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\* \* \*

Under the blue-and-white garlands

Of tangled treelike bodies

Dressed up women are walking around.

I was looking at them through the window.

I was satisfied, I was just,

One or two moments before,

Improved, completely upgraded,

Like snow dissolving on the grass.

I’m pleased with my bright room (*svetlica*)

I live on the first [floor].

But “but”:

When anyone calls the police,

They knock on my window.

My window shines through the night

What else could they knock on?

Who will open them the door to the stairs

At three or four AM?

My beautiful police

In the person of two young cops,

It’s fisticuffs on the third [floor] again –

They claim the holy sacraments.

Arrived! Such a Russian.

And like a clock knock knock

They knock on the window with stocks made in Tula

Or Izhevsk – by the sound.

And again, when let them in,

I’ll ask their document.

And again, like a smarty preschooler,

The cop will show me a gun.

As in, yep, me – a magus from concrete jungle,

My sacraments are quite small,

But like films of Parajanov

They are aimlessly sweet.

Thus, I will realize my helplessness

And burden of indecision.

The sacraments of cops – such vegetables,

That one would hardly pluck.

And having let them in, I’ll start thinking again

Being enchanted by the street garland,

About that one-of-a-kind, that mine,

Whose name goes before all others.

And my miserable sacraments

I’ll be slowly thinking about,

While puritanic children bind there

That cynical shit-wasted shizit (*mraz’*).

Among bug-eyed Okhlobystins

Among new-year cops

All my truths are not true,

They won’t cut it for the holy sacraments.

\* \* \*

My quiet yard, peaceful little yard,

Only little sparrows and cigarette butts.

I look therefrom at the sea

Of your strange figures, Muscovites.

It’s Eastertime eve,

My quite little yard is glad to the spring.

And, like in a good and old-fashioned tale,

Ginger cat lying by my window.

Muscovites go shopping,

There is a small bazaar behind the house.

I’m a little gladly alive sparrow

Before the cat and before someone else's life.

Muscovites choose gifts,

Go to parties, and I’m not sad.

And to me comes only Márquez,

I won’t let anyone else in.

He will come to me, cat-like Márquez,

And will turn his fluffy forehead to me.

And from eyes, with a lot of misfortune,

I will shed happy tears to the grave.

Out there is war, little coffins transit,

People moan and blood runs,

But they conduct a quite talk -

Two departed – about love.

About that little sorrowful forbidden yard,

Where a small sparrow sings,

And when death comes in this town,

Like a typical common ant.

An old poplar with grey bark,

The ground covered with husk and cigarette butts.

And the ground with imperceptible grass,

And beautiful poplars.

\* \* \*

where vodka flows like a quiet river

into the glass of both a victim and a killer

from *sucharevskaya* chebureks-house

i can see faces of the other country

unfamiliar faces of the other country

through the empty glasses

empty dead eye-pits

amid bibacious clatter and chatter  
  
how tasty is the bree of meat pasty *(cheburek)*

became permeated with the smell of an afterlife delight

a fin de siгcle poet

from an ancient sucharevskaya tower

the dead bottle is empty

and the ancient tower is empty

but why does my heart weep?

it weeps just because

\* \* \*

with loose ass, tight at the shoulders

with iPads, full of their poems,

in two thousand twelfth in lilac bushes

my friends departed like shadows  
  
you’re still alive smoker journalist

oh, solitude, and your difficult character

and you, like a man who hijacked an elevator,

suddenly see that motion is tedious

your blog is tight like three multiplied by a half

we like farewell each other in step

sand pours through leaky planking

and a funeral band can be heard

we finish a yearlong itinerary

and that’s a wonderful time  
when on Moscow cemeteries bloom

beautiful flowers – flowers of lilac

\* \* \*

you say: write a column

in dear Russian

but it’s like leading a pet dog

in front of yourself on a leash!   
  
up – beautiful neighborhood

down – a lovely grocery store

in winter, we’ll go to India

yet we’re writing a column

asocial amid nations

Russia is terrible as hell

Moscow 2012

frozen harbor of the seven seas  
  
clip clop - December

key buttons of Satan

God forbid me to write columns

in the magazine of icy country

\* \* \*

we went by car through the gloomy forest shade

you looked at me, I looked out of the window

and, having seen a forest path morning-after,

I took a deep breath and whispered: Russian path

you lot the Russians are like that, - you said sadly, -  
what’s the catch of your strange instinct?

why not say quietly, plainly:

why your path is such a Russian?

both in English gardens and in Australian bush,  
in the jungles of Kongo and Brazilian rainforest

a man never lugs in a propiska,

even if a man has a cruel hang-over  
  
well what, whatever gave you the idea that the path is Russian?

can it be true that’s why it’s covered with

your Russian shit and trash packs,

and massy plastic cups, and bottom of the bottle!  
  
I was sadly silent, no, you don’t understand,

silly foreigner, - that’s Russian forest,

because you trudge wistfully under the sun,

but I have skewed to the path, the path to heavens

I have skewed – and disappeared with a soft liquid song,

but you’ll go and seek for me, if you’re so silly –

there is unimaginable joy on my path,

but this pretty path leads down straight to hell  
  
black forest went silent, like lovers keep silent, -

being tired thyself, they keep silent like that –

black colonels keep watch over its gateway

our Russians, too, please, excuse me

\* \* \*

Once one of my friends

he was mulatto and is mulatto

in an evening talk between old soldiers

shared a story with me

Mulatto Aleksei had come home

but in the morning, he woke up some otherwhere

he went to metro to get to work thinking my god,

thinking what had been yesterday, I wonder

lighting up a cigarette he suddenly picked up a flashback  
lighting fixture and a stick for Russian hockey nearby

a short vision for a couple of seconds

probably a hallucination, he thought, running cold  
  
it became cold, he decided to go home by the way

to slip another Negro T-shirt on.

he came home, but they met him as a stranger

there were shatters all over the floor in the family room

a hole was pierced in balcony door glass

Khokhloma table was cut dead center,

sister reached the talking stage in a week,

but mother did it only in three weeks and told the following:  
  
you got home early, but you were aroused at night

(cubbyhole on the second floor, in Khrushchyovka)

by your friend Fascist, you had been drinking with him nightlong

and came back shit faced with reveille  
  
why are you drinking with him, he’s a fascist plant

but you’re sitting with him on a bench like a brah

afterwards you hung around the flat, I asked you

to go to your room, because a plumber was on his way  
  
you went to your room, suddenly run out quick as thought

in order that the stick was in your hand at ease

I don't give a shit! I’m Fucked-up! you shouted – and to the lighting fixture!

you knocked it down with a blow, like a fiend!  
  
you pierced the balcony glass with the stick

and suddenly you met the Khokhloma table!

you cut it furiously, evily,

and here he was – the plumber gave a knock

you hoped to him and said with a smile

Hi, plumber! I’m Fucked-up!

and the plumber disappeared, as if he never was here,

you said ‘well I won’t do any harm to my little sister’

and with the word you stroked with the stick

then we all ran out of the flat,

you were running after us around the yard, shouting – I Was Made of Meat!

I Fuck Without Condom!

Call the cops, I’ll wait here for them cocksuckers!  
  
only then I left and there I awoke among friends,

that’s how mulatto Aleksei dropped the curtain

there were some other people around the table, Aleksei looked

as if he told no lies, someone even saw that all with his own eyes

and as long as it was almost midnight

I asked Arsen to start talking about the deal

he said listen, Andrukha, just keep in mind

it’s not a funny story at all

BLUE ELF, ballad

When I hear a goods train rumble

or a commuter train dib

I recall when in my boyhood days with my friend, juvenile Voldemar

I used to go on walks to the river under the railway brigde, the river called *Ichka*  
  
waste of all kinds sailed down the river

as if Ichka was headed in a soakaway

and all around was a wasteland – Scotch pattern

heathers, willows, rusty old cars

there is no saying it was a beautific place,

if anything – sense of unspecified fear,

it’s not like, you know, we were afraid of elf-knight,

but the devil may play any trick, sure the devil plays with anything  
  
and so we were walking, and I slipped off a clover, as well  
and suddenly juvenile Voldemar, my companion,

tells me – Look north-ward now

there is some dude in a green jacket walking

let’s flock after him now

apparently, he is a good man and he is interesting to talk to!

I say – Voldemar! well we’re laughing now,

but what if that dude would have to have the last laugh on!  
  
first, this dude isn’t walking, but flying above Ichka,

secondly he wears not a green jacket but a black raincoat

it’s better go and look on

commuter trains with you, Voldemar, my boy!

and in any case, that dude is kind of gloomy and ugly man!

but then my friend suddenly rode rusty

and says – You know, people who cast dirt into the well,

do that not because they didn’t like the water  
  
and we rushed to chase that dude,

and I had the clover, later this fact will become important

here we see a clearing in the woods and craps of both sexes

each and all sit on log and drink up dreadfully

that dude sits at the center, pours out

and holds a crystal cup in his hand

suddenly some bomzh, pretending he lifts something,

says – Fuck off here fuck it fuck  
  
I have already been in their thrash for seven years

I had drunk from that crystal cup and now I’m doomed

for seventy-seven years, non-stop

to drink up their elvish alkie!

but Voldemar, because it was only me who had the clover,

didn’t distinguish the infernality of local brothers' circle

didn’t believe in advice of the kind bomzh

stepped into the center of the circle and drunk some wash from elvish cup  
  
and next thing you know, as they say, he became drunk as a skunk!

I ask the bomzh: - Is it possible to extricate my friend?

he replies – Go hide yourself under the shade of forest plantation

and up to a certain time don’t pass the border of our magic circle  
  
take the clover leaflet in your right arm

and at about five AM, when everyone will calm down,

step into the center of the circle and steal away the elvish cup

with which our leader likes to freshen the nip

circuit us, sleepers, nine times around

and then trash that cup right away

yet bring me a box of beer -   
I listened to this speech with some fear

but I had done everything as alcoholic mutant said

brought him bear, took the cup, circuited them all nine times,

everyone was sleeping, only one skin-job homeless woman

babbled half-asleep - Wat you doin here, shit-ass…

then my friend woke from a stupor and we ran home

but by day, when there was nobody present, we got back and searched all bushes

in quest of the cup with elvish potion,

but we only found a bit of touchstone with a hollow, and a small drop of dew inside.