

May 1986

You often talked of
Piazza del Comune –
where I took your hand.

May 1993

You buy me a present
to celebrate my completing

my Danish A-level
with the oral exam.

When I tell you I've got an A+,
for once you're lost for words.

But you finally manage to say:
"I'm glad I bought you a present."

Back on the island they say:
"A+? With an accent like that?"

Gateway Dog

You see me making faces on the ferry one day.
You turn round to see what baby I'm teasing.
It's not a baby. It's a dog.
You've always been afraid of animals, but to please me you say:
"We should get a dog."

Four years later we pass our driving tests and get a car.
"Now we can have a dog," I say.

A year later, and you're at the hairdresser's.
Their dog's just had a litter that morning.
You like the look of the first-born, a bitch.
I go see the puppy too.
"Yes," I say.

You love our dog so very much.
You begin to look tenderly on all animals.

You write a fable
the year you die – animals,
they're all animals.

Moving to France

We talked – she mostly –
about moving to France.
As a writer,
she could live anywhere.

I'm a teacher.
Both my degrees
are from Denmark,
so it hardly seemed likely.

But I'd have liked to have lived
in France with her.
We sometimes visit
in my dreams.

Et Livstykke

They translate "*Hun var et livstykke*"
as "She was full of go."

This doesn't do the term justice.

"She was a bright spark"
would be ten times better.

"She had a zest for life"
wouldn't be too bad either.
It does lack zing though.

The literal translation is:
"She was a piece of life."

A good translation would be:
"She was something else."

– First published in *Snakeskin* #296, June 2022

She Made Me Smile

Of all her many talents I'll
remember that she made me smile.