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# HOW TO TALK TO THE DEAD

By Anastasiia Kosodii

Translated from the Ukrainian by John Freedman with Natalia Bratus

Yesterday I saw four photos of Ukrainians who were killed by Russians.

The first was a gray-haired man who was being lifted on a board from a mass grave. His pants were down to his calves, his chest was swollen.

The second was a woman with long dark hair and a red jacket. Her arms were crossed on her chest. Lilies of the Valley rose up to the right of the woman, to the left was earth plowed by explosions.

The third was a black body bag, not fully closed. You could see a man's head with an open eye, his gaze frozen.

The fourth - this girl was alive. But she had no left cheek and part of her jaw was missing. Everything was red.

At night I lie down and recall doing an interview near Kyiv with an artist who is now exhuming bodies. "At night," he said, "I sometimes hear sounds. I don't fear them, they are our dead, let them come. They died so horribly. I, at least, will talk to them."

How do you talk to your dead

I think you know

no special workshops are required

we determine our dead by a fact of life not of death, yet tragic, we tell stories about them, we at least try to imagine ~~them~~

an apartment in a new building in the suburbs of Kyiv surrounded by parks and pine forests

minibuses from the Akademmistechko Metro Station

The Sea of Azov alongside the silhouette of a metallurgical plant

vacations to Salt Mines to breathe and restore your lungs

local champagne that is impossible to drink

the communist Artiom who came down off his pedestal on Central Square

visits to the hairdresser for hair care procedures

an ice palace for sports, performances, and competitions

school number one, school number two, school number three

ammonia-free long-lasting cream coloring

3-1 dark brown hair color

oat milk for conditioning.

tasks for the future

invent stories

so that your dead will speak through them

about the life that has taken place and has yet to be

outstanding

eccentric

unforgettable  
boring  
~~ordinary people~~  
the way they wanted it to be  
I think, how long might it take  
to begin

[...]

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