

Ukrainian literary fiction

Grandma did not love to die

Novel. Ukraine. 2021. 180 pages

A cruel, beautiful, open, truthful and relevant saga about three generations of a family who all their lives strive for personal happiness in their home, but in which there has never been love and therefore each of them remains lonely until the end of his life Days, even surrounded by numerous relatives. Each chapter here is a work of its own, a piece of life, an ironic, sad and powerful story. Nestled together, they weave into a magnificent canvas of the story of the residents of a mining village in eastern Ukraine.

All of the stories are not pure fictitious. They were created thanks to the author's power of observation, who as a result of his various professional activities has met many people in the most dramatic situations.



THE AUTHOR

Pavel Belyanski was born in 1977 in a family of military servants in the village of Shakhta No. 9, Perevalsky district, Lugansk region, Ukraine. From 1994 to 1999 he studied at the Chemical-Technological University of Dnepropetrovsk. Since 1996 he has worked as a freelance correspondent for the regional newspaper "Torgovy Dom" in Dnepropetrovsk and for VLD-Press. After graduating from university, he worked as a car dealer, advertiser, wholesale manager, sales department manager and commercial manager. In 2014 he opened his own company manufacturing and installing monuments. Belyanski is married and has two children.

Under the pseudonym „Pashtet“ he actively wrote in samizdat and became the winner of various competitions. Later, on the advice of friends, he opened a facebook account. The first entries are from September 2015, and by June 2016 he already had more than 20,000 followers. His works appeared on one of the most visited websites in Ukraine site.ua.

Pavel Belyanski

From the content

Violent grandfather Petro suffers a heart attack before he can drag his unruly grandson out from under the bed.

Great-aunt Dora introduces the narrator to dealing with women and always gives him cotton plugs before she starts cursing.

Grandmother Anyuta always says: don't worry, I'm not going to die, God doesn't want me. She feels sinful because she has denied her firstborn all her life. In the end she dies without seeing him again.

For Cousin Katja, the sea only exists on the map on the kitchen wall. She sees the sea for the first time in the cinema and for the second time on television. In the end she sells the house and yard, including the television, and drives to the sea in Odessa.

At the feast after the grandfather's funeral, Valera and Vitja cut down the fruit trees to fit the long tables in Tanja's garden, adding a new one to the legendary sibling dispute between Pavel and Katja.

Although or because she was brought up in a monastery when the Red Army came, grandma Anja does not believe in God. Nevertheless, at Easter she brings the priest into the house and lets him say prayers for hours before she gives him something to eat. When he knocks on her door again next Easter and says: Christ is risen, she only says: As if we didn't know it ourselves, and slams the garden gate in his face.

When grandma is on her deathbed once again, her husband Petro admits that he never loved her. Whereupon she jumps up alive and leaves the house angrily.

After his divorce from Katja, Valera only comes back twice to visit his kids. The first time, a dashing blonde is waiting in the car while he has to leave a crate of tangerines in front of the gate for his two children because his ex-wife won't let him in. The second and last time he comes as a war invalid with a prosthetic leg and crutches.

Grandma's village, where the narrator always spends his summer holidays, is a village without men. As if they went to the coal mines for the next shift and simply forgot to come home again. But even without men, everything stays the same.

Aunt Anja chose Vitya as a husband to have children. But when he finally wants to sleep with her on the third day after the wedding, she hits him with a prepared iron wrapped in a towel. On the second hit, she feels her own power, loses her fear of him, drops the iron, and hugs him. Ten months later their daughter Aleksandra is born.

The five children or grandchildren who remain, laugh together into the camera, as always on command, because they always did everything on command and have long since stopped doing things together and have long since left their old eastern Ukrainian homeland.

Aunt Tanya dies under the thunder of artillery fire in February 2015, when fighting for Debaltsevo and Mariupol broke out again in Donbass.

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