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Swallows Have Arrived

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presents

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SWALLOWS HAVE ARRIVED

Divided, I could no longer pray:

It was the Other

who wouldn't let me:

The very moment I clasped

my hands together in prayer

and fell to my knees to answer

a sincere outburst from the heart,

he would run ahead

and stand between me and God

and begin to wink at me

and make faces.

Or, even worse, grotesquely mimic my

every move, glance and intonation,

and often from out of my mouth,

open to pray, would run curses.

Good morning, ma.

Good morning.

I started to lie.

Lies became my second,

then my first,

and finally my only essence.

At the beginning,

when I sinned only rarely,

I lied only to save

and appease myself.

Soon the lies became necessary

to save those around me, my family;

It seemed that I was doing the only

thing I could for my loved ones:

I was sparing their feelings,

I was even acting nobly.

Thank you.

Why are you killing yourself, boy?

Stop, mum.

Please stop it.

Stop what?

Thank you.

Since I achieved a certain skill
and self-dependence in sin,
each new time was the last time.
I believed it sincerely.
But as soon as the last time
was over and I came round,
I could no longer see any point
in further existence,
if it was never going
to happen again.
That's how you live
from one time to the next,
enduring every minute of sobriety as
an eternity of void and loneliness.
I was already unable
to live in reality;
Only a foretaste of just
one more time - the last time...
could make me move and think.
How beautiful the Sun is
when newly risen
He hurls his morning greetings
like an explosion!
Fortunate the one
who can lovingly salute
His setting,
more glorious than a dream!
I remember! I have seen all,
flower, stream, furrow,
Swoon under his gaze
like a palpitating heart...
Let us run to the horizon,
it's late,
Let us run fast,
to catch at least a slanting ray!
But I pursue in vain
the sinking god;
Irresistible Night,
black, damp, deadly,
Full of shudders,
establishes his reign;
The odor of the tomb swims
in the shadows
And at the marsh's edge

my timid foot
Treads upon slimy snails
and unexpected toads.
The hero of the Decadence
is a split personality,
severed in two by the experience
of the disharmony of the world.
It is no coincidence that
the theme of the double becomes
very popular with the Decadents.
Personality, just like the world,
is divided in two,
but the division doesn't end here.
Personality,
as it were, multiplies,
and this multiplication is really
a disintegration of personality
or the "wreckage"
as Beaudelaire calls it.
The absence of one single reality
and the simultaneous existence
of a myriad of different realities,
the collision of these realities
becomes an unbearable burden for
an artist of the Decadence.
How can one survive
this multiplicity of worlds?
How is it possible?
If the Romantic hero is a rebel,
ready to move mountains,
or a visionary, residing in
mystical union with the universe,
then the Decadent hero
is clearly a slighter figure,
often an aesthete
and a melancholic,
sharp of tongue
and malicious of character.
What remains the same is the soul.
The delicate,
frail.
Suffering soul of a poet
in the vulgar environment
of the bourgeois world,

deprived of beauty,
and therefore, justice.
The beauty of the Decadence
is the beauty of fading, of decay;
The cold, dismal beauty of death
and non-existence;
The beauty of
"The Flowers of Evil",
that's how Beaudelaire
called his poetry book.
Does any one have
any questions for me?
I asked you last time to read
Edgar Alan Poe's
story "The Black Cat".
It's a very short story.
Has anyone read it?
Please raise a hand.
You know what,
the hell with you!
- Hello
- Hello.
- Good afternoon.
- Good afternoon.
Greetings comrades!
Greetings, greetings!
Come on through, please do.
How are you, Tamik?
Not so bad, brother,
not so bad. And you?
Alright.
Don't, don't, I'm cold.
- Would you like your tea stronger?
- No, no, thanks, it's fine.
- You know what surprises me, Murik?
- What surprises you?
You have everything here,
but you don't have a clock.
He's as good as a clock himself.
An hour glass.
How's that?
The sands of time are
running out from him.
No, I just get along perfectly

well without a clock.
Aren't you late for work?
No, the clock is inside.
Everyone has a clock inside.
They forgot to wind mine up.
No, it's just that sometimes it runs
fast and sometimes it runs slow.
And sometimes it sticks
in one place.
Well, I want to live in harmony
with time. You see?
But people these days,
the people who populate the earth,
they've all gone mad,
they're all chasing time,
they want to catch it up,
they want to earn more...
It's chaos!
Universal chaos is beginning!
Friends!
Stop hurrying everywhere,
bring time to order!
Imagine they just turned
all the clocks off?
You're laughing again.
Would you like some more tea?
There's only one way
to stop this madness.
How's that?
The whole world must pray to God
that people will stop
their obscenity.
Profound, eh?
I'll tell you about obscenity.
We went fishing one time.
Everyone ran about
trying to snap up the best spots.
And I went off
with the lake warden.
We cut up some thin strips of meat
and I got out some chilled vodka...
and we sat in the shade
and said grace,
and drank and ate, and I cast

my line and fell asleep.
No one caught a thing, except me.
When they woke me up,
I hauld in my line and...
- A shoal of fish, yeah?
- Not a shoal, but there was a fish.
And what did you do with
this one fish, I wonder?
There were lots of you
weren't there?
- No, I gave it to the...
- To the warden?
To the warden? Well,
that was the right thing to do...
But, what has that got
to do with obscenity?
So, why are we so greedy?
Why do we grab all the best spots?
There's no need!
If God gives you something,
He gives it to you... or whatever...
You're right there. When God gives,
He gives it right into your hands.
And it's this love alone that
keeps the whole world together.
And the more a man
loses the sense of love,
the more warlike he becomes,
the more he wants to fight,
the more he wants to enslave.
Without love,
all that's left is obscenity.
That's negative information.
You turn on the television
and every day they tell you
that something has burned down...
You can't change it.
You mustn't watch it, you see?
- Watch the game!
- You've already lost.
- What's his obscenity?
- He's a teacher.
He should be an example to...
- Are you playing the game or what?

- I've practically won already.
You watch the game.
Pik, what's wrong with you?
Everything must
be paid for, eh, Pik?
Shell I open the window?
It's alright.
He just needs some hot tea.
Pik, here, drink your tea.
Pour some on his head.
It's alright!
Mate, grandmaster!
- My friend...
- Wait, wait!
Oh, God!
Again the black sun
has risen over the earth.

I have to live:

I have to walk, talk, smile
and lie, and lie...
The first torture is breakfast.
You eat and you are also lying,
because you don't taste the food
and you try to swallow
without chewing,
pretending that human things
are not alien to you.
Thanks, mum.
I don't want any more, I have to go.
But today is Sunday.
Where are you going?
I have to do some work
in the library.
Do libraries work on Sundays?
They do.
They have a day off on Mondays.
Let him go.
Alright.
I'm off.
Don't forget your briefcase.
Thanks.
Good morning.
You walk grinning agreeably,

trying to look like everybody else,
but you remain alien,
alien to this celebration of life.

And you don't have
to look back to know
that they're pointing at you,
and that your faithful
black sun is following you.

Pik! Pik!

- Hello, Skiff!

- Hello!

- How are you?

- I'm in a hurry. I'm going to work.

But today's Sunday.

We work on Sundays, too. I have
some work to do in the library.

I've just been to the library.

Look what book I got out.

"Alani ranks in China
during the Yuan dynasty".

Knight, Elite Officer,
Commissioner of the Assian troops,
Commissioner

of the Emperor's guard,
Supervisor of the right
Assian guard, Great...

Skiff, tell me the rest later, OK?

I've got a very important meeting.

- When are you going to be home?

- Around 7, 8, 9 o'clock.

I've got such stuff to tell you.

There are some really
interesting facts here.

Good luck, Pik!

See you!

Hey, kid.

- Listen, kid, do you live here?

- Yes.

Listen, do you know uncle Volodya?

- You mean Voven?

- Aha.

Yeah, I know him.

- Could you call him for me?

- Sure.

And I'll keep an eye
on your bike for you.
Just make sure his mum
doesn't see, OK?
- And you won't nick it?
- I've got a car.
Voven's ma said you're a bastard.
Really?
Scram, Pik, scram.
OK, kid, thanks.
Hey, man, you haven't got any car.
So where is he, then, this bloke?
Show me, where is he?
What do you want, for God sake?
Get lost!
Leave him alone! How many
times do you need telling?
Leave him alone!
Rot in Hell!
Run! Run!
Get out of here!
Stop!
Stop!
That's it, you little runt,
now we've got you!
Are you trying to make us run,
you cripple?
Who were you with, you fuck?
- Easy, you're killing me!
- Who were you with, you arsehole?
I don't know him.
Pick up your case.
The briefcase, pick it up!
Open it!
Shake it out!
What are you, a bookworm?
Yeah, a bookworm.
Charles Bo-DE-lair.
- Who's that?
- A French poet.
Looks like a junky
Alright. We let you go!
It's Sunday, the holy day.
You don't have a cigarette, do you?

You're a cheeky one, eh?
And a light, please.
I went to school no. 3, too.
Three years below you.
Don't come round here any more.
The Persian's been busted.
Have your tickets ready, please,
and your passes.
So, girls, what have you got
to show me?
Lads, tickets?
Have your tickets ready, please.
Your ticket, please, young man
Get it there.
It blocks the aisle.
My Pretty one!
- Is it a boy or a girl?
- A girl.
What have you got?
And you, lady?
You took my seat.
It is the conductor's seat.
- Lads, what have you got?
- That's for two tickets, please.
We don't need the tickets.
We are leaving.
Your ticket, please, young man
I have a pass.
So show it to me.
Can I see it?
No, I won't show it to you.
- What do you mean?
- Why don't you believe me?
Look, show me.
Either buy a ticket,
or show me your pass.
I said I'm not going
to show you my pass.
- So get off, I'm stopping the tram.
- I have a pass.
- Why do I have to get off?
- Get off, please.
Leave him alone.
I'll pay for him.

You can't pay for him.
Get off, please.
I have a pass.
Look at him.
You put a pair of glasses on,
pretend to be an intellectual,
and you're too miserly to pay
three roubles for a ticket?
So, show me your pass,
or get off the tram.
Stop the tram!
Leave him alone.
Take this.
You should be ashamed
of yourself, young man.
Intellectual!
Lout!
Hooligan! Lout!
People like you...
Wretched intellectual!
Why the long face?
What's up now?
Murik, I need some money.
What did I tell you last time?
I told you not to come to me
with this obscenity again. Never!
Didn't I tell you that?
I'm telling you honestly
what I need the money for.
It's nice to know
you're not deceiving me,
but I'm not giving you
any money, do you understand?
I went to the other end of town,
to Haly-Galy's.
Even though I was having
really violent withdrawal symptoms
as a rule they come
on the second day without...
I got off a stop
before I needed to.
I had to collect my thoughts
about what I was going to say
and to make sure

the house wasn't being watched.
I already owed Galya
for four doses,
and she had already
sworn three times
that I wouldn't get round her
like that again.
Listen, PiK.
Where do you think you are,
in heaven?
It's like you can't live
without the high
and you're too scared
to start thieving?
There's lots of you
and only one of me.
What am I supposed to do?
To pay the man with my body?
Listen, PiK.
Don't come back here again
without the readies.
I'll set the dogs on you.
Got it?
I could, of course,
have phoned beforehand.
That would also have been
less dangerous.
But, that would have meant
being left with nothing, for sure.
And with the surprise visit
I still had some chance.
It would be good
if Galya wasn't at home,
but Valya was,
Galya's younger sister,
who was also in the know,
but wasn't such a bitch yet.
And it would be better still
if Valya wasn't there,
but Gerasim was,
Valya's fella, alone.
He's a fucked up old Junky,
but a big heart.
And it would be ideal

if the whole gang was there.
Then it would be easy
to shoot up on the sly.
The artist presented a series of
works called "Temporary presence".
A compressor inflates
shapeless forms with the air,
turning them into men and women.
And in a second
the air is blown out.
The same air gives life
and takes it away.
You're watching
"The Culture news".
I stopped about a hundred metres
from the cherished house
and sat down on a bench to catch
my breath and have a look around.
Sitting was even
more difficult than walking.
To my left I saw a swing
and I suddenly and desperately
wanted to have a swing.
Picky-Wicky, brother.
How's it going?
That was Gerasim.
Only a person who
had taken a communion
from the holy spring
could look that magnificent.
Haly-Galy was, evidently, holding,
and I understood straight away
that I had a chance.
Well, well.
What brings you here, I wonder?
I'm waiting for Eskimo.
You haven't seen Eskimo, have you?
Eskimo?
No, I haven't seen him.
So, he's ripped me off, Eskimo,
that bastard, I'll carve him up.
I was surprised with my sincere
hatred towards the poor Eskimo,
who I hadn't seen

for a week or more.
Yeah, that's bad.
- Do you want some beer?
- What do I want with your beer?
You'll be offering
me a biscuit next...
Stop showing off for God sake.
Hey, take it easy!
It was Eskimo who duped you.
Go and sort it out with him.
Who do you think you're talking to?
Eskimo's a fuckhead,
the whole town knows that.
Anyway, when did you lose him?
About two hours ago.
And how much money
did you give him?
Oh, what does it matter,
if I haven't got any more anyway?
And where does Eskimo get it from?
You see, Gera,
there you go again, showing off.
Where do people get it
from around here?
And what makes you think
we've got any?
Never mind!
Give me a swig of beer at least.
Here...
God, have mercy on us sinners!
Amen.
You see, Gera,
to open one bottle,
you have to have another.
Meaning?
Meaning you scratch my back,
and I'll scratch yours.
Meaning?
I'm asking you
how you would open a bottle,
if you didn't have another one?
With a knife.
Gerasim.
Have pity on me.

I'm dying.
But, you haven't got any money...
But if I had money, I wouldn't
be asking for pity, would I?
I'd be pitying
everyone else myself.
Pity you I can.
But help you, doubtful.
If I had known at the moment
that it would have helped,
I would have cried out loud
and fallen down on my knees.
But something stopped me.
Not self respect, but
some strange foreboding of luck.
Now what I had to do
was just not scare it off,
which my hysterics
could easily have done.
At the same time I had
to be emotionally convincing,
remembering Gerasim's big heart.
What was needed here
was not hysterics...
Listen, Gera.
You know I don't have any money.
And I know you
do have the medicine.
But you don't know
about tomorrow...
Listen...
You know, you don't know...
We've heard it all...
More importantly Galya has
also heard it all before,
she's heard about
tomorrow as well...
You are a master only
of the uncertain.
Look, you'll have the money
tomorrow, come round tomorrow...
Why did you go to Eskimo?
You should have popped in
to Haly-Galy's and had a good cry.

You know she wouldn't let you die.
It wouldn't be the first time,
would it?
Eskimo owes her twice
as much himself.
So, he's probably run
to his pals in the village.
Because now you can't get it
anywhere, except from those cowboys.
But, he might also
have been nicked.
Are you kidding?
You were just threatening
to carve Eskimo up.
You're not having me
on about Eskimo, are you?
I swear as if in front
of the junky god, Gera:
If the filth haven't taken him in,
I'll carve him up.
It was dangerous to drag
the pause out too long.
Gerasim, have you got anything
sacred inside you?
Ask Eskimo,
while you're carving him up...
I spent 15 years inside.
I'm sacred myself, understand?
That's why I'm asking you,
like a saint,
let me live to tomorrow,
so I can pay my debt to Galka.
My, you're a difficult one, Pik...
Me? Difficult?
I swear to you that tomorrow...
Oh, stop talking about tomorrow!
Tomorrow...
Tomorrow there'll be shame.
That's what will be tomorrow!
You think I'm sitting here because
you are talking about tomorrow?
I'm sitting here with you,
because you have shame.
Hell with you.

Come on.
I've got a bit.
We can split it.
Don't forget the beer.
Damn junkies
Listen, Gera.
- What are you going to say to Galka?
- I'll tell her I'm fucking sacred.
Don't worry.
She's not in.
She's gone
to visit Cousin in the nick.
Cousin was an experienced thief.
Galka went to visit him in prison.
So she opened the stashes
for her housemates,
but not for the debtors.
Who's that you've brought?
Pik...
Bring us a hit, kitten, ah?
- Has he brought the money?
- Yes, yes.
Let him show it to us, then.
Bring us a hit, I said,
dealer-bitch!
Gerasim cooked up
and I sat and shook out
of impatience and an overload
of psychological
and physical sensations.
There it is
the long-awaited moment;
There it is happiness;
There it is the end to my suffering,
the shelter for the strangers,
the refuge for the martyrs of
conscience, the moment of truth...
I babbled all sorts
of rubbish to myself,
which seemed at the time
to be precious poetry.
However, although my happiness
was full, like the moon,
a small blotch saddened its face.

The sharp pain below my stomach
was increasing while
the spirit was rising.
This base need was just
as acute and pressing
as my high aspiration.
Gera.

I need to go to the toilet.
That'll pass in a minute.
Oh, go on, then,
if you're not afraid of
that gnarling bitch, Valka...
Constantine, give it up!
It's not you.
These words hit me strangely,
like an electric shock,
and I saw, as if for the first time,
the person who had spoken them.

- Gera, it's the filth!

- Calm down, Pik.

Don't open it straight away,
kitten, ask who it is.
Who the fuck are you to give
orders around here, you bastard?
Who's there?

Have you brought money?

Then go and steal some!

What?

What watch?

Shove it up your ares!

No, I told you...

He's not in, and he
can fuck off along with you...

She's not here, either.

That's it.

Clever girl, kitten.

Are you going to have a hit?

Fuck you, you bastard!

So?

Picky-Wicky, sir.

Defend yourself.

I don't know how,
it was either Gerasim's smirk,
or something else,

but I instantly understood
that the person at the door
was none other than Eskimo.
That evening I met Eskimo.
He was dying.
His suffering
which looked exactly like that
from which I had so miraculously
been relieved that day,
didn't make me hurt.
Quite the opposite,
it underlined my own high
and made it more tangible,
deeper and profound.
Eskimo kept moaning
and looking at the watch
every fifteen seconds.
He said Mullah had promised
to bring him some medicine
and hadn't shown up for two hours.
Come on, Mullah, you dog!
What are you doing to me?
Pik!
And where did you say you shot up?
Despite my condition,
I still remembered
that I couldn't give Gerasim away.
Did I say?
Alright. Enjoy.
What difference
does it make to you where?
That's the point.
It makes no difference.
I just wanted
to hear you showing off.
Come on, Mullah, you bastard!
Calm down, brother.
Mullah will show up.
For God's sake!
Where the fuck have you been?
Fuck you!
As if I owe him anything.
Fuck...
Fuck...

You're home.
You're home.
What home?
It's burning, Mullah, you bastard!
Bastard yourself!
It's the Dimedrol burning.
What Dimedrol?
Look, I've got a lump!
Take it out.
Take it out.
Take the lighter and shine it here.
You've been home.
Give me your other arm.
Good morning, Eskimo!
Put the light out.
Don't give us away!
Give me a light again!
So, how do you feel?
It's just water.
You dog!
Did you here that, Pik?
Just water.
Swear on your mother's name
that it was just water.
Shh! Quiet!
Lads, go home.
This is a kindergarten, after all.
There are little kids here,
morning and afternoon.
And maybe we're little kids, too.
The night shift.
Hey, old man.
Go back to your hut!
We're not in your way.
Thanks for that!
We're leaving, Pops, we're leaving.
Forgive us.
- Come on.
- Why? Where do we go now?
Where the fuck are we going?
Can you believe
how many windows there are.
And there are people living
behind every one.

That's nothing!
Can you imagine how much
dough there is behind them,
if you piled it all together!
What do you reckon, Pik?
Why do they need so much money,
if they don't get wasted?
Imagine I've stopped thieving,
found a respectable job,
and I've got money falling out
of the sky on my head.
But what am I suppose do with it
if I don't jack up? Eh?
I don't know.
Maybe build a house,
plant a tree,
have a son and bring him up.
Don't talk rubbish!
You can read that in any book.
I'm asking you as one of the lads.
Just take any decent family man,
get him really high,
so he jumps out of his slippers,
and there and then
his decent family life stops.
He'll remortgage his house,
chop his tree up into matches
and send his son out thieving.
And why's that, eh?
I think they're blind
because they don't know
what a high is.
That's just you
talking crap, Eskimo.
That means everyone's blind
and you're the only sighted one.
And why not?
There's only one saint
for every million.
And there is only one Jesus,
full stop.
Maybe dope is also a holy source,
living water.
Whoever tries it once

forgets everything.
Maybe it's dead water, not living.
Poppies also come
from Mother Earth,
so it can't be dead.
What was that?
What's up with you Eskimo?
Don't scare us,
it's scary enough as it is.
Some bird just almost flew
into my face.
What was it, Pik?
A sign
What fucking sign?
A Godly sign
We've got to stop jacking up.
Don't talk rubbish, Pik. It was
probably just a swallow flying past.
Swallows don't fly at night,
do they?
It was probably a bat or an owl.
Let's go somewhere
a bit lighter, eh?
Eskimo's knowledge about swallows
touched me kind of strangely,
because he'd probably never looked
up at the sky before that night.
At that time neither I,
nor Mullah, nor Eskimo knew
that the swallows had already
sensed an early autumn
and flown away to warmer climes
which know no winter.
Greetings, good fellow!
Greetings, father.
Why have you come here?
I can't pray.
Maybe your briefcase
is getting in the way.
Galka!
I knew she'd crawl back at night.
Yes, I'm coming.
Alright, I'm coming...
What are you sitting around for?

Bring grandma in here.

- In here?

- In here, in here. Where else?

Hello?

How's it goin'?

Yeah, Cousin's coughed up.

Yeah, it's all OK.

I didn't get round

to repaying my debt to Haly-Galy.

Mullah called me

and said that that night some thugs

had broken into Haly-Galy's,

strangled Gerasim and Valka

and taken all the medicine,

money and valuables.

I also found out from Mullah that

there had also been an old woman,

Valka and Galka's mother.

She had been lying

there paralysed for ten years

in a little room

at the back of the flat

where no one ever went,

apart from the sisters.

They kept the goods

under her mattrass.

The thugs didn't touch her,

they just carried her through

to the couch in the living room,

where Valka and Gerasim's bodies

were already lying.

Mullah says no one knows

anything about Galka.

But they say it was probably

Cousin, who set it all up,

because he had lost

at cards in prison.

And after we said good bye,

Mullah added, as if by the way,

that Eskimo had hung himself.

Camera:

Anna Zabłudovskaya

Costume and set design

Tigran Kaitmazov
Music by Shirvany Chalaev
Producer Alan Galazov