

IGOR IVKO, BEGINNERS

152 pp, 2023

RESISTANCE

It started out of desperation, because, in the end, everything starts out of desperation. Chekhov's words about daily exhaustion are important to me. I was exhausting myself to the extreme limits. I exhaust myself in everything I do, when I do something, I do it to the extreme limits. In this particular case, I exhausted myself by learning about the revolution, student movements, protests, about personality types that can withstand changes, about significant women revolutionaries throughout history, about violence, everything always comes down to violence in the end; about Stalin's purges, Gulag, Holodomor, pogroms, about rigged trials, Trotsky, his murderer Ramon, anarchism, anarcho-capitalism, about Mexico City, murders in South America, about Allende, about Chile... and finally about Rosa Luxemburg, my beloved, favorite Rosa. I imagine the time she lived in; when it seemed possible to change the world with one rebellion, one strong word.

I say, I was exhausting myself and enjoyed that exhaustion. When it started, I felt pleasure, voluptuousness, pleasure incomparable to any previous pleasures, incomparable to (my favorite) sexual pleasure; when I heard that a rebellion, a blockade was being prepared in the capital. I felt happiness. They will block the university, I heard and thought, yes, that's it, nothing will be the same after that. Block the university. After that, the roads will be blocked. Rail. Highways. Shipping and air lines. And then it will start to overflow, over the border, very soon there will be no border. It will start. *Acheronta movebo*. And what holds everyday life together will be turned upside down and the guts will be visible.

I'm just an ordinary girl from the suburbs, with an excess of dreams and fantasy of how the world should be, and it seems to me that the way it is now does not look good.

Robi told me, I think it was Monday, that a plenum would be convened tomorrow and that a vote would be taken to block the university. The professors

are there too, people will always be there at the beginning, especially if they are privileged people, they will be there at the beginning, but they won't be there until the end. If someone does give lectures, they will be interrupted by clapping, not by violence. Not by violence at all. I don't believe in violence. And we live violence, even without knowing it, but feeling it somewhere deep down, we live violence twenty-four hours a day, violence is present in our lives, and I feel it pulsating beneath the surface. And how it will erupt, maybe not today, nor tomorrow, nor the day after tomorrow, but it will erupt. When I read about, for example, the southern part of the world, about the so-called Third World, I was disgusted by what I was reading, all those centuries of violence, all those centuries of silent and persistent oppression of a part of the world that is not this part of the world. And if someone thinks it's not related, what can I tell them. It's connected, it's absolutely connected. The pain of a person who digs cobalt is my pain.

It has started, the blockade has been voted. There was excitement, something was happening, we didn't know what, but we knew that something big was happening. Enough hands were raised for the blockade and in the end the blockade was voted. Which means that from that moment on, the rules at college are no longer the same. Students occupy the university. From the beginning, I was afraid of the militaristic terms that started to be used. But violence at some point comes naturally in one form or another.

Our goal was clear from the very beginning, to abolish tuition fees at all levels. But the distant goal of some of us was not the abolition of school fees, but something much deeper, not much to do with school fees. The question at the end of the day: how do we live this life. Not me, but all of us together.

I'm saying this while it's still fresh. So that I don't forget. Because I will forget. As it seems to me now, the most significant period of my life. I have never felt the way I did those twenty-nine days.

I haven't slept for two days. And I feel these words like a fog falling on the night.