M. Kotsiubynsky

Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors

UKRAINIAN CLASSICS IN TRANSLATION

Edited by
George S. N. Luckyj
University of Toronto

No. 4
SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS

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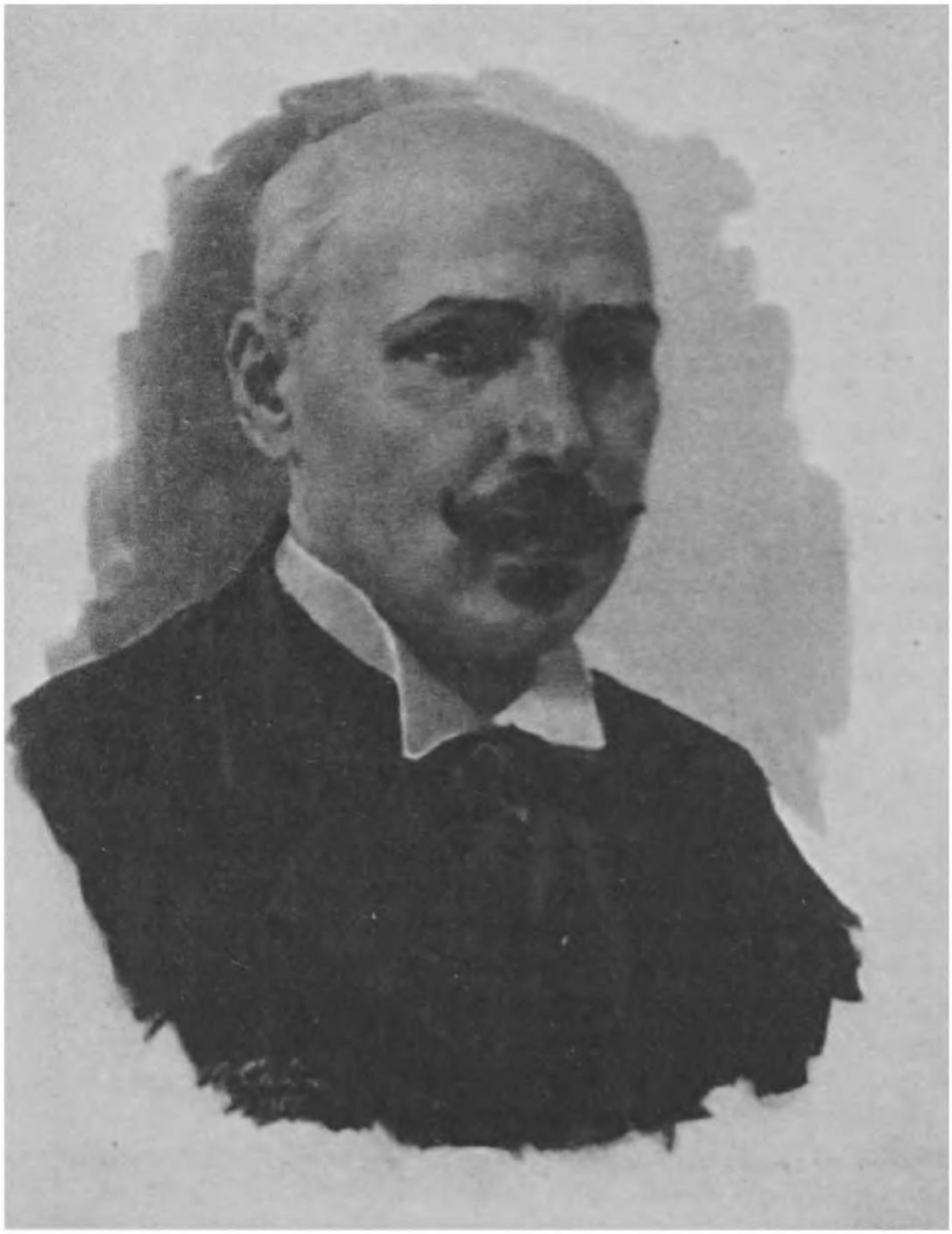

Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky

SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS

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With Notes and an Essay on Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky
by
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EDITORIAL NOTE

The novel *Fata Morgana*, by Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, was originally planned as the fourth volume in this series. For two reasons this plan had to be abandoned. *Fata Morgana* came out in an English translation in the Soviet Union in 1976. Secondly, a translator was found who was able to undertake the difficult task of translating *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, also by Kotsiubynsky. Readers of the series are thus offered the first professional translation of Kotsiubynsky's masterpiece. The editor can say without any exaggeration: here is one of the masterworks of modern Ukrainian literature.

Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky (1864-1913) was a leading prose writer in Ukraine during the modernist period. His short stories, as well as his novels, are rooted in Ukrainian life, yet they explore in a truly contemporary manner the human psyche as it was perceived in world literature of that era. In this sense, Kotsiubynsky is one of the foremost European writers in Ukrainian literature, attuned to the spirit of the *fin-de-siècle*. In order to assess his place in literature, we have asked Professor Rubchak to write a preface to this volume, an appraisal that has reached the proportions of a major study. We are happy to print it as a separate essay, following the translation, along with exhaustive notes to the text itself, which were also prepared by Professor Rubchak. All in all, the volume offers a unique insight into the life and art of Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky.

George S. N. Luckyj
Editor

SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS

Ivan was the nineteenth child in the Hutsul family of the Paliichuks.[1] The twentieth and last was Annychka. Who is to say whether it was the eternal roaring of the Cheremosh River and the complaints of the mountain streams filling the lonely cottage on the bare high peak, or whether it was the sorrow of the black fir forests that frightened the child? Whatever the reason, Ivan wept constantly, cried out in the night, grew poorly, and looked at his mother with such a profoundly wise and ancient gaze that she would turn away from him in consternation. Sometimes she would even think with a shudder that he was not her child. The midwife had failed to utter the proper charms during labor, or to fumigate a corner of the house, or to light a candle, and a crafty she-devil had managed to exchange her own child for the human one.[2]

The boy grew poorly, and yet he did grow, and before his mother had noticed, it was time to sew trousers for him. But the boy was still strange. He would stare ahead, seeing something unknown and distant, or he would yell without reason. His breeches slipping down, he would shut his eyes tightly, open his mouth, and scream.

Then his mother would remove the pipe clenched in her teeth, wave it at him, and angrily call out, "Fie on you, changeling! May you vanish in the lake or the woods!"

And Ivan would vanish. He would roll through the green hayfields, small and white, like a dandelion puff, and fearlessly make his way into the forest, where firs nodded their boughs overhead like bears waving their paws. From there he would gaze at the mountains, the nearer and farther peaks outlined against the azure sky, at the black fir forests that cast off a blue breath, and at the emerald-green hayfields that twinkled like mirrors in a frame of trees. The cold Cheremosh seethed in the valley below. Isolated farms dozed in the sunlight on distant hills. All was sad and still, and the black firs ceaselessly lowered their sorrow into the Cheremosh, which carrried it away.

"Iva-a-a-n! Hey!" the folks would call from the house, but he would not listen and would continue to pick raspberries, make whistles, and blow on blades of grass, trying to imitate the bird calls and the other sounds that he heard in the forest. Barely visible in the verdure, he would pick flowers to decorate his broadbrim straw hat and then, when he was tired, lie down under the hay drying on a dead fir, and the mountain streams would lull him to sleep and then wake him with their peals.

When Ivan turned seven, he looked at the world with different eyes. He already knew many things. He could find such useful herbs as valerian, deadly nightshade, mandrake, and sanicle.[3] He understood the kite's weeping,[4] and

he knew where the cuckoo comes from.[5] When he talked about these things at home, his mother would glance at him uncertainly: perhaps *it* was speaking to him? He knew that evil forces rule the world, that the evil spirit of the *aridnyk* reigns over all,[6] that the woods are full of forest demons who graze deer and hares like cattle,[7] that the merry *chuhaistyr*—who rends wood nymphs from limb to limb—roams about,[8] inviting passers-by to join him in dance, and that the sound of the ax lives in the forest.[9] Higher up, on the distant waterless peaks, wood nymphs[10] dance endlessly, and the *shcheznyk* ("the Vanisher") hides in the cliffs. Ivan also knew about the water nymphs who emerge onto riverbanks on clear days to sing songs and make up tales and prayers,[11] and about the drowned men who dry their pale bodies on river boulders after sunset.[12] All manner of evil spirits inhabit the cliffs, forests, ravines, cottages, and enclosures, lying in wait to harm Christian folk or cattle. Waking at night, surrounded by a hostile silence, Ivan would often lie trembling with horror. The world was like a fairy tale, miraculous, intriguing, and yet frightening.

By now he had been given chores and was sent to graze the cows. He would drive Goldy and Blue into the forest, and when they were immersed in waves of grass and young firs and the mournful peal of their bells seemed to be emerging from under water, he would sit down on a slope, take out his flute, and play the simple tunes that he had learned from his elders. Yet this music never satisfied him. He would cast aside his flute in annoyance and listen to the faint and elusive melodies that dwelled within him.

The dull clamor of the river would rise toward Ivan from the valley below and flood the mountains, and the pellucid ringing of the cow bells would echo like drops of falling water. The sorrowful mountains would peer from behind fir boughs, imbued with the sadness of the shadows cast by the clouds, which obliterated the pale smiles of the hayfields. The mountains were always changing their mood: when the hayfields smiled, the forest would frown. Difficult as it was to peer into the mountains' changing visage, it was just as difficult for the boy to catch the whimsical melody that fluttered its little wings by his ear and yet could never be caught.

Once Ivan abandoned his cows and climbed to the very peak. He rose higher and higher along a barely visible path, through thick growths of pale ferns and prickly blackberries and raspberries. He leaped lightly from stone to stone, clambered over fallen trees, and pushed through thickets. The eternal roar of the river rose after him; the mountains grew around him, and the blue vision of Chornohora appeared on the horizon. Now long weeping grass covered the slopes; the cow bells echoed like distant sighs, and large rocks cropped up ever more frequently, until at the very peak they formed a chaos of shattered boulders, covered with lichen and strangled in the snakelike embraces of fir roots. Each rock under Ivan's feet was covered by soft and silky reddish moss. Warm and gentle, it preserved the sun-gilded water of summer rains and caressed his feet like a feather pillow. The bushy green cranberries and whortleberries had sunk their roots deep into the moss and sprinkled over it a dew of red and blue berries.

Here Ivan sat down to rest. The boughs of fir trees rustled gently overhead, the sound blending with the roar of the river. The sun filled the deep valley with gold, making the grass green; the blue smoke of a bonfire wound its way upward, and velvety peals of thunder rolled over the hills from beyond Ihryts Mountain. Ivan sat listening, completely forgetting that he had cows to tend.

Suddenly he heard in the resonant silence a quiet music that sinuated by his ear so long and so elusively that it was almost painful. Frozen motionless, his head tilted forward, he listened to the strange melody with joyous anticipation. He had never heard people playing in this manner. But then who was playing? Not a single person could be seen in the forest around him. Ivan glanced back at the rocks and was petrified. There, astride a rock, sat the Vanisher, his pointed beard twisted, his horns bent down, and his eyes shut, playing on a *floiara.*[13] "My goats are gone, my goats are gone!" the *floiara* echoed sadly. Then the horns were raised, the cheeks filled with air, the eyes opened wide, and joyful sounds leaped forth. "My goats are back, my goats are back!" And Ivan saw to his horror that bearded billy goats had emerged from a thicket and were shaking their heads.

Unable to flee, Ivan sat rooted to the spot, shouting inwardly in mute terror. When he finally found his voice, the Vanisher disappeared into the rock, and the billy goats turned into roots of windblown trees.

The boy dashed down headlong, blindly fending off the treacherous embraces of blackberry bushes, breaking dry branches, rolling over slippery moss, and sensing with horror that something was pursuing him. Finally he fell. He did not know how long he lay there.

When he came to and recognized familiar places, he calmed down a bit. Still shaken, he listened for a while. The song seemed to be echoing within him. He took out his *dentsivka.* At first he could not get the hang of the melody. He started over and over, straining his memory and trying to recreate the sounds. When he finally found what he had been seeking for a long time, what had given him no rest, a strange, unfamiliar tune floated through the forest. Joy filled Ivan's heart, flooding the mountains, forest, and grass with sunlight, gurgling in the streams, and lifting Ivan's legs. Hurling his flute into the grass and placing his arms akimbo, he broke into a whirling dance. He leaped, squatted, pattered his bare feet in spinning steps, and stood on his hands. "My goats are back, my goats are back!" something sang within him. In the sunlit meadow surrounded by the gloomy realm of firs, the little blond boy leaped up and down, flitting like a butterfly from one blade of grass to another. His two cows poked their heads through the branches, eying him in a friendly manner as they chewed their cud and jangled their bells in time to the dance. Thus Ivan found in the forest what he had been looking for.

At home, Ivan often witnessed strife and woe. During his lifetime, the *trembita* had twice echoed by the house,[14] announcing to the mountains and valleys that death had come: once when his brother Oleksa had been crushed by a falling tree in the forest, and once when his brother Vasyl, a fine young lad, had been cut to pieces by broadaxes in a fight with a hostile clan. The enmity between Ivan's family and the Huteniuks was of long standing. Although everyone in the family seethed with rage at the devilish Huteniuks, no one could tell Ivan exactly how the feud had started. He, too, burned with a desire for revenge and would grasp his father's hatchet, which was still too heavy for him, ready to dash into battle.

Although Ivan was the nineteenth child and Annychka the twentieth, the family consisted only of the parents and five children. The other fifteen were buried in the churchyard. The family was devout and liked to visit church, especially for parish fairs.[15] There they could meet distant relatives who had settled in neighboring villages, and opportunities would occur to repay the

Huteniuks for Vasyl's death and for the blood that the Paliichuks had shed so often.

They would take out their finest clothes, their new wool breeches, their embroidered jerkins, their nail-studded leather belts and wallets, their aprons, their red silk kerchiefs, and even the snow-white mantle that mother carefully carried on a walking stick across her shoulder. Ivan received a new hat and a long shoulder bag that swung against his legs.

The horses would be saddled, and the grand procession would set out, garlanding the green upland track like red poppies. The festively clad people stretched out along peaks and vales. The green hayfields seemed to blossom; a multicolored stream sailed along the Cheremosh, and high above, against the black cloak of the fir forest, a red Hutsul parasol glinted in the early morning sun.

Ivan soon saw a meeting of the feuding clans. The family was returning from a parish fair, where father had had a bit to drink. All at once a commotion arose on the narrrow road between the mountain and the Cheremosh. Wagons had stopped, and men and women, both on horseback and on foot, had gathered in a crowd. Hatchets flashed in the fierce uproar that sprang up, and the Huteniuks and Paliichuks clashed like flint and steel. Before Ivan could figure out what was happening, his father brandished his hatchet and struck someone across the forehead. Blood gushed over the man's face, shirt, and fancy jerkin. The womenfolk cried out and ran to pull the wounded man back. His face as red as his breeches, he struck at his foe with his hatchet, and Ivan's father fell like an undercut fir. Ivan dashed forward. He did not know what he was doing. But the adults stepped on his feet, and he could not make his way through to the fight.

Flushed and furious, he ran straight into a little girl who was shaking with fear beside a wagon. Aha! This must be Huteniuk's daughter, he thought and without hesitating struck her in the face. She grimaced, clutched her shirt to her breast, and ran off. Ivan caught up with her near the river, seized her by the shirt, and tore it. New hair ribbons fell out, and the girl lunged with a cry to save them, but Ivan jerked them away and threw them into the water. Then the girl gave him a penetrating look with her limpid black eyes and said calmly, "That's all right. I have other ribbons, much better ones." She seemed to be consoling him.

Surprised by her gentle tone, the boy remained silent.

"My mother bought a new apron for me ... and moccasins ... and embroidered stockings and...."

He still did not know what to say.

"I'll dress up in my beautiful clothes and be a fine young lady."

He felt envious. "And I can play the flute."

"Our Fedir made himself a fine *floiara*. When he plays it...."

Ivan frowned. "I've seen the Vanisher."

The girl looked at him incredulously. "Then why do you fight?"

"And why were you standing by the wagon?"

She thought for a moment, uncertain of her answer, and then started to look for something inside her shirt front. Finally she pulled out a long sweetmeat. "Just look!" She bit off half the sweet and extended the other half with a grave and trusting motion. "Here!"

Ivan hesitated, but then took the gift. Soon they were sitting side by side, oblivious of the screams of the fight and the angry roaring of the river. She

told him that her name was Marichka, that she was tending sheep, that a one-eyed woman named Martsynova had stolen their flour, and other things that were interesting and familiar to both of them, as the gaze of her limpid black eyes softly pierced Ivan's heart.

The *trembita* announced a third death in the lonely cottage on the high peak: old Paliichuk died the day after the fight. Hard times came for Ivan's family after the master's death. Disorder took root; the possessions disappeared; one hayfield after another was sold, and the livestock melted away like mountain snow in the spring.

But his father's death made less of an impression on Ivan than the friendship with the little girl who had so trustingly given him half a sweet after he had wrongly hurt her. A new current flowed into his old and causeless sorrow. It drew him into the mountains, carrying him to neighboring peaks, forests, and valleys in search of Marichka. He found her, finally, when she was grazing lambs.

Marichka greeted him as if she had been expecting him: they would graze the sheep together. Of course! Let Goldy and Blue ring their bells and bellow in the forest. He would graze Marichka's lambs.

And how they grazed them! Clustered together in the shade of a fir, the white yearling ewes watched with dull eyes as the children rolled on the moss, their laughter ringing in the silence. Tired, they would climb onto the white boulders and fearfully peer into the abyss below, from which the black apparition of the mountain sharply rose into the sky, shimmering with an azure that would not melt in the sunlight. A stream rushed through a crevice in the mountains, shaking its gray beard on the rocks. The age-old silence sheltered by the forest was so warm, lonely, and frightening that the children could hear their own breathing. Their ears sought out and magnified every sound in the forest, and sometimes it seemed to them that they could hear mysterious footsteps, the dull thud of an ax, and a heavy, panting breathing.

"Ivan, can you hear it?" Marichka whispered.

"Why shouldn't I hear it? Of course I do."

They both knew that the invisible ax was wandering through the forest, thumping on trees and gasping for breath in exhaustion. Fear would send them scampering down to the valley, where the stream flowed more calmly. They would make a deep hole in the stream, strip naked, and splash about in it like forest creatures that had never known shame. The sun would glint on their fair hair and beat into their eyes, while the icy water would nip their limbs. Marichka would be the first to feel cold and would set off in a run.

"Stop!" Ivan would call out. "Where are you from?"

"From Ya-vo-riv," Marichka would reply, her teeth chattering.

"And whose daughter are you?"

"The blacksmith's."

"Fare you well, blacksmith's daughter!" Ivan would pinch her and dash after her until exhausted, but warm, they would collapse in the grass.

In the quiet stretch of the stream, where wolfsbane shimmered and monkshood berries hung down like blue slippers, frogs croaked sadly. Ivan would bend down to the stream and ask a frog, "Godmother, godmother, what have you cooked?"

"Beet borsch, beet borsch, beet borsch," Marichka would croak.

"Beets, beets, beets!" they would both shriek, their eyes tightly shut, forcing the frogs to fall silent.[16]

Thus they grazed the sheep, often losing them completely.

Their games changed when they grew older. Ivan was now a young man, as tall and robust as a fir tree. He dressed his hair with butter and wore a wide leather belt and a fancy straw hat. Marichka braided her hair with ribbons, signifying that she was ready to give her hand in marriage. They no longer grazed sheep together and met only on Sundays and holidays, by the church or in the forest, so that the feuding families would not know that their children were in love.

Marichka liked to listen to Ivan playing his flute. Lost in thought, he would fix his gaze beyond the mountains as if seeing something others could not see, place the carved flute to his full lips, and a strange tune that no one had ever played would waft over the fir-shaded hayfields. The frost nipped at Ivan and Marichka, and the first whistling sounds sent chills down their spines. The winter-clad mountains seemed dead. But then the sun-god rose from beyond the mountains and placed his head on the ground.[17] Winter was overcome; the waters awoke, and the earth rang with the song of the streams. The sunlight scattered like flower pollen; wood nymphs slipped through the hayfields, and the first green grass sprang up under their feet. The fir trees breathed with greenery; the grass sounded a green laugh, and the whole world consisted of only two colors: all green the earth and all blue the sky. And down below the Cheremosh drove the noisy, restless green blood of the mountains.

"Turu-rai-ra ..." a *trembita* echoed. "Turu-rai-ra...." The shepherds' hearts quickened, and the sheep bleated as they caught wind of the fresh fodder. The sedge rustled in the cold upland pastures, and from his lair in a thicket the bear rose on his hind paws, trying out his voice and casting about a sleepy eye for food. Spring rains fell; the mountain peaks roared with thunder, and a chill evil spirit blew from Chornohora. Then suddenly the sun—the right side of God's face—appeared and glinted against the scythes that were mowing hay. From peak to peak, from stream to stream, a *kolomyika* flitted, so light and transparent that the flutter of its wings could be heard.[18]

A white ewe came running
From the upland herds.
I love you, my sweetheart,
And your beautiful words....

The boughs of the firs rang quietly; the forests whispered their cold dreams of summer nights; the bells of the cows pealed mournfully, and the mountains ceaselessly sent down their sorrow to the streams. A felled tree flew down with a crack and a cry into the valley; the mountains sighed in response, and again the *trembita* wailed. This time for death. A life of ceaseless labor had ended. A cuckoo sang out on a mountain crest: now someone's gone to eternal rest....

Marichka responded to the flute like a wood pigeon hen to a cock by singing songs. She knew a multitude of them. She could not have said where they came from. They seemed to have rocked in the cradle or splashed about in the bath with her. They were born in her breast the way wild flowers spring up in a hayfield or firs grow on mountain slopes. No matter what her eye rested on, no matter what happened—a sheep strayed, a lad fell in love, a girl was unfaithful, a cow took sick—everything was poured into a song, as light and simple as the mountains in their primeval life.

Marichka could also compose her own songs. Sitting on the ground beside Ivan, she would embrace her knees and quietly rock with the tune. Her rounded, sunburned calves were visible from the hem of her skirt to her red leggings, and her full lips curved sweetly as she began:

A cuckoo small and gray now sings for me,
A bright new song for the village is ringing.

Marichka's song would relate a well-known, but nonetheless fresh event: Paraska had enchanted Andrii, who was dying from her spell, and was warning other men not to love married women. Or her song would tell of the sorrowing mother whose son had been crushed to death by a tree in the forest. The songs were so sad, simple, and fervent that they tugged at the heart. Marichka usually finished them with a couplet:

The cuckoo warbled for me by the stream.
Who composed this little song? Ivanko's Marichka.

She had been Ivan's since the age of thirteen. What was so strange about that? Grazing the sheep, she had often seen the billy goat covering a doe or the ram coupling with a ewe. Everything was so simple and natural, so little changed since time immemorial, that no impure thought ever clouded her heart. Yes, the goats and sheep did become big with young, but people could be helped by a sorceress. Marichka was not afraid. Around her waist, next to her skin, she wore a clove of garlic over which a sorceress had whispered, and nothing would harm her now. At the thought of this Marichka would smile slyly and embrace Ivan by the neck.

"My dear Ivanko! Will we always be together?"

"God willing, my sweet."

"Oh no! Our parents bear a great hatred for one another in their hearts. We will never be married."

Ivan's eyes would cloud over, and he would sink his ax into the ground. "I don't need their approval. They may do what they will, but you shall be mine."

"Oh my, my! What are you saying?"

"Exactly what I mean, my love." And as if to anger their parents he would swing the girl about at dances so violently that her moccasins would fly off.

But events did not take the course that Ivan expected. His farm was falling apart. There was not enough work for everyone, and Ivan would have to hire himself out. He was torn by worry.

"I must go to the uplands, Marichka," he announced sadly.

"Well, then, go, Ivanko," she replied with resignation. "Such is our fate."

Marichka wove a wreath of songs for their parting. She was sorry that their meetings in the quiet forest would cease for a long time. Embracing Ivan by the neck and pressing her flaxen head to his face, she sang in his ear:

Think of me, my sweetheart,
Twice a day,
And I will think of you
Seven times an hour.

"Will you think of me?"

"I will, Marichka."

"It's all right," she comforted him. "You'll be a shepherd, my poor darling, and I'll mow hay. I'll climb on a haystack and look at the upland ranges, and you'll play the *trembita* for me. Maybe I'll hear it. When fog settles on the mountains, I'll sit down and cry because I cannot see where my lover is. But when the stars come out on a clear night, I'll look to see which star is shining over the high pasture. That will be the one my Ivanko sees. I'll only stop singing."

"Why? Don't stop singing, Marichka, don't be sad. I'll soon come back."

But she only shook her head sadly in reply and sang:

My sweet little songs,
What shall I do with you?
Perhaps I'll scatter you
Over the mountains and valleys.

Then she sighed and added even more sadly:

Oh you'll fly o'er the mountains,
My sweet little songs,
And I will wash my face
With my tears.

If fate is kind,
Then I'll gather you together,
But if my fate is evil,
Then I'll abandon you.

Ivan listened to the thin girlish voice and thought that Marichka had long since sowed the mountains with her songs, that the forests and the hayfields, the peaks and the pastures, the streams and the sun were all singing them. But the day would come when he would return to her, and she would gather her songs for their wedding.

* * *

Ivan set out for the upland pasture on a warm spring morning.[19] The forest was still casting a chill; the mountain waters roared over the rapids, and the highland path joyously ascended past the wattle fences. Although he found it difficult to leave Marichka, the sunlight and the rustling green spaces extending to the horizon endowed him with briskness. He leaped lightly from rock to rock like a mountain stream, greeting passers-by simply for the pleasure of hearing his own voice.

"Praise be to Jesus!"

"Praise Him forever!"

Hutsul farmhouses stained cherry-red by fir smoke and peaked stacks of fragrant hay appeared here and there on the distant hills, and in the valley below the frothy Cheremosh angrily shook its gray curls and shone with a malignant green light. Fording stream after stream and passing gloomy forests where occasionally a cow would tinkle its bell or a squirrel in a fir tree would

drop the leavings of a cone, Ivan climbed ever higher. The sun was beginning to burn, and the stony track was galling his feet. Now the cottages were less frequent. The Cheremosh spread out in the valley below like a silver thread, and its roar was not audible here. Forests gave way to full, soft mountain meadows. Ivan waded through them as if they were lakes of flowers, sometimes stooping to decorate his hat with a handful of red Iceland moss or a wreath of pale camomiles. The slopes fell away into deep black abysses, where cold streams welled up and the only denizen was the brown bear, the dreaded enemy of the livestock known as "Uncle."[20] Water occurred less frequently. But how Ivan fell to it when he did find a stream, a cold crystal that had bathed the yellow roots of firs and had brought here the echoes of the forest! Beside these streams a kindly soul would often leave a cup of boiled sour milk.

The trail continued to rise into thickets where prickly firs, without bark or needles, moldered in piles like skeletons. These forest graveyards were sad and desolate, forgotten by God and man, and only heathcocks hissed and snakes writhed here. The severe and sorrowful silence of nature ruled over everything. Mountains were rising behind Ivan in the azure distance. An eagle ascended from a rocky point, proffering a benediction with the wide sweep of its wings. The cold breath of the upland pastures could be felt, and the sky expanded. The forests had given way to a black carpet of creeping mountain pines and firs that caught at Ivan's feet, and moss covered the rocks in green silk. The faraway mountains revealed their peaks, flexing their backs and rising like waves in a blue sea. It seemed that ocean breakers had been frozen at the moment when a storm had raised them from the depths in order to dash them against the land. The peaks of Bukovina could be seen supporting the skyline with their blue shapes; Synytsia, Dzembronia, and Bila Kobyla were wrapped in azure; Ihrets was smoking; the sharp peak of Hoverlia pierced the sky, and Chornohora crushed the earth with its weight.

The upland pasture! Ivan was finally standing in the high, grass-covered meadow. A sea of stormy mountains surrounded him in a wide circle, and the endless blue ramparts seemed to be advancing toward him, ready to fall at his feet. A wind as biting as a honed hatchet struck at his chest. His breath flowed into one with the breath of the mountains, and pride overwhelmed him. He wanted to shout at the top of his lungs so that the echo would roll to the horizon and shake the sea of peaks, but he sensed suddenly that in these spaces his voice would be as insignificant as a mosquito's buzz. He had to hurry.

In a vale behind a hill, where the wind was less biting, he found a sooty shepherd's hut. The smoke hole in the wall was cold. The sheepfolds stood empty, and shepherds were bustling about, preparing a place to sleep. The chief shepherd was occupied in making living fire. Having inserted a small log in the doorjamb, he and a helper were pulling a leather belt back and forth, making the log whirl and squeak.

"Praise be to Jesus!" Ivan greeted them.

The men did not reply. The log continued to hum, and the men, concentrated and severe, continued to pull the belt back and forth. The log began to smoke, and soon a small flame leaped up. The chief shepherd devoutly raised the fire and placed it in a bonfire piled by the door.

"Praise him forever!" He turned around to Ivan. "Now we have a living fire, and as long as it burns neither wild beast nor evil spirit will touch either the livestock or us Christian folk." He led Ivan into the hut, where they were greeted by the musty smell of empty casks and bowls and bare benches.

"Tomorrow the livestock will be driven to us. If only the Lord helps us to return it all to the masters," the chief shepherd remarked and then proceeded to explain Ivan's duties. There was something calm and even stately about the speech and gestures of this master of the uplands. "Mykola!" he called out the door. "Go light the fire in the hut now!"

Mykola, a thin, curly-headed fellow with a plump feminine face, brought the fire into the hut.

"And who might you be, my friend?" Ivan asked with curiosity. "A shepherd?"

"No, I'm the fire keeper," Mykola replied, showing his teeth. "My job is to tend the fire and keep it from going out all summer, because there will be trouble if it does." He even looked around with horror. "And to go to the stream for water and to the forest for wood."

The fire outside was blazing higher. With the dignified motions of an ancient priest, the chief shepherd kept adding dry wood and green branches to it. The blue smoke rose lightly and then, blown by the wind, seized hold of the mountains, cut across the black strip of forest, and rolled over the distant peaks. The upland pasture was beginning its life with living fire, which would protect it against all evil. As if aware of this, the fire proudly wreathed like a snake and spouted ever new clouds of smoke.

Four strong sheep dogs rested in the grass, thoughtfully gazing at the mountains, ready at any moment to jump up, bare their teeth, and bristle their fur. The day was ending. The mountains were exchanging their blue garb for chasubles of pink mixed with gold. Mykola called out that supper was ready. The shepherds assembled by the hut and peacefully sat down at the living fire to eat their first bowl of gruel in the upland pasture.

* * *

How cheerful the upland was in springtime when sheep came to it from every village! The tall chief shepherd circled the sheepfold, fire in hand, his face as grave as a pagan priest's, his stride broad and firm, and the smoke from the glowing ember spurting after him like a winged dragon. At the gate of the fold, through which the sheep would have to pass, the chief shepherd threw down the ember and listened. He heard the gait of the upland pastures with more than his ear. He sensed with his heart how from deep valleys, where rivers seethed and ate away at their banks, from quiet farms and meadows, a wave of livestock was surging upward in response to the call of spring, and the earth underfoot sighed joyfully. He heard the distant breathing of the flocks, the lowing of the cows, and the barely audible sounds of songs.

And when people finally appeared, raising high their long, sun-gilded *trembitas* to greet the upland pasture, when sheep bleated and filled all the folds in a noisy stream, the chief shepherd fell to his knees and raised his arms to heaven. Behind him the shepherds and the people who had brought their livestock also knelt in prayer. They were beseeching the merciful Lord to give their sheep hearts as fiery as the hot embers they were passing over and to protect Christian livestock from all evil, beasts, and accidents. As God had helped to bring the livestock together, so the worshippers hoped that He would help to return it to the owners.[21] The sky listened kindly to the simple prayer; the Beskid frowned benignly, and the wind overhead carefully combed the grass in the pastures like a mother combing her child's hair.

* * *

Upland pasture, high wild meadow, why are you so proud? Is it because of the sheep you have just seen? "Heh-ya, hah-ya!" a shepherd cried as he drove the sheep. Bending their knees lazily and trembling on their thin legs, the sheep shook their wool. "Heh-ya, hah-ya!" Their naked muzzles opened wide with elderly expressions of boredom, revealing salivating lips, to complain to God knows who. *Be-eh, me-eh*.... Two shepherds led the flock. Their red breeches evenly sliced the air, and the flowers on their hats swayed with their motions. "Byr-byr!" The sheep dogs sniffed the air, keeping one eye on the sheep to make sure that everything was in order. Wool rubbed against wool, white against black; the fluffy spines trembled like small waves on a lake, and the entire flock quivered. "Ptrua! Ptrua!" The guttural cry called back the sheep at the edge and kept the flood within banks. The surrounding mountains were like an azure sea, and the wind raked the clouds across the sky. The curly tails of the sheep quivered; their heads were bent, and their flat white teeth chewed thistles and sweet crocuses down to the ground. "Byr-byr!" The high pasture spread its carpet at the feet of the flock, and the sheep covered it with a piebald moving coat. *Crunch-crunch ... be-eh, me-eh ... crunch-crunch*.... Cloud shadows wandered over the nearer hills. The mountains seemed to be moving like waves in a sea, and only the distant ones stood motionless. Sunlight flooded the wool of the sheep, breaking up into rainbows in it and spreading a green fire through the grass, and the shepherds' long shadows trailed after the animals. "Ptrua! Ptrua!" *Crunch-crunch, crunch-crunch*.... The shepherds stepped silently in their moccasins; the woolly wave softly rolled over the pasture, and the wind began to play on a distant fence. "Dzzz," it hummed on a splinter, buzzing monotonously like a fly. "Dzzz," replied another fence, introducing a low note of sorrow. More and more clouds appeared, and now they covered half the sky. The distant Beskid grew dim and then turned black and gloomy in the shadows like a widower, while the pasture was still green and bright. "Why don't you marry, high Beskid?" the wind in the fence asked. "Because the upland pasture will not have me," the Beskid sighed in reply. The blue sky was covered with gray. The sea of mountains grew dark. The pasture became dim, and the flock of sheep crawled over it like a gray lichen. A cold wind unfurled its wings, striking the shepherds under their jerkins. It was so difficult to breathe that they wanted to turn their backs to the wind. Let it strike. The fences whined a high tune, like flies buzzing in a snare; an unbearable pain howled, and lonely sorrow wept. *Dzzz ... dzzz*.... Ceaselessly, persistently. Sucking out the blood and piercing the heart like a knife. I don't want to listen, but I have to. I'd like to escape, but where? Heh-ya, hah-ya! And where are you off to? The devil take you! Byr-byr! Murko! But Murko was already chasing the ewe back. Dashing after it as the wind raised the hackles on his back, he seized the sheep by the neck with his teeth and threw it back to the flock. *Dzzz ... dzzz*.... Like a monotonous and unbearable toothache. Clench your teeth and be quiet. Go on and hurt. Buzz away and begone! What's that crying? It must be the One. May he turn to stone! I could fall to the ground, shut my ears with my hands, and weep. I can't take any more.... *Dzzz ... dzi-u-u!*

Ivan took out his *floiara* and blew into it with all his strength, but the madman was stronger than he was. Flying from Chornohora like an unbridled horse, he struck the grass with his hooves and scattered the sounds of the

floiara with his mane. Like a witch blinking a cataracted eye, Chornohora frightened him with a snow field under black, windswept tresses. *Dzzz ... dzi-u-u!*

The sheep rolled into a dale where the wind was quieter. A blue lake appeared in the gray sky. The pungent upland grass gave off a stronger fragrance. The lake in the sky overflowed its banks and spilled its waters. The peaks became visible again, and all the valleys were filled with the gold of the sun.

Ivan looked down. Somewhere in the lowlands, Marichka's white feet were stepping on the green grass. Her eyes were probably turned toward the uplands. Was she singing her songs? Or had she perhaps sowed them over the mountains, where they had come up as flowers, and she herself had fallen silent? He remembered her sweet girlish voice and plucked a flower to decorate his hat.

> When shepherds graze
> Their little white sheep,
> They'll twine my songs
> Around their hats.

"Ptrua! Ptrua!" The sun beat down, and the air was becoming oppressive. The sheep were waddling along, snorting and flexing their lips to get at the sweet thistles and leaving fresh droppings. *Crunch-crunch.* Wool rubbed against wool, white against black, and their spines rippled like waves on a lake. *Be-eh, me-eh.*

The sheep dogs were tired and lay down in the grass, their flanks heaving. Flies settled on the long red tongues lolling between their fangs. "Byr-byr!" Ivan called angrily, and the dogs were by the sheep again.

Cows were grazing at the edge of the pasture, near a thick forest. The cowherd leaned pensively on his *trembita.* Time moved slowly. The mountain air invigorated the lungs and brought on hunger. How lonely it was here! You were like a slim stalk in a field. The green island underfoot was lapped by the waters of distant mountains. Higher up, on the wild and deserted peaks, evil spirits gathered, hostile forces that you could not overcome and could only guard against.

"Heh-ya, hay-ya!" The sheep shook themselves, and moccasins softly stepped through the green field. The silence was so overwhelming that you could hear the blood flowing in your veins. Sleep began to weigh heavily. Placing a soft paw on your eyes and face, it whispered in your ear: sleep! The sheep dissolved before Ivan's eyes. Now they had turned into lambs, and now nothing was left. The grass floated off like green water. Marichka was coming. Oh you won't fool me, my dear, oh no! Ivan knew that it was a *lisna* and not Marichka who was alluring him.[22] Yet something was pulling him after her! He did not want to go but was sailing away like the green stream of grass.

The abrupt death cry of a cow hurled him out of his daze. What? Where? The cowherd continued to lean on his *trembita.* A red bull struck its hooves against the earth, bent its thick neck, and raised its tail. Now the bull was racing toward the sound, jumping high and tearing up the grass with its hoofs. The cowherd shook himself and hastened after the bull into the forest. A shot rang out. The burst resounded over the mountains, echoing and reechoing. Then everything fell silent.

"Uncle" must have killed a cow, Ivan thought and looked at his flock more attentively.

"Ptrua, ptrua!" The sun seemed to have fallen asleep. The wind had died down and moved higher into the sky, where it was drawing clouds together in a sea as stormy as the sea of mountains encircling the pasture. The day had died in the endless spaces, and it was impossible to tell whether time was passing.

Finally the long-awaited sound of the *trembita* reached Ivan's ear. It brought with it the fragrance of gruel and smoke from the shepherds' hut and related in a long melodic ripple that the folds were waiting for the sheep.

"Heh-ya, hah-ya!" The dogs scurried about, and the bleating sheep flowed in a piebald stream, shaking their milk-heavy udders.

* * *

A fine rain had been drizzling on the range for three days. The mountains were shrouded by a smoky fog. Their wool heavy with water, the sheep could barely walk. The shepherds' clothing was cold and stiff. Their only rest was at milking time under the roof of the shed.

Ivan sat with his back against a board, kneading an udder between his legs. Beside him sat a swarthy, curly-headed goatherd whose every word was accompanied by an oath. The impatient ewes, their udders heavy with milk, pressed from the fold to the shed to be milked. Wait, you poor things! It won't work this way. One at a time!

"Ryst!" the drover angrily called out in the bedlam and snapped a wet rod. "Ryst! Ryst!" the shepherds shouted in encouragement, taking their knees away from the hole through which the sheep jumped into the milking shed. "May you all...." The goatherd did not finish his oath. Who would dare say something at a time like this?

Ivan seized a ewe by the spine with a practiced motion and pulled it backward toward himself over the broad milk pan. The ewe stood submissively, its legs awkwardly spread apart, listening to the milk gush into the pan. "Ryst!" the drover whipped it from behind. "Ryst! Ryst!" the shepherds called out. After being milked, the ewes fell down in the fold as if drugged, placed their heads on their forelegs, and grimaced with their aged lips. "Ryst! Ryst!" Ivan's hands continually squeezed the warm udders, as milk trickled down his arms. It smelled of tallow, and a sweet oily vapor rose from the pan. "Ryst! Ryst!" The ewes dashed in as if crazed and spread their legs over the pans, and ten shepherds' hands squeezed the warm udders. The wet flock on both sides of the shed wept pitifully. Exhausted sheep fell down in the fold, and thick, warm streams of milk gushed into the pans. "Ryst! Ryst!"

The goatherd smiled at his goats. Unlike the sheep, they had keen hearts. Instead of collapsing like the weak sheep, they stood firmly on their thin legs. Raising their horns, they stared into the fog as if seeing something, and their thin little beards shook briskly.

* * *

The sheepfolds were empty and quiet. Perhaps laughter was echoing in the deep valleys where the mountains begin to grow, but here in the uplands, where the sky encompassed desolate spaces, age-old silence reigned.

It was broken only by the crackling of the undying fire in the hut. The fresh milk rested heavily in a wooden bowl over which the chief shepherd was bent. He had already set the milk. A wind blew over him from the shelf under the roof where huge round heads of cheese curds were drying, but it could not dispel the odors of wood coal, cheese, and wool. The shepherd himself was impregnated with the odors. New casks and kegs stood silently in the corner, but a knock on them would evoke the voice that dwelled within them. Cold whey cast a green eye from a wooden pail. The chief shepherd sat amidst his utensils like a father with his children. Everything here—the black benches and walls, the fire and the smoke, the cheese curds, casks, and whey—was dear and familiar. His warm hand had rested on everything.

The milk was thickening, but it was not yet ready. The shepherd pulled out from his belt a handful of wooden tally boards and began to read. This book recorded who had how many sheep. His eyebrows knotted with worry as he stubbornly read on, "Mosiichuk has fourteen lambs and should get...."

Outside the hut, the fire keeper was singing:

> A twisted-horn ewe
> Asks of the ram,
> Will you make hay for me,
> My sweet little ram?

"He's at it again!" the chief shepherd called out angrily and set about recounting his tallies.

> You don't know what winter brings,
> My twisted-horn ewe,
> Or if you'll come out
> Dead or alive from the uplands.

The fire keeper finished his song in the vestibule and entered the hut. Black with soot, he bent over the fire and flashed his white teeth. The fire crackled quietly.

The milk in the wooden bowl was yellowing and thickening. The chief shepherd hunched over it in stern concentration. Slowly unbuttoning his sleeves, he sank his hairy arms to the elbows in the milk. Then he froze motionless over it.

Now everyone in the hut had to be quiet. The door had been fastened, and even the fire keeper did not dare look at the milk while the chief shepherd was casting his spell. Everything was frozen in expectation. The wooden casks pent up their voices; the curds on the shelf were silent; the black walls and benches had fallen into a heavy sleep; the fire barely breathed, and even the smoke furtively escaped through the window. Only the fleeting movement of the veins in the chief shepherd's arms indicated that something was happening at the bottom of the bowl. His arms slowly became animated, first rising and then dropping into the milk again and kneading and stroking something below. Suddenly from the bottom of the bowl, from under the milk, rose a round, raw, miraculously born body. It grew white and tender, its flat sides turning and bathing in the pale liquid, and when the chief shepherd held it up, the green birth water sonorously drained into the bowl.

The chief shepherd sighed lightly. Now the fire keeper could look. The head of cheese was a goodly one. It would bring joy to the shepherd and nourishment to people. The door opened wide; the wind blew from under the roof; the fire joyfully licked at the black pot in which the whey was dancing a *kolomyika*, and the fire keeper's teeth glinted in the smoke and flames.

At sunset, the chief shepherd emerged from the hut with a *trembita* and announced victoriously to all the desolate mountains that the day had ended in peace, the cheese had turned out well, the gruel was ready, and the sheds were waiting for new milk.

* * *

During his summer in the uplands Ivan had many adventures. Once he saw a strange scene. He was preparing to drive the sheep to the fold when he glanced inadvertently at a neighboring peak. A fog had settled on the forest, making it look as light and gray as a ghost. The meadow beside it was still green, and a solitary fir stood black against it. Suddenly the tree burst into smoke and began to grow until a man stepped out from it.[23] He stood in the meadow, tall and white, calling to the forest. Immediately, deer emerged from the forest, one after another, each with bigger and brighter horns than the one before it. Does ran out, trembling on their thin legs, and began to nibble at the grass. Whenever they scattered, a bear would turn them back, like a sheep dog herding sheep. The tall white man tended the herd and halloed at his cattle. Then a wind sprang up, and the flock disappeared, as if someone had breathed on glass, which fogged over and then cleared up. Ivan drew the other shepherds to look, but they would not believe him. "Where? That's only fog!"

In two weeks "Uncle" slew five cows. Later he killed two more, but that was the last time: trying to break into the sheepfold one night, he impaled himself on a stake. Now his hide was drying on poles, and the dogs howled at it.

Fog would often trap the sheep in the pasture. Sky, mountains, forests, and shepherds would disappear in the thick, milky mist. "He-ey!" Ivan would call out. "He-ey!" a muffled reply would sound, as if coming from under water, and Ivan could not say where the caller was. The sheep rolled underfoot like a gray haze, and then they, too, would disappear. Ivan would walk helplessly, his arms extended as if he were afraid of stumbling into something, and call out, "He-ey!" "Where are you?" would resound behind him, and he would be forced to stop. He would stand in despair, lost in the sticky overcast, and when he applied the *trembita* to his lips to call out, the other end would be lost in the mist, and its choked voice would immediately fall at his feet. Thus the shepherds lost several sheep.

Sometimes cloudbursts swept the uplands. Saint Elias was battling with the forces of evil, the deuce take them all![24] His sword flashed and his rifle roared so loudly—hallowed be Thy name!—that the sky would split in half and fall on the mountains, and something black would wriggle back and forth each time and then slip under a rock. The devil was mocking God and exposing his rump, and the poor shepherds had to suffer: they would be overcome with fright and drenched to the skin.

On the feast of Saints Peter and Paul a blizzard broke out. The snow lay on the ground for three days, and many sheep died when they slipped and tore their groins.

Occasionally people would come up from the lowlands. The shepherds would surround them and contend with one another to ask, "What news from the village?" Then they would listen like children to simple accounts: the hay had been taken in; potatoes were scarce; the corn was thin; Ilena Mocharnyk had died. They would all drink to the health of the livestock, and the guests would fill their casks with cheese and peacefully depart for the valley.

In the evenings bonfires would burn beside the sheepfold. The shepherds would take off their clothes and shake out the lice into the fire or, starved after a summer without their women, they would engage endlessly in salacious talk. Their roars of laughter would drown out the sleepy sighs of the livestock.

Before going to sleep, Ivan would call Mykola, who was always talkative and loved to sing. "Mykola, my friend! Come here."

"Wait a minute, brother Ivan, I'm coming," the fire keeper would reply from the sheepfold, and Ivan would hear his song resound:

> Chornohora does not grow corn
> Nor grain nor hay.
> It brings up young shepherds
> And cheese and fine whey.

Mykola was an orphan and had grown up in the uplands. "I was brought up by sheep," he would say, smoothing down his unruly curls.

His work finished, the fire keeper would lie down beside Ivan. He was sooty and smoke-saturated, and his young teeth would flash in the firelight. Ivan would move closer to him, embrace him by the neck, and implore, "Tell me a story, my friend. You know so many of them."

Stars would shoot down from the black sky, and the Milky Way would stream forth like white river foam. The mountains would be sleeping. "They must be growing," Ivan would call out as if to himself.

"Who?"

"The mountains."

"At first they grew, but now they've stopped." Mykola would fall silent and then add quietly, "In the beginning there were no mountains, only water. The water was like a sea without shores. And God walked on the water. But once He noticed that foam was whirling on the water. 'Who art thou?' He asked. 'I do not know,' it replied. 'I am alive but cannot walk.' That was the *aridnyk*. God did not know about him, because the *aridnyk*, like God, existed from the beginning. God gave him arms and legs, and they went about as sworn brothers. When they grew tired of walking on the water, God decided to make land, but He could not get clay from the bottom of the sea, because He knew everything in the world but could not do anything. But the *aridnyk* had the power to do anything and said, 'I could dive down there.' 'Then dive down,' God answered. So the *aridnyk* dove down, picked up a handful of clay, and hid the rest in his mouth for himself. God took the clay and scattered it. 'Is there no more?' 'No.' Then God blessed the earth, and it began to grow. But the earth that was in Satan's mouth also grew. It grew and grew until it forced his mouth open. He could not breathe, and his eyes bulged out. 'Spit!' God advised him. The *aridnyk* began to spit, and wherever he spat mountains grew, each one taller than the previous one, until they reached the sky. They would have pierced the sky, had God not cast a spell on them. Since then the mountains have not grown."

Ivan found it very strange to think that such fine and cheerful mountains had been created by the Evil One. "Tell me more, my friend," he begged.

"The *aridnyk* was capable of doing anything he wanted to," Mykola continued. "When God wanted something, He would have to obtain it by craft or stealth. The *aridnyk* created sheep and made himself a fiddle and played on it while the sheep grazed. God saw this and stole sheep from the *aridnyk*, and then they both tended sheep. All wisdom and cleverness in this world came from Satan. Every wagon, horse, musical instrument, mill, and cottage was invented by him. God merely stole these things and gave them to people. So it was once upon a time....

"Once the *aridnyk* grew cold, and to warm himself, invented fire. God came and looked at the fire. The *aridnyk* knew what he wanted. 'You've stolen everything else from me,' he said, 'but this I will not give you.' Then the *aridnyk* saw that God was starting a fire, too. He was so vexed that he spat in God's fire. Smoke rose from his saliva. The first fire was clean and smokeless, but since then fire has smoked."

Mykola related these stories for a long time, and whenever he mentioned the devil, Ivan would make the sign of the cross under his jerkin, and Mykola would spit to keep the Evil One from having power over him.

* * *

Once Mykola was taken ill, and Ivan tended the fire for him. The chief shepherd was sleeping on a bench beside the fire, and the sick man lay groaning in the corner, where the shadows of the cheese casks restlessly moved about. Water was boiling in a black pot, and the smoke forced its way up, under the roof, and then flew out through the cracks in the shingles. Sometimes the Evil One would blow into a crevice, making the smoke spout in Ivan's face, stinging his eyes. But that was good because he dared not fall asleep. To chase away the sleep that weighed heavily on him Ivan stared into the fire. He had to guard the fire, that spirit of the upland pastures, for who knows what would happen if he let it go out. The embers smiled at him from under the heavy load of firewood and then vanished. Green spots floated before his eyes and sailed off to the meadows and forests. Marichka's white feet were stepping through a meadow. Flinging down her rake, she extended her arms to him. Just as her soft body was about to touch his breast, a bear emerged with a roar from the forest, and the white sheep scattered, separating him from Marichka. The devil take it! Did I really fall asleep? The embers in the fire winked; the chief shepherd was still snoring, and Mykola groaned under a heavy cover of restless shadows.

Wasn't it time to cook gruel for the shepherds' breakfast? Ivan emerged from the hut. Silence and cold enveloped him. He could hear the livestock breathing in the pens. The sheep had clustered together, and the fires by the shepherds' huts glowed dimly. The dogs surrounded Ivan, stretching their sleepy bodies and rubbing their flanks against his legs. The black mountains filled the lowlands like a huge flock. They had lived in such silence since time immemorial that they could hear even the breathing of the cows and sheep. Above them stretched the sky, that heavenly pasture where stars grazed like white sheep. Was there anything in the world besides these two pastures? One stretched out over the land and the other over the mountains, and the shepherd was only a black dot between them.

But perhaps there was nothing at all. Perhaps the night had flooded the mountains, and they had moved, crushing everything living between them, and only Ivan's heart was left to pound under his jerkin in the still and endless spaces? Loneliness gnawed at him like a toothache. Something huge and alien, a rigid silence, an indifferent stillness, a sleep of nonbeing, was crushing him. Impatience hammered on his brain, and anxiety clutched him by the throat. Shaking himself suddenly, he leaped forward into the pasture, his cries, shrieks, and halloos shattering the silence and splintering the night like a stone thrown against a windowpane. "Oh-oh-oh!" the startled mountains called out. "Ha-ha-ha!" the more distant peaks cried anxiously. Then the shattered silence closed in again. The sheep dogs turned back, baring their teeth at Ivan and wagging their tails.

Now he felt even sadder. He wanted to see sunlight, to hear the cheerful roar of the river, and to share the warmth and talk of home life. Sorrow and longing gripped his heart. Recollections poured in and shimmered before his eyes. Suddenly he heard a quiet call. "Iva-an!" Then again. "Iva-an!"

Marichka? Where was she? Had she come to the pasture? At night? Was she lost and calling out to him? Or was he hearing things? No, she was here. Ivan's heart pounded as he hesitated. Where should he go? Then, for the third time, a cry reached him. "Iva-an!" Marichka ... she must have.... He ran headlong, not following any path, in the direction of the voice, but there encountered a precipice that prevented him from reaching the pasture. He stood peering into the black abyss. Then he understood: a nymph was calling him. Making the sign of the cross and looking back fearfully, he returned to the hut.

It was time to cook the gruel. Pouring flour into the boiling pot, he cut through the thickening mass, and soon a fragrant aroma mixed with the wood smoke. The chief shepherd was stretching, and day was breaking. Who had called him? Ivan wondered. Perhaps it had been Marichka after all?

He was drawn to look again and returned to the pasture after daybreak. Cold dew settled on his moccasins. The sky was turning red, and the stars were growing dim. Ivan emerged on a peak and suddenly felt a chill. Where was he? What had happened to him? Why had the mountains disappeared? Water had flooded the valleys around the upland pasture, submerging the peaks, and the pasture was floating like a lonely island in an endless sea. A wind blew from Chornohora. The deep waters rippled quietly, and the invisible sun could be heard growing in its depths. Now a gray peak rose from the sea, and the water streamed off it. The cold wind blew more strongly; the waves on the sea grew higher, and one peak after another appeared from the white foam. It seemed that the world was being born anew. The waters rushed down from the peaks and were now swirling underfoot. The sun had cast its corona over the sky and would show its face any moment now, and the lonely voice of a *trembita* wafted from the sheepfold, waking the uplands from their sleep.

Thus Ivan summered in the upland pasture until it became deserted. The livestock drifted back to the owners in the valleys; the *trembitas* trumpeted their last; the grass lay trampled, and the autumn wind sighed over it as if it were a corpse. Only the chief shepherd and the fire keeper stayed behind. They had to wait until the fire went out. The fire of the upland pasture, which had given birth to itself like a god, also had to go to sleep by itself.[25] And when the chief shepherd and the fire keeper were also gone, a specter wandered into the

saddened pasture and groped about the huts and the sheepfolds to see if anything was left for it.

* * *

Ivan hurried back from the upland in vain: he did not find Marichka alive. The day before, when she had been fording the Cheremosh, the water had taken her away. A flood had sprung up unexpectedly, and savage waves knocked Marichka off her feet, swept her over a waterfall, and then carried her off between the rocks below. People watched the waves toss her about and heard her screams and entreaties but could not save her.

Ivan could not believe the news. This must have been a trick by the Huteniuks. They had learned about his love for Marichka and had hidden her away. But when he heard the same news from every side, he decided to search for the body. It must have been thrown up against the wooden embankments that lined the river. People must have found it somewhere. He went along the river, full of burning rage at its ceaseless roaring.

He found the body in another village. It had been dragged up on a graveled bank, but he could not recognize Marichka. It was not Marichka, but a wet sack, a bloody mass of blue flesh that had been mangled by the river rocks as if between millstones.

A great sorrow seized Ivan's heart. At first he was tempted to jump from a rock into a whirlpool: Here, devour me as well! But then his burning sorrow drove him into the mountains, away from the river. He covered his ears so that he would not hear the treacherous roar that had absorbed Marichka's last breath. He wandered through the forest, among the rocks and clefts, like a bear licking its wounds, and even hunger could not drive him back to the village. He lived on blackberries and cranberries and drank water from streams.

Then he disappeared. People supposed that he had died of great sorrow, and girls composed songs about the love and death of Ivan and Marichka. For six years there was no news of Ivan. He appeared unexpectedly on the seventh. He was gaunt and blackened and looked much older than he was, but he was calm. He said that he had been a shepherd on the Hungarian side. He went about like this for another year and then was married. It was time to take up farming.

When the songs and pistol shots of the wedding had died down and his wife had driven her livestock into his pens, Ivan was satisfied. His Palahna came from a rich family. She was a haughty and robust girl with a coarse voice and a thick neck. It was true that she liked fine clothes and would spend much money on silken kerchiefs and coin necklaces, but Ivan did not worry as he looked at the sheep bleating in the folds and the cows grazing in the forest.

Now he had something to tend. He was not greedy for riches—that is not a Hutsul's purpose in life—and simply tending the livestock filled his heart with joy. The animals were for him what a child is for its mother. All his thoughts revolved around the hay, the comfort of the livestock, and concern that it not grow weak or have a spell cast on it, that the sheep lamb successfully and the cows calve. Danger lurked everywhere, and he had to guard his livestock against snakes, beasts, and witches, who did everything they could to harm the cows and deprive them of their manna. He had to know a great deal

and had to fumigate, cast spells, and gather useful herbs. Palahna helped him. She was a good mistress, and he shared his worries with her.

"What neighbors the Lord has given us!" she complained to her husband. "Khyma came into the shed this morning, looked at the calves, and clapped her hands. 'Oh how fine they are!' There you have it, I thought to myself. No sooner had she left than two lambs spun about and fell down dead. Faugh, you witch!"[26]

"And I was walking past her house at night," Ivan said, "when I saw something round like a pouch rolling along. It was shining like a little star. I stopped to look, and it rolled across the meadow and the fence, and straight to Khyma's door. God help me! If I had thought of it in time and taken off my breeches, I might have caught the witch with them, but it was too late...."

Their neighbor on the nearest hill on the other side was Iura. People said that he was like a god. Wise and powerful, that thunder-soothsayer and sorcerer held in his strong hands the forces of heaven and earth, life and death, and the health of livestock and mankind. He was feared but needed by all.[27] Occasionally Ivan would turn to Iura for help, but each time, encountering the burning look in the sorcerer's black eyes, he would spit unobtrusively. "Salt in your eyes!"

But Khyma was the worst nuisance. An ingratiating old woman, she was always friendly, but at night she would turn herself into a white dog and wander about the neighbors' enclosures. Ivan often had to throw a pitchfork or an ax to drive her away.

The speckled cow was growing thinner and giving less milk. Palahna knew whose fault this was. She watched over the cow, whispered charms, ran to the barn several times an evening, and even got up during the night. Once she raised such a cry that Ivan dashed into the enclosure like a madman and had to chase away from the threshold a large frog that was trying to crawl into the stable. But the frog suddenly disappeared, and Khyma's voice squeaked from the other side of the fence. "Good evening to you, my fine neighbors! Hee-hee-hee...."

Yes, she was shameless! What was that born witch not capable of? She could change herself into a white sheet visible at dusk by the forest's edge, or crawl as a snake, or roll over the hills as a transparent sphere. She even drank the moon so that she could go to other people's cattle in darkness. More than one man swore that he had seen her milking a thornbush: she would drive four pegs into it like udders and fill a pail with milk.

How many cares Ivan had! He had no time to stop and think. The farm required ceaseless work, and the life of the livestock was so closely linked with his own that it pushed aside all other thoughts. But sometimes, when he raised his eyes to the green meadows, where hay was resting in stacks, or to the deep, pensive forest, a long forgotten voice would waft to him:

> Think of me, my sweetheart,
> Twice a day,
> And I will think of you
> Seven times an hour.

Then he would drop his chores and disappear. Haughty Palahna, who was accustomed to working six days a week and resting only on Sundays, when she showed off her fine clothes, scolded him for his whims.

But Ivan fumed. "Be quiet! Mind your own business and let me be!"

He was vexed with himself, too. Why do I do it? he would wonder and then return to his cattle with a guilty feeling. He would bring the animals bread or a lump of salt. The white and the blue cow would reach toward him with trusting lows, extend their warm red tongues, and lick the salt from his hand. The glossy humid eyes would look at him kindly, and the fresh scent of milk and dung would restore his peace and balance.

In the sheepfold he would be surrounded by a sea of small round sheep. These rams and ewes knew their master and rubbed against his legs with joyous bleats. He would sink his fingers into their fluffy wool or take a lamb in his arms with a paternal feeling, and then the spirit of the upland pastures would waft over him and call him to the mountains. His heart would fill with calmness and warmth. Such was Ivan's joy.

Did he love Palahna? The thought had never entered his head. He was the master and she the mistress, and although they had no children, they did have the livestock. What more could they want? The good life had made Palahna plump and pink. She smoked a pipe, like Ivan's mother; she wore sumptuous silken kerchiefs, and the necklaces sparkling around her thick neck made the womenfolk green with envy. Ivan and Palahna would go together to the town or to parish fairs. Palahna would saddle her horse and slip her red boots into the stirrups as proudly as if all the mountains were hers. At the parish fairs beer would foam, whiskey would flow, and news from distant mountains would fly back and forth. Ivan would embrace other men's wives, and Palahna would be kissed by strange men. What a marvel it all was! Satisfied with having spent the time so well, they would go home to their daily concerns.

Respectable farmers would visit them, too.

"Praise be to Jesus! How are your wife and livestock? Are they hale and hearty?"

"They are. And you?"

They would sit down at the table with the embroidered cloth, clumsy in their sheepskins, and consume fresh gruel and sour milk so sharp that it peeled their tongues.

Thus life passed: weekdays for work and holidays for magic.

Ivan was always in a strange mood on Christmas Eve.[28] Imbued with something mysterious and holy, he would reverently perform all the actions as if serving Mass. Striking up a living fire so that Palahna could prepare the supper, he would spread hay over and under the table, mooing like a cow, bleating like a sheep, or neighing like a horse with complete faith to make the livestock prosper. He would fumigate the house and the sheepfold with incense to drive away wild beasts and witches, and when Palahna, her face flushed from bustling about, would announce in the smoke-filled room that all twelve dishes were ready, he would carry a little of each dish to the cattle before sitting down. The cattle had to have the first taste of the cabbage rolls, plums, beans, and barley gruel that Palahna had painstakingly prepared for him.

But that was not all. He also had to summon to the holy supper the hostile powers against which he had guarded all his life. Taking a bowl of food in one hand and an ax in the other, he would go outside. Dressed in white mantles, the green mountains listened attentively as the gold of the stars rang in the skies and the frost flashed its silver sword, cutting down the sounds in the air, and Ivan extended his arm into this winter-clad loneliness and invited all the necromancers, sorcerers, astrologers, wolves, and bears to share the holy

supper with him. He called the tempest to accept his invitation to sumptuous dishes and brandies, but it did not accept, and no one came, although Ivan asked three times. Then he adjured them never to come and sighed lightly.

Palahna was waiting in the house. The embers in the stove sizzled quietly; the dishes rested on the hay, and a Christmas peace filled the dark corners. Hunger called Ivan and Palahna to the table, but they did not dare sit down yet. Palahna looked at her husband, and they knelt together, begging God to allow to come to their table the souls nobody knew, the souls of people lost or killed at work in the forest, or crippled on highways, or drowned in deep waters. No one remembers these poor souls, and yet they bitterly bide their time in hell, waiting for Christmas Eve. As they prayed, Ivan was certain that Marichka was sobbing behind his shoulder and the souls of those who had died unnatural deaths were sitting down on the benches.

"Blow on the bench before you sit down!" Palahna cautioned him.

But Ivan knew what to do without being told. Carefully blowing clear a place on the bench to avoid crushing a soul, he would sit down to the supper.

On New Year's Eve, God himself visited the livestock in the pens.[29] Stars glittered high in the sky; the frost snapped fiercely, and gray-haired God walked barefoot over the powdery snow and quietly opened the door to the stable. Awakening during the night, Ivan thought that he heard a gentle voice ask the livestock, "Have you been well fed and well watered? Does your master take good care of you?"

The sheep bleated joyfully, and the cows replied with a merry bellow: their master tended them conscientiously. He fed and watered them and had even curried them today. Now the Lord would be certain to reward Ivan with increase. And God granted increase: the ewes lambed peacefully, and the cows calved successfully.

Palahna was always busy with her magic. She set fires in the stable to make the cattle shining and beautiful like God's light and to keep away evil spirits. She did everything she could think of to make the cattle as quiet as a root in the ground and as full of milk as a stream is with water. She would tenderly say to the cattle, "You will feed my master and me, and I shall take care of you so that you may sleep easily and bellow rarely, so that the milk-stealing witch will not recognize you wherever you may graze or sleep, and so that no one will bewitch you."

Thus the life of the livestock and the people passed, joining into one like two mountain springs flowing into a single stream.

* * *

It was the eve of a great holiday. The next day warm Iurii would take the keys of the world from cold Dmytro to rule over the earth.[30] The full waters on which the earth sailed would raise it toward the sun. Saint Iurii would decorate the forests and meadows; the sheep would be covered with wool like the earth with grass in the summer, and the hay meadows would turn green. The sunlight and joy of spring would come the next day, and already bonfires were cropping up on mountain slopes and blue smoke was wrapping the firs in a transparent veil. When the sun had set, the fires had died down, and the smoke had drifted away, the cattle gave a joyful bellow as they were driven over the glowing embers to keep them as keen as this fire all summer and to make them multiply as the ashes had multiplied from the fire.

People went to bed late on the eve of Saint Iurii's day, although they had to get up early. Palahna woke up as soon as day began to break. "Isn't it too early?" she wondered aloud, but immediately remembered that she had to go to the meadow. She threw back the warm woolen bedcover and stood up. Ivan was still asleep. The stove was yawning in the corner with its black maw, and a cricket was chirping sadly beneath it. Palahna unbuttoned her shirt, took it off, stood naked in the middle of the room for a moment, and then went to the door, glancing back fearfully at Ivan. The door squeaked, and an early-morning chill enveloped her body. The fir forests, the meadows that had turned gray overnight and now looked like severe monks, and the peaks that were melting away in the fog were all sleeping. A cold heavy mist was rising from the valley and extending furry white paws to the black firs, and the Cheremosh was relating its dreams under the pale sky.

Palahna stepped on the wet grass, trembling lightly in the morning chill. She was certain that no one would see her. And what if someone did? Naturally, it would be a pity if her magic were wasted. She had no other thought in her mind. She had buried salt, bread, and a necklace in an anthill on the Feast of the Annunciation and now had to dig them up. She was slowly getting used to the cold. Her taut body, which had not known motherhood, and was as fresh and rosy as a gilded cloud filled with warm spring rain, sailed freely and proudly through the young grass in the meadow. She stopped finally under a beech. Before digging up the anthill she raised her arms and blissfully stretched her whole body so that her bones cracked. Suddenly she felt that she was losing her strength. She felt sick. Helplessly dropping her arms, she looked ahead and at once plunged into a watery black abyss that would not let her go.

Iura the sorcerer was looking at her from the other side of the fence. She wanted to scream at him but could not. She wanted to cover her breasts but did not have the strength to raise her hands. She tried to flee and found that she was rooted to the spot. She stood powerless, almost swooning, intently gazing into two black embers that were sucking out all her strength.

Finally anger stirred her. All her magic had been wasted! Palahna pulled herself together and called out to Iura, "Why are you goggling so? Haven't you ever seen a woman?"

Without dropping the gaze with which he had bound her, Iura flashed his teeth. "I swear, Palahna, I haven't seen one like you!" He threw a leg over the fence.

She clearly saw the two embers that had turned her will to ashes float toward her and yet continued to stand, unable to move in sweet and terrible expectation. He was very close now. She could see the embroidered seams on his jerkin, the flashing teeth between his lips, and the half-raised hand. The warmth of his body streamed toward her, and she was still standing. Only when the iron fingers squeezed her hand and pulled her toward him did she jerk back with a cry and run home.

The sorcerer stood still, flaring his nostrils and watching as Palahna's white body flashed over the grasslike waves on the Cheremosh. Then, when Palahna had disappeared, he climbed back over the fence and resumed scattering the ashes from yesterday's fire on the meadow so that the cows and sheep that would graze here would be fruitful and each ewe would have two lambs.

Palahna arrived at home angry. It was a good thing that Ivan hadn't seen anything. What a fine neighbor Iura was, the devil take him! Couldn't he have picked a better time to approach her? As for the magic, well, that was lost. She

hesitated whether to tell Ivan about Iura or to leave well enough alone. A quarrel or a fight could come of it yet, and once you've started with a sorcerer.... She should have slapped him properly in the face! That would have taught him! But Palahna knew that she could not raise a hand to him. The mere thought of doing so made her swoon. She remembered the burning look in his eyes and the flashing teeth in his avidly open mouth and sensed that he had spun a web around her. No matter what she tried to do that day, she continued to feel the sorcerer's eyes on her body.

Two weeks had passed since then, and Palahna still had not told Ivan about the meeting with Iura. She only observed her husband more closely. There was something heavy about him. A worry seemed to be gnawing at him, weakening his body. Something aged and watery was shining in his tired eyes. He had noticeably lost weight and become indifferent. No, Iura was better. If she wanted a lover, she would take Iura.[31] But Palahna was proud and could not be taken by force. Besides, she was angry at the sorcerer.

She met him by the river one day. For a moment Palahna felt that she was naked again and a thin cobweb had bound her body. "How did you sleep, my sweet Palahna?" She heard his words as if in a dream.

A reply was on her tongue. "All right, and you?" But she held back, pursed her lips, raised her head high, and passed by as if she had not seen him.

"How are you?" she heard him ask again. But she did not turn around.

Now you'll have to beware of trouble! she thought fearfully. Indeed, as soon as she came home, Ivan greeted her with the news that a lamb had died. Strangely enough, she felt not the slightest regret for the loss of the lamb. She was even angry that Ivan was grieving so.

Iura did not cross her path again, yet Palahna's thoughts turned to him more and more. She listened eagerly to stories about his powers and was amazed that the passionate Iura, who had seen no finer woman than Palahna, was capable of so much. He was powerful and knew everything. A mere word from him could kill a cow or shrivel up a man. The sorcerer wielded life and death; he could drive away clouds and stop hail. The fire in his black eyes could reduce an enemy to ashes and kindle love in a woman's heart. Iura was an earthly god. His hands, which he had extended to Palahna in desire, held the forces of the world.

Sometimes Palahna's heart would grow indifferent to the livestock and to her husband, and they would pale to insignificance like a fog dissipating when it settles on fir boughs. Weary, she would go to the meadow, sit under the beech, and feel Iura's warm breath on her breast and iron fingers on her arms. He could have made her his paramour had he appeared then. But he did not appear.

A hot day came. Ihrets was smoking; the earth was steaming, and clouds ceaselessly scudded from Chornohora, pouring down rain on which the sun cast a slanting glint. The weather was so humid that Palahna never would have ascended to the peak if a dream had not warned her that something bad was in store for the cattle. She wanted to visit the cows in the forest. The mountains around her were covered with fog, as if the streams had boiled over and turned to steam. The Cheremosh boiled below. The river found the rocks hard to lie on and so jumped from stone to stone. Palahna had barely reached the peak when a wind from Chornohora waved a wing and shook the trees. God forbid there should be a storm, she thought and turned her face to the wind. But there

it was. A heavy bluish-white cloud was raging. It seemed that Chornohora itself had risen to the sky and was ready to drop on the earth and crush everything beneath it. The wind raced ahead of it, pushing aside the firs, and the mountains and valleys immediately turned black, as if swept by a forest fire. There could be no thought of going on. Palahna took shelter under the tent of a fir. The tree was squeaking. Thunder softly rolled over the distant hills; shadows fleetly ran over the mountains, washing away their colors, and tall young firs swayed in the wind on distant peaks. If only it wouldn't hail, Palahna thought fearfully as she huddled in her jerkin.

Thunder was rumbling overhead. Inside Chornohora necromancers were chopping ice on frozen lakes, and the souls of suicides were gathering the ice in bags and racing on the clouds to scatter the ice over the earth. The hay meadows will be ruined when they're covered with hail, and the hungry cattle will weep, Palahna thought bitterly. Suddenly lightning struck. The mountains shook, and young firs came crashing to the ground. The earth heaved, and everything spun in a whirlwind. Palahna barely managed to grasp the tree trunk. As if through a fog, she suddenly saw a man clambering up the mountain. He was struggling with the wind, spreading his legs apart like a crab and holding on to rocks with his hands. Now he was close to the peak. He doubled over, then he was running, and finally he was standing on the very peak. Palahna recognized Iura.

He must be coming to me, she thought fearfully, but Iura apparently did not see her. Outlined against a cloud, one foot forward, he folded his arms across his chest. Throwing back his pale face, he stared grimly at the cloud. He stood thus for a long moment as the cloud advanced toward him. Suddenly he dashed his hat to the ground with a sharp motion. The wind immediately blew it down into the valley and lifted his long hair. Then he raised the staff in his hand and shouted into the blue roar, "Stop! I will not let thee pass!"

The cloud pondered for a moment and then replied by sending down a fiery arrow.

"Oh!" Palahna covered her eyes with a hand as the mountains scattered.

But Iura continued to stand firmly, his curly hair waving about like a nest of snakes. "Aha! So that's how thou art!" he shouted at the cloud. "Then I must exorcise thee. I exorcise you, thunder big and little, clouds big and little! Calamity, I dispel thee, to the left, to the forests and waters. Go, scatter like the wind throughout the world! Disperse and scatter! Thou hast no dominion here!"

But the cloud merely shook its left wing derisively and began to turn to the right, toward the meadows. "Woe!" cried Palahna, clenching her fists. "It will crush all the hay!"

Iura was not ready to give in. He only paled even more, and his eyes grew darker. When the cloud moved to the right, he, too, moved to the right. When the cloud moved to the left, he followed it again. He ran after it, struggling against the wind, waving his arms and threatening with his staff. He slithered like a snake over the mountains as he wrestled with the cloud. Just a bit more, just a bit here, on this side.... Sensing the power in his breast, he shot thunderbolts from his eyes as he raised his arms aloft and cast his spell. The wind raised high his jerkin and smote him in the breast. The cloud growled, sent forth thunder, flung rain in his eyes, and quivered overhead, ready to fall down, as Iura, drenched with sweat, barely catching a breath, cast about in a frenzy, afraid of losing his remaining strength. He sensed that he was

weakening, that his breast was empty, that the wind was tearing his voice away and rain was pouring into his eyes, and that the cloud was winning. With his last bit of strength Iura raised his short staff. "Stop!"

The cloud stopped. Rearing like a horse on its hind legs in astonishment, the cloud boiled with anger and despair and begged, "Let me go!"

"I will not!"

"Let us go, we're dying!" cried the souls pitifully as they struggled under the weight of their bags of hail.

"Aha! So now you're begging! I conjure thee: go to the abysses where the neighing of horses and the bellowing of cows and the bleating of sheep never reach, where a crow will not fly, and where Christian voices are never heard. There will I let thee go!"

Strangely enough, the cloud obeyed, submissively turning left, untying its bags over the river, and scattering the thick hail on the graveled riverbank. A white curtain veiled the mountains, and something roared and crashed in the valley below. Iura fell to the ground and gasped for breath.

When the sun broke through the cloud and the wet grass smiled, Iura saw as if in a dream that Palahna was running toward him. She was like the sun itself when she bent over him anxiously. "Did something bad happen to you, my sweet Iura?"

"Nothing at all, Palahna dearest, nothing at all. You see, I've turned the storm back!" He held out his arms to her. Thus Palahna became Iura's lover.

* * *

Ivan was astonished by Palahna. She had always loved to dress in fine clothes, but now something seemed to have possessed her: she began wearing expensive, cleverly embroidered silken kerchiefs, skirts threaded with gold and silver wires, and heavy coin necklaces even on weekdays. Sometimes she would disappear from the house and return late at night, flushed, disheveled, and seemingly drunk.

"Where have you been roaming?" Ivan would ask angrily. "Watch out, mistress!"

Palahna would merely laugh. "Now how about that! I'm not even allowed to have a good time. I want to enjoy life. We live only once in this world."

What's true is true. Our life is brief—it flickers for a while and then goes out. Ivan thought so, too, but Palahna was going much too far. She drank every day at the tavern with Iura, kissing and embracing him publicly and making no attempt to conceal the fact that she had a lover. Was she the first to have one? Since time immemorial no woman has ever abided by only one man.

Everyone talked about Palahna and Iura. Ivan heard the talk, too, but accepted it indifferently. If it was the sorcerer, then so be it. Palahna was blossoming and enjoying herself, and Ivan was languishing. He himself was amazed at the change. What had happened to him? His strength was deserting him. His eyes were sunken and watery. Life was losing its relish. Even the livestock did not give him the pleasure it once had. Had someone cast a spell over him? He bore no malice toward Palahna and felt no grievance, although he fought for her with Iura.

He fought not in anger, but for appearance's sake when people brought them together. If it hadn't been for Semen, his sworn brother, who spoke up for Ivan, nothing might have happened. For meeting Iura in the tavern once,

Semen struck him in the face. "You scoundrel! What are you doing with Palahna? Don't you have your own wife?"

Then Ivan felt ashamed and jumped at Iura. "Mind your Hafiia and don't touch my wife!" he shouted, brandishing his ax in Iura's face.

"Did you buy her at a market?" Iura exploded. His ax also flashed before Ivan's eyes.

"May scurvy strike you down!"

"You bandit!"

"There, take that!" Ivan hewed first, straight at the forehead. Flooded with blood, Iura managed to slash Ivan between the eyes, covering his face and chest with blood. Both men were blinded by the hot waves that gushed into their eyes but continued to strike ax against ax, aiming their blows for the chest. Streaming with gore, these red masks were dancing the dance of death. Iura's hand was crippled, but with a lucky blow he suddenly smashed Ivan's ax. Ivan bent down, expecting death, but Iura reined in his passion and with a fine, grand gesture threw aside his own ax. "I do not attack a defenseless man with an ax!" They seized each other by the shoulders. The by-standers managed to pull them apart.

Well, what of it? Ivan washed his wounds, coloring the Cheremosh with his gore, and went to his sheep. There he found rest and consolation. The fight had not helped. Everything remained as before. Palahna continued to stay away from home, and Ivan languished even more. His skin darkened and stuck to his bones. His eyes sank even deeper. Fever, irritation, and restlessness gnawed at him. He even lost his appetite for food. It must be the sorcerer's doing, Ivan thought bitterly. He wants to drive me from this world.

He went to an exorcist, but she could not turn the spell away: apparently Iura was stronger. Ivan was even certain of this. Walking past the sorcerer's house once, he heard Palahna's voice. Could it be she?

Pressing a hand to his chest, Ivan applied an ear to the gate. He was not wrong. Palahna was inside. Searching for a crack to peer inside, Ivan quietly moved along the fence. Finally he found a hole and saw Palahna and the sorcerer. Iura was holding a clay doll before Palahna and poking his finger in it from head to foot.

"I drive a peg here," he whispered maliciously, "and his arms and legs shrivel. In the stomach, and he suffers pains and cannot eat."

"And if you drive one into the head?" Palahna asked inquisitively.

"Then he dies immediately!"

They were plotting against him! Ivan wanted to jump over the fence and kill both of them on the spot. He squeezed the ax in his hand, measured the fence with his eyes, and then turned pale. Weakness and indifference flooded his body again. Whatever for? It must have been fated this way. He shivered, lowered the ax, and moved away. He walked along desolate, not feeling the ground beneath his feet and straying off the track. Red circles floated before his eyes and dissolved over the mountains.

Where was he going? Ivan did not know. Wandering aimlessly, he climbed mountains and descended into valleys. Finally he noticed that he was sitting by the river. The green blood of the mountains was frothing and roaring by his feet, and he stared uncomprehendingly into the swift current until the first clear thought illuminated his tired mind: Marichka had walked about these places. Here the water had taken her away. Then one thought after another surfaced, filling his empty heart. He saw Marichka's sweet face again,

her simple and sincere kindness, and heard her song. "Think of me, my sweetheart, twice a day, and I will think of you seven times an hour." Now it was all gone. Gone never to return, just as the foam on the river could never return. Once Marichka, and now he.... His star was barely holding up in the sky. For what is our life? A glimmer in the sky, a cherry blossom, fleeting and evanescent.

The sun hid behind the mountains, and in the quiet evening shadows azure smoke wound through the cracks in the roofs of the Hutsul cottages that blossomed on the green mountains like great blue flowers. Sorrow enveloped Ivan's heart. His soul longed for something better, something unknown. It was drawn to other, better worlds, where it could finally find rest.

When night fell and the black mountains flashed with the lights of scattered cottages, like evil creatures blinking their eyes, Ivan sensed that hostile forces were stronger than he was, that he had fallen in battle.

* * *

Ivan awoke.

"Get up," said Marichka to him. "Get up and come with me." He looked at her without surprise. It was good that she had finally come. He rose and went after her.

Silently they made their way into the mountains. Although it was night, Ivan clearly saw Marichka's face in the starlight. Climbing over a fence that divided the meadow from the forest, they entered a thicket of firs.

"Why are you so pale?" Marichka asked. "Have you been ill?"

"I've been pining for you, Marichka my love." He did not ask where they were going. He was happy simply to be with her.

"Do you remember, my sweet Ivan, how we would meet here in this forest? You would play for me, and I would wrap my arms around your neck and kiss your dear curls."

"Yes, Marichka, I remember, and I will never forget."

He saw Marichka beside him, but he knew that it was a wood nymph and not Marichka. He walked beside her and would not let her go ahead for fear of seeing the bloody hole in her back where a wood nymph's heart and lungs can be seen. On narrow paths he squeezed against her to avoid falling behind and sensed the warmth of her body.

"I've always wanted to ask you: why did you hit me in the face? You remember, when our fathers were fighting and I hid in fear under the wagon at the sight of blood."

"Then you ran off. I threw your ribbons in the water, and you gave me a sweetmeat."

"I fell in love with you immediately."

They were moving deeper into the forest. The black firs extended their mossy branches over them as if in benediction, and an utter silence reigned over everything, broken only by the foaming wantonness of the streams in the valley.

"Once I wanted to frighten you and so I buried myself in moss and ferns and lay quietly. You called me, looked for me, and were almost crying. And I lay there, choking back my laughter. And what did you do with me when you finally found me?"

"Ha-ha!"

"Fie, you shameless man!" She puckered her lips sweetly and gave him a mischievous look.

"Ha-ha!" Ivan laughed.

She reminded him of their childish games, their swimming in the cold streams, their jokes and songs, their joys and fears, and their passionate embraces and painful parting. All the sweet memories that warmed their hearts.

"Why did you stay so long in the uplands, Ivanko? What were you doing there?"

Ivan was tempted to tell her how a nymph had called him in Marichka's voice, but he kept quiet. His consciousness was splitting. He sensed Marichka beside him and yet knew that Marichka was gone, that someone else was leading him into the unknown, to the desolate mountain crests, in order to destroy him. Yet he felt good. He followed her laughter and girlish twittering, light, happy, and unafraid the way he once had been. His worries, his thoughts of Palahna and the hostile sorcerer, and his fear of death had disappeared. Lighthearted youth and joy were leading him again to the unpeopled peaks, so desolate and lonely that even the rustling of the forest could not hold on there and was carried away into the valleys by the roaring streams.

"I kept looking out for you and waiting for you to come back from the uplands. I did not eat or sleep, and my songs were lost, and the world withered away for me. When we were in love, even dry oaks bloomed, but when we parted, living oaks dried up."

"Don't say that, Marichka, don't say that, my sweet! Now we are together and will never part!"

"Never? Ha-ha!"

Ivan shuddered and stopped. The dry malicious laugh cut at his heart. He looked at her incredulously. "Are you laughing, Marichka?"

"Of course not, Ivanko! I didn't laugh! You must have imagined it. Are you tired? Is it difficult to walk? Let's go a little further. Come!"

He went on, firmly pressing his shoulder to hers, with only one thought: to go on like this and not fall behind. Else he might see that instead of clothes on her back Marichka had.... Ah, what was the point? He refused to think.

The forest was growing thicker. The putrid odor of moldering stumps wafted to them from a thicket where dead firs were decaying and poisonous mushrooms sprouted. The boulders were cold to the touch under their covering of slippery moss, and the bare roots of firs entwined the paths, which were covered by a layer of dry needles. Ivan and Marichka went on, deeper and deeper into the cold and uninviting wilds of the highland forest.

They emerged into a glade. Here the sky was a bit lighter. The firs seemed to be holding back the black night. All at once Marichka paused with a shudder. Tilting her head forward, she stood listening. Ivan noticed anxiety flicker over her face and draw her eyebrows together in a frown. What was wrong? But Marichka impatiently silenced his question, placing a finger on her lips, and then disappeared.

It had all happened so quickly and strangely that Ivan did not have time to collect himself. What had frightened her? Where had she fled? He stood for a moment, expecting that Marichka would soon return, but when a long time had passed he called out quietly, "Marichka!" The soft cover of fir branches swallowed the sound, and again everything was quiet.

Ivan became anxious. He wanted to look for Marichka but did not know which way to turn because he had not noticed where she had disappeared. She might get lost in the forest or stumble over a cliff. Should he start a fire? She'd see the light and know which way to come back. He gathered dry branches and lit a fire. The flames crackled a bit underneath and sent up smoke. When the smoke was whirling over the fire, the shadows of the angular firs began to dance, populating the glade.

Ivan sat down on a stump and looked around. The glade was littered with rotten stumps and overgrown with a prickly net of wild raspberries. The thin, dry lower branches of the firs hung down like a red beard. Sadness overcame Ivan again. He was alone once more. Marichka was not coming. Lighting his pipe, he stared into the fire to while away the time. Marichka would have to return sooner or later. He even thought that he heard her footsteps and the crackling of dry branches. Oh! She had finally come back.... He wanted to get up and go toward her, but before he could do so, the dry branches parted quietly and a man emerged from the forest.

He was naked. Soft dark hair covered his entire body, encircling his round compassionate eyes, entwining with his beard, and hanging down over his breast. He clasped his hairy arms on his large stomach and approached the fire. Ivan immediately recognized him. It was the merry *chuhaistyr*, the benevolent forest spirit who protected people from wood nymphs. He was death to them: if he caught one, he would tear her apart from limb to limb.

The *chuhaistyr* smiled affably and said with a sly wink, "Where did she go?"

"Who?"

"The wood nymph."

He's talking about Marichka, Ivan thought with fear, and his heart began to pound. So that's why she disappeared. "I don't know, I didn't see," he replied indifferently and then invited the *chuhaistyr* to sit down.

The *chuhaistyr* seated himself on a stump, shook off the dry leaves clinging to his hair, and extended his feet to the fire. Both were silent. The forest man warmed himself by the fire and rubbed his round stomach. Ivan wondered how he might detain the *chuhaistyr* so that Marichka would have more time to flee.

The *chuhaistyr* himself helped. Winking slyly at Ivan, he said, "Perhaps you'd dance with me a little?"

"Why not?" Ivan gladly rose. Adding fir branches to the fire, he examined his shoes, tucked in his shirt, and got ready to dance.

The *chuhaistyr* placed his hairy hands on his hips and started to shake. "Well, begin!"

All right, if he was to begin, then he would begin. Ivan stamped his foot in place, put a leg out, shook his whole body, and sailed into a light Hutsul dance. The *chuhaistyr* comically swayed back and forth. Crinkling his eyes, he smacked his lips and shook his stomach as his hairy, bearlike legs flexed and straightened. The dance was warming him. He jumped higher and squatted lower, encouraging himself with cheerful grunts and wheezes that made him sound like a bellows. Drops of sweat appeared around his eyes, running down in rivulets from his forehead to his mouth, and his underarms and belly glistened like a horse's flanks.

"*Haiduk* once! And again!" he shouted at Ivan, stamping his feet.[32]

"Another crooked one!" Ivan called out in encouragement. "Another blind one! Ho-ho! If we're to dance, then let's dance!"

"Let it be!" The *chuhaistyr* clapped his hands, squatted, and whirled about.

"Ha-ha-ha!" Ivan called out, slapping his thighs. Wasn't he still able to dance?

The flames leaped higher, casting the dancers' writhing shadows on the brightly lit glade. The *chuhaistyr* was getting tired. He raised his hand with its dirty nails to his forehead to wipe away the sweat and now shook his hairy body in place instead of leaping. "Perhaps that will be enough?" he wheezed.

"Oh no, a little bit more!" Ivan, too, was fainting with exhaustion. He was heated and wet. His legs ached, and his lungs rasped for air. "I'll play a tune for our dance," he encouraged the *chuhaistyr*, reaching into his sack for his *floiara*. "You've never heard anything like this, my friend!"

He played the tune that he had heard the vanisher play in the forest. "My goats are back, my goats are back!" Animated by the song, the *chuhaistyr* kicked up his heels again and shut his eyes with satisfaction, his exhaustion seemingly forgotten. Now Marichka would be safe. "Flee, Marichka, don't be afraid, love. Your enemy is dancing," the *floiara* sang.

The *chuhaistyr*'s hair was matted as if he had just emerged from water. Saliva ran in a stream from his mouth, open with the joy of the dance, and his whole body shone in the firelight, as Ivan encouraged him with his cheerful tune, striking the stones in the glade with feet from which the shoes had flown off.

Finally the *chuhaistyr* was exhausted. "Enough, I can't!" He fell to the grass, breathing heavily, his eyes shut. Ivan collapsed beside the *chuhaistyr*. And so they breathed together.

At last the *chuhaistyr* giggled quietly. "Oh, what a fine fling I've had!" Rubbing his round stomach with satisfaction, he sighed, smoothed out the hair on his chest, and began to say good-bye. "Thank you very kindly for the dance,"

"Go in health."

"Farewell." Parting the dry branches of a fir, the *chuhaistyr* plunged into the forest.

Silence and gloom enveloped the glade again. The dying fire blinked a single red eye. Where was Marichka? Ivan still had much to tell her. He felt a need to tell her about his whole life, his longing for her, his joyless days, his loneliness among hostile people, his unhappy marriage. But where was she? Where had she gone? Perhaps to the left? It seemed to him that he had last seen her on the left.

Ivan moved left. The firs had clustered so closely here that passing between their rough trunks was difficult. The dry lower branches stung Ivan's face, but he went on. Roaming about in the dense gloom, he continually stumbled and ran into tree trunks. Sometimes he thought that someone was calling him. He would stop, hold his breath, and listen. But the forest was so still that the crackling of dry branches which rubbed against his shoulders sounded like the falling of timbers. Ivan went on, extending his arms like a blind man afraid of tripping over obstacles.

Suddenly a barely audible breath reached his ear. "Ivan!" The voice was coming from behind, from a depth, as if emerging from a sea of fir needles. This meant that Marichka was not here. He had to turn back. Ivan hurried,

banging his knees against trees, fending off branches, and half-closing his eyes to avoid being stung by needles. The night seemed to be seizing his legs and not letting go, and he had to drag it with him. He had been wandering for a long time and still had not found the glade. Now the ground beneath his feet was sloping down. Rocks blocked his path. Going around them, he slid on slippery moss, stumbled over stiff roots, and seized hold of grass to keep from falling. From the abyss below a faint, forest-muffled cry reached him again. "Iva-an!"

He wanted to answer Marichka's call but was afraid that the *chuhaistyr* might hear. Now he knew where to look for her. He had to go right and descend. But the slope here was even steeper, and he could not understand how she had been able to get down. Pebbles skipped from under Ivan's feet, falling with a muffled growl into the black abyss. But Ivan was agile and used to the mountains and was able to halt at the edge of the precipice, carefully seeking out support for his feet. The descent was becoming more difficult. Once he almost fell but managed to seize an outcropping of rock and hung by his arms. He did not know what was below him, but he sensed the cold and malevolent breath of the abyss that had opened its insatiable maw toward him.

"Iva-an!" Marichka moaned from below in a voice that blended love and suffering.

"I'm coming, Marichka!" Ivan longed to call out. He had forgotten caution. Leaping from rock to rock like a mountain sheep, his mouth barely able to catch a breath, he kept injuring his arms and legs, fell on sharp rocks, lost the ground beneath his feet, and through the thick fog of passion in which he was careering into the valley heard the dear voice urge him on: "Iva-an!"

"I'm here!" Ivan shouted and then suddenly sensed that the abyss was pulling him down. Seizing him by the neck, it bent him backward. He flailed his arms about, tried to grasp rocks with his legs, and felt that he was flying headlong, his body filled with a strange cold emptiness. The heavy black mountain spread its wings in an instant and took to flight like a bird. A sharp deathly curiosity burned his brain: what would his head strike? He heard a bone snap and felt an unbearably sharp pain wrack his body; then everything melted in the red fire that consumed his life.

The next day shepherds found the dying Ivan.

* * *

The *trembita* heralded the death to the mountains.[33] For death here had its own voice in which it spoke to the lonely peaks. The hooves of horses pounded stony tracks, and leather moccasins rustled in the gloom of night, as Hutsuls hurried from their mountain dwellings to the deathwatch. Falling to their knees before the corpse, they piled coins on the dead man's chest to pay for the transport of his soul and then silently sat down on benches. Gray hair mixed with the crimson of silken kerchiefs, and healthy pinkness with the yellow of waxy, wrinkled faces. A deathly light wove a net of shadows on the dead and the living faces. The chins of rich farmers' wives quaked; elderly eyes shone in respect for death; a serene calm united life and death, and coarse, hardworking hands lay heavily on knees.

Palahna adjusted the shroud on the dead man. Her fingers felt the coldness of the corpse, and the warm, sweetish smell of wax dripping down the candles raised sorrow from her breast to her throat. The *trembitas* wept outside the window.

Ivan's yellow face rested on the linen, having forever closed within itself something that only he knew, and the right eye slyly peered from under a slightly raised eyelid at the brass coins piled on his chest and the candle burning in his folded hands. His soul was resting at the head of the corpse: it did not dare leave the house yet.

"Why don't you speak to me?" Palahna called to her husband's lonely soul. "Why don't you look at me? Why don't you bandage the callouses on my fingers? What road are you setting out upon, my husband? Where shall I look for you?"

"She wails well," old women nodded, and others replied with sighs that melted away in the hubbub of voices.

"We shepherded together in the uplands. Once we were grazing sheep when a cold wind broke out as if it were winter. The snowstorm was so fierce that we couldn't see a thing, and he, the deceased ..." a farmer was telling his neighbors. Their lips moved with their own thoughts, for it was fitting to comfort the sad soul that had parted from its body.

"You've gone and left me alone. With whom will I farm now? With whom will I tend the cattle?" Palahna asked her husband's soul.

New guests kept entering the cottage through the open door from the dark night. Knees were bent before the corpse; brass coins jingled on its breast, and people moved over on the benches to make room for the newcomers. The thick candles burned quietly, their wax dripping down like tears. A pale flame licked at the fetid air, and a blue vapor, mixed with the nauseous smell of wax and sweat, hung over the hubbub.

The cottage was becoming crowded. Faces were pressed against faces. Warm breaths mixed together, and perspiring foreheads reflected the deathly light that had lit flickering fires on wire-decorated skirts and leather bags and belts. More guests continued to arrive, thronging at the threshold. The corpse was beginning to move. A barely visible shadow of white, lichenlike spots crawled over it.

"My sweet husband, you've abandoned me to woe!" Palahna wailed. "There's no one left to go to town or to bring things...."

Outside the window, the *trembita* repeated its lament, augmenting Palahna's grief. Hadn't the poor soul heard enough sorrow? The thought must have been concealed under the oppressive weight of grief, because a movement was beginning at the threshold. Feet stamped hesitantly; elbows pushed; a bench shook occasionally, and voices rose over the noise of the crowd. Suddenly a woman's high-pitched laugh cut through the heavy veils of sadness, and the pent-up hubbub burst forth like a flame from under a cap of black smoke.

"Hey you, snub-nose! Buy a rabbit from me!" a young man boomed in a bass voice.

"Ha-ha, snub-nose!" A wave of laughter rolled forth. The merriment was beginning. Those who were sitting closer to the door turned their backs to the corpse, ready to join in the game. Cheerful grins broke out on faces that a moment ago and been knotted in grief, and the rabbit went further and further, enclosing ever wider circles, until it reached the dead man. "Ha-ha, humpbacked! Ha-ha, lame one!"

The light flickered and smoked with the laughter. One guest after another stood up from the benches and moved to the corners, where merry-makers were gathering in tight clusters. The spots on the dead man's face spread wider,

as if concealed thoughts were moving it and changing its expression. A bitter thought seemed to be caught in the raised corner of the mouth: what is life? A flash in the sky, a cherry blossom.

People were already kissing by the outside door.

"On whom are you hanging?"

"On black-haired Annychka."

Annychka pretended to resist, but dozens of hands pushed her out from the tight crowd, and hot lips encouraged her, "Go on, girl, go on!" Annychka embraced the boy who was hanging and kissed him on the lips with relish as the crowd whooped with joy.

The corpse was forgotten. Only three old women stayed beside it, their glassy sorrowful eyes observing a fly that was crawling over the still, yellow face.

The married women threw themselves into the game. With eyes in which the deathly light had not died down yet and the image of the dead man was still fresh, they eagerly went to kiss, oblivious of their husbands, who were hugging and squeezing other men's wives. The kisses resounded throughout the house, mixing with the weeping of the *trembita*, which continued to announce to the distant mountains that death had come to the lonely peak. Palahna had stopped lamenting. It was getting late, and she had to entertain her guests.

The merry-making grew more abandoned. The room was suffocating. People sweated in their jerkins, breathing in the odor of sweat, the nauseating fumes of warm wax, and the smell of the decomposing corpse. They all spoke loudly as if forgetting why they were here and related their adventures with roars of laughter. Waving their arms, they slapped one another on the back and winked at the women.

Those who could not fit into the cottage started a bonfire in the yard and played merry games outside. The light in the vestibule was put out. Girls squealed wildly, and boys choked with laughter. The merriment shook the walls of the cottage and made the dead man's bier tremble. The yellow lights of the candles flickered in the thick air.

Even the old people joined in the games. A carefree laughter shook their gray hair, spreading their wrinkles and revealing the rotten stumps of teeth. The oldsters spread out unsteady arms and helped the young men catch the women. Necklaces jangled on the women's breasts. Female squeals shattered the ears. Benches jumped and banged against the bier. Peals of laughter rolled from the corner with the icons to the threshold, and whole rows of people bent double with laughter, holding on to their stomachs.

A "mill" clattered with a wooden roar in the midst of the screaming throng. "What do you have to mill?" the miller called out repeatedly.

"We have corn," girls shouted as they pushed forward to him.

"Jews" who had made beards by affixing long strips of flax quarreled with one another, and a tightly rolled wet towel was whacking people's backs with a snap. People fled from it, screaming and roaring with laughter, knocking over others in their way, stirring up the dust, and spoiling the air. The floor of the house shook under the weight of young feet, and the corpse on the bier jumped up and down, the mysterious smile of death still playing on its yellow face. The brass coins heaped on the breast by good people for the soul's fare quietly jingled.

Outside the window the *trembitas* wept.

October 1911

Chernihiv

NOTES ON THE TEXT

Most of the material for these notes comes from sources that Kotsiubynsky himself consulted while writing *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, although I have also availed myself, more distantly, of some supplementary texts. Since the material consists of many variants, I have organized it into larger entries rather than attempting to annotate each passing reference to Hutsul beliefs that appears in *Shadows*. Thus, I hope to have avoided repetition and confusion. So when the *aridnyk*, for example, is first mentioned in the novel, I group in that note all the information on the *aridnyk* that the reader will need in order to follow both the text and the relevant passages in my essay.

Forced to amalgamate information from various sources into close sequences, I have not credited individual sentences, let alone phrases, by reference to their sources. Instead, the sources are listed in a section of the bibliography (pp. 123-24). There is no evidence that Kotsiubynsky used Hnatiuk's collection, listed there, but he certainly saw much of the material in other works by Hnatiuk that the ethnographer sent him over the years.

Although I have cast the notes in the present tense, the Hutsul customs that I describe have been all but uprooted. They began to die out in the 1920s, when much of the Hutsuls' territory fell to Poland, and in the postwar years they have been methodically destroyed, for ideological reasons, by the Soviet government. The collective farm system, more than any other factor, has been instrumental in eradicating Hutsul customs.

[1]The Hutsuls, who speak a dialect of the Ukrainian language with negligible admixtures of Romanian and Hungarian, are probably the most picturesque and artistic of the Ukrainian "tribes" inhabiting the Carpathian Mountains. Chornohora, the mountain range where the Hutsuls live, is often mentioned in *Shadows*; it extends about twelve-and-a-half miles. The highest peak in this range is Hoverlia (6,760 feet). Most of the major rivers in the Hutsul region flow into the Danube. The largest of these is the Cheremosh, mentioned in the very beginning of *Shadows*; its mysterious flow accompanies Ivan's grief throughout the work.

The Hutsuls have preserved many ancient customs that had been practiced throughout Ukraine but died out long ago. Cultural exchange and progress were for centuries blocked by the mountains, and the Hutsuls have always been stubbornly resistant to any kind of innovation, considering the

present moment as much more dependent on the mythical past than on the reformist future. Hence, as both Kotsiubynsky and ethnographic studies show, Christianity, for the Hutsuls, is but a thin veneer on their deeply rooted paganism. This is doubtless the reason for their rather startling moral standards.

Artistic activity of one sort or another—and the Hutsuls excel in many—is a constant companion in their daily lives. Here I mean not only songs, instrumental music, and dance, which play such an important part in *Shadows*, but also the production of magnificent wooden architectural structures and highly developed artifacts: woven rugs with intricate designs, pottery, wood carvings, wooden objects inlaid with mother-of-pearl, coral, or beads, and leather work. Even the humblest objects of daily use—a wooden pail, a wooden spoon, a rake, an ax—are brightly decorated. The Hutsuls are fond of colorful dress, which is a matter not only of their inner need to create striking effects, but also of social status. The Hutsul is generous to a fault (capable of giving away all his cattle, for example, on the spur of the moment), very sentimental and lyrical, but also quite vindictive and prone to sudden violence.

Among the chief occupations of the Hutsuls are breeding cattle and sheep and preparing timber.

[2]There is a myriad of minor devils in Hutsul legends. Although they mate with, and sometimes even marry, human beings, usually their wives or husbands come from the demonic world. The *niavka*, the *lisna*, and even the "born" witch are all considered to be female devils, but the most common names for the female devil are *bohynia* ("goddess") and *bisytsia* ("she-devil"). A *bohynia* or *bisytsia* can be quite beautiful; her distinguishing features are an extraordinarily pale face, lustreless eyes that are devoid of the glow that the human soul provides, and pendulous breasts, sometimes reaching down to her waist. When she flings her breasts backward over her shoulders, she acquires tremendous magical powers, including the ability to fly. In some regions of Western Ukraine, the *bohynia* is known as *diva-baba* ("virgin-midwife," or in a more ancient etymological sense, "goddess-ancestor"). She is an ugly old woman who shares with the *bohynia* the physical feature of the magical pendulous breasts and the nasty habit of stealing children.

The child of the *bohynia*, no matter if conceived with a male devil or with a mortal, is usually a devil. It has an abnormally small head, long ears, thin legs, and a protruding belly. Weak, sickly, and obviously ugly, the child learns to walk only at seven years of age and to talk even later. It appears to be stupid, but at the same time seems to possess secret wisdom not available to human beings. It is extremely greedy and eats everything in sight. Regardless of her unusual origins, a *bohynia* is, after all, a Hutsul, and therefore abhors ugliness in any form. When a human baby is born in a Hutsul family, she secretly attempts to exchange her ugly offspring for the pretty human child, sometimes recruiting her husband, a male devil, to make the exchange. She hopes that the superior qualities of the human child, especially its beauty, will make it a leader among the devils.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance that certain complex rituals be performed by the Hutsuls at the birth of a baby in order to protect it from the *bohynia*. Immediately after turning the newborn child over to the mother, the midwife lights a candle, which may not be extinguished until the priest comes to bless the baby and thus immunizes it from the devil. She then places a clove

of garlic between the mother's breasts and a bunch of keys near the mother's body. (Garlic is by far the most potent magical and medicinal plant in primitive Slavic societies; metal is obviously a somewhat more recent addition to the Hutsuls' magical arsenal.) Next, the midwife burns some incense, mixed with dried trefoil or clover, and "fumigates" first the inside of the room and then the outside of the house, while pronouncing appropriate incantations.

If the midwife performs her ritualistic obligations incorrectly and an exchange does occur, the mother immediately recognizes the changeling by the way the baby sucks her breast or that of the nursemaid. The changeling pulls on the nipple so greedily that blood begins to flow. This belief, incidentally, is connected with the Hutsul versions of the vampire legends in which the vampire (including the *niavka*) receives his or her nourishment through the male or female victim's nipple. It is believed that if the woman continues to breast-feed the changeling, she will soon lose her strength and die.

There is only one way to get rid of the changeling (attempts to abandon or kill it are futile since it returns to the household in either case): the mother must take the baby out onto a dungheap in the yard and beat it, hoping that the *bohynia* will take pity on her own child and return the stolen human baby in exchange for it. Since this is not likely to happen, the ill-favored child eventually dies as a result of such abuse. This folk myth is devised to ensure "natural selection." When, in the opening paragraphs of *Shadows*, Ivan's mother becomes angry with the child, she curses him with an abbreviated and modified version of the spell that the Hutsuls cast against the devil, sending him into the sea, into a dead forest, or into the marshes and rocks. As we shall see in note 6 on the *aridnyk*, this wasteland is the domain of the devil. Versions of such a spell against the devil have been recorded throughout Ukraine.

[3]Valerian (*odalen*) grows in the marshy regions of the Carpathian Mountains. A kind of tranquilizer, the herb is used by the Hutsuls against possession by the *aridnyk* and his agents. Several medicinal herbs are subsumed under the name *matrygan*, particularly deadly nightshade (belladonna) and mandrake (mandragora). The root of the mandrake was considered to be a highly potent aphrodisiac during the Middle Ages, not only in countries of Western Europe (especially in England), but also by many folk cultures, including that of the Hutsuls. Before digging out the mandrake root, the Hutsuls dance around the plant, kiss it, toast it with whiskey, sing ribald songs for it, and talk to it, using amorous language and even well-meant obscenities. They soak the root in whiskey for nine days, then wash themselves with the solution to be sexually attractive, and mix a few drops of it into the drink of the person whom they want to seduce. Sanicle (*pidoima*) is an herb that is used to sooth pain, especially from cut or split skin. It is mixed with heavy cream and rubbed over the affected areas of the body.

[4]There are several Hutsul legends about the weeping of the kite (*Kania*). One has it that the kite is the black soul of a witch that had been burned in a bonfire by the Hutsuls; now it flies about and weeps for its body. Another, belonging to the Genesis cycle, relates how God dug a well from which all the rivers of the world would henceforth be fed. In time, the well became contaminated, and God called upon the birds to clean it out. All of them obeyed except the kite, which did not want to get its golden boots dirty (the claws of

the kite are bright yellow). To punish the kite, God forbade it to drink anything but rain water, so during the dry season, the kite suffers from thirst and weeps, begging God to send down rain.

[5]Throughout Ukraine, the cuckoo (*zozulia, zazulia*) is considered to be the most magically potent bird of all. It contains the soul of an ancestor and therefore is capable of prophecy in the crucial matters of death and love. One reads the prophecies of the cuckoo by counting its distinctive calls. (There is an interesting etymological connection in the Ukrainian language between the cuckoo and the ladybug [*zozulka*], which also contains the soul of an ancestor; the number and position of its black dots are used to foretell the future.) The Hutsuls have countless legends about the cuckoo. They believe, for example, that if one has money in his pocket when he hears the call of the cuckoo for the first time in the spring, he will be guaranteed a good income for the rest of the year. It is also very propitious to have some lima beans in one's pocket when the cuckoo calls for the first time, for anyone who incites the elusive bird to eat a bean or two will have phenomenal luck throughout the year. If, on the other hand, one hears the cuckoo call near his house, he can expect death to occur in the family within the next few months. Because the cuckoos reside all winter in the land of the dead, they possess secret knowledge about the fate of individuals and the destiny of the world. Once the cuckoos stop calling to each other, the end of the world will be close at hand: the *aridnyk* will have broken his chains in order to destroy the earth and all the people on it.

The various Hutsul legends about the origin of the cuckoo all have to do with the loss of love. One is about a woman who employed the help of a *bisytsia* to kill her husband because she wanted to live with her lover. Her husband's name was Kukul (a word for a male cuckoo in several Ukrainian dialects). God punished her by turning her into a cuckoo so that she would fly around and call her husband by name until the end of the world, and her lover became a wren, with whom she now continues her illicit relationship.

Another legend deals with a young shepherdess who stayed alone with her sheep in the uplands. The *aridnyk*, introducing himself to her as Kukuk, fell in love with her, turned himself into a handsome youth, and began to court her. Soon the girl became so attached to him that when he could not come to her on Sundays and holidays (the *aridnyk* is forced to spend all holy days in his wasteland—on the rocks or in marches), she would go about all day calling him. When she returned to the village, her mother, who could not bear to hear her daughter calling her mysterious lover, cursed her with the words: "May you call your Kukuk until the end of the world!" The daughter suddenly grew wings and flew away. She will continue to cuckoo (this is, to call her husband by name) until the *aridnyk* is ready to break his chains.

[6]There is little room for Christ and His merciful love in the world of the Hutsuls; their legends, in fact, very rarely mention Him. Their God and their devils, who are derived directly from ancient pagan deities, their Saint Nicholas and their dragons, their magicians and their spirits of nature are all locked in mortal battle, using every weapon available—robbery, lies, deceit—to conquer one another. The world of the Hutsuls, moreover, is ruled by the perpetual victor in that battle, who certainly is not God.

Besides *aridnyk* (this word, probably driving from Irod or Herod and

meaning "the son of Herod," is fairly new and somewhat influenced by Romanian) and *shcheznyk* ("the Vanisher," probably derived from *shchez by*, "may he vanish," the taboo formula to curse the devil), the Hutsuls call the devil by countless other names. *Osynavets* and *osyna* are the most popular names after *aridnyk* and probably derive from the word *osyka*, or "aspen," which is considered the devil's tree. These terms are much older than *aridnyk*, harking back to a pagan god, perhaps Veles. Taboo euphemisms naming the devil are also very old: *toi shcho v buzyni sydyt* ("he who lives in the elder tree") with a variant, *buznychyi* ("he of the elder tree"); *toi shcho v skali sydyt* ("he who lives in a rock," referring to the devil's wasteland), with a variant, *skameniushnyk* ("the petrified one"); *toi shcho v boloti sydyt* ("he who lives in a marsh"); *neumytyi* ("the unwashed one," referring to the devil's impurity and relating to the all-Ukrainian taboo name *nechystyi*, meaning "unclean" or "impure").

A very interesting taboo name for the devil is *pekun*. Although we immediately associate with it the verb *pekty* ("to burn"), it may stem from the Balto-Slavic names of the god of thunder—Perun or Perkunas. Other interesting taboo names have to do with allegorical representations: *iavyda* (probably connected with the word *iabeda*, or calumny) and *bida* ("grief"). Some of the devil's newer names come from the Bible, notably *Irod* (Herod, which may be connected with *aridnyk*); *Iuda* ("Judas"); *Tryiuda* ("thrice-Judas"); and *iudnyk* ("Son of Judas"). Standard Ukrainian names for the devil—*chort*, *Satana* ("Satan"), with the Hutsul variations *Sotana, bis,* and *didko* (standard Ukrainian contamination of the word for ancestor, with which the forest demon is designated in some parts of Ukraine)—are rarely used by the Hutsuls, although *bis* yields the frequently used feminine form *bisytsia.*

The *aridnyk* has armies of helpers. Although the devil's helpers are rarely called by taboo names, they are referred to by all the other Hutsul names for devil (except *aridnyk*). This, as with much else in myth, makes things quite confusing. Although Kotsiubynsky obviously considers the *shcheznyk* and the *aridnyk* to be separate beings, many Hutsul informants use the two names interchangeably to designate the archdevil.

Several Hutsul Genesis myths relate that in the beginning, there was only the sky and the sea, and that nature, not God, was the origin of life. God was created out of the dew that fell from the sky into the water. When God was out walking one day above the waters, He noticed a billow of foam in the vague shape of a man. He was startled by the shape and did not know where it came from. (This implies that the origin of the *aridnyk* was similar to that of God and that his creation seems to have been veiled before God's eyes.) Since God was very lonely in the vast universe, He turned that half-formed shape into a companion for Himself, who henceforth became His double.

For millenia, God and the *aridnyk* called each other "sworn brother" or "blood brother" (*pobratym*). When they became enemies, they correspondingly began to call each other "un-brother" (*rozpobratym*). Their great friendship started to cool at the time the earth was created; this is the tale which Mykola, the fire-keeper, relates to Ivan. Here Kotsiubynsky uses one of the numerous variants of the Genesis story within the Hutsul canon, published in the Shukhevych collection. Variants of that legend in other Slavic mythologies are published in the work by Drahomanov. Ancient Ukrainian songs, called *koliadkas*, suggested that two birds created the world by diving into the sea.

In the prevalent model on which Kotsiubynsky's version is based, God asks the *aridnyk* to dive to the bottom of the sea and get some earth, while pronouncing the formula, "I take this earth in God's name." Being satanically proud, the *aridnyk* picks up a handful of earth, declaring that he does so in his own name. Upon that act of betrayal of God's faith in him, the soil sifts through his fingers and he comes to the surface empty-handed. God then instructs the *aridnyk* to dive to the bottom of the sea once more, and this time to do the job right. The *aridnyk* scoops up some earth in God's name but puts a few grains between his lower gum and lip, whispering to himself that he takes them in his own name. From the soil in the *aridnyk*'s fist, God creates the earth by ordering it to increase; the grains of sand in the *aridnyk*'s mouth begin to increase proportionately, swelling his face to an alarming size. God then asks the *aridnyk* to spit out the "illegally" obtained sand, from which grow mountains, rocks, swamps, deserts, and thickets. This becomes the *aridnyk*'s or the devil's land, the wasteland to which the *aridnyk* is eventually banished. It is important to keep in mind that the pagan Slavs believed that the dead spent the winters in such regions.

A significant element in the symbolic value of the mountains in *Shadows* is the Hutsuls' belief that the Carpathian Mountains belong to the *aridnyk*. This explains why the Hutsuls considered it important to pay as much tribute to the *aridnyk* as to God. (A variant of the origin of the mountains has it that God found some earth under his fingernail, made a tiny pancake out of it, and threw it upon the sea, where it grew until it became the earth. Alei [Saint Elias, or Perun; see note 24] became frightened of it, grasped it by the edge and shook it; the ensuing wrinkles in the smooth surface of the earth became the Carpathian Mountains.)

In his satanic pride, the *aridnyk* decided to kill God since he had grown fond of the earth, considered it his own, and wanted to rule it by himself. While God was taking a nap on the seashore, the *aridnyk* began to roll Him into the sea. As he did so, however, the earth under God's body kept expanding to prevent Him from falling into the water, which explains why the earth is so large today. Upon waking, God said slyly that He had dreamt that somebody wanted to throw Him into the sea. The *aridnyk* answered that he knew nothing about it, since he himself had been asleep. From this first lie by the *aridnyk* were born deceit, fantasy, dreams, dream reading, and even poetry, all of which are now the *aridnyk*'s property. To punish the *aridnyk* for attempted murder, God threw him into the water and put a sheet of ice over him. By punching a hole in the ice with his head, through which steam began to rise, the *aridnyk* created the first clouds. The *aridnyk* liked it under the ice and wanted to live there so that he could supervise the production of hail pellets (see note 27 on Iura's duel with the cloud), but when spring came and melted the ice, the *aridnyk* had no choice but to reappear on the face of the earth (in Slavic mythology, ancestors begin to walk among the living with the first signs of spring).

God chose the most beautiful corner of the earth for His farm (obviously a transformation of the biblical Eden) and banished the *aridnyk* to the wasteland that had been created from the grains of sand in the *aridnyk*'s mouth. Thus, most of the earth became empty and desolate, without the presence of either God or the *aridnyk*. To allay His loneliness without the *aridnyk*, God fashioned Adam out of clay. At first, Adam's lower body, like the *aridnyk*'s, was shaped like a goat, suggesting that God created man as a

substitute for the *aridnyk*, and that in all respects man is closer to the *aridnyk* than to God. Eve was made from a branch of ivy. The Hutsuls pronounce the words "Eve" and "ivy" in the same way (*iva*), which leads us to suspect that woman was created from a semantic misunderstanding. The Hutsuls regard ivy as the most useless and accursed plant of all since the ivy growing near the cross on Golgotha refused to help the crucified Christ. Similarly, the Hutsuls consider their women to be contaminated and dangerous; in the Hutsul dialect, the rough equivalent of the word "womenfolk" is *cheliad*, which in standard Ukrainian means "apprentices" or "domestic servants."

While God was busy with his new toy—man—the *aridnyk* became desperately lonely and bored and asked God what he should do about it. God told him to dip the index finger of his left hand into the sea and flick a drop of water over his left shoulder without looking behind him (a universal magical procedure, as witnessed in the familiar practice of throwing salt over one's left shoulder for good luck); and a companion would spring from the ground. The *aridnyk*, appreciating the possibilities of the situation, dipped his whole hand into the water several times, flicking numerous drops of water over his shoulder. Thus, an army of helpers—all sorts of minor devils and demons—was born. As these devils procreate but do not die (see note 1), their numbers increase steadily.

Just as the *aridnyk* was not created by God, so his immense powers do not come from God. As Mykola informs Ivan, the *aridnyk* created music and all musical instruments except the *trembita* and the *floiara* (see notes 13 and 14), which were God's inventions. In Hutsul tales the fiddle was the devil's favorite instrument. Household utensils, wagons, and most domestic animals (except the dog, which belongs to God) were invented by the *aridnyk*. God Himself seems to have invented very little, preferring to steal from the *aridnyk*. The *aridnyk*, therefore, herded his goats deep into the forest so that God would not find them. But God discovered his hiding place, caught him napping, and led the goats away to His farm. This upset the *aridnyk* more than God's robbing him of anything else, since the goats were his favorite animals. He went searching for his goats everywhere, weeping, "Where are my goats? Where are my goats?" The *aridnyk* finally found his goats in God's yard, crept into it at night when God was asleep, and hit the goats' legs with a switch, causing their legs to assume the shape of his own. This myth accounts for the vanisher's song that little Ivan hears in the forest.

One Hutsul legend concerns a hunter who came upon a herd of goats grazing at some distance in a forest clearing. As he approached, he heard someone playing the reed so beautifully that he could not resist coming closer to the clearing. As he neared, however, the sound died away and the goats vanished. The hunter then made magical hoops out of pliant branches, put them around his body, and crawled toward the clearing. The sound returned, and soon he saw not only the goats but also a tiny man, like a boy but with a beard and horns, who sat on a tall blade of grass and played his reed. Around him danced pairs of boys and girls; their faces were very beautiful, but their backs had gaping holes in them, through which one could see their inner organs. This was obviously the devil herding his goats, and around him danced the dangerous *niavkas*. The hunter cut a short straight twig and began to imitate the devil's fingering upon his reed. After stealing away, the hunter hollowed out the stick and made holes in it to serve as stops; thus the hunter invented the pipe reed, which he learned to play from the *aridnyk* himself. We see that this story, published in Onyshchuk, gave Kotsiubynsky the basis for his description of Ivan's meeting with the vanisher.

Another important invention of the *aridnyk* is fire. It is the role of the fire in the uplands (see notes 19 and 25) that gives us hints of the close relationship between the shepherds and the *aridnyk*. Spending a winter night in the uplands, the *aridnyk* became extremely cold and he proceeded to build a bonfire (*vatra*). God saw the bonfire, coveted it, and asked the *aridnyk* to share it with Him. The *aridnyk* protested vehemently, "You have taken everything from me, stolen everything, but I refuse to give up my bonfire." God split the end of His walking stick, put a dry, spongy mushroom into the split (this is the shepherds' method of starting the living fire; see note 19), and poked the walking stick into the *aridnyk*'s fire, thus igniting the spongy material so that it would slowly smolder. The *aridnyk*, noticing a bright, happy bonfire burning in God's yard, became enraged and stole into God's estate to spit into the bonfire; this is how fire acquired smoke.

The *aridnyk* also invented the mill, a rather sinister structure associated with the devil in many European myths and legends. It is the mill which caused the *aridnyk*'s final downfall in Hutsul mythology. The *aridnyk* uses his tremendous skills as engineer and designer to develop an elaborate plan to trap God. He built an iron chair beneath the mill with a complex system of rings and chains attached to it. God was meant to fall through a trapdoor in the floor of the mill, land in the chair, and be locked up by the intricate trapping device. Matching for once the *aridnyk*'s uncanny cleverness, God managed to trap the *aridnyk* in his own device, where he will remain until the end of the world. At that time, he will be released and ordered to battle Elias (see note 24), resulting in the destruction of the earth. Until that time, the *aridnyk* must govern the world through the agency of his helpers. Occasionally, the *aridnyk* temporarily breaks free of his chains and rides the skies on his white steed (this is possibly a residue of the ancient Slavic myths of the gods *Bielobog* and *Chernobog*). Fairly recently, about 1880, he went on such an excursion; when he rode above forests, trees fell like blades of grass under a scythe; when he flew above villages, roofs (including, the legend makes certain to point out, church roofs, together with their crosses) were torn off and flew after him. During his difficult night in the uplands, Ivan suspects that the *aridnyk* is riding in the sky again.

In another version of the myth, God punishes the *aridnyk* by banishing him to the rocks where the devil now lives. The Hutsuls believe that the earth is flat and circular like a plate; "our" side is green and sunny, while the other side, the *aridnyk*'s domain, is nothing but rock, where only the moon shines. Such an image of the wasteland was known throughout ancient Ukraine as the realm of Marena, the goddess of winter and of death.

The *aridnyk* has also been very active in the development of modern civilization; he designed the steam engine (it takes seventy devils to turn one of its wheels), invented the telephone (his devils sit on telephone wires and pass on the voices of the callers), and is in charge of running the railway. Needless to say, all factories and government offices are managed by the *aridnyk*.

[7]The forest demon, or *lisovyk*, is covered with pelt and has hooves instead of feet. He captures women who stray into the forest, takes them to his lair, and mates with them. He occasionally exchanges human babies for his own brood (see note 1), and steals children who have been cursed by their parents. On the eve of Saint John's holiday the forest demon sits in trees, laughs and shouts joyfully, his peals of laughter echoing through the mountains. His occupation is to herd wild forest animals, usually deer.

[8]The *chuhaistyr* (*chuhaister, chuhaistryn*) is a variation of the *lisovyk*, but unlike him the *chuhaistyr* is friendly to man. Originally a human being, he had been cursed by an offended neighbor, who banished him into the forest, where he is to remain until the end of the world. There are two versions of the *chuhaistyr* in Hutsul mythology. In one, he is as tall as a fir tree and dressed in white linen from head to foot (note that Kotsiubynsky, like Onyshchuk, attributes these characteristics to the forest demon). In the other version, he is covered with pelt.

The *chuhaistyr* is the genetic enemy of the wood nymph (*niavka*) and hunts her day and night. Upon capturing her, he tears her body in two, roasts her flesh on a bonfire, and devours it. He often approaches the bonfires of shepherds with his ghastly booty, roasts a leg or an arm of a wood nymph, and politely asks the shepherds to join him in his repast. If they refuse, he does not get angry (as most demons do when crossed by man) but proceeds to dine alone. After his meal, he invites one of the shepherds to join him in a dance; like the Satyr, he enjoys dancing above all else. Although there is really no need to harm a *chuhaistyr*, one can do so by placing an ax with the blade upward on the ground in his vicinity. He will be drawn to it and will eventually sit on it. Holding the ax in a horizontal position with the blade upward is a potent magical gesture used against many demons, as well as natural disasters (note that a *hradivnyk* does this to divert a hailcloud; see note 27). In his notes for *Shadows*, Kotsiubynsky has the *chuhaistyr* bring a dead *niavka* to Ivan's bonfire, break off a leg, roast it, and proceed to devour it. The author, however, omits this gory detail in the work, presumably because the *chuhaistyr*, thus sated, would not have so eagerly pursued the *niavka* that appeared in Marichka's form.

[9]Very little has been written about "the sound of the ax," although Kotsiubynsky refers to this belief twice in his novel. An old Hutsul related to Onyshchuk that in his youth, when he had been a shepherd, he had heard someone felling trees and groaning and breathing heavily. Although the noises were quite near, nothing was visible. The mysterious hewer was felling trees all night and floating them down a stream, but in the morning, when the shepherds went to see how many trees the invisible woodsman had felled, they saw to their amazement that the surrounding forest was intact. (The sound of the ax, I suspect, belongs to the myriad of preternatural phenomena collectively called *blud*, which leads men and women astray in the forest.)

[10]The etymology of the Ukrainian term for wood nymph—*niavka* (substituted by the newer version, *mavka*, in other parts of Ukraine)—has to do with the old Ukrainian word *navyi*, which pertains to "dead" or "deceased," thus connecting the *niavka* with the cult of the ancestors. The Hutsuls themselves believe that the word comes from an onomatopoeic imitation of a cat's mewing (*niav-niav*). Hence, they claim that the *niavka* makes a mewing sound as she wanders through the mountains. Broadly speaking, we meet two kinds of *niavka* in the demonology of the Hutsuls. The older belief has the *niavka* develop from the soul of a child who was buried without christening. This creature has very short legs, a disproportionately large head, and the body of a small child; its origin and appearance is similar to that of the central Ukrainian demon called *potercha*. Its most startling feature (absent in the *potercha*) is a large, gaping hole in the back where the upper spine and the shoulder blades should be. The newer

varity of *niavka*, described by Kotsiubynsky, looks like a very attractive young person—male or female, although females predominate—whose only distinguishing characteristic is the obligatory hole in the back and dull, lustreless eyes, singularly devoid of human warmth. This variety of *niavka* is quite similar to the east Galician and central Ukrainian *mavka*.

The *niavka* spends the winter in the wasteland (usually high in the mountains in regions devoid of vegetation, which are called *kycheras* or *nedeii*), sleeping in a deep cave. She wakes up around Whitsunday (*Zeleni sviata*) and leaves her mountain peak, but does not descend into the valleys, keeping to the high forest regions. In bygone times, *niavkas* used to visit human settlements and fraternize with human beings; when women began going to the uplands with their men, however, *niavkas* became offended at such sacrilege and withdrew into the mountains forever. It is also for this reason that they became unfriendly to mankind, either injuring women directly or, more frequently, hurting them by taking away their lovers.

The *niavka* spends most of her time dancing and avoiding the *chuhaistyr*. She likes to dance in a circle with her female friends or, more rarely, to spin furiously with her male counterpart while they face each other, stretch out their arms, and firmly hold hands. The *niavkas* dance so rapidly that they become invisible, creating the effect of a strong wind. The spot on which *niavkas* like to dance is called *ihrovyshche* or *ihravytsia* (the latter word is mentioned in *Shadows*) and is easily recognizable because grass will not grow there. The dancing of the central Ukrainian *mavka* and the *rusalka*, on the other hand, causes the grass on the *ihrovyshche* to become lusher and more verdant. We note that Kotsiubynsky makes a slight error in this matter when he writes that the grass seems to grow visibly under the feet of the *niavka*. The dances and the accompanying games of the *niavkas* are called collectively *rozyhra*; the Hutsuls imitate the *rozyhra* on Saint John's Eve not so much to honor the *niavkas* as to pacify them.

The need to pacify the *niavkas* is urgent indeed, as they are extremely dangerous to man, especially to young males. A *niavka* leads a young wanderer astray into the mountain wilderness by promises of blissful sexual experiences and by a spell that is very difficult to break. Her main attraction is her irresistibly seductive laughter. After seducing her victim, she usually kills him by either tickling him to death (the same method used by the east Galician and central Ukrainian *rusalka*) or by sucking his blood through his nipple (since she is by nature a vampire). If she decides to spare her victim's life after enjoying sex with him, the young man never rejoins human society. He refuses to wash or pray, fails to speak coherently, and soon dies of exhaustion. Upon his death, his soul is claimed by the *aridnyk*. The best protection against the *niavka* is a clove of garlic (by far the most powerful magical talisman in the Hutsulian cult) worn about the body. If the young wanderer has neglected to protect himself thus and falls under the hypnotic spell of a *niavka*, he should collect himself enough to take off all his clothes as quickly as possible and put them on again inside out. Any gesture that is opposite to its normal counterpart has tremendous magical powers throughout the world (witness the position of the ax with the blade *up*, mentioned in note 8).

The *bohynia, bisytsia* (see note 2), *lisna* (see note 22), *rusalka* (see note 11), *mamuna* and *nichnytsia* are some of the many female (or predominantly female) demons who share attributes and functions with the *niavka*. They are all, basically, the *aridnyk*'s servants. Kotsiubynsky's *niavka* has a number of features borrowed from these related types. It is the *rusalka*, rather than the *niavka*, who is born (like Marichka-*niavka*) from the soul of a drowned young woman.

Marichka, tempting her lover after her death, acts more like a *nichnytsia* than a *niavka*; a *niavka* will tempt anyone, but a *nichnytsia* appears to her lover (whom she blames wholly or in part for her death as a human) and exhausts him to death with imaginary lovemaking.

[11]The water nymph, or *rusalka*, does not play an important role in the folklore of the Hutsuls. References to her are much more frequent in the mythology of eastern and northern Galicia and in the central territories of Ukraine. Her name is connected with *rusalii*, the ancient Ukrainian rites of spring that were celebrated in the beginning of May (these rites probably anteceded the more contemporary rites of Saint Iurii [see note 30]).

On May 10 (about the time that the *niavkas* wake up in their caves), the *rusalkas* leave the riverbeds, where they spent the winter months in nests, and begin their mischievous activities; they are tricksters *par excellence*. They comb the water out of their hair with magic combs made of human bone in order to flood a field or a village. They also confound fishermen's nets, float millstones and navigate them, swing from swings that they have built in birch trees, and dance their wild, orgiastic dances. Their wild laughter, more boisterous and arrogant than the seductive laughter of the *niavkas*, resounds all over the countryside. Like the *niavkas*, the *rusalkas* can be extremely dangerous to young men and girls. They kill young men by tickling or dancing them to death. When a *rusalka* meets a young girl, she poses a riddle for her. Depending on the girl's answer to the riddle, the *rusalka* either lets her go or forces her into the water and turns her into an "adopted" *rusalka*, known as *rusalka-semylitka* (a seven-year old *rusalka*).

The Hutsuls believe that the original "genetic" shape of the *rusalka* is that of a small child. Upon seeing a potential victim, she quickly turns into a beautiful woman, naked, but almost completely covered with her long hair which she wears loose about her body. A *rusalka* does not have a hole in her back; the only subtle difference between her and a human being is her slightly protruding green eyes, which lack the inner light of the soul. Her maidenly appearance, however, is only one of her many disguises; she can change into a squirrel, a frog, a rat, or any other small animal as the situation demands.

As in the case of any trickster deity, there is a serious, even a grave, side to the *rusalka*. She is uncommonly wise, having access to mysteries that no human inquiry can penetrate. She tells profound legends about life and death, and sings strange songs. In Ukrainian folklore, there is a body of haunting songs (*rusalski pisni*) that are attributed to the *rusalkas*, but probably stem from the pagan celebrations of the *rusalii*. Many of the difficult riddles that the *rusalka* poses are included in the songs of the *rusalii*. The metaphysical implications of these riddles are embodied in magnificent, almost surrealistic imagery. Her ability to pose such mysterious riddles is a part of her profile as a guardian and custodian of the springs of the water of life, making her similar in this respect to the riddle-spouting sphinx and the poetically inclined guardians of the Castalian springs in orphic myths.

[12]Whether suicidal or accidental, the victims of drowning (*potopelnyks, topilnyks*) come out when the moon is full, lie on rocks quite near the place where they drowned, and attempt to dry themselves in the moonlight. They have to do this until a new victim drowns in the same place. Needless to say, they are quite

dangerous, since they do not hesitate to encourage and promote the cause of their liberation. The Hutsuls place crosses along the shore where those spirits tend to congregate to warn boatsmen and ferriers. They also place bowls of milk in such places for the souls of the drowned. The *topilnyks* usually have chalk-white bodies but are sometimes covered with fish scales, or else they appear to their victims as tiny men with very long hair and beards.

[13]The *floiara* is a wind instrument, a kind of shepherd's flute, approximately two feet long, which is formed by a cylindrical tube of hazel or similar soft-core wood. The inner layers of wood are taken out by a special drill made of harder wood. The mouthpiece is carved at one end, and the opposite end is cut flat. In the upper part of the tube, at set intervals, six or seven stops are cut or burned out. The surface of the instrument is sumptuously decorated with carved or burned designs.

The *dentsivka* is a variation of the *floiara*, with an added vibrating element at the bottom of the mouthpiece, with the help of which the player is able to create a polyphonic effect. Most commentators regard the *sopilka* (a word which appears in standard Ukrainian) as a generic term, subsuming the *floiara*, the *dentsivka*, and several other "species" of that instrument. Other experts define the *sopilka* as a simple reed, shorter and narrower than the others, with a basic mouthpiece and six holes for stops. Still others, like Kotsiubynsky in *Shadows*, use the words *dentsivka* and *sopilka* synonymously.

[14]The *trembita* is a wooden tube six to nine feet in length. The mouthpiece end is about one inch in diameter, and the opposite end, the bell, is approximately two to three times wider. The instrument is made of a young, perfectly shaped spruce or fir tree; a tree that has been lightly grazed by lightning will imbue the instrument with a touch of magic. The trunk is whittled to the necessary shape and diameter, rubbed smooth, and neatly cut through in the middle to form two equal parts. The inner layers of the wood are taken out with a special drill or a knife with an extraordinarily long blade. After the wood has been hollowed out, the two pieces are glued together to form the original length of the column. The pipe is then tightly wrapped in soft, pliable bark. The complicated wooden mouthpiece is made separately and fitted into the narrower end of the pipe.

The player (*trembitannyk* or *trembitar*) always makes his *trembita* himself and would not touch anyone else's instrument for fear of having bad luck the rest of his life. When playing the *trembita*, the *trembitannyk* tilts his head upward, holding the *trembita* aloft to form an acute angle with the ground. He modulates the tones by the position of his lips and the pressure of the air. Since there are no stops in the *trembita*, the range of the instrument is limited. Its harsh, loud sounds, rather haunting in their animal-like despair, are mostly ritualistic signals. In the village, the *trembita* is played most frequently to announce a death and during the funeral procession itself (see note 33). In the uplands, it is played by the chief shepherd to make ritualistic announcements to his far-flung shepherds (see note 19).

[15]The parish fair, or *khram* (which means either "cathedral" or "parish-church holiday" in standard Ukrainian), is usually celebrated on the name day of the patron saint of the church. On that day, the Hutsuls, with great pomp

and circumstance, travel to their parish church (several villages belong to the same parish), taking with them great quantities of food and liquor. After the Requiem Mass in the church, families go behind the church to share a meal at the graves of deceased family members. Then the clans begin visiting each other at the graves, sharing the food with friends, neighbors, and guests from other parishes, and raising a glass in honor of the dead. A parish fair can last several days, with the celebrants camping near the cemetery.

[16]The playful conversation between Ivan and Marichka, consisting of sounds which onomatopoeically imitate the croaking of frogs, is taken verbatim from Onyshchuk, where it appears as part of a legend. In this legend, a noble lady betrayed her husband with a gentleman friend, enlisting the aid of a girl friend in the clandestine affair, while at the same time quarreling with her husband, making his life miserable. God punished her and her two friends for the double injustice done to her husband by turning the trio into frogs, who must now live in the water and conduct eternal nonsensical conversations, imitating the lady's shrewishness. The lines used by Kotsiubynsky constitute a short fragment of a rather lengthy conversation between the three sinners, which is a witty imitation of the croaking of frogs.

[17]Pagan Slavs were sunworshippers, and numerous sky and sun gods—Div, Svarog, Dazhbog, Veles, Khors—were widely known in ancient Ukraine. The sky god Svarog was imagined as a face, which was the sky, with the right cheek being the sun and the left the moon. At sunrise, the Hutsuls say the following prayer: "Glory be to God for His divine face which has now revealed itself; glory be to that luminous face."

[18]*Kolomyika* is a brief self-enclosed song (its name is the diminutive form of the Hutsul town Kolomyia). The notation of its lyrics is usually arranged in a simple quatrain of trochaic tetrameter, followed by trochaic trimeter, with feminine endings and the rhyme scheme of ABCB (with an occasional variation of AABA). Sometimes notations of texts appear in couplet form. The *kolomyika* is sung to a variety of melodies, all with the same basic structure. The quatrains occasionally form cycles, sung alternately by men and women in the form of a dialogue or playful *agon*. Most often, however, they appear as independent miniature songs.

Within the simple framework of the *kolomyika*, the Hutsuls have created thousands upon thousands of songs, which are usually improvised for the given occasion. They reflect a wide range of moods, from delicately lyrical to grossly ribald (the latter kind usually sung at weddings), from hilarious to melancholy, from almost surrealistic in their wild inventiveness to mundanely topical. Although love and wit are basic to most *kolomyikas*, they also treat themes of injustice, fate, death, the spiritual world, and faith in God. As Kotsiubynsky illustrates, many *kolomyikas* are based on daily occurrences in the village, sometimes even using the actual first names of the persons involved; occasionally, they become vehicles of censure and hence of social control. Kotsiubynsky quotes the *kolomyikas* as independent textual units and runs several of them directly into the narrative of *Shadows*. He also employs a number of images that are usually found in *kolomyikas*.

[19]The upland pasture (*polonyna*) is a plain or a system of plains high in the Carpathian Mountains used as pastureland throughout the summer. From early autumn until approximately the end of April, no Hutsul would dare approach the *polonynas*, since during the winter months they are the domain of *máras* (etymologically connected with Marena, the Slavic goddess of winter and death). *Maras*, in the specifically Hutsulian definition, are those who died a violent death in the mountains. Although the upland pasture, more so than the valleys, is constantly ruled by the *aridnyk*, it is especially in the winter—when, according to some legends, he is banished there by God—that he takes it over completely, employing the services of the *máras* to eradicate all human traces from his kingdom.

The center of the organization of the upland pasture is the *stoishche*—a permanent complex of wooden structures enclosed by a fence—where the men and the livestock spend the night. The most important building is a small wooden hut (*staia*) without windows and floor. It consists of two rooms: one where the manufactured cheese and various staples and supplies are stored, and a larger bonfire room (*vatarnyk*), where the "eternal" *vatra* ("bonfire") burns all summer. In the *vatarnyk* sleep the *vatah*, or chief shepherd, and the *spuzar* (from the Western Ukrainian word *spuza*, derived from the Moldavian *spuze* or "hot ashes"), whose main job is to stoke the fire and never let it go out, but who also helps the chief shepherd in his chores. The night watchman, or *nichnyk*, is allowed to get warm near the "eternal fire" during the chilly nights in the mountains; he sleeps in the *vatarnyk* in the daytime. Besides overseeing the large number of the herdsmen and their intricate (often ritualistic) chores, the main task of the chief shepherd is to make cheese from the milk obtained daily from sheep and goats. Hence the bonfire room contains a number of large kegs and other utensils.

Around the *staia*, but at some distance from it, are the *koshàras*—sheepfolds, corrals, and other pens and enclosures where the livestock spend the night. Needless to say, the largest enclosures are the sheepfolds, for the sheep far outnumber the goats in the uplands; cows and horses are rare since farmers prefer to keep them in the village and use them throughout the summer. The sheepfold is divided by a wall-like structure, covered by a long and narrow roof, where the sheep are milked each morning according to a complicated but highly efficient plan of operation. Other kinds of livestock are milked in less structured ways. At the head of each enclosure stands a small shack with a leaning roof, covered with bark and resting on four poles, the front pair higher than the rear pair. The shack has no walls since the herder, who does not sleep in the hut but spends the night with the herds, must have a clear view of the livestock. Inside the shack, the herder builds his bed, a wooden platform on low posts. In front of the shack, a small fire must burn all night. Nearby is a salting area, where livestock are fed salt with much ceremony and ritual.

Each pasture is owned by a *deputat* (this political title of "state representative" is given to wealthy farmers as a token of respect). Early in the spring, the *deputat* hires his chief shepherd (*vatah*); although a *deputat* may want to keep his shepherd indefinitely, the ceremony of hiring must be repeated each year. The chief shepherd, a man of authority in the village, lives on his farm in the winter and behaves like any other villager. It is taken for granted by everyone, however, that he is hardly an ordinary man; he knows the ways of the spirits and is privy to mysteries of which the average villager has no idea. The chief shepherd, in short, is a secret sorcerer. After being formally hired,

the chief shepherd proceeds to select his crew, which he also must rehire every year. Each of the herdsmen is not only a "professional" but a "specialist." (It is doubtful that in real life Ivan would have been hired by merely wandering into the uplands, as he is in *Shadows*.) Not only is each kind of livestock herded by a special herdsman with his own title and a set of appropriate skills (I have found twelve such job descriptions, each with its appropriate title), but there is a separate group of "experts" who herd the lambs and take care of new births among the sheep population. In addition, a fire keeper (*spuzar*), a night watchman (*nichnyk*), and a drover (*honinnyk*) are hired; the drover keeps order among the sheep during the milking. The chief shepherd runs all the activities in the pasture with paramilitary discipline, commanding implicit obedience not only because of his superior technical skills but also because of his less comprehensible, but, nevertheless, quite evident powers.

The ritualistic expedition to the uplands takes place in the second part of May. The chief shepherd and two older herdsmen set out for the mountains two days ahead of the livestock. Entering the hut for the first time, the shepherd prays at length, mixing the words of liturgical incantations with pagan magical spells. After the prayer, the chief shepherd throws a horseshow into the center of the bonfire room where the "eternal bonfire" is to burn, an act that is to protect the pastures from lightning and hail. (Since the horseshoe should never be touched, one of the fire keeper's difficult skills is to stoke and stir the fire without disturbing the horseshoe underneath it.) The chief shepherd then proceeds to "create" the fire of life (*zhyvyi ohen*). He finds a dry, thick and straight stick (*skalka*), partially splits its two ends, and inserts a dried, spongelike mushroom into each split. He then holds the stick in a horizontal position at waist level, presses its one end against a door jamb of the hut and the other against a thick board which one of the herdsmen holds in a vertical position, firmly anchoring its lower end against his foot. (The method which Kotsiubynsky describes in *Shadows*—and the one he must have witnessed himself—is cumbersome since the stick must be carefully measured to fit very snugly between the two jambs of the doorframe.) The chief shepherd loops a thick leather belt around the stick twice, and he and the other herdsman rapidly pull the ends of the belt back and forth so that the stick spins between the door jamb and the board. The friction causes the dry mushroom to ignite at both ends, and in time the wood itself begins to smolder. The smoke coming out of the doorway of the hut announces to the world that the fire of life has been ignited and that the uplands are ready to welcome the livestock. When the wood at both ends of the stick begins to burn, the three men hold it aloft, turn eastward, and kneel to say another prayer to God and the *aridnyk* at the same time.

The chief shepherd breaks off a glowing ember from the burning stick, extinguishes it in a bucket of water (a common magical procedure, frequently used to cure the evil eye; see note 26), and sprinkles the ground with this "holy water." The burning stick, used as the foundation of the "eternal bonfire," is placed next to the horseshoe by the chief shepherd, who builds a prescribed structure of kindling around it. Any other means of igniting the bonfire would cause the livestock to perish in the course of the summer. If, God forbid, the chief shepherd were to use a match, he himself would die the following winter. The "eternal bonfire" burns continually throughout the summer, and under no circumstances is it allowed to go out.

In the meantime, the rest of the crew and numerous visitors (owners of herds, other villagers, womenfolk, and especially young people and children) and the livestock set out on the long trek toward the uplands, which can take several days. They are joined by similar groups from other villages, and music, singing, and jokes accompany the festive procession all the way to its destination. A short time before the livestock and the people arrive (they signal their approach with a *trembita* or horn), the chief shepherd places some embers from the eternal bonfire into a bucket, carries them to the gateway, and builds a small bonfire there, pronouncing a spell (this spell Kotsiubynsky quotes from Shukhevych, with some omissions and displacements [see note 21]). As the livestock enter the *stoishche*, they walk over the bonfire, which purifies them and brings them health and good pasture throughout the summer. This ritual is so important that if it happens to rain on the day of arrival, the people and the livestock camp outside the confines of the *stoishche* and wait for the rain to stop so that the chief shepherd can build his bonfire in the gateway.

Before setting out for the uplands, the farmer counts his sheep by standing naked in the doorway of the stable, each foot resting against the bottom of the jamb, and letting the sheep pass between his legs. This, presumably, is meant to make them as potent as he is. He then marks his sheep and other livestock; sheep and goats are marked with notches in the skin of the ear, or with dyed wool looped through the pierced ear, while cows and calves are branded. To avoid offending the farmers, the chief shepherd allows each farmer to report the number of livestock he has brought to the uplands. He then marks that number on a small flat wooden board with a hole bored at one end of it by an intricate set of notches and cuts across the width of the board; these marks comprise an efficient system of numerals, completely unlike the Roman and Arabic systems. The chief shepherd then splits the board lengthwise into two uneven parts, leaving the hole intact in the larger part. The narrower piece, called *ravas*, goes to the farmer, while the wider, called *koloda*, stays with the chief shepherd. The chief shepherd strings all the *kolodas* of a given season on a narrow leather thong and carries them on his body at all times. He does this not because he distrusts human beings (as we have seen, he trusts them on principle) but because he is afraid that prankster demons will "recalculate" his calculations.

In a complex and original series of measurements and computations, the chief shepherd, the *deputat*, and the owners of the livestock figure out how many heads of cheese (which the shepherds will manufacture throughout the summer) will be due each farmer at the end of the season. All the remaining heads of cheese, plus all the lambs and other livestock born in the uplands, will go to the *deputat* as payment for the use of his pastureland. The *deputat* will then pay the chief shepherd and the herdsmen in kind (cheese, lambs, plus the use of the pastureland for their own stock throughout the season). If a sheep dies in the uplands, the owner does not demand retribution but expects to receive only the number of heads of cheese initially agreed upon. Owners of cattle pay in cash for the use of the meadows, and cowherds are given their salaries in cash at the end of the season.

While the chief shepherd, the *deputat*, and the owners are engaged in their business meeting, the herdsmen fix their individual shacks, prepare their beds, and mend the fences around the enclosures. At suppertime, the chief shepherd sounds his *trembita* (every chief shepherd is also a *trembitannyk*; see note 14) to invite his herdsmen to the *staia*. They eat gruel made of cornflour which has

been cooked in a kettle hanging from a complex lift-and-arm that rises alongside the bonfire and extends over it. After supper, they have their first procedural conference (more ritualistic than businesslike, since everyone has been instructed by tradition and his own experience in the ways of life and work in the uplands), at which no outsiders may be present. The chief shepherd pronounces a series of formulaic instructions, which the herdsmen have heard year in year out, and blesses them. They then pass around the ritual bottle of whiskey, wish each other luck, and the herdsmen disperse to their shacks, each taking with him a torch from the "eternal fire" to ignite his own small bonfire outside his shack.

Early the next morning, a normal day in the pasture begins. The chief shepherd goes to the milking wall and hits a beam three times with his ax, pronouncing an incantation to the effect that the sheep should be as strong, hardy and "keen" as the blade of his ax. He wakes the herdsmen with a blast from his *trembita*, and they bring their flocks to the milking wall to be milked. They sit on small stationary stools constructed along the wall, while the drover musters the sheep into an orderly line with a magical twig with bark on it (bark helps the sheep to yield more milk); he allows the sheep to enter, one by one, into the narrow space between the shepherds' knees and the wall, and each shepherd grasps one sheep firmly between his knees and milks it. During the day, when the livestock and the herdsmen are out seeking pasture, the chief shepherd makes the "first cheese" from the "first milk." At supper, the shepherds eat some heads of the first cheese, with appropriate incantations and ritualistic gestures. This is one of the two times during the entire summer when they are allowed to consume their own product. The chief shepherd (who is also the cook) will prepare their food from the staples brought along from the village, cheese by-products, and the meat of animals killed in accidents. The last is discouraged and even forbidden in some regions of the mountains, as eating the meat of animals that one herds is considered to be an unclean practice, almost as evil as cannibalism. As for fishing and hunting, there is no time for that.

At the end of the summer, there is a "parting" celebration (*rozluchennia*). The villagers come for their livestock and cheese, accompanied by music and song, and final transactions take place. The chief shepherd and two older and respected shepherds, who "created" the fire of life, must stay behind in the uplands until the "eternal bonfire" dies of itself. It should never be left burning without human supervision since a *mara* (which takes over the pasture the moment human beings leave it) will use the fire to burn the wooden structures. If, on the other hand, the chief shepherd extinguishes the "eternal bonfire," he may expect to die in the course of the following winter.

[20]The bear, whom the Hutsuls call "uncle" (*vuiko*) or "the big one," poses not only physical but also preternatural dangers for the shepherds. Several Hutsul legends about the origin of the bear have it that a miller, wanting to frighten God, turned his sheepskin coat inside out (turning clothing inside out is an extremely powerful magical act; see notes 10 and 27), hid under a bridge, and as God approached, jumped from his hiding place growling and walking on all fours. God hit him with a broom (a magically potent object; see note 26) and said, "Get away from me, you bear." At that moment, the miller indeed turned into a bear. It is believed that the bear builds himself a house with

windows and a roof, for the winter, and that he nourishes himself by sucking his front paw.

[21]Kotsiubynsky paraphrases two ritualistic texts that he found in Shukhevych (one thoroughly pagan and the other perceptibly Christian), combining them into a single prayer. The first part is a paraphrase of the words pronounced by the chief shepherd during the building of the bonfire, while the remainder of the text is a paraphrase of the set prayer that an older herdsman pronounces at the herdsmen's first supper in the upland.

[22]The *lisna* or *lisnytsia* (meaning "she of the forest") belongs to the "she-devil" group of demons. Like the older kind of *niavka* (see note 10), the *lisna* develops from an illegitimate baby who has been killed in the forest by its unwed mother. For seven years, the soul of the baby wanders about the forest, begging to be christened. If no one hears its cry and blesses it by the end of the seven years, it turns into a *lisna*. The *lisna* is obviously a sort of *niavka*, very attractive, and with a gaping hole in her back. She and her companions dance in open circles, unlike those of the *niavkas* and the *rusalkas*. Since the permanent occupation of the *lisna* is sowing grass upon meadows and in forest clearings, it is small wonder that she is often seen in the uplands. Her hobby is playing havoc with the emotions of young men in love. She appears in her victim's dreams for nine nights; if he does not relate his dreams to anyone, she proceeds to treat him as an accomplice, and comes to him in order to seduce him, earnestly persisting in her efforts night after night. Frequently, like the *nichnytsia* (see note 10), she assumes the form of his beloved woman who is temporarily or permanently absent.

The *lisna*, being an exceptionally tenacious young lady, is not easily discouraged; even a clove of garlic will not drive her away. The victim must steal the sash that the priest wears during mass and bind the *lisna* with it, holding her by force until the rooster crows, at which time she should vanish. The difficulty here is that while her captor holds her, she makes herself so seductive that the young man must mobilize all his spiritual resources, constantly keeping his hand, or at least a part of it, on the priest's sash, in order to resist her. During the next nine nights, moreover, he must avoid the bed in which he first encountered the *lisna*. The *lisna*, in her turn, may be seriously offended by such rejection of her affections, playing nasty tricks on the young man and confounding his work and his love life for a long time. If she should succeed in seducing him, the dire results of mating with a demon (see note 10) follow in short order—listlessness, drowsiness, general debilitation, alienation from society, depersonalization, and eventual death from exhaustion.

The *lisna* harbors a particular fondness for young shepherds since she spends most of her time in their vicinity, sowing grass in the pastures. She sweetly and seductively calls a lonely herdsman by name. If he makes the mistake of answering her, she will refuse to leave him alone, especially since a priest's sash does not readily come to hand in such circumstances. After the herdsman succumbs to her irresistible lure, he will soon suffer the usual weakness and listlessness of body and spirit. His sheep, on the other hand, will flourish as never before since now the *lisna* herself will help the feeble shepherd to herd them; they will find the best pasture, never scatter, and will yield the thickest and the creamiest milk in the entire pastureland.

The siren-like calls of the *lisna* are so alluring that when a herdsman first hears them, he is well advised to run to the next shack as quickly as he can, awaken the shepherd in it, and tell him of his trouble. His companion will immediately understand and sympathize. In order not to hear the call of the *lisna*, they will sit together, sing, tell each other stories, or even dance. If there are no companions in the vicinity, the lonely shepherd should clap his hands and talk, sing, or whistle to himself to drown out the irresistible voice.

[23]Ivan is visited by a *lisovyk* (described in note 7). It is unclear why Kotsiubynsky provides that demon with features of a *chuhaistyr* of the first variety—tall as a fir tree and dressed in white (see note 8).

[24]Saint Elias (*Iliia, Alei Bozhyi, Ylei*) is the Christian "sublimation" of Perun, the powerful pagan god of thunder and storms. In the Hutsul myths of the Genesis, he becomes a mystical power of God, some emanation and externalization of God's Spirit (perhaps like the Holy Ghost), who exists in the sky as God walks the earth. *Alei* has such incredible strength that God Himself is somewhat wary of his mysterious presence. (When we keep in mind that Elias is Perun, his relationship with God becomes a significant contribution to our comprehension of the pagan-Christian religion of the Hutsuls.)

When God and the *aridnyk* were at war, and a host of angels faced a formidable division of assorted devils on the hide of a gigantic bull (obviously a residue of the pagan bull god, identified with the sky god), Elias, in his great enthusiasm, hurled such powerful lightning bolts from the sky that he destroyed not only the forces of the adversary but most of the soldiers serving under his own supreme commander. God Himself was so overpowered by his air support that he fell on his right knee (homage before Perun?). At that point, God quite prudently decided to control His overanxious and overpowering aide by chaining Elias' right leg to a rock. Although Elias has lost half his strength, he still chases the *aridnyk* and his helpers up and down mountain slopes with lightning bolts (Elias' favorite sport). At the end of the world, when both the *aridnyk* and Elias will obtain their freedom, a decisive battle between them is scheduled to take place, which will be so fierce that it will destroy the earth and everything on it.

The passage in Kotsiubynsky to which this note refers is almost a word-for-word quotation from a story recorded by Shukhevych: "And Elias blasts the devil wherever he can find him, be it in a rock, under a rock, or under a tree." The image of the devil hiding under a tree suggests a primary structure in pagan East Slavic mythology, superbly presented and analyzed by Ivanov and Toporov. The god of storms (later specified as Perun) is always above the tripartite tree of the world, while the dragon that he hunts is always hiding in its roots. The dragon (equivalent to the Hutsuls' *zhertva*) steals livestock and hides them in a rock; the god of storms splinters the rock and releases the animals. Ivanov and Toporov point out that Perun's own abode is a tall white rock and that his very name may originate from the Hittite word *peruna*, meaning "rock." Ivanov and Toporov believe that later the dragon became the god Veles, the patron of cattle and Perun's antagonist.

[25]An old farmer told Hnatiuk, "We worship fire like a god. Fire is our precious guest." Fire, however, can be very vengeful, and when men do not

respect it, it becomes furious and destructive. Obviously, fire worship began when human consciousness itself began, and it figures prominently in all ancient mythologies.

[26]Khyma is a Hutsul witch (*vidma*). At night, the soul of a witch departs from her during sleep and flies out of the house through an open window or through the hearth and the chimney. The witch's soul appears as a large, translucent sphere or an inflated bladder, illuminated from the inside. It half-flies and half-rolls across forests, gardens, and fields until it arrives at a stable or a cow shed. The soul of the witch then sucks milk from a cow, fills itself with it like a sac, and rolls back home. There it pours out the milk into a container and returns to the witch's body. The milk that has been transported in the witch's soul is called *manna*. If the witch's soul bursts or is caught in transit, her body dies. A woman can capture the soul of a witch with the edge of her long skirt, and a man by removing his trousers and letting the fiery ball fly into them, where it will be stopped at the seat. The witch's soul can be preserved indefinitely in an earthen bowl used to mash poppy seed (a *makitra*). If the body of the witch is moved, let alone removed while her soul is abroad, she will never come to life again but her soul will wander over the earth eternally, searching for the misplaced body. A witch who specializes in stealing milk is also called a *cheredilnytsia* or *cheredinnytsia*.

Although this is the essential shape that the witch's soul takes, the witch herself, as Kotsiubynsky tells us, has the uncanny ability to change herself into numerous animals or even objects—a white dog (note that a Spanish curse evokes the devil by naming the *perro blanco*), a frog, an owl, or a bolt of linen which slowly unrolls itself in the moonlight and leads lonely wanderers into crevices and abysses. A large grey toad is almost certain to be a witch (see note 16); if you throw it into the fire, it will scream with the voice of a woman.

Like their sisters in other lands, Hutsul witches travel by saddling a broomstick or a long poker used to rake the hearth (*kotsiuba*). They use this means of locomotion when traveling to a witches' sabbath held high on Hoverlia Peak on the eve of Saint Iurii (Bald Mountain, near Kiev serves as the meeting place for Central Ukrainian witches). Hutsul witches use a special cream that facilitates flying when rubbed over the body; if it is rubbed over an object, the object also flies.

We are told that Khyma is a "born"; or "native" witch. There are "native" (*rodymi*) and "adopted" (*khovani*) witches, the latter acquiring their powers with the help of the *aridnyk* himself. "Native" witches sport a tiny, hard tail, but "adopted" witches have no distinguishing marks on their bodies. Surprisingly enough, "adopted" witches are much more dangerous than "native" witches; the former always present a threat to human beings, exercising complex magical practices against their enemies, while the latter are interested predominantly in acquisitions, especially milk and livestock. "Native" witches are inordinately fond of milk; if a "native" witch has no access to a cow, she affixes four short wooden pegs to the bottom of a stool or a bench and proceeds to milk the piece of furniture. "Adopted" witches have no such powers.

As in other primitive societies, the evil eye is one of the most atavistic fears among the Hutsuls. A person is born with the power of the evil eye; many do not want it and consider it a curse rather than a gift. Although the owner of the evil eye is not necessarily a witch, all "native" witches wield that power. A person with the evil eye should look at his or her fingernails, which draw

power into themselves, before encountering the gaze of another for the first time. When meeting a person with the evil eye, one should whisper the following "wasteland" incantation: "In your eye are owls, snakes, rocks, not I." We recall from the novel that when Iura looks at Ivan with his hypnotic eyes, Ivan pronounces a similar spell: "Salt in your eye!" A victim of the evil eye becomes gravely ill and must be cured by a medicine man (*prymivnyk*). The medicine man extinguishes live embers in water, gives some of the water to the patient to drink (touched by sacred fire, the water becomes the water of life), and sprinkles the rest over the patient's body with the back of his left hand in a gesture of "magical reversal." He does so while pronouncing a series of complex, almost surrealistic, incantations in which he sends the effects of the evil eye into the swamps, mountains, and dead forests of the wasteland.

The most potent evil eye is that of a "native" witch. If the witch praises anyone or anything (as when Khyma compliments Ivan on his sheep), that person or animal will soon wilt and die. Even an object acclaimed by a witch is certain to be destroyed soon afterward. If the witch does not want to harm anyone or anything by her evil eye, she should whisper to herself the following formula: "I am cutting, I am cutting, but I do not cut through" (*Tnu, tnu, ne utnu*). (Ivan probably refers to the evil eye when he says that the witches are "cutting" the cattle.)

Perhaps the most uncanny—indeed, cosmic—talent of the witch is to drink the sun and the moon. The drinking of the sun is much rarer and incomparably more difficult than the drinking of the moon. Witches and vampires fly as close to the sun as they can and drink most of its light, causing what we know as an eclipse. When Onyshchuk asked one of the old peasants why God permits such blasphemy (since the sun, as we recall, is holy), his informant answered that it is only out of God's kindness, that the witches beg God so earnestly and persistently that finally He breaks down and allows them to drink a little of the sun. After all, the face of the sun will soon return to its former glory, while the poor witches are doomed to eternal perdition. Since the witches are active at night, they prefer to drink the light of the moon so that total darkness will hide their evil deeds. Both the witches and the vampires eat and drink the moon until only a stain of blood remains in the night sky. Although the moon takes much longer to heal than the sun, it eventually renews itself in the form of the Nova; seeing it, the Hutsuls cross themselves and thank God for not having allowed the witches and vampires to completely destroy the moon.

[27]Iura possesses the two highest powers that the *aridnyk* can bestow on a mortal—that of a *hradivnyk* and that of a *molfar*. A *hradivnyk* (also called *khmarnyk* or *burivnyk*) is a Hutsul weatherman who has an advantage over a meteorologist in that he not only predicts bad weather but does something about it. As in the case of the witch and the *rusalka*, the *hradivnyk* ("hail diverter") may be either "native" or "adopted." The "native" *hradivnyk* is obviously born with his gift and does not have to earn it; all he does when hail clouds approach his village is climb a hill, speak to the clouds, threaten them, and show them the way to go around the fertile fields.

It is not so easy for the "adopted" *hradivnyk*, who may study and practice his difficult skills in several ways. During the traditional Christmas Eve supper, he collects spoonfuls of nine of the twelve courses in a bowl (the devil's

number, as opposed to that of Christ's apostles), places a broom and a hearth poker crosswise on the bowl, and carries the whole "structure" around his house whispering apropriate incantations. Returning to the house, he ties the contents of the bowl into a kerchief and hides the bundle in a secret place, where it stays until Easter. Before Easter, he travels to several towns in the vicinity of his village to buy incense in nine separate stores (before stores existed, the *hradivnyk* probably collected juniper berries from nine trees for that purpose). After retrieving the bundle from its hiding place, he mixes the incense with the Christmas food, or what is left of it, and at Easter hides the mixture in the basket of food that is traditionally taken to church to be blessed. Then he puts it back into its hiding place until the first hail storm arrives.

Besides the "holy supper" (as the *hradivnyk* calls the mixture), he also prepares a magic wand (in the way that is common to all Hutsul magicians) by cutting a straight branch from a tree and trimming it (leaving the bark intact), and then using it to separate a frog from a snake that is about to devour it. Separating two intertwined snakes may do in an emergency, but this produces a definitely inferior magic wand. When the *hradivnyk* feels the approach of a hail storm (and he can sense this much sooner than an ordinary person), he places his magic wand across the "holy supper," either strips naked or puts on his clothes inside out, climbs a hill, burns some straw, stands upon the soot, holds an ax with the blade up in his right hand and the "holy supper" with the magic wand across it in his left, and begins his difficult conversation with the hail cloud. He pronounces a set of complex, poetic incantations, telling the hail cloud to head for the wasteland. Iura's spell in the text of *Shadows* is a drastically abbreviated and simplified version of such a magic speech.

A much more sinister way of becoming a *hradivnyk* is to begin building a table from seventy-seven kinds of wood on Christmas morning, when doing any kind of work is considered a grave sin, and everyone is in church. The candidate works on his table slowly and carefully throughout the year, but especially on Sundays and holidays when the handling of tools is forbidden. He must finish it precisely on Christmas Eve of the following year, at which time he carries it into the main room of his house and sets it for the traditional Christmas Eve supper. He crosses a broom and a hearth poker and walks around his house three times, inviting the *aridnyk* to share his Christmas Eve supper with him. The *hradivnyk*'s powerful spells compel the *aridnyk* to show up in human form and to eat with him. After their "unholy" supper, the two strike a Faustian bargain; the *aridnyk* will obey all the orders of the *hradivnyk* pertaining to the unloading of hail in exchange for the latter's immortal soul. This pact guarantees the *hradivnyk* the power to divert hail clouds as easily as a "native" colleague.

An inferior *hradivnyk* uses a stick taken by force from a blind man and a *kalach* (a bread with a hole in the middle) that has been blessed in church at Easter. He observes the cloud through the hole in the bread, while pronouncing a simplified spell. Informants agree, however, that a village should stay away from such amateurs if it can afford to hire a professional to do the job. If it so happens that two powerful *hradivnyks* from separate villages are working their magic simultaneously on the same hail cloud, it will become confused and beg to be released. The words that the cloud speaks to Iura in *Shadows* are quoted almost word for word from a story in Shukhevych about a cloud

begging two *hradivnyks* to set it free by making up their minds where it should go to release its hail.

The *hradivnyk* is an extraordinarily powerful magician since hail, being one of the most destructive elemental forces in an agrarian community, is a direct product of the *aridnyk* and his helpers. We have seen in note 6 that when God imprisoned him under a sheet of ice, the *aridnyk* entertained himself by making hail pellets. Now hail is manufactured by *chornoknyzhnyks* (the *aridnyk*'s helpers) with the assistance of the souls of suicides. The hail factory is located in an eternally frozen lake somewhere under Chornohora. The job of the *chornoknyzhnyks* is to chop the ice of the lake into pellets, while the souls of suicides pack them in huge sacks. Whenever the *aridnyk* leaves the lake, the souls of suicides follow him, carrying the heavy sacks on their backs. The *aridnyk* and the souls fly across the sky in a hail cloud and spill the pellets out of their sacks upon the most fertile fields they can find. It is these souls that speak to Iura out of the hail cloud. (The fact that in some legends the *aridnyk* sits in his iron chair and in others flies around the world in hail clouds should not be disturbing since myth cannot be expected to be confined to logical progression and coordination of events. However, as Lévi-Strauss and others have illustrated, separate narratives seem to be linked into vast deep structures.)

Occasionally a hail cloud, or the *aridnyk* himself, descends upon the earth in the shape of a human being in order to bargain with a particularly powerful *hradivnyk*. Informants testify to having seen a hail cloud as a nobleman, a rich peasant, or as a shepherd with a flock of black sheep. The *burivnyk* ("storm diverter") seems to be a synonym for the *hradivnyk*. In the three stories recorded by Shukhevych that deal specifically with the *burivnyk*, we see that the ease and authority with which he handles storms would put him in the category of the "native" *hradivnyk*. The *khmarnyk* ("cloud diverter"), in charge of rain clouds, is much more limited in his capacities. Some *khmarnyks* merely take off all their clothes and put them on inside out, pronouncing simple incantations; others are equipped with a magic twig that has been blessed by a priest on Whitsunday (when greenery is traditionally blessed in the church). Still others run out to meet a rain cloud equipped with nothing more than a holy icon.

Judging from the preceding remarks, Iura is either a "native" *hradivnyk* (which would make him a sort of demon), or one who has struck a bargain with the *aridnyk*. Our conviction that Iura enjoys a close relationship with the "public profile" of the *aridnyk* is strengthened by our knowledge of his other uncanny skill, namely, that of a *molfar* (or "soothsayer"). The *molfar* is by far the most powerful magician among the Hutsuls. He is a devoted servant of the *aridnyk*, who is the source of his power. Shukhevych's quotation from a Hutsul informant suggests that the *molfars* "play god" (*bohuiut*) and can do literally anything they want.

The *molfar* operates somewhat like a voodoo priest. He makes a doll, or *molfa*, in the shape of the person or animal that he wants to hurt out of the soil in which his prospective victim has left a track. In the case of an animal, the tail is made out of the victim's real hair, and in the case of a person, some of the hair is attached to the head of the doll. After making the doll, the *molfar* proceeds to make his pins by whittling wooden strips into long and very thin spikes. He wraps the pins in a kerchief and buries them in a gateway in front of a stable door, near a threshold, or wherever his intended victim will be sure to step over them. The next day at dawn the *molfar* strips naked and digs out the pins, puts them in the chimney of his hearth for a short time so that they will

be "blessed" by the flame, and then begins to stick them into the areas of the doll that represent the parts of the victim's body he wants to be affected. If he inserts a pin into the heart or head of the doll, the victim dies instantly. While sticking pins into a human doll, the *molfar* pronounces the following spell: "You have caused me enough trouble [*Ty mini dosolyv*]; for this I peck you, I wilt you, I burn you; may you dry up like a scorched tree." If the *molfar* really wants his victim to "dry up"—to languish and die of weakness—he puts the doll in the chimney until the soil of which it is made is bone-dry.

When a *molfar* takes his vengeance upon someone (he usually attacks people of whom he is envious), the victim must hurry to a fortune teller and sorceress (*vorozhka*), who tells fortunes by the stars and cures illnesses with herbs, as soon as the effects of the enchantment are felt. The stars disclose to the fortune teller the identity of the *molfar*, and she makes a doll of the *molfar* himself, prepares the pins, and proceeds to stick them into the doll. Such charms cannot seriously harm the *molfar* because there is no power on earth that can hurt him or cure his victim; all he is expected to feel is a slight discomfort, which merely lets him know that the victim, with the help of the fortune teller, has discovered his identity and his machinations. This may present an inconvenience, however, since he has to work in secret and keep his identity as a *molfar* hidden from the village community. The *molfar* then decides whether to proceed to torment the victim or to desist. We see that in *Shadows*, Iura chooses to ignore the "signals" he has received from Ivan's fortune teller.

[28]Christmas Eve (January 6) is particularly rich in ancient rites. Kotsiubynsky describes them with such attention and accuracy that all that remains to be done here is to put his description into a wider framework.

Early in the morning the head of the family "creates" the fire of life either by rubbing two dry sticks together or by using the chief shepherd's more complex method (see note 19). He then builds a large bonfire in his yard. Only the fire of life may be used to cook the Christmas Eve supper (known as "holy supper" throughout Ukraine). The farmer carries live embers from it into the house and builds the fire in the hearth around them. Throughout the day it is forbidden to eat anything, to quarrel, to hit one's neighbor with an ax, to beat one's wife, to drink alcohol, to smoke, or to chop wood. Clothing, pots and pans, and all other suspended articles inside the house or in the yard are taken off their pegs, nails, or other hangers to prevent birds from "hanging around" in the garden or in a newly sown field. To ensure a good harvest, the farmer covers the table with straw and a handful of every kind of grain he intends to cultivate throughout the year; on each corner of the table he places a clove of garlic so that evil spirits will stay away from his supper. All this is covered with a linen table cloth. He scatters some hay under the table while imitating the sounds of his livestock so that it will stay healthy and fertile.

The farmer takes all pins and needles and other sharp instruments out of the house and plugs all the holes in the wooden benches around the table with hay, thus symbolically plugging up the mouths of gossips and maligners. Knots are tied in a short piece of thick rope to tie the tongues of enemies and landlords. The farmer then sits on the knots so that "the mouths of all my enemies be silent."

When darkness begins to fall, the farmer goes out into the yard and fires his pistol to announce to the world that supper at his house is about to begin.

He then puts some incense into a lamp and walks around the house three times, safeguarding it against lightning. His wife, who has been busy around the hearth all day, puts the food on the table in strict ritualistic order. There are twelve dishes, each of them prepared according to a traditional recipe. (While preparing them, she puts a spoonful of each of them in a pan, thinning the concoction with water, and bakes it into a sort of pancake, which she then hides in a secret place until the holiday of Saint Iurii [see note 30]). The farmer puts a spoonful of each dish into a bucket, mixes the food with a heavy dose of salt, and distributes this "holy supper" among the livestock on his farm. Returning to the house, he places poppy seeds on a flat tray and next to them a glowing ember that is sprinkled with incense. When the poppy seeds have been permeated with the odor of incense, they are strewed around the house and over the yard to protect the homestead against witches. In the meantime, the wife takes out a new bowl bought especially for this occasion and puts a spoonful of each dish into it. The bowl is covered with a *kalach*, and in its hole are placed a tiny clay vessel filled with honey and another filled with water (in some parts of Ukraine, two joined cups are made by potters especially for this ritual). (Bread, honey, and water, magical symbols of life and wealth in ancient Ukraine, are used in many Ukrainian rituals, especially in the fascinating wedding drama.) The rim of the *kalach* is covered with apples and nuts. When the farmer returns from his poppy-sowing ceremony, he takes the bowl in one hand and an ax in the other, steps out into the yard, carefully locking the main door behind him, holds the ax with its blade upward, and proceeds to invite the *hradivnyks, molfars, chornoknyzhnyks,* and witches, together with wolves, bears, foxes, kites, and other beasts and birds of prey, to his "holy supper." He repeats the formulaic text of the "invitation" three times and then casts a powerful negative spell: Just as they refuse to accept his invitation now, may they never trouble him with their presence in the future. Next, he invites storms and illnesses in the same way.

Returning to the house, the farmer locks the door behind him from the inside, "blesses" all present with incense, and puts the lamp with the smoking incense on a flat rock under the table so that the *aridnyk* and his helpers will leave the house. His wife ceremoniously places in his hands a special baked loaf with a burning candle stuck in the middle. He holds the loaf of bread aloft, and all present bow to the ground, inviting to supper first the souls of those who died a tragic and violent death, then the souls of all who died a natural death.

Gathering around the table in a rigorously prescribed order, each person blows out some air twice in rapid succession over each shoulder in order not to sit on a soul that may already be present at the table. The farmer sits down first, at the head of the table, then his wife, children, servants, more distant relatives, and the poor who have been invited. The farmer throws a spoonful of *kutia* (a magical food of cooked grains of wheat mixed with honey and poppy seeds, the food of the dead in ancient times; a variation of this food, called *kolyvo*, is used in funeral ceremonies [see note 33]) at the ceiling three times, once for the calves, once for the lambs, and once for the bees. If the *kutia* sticks to the ceiling, the farmer's calves, lambs, and bees will be healthy and hale throughout the year. His wife puts spoonfuls of some dishes in the corners of window sills for souls who might be present in the room or who will visit later. The meal proceeds in strict order, each dish served in its appointed turn. Restrained drinking, with ritualistic toasts, is permitted, but getting

drunk during "holy supper" is considered the height of ill breeding. This rule, however, is suspended after the supper itself is over. There should be no conversation at all during the meal, and only the housewife is allowed to rise from the table.

The Christmas Eve rites continue after the meal. If there is a pregnant cow in the farmer's stable, the housewife lies down in the middle of the room and moos so that the cow may have an easy delivery. An unmarried daughter puts a flat bread, which she baked in secret, under her arm and steals out to the yard "to listen." If she hears a *trembita*, she knows that she will be married that year; if, on the other hand, she hears the barking of a dog, she will have to stay single until the next "holy supper." Dirty dishes are not cleared from the table and washed until the next morning, in case the souls want to sit at the table during the night. The leftovers are given to the cattle since it is gravely forbidden to eat the food of the "holy supper" on Christmas day. Later in the evening the family either takes some food with them on their visits to neighbors or remains at home to receive guests. The whole village eats, drinks, sings Christmas carols, shoots pistols in the air, and dances until daybreak. The house that features a fiddler usually attracts the most guests and keeps them the longest.

[29]Ukrainians celebrate New Year's Eve (*Malanka*) on January 13 and 14, according to the Julian calendar. The holiday is rich in rites concerning fortunetelling, young and old gathering together to predict the future and to enjoy themselves. They do not shy away, however, from predictions of personal misfortune and even death, and some such predictions appear to be grim indeed. In fairly recent times (possibly because of changed attitudes toward death), many such predictions of death have been "restructured" to deal with love and marriage. (I suspect, for example, that in the "listening" ritual described in note 28, the voice of the *trembita* originally predicted not marriage but death.) Informants assured Shukhevych and Hnatiuk, however, that such amateur fortunetelling should not be trusted and that if one really wants to know his future he should employ the services of a professional fortuneteller.

One fortunetelling game is called "Little Garden" (*horodok*), in which glowing embers lined up in front of the hearth are each given the name of a vegetable or a fruit. When an ember called "apple," for example, burns to a white ash without going out, it means that the next season will be rich in apples. In another game, called "Spoons" (*lozhky*), wooden spoons lined up and standing on end on a shelf against a wall are each given the name of a person participating in the game. If a spoon topples and falls down, that person will die in the course of the year. If, while falling, it upsets other spoons, there will be a war or a plague in which many people will die. When it gets dark outside, a girl feels her way to the stable and puts her hand between the hind legs of the first animal she finds. If it is a bull or steer, she will be married that year; if it is a cow, she will stay single. These are only a few examples of hundreds of games played on New Year's Eve.

At midnight, all animals are given the gift of speech. Anyone who overhears their conversations will not live longer than twenty-four hours (it is doubtful, therefore, that in real life Ivan would have strained to hear his animals talking). At that time, God Himself visits the domestic animals and

asks them how their owner is treating them. If the animals express satisfaction, the farmer's livestock will increase during the year; if, however, they voice complaints, many misfortunes will strike the homestead. At the same time, the farmer goes to the well with a new bucket and a loaf of bread, making a wide detour of the stables to make certain he does not overhear the strange conversations going on there. He draws a bucket of water from the well, breaks the loaf of bread, dips a piece of it into the water, and says: "It is not bread bathing in the water; it is myself bathing in health and strength." This is an obvious example of the residue of ancient religions in the Hutsul customs, with the bread representing the body of the sacrificial victim and the water, the water of life (*zhyva voda*). Returning to the house, the farmer touches the forehead of each member of his family and each servant with the moist bread, wishing them a happy New Year.

[30]The holiday of Saint Iurii falls on May 6, the first day of spring in Ukraine. (Saint Iurii is so important in some parts of Ukraine that he is considered the son of God.) In the pagan calendar, this day was dedicated to the banishing of the goddess of winter and death, Marena or Mara, and the celebration of the fertility god Iarylo, a phallic deity who blessed the increase of people, livestock, and vegetation. The Hutsuls still call the spring *iar*, a word that also means life energy, sexual drive, and male power. The celebration of Iarylo was accompanied by orgiastic rites and is sometimes identified with *rusalii*. Because the church holiday of Saint Iurii has superseded the celebration of Iarylo, many of Iarylo's attributes have been transferred to Iurii. Some etymologists believe that it was the word "Iarylo" that caused the name of the saint to be changed from the Greek-derived "Georgii" (still used in many Slavic languages) to the purely Slavic "Iurii."

Although the orgiastic quality of the ritual has been minimized in modern times, there is still much magic practiced in Hutsulian villages on that day. On the eve of the holiday, farmers make a bonfire out of dung and straw taken from under their livestock, pronouncing the following incantation: "God, give us as many heads of livestock as there will be ashes from this bonfire." After the fire dies out, they drive their livestock over the embers so that it will be "as keen as fire" (the same ritual is repeated when the livestock arrives in the upland pastures). Then the bonfire is revived and burns until the cock crows. Its light gets rid of the witches, who are particularly active that night, celebrating their yearly witches' sabbath (which refers to the pagan celebrations of the god Iarylo). In order to drive the witches away even more effectively, young people wrap straw or hay around short slices of wood, set them on fire, and hurl them into the darkness, meanwhile emitting bloodcurdling, orgiastic cries. Early the next morning the ashes from the bonfire are strewn about the pastureland near the village to increase the fertility of the livestock. This is probably what Iura is doing when he sees Palahna.

Kotsiubynsky's reference to the exchange of keys between "cold Dmytro and warm Iurii" is based on the Hutsul belief that Saint Dmytro (whose holiday is celebrated in late fall) and Saint Iurii are the two gatekeepers of the sky. Saint Dmytro's task is to lock up the sky for the winter. In the spring, Saint Iurii challenges Dmytro, shouting, "Throw me the keys, brother Dmytro, or I will take them away by force." Dmytro throws the keys to Iurii, and they fly through the air in the form of lightning bolts and thunderclaps of the first

violent storm of the spring. Iurii opens the gates of the sky to release the dew and rain. (In some versions of the legend, Saint Mykola [Nicholas] is substituted for Dmytro in this *agon*.) The dew that falls at dawn on Saint Iurii's day has tremendous magical powers; farmers roll around in the bedewed spring wheat to make their fields fertile, and girls roll around in the bedewed grass to become beautiful.

It is most likely at Annunciation (*Blahovishchennia*), which falls on April 7, that the housewife buries a salt cone, a coral necklace, a pair of earrings, and a piece of white bread in an anthill. The objects are left there until the holiday of Saint Iurii, when, before sunrise, she strips naked and steals to the anthill to dig out the objects. She crumbles some of the white bread and puts a crumb of it into each dish that her family will consume on that day. She gives the salt cone and the rest of the bread, together with some magical herbs, to the livestock. Having extracted a bead from the necklace, she puts it under the stream of milk while milking her cows (she milks them "through the bead"), so that her cows will yield abundantly throughout the year. Then she adorns herself with the necklace and earrings to preserve her beauty and youth.

The anthill is one of the most potent objects in the magic of the Hutsuls, while the bat is perhaps the most magically potent animal, not only in Ukrainian mythology but throughout the world. The Hutsuls believe, therefore, that the most powerful talismans are certain bat bones, picked clean by ants. To prepare such a talisman, a magician gets up before sunrise and puts a live bat into a small clay jar with nine holes in it. After sealing the jar, the magician strips naked, carries it to a large anthill, and buries it there while casting appropriate spells. The moment the jar is completely covered, the magician runs home as fast as he can. For nine days, the magician does not work, pray, wash himself, or talk to anyone. On the tenth day, before sunrise, the magician goes naked to the anthill, takes out the jar, and runs home without looking back. When the sun rises, he takes out the skeleton of the bat and finds in it a bone shaped like a two-pronged fork and another shaped like a rake. When the magician carries the rake-shaped bone under his tongue, the talisman will attract anything or anyone that he covets; when the fork-shaped bone is carried under the tongue, it will repel all enemies, danger, and misfortune. The talisman is especially effective when it is secretly taken out of the mouth and made to touch the desired or hated person; if a male magician touches a woman with the rake-shaped bone, she cannot possibly resist his sexual advances, but if he touches his enemy with the fork-shaped bone, the enemy will immediately lose all power over him.

[31]Basically a pagan people, the Hutsuls play fast and loose with marriage bonds. Many married persons have love affairs and even openly meet their lovers while continuing to live with their families. As mentioned earlier, Kotsiubynsky left copious notes on this. He writes, for example, of a rich old widow keeping a young lover and allowing the young man's girlfriend to live in the house, too. The village tavern is the place where lovers meet openly in the face of the whole village, sometimes provoking scenes of violence and bloodshed. As Shukhevych reports, the parish fair is often the occasion for such illicit meetings and matings. During that celebration, ties between single people are also established; Ivan and Marichka begin their friendship at a parish fair.

[32]From the structured shouts of Ivan and the *chuhaistyr* during their dance, one can surmise that they are dancing the complex and difficult *haiduk*, in which the two dancers (always male) lift their right legs high into the air, twisting their feet in one direction and their bodies in another. The dancers squat on one leg, and raise themselves, very slowly, hop around, then bring the other leg down hard upon the ground. "Crooked" and "blind" are two of the many versions of the *haiduk*. The dance is usually a kind of *agon* between two men, one urging the other to respond to increasingly difficult feats, much like the jazz musicians' game of "jamming."

[33]When a Hutsul is about to die, a member of his family places a burning candle in his hands, which is meant to illuminate the passage of the soul from the body, where it lived either in the area between the neck and the chest or in the head. After the soul leaves the body, it waits at the head of the deceased until the funeral procession leaves for the cemetery, at which time the heavenly powers will pass judgment upon it. Moments after death has occurred, the candle in the hands of the deceased is extinguished and another is lit at his head, since the soul likes light and cannot abide darkness. A jug of fresh water is placed next to the candle so that the soul may drink while it is waiting. Doubtless, the water is a pagan symbol of the water of life, which in ancient times was meant to assert life in the face of death. The corpse is called "God's body" (*Bozhe tilo*), a term also used for the image of Christ that is painted on an unframed canvas or embroidered on a large square of linen and displayed in Hutsul churches before Easter. Immediately upon death, the corpse is dressed in finery that has been saved in a magnificently decorated coffer especially for the occasion.

To announce a death in the family, the Hutsuls hang strips of white linen on the windows facing the center of the village. Then they build a bonfire (called, in this case, the "great bonfire") in the front yard. The women of the house unbraid their tresses and wear their hair loose for wailing (compare this with the ancient Greek traditions), while the men remain bareheaded at all times, until the body of the deceased is in the ground. A *trembitannyk*, or *trembitar*, is hired to play in front of the house to announce the death to the whole world. At the first sounds of the *trembita*, church bells begin to ring, their purpose being to "block the soul" in order to prevent it from wandering all over the world before its verdict is handed down.

At the summons of the *trembita*, mourners begin to arrive. Everyone who knew the deceased (from his own and the neighboring villages) considers it his duty to pay a visit to his house. The guest lights a candle in his own home and carries it to the house of the deceased, as he would carry a lit candle home from church after the Easter mass. Entering the house and ignoring everyone present, he attaches his candle either to the window sill or to a low bench placed especially for that purpose in front of the bier. He also places some coins on the chest of the deceased, which will be his fare across the River of Life (compare this to the dead being transported across the River Styx in Greek mythology; in some parts of Western Ukraine, the river dividing the living from the dead is called Stys). The guest prays at the bier, says a few words of farewell to his dead friend, and only then acknowledges the presence of the living, greeting them ceremoniously and expressing words of sympathy to the members of the family. The older guests sit near the corpse, while the younger

stand in the spacious hall or in the main room near the entrance door opposite the bier.

When enough mourners have gathered, the first round of wailing begins. The laments will resume during the funeral procession and at the grave site. As in many other village societies, the Hutsul laments are set texts; there are several texts for each female member of the immediate family (only women lament, reflecting the function of women as priestesses of the chthonic goddesses in charge of death and procreation). There are texts for a daughter mourning her mother, a daughter mourning her father, a wife mourning her husband, etc. Palahna's lament is a radically abbreviated and somewhat poeticized version of one of the many recorded laments for a wife mourning her husband. As we gather from the reaction of the guests to Palahna's wailing ("she wails well"), a lament is judged as an artistic performance. Rich peasants in various parts of Ukraine hire professional mourners (*plachkas*) to do the lamenting for them.

Generally speaking, there are three constant elements in a lament: an apology to the deceased for his death ("What have I done to you that you have become so angry and left me?"); an accusation, directly contradicting the first element, that the deceased has selfishly left the living to shift for themselves ("Who will feed our children now? Who will help me with the farm work?"); and questions about the direction from which the deceased will come when he or she returns to the community of the living. As mentioned earlier, pagan Slavs believed that their ancestors returned to their homes each spring in the shape of certain magical birds, insects, or even humans ("Where will I find you? In the forest? On the bridge? Or in the field, sitting on an ear of wheat?").

After the initial round of laments, carpenters come to make the coffin. They place their brand new tools (only one coffin may be made with a set of tools) and the boards in front of the bier and make a simple wooden coffin in the presence of the corpse. Having finished their work, the carpenters put the tools into the coffin, cover it provisionally with its lid, wash their hands over it, with a member of the family pouring fresh water from a jug, and profusely apologize to the family for having had to do their odious job. Members of the family grant them ritualistic forgiveness and put a loaf of bread, a burning candle, and a red kerchief upon the lid of the coffin. After sitting with the corpse for a while, the carpenters pick up the bread and the kerchief, accept payment in coin for the tools, the materials, and the work of "having built a house for the deceased," and leave. The empty coffin is placed against the wall behind the bier.

The young people begin to stir, getting ready for the elaborate funeral games (*hrushka*, from the word *hraty*, "to play"). These wild games, many of them blatantly erotic, will be played throughout the night, until the early morning hours. The Hutsuls say that the reason for them is to distract the family from their grief and, more important, to keep all the guests in the house so that the family will not be forced to remain alone with the soul of the deceased. It is quite obvious, however, that such games are a residue of the pagan funeral games, often orgiastic and openly sexual, that were meant to assert life in the face of death and thus to express the cyclical course of temporality.

The first game the young people play is called "The Rabbit" (*Zaiets*). A young man asks his neighbor to "buy a rabbit." "I will not buy your rabbit because it is snub-nosed," the neighbor answers. Then the "salesman" turns to

a friend who indeed is snub-nosed and says, "You are snub-nosed, buy my rabbit." "I will not buy your rabbit because it is hunchbacked," the prospective buyer answers. The "salesman" turns to someone whose posture leaves much to be desired, and the game goes on. The point is that if a person repeats the "epithet" already used, then he must try to sell the rabbit himself. If the players follow the game carefully and no "epithet" is repeated for some time, somebody shouts: "I will not buy your rabbit because he spins." Upon hearing these words, the seller of the rabbit turns himself around very quickly until he falls to the floor. While falling, he tries to bring down anyone standing close to him, and that person in turn attempts to make someone else fall, until there is a pile of happily writhing, laughing, and screaming young people on the floor. There is obvious symbolism in the parallel between this mock "mass death" (*pomir*) and sexuality. What is subtler and more interesting is that the young players, brought up on the kind of unique tact that peasants have for each other throughout Ukraine, suddenly draw attention to each others' physical defects and cruelly laugh at them in the face of death.

The next game that Kotsiubynsky mentions is "The Hanged Man" (*Povishenyi*), in which death and eroticism are combined quite openly. A young man stretches his hand upward and takes hold of a peg, a number of which are fixed high on the wall to serve as hangers for outer clothing. While he does so, he shouts, "I am hanging." Someone from the crowd asks him, "On whom?" The boy gives the name of a girl, who must immediately come up to the "hanging" boy and "resurrect" him by giving him a kiss full upon the lips. While she thus frees the young man from the clutches of death, she "hangs herself," and calls upon her favorite young man to save her from death with a kiss. Whoever refuses to "save" the "hanged person" promptly has his or her face smudged with soot.

"The Mill" (*Mlyn*) requires a boy to lie face down on a bench. In his hands he holds two sticks, with which he beats a rapid tatoo on the legs and the underside of the bench, imitating the rattling of a mill at work. On his behind is placed a kerchief, in which an odious substance is wrapped. Another young man takes the role of the miller, and the rest of the participants act as farmers who have come to mill their grain. "What do you have to mill?" the "miller" asks one of the "customers." "Corn," he replies. "And what am I milling right now?" The "customer" is required to guess the substance in the kerchief. If he does not guess correctly, the "miller" dips his fingers into the substance and smears the "customer's" face with it. A simpler and more athletic version of the game, which Kotsiubynsky uses, requires two "Jews" (boys with strips of flax attached to their chins) to protect the "mill," who is lying face down on the bench and drumming wildly, while several "customers" attempt to push him off the bench and onto the floor.

In another game, mentioned by Kotsiubynsky in passing, the participants sit in a tight circle, with their knees raised to their chests. They imperceptibly pass a wet and knotted towel under their knees, while a player stands in the middle of the circle and tries to establish where the towel is at a given moment. If he guesses incorrectly, he is whacked with the towel. If he guesses correctly, the person holding the towel must go to the middle of the circle.

Some funeral games mock death openly. A game which ridicules the corpse and the idea of death in a downright eerie way has two young people disguise themselves as an old couple, go up to the real corpse, kneel at his bier, and parody a set text of a lament. The more outrageous and vulgar the parody,

the funnier the spectacle. Some of the funeral games, among the great number described by ethnographers, are quite obscene; others are surprisingly dangerous, what with tricky knife play or hot cinders blown into people's faces. The orgiastic nature of these games—by which death is denied and celebrated at the same time, and by which the very value of life is often put in question—cannot be missed.

While the young people are at their games, the older mourners begin their repast (*komáshnia*), the first of three sumptuous meals to be served during the period of mourning the deceased. It is well known that the taking of food during or immediately after funeral ceremonies is the most obvious and widespread form of sacrifice that would assert life over death. Together with various dishes, many small clay pots are placed on the table, on which the *komáshnia* is served. Each is filled with water and covered with a hard, flat cracknel bread with a hole in the middle; a very thin waxen candle is attached to the rim of the pot. Each guest takes home one of these small pots in memory of the deceased: sometimes hundreds are given away. Here again we may suspect traces of ancient death rites.

Early in the morning, after the all-night wake, preparations for the actual funeral begin. Four loaves of bread, with a candle stuck into the middle of each, are placed in the four corners of the room. The candles are lighted when the priest enters the main room, and extinguished when the corpse is carried out of the house. The corpse is undressed, ritualistically washed with the water in the jug from which the soul drank, and dressed again. On the chest of the corpse is placed a small loaf of bread which he or she will carry to the land of the dead as a gift for the other deceased members of the family. When the priest enters the room, he ritualistically asks forgiveness of the family for the work that he must do, and the family ritualistically grants it. After the service, the body is put into the coffin, together with a little sugar, wool, and medicinal herbs. The coffin lid is put into place and the four loaves of bread are placed upon it. As four male relatives carry the coffin out of the house, they lower it three times at the main entrance, so that its bottom touches the threshold: in this way the dead person asks forgiveness for abandoning his house.

The jug in which the water stood at the head of the corpse, and out of which the corpse was washed, is broken against a stone or a tree trunk in the front yard by an older woman. She then carefully gathers the shards, and ties them into a kerchief. She will drop the bundle into the first body of water that the funeral procession crosses: the utensil which was touched by the lips of the dead person's soul should not remain in the world but should travel by the River of Life to the land of the dead. The coffin is put down on the ground in the front yard, while the house, which was not cleaned since the death occurred, is now thoroughly swept by the women. The sweepings are burned in the stove and the ashes are carefully removed, to be dropped into the first river or stream that the funeral procession crosses. The priest reenters the house by a side door, and sits down to a *komáshnia* which he consumes alone in the main room, while the mourners have their meal in the hall or in the yard. The coffin is then wrapped in a sumptuous Hutsul rug (if the deceased was an older person) or in pure white linen (for a child or a young person) and is put on a sleigh, drawn by a pair of horses, no matter what time of year it is. (This mode of transporting the dead had been practiced throughout the Ukrainian territory in prehistoric times and was widely known in medieval Kiev.)

The priest heads the procession on horseback. He is followed by a village

elder who carries a large bowl of *kolyvo* (a variation of *kutia*; see note 28) with twelve burning candles in it. As he carries the bowl, the old man slowly and rhythmically raises and lowers it. Then comes the coffin, followed by members of the family, the women taking turns to "perform" appropriate laments. The whole population of the village, together with friends and distant relatives from neighboring places, walk behind the family. If the deceased is the head of a household, his cattle follow the people; each animal has burning candles attached to its horns. In earlier times, when the Hutsuls were wealthier, all the cattle were sacrificed by slaughter at the grave site.

Usually two *trembitannyks* (*trembitars*) accompany the procession, sounding their instruments at each turn of the road. Before crossing a river the procession stops and a prayer is said. With pomp and circumstance the procession enters the parish church for the Requiem Mass. After the service, the coffin is opened for the last time, and a *trembitannyk* (*trembitar*) plays for the deceased. At the grave site behind the church the lid of the coffin is nailed down with 24 nails, the coffin is lowered into the ground, and members of the family throw lumps of earth and coins upon it, to supplement the fare of the deceased across the River of Life. It is interesting that if the dead person was just, he will have a much rougher passage than if he was evil or selfish: the just man has to travel across the River of Life wrapped in a net and dragged through the water by the Virgin Mary, while an unjust man, traveling at the invitation of the *aridnyk*, walks across it on a wide bridge covered with soft rugs. (As Ivanov and Toporov inform us, the Virgin Mary—*Mariia*—is substituted in a number of Slavic myths [possibly because of alliterative similarity] for Marena or Mara, the goddess of death and winter.)

A small cross is placed on the coffin, at the head of the deceased. The grave is filled and topped by a low earthen mound. A large wooden cross is mounted at the head of the grave, and the bowl of *kolyvo* is ceremoniously placed in front of it. The gravediggers hold out their hands over the grave, and a member of the family pours water over them, whereupon the workers ask and receive forgiveness for their labor. The family gives the four loaves of bread to the gravediggers, in addition to their fee. The funeral party returns by the same road that the procession took to the churchyard. The mourners enter the house of the deceased by the side doors and sit down to a feast (the third since the death occurred), which can go on well into the night. For the next twenty-four hours, nobody may sit on the bench on which the corpse lay, in order not to crush the soul of the deceased, which may still be in the house, sitting on the bench and waiting for the verdict. A new jug of water, a candle, and a cross are left for the soul until the next morning, when normal life resumes in the house.

It is obvious that the soul of the deceased is somehow separated from the person of the deceased in the minds of the Hutsuls. The person is not necessarily identified with the body now resting in the ground. Surely the soul, waiting for its judgment and verdict, does not need the money for the passage across the River of Life, nor does it need the sugar, the medicinal herbs, and the wool that were placed in the coffin. It will certainly not carry the bread that was baked for the other deceased members of the family to the Land of the Dead. It is quite doubtful, in fact, that the soul and the person of the deceased are going to the same place, and that both of them will share the same fate. Needless to say, the ritual does not bother to solve this pagan-Christian dilemma.

THE MUSIC OF SATAN AND THE BEDEVILED WORLD

An Essay on Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky

By Bohdan Rubchak

1

Photographs show a tall, elegant, fastidious man in a stiff collar, with a carefully curled mustache and a painstakingly shaped tuft of hair under his lower lip. One observes in that trim, impeccably groomed figure a certain reserve, a distance, perhaps even a stiffness much more real than the obvious artificiality of pose in photographs from the turn of the century. Memoirs about Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky draw a similar portrait. Courteous and friendly to everybody, but especially to people of the "lower classes," showing at times much warmth and sincerity, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky nevertheless always seemed to be alone. Hlib Lazarevsky gives us the following sketch of the writer:

> Tall. Slim, with slightly stooped shoulders. A bald or shaved head, against which lay a pair of small, flat ears. A pale face, as if powdered, with regular features and dark eyes, whose glance was sometimes sad ... and at other times kindled by self-assured, even somewhat arrogant and contemptuous sparks.[1]

The great poet Pavlo Tychyna described his first meeting with Kotsiubynsky at a concert in Chernihiv, when Tychyna himself was still a student. Kotsiubynsky chatted and joked with the young poet, warmly encouraging his talent. But when the music began, Tychyna stole a glance at Kotsiubynsky: "He alone sat perfectly tuned, conscious of his worth."[2] And the sadness that Lazarevsky observed seldom left his eyes. As Maksim Gorky noted in his obituary of Kotsiubynsky, he always took it for granted that all people are lonely, and that death marks the dimensions of human existence more distinctly than life.[3]

Kotsiubynsky's reserve and his profound sense of loneliness on the one hand and, on the other, his constant desire to break through the transparent but diamond-hard wall that seemed to enclose him and to meet the world and other people halfway form the most obvious ambiguity among the many that surround his person and shape the foundation of his work. His calm and dignified exterior seemed to conceal conflicting currents of tremendous power, and similar currents are hidden under the seemingly calm style of his work—a style always balanced but balanced precariously, often on the brink of exploding with an uncontrolled torrent of passionate, furious words.

Is it not such barely tolerable inner storms that drove Kotsiubynsky to search for something diametrically opposite to his highly cultured, carefully attired, and impeccably mannered persona? Moving through the Gogolesque provincialism of Chernihiv, he seemed to seek his other self in the exotic Moldavian and Tatar peasants, in the precarious ways of life of assassins, henchmen, or revolutionary conspirators, and, finally, in his lasting love affair with the wild, irresponsible, and romantic Hutsuls. Perhaps the openly passionate spirits of the Hutsuls represented for him an externalization of his own secretly passionate nature, thus promising an emotional and creative catharsis, and some miraculous rebirth.

A conflict between a sense of duty, bordering on self-sacrifice, and the barely repressed longing to escape the demands of other people into the unbounded freedom of poetic reverie rent Kotsiubynsky's life and provided a dialectical pattern for many of his stories. A sense of guilt, expressed implicitly in his work and explicitly in his correspondence, accompanied his days and many a sleepless night. He felt compelled, on the one hand, to punish himself for each moment devoted to the weaving of reveries in patterns of words at the expense of other people's needs; on the other hand, he felt driven to expiate each unit of creative energy that he "wasted" on his family, on social obligations, and on political activity. He regretted the long hours that he had to sacrifice to a variety of dull jobs, which provided financial support for the large number of people whom he encouraged to depend upon him. Kotsiubynsky's waverings between the life of writing and the life of action, incidentally, reflect with a unique intensity the situation of Ukrainian literature of his time, when writers considered it their historical destiny to become political and social leaders, and consequently felt guilty about the time spent at their manuscripts. More distantly, such hesitations echo the entire European literary scene, struggling as it was between the Ivory Tower of Art and the noisy streets of social and political commitment.

Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky was born on 17 September 1864 in Zamostia, a suburb of the city of Vinnytsia. His father was a minor government official in the bureaucracy of the Empire. In the words of Kotsiubynsky himself, his father was "of a sanguine disposition, full of eternal dreams that never came true, a temperamental but good man."[4] He was not, however, a dependable provider, although there were quite a few people for whom to provide: he moved from job to job, and from town to town, until—discouraged by the string of failures that was his life—he left his family in 1882 and soon afterward died of alcoholism. About his mother Kotsiubynsky wrote:

> she is of a complex, subtle, and profound spiritual structure: a good woman, uncommonly loving and capable of great self-sacrifice.... I grew up under the influence of my mother, to whom I have always been closer than to my father. Everybody says that we are similar not only in appearance, but also in character and tastes.[5]

Shortly before her husband abandoned the family, Kotsiubynsky's mother went blind, and Mykhailo cared for her throughout her life.

In spite of frequent relocations, Kotsiubynsky managed to receive a fairly decent education. He initially had a private tutor and later entered a grammar school in the town of Bar. A childhood friend has left us the following description of the boy: "[he] was ... always neat and immaculately dressed. He was a

good pupil and was very attentive and diligent."[6] In 1876, Kotsiubynsky enrolled in a high school level theological seminary in Sharhorod, from which he transferred in 1881 to a similar school in Kamianets-Podilsky.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, priests' and teachers' seminaries and secondary schools throughout the Empire, particularly in Ukraine, were hornets' nests of clandestine revolutionary activity. The educational establishment in Kamianets-Podilsky seems to have been no exception. Kotsiubynsky joined student protests against the oppressive policies of the government toward the lower classes of society, and although his involvement was marginal, his name was entered on the "black lists" of the tsarist police, and police surveillance of his person continued off and on throughout his life. He became even more of a "suspect character" when, between 1892 and 1897, he engaged in political activity as a member of the Brotherhood of the Followers of Taras, a clandestine organization that stood for Ukrainian autonomy and radical economic reforms.

His mother's blindness and the separation of his parents put the brunt of responsibility for the welfare of the six-member family on Kotsiubynsky's shoulders. Forced to leave school, and with no hopes of further schooling, Kotsiubynsky dutifully set about to educate himself. His erudition in literature and psychology grew from year to year, and he occasionally liked to flaunt his unusually wide reading. He was particularly interested in the French and Scandinavian literatures because, in his opinion, they provided a wider scope than Slavic writing.[7] Of Russian writers, his favorite was Dostoevsky, but some influences of Turgenev and Chekhov are evident in his mature work. As for Ukrainian literature, he knew it thoroughly. After his formative years as a writer, his sympathies shifted to the side of his contemporaries who opposed the older "epic" novel: Ivan Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, Vasyl Stefanyk, Olha Kobylianska, Volodymyr Samiilenko, and Marko Cheremshyna. The pervasive influence of Franko's prose on Kotsiubynsky's work becomes obvious at the first reading of the two writers. Of the older "epic" novels, some echoes of Panas Myrny's *The Trollop* can be found in his older stories.

After leaving school in 1882, Kotsiubynsky settled in Vinnytsia, and eked out a living as a private tutor in the city itself and among the country gentry in neighboring villages. It was then that he began to think seriously about writing. His first story, "Andrii Soloveiko, or Learning as Light and Ignorance as Darkness" (1884), shows a young beginner, well read in the nineteenth-century Ukrainian prose of the "realist ethnographic" tradition, but without exceptional promise. All of Kotsiubynsky's early output, in fact, is purely derivative and "literary." The main reason for this seems to be his earnest effort to approach "real life" (especially in the sphere of the intellectuals' responsibilities toward the peasants) not on the basis of personal observation but along the conventionalized, standardized tracks of the nineteenth-century Ukrainian novel. It was not for him to express his youthful energy in rebellion; such rebellion had to mature in an ordered, dialectical development. Searching for his native forms of expression, which refused (or were not allowed) to reveal themselves in a sudden eruption of epiphany, young Kotsiubynsky tried his hand in various areas: lyrical poetry, children's verse, historiography (he began a study of the intellectual history of seventeenth-century Ukraine), ethnography, newspaper reporting, and even art (some of his drawings were published in a children's magazine). Perhaps because of his tremendous sense of discipline, he devoted much energy to translation in those early years. It was certainly not a desire for success (success, or even a modest literary career, was

a futile dream in his circumstances), but an inbred sense of duty toward his calling that kept young Kotsiubynsky chained to his writing table after twelve-hour days at his tutoring jobs or later at an office, trying one thing and another, crossing out, throwing away, starting over, and patiently searching.

Perhaps feeling uneasy over those long evenings spent writing, Kotsiubynsky would sporadically return to his role as a man of action. After he had abandoned his early attempts at direct revolutionary activity, he tried to work from inside the system. In 1888, he got himself elected to the city council of Vinnytsia, but with the termination of his office in 1890, he never again returned to official politics, feeling an almost physical revulsion for the people engaged in it. At about that time, however, the name of Vitalii Borovyk, a leader of the previously mentioned Brotherhood of the Followers of Taras, begins to crop up in Kotsiubynsky's correspondence. Between 1892 and 1897, he was deeply involved in the clandestine activities of that underground movement, agitating for Ukrainian independence among workers of the phylloxera commission, with which he travelled at the time. The stories "Kho" (1894) and "The Emissary from the Black King" (1897) echo the ideology of that organization.

Kotsiubynsky's last attempt at public service took place in 1906, when he let himself be elected head of the Chernihiv branch of the influential cultural and educational organization Prosvita ("Enlightenment"), which undertook semi-clandestine patriotic activities throughout Ukraine, establishing illegal Ukrainian-language libraries, reading rooms, and even village schools. The dutiful Kotsiubynsky took that post extremely seriously, devoting to it every free moment of his time. But, as began to happen more and more frequently in his life, bitter disappointment followed on the heels of feverish activity. Because of adverse conditions within the Empire, the Ukrainian liberal intelligentsia was becoming demoralized and afraid. Kotsiubynsky grew to hate such lassitude and timidity in his countrymen: with each passing day, they failed more and more to measure up to the high standards that he imposed on himself, on his nation, and on humanity. "Having left my study for the wide world," he wrote to a friend, "I keep being capsized by underwater rocks that I did not notice earlier."[8] The wide world as such, however, seemed to hide mysterious dangers under beautiful surfaces, which were intent on frustrating the poet's dream of perfection. The writing table, on the other hand, presented its own dangers of escapism and cowardice, of blindness and betrayal.

Although Kotsiubynsky harbored ambiguous emotions toward the world of political and social action, there are no ambiguities in his unmitigated hatred of the corrupt world of tsarist bureaucracy in which he had to make a living. It is small wonder that in all of his writings, the world of greed and gain symbolizes the enemy of the poetic and of the heroic, which themselves are sometimes opposed to each other in his later stories. In order to understand Kotsiubynsky's concept of the world of gain as being contrary to everything that is dignified and decent in human life, one need only glance at the numerous humiliating letters which that proud man was forced to write to employers who owed him money, to prospective employers, or to casual acquaintances who might have heard of an available job.

In 1892, Kotsiubynsky's literary friends found him summer employment with a government commission investigating phylloxera, a plague that decimated the lucrative vineyards in the south of the Empire, particularly in the Bessarabian strip of Moldavia and in the Crimea. For the next five years,

Kotsiubynsky would leave Ukraine for the south in March and return in October or November. He had great moral qualms about the work of the commission, as it destroyed the contaminated vineyards without compensating the poor vine growers. That situation, a glaring result of the inefficiency of the Empire, and the liberal intellectual's worry over it are strikingly embodied in Kotsiubynsky's story "For the Common Good," published in 1896. Kotsiubynsky wrote ten stories inspired by his travels with the commission; some of them belong to his very best work.

In 1897 Kotsiubynsky finally landed a permanent position as a "superior clerk" at the Statistical Bureau of the County Council of Chernihiv. He remained in Chernihiv for the rest of his life. The work at the Statistical Bureau was unbearably dull and exacting; it sapped Kotsiubynsky's energy, his health, and his will to live. To this was added his increasing hatred of the shallowness, the crassness, and unscrupulousness of the administration, of his superiors, and even of his fellow workers. In letter after letter, he complained that the Statistical Bureau did not leave him enough energy for writing. And yet he was quite good at his job.

Never did Kotsiubynsky forgive the world the sin of sapping the poet's lifeblood in exchange for a crust of bread. Although in his writing the spheres of poetic reverie and social action constantly vie for supremacy *within* authentic existence, the sphere of gain—which becomes the bedeviled Gogolian world of greed—is always *outside* of authentic existence, standing against it in mortal enmity. There was an island of authentic existence, however, that Kotsiubynsky found in that sea of pettiness and mediocrity which was his daily work. He befriended a young co-worker, a Russian woman of great culture and sensitivity by the name of Aleksandra Aplaksina. His letters to her, even in the brutally censored state in which they have come down to us, reveal more of his thoughts and emotions than all of his other correspondence, including that addressed to his wife.

Kotsiubynsky's responsibilities were compounded by his marriage in 1896 to Vira Deisha, a high school teacher of French and somewhat of a progressive activist. At the end of that year, their first son was born, followed later by another son and two daughters. His new family, however, did not terminate his financial obligations toward his blind mother and his younger brothers and sisters.

The strain of hard work, of constant anxiety, and (perhaps most important) of unmitigated inner struggles and spiritual self-denials began to show its detrimental effect on Kotsiubynsky's health as middle age approached. Overworked by nervous tension, his tired heart threatened to give way. In 1906, on the advice of physicians, Kotsiubynsky took a six-month tour of Western Europe. Three years later he made a pilgrimage to the Isle of Capri, which was subsequently to become for him a sort of sacred land. (In the late story "The Dream" [1911], Capri becomes the landscape of the poet-hero's dreams, violently contrasting with his dull and provincial waking life.) Kotsiubynsky wrote to his wife from Capri:

> This is a paradise on earth.... The landscapes are incredibly beautiful.... There is no dust to be seen anywhere, and the cleanliness is so ideal, even in the streets, that it amazes me. The air is so fragrant with mountain grass that it intoxicates me. Most important, it is quiet here. As if people did not exist.[9]

We note the three most important features of "paradise," as envisaged by Kotsiubynsky: the intoxicating proximity of nature, particularly of mountains; the quiet that gives the welcome illusion of nonexistence of people; and cleanliness. These qualifications are so frequently repeated in Kotsiubynsky's work that they become *leitmotifs*. In many of his stories, Kotsiubynsky writes almost obsessively about cleanliness; it is virtually "next to godliness," whereas disorder and untidy appearance, let alone bodily dirt, are sure signs of moral degeneration or downright depravity.

In 1910, Kotsiubynsky spent his second summer on Capri, and he returned to the island for a third visit in the autumn and winter of 1911. Toward the end of his life, he began to equate his trips to Capri with his poetic inspiration, and his artistic productivity seemed to grow more and more dependent upon such journeys. His enthusiasm for the beauty of the island knew no bounds. Kotsiubynsky describes the sense of liberation that the island afforded him in a letter to Mykhailo Zhuk:

> Somehow your whole organism becomes filled with the aroma of the sea, of flowers; you are so imbued with beauty that you forget that you are a person, a fairly impure being, and think of yourself as a fragrant plant.[10]

The colorful peasants also fascinated him; he found them to be a basically pagan people, an integral part of the nature that surrounded them, for whom the metaphysical was contained in the immanence of the earth and for whom religious celebrations were nothing but a game, a profound love of theater. It is difficult to miss here an analogy to the Hutsuls, as Kotsiubynsky saw and described them.

Kotsiubynsky's love for the peasants of Capri did not always extend to the people from other walks of life whom he met on the island. During his first stay on Capri, he became acquainted with the Russian writer Maksim Gorky, who made the island his permanent residence in exile, and the two men became friends. Gorky insisted that Kotsiubynsky meet all the Russian émigrés and tourists, a motley lot who constantly passed through Gorky's villa. Kotsiubynsky soon grew weary of the conversational bouts about God and country that Russian intellectuals stage with such gusto. I suspect that he also grew weary of their literary chatter and that it soon became for him a caricature of literature. " ... I do my best to run away from all this," he wrote to his wife, "in order to spend more time with nature."[11] A year later he complained to her:

> Acquaintanceships tire me. Yesterday, for example, Gorky and his wife came to my room, dragged me out to the seashore, then hauled me by force to their house for dinner.... I am simply afraid of such guardianship.[12]

He believed, doubtless, that such "guardianship" was both tiring and humiliating. An interesting example of what Kotsiubynsky must have endured at Gorky's is the insultingly patronizing tone of a well-intentioned letter that a second-rate reviewer and editor, Amfiteatrov, a frequent guest at the villa, wrote to Gorky on the Russian translation of Kotsiubynsky's short stories:

> What a nice writer that *khokhol*[13] Kotsiubynsky is.... One notes the soft tones of Turgenev's tutelage, although he has read some Knut Hamsun, too. He is terribly nice![14]

In the fall of 1910, upon his return from Capri, Kotsiubynsky visited the Carpathian Mountains, about which he had read and thought so much. In his mind, the Carpathian Mountains were a darker, a more mysterious, and more demonic magic land than the sunny, joyous, harmonious Capri. In an important letter to Gorky, he vividly conveys his fascination with the region and its people:

> If you only knew what a captivating, almost fairy-tale corner of the world this is, with its dark-green mountains and eternally whispering mountain streams. It is pure and fresh, as if it were born yesterday. The costumes, the customs, the whole structure of life of these nomad Hutsuls, who spend their summers on mountain peaks, are so unique and beautiful that one feels as if one had been transported to some new and unknown world.[15]

Kotsiubynsky describes the Hutsuls in another letter written to Gorky during his second visit to the Carpathian Mountains in the summer of 1912:

> The Hutsul is a profound pagan; he spends all his life battling evil spirits that dwell in forests, mountains, and waters. He uses Christianity only to decorate his pagan cult.[16]

In the summer of 1912, after *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* had already been published, Kotsiubynsky returned to the Carpathian Mountains for the third time in order to gather material for a new novel that he planned to write. During each stay in the mountains, he worked hard, interviewing old Hutsuls, writing down their songs, attending folk festivals and celebrations, and filling his notebooks with legends and myths. He took exhausting trips to the mountain pasturelands and isolated villages, not giving a thought to his failing heart.

While Kotsiubynsky complained (more and more frequently with the passage of time) about his talent drying up, about not having enough energy to write, and about having written nothing of significance, his fame steadily grew throughout Ukraine, and his work gained recognition abroad. Beginning in 1906, translations of his stories appeared in German, Hungarian, Romanian, Estonian, and Latvian. In 1909, a small collection of his works was published in Swedish, and a year later in Czech. The year 1911 was particularly generous to Kotsiubynsky. A number of his stories were translated into Polish, and a two-volume Russian translation was published by Gorky's publishing concern, Znanie. Encouraged by Kotsiubynsky's success at home and abroad, the Kievan Organization for the Aid of Literature and Art awarded him a modest yearly stipend, which enabled him to leave his odious post at the Statistical Bureau to devote his full time to writing. Such a generous gesture on the part of his people deeply moved Kotsiubynsky, and he henceforth felt accountable to them for every moment of his time. None of this, however, allayed his insecurity as a writer. *Shadows*, for example, made him quite unhappy; he complained that the planned short story had grown into a verbose, swollen work,

that one day he would have to sit down and rewrite it, that it was finally nothing but a bagatelle, a mere surface sketch of the mysterious and profound life of the Hutsuls.

During his last stay in the Carpathian Mountains, in the summer of 1912, Kotsiubynsky's health began to deteriorate at an alarming rate. Doubtless, his sudden release from the despised job and the resulting fever of work contributed to that sharp decline. He returned to Chernihiv by an effort of sheer willpower and a few months later entered the clinic at the University of Kiev. In the beginning of 1913, now hopelessly ill, he was sent home. In the last weeks of his life, he still dreamed of writing his "major" novel about the Hutsuls. He remarked in a letter to Hnatiuk:

> It is time for me, I think, to turn into wood or dust. Well, that is all right by me. I am only sorry that all the material on the Hutsuls will be wasted. But then, perhaps we shall get together again and laugh at our present prognoses.[17]

Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky died on 12 April 1913 at his home in Chernihiv.

2

Although Kotsiubynsky's anxious self-criticism often resembled self-flagellation, it was not unreasonable of him to refuse to have most of his early efforts published in his lifetime. Much in them shows a young writer's desire to write at all costs, except at the risk of journeying into his own self. He dutifully followed the example of the "masterpieces" of nineteenth-century Ukrainian prose—models which in the light of his subsequent work proved to be only too distant to the nature of his own inspiration.

As we have seen, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the political situation in Ukraine demanded that the writer assume the role of civic leader and educator. Critics tirelessly pointed to the example of Taras Shevchenko, forgetting that his genius for spiritual leadership was so organically a part of his creative personality that he himself was unaware of his role in the historical destiny of his nation until the very end of his life. Writers did their best to produce reading material "for the people," with the noble and necessary intention of raising their readers' level of culture, education, national consciousness, and political and economic awareness. Fairly late in his career, Kotsiubynsky himself was criticized by Panas Myrny for wasting too much effort on Moldavians, Tatars, and sundry foreigners, when Ukrainians had enough problems of their own.[18]

The writers' anxieties about social responsibility and their adherence to cultural traditions were minor problems, however, in view of the outer controls of Russian censorship, which increased as the century drew to a close. Besides their vigilance in matters of political orthodoxy, the censors did everything in their power to keep Ukrainian literature at an "ethnographic," "peasant," or "folksy" level. To avoid such humiliating confrontations with the authorities, central-Ukrainian writers published a great number of their works in Western Ukraine; the controls of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were incomparably more civilized than those across its eastern border. In addition to these obvious reasons, Kotsiubynsky preferred to send his works to Lviv, rather than to Kiev, because, as his career progressed, he became more and more attracted to the Western Ukrainian writers of his generation, particularly to innovators like Stefanyk, Kobylianska, and Cheremshyna.

Kotsiubynsky's early work is marred by a number of serious flaws. For example, having taken the "educational value" of literature with a much more naive seriousness than his seasoned masters had done, he would suddenly

interrupt his narrative to preach a sermon on ignorance as the basis of all other vices. Such digressions stemmed from young Kotsiubynsky's simplistic approach to the serious social problems of his time. His first surviving story, "Andrii Soloveiko, or Learning as Light and Ignorance as Darkness" (written in 1884 but published forty years later), is a good example of this. The author presents a young villager who, destroyed by his oppressive environment, turns to petty crime. Having been caught and exiled from the village by the ignorant (and therefore cruel) peasants, the hero finds himself in the city, is adopted by a liberal intellectual who insists on giving him an education, becomes a teacher (and therefore an excellent man), and returns to the village to show the light of learning to his recent tormentors. We see that the hero thirsts for a *something else*, but we also note that such an alternative actuality is still inauthentically imagined by the young writer.

The long story "A Common-Law Marriage" (1891) also suffers from the deficiencies characteristic of the author's early work. But it is incomparably better than anything he had done until then and may be considered his true beginning in literature: here he touches upon complex philosophical and psychological issues that would find their flowering in his "exotic" stories and their fruition in *Shadows*.

The most interesting thing about "A Common-Law Marriage" is certainly not its trite plot but the rather subtle characterization of Oleksandra, which reveals for the first time Kotsiubynsky's talent as a psychological writer of vertiginous depths. Oleksandra has a restless, poetic nature. Throughout the story, she is shown to be extraordinarily fond of words. At the same time, however, she is enmeshed in the nets of the world. She does not hesitate to use deceit to get what she wants, she loves luxury, and is slovenly, unclean, and careless about her household duties. Perhaps in spite of Kotsiubynsky's overt intention, the reader is left with much sympathy for Oleksandra—certainly more than for the passive, vacuous Nastia.

The thematic structure that supported many of Kotsiubynsky's later works began to emerge in this story, although it seems that Kotsiubynsky himself did not yet know how to organize and align its various components. Nastia is an objectlike "angel" whose only function is to catalyze Hnat's innate aspirations to *something else*—to beauty and purity, to peace as the absence of contradiction, and, finally, to the "music" that is implied in his last name, Muzyka. Oleksandra, on the other hand, has something of black magic about her—magic that conquers nature in the name of greed—which would be artistically developed in the brilliant characterization of Iura and Palahna in *Shadows*. But she also has about her a touch of the poet—not an ethereal, but an earthly poet. In *Shadows*, this will be the domain of Marichka, who will assume at the same time Nastia's role of inspirer, but as an active and not a passive muse. We see that at this level of his development Kotsiubynsky did not yet separate, let alone polarize, the realms of white and black magic, or what shall be called in the remainder of this essay personal myth and public myth. A public myth is defined here as a received, permanently structured set of signs pointing to a preternatural reality and answering to the prejudices of the masses, with which the world controls individual freedom. A personal myth—the ultimate embodiment of freedom and hence the exact opposite of the public myth—is the vague aura of limitless poetic reverie grounded in archetypal remnants within the individual consciousness, which seeks, and

sometimes does not find, its unique expression in the permanent medium of language.

The gift of the creating word, which Oleksandra seems to possess on a primitive level, implies restlessness, the clash of contradictions, and a longing for the ultimate horizons of existence; it would always remain for Kotsiubynsky a dangerous gift. But in his mature work, the creating word would be surrounded by subtle ambiguities, while in "A Common-Law Marriage," it was still impatiently relegated to the negative aspects of life. Although in his later stories the creating word would by no means lose for him its mysterious hazards, he assumed all risks of this implication. We should keep in mind, by the way, that the risks of the creating word were Kotsiubynsky's personal risks. The creating word—his own word—not only reveals and embodies the ultimate horizons of existence (which for Kotsiubynsky seems to be frightening enough in itself), but also saps the writer's own lived time, which, as Kotsiubynsky frequently stated, should be devoted to action within the world of actuality. On the other hand, the creating word, in its all-consuming jealousy, does not permit the worship of any other gods. And so the writer who writes, even more than the dreamer who does not (but who worships the word nevertheless), becomes a traitor over and over again, as if he were caught in a mirrored hall of infinite infidelities.

Thus the characters of "A Common-Law Marriage" point to the development of Kotsiubynsky's later heroes, who would remain in the center of opposing forces radiating from *the* world and from *his* world. Because of a catalyzing agent (nature, music, woman), the heavy film of actuality begins to dissolve before the hero's eyes in order to afford him a glimpse of the profoundest depths of existence; then it closes upon itself again and forever. What is even more tragic is that the actions of the hero are not chosen in freedom but are governed by fate. Kotsiubynsky implies, in a romantic tradition, that certain individuals are chosen to be cursed with an unquenchable longing for the ultimate horizons of existence. Like Shelley and other romantics, Kotsiubynsky regards them as "poets," even if they do not actually write verse. Once their longing, awakened by an outside catalyst, emerges to the surface of their consciousness, they are doomed to enter a vicious circle that will open only onto their death. Slowly the world of actuality, which they attempted to renounce, veils their personal myth with the public myth of its own "normality." Having lost both their vision and their ability to subsist blindly and mutely in the actual world, such heroes desperately attempt, and absurdly fail, to return to the fold of society. What is more, their own vision may reappear as a caricature of itself, as an antagonist who now has joined forces with the black magic—the public myth—of the world. In *Shadows*, Marichka, Ivan's inspiration, comes back to haunt him as a wood nymph.

The ultimate horizons of existence cannot be divorced from existence itself, since they emerge from it and become its possible-impossible extremities. The vision of Kotsiubynsky's heroes, therefore, never floats in supraterrestrial regions of mysticism but remains rooted in the soil which has not been spoiled by human dirt. Even the "radical" dream world of the hero of the late story "The Dream" (1911) is implicitly based on the landscapes of Capri. Following the romantics, Kotsiubynsky is consistent in showing that every transcendent act of the imagination must begin and end in the immanence of nature. The opposing energies that clash in Kotsiubynsky's stories, moreover, play themselves out not only within nature but against the accurately

observed and meticulously described background of daily life, be it the familiarity of the mundane existence in a Ukrainian provincial town or the otherness of the exotic, colorful life in a Moldavian, Tatar, or Hutsul village. Such settings, obviously, transcend the function of background. As early as "A Common-Law Marriage," the setting not only sets the psychological mood but almost speaks *for* the characters, saying practically everything that the story wants to say. This is particularly evident in Kotsiubynsky's later "exotic" stories.

In those stories with "exotic" settings, based on Kotsiubynsky's travels through the Bessarabian part of Moldavia and in the Crimea with the phylloxera commission, the beginnings of psychological exploration seen in the best of his early works are deepened and advanced; simultaneously, however, the surface is greatly expanded and enriched. Since surface and depth in a literary work imply each other, Kotsiubynsky experiments with the possibilities of indirect rendition of the characters' psychological states by word paintings of their environments, embodied in a style of heightened musical organization. His detailed descriptions of deliberately localized, meticulously grounded landscapes of Bessarabian Moldavia, the Crimea, and later Capri and the Carpathian Mountains—renditions embodied in striking metaphors—put the reader vicariously in the midst of those exotic landscapes. In an important ambiguity, however, those landscapes *are* distant and exotic, removing the action of the given story from the reader's own daily affairs. Such distancing of the settings on the one hand and their painstakingly accurate localization on the other force the reader to observe the vague but nevertheless excruciatingly intense desires of Kotsiubynsky's heroes from an unexpected point of view. This distanced point of view, however, does not alienate the heroes, but, on the contrary, draws the heroes' psyches much more closely to the reader's own experiences than a commonly shared world would—not by identification but by analogy. At the same time, the yearning for distance and otherness, both in the author and in the reader, is at least partially sublimated by the imaginative figuration of an exotic location. Such dialectics between sameness and difference are particularly evident in the late story "The Dream," in which the actual landscapes of Capri are used as building material for the hero's dreams.

Much has been said about Kotsiubynsky's masterful use of color in his mature work, particularly in the "exotic" stories.[19] Kotsiubynsky himself invited such observations. For example, he gave many of his stories subtitles borrowed from the more casual genres of the pictorial arts: "sketch," "watercolor," "small picture" (*obrazok*), and "miniature." Such confounding of genres and even of modes of artistic expression in a single work was in vogue throughout the nineteenth century. However, Kotsiubynsky's systematic justification of the given subtitle, taken from the pictorial arts by the structure and devices of the text itself, goes far beyond mere imitation, let alone empty catering to literary fashions. The painter Stepan Butnyk recalls conversations with Kotsiubynsky on the importance of "painting" in literature. A writer, Kotsiubynsky explained to Butnyk, should "use" colors as carefully and as personally as a painter develops them on his palette; he should not only know how to evoke in words the subtlest, the most nuanced shades that have no name in any language, but also be able to create harmonious color schemes and to put them at the service of the psychological tone of a given moment in the story.[20]

The "painterly" outlines—shimmering and vague—of Kotsiubynsky's landscapes are rendered with a great deal of help from music, the other nonverbal art always present in his work. Moreover, while the element of painting in Kotsiubynsky's style pretends, sometimes with too much eagerness, to serve the visible aspect of reality, the insistent musicality of his style evokes the world's invisible phase, underlying and predicating the visible. Like the pre-Socratics, Kotsiubynsky believes music to be the ordering and unifying energy of the universe, and therefore the highest embodiment of man's longing for the ultimate horizons of existence. The "music of the spheres" is the organizing force of the universe; the music of language is the organizing force of a literary work. As the "painterly" and musical effects are heightened in Kotsiubynsky's "exotic" stories, the need for a conventional plot structure decreases; what holds the story together is not its narrative line but the structural factors inherent in its visual effects, as they relate to each other in careful and intricate musical arrangements.

The "exotic" stories continue Kotsiubynsky's basic thematic concerns. The picturesque and "romantic" Bessarabian peasants, for example, reflect his growing concern with the primitive mentality that is opposed in principle to the ideas of education and progress. In "Pe cuptior" (Moldavian for "On the Oven"), he describes the village dance; he is both fascinated and repelled by the sweat, the bodily dirt, the dust, the workmanlike seriousness of the dancers, their red, glistening faces, the movement of controlled ritualistic gestures, and the unbridled, animalistic emotion that constantly runs under those gestures and motivates them. The elegant, fastidious Kotsiubynsky hesitantly approaches the sphere of elemental passions; never, not even in *Shadows*, does he dare to give himself over to that sphere completely, since for him lust is an offshoot of the black magic of the world. But, on the other hand, the dreamer in him knows that within the primitive sensuality of young peasant bodies, the deep music of the great god Pan sounds with its secret, atavistic energy. As the dreamer in Kotsiubynsky becomes increasingly disenchanted with the "virtues" of progress, he begins a cautious investigation of more hazardous but perhaps more authentic alternatives.

Kotsiubynsky passes harsh judgment on the superstitions and prejudices of peasant communities and their public myths, as opposed to the personal myths of his dreamer-heroes. We see such censure in the entirely successful "exotic" story "The Witch" (1898, which remained unpublished during the author's lifetime). The plot revolves around an unattractive and lonely Bessarabian girl who wanders about in her father's vineyards, pretending to be a beautiful princess. True to her dream, she proceeds to fall in love with the handsomest boy in the village. In her reveries she becomes someone else, an idealized double of her own humble self, an Other. Thus begins Kotsiubynsky's important psychological concern, which we shall meet quite frequently in his later stories: the interiorization of the Other within a single individual. Because of her lonely habits and her "otherness"—the "otherness" of the dreamer, which the collective treats as treason—the village avails itself of a public myth to brand her as a witch. It is only after a series of "tests," including a public examination of her naked body for a "tail," that she is allowed to shed her dreams and to return to the collective. The need for humility, even for self-abasement, which the girl experiences, along with the limitless possibilities of her reveries, hints at the spiritual dilemma that afflicts all dreamer-heroes in Kotsiubynsky's work; when crisis strikes, she desperately

wants to surrender her dreadful "otherness" and return to a society in which there is room for witches but no room for dreamers. What is more, she begins to identify herself with the image that the public myth has bestowed upon her, and she begs to be allowed to grovel at the feet of the world in order to convince herself of her own "normality."

Kotsiubynsky, in tune with the anthropologists of his time, regards public myth as a means of the primitive society to enforce the standards of the "normal" and the "average," supposedly established by the "ancestors." He disagrees with the anthropologists, however, as to the commonweal of such controls: he castigates the public myth as a weapon of the collective in its relentless effort to discipline and subdue the "otherness" of the dreamer. Small wonder that he often paints the collective itself as a threatening beast.

The central and by far the best story of the "exotic" group is "On the Rock" (1902). The action is set among the Crimean Tatars, and the plot, as in "A Common-Law Marriage," is the eternal triangle of husband, wife, and lover. But in this story the plot counts for even less than in Kotsiubynsky's previous work; it simply serves as a containing border around a field in which magnificent images and the slow rhythm of the narration embody the reveries of the hero and heroine. Here we have a continuation and advancement of what has previously been called Kotsiubynsky's writing-for-itself; we shall find its consummation in such later masterpieces as "Intermezzo" (1908) or "On the Island" (1912).

Ali, a young fisherman and stranger in the village, falls in love with Fatima, whom the rich butcher Mamet had bought from her parents and married with her total, animal-like indifference. (Such indifference, as seen also in the story "In Satan's Bonds" [1899], seems to be in Kotsiubynsky's eyes the normal emotional state of the enslaved Tatar woman.) The lovers escape from the village and are mercilessly and methodically hunted by Mamet and his clan. Fatima falls from a rock to her death (as Marichka does in *Shadows*), and Ali dies under Mamet's butcher knife. Beneath the scaffolding of that trite triangle we again encounter Kotsiubynsky's basic thematic structure—the much profounder triangle of the dreamer, his catalyst, and the world. What is even more interesting is that here we have a double direction of the energies flowing between the dreamer and his inspiration: although Fatima is more passive than Ali, he catalyzes her awakening almost as powerfully as she catalyzes his. By giving a part of themselves, they awaken the Other in each other.

The huts of the Tatar village, built of rock and covered by flat, earthen roofs, seem to blend into the dull and deadly landscape around them, a landscape that in *Shadows* becomes the spiritualized, metaphysical wasteland of the *aridnyk*. This is the kingdom of Mamet, the representative of the world. When his wife Fatima runs away from him, he treats the escape of the dreamer as a theft of his goods. Ali, the "thief" of Mamet's "property," has the soul of a poet, and music is the means of his artistic expression. His native element is the limitless expanse of the sea, in opposition to the dry sand of Mamet's village. Ali came to the village by sea, and the sea will accept the return of his corpse. As if foreseeing that her fate (both love and death) will arrive by sea, Fatima is both fascinated and repelled by it.

The sea not only opposes the aridity of Mamet's kingdom, but also acts as the counterpart of the restlessness and constant variability of the mountains which are Fatima's home. The mountains become the central symbolic

landscape in the story; it is to the mountains—the cradle of Fatima's childhood and the center of her being—that she and her lover attempt to escape from Mamet's dead land. Fatima and the reverie of the mountains from which she comes embody for Ali the highest aspirations of his spirit, the final concentration and explosion to which his monotonous music—the music of the sea—has been leading him. "On the Rock" is an excellent example of how Kotsiubynsky uses the setting to tell the story. The three kinds of landscapes are foregrounded throughout the slow narrative in order to embody the three points of the triangle—the dreamer (the sea), his inspiration (the mountains), and the world (stone and sand)—which constitute Kotsiubynsky's basic thematic structure.

In the stories that come after the "exotic" group, Kotsiubynsky again places the deep psychological probing that he had begun in his early work in the foreground. Painting and music indeed remain in the style of his later works, but they become somewhat more subdued: although the carefully observed details of the setting continue to reflect the state of the hero's soul, the stress is now not so much on the outer as on the inner world.

In the frame of the first-person narrative, which becomes increasingly frequent, the hero's consciousness embraces and interiorizes the landscape. The hero as such has changed very little, but some of his features, vaguely detectable in the early stories, have now been brought into sharper focus at the expense of others. We have seen that the lonely fighter for education and progress had been replaced, in the main, by the lonely dreamer, struggling for the vision of his personal myth and desperately attempting to protect it from the vengeful hand of the world. An important variant of the lonely dreamer, moreover, is introduced in a number of the later stories. He is the anonymous revolutionary who has given up not only his personal life but his personal identity for the cause of terrorism, as preached by "The People's Will" and other extreme groups in the underground of the Empire. The tremendous difference between such a hero and the social activist in the early stories is that he not only refuses to bore us with interminable sermons, but does not even mention his cause, and the story concentrates exclusively on the nuanced states of a psyche *in extremis*: The didactic function of literature, so important to the young Kotsiubynsky, had now been left pretty much by the wayside. Needless to say, the milieu of the hero has changed drastically, the exotic settings having been replaced by more familiar environments.

There are two opposite kinds of dreams in Kotsiubynsky's later stories. Dream can be a thirst for the ultimate horizons of existence and therefore can serve as an open alternative to an actuality that has become odious; or it can become enslaving self-delusion, a further narrowing of the already narrow horizons of actuality, an unwitting escape from the dynamism of freedom into a state of petrification that Sartre calls bad faith. The defeated dreamer-hero may finish by begging at the gates of the world, but he will have at least experienced his moment of apotheosis. The self-deceived hero, on the other hand, will begin and end as a slave of the world. He will never experience the moment of his authenticity but will always use his false dream to isolate himself from himself.

Fata Morgana (1903, 1910), Kotsiubynsky's largest work, is built around a confrontation between the two kinds of dreamers. Each of the peasant heroes plays out the drama of his own dream against the tragic panorama of public events (peasant unrest around 1902). Some of those dreams are

enslaving delusions; others are liberated acts of intentionality toward the distant horizons of the future. All fail equally, the self-deluded dreamers destroying the self-chosen dreamers, to be destroyed in their turn by the punishing hand of the world.

Andrii Volyk, a peasant whose healthy roots in his native soil have been damaged by false dreams of progress in a corrupt society, deludes himself by reveries of a burned-out factory—a vodka distillery which by its very function symbolizes false dreams—rising from its ashes like the phoenix and providing good jobs for everyone in the neighborhood. Fate sets out to confound Andrii's dreams in a series of cynical paradoxes. The factory is indeed rebuilt, but not by a miracle: a greedy landlord restores it in order to exploit the peasants even more effectively than when he had forced them to till his land. The factory cripples Andrii and eventually costs him his life. Volyk's wife, Malanka, who, possibly by virtue of being a woman, is intimately close to the earth, opposes her husband's sterile dream by her own reverie of seeding and fruition, which Kotsiubynsky renders in her magnificent and justly famous apostrophe to the earth. But her dream, too, has been corrupted by childish greed and a naive faith in the powers that be; any day now, she hopes the landowners will generously distribute the land to the peasants.

The two dreamers use their inauthentic reveries to devour each other even before tragedy strikes, each of them ferociously defending his or her own self-deceptive image of reality, since their very existence depends on such delusions. Their daughter Hafiika and her young friend Marko Hushcha, on the other hand, are constructive dreamers; unlike Andrii and Malanka, they do not wait for the landowners to make them a gift of a bright future but hope to take their lives into their own hands by means of a revolution. To their vision is later joined the reverie of the young farmer Prokip, who dreams of milder social reforms through the establishment of peasants' unions. But although the reveries of the young people are intentional gestures toward the future, they prove to be as futile as those of their parents. While the older generation mistakenly counts on the generosity of the powerful, the young generation, equally blindly, relies on the self-discipline of the downtrodden. The followers of delusion, represented by Andrii Volyk, and the leaders of vision, represented by Prokip, fall side by side, while the revolutionary Marko Hushcha is forced to escape and to leave the village to its own devices. The iron hand of the world has cut down those whose dreams, whether false or authentic, dared to oppose it.

In Kotsiubynsky's important work "The Dream" (1911), the mindlessness of middle-class existence is directly opposed to the inner life of the hero (based on his personal myth), while the question of social struggle is ignored almost altogether. Nevertheless, Kotsiubynsky's thematic triangle—the dreamer, his catalyst, and the world—continues to obtain in the story. Antin is a minor government official whose existence is split between rigid, daily routine and a lush dream life, based on Kotsiubynsky's own experience of the generous nature of the Isle of Capri. Antin's days are dominated by his wife Marta, a loving but hopelessly dull woman who meticulously cares for his creature comforts but is totally incapable of understanding his spiritual needs. His "dream work" is ruled by a golden-haired beauty who is something of a poet as well as a revolutionary, serving as a "kindred spirit," an alternative guide in an alternative reality, a sensitive muse in a thoroughly poeticized landscape.

At the outset of the story, Kotsiubynsky mentions in a deliberately casual aside the crucial fact that Antin is a secret writer. While Marta and her chatty neighbors occasionally enjoy an innocent game of cards, our bitter hero locks himself in his room, smokes furiously, and writes something that no strangers' eyes will ever see. As a frustrated, profoundly lonely writer without an audience, Antin is particularly susceptible to intense, almost vengeful, reveries of the ultimate horizons of existence:

> He wanted to experience something, something powerful and beautiful like a storm at sea, like a breath of spring, like a new fairy tale of life. To sing out the unfinished song that lay in his breast with folded wings. He would find new words, not those that rustled underfoot like wilted leaves, but full, rich, and sonorous ones.[21]

In the end, however, this does not work for Antin. Since his echoless writing fails to fulfill him and his daily life offers so little beauty, it is not surprising that he turns to the wordless creation of dreams, which reflect the ephemeral and gratuitous creation of nature.

Almost maliciously, as if to punish her for her inability to fly with him to the land of his reveries, Antin tells Marta his recurring dream, making certain to include both himself as his own uniquely happy Other and his beautiful golden-haired guide, the companion of his joyful otherness, and therefore his true wife. His frequent interjections "Do you understand?" "Have you forgotten?" are meant to act upon his mundane wife as accusations of some profound misdeeds, of which the poor woman cannot possibly be aware. He blames her for having forgotten how to dream, how to be young. He lashes out at the mask of the oppressive world which he has foisted upon his wife, using as his whip the eloquence of his words and fervor of his imagination.

There is a strong hint here of immorality, inadvertently implied by a writer's double life (his daily self and his creating Other). This vicious circle includes the fact that the writer cannot take the people who are close to him into the realm of his imagination (since he jealously guards it from them to begin with), and paradoxically resents the fact that they cannot follow him there. Bitterly, Antin shouts to Marta, "You would like me to be silent forever, like a stone, like yourself."[22] Antin finally achieves the effect that he has consciously or unconsciously desired; Marta begins to feel that she indeed is an intruder in the incomprehensible intimacy between her husband and his ethereal lover and muse, who (as it becomes plain by now) is an implicit substitute for his frustrated writing.

Their sullen and acrid quarrels become increasingly dangerous, since they both feel that not only the peace of their daily existence but their very identities are at stake. Marta intuits with increasing terror the mysterious, magical power of the poetic word that her husband wields. She becomes more and more jealous of her husband's alternative companion. When Antin reminds her for the hundredth time that the strange woman is merely a product of his dream, she replies, profoundly intuiting the powers of her meek husband's daring Other, "I understand that it was a dream.... But you are capable of going ahead and doing whatever you dream."[23] With profound psychological insight, Kotsiubynsky ends the story with Marta's ambiguous resurrection. As the couple's quarrels grow in intensity, she begins to rediscover her own self, to feel young and carefree again. And while she finds her own self not in poetic

discourse but in plain, angry words, Antin seems to be secretly glad to expiate his sin against her and therefore against actuality.

The two beings of the dreamer—himself and his Other—and the constant conflict that is forced upon them by their shared existence are brilliantly embodied in "The Apple Blossom" (1902). (While in "The Dream" Kotsiubynsky does question the various evasions of the writer in the face of the world, his sympathies seem to be on the side of the hero.) "The Apple Blossom" is discussed out of chronological order since it is here that Kotsiubynsky's interrogation of the writer's morality is more open and radical and the placement of the author's sympathy is quite ambiguous. The writer's art, moreover, is interrogated not on the ground of the need for social action, nor on the ground of the writer's shoddy environment and petty personal existence, but on the much deeper level of the meaning of death as opposed to creativity.

The difficult theme (treated in our own time by, among many others, Ingmar Bergman in his film *Through a Glass Darkly* and Robert Penn Warren in his most recent novel, *A Place To Come To*) is handled by Kotsiubynsky with admirable subtlety and tact. A novelist is doomed to witness the slow death of his little daughter, vanquished by some horrible respiratory disease. As his heart fills with despair, his mirrorlike, self-reflective consciousness mercilessly records the "aesthetic" aspect of the child's agony and, more importantly, his own complex attitudes toward it. (He plans to use his observations in a novel, not about the death of a child, but about a sentimentally pathetic love affair.) To this intricate complex of emotions is added the hero's shameful desire to run away and turn his back on the disturbing and disorderly scene of death. The tragedy of the writer's self-reflective consciousness is that it bars him from immersing himself in the process of life and thus accepting the natural inevitability of death. It does not allow him to enter into another's pain, forcing him instead to wallow in his own posed misery caused by the other's suffering.

When the child finally dies in the early morning hours, the father, bereaved by the death itself and ashamed of his ambivalent attitude toward it, walks out into the awakening orchard and returns with an armful of branches covered with bedewed apple blossoms. The freshly cut branches seem to teach the writer a subtle and difficult lesson about life and death, as well as about art and reality. Neither his dead daughter (having become Other in death) nor the apple blossoms (symbolizing the inexorable cyclical course of nature which includes death within its eternal and impersonal movement of life) care about the cheap spectacle of evasions and breast beatings with which the hero had been entertaining himself through the night.

The self-centered way in which the writer looks upon the world and upon his own self is dissolved and absolved by the knowledge that there exists outside his greedy consciousness the indifference, and hence the ultimate difference, of nature. The seamless, self-enclosed unity of nature precludes reflection; its pulsating rings of eternal recurrence refuse to give him solace in the personal loss that the death of his daughter implies. He realizes that he should open the protective walls of his soul to the temporal waves of nature; he should merge his self with its incessant rhythms. The lesson of such joyful fatalism will help the hero to bridge the abyss between the man and the writer, turning him, possibly, into a better man and a better writer.

In the last sentence of the story, that happy knowledge finally breaks down the prison walls of the hero's consciousness and gives him the gift of

tears for his dead daughter. And yet the resolution of the story remains uncertain. The ambiguities implied by it seem to stem from Kotsiubynsky's own fear, perhaps not fully realized by himself. It has to do with the writer's total commitment to the idealized realm of the imagination. Kotsiubynsky, like his hero, seems to struggle against the overwhelming temptation to exchange the hazardous *outside* of life and death in the world for the controlled and orderly *inside* of his work. Does not the fear of life, then, cause Kotsiubynsky's hero (and perhaps Kotsiubynsky himself) to use the purity and indifference of nature as an excuse for his escape from daily existence and its messy involvements? Although dream and work, according to Kotsiubynsky, should grow out of nature, is the indifference of nature truly an answer to the dilemmas of human existence? In "The Apple Blossom," he asks this question on a profound level, where easy answers do not help anymore; here it is the struggle itself—in itself yielding magnificant short stories—that hints at an inexpressible answer. The thematic triangle of the dreamer, his catalyst, and the world seems to undergo an interesting transformation in this story: it is the writer's inauthentic creativity that implies the world, while the blossoming apple boughs become a catalyst of a spiritually promising future.

Such profound interrogation of the nature of reality and illusion is again masterfully embodied in three important works: "From the Depth" (1903-1904), "Intermezzo" (1908), and "On the Island" (1912). Although Kotsiubynsky wrote them at various times in his career, they are related both by their form and by similar thematic considerations. Extended prose poems rather than conventional short stories (only "Intermezzo" hints at a plot structure) constructed upon musical shifts of mood within a densely woven web of poetic imagery, they subtly address themselves to problems of action versus reverie; art versus reality; the work that a text performs within temporal duration versus spontaneous, sychronic, effortless, wordless creativity; the writer as a double agent.

Obviously indebted to the symbolism of the German and Scandinavian variety, "From the Depth" is divided into four short parts: "Clouds," "Weariness," "The Lonely One," and "The Dream" (not to be confused with the previously discussed short story of the same name). In "Clouds," the poet's soul attempts to blend with a wandering cloud, since both are possessed by the desire for the ultimate horizons of existence. The narrator's romantic longing becomes even more pronounced in the second part of the work, characteristically called "Weariness," in which he expresses profound grievances against the sky and the earth; he is jealous of their constancy, pitting against it the fluctuating mutability of his own consciousness. No matter what momentary emotions disturb the sky and the earth, they soon return to their mindless essence; the creative individual does not seem to have a permanent form to which he can return. The narrator proceeds to express a seemingly contradictory, but actually identical, grievance against water, which has the gift of nonconscious, instantaneous, and gratuitous improvisation that is the hallmark of all truly liberated creativity. Water, like the ideal of the poetic imagination, not only reflects the world by its otherness, but its very otherness breaks up and reshapes the forms of the world, while at the same time constantly remaining itself.

The third part, "The Lonely One," continues the theme of the artist's alienation from the center of being and his resulting loneliness. But now the narrator finds himself not only outside the community of nature but also

outside human society. No matter what demands are placed upon the poet by the people with whom he lives, he is doomed to remain cold and indifferent to such demands at the deepest level of his being. The poet makes contact with his human environment only because he finds it morally necessary to do so. Neither social commitments nor the much more intimate commitments of life alleviate the poet's accursed state of otherness.

While in the first three parts of "From the Depth" the poet was alienated from nature, from love, and from society, in the last part, "The Dream," he becomes alienated even from himself. The division between the writer and the man, a division that tortured Kotsiubynsky throughout his life, is nowhere expressed more plainly than in this fragment. The narrator dreams that only one-half of his heart is beating in his chest, and that he spends his life wandering through symbolic landscapes in search of the other half. But when he finally finds it, his chest is emptier than before. Is it that he has made his heart whole too late in life, and that the weariness of the search—the winter of old age—has now fallen on him? Or is it that the poet's fate is to remain incomplete, constantly searching for the other half of his heart as a possibility, and that this very search constitutes the heart of his creativity, while the attainment of wholeness and the ensuing semblance of perfection kills it? If this is so, then Kotsiubynsky is again questioning the mindless completeness of nature as a feasible model of human creativity. We may be envious of the organic unity of nature, we may attempt to emulate it, but our reaching of such perfection would be tantamount to spiritual death.

"Intermezzo," the second work in the triptych, is central to our understanding of Kotsiubynsky's deep interest in the exchange between the creative individual and other people. The opening of the story (the bare outline of a plot allows us to call it a story) hints at the flickering line between the "I" and the "non-I.' The "non-I," as we have seen in Kotsiubynsky time and again, is divided into the realm of nature and that of the world or of other people, while that world of other people is again subdivided into the black magic of power and the struggle against it. The threat of dissolution of the self in the blind lives of other people causes the narrator to experience an emotion close to panic.

> I feel how the lives of others enter mine, as air enters through doors and windows, as rivulets enter a river. I cannot avoid Man, *I cannot be alone.* I must confess that I envy the planets: they have their orbits, and nothing can stand in their path. While on my path I find Man always and everywhere. Yes, you stand in my way, and you believe that you have a right to me.[24]

Such musings continue with the somewhat Sartrean image of the master-slave dialectic contained within the Look: "Everywhere I encounter your look," the narrator says to us, his readers, "your eyes—curious, greedy—crawl into me, and you yourself, in the variety of your colors and forms, pierce my pupils.[25]

When the narrator manages to leave his large city for a rest in the country, he believes that he has returned to his true home. A different otherness now invades his being—the welcome difference of indifferent nature, which makes no claims upon him but organically brackets his personality, together with its cares and worries, and draws his prepersonal self into its own anonymous

rhythms of growth and decay. The very style of the piece, with its magnificent imagery and its emphatically musical prose, is Kotsiubynsky's linguistic embodiment of the narrator's instantaneous reveries inside nature, now turned into writing, not by the narrator but by the author, and thus externalized for the sake of the unknown reader. Images cascade one upon another generously and effortlessly; here wordless reverie almost recreates itself in words, almost writes itself. In this seamless cloth of the universe, where "everything weaves itself," the narrator considers himself rich,

> although I do not own anything. Because beyond all programs and political parties the earth belongs to me. It is mine. All of it—huge, magnificent, already created—all of it I contain within myself. *There I create it again, a second time,* and then it seems to me that I have even more right to it.[26]

Because the narrator's prepersonal self has given itself back to nature, from where it originally came, it can now possess nature within itself and recreate it in reveries as effortlessly as water recreates reality in "From the Depth." The wished-for union has finally been achieved. Or has it?

What deep motive lies under the narrator's desire to repossess the earth and to rehearse the *fiat lux* once again in his preconscious being? Is it perhaps the desire to play God, beyond and above other people? The ethical implication behind the narrator's illusion of the unification with nature on the prepersonal level of his self, an issue that tormented the romantics, does not give him the peace that he had the illusion of obtaining. It is through such moral qualms that other people reach him, indirectly and implicitly, within the shell of his reverie of unification with nature. What water can do, man cannot; he is not permitted to return home, to his original innocence. Small wonder that the narrator calls the cuckoo—the elusive wanderer, thief, and prophet—his closest friend.

The unified tapestry of the writing, which weaves itself almost without the intervention of the author's personality, is suddenly rent asunder by rough, intentional human speech. One day in the fields, the narrator encounters a poor peasant whom he calls, rather melodramatically, Man. The abstract "People" in the beginning of the story, from whom the narrator attempted to escape (and whose role has been passed on to the reader by the pronoun "you") have now been made concrete: Man begins to speak. Quietly and simply, with the barely hidden urgency of strong emotion, the peasant relates the grotesquely horrible scenes of his life, while the poet encourages him with the rhythmically repeated phrase: "Speak, speak!" The pearl of the sun, enclosed in the blue shell of the sky, to which the narrator a while ago spoke a magnificent pagan hymn, is now cursed for its indifference to human suffering. Silently, in thought, the narrator urges Man to ignite another sun in the sky:

> Speak, speak! Overheat the cupola of the sky with your anger. Cover it with the clouds of your grief.... Make the sky and the earth fresh again. Extinguish the sun and light another one in the sky. Speak, speak![27]

We see that the peasant is encouraged to perform a *fiat lux* of his own, opposite in intent to that of the artist.

The holiday of language, the celebration of pure writing, cannot continue while the peasant still has reason to say what he says, to use language in such a direct, crude, and angry way. Whether the narrator wishes it or not, he has to return to the city (which has now become his real home again) and resume his intentional acts toward others. Perhaps one day he will be able to come back to his reverie of the essence of nature and to the land of his personal myth in order to reside there until the end of his life, but this will happen only when the cause of Man's anger is vanquished. For the time being, however, the paradise of pure reverie for the narrator (and of pure writing for Kotsiubynsky) has not been wasted. In a sort of catharsis, in a supreme effort of the will toward absolute willessness, it has tuned the narrator's spirit for the task that waits at hand. In the first part of the story (as in the three segments of "From the Depth"), nature had provided a catalyst that opened for the narrator the farthest recesses of his personal myth and made it possible for him to shut out the clamorous demands of the world. In the second part, however, a new catalyst, the voice of Man, has appeared. In a reversal unprecedented in Kotsiubynsky's work, this catalyst inspires in the narrator a new understanding of the Categorical Imperative and hence of the world; the world has called the poet to itself, to fight the world's black magic.

"On the Island," the last item in the triptych of poems in prose discussed here, is also the very last work of Kotsiubynsky's oeuvre. Death, in fact, prevented him from finishing it.[28] The text, as it has come down to us, has nevertheless its own completeness; its provisional closure is not only perfectly adequate for this particular work, but it provides a full-voiced coda to Kotsiubynsky's entire oeuvre and to his creative life. In "On the Island," Kotsiubynsky no longer finds it necessary either to lament man's separation from nature or to fret about the necessity of commitment. He now indulges in poetic reverie without reservation. The text as the activity of writing—or weaving—now becomes emancipated from the world of striving, be it the striving for gain or the striving of revolutionary activity. The point of the world in Kotsiubynsky's thematic triangle ceases to be a threatening force, and the structure comes to rest upon the harmonious relationship between the dreamer and his inspiration.

The seemingly effortless stream of the narrative, the freely flowing generosity of imagery, the primacy of the prepersonal self—all this communicates to us the almost physical pleasure that the author takes in the process of writing, which appears to be as simple as closing one's eyes and "writing" a reverie without words. Although the physical activity of putting words on paper, of composing sentences and paragraphs in temporal duration, is still second-best to instantaneous and synoptic reverie, it attempts to approximate (as it does in "Intermezzo") the silent blending of consciousness with the essence of nature. Writing recreates nature's own seemingly chaotic, capricious acts of creation, which nevertheless emanate from, and are subject to, the ordered rhythms of the eternal return. This does not mean that language undergoes any sort of "minimalization" or "reduction"; the language in "On the Island" is of a particularly dense and rich texture, since it is only thus that it can become transparent for the sake of the mysterious and ineffable energies that flow underneath it. Judging by the provisional closure of the work, moreover, we have reason to believe that such a closely woven poetic reverie now becomes for Kotsiubynsky a matter of life and death.

The single element that threatens the potential communion between the narrator and nature is other people, who here represent but a fleeting shadow, a chance reminder, of the world. In this work, we never get a good look at them, with the exception of the fisherman Guiseppe. People spoil the purity of Capri because of their rootlessness and the disorder of their lives, as opposed to the eternal difference and yet sameness of the island's nature. Here Kotsiubynsky allows himself to say openly what he probably wanted to say, and indeed implied, in much of his later work:

> People shamble about this way and that—who knows where and to what purpose—and all of this together is like a puppet theater in which the director has confused the order of the play.[29]

While the narrator, who feels totally united with nature, dreams on the seashore, weaving a network of images, "people come, and with the noise of foreigners drown out the sea."[30]

The presence of Giuseppe does not spoil the pristine order of the island and the sea, because he and his songs are an integral part of that order. In Giuseppe's presence, the island's self-containment, circumscribed by its shores and by its essential difference from the sea, is cancelled by total openness. In the fisherman's boat, the narrator experiences an Orphic reverie of unification, in which the sky unites with the earth, while he himself is metamorphosed into a bird. His reverie, moreover, reaches beyond his personal childhood and birth to "a former time," to the mythical childhood of the world:

> We are flying. I for one have this impression, caused perhaps by the blueness that surrounds us: it is above us and beneath us, ahead of us and behind us, on all sides. Even the air seems blue. Was I not a bird in a former time?
>
> The oars carry us like wings, the salty wind fills our lungs, the sails of fishing boats—who knows, in the sea or in the sky?—fly out in a flock to meet us, free as birds. I feel that a pair of wings is growing behind my shoulders.... We are flying. Beneath us is a blue depth, above—a kindred height.[31]

We recall that the peasant in "Intermezzo" serves as a rough wedge, brutally driven between the unity of nature and the narrator's consciousness. Man's suffering forces the narrator out of his reverie of unification with nature and into the recognition of a radical difference between nature and himself. No such abrupt shock takes place in "On the Island," because here the narrator learns a more profound lesson: nature is not the setting for a fleeting, although possibly an intensely symbolic, holiday, nor is it a frame for ephemeral, although possibly intensely poetic, emotions. By the same token, creativity can no longer be treated as a brief respite from more "serious" social and political obligations. It is now Giuseppe, the exotic, laughing son of a sea wave, and not the suffering Ukrainian peasant, who is the shaman of the piece, and perhaps the narrator's imagined, idealized father. As the provisional closure of the story shows, it is within nature and not outside it—certainly not in the nervously, erratically striving society—that the most tragic and at the same time the highest aspirations of the human individual are transmuted into supra-personal, suprahuman symbols by the eternal rhythms of recurrence.

That provisional closure seems to be more appropriate than anything we might expect in the way of Kotsiubynsky's projected conclusion (in which he probably intended once again to remind the narrator of his social obligations). The narrator, musing on a row of agave plants growing outside his window, reminds himself that the agave blooms only once and that the effort that the plant exerts to produce the flower costs it its life.

Doubtless, the apotheosis of the agave plant parallels the end of the writer's career, exemplified by his profoundest piece of work. We might speculate that Kotsiubynsky would want his own career, ridden as it was by doubts and hesitations, to take his life in such a noble and tragic explosion within the forever new and yet forever constant rhythms of nature, instead of his life stopping unfinished, still plagued by a thirst for the possible-impossible horizons of existence.

3

Early in 1896, Kotsiubynsky wrote his wife-to-be that the customs, rituals, songs, and legends that Ukrainians inherited from their pagan ancestors had a special, mysterious meaning for him, that they reminded him of his own childhood and at the same time echoed the poetry of ancient, prehistoric times.[32] It is as if folk traditions inspired Kotsiubynsky to dream not only of his own early years but of the childhood of the world. In "Our Trip to the Holy Well," written three years before *Shadows*, we find the following observation on the "shadows of the forgotten ancestors":

> I keep thinking about those wise people who build their churches, monasteries, and chapels in the best, the wildest places. They know what they are doing. They are addressing not so much us as the ancestors who are alive within us, ancestors who for centuries staged their sacred games in woods and groves and burned their sacrifices there.[33]

The narrator himself wants to build "a holy fire" and to draw out of his breast "the sleeping ancestral voice."[34]

Those sleeping ancestral voices, then, are both around us (when, according to Ukrainian mythology, the dead return to the earth each spring) and within us, on the prepersonal level of the self or, as Jung taught, in our collective unconscious. When he first heard about the Hutsuls, Kotsiubynsky immediately recognized that they were closer to the spirit of their ancestors, by being closer to nature, than highly civilized individuals like himself. Did he believe, moreover, that an artist could do worse than to bring the shadow of somebody like a Hutsul "ancestor" to life in his own psyche? *Shadows* suggests that he did.

Kotsiubynsky finished *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* in Chernihiv on 3 October 1911, and it was published in 1912 (in the January and February issues of the Western Ukrainian monthly *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk*). The first critical review of it appeared in May of the same year in the newspaper *Rada*; in June it was published in a Russian translation in the bimonthly journal *Zavety*.

Some critics have held that *Shadows* is a departure from Kotsiubynsky's usual style and thematic concerns, representing the beginning of a new creative phase which death did not allow him to continue. There is no evidence for such

an assumption; the novel, on the contrary, is a continuation and even a synthesis of the philosophical and psychological interests which occupied Kotsiubynsky throughout his mature career. Some commentators (particularly those in the West) overstress the "pastoral" qualities of the work, while others (largely in the Soviet Union) place too much emphasis on its sociological aspects. As early as 1929, P. Zlatoustov wrote that *Shadows* is intended to depict the poverty, the demoralization of the family, bloody vendettas, superstitions, and savage customs, and that

> the reader does not admire those shadows ... but wishes that man might liberate himself as quickly as possible from such spiritual chains, which the forgotten ancestors have twisted around their heirs.[35]

It seems to me that *Shadows* outgrows its "pastoral" and "sociological" aspects, although admittedly it does carry traces of both. The meticulously researched and detailed background should not be taken for more than what it is: a dynamic canvas that serves as a backdrop for Kotsiubynsky's triangular structure of opposing forces—the poet's thirst for the ultimate horizons of existence, catalyzed by an outside force of inspiration, versus the cruelly inhibiting horizons of the world.

A schema of the complex synchronic structure of the novel, in which all elements work against or with each other simultaneously, might contain four levels of representation: the realistic-mimetic level; the realistic-legendary level, on which the Hutsul legends and rituals (serving here as specific embodiments of the public myth) involve the daily lives of the villagers; the legendary-mythical level (on which the Hutsul legends of cosmogony and of the elements—especially fire and water—transcend the daily use of black magic, point to powerful universal archetypes, and embody the author's own complex philosophy of creativity); and the personal-mythical level of Ivan's poetic reveries. It is interesting that the second and third levels are divided by the symbolism of locale: the black magic of the public myth is exercised in the populated valleys, and the higher myths of the Hutsuls are told by the mysterious guardians of the eternal fire on the high mountain pastures.

The plot of *Shadows*, like the plots of most of Kotsiubynsky's mature works, is merely a framework designed to contain and guide the rich symbolism of the theme. It is, nevertheless, heavily melodramatic and rather conventional. Some critics have made interesting attempts to find models for it in world literature. Wiśniewska, for instance, usefully discusses the epic progression between the birth and the death of the hero.[36] On the other hand, too much has been made of the mere hint in the plot at the model of Romeo and Juliet, a scheme that in *Shadows* soon breaks down under closer scrutiny.[37]

Shadows begins with a "sociological" description of poverty. This superficial level, however, is soon transcended to make room for the uncanny. Ivan's mother suspects her little son of being a changeling, a son of the devil. As in the case of the heroine of "The Witch," here the collective, with the help of the public myth, attempts to explain Ivan's otherness, which is beyond the comprehension of ordinary people. The mother's accusation, in other words, is based on the realistic-legendary level of the schema. Soon, however, Kotsiubynsky enriches that level by a profounder dimension; Ivan's mother turns

to a public myth to explain to herself her son's early poetic calling (the word "poet" is used here in the romantic sense, as Kotsiubynsky himself uses it throughout his oeuvre).

Ivan's poetic calling is symbolized by his refusal to play on his reed the folk melodies of his people, and by his preference to listen "to the faint and elusive melodies that dwelled within him." It is also important to this discussion that even in his childhood Ivan personalizes nature not according to the established images of public myths but by means of his own poetic metaphors. We see, finally, that Ivan's childhood is spent in apartness; from early childhood on, he is nurtured by nature and does not seem to need people for company.

Even as a child, Ivan is haunted by premonitions of horror, as if receiving supernatural intimations of his fate. Before meeting the Vanisher, for example, he fights through a tangle of roots, bushes, and low trees, the kind of "Gothic" landscape that will serve as a background for his climb to the high upland pasture and, later, for his death. There are even more profound premonitions of horror in Ivan's early youth. The poetic reverie that enriches his perception of the world implies a mysterious, unnamed dread beyond the taboo line of the magic circle around the village: "Waking at night, surrounded by a hostile silence, Ivan would often lie trembling with horror."

It is fitting, considering Kotsiubynsky's philosophy of creativity, that an atmosphere of horror should accompany Ivan on the way to his epiphany as a poet, which occurs at his meeting with the Vanisher. He plays for Ivan melodies of his own invention, which he composed in spite of God, or, more precisely, to spite God. (Kotsiubynsky seems to treat *shcheznyk* and *aridnyk* as two separate beings, although most Hutsul myths identify them as two interchangeable names of the devil.) Kotsiubynsky emphasizes that the Vanisher's melodies cannot be heard by ordinary people; one's psyche, it seems, must be subtly tuned to become aware of them. But although the Vanisher's melodies do not reach ordinary ears, not only are they clearly heard by Ivan, but they are not really new to him. It is of utmost importance that the Vanisher's music simply reveals and gives body to those faint and elusive melodies that have lived in Ivan's breast since his birth but which he could not express on his reed before his meeting with the Vanisher. A sense both of triumph and of tragedy accompanies this revelation. Little Ivan dances an exultant dance to celebrate the Vanisher's joy at having found the goats that God had taken from him and, more important, to express his own joy at having discovered his gift. As for the goats, whose "preternatural" image is intermingled with the "natural" image of gnarled roots and dry branches in Ivan's poetic imagination, their presence in the Hutsul myths of the *aridnyk* is evident, but this does not prevent Kotsiubynsky's image from pointing (on the legendary-mythical level of the schema) to the sphere of Pan and, finally, to the Dionysian symbol of sacrifice and tragedy.

When the Vanisher disappears and his goats turn into gnarled branches, the music of Satan completes its apotheosis in Ivan. He

> strained his memory and tried to recreate the sounds, and when he had finally found what he had been seeking for a long time, what had given him no rest, a strange, unfamiliar tune floated through the forest. Joy filled Ivan's heart.

What is a small boy's "long time"? Where is his "long ago"? Is it before his personal birth, when, as the romantics claim, all poetic reverie has its beginning? And what is it exactly that Ivan has been seeking for such a long time? Not only did he find in the music of Satan a confirmation, through embodiment, of his own vague calling, which enabled him to play his own mysterious melodies, but he also discovered his tragic fate of poet as sufferer and ultimately as victim.

Ivan's dance symbolizes an acquiescence to the music of Satan, the conclusion, as it were, of a pact with the devil. This, incidentally, is a frequent motif in Hutsul mythology, at the same time pointing to a wider thematic framework. Art as the dubious gift of the devil appears in Western literature again and again, but it is particularly in Kotsiubynsky's world that to be cursed from birth with the gift of unique songs, and then to have them confirmed by the devil, means to cross the forbidden line and to step on the road to perdition. The set, unilateral public-myth image of Ivan as a changeling and a son of devils now acquires a multivalent symbolic dimension and reaches the level of an ambiguous and unique personal myth.

It is obvious that the Vanisher in *Shadows*, to a much greater extent than his original characterization in the public myths of the Hutsuls, echoes the elusive, "vanishing," and dangerous god Pan. We recall that in early Greek mythology Pan was a primitive god or demon who was worshipped, in the main, by mountain shepherds. His abode was high in the mountains, usually within a rock. In some Hutsul myths, the *aridnyk* also lives in a rock and is called "He who lives in a rock" (*Toi, shcho v skali sydyt*). Pan protected sheepfolds and shepherds from inclement weather, and his favorite animal was the goat (the lower part of his body and his horns were goatlike). Pan made for himself a seven-reed pipe, upon which he played strange, haunting melodies. In keeping with the pagan conception of indifferent, estranged gods, Pan's attitude toward mankind was ambivalent and impossible to predict. A rather benevolent and carefree being, he was nevertheless easily angered and would express his anger by visiting waves of inexplicable terror or panic (hence the derivation of the word) upon people and cattle. He also had the habit of appearing not directly but in visions and dreams. It is difficult to miss here a parallel to the mysterious events in the upland pasture and particularly to Ivan's ineffable feelings of dread.

Although high-born Greeks considered Pan to be a god of peasants—unwashed, hairy, lascivious, goatish, fierce, inconstant, and noisy, as opposed to his adversary, the elegant Apollo—there developed as early as the "Homeric" hymn to Pan another view of that god, reaching the heights of mystical thought. That view seems to have been based on a semantic confusion. The derivation of the name Pan is from *pa-on*, which means "grazer"; however, the anonymous author of the Orphic hymn to Pan, along with other early Greek poets treating the theme, confused Pan with the word "pan," meaning "all." Such etymological misunderstanding, as Patricia Merivale points out, made possible the extension of Pan's physical appearance—particularly the division, at the waist, between man and animal—"to include the heavens, the sea, earth, and fire, and the extension of his function, becoming Supreme Governor of universal Nature, or 'soul' of the world."[38] It follows that Pan's music, once lowly, boisterous, and sensual—the music of the earth and of the people close to it—now became akin to the pre-Socratic conception of the music of the spheres.

In the Renaissance period, Pan became a patron of poets, often replacing Apollo. The romantics, particularly Wordsworth, considered Pan the inspirer of the mysterious echoes that the poet hears in nature; Pan, as Merivale writes, became a symbol of the muted "Orphic" quality and was equated with the "Spirit" or "Idea" that infused natural phenomena.[39] Pan's obverse profile, the irrational force of dreams and visions, also became important to the romantic view of the world. It is this profile of Pan that continued into the symbolist and post-symbolist literature; together with a retinue of fauns and satyrs, he became the rage at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Knut Hamsun, one of Kotsiubynsky's favorite authors, even wrote a short novel entitled *Pan* (1894). Although Hamsun's hero bears little resemblance to Ivan, the work itself is pervaded with the elemental, wild, and menacing spirit of nature.

The Hutsul figure of the Vanisher (or the *aridnyk*) as Satan is mitigated in *Shadows* by the ambivalence of the pagan god Pan, which is made plain in the fire keeper's story about the *aridnyk*. As some Soviet critics have been quick to point out, in Mykola's narrative the *aridnyk*'s positive qualities are stressed and God's superiority over him is played down vis-à-vis the Hutsul legends. Hence it follows that little Ivan concluded a pact with a special type of Mephistopheles who can save a singer's soul through song and yet punish him for that very salvation. The Vanisher becomes, as it were, Kotsiubynsky's ambiguous agent of salvation against the background of a specifically Hutsul Christianity, bedeviled in its own way.

Such bedevilment of Christianity in Carpathian villages is masterfully embodied in the sudden violence after the Hutsul pseudo-Christian (but in its origin, thoroughly pagan) celebration of the feast day. During the bloody battle of the clans, Ivan initially tries his hand at violence, but his new friend, Marichka, not only does not reciprocate his angry gesture, directed at her, but attempts to cheer him up. It is significant that their love is born and grows in the soil soaked with the blood of an absurd family feud, against the lament of the *trembita* mourning his father's death, a lament that ominously foreshadows Ivan's own violent death resulting from the death of his beloved. For young Ivan, however, the memory of his father's death is quickly obliterated by song and love, proclaimed by the silvery sounds of his reed (symbolically opposed to the sinister, dark sounds of the *trembita*). But in the end it is the *trembita* that sounds again as death conquers love. The birth of Ivan's love out of the violence of the collective should be viewed from the standpoint of Kotsiubynsky's constant thematic framework—the clash between poetic reverie, inspired from the outside by a benevolent force, and the harsh power of the world.

The love between Marichka and Ivan is innocent in its paganism, in its *pan-theism*; having learned sex from the animals (from amoral nature), they never descend to the level of the low, immoral, human lust of Iura and Palahna's liaison. The constant companion of Ivan and Marichka's love is song. It soon develops that Marichka is also a poet, and that her gift, too, is mysteriously born; her songs

> seemed to have rocked in the cradle or splashed about in the bath with her. They were born in her breast the way wild flowers spring up in a hayfield or firs grow on mountain slopes.

There is, however, an important difference between Ivan's gift and her own—a difference so crucial, in fact, that much of the thematic weight of the novel rests upon it.

Before Ivan met Marichka, his music had been wholly other; high and strange, it had been totally divorced from human existence. Marichka's *kolomyikas*, on the other hand, are earthly and human, but not subservient to the black magic of the world. Her role as Ivan's inspirer is to ground Ivan's music, as it were, by providing it with words that relate to simple, honest, and joyful human life. Note that the inspired lightness of Marichka's art contrasts with the workmanlike heaviness of ordinary peasant performances as Kotsiubynsky described them in some of his other works. It is this latter kind of art that belongs wholly to the world and is enslaved by it. (In "Our Trip to the Holy Well," for example, we find a rather monumental, Rodin-like but basically negative image of a girl singing.)

It is only with Marichka's contribution that Ivan's art becomes complete. Having been born before his personal birth and subsequently shaped by the Vanisher, his music is now humanized and offered to humanity as human art. If we agree that Marichka provides such a human alternative to the *aridnyk*'s music, it becomes plain why he so cynically uses anti-Marichka as an instrument of Ivan's punishment. While Marichka sings about daily life and even wittily "signs" her songs within their texts, such mundane events become touched with the *aridnyk*'s music (played by Ivan on his reed), and are thus raised to the mysteries of high art. Conversely, Marichka's texts bring the *aridnyk*'s mysteries, suggested by Ivan's music, down to the valleys and turn them over to mankind. We see here a symbolic embodiment and a partial resolution of Kotsiubynsky's own struggle with the dichotomy of commitment to the world and to pure art.

Ivan's love is accompanied by premonitions of grief, as was his childhood, and many of Marichka's *kolomyikas* predict the tragedy that awaits the two lovers. But there are also subtler symbols. The most distant background and horizon of the novel's milieu are represented by the mountains. We sense their sometimes joyous, but much more often brooding and foreboding presence even when they are not mentioned directly in the text. The mountains bring green, succulent life to the sheep and to the people, while at the same time threatening men with cold, pure mysticism and violent, inexplicable death. They are the barrier between the permissible and the forbidden. It seems that although the Hutsul's double reality interflows at crucial points of daily life (or of public myth), it is detrimental for him to step over certain boundaries into the reality of higher myths, to cross both the horizontal and the vertical limits that the mountains mark. That taboo line of the magic circle must be observed at all times. Iura, with all his worldly powers, knows this; Ivan, in his poetic *naïveté*, does not. It is from the mountains, then, that the wind carries cold portents to the lovers.

Water—especially the river Cheremosh—is another central symbol, as menacingly present throughout the novel as the forbidding mountains. When Ivan and Marichka first meet as children, Ivan imitates the foolish violence of adults by throwing Marichka's ribbons into the water. The current that carries them away is the same current that later crushes Marichka's beautiful body into a repellent blue sack when she dares to attempt the fording of the forbidden border between life and death, represented by the Cheremosh. As Ivan

leaves for the uplands, the river threatens him: "The frothy Cheremosh angrily shook its gray curls and shone with a malignant green light."

When Ivan leaves Marichka's earthly songs to go to the uplands, his path leads him through the same "Gothic" landscape that served as a background for his meeting with the Vanisher. Instead of the living carpet of flowers upon which he and Marichka lived their love, Ivan must now cross "creeping mountain pines and firs that caught at [his] feet." Hence, the symbols that surround Ivan's departure warn us that a "sociological" explanation of it—Ivan's poverty in the midst of a greedy world—is obviously too easy. Although we should not completely discount the fact that Ivan surrenders Marichka and her songs to earn his bread as a servant (this may also explain Ivan's inherent weakness of character and his slow surrender to the materialistic world after the loss of Marichka), at the same time, Ivan's departure implies matters that are in many ways opposed to the need of earning a living.

Ivan is "called" at the zenith of his maturity to undertake a quest for the distant source of the melodies that torment his soul and (if we are to believe his public-myth image of a changeling) for the origin of his own existence. It is the forbidden horizon of the mountains—with their distance and their height, where his songs were born—that he must conquer. The barrenness of the landscape, the treacherous vegetation in which Ivan's feet become entangled, the enigmatic effects of the mountain wind, the blueness of the upland pasture—all these images contribute to the composition of a mystical landscape in which the quester-hero must face his ultimate test. The physical and metaphysical heights become one, implying and predicating each other. It is as if the artist in Kotsiubynsky himself had decided to set out on the perilous journey in search of the mythical source of his own art.

The shamanlike personage of the chief shepherd (one of Kotsiubynsky's most powerful father figures), the strange young fire keeper Mykola (both of them guardians of the eternal fire), and the shadowy figures of the other shepherds in the upland strengthen our impression that Ivan has undertaken a symbolic journey to a symbolic place. Kotsiubynsky compares the chief shepherd to an ancient pagan priest and calls him the spirit of the upland pastures. The mountain wind and the hallucinations that it brings almost put Ivan in direct contact with his original teacher—here named by the taboo words "He" or "That One"—of whom the chief shepherd and the fire keeper are priest and evangelist. "What's that crying in the wind? It must be the One. May he turn to stone!" It is as if the tortured and torturing weeping of the wind were the absolute essence of the melodies that the Vanisher had taught Ivan.

Ivan begins to realize that he is being challenged to battle with an unknown but supremely powerful adversary, an ultimate power that menaces everything human. Like pagan priests facing their mysterious deities, its shaman (the chief shepherd) and its bard (the fire keeper) must do battle with it year in and year out. But Ivan's battle is different and incomparably more dangerous than that of the other two, since he has been *seen*, pointed out, and chosen (having had his difficult gift bestowed upon him at birth and confirmed at his meeting with the Vanisher). The challenge of the ultimate horizons beyond the pale of good and evil is neither loving nor forgiving, but demands all the spiritual energy that the chosen one can muster for the supreme battle, which he is doomed to lose.

Marichka was able to respond to Ivan's Satan-inspired music, but she could not match him in the creation of it. On the other hand, only she could

humanize his art, could teach the "changeling" how to live and how to forgive. She, therefore, had to be barred from Ivan's strange quest. While attempting to cross the Cheremosh, she falls, and the menacing waters of the delimiting river swallow her. The destruction of Ivan's strong ally, his earthly muse, is the *aridnyk*'s decisive victory over his adopted son and challenger. Having unwittingly involved herself with the uncanny, having unwittingly provoked it by her integral humanity, and having fallen, Marichka is forced to become alienated from herself and to oppose her own cherished values and desires. As once she had helped him, so now she becomes the instrument of the uncanny, which turns her into an element of the public myth that punishes the quester-poet for his otherness, as in her life the woman herself had helped and guided him.

The *aridnyk* uses his other profile and his other domain—that of the public myth within the bedeviled world—to deal the mortal blow to his victim. The punishing hand turns the poet's beloved into her opposite, and she in turn is forced to turn their love into its ugly caricature. But even before Ivan is compelled to face that perverted transfiguration, he must deal with another transformation in the chain of the *aridnyk*'s anti-metaphors; he must behold Marichka's mangled body, torn limb from limb like a victim of the sacrificial act of *spagramos*. The beautiful, beloved body of Ivan's earthly muse has been broken on the rack of the cruel nature of those high, forbidden regions, and has been mashed between the millstones of the *aridnyk*'s mysterious mill, which figures so prominently in the Hutsul public myths.

After Marichka's death, Ivan removes himself from human society; he becomes a wild man, like a werewolf or like someone who has fornicated with a demon. Ivan's self-brutalization ("self-bestialization") can be read as the katabasis of a vanquished hero. His defeat is painful indeed. His poetic calling, which once had flourished so happily under Marichka's earthly care, but which subsequently drove him toward inhuman heights, has now become a gaping wound; he attempts to ease the pain not by his former communion with the essence of nature but by vain endeavors to lose himself in nature's hostile wilderness. Ivan's defeat becomes total when he descends below the level of self-brutalization and betrays his own self by attempting to join the low black magic of the greedy world "because it was time to take up farming."

In a difficult ambiguity, Ivan ultimately betrays the nobility of the force that called him out to his own highest possibilities and then dashed him to the ground. He betrays the heroic nobility of his defeat as well as his secret gift of music. His final punishment is to turn himself, a poet-quester, into an apathetic slave. Although he always was the servant of the *aridnyk* inasmuch as he was possessed by Satan's high mysteries, he now becomes a possession in the domain of the *aridnyk*'s public myth. It is significant that even while he "farms," he is compelled to "vanish" into the wilderness once in a while, not to listen to nature's mysterious melodies, which he would do whenever he thus "vanished" as a child, but to lose himself in the thicket.

As can be seen time and again in Kotsiubynsky's work, the world does not accept the double traitor (who betrayed the world and then betrayed its adversary), and the black magic of public myths that he attempts to practice soon turns against him. Ivan was never strong and was easily swayed by the pressures of his environment; what lifted him to the sphere of the heroic was his poetic gift. Hence, when he lost his struggle with the *aridnyk*, he was a tragic figure. But now, when nothing is left but his weakness, he becomes a

petty, pathetic victim of the black magic of the world. When Ivan uses the traditional negative spells, pretending to invite the evil forces to his Christmas supper, the negative power of his spells is annulled and the evil forces do ultimately visit him. Anti-Marichka accepts his invitation to the dead, while Iura and Khyma come into his life to represent the magicians and the witches whom he also had pretended to invite to his table.

Iura is a *molfar*, the most powerful among the great number of Hutsul magicians. Khyma is a "born" witch. They are the priest and priestess of black magic, which is the religion of the greedy world of the valleys. Khyma's powers symbolize reality turning to illusion, or to pseudo-poetry, for purposes of gain. The white magic of poetry, Marichka's innocent poetry, is now perverted for Ivan by Khyma's unclean metaphoric metamorphoses. (Note that the passage dealing with Khyma's transforming herself into a translucent ball, a white dog, a huge frog, even a bolt of linen, is immediately followed by Ivan's lyrical reminiscences of Marichka and her songs.) Iura rivals the *aridnyk* himself in the uncanny powers of his black magic.

> People said that he was like a god. Wise and powerful, that thunder-soothsayer and sorcerer held in his strong hands the forces of heaven and earth, life and death, and the health of livestock and mankind. He was feared but needed by all.

Like the magic of Khyma and Palahna, Iura's magic is evil because instead of working with nature, it intrudes upon nature by the force of human will for the sake of gain. (In many of Kotsiubynsky's other works, such "black magic" is embodied in dark metaphors of the city and of industrial progress.) We recall that Ivan's powers had no practical aim; his mysterious music made no demands upon nature, joining it in its purposeless creativity.

Palahna, Ivan's worldly bride, is indeed a representative of the world. She is a type frequently used by Kotsiubynsky as the opposite of the woman of the hero's dreams. Under Palahna's guidance, Ivan half-heartedly immerses himself in the black magic of greed, as opposed to the white magic of music and poetry which he shared with his authentic bride, Marichka. There is no question of love for Ivan in Palahna's domain. The only warmth of companionship that Ivan experiences is with his cattle, in which a trace of nature still lingers. As for Palahna, the only substitute for love that she seems to have known in her life is lust.[40] Iura and Palahna's lust obviously belongs to the black magic of greed and gain; he attempts to seduce her during her own exercise in black magic by casting a hypnotic spell upon her, and finally has his way with her after his dramatic duel with the cloud. As Iura wins his lover by black magic, so he deals with his rival by magical spells: Ivan's bland indifference to his wife's unfaithfulness illustrates his general lethargy after Marichka's death and also implies that he is under Iura's unclean powers.

The ambiguity between mythology and psychology in the case of Iura's voodoo practices and, more important, in the appearance of anti-Marichka, far from being hopelessly paradoxical, is creatively self-fulfilling. Both occurrences may be interpreted as hallucinations, products of Ivan's wounded poetic imagination, which is now gorging itself on public myths. As Kotsiubynsky's other works indicate, a mistreated poetic imagination brings forth unhealthy, lurid shadowgraphs which pervert the poetry of the hero's soul and eventually herald his total collapse. For a subject who knew the heights of poetic reverie,

then, the loss of such lofty vistas, leaving behind only crippled memories, equals the loss of his life force. Hence, one may speculate that for Kotsiubynsky, as earlier for the romantics and the symbolists, and later for Jung, myth and psychology are in a mutually enhancing relationship.[41]

Finally, Ivan not only remains indifferent to Palahna's "epicurean" excuses for her sensual excesses, but tacitly agrees with them:

> What's true is true. Our life is brief—it flickers for a while and then goes out.... His star was barely holding up in the sky. For what is our life? A glimmer in the sky, a cherry blossom, fleeting and evanescent.[42]

Although such fatalistic meditations contrast with Marichka's full-blooded love of life, they are linked, nevertheless, with the suprapersonal mysteries of the essence of nature, to which Ivan was introduced in early childhood, and in which the duration of an individual life is taken up and consumed by grander, totalizing movements of temporality. It is, therefore, interesting that Ivan's thoughts on the transitoriness of human life are repeated at the end of *Shadows,* when the funeral orgy rages around Ivan's bier. We should note also that in this work, sensuality and, later, death provoke the kind of thinking that consoled the hero of "The Apple Blossom" on a more positive and much more elevated philosophical level.

Weighted down by such ideas about life and death, Ivan is drawn to water, which once had taken Marichka's ribbons and later took Marichka herself. It is near the water of life, now transformed into the water of death, that anti-Marichka enters his warped and diminished field of vision. Anti-Marichka is doubly distanced from her former self; she is doubly the Other. To begin with, she returns from the land of the dead, those in Ukrainian mythology (as well as in most other national mythologies) who become alienated from the human community and turn against it, as if the very contact with death had changed them into enemies of life. But this alienation is secondary when compared to Marichka's specific alienation as a wood nymph.

Marichka becomes not only the dead non-Marichka but anti-Marichka diametrically opposed to everything that she had been in life. Her smiling dependability and sincerity become grinning treachery; her simple, sunny words of love become dark, catlike moans of lust; her former promises of eternal devotion now serve as cause for her mysterious, sarcastic laughter. She is forced to turn love into its caricature. And even the nature around her changes from the verdant meadows, where she gave herself to Ivan, to the petrified vegetation of nightmares. She has become a perverted metaphor—an anti-metaphor—of herself, even as everything in Ivan's present existence turns, under his hands, into perverted poetry. Her poetic gift, which glorified everything that is good in human life (and perhaps by its very humanity antagonized the *aridnyk*), is now at the service of the black magic of public myths. Anti-Marichka's *kolomyika*—sung in order to betray the human warmth of Marichka's creations and thus to continue the opposition between spectral riches and actual loss—alludes to the desolation of the *aridnyk*'s wasteland and enriches the symbol of the desolation of nature in Ivan's present life: "When we were in love, even dry oaks bloomed, but when we parted, living oaks dried up." Ivan is about to be vanquished for the last time. Upon Marichka's bodily death, his soul was murdered, and all that remains now is for his body

to be assassinated by Marichka's violated spirit. His soul stands for his music, and his body represents his pathetic attempts at worldly life, which in themselves are a caricature of the earthly existence that Marichka taught him.

We have seen that throughout Kotsiubynsky's work the gift of poetry is also somewhat of a curse. Although the source of such punishment may be unknown to us, its instrument is the jealous world, which cannot bear the poet's apartness that the accursed gift implies. One may speculate that, in Ivan's case, his punishment is accompanied by the public myth's perversion of the highest myth of poetry, namely, the myth of Orpheus. Rather than the poet attempting to take his beloved out of the land of the dead, it is the woman (made into the enemy by the ruler of that land) who lures the poet more and more irrevocably into it. We note that when Ivan is being thus misled, he is not afraid to look upon Marichka's face—as Orpheus was forbidden to see Euridice's face—but upon anti-Marichka's back, where the ugly hole gapes wide, symbolizing a perversion of the desired body. When Ivan, a fallen poet, is torn on the rocks by an evil female agency, his death may be regarded as a caricature of the noble death of Orpheus.

When Ivan walks behind his treacherous guide, his consciousness becomes split between the pole of the true Marichka and the pole of anti-Marichka, as, according to Jung, consciousness may become split between the dark and the bright feminine principle:

> His consciousness was splitting. He sensed Marichka beside him and yet knew that Marichka was gone, that someone else was leading him into the unknown, to the desolate mountain crests, in order to destroy him. Yet he felt good. He followed her laughter and girlish twittering, light, happy, and unafraid the way he once had been.

Anti-Marichka tempts Ivan with the vague and distant memories of his youthful love and with his crippled poetic reveries, distorted now into pathological hallucinations. Anti-Marichka, in short, tempts Ivan with Marichka. She gives him a false sense of happiness, just as Kotsiubynsky's earlier heroes (in *Fata Morgana*, for example) kept up their spirits with a false sense of hope. The added pathetic dimension of Ivan's self-delusion is that it is self-reflective; while he desperately attempts to enjoy Marichka's presence, he knows that it is in fact either a hallucination or the machinations of an evil power. Ivan's awareness of the mockery of his happy past and, at the same time, his inability to walk away from his situation may be the *aridnyk*'s cruellest punishment.

The bifurcation of Marichka and anti-Marichka in Ivan's diseased consciousness is continued with the appearance of the *chuhaistyr*, a merry and friendly forest spirit. In the novel, he does not seem to be the *aridnyk*'s agent, although Hutsul public myths assign to him the status of a minor devil descended from man. We note that he neither knows of Ivan's grief nor is curious about it, and, more important, he does not respond when Ivan (for the last time in his life) plays the Vanisher's secret melody for him. The *chuhaistyr*, being a minor demon, is not initiated into the highest mysteries of creativity; rather, he fulfills, more or less blindly, his role in the struggle on the lower levels of nature.

The function of the *chuhaistyr* is to point up Ivan's divided loyalties between the pole of Marichka and the pole of anti-Marichka. Ivan's duplicity in his dealings with the *chuhaistyr* reflects his confused loyalties toward the real and the imagined world, toward the curse of the mysterious music of his soul, toward Marichka's healthful earthly legacy, and toward the desperate wish, stemming from his inherent weakness, to join the public myth of society. Finally, it symbolizes the older Kotsiubynsky's despair over the inherent confusion and disorder of existence itself; nothing, as Gogol also believed, is what it seems when poetic reverie becomes perverted by evil. By playing his secret melody for the *chuhaistyr* in order to distract him and thus to save anti-Marichka, Ivan betrays his poetic gift for the last time.

Ivan's exceedingly mild show of surprise at the sudden appearance of the *chuhaistyr* (like his matter-of-fact acceptance of other spirits that so frequently appear to him throughout his life) illustrates the communion between spirits, people, and animals in which the Hutsuls believe. It also implies the Hutsuls' passivity in the face of the mysterious forces that rule the land, a resignation to the obvious "fact" that from his mountain peaks the *aridnyk* governs people by direct intervention and with the help of his agents, as a puppet master pulls the strings of his "actors." The nonhuman and the human fraternity begins at the most basic level of life itself. After the shared dance, "Ivan collapsed beside the *chuhaistyr*. And so they breathed together." There is in this image a sort of communion of man and spirit through nature, a sharing in the basic organismic life which Ivan also shared with his cattle. It is the kind of union with nature that Marichka's presence implied on a much profounder level. Because of his confusion of values, Ivan refused that final offer of "breathing together."

Ivan's fall into the precipice is the ultimate embodiment of his earlier fall. He falls into the abyss, where there is no saving hand to catch him, because the possibility of his salvation has been closed to him from his birth:

> He did not know what was below him, but he sensed the cold and malevolent breath of the abyss that had opened its insatiable maw toward him.... Ivan ... suddenly sensed that the abyss was pulling him down. Seizing him by the neck, it bent him backward.

A different breathing, that of death, had joined Ivan's.

The public myth of the greedy and lustful world besets Ivan's bier. At the same time, however, the wild Hutsul death rites serve to embody a deeper significance. An ambiguous synthesis of life and death underlies the coda of *Shadows*; remaining themselves, life and death are joined on some lower level beneath both the personal myth of the poet's limitless and inexpressible vision and the public myth of expressed and established worldly ritual. At that basic level of nature, very close to the "community of breathing," sex begins to stir, as if attempting to include the power of death in the processes of life, to neutralize the linear progress of individual existence in the cyclical movement of birth, vegetation, and decay.

Although such a vulgar assertion of the continuity of life as the Hutsuls' funeral games seems to be at the opposite extreme of the elegantly poetic apple blossoms at the end of Kotsiubynsky's story "The Apple Blossom," the contrasting symbolic ways of expressing such continuity in the two stories are nevertheless similar in their origin. And yet, even as the origin of the symbols

of the apple blossoms and of the funeral games is the same, the latter expression of the continuity of life within the public myth seems to be rather repugnant to Kotsiubynsky.

The descriptions of the funeral games in *Shadows* border on the grotesque, what with the sticky sweat of unwashed bodies mingling its pungent odor with the sweetish smell of the ripe corpse, and the old mourners, themselves close to death, exposing the rotting stumps of teeth in obscene laughter. Kotsiubynsky's ambiguous emotional relationship to that scene is complicated by the description of Ivan's dead face: in it, against the background of the collective, riotous assertion of life, we see the drama of an individual existence (as against the background of a public myth, we see the death of a personal myth). Ivan's life is cursed by an exceptionally intense and high personal myth; therefore, his inevitable betrayal of that myth and his final punishment have to be correspondingly low and ugly. The description of his dead face masterfully embodies that ambiguity, together with the ambiguity between his strength as a dreamer and his weakness as a man.

> Ivan's yellow face rested on the linen, having forever closed within itself something that only he knew, and the right eye slyly peered from under a slightly raised eyelid at the brass coins piled on his chest and the candle burning in his folded hands.

Under the cold squall of mysterious forces, a poet's life is indeed as transitory and fragile as the bloom on a cherry tree.

4

If certain thematic matters in *Shadows* (like the *aridnyk*'s double nature in his relationship with Ivan) seem to remain unresolved, such uncertainties presumably stem from Kotsiubynsky's own hesitations about the poet's encounter with the world. These hesitations, moreover, beget ambiguities not only in *Shadows* but throughout Kotsiubynsky's oeuvre, since (as I have suggested in this essay) *Shadows* sums up Kotsiubynsky's creative philosophy.

With Kotsiubynsky's death, two lives—that of a man and that of a writer—came to an end. Such bifurcation, so characteristic of modern literature as a whole, is particularly radical in the case of Kotsiubynsky. His dutiful behavior, which can be read as a sort of substitute for the parental authority that he had never really known and which he felt compelled to impose upon his youthful self, failed him in the end, as if he secretly wanted to fail there. The only duty that he seemed to observe as an authentic task until the last days of his life was his writing. It is as if he resented the world—the hemisphere of black magic as well as the hemisphere dedicated to the struggle against it—for having prevented him from devoting his total being to the project of literature. Moreover, his dutiful attitude to the task of creativity itself, carried over from his difficult life, put Kotsiubynsky in a constant state of anxiety concerning his drawbacks as an artist: he had not done enough, he had fallen short of his possibilities, he had betrayed his calling. Gorky and many other acquaintances describe his intense attacks of self-disparagement.[43] And Kotsiubynsky's own letters, particularly those to Aplaksina, are even more eloquent on that score:

> It is very bad to be a writer. You constantly feel some vague obligations, your observing eyes are constantly open wide, you constantly strain the strings of your heart and tune them for the melodies of nature. And yet it is never enough, you always seem in your own estimation to be impoverished, insufficiently subtle, lazy, careless.... You would want to embrace the whole world and make it a part of your heart, to collect all the colors and all the rays in the world ... and at the same time you feel with sadness that you are a poor, inadequate apparatus, which cannot fulfill its task.[44]

In Kotsiubynsky's complex and subtle consciousness, it is not only the world that is guilty toward the writer. Complicating that inherently romantic conviction in the spirit of modernism, Kotsiubynsky's uncertainties about his own art imply that the writer is also guilty toward the world. To begin with, the writer (particularly if he finds himself in the situation of a Slavic writer, and even more specifically, of a Ukrainian writer) betrays the world of action

by removing himself to the high, cold regions above the valleys of the community. In a letter to Aplaksina, Kotsiubynsky implies that his gift has been bestowed on him by some alien power and that this was *not* a gesture of generosity:

> If it were not for some unknown power always pushing me forward, always ordering me: Write!—I would throw down my pen forever and would endeavor to apply my energy to some other occupation.[45]

Kotsiubynsky, in sum, considered every moment away from his desk as a wasted moment, yet every moment spent at his desk he also believed to be lost. His reverie was constantly struggling out of the enmeshment of the world, while the world demanded its own.

Kotsiubynsky further believed that within the domain of creativity the writer is doomed to treason. The realm of authentic art lies for him somewhere far beyond images expressed in words, in some syncretic space of ultimate purity. The writer's act of taking up the pen and placing row upon row of black signs on a sheet of paper (its void laden with the dread of infinite possibilities)—the writer having borrowed those very signs from the established, unwieldy, generalizing structure of language and having arranged them in a tedious temporal duration—is in itself a crude representation of poetic reverie and therefore a sort of betrayal. In Kotsiubynsky's important autobiographical letter to Mykhailo Mochulsky, we find the following significant confession:

> When I think about the plot [of a future work] ... I am happy: everything about it seems to be so bright, so fresh, so full and strong that I tremble with excitement. But it is enough for me to sit down at my table and take pen in hand, and everything begins to appear so pale, anemic and colorless. I simply do not have enough words at my disposal to convey all of what a moment ago I had experienced so powerfully. Having finished a work, I feel disgust.... If I could limit the creative process to imagination alone, I would be very happy.[46]

By longing for the ultimate horizons of existence given in pure poetic reverie, in which language itself would fall away as an unnecessary and therefore atrophied appendage of the gratuitously created being, Kotsiubynsky, to his own horror, seemed to attempt to create an alternative "world of Idea," a Mallarméan anti-world of essence, which would ultimately cancel the world of disloyalty, pettiness, dirt, and greed. Kotsiubynsky was indeed convinced that such longings are profoundly evil—perhaps more evil in their mysterious ways than the evils of the bedeviled world. In such desires, Kotsiubynsky seems to warn us, one can hear echoes of the music of Satan himself, since the energy that awakens and inspires them wafts from the gray, bare rocks of the Inhuman. It is this energy that prevented Kotsiubynsky's poetically attuned heroes from devoting themselves to life, and hence paralyzed them as useful men of action. And it is this energy that turned Marichka, the truly innocent one, into a victim of an incomprehensible sacrifice.

The only counterbalance to the ultimate moral chaos, with which the energy of pure creativity threatens human existence, is the careful borrowing of some steadying elements from the bedeviled world. The writer must control the dangerous spirit of creativity by the tedious rows of black marks, the very communality of which saves him from taking the ultimate risk of alienation and perhaps madness in completely self-enclosed reverie. The writer must patiently perform his duty of embodying the ineffable music of Satan against Satan's own wishes in elaborate images, careful rhythms, and highly polished phrases; thus, like some modern Racine, he may hope to reveal the various hidden dangers of existence so much more starkly and abruptly for the deliberate device of stylistic distancing. The writer, then, must approach the world and the people in it without falling into its traps.

Kotsiubynsky's deepest regret seems to have been that he was never able to achieve the innocence and serenity of Marichka's simple art: although he could create her, he could not share in the spirit of her creations. In the end, he was not able to resolve the dichotomy between the danger of art and that of life. He believed both the music of Satan and the bedeviled world to be accursed, each of them drawing the traitor-dreamer toward its own abyss. There is nothing for the writer, then (unless he has Marichka's rare natural simplicity), but to remain a permanent quester and a potential traitor, endangering both himself and the beloved people close to him in his precarious spiritual balancing act. The high tension—the "alternating current"—between the two poles of Kotsiubynsky's divided loyalties is the energy that produced most of his works, including *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*. Had he been more at peace with himself, he might have been able to capture in his work the inspiration of Marichka's quatrains. Or, what is more likely, he might have given Ukrainian literature yet another baker's dozen of self-satisfied novels of "epic proportions" on the smug joys of doing the right thing. But it is his very struggle—a mortal struggle on the level of both art and personal experience—that makes Kotsiubynsky so integrally a writer for our time.

NOTES

[1]H. Lazarevsky, "Chernihiv za chasiv Mykhaila Kotsiubynskoho," in Potupeiko (ed.), *Spohady pro Mykhaila Kotsiubynskoho*, p. 164. Translations of all quotations, except those from this text of *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, are mine (B.R.).

[2]Pavlo Tychyna, "Pershe znaiomstvo: Chernihiv, 1910 r.," in Potupeiko, p. 174.

[3]M. Gorky, "M. M. Kotsiubynsky," in Potupeiko, pp. 183 and 185.

[4]To Mykhailo Mochulsky, 28 January 1906, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, *Tvory v semy tomakh*, 6:48.

[5]Ibid.

[6]M. Khrashchevsky quoted in Kupiansky, *Litopys zhyttia i tvorchosti Mykhaila Kotsiubynskoho*, p. 9.

[7]To Mochulsky, p. 49.

[8]To Volodymyr Hnatiuk, 19 April 1907, Kotsiubynsky, 6:79.

[9]To Vira Kotsiubynska, 15 June 1909, Kotsiubynsky, 6:124.

[10]To Mykhailo Zhuk, 15 July 1910, Kotsiubynsky, 7:51.

[11]To Kotsiubynska, 26 June 1909, Kotsiubynsky, 6:135.

[12]To Kotsiubynska, 24 June 1910, Kotsiubynsky, 7:34-35.

[13]A pejorative Russian word used for Ukrainians and referring specifically to the tuft of hair worn by Cossacks on top of their shaved scalps.

[14]Quoted in Kupiansky, p. 424.

[15]To Maksim Gorky, 9 August 1910, Kotsiubynsky, 7:69.

[16]To Gorky, 2 July 1911, Kotsiubynsky, 7:126.

[17]To Hnatiuk, 19 February 1913, Kotsiubynsky, 7:303.

[18]Panas Myrny to Ia. Zharko, 6 November 1900, quoted in Kupiansky, p. 139.

[19]For a thorough discussion of Kotsiubynsky and impressionism, see Oleksandra Chernenko, *Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky—Impresionist: Obraz liudyny v tvorchosti pysmennyka.* The author carefully analyzes Kotsiubynsky's debt to Western literature and culture generally, thus correcting many distortions of the scholarship on Kotsiubynsky in Eastern Europe. On Kotsiubynsky's use of color in general and impressionistic techniques in particular, see also Elżbieta Wiśniewska, *O sztuce pisarskiej Mychajla Kociubyńskiego*, p. 75ff.

[20]Stepan Butnyk, "Spohady pro Mykhaila Kotsiubynskoho," in Potupeiko, pp. 152-153 *et passim.*

[21]Kotsiubynsky, 3:156.

[22]Ibid., p. 175.

[23]Ibid., p. 176.

[24]Kotsiubynsky, 2:297.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid., p. 306.

[27]Ibid., p. 309.

[28]The story was written in the last months of 1912 and was published in the January 1913 issue of *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk*, with the remark at the end of the text: "Conclusion follows."

[29]Kotsiubynsky, 3:286.

[30]Ibid., p. 287.

[31]Ibid., pp. 289-290.

[32]To Vira Kotsiubynska, 12 January 1896, Kotsiubynsky, 5:61.

[33]Kotsiubynsky, 3:11.

[34]Ibid.

[35]"Idealizatsiia chy zhakhlyva diisnist," *Chervonyi shliakh*, 4 (1929), p. 165; quoted by Chernenko, p. 107.

[36]Wiśniewska, p. 41.

[37]See, for example, Kolesnyk, *Kotsiubynsky—Khudozhnyk slova*, pp. 401-402. This "epic canvas" of a study, pretending to high seriousness, is occasionally useful but more often superficial and pompous, in the inimitable Soviet style. It enjoys great authority in Soviet scholarship on Kotsiubynsky.

[38]The quotation, together with other material on Pan in this section, is taken from Patricia Merivale, *Pan the Goat-God: His Myth in Modern Times* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969). The quotation appears on p. 9.

[39]Ibid., p. 53.

[40]Kotsiubynsky paraphrases a remark that he had heard from an old Hutsul and recorded in his notes: "As long as the world stands, there has been no such man whom a single woman could satisfy." In the novel, he changes this to: "Since time immemorial no woman had ever abided by only one man." See Kotsiubynsky, 3:345.

[41]For remarks on Kotsiubynsky and Jung see Chernenko, pp. 50, 53-54, 66, 98, 114, 119-120 *et passim*.

[42]The strikingly poetic comparison of life to cherry blossoms is not Kotsiubynsky's own; he heard it from a Hutsul during one of his visits to the Carpathian Mountains. See Kupiansky, p. 515.

[43]M. Gorky, pp. 182-183.

[44]To Aleksandra Aplaksina, 28 July 1910, Kotsiubynsky, 7:61.

[45]To Aplaksina, 13 July 1910, Kotsiubynsky, 7:60.

[46]To Mykhailo Mochulsky, 30 November 1905, Kotsiubynsky, 6:43.

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