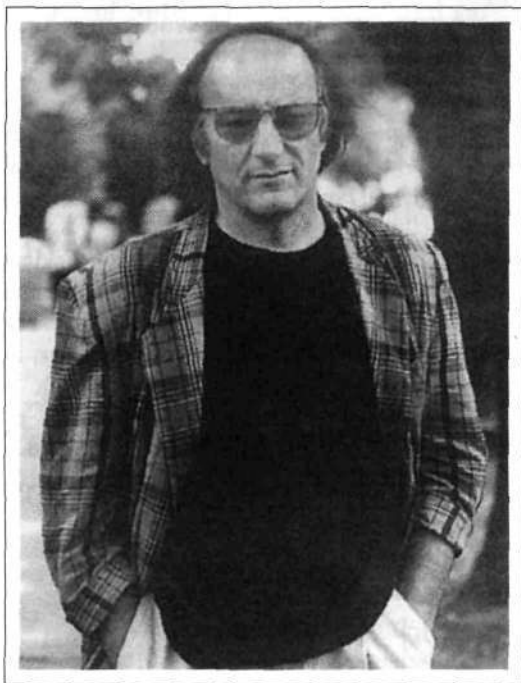


## KOVAČ, Mirko



**Mirko Kovač**, born in 1938 in Petrovići, near Bileća, studied at the Drama Department of Belgrade's Academy of Theatre, Film and Television. He is the author of several novels, collections of short stories and essays, television plays and film scripts. His first book, *Place of Execution*, 1962, was politically and ideologically condemned for painting "an excessively black picture of the world", and he was persecuted throughout 1963. His short novel *The Biography of Malvina Trifković*, 1971, was later turned into a stage play and translated into English, French, Italian, Dutch, Hungarian and Swedish. He has written scripts for some very successful films, including *Little Soldiers*, *Occupation in 26 Pictures* and *The Fall of Italy*. He has received many literary awards, including the 1993 International Tucholsky Prize of the Swedish P.E.N. Centre and the 1995 Herder Prize for Literature. Since 1991 Mirko Kovač has been living in Rovinj, Croatia.

**Mirko Kovač**, autor više romana, zbirki pripovjedaka, eseja, TV-drama i filmskih scenarija, rođen je 1938. u Petrovićima kot Bileće. Studirao je na Akademiji za kazalište, film i televiziju, odjel dramaturgije, u Beogradu. Prva knjiga proze *Gubilište*, 1962, doživljava političku i ideološku osudu "zbog crne slike sveta", a hajka na pisca trajala je tokom cijele 1963. godine. Kratki roman *Životopis Malvine Trifković*, 1971, bio je dramatisiran i preveden na engleski, francuski, talijanski, nizozemski, mađarski i švedski. Mirko Kovač napisao je scenarije za filmove *Mali vojnici*, *Okupacija u 26 slika*, *Pad Italije* i druge. Dobio je mnoge nagrade, između drugih i internacionalnu nagradu Tuholski švedskog PEN – centra za 1993, te 1995. Herderovu nagradu za književnost. Od 1991. živi u Rovinju.

MIRKO KOVAČ

# *The Hand that Trembles*

I am now finishing this manuscript as well. It'll be a novel, a testimony to yet another period of sadness. It's been five years since I started roaming. I can't settle down. I would get on a train bound for Zagreb and return to Belgrade the same evening. Long trips by rain or boat were good for me because, while travelling, I would take notes and invent stories. I regarded fellow travellers as literary characters and I would start conversations with strangers and get into trouble. Perhaps it's quite true what Esterházy said: "The novelist is always the driving-force of the action."

I am sensitive to cold. My fingers are cold again, even though it's cold only in the morning and evening, while during the day it's quite nice. What will December be like? Will I be shivering this winter as well, and what will become of me? Yesterday I went to the Mirogoj cemetery. Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Someone dear to me lies there in the family crypt. It's been five years since her death. An hour or two before she died on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1970, she called me on the telephone and started to sob: "I'm happy! Happy!" I had supper with her father. We reminisced about our past disagreements, but most of the time we talked about that beloved deceased person.

I wrote a letter to my friend, O. Leon, and asked him to send me a few words of encouragement. D.K. from Bordeaux called. He was depressed but I couldn't comfort him. I said:

"Belgrade stifles me. I ran away. That city is killing me; I'll leave it forever, but I have no idea where to go!"

“Nowhere. Just shut up and stay where you are. Screw what you can and screw the crisis; here, it’s worse than there, but there, it’s the worst.” He uttered in one breath.

What will I do then? I go on fantasising about Istrian villages, but the obsession that one day I’ll live in Istria is completely unrealistic. I visited many villages and sought solace in several small churches. I would lie in the atrium and soak up the silence, eavesdropping on history, linguistics, *Cyrillica* and *Croatica*; on the prayers and celebratory Our Fathers. But it was still summer then, late August. You could lie down anywhere, in the shade of the church, on bare ground, under the arcades, by some broken sculpture, at the foot of a side column, and calmly fall asleep without fearing the humidity or the ringing of a bell that has fallen silent a long time ago. I spent the entire afternoon sleeping in the atrium of the Church of Our Lady of the Sea, on the road from Žminj to Svetvinčente. Who knows how long I would have stayed—I was so tired—had I not been woken by a sheep, sniffing and licking my face. What docile sheep is this in the tiny courtyard of the Church of Our Lady of the Sea? The same day, I caressed the baroque columns in front of the church of St. Rok in Svetvinčente, and before dusk I visited the little church of St. Kvirin near Vodnjan. All this took place this summer when I felt like living, because the sun was warm and everything was moving along the path of rising and setting. That’s how it is when there’s a source of joy. And the sun certainly is just that. Now winter is knocking on the door: cold, ice, snow, wind, sleet and slush. What am I to do; where am I to go?

A friend of mine offered me his flat in Rovinj. I escaped the snow and the cold, but not my sensitivity to cold, which doesn’t only mean physical sensitivity to cold but also a state of mind, in my case also an attitude towards that particular time of the year. There were perfectly fine winter days when, thinking about some future severe winter, my teeth would start chattering. I would shiver, reading Russian novels full of descriptions of Siberian taigas, tundras and steppes buried in snow. But now all of this had been repressed. I arrived in Rovinj, warmed up the flat and immediately stepped out on the balcony. I clasped the cold iron railing with my hands and didn’t shiver, not even slightly, not even when I pressed my face against the stone door post.

I was watching the seagulls. There were days when they would become upset and start shrieking in panic, and then they would drop down to the sea surface, dive under, or just stay floating, occasionally flapping their wings, especially when they were mating or squabbling over their catch. I wasn’t only observing the sea, seagulls and fishing boats, but also the sunsets, disregarding the opinion that sunsets are kitsch. I would just as soon say that that definition is all too easy and that it simply betrays powerlessness before a mythical scene. During one sunset, the clouds on the horizon over the sea took on the shape of distant mountains which, after the sun had set, began to burn along the edges. It was a single flaming wreath, changing hues. The overflowing

rosy tones lingered for a long time until they were completely overwhelmed by darkness. I poked my nose into every corner of this wondrous little town, skipping down stairs, walking through porticoes, turning into small, tile-lined courtyards, touching walls or simply strolling, yet discovering, every time, new details on the facades, Renaissance portals, biphoras, pilasters, consoles, balustrades. And then I would return to the cosy flat and sit for a long time by the window, watching the passers-by. I've been gazing through the window for so long that I could recognise every walker by the way he walked. That crowd on the waterfront was filling up with new strollers. I noticed two women in black, who had clearly just arrived from somewhere.

One of them wore a large black hat. She was slender and always held her obviously older companion under the arm. That slender-legged lady would sometimes come storming along the waterfront, but never without her broad black hat. Her stride was magical. I opened the window and there I would stand dumbfounded if she passed. But often, I would whistle some aria to attract her attention. And indeed, the lady in the black hat once glanced at me but only superficially, so I didn't see her face as it was always hidden in the shadow of her hat. I couldn't do anything from the window, so I decided to leave the flat, venture out to the waterfront and introduce myself politely. Our first encounter up close was quite a surprise. I knew the lady with the black hat and I had even written something about her. She was Andrea Music from Trieste. We had met on a boat in 1971. We were travelling together.

I thought Andrea didn't recognise me at first, only pretending that she knew me, but when we exchanged a few words, she remembered many details. She recalled in particular our meeting with Pasolini and his book with a dedication which I had given her. Andrea told me how her father died at the age of forty-nine and how greatly the family was distressed by this. And then she introduced me to her mother. I muttered something in the way of condolences. I can't handle mourning situations very well. The two of them just adored this small town and came here in summer and winter. They loved taking long walks along the Punta Corrente. There, they would fill their lungs to the brim with the sea air, and in the forest they would walk outside the well-trodden paths, often scrambling through the bushes. The mother left us and walked away towards the pier.

"Did you hear about the murder of Pier Paolo Pasolini?" said Andrea.

"Murdered!" I said with surprise. "No, I haven't heard. I don't read the papers; I don't keep abreast!"

"That's right. They found him near Ostia."

"Who killed him?"

"They don't know yet. I went to the funeral with Renata. Do you remember Renata?"

"Of course I remember her. I mention her in my diary."

"Poor Pier Paolo. I didn't like him at first, but that meeting was a turning point. I've read everything he had written and have seen some of his films. Right now I'm reading his essays *Scritti corsari*."

I proposed to make *spaghetti Pasolini* that evening, boasting that I do a very good job of it and that I have all the ingredients.

"I'll bring a bottle of Merlot," said Andrea.

The *spaghetti Pasolini* was a success. I've never gone wrong with that recipe, particularly when I prepare the dish for two persons. Pasolini's manuscript in the book *Trasumanar e organizzar*, which the author presented to me in 1971 in Ferrara, took on a cultic significance for Andrea.

"Had I torn out that page with Pasolini's dedication, I would be the one with his handwriting now," I said.

"You would've lost it somewhere, because I've discovered it only now that the writer is dead," said Andrea.

"Then you must have remember me as well," I said.

"Yes, but it was through a haze. I just couldn't conjure up your face."

"Now I know why at that time I overlooked your beauty and excitement," I said.

"Tell me," said Andrea, smiling and assuming that curious pose. "Dimmi!"

"Girls who study Slavic languages turn me off. It took me four years to realise that there were exceptions." I said.

"You're courting me now," said Andrea. "I don't know any more what I am. These studies were a waste of time. I tried writing poetry and also translating Kisch's novel *Bašta, pepeo*, but I never finished any of it. And then my father died, and in the meantime, several failed love affairs. I have a feeling that they've all betrayed me. My father died at a time when some kind of extremes were breaking inside of me. I adored him and only he could have helped me. Now I'll write a book about Pasolini, but I hesitate between a traditional novel and essayistic prose."

"That means that I'm one of the heroes as well?"

"Yes of course. That detail about the dedication is important as a motive, as an emotional point. After all, why should I be the one to write that book. Although there are several other important points of contact. First, his homosexuality as a kind of excommunication, and then there are his prophecies which are fascinating. Italians don't like homosexuals and they always wish them a spectacular death. They were satisfied with the brutal murder of Pier Paolo. No one from the Government sent condolences to his mother, and the gentlemen judges and lawyers were wondering if such a person deserved a better death. Thirty-three legal actions were filed against Pasolini. In the space provided for *nazionalità* he would always write, "ashamed to be Italian." Moravia wrote: *Pasolini had to die!* And Pasolini, the exile and the outcast, knew exactly how, because he forecast his death in his works. He depicted and filmed his death in several of his films, but with the greatest



precision in the film *Edipo re*. He also described it as early as in 1950 in his story *Gas*. In that story, which takes place in the Roman suburbs, Pasolini described and foresaw every detail of his own death. His fictional double, Vergili, the seducer of minors, was killed on a small football field, enclosed by a wooden fence. The mutilated corpse was just a heap of rubbish in that pile of bricks, sheet metal and scrap iron. All of this coincided with Pasolini's death. And another detail: According to his story from the 1950's, the photograph of the body from the Roman suburb was published on the cover of *Europeo*, which is exactly what happened twenty years later. The photograph of the massacred Pier Paolo Pasolini appeared on the cover page of that same weekly. Pasolini is one of the rare people who achieved the vision of their death. He was killed by his archetype, a dark-skinned, curly-haired boy from the suburbs. That's the idea of my novel."

"What are you going to call your book?" I asked already drawn into the story, even though I continued to stare at her exciting and luscious lips. I was tempted; I was on the verge of capturing them.

"I don't know yet," says she. "Maybe *The Hand that Trembles*. Do you like it?"

"Yes, I do." And then, chatting her up, I blurted out a platitude: "My hand is trembling too. I'm trembling too."

I let my hand drop onto hers, but Andrea freed herself unobtrusively from that temptation and poured wine into both glasses. I'm not insolent; I can control myself. I opened another bottle of wine, but she wouldn't drink anymore. Placing her fingers over her glass, she continued with the story of Pasolini. I didn't know how he had been killed, so I interrogated Andrea. I wanted to show her that I cared for her story, that I listened to it and that I had invited her to have spaghetti with me only to reminisce about that meeting with Pasolini. Twice, I raised my glass in honour to the departed.

Andrea talked about his death. She knew many details, but I'll talk about this shortly. I didn't want to dedicate this evening to Pasolini. My thoughts were running in a different direction. From time to time I didn't even hear what Andrea was saying: I was fascinated by the movement of her lips. Perhaps it was Pasolini's fault that I still wasn't in bed with her. Still, I must weave some of this story into the novel: the wonderful movement of her lips and Andrea's quivering, exciting and erotic voice must not go to waste. So, Pier Paolo was killed in the Osti hydroplane port. The boy named Pelosi confessed to the murder. If we are to believe the testimony of the teenager, it was Pier Paolo who began this deadly game. He took a post from the fence and tried to stick it into the boys behind. Then Pelosi grabbed a stake and hit him over the head. Pasolini stumbled. Lying on the ground, bleeding, he shouted: "Why, rascal! Why!" The boy kept striking him until his head was crushed. Pasolini was discovered by Maria Teresa Lollobrigida, a housewife who comes here, to her house, every Sunday. She declared for *Messaggero* that at first she

thought someone had left a pile of rubbish near her house. She wanted to clean it up, but when she approached, she realised that it was a corpse. The head of the dead person was smashed and the hair was soaked in blood. A few paces from the body were the severed fingers. Then she noticed something black, something that looked alive and glistened. It was an eye. Like Vergil's eye and the extinguished, dead look from the story *Gas*.

It wasn't my intention to write about Pasolini. I know little about the artist. I've read his novel *A Violent Life*, but I don't remember anything from that book. I did remember one of his verses: *I've never been more a corpse than I am right now*. I was ill at the time and I was on the way down, so I kept repeating that verse. I saw some of his films. There was a kind of simplicity and clever toying with myths, but that's not enough for the artist to find himself in my novel and to have almost two chapters dedicated to him. I don't know why Andrea pointed out that Pier Paolo had Slavic blood in his veins. His mother was from Casara, which was inhabited by Croats a long time ago. Her family name was Colussi and in the ancient monastic books it was recorded as Kolušić. To me it doesn't mean anything, as I have no sense of racial affiliation. Ethnicity, as a source of conflicts and madness, is interesting only in literary terms. So I didn't include him in the book because of the Slavic blood in his veins. So what? I think that any further discussion of this is needless. One always tells a story so that someone else may unravel it. I don't believe that stories are entangled. It is, however, quite true that everyone wishes to turn them upside down.

It was late. Midnight had gone. Andrea had had her fill and more. She had drunk two more glasses of wine. We stepped out onto the balcony. The sea was choppy. The night was clear and chilly. One wave climbed high up the shore of the island of Sv. Katarina, smashing savagely and breaking against the rocks. In the distance a lighthouse beacon was flickering. The wine had intoxicated me; I was tongue-tied.

"Shall we meet again tomorrow?" I asked.

"Stop by the hotel to say hello," said she. "I'm taking my mother to Trieste and in a day or two I'm leaving for Rome to stay there for good. I fell in love with that city. That's where my lover Silvana lives. She comes from a famous family of poets, the Naldinis. We've been in love for two years. My father approved of this relationship, but my mother thinks I'm strange."

"What is your experience of men?" I asked.

"There were some relationships and lovers, but my true passion and true love only began with Silvana. She's so impudent and so generous. I adore that wonderful girl. Her beauty is fascinating. We are both happy. We have a small flat in the suburbs of Rome. It's our very private nest. There we shut ourselves up and devote ourselves to each other. Pasolini said it beautifully: *Life is a struggle against the Eye that observes us*. Now I have to get back to the hotel. My mother won't sleep until I return."

*Translated by Marjan Golobič*

MIRKO KOVAČ

# Ruka koja drhti

Sada već privodim kraju i ovaj rukopis; bit će to roman kao dokaz još jednog tužnog razdoblja. Već je peta godina otkako lunjam; ne mogu se skrasiti. Znao sam sjesti u vlak, doći u Zagreb, a onda se iste večeri vratiti u Beograd. Meni su koristila duga putovanja vlakom ili brodom, jer tada sam ponešto bilježio i smišljao priče. Na putnike sam gledao kao na literarne likove, a i sam se upletao u rasprave s neznancima i upadao u nevolje. Možda je doista točno ono što je rekao g. Esterhazy da je »pisac romana uvijek nosilac radnje«.

Zimogrožljiv sam, opet mi zebru prsti, premda je studeno samo na večer i ujutro, dok je preko dana umjereno. Kakav će biti prosinac, hoću li se i ove zime tresti i što će biti sa mnom? Jučer sam bio na mirogojskom groblju; subota 1. studeni. Netko meni drag leži ondje, u obiteljskoj grobnici. Prošlo je pet godina od te smrti. Sat-dva prije nego je umrla, 31. siječnja 1970. godine pozvala me telefonom i zaridala: »Sretna sam! Sretna!« Večerao sam s njezinim ocem, prisjećali smo se nekih naših davnih nesuglasica, ali smo najviše vremena posvetili toj dragoj pokojnici.

Napisao sam jedno pismo prijatelju o. Leonu, zamolio sam da mi uputi nekoliko ohrabrujućih riječi. Javio mi se D. K. iz Bordeauxa, bio je potišten, ali ja ga nisam mogao utješiti. Rekao sam:

»Gušim se u Beogradu, pobjegao sam otuda, taj grad me ubija, napustit ću ga zasvagda, ali ne znam kamo ću!«

»Nikamo, nigdje, šuti i ostani tu gdje si, pojebi štogod i zajebi krizu, ovdje je gore nego tamo, a tamo je najgore«, izustio je u jednom dahu.

Onda što ću? I nadalje maštam o istarskim selima, a ta opsesija da ću jednog dana živjeti u Istri, posve je nerealna. Obišao sam mnoga sela, a u nekim malim crkvama tražio sam mir, pa sam znao ležati u atriju, napajati se tišinom, osluškivati povijest, lingvistiku, *Cyrilicu* i *Croaticu*, molitve i slavjanske očenaše, ali tada je još bilo ljeto, kraj kolovoza. Moglo se leći posvuda,



u sjeni crkve, na голу zemlju, ispod arkada, uz kakav srušeni kip, podno bočnog stupa, i mirno zaspati bez bojazni od vlage ili zvona koja odavno muče. U atriju crkve Gospe od Mora, na putu između Žminja i Svetvinčeta, spavao sam cijelo popodne. Tko zna dokad bih tu ostao, bio sam umoran, da me nije probudila ovca koja me njuškala i lizala mi lice. Kakva je to pitoma ovca u lopici crkve Gospe od Mora? Još istog dana milovao sam barokne stupiće ispred crkve sv. Roka u Svetvinčentu, a prije mraka obišao sam i crkvicu sv. Kvirina blizu Vodnjana. Sve to je bilo ljetos kad mi se mililo živjeti, jer sunce je grijalo i sve se kretalo tom putanjom izlaska i zalaska; tako je kad postoji izvor radosti, a sunce to doista jest. Sada je zima na pragu, mraz, led, snijeg, vjetar, susnježica i bljuzgavica; što ću i kuda ću?

Prijatelj mi je ponudio stan u Rovinju; umaknuo sam snijegu, mrazu, ali ne i zimogrožnji koja ne znači samo zimljivost već i psihičko stanje, a u mom slučaju i stav prema tom godišnjem dobu. Bilo je sasvim ugodnih zimskih dana kada bi mi, i pri pomisli na neku boduću opaku zimu, zubi zacvokotali. Znao sam se tresti dok čitam ruske pisce koji opisuju sibirske tajge i tundre ili stepu pod snijegom. Sada je to bilo sve potisnuto, stigao sam u Rovinj, zagrijao stan i odmah izašao na balkon. Rukama sam držao hladnu željeznu ogradu i nijednom se nisam stresao, čak ni onda kada bih priljubio lice uz kameni dovratnik.

Pomatrao sam galebove, a bilo je dana kad se uznemire, počnu panično klikatati, a onda se spuste na površinu mora, zarone ili samo plove, povremeno zalepršaju krilima, pogotovu kad se pare ili otimaju oko plijena. Ali nisam promatrao samo more, galebove, ribarske brodice, već i zalaske sunca usprkos onim mišljenjima da je to kič. Prije bih rekao da je ta definicija laka i da očituje nemoć pred mitskim prizorima. Za jednog zalaska oblaci na obzoru mora poprimili su konture dalekih brda koja su, nakon što je sunce utonulo, počela gorjeti po rubovima. To je bio jedan plamteći vijenac koji je mijenjao tonove boja, a to razliveno rumenilo zadržalo se još dugo, sve dok mrak nije posve ovladao.

Zalazio sam u svaki kutak ovog čudesnog gradića, skakutao skalinama, prolazio porticima, zavirivao u mala popločana dvorišta i dodirivao šterne, ili samo lagano hodao svaki put otkrivajući nove detalje na fasadama, renesansne portale, bifore, pilastre, konzole, balustrade, a onda se vraćao u topli stan i dugo sjedio kraj prozora pomatrajući prolaznike. Toliko sam zurio kroz prozor da sam već svakog šetača mogao prepoznati po načinu hoda. To jato s rive popunjavalo se novim šetačima, pa sam tako zapazio dvije žene u crnini, očito tek pristigle odnekud.

Jedna je imala veliki crni šešir, bila je vitka i uvijek je držala podruku onu drugu, svakako stariju osobu. Ta je vitkonoga gospa znala katkat i sama protutnjati rivom, ali nikada bez svog velikog crnog klobuka. Gazila je čarobno. Otvarao sam prozor i tu bih se ukipio kad bi ona prolazila, a često sam znao zvižducati neku ariju kako bih privukao njezinu pažnju. I doista, dama s crnim klobukom jednom me pogledala, ali je to učinila ovlašno, tako da nisam zapazio to lice, premda je ono uvijek bilo u sjeni šešira. Ništa se tu nije dalo

učiniti s prozora, pa sam odlučio izaći na rivu i uljudno im se javiti. Ali prvi naš susret izbliza bio je iznenađujući: znao sam tu damu s crnim klobukom a nešto sam o njoj već i napisao. Bila je to Andrea Music, Tršćanka; upoznali smo se na brodu, ljeta 1971. godine. Putovali smo zajedno.

Mislím da Andrea u prvom trenu nije znala tko sam, glumila je da zna, ali kad smo izmijenjali po nekoliko riječi, prisjetila se mnogih detalja, a posebice zajedničkog susreta s Pasolinijem i njegove knjige s posvetom koju sam joj ostavio. Andrea mi je rekla da joj je umro otac u četrdeset devetoj godini i da je to bio pravi obiteljski stres, a onda mi je predstavila svoju majku. Promrmljao sam nešto kao sućut; ne snalazim se u korotnim situacijama. Njih dvije vole ovaj gradić, tu dolaze ljeti i zimi, vole dugačke šetnje na Punti Corrente; tamo se nadišu morskog zraka, a u šumi hodaju izvan staza, često se verući kroz šiblje. Majka nas je ostavila i udaljila se prema molu.

»Jesi li čuo da je ubijen Pier Paolo Pasolini?« reče Andrea.

»Ubijen!« začudih se. »Ne, nisam čuo. Ne čitam novine, ne pratim ništa!«

»Da, nađen je mrtav u blizini Ostije.«

»Tko ga je ubio?«

»Ne zna se. Bila sam s Renatom na sprovodu. Sjećaš li se Renate?«

»Kako se ne bih sjećao. Unio sam je u svoj dnevnik.«

»Jadni Pier Paolo. Prije ga nisam voljela, ali onaj susret bio je odlučujući. Pročitala sam sve što je napisao i vidjela neke njegove filmove. Sada čitam esej *Scritti corsari*.«

Predložio sam da na večer napravim *špagete Pasolini*, pohvalio sam se da ih dobro pripremam, a imam i sve potrebne sastojke.

»Ja ću donijeti bocu *merlota*,« reče Andrea.

Uspjeli su mi *špageti Pasolini*; još nisam fulao po ovom receptu, pogotovu kad ih pravim za dvoje. Pasolinijev rukopis u knjizi *Trausumanar e organizzar*, koju mi je poklonio 1971. godine u Ferrari, sada je za Andreu imao kultno značenje.

»Da sam tada istrgnuo onu stranicu s Pasolinijevom posvetom, danas bih ja imao njegov rukopis,« rekoh.

»Negdje bi ga već izgubio,« reče Andrea, »jer sam ga i ja otkrila tek sada nakon što je pisac mrtav.«

»Onda si se morala sjetiti i mene,« rekoh.

»Da kao kroz maglu. Ali tvoj lik nikako nisam mogla dočarati.«

»Sad znam zašto sam tada previdio da si zgodna i uzbudljiva,« rekoh.

»Da čujemo,« reče Andrea, nasmija se i namjesti onu znatizeljnu pozu. »*Dimmi!*«

»Slavistice me odbijaju. Trebale su proći četiri godine da bih shvatio kako postoje iznimke,« rekoh.

»To je već udvaranje,« reče Andrea. »Sad više ne znam šta sam. Bio je to uzaludan studij. Pokušala sam s poezijom. pa s prijevodom Kiševa romana *Bašta, pepeo*, ali sve ostavljam nedovršeno. Onda očeva smrt, a u međuvremenu nekoliko promašenih ljubavi. Imam osjećaj da su me svi iznevjerili. Otac mi je umro u trenutku kad su se u meni lomile neke krajnosti. Obožavala sam

ga i samo mi je on mogao pomoći. Sada ću pisati knjigu o Pasoliniju, premda dvojmim između klasičnog romana i esejističke proze.«

»Onda sam i ja jedan od junaka?«

»Da, svakako. Taj detalj s posvetom važan je kao povod, kao *emotivna točka*, jer što bih inače baš ja pisala tu knjigu, premda tu postoji još nekoliko važnih dodira. Najprije njegov homoseksualizam kao vrsta izopćenja, a onda i njegova proročanstva koja su fascinantna. Italijani ne vole homoseksualce i uvijek im žele spektakularnu smrt. Zadovoljilo ih je okrutno ubojstvo Piera Paola. Nitko iz vlade nije poslao sućut njegovoj majci, a gospoda suci i odvjetnici pitaju se je li takav tip zaslužio bolju smrt. Protiv Pasolinija vođena su trideset tri sudska postupka. U rubrici *nazionalita* uvijek bi stavio: stidim se što sam Taljan. Moravija je napisao: *Pasolini je morao umrijeti!* A taj prognanik i otpadnik točno je znao i kako, jer je to u svojim djelima predvideo. Svoju je smrt naslikao, snimio u više filmova, posve precizno u filmu *Edipo re*, a opisao ju je davno, 1950. godine, u priči *Gas*. U toj priči koja se događa u rimskim predgrađima, Pasolini je opisao i predvidio sve detalje vlastite smrti. Njegov dvojnjak Vergilije, zavodnik malodobnika, ubijen je na malom nogometnom igralištu ograđenom drvenim letvama. Unakaženi leš samo je hrpa smeća u toj gomili opeka, lima i starog željeza. Sve se to podudarilo s Pasolinijevom smrću. I još jedan detalj: u toj priči iz pedesete stoji da je fotografija tog leša iz rimskog predgrađa izašla na naslovnici *Europea*, kao što je dvadeset pet godina kasnije, u stvarnosti objavljena fotografija masakriranog Piera Paola Pasolinija na naslovnoj stranici tog istog tjednika. Pasolini je jedan od rijetkih koji je viziju smrti dosegnuo. Njega je ubio njegov arhetip, dječak iz predgrađa, crnopus, kovrčave kose. To je ideja mog romana.«

»Kako će se zvati knjiga?« upitah već uvučen u tu priču, iako sam i nadalje piljio u njezine uzbudljive i sočne usne. Dolazio sam u iskušenje da ih zgrabim.

»Još ne znam,« reče. »Možda *Ruka koja drhti*. Sviđa ti se?«

»Da, sviđa mi se«, a onda udvarački banalno izustih: »I moja ruka drhti. I ja drhtim.«

Spustih svoju ruku na njezinu, ali Andrea se nenametljivo oslobodi te napasti i natoči vino u obje čaše. Nisam drznik, znam se vladati. Otvorio sam novu bocu vina, ali ona više nije htjela piti; stavila je prste na svoju čašu i nastavila priču o Pasoliniju. Nisam znao kako je ubijen, pa sam zapitkivao Andreu. Htio sam joj pokazati da mi je stalo do njezine priče, da je slušam i da sam je pozvao na špagete upravo zbog sjećanja na susret s Pasolinijem. U dva maha sam i čašu podigao za pokojnika.

Andrea je pričala o toj smrti, znala je mnogo detalja, ali o tome ću ukratko. Nisam želio ovu večer posvetiti Pasoliniju, moje su misli tekle u drugom smjeru. Katkad i nisam čuo što Andrea govori; bio sam opčinjen pomicanjem njezinih usana. Možda je upravo Pasolini krivac što već nisam s njom u krevetu. Pa ipak, obvezan sam nešto od te priče utkati u roman; ne smije ostati uzaludno to krasno micanje usana i treperenje uzbudljivog i erotičnog Andreina glasa. Dakle, Pier

Paolo je ubijen na ostijskom pristaništu za hidroplane. Dječak Pelosi priznao je ubojstvo. Ako se može vjerovati iskazu maloljetnika, onda je Pier Paolo započeo tu smrtonosnu igru: izvukao je kolac iz ograde i pokušao ga ugurati u dječakovu stražnjicu. Pelosi je tada dograbio letvu i udario ga po glavi. Pasolini je posrnuo. Ležeći okrvavljen na zemlji, uzviknuo je: »Zašto, žabac! Zašto!« Dječak ga je tukao dok mu nije razmrskao glavu. Pasolinija je otkrila Marija Teresa Lollobrigida, domaćica koja tu dolazi svake nedjelje, u svoju kuću. Izjavila je za *Messaggero* da je najprije pomislila kako je netko ostavio hrpu smeća blizu njezine kuće. Htjela je to počistiti, a kad je prišla blizu, ugledala je leš. Glava pokojnika bila je razmrskana, a kosa natopljena krvlju. Korak-dva od leša bili su otkinuti prsti, a onda je vidjela nešto crno i namah živo, svjetlucavo. Bilo je to oko. Kao Vergilijevo oko i zagasiti mrtvi pogled iz priče *Gas*.

Nisam kanio pisati o Pasoliniju, malo znam o tom umjetniku. Čitao sam njegov roman *Žestok život*, ali ničeg se ne sjećam iz te knjige. Zapamtio sam jedan njegov stih: *nikad nisam bio toliko leš kao sad*. Tada sam bio bolestan, bio sam propao, pa sam često taj stih ponavljao. Gledao sam nekoliko njegovih filmova, bilo je u njima neke naivnosti i spretnog poigravanja mitovima, ali sve to nije dovoljno da se taj umjetnik nađe u mom romanu i dobije malne dva poglavja. Ne znam zašto je Andrea isticala da Pier Paolo ima u sebi i slavenske krvi. Njegova je majka iz Casarse koju su nekada davno naselili Hrvati. Njezino je prezime Colussi, a u starim fratarskim knjigama zapisano je i kao Kolušić. Meni to ništa ne znači, nemam nikakva osjećaja rasne pripadnosti. Etnos je, kao izvor sukoba i ludosti, samo literarno zanimljiv. Dakle, nisam ga uveo u knjigu samo zbog slavenske krvi u njegovim žilama. I što onda? Mislim da je svaka dalja rasprava o tome suvišna. Jedan uvijek priča da bi drugi tu isti priču odgonetao. Ne vjerujem da su priče zamršene, ali je posve točno da ih svatko želi preokrenuti.

Bilo je već kasno, prošla je ponoć. Andrea je prevršila svoju mjeru, popila je još dvije čaše vina. Izašli smo na balkon. More se bješe uznemirilo. Noć je bila vedra i proladna. Jedan val se visoko propinjao uz obalu otoka sv. Katarine; tako je divlje udario i razbijao se u hrid. U daljini je treptao svjetionik. Vino me već bješe omamilo, zapletao sam jezikom.

»Hoćemo li se sutra vidjeti?« upitah.

»Dođi u hotel da se pozdravimo,« reče. »Vozim mamu u Trst, a za dan-dva odlazim u Rim i to zauvijek. Zaljubljena sam u taj grad, ondje je i moja ljubav Silvana. Ona potiče iz slavne pjesničke obitelji Naldini. U ljubavi smo već dvije godine. Moj otac je odobravao tu vezu, dok majka misli da sam nastrana.«

»Kakva su tvoja iskustva s muškarcima?« upitah.

»Bilo je nekih veza i ljubavi, ali prava strast i prava ljubav počinje tek sa Silvanom. Ona je tako drska i tako darovita; obožavam tu krasnu curu. Njezina ljepota fascinira. Obje smo sretne, imamo mali stan u predgrađu Rima. To je naš intimni kutak, tu se mi zatvaramo i posvećujemo jedna drugoj. Pasolini je lijepo rekao: *život je borba protiv Oka koje nas promatra*. Sad moram u hotel, mama neće zaspati dok ne dođem.«