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Seoul South Korea - Day 8

3rd of April 2018

KRISTINA ČMELIK

I went to Sokcho today. I woke up a bit earlier than usual and went to Dong Seoul bus station to catch a bus for Sokcho. Before getting on the bus, I stopped at a convenience store to grab a coffee and a snack for the ride. After waiting for ten minutes at the station I hopped on the bus and I was amazed. It was the fanciest bus I had ever seen - the seats were so spacious and comfortable. The ride took about 3 hours, but it went by quickly as I slept most of the way there. First thing I did when I arrived was that I went to the tourist kiosk to pick up a map as I didn't plan too much ahead for this day trip. I chose the spots I wanted to check out and when I got lost, I just followed some old Korean ladies as they seemed to know where they were going. The first spot I checked out was this beautiful pavilion on the sea. It was breathtaking. After writing a postcard for my friend I went to a lighthouse nearby. There were many stairs to climb up and it was quite windy but the views from it were worth it. I was starting to feel a bit hungry, but I didn't have my mind set on a certain thing, so I decided to walk along the sea in a search for some seafood and enjoy the fresh salty air. After walking to the end of the beach I chose a restaurant specializing in seafood and the must try thing was Huemul which is a dish made with all kind of raw seafood in a cold red pepper sauce eaten with rice. I wasn't sure I would like that, but I had to try it since I was here only for a day. When the lady brought it over it looked nice however after few bites, I was sure I would leave the restaurant hungry...

I ate all the rice as well as the side dishes, but I had only few pieces of the fish. After that I needed to find a nice café with a view of the sea and a sweet drink so I could wash down the fishy aftertaste lingering in my mouth. After I've enjoyed the sweet mint chocolate chip frappe, I went back to the bus station to buy a ticket little bit in advance so I would feel sure that I have my transportation for Seoul sorted. Then I walked a bit more around that area and took bunch of pictures of blooming cherry blossoms that were all around the little seaside town. Still feeling a bit sleepy as there was no caffeine in that frappe and with more spare time I sat down at a little café where I had the biggest and cheapest coffee on this trip for only 3000 won or around 3 euros, it's still more expensive than back at home but cheap for South Korea. The atmosphere at the café was just lovely with jazz music playing in the background and there was even a little cat in the café that was soundly sleeping on one of the chairs. Little by little time was passing by so I went to the bus station where I bought few snacks, some for the ride home and some to take back for my family and friends to try. The ride home went even quicker as I was tired from all the walking around, I did that day therefore I slept most of the 3 hours. When I got out of the bus in Seoul it was already dark so went down to the subway station and went straight to my Airbnb, I watched some tv, washed up and went to sleep. Couldn't wait to see what amazing things I would see the following day.



The Giant's Causeway

17th of October 2018

KRISTÍNA BARTÓKOVÁ

On another rainy mid-autumn morning, around half past seven, we had departed from Belfast to visit the famous Giant's Causeway that we heard so much about beforehand. Our journey was short and quite uneventful. We all spent the bus ride in a quiet half-slumber as we had an early wake-up call that morning. After around an hour, most of us have regained our energy and spent the rest of the ride, about half an hour, quietly talking. And then we have arrived at our destination.

If anyone was still somewhat sleepy, the icy wind that blew in our faces as we got off the bus woke all of us up. Despite the cold weather our spirits were high. What we saw was worth enduring the chilly weather for a day. The view, even from the beginning of the route, was breathtakingly beautiful. The green of the grass, the cool blue colour of the sea and the bright white colour of seafoam were in marvellous contrast with the black coloured stones and pebbles. The trail snaked along the seashore and we got closer to the end of the causeway with every step we took. When we were just a few minutes walking distance from the end of the trail, we saw what all that talk was about. The shape and colour of the stones under our feet changed. We were walking on near-perfect hexagonal shaped stones. Our tour guide explained that what we've seen beneath our feet were not at all just regular stones. They were (are and will be) huge basalt columns that formed around 50 million years ago. One can imagine our shocked faces.

Soon we got over the shocking age of the place and started wandering around. There was quite a wide cliff that was reaching into the sea – or rather, it was sticking out of the sea. We stood as close to the edge as we dared. Our heartbeats got swifter as our adrenaline rose. It was an exhilarating feeling standing so close to the massive waves that were rising high up above our heads. We were soaking in the wild energy of the place, and in sea water as well as we were so close to the shore. Some time later, our guide announced that it was time to go. Slowly, with a little sadness creeping into our hearts and minds, we've walked back to the car park. With a long last look and a promise of returning, we boarded the bus and began another journey.



Milena Čantrak:

Literature is the art of words that celebrates the beauty of life

Milena, tell me something about your life. Who are you?

I am a 22-year old poet and student from Serbia, I study preschool and elementary education. I consider myself a polyglot - I speak English, Italian, Spanish, Turkish and now a little bit of Slovak, even though I'm still insecure. And I'm also leading the Council of Culture of the Serbian-Russian association of the region I live in Serbia, which is the Zlatibor district and my role there is to organise cultural activities to promote brotherhood between Serbia and Russia.

In what way do you see yourself as a poet? Tell me something about your journey in becoming a poet.

I have to pay full tribute to my grandmother. She was a teacher and still is one. I believe that once you become a teacher, you never actually retire, but teach your whole life. She taught me how to read and write when I was 2 and a half years old and by the age of 3, I could read and write the full Serbian alphabet, and then was introduced to the world of literature. The first poem I wrote at the age of 8 was about winter and Santa Clause - everything that interests a child. I was grateful that my school and my teachers recognised my talent and encouraged me to participate in different competitions, which helped me to gain confidence. And then my school actually published my first book, which is called I AM A FREE BEING - a collection of poems I wrote from the very beginning up to the point when I was twelve.

What a journey. You said that you must pay tribute to your grandmother.

Yes, because she's the one that introduced me to the beauty of language and literature, the awareness of our national identity, and that's why once dedicating my second book to her was a natural step. She was the one who planted this awareness of national identity, my second book embraces it, so if it wasn't for her, I would never write.

I guess this is the book you are speaking about, can you please tell me the name of the book in English?

In English, it would be ON THE PATH OF TRUTH.

What's behind this book? What experience?

The experience behind this book started when I was acting for a church play, we were visiting the monastery Studenica, which is the place where the Serbian king Stefan Nemanja and his queen are buried. Visiting the place and playing the mother of the Serbian enlightener St. Sava really inspired me to think about it in a deeper sense. I have also always

been assigned to recitate dramatic poetry that is strictly patriotic. Spending creative time in this area of patriotism, patriotic poetry, patriotic literature, I was really inspired by Desanka Maksimovic who is the first lady of Serbian poetry. If it wasn't for her poetry, I would never see how beautifully and graciously a woman can write and embrace her national identity and feel compassion for her people. She was and still is the greatest Serbian poetess, who also was a professor at the first high school for girls in Serbia and wrote one of the most famous Serbian poems, The Bloody Fairytale, dedicated to children that were massacred during the German occupation in Kragujevac. So she was an example of how a woman can stay strong and still graciously pay a tribute to her nation. On the first page of On the path of truth, there's her quote implying how important it is to acknowledge our ancestors and their path in order to recognize our own.

Can you explain something behind the struggles of Serbians captured in the poems?

I think that literature is there to complete us and to give us strength when we think that getting up and continuing is not an option and consciousness of national identity is very important, because if it wasn't for our ancestors, we would never be here, we would never have liberty and this freedom we have and relying on that past gives us a better perception of our future. We can never build the future and be fully present if we do not have acknowledgement and awareness of our past - who our ancestors were, what they fought for.... I'm personally extremely proud that my nation is known for writing in the hardest moments, during the five-century long Turkish occupation there were some of the greatest poems ever written in the Serbian language, during wars, during every hard moment literature has flourished even more.

Can you tell me about your journey into publication of this second selection of poems?

Being surrounded by fellow poet friends who share the passion for writing and cherish our tradition was a blessing. The encouragement from my home faculty, Serbian-Russian association and my hometown Užice in general meant a lot for the journey of publication.

What are the titles and topics of the poems in the book?

Some of the chapters are, for example - The Smell of the Motherland, Identity, and finally Blessings, dedicated to the most important women in my life.

I can see that you probably often quote some famous people who had a great impact on your writing.

Yes indeed, a quote is enough to inspire a poem and following a poem with its base gives a reader more background and ensures that it resonates deeply.

What about your current book, the book you are writing now? What will be the topics?

It's a book that celebrates recovering from a very hard period in one's life and it covers all of the stages of such an experience – the stage when we were hurt, the stage when we are trying to figure out what's happening, when we are trying to gather strength and finally

feel free again. It's about freedom of acceptance of one's self, expressed in many languages with Serbian as the base and English, Spanish, Turkish and Italian translations. The multi-lingual side to the book is personally important for me because it ensures that I can share it with my international friends and teachers.

Do you also see some purpose in writing this collection of poems about struggling, pain, recovery? In what way can it help someone?

Literature is the art of words that celebrates the beauty of life and hopefully, someone who is struggling, by reading these poems, can find themselves in them, impersonate them, embody and feel them, and be inspired to use them as very personal anthems of self-love, healing, acceptance and empowerment.

As you said, the motivation for writing or some deeper experience behind writing your poems in the current book is working with elderly and people who have dealt with discrimination, loss and depression. How did you come into contact with those people?

Volunteering in the Gerontological centre of Belgrade, seeing how bravely the elderly still hold onto their purpose after painful life experiences and still possess joy was a rewarding experience. I also attended workshops with women who have suffered through gender-based and domestic violence and came out of the experience as stronger individuals. It's impossible not to be inspired by the strong women in my life. Of course, there is always inspiration on the personal plan. Life serves us loss and trials, but the question is how we accept it and in what way we choose to deal with it. We often need a push and a reminder that we're whole and capable of growing through such experiences.

So, I guess that your poetry also wants to bring some consciousness to women who struggle and who may have lost sight in their path.

Yes, literature is there to bring us hope and joy and I'd be happy as an author if the poems could be used as to inspire someone to move past their challenge and love themselves just a little bit more.

Is there anything else you would like to add about writing, literature in general or its purpose?

Well, as I said, I view literature as the art of words that celebrates life and everything that is alive and beautiful in humans; it's there to comfort us, guide us when we are not sure which way to go. James Allen, his books *As a Man Thinketh* and *The Heavenly Life* were a huge inspiration. In the 19th century, he was the first author to write about self-help and healing by acknowledging patterns of thought. Needless to say that music provides all the richness of inspiration. The Italian pop opera trio *Il Volo* celebrates the greatest vocals of Italian and American culture, such as Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli and Frank Sinatra while adding a modern pop touch to their music. Their pieces inspired me to write in Italian. Italian language is music itself and writing in it brings so much joy. Every language is unique in providing different expressions for every feeling.

Do you think that through art or poetry, music, people can feel catharsis? Is it important?

Of course, literature is there to help us grow, so catharsis is essential in context of that purpose. If we read words designed artificially, we cannot fully benefit from poetry itself and art itself.

Thank you.

Thank you!



A FAMILIAR VIEW

Matej Jelínek

As I was driving through an old bumpy road
I became tired, turned left and slowed
Parked at a rest stop, near the mighty trees
Sat down at an old bench and felt the breeze
The sky was clear, no clouds I'd seen
No cars passed by, it felt serene.
The warm evening sun gazed down on me
A small forest path had it revealed
Overwhelmed by nature's marvel and mysteries
I took a bottle of water and walked beneath the trees

A footpath led me through the pines
Until I saw no further signs
I looked around, and I could see
What the sunrays were showing me
There it was, right at this hour
A lush meadow, full of flowers
A glowing oasis hidden in the wild
Came to life when I arrived
I rested briefly when it came to my mind
That I had lost sight of the way out

Time must have passed, the sun began to set

Painting the land in its vibrant palette

I ran in circles, round the meadow, to no avail

I lost my entry path, but found another trail

So I wandered, then my alertness increased

I saw a large den, a hideout of an unknown beast

That's been prowling round these trees

Looking around, no longer did I feel at ease,

Frightened of the image in my mind, I began to sprint

Stopped to catch my breath, and saw plenty of footprints

Around me were torn down trees, some had claw marks on their bark

I was being watched, by a creature lurking somewhere in the dark

Panic seized me. Not looking back, I ran for miles

When I noticed a cabin, with lights on, tiny in size

Rushing to the door, still gripped with fear

I knocked and knocked, hoping for someone to appear

No reply, dead silence, yet the door opened wide

Unsure and anxious, I stepped in to hide

What awaited me was familiar, though distorted view

My eyes deceived me; I knew it could not be true

Inside my apartment did I myself find?

A perfect replica, had I completely lost my mind?

No noises came in, I glanced at the window, a view outside

I walked to take a look, but no matter how I tried

The window just mirrored the room inside,

The doors then locked on their own, as I glanced behind

Was I trapped here forever, with no way out?

Exhausted, confused and out of supplies

I laid on the bed, then slowly closed my eyes

As I opened them next time, blinded by the gold sunlight

I was back behind the wheel, of my own automobile



PARK FINDINGS

Martina Turzová

As the first sun's beams gleamed in the morning skies
I woke up myself, weary, tired and stroked my eyes
With everything I've needed for this trip to start
Met my troops on halfway, still felt lonely at heart
Murky puddles saw the light
That turned them at once bright
Our journey outset speedy-fast, us marching to the park
Enough food we packed, almost like in supermarket's cart
Early hour, you see limpid dew on blades of grass
And the bark that covers trees is the colour of brass
Finding our way through a bridge upon a narrow brook
Streaming like an oozing blood I find in my pocketbook
Slowly pacing with my friends, we observe the place
The art of nature, signs of outdoors, the scenery's grace
Here and there a big white sculpture surprises us
Standing on a spot, we have a lot to discuss
Suddenly, something is whizzing around
We cannot really see, as if we were downed
Standing still, sound of our feet is stopped
A rabbit hopping here and there popped

A magnificent castle left my heart full of cheer
And my fellow travellers opened bottles of beer
We sit down on blanket put on ground of green
And talk for hours like that as we our friendship glean
The castle is huge, coloured in many paints
So bright, so beamy, that it could cause faints
Further as we go, green is everywhere I look, and it looks so pretty
Makes me feel as if I could fly and makes me feel as gritty
My hair behind my head a playful wind disturbs
We are not aware of the birds hiding in the herbs
So powerful look those green yards everywhere
The park so rich with greens acts like a billionaire
At a greater distance I could see a lake
Another place we stop at, ready to rake
So many wonderful things and people have no idea
That they exist, park is an open and free galleria
Having a tour like this made me realize though, how lucky I am
To have friends who walk with me truly and it's no scam
I'm looking forward to another adventure with them
I don't feel lonely anymore, I found the hidden gem

AWAKENING

Milena Čantrak

Let there be light
upon the glorious healing
as the eyes capture the beauty again.
The missing strength is born through love
above the pieces of a glass ceiling.
Graciously gather the verses to cover
this soul once baptised with fire
and bring the courage for a sunset
that is yet to be discovered.
What was once buried deep in pain,
may now the hope graciously release.
Let there be light
for this self to gain
the strength to see the world in colour;
the very power
of precious liberty
to fly across the beauty of Mother.
Like Mother, like the creature...
May this divine strength within
withdraw illumination from resting palms –
to create, to feel, to love, to desire.

JOURNEY TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN

Bruno Kopček

It has been days since I yearned to go
to the peak of the hill I wish to know
I packed my supplies and a long curved stick
When leaving the house I was quick
The base was long the path now steep
I was excited, so no time for sleep
The shrubs had a brush of magic
I hoped for laughter and nothing tragic.
Animals roamed, some small, some large
I had no time for them in my questing charge
Stones lay beneath me, sky high above
The air wisped around me smelling of love.
The sun is now setting, it has been a while
I stride boldly forward, not a wrinkle in my smile
My bag is heavy, my feet are all sore
I walk forward, still wanting more
No human in sight, just wonders of nature
No one to help me but I feel no danger.
I reach the top and the sun finally sets
What my heart desired it now finally gets.

The Riddle

Mária Ráciková

I can touch you, you can't touch me,

but you can feel me.

I make you see things but I can make you blind.

I change colours as I come and go.

Some days I don't come out at all.

Those are the days when you feel blue.

(the Sun)



UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN IN THE GARDEN PARTY

Vivien Lea Vitková

The Garden Party by Katherine Mansfield contains symbols, allusions, and messages that are not that obvious at a first glance. "Away Laura flew, still holding her piece of bread-and-butter. It's so delicious to have an excuse for eating out of doors, and besides, she loved having to arrange things;" This story features different perspectives. Firstly, the story is introduced with a camera eye technique, then it changes, and the reader knows what Laura thinks. This is one of the features of modernism. The more the story is reread the more it uncovers. So, apart from the most obvious features, there are many others. Katherine Mansfield uses many symbols and allusions, the author shows things rather than tells them, and she forces the reader to think at the end.

The short story „The Garden Party” features symbols and symbolic images, mainly flowers that have a deeper meaning. There are many symbolic images such as daisies, which symbolize innocence and purity, but at the same time, they symbolize immortality. These daisies are present in the garden, which may signify that the joy and the perfection which is present has a darker undertone to it. The author uses many flowers to illustrate the setting and shows their significance throughout the short story. "As for the roses, you could not help feeling they understood that roses are the only flowers that impress people at garden-parties; the only flowers that everybody is certain of knowing. Hundreds, yes, literally hundreds, had come out in a single night". The roses appeared out of nowhere, overnight, which shows a supernatural element of the story, but at the same time, it shows that the story has more to it than what is seen on the surface. Next, the author uses lilies. "Take it yourself, darling," said she. "Run down just as you are. No, wait, take the arum lilies too. People of that class are so impressed by arum lilies." Although there is a reference to the class, the symbolism lies in the lilies because they symbolize purity and death, in many cultures white is the mourning colour. "Breakfast was not yet over before the men came to put up the marquee." Another symbolism can be found in the colour of a marquee, which is a large tent. This is used to show the status of the family because the marquee is used in richer families. This detail however is not shared, so that the family is upper or middle class is told through "showing" rather than "telling". The author uses clothes such as the turban, petticoat, or kimono to indicate their social status, and that they can buy luxurious goods.

The author uses allusions to give her story a deeper understanding. There are some biblical references. "Hundreds, yes, literally hundreds, had come out in a single night; the green bushes bowed down as though they had been visited by archangels." The archangels are deeply rooted in Christianity. And therefore, this could be considered as an allusion. There is a reference towards Greek mythology, specifically Persephone. Persephone was taken to the underworld by god Hades. This could be seen when Laura leaves her "perfect

garden" and enters "reality". In mythology, when Persephone is in the underworld, there is a guard, a three-headed dog. This is indicated when Laura enters and there is a dog. "It was just growing dusky as Laura shut their garden gates. A big dog ran by like a shadow." This mythology continues when Em's sister wants to deceive Laura to look at the dead body. "Don't be afraid, my lass,"—and now her voice sounded fond and sly, and fondly she drew down the sheet—"e looks a picture. There's nothing to show. Come along, my dear." This, again, is a reference to the Persephone, when she is deceived and eats pomegranate, which results that she will be tied to the underworld, even though her mother warned her not to eat anything in the underworld. In this way, Laura upon seeing the dead body will never be the same. Laurie is sent by Mrs. Sheridan to go and bring Laura back. Laurie is considered to be Hermes, who helped to rescue Persephone and bring her back, although both Persephone and Laura will never be the same, they both have a much deeper comprehension of death.

The distinction between the classes is shown throughout the whole story, where the feature of subjectivism is present. The author uses another flower "lily-lawn" to indicate that the garden of the Sheridan family is perfect. The working man does not like the fact that the marquee should be placed on it. Instead, they pick a place against the karaka-tree. "I don't fancy it," said he. "Not conspicuous enough. You see, with a thing like a marquee," and he turned to Laura in his easy way". The character Laura is very naïve and unaware when it comes to the working class. She is surprised that a person, who is a working-class, cares for the scent of the flower. She and the people who will come to the party do not pay attention to the flowers. She is shocked that the man is interested in the flower. "He bent down, pinched a sprig of lavender, put his thumb and forefinger to his nose, and snuffed up the smell. When Laura saw that gesture she forgot all about the karakas in her wonder at him caring for things like that—caring for the smell of lavender. How many men that she knew would have done such a thing?" The naïve nature and the lack of understanding of the working class is made also clear by Jose's character. "You won't bring a drunken workman back to life by being sentimental," she said softly." The character is judgmental towards the working class and assumes that every person from the working-class is more inclined to be alcoholic. Subjectivism is mainly shown when hearing about the news that someone died. "Stop everything, Laura!" cried Jose in astonishment. "What do you mean?" "Stop the garden-party, of course." Why did Jose pretend? Laura from all of her family is the most empathetic when it comes to the poorer people. She wants to stop the garden party and Jose does not understand the reason behind it. He does not care about someone from the lower class, and the party is not cancelled at the end. They focus on themselves, not on society or other people.

The story has an open ending. Laura and her views on life change. Em's sister convinced Laura to look at the dead man. In this way, Laura is pushed to comprehend a new understanding of death. „Isn't life," she stammered, "isn't life—" But what life was she couldn't explain. No matter. He quite understood. "Isn't it, darling?" said Laurie. Laura does not end her thought, because she is not able to conclude what she has seen. Life itself and death are so difficult to understand that it is impossible to conclude. In this way, the author also

wants to push the reader to finish it and think about it.

The symbols, allusions, subjectivism, and opening endings are present in the short story "The Garden Party". All of them show and imply the distinction between the people from the lower and upper classes. This story shows a contrast between the perfection of "The Garden of Eden" alias "The Garden Party" and how the people from them view others. The story itself may not be that comprehensible and clear at first, but after the uncovering of the hidden, the story makes more sense. Is it really The Garden of Eden or just an illusion?

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Picture source: <https://medium.com/@liyasaraw/analyzing-the-garden-party-8133e6ad78ae>

THE BLACK CAT BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

Silvia Presinszky

The chosen short story is written by the American author Edgar Allan Poe who is known for his mysterious tales, alongside with other literary works. This short story, in particular, represents the Gothic literature, which is a subgenre of Romanticism. This essay analyses three chosen elements of Gothic literature. At the beginning of the story, we can sense sorrow from the narrator's side because of his previous actions, which creates great confusion as we do not know the reason for his remorse. The onset of the story is informing about the earliest years of the narrator who claims himself as a tender animal-loving person from his early childhood. He also mentions that he married early to a woman who shared the above-mentioned features with him. However, because of alcoholism the narrator's personality has changed leading to irritation and intemperance which has influenced the whole plot. His tenderness has shifted into violent behaviour, which is one of our features, which occurs in Gothic literature. The narrator introduces his favourite animal, a black cat, Pluto. According to his wife's sayings, black cats are witches in disguise, thus reflecting something supernatural. The third feature is linked with the spooky setting of the story.

At first sight, the setting of the story is not as typical as in other gothic novels. In this short story, there is no castle nor another haunted or abandoned place. Though, the author included many other figures to display this feature. The story takes place in a regular home, yet there are no records about its age nor anything else proving its irregularity. Later on, however, this house burns down, which makes the narrator and his household move to an old building. After the unlucky incident, he returns to the ruins of his burnt-down house, finding only one surviving wall. The scene isn't that much haunting until he recognizes his hung black cat, Pluto on it. By the end of the story, the narrator takes us to his basement where the brutal incident happens. The description of the basement is limited, thus in general, basements evoke something dark, infernal, and scary, which is the main feature of Gothic literature. These values might condition the author's choice of the crime scene; hence the narrator killed his wife in the cellar of this old house.

The supernatural elements of Gothic are represented in this story by the black cats. According to the narrator's wife, black cats are "witches in disguise". The narrator often felt haunted by his two black cats, evoking such feelings as if they are some kinds of ghosts, which may be perceived as supernatural power: "During the former the creature left me no moment alone; and, in the latter, I started, hourly, from dreams of unutterable fear, to find the hot breath of the thing upon my face, and its vast weight -- an incarnate Night-Mare that I had no power to shake off -- incumbent eternally upon my heart!". Pluto, the narrator's first cat was hung by the narrator himself on a tree limb. After this incident, his house burnt down and when he returned to the ruins, he found out that only one wall survived the accident. As he examined the wall, he recognized a gigantic black cat figure with a rope around its neck. This proves that the cat carried something that haunted the narrator and even after killing the animal, the narrator did not get rid of that haunting feeling: "When I first beheld this apparition -- for I could scarcely regard it as less -- my wonder and my terror were extreme." Also, the fire itself can be perceived as an element connected to witchcraft, as witches used to be burnt at the stake, leading to a connection between the words of the wife and the happenings after the cat's death. The second cat did not get a name, yet it had the same appearance as Pluto, however, this second cat had white fur on his chest. Later on, the narrator discovered something unusual on the second 'beasts' breast. The white spot reminded the narrator of Pluto, hanging on gallows. This "coincidence" caused the author to create an even bigger hatred for the cat and wanted to get rid of it by killing the animal. The whole story evokes a supernatural feeling from the cats' side, especially from the second cat. At the almost-end of the story, the narrator was ready to kill the cat with the axe, yet his wife stopped him. Her action led to an even worse scenario, as in a demonical rage he buried the axe in her head. He immediately tried to cover his actions, taking

taking apart the old brick wall with a crowbar, and hiding the corpse of his wife behind the wall. After his cover-up, he wanted to find the cat, which he blamed for his crime. However, he did not find it until the very end of the tale.

The author describes himself as an animal-loving person at the beginning of the story. After he wed, he and his wife possessed many kinds of animals, however, due to his problems with alcohol he acquired some kind of resistance, hatred for their animals. The theme of death is perceived as a common thing in the story. The irritation and killing are presented in an early stage of the story when the main character killed all of his animals, except the black cat, Pluto "...as I made no scruple of maltreating the rabbits, the monkey, or even the dog when by accident, or through affection, they came in my way." These actions were the first ones representing his rage and violence influenced by alcohol. As time passed the narrator felt as the cat was avoiding him. One night, he tried to grab the cat who bit him, so the narrator mercilessly cut out the cat's eye with a pocketknife. The cat was probably terrified by the actions of his owner and this time the animal really avoided the narrator. One morning the narrator hung Pluto in cold blood on a limb of a tree. This act was one of the most surprising ones, as the narrator and both his wife loved Pluto. However, the narrator's emotions and irritation have changed him to a merciless person. The last violent thing occurred at the end of the story. As we know, the author found a new companion in the form of a new black cat. The animal's appearance was similar to Pluto's and the man and the wife loved it. However, as time passed the negative feelings and irritation increased in the narrator towards the cat. One day the narrator went down to his cellar when he almost fell off the stairs because of the cat, which caused, that the man took his axe and wanted to kill the animal immediately: "Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wrath, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal...". His wife stopped him from doing so, instead, the narrator buried the axe in her head, and she died immediately. Without remorse or feeling sorry he graved her body into the wall of the building.

The violence of the main character is related to his emotions and externalities caused mainly by the consumption of alcohol. His mood swings occur throughout the whole story. The man was driven essentially by his feelings, which were often unfounded and unreal. The narrator is often irrational, guessing, and acting out of rage. Simultaneously, the feelings caused by the presence of the two cats played a huge role. The author felt as the cats were haunting him, or even dictating him what to do. This fact confirms some kind of supernaturalism in the story. Overall, black cats mean bad luck or can be coined to witchcraft, confirming the idea of supernaturalism. The setting itself is however not that mysterious, yet the narrator's basement is old, and in general, we may say, that basements are often dark, ghostly, and terrifying. They are often perceived as haunted places, which strengthens the occurrence of mystery and Gothic.

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THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POEM O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

Margaréta Jungová

What have nations and ships in common? Captains, leaders, presidents... The saying "We are on the same boat" is very accurate in this connection. Although in the 19th century in the United States not all people were on the same boat. Not all were equal. The dark time of slavery and cruelty is an ugly scar in American history. Fortunately, there was one brave leader who tried to be the captain of all people equally and fairly.

The metaphor of captain – leader, is the main theme in Walt Whitman's poem O Captain! My Captain! written in 1865. The poem was originally published as a part of a pamphlet called Sequel to Drum-Taps based on the horrors of the American Civil war which lasted from 1861 to 1865. The pamphlet was published the same year when the war ended and its content was at the time very current and the pain was still very raw. The consequences of the Civil war affected greatly every single American citizen including Walt Whitman. Whitman's way of coping with this unresolved pain was writing and thanks to that, nowadays we have many touching poems from his pen.

The central figure in the Civil war was American president Abraham Lincoln whose reign didn't last very long, but he is to this day one of the most memorable and loved presidents of all time. Whitman admired this leader so much that he wrote multiple poems about him. The most famous is O Captain! My Captain! in which the character of the captain represents Abraham Lincoln. In the first verse "O Captain! My Captain! our fearful trip is done", the fearful trip reflects the Civil war and from this statement, we can already feel Whitman's remaining fear of the war. In the following part "The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won; The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting", the ship stands for the Union which won the prize – the war. In our opinion, the statement "The port is near" shows Whitman's desire for the ideal state of his nation and equality. "But O heart! heart! heart! O the bleeding drops of red, Where on the deck my Captain lies, Fallen cold and dead". President Lincoln was shot to the head, not heart, but we think that „O heart! heart! heart!“ describes the author's sorrow caused by the president's death and his own broken heart. "O Captain! My Captain! rise up and hear the bells; Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills; For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding; For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning" is the next stanza of the poem. Abraham Lincoln was brutally assassinated only five days after the war ended. He was fighting for over four years and didn't have even a week to celebrate the end of the Civil war. He didn't get to properly see all the joyful people, didn't get to receive the flowers and gifts. All that cheer and honor were stolen from him. "Here captain! dear father! This arm beneath your head; It is some dream that on the deck, You've fallen cold and dead". In this stanza, Whitman addresses the captain "dear father" which shows us how much gratitude and admiration he had for this role model. Almost as if he was thanking him for his life, as he would to his father. In the second part of this stanza, the author expresses his shock with this new situation, which is so surreal to him, that he wishes it was just a nightmare. "My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still; My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will". In this next part, we learn that it is not just a dream and the horrible situation is real. The captain does not answer and he is not able to give his fatherlike advice nor the words of encouragement anymore. "The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;

From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won;". Whitman continues with the metaphor of Union represented by "the victor ship" which won the Civil war referred to as "object". It feels almost as if the author resented the word war from his vocabulary and refused to use it. The whole poem is closely connected to the Civil war, but the author doesn't use the word war not even once in the text. "Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells! But I, with mournful tread, Walk the deck my captain lies, Fallen cold and dead." The last paragraph proceeds with the bittersweet theme of the poem putting the festive ringing bells on the one hand and the dead cold body of the captain on the other.

This whole era truly was bittersweet for the American people. The end of the war was an ecstatic event in American history, but at the same time deeply sorrowful. This impression of two opposite feelings in contrast and blended at the same time is the feature of this poem that captivated us the most. The usage of words in this piece is very polar. On the one side, we have words with the positive spirit like bells, exulting, bugle, bouquets, wreaths, eager, safe and sound, victor... From these expressions only we could think that O Captain! My Captain! is a happy celebratory poem, but after these warming words Whitman crashes our perception with heavy expressions like bleeding, cold, dead, pale, still, no pulse, no will, mournful... In the same way, his perception and feelings were crushed by cruel reality. In the same way, his relief and joy caused by the end of the war were mixed with the misery and heartbreak caused by losing a role model and father figure.

Leaders of our nations really are like captains manoeuvring giant ships on a heavy sea, sometimes successfully other times unsuccessfully. Abraham Lincoln managed to arrive with his ship to the triumphant harbour, but he paid for it with his own life. His sacrifice saved the lives of millions of suffering slaves and his legacy is honoured to this day. Walt Whitman contributed with his talent to anchor the legacy of Abraham Lincoln's life in history and people's hearts.

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W. H. AUDEN: Funeral Blues

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message 'He is Dead'.
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one,
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun,
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

1

W. H. Auden: „Pohrebný Blues“**Alexandra Böjtöšová**

Vypnite telefóny aj hodín bolo dosť,
aby pes neštekal, hodťte tučnú kosť.
Umlčte klavíry nech tlmený bubon znie,
prineste truhlu, nech smútiaci dav pristúpiť vie.

Nech lietadlá stonajú krúžiac nad hlavami,
čmárajúc na nebo: „Už nie je medzi nami.“
Uviažte mašle na biele krky holubíc,
nech policajti nosia čierne páry rukavíc.

Bol to môj východ, západ, sever i juh,
môj pracovný deň i nedeľný klúd.
Moje poludnie, polnoc, pieseň, ľudský hlas,
láska je večná, myslela som si, no mýlila som sa zas.

Nechceme hviezdy, do jednej zhasnite,
zoberte mesiac a slnko strhnite.
Vypustite oceány, lesy nenechajte stáť,
už nič dobrého život nebude mi priať.

W. H. Auden – Pohrebný Blues

Hana Ondrišeková

Zastavte všetky hodiny, telefón odpojte,
Šťavnatou kosťou psovi štekať zabráňte,
Utíšte klavíry a s úderom polnoci
Vyneste truhlu, nech vojdú trúchliaci.

Nech lietadlá nad hlavou krúžia s nárekom
Čmárajúc na oblohe odkaz, že je koniec jeho dňom.
Uviažte krepové mašle okolo bielych krkov holubíc,
Nech policajti zahalia si ruky do čiernych bavlnených rukavíc.

On bol môj východ, môj západ, môj sever aj juh,
Môj pracovný týždeň aj môj nedeľný druh,
Moje poludnie, moja polnoc, moje slová, moja skladba;
Myslela som, že láska bude trvať naveky: Aká to hanba.

Hviezdy teraz nechcem, všetky ich uhaste,
Zbaľte mesiac a Slnko odneste,
Vylejte oceán, aj stromy rozsekať;
Pretože teraz už nič dobré nemôže sa stať.

W.H. Auden: Pohrebné Blues

Matej Jelínek

Zastavte všetky hodiny, telefón už zvonil dosť
Pes nech dnes nebreše, hoďte mu chutnú kosť
Stíšte zvuk klavírov, kým mierny úder bubnov znie
Vyneste rakvu, tá zástup trúchliacich vedie

Nechajte krúžiť lietadlá, nariekajúc nám nad hlavami
Na nebesách píš svoju zvesť: "Už nie je medzi nami!"
Nech stuhy krepové zdobia krky holubíc
A dopravným policajtom nasadte pár čiernych rukavíc

Bol to môj sever, západ, východ a juh
Môj pracovný týždeň i nedeľný klúd
Moje poludnie, polnoc, moja pieseň a reč
Myslel som, že láska bude trvať večne; Je však preč

Hviezdy sem dnes nepatria, zahaste to všetko
Zbaľte náš Mesiace, odmontujte aj Slnko
Vylejte celý oceán, posekajte každý les
Lebo na dobré nič neobráti sa dnes.

Jaroslav Švarc

Stop hodinám, telefónov dost'
aby pes neštekal, hodte mu kosť,
utíšte pianá a bubon nech ticho znie,
rakve a trúchliacim bude robiť privítanie.

Nech lietadlo dym na písmo zmení,
a vytvorí nápis 'Už do neba je prisľúbení'.
biele stuhy na krky holubíc,
a policajtom pár čiernych rukavíc.

Bol môj Sever, Východ, Západ a Juh,
môj pracovný týždeň aj Nedeľný klúd.
moje poludnie, moja polnoc, moja pieseň i môj hlas,
láska je večná, myslel som si, no mýlil som sa zas.

Hviezdy nech zmiznú, netreba ich tu,
zbaľte mesiac a slnko nechajte zmiznúť,
vylejte oceán a vyrúbte celý les,
nič dobrého žiaľ nestane sa od dnes.

Preklad Patrícia Šimorová

Vôňa čerstvo praženej kávy sa do ulice šírila odniekiaľ zospodu pasáže. Nebola to klasická vôňa, ale vôňa, čo prekračovala limity štandardu. Winston sa nedobrovoľne pozastavil, a približne počas dvoch sekúnd bol myslou naspäť v období jeho detstva – v tom polo-zabudnutom svete. Neočakávaný treskot dverí však prerušil zdanlivú vôňu tak rýchlo, akoby sa zdalo, že bola zvukom.

Prešiel niekoľko kilometrov po chodníkoch, zatiaľ čo jeho kŕčový vred pulzoval. Bolo to už po druhýkrát, čo za posledné tri týždne premeškal večer v Komunitnom centre – čo sa dalo považovať za celkom neuvážení skutok, keďže ste si mohli byť stopercentne istí, že vaša účasť bola starostlivo kontrolovaná. V podstate, člen strany nemal žiadny voľný čas a nebol nikdy sám, odhliadnuc od času stráveného v posteli. Predpokladalo sa, že pokiaľ nepracuje, neje alebo nespí, zúčastňuje sa na nejakom druhu spoločenskej rekreácie – a tak robiť hocičo, čo by naznačovalo chuť držať sa v ústraní – i prechádzka osamote – bolo vždy vskutku nebezpečné. V “Novom Jazyku” bolo pre to špeciálne pomenovanie – “VLASTNÝ ŽIVOT” – čo v preklade znamenalo “individualizmus a výstrednosť”. Ale dnes večer, ako tak vychádzal z ministerstva, vôňa aprílového vzduchu ho celkom opantala. Obloha sa mu zdala modrejšia, ako kedykoľvek predtým počas tohto roku. A odrazu sa mu ten dlhý, hlučný večer v centre, nudné a celkom vyčerpávajúce hry, prednášky a predstierané priateľstvá premazané ginom zdali neznesiteľné. To nečakané nutkanie ho prinútilo odvrátiť sa od smeru autobusovej zastávky a nechať sa vtiahnuť priamo do londýnskeho labyrintu – prvou južne, potom na východ, znovu na sever, až sa celkom stratil v neznámych uliciach a bolo mu úplne jedno, ktorým smerom šiel.

“Ak existuje nádej,” napísal si do denníka, “tak spočíva niekde v robotníckej triede”. Tie slová sa k nemu neprestajne vracali späť, boli výpoveďou mystickej pravdy, hmatateľnej absurdity. Nachádzal sa niekde v hmľistých, nahnedo-sfarbených slumoch, severovýchodne od bývalej stanice svätého Pankráca. Kráčal po vydláždenej ulici lemovanej dvojposchodovými domami, ktorých otlčené vchodové prístupy viedli priamo na chodník. Vyzeralo to, akoby boli nejako podivne poznačené potkaními dierami. Tu a tam sa medzi dlaždicami objavili kaluže špinavej vody. Ľudia sa z tmavých vchodov hemžili dnu a von v udivujúcich číslach. Tiahli priamo nadol, po oboch stranách sa rozvetvujúcich uličiek. Zloženie bolo rôznorodé – dievčatá v plnom rozkvetu s nahrubo namaľovanými perami, a mládež, čo sa za tými dievčatami naháňala; opuchnuté, kolísajúce sa ženy, ktoré boli fyzickým príkladom toho, ako budú spomínané dievčatá vyzeráť o desať rokov; staré pozohýbané stvorenia, ktoré sa šuchajú, s rozkročenými nohami pohybovali po okolí, a nakoniec otrhané deti, čo sa bosé šantili v kalužiach a rozptýlili sa až na rozhorčené výkriky svojich matiek. Približne štvrtina okien na ulici bola rozbitá. Väčšina ľudí si Winstona nevšímala, no našli sa aj takí, ktorí ho veľmi pozorne sledovali. Dve príšerné ženy stáli vonku pred dverami a rozprávali sa. Tehlovo-červené predlaktia sa krížili na ich zásterách. Keď sa priblížil, Winston zachytil útržky ich rozhovoru.

Preklad Kristína Bartóková

Príbeh falošnej korytnačky

„Ani si neviete predstaviť ako veľmi ma teší, že vás znova vidím, moja predrahá!“ povedala Vojvodkyňa, kým láskavo preplietla svoju ruku s Alicinou a spoločne odkráčali.

Alica bola veľmi rada, že ju našla v takej príjemnej nálade. Pomyslela si, že možno len čierne korenie ju urobilo takou neľútostnou, keď sa stretli v kuchyni.

„Keď budem ja Vojvodkyňou,“ povedala si – i keď nie veľmi nádejným tónom, „nebudem mať vôbec žiadne čierne korenie v mojej kuchyni. Aj bez korenia je polievka dobrá... Možno je to vždy korenie, čo robí ľudí takými výbušnými,“ pokračovala potešená, že prišla na nové pravidlo. „Od octu sú všetci kyslí, a od harmančeka zase trpkí, a- a jačmenný cukor robí deti vlúdnymi – želám si len, aby o tom ľudia vedeli, potom by neboli takí skúpi, vieš.“

Alica celkom pozabudla na prítomnosť Vojvodkyne a trochu sa naplašila, keď začula jej hlas blízko pri uchu.

„Premýšľate nad niečím, moja milá, a preto zabúdate hovoriť. Neviem vám hneď povedať, aké je mravné ponaučenie toho, ale za chvíľu si na to spomeniem.“

„Možno to žiadne nemá,“ odvážila sa poznamenať Alica.

„Ale, ale, dieťa!“ povedala Vojvodkyňa. „Všetko má svoje mravné ponaučenie, treba ho len nájsť.“ Pritlačila sa bližšie k Alicinmu boku, kým hovorila.



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