

Vlado Mladenovski

NORMA

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by Vlado Mladenovski

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## FOREWORD

### WELCOME TO NEMAK

The author of Norma, mercilessly, even with the first sentences, introduces us to the whirlpool of his own unusual story. Like a spiral through a mental infarction, he throws us to the shores of Nematik, the land where Norma lives. Leaning on Peter's shoulders, skipping over the piles of endless earthly rubbish, Vlado takes us to the ideal fields of the country that exists on the other side of the mirror. Deeply empathetic with the real main character, the earthly martyr Peter, the author cruelly throws the earthly truth in our face, not waiting for us to look in the crystals of Nematik.

Reading about Norma and Peter, sensing our Milica from Skopje in every bloody spark of the Macedonian hell, along with Vlado, we stand on the platform waiting for the train to take us "nowhere". Staying throughout the story with the ticket firmly clenched in the sweaty palm, unconsciously, we grit our teeth cheering for the characters that play bravely on the contours of the rainbow. Like in a movie. Exactly, a movie. As you read, you cannot help but look at the scenes of the powerful movie story that appears as a ghost on the edge of a dirty platform. And you cannot narrate, retell or paraphrase this hastened book. Hastened and express.

Like a thunder behind the story of another world, Nematik is a reflection of the opposite image of Macedonia. A world in which the sincere and the insincere are confronted with the song of genesis. With the poetry of the source of religious illusion and cruel reality. Read this book without prejudice. Because the core and the essence of human destiny are squeezed therein. In about seventy pages, experience Nematik, fleeing the madness of reality and cruelty of life. Welcome to Nematik!

Aceski Sasho Cik

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## INTRODUCTION

When darkness reaches the middle of the day,  
It grabs, blackens, destroys and hurts,  
Shines in the unconscious, with stellar hope,  
You are swept away, howling and lying yourself hopefully.

A child grows into a big nothing,  
Ignorance scattered around desks and sofas,  
Our anger stinks and yells in our ears,  
In so much misery, reason is suffocated.

The painful strike sounds loud in the ears,  
I hear the spike rubbing from the iron,  
And the black sheep praying the executioner,  
Give me three days at least, you will see, it will dawn!

The crucified idol hangs on the walls,  
Pain doesn't stop, at least to ease sorrow,  
Candles burn, do not hear mock,  
Let your cattle out of your flock.

Sour it turned, trodden by a yokel,  
With morals known to him, upright but bent,  
White figure made miserable of the belly folds,  
They were our sisters, and they were dear to us.

There was a Peter, different from all,  
Obliterate reason, untold hero,  
Motif on the rim facing west,  
A pack of wolves thirsty for attack.

Curdled sheet of tenderness he keeps,  
His heart is blinded, but Milica he loves,  
Reason from a friend like a mercy from dry wind,  
He is looking for a gram of vigor here and there.

Twisted essence the miserable utters,  
His open mouth poisons the brain,  
The battle will end and Peter seeks a beginning,  
Fearless in the fight, wounded by love old.

Do you, Peter, see the end from above?  
Why do you, hero, kneel above a building high?  
Will you fly, hero, over the asphalt unpaved,  
Or you will wait for us far away, still unborn.

You saw, Peter, the gate is shining there,  
White is your cloak with spots of roses,  
Your fingers will play again with curls,

It is your Milica, now you can enter.  
Only peace might hurt more,  
We are crushed bro; we don't have strength anymore,  
We need Peter for nothing; the end is anyway here,  
Only closed eyes see heaven.

I am praying, I don't know whose white coat to see,  
A drop of the needle that gives peace,  
See you buddy there, write Cyrillic,  
Here I am, traveling, hey, say hi to Milica.

## I

The belts of Nazareth, which are here to calm my temper, squeeze my hands so badly that, with every surge of blood running through my veins, I feel as if every amount of fear is my last one. Amounts distributed in an ideal rhythm or tact. Something resembling a sound of a train that is moving on the rails at the same pace. Tam-tam... tam-tam... I love trains. Now I got my own, rear-wheel drive. Imagine, the train-driver is a girl dressed in white. I cannot see her face from the reflections of lights that blur the image as soon as my pupils get used to that particular light, another one comes and makes the image dark. Then comes a third light, fourth and so on... I want to ask her to slow down but I have no voice. I hate my silence. The rhythm of fear in me is already equated with the rhythm of reflections of lights. The wheels creak in the same rhythm. This is crazy. But now I have just noticed that the cubic lanterns in the distance also throw light in the form of a circle before it is completely lost. I would never remember to see how they illuminate the things they want us to see. But now, I do not see anything. Only darkness and fear that beat, thumping my temple hard to unbearable pain.

I am still amazed by the ingenious architecture, the logical layout of the buildings as it normally first catches the eye, but even more so by the perception of life and its goods in this distant place. A place where you cannot feel distrust or fear of someone or something be it alive or imaginary. Heart-calm, eyes-captured by beauty. There is peace, tranquility, happy faces everywhere, buildings in curved shapes that are neatly placed and reflect compactness, i.e. orderliness, in a society shining with perfection. Nematik.

Peter was the first to open the oval window in his bedroom every morning, allowing oxygen to come in, which had an aphrodisiac effect on him. That sparse oxygen in the atmosphere that was almost cloudless troubled him initially and he fainted with excitement while making love to Norma. A beautiful female specimen that the entire population of Nematik was proud of. Maybe her beauty, the physical one, was different from the femininity we are used to, but Peter was earnestly in love with her. Norma was the fourth generation of the Soyuz caste who preferred to value morality and mind rationalization and were asked to spread and impose those principles on other inhabitants. These are principles that are highly ranked among the social norms and are binding for the greatest achievement - happiness. It is interesting that they advocate for open-mindedness, but at the same time consider that the mind should be directed towards useful goals or to upgrading social criteria. That is mind rationalization in a society which does not even exist on paper but is there only for the Nematik.

The Soyuz caste is also known for the natural beauty of its members, including Norma, who is leading the way in this regard. Peter had a hard time pronouncing her name, more because of the feeling of some former socio-political infidelity, although he had affectionate memories of the beautiful Milica, who ended up with a rope around her neck in

the moldy basement of the hacienda of the newcomer - vampire. In fact, Milica was his girlfriend, and he was her lover. But, that was.

I will hang the last priest with the intestines of the last king! - a phrase learned by heart, used by Peter in the debates with his neighbors in order to contribute to the cleansing of the political pigsties, which smelled so badly before each election that burned even the eyes. Visually, the smell, mixed with the polluted air of Skopje, has been promised hundreds of times to be cleaned and a million more promises given with the sole purpose of obtaining a new “sex party” with the citizens who obediently wait with their pants down. It was a picture that revived the bacteria in Peter’s stomach.

For Peter, there was no need for political excursions in the new environment. He liked it, and the esteemed by him, Garibaldi, would surely have been without action in a society that was rushing to perfection. There is no stress in Nematik! There is no politics, no elections, no perfect fools, no perverted social sages; *no* and *cannot*, as words, don’t exist in their language. In fact, Nemaks laugh more than they talk; therefore, I think I know why our intellect has easily grown accustomed to the new environment. And, his lungs began to produce more freshness.

Nothing remained binding on him in the former dump. He was sometimes passionate talking about the former tavern “Freedom”, about friendships, music, women, binges, beauty of life... the life he later cursed.

Why curiosity never missed him as it peeked through the bedrooms and dark corners of the city? - Peter was often infuriated in the moments while wandering in the fog, looking for the never-ending white line. Curiosity, or staring, in the space studded with barbed wire, is equivalent to life. Well, everything has to do with it! He did not allow himself posterity, fearing that at some future time he would have to bring up the mistake by himself. And, he honestly had no time to devote part of his mind to think about children, or, let’s say, a traditional family future, because he was preoccupied with survival strategies.

He found his peace in Nematik. As part of the minority, his smile and good mood were noticed while fulfilling the daily obligations, i.e. habits of the Nemaks. Mandatory breakfast, morning vigil while the sun is still red, then a mandatory board game practiced by virtually everyone. It starts after the red sun that shines for about two hours and lasts until it starts to lose its intensity, and, as they say, it turns gray. That is the time when the Nemaks make love. Then, as a relief from the passion, everyone has dinner and gathers with their partners in equivalent dwellings, which, honestly, I don’t know how they are able to recognize which one is theirs. In the beginning, Peter entered other people’s homes a million times, which the locals consider a good gesture. But, Peter bears the burden of the past, knowing that behind many good things there is greater evil, so he decided to ask them to mark his dwelling, the one that he shared with Norma. Although it was against the rules of the Nemaks, they still found understanding and allowed him the button opening the door to be square, not circular. That was enough.

In the beginning, as a sign of hospitality during the mandatory breakfast, when all the Nemaks eat together, usually everyone in their own sector, Peter was served with food grown for those like him, who live outside the ghettos. However, mating or sharing goods with the female is not allowed. One cannot even get closer to those unique creatures because of the different smell. It is a scent they are not used to. Simply because you stink, you cannot share a bed with a female. For that reason, Peter very quickly got accustomed to their food, which is tasteless and void of various things that affect health. Moreover, he immediately accepted the other rules. He wanted the red sun to last as long as possible, because no one is thinking then. Everyone is sunbathing. And the red decor of the planet was known to him even when he was an Earthling. The Zelezara sky over Skopje was often reddened by the poisons released by the factory. We are poisoned by the quasi-romanticism in our shit of set-up. And,

in Nematik, the redness meant and radiated health and peace. During the gray glow, Peter had no problem. He was so desperate to fuck that I think he would not mind fucking a chicken. Peter fell in love with Norma and enjoyed the sex with a female with lizard attributes. Here, females have tails. Tails with a million species of tentacles that they use during the act of love, while caressing the male, to actually give him instructions on how to lead the act which they enjoy the most. I had never heard about the other tentacles, what spells and tricks they do. Norma also respected Peter's sexual fantasies, so they had no problem whilst the sun was shining in a gray light.

Peter boasts that he would not change fucking Norma with anything else in his life. Norma, besides being really more beautiful than most of Nematik's females, enjoys the greatest recognition that a member of the community can receive. She wears a red stripe on the left upper arm. This means that, in addition to the rules and principles of her caste, she knows skills to master in art, music, dance, painting... And, she is ideally healthy and very wise. With such recognition, she can choose for herself who she will live with or make money with, and that "doll" chose exactly our prematurely born Peter!

It is strange for us, Earthlings, that the Nemaks, I mean the males, do not show sexual urges, nor do they sigh loudly when a female like Norma passes in front of them. The smile is always an inevitable decoration on their face. They almost have a perfectly white complexion and slightly pointed ears, so be it Norma or not, they smile. However, Peter habitually gives himself airs while walking like a peacock, holding tightly the hand of the beautiful Norma. But no one notices him.

He wanted to be recognized, to be a leader, to turn people around him when passing by. A behavior he was warned of by his partner as well. She knew more than any other indigenous people about the past inclinations of those like Peter. She often stressed that his "Freedom" is not just a room where reason is lost, consuming a variety of liquids and food. That is something that makes us all happy here. We live it, and you too, Peter, we live freedom here! - Norma told him.

Nemaks respected diversity, but still worked hard to get the newcomers accustomed to their way of life and customs. It would be foolish to let the many centuries of tradition and so much luck be obscured by some characters like Peter.

Male newcomers found it easier to get accustomed here because most of the people in Nematik are female. Female newcomers, on the other hand, found it difficult to get closer to the native males, although they did not care much for them. They are different. Very often they never leave their newly settled colonies, where they continue to pursue their former habits. The red sun was strange to them, even more so the vigil. Such ghettoized newcomers did not understand why love is made every day in the gray sun. Nemaks never have a headache, nor are they sick. But, to be honest, Nematik women can only get pregnant once a year, which is on the same day of their calendar year that lasts 525 days. Female newcomers did not have such a problem.

On the last, 524 day of the calendar year, now of the year 4057, at the last rays, the gray sun turns white. The white light shines, so identical everywhere. There are no shadows from its prevalence. It is magical! Nemaks respect that day. On that day, all the suns around them shine, including those that shone through the previous lifespan and then went out before a new sun was born, which after its lifespan goes out, and so on and so on... But they all save energy for this day. Nematik's Fertility Day. The bright light that shines helps to awaken the fertility hormone in females. Only then their ovum is fertilized. Males do not have such a problem. The light which is identical even indoors drives the Nemaks so crazy, yet beautiful, that they don't choose where they have sex. They feel that it does not matter if they are in or out. Seen from the outside, it all looks like a group orgy that only happens in a dream.

The sexual intercourses end at different times in couples, but always in full whiteness. That is normal, right? They all keep on lying or sitting in their chosen nests, while the suns slowly begin to fade away, leaving lines between lighter and darker shades that retreat to the point where they disappear completely. Nemaks walk along those lines as they withdraw and become increasingly blurred. Those couples, who reach the farthest walking on the edge of light, believe that their newborns will be blessed with the longest life. With the complete disappearance of the sun, full darkness occurs. Stars shine in the distance, but they do not have the intensity to illuminate the ground of NemaK. And the planet has no moon to reflect some of the light from the sun, which illuminates the area at night with huge, scattered crystals. That part of NemaK is uninhabited. The couples stay in their places, at the positions they have reached, until the morning, when they slowly return to their dwellings, preparing to send-off the passing year.

Otherwise, daily making love in the gray sun is a kind of habit, a daily ritual, to respect the moment when the day of fertility arrives. The day after the light goes out, the last day of the year, is the only day when Nemaks do not have sex. Peter has not experienced that day yet.

### *FREEDOM*

*Amid the terrible machinery,  
mental spurt fights,  
a bright man stands upright,  
and counts endlessly.*

*Up to ten and back,  
someone's mind to make fragile,  
a century-old leg, foot to lift,  
view to open, air to burst.*

*Reason, thought, urge to explode,  
waiting row, columns to break,  
a hostage to get out of his own body,  
with new senses to shout loud, freedom!*

## II

Peter met Norma, or, more precisely, she met him, in the days when he was on the verge of his vegetating. Peter escaped the onslaught in full swing, which shat over all the social norms of the previous life, so it was logical that Peter was one of those who sucked shit. Long years of shit. The struggle for dignity was tough and long. He lost all the battles, but kept saying that the war was not over yet and, indeed, it was not over for him. That struggle haunted him whenever he opened his eyes. He wanted the neighborhood in which he existed to be a compact whole, created by his generation, and to distinguish it from the collectivity imposed by the assholes with ties, i.e. he wanted them to point fingers at the neighborhood as a debauched environment in which thought rules and brings progress.

As a child, my fist was bleeding from playing marbles, now I will have it bled from the noses of all those who want to urinate on the ground where we used to make holes or draw mortars! - he often said as a teenager before signing the parked car with a screwdriver that was not from our neighborhood.

He says that Norma had wings when he met her. She flew in as he was gathering strength, with bleeding knees, to lean his head from the roof of the building where he rented an apartment. She pushed him back so strongly that he hit his head on the concrete and fell unconscious. Since then, they are inseparable in the far-away Nemač. He respects her as she may have flown millions of kilometers to save Peter, Milica's lover, from the fate that befell the poor black-haired woman. Even if it is a coincidence, it deserves respect. Now, Norma is in his heart. Milica is just a memory of a bygone era, filled with love and a lot of pain. He would say that tears are useful only to collect some dust in piles around the bench on which you sit with your head bowed. Tears cannot clear the whole street. Too many defeats endured per square meter in the years we grew up. If we arranged those plates like a ladder, we would reach the moon, and we would still have some left to pave the way back. Peter reached further thanks to the beautiful lizard-like Norma. Lucky him!

It happened once that Peter packed his suitcases; or rather his whole life fitted in one smaller suitcase, and headed to the train station. He said: "I will get on the first train that will take me out of the country, no matter in which direction", and sat on one of the benches, waiting for the loudspeaker to announce the number of the platform on which such a train would arrive. He got chilled to the bones waiting at the platform, where, due to the dirt and the accumulated garbage, not cleaned for years, all his past came before his eyes. Around the broken trash cans which were full, moldy papers to wrap up the "Generation M" sandwiches, as well as nudes from "Vrući Kaj" could be seen and there were cover pages on the benches from the "Nova Makedonija" newspaper, very often used for various purposes due to their size. Their consistency in writing deserves respect. They didn't change the cover page for 30 years. Maybe there was progress in the photos, i.e. the idiots on the photos! I mean, the same characters, from juvenile careerists, became wrinkled bastards, but still it was difficult to see where and how they reached the ideological turning point.

The reminiscence was stopped by the loud shriek of the rusty horns, whose purpose was to convey the sweet words of the sweaty lady dispatcher, hidden somewhere outside the reach of citizens. Before uttering the words, she sucked the remaining food from her teeth, and then remained silent until the shriek finished, and, finally, she burst out:

- Those waiting for the train with one-way tickets shall remain waiting!

Tiiiiiiiiiiii! Piiiiiiiiiiii! Again a loud shriek, but this time announcing the departure. Moreover, the stench of stale urine on the tracks, requested courage to endure longer.

Before his one-way trip, we were too emotional for several days, backed by lots of alcohol. I am not even sure if he had any money left for a ticket. Neither he nor we knew which way he would go. We talked more about whether he would return or not and when. As if we were all sure that our hero would succeed in life anywhere but here. Maybe the whole idea was caused by an outburst of rage, a feeling that, unfortunately, you cannot get rid of.

As soon as the horns shook their fresh rust off and calmed down, the ground began to shake, announcing the incoming train composition. Peter knew it was not his train, so he ignored it. Luckily, the loudspeaker did not rush to announce the arrival of the train coming from somewhere. Surely, the lady dispatcher was eating a second round of fat. Peter was thinking about the new beginning he was already determined to embark on, when his nose smelled a pleasant feminine scent, bringing him back to reality. A remarkable girl sat on the same bench next to him, primarily because there was no other, undamaged bench nearby. A black-haired, with beautiful curls, good-looking girl that Peter had not seen or touched ever before. My friend's knees were shaking. Exhaling two or three times, peeking at her as she was looking for something in the suitcase which was similar to his, he couldn't stand any longer and started speaking to her.

- Maybe we are waiting for the same train?

- No, boy! I just came back. - the girl replied.

- And, where from? If it is not a secret? - Peter asked.

- From where you intend to go. - she replied.

That was enough for Peter. He cheered up; neither the platform nor the train mattered to him anymore. Politely, with a smile on his face, he stretched his hand.

- I am Peter.

- Milica! - she said, putting up a smile on her face that drew two dimples in her cheeks, which made her look even more beautiful.

- Shall I treat you to coffee somewhere in the town? - Peter invited her.

- Oops! Aren't you waiting for your train, or there is still time before it leaves? - Milica asked him.

I think Milica felt that Peter would not leave, that was evident from the look on his face; she was somehow not surprised that Peter had already forgotten about his trip.

- Maybe another day, or some other time... - Peter said.

Milica closed the half-opened suitcase and got up.

- I would like some coffee! And, a walk around the city would do me good! I have not seen it for two days. - she replied.

Peter got up satisfied, and, together with Milica, headed to the exit of the train station, the pathway to the new chapter of his life. It looked perfect, like a fairy tale, but it did not smell like that.

Peter wanted to predict things; he even thought he had such a gift, let's call it prophetic, as he was often not mistaken, although where it stinks of shit it is not so difficult to bog down therein even if you are careful not to. Shit was everywhere. Peter easily guessed the next steps of the well-established assholes, but that gift didn't give him any advantage over them. On the contrary, he fed himself so blindly and sadomasochistically with their shit, dispersed and present even in the most hidden pores of life, which, he said, made him stronger. The poor hero had his gun rusted before taking it out of the pants.

At times, he was frustrated that Norma knew in advance what he was fantasizing about while they were making love, so she was prepared for each of their next sexual exhibitions. The moment of surprise was fucked up for him, i.e. he could not brag later about how productive he was for the multiple orgasms of his partner. But the tails of the Nematik women did a good job as well. They were goddesses in the bedrooms in Nematik.

Before Milica got married richly, she was Peter's inseparable habit. They were madly in love with each other. They were overjoyed together. Their love messages, created by acting as a couple, reached beyond and were truly enjoyed by the whole environment. Milica was shining, glowing. She became even more beautiful. Our neighborhood had never seen such a beauty. Peter, besides unreservedly loving Milica, also fought with the vampires who lived there around the clock. They sucked his blood so badly that it became a problem for him to take Milica out for coffee. Peter fought and Milica respected his defeating struggle, but she felt in herself that parts of her existence began to remain without incentive. However, there was no place for Peter's replacement in her heart. As time passed, their coexistence was reduced only to fucking in the days when Peter would skip the guaranteed dose of liquid in the tavern "Freedom", after which he was more motivated to fight the dragons. Fighters like him grew stronger in such places. Their morale was raised at the cost of the low libido. It all affected Milica.

He became so obsessed with the fight that he was constantly looking for a way, a weak point, to rise above the creators of our decay. He often said that he should bring the enemy closer, to sit him down at the table, because if distanced, the enemy had the advantage over him because of his long arms, stretched from robberies. Their pockets were even deeper.

At Nematik, residents are distinguished only by the social status that is usually built or promoted through the castes in which they belong, which, in turn, means more obligations to



society and to the lower, but not privileges. Material value is something non-existent there, i.e. in Nemark, they are all literally the same. There are no cars, yachts, fur coats, expensive restaurants - nothing that would separate them from each other, due to material wealth. They all walk on two legs, are dressed almost in the same way, only small details can reflect a higher social status in the appearance of some individuals who are not too many, such as the red stripe on Norma's left upper arm.

At first, Peter was contemplating aloud so that the locals could hear him, that Nemaks were consuming some kind of drugs collectively. That they jealously guard it and hide it only for themselves, out of the reach of the Earthlings. Since he met Norma, more or less, things became clearer to him, that it is not about any drugs, or any magic potion. The smile, their happiness, almost always positive attitude towards the others, even different from them, was due to the success of the system, the society in which they were born, grew up and died. To die without any trouble! Why would anyone die!? - he sometimes asked Norma jokingly. To be born even happier and more beautiful! An answer Peter did not believe in. After you die, only a bigger worm can come out of the soil thanks to you, which would be beneficial only to a fisherman on Vardar, whose fishing rod and cork are a legacy of our epic social transition. A therapy for the strikers, former workers in the factories, who were transited on the quay of Vardar, leaving them without a penny! And the wisest, the ideologues, creatively melted the machines from the factories like scrap iron and proudly bought from the earnings padlocks for the entrance gates of the places that gave life to thousands of families. Now, they say, staring in the river had a calming effect on them! Exactly, when you come up on the surface of the river after more than two minutes of diving. And you will never get nervous again. Because of the past, you never say Good luck! to fishermen! It is foolish to say such a thing to them, knowing that happiness flew away from them years and years ago! More precisely, their happiness was cut off and now, pitilessly, jokes are invented with goldfish that bring happiness and fulfill wishes!

One sober day, I mean after a whole day of drunkenness, Peter, wounded from the previous struggles, decided to present us with the long thought-out plan he had in mind. Honestly, we doubted the reasonableness, but he believed in what he had planned. I deeply think that Milica trusted him too, although she was exhausted from the obstacles on the way that were set by the ethically blind. One step forward - three steps back, was the formula for success, created by the empty-headed sages as a social norm that they imposed with all their power and means to be respected by the class, whose financial income reached up to the tenth day of the current month. That sober day, he found a broken bird wing on his terrace.

- A bad sign! - he told us, a few friends from the neighborhood.

He admired the birds. They are the only animals that can sense danger in time and escape it. The old people of Skopje said that before the bombing of the city in the Great War, the birds disappeared even before the bombs fell. They felt the danger! That feeling must have traumatized them, but with their timely escape, they kept their intestines in place. They didn't have the chance to see the abominations with which the occupier acted, I apologize, administered the city and the state where I was born. That is why, in the years after the war, the people of Skopje rejoiced at every pigeon returned. They love pigeons, keep and care for them. Peter also had such a gene.

That day, he proposed to Milica to get closer and seduce the vampire as soon as possible and then marry him. His house blocked Peter's view, whose rented apartment was on the third floor of the building. It is not clear to me what kind of rapprochement to the enemy he thought of, but he was convinced of the plan. Neither Milica understood him well, because she did not know the man personally, nor did she oppose him because, indeed, Peter's fight was respectful. She was supposed to conquer the rich newcomer neighbor with her beauty, who didn't get along very well with women. Then, in the period that followed, to slowly find

out the weaknesses and, with such a joker in his hands, Peter to fight against the ugly bastard who was one of the obstacles for him to create the ideal neighborhood. A place where people would live and prosper based on honest achievements. A place free from miserable people, such as the newcomer. There were still no other opinions about Milica's beauty, or some masculine criteria that would disparage her or find her an imperfection. The black beauty was bursting with charm! The doll got ready, looking a little bit like a slut, took the key with the red ribbon and went out to work out the plan.

And everything happened so quickly. The doll Milica, with her beauty given by God, seduced the vampire at the request of Peter, the very next day. We doubted our friend's reasonableness, but he proudly invited us for a beer that day on his terrace. It was looking at the vampire's hacienda and we were supposed to see and make sure that his Milica was successfully implementing the plan. In the evening, we sat down. "Skopsko", peanuts, topicless conversation, anticipation, glances at the extinguished lights of the hacienda... That was all we did for two hours, while waiting to see details of the initial success of the plan. I told him to think of something else until it was too late, but he was convinced that only sacrifice could bring victory in the war. In this case, I did not understand who the victim was!

After a dozen of beers drunk per person, a lamp was lit in one of the enemy's rooms. The modern design of the housing provided dark foil on the windows instead of curtains, but from the angle we were watching, it didn't matter at all. We had the opportunity to see the whole show.

Milica pushed the fat vampire on the bed. A very ugly boy with a stature barely able to open a fridge. She began to undress slowly, piece by piece, removing her clothes which caused us, the viewers, discomfort because of Peter, but also a dose of excitement. Milica's perfect body was already in our eyes, yet within the reach of the vampire. The fat bastard took off his clothes quickly and we were astonished with the size of his dick that made us all feel inferior. Part of Peter's plan was implemented.

- Good! - he said and raised a toast to us, opening a beer for each of us.

The time came when it was stupid to watch Milica in Peter's plan, but we all peeked, pretending that we did not want to. I could see the others squeezing their dicks imperceptibly with their legs, and I know that each of us wanted to be the villain in Peter's plan at that moment. We drank a few more beers while the fat vampire was still doing his business. Milica could no longer hide her pleasure, even though she assumed that Peter would watch. When we thought it was over, after surely five more beers, a lamp from the smaller window of the house was lit up. Because of the echo, most probably of the tiles, Milica's screams of pleasure could be clearly heard from the vampire's shower. It was a moment that made Peter feel uncomfortable and asked us to leave. And, there was no more beer, so we had to stop watching the porn show, which lasted even when we were leaving.

In Nematik, the sexual act also lasts long. But, the game is led there by the females, so it lasts as much as they want. Peter boasted that he was a machine and that it could be seen on Norma's contented face. Maybe it was so.

In the morning sessions after the breakfast in Nematik, females often present their various, newly learned or advanced skills. That morning Norma wanted to dance, alone. As she announced the performance, she said that she comes from a country on Earth where almost everyone left. Peter began to applaud too early, to which the Nematiks looked at him strangely. They just laugh and bow in satisfaction or approval at something that follows. Finally, Norma, with the first two movements, wrapping her tail around her body, left the Nematiks with open mouths. Norma performed a very complex dance, on which Peter clapped his hands, stressing the rhythmic percussion beats. It seemed that they rehearsed together, although Peter was obviously just an idea. Norma jumped, twisted, fell into a trance, performing the dance that is actually performed only by men in that distant country, whose

name derives from the beauties of life there. The Nemaks were left speechless with excitement, I think until the appearance of the gray sun. After the performance, Peter, in tears and snotty-faced, visibly confused, hugged Norma. He cried for what he might be now missing far away from there. Even more so, it was getting harder for him.

### ALONE

*Morning in bloom, foggy night,  
a thin wall between me and I,  
I am striving for somewhere,  
something I think I know.  
Muddy cobblestone in a shameful direction,  
signpost, circle, again I am alone.*

*The past I thought was something behind me,  
black and white image of a child grieving,  
galled by the strain grafted at night,  
a heavy tear creaked the cute cheek,  
hour of pain, dampness and gray silence,  
I listen to the inside, again I am alone.*

*The cry haunts me for standing still,  
I thought the tears would fade the clotted blood,  
I see a bridge in front of me on the dark side,  
sorrow and loneliness from which I flee for the hundredth time.  
But that is the shadow, always in the West,  
no matter where I turn, again I am alone.*

### III

That August day was too hot for Peter to walk around with his shirt buttoned up to his throat. It was as if he was hiding bruises on his neck as a result of a crazy fucking night. His pants were ironed with a sharp seam that would cut a paper in half. His brushed up kayak shoes were shining. In fact, he wore them only to celebrations. Looking from a distance, he seemed to be heading somewhere. I knew that he was not coming back from an all-night fuck, because he no longer had anyone for that, and Ilinden was celebrated several days ago, so there was no logic for him to pay a visit to anyone on that day. He was walking lost, near the vampire's hacienda who could not get off his Milica. It was already rumored that the beautiful Milica left the poor Peter because of the fat rich vampire. Admittedly, just passing by the hacienda will make you realize that Peter is alone.

The concrete was evaporating from the August sun. Through the nebula created by the dry evaporation, in the distance, a figure appeared marching with a military confidence, moving in the direction towards our hero. He tore off ideal sized pieces from a healthy apple, with a small knife that seemed to be part of his hand. He was slicing the apple, not looking at it. Could he cut off his finger? Peter turned his head with a dose of caution, like a dude, with his hands in his pockets, but the figure just passed by, without noticing that there was someone nearby. Then, after chewing the piece of apple, cut with surgical precision, he put two fingers in his mouth and whistled loudly, waiting for a response and looking at the sky. What's wrong with this fool? - I thought to myself. I'm sure Peter thought the same thing! His "Jonathan" appeared from the clouds, which caused a smile on his gummy face, flying in

parade circles around the man from Skopje, and then headed to the hovel stationed in the neighborhood, which murderously preserved and cultivated the former socialist splendor.

Peter sighed with a tiny smile, as a sign of respect for the man from Skopje, took a sitting position as a model on the nearest bench and stared at the pigeon, which was disappearing in the murky horizon. But even after it disappeared, he remained staring at nothing for a long time. An empty space was increasingly present in his life. Honestly, I was dying of curiosity to see why Peter was wasting his time on the square in the neighborhood, because I had heard that he had been sitting on the same bench for weeks, only changing his shirts. And, he would not say why. This time, he wore dark glasses. They looked good on him. After half an hour, stiff, he barely got up, straightening his spine for about three minutes, after which he headed to the hacienda at the moment when the automated door was lifted up from one of its exits and the vampire left in his expensive vehicle. An unpleasant panic gripped me.

- What was our hero's intention now? - I asked myself, spying on him. The fat man left, Peter entered the main gate of the yard, which opened before he could even touch it. Milica greeted him in the yard, jumping straight into his arms. They cried a bit in the middle of the yard. It was their first meeting in almost two weeks. The vampire took a leave to take pleasure in Milica, but it was about time to think of business. Frequent and long sex was good for health, but harmful to business due to his absence from the party, the fat man told Milica.

After the lengthy hug, Milica brought Peter inside. However, before Peter's strategic and long-time analyzed plan began, his relationship with Milica was an example in the whole neighborhood, and, I believe, even beyond. There was no desire for petty adventures, nor any flirts with ex-girl or boyfriends. They missed each other every minute spent on something else. Each of their holding of hands was different. Every kiss, every smile was sincere and full of love. Girls from the neighborhood would comment on the relationship between Peter and Milica as a successful example to their boyfriends. They also wanted to get the attention that Peter gave to Milica. But Milica was something unattainable, much higher than their views. She had no reservations about Peter. Not a single moment was spared. Her heart was Peter. Her reason, as well.

It took them more than an hour. My curiosity did not allow me to do anything during that time. At times, the owner of "Jonathan" was coming into my messy thoughts and it was becoming normal for me or, in a way, I wanted the living, the life of the man from Skopje, rather than my practice of aimless topics. Chewing with your mouth open, staring at the sky! Well, this man has no trouble! - I said to myself and waited. There is Peter, smiling... Milica sends him to the gate. A long, very long kiss followed, causing the saliva reach their knees, connecting their lips tight as they parted. Peter stroked her black curly hair and left happily. He had the shirt over his shoulder, wearing only the white underwear shirt. The seams of the trousers were no longer sharp, nor were the kayak shoes tied. He only had the glasses on his nose and, like a peacock before mating, he walked in the middle of the square with a slow, confident, fucking step, just like when you walk with your cock erected and it bothers you, so before each step you make a small semicircle with your hip, which in turn results in your feet not being positioned normally in relation to your body. The Charlie Chaplin style!

The males in Nemač indeed have such a style, like Charlie Chaplin. Their feet are disproportionately large in relation to the body, so they make such moves. Regarding the penises, Peter says that he has advantage over the Nemačs. Norma shyly mocks while Peter brags and boasts with his dick, pressing it into his tight white leggings to make it more expressive. Although I don't think he has seen anyone else's dick, sexually satisfied Norma was the reason for his opinion. She pointed out to him many times that sex is more than the size of a penis, but our hero did not even intend to accept such a thing as logical.

- Hah, surely because of the crooked nose women have sex with me! - he often mentioned the contemplated and built by him, thought.

The day of confrontation, 263, which is an extra day and, according to the Nemaks, prevents the year from being divided in half, is marked with a black cube in their calendars. Nemaks go to the rim that day, where they confront their fears and bad thoughts. By doing so, they purify themselves. Otherwise, a very sad day for them, the only day when no one can force a smile on the faces of the Nemaks, not even with the best joke.

They gather at the border, behind which it is impossible to live. It is the part of the planet where the planted opposites are seen on both sides. Huge crystals rise from the ground, so high that the field of view cannot reach their end. The ground is covered with a reflective substance that frightens the Nemaks to the bone because of the appearance of a million broken mirrors. Due to the many refractions of light created by the crystals, changing the heat of the color, in that part of the planet it is not known when the sun is red and when it is gray. Only a few have seen such chaos and it is a kind of punishment for a misdemeanor committed by a resident. When Nemaks go there, it is always dark. This is because that part of the planet is on the opposite side of their dwellings and if it is light for them, it is dark there, and vice versa. But they do the confrontation during the day, when it is dark on the rim.

The one who has sinned has usually made that sin due to some bad thoughts. The history of NemaK does not remember bad action. Here, on the rim, because of the fears, but also the honesty that is their innate trait, every wrongdoer admits everything. He judges and punishes himself. The greatest punishment is to sit and greet the next darkness with prayers. To see the illogicality of the day at that part of the planet, to leave at the next darkness, purified. Everything is so well thought out to them, so they do not consider this day to exist. The wrongdoer, purified, returns and continues with the habits normally. No one looks down on him, criticizes or gossips him behind his back.

Our Peter enjoyed the day of confrontation. If he had to speak of a mistake, he would have to stay there for two months, without a minute's pause of talking, not even to drink water. But Norma had explained to him that he had to confront the sins and evils where he had committed them. Even if Peter wanted to go for some kind of confrontation to the planet with thorns and barbed wire, Norma would have stopped him. Our hero meant so much to her. She loved him too much to let him go. And in NemaK, not only did Peter not do wrong, but he also had no bad thoughts. He was only thinking about fucking Norma, so at the rim, it was interesting for him to look at with enjoyment. Desired citizen is the man who flew from the place on the Earth with a very long, sad history...

Peter and Norma sat in front of something that, if you run over, there is no coming back and, holding their hands, they left among the first, which is logical for someone with such a built status and a red ribbon on the upper arm. He was expected to be decent on arrival, but Peter could hardly hide the thought that he is superior and, normally, started to show off.

He was shining so bright like a dude as he was coming out of Milica's gate. He noticed me and came to the bench that made stripes on my buttocks while I waited to be informed about the progress of his plan. He sat down, lit a cigarette, put his glasses on his forehead and, turning around to see who had seen him, told me that the plan was "going on smoothly". He was really pleased and I was very surprised. Now, everyone would say that Peter fucked so often and so hard the rich ass' fiancée.

Let him die of pain; let everyone know... so I can see him, fuck him! - he uttered a sentence, whose words I wished did not exist, to throw them out as he let out the smoke from the already burned to the filter cigarette. I wanted to turn back the time two or three weeks, when we, the few friends, needed to reassure him strongly of his plan. I still couldn't find logic in Peter's plan, which according to him, was really coming true. Milica was already

engaged. We had to wait for the moment when Peter starts fucking the vampire's wife... And what's next?

#### WE

*Is there a passage, a strait by the heaven?  
A crack opens in front of the wall of misery,  
a path that leads high above it,  
coming back from the fight, the back is our glow.*

*We do not know why we stand aside,  
with our pants down, propped up bodies,  
we think of enjoyment, we look with disdain,  
fives on face, cheeks are warm.*

*We want urge, heat in the veins,  
we suffer the same, but on different sides,  
with a face in darkness and a hazy heart  
sorrows do tear us apart, cursed be our genes.*

*Is the fight against the sweltering scum a hope,  
waiting on the verge of the pouring rain,  
whitish images with nut hearts,  
the number under the shoe, that is what we are.*

#### IV

Board games in Nematik were not much respected by newcomers. But, they still had to be part of the small ceremonies, because, purposefully, the games were to bring them closer, to contribute to the increase of the already huge happiness. The ghettoized people from our country never get tired of getting involved in any social task.

The game that Nematik respected the most and were eager to play was called "Tower". Four teams of four pairs are made. So, one team consists of eight members. All participants have glass, crystal, plate-shaped rods, with a length of 3 stripes, which is about 15 centimeters according to our measurements and all are of identical weight. Each team can place four rods on the base. Then they have to pile them up, making the setting difficult for the next one who has to place a rod, while making sure not to destroy the previous rod or the whole setting. The Nematik are very good at this game. Their piles resemble towers that reach great heights. There are four of them in a team so that they can climb on top of each other and reach the height to pile the next rod up. Very often, the teams manage to pile all the rods without destroying the tower. It is a moment to celebrate. Everyone congratulates each other and they all briefly pay tribute to the tower as it symbolizes the uninhabited part of the planet. The game often lasts until the appearance of the gray sun. Everyone enjoys it, both those who are part of it and those who watch. The team that would cause the tower to collapse is expected to perform something funny at the request of the winners. One of the punishments is jumping only with the help of the tail. It is really funny because they could not keep balance with it, so the jumps are unbalanced and they end up crashed at the ground. Once, Peter, as part of a defeated team, had to jump on his tail, too. Since newcomers do not have tails, in order not to feel endangered, the Nematik provide them with tools, like elastic sticks, which they put under their buttocks and, when pushed, as an opposite reaction, they jump with the

jerks sitting on them and they do so several times, until they fall down on the ground. Peter managed to jump up and down five times with the stick in his ass, which caused huge satisfaction to the audience, but, in my opinion, not to him personally.

Nemak is a planet with a rare atmosphere, clouds can barely be seen. It has no water surfaces, so the vapors are very small. The fluid necessary for life is drawn from the interior of the planet. There, as a combination of a series of chemical reactions, stimulated by the core of the planet, large amounts of water are gathered, which cannot come to the surface by itself, due to which the Nemaks are deprived of the beauty, with which our people associate many memories.

Nemak's idyll, deprived of meditative pleasures like on Earth, did not bother Peter at all. He did not want cloudy weather or rain anyway, and he did not want to see a rainbow. Summer vacations at sea were always rescheduled for next year, and the years came and went, leaving only scratches in the wall, which actually marked the defeats.

It was on such a gloomy day, when mankind was being punished, that a letter in a blue envelope arrived at the address where Peter lived. The color of the envelope hinted at a problem of our shitty social order. Better a bullet than those words on the paper written by the empty-headed sages that see you right in your eyes when they torture you.

Two years earlier, Peter started a carpentry and joinery business. He rented a large space where he worked to arrange it, which, in turn, was to be a furniture showroom. We all helped. Peter was convinced that he had seized the opportunity to make money. It all made sense because the things he wanted to produce and import were very modern, unique, and, at a normal selling price, he could earn fifty percent. In addition, Peter had a sense of aesthetics and understanding of the carpentry, a skill he had learned while serving a 6-month prison sentence for beating up his former boss at the accounting firm, where he was employed.

So, Peter bought different kinds of saws, drills, various tools; he filled the warehouse with material, boards, beams... everything! He paid rent in advance for the whole year for the warehouse and for the workshop, while for the big salon it was agreed to arrange it first and then to pay the rent, on an ongoing basis. With no money, he mortgaged the family apartment left by his deceased parents and took out a loan. Everything went according to the plan before the problems started. But before the agreed import could begin, the state asked for a number of illogical licenses. His company was blocked for months; he could not be a manager because he was not qualified; he had plenty of convincing sessions with the administrative assholes behind the counters, but, in the end, our hero succeeded. He registered a company, paid taxes, did this, did that; everything was impeccable! He invested the money according to the plan, i.e. he invested in something that was an idea, in order for the business to survive.

Peter, however, lost several months in fighting social battles. Moreover, part of his marketing plan was "eating shit" about what he would bring for sale and that he would be a dude. And the competition was ready to freeze the announced cooperation. Inspection came into his workshop after reporting unsecured conditions for safe work. He was fined and his workshop was sealed with all the machines and tools therein. Thus, Peter no longer met the conditions to engage in such activity, so the state revoked the work permit he received just recently.

- But come on! God damn it! - he said and, persistently and surely, he was dying.

He would only be engaged in trade. Then, the fiancé of his beloved offered a larger sum for the brand that Peter wanted to bring in, but also a higher rent for the unopened salon and, of course, in a society where immorality and bribery exist in every corner, he got both. And, the showroom opened and modern furniture started selling; but Peter did not become the owner. The neighbor, a real dog, sniffed the profit and turned to something that was not in his former businesses portfolio. But he could do anything! Peter prepared everything for him and remained with his finger in his mouth. He received a second huge fine for the workshop

from the honored court, after which his equipment was sold out. So, he was left without a penny for cigarettes and with unpaid loan installments, for his parents' apartment was put up for sale. Peter did not go mad. He said his time would come, but he had to fight for it.

- The bank will sell the apartment and will return the rest of the money I do not owe, so I have an idea what I will do with it. And I will fuck all the vampires that sucked my blood. It will hurt them a hundred times more than it hurts me! - Peter was thinking.

And, the day came, after two whole years, when that damn blue envelope destroyed him. It would have really been better if a bullet was packed therein, or at least a razor, to cut his veins... I am not sure if he was right. My friend called me to read it aloud because he could no longer believe his eyes.

*"We inform you that after the seventh bidding, the apartment of 114 square meters, at the address: "Video Smilevski Bato" No. 4/7, Skopje, forced ownership of the Theatrical Bank, due to non-payment of debt, based on a mortgage loan, from the former owner after the bequest procedure, Peter Kredarski, was sold at the last closed price of 48,000 Euros. You owe the bank further 2,300 Euros, which you are asked to pay within 8 days. After the deadline, we will proceed with forced collection. Sincerely, Metodija Lihvarski, Director of the Theatrical Bank."*

I could not believe what I was reading! I sat down, re-read the text a hundred more times so that I would not miss a thing, a word that would soften the pain, but all was in vain. I was astonished, how was that possible? To take from him an apartment worth at least twice as much and still to owe them! Allegedly, at the first bids they could not reach the price, so they lowered it, and on the seventh it fell so low. Shame! Peter just stared blankly at the wall.

- We will do something bro! - I told him.

Then he shed a tear. But it was not as to collect a pile of dust on the asphalt. It was not a tear that passes after six months due to lost love. It was empty, a tear without a message. It was a tear that pierces the eye. All the rage accumulated due to powerlessness was trapped in that drop of purity.

- I will beat them all, brother! They will regret that they wanted to fuck with me! - Peter said through his clenched teeth and then I left him alone to get some rest from the stress, to cry, as it was the only thing he could do after which he could probably feel a little better.

There are no such things on Nемак. There have never been such things there, or rather, there are no such creators of misery. And, imagine, creators being rewarded. When Peter would say something like "just see me" ... or "wait and see what will happen"... Norma immediately reprimanded him. You slap yourself before you slap someone else, she would tell him. If you want to shoot someone, shoot yourself in the knee first and then decide if you will shoot the other. If you inflict pain, inflict it on yourself first. At least to be aware of what the other will go through because of you, Norma was categorical.

Such high morals and upbringing in our environment cannot be found, not even in a church. Here, your stomach is rip open with thorns. First from the inside, later you are crowned with the same thorns, only stabbed in your head, as an obedient follower of the fictional young man, crucified.

And we talked to Peter at the very beginning of his business failure. Bro, you better go and give a bribe! We will all provide as much as we can! Go and feed some clerks in a restaurant, on white sheets with a pile of napkins! Buy whiskey and perfume! Put some money in an envelope!... But, in vain. He did not even want to hear about it. I can only offer friendship for sincere help, but the miserable cannot even understand the meaning of the word! And, if they put friendship on the scales for some kind of service, then, at least, a broken nose will be the price - was Peter's answer. In addition to the firmly expressed so-called social attitudes, he had built theses that he had interpreted or understood by reading a few books at the times when his cable television was off due to unpaid bills.



When materialism penetrates, finds gaps, holes in the system where there shouldn't be, it is time to lock the libraries, cinemas, theaters, i.e. the meaning of culture in general! Art should be something that alleviates the pain of existence, not confirming the life with its sufferings - Peter said, who also did not want to interpret the past, but to predict the future.

The inhabitants of Nematik believe in themselves, but also in each other unreservedly. No one and nothing is idealized there. Obedience comes from happiness. The Sower of thorns in Arabic clothing does not have to hang on every wall to remind them of obedience and fidelity. They believe in the sun and respect all previous suns that have shown, because they have made and enabled their existence. For the Nemaks it means living, and for us the sun means existence. But, some former sages, because of the need of intellectual masturbation, attribute the meaning to the murdered, then resurrected creator, who was conceived without fucking and came into the world from a mother - a virgin to a man, a husband in the house. Moreover, the moral values of the fictional martyr were written on a paper in the form of a testament, old and then new, according to which the sufferers should be guided, pray, kept silent, while the guys who are too ethical push their dicks so deep inside them. The paradox reached the zenith of unreasonableness in society, a billion years away from Nematik.

### NEIGHBOUR

*The bald king started sneezing, the sky was thorn,  
Instead of a sweet light, lightning struck a child.  
The soil shook, slipped a green snot,  
A man without a head, ten faces got.*

*Divided into two, third side adorns,  
From behind a rough hand caresses his shoulder,  
Rough throat breathes, excitement is heard,  
He bends his head, the back should have an arch.*

*Falsely proud, he sees the sky is blue,  
He takes little pleasure while tightening his belt,  
A neighbor passed by, he noticed no one,  
Comforted of fear, he remained calm.*

*Leather shoes, barely holding knees,  
The king is furious, his stomach itches,  
The caressed shoulder a dry branch became,  
Neither his back is bent, nor has face left.*

*The bald king is broken, the sky is opened,  
Lightning flashed, it killed a life,  
Without a face but blackened, covered by a handful of soil,  
A neighbor passed by, he noticed no one.*

### V

Six months passed since the tragedy written in the blue envelope. The madness that had gripped Peter was evident, but, in spite of all the obstacles, he stuck to his plan. Milica was already married to the fat man. They made a huge wedding. His businesses were brilliant so the fat man had free time and was more and more often in bed with Milica. It was no

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