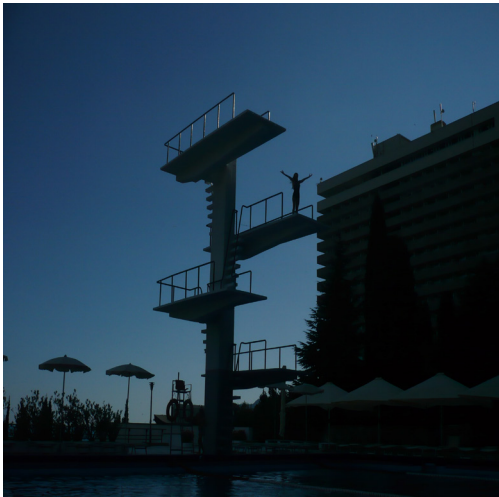


FICTION



**APPSIRANTESS. EXCERPT FROM THE
NOVEL
THE TRAGIC CONFESSION OF
MYKOLA KHVYLOVY IN THE NOVEL
BY LELYA AREY APPSIRANTESS**

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The theme of the executed revival of the 1920s-1930s in the context of Russia's current active aggression against Ukraine, which has been going on for nine years, when the Russian occupiers are shooting not only the Ukrainian intellectual elite, but purposefully destroying the entire Ukrainian nation, has acquired special relevance.

The importance of the slogan “Away from Moscow” by Mykola Khvylyovyi, one of the most extraordinary representatives of the period of the most powerful and brilliant literary and artistic development of Ukraine, increased in the plane of the fierce struggle of the Ukrainian people with Moscow for their freedom and independence.

The ability to foresee the future through critical thinking and deep intuition led Mykola Khvylyovyi to appeal to fellow writers with a proposal to reorient Ukrainian literature toward a psychological, cultural and intellectual Europe. He sought to contrast the power of European individual consciousness with the artificial Moscow

massism that, in his opinion, would surely lead society to catastrophe in due course.

Lelya Arey, in her novel “Appsirantess”, tries to uncover the phenomenon of Mykola Khvylyovyi, in particular his socio-political views, his world outlook and the mystery of suicide, in a thanatological mystical paradigm. The author involves in the plot the spirit of the murdered writer, who in communication with a researcher of his work reveals the details of his biography in both premature and otherworldly life.

The theme of a temporary return to premature life in the plane of the mystical model of life after death is popular in world literature, where the traditional way of communication with the spirits of the dead is a spiritualistic session of mediums.

The heroine of the novel “Appsirantess” does not need the help of mediums and communicates with the spirit of Mykola Khvylyovyi through direct dialogue without intermediaries. Such an artistic device gives the fact of filling the white spots in the biography of Mykola Khvylyovoyi, and also correlates with the manner of his writing, according to which in the created literary characters the writer reflected the inner world of his own soul, its experiences in three-time planes before death after death, as, for example, in “The Story of the Sanatorium Zone”.

The spirit of Mykola Khvylyovyi in the novel “Appsirantess” similarly appeals to the past - the time plane before death, the present - the time plane at the time of suicide, the future - the time plane after suicide, supposedly erasing the borders between this and that world and demonstrating the continuity of events.

Therefore, this text prompts reflection on the similarities between the tragic situation that occurred in Ukraine almost a century ago and the even more tragic reality of today’s horrific Russian-Ukrainian war, essentially a logical bloody continuation of Russia's destruction of Ukrainians.

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Apsirantess. Excerpt from the novel

Lelya Arey

XIV

Vira was preparing for the last candidacy examination within the specialty (Ukrainian literature) – May has come. For the past six months, Vira had been constantly telling Kirill that they needed to part, that she was tormented by remorse, and then continued to date him. He said he loved her, valued her personality, did not want to oppress and would accept any of her decisions. Vira did not tell Bohdan anything like that, continuing to date him as well.

She lived in a feeling of nervousness: it was necessary to collect and process material for writing a dissertation, prepare for candidacy examinations, participate in scientific conferences, undergo graduate practice, conducting seminars for students, date Bogdan, feel his suspicions, date Kirill, tolerate his reproaches, hide this connection from parents and acquaintances, avoid discussing the problem of the might-have-been wedding, reply to "sympathetic" questions on the dissertation writing process... Vira, nervously, began to cry for no reason, regardless of where she is: in a cafe, at a lecture, on the street... If someone nearby happened to be interested in the cause of her tears, she replied that she was trying to understand Khvylovy's creative process and immersed herself too deeply in the hermeneutics of his texts.

Vira no longer sang when walking down the street, she did not rejoice in the sun or rain, often, almost always, thought of Kirill, absorbed in feelings of guilt and desire to be with him always. A week later, they were going to a scientific seminar in Canada on the Ukrainian diaspora. Vira has never been to Canada before, she was interested in learning the culture and mentality of this country. But instead of a thrilling anticipation of the adrenaline and novelty she felt anxious and bored: she was scared, and she suddenly began to miss her mother, as piercingly painful as in kindergarten. Vira had lunch at the "Chateau's" viranda on Rymarska Street together with Khvylovy. Rather, Vira had lunch, and Khvylovy, invisible to anyone, sat at a table and entertained her with a conversation. All the restaurant staff secretly and with curiosity observed the visitor, who was laughing contagiously and loudly, suddenly indignant, talking, mimicking remarks, delight and indulgence with herself.

"Why is it so painful and difficult for me? - Vira asked Mykola."

"Because you intuitively feel that you went the wrong way, but you still keep going."

"Then why can't you stop me?"

"Because it is your choice and you, subconsciously, are fighting for it. I am powerless to do anything."

"Why did you kill yourself?"

"Because I felt guilty because of my helplessness... And why are you interested in it?"

"Firstly, you probably forgot the topic of my dissertation, and secondly, this problem is of interest to all specialists and just cultured people who know history.

Can you imagine how lucky I am! But I'm just a lucky girl! I can, without rummaging through archives and other people's letters, perverted newspaper articles and often false documents, find out information from the first source, you know!"

"You mean, my life, my grief is called information !?"

"Mykola, dear, I'm sorry, you know how dear you are to me, how grateful I am to you for being near, what a wise friend you are... Well, forgive me, please. This word is foolish... You know what a period we live in now: without pathos, ridiculous pseudo-exclamations that have remained in the pop culture of mass. Moreover, in the postmodernist interpretation the concept of information is the most valuable..."

"But you yourself wrote that the postmodern era is over, and that another kind of art, which the French call "critical fiction", is being formed now."

"Forgive me, I will try to be more refined and sentimental..."

"Please, I beg you, return the romance, with your own boys you are kind and gentle, so why are you such a rusk in science ?!"

"But this is a scientific style. That's how they teach me ..."

"Who teaches you ?! They're about to learn from you!"

"You flatter me... So tell me, why did you do it? This is a sin according to the canons of the Christian religion..."

" You are talking about rules now... But I have always been an exception... At least the fact I am talking to you now... Intuitively, I always wanted to do something special in art, I felt responsible for my nation, now I want to help you... Fortunately, people forget bad things quickly. You probably don't remember your mother in the 80's buying groceries on the quiet, and at the same time gladly taking whatever she was offered to her. Such a concept as the expiration date simply did not exist. How she bought hand cream for 30 pieces and dimensionless tights in any color and size, and in the 90's she paid the dressmaker with flour and eggs, because you couldn't buy

anything with money.”

And today, how do you buy groceries? You have peaches and tomatoes in your fridge in winter, but yesterday in the confectionery the fragrant freshness of 30 types of cakes did not inspire you. The country is stocked to the brim! No one is surprised by anything! And thank God for that! Remember, the history textbook describes the events of 33 year. It was the memorable spring of famine.

And can you imagine, the Central Committee of the Communist Party expressed its condolences to the deprived Ukrainian people in official department language and, most impressively, blamed this very Ukrainian people for the causes of the famine. Just imagine, agitation propaganda worked hard to prove that peasant conservatism, the ordinary villager unwilling to accept collective forms of economy, was to blame; in general, all the troubles were pushed on the poor kulak, declaring him an enemy of the people and a Ukrainian nationalist who was committing counterrevolutionary intention.

I walk down Sumska Street with Arkasha Liubchenko, and the bony, long, yellow, trembling hand of a young woman, who has aged prematurely with grief, reaches out to us:

“Have pity not on me, but on my children!” - and next to her are two turned blue sons.

There were more and more such starving people in Kharkiv day by day, despite the fact that the authorities ordered not to let them into the city, it's the capital, after all, but they found ways to somehow get in and fill the streets with unrestrained crowds. The police drove them dirty from the central streets - they were crowded in the alleys. These poor peasants were not professional beggars, and they often begged without words, through gestures and half-dizzy looks of hungry eyes. Of course, I gave this woman everything I had with me, because she - a peasant woman, was the first to have the right to bread, and instead of which she, under shitty socialism, asks for a piece of bread. You know, it just didn't fit in my head! Could it be true that everyone in the Kremlin is so clueless that they did not think of everything in advance and, accordingly, did not prepare properly?

Of course, I understood perfectly well that this could not be the case, and so I had to draw a single conclusion, the only explanation for what was happening was the "general" line - a perverse means to destroy the Ukrainian nation, tear it apart, scatter it, rape it, eradicate.



Vira observed as Khvylovy's emotional outburst moved the ghost from calm, wise prudence to the material outlines of the human body. It even seemed to her, when he wrapped his arms around his head, that Mykola would cry now. Vira recalled that in his memoirs Arkadii Liubchenko focused on Khvylovy's temperament, whose characteristic feature was the strength of spirit, a deep organic force that captivated, excited, made the people who listened to him tremble. Vira was amazed at how worried Khvylovy was and how his excitement worried her. Khvylovy's spirit did not cry, instead Vira cried.

"You know, I have never been stopped by difficulties, on the contrary, they have always stimulated me. Despite the hardships I endured, I was not disappointed in life, I always tried to enjoy, I believed in the future of Ukraine. At the same time, I was well aware of the suffering my people were going through. But even in that horrible, disgusting situation, I tried to do something. That's when I had the idea of creating a semi-official studio called "Urbino", a prototype of VAPLITE, we gathered in my apartment - it was very fun... Then one day the Free Academy was formed, which, if you remember, the authorities declared "counterrevolutionary." Then we published the "Literary Fair", which, of course, was defeated. However, I did not despair, I could write. By the way, do you know how Solomiia Pavlychko described my "exercises"? - Psychopathic discourse. Ha-ha-ha. Do you know what the saddest part is? - That I am lonely. Nobody understands me - not even my descendants. I tried to portray the collapse of civilization, which the revolution led to, the destruction of the foundations of life, morality and the psyche, but I am called a romantic revolutionary, whose artistic characters are schizophrenic psychopaths. Virochka, darling, maybe can you understand me... Well, read me correctly, please! When I saw what they, the fucking revolutionaries, were doing to my culture, my people, I was dying. They killed my Ukrainian pride, my Ukrainian conscience gradually, methodically, thoughtfully.

Yes, I was thinking about death. When it comes suddenly, it's scary. However, if you prepare for it, it's a different matter. In fact, we were all living in a modernized prison. Our Ukrainian literature was squirming in the casemate, suffocating from the all-Russian "parasha". And behind the door they were tirelessly watching, rudely nodding: together with various Smerdiukov and Svydrygailo, their own Khokhls, various Yakovenko, Pylypenko, Mykytenko, Kyrylenko, enko, enko - Kaina's brothers, hired assassins! But their fate is the worst. You'll see! Besides the disgrace, their inevitable demise awaits. They will be used as long as necessary, and then thrown

overboard like extra ballast, finally destroyed. You'll see! You, Virunchik, say that suicide according to Christian canons is a sin. But there are cases, however, quite rare, when death deserves justification.”

“Example?”

“For example, when it became quite obviously to absolutely everyone, including me, that by an act of death one can do something more for one’s people than by being present in life. And my death (not the death of a miserable citizen, some burgher there), but mine - the death of a genius... Sorry, darling, now I can afford not to doubt that I am a genius ?!”

“Well, yes, of course...”

“Uh-huh, merci, there’s the thing: my death in the end has to be purposeful. You see? I did not depend on myself. I was really an ideological person, serious about my work, my activities, the people who were around me. Thus, my death became an act of protest, which had to draw attention to the horrors and injustices that have become conventional and commonplace. Of course, it was my secret.”

“Tell me, were you unable to come to terms with the general injustice or was there a specific case, maybe?”

“Of course, there was. This occasion is my best buddy Mykhailo Yalovyi, who became the last straw. After Arkasha Liubchenko and I had traveled through the villages of the Lohvytskyi district, where he had fallen ill, I returned to Kharkiv, and found a radical search of the Council National Commissars of Ukraine. Firstly, Ulas Chubar was hanging by a thread, because Liubchenko was appointed his first deputy. In addition, Skrypnyk was removed from his position as People's Commissar of Education, and V. P. Zatonskyi was appointed in his place, whose first deputy was Andrii Khvyliia. I was struck by this. Clearly that I interpreted this as the first blow to the leadership of those Ukrainians who had a national backbone. The removal of M.O. Skrypnyk marked the beginning of the destruction of Ukrainian culture and science. Secondly, the ODPU reported that a counterrevolutionary organization which operated mainly in Ukraine and was headed by Fedir Mykhailovych Konar, Deputy People's Commissar of Land Affairs of the USSR for Agriculture Mechanization, had been disclosed and shot. Fedir Mykhailovych's real name was Palashchuk. He is a native of Galicia, a patriot, of course, a Ukrainian who was strongly associated with Ukrainian cultural and political life. Thirdly, the arrests of O. Shumskyi, K.Maksymovych, Academician M. Yavorskyi, Sologub and many other my interlocutors were an impressive event.



Fourthly, my friend Mykhailo Yalovyi was arrested. All this happened at the end of April 1933.

“Did you try to do anything?”

“Of course?! The three of us, Dosvitnyi and Kulysh, immediately rushed to the Central Committee and the ODPU demanding that they explain the reason for Mykhailo's arrest. And there we were "explained"”

“What exactly?”

“Well, I'm still a man, let it remain my secret... But after this visit I realized that this arrest was associated with a "great" plan of a carnival provocation against the Ukrainian literature. And, thus, the creativity was out of the question. That's when I started looking for some way out of this dead-end situation. I was isolated from the press, publishing houses, printing houses. What could I do? Go against the flow again? Go to the Central Committee of the Party and throw a Party card on their table, making a statement to that effect? But what good would that have done? No one would have heard about it, because after such a campaign, I would probably never come out of there and simply disappear without a trace, like the others. I was crushed. I felt that I had to break with the Party, which consists of the murderers and jailers of my Ukrainian people. But how? I needed everyone to know about it, and this fact to go down in history. You see, it was a matter of life and death. I tried to drink - it didn't help. And then, focusing on Roman aristocrats, I came up with an anecdote. Vira frantically began to rummage through her bag and, not finding what she needed, said:

"Wait, wait, don't tell!"

She pulled out a notebook with a pile of library order forms and a pen.”

“Wait, darling, I need to write it all down... Come on!”

“On May 13, 1933, I called my closest friends by phone: Mykola¹, Oles², Hryhorii³, Dniprovskiy⁴, Johansen⁵, Ivan⁶, maybe there was someone else - no matter. We were drinking tea, it was fun, everyone was in a good mood, talking excitedly, lively discussing something. I took the guitar and began to sing a fragment from Pushkin's

¹Mykola Kulish

²Oles Dosvitny

³Gregory Epic

⁴Ivan Dniprovsky

⁵Mike Johansen

⁶Ivan Senchenko

"Devils" to the accompaniment:

*Sir, I tell you on the level:
We have strayed, we've lost the trail.
What can WE do, when a devil
Drives us, whirls us round the vale?*

"And you can imagine, my comrades felt some fatality in this farce, my veiled cry... and unnatural silence reigned... In the doorway between the room and the kitchen stood Uliasha, my wife, and smiled sadly. I stopped singing, dropped my guitar and got up. Kulish, I think, in order to defuse the situation somehow, theatrically suggested:

"And now - a shot for us!" They poured. They drank. The mood worsened even more. I told an anecdote about love of life. Then Mykola⁷ started telling jokes, everyone laughed. In the corner near the closet sat my favorite dog Pom (I always took him with me on the hunt) and participated in the conversation: when everyone laughed, he barked. Even he was here, along with everyone. I approached him and began to pat his ears, he was spinning merrily, waving his tail happily, whining, then got up on his hind legs and hugged me. I pulled him away and went to the study, closing the door tightly behind me. I sat down at the desk, opened the drawer box, took out the preloaded revolver, remembered mine daughter and wife once more, and shot myself in the right temple. I did not feel pain, on the contrary, it became so easy and spacious, as if I had freed myself from something heavy. From the next room, Mykola could be heard shouting: "Are you out of your mind!" A few seconds later, he burst into the study, followed by Uliasha. Uliasha screamed hysterically: "Doctor!" I felt somehow sorry for her, I approached her to hug, calm down, began to kiss her eyes and tears, and she paid no attention to me and kept screaming and crying. I looked around and saw that I was sitting at a table, my head slightly tilted, and blood flowing from my right temple. My right hand was helplessly lowered, my revolver lying on the floor. And then I realized that, most likely, I was dead, and that's why Uliasha was beating herself. Honestly, I enjoyed it. I tried to tell her that I had left a letter on her desk, but she did not hear me.

A doctor arrived, touched my pulse for proforma and pronounced me dead. My

⁷Mykola Kulish

body was left sitting in a chair. Hryhorii⁸ and Ivan⁹ carefully inspected my desk, where they found and read two letters: one to Uliasha and her daughter, the other to the Central Committee of CP (b).”

“Do you remember these letters?”

“Literally, fortunately, no, but the general meaning, of course, I remember. Are you interested in this?”

“Of course! These are historical documents! I wonder if they are preserved in the archives ?!”

“Uliasha's letter, maybe, but in the letter to Central Committee - I'm sure not. The bottom line is this: I asked Uliasha and my daughter, my periwinkle flower, to forgive me for bringing them more suffering than joy. And the letter to the Central Committee was in the style of my pamphlets. In the introductory part, I described the real picture of the state of the modern village - famine and mass impoverishment of the peasantry. I attributed the responsibility for these crimes to the Central Committee of the Party. Then I threw a harsh remark at the Party in betraying of the revolution ideas, in rebirth, in bowing to Russian nationalism and in destroying the basic cultural and economic rights of the Ukrainian people. I described the arrest of Mykhailo Yalovyι as the beginning of terror against the revolutionary generation at all, and Ukrainian writers in particular. I claimed to be responsible for the great ideals of the 1917 revolution, and for the activities of my generation, including. That is why I protested against both the population-killing policy in the villages and the terror against the Ukrainian intelligentsia. And since all the means of protest were taken away from me, I protested last, what was still at my disposal at that time – my life.”

“How old were you?”

“41.”

“Were you at your funeral?”

“I think everyone was at their funerals. And I'm no exception. Interesting! The next day, May 14, Ivan¹⁰ and Petro¹¹ transferred my body from the Slovo house to the

⁸Gregory Epic

⁹Ivan Senchenko

¹⁰ Ivan Dniprovsky

¹¹Petro Punch

Blakytyni house. Peter fussed to make my mask for the monument, but of course he didn't succeed. He was very annoyed and quietly angry: "Do they think they should not erect a monument to him?" About 11 o'clock, with a slight delay, my body was placed in a coffin in a small hall. Ivan Kyrylenko from the Writers' Union and Naum Kaliuzhnyi from the Printers' Union spoke. Les Kurbas and Pavlo Tychyna stood by the coffin in the so-called "honor guard". Surprisingly, they had very stern faces, Pavlo had a deathly pale mask instead of a face, and I wish they were happier. It is striking that Volodymyr Koriak, my brother and opponent, did not come to the funeral. He must have chickened out!

About one o'clock, the coffin was taken out and placed on a special platform of the car. It is unknown where the crowd came from. People did not fit in the hall or in the yard, and filled the intersections of Pushkinska and Kaplunova streets. The car drove slowly up Pushkinska, to the city cemetery. The car was followed by mother, sisters, Uliasha and daughter, closest friends: Mykola¹², Kurbas¹³, Dniprovskyi¹⁴. Behind them, in the second column, Mike¹⁵, Pavlo¹⁶, Dosvitnii¹⁷, Epik¹⁸, Yanovskyi¹⁹, Sosiura²⁰, Senchenko²¹, Panch²² and many others, I did not even expect. The orchestra, which was sent from the union of printers, played Chopin's funeral march. I saw familiar faces, the coffin with flowers and myself in the coffin, or rather my body. I saw Mike, tall, athletic build, broad-shouldered, unashamedly openly crying. You know, I enjoyed it. Next to Mike was Pavlo, who was supported by Dosvitnii. It seemed that if Dosvitnii did not hold Tychyna firmly, Pavlo was about to stumble and fall. Tychyna's silent and yellowed face gave the impression of a ghost. He didn't seem to see anything, and then I realized that he was jealous of me for doing something he never dared to do. He moved maniacally with the crowd and looked at me in the coffin. Do you know his poem "Wind from Ukraine"?"

¹² Mykola Kulish

¹³ Oles Kurbas

¹⁴ Ivan Dniprovsky

¹⁵ Mike Johansen

¹⁶ Pavlo Tichina

¹⁷ Oles Dosvitny

¹⁸ Gregory Epic

¹⁹ Yuri Yanovsky

²⁰ Volodimir Saussura

²¹ Ivan Senchenko

²² Petro Punch



"Something familiar, but I do not know it by heart."

"He once dedicated these poems to me."

"I will definitely watch them."

"There were two speeches at the cemetery: Petro Panch spoke on behalf of my friends, and Ivan Mykytenko spoke on behalf of the Organizing Committee of the Writers' Union. Most strikingly, both Mykytenko and Kyrylenko, even at my funeral, voiced the official version of my suicide: they touched lightly on some of my achievements and scrupulously analyzed my mistakes and "guilt." Can you imagine, Kyrylenko said:

"Khvylovy once preached Ukrainian nationalism, colored by Trotskyism...". Mykytenko muttered that instead of finally correcting my mistakes, I did not return to the Party, but lost my courage and went into a dead end of individualism, from which I decided to find a "way out." He then summed up that my action was "meaningless," which has nothing to do with being a member of the Communist Party. Against their background, Petro Panch's speech contrasted with philanthropy and, even in some fragments, sincerity. He tried to speak in an official tone, barely squeezing out the words that were very difficult for him: "Khvylovy's talent is extraordinary. We, the Soviet writers of the second vocation, almost all entered the distant unknown literature under the sign of the restless, infectious and romantic Khvylovy. With his shot, he made a hole that no one can close today." Maybe, thanks to him, I was buried as a writer. Because a month later in the Central Committee they finally "reached" the true meaning of my letter to them."

"And what exactly did they understand?"

"They understood that my death was not a "loss of courage", not a "lack of revolutionary passion", not an "intellectual demagnetization", not a "last mistake", but the last, conscious blow against the party and its politicians. That is why my death was described as a "demonstratively hostile act" and all my activities were condemned as "nationalist", thus, I became an "enemy of the people". All my works were confiscated from libraries - they were included in the police index, and my name disappeared from the history of the Ukrainian literature. Moreover, almost all of my associates, or even just contemporaries, were arrested and exterminated in death camps.

"All of them?"

"Well, maybe, except for Tychyna... He punished himself. He made his own

choice – He got the wind up. It is better to die in a concentration camp than to write poems like Pavlo in the 1930s. This is the apocalyptic balance of Stalin's massacre of the Ukrainian literature of the 1920s, which wanted to embark on its own path of development, independent of Moscow. Of the 260 Ukrainian writers, 228 were arrested, shot and sent to concentration camps.

Mykola Zerov²³ was fluent in Latin. Horace's credo - the "Golden Mean" was close to him, he especially skillfully used this ancient rhetorical technique during our polemics. When the opponent lost his temper, shouting, proving his position, Mykola always calmly, but thoroughly accurate, gave strong arguments - without shouting and fighting, elegantly "put" his "opponent" on the shoulders. He elegantly translated the Ukrainian ode "To Delliia" into Ukrainian. It was striking that the words of the second half of the bloody first century BC were very relevant at the beginning of our bloody twentieth century.

*In an hour of despair
be able to restrain yourself
In moments of joy
Keep calm...
Because know:
You'll still have to die
Oh, Dellij, my beloved!*

I really liked these terms. I liked to recite them loudly. Liubystok also knew these lines, and she almost always repeated them after me in her childish, girlish voice. It seemed that we were reciting the canon with her.

Liubystok was very sensitive, vulnerable, however, even with her it was very difficult for me to restrain myself. The only place I mistakenly thought I could be honest was my home. Wrong, because over time I realized that our apartment is being eavesdropped on. Maybe even on the street it was safer than at home. We were all specially gathered in one house so that it would be easier to follow and wiretap our apartments."

"Do you mean the house "Word"?"

"So. Glorious, comfortable, with large apartments in those days, because the

²³ Zerov Mykola (1890-1937) Ukrainian poet, leader of the Kharkiv trend of "neoclassicism", literary critic, translator of ancient poetry, used the genre of sonnet, polemicist.



writer always had a library, with offices - the house of writers "Word". That's where we were all gathered to watch us. Who came, to whom, what he said, how he answered... I had a very hard time with the unjust attacks on me, my friends and colleagues. Indeed, I was very scared to do what I set out to do. I loved life madly: "How much I love life, you can't even imagine," was written in my last letter to my friends on May 13, 1933. My suicide was a desperate decision I made because I felt that terrible disaster that approached the generation of our writer friends - the flower of the Ukrainian intelligentsia.

On the eve of this event, on May 12, 33, I was terribly excited and kept repeating myself, "... It can't be! This has to stop! " I received a postcard in which it was written: Khvylovy was arrested. I shot myself, maybe to save my like-minded people. However, all of them also suffered. An entire generation of writers has been wiped out. All my works were hidden.

There is still my correspondence with Zerov. I considered Mykola to be my creative mentor, who could prompt and explain to me. I respected and loved Mykola very much. He was my mentor, but he was also my friend. My close associates included Mike Johansen, Mykola Kulish, Ivan Dniprovskyi, Myshko Yalovyi, Maksym Rylskyi, Pavlo Mykhailovych Vyshnia. Many, many other writers came to my house. We had our own home club of writers, where our friends gathered and discussed literary news, and sometimes it was a club "e-2 / e-4", when everyone was fond of chess. I was an avid hunter, and I encouraged my friends to hunt: I gave them hunting dogs, mostly English Setters. Those were happy days of unity with nature, almost always a friend was with me: either Mykola Kulish or Pavlo Vyshnia.

Once Uliasha, Liubystok and I went to Sukhumi. It was late fall. I was sick, my lungs were bad, and the doctor advised me to go where it was dry and sunny. Lida Vovchan and Maya were with us. Lida is the wife of Vasyl Blakytnyi, Maya is his daughter. She was then a little over two years old.

Vasyl did not go with us, but Myshko Yalovyi was with us. It was Myshko, who took care of Liubystok and Maya, and he practiced with them very well. He told the girls fairy tales to decorate the trip. It was 1925. The weather was gloomy, it was raining. That's why we weren't there long. In 1928 my family (Uliasha, Liubystok and I) went abroad. We were in Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Vienna. We spent the longest time in Berlin (that's where we celebrated the New Year) and in Vienna. Vienna used to be called Little Paris, and when we arrived, it was already empty, and we couldn't

understand for whom the famous place of entertainment Prater was built. Liubystok felt the anxiety of the adults, which she remembered. It was then that a literary discussion took place abroad, and I was afraid that we would not be allowed to go home.

These moods for Liubystok are so far and so close... She perceived me as "Boiling", striving for creativity. I always wrote at night, and then read it out to Liubystok in the morning I. After my death, she wondered if I had had time to write all my ideas? Definitely - No! Constant harassment, not to the extent of careful critics who continue their black work after my death, kept me in terrible chains. Finally, the terrible tragedy of our country has reached the generation of Ukrainian writers - the most sincere and talented.

People often came to us who I loved and respected very much. Then I hoped, and now I know for sure, that this spiritual kinship was mutual."

Vira asked:

"Who visited you?"

"Who visited us? Ostap Vyshnyia, Mykola Kulish, Mykhailo Yalovyi Ivan Dniprovskiy, Oleksa Dosvitnii, Mike Johansen, Hryhorii Epik... Then Ivan Dniprovskiy wrote good memories about our family. Ivan's wife, Marii Mykhailivny, had these memories stolen from her. Of course, the NKVD... Who else can use such methods? Who needs other people's memories? She believed that they had "disappeared somewhere", maybe one day they would be found. I know that there are two of my letters in the archive. I even saw how Academician F.D Ovcharenko read them. He is a former secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine."

"And you didn't think about your relatives, about your wife, about your daughter... You didn't even warn them..."

"Yes, I did not warn. Of course, they were very impressed. Liubystok still interprets this day as tragic. Of course, the daughter have unpleasant memories, some cold - terrible. She went to music school. She had the music lesson that day, and when she returned, she was not allowed to go home. There were some strangers near our apartment, so when she reached the second floor, she was taken away by Vira and Hrytsko²⁴. They were silent around her for a long time, they walked around

²⁴ Epic Hryhoriy is a Ukrainian poet, Vira is his wife.

Liubystok upset, and finally they "told" her everything. I was next to her then, watching, realizing everything that was happening to her. She felt like lightning! She was in serious condition, as if semi-crazy! Afterwards, a woman took her to the town of Zolochiv (where her mother Uliasha was born). There - my grandmother's hut, apple blossoms, the sun set. She was no longer crying, but moaning!

Liubystok never saw me dead. She returned to Kharkiv when I was buried. Later, after Academician F. Ovcharenko read my two farewell letters, one of which was for her, she lost her temper, although a long time passed. She even wrote to him, asking him to rewrite these letters, or at least the one that concerned her. The academician did not answer her. And she really wanted to have these letters, or at least the one addressed to her. There was silence in response. Although she asked very much ... Very much! Very! She asked! She did not want to mention May 13, 1933. Over time, she received those letters from Ovcharenko, which made her even more sensitive. Then she asked him for Zerov's letters. For her, they were as holy as those sent by Fedor Mykhailovych²⁵. Then she had our photos. Good people sent them from the Kharkiv Literary Museum.

I remember doing lessons with her... our chats ... Once I read Mike Johansen's "The Journey of Scientist Doctor Leonardo " to Liubystok. Personally, I was very impressed by this work. She said that I was already shining, reading so wonderfully. By the way, as always. Mike lived above us, in the house Word on the fourth floor. Mike was a friend of mine whom I loved dearly.

After celebrating my 95th birthday in 1988, Liubystok sent my photos to people I met, who wanted to know something about me – Koval²⁶, Drach²⁷, to the Kharkiv Literary Museum. In those photos, I, Uliasha after returning from the front (remember "Cat in boots" 1920: Who's there?), Liubystok, my mother. In one photo Liubystok aged 10-12 years in someone's arms, it was my gift – a German pointer – the Sea. Liubystok collected articles about me – Zhulynskyi²⁸, Koval, tried to distribute them...

²⁵ Ovcharenko Fedir Mykhailovych – academician.

²⁶ Koval Vitaliy Kyrylovych (1937-2001) – Ukrainian writer, critic, journalist, winner of the V. Vynnychenko and H.S. Skovoroda International Prizes.

²⁷ Drach Ivan Fedorovych (1936-2018) – Ukrainian poet, translator, playwright, screenwriter, public figure, supporter of Ukraine's independence in the 20-th century, Hero of Ukraine.

²⁸ Zhulynsky Mykola Hryhorovych (b. 1940) – Ukrainian literary critic, director of the Taras Shevchenko Institute Literature of the National Academy Sciences in Ukraine.

We talked to her about literature as well. It was from me that she heard how I interpreted the meaning and our place in the world. Although she was small, she understood and even remembered something.

“What exactly did she remember?”

“That our Ukrainian literature and culture in its development should be based on the achievements of world culture, in which each population (each nation) in specific historical periods contributed its destiny. I explained to her that the cultures of all nations are equal to each other, and each of them has the right to influence world culture. Therefore, I believed that Ukrainian culture has the right to take all the best from the cultures of all people without restrictions. But she should not wander in the tail of Russian culture like a poor younger sister.

You see, I lived in a very difficult period of the country's development, of which Soviet Ukraine was an integral part. I wondered how Soviet Ukrainian culture and literature should develop in those difficult conditions. On the one hand, Ukrainian culture and literature were dragged back into the idealized past by Ukrainian "education," and on the other hand, it was increasingly threatened by great-power Russian chauvinism, aided by Stalin's growing centralization of party and Soviet bureaucracy, regardless the need for cultural development of all people of the Soviet Union, taking into account the peculiarities of their historical development and national peculiarities. Furthermore, at that time, among many Moscow intellectuals who contributed to the development of Soviet culture, there was an ideological and cultural mixture in addition to the bourgeoisie. What began to flourish during the creation of the NEP. All this worried me very much. I'm Khvylovyi.

I saw that in these difficult circumstances an ideological demarcation was needed with the so-called "friends" of the Ukrainian people, who did not really care about the real development of Ukrainian culture and literature, but only their own, useful, group interests and great Russian chauvinism.

I tried to find a historically necessary way to develop Ukrainian culture and literature, which would be based on all the achievements of world culture and contribute to its prosperity along with the development of culture of all people of the Soviet Union.

However, I wrote my works and polemical articles not in a quiet study, to which the noise of a fierce struggle did not reach, but in the circumstances of a brutal struggle between representatives of various strata of Ukrainian society. The complexity of



the circumstances at that time was increased by the fact that a significant part of the working class of Ukraine were Russians, and many of them were among the intellectuals.

In this struggle, in polemical fervor, I did not always perfectly formulate my views and thoughts. Of course, in such a difficult period of world history, I could not draw a perfectly correct path of development of Ukrainian culture and literature.

But Stalin immediately realized that my ideas, as well as those of Skrypnyk and other Ukrainian writers who cared about the flourishing of Ukrainian culture among other Soviet people, including Russia, were a deadly threat to his goal – national autonomy of all people of the Soviet Union, at the head of which he sits – "leader of the nations."

Therefore, Stalin called these ideas nationalist and, using my apt words, such as "away from Moscow, the center of the All-Union bourgeoisie," attributed political connotations to them and accused me of being an enemy of Soviet Power. It was a signal of my harassment, which was picked up by my "opponents" and then became an official assessment of my work and activities.

Therefore, it is not surprising that for almost 60 years my name was disgraced, and my works and real views were silenced.

My rehabilitation was very important for Liubystok. She was glad that during the perestroika period, among others, as she believed, those who were falsely offended, my name "shone", too. However, she was very worried about one moment. If before "scientific men" received PhD and doctoral dissertations, and some academic ranks, when they disgraced all the ideas and all Khvylovyi's works, today many of those "scientific men" returning 180 degrees rushed to recklessly write about me only "enthusiastic words."

She did not understand how instead of a serious, genuine critical analysis of the writer's ideas and works, and the invention of his thoughts, which can be used now in search of ways to develop Ukrainian, then Soviet, as it was in the 80's, culture and literature, in light of the development of the Ukrainian people, she and other readers read only lengthy articles on how I was disgraced, without mentioning who disgraced me, and looking only for new and new "beautiful" words to evaluate my work. This is not clear to Liubystok, she considers this state of affairs is unfair.

She, as my defender, believes if we really want to correct the guilt before the world memory of Mykola Khvylovyi, we must find and use all the wealth of his

creativity and views, and he looked and saw much more and "further" than many of his contemporaries, to contribute to the true and rapid prosperity of the country, its culture and literature, which I dreamed of.

Liubystok talked to the staff of the Kharkiv Literary Museum and corresponded with Svitlana. Strange things happened to her here. Liubystok learned from her friend that I had another marriage. Liubystok did not know about it. At least Uliasha and I didn't discuss it with her. It was a trauma for her when she found out about my other marriage and even my "child"! Maybe ealousy mingled. She learned that now my relatives have been "dug up". That my daughter's name is Iraida Lvivna Kryvych, that she has a son V. Kryvych.

For Liubystok, this was an incomprehensible story. She couldn't believe that I have never told her about it, like her mother. She had never heard from Uliasha and me about marriage or another child. She was not pleased that the Russian-language Kharkiv newspaper "Vremia" called Iraida "the daughter of Mykola Khvylovyi," who is now 75 years old. That she lives in Kharkiv (her portraits were added to the newspaper).

Liubystok was offended: why couldn't they publish her appeal to the participants of the anniversary evening dedicated to the 100th anniversary of my Birthday. It was very important for Liubystok. In the 5-th²⁹ volume of my works, published in the United States by Kostiuk, this issue is discussed in detail.

Liubystok thought that this story was rather strange, based only on conversations and chats. She did not understand why these "relatives" were silent all the time while I was being scolded (and I was called both a fascist and a Nazi), and now they have appeared and shamed me in the newspaper. She was worried that the appearance of these "relatives", as she called them, would prevent the publication of her "appeal" and "Memoirs". She really wanted the manuscript of "Memories" to be published in Kharkiv.

Something made me feel sad..."

Vira suddenly noticed that there was already a chilled Solianka on the table next to her, and she looked around in surprise. The waiter approached:

"Can we serve steak, you're not going to eat the Solianka?"

"Of course, I'm going to. Heat it up, please, and you can already carry the steak.

²⁹ Khvylovy M.H.

Khvylovy was not at the table, looking around, Vira quietly called: " Mykola!"

"Do you want something?" The waiter asked.

"No, no, it was nothing anyway."

"He disappeared without saying goodbye," Vira thought. She was calm and well, she began to enjoy the food, looking at the cars passing by.

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