WELFARE

Translated by Juliet Schofield

A play in one act

CHARACTERS

NEIGHBOR

FYODAR FYODOROV
MARIA MARIEVA
ILYA ILYEV
KOSTIA KOSTIN
KATIA KATERINOVA
VERA VEROVA
YULIA YULIEVA
EVGENIA EVGENEVA
STAS STASOV
INNA INNOVA
BORIS BORISOV
PETR PETROV
TATIANA TATIANOVA
IRYNA IRYNOVA
ALEXANDR ALEXANDROV
IVAN IVANOV

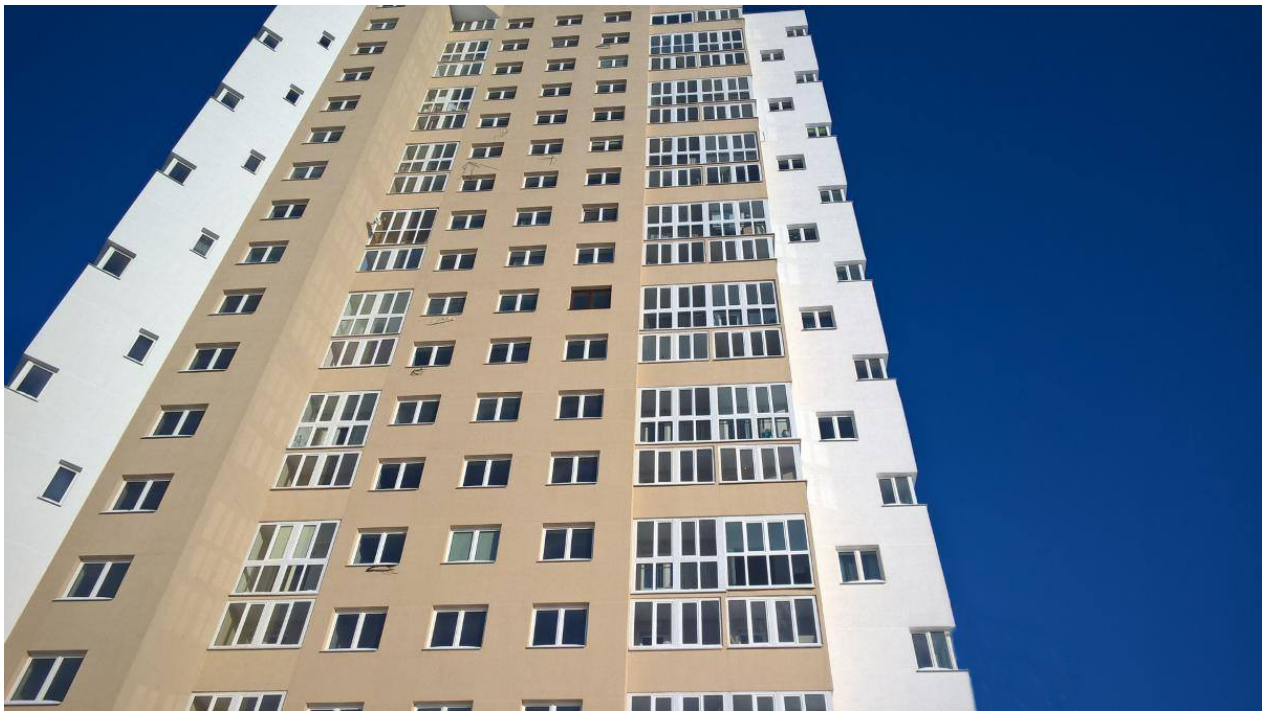
SALES GIRL
MAN WITH A DOG
NUN
FIRST POLICEMAN
CASHIER
SECOND POLICEMAN
DRINKER
COLLECTOR
GOD
GANGSTER
OLD MAN
OLD LADY
CHEMISTRIST
HUSBAND
CHILD
TAXI DRIVER
OTHER NEIGHBOR

May. A small district in the outskirts of a capital town. A newly set, yet high-rise house, which is situated next to a village on one side and next to a forest on another. It's not too early morning of a weekday. The neighbor is drinking coffee and reading a closed group of the house cooperative in Facebook. She pays attention to the comments to her posts especially.

FYODAR FYODOROV
2 weeks at 15:22

Neighbors! One can't do so! Have a look at the 6th window counting from the bottom. It's brown! It's 10th floor, the flat number 77, if I'm right. What on earth people are thinking about when doing such things?

Like · Comment



MARIA MARIEVA What's the problem with the colour?
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:23

ILYA ILYEV Maybe its mismatching to other windows, isn't it? Or maybe the problem is it looks like there is no window at all when looking from the ground? If one likes the colour one may make it brown only inside the flat, and not to vandalize the whole front of the building.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:25

MARIA MARIEVA I don't mean aesthetic issues. Should one be punished for?
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:26

FYODAR FYODOROV Yes, with a fee and remounting of the window.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:27

KOSTIA KOSTIN A person have the right to mount any window one fancies! The flat and the window inside it are one's property! Or do we have a strict regulatory law in the house, where there are – just like in the criminal code! – written rules of using one's own flat! It's a pity that the window is brown! The perfect one would be violet!!!!

Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:34

FYODAR FYODOROV Luckily, you are wrong. The colour of a window frame, it's look etc. should be agreed with the main architect of the district, but not with the house cooperative of the owners.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:36

KOSTIA KOSTIN You'd better place the person in prison for this! Mind your own business, our lives aren't simple as they are already! Peeeeople, be more kind and don't interfere into other people's lives! What if this window was your neighbor's dream?!!!! He now passes by, looks at his window and realizes that he is happy!
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:37

KATIA KATERINOVA And I think that the Chairperson and the Board shall implement an elucidatory conversation with the owner. And also place the one's picture on the informational desk in order to prevent others from following violations.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:40

VERA VEROVA Oh dear God!!! Accusatory desks from the Soviet times! Let's get back to those times and bring back anonymous reports and collectivization!
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 15:41

ILYA ILYEV To my mind, it's enough to change the front cover-up into white. But to prevent other from doing so we have to raise people's awareness on the subject. Also, I, personally, welcome anonymous reports. This is a great instrument of public control, it's widely used in civilized society. And there is nothing to be ashamed of.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 16:23

VERA VEROVA It's great You don't despise reports) At least now we know who we live near to.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 16:30

ILYA ILYEV Right, once you get a fee for the parking on grass near the house, you may come strictly to me.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 16:31

NEIGHBOR
2 weeks at 22:23

Guys, it's horrible, I can hear a big dog barking loudly!! This is what I've been scared of! It's silly to hope that the dog has just come for a visit. It's almost half past 10 pm. Please, someone, cool me down:((((
Like · Comment

YULIA YULIEVA Maybe it's an action movie? Which floor?
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 22:28

NEIGHBOR No, it's life. I'm on the fifth one, but I don't know where it barks. Maybe it's ended already, sounds quite now, I have to fall asleep quickly not to hear it anymore.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 22:29

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Must be on your side. It's been quite on ours the whole evening.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 22:31

KOSTIA KOSTIN Stay strong, at least it barks not at your place.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 22:45

NEIGHBOR Thanks, I do, we'll get get used to everything soon.
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 22:46

STAS STASOV
2 weeks at 3:13

Does anyone but me hear this drunken trash party around 17th floor accompanied by shouts and swearing, though this time without music! Neighbors, be humans, if you can be called so, of course! I won't be coming and talking to you, I'd call the police, you'd be talking to them!!!!
Like · Comment

INNA INNOVA На 15 слышно как кто то по полу качается,как дерется что ли,но без слоат и даже атздохоат,стулья задатигаются…On the 15th it sounds like someone's wiggling on the floor, like someone's fighting or so, but without words or even sighs, chairs are being moved…
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 3:18

BORIS BORISOV Dear Stas!! In my turn I'd say your "drunken evenings" with shouts and endless laughter till 3 am got on my nerves… I totally get it, laughter make one live loner, but it keeps happening again and again… You ought to have some shame and respect to your neighbors. Let's live on friendly terms!! P.S. and send me your phone number so that next time I won't have to deal with the problem using "your methods"...
Like · Comment · 2 weeks at 8:48

STAS STASOV I do apologize, the phone number is sent.
Like · Comment ·2 weeks at 9:49

KATIA KATERINOVA
1 weeks at 12:20

Good afternoon! I'd like to know who else had to listen to the mayhem which took place in the three-rooms flat on the 4th floor on the forest side. We'd been listening songs till half past midnight, and on 4th floor itself the walls were vibrating from the music. To come and talk to the mob of drunk people won't end up with anything but conflict, reasonable conversation is impossible. People, why can't you live human-wise? There are lots of public places and if you're going to dance and sing till the midnight why can't you do it in places, which are suited specially for it, rent a cafe and don't turn your neighbor's life into hell?
Like · Comment

PETR PETROV At least I know that in flat #24 the battery has run down and also that they love the horse a lot *(it's a reference to the lyrics of two very popular songs to sing by people when drunk – TN)*. And it was heard even at the 7th floor.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 12:30· Editeed

EVGENIA EVGENEVA We also heard the concert of the drunken choir perfectly (especially in the toilet). But. Why those, who heard it very loudly, didn't call the police?!? They bother you, they violate your rights – why'd you keep quite? I didn't hear it in the bedroom, that's why I calmly went to bed. But this'll be happening behind my wall – I won't be nice, I'd call the police straight away. Which I wish you'd do too.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 14:03

VERA VEROVA Katia, I spoke with with you personally, at 21.20. I asked you kindly to have some patience. I can't kick people off the birthday party! I am ashamed in front of people, which I invite once a year, and someone is forcing into the flat. We all are humans! We have a merry affable company, we'd welcome everyone! But sometimes there are holidays in our lives, which we'd like to celebrate not till 7 pm. Dear neighbors, please forgive us everyone, that we disturbed your rest, but I'm confused that I can't invite people to the new apartment. The house is new, but guests must not be… Not to mention impossible karaoke. But it's not always possible to go to a

cafe with children. It was the second attempt to celebrate at home, we all should conform to each other, because celebrations don't happen so often.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 18:00

KATIA KATERINOVA Vera, we are all so nice in name, but it's better be in deed. You said you'd turn the music down, which you did not, then that singing followed. The way the music yelled was way beyond appropriate. We don't cause you such inconvenience and you don't have to conform to me, so why should I sympathize everyone around?
Like · Comment · 1 week at 21:24

TATIANA TATIANOVA So did this happen before 23.00?
Like · Comment · 1 week at 21:24

KATIA KATERINOVA Till half past midnight in general. Tatsiana, when the music is so loud, that it can be heard over 3 floors as if it's happening in your own flat, the law has nothing to do with it.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 21:26

VERA VEROVA When you came to me and asked me to turn the music down I turn everything off at 22.00. Three our men started to sing, excuse me, how should I shut their mouthes? I apologize once again, but don't see anything criminal in it. I actually feel ashamed, and I personally went to the 6th floor, it could be heard, but it wasn't on the 7th. It's just that we have such audibility, the music wasn't that loud, because a 2-years old child could sleep in this room
Like · Comment · 1 week at 22:03

VERA VEROVA Someone's just hammered, let's run to deal with it!
Like · Comment · 1 week at 22:05

VERA VEROVA If only you knew, who'd been singing…
Like · Comment · 1 week at 22:07

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Vera, who sang?) It's intriguing
Like · Comment · 1 week at 22:34

INNA INNOVA Hello, stranger darling))))) *(it references to the lyrics of a Belarusian song popular in 90s – TN)*
Like · Comment · 1 week at 23:20

TATIANA TATIANOVA Maybe one day I'll reach the neighbor, who just finished singing and playing the piano a couple of minutes ago… But for how long?!
Like · Comment · 1 week at 0:12

VERA VEROVA I'm sorry for you. He's lucky to have such a neighbor, who tolerates him more then once a year. I imagine what'd happen if I started to play piano. Our neighbors are annoyed even by radio, the repertoire is all wrong! Next year, I invite… The New Year somehow far away from our house… It's terrifying. Also I want to have some fun.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 10:16

NEIGHBOR
1 week at 23:12

The amateur of a home video! Write the number of your flat and I'll buy and deliver to You headphones with a long wire so that you'd finally watch and listen enough of it. All of you are young people, do you have problems with ears, or with impudence? Right now we've got to listen to it all together. I'm just sick of it, I won't mind it on Friday evening, but tomorrow is a working day, and there is no point running around the house. You'd better read the book, next time I'll take the trouble finding your room and will read You (to calm you down, finally) the rules of living in a house with many apartments. The house is turning into a dormitory, slow and steady. Our people

don’t have neither respect to each other, nor conscience. It’s already late, and I’m not just being picky from sheer boredom!!
Like · Comment

BORIS BORISOV And which apartment was disturbed by watching an action movie till 2 am?
Like · Comment · 1 week at 14:18

IRYNA IRYNOVA Boris, Invite neighbors to watch movies together!:)
Like · Comment · 1 week at 14:18

MARIA MARIEVA Repeat the movie session and you’ll find out in the morning))
Like · Comment · 1 week at 14:20

ILYA ILYEV Please, advise some good movie, I’ve got nothing to watch.
Like · Comment · 1 week at 15:51

PETR PETROV http://seasonvar.ru/serial-5131-Ajris.html
Like · Comment · 1 week at 16:09

VERA VEROVA This is just crazy! One can’t watch TV, can’t have guests, phones ans night life are disturbing, kids are forbade from running – when it’s going to end, it’s enough of it indeed. And if there are problems and complaints you’d better go straight to the neighbor and discuss it, you shouldn’t right in public what was done and by whom. Be humane, for god’s sake, it’s not a retirement home!!!
Like · Comment · 1 week at 18:39 · Edited

PETR PETROV
1 week at 22:23

Comrades smokers starting from 6 floor and higher, do not throw cigarette butts!!! Today I found this delight on my balcony. Watch videos with fires and think, do we really need it?! I was away for almost a week, and, so to say, “what if?” Do not neglect the fire safety! Discipline your guests! Use electricity and sticks if needed! Thank you.
Like · Comment

EVGENIA EVGENEVA It’s good that it didn’t fall in someone’s hood or on a head! And also it’s dirt under the windows… If you are from a piggery and not used to living clean – crap in you own home and be happy!! Such idiots are living in the house…
Like · Comment · 1 weeks at 22:29

NEIGHBOR
6 days at 23:14

Dear “dog owners”! I like animals very much, that’s why I don’t have any in my apartment, but to I can’t tolerate this torture no more. Well, someone managed to take care of the remains of the living processes of their pets (let’s have it straight, not everyone in our house!), but speaking of the noise produces by harmonious doggy company it is completely horrible! Crying children, who we hear too often, will grow up in our joy and it will end, but I won’t be tolerating barking and yawling of dogs in a high-rise house, and I am deeply sorry, and I am not wicked, I just crave for sleeping! So I think that once you’ve got animals, especially when they are not at all little ones like in this case, you’d better live in a private house, and if you don’t then, if you please, think and take care of your dog and of US – NEIGHBORS!!! Otherwise I’ll have to call the police as it is just the same kind of violation as maintenance works at night!
Like · Comment

INNA INNOVA
5 days at 15:12

People, have you no shame? Stop drilling! It's Saturday. It's impossible to stay at home! Around 8th floor

Like · Comment

ALEXANDR ALEXANDROV Totally agree
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:19

IVAN IVANOV Agree, does anyone know where it might be?
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:19

ALEXANDR ALEXANDROV 9th floor, maybe
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:21

INNA INNOVA Or 7th floor
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:22

IVAN IVANOV No, it's not 9th
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:22

ALEXANDR ALEXANDROV 8th floor, two-room apartment, forest side feels very close tp
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:23

IVAN IVANOV the same for 9th
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:32

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Ребята, пойдёмте искать!!! Guys, let's go seek!!!
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:36

IVAN IVANOV let's separate, I've got feeling that this some one might be on the 10th, I'm going there straight away
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:37

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Honestly, I've got enough of this shit!!! No respect at all! Not even mentioning the violation of the LAW! I'm having a conference call at 16.00 via Skype and I won't fancy not hearing people and them hearing the drill!!
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:37

EVGENIA EVGENEVA I'm heading to the 6th and 7th now.
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:38

EVGENIA EVGENEVA атстретила соседку на 7, тоже ходит ищет, с маленьким ребёнком на руках!!! Имейте соатесть, сатолочи! I've met a neighbor on the 7th, she's also wondering around looking for, with a small baby in her hands!!! Be ashamed, assholes!
Like · Comment · 5 days at 15:45

NEIGHBOR
4 days at 23:08

Shut your dog up, if you please, I've got no more strength for manners and politeness! Either feed it, or take for a walk. You can't? Call me – I'd go, I don't sleep anyway...((Can't do it, you know.
Like · Comment

YULIA YULIEVA The owner doesn't pick up the phone((

Like · Comment · 4 days at 23:10

YULIA YULIEVA We've already called the police((Poor thing is going crazy((
Like · Comment · 4 days at 23:10

NEIGHBOR What flat is this? And what kind of an owner is she? She is a monster! She took a dog, and torture her and the whole house!! If you've got no money don't get animals, if you got some – buy a house and live there happily with your dog!
Like · Comment · 4 days at 23:11

NEIGHBOR
3 days at 22:23

Neighbors! Achtung! I don't know why would we go down, but today I found a CIGARETTE BUTT on my balcony!! No one smokes in my apartment, and I open the window when I leave it, because it's hot and because I have the right to, and there is a synthetic carpet on the floor which the butt has landed on. Haven't you heard about the fire in a high rise house? The cause is to be investigated. And why wouldn't this be the cause?! Just imagine, if there was a baby in a carriage sleeping in the sun?! I don't think with this post I'd teach someone the right way to behave, but maybe I'll warn someone, who (just like me) stupidly leave windows wide open or open ones at night.
Like · Comment

STAS STASOV It's just crazy. I might need to set an insect screen. My wife's been asking for a long time. I assume, I'd set one because of your post.
Like · Comment · 3 days at 22:29

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Screens… Shall we stop breathing as well?! Sometimes it stinks horribly in the apartment… Neighbors, is it so hard to go down and smoke on street?? Moving means living, and smoking kills. So that's the golden mean!
Like · Comment · 3 days at 22:40

YULIA YULIEVA
2 days at 23:40

Fire alarm is on. Everyone's safe and sound????
Like · Comment

YULIA YULIEVA Or shall we run?)
Like · Comment · 2 days at 23:40

ILYA ILYEV Dear ladies!!! Who was smart enough to make a false call for the fire squad and saddle the house cooperative with debts? Someone was in danger? Someone's life was in danger? All issues are to be solved by the CHAIRPERSON!!!!! Call him if you have issues, which actually cannot be solved and which deal with common property of the cooperative. If you have NO conscience then call someone for the Board. And if it's "CATASTROPHE" then you may also complain to the UN. Think about your actions!!! And what they may cause!
Like · Comment · 2 days at 10:21 · Редактироатано

TATIANA TATIANOVA I assumed it's a personal, not the cooperative's responsibility if someone made a false call for the fire squad!
Like · Comment · 2 days at 10:30

KATIA KATERINOVA Ilya, you are all wrong in this case. Who and what for are you truing to blame. When the fire alarm is on it's a natural reaction to call for the fire squad. Shall one run

around the house and analyze the reasons the siren went on and the occurrence of the fire?! Although, they receive a signal to their post and they come according to this signal, what does the call from people have to do with it?
Like · Comment · 2 days at 10:38

IRYNA IRYNOVA All calls are now to be paid for. By the way, it costs some money. And fees from the fire department are rather significant. So, even if there was a threat to life you'd be saved first and then you'd get a bill for it.
Like · Comment · 2 days at 10:39

EVGENIA EVGENEVA Guys, can this alarm be heard everywhere in the house? Is it loud and audible or what?)
Like · Comment · 2 days at 19:32

ILYA ILYEV It's not loud. It's well heard only in three-rooms apartments facing the forest.
Like · Comment · 2 days at 19:49 · Редактироатано

EVGENIA EVGENEVA If this alarm won't be false next time, please, save me, would you?)) I was asleep and haven't heard a thing. It's rather scary…
Like · Comment · 2 days at 19:57

IVAN IVANOV
49 min ago

Seems like something/someone died… it's smells terrific on the first floor.
Like · Comment

PETR PETROV This is "greetings" from "dog owners"
Like · Comment · 47 min

IRYNA IRYNOVA What'd you mean, dog owners? What can smell like this?
Like · Comment · 32 min

PETR PETROV Urine, so to speak. It's not always that the animal manages to bear till one's outdoor. It's not the 1st time it smells so, and not the last. The right elevator constantly smells of the urine already. And in this exact case I personally so a puddle where the tile is off, on the concrete.
Like · Comment · 17 min

EVGENIA EVGENEVA It won't smell so harsh from the dogs) You leaved in time, today in the evening it's crazy))
Like · Comment · 5 min

IVAN IVANOV It definitely smells of corps, most luckily from the basement
Like · Comment · 1 min

VERA VEROVA Horrible!!!
Like · Comment · 1 min

NEIGHBOR (*typing*) Patience *(autocorrection)* Patients (*corrects herself*) Patience has run out. I would go myself... (*autocorrection*) my shelf (*corrects herself*) myself and finish (*autocorrection*) Finnish (*corrects herself*) finish (*autocorrect*) fishing (*corrects herself*) put down... (*autocorrect*) prawn (*corrects herself*) down (*autocorrect)* clown (*corrects herself*) KILL THE DAMN DOG!!!!

She presses "Send". The page showing Internet connection failure appears.

NEIGHBOR Damn it! (*She picks up her phone trying to connect to 3G. It doesn't work*). Да ладно. (*Пробует еще раз*). What the… I've paid just recently… (*проатеряет счет на телефоне. She*

attempts to check the balance. Connection failure.). What the hell. (*She attempts to call to the operator, cheerful music plays and kind voice says: "Unfortunately, all operators are currently busy". She hangs up.)* Perfect.

The Neighbor walks to the hall, takes on glittering sneakers, a jacket. She looks at herself in the mirror a bit, does her hair, puts on some lipstick and adds some perfume, then takes her bag and goes out. It's warm May outside, the lilac blossoms by the entrance hall. The Neighbor walks to the nearby shop, following the steps of many others before her. Next to the hyperbuilding of the hypermarket there is a stand selling draft fizz next to an amusement ride "Air Hill": it costs 4 rubles per 10 minutes. The neighbor approaches the ATM, which is hiding in the wall in front of the fizz's sales girl. The ATM's screen shows "Error №404. The machine is currently unavailable. We apologize for the inconvenience".

NEIGHBOR You've got to be kidding me.

SALES GIRL It's broken since the morning.

NEIGHBOR So what?

SALES GIRL Someone's called them already.

NEIGHBOR And what's the answer?

SALES GIRL They said it's to be solved there and then.

NEIGHBOR I see.

SALES GIRL A man has come, he's got very angry. He said it's the third ATM around and non is working, all are fritzed.

NEIGHBOR What?

SALES GIRL Fritzed. He said so: all are fucking fritzed.

NEIGHBOR So ATMs don't work at all?

SALES GIRL Not the nearby ones, no. Americans must be blocking us – that's what the man said.

NEIGHBOR And where am I to pay for the Internet?

SALES GIRL There is a machine inside the shop to pay with cash, give it a try. It's just that you've got to pay the commission fee! 1% of the payment amount, but at least 1 ruble.

NEIGHBOR Thanks. *(she goes inside the shop)*

SALES GIRL *(shouting after her)* And a ruble used to ten thousands rubles!

The Neighbor goes inside the shop, approaches the machine. She chooses to pay for the Internet, then the Internet provider, she presses "Next" and sees the screen requiring to "*Enter the customer number*".

NEIGHBOR Damn it.

She takes her phone, calls the contact "Husband". She hears the music and kind voice says "*You don't have enough money to complete the call...*"

NEIGHBOR Damn it! *(she comes out of the shop)*.

SALES GIRL Doesn't it work?

NEIGHBOR It does work.

SALES GIRL It's good then.

NEIGHBOR No good at all.

SALES GIRL *(wisely)* Well, if you think bad you get bad. And if you think good you get good. *(The Neighbor walks by heading to the Underground. The Sales girl shouts after her)* Hey, buy some fizz at least!

NEIGHBOR I don't want to, thank you.

SALES GIRL It's nice fizz!

NEIGHBOR No, thanks!

SALES GIRL It's just 1 ruble!

The Neighbor walks further down the street. People run ahead of her, people come towards her. There are many people around and it makes sense, because the Underground is nearby. The Neighbor sees a man with a huge dog, coming towards her. The dog pulls towards the Neighbor trying to sniff her around.

MAN WITH A DOG Quiet, Badger.

NEIGHBOR (*sniffs*) Badger?

MAN WITH A DOG Wanted a badger-dog when I was a kid. Also I am a hunter. So that's kind of a wordplay (*smiles at the Neighbor*).

NEIGHBOR I am married (*she leaves quickly and proudly*).

The Neighbor goes to the Underground through elderly women selling flowers, vegetables and fruits. She goes down to the cold passage and walks it all through searching for the ATM, but finds nothing. Then she notices a nun, who goes a-begging, approaches her.

NEIGHBOR Excuse me, may you tell me where is the ATM? (*The nun looks at the Neighbor silently*). Do you know where is the nearby ATM? (*The nun looks at her silently*). Don't you know? (*The nun silently reaches inside her pocket, takes out one ruble and offers it to the Neighbor*) No, thank you, leave it for yourself.

The Neighbor looks around once again then she goes through the glass doors to the Underground station – green fresh and shining ATM stands right behind the ticket gate. The Neighbor moves towards it, but policemen stops her.

NEIGHBOR I need the ATM.

FIRST POLICEMAN You've got to pass the ticket gate.

NEIGHBOR But I only need the ATM.

FIRST POLICEMAN Buy the ticket and pass.

NEIGHBOR Are you kidding me? I just need the ATM.

FIRST POLICEMAN Lady, buy a...

NEIGHBOR Don't "lady" me. (*She turns around, goes to the cashier*) One ticket, please. (*The Neighbor hands her the card*).

CASHIER Oh, we temporarily don't accept cards, something's wrong with electronics. We must be being blocked or something…

NEIGHBOR By Americans?

CASHIER Why Americans?

NEIGHBOR Fine, how can I buy a ticket?

CASHIER By cash?

NEIGHBOR (*she opens up a purse, it's empty*). I've got everything on the card.

CASHIER There is the ATM right behind you!

NEIGHBOR The helpmate policemen won't let me go there.

CASHIER He is no help then (*laughs*).

NEIGHBOR Why don't you give me a ticket, I'll pass, then I'll get some cash, come back and pay for it.

CASHIER Right, I'll give you one and you are gone forever.

NEIGHBOR What shall I do then!

CASHIER (*kindly*) Go find the ATM somewhere else.

The infuriated Neighbor returns to the policeman.

NEIGHBOR The woman doesn't accept the card...

FIRST POLICEMAN The system.

NEIGHBOR Yes, I understand that you have a system, but how …

FIRST POLICEMAN Not a woman, but the system does not accept.

NEIGHBOR What?

FIRST POLICEMAN Cards.

NEIGHBOR What cards?

FIRST POLICEMAN Playing ones(*laughs*).

NEIGHBOR Are you kidding me? Let me pass to the ATM! (*trying to break through*).

FIRST POLICEMAN Hey, lady, get out of here, or I'll detain you for resisting the police.

NEIGHBOR I never touched you! I need the ATM!

FIRST POLICEMAN So do not touch. Get out of here, use the overground transport.

NEIGHBOR I do not need the transport, I need the ATM.

FIRST POLICEMAN Lady, don't you understand me well? Do you want to go to the police station?

The Neighbor walks back into the passage, forcefully pushing innocent glass doors, so they sway indignantly back and forth. She quickly goes to the stairs leading to the daylight, but she suddenly turns around and goes to the place where the nun was. But the nun is nowhere to be found.

NEIGHBOR Fuck!

FIRST POLICEMAN (*from behind her*) Come with me.

NEIGHBOR But I ...!

FIRST POLICEMAN Come with me, otherwise I will detain you for resisting the police.

The neighbor obediently goes, the policeman follows her – so they enter the police room consisting of one corridor with several doors.

FIRST POLICEMAN Sit down. (*She sits down*).

NEIGHBOR Listen ...

FIRST POLICEMAN We will now draw up a protocol on administrative offense under the article for using foul language in a public place, disorderly conduct. Then you'll get the notice, come to the court and get a fine from 2 to 15 basic values or will be arrested for up to 15 days.

NEIGHBOR This is just ridiculous ...

FIRST POLICEMEN Will it sound ridiculous to those parents whose children today will swear at the dinner table? Because adult women do not know how to behave in public.

NEIGHBOR I am a mother myself, I understand...

FIRST POLICEMAN And what swearing do you teach your child?

NEIGHBOR I do not teach the child swearing!

FIRST POLICEMAN What are you teaching?

NEIGHBOR What are these questions for? I do not...

FIRST POLICEMAN I want you to realize your misconduct on personal experience and not to commit it again. Or how do you think people become repeat offenders (*grins*).

NEIGHBOR Perfect.

FIRST POLICEMAN Let's get your passport.

NEIGHBOR (*reaches into the bag, searches and does not find it*) I left it at home.

FIRST POLICEMAN Look well once more. If you do not give me your passport right now, then we will stay here until your identity is ascertained.

NEIGHBOR My name is ...

FIRST POLICEMAN (*pulls out pen and paper to her*) Write. (*Dictating*) I, someone, some day of some month of some year loudly and obscenely scolded in a public place, in the subway underpass, in the presence of children and clergy ...

NEIGHBOR There was no nun. I wanted to take the ruble from her, but she ...

FIRST POLICEMAN You wanted to rob a nun? That, you know, makes a big difference.

NEIGHBOR Yes, no! She herself wanted to ...

FIRST POLICEMAN (*picks up the phone, dials the number*) Hello, hello. Call him, tell him to come here.

NEIGHBOR ... she wanted to give it to me herself! She …

FIRST POLICEMAN (*loudly to the Neighbor)* Quiet! (*to the phone*) I got a swearing lady who committed a theft (*hangs up the phone*).

NEIGHBOR A theft?! You're kidding me!

FIRST POLICEMAN Quiet, I said! (*Second Policeman enters*) Here is a woman who wanted to rob a nun, no passport, she's got only an empty bag and a card. At first she's ben trying to broke to the ATM, then swore loudly in the passage. I think the card was stolen. Deal with it, I'm off.

NEIGHBOR This is my card !!! My! Are you kidding or what?

FIRST POLICEMAN (*quietly*) I can't bear, I'm fucking pissed off with her screams.

NEIGHBOR You swear yourself You are swearing yourself!

FIRST POLICEMAN (*grins*) She must be a bludger too (*seriously*) Deal with it. (*To the Neighbor*) You'll get to know what it costs to rob a nun.

The First Policeman in a beautiful choreographic manner changes places with the Second Policeman and leaves the office.

SECOND POLICEMAN (*comfortably sitting down at the table*) Why did you rob a nun?

NEIGHBOR I did not rob a nun.

SECOND POLICEMAN How is it, if a policeman saw it with his own eyes.

NEIGHBOR How could he if I didn't steal.

SECOND POLICEMAN Did he come up with it?

NEIGHBOR Yes.

SECOND POLICEMAN What kind of people are you, thinking the police have nothing else to do but to invent a violation of the law? Where did you get the card?

NEIGHBOR Excuse me, have we switched to informal conversation?

SECOND POLICEMAN The respect must be earned. Have you heard of such an expression?

NEIGHBOR This is my card. Personal one.

SECOND POLICEMAN Give it to me. (*A neighbor pulls him a card, the Second Policeman carefully examines it, then puts it on the opposite edge of the table*). People who have their own cards do not rob the nuns.

NEIGHBOR So I did not rob her.

SECOND POLICEMAN Why don’t you have a passport with you?

NEIGHBOR I left the house for five minutes...

SECOND POLICEMAN Do you smoke?

NEIGHBOR What?

SECOND POLICEMAN Cigarettes.

NEIGHBOR No.

SECOND POLICEMAN Weed? (*grins*)

NEIGHBOR No!

SECOND POLICEMAN (*seriously*) You're lying. One leaves a house for five minutes either to throw out the garbage or to smoke. You do not smoke. And if you took out the garbage, then why did you take the bag with you? This is inconvenient.

NEIGHBOR My Internet has disconnected, I needed to pay for it.

SECOND POLICEMAN Everyone use Internet banking now!

NEIGHBOR Uses.

SECOND POLICEMAN So smart, but have no passport, so sad.

NEIGHBOR Listen, I went to pay for the Internet, I ran out of money on my phone, I went to find an ATM, the ones near house didn't work, I went here ...

SECOND POLICEMAN ... and messed up an ATM with a nun. Only a nun collects money, and an ATM gives it out. Do you understand the difference?

NEIGHBOR I did not touch this nun!

SECOND POLICEMAN And if we now look at surveillance cameras? What would we see there? (*Neighbor is silent*) That is the answer. (Gives her pen and paper) Write. I, someone, some day of some month of some year ...

NEIGHBOR (*mumbles*) Sweared ...

SECOND POLICEMAN Exactly, you also sweared.

NEIGHBOR I didn’t ...

SECOND POLICEMAN Write! It sweared in a public place, in a subway underpass, in the presence of children and clergymen. Before or after?

NEIGHBOR What?

SECOND POLICEMAN Were you abusive before or after you robbed a nun?

NEIGHBOR I did not rob ...

SECOND POLICEMAN Write. Before and after robbed a church representative. Date. Signature (*takes away her paper*).

NEIGHBOR Now what?

SECOND POLICEMAN Now wait. We will verify your identity.

The second policeman takes the paper, phone and cigarettes and goes out into the corridor. The Neighbor sits for five, ten minutes, then takes her bank card from the table, opens the door, looks around, very quickly leaves the room and runs along the subway crossing toward the May sun. Once on the street, she runs to the bus stop, jumps into the approached bus and sits in the back seat. Closes her eyes and tries to catch her breath. Passengers look at her point-blank. The bus moves, the passengers turn away minding their own business. After taking enough breath, the Neighbor reaches into her bag, pulls out the phone, dials the number of her husband. Music plays and the same charming voice sounds: "*You do not have enough money ...*".

NEIGHBOR Fuck.

DRINKER (*from the opposite seat*) So beautiful, and so dirty-mouthed.

NEIGHBOR Look for yourself.

DRINKER I compliment her, and she is rude to me. (*pause*) There were times you might be beaten up for such a thing. (*pause*) Military people solve things quickly. And as for women, the second you unleash them... they only have one skill: yaking and talking you to death in such a way that you'd forget your own name. (*pause*) But if the one is beautiful, then one can be forgiven. (*pause*) I met one when I served. General's daughter! OP! (*slaps his knees*) I was going to marry the general's daughter. I had a lot of them, but her dad somehow found out, called me for a conversation and said: marry her or I'd shoot your dick off. (*pause*) OP! (*slaps her knees*) Well, what was I to do, she was a beautiful woman. Right, and I was young. I confessed my love to her, make a fuss of her. She already got a white dress, very beautiful. So on the wedding day I woke up in the morning ... OP! (*slaps his knees*) Fuck this! And I escaped through the window across the roofs of the barns.I'd better let 'em shoot my dick off rather than I will ruin my life myself. OP! (*slaps his knees*) I'm a free man! (*pause*) And she would be better off without me. (*pause*) Listen, maybe you will have a ruble, huh? For a grandpa to take a hair of the dog...

NEIGHBOR I have all money on the card.

DRINKER It's bad of you ... (*pause*) I won't give a penny to the state! I'll put it on this card, and they will take it from me. OP! (*slaps his knees*) And there is no my money. I will come to them: "GIVE MY MONEY BACK!" (s*laps his knees*) And they will say: "We didn't take anything, you put them on this card – and then they turn and spin, we make some frauds with them". I will not take part in these government frauds. I'd better let 'em shoot my dick off! OP! (*slaps his knees*) One should held the money in one's hand, firmly. And give it to no one! OP! (*slaps his knees*)

In the bus the speaker cheerfully cracks: *"The Gymnasium stop"*. The doors open and ticket collectors step in. Instantly revived passengers are rustling bags and pockets. The speaker continues: *"Mind the closing doors. The next stop is the Church"*.

COLLECTOR (*casually*) Passengers, please show you tickets.

DRINKER Here come the scavengers (*The drinker hastily escapes from the bus, bowing with the fat Collector*).

COLLECTOR (*referring to the Neighbor*) Miss, may I see your ticket.

NEIGHBOR You see, I only have a card, and the driver won’t take cards ...

COLLECTOR Tickets for non-cash payments can be purchased at the stands of the unitary enterprise “Citytrans” at public transport stops.

NEIGHBOR I did not have time, a bus drove up ...

COLLECTOR You will now leave with me, we will draw the protocol and you’ll pay the penalty.

NEIGHBOR But it is unfair! I ...

COLLECTOR Do you have a travel card?

NEIGHBOR No, but ...

COLLECTOR Do you have a ticket?

NEIGHBOR No.

COLLECTOR Do you have a disability certificate, a certificate stating that you are a student of an educational institution?

NEIGHBOR No.

COLLECTOR Are you a student of Suvorov Military Collges? Are you a victim of the Chernobyl catastrophe? Have you served in Afghanistan?

NEIGHBOR No, no!

COLLECTOR Are you the Hero of Belarus? The Hero of the Soviet Union? The Hero of Socialist Labor? Full Holder of the Order of the Fatherland, Glory, Labor Glory?

NEIGHBOR No, of course! What are you saying?

COLLECTOR Unpaid travel means traveling without a ticket or a travel card for the appropriate type of transport, without a document ...

NEIGHBOR Yes, I understood, but I have a credit card!

COLLECTOR ... confirming the privilege on payment for travel or the right for free travel. Is it a bus?

NEIGHBOR Yes.

COLLECTOR The fine for travel without tickets in public transport, to which the bus belongs, ranges from 12 rubles 25 kopecks to 24 rubles 50 kopecks. If the fare dodger pleads guilty and agrees to pay the fine, then an administrative offense report is not drawn up. If the fare dodger refuses to pay the fine, or if it is impossible to verify one’s identity because one cannot submit the relevant documents, then the controlling person should contact the internal affairs policemen to verify the identity and draw a protocol on administrative ...

NEIGHBOR You are kidding me ...

COLLECTOR ... offense. Do you plead guilty?

NEIGHBOR You say so, as if the Judgement Day has come...

CONDUCTOR Do you plead guilty?

NEIGHBOR God, I plead guilty, let's just ...

The bus suddenly twitches. Everything instantly plunges into wadded whiteness – it’s everywhere.

NEIGHBOR (*looking around in panic*) Hey! What happened? Hey! What's happening? Who is there?

There is a muffled melody and a familiar voice repeats: "Y*ou do not have enough money for ...*"

NEIGHBOR You’ve got to be kidding...

GOD Yes, I'm kidding.

NEIGHBOR (*shudders*) Who is it?

GOD And who is this?

NEIGHBOR I ...

GOD Passport.

NEIGHBOR I left my passport at home, what the ...

GOD I'm just kidding.

NEIGHBOR I don't understand ...

GOD I am God.

NEIGHBOR Who?

GOD You’ve heard well. Can we speak informally, huh? And let’s go straight to the point. There have been complaints about you.

NEIGHBOR Complaints ...?

GOD Please, don’t you ask again all the time, okay? Otherwise we'll be stuck here forever.

NEIGHBOR Where exactly means “here”?

GOD You are yet too young to know such words. (*sighs*) So to say. People complain about you, constantly. Your neighbors. Every evening I receive, “Lord, what is bothering her again?”, “God, what’s her problem with my movie,” “God, why is she always dissatisfied?” And so on. But this is your own business. That's what I’m worried about: "Lord, let her live my dog alone." That’s what we will deal with.

NEIGHBOR With a dog?

GOD Exactly.

NEIGHBOR Why with a dog?

GOD Who then?

NEIGHBOR We should deal with people.

GOD I don't work with people, you are able to figure everything out among yourself. I help those who are not responsible for themselves.

NEIGHBOR Dogs.

GOD And Trump.

NEIGHBOR Really?

GOD No. Why do you offend a dog? Can she really stand up for herself?

NEIGHBOR It’s not the dog I blame, the owner ...

GOD You offense the owner?

NEIGHBOR I do not offense anyone! The dog barks all the time – is is ok? I go to sleep – she barks! I wake up – she barks! What does this owners of yours think about?

GOD Are you stupid?

NEIGHBOR I'm not stupid!

GOD Sorry, it seemed so. What do you mean “my” owner, I already said that I do not work with people.

NEIGHBOR Are you the dog’s god?

GOD God is one.

NEIGHBOR And protects the dogs.

GOD Fixing the spat for them.

NEIGHBOR This is absurd.

GOD Tell me, is there a lot of hate in the world?

NEIGHBOR Plenty, and such dogs...

GOD Haven’t you got enough hate?

NEIGHBOR I'm not ...

GOD You say yourself: there is a lot of hate in the world. So take a piece from the one that is already there, as much as you need. Why are you creating more of it? Can you imagine how hard it is to maintain the balance?

NEIGHBOR But you said you don’t help people!

GOD All for the sake of dogs.

NEIGHBOR Bollocks.

GOD I swear, it’s all for the little ones. (*pause*) How to explain... Look at what others do: they take hate and sublimate it into movies, into music, into sculpture, into literature — oh, I spoke in verses — into cooking, into architecture, into engineering, into all this kind of stuff. Then the rest take what they want from this, and get amount of hate exactly as much as they need. And that's all. And no more hatred is needed. And no more hatred appears, and it is not multiplied – people take the one that already is. Am I clear? And you escalate it, my dear. Oh, in verses again. (*pause*) Why?

NEIGHBOR I don't know.

GOD Who knows then?

NEIGHBOR I didn't mean to.

GOD What are you fighting for?

NEIGHBOR Shall I just sit back?

GOD Sit on whose back? Who is the enemy? (*pause*) Why don’t you get some sort of a hobby?

NEIGHBOR Cross-stitch embroidery?

GOD I have some troubles with crosses, but it’s up to you. Listen, are you happy?

NEIGHBOR Me?

GOD I asked you not to.

NEIGHBOR Sorry. I just don’t know how to accurately answer this question.

GOD Choose one option: 1. I do not feel happy, 2. I feel rather happy, 3. I am very happy, 4. I am incredibly happy.

NEIGHBOR What is this?

GOD This is the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire.

NEIGHBOR I do not need any test!

GOD Okay, whatever you like, but there are other complaints about you. “God, doesn’t she have any get-togethers with friends?”, “Good Lord, does she have nothing else to do?”

NEIGHBOR These are absolutely moronic conjectures. I have a husband, a child, a job, and to drink up stupidly doesn’t mean happiness!

GOD Drinking is bliss!

NEIGHBOR Is this a new commandment?

GOD No, I have nothing to do with it.

NEIGHBOR With booze or with commandments?

GOD With the commandments. I’ve told you, I don't deal with people. Don’t approach me with is.

NEIGHBOR Who shall I approach then?

GOD Are you st ... No, I already asked. (*sighs*) I told you that you can figure all it out for yourself.

NEIGHBOR Why are you a woman?

GOD I am not a woman, I am a role model of the society at the particular moment of time.

NEIGHBOR Right. (*long mutual silence*)

GOD Get off the dog, huh?

NEIGHBOR Good.

GOD And find yourself a hobby.

NEIGHBOR I will.

GOD And have sex.

NEIGHBOR (*open mouth, indignant, then calms down*) Alright.

GOD Normal one, and not like usual!

NEIGHBOR Fine!

GOD Less hate, more sex. Well, or sublimate hate into sex. Alright?

NEIGHBOR Yes!

GOD Fine. Be happy (*smiles*) Fuck off.

Whiteness dissipates. The Neighbor, as in the paintings of the Renaissance, lies on the seats of the bus. The Collector stands over her.

COLLECTOR (*casually*) Are you alright? The bus suddenly stopped, you bumped with your head into the rail and faded.

NEIGHBOR Yes, I'm fine ...

COLLECTOR You have a small cut or something. Use some iodine to prevent infection. Go to the pharmacy, they take cards.

NEIGHBOR Yes, I would. Thank you.

COLLECTOR Here you have a receipt to pay the fine, you'll pay later. Goodbye. And if you feel sick it means concussion of the brain. Or pregnancy. Goodbye.

NEIGHBOR. Goodbye.

The Collector leaves and as she does the excess stress leaves as well. The bus moves forward. The neighbor carefully sits down, touches her head, looks around. All passengers look at her point-blank.

NEIGHBOR I'm not drunk.

Everyone are eloquently silent. In silence, the bus arrives at the next stop. The speaker cheerfully cracks: "*The School stop. Mind the closing doors, the next stop is the Hospital*".

The neighbor leaves the bus, no looking back, and moves into the first courtyard, all overgrown with old bushes and trees. She is walking along a cracked road tile, and a man with a package is walking about ten meters in front of her. The Neighbor thinks about calling him and asking for the direction to the pharmacy, but the right mind wins.

NEIGHBOR (*mumbles*) ... I've already got hit in the head once, that's enough for today.

GANGSTER (*turning back, stops*) What?

NEIGHBOR (*turns back and continues to go*) Nothing, I wasn't talking to you.

GANGSTER (*continues to stand*) Why'd you answer then?

NEIGHBOR (*keeps going*) Sorry.

GANGSTER (*continues to stand*) Suck my dick!

The neighbor speeds up the pace, almost runs. She dodges between the old nine-floor panel houses decorated with drying sheets right next to the porches. In the low balcony window with a wooden frame, in the cracks of which traces of blue paint are still visible, the Neighbor notices a reading gray-haired Old man.

NEIGHBOR (*mumbles*) That's how the God should look like. (*to the Old man*) Excuse me! Excuse me! (*The Old man slowly turns his eyes off the book and turns his head towards the neighbor*) Can you tell me where the pharmacy is?

OLD MAN (*looking at her point-blank*) Honey, you'd go straight like you do – and you will find it. (*Smiles*).

NEIGHBOR (*smiles back*) Thank you so much!

OLD MAN (*turning back to the book*) It's there is only poisonous chemistry.

NEIGHBOR Right, thank you!

OLD MAN (*looking to the book*) One won't find happiness in the pharmacy...

NEIGHBOR But I'm not heading for happiness.

OLD MAN (*to the book*) One should always head for happiness. And if not, it is better to sit at home.

NEIGHBOR Is it why you sit at home?

OLD MAN (*slowly detaches from the book and turns his head at the Neighbor*). I lost my legs in the war.

NEIGHBOR I am sorry.

OLD MAN (*turning away to the book*) You are mean.

NEIGHBOR I'm sorry, again. Thank you! (*quickly and shyly leaves*)

Passing by a couple more houses, the Neighbor finally appears in front of the white plastic doors of the pharmacy, and comes inside: it's empty, there is only Old Lady standing near the cashier's desk. It's a service break.

OLD LADY (*after a short silence*) Lunch.

NEIGHBOR Service break.

OLD LADY Right ... And I was in such a hurry. Didn't manage to the church. I can't climb the stairs myself, my legs are cramping and no one helped me. No one was near, but one woman ran and did not help me. She ran, I say: "Help me to get up" - "I am in a hurry". And she did not help me. And I think what kind of a believer are you, you ran to the church and did not help the cripple. So I stood in front of the icon and said: "Dear Lord, God bless her!" And so I asked and so he helped her. Oh, Lord, our Creator, I ask for Your help, grant the complete recovery for the God's servant, wash her blood with Your rays. Only with Your help will healing come to her. By the power of the miraculous do touch her, bless the road of her to the long-awaited salvation, healing and recovery. Give her body health, give her soul blessed lightness, give her heart Your divine balm. The pain will disappear forever and the forces will return to her, all the wounds will heal and Your holy help will come. Your rays from the blue of Heaven reach her, give her strong protection, bless her for deliverance from her illnesses, strengthen her faith. May my Lord hear these words. Glory to Thee. Amen. There are such people in the world, let them be good, let them be ... And social workers ... I'm taking on the bus, she's off the bus. "Where are you going?" I say: "To the clinic, to the eye clinic, I am appointed for 10:40". "Well, call me when you need me to come." I say: "Do not wait for my call, I have nothing to call for." I say, I paid 60 rubles for the utilities rubles, I

bought Cerebrolysin for 55 rubles, and a that’s it. I have 150 rubles left, and I have to live the whole months for it. And the doctor prescribed me these vitamins to buy, and how much do they cost – here is it, sixty three ruble rubles for vitamins. And I tell the doctor, I’ve taken the vitamins ... How old are you?

NEIGHBOR Thirty-four.

OLD LADY Oh, I was pretty at your age ...

The sign "Service break" is replaced by a friendly face of a Chemist.

CHEMIST Who’s next.

OLD LADY Oh, I need a plaster, a regular one.

CHEMIST Here, look, they are all here.

OLD LADY I don't see anything.

CHEMIST Here's the regular, 10 pieces.

OLD LADY I need the regular one.

CHEMIST (*reaches to get it*) 1 ruble 30 kopecks.

OLD LADY Is it germicide?

CHEMIST These are all germicide.

OLD LADY I need a germicide one. And how many pieces are there?

CHEMIST Ten, I’ve told you.

OLD LADY And how long is it?

CHEMIST (*looking on the package*) 2.5 to 7.2 centimeters.

OLD LADY (*thoughtfully*) 2.5 to 7.2 ... Well, sort of normal, I’ll take it.

CHEMIST Do you need transparent or natural one?

OLD LADY Ordinary one. Germicide one.

CHEMIST They are all germicide.

OLD LADY Then let it be transparent. (The Chemist goes to the cashier desk, the Old Lady follows her). Shall I give the discount card to you?

CHEMIST Right.

OLD LADY Is it this one? Or this one? (opens the wallet, shows all the cards to the Chemists).

CHEMIST No, this is the one of the state pharmacy.

OLD LADY Which one then ...

CHEMIST Here, you have one sticking out, the blue one.

OLD LADY It must be this one ...

CHEMIST Yes. (*Grandma pushes the card under the glass below*). Put it up here.

OLD LADY Oh, not there ...

CHEMIST Is this all?

OLD LADY Oh, do you have cotton wads?

The Neighbor’s phone rings, this is the Husband. She quickly escapes from the pharmacy to the street.

NEIGHBOR Hallo!

HUSBAND Hello, listen, remember we have this ... (*The neighbor suddenly starts crying*). Are you crying? Is everything okay? What happened? Hey, did something happen? Something with ...

NEIGHBOR No, no, it’s alright.

HUSBAND I don’t understand, what ...

NEIGHBOR I just have such a stupid day. (*Crying quietly*) I'm so glad to hear your voice!

HUSBAND Are you sick? Do you feel bad? Shall I call for the ambulance?

NEIGHBOR (*abruptly stops crying*) Screw the ambulance, I say that I am glad to hear your voice

HUSBAND Are you okay?

NEIGHBOR Yes, everything is fine with me!

HUSBAND Where are you? Aren’t you at home?

NEIGHBOR I am at the pharmacy.

HUSBAND Can you explain me what has happened?!

NEIGHBOR Nothing bad, I’ve just got hurt a bit, came for peroxide.

HUSBAND Hurt where? Are you sure everything is all right?

NEIGHBOR Yes, everything is fine.

HUSBAND Well, alright then. (*pause*) Call, if you need something. Alright?

NEIGHBOR Fine.

HUSBAND Bye.

NEIGHBOR Wait, call me an... (*beeps are heard in the receiver*) ... Uber.

The neighbor sits on the steps near the pharmaceutical staircase, begins to sob: loudly, howling and choking snot. Over some time she calms down, rummages in a bag in search of napkins, finds only those that remove fat from the face. A child of about six is looking at her from the side.

CHILD Why aren't there little pigeons? (*the Neighbor is silent*). Why aren't there little pigeons?

NEIGHBOR (*snorking*) Why there are not?

CHILD Where are pigeon babies?

NEIGHBOR I don't know.

CHILD (*with doubt*) You're an adult. Adults are those who know everything.

NEIGHBOR Adults are those who are over 18 years old.

CHILD These are old. (*the Neighbor is silent*). Did you study well?

NEIGHBOR Sure. You have to study well, then go to the university, find a job and earn money.

CHILD Then why are you poor?

NEIGHBOR I ... (*pauses*).

CHILD Has Lipton tea always been without preservatives? (*The Neighbor is silent*) Why do men not wear skirts? (*The neighbor is silent*) Why insects are afraid of us? (*the Neighbor silent*) Does the God exist? (*The neighbor is silent*) Is it true that cats see everything in black and white?

NEIGHBOR (*with certain relief*) Yes.

CHILD And dogs?

NEIGHBOR I don't know.

CHILD Don’t you like dogs?

NEIGHBOR (*angrily*) I like dogs!

CHILD If you like something, you will know everything about it. (*Gradually inspired*) I know everything about balls. They are round, they are smooth, they are with patterns, they are large, there are small, they are one-color, there are multi-colored, there are covered with strips, there are covered with flowers. I know everything about balls! I can answer any question about balls! If you ask me any question about the balls, I will answer it!

NEIGHBOR Why are balls elastic?

The child is thoughtfully silent and picks foot sand. Then he leaves, defeated. The Neighbor’s phone rings again.

NEIGHBOR Hallo!

HUSBAND Listen, are you sure you are all right?

NEIGHBOR Call me an Uber. I have no money on the phone.

HUSBAND Why wouldn’t you use an ATM to pay for it?

NEIGHBOR Listen, can you just call me uber? Or is it so hard?

HUSBAND Where are you? What is the address?

NEIGHBOR (*looking around*) Let me see ... the Street street, 8a.

HUSBAND I’ll call now. Stay there.

NEIGHBOR Where would I go.

HUSBAND Are you sure you are fine?

NEIGHBOR Just call me a taxi! Please! Faster!

HUSBAND Fine (*hangs up*).

The Neighbor seats heavily on the steps. She receives an sms from her husband: "Black opel astra, 7 minutes." During these long 7 minutes absolutely nothing happens with the Neigbour and when a taxi pulls up, she humbly rises and gets into the car.

TAXI DRIVER (*chatters*) Hello, good afternoon!

NEIGHBOR (*sits in the backseat; ironically*) Yeah, so good.

TAXI DRIVER Well, it would not be good if you set yourself up like this. (*wisely*) You have to set yourself up for good, then it will be good. Who offended you?

NEIGHBOR Life offended me. You'd better follow the road.

TAXI DRIVER As if I don't! Well, life… We ourselves are responsible for our own life, and for our well-being, and for the country, although many people still don't understand it since the Soviet times. They think of the state authority as of some kind of unreachable God, which we shouldn't even think of disturbing. And this God sits somewhere there and no one should touch him. In general, you know, as one says, "the people have the government they deserve."

NEIGHBOR So, we have not only a lousy country, but also lousy people.

TAXI DRIVER You shouldn't say so. We have a good country. (*pause*) With its own issues, but it is not Russia. Yet. But generally between us and joining in Russia there is only one president, that's all. This whole republic will leave as one unit, like at a parade, as soon as he dies. Tuv! All the authorities will yell out: "Vladimir Vladimirovich! XO ". There are no normal people left, he shaped it all for himself. It turns out that he is the one – and that's it, and a herd of ladybirds. It very well may be that he will die now. Therefore, he is afraid: he changed the security chief, he changed everyone. The situation is very disturbing. I would not sleep at all, if I were in his shoes. Because he has to be scared as shit. Because he has already exhausted himself. As soon as he kicks the bucker Russians will appoint anyone, anyone from this cohort of morons, they'll put anyone. That's it, they'll carry the elections – pff, everyone will vote as one, hello. In a year or two they will put up the flag, the emblem, will induct the Russian ruble. The funny thing is that this is, apparently, the best option for the Republic. Because anything else is just bollocks.
It is so if they won't get a nerve to shoot with Americans. For some reason, they are very much enjoying some kind of wars, beatings. They sit and in all seriousness shoot at some homes and cannot figure it out, who did it? It's just clowning, it is not even serious. Who might say that it is possible. Bollocks. This is not a war, this is just a circus. They pretend to be enemies... Look just how the Americans made Volodya Putin just some ... He didn't lift a finger at all! In two years they have made of Lelik and Bolik the most terrible country Russia, which threatens everyone in the world. How hard they tried! It is absolutely unclear, though, why it is done, if you do not look closely, but in fact they came up with a great idea: they sit frightened to death and observe what's going on. Because Russia is an absolutely pro-American country, and at the same time they make each other enemies rather playfully. Enemies, enemies ... Can we be enemies? Volodya is an American president. And they destroy Europe! If it will be profitable for them, for example, to make here such an easy Palestine with gun fights, then they'll easily create, for example, the Republic of Belarus against Poland. Very interesting shit storm! It can flash very well. Great! The Russians will save their brothers, who were fooled and made to speak some stupid language, and "these are our Russian brothers!". The West will also rush to help! Therefore, I think the situation is extremely hinky ... it would be very good if it somehow resolves …

NEIGHBOR You'd better follow the road, not Russia …

TAXI DRIVER For Russia, against Russia ... This is like "are you for the Crimea or against the Crimea." Who needs to shoot? You see, when we called our pals at Donbas, when this crap started in the 14th year, we called – we have a lot of Donbas colleagues. And Kramatorsk, Makeevka, Donetsk itself – a lot of guys. We called them, our army guys: “who is shooting there at your place?”, “What kind of stupid battalions are these?”, Why is it happening there at all? None of them ever went anywhere. And we actually used to shoot. That’s it, the boys with some kind of shooting experience could go to some kind of battalions, like some kind of volunteers. “And who, and who is shooting over there?” They: “No one knows who is shooting here.” - "And who is in these battalions?" - "Nobody knows." - "Snd you ...?" - "And what am I – a bone-head?"
NEIGHBOR Are you a bone-head?

TAXI DRIVER What? Well, what normal person will take a gun and go to war ...

NEIGHBOR (*experiencing mundane resentment*) Are you a fool? What kind of monologue is it?! Is it your performance? Shall I put a tribune for you? Why does a taxi driver talks about stereotypical geopolitics, America-Russia, Putin again, ...
TAXI DRIVER But in real life ...

NEIGHBOR ... and distracting from my inner world. My patience is bursting! No, I'm not mean and not selfish, it just knocks it all, it loses it! Stop near the barrier.

TAXI DRIVER I'll drive to the entrance, why ...

NEIGHBOR Stop here!

TAXI DRIVER Welcome.

NEIGHBOR Thank you.

TAXI DRIVE I mean you, welcome. I stopped.

NEIGHBOR Thank you, goodbye.

TAXI DRIVER Good day to you! Oh yes, I forgot (*grins*).

The Neighbor gets out of a taxi and goes to the entrance hall, as if her eyes were closed. Smooth steps, unshakable entrance door, cheerful doorbell of the intercom, clean common hall, elevator that constantly breaks down. She goes up to her floor, goes out. The bright yellow color of the marker strikes her eyes, the colour with which an announcement is circled on A4 paper, placed in a page protector and glued to the wall.

EVGENIA EVGENEVA (*the text of the announcement belongs to her*) Dear neighbors, the term of the authority of the Board of our Cooperative of Owners expires. The election of new members of the Board, the Audit Commission, as well as some Commissioners is scheduled for June (it is planned to hold a General Meeting). Be active, suggest your candidacy to participate in the management of our house, to create the most comfortable living conditions in it. In the case of the absence of the authorities of the Cooperative its further activity is impossible, taking into account all the consequences. Also, I ask you to nominate your candidacy for the post of the Commissioner of our floor. Unfortunately, due to the divergence of views on the understanding of this “position”, in view of the injustice of some decisions – I do not see me further participating in the management bodies of the Cooperative.

The Neighbor’s phone vibrates, she’s got an sms: “10.00 rubles were credited to your account. The balance is now 9.75 rubles. Thank you". She turns on mobile Internet, opens the closed group of the Cooperative.

ILYA ILYEV
2 ч.

Good afternoon! Due to the low activity of the tenants, confirmed in personal conversations and through a preliminary survey at the FB, the general meeting is postponed to a cooler season.
Like · Comment

YULIA YULIEVA
2 ч.

Dear neighbors :) Perhaps there are extra seedlings of petunias, geraniums, lobelia, ageratum and other flowers for ampelous planting in tubs at the entrance to our house. Thanks!
Like · Comment

INNA INNOVA
1 ч.

Guys, if someone needs a bike, then take it, please! Ride with pleasure!
Like · Comment

ILYA ILYEV
48 min.

Dear neighbors! Maybe someone has an unrequired gnome costume for a 4-5 year old boy. We will be very grateful if you lend it to the matinee in kindergarten. Thanks!
Like · Comment

TATIANA TATIANOVA We should have, I'll look in the evening
Like · Comment · 1 ч.

ILYA ILYEV :)I’d be very grateful !!!
Like · Comment · 1 ч.

ALEXANDR ALEXANDROV
1 min.
Near the door, near the entrance a large dog lies. Sheepdog Maybe it’s nothing, but we personally went down the stairs.
Like · Comment



The neighbor turns off the phone, puts it back in the bag. She calls the elevator and goes down to the first floor. She clicks on the button of the intercom - it is still ringing back gaily – she pushes the door. A big dog lies in front of her: the dog turns around and shows the Neighbor its tongue.

NEIGHBOR (t*o the dog*) Dog. Get out. Go away. Get out of here. Sh! Get out of here! Be gone! Why are you lying here? Get out! Move on! Leave the hell out of here! Get out! Well, go! Dog! What's your name ... Lessie, get away from here! Rex! Jack! Chappy! What's your name?! Trump! This is nonsense. Why are you lying here, do not lie here, why are you lying here! Why not elsewhere? Why not in another house?! You're lying at the entrance, right at the entrance, do you understand? You should go away! There is no place for you here! (*exhales, sits down next to the dog*) Doggie. Because of you people can't go out, you bother everyone, please, leave. Why don't you better lay on the grass, look what a soft and green grass, why are you lying on this concrete. Or is it a tile ... It is cold, you will get cold. Are you waiting for your owner? Did this creature threw you again? Or has she left you for good? Threw you away, and you have returned, haven't you? She kicked you out on the street? What kind of bastards take animals, play and kick them out on the street?! What kind of people… they are not people! But you are not like that! Go find other owners, good ones! In a private house. Come on, run away from here! Chappy, come on, go away! (*grabs*

the collar, pulls) Get out! Everyone will be glad if you leave! (*lets go of the collar, falls to the floor*) Nobody needs you here! You only bother everyone here! And your owner is scum, and you are a rude animal, and all of you are bastards and scum! Bastards, you ...

OTHER NEIGHBOR Will you be done soon? (*The Neighbor looks up. The Other Ceighbor is standing on the stairs to the entrance*). I need to go. You interfere. (*The Neighbor turns and looks at the dog. The dog looks at the Neighbor*). I can't get in, you lie in the way.

NEIGHBOR (*to the other neighbor*) Who are you?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Your neighbor, obviously. (*The Neighbor looks at a woman, then quickly gets up and moves away. The other neighbor, entering, holds the door*) Well, are you coming in?

NEIGHBOR What about the dog?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Is it yours?

NEIGHBOR No.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, what's the problem then? (*The Neighbor is silent*) And what floor are you from?

NEIGHBOR The fifth.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Oh, we are neighbors. Facing the forest or the village?

NEIGHBOR The village.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Oh, by the way, I have long wanted to visit you.

NEIGHBOR What for?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, to meet each other, we are neighbors, neighbors should know each other, well, we live together. Maybe, now?

NEIGHBOR What?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, come visit you?

NEIGHBOR I'm leaving now, I ...

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, then maybe at lunch? Well, at about 14:00?

NEIGHBOR I won't be home yet.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, at 15:00?

NEIGHBOR I won't be at home.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, you will sometime, won't you? In the evening, maybe? Well, at 19:00, maybe?

NEIGHBOR I don't know, I'm not sure.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, I can hear you walking in the apartment in the evening.

NEIGHBOR Excuse me, what is the problem?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, let's better go to your ...

NEIGHBOR Can you tell me what the problem is?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, I don’t want to discuss it in front of everyone...

NEIGHBOR There is nobody here, what's the problem?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Well, I'd better ...

NEIGHBOR Just tell me what is wrong!

OTHER NEIGHBOR (*abruptly*) You are disturbing my life! Your chair creaks!

NEIGHBOR (*pause*) Chair?

OTHER NEIGHBOR Yes, CHAIR! Constantly!

NEIGHBOR Chair?

OTHER NEIGHBOR CREAKES! And I have a small child!

NEIGHBOR I am sorry.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Constantly squeaks! Constantly!

NEIGHBOR I won't do this again.

OTHER NEIGHBOR (*pause*) Thank you.

NEIGHBOR I am sorry.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Goodbye.

NEIGHBOR Goodbye.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Nice to meet you.

NEIGHBOR You too. Goodbye.

OTHER NEIGHBOR Goodbye.

The other neighbor leaves, closing the door behind her. The dog, in contrast to the petrified Neighbor, breathes noisily and with pleasure. Drilling is clearly audible from the very depths of the house. From the upper floor, the window frame falls, splashing into asphalt with glass chips. The dog barks. The Neighbor squeals. The metal plate “Welfare house” peacefully shines in the sun. And it will always shine.

Maryia Bialkovich
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