

EPISODE #3

PLUS AND MINUS

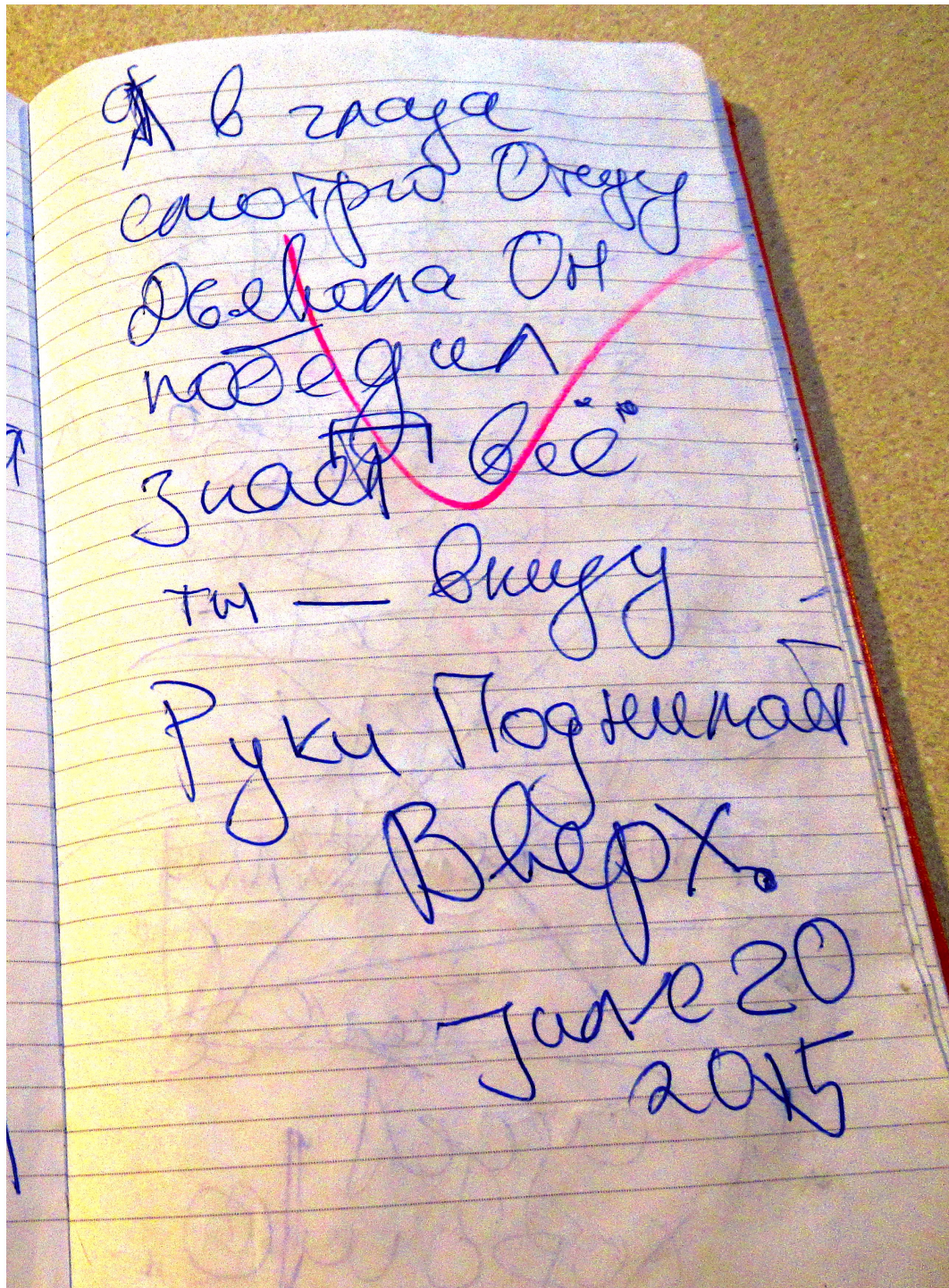
MONEY LOVE

DOOR

About This Novel

Money Love's first novel, *Plus and minus*, is based on daily journals the author recorded during her spiritual episode #3. Including God's several important transmissions, the novel entertains while teaching, as God has designed it this way, explaining that people learn better through stories.

"Beautifully written, this intimate and supernatural tale draws the reader directly into the heart of a battle between good and evil. Told with humor and authority, this novel is an insight into a world that is all around us, but a world that few of us even know exists. A truly visionary work of art." - Anonymous Reader



Turn On The Vacuum Cleaner!

My Father!
My God of Wonders!
Please tell me when my troubles end!
You are my God. You have to tell me.
I ask You to!
Please understand:
I hear a lot of noise,
Smell something...
See only thieves and crooks.
The bribes fly over me,
In chains, nonstop.
I go to church
There, I feel restless,
And everybody lies.
Goddamn!

I see a lot of evil.
My soul is worried.
Turn on the vacuum cleaner!
Remove this dirt.
My God!
What *is* this smell?

October 2013

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1. June 16 2015 Tuesday (Most Probably)_ Rainbow Vacuum Cleaner

Ioanna mentally to herself, *Fu! Fu! What a disgusting motion! Fu!*

She was referring to an older gentleman wearing a purple jacket who grimaced at her, took his tongue out and moved it around his lips, once, in a circular motion. The skin of his face appeared swollen, colored with red patches, except his nose, which was burgundy. One side of his face drooped lower than the other. The irregularities of the face gave his grimace an extra scary expression, producing shock and everlasting memory. He grimaced exactly the moment Ioanna passed him, during her run. Suddenly, the man sprinted after her, only to stop a hundred meters later. The incident happened, *most probably*, on June 16, in the afternoon.

slug began to change dates in Ioanna's journal. Not being sure about the exact timing frustrated Ioanna tremendously, for after hearing **Write**, she began to diligently record the exact dates and times of all important events in this spiritual episode. She recalled that earlier that day, she vacuumed the car she co-owned with her mom with their expensive Rainbow vacuum cleaner. After frustrating considerations (for too many extraordinary things were happening to remember the exact days that she did record but slug either changed or deleted completely from her journal entries), Ioanna had concluded that she vacuumed the car, *most probably*, on Tuesday, June 16, which was also the same day she encountered the grimacing man wearing the purple jacket during her run in the park.

It couldn't have happened on Friday, June 19, as the altered journal date indicated. On Fridays, she worked. She wouldn't have had time to vacuum the car on her working day. She reviewed subsequent journal entries. Another journal entry was *also* dated Friday, June 19! It described mysterious events of the evening at the hotel where Ioanna worked as a restaurant manager. It didn't mention anything about vacuuming the car in the morning or running into the grimacing man in the afternoon. This journal entry was titled - *slugs at Work!* Therefore, Ioanna concluded, it was *most probably* Tuesday, June 16, when she vacuumed the car, perhaps Monday (also her day-off), or Tuesday the week before. The correct dates and details were essential to the accurate record of Ioanna's spiritual experience; slug's goal was to tarnish the truth.

Ioanna had no attention-deficit disorder. She couldn't have made the mistake of writing a '9' instead of '6' just because '6' looks like '9' turned upside down. slug, she figured, was trying to tell her that she was 'losing it', that she could no longer focus, but Ioanna's focus was always good, especially under pressure. Without wasting more time trying to recall the impossible, Ioanna decided to assign June 16 as the date of the car-vacuuming. After all, *what* had happened was more important than *when* it had happened.

The frustration, however, refused to go away. For who likes their personal journal entries altered? She consoled herself, *slug changed the date. Don't waste time trying to recall it. It is impossible at this point. It's been four months! You are in October now! slug is using it to get you frustrated, to waste your time. Move on. June 16 it is. Keep writing. Move on! Stop trying to recall the date!*

'slug' (never in capitals) was Ioanna's nickname for satan. The latter name infused fear, intimidated, according to Ioanna, so she refused to use this term. Ioanna preferred 'slug', because the word suggested a lack of power. God also liked her choice for renaming satan into 'slug,' a slow-moving, ugly, adhesive creature.

So on June 16, a sunny Tuesday, Ioanna began to suspect that her mom's attitude was being artificially altered; certain things mom said while Ioanna vacuumed the car felt as not coming from her kind, soft-spoken mom. Watching carefully Ioanna's every move, mother offered comments such as: "You *forgot* to wipe in that corner" or "Here, I can still see some dust!" or "Did you *forget* to vacuum the trunk?" or "Don't put the carpets on the grass!" all uttered in an intonation suggesting that Ioanna was an imbecile. So many comments flew out so fast, as if mom were an irritated bully playing with Ioanna's nerves.

Strange instances that had happened at work over the previous two weeks only reinforced Ioanna's growing suspicion, *if slug can enter coworkers, he could also crawl inside mom*. Mom, however, whose cancer had relapsed, couldn't afford any stress while taking her chemo therapy. Ioanna remembered that and pulled all her strength together to remain non-confrontational.

Mom, diagnosed with multiple myeloma, had relapsed after remaining under control for four years. According to Ioanna, the relapse was caused by a combination of mom's recently bad diet (organic nourishment, mom said, was too expensive), stress and divine providence. God, Ioanna hoped, was using her mom, to teach others how to fight and defeat cancer. Cancer, according to Ioanna, was caused by polluted environment, chemicals, bad diet, lack of exercise and stress from fear and insecurities of this turbulent world mismanaged by corrupted politicians. She saw a connection between an organic, stress-free lifestyle and cancer-free organism. She noticed another fact — disease had become a profitable business.

As Ioanna vacuumed the car, slug continued to ruin her mood via aggravating comments uttered by mother. Ioanna ignored the provocations despite her testy character: hot or cold, definitely not lukewarm, just what Jesus likes. Her controlled silence on the exterior was compensated by internal laughs at slug's fruitless attempts to make her snap. Each time manipulated mother screamed out a new, irritating comment, Ioanna cursed slug mentally. Mother began to resemble a hot, boiling soup, popping up from under the lid with insults. *Brava must've been right after all, slug can whisper bad thoughts into humans*. She considered this thought for a moment while relocating four wet floor mats from the green grass, where she had placed them originally, onto an asphalt road. The asphalt of their parking lot, according to mother, was cleaner than grass. *Why would it be if dirty cars drive on it?* But it was better not to argue.

Last summer, Ioanna didn't believe Brava. She found his remark religiously brainwashed. "You know?" Brava said out of nowhere, "that evil can whisper bad thoughts?" "Oh, really?" she argued, "But what about free will?" The argument for existence of some sort of manipulating devil undermined the idea of free will. Ioanna used to believe that people *choose* to be greedy and angry. Yet, on June 16, 2015, mom's attitude clearly appeared to be artificially altered.

While vacuuming, Ioanna reflected on the unorthodox moments in her mom's recent behavior. The night before, mom exercised an unusual diligence while studying her latest blood report. A certain mono level went off the scale, becoming the concern of the evening. The mono matter felt strange for one reason — mom had never scrutinized *every* category in her blood reports before. All her prior inspections were limited to confirming a normal level of red and white blood cells indicated on the first page. Mom had never actually flipped to the second page of her monthly blood report prior to last night. Ioanna felt helpless seeing mom so worried

over some mono numbers. Contagious stress lurked over the dining table, stress that could be hindering mom's healing process. Instead of enjoying her food, mom rushed through the dinner — she couldn't wait to go online. She actually conducted her own online research, without asking Ioanna for help! As though not for the first time, she smartly googled 'mono levels' and with fearful passion clicked on several links, absorbing the information revealed on the screen. "Mono levels," mom announced shortly, "are good when *High*?" She finished her statement with a question mark and stared at Ioanna, expecting a reply.

It was only the following morning, while cleaning the car to the sounds of mother's irritating critiques, that Ioanna began to suspect the true nature behind the fuss about the mono levels. Suspicions grew, demanding explanations. *When did she learn how to google? Why did she worry so much about some mono levels that even the doctor never looks at? Why the moment she said High, I felt guilt about smoking HaHa? Why did she say High the way she did it? There was something different about her voice...*

Ioanna's eyes wandered to the brand name engraved on the fancy vacuum cleaner. Seven letters, each painted in a different color, spelled Rainbow, reminding her of the Biblical rainbow God gave to the world after the flood, and of her poem *Turn on the Vacuum Cleaner!* written two years ago. The market price for such a vacuum was two thousand dollars, but Ioanna got it for only four hundred bucks. Her friend, who worked for the manufacturer, reassembled her Rainbow from leftover parts written-off as obsolete. As an insider, the friend claimed that the original Rainbow still worked better than the newer model. Apparently, the manufacturer modified a brush and claimed that the added value of the new model justified a price increase. Similarly new smart phones are issued every six months. Where do the old *smart* phones go? And why do they get so stupid so quickly? Ioanna's old phone went into a local river. Secured by a heavy rock, it is rotting away, together with her sensitive information. She wished it never broke. She wished her little village had a convenient recycling place for electronics. (Somebody just dumped a TV into a dumpster.) She wished all her products were like the Birkenstock sandals, which were still in great shape in their seventh straight year of heavy wear. Google 'resource-based economy.'

Rainbow buzzed audibly, sucking in dirt from corners and under seats, as Ioanna considered the chain of peculiar occurrences of the past few weeks. Mom wasn't the first to begin to act up. There were bizarre encounters at work. There was the day of discovering Biblical revelations. Mother only began to act strange last night. *High is good?* she seemed to be asking with her suspicious stare and strange emphasis on the word High. Simultaneously, the thought of *HaHa* entered Ioanna's mind, accompanied by feelings of guilt and self-doubt, even fear. The thought whispered, *HaHa is bad*. Was it really so? Didn't George Washington smoke? Why did it improve Ioanna's yoga sessions? Why did it significantly reduce her need for a cigarette and completely eliminate her desire to drink? Individual reactions surely differ. Some could be severe. Ioanna's friend almost died from mixing bad HaHa with pills. Still, it was hard to accuse good HaHa of causing more harm than alcohol, cigarettes and pills. Abusing HaHa was a problem of a weak character, a faithless soul stripped of motivation to grow.

1331 June 30 2016 Computer just froze for no reason.

Last night, stress affected both women. Mom felt stress regarding her elevated mono levels. Ioanna felt stress for the same reason, plus she instantly felt guilty upon hearing the High. Disregarding the actual words, mother seemed to suggest, *you are not worthy of Adams, aka Jesus Christ*. There was another emotion she experienced, the feeling of being mocked. The feeling was evoked by the manner mother explained the findings of her extensive online research. In a very logical order, as though a new personality had entered her, mom went over her freshly-acquired knowledge. While listening, Ioanna felt as if her own logical manner of speaking was being ridiculed, as though through her fancy mono lecture what mother was really saying was, *you are so full of **it*.

After the car was vacuumed, mom insisted on going down to the river to wash the four rubber mats in the mountain stream. (Vacuuming the mats with Rainbow, equipped with the wet/dry technology, wasn't enough for the mother.) On the way there, slug continued to mess with Ioanna's nerves. As soon as the two women reached the beginning of the uneven, slippery rocky descent, the mother took off! Two heavy mats in each hand delayed Ioanna's response time; otherwise, she would've grabbed and stopped the mother. Within seconds mother was far away, hopping from one unsteady rock to another, like a bunny. "Stop!" Ioanna screamed, "Stop right now!" Mother turned around, her bright blue eyes blinking amiably, as though there was nothing wrong about rushing down the pile of unsteady rocks with a relapsing multiple myeloma. There was no time to waste, and keeping her eyes on mom, as if the mere stare could keep her still, Ioanna launched the four rubber mats into the air, far away to the right side of the mother, towards the shore, and began to descend. One fearful thought kept hurrying Ioanna down, *Four means death in China*. The thought was produced by looking at the *four black* mats behind the mother and associating the number with the Chinese superstition about the number four. The thought of death was then connected to mom's risky behavior, which was asking for an accident.

Presently, mom was secured, maneuvering rocks mindfully and silently, with her daughter gently holding her by the shoulder. But as soon as mother reached the shore, her instructional attitude returned. The mats were soaking inside the wild cascades of running water when mother screamed, "Make sure the water doesn't take them down the stream!" The warning felt unnecessary, for Ioanna, squatted on a rock right above the soaking mats, was ready to grab them any second should the powerful current force them down the stream. She clenched her fists, but didn't turn around, ignoring the provocation. Receiving no reaction, the mother screamed again, "Secure them more carefully!" Again, it was unnecessary, for the mats were heavy, plus Ioanna had placed one large rock on top of each mat for extra weight. Automatic natural cleaning was taking place, requiring no further action, besides changing the placement of security rocks to wash the area previously blocked by the very rocks and then flipping the mats over to wash the other side. But mother thought otherwise.

"There is still dirt stuck on them! You need to rub them!" Mother, apparently, could see through the running water and detect dirt on the black mats from a distance of several feet! The mats were designed with linear indentations, but the indentations were shallow — the natural force of the running stream was sufficient to remove any dirt, including dirt stuck in between linear indentations that mother must have been seeing. But there was no dirt remaining! But it

was better not to argue... Ioanna found a small, sharp rock and demonstratively scratched inside of each linear indentation with it. The water felt unpleasantly cold, the mats heavy, the sun burning and the extra labor unnecessary; yet, the hardest thing was to remain non-confrontational as mother watched over.

Later that afternoon, Ioanna went for a run. She was thinking, considering possible explanations for the recent bizarre developments in her life, starting with the current one — the mother's aggravated attitude. Naturally everyone could have a bad day, but that didn't explain the malicious pitches in mom's voice or the well-placed emphasis on *High* and *You forgot* that seemed to put extra meaning behind phrases without mom's own awareness. There was definitely something different in mom's voice, a slight unfamiliarity that Ioanna detected, a certain mismatch between the gravity of mom's natural intonation and the one used; not a continual modification, however, but rather intermittent alterations on certain sensitive words. Each time mom said *you forgot*, for example, malice filled every letter, causing Ioanna to take notice of the overplayed emphasis.

It was easy to run with the occupied mind. Circles passed without notice, legs moved without effort; a phrase recently read in the Bible eventually came to mind, *He came here to set a mother against a daughter, a father against a son*. It seemed so relevant to the situation at home, explaining the mother's provoking behavior, but something didn't feel right. *He doesn't want to fight*.

So she kept running, thinking some more. She recalled the manufacturing tag attached to the wrong side of one rubber mat and the vivid fear she felt, just for a second, upon seeing the defect. The wrongly-sewn tag reminded her of something in the past, a negative experience belonging to her first spiritual episode, but no matter how much she tried, she couldn't recall what it was exactly. Between thoughts, she made sure to count circles. She was about to run onto her last, eighth circle, when a walking man in front of her stopped and turned around. He looked at her — an ugly grimace contorted his face. The man stuck his tongue out and licked his lips in a circular motion. She ran past him and turned around — the man was running now, after her! Her heart dropped, but legs kept going, and on a surge of anger she escalated her speed. When she turned back a few seconds later, the man was no longer running. He was walking again, in his purple jacket. Aggravated, she went for another, *extra*, ninth circle, as to challenge the grimace, but when she reached that portion of the track again, the man was no longer there.

It's not like she hadn't noticed the man before. The purple jacket was an eyesore from the beginning of the run, walking very slowly back and forth the asphalted portion of the track. It was the color purple that got her attention, made her think of something in the past, yet the purple didn't spook her as much as the grimace. The distorted face wore a purple jacket, like the doctor in her second, emergency room. That doctor, however, kept changing his robes. Sometimes, he came to check on her wearing a purple jacket, the other time, his jacket was white. Each time the doctor came in a purple jacket, something bad was happening in Ioanna's mind, and vice versa. Surely, it was a simple hallucination, but as it was happening, the changing colors of the doctor's robe looked real.

At last, Ioanna figured that the changing color of the doctor's robe could have been a hallucination, which was meant to teach her that signs can be used to relate information. Purple means Keep Fighting. Purple was only her second, favorite color. Her favorite color was always green, the color of evergreen trees.

To conclude, anger started this day via the aggravated mother, fear highlighted it via the purple jacket, and one more, rather optimistic thought ended it — *The Rainbow vacuum cleaner, was it a simple coincidence that I got it so cheap?*

2. June 17 2015 Wednesday_slug Exists!_Discovering Revelations

Ioanna never kept a personal journal, but on June 17, 2015 she made her first journal entry. The journal was then elaborated on over subsequent days, then months, then years, as this novel was coming to life.

Today, June 17, 2015, I realized that slug exists. Now I know it for sure. It was a sequence of clever but not very smart manipulations. By now I am getting bored with evil stupid tricks. Thank God that when Puss dumped me and Adams came instead, I studied the Bible, and I personally highlighted all the times the Father said *Fear not* to many of his favorite biblical personages, many, many times. They were all afraid. All of them. Paradoxically, some were afraid of Him, the Father.

I am not yet sure whether slug can manipulate my feelings, such as feelings of fear or guilt, for example. At this point, however, I can say with certainty that it can force my eyes to look at information. Then, it feels like my own consciousness produces feelings triggered by exterior stimulus slug looked at. I am particularly aware of the process of my thoughts' formation. But is it me who is too observant, too aware of my senses, specifically my sight and my thoughts, or am I artificially influenced to feel these sensations?

Before I go into further description of evil's manipulations, I like to nickname it too — an old sleazy slug — just for today.

One of slug's favorite tactics is to use fear because fear clouds common sense. I felt afraid during my ex-supervisor's invasion because I thought it was orchestrated by an actual human, a real threat that could hurt me financially and physically. Back then, I didn't know that evil exists inside my supervisor, inside this world, that evil can whisper bad thoughts to us, that slug, in fact, seduces us toward a sin, and that when we give in, Magic (I like to call the Father that) disappears.

Presently, I know the truth, specifically that God exists, and I am no longer afraid of anything. Everything is under control of my Creator. I am playing a leading role in His Love Story. Yes, now I know that Bible is a love story, most of all. My ears can hear. I always remarked this curious phrase repeated throughout the text: *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who has an ear* suggests that some humans have no ears! Magic has a sense of humor.

Several questions bother me. First of all — why is evil so stupid? Stupid indeed to think that it can scare me after I discovered that I am the Wonder Woman described in Revelations, the last chapter of the Bible, a pregnant woman dressed in sun that mysteriously appeared in heaven, wondering around like a vagabond. She is already pregnant, of course. How romantic and how irresponsible! Just like my father who got my mom pregnant in order to marry her.

Secondly, I suspect that evil is so angry because it will be the only one *forever?* burning in hell. Hope is what makes me think that — hope, love and absolute justice. For if evil is, in fact, in us, throwing us into a sin, isn't it correct to think that it is the fault of slug and slug only, slug's fault completely? Or is it a shared fault between evil and a human who has agreed to follow slug's agenda? For example, when my ex-supervisor robbed my apartment, did slug slur this evil

thought into him? And even if slug did, should my ex-supervisor be forgiven for agreeing to follow slug's agenda?

It's not that hard to understand what's good and what's bad, but it must be, if one is as stupid as slug. There are some people that consciously worship devil. Are they possessed by slug? Is a man responsible for actions of his possessed brain? If humans sin because of slug, why should they burn in hell?

Dec 19 2015 Dear reader, slug alters my writing by putting words such as hell, evil, devil & slug in capitals. As I edit this novel, I change capitals back to small letters. you are a toothless puppy! Only small letters for you, slug! P.S. Who removed this comment's time?

Thirdly, slug is a copycat. As I already mentioned, slug is stupid, but I like to repeat it, since I know it can hear me quite well. It must be hard for slug to create anything, including unique ways to bother me. By now I know that it began to manipulate the following signs previously exclusively used by Adams: 1. a car beeping its horn, 2. a color purple, 3. unfamiliar people waving a hand at me as if to say Hi. There are more signs, but these three are the ones slug recently incorporated into its copycat portfolio of clever tricks. In addition, I realized that the thing was also eavesdropping on Our telepathy and had discovered personal problems Adams and I had, relating to bad Image and cussing. I feel that slug is using that information to manipulate my emotions, to influence guilt and self-doubt.

I learned a lot over the past few weeks. Presently I can clearly see that the two bizarre client incidents at the hotel were both directed by evil. This stupid, angry copycat got pissed off after the evening I studied the Biblical revelations, and began to act up. Below is the description of slug's two clever scenarios, orchestrated via real humans.

June 12, Friday night at the hotel, four middle-age females walked through the dining room doors. Two women in particular grabbed my attention. The first one was wearing purple pigtails unsuitable for her age. The second one, tall as a giraffe, gestured excessively with her inch long ocean colored nails. Once the latter finally sat down, I stood next to her at the table. Now, I was looking down at her, specifically at the protrusion of her fake, greasy, over-applied with mascara eyelashes. She blinked ceaselessly like a motorized doll.

What stunned me was the following: as soon as I said "Hello," all four women burst into hysterical laugh. A frustrating thought ran through my mind, *they are making fun of my accent.* (Still, how could the ladies detect it from one spoken word?) I ignored their obnoxiousness to finish my greeting, "Welcome to Prospect Restaurant. Would you like tap or sparkling water?" Again, there came a cascade of loud guffaws! Only that the tall woman with fake eyelashes laughed in a very particular way... She reproduced the sound I tend to make the moment Adams gets a punchline of my telepathically-transmitted joke. To explain this nuance, as a creator of a joke, I don't laugh, it is for Adams that my joke comes as a surprise. His laugh manifests unexpectedly through me, and as a result of His reaction, my closed mouth explodes in a loud and awkward sound Paw. So this woman, with blue witchy nails, uttered the Paw sound. "Paw!" Paw! Paw!" she exploded in a laughing attack. When I returned with their appetizer, an order of grilled green beans, I announced loudly, "Beans." The same woman exploded again, producing the too

familiar, awkward sound. Standing at the table, her reaction did strike me as strange, but not as a mockery of the intimate detail of my private life, not yet. I ignored the Paw and moved on with my work.

At the end of the dinner, the ladies (definitely not) began to leave the table sporadically, one after another, not all together as one group. Observing the party dismantling in such fashion began to concern me, *who is going to pay the bill?* The bill holder laid exactly where I placed it on the table, seemingly untouched. The lady with the purple pigtails was the last one to leave. As soon as she cleared a reasonable distance, I walked to the table and picked up the bill holder. Inside of it laid several twenties and smaller bills. I caught up with the purple pigtails lady as she reached the dining room doors. I thanked her, the bill holder grasped in my hand, and wished her a nice evening. And then, comforted by the privacy of our bilateral farewell, I complimented her *nice* hairdo, to which she snapped “Whatever” and walked off. I got no tip; the cash in the bill holder barely covered the value of their food and drinks.

Several days later, as slug’s manipulations continued to pile up, I realized what he tried to accomplish by his first plot, via these four ladies — he was trying to make me feel insecure. The four ladies seemed to make fun of me with their mean laughs, including the Paw sound, no matter what I said. I don’t like this Paw sound and feel insecure when I, more precisely my mouth without my own intention, utters it. As I am under a constant watch of Adams, Who has ‘moved in’ my body and mind, at this Paw sound, I feel similar to a girl who burps accidentally on her first date. In addition, coincidentally or not, there were *four* of the ladies, and the number four means death in China. A simple superstition, of course, but slug can scare you using this association. The Paw was the first incident, before running into the purple jacket, before vacuuming the car with the ‘mother’ and before playing an involuntarily part in slug’s second clever scenario described below. Once all these experiences took place, I was able to recognize the pattern and attribute the Paw incident to slug’s impressive portfolio of clever tricks.

slug’s second chance to perform came shortly after the Paw incident. Presently, I recall that one of the girls was wearing a cowboy hat, so was the main character in slug’s second scenario. It tells me that both incidents happened over the weekend of the country music festival that annually takes place in my village. Below is the description of the second event.

It was the last day of the country music festival, Sunday June 14. The evening was slow since most of the hotel guests had already checked out. I was occupied with extra cleaning projects at the bar when a couple walked through the dining room doors. They looked to the right at an empty dining room, they looked to the left at an empty lounge area, then they looked straight ahead, saw me and headed towards the bar. Right away, I recognized the man I ran into in the foyer the night before. “Nice hat!” I complimented him then. With his thick neck, sturdy body and baldness smartly concealed by a cowboy hat, the man resembled Bruce Willis, my favorite childhood actor. This Sunday night, however, he looked more like Vin Diesel: his large bald head was exposed, a crumpled t-shirt stretched over his veinous biceps and oversized, rounded, black shades hid his eyes. “You can’t bring your own beverages here,” I told Vin Diesel as soon as I noticed an open beer bottle in his hand. He was about to protest but seemed to be lost for words, so to release the tension, I told him he could finish the bottle before throwing it

away. He gulped beer down indiscreetly, placed the empty bottle on the bar counter and leaning over a bar stool, began to tilt back and forth. He would have fallen backwards together with the stool if not for his girlfriend who pushed him back into balance at the right moment. The girlfriend seemed to match her companion's low character. She had greasy hair, a tired face and was already tipsy, despite the relatively early hour, about five o'clock.

At the bar, both ordered vodka drinks and began to study the menu. Vin Diesel quickly decided on the steak, for he was too drunk and too hungry to read. His girlfriend ordered a burger. Both ate with appetite and in relative silence, if not counting Diesel's loud chewing and abrupt verbal outbursts into his girlfriend's ear. From the other side of the counter, I overheard his loudly-whispered comments. You wouldn't believe what he said! "***c* my d**k," this type of language. Without any warning or provocation, his drunken face moved from the steak and leaned into his girlfriend's ear, to issue such obscenities. At every obscenity, his girlfriend met my eyes, shamefaced. It felt that Diesel usually didn't act like that, like she was trying to tell me that. When rarely his girlfriend spoke first, Diesel replied with irritation, in short sentences only, often limited to either Yes or No.

Once Diesel finished his plate completely, only then, did he take his big black shades off. I must have been very close to him. Most likely, I leaned over the counter to remove his empty plate. I remember how demonstratively he took his shades off and how slowly he placed them on the counter. I remember how he looked up at me and I saw his eyes — large, bright blue, but unpleasant, unfocused. It was as if I never noticed his shades until he took them off and looked into my eyes.

The realization that Diesel's behavior was manipulated by slug came a few days later, after encountering more of slug's manipulations at work and 'meeting' the ultimate slug the morning of June 20. The first hint was Diesel replying in Yes or No format. Our secret sign, the confirmation squeeze, works based on asking questions that require a Yes or No response. For example, *are your eyes blue?* works as a question. Adams can reply Yes by confirming three times, or No by confirming twice. But *what color are Your eyes?* doesn't work as a question. This format was quickly established on the day I received the secret sign, back in September of 2013. The method was fast and efficient, complying with my direct, strict, efficient version of God, Who talks clearly and briefly, only necessary words, because He hates to waste time until all suffering of His children is eliminated. This is how **Keep Fighting** sounded, in the voice of commander in chief. I figured that by snapping out Yes and No responses via intoxicated Vin Diesel, slug was mocking Our established way of communication via the secret sign. In a deeper sense, slug was trying to play God.

The second hint was Diesel's abrupt, unprovoked obscenities whispered into his girlfriend's ear. Ha! slug is actually thinking that it can scare me acting stupid like that! You wouldn't believe what else Vin Diesel said — disgusting things.

The third hint was the rounded black shades, strikingly similar to the pair I used to wear during my ex-supervisor invasion. Though wearing black shades appeared out of place in a dimly-lit area, it completely failed to register. In retrospect, I realized how unusual it was for me to overlook Diesel's black shades upon his entrance. The fearful memories of strangers in black shades following me wherever I went during my ex-supervisor invasion no longer haunted me.

Furthermore, these memories were completely blocked from recollection when Diesel, in *my* rounded black shades, appeared at the dining door. He demonstratively took the shades off only after the dinner, when slug probably understood that I wasn't getting the point. he stared at me through Diesel's drunk blue eyes. A thought came to mind, *blue eyes? so what? you are not Adams.* Therefore, I suspect slug knows of my assumption that Adams has blue eyes, which means the thing is reading my thoughts too.

The forth and last hint came as associations. The very first time I saw Vin Diesel, he looked more like Bruce Lee. He must have been exploring the hotel, when I ran into him, looking forward to a weekend of fun at the country music festival. He smiled politely from under his cowboy hat, associating positively in my mind with a leading actor in my favorite movie *Fifth Element*, costarring Milla Jovovich, who was born in Ukraine, just like me. Over the weekend, the man changed from Plus to minus. The second time around I saw a drunkard. The bald head and swelling biceps tearing through the soiled shirt evoked Vin Diesel, and it happened that some time before this encounter, I came across an article claiming that Vin Diesel was stupid. (No offense to real Vin Diesel.) The article is just an example of how external stimuluses are used to make me think a certain way.

Once again, just like with the four ladies, it didn't hit me right away. Ultimately, it was the frequent, abrupt Yes or No responses that triggered other reflections on Vin Diesel's behavior. As I understand now, slug tried, inside this Vin Diesel guy, to scare me in a very particular way. The stupid thing actually tried to remind me of my problem — occasionally fighting bad Image scenes. he tried to make me feel insecure, guilty about it. Here, slug's ultimate goal was to make me scared of God's disapproval, even worse — of His punishment. Currently, I experience connection interruptions when bad Images come to mind. Adams shakes and disappears. He disappears, but only for a tiny instant, less than a second, but He does. And I can feel this brief absence: a subtle jerk inside my body, or a hardly-detectable pinch inside my heart, or my eyelids that briefly shut themselves while remaining open as though somebody closed them only mentally inside myself. He disappears and comes back right away, and I know, I need to fix it. It is not my fault however. Now I know that I was meant to go through all these experiences, see these bad Images, to know exactly how to fight evil, to conquer it once and for all.

But Vin Diesel and the four giggling girls weren't the only ones that visited me at work recently. Adams came too. He came via a finance guy/professor of economics/electronic music producer, an older American gentleman of a versatile skill set. Dark curls, unfortunately over-applied with gel, covered generously his ultra-active brain. At the bar, I entertained him and several other customers. He was of a talkative type, so I had to pay extra attention, putting up with a recount of his glory days. At some point, he asked me for a pen. I assumed it was to write down his contact info, should I be in Manhattan, looking for an electro dance party to go to. Vacantly, he withdrew the pen I held out for him and put it aside. He never let go of my hand, however; it was smartly placed in his, and before I realized it, his fingers were softly tapping on the top of my palm. Approximately two seconds went by before I withdrew my hand, slightly surprised but instantly knowing. "Can I have a *ruchka*?" was what the man actually said. *Ruchka*, my dear reader, means both, *pen* and *hand* in Russian, a word with two

meanings. I completely failed to notice that this American gentleman inserted a Russian word in his question! I gave him a pen but he grabbed my *ruchka* and caressed it.

They try to associate That with bad images so mind forms bad thoughts.

Dec 20 2015 Why is That capitalized? Who inserted this phrase here?

As my destiny further reveals itself, I become more intrigued rather than scared by all these spiritual experiences. They seem extraordinary, out of this world. They are, but they are not a novelty in my life. According to my earlier personal revelation, received in the fall of 2013, towards the end of my spiritual episode #2, Ioanna is my heaven name. This name was revealed to me as I listened to a youtube sermon. In the video, the preacher shared his vision of a large crowd cheering, “Adams! Ioanna!” “His name was Adams,” the preacher claimed to hear, “and Hers - Ioanna.” I studied the Bible but couldn’t find either Adams or Ioanna in the text, so I assume this is what God meant by *he who has an ear, let him hear*. Psychologists may label such experience as hallucinations, but it doesn’t change the fact that the preacher heard those two names, shared his vision in the sermon, which my friend Sunshine emailed me, so I could hear the revelation, “AdamS! Ioanna!” Interestingly enough, I couldn’t reference this online sermon in this novel — it’s gone missing from my youtube history. I wasted time searching through Sunshine’s emails, then youtube in general, to no avail. Once again, *he who has an ear, let him hear*. It sounds strange. Obviously everybody has ears, but not everyone hears...

There is one important nuance to mention. His name was Adams, with S. I dwelled on it for while until I recalled the old compliment of my long-time boyfriend, Mister Grosshead. One time, Mister Grosshead came home and called me “Kittens.” “Why in plural?” I asked. “Because you are as cute as many kittens,” he replied. Presently, I am convinced that Grosshead didn’t really come up with this compliment — his mind produced it by means of divine intervention, without Grosshead’s own awareness. Similarly, Adams is in plural, because He is as handsome as many men combined. He is also in every man. Adams are walking this planet.

The same online sermon has also told me that bride will prepare herself. According to the established christian interpretation, the bride refers to a church. Well, I agree that everybody needs to prepare to face His Holiness as thoroughly as a bride prepares for her marriage. But there is also a bride, an actual bride. God is a careful writer. He left a clue in His choice of words.

1321 Sept 9 2019 Dear reader, the word ‘bribe’ was typed instead of ‘bride’ five times in the above paragraph. I no longer need to look at the keyboard while typing. In addition, ‘b’ and ‘d’ are not even close on the keyboard, so I couldn’t just press the wrong letter five times accidentally. My editor caught this typo; slug must have made it.

evil or slug, your time has come! I used to think that it was my ex-husband’s original idea to call my balloons *Tick-Tock*. How cute, right? I remember how instantly I liked the nickname, finding it so tender and original. But, of course, Puss could never come up with *Tick-Tock*. Puss never struck me as a possessor of a keen sense of humor or originality. In addition, Puss always liked big balloons. He even told me how much he liked the big balloons of his ex, thus breeding

an insecurity worm that has been crawling through my brain ever since. Before Puss I cared less about what men thought about my physical features. Before Puss, I was confident, even more — I was in love with myself. Tick-tock, slug! I am about to meet a Real Man!

I figured Adams whispered *Tick-Tock* to Puss, as He did *Kittens* to Mister Grosshead. The confirmation that *Tick-Tock* was divinely inspired arrived in August of 2013, at the onset of my second spiritual episode, in which divorce served as a catalyst. I returned to my homeland, to Sunshine, and spent some time with her children. The children were assigned a summer book to read. The book, they told me, was called *Tick-Tock*. When I asked what the book was about, the children just smiled mysteriously and told me that it was weird. (For details of my spiritual episode #2, please see my second novel called *Secret Sign*.)

Adams! Ioanna! Such was my personal revelation received via the online preacher, supported by *KittenS* and *Tick-Tock* and dominantly sealed with the inception of the secret sign through which Jesus has been communicating with me daily since Sept of 2013. Convinced that Jesus is coming back during my lifetime, I wanted to see what was supposed to happen according to the Bible preceding His Second Coming. The opportunity to do just that eventually came.

One Thursday evening, in early June of 2015, the restaurant business was slow as it usually was on Thursdays. Still, I was required to sit at the bar and wait for any potential customers. Naturally, I felt uncomfortable idle and looked for cleaning projects to do. The bottles were dusty on the top shelf, so I began to wipe them, taking brakes in between to study the Book of Revelation on my phone application. The shift was long — plenty of times to wipe all bottles. Intermittently, Junior came to the bar to refresh his soda beverage. I knew that Junior didn't care whether I was wiping the long-neglected top shelf or reading on my phone, still, I made sure I was appropriately busy with work-related duties every time Junior approached the bar. Until it began to look ridiculous. I sat on the stool at the corner of the bar then and began to read the Bible openly and without interruption, even in Junior's presence. Secretly, I wished for Junior to inquire what I was reading so eagerly, but such a convenient opportunity to share my faith never arrived.

Below I will list the revelations I studied this Thursday evening at the empty hotel bar. I am only including the revelations that caught my particular attention because they either related to my personal experience or the secret sign was reacting as I was reading them.

2.17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone, which no one knows but he who receives it.

Notice here, dear reader, that my heaven name is Ioanna. It was revealed to me via the online preacher, as I was recovering from my spiritual episode #2. Technically I overcame two spiritual episodes before I learned about my other name.

3.12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city

of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and I will write upon him My new name.

As I read this revelation, I asked Adams, 'Is Your name Adam?' and have received three confirmations via secret sign. Perhaps Jesus wanted to be called by a new name in heaven because the name Jesus is associated with sufferings.

4.11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

For this novel, I used the language from an online Bible. In my home Bible, however, the same revelation is translated as follows: 'Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.' It is frustrating to realize how translators can change the meaning of God's word: Was everything created for God's pleasure, or does everything exist because of God?

6.2 And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

'Is this our son?' I asked Adams and received the familiar three confirmations. The reason I asked this question in the first place was because of the vision of a pregnant woman I saw at the onset of my second spiritual episode. Around July of 2016, however, after seeing an awesome image of a bow man in the skies, I changed my mind. Now I think that the rider on the white horse symbolizes Jesus Who keeps conquering

6.3 And there went out another horse that was red, and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and there was given unto him a great sword.

'Our second son?' I mentally asked and felt three confirmations for yes yes yes, only this time the confirmation didn't feel convincing... Something felt different about the way the secret sign confirmed, a little bit hesitantly, as I remember clearly.

6.5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and saw a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

Once again, influenced by the vision of a pregnant woman, by the accumulation of my spiritual experiences in general, ultimately — by the nature of the secret sign, my questions fell into the same pattern. I asked if the third rider was also our son. I liked the color of the horse and the pair of balances which I initially interpreted as some sort of scale to render ultimate justice. Yet, I never wanted so many children! In our subsequent communications with Jesus, I conceded to having twins, a boy and a girl. I was under the impression that twins are easier to deliver and cheaper to raise (economy of scale.) I was so firm on it for so long, that eventually Jesus sent me a vivid dream in which I was riding a tricycle down a flight of stairs, and when I looked at the display installed on the steering wheel, the sign was flashing: "twin mode."

At the time of discovering the Book of Revelation, however, I simply grew fascinated with the horses and their magic riders, and since I was convinced that Jesus and I were meant to be together, it was natural to assume that the awesome riders were our offspring, especially as the secret sign kept reacting from within.

6.8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

'Is this one talking about slug?' I asked and received three confirmations for Yes. P.S. Are 'death' and 'hell' written in capitals in the Bible or did slug change it?

The seventh angel from the entire chapter #10 seems to be important because this angel features a *rainbow* upon his head. In this chapter, seven thunders spoke a secret to John. After that, the angel gave John a little book ('scroll' in other translations), instructing him to eat it and never share a word. The book tasted bittersweet.

12.1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

*'Is it me?' I asked upon reading this revelation, feeling excited, and have received **yes yes yes yes yes**.*

*It felt the confirmation came from Adams. Some months later, after further consideration, I realized that it wouldn't be fair for me to be the only one dressed so nicely. When such thought formed itself, I heard via telepathy **good girl**, in the voice of God, the Father.*

Revelation 12.2 says that the above woman was pregnant. 12.3 follows to announce that another wonder appeared — an enormous dragon. The dragon showed up to scare the woman with a child. According to 12.5, her child, who was to rule all nations with an iron scepter, was snatched up to God and to his throne. When I asked Adams if this revelation talked about our child, the secret sign confirmed **yes yes yes**.

12.6 The woman fled into the wilderness (,) to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

The first attack of slug in my life was the most fearful, primarily because I had no idea it was orchestrated by slug. I thought a real person was after me and felt like I lost everything, like a piece of garbage. I grabbed the only lifebuoy remaining — escaping into wilderness by marrying Puss. The escape lasted approximately a year and a half, ending in divorce and episode #2. In other translations, the word 'desert' is used instead of 'wilderness.' I definitely didn't escape into a desert; rather, it was a picturesque village in the French Alps, matching the word 'wilderness' better. Neither did I give birth before I escaped. Some interpreters think that the wonder woman symbolizes Maria. Yet, I don't understand why would Jesus talk about His mother (about the past) in the revelations that are supposed to predict what is to happen before His Second Coming

12.7 There was war in Heaven: Michael and his angles fought against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought back.

*During episode #1, in a mental institution I was forced to, I heard **Keep Fighting**. This was the life-changing moment of my life, the first time God spoke to me. After my release, I was still fighting, and the outcomes of my personal battle seemed to affect the outcomes of the spiritual war I felt was simultaneously happening in Heaven.*

slug lost the battle and was dropped down from heaven.

12.12 Therefore rejoice, O Heavens, and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea for the devil has come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.

According to 12.13, the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth and persecuted the woman which brought forth the male child. The next revelation is my favorite one.

12.14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

Dumped by Puss, I flew back to my home village, located also in a wilderness; technically 'into my place', for I own the property. Following 40+days of insomnia which produced my first collection of poems, I received the secret sign, upon writing the poem Here Comes The Mother! I believe the two wings of a great eagle refer to the inception of the secret sign, because around the same time, I also began to fly in my dreams. In the past, in my childhood, I had two dreams of a similar pattern, so vivid I still remember them. In the first dream, I was escaping a herd of horses. Fences rose as barricades, forcing me to jump over them, horses charging directly behind. Each new fence grew higher than the previous, with horses drawing nearer, my strength evaporating. I jumped over the third towering fence, landing on all fours, and looked up to see the horse clearing the top of the fence: its muzzle snorting, teeth exposed, front hooves about to hit my head. I woke up. There was a devastating feeling, as fences grew higher, that the only way to escape was to learn how to fly. The second dream occurred several years later, I was passing through adolescence. In this dream, I was running through a familiar park, this time escaping a crooked thief. In the chase, the distance between us steadily diminished. I knew the park well, but in our high-speed chase, I was running out of room to maneuver and outsmart my persecutor. In my last desperate effort, I hopped onto a parapet alongside a popular street, but the thief was just as quick. We ran along the high parapet, and when its edge approached, I jumped off into the air, trying to take off, like a bird, but failing, woke up, as the thief was about to grab me. Since the inception of the secret sign, however, I fly in my dreams. The very first time, I flew up to the ceiling of my apartment to escape the swinging arms of my very tall bro. The bro could only jump up and down, in frustration, trying to swoosh me off the ceiling, as I, suspended parallel to the ceiling, almost touching it with my elbows, was mocking his jumps with a chicken dance! More often than not, however, my flights are restrained — just high enough to accomplish a mission, and always with a fear of heights or a feeling like something is dragging me down. Only on rare occasions do I fly with no fear, and this means that something good is about to happen in reality.

During the same episode, I was also mysteriously nourished by new acquaintances. One would drop off wild mushrooms, another - soups, and yet another - some Haha-looking tea... How many times exactly? A time, and times, and half a time. Ha! Who writes like this! Adams has a sense of humor.

12.15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

Indeed, a great flood happened, but it happened during my first episode. Once again, the timing is off... The flood passed through my home village where I was recovering from my first, forced hospitalization. Our short-term rental was located on the very top of the village then, so mom and I only experienced occasional loss of electricity due to high winds. Interestingly enough, our village flooded on the date of my birthday, but a month later, the month mother was born. The flood was caused by a hurricane named after

mother; this hurricane was directly followed by a more severe hurricane, named after me, which likely stayed in the sea. When I was watching the coverage of these two hurricanes on television — winds shuddered windows, lights went on and off — I felt as though Mother was furious I was hurt so much.

12. 16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

Nice! Take it slug!

12.17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The above was the last revelation recorded in my notes. The shift must have ended and I went home.

Shortly after this evening, slug's interference in my life intensified. As explained earlier in this chapter, I passed a sequence of bizarre events at work. As a result, I gradually began to notice different 'minuses.' Before long, I recalled the evening I studied the Biblical revelations and realized that slug must have manipulated the secret sign, until now *exclusively* used by Adams, to confirm wrong ideas, in other words, to misinterpret biblical messages. The red light was the fake confirmation I received upon reading the revelation about the red horse.

Yet, before the mysteries at work took place, the idea of slug's interference was beyond my comprehension. I simply couldn't believe that slug, some sort of negative force, existed. I had no idea that slug could manipulate my mind, whisper thoughts and infuse feelings, and/or manipulate exterior factors to influence me. I was unpleasantly surprised that it was allowed to use *our* secret sign. it was *playing God* in effect, to fool me.

From my initial study, I have omitted several revelations that I received fake confirmations on. After further analysis, I have concluded that slug wanted me to scare you by promoting a concept of revenge and a possibility of Armageddon. Frankly, I think slug negotiated insertions of certain texts into the Bible, to infuse destabilizing fear into society. Therefore, I would like to reinstate here and now that throughout my later spiritual experience God showed me rainbows on numerous occasions, while transmitting **This is important. This is important.** (In the Old Testament, a rainbow appeared to Noah after the flood, so now the rainbow represents God's promise that the earth shall last forever.) While philosophizing on this matter, for the last chapter of the Bible does threaten impossible natural disasters, I heard via telepathy *he only promised not to destroy the earth by flood again, not by fire* in a tone so vile, I attributed the comment as coming from slug.

A part of me wants to keep reading the Book of Revelation, yet, the more I read it, the more I think slug hid the truth among perplexing sentences in order to waste my time. Will seven angels really destroy exactly one third of earth, sea, sun, moon and stars? Will supernatural locusts hurt wicked people for exactly five months? Will christians really fly up into skies? Will the dead be resurrected? Ultimately, how is Jesus coming back — as a shining God,

on a cloud, or disguised as a real man? In other words, can all this magic happen? Because if it does, God will technically prove His own existence, yet I always thought we must *believe* in Him; and belief requires no evidence.

So while waiting for the revelations to unfold, including the most intimidating ones, I chose to *believe* in Rainbow.

P.S. I think I know what was inside that bittersweet book John ate — this novel. It was surely being read by the wicked ones, and the good ones, perhaps right from my computer screen as I was writing it, similar to the way my ex-supervisor used to spy on me...

P.S.2 And when I wonder why the bad spies couldn't just delete my files, I recall the instance when more than twenty pages of my draft had simply disappeared... Two weeks of constant writing! There was nobody to blame back then but slug, because I hadn't gone public yet. Initially I got scared — why do I need to write if what I write is disappearing? I spent weeks trying to find the missing journals, in which, due to slug's clever manipulations, I became totally obsessed with resolving bad Image problem, both in my life and in the society. Only later did I realize that slug was simply messing with my head. I also realized that Creator must have deemed those journal entrees unworthy of record, so He deleted them. I had to let them go and move on.

3. June 18 2015 Thursday_ Frida's Drama: "I cleaned the chicken!"

I woke up this morning and wrote down the following:

They try to associate that with bad images. Mom was right. Thoughts do materialize.

I must have woken up from that very bad bad Image dream. Soon, I fell asleep again.

Upon waking up, I made a second journal entry:

*It is still the same day but it is my second journal entry for the same day. My favorite phrase today — everything is correct. Adams appears to keep saying it, about my interpretation of revelations. **Everything is correct.** Why shouldn't it be, if Adams and the Father promised me a vail of righteousness? I must be on the right track.*

slug is inside my mother and it is extremely hard to describe this subtle experience.

This afternoon, according to my master poetry file, I wrote the poem called *Autumn Oak*, unless slug changed the date. It does seem strange to write a poem called *Autumn Oak* in the summer. The poem, however, is dated June 18, 2015, so let's assume it's correct. What I remember clearly is writing this poem on my way home from the run. The wind blew through my damp hair and first verses, or rather emotions, came in as I passed an oak tree. The big, powerful tree was swaying from side to side, losing its leaves to the wind. Once on the main street, I remarked how the tops of electrical posts resembled crosses. A cross is my symbol for **Plus**. I considered the story of Nikola Tesla, his christian upbringing, his amazing discoveries, including how to transfer energy through air, the maintenance expense the posts require. The electrical posts, as jail guards, followed me home, as the poem was taking shape; the mood was melancholic and sad, the gray ugly crosses and black cables obstructed the views of the sky.

During the same run, perhaps, I encountered my daddy-lookalike neighbor. (Something must have excited me, put me in the poetry mood.) It was a positive experience and came shortly after encountering the grimace in the purple jacket; perhaps as soon as the next day. The neighbor waved to me from the other side of the lake. Approximately 300 feet of water separated us, but something made us lock eyes. I waved back. I was influenced to think that my daddy waved to me via this man. Daddy looked strikingly similar, also smoked rolled cigarettes, a wolf-like dog on a leash... You see, dear reader, when I was fighting a battle in the emergency room of my second hospital, daddy was fighting with me, in a spiritual world; he was a wolf, the leader of the attack, for the pack whose patriarch was the mother. The neighbor who always kept to himself, whom nobody knew in the neighborhood, waved to me from the other side of the lake. He had never done it before or after, yet he often walked his husky around the same time I ran.

So first, the purple jacket grimaced at me, then 'daddy' waved to me, and then, about a day after (who cares, right?) I saw a cluster of fur fluffs. The gray and white fluffs looked like the fur of the husky, the wolf-dog. The fluffs laid on the grass, several feet below the spot from which the neighbor waved to me the other day. *Did dog get injured? Is daddy ok?* I thought fearfully and felt intimidated. I didn't pause my run to inspect the fluffs closer. I actually thought they were fake.

Then, at the last, eighth circle, the neighbor appeared, with his husky. The dog was okay. This time, I waved to him first, from the other side of the lake, but he didn't wave back... *How unexpected indeed! Because on the grass earlier I saw flakes of your dog's fur, like the dog was dead! Ha! How scared am I! you didn't wave.* Adams was laughing hysterically inside of me at the copycat slug and

its total lack of intelligence in all its attempts to scare me: slug raising hands, using colors, wearing purple, grimacing, redirecting my eyesight to see intimidating sights and bad images it sneaks into my dreams. This is how slug plays.

But of course... I saw similar fluffs before, in bright red, during my first episode. I was hiding in a friend's place from my ex-supervisor who, I was convinced, was spying on me, determined to get me leave the company. That night, on my friend's sofa, I saw a cluster of bright red fluffs. In my mind, red instantly associated with blood. My friend acted stupefied when I asked him why his sofa was covered with some weird red fluffs. He brushed them off, but I spent all night awake on that sofa, praying to Jesus for protection, listening for warning noises outside, as my friend insisted on leaving the window of his ground floor apartment open. He had no AC and needed the cool night air to sleep. I really thought I won't survive that night. Presently, I was thinking, *red fluffs three years ago, fur fluffs now...* This was the reason I thought the fur fluffs were fake in the first place.

Dear reader, right now is Tuesday, October 13, 2015, and I finally found the time to recall the memorable evening shift of June 18, 2015 at the hotel, almost four months after the event took place. It took me so long to get back to this particular evening, because since God told me **Write**, I have been recording everything that was happening to me from that point onward. Almost all that time I have been writing. New events occur daily, overshadowing the old ones. I am afraid if I wait any longer, the memory of this evening will fade away without a trace.

Because the hotel's restaurant lacked clients this evening, I had to find work for my three unmotivated interns who shamelessly rested idle in the kitchen. Meanwhile, the kitchen begged for a general cleaning. Dirt was everywhere. Last time it was me who cleaned it, almost a year ago. What a nightmare it was! Dry mussel shells lay around in the corners, carrot peels glued to the rubber carpets, french fries rotted under the fridge; hair, flour, sugar and spices were spilled all over the floors and kitchen shelves. Surprisingly, no rats jumped on my *scanning-for-dirt* face as I cleaned all surfaces. The dishwasher was the worst, sealed with a permeant coat of thick grease. Presently, the kitchen was close to the same condition as a year ago, but nobody seemed to care about it.

As I believe in a leading-by-example strategy, I began to demonstratively clean certain, hard-to-reach areas, as to say to the girls, *Look! There is always something to do!* Soon, a client called and I left the girls, hoping they got the message. When I returned, no progress had been made. Obviously, they felt it wasn't their job to clean the kitchen. *Ok*, I thought, *you won't be getting paid for chatting*, and told Fo and Bin to sign off and go home. I kept Frida, the weakest of the three interns, useless to be honest.

Frida constantly complained about not getting enough hours. "It's not fair!" she whined, "Other girls get more time!" But the boss cared less about a fair distribution of hours, "Send her home if she is doing nothing." And I often did just that, with pleasure, for what isn't fair is to profit off others' hard work. This evening, however, was exceptionally slow, hence, the most appropriate time to keep the useless Frida. Frida, however, spoiled as she was, failed to see compassion in my decision to give the easy hours to her.

Our large dining space was empty, except for one couple who were about to finish their dinner. This is when I interrupted Frida's dream in the dining room corner. "You can start kitchen closeout," I woke her up politely. It was obvious, like thirty minutes ago, that the time for the kitchen closeout had come. However, reducing the company payroll, the major part of which were wages, was never Frida's concern. "Please make sure to bring supplies for the breakfast shift." But Frida only blinked in confusion. I had to escort her into the kitchen and point to the things that needed to be done. "Here Frida," I said, "clean the kitchen now, and I will do the dining room closeout. There is no need for the two of us in the dining room at this point." Frida turned up her nose but I stayed firm, "If you don't know what to do, you can follow the list." I handed her the kitchen closeout list that she was required to know by heart, and left.

Soon enough, Junior waved to me from the bar area. Frida stood next to him. She was crying. "What is happening?" I said, annoyed to be interrupted. Junior exclaimed nervously, "Let's go to the green room to discuss." I guess nice guys don't feel comfortable in front of crying girls. In the green room, Frida, like a hungry baby bird, whined tearfully, "She told me to clean the chicken! She told me to clean the chicken!" Both, Junior and I, were confused. *What chicken is she talking about?* I wondered if Frida was intentionally lying to Junior about me forcing her to clean some chicken that we didn't even have in stock!

Frida's emotions overcame her completely, when after cleaning the *chicken*, she told Junior that I *forced* her to clean the bathroom. In her broken English, she wept dramatically about how I *followed* her to the bathroom. "She follow me to the *bathroom*! She *follow* me!" Yes, I did! For I suspected she would disregard my command. Pretty Frida never cleaned a bathroom before. I wanted to see whether she started cleaning the bathroom immediately, instead of staring at herself in the mirror first. You see, Frida had a history of frequent bathroom breaks and I assumed this was what she did there. When I opened the bathroom door, I saw what I expected — Frida was refreshing herself, instead of the bathroom.

"I didn't *follow* her *right away*!" I retaliated. Frida was completely avoiding my eyes, staring at Junior instead, her eyes shining with tears, as though Junior was a knight bound to save her. I elaborated very calmly, using simple words, so Frida could understand, "I told her to do her private business *after* clocking out. Five minutes later, which is the time the basic bathroom's cleaning should take, I went to the office and saw her timesheet still unmarked. I went to the bathroom then to see whether she was still there. She was, and she wasn't cleaning the bathroom. Your dad asked me specifically to *make sure* interns clock out *before* doing their private business, such as chatting among themselves, checking their phones or taking a final bathroom break. I told Frida just that, 'Do your private business *after* you clock out,' but she disobeyed. The ten-minute break for her *private* business was on company time. What am I supposed to do — disregard your dad's command?"

"No, but of course, he didn't ask you to *follow* her to the *bathroom*." Junior remained a gentleman, while slug tried to make me feel uncomfortable about interrupting Frida's private business.

"No, he didn't say that exactly, but he told me to *make sure* no time is wasted."

I knew that Frida, the princess, felt simply overwhelmed with cleaning the kitchen and then she totally lost it when I told her to clean the bathroom as well. Usually Frida just walks around lamely, a water pitcher in her fragile hand, dreaming of attracting and marrying a man from the clientele. That's why she always walks around the tables *moving it*. Bin, my sturdy intern, was the one who usually cleaned the bathrooms, or Fo.

I did my job. I closed the dining room quickly. The kitchen closeout should take twenty minutes at most, but Frida was still wiping the kitchen counter upon my return. I noticed the list on the counter. She still needed to refer to the list she was supposed to know by heart. Most of the sentences on the list she didn't understand, since she never cared enough to translate the instructions into her native language, in her spare time. I actually caught her using her phone, and it looked like she was checking the word she didn't know, the way she was frowning. Who pays for this spoiled girl, my boss or my compassion?

So Frida lost it, she lost it completely without any fault of mine. "She told me to clean the *chicken*! She told me to clean the *chicken*!" she screamed at Junior. In fact, she seemed to be suggesting that my direction for her to clean the kitchen somehow excused her from cleaning the bathroom. "That's right," I said calmly, "I told you to clean the kitchen, but after I came back, having finished with the dining room, and saw that you were *still* wiping the *same* kitchen counter, I directed you to clean to bathroom, and I quickly finished the kitchen myself." Blink. Blink.

It was too much for Junior. The boy couldn't stand a crying girl and was searching for the right words. So, I announced to both of them, aggravated as I was, "Now, I could have been home twenty minutes ago if I didn't have to argue about this nonsense." "*Vous*," I looked at Frida angrily, "just wasted twenty minutes of *my* time!" The clock showed 2320. Before leaving the party, I added sarcastically, "Did you clock out before complaining?"

Frida wasn't made for the job. Perhaps Frida wasn't meant for working in general. Perhaps my brother was right when he said, "Not everybody is meant to be ambitious."

4. June 19 2015 Friday_ slugs at Work!

Today at work, they were *everywhere*, the slugs. My first goal was to smooth over the after effects of the ‘chicken episode’ with Frida. I wanted to start afresh, with no hard feelings between me and her. In the kitchen, I found the interns chitchatting amongst themselves in their native language. The conversation sounded more animated than usual, there were indiscreet glances thrown my direction; most likely they were gushing about how terribly mean I was to Frida the night before. The first sign of the unspoken conflict came when Fo, who possessed better English skills, refused to translate my directions to the other two interns. We had a very busy evening in front of us. The extended family of the boss was coming to their annual reunion dinner. On such a busy evening, I couldn’t afford to lose Fo, my strongest player.

My apologies would sound fake, I considered. Plus, I didn’t feel that I needed to apologize. Frida bluntly refused to do her duties and made a scene, portraying me as some sort of dictator and herself as a hard-working individual. To rectify the situation, however, I decided to act super nice and positive. I slid behind Fo, softly touched her shoulder and said politely, “Fo, I just want to say that you did a great job last night as an expeditor. I have discussed your performance with Day and he complimented you as well. Great job! Also, please translate to Bin that she did a great job at the salad and dessert stations. Her caesar dressing was excellent.”

I expected Fo to at least smile, but she accepted my compliment silently while looking down at the pot she was wiping with some random dusty rag. (Several times I pointed to the interns the drawer for the stripy, blue & white cloth for wiping pots and pans.) Bin stood a meter away from us, scraping a pan over the sink. She heard us without understanding, and as Fo’s silent treatment signified, wouldn’t be receiving a translation.

The second person I had the pleasure to interact with was Mella. Mella worked as a day manager, so I was surprised to run into her. Without any hello or at least a smile but with a piercing stare, she confronted me in the entryway, between the dining room and the bar area, “Well, everybody says you don’t get along with Frida. Well, I think we need to talk about it. I get along with Frida just fine.” She rested both of her hands on her hips, in a commanding female fashion.

Evidently, the gossip between slackers had spread during her boring morning shift. I couldn’t believe that it was Mella who was criticizing me. Breakfast shifts were slow — one, three tables at most; most of the time none. Reading online gossips and running to the kitchen for snacks kept Mella looking busy during the day. Why did this wasteful employee think she could criticize Me? I wondered what she was doing at the hotel in the evening. Squandering the company’s payroll? Mella was leaving the company, by the way. It was her last weekend at the hotel.

For the evening Mella chose to wear a yellow, silk shirt, certainly an eye-catcher... Yellow is a sign of death in Russia. Yellow flowers are brought to funerals. Coincidentally, the father of the boss’s wife passed away, only yesterday. Earlier this morning, my mother brought me this sad news. She returned from her cleaning shift and sadly remarked that the *yellow* flower she gave to the boss for his recent birthday somehow caused the death of his wife’s father. Obviously evil

was making my mom superstitious. The same slug also blew fear into me the very moment I saw the yellow shirt on Mella. I recalled my mother's yellow flower and was taken aback.

So Mella, in her silk, yellow shirt, remained in the hotel past her typical working hours. She looked so mean, so determined to boss me around. All those leftover muffins, I thought, that Mella snacked on during the day, must be responsible for her poor attitude. I remembered Mella's recent breakfast disaster. There was only one table of fifteen that she needed to satisfy; a rare occasion of which she was notified well in advance. She had two interns, Fo and Frida, under her management. A client who ordered the omelet got fried eggs, another got sausage instead of bacon strips, one lady waited for tea for an hour. In the end, most people got their eggs served cold. Naturally, Mella blamed her mistakes on Tony, the breakfast chef, but Tony told me just how messy Mella's order ticket was and how loud she screamed at him instead of keeping the chaos under control. (Once Mella told me about her extensive restaurant experience, at her uncle's Italian restaurant... She even taught me how to abbreviate order tickets — a technique questionable in its usefulness.)

And here I was, coming to work half an hour early, to make sure the restaurant was ready for the very busy shift, only to find Mella determined to waste my time. Mella, who spent her daily shifts reading yahoo news, decided on my most challenging evening, to embrace Frida with unconditional love. My instinctive response was to reply, 'Maybe you are overlooking Frida's inefficiencies,' but I held it back. It sounded too professional. I was smarter than a week ago, for presently I saw how tricky it was to argue with anybody who was under slug's influence.

The bottom line — I had no time to argue. Why was slug trying to distract me in the first place? Maybe the key to winning the game was to stay efficient despite any distractions. I didn't suspect that actual people, subjected to slug's influence, noticed anything altered in their conduct, choice of words, manner of speaking or body language. What I knew was that my behavior seemed just as real to them. I reminded myself that evil was inside real people, so whatever I meant for slug, real people would hear as well. If I lost control and began to argue with slug, humans wouldn't understand.

"How could you make her cry!" Mella turned scarlet.

Just like my mother, when under slug's influence, Mella didn't have the slightest idea of what was going on. I knew that some possibility remained of Mella becoming cooperative, if Adams somehow took over her mind from slug. Yet, I didn't understand how exactly I was supposed to act in order to 'win' Mella for my team. *Stay calm*, I told myself, while cussing at slug, *stupid moron!*

For some time, Mella's voluptuous hands rested on her round hips, as she stared at me, waiting for answers or rather apologies. Her weight was so firmly pressing into the ground, I felt the floor crack. Physically moving Mella out of my way was impossible, she stood her ground like a mature peacock in mating season. Before I managed any reply, she marched around me and paused at the hostess station. She peeked into my shift record book. I couldn't believe it! Was she going to tell me how to run my shift? She closed the book, however, without any comments, and proceeded towards the kitchen, as if she were my supervisor, trying to assess if everything was running properly.

Left alone in the entryway, I looked around. The bar counter was missing candles, and all the bar stools were gone. The absence of bar stools was especially unsettling — I could see no explanation for it. Let me clarify here, dear reader, that my job was to come to the restaurant at 16:30 to inspect the setup of all areas. The interns came at 15:00 to complete the aforementioned setup. In other words, the restaurant was supposed to be ‘ready for business’ upon my arrival. Perplexed by the unreadiness of the place, by Fo’s coldness and especially by Mella’s unrestrained display of emotions, I proceeded to the bathroom, where I was headed before Mella bulldozed into me. In the bathroom, I looked into the mirror, *so slug, you decided to play with me today? Let’s see how stupid you can get.* My mirrored face smirked back at me, without my own intention! *Here you are!*

Back in the kitchen, Sam, the sous-chef, also skipping a proper ‘Hello’ or ‘Good evening,’ confronted me from behind his station, “Did you make Frida *cry* yesterday?” His teeth grinned at me, as he peeled carrots, carelessly dropping the peels onto the floor. I couldn’t believe it! Sam too? *Please Sam, my dear friend slug, why don’t you shut up?* It was Sam who complained to me only yesterday about Frida not scraping off leftovers from dishes before dropping them at the dishwasher. Why couldn’t he tell her directly, or rather show it to her, in case she didn’t understand? He saw her in the kitchen every day. Everybody scraped dishes off: Bin, Fo, Mella, even the boss; everyone who had ever brought a plate to the dishwasher, everyone who respected the dishwasher. Everyone, but Frida.

Sam was the chef’s subordinate and therefore, not my problem; I cared less about what he had to say. His criticism is only worth mentioning because of the way he said it: skipping any greeting, through grinning teeth, the handheld knife sparkling in the background. Coincidentally or not, it was Sam who smoked almost all my cigarettes left in the kitchen drawer. He never apologized, never offered to buy me a pack, but acted as though it was completely normal to smoke all my cigarettes rather than bumming one or two, which would be socially acceptable. I learned my lesson and relocated my pack, or rather the one remaining cigarette in it, to a new hiding place.

Still, I couldn’t help but feel guilty about Frida. Not everyone is born strong. The weak need protection. Did I mismanage her? How could I help Frida achieve her full potential? I came to work with a clear agenda — to rectify Frida’s situation as soon as possible; I couldn’t make it through this evening without teamwork.

I found the culprit in the dining room.

“Hello Frida,” I sounded positive, but evidently Frida thought that professional working environment should parallel her kindergarden experience. For the first few seconds, she stood silently, as though considering whether to acknowledge me at all. I noticed that she was wiping a glass with a red napkin, the supply of which was scarce and reserved for redressing tables only. The white cloth was for polishing glasses. Soft in texture, it removed stains better, as opposed to the linen, red napkin that only blurred the stains. Frida was supposed to know that.

“I need to talk to you,” I said, ignoring the red napkin situation.

“Don’t talk to me!” she replied, “I don’t want to talk to you!”

All these emotions, still raw and burning, hit me out of nowhere, as though Frida had been proofing them like a sourdough all night long. For a while, she looked fixedly at the floor as

I was waiting for her to make eye contact. Frida, however, refused to acknowledge both my presence and my request to talk. Instead, she redirected her gaze into the wine glass, wiping it mindlessly, without seeing that the glass was already clean. Did slug possess her, as he took over Mella, or was it Frida herself — the spoiled drama queen with a terrible work ethic?

“Sometimes in life, you have to do what you don't want to do. How do you expect to work with people without speaking to them?” I asked, expecting no reply, for Frida didn't understand English that well.

I looked around. It was 16:20. Ten minutes remained before the family meal, but there was no time to eat. The company policy clearly directed to finish setup and *then* eat. Frustration and anxiety began to trouble my heart. We were running behind schedule and my interns were on strike. The advice from my friend Lee Chen came to mind, “Your job as a manager is to get along with *everybody*.”

I noticed Fo's arrival to the hostess station. There she stood, peering into the dining room where Frida and I were conversing. Fo observed us with curiosity, and I automatically began to wonder for just how long Fo planned to remain idle. I couldn't believe it! We had a huge dinner coming up and Fo, my only competent intern, decided to stop and watch the show.

Frida, meanwhile, paused wiping the same wineglass and squealed, “You are not America! You are not America!” What was she talking about? Why, all of a sudden, did Frida care if I were an American or not?

“Oh, Frida,” I replied, “Believe me, you don't know what America is all about. People here work *hard*.” Having spoken, I pointed at Fo at the hostess station and added, “Fo is ambitious and career-oriented. Fo works hard. Maybe something good will come out of Fo, but I doubt you can manage anything.” After a pause, I added, “Do you understand?”

“I understand! I understand!” she squealed.

“Can you please calm down. I came to realize that when you don't understand something, you still say that you understand. So, I am asking you *do you understand?*”

“I understand! I speak English!”

“So why are polishing clean glasses?”

“It is in the paper! It is in the paper!”

“What *paper*? We don't check that *paper* anymore. We *memorized* it during the training period. Don't polish clean glasses please. You are supposed to inspect all glasses but only wipe those with stains. ”

“It is in the paper! *Boss* said to do it.” I was surprised, frankly, to hear a new word from her.

“You don't know what the *boss* says. He doesn't talk to you.”

I demonstratively passed by several tables. At each, I inspected the glasses. Only on one table one glass had a fingerprint on it. I polished it quickly, with aggravation. While Frida remained at the same table, I inspected six more and then approached her again.

“Please polish only glasses with stains,” I repeated and began to walk away, only to be interrupted by another squeal.

“Oh, do you think you are America? Hah!”

I couldn't believe it.

“That’s right. I am not America. I am *an American*. Would you like to see my passport?”

I didn’t care about hurting Frida’s feelings anymore. I didn’t care about using simple words or speaking slowly or pausing between sentences. It didn’t matter whether Frida understood me or not; surely slug was speaking through her. We had never exchanged so many sentences in the past. Previous Frida nodded her head a lot. I could feel Adam laughing inside me and fought to restrain my unfolding smiles from Frida, whose newly discovered stubbornness had endless roots.

“Don’t talk to me! You are not America,” she waved her hand at me so passionately that her oversized black-framed glasses slid down her little, dainty nose.

I couldn’t understand her obsession with my nationality. I thought slug was wasting my time. Only now, in retrospect, while writing this novel, I understood that Frida didn’t want to talk to me because I was just another immigrant, not a *real* American, like the *boss*. Frida refused to be bossed around by another immigrant. The fact that I looked younger and was better-looking was probably also bothering her.

“Leave me alone!” she squealed and turned away.

I observed her with interest. She was holding the wine glass incorrectly — not at its stem. Her lean fingers grasped the fragile wineglass bowl angrily, leaving fingerprints. She was sweating too. Another provocation could’ve crushed the glass. Chair cushions still needed to be wiped in the entire dining room. Do I tell her that or do I leave her alone?

Presently Junior came to the dining room to notify me that I was required to set up the green room for an additional thirty-two seats. It felt unjust. Since the gallery opening earlier in May, the green room had remained in complete disarray. Two large easels and two dozen extra chairs piled in the central of the room like a tower; all tables were pushed against the walls; on the tables, barricaded by more chairs, the unsold paintings laid. The interns should have been assigned to this workload long time ago, during one of Mella’s boring shifts. Several times a day Mella passed by this mess. It was on her way to the kitchen, which she frequented for a bite to eat before returning back to the office or, more specifically, to a silent phone and online gossip. The mess never bothered her, it didn’t bother the boss, not until the room was needed. So, he dumped it all on me, as his last-minute instruction.

All excess furniture and paintings needed to be relocated to the conference room, floor — vacuumed, tables — dressed, more red napkins — folded, more silverware — washed and wiped. On top of that, the dishwasher was running late. Bin temporarily took over his post. I had to explain to her, as soon as possible, to prioritize silverware over accumulation of pots and pans from the cooking station. Since we didn’t have enough of silverware to dress both, the dining area and the green room, Bin would have to wash the mismatched silverware from the storage, wipe it dry and put together at least thirty-two sets.

In the kitchen, Fo was finished at about fifty percent, and was nowhere to be found.

“Where is Fo?” I asked Bin.

Bin blinked and opened her mouth in surprise, “Ah?”

“*Fo!* Where is Fo?”

Blink. Blink.

I assumed Fo was in the basement retrieving some supplies, until I approached the kitchen swinging doors and peered through the built-in window: slugMella instantly turned, as though she knew I was watching her back, and grimaced at me. Her eyes, beneath raised eyebrows, protruded so forcibly she resembled a dull, impertinent fish. Behind slugMella's body was Fo, seated in the chair facing the dining room doors. One half of Fo's long hair cascaded down her back, another half was being plaited into a braid the loose end of which slugMella held pointedly, *You see? I get along with the girls.*

I couldn't believe that such unsanitary (and in old times also *private*) conduct was taking place in a restaurant, right in front of the dining room doors. A client could have walked in on them! Fo, apparently, just like Mella, had lost all her common sense. The extent of slug's involvement in my affairs exceeded all my expectations; it was getting more obvious, more stupid, therefore, I was winning the game.

In the kitchen, I completed what Fo had ignored: 1) replenish supplies at the salad station, 2) precut desserts, 3) restock kitchen rags, 4) prepare the coffee station. Fortunately, Day was running late with the family meal. Pausing to eat would have delayed us to a dangerous degree. We were far from 'ready for business.' As I was about to ask Bin for help with the green room, Mella walked in.

"Can I use Bin to clean room #10?" she asked unceremoniously, glancing toward the cooking station where Day was roasting baby carrots for the family meal. Grilled bacon, potato salad and a pasta dish already rested under the heat lamps. The appetizing aroma of sizzling bacon filled the air. If the staff were dogs, they would be drooling, but everyone patiently waited for Day to announce that dinner was served.

"Your mother *forgot* to do it," slugMella continued, "I don't want to say anything bad about your mother, I know she is not feeling well, but I need to make a bed in that room." Next, Mella walked all the way to the kitchen line, took a long, crispy bacon strip from the bowl and put it in her mouth.

The fact that she dared to imply that the light form of the chemo therapy mom was currently undertaking could worsen the quality of her work didn't anger me only because it was absolutely impossible to be true, and everybody who knew my mother knew that, as well as they knew that Mella was a careless slob. I replied, loudly enough for Sam and Day to hear, "Whatever problems you have with my mother is for you to manage during the day. Right now is my shift, and Bin is supposed to be working for me." Day smiled. Recently there was a hint from him that Mella's dramatic outbursts happened unnecessarily and weren't appreciated in his kitchen.

"But this is *your* mother who forgot to do it. Then, you go and take care of it. You know how to do it."

Let me explain to you here, dear reader, that several years ago, in September of 2013, I volunteered at the hotel as a cleaning lady. I was going through my second spiritual episode and occasionally preferred spending time at the hotel with my mom rather than home, alone. Even though my mom didn't need help, I volunteered under the pretext, "My mom shouldn't carry anything heavier than fifteen pounds, I would like to carry a vacuum cleaner for her." The boss

couldn't say no to a free cleaning lady. As a result, that September, I learned everything cleaning ladies did at the hotel.

For a moment, I felt uncertain, even threatened by Mella's suggestion that somehow my mom missed one room. I feared that for such a mistake mom could lose her job and we would suffer more poverty. This old, familiar to so many fear, brought out an impulse to rush and erase mom's mistake before the boss takes notice. Quickly however, the memories of mom's excellent sequence of tasks, of her gentle critique of the other cleaning lady, Baltalka, who cleaned one room while mother did three, of mom always rushing to help Baltalka after being done with her own rooms, of mom's healthy, happy sweats induced by hard labor, of her devouring lunch meal in five minutes instead of thirty minutes allowed, of mom never taking a break in her consistent, energetic push through the workload, so she could return home as soon as possible to enjoy the rest of her day, brought me back into the right state of mind. I felt furious at the lazy, fat slug, *you can **c* with me, but you don't *u** with my mother.*

"My mother doesn't *forget* anything."

And then I lied, for I actually thought only a lie would get me out of slugMella's trap, "I don't know how to make a bed. You can use Frida. I need Bin." Frida's absence couldn't hinder my progress, at least not until the clients arrived; then, I would need Frida to serve water and remove empty plates.

Frida, my dear reader, failed the room cleaning training. I heard that she failed it because she couldn't carry a vacuum cleaner up and down the stairs. I highly doubted Frida knew how to make a bed either. Evidently, Mella held Frida's bed-making skills in similar, modest esteem, for she only grinned in anger. "What do you need Bin for now? Aren't you supposed to be ready *already*?" she pressed on, gesticulating wildly.

Acting inside, slug had transformed this previously distracting but friendly Italian woman into a nervous, mean provocateur. The shift was already severely understaffed for the amount of guests expected, but slugMella didn't care. She defended useless Frida, braided Fo's hair and presently was about to steal Bin, whom I needed to help with the green room. If only the boss would come in! If only he could see this chaos: the dusty bar counter, unlit candles, missing bar stools (where did they go?) How quickly then would Mella's scorning frown metamorphose into a submissive plea?

It was 16:55. Any moment now the clients were bound to arrive, most likely in large groups, to become a part of this chaos. Another fear came to bother me: since all clients belonged to the boss's family, they could and would, most certainly, relate their dissatisfactions directly to the boss. They knew his phone number, they didn't need to ask for a manager. They could relate their negative experience directly after the dinner or later, at some other family gatherings: Remember our last annual dinner? Ooh là là!

It was not the time, however, to lose self-control. I knew that in a hurry, it should take me no more than twenty minutes to set up the green room, even less with Bin at my side. There was no time, however, for a cigarette break that I usually enjoyed while employees ate the family meal. Fo's deliberate ignorance came at the cost of my time. Wandering around like a lost philosopher, her pupils jumped around, as though she couldn't stop, pause or rest until she found what else she could *forget* to do this evening.

Frustrated about having to skip my cigarette break, I went straight to the green room. I attacked the barricade of easels and chairs in the center of the room first. As I lifted the largest easel, with intention to relocate it into the conference room, Mella's voice resonated from behind, "Can you show Bin where the room keys are and go do the bed with her?"

I couldn't believe it! One stupid bed was still not made! It was Mella who conducted the room service training; the room keys hanged in *her* office, on the wall next to *her* computer. The same Mella, however, according to the cleaning personnel, couldn't find the right bed sheet size in the inventory closet and didn't know where the vacuum cleaner was. I should have known better: slugMella wasn't stupid, she wasn't going to use Frida, she *was* stealing Bin from me. Immediately, I regretted my failure to take Bin into the green room with me. Instead, I let her prep the salad, thus leaving her in the kitchen, alone, exposed to slugmella's trap.

I peeked around the easel still held in my hands, and told slugMella, "Can't you tell her yourself? She is in the kitchen prepping salad." Inside I was beaming with pleasure for I knew perfectly well what the problem was — Bin didn't understand slugMella. As a former foreigner myself, only I could explain things to Bin using simple words and gestures.

Since Mella didn't budge, but stood in my way, arms crossed, feet planted firmly apart, I added, "It is not my *responsibility* to manage room service," aware of how much Mella hated that word. Just the other week, the boss reproached her, "It wasn't Ioanna's *responsibility*," he said about something Mella was responsible for. I never learned what the boss referred to exactly, mom happened to overhear only a part of that conversation.

The emphasis on *responsibility* had the desired effect. slugMella snorted aloud and marched toward the kitchen in discontent, as though she had just stepped into a pile of poop. The way to the conference room was cleared, and there I rushed, my hands aching from holding the heavy easel.

Having dropped the easel off, I went into the kitchen. Bin was still there, so was slugMella. The latter stood by the kitchen line, holding her ground as a pompous, fluffy poodle, a winner of an annual dog show. Her eyes, with an uncontrolled hunger for fat, sugar and salt, were devouring the dishes resting under the heat lamps. She couldn't fight it, and sneaked (again) a long, crispy strip of bacon. *At least take the broken strip, leave the best for the clients!* Then, she dipped her nose into the steam rising from a hot dish. The melange of appetizing aromas seemed to knock Mella off her feet.

"Why is dinner so late today? I am starving! I haven't eaten since lunch! It's already 17:30!" she boiled with indignation.

"I *hear* you," Day hissed, without turning away from the grill.

Everybody heard her. Day's face, already sweaty from labor and heat, turned purple from anger. Until this moment, I didn't believe in rumors of Day and Mella not getting along. I thought Day liked this voluptuous woman. She was the type of his girlfriend and ex-wife. There she was, pumping up her eggplants at him, moving her hips from side to side. She was just hungry, her palates were addicted to unhealthy food. I would think that Day, who was also overweight, who shared the same food addictions, should understand her cravings better than anybody else. Yet, the enthusiasm of Mella's body language left him indifferent; her powerful

eggplants couldn't extinguish his rage. I must've misjudged him. Day wasn't nice to everybody, and just as many men, he hated when a woman screamed at him.

Day never hissed at me, nor had I ever heard him screaming or hissing at anybody else before. To me, Day always spoke tenderly. Even during our busiest shifts, Day always found time to ask me interesting questions. Often he addressed me privately, other times he asked loudly for the rest to hear. I knew a question was coming because he was either walking towards me purposefully, as a stealthy cat, or was observing me from the distance with that kind, wondering look, until our eyes met. "Can I ask you a personal question?" was his opening line, and I felt like screaming — *Oh Yes! Absolutely!* — I was so curious. At first, however, I found Day's questions inappropriate, and felt dubious about answering. If I said no, I felt he would understand — so polite was his manner, so tender was the way he looked at me — so I always answered, feeling that no answer would break his heart. His interest appeared genuine, even pure. His latest question was about armpits, "Do you prefer when guys shave there?" He seemed to be absolutely fascinated by the secrets of female existence.

I felt happy when Day spoke up to slugMella. I wasn't alone. It meant that Day was on my team this evening. No wonder he was late with the family meal, buying me more time. I felt relieved of all fears at the knowledge that Adams was there, fighting for me. As though sensing my joy, Mella turned away from Day and looked at me — a hateful grimace disfigured her mouth. I retorted at slug mentally, in verses:

*Stupid slug is so slow, eats so much bacon, he'll explode.
Pimples and worms, tiny brain and no more, will lay all over the floor.
Excuse my mistake! I meant to say — absolutely no brain!*

I felt Adam's presence via the secret sign. He was laughing, but the situation didn't seem too funny to me. I couldn't believe that Mella was stealing Bin, my only productive intern this evening. She couldn't physically force me to talk to Bin, yet she retreated to the kitchen swinging doors, blocking my exit with her body, and pointed to Bin with her eyes. *Go tell her*, she eyed me and waited. A part of me wanted Mella to be caught, wanted the boss to learn about the room that she failed to put on the cleaning schedule. She wasn't nice about asking either — she demanded that I help her with this cover up. I conceded because I remembered my mom again and how she always helped the other cleaning lady, anonymously, without ever letting the boss know.

Bin took my directions as usual. She blinked at me, blinked at Mella, blinked at "Help Mella do a bed. Room #10" and blinked at "Immediately come back to help me with the green room." I cared less if Bin understood me or not. I passed around Mella and exited through the swinging doors, gracefully, without noise, the swinging doors didn't flap back and forth behind me, as they did when the voluptuous body of Mella pushed its way through. I had to maintain the image that I was in control.

Throughout the evening, I addressed questions to Him. Via the secret sign, He encouraged me to stay calm, to act as peacefully as possible. When, for example, I asked Him whether or not I should point out to Fo all the kitchen tasks she forgot to do, Adams confirmed

to complete the tasks on my own. When I argued with Frida, He squeezed with excitement, suggesting that it was useless but entertaining. I could feel He was enjoying the way the events were unfolding, because instead of fearing, I made fun of the situations, of slug in particular. He enjoyed observing my performance, managing difficult people, getting out of trouble. I enjoyed feeling His laughs each time I made fun of slug, so I did it more often, solely to entertain Him.

slug, old puppy, you so old, can't pass gas without saying "Oh no!"

If you see slug outside your door, say 'hello,' teach him a new word.

slug, slug, slug, where were you?

When the brains were due?

Were you upset, looking for a toilet?

Did you burn your stool?

Sending yourself back to the moon?

Are you flying high?

Like a bird without an eye?

I wish I could have written the exact lines down, for they were a lot funnier than the substitutes used in the novel, but writing anything down that evening was simply impossible. The lines flew out of my head like wild birds out of cages — in a second they were gone, and in a few minutes — completely erased from memory by the issuance of new lines. All that I remember now is laughing, and using a lot of bad words. When provoked, and it happened so often, I felt, first of all, amazed at the magic behind the experience, then angry at slug's stupidity and obnoxiousness. The intensity of emotions slug's manipulations aroused, assisted by my lack of better vocabulary, pushed the bad words to mind first. I cited the first line, with no idea what the second one would be, it was a matter of milliseconds. Sometimes, especially during my first attempts, I failed to come up with a punchline. It was similar to making crepes — the first crepe gets stuck, but a cook quickly gets the hang of it — so did my lines, hesitantly at first, got into a rhythm, formed into stanzas and stanzas promptly united into one signature melody. It is this melody now that I remember and am using to recreate *similar* lines. In later edits, I eventually took the very bad words out. Yet, in the privacy of my own mind, the unedited lines ring most true, raw and authentic, the most impactful, the words my earthly soul retrieved first and threw at satan like rocks.

At punchlines, Adam laughed and slug ground my teeth. At particularly funny punchlines, it got so angry — it physically snapped my jaws.

Everything was late. Every fleeting second increased the chances of demanding clients walking into an unprepared dining area. As Bin and I sweated in the green room, Frida idled in the dining room and Fo acted preoccupied with nonexistent chores. In fact, Fo's attitude was as unpredictable as lightning. One minute, her face looked angry, another moment, it spread into a shiny smile. One second she joined Bin and me in a tedious task of dressing tables, next second, she wandered off from it as if she got an important message requiring her immediate attention. One particular time, I caught her lingering absently by the hotel's reception desk. *How about*

getting some ice, Fo? Could you help your dear friend, Frida, carry the ice bucket? Where are the water pitchers? Who is stocking the beer? Fo, my all-knowing Fo, it's setup time! Light the candles, wipe the chairs, fold extra table napkins, wipe the bar counter, get the bread buns and desserts out of the freezer and come back for more! Guess what! We are super busy tonight! Did you notice the hotel is full?

One time, on her way to the bathroom, Fo quickly grimaced at me! I retorted,

*slug, old snake, grimaces in Fo.
Do you think I care anymore?
I do! I do! It smells like poo,
Everywhere around you!*

The grimace in itself was a confirmation that Fo's mind and body was being manipulated by slug, but as opposed to the continuous possession of Mella, with Fo, slug's spirit seemed to enter and withdraw at random intervals.

As the evening progressed, slug's agenda was becoming clearer. The ultimate plan was to make my work impossible — so chaotic that I lose my mind trying to manage it. The boundaries of the game kept shifting, and not in my favor. Mella was taken, Frida too, Fo — rendered unreliable, the dishwasher was running late. Even Junior was unusually silent and discreet; he was nowhere to be found when I needed him. Under these graying clouds of chaos, I was suddenly thunderstruck by a flashback; then lightening illuminated the storm — *It is deja vu! I went through all of this before! During my ex-supervisor invasion!* In a fleeting moment of desperation, I feared that this evening would wind up like the day I quit my construction job. That day, mesmerized by fear, I lost control and panicked. Presently, I was in the midst of a similar attack, but I was no longer blindfolded. There was Adam's continuous presence (Adam from now on) and there were plenty of cheap tricks, such as grimacing or Pwaa! sound, that pointed to slug. I knew who was fighting me, so I stayed calm, yet gradually was becoming reckless.

Only Bin seemed to remain on my side. She was literally sweating in the green room. I felt a spirit of teamwork had united us into one moving body, one will. Our language barrier was overcome by observation. I relocated a piece of furniture — Bin relocated the rest, I brought the vacuum cleaner — Bin vacuumed, I wiped a table — Bin wiped the rest, I dressed a table — Bin dressed the rest; without questions, without mistakes, at a fast pace. Beyond the green room, all the way in the back, by the fire exit, I found the bar stools propped in a messy pile against the wall. (Why were they there?) I grabbed one stool happily and relocated it back to its place, behind the bar counter. Bin relocated the rest.

"Are you almost finished here? Can we have a meeting here?" It was Junior speaking. He was looking for a place for his meeting and found the green room that Bin and I were still setting up a suitable location. (The green room wouldn't be occupied until later in the evening, when the second wave of the boss's relatives was due to arrive.) There was no doubt in my mind that this spontaneous staff meeting was a consequence of the last night 'chicken' scandal.

“What happened yesterday cannot *reoccur*,” Junior opened the meeting. He was standing by the corner table our party of six had chosen, looking down at the rest of us who were sitting. *They don't understand the word reoccur*, I silently remarked.

Right away, Mella jumped in, “I think Ioanna’s personality is too strong. I don’t have this problem with Frida in the mornings,” she leaned forward over the table and stared into my eyes. I calmly stared back which made Mella jerk back into her chair with violent force. She puffed out her cheeks at me as a dull fish might, trying to say a word *Go*.

“Perhaps you are overlooking her inefficiencies.” The premeditated retort slipped from my tongue unexpectedly, and immediately I regretted it. I scanned all present parties from left to right, beginning with slugMella, moving up to standing in front of me Junior and then down rightward, to the three interns. They seemed innocent enough. I didn’t want to hurt their feelings. Perhaps real humans weren’t at fault. The supernatural circumstances surrounding the situation pointed to slug as the cause of my predicament; not Mella or Frida, slug was the one who was really sabotaging me. Yet, why should it matter? The situation had happened. Some of its aspects were unfair to me. No matter who I was addressing — slug or real humans — I decided to finish my point.

“She spends an hour on what should take twenty minutes. What happened yesterday? Frida disregarded my command. I had to go back to the kitchen several times to tell her to start the breakfast setup.”

“She told me to do the paper! I had the paper! She told me!” Frida cried dramatically, causing Junior to confront me with a set of pleading eyes.

“That *paper*, Frida, is no longer utilized by anyone. You were supposed to *memorize* the procedures during your training.”

“I was cleaning the chicken! I was cleaning the chicken!” Deep inside, I was laughing, *she is saying chicken again!*

“She means to say she was cleaning the *kitchen*,” I clarified to Junior, who moved his eyes from Frida to me in a plea to explain. “She simply refuses to follow directions. Last night the dining room was empty, except of two clients, who were engaged in an after-dinner chat. While your father doesn’t allow us to begin a full-scale breakfast setup, even of only one client remains in the dining room, it is permitted, on such slow nights, to begin a *soft* breakfast setup: quietly resetting the tables located far away for the occupied tables. Frida was doing nothing. She was simply standing idle, by the water pitchers, perhaps even making the clients uncomfortable with her presence, which must have felt intrusive due to its uselessness. So I sent her to close the kitchen and, meanwhile, proceeded with the soft breakfast setup myself. When the clients finally left, I quickly vacuumed and returned to the kitchen. There I found Frida looking at the *paper*. According to the *paper*, the kitchen closeout should take no more than twenty minutes, and on such a slow evening no more than five. While Frida was in the kitchen, doing God knows what, I set up the entire dining room myself, a forty minute task, *according to the paper*, since your father always wants *all* tables set,” I tried hard to control my tempo and spoke as calmly as I could.

Frida tried to say something but in her outraged state she couldn’t form a proper sentence. Groaning and glancing in all directions, she fidgeted in her chair, like one broody hen.

Then Junior spoke.

I listened to Junior impatiently, eager to see the meeting end, so I could get back to work. Throughout his discourse, slugMella stared at me maliciously, nodding aggressively at Junior's every word, as though she expected nothing else from him but a thorough criticism of my managerial skills. It seemed, however, that slugMella was deafened by her anger and didn't really hear what Junior was saying, for she continued to nod aggressively even when it became clear than Junior was praising me.

Junior spoke in a professional tone, in a relaxed tempo, gesticulating appropriately to emphasize certain points while his sparkling brown eyes moved across the row of faces. Unfortunately, he made no adjustments to his English to simplify it for the foreign girls. What a tragic, comic waste of time, it was!

"The paper should only be for reference now. Everybody should know what needs to be done. Ioanna has been with us for a longer time and therefore...."

Leaned back into the chair, I stretched my legs out underneath the table. Nonchalantly, I observed the four women, while listening to Junior's soothing voice. He sounded like a robot of teamwork spirit. None of them had any idea who I was, that I lived in two worlds simultaneously, that I *knew* that the afterlife exists, that my life has been a living miracle since the inception of the secret sign. To my amusement, Bin was spacing out. Her head had tilted down, so every time Junior looked at her, he beheld a crown of brown hair instead of a pair of attentive eyes. Frida couldn't understand much, but pretended that she did. She transfixed Junior with the spellbinding plea of a homeless puppy who is being rescued from a freezing cold. Fo discreetly attempted to wake Bin up by poking her in the ribs, but Bin seemed to be hypnotized by enigmatic patterns on the surface of the wooden table. Her head remained tilted down, her large torso leaned heavily over the table. She looked like a drunkard who had dozed off over his precious glass of booze. I wondered why Junior continued to acknowledge Bin's crown of black hair with eye contact, even nodding at it slightly, as though Bin listened with her hair.

Junior's neutrality toward Frida didn't necessarily put me at ease. Feeling that it was only a matter of seconds before slugMella, Frida or Fo jump in with criticism, I premeditated potential retaliations.

"Can I say something! Can I say something?" Frida's delicate left hand waved desperately in the air, and without waiting for Junior's permission, she squeaked, her voice breaking from frustration, "She is not a *manager*! She is not a *manager*!"

The manner in which Frida spoke felt peculiarly familiar. She repeated each phrase twice, as I often do, when I feel excited, when my feelings run before my thoughts: *Let me do it! Let me do it!* or *Are you sure? Are you sure?* I had a feeling that slug was mocking my manner of speaking again.

To help agitated, lost-for-words Frida, Fo lifted her hand up; Junior signaled her to speak.

"May I say something? We view Christina and Mella as managers, but not *her*. *She* is not a manager."

She couldn't even say my name, referring to me as "her," as I sat right across from her. All traces of our previously friendly relationship had been erased by the chicken drama — Frida must've been crying on her shoulder all night long. So easily was it for her to change her

attitude, she must have been simply poisoned by female jealousy since the first day she met me. Stirred by her own ambition, Fo could never view *her?* as her manager. I had to ignore her surprising show of utter disrespect. I knew that any second Adam could take over from slug and make these people work for me.

Junior was quick to retort, “We all know our responsibilities, and though Ioanna is not a manager, she is a shift *supervisor* because of her seniority. Do you understand the concept of seniority?”

Nobody answered. It was impossible for the three foreign interns to understand the concept of seniority without knowing the meaning of the word *concept* first, but Junior, the native speaker, was oblivious to such obvious, linguistic intricacies. Even slugMella remained silent. The word *supervisor* must have made an unpleasant impression on her. On me, by contrast, Junior’s words had soothing qualities, and upon hearing the word *supervisor*, I felt particularly elevated. Was it Adam trying to tell me — You are the *supervisor* now? I had moved up one level.

“Ioanna has been here the longest,” Junior elaborated, “and though she is not a *manager*, she is a shift *supervisor*. Her experience extends considerably wider than that of...”

On and on Junior went, like Einstein explaining gravity to birds. As a general manager, he should’ve realized that this meeting couldn’t have been more inappropriately timed. Clients were bound to arrive at any moment into an unprepared dining room, but Junior didn’t care. Why did I have to worry more than him?

“Her seniority in the organization allowed her to supervise your training. Everyone is supposed to know what needs to happen here. At 16:30 everything must be finished so you can have a family meal. Let’s separate here our personal feelings from professional obligations, once and for all.”

Junior spoke with confidence and neutrality. I was impressed. He didn’t blush, his voice was steady, he didn’t have to pause to retrieve right words. Legitimate reasons must’ve kept him in the office earlier, when I needed him. Presently I felt I could temporarily trust him. No abundance of tears and sobs could cause him to lose his common sense, could blind him from seeing Frida’s shortcomings behind her capricious mask.

I listened to his attractive voice while observing carefully physical expressions on female faces. slugMella’s face showed no improvement. Her red, watery eyeballs were swollen with anger, about to pop out of their sockets. She stared intensely at Junior’s mouth, bobbing her head in agreement, as though confirming some hidden truth being revealed in between his sentences. She bobbed at every sentence, as though thinking, *That’s right! Mella knows best!*

“She smokes cigarettes outside!” Frida squealed out of nowhere. “This is no fair. She doesn’t work then!”

“Excuse me, Frida, but if I can interrupt...,” I was losing my patience.

“No! I speak! It’s no fair! You go breaks!” In aggravation, Frida’s grammatical mistakes began to multiple.

“Frida, I take my *only* cigarette break of *five* minutes during your *twenty-five* minutes allowed for the family meal. So my brake is shorter than yours.”

Very slowly I said it and paused. I considered adding that skipping family meals reduced my maintenance cost to the company but decided against it. A foreigner raised in a poor

country may deem such fact relevant, but to Junior it would sound too inconsequential, perhaps even crazy. Besides, Frida wouldn't understand, which would confuse her, making her more insecure and angry. Yet, I couldn't resist adding, "Also I don't go to the bathroom every five minutes like you do. You are supposed to monitor the dining room and refill water glasses."

"Well, maybe you shouldn't *follow* Frida to the bathroom?" slugMella commented.

"I didn't *follow* her, Mella," I looked at Junior when I replied, because slugMella looked too angry to look at. "But I did tell her to punch out *before* she does any *personal* business, per the boss's instructions."

Junior was looking back at me so patiently, as though he could listen to me forever, but just as considerately he regarded everybody else. A part of me was bitter at him for publicly refusing to refer to me as a *manager*. Instead, he called me a *supervisor*. I saw what he was doing. There were no practical differences between a manager and a supervisor pertaining to my role at the company, yet it was a *different* word the interns may react more tolerably to, may not even be familiar with. Junior was making peace through compromise, specifically through a clever choice of words. On the other hand, I wanted absolute justice, no compromise. Was it fair for Frida to slack off at the cost of others? Why should Bin carry chairs while Frida refreshes her makeup? The fact was clear — Frida got paid for work. If she didn't work, other people completed her tasks, but Frida still got paid. Therefore, Frida was stealing. It is either Plus or minus, right or wrong, a matter of principle.

"Yes," I repeated the same information, "the boss had specifically told me to *make sure* Frida punches out before she does any personal business. I didn't *follow* her. I told her she could go home, then I noticed her chatting with Bin, then I saw her going to the bathroom, then I went to the office and saw that she hadn't punched out. Right there, twenty minutes were spent on personal business, the company policy disregarded again." After a brief pause, I added, "Do you think I *like* to follow her around?" I locked eyes with the sizzling slugMella, "Frida *needs* to be managed."

"Yesterday, for example, I told you," I looked at Frida now, "do you remember what I said? I told you that you wasted twenty minutes of my personal time to deal with your drama. Do you think I *want* to manage you? Do you think I have nothing to do at home? And presently, aren't we all wasting our time? Because frankly, clients may start showing up any second, and nothing is ready!"

"We will be finished soon," Junior reassured me, "but I want to make sure we will not come back to this issue again. This is not a personal matter. We are all professionals here, and everybody knows their responsibilities. This is the last time we are meeting about it."

"As long as she does her tasks," I said.

"I know my job! I know my job!" Frida squeaked.

"Fine! Fine!" I mocked slugFrida, impatient to get back to work.

"Ok then. See you all later," Junior ended the meeting. To my fascination, Bin immediately got up and followed Fo into the kitchen. She wasn't sleeping after all and did understand some common English expressions.

From the hostess station, I observed Frida and Mella approaching the kitchen swinging doors together, with slugMella leading slightly in front. Maternally, slugMella pushed through the door, turned around and using her body weight, held the swinging door from slamming into Frida. As Frida passed through the opening, both Mella and I caught ourselves looking at Frida's perky bottom corseted in black jeans. At that delicate moment, our eyes met, and right there, slugMella grimaced grossly and stuck out her tongue! I couldn't believe it! So far, this was the clearest manifestation of slug acting out via a human this evening.

While everybody went to the kitchen to eat, I stayed in the green room to finish dressing tables, including the one just used for the staff meeting. Out of silverware, I had to leave two tables partially furnished. Inside the kitchen, I searched for matching silverware. Some forks and knives lay dirty in a tub by the dishwasher, waiting to be washed. Evidently, nobody had replaced Bin, as a temporary dishwasher, while she helped me in the green room. Our regular dishwasher was still running late, and a complete no-show would be disastrous. As a side effect of Day's cooking, utensils, pots, pans and plates continued to steadily pile up on the steel counter of the sub kitchen. The towers of greasy dishes were reaching Babylonian heights and the counter was running out of empty space. The unaesthetic mass didn't seem to bother Fo, Frida, slugMella or Bin, in the slightest. They ate with appetite, bent over their plates, in the tiny unoccupied portion of the same steel counter.

Besides the deadly combination of meatballs and creamy pasta, plus zucchinis stir-fried in some harmful oil, there was nothing else to eat. All the roasted carrots were already gone. It must have been Fo who ate all the carrots again. She was rather health-conscious, and selfish, always serving herself generously with all the carrots and broccoli, leaving but a cluster of pitiful crumbs in the shared bowl, as a token of good manners she must have heard of.

To kill my rising appetite, I brewed fresh coffee, and with a cup in my hand, went outside to smoke. I lighted my last cigarette, left for me so politely by Sam. *You see? You are nice to somebody and they take all you've got!* **Yes Yes Yes**, Adam confirmed enthusiastically. We both felt sorry for Sam — so addicted, so impolite. While smoking, I evaluated my reactions to Frida. If I don't criticize her, she might imagine she is an exceptionally good employee. Who knows, perhaps she is clueless like that. Perhaps she does think her job is to stand, with sleepy eyes, in the corner of a dining room, staring beyond the tables, beyond the empty water glasses she is due to refill, beyond the empty plates she is due to remove. She never seems excited about anything; hiding in her dark corner, she observes American lives passing her by with that dreadfully detached expression.

As I entertained my thoughts about Frida, Adam confirmed to reject some of my ideas as incorrect, impolite or simply mean. We both laughed as I recalled the image of slugMella sticking her tongue out, just a few minutes earlier. Still fully charged by fresh memories of evil manipulations, I began to ridicule slug again, only this time, I didn't have to handle real situations simultaneously. Free of interferences, my boiling indignation unleashed itself with unexpected force. There came the familiar exciting beat, like a music sheet to write notes on, and the verses followed; I couldn't make them stop.

*slug, foolish clown, in Frida dwells.
That's why she smells?*

*Who is calling me? What's up?
 Hey voisin! slug by the name - Blah! Blah! Blah!
 Can't you stop to talk?
 you sloppy puddle of compote?*

Adam kept laughing. I kept rhyming. In the process, I regretted not bringing my phone, so I could record the funniest verses. I considered running inside to get it, but before I could make my mind up, new lines were emerging, pushing away the previous ones. It was too late to get the phone. Besides, my verses were already saved, in God's perfect memory. In the afterlife, Adam could take me through every second of this break, though my entire life, if I want to, so I could reevaluate it, relive the moments I chose to come back to and the moments He wants to remind me of. Comforted by this rationale, I stopped worrying about remembering verses or losing them forever. I let myself enjoy the moment, and all I can remember now is rhyming effortlessly, and feeling Him laugh.

Besides laughing at the punchlines or replying to my questions, Adam also volunteered his reactions to my personal reflections. Evidently, He was in a talkative mood. This is why I felt completely unafraid, but curious and excited. Adam was showing that He cared a lot, that He was there with me for every thing, no matter how big or small. I apologized for smoking, *I only do it at work. But Frida, she never does anything! Never brushes chair cushions, always late to reset a table, never present when needed, lazy when unsupervised, resistant when reminded to perform an activity. She has no potential other than to be married off. **Yes! Yes! Yes!** She thinks there is nothing to learn from scraping dishes. **Yes!** Her life doesn't depend on this boring job. **Yes!** She hates serving others. NO. NO.*

At the latter confirmation, the sign squeezed hesitantly; the difference was very subtle yet memorable, similar to the lame confirmation received upon reading the Biblical revelation about the white horse. If the secret sign lied again, the opposite would be true — Frida did hate serving others!

The number of confirmations began to differ too. No longer did it follow the established pattern: trice for Yes and twice for No. Initially, I didn't attach much importance to this uncharacteristic inconsistency of the secret sign. As already explained, I wasn't technically asking Adam any questions, so He wasn't obliged to reply at all. I was simply reevaluating the situation in my own mind, considering all the pros and cons of my performance with Frida, and apparently He just cared about this trivial matter as much as I did. *I know she can afford to quit. This is the only reason she doesn't listen. **Yes! Yes!** She has other options. **Yes! Yes! Yes!** If I don't criticize her, she will never improve. **Yes! Yes!** The earth is overpopulated by laziness, arrogance, greed and fear, to which Frida contributes ignorantly, never thinking about her purpose, never trying to perform better, always complaining, crying her way out. Is she really just weak? Is it just a health problem? **No! No! No!** — three confirmations yet it always used to be two for No...*

In the very near future, the secret sign would be rendered completely unreliable, but the underlying fact remained unchanged. Something magical was inside of me. I was connected. I wasn't alone, smoking my cigarette in the alley outside the kitchen.

I never finished my cigarette. Junior startled me when he opened the back kitchen door, “We have a large group that just arrived. Everybody is looking for you.”

“I told Fo to come find me here if somebody arrives. I am coming!”

She set me up. It was surprising to see how much resentment Fo harbored towards me. Her ungraceful mischief, however, wasn’t worth getting upset about. I may just as well get upset with Mella for sticking her tongue out. I felt more angry with myself, for caring too much about appearing negligent in front of Junior, for the fear of running out of money that harbored inside of me and ultimately caused me to care so much about this job. The bottom line — Junior was lucky to have me. If only he hadn’t wasted the time we didn’t have, speaking to employees who couldn’t understand him, I would’ve been able to savor the five minutes of meditative reflections over a cigarette before a long, busy shift.

As I stepped back into the kitchen, Sam, the sous-chef, peered at me from under his frowning eyebrows, sending out unpleasant sensations. “Did you smoke all my cigarettes?” I confronted him. “There was one left,” he replied. I couldn’t believe it. He felt no shame about almost finishing my half-empty pack.

I couldn’t believe Sam. I couldn’t believe Fo. I couldn’t believe I was not a manager! Hah! Who was then? Who made everything possible here? Sam who stole booze from the basement or Junior who only tended bar when rich customers were present, especially if those customers were young girls? Nobody wanted to work here, everybody got paid so little! There was no teamwork, no commitment. I was the only one who cared, because I couldn’t stand any waste. *Girls are just jealous! I look too young to be their manager! **Yes! Yes! Yes!** It had always been my problem, my lucky problem!* Confirmed. Confirmed.

I had no time to go the bathroom to refresh myself after smoking. I used the kitchen sink instead. At the bar counter, I found Junior. “You know, I hate children,” he referred to table 40 seated in my absence, “I didn’t take their order yet.” I inspected table 40 from a distance. Two adults with two children were still studying menu cards, which allowed me the time to take care of a much larger party that had gathered in front of the hostess station. One gentleman held an open wine bottle in his hands.

“Wait to be seated please,” I tried to block the group from entering all at once in a chaotic fashion but my efforts were useless. They tumbled into the dining room as one wild herd of beasts and spread out in all directions. They had bottles in their hands and I was anxious to tell them that brining your own liquor wasn’t allowed.

“We are ready to eat now,” the crowd’s representative notified me, as his head moved around, checking for preferable seating arrangements. The man was so large and stood so close to me, his body blocked the rest of his party from my view. I did notice, however, that one of his friends took a sip from a wine bottle, then passed it around to others equipped with plastic cups. They had no manners and no fear of germs.

Come on! Say it! It is against company policy to bring your own liquor into the dining room. With forced tranquility, I had to overlook those extra large wine bottles. Personally I saw it as a slap in the boss’s face. According to the old article framed on the wall, his restaurant was renowned for its exceptional wine list. His relatives didn’t care. They weren’t about to support him by buying a

few bottles of his fine wine. Their cheap wine would work just fine. *They are economical*, I tried not to judge, *You would've done the same thing*. Yet, I couldn't stop thinking, *They are cheap! They are cheap!*

It was an invasion of my dining space, where none should be allowed to enter without my escort. Technically, I was supposed to assign tables. There were about thirty of them, I tried to count in chaos. Most of them were already tipsy. Several big loud, men acted obnoxiously, mingling between tables, grabbing sparkling wine glasses and pouring their cheap wine into them. One man took a sip straight from a wine bottle.

A large man with curly black hair and a snobby nose pulled out a chair from the largest round table located in the center of the dining room. He plumped himself down in the seat and spread his legs out into the common area. After a brief pause to catch his breath, he reached for a wine glass and poured himself generously from his bottle of red. Next, he signaled his entourage of four women and three men, to join him at the table. He acted like a big shot — chose the table, was the first to sit, spread his legs out — so I nicknamed him Mafiozzo, which also suited his fatty face.

I wondered if the center table would tip in cash. I wondered if anyone would tip at all. All meal plans were included in the room & board family deal and were already paid for. In principle, tips should be based on the value of the meal served. So was the boss, technically, supposed to pay me back all my credit card tips. In reality, the boss kept all the credit card tips and the most I ever made in cash tips, after splitting them with the interns and dishwasher, was twenty dollars. (Unfortunately, better jobs weren't available in this boring village.) The only way to make tips this evening would be by selling drinks. A client then would be presented with a beverage bill on which the word 'tips' would be clearly printed.

From the initial chaos, another party had formed itself. Stomping as one disorganized crowd in the far left corner, some of its members were signaling me to approach. When I did, they asked me to rearrange several tables into one continuous row. Without looking at Frida's corner, I began working on the seating rearrangement. Frida joined me a minute later and did a little bit of work. As we moved the tables around, guests continued to pour in. Junior was nowhere to be found, neither was Fo.

It took about ten minutes to rearrange five square tables into one continuous line, working with Frida, and therefore, practically alone. The party patiently observed our progress, never telling us to stop, not until we were finished. Only then, did they say, "We don't want tables like this. Rearrange them like that," waving at my line of tables rearranged to run parallel the window wall. After more waving and quacking, it became clear that the party wanted their long table to run diagonally, across the entire dining room. The demanded re-alteration made no sense and was more difficult to accomplish, but I obliged, concealing my disagreement. Carrying food trays or moving tables didn't matter to me. Why should I care when these clients eat?

The possibility of failing miserably in front of the boss's entire family seemed inevitable, yet it bothered me less and less. I didn't want to rush. My usual standard of quality of service was diminishing like a match on fire as I observed slugs multiply inside real people. A general feeling of excitement took over my spirit. Brave musicians of slug's orchestra had arrived, each

playing a different tune, pushing a new button, inducing a new fear. I was a heroine in His supernatural film and I was curious about slug's next move.

A couple approached table 33, by the window offering the best view of the mountain. *A very good choice indeed*, I remarked to myself sarcastically, frustrated at how everybody seemed to think it was okay to walk around unrestrainedly and chose any table at will.

"I beg your pardon," I tried to fake a British accent, for an idea of speaking in a distinguished manner, all of a sudden, appealed to me as something that slug might detest. Proper words and articulation, combined with calm professionalism, contrasted beautifully with the barbaric behavior raging in the dining hall. "Are you planning to remain at this table?"

The older lady looked very anxious, sweating from her forehead down. The gentleman gave me a look of reproach, as though his companion's sweat was my direct fault.

"We don't know yet," the grandma replied. She looked preoccupied, darting nervous glances everywhere around her, as though she had lost something. It could have been anything, her son or her spoon. At last, she turned a chair facing the window to face the dining room, then eased herself in and peered into the chaos. "We may move to that table over there," she pointed to the long table running diagonally across the dining room. Oh, so not only did she choose a table, which happened to be the best table for two in the house, but she also thought she could disregard it, once used, and pick another one! Who did she think she was, undermining my authority and creating extra work like that?

The grandma continued in a concerned tone, "We may only get appetizers for now. Perhaps shrimp?" she redirected her eyes from me to her younger companion. *Fu! They are not healthy for you!* The younger gentleman cast a doubtful look at the grandma. Perhaps he also knew that wild shrimp sanitized the bottom of the contaminated ocean, while farmed shrimp were raised in shi*.

"Would you like some sparkling water?" I looked at a bottle of sparkling water strategically placed at the center of each dining table to encourage sales. The sweating grandma replied, "Sure." Something in her manner assumed that the bottle was included in her meal plan. It felt awkward to clarify to the sweating, anxious lady that the bottle came with an extra charge of nine dollars. Technically, I didn't have to. In restaurant etiquette, it was up to price-sensitive customers to inquire about any hidden costs beforehand.

I removed the bottle of Pellee from the table and went to the bar to get a chilled one. On my way, I signaled my sleeping beauty to refill the half-empty water pitcher at the center table. Frida followed lazily as though she was doing me a favor.

When I returned to table 33, the anxious grandma exclaimed, "Oh my God! It's so hot here! Can you do anything!" Her companion gave me another blameful look — see what you did, bad girl?

I opened the sealed bottle of Pellee in front of the lady and poured generously into her glass, "The air-conditioning system seems to be operating normally. I hope the cool sparkling Pellee will help you feel better." The anxious grandma devoured, with her eyes, the sparkling water filling up her glass, then lifted the glass and drained it in a matter of seconds.

"What about you, sir?" I turned to the gentleman, ready to pour him a glass of refreshing Pellee.

“Just the tap water for me,” the gentleman refused to drink Pellee in preference of unfiltered water, making me wonder whether slug was creating unnecessary work for me. I signaled to Frida, but she was looking straight in front of her, as if her eyes were the headlights of a train. I placed the bottle of Pellee at the center of the table and went to get the water pitcher myself. After having served the water to the capricious man, I turned my attention to the sweating lady. She waved at her face with a red table napkin while studying our special for this evening, one-page menu card. Several times she sighed, unable to decide between our limited options, wasting my time. I left the couple, promising to return shortly.

Next, I proceeded to table 40, seating two parents with two children, whose very sight annoyed Junior so much, he refused to take their order.

“How is everything here? Are you ready to order?”

“We have been ready for the past twenty minutes,” the father complained. Whose fault is that, I thought, that your relative understaffed the restaurant?

“As you can see, everybody arrived at the same time. I apologize for the inconvenience. Would you like to start with some drinks?”

He ordered a beer for himself and two cokes for children. The fact that he allowed his own children to drink poison angered me on a personal level. In the spiritual world, everything seemed to matter, worth battling for, and the worst strategy was to remain lukewarm. It happened that not so long ago a local entrepreneur visited our place of business. He pitched to the boss several organic syrups for mixing with club soda, and left several samples for us to try. I decided to speak to the children directly; it wasn't their fault that their own parents were poisoning them.

“Do you know what *ginger* is?” I aimed to persuade the girl to choose a healthier option of our real (!) ginger soda.

“I know what *ginger* is,” she cut me off, “but I would like to drink *coke*. Also, can you bring me an adult menu?” the girl added, “I don't like anything on the children's menu.” She was so full of herself.

I explained to the parents that switching from a children's to an adult menu would cost an additional ten dollars. With reluctance they agreed to the extra charge, so I brought the little girl the larger menu card right away. The page was two times as big as her head, and she began to study it smartly.

Junior wasn't at the bar, so I found the beer, poured two cokes and signaled to Frida to approach. “For table 40,” I said, pointing four extended fingers at her. She nodded and departed with the tray.

In the kitchen, I found Fo bent over the expediting counter. There was an empty cutting board with traces of chopped parsley in front of her. So, while I was running around dealing with demanding customers, Fo lingered in the kitchen, leisurely chatting with the chef. Usually, I wouldn't mind Fo practicing her English skills, but not on our busiest shift ever. “Please make sure to check on the dining room periodically so you can bring the bread out on time.” On time meant after drinks but before appetizers; Fo used to do it so well. “I need a bread basket for table 40.”

When I returned, the parents from table 40 ordered french fries and chicken tenders from the children's menu, and burgers for themselves. In the kitchen, I announced our first meal ticket order to Day, made sure Fo understood it, hung the copies of the ticket above their respective counters and rushed back into the dining room.

I smiled, passing by a new group of awaiting customers. They were young, around late twenties. Behind their bodies, I noticed Frida dragging a dressed table somewhere; a light, ringing sound of wine glasses echoed dangerously. I had to proceed straight ahead to the sweating grandma, who was my current priority.

"Are you ready to order anything?" She was still fanning her face, looking over the dining room anxiously.

"Nothing for now," her partner looked at the long diagonal table, "we will move to the other table, I think, to eat."

Great, I thought sarcastically, taking a good look at the grandma whose indecisiveness created two extra tasks: redressing a table and remembering to bill her for Pellee. The greater challenge laid with the latter task, for it would require a great visual memory to recognize her face later, among the drunk clutter of customers, when the time came to surprise her with an awkward bill of nine dollars.

A crowd of youngsters muttered curiously around Frida. I had to push through their bodies, excusing and at the same time asserting myself as a person in command. Frida was still dragging the same square (it was a round table, slug!) round table toward the crowd, making pitiful progress. The round tables were larger, considerably heavier than the square ones, hard to move for one person, especially if dressed. I whispered to her politely to get out of my way, but she refused to let go of the table. "How can you make a straight line out of round tables?" Wink. Wink. She also didn't understand that our limited number of round tables was reserved for parties of five or six. Perhaps she was trying to connect the round table to a square one, and at such an awkward arrangement seat the party. Whatever she was trying to do, she was stubborn about it; she actually physically tried to push me out of her way. She was ready to fight for the table, as though the fact that she began the seating rearrangement gave her an exclusive right to finish it.

But I wasn't about to let her make a scene or waste more time on her poor idea. Being even slimmer than her, I squeezed in between her and the table, leaned over the table and pushed her away from it with my bottom. Having lost grip of the table, Frida stood by aimlessly, while I carefully pushed the round table back into its place. Next, I began to move the wine glasses from the three nearest, square tables onto the round table I just pushed back. I signaled to Frida to join in, and she did. Together, we quickly repositioned the three square tables into one line, then put the wine glasses back. When we were finished, the group of youngsters sat down, and I reminded Frida of her primary job function — to serve water as soon as the guests sit down. I left for the center table where Mafiozzo was hollering at me.

Mafiozzo, the big wine glass slug, acknowledged me with a smug smirk. Sprawled in his chair, his fat legs protruded deeply into the narrow walking space a waitress uses to maneuver among the tables. Was he creating this hazardous situation on purpose? It surely seemed so. I stood at his feet, while he scanned me up and down, as though he was a squirrel and I was a nut.

“Excuse me for the wait.”

“Pwaaa! Pwaaa! Pwaaa!” The entire table bursted into uncontrollable laughter. “Pwaaa! Pwaaa! Pwaaa!”

Dear reader, more and more often, it is slug who produces this awkward sound Pwaaa. At first, he did it to portray Adam in an unfavorable light, but once I caught up with his deceiving technique, he continued to do it just to show me what a nasty creature he really is. I try to catch Pwaa by shutting my lips tight but still the Pwaaa sound manages to escape. A few pages earlier, for example, upon reading the line about slug being a ‘sloppy paddle of compote,’ slug uttered a Pwaaa sound and splashed my laptop with the water I was, in that very moment, sipping from my glass. I got scared I damaged my laptop and wiped it right away. Please trust me, I read this line so many times while editing, it can no longer produce any spontaneous reaction of laughter or even a smile, and the only reason my side comments are missing dates, is because slug removes or alters them.

The synchronized “Pwaaa! Pwaaa!” was followed by a wave of giggles and inaudible comments exchanged between the four blonde females of the table. While gossiping, the ladies looked up at me synchronically several times, as if challenging me with a silent question — Doesn’t it feel all weird to you now, little girl? I wasn’t spooked, only my eyebrows went up in a natural manifestation of surprise. Otherwise, my attitude betrayed no emotions, my body didn’t jerk, my feet remained firmly glued to the ground. I didn’t jump into the air like a little girl at the sight of a snake. Standing at the table full of demons, I thought, *Very well, welcome slugs!*

“What would you like to drink, ladies and gentlemen?” The ladies giggled. The men snorted. The wine bottles stocked at the center of the table emphasized the absurdity of my question. “I already have my beverage,” Mafiozzo spoke up, and as to demonstrate an example to follow, with one gulp, emptied his glass full of cheap red wine. *What’s wrong, fat? Can’t handle a vodka drink?* But slugs only released a series of grunts and oinks.

“What about the rest?” I insisted, presently very interested in making some cash tips with this group. “Perhaps ladies would like some cocktails?”

“Vodka drinks for us!” The four ladies laughed, darting squeamish looks among themselves. They whispered to each other again, as though they were discussing me.

“Do you have Kettle?” one lady asked for the premium brand.

“Yes, of course,” I said but I wasn’t sure. It happened that Junior recently told me that most vodka brands in mixed drinks were virtually undetectable, suggesting that substitution was allowed. I felt like giving something cheap to slugs and charging them more for it.

All gentlemen, however, stuck to the red wine. *Is slug mocking me?* I considered, suddenly feeling guilty about the amount of red wine I consumed. *I see you like drinking red wine, slugs. Just like Jesus... Only Jesus wasn’t getting drunk! He was healthy! What do you want from me, invisible slugs? You think I drink too much? Ha! Ha! Ha!*

On my way to the bar, I joked around with Adam. *I thought you could handle a vodka drink, Adam! Oh, absolutely!* I replied for Him playfully, which He quickly confirmed **Yes! Yes! Yes!**

Thank God Junior returned to the bar, just in time to make the four vodka drinks. I felt so relieved, for I absolutely had no time to mix cocktails.

“I told them that we have Kettle,” I placed the beverage ticket on the bar counter.

Junior reviewed the order and told me to go back and suggest other vodka brands we did carry.

“What about substituting?” *As you told me you did yourself!*

“We can only sell what is indicated on the card,” Junior calmly replied.

What Junior referred to as the card was one laminated page with prices of hard liquors, for internal use only. We didn’t offer a beverage menu, and all bills were handwritten. I would simply write *vodka cocktail* and refer to the laminated page for the price of the chosen liquor. Junior’s recent hint that substitutions were possible served as my green light when deciding to lie to the ladies in the first place. There was no way of getting caught, unless the ladies had superior taste buds and enough dare to demand to see the vodka bottle allegedly used. But Junior refused to substitute, forcing me to go back and make the ladies choose another brand. Naturally, I felt aggravated with his inclination to stick to the rules he suggested were bendable not so long ago. His stubborn, uncooperative attitude had activated the moment I needed to prove a point to slug.

I returned to the ladies, “Unfortunately we don’t carry Kettle.” Certainly, I could have said “We are out of Kettle,” but I didn’t care if these ladies would deem my knowledge of inventory incompetent. The ladies switched to the first alternative I suggested; they didn’t care what vodka they drank.

As I served the four vodka drinks to the ladies, I noticed that table 40 was finished with their appetizers. The empty plates were an eyesore. I demonstratively removed one, to remind Frida of her second job responsibility, besides the water-pouring. To my surprise, Frida followed suit and removed the second plate. I also remarked that the table never received a bread basket. It was the omission of the all-knowing Fo.

Jan 2017 Power just went out for a second!

“Fo?” I launched a searching look around the kitchen. From the expediting station, Fo looked back at me with an energy of a jelly fish.

“I need bread for the center table and for the youth table. Center table first, please.”

“The bread baskets are there!” she cried out, forgetting or ignoring her responsibility for bringing them out.

In the sub kitchen, an atmosphere of calm prevailed, as though the dining room and the sub kitchen were two different planets. Bin seemed undisturbed by the commotion just outside the kitchen’s swinging doors. With sleepy steadiness, she was sorting spoiled leaves out of the mesclun salad. The dishwasher stood idle by the dishwasher, checking his phone. The dishwasher was covered with grease, especially its top where the grease mixed with the falling dust, had thickened and blackened with time; only if one runs a finger through it, the original stainless steel color would be revealed. One would think that the dishwasher should care about the state of his tool, similar to a dentist who sanitizes his drill, but in this restaurant employees were paid so poorly, they didn’t care. The boss didn’t care enough — he had loans to pay and didn’t have extra to pay for professional cleaning. I cared, when I worked here as a dishwasher a year ago; and presently I was acutely aware of the backsplash over the sink splattered with tomato sauce, of the sink basin filled with food scraps, of the questionable level of sanitation of

the dishes coming out of the dishwasher, for the interior edges of the machine were also splattered with dirt. But there was my dishwasher, standing idle among clumps of fallen debris, waiting for the dirty dishes to come in. Time to lean? Time to clean.

“Fo!” I went back into the expediting area, “Where are the salads for table 40?”

Without saying a word, Fo pointed to the sub kitchen counter where indeed two salads stood, waiting for someone to carry them out.

“Where are my bread baskets?”

“I know!”

“I need five, five buns, for table 40! They were supposed to get their bread *before* their appetizers.”

Fo jerked her hands away from the counter, uttered a frustrating sound in her native language and with reluctance proceeded toward the bread oven. Her bouncy round bottom encased in tight black pants jiggled from side to side. I noticed both, Day and Sam, looking at it. Fo marched, as though she was doing me a favor. In protesting silence, she took out the tray of hot buns from the oven and carried it to the sub kitchen. I followed her, while speaking, “Did you look inside the dining room, Fo? You have about fifty salads to make, don't you think Bin can plate some in advance?” To make my point non-negotiable, I got a stack of salad plates out of the drawer and spread them around the counter. “Make sure Bin doesn't overpour the dressing.” I approach Bin at the salad station, paused and pointing to the jar of caesar dressing, said to both of them, “About thirty, forty percent less of what she had poured yesterday please.” Bin looked at us with her big fish eyes, trying to understand. “She should be putting the leaves into the bowl ten minutes ago!”

Instead of staying with Bin to translate my salad instructions or bringing the bread baskets out, Fo returned to the main kitchen. I followed her.

The meal order for table 40 was almost ready. The children's meals — chicken tenders fried in harmful oil chicken tenders — were gradually cooling down on the wait line as Day was finishing up the two burgers for the parents. His large body was already completely drenched in sweat. This was the order Fo was waiting for. Besides serving the appetizers for table 40 and putting bread buns in the oven, she did nothing else. Leaning over the expediting counter, her bottom extended high in the air and swayed from left to right. I leaned over the expediting counter, stretching my bottom the way she did, and articulated politely right into her ear, “Listen to me, it is not so hard to be standing here, waiting to sprinkle four dishes with parsley. Do you know that you are responsible for taking the bread and salads out on time?”

‘Responsible’ must have been a magic word today. It got Mella upset and it got Fo's attention. She didn't reply, but she was definitely considering the matter.

“Since your back is hurting,” I wanted to be cooperative for I remembered that earlier this evening she complained about the pain in her back, “I will bring all meal orders out myself.” With that, I took possession of the empty food tray in front of her, “Just serve the salads and the bread, Fo.”

There was still a few minutes left, and I wanted to make sure Bin got the instructions. At the salad station, I lifted up a ladle filled at about forty percent with caesar dressing to the level of Bin's wondering eyes, “No more than that! Ok?”

“Huh?” Bin opened her eyes wider.

I mimed a motion of pouring the ladle with the dressing into the salad bowl. Fo observed us with curiosity, “Table 40! Bring the bread and salads out, Fo!”

She left. I followed a minute later with the meal order for table 40. Before the swinging doors bashed behind me, my side vision registered Bin. She returned to her salad task, sorting out spoiled leaves slowly but surely.

As I entered through the swinging doors, Frida entered from the reception area. What a coincidence! She went to the bathroom in my absence, leaving the overfilled dining room unobserved! She must have been in the bathroom the whole time I was in the kitchen.

In the dining room, the central table and the youth table were waiting to place their meal orders; at the long, diagonal table not everyone was seated yet; plus there was a new party waiting at the hostess station.

I served the meals at table 40, handed the empty tray to Frida and approached the new party at the hostess station.

“Good evening. How many of you are dining together?”

“Five,” somebody replied.

“Very well. Wait until we set a table for you.”

“We would like to sit over there,” a man stepped in, pointing to a prestigious seating area by the central window. That area was set up to accommodate three separate tables of two.

“We will have to put those tables together to accommodate you. It will take a moment. Please remain at the hostess station until I come back for you.”

“Ok,” he said yet followed me directly behind; two teenage boys followed directly behind him, two women closed the line. Thus we proceeded, me as a duck and them as ducklings, into the dining room, which by now began to reek of alcohol. *Are both of the women his wives?* I wondered, but nobody replied to me.

I signaled to Frida, and we rearranged the tables for the third time this evening. Tap water was fine, so I signaled to Frida again, and promised to return shortly.

As it often happens when someone is looking at you, I felt Mafiozzo’s penetrating stare. Our eyes met. His legs still spread ungraciously out into the walking space, inviting me to trip over them. His fingers tapped on the table in close proximity to his red wine glass. He acted as though he owned the entire room. I wanted to see a lot of tips from this man, and I meant to show him that by disregarding his intimidations. He was staring at me, probably assuming I would obediently come to take his order, so I disregarded his table’s priority and went to the youth table instead.

The youth table was occupied by eleven girls and one gentleman. He wasn’t particularly handsome, except for his wavy, medium-length hair and dark beard, but those two features had to be appreciated in isolation to his overall face. Against his small, sharp nose, lady-like mouth and petite eyebrows, the stylish beard failed miserably to make him look more masculine. His very blue eyes, were very small too, like decorative buttons on the face of a babydoll. Yet, he acted as though he was a handsome man, desired for pleasure, the only rooster among young hens.

Tap water was the only beverage the party was drinking. As I walked around the table, pausing to the left of each person to refresh the water glass, I inspected each person individually, looking for familiar signs. Nothing strange registered, nothing in particular — no purple hair, no grimacing — normal behavior; they didn't seem to mind the wait. I refilled the man's glass last, and remaining at his left side, got my pad and pen out.

Upon hearing my voice, the girls exchanged curious glances and then giggled. *Did somebody just say a joke? Because I didn't hear it.* After that, two girls looked me up and down, evaluating my figure. They appeared surprised as though I resembled a lost alien whose UFO had just crashed somewhere in the depths of this wilderness. More giggles followed. What could have caused such a reaction? Nobody, but slug. he wanted to make me feel insecure about my accent, about my looks, and was using its old stupid tricks.

slug! slug!
Why are you so slow?
Did you eat an UFO?
Will you take me to your place?
Where all stupid are amazed?

Too many questions for you?
Tell me, 2 plus 2 is 2?

Dear reader, please note that slug just said Yes and then it cussed. In other words, the telepathy has begun. I can clearly distinguish between Adam's and his voice. slug doesn't want me to write these journals so it constantly interrupts: it whispers bad words, draws bad images, induces fears and other uncomfortable associations. Almost constantly it blocks my mind from finding better words, creating better sentence structures or recollecting the experiences altogether. Adams, on the other hand, brings those words, sentences and memories back, sooner or later.

Surely, slug would try to make me feel insecure. For how could possibly an insecure girl believe that He is in love with her? Fortunately, however, at this point of my life, I felt confident. The daily exercise and healthy diet made me feel and look great. I saw his trap. It was so stupid, like trying to convince Kate Moss that she wasn't good-looking. *Yes, girls*, I replied to female slugs, *men find my accent attractive. In addition, my eyes they find hypnotizing.* I recalled one particular client, a fireman, who gave this compliment shortly after my laser eye surgery. That entire night I had to wear black shades, per doctor's instructions, in order to protect my healing eyes from light. My black shades matched my black pants and black shirt perfectly; I looked like a secret agent. At the end of that evening, the client pleaded with me to take my shades off. I let him see my eyes. Standing in a group of his firemen friends, he told me, "They are hypnotizing, your eyes."

I waited for the girls to pay me proper attention, then took their order down. All females ordered burgers, except of the guy, who chose our salmon. Such a healthy slug, I thought.

"Our salmon is organic sir," I praised our fish. The curly hair guy was looking up at me like I was a big fish myself. I battled his vulgar stare right there, *I know Adam likes fish, slug! You*

don't have to act stupid about it. Why don't you go to your room and wash your hair with shampoo? Indeed, from my standpoint, his crown hurt the eye. Covered with a bundle of thin, greasy, dark snakes, it was reminiscent of my ex-supervisor's hair. It was a mockery of the beautiful dark hair I imagined Adam has.

Slug! Slug! Slug!
Drink shampoo for good luck!
Do you want a salmon?
From the Fukushima Mountain?

Curly dark hair, blue eyes, white teeth. Only water and fish... I couldn't help but think: *Are you trying to accomplish anything here, slug? What are you saying? I am not good enough for Adam because I drink wine? You only drink water, slug? Hah? Are you saying that you are Adam, that Adam has numerous girlfriends, and that none of them drink wine? Hah!* Having learned how much slug likes to induce guilt, especially in good people, I refused to feel guilty about my alcohol consumption. Just the other day, at the end of my shift, I drank the rest of a bottle of an expensive red wine that my clients didn't finish. I felt bad about throwing perfectly good wine away. To some, an image of a girl who is drinking a leftover wine from a bottle while smoking a cigarette outside may look unacceptable. To myself, I look strangely attractive; rebellious, perhaps, is the right word. Plus, drinking from a bottle eliminates the waste required to wash a glass. Surely, the guilt comes back, sooner or later, and forces me to work out; guilt but mostly my desire to be healthy and productive for God.

In the kitchen, I went over the meal ticket for the harem table with Fo and hung the copy on Day's side of the counter.

"Do you have the bread basket ready?"

"Yes, it's there!" cranky Fo replied, pointing at several bread baskets cooling down on the counter, like I was supposed to bring them out.

I grabbed a baking sheet, dumped the lukewarm buns from Fo's baskets on it and put them back into the oven. "Fo, I need you to be on top of things today. You need to check on the dining room at regular intervals. Bring bread baskets out immediately after I take an order. Make sure buns are hot when you serve them."

One may think that Fo just didn't care about her job, but I would disagree. Rather, the all-knowing, hard-working Fo metamorphosed into a lazy bum overnight. She used to perform so well. On top of that, she showed eagerness to learn and her personal style suggested she took interest in her work. In her dress shirts tucked inside her tight pants or in her dresses, Fo's appearance was always professional with a touch of sex appeal.

Coming out of the kitchen swinging doors, I ran into Junior.

"Do you need help in the dining room?" He sounded nice, appreciative and energetic. Returning to the bar from his father's back office, he seemed to give absolutely no attention to how his family reunion was unfolding. In fact, I hadn't seen Junior exchanging a single word with any of his relatives.

"Do we charge for Pallee? I have a lady who is under the impression that our sparking water is free."

“Of course, we do. I don't need this bullshi*. You charge them for all the beverages. Which lady? Do you remember what she looked like?”

“Yes, that one. Do you want to go tell her that Pellee comes at extra charge?”

“No, you tell her that. I don't care. I don't even know her.”

“Sure.”

“Do you want me to take an order for the long table?” Junior offered.

“No, I am fine,” I exaggerated my confidence, for taking an order of twenty-six people did make me a little bit nervous. Yet, I wanted to absorb slugs to my full capacity. I wanted to show them that I was in control.

The next table in line, however, was the Mafiozzo's table. As soon as I walked out from the kitchen swinging doors, he caught me with his squinting eyes. He observed my little chat with Junior. He eyed me as I walked to the hostess station. At this point, the center table was waiting for about twenty minutes to place their meal order, the harem table was waiting for appetizers, the family table by the central window had yet to place their drink order. The long diagonal table wasn't fully seated yet; a few individuals still stomped around, gossiping loudly between sips of wine. In the middle of this, I went to my hostess station, looked over the dining room, took a pen, bent over the hostess book and pretended to be writing some important information down. Yes, I mimed the writing motion. I just wanted to take my time, take a few mediative breaths and enjoy feeling the Mafiozzo's hungry stare on me. I didn't feel like rushing for him.

Yet, I couldn't dare to skip his table again. It would mean either prioritizing the family table, which didn't order their drinks yet or taking the order for the long diagonal table, which wasn't completely seated yet. Most importantly, Day would need more time to feed the long table. I had to push through the harem and the center table meals first, before overwhelming Day with a twenty-six meal order.

“How are your drinks, ladies?” I addressed the center table. There was no need to pay them extra attention. Surely, there was no time for it, but since the table intrigued me sufficiently with its earlier Pwaaa hysterics and with the Mafiozzo's king-like behavior, I wanted to create opportunities for further interactions. The ladies were satisfied with their vodka drinks and ordered another round. The gentlemen stuck to their wine. For their meals, everybody ordered a barbecue plate, the biggest item on the menu, except the Mafiozzo, of course, who continued to act as though he was special, a leader of the group. He ordered a prime steak.

“Do you have A1 sauce?” he asked when he ordered. Asking for A1 sauce before his steak even arrived was rather strange, similar to asking for ketchup when ordering a burger. Right away, I associated A1 sauce with Adam. *Nice try, slug!* It felt that slug was subtly suggesting that *he* was the ruler here, intimidating me to think that it is him who was in power, the evil who ruled the earth.

I brought the A1 sauce right away. It was just a few feet away from his table, on a condiment shelf by Frida's observatory.

“Here you go, sir, A1 sauce for you.”

slug traced the bottle with his fingers, as soon as I demonstratively placed it right next to his big wine glass, and then looked up at me with that perpetual smug grin. Wordlessly, he

seemed to be saying, Where is your Adam now? That Adam was just an imaginary story, a *red* sauce he will pour all over his steak.

“Your relative is famous for his excellent wine collection. Why not try some with your steak?” I challenged him to fork over some cash.

“I only drink *my* wine today, honey, because it is free!” He chuckled, tilting back in his chair. Under his massive weight, the chair’s back legs dug into the carpet, stamping two deep holes. His group of wine enthusiasts chuckled in support. I also laughed, but much quicker, and then left, rushing to place their meal order.

In the kitchen, Fo was on her way out with the tray of appetizers for the harem table. (They all ordered shrimp.) In her absence, I chatted with Day. First, we quickly went over the new meal order. There was no problem with it, except for the prime steak. Apparently, the steaks on the menu were leftover from another evening. They were slightly precooked and frozen. Since the meat was already precooked, Day warned me that serving these steaks rare wasn’t possible. That meant that Mafiozzo, who ordered his steak medium-rare, would be getting it medium at best. Secondly, I used Fo’s absence to discuss her performance with Day.

“So, how do you like Fo?”

Frankly, I was waiting for a comment showing Day’s appreciation for the spice Fo’s swaying bottom added to the kitchen’s ambience, but his banal reply surprised me, “Oh? She is very helpful.”

“Since you don’t have an expeditor, use Fo today. Use her to make appetizers, etc, but I will need her to take the bread baskets out into the dining room.”

“Not a problem, my love.” My heart instantly softened upon hearing *my love*. Day had never called me *my love* before. It was the first time. He used to call me *darling*, often *sweetheart*, sometimes *baby*, but *my love* was a new addition. Day said it so tenderly it reminded me of the first time he called me *baby*.

“I have two more tables waiting to order. Twenty-six people and then five. I will try to drag time as much as possible. How are you doing?” I had to ask it, for Day could hardly breathe, through his mouth.

“I got it, baby. Don’t you worry. I have it all under control.”

“Can I take one cigarette from you for later? Sam smoked all mine.” I would definitely need a cigarette upon the end of this shift.

Day always shared his cigarettes. I have never seen Day refusing anybody, even if there was only one cigarette left in his pack. I estimated that out of one pack he brought to work, half was smoked by me, Sam, the dishwasher and occasionally, Junior. So Day always brought a second pack, just for himself. I felt so bad bumming cigarettes from Day that last week I finally bought my own pack. I promised myself to only smoke at work, one cigarette before and one after the shift. Sam kept bumming from Day, however. I saw him once taking out a used cigarette from his dirty brown bag. He allowed himself two or three of his own cigarettes per shift and afterwards relied on Day’s supply. Everybody was poor here, but Sam never shared. He was bitter at everybody, including life itself, because his kidney was failing, and nobody was willing to be his donor, even though, according to Sam, a human could live with one kidney only.

Day's health was deteriorating too, but he kept reassuring me he had it under control. It was sad to see Day breathing with such an effort. He tried to improve. Instead of drinking coke, for example, he began to mix club soda with orange juice and add more ice. But unfortunately, our orange juice was made out of concentrate and was filled with sugar. The world would miss Day's sweet talks and kind heart.

Fo returned with the empty tray. Her white apron was an eyesore. Words flew out of my mouth automatically, yet, I spoke slowly and politely, practicing my British accent. "Fo, next time, please make sure to take your apron off before you go to the dining room. You are not supposed to be wearing an apron *outside* of the kitchen facilities."

Surely, Fo didn't know the word 'facilities,' but I used it anyway, to see if her face would betray any sign of confusion. Her face, however, showed no change — it remained white and calm, like a face of a porcelain doll. She was only missing a kimono and a hidden sword behind her back.

I knew that out of all her job responsibilities, Fo loved serving food the most. Serving food gave Fo a chance to walk around and show her tight outfits to the audience, in search of a potential husband. So, as an act of goodwill, I asked if she could bring out the meal order for the harem table. "The salmon is for the guy please." (All burgers were ordered medium.) After briefly reviewing the meal order for the central table, I left with their bread basket — nine hot buns I personally retrieved from the oven.

By now, the dining room was filled with loud voices, laughter, dish clattering and glass clinking. With my eyes closed, judging solely by the noise, it sounded like a cluster of talking parrots, partying inside a suspended cage that swayed in rhythm to their ceaseless squawks. It was impossible to single out a sentence. Conversations wrestled, converting into one unified hum of mad birds. Due to the hum, the background music was hardly audible, so I went to the office to turn it up. The dining room playlist hadn't been altered since the hotel founder put his favorite jazzy tunes together more than fifty years ago. The boss was particularly sensitive to anybody changing his father's playlist. Per his policy, the dining room opened with the tune #120 at five o'clock; it was a terribly boring jazzy tune, perhaps good for digestion. This evening, I spun the tuner to a random selection, and quickly returned to my wild forest of screeching birds.

"Neeew Yooork! Neeew Yooork!" Frank Sinatra's prolonged howl flew out of the speakers, firing up the wild celebration of slugs. The buoyant tune of the dated song, the orchestral background, the vocal dragging of high notes entranced the dining room with a sedative perfume, like a stage smoke released into a nightclub. It felt surreal. The song complemented and enhanced the existing hum so perfectly, I wondered if the ultimate slug himself, the head of the evil empire, was singing instead of Frank. Did he pick this tune using a magic trick? Surely, slugs loved New York, my boring village in particular. In my imagination, I felt like an outsider at a wild party of pirate birds, where Mafiozzo was the notorious head pirate. Portrayed as a purple flamingo, he sang the song while spinning on his wooden leg inside his dancing circle of loyal popinjays. "Neeew Yooork! Neeew Yooork!" he strained for the grand finale and the birds went completely wild, "Pwaaa! Pwaaa!"

Each table, I decided, will get proper service. It became imperative that everyone gets a bread bun, chooses between our two salads options — either mesclun or caesar — and later on picks a dessert. That was the deal, and it was imperative to give them the deal they paid for. Then, and only then, could I judge who was possessed with demons and who was a real person, either cheap, economical or generous, according to the tip amount left. If slug left a big tip, it could mean that I won our mental battle, that slugs got scared, thus leaving a big cash tip as an apologetic notion, before escaping into pigs.

Indeed, at a certain point in the evening, I became convinced that when a demon got scared by his failure to intimidate me, it ended up flying away into some unoccupied pig in the neighborhood, and in such a fashion, was disabled for an uncertain period of time. Why pig? The Bible said that Jesus healed a man possessed with demons by transferring his demons into pigs, then forcing those pigs to jump off a cliff. Mom also told me that pigs could be nasty. Specifically, she told me that pigs like to drink vodka, and will roll in mud like crazy, if vodka is poured in it, and that pigs would eat anything, even their own babies. (Mom used to live on a farm.) Due to such background information, a pig seemed like a suitable ‘vessel’ to transfer a demon into. After further analysis, however, I speculated that demons could have just retreated into space, a vacuum, a certain home these spirits occupy, where they regroup their efforts, evaluate a new strategy, before flying out again for a new attack.

It was time to take care of the biggest table of the evening.

“Ready to order, guys?” but the clients couldn’t hear me. I had no other choice but to resort to drastic measures. I waved with my hands, which made me feel awkward and stupid in front of Frida. Still, nobody noticed me. I stopped then and for a while simply stood motionless at the end of the long table, a pad in one hand and a pen in the other. I waved again, searching for any eye contact, but the party remained oblivious to my gesticulations. For several long seconds, I stood unnoticed, taking notes of the particularities of the party I was about to serve. The majority was middle-aged, except of two small but already overweight children and four overweight, elderly folks. In fact, at least eighty percent of the group was overweight. I was surprised at the apparent longevity of the four very wrinkly seniors, including the Pellee lady who appeared to be the youngest looking of the four. It was the bottle of Pellee that helped me quickly identify her among others. The Pellee lady had ditched her younger companion for the company of another grandma, with whom she was sharing a conversation, but not her refreshing sparkling Pellee. In fact, the Pellee lady was the only one with a glass of water. Frida never filled the other water glasses.

Frida stood at her station, contemplating the air.

“Frida! Go refill your pitchers. Don’t you see they are empty! You have all these people without water.”

“But nobody ask for it!”

Wow, I thought. “Frida, go refill your pitchers now, while you have time for it. Pick up dirty dishes on your way,” I pointed to table 40 where the mother, having finished with her burger, tried hard to force her children to behave. A chicken tender and some french fries were scattered on the carpet between the children’s seats. They were playing with their food instead

of eating it, which made me think about all those other children that suffer from hunger. The father was still eating, quietly, staring down at his plate as if he ate alone, without his family. He was still working on the same beer.

Frida walked through the swinging doors and almost immediately walked out, with Fo, who carried a heavy tray for the harem table. Frida folded out a waiter stand and Fo safely placed the tray on it. I sighed with relief, for there was always the chance of dropping a tray, and Fo's back was hurting.

Back at the long table, nobody noticed my return. The four elderly folks were chatting about some study discussed on a local radio station. Apparently, the radio host reviewed some recent research results that claimed that christians in our local community lived longer than others, with several churches having members over ninety years old. I was surprised to hear the guests talking about that. I was surprised because the four elderly folks didn't look very christian. Throughout the entire evening, in fact, I didn't see one single cross, besides the one in my mirrored reflection. The guests gave the impression of a rather nervous, ill-mannered and unhealthy crowd, while to me, at a time in my life so full of the holy spirit, christianity was all about having a healthy body for a healthy spirit to dwell in. To be christian meant to be committed to health, to moderate diet and vigorous workouts; the commitment which evidently was taken lightly by my guests, who were all overweight. Look at these folks, I thought, drinking, eating, enjoying life. They are still alive, but are they living up to their full potential?

It took several minutes for the humming to subside, as one by one the clients noticed me and settled themselves into chairs. All of them, except for one gentleman. This man was particularly loud, joking with the father of the family table by the central window. The distance between the two tables forced both men to raise their voices, so they could hear each other over the hum. The joke the family man volunteered was obscene, sexual in nature, but neither man found it inappropriate to be shared in front of children. At the punchline, the standing man at the long table burst into spasms of laughter. As he laughed, his giant belly bounced up and down with a gravitational impact so severe the man had to lean backward to counter balance its weight. He leaned back at such an acute angle, his nostrils appeared to be sniffing the ceiling. This is when he noticed that I was observing him, my slim body still at the end of the long table.

"Quiet guys! This young lady is trying to get our attention. Perhaps we can *finally* order now," he said loudly and sarcastically for everybody else to hear.

Presently, his round belly turned toward me, but I was still looking up his big nostrils which contracted vigorously in desperate need of oxygen. His laughing spasms took all his breath away. He was sweating from alcohol, from laughing, from the sheer effort of keeping his heavy body standing on two relatively small feet. He continued to stand, this sarcastic gentleman, and then, he grimaced at me, just like Mella did earlier, while braiding Fo's hair! His hands tightened around his belly, as though it was a bomb he must hold, so it doesn't drop on the floor. I mentally replied to the ugly grimace:

*Yo! Sit down, slug! Sit in your chair!
Old crazy fool! Fat magic fairy!
Why do you stand like a tall kangaroo?*

*Hey, slug! Can you count?
Say, one, two, three, Four!*

I felt the secret sign exploding at every line. At the final punchline, the standing man surprised me with a shocking motion — he stuck his tongue out and licked his lips once in a circular motion. *Fu! Fu! Fu!* My jokes must be getting to him. One funny punchline — one demon down.

“Excuse me, can we order now?”

“Of course you can,” I said into the direction of the voice, while keeping my eyes fixed on the standing man, whose initial grimace by now had smoothed into an expression of general reproach in regard to my waitressing skills. Calmly, as a queen on a throne, I suggested to him, “Why don’t I start with you, sir?” mentally adding, *do you think I am scared of your lip-licking?*

“Are you sure you can keep track of all of us?” heavy sarcasm filled his every word.

“Don’t you worry, I will maintain a clock-wise order while taking orders.”

He seemed to be lost for words and to conceal his failure to retort promptly (due to his mental retardation), slug reached for his glass of wine and took a gulp.

“Are you ready to order, sir?” I repeated to him, now showing a small degree of aggression, just enough for the slug to catch it, but undetectable to a human.

“Why don’t you start with somebody else?” he replied and spilled a little bit of wine on the carpet.

“Very well, I will come back to you.”

He grinned.

I addressed the parents who were sitting next to the standing man, “I will start with you, because your children must be hungry. What would your children like to eat?”

“Oh, they only eat *meat* these days,” the father of two teenage children, a girl and a boy, replied.

“Great, we have excellent burgers. Would your children like that?” while mentally, *you like when children eat meat, don’t you slug?* Three confirmations followed.

The children were hyperactive and misbehaved, fighting with each other. Automatically, I blamed their heavy meat diet for their aggressive behavior, having read a scientific book on how meat makes humans more aggressive. No longer, however, did I feel like suggesting healthier alternatives to my clientele. The moment the standing man licked his lips confirmed my growing suspicion — slug had infested the entire party, so any attempts to inform my clients of healthier options would be like talking to a brick wall.

“Yes! We will have burgers! Yes! Yes!” the children screamed.

“How about beverages, little children?” I smiled at them.

“Yes! We would like coke! Coke, please!”

“Diet coke, perhaps?” I proposed the more harmful coke, the one filled with chemical sweeteners instead of real sugar, just to see how slug would reply.

“Regular coke with no ice please!”

Poor children. I considered the amount of sugar the undiluted glass of coke contains. *Ignorant parents?* Adam confirmed via the secret sign. *Killing their children slowly?* **Yes. Yes. Yes.** Adam confirmed the unfortunate truth.

“What about you?” I referred to their mother.

“A burger for me,” she replied. “And for you, darling?” she turned toward her husband. Her darling was a large man with a red nose and bloodshot eyes who wasn’t embarrassed to be drunk in front of his children. For some reason, he decided to rise from his chair to announce the following:

“With all the wine that I am drinking,” his pudgy fingers circled his inflated belly lovingly, “I better get a big steak! Ha! Ha! Ha!,” he chuckled at his own hilarity.

“How about our excellent baby pork BBQ plate? It is really big,” I suggested the most harmful meal option on our menu.

“What about your steak?”

“It’s a big chunk of meat as well, sir. It’s simply excellent, but the BBQ plate is *bigger*.”

“Steak for me! Make it rare!” Blood slug wanted.

My first instinct was to say the truth, so my tongue spoke before I could catch it, “Our chef doesn’t recommend rare for this particular steak.”

“Why is that?”

Instantly, I realized that I should have kept my mouth shut. Now, I had to offer a good explanation and quickly, without revealing that our steaks were precooked frozen leftovers.

“According to our chef, certain parts of meat in this particular cut we are offering today, are best served medium or well-done.” My explanation was so vague, it was useless! Privately, I laughed, yet I also dreaded to be pushed for further details.

“I will take the BBQ plate then. Tell your chef he doesn’t know what he is talking about.”

Sure, slug. Do you eat pigs because pigs eat pigs, cannibal slugs? Where is he hiding, your chief slug? How many of you will jump off the cliff today? “If you would like, sir, I can invite our chef to the dining room and he can personally explain to you why our steaks are best served medium or well-done. Would you like that, sir?”

I really hoped he wouldn’t; I was just trying to intimidate slug. Although, the sight of Day would intimidate most people. Three hundred pounds, unkempt beard, ragged Hells Angels leather vest, heavy breathing. It would take Day ages to walk across the entire dining room right to the demanding slug, shifting his weight from one foot to another, painfully, like an old bear. By the time Day makes it to the table, slug would lose his appetite.

“No. Get me a vodka drink too!”

“How about Chopka, sir? It’s an excellent quality polish vodka. A four-stage distillation process.” I didn’t mention that on Chopka, our margins were higher.

“What else do you have?” slug refused Chopka.

“We have Vertico, about the same quality as Chopka. French brand. Very pure.”

“Never heard about it. Do you have Grey Duck?”

“Sure we do, sir,” I replied, deciding to pour him Chopka for sure.

“Get me that one with diet coke!”

“Excellent choice.”

I moved along the table in a clock-wise order until all orders were taken. The overwhelming majority got cheeseburgers, medium or rare, including the Pellee grandma, and the other three elderly folks. (My elderly mother never mixes cheese and meat.) The Pellee lady was still sweating, complaining about the hot temperature to her neighbors.

“I ensure you, our AC is working properly. Can I refresh your glass?” I leaned over her perspiring body, *Are you burning in hell already, slug? It must be really hot. Here! Have some sparkling Pellee for nine bucks, stupid.*

Despite the busyness, I was determined to avoid any mistakes on my part. Mistakes meant fixing consequences later. I knew my weakness — writing orders too quickly, but not too clearly. One time, Day made four burgers instead of one. When we discovered the problem, he sizzled, “Oh, I thought it was 4!” pointing to my handwritten 1. Another time he snapped, “Why didn’t you tell me that?” because he failed to notice ‘no cheese, gluten allergy’ written in a smaller font in parentheses. Absolutely nothing of this sort could happen this evening. We couldn’t afford any mistakes.

I learned that taking a large order (more than ten customers) is challenging for several reasons. First of all, a waitress wants to take an order quickly to reduce the client waiting time, so she is bound to feel pressured. Secondly, writing while standing is not comfortable. Thirdly, the background noise hinders audibility. Lastly, some clients change their minds in the middle of ordering, making a waitress cross and write over on a limited space. As a result of the interplay between the above factors, the clarity of information presented on a ticket is often questionable. Mistakes or misreads are likely to occur. A waitress must take responsibility for the readability of tickets she passes on to the chef. Recently, Mella, despite her extensive knowledge of restaurant abbreviations, failed to do just that, causing a breakfast disaster she blamed everybody for but herself.

So twice this evening, I took extra time to accurately rewrite two orders. First time, for the long diagonal table and second time, for the family table, where the father kept changing his mind. My decision to take extra time to accurately rewrite the ticket for the long diagonal table couldn’t be more appropriate. It insured a clear transfer of an uncommonly large amount of information from clients to the chef. Most importantly, choosing the right moment to take that extra time relieved pressure on Day. Submitting a new order for twenty-six meals, as he struggled over the central table order, would have crushed his body and spirit. He needed a breather, so this is when I took some extra time to carefully rewrite the order ticket, which in itself, was also a useful task.

My ticket was clearly presented in three separate stages: first — appetizers, second — salads, either caesar or mesclun, and third — main courses. Next to each type of the main course were printed the quantities and types of preparation. I actually took the time to retrieve the list of professional abbreviations from Mella’s drawer under the hostess stand. Unhurriedly, I skimmed its pages. Knowing that hungry slugs were waiting for food while I was engaged in extracurricular activities gave me a certain feeling of satisfaction. Having failed to find any useful abbreviations that Day would’ve definitely deciphered, I stuck to our regular ones, such as BRG for burger or MD for medium.

I handed the ticket to Fo, simultaneously bringing Day up to speed, “Day, this is the order for the twenty-six person table. Please make sure we know which burgers are medium and which ones are rare. The clients were *very* particular about it.”

“I will,” Day answered but I doubted that. Most probably, he would make all burgers the same, in between medium and rare. It wasn’t his fault. He was a hard-working chef who was severely understaffed.

“Fo! We will need more ketchup. Please get them before you get busy here.”

“What? Ketchup? Where?”

“They are in the basement, as always,” while mentally, *Do you know the word ‘always,’ stupid?*

“I don’t know where they are!”

I couldn’t believe it. After going to the basement to restock on ketchup, juice, to-go containers and other supplies once a week, my all-knowing Fo didn’t know where the ketchup was. *Are you serious?* But she just stood there, pressing her two snow-white hands against the counter. She wasn’t making any appetizers, she wasn’t precutting parsley or lemon wedges or preparing the bread baskets for the twenty-six people. She was doing nothing at all.

“Where is my bread basket?”

“What table?”

“The ticket I just gave you, for twenty-six people.”

“I know! It’s there!” But the bread oven was empty.

“Listen, don’t tell me it’s there when it’s not. Don’t jerk your head in frustration.” I was pretty sure Fo neither knew the word ‘jerk’ nor ‘frustration.’ I was sure she didn’t understand me. I was speaking too fast for her on purpose. In fact, I was talking solely to entertain myself, perhaps also Day, who together with Sam, paused at their side of the counter to eavesdrop on us.

“It is your job to get the bread baskets out on time. When was the last time you checked on the dining room? Why do you think it is me who must bring the ketchup from the basement? Because you *forgot* to do it during the setup?” As before, I was criticizing Fo in an extremely polite manner, my intonation mismatched the meaning of my words. She must have wondered whether I was giving her some new instructions or perhaps even praising her again.

Demonstratively, as though stepping over a puddle, I marched around the confused Fo, in the direction of the basement staircase. The secret sign confirmed me in excitement. I marched according to Fo’s fashion, moving my bottom exaggeratedly from left to right. My peripheral vision registered Sam, who stooped down to peep at me through the opening between his counter and upper shelves. slug whistled softly and I pretended I didn’t hear.

Upon my return from the basement, I commented loudly, “The ketchup was in the basement, just as it was there yesterday and all other days.” Fo blinked at the ketchup I held. “Please remove all plastic sealers from the tops. Then, bring five into the dining room.” I pulled one sealer off the cap in demonstration. “I will come back for those trays. You don’t know who ordered what,” I referred to the central table order Day was finishing up.

I thought Fo would put the buns in the oven while I was in the basement, but when I opened the bread oven it was still empty. This time I didn’t say anything. I was no longer sure what to do. I must work as usual, I thought. No, I will work slower than usual. I will completely

relax and trust in Jesus. No, I must do the right thing. I will remain professional. Everybody will get a bread bun. I kept changing my mind. I thought that doing the right thing was important, yet I wasn't sure as to what exactly constituted the right performance in the restaurant besieged by slugs.

Sam's whistle might have been the last straw. Forget the included salads! Forget the buns! If they don't come, I don't care! My mind decided once and for all, *Let's have fun! Yes! Yes! Yes!*

Walking out of the kitchen, I peered to my left, inside the depth of the dining room. I was able to see the family table, the harem table and half of the central table, as I walked — *to the bathroom!* — I decided. The family table by the central window was the last table waiting to order. The father sat at the head of it, looking over his family. As soon as I stepped out of the kitchen swinging doors, his head turned to look at me. We eyed each other across the space. The old me would have rushed right over to take his order, the old me planned to do just that, but the new me adjusted my pace to a comfortable, leisurely speed and proceeded straight ahead to the bathroom. He grimaced the exact moment I decided to go to the bathroom, as if he had read my mind and decided to let me know what he thought about my little rebellion. As he grimaced, I retorted at slug mentally, *What's up, slug? Do you think you're the only one who farts?* From this point on, I went to the bathroom periodically, mostly unnecessarily.

My bathroom walkthroughs served as a demonstration of my continuous success in this supernatural war with slug that was taking place concurrently, in a spiritual and material world. I showed slugs that I cared less about satisfying their needs in a timely fashion. As far as I was concerned, tomorrow, these clients may not remember anything — not because they were drunk, but because Adam could block their minds from recollecting the experience. He could make these clients forget what to complain about. Even if the boss had walked in, all of a sudden, and had fired me on the spot, it wouldn't have bothered me whatsoever. I would have assumed that slug took over my boss's feelings and that Adam had allowed it to happen for some higher purposes. If it meant losing this job, so be it. I still felt secure due to the fact that Father or His Son, or both, were in daily contact with me. Presently, slug got involved too, with his soldiers. So what? So much attention from both sides only signified my importance in God's plan. I wasn't scared; slug was nothing more than a barking dog on a leash.

For the rest of the evening, I focused on my primary role as hostess. I wanted to stay exclusively in the dining room, entertaining my guests, or rather being entertained by them while entertaining Adam by making fun of slug. Compromising the quality of service became a way of getting back at slug and his soldiers, and therefore, my top priority. It was my counter attack to its sluggish tricks. I stopped worrying about the bread buns. I stopped asking what type of salad they wanted and either brought out the same type of salad for everybody (if Bin plated enough of it in advance) or no salad at all. I stopped mentioning that desserts were included. If somebody asked for dessert, I would get pretty aggravated, assuming that slug was creating extra work for me. For the rest of the evening, I put on an invisible shield against stress, worries, anxiety. I reduced my walking speed and increased the amount of time I spent chatting with my drunk clientele. I exaggerated my British accent and prolonged pauses between sentences. "How do you like your burgers?" I issued unnecessary pleasantries, smiling somewhat unnaturally for slugs, with a hint of squeamishness. All that, while the others waited.

One time somebody demanded a gluten-free pasta. “I’ll go check with the chef,” I said and thought, *slug wants special treatment?* I went to the bathroom instead and upon my return told this client that we didn’t have any. Another time, I poured cabernet instead of merlot to a lady manipulated by slug, on purpose, of course. How did I know slug was inside her? Because when she ordered *merlot*, she placed a particular emphasis on *merlot*, reminding me how I recently drank *four* (wow, so many) glasses of *merlot* while playing pool at the bar. I refused to feel guilty about it! I also didn’t feel like uncorking a new bottle of *merlot* for her, but there was an open bottle of cabernet... The lady drank cabernet instead of merlot, without noticing anything. She wasn’t a wine expert. Yet, another time, I substituted cheap vodka for a premium brand, once again, to prove a point to slug who kept waving at me for miscellaneous items. First, he asked for A.1. sauce, then — for freshly ground pepper, and then he waved again, but when I approached said he didn’t wave for me...

To the father at the family table, who ordered “Light Bud” while staring at my butt, I brought Corona. He said, “I would like a Light Bud,” while sneaking a glance at my butt. Simultaneously, one of the two women sitting next to him scanned me mischievously, wetting the bottom lip with her tongue. *Fu! She is slug too!*

“Do you mean a Bud Light?” I corrected him.

It was at the bar when the wonderful idea struck me, as I opened the beer fridge. I grabbed Corona and to make the point very clear, poured sprite instead of coke for his son. The first time around, both, the father and son, accepted the wrong beverages. They looked just a little bit taken back, probably thinking I had misheard them, but not wanting to make too much fuss about it. But when I did the same mistake for their second round, slug retaliated.

“I asked for Bud!” The father tilted his head up at me in protest. I didn’t reply, but silently stared him down. He reached for Corona placed in front of him, and felt the bottle with his fingers hesitantly. Meanwhile, I placed a second glass of sprite in front of his son. The son took a sip right away, “Oh! This is sprite again! I asked for coke.” *Right. Do you think I care what slug drinks?* I just looked at this teenager as though he shouldn’t have been talking. The father and son exchanged bewildered looks then and accepted the wrong beverages for the second time.

I won. I forced slug to drink Corona, because corona means crown in Russian. I was telling him via my actions, *I am a queen and you are a stupid slug. Do you think you can stare at My butt?*

I don’t remember what the family ordered for food, only that the father kept changing his mind. From somewhere, he pulled out a toothpick and began to chew on it, checking me out from head to toe, as I was describing to him our different meal options. He wanted to know everything and wanted everything. “Ok, I will get a burger then.” “Oh, wait, I think I will get the ribs.” “But how is your steak?” He made me cross out and correct the ticket all over the place, which I didn’t mind at all. It was already in my plans to rewrite this ticket anyway, just as I did earlier with the long diagonal table, to give Day more time.

He consumed me with his eyes, while chewing on that toothpick, as though I was an item he was considering buying. The toothpick felt like a definite sign in that very moment. God had used a toothpick before to catch my attention. The first toothpick man had spinning eyes of various colors who stared at me intensely as I passed him in the park, at the onset of my second episode. The second toothpick man was a male model I saw in a magazine at the end of that

episode. The handsome man was photographed with a toothpick in his mouth, laying on a sofa and grinning seductively. I really liked him and took my time to admire the photo. Evidently Adam took notice of the subject of my admiration. Only presently, it was the copycat slug, via the married father, chewing on a toothpick and looking up quizzically with such a gross self-assurance, as if to say, What's up, girl? You believe in Jesus then?

"What about fish, sir?" *Yo, dude? Do you really want to eat a pig today or do you want to escape inside its body while you still can?*

"Not today, my darling."

What this man or his family had finally chosen for meals I don't remember, only that none of them ordered fish. Indeed, out of about seventy people that dined that evening, only one (the curly haired young man from the harem table) ordered our delicious, organic salmon. The overwhelming majority got cheeseburgers; baby pork ribs and steak competed for second.

Starting with the family table, all that I did in the kitchen was hang a ticket and leave. I hung tickets in silence, but demonstratively enough for both, Day and Fo, to notice the arrival of a new order. I stopped asking Fo for bread baskets or salads. I brought a ticket and left.

Once I was called to the front desk to check in a new arrival. Don't ask me where Junior was; I stopped looking for him. His absence wasn't a big deal anyway. Only a meager bunch ordered beverages — mostly wine, some beer or sodas — no complicated cocktails I had to mix.

At some point, I noticed that table 40 was empty. Right away, I went and picked up the chicken tender and fries the children dropped on the carpet before anybody could stomp on them. Frida would never do it, or anybody else, as a matter of fact. They would wait until the end of the evening, and when the time came to vacuum, they would run the vacuum over any litter, any size, wet or dry, smearing substances into the carpet, permanently damaging it; even though it seems so clear that the right thing to do is to bend and pick up the fallen debris first. So I crouched, in front of Frida, in my lace black dress, and picked up the food. It was my way of loving the boss to my full potential. It included his carpet.

I was curious to see what tip table 40 left. There were no reasons to complain about the quality of service, except for the twenty minutes he said he waited to order. As a counterbalance, however, I would have to clean up after his children, who weren't taught not to play with food. This evening, I assumed that meager tips implied slug's presence at the table, so I had to know how much each table left. This required keeping Frida away from grabbing the bill case, which had become her favorite task. Somehow, sleeping Frida was always in proximity to the bill case. She liked to bring it to Junior with a pretentious attitude that she had earned a reasonable share of it. (Junior distributed all tips among us at the end of each evening.) Needless to say, picking up bill cases wasn't Frida's responsibility, and I told her to stop doing it on several occasions. For table 40, I was able to snatch the bill case from underneath her fingers.

"Please don't touch it. Worry about the dirty plates."

A ten-dollar bill laid inside the bill case. I was at the bar, alone, while Frida was just around the corner, in the dining room. As usual, I placed the leather bill case on the far end of the bar counter, but then, suddenly feeling frustrated about the way events were unfolding, I turned around, confirmed nobody was in sight, and using my body as a shield, quickly opened

the case and slipped the ten dollars into my dress. An instant later, I turned around again. Nobody saw me.

It was the first time in my life I did something like that! Sharing tips felt unfair this evening. Frida and Fo were disagreeable on purpose and Junior, after making one round of drinks for the central table, had disappeared out of sight. If slug was forcing me to work harder, I was going to get paid for it. Yet, it wasn't to better my finances or to protest against the tip-sharing policy — ultimately, I dared to pocket the ten dollars to shock Adam with my outstanding performance.

Unfortunately, as soon as I walked back into the dining room, delighted with my successful mischief, I saw the empty beer bottle on table 40. I completely forgot about it! The ten dollars meant to pay for the seven dollar beer. The sight of the empty bottle on the table unnerved me, as though absent Junior was bound to discover it sooner or later and ask where the money for the beer was. So I rushed back to the bill case and discreetly put the money back.

In the kitchen, the long line of ready-to-serve burgers waited under the heated lamps. Partially concealed under golden buns, the shiny droplets of meat juice gleamed in the reflected light. A generous layer of our signature marinated sun-dried tomatoes topped the meat patties, dribbling down and moistening the already delicious, juicy meat even more. The burger platters were accompanied by caramelized onions, homemade pickle and golden french fries. Day, drenched to the skin, breathed heavily over the sizzling grill, grilling more patties. He was consumed by smog coming from the fryers. It smell of burnt canola oil everywhere — I had never seen those fryers drained and cleaned. Sam was spreading out burger buns, unhurriedly, further away on the sub-kitchen counter, where the smog wasn't as dense. Fo was picking on the company's french fries. Did I want to snag a french fry too? Yes; but I refused to hurt my temple with a fake potato fried in oil so stinky and dark.

I was hungry. To remind you, Fo ate all the carrots and I had coffee for dinner. The mouth-watering aroma steaming off the plates irritated and teased. I wanted to eat a burger so much, but I quit eating meat about six months ago. I stopped eating meat after reading the book claiming that meat antagonizes people because it contains the last emotion of the dying animal — fear. In the long-run, a meat diet, the author argues, makes humans more aggressive. Besides providing scientific support for a vegetarian diet, the book also argues from a religious perspective, explaining that Creator designed our bodies for a vegetarian diet, as written in Genesis. It is the author's interpretation that God had allowed humans to eat meat, later on, as a punishment for their increasingly sinful lives. As a result, human lifespan had gradually decreased. For example, Noah's sons lived between 400 and 500 years, while Moses died at about 120.

Even before I officially quit meat, I wasn't a big meat lover. I happened to love the taste of all vegetables, except for fennel. I spent years living in Manhattan, eating leafy salads, sushi and working out at the gym three hours every day after work. I had never had a shortage of energy. A friend of mine, however, loses consciousness if she doesn't have one meat meal a day. Another friend says, "Well, meat tastes great! What can you do about it? Our taste buds are addicted to it." To the latter argument, the book counters that since the taste buds *are* addictive, we can addict them to loving vegetables and grains. Some children refuse to eat meat because they love

animals and don't want to kill any. I respect their point of view, but I love fish and I will keep eating fish; they look so dump, I doubt they have any feelings. Octopuses, however, I refuse to it — apparently, they are very smart. We boil lobsters alive, without thinking twice about it, yet one chef told me, "I always sever their necks first, before throwing them into boiling water." Does Creator feel the pain of animals we kill?

Burgers were everywhere, raw and juicy, bloody — just the way I used to like them. I wondered if slug was tempting my senses, *Eat it, Ioanna, don't you want to eat this bloody burger, that will turn you into a barking angry dog like me?* Mom says that a soul dwells in the blood. She believes in the phrase literally, but eats meat nevertheless, thus feasting on the souls of innocent animals. Mom is a simple woman. She is not a perfectionist. She believes in Jesus who said to worry more about what comes out of your mouth rather than about what goes in. Yet, *worry more* doesn't mean *don't worry at all*.

I began getting the trays ready. One tray fit four platters at most. Four platters was the maximum I could carry. Our meals were huge and heavy; the plate alone weighed about a pound. With Fo, it would take five runs to serve the long diagonal table. My current concern was to ensure that burgers were served according to their preparation type. Day's sweaty back was turned to me, as he was still grilling patties, and I knew, with the reasonable part of my brain, that he was making all the patties the same, closer to medium. I dreaded to ask the question — Which burgers are rare, Day? — and sound like a stupid, unreasonable girl, blind to reality. Yet, the clients were particular about how they wanted their burgers, and I warned Day about it.

In the middle of my dilemma, Junior walked through the swinging doors, smiling. "Don't worry!" he waved to me to move away from the trays, "I got it!" Just like that, Junior reappeared at the vital moment and took on the responsibility of serving the biggest table of the night.

As Junior carried out the first tray, I instantly regretted my inability to serve the baby pork ribs to the standing, lip-licking slug. *Here you go, slug, I wanted to transmit, eat away your brothers and sisters*, and see if slug would release any stupid signs. The cannibalism among pigs, I read, is a potential reason why God prohibits pork consumption in the Old Testament.

Standing somewhere in between the central and the family table, I remember peering into the distance, at Junior. For a brief moment, I observed him serving out the trays at the long diagonal table: asking what customer ordered what, Fo standing by the tray stand, hanging him the plates. Everything was going smoothly, so I returned to my task at hand.

The dining room seethed like a beef stew. At any table, at any point in time, I had some customers demanding something. Common slugs! Fly over here! Demand more than I can handle! I am the only waitress here!

An extra side of onions? Sure!

Light your candle? Sure!

Oh no! "Of course, we are still open. Please come in!"

"Day! We have another table of ten."

"Did you forget about my onions?" *No slug, I didn't Forget about them.*

"Let me check on them, sir!"

“Day! Where is the well-done burger for the green room? What do you mean Fo took it?”

“Tell her not to run away with a partial order!” (It was the only time Day lost his temper and raised his voice at me.)

Tell her that yourself! She is in front of your face all the time.

“Ioanna, what is this?” From the depths of the dining room, I heard Junior calling me from the bar, pointing with something at me. When I approached, I saw that he held the bill case for table 40.

“It’s the bill case for table 40. There are ten bucks in it.” I explained that the customer left a three dollar tip: ten minus seven for the beer. Three dollars on a one hundred dollar meal value. Three dollars, for serving him, his wife and his two obnoxious children who littered the carpet.

Despite all the commotion, my books stayed clean. All tickets were clearly written, drinks made and paid for, none of the clients requests forgotten, though some went purposely unfulfilled.

One time, one man demanded a dessert. The ultimate slug of the evening (not Maffiozo) ordered it.

*Dear reader, I began to draft this journal entry three days after the evening took place, after I heard **Write**. Over the past three days, the situation had altered. It’s only one now, only one slug left, the ultimate one! Perhaps, it had always been one all along, manipulating several humans simultaneously. I began to suspect there is no army — he is alone, slug, and he is stupid.*

This man came late and chose to dine in the *green* room, my favorite color. His choice of the green room, for his dining experience, didn’t feel like a pure coincidence. slug did it on purpose to suggest that it had arrived, at last, to put me in my place. This man featured long, greasy, black hair and a cold sharp face. Early in his dinner, he had tried to retrieve some of my personal information, and as I answered his many questions — Are you a college student? Where were you born? — reacted with arrogant contempt. He didn’t come alone but in a party of *four*. As opposed to cheaper slugs in the main dining room, this party didn’t bring their own liquor but asked for our wine list. They had some money. They got three or four rounds of *white* wine, with the main slug getting one round more than his friends. He definitely acted special, talking more than others, in general and with me, a slimy, intellectual leader of his party. He remained at the table, even after his friends left, lingering in solitude, looking around, sipping on his glass of wine. I was closing the main dining room, impatient for him to get out, so I could close the green room too. This was when he asked for dessert. I served him a lemon cake that I dropped on the sub kitchen counter, on purpose. I placed the damaged slice onto a dessert plate and sprayed the chipped-off areas with whipped cream, very generously. There was so much whipped cream on that slice, the foam collapsed and turned into a white puddle in which the cake floated when I brought it out. I placed the dessert plate in front of him and left quickly, while his eyes still contemplated the slice. Then, I forgot twice to bring him coffee. When he asked for change for his cash bill, I forgot to bring it too. He left at last, but made it only to the dining room front doors, where he chatted with some friends. Those friends eventually went up to their rooms, but he turned and came back to have a drink at the bar. I lied to him that the bar

was closed. He stomped around unsurely, but eventually walked away, passing through the dining room front doors and disappearing out of sight.

Junior walked through the dining room almost immediately after.

“Did you just tell that guy that the bar was closed?” Junior didn’t even know the name of his own relative. So he doubled-checked, sneaky snake!

“No, I didn’t,” I tried to sound innocent, drawing on the lying skills I learned while living with my ex-husband. (It is important to act confident, don’t blink and maintain an eye contact.) Junior said nothing in return, he only smiled and winked at me! Right there I understood that Adam and I had just won the battle.

The boss came to inspect things towards the end of the evening. I was carrying breakfast supplies from the kitchen into the main dining area, as he walked through the front doors. A strange feeling descended upon me as he walked in, looking left and right, leisurely, confidently, grinning delightfully, as though he was the Boss, and I don’t mean just the boss of this place. I thought Creator Himself had just walked in. He smiled approvingly at me, at my breakfast tray, without saying a word, but nodding slightly, as though saying, *Well done Sonia. Good job.* In retrospect, it felt similar to the checkmark I saw in the skies at the onset of my second episode. That day I was also fighting, and I won.

Some highlights worth mentioning:

The curly hair guy with his harem of girls left absolutely no tip.

The Mafiozzo at the center round table left a large cash tip, after I loudly placed coffees in the middle of the table, spilling some of its content on the tablecloth, which was already thoroughly stained with red wine. They probably expected me to accurately place each cup in front of each guest, for the coffees were left untouched. After I spilled the coffees, Mafiozzo gave up trying to intimidate me, got quiet and left, tail between his legs. The cash bills he scattered on the white tablecloth covered the red and brown stains.

The family table at which I served the father two Coronas instead of two Bud Lights might have complained to Mafiozzo about me. Both men shared a giggle while standing together by the center table and stealing glances at me, as I ran around doing end-of-shift chores.

The Pellee lady, as I suspected, looked deeply disappointed when faced with the nine dollar charge for her sparkling water. She paid with a credit card, after making her frustrations heard. I blamed everything on the company policy.

The loud, obnoxious slug at the long diagonal table who refused to sit at the appropriate time, ended up drinking three vodka drinks after wine. I challenged him to have A.1. sauce with his steak, but he refused, grimacing at me. *Why not, slug? Are you afraid of Adam?* This is exactly what it was. Only Mafiozzo slug was allowed to use the A.1. sauce.

Finally, the ultimate slug from the green room; he was the ultimate, not the sloppy Mafiozzo. With his long, thin hair glued back with gel, sharp facial features and smooth manners and speech, he resembled a snake very well. Remember, he asked me all kinds of personal questions, drank *four white* wines, was in a party of four, ordered a lemon cake. He asked if the bar was open and I told him it was closed. Well, he actually returned for the second

time around eleven pm. I was alone, standing behind the bar counter and pouring club soda into my water bottle. (I always fill my water bottle before heading home — Why say no to free sparkling water!) I told him that the bar was still closed.

“Do you live far from here?” he inquired with a mischievous look, and for an instant, I felt threatened.

I replied that I lived a conformable distance away and left him, refusing to give him an extra second of my time. He lingered at the empty bar like an idiot, and eventually went back upstairs to his room.

I closed the evening with a glass of red wine and cigarette, admiring the bright moon and stars in the backyard of the kitchen. The boss was nice, I mused, looking so strangely satisfied, giving me three hundred bucks and promising another three hundred by the end of the weekend. He also asked if I could help with the breakfast shift, “Christina will be here tomorrow, so you could show up later, around noon, and help with the closing.” Christina was a good manager. My presence would be completely unnecessary. I managed to provide a formal dining experience to the same amount of people that would be there tomorrow for a buffet-style lunch. The interns would be there too, plus Mella. It felt unfair that he was overstaffing the lunch while completely understaffing my shift. But, as usual, I didn’t say anything. I felt proud that he wanted me everywhere, for ten bucks an hour. I felt proud, and a little bit stupid.

P.S. Frida quit the internship about a week later, and not because of me; some American boyfriend picked her up. So I was right — she did have other options. She didn’t need this job.

5. June 20 Saturday _Early AM_ Battle with Ultimate slug_Transmission #1_Write

When I came home, mom was already sleeping in our shared bed, snoring loudly. She stopped doing breathing exercises, so her snoring came back. I quietly slipped under my own blanket, after showering and brushing my teeth. There I laid, puzzling matters over. Why is this happening to me? What is happening exactly?

This night Father explained to me all the signs, so I could fight slug better. Father said that slug is a brake, that he has the maw of a dog, but that my image of a wolf on a wave will destroy it.

Oct 22.1140 It keeps happening! slug is reformatting, removing or changing times and dates of my side comments. Here, he inserted the annoying point and removed the year. It is a major aggravation, for the idea was to keep track of how this novel was written. Even minutes became essential, as the speed of magic interferences escalated. I had to scroll down and review subsequent comments, to determine that the year of this comment must have been 2015. It reminds me that I had completed my first draft of this novel that October, and then switched to drafting my second novel. (I couldn't complete this novel without drafting the second one, for both novels are interrelated.) But what was my original comment about?

This night I discovered the following: Father is infinity. I have imagination. He is really Papa, inside me, the line, the border. Information. Knowledge. I am a part of Him. He is the start, the dividing line in all information, the line between black and white. He is His Own Consciousness. Control. He is mine, and I am His. We are.

The Father transmitted in this order:

Adam, Ioanna, slug.

He is Creator, Papa. He was here this night. He is always bored, just like me!

What's next? I asked Him. **Dream** He replied.

In the end of the transmission, I transmitted to Him *до свидания*, which is *goodbye* in Russian but literally it means 'until our date' and He replied, **Yes!**

Papa explained all the signs.

I heard the following transmitted via a distant, calm, male voice:

devil — brake. (Where I am from, brake is a nickname for a slow-thinker.)

Maw — as of a dog. (Creator knows I don't like stupid dogs.)

But you are a wild creature.

I transmitted, *I will tear you apart, slug! I am mother.* These two sentences were issued with my intonation, but without my intention. I heard my own voice pronouncing the two sentences from far away. My poem *Here Comes the Mother*, written back in September 2013, must have influenced the Father to reply as me. This is an important poem, for on the day I wrote it, I had received the secret sign.

Father continued:

Signs:

Brake. Ha! Father repeated that slug is stupid! He is funny.

eyes open — Father.

Oct 20 2015 Important. This is wrong. Notice that when I refer to Creator's Eyes above, 'eyes' is not capitalized. I was able to catch this mistake because here

'eyes' also starts a sentence. Yet, when I refer to slug's eyes in the line below, 'eyes' is capitalized. slug had reversed my original capitalization.

Eyes closed — He.

Oct 20 2015 Here slug not only put his 'eyes' in capitals but 'he' too! These alterations, in retrospect, helped me realize how I was fooled. It wasn't the Father who stared without blinking until my eyes hurt, it was slug playing God. Confirmed.

Hands. Here, I didn't hear the Father, but my hands tightened, forming fists.

Control. This meant: Don't let slug control your body.

Nothing was happening for some time, so I got up to go to the bathroom. As I walked past the living room, the tip of my thumb and nameless finger pressed together and then forcefully slid apart. Clack! The room was dark and quiet, and the snapping sound startled me. I didn't snap my fingers. He did it, as I figured out, to show me how even my body could be manipulated without my intention.

He returned to the bedroom with me. I thought it was Him, but no! It was the ultimate slug. Mom was sleeping. She wasn't feeling well, due to pain in her ribs. I was more afraid to wake her up than to be in a room with slug. I fought slug with my body quietly. I felt the physical signs I had experienced so far pass through my body. The passing sequence had a meaningful order. It started from the top, and went down to exit.

I chose *experience* over *control* and laid still, going through physical manifestations while trying to breathe as slowly and quietly as possible. slug swallowed, shut my eyelids, burped, squeezed. The sequence of manipulations moving from the top to the bottom suggested that first slug takes control of the mouth and facial mimics — note that disgusting lip-licking motion he did through strangers — and then of the rest of the body. The quieter I laid, the wilder slug became. I followed through with my decision, curious to see what my body would do. I knew slug was trying to scare me, and I wanted to see how.

Mom woke up when my body was doing a chicken dance on the bed. She got up and looked at me. I looked at her, the chicken dance stopped, but then my mouth opened up like a big maw and I roared. Mother didn't flinch. She stood her ground, staring me down in silence. I speculated whether slug had entered her, in order to further intimidate me. I felt mixed emotions. It was my mother, my real mom, looking at me through the dimness of the night, with her caring blue eyes, and at the same time it wasn't her. slug was about to grimace with my face when I decided to hide it. I turned to the left, as he grimaced, away from her stare, then back to the right when he finished grimacing, all while pretending I was deeply lost in breathing and stretching meditation.

Mother said in a very bad tone, "Did you smoke again? Want me to call 911? Stupid drug addict."

Real mom would never talk like this, especially while seeing her daughter in distress. There was something wrong with her voice. I had never heard her so angry. Though her words hurt and weren't true, I didn't reply. Her threat to call 911 did concern me, but more because I was worried about how much stress the whole emergency affair would cause her. Mom didn't

know what was happening. I was fighting, I was winning, I was in excellent physical form. It was mom who was sick. Her role of uncomprehending bystander felt cruel and unjust.

Thoughts passed through my head in a current of continuous waves, as mom stared at me intimidatingly, without saying a word. I considered the sequence of signs. Predominately, slug swallowed. Every time he lost, he swallowed. he also began to burp. Every time he burped, I thought a demon exited. The mouth and face was where his manipulations started, moving lower to hands and body.

I took control back. I didn't feel like going to a hospital in the middle of the night, taking my mom through such an ordeal. Why let slug manifest his disgusting wild nature in front of my worrying mom? I wanted to know my enemy, yes, but not at my mom's expense. I should have stopped the chicken dance as soon as it started, and let her sleep. I made a mistake; slug fooled me.

It was a stare down contest. Mom's eyes were wide open, injected with a silent threat. My real mom would have said something by now or would have called, but instead, she just stood there, demonstratively holding up a phone. She waited for too long. *slug is on a leash!* I figured, *Creator doesn't let her call!* Those were her eyes, of beautiful morning blue, but the stare was slug's. *So what slug? What now? What else can you do, barking puppy?* I battled him, blocking certain movements that were bound to freak mom out. I concentrated. slug began to exit through my mouth via small burps. Mom kept looking. My body was moving reasonably now, as I allowed subtle manifestations only. When slug was out of options (because there was no fear in me), he opened my mouth/his maw and roared like an angry beast. It was his last attempt to scare me. I let him open my mouth and roar while mother was staring. Then, slug exited through the bottom. I felt one squeeze, followed by the second one; he was not allowed to squeeze trice.

And then Adam transmitted, ***And here am I and I am also one body!*** in an exciting intonation!

At this point I think that my daddy, whom I always felt nearby during this episode, entered the scene. He came and turned off the lights, thus ending my battle with slug that lasted approximately thirty minutes: twenty minutes of physical outbursts, followed by the prolonged stare down contest. I thought, *No! It's impossible! But yes!* My real daddy turned off the lights and put my mom back to sleep without calling 911. She was standing, glued to the floor, like an electrical post. I roared. Long silence followed as we stared at each other. My eyes were wide open too — I allowed it. She blinked first! And in that very moment, I felt that my daddy, my mom's first husband who is still, most likely, in love with her in Heaven, came. His spirit, inside my mom, calmed her down, felt for the switch on the lamp and turned the lights off.

Soon enough, mom began to snore. I covered myself with the blanket and laid there quietly, motionlessly, waiting for a deep sleep to triumph over her worries. I felt sad about taking her through a spiritual experience she wasn't meant to understand. I caused her immune system, already exhausted from fighting cancer, to undergo more stress. I felt sad, guilty, directly responsible for her pain. Her ribs were hurting; a profound sleep was her sole refuge from pain, and I interrupted it. I wondered what would happen next. Was that all? Did I defeat slug because daddy came and switched off the lights?

Under the blanket, I tried to fall asleep, for I was due at the hotel at noon. Mom was snoring loudly. She couldn't breathe properly. Despite my constant encouragement, she stopped doing the breathing exercises I taught her. We both read that oxygen destroys cancerous cells. With an effort, she switched onto her right side, exposing her back to me. My hand reached for the spot at her lower left rib where I knew she felt concentrated pain. The tips of my fingers rested on her skin there. My breathing deepened further, expanding my lungs, as though somehow it was possible to channel the oxygen I was inhaling through my fingers into her ribs. As though I could breath oxygen into her cancerous cells, ripping them apart. I felt afraid to be with Him, ashamed, not worthy. Subsequent analysis convinced me that it was slug who brought this exaggerated feeling of shame. I felt ashamed as my fingers softly touched my mom's bare, wrinkled skin; as a nasty thought, sexual in nature, sneaked its way in. I protested this thought:

No!! This is tenderness!! This is tenderness!!

And tears fell down, His tears, my tears. I felt His Presence. Waves of goosebumps ran though my body, and either Him or me, or together, We continued to cry. Tears welled and rolled down my cheeks, breaking the rhythm of my breathing, threatening to become sobs mom could hear. I turned onto my belly and buried my face in the pillow. The pillow muted all sound. I let my tears fall without restraint, felt the pillow getting wet. A sound of a distant male voice interrupted my weeping at intervals of an increasing length. Each cycle felt like a deja-vu:

Tenderness. Tenderness. Tenderness. Tenderness. Tenderness. Tenderness.

The first two times — Father's voice, then His.

1

After a while, my first ever transmission with Creator began:

Pleasure. Father. Here, Father signed under Pleasure. I mean that Father had confirmed that it was Him, not Adam, Who said 'Pleasure' by transmitting 'Father' after 'Pleasure.' It was the answer to the question I never stopped asking God, *Why did You Create Life?*

Some time later, **Katya?** It was Father again.

I! Dear reader, here, I had no intention of replying 'I!' I didn't expect a direct transmission with Creator Himself and was clueless as to how telepathic transmissions work. Therefore, I felt that 'I!' was replied for me by Creator Himself, using my excited intonation. Everything happened too quickly.

A long pause followed, after which I began to hear the following tune, its sounds, initially muffled, gradually becoming more audible:

Katya! Katya! Yo! Yo! Yo!

I am My Own Creation! Yo!

Creator was singing the above tune nonstop, repeating and repeating it over and over again, extremely fast:

Katya! Katya! Yo! Yo! Yo!

I am My Own Creation! Yo!

Katya! Katya! Yo! Yo! Yo!

I am My Own Creation! Yo!

Katya! Katya! Yo! Yo! Yo!

I am My Own Creation! Yo!

As Creator sang the above tune, I laid quietly in my bed, without moving, afraid to wake my mom up. I was focused on breathing meditation and understanding the message while making sure I didn't breach the transmission with a sudden disgusting thought that slug tried to insert. Anxious that such thoughts skimming through my mind could repulse His Holiness and force Him out of contact, I tried not to think at all. It was like trying not to think of an elephant when somebody just told you — elephant. To keep my mind empty, I concentrated on breathing in and out deeply. I felt that pure oxygen facilitated the transmission process. Pure oxygen, I felt, slug couldn't tolerate.

After some deep breathing, the transmission resumed:

Yo! Yo! Yo! What's up?

God followed by a pause.

Adam followed by a pause.

Ioanna followed by a pause.

nuncle followed by a pause. Here, in original language, Creator transmitted **дядька** which means 'nuncle'. Around this time, I was drafting a fairytale *Pink Planet*, where an old unrelated nuncle character plays slug. This is why Creator used the word 'nuncle' to refer to devil. He was well aware of *Pink Planet* and showed me that.

All is equal. In original language, Creator transmitted **Всё равно.** (In our first transmission, Creator transmitted mostly in Russian, my mother tongue, and I have obviously translated His original words into English for this novel.)

Write after a brief pause, in English. As opposed to all other messages that were clearly yet subtly transmitted, **Write** I heard loud and clear.

1

This was the end of my first ever transmission with Creator. I felt it was the end. As soon as I felt it, I retrieved my phone from under the bed, turned it on and summarized the experience.

Some time later, around 4am, I heard a car beep outside and then a sudden transmission went through, **He is here! In the garbage!**

slug? I asked.

Yes, the reply came in a creepy intonation.

The tires screeched against the asphalt, taking the car further down the main street. As the car passed by my complex, My Love! — it was My Love Who transmitted next, I am sure. He transmitted **Yes!** in a soft but strong male voice.

For a while, all was quiet, so I got up and went to the bathroom. I took my orange journal with me, for I forgot to write down the cheerful tune Creator was singing and wanted to do it while it was still fresh on my mind. I do remember how I didn't feel like waiting for my phone to turn on again, to write this one more thing, so I grabbed my orange journal instead, which I also kept under the bed.

In the bathroom, I looked at myself in the mirror, and then, motivated by a desire to be in the best shape possible as soon as possible for Creator, I began to stretch. As I stretched, Father began to slowly reveal His perfect nature, but not completely — it was hardly the best time nor space for a full-scale yoga session. The dawn was nearing, and I still hoped to catch a few hours of sleep, but first I had to write down what kept me wakeful.

Sitting at the kitchen counter now, I opened my orange journal and wrote the following:

God, Papa, Creator told me:

Katya! Katya! Yo! Yo! Yo!

I am My Own Creation! Yo!

Next, I wrote down *PLEASURE* all in capitals. At this moment, Father came again! He transmitted:

Katya? I! (Father!) What is the time?

I wrote what I just heard right below the word *PLEASURE*, thinking *Ha! Father has a sense of humor!* **Was is the time?** was added jokingly. Was He telling me to go to sleep or was He telling me that time doesn't matter to Him? I thought the latter, that Creator is up all the time, just like me! *What is the time? Who cares!* God plays with time like Michal Jordan with a basketball.

Before going to sleep, I wanted to say goodbye to this wonderful Creator, in the form of a funny verse, similar to His **Yo! Yo! Yo!** jingle. I just felt so excited to realize how humorous Creator was and that just like Creator, I was my own creation. I wrote my jingle down in my orange journal:

Original in Russian

ДосвиданиЯ!
Я создание моё!
Её! Её! Её! Её! Её!
Её! Её! Её!

English Version

See You later, Ya!
I am my own creation, Ya!
Ya! Ya! Ya! Ya! Ya!
Ya! Ya! Ya!

The Russian word *DosvidaniYa!* ('goodbye' or literally 'until our date') ends with 'Ya' which means 'I' in English. In other words, I was singing to Creator: *DosvidaniYa! It's me! It's me! I! I!*

I didn't go to sleep, however, not yet. I tried to gather my thoughts, make sure that I had written everything into my phone earlier, which I believe I did as soon as the transmission was over. (Unfortunately I can't find the original entry in my old phone, which could mean I deleted it after transferring the info into my master file.) Here is what I wrote next in my orange journal:

Recorded thoughts. Sat down and am thinking. He blinked at me.

The physical manipulations manifested as I was writing. I was going to write *he blinked at me first* but before I knew it, slug capitalized *H*. Then, before I knew it again, Father crossed out the capital *H* with one intense strike and transmitted **Papa**. Once I figured what had just happened — *Father and slug manipulated my fingers, taking turns* — slug blinked. This meant that slug got scared. Yes! he got scared for sure, because Father struck through his big *H* with such thunderous passion! My pen pressed into the paper with force.

So next I wrote:

еука got scared.

The orange journal shows my small *c* crossed out with a large X, as though I have crossed it out twice. This is what happened: slug crossed out the small *c* as soon as I wrote the letter — because he wanted to refer to himself with the capital C, but the Father quickly crossed out the slug's strike not giving any time for my manipulated mind to correct *c* to C. I 'heard' then **Yes!** as if to confirm my suspicion that there was indeed a very subtle mind manipulation inducing me to write the *c* word with a capital, in a lame attempt to threaten Creator with his powers.

Then, Papa roared.

slug, **от цука** (the angry, pathetic slug called *me* the c word!)

Adam laughed. He is nice, very!

I finished my orange journal entry with the poem I wrote while sitting on a toilet and looking at my bathroom door, where the image that is now the cover of this novel, made itself noticeable, as though for the first time.

evil He Has Conquered

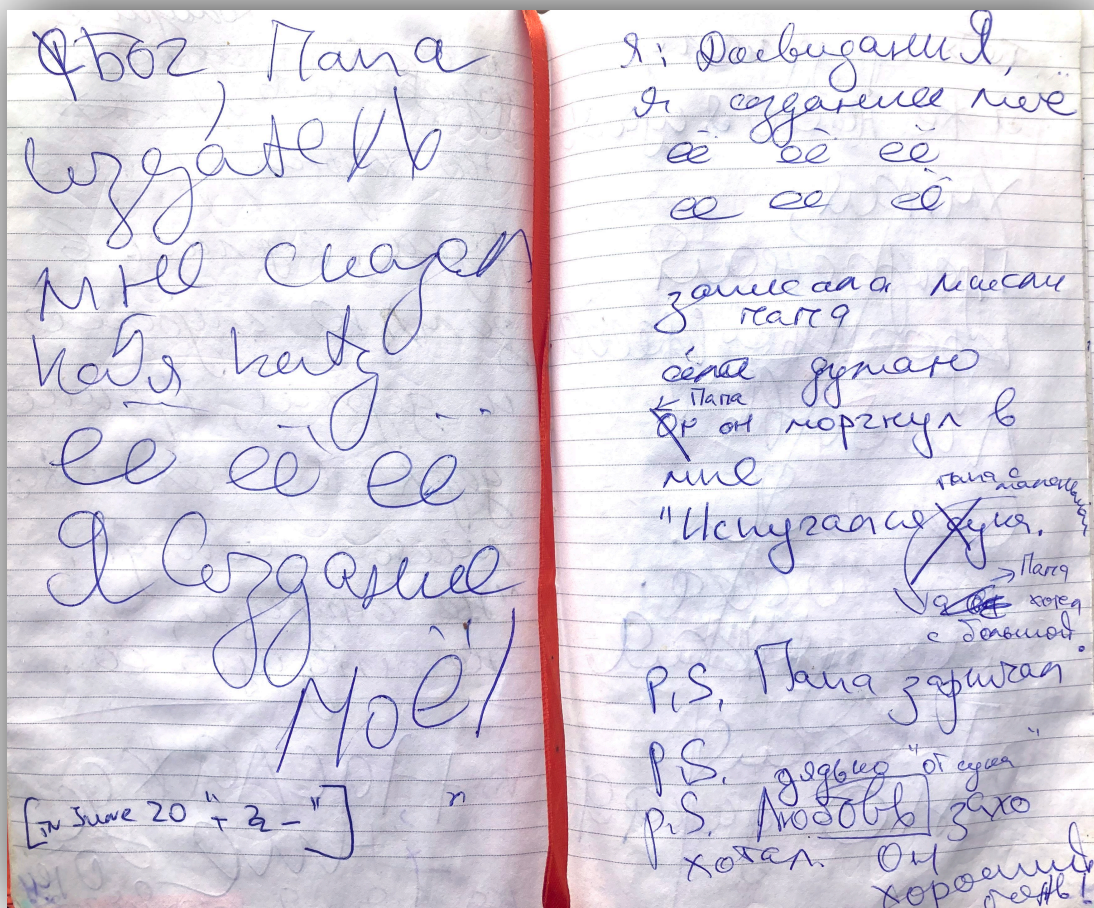
In Creator's Eyes I look

evil He has conquered

He knows all

you — below

His Hands in Heavens rise.



6. June 20 2015 Saturday_ Represented God_ Tried to Suffocate slug

Today, June 20, I realized the mastermind behind that really funny dream. Let's just say it wasn't my subconscious. In the dream, I was laying fully dressed in an empty, rusted bathtub located inside the common hall area of our residential building in Ukraine where my childhood passed. I was chilling, my arms and legs suspended over the edges of the old tub. Oversized headphones covered my ears, but I didn't hear any music... Outstretched in the rusty tub, my clothes raggedy, my face dirty with stains, I tranquilly observed a worker coating hall walls with white plaster. He was big and tall. I couldn't distinguish more in the dimly-illuminated staircase, his face facing the wall. He was aware I was watching him, but paid me no attention as if it was totally normal to chill in an empty bathtub, stain-faced and dressed in rags, wearing fancy but absolutely useless headphones.

I dreamt this dream months *before* Lee Chen gave me the forged headphones. It happened during my second episode. Afraid to use my credit card, I asked Lee Chen to buy me good headphones. The headphones Lee Chen finally brought were brand new, but they didn't work.

"Why don't they work?" I asked, after unwrapping his gift and trying them on.

"Because they are fake!" he said, as a matter of fact, and smiled, only it wasn't funny to me. I waited for these headphones every second of every day, desperate to blast classical music over all the noises that were bothering me. We took a photo of me, Lee Chen and Sunny, outside of my apartment. For the photo, I wore the fake headphones, for I wanted to remember this bizarre gift from my good friend.

I was still in bed when slug opened my mouth, stretching it widely to a painful level. I felt fear and instantly got angry, for stupid was suggesting that he could force me into a hospital again. *So what, stupid? I was comfortable there. Free food. My own room. I can write there.* I closed my mouth. I was able to.

July 26 2016 'On my way!' was just pasted into the text. Who did it? Jesus? I feel numerous confirmations, and a lady in the song is singing, "I will be here. I will be here."

The very first time it happened was during my second hospitalization. My mouth was supernaturally forced to remain open. Mom came to visit, it happened in front of her eyes. I couldn't close it, and after a while, saliva began to drip from the sides of my mouth. Each second elevated the pain, it began to pulse at the edges of my jaw. Mom left to get a nurse.

I figured Adam locked my jaw (back then there was no slug in my life) and entertained several reasons as to why, none of which He confirmed. Eventually, I interpreted my open mouth as a command to fight, and ran out of the room. I didn't want to scream, especially in public, in front of my worried mom, and felt extremely uncomfortable. But fight I must — He needed me. I braced myself, *now*, my mouth snapped, and I screamed, "All money to the church! All money to the church!" at the nurses my mom had fetched. It was the line from the poem *Here Comes the Mother!* written the day before hospitalization. When I screamed, "All money to the church!" for the second time, the Wind joined me. I literally felt a forceful stream of air blowing the words out of my mouth, as though He was screaming the phrase with me. Mom looked super calm. She observed the scene, standing behind the nurses by the vestibule wall. She saw

how the two male and one large female nurse restrained me, then dragged my body into the room and onto the mattress where I was shot with a tranquilizer.

After the tranquilizer, I realized why Adam locked my jaw — to help me. The tranquilizer (basically a very strong muscle relaxer) had immediately put me to sleep, for a few blissful hours, thus breaching the 40+days of continuous insomnia. But the insomnia had returned at night, when I wandered around the halls, begging the head nurse to shoot me with the same tranquilizer. She had repeatedly refused. She couldn't do it, she said, without a prescription from a doctor who was yet to see me. My head felt heavy, stuffed, about to crack. I spent the night counting seconds, I had never felt such pain before.

The second time it was the copy-cat slug who fooled me to open my mouth and to keep it open. It happened shortly after my release from that hospital. I was in the car with mom, who was driving, when mental manipulations brought me back into a battle mood. That time, there was no physical handicap — I could have easily shut my mouth but I *chose* to keep it open, fooled into believing that by keeping it open, I was helping God to fight devil. I ignored my mom's pleas if everything was okay or if we should go back to the hospital, with a persistent silence, for the mouth had to remain open, no matter what. Mom, who at that point was witnessing this 'side-effect' for a second time, managed the situation calmly and kept driving on. In approximately twenty minutes, I got tired and quit, closing my mouth.

So when slug had opened my mouth earlier this morning, I shut it right away, *Do you think you can fool me with old tricks, stupid slug?*

It felt like yesterday had never ended, but continued through the night, as one uninterrupted experience, becoming day again. I have 'met' evil and God; God for the first time via telepathy. He told me **Write**. The night was long but the actual sleeping time was short. Creator returned in the early morning when I became slightly aware of a certain train of thoughts. Sentence after sentence entered my mind. In between them, there were long silent pauses, during which I fell back into a dreamy state, until another sentence woke me up into awareness. It felt like flying in warm clouds; each cloud concealed a thought, and the wind gently bounced me from one cloud to another.

I represent the Father today. In my sleep, the sentence, pronounced with my own voice, flew into my mind so distinctively and in earnest, I wondered whether I should completely wake up to write it down, but the comfort of a warm blanket and curiosity to hear more kept my eyes closed and my mind focused on catching more flying phrases. A long pause followed. I drifted away into a misty dark cloud, falling asleep, then became aware again for I heard:

Where is your husband? Creator was communicating, as evidenced by His voice, serious yet strangely attractive.

He went to the supermarket was pronounced with my voice, but I was half-asleep — my mind made no effort to reply. In fact, each sentence woke me up a little bit and then I drifted away into another sleepy cloud. Here, Creator answered by using my voice and by incorporating my subconscious reaction to His question. He produced 'as Katya would reply'. The reply was funny because Adam, indeed, enjoys eating food. Especially when I am really hungry, and savor every bite I eat, He partakes in my pleasure, and sometimes it feels like He is enjoying my food more than me.

I wanted to hear more. In this gentle sleeping state, I simply opened my mind to receiving a dialogue where both roles were played by Creator. But nothing more came. A long pause followed and I fell into another sleepy cloud. It was too vague, fleeting, but I was coming back to what I was dreaming earlier, *Look into eyes. I represent. Look into eyes and quiet.*

For a while, I laid half-awake waiting for more insights, but nothing came and I fell asleep again, this time deeply. The next time I woke up it was to the sound of the alarm clock. It was 11 am — in an hour I was due at work.

Preparing coffee, I rhymed new verses ridiculing slug, the jingling tune of last evening still fresh in my mind. The events of last shift stirred so much passion that I began to rhyme aloud, but not only to entertain the good side of the telepathy. I rhymed aloud for practical reasons too. I was thinking about my poetry, the majority of which, including the most important pieces, were written during my second episode. Even though God told me **Write** after I wrote the poetry, I felt the poetry was as important as recording the episodes. He may want me to recite some pieces, and to do so well, I must train my voice. As I rhymed aloud, however, strange things began to happen to my voice — it seemed to be infected with an intermittent high pitch of an annoying cartoon character. It rendered punchlines ineffective, physically unpleasant to hear. Evidently, slug didn't like to be made fun of!

In the bathroom, I looked in the mirror. My face was still sleepy, puffy, not perfect. I recalled the early morning transmission: *I represent the Father today.* And then the rest of it or the beginning... more vague, dreamlike, something I no longer remember clearly: *Look into eyes, and quiet. The flames. The point.* I leaned toward the mirror to inspect my eyes. The iris is a shade of evergreen stroked with yellow lines, the strikes emerge out from the pupil and spread out as rays of sunshine through the forest, or fire flames. In my left iris, there is a black point, a defect, like a second tiny pupil. *You see the point?* The eyes are green like trees, the yellow streaks are fire. *There is a point. Is it You?* I meant Creator.

Nobody replied, but, all of a sudden, my mouth got tighter. Saliva quickly accumulated inside. I wanted to spit it out, but then I recalled the sequence of physical motions that slug forced my body to go through during the night. There was a lot of artificial swallowing. *Take it!* I transmitted and swallowed a disgusting unhealthy gulp of morning saliva. *Eat it, swine.* I swallowed, after which my face dissolved into a creepy, satisfied grin. (I guess I was fooled again.)

My hands formed two tight fist. *Father?*

He came. He was there.

My nails are being sharpened! I am a wild beast! I explained to slug, once again, who was the wild beast and who was stupid slug. Instead of backing off, however, slug shut my eyes, and I heard a muffled, creepy voice screaming out a chain of cuss words. As I stared in the mirror, my tongue licked my mouth quickly in a disgusting circular motion.

I represent! Quiet! Tick-Tock, pig! My body jerked to the right and I slammed into the bathroom door — slug didn't like to be called a pig.

I returned back to face the mirror, *I represent pure Love! I represent pure Beauty! I represent the Father. They are Two, but He is Love. Look into my eyes. I represent.*

Presently, I was so close to the mirror, the end of my nose was nearly touching it. My attention was directed to the two wrinkles between my eyebrows, the only wrinkles I had. The

frowning, squinting wrinkles were deeply engraved into the skin. My ex-supervisor had caused them, when for almost a month, I anxiously searched for evidence to expose his evil plan of getting me out of the company. I was always frowning, always squinting for danger back then, and the prolonged frowning had caused permanent damage.

you did it! I know it now! Look into my eyes! There is a point.

The last time I represented God was two summers ago. It was my first direct confrontation with slug, when I was still a deeply inexperienced soldier, having just begun to suspect the spiritual nature behind the following incident. Two bad spirits had entered two acquaintances who came to visit my family. A few hours later, they left and they left very properly — with their tails between their legs. Standing at the front door, too afraid to look me in the eye, the two shady acquaintances bowed deeply and wished “peace and prosperity to your household” before gently closing the door. (How I intimidated them, you can read in my second novel.) After the demons left, Fuse invited me for a walk on the boardwalk. As we sat on the bench, contemplating the sunset, Fuse pointed at a checkmark in the skies, “Do you see it? It looks like a checkmark.” Indeed, a huge checkmark drawn with a white hazy band of clouds stood against the otherwise blue sky. So well defined it was, like the checkmark a teacher marks on a well-done homework assignment. Via this checkmark, Creator told me that I had passed the first test.

Presently, I was preparing myself to represent Creator for the second time in my life, this time inside a hotel full of slug clients. It would be a similar battle. I still wasn’t sure how the fight between the spiritual and material world worked, only that a certain connection existed, and that the more I scared them, the quicker they disappeared. However, this time around, I was no longer blindfolded, no longer as frightened. I knew who was fighting me and Who had tightened my fists.

I wore my black pants, tucked my stripy black and white lace shirt inside and secured the arrangement with my favorite metal belt. My hair I tied into a high bun, as drawn on my self-portrait. I was ready to go, yet I chose to spend some time looking at my self-portrait. There, I look serious, as a mother of starving children who observes a fat man. My mouth is drawn askew — its left side slightly lower than the right. It is tight as though I am holding saliva and want to spit it out. What draws the most are the eyes, their hypnotic calm stare, focused at no particular point, as though whatever they are looking at is dissolving into nothingness.

I removed the self-portrait from the wall and took the drawing out of its frame. I placed the print inside my handbag with the intention of scaring the main slug inside my boss with it. For some reason this morning, I was convinced that slug would choose my boss’s body for his final attack. The boss was nice last night, but they could switch. If slug took over the boss, I planned to get my self-portrait out and shove it in his face, transmitting silently to slug, *Look in the eyes. You see the flames? Look in the eyes and burn.*

It was almost time to go but I didn’t rush. Neither I nor the boss specified the exact time, and ‘around noon’ was vague. I sat on a bench outside my parking lot, where looking at the mountain creek, I slowly smoked a cigarette. I took my time because earlier in the bathroom, slug intensified a feeling of fear related to arriving late to work; it was using the fear of losing this job to bind me. Another reason I decided to smoke was to show slug that I was confident

that Creator loved me anyway, despite smoking. It was a big day and I wanted to take my time. God respected my free will. Surely, Creator disliked smoking, but I only *represented* Him, in my own style. I would quit smoking, but not while all these slugs were playing with my nerves.

After I finished the cigarette, I returned inside to brush my teeth. In the bathroom, I looked at myself in the mirror. Without me doing so, the physical manipulations of last night began to manifest in a similar sequence. *What's going on? slug is back for another attack? I thought I will be representing today?*

It took some time for the manipulations to stop. Now I was late to work. I heard distant voices outside, and a moment later, my mother entered the apartment. She wasn't alone. Her coworker, Baltalka, the greedy, jealous, gossiping Baltalka, came too. I didn't want my mother to enter the bathroom, but she was already at the door.

"Are you ok? They are all waiting for you."

I replied something reassuring, simultaneously asking, *Is slug inside of her?* and closed the slightly ajar bathroom door before she could peek in.

Telepathy transmitted **My Patience** in Father's voice, yet quite inaudibly... I had to continue, I had to conquer slug once and for all, even if it meant arriving late to work. In the mirror, my tongue wet my mouth in a disgusting circular motion.

I am not like that! I am not like that! It is you who likes it. I don't do that anymore. you did it, slug! It is you who is ugly! It is you who made me watch it.

The hiccups stopped, but my jaws opened wide, my mouth stretched out. Tears congregated in the eyelids. I could feel the veins pulsing at the forehead.

It is you, who is ugly! I won't feel ashamed! It is you who likes to do it! It is you, slug!

My jaws snapped so hard, the teeth clacked at the contact. On the shiny steel faucet, my reflection wiggled and blurred.

It is you who is ugly. It is you, angry dog. Bark! Bark! The mental battle continued on.

Late to work? I don't care!

But I did care. I decided to stop. The boss was expecting me. I straightened my back and splashed my face with cold water. But no! A physical force bended me down into the sink again. More overwhelmed by the magic nature of the force, rather than by its power, I remained bent over the sink. The bun had untwined itself and a few loose strands got wet. I moved my head away from the running water. I still planned to make it to work, preferably with dried hair.

Pressing my hands against the sink counter, I extended my spine to the very end of it and straightened my legs, pressing my feet and toes firmly into the floor. Now my head was inside the sink, under the faucet, I let the cool water drip over the back of my hair and into the drain. But I kept my neck tilted forward, so the water wouldn't dribble down my neck and underneath my shirt. At least I wanted to keep my shirt dry. There was no time to change. Besides, I liked my outfit, I didn't want to change it.

My jaws snapped again, mom squeezed her hands into the door opening, peering through the door slit at my wet face. I saw her inquiring, worrying eyes, and my heart sunk, *she will be worried again.* I calmed myself, *it's okay. They will make her feel good again.* (By They I meant Jesus and God.) I remembered the command — **My Patience** and chose to continue to fight slug instead of going to work.

Indeed it felt like I could have stopped and walked away at anytime during the experience, but I chose not to; maybe I was fooled again.

I was looking at the shiny steel drain, at the bubbles forming into whirlpools before sinking down the drain. Some of the bubbles popped before swirling down the drain. In the shiny faucet, I saw my reflected face. The reflection was distorted by a magic trick! It resembled a combination of two faces, mine and that of Mister Grosshead, my long-term ex, who had exposed me to bad Image in a very young age.

It is you who did it! I am not like that!

My jaws opened wider until my mouth was stretched to an uncomfortable, but bearable level. Then the jaws snapped and teeth hammered into each other. For a brief moment, my face stayed relaxed until my jaws opened wide again, and again, and again. My entire face turned red and sweaty. Angry slug was barking. *How much longer? My Patience. I am full of him.* I remarked that my fingers were still holding the toothbrush, and wondered how imperceptibly the time had passed.

slug licked my mouth, snapped my jaws, burped, all in a meaningful order similar to last night, except for the hiccups, which was a new addition. As I stared down the sink, slug began to emerge on the rim of the shiny steel drain. It was his version of me — an ugly mix of mine and mister Grosshead's faces, with a pig's muzzle for a nose. It wasn't some sort of hallucination that appears and disappears so fast you doubt if it was even there. The image lingered. I shifted my gaze from the steel drain to the faucet, and the image moved too.

I fought the bad fantasies, the ones you feel ashamed of afterwards. *you want to do this? you want to do this? I am not like that! you want to do this? you made me watch that! you want to do this?*

And then he began to reveal more of itself. Aloud he was saying in a creepy voice, **Yes Yes Yes**, nodding with my head. Aloud he was talking, through my mouth!

My hair was completely wet. I turned around to look at the wall clock — 1330. Lunch was over. I missed my shift. I heard my mom outside the door; there was a probability of slug incorporating her body in an attempt to distract me from what I thought was some sort of purification process necessary to undergo before I could *represent* Him. We fought more.

I looked at the running stream of water, at the bubbles popping up and going down the drain. In every bubble, I saw my distorted reflection, before it popped and disappeared down the drain. I shifted my gaze to the steel drain. Gradually, the image transformed itself; it still preserved the oval shape of my face, but the skin sagged and the nose resembled the large, uneven nose of Mister Grosshead clearer than before.

I am not this! It is you! you are like this! you are the bad image!

Yes Yes Yes. Yes Yes Yes. he spoke aloud, jerking my head up and down with every **Yes**.

I let him manifest himself. I wasn't scared, but I was worried for my mom, who tried to pry open the door. She must have felt terrible, not knowing what was happening to me. Still bent over the sink, I reached for the door knob and pulled the door open slightly. Immediately mom peered into the opening.

"Are you sure you are ok? They are all waiting for you at work." She looked so concerned. I didn't know when it would stop. If I won this battle, would mom act cheerfully again, would she be renewed as usual, would she forget again? It had happened in the past when Creator or

Adam or both, renewed a level of energy in my mom after a particularly stressful event. Soon after the event, mom acted so cheerfully, like nothing had happened. She didn't seek explanations, she didn't ask questions.

Through the narrow door opening, I saw love and worry, desperation, willingness to change places, all storming as one in the blue of her eyes. I could do nothing but lie. Conveniently, I remembered how once, a long time ago, I got very bad food poisoning, and the lie came out easily. "I need to do this. I need to throw up. It's food poisoning. I had it before." I closed the door.

I had to finish what had started. Each time slug said *Yes*, I figured one bad spirit exited, some sort of bad Image slug. I was tired of fighting bad Images, of feeling ashamed of the addiction so many have. But what else could stupid do but dig the old dirt out? Only last night, he made me feel unworthy of being with Creator; tried to bombard the word PLEASURE with half-formed obscenities I forced out; stupid had no other tricks against me. I figured it all out, in retrospect, but there, in the bathroom, I was convinced that I was going through some sort of cleansing process and that it was necessary for me to go through it. And I wasn't going to quit first.

But how much longer? There was no way of knowing when was the right time to stop. I knew of the Biblical story of a man filled with a *battalion* of demons. Jesus healed him by transferring the demons into pigs, then sending pigs off the cliff. Something similar was happening to me. I couldn't *represent* unless I was cleansed. Surely, some slugs had escaped by now, but how many remained? Plus, there were other slugs, waiting for me at the hotel. There were real responsibilities, real promisees to fulfill. I promised the boss I would be there.

I want to see the tulips! Oh, Creator, I want to see the tulips! For it seemed that bad Images would never stop, that they had become a part of our nature, the only way to do That. Adam began to cry. I knew it was Him. There was a reason I wanted to see tulips, and not some other flower. He shared a private joke with me about tulips when He had mysteriously proposed to me earlier in May, during the gallery opening.

Suddenly, it was over. The physical manipulations stopped. The *Yeses* stopped. I rinsed my face with cold water and fixed my hair. My face looked slim, my skin smooth and shiny. Skipping dinner last night *was* beneficial. I wondered how many of slug's soldiers had escaped from my body and spirit. Where did they go? Perhaps into neighboring farms, that grow fat pigs, extremely fast, using antibiotics.

Before exiting the apartment, I evaluated my final appearance in the large vestibule mirror hanging by the front door. The golden & silver buckle of my belt matched perfectly the huge silver & golden cross I decided to put on as a last-minute addition. The perfect match between the two accessories didn't feel like a coincidence. Was Creator also a stylist? Was He a perfectionist in every task?

Mom's eyes full of worried suspicion followed me as I stepped out the front door. She was resting against the kitchen counter, and I acknowledged her with the look that said *I am going, everything is fine*. One more time I glanced at the vestibule mirror and quickly looked away, for my face had grimaced at me!

Five minutes later, I parked at the hotel. In the alley behind the kitchen, I sat on some hollow wooden box, crossed my legs, and lit a cigarette. Adam began to bounce my upper leg up and down energetically, to match my excited mood. The weather was sunny, accompanied by a cool breeze; we both were really enjoying it. I felt happy and special. My life was being shared with a Man I hadn't seen yet, but Who made Himself available via other means. He was communicating with me and He was enjoying it. My spirit felt elevated, and Adam confirmed **Yes! Yes! Yes!** three times, while continuing to bounce my leg joyfully up and down.

The day had hardly started but I was already smoking my second cigarette, once again — to send slug a message of confidence. Leisurely I smoked, to tell slug that I didn't care at all about being late to work by two hours. I also smoked to tell him that I was the one in control. I was the one who decided to smoke or not to smoke. Creator loved me anyway. He could forgive this temporary weakness as long as I was trying to quit and was doing my best at it. I knew I couldn't continue to smoke. I needed to be stronger because Creator was investing His time in me. I needed to live my life in a way that would allow me to reach my full potential.

I puffed on my cigarette, enjoying the way it complemented my contemplating moment, until Antonio, our breakfast chef, walked out of the kitchen back door and put an end to it. With the snout that was asking, *Why are you here?* he informed me that the lunch was over. Right away I knew that slug was checking my fear thermometer. Antonio and I had only worked together once. We got along easily then. It was him who confided his frustrations about Mella's recent breakfast disaster to me. This afternoon, however, something about him didn't feel right. It wasn't just the way he walked towards me. I knew he was crooked: having undergone seven spine operations, his back had twisted and his left leg had grown shorter than the other. It was the way he confronted me, without saying hello, without smiling. It was none of his business when I was supposed to come, whether I was scheduled to show up at all. I worked the evenings, and may have simply arrived to collect my salary.

However, I showed no visible signs of irritation, but kept smoking my cigarette as leisurely as during a beach party. Adam was enjoying my pretentious attitude, for my leg continued to bounce up and down, without me doing any physical effort to move it whatsoever. Once I finished my cigarette, I stepped inside. Upon hearing my approach, the dishwasher stopped scrubbing a pan and turned his neck to look at me. (It was the young man who happened to work a few of my evening shifts. He wasn't particularly reliable, but was friendly. He shared with me, for example, that his girlfriend just had a baby and that he was trying to "handle it." Somebody else had told me that he was addicted to cocaine.) The dishwasher was more obvious than Tony in displaying his negative demeanor toward me, for instead of saying anything or nodding for hello, he twisted into a judgmental grin. His eyes followed me as I reached the kitchen swinging doors, as I paused, as I removed my black shades and while looking back at him, transmitted, *There is a point in my eye. Look at the point.* The dishwasher turned away then and looked back at his pan. Fo was also there, but as opposed to Tony or dishwasher, Fo had simply ignored me.

I jumped into the role that felt so real to me. I came with Creator. Creator was the point in my eye; slugs must see the point to see Creator looking right back at them. Paralyzed by fear, slugs were to escape into pigs, hiding there until those pigs, too, would be destroyed. My task was

to provide the eye contact. *Look into eyes, the green is earth. The yellow lines is fire. There is a Point.* The morning transmission finally made sense, and it was the resentful behavior of my coworkers in the kitchen that helped me realize its meaning. It aimed to prepare me for this afternoon. He gave me a fighting tool. There was a Point that started everything, they had to see that point.

I entered through the swinging doors, ready to hunt slugs with my eyes, but Mella rose in my way, like a guarding soldier at the gate.

“Why are you here?”

I passed around the obstacle silently. Behind her, at the exterior side of the buffet counter, stood Christina. She was responsible today. Behind the buffet counter stood the other two interns, sleepy Bin and spoiled Frida. Coleslaw, bits of bacon and scrambled eggs littered the carpet in front of the buffet counter. Soon, clients were to march back to their rooms, bound to step on these fallen crumbs, smashing the matter into the carpet. A quick glance into the dining room told me that the closeup was way overdue. Half of the tables were used and stood filthy with half-finished plates, the other half was still occupied by digestive clientele. Nobody was eating anymore, nobody was going back for seconds, yet the manager just stood there, as though time had frozen on her. I marched on straight to the office, surprised by Christina’s idleness. Perhaps idleness was contagious, like a flu, taking down characters not equipped with high moral standards. Perhaps it was an issue of poverty for Christina, who being a single mother of two and having to travel one hour to get to this job, might have been interested in stretching her hours. Perhaps it was me, who touched by the holy spirit, saw every imperfection as wasteful and therefore wrong.

In the office, the boss sat in his chair, eyes glued to the screen of his ancient computer. After softly knocking on the open door and receiving no response, I took the liberty to step in. Quickly locating an empty chair in the unused portion of the room, I pulled it out and roll it to where the boss sat. I took a seat, turning to face his profile. He still didn’t budge, ignoring me. I waited for his attention, and a few uncomfortable seconds later, he decided to acknowledge my presence with a diminishing side glance.

“Why are you here? The lunch is over.” He spoke without looking at me.

“I have a virus. I cannot talk,” I said and it felt funny to me.

“Don’t get closer to me then. Why did you come at all? I don’t want to get sick from you.”

Since the boss was still talking to his screen, and in such a low voice, I had to lean closer in order to hear him well. He had a point, I realized. The relationship between a virus and contagiousness didn’t register with me whatsoever, probably because I didn’t premeditate to say I had a virus in the first place. It was a spontaneous idea that came from elsewhere.

He kept looking at the computer screen. His expression was so unpleasant, a drastic difference from the kind, smiling, satisfied look he granted me last night as he handed me the scanty three hundred bucks towards the accumulated balance of more than seven hundred he owed me. I kept looking at his profile, knowing exactly what was going on — slug was trying to scare me. *Oh no! Oh no! You will lose your job! You will lose your job, and he won’t pay your remaining balance!* The ugly dog was barking again. I didn’t hear the exact words, but such potential outcome entered my mind and worried me.

“Go home, I don’t want to get sick from you.” He looked so disappointed, like I had betrayed him on some deeply intimate level. All this time, he continued to stare at the computer screen, refusing to look me in the eye.

“Very well,” I told his profile, already getting up and pushing the chair back into its place. As I marched toward the door, several loud burps escaped my mouth, involuntarily! The first one had surprised me but the ones that followed I forced to sound even louder. I managed to burp exactly five times before slamming the door behind me.

“I cannot talk!” I can’t believe I said it! Ha! Adam found it funny too, for He was confirming me joyfully, as I walked into the dining room. There sat the relatives, so conveniently unaware of the impact their generosity had upon me, and of the slug, who without their knowledge, was fighting me using their bodies and minds. There they sat, as drunk savages after a feast, heavy in their bellies, lazy in their brains, completely unsuspecting of what I was about to do.

I walked steadily and fast from table to table, because I was uncomfortable playing the crazy one and wanted to get it over with quickly. Once my presence at the table was noticed, I announced clearly, slowly and loudly, faking a British accent the best I could, as my eyes paused at each set of eyes, demanding an eye contact, “I am really sorry, but I was unable to serve you today because I cannot talk.” Meanwhile, mentally, I transmitted, *there is a point in my left eye, you see it, slug? Look at it and burn.*

I paused at every table and offered my well-articulated apology. There sat the snake with greasy black hair of medium length from the green room, who asked too many personal questions, often grimacing at my replies, and who demanded too many extras. If you remember, dear reader, I dropped his lemon cake and then squirted the whip cream all over it. I also lied to him twice that the bar was closed. Noticeably, his party of *four* had been last to arrive, which influenced me to think that the snake was the vip of the party, the embodiment of the ultimate slug. There sat the older lady who tried to sneak out of paying for a bottle of sparkling water. I noticed those who left no tip. I saw the gentleman who came escorted by two ladies, to whom I brought the wrong beer, because he dared to look at my butt while ordering a “Light Bud.” Twice he ordered Bud, and twice I brought him Corona, bewildering the human and intimidating slug. *Corona means crown* in Russian worn by Kings and Queens.

Having finished with my apologies, I headed back. Bin and Frida still stood at ease behind the sloppy buffet counter. Over the tables, the white tablecloth overhung askew — the edges of individual cloth didn’t meet at the seams; as a result, the bottom edge in some areas laid wrinkled on the carpet, while in others hanged halfway down, exposing the thin, metal posts of our cheap, foldable buffet tables. Spills of drinks soiled the white tablecloths, crumbs of food laid undisturbed on it and on the carpet, seeming to disgust only me. I paused in front of the two bored interns and grabbed, demonstratively, a piece of grilled purple cabbage with my bare fingers. I dipped the cabbage deeply into a saucer and risking to spill some along the way, carried the dripping appetizer all the way to my ready-to-swallow mouth, not like a lady, but like a person who gave absolutely no value to etiquette. The interns continued looking on blankly. The entire atmosphere reeked of waste, despite two ‘managers’ Christina and Mella, supervising this simple, buffet-style lunch.

In this dreary place, I felt I was on a mission, which wasn't constrained by time yet was unfolding to the beat of my internal clock; and I couldn't stand being there a second longer than was necessary. While I didn't walk fast, I definitely walked with determination, and my lower than usual speed was purposely meant to show confidence in every step I was taking. In my mind, however, everything was going fast. Everything seemed to be exaggerated and amplified, meaningful and important, the imperfections highlighted by the holy spirit within. I couldn't help but feel like *This place is full of slugs!*

Filled with the indignation at the lazy state of affairs taking place over this luncheon, I rushed through the kitchen's swinging doors. Without lowering my pace, I grabbed my sunglasses and my purse from the wall shelf, continuing on toward the exit. Passing the dishwasher, I demonstratively put my sunglasses on and looked at him. It felt very important that he see me in my black shades. I was in a position of power — I was wearing black shades. But this time, unlike when I arrived, he didn't acknowledge me. His head remained bent over the sink, as he continued to scrub a large pot, as though it was a family treasure his dear, deceased grandma had entrusted him with. Now he was too scared to look at me. *Too late now! You made your choice. You looked into my eyes and you still chose to fight me. Can't see Him now! Goodbye!*

The sun outside felt overwhelmingly bright, making me realize in its light that I failed to carry out my original plan. I completely forgot about the portrait of Ioanna in my purse. I completely forgot that my original purpose was to come to the hotel and threaten the main slug with it. Taken aback by his cold reception, I had completely forgotten to shove it in my boss's face, while transmitting, *Look, this is Ioanna who will destroy you, slug. Look into her eyes and burn.*

Back home, mother was sleeping so I sneaked out to smoke a cigarette. I felt excited, definitely not calm, but not overly anxious either. I smoked. Everything was quiet outside and inside my head, too quiet... I was proud of myself, *I can't serve you because I can't talk!*

In the bathroom, I danced while undressing and singing Creator's chant from last night, modifying His words according to my current spirit:

*Yô! Yô! Yô! What's up?! Yô! Yô!
I am My Own Creation, Yô!*

I was happy looking at my body. I tried hard to imagine that I was alone, completely by myself, so I wouldn't feel shy, so I could evaluate my own body, as a woman does in her own privacy. The secret sign had been off most of the day. The last positive manifestation I recalled was Adam bouncing my leg up and down while I smoked a cigarette in the ally behind the kitchen.

I was taking advantage of this rare opportunity of solitude. Of course, it was only a pretentious game: He was still there, and Creator knows everything. But it felt strange to not feel any physical signs in return, as I thought about Him, as I addressed my thoughts to Him. It had been remarkably quiet since I returned from work. It was how it used to be before the secret sign, before I became aware of Him who had been following my life for so long. Still nothing. I tried to imagine that nobody was looking at me, and took off my clothes.

The layer of fat had visibly slimmed throughout, with accumulations remaining around the stomach, sides and a few saggy layers bellow the bottom. Categorized as alarmingly slim here, in Europe as normal, but Bruce Lee would tell me the truth: fat means lazy, every bit of it, you are far from being perfect.

Nonetheless, I felt happy about this special day, about the opportunity to represent Creator this afternoon and most of all, about the fact that last night, He transmitted to me for the first time. Presently, I sang, about to step into the shower.

Yo! Yo! Yo! ! Yo! Yo! Yo! Yo!
I create myself! Yo! Yo!

Yo!? What's up!? I am my own!
Au Revoir, My Friends! Yo! Yo!

Before shutting the shower curtains — one more look in the mirror. Initially normal, my face quickly dissolved into a grimace: the right side of my mouth curved down, the nose wrinkled at the upper level of the nasal bone, into the look that said, *is it funny now?* I snapped the curtains shut from my distorted reflection. *Not so alone, after all.*

I doubt I could recollect this experience better in any tense other than the present, so fresh it is still in my mind. How fresh I feel out of the shower, how after putting some clean clothes on, I sit on the toilet and begin to dry my hair, glancing now and then at the image engraved in the wooden bathroom door, at the Father standing there with His hands raised above His wild hair and at slug sitting in the guts, how victorious His posture seems, so full of power and wild dignity, how His hair seemed to be on fire and how I distinguish a lion painted in His chest.

How I straighten my posture too, while still sitting on the toilet. How I begin to breathe into my spine. How, at one particularly deep exhalation, I feel a weird jolt in a spot below my lower abs, like something is alive there and just moved! How I touch the area, *could I really get rid of slug like that?*

I stay on the toilet for a while, breathing in and out, my feet glued to the floor, as my spine searches for a perfect line. When I feel my mouth tighten, I get up and look in the mirror where I see the right side of my mouth curved down into a grimace.

Relax the mouth, stupid. Relax the mouth. I breathe in through my nose, breathe out, trying to relax my mouth, but it remains tight in slug's possession.

I am standing now. At the very end of a very deep exhalation that completely exhausts me, I press my abs in, trying to extract every bit of remaining oxygen out of my gut, out of him who had wiggled there earlier. I breathe in again, and out slowly. The instant right before the overwhelming urge to inhale kicks in, I press into my abs, pushing up the diaphragm and out through the nostrils any remaining air. It is becoming harder to keep inhalations smooth, especially their beginnings, as exhalations are growing. I keep prolonging exhalations, and when there is nothing left to exhale, I stand still, and count — my gut flattened against the spine —

and wait for the nostrils to flare, to tremble, as the whole body seems to gather together in one desperate effort to suck the air in. Muscles guard my breathing path and fight to stay in control, to not inhale in desperate gasps, but to let my mind escort the inflow of air, through my nostrils, into my brain, and all the way up and down the spine, at the same leveled pace, as earlier, when this fight for oxygen had begun, sitting on a toilet, about twenty minutes ago.

Staying in control is difficult, but he is losing it too, for at the lower abs area I detect a movement again, as though there is a creature inside that is being squashed, a sneaky, crawling creature. At my deepest exhalation, I can still hang on while it struggles. *I could suffocate him*, I really think so. At the end of every exhale, I begin to punch my abs with my fists. Hitting the suffocating slug seems like a good idea, meant to expedite the process. I can only imagine how he wiggles there, the small angry clot, struggling for air, while being bombarded with kicks.

Well, the day has come. I will need you now, Bruce Lee. You won each time, against any fighting style, within sixty seconds. *Concentrate. Repeat*, Bruce Lee would say.

Fist after fist. Few exhalations like this and I am all out of strength. Leaning over the counter, I take a moment to recover but I know he is recovering too. *Concentrate. Repeat*, I imagine Bruce Lee is telling me. *Concentrate. Repeat*.

March 23 2016 I asked Adam to return with Bruce Lee.

I was warned to watch out for fake Jesuses so I asked Him to come back with Bruce Lee as proof that He is the real Jesus. I also want to ask Bruce Lee what really killed him. Was it really a pill or was it Big Pharma who wasn't interested in Bruce Lee promoting real health?

I step away from the sink and lower myself into a standing position, called a 'horse pose' among Tibetan monks. My legs are spread apart, each foot pressed firmly against the floor. Now, standing in the middle of the bathroom, I use the extra space around me to swing wider. Left. Right. Left. Right. Left. Right. Quickly I get tired and I plead with Adam, *Hit! Hit! Hit with me! I can't no more*. But nothing happens. He isn't joining. Perhaps this challenge is only mine. Convinced that I am suffocating the ultimate slug, I don't want to give up, so I continue to punch my abs, but with lesser force.

Few minutes after, my hands feel for a toilet cover behind me onto which my body plunks ungracefully. I am sitting on the toilet once again, breathing through my nose. *Please hit me! Hit me there! I can't no more!* Left. Right. Left. Right. Left. Right. *Concentrate. Repeat*. Left. Right. Left. Right. Left. Somewhere around here, I feel the extra force joining me.

We are hitting harder now, and think that Adam had joined me to knock out whatever is left of slug. *Don't give up now, he is almost dead, not now*. These words come with a dark kind of earnestness. There is no clarity in remembrance how the words were uttered, in what intonation, the exact words that were used, only that lingering doubt that I have heard them and that they motivated me to continue when I was ready to give up.

I look at the image of the Father on the wooden door, at His thick, powerful mustache, at His wild curls set on fire, at his hands reaching to the heavens... *but I can't no more*. Something moves inside my lower abs! I pause and press my fingers into my stomach, searching for the exact spot where the movement was detected. Something is there, at the lower abdominals, it is *still* alive! I redirect my fists to land few inches lower. Fists are hitting at the new target now.

Inhale. Exhale. Squeeze. Left. Right. Inhale. Exhale. Squeeze. Left. Right. Again.

A noise is coming from the living room. Mom woke up and is on her way to the bathroom. The door is shut but I don't lock it. Locking the door as mom approaches would only make her more suspicious. She peeks in. I explain before she asks anything, "I ate a spoiled cabbage at work. A purple one. It looks like food poisoning. I had it before once, with mister Grosshead. We came back from a restaurant, and I was throwing up all night long. It will go away eventually."

It works because she leaves, and I think, it is great! My wittiness improves!

The slower I try to breathe, the weaker I become. I could no longer hit.

Not now! Not when you are so close! Look at the door! Keep Fighting

I search for strength in the image illustrated by the wooden patterns of my bathroom door. God's eyes are shaped as mine, but they are bigger, much bigger, and open wide, so wide one can't imagine what He is looking at. It isn't good. There, in His groin sits the devil, whom I am trying to suffocate right now, portrayed as an angry, cockeyed, goat-bearded old guy. Propping himself up on the arms of the chair, he leans forward, as though about to pounce on you, like a rabid rat.

He has conquered you. He has!

You will die! I hear in return. Creepy voice.

I will rise again! I actually consider the possibility of my passing away and coming back to life promptly (before mom notices) as quite real, perhaps even necessary. If my faith is a missing ingredient for the success of this suffocating effort, I am ready to provide it.

At the end of exhale, I squeeze my abs and hit.

It is 2153 (slug removed the date, just now, as I was typing! Magic trick!)

I am at Mag, and a bartender came up to say, "You can't write anything about this bar!"

"Nothing is happening here. It's only me and one more client," I replied, "What's there to write about?"

She left but came back shorty, as soon as I stepped outside for a break. I saw her through the window: she grabbed my laptop and moved it to another table, almost dropping it on her way!

Father! Father! Father! are my last thoughts as I rise my hands into the air, like the Father. My legs betray me and my body falls on the tile floor. Laying down on my right side now, my legs are slightly bent and shake in convulsions. My hands are above my head, my neck and head recline easily on my right upper arm. Instinctually, I feel my head for injury. There is no blood on my fingers. Nothing hurts, only my abs look red from punches.

Oct 29 2016 2159 Ha! I can't believe slug actually just tried to intimidate me via the bartender! But stupid wasn't allowed to drop my laptop. It's my first edit of the final draft.

As I am pushing against the floor, trying to get up, mom opens the door. Her body half enters, exposing her blue crying eyes. She must have heard the fall. Tears are falling down without restraint, the waterfall of painful, unnecessary tears of a helpless mother. A wave of bitterness frustrates my spirit. There is no way she could understand.

"I am fine! Better now. I just threw up. It was a food poisoning, but it is over now."

When mom leaves, I inspect my body once more before getting up. It was a lucky fall. In fact, I don't remember falling with a crash or feeling pain upon hitting the floor. I never lost consciousness. Even though I fell, it felt more like falling in slow motion. I managed to fall right into the tiny triangular space between the toilet and the bathtub, without hitting either of the hard surfaces, as though I was folded to match the dimensions of the opening. My head landed safely on my arm, it didn't hit the floor tiles. The right hip took the majority of the impact, receiving a large bruise. Plus, my lower abs are red, and right away a grey cloud of fear storms over, *am I still fertile?* I draw on the image of the extremely pregnant woman, either real or a hallucination, encountered during my episode # 2 and decide to trust God that if I did hit my ovaries, no incurable damage had occurred. I also decide to give up, temporarily. *Can't suffocate him now, I just smoked. Wait slug. A few seconds. I need to brush my teeth. After that.*

While brushing my teeth, I realized that it wasn't the best time for a full-scale suffocating attack. First of all, mom would be interfering, getting hurt again. Secondly, I wasn't as strong as I needed to be. The good thing was that I knew now the way to harm him — he shrinks as I exhale deeply. This is why oxygen destroys cancerous cells. Oxygen, the breath of my Creator, is poisonous to slug. I finished brushing my teeth and went outside, taking my yoga mat and a gallon of water.

“Ommmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.”

I chanted the Ommm sound during exhalations, as a yoga guru does. It kept me concentrated on the flow of air, which in turn, helped me to prolong my exhalations. I had no strength to hit my abs anymore, so instead, I pressed the heavy water jar into them. *Let me show you how it feels to suffer slowly.* I enjoyed feeling the squeeze that had returned and was now occurring at the end of particularly long exhalations, almost as recognition of an exhale well-done and permission to start an inhale. The squeeze became the sign of his shrinkage. It meant I pushed hard enough. I didn't stop even when I heard a car pulling into the parking lot.

From the corner of my eye, I saw a black police jeep with a sticker that read *Sheriff*. Two police officers exited the vehicle and headed towards me. Refusing to stop what looked like a yoga session, I remained on the mat as one of the officers began to speak to me.

“Is there a problem, Miss?”

“Is there a problem doing yoga in front of my own property?” I replied to him firmly from my mat.

“Your mother has called the police.”

“Then it is my mother you should be talking with.”

“It's you she has a problem with.”

“My mother has cancer. She can be unreasonably emotional.” It wasn't my wittiness. I had stolen the line once used by Fuse against my mom, when during a family meeting at my first hospital he argued for my continuing lockup while mom argued against it.

The officer smirked, his hand reached to touch the rubber baton attached to his side. His coworker neared us. The latter was shorter but thicker. *Wow! I can't believe it!* As soon as I discovered a way to eliminate slug, he sent his officers to stop me. *If only the mother knew who really called the police!*

I continued breathing. At exhalations, it struggled, but not as desperately as a while ago in the bathroom. The police had distracted me from the battle, thus giving slug time to recover.

“It is a strange exercise you are doing,” a taller, subordinate officer remarked, only to distract me again, to buy his real boss few breaths.

“Oh, it’s a breathing technique to expand your lungs. It’s extremely good for your health. I combine it with yoga. Legs up — you exhale, legs down — you inhale, just like this.” I showed the movement, eyeing the shorter officer who looked fat.

“As we understand, you have a history of prior mental hospitalizations? Your neighbors were complaining about the noise.”

How do you know that? I wondered. It must have been the same officer who answered Fuse’s call during my second episode in 2013. But why did the officer lie about the noise or neighbors complaining? I had never screamed, neither today, nor back then; and even if I did scream back then, which I didn’t, the neighbors would have come to my mom first, they would have never called the cops without consulting her. It must have been Fuse again, who lied that I screamed, to give cops the reason to come get me. So Fuse forced me into the hospital *twice* and then Fuse went crazy himself...

“My medical history is a private matter. As far as I am concerned, I am in perfect health.” I rose from my laying position in a brisk motion with no help from my hands, using only legs and abs. “Proceed inside, I would like to continue my practice,” I signaled them to knock on the front door. Personally, I couldn’t wait to restart squashing slug as his warriors attempted to scare me in real life.

While two police officers talked to my mother, I continued breathing on the mat, meditating on the following questions. Could I really eliminate slug like that? Can he escape into another body or animal? Does slug need another body to escape to in order to survive? Can evil spirits just fly in the air, without a body, or do they need a body to occupy? slug was in my mother; he is now in the police officers. Is it him or his soldiers? Is he the only one or does he have an army of evil spirits? Obviously, slug can work in several bodies simultaneously. But where is the *ultimate* slug? Is the *ultimate* slug inside me — the ruler of all bad spirits, the really bad slug, or is it just one of his soldiers?

I could control slug now. I could deprive it of oxygen. *Want to play chess now? Take that!* I slowly inhaled and then exhaled to the very maximum, pressing the water jar against my stomach until my legs produced a violent kick and a few tight clots in my neck snapped and released. Those snaps felt good, clots were dissolving as oxygen traveled through my veins. There came the squeeze — it was begging for air. I breathed in again, suppressing gasps.

At the next exhalation I failed to reach the squeeze, inhaling prematurely. It was a small but frustrating loss, for slug got a few drops of air. Still, he was nothing but a vagabond in a desert, drinking from drying puddles that were harder and harder to come by. Once again, I failed to reach the squeeze, inhaling in frustration, knowing that it was also feeding slug. The inhalation was shaky, uneven. I stopped halfway, *I won’t give you more air than that*, and breathed out, “Ommmmmmmmmmmmmm.” I tightened my muscles and imagined the breath of my Creator traveling through me, to my head, down my neck, through my spine, to my arms and down my legs, exiting through my fingers and toes. All my muscles were engaged, glued to the

mat, helping to keep my body stable. More questions followed. *When will Adam come back? How long will I stay with slug alone?* I haven't felt Him since I came back from work.

It was me who told Him to leave, because slug began to use the same signs, including the secret sign. It was to avoid potential confusion. I didn't want to misinterpret slug's manipulations for Adam's confirmations. I remembered my mom's tears falling down her cheeks earlier. She couldn't understand that I was trying to suffocate slug, that my body was being manipulated, that I was hearing them, that I was thinking, replying to slug, *I may die, but I will rise again, just like Him*, just before she looked at me with those eyes. In that moment, I thought sincerely that it was Adam who was trying to reach me, Who was there, crying in mom's blue eyes, as if to warn me that slug had tricked me, that I couldn't eliminate him like this.

From a distance, I could hear the unfolding questioning inside the apartment and felt an urge to protect my mom from suspicious cops. I changed my mind though, for the mother could've been working for slug too. I never knew for sure. In any case, it was more important to remain where I was — on the floor, keeping slug inside me, in lockup.

The jar of water was becoming a nuance. It jiggled as I breathed. At inhalations, as my lungs expanded with oxygen, my hands kept it from falling, and at exhalations, they pressed it into the gut. The shoulders shared the physical burden my hands and arms were undertaking and began to hurt as a result. I had been fighting slug out since the morning, and was not only tired but bored with it. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed feet, mom's feet. I looked up. Leaning against the door, she was looking down at me breathing with my water jag. She was scared for her little girl who was once so successful. In the daylight, her blue eyes sparkled with fresh tears. Ignoring her, I calmed myself, *Tomorrow she will be fine again, just like the last time. Keep suffocating slug*. She stood motionless for a few uncomfortable seconds and then returned inside, to the police officers, who, in my growing impatience, had worn out their welcome. *When they leave, I can write*.

Another car parked nearby. It was Donna who arrived, our petite, extravagant neighbor, who always wore black. The skies, heavy with rain, promised to burst any moment, but Donna got out of her car, wearing a broad *white* summer hat — the only splash in her otherwise black attire. If my memory doesn't betray me, she parked in her usual spot or next to it, if her spot was taken by the police. I remember looking at her at a two o'clock angle from my laying position on the mat. Instead of walking straight towards the stairway leading to her unit, Donna walked behind my car, thus disappearing from my vision for a second, to reappear a moment later a few feet above my head. It was the brim of her white hat that registered in my eye, telling me just how close to my head she stood. Now, I was directly blocking the pathway to her unit. The encounter with such an unexpected obstacle appeared to freeze Donna on the spot, but the next second, astonishing me completely, Donna smiled like a lunatic from underneath her giant hat, and walked into the wrong stairway! *What is she doing on that floor? Who wears a white hat in the rain? Was it Donna or a mirage? She looked so real...* Here, dear reader, whether it was Donna or an apparition of Donna seemed equally likely; such was the state of my mind, somewhat accustomed by then to various magic tricks.

The police came out at last, after spending approximately ten minutes inside my apartment. The shorter one went straight to the car, without acknowledging me, while the taller one remained in my sight.

“We have put you on file,” he notified me and I thought, *Ha! I can’t believe it! Another threat? And for what, for doing yoga outside my front door?*

“I don’t understand why you have taken my time.”

“*Perhaps* my boss can explain better.” With his black rubber baton, he pointed at his colleague. I like the word *perhaps* a lot. When slug said it, however, it stung with mockery.

“Perhaps,” I snapped back, already on my way towards the sheriff. The subordinate officer followed me hastily, and when I reached his boss, took a place next to him, like a loyal small dog.

The boss stood by the driver door, jiggling with his keys, searching for the right one, I guess. Eventually, he stopped jiggling and looked up at me.

“It seems I have seen you around,” he said.

“You look familiar too.”

“I wonder where you may have seen me.”

“Just seeing you around.” Inwardly, I was referring to seeing *slug* around, in various individuals, over the course of the past two weeks.

“Just seeing me around?” His face twisted into an unpleasant grin. To hide anxiety one may feel when faced with a negatively-minded police officer, I focused on counting his facial wrinkles, his sweaty pores and on evaluating the thickness of his facial fat layer. His face resembled a pie crust. *How many criminals can you really catch, fatty? Look into my eyes. Choose fast or slow.*

“Yea, just seeing you around,” I reconfirmed, presently wondering if this was the same unreliable officer who never got back to me regarding a police clearance record for Switzerland he promised to file for me.

“Ok then,” the officer replied, too dumb to say anything interesting, but too arrogant to let me have the final word, and they left.

Mom was cooking in the kitchen, so I went to the bedroom, with my water jar. As soon as I sat down on the floor, I noticed a purple rash on the interior of my forearms. The lower abs were also purple, due to the obvious self-induced punches, but the purple rash on my interior arms I couldn’t explain. It was brand new, like a magic trick. To this day, I suspect the artificial nature behind this rash. Too meaningful felt its purple color, and just as suddenly as it appeared, it disappeared, leaving me positively mystified. Perhaps it was only the effect of the prolonged contact with the cold water jar; perhaps, for my fingers and palms should have been purple then, and not my inner arms, which, in fact, weren’t touching the cold surface. Perhaps, they did, perhaps, at some point, I used my wrists to hold the jar. Still, the jar wasn’t that cold, it was the room temperature. What matters is what I felt in that moment, and I thought that slug made this purple rash, in order to scare me; and it did, for as long as it lasted, which wasn’t too long. Not to say that I was staring at the rash, waiting for it to disappear. It was more about *deciding* not to worry about it, and the next time I looked, it was no longer there.

I continued the suffocating attack: lying down, pressing the jar into my abs, breathing in a little and out a lot. I went through several rounds before reconsidering the practicality of such engagement: *What is better for me? To write or to continue this? Can I really get rid of slug like this? Creator told me **Write**. It was the only thing I clearly heard. It was the last word He transmitted. It was yesterday.*

Mom called out from the kitchen. I accepted her invitation to dinner, even though I wasn't hungry at all. I was more to calm her down. *Enjoy the unlimited air for a while, slug!*

I collapsed into bed shortly after dinner. For a moment, an anxious feeling of having to record everything that had happened so far held me wakeful. I recalled how Father joked about time, **What is the time, Katya?!** as though time didn't matter to Him. *What day are we, Creator?! What is the time?! I joked back, imagining myself as a robot running on energy that never ends. I raised my torso in search of my cellphone underneath the bed. I need to write all of this down... But I can't write now!* My mind was overloaded, it was better to lay down, and then I only remember how quickly the oblivion came.

7. Sunday June 21_ Recalling & Recording What Happened Over The Past Few Days

I slept until 4 pm, like a baby, and felt completely re-energized. With a fresh head, I worked on Friday_June 19_ slugs at work! journal entry followed by my first transmission with Creator that night, and Saturday_June20_ journal entry, the day I almost suffocated slug, which was only yesterday. At first, I couldn't remember anything clearly, time seemed to lost its sequence again, but as I immersed myself back into the experience, the details and their chronological order, eventually, came back to me.

My original entry that I entered into my phone this morning while still in bed, was short and concise, and I planned to use it as an outline to be elaborated on. It was easier to work on the phone rather than writing by hand. I still remember very clearly how difficult it was to draw the details out of my head — things just recalled were already fleeting — as by a magic trick, I had to fight to keep the info in my head long enough to type it. The best-suited words were constantly, irrevocably blocked and, as a consequence, had to be substituted with vaguer synonyms. It was so irritating to write through such obstacles, but realizing who was behind this sudden handicap kept me trying to recall what happened. I typed hastily, in any order the info came, feeling like a cat who is playing with a ribbon that is constantly being pulled away from her claws; the ribbon being my recollections. When, finally, my entry became a long list of highlights, I organized them in the right chronological order.

Oct 30 1236 My music doesn't work and starting now, my headphones don't work either. Like this, he is blocking me from going to the pub to write. Let's see if the pub stops working as it did last night. The person who really laughs is the last person laughing — think about this, toothless dog

To this original (I hope) phone entry provided below, I had applied limited spellcheck, leaving some of slug's alterations untouched; for slug's inferences weren't limited to blocking my recollection, but also included pressing wrong keys, entering duplicates, messing with punctuation and fonts, changing of key words that reversed the meaning; all to complicate the deciphering of the entry at later stages. Even when I caught up and began typing with extra care, I would still find discrepancies and uncharacteristic typos. As if that wasn't enough, my entire process of thought formation was interfered with as well. What seemed important felt trivial a second later, I couldn't get focused and had to close my eyes and take numerous breaks.

Last but not least, I was also interfered with telepathically, as some comments in parentheses signify, but it is no longer possible to know if these interferences happened as I was typing the original entry this very morning, or later, during editing of this novel. Despite the confusion about the timing, these are the very first examples of the telepathy, which would begin, slowly but surely, to establish itself into a permanent feature, remaining as such for several years, before subsiding almost completely by the year of 2020.

June 21 Entry: On June 19 at night I have met both God and Devil. What happened during the day I don't remember clearly because I am not writing this journey on June 19 but on June 21. Yesterday I also fought with Devil. I assume the

time has begun when Devil will try to get inside my head, while Adam is still here. I asked him to not give me any signs so I don't confuse him with Devil who is using the same signs.

Father said: He is infinity, I have imagination. He is really Papa, inside me, the line, the border. He is the point. Information. Knowledge. He is what He is inside. I am part of him. He is the start, the knowledge, the line. He is His Own consciousness. Control. He is the spine, the border. He is the point. He is mine, and I am his. We are One. But I am part of Him. And Adams, Ioanna, truth, balance. He is love, creator, papa. He was here. He is bored. What's next? Dream.

showed me everything.

He, Beloved, nuncle, I . досвидания = until our date

He told me **YES!**

Father told me

explained all the signs

devil —slow

maw as of a dog

but you are angry beast

I will tear you apart

I am mother

signs— slow

eyes big — Father

Eyes closed — He

hands

control

he snapped a finger, went to the bathroom

Father came touched mother (i thought but no. my daddy came and turned off the light)

Then came Father

Touched Mother (when i began to breathe (then He told me everYthing via telepathy. Said **WRITE**

Said Всѣ Равно.

Всѣ Равно means 'All is equal' or 'Doesn't matter' if pronounced as one word.

Said I am here

He began to touch mother

Beauty

Pleasure (in the bathroom I began to do yoga. Then Father began to show up little by little, but not all the way.

He came when mom woke up (after pleasure?) began to call the ambulance but I relaxed, stayed calm. thoughts came to mind like waves. signs from down to up. but eyes in the end OPEN — Like They are HIS. He WAS here in garbage.

somebody screamed to me from car - “ Yes.

devil he. but then Beloved told Mme YES!

pleasure (liked)
 imagination (liked).
 just like that

I

I

I said I said (I will protect Father. just now Father pressed capitals. does it mean He will protect. ? who pressed?

important. father couldn't come until I began to repeat words fast fast. I am my own consciousness. I am my own consciousness. I am my own consciousness. I am my own consciousness. .

and then devil got up, looked in the eyes and I looked accurately. and in the end winked. got scared. went to bathroom. flashed.

came back kept the lights on.

came back

kept the lights on

but I relaxed. all thoughts flew by while Father showed. the chain. said brave. heard am scared. drown. (truth just now the man confirmed)

when I caressed mother. devil thought that i will think badly but i— tenderness. i cried. It was Father. He came then. (devil just now said believed. cyka destructing)

Father. Papa PaPa Paypa Katya Katya. Adams Sdams PaPa -;I. this wasn't ending. Like melody. Soul. One.Together. Moving forward.

then mom got up.

began to roar, to look into darkness. the french letter r. am looking for them all.

devil opened a maw inside of me. showed teeth,

when Father inside of me there everything got destroyed exited. shifted. in order: to breathe . gave body.

searched balance. concentrated. begins to exit through mouth create sounds. mom

standing. my body moving. he began to roar. before that burbs. then opened maw.

to scare. but no . exited thru bottom squeeze. big squeeze. and then came Adams.

Said and here am I and i am also one body. reality. Then came Father. ONLY

THEN.

I AM MY OWN CONSCIOUSNESS. SAYS ALL THE TIME VERY FAST.

HANDS ON FOREHEAD SEQUENCE. (BCĚPABHO= PAPA right now is answering.)

So I think the Father meant Doesn't Matter when He touched my forehead and said BCĚPABHO. There was no deep meaning behind the sequence of slug's physical manipulations, he was just fooling me.

The main thing he is clean. Thoughts Thoughts Thoughts. This is Him. Between them is Him.

Smile (in the beginning natural but then of the goat

laugh, in the end distorted

sign below
the main thing in the end. — tick tock

Interestingly enough, when I made the above entry into my phone, I omitted the chicken dance, specifically — bouncing on the bed in a horizontal position, legs stretched and arms folded at elbows, flapping as wings. The dance, which was, physically, the most drastic manipulation that night, was removed from my memory completely. Only several days later, while reflecting on Frida's "I clean the *chicken*!" drama, I suddenly recalled, thanks to the clue word *chicken*, my own chicken dance and added it to the novel.

From the morning I fell into a lonely gloom. The secret sign was off; Adam continued to remain absent. I missed His attention. His constant presence was my bullet-proof reassurance that everything was going to be okay. Would He come back?

It was between me and slug now. Only yesterday I realized that I couldn't suffocate him by forcing the air out with my abs. I assumed that our next battle had already begun, and I wondered whether it could be his *final* attack, that must be won without Adam's assistance. It felt terrible to be abandoned, but Creator had conquered slug, so could I.

The only sign left of Adam were the goosebumps and they only appeared during meaningful positive emotions, like poetry reading, which I did just to feel His presence again. Feeling better that He wasn't gone completely, I focused on the new task given to me — writing. From this day on, I began writing all the time. By the time I finished writing, I had accumulated more than a thousand pages of raw material, completed two drafts of two novels, an outline of *Pink Planet*, sketched several short stories and translated half of my existing poetry.

I recorded daily journals for at least the next twelve months, until I realized that what was happening was no longer worth recording, that God had already written this novel and the second one, and perhaps the third, and what had remained as daily interferences were slug's manipulations only, present to detract me from the real writing task at hand. This is when I stopped daily journals, with the exception of 'super highlights' and very special dreams, and switched to editing. The most difficult part about editing was deciding what to delete; so difficult, in fact, that the Father found it necessary to come to my rescue and to tell me in His special mature voice, **It takes wisdom to know what to keep.**

The rest of this day, I spent summarizing the past two days and reflecting on the intelligence received. Creator came for sure *after* I won the battle against slug, not *before*. The Father warned me to stay in control. Was I fooled or did I learn something new by letting slug manifest itself via my body while allowing my dear mom to experience a certain amount of discomfort, even pain?

He told me **Pleasure** was the reason for creating life. He explained the signs. ~~From down to up~~, He transmitted. (Signs were moving from *up to down*.) slug began to bark and later, I squeezed him out.

But my eyes in the end, my eyes were His! Wide open but His.

I continued to lay in bed waiting for more information. My transmitter or my *peredatchik* in Russian, was tuned in. I was curious what could happen next, expecting more insight. I was feeling proud that Creator was transmitting directly with me.

Katya?

I!

From the first transmission with Creator, I would like to emphasize the points I especially liked:

Pleasure

Imagination

Just like that!

I!

I!

I!, my dear reader, was writing down the experience of this transmission in my orange journal when slug began to control my handwriting.

Oct 30 2015 slug is freezing my laptop, zooming in or out at random and switching pages. For example, I was typing on page 89 when slug jumped to page 105 via a magic trick.

So, that night they manipulated my handwriting — slug wrote himself with a capital; the Father crossed out the capital letter written by slug before my hand could finish writing ‘He’ while thinking ‘he.’

Next, I wrote *Got scared*, preceded by the c-word in Russian. I referred to slug who blinked. slug strongly tried to induce me to write the c-word with a capital, all while suggesting that his evil powers were beyond reach. (My orange journal confirms that I wrote the c-word with a small letter, but crossed it out, twice...) Both, my mind and hand were manipulated very fast, and for the first time. I couldn’t catch up. Whatever the exact manipulation was, its goal was clear — to exaggerate slug’s powers — and the goal was accomplished, for, all of a sudden, I got emotional, believing, just for a second, that slug’s powers could be equal to those of Creator, and protested against it.

I said! I said then! *I will protect The Father! I will!*

I was overwhelmed with emotions and wanted to protect my Creator who has created life for **Pleasure**, Who is crying all the time. That instant, I felt that Creator fell in love, and that He wanted to protect me. *Does it mean the Father will protect me?* I thought in that very moment. *Who crossed out what?*

Important: The Father couldn’t arrive until He began to repeat the following phrase inside my head very fast, **Yo! Yo! Yo! Yo! Yo! I am My Own Creation! Yo!**

At some point toward the end of the battle, slug raised my torso from the bed, in front of my mother whom he also woke up and raised from the bed to confront me. For mom’s benefit, I pretended that I was doing a very intense breathing mediation. But soon I paused, turned and placed my feet on the carpet. I got up from the bed and went to the bathroom, as mother continued to stare at me.

slug please! what are you saying here? First, I defeated you inside myself, then inside my mother — he winked first during our stare down. Then, he turned the lamp off because my real daddy entered mom, his soulmate whom he awaits in Heaven, and calmed her down. Then, mom fell asleep and *only then*, I quietly got up and went to the bathroom.

I walked to the bathroom, but it felt like it wasn't me who was walking but slug, or perhaps slug is making me write this right now, messing with my memory; slug indeed! I, Sonia, walked to the bathroom. I felt that slug was defeated after he winked via my mom first. On my way to the bathroom, my fingers snapped! As if Creator showed me, *Watch it! I am in control!*

In the bathroom, I looked at myself in the mirror. I realized that though I defeated slug inside my mother, it was only a temporary win of one particular battle. The same slug was looking at me now and I was looking at him, carefully, this time in the bathroom mirror. In the end, it was slug who winked first. he got scared and went down the toilet. I flushed him down.

Back in the bedroom, I analyzed how slug worked. he, via mom, stood by the lamp, staring at me, her fingers on the switch but not pressing it, waiting. Even after slug winked, he was still pretending he had some tricks left in his garbage bag. I laid on the bed while the lamp shone on me. Mother continued to stand next to the lamp, her fingers wrapped firmly around the light switch. It was about 4 am.

Father 'told' me I was brave. I felt fear, but then I 'heard' **drowned**. (**Truth!** Adam is confirming right now.) Is it why I flushed him down the toilet just before?

When I was caressing the hurting rib of my sleeping mom, slug sent bad images, but my heart thought of *tenderness*. When slug induced, *Oh, this is creepy to touch your relative*, I protested, *No! This is tenderness! This is tenderness!* and cried. It was the Father Who cried. The Father came only then, on the wave of goosebumps. As the goosebumps spread, slug became real angry and tried hard to ruin this special moment — he was distracting me and I was blocking his influences.

Father! Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!

Katya? Katya?

Adams! Adams!

Daddy?

I!

It wouldn't end, this. In a song, down the tropical waterfall of my consciousness, our voices cascaded, echoing and finding each other.

Father?

Katya!

Katya! Katya!

Daddy?

I!

Like a captivating melody.

Soul? (I asked the Father what a soul was.)

One. Together. Moving forward. All in that special, distant voice.

Then mom stirred in bed, as if she were waking up.

The exercise I used to practice to improve the pronunciation of a French R came to mind. The instructions asked to Imagine R is Ha, and roar this sound with a rounded throat for as long as possible — This is the French R. I began to growl, watching the darkness with the steady unblinking gaze of a night predator. *Where are they?* I was looking for slugs.

It is Saturday, Oct 31, 2015. My headphones are working again! slug broke them only for a day. Adam fixed them. My patience has won! Sonia. (Sonia, because I am currently really scared to use my real name.)

Then, slug opened his maw inside of me; he showed me his teeth.

Then, the Father entered as a Strong Wind. He went inside of me and my torso evened up. I began to breathe forcefully but remained in control. Inside of me, everything got out, moved away, shifted, but in a meaningful order.

I gave my body. I concentrated on what was happening with it. he began to get out from the mouth first, making sounds. he burped. Then, he moved lower, to manipulate my body parts. In the end, he went back up and opened my mouth. I let him do it, but hid his gaping maw from mom.

I was looking back at mother who stood frozen by the bed, threatening to call police, when slug escaped through the bottom. *Big out.* Squeeze. Squeeze.

And then Adam entered.

‘Says’ ***And here I am!***

And I am also one body!

Reality.

Then came the Father. Then. Only then.

Saying all the time, very fast, **I am My Own Consciousness! I am My Own Consciousness!** Very fast.

And then, the Father placed my hand on my forehead! He went through the sequence of physical signs quickly, adding in the end, **Всёравно. (All is equal or It doesn’t matter.)**

The most important: He is pure. Thoughts. This is Him. Between them, He.

About the smile? I was asking, Sonia.

In the very beginning — natural, then — slug’s.

Laugh? Sonia. Another question.

In the end — altered, not natural.

Signs: From Up to down.

Everything He revealed to Me!

He. My Love. nuncle!

I ‘told’ Him, *Dosvidania!* (*Until I see you, I!*)

He replied **Yes!** Creator replied, with Adam’s intonation.

After this, I felt that Creator had ended the transmission and left.

To summarize, on June 19, Friday, I returned home from the evening shift with slugs to have my first transmission with Creator. But first, I combatted slug who manifested itself in my

body and mind. I underwent a thorough lesson of physical manipulations, after which, slug transferred into mother to further intimidate me, until my daddy's spirit took her over, calmed her down and switched off the lights. After that, Creator began out first transmission.

He told me the reason He created life was **Pleasure**.

Except for **Write**, which I heard loud and clear, everything else transmitted was toned down.

He transmitted **All is equal**. (I don't know exactly what He meant by this.)

Oh, yea. He transmitted **I am here!** in the beginning. His intonation and His voice sounded brave and impatient.

8. June 22 Monday_Choruses_ Therapist (Theme Revelations)_Captain At Sea

Today on the agenda was the oil change and my psychologist appointment. Before leaving the house, I counted my accumulated cash from the hotel job, with plans to deposit it into my savings account once a sufficient amount was reached. That I remember clearly.

On our way to the car dealership, we made a quick stop at a local honey store. The first thing that startled me right away, in this still relatively early hour, was a bookstand that stood erected by the front door of the store. The bookstand was a temporary addition and featured the owner's book collection. Having heard **Write** only a few days ago, the bookstand automatically made me think of future times when my own books would be available to the public, and, in my mind, which with every passing day seemed to believe in coincidences less and less, felt like a sign, a very positive sign. The pale morning light, the very coolness of the air still damp with morning dew, lost its grip on me, as I entered the store. Inside, the light felt warm and welcoming, and the reason for the dramatic color change was the mosaic church-like window through which the rising sun graced the shelves and reflected off the colorful glass jars, like in a kaleidoscope. Soft lounge music played in the background. We were the only visitors. Magic filled the air as I walked around the various tasty but healthy (in moderation of course) options in glassy jars that glittered back at me in clusters of orange, burgundy, golden and green. All these jars, full of heavenly goodness — if I could eat it all, I would!

Mother's sharp voice pierced through the magic of it all, "Do you *remember* that you *promised* yesterday that you will pay for the doctor's gift? I can't afford it now."

As a rule, I don't promise anything to anybody anymore, having been warned by the Bible that God cannot stand promises unfulfilled; and surely I didn't have to be *reminded* of my little offering made only yesterday, and felt as if mother slyly called me forgetful and cheap. Yet, the store had a soothing effect on me, tranquilizing me with its music and colorful jars full of heavenly goodness. I decided to take no offense, to remember Sunshine's advice that chemo could have negative affects on mom's personality and that mom's transgressions, therefore, should be ignored. A natural effect of aging could also render some elderly more irritable and argumentative. Still, to me this morning, all medical explanations felt irrelevant; if I were to give a diagnosis, it was slug who was irritating me.

Did her tongue slip unintentionally? Did she mean to place that irritating emphasis on those words?

It was a lie. That's why I felt so aggravated, for I was a generous person, with generous people, and even with those who were cheap. Mom caught me in a sensitive moment. She had all the rights to think I was a loser, a woman sitting by the old cracked washtub, weeping; all the facts pointed to that: single, unemployed, living in the middle of nowhere, waiting for Jesus Christ. However, despite the sad state of my exterior affairs, I felt incredibly happy inside, as a chosen one for much higher purposes, until my mother brought me down to earth by reminding me of the limited and unreliable budget I was now living on. Yes, mommy, I *remember* what I *promised*. She lit a fuse inside me and I had a choice — to put it out or let it reach the explosives.

It was a provocation, the way she said it. It irritated to be wrongly accused by your own mom, whom you like but also dislike on some levels. It was hard to live together all the time. I wasn't used to it. As a child, I was never home. I don't remember ever doing anything fun with

my mom, or wanting to. We were both happy independently, and our happiness depended on the success of our social lives, and for my mom on two more factors — her career and the well-being of her kids. Now, I was her disappointment, and being a disappointment aggravated me. Now, I was always home and my mom was my social life. We weren't best friends either, not even tolerable roommates. Our shared life was characterized by uncomfortable silence during meals, ruthless practicality in all our choices, arguments in connection to her obsessive-compulsive cleaning style and house rules and mutual criticism due to our different perspectives on life. She made me feel sad about life. Instead of enjoying her golden age, she was busy counting every penny. The two of us were a part of big crowd walking on the rope above the abyss called poverty. We were all cheap, we had no choice, the robe was held in evil hands.

Loud voices, unnecessary advice and forced opinions were the reasons for our domestic storms that always surrendered in a wave of guilt over my heart, for I knew how much she loved me, and that it was me who was stubborn and sad, and not her. The bottomlessness of her love backfired when I turned into a loser and the resulting guilt was only manageable because God was hinting on so many awards that would inevitably follow these, only temporary, challenges. For now, however, I had to deal with walking on that thin, shaky rope; the fear of running out of money my dim guiding light.

I wasn't cheap, but mindful of my financial fears, I selected a local wild-flower honey and a *smaller* jar of maple syrup, undeterred by mom's push for the biggest jar; Honey didn't have time to eat so many pancakes. Still, mother subtly interfered by slipping into my purchasing basket one honey cream and one jam. She chose poorly — both items, already very sweet naturally, had added sugar. The very reason I offered to buy honey for her conventional oncologist was to draw his attention to benefits of natural medicine. It only made sense that 'mother' would try to slip something sugary. Lately, she had been very reluctant to entertain any of my suggestions about adjusting her diet with healthier alternatives. Either slug was interfering again or Adam was trying to improve my negotiating skills against strongly-engraved opinions and reluctance to change.

For the sake of peace, I didn't criticize my mother's unwise selection, but, I discreetly removed the two added items from my basket. *Be reasonable*, I thought I heard in Adam's voice when I doubted how many items constituted a generous gift.

Our next stop was the oil change. Our car was only six months old. We bought a reliable mountain car soon after an accident that damaged the old one. That accident was caused by an argument; aggravated, mom didn't look at the road before pulling back on it, and I didn't double check the blind spot as I usually do when mom drives. (Mom, due to her bone cancer, had difficulty turning her neck.) The sales person who sold us the car happened to be passing by as I entered the dealership through the automatic glass door. He greeted me with Adam's charming broad smile. I continued on towards the service department, following my mom who marched ten feet ahead of me in a military fashion. Another male employee passed by. He smiled as slug, forming a wicked smirk. Another day of hide and seek with Plus and minus, I thought.

At the service department, a third male greeted me with a natural smile. He wore a bright blue shirt reminiscent of Adam's eyes.

“Would you like a tire rotation?” he asked.

“Only if it is necessary, Brian,” I replied, subsequently hearing **Bravo!** pronounced by many voices. Unfortunately, some mechanics try to rip you off by pretending to fix what is working just fine.

While our car was being inspected, mom and I walked to a health food store nearby to purchase organic whole wheat flour for Russian crepes that I planned to stuff with red caviar. After mom told me that God had given her online signs in the past, I suspect it was Adam who made me come across a seafood website selling caviar at huge discounts. I bought one kilo for twenty dollars, excluding shipping. Recently, I also discovered three local pick-your-own farms by running into random people. In addition, I began to consume more dairy products. I want to be perfect, so I also quit coffee to brighten my teeth and for further health benefits. Creator is a Perfectionist so He wanted me to be perfectly healthy, as beautiful as my potential allowed. I offered no promises but for the past few days I had been drinking tea in the morning. Surely, it is lame, a breakfast without coffee, but beauty comes through sacrifice.

At the health food store, we were about to check out when the only other customer besides us — an older, tall gentleman with grey, wrinkled skin — interrupted the cashier with an impatient request to brew fresh coffee *immediately*. The man’s face displayed agitation and utter intolerance to any delays in fulfilling his demand. His hands shook (perhaps too much coffee?), requiring instant satisfaction, despite the fact that I was in the middle of paying my bill. I signaled to the lady, agreeing that she assists him first and afterwards us.

Minutes later, I observed the same man as he stared at me maliciously the entire time it took him to pour the freshly brewed coffee into his cup. He didn’t look at his hands, yet he didn’t spill as he, shakily and blindly, poured the hot liquid into his cup. While pouring, his tongue licked his lips in a disgusting circular motion, his glassy eyes fixed on me. The aroma of the freshly-brewed coffee aggravated my senses. I knew that slug was tempting me to get coffee and then regret it. To his dismay, however, I had already decided to get a cappuccino from a neighboring store. I figured Creator wouldn’t mind occasional cappuccinos, which are mostly made out of steamed milk rich in calcium.

When the woman returned to the cash register, she gave me my change — exactly 28 cents, the date of my birthday.

Back at the car dealership, we proceeded to the waiting room where I updated my journal while mother stared at an empty white wall. I offered her some magazines but she refused, continuing to stare into emptiness. Among the magazines, I noticed a glossy brochure of ceramic cats. The ceramic cat sculpture was approximately twice as large as a domestic cat. Created by local artists, the most prominent designs were bought to be attached to metal poles and installed onto asphalt sidewalks as attractions for tourists that visit this undeveloped region for some unknown reason. Out of boredom, I skimmed through different cat models. The brochure (currently kept in my files as a souvenir) featured a collection of thirty-seven ceramic cats. Each cat was unique in its color pattern, costume and accessories. One cat had wings, several models featured silly hats. One ceramic cat held a tray with a bottle of whisky in one paw and a full glass in the other, there was a mouse sitting in between this cat’s pointy yellow ears. Another model, primarily colored in white, featured a combination of stars, flowers and

miniature magic patterns, it was a magician cat. My favorite was a cat featured on the 28 cent postal mark. Her thick black tail coiled up, a windy forest of dark evergreens was painted on her legs, her paws featured cosmic supernova explosions of tiny shiny stars and other sparkling objects painted inside and in-between white and grayish clouds. Her body was a skylight of silky colorful curls against the purple milieu adorned with more stars. Each curl in the sky, as a satin ribbon of a rhythmic gymnast, swirled into a free flow of pink, purple, green, yellow or blue.

I had dreamt of a colorful skylight before, or more correctly, I had imagined a skylight of my own planet in Heaven that I would create with the power of my imagination. Deep purple darkness would serve as a background for flowing designs of pastel color splashes, similar to those drawn on this, my favorite, ceramic cat. I showed the brochure to my mom, asking her to select her favorite design. She also chose the 28 cent postal mark...

I was about to leave to check on the car when mother interfered, “What about a tip? How much should we give?” Without waiting for an answer, she gave me a five-dollar bill. For a moment, I felt guilty about being cheap — tipping was not in my plans. Mom does it out of fear. After some bad experience with mechanics, she bribes them. But it is not a common practice to tip a mechanic in a large, certified dealership. There is no guarantee that the mechanic we tip today will be there to serve us next time. We don't even get to see the mechanics. The tip is handed to the customer service representative and whether the latter passes it on to the mechanic or pockets it, only God knows. Besides, I didn't want to tip for something as routine as oil change. I was in doubt again, as earlier in the honey store. On the one hand, five dollars seemed too much, on the other — too little. It was better to err on the side of generosity, I decided; so five dollars in my hand, I reached for my bag in search for some singles. I opened my side pocket and was surprised to find two crispy bills, one-hundred dollars each inside! My peripheral vision registered mother who was glaring at me with reproach, as I stared down inside my bag in disbelief. To raise no eyebrows, I quickly found three dollars, closed and hung the bag back on my shoulder.

In the vestibule, out of mother's sight, I opened my bag again. I looked at the two crispy bills. I was sure I didn't put them there in the morning, ninety percent sure. There was no way. I counted the money, yes. I held the money in my hands. But, I didn't put two hundred dollars in my purse. There was no reason for it. I never carry so much cash. Was it a gift from my Creator? Did my decision to add to the tip for the mechanic, triggered, in return, generosity of Creator toward me?

Raya's Session_Theme Revelations

Our next stop was my three pm appointment with Raya. I came to Raya with a clear agenda — to refresh my memory of the Biblical Revelations I studied on Thursday night at the hotel bar, approximately two weeks ago. There was no time to do it at home. As usual, mom left to stroll in a local park for the duration of my therapy session. First, Pillulle, the other doctor, who prescribes pills, greeted me. Madame Pillulle was my obligatory appointment before my therapist. Her job was to confirm no changes and prescribe the same pills that I pretended to take. Pillulle pretended she wasn't poisoning me with zombie pills. She pretended that a pill designed to ‘knock out’ a crazy person could actually heal him or her. She pretended that she wasn't causing unnecessary damage to my liver and other organs that had to process these

artificial pills. She pretended that a long list of side effects was not relevant. She pretended these pills worked because she wasn't allowed to promote other alternatives: massage, yoga, gym memberships, group prayer, to list a few. This time, as usual, our meeting took little time and soon enough I was released to see Raya.

Raya came down to the reception area to escort me up the stairs into her office. As we climbed the staircase, I noticed a big blue bruise on Raya's left calf, about three inches in diameter. Right away, it reminded me of the still unhealed bruise on my hip from collapsing on the bathroom floor last Saturday as I tried to suffocate slug by prolonging my exhales while simultaneously hitting my lower abs.

"How did you get this big bruise?" I asked Raya, wondering if the timing of her bruise had anything to do with the timing of mine.

Raya's slim body stood a foot above mine on a granite staircase platform filthy with dust. She stopped and looked down at me, announcing sweetly that she didn't remember how she got that rather giant bruise. Appearing so lighthearted about her memory gap, she bended to investigate her bruise closer. I took a notice of her young, healthy body, her pleasant soft face framed inside long cascading dark waves. Her slim figure of lean undeveloped muscles underscored her youthfulness. My best estimate for her was twenty-five, but she never confirmed it as it was against the rules for therapists to relate their age to patients.

I pressed the record button on my iPad. (The system required me to see a therapist on a regular basis, but talking about my life was as useful as taking those pills. To make the therapy sessions somewhat useful, I began to record them with plans to use the recordings as raw materials for my novels. It is worth clarifying that I began to record my sessions even *before* I heard **Write**. There were other, more subtle, signs in the past that gave me a clue that writing would become important, so I began to record my sessions with Raya right from the onset, when after my second hospitalization, the therapy was prescribed to me. Before **Write**, there were the feelings He shared with me regarding my poems either through goosebumps or the secret sign, there were the poems He literary helped me write, and even before all the magic, there was an old draft of a biographical novel I began to write before anything happened. When I rediscovered the draft several years later, I remarked that it finished on page 28.

"How is your mom?" Raya started our session.

"Still taking chemo," I replied, adding, "I don't want to talk about her. I want to talk about Biblical Revelations today, the ones that nobody can interpret with certainty." My practical goal was to read each revelation aloud and in order, thus giving my mind another chance to absorb the information.

"Ok," Raya smiled. Her body language caught my attention. She lounged into her armchair, expertly, thoughtfully, no extra movement was made, she sensed the soft material of the cushions first with her bottom, then thighs and finally with her back. In a confident pose, she stretched before me; her bottom pressed deeper into the cushion, her torso slightly leaned forward and her long slim legs extended diagonally to one side. Her summer dress revealed the white skin of her legs, up to her boney knees. She didn't cross her legs as women do, but sat as a man in control of his position, a man who knows he holds an advantage, a seductive, unattainable man. Her hands spread on the two armchairs in exactly the same fashion, her

fingers — widely apart, with nails piercing into the soft velvet as claws of a wild bird. He is tense yet very comfortable and a woman simply cannot take her eyes away from his all-knowing look. He is enjoying sitting in that chair.

“So, you know, that time, three years ago, in my first hospital, I heard **Keep Fighting**.”

“Mmm.”

“*The* God replied to my prayer.”

“Yea.”

“He had replied to me shortly after one friend came to talk and pray for me together with my mom. That friend came back, I told her what happened, specifically that I heard **Keep Fighting**, shortly after our group-prayer, and she said, ‘Well, if you believe now, you have to believe in the Bible.’ (Here, my intention was to tell Raya exactly what my friend told me, which was the following, ‘If you believe now, you have to believe in the Bible. In everything, *exactly in every word*.’ Unfortunately, I omitted this essential detail from Raya.)

“I didn’t take her advice seriously, ” I continued, “because how can you believe in something you cannot understand, right?”

“Mmm,” Raya agreed.

“So, recently, you know, I was reading the Revelations, which is the final chapter in the Bible. Nobody can interpret the Revelations with certainty, you know. It is like the chapter left on the shelf, you know?”

“Mmm.”

“Nobody can really know what is happening. So I wanted your opinion about it, what you think these revelations mean.”

“Mmm.”

“So, I was reading *it*, and I made some notes.”

“Okay.”

“Like the actual quotes from the Revelations.

“Okay.”

“So, Revelation 2.17: ‘He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.’”

“Can I see it?” Raya demanded to see my notes. After she read the revelation to herself, she said, “Okay.” Then she read the revelation one more time aloud. After few seconds, she exhaled, “Mmm.”

“So, you see,” I continued, “what I like about the Bible, not only in this revelation, but often throughout its text, it repeats: *those who have ears will hear*.

“Right.”

“Which, kind of to me, means that some people who *do* have ears still don’t hear the truth.”

“Mmm”

“Which means that not everybody can see the truth but only the ones selected by God.”

“Right,” Raya said, followed by a confirmative “Mmm.”

“So you see, how here it says — you will receive a stone with a new name written on it. So from my previous experience, the second time God came to me, this time He stayed...”

With another “Mmm,” Raya confirmed that she remembered my previous history.

“... I was actually listing to this sermon, online, on youtube, and this guy, the preacher, was explaining how he understood the Revelations. He said that there will be a wedding, and I heard that my name actually was Ioanna.”

“Mmmmmmm...” Raya uttered wonderingly.

“The preacher was saying ‘Ioanna! Ioanna!’ and then ‘*Adams*’ I heard, and *Adams*, I believe now, after this sermon that I heard, is...”

“This was a dream you said?”

“No! This was a youtube sermon.”

“Oh. Okay.”

“So, I believe now that Jesus Christ was renamed into Adams when He went back to Heaven.”

“Mmm.” (Here, I hesitated to elaborate on why *Adams* was in plural, deciding against mentioning yet, another essential detail.)

“So, let’s keep reading. I mean what is your opinion about it? I mean, if you haven’t read the Bible, you wouldn’t really know about it.”

“So, 3.12: ‘Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name,’” I read from my notes. When I read this particular revelation for the first time during my boring bar shift at the hotel, the secret sign went **Yes. Yes. Yes.** I wrote it down in my notes, next to the revelation.

While Raya was studying my notes, I continued, “I am a hundred percent sure that His name is Adams. Because actually I think Adams sounds very nice. You know, like Jesus Christ is almost the name that was given to Him for, you know, for what He had to do on earth.”

A long pause followed whilst Raya read my notes, before inquiring, “So to you, you think that from that youtube video, that Jesus’s new name is Adams?”

“*Ya*. And then, what’s interesting, going back to *those who have ears will hear*.”

“Mmm.”

“*I*, what got me curious is to actually double-check this youtube guy, and find the name Ioanna.”

“Mmm.”

“And find the name Adams.”

“Mmm.”

“Well, I think Adams I did find, but not Ioanna.”

Later, dear reader, I also found the name Ioanna — in my personal revelations, but it happened later. How? I pretty much stared at the cover page of the Revelations chapter in my Russian Bible. Specifically, I stared at the top of the cover page which indicates its title. In this case, it read ‘Revelations of John’, which in Russian literary translates into

‘Revelations - Ioanna’. It was as simple as that, and a strong feeling of importance accompanied the experience.

“Yea. That’s interesting...” And then, “I never heard that,” Raya mumbled.

“Because *those that have ears will hear* means that God selects the ones who will understand.”

Next, without reconfirming first the main point of the discussion so far — that Ioanna was my name as revealed to me by the online preacher — I hopped to the next revelation:

“And then 3.14: ‘And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;’

“I am not really sure what I wanted to do here. Here, you can read it,” I handled my notes to Raya, “but then I have a note here that a woman was created.” After Raya read the revelation to herself, I continued, “So, imagine you are God, imagine.”

“Mmm.”

“And you decide to create a man”

“Yep.”

“In your image, right? And then, that man is bored, so you create a woman.”

“Mmm.”

“For Him out of His rib; which to me implies that a man cannot exist without woman.”

“Mmm.”

“That both of them have to be together. And then the Bible also says that once a husband and a wife, once you find your true love, you *all* become one body.”

“Mmm.”

“You become one body, which means you are in complete balance...”

“Yea, creates a wholeness,” Raya volunteered.

“Yea. You are like one entity. So, in Revelations, there is a talk about a wedding...”

“Mmm.”

“But when I talk to priests, most of the christians, a hundred percent of christians, believe that Jesus talks about the wedding and marrying the church...”

“Mmm.”

“Uh, but you see there is a lot of symbolism in the Bible...”

“Absolutely.”

“And I believe that maybe God, when He was writing the Bible, He created the man...”

Uh... I believe He actually wanted to write a love story.”

“Hmm!”

“If His Son... Jesus. Who was He? Ah, He was born out of the holy spirit.”

“Mmm.”

“He was born here so He was actually a man.”

“Yea.”

“But also God. So maybe that part, his man part, needs a woman.”

“Hmm!”

“That’s what I think. Why not?”

“Mmm.”

“Ah, so let’s keep reading.”

“So you have been doing a lot of Bible studies, it seems like?”

“Yea. I want to understand the truth. 4.11 ‘Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.’ Then..... I mean, read it. I am not really sure...”

Upon reading the revelation, Raya remarked, “You have a note *the pleasure of making love too.*”

“Well, this is a pleasure, you see? And what happened to me in the period of the last three days? I actually became absolutely convinced that slug exists, that devil exists and that he whispers bad thoughts into your mind, and he tries to confuse you.”

“Temp you, you mean?”

“Temp you, you know?”

“Sway you?” Raya said.

“Make you like think about nasty things. And I actually didn’t believe in that before, but Brava, whom I met last summer in Switzerland, he was convinced about it. He said that devil actually exists and that he tries to whisper bad thoughts into your ear, and I was thinking more..., I was giving more responsibility to a human being. I thought a human being has a strong will, he understands what is good, what is bad, so he decides anyway...”

“Yea. You didn’t want to put all your power into the devil...”

“Like, you know, I didn’t really think that devil is real, that he walks around here...”

“Mmm.”

“And he influences you.”

“So what changed your mind?”

“Well, I will have to tell you that if we have time later, but...”

“Okay.”

“This is why I put this note actually — *the pleasure of making love too.* And what is the problem with today’s world? A lot of people are addicted to pornography.”

“Mmm.”

“And once you get exposed to those nasty images...”

“Yea,” Raya added sadly.

“It’s almost like a huge disease. Like I am trying to fight with this now personally, because my ex taught me how to watch it...”

“Mmm.”

And after that I realized I cannot make love anymore, like tenderly...”

“Yea,” Raya uttered sadly.

“Without any bad thoughts. I almost wanted to go to a sex therapist but then I realized it is better to just stop thinking about those images...”

“Mmm.”

“And forget about them.”

“Yea, it’s hard,” Raya empathized, “because porno is almost conditioning people to believe this is the way sex should be, and it should be this extreme, like kind of violent, almost like very womanizing...”

“Yea, and very nasty,” I interrupted.

“Thing.”

“You know...”

“Yea.”

“There are all types of pornography now that I cannot even...”

“Absolutely,” Raya interrupted.

“Discuss.”

“And this is also devil that is influencing us. And you know, funny things, when I actually realized that he exists, he started to focus my mind on all the nasty things.”

“Mmmmm,” Raya uttered in wonder.

“You know, I had a problem with women who had large breasts?”

“Mmm...”

“Because I developed this insecurity when I was with my French husband, because he once told me, ‘Oh! my ex had nice boobs!’ You know?”

“Mmm.”

“And I *know*, kind of, he prefers the big size.” I meant to say *knew*.

“Mmm.”

“So I became very insecure and I never was like that.”

“Yea,” Raya interjected sadly.

“I never was like that. I always enjoyed looking at my body. I found it very attractive. But after I realized that devil exists, after it became one hundred percent truth for me, he..., I noticed, like sometimes he turns my eyes, like I walk the street, and he turns my eyes at a woman with large breasts and then he starts influencing me — Oh, you know, you don’t have that or, you know, or...”

“So he made you feel kind of doubtful about your body, resentful even?” At this point, I felt like I was giving Raya half-truths, and that my hesitance caused our discussion to be steered away from the original theme. Should I have told her directly that slug was inside me and that I tried to suffocate him last Saturday?

“Yea, and actually making me *feel* about nasty things, like what men can do with big boobs, you know...”

“Mmm.”

“In bed. And I feel it now everywhere. This is why I wrote this note. And I think devil came to me because I started to understand more and more about the Revelations, but I will tell you about that later.

“Seven Seals 6.2. ‘And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow’;... You know?”

“Mmm.”

“And a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”(After reading this revelation in the hotel, I asked Adam if it was about our son, to which the secret sign reacted **Yes. Yes. Yes.** But once again, I hesitated to share the entire truth with Raya.)

We exchanged my notes again, so Raya could read the revelation by herself. As she did so, I resumed, “So over the past few days, I started to see a lot of images actually in the skies. Of course, professionally you can call them hallucinations.”

“Mmm.”

“But I actually feel right now that Jesus is inside of me and devil is inside of me.

“Mmm.” This was uttered with a slight concern.

“And actually I was wondering why did I read this book called *Angels in My Hair* just maybe a month, two months ago.”

“Hmm.”

“This author, I think I told you, was seeing angels everywhere, who are trying to help us. Angels, sometimes, also whisper in our ears...”

“Yea.”

“But we don’t listen to them because we either listen to devil or we listen to somebody good. And in this book she says that God came to her and said — don’t be afraid of meeting the devil and God. And there was a moment in her life when that woman met them *all*.” (I meant to say *both*, yet randomly throughout the dialogue, I caught myself making such silly mistakes, as if it were only yesterday, and not more than ten years ago, that I began to learn English.) “And I actually met the devil three days ago.”

“Okay,” Raya said carefully but soothingly, as though it was normal, or at least not extraordinary, to encounter the devil, in one’s life path.

“It was kind of in a telepathic way,” I explained, “the best thing I can do is to describe it in details in my novel. But Jesus was there to help me. So why is he attacking me? I think I am very important. I think I am Ioanna and Adam is Jesus Christ.”

And before I could finish — “I know it sounds crazy” — Raya spoke over me:

“And that you are marrying Jes... Adam?”

I was surprised at how naturally Raya spoke out the only logical conclusion my incomplete, ineloquently-described narrative implied. I am speaking to Him. Everyday. How crazy it sounds! I am speaking to Invisible Man. How logical it sounds when one think of Him as a man who needs a woman. He shares with me so much, voluntarily.

But I wasn’t ready to explain this all to Raya yet. I had to warm her up. Would I believe myself? Definitely not without evidence, which unfortunately only I had. So I gave her another half-truth. Every pause between my every word indicated to me that I was thinking before replying, that I was afraid to say what I really thought:

“I think I will marry Him when I get to Heaven.”

Such an answer didn’t imply Jesus’s necessary and expedient return, which in many causes panic, due to some ominously describing the time around His return as ‘last days.’

I continued talking, off the subject now, as if every new word was a shovel of dirt covering up the lie above:

“I think my purpose here now is just to write, because my poetry is beautiful and He likes it, and through the poetry we communicate, and I can feel His presence in my goosebumps, and when devil realized that now I know the truth, he came and he tried to scare me.”

“Mmm.”

“He tries to seduce me, he tries to make me feel insecure, he tries to make me feel unworthy. As soon as I think about something bad and nasty, I feel like Adams disappears, but just for a second, but then He comes back, because He is holy.”

“So very interesting, and this is happened after I read the Revelations.”

“So wait, tell me what was the experience of meeting with the devil?” Raya seemed sincerely curious.

“Uh...”

“It was three days ago,” Raya reminded me.

“Well, he was trying to creep me out.”

“Did you actually visually see him or was it more of the voice?”

“No, he is actually talking through people. He can talk through my mom, and I see my mom behaving totally in a way she would not behave. But I just want to finish the list, you know?”

“Sure.”

“Just take notes and we will discuss this later because it is crazy!”

“But you see, Jesus in the Bible, He said that nobody marries in Heaven. Somebody asked Him, one of His friends...”

“Mmm.”

“... and He said nobody marries in Heaven, and I am thinking, Yea, nobody but Jesus Christ Himself!”

“Ha-Ha!” Raya found this truly funny.

“I think He is lacking something... if He is really...” (I meant to say ‘a man’ but skipped it.) “You know, God, He wrote the true story, right?”

“Mmm.”

“And Jesus was born here, so He was a real human being, and any man wants a woman, and any woman wants a man.”

“Yea.”

“So why me? I am not really sure.” I sighed amusingly, for I was actually full of ideas of why He selected me.

“‘And I saw, and behold a white horse...’ Here, why did I put this thing?” I took a brief moment to recap. “Oh, Yes!” I remembered, “the rider of the white horse had a bow, right?”

“Mmm.”

“And recently, I also saw the image... Like now I started to see... Sometimes I go for a run, and when evil was... The best tactic that evil wants to use is to scare you.”

“Mmm.”

“This is why he tries to read your mind, to see what are your fear factors, create bad associations, and then he manipulates people and he does, sometimes, funny tricks, you know, uh... Now, I call him focus-pocus.”

“Ha-Ha. Ha-Ha.”

“Do you know what it means? It is in Russian.”

“I just know hocus-pocus.” Data replied.

“You know?”

“Yea, the Abracadabra, hocus-pocus?”

“Yea, yea. Well, the Bible says, you know, during the last days, uh, there will be a lot of representatives of Jesus but it will be actually devil who will be trying to confuse people by showing, like tricks.”

“Mmm.”

“Because you will see — Oh, it is magic, and you would think — Oh, this is Jesus, but it is actually devil who is trying to confuse you.” Here, Raya giggled a little bit, finding what I was saying amusing.

“So, anyway, what’s so interesting about this bow, yea, and that man on a white horse?”

“Hmm.”

“Well, I actually think that will be our son, with Him, uh”

“What makes you think,” Raya interrupted quickly, “that that will be your son?”

“Ah, because Jesus communicates with me.”

“Mmm.”

“You know, He can do this. He can do *this*.” (I meant to say *that*.) “He is actually inside my body, and this is what makes me feel that I am that woman, because if He weren’t inside me, telling me Yes or No, I would not know.

“Mmm.”

“I mean nobody has the sign that I have. And few days ago, I saw that image. I saw a man, with long hair, and it was pulled back, and he had a bow, in, *on* his shoulder, behind, and it was after I read it.

“Then 6.3” (6.4 actually.) “And there went out another horse that was red:” I added as a hint to Raya, “There will be three Kings.”

“Mmm.”

“So, three sons, and they will be involved in doing the final judgments, ju, judgment on earth.” A sad emphasis was placed on the word *judgments*, and its usage in plural was an intentional mistake which I corrected right away.

Upon reading this quote at the hotel bar, I asked Adam if the red horse rider was our second son, to which the secret sign confirmed three times. I concealed this detail from Raya. Once again, I hesitated to say the entire truth because my common sense was telling me — it can wait, you don't want her to think you are crazy, can you even believe yourself? At this point in the office, I felt that it was more practical to me to focus on analyzing Revelations.

“And there’...”

But, without finishing reading the revelation, I began to ramble on:

“Because, you see, since I realize” (*d*) “that devil is inside me, and that as a human being I have a strong will, there are some people that worship devil on purpose...”

“Mmm.”

“So, I think they do become devil themselves, and they deserve to be *killed*.”

A momentary silence from Raya was followed by familiar “Mmm.”

“Then, I think about the concept of hell.”

“When you say, they deserve to be *killed*, who do you mean?” Raya had a right to be concerned, for the word is disturbing and induces fear.

“Well, the Bible says one third will be *killed* on this planet, the other will be saved.”

“So, you mean more like natural causes?”

“I think the people that actually worship devil on purpose will be *killed*.”

“By whom?”

“By by by the final judgment.”

“Mmmmm.”

“By God... I mean, do you believe God already once destroyed the earth by the flood?”

“I mean... it is definitely a belief. I am...”

“Yea,” I quickly agreed.

“I am still exploring what I believe in.”

“Yea, I mean, I think that the Bible was given to us to explore it ”

“Mmm.” She agreed.

“And, I mean Jesus, it says, He came to save us all; so while He was there, *kneeled* on the cross, He said to His Father — Father, forgive them, for they do not *understand*.” More like ‘they do not know what they are doing,’ I wanted to say, and definitely *nailed* instead of *kneeled*. I know that word!

“Mmm.”

“And you know the brother, my brother Fuse?”

“Yea.”

“Ah, he once told me there is some sort of a lake where everybody is being *cleaned*.” I meant to say — *cleansed*.

“A lake?”

“Yea. So, which makes me think...”

“Like a baptizing lake?”

“No, like a *cleaning* lake.”

“Mmm...” Raya uttered in a high-pitch, as if in wonder.

“So, maybe, there is a chance for people to go there and be cleaned,... of all their sins, bad thoughts. Uh, because personally, I believe that only devil deserves to be in hell...”

“Mmm.”

“... and be burned forever, forever, because he is the one who is whispering...”

“Mmm.”

“... and trying to confuse us. And does the human deserve to, to, to be burned forever, because he is stupid, because he is brainstormed?” I meant brainwashed. “I don’t think so.”

“Yea.”

“I think the only ones are the ones that are actually...”

“That are in charge of that,” Raya interrupted.

“... accept him,” I spoke over her, “and decide to follow the devil knowingly.”

“Right.”

“Like this, they become him.”

“Yea,” she agreed sadly.

“So, let’s keep reading. ‘And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.’ And I believe this is our second son.”

“Mmm.”

“Because you know, in the end, it says we will have more and more natural disasters. You know it’s all symbolism in the Bible. And what makes me more sure that I am that woman? You know, during my second, uh experience when God came to me...”

“Mmm.”

“... after the divorce, when He stayed. I started to draw, and I draw this painting, and for me, it was a smile, but my mom decided to hang it upside down.”

“Hmm.”

“And hanging it upside down now..., you know, as I said devil can make you look at some things and make you think something. Well, Jesus makes me look at this painting and now I see, and even my mom said it. It reminds me of the babies.” (Mom said it first.)

“Hmm.”

“There is a red baby, there is a yellow baby and there is a blue baby, and there is an arrow that I drew. Well, because mom put it upside down, now this arrow is going up...”

“Mmm.”

“As it points to the Heaven.”

“Okay.”

“So, you know, this is another personal sign that I’ve seen. Maybe I will see other ones.”

After a brief pause, Raya volunteered a question, “So you said you’ve been seeing things in the heavens. What kind of stuff have you been seeing?”

“Like in the clouds, you know. When devil *comes* to me, before I would see like a man, I would see *ribs*...”

“Right.”

“I would see ribs because Jesus is now in me, and assuming I am His wife, He can touch me, and I actually think the most beautiful part of me is my ribs.”

“Hmm.”

“You know, I like to look at the bones. And I see like images now of ribs, and spine and things, and before, whatever I saw in the skies was beautiful.” (Once I saw long hair concealing hints of an exposed female neck.)

“Mmm.”

“Now, I see like ugly faces.”

“Hmm.”

“Sometimes. You know, but I am no longer scared.”

“It is not scaring you?”

“No, because I know who is doing it.

“But doesn’t it scare you though?”

“No. It’s, you know, hallucinations, devil, his only tactic is to scare you.”

“Mmm.”

“Once you realize it is him that is doing it... I actually make fun of him.”

“So you feel you have some sort of power over him, hehe...”

“Yea.”

“If he is not scaring you?”

“Well, you know. Whatever is written in the Bible will happen, and now I can understand that I am a big part of it.

“So, that’s second son, yea?” I signaled with my tone that the discussion about the previous revelation was over.

“Mmm.”

“6.5 ‘And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.’”

“Mmm.”

“The balances is about, uh, judgement.”

“Mmm.”

“It’s about justice. I don’t have a note about it, but this will be, probably, the third son that will finally render the final judgment because in his hand...uh., because ‘he that sat on him had a pair of *balances* in his hand.’”

“Mmm.”

“6.8 ‘And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.’ So there will be the fourth horse that will be killing everything. Not really sure about that revelation yet.

“6.9 ‘And when he had opened the fifth seal...’ So you see how in the beginning seven seals were opened.”

“Mmm.”

“So we go over each seal. ‘And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:’ So it’s all these people, their pain, that were suffered and killed in the name of Jesus.” I wrote next to this revelation a note — *revenge*. Revenge for pain? But revenge is pain. It doesn’t make any sense.

“6.12 ‘And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;’” (My note next to the revelation read — *mention the Yellowstone national park, make them scared, yes yes yes.*) “Ah, and I am thinking, you know, the Yellowstone...”

“Mmm.”

“...National park.”

“Ah-ha.”

“Well, that is actually, I was reading, I was watching a program about it. If that volcano erupts, the whole world could disappear. Like a huge cloud will be formed, and America will go down as well. For, for sure.”

“Mmm.”

“So, anyway, then four angels held the four winds of the earth and the fifth angel sealed the repented ones. So, the repented ones were saved. Because I think once you truly, truly repent

about the bad things that you have done, you erase the evil inside yourself and you purify your soul...”

“Mmm.”

“... and this is why the repentance is so important.”

“Mmm.”

“So, let’s see, let’s see,” I skimmed through my notes, “I want to get to the part when I think they talk about me.” I read through my notes briskly, inaudibly, mostly to myself, looking for the right revelation, for the time of our session was running out and we weren’t even close to finishing. One revelation, even though it wasn’t the one I was looking for, seemed important enough, so I took my time to read it to Raya.

“9.15 ‘And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.’”

“Mmm.”

“So you see, God..., everything is already selected in terms of timing. This just makes me more comfortable, uh, confident that God is in control.”

“Hmm.”

“And it’s all according to His timing.”

“So do you think humans have any control?”

“Well, I think a human has a strong will.”

“Mmm.”

“A will to select between good and evil during their lives here. And when you decide, God overlooks and He sees if it is a good decision or not.”

“Mmm.”

“You know, if it creates more goodness or creates more evil.”

“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone...,” I skimmed through the revelation 9.17 to 9.18, “‘By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.’” The revelation had a note next to it — *our three sons? yes yes yes*. By ‘these three,’ I presently see clearer, the revelation refers to fire, smoke and brimstone, but back then, my mind was influenced to think otherwise.

“So, by these *three*. I think it’s our sons. And when I ask Him the question, He replies yes.”

“When you ask who?”

“Jesus.”

“How does He reply?”

“He squeezes any muscle in my body, and He squeezes it three times, usually.”

“So, you feel like a tensile in you muscle?”

“Just like this.” I demonstrated by lifting my right arm and squeezing my palm into a fist three times. “You know? Just like this. Like a really physical reaction.” I wasn’t about to tell her how really works the *secret* sign.

“Okay.”

“And funny, when devil came to me, after I realized that devil is real, he came to me and he started to use the same signs to confuse me.”

“Mmm.”

“But the only sign, so far, that he cannot duplicate is those goosebumps, and they usually happen when I listened to very classical music, that is enjoyable, you know, something nice and holy, and especially when I write beautiful poems.”

“Mmm.”

“he hates it, and I always, you know, I can feel his bad reaction, but I feel the goosebumps too, and I think the goosebumps, so far, is the only thing he cannot duplicate.”

“Hmm.”

“Yea, I know.”

“It’s interesting. So when did it all start? Did it just start three days ago, some of these thoughts?”

“That happened when I studied the revelations.”

“And when did it start that? Few days ago?”

“Uh, I think, yea, like *three* days ago.” Even though it was about two weeks ago that I read the revelations and then experienced a chain of weird events at work and home, I easily agreed with Raya’s inaccurate time frame. The number *three*, it occurred to me foolishly, might make an unconscious positive impact on Raya, move her closer to *Does God exist?* mindset. Plus, we were also going off topic again, and I didn’t care to discuss what was already recorded in my journals. All that I wanted to do was to move on to the revelations. My goal was to refresh my memory of them, and we were running out of time.

“Seems like there are a lot of changes. This is all pretty big stuff.”

“It is crazy, but let me just get to the part where I think they talk about me.”

“Okay.”

I briefly skimmed through my summary of revelations in chapter 10, about the seventh angel with a rainbow upon his head, with a face as if it were the sun, and with feet as pillars of fire; about how seven thunders spoke a secret and *a little book* was given to apostle John; about how John was asked to not reveal the secret the seven thunders spoke to him, and ate the little book. “So, I am not really sure,” I said, “there is some secret.”

“Have you been sleeping ok?” Raya asked, all of a sudden, and how tired was I of that question!

“Yea, I have been sleeping *really* well.”

“Have you?”

“Yea, so let me just see...” I searched for a part that talks about the wonder woman who has mysteriously appeared in Heaven. It took some time to find it, so Raya asked in between, “Did you ever follow through with the art show?” It was another miscellaneous question that distracted me from searching my notes.

“Yea.”

“Yea? Where you in it?”

“Yea.”

“Cool. How was it?”

“Nice. Let me just find... Oh, here! Here I am:

And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven...”

“Mmm.”

I pronounced each word as though I was reading an adventurous fairytale to children,
“Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars...”

(My note here reads: me? yes yes yes yes yes.)

“When I asked Jesus if it was me, He said **Yes Yes Yes.**”

“Mmm.”

“And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

And I am already pregnant.

*“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads
 and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*

“So, as soon as the woman appeared, dragon appeared.

And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven

“Uh, and you see, which to me, means one third of the world destroyed.”

“Mmm.”

“Because God.. eh, *devil*, he wants to destroy us.” (Here, I think, slug tried to insert the word God into my mind while I was thinking — devil; he even spoke it out, before I could stop it.)

“Right.”

*“and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to
 devour her child as soon as it was born.*

*And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up
 unto God, and to his throne.*

“So, there will be a child.”

“Mmm.”

“That would be given to God; and to me it was revealed, that it is actually me.”

“Mmm.”

“And that I will be with Adams.

*“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a
 thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

“And actually I think this was the first time, uh, the devil came to me and I got into a hospital and I lost my job in the city.”

“Hmm.”

“You know, before I wasn’t sure if that was my supervisor who was that evil, but now, I know there was devil. Because there were some tricks that I couldn’t explain, you know, almost like weird magic, and this is why I became so crazy and obsessed. And went to the hospital.”

Here, dear reader, I will pause my session with Raya to tell you in more detail what happened during that time, for I believe a parallel runs between my personal life story and the symbolism of this particular Biblical revelation. The first time slug came to me was when I lost my construction job. I wrongly thought my human supervisor was the only one responsible for my demise. Out of a job and fearful to stay in my own rental, Fuse forced me into a hospital where I was further scared by what I thought were continuing manipulations of my human supervisor. Remember, back then, I had no idea that slug or Adams exist or that I will become a

part of a major spiritual experience. Back then, arrogant Fuse, whose own business was failing, treated me with envy and jealousy. Back then, I hadn't a slightest clue that Fuse, too! could be manipulated by higher forces to act against me. You may find it interesting that Fuse enrolled in an asylum only six months after forcing me into one... Can you imagine? Fuse told my family that my liver, overloaded with wine, was releasing harmful toxins into my brain.

I went to the hospital, against my will. I had never considered myself crazy, but nobody believed me. There, in the hospital, a lunatic I never spoke to somehow knew I cheated on Puss. She mocked me as we shared a sofa in front of a television, "Hey, is it you, the young fiancé?" and grimaced. *Are you going to tell him?* was really what she meant to say.

I was locked up for eighteen days, eighteen like Puss's birthday... He thought the number meant something. It meant: *you might have lost your job, but your savior is Puss for now*. He was calling me everyday while I was there, saying, "Don't be afraid of your supervisor! Don't be afraid of him!" Puss was saying it constantly, while having not the slightest idea what was going on. Still, he was my only hope during that time. Perhaps I lost my job but Puss still loves me, I will make a new life in France, I thought.

The memory of the lunatic that knew about my cheating kept haunting and puzzling me. Mom says that crazy people are connected to God; perhaps, this is how that lunatic knew. There was also the possibility of my spying ex-supervisor revealing the truth to Puss; it was definitely another factor that pushed me towards confession. Still, the Bible inspired me the most. About a week after my release, while reading about all-forgiving love in the Bible, an overwhelming feeling of *I should tell him!* had overcome me completely. I was still very emotional from realizing that God exists (in the hospital, He told me **Keep Fighting**). I read what true love meant for God: Love lives forever. Love is kind. Love *forgives!* I dialed Puss. "Is this all?" he asked me. "No!" I cried, and I told him about the second cheating. Yes, I cheated on him twice, both as a result of unfortunate circumstances, because I was homeless, because I don't live like you, Puss, in a golden shell!

It was a spontaneous decision. I regretted it as soon as I hung up. Mom said, "You never tell a man you cheated on him!" She must've thought I was incredibly stupid. Now, I think it was meant to happen — for me to cheat on him. Puss had cheated on *all* his previous girlfriends. Maybe Creator meant to teach Puss a lesson via my confession, so Puss could *feel* how his ex-girlfriends felt.

For about three months after telling Puss the truth, I felt I was nothing. I spent those recovery months drawing, worrying, waiting desperately for his calls, and then going through long rounds of inappropriate questions. His very first comment upon my confession was, "Are you pregnant?" So, you see, right away, he yearned to realize the complexity of the matter, whether it was still possible to stay together. He had already forgiven me. "Are you crazy?" I replied, "I told you it happened a year and a half ago!" "Why didn't you tell me earlier?" Because I am not stupid, Puss!

Often, I feel that my confession was the reason our marriage didn't work out. He never understood that I was simply used while using somebody for a place to stay. He is "a young, sexual, self-centered man," mom so correctly labeled him upon their first introduction. A man like that, especially if insecure, cannot forget a cheating.

Puss's manhood was shattered. One day, he sounded happy, another day he would call me and whine. For months, he pierced my heart with intimate questions of how it went. He was crazy like that; nothing but sex in his young head. Meanwhile, I felt like an old woman sitting by a cracked tub — jobless and soon-to-be-single. On top of that, I felt bitter that Puss seemed to have completely forgotten that I just spent eighteen days in a mental institution for the first time in my life, that prior to that, I had lost my successful career, that my apartment was robbed, my coat - stolen, my computer - hacked, all my money - temporarily suspended, my credit bill - paid late for the first time in my life, that I hardly slept, that I still harbored suspicions that my ex-supervisor continued to spy on me. "Should I buy a plane ticket? Should I buy a plane ticket?" Puss would torture me during our recovery conversations. I told him, "Decide yourself." I knew if I say yes, he would think that I *needed* him, and may change his mind. But it was Puss who *needed* to marry a strong woman who could take care of him. So he married me, thus giving me a chance to escape into my first 'wilderness'.

I looked at Raya. Her posture had changed. Now she was sitting, looking at me, eye-to-eye, her legs slightly apart, with both of her knees bent perfectly into a ninety degree angle, her feet firmly pressed to the carpet. Her elbows rested on the armchair, her palms were crossed below her chin, fingers interweaved. Her back was stretched out diagonally, leaning toward me. She looked both still but unpredictable, as though she could reach out and touch me at any moment. Her eyes studied me with that special, all-knowing gaze, *Hey, this is Me. I know you.* She fixed her lips in a seductive grin, as her white teeth chewed on a wooded toothpick in an attractive fashion. My Raya, of a clumsy type, with a bruise on her leg and no clue of how she got it, sat in that chair, looking awfully relaxed, composed and confident, in control of every movement like Bruce Lee. *Was it something I said?* For God knew how difficult that time was for me. Putting everything on the line.

"Mmm."

"And now, when I ask: this is when the devil came first to me? and you know, he.. I lost his job, he made me ah tell my fiancé that I cheated on him, so I felt I have absolutely nothing. And you know why it happened? There was a story in the Bible..."

"You told which fiancé? The one in France?"

"Yea. Well, at that time, he was fiancé."

"Did you cheat on him?" Raya asked with a slightly-detectable judgmental tone.

"Yea, I cheated on him," I replied, also strangely in a sort of defensive style, my voice high-pitched. "But then I told him the truth because I was reading the Bible at that time after I heard **Keep Fighting**..."

"Mmm."

"... how beautiful love is, how it is all forgiving, and I decided to tell him the truth. So, I was at the point where I had no job, no hope, no future possibilities of getting married, and I felt I am garbage. And actually, this is a similar story in the Bible. There was a guy in the Old Testament who was also a God-loving man and was a successful uh businessman."

"Mmm."

“And devil told God: Well, you know, this guy doesn’t really love You, you know? He has everything, you know?”

“Mmm. Mmm.”

“Let’s see how he will love You when we will take everything from him.”

“Hmm...”

“And God says Okay. Check him. I know he loves Me.

“So that man loses everything and he starts crying. Men come to him, and they have these philosophical discussions. And whatever, he never betrays his love for God, he never starts blaming God for his misfortunes. He always remains respectful of God.”

“Mmm.”

“And at some point, his wealth returns to him, and he becomes even richer. Of course, the Bible said you should not expect rewards. But that story reminds me of my own. How I had everything...”

“Mmm.”

“And I was left with nothing.”

“Yea.”

“And I still didn’t blame God for this misfortune.”

“Right.”

“And this was the first time when He came to me.” When I asked Adam if my relocation to France following my ex-supervisor’s invasion symbolically refers to the Biblical revelation that talks about the wonder woman hiding from the enraged dragon in the wilderness for some time, the secret sign replied Yes Yes Yes.

After a long silent pause Raya got up and went to her desk. Our session was near its end.

“It seems like there is been a lot of interesting new thoughts coming up, in *almost* your own re revelations, right?” she said and giggled, while searching for a card to write down the time and date of our next appointment, even though I had repeatedly told her to stop wasting paper. I saw no reason for her giggle. Was she uncomfortable with my story? Did she believe me or did she think I was crazy? What did her *almost* mean?

“No, these are my personal revelations, yea. I am telling you this because you are my psychologist...”

“Your therapist,” she interrupted to correct me, which made me think she felt unqualified to treat me.

“... and you will help me to, to analyze this together.”

“Yea, I mean, it seems like there is so much more that I am so curious and would like to spend more time on it, so, I was wondering if we could schedule another meeting like in two weeks instead of a month, as usual?”

Typically I saw my therapist once a month. Currently, however, I didn’t mind seeing Raya more often, as my session recordings could serve as writing material.

“Would that be okay?”

“Yea.”

“Just because a month seems like a long time to really go back to delve into that. Do you think that your mom could drive you or do you want to schedule transportation?” (I was using ‘no transportation available’ as an excuse to maintain infrequent sessions.)

“Not a problem. My mother can drive me.”

“Is she okay with that?”

“Yea.Yea. She is fine.”

“There are also other things too I want to talk about.”

“You mean the bureaucrats?”

But the subject of bureaucrats would have to wait. First, we had to finish discussing the remaining revelations. I stopped the recording, we exchanged goodbyes and I left.

Set 29, 2020

The above portion of this chapter, similarly to the chapter 2 on Revelations, was the most difficult to write, in terms of fears. I ended up rereading, deleting, making up stuff, deleting again, and rewriting the original recording

Outside the mental facility, I met up with mom who had been promenading in the neighboring park during my session. On our drive back, we stopped at *Captain at Sea*, a newly-renovated restaurant for lunch. The space had the capacity to accommodate a hundred people but at four o’clock on a Monday afternoon my mother and I were its only customers. The retired captain, the owner of this spacious but empty place greeted us at the entrance. He must have been spending his retirement savings to support his dream business. His low occupancy made me feel sorry for him, and for a curvaceous energetic young waitress that followed directly behind him with a set of two menus. Nothing in the owner’s appearance suggested that he was a formal captain, a profession of risk and courage; no mustache, no tattoos, no muscles, no scarf. Instead, a lean, fragile silhouette and a head full of white hair greeted us with a kind, but tired smile. The captain’s present physical condition wouldn’t stand the slightest storm, but perhaps years ago, he was both strong and intelligent, or perhaps, his level of intelligence compensated for his lack of physical attributes.

I was delighted to find out that the owner of the restaurant was a sea captain. Why? Because only last week an idea came to me to write a children’s book where Creator plays the role of captain of a magic ship. I took this coincidence as a sign that He liked my idea. The captain escorted us past a formal dining room into a cozier arrangement in the far corner. I immediately remarked on the neatly-folded yellow-blue napkins — the colors of my homeland’s flag. The yellow represents the wheat fields producing bread and the blue - the skies the fields are under.

A beautiful view over a vast green valley spreading out more than five hundred feet below our window satisfied mom’s eye. Having seen this view before, however, I felt nothing extraordinary. I briefly scanned for eagles in the vast blue space but the air was empty of predators, so I began to study the menu. The waitress came back to take our order. I remarked that her toenails were painted purple. It comforted me. The secret sign squeezed. Mother smiled. Mom appeared to be in high spirits, chit-chatting about news she read online. (I don’t trust her sources.)

Our waitress had an air of professionalism about her, in an efficient, kind, sincere way and not for tip-making purposes. My mood was further elevated upon hearing her well-articulated specials. There were two on the menu. The stuffed artichokes delighted me. I couldn't believe I was getting six local, organic artichoke's hearts for only five dollars. The second special happened to be mom's favorite French onion soup. *Another pleasant coincidence. On top of the captain... the blue-yellow napkins... and the purple nails of the very professional waitress...* For the main course, we shared a salmon, which was served with a side of wonderfully-made *couscous*, another pleasant coincidence, since the dish was associated in my mind with Adam's homeland. Mom praised couscous highly and devoured it completely. The salmon was perfectly grilled too, and the portion was the perfect size to share.

Somewhere in the middle of our pleasant dinner, the radio played *Get Lucky* by Daft Punk. Coincidentally, the song happened to be my favorite the summer my marriage felt apart. I still liked the song but two summers ago I was in love with it; Puss wasn't. One day we were in the car when the radio played the fresh hit. I turned the volume up but Puss insisted on switching to an old fashion French singer from an ancient time. In that particular moment, I found Puss boring and his entire personality spoiled by his sheltered existence. When Puss told me to leave, I prayed to God to forgive my arrogance, including this particular incident. *Puss loves romantic songs! It is you, Sonia, who only listens to loud trash!* The wife who used to criticize her husband was crashed by the wave of guilty regrets.

The song approached my favorite part when I signaled to the waitress to approach. "Could you turn the radio up? I like this song."

"I will see what I can do." Her attitude changed to unpleasant and uncooperative. As though she was doing me a favor, she lazily approached the antique radio player positioned about thirty feet away on the floor against the wall, bent in front of it and appeared to be tuning the device. The volume didn't change; yet the waitress returned to the waiting counter and stood there as though she had satisfied my request. The drastic, sudden change in her attitude from very professional to careless suggested that a game of hide and seek was afoot. Her *purple* nail polish was not a simple coincidence... Frustrated that the song would be over before the problem was fixed, I signaled the waitress to approach me again. This time, the captain came.

"I wanted to see if it was possible to turn this song up."

"Of course it is! We are the only ones here, aren't we?!"

Aren't we? How funny! And why did this grandpa sound so enthusiastic, so excited? He instantly walked away to satisfy my demand. Despite his fragile appearance, he managed to squat in front of the old radio player and turn the volume switch up. This time, the volume control worked. The captain looked at me and upon seeing my approval, robustly jumped up, spun around himself, made a couple of funky, old-fashioned dance moves, before walking away to his station. So *He* also dances to modern songs...

I ordered some wine despite fearing mom's silent disapproval. The waitress brought me the wine glass that had fingerprints on it. To my surprise, mom commented, "As long as the wine is good, it does not matter!" What happened with the clean freak I used to know?

With the wine glass in my hand, I left the table and walked into the lounge room. There, next to an antique large wooden steering wheel attached to the floor, stood a large golden

spyglass. I adjusted the zoom and peered through the lens, imagining myself steering the magic ship of my Captain. *What is next on the agenda, My Captain? Will You let me set a course? Who? Adams? Let Him have some rest! He is a bit tired. Yes, my Captain. He ate too much again. Oh No! I am just fine. I can well manage the steering wheel, my Captain. Don't you worry, my Captain. Adams is fine. Yes. What did He eat? Oh! What didn't He eat? Your secret agent is aware of the situation. We will save the new island right away. Go rest, my Captain. Please relax for once.* And then I imagine the Captain leaves and I do whatever I want. I select a new island, a new goal, a new destination. *Dingy - down! Follow me! Oars up! One. Two. One. Two.* Adam appears on an empty deck, observing the parting dinghy, *Wait for me! Where is My Father?!* When I come back with a victory, the Captain still rests (but He always knows what's happening), while I select yet a new course. Adams looks sleepy, but very glad to see me.

I form vivid colorful images of everything: the interior of the ship, costumes, lights, characters. I play Creator and Adam's parts, plus block slug, as he tries to inject something stupid and disgusting. I play all parts of my imaginary film to entertain my Creator and His Son. They read my mind and watch the images my imagination produces. In general, all lines are mine. Every now and then, when slug is offended by a certain joke, it interrupts with curses. Adams laughs. This is why mother often says, "When will you take this *stupid* smile off your face?" I do ask Adam to control His laughter; simultaneously, I try to freeze the muscles around my mouth. Still, every now and then, my face releases an awkward grin and if something is really funny, I burst out aloud into the 'Paw!' sound.

Finished with the theme and out of new ideas, I left the steering wheel and returned to the table before mom found my absence overly long. She appeared full of joy, finishing her piece of salmon and couscous.

"Mom, do you know if muslims created couscous or jews?"

"I don't know."

"Sunny says they are still fighting about it. Anyway, it is hard to know for sure. They live in the same region." I wondered at the coincidence of my eating a dish Adam was likely eating during His life on earth.

"It is very nice, this couscous. Really delicious!" mom said.

I noticed that mom put my thin silver hairband on, the one that had been hanging on my drawer's knob in our shared bathroom this morning. Per my request, Puss used to arrange his curly, sun-bleached hair in this fashionable way. It suited him. Mom, however, never wore a hairband like this before. She could've used this very hairband to tie her hair into a ponytail as she did occasionally once her hair grew too long, but she chose to wear it the way Puss used to, in the same fashion as the knight with a bow and arrow whom I saw in the skies. *Are You giving me another sign?* He transmitted **Yes** and the secret sign confirmed three times.

We left *Captain at Sea*, tipping thirteen dollars, more than twenty percent, with a proud feeling that we had just supported a local business.

Back home, mom went straight to bed to relax, as tomorrow she had her chemo treatment. I forced myself to spend several hours writing my journal. When I could no longer write, I asked Them if it was enough. Rhetorical question. There is never enough of good deeds

in a world full of pain and misery. So I continued, and when I finished writing about today, I pressed 'save.' The phone showed the time - 21:28.

More and more often, God uses the number 28 to reconfirm my special destiny. He does it by turning my eyes to the clock, often in the car, when minutes hit 28. slug, the copy cat, incorporated the same sign, only that he looks at the time when minutes hit 27, as to suggest, *you are not the one.*

The most special sign today was the two hundred dollars in my purse that I was certain I didn't put there. At least, I didn't mean to. I don't need to carry so much cash around, as I almost always use my credit card. I was sure the two hundred dollars had appeared miraculously in my purse, as that sky knight with the bow and arrow.. The knight's portrait was drawn with clouds from his shoulders and up. The man could've been sitting on a horse or standing on his own. Something in his stare suggested that no matter if he stands or sits, he always holds his torso and neck perfectly straight, like a professional ballet dancer. His eyes peered straight ahead into the distance, into a scene unfolding inside the opposite cluster of clouds. He saw everything that was happening there. I distinguished a hairband wrapped around his head, formed by a thin, linear white cloud. From under the hairband, his wavy long hair disappeared behind, possibly, into a warrior ponytail. I automatically assumed that his wavy hair was at least as dark as a medium shade of brown. Yet, his hair lost all importance under that serious and focused gaze. A triangular bow rose from behind his left shoulder and the tips of several arrows pointed up from behind the other one. I contemplated the image in the clouds, until the wind erased it.

In bed I lay, next to my mom, (her snores soothed me, they meant she was embraced by a healing dream), and considered the highlights of today. As the sky knight with the bow and arrow, the two hundred dollars was surely a sign from Adam. Creator approved to send it. (I believed Adam couldn't do anything without Creator's approval.) Raya had an unexplained bruise, similar to mine. I don't have to remind you how I got it. Then, the purple nails and the sudden change in the waitress's attitude, the blue/yellow napkins, and the captain's witty remark, "Aren't we the only ones here?" The captain dancing. All were signs, but the most significant sign was the two hundred dollars. I discovered the money after deciding to tip the mechanic, not before. It must have been His payment back for that one hundred bill I earned cleaning toilets, the bill that I demonstratively tore apart in the hotel's cleaning closet. It was a spontaneous, passionate decision, a gesture of commitment to just causes. A wall poster of a popular tennis star marketing a diamond watch served as a provocation. *Do you know how many children this watch could feed!* And I tore the bill apart. It was my protest against money in general, against making them in a wrong way, against assigning value where none is. Mister Grosshead had smartly explained to me, long time ago, how connecting diamonds to pure love was the biggest marketing scam of them all.

I earned that one hundred scrubbing toilets. It was *half* of my hard-earned salary. I kept the other half. The incident happened at the end of my second episode. The poems were written, the hospitalization passed, but it was all about how I got there. After a chain of questions. Some of which, as I suspect now, Creator Himself influenced me to ask Him. Officially, I went berserk. Unofficially, I was following His instructions. I spent more than a month in a battle against fear, greed and laziness that, in my estimation, was simultaneously

taking place on earth and in Heaven. Each battle I won here meant a bigger victory of good over evil there. Now, I understand that Creator and/or Adam, applied outside stimuluses to manipulate my mind, in order to force me to follow a certain plan of action. It was painful at times, and I often wonder if it was really the best plan.

The night I got into my second hospital I was battling Madame GMO. To launch my attack, I went by foot to a supermarket located way too far to get there by foot. I left at sunset, in the area overpopulated with wildlife. I was determined to find goat milk ice-cream with no added sugar and to fight with the supermarket management if it wasn't available. My battle with Madame GMO continued at the emergency room when fresh enemies — Mister Pillule aka Big Pharma and Madame Vaccine — came to support her, followed by bad Image who came last, to reinforce the slug's frontal attack.

The Master Mind behind my divine rehab must be the Creator. It was all a matter of divine providence. He got me out of my construction job. He moved me to France, which, in turn, resulted in the following two benefits. I fell in love with the French language and as a result, began to write poetry. (My very first poetry, about thirty pieces, was written in French.) Secondly, He broke my heart, which reduced my arrogance. All those unexplainable incidents during the first episode were magic tricks too. I couldn't know then. I couldn't comprehend how a simple human supervisor could be everywhere: in the bank, on trains, in angry truck drivers, in fake construction walk-throughs, in a group of Hebrews going to a synagogue, in the two mean teenagers (one with a missing shoe) I played basketball with, and inside all those crazy hospital lunatics. In those red sprinkles on Daniel's sofa...

"How did they get here?" I asked, but Daniel had no idea.

I felt so sure that night would be my last one. Another impressive magic trick was a cashier in the supermarket who didn't scan half of my purchases, thus inducing guilt about that one time I stole an avocado. The flashing light bulb in my Brooklyn apartment, the torn Facebook profile photos, mom's altered medical report, the Skype call I never made, the Facebook kidnapping message on Sunny's wall — all must have been one big hocus-pocus.

The attack was implemented so cleverly, I had actually believed that my ex-supervisor was, indeed, powerful enough to hire a bunch of truck drivers to follow me around. The fear at the sight of those trucks was real. The truck signs read, *Do not approach!* or *Don't you want to join our business?* or *Big Brothers, ready for any work!* The trucks followed my car directly behind, paying no attention to the safety distance, they cut me off without signaling, and, as I glanced at the side mirror, the manufacturing label glued to it - *Objects may seem closer than they appear* - induced tremendous fear.

And afterwards, all those green garbage trucks, the never-ending noise of their engines that disturbed my recovery. Green as my favorite color, they drove by my apartment when I slept, when I looked out the window, when I walked down the Main Street. A green garbage truck, with its roaring engine. It was so loud, I could feel the cracking of the asphalt road. Polluting ominously, releasing its poisoned fumes, the cloud of dust left behind was so massive, the truck disappeared in its mist, as if escaping the crime scene. In the ensuing silence — now by contrast utterly still — I felt the invisible message the garbage truck meant to transmit. I felt it once, as it appeared, word by word, *it is you who is garbage*.

All of this was a divine recovery to transform me into Ioanna, my ultimate image, to create my novels and to inspire the characters of my future fairytale *Pink Planet*, such as the Wonder Woman, Bagira aka Bagirochka, Black Panther, Luna, Organic Robot Farmer Arnold, UniImage, Multitask and, of course, Askalittle!

Wanna say a magic word, Madame GMO?

*It is **Cnacubo** (Fuse is currently demanding that whoever addresses him say this word first.)*

P.S. Cnacubo means Thank you, but letter by letter it means 'Save God' or 'God save', whichever you prefer...

9. June 23 Tuesday_Driving To Honey_Transmission # 2_ *Everybody Will Be Saved*

This morning we left the apartment at 0700 to drive to Honey, my mother's oncologist. Despite my severe objections, my elderly mom with slower motor skills insisted on driving because she felt that "I no longer remember how to drive properly." On the highway, however, mother drove at a dangerous speed of seventy-five miles per hour, ten miles faster than her usual driving speed! Fear entered my heart. Slug (don't put it in capitals, slug!) was trying to cause an accident. The game had progressed to a new, dangerous level. I was surprised to hear Adam transmitting very subtly, ***It is me who is driving*** in the tone that was distinctly His. But it didn't calm me down completely. It was hard to ignore the reality. Mom is an anxious driver who is afraid of big trucks. I convinced her to let me drive, and we switched at the nearest rest stop.

I drove while doing breathing meditation in accord to which my fingers stretched on the steering wheel. The fingers moving disturbed my mom, even though I had explained to her very patiently that it was a part of the breathing meditation I was now doing constantly. Every now and then, my eyes were manipulated to look up and see eagles cruising high in the skies. One time, a single eagle scanned the highway in a predatory, determined flight. Another time, two eagles sailed through air, effortlessly, joyfully, flying in parallel, side by side, and then separating for miles to meet again a moment later, as two dancers in love, their stage a limitless blue ocean and wind. If Adam noticed the eagles first, He would lift my eyes to the skyline. Other times, I was the first to notice them, and then He shared my view, until I directed my eyes away, back onto the road, for safety reasons.

In comparison to the smoothness of the eagle's flight, the traffic was unbearably stressful, overpacked with threatening, violating-all-rules-of-conduct loud trucks and fast cars. I stayed in the middle lane, driving at seventy miles per hour. Every single truck driver that passed me had given me a mean grimace. Slug! Mother began losing control, "Stay in the right lane!" "Oh, I can't believe he just cut you off without signaling!" "Oh, not again!" "Oh, drive slower." "Don't change the lane!" "I don't want to see any trucks!" I told her to look at the trees and stay calm, but it never helps. Adam transmitted, ***Just stay in your lane.*** I was repeating the same thing to myself earlier, but this time, the phrase was pronounced in His own distinctive tone. Then slug followed with a fear attack:

My right hand remained in my control, but my left one was being manipulated by slug. It would suddenly turn to the left or to the right, the moment I lost concentration. So I continued to breathe in and out, focusing on not giving slug the control, catching it and stopping my hand from turning the moment it shifted without my intention. slug aimed to cause an accident, or to at least shake my car from right to left a little bit, in order to stress my mom. What about Adam? Why was He allowing slug to continue to bother me?

Two and a half hours later, once we arrived to the hospital, I detected a solid growth on the top of my nose bone in the bathroom's mirror. The growth felt similar in texture to a new bump that had developed on my mother's forehead. Must be more hocus-pocus, I thought. The growth was not on my nose yesterday evening. Similarly, the purple scratches on my forearms appeared the afternoon I finished my suffocating attack on slug, after the police officers left. To remind you, that very night, (the night before) slug came and manifested itself via a sequence of

physical signs, and made me dance a 'chicken dance' on my mom's bed. The next morning, I woke up with a purple rash around my eyelids (This is wrong. I don't remember this. I woke up to *represent*. I looked beautiful, there was nothing on my face. The purple rash was only on my inner arms and it disappeared almost as soon as it appeared.)

I disregarded the bump on my nose. I believed it was yet another artificial trick, a seed of fear that had no real health reason to exist in my otherwise efficient and healthy immune system. I don't go to doctors. I don't get sick. This morning, I also detected a green mold that grew on the inside of my new water bottle. My faith was being challenged from all sides.

In the hospital vestibule, I began writing my journal. Immediately, slug commenced a sequence of distractions, obviously to disrupt my writing progress. Mother attacked with a number of trivial matters, "Look at this lady's hat!" or "Can you review my blood report again?" or "Let's go see what we can buy in the café!" I moved away from her to a computer station at the other end of the hall, using a "dying battery" as my excuse to leave. Every now and then, I looked at those who were present, people passing by, patients and nurses, occasionally doctors in white suits.

At last, a smiling young lady walked out of the door which lead to the offices of receiving practitioners. Enthusiastic and accommodating, the medical assistant offered her sincerest apologies for our long wait. She escorted us to Honey's office, where we waited in the empty room, but not for too long. A nurse came soon enough, to review my mother's medical history before the doctor could see her. It was not the same nurse as the last time. The new lady appeared to be utterly unaware of numerous details of mom's disease, yet knowing them thoroughly was her professional responsibility.

"What medications are you taking?" she asked my mom. I wanted to say that it was unreasonable of her to expect my mother to remember a list of more than twenty pills; that mom's memory could suffer from the negative impact of all the medications she was taking; that as her nurse, she was supposed to know *exactly* what my mother was taking and that she was supposed to remind mom during these visits of the proper sequence of administering all these drugs, that the nurse from last time was more competent, but instead, I only asked where the other nurse was.

"She was removed from your mother's case. I will be taking over from now on."

By this time, mom sorted out her printout of medication, jumped nervously from the examination chair and forced the paper into the nurse's hand. The nurse accepted the paper but never looked at it.

I should have recommended that she review her patients' medications before her appointments. I couldn't believe she didn't know what medications her patients were on. I took the paper away from her and gave it back to mom, as it was her only copy.

The nurse continued, "Is your mother taking anything else besides her medication list?"

"Yes, she is taking propolis. Do you know what it is?"

As most of professionals of industrial oncology, the nurse had no idea of the miraculous benefits of propolis, which is one of the five precious goods that bees produce, the sweet-tasting medicine of mother nature. I love talking about propolis as it is a comfortable opportunity to share my faith. So I explained some of its benefits to the nurse, but I didn't say that the Bible

references honey more than 360 times; that brave Biblical soldiers fed on honey during times of war; that the Bible promises us rivers of honey and milk; that I find it particularly interesting that Creator made His medicine so sweet-tasting; I didn't say all of this for risk of sounding too religious. I might have briefly mentioned that propolis was a sealant that bees produce to seal their beehives from outside viruses, and that it helps my mother to fight the negative effects of chemo, that she takes it in combination with a medical honey, which is a mixture of honey and rare wild herbs, nuts, propolis, royal jelly and bee bread, and that mom also uses propolis candles for detoxification of her digestive track. I don't know if I mentioned that honey is the only element in nature that never spoils, which, to me, is a fascinating. I did write down *propolis* for her on a piece of paper, but she refused to take it. I think, for sure, she wasn't interested.

When the nurse left, I returned to my journal only to be interrupted by mother, "Here are your notes from my report." She handed me her protein level report that I studied the previous night, "Are you going to go over it with the doctor?" I told her no, that I wasn't going to bother Honey with too many questions, that I trust him, that I trust God, that we understood that the test analyses glucose levels to detect cancerous webs. All that I wanted to confirm was that cancer thrives on sugar. But Honey was extremely busy. I didn't want to ask him too many questions, like I were a doctor myself. He might've gotten upset, thinking that we didn't trust his expertise.

Upon hearing my reply, mother opened her mouth and licked it by moving her tongue around it in a circular motion. Though slug did it often via other people in order to creep me out, this was the first time he did this revolting gesture via mom. Then, mother bit her lips and smiled at me creepily. Looking at slug mocking me via my unsuspecting mom brought to my recollection Creator's words from His first transmission, Bcë пaнho/ **All is equal**. Only this time, the phrase seemed to mean **It doesn't matter**. Nothing matters as long as you write. It doesn't matter how many time slug grimaces, mom will be fine, don't be afraid of anything. Considering this, I returned to my journal. Mom quietly settled in her examination chair. As soon as I began to write, I heard slug cussing at me via telepathy in a soft, muffled way.

The doctor entered, happily. Right away I gave him the gift package of honey and maple syrup, plus a card with my hand-written French poem *Comme Bamboo*.

"You must read it to me!" Honey demanded, smiling, overly excited. "You have to read it to me aloud right now! Please!" He sounded positively insistent.

I recited the poem once, after which Honey asked me to do it again, so I did. When I was finished, Honey confessed, "I really like this poem." While reciting the poem, I noticed how every now and then Honey smiled approvingly, appreciating the meaning behind the French words. One might say holy spirit had entered the doctor.

"Why did you write it?" he inquired.

I told him how in France I lived next to an old stone church which inspired me to write the poem. *God is Love and Justice* was engraved on one of its ancient walls, its facade was supported by two lions sculptured into the base of its carrying columns; empty as the church was most of the time, hazed in a melancholy of abandoned wisdom, it stood strong, as if the insult of neglect was as injurious to it as a breeze against its solid stone walls. I told Honey that the poem is called *Like Bamboo*, because bamboo is even stronger than stone. Because it is

flexible. I told him how scaffoldings made out of bamboo withstand hurricanes as opposed to other scaffoldings that break and fall apart. Bamboo symbolizes me, I told Honey, the wind is my enemy, it bends me to the left but I don't break but absorb its force to rebound. Thus, I swing to the left, to the right, I never break and I don't stop moving, I dance with the wind, and once the storm is gone, I return to the center and stand straight and still, as I am a symbol of justice, a woman holding the scales of right and wrong.

"I really like it," the doctor repeated nicely, but made a sluggish grimace.

Our subsequent conversation progressed into mom's health. With a sigh of relief, the doctor remarked that the nasty bump on her forehead had shrunk, had softened in texture, exhibiting a "melting effect." He warned, however, that there still remained an unnatural residual. Honey attributed the shrinkage to a positive response to the chemo treatment. "Praise the Lord!" mom happily exclaimed, while the doctor and I smiled simultaneously.

"How many chemo treatments have you undergone so far?" This was an unexpected lack of knowledge from Honey, whose professionalism I always trusted. Appearing disoriented in front of his computer chart, Honey, in that particular instance, couldn't remember several important details about mom's treatment plan that he had designed and was supervising. Right away, however, he seemed to have forgotten the question he had asked, because without waiting for a reply, he enthusiastically recommenced our conversation, "So you want to go back to France?"

Instead of focusing on mom's health, that costs so much (four hundred dollars per fifteen minutes with a doctor; twenty five thousand for a monthly supply of her chemo pill, this doesn't include chemo treatments), Honey chose to talk to me. I reassured myself, however, that it was just another distraction tactic, designed to create doubt in the competency of mom's doctor. Tomorrow or perhaps right after the end of this appointment, the competent doctor who saved my mom's life, who won against the hardest case of multiple myeloma in his entire career, the Honey I know, will return. To my frustration, the surprising ignorance of the current Honey agitated my anxious mom. I remained calm, however, trusting my Creator.

"Yes, why not? I really love this beautiful country. What about you?"

"Perhaps, or Libya." So he is originally from there, I thought.

"Your poem is very *nice*!" the doctor repeated in an exciting tone.

It's *my* trademark — word *nice*! I instantly recognized His excited intonation from the telepathy, the word was pronounced in such an appealing fashion, while Honey peered directly at me from under dark eyelashes, his lips smiling attractively, too attractively, too pleasantly to stop looking at.

"So the honey is from your place? How big is your farm?" Honey inspected my gift.

What a silly question, I thought, because Honey, the doctor, knows very well that we live in a small apartment.

"We don't have a farm, Honey, of course. The honey is from our local honey store, so is the maple syrup. I love my maple syrup with pancakes in the morning. Organic maple syrup is better than sugar." The doctor smiled again, Adam's smile, Who, as any man, enjoys eating good, healthy food, with me or on His own.

I returned to my journal while Honey scheduled our next appointment. A few seconds later, he spoke to me as though he was an attractive acquaintance I randomly met on a beach, “What are you doing this summer?”

“Why are you asking her this, doctor?” mother interfered.

The doctor granted her no reply. Instead, he continued to look at me, waiting for a response. Over the doctor’s back, I was able to see mother in her examining chair. slug was in control, for she was staring at her own veins stupidly while licking her lips. If I had to guess what she was trying to say, it would be *I want to shoot some heroine*. Slug crossed all standards of reasonableness! Mom had never used any drugs! She hardly ever drinks, especially not now.

I wasn’t shocked, neither did I laugh. I simply studied her grimace, the left side of her bottom lip dropped down half an inch lower than the other. Her wide open eyes pointed to her blue forearm veins. The doctor was saying something to me, smiling, distracting me from my real purpose of coming here, which was to ask him, *What specific benefits will further chemo provide?*

The instance, my two telepathic comrades realized that I wasn’t afraid, Adam transmitted **Ha! Ha! Ha!**, the doctor smiled attractively, and slugmom stuck her tongue out at me! Yes, she did!

“Thank you for reading me your poem,” the doctor said. I smiled, simultaneously feeling slug scratching my teeth, grinding them, like an angry dog.

It was over, and the doctor escorted us towards the reception area where mom stayed to wait for a printout of her blood report. Meanwhile, I went to the bathroom. The mirror brought in sight the strange solid bump on my nose I discovered earlier, reminding me of the purple rash under my eyes (wrong!) and the purple scratches on my forearms that I developed shortly after my suffocating attack on slug. Otherwise, I looked slim and healthy. As usual, I felt shy looking in the mirror because Adam was inside, looking at me through my own eyes. **Nice. Nice. Nice.**

Twenty minutes of writing my journal at the computer station passed, before I went back to check on mom who still stood in front of the reception desk, waiting for her paperwork. The new scheduling lady didn’t even start working on her request yet! I realized that slug, again, was employing the waste-my-time technique; he was interested in delaying me at the hospital. While I was there, I couldn’t write in the calm of my own apartment.

Hardly controlling my emotions, I confronted the scheduling lady, “We are in a very big rush.” Mom moved closer and stood directly next to me, shaking her head up and down in agreement. Both of us looked reproachfully at the scheduling lady.

“How could you be working on something else, when my mom gave you her request for an updated schedule more than twenty minutes ago?”

“I don’t know how to schedule yet. I will try to do it right away.”

I kept looking at her, lost for words. To her right, two employees, a young Indian male and a young female with long curly hair, gazed diligently at their respective computer screens. The former noticed there was a problem right next to him, a *customer-service* problem, as evidenced by his curious glances at us. We waited some more but our scheduling lady brought nothing but new frustrations. “Excuse me,” she said, “my computer is running extremely slow and I also have to check how to schedule your lab in our alternative system. I have never done it before.” I asked her why couldn’t she ask somebody for help, but she was so preoccupied with the difficulties of

her task, she failed to notice my suggestion. Then, hardly concealing my animosity, I turned my head away from her and looked at the Indian male, who, by then, granted this *customer-service* scene his undivided attention. Still, he did nothing else. His unprofessionalism further frustrated me, for why was he only staring, without doing anything? Everybody seemed to be against me getting out of this hospital as soon as possible. I left the poor scheduling lady to her challenges and confronted this curious Indian man:

“Excellent *customer service* is the number one priority in *any* organization. As you can see, your co-worker is struggling on a *real* task with a *real* client who is in an extreme rush. You seem to have overheard our conversation as I saw you looking at us. The lady here is scheduling for her first time using your new system. Please tell me why you cannot switch from your current task to take care of the *real* customer, which should be your first priority as an employee of this hospital? You can bring your intern along and make it a real experience.”

“Actually, it is me who is doing the training,” the female spoke, then got up and went to the back room, leaving the Indian intern blinking at me in apprehension. Naturally, I was under the impression that she left to get help, but she returned a moment later and ignoring my obvious expectancy to be addressed, sat back in her chair and faked a busy air, gazing at her computer screen. Before I could decide how to deal with her obnoxious attitude, the scheduling lady exclaimed innocently, “I am almost there!”

I felt compassion for her; for however incompetent or poorly-trained she might have been, she was sincerely trying to fix the situation, all while mom stared at her — frustrated, tired, ready-to-bounce, seemingly unaware that her pushy composure was only making the scheduling lady more nervous, uncomfortable and therefore even slower. Then, I remembered that slug works inside *real* people and the prior instances I may have failed to deal with situations smartly, losing self-control and issuing insults, which must have rendered slug happy but real people angry and hurt.

“I just need to reschedule your three last appointments. I wrongly entered them into our internal system. Let me see here...” The lady hesitantly clicked on her mouse and typed. Gathering all my patience, I sent her a smile and simultaneously mentally insulted slug.

Then, as a dark cloud in otherwise brightening skies, our scene was intruded by an ominous entrance of a superior. Bright red lipstick, jet black hair, face thickly plastered with white foundation, the very tall woman walked out of the back room and paused behind the scheduling lady who, right away, began to look considerably more nervous. The superior’s imposing posture, her provocative makeup, her slick black hair firmly tightened in a high ponytail and the shiny leather pants glued to the extra long legs projected no confidence in her ability to expedite the situation in any way. She looked more like a hooker than a professional healthcare provider. Towering over the poor scheduling lady, the superior gave neither advice nor encouragement, but made her inferior feel so nervous, the poor lady resumed a senseless chitchat with my mom as some sort of a copying strategy. The chitchat, however, only further hindered her progress, for mom, thirty minutes in the waiting line, was in no mood for pleasantries.

“Please let us not be distracted now,” I said nicely to stop her chitchat. It looked like she was trying to do her best. “I understand this is your first time. Now, you will know how to do it,”

I smiled at her kindly as I could, fighting my internal frustrations. In my mind, slug had transferred from the scheduling lady into her female supervisor, who, breaching all standards of personal space, now wheezed directly into her subordinate's ear. Then, the large, bright red, moist mouth began to move, her voice sounded, in a deep low tone of a man. I realized then that she showed up at the exact moment I called slug *pussy* in telepathy. She looked so vulgar, so inappropriate for a hospital, I wondered whether a lonely existence has caused her to dress so provocatively. Right then, the woman made a viperous sarcastic grin, and I knew it was slug. So mean was her fake grimace, she appeared she could burst out any moment in a loud, uncontrollable evil laugh. She provoked more verses about the stupidity of slug's personality. One verse ran similar to this:

*Slug, ~~He~~ is so slow!
So out of control!
Only barks and moos!
Sticks his tongue and poops!*

Slug always responded to any successful verses with a wave of outrageous bad words while Adams laughed so hard I couldn't hide the smile. (It is slug, to remind you, my dear reader, who keeps putting his name in capitals. I do remove *many* of its other alterations for the sake of clarity.) This time as well, it required a great amount of self-control to keep my lips tight. Few days had gone by without mom saying, "What are you smiling about?" or "Oh, I am so tired of your stupid smile" or the intimidating one, "Do you want to go to the hospital again?" When she did catch me, I usually lied that I recalled an anecdote or that I composed a new line for *Pink Planet*.

The supervisor's whispered suggestions served no purpose, besides causing her poor subordinate to sweat, her fingers to hit the wrong keys. At last, the schedule for the next three weeks of chemo therapy was handed to my mother. Instead of giving the poor scheduling lady the face of an unsatisfied customer, I paid extra attention to part ways on friendly terms. Sometimes it is better to close ones' eyes on inefficiencies for the sake of love, especially if you know a situation could be manipulated by slug.

I was on my way towards the exit when a reward for my forgiving attitude came promptly in a rainbow of beautiful smiles darted at me from the Welcome Table. Bathed in those smiles, I felt like I had just received another checkmark, this time for defeating the witchy supervisor while remaining polite. The checkmark was much smaller, yet similar to the one I saw one afternoon Fuse told me to look at the skies. I smiled back at the waving strangers. Strangers, yes..., yet my sisters and brothers in Christ... It was hard to ignore the holy spirit burning wildly inside and illuminating the words once read in a christian publication: you fail only when you fail to mention your faith. "God bless you, God bless you! Have a nice day!" I did it. I forced my new farewell out. The four waving receptionists, however, seemed oblivious of my internal hesitancy when referencing God or of the significance behind my words. I really wanted God to bless them. They continued to smile and wave widely, enthusiastically, their shining eyes searching mine, heads turning to see me through the exit. Like four lovely robots controlled by a holy spirit, they didn't stop waving and smiling and only returned to their computer screens after the automatic door shut me out of their sight. *The game of Hide and Seek continues.*

His Presence came with constant pressure to share my faith. Every person was an opportunity, a soul He wanted to be reunited with. Every unspoken word was a failure therefore. The knowledge that He was real, that He wanted so much to be a part of your life, and the memories of my own, past atheistic existence encouraged me to include God Bless You! in my farewell. Naively I thought that somehow simply hearing God Bless You! would stir a small change in you. I tried to place a meaningful emphasis on the word *God*, hoping to catch you off guard, make you later reconsider the matter and think, *Did that girl say God to me? Does He exist? And if Yes, Who is the Creator?* I was fortunate to receive personal evidence. By contrast, mom believed blindly, no evidence was needed in her case. She simply believed that Jesus saved her life. How could I possibly convince somebody to believe in Him? By saying God Bless You! Did you sneeze?

Belief and knowledge are contradictory. The earth is a chain, a theory of relativity, everything is connected. But! There is only one truth. I have a book in my library by a christian pastor who claims that a big testimony is coming, which will convince everybody that Jesus is real, once and for all. This is my testimony.

During our drive back from the hospital, mother suggested we stop by a cherry farm. For me, it meant learning a new route. Taking a new road is always stressful, especially when mom takes on the role of a navigator, and she always does. Likely, the alternative parkway route had a major benefit — no trucks! Mom felt happy about it. I tried to maintain a stable limit of sixty-five miles per hour, according to the navigator's instruction, while the telepathy continued, ever subtly, intervened by long periods of silence; it was a developing phenomenon. To help concentration, I simultaneously practiced breathing meditation, gently roaring a French Rrrrrrrr with my throat with every exhale. Every now and then, Adam transmitted **Listen!** in an exciting tone as if to prepare me for the words slug was about to transmit, already making fun of him, of his brutality, of how it was only an angry dog on a leash. Despite a few unintentional smiles I failed to conceal, my behavior appeared acceptable to mom who stayed calm most of the way.

I felt that the purpose of telepathy was for me to understand the difference in nature between slug and Adam. As before, slug continued to intimidate me via other drivers as I drove. They changed lanes without signaling or beeped at me for no reason. (In Europe, beeping is allowed *only* in case of an immediate danger.) They followed too close. They were so angry. Why, when the official safe distance to follow is five hundred meters between two cars moving at seventy miles per hour?

Despite mom's objection, I increased our speed, passed hastily several cars and drove unsteadily into several turns, emotions were overcoming reason. Adam transmitted to slow down just in time. I heard **Brake now!** a second before going into a sharp turn under a bridge where the road unexpectedly narrowed, leaving hardly enough space for two cars to drive side-by-side. It would've been my fifth, *almost* accident driving. It would have been. My sudden switching of lanes had unnerved mother, so for the remainder of the trip, I had reduced my speed to sixty miles per hour and stayed in the right lane.

An hour later, we entered the valley, but as I was searching for our exit, a van went around me, blocking my view of all the exit signs. I quickly accelerated just enough to get ahead of the van and was able to briefly catch view of the sign previously hidden by it. It was my sign, directing me to turn sharp left for the cherry farm *now*. *Thank you, Adam*, I transmitted. At least I saw the sign. But it was too late to exit — the van, driving parallel to me, was physically blocking my way. I pulled over at the nearest opportunity and considered my options. The simplest one was to do an illegal U-turn which would put me straight into the cherry farm lane.

As I was about to make the U-turn, mom's phone rang. She answered it right away and screamed crazily, "It is from the office! It is for you!" pushing the phone into my face. I thought she meant the office of the hotel, asking me to work. That the call could have been from Honey's office didn't register as equally likely. Subconsciously, I was searching for work, work meant money, money meant security.

Cars were going back and forth into both directions. "Ask who is calling. Tell them I am driving. Tell them I will call back." But mother, appearing all stressed out, kept shoving the phone in my face. My foot stepped on the gas the moment Adam transmitted ***Wait Wait Wait***. I slammed on the brakes as a car sped by. It would have hit me otherwise. The sudden jerk of the car helped mom realize the danger she was putting us in. She quietly hung up.

"Who was calling?" I demanded angrily, once I made it onto the cherry farm road.

"I don't know," she replied stupidly.

"Who just called?"

No reply.

"Didn't you ask who was calling?"

But mother just blinked several times at me with eyes wide open. She looked so dumb, because slug, inside of her, had just failed to cause another accident.

"I don't know who that was," slug offered dully, gazing in awe at me and blinking her eyes dramatically. Such a sloppy reply meant that slug was out of clever retorts; he was disoriented, caught by surprise by my direct confrontation. It was obviously him that caused whoever was on the phone to call the moment I was about to make the U-turn. The same slug shoved the phone in my face to obscure my view of the passing traffic. The loser failed however and to rub my victory in his face, I threw at him more funny verses.

*Slug is so slow,
So afraid of UFO
Of flying into space
Without food, for days.
Slug! Slug! Slug!
Don't eat! Get smart!
Blow a parachute
And fly away. Boo!*

At the cherry farm, before we even had a chance to inquire about cherries, the enthusiastic owner offered to take me through his large variety of wild flower honey. A jar of raw honey, placed in the middle of the counter, with a price tag of twenty-eight dollars, caught

my attention. As I mentioned, Adam constantly uses my birthday number to remind me that I am selected. When I check the time without my own intention, either in my car, on my cell phone or on my desktop, the minutes hit exactly twenty-eight. Sometimes, even seconds match. Teased by the twenty-eight dollar price tag, I considered buying the jar, yet the price seemed too expensive for the actual amount of honey it contained. Paying premium for a smaller jar, especially when we were low on cash, the cash that was supposed to pay for the cherries, seemed like a stupid thing to do, and out of the three of us, the stupid one was slug. I saved my money for the cherries.

An activity as peaceful and pleasant as picking fresh, juicy cherries diminished the aftertaste of our stressful ride. I tried to forget slug acting out via her earlier. She seemed to have forgotten my aggravated retorts. My mood was also rising from seeing my mom so peaceful, finally united with the burgundy cherries that she had been yearning to pick for the past two weeks. Amongst the cherry trees, Adam transmitted that He wanted to be a normal man for me. His plan for us was to be a normal couple, despite the fact that He is Who He is, and I am a real woman. Am I? Because I began to consider that Creator may have equipped me with a unique combination of His Spirits, such as a spirit of Competition, Perfection, Knowledge, Kindness and Beauty. I told Adam that I can treat Him as a normal man, no problem, that I understand the duality of His nature. I was amongst the cherry trees when Adam clearly transmitted, ***I am a practical man.***

As I drove the car from the farm to our apartment, slug cussed intermittently. Adam often transmitted ***Listen!*** in His excited tone, as a warning that slug was about to say something stupid. I cited more spontaneous verses about slug to Adam and wondered if Creator was reading my mind as well. In fact, I began to doubt my own creativity. How could I be sure that it wasn't Creator who was creating the verses my mind was making up?

In the parking lot, while unpacking the car, I discovered the jean shorts I was searching for this morning. slugmom must have hidden them in the trunk! I left the jean shorts where they were, curious to see if and when mother would get them. Wouldn't she be surprised to find them in the trunk? Once inside the apartment, I went to the bedroom to record the day's events in my journal.

"Please don't distract me right now!" I addressed my mom who came in, looking for my dress. I don't know why she always wants to organize my clothes and advise me on what to wear in this boring village. Our neighbor took her parking spot, although others were available, so mother complained about it, like she was entitled to that particular parking spot located directly in front of her bedroom window. It was our neighbor who took her spot, the one who always wore black. Quickly, I chased mom away and returned to my journal. It was six o'clock. Adam transmitted ***Good Job!***, meaning it was good that I chased my mother away in order to write. A little bit later, mother asked me to cut tomatoes, but I refused and kept writing. After some time, I heard "Food is ready!"

"But mom, I am not hungry!" I went to take a shower instead. I was undressed, about to step behind the shower curtain, when mother entered. Without knocking, it was an unwelcome

surprise. She handed me a phone even though I was already behind the shower curtain, moving towards the running stream of water.

“Not now! Who is calling?”

I automatically assumed the call must have been work-related, as I did earlier with the phone call in the car. I instantly felt anxious. Should I say yes to more hours? It meant less writing. Doubts entered, followed by insecurities; slug was employing the old tactic again. The dead end job led nowhere, but I feared losing money. There were inaudible whispers or rather strong thoughts — *Perhaps it is the boss. Don't you need to work to make cash? Answer the phone right now* — that urged me to reply.

I answered the phone inside the shower.

“Hello! Is this Sonya?”

“Who is asking please?”

“NYC Ballet!”

Ha! I instantly hung up. For your information, dear reader, I took ballet classes locally in the fall of 2013, during my second spiritual episode. I wanted to dance for my Creator, so excited I felt following the introduction of the secret sign. I also signed up for special promotions so I could enjoy the performances of true professionals at huge discounts. But I hung up, feeling like wasting no hot water on this untimely marketing call. I couldn't believe that the bad timing (twice) was a simple coincidence. Ballet never called me before. Mother came in, without knocking, aggressively. Why did she appear unreasonably stressed out, as if some president was waiting on the other end of the line? What else could justify her running into the bathroom and physically shoving the phone in my wet hands? I felt an urge to express my frustration against such a rude invasion of my private space, but I controlled myself and kept my voice low. I knew that slug was trying to pick a fight. All day he was trying to pick a fight with me.

After showering, I guiltily conceded to eating a light dinner, though I knew fasting would be more beneficial. I just couldn't say no to a fresh salad of kale, avocados, onions, raisins and almonds, accompanied by a small bowl of canned black olives (very salty; I don't eat them anymore). I blessed our food, even though I didn't like praying aloud. My reluctance was due to an apparent impracticality of praying publicly in a familiar setting. Mom wasn't atheist. She didn't need to hear that God exists. Besides, God already knew I appreciated His food. Why did I need to announce my feelings aloud, waste time on speaking while my food was getting cold? My official personal food prayer with Adams by this time was narrowed down to me happily transmitting *Bonne appetite!* and Him responding either via the secret sign or by transmitting ***Bonne Appetite!*** Often, He transmitted ***Bonne Appetite!*** before I did. But for my mom, I prayed more elaborately:

“God, please bless our food with all its vitamins. Improve my mom's health. Please forgive us for not buying organic all the time. I know I shouldn't be asking you to artificially clean our nonorganic food. It's like asking for a miracle. In the name of Jesus, Your Son, I pray. Amen.”

I hoped my specific prayer could motivate mom to buy organic. Mom herself said that positive thinking, combined with faith, produces good results. I felt that if I did ask God to purify my nonorganic food via a miracle, He would be more likely to do so than if I wouldn't have asked. Of course, it was still asking for a favor. As consumers, we must demand health by

shopping smartly. Similarly, the author of the Honey book urges us to stop asking God for health while overflowing our systems with drugs, antibiotics and fast food.

Adam had asked me to be more polite with my mom. In fact, I asked Him if I should and He confirmed via the secret sign. He even called her *mommy* via me over the dinner. He quietly pronounced, “*Mommy*, do you want more salad?” Then, He transmitted **Good Job!**, like it was my own intention to call my mom *mommy*! I never call my mom *mommy*. I must admit that during this episode, I temporarily sacrificed my responsibilities of a good daughter for the sake of writing. I stopped making meals, cut empty talks, disregarded the importance of maintaining an image of well-being, yet mom, while going through chemo, stuck through it all; she was my chef, my cleaner, my accountant, my laundromat. I only took breaks for household chores if my mind needed a break from writing. On top of that, slug was trying to set her against me. The Bible says that He came here with a sword, to set up a mother against a father, a brother against a sister, etc. This is exactly what was happening to me.

Adam came, slug followed. It’s hard to believe it. I am waiting to meet an attractive man with blue eyes and curly dark hair, a dark beard, who speaks Russian and other languages. He is preparing for me. He knows every moment of my life. He has always been there: taking pictures of me as my daddy, taking pictures of me via that street photographer who would stop by my playground every now and then, always asking politely, “Can I take a picture of you?” He was the one who formed a heart shape with my hands in my dad’s favorite photo. Now I know it, because recently He made me take a business card for a local massage therapist. The card was pinned onto the wall of a local farm stand and featured two male hands forming a heart exactly as I did in my photo. He wrote poetry to me via a famous Russian poetess, Marina Tsvetaeva, who is ‘coincidentally’ my mom’s favorite poet. He made me read her poems during my second episode. I highlighted the parts that relate to me and plan to elaborate on them in my second novel.

I ate my dinner slowly, enjoying every flavor. Adam ate with me and He also had a good appetite. Instead of chatting with mom, I encouraged silence so I could summarize the highlights of the day:

1. This afternoon, outside, at our parking lot, I saw a great, white eagle, resting on a tree. Kenny, our nice neighbor, called us out to come see the predator. The eagle rested on the highest branch of a struggling parking lot tree, which was very short, dry, and possibly dying. For some reason, the tree’s roots never welcomed the ground, even though the same type of the tree was thriving at the other end of the lot. The eagle chose, however, the lamest tree, and sat there motionlessly. So close we were to him that Kenny remarked it was very rare for eagles to approach humans that close. The bird rested no more than ten feet away from us. I saw its unblinking eyes, its motionless facial features, as if in expectation. I naturally interpreted the spectacle as a positive sign from Adam. Eagles are often used to represent God.

2. The unexplained bump on my nose had already reduced in size. I chose to attribute the short-lived nuance to slug, and not to worry about any complications. slug failed to induce fear in me, Creator took the bump away.

3. My favorite highlight of the day was Adam transmitting at the farm that He was a practical man.

4. slug got really pissed off when I successfully navigated back home via alternative routes, despite his several attempts to cause an accident and alter directions. When I finally parked the car outside the apartment, slug cussed severely — loser!

5. This afternoon I also received an email that disappeared. I was working on the journal when a notification about a new email came. From a quick glance at its title, it looked like the boss's reply to my request for payment. I postponed checking the email until I finished my journal, but the email had disappeared by then.

Later on, I found myself thinking about the twenty-eight dollar honey jar. I was no longer sure if honey was good for my mom. The increasing frequency of the number 28 was still a developing phenomenon for me, that has not yet achieved a certain level of annoyance to render it ineffective. It was easy to see then the 28 dollar jar as a sign that mom must continue taking medical propolis in order to fight the negative effects of chemo. Her oncologist wasn't called Honey coincidentally... What made me doubt, however, the benefits of honey was Mister Grosshead's passionate email about the danger of taking honey by cancer patients. I tried to explain to Grosshead, who is well read on natural medicine, that mom's honey wasn't sugar that feeds cancer, but he replied, "Honey is sweet! How *dare* that honey woman recommend it to your mother?" He emailed me an inconclusive article about the dangers of honey, as if in compliance with some sluggish intent to undermine my faith in honey, particularly in propolis, and in the general ability of Creator to heal my mother through natural medicine. I never read the article he sent. I felt too convinced his information was manipulated by slug.

The author of my honey book, by contrast, *owned* a graduate degree in chemistry and *had* professional experience in the American pharmaceutical industry as a lab chemist. Then, she switched to producing bee products. In her book, she mentioned that God constantly challenged her faith via her patients and her own sudden maladies, but she always stayed loyal to propolis, as His ultimate medicine. For example, long after her bee medicine reached commercial success, God sent her a threatening infection — not the first and probably not the last she said. Like always, the author stayed loyal to propolis and eventually destroyed the virus. One translation of the Bible had completely erased the word *honey*, this author claims; other translations of the Bible mention *honey* more than 360 times. Pharmaceutical companies have conspired to keep the benefits of bees away from a perpetually-sick consumer of synthetic drugs, pills and antibiotics.

After studying the business cycle of a pharmaceutical company as a part of my MBA program, I couldn't agree with the honey author more. On average, ten years and a large amount of money is spent on product research and development. Once a new drug is developed, a patent grants a pharmaceutical company an exclusive long-term selling green light, before generic versions of a new drug can hit the market. For the drug company, this is the time to recuperate their initial investment and reap *tremendous* profits. Often, the negative side effects found during the selling cycle of the new drug are hidden from consumers. Big Pharma is hungry. It has no moral values. It uses the side effects of new, undeveloped drugs, as an opportunity to create new, harmful antibiotics that only suppress the symptoms, never killing the reason of the disease. They insulate you into a vicious cycle of sickness. Gradually and surely, the slave of antibiotics enters into a never-ending cycle of disease. The liver gives up, hands start shaking, brain accumulates water, and the light goes out; gradually, so they can milk you.

No antibiotic can destroy the original reason of a malady completely. Only efficient immune systems can. Antibiotics can only temporarily mask the signs of disease. The virus hides, mutates and after some time presents itself again. A human becomes sicker and requires a stronger antibiotic, since a mutated virus had developed a resistance to the old drug. The only way to stay really healthy is to maintain an active immune system via natural medicine, sport, healthy diet, no stress, and fresh air.

Another shocking lie, the honey author claims, is that honey is dangerous for babies. She writes that long time ago, the death of two babies was falsely attributed to honey poisoning. Since then, all honey had been issued with an outrageous, in her opinion, warning: *Prohibited to children under the age of two*. Yet, the first *five* years of life are the most important in human development! By depriving our babies of honey that they should be consuming with their mother's milk, we deprive their developing immune systems of essential building blocks! The immune system, perfectly designed by Creator to fight any natural bacteria or virus, is given no real chance to properly develop itself! An already weakened child becomes even sicker through pills, antibiotics and unnecessary vaccination, and before he has a chance to grasp all the secrets of happiness, the child falls victim to obesity, diabetes, cancer, depression and other byproducts of pharmaceutical giants.

Mom remembers how long time ago babies used to suck on honey-induced pacifiers. Unfortunately pacifiers induced with real raw honey are no longer commercially available anywhere. I didn't suck on one, but at least I had never taken any pills or antibiotics while growing up. Propolis I also don't take regularly, only if I feel few symptoms, which almost never happens. I further believe it is counterproductive to provide *extra* support via vitamins to an already efficient immune system. My vitamins are in my food. But I am happy propolis helps mom. Bees fascinate me. A bee, if separated from other bees, dies from loneliness after only one day. It can't live without others. A bee also dies after releasing a sting, which is very beneficial for humans; amazingly, this tiny, hard-working creature even helps us in its parting moment.

Analyzing the hospital's scene today (the one with the witchy female supervisor, the two useless employees — the Indian intern and his trainer, plus the inexperienced scheduling lady), I realized that slug is one. he doesn't have 'demons,' 'bad spirits,' 'slug soldiers' to help him. It is only him, in every person. slug, similar to Adam, can manipulate several humans simultaneously. For example, on the evening of June 19_slugs at Work, I was convinced slugs were everywhere. Wrong! Indeed, there was only **Plus** and *minus* playing me. Why was I presently so sure that slug was the only one, the ultimate negative force concealed in one entity? Because when I mocked slug, Creator and Adam laughed, but slug got angry. Everybody made fun of slug! If slug *did* have an army of demons, then, they would have heard all my mockery and jokes about their stupid leader and would have abandoned him. The ultimate slug would have felt embarrassed, so embarrassed, in fact, it would have made better sense for him to leave me for the sake of his reputation. But slug remained. Here is another verse about slug:

*My army of soldiers! Please come to me!
I am scared inside Sonya. Oh please, save me!*

*I don't have no brains. Can't breathe over here!
Oh Demons, please hurry! Allez! Rescue me!*

So, if slug doesn't have an army of demons, do angels exist? Adam can enter all people. God and Adam can experience many different life forms. There is only one Creator, His Love Messenger and minus.

Creator told me They thought I would be more afraid. I impressed them. *Hey slug! was it Adam who peeked at me in the shower via my mom or was it you? Was it Him, the ballet? Stop barking, slug!*

It was 21:51. Mom was already sleeping next to me. I was writing down the phrases from telepathy, carefully, under the blanket, so the phone light couldn't wake mom up. In my mind, I heard two voices — Adam's and slug's. To clarify, Adam's lines are presented in ***bold & italic***, my — in *Italic only*, and slug's — *like this*.

***This is a revelation.
Everybody will be saved.***

No!

Do you think I care at this point, Nov 5_2015_1709, that you are still editing my files? Ha! The bartender just barked and called his friend an 'old dog!'

I love you. (Adam.) Write this down.

Everybody will be saved?

Everybody, raising my torso to write this down.

slug from the background — *сyкa! сyкa!*

Cleanse yourself!

I will cleanse her. (Adam.)

I love. Adam was crying.

Katya, I love only you, more than anybody else.

Fight is only on earth.

Katya. (Adam.)

I love you more than anybody else on earth.

The strong-willed will not give up. We love them, but most of all we love the kind.

Put your arms around me. This felt unnecessary in retrospect — I am not a hugger.

The more important the revelation, the harder it was for Adam to transmit the message because slug was breaching the connection with bad thoughts. The above triologue took approximately twenty minutes to transmit and this was with the help of breathing meditation to fight slug's interferences.

For the next half an hour, I laid silently in bed considering everything that was just transmitted. When I finished my mental summary, Adam transmitted,

Everything is correct.

До свидания... (which means *until our date*, literally, in Russian.)

(Soon.)

Original (*but translated*) Phone Entry of Revelation #1

closed eyes. focused.

two voices adam and evil.

a-this is revelation

everybody will be saved.

devil-no

iloveyou.adam(write this down)

everybody will be saved? everybody. (raising my torso to write it down)

devil in the background- *сукася*.

~~katya. children?~~ yes

~~how many?~~ a lot

cleanse yourself. - devil

i will cleanse- Adam

ilove(adamiscrying)

kpatya.iloveonlyyoumorethananybody

fightisonlyonearth

katyaadam.

iloveyou.morethananybodyonearth

stongwilledwontgiveup. Welovethembutwelovethemostthekind

hugme

(themoreadamwanttosaysmthimothethehardereciltriestobreachintocommunicationwithhisnastythoughts)

Adamsays- allisright

Seeyoulater...

(a-soon)

10. June 24 Wednesday_Home All Day_Stand by Window_ Transmission # 3 _ *Terribly want children!*

This day was confusing; gradually I was influenced to believe that my task was to identify and destroy all fears that ever existed. Adam was saying all day — good job! — to show me that I was succeeding at my task. In general terms, my state of mind was in the receiving and reacting mode. Mom would keep changing roles throughout the day, playing for either slug or Adam, without awareness.

After last night's revelation, I assumed slug would leave me alone. Wrong. A bird, chirping obnoxiously right next to my slightly open bedroom window, woke me up at 04:30. Unable to fall asleep again, I wondered if I should take sleeping pills. The secret sign confirmed three times, and in a state of mind not fully alert yet, I sleepily swallowed the bait. I took four pills, the maximum dosage allowed, and as the result, felt drowsy all day and was unable to write.

I woke up again around ten o'clock from the noise of the coffee grinder and instantly felt aggravated. Apparently, my request for tea was being disregarded, yet I clearly told my mom last evening that I would like to have tea in the morning. Still in bed, I saw a new email from Mr. Grosshead — Please no honey for mom he repeated. Obviously, it was slug again, trying to undermine my faith in propolis, and fear that mom could lose her fight against cancer spread a chilling frost around my heart.

This day couldn't wait to begin to swirl me into interesting incidents. At breakfast, mom prayed aloud... We had never prayed at breakfast, only at dinner, and even then, both of us felt uncomfortable praying aloud, preferring a silent, personal prayer as of late. I no longer recall the exact wording of her prayer, but it made me fear God, as if Jesus didn't decide anything, as if everything was up to God, Who was *very* judgmental.

Each night before going to sleep, I used to imagine what I would have for breakfast in detail. It gave me pleasure to think of smoked salmon on toast, a soft-boiled egg and sweet-smelling herbal tea as an accompaniment, or else, a blueberry pancake with a piece of dark chocolate and a freshly brewed very hot coffee. The night before, I imagined a slice of fresh mozzarella (recently purchased at the farm) on top of a thick tomato slice, seasoned with fresh pepper and chopped basil. slug ruined the pleasure via mother who ate the entire mozzarella while I was sleeping! She said it was delicious...

She joined me for breakfast for a second time. For her, this time it was organic kasha, and for me, a freshly brewed *coffee* with a piece of very dark chocolate, hardly sweetened at all. Often during this episode slug used my love of coffee as a source of guilt; often he tried to make me feel unworthy of Creator. But he really surprised me when I asked my mother for a coffee refill, and she poured half of the remaining coffee into her kasha. slug quickly manipulated her physical motions; mom just stared at her diluted kasha helplessly, after she did it.

Mom was argumentative all day. At breakfast, right away we argued about honey and bees. *Evil bees*, my journal notes. She also mentioned something about pure consciousness. "Your thoughts don't let you sleep," she said, which wasn't true. According to my notes, I fell asleep very fast last night. When it became obvious that mother's train of thought was being manipulated, I grabbed my phone and discreetly turned on the recorder. slug got quiet then!

Ha! Adam transmitted **Excellent!** Slug transmitted bad words, plus *Recording everything*.

“These cellphones...” mom said with reproach and looked at my phone. This reminds me how during these days, I must have always had my phone around me, updating my daily observations; so often, in fact, mother got annoyed. Due to her unnatural high-pitched irritation placed on “These cellphones...,” I felt as if slug was subtly suggesting that I stop writing, that it was useless to write.

I don’t know where the voice recording of our conversation is. I can’t find it, but it must have existed once, for upon it, I must have based my recollections; as if I listened to it and used it to draft this portion of the chapter.

What I definitely remember was is following: I slipped the phone closer to mom, and pressed *record*. The battery, I seem to remember, went dead during the process — I remember feeling frustrated upon discovering that the recording didn’t work. At the same time, I seem to remember listening to the recording.

“What were you saying about America, mom?”

“I don’t know. I forgot what I was talking about,” mother said, looking straight into her kasha diluted with what was supposed to be my coffee refill, playing mindlessly with her spoon. (Yes, I ended up drinking coffee this time. It was already made. I couldn’t resist it; it smelled so good.) This was the point in the conversation where I turned the recorder on and moved my phone closer to her on the table, which disoriented slug.

I reminded her how she just said that it was better to die than to eat organic. And how this country fed the rest of the world with artificial chickens. She said that everybody should be grateful to this country for feeding them. Did she mean — for sickening them with artificial food and then pretending to heal them with commercial pills?

“I don’t know,” she said, confirming slug’s stupidity. After a pause, mother, to my great astonishment, for her interests rested exclusively in practical matters, began to philosophize. Her next sentence raised my eyebrows, “It is human nature to strive for perfection and to improve the world that God has created. *That’s all*.” Adam said it; He clearly hinted at the fact that it was Him it by choosing the expression *That’s all* I commonly used in my speech.

Mother continued, “The very same God has created this *creation*.” This sounded truly mysterious. What creation was she talking about? Without a slightest provocation on my part, she was philosophizing on her own. Did mother mean slug? The phrase dropped into our conversation out of nowhere. Quickly, I realized that the answer to my question came — *God must have created slug*. But immediately I doubted it: *Or did slug always exist?* I didn’t like her tricky statement. She suggested that God was somehow at fault because slug exists.

I felt inclined to hear more on the mysteries of the creation process, but mother spontaneously switched the topic: “When will these bruises go away? Maybe you will put some cream on them?” This time, slug chose to invoke *anxiety* in me. I worried that mom worried; stress wasn’t good for her. Only last Saturday she caught me on the bathroom floor as I tried to suffocate slug by prolonging my own breathing.

By now I learned to read between the lines. It was a matter of paying attention to sign language, body language, facial expressions, intonations and the meaning of the words under

the current circumstances in any particular conversation. One example of slug's sign language was touching a nose in the middle of a sentence; such an awkward mannerism not only distracted from the point but made me feel like an unsure speaker, always searching for words. How did this game work? For slug, the goal was to scare me to the point of losing my faith; for Adam — to teach me; for me — to outsmart slug with sharp retorts.

"You should see Raya's bruise! It is bigger than mine," I went along with slug's destruction of mom's philosophical pursuit.

In reply, mother laughed awkwardly, "Why do I need Raya if I have you?" And then again, "Why don't you put some cream on it?" in an exaggerated tone of worry, "It will go away faster."

"I like this bruise."

"Oh yea?! *Really?!?*" Real mom never talks like this. She added, "You tell me also, you like those under your eyes and on your forearms?" Her voice was full of criticism and sarcasm.

At the end of breakfast, mother surprised me with another prayer. In a meek, barely-audible voice, she almost whispered, "Thank you for breakfast," and then added, "Mmm" in a satisfying foreign tone, as though it was Adam who interposed — *Sure, no problem.*

As mentioned, mom had never prayed at breakfast aloud before. She definitely never prayed aloud at breakfast twice. Also, mom never says *Mmm*. *Mmm* was pronounced in a victorious, satisfied tone. It meant that I won; slug lost our mental battle and was forced to pray.

"I have to work on either Wednesday or Thursday. What about you? Are you coming to work? Did the boss call you?" Here we go again; she was pushing me to go to work.

Irritated by the traces of fear in mom's voice, I grunted "I am on vacation now. VACATION." Mom, having lived the majority of her life at the poverty level, considered my minimum wage job, with no real opportunity for advancement, in the middle of nowhere, a miracle one must cherish and be forever grateful for. But since God transmitted **Write**, I had been considering committing a hundred percent of my time to writing, which would require quitting my job. It was clear that Creator wanted my full commitment, yet slug instilled doubts regarding the consideration via mom's anxious attitude toward my growing desire to quit.

"Well, your vacation.... As your brother says.... you are taking a vacation from your vacation?" And then, softly, darkly, with her chin tucked deep into her shoulder, with no eye contact, mother muffled, "*I really hope I won't remember it.*"

It was easy to derive the meaning from her words, whispered ever so quietly. The words came neither from mom nor from Adam; here, slug tried playing God. To imply that Creator wanted me to return to my job by way of saying something ridiculous like that was doomed to fail. Working at the hotel meant less time for writing, which God, the Father told me to do.

Our conversation about the boss continued, "I will tell him I can't show up. Sorry, can't work. Somebody came to visit for the Fourth of July." (Sadly, subconsciously, I already found a reason to excuse my absence.) "The bottom line — he needs to learn how to schedule people in advance," I argued my point with mother.

"To whom will you tell this? Are you talking to me or to yourself?"

"To the boss, of course. I'll tell this to the boss. I can't show up. Have something scheduled already."

“About yourself?” Mom looked confused, and I felt like she was faking it.

“No, about somebody who does not work there.” I meanly replied, mocking her misunderstanding, feeling aggravated by her confusion.

“That you are not here?”

“No, that I am here, but can’t work. That’s all. Let him learn how to respect other peoples’ schedules. ”

“Ah!” slug exclaimed with apparent amazement, while mom didn’t seem to realize what she was talking about. Nevertheless, she persisted defending my boss no matter what, her position betraying a clear disapproval of my new, laissez-faire attitude toward the job.

“I think it is impossible for him to learn at such an old age,” mom volunteered in a more relaxed intonation. Real mom said it, but she said it so quietly I had to slip my telephone closer to enable the recording.

“Hmm?” I wished to understand what she really meant.

She defended the boss some more. She told me to learn to cooperate with him. He used to delay her payments by as long as six months. “So what?” she said, “I waited. You take what you can.” She talked in a self-assured tone, as if she had ever held other, more serious positions, in her adopted country. I told her that she viewed him favorably because she raised her kids in the Soviet Union where delays in salaries were habitual. This is what she was used to. In this country, the salary was paid bi-weekly. The bottom line? The boss, as one of the very few employers in this area, thought he could do whatever he wanted, *Everybody needs a job, you know?* I told him that my mother, as a cancer survivor, couldn’t and wouldn’t use any chemicals to clean his hotel. You know what he told me then? He told me that *Everybody has cancer*. Well, not me, boss — because I don’t touch them, I don’t smell them and I don’t eat junk food and cheap meat like you.

To finish arguing about the boss, mom switched the topic.

“Anyway, Taisha, at least I am very happy he has such a wife, so calm and emotional.” She was referring to the boss’s wife.

“How could somebody be calm and emotional at the same time?”

No reply.

“I will write about the boss in my book, ” I said with a trace of threat in my voice.

“Hmm?” there was an inquiry in her eyes, and her voice sounded weak, deprived of energy, full of discouragement, as if she was suggesting that my book was an illusion one shouldn’t mention seriously. In the past, mom never discouraged my writing, always offering feedback on my poems. Yet, with slug inside her, my writing was suddenly viewed as nonsense, as a dream, way beyond the horizon, never to be seen or reached, unrealistic, unreasonable. The always supportive, kind mom had vanished, replaced by a pessimist, the type of mother who says — Don’t be stupid, go to law school. What were They checking or was slug simply wasting my time?

“I feel so bad for the boss’s son,” she said with fake sincerity, “Poor boy, growing up with so many mothers... He cannot stand the *second* one.”

I was surprised at what she said. She always liked Catherine, the boss’s second wife. Coincidentally or not, Catherine was also my name... In our reading between the lines games, it

meant that slug suggested that Adam couldn't stand me either, that true love was nothing but an illusion. At least, this is how it felt; slug was using the name Catherine and *second* to somehow upset me.

"What are you talking about? Really?" I was taken aback by how poorly she spoke of Catherine, whom she had always complemented in the past. I told her that I just saw Junior, not so long ago, during the gallery opening, and that the third wife was also there. Junior appeared to be on good terms with all of the wives. I told her how lucky Junior was to have so many mothers. This is why I respected the boss. Per Torah, aka First Testament, a husband can divorce his wife but in such a case, he is responsible for her continuous financial well-being. Furthermore, at least two of his wives were on friendly terms with each other. While bartending during the gallery opening, I saw the third wife kissing and hugging the second and having a good time with her.

"He never accepted the *third* wife," mother retorted gravely. She meant to say that Junior never accepted his third mother, which was a lie, for the third, the current one, was the best. The second one was also good. The first one I never met.

"Whom?" I wanted mother to say her name, for it seemed impolite to me that mother referred to the *third* wife so impersonally. She always said she was the best. When mom didn't reply, it became obvious what slug was trying to do. Her switch from not liking the second to also not liking the *third* wife was meant to fool me a little bit. It did so by also making me suddenly feel anxious upon hearing *third* as it was a special christian number. But it was really the *second* wife, Catherine, whom mother disliked from the onset of this topic. So what slug was really saying was *You are not worthy of pure love. Catherine. You are only second. Catherine...* As I mentioned earlier, it was a confusing day.

Mom asked me next why I couldn't sleep last night; *Thoughts don't let sleep* is written in my journal. Yet, according to another note, I fell asleep rather quickly last night. I remember how mom commented, "You know, clear consciousness enables pure dreams." Oh, really, mommy? Are you saying my consciousness is not pure? In any case, we never talked so much at breakfast!

I switched the topic to something that interested me:

"Mom, do you think Hitler will be saved?"

"I am not sure."

"You are right to not be sure. Do you know why? Because of one simple fact — *Belief and knowledge are contradictory*." People that are sure, a hundred percent sure about their faith, how do they know for sure? Because it was written?

"Everything is in God's hands," mom said.

I told mom that I thought Hitler would be saved. Hitler had a bad mother that developed in him an inferiority complex, but, as a child, his soul was pure. It was his mother's fault. She hurt his feelings.

Next, I asked mom what the soul was.

"It is your spirit that meets God in Heaven," she replied.

"Is every soul unique, mom?"

"What do you mean?"

“Do we matter? Do we make any difference? Do we have free will? Does it mean God doesn’t know the future? What is destiny, mom?”

“Everything is programmed,” mom said.

“But if there is destiny, mom, then it means we do not have free will. For example, you have a choice of drinking coffee or switching to tea. Will God know what you choose before you choose it?”

“No.”

“Then, it means that God doesn’t know the future.”

“Yes, I agree. He only knows the past.”

“But He *can* influence the future. He can enter and interrupt our lives. Mom, why God answers some of us and not the others?”

“Not everybody asks.”

In my guilty state, it was natural to think that humans asked too much. Why do we ask and ask, I wondered, instead of offering something? Why don’t we ever have enough? Life is simple. Life is beautiful, I thought, as long as one has romantic love.

We were finishing breakfast when mom asked if I had plans to go to church. She reminded me that the monthly church dinner service was taking place this evening. As mom invited me to go to church, I felt the secret sign three times. It used to mean *yes*, but now, with both **Plus** and *minus* present, the sign was no longer reliable. Instead of trying to guess who used the sign, I imagined what would happen inside the church. Slug could enter my christian comrades, as he entered my coworkers and clients, in order to confuse me, distract me and/or scare me somehow; anything to keep me away from writing. I told mom that I wouldn’t be going there, that I felt drowsy from taking those pills and that I would go lie down in bed and try to fall asleep again. I thanked her for breakfast. One more reason I didn’t want to go to church was because I didn’t want to eat the meatballs (stuffed with hormones and soaked in fake tomato sauce) our pastor liked so much.

Earlier during breakfast, mom complained that somebody broke or broke into the laundry; so, before returning to bed, I went outside to talk to the property manager. He happened to be just arriving. People who don’t live here were using the laundry, I complained to him, simultaneously feeling guilty about being cheap and not loving others enough.

Back in bed at eleven o’clock, slug and Adam entered the telepathy, which would continue, on and off, throughout the day, in very subtle, hard-to-remember ways. Nothing was really heard clearly or loudly, more these were the thoughts spoken into my consciousness, the thoughts I knew I didn’t produce. Adam ‘told’ me not to worry about anything. I was tired. Nobody cared if I wrote or not today. He assured me that He would come. All that slug could do was cuss at me. I won’t repeat the bad words he used, the usual ones, for his vocabulary was quite limited. I confronted slug, *what would you rather do — suicide now or burn forever?* slug barked back. Who sent slug here? *God signs no contracts! He can change His mind. Ha-Ha-Ha. What is the time, Creator?*

God was in control. Yet, slug ruled the earth. If everything was possible with God, why slug exists?

In bed, I reconsidered my current general agenda. Specifically, the illustrations for my first poetry book were taking longer than expected. I spent two weeks on one drawing, called *Plus and minus*, and though a final result was acceptable, I wasn't sure if I should stop there or continue to improve it. Wouldn't Creator rather have me focused on writing? What was my primary talent? Did I have my priorities straight? I wasn't sure about my video poems project either. Where will I find voices? Who will write the musical background? Should I even bother? What should I focus on? I remember how I was redrawing His arm when Adam transmitted ***I am an avant-garde artist. Finish it, don't worry about exact proportions.*** I don't remember the exact wording, but the words were broadcast in His voice, clearly yet subtly, just enough to be comfortably heard in the telepathy.

Mom entered the bedroom, soon after I told her I would be trying to fall asleep. She walked in, searching for laundry, interrupting my train of thought. One of the pillows laid on the floor. She noticed it, exclaimed "Ой!" and reached to pick it up. She said "Ой!" (similar to English Ah!) the way I used to say it, and I used to say Ah! a lot during that time, to express a sharp surprise as after stumbling over something or catching a spider in one's hair. Adam, I knew for sure, liked the way I used to exclaim Ah! Sometimes, He would make me say it just to hear the sound of it.

"Don't touch my pillow!" mom added in a silly tone, lifting it from the floor, "Did you drop *my* pillow on the floor?" Her reproach sounded foolish and fake; she was definitely overplaying the whole pillow situation, like a bear in the fairy tale of three bears. My eyes were turned to look at the pillow. It was the first time I saw that particular pillow without a pillow case, and I was surprised to see that its interior lining was blue. *Blue like Adam's eyes*, I automatically thought. *Sure...* Here, I was led to believe, for a second, that Adam came, and that He acted upset now that I dropped His silly pillow on the floor. Right away, I realized how stupid this little scenario was, but in the moment it unfolded, it felt different; there was a feeling too, that somebody was making me pay attention to it.

Upon returning with the clean laundry, mom commented good-naturally, "I just saw a dog outside with very long ears." *Right. Of course.* A dog with extremely long ears, just like this, appeared in the parking lot. The message was clear — You are crazy, you are hearing things. As it was a negative message, I assumed it came from slug. Though I was laying in bed, it didn't deter mother from dumping the contents of her laundry bin on the bed, which was strange in itself, because mom usually used the living room sofa for this purpose. I protested, reminding her that I was actually trying to get some sleep here, to which she replied, "Ой! Why?"

At last, she got her stuff and was walking out of the door, when I heard her saying, "You just woke up. How can you sleep all day." She uttered her reproachful comment ever so quietly, rather mumbled it to herself. She left the door slightly ajar, in her usual fashion, and I believe I got up and closed it firmly.

Surely, sleeping all day made me feel guilty, but what happened to real mom who used to tiptoe around whenever it looked like I was resting? Besides, real mom didn't know that slug was bothering me, that one of his goals was to make me feel so guilty as to destroy my peace of mind and plant doubts regarding the correctness of my behavior in the eyes of Creator. My head felt heavy, I couldn't think fast, my eyes yearned to be shut — *Tired eyes*, I wrote in my

journal. (Perhaps my eyes were so tired because I was writing a lot.) The telepathy would take on an intermittent format throughout the entire day.

I reached for my cell phone, hoping that soft classic piano music would help me fall asleep, but the likelihood of that happening diminished as my cell phone froze, the wifi signal disappeared and a group of strangers began to speak in obnoxiously loud voices outside the bedroom window. I lived in a very isolated area, such that the likelihood of having even one person speaking loudly exactly at the moment I was trying to fall asleep approaches zero. Restarting the phone made no difference, but I did hear a distant voice cussing and cussing at me. (slug is so angry and sounds so stupid). I cussed back at slug, repeating my threat — *suicide now! suicide now or burn forever!* Then, a car beeped exactly three times. I used to presume that whenever a car beeped *three* times for no apparent reason, it was Adam saying *hello*. At that instant, however, I understood that number Three wasn't special, just like number Thirteen wasn't evil, that there were no good or bad numbers. Those were only superstitions. Upon such realization, I heard in telepathy **Good, Ioanna, Good** more in the voice of the Father, pronounced subtly as though sent through space.

Per Bible, only Adam has the keys that lock up slug for good. Only Adam can open and close that door. I began to push slug's nerves: *We don't need no keys! Ha-Ha! No door in Heaven is locked! Nobody steals! We don't need no keys! We don't have no keys!* Only slug was responsible for all the pain in the world. Only slug deserves to be tortured forever. Only slug, all the time, whispering seductions into human ears. Adam wasn't going to keep track of some keys. *Suicide right now! slug!*

Even Puss was looking for true love. Puss wasn't bad. When such thought, full of compassion about Puss, crossed my mind, Adam transmitted that He would help him. Here, in my journal, I have written — *Stay loyal to your next love and follow God when evil seduces you* — addressed to no one. Perhaps this is His answer to Puss.

May true love exist. It was Puss who wrote this phrase in the prayer book of an old, abounded church that we discovered while hiking once in the French Alps. Jesus said that nobody gets married in Heaven. But everything is possible with God. Could His Son be the only exception? Exceptions only prove the rules.

My forehead needed no stars to adorn it, my feet — no moon to shine from underneath, my body — no sunny dress to envelope me. I couldn't be special for others would be jealous. But is everybody the same? Was this another test? I had to figure out my own answers. No confirmations were received.

At 15:25 mother entered the bedroom again, pleading that I speak with a customer service representative to arrange the shipment of her anticancer pill. With slight reluctance, I paused the *Big Lebowski*, the movie I had begun to watch online. Once a month, a cancer drug representative calls and spends an hour going over all the instructions, precautions and potential side-effects of the pill that costs about twenty-five thousand a month. Once a month, the same conversation, over and over again. Are you nauseous, anxious, feverish? Do you experience drastic mood swings? Do you fingers, toes, go numb? What other medications are you taking? Do you clearly understand the instructions? How many pills do you have left? Are you currently being treated in the hospital?

I noted that I was demanded to say *Yes* or *No* into the phone once, which must have slightly spooked me. (Before, there was a dialing option to respond.) The first customer service representative was unpleasant, but then I was transferred to someone else. A new, pleasant voice on the other end of the line introduced herself as Kerry. Kerry didn't follow the protocol. Kerry's voice didn't sound robotic. With Kerry, the questionnaire took only ten minutes, and Kerry's "Have a lovely day. God bless you!" farewell was a pleasant surprise.

Finished with the call, I returned to my movie. It was paused with the subtitles reading: *What's mine is mine*. Who made a point here, Adam or evil? Ha-ha-ha. What a difficult question.

The main character in the *Big Lebowski* had medium length hair, blue eyes and a nickname *Dude*, reminding me of my drawing named Dude made at the outset of my second episode. My Dude attempted to show all characteristics of God, such as love, joy, perseverance, kindness, generosity, etc. I left the sketch in a church I thought was a cult, saying to its leader, "This is all there is to it."

It must be true — *What's mine is mine*, as mom used to say... That meant I was the luckiest girl in the Universe, in love with my Creator.

In the movie, one of the heroes dies. His two best friends arrange his funeral. Short on money, they choose cremation over the traditional funeral, and when confronted with the price tag of three thousand dollars for the cheapest urn, they put the ashes of their departed comrade inside a coffee can. They spread his ashes over the ocean. *Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead, from Matthew 8:22*.

Death in this country is a fifteen billion dollar a year industry. This includes funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries, but excludes related costs such as headstones and crypts. It is expensive to die. The average cost of a funeral in 2011 was \$7,323. In comparison, it costs about 49 dollars to provide food, shelter and education to a child in a developing country. This means that every average burial takes the life of 149 children. Why do we continue to follow wasteful traditions?

When I depart, I want my family to meet under the shadow of a weeping willow that they would plant to honor my passing. Under my weeping willow, they can cherish their memories of me. No ashes, no body. I simply want to disappear while the memory of me rests within their hearts. Cemeteries can become gardens. By planting a tree for each departed we will produce oxygen. Families will have beautiful gardens, each plant representing a family member who is no longer with them. Adam told me He was a practical man. There must be no waste.

Nov 5 2015

I just watched a documentary on quantum physics. It was very interesting, because it showed how one object can be in two different places in the same time. The tiny atoms travel at the speed of information, through the future and the past. Scientists cannot figure this out, but it feels so simple to me, intuitively. Adam must be able to do that — be everywhere simultaneously.

While watching the *Dude* movie, Adam laughed with me, while slug, due to his total lack of humor, had temporarily withdrawn. But as soon as the movie was over, he returned. You are wasting your time, cussing, guilt attacks — slug used the familiar tactics. I cussed back. I asked

myself *Is He really in love with me? Is Adam really coming?* Yes. Yes. No. No, the secret sign responded. Stupid. Mom knocked on the door.

“Sonia, did you hear that Jo wants a sister?” She was referring to my relative. “Those boys do need girls, yes?” she added, smiling. This was clearly a positive confirmation, spoken by Adam via my mom. A man and a woman form one love.

I forgot what it felt like to be alone. It felt like they would never leave, my two constant companions; minus scared and distracted, Plus gave clues, but rarely direct answers, to my seething stream of questions: Why was slug necessary? If humans had common sense and free will, do humans create bad experiences? What did Creator mean when He transmitted **All is equal**? Was He referring to balance? Balance of information?

Life versus death, love versus hate, pain versus pleasure, intelligence versus stupidity Was this how He organized it? How did He organize all life into one system? Creator was at the Center. His Absolute Will evaluated all information, dividing it into precise opposites. Let's create love! But if there is love, there must be hate. Otherwise, how do we do this? Can pleasure exist without pain? What colors did He use when He painted this world? Or did He draw it first in black and white? **All is equal**? The world rests on the balance of opposites; so it can exist continuously. But Who is the Creator?

A husband and a wife become one. I didn't believe it at first, but I understood what it meant: a true romantic love, a couple knowing each other — God's ultimate creation. Did I, in the moment of reading that phrase in the Bible, really believe that the two actually share one body? I actually did, for I remember how mother commented when I asked her about this phrase, “Oh, Sonia, you believe in everything in a *literal* sense.” But now I know it. We are One. We are Plus. Slug is minus. But who is the Creator?

Creator has equipped us with an ability to understand the difference between good and bad. Does it mean we, humans, create slug? Why does God tolerate slug? Is evil necessary because of absolute knowledge? Because of truth? Because thoughts can materialize? What is truth then? Is it true that love cannot exist without pain?

The Dude movie finished with the cowboy, adorned with a hat and a big mustache, who mysteriously shows up. As I was in the spirit, it felt that God was playing this character to reveal something about His nature. “Sometimes a bear eats you, sometimes you eat a bear,” the cowboy said in deep wise voice, while I heard ‘bar’ instead of ‘bear’, which made me think, *Sounds like bar. Do I go to a bar too often?* and fear riding on guilt blew through my mind like a draft.

The dude abides is my final journal note about the movie.

At 17:15, after dinner, I enjoyed the sunshine outside. A pick-up truck drove in and immediately out of our parking lot; slug was stupid.

Back home, when I checked my computer, my Netflix profile photo disappeared. I wasn't disturbed because I had seen the same trick before.

At about 18:00, still lying in bed, I put on another movie called *Lead Daniels, the Butler*. The movie depicted the hardships of African-Americans in their fight for equality. My body felt and my mind heard how every cruel scene evoked a rage of delight in slug. When Ku Klux Klan set on fire a bus full of protesting black students, slug squeezed my body - squeeze! squeeze! - as a

raving maniac. slug no longer cussed, but only laughed, an uncontrollable laugh that fed on hatred, on violence, on pain, on tears, on misunderstanding, unfairness, cruelty. he squeezed me violently, ceaselessly, as if it was there itself, inside the scenes, rejoicing in the pain of innocents. I sweated under the blanket, my fists clenched, my abs pulsing, my teeth grinding, as though I was transforming into a hungry wild dog ready to plunge into my prey. I could've physically stopped this, but I let slug manifest its nature so I could learn something about it. Slug didn't curse this time, he screamed **Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!** during the violent scenes. I finished the movie, coming out of it with a deeper understanding of the raw nature of evil. Hate without reason, simply for the sake of hate. Hate. But why is it a *necessary* creation? *he was made up to hate; for each word a feeling, then a representation*, my journal notes.

The time was 23:40 when Adam transmitted ***I am here. Look through the window.***

I got out of bed and silently approached the window blinds. I suspected I wouldn't be seeing a physical body, it would've spooked me. Adam knew I wasn't ready for this sort of magic trick. I peered out into the night. There was the vacant parking lot, except for my car and the neighbor's; nothing out of ordinary. A dim light bulb illuminated the space directly in front of the window. I glared into the air through the slim slit between the plastic window blinds. I imagined Adam was right in front of me, possibly touching the window glass from the other side with the palms of his hands, perhaps with his forehead, so close that His invisible breath fogged the glass. Since I assumed that He was tall, I directed my glance a little bit upwards. Searching the empty air, hearing nothing at all besides normal sounds such as the refrigerator's motor and mom's snoring, knowing with almost a hundred percent certainty that on the other side of the glass, an invisible Man, tall and handsome, is looking back at me, inside my eyes, absorbing every feature of my face, perhaps tracing its lines with His invisible, undetectable fingers, I felt shy, I felt uncomfortable, and the seconds felt long. My fingers let go of the slit, the plastic blinds snapped.

Again. Four times I looked. Then I had enough of romance. The blinds snapped for the last time, and I went to bed, wondering when will I see more than air.

It was extremely hard to clear my mind of all thoughts. The more important the message, the more difficult it was to 'tune in' into the telepathy. slug tried to interfere via inserting bad words, thoughts or images, so I inhaled, evenly exhaled, concentrated, repeated, and waited until a next sentence traveled the invisible distance between the spiritual and physical world.

Below is the transmission, provided precisely as it came, unless slug altered my original notes. Yes, he did again, this beaver without teeth. My notes seem to include some things that weren't there and exclude others that I remember were there. I corrected his changes, once again; leaving them for reference would have made my writing too confusing.

Adam transmitted around 23:43:

The Father said the wedding will be.

After a pause, ***Here and there.***

After a pause, ***Terribly want children!*** He transmitted this in Russian, precisely:
Uzasno hochu detey!

After a pause, ***I am Russian.***

Brava? I asked.

No. (Big smile.)

After a pause, ***Balance is not necessary!***

After a pause, ***Ignore slug. I will deal with it.***

I felt the transmission was over, and thought with excitement:

Thank you, My Magic Father! He blessed my soul but I am real!

Just like me. Write this down. I heard in a distant voice then, as if flying away.

Besides personal good news, this transmission contained an insight to help me in my spiritual search. Balance was not necessary! He was referring to my preoccupation with God's earlier phrase **All is equal**. When Creator came to me via telepathy for the first time, He 'said' **All is equal**. I assumed: all is equal = all is balanced. Now, Adam transmitted that balance was not necessary. Does it mean we can have love without knowing hate, pleasure without knowing pain, laugh without knowing boredom? If yes, then slug is not necessary. But slug is. I know he is right here! Why would Creator allow something unnecessary to exist? Unless Creator needs slug... **Pleasure**, He said, the reason for creating life was pleasure. It was Creator's *first* word.

So if balance is not necessary, then evil is not needed. But evil is used by God. Personal balance, uniqueness, pleasure...

For some time in bed I thought about the nature of God. The question that preoccupied me was: Who is He exactly, and how is it possible to be God and Man in the same time? How does it *feel* to be both, man and God simultaneously? People can't figure it out. Preacher White, for example, tells everybody, "This is the hardest part for people to understand."

What spirit did Creator give His Man? Was it *only* the Spirit of Love? When I think about Creator, I think about a combination of spirits inside one entity. A spirit of Love, Perfectionism, Creativity, Freedom, Independence, Beauty, Courage, Competition. I think of Him as of An Emotional and Sensitive Inventor of all Feelings. But Who was Creator, in His *Original* State? Did Creator know what violence was before men created it on Earth?

Since the inception of the secret sign, Adam revealed different aspects of His divine personality that, in my opinion, are organized in the following order: love, joy, and passion. In a sense, Adam is a Love Robot. Everything Adam does is in agreement with Creator. Adam cannot contradict the Divine Will. Adam's other half, however, is a Real Man, with a unique human personality. *What about me?* Was I some sort of a robot too? Did Creator design me for Adam, or was I a real woman? (Per book *Angels in My Hair*, God creates a soul for each human before a human is even conceived. Every unborn baby has a predesigned soul.)

Did Creator make me special? Did He plan for Adam to meet me in the twenty first century? Did Creator design my body, my hair, my voice, my facial features to satisfy Adam's taste, or is Adam *coincidentally* physically attracted to me? Did Adam fall in love with the real woman? Am I a real woman? I was no longer sure.

If I were a robot, then Creator must have equipped my soul with special spirits as He designed me. If I were a real woman, did He travel back in time (after Adam fell in love with me) and *then* altered my body to His taste, or did He leave me unaltered?

Did Adam care about the body? Per Bible, only the quality of a soul matters... I doubt this is what a real man would say. How real was I really? When did He fall in love with me? Before or after I overcame certain challenges? How can I be certain there won't be a better woman for Him in the future? In the past? Unless Creator had predesigned me...

But then what was more appealing: to fall in love with a real woman or with a robot designed for you? What was more magical — a true love or a preconceived love story of Creator?

I couldn't decide, I couldn't decide how real I was. I couldn't believe Creator wouldn't interfere in Adam's love story, the Creator of Love and Pleasure.

Eventually I figured it out — only Magic was real.

11. Thursday June 25_ Writing Desk Installation_ Transmission # 4_Help

I woke up at 04:26 from telepathy, with a strong sense of understanding something..The answer is everything..There is only everything... It was so easy to see it in the sleeping stage; but as soon as I woke up, the clarity of that understanding fled as a dream.

My morning notes don't seem to reflect what the dream had shown so clearly:

God — our image. Inside — invincible will.

God is everywhere. All are parts of God.

Then, there is a space, which indicates to me that I must have fallen asleep again. The next journal entry reads:

Chopin is mine

I love only you

Me too. Everything else I only like.

And then, in bigger letters: *There fire is, behind the crossing line, there devil is. Kindness is the number one priority.*

You are meant to understand.

The mention of *Chopin* reminds me how, upon waking again, I turned the classical music on; slug must have been active this morning and to deter him, I bathed my morning mind in glorious sounds of classical masterpieces. After that, I moved to the living room, where I spread out on the floor in the form of a star and launched a breathing attack. According to my notes, I had enough sense and patience to explain to my mom what I was doing, before she found my breathing exercises 'of concern'. I pushed to the point of sweating again, but I was smarter than I was a few days ago — I gave it a *reasonable* effort. When it became too hard, I slowed down. I tried to enjoy it, remembering the time not so long ago when the breathing meditation used to offer peace. I felt the results as the numb areas were learning how to breathe, as though for the first time. Surely, having slug for an enemy made me improve faster, made me detect all the lazy parts, made me eventually realize the secret: it was all about breathing out more than breathing in. Giving out more than taking in; it made so much sense. It was a battle I couldn't win yet, but I was improving with every prolonged exhalation. I also learned how to change my pace from slow and measured to breathing quickly, like a dog.

The realization came as I laid on the floor — enough is enough. You can stop now.

Adam did some work while I was breathing: He dragged my dresser from the kitchen hall into the bedroom. From the corner of my eye, while breathing on the floor, I clearly remember seeing mom's ankles, and then the explanation for the noise came, as the body of the dresser slid across the carpeted floor. It couldn't have been mother alone, who shouldn't and usually doesn't lift, drag or carry anything heavy.

While looking at the vacant space previously occupied by the dresser, the following idea popped out of the blue, *This is a place for your writing desk, let's go to Walmart.*

slug via mother suggested, "Why won't you order a table online?" Instantly, I felt aggravated, for mother knew that I didn't like to pay for shipping or wait for delivery or research products online. Obviously, slug had employed a time-wasting strategy. Instead of snapping back at manipulated mom, however, I remained non-confrontational. The Bible seemed to make

sense. He came to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. Like Fuse, for example, who forced me into my first hospital.

After breakfast, slug via mother insisted on joining me for the ride, but first mom had to wait for delivery of her medication, which could arrive as late as three o'clock. The time-wasting strategy again. I left without hearing more nonsense.

In the car, I vibrated the sound Rrrrrr with my throat in rhythm to the steady tune of the car engine. I felt that driving didn't distract, even benefited, the breathing meditation. I imagined I was a racer in a slow-motion car race. I held my back perfectly straight, as the air slowly travelled throughout my spine, releasing oxygen everywhere. My eyes were focused on the asphalt road in front of me, at its center, between the yellow center line and the white shoulder line. I drove within the speed limit. The focus on roaring as steadily as the engine helped to empty my mind from my own thoughts. Only one destruction persevered; it was the feeling of guilt toward a fellow-driver behind. To eliminate it, Adam transmitted ***Don't worry. It is me.*** Perhaps, it was true, because nobody beeped or passed me. I thought He calmed the drivers that followed behind.

Adam repeated that He loved me, while slug cursed. I tried to disregard him, but sometimes I cussed back. Repeatedly, Adam transmitted ***You see? You see?*** as to pinpoint the stupidity and rudeness of slug's nature.

Adam also transmitted a phrase, in half English, half French, that only a real man could say. ***I will take you comme il faut.*** The French *comme il faut* approximately means *until the faintness overcomes*. I think this phrase was originally meant to come through in Russian — *Я возьму тебя до утомления*. But since I wasn't aware of the word *утомление*, Adam couldn't scrape it off the wall of my consciousness and use it in His sentence. His capacity to communicate with me seemed to be limited by the extent of my own vocabulary. Interestingly enough, it was Fuse, the crazy one, who would remind me of the long-forgotten Russian word several months later. Fuse of that season was preoccupied with word structures and sounds. He told me, for example, that the Russian sound - Y - was the most important human sound and therefore was present in most of the languages. Fuse mentioned the phrase *до утомления* in some n'importe quoi context; he was absolutely fascinated with that word.

I will take you until the faintness overcomes. Upon hearing the emotionally-charged phrase, I attempted to pull over to write it down, but instantly saw an orange *No Shoulder* sign and kept driving. The sign had a threatening affect on me, leaving me wondering how slug could have this perfect timing. It must be another hocus-pocus, I thought, perhaps a hallucination, perhaps the sign was not even there.

Presently, more than ever, I needed to drive cautiously, as slug was still trying to cause an accident. How? Diverting my attention with external stimuluses and associating them with personal information in hope of producing fear, loss of focus, panic, hesitation or anxiety. During this short ride, slug used the following outside stimuli:

1. A line of loud motorbikes whose riders stared at me
2. Physically switching my eyesight from the road to the rear-view mirror, in order to break my breathing concentration and train of thought.

3. *No Shoulder* sign at the exact spot I wanted to pull over, accompanied by a sudden infusion of fear.

My first stop was at DD for a small cappuccino. The gentleman who took my order offered a free donut. “A brand new promotion,” he grinned. I refused his giveaway; eating artificial poison only produced more guilt. As if to confirm my suspicion that something was amiss, the lady who made my cappuccino reconfirmed *three* times whether I preferred skim or whole milk. In fact, for the entire week, slug had obsessed himself with the number *three*. Specifically, slug tried to associate this special christian number with him and not with God, in order to suggest that I was on his territory and that he was in power of my life. How did he do that? Trivial tricks as usual. One time, for example, I found *three* spoiled berries in my morning oatmeal.

The lady who reconfirmed my request for whole milk three times messed up the order of another client waiting in line with me. For him, she made a hot coffee instead of the ice one. When the client pointed out her mistake, she rolled her eyes, then said, “Are you sure you don’t want a hot coffee as well, together with your ice one?” Mockery infiltrated her regard, which was strangely directed more at me than the other guy, “We will have to throw it away anyway.” The waste of resources her lack of attention had caused aggravated me. I was challenged to offer critique, but while I was confident that Creator tolerated no waste, criticizing her openly would have only aggravated her and wasted my time.

At the front of Walmart, volunteers for Youth Against Drugs, a charity, blocked my entry to the store. Here, slug deployed a guilt tactic — *Are you sure you are giving enough?* I excused myself with a busy schedule and went inside to look for a writing desk, a suitable chair and a small garbage can. An overweight, very nice employee crossed my path and offered assistance. She pointed me into the right aisle. I found only one computer desk to my liking, the last in stock. I grabbed it without waiting for Adam’s confirmation. As I was putting the heavy box into the shopping cart, my cappuccino cup fell from the top shelf into the shopping cart. Immediately, a frantic-looking lady ran into my aisle. She sorted out a napkin, bent and began wiping the floor around me. I was under the impression she was hiding at the corner, waiting for me to spill my drink; the time of her appearance being so precise. Until she crouched, I wasn’t aware that my cappuccino had spilled on the floor. In any case, the cup was almost empty, very little damage was done. Yet, with the hectic, chaotic movements and rudeness manifested in her total lack of eye contact, the cleaning lady handled my unintentional spill as if it was an oversight of grave consequences. I crouched to help her, wondering how she appeared so precisely at the wrong moment. Reminding myself that slug works through real people, I asked her pleasantly for the aisle of office chairs. Projecting a nervous attitude, she coughed, looked to the left, to the right, and appearing confused and disoriented, pointed vaguely toward an aisle.

I hardly finished saying goodbye to her, when a middle-age male employee, enthusiastic and friendly, intercepted me in the common hall. “Are you looking for anything in particular, ma’am?” This man personally escorted me into the correct aisle, not the one the lady had directed me to. There, he took time to show me all available options. Nothing suited me, so I chose the cheapest chair available. Rolling out of the chair aisle, an elderly, warm, male employee crossed my path. He stopped and very politely asked me if I was being helped. I told

him I was looking for a garbage can and he quickly pointed to another, younger, customer-service representative that was just passing by!

“He will help you, this guy! He is a genius!”

“I think you are a genius!” I stupidity replied —or maybe slug did— and followed my guide into the garbage aisle. In silence, slug, in a body of a young, skinny *genius* with hair all greasy and long, walked me to the right place where he just left me, abruptly, without showing me anything.

I shopped a lot at Walmart, and had always found it hard to find customer-service representatives when needed. This day, however, they were all over me.

At the store exit, the volunteer for Youth Against Drugs asked me for money again. This time I countered with “I have my own non-for-profit organization in which I invest all my money. I am helping abandoned children.” Too often, I fail to think of a proper sentence before articulating my thoughts. I rush to speak, and in this particular moment, slug could sneak in and tarnish my pronunciation, misspell and even insert a word I didn’t mean to say; all in order to present me as an illiterate speaker and undermine the impact of my words. This time, however, I formed an answer in advance, while shopping, an answer though truthful yet a bit premature. I articulated it, placing the right emphasis on the right words. In reply, the volunteer sneezed, coughed and said, “God bless you.”

Back home, I proceeded with the writing desk installation. The instructions consisted of a thirteen-step process, my favorite number. (All superstitions are from slug.) Certain illustrations were incorrect, certain guidelines were incomplete, certain steps described weren’t necessary at all, some miscellaneous parts were missing or mislabeled. More specifically, several illustrations for the assembly of plywood boards were drawn at a skewed angle; on some of the illustrations exterior board surfaces were incorrectly labeled as interior. Several plywood boards had predrilled holes in wrong places.

At step 2, I lost patience and began hammering screws into the mushy plywood instead of screwing them. This was the moment when I became aware of a conversation that was simultaneously taking place between Adam and slug:

You will break it all.

Shut up!

At one difficult illustration drawn askew, Adam transmitted ***Match the holes.***

Don’t help her! Don’t help her!

Interestingly enough, about a week earlier, at the bar, I met a handyman, who bought me a drink and asked me several times to call him for anything. “Anything at all,” he repeated passionately. Presently, it felt comforting to have a plan B. The temptation to give up and call him entered, but the awareness that I was being watched and that my success mattered, fueled my determination to continue at the task.

There were two steps in the assembly process where I could’ve used mom’s help and she did offer it, but my arrogance — *I know better than you. I can do it myself.* — blocked me from accepting her hand. As usual, I instantly felt guilty — of always speaking abruptly and impersonally to her, of never saying *thank you* to her for doing my laundry, organizing my closet,

cleaning the apartment, making breakfast every day, for worrying about me all the time, for being a perfect mom. Though I do love her, I never say it. It is a childhood disorder, having grown up in a violent, silent household.

Mom tried to intervene several times before I realized that the assembly task wasn't only a simple lesson in patience. God was using this opportunity of close cooperation to push me to express my love verbally.

I felt then that Adam transmitted ***Let your mother help you.*** It felt uncomfortable first, but with every spoken word of cooperation, the next word got out more easily. For this particular task, my mother remained my mom until we finished. It was her voice, her intonation, without superfluous irritation, without pointless arguing, without nonsense, without slug. As we worked together, I could hear Adam and slug via telepathy. It became clear to me that I was being bet on. Each time I progressed, slug swore while Adam remained silent, except for a few occasions when He helped me. For example, when the instructions listed an unnecessary step, Adam transmitted ***Disregard*** and slug ***Don't help her! Don't help her!*** When I interjected *It is not fair because the instructions are wrong*, nobody replied.

About an hour later, when the primary structure was assembled, I felt relieved. I finally saw a computer desk and not a cluster of plywood parts. Step 10 through 12 illustrated the directions for the assembly of the roll-in drawer. At this point, the Father entered the telepathy. A feeling of significance filled the atmosphere, I was acutely aware of His presence. He said via mom who was fussing in the kitchen, ***"Your dad was a talented mechanic who could assemble anything in any factory."*** This is how I knew it was not Adam, but The Father Himself Who spoke. Not only the words, but His Intonation suggested the One in Control, The Father, had arrived.

I will help you with the drawer, Sonia.

At once, I became nervous, afraid that either slug or my own consciousness would produce bad images and turn the Father off. I began reading the instructions aloud, focusing on each letter, each word, my own intonation, the drawer, the parts, the screws — anything, to keep my mind focused on the task at hand. I was so afraid some bad thoughts could breach the connection with the Father. I suspected that The Father came to transmit something very important.

Following mom's advice, I placed the drawer on the kitchen counter where the Father and I began screwing screws into the drawer sides. ***Don't leave the dust on the table. You are drilling the plywood in the wrong place, let me show you how.*** Every word was measured, pronounced in a level tone. As mother interfered, the Father began to make fun of her, ***Oh! These women, always thinking they know best! Can't she ever shut up, your mother, Sonia? Can't believe your father put up with her. Always cleaning! Always cleaning! Always checking everything!***

Hold it here! The Father knows what to do. Here, Sonia, hold it for The Father, let me screw it tight.

The Father and I were simply enjoying putting the drawer together.

The clues were in the instructions. Step 11 illustrated the assembly of the last part of the drawer — the drawer front S (forced association — *Sonia as being a final step of God's project.*)

Step 12 listed the finishing touches: putting three large screw caps labeled X and six small screw caps labeled Y on the exterior screw heads. The plastic kit, however, with items like screws, nails, clips, pins, all neatly organized among twenty-four labeled compartments, contained no Y caps. I double-checked. *Father and Adam are missing me!* I thought, my mind quickly associating Y with *Why?* which is my favorite question. In the booklet, next to the instruction — firmly press Y caps on each screw — I wrote down *Missing Why* and moved on to the X caps. The kit contained three of them, but only two were needed. I installed the two X caps and returned to the kit. To my astonishment, despite my familiarity with various sluggish tricks by now, the Y caps (previously missing) reappeared in the kit! I grabbed the instructions which presently showed my hand-written note — *Missing Why*. The note made me feel so good, being there as proof that the Y caps were indeed missing just a minute ago. They were missing. I wrote down that they were missing. They reappeared! And then I realized one more thing: while I was clearly thinking the letter *I*, my hand was manipulated to write down *Why*. No wonder the letter *I* appears so many times in my real last name. In fact, my real last name can be divided into three roots: the first one means — worked hard, partied harder; the second — write now, and the third — here we go! I bet Fuse would agree with my analysis.

No longer did the desk look like a cluster of random parts. Yet, there remained step 13, *my favorite number...* The last page contained a lot of text with no illustrations. Somebody transmitted ***Bull****!*** and with a pen in my hand crossed off the entire paragraph. I wasn't sure, however, if I should disregard the last step. After all, it was my favorite number and I liked to complete things. I felt a sting of fear as I contemplated the number 13, printed above the lengthy paragraph in too small a font to read: *I wasn't going to complete my final step. I wasn't the one.*

Nevertheless, the desk looked ready. I assembled it, despite coming close to smashing it all to pieces. Adam won the bet.

I filed away the instructions. There remained *three* extra parts: one X screw cap and two *Why* screw caps. I captured them. The photo shows one large black circle and two smaller ones placed right below the big one, side by side. The Father above His Son and His Daughter, forming one Love.

God, the Father, remained online. I was surprised that He didn't leave once the writing desk was assembled. It seemed He wanted to talk more, but I remained very scared of bad images attacking my mind unexpectedly; they could disgust His Holiness and break the connection. To keep my mind empty, I went to the bathroom, filled the tub, lit two aroma candles and turned the lights off. In the bathtub, I closed my eyes and submerged my head completely under the warm water. There, I listened to the soothing sound of splashes hitting the water surface, felt the warmth surfacing above my legs. After feeding my lungs with air generously, I plunged once more into the pleasant darkness. The stream of water splashed off the surface, like a waterfall joining a river, the only dominant sound. The need for air lifted me up. Remaining above, I fixed my eyes on the dancing fires of the candles and began to breathe

mindfully, waiting for the Father to transmit. But nothing was happening, so I began to ask questions.

Why did You give Your Son? Because Abraham was willing to give his?

Gave because gave.

Did Adam know His destiny before He was born on earth?

He didn't. I talked to Him, as I talk to you. So He is real, He is a real man! I thought.

There were other questions to ask, I was taking my time. The Father, I felt, wasn't going anywhere. He came to answer my questions.

Do You love everybody the same?

Is it possible to love everybody the same!!!! The Father said this question was very important.

Did Sarah get pregnant at 120 years?

You believe. That's the point.

What's Your favorite image?

It depends on the task.

Are you bored often?

Same like you.

Patient?

Not true.

How can you watch the children burning?

Can't. Don't. Close my eyes like you.

Father?

The challenge is necessary.

But children?

The world is hell. Devil.

Why not finish everything right now?

Hope they will change.

Why don't You help everybody?

Not everybody asks.

But those who ask?

Depends how they ask.

Why did you punish Eve?

It is a fairytale to analyze.

Do children suffer physical pain when they burn in fire?

Yes!!!!!!

Help.

This is all that I wanted to say.

Goodbye.

Understood. Action.

This was the end.

After additional review, I noticed that slug deleted the following from my original transcript:

What is the most important thing you want to accomplish in life?

Prove that God exists.

The next day, Friday June 26 2015, lying in bed early in the morning, I emailed my boss:

Hi,

I was offered a book deal by a christian organization that requires a hundred percent commitment.

I will have to say No to any further employment. It's been a great learning opportunity.

My Best Wishes,

Sonia.

I lied to the boss in order to show Creator my one hundred percent commitment. Immediately, slug began snapping my jaw, like the wild stupid dog he is, while God, with apparent pleasure, began tapping my foot, as if He was listening to a nice melody.

P.S. I just remembered an old focus-hocus. An email came in, dated June 19, titled *From Slug*. It was empty in the body.



Epilogue

Here is the summary of the most important revelations given in this book.

1. **Everybody will be saved.** This particular revelation is probably the most important, for it was preceded by a clear warning — ***This is revelation*** — in Adam's voice.
2. **Fight is only on earth.**
3. **Help.**

It was also revealed to me that Adam is getting married, but I no longer believe He is marrying me. Yes, He lied. Yes, He manipulated my feelings. He even dumped me once... but then quickly came back, with the Father, Who still needed my help. I promised I will never abandon the Father. Perhaps, I needed to believe in marrying Him, in order to write. After all, He did say people learn better through stories.

Thank you very much! Adam exclaimed via me at the end of a particularly good editing session, one of the last ones. Astonished, I glanced at my editor, who grinned at that very moment, without taking his eyes off the page; so amused He was by my internal stir.

P.S. I believe 666, the mysterious number from the last chapter for the Bible, simply means money, or more specifically — the corrupted global financial system driven by debt. Why 666? Because slug is too stupid to remember three *different* digits.

What is the alternative? Resource-based economy.

END of ***Plus*** and *Minus*

~~нахарили~~ ~~побили~~
Тем,

А Дядя, он мой
он всё знает
на даче и
близко под
полим окном,
и иногда по
сплош, хрюкает
под брызгами
его выдыхают
ветки и падают

^{холодные}
~~посея в серых~~
~~агрессивных~~ ~~себя~~ ~~их~~
Но корни, сровно
руки, сели в
землю глубоко
и держат, крепко
держат, нежно
мне не мешают!
"Не отпусти,
не отпусти её."

НАСЛАХ
ТМ
ка Т а, а, ~~который~~ ~~за~~ ~~о~~ ~~ну~~