nova·nevėdoma



nevédomosti №5

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§1 Re: New heights. Be it odd and accidental, be it fateful, consequential, a few good things happened lately, even tho I'm being humble marking them modestly as "good", for they are rather remarkable and unprecedented for me: my story "Dragonfly's Retinal Structure" was shortlisted for the William Saroyan International Prize for Short Fiction, making into the top 10 amongst 108. You can find my story and the whole shortlist on the contest's website.

"Dragonfly's Retinal Structure" is a special piece for me, beloved even, one of my favourites, and it genuinely makes me happy the story gained such significant recognition despite being rather "unusual" in technique and style. I don't want to say "experimental" — tho some might feel that — for I don't like the term, moreover I wasn't experimenting writing it, but regardless, seeing it recognised in serious competition by serious people is an important accomplishment for my literary endeavours. The story's also an episode in my upcoming-ish and book "Tulubaikaporia", rather a lyrical and free variation on its main theme: Tulubaika.

None of my works have gotten thus far in any context (tho I don't really

submit much; was rejected when did), so, as said — unprecedented. The final where the winner was announced happened in Yerevan on the 7th of September, a few days ago, where my wife and I went for just a day — quite a journey, apparently, given no direct flights and necessity to be in yet another country on Monday. The experience was rather surreal, given most of the event was in Armenian and we didn't understand a word; only the international prize was announced in English by a person from the Saroyan Foundation. Alas, Yours Truly didn't win anything, but he's a simple man: a shortlist is a still a shortlist! Congratulations to Lusine Kharatyan with her story #America place Pregnant for winning the prize.

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§2 Re: Podcast appearance. Another fun and flattering thing that happened to me, or with me being involved, is my appearance on a podcast with and , where we talked about my book "Deleted Scenes from the Bestselling Utopian Novel", literature — especially Eastern European and Russian — writing in English as a second language, self-publishing, censorship and emigrant experience, literary identity, amongst other curious topics. If you'd like to hear us talking about all that, you can listen to the first 35 min for free, with the whole 1h40m available to paid subscribers to Buku's newsletter. The transcript is also available.

And short review on the book by her:

> Deleted Scenes from the Bestselling Utopian Novel—

> perceptive, quietly pessimistic, as though quietly stands in his corner and mocks the rest of us, ponders about Russia and totalitarian regime ; satiric, with dialogue that pulls you into his dystopian world and its hallucinations, lunacy (his words) and surrealism, Vanya is someone to look out for in the years to come.

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§3 Re: "Deleted Scenes...". The book is one year old this September! The time indeed has flown by and it's hard to believe it's been a whole year: it either feel both forever and yesterday, distant past and everlasting present. During that year: I've sold close to two hundred copies (stopped counting), participated in a few bookfairs, the book was stocked in the Pushkin House bookshop in London, many readers wrote some lovely reviews, I wrote a few essays as complementary materials for the book. In short, I'm happy to see the book doing well, reaching new heights, collecting appreciations and kind words, and, frankly, being loved by the readers. For all of which, I'm thankful to all of you supporting the book and myself as well!

For the rest of you who haven't read it (yet), it's yet another reminder to grab a copy. There're a few ways to do that:

- Links to book stores (including direct sales from my store) are on the book's page on my website. You can also just search it online — many retailers have it.
- I can ship you a signed copy to wherever you're on Earth. It might take a bit longer and incur some extra shipping costs.
- Theoretically, you can try asking your local library to order it. I'ven't heard people doing that but might be worth a shot.

Plus, I do believe I have more things I can tell you about the book, whatever that is: publishing process, writing process, inspirations, influences, themes, etc. Yet I don't know if there's anyone interested reading about any of that and what that "any" really includes. So...

I decided to run some semblance of a Q&A here. You can send me any questions about the book by replying to this email (or *vanya [at] nova-nevedoma [dot] com*), sending a direct message on Substack, or leaving a comment here. Later I'll collect all those questions and answer them in a few posts... or zero, in case of no questions, but if that happens I would of course be really sad and probably terminate my literary career at once...

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§4 Re: The state of NoNe. This might constitute as another accomplishment worth celebrating or it might: I don't know really and feel rather oblivious to what's going on, how and why — surreal, that — but more and more people are subscribing to Nova Nevédoma, more and more people reading my work, more and more people sharing it. The publication is approaching 2000 subscribers (1890 now) — an unimaginable number for me just a few years back — and would likely reach it by the end of October or so. I am, as mentioned, a simple man, so this does feel good, even tho it hardly affects what I write, how, and when, but anyway... it's been a wild journey and I'm grateful to all of you for being with me here! Sending most radiant beams of appreciation and virtual hugs...

A small digest in case you missed any of the recent posts I'd like to

highlight:

- I wrote my own guide to contemporary Russian literature for featuring a good dozen Russian books in translation that you can find and read, everything: new realism, magical realism, wild dystopias, futuristic visions, historical fiction, experimental novels, etc. The article is a series of short reviews and some cultural and political context surrounding the literary scene in Russia. I do highly recommend you to check it out!
- What I would call "the fiction summer", a series of short stories that might or might not become one conceptual book about children and adults later on. These four stories were highly praised by my readers; some even referred to them as my finest writing to date, which is, of course, again, lovely to hear and I do consider an accomplishment:

On and of erotic undercurrents of Infinity

- How I Spent My Summer (essay)
- Soul Epidemic
- Was or Wasn't, Would've or Wouldn't've Been

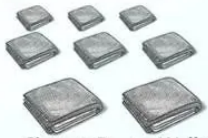
On this note, I bow away! ...

P.S. Visual entertainment section

EVERY DAY CARRY



Chainmail Hauberk
(to deflect enemy blades)



Sixteen Decoy Wallets
(*zero* real ones)



Tactical Glock 9mm
(just needed a flashlight)



Pacifier & Blankie & Baby Toy



A Rose
(for my beloved)



Santiago



The Keys to Heaven and Hell
(forgot to label them)



The Weight of Knowledge



300 Loads of Cement Per Hour
(faster than any machine)



Picture of Ma
(x16)



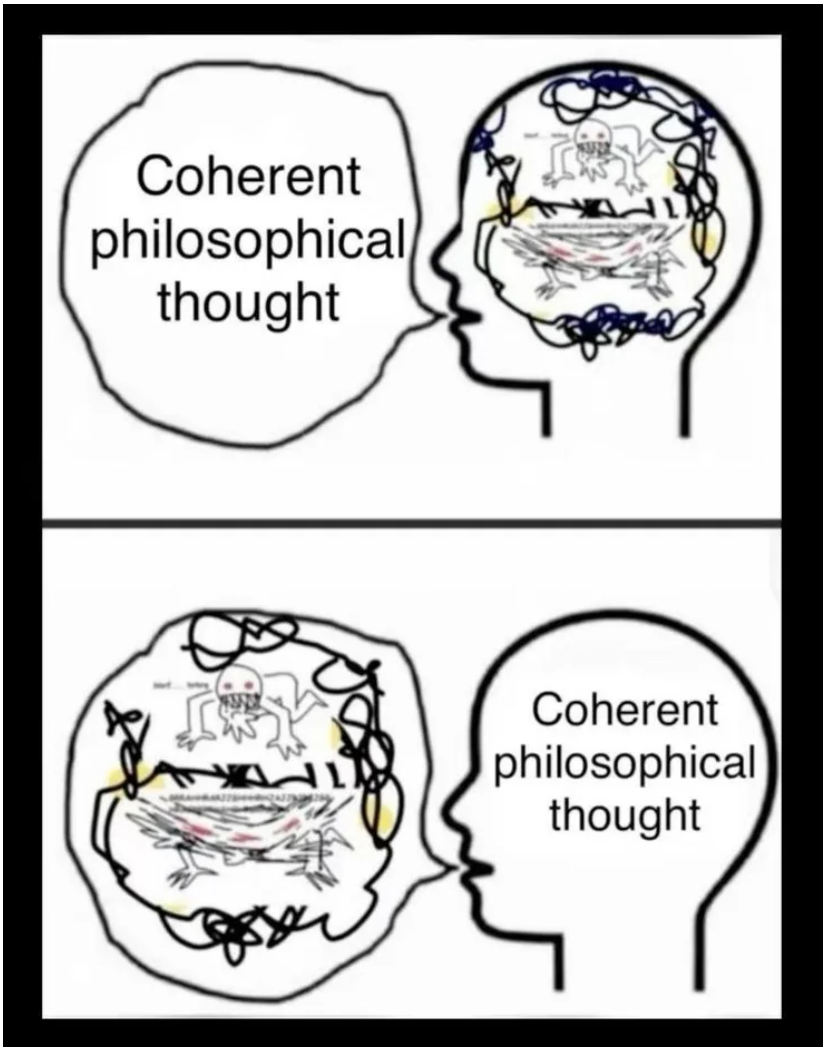
Cyanide Pill
(in case of capture)



Your Heart
(on a string)


TATA
ALBERT
CAMUS
MAMA
JA
PAPIERO


Someday, many years after my death...
I wish to be admired and worshipped by a community of teenage, transsexual anarchists.



Read next part

nevédomosti №6

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for original fictions and translations.

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