

MARTOR



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The day when the bats arrive

Alina Iordache



13th June 1990. North Railway Station. I was just getting off the train with my mom and dad. Two people in their sixties.

Close to the exit, a manly voice clearly whispers to me from behind: 'Get lost, the miners are coming!' A tall man, wearing a navy blue suit and a white shirt, passes me by skimming the ground. He slowly slides in front of us before me being aware of it. I don't get it. I don't utter a word to my folks. He seems ghostly.

We head, as we have done it lately, directly to Universităţii Square. Being away since the night before, we have no idea of what has happened. My mom starts talking to one of the architecture teachers. She can't get it: what does it mean 'swiping the people off the road'?! A confused and frightened crowd, looking as if waiting for the worse.

I take my dad and I bring him in front of one of the soldiers. We speak loudly and provocatively about the facts displayed in front of our eyes. He smiles flatly, ironically, mockingly. I step forward. We can almost touch each other. He and I are practically two. We dance a sort of induced tango. Busses could be seen at the back. Not empty, as they were going to say later on. They covertly swarm with professionals, watching over the events. We feel swamped, dirty inside, puppets of a cruel, absurd and ridiculous staging.

I take my folks to 'Capşa'. As if, desperately, I

were able to erase... The restaurant takes some time to open, quite a lot after the normal hour. We are announced that all we can get is soda. As I usually drop by, one of the waiters recognizes me and, also whispering, advises me to get out quickly, all the more as I am accompanied by two elder people. We leave. I feel completely bemused after his explanation: the miners are expected to come to teach the students a lesson.

If two people tell you to make tracks... We head towards The Athenaeum. All the adjacent streets are full with trucks. From behind the tarpaulin, the fresher face of a rookie looks down the street. The street seems hectic. People keep on running out of the underground. In the back-soldiers with guns. You cannot use any means of transportation. Somebody has mercy on us. We pay for one-way tickets to Sinaia, but we get to the train station. We step in a train as if expected to arrive. We arrive in Braşov just in time to watch Răzvan Theodorescu speaking about a Bucharest, other than the one we have just seen.

For me, June '90 is surrounded by mystery. A mystery which equally surrounds me. As one of my friends would say: 'Just imagine you had stayed. With your 3 centimetres of hair, they wouldn't have had anything to pull. And then you should have seen a different situation!...'

Translated by Raluca Vîjăac
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