

UMENIE. LITERATÚRA. FILOZOFIA.

ESTETICKO

ročník II.
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UČENIE O UČENÍ
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„Jej tvorba v sebe zachytáva prvky mysticizmu, surreálnych vidín i mnohotvarých liminálno-hlbinných výpovedí. Podnecuje k Zaváňa bezčasovou gotikou. Čo na Lune, čo ju presahuje. Čo na Lune, čo na jazyku...“

NOVA Z NOVO

Ozveny

Nemôžeš spáliť bolesť
Dovoľ jej spáliť ťa

Abominálny krik
Potratené trate
Zjedené jedy
Držia sa v tebe

Neplať náplastami
Echo ťa uchopí

Pochová
Potopí
Až potom
pochozíš



Mesmerizmus

X.

Kvapka kolíše sa
Stáby počítadlo pritom ako
ozvenou dusí pohľad
Tak prázdny a predsa s nádejou,
že opäť zakúsi hrot chuti
Už dávno splynula vo zvonici
huslí podupaných

XI.

Prosím, prosím
Povedz mi,
či tá chodba nie je
Schodisko
Chcem len vedieť, kam mierim
Ako v tom sne,
kde patrili nám odpovede

VIII.

Kto je ten cudzinec?
Čo ma škrabe?
Keď ponorím sa pod
bežiacu pláň hľadania

Potrebujem poznať úmysly
tulákov šepkajúcich
Do čiel kopcov

VII.

Ticho

Ako spev harlekýna
vo farbe noci bezútešnej
Láka ma opakovať
to staré gesto
stavajúce trojuholníky
okolo zrakov

VI.

Alebo len moja drahá
opúšťa predstavy?
Ako často počuje
hnilobu koreňov
nad povrazmi záhrad mojich?
Nie-kedy, zostaň
Preberiem sa

V.

Chcem tesat'
Bohyne z hodvábu
a z perál nebeských pien
V kúpeľoch podzemných
Budú stáť ako strážkyne
našich rituálov
Nečistoty a nevinnosti

IV.

Som bosorka, si bosorka
Nechcem, aby si horela
Som štvrtá tvár Hekaté
Zabudnutý tieň mesiaca
Skrčený pod lístím slz
Netočím svet
Ten ťahá moju niť

III.

Bojím sa
Keď hýbem stenami,
rozplynú sa ako les
výšiaci sa v nových spomienkach

A v Ikarových prosbách
za oslobodenie v čase
Padajúcich kariet

II.
Ležíš predo mnou
Ako zverokruh na nebi
nepospájaných súhvezdí
Drapéria na torze
s krídlami tvojich ochrancov
Odvádzajúca sprievod mojich
bdelých veršov

I.
A na začiatok:
Zabúdam, topím
ten útek pred sviečkami
Hmloviny dimenzií
pohlcajú naše
vzdialené tance
triezvyh chorôb čakania

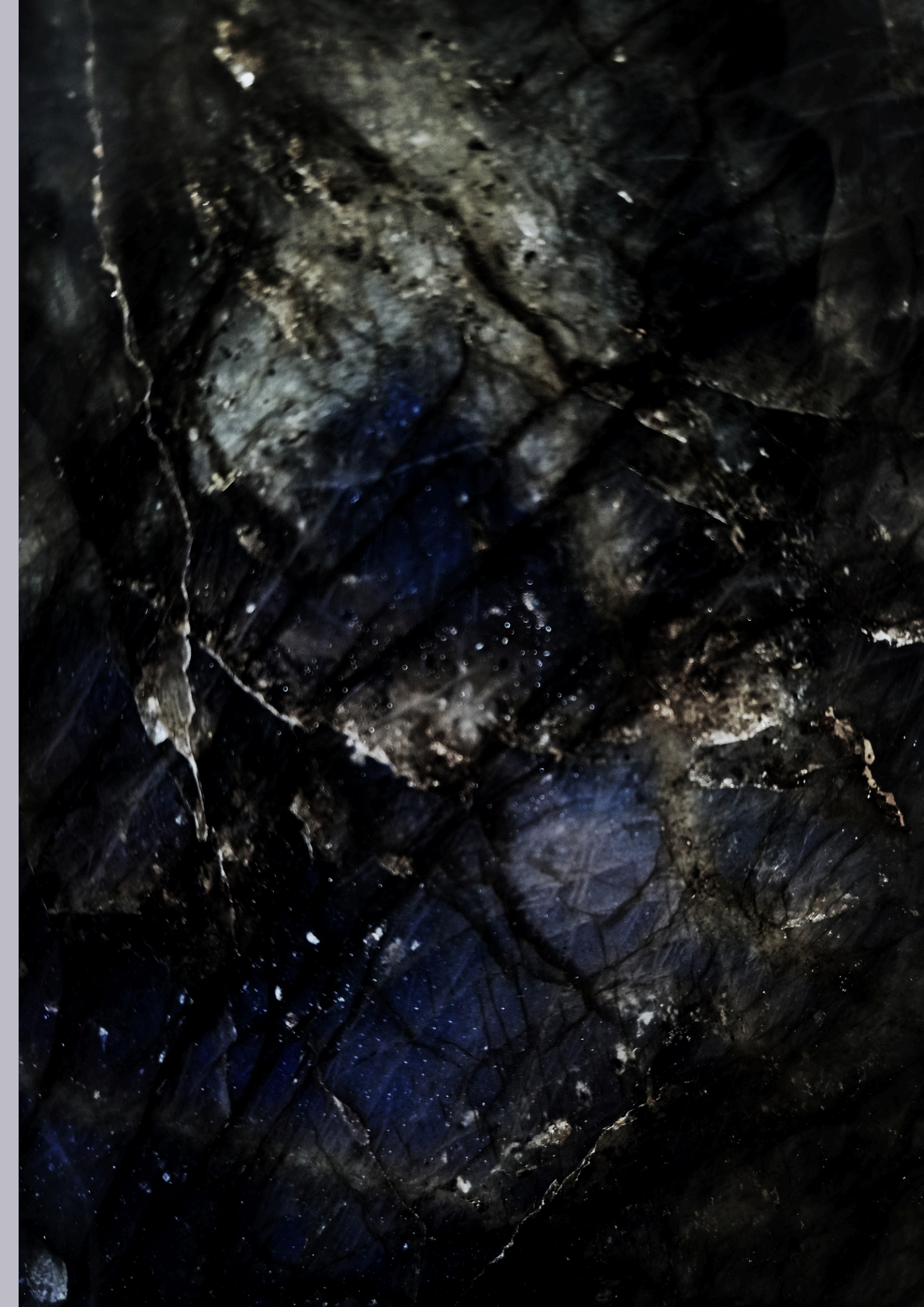


Liminály

Chce ťa dohnať
dusná hmota.
Nie a nie vyhasnúť,
len zoslať príchut'
posledných dní...
Sme v rituáloch ohni.
Dvíhaš ma, ja usínam.
Vrháme sa k úžinám
pyrického empíria,
kde pahreby nekončia.

Dočkali sme sa tu obradu.
Nesiem stigmy s očami granátu.
Spálil sa ti jazyk,
odmietaš prijať svoje jazvy.
No tento tanec na tyči
nikoho z nás nezničí.
Vzdaj sa svojich zrn,
ekliptické prísahy splň.
Ako dávny Prométeus
do skalnej obete sa spust'.

Dlho nedalo sa kričať,
potom zima prišla,
pobrali sme sa na západ
brány a pomníky hľadať.
Nesieme odrazy starovekých masiek,
pod nimi len planúci driek.
Prekonám ten hlad, sľubujem,
ak sa z neho drak vyklúje.
A ty spoznáš ten záves,
odkiaľ spieval nám sám Hádes.



Z Novu

Objímame sa
Stále trasiem sa
Ale už viem
Že k sebe patríme

Z Iona Prvotnej matky
A šarlátových snov
Svätej prostitútky
Ona zbavila nás okov

Plávame
Plány nemáme
Vieme a len sme
Naša noc nevyhasne

Držíš ma a ja tvarujem
Armatúru nekonečna
Raz nám ju darujem
K hladine postrč ma

nikcho

nezachránia

ne stanem

ciach

sublimovaná

Arkanické noirum

I prerezané nevyhasne, zisťuješ...
Okoštovala si niekedy
skelety starých katedrál?

Takto chutí carpe noctem
Mucholapka na hviezdy
Ospalého návratu sen

Zalejme slzy do obsidiánu
Za všetky duše v sieťach a hmlovinách
Matéria vpitá pod kozmický prach

Otvára sa festival stratených krídel
I po teba si príde
Oddel'ujúc svetlo od sveta



“Alžběta Janečková (1985, Plzeň)
vystudovala angličtinu a francouzštinu a ve
třiceti se odstěhovala do Španělska, kde má
konečně klid na psaní. Píše prózu i poezii,
obojí cinknuté nostalgií a vlastní, důkladnou
zkušeností s mateřstvím a eskapismem.
Zatím se dostala ven jedna povídka v edici
nakl. Listen (Rodiny a rodinky 2023) a básně
na Poetizeru a IG (@marysapise).”

únorová rána

Taky ti připadá tma
teplejší než světlo?

Ale ty jen po trávě slídíš
a neříkáš nic.

Co noha nohu mine
naším ranním okruhem
ty napřed a za tebou
postupuje svítání

i Slunce, zdá se, pochybuje
zda vyjít do vlastní záře.

Pára ti jde od čumáku
ohlédneš se: *jsi se mnou?*

Jsem, ale počkej, čtu si
vzkaz na stěně dopravního koridoru:

-Zpoždění nic nezmění-
zbytečná pravda, ale pěkná
jako od čumáku pára,

ledové světlo, teplá tma
a únorová rána

vyhlídka na Plzeň

divím se skrvně
v bílé krajině a králi,
který na zelené louce
vystavěl šedivé město

oprášit ho tak z tváře Země
letmým pohybem obrovy dlaně
a pak zapřáhnout opratě
do splašené komety a slyšet -
kostelní zvon dnes odbíjí tiše
tišeji než křupání sněhu

na mateřský

patřím do pokoje
s pohovkou a fíkusem?

moře v očích rozmazalo
tvoje hračky v akvarel

otevřít a zavřít
noc a den

a co okna a dveře?
jsou také protiklady?

ale já vím, že ano
okna jsou touha po svobodě
a dveře cesta ven

Taky něco o té lásce

kolem nás přešlapují motýli
odkud se vzalo tolik kůže a barev?
když dotkneš se jich
(a to bys chtěl, boyfriend?)
nezemřou, nemají pel

asi první teplý podvečer ochočil tě,
že díváš se na mě jako
Nobelova cena za mír

díváš se na mě, až zapomenu,
že včera jsi mě počastoval
přívlastkem t.l.u.s.t.á.
že včera jsme tě chtěla pověsit
za masové koule do průvanu,
(co v krabičce přinesl jsi od mámy)

a kolem nás přešlapují holky na zastávce
a ty civíš mi do očí, tak říkám si:
je taky čas napsat něco o té lásce

Cestou ze školky

pěkný západ slunce prosvítá
mezi ulicemi a prozaické
vyprávění všeho,
co ve školce se přihodilo
prosvítá mezi tvými rtíky

nebyla to chvíle pro drama,
ale mně takhle z vrchu připadala
škvíra mezi budovami jako
tunel se světlem na konci

bylo to jaksi nepatřičné,
ale přesto se to dělo:

*tvoje ručka ochotně
v mojí dlani
a tvůj sladký hlásek
přerušovaný mými
morbidními představami*

k svačině byl jogurt a
červánky vklíněné
mezi bloky lákají
světlu vstříc

sama sobě připomínám, že
domů jdeme doslova,
ne metaforicky

doslova na svět jsem tě přivedla,
miluji tě tak doslova, jak jen to jde
ty jsi doslova definice milování:
tělo a duše stvořená z lásky

a přesto, ten západ slunce
připomněl mi, že
tohle jednou skončí a
zanikneme tak jak jsme započali

z ničeho
z nehmatatelné chvíle dobra
(takže empiricky z ničeho)
hlavně se nezbláznit
a tahat dál vědra

ze studny života

k obědu bylo maso a náš dům
už pěknou chvíli stojí před námi.

Můj život přibližně ve třech slokách

*První vzpomínka odhalená samozvanou
hypnotizérou, kosmetičkou a
masérkou v jedné osobě:
zvracím do plodové vody
bramborový salát
tak se prý rodí
na Boží hody*

*Puberta:
nejde mi myslet,
tot to přestávám dělat
je to, jakoby mé jediné
období štěstí
a dál už si nic nevybavuji*

*Dospělost:
vypadám na pětadvacet
na to jediné
taky můžu být hrdá
a zdá se mi, že ten život
nějak trvá*

Inspirováno fejetonem Nory Ephron: The
Story of My Life in 3500
Words or Less.

Nespavost

neurosis jako sýkorka obecná
v hnízdě mi přebývá polštář
a spánek kulatý chybí

úplněk v mysli omlouvá
nevyčerpané smysly

Koberec

Je jaro, říkali. Pak se opravili. Už začalo. Čas sednout si pod třešeň, která má holé větve obsypané květy. Čas myslet, na to, co bylo a co mohlo by být. Maryša na takové bilancování nemá ani minutu, protože roluje koberec. Roluje ho s nechutí, bojí se, že se nevejde do auta. Stydí se, že ji někdo zahlédne. Je jaro, tak prší a ona tu trofej nese ve větru, dešti, osmi stupních a před zraky sousedů. Vešel se. Jaro znamená, že bude líp.

Je nový, z IKEY nebo Ikeje. Hrozně dlouho váhala, jestli ho za tolik peněz koupit. Ted' ho za stejný obnos nechává vyčistit. Peníze i čas jsou relativní. Paní jí ráno říkala, že to bude trvat týden nebo dva. *Já to ručně mejdlem čistím, pak suším a pak teprve koukam, jestli je to úplně čistý. Pak to třeba znova meju a pak třeba dva dny prší a nemůžu to sušit venku.* Jo, dobře, cokoli, pani. Ve tři čtvrtě na jednu vám to sem hodim a až mi zavoláte, zastavím se. Jezdím kolem dvakrát denně pro děti do školy.

Maryša parkuje se čtyřmi blinkry u popelnic. Šťouchá to ven. Muži jsou prý lepší v ukládání velkých objektů do malých prostor. Ona si ale umí sbalit krosnu s celtou sama. Koberec si hází na rameno jako smrk z polomu, jeho rub tlačí,

plastová přezka ramínka podprsenky se utápí v mase.

Na dveřích visí příjdu hned a číslo na mobil. Ten její je vybitý, jak jinak. Opírá šedožlutou chlupatou rolku o vchod. V kapse má lísteček s nákupním seznamem a na druhou stranu píše svoje číslo. Děti by počkaly, instituce ne. Není to její chyba, je to její podstata. Ví to, poddává se tomu, krčí rameny a kdyby nebyl mokrá chodník, sedla by si do pozice lotosového květu a oholila vlasy. Nashledanou. Mezitím proběhne celý den. Tak nějak mimoděk, jako obvykle. Děti si hrají na tvrdém. Koberec doma nikoho nezajímá. Ani tu paní z čistírny. Nepsala.

Maryša nikdy předtím v čistírně nebyla. Místo pro úzkostlivé otrokyně voňavoučkových domovů, majitelky sedmero kabátů a čtenáře lístečků, co na nově zakoupeném oblečení nepříjemně šimrá, říká si a v tom ji přepadne jaro, čas myslet na to, co by mohlo být a co bylo.

Jak měli jednu čistírnu naproti práci. Kolegyně tam chodily a nikdy se o tom neopomněly zmínit. Ustaraně důležité a pyšné na svoji výkonnost. Kromě svačin do školy, pracovního vypětí a odpoledního nákupu, měly ještě ke všemu: čis-tír-nu. Úděl.

Na svého prvního opravdového kluka. Sbalil ji na semináři z pedagogiky. Číhal na mě u vchodu, aby jí mezi obyčejnými nudami řekl něco zajímavého: *Některé skvrny nelze odstranit bez porušení struktury látky.* Vzdáleně se to vztahovalo k tématu, o kterém jim nekriticky předčítali v chladné posluchárně. Říkal, že to kdysi zahlédl na dveřích čistírny a že mu došlo, jak musí jako budoucí učitel vnímat dětskou duši. Že po těch dětech nemůže vyžadovat dokonalost. Přišel jí úžasnej. Roky potom otevřela Hrabala. A bylo to tam. Lhář a falešnej pábitel. S malým p.

Za týden volá paní z čistírny, že to je hotový. Maryše vůbec neví, kdo to je a o čem mluví. Děti si pořád hrajou na tvrdé podlaze. Vysavač je odložený v útulku. To se občas stane, že si pořádáte něco, co jste vlastně nepotřebovali. Ráno hodí těti do školy, pak zaparkuje po rozkvetlou třešni, beze strachu sklopí sedačky. Koberec je voňavý a urostlý. Nese ho na rukou a když se nikdo nedívá, stydlivě ho políbí. Pak zaparkuje před školou, vystoupí a stoupne si ke skupince super výkoných žen. Je potichu, bojí se, že kdyby otevřela pusou, vylezlo by z ní, že byla v čistírně. Že dělá nezajímavý jarní úklid. Co jiného jim, ale říct? Že jaro je čas rozjímání a naděje, suchých polibků pod rozkvetlou třešní a že nikdo doma nepotřebuje koberec?

I HAVE NEVER LEFT.

NOBODY KNOWS.

Be with me always — take any form — drive me mad! only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable!

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

Four walls somewhere behind me. A small garden with a wire fence in front of me. Freedom leaking through the wire fence to the streets, cafés, shops, and everywhere else around.

Holding a cold glass of gin tonic, I move on the bench so that sun rays can take hold of my whole body. Once the heat fights its way through the skin barrier, it blends with alcohol. This mixture quickly charges me with energy. The rush is so sudden and untameable that I get the urge to somehow escape from my own skin which suddenly feels tight and too weak.

I put the idea of outgrowing my skin into words, for once not choosing the expressions carefully to gently stroke the ear of the listener. I rather allow this new energy to rule over my syllable-placing .

"It feels so good. The sun's melting me but in a good way. In the best way possible, actually. Like I'm not a cold piece of rock anymore but rather a flexible piece of some half-fluid, half-solid material that can, you know, simply go anywhere."

"Okay, you're either getting philosophical or getting a sunstroke."

"Is there a difference?"

He laughs. "You got me. But get philosophical however much you want with me. I mean, had it not been for Sophocles, I wouldn't have got to speak to you in the first place."

"It wasn't Sophocles you asked me about back then."

"Oh god, names again. Socrates, then, right?"

"It was Plato, actually," I now laugh, too, sincerely. "If you want to keep being my friend, you should know my boys better than this."

"I wanted to tell you that I started reading Nietzsche."

"Nietzsche? What are you, ten?"

"Ten? You mean like, he's a ten but he reads Nietzsche?"

“Definitely,” I smirk at him. “You should start with something easier, like those YouTube channels, philosophy for dummies.” I poke him and put my head on his shoulder.

“Yeah, neither a sunstroke nor philosophy, just a normal drunkenness,” he wraps his arm around me. I open my eyes enough to squint at him. The sun and heat have altered my seeing. He’s partly in the shadow, sweat trickling down his neck and disappearing in the secrets of his black T-shirt, yet I see him in red and orange and yellow shades, colours appearing at places where they normally wouldn’t. I like it. I eternalize this very moment in my mind to return to it after the sun sets so that I can sit on this bench, summoning new freckles on my nose, forever.

“I might be a bit drunk, Dan,” I admit. “Let’s go inside.”

I’ve started forgetting many things. I can barely remember how sun rays feel on the skin anymore. I don’t know how ice cream tastes, how honest laughter hurts in the stomach, what a delight a real conversation causes. But I can live within this growing

memory void. What causes me an immeasurable amount of pain, however, is the fact that I can't recall how his face felt against my palms, his body against my skeleton, his beautiful soul blended with the wounded, disintegrating remains of mine.

He puts me on the side and slides effortlessly into me, so deep that I feel him reaching the parts the hollow lonesomeness of which has put them to sleep. He is so close to me that I feel my eyes tearing up. He gently touches my chest. He lets me moan into his ears what nobody could put into intelligible phrases. I don't hold back. I open up, refusing to be closed.

As he lays next to me fast asleep with his palm resting on my hipbone, I stay awake to look at him, remembering the day he told me he had sold two paintings and hence would have money to leave Germany and come see me. Once you say so, I'm there, he texted me. Come here, then, I replied.

I look at his perfect skin, cherishing every millisecond of his very presence. I gently stroke his hair. Eventually, the memory of yesterday creeps into the room. I see Dan standing in his window, looking directly at us,

knowing well he was waiting for that friend of mine to show up. I close my eyes but still see him rushing into the house, pretending he forgot some documents upstairs. On some level, at this moment I know that the days when I can still perfectly feel and taste and smell are numbered. But the fool I am, I think that time will come later than it does.

I keep staring at myself, clothes plain, hair lank, eyes that can't see me and which I can't see either. I know that soon the real me standing on the top of the slope looking into the garden with unseeing eyes will step aside into the inferior position and I will become the dominant me. She will be the passive me. The one left to perform mundane labour tasks linked to satisfying simple human needs in a world that turns out to be anything but simple. I will be the active me who truly takes over from afar. I have never left; I am not here; I am nowhere; have I ever been?

What's "time" anyway? Vik would proclaim it's only a meaningless concept nowadays; Stela would describe it as an inherently oppressive term that's supposed to push us to perform

until we peel the layer of who we were supposed to be off and sweat the resistance to contemporary post-postmodern capitalistic exploitation off. Tom would polemize it is a fascinating concept that shows how much we have evolved as a species, both in a positive and negative sense. My old self would define it as something that can cause an unbearable amount of pain, but also liberate from it.

The me that I am now, trapped in the house I tried so eagerly to escape, would put it differently. Time means being. While you're able to distinguish between a Tuesday and a Saturday, between three o'clock in the afternoon and ten o'clock in the morning, you are well. No matter how you feel otherwise, mentally or physically, you are still a functioning body oscillating within clearly set borders. You're still living. As soon as those terms stop making sense, blending into one unfathomable mush, that's when your life ends. You lose your orientation in the linear world, and you're done for.

I am on the bench in summer; I am in the kitchen in autumn; I am on the slope in winter; I am with Hadeel in spring. Yet I am still on that bench, enjoying the sun, frying in its false promise until I become dust.

Sitting on the bench, I know I should have fried there that day. I know that if Dan could mingle with time even more, he'd grab my hand, return to that moment, and let me burn there beyond metaphysical death until my poor soul would find whatever he believed to be eternal torment. If he could, he'd take me through Dante's circles of hell, making sure he'd stand right by my side to feel each of my seconds on his skin, too. He'd sacrifice the comfort of time to watch me lose the strong protective layers repeatedly.

Sometimes I don't think I deserve such suffering. I think that whoever judged me, judged me wrong. My tongue itches to yell "veto!" at whoever wished this upon me. I desire to scream at everyone that their assumptions are not only incorrect but also evil. I want to say that Vik and Stela had no right to be that awful to me. Okay, I wasn't the best person that has ever walked the Earth, but neither were they. I didn't deserve to fall into disgrace overnight. But first and foremost, I want every being capable of thinking to see how unfair it is that he continues his life, probably happier than ever, free, and able-bodied, while I'm stuck a few meters away from him, standing in the middle of the garden in the dress and necklace,

looking up into his window. I need to scream many things, but there's nobody to say it to, and I lack any voice anyway.

Other times I think I don't suffer enough. I start thinking of my parents. They've always wanted only the best for me, they never scolded me for being weak after my mother had recovered. They respected and understood my mental state even while telling me to remain in the house of terror. They knew any other alternative was out of budget, and therefore out of question. Fine, they weren't exactly happy with my performance at the university, but who would be?

I think of Stela and Vik and how nervous my constant rants about Dan must have made them feel. I was kicking everything around me because I was denied the peace I had been promised, but I did not realize Vik and Stela needed that peace, too, and it was me who was robbing them of it.

I also think of Tom, as much as my fading memory allows me to. Poor lovely Tom whom I loved with every functional cell of my body until it was devoid of any sensation unrelated to bodily needs. He loved me too, dearly and deeply. I had the chance to become the girlfriend he deserved, but I was too fucked up. Out of everyone whom I have hurt, I hurt him

the most. I never forget that. I tattoo it into whatever's left of my mind.

At such times, for everything bad that I did, for every trauma I caused, I should be paying even more than I already am.

Vik and I got to know each other on a train to Vienna. I was accompanying my mother to the doctor and Vik was travelling to see Lena who studied in the city back then. Vik asked me if I had a cigarette, I said I didn't smoke. Mother told me kindly I didn't have to lie for her, but I assured her I was honest to slip one to Vik when my mother went to the loo. Vik laughed, saying my mother raised me an honest person indeed. We stayed in touch ever since, occasionally inviting each other for drinks talking about our parents, going for long walks while discussing movies, and then texting each other until dawn changed the sky palette of the night.

She was the only one to whom I said: "I think I'm falling in love." I didn't have to add "for the first time ever"; she knew. She reacted by nodding. It was a wise-looking nod, hiding more information about the aspiring romance than I had orally disclosed. "Is it serious?" she asked then, and when I said yes, she put a smile on her face that I never deciphered, and asked:

“More serious than us?”

She could read me better than anyone else. While she is carefully unpacking her precious philosophy books with pristine covers and turns to ask me why I want to start searching for another flat, I feel like I am in the room alone.

“I can’t stay here with him,” I say. “It’s getting out of hand. I only want to know if you want to come with me only, or if I should look for a room for three to invite Stela, too.”

Vik raises her head from the labyrinth of plastic wraps and paper boxes. “Babes, all of us have just moved in, in my case quite literally. We can’t repeat the whole pack-unpack shenanigans all over again just because you can’t deal with your friend. I’m really sorry, but no.”

A couple of times, I think about my actual death, about my physical body stopping to work out of nowhere. A second comes when all the internal organs reach a consensus that they don’t want to cooperate any longer. That was fun, guys, but that’s it, the heart says. Yes, no point in continuing, the brain agrees. Exactly my words, the lungs nod. And they let go of each other’s neural hands.

The concept of death is generally difficult for

people to comprehend. At least I think so, I haven't had a memorable conversation with a person in a time, so I don't have the most recent knowledge to back up my argument. Death, however, doesn't scare me. I'm neither horrified nor excited when I think about my body dying because I'm not directly attached to it anymore. I can see it, but I can't feel it, so I couldn't care about it even if I wanted to.

I don't even care about this non-physical form of me roaming the garden and the house. I can't do much with it, I can only think and watch my memories which I'm becoming less and less emotional about. I'm not a poltergeist who torments him through all the places that he moves out to in a delusion that the haunting will stop. I don't randomly turn the TV on and off to scare his girlfriend while she prepares dinner, waiting for him to come home. Hell, I can't even yell at her to run away while she can, save herself while she still has a body to do so because once she says no to him, he'll not stop until she dissociates from it. All I can do, then, is stand below his window and watch, neither a form nor an idea, just something that has existed and somehow continues without ever having a similar dinner prepared for.

I wish my life was a movie. Any genre would do, but in my case, it'd go for horror. At the end of such a film, the protagonists are either saved or they save themselves or they die, with their story coming to an end. When they survive, they are portrayed as cheerful, having their memory of the gruesome incidents probably wiped, or they are content with whatever happened because they are ready to start anew, just with a few scars and maybe a missing limb.

I wish my life was a movie because movies usually end when all the drama ends. You don't see the protagonists going through awful phases of PTSD, guilt, neurosis, total breakdowns, or desperate suicidal attempts. I wonder why that is. Maybe such an aftermath would be too uncomfortable for the viewers. Or maybe the lack of coverage of the consequences comes from the same bag of reasons in which the decisions not to show characters urinating or eating or washing their genitals every day are stored. It'd just be too boring to watch.

Unlike movies or any made-up tales, the real stories don't end. We live and live and live long after the dramatic incident, probably even too long after it, even though we have left our minds and souls in those intense moments.

We just casually dropped them where we were the happiest or saddest or angriest or the most in love, and our body spends the rest of its functional time as a consuming and defecating, but otherwise empty machine. Well, that's life, people say from that moment on. What else did you expect it to be, a fucking carpet with personified animals inhabiting a rape-free city printed on it?

My life, too, continues despite being over. I get up in the morning; I dress up; take some plant yogurt with gluten-free granola out of the fridge; put some eyebrows and eyeliner on; eat the yogurt; poop the yogurt out; go to work; pretend to be one coherent person; eat some lunch; come back home; make pesto and eat it with pasta; go for a walk to stand still at the top of the slope above Dan's house; lose myself in time and space over and over; return home to take a shower; watch a video on YouTube; go to sleep. In that sense, I am a perfectly functional human being. I do chores, I am a diligent worker, I let people talk to me and invite me out for a drink or two. The live-action drama is over, closing credits start momentarily.

But nobody knows I left a large chunk of myself in that house so that whomever I am currently with, I am not with them at all at the same time.

I remember watching TV shows about ghost hunters. Well, “watching” is an exaggeration since my mother’s hearing was trained to detect the first tunes of the opening theme. She stormed into the living room, yelled at me for watching “the works of the devil himself, as if we didn’t have enough troubles without them” and turned the TV off. But as I was growing up, I, of course, outsmarted her. I found out that one channel played the show when I was back from school and my parents still at work. By the time I was thirteen and lost interest in it, I knew all about Ouija boards, EMF meters, thermal cameras, and giving almost sacred attention to a draught. The hunters never found anything completely decisive that would say to every doubting Thomas that not only the living dwell in certain places.

Now that I have all the time I’ve never wanted, I think about all those places that were allegedly haunted. I think that even if they were, the ghosts wouldn’t bother to grandiosely announce the presence of their faded shape to people who wouldn’t understand anyway. Hunters look for sensation. They want to measure everything, read everything, rip it all open to make an insane amount of money off it and feed from the “wow” of audiences. Ghosts.

don't want any of it. They want to roam the premises they've been bound to for one reason or another while new technologies come and go, the ghost fascination dies out to be reborn again, and the house is torn down for a new block of flats to replace it.

Maybe all houses are haunted houses in some sense. The hunters can just never capture this kind of haunting because the dwellers don't talk about it the way people in horror films do. They don't call every exorcist listed in the Yellow Pages to redeem the French window living room, the marble island kitchen, and two bathrooms with a premium jacuzzi bath. People just look in another direction when all the paintings fall at the same time, or they replace smashed dishes with new ones. Maybe they still get startled when the heirloom chandelier falls down in the middle of the night, but they don't overthink it. They don't sensationalize or romanticize their suffering, they don't bathe in it. They wash the taste of acceptance with more coffee in the morning and move on without freaking out or diving deep into the lore of their house.

As time goes on, I stop freaking out, too. I understand there might ultimately be no grand story behind my mystery, no dark wizard

to curse me for five generations. Maybe I had a chance to save myself, not only once but many times, but I turned the other way. Maybe I brought it all upon myself. Maybe swimming in boiling acid was the only way to make my empty life fuller, to experience some drama, even at the expense of eternal imprisonment. Maybe I don't really deserve any sympathy; maybe all anyone could do for me is to grab a few more stones to throw.

A wave of overheated bodies takes me out of the bus so effortlessly that it takes a few seconds for me to find my lost bearings. After that, I see him and raise my hand to wave. He sees me too, and we exchange happy smiles. He rushes to me so quickly that I suspect he can secretly fly.

"You found it, yay!" his hug draws me into excited hurriedness.

"I'm pretty good at getting into the bus and out of it, thanks. Okay, show me where all your magic happens."

"It'll be a place for your magic, too, don't forget that," he corrects me as he leads me down the street. We pass three parks, a grocery store, and a café. I note that there are a lot of places for socialization to explore.

“You haven’t even seen the best places yet, wait!” he replies while laughing. “There’s a small hill nearby, a very nice one, you can see the whole city from there. Great for hangouts. I’ll show you even more spots, don’t worry. I’ll take you everywhere, I’ll make a really nice and adventurous summer for you.”

An enormous heavy door leads us into a small garden that’s full of greenery. I tell Dan that I feel like entering a fairy tale and he looks flattered. He shows me flower beds full of petals of all the colours of the rainbow. “My grandpa’s quite a gardener, he planted all of it,” he says proudly. “He also renovated this old bench,” he points to a nicely decorated bench resting on the other side of the garden next to a small white house. “He thrifted it.”

“It looks amazing.”

“The house has a ground floor and an attic which my parents renovated so that someone could live there. My mom wanted to have a piano there, but... you know, life had other plans.” Dan clears his throat before he continues as if nothing happened. “I have an office in the attic, so I’ll be at your place quite often. I’ll be almost like your personal attic ghost.”

I smile. “A proper old house it is, then.”

“It’s not that old, we renovated it.” He leads me into the guts of the house. “Yeah, and you’ll need to lock all the doors whenever you leave the house. Not that there’d be any burglars, this is a very decent part of the city, but we never know with people, do we? Okay, so this is your room. You’ll have one or two flatmates in the other room, but I’ll search for someone nice, no worries. As you can see, the whole place is furnished, I even left the paintings on the walls because I know how much you love art. I know you and Stela will bring your own stuff, but I bet you don’t have such big comfortable beds. You’ll have enough space for all your things, don’t worry. And we have a big kitchen, so you can cook as much as you’ve always wanted. And yes, here’s the toilet and next to it is a bathroom, quite spacious, too, as you can see. You can check the walls, there’s no mould anywhere, not in the bathroom, in bedrooms, in no room in the house. Yes, it might not be one of the newest places on this street, but we’ve been taking great care of it.”

I don’t know what to say. I’ve never lived in such a big house, neither in my hometown nor here. I look at the calmness-invoking light cream walls. I smile at the stories told in colour preserved in old frames. I come closer to the


big windows leading into the garden and close my eyes for a handful of seconds. "It's all very nice," I turn around to Dan who's observing me attentively. "Stela will be ecstatic, finally a place where she can breathe. Her lungs will love this place."

"What about your lungs?"

I grin at him, then reach out to touch his hand.

"Thank you," I say honestly. "I feel like I could be really happy here."

"And you will be," he emphasizes in a serious voice. "You'll recover here very fast and then you'll be truly happy again." He touches my hand as well and smiles at me widely. "I'll make sure of that."



Ďakujeme, že tvoríte.
Ďakujeme, že tvoríte.
Ďakujeme, že tvoríte.

I KEĎ SA NEBO ROZPADÁ