

**A Step
in the Right
Direction
Translated
by Barbara
Haveland
Morten
Søndergaard**

FIRST ENGLISH EDITION

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begin again. First we lie for a while recovering, which is quite alright
really
after all we've been through. But then we try to rise
anyway, we say:
Come on now, we have to get up, right now, we say, up we get: *Get up
now!*
And we try,
but we fall back, pull ourselves up onto our elbows anyway, and
eventually onto our knees,
and after some time we're up. Then we stand there swaying
and trying to get used to the situation,
take the first tentative steps, but then we fall down and we rise
and we fall and so it goes on for ages.
After some time we actually do get going and we stagger and we
stumble and we fall, but it doesn't
matter, because we rise again and regain our balance. But then
we fall and stay down for a while
then drag ourselves over to the bed and lie there a while. After some
time we rise and go over
to the fridge and open it, and take out milk and go over to
the table and sit down at it.
Then we pour milk over cornflakes and shortly afterwards we rise
and go to the toilet and sit down.
And then we rise and then we go out onto the street and into the bus
and then

we sit down. Then we go to work
and sit down at the computer, but it goes down, so after
some time we go home
and go to bed. Then we go to sleep and then we wake up. And then
we get out of bed
on the wrong side and the day
runs away from us, and the sun comes up and the sun goes down and
not the other way round.
We feel as though we
can't quite keep our feet, that the world just goes on
turning without us,
and we wander in the wilderness and we don't really know where to
begin and where to end.
And we don't begin and we don't end, but we try anyway to
dig in our heels. We try to pull ourselves together,
we need to be more on our toes, on our high heels, *we know that*,
we tell ourselves, but it's beyond us.
We work and we work, on the go before the crack of dawn, and we
try to move on, keep moving on,
try not to fall short, to find our footing,
to stand on our own two feet.
But then we fall, fall and fall, and there we
lie, and there's no getting round it,
and we try to get back on our feet. We take heart and we rise
up, because we have to keep going,
we mustn't go out of our way for anything, but we go out of our way, we fall
by the wayside and after some time
we go dead, we let things lie, we grow bitter
and mean and wayward.
We've gone downhill, we're done for, done in and feeling
bypassed. We fall down and stay down.

We grow old and die. We meet our death. Or rather: Death steps in.
No: We pass away. Yes: We simply pass on. And we're
laid in the ground and we lie there,
and lie and lie and lie and lie and lie and lie
and after some time
we fall into decay and in the end we fall to dust. And the sun comes
down and goes up
(not the other way round, *d'you hear?*), and in the ocean single-celled
plankton
run together in ever more complex organisms, they run into one
And after ages and ages
they become fish that grow legs and crawl up onto the land, and a
couple of apes become
upstanding, and ever more complex
minds arise and they start to walk and say "we". And we
drift and dawdle and dart and flit and flounce and
gallop and glide and jink and jog and lope and leap and march and
meander and
plod and prance and promenade and prowl and sashay and saunter
and step and
shamble and shuffle and stalk and stomp and stride and stroll and
strut and swagger and
tiptoe and tramp and trip and trot and trudge and wade and waddle
and wander.
And we gather into groups and in communities and in circles and we
go to school and to university,
where new groundbreaking discoveries are made, new ideas spring up,
and art
goes its own way, gaining more and more ground and soon we're
an army of trailblazers
who join some crossover avant-garde group that won't be left

standing by *anyone*.

And we storm over the thresholds of new millennia, in leaps and bounds,

and we're heading for great times.

We expand and cross borders, on foot, by land and by air, we climb into gleaming machines and we, mankind, we, the great, the just, we invade, we attack,

we let fly at and kill and we are victorious! After a while we come home from successful campaigns and we hold parades and march proudly through triumphal arches. And we place ourselves on well-deserved

victors' rostrums, we place ourselves on thrones

and at negotiating tables and there we

sit, we sit and sit,

kicking our forerunners down, clinging to our posts,

and what should have

been a transient government turns into a running battle and even though

we make compromise upon compromise

one by one we lose our supporters. After some time we're down at heel, on our last legs,

we go off track, we lose our way, we trip ourselves

up and someone pulls the rug from under us

and we miss a step and we feel that we're on

the slide, but we go on sitting and sitting,

while the people rise up. They march, the people, in mile-long protest marches, they fill the squares with shouting and banners and sit-ins. And we respond with tax cuts

And tear-gas and curfews, until we too are cleared out of the way.

We have to stand down

and we go under, right under, we hit rock bottom. We made our bed