

# *Chard de Niord*

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## Pasternak

*What century have we got out there, my dears?*  
—Boris Pasternak

This was the life, to live in Russia  
at the end of Russia and write about its history  
as if it were poetry, while one beloved or the other  
lay asleep nearby, dreaming of him writing nearby  
in a high-ceilinged room with the vista  
of snow-covered mountains, forests and fields.  
More ice than glass in the window frames.  
A red coal in the samovar.  
Outside, in the distance, the endless rain  
of shells and sough of trains behind the hills.  
The old world falling to its knees like an elephant.

This was the life, to live at Peredelkino  
like a prophet in his own land and dream.  
“What I have lost is much too great for a single man,”  
he writes in the snow with the tip of his cane.  
The shelling has stopped and the world has changed.  
The wind picks up and blows the words away.  
He writes for the eyes who follow him,  
“Nothing is lost in the other world.”  
This dark December day inspires him to write  
the plainest things in the snow, then walk away.