

YEKATERINABURG

I nestled
in your petticoat
folds snug amidst the silken
underskirts where all your wealth
was sewn. I lay beside a bird brooch, an
emerald peacock whose inset diamond eyes
lie lifeless against lacklustre sapphire cheeks.
No plush velvet to cushion us but worn silk taffeta
stuffed with bedraggled eiderdown soiled by Siberian
mud over those open prison months. This is no swallow
nest,
enclosed, secure, but a hidden cage devoid of songbirds.
Faberge spun gold around my ivory egg, embellished
me with the brilliance of jewels. We were your past
and hopeless future, Anastasia, your nest egg
clung heavy around juvenile ankles
until felled in one swoop
by Comrades'
bullets.