

NO CULTURE

(WOMEN SOCIAL RAP)

Myriam Thyes, 1992. Translation from German to English:

In the moonlight on Piazza Navona,
in the year eighty-six in Rome it occurred to me:
I walked across the square to the gypsy woman,
wanted to have my cards read for fun.
She was supposed to earn a bit of money – but no:
two policemen came along and intervened.
They shoed the gypsy away,
as if she were nothing but dirt on the tourists' shoes.
So I said out loud:
"Quanto è stupida la polizia – volevo proprio venire da Lei!"
And that translates as:
"The police are so stupid – I really wanted to go to the gypsy woman!"
The two big cops heard that – and that's exactly what they looked like –
and demanded: "Hand over your ID!"
But it was back at the campsite, and I laughed at them;
in their uniforms they looked like stuffed animals.
I didn't think it was a big deal, but one of them grabbed me by the arm:
"Come with us, off to the station; we'll sort this out there!"

I put up a fight,
they push me to the ground,
I kicked them in the balls,
and the handcuffs snap shut.

When I look up: a crowd has gathered!
Luckily, my sister picked up my bag.
At the mobile police station in the caravan,
I gave my details through my tears:
"I'm not afraid of your uniforms,
and your brains don't impress me,
I'm only crying out of anger at your muscles!"
A police car drove me, two men in the front,
one on my right and one on my left,
to the main police station. – I thought to myself:
"If only no one there wants anything more from me!" -
The whole way in the car I explained the story
to the most handsome policeman, in my opinion.
At the station, the sergeant was embarrassed by the whole affair,
but instead of admitting it, he reacted petty:
He gave me a lecture on morality: - "You tourists
should be grateful that the police
are working so hard to keep you safe.
And anyone who, like you, obstructs an official duty,
faces up to six months in prison!"

Then I was let go, but the next day
I was still seething with anger, so this is what happened:
I was standing on the bus; not far from me sat a young man,
who was trying to see if he could see anything under my skirt.
I couldn't find the words, so I spat in his face;
he almost lunged at me, but didn't.
An old man who'd seen it all just said:

"These tourists simply have NO MANNERS!"