

Kad sēžam uz skatuves Slobodskas pilsētas ģimnāzijā, pie manis pienāk pati ģimnāzijas direktore un čukst ausī:

– Aivar Janovič, vai jūs varētu nospēlēt Slinkumu? Tā puikas vietā, viņš nav atnācis! Un Roalds Grigorjevičs* atsakās!

Protams, es nospēlēju to Slinkumu no Raiņa dzejoļa. Gulēju uz skatuves grīdas, kā jau Slinkumam paredzēts, un pārējie bērni lēkāja man apkārt. Pēc tam piecēlos, piegāju pie mikrofona un aizkustināts stāstīju, kā skolas laikā teātri spēlēt kautrējos un vajadzēja pāiet četrdesmit gadiem, lai es kaut kur Vjatkas guberņā pēkšņi sāktu to darīt. Bet Roalds atteicās tādēļ, ka, vēl ceļojumam nesākoties, Rīgā vannas istabā bija salauzis ribu.

Taču – ja reiz spēlēt teātri, sākt ar lomu kādā Raiņa darbā ir slavējami.

* Roalds Dobrovenskis, rakstnieks, romāna „Rainis un viņa brāļi” autors.

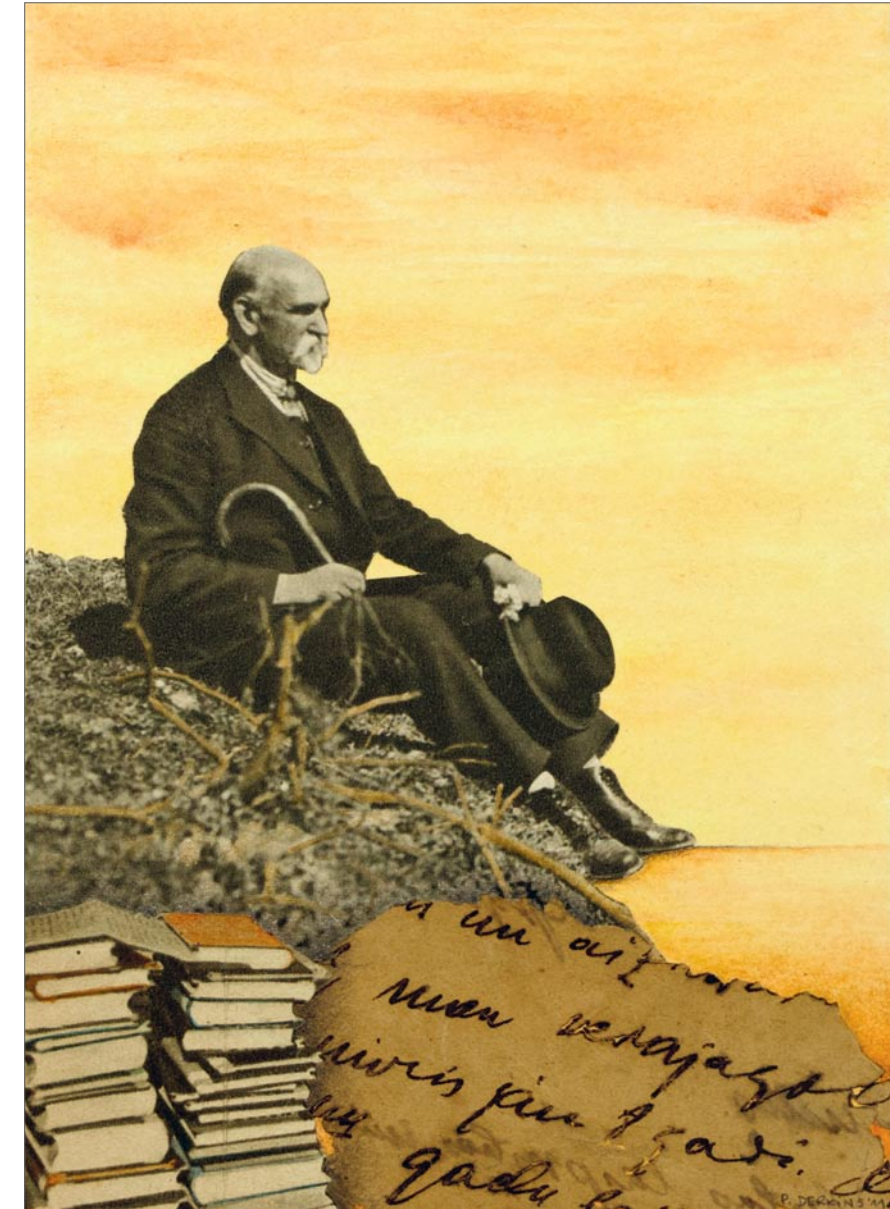
We are sitting on the stage at the Slobodska City High School, when the Director comes up to me and whispers in my ear: – Aivar Janovich, could you please play Laziness? Replacing the boy who hasn't come! And Roalds Grigorjevichs* refuses!

Of course I played Laziness from the poem by Rainis**. I lay on the floor of the stage, as Laziness is meant to do and the rest of the children jumped around me. After that I stood up, went to the microphone and emotionally told everyone that during my school years I had been too shy to participate in plays and that it took forty years and to be somewhere in the Vjatka province for me to suddenly start acting. But Roalds had refused because even before he started his trip, he had broken his rib in the bathroom in Riga.

Anyway – if one is going to start acting, then starting with a role in a work by Rainis is commendable.

* Roalds Dobrovenskis, author of the novel “Rainis un viņa brāļi” (Rainis and his brothers)

** Rainis (Jānis Pliekšāns, 1865-1929) – most famous Latvian poet and playwright



Pirms vairākiem gadiem man radās iespēja tulkot Ņujorkā dzīvojoša krievu rakstnieka darbus, taču šī apņēmība noplaka neparedzētos apstākļos un ikdienas darbos. Rīgā bērnību un jaunību pavadījušais Aleksandrs Genis, cita starpā virknes labu eseju par literatūru autors, bija arī aprakstījis savu skatu uz Latviju, savu dzimteni un devis šim darbam daiļskanīgu nosaukumu „Dzintara traktors”. Autors vēlējās, lai šo grāmatu iztulkoju vispirms un tad vēl otru, kura man patīk vairāk.

Taču, kad piegādāju manuskriptu redakcijai, sekoja atteikums. Savādi, ka gados jauno redaktori jau sākumā bija nokaitinājies, ka Brīvības piemineklis piesaukts ar trīs zvaigznītēm, nevis trīs zvaigznēm. Citēju: „... stingrā Brīvības statuļa, kurai nepiemīt arhitektūras pārmērības, tur rokās trīs zvaigznītes, kuras mēs jaunības cinismā uzskatījām par armēņu konjaka reklāmu.” Uz cinismu taču norādīts, un es autoru respektēju, turklāt viņš ilgu gadu strādā radio „Svoboda”. Bez zvaigznītēm attiecīgā rindkopa zaudētu jēgu.

Tā nu iešana uz redakcijām ar šo darbu pagaidām ir apstājusies.

Several years ago I had the opportunity to translate the works of a New York-based Russian author, but this idea died amidst unexpected situations and everyday responsibilities. Alexander*, author of a whole string of essays on literature, and who had spent his childhood and youth in Riga, had also written about Latvia, his homeland and given the book a charming title “The Amber Tractor”. The author wanted me to translate this book first and then a second, that I liked better.

However, when I delivered the manuscript to the editorial staff, it was rejected. It is strange that the young editor had quickly been offended by the fact that the Freedom Monument had been described as having three starlets, not three stars. I quote: “...the solid Freedom Monument which does not possess any architectural excesses, holds in her hands three starlets which we in our youthful cynicism used to regard as an advertisement for Armenian cognac”. He has clearly indicated the cynicism and I respect the author. In addition, for many years he worked for Radio “Svoboda” (“Freedom”). Without the starlets, the description would lose its meaning.

And so my trips to the editor with this work have stopped for now.

*Alexander Genis (1953) - Russian-American writer and broadcaster



Kad abi ar draudzeni bijām kārtīgi izmīlējušies, pulkstenis jau rādīja pusnakti, un koridora durvis nelaimīgā kārtā arī bija ciet. Koridors bija viens uz četriem dzīvokļiem. Nelaimīgā tāpēc, ka šis atkal bija tas gadījums, kad aizslēgt durvis varēja, bet vaļā dabūt – tikai ar laušanu. Es to biju darījis jau divas iepriekšējās reizes un nolēmu to šoreiz nedarīt. Principiāli – lai kaimiņi šoreiz dara!

Piedāvāt draudzenei naktsmājas man īsti negribējās, tik ļoti esmu pieradis gulēt viens. Viņa arī pati tikko, vēl nezinot par ķibeli ar durvīm, bija piezvanījusi uz mājām, ka tūlīt būs klāt. Nolēmām rīkoties jauneklīgi – nolaidīšu viņu ar palagiem no lodžijas. Ātri sasējām palagus, iedevu viņai savas sporta kurpes un laidu lejā. Izdevās veiksmīgi, lai gan mans otrais stāvs ir diezgan augsts. Nometu arī viņas kurpes un pretī, gandrīz izlidojot stiklam, dabūju savas. Pēdīgi palagā iesēju un nolaidu arī riteni, ar ko viņa bija atbraukusi.

Otrā rītā, kad devos uz veikalu pēc maizes, dzirdēju pusaudžu sarunu: viens stāstīja, ka ap pusnakti no augšējā stāva loga ar palagiem nolaidies pusmūža tantuks ar riteni. Es neiejaucos – lai jau domā, ka no ceturtā stāva.

When my girlfriend and I had finished making passionate love, the clock already showed midnight and the corridor door was, unfortunately, closed. There was one corridor for four apartments. Unfortunately because the situation was that one could lock the door, but one could open it only by breaking it. I had done this twice before and decided not to do that this time. A matter of principle – let the neighbours do it this time!

I didn't really want to offer my girlfriend a sleepover – I am so used to sleeping alone. Not knowing about the complications, she had also just rung home to say that she would be there any minute. We decided to be youthful – I would hoist her down from the balcony with sheets. We quickly tied up the sheets, I handed her my sports shoes and hoisted her down. Success. Even though my second floor is quite high. I also threw down her shoes and received my own back, though almost flying through the glass. Last I tied the bicycle that she'd ridden here in a sheet and hoisted it down.

The next morning, when I went to the shop for bread, I heard some teenagers talking: around midnight a middle-aged woman with a bicycle and tied in sheets had flown down from the top floor window. I didn't get involved – let them think it was from the fourth floor.

