

A photograph of several wooden chairs in a room, with the text overlaid on the image. The chairs are made of dark wood and are arranged in rows. The background is slightly blurred, showing more chairs and a table. The lighting is warm and soft.

The Ballad of a Little Slice of Bread

Frane Milčinski Ježek



Namesto uvoda

Človeka, ki nam je blizu, nikoli povsem ne izgubimo. Tudi potem, ko ga ni več, živi z nami v spominih, na starih fotografijah, v predmetih, ki jih je imel rad ... Še najbolj pa nam ga oživi njegov glas.

Imam posebno srečo, da je po Ježku ostalo veliko zvočnih posnetkov. Vsak od njih mi pričara njegovo podobo, me vrne v čas, ko je posnetek nastajal, ko ga je Ježek prvič javno izvajal, ko mi ga je prvič povedal ali zapel.

Najbolj so mi pri srcu pesmi, ki so zbrane na tej plošči. V njih je strnjeno vse Ježkovo življenje od prve prešerne mladosti pa do zadnjega bridkega slovesa.

Pravzaprav naša mladost ni bila ne prešerna ne brezskrbna. Tekla nam je v času druge svetovne vojne, ko nam je vsak dan prinašal nove strahove, nove skrbi. Pa vendar smo se znali tudi veseliti. Iz prvih srečanj na začetku vojne se najbolj spominjam pesmi *Whisky Johnny*, ki jo je Ježek prepeval v družbi prijateljev – igralcev, pa pesmi *Liter brez dna*, pa *Glažek vinčka*. A med vesele viže se je pogosto vmešala temnejša tematika, ki so jo priklicale socialne razlike, beda brezpravnih »štokglajzarjev« – kot je Ježek imenoval tiste, ki jih je revščina zrinila na rob družbe in so životalili v starih vagonih, odrinjenih na stranski tir.

O teh pojejo pesmi *Kapljica in morje*, *Balada o koščku kruha*, *Najin otrok*, *Preprosta ljubezen*. To zadnjo mi je Ježek zapel, ko me je prvič povabil k sebi. Še zdaj ga vidim, kako je sedel k pianinu in zapel: »*Mežnar bo za pričo pri poroki ...*«. Mislim, da je prav ta pesem za zmerom povezala najini življenji ...

Iz zapora, pod italijanskimi Dolomiti, kamor ga je kot nevarnega »ribella« poslal okupator že na začetku vojne, je prinesel domov pesem *Arestantova oda stenici* in pa bolezen, ki ga je spremljala vse življenje.

Nasploh so se pesmi s te plošče rojevale, kot jih je prinašal čas, kot jih je ponujalo življenje. Ob otrocih je zapel pesem *Porednim otrokom v pozdrav*, mladim je namenil pesem *Ljubezen naj gre vedno v cvet*, tistim, ki jim življenje ni prizanašalo pa pesem o *Darwinu*, ki nima prav, pa o *Ringlšpilu u Forštatu*, ki tudi revnim ljudem pričara zvezde z neba.

Ko sva hodila po ulicah, je gledal hiše in ugibal, kakšni ljudje živijo v njih. Tako je nastala – vsaj zame – ena najlepših njegovih pesmi: *Hiša št. 203*. Ko ga je pestila bolezen, se mu je zapisala pesem *Sreča stanuje v sedmem nadstropju* in čez čas še pesem *Telefon mame sreče*. Ko je nekoč čuval vnučka, se mu je porodila *Gangstrska idila*. Skozi dolga leta pa je hodila z njim misel na smrt in v enem takih trenutkov je nastal njegov

E Lon Lan Ler

(Richepin's theme)

*There lived a poor but youthful lad
Who loved a girl with all he had,
But she did not love him at all.
E LON LAN LER E LON LAN LA*

*She told him, "Go and kill your ma;
Do not return without her heart,
So I can feed it to my dog."
E LON LAN LER E LON LAN LA*

*So off he went, the slaughter passed,
And ripped her heart out of her breast
And as bore it back, he sang
E LON LAN LER E LON LAN LA*

*And as he ran, heart in his hand,
He fell down on the hard, hard ground,
And the heart he'd held rolled from his grasp.
E LON LAN LER E LON LAN LA*

*The heart rolled over in the dust
And through its tears it gently asked,
"Oh, did you hurt yourself, my child?"
E LON LAN LER E LON LAN LA*

Luck Lives on the Seventh Floor

*Ay! Ay! Ay! Ay!
You can't buy luck
At a news-stand
Like a crime paperback
Or the latest GQ.
Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la
Tra-la-la-la-la-la*

*Ay! Ay! Ay! Ay!
It's not something you find
In a supermarket
To pick off the shelf,
Pay up and leave.
Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la
Tra-la-la-la-la-la*

*Luck lives on the seventh floor,
The lift's out of order and we have to walk;
But what a walk, what a trial:
The stairs drag on and on and on.*

*Ay! Ay! Ay! Ay!
And when at last
We reach its door,
All we find's a note:
NOT IN.
Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la
Tra-la-la-la-la-la*

A Glass of Wine

*A glass of wine, eh?,
Should go to the heart right away
And, as gently as it can,
Comfort us.*

*A glass of wine, eh?,
And the sun will shine through,
And the whole world will be a rainbow,
In an arc.*

*Hey, landlady, we're still here
Give us the bottle from the corner:
Just think how our money will pay
Your daughter's dowry.*

*A glass of wine, eh?,
And the sun will shine through,
And the whole world will be a rainbow,
In an arc.*

Darwin Had it Wrong

*No-no-no no-no-no-no no-no no-no
No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!
No! No! No! No! No!*

*Man is not one
There are two of them -
One is an idler
The other does the work.
No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!
One hups! onto the saddle
And he reckons he's a lord,
The other is born
And his feet can't leave the ground.
No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!*

*There was once a monkey on a branch
(A long, long time ago);
It yawned because it had no work
And looked down to the ground.
It saw a stick lying in the grass,
"Well, bless my soul, a tool,"
And so it crawled down from the tree
And that's how it makes its dough.*

No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!

While on another bough
There's monkey number two
Who doesn't mind time passing by -
With time it hasn't got a clue;
It sees a stick, down in the grass,
"Well, I'll be blessed, a walking stick,"
And down it drops, and with its stick
It sets off for a walk.

No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!
No! No! No! No! No!

Man is not one
There are two of them -
One's got a debt,
The other a purse of gold.

No! No! No! No! No!
Darwin had it wrong!

One is born
With a silver spoon,
The other for suffering
Ordained by the Lord.
No! No! No! No! No!

Darwin had it wrong!
So we'd better ask ourselves tonight,
When will that Darwin ever get it right?

The Droplet and the Sea

As I wrote this to you
A drop of ink dripped from my pen
And I thought:

See how in one droplet of ink
There can be a whole sea of luck,
While in the same droplet of ink
There can be a sea of strife,

Since this little droplet might contrive
An official document with a formal SIGNATURE.
Look, it's full of a magic strength
Like a magic sign at a crossing.

Signatures. Signatures.
Signatures. Signatures!
These ones aren't run-of-the-mill,
They're official.
Signatures. Signatures.
Signatures. Signatures.
And being official,
They're cold, they're cold.
Signatures. Signatures.
Signatures. Signatures.

Whoever's got the strength to hurl them on the

form,
Should be aware of what he's taken on -
THE SIGNATURE, this tiny talisman -
He can give luck, or he can take it.

See how in one droplet of ink
There can be a whole sea of luck,
While in the same droplet of ink
There can be a sea of strife

A sea of luck and a sea of strife
In a single droplet of ink.

Simple Love

Only the churchwarden
Will witness the wedding,
And the altar will be without flowers or candles,
But for me you will be a golden treasure
Because my love for you is so strong.

Then after a while you'll have a child,
A little boy, the little cheat;
He won't find anything good down here
And he'll go with us to our Calvary.

But anyway, he'll grow up like the grass
And get to know this tangled world,
And if I lay a drunken hand on you
He'll be sure to rise to your defence.

And then he'll suddenly leave home,
Because that's what children do,
And again alone, ah, so alone
We'll trudge on down the dirty road.

And there'll come a spring when I shall die
And you will curse the world and God;
Maybe you'll hold my hand to say goodbye
And that'll be the end for us.

*That, my girl, is what life's like:
Death ends everything, good or bad;
You see, there's nothing afterwards,
Neither hell nor heaven.
This world is hell, with a bit of heaven for luck.*

The Prisoner's Ode to the Bedbug

Little bedbug, red bedbug,
I wish you good evening from the bottom of my
heart,
Tell me where you've been tonight
And where you toasted your bloody beer!
Did you sip the poisoned blood
Of scoundrels, tramps and whores
And suck from every one of them
A little of their life?

Red bedbug, little bedbug,
Your stomach holds
A field of sinners' blood,
And now you'll kiss me
With a passion
And my blood will mix with theirs.
Because in you, red bedbug,
Who slides in here anyway you please,
We're all who've lost our happiness
Together with a single pulse.

The Bottomless Carafe

New inventions, day by day,
Shock the world;
For the weekend, the earthling
Will soon fly to the moon.
But where's the scientist, the scholar
Who'll solve the problem
Which tortures me, wretch that I am,
From sleep and sustenance.

Why does every carafe
Have a bottom?
How am I, poor wretch,
To cope with this?

Let the carafe be bottomless
As the sky,
So that hundreds and hundreds
Of litres will fit in.

Why does every carafe
Have a bottom?
How am I, poor wretch,
To cope with this?

Copernicus, Newton, Galileo,
Einstein and the rest

All discovered plenty of things
Which we are glad to have;
But day after day I wait
For the news to come out
And fill the front page:
INTRODUCING THE BOTTOMLESS CARAFE

Why does every carafe ...

My Upside Down World

Everything's properly wrong in my upside down
world,
And because it's upside down, that's how it should
be -
I sleep in the office and pick mushrooms at home
And if I'm ill, I'm at my healthiest.
What came before will be
And backwards travels forwards;
If you're quiet you're talking loudly,
And when you're old you're the youngest of lads.
That's just how it is
Because in my world everything is upside down.

This upside down world of mine's ideal:
It ends at the beginning and begins at the end,
It's spring when it's dreary winter elsewhere
And those who hate me love me,
And together with them
I go singing a song,
That's why my upside down world's spot on.

Number 203

At number 203
A hundred things are going on
Outside it's sunny, outside there's rain,
But you pass quietly by,
Past you go and never know
That at number 203
A hundred things are going on.

Janez is happy
Because he's skipping Latin today,
He's discussing with Peter
Who'll get a goal on Sunday;
But down on the ground floor
There's a girl with tears on her cheeks -
What's going to happen to the baby,
That's her sorrow.

At number 203
A hundred things are going on
Outside it's sunny, outside there's rain,
But you pass quietly by,
Past you go and never know
That at number 203
A hundred things are going on.

The old professor

Has put his trousers on wrong,
And Pepca has watered the flowers
On the window-ledge;
Lojz has been drinking for three days already,
He'll drink up his wages,
The children are hungry
And staring into space.

At number 203
A hundred things are going on
Outside it's sunny outside there's rain,
But you pass quietly by,
Past you go and never know
That at number 203
A hundred things are going on.

Micka has locked her young soldier
In the wardrobe,
Because the devil has brought
A lady from somewhere;
Up in the attic
The old mother has died,

But there was no-one to close her eyes for her.

At number 203
A hundred things are going on
Outside it's sunny, outside there's rain,

*But you pass quietly by,
Past you go and never know
That at number 203
A hundred things are going on.*

The Ballad of a Little Slice of Bread

*But this little slice of bread
Is no big deal,
You can lose it anywhere you like
On the road, in the cinema, or while playing
football
And if you lose it you say, who cares,
Without this little slice of bread
I'm going round the world.*

*But this slice becomes important
If somebody wants it from somebody else -
There's a fight because everyone wants to have his
share;
From such a spark a fire will grow
And in a flash
It will go around the world.*

*And that's how it will be:
Until everyone in the world
Can cut his own slice of bread,
The earth will never be dry of blood
Because - believe me - it's quite something,
This little slice of bread.*

Love Always Finds a Way to Flower

*Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This round and crazy world will be.
Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This foolish world will be.*

*A gentlemen, once upon a time
Of an evening in the spring,
Was wooing his beloved.
He liked to walk the promenade
And moved aside his parasol
To kiss her on the shoulder.*

*She lost her virginity
And his cufflink went astray:
That's how their child was born.*

*But oh! today,
Just look at the young,
Off on their dates without a tie.
Though when a girl goes out with them
I find myself full of desire -
The stars are still golden for them.*

*If for the pram
They miss a payment,
I'll gladly pay it:
The baby will be a little bit mine.*

*Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This round and crazy world will be.
Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This foolish world will be.*

*Hey, get up all you
Hitchhikers,
The roads are calling you;
The winter cold has gone away
And now it's time
To play hopscotch in the sun.*

*I'm crazy enough, you know,
To love you guys,
Pushed away to the side of the road
You are our hope of hopes.*

*That's why I like it when Lady Spring
Starts her Mercedes of gold.
Hey, a Mercedes of gold,
Empty front and back*

So there is space for all.

*Just a little advice for the road
Before you go away:
It's best to wander on your own
But come to rest as two.*

*Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This round and crazy world will be.*

*Let the white flags flutter in the breeze,
The little white flags of life: nappies!*

*Love always finds a way to flower
So that more beautiful and more fine
This foolish world will be.*

For Naughty Children

*This little song
I'll sing as a joke
To say hello to naughty children,
For little monsters who scuff their trousers
And always do the wrong thing.
Hey, you crafty, cunning things,
Let luck be with you everywhere -
Good children are loved quite enough
But you miss out on things.*

*Monsters, ruffians,
Make every stupid move,
But when they're sad, their tears
Hurt just as much as ours.*

*And when some day they find wisdom,
They'll be just how they should be -
A little bit good, a little bit bad,
Like people usually are.*

*So, as a joke,
This little song,
To send the naughty on their way -
Hey, you crafty, cunning things,
May luck be with you everywhere,
May luck be with you everywhere.*

The Merry-go-Round on the Edge of Town

*We had a merry-go-round on the edge of town
When I was a little tousle-haired kid;
On Sundays I played the hurdy-gurdy,
But not for money, for pride.*

*For the poor the merry-go-round
Was a step from hell to heaven;
They went around almost in the stars
And the hurdy-gurdy sang to them.*

*Diddle-diddle-diddle-deya
Diddle-diddle-diddle-dey
If it works, it works,
Life is a roast,
Life's not the crust,
Yes, that's how it is.
Diddle-diddle-diddle-dey
That's the sweet story,
Life's not the crust,
Life is a roast
What will be will be.
Diddle-diddle-diddle-dey.*

*Where are you now, old merry-go-round,
Has time caught up with you as well?*

*Or are you still there, dust choking the air,
Sending the poor villagers to the stars?*

*The stars of the poor are so, so close
That every beggar could pull them down,
But the longer arm takes everything
And the poor stay as they are.*

*It doesn't work for a beggar
To eat the Sunday roast;
He only gets to eat the crust,
Yes, that's the way it is.*

*It's a sad story:
The beggar gets the crust,*

*But who gets the roast?
Well, what will be will be.*

Requiem

Doff your hats. The clown is dead.

*Only three attend the funeral:
Marjana, the ticket seller,
Ben Ali, the sword-swallower
And the dog who barks numbers.*

*But all who ever laughed at him,
Are missing from this sad line -
He no longer means anything to anyone,
This clown, who's dead in his coffin.*

*But before he was your laughter,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
We used to split our sides on the benches,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
A whole tankard of beer he poured in his pocket,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
And sniffed under the horse's tail,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
He plonked his rear down in a tub,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
And said, "Herr Graf," to the donkey.
Ha-ha-ha-ha ha-ha ha... ha*

Don't laugh, the clown is dead.

*His dog is whimpering so sadly,
Marjana is rubbing her eyes,
And Ben Ali, who gobbled swords,
Can now hardly swallow his tears.*

*Today's show is cancelled,
The trapeze is quiet above the net;
Through the ripped canvas, only a star
Will see into the dark arena.*

*Doff your hats.
The clown is dead.*

Balada o koščku kruha

- 1. E lon lan ler** (*Ričepinov motiv*) (3.19)
***, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 2. Sreča stanuje v sedmem nadstropju**
(1.40) glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 3. Glažek vinčka** (2.17)
dunajski šlager, priredba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 4. Darwin nima prav** (4.14)
glasba Urban Koder, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 5. Kapljica in morje** (2.52)
glasba Mario Rijavec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 6. Preprosta ljubezen** (2.51)
glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 7. Arestantova oda stenici** (2.34)
glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 8. Liter brez dna** (3.13)
glasba S. Fellner, priredba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 9. Moj narobe svet** (1.26)
glasba in priredba Urban Koder, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 10. Hiša št. 203** (4.57)
glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 11. Balada o koščku kruha** (2.16)
glasba Bojan Adamič, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 12. Ljubezen naj gre vedno v evet** (3.39)
glasba Marjan Vodopivec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 13. Za poredne otroke** (1.37)
glasba Mario Rijavec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 14. Ringelšpil u Forštatu** (2.58)
***, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 15. Soldat umira v Karpatih** (2.55)
po ljudski pesmi, priredba Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 16. Pesem o dimu** (2.57)
***, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 17. Whisky Johnny** (2.32)
glasba Duncan A. Cowen, priredba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 18. Gangstrska idila** (3.32)
glasba Mario Rijavec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 19. Raport neuglednega trupla** (2.09)
***, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 20. Telefon mame sreče** (3.48)
glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 21. Marcia Funebre** (2.16)
(*Najlepše je živeti kot mrtvak*)
glasba Marjan Vodopivec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 22. Najin otrok** (2.34)
glasba in besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 23. Nedeljski obiski v blaznici** (5.48)
glasba Urban Koder, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek
- 24. Requiem** (3.28)
glasba Marjan Vodopivec, besedilo Frane Milčinski Ježek

Frane Milčinski - Ježek

(1914–88) remains without doubt the most important Slovene humorist and satirist. From an early age he was involved in the theatre and started to perform in public as a youth; he worked for Radio Ljubljana from 1936 and in 1958 was in the team that created the first test programmes for Slovenian national television. He continued working in radio and television for as long as his health allowed and wrote the first Slovene radio play and the first Slovene radio play for children (*The Sleepy Little Star*, 1952), which was later made into a puppet play, translated into several foreign languages and performed on stage in numerous countries. He wrote a myriad of sketches, short stories, poems, songs, chansons, couplets and adverts, directed, acted in and hosted numerous light entertainment programmes, and performed in films and public musical-literary evenings throughout Slovenia.

Together with Jože Gale he wrote the screenplay for the film *Kekec*, which at the Venice film festival in 1952 was awarded the Golden Lion for best youth film. In the film he played the role of Kosobrin and his acting received a special award from the People's Republic of China. Among his numerous awards, foremost was the Prešeren award (the

most prestigious Slovenian award in the arts), which he won for lifetime achievement in 1975.

Throughout his life, Milčinski-Ježek remained a man for the people and with his performances and humour stayed on the side of the little man. He once said of his work, "We comedians are not the kind of people who have a flat on Mount Olympus, a weekend cottage on Parnassus, or the other way round. Our place is at the foot of the slope, where ordinary people are grinding their way through the pressures of everyday life. We're not ashamed to be down here, nor to be comedians".

In spite of Milčinski-Ježek's great popularity, his work has become widely available only in the last ten years, with the release of cassettes, CDs and books of his short stories, poems, songs and chansons. The songs on this disc were written at different stages of his life (some he was already singing in his youth) but the first time they were recorded was in 1974 for Radio Ljubljana. Doubtless many of the old recordings have unfortunately been lost. The music for the songs was written, apart from Milčinski-Ježek, by Bojan Adamič, Urban Koder, Marijan Vodopivec, Mario Rijavec and others (despite our best efforts, not all the composers have yet been identified).