

TANJA ŠLJIVAR

HOW MUCH IS PÂTÉ?

original feature play

Translated by Goran MIMICA



TANJA ŠLJIVAR

She was born on 13 June 1988 in Banja Luka, where she finished high school. She attended the Dramaturgy course at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Belgrade. While still at school she volunteered for many NGOs. In 2005 she was one of 15 pupils from Bosnia and Herzegovina to attend the *Leadership for the Young* programme in the USA. She participated in volunteer camps in Austria and France. In November 2009 her adaptation of the Laza Kostić play *Diaries*, directed by Miloš Jagodić, premiered on Radio Belgrade. Her collection of short stories *The Room on the Third Floor* will be published by Književna Omladina Srbije in 2011. She is co-writer of several short films and TV dramas. She participated in the Slobodan Stojanović Summer School of Film Dramaturgy at the Vrnjačka Banja Festival of Film Screenplay 2008, as well as in the Talent Campus at the Sarajevo Film Festival 2010. As a guest-student she participated in the 2009 Trieste Film Festival. She collaborated with the Belgrade Summer Festival (Belef) as writer of texts for the opening events, brochures and Internet communications. The same year she hosted the Second Rakovica Theatre Festival and wrote reviews of the performed plays for all seven days of the festival. This year she won third prize for the opening text for the *Joy of Europe* children's festival. She speaks English, and understands German and Spanish.

SAD MEAT, JAPANESE FISH

Is our time – despite everything and not least in modern theatre – going to produce a tragedy as George Steiner put it: „From the ritual of stubborn resistance and homage to the dead, 3000 years ago, in the valleys of Argos”? We can only guess, but something else, what we know can be told, or better, felt. We are talking about the moment when on the (theatre, drama, „public”) „scene” appears – again, despite everything, (trends, theories, communication overload) – *a pure, energetic jet of tragic energy.*

Tanja Šljivar's text contains such a jet – or wave – of tragic energy, regardless of what might be its source. An apparently bizarre, but nevertheless universally focused story about a butcher in a Bosnian province

who builds a Buddhist temple to his perfect love – an internationally famous model and lover of the Japanese way of life. Or, perhaps, the source of this unusual, painfully-concentrated and, at the same time crude, dramatic energy is in an ambiental-conceptual setting: everything starts and ends in the cold-blooded light of the village butcher's shop *Lard*, in whose centre, as in the darkness of Racine's *Antechamber of Power*, the butcher Stojan's misery and madness rule. Or the centre is, first of all, in the author's perfect and vertiginous *allegory of Meat*: bloody pig carcasses as the quotidian, as well as mystical and imaginary phases of the butcher's adventure in the quest for the idea of Love-Which-Is-

Meat-Out-Of-Lust – thus the *Temple as Ascension and death*.

Only through flesh can lust (sensuality) be overcome, just as only through renunciation can you dream: „Whatever skills and knowledge you may have, don't be proud of them; better fear for the light that has been given to you,” writes Thomas à Kempis in his *The Imitation Of Christ*. Exactly via the ascension through the darkness of the animal – recent wars, madness of cheap sensuality and cheap emotions, Tanja Šljivar allows her anti-hero to rise up to the noble emptiness of renunciation, to the place in/on which all life's gains meet their other side. Of all the radical influences of modern and post-modern dramaturgy, the author of *How Much is Pâté* reaps most from Beckett's inspiration from à Kempis' mysticism, the absurd fruitfulness of (self)negation of the hero as a new field of searching for sense. And just like when Beckett's heroes followed the advice of the Dutch mystic about duty „in cubiculis vestris compungimini” (grieve in your own room) so does the author's Sad Butcher reach the height of freedom, only apparently blinded by the magically transparent ball of the „more-than-human” flesh's fragility.

Svetislav JOVANOVIĆ
Translated by Goran MIMICA

CHARACTERS:

Stojko

Slavica Radić, later Ecclestone

DJ Pig

Stojko's mother

Stojko's father

Stojko's wife

Stojko's brother-in-law

Midwife

Lady Neighbour 1

Lady Neighbour 2

Neighbour 1

Inkontinent

Pudgy

Soldier

Gypsy band (the same one on the video beam building the temple)

TV journalist (on the video beam)

14-year-old Stojko (on the video beam)

Scene 1 – A talented and skilled butcher comes into the world

On stage there's a glass freezer cabinet, like the ones in butchers' shops, filled with different kinds of meat. On the hooks above the cabinet hang dead pigs. The glowing neon shop and slaughterhouse sign says Lard, and underneath in neon letters, of which some do not function, it says: We don't offer crocodile, giraffe or lemur meat, we only have 100% pork. On the video beam, when footage is not shown, just like when a jukebox is not playing, there are photos of live domestic animals which could be found on some photo forums and amateur sites, as well as Jackie Spurrier's paintings of cows, Rembrandt's Slaughtered Ox, various illustrations of the Three Little Pigs etc. Stojko, in a bloody white butcher's coat, takes a pig from a hook, puts it on the counter. He cuts off its tail and bites it raw, having difficulties chewing it, the tail is hard.

STOJKO: I imagined the temple to look like her. Wavy brown roof, like her hair, solid white construction, like her body. Windows on the temple, like windows into her which only I am allowed to look through. There will be plenty of things for my eyes only. Others don't know how to look at her. Not at her wrinkled eyelids, with dark blue eye shadow, which fills the wrinkles, gathers, cakes, so that all of that makes her seem older than she really is, the others don't see. Not at her sagging breasts, nor her wrinkled hands. Nope. They see her on the covers of magazines, photoshopped, heavily made-up. Women are jealous, they say, she whores

around for money, and who wants to be with a guy three foot shorter than her? And who would have two daughters with the creature. They are not his, for sure. She fucked everybody. For money. For money, for money, what else. Men say nothing, they just drool, then straight to the bog with a magazine and after a minute, after they come, they forget her. No-one, mate, in the world has looked at her the way I did. Well, fuck it now.

Stojko cuts the tail in half, crams one in his mouth.

STOJKO: 'Coz I used to watch'er like that, now she's got to watch me. She'll look at me, at least once more. I was born here, in this butcher's shop, in *Lard* I was born. First I thought I was born here because my old man was not normal, now I know why I was born here, because I was not meant for nothing better.

Stojko's pregnant mother enters the scene, she's in her ninth month.

STOJKO: Here's my mother. She's 19. About to drop she still comes to slave in the butcher's shop.

Stojko's mother takes the knife from him, starts cutting the meat. She cuts it for some time, then she grabs her stomach. She steps in front of the counter, a water puddle under her feet.

STOJKO: I guess, she'll call my father now.

MOTHER: Radeeeeeeeee! Radeeeeeeeeeee! Help!

Stojko's father enters the scene, sweating, shirtless, sunburnt with white vest stripes visible, the rest of his skin is red.

FATHER: What you screaming about?

MOTHER: Me waters broke.

FATHER: Fuckin'ell.

MOTHER: Don't just stand there, call someone. Smilja, for sure. She handled my mum too.

Father runs, then comes back with the midwife. Stojko continues to speak in the meantime.

STOJKO: Born in a butcher's shop, born in an asylum, born in a hospital. All the same, whatever.

MIDWIFE: Mara, Rajko, are you mad, a butcher's shop is no place to give birth. If nothing else, she'll puke her soul out because of the stink.

FATHER: Too late now. Me son's gonna be born right here, in the only butcher's shop in Maglajane. Big honour. One day he'll be grateful. Anyway, we'll never make it to the hospital.

Father lifts mother and carries her to the counter. He moves some pieces of meat from near her head. The midwife crosses herself.

MIDWIFE: Don't, Rade, for God sake. It's a sin, man, it's a sin.

STOJKO: There was no time to make it to the hospital. Just a mere 17 hours. I've never spent that long doing anything in my life like my birth. But as hour after hour passed, as my mother writhed in agony, Rade wouldn't budge. And so I was born somewhere between a pig's head and veal leg.

Stojko's mother is screaming, the midwife offers the screaming child to the father. Stojko reaches out to his father, still crying.

FATHER: No, thanks.

MIDWIFE: Why not, Rajko?

FATHER: He is covered in blood, wipe him.

MIDWIFE: A butcher, but his son's and wife's blood makes him giddy.

MOTHER: Give'im to me.

Mother kisses Stojko who continues to cry. She pets him and speaks baby-talk to him.

MOTHER: My Stojko, me little Stole. That's what I am going to call him. Me little Stole.

FATHER: Good name. Stole. Like a nickname for stock. *The midwife constantly crosses herself, everyone leaves the scene except Stojko.*

Scene 2 – Everybody wants a piece of meat

Stojko returns behind the counter. With difficulty he polishes off the rest of the tail.

STOJKO: Everything in the world grows. I did it too as a baby. A kid too. A tree. Women's tits. And men's. And desires grow. The desire to eat meat grows. And everybody wants a piece of meat. Even those who don't usually eat meat, 'coz they take pity on animals. And those who usually eat meat, 'coz they love fat and something hot. And those who have stopped eating meat, coz they want to lose weight. They particularly want a piece. And another one. And one more. Then they forget that the day before they decided to go on a diet. They lick the fat from around their mouths. And burp. Those kinds of desires I can fulfil.

He continues to eat raw pork. He cuts a leg into pieces, and crams them into his mouth while speaking, tries to quickly swallow them.

STOJKO: Just before the war I went to high school, what else, for butchers. I mean, it would've been stupid if I, born in a butcher's shop, had done mechan-

ics, driving or singing or accountancy. It was easier. I didn't have to choose anything, my old man did it for me when he decided that his son would be born in *Lard*. The fact I enrolled at butcher's school meant rapid success, because he was, by nature, gifted for slaughter and no-one had to teach him, so he decided to reward me, his abnormally advanced son, with 500 Deutschmarks. He says if I don't double them in seven days not to show me face to him.

Stojko drags a golden calf onto the scene. He pets it and stops eating while he speaks.

STOJKO: On the market in Banja Luka I bought a 300-kilo ox and I slaughtered it. That was the first real living being I finished off. I mean, mosquitoes, worms, snails and other crap I don't count. They aren't big enough to take seriously. And I rode through Maglajane, with the slaughtered ox on my bike trailer.

On the video beam, young Stojko, about 14, rides a blue bike with a trailer and the slaughtered ox, swarms of flies around it. A few stray dogs run after him, barking. Stojko speeds up, houses and fields passing by.

STOJKO: I enjoyed it. Dogs followed me. They could smell a just-slaughtered ox, but I couldn't. Only the rustle of banknotes in my thoughts, or was it the wind, who could remember that now. I knew that they'd all gape for meat, which wasn't, unless it was rotten, much around in Maglajane just before the war. A huge, 300-kilo ox was in any, and particularly in those, conditions a jackpot. They were staring at it, and I knew they were gonna come to *Lard*. To buy a piece of meat. Eyes. Tongue. Leg. Heart. Breast. Brain. Everything they lack or have extra of. They can all buy it at my

place. Everything that grows. And I give a piece of meat to all those who ask for it, and everybody, yeah, soon or later, asks for it.

Lady Neighbour 1 and Lady Neighbour 2 and Neighbour 1 enter the scene.

Lady Neighbour 1 is heavily made-up, young, the type who likes to undress, as if she wants to catch something on her kidneys. Lady Neighbour 2 is in her 40s, wears a head scarf, looks tired and worn because of pills, Neighbour 1 is moustachioed and fat. Lady Neighbour 1 leans over the counter and kisses Stojko on the cheek.

NEIGHBOUR 1: You, girl, don't push, oldest first!

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2 (*Slowly, dazed*): No, the first go first. Whoever is first in the queue. Waiting. Yes, the first first.

STOJKO: What you want?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Huh, can't in front of this old fart.

Neighbour 1 turns his back to the counter, offended.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: I'd like a little piece of veal leg.

NEIGHBOUR 1: Wow, that's really shocking.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2 (*Slowly*): Shocking, shocking.

Stojko gives a piece of meat in a plastic bag to Lady Neighbour 1.

STOJKO: That's 200 Deutschmarks.

She gives him money.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Stole, and you know what I'm gonna do with it?

STOJKO: Put it in the beans?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: I'm gonna put it in my knickers. I am bored with my own smell.

NEIGHBOUR 1 (*Shouts*): Damn you, girl, get out or little Stole and myself will beat the crap out of you.

Lady Neighbour 1 is scared and runs out of the scene.

NEIGHBOUR 1: I guess it's my turn now.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: The first first. It's been like that since the dawn of the world. First the first. Only then the second.

NEIGHBOUR 1: Gimme a break, woman. Oi, Stole, any kidneys left from that ox?

STOJKO: Both are still in the game, neighbour. One's 25 marks, I'll give you two for 40.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2 (*Very slowly*): First one kidney for 25 marks. Second the second one for 25 marks.

NEIGHBOUR 1: Are they in lard?

STOJKO: They are, neighbour.

NEIGHBOUR 1: My Stole, I've got a kidney stone. When I piss I am afraid it'll pop out. It hurts like hell. I like to imagine that it's already out, that I've skipped the exit part. The pain is horrible while you wait for it, while you imagine it, and when it happens and it passes...Wow, who cares, as if it had never been there. That's why I'm gonna put the ox kidney in a pickle jar and place it like a vase in the middle of the table. To tell myself that it's my kidney, coming out of me. Not to be afraid every time I go to the bog.

STOJKO: Give us 25 marks, then.

NEIGHBOUR 1: I'll take both, man. One in the jar, one in the pot. I want my wife, when she eats it, to feel that the two of us live, as they say like pigs in shit.

Neighbour 1 laughs stupidly, takes the meat, gives Stojko money and leaves the scene.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: First the first. Then the second.

It's me now. The third. Who waits gets it, my Stojko.

STOJKO: You want some meat? Brain?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Three pills in the morning, two in the afternoon and four in the evening. The first first, the morning ones are the most important. Then the brain's gone. Ciao, ciao, the brains gone, bye, bye.

STOJKO: Well, dear, you put an ox brain in the pressure cooker and salt it a bit, to dream for. Like butter it cuts, butter.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Bad day. Bad day to sell me brain. Today I've stopped cooking. Let Milutin drop dead of hunger. Me too. Him first. First the first, Stojko.

STOJKO: So what are you doing here?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Fuck it, this morning, after those first three pills, my most important pills, I go out a bit on the terrace, when, fuck me, you on the bike with an ox in your trailer. I thought my morning pills are playing tricks, I rub my eyes, but it's for real. I say, God is hell bent on screwing me, because there hasn't been no decent piece of meat in Maglajane for weeks, when, here, just when I decide not to get behind the cooker anymore, Stojko rides his bike with an ox. I had to come. Just to fill myself with the smell of raw meat.

STOJKO: If you don't wanna buy nothing, get lost, for fuck's sake.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Would you give me a... give me a piece of meat?

STOJKO: What you want?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: A bit of liver.

Stojko offers her a piece of meat, she bites into it from his hand.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Thanks a lot, a lot. The first first. First I stopped cooking, then second I started eating raw meat. 'Cos I can't cook it, no? 'Cos of the decision. I can't cook it, you know.

Lady Neighbour 2 is leaving the scene.

STOJKO: Five marks.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: Five marks what?

STOJKO: For the liver you wolfed down.

Lady Neighbour 2 staggering, leaves the scene.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2 (*Leaving*): First the first, Stojko. Should've asked for money first. Now that I've eaten, I wouldn't give it, not even to the President.

STOJKO: Just in one day the ox turned into gold and fulfilled dreams of the peasants, five hundred marks into a thousand, and I, for my father, into a man. He said: it wasn't for nothing you were born in *Lard*. Off it and in it you live and work. I stuffed myself with money and went for one more ride through Maglajane.

14-year-old Stojko, on the video beam, with banknotes sticking from every orifice in his head and his clothes, rides the same bike with a trailer.

3. She wanted her nude portraits to be seen by at least half the world, but he was just a poor pâté producer.

Stojko continues to eat the pig. He's eating a chunk of leg.

STOJKO: I became famous. In Maglajane and beyond. Everyone used to come to *Lard* to eat from my hand. I set the working hours for my old girl, not the old man,

so I used to let her sleep 8 hours, not between 4 and 6 like that arsehole. My school mates started coming round too to the butcher's shop, like in some bar. Well. Everything was sailing. Her too, I swear. The bitch too. She was having nude photos taken of her. For some cheap magazine. I wasn't interested in her at the time, but of course, I had seen the photos.

The photos of naked Slavica Ecclestone, from her early modelling career, are shown on the video beam, and are combined with the usual photos and pictures (of domestic animals).

STOJKO: She was the same as other whores. Meat. Not even properly proportioned. Her red, spread cunt, as if she had had a fuck a second earlier, as if to say, why not take a photo, who cares. Grannies were shocked. They stared at her as if a bear was going through the village. Soon she stopped leaving the house for good. They knew her for the bad things, and me for the good. We both traded meat. For money, I sometimes gave them a piece, so they liked me, and she, they say, never did, so they hated her.

Stojko is finishing the leg. He chomps and slurps loudly.

STOJKO: She screwed me up, for the rest of my life, because that day she felt like peeking out and stopping by *Lard*.

Slavica Radić, later Ecclestone, enters the scene. Young, beautiful, long hair, in jeans and a simple vest. Stops in front of Stojko and looks at him for a long time. Stojko is cutting meat, paying no attention to her. Slavica takes off her sandals. Swaying her body slowly, she takes off her vest, nothing under. She

takes off her jeans. No underwear. She is barefoot and naked in front of Stojko. Stojko lifts his head, looks at her, long and hard. He approaches her, comes close to her, goes to touch her, then looks at his bloody hands, pulls back.

SLAVICA: And? What do you say?

Stojko is silent.

SLAVICA: Say something. Don't you like me?

Stojko is silent.

SLAVICA: That's why I undressed. Because I know you won't say a word. There are some three thousand people in this village-hole. Three thousand mouths spat on me. Toothless old bats, kids still wearing nappies, some pretty women, then impotent men, they say they can't get it up when they see me naked, all of them, at least ten times a day since I got photographed, washed their mouths with my name. Father wanted to throw me out, but mother wailed, so he agreed to let me stay a bit more, until I leave for Tokyo. There, where I'm going, different people live. They have different eyes. And clothes. And skin. And they smell differently. And walk. And I think no-one pays attention if someone takes their clothes off. I think they even like it, because they like watching bodies. They say that the sun rises there first, then in the rest of the world.

STOJKO: Fuck the slitty eyes, what you gonna do there? Don't they do ducks or something there?

SLAVICA: The duck is, as far as I know, a Chinese speciality. There, they eat raw fish.

STOJKO: I was born in a butcher's shop but never heard about eating raw meat.

SLAVICA: I guess some troubles made them do it.

You'd eat it too if you had to. You'd eat it for sure.

STOJKO: I wouldn't. I wouldn't, I am telling you. I got used to blood. Long ago. But the smell never. Whoever enters *Lard*, remembers this smell for the rest of his life. You'll still smell like pigs, Slava, even if you eat fifty raw fish over there. Man can't get rid of it.

SLAVICA: I'll make a pile of money there. A pile, I'm telling you. And I'll smell of Gucci. When you put that on, pigs can't be detected. Nope. It just enforces the smell of raw fish.

STOJKO: Whatever you say.

SLAVICA: And you, you staying?

STOJKO: Why should I go?

SLAVICA: You like killing?

STOJKO: I am used to it.

SLAVICA: I mean a person?

STOJKO: It's the same. What d'you know when a lamb screams? Or a pig squeals. When they see a blade, they fight like cunts, hysterically, so hopelessly and miserably that sometimes I feel like laughing out loud at their stupidity. Only the sheep is quiet before the slaughter. Smart thing. Smart. The same is with people. They wouldn't be quiet. They'd try something, they'd talk, beg, cry, twist on the ground, crawl, kiss my feet. Then it wouldn't be a problem for me to finish them off. If someone'd by any chance get quiet and look me in my eyes, like a sheep, I wouldn't kill them, never.

SLAVICA: They don't kill in Japan.

STOJKO: Aaaaah. But the Yankees dropped the atomic bomb on them.

SLAVICA: I don't know. I think they don't kill each oth-

er over there. Even if they do, mamma Japanese and dad Japanese and cousins Japanese and little children Japanese, they all dress up nicely in kimonos, in what's for them some sad shade and they go to little Japanese cemeteries for the last farewell. And they all know who's buried where. And they know on which day. And they remember the dead one. And they all wail for him in their sweet Japanese language. Not only for seven days after the funeral. But all the time, they think of the dead all the time. At least they won't kill me. They know what's beautiful. They like women who sell their beauty. They like women who show their bodies. Especially white women. They like them and won't kill them. Never, never. That's where I'm gonna live, perhaps forever. They'd quarter me here if I stay for another couple of months. Rascals ask me on the street how much is pâté. Uncle Jovan, my old man's buddy, asked me to give him a blow job for ten marks. So I decided to go, almost for sure, where the sun rises first. I am leaving tomorrow never to come back. Is it a sin to share what you've got with others, Stojko? I've got these eyes.

Slavica takes Stojko's hands and puts them on her eyes.

STOJKO: Cows have large eyes. And long eyelashes.

Slavica puts his hands on her nose.

SLAVICA: I've got a nose and nostrils, through them I breathe in the stink of this butcher's shop. Through them I breathe in the stink of your birth place and your stink.

STOJKO: A cow has big nostrils too. It seems it likes the stink.

SLAVICA: And I've got a mouth and a tongue to speak with. I lick things with it. When my mum makes a cake, I lick the spoon of the mixer. I know, I shouldn't, maybe because of that spoon nothing will come of that Japanese sun, if I gain weight. Maybe I'll never be the one to see it. I like licking meat too. A plenty of meat around us, all to be licked. But most of all I'd like to lick your skin.

Slavica licks his cheek.

STOJKO: A calf licks salt when you put it on your palm. *Slavica licks his palm, puts his fingers in her mouth and bites them.*

STOJKO: But a calf doesn't say anything. Just licks. And you are talking. Sun. Raw fish. And the spoon of mother's cake mixer. Well, you know everything, Slava. Everything.

They kiss.

STOJKO: Not here, please.

SLAVICA: Where else?

STOJKO: I've done everything here. But that with you, I can't. I'll build you a house, Slava, there we'll do it. Every day. Several times. The house will be filled with posters of the rising sun. And we'll eat raw fish, if you really want to. And we'll wear kimonos. I'll fence off your house, so that no-one can come close to you and ask how much's pâté. What I am talking about a „house”, I'll build you a temple, like theirs, with a curved, bent roof.

Slavica puts his hands on her neck. Stojko caresses it.

STOJKO: Do you know what a lamb's neck is like, Slava? Long and hairy, with white hair. Yours is long too, but there's no hair, all smooth, my hand slides.

Slavica puts his hands on her breasts.

STOJKO: A sow has twelve tits. You, only two. Exactly to fill my hands. Twelve of hers is not like one of yours.

Stojko bends over and licks her nipples.

STOJKO: Your nipples are like petals, Slava.

Stojko kisses her stomach.

STOJKO: One day a child will be here. Mine, Slava, I'm telling you. And it won't be born in *Lard*. Won't live in *Lard* or die in it.

SLAVICA: Don't talk nonsense, Stojko, I liked you because you didn't talk.

STOJKO: Fine, Slava, fine.

Stojko licks her clitoris. Inserts his fingers in her vagina. She moans.

STOJKO (*About to cry*): I never used to look at these parts in an animal, I swear. I always felt giddy. Hole after hole, just emptiness. I've never wanted to fill them with anything. But yours, yours is tasty. And pink, not dark. And I want to fill it up, I really do.

Stojko kisses her thighs.

STOJKO: Show it, everything you've got. To everyone. Those who don't deserve to see it, let them see anyway, maybe they'll finally understand something.

Stojko bites her thighs.

STOJKO: There's only fat under a pig's skin. In your case there's everything.

Slavica steps back and goes for the exit.

STOJKO: Slavica.

SLAVICA: Yes?

STOJKO: I know you don't like it when people talk. But I have to tell you. I have to. I'll make you a temple, I swear, I mean it seriously. Here, in Maglajane, and

it'll be like in Japan. Seriously. Here, come back in a couple of years, and you'll see. If you don't like it, you can go back to Japan.

SLAVICA: Fine. I believe you. I'll come back to see.

Slavica leaves the scene.

Stojko cuts another pig leg with a cleaver. Cuts it in pieces, then puts chunks in his mouth, while talking.

STOJKO: From that day I saved every coin as the most precious object. I stopped going to football games, stopped buying clothes and I only gave my old girl some marks, to buy tampons for her period and so on. I worked like a horse, from dawn to dusk, slept six hours and dreamed of the rising sun, never sunset, then her breasts, our house, which sometimes is very small, sometimes looks like Japanese temples with curved roofs. Awake I slaughtered and slaughtered and slaughtered and then sold it. I was hell bent on building a Buddhist temple in Maglajane. I had an architect too, he made a blueprint, I gave him half in cash, but much more got wasted and fucked than went on the attempt to build my temple.

Scene 4 – The butcher of Courage and the four-year war.

On the video beam the photos of slaughtered animals and people are alternating. Then the usual ones (Jackie Spurrier, Rembrandt...)

Stojko continues to eat the second leg.

STOJKO: Slavica left. I got up every morning at dawn to watch the sunrise. I knew she was watching it, somewhere there.

On the video beam there are kitsch photos of sunrise in Japan. Stojko executes the Salute to the Sun yoga asana. While doing it he vomits some undigested pieces. He wipes his mouth with his hand.

STOJKO: I saluted the sun as if it was her. I know, she would say that yoga is not a Japanese art, but that's from some other Asian country. And she would put my hands again on her body. And she'd tell me to be silent, because she doesn't like people who talk too much.

Stojko goes behind the counter and cuts a few spare ribs from the pig, chews them.

STOJKO: And while I was saluting the sun, other men from Maglajane were dragging themselves on the battle fields. I never wanted to go to war, 'cos I knew I'd slaughter easily. It's enough that someone wails and that's it, I'd cut his tendons like that. My hand would go for it on its own. In war, just like in peace, everyone would want a piece of meat. That's why I stayed in Lard. 'Coz I gave it to anyone what had money to pay. *DJ Pig, Pudgy, Inkontinent and Stojko's father enter the scene.*

DJ Pig looks as usual, his hair is sprayed fluorescent pink and green, he's wearing dark sunglasses. Pudgy is short and fat, very young, perhaps he hasn't left school, in his hands he carries a huge piece of olive green material, scissors, a needle and thread. Inkontinent is old and moves slowly, Stojko's father looks as before, tanned, with white stripes from his vest.

DJ PIG: Stole, some rakija¹ on the table, right now.

Stojko takes the bottle from under the counter. Pours to everyone. Four of them sit on the bar stools, at the counter. The counter is lower than a typical one, so each one of them has to lean forward in order to reach the food and drink.

DJ PIG: I drink from the bottle. You know that. I don't go to the gym. I eat only fatty food, I drink, smoke like a Turk, I'll fuck myself with my own hand.

DJ Pig takes the bottle and swigs a huge gulp. Stojko's father slams his fist on the counter.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Pig, do not mention Turks in Lard.

PUDGY: Stole, gimme some piggy, for God sake.

STOJKO: You got money?

PUDGY: Sure thing. I wouldn't ask for piggy if I didn't have any.

Stojko puts a platter with piece of roasted pig on the counter. Pudgy gives his some banknotes, Stojko counts them. Pudgy takes a piece of meat, bites into it. Between big bites, his keeps cutting the sheet of cloth trying to sew something.

INKONTINENT: I see, you are hell bent on losing weight.

STOJKO: You shut up and piss in your pants. Pudgy doesn't take the piss out of you.

DJ PIG: Pudgy, I completely support you in losing a few kilos. If you want, you can be my belly dancer at my gigs in Frankfurt. Great sweating on the stage, cool.

PUDGY: Thanks, Mr. Pig, but I am not made to dance. I am here to take some yoga classes from Stojko.

Everybody, except Stojko and Pudgy, laughs.

¹ Rakija – Serbian homemade brandy.

DJ PIG: Stojko, mate, when I performed in Milan, I met your Slavica. There was some fashion show, whatever, she works for Armani now, then all the Bosnians gathered in a booth in some nice discothèque. Everyone buys for Slavica. I looked at her and remembered you, so I wrote a new hit.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Fuck Bosnians. What kind of nation are they, fuck me?

DJ PIG: Well, yours.

INKONTINENT: Hey, hey, cut the crap. Let us hear that song.

STOJKO: Pig, don't play with your life. Any idea how many pigs I've slaughtered in my life?

Stojko raises a cleaver in DJ Pig's direction.

DJ PIG: C'mon, man, chill out. A nice song, you'll hear it. The title is *A Peasant and a Model*. Not about you, at all. Nor about her. I've changed everything in fact. This guy's a farmer not a butcher.

INKONTINENT: C'mon, man, Stole, let's hear it, just to please our souls.

STOJKO: Just don't piss your pants from happiness.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Stop fucking around. Let's hear the song.

Stojko's father does a drum roll on the counter, as if to announce something important. While DJ Pig recites the lyrics, everybody except Stojko and Pudgy, laugh and applaud, there's general enjoyment. Stojko stares at Pig's face.

DJ PIG:

The model's here, in the village for a break
Shows are done, no more can her body take.
Neighbours admire her beauty, they are full of praise
I'll see her too, once I get back from my fields of maize.

I'll have her, trust me, soon we're gonna rock,
Not long now, but first I have to feed the stock.
I'd like to fix the pickles and some brandy
Her city lungs make me really randy.

I throw a flaming look, offer a glass of wine,
Peasant and model, that connection's fine.

Stojko drives a butcher's knife between DJ Pig's fingers on the counter.

STOJKO: Enough.

STOJKO'S FATHER: If you are that good with knives, you should practise on Muslims, and leave our Pig alone. Can't you see he's joking.

DJ PIG: Yeah, mate, are you crazy? What the fuck's wrong?

STOJKO: You really saw her in Milan?

DJ PIG: Allah is my witness...

Stojko's father slams his hand down on the counter.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Do not mention Allah and Turks, I've told you. Stojko, finish what you started with this Pig.

STOJKO: And what did she look like?

DJ PIG: Well, some long white dress, deep cleavage, no bra. Nothing special. A whore is a whore.

STOJKO: You don't know how to look at her.

INKONTINENT: Who'd know, if not our Pig? Who'd know if not him, who in Frankfurt, Dortmund and Milan fucked whores.

PUDGY: I don't think the number's important.

Inkontinent, DJ Pig and Stojko's father laugh.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Oooh, and you're a great fucker for sure.

PUDGY: I've never been with a woman so I don't know.
DJ PIG: Who'd say. I reckoned that you'd been threading pussy on your cock like a pearl necklace, Pudgy. I am a real fighter in bed, but Stole is my eternal inspiration.

STOJKO: Well, fuck you and fuck me, if I am your inspiration.

DJ PIG: Fucking hell, how can I miss the opportunity to sing about the love between a butcher and a model and all of them in Japanese-Bosnian style?

STOJKO'S FATHER: But you were the best, Pig, when you wrote that one about Schumacher. Your arrow pierced right through Stojko's heart.

Stojko's father mimics the bow and arrow.

INKONTINENT (*Screeching with laughter*): Wicked song. Good, our Pig is good. It's not Bernie, but Schumacher, not the butcher but the farmer, clever boy. Who doesn't know Stole would never get it.

STOJKO'S FATHER: I am embarrassed to take a walk in the village, wherever I go I see that crap of a temple. He laid the foundations next to the church, fuck you, like you are not my son. Not just that you learned butcher skills and did the school, like it's some science, but you're building a Buddhist temple next to the proper church. Everybody keeps asking has my Stole gone mad. They don't know, mate, what to expect. Some say it's gonna be a stable, some a brothel, and they are happy about either, in vain. But you won't do it. Now it's the war that's fucked you up, then you'll get married, this and that. You won't have time and what for. A temple in Maglajane. Oi, a Buddhist temple in Maglajane!

Stojko's father gestures that Stojko is crazy.

INKONTINENT: Oooh, Slavica will piss her pants, like myself, when she sees that temple, I mean if she ever returns to Maglajane. You are stupid, Stole, Rajko I am sorry but your son is stupid. You think she cares about the temple? Why do you think she's with Bernie? 'Cos he's handsome and smart? 'Cos he builds her temples? My Stole, my poor Stole.

STOJKO: Why don't you go to the war a bit, eh? You are shitting me here in *Lard*. Ljilja was here yesterday to buy a kilo of chicken breasts and says you've been drafted. She was crying, wailing, says it would be fine if she could only come with you and wash your nappies.

INKONTINENT: Well, my Stole, you don't know nothing. We complained, mate, Ljilja and me. We went to Banja Luka, to the HQ. They received us fine, in some office. We sat on a two-seater across some moustachioed big soldier. Ljilja's talking, me and Tashy are silent. She's begging to either release me or come with me. She says, her Ljubomir is 49 and still pisses his pants like a baby. Says, I wash his pants, but pants aren't a problem. Says, I wash his nappies too, cotton ones, which belonged to our son Boško once upon a time. We have seven nappies for seven days. What's he gonna do, mister Commander, when the eighth day comes? Tashy stares at me all the time, ignores her, and tells me: you are lucky, old buddy, that your paranoia shoots through your dick, and not through your arse. In the trenches everyone shits ten times a day, at least. The battlefields don't stink with corpses but with military shit.

STOJKO: What are you doing here, fuck your mother? You want them to close *Lard* down, so the Serbian army will lose the war without my daily bacon supplies?

INKONTINENT: Well, it could've all been fine, maybe even Tashy would've let me off, when Ljilja started crying, and there's nothing worse for a soldier than a crying woman. My bladder gave up, no control. I pissed all over the orange two-seater and the yellow sponge sticking out of it and Ljilja's red dress, which she had worn especially for Tashy. He said I had to be at the bus station in ten days or I'd be a goner.

STOJKO: So here you are. Fuck you, this is not a bar, this is a butcher's shop, mate. People come here for a bit of meat.

INKONTINENT: Well, where else, to a bar, it's a deserters' lair. It's easier to take them away drunk. You can create all sorts of things out of rakija, my Stole. Me, while they were taking me to the van, I'd say to myself: Ljubomir, mate, you are in some cop TV series. They are kidnapping you, but your partner is gonna save you for sure from this fucked up situation.

STOJKO'S FATHER: You're all cunts. Butcher, tailor, singer and pants pisser. Phew, fuck all your mothers.

DJ PIG: I've got German citizenship, so I don't give a fuck about shooting for the Serbs.

PUDGY: Well, I want to go to war. But they wouldn't have me. I am too fat, I'd slow down the whole division, I couldn't get out of a trench, I'd struggle and twist, and no uniform is big enough for me. That's why I am making my own, and when I finish, straight to the front line.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Great, Pudgy, honour to you. That's a different kettle of fish.

PUDGY: I'll get thinner in the army. Order rules there. And discipline. Early rise. No sleeping, so you look wasted, although you are fat. Lots of running. Plenty of push-ups. And you are nervous, so you can't eat. As the old man says, a lot of pooing there. No food. Even if I wanted to eat, there's none. Some eat leaves, so you get diarrhoea.

DJ PIG: Forget the war, Pudgy. I am telling you, on stage with me, you can jump around like a maniac, you can't fail. You'd halve in a month, if you came with me on tour.

INKONTINENT (*Excited*): Great, Pudgy. Great. It all fits. If they come for me, you say you are me. Or, we can say, you are dying to go to war, they won't let you, I don't want to, they want me, something like that we'll say, or say you tried hard, made a uniform, so you first, then me.

DJ PIG: You know for sure what'll work, I swear? You tell them, if they come, that you are a faggot, that always works. The army don't need those.

INKONTINENT: God forbid.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Pig is right. You can't fail with bug-gery. A faggot, mate, can't be a soldier, whatever he tries.

On the video beam there is Pudgy eating cakes in poorly furnished cake shop, taking one after another from the cabinet.

Pudgy stops eating roast pork.

PUDGY: Actually, I don't like eating roast pork. Nothing salty, sour, nor spicy, my pallet doesn't like it. I love swallowing sweets. I like sugar in my mouth, on my lips, on my tongue, when it scratches my throat. I like

to get sick because of sweets. And when it all gets blurry in front of my eyes and I get a headache. I like to sit on the bog for ages, so I can scoff some more immediately after. Flapjacks, sponge cake, then ice cream and fruit cakes.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Calm down, Pudgy. I don't care about the fact you stuff yourself in your free time. It's enough just to look at you to feel sick.

INKONTINENT: C'mon, Rajkan, let's hear it. I like hearing stories. When people talk, there is no thinking.

PUDGY: I went to Laktaši, to a cake shop. Every evening. The bus station is right in front of it. I make a few steps, open the glass door. Approach the cabinet. Then dig into it. First I munch cherry croissants. The cherry takes the edge off the sweetness. A bit bitter, you like it, 'coz you know the baklava's coming next, I kill at least ten of them. Then next on the menu are cakes. I eat a slice from each one. And every night like that.

INKONTINENT: Fucking hell, man, where do you get all that money?

PUDGY: Well, I had none. My friend used to work in that cake shop. He let me eat as much as I could, under the condition that, once the war's over, I'll go to the gym and start a weight loss programme. I promised. And I believed in that promise. Him too. There were no customers, people don't feel like sweets. Only some children used to lick the cake shop windows, so their mothers would spend all their wages on tufahija².

STOJKO: Well, why the hell don't you go there any more? There, get the Piss man under his arm, so they can take him to war from there. Yeah, man, good for you that you prefer sponge cake to pork.

PUDGY: No more. No more sponge cakes. Nor cherry croissants. Nor baklava. Nor the child who licks the window. No tufahija. Nor my friend. One day they threw a grenade and blew everything up. Sometimes I think it was good that I used to stuff myself there by night, and sometimes I think it could've been good if I did it by day too. They threw a grenade during the day. During the day I weigh almost 200 kilos. During the day I lie at home thinking how I'm gonna take the bus to his place. During the day my body would fly in pieces up to 20 metres around the cake shop. Chunks of me, for sure, would be large. And people'd have to step over them. The chunks of my friend weren't. No-one noticed. I went during the day to collect them. His pieces were small, too small to be recognized. I kept collecting him during the day, but never managed to. During the night I used to stuff myself.

On the video beam, Pudgy, his mouth smeared, leaves the cake shop not closing the cabinet. The usual photos continue to flick.

STOJKO'S FATHER: I bet your buddy was a Siptar³. Only they can make sponge cake while grenades are whizzing around. He deserved it.

STOJKO: C'mon, old man, shut up.

² Tufahija – stewed apples stuffed with a walnut filling. Turkish sweets popular in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

³ Siptar – a member of the Albanian community in Kosovo. Today used in a pejorative sense.

STOJKO'S FATHER: You say that to me. *Lard* is not yours yet. Until then I say what I want here.

DJ PIG: Pisser, I am telling you seriously to tell them you are a poofter.

INKONTINENT: Stole, give us a drop more rakija. At least I can piss something of quality. So I can brag to those in the trenches that I drank real plum brandy. They'd go crazy smelling the rakija on my breath.

Stojko puts another bottle on the counter, the previous one is empty. DJ Pig drinks from the bottle.

DJ PIG (Sings): No gym, I only eat fat, I drink, smoke like a Turk, I'll fuck up myself on my own.

STOJKO (Cuts him off, Pig does not finish the chorus): C'mon, fuck off.

DJ PIG: I write one song that is not about you, and you immediately turn jealous.

A Soldier enters the scene. He is faceless, wearing a Serbian uniform.

SOLDIER: God bless you, Stojko.

STOJKO: You too, Ranko.

Under the counter Stojko pulls out a huge bin liner, filled with meat, gives it to the Soldier.

SOLDIER: That's right, Stole, that's why I like you. Is the meat safe?

STOJKO: For you always.

SOLDIER: Trichinosis?

STOJKO: God forbid.

Pudgy has made a shapeless shirt out of camouflage material, it has holes for the head and arms, but no shape. He gets up, stands to attention, salutes the Soldier. Inkontinent is trying to hide his face from the Soldier, he is nervous, necks one rakija after another.

PUDGY: Permission to speak, sir?

SOLDIER: Granted, fatso.

PUDGY: They wouldn't let me volunteer, sir, they said I'll get stuck in the trench, they said they didn't have a uniform big enough for me.

SOLDIER: They were right. Pig.

DJ PIG: Let's not insult each other's nationalities.

Stojko stabs the butcher's knife between DJ Pig's fingers.

STOJKO (To the Soldier): All fixed, don't worry about him.

PUDGY: Well, I thought, for me it's not a problem if I get stuck in a trench. No way. The others continue, I remain stuck. Not a problem. I made myself a uniform. *He holds the uniform in front of himself, it covers his face.*

PUDGY: This soft, green shirt I've made.

SOLDIER: Shorty, don't provoke. Go back to your place and finish the pork. We have too many deserters to think about fat volunteers. Here, yesterday in Kaba-tovci, in a bar, I caught three runaways. You, Stole, you all right?

STOJKO: Just about.

SOLDIER (Sneeringly): Temple?

STOJKO: Temporarily on hold.

SOLDIER: Fuck it. And you other gentlemen, how are we today?

The Soldier puts a hand on DJ Pig's and Inkontinent's shoulders.

INKONTINENT (Screams): I am a faggot.

SOLDIER: Stojko, give me a knife. The sharpest. I don't want to work twice. You, put your hand on the counter.

INKONTINENT: I am not, I am not, I piss my pants. An old man, but I wear nappies like a baby. I know nothing. Pig told me to say I was a faggot.

SOLDIER: You just put your little hand on the counter. *Under Inkontinent's stool a puddle of urine appears.*

INKONTINENT: You see, you see, I piss my pants like a little boy.

Stojko gives a knife to the Soldier. He cuts off Inkontinent's right thumb. Inkontinent screams.

SOLDIER: Stojko, I have no time for your nonsense. You allow all sorts of things in *Lard*, you let the scum gather here. See you soon. Make sure you get me lamb intestine next time. And when I come next time no more of these peasants.

STOJKO: No worries.

The Soldier leaves the scene, Inkontinent continues to scream. Everybody except Stojko leaves the scene. Video beam is showing photographs of Slavica Ecclestone from fashion shows. Stojko continues to eat spare ribs. He pukes.

STOJKO: Here I sell two kilos of sausage to a Muslim soldier who wants to try pork before he dies, there, she is having a fashion show for Armani. Here I lay the foundations for the temple, there she marries that Bernie. Here I lie on the floor, curl up and sleep because the smell of meat never reaches the floor. And I never dream about the animals I slaughter. And I don't dream about mince meat and rice mixed into sarma⁴. I dream in some languages I don't un-

derstand, I dream in Japanese. There she buys a pair of shoes for 500 marks, just like my first ox. Here, once a week, I bribe the Serbian army with a sack full of meat, just not to be drafted. There, once a week, she blows Bernie's cock, and that is probably arranged by the prenuptial contract. I've heard that her and Bernie can't communicate. She speaks Serbian and Italian, he speaks only English. What's he with her for, if she can't tell him what she told me? About raw fish, sun and the Japanese. What's he with her for, if she can't tell him what she told me? And my temple in her likeness slowly advanced. By the end of the war it had windows, so I can look at my Slava. I knew she would return by the time I finished the temple. I knew it would be in all the tabloids worldwide. The only Buddhist temple in Bosnia. It's a great honour. My Slava will know how to appreciate it. She'll know everything.

Scene 5 – Our butcher's getting married.

On the video beam there's footage taken with DJ Pig's mobile phone, his hand constantly shaking. Gypsies are working on the roof construction. Stojko is going around the temple supervising.

DJ PIG (*On the video beam, off*): This is a hit. My new video. Stole, my king. King of kings.

Stojko leans in through the temple window, looks at its interior, kicking his legs in the air.

⁴ Sarma – a dish of grape, cabbage or chard leaves rolled around a filling usually based on minced meat. It is found in the cuisines of the Balkans and Turkey well as those of Central Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

DJ PIG (*Turns his mobile camera towards himself, we can see his face, big, he is licking his mouth.*): This new video is a bomb. Stole, phwor, Stole, let me kiss your arse for this.

DJ PIG makes faces.

The usual photos continue to alternate on the video beam. Stojko cuts off a pig leg and eats it. He doesn't cut it in small pieces, he holds it in his hand and bites off pieces.

STOJKO: For a long time I refused to touch human skin except hers. That's why I caressed lambs. Did the same with pigs until I'd bleed from their rough hair. But women never. It'd be the biggest sin, to caress another woman. Then I wouldn't be able to enter our temple clean. After I met and touched Jovana, I may as well've killed and raped a little kid, that's how much I sinned against Slava. No human skin can be like Slava's. Jovana's neck never reminded me of Slava's. Slava is more like animals than other women.

Stojko pukes. He continues to eat the leg.

STOJKO: Even my old man gave up the idea of marrying me off, when he understood how much I spent on the temple. I think my mother believed that one day Slava and I would get married in that temple. Only Pig would not leave me alone. He used to bring all sorts of women to *Lard*. Some were even pretty, but fuck that. And others, even someone who hadn't touched the most beautiful woman in world, wouldn't go near them even with a shitty stick. And it was always the same thing. We'd chat a bit, I see they know nothing about life, never heard of raw fish, I give them some lard or pork scratchings at the end and never see

them again. But Pig convinced me that Jovana would build a temple for me, if she had the money I did. Like, she's known me since high school, she studied to be a vet. Our classrooms next door, but I'd never seen her. She was amazed by my 300-kilo ox adventure and was hell bent on meeting me. She is from Pig's village, she knew we were friends, she begged him every day, and one day, four years after the end of the war, I let him bring her. I said, what the hell.

Stojko almost finishes the pig leg, leaves the remains on the counter. Jovana enters the scene. She resembles Stojko's mother, much more than Slavica.

JOVANA: She, too, came like this to your butcher's shop once.

STOJKO: Fuck it, *Lard* is a kind of reception hall.

JOVANA: Pig said that she took off her clothes.

STOJKO: No idea, it was long ago.

Jovana starts undressing. Stojko approaches her, stops her.

STOJKO: Don't, please.

JOVANA: You know, you were king for us. When you slaughtered that ox. In the school corridor I used to stare at you all the time. You never noticed me.

STOJKO: I don't know how to stare.

JOVANA: And I even wanted to come to you in *Lard* and ask some silly things, like, how much is pâté, just so I could look at you, but my brother wouldn't let me.

STOJKO: And?

She gets twitchy, looks around.

STOJKO: What have you got to offer?

JOVANA: I am fertile. The whole village knows. Come and see.

Stojko approaches Jovana, she takes his hand and puts it under her skirt.

JOVANA: You see how wide it is. The whole hand can fit. When I was seventeen I got pregnant, he left to the war, didn't know, my brother forced me to abort. I can still give birth, that I know, otherwise I wouldn't have such a big hole for nothing.

Stojko pulls his hand out, steps away from her.

STOJKO: Anything else?

JOVANA: I can graft. Like a horse, if needed. I don't know who my dad is, my mother died when me and my brother were kids. I raised my brother, I run the household with my ten fingers. Feel me hands.

Stojko touches her hands.

JOVANA: From washing. Washing and cleaning, they got rough.

STOJKO: Anything else?

JOVANA: I obey. I can be silent like a sheep.

Stojko nods his head.

STOJKO: That's something.

JOVANA: I danced to my brother's tune. I'll do the same for you.

Stojko gives her a whole chicken, she takes it hesitantly.

STOJKO: If that's so, here you go.

JOVANA: Sorry?

STOJKO: Put your hand in it. C'mon.

Jovana is confused, then sticks two fingers in inside the chicken.

STOJKO: Stick it in. Deeper, deeper, don't be afraid.

Jovana inserts her fingers deeper.

STOJKO: Deeper, like that. There's a gift for you inside.

JOVANA: A gift?

She grimaces. Sticks her whole hand in it. Pulls out a ring.

STOJKO: You wanna marry me?

JOVANA: You bet.

The moment Jovana agrees, trumpets sound, the tune of DJ Pig's song The Marriage of a Mate. DJ Pig enters the scene, excited and noisy, accompanied by a Gypsy band, the same people who were building Stojko's temple on the video beam. DJ Pig waves a deck of cards and leads the group, including Stojko's father and mother, Jovana's brother, Inkontinent and Pudgy, drastically thin, Lady Neighbour 1, Lady Neighbour 2 and Neighbour. While the song plays, everyone kisses Stojko and Jovana, congratulating them while dancing, then all sit around the counter as if around the wedding table. Stojko lays a platter with roast pork, a few bottle of rakija, plates and glasses on the table. On the video beam, alternating with the usual, are photos of Slavica and Bernie Ecclestone's wedding. DJ PIG (sings):

*On Saturday our mate's getting wed at last
we gonna have a three day blast,
for years folk will say I was drunk as a hog
so that everyone knows who's top dog (who's top dog)*

*I'll dress up real nice my lady bear,
let'em see the Vienna school, that's only fair,
I'm throwing marks, schillings and francs (while
singing he's throwing money around)
for the singer, all the way to the bank (to the bank).
The orchestra stops playing.*

STOJKO'S FATHER: Fuck my mother if I expected this. Porky, all the honour to you.

DJ PIG: Yeah, when DJ Swine's the matchmaker, no mistakes.

Stojko's mother kisses Jovana.

STOJKO'S MOTHER: Thank God.

STOJKO'S FATHER: Thank Pig.

STOJKO'S MOTHER (*Strokes Jovana*): My daughter-in-law. My sweet daughter-in-law.

PUDGY: I'd like to apologize on behalf all present. We couldn't manage to buy a gift. Everything was so sudden.

INKONTINENT: Don't break your head with someone else's worries, Pudgy, sit and eat some piggy.

PUDGY: I became a vegan in the army. Every day I practise the yoga Stojko taught me and look at me now.

STOJKO'S MOTHER: You lost weight, but my daughter-in-law is still the most beautiful.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: There's no gifts, because first is first, and second's second. First we should've received the wedding invitation, and then buy a gift. No-one informed us.

NEIGHBOUR 1: Yeah, true. Pig gathered all of us and said Stole's getting married. The women started screaming, and we, men, kissed each other, and came here to see.

INKONTINENT: I look nice, don't I? And I smell nice?

STOJKO'S MOTHER: You do, old man. And you smell nice.

INKONTINENT: It's because I don't only piss my pants but I poo too. Four years since the war and paranoia

still hits me in my dick and bum, just like that Tashy from the army told me a while ago, fuck him.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Don't worry, old man, just sprinkle a bit of Gucci on your bum, you gonna smell like a flower.

NEIGHBOUR 1: You, girl, as if you were born in a boat. You remember, Stole, what she asked you for and why? Back then, when you slaughtered the ox.

STOJKO: Forget about it.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Sweetheart, I'm real glad you are getting married.

Gets up and kisses him noisily on the cheek.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: First, Stole, the first woman has to be married, then the second one. You could've married the most beautiful one first.

STOJKO'S MOTHER: Don't, Zorka, for Christ's sake.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2: First the first things are spoken. Then after they've been spoken, the second is celebrated.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Wow, your friend is sweet, Stole. Moves her chair closer to Pudgy.

DJ PIG: Well, well, me matchmaking again, I see, nothing can be done without Pig. So that even Pudgy can get his end away.

PUDGY: Missy, could you, please, move away a bit.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: C'mon, you're such a sweetheart that I can't resist.

STOJKO'S BROTHER-IN-LAW: I was here, in the centre of Maglajane, on my way to pay the priest for my sister's wedding, I saw a horrible building. I was told, my bro, that you're building it.

DJ PIG (*Sits next to Stojko's brother-in-law, puts a*

piece of pork on his plate.): Have a bit of this. No-one can stuff pork with carrot like your brother-in-law.

STOJKO'S WIFE: I said I'd do it. I'd marry Stojko.

STOJKO'S BROTHER-IN-LAW: People say, bro, that you are mad. In love with a model. And 'cos of her you don't look at women, only goats.

DJ PIG (*Puts another piece of pork on Stojko's brother-in-law's plate*): Oi, mate, it's fine if you don't like carrot and things, but try this, pork stuffed with venison. Your brother-in-law's a magician, I'm telling you.

STOJKO'S WIFE: I said I'd do it. I'd slaughter pigs and oxen with Stojko.

STOJKO'S BROTHER-IN-LAW: They say you swore not to let the other woman in that temple.

DJ PIG (*Puts another piece of meat in his plate.*): Oi, mate, then have some pure venison. To lick your fingers. He's an artist.

STOJKO'S WIFE: I said I'd do it. I'd wash bloody knives for Stojko.

STOJKO'S BROTHER-IN-LAW: You won't touch another woman. And I want my sister to have a child, do you hear me?

DJ PIG (*Stuffs a piece of meat in Stojko's brother-in-law's mouth*): Not even the greatest gourmand could resist this one. Pork stuffed with venison and carrots.

STOJKO'S WIFE (*Gets up and screams.*): I said I'd do it.

Lady Neighbour 1, who sits between Stojko's brother-in-law and Pudgy, hugs both of them.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1 (*To Stojko's brother-in-law*): Don't you worry about your sis. The whore left long ago, to Tokyo, then to England. Has a rich husband, mate,

doesn't care about Maglajane and Stole. And you know what?

NEIGHBOUR 1: What, for fuck's sake?

LADY NEIGHBOUR 1: Now I am the most beautiful woman in the village. It's been nine years now.

LADY NEIGHBOUR 2 (*Shakes her head*): Stole, you made a mistake. The first woman should be married first, the one who doesn't ask how much is pâté right away. The second one should be married second, when the pâté price drops.

Lady Neighbour 1 tries to kiss Pudgy, who avoids it, and stares at the platter with roast pork, and, not being able to resist anymore, takes a piece and quickly scoffs it. She then attempts to kiss Stojko's brother-in-law, who, also trying to avoid her, stares and Stojko and Jovana. Lady Neighbour 2 pops pills and washes them down with rakija. Neighbour carefully examines a lamb kidney. Inkontinent looks under the chair for traces of his urine. The others keep eating meat, very slowly, except DJ Pig, who's stuffing pieces of meat in his mouth one after another.

DJ PIG: Music!

The Marriage of a Mate starts playing, everyone sings. When the song finishes, led by DJ Pig and the orchestra, while the Schumacher song plays, everyone except Stojko leaves the scene. He pukes, and then starts eating the remains of the pig leg.

STOJKO: For Slavica's wedding Bernie had three Lamborghini filled with rose petals delivered to her house, the chauffeurs almost choked to death. But I'm building her a temple. Armani himself designed her wedding dress, for free. It was really low cut at the back,

that dress, on the edge of decency. But I'm building her a temple. Schumacher gave her the most luxurious wedding gift. Her name spelled in letters her own height, made of Swarovsky crystals. But I'm building her a temple. Everyone throwing themselves at her feet. But I'm building her a temple.

Scene 6. The temple is done. So is the butcher.

On the video beam, Stojko and TV Reporter are standing in front of the newly-built Buddhist temple.

REPORTER: Dear viewers, unbelievable. Abso-fucking-lutely unbelievable. We've got a real Buddhist temple in the middle of Maglajane.

Reporter steps aside to reveal the whole temple in the frame. Stojko stands there, confused.

REPORTER (Off): Aaaaannnd? What do you say? I know, you cannot abso-fucking-lutely believe it.

Reporter steps back into the frame

REPORTER: With us is also the mastermind behind all this mess, super-crazy, super-cool, butcher Stojko Mišić, aka Super Stole.

Stojko waves to the camera.

REPORTER: Stojko, could you let us into the secret of when you came up with this, I won't say deranged, but super-crazy idea?

STOJKO: About eleven years ago.

REPORTER: Phenomenal! And how?

STOJKO: I built it for a woman. Slavica Radić. This way I wanted to say hello to her, I don't want to talk too much, this temple speaks for me.

Stojko goes towards the temple.

REPORTER: Stojkoooooooo! Stole, king, come back for a sec.

Stojko comes back.

REPORTER: Did you know that not so long ago Bernie built a Formula 1 circuit in England and called it, believe it or not – Slavica?

STOJKO: So what? It's just a circuit.

REPORTER: More shocking news, dear viewers, is that soon we'll have the Bosnian Grand Prix. Because Bernie is building a circuit here, in Maglajane, and the biggest curve will, of fucking course, be called Slavica.

Stojko leaves. The usual photos alternate on the video beam.

STOJKO: Jovana, too, gave birth in Lard. Smilja helped her deliver, too. I says one day my daughter will be grateful. The only butcher's shop in Maglajane. The only one that stayed open during the war. And I didn't take her in my arms when Smilja gave her to me. Human blood is one thing, animal something else.

Stojko's mother and Stojko's wife, pregnant again, enter the scene. They go behind the counter, take knives and start carving meat. They do it noisily and aggressively, each time stabbing knives into the counter.

STOJKO: I took care of everything. The whole interior of the temple has been covered with posters of the sun that rises over there. I did it. I made the sun rise here first. And I planted cherries everywhere around. And I watered them. And it all grew. And cherries. And the temple grew. And the sun, I swear it has started to

rise first in Maglajane now, and later in the rest of the world. Slavica, I swear.

The two women leave the scene.

STOJKO: It was everywhere, in all the tabloids worldwide. She must've heard about it. And she should've come. But she didn't. she's got big eyes, like a cow, and a long calf's tongue and a goat's hairy neck, and twelve sow's tits. And all of that I like on her. And I love it all. And I'd kiss all of that day and night in the temple. But she didn't come, fuck it.

Stojko pukes. He splits the pig's head in half with the cleaver. He takes half the brain with a knife. He breaks off pieces of the brain and chews them, steps in front of the counter, on the proscenium, carrying the brain.

STOJKO: The brain is a miracle. Unexplored. I have explored my heart. The temple grew out of it.

Stojko pukes, continuing to eat the brain, falls on the floor and goes into spasms, starts choking on his vomit. On the video beam there are kitsch photos of the rising sun in Japan.

STOJKO: She never asked me how much is pâté, she never asked, never. How much is pâté, how much, that she never asked.

Stojko lies gurgling a bit on the floor, then dies.

THE END