



**HRT - CROATIAN RADIO**

**TOMISLAV ZAJEC**

**LITTLE MOSCOW**

Inspired by A. P. Chekhov's play *Three Sisters*

**PRIX MARULIĆ 2021**

Director: Stephanie Jamnicky  
Sound engineer: Marija Pečnik Kvesić  
Music editor: Adriana Kramarić  
Producer: Hrvoje Ivanković

Actors: Hrvojka Begović, Irena Tereza Prpić, Petra Svrtan, Filip Križan

Length: 59'53''  
Première: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Original Language: Croatian  
Producing organisation: HRT – Croatian Radio

## ABOUT THE PLAY

Maša, Olja, Irina and Andrej are our contemporaries. They each live their own unhappiness and hope for a better life. The family house called Little Moscow is the place that brings them together and reminds them of their shared past. But the true nature of that past and who they really are is revealed each time they meet and try to understand and help each other.

*Little Moscow* by Croatian writer Tomislav Zajec is an inspired paraphrase of Chekhov's play *Three Sisters*, carved into neurotic and dehumanised atmosphere of modern world.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Tomislav Zajec** (Zagreb, 1972) is employed as an assistant professor at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb. He published four books of poetry: *Natanijel's Diary* (1996), *North-Golden Shot* (1996), *The Hole of His Name* (2000) and *Catholic Guilt* (2016); four novels: *The Breaking Room* (1998), *Entrance to the Black Box* (2001), *Cannibals* (2005) and *Luna Park* (2009), and two collections of plays: *Departures* (2013) and *Little Moscow/That Which is Missing* (2019).

He is an author of eleven original drama plays, *John Smith, Princess of Wales* (1998), *Assassins* (1999), *Pigs* (2001), *New Nosferatu* (2002), *Milk* (2003/2004), *Dorothy Gale* (2007), *Astronauts* (2008), *Saved* (2009), *Someone Should Walk the Dog* (2012), *That Which is Missing* (2014) and *Little Moscow* (2018). His plays have been performed in Zagreb, Varazdin, Dubrovnik, Split, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Novi Sad, Buenos Aires, Lyon, Grenoble and Glasgow, among the others.

He is a winner of a Grand Prix on 29<sup>th</sup> Journées de Lyon des Auteurs de Theatre in Lyon, France for 2018, for his play *Someone Should Walk the Dog*.

He is the five-time winner of the *Marin Drzic Award*, the greatest national award for a new play sponsored by the Croatian Ministry of Culture, and two - time winner of the *Marul Award* for playwriting and dramaturgy, at the National Festival of Drama and Theatre in Split. In addition, he received several other awards and acknowledgements for his literary and dramaturgical work.

His work is included in several Croatian literature reviews and anthologies, and his plays have been translated into English, French, Hungarian, Polish, Slovenian, German, Spanish and Russian. During the past decade he has held numerous screenwriting and drama workshops, and he is the author of drama writing manuals *Game Rules: From the First Idea to the First Play* (2012), the first book of the kind written in Croatian language.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

**Stephanie Jamnicky**, born in Cleveland, USA. Has been living in Zagreb, Croatia since the age of three.

Completed schooling and the Academy of Drama Arts (specialization in Theater Directing and Radiophonics) in Zagreb.

Since 2003, has been employed as a Director in Croatian Radio's Drama Program.

Has directed more than one hundred radio-dramas. In addition, has directed short forms and poetry written for children and adapted for radio.

Won Grand Prix Marulic and Grand Prix Nova (co-author with Zoran Sajko) for short form "Glagoljon".

*Money rustling in a money box.*

**ANDREJ:** City. Starting with M. Six letters.

**OLGA:** What are you doing?

**ANDREJ:** K--killing time, while we are waiting... In Russia.

**OLGA:** Come on, Andrej, don't rustle the box.

**ANDREJ:** Why?

**OLGA:** It bothers me.

*Andrej continues rustling.*

**ANDREJ:** You know, there are some t--things that a man can never admit to himself.

Not that he does not want, he can't. As long as he l--lives.

**OLGA:** What things you can't admit to yourself?

**ANDREJ:** I was talking about people in g--general. Not about me.

**OLGA:** In general.

**ANDREJ:** This is where you also always draw a line. G--general before personal.

*Olga suddenly throws herself towards Andrej and snatches the box.*

**OLGA:** Give me that... (*calm again*) Thanks.

**ANDREJ:** And if she does not come after all?

**OLGA:** Do you know any reason why Irina might not come? ... Andrej... Andrej...

**ANDREJ:** (*calmly*) You are insane. Olga, when do you think o--others will figure that out too?

*Music.*

*Little Moscow.*

**OLGA:** I didn't know that. At that moment I had no questions. I don't know, I always start from the beginning. Of day, week, year. School year. But, I met him completely by chance.

That morning, I explained the word formation by prefixation to third class pupils, and then I noticed him standing in the middle of the path leading to the old factory. Dead young fox was below his feet. He stood proud, as if he sentenced it himself. I wanted to ask him, did you kill the fox? Instead, he told me that the fox was a messenger, a spirit of rain. And that it actually takes care of people, when they stop caring of each other. He seemed like he could take me by hand and lead me somewhere, anywhere, far away. But not nice, only dark and forever. If I only remembered that messenger, the sprit of rain, fox, the week after that. When he kissed me for the first time.

*Little Moscow. Olga enters the house. Sound of a door.*

**OLGA:** Who is there? Someone is... Who is in the house, is it you? (*A moment.*) I heard you, I know you are there. I'm not in the mood for this game, listen, we have to talk...

**ANDREJ:** Booo!

**OLGA:** Moron!

*Olga starts kicking Andrej, he is laughing.*

**OLGA:** Moron, moron, moron –

**ANDREJ:** It wasn't me... m--mice –

**OLGA:** Fucking moron!

**ANDREJ:** Really... ouch... I haven't moved, it was them you've heard...

**OLGA:** Off with you. And there are no mice here!

**ANDREJ:** There are no m--mice in Little Moscow!

**OLGA:** And there were never any.

**ANDREJ:** And there were never any.

**OLGA:** Moron!

**ANDREJ:** Moron!

**OLGA:** You might have let me know that you were coming.

**ANDREJ:** I didn't, on purpose, because y--you must have just everything under control.

**OLGA:** Very mature of you.

**ANDREJ:** You really thought I would not come?

**OLGA:** You never sent a word. For days, Andrej. What should I think? I called you...

**ANDREJ:** What? I did not notice, I was busy.

**OLGA:** Andrej...

**ANDREJ:** Olga... if you would only ease up a little, things become...

**OLGA:** If this is some kind of lajfkoučanje (life couching)<sup>1</sup>, you can immediately...

**ANDREJ:** Did Irina teach you that?

**OLGA:** Yes, because I... Let me look at you properly. Jesus. (*kisses him*) You're still not sleeping.

**ANDREJ:** I am.

**OLGA:** I would not bet on it...

**ANDREJ:** I am sleeping, eating, fucking.

**OLGA:** Andrej!

**ANDREJ:** S--sorry. Sorry, really. I thought you would be pleased.

**OLGA:** Of course.... of course I am pleased. Moron. And...what was this work you had?

**ANDREJ:** And t--this is still the same conversation or...

**OLGA:** Well you started it, and I am just... asking, come on.

**ANDREJ:** Why? You know that it's up to m--me. It's always up to me. I do not create opportunities, open doors...

**OLGA:** And, I beg your pardon, what's wrong with that?

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<sup>1</sup> English expressions were kept as pronounced with the original in brackets.

**ANDREJ:** This is all fiction, Olga. There are salaries that do not exist, jobs that do not exist, o--opportunities that do not exist. T--they tell me all the time that I need to be patient, any time now, but this is not only my... there is a w--wider picture.

**OLGA:** Wait Andrej, are you still assistant lecturer of Theory of Literature?

**ANDREJ:** Yes, I--I am still assisting. And besides, I am translating a m--manual.

**OLGA:** Into which language?

**ANDREJ:** We know too m--many, I have no idea yet.

**OLGA:** And why didn't you tell me that straightaway?

**ANDREJ:** I live on the edge, sister.

*Music.*

*Little Moscow.*

**ANDREJ:** (*off*) Little Moscow is f--falling apart, don't you think? As if it has outgrown us, it is beyond repair, something should really...

**OLGA:** Are you done already?

**ANDREJ:** (*off*) You have something dripping here.

**OLGA:** I beg your pardon?

**ANDREJ:** (*off*) You have something d--dripping here.

**OLGA:** I have. Great.

**ANDREJ:** (*off*) Is Maša coming?

**OLGA:** Yes, she deigned to call, yes. She didn't call you? Do your hear me? Perhaps I should not have allowed her to leave.

*Andrej enters.*

**ANDREJ:** Who, Irina?

**OLGA:** Yes, Irina... To be clear, I found Irina here, on the carpet. And for one moment I thought that she was... I, not you. I thought that.

**ANDREJ:** I know that.

**OLGA:** And after all she went miles away...

**ANDREJ:** I guess she just wanted to get a—away, didn't she?

**OLGA:** And this should make me feel better.

**ANDREJ:** You can't reduce everything to "yes or no" woman. There is a vast grey area that you never take into account, and it responds to "m--maybe".

**OLGA:** Yes, yes, because it is vast and grey, you said it yourself.

**ANDREJ:** I just mean, when she comes, don't b--b...

**OLGA:** Wait, wait Andrej... you know something I don't. Andrej... do you know something I don't?

**ANDREJ:** No. What would I know?

**OLGA:** Or perhaps you think that was some kind of joke. Who cuts her wrists as a joke?

**ANDREJ:** S--she always smiles on Instagram.

**OLGA:** And your *maybe* is based on that? On photographs where she smiles?

**ANDREJ:** You can't measure everything to your scale.

**OLGA:** But it's the only one I have.

*Sound of shattered glass.*

*Music.*

*Sound of a flying airplane.*

**MAŠA:** Who are we? We are but useless collectors of superfluous things, and knowledge is most certainly one of them. To the extent that under my skin a long and tiring curriculum flows, turbid and impassable river of knowledge. And I am sitting beside him in the airplane flying from Vienna to Zagreb. I am watching him, he is a handsome man. His accent tells me



he's Ukrainian or Russian. Fuck. Of all the languages daddy poured into us, I don't speak Russian. So I'll try with the common language of all beings, things and phenomena: Did you know that the Latin word *curriculum*, which means race or course, is etymologically related to Latin word *cursus* that we can also translate in a similar way?<sup>2</sup> And all this actually boils down to a Calvinistic need for a higher order in acquiring knowledge, which our father by some genetic modification somehow relinked till this century, and infected with it me, my two sisters and my brother. In any case, this is the optimal way to reach a goal. And that Russian is laughing, he thinks I'm funny, whenever I try to be likeable I fall into this external-neurotic mode which attracts either appeal or sympathy, as required. Finally, that's how I met my husband. My husband teaches at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University in Vienna, but he is frantically afraid of flying, and at the same time he does not understand that in an airplane one is closer to God than ever. So he does not travel with me, so I travel alone everywhere. And because of that, this Russian has just introduced himself to me; he says his name is Aleksandr Vershynin. Like a name from literature. And then he asks me where I am going. And I, full of superfluous knowledge, smile and say: I'm going to visit my brother.

*Music.*

*Maša and Andrej in his flat. Smoking pot.*

**ANDREJ:** So... w--who is he?

**MAŠA:** Who? What's wrong with you? Are you normal, fool? Who would he be, nobody. I'm a married woman.

**ANDREJ:** That's why I want to know.

*They are laughing.*

**ANDREJ:** Slut.

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<sup>2</sup> This sentence is in English in the original text.

**MAŠA:** (*laughing*) Prick, we had a drink together, what do you want? -- (*Smoking.*) He is a brigadier.

**ANDREJ:** Is this s--something like s general?

**MAŠA:** Search me, I guess so. He works in the office of the military envoy here, in Croatia..., and he was everywhere, I don't know, in the Balkans, first in the Russian humanitarian mission in north Kosovo, they refurbished some schools, I don't know and so... Jesus, you really are the biggest gossip of us all!

**ANDREJ:** Maša has fallen in love!

**MAŠA:** Fatally, on the airplane... He speaks some Croatian, not very well...

**ANDREJ:** (*laughing*) Moy dro-goy Maša...

**MAŠA:** ... but enough to tell me that we cannot know what we are going to laugh about tomorrow... because I was laughing all the time, like I wasn't thinking straight. He said that the future was coming, to all of us, the future was coming in big strides and one should prepare for the possibility that it will be good and pretty...

**ANDREJ:** Jesus C--Christ...

**MAŠA:** I know! I am totally abnormal, Andrej.

**ANDREJ:** Yes, you are.

**MAŠA:** Thick as can be. Dad was a soldier, bewitched with Russia, and look what I'm doing now.

*They are laughing.*

**MAŠA:** And how are you? Let me look at you.

**ANDREJ:** Hey, easy, like I'm under a m--microscope.

**MAŠA:** Sisterscope. Because you are the prettiest of us all. (*they are laughing*) How much? How much, ha?

**ANDREJ:** What?

**MAŠA:** Money. How much do you need this time?

**ANDREJ:** You have no idea, Maša.

**MAŠA:** No. And actually, I don't want to know. Any news about the faculty?

**ANDREJ:** That a--assistant position of mine...

**MAŠA:** Yes. What about it?

**ANDREJ:** T--they gave me notice this semester. They don't need outsourcers, I don't know. Some re-organisation, other people, better, cleverer, that's how it goes, I guess.

**MAŠA:** You know what. This is small loss for you and great for the lunatics at the comparative literature department.

*They are laughing.*

**MAŠA:** You told Olga?

**ANDREJ:** No. Not yet.

**MAŠA:** And the money you need. It has nothing to do with this?

**ANDREJ:** No, no... This is something e--else.

*Sound of Andrej's mobile.*

**MAŠA:** It is... answer it.

**ANDREJ:** I want to stare at you now.

**MAŠA:** *(through laughter)* Half-wit. Are you sleeping better?

**ANDREJ:** Yes, yes. Hundred times better. W--white noise puts me to sleep. An a--application.

**MAŠA:** I'll be off now.

**ANDREJ:** Maša... thank you.

**MAŠA:** Olga phoned....

**ANDREJ:** Don't tell Olga. You know what she is like.

**MAŠA:** It's a lot of money, Andrej.

**ANDREJ:** Just to g--give them back, this is the last one.

**MAŠA:** And I believe you?

**ANDREJ:** Please.

**MAŠA:** Then, in spring, in half a year, at home?

**ANDREJ:** In half a year at home. And where will the l--lady go now... shall I guess?

**MAŠA:** Don't you dare...

*They are laughing.*

*Music.*

*Maša exits. Andrej makes a call on his mobile.*

**ANDREJ:** (*into phone*) Hey, here I am... she just l--left... I sorted it, don't worry. I'm t--taking it to them tomorrow... yes, and I shall never more... I promise... scout's h--honour... sorry, I know it's not funny... at all... sorry ... I'm stupid... I know, I know, I know... but I love you a lot...

*Music.*

*Maša, in front of the Little Moscow door.*

**MAŠA:** So here I am then. Here. Five months later. At home. At Little Moscow. I am dragging myself in this heat and humidity with a suitcase and flowers. It's Irina's twentieth birthday and I am probably not entirely normal. I'm all sweaty and pissed-off. And before I enter, I just want to find something to hold on to. And then I spot the broken window and suddenly I feel better. Something is wobbling, missing, crashing down and going to ruin in this part of the world too. Only what I am going to say. I made a mess and now here are the consequences. Or. Or something equally stupid. This morning I made a scene when he told me that he was definitely going back to his big Russia. To his wife and kids. Because in the narrative that makes his life easy, I am with him only because of the money he lent me. Which I didn't even return. A whore and a

thief. Ouch. And it is afternoon now and I am standing in front of Little Moscow and suddenly I feel better. Really. Because of this glass I can breathe more easily, so finally I enter.

*Maša enters.*

**MAŠA:** Zdravstvujte.

**OLGA:** There she is, well woman, where are you...

**MAŠA:** So when did they cancel the fucking service?

**OLGA:** There, there, there, you are all wet...

**MAŠA:** Well I've been walking in the hot sun for the last hour, like a mad cow.

**OLGA:** There has been no bus since winter. Too few people remained to make it worth while. We shall put those into water.

**MAŠA:** For Irina. It wilted, of course.

**OLGA:** It did not, it's nice...

**MAŠA:** OK, OK, easy...

**ANDREJ:** T--there was no bus when we were kids either, do you remember? A nice walk there and back, several times a day. I would always r--read on the way. So, once I fell down, ripped my knees, there was blood on my trousers.

**MAŠA:** It's hot here, Jesus! And I need some booze quickly, right now.

**OLGA:** I've made compote.

**MAŠA:** Compote. My dear.

**OLGA:** What is it?

**MAŠA:** Nothing, everything is great, I just fucked up my entire life, so I'm a bit so-so.

**OLGA:** Come on, unpack, and you'll soon be...

**MAŠA:** Wait, there's some blood, here on your sleeve.

**OLGA:** I don't know, I don't think it is...

**MAŠA:** And why do you always wear this? I think you had the same thing last time. The same clothes, with this same pony-tail, is this like your uniform, a costume?

**OLGA:** All right Maša, come on.

**MAŠA:** *(after her)* And what happened here, why is the window broken? This house is...  
*(Then louder, so she can hear her.)* This house is falling apart.

**OLGA:** *(from outside)* Go on, like I haven't heard enough about it.

**ANDREJ:** You see, Maša is telling it too.

**MAŠA:** *(to Olga)* I do not mean it like that, like he does.

**ANDREJ:** *(to Maša)* And h--how does he mean it?

**MAŠA:** Cut the crap Andrej! No sign from you, at all. I haven't seen you or heard from you for three months. Do you know how much money that is, man? I am now in deep shit because of you. Not to say that I was worried that something might have...

**ANDREJ:** Worried?

**MAŠA:** Really, what's wrong with you?

*Olga returns. Clinking of glasses.*

**OLGA:** There it is, drink we said. Cherry brandy, home-made.

**MAŠA:** That's just what I had in mind.

**ANDREJ:** Y--you know that Olga has an invisible shield for sarcasm.

**MAŠA:** Fuck off, Andrej. Come on, pour...

**ANDREJ:** I'll have some too.

**OLGA:** Cheers!

*Clinking of glasses They are drinking.*

**OLGA:** There used to be many people here for birthdays, once, before. Do you remember? Dad would drag them in like to a train station, those people, we barely knew anyone. We were little, but still.

**MAŠA:** And now, a man and a half.

**OLGA:** I did not say it because of that. And this is just...

**ANDREJ:** And who is short of a half?

**MAŠA:** The one who asks, Andrej. Will you stop finally?

**OLGA:** Egon Shiele was born in a train station, in Tulln an der Donau.

**MAŠA:** Screw you Olga!... There now... I'm sorry Olga... I'm going to the loo...

**MAŠA:** You still have glass on the floor. Look, here.

*Sound of dialling on the mobile.*

**ANDREJ:** *(into the phone)* Hey... d--don't pick up, I know you are driving. I haven't told them yet, just that. I shall. I need just a --little...

*Andrej hangs up. And then, a door bell.*

**OLGA:** Is that Irina?

**ANDREJ:** No.

**OLGA:** Who else?

**ANDREJ:** A child wants you, a boy, I think he's your p--pupil.

*Music.*

*Olga in Little Moscow.*

**OLGA:** I brought him home, here, to Little Moscow. Some boys beat him up on the playground, for no reason. Like boys usually do, among themselves. And I... I really don't know what came over me. Instead of thinking about solitude, warm bed and books, I brought him home.

**MAŠA:** *(from outside, to Olga)* This house is falling apart.

**OLGA:** *(shouting to Maša)* Go on, like I didn't hear enough about that already.

**ANDREJ:** *(from outside)* You see, Maša is telling you too.

**OLGA:** (*continues her monologue*) He had blood on his face, and hair, and hands. I helped him undress. Little Moscow, what kind of name is that for a house, he asked me. How can one explain it? Our father brought his obsession with Russia as a lifelong present from one of his journeys.

**MAŠA:** (*from outside*) Not to say how worried I was that something might...

**ANDREJ:** (*from outside*) Worried?

**OLGA:** (*continues her monologue*) Worried, yes. I was always worried that I would become useless. Some of his blood remained here on this sleeve. That's why I took of the shirt I guess.

*Maša and Andrej continue.*

**ANDREJ:** (*from outside*) I thought you were on my s--side.

**MAŠA:** (*from outside*) On your side... what is this shit?

**OLGA:** (*continues her monologue*) And he stood naked in front of me and said: if this is a forest I am watching over you. I thought how angry I was at him because he did not read *Pleasant Conversation of Slavic People*<sup>3</sup>. And then I took off everything else.

*Music.*

*Andrej is playing with a small money box like at the beginning.*

**ANDREJ:** City starting with M. Six letters.

**MAŠA:** What are you doing?

**ANDREJ:** K--killing time, while we are waiting.

**OLGA:** Andrej -

*Andrej slowly puts the money box down.*

**MAŠA:** How does a person know they will survive what happened to them?

**OLGA:** By waking up the next day.

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<sup>3</sup> Required school reading, Croatian title: *Razgovor ugodni naroda slovinskoga*.



**ANDREJ:** In Russia.

*Music.*

**MAŠA:** Who was at the door?

**OLGA:** No one.

**ANDREJ:** Six letters. Starting with M.

*Music.*

*Olga, Maša, Andrej and Irina.*

**OLGA, MAŠA, IRINA AND ANDREJ:** (*singing*) Zum Geburtstag viel Glück... Zum Geburtstag viel Glück... Zum Geburtstag liebe Irina... Zum Geburtstag viel Glück...

*Clapping. Shouting. Being merry.*

**IRINA:** My hands are dry! Here, look, *for-ril* (for real)... dry, dry... feel... here, look... I don't know, there are some craters, some fields, some horror. Children do not have dry hands, Olga. You all think I am... but this is *krejzi-šit* (crazy shit), children do not have dry hands, hydro lipid layer of their skin is preserved and moist and all that, and mine is not, I have dry hands!

**ANDREJ:** Take it!

**IRINA:** What is this?

**ANDREJ:** A cream. Irina. It is a h--hand cream.

**IRINA:** Glycerine.

**OLGA:** Andrej, do you use hand cream?

**MAŠA:** Yes, I think this is our key problem at the moment.

**IRINA:** And do you know that I am always dreaming, really, really... this little girl, and each time she asks me for...

**OLGA:** (*unsuccessfully trying to interrupt her*) Irina...

**IRINA:** ... I don't know, some justice for the things that were done to her, but I cannot remember who harmed her, so how could I help her at all.

**ANDREJ:** Irina... come here! Let me hug you.

**IRINA:** No, no, no, no... leave me alone! Why are you looking at me like this? You too Olga? *(to Andrej)* Don't believe anything I've told you. *(to Maša)* One really cannot confide in him.

**OLGA:** What about?

**IRINA:** Who broke all the *faking* (fucking) windows? On Little Moscow?

**MAŠA:** Have you taken something?

**IRINA:** I don't trust anyone about anything. Not myself, nor anyone, let them talk, don't worry Olga.

**OLGA:** Andrej, go get some water.

**IRINA:** No! No! It's my birthday! Andrej gave me a bracelet, and last year he gave me a spinning top.

*Irina plays the music. She begins to jump.*

**IRINA:** *Lec-dens* (Let's dance)! All this other stuff, I'm not interested! *Lec-dens* (Let's dance)! I am so happy, I am not interested in events, I have been happy since then, because of that, do you understand?

**MAŠA:** What events?

**IRINA:** Broken windows are events. You are sad, Andrej was beaten up, these are events.

**ANDREJ:** Irina...

**IRINA:** *(to Olga)* Did you see that, your brother has a bruise?

**OLGA:** Yes.

**ANDREJ:** *(to Olga)* And w--why didn't you...

**OLGA:** Go and get that water already, you hear?

*Music stops*

*Andrej exits.*

**IRINA:** There! Another one! (*to Maša*) This is between them. I am not interested in *faking* (fucking) events! Quanto sono felice – come una colomba nel cielo! (I am so happy – like a dove in the sky!)

**OLGA:** That's enough Irina.

**IRINA:** And God, like that dove, talked to me on the road to Little Moscow. And he told me, Irina! You are finally returning home, be the bearer of joy to your sisters and your brother. And he also told me, in the book that I wrote and which is called the Bible *friking* (freaking) doves are the gifts of the Holy Spirit and that is the only reason why they release them at the Olympics and at all those stadiums as a symbol of peace. But, Irina! He tells me more. The stadiums are too high, and the doves have been in cages all day, so once they fly they have no strength, their wings are too weak. And they die half way to freedom, like kamikaze they fly into concrete, suddenly and rapidly, because they decided so.

**ANDREJ:** (*entering*) Here is the water... And now I haven't heard who died.

**OLGA:** Come on Irina, sit down a bit.

**IRINA:** No.

**OLGA:** Irina, just for a bit, to have a drink of water...

**IRINA:** (*howls*) No, don't you hear me! Leave me in *faking* (fucking) peace!

*Irina exits.*

**MAŠA:** All right, dear Jesus, what the fuck did she take?

**OLGA:** She's been fumbling since she came, is this trip?

**ANDREJ:** You're asking me?

**OLGA:** And why are you staring at your mobile constantly?

**ANDREJ:** I did not give her t--trip.

**MAŠA:** I didn't think that you gave her trip.

**OLGA:** So it is trip then.

**IRINA:** *(outside the room, interrupts them)* Andrej!

**ANDREJ:** T--tell me Irina.

**IRINA:** *(outside the room)* No. Not me. You! *(Irina returns.)* You tell us something *paka* (pukka), that only a university professor would say. Some wisdom of yours from books. One, two, go!

**OLGA:** Come on Irina, drink some water.

**IRINA:** You're like a water advertisement, *krejžišit* (crazy shit)!

*Andrej starts laughing.*

**OLGA:** Maša... help me...

**IRINA:** Let's take a photo now, how pretty it is, the leg bracelet, we did not take a photo for a very long time, let's go, photo, I do not remember the last time we were together...

*Protests from everywhere, but Irina got her strength back, she does not listen to them, but starts arranging them.*

**IRINA:** Here, here... so... move a bit, Andrej... I can't see you Maša, Olga you are so *aptajt* (uptight), pretend you are drinking water... Maša... to the right, more right...

**IRINA:** *Hešteg: hepines* (Hashtag: happiness). *Hešteg:majgrlsabetrdenjors* (Hashtag: mygirlsarebetterthanyours). *Hešteg: brzdejfan* (Hashtag: birthdayfan). Ready?

**OLGA, MAŠA AND ANDREJ:** Ready!

**IRINA:** Little Moscow.

**EVERYBODY:** Little Moscow.

**IRINA:** There!

*Irina takes a photo, then collapses with a quiet sob. Music.*

**MAŠA:** Irina...

**OLGA:** Jesus Christ, she fainted...

**ANDREJ:** Wait, wait, wait, so...

**OLGA:** Irina... can you hear me, what have you taken...

**MAŠA:** I'm calling an ambulance.

**ANDREJ:** Easy, easy...

**IRINA:** Dove, the only one that flew out of the stadium walls and saw the sky for a moment, that dove came down and moved into me, and now it dwells in me like a small token of someone's love.

**MAŠA:** Irina...

**IRINA:** Come, give me your hand... here... on the belly... do you feel?

**MAŠA:** Something has moved.

**IRINA:** That is it, inside me, it moved its wings.

*Music.*

*Little Moscow. Exactly one year earlier. Irina is lying in bed.*

**IRINA:** What do you think, why did he give me this spinning top?

**OLGA:** Aren't you sleeping?

**IRINA:** I'm sleeping, what do you think?

**OLGA:** I don't know Irina.

**IRINA:** He sent it by post. And when I phoned him, he said: that is a sphere, like Earth. Then I told him: the Earth is an ellipsoid. Then it's an ellipsoid, like Earth. Then I told him: but an irregular ellipsoid. So, actually a geoid.

**OLGA:** (*absent-mindedly*) Poor Andrej.

**IRINA:** And he made it himself, do you know? Utterly wrong, but totally romantically understood shape of the Earth, with so many open possibilities.

**OLGA:** Why did you do it?

**IRINA:** I don't know. I just felt like it.

**OLGA:** You felt like it.

**IRINA:** Yes.

**OLGA:** You don't just feel like doing things like that, you understand, you simply don't...

**IRINA:** I felt like it.

**OLGA:** What kind of answer is that?

**IRINA:** I have become evil.

**OLGA:** And why are you evil?

**IRINA:** I don't know. I don't remember mum's love.

**OLGA:** Irina, the fact that you don't remember it, does not mean that you did not feel it. That it did not exist.

**IRINA:** And now when dad is gone too, suddenly there is less of everything.

**OLGA:** Less of what?

**IRINA:** Why do we call this house Little Moscow?

**OLGA:** Because we are his children.

**IRINA:** And he?

**OLGA:** You know that story.

**IRINA:** But how can you love a city, without having someone in it that you love as much. Or even more than that.

**OLGA:** We don't know that.

**IRINA:** We do, Olga, we are not stupid. He dragged us all over the world but that was the only place we did not visit. What do you think why? He stuffed us with languages, and the only thing I know in Russian is *Ya trakhayu tvoyu korovu...*

**OLGA:** What does that mean?

**IRINA:** Fuck your cow... If only we were stupid... You know that Andrej spends his days in a betting shop? He even has some *kreking* (cracking) gang, there. And then he borrows from strange people. He says he cannot stop, like all of this is not part of him... *Mejk-sens* (Makes sense)?

*Pause.*

**IRINA:** He will sell the house, it's in his name, right?... I see things from the future, I told you...

**OLGA:** Stop! Cut the crap! Do you hear me Irina? Listen to me carefully. Promise me this minute that this was the last time. Did you hear me? Did you hear me? You could have bled out, you stupid cow, you could have... well why, tell me why... I don't understand... cut your own veins... I could never do it...

**IRINA:** Not everything happens because of you.

*Olga slaps her vigorously. A moment. Irina does not even blink.*

**IRINA:** I have a birthday next year. A round one. Twentieth.

**OLGA:** Yes, you do.

**IRINA:** And I shall leave here. To Italy. And I shall meet a wonderful boy there. And his name will be Massimo.

**OLGA:** You really don't need to go all the way to Rome for that.

**IRINA:** And then I shall fall in love. Don't worry.

*Music.*

*Andrej. Somewhere in front of Little Moscow. Perhaps in the garden. He talks into his mobile.*

**ANDREJ:** ...I don't know... I d--didn't because... I'm saying I d--didn't... it was a birthday and Irina came stoned, completely... really, and Maša watches me like she would... I know, I know but O--Olga will...oh for fuck's sake... no, no way... she will not understand... b--

because everything is fucked up and there is nothing... no, I am not p--pathetic!... I wish you were here... no, it's different, this way I am completely alone and unhappy! T--that is the difference.

*Little Moscow. In front of the house. Cicadas chirping.*

**MAŠA:** And where were you?

**ANDREJ:** A--around. When I come here, I just s--stare into the blowing wind, the grass growing, how many c--clouds are in the sky, like the sky will fall on my head.

**MAŠA:** You are preparing me for something. And I don't like it.

**ANDREJ:** Was it b--bad?

*Maša is quiet.*

**ANDREJ:** Well that, Vershynin... I mean, with that Russian of yours, in the end.

**MAŠA:** Perhaps... I don't feel like talking about it. With you.

**ANDREJ:** Fair enough. He l--lent you the money, for me?

**MAŠA:** Andrej... Listen, is his name from literature? I googled it, but found nothing.

**ANDREJ:** Fuck, I don't know. I'll have a look.

**MAŠA:** All your education, for nothing.

**ANDREJ:** Yes. (*A moment*) Do you know that she has not been going to w--work for some time?

**MAŠA:** Who?

**ANDREJ:** Olga of course... Electronic registers reached this part of the world, imagine that. P--professoress Olga is networked, linked, online. And on s--sick leave for a very long time.

**MAŠA:** How long?

**ANDREJ:** One month.

**MAŠA:** Give me that joint...



**ANDREJ:** And exactly one month before the i--invasion of Poland, Hermann Goering negotiated about peace with a team of English industrialists. Did you know that? On a f--farm of some Swedish businessman, in north Germany.

**MAŠA:** I see. And these are our peace negotiations, before invasion? Nice introduction, well done.

**ANDREJ:** I am proud of myself too.

**MAŠA:** And how did it end, this attempt of his?

*Andrej laughs.*

**MAŠA:** And the shit is... how big?

**ANDREJ:** B--big. Maša, big, and I really...

**ANDREJ:** H--here's Olga.... Olga, this world, you understand... the whole world, all of us... are in the m--middle of complete material and moral bankruptcy, in the middle of all possible manifestations of c--corruption, chaos that spills over on all of us like a pile of shit, but in the middle of it all it must surely be fucking difficult to so s--subtly, but continuously control...

**OLGA:** I'm not controlling anybody.

**ANDREJ:** I was not thinking about o--others. Alcohol! I'm now going to get s--some alcohol.

*Andrej goes into the house. Olga and Maša are left alone.*

**OLGA:** So. Night stories about revolution are always told by those who are then so tired in the morning that they are not able crawl out of bed.

**MAŠA:** He was talking about you, and not about...

**OLGA:** He does not know what he is talking about Maša. And you always give in to him.

**MAŠA:** He's my only brother.

**MAŠA:** Olga... are you happy?

**OLGA:** What kind of stupid question is that?

**MAŠA:** All right, stupid, sorry, sorry... Well, how are things at work?

**OLGA:** Ordinary, I don't know, I guess. How else?

**MAŠA:** Yes, you see, it is ordinary...

**OLGA:** It would be even better if the classes were completely empty. Without pupils in them.

**MAŠA:** Oh, you are funny as well, really hilariously funny, and I would like to be of some help, but I am so very stoned. And besides I am a whore. I am an unhappy and stoned whore, Olga!

**OLGA:** Maša...

**MAŠA:** Please tell me...

*Maša continues crying...*

**OLGA:** Right, there... there... When you live, you meet people. You love some, some love you, you leave some, and some leave you. Why make a big deal out of it?

**MAŠA:** And why don't you want to hear about it at all?

**OLGA:** Come on, let's go inside. Enough of that.

**MAŠA:** You know Olga... I brought a few things with me... on purpose. In case you should think that I intend to stay... here, in Little Moscow.

**OLGA:** And do you intend to stay?

**MAŠA:** No. I just don't intend to ever leave.

*Music.*

*Irina. Little Moscow. A year earlier.*

**IRINA:** Future... Future exists! And in the middle of that future, persistent like a stone in a shoe I shall work! I shall be that little light that moves on the façade in the night, neon lights will turn on in big empty offices where I shall vacuum the carpets, dust, water the plants. I shall be a little chamber of the corporate order, filled with good will and everything I have learned so far. And to someone from outside the building will seem the liveliest at night

because of me. There is future, I am certain of it (*music begins*) I am completely certain of it. In a year I shall be twenty, and that is future. But future is not what will come but what we imagine will come. And what is coming, and is inside me, is beautiful. More beautiful than anything else in this world!

*Irina sobs. She cuts her wrists with a knife.*

*Little Moscow. The next morning in the present. Irina is in the kitchen.*

*Clinking of dishes.*

**MAŠA:** Jesus, so much light!... What are you doing?

**IRINA:** Good morning, I'm cooking.

**MAŠA:** (*laughing*) Great, you are cooking.

**IRINA:** Breakfast. For myself, *olrajt* (all right)?

**MAŠA:** Grow up already, will you?

**IRINA:** *Nou-vej* (no way). I am the prophetess of love. My oracle is Little Moscow. This kitchen. And prophetesses never grow up, that is their attraction and their curse.

**MAŠA:** You crazy lunatic. (*A moment. Clinking.*) I'm worried about you.

**IRINA:** There's a boy in the street, looking towards the house.

**MAŠA:** What?

**IRINA:** A boy. Looking towards the house. Perhaps he's a Jehovah's Witness.

**MAŠA:** For Goodness sake let him be, we are Catholics, tell him that.

**IRINA:** There... he's gone now. Olga is very mad? Because of last night.

**MAŠA:** No, she's just...

**IRINA:** (*interrupts her*) Worried, I know she is worried, it is her *present continuous*<sup>4</sup>. And I am just trying to live, I don't know, is that so bad?

**MAŠA:** So how is that going? I don't know, for the time being?

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<sup>4</sup> „Present continuous“ is in English in the original text.

**IRINA:** For the time being? *Ejs* (Ace), if you ask Irina... You have the right things, and on the other side is a mirage, illusion, *mejksens* (makes sense)? That which does not exist. And do you know what I am doing, each evening while I am cleaning offices? Repeating languages. *La donna nell'ufficio numero tre di Via del Montoro ha distrutto il tappeto.* (The woman in the office number three in Via del Montoro street has ruined the carpet.) Just my language! You and Olga and Andrej...

**MAŠA:** What about us?

**IRINA:** Not about you, about me! I need something else, something that is not you, something of mine, do you understand?

**MAŠA:** Everyone needs something that is only hers.

**IRINA:** The best thing in Rome is the sunset. Through umbrella pines, in front the Borghese palace. But I have not yet had time to see it, I have so many...

**MAŠA:** And has someone dragged you away from here? Come on, please...

**IRINA:** No! I wanted this myself because I am not in my right mind I guess, OK Maša?

**MAŠA:** No, Irina. No, Irina. You are... you are just too good and you let other people take advantage of you, that's what I think.

**IRINA:** And what would people otherwise do but take advantage of each other?

**MAŠA:** You are too young to be so cynical.

**IRINA:** And you are too old not to know that this is true.

**MAŠA:** No, but you... you don't tell me anything at all... and then I end up being guilty for things I don't know.

**IRINA:** Where were you when Olga dragged me to the hospital? Why were you not here? I needed you Maša, all of you, why were you not here? But here she is now, when...

**MAŠA:** I came because of you, because it is your birthday Irina!

**IRINA:** Fuck you! You came because you are fucked up and alone, and because you have no clue what to do tomorrow.

**MAŠA:** This has got nothing to do with...

**IRINA:** I am a *faking* (fucking) prophetess, Maša!

**MAŠA:** Then you fucking know that none of this would have happened if we protected you less, if we let you make a mess...

**IRINA:** I am making a mess!

**MAŠA:** I think you are making it under our control.

**IRINA:** And how does one make such a mess?

**MAŠA:** I don't know! I don't know! How could I know? But cutting your wrists... Last night you slit your veins, you nearly bled to death, fuck...

**IRINA:** This is the only thing that has nothing to do with you, this is not your control, Maša!

**MAŠA:** Then whose is it?

**IRINA:** Mine! Only mine! Do you understand?

*Andrej appears at the door.*

**ANDREJ:** Noise, from early morning... I mean, people are still sleeping here.

**MAŠA:** You never sleep.

**ANDREJ:** I meant the others, I was t--translating.

**IRINA:** Andrej! I see things, you know.

**MAŠA:** Irina is a prophetess.

**ANDREJ:** And what do you see?

**IRINA:** You really want me to tell you?

**ANDREJ:** Yes, tell me.

**IRINA:** You will never get a job at the faculty.

**MAŠA:** (*laughing*) And now tell us something we don't know.

**IRINA:** Andrej sold the house. This house. He sold Little Moscow.

*Music.*

*Little Moscow. Olga. She is alone.*

**OLGA:** Once. Long ago. That afternoon I felt for one brief moment what it meant when someone was watching you for you. Because it is you. But, if this is love, then it disappeared before I even understood it. The next day he bragged to his best friend from class. One day later everybody knew. And I stepped out of headmistress's office, entered this house and closed the door behind me. I thought, I shall stay inside forever and slowly lose my memory, little by little. It is always easier to forget the one who cannot remember anything herself. But how could I explain this to someone who is seventeen? I should have thought about it before he shouted that I had betrayed him. And then he threw his first stone into Little Moscow's window.

*Irina and Andrej are on Skype. Irina is in Rome. Three weeks earlier.*

**IRINA:** And now... better?

**ANDREJ:** Put the c--camera down a bit more... I can see you, yes. I can see you. You look pretty on the screen.

**IRINA:** You look pretty on the screen too. *Don't-bulšit-mi* (Don't bullshit me). Fool.

*They are laughing.*

**IRINA:** You look like you need sleep. What are you doing all night long, Andrej?

**ANDREJ:** P--pretending.

**IRINA:** To sleep?... Look, I'll *zaspemat* (spam) you with bad vibes.

**ANDREJ:** I know.

**IRINA:** How do you know?

**ANDREJ:** You announced it.

**IRINA:** You know what I like the most in Rome, but *for-ril* (for real) and completely? Sunset, I know, corny, yes, but not the usual one, the one through umbrella pines, in the Borghese palace park. No, really, *krejzi* (crazy) I know, but... each evening I go up there, there is this belvedere...

**ANDREJ:** Irina...

**IRINA:** If you tell Olga, or Maša, *votevr* (whatever)...

**ANDREJ:** ...horse head in the bed.

**IRINA:** I'm serious Andrej...

**ANDREJ:** Me too, who is h--he?

**IRINA:** Nobody, somebody, perhaps. He works in one of these offices. He is terribly... tidy, he looks after his things, iPad, iMac, he never leaves rubbish behind. He asked me out, a few times. And I said, maybe. *Mejbibejbi* (Maybe baby). He likes laughing and it suits him. And then one evening he stayed at work longer. He had whiskey in one of his tidy drawers, I never opened them. *For-ril* (For real)! We drank, yes. And that is against the rules of the company he works for. And he laughed and laughed, I got drunk, *votevr* (whatever), he wanted me to dance with the vacuum cleaner and I danced. I held the long handle like somebody's cold waist. *Sensualmente*, he said. And I danced as he wanted, *sensualmente*. And then... the others came.

**ANDREJ:** What o--others.

**IRINA:** I don't know... his friends. Two of them. (*A moment.*) Believe me, Andrej, I wanted to tell him: *frende* (friend) you know, *sori* (sorry), this is not my thing, when I am unhappy I am unhappy because of myself and for myself, and not because somebody else would want me to. *Mejksens* (Makes sense)? But I didn't utter a word, not a sound, I could not, I was too... afraid...

**ANDREJ:** Irina...

**IRINA:** He suddenly stopped saying: *quanto sei bella, Irina, sei bellissima, Irina*. Without a word, he undressed me and put me on a table. And you know, till that very moment I thought he could be someone I could love. How crazy it all is...

**ANDREJ:** It is not, no...

**IRINA:** And then he let his friends fuck me first, he waited. Politely, he waited his turn. He waited without a word, like waiting for a bus. But he was still very angry when I started bleeding after some time. He hit me, but I didn't cry. I really didn't.

**ANDREJ:** Irina...

**IRINA:** So, perhaps that is why they gave me fifty euro at the end. They did not look at me while I was trying to put on my clothes, I could not button my shirt, but they waited patiently anyway. So I finally got up and left that office, and I think... I think there was some blood on the carpet. *La donna nell'ufficio numero tre di Via del Montoro ha distrutto il tappeto*  
Andrej?... Don't say anything. Please

*Music.*

*Unusual sounds are coming from a distance.*

**MAŠA:** Why? I think one should talk, even if it seems completely crazy. The fact that only knowledge helps me to stay composed in such situations is my business only.

**IRINA:** Maša...

**MAŠA:** Lexical semantics! I have just invented a new word. Look, we have all paid too much for our education to make jokes about it now. Melancotropy. What do you think?

Misanthropy, melancolic misanthropy, melancotropy. Ha?

**IRINA:** I don't know, to me it sounds like a profession.

**MAŠA:** Look at you, all shrivelled up, like a little bird. It is all right, Irina.

**IRINA:** And where is Olga?

**MAŠA:** She's out somewhere. You know her, she is certainly trying to help...



**IRINA:** She is not helping anyone... They don't want to see her, didn't she tell you?

**MAŠA:** Who, I don't understand...

**IRINA:** Nobody, everybody, *huevr* (whoever). What shall we take with us, if...

**MAŠA:** I don't know, Irina. I really don't know. But the fire will surely not reach as far as the house, all right?

*Andrej enters. He is out of breath.*

**ANDREJ:** Here you are... and outside... don't you see?... everything is burning... people are packing, I can see them leaving... fleeing! And this is good, I guess, perhaps it should be that way... Because, in the end, somewhere, sometime, where there will be nobody and nothing, only we shall remain. Alone. Do you understand? True, it will be some other time and some other place. It will burn from ignited mountains that will throw out glowing hot stones. And we shall then finally be sure that we descend right from there, and because of that we are different. We come from a burning planet which was suddenly extinguished, and that is why we are so different, understand? And finally we shall not owe anyone. We shall not answer to anyone for what we do, where we go, whom we love. Nobody will blame us, and we shall finally be able to stop yearning for something that never... existed... anyway!

*Music.*

**OLGA:** I set the wood on fire.

**MAŠA:** You...

**OLGA:** Yes, I set the wood on fire! I took three bottles of brandy. I soaked some rags, lit them up and threw them into bushes. It lit up in a flash.

**IRINA:** Maša, Olga set the wood on fire.

**MAŠA:** I hear.

**ANDREJ:** Olga, you can n--not... you are... you do not understand... you never l--let me, neither of you let me...

**OLGA:** Andrej! Nobody... shall throw me out... of this house... nobody! Least of all you, this is our house, only ours, we have always belonged here!

**ANDREJ:** And what do you think why did d--daddy have such an urge...

**OLGA:** It's in vain, do you hear?

**ANDREJ:** ... that we should feel at h--home in every corner of the world? What do you think, Irina?

**IRINA:** I don't know, I don't know, really...

**ANDREJ:** Neither do I, neither do I know, Irina. But if we k--knew...

**OLGA:** It will swallow everything, it will swallow the school on the hill!

**MAŠA:** Olga...

**ANDREJ:** ... perhaps we would know why we got s--stuck in this Godforsaken place!

**MAŠA:** (*to Olga*) ... this fire and everything, this is not because you got fired?

**OLGA:** What are you talking about, your brother sold the house!

**IRINA:** Olga is only on sick leave, is she not?

**ANDREJ:** ... it's the finger of God, glowing hot stones, we had to leave anyway...

**OLGA:** You sold Little Moscow because of your debts, idiot!

**ANDREJ:** ...there is nothing here, these were only d--daddy's dreams anyway, about Little Moscow, about all of us...

**OLGA:** Shut up, Andrej!

**IRINA:** Olga, don't...

**MAŠA:** Are you on sick leave, or not?

**OLGA:** Things are rarely so banally binary Maša.

**MAŠA:** But how can that be different, you either...

**OLGA:** Well what do you want from me now? Give me a break! I made a real mess, an incredibly big mess, Maša. I don't know what I am or where I am. Is that you want to hear?

**MAŠA:** Yes, perhaps I do, perhaps I really do, tell me!

**OLGA:** All right, I fell in love. After all these years, foolishly and wrongly and unhappily, what else needs to be said? I didn't learn anything, I became a cannibal, do you understand?

**IRINA:** I don't know anything any more either! I do not know the Italian word for window, or for ceiling any more! Olga, and if I am by any chance pregnant...

**OLGA:** You are not pregnant.

**IRINA:** But if I am... if I loved him, if I loved him equally by chance, I would have that baby.

**ANDREJ:** Please, Olga, please... because it is still not near... the f--fire... we can still... these are just d--daddy's crazy dreams...

**OLGA:** These are my crazy dreams too, these are my dreams too! All right, Andrej?

**ANDREJ:** You are mad.

**OLGA:** Yes I am, as mad as a hatter! And now we shall all have to cope with it somehow.

**MAŠA:** That's right Olga, we shall, all of us! When a man takes happiness peace by peace, he becomes evil, understand? I am going to call him, I am done waiting, now, immediately, at once.

**IRINA:** Maša, Maša is calling him!

**MAŠA:** True, he is a soldier, what's more a Russian soldier... *(Maša is dialling a number.)*  
... and through entire history soldiers were those who used to write. Women waited, waited and waited. Fuck that.

**OLGA:** Maša, you are stupid, the most stupid in our family, that is what you are.

**MAŠA:** It's ringing.

**IRINA:** Tell him that you love him!

**ANDREJ:** Olga... please, I... please...

**MAŠA:** (*into the phone*) Hey man, listen, I left my husband because of you, Doctor *Faking* (Fucking) Zhivago! I left my husband, and you are returning to Moscow?

**ANDREJ:** ... why don't you ever a--ask me, why have you never asked me...

**IRINA:** Tell him, tell him...

**OLGA:** And what should I have asked you?

**MAŠA:** (*into the phone*) Many things are not clear to me either, you moron.

**ANDREJ:** Something, anything, that really has something to do... with m--me.

**MAŠA:** (*into the phone*) In which war you were, or what you want from me, or why I cannot let you go...

**ANDREJ:** How I live, or where I am, or how I am, or whom I am f--fucking.

**OLGA:** (*to Andrej*) Because I fear I shall not like the answer, OK?

**IRINA:** (*to Maša*) No, no, Maša, please...

**OLGA:** (*to Andrej*) Perhaps I cannot take so much truth at once.

**ANDREJ:** Olga...

**OLGA:** Is that so horrible?

**MAŠA:** (*into the phone*) No, you listen to me now. First I got used to cheating my husband, then I got used to stealing the husband from some Russian, then I got used to you accepting that, and then I finally got used to you too. And after all this, you are leaving?

**ANDREJ:** F--forgive me Olga, forgive me...

**MAŠA:** (*into the phone*) To hell with such an outcome!

**IRINA:** What is all this? Maša! Olga! Why is there no love, why is there no love?

*Irina starts screaming.*

**OLGA:** They say that life is a combination of boldness and proportion. This is always my first lesson, at the beginning of school year. I read that somewhere and I guess it made an impression on me.

**IRINA:** Olga, what does that mean?

**OLGA:** Fuck I know.

*Sirens.*

**THREE SISTERS:** (*singing*) Little house on a hill; two windows on it; a fair damsel on the window; like a spring rose. What are you doing fair damsel; on this beautiful night; my darling, my shining star; said that he would come. Three nights have passed already; since I have been waiting; and many more will pass; I remain cheerless. My darling loves another one; he forsook me; but I shall not damn him; because I loved him. <sup>5</sup>

**IRINA:** A boy is standing outside. He is holding a bucket of water.

**MAŠA:** This is also a beginning.

**OLGA:** New life is beginning, almost against our will. If we only knew, if we only knew!

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<sup>5</sup> Traditional Dalmatian song.