

Nimbus the nomad

by Galina Toktalieva

Whenever I go to Main Square with idea to make good photo of a horse, the blinders - leather flaps of bridle to keep horse from seeing anything on both sides - abash me. They say horses need those blinders to drag carriage with tourists forward. They also say about folks who are not able to accept reality: people have their blinders on. However, to move steadily forward, one virtually needs to concentrate at target and ignore anything else around – to put blinders on. Photographers experimenting with image know that any occasional element included in frames suddenly gets quality of wholeness. Frames draw attention to detail retrieved from blurred zone of our perception. Can we really believe our eyes, if consider that eagles, cats or flies see the world differently? Perhaps picture of universe we have in mind reflects before anything else the visual processing capacities of our brain. Selectivity of this perception is responsible for frames, enclosures, boundaries and borders we generate all the time.

As a child, I felt shaken by idea of infinity. Attending normal Soviet school, where divine explanation of creation according to Lenin's aphorism about opium of the masses, was out of question, I together with other saluting soviet pioneers was dropped on mercy of relativity theory and my own imagination. If universe with billions of galaxies had no edges, why space and time of my local reality had? Furthermore, why eternity was not equally eternal in all directions? Our ordinary life consisted of beginnings and endings, squeezed in marked limits, where any event finally terminated and any progress confronted fences, barriers and barbwire walls. Later I concluded that history of humankind was history of erecting or expanding borders, and became less confused by frame making in different forms I witnessed, including frame making of my own mind.

If to make trip from Vienna, which stands now for place of my residence, to Talas in Kyrgyzstan, where I was born, moving in train through territories of Europe, Russia and Central Asia, one may endure episodes of passport inspections many times. Nevertheless, sky would be everywhere the sky, and water would be everywhere the water, as well as basic traits of people and their feelings - in spite of different languages used - would be in core the same. When travelling by air and lined up in airports by passport-control booths in slowly progressing queue, I would feel suddenly easy and playful under enigmatic gaze of person in uniform, who, it seemed, tried to uncover on the spot traveller's trespassing faults. I knew that real invisible me was something like cumulus or jinn out of bottle – spirit passing through any barriers, wind-driven, impossible to cage, to fix or pinpoint at what side of border it is. When in the plane, I peered out of window at earth below – at first divided in two or three, then in more segments as Lilliputians land or patched blanket, but the higher airplane rose, the less segmented picture I saw, and eventually all divisions faded away. When travelling by car and still keeping in mind how it was when the Wall between East and West Germany existed, I savoured easiness of crossing EU borders. Whatever symbols one had – be it dragons, mutant two-headed eagles or hammer and sickle - printed on piece of carton and kept in breast pocket as passport; one simply moved on and on. Miraculous expansion of human mind and its manifestation! Globalization goes forward, and one day there will be no more illegal travellers crossing distances in coal containers and meat refrigerators to reach the

Promised Land. If different sort of borders are still here today mostly for group identifications, why not try thinking beyond them?

The weather was hot and chilly at the same time. Cloudy sky radiated heat and hung low overhead. Plot of park ground where I was sitting exposed nothing to the view except wisps of yellow grass, dog's excrements and garbage containers. I was in that remote Vienna district, where one hears no German, but other guttural, loudly spoken languages with puzzling pedigrees. I stared at the peeling back wall of house opposite with inscription made by graffiti painter: "I am bored with it all". The wind tossed around scraps of old newspapers and threw dust in my face. Dark, as if covered by soot pigeons, in zenith of their mating season explored littered vicinities and occasionally mounted one another. I looked around – at the rusty cars passing by, at my hands resting listlessly on the lap and keeping traces of ageing. Only yesterday, or may be decade ago? - their skin was supple and smooth. Right hand had a twitch in the wrist, straitening for a while and then curving again in mouse gripping cramp.

It seems not long time ago I stood before Moscow grocery store, chilled to the marrow and hungry, eager to get my portion of buckwheat, in line with hundreds of other hopping, popping and clinking with empty bottles Muscovites. It was after putsch time, when Boris Eltsin – then boisterous and robust-looking man who instigated spirit of rebel in red-carpeted corridors of ruling power, would appear in front of White House mounted on the tank, like Lenin in 1917. Eltsin conquered particular admiration and support from inhabitants of suburban Zelenograd, where I resided at that time. It was center of national electronic industry with military styled, barbwire fenced plants standing in ruin, with workers getting no salary for years in a row. We greeted all the revolutionary change could bring. It brought hope. But also disorder. Shop windows stared back at us with blind sockets of empty shelves. Pensioners could buy only a box of vodka for their lifelong savings. We kept in purse not money but ration cards. Life was wasted in queues.

Glued to bench in front of graffiti on the wall by magnetic force, I mused on origin of it. Only emigrant compelled to survival in exile could write such English phrase here. His existential boredom meant hunger for deed and event, routine void of struggle and search, vital needs of soul unsatisfied.

My life, though perfectly preserved in Austrian emigration, seemed to be poor of spirit and color. Unfolding tapestry of the memory, I tried to spot, when exactly boredom started to crawl out in the scene like big gray spider with quick hairy legs.

The broken window was secured with piece of carton, and February wind whistled in cracks of small hotel room. I pooled old newspapers and jacket at the top of my bed, but could not fall asleep. Tranquility and slumber eluded me. The sheets of manuscript at the table seemed snowy blue in lucid moonlight. Rolling over, I eventually sprang to the feet. I boiled some tea with camp boiler from my travel set, and after sipping it hastily, came out.

It was Vilnius of 1991. The air of the night was clear and mild. The stars glimmered exceedingly bright and low. I felt fresh breathing of Baltic sea on my cheeks. After overcrowded Moscow streets, Vilnius with its thin spires and lattice windows looked idyllic and fabulous, very much like medieval golden music box with tiny figurines of cavaliers and dames I saw once in window of antique shop.

However, the empty streets with remains of hastily erected barricades looked disturbing. It was a few weeks after the Russian tanks entered the town. It was extraordinary attempt of authorities to pacify folks of former empire by old imperial methods. For many ordinary people Vilnius intervention always symbolized later the end of soviet era. The callousness and hysteria of generals, their war-prone decisions caused confusion and bloodshed. There were victims – defenders of Lithuanian sovereignty and occasional pedestrians as well. National representatives made rebellious “justice or death” statement and retreated in the barricaded building of Lithuanian parliament together with the troops of volunteers.

In the early morning securities let accredited journalists inside after confiscation of cameras. The press males had been examined all over, and the females - only two of us, due to courtesy of Lithuanians, were spared of body search. The civilians – volunteers in bulletproof vests – tall light-haired young men who spoke Russian with peculiar accent – looked earnest and sad. They prepared to die.

Improvised soldiers slept on the floor of parliament chambers by turn, expecting the burst of new military attack every minute and ready to defend the citadel of national freedom till the end. Every window had been barricaded with sand sacks and watched.

I was special correspondent of one newly established unaffiliated newspaper. Only because its headlines sounded somewhat Christian, volunteers let me in.

Ignoring political labeling, newspaper appealed to compassion and common sense of people of any nationality and views, reporting on poor, ostracized, deprived and downtrodden. My heroes were convicts, outcasts, homeless, truth seekers and victims of national outbursts.

After press conference with prime minister seventy journalists left for their quarters. Only three of us stayed in the barricaded parliament with volunteers, keeping true evidence valued most.

There were rumors new assault would begin tonight. The chamber and staircase had been mined. We stayed there to share self-denying courageousness of ordinary Vilnius people. There was no electricity in the building, and the faces of volunteers seemed greenish in candlelight.

I talked to young solemn Lithuanian. He left his wife and daughter in the town to enter the defense troops, and kept small Christian icon in embrasure of window beside the gun. If our life is only night dream, why we all are afraid to die?

In the last decade before new millennium kilometer queues lined up in Moscow streets by American, British, German embassies. Applicants nervously tossed papers in cardboards, peered through the bars, argued with securities – ready to endure any hardships and spent nights in line for sake of escape to behind-cordon-paradise. They got accustomed to rude and arrogant treatment of authorities including overstrained, terrifically formal, unwilling to assist and seeking pretext to reject embassy clerks. These embassy clerks in nice suits - wearing mean of politeness, but emanating contempt, - possibly had directives not to let the Russians - especially ordinary Russians - in. Escapers took reject incidents patiently as martyrs, still striving for lucky chance to leave motherland forever.

Almost eight years passed since my relocation in Austria. Driven by common post-Soviet dissident craze, I tried to settle in France, Denmark and Sweden at first, but failed. In this period of turmoil and disorder, nothing worked right for me, and I used to recur to my empty suburban flat with small journey bag and twenty dollars in the pocket – downtrodden, shocked, traumatised. I was not Kyrgyz or Russian anymore,

having no other nationality either. It seemed all hope for positive change was lost, when once in summer of 2001 I found short mail from a stranger in my mailbox. The 45-years old divorced Graz engineer, who had found some of my reportage photos on Internet, invited me to look around Austria. Soon I got possibility for permanent residence there, though in psychologically hard conditions. The vision of escape that seemed so desirable and unreachable for me in post-perestroika Russia came to reality years later, though in bizarre guise.

The chimes of the local church struck three. Suddenly it became darker, rainy clouds covered the sun. The flock of pigeons left for the shelter. The wind amused itself for a while with red t-shirt abducted from somebody's balcony, and then left it resting on the ground like overthrown flag. Graffiti glowed bright in twilight. Enjoying cool breeze of approaching thunderstorm, I was so far away in my thoughts.

My farther was born in northern China, where Kyrgyz people sought refuge after revolt against tsarist Russia colonialism and mass slaughter in 1916. I felt proud of the fact that in spite of Islam traditions, Kyrgyz women never carried a yashmak. Kyrgyz parents also never bound women's feet. Yet in China at that time, one still could meet women hobbling on mutilated feet, which considered to be aristocratic and arousing. Moreover, Kyrgyz as phonetic variety of Turkic language spread in historical Turkistan region employed Arabic graphics. It was crucial point of cultural differences between folks of Turkistan and China. After a few years in exile, Kyrgyz families wandered back to Kyrgyzstan. At the beginning of 20th century, the medieval social order of lords and vassals was still preserved there. Soviet historians, often represented in Central Asia by scholars of Slavic and Jewish nationalities, used to write later in textbooks that backward Kyrgyz folks advanced quickly and made a leap from feudalism to socialism, due to progressive innovations brought by Lenin supporters. My farther belonged to old family of landowners, who lost their properties in course of Bolsheviks revolution. His grandfather was well-known edifier of past gone times - yet alive in the late twenties, when agriculture collectivization and abolishing of private ownership started. All more or less well-off families were stripped of belongings, extinguished or sent to place railways in Siberia or to dig up the Belomorkanal (built on bones of prisoners The White Sea Channel) in the far north. Authority executives brought feeble nobleman in "black yurt" as public enemy; his own relatives let him die there from thirst, - afraid to express sympathy in face of new rules and new power. Descendants of old edifier and his seven wives almost all perished. At the peak of anti-kulak punitive campaign in 1930 my farther - 12 years old boy found himself alone in charge of two younger children, all of them at verge of dying from famine. The only way to survive was to leave Naryn district where they resided for town Tokmok at the north of Kyrgyzstan. Children heard a rumour that life there was easier. One could even get shelter and piece of flat bread in asylum for orphans.

The unconceivable task was to reach high mountains area, come through one of Tien Shan passes and then move a few hundred kilometres along semi-desert steppes without guide, warm cloth and food.

Soon they started their journey - three kids driven by fear and wish to live. Great part of the way Murat carried his three-year old weakened brother on his back, and child eventually died on the way. The sister died later, when they already settled in Tokmok.

They tramped ahead, and there was no soul around. Once in the mountings Murat stumbled and then stretched on the ground exhausted. He could not make a step further. His younger sister still marched forward with mechanical persistency of broken soul and soon disappeared out of his sight. He was alone in nowhere under

ruthless sun on hot as saucepan cracked ground with nothing except violet heads of camel's thorn. He whimpered there meekly hiding rough as bark face in the elbow. He felt deep breathing of earth, its magnetic force, and urge to surrender; to float on waves of weakness to beautiful land of his dreams seized him. He would close his eyes only for a while, and see big orchard full of cherries and peaches, where he rested under the green tree. His sister approached him carrying in both hands big bowl with sour milk. Then he saw his deceased mother - in motley headscarf, stirring-fry pastries in the smoked wok. He would slip in spinning eddies of nothingness, but life in miraculous way would come back to him. In one of such clarity moments, he caught the sight of something like sprout in distance; it was wild onion shyly offering its small meagre feathers to the sun. He started to dig up for root ferociously and soon kept bulb of big walnut size in hand. He greedily devoured it together with peel and bits of soil. Minute later he felt as if he got severe blow in the stomach. Never in his life had he experienced such a pain. The onion was burning out his guts. This agony galvanized him. He crawled forward on his four until river bend came in view. There he rejoined with his sister. The next day children reached outskirts of village, where they stumbled upon corpse in the bush. Face of dead man was a mess, but in his bag, children found thoroughly wrapped in linen small sack of corn flour, which revived their strength and helped them to reach place of their destination.

Seventy years passed as if in the blink of an eye.

Now he rested in bedroom, wrapped in a shroud - still, unfamiliar and odd. Early in the morning, we had a visit from a hospital to register death, and then the body was to be buried in city cemetery according to Muslim law without further delay.

Later I could recall little of those days of my youth. It was feeling of unreality that kept hold of me. Only some time ago old man would sit in the kitchen perusing newspaper, now the chair with concave keeping contour of his body empty. His interests never expanded beyond borders of clan agenda, and to this realm of tribalism with blood relationship as primary property, I never belonged. As he lived, so he died - true member of his kin, foreign to me. Later group of Kyrgyz men came, whose talks I could apprehend distantly, as I talked little of Kyrgyz, and took the body away. Muslim women could not participate in burial ceremony, and I had been considered to be Muslim too. Afterwards, together with mother, we were taken to ceremonial meal with crowd of condoling strangers. Gathering took place in the yard of distant relative's villa with huge fireplace in the centre. Woks were steaming and sacrificial sheep were bleating before ritual slaughter. Thus Murat, true son of Sayak totem, died. I felt stunned and could not cry. But did I want to?

We, children of the family, were half-breeds speaking Russian and looking like Volga Tatar mother. In bury gathering of about two hundreds people, I was the only one, who formally being Kyrgyz, had purity of race sadly compromised. National dissimilarities were pain in the back of our time. The stumble point of having different mother tongues and different ancestry cooled out many relationships, making both sides touchy and edgy without measure, in spite of talks about international soviet solidarity. One Russian author, who used to live for many years in Japan, observed that higher criticism of ordinary yellow-race people provoked not representatives of white race, but those natives who tried to look like Europeans. National conflicts and demonstration of race superiority were customary for soviet reality, piercing with hundreds of thorns sensitive, raw selves of our youth.

Yet in distress or trouble, I would keep in mind the story of hungry boy and the onion. It is not easy to spot somebody starving to death in Austria nowadays apart

from those having eating disorders and occasionally extinguishing themselves with their extra fat cells. Exceptional living conditions of zero social benefits and zero income are exceedingly rare. All registered poor keep their big-wheeled bags handy, as they can get varieties of eatable bread free of charge in special supermarkets. Every time on my way to tram station, I see again the same pauper standing on his knees by the crossroads. Not young and not old, native without visible disabilities, he holds his plea post with military punctuality and perseverance every day of the week for years. Only special personal involvement in the business can sustain such persistence. Perhaps he needs that feeling of pain in the knees and humility – appealing to occasional elderly frauen with small dogs passing by to the extent of dropping beggar a coin – he needs minute compassion of strangers for his self-identification. There are many other professional bums in tourist arrears of Vienna and Graz with higher earnings. The spectacle of ragged persons on their knees in perspective of modern West European city always struck me as something monstrous. At the same time, it could be a true evidence of progress and democratisation of western society. Because only in the country of high social security and multi-digit bank accounts of middle class, the pauper would launch demo of helplessness and keep it for hundreds of hours, instead of moving his ass for positive change. When you live in place of high taxes and high social benefits feeding yourself on welfare for decades, the idea of personal time as monetary investment sounds brainwashing. The street beggary so widespread also signalises perhaps, that any individual initiation, any establishment or promotion, any endeavour towards new enterprise, would probably face great inertia and bureaucracy of authorities.

The blessed orderliness and stability of civilized world operates smoothly by means of templates and strict rules often impassable for trailblazers.

I thought about my last media project with bitterness. It failed as well as many other stillborn projects, originated by frustrated mind of emigrant in leisure-orientated fairyland of ski resorts, cafés and Mozart bonbons. With years, I progressed only in realm of my private competencies, and for superficial observer my position in social pyramid, plunged in bottom residue of swarming around nocturnal creatures like migrants, derelicts and unemployed, had not changed.

The rain started and ceased, and then started again. I would say the weather in Vienna was moody, without chance to predict how it would turn out in an instant. I sighed and climbed the stairs up to my small flat. I drank the water directly from the tub. It had bland taste, like many things here, but seemed to be clean. The tub water in Moscow always kept the scent of disinfectors. What about mildness, it prevailed in the air, in attitudes, in taste of dishes, in all Austrians might say or do. Even famous national strudel, always contained for me mellowness in compounds of its flavour. Not once feeling tired of such overall monotony and thirsty for acute experiences of my youth, I would consume greedily pelmeni from nearby Russian store with generous quantities of black pepper, chilli sauce and vinegar, and then become sick for a couple of days.

My desktop PC, the only true witness of my efforts, purchased after sequence of heroic saving tactics, sat in the corner looking back at me with cold mocking gaze of push buttons.

There was little furniture in the room, and walls tinted in hospital fashion were bare except of picture of Graz hanging above the bed.

Sooner or later in the life of everyone comes period of trial. Graz was the very place, where my emigration ordeal by water and fire started. It was southern-looking fair town with medieval architecture, in strange way reminding me of sunny Bishkek streets. It was love at first sight. Graz struck me as prettiest place I ever knew.

However, to reside in historical centre of it under heated, as oven roof, trapped in tiny attic, with deafening, amplified uproar of surrounding restaurants all night long, was hard. In addition, other inhabitants of under-roof space belonged to the African commune rap fans, and from their round-the-clock jovial blare, I was separated only by thin carton wall. Sometimes I would see the property owner downstairs in elegant suit, to whom this imposing building, as long as string of other dwelling houses and hotels of the town belonged. Considering rather high rent required by his office, I came to think that trouble and misfortune of one, always turns out to be barging or profit opportunity for the other. Jobless emigrants could not move in search for better place, bound by too high a deposit proprietors demanded.

I would usually take a nap on small broken bed of mine after hubbub of restaurants subdued before dawn and then hit and devastated by roar of bottle collector in the yard at sunrise.

In such conditions of heavy noise poisoning, I sought comfort in meditation, though vainly.

Life dragged along bottom curve of its cryptic parabolas. I was lonely and hurting, swinging between hope and despair. Seeking salvation in secluded walks and in stillness of public library and compelled to read in language other than my own, I came across number of spiritual teachings which seemed flowery, hypocritical or frankly insane to me in contrast to brutal reality, and I could not get rid of idea of world dominated by the dark core.

Yet once, when my situation seemed especially unbearable and I marched along the river envying the dead their peace, one simple suggestion came to my mind. What if to step behind the mirror of my usual self, leave the skin of unique personality behind, completely liberated by death and then come back revived as phoenix out of the ashes? The death is as great mystery as life, and imitating transition between them, one could probably see the glimpse of light concealed from frustrated self. I wanted to taste true freedom of reality without myself in the centre of it and to get rid of sadness, originated by one of my formal identities and circulated as poison in my blood.

So coming home with good intention to bring myself to an end, I washed away remains of tears and lay down on the bed, looking at the dim glimpses of spectral colours playing on the ceiling. After some time soft light filled the room. I still heard sounds of forks clinging in restaurants below, so distressing before for my mind, as I imagined myself in contrast to guests devouring exquisite meals, more hungry, than I really was, but now these sounds promised possibility of sensual pleasure, they were revelation. I suddenly felt absolutely secure and self-sufficient, and had instantly forgiven all who caused me pain and suffering earlier, as I was capable to inflict sufferings on others too. Everything was right in my life; all events took place in right succession according to cosmic law. This blissful state of complete composure lasted only for a few minutes, but I suddenly realized what real meditation was.

Later I forgot about this experience, absorbed in everyday hum - on mercy of always changing tides, on mercy of wheel ever rolling: from sadness to joy and back.

I could not take eyes from picture of Graz on the wall above my bed. Now every detail of landscape seemed to be full of deep meaning. The sky was pure, and tiled roofs reddened intensely in sunset rays.

I threw glance out of the window at gloomy rainy day. There was nobody in the street, except strange decrepit woman with bent back, who kept limping in direction of nearest market and dragging her shabby wheeled bag along. What moved her?

What a miracle of engine one must have to endure existence kicks and prods for eighty years? My living energy, contrary to hers, was all depleted, and my dreams were burned to ashes. I felt myself trapped, drained by erroneous languid attachments - useless, ridiculous creature.

I listened to chorus of scornful, satiric voices inside, criticizing me, making fun of all my endeavours and efforts. I wanted to run this cacophony, be at peace with myself. I wanted to sink in nothingness with all my soul. Eventually it became quieter, with occasional thought flickering as moth in condensing darkness, and soon universe was dumb pitch-black ether with no move, no sound or sensation. After a while a weak gleam of light that appeared far in front of me. Making step in a while, I moved forward, and distant exit out of tunnel shone yet brighter. At last I emerged out of darkness, blinking from bright sunlight, and saw myself at emerald lawn near Schlossberg – historical fortification hill with castle on the top in the centre of Graz. The sky was crispy blue, and sparrows chirped in crimson bushes of barberry: “Here you are! Here you are!”

Did I sleep? No, I was lying at my bed fully awake and saw every tree of scenery with eyes of my inner sight.

Sharp buzz of telephone transported me back to reality of my Vienna flat.

It was Kyrgyz woman Nora, clean-lady, whose claim for asylum in Graz after number of years was recently satisfied. She had something like good news.

She told one of Graz proprietors offered her nice flat for living quite cheap, but she would not take it due to wish to find place in other district.

My heart jumped and went on melting slowly as lump of ice on the plate. I knew I would travel to Graz tomorrow with the first train.

The first feeling I had in Graz in vicinity of railways station was rhythm of life slowing down. I was still excited with prospect of see Graz after two years absence, as I could be excited to meet with old, beloved friend, and my pulse was still beating fast, while all around – people, cars and even birds – appeared to be frozen in slow record scenery. Autos and walkers moved not only slower, but also with less manoeuvre efforts, as if claiming more space for themselves and ignoring similar claim of others. The same effect I often noticed about provincial residents, when taking bus from Moscow to suburbs. Boisterous bicyclists wheeled back and forth in walking areas of Graz, miraculously avoiding collisions with annoyed pedestrians. Somebody on the train told that local Greens reserved more space for bicyclists on expense of discriminated car-drivers.

Graz, situated in valley resembling kettle, now and then suffered from smog.

My next thrill was that people in the street stared at me.

They had touching provincial manner to look at anybody passing them. I got used to specific capital way of disregarding people in the street, which during my first months in the capital greatly upset me in others, when secluded, as if wrapped in plastic, I could not meet even occasional glance of anybody.

Now I stared at people back with relieve, feeling free flow of natural curiosity and exchange of our energies. Perhaps numerous Muslims residing in the capital contributed greatly to unspoken law of eye contact avoidance, as Sharia prohibits gazing at the women in public places.

Because this avoidance, one could rarely spot interesting face in the streets of Vienna. Confronted with hundred-faced hydra of pedestrians in shopping street, all the same you felt unnoticed, as if equipped with fairytale invisible cap. Women looked self-

absorbed. Men seemed languid and dull. They looked away as if feeling guilty, frigid or distressed. This avoidance also made you safe in any costume; whatever you dared to put on – odd, soiled or despaired; you would never get judging glance and feel out of place.

As if in night dream I walked in direction of central square and Schmiedgasse. I had no idea where I would spend the night, if not coming to Vienna with back train. My acquaintance Nora, who was full of beans yesterday, sounded sulky on phone, when I called her early in the morning. One may think that foreigners of the same ethnicity stand for each other as brothers and sisters, confronted by hardships of emigration. In case of Russia and CIS citizens, the contrary is true. The Russians abroad prefer to communicate to natives, and often conceal their origin, or furtively avoid mentioning it in private, as if gnawed by shame to be ex- soviet. Nora, sophisticated woman in her forties, putzfrau for private household, lived with her schooling son in small lodgings in poverty stricken Griesplatz. She talked willingly only about her Austrian benefactors. The flat she meant for me was free of furniture and occurred to be under very roof of old dwelling house. The landlord required average according to local market rent, though without deposit.

Contemplating this prospect, I thought about five years of my life spent in the same conditions before.

It is interesting to explore how humans react to extreme life situations. Great Russian writer Shalamov, survivor of Stalin death camps, wrote in his book that neither love, nor friendship took place between people in real trouble. Friendship, connecting two persons, always meant that their hardships were durable and their troubles were moderate, otherwise they would be incapable to develop friendly feelings. Japanese scientists, who studied psychological consequences of Hiroshima bombing in 1945, registered that at most acute periods of disaster only human bonds between mother and child kept hold, and all others deteriorated.

How one can potentially change place of residence in Austria? Can I move somewhere at all on my free will being low-income emigrant?

When I came to Vienna central social help service with such a question, young consultant who talked to me there gave impression of being more defensive than helpful. The first feeling you have in any social help institution in Vienna is that they want to get rid of you as soon as possible. Maybe protecting themselves against numerous petitioners, social help workers seem to be unreachable for any individual plea. All answers sound as produced on demand templates, whatever you say. You get piece of standard info meant to shut you up or send you to next futile trip along bureaucratic terminals. The woman told that every region of Austria had its own regulations – for Vienna unfamiliar, and to change residence for low-income person meant to change relative security for complete insecurity of unknown. She meant underprivileged were chained to the place of their residence and it was advisable for them to sit still.

To do additional inquiries I arrived at Graz welfare office at 8.30 and saw there a crowd of people waiting in line for clemency of private talk.

Every official place has specific vibrations and unique atmosphere to it. Interior of social service organizations always smells as poverty, even if its visitors are dressed up well. What it was? It was the smell of frustration. Aura of feebleness and lack of discipline was spread in the air. Frustration meant body dysfunctions, dullness and parasitism. There were many emigrants among visitors, where women with small children prevailed. What about natives, many of them looked like addicts. Poverty

often links with variety of mental problems, inadequacy, insufficiency and psyche deformity.

It could be many reasons why one loses job, divorces, becomes bankrupt, asylum seeker or dissident, but any chronic trouble is always signalizes about mental distortion or incongruence, about discord between what one feels and does, fatal inability to penetrate in deeper levels of his own self and to become adequate.

The water in Graz is full of calc. Quickly enough thin layer of this calc pollutes crockery. We know that layer of fat tokens – pollutes our blood vessels. In similar way, our energy channels are polluted with remains of indigestible offends. Thick rotting layer of unresolved pains, grudge, jealousy, guilt and anger accumulates at the walls of our vital channels and inhibits free flow of energies. We become poor, downtrodden, neglected, addicted, discriminated and jobless, and cannot step out of vicious circle of misfortunes.

Reflecting about metaphysical roots of this phenomenon, I was nevertheless poor myself and looked nervously at the screen of monitor where my number was to appear in incomprehensible order, waiting to be accepted in holy realm of public charity office.

Only with years, I learned to follow my feelings in spite of logical considerations. The stir that I sensed in abdomen in crucial moments of life not only revealed true nature of things, but also in mysterious way predicted future events. However, elusive feeling was, it always appeared at the scenery, as result of quick background evaluations, when corresponding idea was not formed yet. Language of intuition was enigmatic, and because of its subtle, changeable nature and quality to be easily suppressed by rational mind – untrustworthy. Time passed, and bitter life experiences brought me to the point of understanding, that feelings have much more power than I suspected, and could point out right direction in search for fulfilment and happiness.

Many of my Austrian acquaintances tend to operate under true dominance of rational mind. They are neat, orderly, punctual, supremely attentive to detail and formal structures, to every element of edifice, every insignificant decorative pattern, every word and every line, and how these words and lines are positioned, they vote for order, steel brackets of regulations, predictability and security in everything, for conservative stability, and prone to count every cent they spent and plan every step they do. When they write private mails and discuss, they refer not to ideas, but to exact phrases, and express themselves in a, b, c paragraphs. The advantages of such approach are obvious: Austria belongs to one of most secure and prosperous countries of the world. But there are some human values which are neglected. Supreme rationality makes such persons to be incapable of explore, experiment and inspiration, of independency beyond accepted values. They dismiss or nullify anything incomprehensible that goes their way, being often deaf and blind for creativity, risky innovations, for original ideas, for potential possibilities. I write this because I have inferiority feelings.

Quickly tuning to my Austrian encounters, I am hypnotized by them. Austrians tend to speak with authority and transfer me their unspoken opinions of superiority over me. For them such superiority based on rational contemplation is quite obvious. It takes me serious efforts to restore my self-balance later.

Do you know somebody never making mistakes? It must be specie of artificial intellect. Humans simply need to miss a target now and then to guarantee one accurate shot.

I don't claim to be possessor of absolute truth. Like any other mortal, I make wrong

judgments on certain occasions in my search for true fact. I may be completely in the power of ego sometimes, feeling the world developed personal grudges against me. But then change of tide brings ability for detached view and main condition for objectivity – inner piece. Unhappy people tend to be subjective and make those around them unhappy too. Those who steadily accumulate unhappiness: poor, sick, outcasts, drug-users, illegal immigrants, persons in refugee camps and prisoners - accumulate also enormous destructive force to strike back, subjected to uncontrollable aggression, which affects innocent people. Society must care more about deprived and downtrodden to improve common psychological climate and prevent murder, rape, robbing, domestic violence and suicide.

As I also witness certain deprivation, I started to use instinctively such instrument of defense as word to restore my equilibrium between good and evil. This instrument contains huge destructive and creative potential, in spite of mask of gibberish it carries.

I always tried and would use every my word with consideration.

My nervousness in front of social office doors in Graz signaled about discord between highly charged expectations and possible real output. Woman in glasses, whom I recognized as fatality herald of my forgone attempts with Graz social institutions, told me with note of disappointment in voice that anybody with my type of visa and permanent lodgings in Graz, in state of trouble can claim for social benefits. The root of her disappointment could be directive to reduce budget expenses and to issue help only to limited amount of people. Coming further in details she told, that total sum was 540 euros per month, without any rent help. To live on 140 euros, after bills paid, was it possible? She threw glance at my puzzled face and then wished me goodbye with air of relieve.

I went out in the street, suddenly feeling empty and tired. Realization of being homeless in Graz added weight to rucksack behind my back.

The sun was shining; the air was full of sweet aroma, and tender breeze caressed my face, bringing smells of bread and coffee from nearest restaurant. Wrapped up in my problems, I could hardly appreciate natural translucent beauty of this place before. Every house and every lawn seemed pretty, and every face seemed cute. If only I could be bee, collecting nectar from flowerbeds, or bird, which can fly freely and nest wherever it wants singing every sunrise its greeting song. If I could be the seed falling down unnoticed in soil and resting there for days under generous sun, to become gorgeous tulip later and offer my loveliness to the world.

Pretzel seller at the corner greeted me, as if it was only yesterday I passed him hunting for street shots and he used to offer me free of charge broken in two, but otherwise excellent cakes, he baked himself.

Further along the street the same handicapped begged for alm by church doors, but closer to Main Square there were many new beggars, who used their inborn disabilities and deformities as weapon to press on feelings of especially sensitive pedestrians.

It was the day of local parliament session, and I hurried under the arc of marvellous Landhaus building and climbed its stone stairs with half-forgotten trepidation. Passing unexpected check-out control at the door, I watched with smile how businesslike male officer rambled through female hygiene artefacts and underpants in my rucksack.

The glorious chamber with big chandelier, decorations and paintings, rows of leather arm chairs, - all was here as before, but something irreversibly changed.

It was only a few years ago I was sitting here in the rows for public trembling with excitement of peeper, who managed to throw a glance in sacred world of politicians, lawyers and journalists, in ruling realm of society, unreachable for ordinary people and especially for me – penniless emigrant who hardly spoke German, silly caged bird. I had low self-esteem and such fuel as desperation in my blood. The chandelier shined much brighter then, and men in suits and polished shoes seemed elegant and breath-taking. I would be happy to get even occasional glance from them. Every cell of my body burned, and ego, distorted by frustration, shrieked inside of my mind: “Look at me, notice me! I am also human, with heart and brain, that nobody needs, seeing beggar or a piece of meat in me! I could be among you, when having other origin, and my awful life in your country under your political laws has not degraded my human value!”

The river of life changed me, brought me other perspectives and views. Now I felt myself almost calm. No more breath-taking sensations. No more agitation. I felt only curious and concentrated at what orators told. No words, the men and women of Landtag were dressed up well and moved about with grace of audience favourites, but there was nothing exceptional in their appearance and outfit. Streaks of exaggerated chic and trendy fashions some of them used in their image making arsenal and how they seemingly claimed the attention of public to themselves - added to general atmosphere of amateur theatre rehearsal.

Speeches, with few exceptions, sounded unenergetic and artificially prolonged, some were not well articulated.

Many participants of this theatre rehearsal walked back and forth, talked to acquaintances, and used back door of chamber to sneak out, in common cool atmosphere of busy matter-of-factness. I would prefer somebody to talk with passion and even break the rules!

I was also reflecting about difference between two representatives of human race, of whom one earned 9.000 sitting here and other begged for 540 of social help, and was not guaranteed to get it at all.

Words have magic power. Every word contains infinite possibilities for creation of new reality. When we say “earth”, we call to individual formula associated with word - mental conglomerate of images, accumulated in archives of our memory. We may see patch of black soil in granny’s garden, which we touched, smelled and even licked, when we were a toddler or we see mossy place somewhere in the fields, where we rested last week during secluded walk along the river. Person with theoretical type of mind may assign concept to position of our planet in Solar system. We use the same words, filled with individual content, corresponding to our characteristics and experiences; the subjective meanings we assign to the words keeps language in fluid form of constant transformation.

It is why the best way to study language is living among native speakers. You learn life and content it may give to words.

Main problem of communication is to find most suitable words, and when we find such words, we always transform them, as pieces of clay, pushed in pigeonholes of our concepts. This transformation is hardly recognized by our listener, who has his own filters and perceives only meanings he assigns to words himself. In the process of idea formulation, initial meaning of it may be lost or distorted.

When I say: “love” – what do I really mean?

Is it possible to express with one word that bliss and harmony of feelings, or that storm of body sensations swirling as gigantic eddy in crimson darkness of our inner

self? How to describe indescribable, paradoxical, brutal and tender, feeble and powerful - using one single word? This very word that knew so much abuse, which no other word knew in human history, which was there for evil and good, for sacredness and curse, and was written at the walls of sordid public toilets together with abrasive drawings?

We are capable to use words as ready-made decorative elements and talk, talk and talk instead of simply humming tone. We came in this world to talk, being extremely verbal creatures. Every Vienna unemployed can initiate discussion about taxes and elaborately condemn such imperialists as Bill Gaits. Some people vibrate atmosphere with voice cords, only striving for attention. But words have magical force only being filled with genuine energy. All orators of Soviet era, for example, were trained to make speeches using clichés and soapy phrases free of solid connotation. Michael Gorbachev was particularly notable for art of empty talks in perestroika epoch, and the moment he had lost his post and became popular in the West as great transformer, his speeches obtained depth and sensibility.

We say “love” or “hate”, when being helpless to find true equivalent of what we feel. Words distort initial meaning of what we want to communicate. All what we say is more or less false. We lie about our thoughts and feelings. The moment we pronounce word, it separates itself from the source and forms another reality, almost as new for us as for our listeners.

When woman says: “I love you”, she probably sees herself as small girl, who once had by chance slipped down from the bank of the river and fell in the water. Without single scream, paralyzed, she felt how grey masses of water closed above her head. It was moment of darkness and then she came to her senses at the shore in the arms of her farther. Man jumped in river how he was in boots and overalls and rescued her. He stood on knees by her, fondling her face, calling her name, with such anxiety, such pain, such eternal love in his eyes!

When man says “I love you”, he may recall the day, when he -15-years old schoolboy was embracing unknown woman in dim smoky wagon of long-distance train. They had met only half an hour ago here – he was hanging around and she was going to dining lounge – matron of forty with bleached hair and makeup applied generously to faded face. She asked for cigarette, they kept silence for a while, and then she started tickling his neck behind the ear, as if caressing the cat. It was dark, and woman smelled as caramel. Wagon swayed from side to side, so were her full breasts with big brown nipples, as two big ripe pendulums in her open shirt. When he squeezed these pears, he could not keep it longer, and in convulsion of sharp pleasure he whispered: - I love you...

Wherever I walked, my feet, as if against my will resuming old tracks, brought me to place of my former lodgings. I even stepped in vestibule of big house with blue panels, where under the roof there was small sticky room I rented before. My old post box kept the same number and same sticker on it. Narrow staircase window upstairs, from which I used to gaze in the yard, concealed from anybody’s eyes, was open. The area was crammed with restaurants and cafes, and the only place where one seeking piece could dwell looking was patch of sky above and cobblestones below. These stones shone back at me in all numb malice significance of their distant glitter. What was the virtue of restaurants you never visited, joviality you didn’t share and exquisite dishes you couldn’t savour, tantalized by sounds of merriment and odours of good kitchen every day? What was the virtue of being separated from others and

erecting dream castles in sticky cramped room, pacing tiny space from one wall to the other for hours? What was the virtue of love song, witch you sang with small shaky voice to cheer yourself up, hardly audible in hum, chanting of wine glasses and drunk vocals of your surroundings?

I descended to the grounds. At this hour cinema café in front yard was full of visitors. People enjoyed being unoccupied - every single day of the week.

I remember that trying to catch the point, I was sitting there myself, drinking espresso and gazing at passers-by, as others, and tried to draw out, what was all about.

Did visitors entertain any hope to come in casual contact with somebody? May be they did. But I never witnessed spontaneous delivery of new contacts between strangers there, where every hour brought new faces to the stage. What about me, I felt myself even lonelier than before. Did people use café for their appointments? Some really did. However, many simply stayed numb, passive and at leisure. My investigations brought me to conclusion that people simply enjoyed being idle. Cup of coffee or glass of wine did not cost much and could not be the reason to blame numerous visitors in extravagance. But what about time loss, who counted or measured this immeasurable waste? Time – this most valuable currency was spent by Europeans in cafes in bountiful quantities, and only nation of banks and social security, when every idle minute brings you not loss, but gain - enriching automatically at your bank account, could originate such quantity of café idlers, who invigorated with their money Graz and Vienna city budgets.

When blanket of common human wealth is a little bit short, every gain you have is on expense of others. Somebody works day and night for this wealth – builds houses, grows wheat, produces autos, symphonies and children, and somebody stays idle day after day, months after month, wasting their life and common resources of humankind in cafes.

Thus, I was thinking standing in front of Schubert cinema and contemplating with misery prospect of spending next hours in Vienna train.

Then I saw Ernst, one of my few old contacts, who was approaching me with expression of delight.

It was bold man in his fifties, very neatly dressed in Gucci from charity shop. He was unemployed for number of years, and as long as I knew him – always on welfare. As one Graz teacher put it at the beginning of my emigrant eposée, introducing me to local regulations:

- All Austrians with rare exceptions have money on account even presenting themselves as poor as mice, and how much they really have, you would never know, even going to bed with them for ten years in a row and eating charity soup from the same bowl”

Meanwhile Ernst cordially offered me to have a rest in his flat and share his meal.

I was glad to be not alone in the town, but accepted invitation with sudden twitch of hesitation.

Harassment can take several outwardly innocent forms intertwined in tissue of everyday reality. With years I came to conclusion, that woman of any age must be on her guard, when encountered with flattery and promise of males inviting her to share private living spaces with them.

We came to high-ceiling flat with portraits of Ernst and his relatives at the walls.

There was old piano in the corner. The flat shone with sparkling purity of obsessive cleaning, decorative plates and souvenirs were positioned in strict order at the shelves, so were the cups in the kitchen, following to straight lines of tablecloth in their even rows. In wardrobe the heap of clean shirts, painstakingly ironed and folded

with stern exactness, presented itself to my amazed view. Neatness of flat reminded me very much of drugstore. All odds must be weighed, labelled and calculated in this world. The first thing Ernst made coming back home was to take bath. He scrubbed himself with sponge, and repeated this procedure a few times per day.

When he cooked meal, his hands performed every operation in prescribed procession: two cups of water, one spoon of oil, piece of cheese – measured, weighted at the scales, written in cents and euros of expense at the monitor of his mind. There was no place for frivolity, spontaneity or any excessiveness here.

When we proceeded to dining table, which Ernst neatly decorated with artificial flowers from Carla, in spite of being hungry I paid attention to the fact that dish was free of any spices, and that cook had unpleasant manner directing his frozen gaze in my plate and at every spoonful of rice that disappeared in my mouth, as if being regretful about it.

In course of our discussion it came out, that Ernst voted for ultra-rights during the last elections, promoting opinion that communists were only bastards of society, Greens were lesbians, socialists were manipulative, and conservatives could not grant him job for the last ten years.

It was very humid in the room, but all windows were shut to prevent dust from coming inside. I felt myself squeezed and controlled. Some men in their courtship attempts may be excruciatingly invading, gluing to woman as forest ticks, constraining her every move, every urge, natural sovereignty of her feminine self, hating her secretly for her biologically programmed independence from libido, wrapping her meticulously hour after hour with cobweb of their egoistically singular male lust till she is mesmerized and turned in big immobilized cocoon, which has no feet to run away, no hands to struggle, but only ears to listen to him and edifice where he can now and then rest his prick.

After meal dishes were thoroughly washed with brush and soap (Ernst didn't trust this procedure to me) I persuaded my host to demonstrate me his piano skills with sly hope to be left in rest for a while. And in spite of the fact that old Carla instrument sounded deafeningly loud, and Ernst was meticulous, but spiritless pianist, I sank in heavy slumber at the couch, as I slept little previous night.

Some time later I was awaked by painful pinch at my leg, and could not immediately realize what it was. In twilight of room I could see figure of man in white underpants, who was moving around uncontrollably and then with grimace of glee suddenly collapsed at the sofa with all his weight, fixing huge hands at my wrists. I lay there full dressed, paralyzed in dismay, hearing loud panting and feeling he tried to strip me off. At this moment of shock brutal truth of male core needs and essence of these needs opened as canyon for me. Mama, why you only produce me as a girl! What bitterness, what a trial, what a torture to be object of male lust! I could never apprehend why occasional intercourse may be of such supreme value for them, that they could trade many things for it including friendship and possibility to be loved! God forgive me, I kicked Ernst too hard.

Today I got up early to see Vienna sunrise. It was a quarter to four, and heavy boots of newspaper delivery man just tramped down the staircase of our apartment house. In this gloomy hour city lay unexpectedly serene under cloudy sky, and dusty ringlets and angels of mould fondled by tender breeze seemed mysterious in soft morning glow. Echo of my footsteps disturbed doze of old-fashioned yards, and only Cyclopes eye of cathedral clock witnessed for a while my advance along the streets.

Vienna, Vienna! I might be fascinated by secrets your old dwelling houses kept, by elegance of your cafés, by intricate style of salons, by chivalry and euphemism of your courtship, by biblical grandiosity of your art, I might be one of your numerous admirers for ever and enjoy lifestyle of stability of pretence you kindly offered to me – poor nomad at the harbour of new earth. Penniless wanderer, what rolls you on like tuft of tumbleweed along vast spaces of steppe? Ask the clouds above the head which drift to southern regions and Graz. All road signs point in this direction. Eternal nomads, what drives you on? And where your homeland is? Thunderstorm roars in the skies and I hear reply: “It is only where we are loved our home is...”

Whenever I look out of window seeing a piece of blue sky, roofs with black dots of crows at antennas, and hear distant lulling clang of tram, I feel piece and sweet anticipation of new rendezvous with Vienna. I go out and gaze at surrounding curious subjects as newly born soul and wish I would walk forever and lose myself in the city, where every street is terra incognita and déjà vu. But if I dwell not in parks or secluded suburban streets, but move to the centre, where heart of the city beats, very soon tiredness and gloomy indifference go down as fog at me. It is monotony, that saddens me. As many other cities of the world, Vienna central streets are there mostly for shops and cafes.

Accepting my destiny of frustrated pedestrian, und would enter all boutiques that will come my way, one by one, responding to appealing grace of mannequins in shop windows.

Avoiding enthusiastic assistance of sales-women, I would look at long rows of cloth and brood over the fact that many shops live on one simple operation of selling goods, that were produced in China, East Europe and countries of the third world.

By other words, trade gets profit at difference of prices. This wool pullover was made somewhere at the other side of globe and brought here for sale. Group of worn out factory women knitted it and probably got their decent share as 20 cents for item, and then the managers, drivers, pilots, watchmen got their modest rewards too. But main payment would be received by local shop-keepers, when you enter Vienna shop and buy this pulli for 40 euros.

All that surrounds us in the world, including ourselves, are the clots of energy. Every object, such as pen, shirt, sweater, picture - contain accumulated energies of their original designers and producers. Sale or resale don't add anything to it. It only reduces rate of creativity in this world.

In case of second-hand, Caritas or Kleidung für Entwicklung shops, process of exploitation of initial producer energies is mostly vivid. I often visit such shops from pure curiosity. My dream to find original item for low price never comes true. Ladies who make themselves very busy putting price labels at things that were thrown away or brought by others as gift, do this in such way that any bargain becomes impossible. Relative usability of item is always accompanied by corresponding price. Long line of profit-dealers feed themselves at creative impulse of initial producer who got his twenty cents for colossal input in world economy.

What about numerous cafes and restaurants, which like mushrooms after rain appear and also disappear without further notice in the city? I ask all my acquaintances about their restaurant preferences, and always try to visit the place. Feeling expectant about dishes prepared elsewhere, you must pay for your expectations.

Struggling with heart-burn afterwards, I can never be sure that restaurant did not make deal on left-overs and bought cheapest starting ingredients. Left-overs are remains of food prepared and served before and put in second use, which nutritive values are low and influence on digestive system is harmful.

Initial creator - cook, or dish-washer, gets his modest reward for hastily prepared food. The price of dish would include also input for salaries of restaurant personal, including future restaurant owner Porsche car.

Even in such quite respectable fish restaurants as Nord See with their tourist-orientated prices, you can witness how they instantly put your order of vegetables and fish in microwave oven, what leaves the question when this particular dish was cooked without answer.

What one can say about many other restaurants whose kitchen manipulations we can never observe?

There are thousands of cafes and cloth shops in Vienna. Why? What originates this multiplicity? Local view is that Vienna nourishes itself mercilessly from tourists.

Global view is policy of bringing up of new consumers generation, who are encouraged for new and new expenses. Cumulative image of such consumers is gigantic blind fat worm in silk gowns with nothing more except palate and anal holes. How streets of our cities would look, if shops and restaurants had idea not to suck, but to serve us? May be it would be more space and light there.

Or the streets would be completely empty?

Failing to observe sunrise this morning, I have witnessed other significant event on the way back home - bunch of drunk men who associated and sang the song. They spoke in dialect of Vienna proletarians, which one can hear at Karlsplatz crossway, full of searchers for joint, pill or sniff. And the song was one played in Hitler parade chronicles, demonstrated to us so often in years of my childhood together with photos of hair, shoes and children toys accumulated in gigantic containers by death camps administrations. Poor lads voting for nationalistic party! If you could only imagine with what chasm of sadism associate millions of people living at huge territories of Eurasia this singing and other symbols of nationalism!

After incident that took place in Ernst flat, it was impossible for me to stay there. I collected my belongings and left. In velvety blue evening Graz lay in front of me as lost paradise. The air was still and warm. People talked and laughed, as if they were in love. After a while my feet brought me to one of secluded alleys of Stadtpark, where I stretched myself on the bench in state of perfect tranquillity.

Only once, man looking like drug dealer and speaking African English, approached me with insistent nudge. I would be scared before, but now I only told him I was patient of psychiatric clinic on escape, and he left.

Weird feeling of unreality took hold of me. I knew I rested myself at the bench of town park in Graz of 2009, at the same time it was Graz of 2001, when I was here for the first time, and simultaneously I saw myself in peaceful environment of my own Vienna flat.

The sky was full of stars, and scent of blooming trees became clearer in quiet tenderness of night. This place and this hour, as in peak experiences, opened magic door to time-space synchronicity for me. For a moment, I imagined myself omnipotent as universe creator, and asked myself, what I would do, if I were God? What kind of justice I would restore? Who I would punish or reward? What wishes I would fulfil?

For a while I contemplated prospect of winning million in lottery. That was the very wish every unemployed I talked to had. Now being omnipotent and fair God, I was bombarded with million of singularly expressed demands to deliver million of euro to every person exclusively on expense of others. Even God could not break natural laws of energy transformation: money didn't grow as peaches on the trees; they could be

only extracted for a while from flow of constant circulation. May be I would grant myself superb ability to fly? But can you imagine pigeon of human size? For the last years I got to know many people, and have heard many stories of misfortunes and ill fate. Sad stories appealed to compassion, but looking closer at them later, I always saw controversy of the case, when every victim was offender and executer of his own ill will at the same time, and every charity contained egoism in core, everybody creating and ruining his possibilities himself. Would I assist anybody to get in miraculous way new promotion, job, flat, pension or new loving relationship?

I stayed thoughtful for a while, and then decided that the best would be not interfering.

All what we have we created ourselves, though often feeling unhappy about results of our manifestations? I also deserved those very circumstances I found myself in.

Early in the morning I strolled toward Graz job office which was situated opposite of best town bordello. Nightclub stood at the corner of the noisy street, in bright sober morning looking more like the fort than the ecstasy harbour, with picturesque paintings and statues above blank façade and narrow bullet-proof door, where nobody could enter without being thoroughly observed. Once before from pure curiosity I studied catalogues of women who used to work here. Faces were as a book. I wanted to know what stood behind their self-destructing or menacingly bizarre activity. Almost every smiling face kept traces of anxiety and devastation under thick layer of makeup.

Meanwhile people who hurried to sneak in job office doors were not less ambiguous. This office used to get telephone bomb threats from time to time. After complete evacuation, police strained to find explosive device, but always in vain. People entering the office this morning looked ordinary, even tedious.

Finding themselves in big hall with reception desk and places for sitting, they settled down spreading vibes of nervousness around.

The queue was moving forward at tormenting pace. Fifty persons waited with faded expression for their turn to come - waste thrown up at the brims of society - devastated, useless, ruined unemployed. They believed they were losers, and it was crucial for them how others saw their role in this game; how others defined degree of their failure and success in rat races and labelled their place in social pyramid.

The very atmosphere of place extended hypnotic sinister influence on everybody placing himself in front of monitors with fixed gaze. Every official they met here, every word they heard worked for strengthening of their uselessness complex; they didn't know how they gradually started to see themselves in new light of inadequate creatures. One had to develop strong resistance and independence of mind to stand against hypnosis of collective consciousness. Many young unemployed still had no independence shield.

I felt bored. I already made a few tours on the upper floors, and kept fidgeting on my stool. The tensed atmosphere threatened to strangle me. Finally I decided to seek temporary escape in WC.

In contrast to hall, the toilet room was lit with luminous blue light. There was clean and quiet inside, and water dropped peacefully from the tub. Arranging my hair in front of the mirror, I noticed dark object on the top of paper box. It was big leather wallet in size of book, forgotten by somebody here. I continued studying myself in the mirror, assuming that owner would come back in a minute. But time was passing on, and nobody claimed right for wallet, nobody disturbed my privacy in blue lady's

room.

Then I urged myself for quick inspection. Wallet could belong to middle-aged Austrian with higher education and propensity for management, as it contained planner, enveloped documents, collection of visit, benefit and profit cards. I decided to stop inspection at this point, though feeling curios.

I asked myself: - If there is money inside, whatever sum it may be, and I will take it now. Will it bring peace to me?

I knew for sure that not. I knew that regret and feeling of impurity would outweigh any material gain I could probably get.

Besides I knew that law of general balance kept counting eye on all we gain and lose. Some shopkeepers and waiters tend to cheat without idea that all gains are counted at the scales of destiny; and any forced profit is extracted from overall gains later. You trick and win a trifle, but then you suddenly lose something dear to you.

I marched to reception desk and handed wallet to bewildered clerk. For some time he gazed at it in confusion, as if expecting something explosive inside.

When my turn for consultation eventually came, young audacious guy of counsellor refused to devote a few minutes of his precious time to me. When I requested for general Graz employment information, he addressed me to Internet. When I asked him, what in this case his job was, he told his job was allowance payments.

I regretted about two lost hours and marched to desk to comfort myself with bonbon from box for public use.

In era of information availability role of many consultants devalues, as they stop to be single possessors of specific knowledge.

Homelessness excited my gastronomic exuberance till unexpected degree, and passing every restaurant with ravishing schnitzel smells, I stopped by doors tormented to rush in and plunge my teeth in huge piece of meat. The very thought flowed my mouth with juices, and I swallowed convulsively sniffing the air as stray dog.

If to simplify the model of our entire body, it can be presented in the form of long tube with input and output orifices. Our digest system determines that every piece of energy supply we consume undertakes long journey along many meters long tunnels - central process of our organic existence we are not aware of and don't care about.

When you want to improve your relationships dramatically or in situations of life crisis, it is useful to remind yourself that you are not more than one big worm, whose prime biological goal is to insert tons and tons of food in your oral cavity and then exercise every day efforts to get rid of waste. This simplification may enlighten blind spot of egotism we normally not aware about.

You and me - we take for granted that others must behave in our best interests at the expense of their own, and reverse things deeply sadden us.

We are hurt in our best feelings that others are not ready to sacrifice for us, moreover they are totally preoccupied with themselves and their demanding tubes, what determines their being and affects their life goals.

When I was child, I often witnessed the process of killing of sacrificial sheep at national Kyrgyz festivities. At first I naively believed that sheep was filled with meat inside, like chocolate rabbit filled with cocoa mass. But anatomy occurred to be eternally complicated. There were long green intestine garlands inside filled with stinking mess.

The intestines of humans are very long too and occupy considerable part of abdominal zone-presenting capacious container for shit.

Our bowels, liver and blood vessels are filled with digested and half-digested waste. We are full of shit, in literal and metaphorical sense.

That is simple.

.It is true, that our healthy attitude toward food is perverted nowadays. In Russian classic literature, we can find examples of primary natural attitude toward food as energy source. Before accepting the new member to the brigade of bargemen, they invited him to meal. The small quantity of consumed food signaled potential poor activity feedback. The women all over the world like to look, how their men eat. There is something touching in fact that males need more calories for normal metabolism. And regular ejaculations demand additional energy recharge. The millions of spermatozoids are energy-transmitting. Usually men feel exhausted after ejaculation, and women, who received energy supply in vagina in the form of semen feel healthy and refreshed. This effect is necessary for possible fertilising and energizing of embryo.

Coming back to digest system, I can only say, that from my point of view connection between taste for good food and sexuality definitely exists. The persons who do not care what and how they eat, normally do not care about quality of other sensual pleasures - taste and smell, touch and visual appreciation of beauty. The best lovers are those who have certain quantity of fat at their bodies, which points to sufficiently developed hormonal level and hedonistic life attitude.

The ability to enjoy good food and creative copulation are connected, it signifies talent to enjoy life in general. During four years of my Austrian immigration, I managed to visit tens and tens of restaurants with my companions, about what special research book can be written.

But it was difficult to enjoy really good eating. The good cooking was very rare, and eating contributed normally only to heartburn and excessive fat layer at the belly. Why that? The answer is simple. The food is mood sensitive. The primary goal of restaurant owners is to sell their products. Nobody really cares about your health and nourishment.

The same with sex.

You feel sexual tension and go to one of 62 Graz bordellos. Young blond girl with big tits and popo instantly arises your appetite and serves you till end.

And you give away your semen, as male reproduction horses do, climbing up at the top of artificial horse female at the farms, but real nourishment and satisfaction nobody guaranties as long as you have paid for your enjoyment.

Truth was that all my ancestors were ruthless meat-eaters for ages, and the same predator appetites boiled in my blood when I eyed cutlets or steaks. But my mind was on the guard. Once I witnessed conditions in which pigs were held before being sent to slaughter. It was not that my partial vegetarian attitude was influenced by youngsters who spread politically engaged propaganda about tormented animals on main Graz square. My motivation for food preferences was self preservation. I could see clearly that the meat available in urban conditions may be often impure, when every piece of schweinsbraten brought consumer in contact with all this poor unhealthy obese animal had devoured during its lifetime and also with chemical staff of slaughter horror which poisoned its flesh long before death.

As many others who lived in scarcity, I was confronted with dilemma to choose between money saving mode health caring mode. As surveys show, the weight of people often correlates with their income not only in America, but also in Europe. Poor people eat more and they are less choosy.

With these thoughts I approached Mangolds – one of the best Graz vegetarian restaurants popular among alternative thinking devotees. These devotees and their

pockets were paramount conquering goals for entrepreneurs, including store owners, educators or restaurant administration of healthy food business. Businesspersons were there for business, not for clients enjoyment as these clients naively assumed, following the rules of exploiting clientele every business had. Meanwhile there were many epigones among collective views supporters striving to look special, having pose, pretence and multiple defences, but defenceless in their core against manipulation and fraud of their own leaders and tribesmen weather they were alternatives, anarchists, dark red, green or blue.

Dietary experiments brought me to realization, that spicy meat food, washed by alcohol drinks may be to great extent responsible for voluptuous, sensual moods of humans, while sexual restrain was often accompanied by restrain of eating habits. One of my male contacts, who confessed visiting the same whore for a number of years in Graz, recalled that she preferred hot, spicy and tasty Chinese food – which helped her to stay moist all the time. Lately I have reread such masterpieces of erotic literature as memoirs of Giovanni Casanova, books of Henry Miller and Charles Bukowski for evidence that wine and exquisite dishes prefaced orgies these males described in their books. Male authors don't linger much at prelude, sensuality or gastronomic details, but with standard similarity depicted pump movements or pump poses of their lust besieged female personages – mostly prostitutes, stimulated by their professional objectives and drinks.

Visiting variety of biological food stores in Vienna, I often face the same problem in all of them. Every time I bite tasteless tomato or peel half-dried orange, the idea of biological purity of these precious products fails to come to my rescue. Taste sensation rebels, demanding unhealthy but appetizing fruits and vegetables for satisfaction - normal products that may be ruinous for body, but not so ruinous for budget.

Lingering indecisively in stores filled with assortment of goods, exotically packed and labelled, I bless good will of producers and their endeavours to save humankind, but eventually difference in prices pushes me to idea that core goal of all deal might be simple exploitation. Such stores and restaurants exploit anxiety of persons striving to be healthy. Anxiety stricken people buy in these stores with hope to get more chances against incurable diseases and overall pollution. They also believe they invest in ecology and don't mind additional expenses. This means healthy food is extravagance not everybody can afford.

I used to visited Mangolds before, fascinated by atmosphere of this canteen and by possibility to combine food of my choice. I felt inspired by idea of belonging to the nature friendly tribe, but after eating, often felt sad, as every meal strained my budget and in fact was harmful for me. Deprived and poor used to stand by sausage kiosks - their consciousness free of exaggerated cares to be slim or to avoid cancer and arteriosclerosis. And Mangolds, in spite of seeming casualty of style, could put segregation signboard "Health food not for all" above the door.

This time I took only three baked potatoes, which as dietary caprice of frugality, lay lonesome in the middle of my plate. Taking my time enjoying it, I suddenly heard sounds of Russian speech behind. Woman in her late forties at the other table was talking on mobile phone.

I came up to her for greeting and short exchange of experiences. Originally from Russian city Samara, Irina lived in Graz for number of years and was married to Austrian man. She worked in one of boutiques of main street as saleswoman, but recently lost her job. Occurrence didn't upset her much, as situation of her husband was rather good.

It must be said that I collect evidences of Russian women in Austria in attempt to

create common portrait of female emigrant: how they accommodate to new conditions and how successful they are in building relationships with Austrians. Only a few days ago in Vienna, I met a girl from Vladivostok, who related me about significant difficulties she endured maintaining serious relationships with Austrians. The same opinion shared other Russian women from Vienna. Nobody could clearly define what was precisely wrong about Austrian men, and why attempts to create stable relationship with them failed.

With Irina it was different case. I was surprised to hear totally new interpretation and classify it as happy life story. She seemed to be quite satisfied with her family life, and told she would never trade her Austrian husband for Russian mate, or would never divorce. She told there were temporary difficulties at the beginning of their mutual life, which she tried to smooth and kept relation at the sunny side of the road. After Irina had gone - in hurry for her new job appointment, I tried to draw out, what was special about this happy story, and only two things seemed to be obvious: Irina was much older than other Russian women, and she lived not in Graz. Vienna is multinational city of communities, and life trajectories of many Russians here are defined by borders of national group interests, while in Austrian provinces the question of integration in Austrian life becomes for women survival factor number one.

The thought was fleeting and elusive as lizard. I chased it, as one can run after wind or rainbow, and caught it holding slick thing tight, but next moment it slipped away giving away the tail as trick of escape. I pinned down these remains – a few helpless words. My mind was up to brims with hundreds of impressions which were too vague and momentary to grasp. If I could convey complete image of my river – that stream of consciousness everybody has, there would be no plot and no story. All stories are not more than forced selections. I could also choose to write in Russian - my mother tongue, and all my contacts are convinced this is the only way to write a story – in your own language. But I don't know anymore what my language is. I had come through drastic transform of identifications. My mind gradually witnesses expansion of itself beyond national borders. I feel myself launched in cosmos where conventional wisdom doesn't work anymore and where stripped of my ex-soviet identity I am free to choose language of my preferences as most suitable symbol system to express my thoughts.

My unsatisfying rendezvous with Mangolds was over, and as I still had much place in my stomach, I decided to pay informal visit to ISOP – one of Graz emigration organizations, where one could get consultation and eat something on relatively low price.

I tried to restore in my memory succession of counsellors I had come in contact with for the last years. Once I lingered for a long time in corridors of Landhaus before gaining enough courage to knock on the door and ask for advice there.

At that time I didn't know yet secret - one must never rely on advice of others. Seeking advice automatically puts you in inferior position and whoever advice givers are – may it be Queen Elisabeth herself – they make suggestions from their own limited viewpoint.

When I found myself inside of office, one of Landtag functionaries was not at all pleased to see me. He sprang to his feet and proceeded to the other room, throwing only one phrase to me – all he had in his rescue inventory: “Zebra! Go to Zebra!”- And I left in bewilderment about true meaning of this animalistic symbol.

I wonder if Zebra, ISOP and similar institutions could stand against billow of

expectations frustrated foreigners could have and if they could provide any solution to them at all. Many emigrants come from the countries where personal influence, and also bribe, including body trade, can solve the issue. They are not aware of fact that in Austria - country of rules and order, personal charms are instantly discarded in juxtaposition to law. Gradually I came to idea that proclaimed objective of average emigration institution was limited by range of information services it provided. Such institution existed as “thing in itself”- in realm of unspoken goals and regulations for emigrants unknown and having little to do with emigration. It existed as compulsory counter-balance in social hierarchy and supported this hierarchy hugely in poverty-friendly and foreigners-friendly institutional disguise.

In search for confirmation of my theories, I used to hang around in boring offices and orgs, trying to see what was behind the scenes. I sniffed the air and listened to muffled voices of officials. I was not interested much in explanations and instructions, perceiving nonverbal entities. In ISOP I strolled along corridors recollecting my first visit here seven years ago. The atmosphere here changed in direction of less pomposity. Then I came to speak to one of counsellors, who just finished buoyant chat with female colleagues, and proceeded less vigorously to his working place. I asked him for employment guidance, for any survival ideas he could think of. I already knew what in accordance with his position he might say, but the real answer I expected to hear was not mere words, which could be more or less formal, the answer was encrypted in his posture and eyes and how he reacted to my problem, in sudden fading of his smile, his body language, which conveyed me truth of equality mythologies, truth that any society needed ground layer of deprived, numb and humble to erect its power on it, that universal reply to all my questions was surrender - submission to natural flow of things. This flow brought foreign women only three alternatives of survival: to wash, to be wife or to make living in nightclub.

After talk I descended in empty dining room, where sulky Egypt woman handed me generous treat of stewed vegetables. When I tipped her for good cooking, subtle smile illuminated this dark face and made it beautiful.

It was bright sunny day of such light and shadow balance that made Graz special for me. Streets were full of tourists. Trams stopped going because of rails reconstruction, what added to common turmoil. I was walking round and round in miraculous way attracting my former contacts to me. Once it was Armenian Elena, with heavy makeup - hurrying on to clean up flat for one of her customers. Then Bulgarian waitress who used to work in Turkish restaurants for 4 euro per hour - bumped against me at Hauptplatz. Russian Tanya with bicycle and hair dyed in pitch black to conceal grey, browsed vicinities and granted me with new story on her family affairs. Girls were glad to talk, but nobody offered me shelter. Perhaps I didn't seek such type of shelter. The least thing I wanted was to restrain somebody's freedom, as I valued mine very high. For all women, and especially those living in stress conditions of emigration, closeness with men and provision for children, were of so paramount value, that friendships could hardly flourish in that severe atmosphere of rivalry and mother obsessions, when two women, if they didn't meet only for chat, were more competitors than companions in struggle for place under the sun. I knew in my heart, that in case of strict emergency, hardships and disaster only men would reply and help me, these senseless, calculating, cold and egoistic Austrian men would suddenly demonstrate compassion and altruism, while women – however sensitive and gentle they were, would withdraw, ruthlessly turning their backs on anything that can even slightly compromise their family interests.

I drank a glass of water in the Russian restaurant in Sporgasse, whose mistress talked with Ukrainian “h” instead of “g” offering solid pricelist of national dishes.

Then I marched to Jakominiplatz, where one of dark red activists at party stand attracted my attention. He smiled at people with natural, soft smile offering them booklets, and when I bent to sign his petition I suddenly saw whole picture in infrared colours. The body of guy was literally gleaming as heated stove against dark background. These reds, after all, some of them – have very good body vibes.

If to keep looking at the shining surface of the teapot or at radiating lamp in the kitchen for some time, the channel can open. Not bigger than lid of teapot, this space swirls and sucks me in parallel world. I push myself through tight hole and then dive deep in unknown as dolphin – in such way I merging with my own thoughts. Through time and space, beyond boundaries of personal history, with picture of myself as 85 years old in hospital ward dying from heart failure and as tiny speck of cell in mother womb, which already had access and contained in coded form all future events as well as billion of other probabilities – so I browse the depth of non-local reality.

When I was university student, the materialism philosophy together with party history occupied VIP chairs of our education. We called ourselves materialists, reciting by heart the main principles of matter dominating over consciousness. We repeated postulates as parrots may do it, sincerely convinced it was also our own paradigm of universe. Only twenty years later I was struck numb to discover many of us were idealists in the core.

Nobody can say where thought comes from; it simply appears in the head. Thoughts have material equivalents in world of form, but they powered by parallel reality. This reality is essence of universe creativity, and eventually not less, but more material than the world of form.

The thoughts seem to be fleeting, unreal, something born without evidence and melts away without trace and consequence, nobody can touch, hear or smell them – crazy comets at the skies of our consciousness. Ideas come and go. Their homeland is mystery, the destination of their escape unknown. But that invisible field were they belong originates all we can see, touch and hear around.

If to see thought as spring or seed of any material events, it would get more respect and attention. Our thoughts come in material world through us, but they don't belong to us as private possessions, they belong to common infinite wisdom field, to spirit that orchestrates universe order.

When you imagine biting apple, saliva fills the mouth. Thought influences body and creates material equivalent of itself.

Wanting to manifest our desires we try to retrieve them from parallel into material world. But why we want this first of all? Is that because we want to experience something in material world what we can not experience in parallel world?

Dreaming to win million, we imagine we would be happy having it. What then happiness is? Joy, ecstasy, euphoria. Large portion of adrenalin rushes in blood, making heart pumping harder, with fierce intensity, hundreds of natural drugs invading blood stream, body feeling light, rising in the air like kite or balloon.

The question is why one needs million euros to feel this. If you can experience bliss without extraordinary outer event, with million in the pocket or not, why then we need special conditions of material world for happiness?

If I enjoy my dreams in parallel world, why I bother myself to force them into form? Why I consider myself to be looser if they fail to appear at right time? If possibility for happiness at all exists, one may be happy without special reason. Physiological mechanisms and body sensations may be the same in case of million and zero bank

account.

So I was dreaming. I lay on mossy bank of the river looking in the sky and listening to rumble of Mur.

There was silhouette of clock tower on horizon. All appeared with perfect grace and precision in my life. I nurtured peaceful loving relationships and benefited from true friendship. I created artistic values which inspired others. I had cosy nest, where I could find peace and dry my damp feathers after rain.

The rain caught me during Schlossberg stroll, and I ran all the way down seeking shelter and found it only in vestibule of house, where I lived before.

Shaking off the drops, I climbed upstairs and entered reception of Berlitz language school. Whenever I asked for job here before, the reply was negative. Perhaps supply and demand of language trainers was always in such disproportion unfavourable for language job seekers, that for five years I was never granted with interview.

If I wasn't sure my education and qualifications were good and might be of use here, I would think it was something wrong with me or my CV.

There were not qualifications, experiences or similar conventional indications of sufficiency that played main role in successful employment. To open the lock key must fit the keyhole. Employee must fit the office, corresponding to unspoken requirements of it. Some administrations could be extremely choosy. To get employed one must demonstrate eagerness for instant transform of giving up old and admitting new point of view as his own. Employments are like roads with one-side movement, or bride kidnapping. They evaluate, they choose or reject you. You are spared of right to choose.

You are horse on the market, whose teeth are inspected on subject of standing against longest and most gainful exploit. With age you loose flexibility, becoming more of stubborn horse: where you mount it, there you dismount it.

After short interaction with secretary, I suppressed deep breath and came down again. There I sat on the steps of stairs looking at drops thumping against glass door. Instantly it opened and one of my former neighbours came in. It was tall thin man in his late fifties, high school teacher in spectacles, who lived alone in one of flats upstairs. I knew nothing of him, except that he was quite, reserved and used to sit in the same café reading newspapers.

As if not seeing me, Erich took out keys and checked his mail box, and then not turning his head round, he told:

- I can give you umbrella, come along with me.

Behind double doors there was spacious, thoroughly curtained flat with little furniture. Old style long windows and high ceiling made room looking like gallery or wax figures chamber, where in dim bulb light figures of Jack Ripper and Great Inquisitor may suddenly open to view around the corner.

Wide, covered by crimson tapestry bed stood in far end of room. And all back wall of it was full of books, such huge home libraries I saw only in former times, and recently only once before, in Kärnten - in family of former Nazi officer, who used to accumulate all possible literature about Adolf Hitler and his lover Eva Braun.

With relaxed gallantry of good host Erich offered me a drink. There was a choice of good red wine in his kitchen, but I made my mind for cup of exclusive tea, about ceremony of making it Erich was aware as experienced tea-drinker.

The rain was still coming down in torrents. The same view on the square below with green umbrellas of guesthouse could be seen from my mansard upstairs. But the

kitchen I was sitting in now seemed totally unfamiliar to me. I sipped the tea observing self-possessed, but inwardly embarrassed Erich. He played with his tea-spoon, studied his hands, the ash-tray and all objects scattered at surface of table, as if avoiding my glance, and yet in great inner thirst to be watched. I knew if I reach out my hand and touch his unshaved cheek or run my fingers over his gray hair; the story would take other turn. Sudden awareness of my gender powers, hardly gained by price of strained efforts and bitter life experiences, having little in common with my mental traits, but given to me from the start in one pack with female contours, as they may be granted to small gipsy beggar in the street, who knows nothing of the world, but small round orbs of breasts already jump up and down under her shirt - this thought was sweet and sad. Whatever males said and however conquering they might see their role in game between genders, the critical decision of approach was to be made by females.

Erich face kept traces of arrogance and humility at the same time. Like many other males with no wife or girlfriend, thrown on mercy of occasional partner seekers or paid concubines, he hated inexplicable and irrational essence of female nature and he adored their bodies. Fatal loneliness seemed to be written on his high forehead. However strange it was, I often observed such loneliness among representatives of teaching profession, as if meeting people every day could be easily accompanied by social numbness and self defeating communicative strategies.

But could my story really take other turn and depict happy end with me, dreamer, finding bliss in arms of history teacher or any other man?

I saw many books on sexuality in Erich's home library, signaling he belonged to that cohort of men with whom intellectual talk on delicate subjects didn't mean threat of harassment and rape.

Always highly critical about institute of marriage, Erich kept distances with females and went on alone to prevent any violation of his private space. Females of his world were there only for formal contact or for sex, and gender interactions were seen by him in terms of lust. He truly believed that not only men, but also women in relationship searched first of all for release of their sexual instincts. He had 20-years old son, contact with whom and his mother he didn't support, because of broken marriage promise in the past. Lately he fell in love with one of his contacts, young pretty woman, whom he desired with all his heart. But relationship turned out to be complete failure, as woman, willingly sustaining friendship with Erich, refused to sleep with him.

Unhappy relationship and unfulfilled wishes often carry the mask of fatality, undeserved punishment, something you can not apprehend. But there is always the sort of mental mistake to any suffering, crooked logic of ego, which not easy to pin down. Crooked logic poisons consciousness with hypnotic refrains about what others really are. The time passes on, and you leave your old shell as snake leaves the skin. And glimpse of truth comes as relief that there is never one common reality, there are only hardened patterns and distortions of individual perception. If Erich could only apply this relativity theory to his own life when he expected young unmarried woman to provide sex for him on grounds of erotic satisfactions, which he thought every female searched and was crazy about.

I tried to imagine, how my world would change in accordance with Erich female portraiture. I would instantly obtain unlimited access to fulfilment of my strongest desires. It would be fantastic world – with apricot skies and strawberries growing richly on both sides of the road. Wet with constant desire, at every street corner, in every café I would pick up men and bring them home for quick copulation. One piercing hypnotic glance, high-heels and short skirts, coquettish posture, mysterious

smile, glass of wine – all that staff would be enough to captivate them. No hidden prices, no traps, no consequences. Only passionate pussycat and her piece of ass! They would not deny, as people don't deny free advertising gifts in the street. The visitors would wait in line downstairs, police pacifying bold pensioners with beer bellies who tried to monopolize the place. I would become champion of fulfilled wishes, more distinguished than any billionaire or rock-star.

If any woman explorer was there primary for sex rewards, what was sense for her to go so far and sustain painful complicated relationships with mature men of spiritual and intellectual virtues, who lost their freshness a few decades ago, when young exciting performance paradise of occasional male partners in their thirties and even twenties was always available? Unshakable believes in sexual greediness of females made the whole Erich formula of relationship phantasmagorical.

If I could touch Erich's cheek in that flat – homeless wanderer caught by the rain, we would merge at that broad, covered by crimson clothe bed, him – lonely man with hidden throb for violent intercourse, and me – forlorn woman searching for safety in prime of her forties. To kiss, to embrace, to strip myself nude, to lay down and open legs, to caress, to suck, to let him in, to accelerate his strokes and breath, to bring him to the peak...then to get up, to wash out any trace of intrude, to put on cloth, to say a few phrases and leave.

Nothing would change. I would have the same breasts, same pace and expression of wistfulness on face. And only later something would eclipse the sun. My true self would revolt - humiliated, betrayed and thrown in swamp of despair.

The secret of happiness was to give happiness, but not on expanse of your self. The secret of happiness was known for centuries by conventional wisdom and was formulated by sayings, proverbs, folk songs and granny tirades. When seeking love – be love.

Once classic of Russian literature Leo Tolstoy was asked what in his opinion sin was. He told that making sex wasn't sinful by itself. Sin was to make sex and withdraw from response for consequences of it.

Erich gave me black ancient umbrella with massive handle, one spoke of which was broken. But when I came out, the rain was already over, and it was smell of somebody's cigar and promise of clear night in the air.

If sitting in my Vienna flat, one looks outside, all he can see is dusty grey wall of dwelling house across with five rows of watchful windows. The martyrs of big cities, sentenced to lifelong imprisonment in cubicles of offices or industrial units, trapped in elevators, packed in underground trains side to side as herrings in tin can, bothered in noisy parks and streets by presence of others - the only place of privacy and silence we can enjoy is the small cement box of our own flat with all doors and windows shut down, with radio and TV switched off – in breaks between growling fits of refrigerator and washing machine. Yet silence and peace still unreachable, when sudden space of emptiness is filled with cacophony of our own thoughts. The best protection for humans against destructive noise invasion is to participate in pollution. People talk loud on phones in public transport, shout at one another and go on with deafening chats, many pollute atmosphere with political speeches, reports, moralizing outbursts and other forms of highly poisonous monologues – making others suck in the verbal waste of their liberated self. Those who can not use speaker's rostrum, clean themselves attacking spouse or visiting self-help groups where they can scream and kick pillows with broom stick.

As I have no companion to assault, and my neighbours - elderly ladies greeting me politely with full expose of artificial jaws on staircase, may be disturbed by loud singing in bathroom, the only escape I have is to howl on the moon how predators of forests do it.

If I go to nearby park my howling privacy is disturbed by dog owners trotting along the alleys - their pets barking at me. If I howl on balcony looking at disk of the moon rising above antennas and chimneys, the heads of elderly ladies instantly stick out of upper and lower rows of windows as heads of turtles in mating season. The only solution is to shut myself up in wardrobe at home, and there crutching among clothes with anti-moth smells to wail on imaginary moon to my satisfaction.

Recently Hansi gave me a call and promised to show me the best place in Vienna available for howling.

Hansi is stout smoothly shaved unemployed photographer, who has strong body odour and talks non-stop as radio with air of authority giving eloquent comments on anything that reaches his eardrums, including my Russian singing and queries about idiosyncrasy of Western life I do addressing myself (in broken German and with word "shit" in the end of every phrase)

Hansi meekly waited for me at tram stop - in canary shirt neatly buttoned, with hairy belly bulge peering out in intervals between. We took number 49 tram and soon arrived in place distantly resembling forest.

There I started from sacred "A-a-a" and proceeded to holy "Om", and Hansi accompanied me, three steps behind, suddenly seized by one of his talking fits. In breaks between yowls I could catch the scraps of phrases pouring from him behind: shit Austrian government, terror of social-democracy, corrupted whores of power, and screams: - Let me out! If I am too old for employment, why you don't let me retire?

In the end of tour Hansi became so excited about world environment problems, militarists, islamists, and bureaucrats who denied him minimal Austrian pension, that we could not take commute tram.

Irrepressible chatter-boxes and those talking loud in public and monopolizing common space must be restricted as smokers. Silence, security and privacy - this is what we need to feel us at home.

Graz was there – on the tips of my fingers and yet unreachable. After fruitless wandering around, I felt so tired that seriously considered to spend my last money for hotel room, where I could fall down and go asleep.

The bell of cathedral struck nine. The doors of nearest restaurant, which was familiar to me, were wide open, and sounds of music, laughter, delicious smells were streaming outside.

I stopped for a moment recollecting past gone days and all that was connected in my memory with that place: steaks, potato wedges, Che Guevara on the wall, billiard, and place behind the bar, where engraved word "Galina" was still visible at the corner of the table.

Somebody went out and greeted me. It was retired salesman Derek, with whom we used to eat free presentation sandwiches at painting exhibitions in Graz before. He was a little bit tipsy, but glad to see me.

We started talking, and he offered me to stay in one of spare rooms in his flat, where his German niece used to spend nights sometimes.

I thanked him and told I took the vow to sleep alone. He laughed and offered me a drink.

It was spacious flat in tall living house. The long balcony with cactus gallery let spectator see all Graz below – with dark silhouette of castle, dimly shining ribbons of

roads and blinking garlands of vicinities.

Woman is like a cat, she may be attached to the place of living. Woman is like earth, she values simple joys and nourishment. She is like tree – stays there in silence and keeps her secrets.

Spare room contained no furniture except small old sofa where I stretched with greatest pleasure, but soon got invitation from Derek to watch last of Mister Bean films, which always enjoyed.

We settled in big drawing room in front of TV in two broken arm-chairs. Derek looking pathetically old and shabby in his stretched track suit, with dim eyes and free skin swinging back and forth under his chin, opened his third bottle of beer.

Soon I was surprised to discover that distance between our chairs was changing, as if Derek had been slowly pulled in my direction together with furniture by invisible force. For a while I forgot about that carried away by one of Rowan Atkinson tricks, and startled when cold, moist and trembling hand touched me.

- Didn't you dream to get erotic massage from me? - Whispered old man exhaling beer steams in my face.

I could see that his thin blue lips were wet, and saliva was dropping down from the corner of his mouth at his stained track trousers.

Moment later I sprang to my feet and rushed out in confusion. Feeling pursued, trapped! Trapped in strange place - lonely traveller with nothing, except silly dreams. To run away? To jump down from balcony? I was in anguish, my thoughts scattered, moving back and forth, grasping rucksack, shoes, and pyjama and then dropping them all at the floor. Why in the world contact with the body could be of such high value for men? They were ready to deny the only place where seeds of love could grow - the soul, always ready for prompt intrusions. Weird women sleep with grotesque men! Can such amorphous non-material things as sympathy, compassion and gratitude stand against touchable, visible piece of flesh in man's bed?

I moved to the door and then froze in amazement. Hysterical laughter took hold of me, I fell on sofa laughing. There was lock on the door. And I could lock myself in! Next day Derek looked quiet and embarrassed, and I even had morning coffee with him, forgiving old man his delusions.

Later I spent a few hours more in Graz feeling something like pain in my heart before taking train to Vienna.

I am sitting at the bench in dusty scanty garden in vicinities of Schmelz Bridge, hearing clang of trains passing by and looking at thin dirty pigeons mating at the lawn. Males unfurl their feathers, spread the tails, coo and spin in self-absorption – more fascinating for themselves than for females who never stop pecking around. If object of courtship ignores erected tail or even escapes indignantly, dancer with the same gusto moves to next one in the flock, when at last somebody – with softer disposition yields to his insistency and let cavalier pinch and mount on the top of her, what terminates ritual. The business is over for male, but for female it is only beginning – to let new life grow, to take care of eggs, to feed and protect nestlings – what an ordeal!

I would read about habits and life of lions in savannas, where male role in spite of his scary looks, was often limited by mating functions, while females would take care of cubs and hunt providing for all pride.

I was often brooding over such injustice. There was also inequality stored by nature for humans: women gave birth, raised children and were like domestic slaves –

condemned to double working shift – in office, factory and at home, with spouses retired in the evening at sofa in front of TV.

According to recent surveys and sociological research, migration of cheap working force - women for domestic service, from third world countries is connected with increased professionalism of women in the West, and with the fact that unequal input of male and female in home work, was not much influenced by change of traditional roles of males as the only breadwinners in the family. By other words, does woman spend more time in office than man or not, his contribution in home work is always smaller, and if family does not hire clean-lady or nanny (who in some cases provide also sex), the plates would stay unwashed.

History of humankind marked by conflict between tribes and nations used to give women submissive role of child-cares and servants of males. Even now many males subconsciously expect to be served at home and in bed. Partnership is crib where love may be born and raised, but for women it also means contraception problems, abortions, far to be pleasurable visits to gynaecologists, kitchen quarrels, jealousy and violence, including passive aggression of sour mien and strained silence, feelings of self-esteem and independence lost and everyday burden of domestic work.

I could also vividly imagine what many women feel, when their partner lays beside in blissful relaxation after sexual act. They feel invaded, dominated, used, consumed, possessed, they feel they are positioned under man from now on – in literal and metaphorical sense, they are subject to male authority, to his criticism, reproach, scolding, control and ridicule, to his patronizing attitudes, jealousy, anger and wish to erect his self-esteem on base of her humility; act of copulation changes in magical way balance of forces; from now on her sovereignty is subject to male's ego. After sexual act woman may feel she provided her body to man in attempt to maintain emotional bond, and male had nourished himself without expressing gratitude, he consumed her as he could consume any other female in his immediate disposition, without praise to her sacrifice and individuality.

For long I wondered why universal order was organized in such unfavourable for female way.

Nature could not be other than harmonious, wise and beautiful in all its forms.

Deep meanings were concealed from my eyes. I would read memoirs and autobiographies, classics of world literature, listen to narratives of my associates and take in account scientific healthcare and psychological research – to know more on relationships and try to find answer to my questions. Did really universal intelligence, for which all were equal: male, female, spider, bird, cucumber or mammoth tree, - mean to promote the favourites?

And only yesterday, when I was reading stories of Anais Nin – wonderful female author of past century, whose art of erotic tease and knowledge of human nature were deep and could outdo praised skilfulness of erotic male authors, suddenly brought me to the brim of insight. It was customary to read male narrators of erotic trend, with their poor detail and vaguely described emotions of personages, but with direct intercourse portraiture, poorly varied. Now I was witnessing what was going on between man and woman from female point of view, and was shaken by this genuine, subtle, superbly erotic revelation. Nin's lover Henry Miller with all his cynical frankness was lamb comparing to her insatiability and sensual power. It became already dark in the room, but I could not stop reading and switch on the light. I was afraid to ruin sensations transmitted to me. Even if the ceiling fell down at the moment, I would continue reading. At last my eyes reached the last line and I closed the book.

Now I found the answer to question that bothered me for so long time: why only

lionesses hunted? They hunted, because they didn't separate themselves from cubs, and therefore when hungry, were 5 times hungrier than lions.

And lions were busy recreating themselves. The common male function was to nurture vital energy within themselves and then transfer it to female as best part and essence of their individuality. Not only semen, but even kisses and touch of mating male contained that vitality, his DNA, his liquids and electromagnetic fields mirrored all he had experienced and achieved; they mirrored his creative and intellectual potential, his aspirations, all his victories and losses - in chemical compounds of his semen, in invisible force of his mating spirits was all he could give of himself.

Female function was to accept that precious gift, let it fuse with her own life and allow it to grow. Many women in partnership don't suspect they borrow many things from their mates in the course of sleeping together - with the semen, with breath and touch of intercourse. Man transfers to his woman lust, aggressiveness, prompt to be untrue, wish to go on risks, to be competitive, ruthless, to be less selective about partners and to value performance of sexual act over emotional and erotic merits.

If you want to be completely responsible for all you feel, you must keep to yourself. Many may think that older people have no sex because they lost their sexual attractiveness for others. But real reason lays deeper. Accumulation of experiences and inner evolution brings us to the point, when sovereignty and tranquillity of mind start to play primary role.

I remember meeting artist Walter in front of Sackstrasse gallery, where he stopped for a while to say hello to Graz ex-politician Tatiana – small buoyant gregarious woman with bleached hair, accompanied by man of provincially reputable looks. Walter was going to his cramped stinking studio, opposite of stylish Marko office. He had the same shabby portfolio, the same beret on baldhead and the same reflective look as a few years ago, and was not at all surprised to see me again, as if we had friendly chat at the same place only yesterday. Life of guesthouse artist, according to Walter narrations, was constant struggle for survival, which he never considered to give up since his adulthood. He expressed patronizing attitudes towards younger freelancers, eager to share his own experiences with them, and every time I accompanied him in our walks, he would now and then show whim for promotion, ceremoniously introducing me to all we had occasionally met:

- This is Galina. Very good photographer, but has no money at all to live on.

After such preface all people involved, except of promoter himself in his seedy checked jacket, felt instantly uneasy - pedestrians hurriedly resumed their walk and I tried to recover from metamorphose of turning into one big red shrimp of embarrassment.

All our friends' recommendations, advice and assistance are not more than extensions of their self in this world. Even neutral objects of their possession carry auras of their personalities, not speaking already about vibrations of non-material things.

Moreover, every rescue technique they offer embodies limitations of their mind.

Along with shameless promotion, Walter practiced to share with me his assignments, which I could hardly use to my benefit.

- Your advantage is ability to see, - Walter used to say, - and majority of people are blind as moles.

I did not feel flattered at all aware that nature gives equal portions to all. Painters and photographers may have eyes for detail. However, they may be mute as fish or have cloth ears.

As Charles Bukowski put it, if something is worse than whore, it is bore. Never stop contemplating the fact, that many personages of older generation develop tendency to become gradually deaf. Initial virtual root of this deficiency, giving full bloom to malady and even disability, is rigidity of mind that automatically excludes necessity to listen to opinion of others.

Walter talked about one well-known Graz architect seeking aspiring photographers for his new projects, and felt himself benefactor giving me such valuable a hint, in spite of me producing bird chirp and mosquito buzz denying intimate closeness to architecture photography.

The prospect to earn money! Who would stand against it?

My own brother – habitual consumer of “kasha” (porridge) living in one of Russian provinces and condemning deficit, tyranny of authorities, cataclysms and mocking fate of national heredity - like millions of other ex-soviet citizens, finds himself now in very poor health, but even at his deathbed he never withdraws from moralizing whenever me, poor, collect enough courage talk to him:

- Galya, if you don't grab opportunity to earn money at once, you will always sit by broken washtub. What the hell you are doing in Austria?

Broken washtub is symbol borrowed from poet Pushkin fairy tale about woman who wanted too much and eventually stayed with nothing.

It would be insincere to say I don't want to have more money. Who would deny importance of resources for further development? Who would deny value of autonomy only money can give? I really strive for independence! The problem is the conflict of motives, when money matters are compromised.

Not long ago I got acquainted with one nice middle-aged woman here in Vienna. We used to surf on Internet together during our obligatory job-seeking course. Angela was of the same age as me, but of higher reasonability. In her opinion the only right decision woman in her forties could do was to seek for regular employment and be glad with anything, as frantic passenger glad to get any place in the last train of his destination. She herself used to work as gallery watcher, receptionist, salesperson and what not.

Drinking coffee from plastic cup and looking at the wall watch again and again only to notice clock hand did not move, and time of formal obligations did not expire, she would say:

- Please realize you are not young anymore, and you have nobody to scratch your back at home. Stop talking nonsense about creativity when you are sitting by the road with stretched hand, and become breadwinner at last. Awake from your illusions to face the reality!

It was not the first time that my companions would convince me that their own reality was the only one all others, except of me, shared.

If I draw a straight line on the sheet of paper, I have already one of meaningful symbols by hand. If to keep in mind that there is no beginning or end to it, and that space can be unfolded in both directions, then any given point there may be considered as centre of infinity. If such centre of creation is my observable body – 165 cm height, 51 kg weight - that in fact is only frame for nothingness inside, cosmos extends eternally outside as well as inside of me.

To follow formal rules and obligations one must struggle to align yourself to outer world neglecting inner one. All information about my unworthiness, including negative evaluation of my skills, age, gender, nationality, race, personal qualities,

verdict on my employment and relationship unsuitability – all this comes from outside, opposing my own personal beliefs with pompous audacity of false prophecy. Why giving such priorities to outer cosmos getting most valuable things like life fuel, support and love from inside?

Why I must believe to all I am told? They say I am woman. Is it true? They say I am unknown author living in Vienna. Is that true? How moon rays can be identified through specific genitals? What others say may be result of their highly subjective perception and interpretation - turned in tremendously distorted, amputated cliché. Any job I may instantly grab with purpose to earn money does not make me automatically worthier. The problem is I want to be happy. If I do something, I want to do it passionately.

We create chain of treasure towns in sphere of thought. They are as real as solid objects, yet imperceptible as energy vibrations. The proof of genuineness and worthiness of creation is not necessarily in its visibility. All originated by our mind, has its own structures and evolves independently in parallel world, incomprehensible and non-existent for others. Accustomed to judge others by visible attributes of their identities, in our self-esteem we rely on opinion of others, hardly known by them. All I want to achieve in material world, already achieved by me in world of my mind, and all I strive to get already belongs to me in that world. Every strong desire is only wish to rejoin with myself.

In human society, any parallel values must be validated by material manifestation. Incapable to bring my parallel world in conformity with conventional reality, perplexed, bewildered, lost - I tried to catch straw and trust to opinion of competent others again.

With this intention I applied for consultation in Vienna economy chamber (WWK) In one of its offices, experienced consultant greeted me warmly on the day of my appointment. He had that kind of Nordic nose dominating at the face that always made me freeze in awe.

He listened to my story about failed endeavour to set up international media in Vienna with condescending sympathy for a few minutes. He was there not for listening stories, but for giving wise, competent and ready-made advice.

- One could try to publish Vienna news in Papua or Eskimo language as well, - told advice giver caressing his magnificent nose, - Entrepreneur must keep the eye on actual market demands. At your place, I would give up and seek employment in educational institution.

He also told, that pitfall of creative work is dependence on potential buyer. If pictures and books nobody buys, creative value of masterpiece is equal to zero, and huge time-energy investments are lost. In world of purchase evaluations, all that failed to be paid for, failed to exist.

I thanked man heartily for advice, though it aroused only more doubt, and left imposing building. My thoughts were scattered.

What if he is right and only way for me is to sell myself in tuition slavery of serving others without devotion and sweating through paid hours in one of educational institutions? I instantly saw myself in role of language trainer poisoned by excessive communications and with aching jaw after talking loud a few hours per day as cheaper substitute for CDs. There is something devious to verbalizing: you can think or talk, but never both.

Later on my way to one of language schools, where I had to undergo interview, I recollected time, when once I tried to work as teacher in one of Moscow schools. Russian education system had chronic staff deficiency at the time, and teaching was profession poorly estimated and paid. The headmaster of very first school where I

emerged eagerly seized opportunity to engage me as English literature teacher, though my qualifications failed. Later I realized why great knowledge of subject was not key matter in the business.

Dressed in long skirt, I appeared at the square in front of the school, where a few hundreds of pupils, parents and teachers gathered to rejoice beginning of new academic year. Squeezing bunch of half-withered flowers with trembling hands, I looked apprehensively at row of children in front of me trying to memorize faces of my future 13-years old students. My throat was seized with anxiety and I could hardly speak.

The first teaching day was such a shock - I stopped to eat and sleep. After a week, I saw my life was awful torture, and in a month, I decided to escape at any cost.

The compulsoriness of education, new moods of anarchy and liberation brought by political agenda, disorder and impunity - turned teenagers in unruly monsters, which preferred to spend time in classroom to their own satisfaction. Moreover, they got used to such disciplinarian tool as piercing screams of other teachers, which I failed to apply.

I felt being trapped in one cage with forty wild animals, deprived of basic freedoms, ready to bully, tease and tramp over any adult who captivated them.

In my anguish, I lost naivety of ignorance and realized what essentials of teaching profession were.

The principal function the teacher was there to fulfil brought him in one row with wardens of prisons; teacher was there not for enlightening, but for suppressing, not for conveying new knowledge, but for bringing pupils through hard discipline experiences.

All I had to do was to shape personalities of teenagers in certain way and make them to surrender to adult power, yield to authorities, I was there to give children first idea what society rules of control, hierarchy and suppression would be for them in the future.

I was still speculating about teaching issue. Before and after my school experiment I came to know many specimens of this profession. Memory readily offered me extensive inventory.

Once a student of Kyrgyz University, I fell in love with the teacher of old Slavic literature. He was big man in long belted blouse with black beard, doctorate and that sort of sad eyes, which seemed to convey eternal sorrow of all Jewish people. I hardly ever spoke to Professor in person. However, whenever he emerged in long corridors or lecture halls, I perceived his presence by change of light around me - place seemed to be instantly illuminated by soft miraculous glow. I knew he was in proximity of my radars by feeling of delight that overwhelmed me. It lifted me above rows of chairs to glide there together with specks of dust dancing in sunbeams.

Once two fellow students, we accompanied Professor in his meditative walk along ash tree alley, and it deeply touched me, how he kept silence puffing on his pipe to encourage us to speak.

As inexperienced speaker, I imagined that lecturer saw his audience as undifferentiated crowd with blended identities and concealed private attitudes, and could not possibly distinguish me. When in reality lecturer saw in front of him not a crowd, but variety of individualities, therefore, he quickly set me apart from hundreds of others. My eyes traced every move of Professor like sunflower following the sun.

When coming back home I studied philology diligently making breaks only for cleaning chores and for short walk in vicinities. Whenever I had opportunity to stay alone, what was rare case in our busy flat of six persons including mom, I listened to Bach concerts thinking of Professor. My cousin – plump Tatar woman, who visited piano classes in conservatory, was ironical about strict selectivity of my music preferences denying all except grandeur of Bach music.

I was 22 years old bookworm of a girl without any idea of intimate relationship, my complete ignorance in titillating sphere compensated by scraped medical knowledge from anatomy textbooks. Soviet era was time of information vacuum on equivocation subjects, no frivolous books, journals or pictures were available for tormenting by curiosity youngsters, and all suggestive scenes were cut out from Western films on TV – to keep all young communist league members in reproductive and marriageable state of mind. When fuelled by exceptional lust or investigative enthusiasm, one could search counselling of older friends and listen to horror stories about non-stop foetus hunt of Soviet abort clinics, but brought up in purity of family orientated girlhood, many of us felt dubious about such investigations.

However covert, first deep infatuation did not associate in my mind with shadowy side of life. Quite the opposite. There was nothing forbidden or shameful here. In my imagination I approached the man with pipe million times only to touch his shoulder or to look steadily in his eyes. All my dreams terminated at that place, like those romantic films clipped by soviet censure. I could not invent what would come next. The very act of tentative approach, inspired by platonic urge to unite, was pure bliss by itself demanding no continuation and no physical merge. I never tried to fantasize, how Professor might look without trousers, though twenty years later I would do it. How his private parts looked was of no importance at the time, in delirium of emotional bond I managed to reach such levels of closeness where our anatomic body varieties belonged to nobody in particular, yet to both of us.

If life could give me no chance other than prospect to see my hero and listen to him sometimes, I would be completely gratified. Nothing taking place between man and woman on earthly prosaic plane could stimulate more closeness than, it seemed to me, I already shared with him.

I volunteered to write annual research under Professor supervision, and closer to the end of academic year, he invited me to visit him and discuss deficiencies of my manuscript.

He lived quite close to university in old brick house with decorated windowpanes and small garden of walnut trees. Big living room was spare of furniture except of writing table and couple of armchairs. Books, literary magazines and sheets of paper were scattered everywhere, occupying table, big part of floor and windowsill. Row of empty bottles stood along the wall. Room kept stale smell of tobacco, soiled cloth and beer yeast. Professor's stretched tracksuit and ketchup stained shirt made him look like enthusiastic red-faced men associating by wine kiosks.

I felt perplexed and bewildered about actual unexpected manifestation of my dreams. Professor seemed to be unwilling to discuss literary matters too, and after strained talk, we moved to kitchen.

There he suddenly embraced me, and I went through one of the most shocking sensuality experiences of my life. I felt how sticky rough thing, perhaps his tongue, keeping smell of onions and tobacco, used to touch my lips with quick snake-like movements, and then tried to make a way between my teeth.

Whole thing was sensation of awkwardness and embarrassment, of forced effort. Feeling of closeness disappeared. Bliss gave place to fear. Adoration faded and turned in contempt. Professor managed to unclench my jaws, and his tongue dripping now

with saliva penetrated inside of my mouth and wiggled there like big worm. I felt wetness spreading on my cheeks, and blinked in disgust ready to use sleeve of dress as napkin, in spite of politeness and empathic considerations.

Tongue manipulations excited Professor and reminded him other action he craved, which I instinctively dreaded. He mumbled:

- You do not know how to kiss properly, how to do things properly.

Then professor lifted me up as doll or bundle of laundry and carried to sofa in the corner of the room, but the moment my shoulders touched the cool leather, I jumped to my feet as if pushed up by spring of colossal force.

I escaped from brick house in confusion, with feeling of victory and loss in the heart, forgetting my manuscript, my umbrella and my dreams in Professor's room.

I had never chance again to tell him it was my first kiss. Professor gave me his last good lesson. Best teachers are those who do not mean they are.

The moment comes, when you simply stop enjoying yourself. Austrians say you lose your "Lebenslust"- love of life. Motivation formulas – like "our circumstances reveal us" and "what happens to me is only extension of myself"- easily applicable to others, are of poor self-help against something looking like uncontrollable enigmatic ill fate patterns. Graz emigration hardships exceeding my accommodation abilities resulted in my spirits falling to darkest pits of despair, or rising up to the stars of exhilarating joy.

Convinced in overall superiority of Western life style and values over ex-soviet praxis, I came to Austria as bursting with suppressed energy searcher, curious and eager to deserve those basic rights others already had and did not appreciate their treasure as air, they inhaled. However, exaggerated vigour of newcomer evaporated with time and I became as dispassionate and listless as majority of Europeans around. Existing in the world of metaphors, symbols and cryptic meanings, I would see every pendulum clock and every children playground swing as symbol of joy and sorrow fluctuations. A swinging weight was like gains and losses oscillation model, like paradigm of universal dichotomy. Dark and light modes followed one another in perfect order and equilibrium and the angle of positive swing defined degree of consequent negative one. Great trouble and good fortune were only prolongations of one another and were sway extremes. The European economic stability and social security were a blessing for emigrant. They meant to pacify the sway of all possible private pendulums. Benefit of neutrality made pendulums move back and forth on smaller scales - closer to zero. Neutrality and absence of radical fluctuations originated monotony and inertia. Westerners getting good nourishment, and excellent medical care, but spared of struggle for survival felt bored, useless and tired. People in countries of turmoil and poverty, of radical change - were exposed to devastation and chaos, which in strange way, made people more appreciative of life value and happier. Brain chemicals in state of mental disorder, drugs and alcohol amplify the mood swings. The moments of darkest despair are fee for ecstasy. Avoiding pain, suffering, hard effort, struggle and discomfort of change, we avoid also many blissful and pleasurable experiences. Many people around impress me as having sort of depression or chronic fatigue. Whatever they do, it seems they never enjoy it fully. Existing for many years in comfort zone, they feel fed up with all. Such environment is highly favourable for boom of penny-wisdom mediocrities. To become such mediocrity one needs only to lose contact with source of life and survival necessities and submit completely to consumerism of civilized world...

