TRANSLATÓRIUM

STANZA

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A series of translation workshops
with Ostap Slyvynsky

"DICTIONARY OF WAR"
in the Languages of Scotland

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"Dictionary of War", compiled by poet and translator Ostap Slyvynsky, was created from real testimonies gathered in the first months of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Words redefined by war. Language carrying memory and loss.

Over the course of two months Scottish poets, selected by TRANSLATORIUM and StAnza, translated 'definitions' from the "Dictionary of War" into two of Scotland's languages — Gaelic and Shetlandic — languages that carry their own histories of displacement, struggle for visibility, and preservation.

This project is not only about translation. It is about creating a space for cross-cultural dialogue and exploring how the experience of war can be carried across different languages and contexts.

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"DICTIONARY OF WAR"

in the Languages of Scotland

translated into Shetlandic by

Roseanne Watt

(English translations
by Grace Mahoney and Taras Malkovych)

BEAR
Stas, Kyiv

My dreaming is more real than my waking. During the day, I occupy my mind with errands. But in sleep, reality strikes back. "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters," as Goya put it. Now one of this phrase's many meanings is that you can't stop thinking. You must power through in order to think against reality.
Today I wanted to go back to my childhood. And so I "escaped" to where there is no war: to Makiivka, Ust-Kamenohorsk, and Zakarpattia of my childhood. Now, when I am sad, I retreat into my childhood. The first time, I thought step-by-step through each preschool phase. Now I meditate on a bear. There are two teddy bears: my own bear that I remember and another one, an imaginary one. And either I am hugging my little childhood toy, or the other, enormous one who's white with spots, hugs me. I'm fantasizing, and there is no war. Let me say it aloud—"a fantasy." This word does sound wonderful:
fantasy.

BEAR
Stas, Kyiv

Me draemin is mair real as me waakenin. Idda day, I lay me mind wi airrents. But when A'm laid til, da real wirld claps back. "Da sleep o Raison Maks Maras," as Goya pat it. Noo een o dis phrase's mony meanins is you canna hadd fae tinkin. You maun akkadør in oardir tae tink firnenst reality.
Daday I waantit tae ging back tae me bairndom. An sae I 'escapit' tae whar de'r nae war: tae Makiivka, Ust-Kamenohorsk, an Zakarpattia o me bairndom. Noo, when A'm doon-apøn-it, I lay me intil me bonhoga. Da first time, I tocht step-bi-step trowe ivvry preschøl phase. Noo I keep a bear i blura. De ir twa teddy bears: me ain bear at I mind an anidder een, a made-up een. An eddir A'm tristin me peerie laalie, or da idder, endumous blaegit een, is tristin me. A'm tinkin lang, an de'r nae war. Lat me say hit alood – "a spo". Da wird soonds datna lichtsome: spo.

Notes:
The word **mara** literally means nightmare, but the word itself comes from a monster who would terrorise the dreams of people.

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The word **bonhoga** means a spiritual or childhood place, with its literal translation being 'child's pasture'. It is also used in a more jocular sense to refer to someone's bed.
The phrase **i blura** is used in several senses; to keep something secret, to brood over something privately, or to be in covert cahoots with another.
Shaetlan has dozens of words for the different patterns of animal's coats, especially sheep wool. **Blaegit** means having dark spots on a white body.
The word 'fantasy' was quite tricky to translate into Shaetlan. In the end I decided on **spo**; the word itself is more often used as a verb to mean 'predict or foretell', but it has an older usage of 'indulging in fantasies'. It's use as a noun here is something of a coinage on my part. I also toyed with the idea of using **glamourie** here, which is a noun that refers to being under a spell or an illusion.

MUSHROOM
Oksana, Kyiv region

I'm walking to the post office when I hear a loud explosion that rocks my whole body. I turn around. Behind the village a black mushroom of smoke climbs to the sky. Along the road people turn to look and stand in silence. The people watch as the mushroom grows. They watch. The mushroom grows. They watch. The mushroom begins to dissipate. They watch. The mushroom fades into a cloud of black and gray and disappears behind the trees. The people turn around and go about their business. And the world fills with sound once more.

MUSHROOM
Oksana, Kyiv region

A'm gyaan til da post-office when A'm dovvened bi a lood bang. I swirr mesel aroond. Ahint da village a imey paddock-støl o reek climms idda lift. Alang da rodd fokk turns tae stoor an staand i silence. Da fokk gaans at da growin paddock-støl. Dey stoor. Da paddock-støl growes. Dey stoor. Da paddock-støl sterts tae sinder. Dey stoor. Da paddock-støl dwines tae a clood o swart an gro an hwims oot a sicht ahint da trees. Da fokk turns aroond an gengs aboot dir aerrends. An da wirld lippers ower wi soond agaen.

Notes:
Dovvened means to be bewildered or stupefied by a sudden loud noise.
The use of the word **stoor** here holds a double-meaning; it means 'stare' but the same word is also used to mean 'dust/soot'. So the phrase turns tae stoor can be read as 'turning to look' or 'turning to dust'.
Similarly, the word imey refers to the blackness of soot.

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THUNDER
Kateryna, Kyiv

—When it all began, we started playing a new game—says a woman from Kharkiv, while rocking her three-year-old
daughter on a swing.
—What kind of game?
—Whenever you hear thunder, run down to the basement. The younger one likes it. But the older one doesn't understand why we didn't hide from the thunder before.

GRITTIN
Kateryna, Kyiv

—At da atset o it aa, we stertit playin wis a new game – says a wife fae Kharkiv, nuggin apø da swing her
tree-year-aald lass wis in.
—Whit kind o a game?
—Onytime du hears grittin, haste dee doon tae da baesment. Da peeriest een laeks hit. But da aaldest een døsna ken whit wye we didna hoid fae da tjordin afore.

Notes:
Technically, the word **grittin** means the rolling sound of thunder, whilst **tjordin** refers to thunder more plainly (etymologically means 'Thor's din'). **Grittin** also sounds close to the word for crying, which is **greetin**.

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HOUSING
Dmytro, Kyiv

Looking at the buildings we saw smashed kitchens, remnants of bedrooms, nursery wallpaper, pieces of mirrors hanging in the bathrooms. Taking it in, we realized that some of the owners of these apartments had been saving money for a half of their lives to build and fill up these spaces. Some of them were probably going to spend their whole lives here.
We saw a billboard in front of one of the buildings, saying: "At last! Some affordable housing for you."

BIGGINS
Dmytro, Kyiv

Kannin da biggins we saa da shallmillens o but-ends, bedrooms laid in brukk, bairns' waapaepir, da brokken snugamulya o mirrors hung idda toilets. Seein til it, it faas apø wis da wye da aaners o dis flats wis pittin-by money fir half o dir lives sae at dey micht geng penkin aboot dem. Mony o dem wis laek tae faa hagasted here.
We saa a billboard afore een o da biggins, at said: "At last! Some hoosin du can faa."

Notes:
To kan something means to look at something from a distance and attempt to discern something about it.
Hagasted means to become familiarized to a certain place by staying long in it.
Faa literally translates to the English 'fall', but it has many extended uses in Shaetlan, including 'to realise' 'to become' and 'to afford'. With this latter one, it is usually used in the negative: I canna faa hit. So the last line here becomes something of a pun: 'At last! Some housing you can afford/fall'.

LAND
Halyna Dmytrivna, Bilopillia, Sumy Region

Of course, I planted the field, you bet! I've harvested here and sown here. Sure, my house is kind of gone, but I have to sow the crops. The land has also suffered. First it was littered with shells. Then deminers came and said, "Ma'am, go stay with your son. We'll fix your land." And they assured me: they were all locals, they knew everything, they understood how things worked. But now, I must take care of it. For when you till a field, when you sow it, it's as though you're laying your hands on another person—stroking her skin, combing her hair. And I thought to myself, "It's good that the heaviest shelling took place back in March, when the land was still asleep."

LAAND
Halyna Dmytrivna, Bilopillia, Sumy Region

O coorse, I set da rig, du best believe hit! A'm winned da voar an hairst here. Yea, me hus is kind o vodd noo, but I maun kest da coarn. Da laand is laekwise sweein. First hit wis skailed wi shalls. Den da deminers cam an says, "Wife, geng du an stay wi dee son. We'll sort dy laand fir dee." An dey telt me: dey wir aa neeborfokk, dey kent hit aa, wir wint wi hoo tings wrocht. But noo, I maun hird it. Fir when you till da field, when you saa it, hit's laek y'ir layin yir haands apø anidder boady — kjoderin-aboot her skin, reddin her hair. An I tocht tae mesel, "Hit's a mercy at da warst o da shallin wis by at Maerch, when da laand wis still lurrin."

Notes:
The phrase **winned da voar/hairst** literally means 'I've worked the soil of spring/autumn'. The word **vodd** means 'ruined/empty', used most often in the phrase **vodd hoose**, an abandoned house.
To swee is to hurt, especially in the sense of burning or stinging pain.
In Shaetlan the word **wife** refers to women generally, rather than specifically married women.

ROOM
Valeriia, Sumy region–Warsaw

Language can be so wise. Yes, language.
Take, for instance, the Polish word "pokój" for a room also means peace. Such a nice word. I think about it before I go to bed. Opening the window, I listen to the sound of rain and cars rustling on the asphalt. And it reminds me of home. But back there, there is neither peace nor any room of mine.

ROOM
Valeriia, Sumy region–Warsaw

A leid can be sae wise. Yea, a leid.
Tak, fir instance, da Polish wird "pokój" fir a room laekwise means paece. Sicna boannie wird. I tink on him afore I lay me til. Oppenin da windoo, I lø tae da soonds o smirr an da hush o cars ower da tarmac. An it minds me o hame. But back hame, de'r nae paece nor ony room o me ain.

Notes:
Smirr refers to a fine, drizzling rain.
Hush is a word that specifically refers to a muffled rushing, rustling or murmuring sound, like the sound of waves breaking in the distance, or the wind through leaves. It is also a word associated with lullabies.

BLOOD
Mariia, Chernihiv

I felt like I was on a cloud—there was a buzzing in my head and my body became so light, light . . . And then the scent of blood reached me. It's crazy. I think that's what saved me: the surprise or the fear. Maybe, blood is like gas—it smells in order to alarm you? And it seems that's when I woke up. I started moving. I signaled that I was alive. The volunteer guys who saved me said later that if another ten seconds had passed, I could have died of blood loss.
I see a lot of blood these days. I am not afraid of it; I just see it. Had there always been so much blood before? Even when I look at the map of our occupied territories, they've been marked in red and pink. It seems as if the map is bleeding from its edges.

BLØD
Mariia, Chernihiv

I felt laek I wis apø a clood—de wir a drummin i me haed an me boady wis faan sae licht, licht … An den da vaam o blød cam ower me. Hit's wild. I doot dat's whit saved me: da begunk or da gluff o hit. Mibbe blød is laek gas—hit maks a guff tae var dee. An it wid seem at yun's when I waakened. I stertit tae move.
I lat dem ken de wir a pja i me yet. Da volunteer fokk at saved me telt me laetir dat if anidder ten seconds had gien by, I michta deed fae da drüri.
A'm seen alokk o blød dese days. A'm no fairt o it; I joost see it. Wis it laek dis afore, dis amoont o blød?
Even when I look apø da map o wir occupied laands, dey'r pentit i yatlin an pink. Hit's laek da map is bløddin fae it's aedges.

Notes:
Vaam means scent, but it also has connotations with an ominous atmosphere coming over a person.
Begunk is a word that means to get a nasty surprise, while gluff is a sudden fright.
Pja is a word that means a pulsation of life or breath.
Drüri means blood flowing from a wound.

LAMP
Kateryna, Vyshhorod

That day, I shut off the water and unplugged all the appliances. Only one lamp would not turn off. A glowing orb—one of those salt rock lamps. Apparently, there was still some current left in it. It turns on and off by touch. But that day, it did not want to go out. It only changed colors. I tried touching it everywhere. I spoke with it.
Well alright, dear. Stay on. Wait for us.
I tapped it a couple more times, trying to find a color that would fit a house being abandoned because of war. Cold blue, soft lilac, hot red?
I left it on warm yellow. The color that glowed in the window of my childhood kitchen.

LAMP
Kateryna, Vyshhorod

Dat day, I stekkit da waatir an unpluggit aa da appliances. Onnly ee lamp widna slokk. A glurrin ee—wan o dem saat rock lamps. Hit wid seem at de wir some pja i him still. He gings on an aff bi touch. But dat day, he didna want tae slokk. He onnly cheenged colours. I grippit him aa ower. I spakk til him.
Weel, hjarta. Bide du here. Bide du efter wis.
I tappit him twartree mair times, lookin tae fin a colour at wid set a hus made vodd fae war. Iset blue, saaft kurki, lowin red?
I left him apø a glødin yalloo. Da glisker o colour idda windoo o me bairndom keetchin.

Notes:
Slokk means to put out a light, to extinguish.
There is no word for lilac in Shaetlan, so I went with **kurki**, which is a lichen that produces purple dye (most colour-words in Shaetlan are named for the plants or things which produce the pigment).

FAREWELL
Oksana, Lviv

The people we hosted are leaving. They say goodbye to us, hug us, and drive on. We barely know each other—we just exchanged names and a couple of looks. But they hug me for so long and so tightly that I think we must be the dearest people to each other.

FAREWELL
Oksana, Lviv

Da fokk at we imbu'd is laevin. Dey say dir farewells tae wis, hug wis, an drive on. W'ir fremds tae een anidder – we joost swappit naems an twartree looks. But dey hadd me fir datn lang I tink w'ir surely frends.

Notes:
The phrase **Imbu da fremd** is an old adage of hospitality, literally translating to 'welcome the stranger'.
Where a **fremd** is a stranger, **frend** means kin. I have always liked the way there is only the difference of one letter between these two words.

JOY

Masha, Kostiantynivka – Ivano-Frankivsk

Here I am often asked: where does my joy come from? What am I happy for? Sometimes these questions come with a grain of reproach. And with good reason, because in all reality I have nothing and no one left. Just my little Sashka. But when I realized it, it was like a revelation: they've already taken everything from me, why should I also let them steal my days? They have no right. And I stopped thinking like everyone else, "Just a little more patience, and we will win, and life will start again." No. This is life. It's here, and we are not going to have another one. And victory won't be like waking up after a bad dream, "Phew, I am home, everything is alright." It's never going to be like that ever again, because this is not a dream. There is no "home" to wake up in anymore. And so I made this resolution: I will do everything I can for victory, but I will not give them a single day. There won't be one day of me wallowing on the ground and suffering. I will rejoice just to spite them. Yes, it's joy from anger, yes.

BLYDENESS

Masha, Kostiantynivka – Ivano-Frankivsk

A'm aksed dat aafen here: whit wye am I sicna blyde boady? Whit am I sae lichtsome fir? De'r a trøttelin wye aboot dis questions. An fair enyoch, fir in aa da wirld I hae nothin an naebody left. Save fir me peerie Sashka. But when I cam tae ken dis, hit wis laek an uplowsin: dey've taen hit aa fae me noo, whit wye wid I let dem tieve me days an aa? Dey dunna hae da richt. An I stoppit tinkin laek aabody else, 'Joost akkadør a start langer, an we will win, an life will start agaen." Nah. Dis is life. Hit's here, an w'ir no gettin anidder een. An victory winna be laek waakenin efter a mara, 'Phew, A'm hame, hit's aa fine." Hit's no tae be laek dat ivvir agaen, fir dis isna a draem. De'r nae "hame" tae waaken-up in onymair. An sae I laid on a kind o aamous: A'll leesh-at fir victory, but A'll no be gien dem wan single day. De'll be no day dat I pinnish apø da grunnd. A'll kilk aboot joost tae gripe dem. Yea yea, hit's makkin filska fae ilska.

Notes:

Akkadør means to endure or persevere.

To lay on an aamous is a little more specific than making a resolution; it means to promise a gift of something should a situation turn out the way one hopes for.

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Pinnish means to suffer, especially in the sense of from cold or starvation.
The phrase **kilk aboot** means to be full of the joy of life and mirth.
Filska means to make fun, while **ilska** means malice, hatred, anger or misfortune.

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FREEDOM
Vadym, Konotop

Freedom is such a thing: nobody is going to obtain it for you. No one will give you freedom—it won't be wrapped like a present, and you shouldn't expect it either. You can only make it yourself. Yes, handmade [laughing]. There are no freedom factories. It's not mass-produced.

FREEDOM
Vadym, Konotop

Freedom is sicna ting: naebody is gyaan tae geng furt an get it fir dee. Nae een will haand dee freedom—hit winna be wrappit laek a kjog, an du sudna lippen it eddir. Du can onnly makk hit deesel. Yea, hand-makkit [gaffin]. De irna ony freedom factories. Hit's no mass-maakit.

Notes:
The word **mak** means 'to make' but also has connotations with knitting, with the phrase 'haandmakkit' meaning hand-knitted.

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SUN
Nina, Konotop

When the war started, I thought I would cry a lot. Because, generally, I cry easily. But now I'm all plugged up. In all this time, not one tear. I only cried once. It was when I left the shelter after sitting down there for a long time. Stepping into the bright sunlight, I burst into tears. I walked home like that, and I wasn't sure whether it was a real cry or just tears falling.

SOLJA
Nina, Konotop
At da atset o da war, I tocht I micht gowl alokk. Becis A'm wint tae greet aesily. But noo me een's aa stappit. No wan tear ava. I onnly grett ee time. Hit wis when I gød furt oot o da shelter efter settin me doon dere fir a bardasoga. Strampin itil da solja, I stertit tae gowl. I gød hame laek dat, an I wisna sure if hit wis real greetin or joost tears drappin.

Notes:
Solja means specifically brilliant sunshine through heavy rain or between dark rainclouds.

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Some notes on translating entries from A Ukrainian Dictionary of War

I found the first read-through of the material pretty distressing. Crying struck me as a more appropriate reaction than translating. And I noted a certain reluctance to put such distressing material, often regarding the direct effects of horrifying violence on civilians, into Gaelic, a language I enormously love. (We pronounce the word as Gall-ick, not Gay-lick.)

Nonetheless, I realised that we already have in Gaelic quite a lot of writing dealing with war. There are memories of fighting in the trenches from the First World War, and of prisoners of war from the Second, who were able to use their native Gaelic to communicate in such a manner that no one close by could understand.

Besides which, probably the best poetry written about the Second War in the British Isles is in Gaelic. Somhairle MacGill-Eain (Sorley MacLean, 1911-1996) and Deòrsa Caimbeul Hay (George Campbell Hay 1915-1984) both wrote about serving in the British forces in North Africa. Hay left fragments of a major poem entitled Mochtàr is Dùghall (Mochtar and Dugald) which sets the background and the experiences of a Scottish and an Arab soldier side by side. In particular, he has a marvellous poem, written in a 'canzonetta' form borrowed from Petrarch, about the 1943 bombardment of Biserta in Tunisia. That contains the celebrated line 'seann chìs àbhaisteach na fala cumant'' ('the old familiar tax of common blood'), referring specifically to civilian casualties. It is therefore relevant to what is happening in Ukraine today.

One welcome challenge was offered by words like 'shrapnel', 'deminers' or 'mass-produced', for which no Gaelic equivalent comes readily to mind. With 'shrapnel', for example, do I introduce a completely new word, given that this was in fact the surname of the inventor? Or do I use a circumlocution, like 'fragments of shells'?

In choosing which entries to work on, I found I tended to avoid anything too explicitly violent or potentially sensational. Instead I was drawn to entries that centred on a specific image, or a paradox, or a pondered reflection. In any case, these are items which will tend to come over well in another language. With the Gaelic, my effort was to devise renderings which would be colloquial rather than literary in style, and would

evoke people actually talking, while at the same time being elegantly phrased and pleasing to read. Having the Ukrainian text to hand was useful because, as so often happens, there were things in the English translation that weren't there in the Ukrainian. Going back to the original made everything simpler.

I was very happy to take part in this project for at least two reasons. Translations, mainly of poetry, from a variety of European languages have formed an important part of my own apprenticeship and ongoing development as a poet in Gaelic. Besides which, I continue to believe strongly in a European vocation for the Gaelic language, in other words, for its relevance beyond the boundaries of Scotland itself. Working on these entries was for me consistent with these aims and these convictions.

Christopher Whyte

à FACLAIR COGADH NA H-UCRAIN

GRANNIES
Yurii, Kharkiv

When the building across from ours was destroyed, two grannies lost their apartments. They refused to leave. They didn't want to live in someone else's home, and so they just sat on the bench near the entrance. They were hit by shrapnel and died there. We buried them in the yard. We dug their holes between shellings.

SEANMHAIREAN
Yurii, Kharkiv

Nuair a sgrios iad an togalach far comhair, chaill dithis sheanmhair na h-àrasan aca. Dhiùlt iad an trèigsinn. Cha robh iad ag iarraidh a bhith beò ann an dachaigh aig cuideigin eile, 's mar sin cha d' rinn iad ach suidhe air being faisg air an doras chumanta. Fhuair iad bàs nuair a bhuail srapnail iad. Rinn sinn an tiodhlachadh sa chuairt-lios, 's sinn a' cladhachadh nan toll eadar ionnsaighean nan sligean.

THUNDER
Kateryna, Kyiv

'When it all began, we started playing a new game'—says a woman from Kharkiv, while rocking her three-year-old daughter on a swing.
'What kind of game?'
'Whenever you hear thunder, run down to the basement. The younger one likes it. But the older one doesn't understand why we didn't hide from the thunder before.'

TÀIRNEANACH
Kateryna, Kyiv

'An uair a thòisich sin uile, thòisich sinn ri cluiche ùir,' tha boireannach à Kharkiv ag ràdh, fhad 's a thulgas i a nighean, a tha trì bliadhna a dh'aois, air ais 's air adhart air dreallaig.
'Gu dè a' chluich a th' ann?'
'Gach uair a chluinneas tu tàirneanach, ruith sìos gus an t-ìoslach. Bidh sin 'na thoileachas don tè as òige. Ach cha bhi an tè as sine a' tuigsinn carson nach robh sin gar ceiltinn bhon tàirneanach roimhe.

STAR
Viktoriia, Kharkiv

At one point we thought that we didn't have any good household traditions, so we made a Christmas Star: a huge one, very tall. It was so tall that it had to be carried like a spear to our apartment on the fifth floor of our building. And we screwed in some light bulbs as well. Then we learned some carols—only the Ukrainians have carols, right? Well, we take it to another level. And so, we went caroling. We made so much money during the first year that we were able to sew some proper winter costumes for ourselves. People started booking us. Our relatives, friends, even strangers kept ordering the "Vertep" nativity at the holidays. All this time, I've kept our star on the balcony.

RIONNAGAN
Viktoriia, Kharkiv

An uair a chuireas sinn teip air na h-uinneagan, gus nach bi iad a' bloighdeachadh is bomadh gar ruighinn, bidh coltas rionnagan oirre. Rinn mi an aon rud le m' uinneagan fhìn. Teip nach eil trìd-shoilleir, ceithir stiallan a' dèanamh croise air gach uinneig, air an dà thaobh – mar a tha sgrìobhte san leabhar-mìneachaidh. Air madainn ghrianaich, bidh mi a' dùsgadh agus an sin, air na ballachan, chì mi sgàil na teip. Mar rionnagan is iad gu mall a' snàgadh. Bu mhiann leam nach robh cuimhn' eile ach seo agam air a' chogaidh.

STORIES
Vika, Mariupol

You're a writer, aren't you? It's easier for you, when you write—you don't see the people on the receiving end of your stories. For me, whenever people look at me, I start pitying myself so much that all my words fail. Or the opposite: sometimes I think that maybe I haven't experienced enough, and it's ridiculous to go around sharing my stories like this. Because I don't know what that other person has gone through. And maybe that person thinks the same way. And so we both sit in silence. But actually, we have both gone through so much—enough for a hundred people.

SGEULACHDAN
Vika, Mariupol

'S e sgrìobhadair a th' annad, nach eil? Bidh e nas fuarasta dhut, 's tus' a' sgrìobhadh – cha bhi thu faicinn an fheadhainn a leughas na sgeulachdan agad. Ach gach uair a sheallas na daoine orm, bidh mi a' cur a liuthad de thruas ormsa fhìn 's gum bi na faclan a' fàilligeadh. Air neo a' cheart-aghaidh: uaireannan bidh mi creidsinn nach do dh'fhidrich mi gu leòr 's gu bheil e gòrach 's mi a' dol mun cuairt a' co-roinneadh nan sgeulachadan agam. Oir chan eil fhios agam dè tha an neach eile air fidreadh. Agus math dh'fhaoite gum bi esan a' smaointinn an ceart rud. Mar sin mairidh sinn nar dithis nar suidhe. Ach san fhìrinneachd, tha an dithis dhinn air na dh'fhòghnadh airson ceud dhaoine fhidreadh.

KEYS
Arina, Makiivka–Kyiv

These days many of us have a lot of different keys. Sometimes it's a lot of keys in a big bunch. Sometimes a couple of bunches spread across pockets. Keys to the house you were forced to leave, keys to the house your parents were forced to leave. Keys to the apartments of friends and acquaintances who asked you to watch their plants.
In time, I've had to leave all my homes—I had three of them. And, for whatever reason, still keep all three batches of keys. I still remember which one opens each lock. Even though I am not sure whether the buildings are still intact or who lives there now. But there is one batch I don't recognize. Here it is, with just two keys. And here I am, looking at it, still hoping to remember.

IUCHRAICHEAN
Arina, Makiivka–Kyiv

Sna lathannan seo bidh tòrr iuchraichean diofraichte aig mòran dhinn. Uaireannan 's e tòrr iuchraichean ann am bagaid mhòir a th' ann. Uaireannan paidhir bhagaidean a bhios agad nad phocaidean. Iuchraichean an taigh a b' fheudar dhut a thrèigsinn no iuchraichean an taigh a b' fheudar do d' phàrantan a thrèigsinn. Iuchraichean nan àrasan aig càirdean no luchd-eòlais a dh'iarr ort cùram a ghabhail de 'n lusan.

Le dol seachad na h-ùine, b' fheudar dhomh mo dhachaighean uile a thrèigsinn – bha trì dachaighean agam. Agus, gu dè an reusan, tha trì bagaidean de dh'iuchraichean agam fhathast. Tha mi a' cuimhneachadh fhathast ciod an iuchair a dh'fhosglas gach glasadh. Ged nach eil mi cinnteach a bheil an togalach slàn no cò tha fuireachd an sin a-nis. Ach tha aon grunnan ann nach eil mi ag aithneachadh. Sin agad e, chan eil ach dà iuchair ann. Agus tha mi an seo, a' sealltainn air, 's dòchas agam an còmhnaidh cuimhn' a bhith tighinn orm.

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BULLET
Mykola, Khmelnytskyi

I don't know if I've taken any sins upon my soul. I just aim and fire—but as I pull the trigger, I close my eyes. Whether my bullet has killed someone or not is anyone's guess.

PEILEIR
Mykola, Khmelnytskyi

Chan eil fhios agam a bheil peacaidhean aig m' anam no nach eil. Cha bhi mi ach ag amas is a' losgadh agus an uairsin dùinidh mi mo shùilean. Chan urrainn dhomh ach tuairmeas a dhèanamh an do bhuail mo pheileir cuideigin no nach do bhuail.

JOY

Masha, Kostiantynivka – Ivano-Frankivsk

Here I am often asked: where does my joy come from? What am I happy for? Sometimes these questions come with a grain of reproach. And with good reason, because in all reality I have nothing and no one left. Just my little Sashka.
But when I realized it, it was like a revelation: they've already taken everything from me, why should I also let them steal my days? They have no right. And I stopped thinking like everyone else, "Just a little more patience, and we will win, and life will start again." No. This is life. It's here, and we are not going to have another one. And victory won't be like waking up after a bad dream, "Phew, I am home, everything is alright." It's never going to be like that ever again, because this is not a dream. There is no "home" to wake up in anymore.
And so I made this resolution: I will do everything I can for victory, but I will not give them a single day. There won't be one day of me wallowing on the ground and suffering. I will rejoice just to spite them. Yes, it's joy from anger, yes.

ÀGH

Masha, Kostiantynivka – Ivano-Frankivsk

Bidh iad a' feòrachadh dhiom gu tric an seo – cò às a thig an t-àgh? Dè bhios gad dhèanamh toilichte? Aig amannan bidh beagan achmhasan sa cheist. Is tha iad ceart, san fhìrinneachd chan eil rud no duine sam bith agam a-nis seach mo Shasha beag. Ach nuair a thuig mi e, b' e seòrsa foillseachais a bh' ann: thug iad bhuam gach uile rud a-cheana, carson a bhithinn a' ceadachadh dhaibh mo làthannan a ghoid cuideachd? Chan eil de chòir aca air sin. Agus sguir mi de smaointinn mar chàch: 'Chan fheudar ach beagan foighidinn a bhith agad fhathast, bidh buaidh againn agus tòisichidh a' bheatha uair eile'. Tha sin ceàrr. Is e seo a' bheatha, na th' againn a-nis, is cha bhi tè eile againn. Agus cha bhi a' bhuaidh mar gu robh thu a' dùsgadh às dèidh droch-bhruadair: 'Taing do Dhia, tha mi aig an taigh, tha a h-uile rud mar a bu chòir'. Cha tig sin air ais gu là luain, o nach e bruadar a th' ann an seo. Chan eil 'dachaigh' ann fhathast sam b' urrainn dhut a bhith dùsgadh.
Agus shònraich mi na leanas: Nì mi mo dhìcheall chum 's gum buadhaich sinn, ach cha bhi mi a' toirt dhaibh là sam bith. Cha bhi là ann is mise a' lobanachadh air an làr is a' fulang. Bidh mi aoibhneach neo-ar-thaing dhaibh. Seadh, 's ann às an fheirg a thig an t-àgh.

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FREEDOM
Vadym, Konotop

Freedom is such a thing: nobody is going to obtain it for you. No one will give you freedom—it won't be wrapped like a present, and you shouldn't expect it either. You can only make it yourself. Yes, handmade [laughing]. There are no freedom factories. It's not mass-produced.

SAORSA
Vadym, Konotop

'S ann mar sin a tha an t-saorsa – cha bhi duine sam bith ga solaradh dhut. Cha bhi duine sam bith ga toirt dhut – cha tèid a pasgadh mar ghibht, 's cha bu choir dhut feitheamh rithe. Chan urrainn dhut ach a cruthachadh thu fhèin – seadh, bidh i làmh-dhèanta (a' gàireachdaich). Cha tèid a saothrachadh ann am factoraidhean, 's i ga mòr-chinneasachadh.

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BODY
Sofiia, Lviv

People usually think about their body most when it's in pain, right? That's when they feel it the most. I never thought I would feel my country as if it was a body. I go shopping, I walk up to the shop's door, I press the handle down, and it seems to me that it is in pain. There are open wounds hundreds of miles away, and here, everything hurts.

COLAINN
Sofiia, Lviv

Bidh na daoine a' smaointinn air a' cholainn nuair a bhios iad a' fulang, nach bi? 'S ann an uairsin a bhios nas mò de mhothachadh aca oirre. Cha bhithinn a' creidsinn riamh gum bithinn a' faireachdainn mo dhùthcha fhìn mar cholainn. Bidh mi a' dol a cheannach, thèid mi suas gu doras a' bhùtha, cuiridh mi mo làmh air a làmhrachan agus faireachdainn agam mar gu robh e a' fulang. Ceudan mile bho sin tha leòntan fosgailte ann agus an seo bidh gach uile rud a' fulang.

APPLES
Anna, Kyiv

That night I fell asleep in the bathtub—a bucket of blankets and pillows—listening to the most powerful explosions here since the beginning of the war.
Long ago, in my past life, I was crazy in love. We took our first trip together to a house in the Carpathian mountains. It was deep in autumn. As we fell asleep in the attic, on a bed that was not much more comfortable than a bathtub, I listened to the sound of apples falling in the garden. Thump, thump, thump, from all sides, large and ripe, at a measured pace, all night long. I was happy.
Now, when I fall asleep to explosions, I hear those apples. I want so badly for it to just be those garden apples hitting the ground around us.

ÙBHLAN
Anna, Kyiv

An oidhche sin thàinig cadal orm sa bhallan-ionnlaid is e 'na bhucaid làn de phlangaidean is cluasagan. Bha mi a' cluinntinn nan spreadhaidhean na bu bhodharaich' a bh' ann bhon a thòisich an cogadh.

Mòran ùine air ais, bha mi às mo bheachd le gaol. An ciad turas a rinn sinn còmhla, chaidh sinn gu taigh san t-Sliabh Charpaitian. Bha sin aig meadhan an fhoghair. 'S sinn a' dol nar cadal san seòmar-mullaich, air leabaidh nach robh mòran nas comhfhurtaile na ballan-ionnlaid, bha mi a' cluinntinn fuaim nan ùbhlan a bha a' tuiteam anns a' gharraidh. Bum, bum, bum bho gach taobh, toirteil is abaich, gu riaghailteach, ceumnaichte, fad na h-oidhche gu lèir. Bha mi air mo dhòigh.

A-nis, nuair a chluinneas mi na spreadhaidhean 's mi dol 'nam chadal, cluinnidh mi na h-ùbhlan cuideachd. Tha mi ag ionndrainn gu dearbh nach robh dad sam bith seach na h-ùbhlan a' bualadh air an ùir mun timcheall oirnn.

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