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Notes of the Lunatic

Preface to the English version

“The lunatic” isn’t a diagnosis; my protagonist continues the ancient tradition ascending to the classical Greek and Roman literature and to Shakespearean characters. His madness is very wise. Despite of his apparent despondency, the lunatic is very tenacious of life. His soul dies many times only to revive being stronger. His emotions are complicated; they are emotions of a philosopher. Please, don’t look for logic in the sequence of poems that form his diary. In the original Russian version his experiences are listed in the simplest possible order: alphabetically.

My special gratitude to Kristina Shramkovskaya whose ideas helped me when I worked on “Holy foolishness” and “Pray of the Lunatic”.

Confession of the Lunatic.

The dead also can laugh.

Moreover, the dead can love.

One shouldn’t be afraid of the dead.

I’ve died, for example; but must continue to live.

And only now I’m again – how glad am I!-

I’m wrapped in my defenseless skin.

Yes, the lunatism is a pain, a rack, a hell

But also a resurrection from the dead.

Diary of the Lunatic

Alcohol

Dreamily, with a thin voice lowering it when closing to the end

The green mom; I’ve born her out myself.

I won’t let one take her to ride in a toy car.

We will launch biting creatures under our skin,

We’ll spank them if they bite us.

I’ll just water myself with a little more drink.

I was... And now am I not good enough for you?

Oh, me – (Is the little boot now filled to the brim?)

If I don’t want, I won’t... My soul burns me; my soul’s hurt.

Wrath [Rage]

Disdainfully

In a decent and blissful soul

A vagabond tune is fermenting.

In its placid depth

A wrath is ripening.

Allow yourself to dare

If your soul is in paroxysm with pain,

Not to burst into tears but just blow up,
At least one time,
Thoughtless, in the darkness of face.

To revel in your solitude.
My mortal sin. Anger.
To prophesy, to prophesy,
To raise your hand against – everyone.

To overcome all sufferings,
Is it feasible for the modest ones?
The modest ones will become the slim ones.
For us, no obstacle on the way to hell,
So, laugh at the repentance!

To tie them up, these mangy and nasty people,
With your glance. Well, is it their fault
If they can only squeeze out through clenched teeth the pathetic: “Quiet!”?
Oh, the brave ones!
And to pay with a sudden
Sharp pain in the heart, to pay in full.

[In response] to “Forgive!” to shout “God will forgive!”,
To throw somebody’s slimy hand off the shoulder,
To fall silent
And to leave,
Brattling through loathsome streets.

Infatuation

Thoughtfully

Once more my head is spinning,
Once more flesh is burning out in delirium,
Once more I’m whispering the same words:
“Oh, not to lose! Oh, not to lose!”

I’m still avoiding worthless souls,
Still can be captivated by the warmth of eyes,
How sweet is the fear that I won’t be able
To keep this all, to keep this all.

And **something** isn’t broken yet, [as a thread]
And pain still cannot be put out, [as a fire]
And question still doesn’t laugh at me:
“How should I live on? How should I live on?”

From the magic when any moment is an epoch –
Into vain and empty days

When all that's left is to pray: "God!
Return my love! Return my love!"

Stupidity

Wearily (In a tired manner)

There was a cold rain behind my house.
The picture... I touched it [petted it] with my hand.
"I've created a world! [You all!] Catch the canvas! Everything I've seen!
Judge the things that cannot be known!
The eyes hurt... My eyes!"
I adored myself. And hated.

And now I endure myself.
I want to sleep. I sleep much.
I've become rich. Nobody, because of the past friendship,
Will tell me that I'm not the same.
I am. The former genius. [Now] an idiot.
An attentive one, a gallant one, a good-natured one.

It would be better if I dripped saliva,
And had a blank look,
And mooded happily squinting my eyebrows
In delight because I'd stained
My bed... but never visited that basement
Where my linens [pictures] and sculptures are [kept].

Where, accompanied by the breath of the pictures,
I feel the green colour of patinas.
[To] where has my gift [talent] gone? From where did it come?
No, I don't talk with them.
I only create copies,
Making this miracle again and again.

Nostalgia

With love

I've pushed my life into suitcase's corner
And locked in a safe. But a gloomy day will come.
I won't stare into a twopenny novel,
Too lazy to watch a low-lived movie.

I will desire to return my past troubles,
To live once more that year of sweet hell,
To live once more my yesterday, its dreams and triumphs,
And also this pain I had a moment before.

I will feel sorry for the smashed cup,
And the broken forgotten pencil,

And the rag that was my shirt before,
And the demolished house where I lived.

I will swear to memorize everything that is gone.
I can't be helped. I can forgot
Neither a thought nor a word. Ah, I'm called by voices
From the bottomless depth.

A proud demon drowns in the rays of hope:
The world will be conquered by the brilliant wits and glance...
He became decrepit, forgotten. He was buried!
Hundred years ago! He's rotten! Hundred years ago!

Fallen in love are joining their hands
Five hundred years ago, in a backwater land,
Having no idea about our joy and sorrow.
They know nothing about me!

The slave of Time, the unusually meek one,
In a senseless and painful struggle,
"Don't change!" – I'll shout to the world.
"Don't change!" – I'll shout to myself.

And exactly then, strangling myself in an embrace
So that to pray away my otherworldly anguish,
I will name my implacable curse,
I will desperately name it "Love".

The sufferings of old ones... But I'm younger!
That's all is life. Crunch, my bones! Forget this all!
And a quiet voice, sober as the hunger,
Will me predict my future three-days way:

"It will break and it will break vainly,
Your madness, pain, this love of you".
But I will still be scared to realize
That I myself will die at the same time.

A cold fear of a phantom will remain,
And, breathing with the stuffiness of breath,
A soul will settle within the oppressive walls of the house,
A cowardly and vile soul,

A dummy trash with neither will, nor aspirations,
The crooked lips and very normal look.
And I will go away into my [beloved and] only Time,
Which cannot be inverted back.

Solitude

In a whisper, friendly

Hello, my strange mirror reflection!

How do you do?

Let me wink you,

The fact is, that soon I'll fall asleep

And you'll leave me.

And outside there is the sun and rain all the time.

The rain.

And the sun.

You won't believe how many times my face will smile to everybody tomorrow.

Why only I and you know its real expression?

Why, my mirror reflection?

And when we both die,

Together,

Nobody and never will know what [creatures] we were.

Where has everything gone, floated away?

You remember, those ones, family, friends,

They all are strangers,

Wind-up bobbleheads...

If only we both could believe that there exists [at least one] somebody in the world!

Alone as a thumb [= absolutely alone]...

Sit and read old silly books once more and once more in silence,

Ten times, hundred times... However, I was lucky after all,

For tomorrow I'll organize something good for somebody

And won't confess, as if I'm a deceiver.

The lovers can manage sometimes do a similar trick,

To feel a secret connection with the heart of their mate.

There is nothing wrong in it...

Do you want me to keep this promise?

Meaning of Life

1.

Longingly

My Lord, who is non-existing!

You are also anxious and orphan.

Tell me, please, if you get known,

For what I've come into this world.

They live for the sake of pleasure,

Dream of happiness, poor folk,

Or admire themselves,

As if they are immortal.

In the circle of random friends

Chosen for the entire life

To be everyone's favourite
Is such a precious prize!

As if they are not aware,
Don't know beforehand:
A modest and sandy mound
Will gobble their charm up...

If one could invent a goal
For years, not for one day
And live as a bullet lives
When it's into a target shot!

People born to become arrows
Strive to get their destiny.
But I don't know how to believe!
And there's none to teach.

2.

Passionately

I'm twenty. My teeth are already worn.
One more day has been mislived in a hurry.
My doings, whether they are wise or stupid,
Aren't worth a penny in [= on the scale of] eternity.

I want my memory to be honoured forever
As the unbearable and the most gold one;
I want the kids to learn my life by heart
And the adults nodded and nodded...

Not to be lost! Let it be terrifying,
My way, let me collapse under the myriad of evils
And die misunderstood, great and compassionate.
Oh, yes, I want a non-existing fate!

[I want] a drop of bravery. At least, to meet them standing,
Long years of bothers. To wait, to age.
To live till end with dignity and strictness.
No! I won't bear it! No! I'd better die!

Fear

Audaciously

No, not me, [lying] on a tumored [swollen] pillow,
Crawled - as a crucifixion - under my blanket.
How, from folds of my little bedroom,
A muggy [wet] little demon giggled!

No, not me, not a little beast, went crazy,
Began to whine into the heaven: "Give me immortality!"
Trembled with any small ail and conceived:
The death is not worthy of living!

No, not me only once was split,
Having suddenly thrown away all angry "Forbidden!"
And the scorching cold kept silence,
Gliding between hands, between ribs,

About worlds [that were] out of reach before...
No, not me wasn't capable to enter them,
Not me hugged the pillow in hopes
To smash their stiffness with my trembling!

No, not me; for me, it won't be enough!
For me – not a little bed but the Earth;
Could one bury the soul into blanket?
No, not me! However, who if not me?

Fear, the fear of mine, is uglier and stricter,
How often it comes for me!
It is [hidden] in strayed dogs, in each passerby,
At the window, behind the wall, behind my back,

It sweeps away lead seals,
It's useless to take shelter in the dream [when sleeping],
Or lighting a candle, or [lighting] a bomb,
Or pressing [your] back against the wall.

Its claws tear my eyelids [into parts]...
However, can one find a magic without horror?
Against the dim ever-drowsiness
I rise it [my fear] as a shield!

It's with me, my mighty torturer,
It won't betray me, as the love would, it won't escape,
It will colour [for] me the rain and the cloud,
It will besot me when I am in sorrow.

I'm a *bretteur* [scrapper] flawless and nervous.
I march as [in a manner] I wanted, as I've dared
So that my last moment as well as my first one
Would be warmed with my careless smile.

Secret
Confidentially

Under the thin and delicate eyelids' skin,
At the clean bottom of soul a secret is kept.
My Chronos, I know your running into the eternity,
Drag yourself along, but don't carry us away; give us peace!

To lie for salvation. Oh, help me, my Lord!
Look of young eyes (too young but I'd give them all my ardour)
Couldn't rush the revealing.
I do love you but won't betray my secret.

Let a faded day present us with the debt: to implore the paradise,
To multiply humbly the death, into the soil, into the snow, -
We'll die together: I and my secret
Under the thin and delicate eyelids' skin.

Yearning [Ennui]

Indifferently

The frozen gaze is tired. [Give me] non-existence!
[Give me] oblivion of what has been and what has seemed.
The last wrath. A paroxysmal pity.
The antics are over, dear friends.

Lunacy, happiness, genius, fear, [love] languor,
The salt of pride and the fortitude's fist,
My Love... Unbearable darkness ...
– They are no more than shadows having died!

The desires are outlived. Flutter up, fairies!
And each new moment is getting thinner and scarier.

Euphoria

Enthusiastically

On the rope – forward! On the rope – forward!
On the anxious dry [sere] cable.
But where am I going? Only the devil could determine.
But for what am I going? I don't remember.

On the rope – forward! Only the stars around me,
As juggler little balls, are dancing.
One can't see, in the dark, eyes and lips, lips and hands
Of my spectators... In a circus? In whose [circus]? In ours?

But for [the sake of] them I do slide, and repeat, and do pray:
"For you all, even if I hate you."
Only if I fall off, only if I fall off,
I will see, I will see their faces.

If I took a look down! But I can't, but I can't.
Do they see how I keep smiling?
What if none is there? Where are my enemies? Where are my friends?
They all have gone. I'm left alone by mistake.

To the right means down, to the left means down.
Oh, I shouldn't fall off, oh, I shouldn't!
I'm tired. – Hold on! – All the same. – Hold you on! –
How it's usual to misstep while sliding.

If I threw myself off! If I glided down and down,
Innocent – for everything – nocent – ...
But I have no right to die. But I have no right to die.
On the rope – forward! On the rope!

Holy Foolishness

Mysteriously

Today, on my most luminous Thursday,
I won't eat God's little bird;
To you, my immortal worm-friend,
I'll give my warm, completely.

I'll nurse a little grain of wheat,
I'll pet a fly with its spider,
I'll put my holy fingers in your eye sockets,
Oh, cattle executed by a butcher;

And I will shout with the goat voice:
"This isn't way to live! Isn't way to live!" -
Into whip-striped backs
And burned eyes,

Whether of humans or of cattle... I don't know
Whose burden is fuller with heaviness.
And for the sake of you all I pick
The scab off my little sore,

Like Job... And for this I have the right
To be a little sarcastic and cheeky,
And scare someone with the truth,
And partially uncover the future.

But only while wiping an icon,
I will open myself to the simple verity:
I'm bending over and dying.
Me! Struck by the kindness!

Pray of the Lunatic

I will live! I will live anyway!
I will survive yet!

I will rise from the dead for to be!
I will come back to myself!

I'll be as before and I'll different.
How wise now am me!
For the madness that keeps me safe –
Thank to destiny.

Oh, my beast, you're my salvation!
[There is] no scarier reward:
No barrier to those who has torn [to shreds] the goal,
Who has overcome the hell!