SPASM OF ACCOMMODATION

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PURVEYOR OF POETRY & OTHER ANTAGONISMS

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Everything Involving the Days of the Week

1.
This year, no kisses
This year, only language courses,
New plastic cards and putting oneself
in awkward positions

We can happily conclude:
Today the concept of freedom prevails

2.
Spill information
like money.
It seems that in the past
almost nothing was needed
to believe
in something

Action has such a bad name
that it's better to give it up

3.
Everything involving the days of the week,
seasons, languages, and trees, is masculine.
But this does not concern you

Since here there's nearly always a fog,
the mountains and the lake,
betrayed by the window,
still have to be imagined
rather than observed

4.
The books tower like ruins
in front of him as he's carried forward,
but also turn backward toward
the wayward angel of reading

Sometimes it helps to imagine
what became of
your former classmates,
as one Russian artist put it.
but even that won't work for long

5.
Another world is possible
the activists admonish us
as do the analytical philosophers,
as they substitute the relevant implicature
and abolish the bourgeois class, respectively.
activists, who understand nothing of philosophy,
and Analytical philosophers
who are finishing up their treatises,
let's say, in 1945.

6.
Then
you will settle in the cultural milieu
and create your own language,
but first you must walk over the heads
with a light step, in a white crown

case in point, to translate the stories of refugees
for the police, in language that makes sense to them,
i.e. to give away their language,
as in the case of any
translation—to betray,
then afterwards, out of this, you can also
construct the entire artistic world,
an enterprise that is likewise not prophitless.

Translator's Note

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE THINGS
WAS, PERHAPS, MADE AT ANOTHER TIME

— L. Wittgenstein

King's College is on fire.
Don't talk nonsense.
What is the object of your desire?
I want Mr. Smith to walk into this room.
Are you sure that that is exactly what you want?
Of course, I am bound to know what I want.
Don't talk nonsense.
I want for this and this to happen.

That which you believe in is not a fact.

I feel fear.
I am afraid of something, but I don't know what.
Wherever you were, you must get
from wherever it was
to the place from which you left.

Why do you assume that your toothache corresponds to the fact
that you hold your cheek.
…

There most certainly exist entirely determined actions,
ideas about
another person sensing pain.

I was never taught
to correlate the depth of water underground
with the sensations in my hand,
but when I feel a certain tension,
the words "3 feet" immediately appear
in my consciousness.

Well, of course red exists,
and you are bound to see it,
if you are capable of imagining.

An increase in pressure on my eyes
produces red images.

King's College is on fire.
Don't talk nonsense.
I want this and this to happen.

In that case what a strange mechanism
our desire must be,
if we can desire that
which will never be fulfilled.

Of course, that's not all,
but you can come up with more
complicated cases, if you want.

But we are bound
we will speak further
of the significance of the expression
"forgetting the meaning of a word"

Translator's note:
This was actually never
Done.

This Page Does Not Exist

No not Great Method — Ghost's mate
This isn't Skandiaka, and it won't be Ochirov either

"This page does not exist".

It seems really strange to me
that revolutionaries used to be summoned
to completely destroy the old culture,
to toss from ships and so son,
while nowadays that which is usually called
civil society
is primarily engaged in protecting
the butt-ends of the city and ruinised artefacts.

"Trusted methods to get to nowhere"
"People are dying for metal" –
sang Magomaev and Agatha Christie

"A metal allergy" – my roommate says.
I have no idea where he works
He almost never leaves his room.

One time I accidentally broke his door
With my head.

We were just dancing
in the corridor.

“If you think we brought you here for a reason”

there won’t be any more colourful bonfires
of books on squares.
Just every once in a while error
#404 will appear on individual users’ screens:

The page you are reading does not exist.

Trusted methods to get to nowhere:
write рудз.yandex.ru instead of help.yandex.ru
(download and install Punto Switcher,
if you don’t want to keep making that mistake)
Another potential method —
To write inex.html, idnex.html or index.htm instead of index.html

If you think we brought you here for a reason
by putting up the wrong link,
send us that link at: 404@yandex-team.ru.

But if you really want to find something on the Internet,
use the following Yandex search:

and remember: you didn’t read this.

Examination

Using the given poem as an example,
We will once again see how
Political declarations
Included in a work of art
Straighten out,
Simplify
And remove the work
From aesthetic space,
Transfer it onto a different plane.

We will see that the author
Will attempt
To express his political
Views and convictions,
Clumsily disguising them
In an aesthetic form.
While the objective qualities of the latter,
According to many experts,
Will necessarily be revealed as
Significantly lower,
Than if he were to just do what he knows
And just write poems
Seeking out his own style
And his own place in the literary process.

If the author were, for a start,
To slightly restrain his arrogance,
To read some classics,
Study some at the faculty of philology,
Where they certainly know how to inculcate love for them,
He would realize the full incompatibility
Of politics and art,
And only afterwards
Would try
To compose something of his own
Ideally in a derivative spirit,
Then we would actually be able
To talk about poetry here.
But in this case
We cannot allow ourselves
To talk about poetry.

We will also see that the author
Will have to acknowledge
Right in the text of the poem
The total groundlessness of his own claims,
However we will also be able to follow
His inevitable attempts
To somehow wriggle out,
Resorting to such concepts
Alien to Russian poetry
As conceptualism,
Postmodernism etc.

Furthermore, we will see the author
In the given poem
In blasphemous fashion flouting
The foundations of Russian syllabo-tonic verse,
Laid down by such great men
As Lomonosov, Derzhavin, Zhukovsky
And, of course, Pushkin

From which we will be able to conclude,
That the author probably cannot boast of
A truly patriotic relationship
To our great two-hundred-year-old
Russian culture.

Bearing in mind all of the above,
As well as the fact that the author
Has resorted to the use of
Forbidden symbols,
Exploiting hatred towards
The social group “the authorities”
And, finally, has been noticed
At gatherings of certain ultra-leftist groups,
We can conclude that
These pathetic aesthetic exercises
Do indeed contain an extremist component,
And that he himself can be convicted
According to art. 280 of the Criminal Code
Of the Russian Federation “Public
calls to the execution
of extremist activity,
abetted by the use of
mass media.”

Happening

Lazarev: *Hey, Bornikov, let's go catch some criminals*
Bornikov: *No, I'm not up for that, let's catch some Loskutov instead*

Lazarev (police captain) and Bornikov (lieutenant)
are personnel of the Novosibirsk Region GUVD "E" center

once
Artem Aleksandrovich
at an unidentified time
in an unidentified place
willfully
illegally
without intent to distribute
for personal use
acting willfully
aware of the unlawful character of his actions

purchased

from an unidentified person
for an unidentified sum
a plastic bag
with a substance
of vegetative origin

and green
which was the narcotic drug marijuana
the total dry mass of the substance was eleven point zero grams

which is in fact a large amount

after which
putting it in his carrier bag
in the same way
illegally
willfully
without intent to distribute
carefully keeping on his person
an illegally purchased narcotic drug
Artem Aleksandrovich
began
to travel
across the territory of the Dzerzhinksy neighborhood

Gagarin and Us

The state arrives
through the pipes every day
into every house

The President
approved this a long time ago
the Patriarch also
don't be a fool
blessed it
and now there
even to those whom it didn't reach earlier

Gagarin arrives
for the blood of Soviet babies,
smiling broadly,
and offers a pin

To those who had time to hide
and jumped out the window
and had time to call
the emergency services
a tender voice answers
the voice of Yuri Alekseevich

explaining the details
of the procedure for peaceful surrender to the authorities

and subsequent departure
for the summer labor
therapeutic camp, “Fatalist”
in 2 shifts.

On an Unusual Transformation into a Scoundrel

Once K. woke up and realized that his hands were clean
Although he remembered not making any particular effort in that
regard yesterday
During the day he barely recalled this strange event again.
And by evening he'd completely forgotten it.
The next day K., with increasing alarm, discovered that he had a
cool head.
He also tried to explain this to himself in a rational way
But his cool head wasn't particularly well disposed for this
Moreover the general trend was all too clear
On the third day, resisting speculation with difficulty
He discovered all the same that he had a flaming heart
After this he understood everything completely (but this had been a
long time coming),
looked at himself one last time in the mirror, which couldn't really
help much anymore,
got dressed,
gathered his things,
shaved,
and began working for scoundrels.

My Lesser Ukrainiad

war and revolution fit into a week
and last for hours
spent on facebook

cossacks have stormed the security fence around the airport,
and entered the airfield

and they stand there, like,
greeting euro-integration
and the advent of the post-industrial epoch

a poet has been led out of the occupied building
and is being beaten on the stage, installed in Freedom Square

to rally or not to rally
the devil knows
but it seems that in the south something is flanked

a russian flag hangs over the regional administration.
the Olympic truce is broken

a limited contingency of regressors is introduced
with the goal of preventing the advent of the future
in a single given

My Friends' Words

Oleg's Words

on the one hand it's clear
that he was unripe
but now he's so-so
which is why one should decide once and for all
one should be marginal
every possible bonus that can be expected
intellectual life
has already been sampled by all of us
not in full measure, but enough,
a taste of it
and so it's time to be marginal
i'm sure, yes, marginal

Lisa's Words

you imagine,
she just has to this day a sore neck,
and she goes to a fortune-teller,
who says to her: "Go
get an MRI fast,"
and she asks her:

am I talented or not,
I have to work in theater
or not, you know,
and she just needs to fix her neck

Some More of Oleg's Words

but you would have liked a confession
well i think there should be a book
at the very least from harvard university press
so that it would legitimize everything
and a prize, say, in honor of hannah arendt
which was last received by zygmunt bauman
never to receive one again
these are the signs of distinction which
would finally allow me to behave
utterly without compromise

Sveta's Words

sometimes we get together with our friends
and suddenly one suggests we get a little drunk
and watch some kind of arthouse film
and then another one of us
says that he has some grass,
and after this begins to cite some poems, let's say, of auden
and then another one begins to cut a line
and puts on this music, you know, the postunderground type
and at that point sveta finally says:
don't you think that's enough
and I too sometimes want to say
don't you think that's enough

Taxonomy

Poets can be divided into those
who write
because
they have a gaping hole
in their hearts,
those who
read something similar
and decided to share,
those who do filigree and senseless
ornamental embossing
or create coded
messages about
things too shameful to impart
just like that —
plus, by virtue of their mediocrity
and by virtue of their marginal experience,
there are those that belong to the Emperor
embalmed ones,
those that are trained,
stray ones,
poets included in this classification,
poets running like madmen,
and innumerable others,
many, many miscellaneous others

miscellaneous and from the past,
incidentally, it's also worth mentioning
poets who have broken the flower vase
and also those that at a distance resemble flies.

SOURCES AND TRANSLATORS

"Everything Involving the Days of the Week," "My Friends' Words"
translated by Ingrid Noorgard / Catherine Ciepiela

"Translator's Note," "This Page Does Not Exist," "Examination"
translated by Thomas Campbell

"Happening," "Gagarin and Us," "On an Unusual Transformation into a Scoundrel," "My Lesser Ukrainiad," "Taxonomy"
translated by Jonathan Brooks Platt

Russian versions of some of these poems can be found in Pavel Arsenev, *Green Colourless Ideas Sleeps Furiously* (Kraft: Petersburg 2012) and #17 [*Translit*], 2015

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