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Under the Turin Sun

THIS ENGROSSING NOVEL TELLS THE STORY OF A MARRIED WOMAN NAMED KRISTÍNA, AND HER MATURING AND SEXUAL OBSESSION. THE MULTI-LAYERED DRAMA IN HER LIFE MOVES TOWARDS A CLIMAX WORTHY OF A PRESENT-DAY SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY.

The novel depicts violence and physical brutality through the behaviour of the protagonist's lover, who is the object of her sexual addiction, peeling away, layer by complex layer, the process of maturing, generational trauma, crisis of family and male identity. Kristína undergoes a personal transformation that leaves her character profoundly changed. As the story evolves, the novel's tone gradually changes, turning what begins as the depiction of a "crazy family" into something much darker and increasingly apocalyptic.

IVANA DOBRAKOVÁ



●●●

"The little worm was screaming."

"Come on, little worms don't scream."

"But that little worm was screaming. It was thrashing about and opening its little mouth."

"Come, come, now, it only seemed like that. I've never heard of worms screaming."

"Maman, I'm telling you, that little worm was screaming. Why can't you just believe me?"

I don't believe him, but I nod to calm him down. Meanwhile Alessio is crying his eyes out in bed as he describes the screaming little worm.

"But why did David do it? And laughed about it!"

"Was he laughing as he squashed the little worm?"

"Don't put it like that," Alessio wails, but then nods, "yes, and he did it with a stick. Can you imagine how that stick must have felt to be used that way?"

Alessio is crying again: "What's the little worm's mummy going to say when he doesn't come home in the evening and she goes out looking for him?"

I'm comforting my son, trying to calm him down but I choose not to say anything about the little worm's mummy, only "come on now, everything will be all right."

But Alessio is still crying the next day on our way to school, he cries and says he can't be friends with David anymore, even though it was just the other day he called him his brother, his only real brother, and as we walk down Via Giulia di Barolo, it occurs to me that David's mother seemed just as shocked as Alessio, whereas I remember often tormenting insects as well as small animals when I was young.

Together with some boys, I used to organize races for trams, as we called the firebugs of which Medická Garden was full. We would stick the trams in matchbox cars and let them go downhill. Then see which one would win and which ones would topple over. I also used to stick pins in butterflies, not that often, but I did have a few pinned to the polystyrene wall in my nursery, the specimens dried in the sun under glass. And I used to catch flies on the windows to feed spiders. Pin them down with one hand, tear off their wings and toss them into the spider's web. And then watch the spider as it trembled in confusion at first and then, hardly believing its luck, scurried towards its lunch. Me and my cousins also used to flood field mice out of their holes. We'd find all the holes in a mouse colony, cover some with a glass and pour water down the remaining ones. To say nothing of the lizards I tried to catch on stones at the cemetery, more often than not ending up holding a tail in my hand.

Ah, those unsullied, bona-fide village summers!

When it came to little worms, I had no problem squashing them when I was little.

But tell that to my hypersensitive son, who's concerned about a little stick and how guilty it might feel? Never.

Tonight, however, I will tell Marco that I've got in touch with a psychologist recommended by Alessio's paediatrician, and that I'm taking him to see her next week.

Marco doesn't protest, he must also have noticed that Alessio has become worse, though I do have some sympathy for his recent fits of hysterics about animals, the little animals that have feelings or, at the very least, are not keen on being squashed with a stick in the courtyard, but why should I worry about how a piece of cutlery might feel when I use it, or how the toilet feels if it hasn't been scrubbed clean for two days, or whether the coffee machine feels tired, or why I bought cut flowers again.

Alessio is now afraid to sharpen his pencils: it seems to him a gratuitous act of cruelty.

Alessio got into the habit of saying hello to the mirror rather than to his reflection in it, as well as to the shower-head and the sponge, and has been chatting to them while he takes a shower.

●●●

IVANA DOBRAKOVÁ 1982

Photo © Zuzana Vajdová



But there's this thought that keeps returning doggedly and hangs around irritatingly, you can't get rid of before you go to sleep at night, or even in the daytime, it always pops up at the least convenient moment when you have to attend to your duties, because, however annoying it may be and in spite everything, you still have to keep functioning as part of a family unit – would you be capable of breaking it off for the sake of your children?

Ivana Dobráková *Pod slnkom Turína*

Published by: Marenčin PT
Bratislava, 2021, 224 p.
ISBN 978-80-569-0789-4

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Ivana Dobráková is a prose writer and translator from the French and Italian, she has lived in Turin, Italy since 2005 with her husband and daughter. She is a four-time finalist for the Anasoft Litera Prize and a 2019 recipient of the European Union Prize for Literature. In her fiction, she often focuses on disturbed mental state coming up against the unpredictability of the outside world. A key feature of her writing is a psychological authenticity and urgency, the result sometimes being reminiscent of notes of a session with a psychiatrist, as well as a cry for help.

Translated titles:

ARABIC

ون يروت س مش تحت
(*Under the Turin Sun*)
Sefsafa Publishing House,
2022

تان حاشل ا يقئاسو تامم ا
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Mohamed Kamal Eldin
Abdel Hamid Elbaaly,
2022

وي ثلب
(*Bellevue*)
Alturjman For Translation
& Publishing, 2021

BULGARIAN
Bellevue
(*Bellevue*)
Nauka i izkustvo, 2018

CZECH
Toxo
(*Toxo*)
Větrné mlýny, 2018

—

Matky a kamioňáci
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Větrné mlýny, 2019

ENGLISH
Bellevue
Jantar Publishing, 2019
—
Mothers and Truckers
Jantar Publishing, 2022

GERMAN
Mütter und Fernfabrer
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Residenz Verlag, 2022

HUNGARIAN
Toxo
(*Toxo*)
Lector Kiádo, 2017
—
Anyák és kamionsofőrök
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Typotex Világírodalom,
2020

ITALIAN
Madri e camionisti
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Spider & Fish, 2021

MACEDONIAN
Majku i kamiončuuu
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Artkonekt, 2021

POLISH
Pod słońcem Turynu
(*Under the Turin Sun*)
Książkowe Klimaty, 2022
—
Bellevue
(*Bellevue*)
Slowackie Klimaty, 2013

SERBIAN
Toxo
(*Toxo*)
Prometej, 2019

SPANISH
Madres y camioneros
(*Mothers and Truckers*)
Sexto piso, 2021

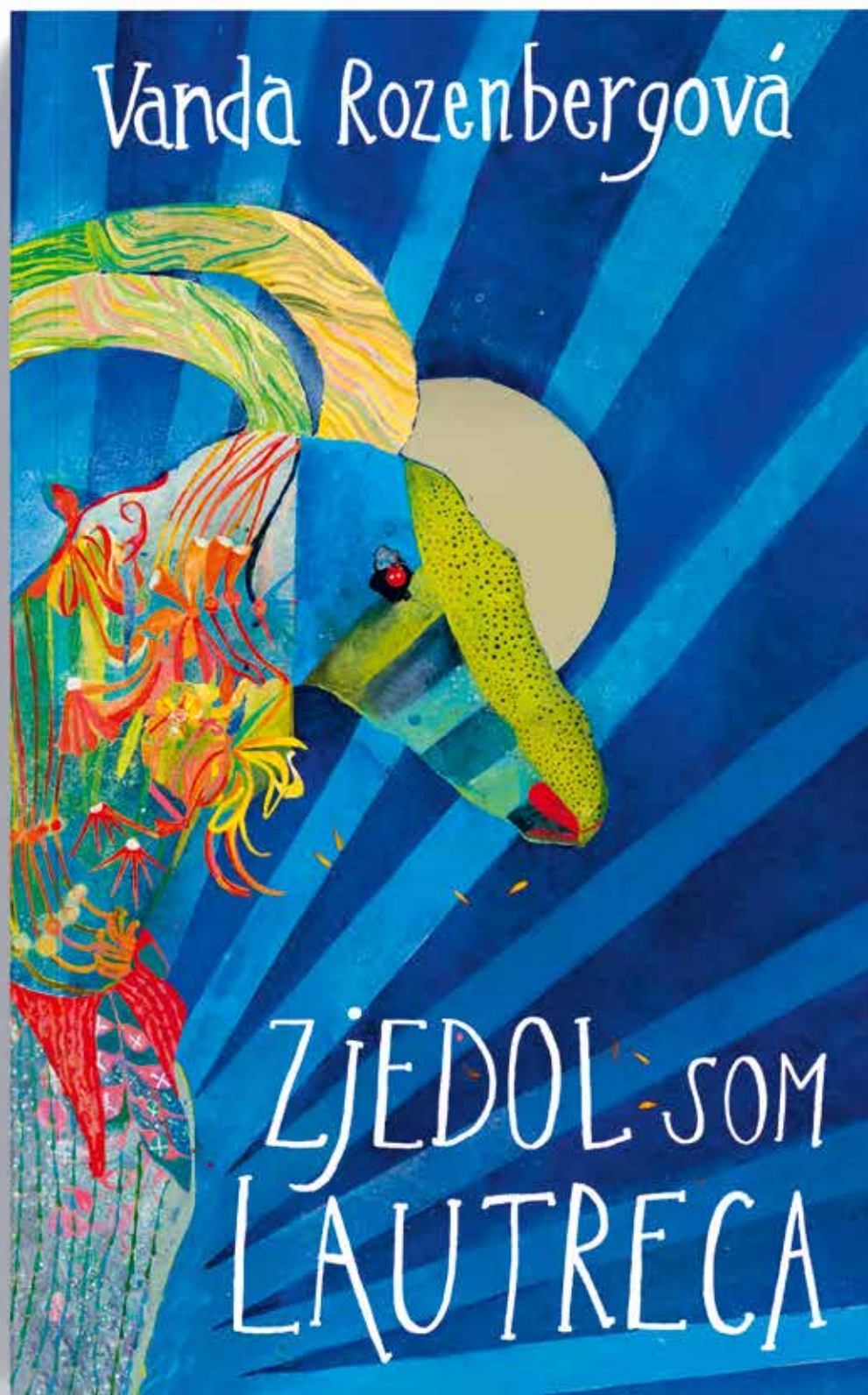


I Ate Lautrec

BUBI HAD ALWAYS FELT EXCEPTIONAL, SOMEWHAT PRIVILEGED, AND ABOVE THE TYPICAL WORLD OF A CHILD. TWO KEY THINGS WERE THE MOVING FORCE IN HIS LIFE – LOVE FOR HIS MOTHER AND ILLEGAL CHILD TRADE.

In minimal space and with maximal sensitivity, Vanda Rozenbergová depicts the relationship of three characters, bringing to life poignant social topics and diagnosing the state of society. The book is a fictional autobiography of a young man, the narrator Bubi, whose adolescence is defined by his close, almost Oedipal relationship with his mother. Bubi's life is an emotive map of cultural influences, gradually embossed with crime: together with his mother Lasička and her friend René, they risk their lives to rescue babies from inhumane conditions. With hope of a better future, they sell them to families in the West, as each of them deals with questions of ethics in his own way.

VANDA ROZENBERGOVÁ



●●● "We leave in two hours. We'll save the boy's life," she said, poking her head into the room. "We've only had one girl, all the rest have been boys. Is it a coincidence?" I stopped, breaking the rule about not asking any questions; normally I'd just get going, and all memories within me would disappear, as if my brain had been sprinkled with acid.

Lasička took a breath.

"If you're picking a cat or a dog, people will tell you to get a female, they're easier to train; female dogs have a better personality, not to mention female cats. A male dog gets named ShutUp, a tomcat gets named GetOut, but a female dog is Sweetie, Lovey, or Princess." She leaned against the wall by the window. Water was bubbling in the electric teakettle. She poured some over her coffee and walked into my room; I was setting out my clothes.

"Everyone wants a girl," she said in a raised voice, and looked at me as if it were my fault. Then she took a couple of long sips; she could drink things hot and eat things ice-cold, she could survive the wilderness or radioactivity, and at the same time she could give the impression that she doesn't have a head on her shoulders and can barely find her way around our street. Females know how to do that.

"You're wrong," I said. I set out a pair of socks on my bed, turned toward the closet, and looked for a white t-shirt.

"Do you think anyone would say it out loud? I'm a chauvinist too, but luckily no one cares, because we can't afford so much as to react to anything around us, there are no social networks in our world, we have to stay in the shadows. But this game of pretending that no one is inferior or subordinate is absurd, and focusing on it only makes the scales tip to one side. Over and over and over again."

"Watch out!" I cried, but it was too late, she spilled her coffee and the puddle on the windowsill quickly found its way under a magazine; I had a golf lovers' magazine there.

"Are you a golf lover?" she asked, laughing.

"Not yet." My grey pullover was engulfed by the darkness of the closet, and my mind by the question why Lasička picked boys. The coffee didn't drip onto the carpet, there was too little of it, so there was no need to get a rag; the brown stain soaked into my golf, and it's safe to say that neither of us had ever cared about unimportant details, which supposedly make up this world, come to think of it, that spilled coffee's still there, it must have naturally sublimated and left a map. We certainly didn't wipe it up.

My mother's medium-height, thin figure looked like a silhouette of an elderly model, but her sharp profile and long brown hair were still my favorite picture, if not of all times, then at least of the era during which I had been alive. I didn't feel like dealing with gender issues anymore, I wanted to read about golf and listen to Lambchop until we left.

"I'd like to finish reading it." I folded my clean, though rumpled pants and set them on a shelf; at our house, we weren't big fans of ironing either.

"Hold on." She stopped me. "I'm well aware that as soon as almost every prominent man dies, rumors start to spread about him that he was a sex maniac, pressured girls, and abused women. Some get it even before they die. I know enough about men, grown men. I know about the stench of vomit that dries onto a parquet floor the same way that blood dries onto the mouth of a woman who has just been beaten, I know about the arrogance that whispers to men that besides a TV and a car they have a sheep that will listen to their every word and won't dare leave the house without their permission. But those despicable men were children first, they were boys that no one bothered about, and if so, then only with hard knocks. So don't try to persuade me that I hate girls. I'm only aware of the fact that little kids of the female gender get idolized. Perhaps rightfully so. Perhaps it's historically accurate, but it doesn't fit my personal views."

VANDA ROZENBERGOVÁ 1971

Photo © Rastislav Šorman



Vanda Rozenbergová is an author, trained journalist, and lover of electronic music and fine arts. Her debut was a collection of short stories entitled *The Side Effects of Raising Small Rodents* (2011). Her last three works of fiction as well as her current novella, *I Ate Lautrec* (2021), were shortlisted for the Anasoft Litera Prize. In her stories, Rozenbergová emphasises human fragility, vulnerability, and a fatal predetermination of human lives. Her observations focus on social relationships and the ties between the microclimate of the family and intimate relationships. She structures her narratives as mysteries, but without the explicit pressure of the classical form of this genre.

I hate it when someone hums in my presence. I was five years old and humming the 'Flight of the Bumblebee' in my mind, I repeat – in my mind. I only hummed aloud when I was alone. Other than my parents, no one respected that I was an introvert, and my grandparents didn't even know what it means.

Translated titles:

CZECH

Tři smrtky pluly do dáli
(*Three Deaths are Sailing*)

Host, 2020

GERMAN

Drei Tote treiben
(*Three Deaths are Sailing*)

Drava Verlag, 2022

Vanda Rozenbergová **Zjedol som Lautreca**

Published by: Slovart

Bratislava, 2021, 109 p.

ISBN 978-80-556-5314-3

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In Brief

A COMPREHENSIVE VOLUME OF DIARIES BY MILAN LASICA, SLOVAKIA'S BEST-KNOWN HUMORIST. THE TEXT IS INTERSPERSED WITH A VISUAL DIARY OF THE PANDEMIC CREATED BY ARTIST MAREK ORMANDÍK IN 2020.

This diary, by one of the most prominent figures in Slovak (as well as Czechoslovak) humour, maps the period from 2009 to 2015. As his seventieth birthday approached, Lasica was inspired to take stock of his own life in a more detached way. Lasica covers a range of issues, from private concerns to wider social, political and artistic issues, focusing primarily on his own feelings and views. He touches upon the subject of humour only marginally, and mostly when quoting aphorisms by his friend, the unique Slovak satirist Tomáš Janovic.

MILAN LASICA

Milan Lasica Marek Ormandík

V KRÁTKOSTI



●●● **JANUARY 3, 2009**

I have taken on an impossible task. I've decided that this year I will jot something down every day. Something that I remember. A kind of retrospective diary. I have twice before tried to keep a diary. Once was when I was about eighteen. I managed to keep it up for a couple of days. The second time was at the age of forty-six. That attempt didn't last long either. Although the second diary has survived, I'm sure I have it somewhere, I just have to remember where. So now I'd like to catch up. I don't have a plan. Except to write something down every day. If I can think of something, that is. And if I can't, I will write that down as well. This is basically how diaries come into being. Many years ago, Julo and I had dreamt up a character to whom nothing ever happened. Yet he believed that it was important to record it. The result looked something like this: Monday – got up in the morning, brushed my teeth, got dressed and went to town. Didn't meet anyone, just wandered about and came back early in the evening. Sat in the armchair for a while waiting for someone to ring but no one rang. Went to bed. Tuesday – like yesterday, nothing special happened. I'm off to bed. Wednesday – again nothing, perhaps tomorrow. Thursday – it almost looked as if something was going to happen but nothing came of it in the end. Friday – the phone rang in the morning, I rushed to answer it, but it was a wrong number. Saturday – the neighbour rang the doorbell and asked if I had any flour. I didn't. Sunday – finally a day off. I haven't even bothered to get up and spent all day in bed. In the evening I'll make my bed again and will lie in the bed I've made. At times, it felt as if my life had indeed evolved at this pace and had been similarly thrilling. There had been days, weeks, maybe even years like that. I would go out and just wander the streets. Sometimes I would stop and wonder which direction to go now. No one wanted anything from me and therefore I didn't do anything. Because I'm not a writer. A person who sits down at his typewriter every day and writes and writes and writes, for three or four hours a day. I'd never felt the need. I did feel the need to be on stage though and hear the audience being amused by what I was saying. What Julo and I were saying. We knew how to make them laugh. But without an audience, this skill is completely pointless. A comic without an audience is like a young woman without a lover. She would love to make love but there's no one to make love to.

JANUARY 6, 2009

The TV reported that the Russians have cut gas supplies to us by 70 per cent. This is exactly the kind of blackmail that's to be expected of the Russians. It's the basic principle of Russian politics. I'm a layman, an amateur, a naive infantilist, which is why I can't understand how it's possible that over the twenty years since the Velvet Revolution we haven't managed to switch to alternative sources of energy. After all, we have all known all these years that Moscow could turn off the taps whenever it wanted to. Incidentally, I just remembered that about fifteen years ago there was talk of an advertisement for the Slovak Gas Industry and I came up with a billboard that would say: TURN ON THE GAS! THE SLOVAK GAS INDUSTRY. It didn't go down well. After what has just happened, it will soon be difficult to gas yourself. People will have to return to less palatable methods of suicide, such as hanging or shooting themselves or jumping into the Danube, as that won't get blocked by the Germans and Austrians, they wouldn't do that to us, they're our allies, they're not going to stop us from drowning ourselves in the Danube whenever we deem necessary. I'd like to see who would dare oppose nuclear power stations now. We won't let anyone take our power: it's our power. I propose we retaliate by stopping supplies of uranium to Russia. Provided it's not too late for that, obviously.

MILAN LASICA
1940 – 2021

Photo © Ctibor Bachratý



Milan Lasica was a humorist, playwright, prose writer, lyricist, actor, director, moderator, singer and director of the L+S Studio theatre. After studying dramaturgy at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, he launched his acting career at the legendary Tatra Revue cabaret in Bratislava and at the Theatre on the Corso (Main Street), developing a legendary comedy double act with Július Satinský. Together they laid the foundations of contemporary Slovak humour, which moved away from folksy entertainment, and towards an intellectual satirical take on the world. The dialogues and sketches by L+S draw on banal everyday situations, shifting them towards the absurd. Pointing out the limitations of formal language and the dangers of conventional thinking, they offer an ironic commentary on the mentality of Slovaks. He was also a popular author of song lyrics and crooner specialising in golden oldies.

Here I can write not just what I really think but also what I want. For paper, unlike a chicken, can take anything.

Translated title:

CZECH

Dopisy Emilovi

(Letters to Emil)

Rozmluvy, 2013

Milan Lasica
V krátkosti

Published by: Slovart

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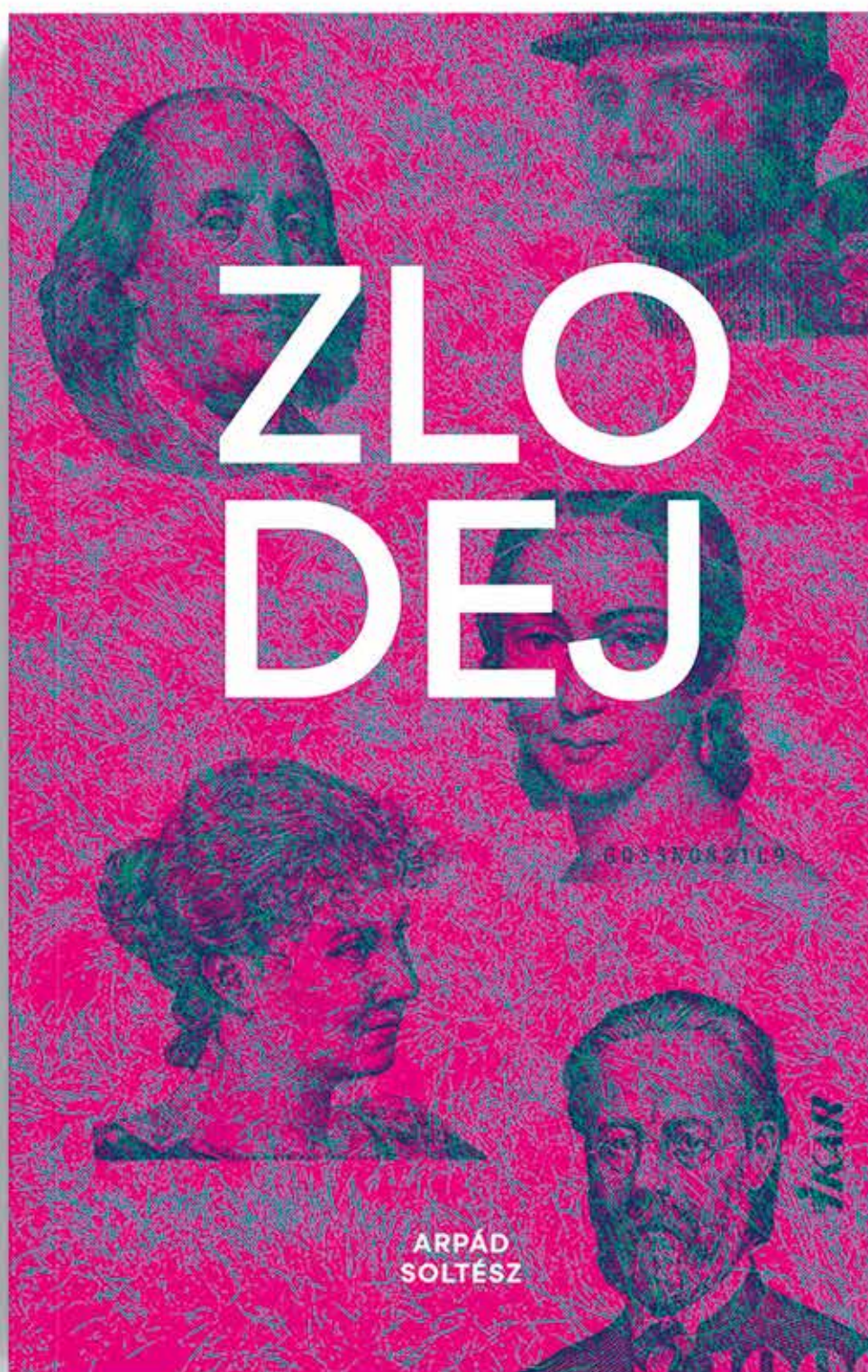


The Thief

THE VIVID STORY OF AN ORDINARY MAN WHO IDENTIFIES WITH THE TALES OF THE SLOVAK FOLK HERO JÁNOŠÍK, WHO IS A THIEF AND SWINDLER.

The narrative is set in the late 1990s in Košice, the main city of the eastern part of Slovakia, and is written with humorous detachment. It is precisely this lack of attachment that enables the author to link the realities of life in eastern Slovakia with its colourful criminals to stories of privatisers and the organisers of colossal pyramid scams. Ironically aloof, Soltész captures the moral relativism of the narrator, who defends his thief's honour by passing the buck.

ARPÁD SOLTÉSZ



●●● I take a few deep breaths. It doesn't matter. It's not going to get any worse now. Rudo's a professional. He knows what he's doing. I hope. He already got caught a few times. Never directly at work, of course, but even so.

An hour ago, when the old lag examined the entrance to a small but rich business that I had tipped him off about, I'd expected him to pull out a lock-pick and open the security lock. But he took a small step backwards, grimaced at me, and gave it a proper kick instead. The lock was sound. It held, but the wood around it gave way like cardboard. Rudo doesn't look capable of that. He's tall, but skinny. A bit angular. Tough bones covered in even tougher skin. And sinews. Old, solid sinews giving him inhuman strength. Rudo is an animal. A predator. I was sure that the noise carried through the quiet night as far as the cop shop, which can't be further than three hundred metres away as the crow flies. If I avoided crapping myself at that moment, I definitely wasn't going to now.

"Come on," said Rudo, grasping my shoulder and leading me slowly down the brightly lit street. I was completely confused.

"What? Aren't we going in?"

I might not have understood why he kicked the door in if we weren't going to steal anything, but I was relieved. I'd suddenly realised that I didn't want to. This isn't my thing. This isn't why I studied for five years.

"There's a suitable doorway a bit higher up, on the other side of the street," said Rudo, pointing. It was slightly ajar, only darkness behind it. "We'll wait there for a bit. If nobody turns up, in we go."

I got my first lesson in theoretical burglary in that dark entrance.

"The more intricate your plan, the more complex your logistics, the more factors you have that could fail, fatally," Rudo explained in his typical cultured speech. He looked like a killer who'd spent half his life doing time in Ilava and Leopoldov, but he talked like a retired professor. "It's not rocket science, but it's a job for patient people who can keep their cool. You need to minimise the risks. You kick the door in. Nothing can go wrong there. If you don't feel like it, you can pick up a steel crowbar, but it's better not to have anything on you that might look suspicious. If you encounter a special door and establish that it would take you a long time, you just walk away and find some other door tomorrow. If you can break it down, you retreat somewhere where you can't be seen, but you can see the entrance. You wait for at least an hour. Two is even better. Someone could hear you and call the coppers. Someone could be inside and call the coppers. Or they could have a silent alarm connected to a central desk at the station. Officers always take their time, so you have to give them time. If they put in an appearance, or anyone else does, you leave the area immediately, and tomorrow you smash open another door somewhere else. If nobody shows up, you go into the premises and take away everything you can sell on for a profit."

Rudo had spent half his adult life doing time in Ilava and Leopoldov, and most of that time he'd spent reading. When he was free, he stole, and chatted up university girls.

I got into the honest, old-fashioned trade of thieving via the usual route: the slammer. I spent almost two years inside. That's where I got to know Rudo, but it was another year before they let him out too. I regularly sent him parcels, mainly tobacco and tea – hard currency in the prison economy. Sometimes I threw in some magazines as well. Twice even a letter. I didn't expect an answer, and none came. Rudo read a lot, but writing wasn't his thing. Not that he had a problem with writing, he wasn't dyslexic or anything, there just wasn't anything to write about. What can you write about from clink? The other lags? I never had any mates among them. Except Rudo, of course. There's no such thing as friendship there, anyhow.

ARPÁD SOLTÉSZ

1969

Photo © Daniel Arthur Michalica



Everyone lives as best they can. One person earns money, another steals it. I don't think it's anything to be ashamed of. If I didn't steal, we would have nothing.

Arpád Soltész is a writer and journalist, who emigrated to Germany after finishing secondary school. He returned to Slovakia after 1989, where he worked for several regional and national dailies and weeklies, and for the private TV channel JOJ. Today he works as a political commentator and freelance writer after beginning his career in investigative journalism. He is the author of the bestsellers *Meat – Back Then in the East* and *The Swine*, on which the film of the same name was based. His novel *Anger* was published in 2020. Soltész's work is popular because it captures the specific atmosphere of the criminal world, which also functions as an apt image of society.

Translated titles:

CZECH

Svině

(The Swine)

Noxi, 2019

FRENCH

Le Bal des porcs

(The Swine)

Agullo, 2020

—

Il était une fois dans l'Est

(Meat – Back Then in the East)

Agullo, 2019

Arpád Soltész

Zlodej

Published by: Ikar

Bratislava, 2021, 304 p.

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Blood is Only Water

WITH IRONY AND INSIGHT, MICENKOVÁ PAINTS A PICTURE OF CYNICISM AND GROWING DESPAIR WITH HER CHARACTERS: A MOTHER WHO LIKES A DRINK TURNS INTO A TOTAL ALCOHOLIC, AND AN UNDERSTANDING FATHER SLOWLY CHANGES INTO AN APATHETIC, DEFEATED SHADOW WHILE THEIR INTROVERTED DAUGHTER FALLS INTO AN ABYSS.

Blood is Only Water is a merciless social drama depicting the breakup of a dysfunctional family. Over more than four hundred pages, the reader follows their shifting relationships, and with each character you feel that there is no escape from the situation. To deepen their psychological portrayal, the author repeatedly changes perspective, showing the action first through the eyes of Klára, then her mother, and then her father. The author challenges the Slovak stereotype of the man being the violent head of the family: in this case it is the mother, with her unfulfilled acting ambitions and alcoholic excesses. It is clear from the beginning that there will be no happy ending, and it will be Klára who pays the highest price.

JANA MICENKOVÁ

Jana Micenková

ČRV JE LEN VODA

MARENČIN PT

●●● Since the last scene at home, Klára has been spending a lot of time with boys, especially Martin Makula, who she likes to act tough with:

"I'm going to leave home, whatever. I'll live in a squat. My mother is a fuck-up and I'm done with the bitch..." She exhales smoke from her cigarette and Martin nods as if understanding:

"Our place is also fucked up but I don't even give a toss..."

Klára then thinks that everything is as it should be, that the two of them, children of fucked-up families, are made for each other. Martin will protect her. It won't be long before they run away together.

So during the next scene at home, Klára tries to keep her distance and not get involved. As if she had nothing to do with the place, and only went there to sleep at nights...

But it is impossible to ignore how her mother has ruined the bathroom by covering all of Klára's drawings with black paint. And now she is screaming about how the bathroom was 'redesigned' without her permission. Klára tries to be like a member of the audience at a play – she watches her yelling mother who has latched onto the word *principle* and is now repeating it over and over again, trying to brush black paint off her hands as she does so. And she also watches her father, who, with a tremulous voice, is trying very hard to be diplomatic with her mother:

"But you said you liked the bathroom..."

"What did you expect me to say? I didn't want to lose it in front of Klára, didn't want to say how infantile it was with her there... But it's the principle of it, don't you see?! You did it without even asking me! You waited for me to go off on a trip and then did it while my back was turned... If you'd only called me... But it's as if I didn't even live here, as if I was an outsider... So do you understand?! It's the *principle* of it that bothers me!!! You do know what a principle is, don't you, or are you completely stupid?"

The yelling and racket go on, and then her mother smashes something. Klára is standing by the door. She would like to hide in her room but there is such a bad atmosphere in the hall, she's afraid of dashing through it. When she manages it, she slams the door behind her and puts on her earphones:

"I live in a concrete cage and it's fucking my mind
And because you do, too, we're two of a kind!"

Klára is convinced she and Martin should move into that squat at the first opportunity, next week if possible. They just need to make a plan!

Her agitated father interrupts her thoughts. He's packing some of her things in a plastic bag and telling her she should go to her grandmother for a few days while the situation calms down and he fixes the bathroom. And how she shouldn't tell Gran anything about it either, because nothing really bad happened, after all.

"You know what Mum is like... she's a little bit upset now but it'll be ok again soon..."

Klára would love to reply with a thousand bad words asking just what Mum is really fucking like! Her father should finally explain to her if she is good, bad, happy, sad, normal or nuts! One simple answer would be enough. (But then again how can he answer such a question when they don't know if she really is a proper mother?)

But Klára says nothing – her father has already heard more than enough about how useless, cretinous and impotent he is. Why should she add to his misery? So she tries to look nonchalant – at least it will be peaceful at Gran's place.

It is hard to explain to her gran what has happened at home, though.

"Dad is redoing the bathroom..."

"But why? Last time you showed me photos of how beautifully you'd painted it..."

"Yes, well, there's been a spill..."

JANA MICENKOVÁ
1980

Photo © Zsolt Birtalan



Jana Micenková studied Slovak language and literature, with a special focus on scriptwriting and dramaturgy. In 2013 she established the independent *Nekroteatro* theatre ensemble in Prague, where she works today as a playwright and director. Her literary debut, a short story collection entitled *Sweet Life* (2017), was, like her new novel, one of the ten works nominated for the annual Anasoft Litera Prize.

Writing for me is very fulfilling, and not just a therapeutic act, but one which gives my whole life meaning. For me it is crucial that, through literature, I can share my innermost feelings with readers. And if readers are able to find themselves in my texts or relate to them in some way, it gives me a feeling of some kind of common 'tribal' connection.

Jana Micenková
Krv je len voda

Published by: Marenčin PT
Bratislava, 2021, 419 p.
ISBN 978-80-569-0633-0

For translation rights please contact:
booksfromslovakia@litcentrum.sk

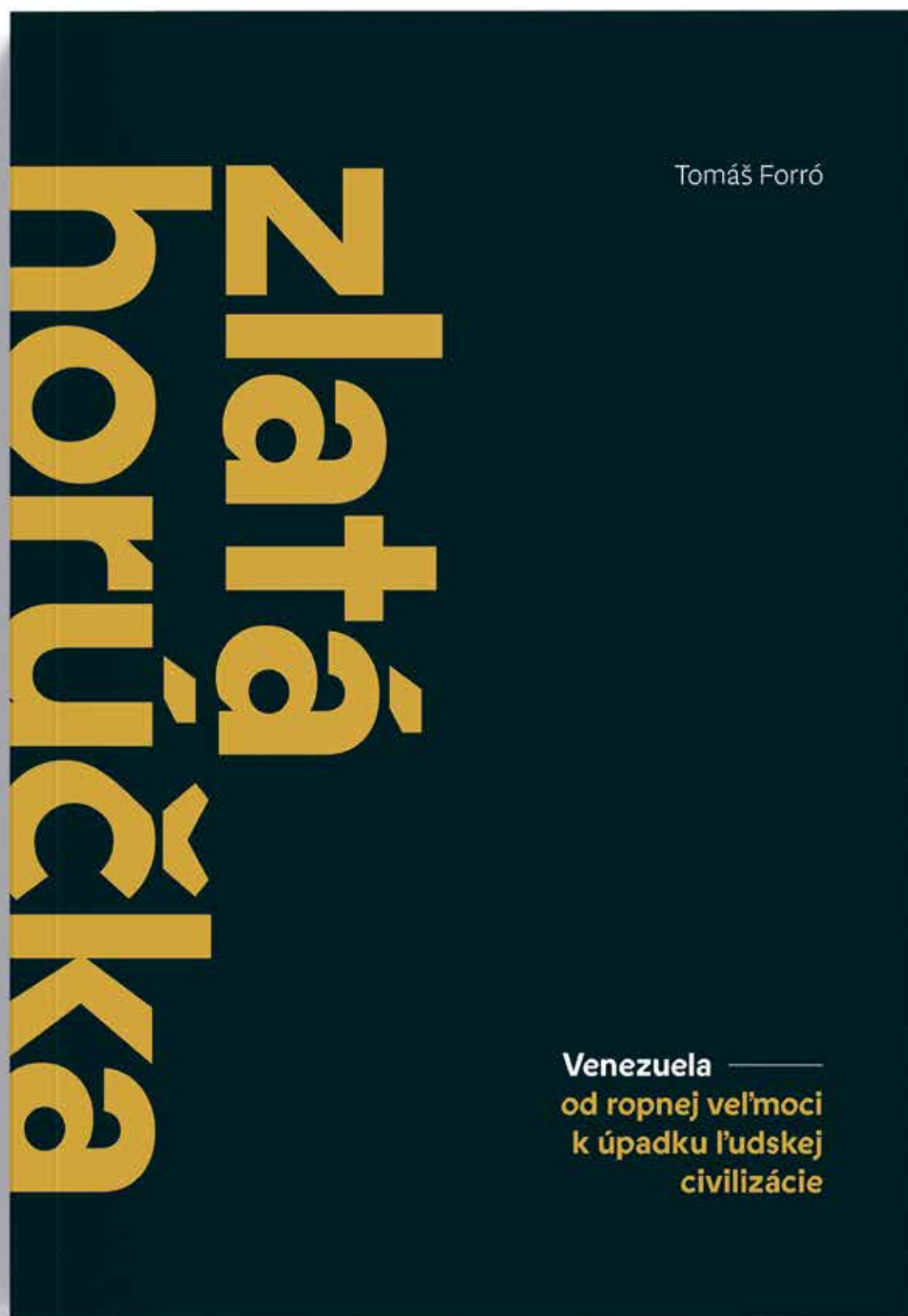


Gold Fever. Venezuela – From an Oil-Rich Superpower to the Collapse of Human Civilization

IF YOU WISH TO SEE A COMPLETE COLLAPSE OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION, VENEZUELA IS A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN WATCH IT HAPPENING IN FRONT OF YOUR VERY EYES.

Oil wasn't the worst thing that could have happened to Venezuela. The indigenous Pemon people, whose territory overlaps the border with Brazil, have lived in the jungle, in harmony with nature, for many years. A matriarchal society with their very own sacred sites, their curse has been that at the bottom of the rivers next to which they live, there is gold – lots of it. And this attracts people with guns and no scruples. The drama now playing out in the region of the Great Savannah and the endless green Amazon is a foretaste of what may happen across the planet in the decades to come as our world turns into a place of endless want and of a war in which everyone fights against everyone else.

TOMÁŠ FORRÓ



Tomáš Forró

Venezuela —
od ropnej veľmoci
k úpadku ľudskej
civilizácie

●●● COLLAPSE

My last image of Venezuela before our hasty getaway is at just after five in the morning. My friends are impatiently waiting in the car on *Troncal 10*. Every minute is precious but they promised me they would stop. The sun is slowly coming up above the Great Savanna.

I run from the kerb through some grass to a wooden shack. I am welcomed by the mango tree and Lady Sansa and then a sleepy Lisa comes out of the house. I give her a goodbye hug:

"Take care and let's just hope it will all end soon and we can meet again when things have got better."

"Things in Venezuela will never get better," whispers Lisa.

Her words have been haunting me ever since. From its carefree times of plenty and development, the country I have been visiting for the last fifteen years slowly backed over the cliff before plunging into the depths below. Such a fall is unprecedented in modern history – and it has all happened in front of our eyes.

It is no exaggeration. Less than fifty years ago Venezuela was one of the biggest importers of luxury goods in the world and the salaries of its top managers, military officers and public administrators were higher than those in the USA and UK. The moneyed classes regularly spent their holidays on the French Riviera and in 1976 Air France started direct flights from Paris to Caracas by Concorde, the latest miracle of supersonic aviation.

That is why the situation today seems almost unreal. Venezuela hasn't been through any devastating military conflict and even the Second World War barely affected South America as it did other parts of the world. Nor do people here recall any natural catastrophe which set the place back a century. So how is it possible that in the space of just a few decades a country so wealthy, sitting on such abundant supplies of oil and other strategic resources, has turned into a land of chaos, lawlessness, hunger and despair?

Only ten years ago, it seemed Venezuela might survive the fall in the price of oil, manage the economic crisis and thus avoid a political crisis, and then get back on the road to recovery and growth.

Venezuela is not a country in crisis, however. Rather it is going through a process of free fall in which its economic, political and social life and security have sunk to levels close to that of countries at the very bottom of the global index. During the last ten years, the country has not worked on solutions to its problems, on looking for a new, sustainable model for the future. Instead, it has seen a disintegration of state power and its basic functions, with organized crime and terrorist groups taking control of whole regions of the country. Supplies of food and fuel are now collapsing.

And what is probably most important, the country's social structure is completely breaking down. When ethnic, political and other interest groups start fighting one another in ways typical of civil wars, when they start murdering one another and the state is incapable of restoring law and order, loses control and becomes one of the warring parties itself, then we cannot talk of a mere crisis.

The conflict in southern Venezuela, in which ever more factions are embroiled and territory affected, is slowly becoming the new status quo. It is starting to resemble anarchy, or, if you like, the natural state of things from centuries ago when tribes led their undeclared wars against all other tribes. There is no unifying force which is now able to stop the downward spiral of violence. Each side can only survive and fight on. But no side can triumph over all the others.

TOMÁŠ FORRÓ
1979

Photo © author



Venezuela teaches us that for a country to go disastrously downhill, there needn't be a terrible war or natural disaster. Instead it can happen gradually through long-term neglect – or mishandling – of manageable problems and crises, through ignoring threats and searching for over-simplified solutions.

Tomáš Forró
Zlatá horúčka. Venezuela –
od ropnej veľmoci k úpadku
ľudskej civilizácie

Published by: N Press
Bratislava, 2021, 246 p.
ISBN 978-80-8230-006-5

For translation rights please contact:
booksfromslovakia@litcentrum.sk

Tomáš Forró is an independent journalist who writes about regions of crisis and conflict around the world. His considerable literary talent and almost non-existent sense of self-preservation enable him to write not just fascinating articles but also whole books about contemporary events. In 2016 he won the Best Reporting award for his written journalism, specifically for a series of articles published in Denník N. In his book about the conflict in Ukraine titled *Donbas. The Wedding Apartment in the War Hotel* (N Press, 2019) as well as his next book, *Gold Fever*, he vividly depicts the cruel reality of the world in which we live. His compelling style quickly draws every reader into the embattled scenes he describes.

Translated titles:

CZECH

Zlatá borečka

(*Gold Fever*)

Paseka, 2022

—
Donbas. Reportáž
z ukrajinského konfliktu
(*Donbas. The Wedding*
Apartment in the War
Hotel)

Paseka, 2020

POLISH

Apartament w hotelu
Wojna. Reportaż z Donbasu
(*Donbas. The Wedding*
Apartment in the War Hotel)
Wydawnictwo Czarne,
2021



A Utopia in Lenin's Garden

WHO WOULDN'T LIKE TO LIVE IN A PARADISE WHERE EVERYONE IS EQUAL AND HAS EVERYTHING THEY NEED? THIS BOOK WILL TAKE YOU ON A TUMULTUOUS JOURNEY TO KYRGYZSTAN...

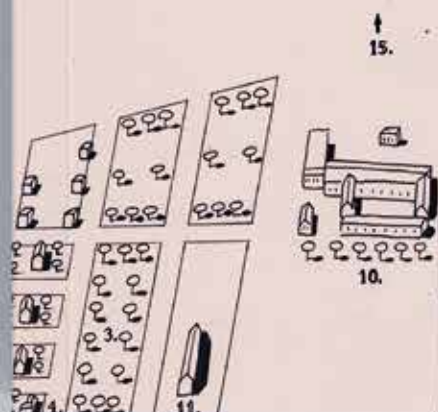
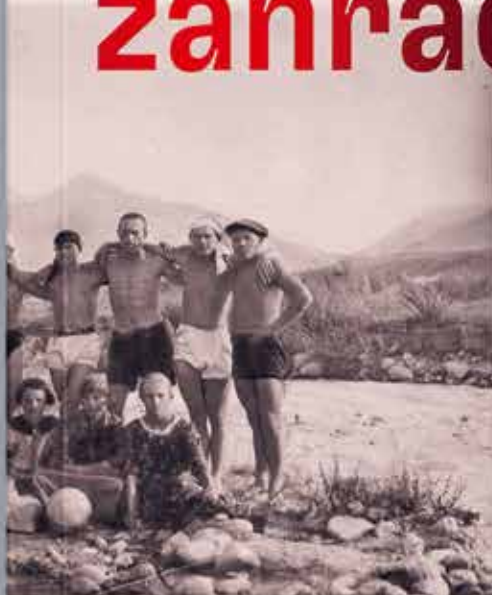
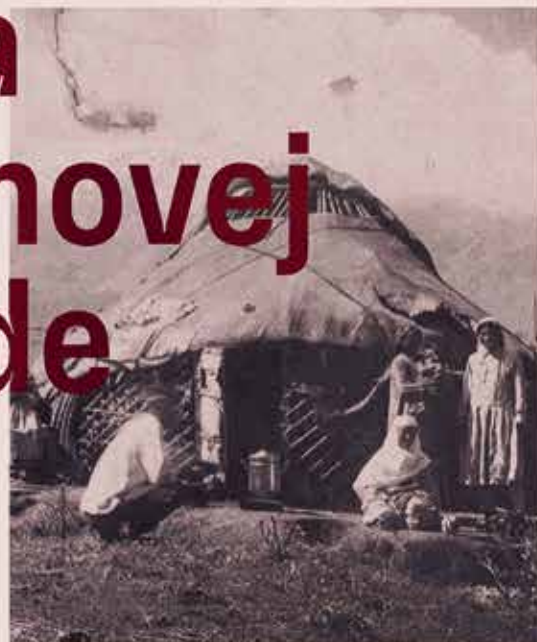
This documentary narrative describes the fate of Czechoslovaks looking for new opportunities during the economic recession which followed the First World War. Communist ideas about equality and shared ownership were spreading fast amongst the working classes. Rudolf Mareček was an inventive Moravian explorer and agitator. He decided that in faraway Kyrgyzstan, he would build a new world for beleaguered factory workers from home. Amongst the people drawn to his plan were the parents of Alexander Dubček – later the most powerful man in socialist Czechoslovakia and leader of the Prague Spring. Despite immense effort, however, Mareček's Leninist utopia was ultimately doomed to failure.

LUKÁŠ ONDERČANIN

Lukáš
Onderčanin

Československá
komúna
Interhelpo

Utópia v Leninovej záhrade



absynt

●●● On the banks of Lake Issyk-Kul stands a man short in height wearing an orange coat and yellow boots. A hat is hiding his back-combed hair, but his elegantly trimmed moustache is visible. Stories and myths about his arrival are spreading very quickly through the nearby villages. A cold wind that ripples the surface of the lake is blowing into his face. His eyes are half-closed and though he is only thirty, his face is already deeply lined.

A Russian revolutionary, a Bolshevik from afar, a warrior from Verný – the local people have spoken much about this man. And many of the things they say about Rudolf Pavlovič Mareček, native of the small Moravian town of Nový Hrozenkov, are actually true.

He has most often described himself as an idealist. It is what he was when as a twenty-year-old he left the church and in Moravia people noisily condemned him as an infidel. "Religion is the opium of the nation," he would say. It is what he was when he left his carpenter's workshop in genteel Vienna and persuaded his young wife, Albína, with the nickname of Běla, to stop working as a ladies' milliner and leave with their young children for Rajec Valley. It is what he was when he fled the approaching front to go as far east as he could, deep into the heart of Russia where he could feel the winds of the Bolshevik Revolution blowing. He had simply refused to fight for Austro-Hungary against Russia.

The trains heading east were full of deserters, some sitting on the roofs of the wagons. On the journey, the family was hit by two terrible tragedies. [...] But not even the death of two children had broken Mareček. His inner faith in revolution and Bolshevik ideals had prevailed.

Now he is here, by this Central Asian lake, in the Kara-Kirgiz, surrounded by mountains and ready to start a new chapter in his life. And he is happy with what has been achieved so far: not only has the Communist Party in Pržhevalsk started its activities, but by the lake the first houses of the Novaja era commune, which he established, have now appeared. Everyone in the commune will be equal, everyone will work for each other and the crops in the fields around will belong to all of them. [...]

A MERCHANT OF UTOPIA

A beggar's hovel with a dilapidated roof that let the rain in and a small room without a floor," was what awaited Rudolf Mareček when he returned to Slovakia in 1921 from faraway Kara-Kirgiz. An acquaintance from the town hall in Turčiansky Svätý Martin had found the dwelling for him and though it was in a dreadful state, Mareček accepted it.

It wasn't a happy return for him. When he went to see his parents in Trenčín, his father received a letter from his boss at the local sawmill: "Get that Bolshevik commissar son of yours out of here at once or lose your job!" Mareček didn't want to cause his family problems and so quickly left. He then sent his wife and children to live with her sister and started looking for work. But the furniture firm in Martin gave the same arguments for sending him packing: a Communist would only make trouble, and who wanted that during such difficult times?

He finished up in a construction cooperative in Žilina and commuted there from Martin. His wife Běla then came back to him together with their two sons, Bořivoj and Vladivoj, and their daughter Drahomíra.

Mareček never stopped agitating, though, nor talking about the new political order emerging in Russia. On May 1st 1922, the town square of Martin was full of red flags and several people stood on a stage, Rudolf Mareček with a Soviet flag amongst them. He watched on impatiently as members of the Social-Democratic party gave speeches before him. There was a crisis in the country, unemployment was soaring, there was a shortage of food and places to live – he could agree with them on all that. But he disagreed with them on many other things.

LUKÁŠ ONDERČANIN
1990

Photo © Jozef Jakubčo



Lukáš Onderčanin is a Slovak journalist. Born in Moravia, he grew up near the Low Tatras and then studied journalism in Bratislava and Poland. He worked as an editor for MONO.sk, and currently works as the chief editor of a quarterly entitled *Príbehy 20. storočia* (*Tales of the 20th Century*). He has been nominated several times for journalism awards, and in 2021 won the Open Society Award for his reports on freedom of the press in Hungary. The historical documentary novel *A Utopia in Lenin's Garden: the Czechoslovak Interhelpe Commune* is his first book.

People have been looking for an ideal society for thousands of years, and I was especially fascinated by the utopist ideas of a workers' paradise which a thousand people from Czechoslovakia believed in almost a hundred years ago, a place where apples would simply fall into their hands. The story of the Interhelpe cooperative in Kyrgyzstan was too interesting for me to ignore during my travels around Central Asia.

Lukáš Onderčanin
Utópia v Leninovej záhrade

Published by: Absynt

Žilina, 2021, 440 p.

ISBN 978-80-8203-264-5

For translation rights please contact:
booksfromslovakia@litcentrum.sk



Women As Well As Men, Animals

**MICRODRAMAS FEATURING INDIVIDUALS IN NEED, LEAVING IT
UP TO THE READER TO WORK OUT THEIR BACKSTORIES, CONTEXT,
AND OUTCOMES FROM HINTS AND ALLUSIONS.**

Broken marriages, children growing up in single-parent families, abandoned and lonely people, alcoholism... While these stories won't exactly cheer you up, beneath each unhappy story is usually an undercurrent of humanity and nostalgia that shows that life is beautiful despite the pain, despair and tragedies of life. The protagonists are mostly children and teenagers going through their first romantic experiences, who at the same time have to come to terms with the disintegration of their families and the gradual decline of one or another parent. Acutely aware of what is happening around them, they demonstrate a flexibility that enables them to adapt to a new reality.

RICHARD PUPALA

RICHARD PUPALA

ženy aj muži, zvieratá

13 POVIEDOK

Ljndeni

●●● The last days of August drag on, but after eight dusk begins to fall, and the nights at the end of school holidays are worth waiting for. This is when the fairground is at its most beautiful. With its flashing lights and beguiling music, it entices you to take just one more ride. You climb into a swan with a crown on its head, pull a lever and up you fly towards the stars. A slight jolt at the top reminds you that you can fly no higher, and snatches of laughter drift up to you from the merry-go-round.

We stood at the shooting gallery, leaning on the counter. Lights snaked above our heads. Miss Important was loading the air gun, glowering.

"If you're not going to fire, get out of the way!"

Boris pursed his lips. He reached into his pocket and flipped a two-crown coin onto the counter. Miss Important spun the multicoloured target round with all her might, as if wanting to send it flying away. Boris fired and won chewing gum. And gave it to me. A little orange ball filled with sherbet. I put it away, I guess I was too self-conscious to pop it into my mouth in front of him.

First, I caught Miss Important's gaze. She stopped chewing and stared at the merry-go-round open-mouthed. I turned around just as my mum was dragging Miña onto the ramp with Irena toddling up the stairs after them. The sound of their laughter could be heard as far as the shooting gallery. I couldn't believe what I was seeing, partly because mum was wearing my T-shirt. It had been a present from Bea. It was too small for her, she liked to stress that her chest size was getting bigger. I'd never worn the T-shirt to go out, saving it for secondary school. It was a pastel colour, quite an unusual one, and it said BREAK DANCE. Fortunately, Bea wasn't here now.

Mum wasn't quite forty yet, she hadn't yet lost too much weight and looked gorgeous in her rifles, as jeans were known in those days, and my T-shirt.

Then I caught Boris's gaze. He was staring at my mum and her crazy friends, as was Jindro, who was selling them their tickets, holding on to the chain and saying something, and the three chicks were laughing.

Jindro pressed a buzzer. All aboard, let's go! Someone from Boris's crowd spat out a comment in the direction of the merry-go-round and I overheard the word drunks. That 'someone' had no idea that I was the daughter of one of them.

Mum flew up and started to circle around, her hair billowing out. She tilted her head back and laughed, happy and freed from gravity, and at one point as she flew around, she spotted me. A stiff figure at the shooting gallery. Which is how I see myself now whenever I stop to think about it for a minute. It's always just a moment, a tiny section of the circle described by the seat. I disappear from view into surges of air only to reappear again. Disappearing and reappearing. Over and over again. Mum tried to wave to me. She was calling out something, but the words escaped from her mouth into the darkness.

I left. I strode off resolutely, determined never to return to the meadow until the end of the school holidays. I wasn't heading home. I just wanted to keep walking, to get the anger out of my system. My hand found the chewing gum in my pocket. I popped it into my mouth and bit into it. As the sherbet exploded, I heard the sound of trainers on the tarmac behind me. Boris had caught up with me.

I don't know what we talked about. We kept wandering along the pavements around the prefab blocks until the music from the fairground stopped and all we could hear were the crickets.

Boris walked me to the entrance to our block, but didn't leave when we got there. I didn't go in either. As if responding to a question left unsaid. He came up closer. Slowly, with another question in his eyes, he leaned down and kissed me. And when he kissed me again, I plucked up the courage to run my hand through the hair on his head.

RICHARD PUPALA
1972

Photo © Štefánia Kažimírová



Writer, dramaturg and scriptwriter. He graduated in scriptwriting at the Academy of Performing Arts Bratislava, where he also received his PhD, and taught for two years. Currently freelance, he is regarded as one of the most distinguished short story writers in Slovakia today. He lives with his wife and daughter Terézia in the Petrželka district of Bratislava. He has published three collections of short stories, all of which have been shortlisted for the Anasoft Litera Prize. His most recent collection, *Women As Well As Men, Animals* was Slovakia's nomination for the 2022 European Union Prize for Literature.

I think that as a child you can never get to know your parents as two individuals. They are not just your parents, but also someone's children, someone's friends or lovers. And you are not with them at those times in their lives.

Richard Pupala
Ženy aj muži, zvieratá

Published by: Lindeni
 Bratislava, 2020, 176 p.
 ISBN 978-80-566-1945-2

For translation rights please contact:
booksfromslovakia@litcentrum.sk



Unicorns

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF LONERS, WHO HAVE A HARD TIME STARTING RELATIONSHIPS. IT IS AS THOUGH THEY FUNCTION IN A DIFFERENT OPERATING SYSTEM AND AREN'T FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR SURROUNDINGS.

The protagonists of Barbora Hrínová's short stories move in a multicultural environment, experience the interest of potential hetero- and homosexual partners, but it's never a good fit, so they usually remain alone. It's not just a question of sexuality, but of an overall positioning in the current online world, in which mythical unicorns have mutated into children's brightly-colored plush Minions. The author offers a picture of millennials marked by a greater tolerance of different identities, a longer period of adolescence, and an overall virtualization of life. They can't find themselves in this or any other available real world.

BARBORA HRÍNOVÁ

BARBORA HRÍNOVÁ
JEDNOROŽCE



ASPEKT 

●●● Two ladies are lying on a double bed in Jürgen's bedroom – a pastel print on the covers. They're wearing summer hats, beneath them they have wind-blown hair and romantic expressions; Tereza is a bit taken aback by it. If this is his ideal, why did Jürgen call her, and not some dancer from Renoir's painting? The cover twins are wearing transparent blouses and black garters. Tereza can see why lonely Jürgen would sleep under them, but why is he forcing her to cover herself with another woman?

They're lying next to each other, and Jürgen's attempting something inside Tereza with his finger. Tongue, mouth, finger, mouth, finger, tongue, but it's not working.

"Eleven minutes and nothing," he says.

"You're timing it?" Tereza asks.

Jürgen doesn't answer, but she can tell that he glanced at his cell phone.

"I'm not going to scream," Tereza says, recalling scenes from Pornhub.

"I don't want you to scream," Jürgen says, muffled.

Tereza realizes that she completely forgot she should get wet.

She feels bad about it, but she's surprised that such a well-stocked household doesn't have lubricant. This must be the one thing, where Jürgen insists on authenticity. Although he doesn't like the ocean or body hair, he does like spring, summer, autumn, winter, and emotion. It's impossible not to like such a man.

"It'll work next time," she says with zeal. But she doesn't know whether that'll be in a week, a year, or twenty years.

"Don't make any promises. You can't promise such things," Jürgen says reproachfully. Then he hugs her from behind.

"Don't push yourself," he whispers emphatically into her ear.

A gold brick & a gold heart, in her mind he merges with Oskar.

A large spoon full of honey and a nervous little spoon.

But soon the large spoon stops caressing and falls asleep. It snores.

Moreover it crushes the small spoon with its whole slumped body.

Tereza reaches for the earplugs on the nightstand. Earplugs and a super couple in socks save the world from catastrophe. But she can still hear the snoring.

She tries to lift Jürgen's arm and roll him over to his side of the bed. Based on a couples' quiz, he should be on the right. But the massive body sprawls out somewhere in the middle and snores even louder. [...]

Tereza gets up and walks around the apartment. At first, she wants to make up the couch in the living room, but when she stands still, she hears at least twenty clocks ticking. Pendulum clocks, cuckoo clocks from the family clock shop in Dumka that Jürgen's grandfather and great-grandfather had made and wound, newer clocks as well as completely modern ones that Jürgen has recently purchased. In the dim light of the living room, a forgotten, brightly colored orange sits on the dining table. Or is it some smart biological clock? Tereza thinks the orange is ticking too.

She cracks open the door to the kids' room. She lies down in Jürgen's daughter's empty bed. Sophie. They have something in common. [...]

Something falls onto her. In the dim light, she recognizes a plush unicorn. She turns on the lights to make sure that nothing else is about to follow. Above the bed is a shelf crowded with plush toys that don't look anything like Monchhichis or teddy bears, nor like any other of a list of animals and TV characters from a Vienna toy store of the early nineties. They're minions, mutants, plush viscera, "poo" with eyes, Pikachu with turquoise-colored hair. She had no idea that unicorns could take on the form of a frog or an earthworm.

BARBORA HRÍNOVÁ
1984

Photo © Jakub Kováč



**It was an experiment on
my part. A completed
one, I must add.**

Barbora Hrínová is a screenwriter, author, and educator. She works at the Screenwriting Studio of the Film and Television Faculty at the Academy of Performing Arts Bratislava. She completed a six-month research stay in Georgia, as well as at Chapman University as a Fulbright scholar. Based on her time in the USA, she wrote a two-part documentary for Czech radio entitled *The Enlarged Heart*. She has collaborated on a variety of television series, and also writes radio features. Three times she has been shortlisted for the Poviedka Award, which is given for the best short story of the year (2008, 2017, 2018). Her debut collection of short stories, *Unicorns*, won the prestigious Anasoft Litera Prize in 2021.

Translated title:

CZECH

Jednorožci

(*Unicorns*)

Host, 2022

Barbora Hrínová
Jednorožce

Published by: Aspekt

Bratislava, 2020, 192 p.

ISBN 978-80-8151-091-5

For translation rights please contact:
booksfromslovakia@litcentrum.sk



Chernozem

A COLLECTION OF POEMS ABOUT THE WORLD'S ECOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SOUL. A BOOK ABOUT HOW THE ADVANCED AGE AND CONDITION OF THE EARTH INFLUENCES OUR LIFE AND OUR PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD.

Chernozem, the fifth collection of poems by Mária Ferenčuhová is a hypnotic meditation on ending and rebirth. What is revealed in the books is that the individual fate of humankind is connected with the fate of the universe, where chillingly personal and yet all-embracing images of intimacy seem to transcend themselves and expand into infinity. The collection presents a disturbing poetic universe on the verge of collapse, a fantastic world, perhaps reality, with *Chernozem* the substratum of last resort.

MÁRIA FERENČUHOVÁ



Mária Ferenčuhová
Černozem

edícia poézia

●●● GENESIS

1

a burst of light created the world
 then when the universe
 had expanded and cooled
 the light dimmed
 to invisible radio waves

in thirty million years of darkness
 some of the radiation condensed into matter
 and later into gas clouds

into galaxies
 the gravity of which acted
 on atomic nuclei so strongly
 until they fused and released
 huge amounts of energy

the first stars' atomic fires
 bringing light once more to the young
 universe

some did not find purchase in their galaxies
 and collapsed into black holes

shone more brightly before
 than millions of others

many stars burned up or exploded
 their debris becoming the building foundation
 of new stars

even the Sun at birth cast off a part
 of itself

and created the planets

2

The earth:
 elongated bodies
 cloudiness
 you fly or you swim

under feet
 pounding the asphalt
 an underground river

through the vents of canals
 sediment
 rises

you're getting short of breath
 you stretch out your hands

at last fresh
 clay between your fingers

TREASURES OF THE EARTH

the copper coins have almost merged with the soil
 green potter's clay
 pink grains under the nails

mama
 mama treasure!

blue glass
 oil bottle
 you mistake a femur
 for a tree root

at every step
 we've got company

UNDERGROUND OCEAN

I still tolerate my own surface
 concrete overgrown with moss
 algae on a rock
 sun-baked asphalt
 clothes the split ground
 lakes mountain passes
 ocean gaze behind a swollen lid
 I can't see you anymore
 but I can still feel your palm
 thunder in the depths
 water hides away in stones
 I in you, you in me
 we won't spill
 we won't precipitate
 we can't even manage
 to evaporate



MÁRIA FERENČUHOVÁ
1975

Photo © Dirk Skiba



**The economy
It will be ecological
Relevant throughout the zone
Non-aggression pact**

Mária Ferenčuhová is a poet, translator, university teacher and film theorist. She has published five collections of poetry, the best known of which is the award-winning *Immunity* (2016) and her most recent, *Chernozem* (2020). In her poems, she most often pursues the themes of alienation, a state of existential uncertainty, terminal illness, and the relationship between mother and child or between partners, which she expresses sensitively but without pathos. Ferenčuhová is currently among Slovakia's most translated poets, and is a translator from French.

Translated titles:

ENGLISH

Tidal Events

Shearsman Books, 2018

FRENCH

Immunité

(*Immunity*)

La Traductière, 2019

GERMAN

Tschernosem und

Immunität. Auswabl

(*Chernozem and*

Immunity)

Hochroth Verlag, 2022

GREEK

Παλαιοροιακά γεγονότα

(*Tidal Events*)

Vakxikon, 2019

MACEDONIAN

Земја на чрнесто

(*The Principle*

of Uncertainty, Endangered

Species, Immunity)

Vostok, 2018

SERBIAN

Imunitet

(*Immunity*)

Prometej, 2018

SLOVENIAN

Ogrožena vrsta. Imunost

(*Endangered Species.*

Immunity)

JSKD RS, 2019

SPANISH

Tierra negra

(*Chernozem*)

Vaso Roto, 2022

UKRAINIAN

Імунітет

(*Immunity*)

TOV „Kopmaniya-Krok“,

2018

Mária Ferenčuhová
Černozem

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