

Contents

PREFACE	7
First Meeting: My Unreliable Memory	9
“Would you want to be judged by these?”	16
Reading in Iowa City, Iowa	19
Cats	22
“A Part of Speech”: Misunderstandings	24
“Tenderly Yours”	27
Having it All: His Own Idiolect	29
Interlude	35
Is Russian Translatable?	36
“May 24, 1980” and Reading Aloud	41
“May 24, 1980”, the Brodsky Version	48
Translating Oneself	54
Brodsky Remembered	58
“The Poem”	60
“The Jewish Cemetery in Leningrad”	64
But Back to “May 24, 1980” and Tonic Verse	67
Something New	74
Jewishness	76
Another Look at “the Poem”	85
Recriminations	87
“A Part of Speech”: Attitude Indeed!	90
“On Love”	92
Choices	96
Words Aloud	103
Proselytizing Students	107
The Self Projected	111
How Does Brodsky or Anyone Else Translate Brodsky?	115
Two Jews	117
Improvising the Whole: D. H. Lawrence	121
Buber	127
Rhymes Galore	130

Hopkins, Yes; Brodsky, No!	134
An Irish Tribute	137
Rhymes, Especially Feminine Ones	139
<i>So Forth</i> : Who is the Translator?	145
An Inscription	148
At Sea in English But Not in American: Rhymes	150
The Russianizing of Donne	158
Writing and the Man	164
The Essayist	166
On Not Saying Goodbye	168
Projects, Especially 19th-Century Russian Poetry	170
Pasternak: The Joys of English	175
New York: Home	179
A Sour Note	183
A Collective Goodbye	184
Zabolotsky in Brooklyn Heights	188
Last Conversation with Joseph	197
Defending the Bard	200
Former Students' Testimonies	205
Listening	207
The Shape of "May 24, 1980": Compensation	210
Brodsky into Brodsky	213
Tidying up JB	216
"May 24, 1980": Into the Lions' Den	221
Revising "A Part of Speech"	224
New Versions for Old	230
Leftover Comments on "May 24, 1980"	233
Against Formal Translation	235
Last But Not Least	239
POSTFACE	242
NOTES	245
INDEX	251