

András Forgách

SONG OF THE SKUNK

MUSICAL TORTURA DELL'ARTE  
IN TWO PARTS  
2002

after DANILO KIS: THE TOMB OF BORIS DAVIDOVIC

“Even the stone will speak, if we break its jaw.”  
(Fedukin, investigating judge)

## CAST

**BORIS DAVIDOVIC NOVSKI**, THAT IS TO SAY MELAMUD, NAMELY BEZRABOTNIJ, THAT IS MAUZER, NAMELY ZEMLJANYIKOV, THAT IS PROLETARSKI, THAT IS TO SAY DOLSKI, NAMELY PODOLSKI, PROFESSIONAL REVOLUTIONARY, AT HIS ARREST THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF THE POSTAL SERVICES AND TRANSPORTATION

**FEDUKIN**, INVESTIGATING JUDGE, INQUISITOR

**DR KARL GEORGIJEVIC TAUBE**, THAT IS TO SAY CYRILL BAITZ, NAMELY KÁROLY BEÁTUS, DOCTOR AND REVOLUTIONARY

**A. L. CHELIUSTNYIKOV**, FREELANCE STAFF MEMBER OF THE NEWSPAPER NEW DAWN, DEALING WITH CULTURAL AFFAIRS, MEMBER OF THE CHEKA, DEPUTY COMMANDING OFFICER OF A BATTALION IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

**EDOUARD HERRIOT**, RADICAL SOCIALIST, MAJOR OF LYON, WRITER, MINISTER  
**MIKSHA**, NAMELY MIXAT HANDESCU, TAILOR'S APPRENTICE AND WORKER AT A BUTCHER'S SHOP

**REB MENDEL**, FURMAKER

**E. V. EIMIKE**, ALLEGED STUDENT OF LAW, JOBLESS STORAGE CONTROLLER, INFORMER AND REVOLUTIONER

**ABRAM ROMANICS**, MAKE-UP MASTER

**ALEXANDER TYIMOFEJEVIC**, DRIVER

**V. BRAGINSKI**, CHIEF ENGINEER OF A BEER FACTORY

**BABOON**, THAT IS TO SAY SEGIDULIN, PICKPOCKET AND PAHAN ON THE ISLAND OF KOLIMA, IN THE ICY HELL

**EAGLE**, AZAZ KOSZTIK KORSUNIDZE, NAMELY THE "ACROBAT", AND SAFE-BREAKER AND PAHAN ON THE ISLAND OF KOLIMA, IN THE ICY HELL

**SNAKE**, PARTNER IN THE CARDGAME

**GOULD VERSCHOYLE**, IRISH, HERO OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

**TOMMASO**, CATALAN FIGHTER IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

**ROBERT CAPA**, WORLD FAMOUS PHOTOGRAPHER

**ARMAND JOFFROY**, CORPSE

**CHIEF COMMANDER**, AT BILBOA IN SPAIN

**BOB**, YOUNG AMERICAN ACTOR, WORLDWAR DISABLED

**KRAUTHAMMER**, GERMAN TEXTILE MANUFACTURER

**TROFIMOV**, WRITER, ARISTOCRAT

**NATASHA FEDOTIEVNA MARMELADOV**, WIFE OF THE CHIEF EDITOR AT THE NEWSPAPER *NEW DAWN*, ART HISTORIAN, FRENCH TEACHER, PRISONER

**HANNA KRZYŻEWSKA**, POLISH-JEWISH EMIGRANT COMMUNIST GERMAN LANGUAGE TEACHER

**FRAULEIN ILSE**, NURSE AT A SWISS SANATORIUM

**WIFE OF DR. TAUBE**

**MOROZOV**, POLICE INVESTIGATOR

**KINYEMATOGRAFINA**, WOMAN POLICE INVESTIGATOR

**BISHOP**

**INQUISITOR**

**INTERPRETER**

**NEUMAN**

**FURTHER**: PRISONERS AND FREE MEN, ACCUSED, CONVICTED, PRISON GUARDS, WHORES, MURDERERS, COMMUNISTS, TORTURERS, YOUNG MEN, SAILORS, LYNCHERS, CHILDREN AND DOGS, CHICKENS AND A SKUNK

**TAKES PLACE IN:** AGEN, AKTYUBINSZK, ALMERIA, ARKHANGELSK, ASTRAKHAN, BAKU, BARCELONA, BATUM, WIEN, BERLIN, BILBAO, BORDEAUX, BUDAPEST, BUKHARA, BUKOVINA, CASTEL SARRASIN, CATALONIA, THE CAUCASUS, CETINJE, CONSTANTINOPLE, DACHAU, THE DANUBE, DAVOS, THE DNIEPER, DUBLIN, ESZTERGOM, GALICIA, GARONNE, GENF, GIJON, GRANADA, GUADALAJARA, HULL, IVANOVO-VOZNYESZENSZK, KAMA RIVER, KARAGANDA, KEM, KERSON, KIEV, KOLIMA, KÖNIGSBERG, ISLAND OF KRONSTADT, KURSK, LENINGRAD, LYON, MADRID, MAKLAKOV, MALAGA, MARSEILLES, MAZERE, MONTENEGRO, MONTGISCARD, MONTPARNASSE, MONTPELLIER, MOSCOW, MURMANSK, NARBONNE, NIKOLAJEVSKI, NORILSK, ODESSA, OREL, PAMIERS, PARIS, PLOEST, RIGA, RHEIN, ROUEN, SANTANDER, SARATOV, SEINE, SEBASTOPOL, SOLOVETSKI ISLANDS, SAINT PETERSBURG, SUZDAL, TAMBOV, TARASCON, TOULOUSE, TULA, TYUMEN, TURKESTAN, VERDUN, VLADIMIR, VOLGA, WORONIEZ

PART ONE  
I. HOUSE SEARCH

THOSE WHO SLEEP AND THOSE WHO ARE AWAKE

*The bell is ringing. When nothing happens, another ring is heard.*

DR TAUBE                   The bell rang.  
HIS WIFE                  You're just dreaming.  
DR TAUBE                  I go take a look.  
HIS WIFE                  Don't go anywhere.  
DR TAUBE                  What's the matter? You're not sleeping well?  
HIS WIFE                  What's the time?  
DR TAUBE                  One o'clock, dawn.  
                              *he is listening at the door*  
                              Who is it?  
VOICE                     The janitor!  
DR TAUBE                  And what do you want?  
VOICE                     I am sorry Karl Georgievits, but my wife has serious  
                              breathing problems!  
DR TAUBE                  She has asthma?  
VOICE                     That I don't know, she just simply doesn't get any air!  
DR TAUBE                  Has she ever had an attack like this before?  
VOICE                     For God's sake, please come, comrade Taube! I heard, you  
                              were a doctor!  
DR TAUBE                  I am going right away.  
HIS WIFE                  What do they want?  
DR TAUBE                  They want me to see a patient.  
HIS WIFE                  How come they know, that you are a doctor? We have not  
                              told anybody. Nobody could possibly know this in this house.  
                              In this house nobody has ever said hello to us.  
DR TAUBE                  Don't you think it's all the same? It is my obligation to go. I  
                              am not a doctor for not to exercise my profession.

*He opens the door. Three plain cloth investigators enter, they turn everything upside down, they pocket papers and letters, then they knock Dr. Taube down, later they knock his wife down too. They throw the couple on their shoulders and carry them out like sacks. Silence. Enters Fedukin, examines the location, kicks the papers, once in a while picks up a piece absent-minded, reads it, then he notices a typewriter turned upside-down, places it back, and starts strumming the keyboard.*

FEDUKIN                  Every arrest has its charm, has its own feel. And you shouldn't think, that it's so simple, that we just go out there, and just humpty-dumpty out of nowhere we knock on the door, ring the bell, knock down the patient, and then upsy-daisy we toss them in Lubjanka. These things need mindful preparation, sometimes we prepare it conscientiously for weeks and months. But sometimes we really have to improvise. However, don't think that all our scenarios are a piece of cake. For instance, what made matters interesting with the couple you have just seen was, that...

I.2. The deaf phone

*The phone is ringing. Fedukin falls silent. Lets the phone ring for a long time, he is watching it closely, he squats down to it. Picks up the receiver and then let it fall back. Then slowly backs out of the room. At this very moment the naked couple under the sheet wakes up.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV           What was this?  
 NATASHA                    The phone.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV           Don't say that, honey, don't say that. Only in your dreams.  
                                   *laughs*  
                                   You know, what I've dreamt?  
 NATASHA                    Jesus, who could it have been at this hour?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV           Where is the alarm clock?  
 NATASHA                    Lord Jesus. One o'clock at dawn.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV           Talk to me in French honey.  
 NATASHA                    Je peux pas maintenant.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV           This is what I like.  
                                   *He is kissing Natasha*  
 NATASHA                    I am so scared.  
                                   *Slowly they fall asleep*  
 FEDUKIN                    I love this silence. The silence of the night.  
                                   Everybody is sleeping. We are awake and at work. And there  
                                   are people we don't let sleep, and there are others we wake  
                                   up, and there are the ones who fall asleep for good at our  
                                   hands. Sorry, I haven't even introduced myself. My name is  
                                   Fedukin, state security investigator – Frosty Fucker Fedukin,  
                                   as they call me behind my back. Although I am not cold at all.  
                                   One is always at the mercy of other people's prejudices.  
                                   Even those powerful, honest people like me, who openly  
                                   strive for success.  
                                   *To a member of the audience*  
                                   Don't smile. Yes, yes, you, yes, don't smile. Maybe you can't  
                                   tell, but I'm a serious man. You have to take me seriously. Is  
                                   that clear? Because one is never what one seems to be.  
                                   *daydreaming*  
                                   Once in a while a phone starts to ring. Or a message arrives  
                                   from a distant ship...

*The phone starts ringing.*

FEDUKIN                    Somebody pick it up already!

*Natasha stares the phone, as if trying to put a spell on it, then wakes up Chelyustnikov with forceful kicks.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV           *laughs*  
                                   *That asshole Somorov!*  
 NATASHA                    Somorov, who?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV           He bellows his monologue, as usual, with gigantic pathos,  
                                   and there I stand on the stage, in top form. No, not on the  
                                   stage, but still in the dressing room, and the stage master's

bell is ringing. One is dreaming such foolish things! So we are playing the *Forest*. I am playing the comical part. It is a superb role, you should have seen me in it. As I fell flat on my face completely drunk!

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

Jesus, who could it have been? At this hour?

What's the time?

Two twenty.

Most likely it is your precious husband. Comrade Marmeladov, chief editor. Instead of editing his newspaper, he is making these calls for me. Then how we gona look, in case the paper will be full of misprint again.

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

He never calls at night, he knows, I am asleep at this hour.

He is right too, night is for sleeping.

*The phone rings again.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV

Pick it up already! For the sake of my holy virgin Mary! What are you fooling around for?

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

But I don't dare to.

But I can't pick it up either! Am I not right, my turtle dove? If you don't pick it up, *they will come here*, don't you get it?

FEDUKIN

Somebody pick it up already! I can't just simply reach into my brain!

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

But who could it be?

But how would I know?

But then who are coming here?

That I know even less, sweetie. But I have my own peculiar ideas.

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA

Even then I don't dare.

I count three, and you pick it up.

No.

*The phone is ringing.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV

One. Two. Three.

*In the very moment, when Natasha picks it up, the phone falls silent.*

### I.2.b Barking

REB MENDEL  
FEDUKIN

*He is holding a stick high up while barking savagely. as somebody who is disturbed*

What is it, old man? What are you barking here for? Doesn't it bother you, that half the globe is sleeping?

REB MENDEL  
FEDUKIN

*barks*

Do you know what time it is? What do you want with that stick?

FEDUKIN

Now put that down nice and easy.

*He talks to him, as if he was insane, pushes him out*

### I.2.c Continuation of the deaf phone

CHELYUSTNIKOV That asshole Somorov! God rest his soul, he was shot dead last year, he talked way too much, God damn actor! You know, there are people like that. He can't help it, he has to talk all the time. I've always said, that actors were not normal, their heads are full of roles.

NATASHA But who could it have been?

CHELYUSTNIKOV Phones are stubborn things. I believe he'll call again.

NATASHA Then I jump out the window.

CHELYUSTNIKOV And you know, I am standing there in the dressing room, stark naked, and the stage masters' bell is just ringing and ringing ...

NATASHA In the middle of the night!

CSELJUSTNYIKOV Obviously in my dream the phone was the bell. So the bell rings, the stage master is shaking it right in front of my room. He is just shaking it and shaking it, and so there I stand, my darling on the stage, Somorov is facing me – just a second ago I was in the dressing room, yet now I am standing on the stage already, this is how dreams are, and as I said, I was in top form. So that's when I notice, that I don't have any clothing on, that is to say, the buttons start to pop off, one after the other, and they slip down to my feet. Somorov starts to let out his bellowing, as a hind calf, I thought my ears would crack, and there I stand, get it, stark naked, ha ha!...

NATASHA I'll take rat poison.

CHELYUSTNIKOV My honey bunny.  
*Starts feeling up Natasha*

NATASHA Don't touch me!

CHELYUSTNIKOV My sweet little cunt-squirrel!

*The phone starts to ring again, Natasha picks it up.*

FEDUKIN Thanks God.

NATASHA Yes. Who? I don't understand. With whom? He is not here. I have no idea. Why would he be here? What? No problem. At this hour? What?  
*hangs up the phone and looks in shock at Chelyustnikov*

CHELYUSTNIKOV They were looking for you. From the headquarters. That they are sorry, it is urgent.

CHELYUSTNIKOV And? Was I here? No, I wasn't here, and that's all that matters. This is just as simple.

NATASHA They've asked, If I knew by chance, where you were. Two o'clock in the morning, I don't know by any chance where you are? I poison myself, do you hear me?

CHELYUSTNIKOV *buckles up his gun, combs his hair*  
Remember one thing, sweetie. I wasn't here, and that's that. It's just as simple. You can never admit to it, under no circumstances. No matter what they are threatening you with. Natasha. Not even if they break your jaw.

NATASHA My jaw? They break my jaw?

CHELYUSTNIKOV I have to go now, honey! I don't let anybody break these sweet little teeth of a mouse, don't be afraid.

NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

Don't touch me!  
My sweet little cunt-squirrel! You little bolshevik cunt, you.

*Three investigators appear in the doorway, Natasha starts walking toward them*

FEDUKIN

The trouble is, that they are disturbing me. I am disturbed by my own thoughts. It is not always easy to sum up a colorful story running on several channels.

Bukovina, Kiev, Vladivostok, Lausanne, Bilbao...

*the telegraphic set starts to clatter*

...and the little fanatic Irish guy! Due to my state security activities and their inevitable consequences... No, this is not correct.

*strikes the above*

What has inevitably followed from my state security activity...

This not good either.

*strikes it*

My call for state defense activities predestined me for...

That, as I said, to get acquainted with several really famous persons under extraordinary circumstances...

*he is typing*

1936, Bilbao, Robert Capa

SPAIN, 1936

1.3. On a hill next to Bilbao.

*Distant rattling of firearms. Verschoyle, Tommaso, Robert Capa, world famous photographer, and a corpse (Armand Joffroy)*

CAPA

*a camera in hand*

The sun is too strong. I would not like to get it right into my eyes. The corpse should be moved over there...

VERSCHOYLE

Not a corpse. He is Armand. My best friend.

CAPA

Let's put Armand over there.

VERSCHOYLE

Come, Tommaso, help.

CAPA

And what if we pretended, that he fell exactly in this very moment, and we would catch the moment when he falls...

VERSCHOYLE

What is this good for?

CAPA

This?! It will be seen in every newspaper in Europe, my dear friend. And we help the Spanish cause with it too.

*Meanwhile the Morse set starts working, Verschoyle jumps to it in a second. He is reading the information from the paper ribbon slowly rolling off.*

VERSCHOYLE

A second.

CAPA

The death of Armand Joffroy is going to come handy for a lot of people. Armand Joffroy shall get into eternity on the double.



TOMMASO Just let's hurry ...  
 CAPA Let's hurry because the perfect lighting will pass.  
 VERSCHOYLE *Immediately winds up the phone with a crank handle to call the commanding officer of the battalion*  
 TOMMASO I have to talk to the commanding officer of the battalion!  
 He is holding the corpse  
*I can't take it for long.*  
 CAPA Come, Verschoyle, we don't have much time.  
 VERSCHOYLE I have urgent reporting, Sir.  
 CAPA Hold him, Tommaso, so his hands would sweep the ground... Fine... Still, we'll make another shot, until this foolish Irish is making his calls... *Takes shots*  
 VERSCHOYLE I have to ask for an urgent hearing from the commanding comrade. No, it is not possible on the phone. Understood... I stay at my location. Understood.  
*Hangs up the phone.*  
*He stands in the tableau*  
 CAPA Now we should make one as if he was tortured by the falangists... Undress him...  
 VERSCHOYLE Sorry, Armand, ...  
*he starts to undress the corpse*  
 The world revolution cannot wait. And for you it's all the same.

*The commanding officer arrives with his deputy*

COMMANDER What are you doing here? Oh, the famous artist. Very well, just continue, continue.  
 CAPA It won't last for long.  
 VERSCHOYLE *Jumps up and goes over to the commander.*  
 Comrade Commander I have important things to report.  
 PARANCSNOK I am listening, Verschoyle.  
*Turns to his deputy*  
 He is our Irish companion-in arms. He has learnt the art of Morse in one week. These Irish are pretty fast. And he shoots extremely well. The only problem: he doesn't like to kill. This is his only weak point. But we will teach him, right?  
 DEPUTY Killing is a must.  
 VERSCHOYLE May we talk in private?

*Capa leaves*

COMMANDER No, it's not possible. There are no secrets here, we are among ourselves.  
 VERSCHOYLE Unknown parties are crossing our messages, and are sending back misleading informations.  
 COMMANDER Fairy tale!  
 VERSCHOYLE Believe me Sir, I am not talking rubbish. I've tested it.  
 COMMANDER What have you tested?  
 VERSCHOYLE I have sent the same message to two different locations. One to Seville and one to Madrid. And I compared the responses.

Certain people disappear, and new people from mysterious places pop up to replace them.

DEPUTY *Starts to show interest*  
Well, well.

COMMANDER And who would be that rotten spy, you are referring to, you stubborn Irish?

VERSCOYLE May I tell you in private?  
COMMANDER If you insist so much.

*Verschoyle whispers into the ear of the commander. The commander turns gloomy for a moment. He waves to Verschoyle, that he can leave. Then he turns to his deputy.*

COMMANDER This Irish has some sense of humor. Well, that's how it is with small nations!

DEPUTY And what did he say?  
COMMANDER whispers into his deputy's ear  
That some persons from Moscow...

DEPUTY That's unbelievable!  
COMMANDER These little nations!  
*The commander starts laughing, his deputy laughs with him.*

FEDUKIN *Starts typing again*  
But what really got stuck in me during my long professional carrier, no, strike that, so, what really, how can I say this, somehow got crystallized inside me, was the taiga in the twilight, with its flora and fauna, the long daybreaks, when after staying up all night and working, I stared out the window of the tower and I was watching the counterrevolutionary skeletons, dressed in prison rags, marching toward distant lead mines...

*Tommaso starts waking up Verschoyle, who fell asleep next to the telegraphic set.*

TOMMASO Gould. Gould. Wake up.  
VERSCOYLE Good grief! What is it? Where am I?  
TOMMASO Good morning. They are calling you for an urgent assignment. A ship's radio transmitter should be repaired in the harbor. The name of the ship is: Sebastopol.

VERSCOYLE And they couldn't find anybody else but me?  
TOMMASO Armand is dead.  
VERSCOYLE That's true. Armand is dead. Okay, then let's go.  
TOMMASO A motorboat will wait for you on the shore. Don't ask anything, just get in. I stay here.. Just take your tool box. While you are away I take care of the arriving messages.

VERSCOYLE Fine, Tommaso. Two years from now, after the victory of the aide'+, or what I really want to say, after the victory of the idea, we'll have a good night sleep, am I right Tommaso?

TOMMASO But of course, Gould.

*They hug each other. Verschoyle leaves.*

*The Morse set starts working.*

*Tommaso rips off the ribbon and sticks it into his pocket. .*

FEDUKIN                                So that's how it is. This little Irish won't do any sabotaging anymore either. One kind corpse-appointee among many others... the plate-armored belly of Sebastopol swallows him for ever. On the ship - riding the waves - he can meditate about the strange grimaces of fate...

I.4.a Denunciation of the skunk

REB MENDEL                            *as if praying*  
 It's coming, Every night it's coming. The skunk. Stealing my chickens. All hell breaks loose, Oh, God of Israel!

FEDUKIN                                Old man, I am not interested in your skunk, and I am even less interested in your stone age methods. Go away. Get lost. This is not a hen-pen. Is that clear? The world is not a big hen-pen, old man!

I.4.b Night in Kolima

*Two prisoners in Kolima wake up from their sleep at the noises.*

EAGLE                                    Shut up, Mother fuckers!

BABOON                                I smash you apart, who ever you are – dirty traitors, who circumcised even the little Jesus, and sold your sole for one mess of cold scum! I smash you apart!

EAGLE                                    Don't make me laugh, Stumpfinger! What are you going to smash them with?

I.4.c Prison guard

PRISON GUARD                        *enter*  
 May I bring the coffee and the vodka, Comrade Fedukin?

BABOON                                What's the time?

EAGLE                                    The morning gun is round the corner, so sleep fucker. And don't scratch yourself in your sleep, you louse. Your fucking fleas are jumping on me.

BABOON                                Careful, they are coming!

FEDUKIN                                I can't work under these circumstances. This is what could happen to you, if you live so much and see so much as I did, and your memories mix up with the pictures of reality...  
*he tries to write this down*

REB MENDEL                            *barks*

FEDUKIN                                *walks over to Reb Mendel and sniffs at him.* You know what I say to you? You are the skunk. You smell like a skunk. Why do you all stink so unbearably?! Or maybe just my sense of smell became too sophisticated? I easily sniff out if somebody gets ready to make a confession. Stinking, sweet stench, sweat, urine blends, all the secreting glands work wildly, but something soft is mixed to it, something malleable, velvety like a woman, like the ripe fruit, ready to fall from the tree...

PRISON GUARD                        So, then may I bring the coffee Comrade Fedukin?

FEDUKIN Go to sleep, old man.  
*As if he didn't hear the prison guard*  
 This is the responsibility of the vigil-keeper.  
*to the audience*  
 We keep vigil, so that you can sleep well.  
*after a short pause*  
 Just don't urinate in any street well.  
*he laughs at his own joke, then turns to his prison guard*  
 What is it?

PRISON GUARD Then may I bring the coffee and vodka, comrade investigator?

FEDUKIN You may bring it when you hear me scream. And when I scream you'll hear it.  
*asking it very quietly, practically whispering*  
 What time is it?

PRISON GUARD Comrade Fedukin, I came in, because I heard your voice. It is one o'clock in the morning, Comrade Fedukin. Three minutes passed.

FEDUKIN Really?

PRISON GUARD It has just struck one.

FEDUKIN Have you heard the chime?

PRISON GUARD Yes sir, Comrade Fedukin.

FEDUKIN Don't lie. From what direction?

PRISON GUARD *he is showing the direction*

FEDUKIN Measures should be taken. The population's sleep is disturbed. Also, I don't like it, if the captives know what time it is. The church must be blown up.

*The prison guard leaves with the order.*

#### 1.4.d Miksha's suspicion

*Reb Mendel starts to bark. Miksha comes too, he is barking as well*

FEDUKIN *He turns to Miksha irritated*  
 Who are you, you little shit head?

REB MENDEL *To Miksha*  
 Go away. I don't need you.

MIKSHA I know who is stealing your chickens!

REB MENDEL Ajve, smart guy. Go, get some sleep.

MIKSHA Look for the thief among the Jews Reb Mendel.

REB MENDEL Shame on you Herr Mixat! How could you say such a thing?

MIKSHA Jew to the right, Jew to the left, Jews are everywhere. On the other hand the chicken meat is tasty, Reb Mendel.

REB MENDEL These goyim helpers, Herrgott! Herr Mixat!

FEDUKIN What the heck, you have names too? Clear out of here Herr Mixat! Reb Mendel! Beat it, I don't want to see you at all!  
 Buzz off! Back to your places!

*Reb Mendel and Miksha start barking, then wait, Miksha tries his stunt with his button.*

#### 1.5.a Game of cards - deal

*In the barrack of the lager in Kolima, movements on the bunk beds.*

BABOON                   What's up Eagle, can't you sleep?  
 EAGLE                    Don't you hear, that they are barking?  
 BABOON                  Be happy, that you are inside here in the fine heat.  
 EAGLE                    Why is it any of your business, what I am happy for?  
 BABOON                  Then why are you weep in your dream?  
 FEDUKIN                 I would like to work, Sirs, I beg your pardon!  
                               *He tries to write*  
 BABOON                  Who is this prick?  
 EAGLE                    Don't worry, I kill him anyway. I'll castrate his eye-sockets.  
 FEDUKIN                 Okay, fine, fine. Then just go on with your blabber my little  
                               doves.  
 EAGLE                    The rules?  
 BABOON                  What?  
 SNAKE                    He is asking about the rules.  
 BABOON                  Your name is shut up, Snake. Here is the best four cards...  
 EAGLE                    Czarina, Whore, Bludgeon, 69. So what?  
 BABOON                  I take these out.  
 EAGLE                    Why?  
 BABOON                  Devil, Death, Hunged men, Kindjal. These play.  
 EAGLE                    What do you want with this?  
 BABOON                  I have played a couple of times with you, Eagle. I know what  
                               cards you fall for.  
 EAGLE                    Then I'll take out four cards too. Power, Cup, Dagger, Star.  
 SNAKE                    Then I take out four too.  
 EAGLE                    As I said, shut it up, Snake.  
 BABOON                  We have let you stay, but not so you can hiss around here.  
 EAGLE                    So we play with four times four cards.  
 BABOON                  Let it roll.  
 EAGLE                    There will be four rounds.  
 BABOON                  Let it roll.  
 EAGLE                    Who loses, will...  
 BABOON                  Whoever loses, Eagle. will follow my orders.  
 EAGLE                    Yours, Baboon? What is this? Are you going to cheat?  
 BABOON                  I never cheat. But I always win.  
 EAGLE                    True, that you can't cheat anymore with your crippled hand.  
 BABOON                  You can get off my hand, Eagle.  
 EAGLE                    You can thank to the doctor. He sewed back your fingers!  
 SNAKE                    Dr. Taube?  
 BABOON                  It will be thanked.  
 SNAKE                    You can go back to the lead mine.  
 BABOON                  The one who loses is going to disembowel him. That's all.  
 SNAKE                    Why don't you kill him yourself?  
 BABOON                  How could I possible do that? He saved my life. He has to die  
                               for it. I can't kill him. The one who loses kills him. Clear?

#### I. 5.b MATCHES AND BUTTONS

MIKSHA Before the matches burn down, I've already sewn on a button.  
 REB MENDEL Do you think I have so many matches?  
 MIKSHA Just one please!  
 MIKSHA Light it, and watch.  
 REB MENDEL I light it, I light it too. Just please don't gesticulate so vehemently like a prophet in the desert.

*Reb Mendel lights the match, Miksha sews on the button to one of the clothing with unbelievable speed..*

#### I. 5. d Playing with matches

REB MENDEL *acknowledging*  
 You can't even tear this off.  
*tests the button*  
 MIKSHA A single match is enough to set fire to all the oil fields of Romania.  
 REB MENDEL Herr Mixat, You could still be an excellent craftsman except for these stupid thoughts, which run around in your head.  
 MIKSHA It will be a gorgeous outbreak of fire, Reb Mendel.  
 FEDUKIN How remarkable young man is this Miksha.  
 REB MENDEL *takes another look at the jacket*  
 Why did you sew here this button, Meingott? You are really an idiot, Herr Mixat. There is no need for this button here at all.

*Somebody turns on a radio, which is broadcasting a march.  
 Reb Mendel tries to rip off the button, but he doesn't succeed.*

REB MENDEL Where are the scissors, Herr Mixat? Give it to me!  
 MIKSHA *he wants to hand him the knife*  
 REB MENDEL This is scissors for you? Don't fling that knife, 'cause you bruise the air with it!!

#### I.5.c Game of cards – licit

EAGLE So let's swing, boys. A horse doctor less. There are too many doctors on earth anyway.  
 BABOON The devil take the hindmost.  
 EAGLE The hindmost.

*The game begins.*

BABOON What's up Acrobat? You wait this much on the trampoline too, when your partner is already doing the somersaults on the double? You know that ends in a salto mortale.  
 EAGLE Wait a second Baboon, this game ends in death anyway.  
 BABOON Only you don't know yet in whose.

*Eagle takes a look at his opponent's card. He has lost. He sits up in bed. Snake looks from one to the other. The wake up bell of the concentration camp starts ringing, the prisoners of Kolima start running to the bath.*

I. 5. e. the idiotic question

FEDUKIN                                      Wake him up and bring him here. Bring him here right now.

*A question arrives from the dark.*

VOICE                                      Who?  
 FEDUKIN                                      Who asked that? I asked that, who?  
 VOICE                                      Me.  
 FEDUKIN                                      Take him down to the courtyard and shot him dead. I don't work with idiots. Bring me Boris Davidovic. I am preparing an artistic work. I have to make a stubborn guy see reason. A genially stubborn guy. Who knows...  
*He takes a look at his watch*  
 Three a clock dawn. The time has come.  
*He suppresses a gigantic yawn*  
 Music!

*A romantic tune is heard, Tschaikovski, very loudly. D major violin concerto. Fedukin rolls up his sleeve.*

1.7. THE QUESTIONING

*Boris Davidovic is being lead in with a jute sack on his head, in one dirty underwear, one of his foot is bear, on the other he wears one of the torn boots. They bring in a table lamp too – a guard directs the light of the lamp continuously at Boris Davidovic.*

FEDUKIN                                      Then let's start it all over again from the beginning, Boris Davidovic.  
 NOVSKI                                      What?  
 FEDUKIN                                      I ask, you answer, you worm.  
 NOVSKI                                      As you like it.  
 FEDUKIN                                      I don't like it anyway, you worm. Mother's name?  
 NOVSKI                                      Unknown.  
 FEDUKIN                                      True, to a worm belongs a mother worm. How did they call that Jewish pig? That worldcunt studbitch? We can't always be subtle, sometimes we have to bellow our sorrow. Some die from constant tenderness, from constant caressing. I know such Chinese interrogation methods. But I don't work with such insidious methods. I am straight like a ruler. What was your precious mother's name? Who brought to this world such a monster, a steaming pile of shit, such a smelly skunk like you, dear comrade Novski?  
 NOVSKI                                      I didn't know my mother.  
 FEDUKIN                                      Wasn't she Hanna Krzyżewska by any chance?  
 NOVSKI                                      I don't know any woman called Hanna Krzyżewska.  
 FEDUKIN                                      I am not interested, you shit sack, who you know and who you don't know. If I want it, then you know Hanna

Krzyżewska, and If I want it, then you don't know Hanna Krzyżewska.

NOVSKI Then we should put it on record, that I don't know Hanna Krzyżewska.

FEDUKIN What would you like to put on record? A cigarette, Novski?

NOVSKI No, thank you.

FEDUKIN You should not thank me anything, do you hear me, you rotten leek!

*lights a cigarette.*

NOVSKI No.

FEDUKIN Don't play me the hero, do you hear me? I know that you are a rabid smoker. That you die for a cigarette. Now, take one safely.

NOVSKI You know nothing, Fedukin.

FEDUKIN Comrade!!!

NOVSKI Comrade.

### 1.7. b Skunk trap

MIKSHA I beg of you, trust your chickens with me, Reb Mendel!

*Flings the knife*

REB MENDEL What do you want?

MIKSHA I set a trap.

REB MENDEL You set a trap?

MIKSHA Yes. For the skunk.

### 1.7.c The zero

FEDUKIN Yes, this is how I can sum up the essence of my work: to set a trap for the skunk.

*Turns to Novski*

Let's set a trap for the skunk, tovarish Novski comrade. In other words, to you. We are going to have plenty of work together, tovarish Novski comrade. We will spend many nice days together. But you better take notice of one thing at last. To hell with that huge, huge pride! You have ceased to exist. We pulled you out of the circulation. You have become a zero. But that's not enough for me, little brother. I want to get out of you even more than *everything* brother. If I write a number before zero, a gigantic leap will take place in the universe. And you will help us in this. This is our job, and that's not nothing. So your mother's name is Hanna Krzyżewska.

NOVSKI *silent*

FEDUKIN I would like you to repeat with the most eloquent Russian accent you are capable the sentence you have just heard from my lips.

NOVSZKIJ *silent*

FEDUKIN Mother's name Hanna Krzyżewska.

NOVSZKIJ *nonchalant*

As you like it.



FEDUKIN Let me hear that sentence.  
 NOVSZKIJ Mother's name Hanna Krzyżewska.  
 FEDUKIN Do you hear, how he is lying! Do you hear, what kind of dirty, lying scoundrel! This Polish revolutionary woman murdered in honor, disemboweled and thrown into the river, was never you mother.

### I.7.d Conjugation

*Hanna Krzyżewska steps forward.*

HANNA KRZYŻEWSKA Ich bin, du bist, er, sie ist, wir sind, ihr seid, sie sind nicht deine Mutter.

FEDUKIN *shouts at her*  
 Shut it up. To your place!  
*To the audience*  
*I hate it when somebody speaks German in such a Jewish manner.*

HANNA KRZYŻEWSKA Aber Entschuldigung!  
 FEDUKIN Keine Entschuldigung. This wants to teach German? This Polish woman?

HANNA KRZYŻEWSKA What's your problem with my being Polish! What do you want from my Polish homeland?

FEDUKIN You have a homeland?... You know where your homeland is? You know who wants you? World revolution? You are the traitor. You betrayed your homeland, you betrayed your best friends, you betrayed your cell, your betrayed yourself. It is better that you know it from me...  
*whistles*

*Miksha jumps out from the background and starts to strangle Hanna Krzyżewska. Fedukin is watching the scene with expert eyes while Hanna Krzyżewska is gasping for air and is begging for her life.*

FEDUKIN Miksha! Stop that. All in due time.

*Miksha leaves Hanna Krzyżewska, who falls to the ground as a lifeless sack. The guards pull her out by her legs. Miksha stares after her a little disappointed.*

### I.7.e Creativity

FEDUKIN So?  
 NOVSKI I've just repeated a sentence, if I remember well.  
 FEDUKIN Well. If there is something I am not interested in my fellow citizen Novski or Dolskij or Podolskij is exactly what you do remember. You will remember, what I want you remember – this is the game. And you will remember details, take note of this, Boris Davidovic Foreskin Pimple, I will hear exclusively from you. In other words I expect a little creativity from you too, Mr. Prickhouse Asshole, am I understood?

NOVSKI I'd go back to my cell.  
 FEDUKIN *turns to the audience*

Oh, Ladies and Gentlemen, how wonderful is the human soul! He, from his free will would go back to his cell. He calls a two meters long and two meters wide hole a cell, a hole, crowded with rats and where the water reaches his ankle, a hole that has been named aptly by an observant memoir writer 'a stone shroud'.

*turns to Boris Davidovic*

Where in the stinking God Almighty would you like to return, you bloody bladder? What do you call a cell? For this lie I deprive you of three days soup ration as a punishment. Beat it! Take him to ditch number ten! To the water ditch. So it is his cell? This is not a hotel, Boris Horriblelovic! You will stand in icy water for three days, rats will chew your navel apart.

*checks his watch*

I got hungry. I go to eat. Don't let him sit down.

### I.8. A car in front of the house

*The phone starts ringing. Chelyustnikov has arrived home already, in one of his hands a bottle of vodka, in the other a cigar. He picks up the receiver.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Who is it? My dear comrade! ME? I was home, I have been home from eight o'clock in the evening, comrade. But really. A car in front of the house? Half an hour ago? But why haven't you said that dear comrade secretary. I am flying!  
*Checks whether his gun is loaded.*

FEDUKIN                   *calls over*  
Give me that.

CHELYUSTNIKOV        What for?  
FEDUKIN                 I said, give it to me.

*Chelyustnikov hands it to him offended. Waits*

FEDUKIN                 *holds the gun at Chelyustnikov*  
I have an idea.

*Hands back the gun to Chelyustnikov.*

### 1. 8. b. TEMPLE FROM A BEER FACTORY

CHIEF ENGINEER        This is a sabotage.  
CHELYUSTNIKOV        You want me to force you with my weapon comrade chief engineer?

CHIEF ENGINEER        I only follow the orders of the local party committee.

CHELYUSTNIKOV        I am the local party committee.

CHIEF ENGINEER        I make a call.

CHELYUSTNIKOV        I wouldn't propose that.

CHIEF ENGINEER        Who are you?

CHELYUSTNIKOV        My name is Chelyustnikov. You may have heard that name already. I performed on stages, I had great success...

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV No, I haven't.  
No problem. Hereby I seize this beer factory. The rest of the instructions you'll receive later.

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV An idiot actor.  
The only reason I don't shoot you, you idiotic chief engineer, because I've got strict orders, that today no event that would require police involvement should be allowed to take place in Kiev. Today Kiev is a peaceful city. Today no blood shall be shed in Kiev. There will be meat in the stores and tomato at the groceries. And last but not least, today, in the cathedral we will celebrate mass in Kiev.

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV My fellow citizen, you are mad.  
Edouard Herriot, does this name say anything to you?  
Comrade chief engineer?

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV Edouard Herriot? No, it doesn't say anything.  
That's a pity. Edouard Herriot, French revolutionary, the head of the committee of foreign affairs, major of Lyon, representative of the parliament, music scientist...

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV I make a call.  
Don't bother that phone! Today everybody wants to make a call. When this man will show up at the gate of the cathedral we will celebrate mass. Meanwhile you and your workers will drink beer and eat pretzel, and get drunk, like animals, with special permission, except if you want to participate in today's mass... It's not obligatory, but you get bonus for it, I can't keep that a secret.

CHIEF ENGINEER  
CHELYUSTNIKOV I shit on Edouard Herriot. I make a call.  
Very well. Make a call. But do not shit on Edouard Herriot.  
*dials*  
This is the chief engineer of the beer factory. My name is Braginski. Yes. Yes. Yes? Yes Sir. Yes Sir. Yes. No. Yes.  
*turns dead pale, hangs up*

CHELYUSTNIKOV Well?  
CHIEF ENGINEER I take measures.  
CHELYUSTNIKOV Bravo! I'll take measures too. Where is Abram Romanics?  
ABRAM ROMANICS *talks in a shy manner*  
Here I am, at your service.

CHELYUSTNIKOV I really can't complain about the comrades. You have everything that's needed?

ABRAM ROMANICS Everything, at your service.  
CHELYUSTNIKOV Then let's set to work.

#### I. 8. c THE MAKE-UP MASTER

*Abram Romanics starts to put make-up on Chelyustnikov – at the end of the scene we see a classical pope with big beard and belly on the stage.*

ABRAM ROMANICS And where is this vestment from? How gorgeous it is...

- CHELYUSTNIKOV Let's leave the religious agitation. We've borrowed it in exchange for a promissory note from the property room of the theatre.
- ABRAM ROMANICS *passes his hand over the material*  
Real stuff...
- CHELYUSTNIKOV Please don't pester it Abram Romanics. If we consider all the priests we've shot already, we can supply all the theatres with real costumes. Well, get going, hurry up.
- ABRAM ROMANICS *slowly gets going, glues up a beard*  
You will see Alexei Laurentiejevic, we will turn you into a genuine pope – we make here a nice little belly too, here is this pillow, I tie this up tight here with this gauze...
- CHELYUSTNIKOV There is no need for it, it would only impede me in my movement.
- ABRAM ROMANICS Where have you seen my fellow citizen Chelyustnikov, a lean pope?
- CHELYUSTNIKOV I nearly forgot, Abram Romanics. You have to sign this paper. In this you oblige yourself, that whatever you see, hear, or do now, you'll treat it as the strictest state secret, and you'll be silent about it like the grave...
- ABRAM ROMANICS *his hand is shaking*  
Where should I sign it?
- CHELYUSTNIKOV Where, where, at the bottom. Come on. Hurry up! We have no time.
- ABRAM ROMANICS *signs, returns to do the make-up*  
Citizen Chelyustnikov, do not forget about your beard, not even for a moment, specially this sort of beard, because we wear this not on our face, but with our entire trunk, entire upper body. So right now in a very short time you should learn how to harmonize the movements of the head and body.
- CHELYUSTNIKOV Bravo. You are a real expert, Abram Romanics. I wouldn't have been able to tell this about you.
- ABRAM ROMANICS You know, citizen Chelyustnikov, when you run out of words, then just murmur in bass voice. Grumble as much as you can, as if you were angry at your flock. And roll your eyes, as if you were damning God, who you, although only temporarily, but serve.
- CHELYUSTNIKOV My little philosopher, you! How do you know these things you little Jew?
- ABRAM ROMANICS One pays attention anyway, my fellow citizen. Had you seen as much Boris Godunov as I did... And as far as singing goes...
- CHELYUSTNIKOV We don't have time for that. We'll sing later, comrade Godunov...

#### I. 8. d THE DRIVER

*The make-up master is being arrested and dragged away as soon as Chelyustnikov leaves.*

CHELYUSTNIKOV DRIVER Let's get to the beer factory! To the cathedral!  
*he kisses the hand of Chelyustnikov*  
 Praised be Our Lord! Glory be to God!

CHELYUSTNIKOV Ahh... You kind driver... They really still give respect in this beautiful homeland... Oh...

DRIVER And shall we wait for citizen Chelyustnikov?

CHELYUSTNIKOV If we are going to wait for the citizen? What citizen?

DRIVER Soon it will be easier to see a reindeer in Kiev than a priest.

CHELYUSTNIKOV Yes? And what do you need a priest for, my son?

DRIVER For the cleansing of the soul, my holy father...

CHELYUSTNIKOV Step on the gas, son!

DRIVER To do what?

CHELYUSTNIKOV As I've said... step on the gas son... that's right! *he pulls up his dress and shows his red boots to the driver*

DRIVER My Lord Jesus Christ!

CHELYUSTNIKOV My make-up is great, not true?

DRIVER It will do.

CHELYUSTNIKOV Well, let's go, 'cause citizen Herriot is going to arrive soon.

### I.8.e KIEV, CATHEDRAL

*Herriot, Chelyustnikov,  
 Natasha, as a guide, kneeling mass crossing itself*

HERRIOT VOILÁ, le cathedral! Enfin!

CHELYUSTNIKOV *as if celebrating mass, he is singing, murmuring in a deep voice. He is improvising, he dangles a censer, crosses himself*  
 Are you here? Have you arrived? Then let's go at it! I am singing already! Nastja, be careful, 'cause I am watching every word of you!

NATASHA Je suis tres heureuse comrade Herriot, que je peux vous montrer la Saint Sophia Cathedral qui etait construé pour la gloire de Vladimir, Jaroslav et Zjaslav le premier...

CHELYUSTNIKOV Don't be so verbose my darling!

HERRIOT Magnifique! Etonnante! Pas a croire! Et plein de gens.

CHELYUSTNIKOV Oh, my sweet lord, how well I am doing this, bravo my little Chelyustnikov, meine kleine garde Offizier... Amen.

NATASHA Cette cathedral, the Saint Sophia Cathedral est une faible imitation de l'eglise de Kerson qui etait appelé d'apres la cité de Korsun.

HERRIOT Je dois noter ca...  
*starts taking notes*

CHELYUSTNIKOV He is taking notes. We must pay attention to this too. Do I have to pay attention to everything? We have to notify the cleaning lady in the hotel, that we'll need the notebook of citizen Herriot too...

NATASHA Le gouvernement de L'Union Sovietique est tres attaché a garder tous le monuments historiques...

CHELYUSTNIKOV *same as above*  
 Natasha, what do you want from the Union of the Soviets? Sancta crucifix, Adonai... pardon this is not the place... Hold

that icon with more piety Sergeant-major! This is not a garden gnome! My sweet Lord... we have full house. Look at that! The comrade party secretary splendidly crosses himself repeatedly... I wonder where he had learnt that... Halleluja... Amen... let's pray.. Lord Almighty I just see that a beer tub has been left inside... This is a sabotage Gospodi! Hallelujah! Misericordia! And so on! And so on!

*They roll the tub out*

HERRIOT  
NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

Et qu'est ce que c'est?

Ca?

This is a medieval representation of the skunk...

C'est une representation de skunk...

Partly the skunk was the representation of infidelity in the Christian mythology...

NATASHA

La skunk est une representation pas de foix de Jesus Christ dans l'histoire de la Catholicism...

CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA

Partly in a paradox way, the symbol of fanatic faith...

Mais aussi de la foi fanatique...

CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA

In certain cities the skunk was considered a holy animal...

Dans certains villes la skunk etait une sacre animal...

CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA

Killing a skunk was punished the same way...

Et tuer une skunk...

CHELYUSTNIKOV  
NATASHA

As the killing of another man...

Ettais comme tuer un homme.

HERRIOT  
CHELYUSTNIKOV

Tres interessant!

Maybe we should go out now... it's more spacious outside... I grew really very tired... God-bye Natasha!... I didn't want it like this...

*shakes the church bells*

## I. 9.

*While somebody distracts Herriot, Natasha is being arrested and taken away in no time.*

## I. 10 a. THE CONFRONTATION

*Abram Romanics, Fedukin, Novski*

FEDUKIN  
ABRAM ROMANICS  
NOVSKI  
FEDUKIN  
ABRAM ROMANICS  
FEDUKIN  
ABRAM ROMANICS  
FEDUKIN

Abram Romanics! Calm down. Please take a good look at this man. Do you recognize him?

Yes I do.

I have never seen you in my life.

Don't let this scoundrel scare you Abram Romanics.

Continue. He is the man, who...

He is the man I gave thirty thousand rubels at the railway station in Saint Petersburg, wrapped in brown paper bag, on April 17, 1926.

So, I see. Don't you know his name?

Jakov Mauzer.

His name is not Mauzer, you beef. How much trouble do I have to have with you. Abram Romanics, try to force a little

bit your memory rotting in mildew. Have you worked in a theatre not to be able to remember even this much?

ABRAM ROMANICS  
Sorry, but to the best of my memory the comrade used this assumed name.

FEDUKIN  
That was an earlier version. Don't forget that your wife is a heart patient.

ABRAM ROMANICS  
Then what's his name?

FEDUKIN  
You are asking me, you rat? A minute ago you knew what his name was. I have no time for failed students, Abram Romanics. This is not a Wagner-opera, Abram Romanics, which leads us into the infinite. You are the revenge of the scrap Abram Romanics.

ABRAM ROMANICS  
It doesn't occur to me, please. I beg of you.

FEDUKIN  
Well, fine. Then I help you. But this is the last time. He is Boris Davidovic Novski, the infamous, insidious, embezzler and saboteur.

ABRAM ROMANICS  
Oh, yes, sorry, for one moment my memory slipped. He is Boris Davidovic Novski, the embezzler and saboteur.

FEDUKIN  
Like you yourself.

ABRAM ROMANICS  
Like me myself.

FEDUKIN  
You will be hanged no matter what, so let's not stall for time. Why did you give him that money?

*Fedukin picks up a bottle of vodka and he pours the entire content into Abram Romanics, he has the hiccups, swallows hardly.*

FEDUKIN  
A little potato brandy, to make your heart strong. Don't be afraid, if he wanted to attack you, we will beat him to carrot pulp until the puss from all his sores spurts forth. In case you want to puke just puke at him safely. This is not a human, this is an animal! He turns to *Boris Davidovic*.  
You sold your homeland for money? And meanwhile you play the big revolutionary, the clean hearted rebel with good morals?

NOVSKI  
I repeat, that I have never seen this man in my entire life.

FEDUKIN  
*To Abram Romanics*  
Take a good look, Abram Romanics. Is it him?

ABRAM ROMANICS  
*he is completely drunk, he is close to having a heart attack*  
Yes, him.  
*staggers*

FEDUKIN  
Why have you given him the money? But watch carefully every single word you utter.

ABRAM ROMANICS  
I gave him the money I've received from the English government so...  
*he has the hiccups, he is grabbing his heart*

FEDUKIN  
Well, you drunkard pig, I told you not to drink, phooey! ugh, you can't take it and still you drink.

*The guards laugh.*

ABRAM ROMANICS  
I gave to him the thirty thousand dollars, so he would make arrangements with his bosses for a bigger imperialist deal ...





## I.12. THE SONG OF THE SKUNK

*Miksha and Reb Mendel*

MIKSHA Do you hear this Reb Mendel? Do you hear this?  
 REB MENDEL What, Herr Mixat? It's spring time. At times like this young people hear all sorts of things.

MIKSHA Don't you hear, Reb Mendel?  
 REB MENDEL What should I hear?  
 MIKSHA Sings.  
 REB MENDEL Who? What a pity, the girls, always the girls, Herr Mixat?  
 MIKSHA *screams*  
 I liberated the chickens from the oppression of fear, Reb Mendel! Now they can lay their eggs freely! Do you hear this, Reb Mendel? The evil skunk sings, Reb Mendel, the evil skunk!

REB MENDEL What is this? What is this?  
 MIKSHA What's what? Well, it's the thief-skunk! I gave it, what it deserves! Do you want me to tell you how I flayed it.  
 REB MENDEL Be silent!  
 MIKSHA First one snip around the throat, two snips at the stem of the paws...

REB MENDEL Enough is enough!  
 MIKSHA I peeled a bit the skin at the neck and I cut a split like a buttonhole, you know, as I've learnt from you Reb Mendel...

REB MENDEL What have you learnt from me, Herr Mixat?  
 MIKSHA Yes, so with one tear, one rip...  
 REB MENDEL I could kill you! I could kill you, Herr Mixat, if only Moses hadn't forbid it, I would kill you! Be damned, Herr Mixat, be damned. And get the hell out of here, I don't want to see you!

MIKSHA But why? What have I done wrong?  
 REB MENDEL Don't ask me, you monster! Ask your own soul, if you have any at all!

## I. 13. AN ASSIGNMENT

*Eimike, Miksha**Miksha throws a knife into the floor.*

EIMIKE You are not paying attention, Miksha...  
 MIKSHA But what do you want?  
 EIMIKE And you are mocking me.  
 MIKSHA How can anybody have such idiotic name? Waclav Eimike, law student without a diploma? What did the priest say, when he christened you? Wacky Eimike?

EIMIKE Into hell with names, Hantescu! When have I called you Hammy?

MIKSHA That's different. A Czech could call a Romanian any time a Hammy. Because the Romanians are hams. I know for sure. I am the exception.

EIMIKE Let's leave the philosophy.  
 MIKSHA Let's leave it.

EIMIKE                                 There are more important things to consider. A traitor wormed his way into our cell.

MIKSHA                                 You said, you would tell me, what revolution was.

EIMIKE                                 Exactly. Where there is revolution, there is betrayal. The two things are organically connected.

MIKSHA                                 Until now you have said, that revolution is something good.

EIMIKE                                 Now you say, that it's bad.

EIMIKE                                 Exactly. Revolution is good in a way that it's bad. When you serve a cause, you have to make sure that the cause wins. And in order for the cause to win.... Give me that knife, I show you.

*Miksha unwillingly gives him the knife*

EIMIKE                                 You see it has a handle and a blade. The handle is the party. The blade is the man. The party is using the man. Now then. The tip of the blade is the revolutionary vanguard. We are this. And the blunt side: those are the traitors. Do you get me?

MIKSHA                                 Maybe.

EIMIKE                                 I'll tell you another strange thing, Miksha. Even if you don't understand it now, one day you'll understand it. Beauty will ruin you. Don't believe beauty. Beauty is the enemy of revolution. Diverts your mind off your duties.

MIKSHA                                 What kind of beauty are you talking about?

EIMIKE                                 You will understand. Beauty has an accent. Beauty is freckled. Beauty is brown...

MIKSHA                                 You don't mean...?

EIMIKE                                 *He covers Miksha's mouth with his hand*

EIMIKE                                 Don't say it. Don't utter the name. It will come across on the riverside.

MIKSHA                                 Who will come across on the riverside?

EIMIKE                                 The traitor. The dull knife. The one the vanguard has to fix for good, if they don't want to endanger the entire organization.

MIKSHA                                 So, I see.

EIMIKE                                 Now you know everything.

MIKSHA                                 I know everything?

EIMIKE                                 Everything. Tomorrow you report to us, that you carried out your assignment.

MIKSHA                                 Tomorrow I report, that I carried out my task.

EIMIKE                                 Long live the party.

MIKSHA                                 Long live the party.

*Both of them leave*

## I. 14. THE TRAITOR

*Riverside. Hanna and Miksha*

HANNA                                 Miksha?

MIKSHA                                 Me. Yes. Have you expected somebody else?

HANNA                                 Are you sad?

MIKSHA                                 No.

HANNA But yes. I have seen a cloud run through your forehead.  
 MIKSHA The clouds run through the sky Miss comrade and not over me.

HANNA Don't say Miss comrade.  
 MIKSHA Then what should I say Miss comrade?  
 HANNA My name is Hanna.  
 MIKSHA It was not me you've expected, Miss comrade.  
 HANNA The one who hasn't come, has not come, and the one who has come, came. That's how life is.  
*quiet*

MIKSHA The flower withers, Miss comrade.  
 HANNA My name is Hanna.  
 MIKSHA Suffocates. If I take hold of a flower, it suffocates, Hanna.  
 HANNA How beautifully you've said that Miksha.  
*looks at his watch restless*  
 I wonder where the others could be?  
*shrugs his shoulders*

MIKSHA Shouldn't we go back to the city?  
 HANNA Let's stay some more.  
 MIKSHA Should I teach you German? Ich kann dich Deutsch...  
 HANNA Dajch, dajch! What they say in Daich, that's Hebrew to me.  
 MIKSHA Schön ist das Leben!  
 HANNA Leben is not schön. It is everything but not schön.  
*starts laughing*  
 You do know!

MIKSHA Anybody who has served at a Jew, they all know.  
 HANNA Who are you angry at? Don't you want to swim?  
 MIKSHA Schwimmen, schwimmen.  
 HANNA Do you know how to swim?  
 MIKSHA Not me.  
 HANNA Then why do you want to swim?  
*laughs*

*Miksha embraces the girl from behind, his embrace is getting stronger and stronger, the lean body wriggles in the grip of the two gigantic hand, then it gets limp. She regains consciousness for one more second, so Miksha jumps there, he starts to cut around the skin on the girl's neck, just as he described it when he talked about the flaying of the skunk...*

### I. 15.a. THE SOLUTION

FEDUKIN Well, Boris Davidovic, you will receive such an opportunity, such a chance, there aren't many who can get such a chance. You may dispose of your own fate. Until now, it seemed, that the world has ended, and you perish, and not even a dog will bark after you, and as far as I understood, this was not against your own wishes. But I usually don't give up. My job is, what was your job, while you were a human, to serve my party and my homeland.

*They push in a boy. Fedukin holds a gun to the boy's temple.*

FEDUKIN The life of this fine young man, who is a perfect stranger to you, rests in your hand. You decide what should happen to him.  
*turns to the young man*  
If Boris Davidovic doesn't make a full confession of guilt we kill you.

FIRST YOUNG MAN *begs crying*  
For the love of God, comrade Boris Davidovic tell them the truth. Don't deny anything. Remember that once you were young yourself. I beg you, for the sacred love of God, what does it cost you to utter that magic word. You are guilty, I am innocent! And they kill me because of you!

NOVSKI *silent*

FIRST YOUNG MAN You can't do this to me, Boris Davidovic!

NOVSKI There is no bargain.

FEDUKIN Well, fine, then I pull the trigger.

*The young man falls to the ground dead.*

I. 15. b. TWENTY YEARS LATER (Morozov)

*Morozov, Fedukin, investigator woman*

MOROZOV Bring here Korsunidze.

FEDUKIN You would like to jump twenty years?

MOROZOV It is not my fault, sometimes it takes this long to unravel a mysterious case.

INVESTIGATOR Bring here Mixat Hantescu, or Miksha the Ripper.

FEDUKIN Would you like to confuse everybody? Do you see what's happened here? One became a killer in 1934, the other became a murderer in 1958, but between the two there is no connection at all.

INVESTIGATOR It is not my fault, the dossier has just come in. Hantescu is here too, we have to do something with him. He disemboweled the Polish revolutionary woman and threw her body in the river. They say he is quite quick to learn.

FEDUKIN Well, well, let's see what the cockchafer develop from. This is useful stuff.  
*to the investigator woman*  
he is all yours.

INVESTIGATOR Still, let's see the driver first.

MOROZOV I start. I start. Korsunidze!

INVESTIGATOR The driver is here already. Miksha can wait. For later usage.

MOROZOV First I talk to this iron safe man.

FEDUKIN Quiet. Now an excretion, pardon, I mean, an experiment, fathoming the depth of human soul, follows. Drumbeat please!

I. 15. c. THE SECOND ORDEAL

*Fedukin, Isajevic, Novski*

*They bring in a half naked young man*

FEDUKIN Well, Boris Davidovic, just watch my hand.  
*turns to the young man*  
 ISZAJEVICS You die, Isajevic, if Novski does not confess.  
 FEDUKIN Come on, what could he confess?  
 ISZAJEVICS You die, because Novski did not confess.  
 ISZAJEVICS Boris Davidovic won't surrender himself to the dogs!

*At this very moment he is shot and he drops to the ground dead.  
 The phone starts ringing. Fedukin picks up.*

FEDUKIN Yes. I understand. Yes, I give him.

*He holds the phone to Boris Davidovic' ear. Boris listens to it motionless.*

NOVSKI *in the phone*  
 I say nothing.

I. 15. d. UNTIED THREAD (Korsunidze)

*Morozov, Korsunidze, Investigator*

KORSUNIDZE I confess everything, just please don't hurt me, sir  
 investigator!  
 MOROZOV Why would we want to hurt you dear Korsunidze? I have no  
 intention at all whatsoever to do anything against you. Have I  
 ever hurt ever? Cigarette?  
 KORSUNIDZE May I answer?  
 MOROZOV Naturally, Korsunidze.  
 KORSUNIDZE Last time you have beaten me to pulp.  
 MOROZOV That was last time, Korsunidze. At your service, take some  
 safely. These days new methods are at work. Now we take  
 record of evidence of police brutality, Korsunidze. Comrade  
 Stalin is dead, his attorneys, investigators are in retirement,  
 the time of general amnesty has arrived... So where have  
 you been before yesterday between 11 pm. and 4 am. at  
 night?  
 KORSUNIDZE I have slept at home.  
 MOROZOV Don't talk beside the point, dear Korsunidze. We know  
 everything. Your companions have snitched on you. You are  
 getting old, Korsunidze.  
*slaps him with full force in the face*  
 KORSUNIDZE As I said, I confess all, just don't hit me sir investigator, I  
 confess everything.  
 MOROZOV I am listening.  
 KORSUNIDZE I killed Dr. Taube in the hospital of Tumen on December 5<sup>th</sup>  
 in 1956 – although I am not a murderer, I have never killed in  
 my life, but this one I had to do, Mister investigator, this one I  
 had to do!

MOROZOV What do you mean you had to? Who is that Dr. Taube?  
 KORSUNIDZE I have lost in the cards.  
 MOROZOV Tell me.  
 KORSUNIDZE That's it. I killed him, because I lost the game.  
 MOROZOV Where?  
 KORSUNIDZE There.  
 MOROZOV Where there?  
 KORSUNIDZE There.  
 MOROZOV I see. And why have you waited for so long?  
 KORSUNIDZE I have lost sight of him first.  
 MOROZOV First you have lost in the cards and then you have lost sight of him.  
 KORSUNIDZE But then somebody told me where to find him.  
 MOROZOV So we are murderers now too?  
 KORSUNIDZE Please don't torture me mister.  
 MOROZOV Well, fine, I won't hurt you. You will be dealt with in a fair trial, fine? We can find some mitigating circumstances too, if we want to, can't we?  
 KORSUNIDZE Really?  
 MOROZOV One German doctor less on earth – the world still turns around.  
 KORSUNIDZE May I get away with it?  
 MOROZOV Well, of course, Korsunidze, of course. But under one condition.  
 KORSUNIDZE Yes?  
 MOROZOV You sign a paper for us, Korsunidze, and we have a chat with you from time to time.  
 KORSUNIDZE You mean I have to be a snitch?  
 MOROZOV Oh, Korsunidze, why do you have to use such a dirty word? You simply sign it, and we turn a blind eye to this mishap – it will get lost in the dossier of unsolved cases... Nobody knows who is Dr. Taube. Well, Korsunidze... I give you a little time to think, let's say... five minutes.

*While Korsunidze signs the recruitment paper, Morozov turns to the investigator woman: back to 1934.*

### I.15. e. THIRD ORDEAL

*Fedukin, Novski, third young man*

FEDUKIN Well, Boris, I am happy, I see you again. As you see the third subject is here too. Or object. As you like it. Or noun, or adjective.  
 NOVSKI He will not die.  
 FEDUKIN What am I hearing?  
 NOVSKI He will not die.  
 FEDUKIN May I hope, Novski?  
 NOVSKI This boy won't die.  
 FEDUKIN This is a great relief for both of us, Novski, believe me. Music!  
 NOVSKI I would like to make a confession.

FEDUKIN

Oh, we shouldn't hurry things. Champagne, ladies and gentlemen, champagne! I grew so tired. The confession can come later. We have plenty of time, Boris Davidovic, isn't that true? Champagne?

*Tableau, then darkness – the audience leaves to the buffet.*

END OF FIRST PART

## SECOND PART

II. 16. SWITZERLAND, SANATORIUM, 1917

*Novski, Herr Krauthammer, German textile manufacturer, Nikolai Trofimov, aristocratic writer, Fraulein Ilse, nurse, Dr. Taube, lung specialist, Bob, young American actor, disabled soldier from World War I.*

*Novski and Krauthammer play chess. Novski eats a peach with great relish.*

NOVSKI Your turn, Herr Krauthammer...

KRAUTHAMMER Why don't you call me comrade, dear Boris Davidovic? Since we fight for the same cause. You there, me here. I fight for a world without borders, you too, as far as I know. I travel in textile export-import, you are dealing in world revolution, export-import, if I am not mistaken.

NOVSKI Tovarish Krauthammer, I don't know what you are talking about. One thing is sure, that presently we don't fight for the same cause. In this very moment I am endangering your czarina. And my peach is dripping. And I can't pay attention to so many things at the same time. Do I have to play for you too?

KRAUTHAMMER Just take care of your peach. Why don't you spread a cloth on your knee. In the revolutionary school they don't teach good manners?

NOVSKI In the school of good manners do they teach revolution?

KRAUTHAMMER This is a Jewish sort of thing, turning everything inside out, Novski. I don't like dialectics. Accountancy and dialectics are two differences, as granddad used to say.

NOVSKI As I have said, your queen...

KRAUTHAMMER I dislike it when the enemy gives me advices. That's always suspicious. And my queen will take care of herself. She has the IQ she needs. What I don't understand, how can the Jews be capitalists and communists at the same time. Marx and Rothschild. Same thing in green. I mean red.

*steps*

At your services my fellow citizen, and now you can fall in your sword, in case you wish to.

TROFIMOV *enters*

Bonjour Messieurs. Who is winning today?

NOVSKI Sadie, pashaluista and shut it up.

TROFIMOV The Moscow-monster woke up with his left leg first?

KRAUTHAMMER Russische Schriftsteller! Russian writers spare me please!

*takes Novski's rook*

We had a rook.

TROFIMOV Nasty man.

NOVSKI As I've said, your are disturbing the game, Trofimov. Have you finished finally that short story?

TROFIMOV I am still collecting material, Boris. You haven't talked enough yet to me about the dawns of Sankt Petersburg.

NOVSKI The dawns of Sankt Petersburg are the same as the dawns of Chicago. Dirty and grey. Eat a peach. That will do good



for your digestion. Maybe you will finally digest the Russian reality too. And you put to their places the muzhiks too.

Music!

*music is being played outside. To Krauthammer*

And if I blow up your defense?

KRAUTHAMMER

Wauu, I am really afraid. This fortification is bomb proof, you rascal mine engineer. Have you read the today Zürcher Zeitung?

TROFIMOV

Don't hurt the Russian muzhik Novski, because you'll get into trouble with me. I thank it to the Russian muzhik, that I became a writer. They have paid my hotel bills in Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam and Lucerne.

NOVSKI

I love muzhiks. The only thing I don't like is daybreak. I can't sleep at dawn. They always take me away at dawn. What does the Zürcher Zeitung write? The world war has ended?

BOB

May I come in?

KRAUTHAMMER

Dieser scheiss Amerikaner ist wieder da. I suggest, you read the paper. Still, I'll execute this secret agent here.

*takes a chess-piece*

TROFIMOV

Why are the Americans so unbearably healthy? And why do they smile incessantly? And why do they win all wars?

Why, why, why? Patschemu, patschemu, patschemu?

What would happen if our Russian muzhiks would eat the same way as the Americans? All our troubles would be solved. The most important thing is a healthy life.

BOB

May I?

NOVSKI

And now a backward somersault. Check.

*to Bob*

You may.

BOB

Is there any problem with my presence?

TROFIMOV

He is also weight lifting every day. What fine muscles!

Wonderful. Wonderful. Atlichna! Atlichna!

*he shows how much he is impressed with Bob's muscles, so he gropes him and fingers him a bit*

NOVSKI

Listen, Tschaikovski, instead of admiring the muscles of that young man finish finally your short story. I would like you to take my life seriously. That's no tale, my child.

KRAUTHAMMER

And you better pay more attention. This is not a fairy tale either. It is checkmate!

BOB

Is there any problem with my presence? Do I disturb anyone?

NOVSKI

No, nyet, nein. Take a seat.

*He knocks over the chessboard and stands up*

I let you win, mein Herr, that's all.

BOB

Oh! Shit! You lost because of me?

FRAULEIN ILSE

What happened?

KRAUTHAMMER

To beat a genius in chess... Who will believe me this in Berlin? I better leave. Tomorrow, same place same time. Read the Zürcher Zeitung, Boris. And don't eat so much peach, it hurts your concentration.

BOB Where is he going? Is there any problem with my presence?

TROFIMOV Nichevo, my dearest. Stay seated. There is a beautiful light cascade on your neck muscles.

NOVSKI He went to have a little air. Trofimov. Novel! Life! Story!

TROFIMOV I can't write at orders, Boris Davidovic.

NOVSKI But you will. It will be a bestseller. Even if you don't write it. My life is not a worstseller, but a bestseller.

FRAULEIN ILSE Everybody is going for their breathing exercises.

BOB Fraulein Ilse! Good morning!  
*Jumps up, kisses the nurse's hand, then he would like to dance.*

FRAULEIN ILSE *She peels off of herself Bob's hands*  
Bob will be a good boy, he covers himself up thoroughly with a blanket and lays out to the balcony.

BOB Boris, help me! She is terrorizing me again.

NOVSKI How could I help you? All nurses are terrorists.

FRAULEIN ILSE May I take this as a flattery?

BOB Tell Fraulein Ilse to leave me alone. I want to talk to you. I have important questions to ask, Boris.

NOVSKI Fraulein Ilse, Bob today, as an exception, does not hold his breathing exercise.

FRAULEIN ILSE This is the third day in a row. I will get scolding from the doctor.

NOVSKI Just leave the doctor up to me, Frau Ilse.

FRAULEIN ILSE And when are you going to have some time for me, Herr Novski?

NOVSKI Attune the piano and in the evening we will play four hand. Alright? Okay? This is how it should be said: okay? Right Bob?

FRAULEIN ILSE Mein Herr. Just tell me one thing. Why is your eye so blue? It is not my fault that your eyes are so blue!

BOB I want to go with you to Russia, Mr. Novski.

NOVSKI Don't rush things, Bob. I am not going there.

BOB That seems to be the only country today, where interesting things happen to happen, Mr. Novski.

NOVSKI Russia is the most backward country on earth, Bob. The last of the last, Bob.

TROFIMOV How are you talking about your homeland, Novski? I'll really get angry with you. Yes, Bob, Da, da, da, da: come to Russia. The greenest meadows, the widest rivers, the bluest sky and the most beautiful gold domes of the world are there! Once you come to us, you will realize, that America is the country of iron and steel. At our land, in Russia innocence is still blooming!

NOVSKI Go, bloom in your own room, Trofimov and write that story finally.

TROFIMOV *jealously*  
Are you also attracted to this boy, or what?

NOVSKI Yes, he is so naive, it's a piece of art already.

TROFIMOV Really, Boris, have you read the Zürcher Zeitung?  
*leaves*

NOVSKI What does everybody want with that Zürcher Zeitung? I am not interested in the Zürcher Zeitung. The most boring newspaper in the world. There is no opinion in it. Although everybody has to have an opinion. I can't bear objectivity.

BOB Russia is where my place is. Can I accompany you, when you go?

NOVSKI I am not going, Bob, I am fed up with Russia. I am up to my throat with Russia. The world is not only Russia, Bob. The world is full of tennis courts, croquet lawns, golf courses...

BOB Today, Boris, today. Not a minute later.

NOVSKI What do you mean?

DR TAUBE *comes*  
Novski, we have to talk.

NOVSKI *half loud*  
What's up with my laboratory findings?

DR TAUBE The laboratory findings are unimportant, Novski. Have you read the Zürcher Zeitung?

NOVSKI What's with my laboratory findings?

DR TAUBE *whispers to him*  
Your medical reports are excellent. If I look at your laboratory findings, than you wouldn't be able to stay here another day. But you wouldn't want to leave, Boris Davidovic, would you?

NOVSKI I have not received yet any kind of instructions.

DR TAUBE Then read the Zürcher Zeitung.

BOB Yes, the *tsytoong*. Don't forget to read the *tsytoong*.

DR TAUBE Fraulein Ilse!  
*points to the chess pieces and a peach lying on the ground*  
What a mess. Where is the Zürcher Zeitung!?

FRAULEIN ILSE I have no idea. Keine Ahnung, Herr Doktor.

TROFIMOV *filters back*  
How much do you pay me for the Zürcher Zeitung, my little dove?

NOVSKI *rips out the newspaper from Trofimov's hand, which he has held behind his back*  
What's there to read in this?

TROFIMOV Don't look for it in the sport's section, Boris.

NOVSKI *smokes his cigar comfortably, he sits in an armchair*

FRAULEIN ILSE Aber, Boris Davidovitsch! Rauchen ist verboten!

DR TAUBE Lassen sie es, Fraulein Ilse. A cigar is just a cigar. Don't think anything bad.

NOVSKI *smokes his cigar and leafs through the paper*

*All eyes stare at Novski. Then he suddenly gives his cigar to the doctor, pats the buttocks of Fraulein Ilse, punches Bob's belly, rumples Trofimov's hair and leaves the saloon. The company looks after him gaping.*

DR TAUBE

*a little moved*

A revolutionary. He is going to make a revolution.

## IN THE JUNGEL OF CONFESSIONS I.

### II. 17 SCRIPT

FEDUKIN

*to Novski, during the interrogation*

Well, yeah. Revolutionaries make revolution. An traitors sell out the revolution. The two is one and the same, right my little friend? Are you still here, Dr. Taube? Go, get your stuff together, you have been appointed to chief doctor in the vicinity of Moscow.

*Dr. Taube leaves*

Chief doctor?

*after some pause*

Quack doctor.

*After some pause*

Has been. Once upon a time.

*to Novski*

Where is the short story?

NOVSKI

There is no short story.

FEDUKIN

You rolled in the fresh clean sheets, you drank Swiss cowmilk and ate Milka chocolate. Everybody admired you. The good times are over Novski, right?

NOVSKI

No.

FEDUKIN

But yes, you have been a hero. You could have become elementary school material, Novski.

NOVSKI

I am not interested.

FEDUKIN

A leading figure of party history.

NOVSKI

My ass.

FEDUKIN

From now on get used to it, that you don't exist. That's your assignment. And the short stories you better forget.

NOVSKI

I don't care about short stories. And I care even less about those stories, which haven't been written about me. I don't care if I exist or not.

FEDUKIN

And if tomorrow another innocent man will die due to your stubbornness?

NOVSKI I am only interested in one thing, that mud should not spatter my name.

FEDUKIN However, mud did splash on it tovarish Novski. The very moment, you allowed yourself to be arrested, if you had been such a fool, not to shoot yourself in the head, or you didn't denounce someone else, your name became mud sputtered. And nobody can undo that anymore ever. We write a nice little confession. Right Novski?

NOVSKI Where should I start?

FEDUKIN What would you say to a nice little group of conspirators?

NOVSKI Fine.

FEDUKIN A group of conspirators organized to overthrow Soviet power?

NOVSKI Fine.

FEDUKIN Well, then let's see who would be in it...  
*he studies a piece of paper, he is picky and selective like a cook, when he is cooking and selecting ingredients for his soup*

Let's say there is an older chemical professor, there should be a middle age doctor, a young worker, let him be a turner, and here is a famous painter... Let's say he painted fake money for you. You get the point?

NOVSKI You think it is so easy fake money?

FEDUKIN Everything is easy, if we want it. Think about it!  
Out fantasy can soar freely, Novski. You may form your role into anything you want to. Only one thing is important, and you better get used to it: that you are a traitor.

NOVSKI But not a crook.

FEDUKIN We are not going to ride on subtleties. Cigarette?

NOVSKI Please.

FEDUKIN *gives him light*  
Let's say you wanted to blow up the thermal power station in Mitromansk?

NOVSKI Why would we have wanted to blow up the thermal power station in Mitromansk? I don't even know where it is.

FEDUKIN That's no problem, Boris, I show you the map.  
*spreads a map*  
You see, here.

NOVSKI I have never been in Mitromansk.  
*takes a look at the map*

FEDUKIN And there isn't a thermal power station here.  
So what? Where is the problem here?  
*he takes a look too*  
True there isn't any. We can build one here, if necessary, so the accusation can stand – what do you say to that, Boris? Our possibilities are unlimited.

NOVSKI But how could we have blown up a thermal power plant that wasn't even built yet?

FEDUKIN You actually wanted to prevent the thermal power plant to be built in the first place.

NOVSKI And why would you have built here a thermal power plant when there is not even a mine nearby, nor there is at least a big city?

FEDUKIN Let's see.  
*he studies the map, then opens a lexicon*  
Fine, a little bit further down. Kiev – Kiev has to have a thermal power plant too, not true?

NOVSKI That's not economical, Fedukin.

FEDUKIN Comrade Fedukin.

NOVSKI Comrade Fedukin.

FEDUKIN Because we fight for the same cause. Not true, Novski?

NOVSKI But yes.

FEDUKIN To keep matters simple, let's stay with the thermal power plant. We can clarify the details later. Given is the graphic artist painting fake money, a chemical professor, who prepares the blasting gadgets...

NOVSKI I make the explosives. I insist on that.

FEDUKIN But comrade Novski, if you are the one preparing the explosives, then you won't have any time left for organizing.

NOVSKI But what do I have to organize?

FEDUKIN Well let's see: illegal mail service, illegal meeting place at a settlement near the border. The money route... bribing a couple of high ranking military officers...

NOVSKI I am an expert at that, I know how to do that, that's fine.

FEDUKIN This is what I have done my entire life.

FEDUKIN But you have to present that credibly in court.

NOVSKI I'll present it.

FEDUKIN But you have to write down the text in your own handwriting.

NOVSKI I'll write it down.

FEDUKIN Do you feel the taste of it, do you feel it already? You may form it freely with your imagination, but it will be like a beautiful crystal. When do you write it down?

NOVSKI Now.

FEDUKIN First take a little rest, think matters over.

NOVSKI Fine.

FEDUKIN Let's say you get two weeks. We don't have more time. I am urged really badly from my higher ups. There are certain indicators. And I have to account for them. Do you have any special request?

NOVSKI I have no request.

FEDUKIN And no suicide experiment, you little prankish! I'll have my eyes on you!

NOVSKI As you wish.

## II. 18. THE INTERROGATION OF THE DRIVER

*Kinyematografina, investigator, Alexei Timofeievic Kashalov, driver, later Abram Romanics, then Verschoyle, after that Mixat Hantescu, finally Natasha Marmeladova*

INVESTIGATOR Let's start from the beginning, Alexei Timofeievic.

DRIVER Comrade investigator, I am thirsty.  
 INVESTIGATOR Well, I am very sorry, dear Kashalov, but there is no tap here.. So, you kissed the hand of comrade Chelyustnikov...  
 DRIVER Yes, I kissed the hand of comrade Chelyustnikov.  
 INVESTIGATOR However, at that point you have not known, that he was comrade Chelyustnikov.  
 DRIVER But of course I knew, please.  
 INVESTIGATOR Instead you thought that he was a priest...  
 DRIVER Now of course I didn't think that, no way. I swear.  
 INVESTIGATOR Then why did you ask from him, and let me quote that word for word from the report of comrade Chelyustnikov: "Well, shall we wait for citizen Chelyustnikov?" Who did you want to wait for? So?  
 DRIVER Well, he is a very funny man, that Chelyustnikov. I thought I would play a joke on him too. I am thirsty.  
 INVESTIGATOR Oh, Aljosh! If everybody would drink who is thirsty, then all the oceans on earth would get dry, and you can't possibly want this! I do not even want to hear such nonsense.  
 DRIVER I die.  
 INVESTIGATOR You know what, Kashalov, I make them bring in a pitcher of fresh water, okay?  
 DRIVER *nods*  
 INVESTIGATOR But you know, Aljosh, you will have to do something for that water too.  
 DRIVER I am thirsty.

*Investigator rings the bell, soon they bring in a pitcher of icy water.*

INVESTIGATOR Let me quote further the account of comrade Chelyustnikov: "... in case I would have appeared with the crown of the czar on my head, Aljosh would have certainly dropped to his knees in front of me."  
 DRIVER This is a blatant lie!  
 INVESTIGATOR What a shame, Aljosh, you are accusing comrade Chelyustnikov with lies? This could have serious consequences.  
 DRIVER I am thirsty.  
 INVESTIGATOR Bring in that biochemist. Or not even him, rather that turner. Maybe we should start with the turner. He has such a beautiful name: Rubin. Bring in Rubin.

*They bring in Rubin, the turner. All witnesses are in horrible state.*

INVESTIGATOR Well, Rubin, take a good look – do you know this man?  
 RUBIN Yes. He is Kashalov, the driver.  
 INVESTIGATOR What do you have to say about him to us?  
 RUBIN In September of 1934 I participated in a secret religious meeting, where Kashalov appeared too and where we have agreed that we worm our way undercover into the leading organs of the Soviet power...

INVESTIGATOR Thank you, Rubin, you can leave now.  
*daydreaming*  
 He has a beautiful name. And an excellent memory.  
*to the driver*  
 Well, Kashalov?  
 DRIVER I am thirsty. I don't know this man.  
 INVESTIGATOR Then let me freshen up your memory. Didn't you say, that  
 "Soon it will be easier to see reindeers in Kiev than priests?"  
 DRIVER Maybe I've said that. But this means nothing.  
 INVESTIGATOR Bring in Abram Romanic.

*They bring in Abram Romanic.*

INVESTIGATOR Abram Romanics, Take a good look. Do you know this man?  
 ABRAM ROMANICS Yes. He is Yuri Afanasiev.  
 INVESTIGATOR Oh, not at all, Abram Romanics, he is not Yuri Afanasiev.  
 Take another look.  
 ABRAM ROMANICS At your service.  
 DRIVER I am thirsty.  
 ABRAM ROMANICS I don't know.  
 INVESTIGATOR I help you. He is Kashalov, the driver. What can you tell us  
 about him?  
 ABRAM ROMANICS In September of 1934 I participated in a secret religious  
 meeting, where Kashalov ...  
 INVESTIGATOR Thank you, you may leave.  
 DRIVER I am thirsty.  
 INVESTIGATOR A cigarette?  
 DRIVER I would like to drink.  
 INVESTIGATOR I see that we can't get ahead. In other words, Aljoshka, why  
 have you kissed the hand of comrade Chelyustnikov?  
 DRIVER It was a joke.  
 INVESTIGATOR I am very sorry, Aljoshka, but I still can't give you drink from  
 this crystal cool water. Bring in lieutenant Verschoyle.

*They bring in Verschoyle.*

INVESTIGATOR Well, dear Gould Verschoyle, do you have anything to say to  
 us about this man?  
 VERSCHOYLE Nothing.  
 INVESTIGATOR Freshen your memory, Verschoyle.  
 VERSCHOYLE I remember nothing.  
 INVESTIGATOR Our agreement was something else, Verschoyle.  
 VERSCHOYLE I am sorry, but I don't remember anything. I would like to  
 sleep.  
 INVESTIGATOR Take him away. Bring in Hantescu.

*Verschoyle leaves. They bring in Miksha*

INVESTIGATOR Miksha, Miksha, how do you look? Why don't you take better  
 care of yourself?  
 MIKSHA I do.



DRIVER I am thirsty.  
 INVESTIGATOR Well, Herr Mixat, do you recognize this man?  
 MIKSHA Yes. In September of 1934 I participated in a secret religious meeting, where Kashalov appeared too and where we have agreed that we worm our way undercover into the leading organs of the soviet power...

INVESTIGATOR Thank you Miksha.

*Miksha leaves.*

INVESTIGATOR How many more people should I bring here so you would finally grasp what your duty is!? To admit, what you have to admit. You are a secret religious fanatic, who under the mask of a driver wormed yourself into the organs of the soviet counter-intelligence, to spy on our secrets and in some cases kill the guards of the soviet power... one after the other with poison or through other artificial accidents.

DRIVER I am thirsty.

INVESTIGATOR You wanted it. Bring in Natasha Fedotevna Marmeladova.

DRIVER No, please, not that!

INVESTIGATOR What's the matter? What's your problem? Why are you afraid of Marmeladova?

DRIVER I am not afraid.

*They bring in Natasha.*

INVESTIGATOR Well, Natasha? What do you have to say to us?

NATASHA I had an affair with Kashalov.

INVESTIGATOR Who is Kashalov? Would you be able to recognize him from the ones present?

NATASHA It is him.

INVESTIGATOR Well, Aljoshka? Have you screwed the schoolmistress?

DRIVER I am thirsty.

NATASHA We screwed three times in my husband's apartment. He drove my husband home and to the newspaper offices... And at one time I allowed him to come in... I prepared tea for him...

DRIVER Not true!

NATASHA Aljoshka, it makes no sense to deny it... I've sucked you off, Aljoshka, I beg your pardon miss investigator, admit it, Aljoshka...

DRIVER I never with even a finger touched Natasha Fedotevna Marmeladova...

INVESTIGATOR Well, unfortunately this is what the official report states.  
*reads it*

"Then Aljoshka asked me to turn with my back to him, because this is how he would like to do it, and that I should place a pillow under my belly ..."

DRIVER I confess everything!

INVESTIGATOR What a pity... Why did we have to wait for so long for this clean hearted confession? Give him water. Don't you see

how thirsty he is? I advise you not too fast Aljosha, 'cause you are going to get sick.

*The driver drinks, meanwhile Natasha leaves.*

INVESTIGATOR Here you go, dictate, Aljosha.  
 DRIVER November of 1933 ...  
 INVESTIGATOR September...  
 DRIVER On the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the month of December in the 1330st year of the Lord, it got into the vigilant ears of the reverend in Christ, Pamiers' bishop from the Lord's grace, that Baruch David Neumen...

INVESTIGATOR Slower, Kashalov – I can't type this fast... Start from the beginning.

## II. 19. DOGS AND BOOKS

“LIKE THE DOG THAT GOBBLES UP ITS OWN VOMIT”  
*Puppets and people.*

### II. 19. The Court of justice

DRIVER Baruch David Neumen  
 INVESTIGATOR *types*  
 Baruch David Neumen...  
 DRIVER ...In the city of Pamiers in the times of persecution, started by faithful lynching mob...  
 INVESTIGATOR *types*  
 Pa-mi-er-s.  
 DRIVER That's right... ...like the dog, which gobbles up its own vomit, along with the other Jews he has been living according to the customs of Judea.  
 INVESTIGATOR Has been?  
 DRIVER Has been. So that's why the at the orders of the mentioned bishop His Excellency he was arrested and thrown into a dungeon.  
 BISHOP Bring Baruch David Neumen to me. Lead him through the torture chambers.  
 INQUISITOR We can use the occasion to stop there and test the effectiveness of our tools.  
 INVESTIGATOR No, my friends, we have to keep within the lawful order.  
 INQUISITOR The law here is Monsignor Jacques.  
 BISHOP That's right. Let's not death rattle and torture screams pave our way, let's try to make him see that his own thoughts and deeds are untenable. Maybe this way we can save his soul.  
 INQUISITOR Are you ready, in case this Neumen wants to snap out of it with a cunning baloney from the unclean book of the Talmud?  
 BISHOP I have all the books in my head.

INQUISITOR But if we burn away the man, then the books kept in his head also burn away, not true?

BISHOP My friend, this is not our aim right now. We need a converted man, who will influence all the others, is that clear? Where is Neumen?

NEUMEN Present.

BISHOP Swear.

NEUMEN I swear to the laws of Moses, that I will say the truth and only the truth, first of all about myself, but also about others, about the living and the dead. I will refer to them as my witnesses.

INVESTIGATOR Kashalov, Kashalov, don't make my life miserable.

DRIVER I continue.

## II. 19. b BOOKS

INQUISITOR Let's start.

BISHOP Let's go in order.

NEUMEN In this year, one month ago last Thursday, the respectful lynching mob, equipped with long knives and sticks with zinc crosses sewn on their robes, unfurling their flag of rebellion, threatening the Jews with extermination, came to Bilbao.

FEDUKIN This exotic bullshit does not interest me now, Novski. Don't flaunt your education. I would like you to come to the point. What's your problem?

NOVSKI You incessantly put expressions in my mouth, which I could not have uttered, it is physically, logically, intellectually and morally impossible for me. I won't sign this and that's the end of it.

FEDUKIN I thought we brilliantly understood each other. There was a point when I thought you have actually become enlightened, Novski.

BISHOP Baruch David, do not gather ash on your head.

NOVSKI For him, who has ash in the place of his heart, it is all the same already.

FEDUKIN You want a woman, Novski? You want me to send in to you a woman? What do you ask for, Novski? It'll cost you one word. Or maybe a beautiful young boy from the Bolsoi? We can satisfy all needs. The only important thing is that you confess. Confess all the things you haven't committed. First of all confess those.

INQUISITOR I am tortured by gas. Shouldn't we hold a lunch break?

BISHOP No.

NOVSKI I was just writing and reading in my library, when a human crowd girded with ignorance and hatred – whose ignorance is blunt as a cleaver, and whose hatred is sharp as the knife – burst into my room. What really made them see red was not my gold, but my books lining up on my bookshelves.

WOMEN To hell with them!

OND LYNCH  
WOMEN  
FEDUKIN  
NOVSKI  
SOMEONE  
KORSUNIDZE  
INVESTIGATOR WOMAN  
DRIVER  
FEDUKIN  
BISHOP  
INQUISITOR  
BISHOP  
INQUISITOR  
BISHOP  
FEDUKIN  
CROWD  
KORSUNIDZE  
FEDUKIN  
INVESTIGATOR  
NEUMEN  
INQUISITOR  
CROWD

Burn them!  
Rip the books apart!  
The subversive literature was printed on homemade printing machines and they have created a gigantic distribution network...  
The calf bound books were numbered and represented immeasurable scientific value...  
Down with science!  
Idiotic intellectual! I make you suck, you..!  
And what have you said at that?  
Don't rip them apart, because if you have lots of books, then you understand the world, but if you only have one book you turn blind.  
Are you alluding to the works of comrade Stalin?  
Everything is written in the New Testament, and in that one book all other books of all times could be found, and so the rest should be thrown on fire.  
Finally a smart word.  
And if there is anything else in the others, which is not to be found in this only one, then...  
One party, one country, one flag!  
...those others should be even more thrown at the bonfire, because those are heretic books.  
Down with the intellectuals, you heard, Novski!  
CHRISTEN HIM! CHRISTEN HIM!  
Or we beat your skull with the drumbeat of your books.  
Dark middle age.  
And what have you replied Novski?  
I rather get christened, then killed, because *despite everything*, the pain of existing for a short while has still more worth than the final emptiness of annihilation.  
He even has an ideology. These have ideology for everything. These homeless Jewish mercenaries can explain anything.  
CHRISTEN HIM!

II. 19. c Church square

DRIVER  
INVESTIGATOR  
DRIVER  
BISHOP  
PRIEST  
NEUMEN  
PRIEST  
CROWD  
NEUMEN

And he was dragged to the Church square...  
Was dragged?  
Was dragged.  
*in the church*  
Do you see my son? These were all Jews who did not want to become baptized.  
Think, Neumen. Look into your heart.  
And what's there on that stone? That bloody bullet?  
That? That's a torn out heart, my son.  
RIP IT OUT!  
*they start hitting Neumen, they hit him in the head with a bludgeon*  
I get baptized, people, but with one condition.

INQUISITOR That damn Jew will start his tricks now.  
 NEUMEN I have a Christian friend, I would like him to be my godfather.

INQUISITOR A Jew can never be the friend of a Christian, except if he corrupts him.

PRIEST I lead you to him.  
 NEUMEN My only request is, that if on the way somebody asks you, if I was christened already, please tell him, that yes.

PRIEST I can't do that, this lie would be a deadly transgression in my mouth.

DRIVER Even the dogs were set loose that day in the city, and as if all dogs from all around also ran into town, and they have followed the footsteps of the respectful lynching mob...

*Loud sound of bells, the Jewish district is burning, smoke, the crowd is ebbing and flowing around Neumen.*

II. 19. d Antipassio

DRIVER *to the priest*  
 Tell me you priest, - asked a member of the honourable lynching mob – where are you taking this heretic? Have you christened him yet?

PRIEST No.  
 LYNCS ELOD Beat him to death!  
*an enormous blow hits Neumen's head*

PRIEST If you want to live, get christened right now. Follow the path, everybody else is following, and we shall reach out our hands to you.

FEDUKIN Don't look for another road. I say exactly the same thing Novski.

INQUISITOR Does this confession going to last for long?  
 BISHOP All details are important. This record is being made for posterity.

INQUISITOR I shit on posterity. It has to be done now, NOW!  
 CROWD I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD!  
*they drag Neumen to the baptismal font and push his head under the water, Neumen is about to drown*

NEUMEN I thought they would drown me as they would drown a dog into the consecrated water of the baptismal font.

FEDUKIN Everything has its own time.  
 CROWD I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD!  
 NEUMEN But is the baptism valid, that was executed without the intention of the soul, more, against its will? And if somebody enters a faith due to the fear of death, is that acceptable?

FEDUKIN This back and forth, this back and forth Novski, always this back and forth. You diddle with eternity. Once you have said 'A' then you should say 'B' too. Once you have said yes, don't say no.

NEUMEN Have you seen ice? In cold ice remains ice. But if it touches fire it melts. Our religion is fire. And with this I have said everything.

INVESTIGATOR *ticks on the typewriter*  
Our revolution is fire...

FEDUKIN Cunning. Bravo! There is something to learn!

SOMEONE You will be baptized right on the spot or you die.

NEUMEN I rather get baptized.

SOMEONE That's clean talk!

AN OTHER Say after me: I profess, that Jesus was crucified by Jews, I profess the Holy Trinity, and so forth and so forth...

SOMEONE Let me hear!

AN OTHER Shout at the top of your lungs.

PRIEST *Whispers into Neumen's ear*  
Say that you appear before the sacredness of the cross of your own accord, otherwise they'll kill you.

NEUMEN *aloud*  
What I do, I do with good heart...  
*to his investigators*  
Although I have thought just the opposite.

PRIEST Let you be christened Johan.

NEUMEN I beg of you, reverend father, walk me home, let me see if anything remained of my house and goods.

DRIVER A catchpole who was ordered to the street in defense of the Jews halted him.

CATCHPOLE And you? Where to, where to?

PRIEST This man has been baptized and is a pious Christian.

CATCHPOLE Then you may go.

NEUMEN *pulls him aside*  
One word, catchpole.

CATCHPOLE What is it?

NEUMEN Privately.

INQUISITOR Again and again this corruption. These pay off everybody and sell out the country. They know everybody. Their arms reach everywhere. Polyp. Cut off the disgusting tentacles of the polyp! They are even capable of organizing the pogrom themselves, so they would be glorified.

NEUMEN Help me.

CATCHPOLE Do you want to be a good Jew?

NEUMEN I want to.

CATCHPOLE But do you have enough money for it?

NEUMEN No. These are all my earthly goods.

CATCHPOLE Well, then that's fine, don't be afraid at all, if somebody asks, just say, that you are a good Christian and you'll escape.

FEDUKIN When I joined the party...

NOVSKI When I joined the party...

FEDUKIN The only aim I kept in view was...

NOVSKI The only aim I kept in view was...

FEDUKIN While getting higher and higher up in the revolutionary hierarchy...

NOVSKI While getting higher and higher up in the revolutionary hierarchy...

FEDUKIN To feel out the life circumstances of all the party leaders who I came into contact with...

NOVSKI To feel out the life circumstances of all the party leaders who I came into contact with...

FEDUKIN So I can arrange their murder.

NOVSKI So I can arrange their murder.

NEUMEN Nothing was left of my house and goods. When we stepped out to the square, we've met a city official.

OFFICIAL Are you a Jew?

NEUMEN *whispers*  
I am.

OFFICIAL How much can you give me?

NEUMEN How much do you need?

OFFICIAL I little will do.  
*Neumen gives him something to the priest*

OFFICIAL Let him go freely. I assign a man to him, who'll defend him from the lynching mob.

A MAN Don't be afraid, as long as you see me. Do you have a little money?

NEUMEN Only this ring.

A MAN That's going to be fine. Let me say something. If they ask who you are, reply them always according to their taste. I will back you up.

VOICE Are you a Jew?

NEUMEN Yes, that's what I am, brother.

VOICE Take care and go home.

NEUMEN Have you seen my sons?

VOICE How could I? When I don't even know you.

ANYONE Are you a Jew?

A MAN This is no Jew, but a converted Christian lamb.

ANYONE He doesn't look that way, do you hear me man?!

A MAN Believe me, this is not a Jew anymore and he never will be one ever again.

ANYONE Look just there, that man is taking that Jew, and he says, he is a Christian.

A MAN Step on it, Neumen, 'cause I can't defend you from such a big lynching mob, run!

## II. 19.e. DOGS

WOMEN Death to the Jews! Kill them all!

INQUISITOR Korsunidze? Do you have anything to add to this?

KORSUNIDZE I was there, and I was shouting too. I mingled with the crowd and I made observations.

INQUISITOR Who else have been there?

KORSUNIDZE Gould Verschoyle, the Irish counterrevolutionary spy, also Abram Romanics...

INQUISITOR Thank you, that's fine.

NOVSKI That Irish guy is unfit to participate in this trial.  
 FEDUKIN I will decide that, Novski.  
 DRIVER The massacre of the Jews and the looting lasted till late night that day. The fire illuminated the entire city, and the dogs were howling all around.

KORSUNIDZE I went into the hospital. Nobody stopped me. I went straight into the director's room. I've found Dr. Taube there. He was just trying to open a can of herring. And I thought it would be better for him, if he didn't know what was happening to him. So I hit him in the head three times from behind. He didn't utter a single sound.

HUMAN I walk you to the crossroad, step on it, and if you meet somebody on the way, speak only German.

INQUISITOR That bastard will get away with it again.  
 FEDUKIN Let's see the end of it.  
 NEUMEN When I got there, I just wanted to cross the main square of the city...

SOMEONE Are you a Jew or a Christian?  
 NEUMEN First you tell me what you are?  
 SOMEONE We are the honourable lynching mob serving Christ.  
 A PRIEST In the name of Heaven in the sky and Heaven on Earth we exterminate all who don't follow His road, no matter whether they are Jews or not.

NEUMEN I am not a Jew.  
 A WOMAN You are lucky that your are not one of them.  
 NEUMEN Now you answer to one of my questions: The road to Heaven in the sky and Heaven on Earth has to lead through blood and fire?

FEDUKIN That's right, Novski, just as you say, through blood and fire.  
 BISHOP A single scabby sheep is enough to infect the entire herd. Is it not better, to kill off that one scabby sheep, than to let the entire herd be infected?

CROWD TIE HIM UP!  
*they tie Neumen's hand and leg.*

NEUMEN Do you have power over humans, that you can dispose of their freedom like this?

A MAN We are soldiers of Christ, and we have permission from the authorities, to separate the infected from the healthy, and to separate those who have doubts from those who believe.

NEUMEN Well, then let me tell you, that the mother of faith is doubt, and doubt is my belief, and I am a Jew. I didn't tell them this out of courage but of exhaustion.

## II. 19. f. MAIN TRIAL

INQUISITOR And have you returned to your Jewish faith?  
 NEUMEN No.  
 INQUISITOR Have you told to one or more Jews, that they should only be baptized so they would avoid death?  
 NEUMEN No, I have not said that.



INQUISITOR And your own reception of baptism? Do you regard that invalid?

NEUMEN Yes.

BISHOP Why do you expose yourself voluntarily to the dangers of heretical thinking?

NEUMEN Because I want to live in peace with myself, and not with the world.

BISHOP Put him to the rack.

NEUMEN *after they have tortured him*  
I admit to my deviation, I sign, that I reject my Jewish faith.

## II. 20. Deal

DRIVER But hardly nine month later, in May, Baruch David appeared again at the tribunal and declared, that after reading the books of Laws and Prophets again he wavered in his faith.

INVESTIGATOR Ba-ruch, should be written with a 'c' and an 'h'?

DRIVER Naturally.

FEDUKIN Darn it, Novski, what is this good for?

NOVSKI No, if you don't strike that wicked murder and robbery, and also, that I ordered the killing of Hanna Krzyżewska.

MIKSHA That was me.

FEDUKIN You shut up, you little butcher-slaughterer.

MIKSHA That was me!

FEDUKIN Get lost.

MIKSHA I would like to make a confession.

FEDUKIN I am not interested in your confessions.

MIKSHA I killed her!

FEDUKIN Fine, then you are not a murderer. Only a traitor, is that alright with you?

NOVSKI Fine. But then I insist on a New York trip too. I always wanted to go to New York.

FEDUKIN But when, tell me Novski when? By now I have worked out such a fine timetable. That trip would be at least three months. Where can you still stuff in that three months?

NOVSKI That's not my problem anymore.

DRIVER It praises the bishop's endless patience, that he was ready to argue again with Neumann, and he managed to convince him – this time only a little torture was needed. But in five months time Neuman expressed doubts again. Unfortunately, this time he did not survive the tortures.

FEDUKIN Well, Novski?

NOVSKI New York?

FEDUKIN Doesn't work. But a little pleasure trip to Paris could function well. We can fit that in.

NOVSKI I sign that.  
*he signs his confession slowly and carefully. Fedukin is about to reach for it, but then Novski slowly tears it up*

FEDUKIN What was this good for?

NOVSKI Everything is good as it is.

FEDUKIN Should we begin it all over again, Novski?  
 NOVSKI If you want it, Fedukin.  
 FEDUKIN My patience is endless, Novski.  
 NOVSKI Mine too, Fedukin.  
 FEDUKIN So 1934...  
 NOVSKI Yes, 1934...  
 FEDUKIN November?  
 NOVSKI Rather October...  
 FEDUKIN Let it be October...  
 NOVSKI The twenty-third.  
 FEDUKIN Fine, the twenty-third. Why exactly the twenty-third?  
 NOVSKI I have no idea. It is a prime number.  
 FEDUKIN Wonderful. Let's go.  
 NOVSKI I have decided, that I take upon myself all my sins, even  
 the ones I haven't committed, and also those, that haven't  
 been committed by anyone, and those, that shall be  
 committed one day, and those, that remain in eternal  
 obscurity, and those that were cleared up.  
 FEDUKIN How would death by hanging suit you?  
 NOVSKI Only death by hanging would suit me. I want to die like a  
 dog, I want the veins on my neck to swell and stick out, I  
 want my dick to shoot sperms, so the witches could gather  
 them and heal barren women. Nobody should know where I  
 lie.

## II. 21. EPILOGUE

Lyon, 1964

CHELYUSTNIKOV Bonjour, Monsieur Herriot. Do you recognize me?  
 HERRIOT Bonjour.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV C'est moi, Monsieur Herriot.  
 HERRIOT Qui etes vous?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Kiev. Kiev! La cathedrale! Kiev!  
 HERRIOT Kiev?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Oui, Kiev!  
 HERRIOT Á, Kiev!  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Moi, Kiev, Monsieur Herriot, Kiev! Cathedrale!  
 HERRIOT Kiev?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Moi! Cathedrale!  
 HERRIOT Oui, la cathedrale, Kiev. Tres, tres beau.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Now I am in need of an interpreter.  
 HERRIOT Quoi?  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Tres compliqué. Je ne parle pas francais!  
 HERRIOT Vous parlez tres bien francais.  
 CHELYUSTNIKOV Damn. Kiev! – to hell with it, he is deaf too – Kiev!  
 cathedral! moi! – the entire thing was a big big, you know, a  
 big-big theatre! – theatre!  
 HERRIOT Theatre?

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Oui – le grand theatre. Cathedral, no cathedral! Cathedral – beer factory. Do you understand? Beer factory! Damn it, how can I tell this to him?

HERRIOT                    Oui, j'étais un fois a Kiev. Ville magnifique!

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Moi, I was a priest, pope, big beard, barbe grande, blue beard, cathedral! I celebrated mass for you, get it? And there in the church...

HERRIOT                    Dans les années trentes...

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Beer? How do they say it in French, beer? Who knows how do they say in French, beer?

HERRIOT                    Beurre... Que est-ce que ce beurre... Nye panyimayu.

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Well, well, this is the only thing you know, you French. Nye panyimayesh, what?

HERRIOT                    *vehemently nods*

                                  Kiev, ville tres religieuse... Meme pendant la dictature...

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Of course. May I say something?

HERRIOT                    Comrade...

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Tscheliustnikov...

HERRIOT                    *shakes his head*

CHELYUSTNIKOV           And nothing was what it was! How can I explain that?

                                  Nothing was what it seemed to be. Rien... You understand, rien... me it wasn't me!

HERRIOT                    Oui, mon ami... Mon ami!

CHELYUSTNIKOV           I prison! I was in prison!

HERRIOT                    Prix son?

CHELYUSTNIKOV           May I take a picture? Photo, photograph! moi, Monsieur Herriot! Lyon! Well?

HERRIOT                    Oui.

CHELYUSTNIKOV           Merci.

*Chelyustnikov takes the shot with the delayed action release, then he himself stands in the tableau as well.*