

BOREVIT

13 years old

You hate it when voices overlap. You want to speak to one person at a time.

Black band on the wrist. It's annoying, shake it.

This morning I ate oatmeal and three cents' worth of blueberries.

After school, I practised with that passage of the Flight of the Bumblebee. It is very hard.

I still think the violin is not my instrument. Mood is good despite it all.

In the afternoon I felt lightheaded and cranky, but I had promised Ziva I would go. So I went.

The guardians around her house are stupid. Svetovit, the simple son of a simple gardener, outsmarts them.

I like Svetovit, because he is not the sort to make fun of madmen. He seems to look at me with respect, maybe with fear. He says he has heard me play.

I dislike Kresnik on the other hand. He wants to pretend he is his brother, the politician. He is bad at it.

Everyone at school thinks Tawols is funny. I do not. Clowns do not make me laugh. They make me sad.

But these are my friends, I guess. Maybe they are not right for me either. Like the violin.

It takes time to understand.

After helping Ziva escape, we did not know what to do. I think we were dawdling.

Then a new boy arrived. He had an authentic fallen star with him. I knew it when I saw it.

Then Tawols remembered the story about the bottomless well, the one that comes out at the other end of the world and spits the things you throw in it back into the sky. Remarkable for a clown.

So we went to the well, all as one.

The new boy is called Jorilo and Ziva likes him. Not like she likes me, in a different way.

It was pretty for a while. My head had even stopped spinning. I would have wanted my violin at hand.

Maybe I could have composed my own music for once.

Another boy reached us instead, another stranger, and he started screaming that we had to leave, that one of Ziva's guardians was coming. We ran away and that is how we ended right into that stupid guardian's arms.

I wonder if Ziva will ever escape her mother, that believes her sick and so makes her sick with melancholy.

I wonder if I will ever escape my music. But the truth is that I do not want to.

I just need to give up the violin.

The more they say I am a violin prodigy and the more I think it is not right for me.

BOREVIT

20 years old

Go from one extreme to the other. Keep to yourself, but grow euphoric if anyone talks to you.

White band on the waist, dangling like a tail.

This evening I ate sausages and eight cents' worth of beer.

Pretty party, very good mood. Some dizzy spells, but only the day after. I nursed them with sleep to go back to the tour. The party was for Ziva. She will depart as well, to go study.

Not the violin, fortunately. Her hands are no good for it.

The others were strange. All of them. Ziva is escaping her prison home, so I understand. I understand Svetovit as well, because it is hard to celebrate your own heartbreak.

He talked to me after he drank too much. I know it is hard, I said to him. It was hard for me too when I went from violin to cello, but it was the right choice. You always see it after it is done.

Kresnik was hiding something. He thinks he is strong, like a statue, like his big brother. He is not. He was hiding news, something he wanted and not wanted to say. I wonder why.

The place of the party was Towals's inn. It actually belongs to his uncle. But he always acts like he is the host. He makes quips, he jokes, he thinks he is comical. But he is not funny.

There is not always something to laugh about. There almost never is.

I got sick during the last tour. My head was spinning, so I drank to stop it.

Then I went out into the hotel's corridor. In my under-pants. They wrote it on a newspaper.

I was suspended for a while. I had to write apologies. They said I represent the notion when I go out to make music. They said I must be responsible. I just want to play. For the bow and the cello, for me and for the people who stay and listen. It is so simple.

There are not many simple things left at home. Polobo was the sound that summoned a hero.

Now it is the off-key note that insults a neighbour. I do not like it. Maybe I will not come back again.

There are many phitharmonics in the world. I will find another to play in.

Veles says he has heard me play. Two years ago, he thinks. He told me at the party, he come with his brother Jartlo. Not with him. After him. Well, it is complicated.

They are Polobian wanderers. It sounds good. So I am a Vendevian wanderer. I like this.

I like cello too. It is decided. I will write a song. For all my friends.

One each. So it can follow them anywhere.

BOREVIT

27 years old

You are calmer than ever. Confident, reasonable, master of the situation.

White band tied around your arm.

This morning I did not eat. Nor drink. The cemetery is waiting.

I will play alone, nobody else in the phitharmonic wants to anymore.

They always bomb the Dolobian tombs, they say. War is a serious thing, they add. Find a way to cross the border, they suggest. It all seems foolish to me. Do they think I cannot see the dead?

Do they know how many strings I have replaced during these two years of bombs? No more playing abroad, only funerals now. Nobody else plays at funerals anymore. Maybe at Vendevian ones, I do not know.

Someone says I am a traitor. To me a Dolobian is as vile as a Vendevian.

I am not even good at telling them apart. One from the other.

At least this time I know the deceased. It is Ziva's mother.

So I know what songs to play to remember her, one last time. She must be happy to be dead too, after such a long disease. Or maybe she wanted to see the end of the war? Some say it will never end.

Now Ziva owns the mansion. It is not what she wanted, no convict wants to inherit the prison.

We celebrated her farewell, years ago, but she never did leave. First her mother, then the war.

Tovols asked me to play. I would have done it anyways, of course. But maybe he needs to believe he has done something. Like he needs to laugh. I do not see many Dolobians laugh these days.

I have not seen Svetovit in months. Surely he will be at the funeral as well. Even if they sent him to the border, to the front. Close and very far away. The posters say he is fighting the enemies of the state.

The strangers that say they want to return our peace to us. They are not doing a very good job of it.

Certainly they want something else in exchange for it.

Maybe Kresnik knows more. But I do not want to ask. Only play. The Dusk Dragon does not care about music and I do not care about him. As long as the bombs only fall close, it will be alright.

I have dreamt of Vesles and Jarilo. I am sure they are fine, far away. Like the dead, happy and out of reach. I remember Vesles's letter. The invitation to come pick me up to escape. He wants to save my music.

Pretty thought, but my music is fine where it is. Do they know about the funeral? If so, Jarilo will come.

For her. They are criminals and Dolobians. Somewhere there is a bomb with their name written on it.

Maybe I should eat something. The head spins and spins.

BOREVIT

34 years old

*You just want this moment to end.
Close the scene at the right time.*

White band on the neck, ready to hide your face.

This morning I ate. Biscuits. Sausages. All the money in my pocket. I drank wine. I made myself numb. Yes. I have a letter in my pocket as well. A special permit to go away from here. For artistic merits. For the phitharmonic. Velas told me to ask the director and I asked. For four people, because I always need someone to take care of me. They gave me a permit for three, not for four. I do not understand. I will tell Velas, he will take care of it. I am making a trade with him: a letter for a letter.

A year ago... No, two. I do not remember. What was I saying? Yes, I gave Velas Towals's letter. A man was talking about it, he had found it in an abandoned warehouse... The den of the Polobian brothers. One of many. A letter from the camps where they take Polobians. At the other end of the country. A letter for Velas. To tell him to run, I think. So Velas will run and I with him, with Jarilo, with Ziva. Four total. We will cross the border. Smooth as oil, he said. Smooth as oil. Just so. I mailed my cello. He will be fine, he will be safe. My music can go far for away, even without me. It is scary, but it is good. It is how it should be.

I had a dream. Kresnik and Svetovit were there. A two-headed dragon. Svetovit was a head and there was another head I did not know. A poison-spitting head. Kresnik was the tail, as always.

The dragon beat its wings, bat wings, membrane, leather, snapping wings. But each snap was a laugh. A laugh like Towals's. Towals not laughing anymore. Towals screaming and dying. Far away, without a funeral. They say the war is about to end and we are going to lose. I do not dare to hope. Death to the Vendevisions! Death to the Vendevisions! And to Borevit too, if you really must.

I am tired of bombs, of bangs covering every other sound. You cannot play if you do not hear yourself play. If you do not feel your hands, if everything vibrates, not just the strings. The violin strings. I wanted to write a song for all my friends. I never did. I want to cross the border, to stop in a country that is not mine, to lie on a foreign bed, in my underpants. And compose a song for Towals. A requiem, a nocturne, a simple round of C major. He liked to dance, but I do not know how to dance and he cannot do it anymore.



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PERMIT

Citizen Borevit

resident in Maw of Dusk

personal document no. V.N 9222

holder of a regular, signed declaration of descendance

permanently employed by The Vendevian Philharmonic Orchestra

has been authorised to expatriate in the company of two associates.



The bureau of Senior Official Vidovin

Vidovin