

## POGHOS AND CHIKOL

### *Part one: 2018 - 2020*

#### **About how Poghos met Chikol**

In the afternoon of twenty eighteen Poghos was driving down Kochar Street in his “Niva”, holding the steering wheel of the car with his left hand, a doughnut with his right, which he had bought earlier in the morning, but had not had time to eat. The fact that it was afternoon he found out from the radio, which had suddenly stopped to announce: “It is twelve in Yerevan. Welcome to the news”

Poghos was quite angry. He appeared here by accident. according to the schedule he made the day before, he was supposed to be at Kochar Street at twelve o'clock. He did not disrupt that schedule at all, he even came seven minutes early, but it turned out that the address he wrote in the notebook simply did not exist. And it shouldn't exist, because instead of Yervand Kochar Street, he came to Hrachya Kochar Street.

And so, Poghos, sufficiently angry, before turning and going to the right address, called Achon and began to scold her:

-Why didn't you tell me that it was Hrachya Kochar Street instead of Yervand?

Achon, who at that moment was reading a book about the former president of Uruguay, Jose Mujica, which, by the way, was recommended by Poghos himself, reluctantly stopped reading and said:

-That old man was great!

-What old man? -Poghos didn't understand.

- The president of Uruguay, Jose Alberto Mujica Cordano, also known as El Pepe, explained Achon, then continued, - did you know what diplomatic scandal he got into when he said to his aide: "This old woman is worse than that pervert," referring to Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez De Kirchner and her late husband, during the press conference, not knowing that the loudspeakers were already on:

-Of course, I knew. I recommended it to you.

It may seem to the reader that Achon was Poghos's secretary, but she was not. They were just neighbors, or maybe little more than neighbors. And in general, Poghos could not even have a secretary, because the work he was engaged in did not imply such luxury. The point is that our hero was repairing refrigerators. More precisely, not only refrigerators, but household appliances in general. He could repair anything, even a rocket, but he was mainly approached by those whose refrigerator or the washing machine and sometimes the iron was out of order.

And here Poghos, after talking with Achon and calming down a little, had already reached Baghramyan Avenue and started eating his doughnut with a rather large appetite, which he had bought earlier in the morning from the store under his building, when the radio receiver, after announcing the Yerevan time, continued, " Today Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan will answer citizens' questions live. He wrote on his Facebook page..."

-Chikool, -Poghos exclaimed, then swallowed a large piece of doughnut and added, - Revolution!

He did not accept the new prime minister. He felt with his hundredth sense that something was wrong. Poghos felt people in general. The nature of his work allowed him to interact with many people and he was able to distinguish good from bad, lie from truth, fake from sincerity and all that jazz. At least, he was sure he could. He loved good people, loathed bad people, but still thought that one does not exist without the other, it is nature.

"From today on, the amount of gasoline provided to the cars serving the staff of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia will be reduced twice. In this way, at least fifty-six million drams will be saved annually," the radio announced.

-Chikool...-he shouted again and stopped at the red light and turned off the radio.

A month or so before that, when the revolution was raging in the country, Poghos was busy with his invention. What kind of invention it was, we will have occasion to talk about, but now let's talk about why our hero was not enthusiastic about the events unfolding around him, like his neighbors, relatives and acquaintances, almost everyone did, except for Achon, of course. The point is that Poghos was an extremely intelligent person, although those same neighbors, relatives and acquaintances were convinced that he was insane. They were convinced, but they didn't dare to talk about it, even among themselves. Everyone feared

Poghos and it's hard to say why, because he never did anything wrong towards them. We will come back to their fear later. Poghos was not excited about the revolution, because he felt that there were more lies and falsehoods than the truth.

The traffic light at the Baghramyan-Moscovyan intersection persistently did not turn green. Poghos stood in the middle row. In his left mirror, he suddenly saw a line of black cars with red and blue lights flashing, speeding down the third row. Several cars passed him and braked a little ahead, the next one, an S-class Mercedes, stopped directly to the left of his Niva.

In fact, the news he heard on the radio a while ago was not particularly true, thought Poghos. The government has not reduced the number of official vehicles either. And maybe these are not government cars, but some kind of oligarch, he continued to think, and at that very moment the rear window of the Mercedes opened, and who do you think he saw?

The one sitting in the next car was called Chikol by Poghos. That's how Poghos imagined that character and he named him accordingly.

And here, at the Baghramyan - Moskovyan intersection, standing under a red light, Chikol smiled at Poghos. And although he didn't say anything, his smile said: "You see, I, the head of state, stopped at a red light."

Poghos, unlike the head of state, did not smile. Moreover, he gave such a look that the smile on the Prime Minister's face froze and he had to raise the glass. And Poghos did not manage to say what he wanted to say. You might think that he had to be rude or even curse, but no, Poghos just wanted to say, "we'll talk in two years."

### **About what Poghos has been up to for the past two years and before that**

Before going to the main part of this story, it is probably right to know and understand Poghos at least a little, because understanding him deeply is not so easy.

After the April war of twenty sixteen, Poghos, returning from the front, began to think about something that in case of coming true would save many lives in both his homeland and in the world.

He was an engineer by profession, graduated from Yerevan Polytechnic Institute in nineteen eighty-eight, worked in a factory for two years, then went to war and fought for four years until he was wounded. He was wounded by a shell explosion, exactly one day before the

armistice, and when his friends took him to the field hospital after the victorious battle, the doctors said that the wounds were too many and too serious, especially the head injury. In one word: he wouldn't live. But Poghos lived and more than that, he took part at the next two wars that shook our country. But there was one problem. Poghos has changed. It's not very certain whether it was the result of concussion he had as a result of the explosion of the shell, from the shrapnel injury of the head, from being in a coma for about a year, from stress, or for some other reason. He raptured quickly, often expressed incomprehensible thoughts, could stand for hours and look at the sky, but most importantly, he began to listen to rock, and heavy rock, for instance "AC/DC", "Guns N" "Roses", "Aerosmith" and others. He had assembled a powerful sound system in the trunk of his "Niva" and liked to go somewhere outside the city in his free time, to a forest or a mountain and a valley, turn on the music as loud as possible, think, and at night look at the sky with his hand-made telescope. Achon sometimes accompanied him.

And Poghos's non-free time consisted of two parts. the first of these was the work by which he covered the expenses of his living; as already mentioned above, he was engaged in the repair of household appliances. The second was the invention on which he had been working since twenty sixteen.

But before we get to the invention, which we promised at the beginning of this story, let's keep another promise and talk about why people were afraid of Poghos. First, in order to present the image of our hero, let us turn to the description of the victim Leonid Bakhtikyan preserved in the archives of the Yerevan Central Administrative District Police Department, given on December five, nineteen ninety-six, on the basis of which the oral portrait of the suspect Poghos Poghosyan, (our Poghos), was drawn up. Twenty-five-thirty years old, brown hair, brown beard, big brown eyes, slightly pointed nose, height: one hundred and eighty-one hundred and eighty-five centimeters, strong build, a small mole on the left cheek, a slanted, long scar on the right cheek."

Of course, more than twenty years have passed since the description given by Leonid Bakhtikyan and the appearance of our hero has changed somewhat, but the reader will surely be more interested in what he did in nineteen ninety-six that the police had to search him. Let's turn again to the materials stored in the archives of the Central Administrative District of Yerevan Police Department, according to which a criminal case was initiated against Poghos Poghosyan on basis of article one hundred and nineteen of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, that is, causing severe physical pain to a person on purpose. Later, the court recognized our hero as sane and sentenced him to the maximum sentence defined by the above-mentioned article: three years in prison. Of course, the court committed an illegality by

recognizing Poghos Poghosyan as sane, but it was the only solution. The thing is that the person, i.e., Leonid Bakhtikyan himself, to whom our hero intentionally caused severe physical pain, was also a judge... But how and under what circumstances was that pain caused to Judge Bakhtikyan? According to the criminal case documents, Poghos hit and broke the victim's nose and pulled his ear. The criminal case did not mention the order in which he did it, first he broke the nose, then pulled the ear, or vice versa, and what happened to the victim's ear after pulling it. As for the circumstances, the information about them was also very scanty, it was only stated that the incident took place on Pushkin Street in the middle of the night.

Poghos did not like to remember this incident. He also didn't like to remember the year and a half he spent in the colony before he was released by amnesty. He equally did not like to remember two other incidents, during one of which he had robbed a wealthy businessman along with his two bodyguards, after which he had forced him to eat one hundred thousand drams in ten thousand notes, and during the other incident he had forced a high-ranking policeman to strip, put the latter in his own car and dropped him off in front of the official entrance of the Ministry of Internal Affairs at the exact moment when the minister was coming to work. In the first case, the businessman, or rather his employees, gave Poghos one hundred thousand drams, instead of the promised two hundred thousand drams for the work he did. In the second case, a high-ranking police officer injured and dragged a woman in front of Poghos, during which her dress was torn in the breast area.

In both cases, the court found Poghos insane and did not prosecute him. Medical coercive measures were applied to him, but our hero remained free. The events took place in the years two thousand and one and two thousand and five respectively. Before that, during and after that, of course Poghos had pulled many people's ears many times, broke some noses, but neither the law enforcement agencies nor the general public were informed about it.

Don't rush thinking that Poghos was wild. Believe me, Poghos was an extremely kind man, just easily distracted. However, he pulled the ears and broke the noses of people who deserved it.

Anyway, let's move on to how Poghos earned his daily bread and finally talk about his invention.

Poghos posted a statement on the "list.am" website that read: "Repair of household appliances: do not to call for stupid things." More than that, the statement was posted not by Poghos, but by Achon, because our hero had no clue about the Internet. The post was made very recently, in twenty seventeen. About ten years before that, Poghos had done the same thing, posting

the same announcement at bus stops and building entrances. Before that, he worked for several years in companies selling air conditioners and gas heaters, but nowhere did he get along with the management, and after enduring a few months at most, he was fired, breaking one nose and pulling five ears. However, Poghos was never void of money. He always earned enough to live normally. Actually, he didn't need much for normal lifestyle.

And then in twenty seventeen his neighbor Achon, posted the aforementioned ad on the Internet and Poghos's income skyrocketed after Poghos repaired her iron, which was unmendable. Currently, he was earning an average of thirty thousand drams a day. In addition, he received money every month from his sister living in America, and although he asked her not to send him any money, his sister was too caring to obey. Moreover, she was constantly persuading her brother to move to America, but Poghos did not listen to her. He lived in his apartment on Pushkin Street. He lived alone. He worked during the day, in the evenings he went to classical music concerts, operas, ballets or had beer, depending on his mood. On weekends he got into his khaki-colored "Niva" and drove somewhere outside the city - forest or mountain and valley, sometimes taking Achon with him, and at the same time worked on his invention.

In fact, we did not talk about the invention, but there will be time for that. And now let's come to June twenty twenty, a period when everyone in the world and in Armenia wore a mask, even when walking in the park, all except for a very few, including our Poghos.

### **About how Poghos pulled the MP's ear**

We can't say that the epidemic didn't affect Poghos's work. Naturally it had an effect, the calls decreased thrice, maybe quadrice or even quince. But still, there were callers. In the heat of summer, you can somehow survive without an air conditioner, but when the refrigerator breaks down, it is already a serious problem. And two, three, sometimes even four times a day, the owners of blown refrigerators called Poghos and asked to save their food. And Poghos loved helping people.

However, it should be mentioned here that after Poghos was in trouble several times, that is, he went to the call without a mask and was not allowed in, he had to slightly edit his statement posted on "list.am". Actually, it was edited by Achon, because Poghos could not handle the Internet. Now the statement added the following line: "No to masks".

And so, on June eleven, twenty twenty, Poghos received two calls one after the other, in both cases he was called to repair a refrigerator. The first call was again from Kochar Street, like two years ago, the other one from Yerrord Mas, and, just like two years ago, Poghos gave priority to the first one, of course, first checking from which Kochar Street the call came from.

It was seven o'clock in the evening when Poghos pressed the doorbell button of the apartment on the fifth floor of a building with a tool bag in his left hand and a parrot he had caught in the elevator in his right hand. The bird had gotten into the elevator when it stopped at the fifth floor and the doors opened. Poghos first politely asked which floor it was going to, but since he didn't understand anything from the parrot's answer, he carefully grabbed it and took it out of the elevator, thinking that it might belong to one of the residents of the floor.

The parrot had white feathers, yellow plumage and a very confident look.

-Who is it? -someone asked from the opposite side of the door of the apartment on the fifth floor, with enough delay.

-Poghos, -answered Poghos.

-Who? -they repeated from inside.

-The refrigerator guy, -answered Poghos.

A young man who had obviously just woken up from a nap answered the door. The man he looked like a frog with prematurely bald and oval head and large protruding eyes. At least that's what it seemed to Poghos.

The young man was wearing a green, crumpled T-shirt and wide, unflattering shorts, with crooked legs continuing underneath. Totally like a frog, Poghos thought and asked:

-Whose parrot is this?

The young man first put the glasses on, then took the mask from the closet in the hall, put it on, and then said in surprise:

-How do I know? Why aren't you wearing a mask?

Now it was Poghos's turn to be surprised. He once again measured the frog from head to toe and asked:

-Did I talk to you on the phone?

-Yes, -he answered and turned to the member of his family, -turn the noise of the TV down.

The sound of the TV was really loud, apparently some Armenian series was airing and someone was explaining something to someone in slang:

“Now you listen to me, you have no idea who you’re talking to”, something like this.

The parrot was making restless movements trying to get free. Poghos held it tighter, waited until they turned down the volume of the TV and asked:

-Did you read my announcement?

-What announcement? - the frog pretended to not understand, -wear a mask at once.

- But it is written in my statement that... - Poghos wanted to explain that he warned about not wearing a mask, but he did not manage to, because at that moment the parrot got out of his hand and flew over the landlord's bald head into the apartment.

-What are you doing? -the owner of the house exclaimed, -I will call the police now.

Poghos did not understand who he was addressing to: him or the parrot, and that was the only reason why he did not pull away from the owner's ear. The thing is, he didn't like it when strangers called him singular "you", besides, he didn't like the police and even more so, that word made him mad. In short, he hesitated for a moment, but even that one moment was enough for the host to run after the parrot. But catching the bird was apparently not that easy. First there were squawks, then grumbles, then the parrot came back and landed softly on Poghos's shoulder. The frog also appeared, he stood panting and said out of breath:

-He broke the Chinese vase. You will pay for this.

Here, Poghos realized that, the previous time the host addressed the parrot and not him.

-The Chinese will soon rule the world, - he said indifferently, as if nothing had happened, - the second half of the twenty-first century will belong to the Chinese.

-Sorry? -the house owner didn't understand.

-I mean does your refrigerator need to be repaired or not, because I have another order.

The frog's eyes widened in surprise.

-Are you kidding me? Do you know who I am?

-No, -Poghos answered calmly, -but I suppose you're a human, although you look very much like a frog.

-I beg your pardon? -the frog exclaimed, -I am a member of the National Assembly. You will answer for this. That's it. I'm calling the Police.

Poghos couldn't stand it anymore, he put down the bag with tools and was going to grab the deputy's ear, but at that moment a female voice called from inside.

-Keep silence, the Prime Minister is speaking.

The frog turned sharply, ran into the living room, turned the volume of the TV up and kept standing. Poghos also walked into the living room, even though no one had invited him in.

However, it turned out that it was not the prime minister who was speaking, but the news anchor. "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan proposes adding the violation of not wearing a mask in the car among the traffic violations recorded with the mobile application, on the basis of which administrative proceedings will be initiated."

-See? – said the frog turning to Poghos.

But the latter did not have time to answer, because at that moment the prime minister himself appeared in the frame and started speaking: "What is the problem there? A person saw a violation, took a picture, recorded that there was a person without a mask in the car, the number was written down, the driver is fined for it. We are now in a situation that it must be added to that list. We tell our citizens that we are starting an anti-epidemic movement, but they don't want to give appropriate tools? Where is the problem?"

-Chikooool, -exclaimed Poghos.

And here a miracle happened: the parrot, which had been sitting on Poghos's shoulder all this time and about which they had completely forgotten, began to speak:

-Chikol, Chikol, Chikol, -it repeated.

The host, aka the deputy, aka the frog, picked up the phone and called.

-Hello, police? Insulting the prime minister, attacking a deputy without a mask, a parrot breaking the Chinese vase...aaaaaghh!

He made the last exclamation, because Poghos pulled his ear. The phone fell from the deputy's hand, apparently it had the same fate as the Chinese vase, the deputy himself screamed a little more, then when his wife entered the room and Poghos released his ear, he froze in fear and shuddered.

And our hero, without saying anything, turned around and went out, feeling somewhat satisfied.

He stood at the door for a moment, looked back and said:

-Chikol.

-Chikol, chikol, chikol, - responded the parrot who was on his shoulder all that time and who obviously liked everything he saw.

### **Shameless parrot**

After pulling the frog-deputy's ear and leaving his apartment, Poghos had to figure out how to deal with the parrot that continued sitting on his shoulder. He grew fond of the bird, and would have been glad to take it with him and keep it in his house, but if the parrot belonged to one of the inhabitants of the building, and most probably it did, it would not be humane to deprive it of its owner, or the owner of it. And Poghos decided to let it go.

-Surely, you are an interesting bird and politically literate, -he turned to the parrot taking it off his shoulder, -but I can't take you with me.

Then he caressed its beak and let it go.

He went half-way down the stairs, into the elevator, and had barely pressed the button for the first floor when the parrot flew in and sat on his shoulder again. Ok, thought Poghos, maybe it wants to leave the building, I'll take it down with me and let it go. And he did so. Leaving the entrance of the building he threw the parrot into the air and before getting into the car parked in the yard and leave, he decided to enter the store next door and buy a cigarette.

"Entrance only with masks" was written on the door of the store. However, Poghos did not pay attention, he went inside and approached the counter, behind which stood a woman with ample breasts, also without a mask:

-Give me a box of...

-There's no service without a mask, - the clerk interrupted.

-But...-Poghos wanted to say that she was not wearing a mask herself, but the clerk interrupted again:

- On the door is written: "Entrance only with masks". Can't you read? Do you want me fined?

-But you're not wearing a mask either, -Poghos finally had a chance to say it.

-Yeah, but I'm not a customer, -explained the clerk very confidently, -put on a mask immediately, otherwise I will be fined.

Poghos gave a moment a thought and said:

- To put it mildly, and I will try to be as mild as possible, I must say that you do not particularly shine with your mental abilities, madam. However, that is not the important thing, the important thing is that according to your approach, customers should wear a mask, not for them to not get infected, but for you to not be fined.

Here, the saleswoman, who apparently did not understand the first part of what Poghos said, and only partially understood the second part, reacted hence:

-Are you going to pay if they fine me? There's no trade these days either.

Today, for the second time, unknown people addressed Poghos with singular "you". He certainly couldn't treat women the way he treated men, so he did the following: he stretched his whole long body over the counter, reached the shelves on the wall, took a pack of cigarettes from there, then, under the astonished gaze of the saleswoman, took out a thousand from his pocket, handed it to her and said:

-Keep the change.

And left the store. But he had not managed to approach the car and open the door, when the parrot appeared out of nowhere and sat on his shoulder again.

-You are one shameless bird, aren't you? - Poghos got angry, -what should I do now?

-What should do? What should do? What should do? -the parrot repeated.

And while Poghos was thinking about what to do, a kid on a bicycle approached him, braked sharply, got off the bike, examined Poghos carefully, and asked:

-You won't hurt it, won't you?

-I never hurt animals, -Poghos answered, - if we don't count people, because they are also classified as animals.

-Really? -the child got happy, -do you know what wise parrot that is? I wanted to keep it myself, but my mom didn't let me.

-He IS wise, -Poghos agreed, -and quite barefaced. By the by, do you know who it belongs to?

-Yes, to Mukuch.

-Mukuch, Mukuch, Mukuch, -repeated the parrot.

-Who's Mukuch? -Poghos asked both the child and the parrot.

The child answered his question. It turns out that Mukuch is a drunkard living on the sixth floor whom no one likes. He doesn't like the parrot either, and that's why he ran away from him.

- All right, then, - said Poghos with a sigh, after partially familiarizing himself with the bird's genealogy, - I will take it with me, Achon will probably know how to keep and feed it.

-Achon, Achon, Achon, -the parrot exclaimed.

### **About how Poghos was taken to the police**

On the same day, June eleventh, twenty twenty, Poghos was taken to the Yerevan city center police department. It turned out that it was moved from its former place to a newly constructed and quite presentable building, next to the Republican Stadium. Poghos had been in the previous department several times, the first time he was taken out with handcuffs and taken to the place of preliminary detention, the other times he was taken directly to a psychiatric hospital without handcuffs. The consequence of the first time was one and a half years of imprisonment, the other two times one month of forced treatment. Then Poghos was registered permanently in a psychiatric hospital, and later he was given a "certificate of insanity". This was facilitated by Poghos's childhood friend who rose to a very high position in the government system, but remained a decent and honest man. Once, after one of Poghos's exploits, he said to his friend: "You are still incorrigible, but I know that you are a righteous person and punish those who deserve it. So, I will put you on an "insanity paper" so that you

don't end up in prison after breaking your nose. But it certainly does not mean that you should continue breaking noses with the same intensity. I would recommend doing this at least once a year.

Poghos agreed and he kept his promise. However, since he had not made any promises concerning pulling people's ears, he did not feel constrained here.

Let's get back to how and why our hero was taken to the downtown police station.

After finishing the work in Yerrord Mas, Poghos decided to practice parroting. First, it was necessary to get food for him, then take care of its living conditions. It was also worth thinking of a name, because he forgot to check with the child how they call the bird. However, it turned out that all three issues were not easy to solve. Due to the coronavirus, all pet shops were closed. The poor animals and birds actually suffered here too because of humans. And in order to find a suitable name, the parrot first had to know the place properly. At least Poghos thought so.

In short, Poghos, was returning home preoccupied and worried, when his phone rang. Someone introduced himself as a criminal investigation officer and informed Poghos that he should report to the central police station.

-What for? -Poghos asked, who had completely forgotten about the incident taken place in the afternoon.

However, the criminal investigation officer did not clarify why.

-You will find out on the spot, -he said.

-It's not gonna happen, -Poghos objected, -I need to find food for the parrot. By the way, do you know what parrots eat?

However, the policeman was not inclined to answer this question either. Instead, he said:

-If you don't come, we will arrest you.

-You can arrest me, you can judge me, you can even hang me, but that won't make me pay the fine and wear a mask, -Poghos got angry and turned off the phone.

The thing is that he felt like the police were called for him, because he was caught several times without a mask, he was fined, but he never paid it. And he didn't remember the deputy

and the afternoon incident. For Poghos, in fact, pulling an ear was more common than not wearing a mask.

Of course, the policeman called several times, but Poghos did not answer the calls. He arrived home, introduced the parrot to his new apartment and advised it to temporarily settle in the living room on the chandelier until he took care of his nest issues. The parrot liked the idea, did a few spins around the room and landed on the torch. Then Poghos went out, knocked on the neighbor's door, but not finding her at home, went down to the yard and entered the store. He bought a hundred grams of rice, a hundred grams of wheat, the same amount of buckwheat and lentils and returned home, thinking that the bird would surely find something to his taste in this wide variety. Only he didn't know which of the things he bought was parrot-flavored, because he met the police at the door of the apartment.

It took some effort from the latter to find our hero. After they arrived to the deputy's apartment and learned the details of the incident, they asked him to find the number of the refrigerator repairers in the list of calls made on his phone. But as you remember, the frog's phone fell and had the fate of the Chinese vase and it took the police some time to verify Poghos's number through the mobile operator. Then when they finally called Poghos and he didn't comply with their, let's say, not particularly legal demand to report to the police, the policemen deciphered his address and came to Poghos's apartment on Pushkin Street, where our hero was about to enter, carrying several bags, one of which contained a hundred grams of rice, the others contained the same amount of wheat, buckwheat and lentils.

There were three policemen, with similarly blank stares sans any expression. They were disgusted with life and themselves, wearing crumpled shirts, and stinking really bad. One of them, who according to everyone was the highest in rank and whose clumsily shaven muzzle was left with a crumb of the khachapuri he had eaten a little while ago, turned to Poghos:

-Why don't you comply with the request of the police?

-Where are my keys? -asked Poghos searching his pockets.

-What keys? -the policeman didn't understand, -I asked why don't you come to the department when they call you?

-Here, hold this, -said Poghos avoiding the policeman's question again and handed him the bag with beans, -I probably left it in the store.

The policeman took the bag automatically, but immediately came to senses and shouted:

-Where are you going? Hold him!

The other two policemen rushed to fulfill the boss's order. They reached behind Poghos and tried to grab his arms. It didn't turn out not to be so easy, though. Not only did Poghos not allow them to grab him, but he also grabbed the policemen by their collars, lifted them into the air without any effort, and holding them in the air, turned to the boss:

-Don't make me mad. When I'm mad, I get out of control.

Later, at the police station, where Poghos agreed to go only after he had flagged down a couple of policemen, fed the parrot (the bird preferred cereal from a wide variety of legumes) and went to the toilet, he told the investigator:

-Your officers stink. Explain to them that showering is preferable, at least once in a while. I shower thrice a day on hot weather, for instance, and twice in winter. And naturally I change my shirt every time. By the way, why am I here?

It turned out that he was accused of committing three types of acts. The first, causing severe physical pain, as we have already had occasion to say, provided for up to three years in prison, the second, using violence against a police officer, five years in prison, and the third, not wearing a mask, a fine of ten thousand drams.

Without going into too much detail, none of these punishments were applied to our hero. He was only transferred from the police department to a psychiatric hospital.

### **Proposals to the Prime Minister from a psychiatric hospital**

Although Poghos was registered here, he had not come here even once in the last few years. And now he was surprised to discover that some things have changed in the psychiatric hospital. The building was renovated, the reception area expanded, and most impressively, the courtyard and garden were improved.

It was a cool summer evening, and the patients had gone out to breathe fresh air; some were walking, some were sitting in the park pavilions and talking. They were all wearing masks. Poghos was just outside, naturally without a mask. He was told to wait while they did the formalities, after which he would be seen by the doctor and it would be clear what would happen after that. So, Poghos was waiting.

He sat in the reception for a while, then left the building and started strolling first in the yard, then in the garden. But before that Achon called and the following conversation took place between them:

-Where are you, -Achon asked.

-In psychiatric hospital.

-Where? -Achon didn't understand.

-Mental institution, -Poghos explained clearer.

-Did their fridge brake? -Achon got surprised.

-No, -Poghos said, -I guess I broke.

Then he told the story of that day in short.

And now, while walking in the park of the psychiatric hospital, he was thinking about Achon and a little more about the parrot, when he suddenly heard the very familiar voice or rather, a squawk, an all-too-familiar squawk, coming from a booth under a cherry tree. Four patients had gathered here and were looking intently at a telephone resting on someone's broad-brimmed hat on the booth table, whence came the commotion;

"My specific position is this: should be strong, brave, law-abiding and strict. If a policeman approaches someone and requires to wear a mask, people start verbally attacking him and fighting. Is that right? I say, they will be detained in case of necessity and force will be used. I think that during the last two years, the RA police and National Security Service used very little force against some people. "Very soon they will have to use so much force against some people that they will not come out at all."

Poghos's first urge was to go over and smash the phone. But he restrained himself and began to watch the patients discuss the recording they had just heard.

-Did you hear that? - said the first patient, who apparently turned on the recording and who owned the phone and was very pleased with himself. He wore the mask so that it almost covered his eyes.

-Yes, - said the second patient, who apparently owned the wide-brimmed hat on which the phone was placed - our prime minister is right. They plundered and ate the whole country.

-I also agree, - said the third patient, -all ex-prisoners should be punished.

Here the fourth patient stood up and, for some unknown reason, assumed a sensitive position as if he was going to give a speech, coughed several times, straightened his mask and said:

Now listen to me. My specific position is this: we must take steps to help our Prime Minister. I suggest the following: first, a task force must be created and the whole area controlled. As soon as we see a person without a mask, we must immediately call the police.

Judging by the attitude of the other three, the proposal was accepted unanimously.

-Second, - the speaker continued enthusiastically, - it is necessary to list all the patients treated here who are connected with the former authorities and send the list to the National Security Service.

This proposal was also accepted unanimously and the speaker said:

-But first they should send this package of recommendations to the Prime Minister.

However, how he was going to do this remained unknown, because at that moment another patient approached them, holding a piece of paper torn from a notebook, on which something was scribbled.

-Would you by any chance have an envelope? -he asked his colleagues.

-What do you need it for? -asked the fourth patient angrily, because he had been interrupted.

-Have to send a letter, -explained the newbie showing the scribbled piece of paper.

-What letter? -asked the third patient.

-A regular one with an envelope.

-To who? -asked the second patient.

-The Prime Minister.

Here, all four patients gathered in the booth looked at each other. It was obvious that they didn't like that anyone but they wanted to send a letter to their Prime Minister.

-It's not gonna happen, -said the first.

-Bad idea, -said the second.

-We don't have an envelope, -said the third.

-Besides, the Prime Minister is busy now, -said the fourth.

-What is he busy with? -asked the newbie.

-We sent him a package of suggestions, -explained the fourth, -can we know what you have written to the Prime Minister?

-I wrote that two years ago, I blocked a road in Kyavar. "Kamaz" also got up to my feet. He must remember me.

-Was he there?

-Who?

-The Prime Minister.

-No.

-So, how should he remember you, if he wasn't there?

-He remembers everyone.

The people gathered in the booth looked at each other again, but this time calmly, even with a smile, as if they wanted to say: who is this madman?

The fourth spoke again on behalf of all.

-OK, you can send him a letter.

-But I don't have an envelope.

-Turn to someone else with that problem. You can ask...the fourth patient looked around and noticed Poghos, -there, you can turn to that man over there.

And it was here that everyone reflected that they hadn't noticed Poghos, who was standing not far away and was actually listening intently to their entire conversation. They looked at each other fearfully, trying to understand whether they had spoken wrong things, and then at Poghos to understand who this man was and where he had come from.

All this lasted quite a long time, after which the first patient expressed himself, turning to Poghos:

-Are you new here?

-No, I'm old, -Poghos smiled approaching a bit, - you have no idea how old I am. But you were discussing something, please, do continue.

-So, you've been here quiet a long, then? -asked the second, -so how come we've never seen you here?

-No, they brought me here recently, but all the same, I'm old, -explained Poghos keeping his smile.

-And why did they bring you here? -asked the third patient.

-For not wearing a mask.

-This man doesn't have a mask, -said the fourth, -we should call the police.

-It's useless, -said Poghos calmly, -because it will become a closed circle. If you call the police, they will bring me here anyway. But that's not the important part. The important thing is that after hearing your conversation I realized what strong threshold the Prime Minister has and more importantly, I didn't have an urge to pull your ears.

Poghos wanted to say something else, but didn't have a chance, because the nurse came in and told him to go to the head's office.

Achon was sitting cross-legged in the principal's office.

-Let's go home, -she told Poghos, -I ordered Sushi.

### **Little bit about Achon**

If someone ever dared to tell Achon that one day she will be forty, they would dearly regret it. And now, when Achon is at her forties, it is risky to remind her about it. Surely, she didn't have a tradition of breaking people's noses like Poghos, but she punished them another way, she simply deprived people of her friendship. Believe me, that was a severe punishment, because many people were willing to be Achon's friend even with a broken nose. But to tell you the truth, our she had a right to be irritated. She took care of herself so well that many young girls would dream of having her body and looks.

Achon had had four husbands. Actually five, if you count the last one who had decided to propose on her birthday. He had proposed properly, on one knee with a diamond ring in his hand, and Achon said “yes”. But their married life ended the next minute, when the groom presented the bride with the symbolic forty-one roses he had prepared in advance for her birthday. Achon immediately kicked him out of the restaurant. Then the ex-husband made dozens of attempts to win Achon's forgiveness. He knocked on the door of her house, holding first twenty-nine, then twenty-seven, twenty-five roses and so on, but in vain. The last time, a year before this story, when he had appeared with twenty-one roses in his hand and had once again been kicked out by Achon, he had behaved a little inappropriate by calling his unreal bride a “witch”, and did it the Poghos was coming out of the elevator. Needless to say, what had happened to his ear, but the important thing is that this is where Achon and Poghos's relationship started.

We will have a chance to talk about their relationship, but before that let's get to know Achon bit better.

Besides having four, actually five husbands at different times of her life, Achon had also had girlfriends, whom she spent most of her time with, in their houses, various cafés, restaurants, fitness clubs and various events.

All those girlfriends, without exception, were representatives of Yerevan's so-called "Beaumont" and were divided into two groups. The first group made business ladies, who earned their own money for their glamorous pleasures, the second group made women whose glamorous pleasures were paid by their husbands. The two groups were not particularly friendly to each other, but our Achon was involved in both groups and participated separately in all activities with them, although she had no business and no husband. But she had several apartments and a private house “inherited” from those husbands. She earned her money from giving the houses out for rent and it was enough to cover her glamorous life.

Achon had lived too short with all her husbands, certainly not as short as the last one, of course, but at least not more than a year. All those husbands had been serious people, had good possessions. Achon had married them almost entirely out of love, because she had loved all of them to one degree or another. Except there was one problem: Achon had a tendency to get bored quickly. She got bored with the suit and changed it, got bored with her car and bought a new one, quickly got bored with the apartment and moved to another one, quickly got bored with her husband and... well, you know what I mean.

But the reader will probably wonder why we dwell on the character of Achon in such detail. For two reasons: first, Achon had a relationship with Poghos, and that relationship was very special. Second, Achon moved to the last apartment on Pushkin Street after divorcing her fourth husband in twenty eighteen. She noticed their neighbor Poghos a long time ago, she was interested in him for some reason, she tried to start a conversation several times, but the neighbor was too indifferent, and this irritated Achon even more. The point is that she liked real men and could not stand, as she said, "sissies". As surprising as it is, the interest in Poghos did not fade even when it turned out that he was just a refrigerator repairman. There was something deep, mysterious about that masculine man.

Especially after that incident when Poghos pulled Achon's late husband's ear into the elevator, the neighbors finally got to know each other. Not only did they get to know each other, but they began to communicate intensively. Thanks to Achon, Poghos learned about some things for the first time: for example, what sushi is and how delicious it really is, what real sex is and how interesting it really is, what internet is and how useful it really is, and so on. And Achon just felt good and was extremely happy with this new change in her life. She avoided introducing Poghos to her glamorous girlfriends or going out together to public places, although she had agreed to go with him to cultural events several times. And in general, they had almost no common topics to talk about, although Poghos himself was not particularly talkative. But still, there was a topic that they could talk about long, meaningfully and aggressively enough. And that topic was called "revolution".

The second reason we're getting to know Achon is because without her, this story would hardly have happened, and if it did, it would hardly be interesting.

And it all started when Poghos was released from the psychiatric hospital on June eleven, twenty twenty, with Achon's intervention, and on the way back home, Poghos told the day's adventures.

-Did you really pull from the deputy's ear? -Achon laughed.

-Yeah, but not too long, because his wife appeared, -Poghos said:

-Was she beautiful? - Achon asked.

-Who? - Poghos didn't understand.

-The wife, -Achon explained.

-I didn't pay attention, -Poghos answered honestly, -but the deputy looked like a frog.

-I hate frogs, -said Achon scolding her face from disgust, -although their legs are tasty, if they prepare it in a good restaurant, that is, by a good cook. By the way, I know a restaurant like that. Let's go there and have frog legs.

-Didn't you say you ordered something already?

-Yeah, Suchi, but that can wait.

-But restaurants are closed, it's lockdown not, -Poghos persisted.

-The lockdown has long ended. But maybe we should really go home, order frog legs and eat at homes?

And since Poghos had not eaten anything during the whole day's struggles and adventures and was terribly hungry, he did not object. They went to Achon's house and it was here that the idea was 'conceived', which would later become a plan that Poghos and Achon would implement in the near future and which will be mainly told in this book.

### **About how Achon and Poghos decided to deal with the "sissies"**

If someone had ever told Achon that there would come a day when she would become interested in politics, Achon would certainly have sent them to hell. Or some other exciting place.

Achon was sure that politics in Armenia was just a means for earning money, and as money was never an issue for her, she had her own means for gaining money, she was never interested in politics, she treated politicians just like a poodle treated stray dogs: they do exist, but she doesn't care about them and the far they are the better.

Achon certainly noticed the vices of the society around her, the negative singularities, but she was indifferent to them, until it reached to her, personally. However, she was indifferent not because she did not want to help people and the society in general, but because she saw that the society was indifferent. And not only indifferent. Achon was convinced that she was the only one to blame for her own defects and the negativity surrounding her. If someone takes or gives a bribe, if they watch indifferently how a tree is cut down in the yard, if they vote in

an election after taking money for it, and after all that they say that the country damned, then it's all gone to hell. That's how Achon thought.

However, dispositions of our heroine changed when the authorities changed in Armenia.

Surely, she was never fond of the former authorities and perfectly understood that they never cared about people and that they've taken tens of times more than gave and lied to people, of course. They lied to those who wanted to be lied to and never lied to those who didn't have a chance to be lied to. The latter were conscious people.

For instance, when people of the authorities went around to people's houses and offered money for electing them, they knew who they should approach to. Because they knew that they could not lie to conscious person.

And because Achon was a conscious person, she hated it when people tried to lie to her, i.e., knock on her door.

And because the new authorities were doing that, Achon had to get interested in politics.

So, what was her conclusion, then? She concluded that the new authorities not only did lie to people, but they mocked them, took their trust for granted and they never cared whether they were dealing with a crowd or conscious people.

This was too much. Because lying is one thing, mocking is another.

And because a person who could mock Achon didn't exist, she had decided to take measured.

"Sissies" was the name she gave to the new authorities. Almost all of them. Without exceptions. And it didn't matter whether it was a man or a woman, because Achon believed that "sissiness" has no sex and men and women are equally gross. Once someone asked her to define "sissiness" and she said: "It's like when someone has testicles instead of balls and they are very proud of it". It's okay, let them live their lives, be satisfied and happy, but when such people get the opportunity to manage the destinies of others, this is already a different matter. And now, lo and behold, the fate of the entire nation and the entire state is in their hands.

Achon understood that she had to do something. She also understood that fighting against a "sissy" with power was going to be tough. It was going to be harder than fighting against the strongest and bravest scoundrel. And here, on June eleventh of twenty twenty, while eating frog legs in Achon's house, Poghos asked the neighbor:

-So, what shall we do?

-We should make an omelet from their balls, I mean testicles and make them eat it, -said Achon without giving it a lot of thought.

-I can't do that, -Poghos said sincerely, - I can pull their ears at the most.

-It's the same thing, -said Achon very seriously, -let's stick to that.

-But what's the point? Today I pulled an ear of a deputy and nothing changed. First, they took me to the police station, then to mental institution and the deputy remained at his house and will go to work tomorrow. He's just one of them. But there are so many frogs like him.

-If we put meaning to our actions and act like...

But Poghos was not listening to Achon.

-And besides, the parrot appeared, and now I have to take care of it. I don't even know what it eats. And I don't know if I should make a cage or let it live free. And finally, it needs a name.

-This is not the time for taking care of some parrot, -Achon tried to catch Poghos's attention, -do you understand that those "sissies" are mocking the nation. They do whatever they want and there's no one to punish them.

-Do you want me to punish them? How can I punish them? I am busy with a very important matter. Didn't I tell you about my invention? Gotta make it look complete and I can't focus.

-You should definitely focus, but not on the invention. We will deal with the invention later, I promise, -insisted Achon, who indeed had heard from Poghos several times about his invention, but still did not understand anything.

-Everyone should do their own thing, - persisted Poghos, - I'm just a household appliance repairman, if we leave aside my invention, how can I punish Chikol?

-You can, -Achon hit the table, -I mean we can. We have to punish Chikol's "sissies" and hence punish him.

-We? -Poghos got surprised. -You mean you and me? But how?

-I'll tell you how. I have an idea. You just have to agree.

-I agree to pull out ears of all the “sissies” I see and I will do it with great pleasure, I can even break their noses, because there are some who hold their noses so high, they need to be broken, but you have nothing to do with it.

-Will you hear me out?

-I got you already. It’s a great idea. Thank you for inviting me over to your place and treated me with frog legs, but I have to say that I didn’t like them, they taste like chicken and I hate chicken. I have to go home now and take care of my parrot. I wonder if it likes rock.

-So, do you agree? -Achon got excited.

But Poghos didn’t answer, he finished his beer instead, got up and left Achon’s apartment, entered his own house, which the parrot messed up big deal. By the way, the parrot still didn’t have a name.

### **Poghos is watching TV**

A week had passed after this conversation between Achon and Poghos. It took place in Achon's house on the day of pulling the frog's ears and eating the frog's legs, that is, June eleven, twenty twenty. One day, after midnight, Poghos got tired of working on his invention, took a bottle of beer out of the fridge, got comfortable in the armchair of the living room and turned on the TV. One of the channels was broadcasting news, and Poghos decided to listen to what was happening in the country and in the world in general. But he didn’t have a chance to see the latter, because after seeing and hearing the very first report, or rather the hero of the report, he got angry and changed the channel. The report was from the National Assembly, the hero of the report, a high-ranking representative of the ruling power, was running through the corridor of the National Assembly and the journalists were running after him, reaching him from time to time, asking questions and getting or not getting answers to their questions. The whole scene could have seemed funny if the TV volume had been turned off and the cynical and arrogant words of the deputy could not be heard.

The main questions to the official were related to a draft law authored by him, according to which it was proposed to increase the amount of compensation for insults and defamation published in social networks and media from one million drams, in case of insult, to five million drams and in case of defamation, from two million to ten million drams.

"I think that by tightening the already existing article, we will be able to prevent the informational situation that exists today to some extent. People also get angry, people are misled."

And while Poghos was trying to understand how to "prevent a situation that already exists" and why "people get angry and are misled", another question from the journalist followed: why are you walking around accompanied by the police, to which the official answered like this. "Due to security reasons, threats of reprisals were made against me."

Poghos changed the channel and exclaimed angrily:

-Chikooool!

-Chikol, Chikol, Chikol, -repeated the parrot sitting on the chandelier, who had been watching the reportage as well.

-Are you here? -Poghos turned and looked up, -did you hear that?

The parrot didn't answer, but jumped from the chandelier, took a big spin around the room, and landed on the TV.

-Did you hear that camel? -Poghos repeated, -he's worried about his security. He does not want to be hurt and is afraid that he will be retaliated against. Who does he mean by "the people"? And why should the people insult him and retaliate against him?

Although the parrot did not answer anything, it was clear from his attentive look that he was not indifferent to the subject.

-Do you know who is afraid of the people? Those who have something to fear. And who has anything to fear? Those who deceived the people. And how can those people who, as they claim, love the people and the people love them, deceive the people? So, everything here is a lie and this is a mockery of the people, do you understand?

The parrot let out a long chirp that suggested that he more than understood.

-Now, the most important thing, -Poghos continued, -this camel wanted to punish those who insult him and in order to not get hurt himself, police officers escort him. So, what should we do?

-What do...what do... -the parrot repeated.

-Achon will help us here.

-Achon, Achon, -parrot repeated.

-Yeah, Achon, she seems to be having a plan.

Achon, however, did not open the door. Poghos forgot that it was long past midnight and persistently pressed the neighbor's call button. The parrot decided to join him and perched on his shoulder. Chances are he was wondering what Achon's plan was.

But Achon did not open the door, and could not open it, for the simple reason that she was not at home.

### **Achon's counter-revolutionary day or “Danger and delight grow on one stalk”**

She had an interesting time that day. It was an extremely political, or rather counter-revolutionary day. First in the afternoon, she learned that one of her ex-husbands, the fourth in number, was infected with Covid, an hour later she learned that he was taken to the hospital, and another hour later that he was lying in the intensive care unit. And Achon hastened to visit him. But don't think that she did it out of care or the great love she once had for her ex-husband. Not at all. The fact of the matter was that the car she was driving now, a luxurious, cherry-colored Lexus, was given to her two years ago by Seryoga, “exhibit four” husband. There was also a small apartment in one of the elite buildings in the center, which Seryoga had also left her after parting. And, since both the apartment and the car remained in the latter's name, that is, there was no name change and they were not officially married, Achon was worried that if her ex-husband died, which, according to the doctors, was very likely, she will be deprived of that considerable immovable and movable property.

The same doctors, however, stubbornly refused to let the patient enter. And more than that, Achon was not allowed to enter the hospital. The paramedic transporting the food was especially active:

-It is excluded, - he said too confidently, -even if the hospital management allows you to.

However, the first obstacle was easily overcome by Achon: she whispered something in the ear of the policeman on duty at the entrance and he opened the door smartly, then in turn she whispered something in the ear of the orderly and under the angry looks of the latter and other patients gathered at the entrance, Achon entered the hospital.

Hospital management intervention was needed later. Of course, for this Achon had to call one of the representatives of "Beaumont", a friend, whose husband was one of the authorities in the medical field. Five minutes after the call, she was escorted to her ex-husband's intensive care unit by the head doctor himself.

The patient was put on artificial respiration and lay almost unconscious. The head doctor stood sadly by her, probably thinking that the lady would now throw herself at him and start sobbing. However, there were no emotional scenes and the lady only said:

- Remove these tubes, I need to talk to him.

- But you see that he can't speak - the chief doctor mumbled, - I understand that you...

However, Achon interrupted him and it was unclear what the chief doctor meant.

-Can he sign?

In another half hour, after Achon called another representative of "Beaumont" girlfriend, whose husband was a high authority in the justice system, the notary entered the intensive care unit. He was so scared that instead of a mask, he wore something very similar to an astronaut's helmet, but still he did his job honorably and perhaps for the first time in the history of the Republic of Armenia, a notarial transaction related to the name change of the property was registered in the intensive care unit.

And when, saying goodbye to her ex-husband, Achon blew him an air kiss, she still didn't know that all this trouble was pointless, because Seryoga wasn't going to die at all.

On the way out of the hospital, in the elevator, she met the orderly, the self-confident lady who a moment ago ruled out that anyone could enter the hospital, even if told by management. She glared at Achon and said:

-Why did they void us of money, then?

-What money? Who voided you? -Achon didn't understand.

It turned out that the lady previously worked as an elevator operator before the revolution and was not dissatisfied with her job.

-People put two hundred drams in my pocket, now I'm void of that.

-How is that my fault? -Achon asked.

-They tell you not to let anyone in, but they let you in, the ministry calls and they let you in, the guard calls and they let you in, - said the former elevator driver angrily, - is this the new Armenia, why were we making a revolution?

-Those who made it have something to think about, -Achon said dryly and left the elevator.

However, the political, or rather counter-revolutionary day of our heroine did not end there. Leaving the hospital, she called her two girlfriends who had helped her solve her problem a while ago and invited them to lunch at a newly opened restaurant on Saryan.

They sat at the most convenient table and ordered seafood. Two men in ties were sitting at the next table, actively discussing something. The profile of one of them, which was very similar to the profile of a camel, looked very familiar to Achon, but for a long time she could not remember where he was familiar from.

-We should not leave our work and go after them, let the police deal with it.

The speaker was the camel, who was leaning on the table with his elbows and was slowly chewing something, or rather ruminating, as a camel ruminates.

-You are right, -agreed his tablemate, whose eyes were fixed on the Achon's table, -let them do the catching and judging.

-How long is this going to last? - added the camel, -we are already sick of it.

-Yes, yes, we are disgusted, - repeated the tablemate, not taking his eyes off Achon.

-What are you looking at? - asked the camel and turned around.

And that's where Achon recognized him.

The first thing that crossed our heroine's mind was to turn the plate of seafood on the camel's head. She even imagined shrimp tails dangling from the ears of a member of the National Assembly and spicy horseradish sauce dribbling down his camel's snout. The temptation to say a word or two to him was great. But Achon held herself together. Girlfriends, as well as many customers of the restaurant, could not get it right. And she just called the waiter and asked to move them to another table.

-Why? -friends wondered.

- There are ruminating camels around, - explained Achon so that she could be heard at the next table, - they can even spit, it's a tribal thing.

Achon was hoping that she would be answered from the next table and then she would have every reason to carry out her plan regarding the plate of seafood. But the camel did not say anything, turned around in fear and continued ruminating, although he understood very well that the allusion was directed to him.

After finishing lunch at a restaurant on Saryan Street, Achon went to have coffee with another friend, then to a gym, then to a beauty salon, then to other salons, came home in the evening, changed clothes, went to dinner with other friends, returned home again, changed clothes again and went to the club to have fun.

The club had recently opened and was one of those rare places of entertainment in Yerevan where everyone was welcome. Achon and company were here for the first time, they were invited by the owner of the club, who had expected that the dear guests would get the best impression possible and vouch for this place to their wide circle. Everything might have been just like that if...

Achon remembered the old Armenian proverb: "Danger and delight grow on one stalk". Everything was true, proverbs do not happen in an empty place. At the same time, either in the actual or in a symbolic sense. First of all, the club did have conduits that separated the tables from each other, and on one of those stalks the deputy camel was dancing with his tie half loose, his shirt out from under his pants, and, by all accounts, indulging in a more potent pleasure than alcohol. Symbolically, the deputy's action also coincided with the meaning of the old and well-known proverb; he was doing something dangerous. Only he didn't know about it yet.

Although there was an extremely cheerful atmosphere at Achon's table, that evening the girlfriends had decided to drink Absent, although Achon was thoughtful. First, she didn't like the club to begin with. Neither the music, nor the interior, nor the lighting. But it could still be put up with somehow. People were another matter. They were hard to come to terms with. Even Absent didn't help. Where did so many "sissies" come together, thought Achon? It seems that they came here from some incubator. And only when she saw the camel MP, she understand what incubator it was.

-Did you recognize him? - her friend's voice was heard through the noise.

-It's the camel, -Achon said.

-Who? -her friend didn't understand.

-Doesn't he look like a camel? -Achon said.

The friend liked the comparison, she had a good laugh, then took her phone out of her bag and started taking pictures.

-What are you doing? -Achon asked.

-I'll take a photo and post on Facebook, -answered her friend.

-No, don't, -Achon said.

-Why not? -her friend got surprised.

-It's their style, we're not sissy, are we?

But after thinking for a moment, she took out her phone and started taking pictures herself.

### **About how Poghos and Achon came up with a plan of action**

When Achon got out of the elevator and saw Poghos standing in front of her door with a parrot on his shoulder, she wasn't surprised at all. It seems that they had just agreed that the three of them should meet there at one o'clock in the morning.

-Achon, Achon, -shouted the parrot.

-Weird! -Achon laughed searching for the keys in her bag.

-What's weird? -Poghos asked, -it's a clever parrot and we were waiting for you.

-Yeah, it is a clever parrot, -Achon agreed, -but the funny thing is that I wanted to talk to you myself, but was thinking you would be asleep.

She showed Poghos the video that she had recorded in the club.

-This is the camel! -Poghos exclaimed.

-You know him? -Achon got surprised, -I mean how do you know he's a camel?

-I don't know him, Poghos interrupted but they were showing him on TV and he looks like a camel, doesn't he?

-Yeah, -Achon agreed.

-Where did you record this? -Poghos asked.

-In a club.

-Were there policemen with him?

-With whom?

-The camel.

-There were a lot of policemen outside.

- He said on TV a little while ago that the police escorted him for security reasons because threats were made against him. Turns out the cops are escorting him even when he's having fun.

-Fun, fun, -parrot exclaimed.

-There's nothing wrong with having fun, -Achon said taking out a half full bottle of Absent from the drawer, -I like having fun myself and can't imagine my life without it.

And of course, I understand that every person has the right to have fun. Moreover, a person should devote a significant part of his life to entertainment. What else does he live for? But there is an important circumstance: a person has to earn the right to have fun. For example, what fun does a common porter or, let's say, a welder in a country where he receives pennies for the work he does have? For instance, in our country, he comes home in the evening and drinks beer with smoked fish. Or what fun does an ordinary engineer or a teacher have? They can afford to get together in a cheap restaurant once a month and eat "khash". But these people are working, doing business before they indulge in their little fun. Officials, of course, also have the right to have fun. Of course, former MPs and officials also had fun. The fun they had in the "barbecue – kebab" environment, might not be more disgusting, the characters of the former authorities- chubby, fat-headed, might not be not more unpleasant, the dances of the former authorities under the zurna and drums, might not be more vulgar, but at least there was something that was different. They were at least doing something until they had fun. Until filling their huge bellies with kebabs and snorting, what did they do? At least they had

established a state with all its institutions, adopted a constitution and laws. Of course, they didn't make the state of people's dreams, the institutions did not work as they were supposed to, the laws and even the constitution were often violated, but they still existed. While these...

-What should we do then? -Poghos interrupted Achon.

-What do, what do...-parrot repeated after being silent for some time.

-What should we do? We should finish them off, -said Achon serenely filling small glasses with Absent. But it wasn't clear who she was talking to: Poghos or the parrot.

But Poghos answered:

-I'm against all sorts of homicide. You can't just kill someone.

Achon put a teaspoon on top of the Absent glass and put some sugar in it. And all this under Poghos's surprised gaze.

-Of course, not. Did I say anything about murder?

-You said "finish them off".

-Yeah, but that's a totally different thing. We can finish them off without killing them.

Achon continued doing some funny stuff with Absent. She brought out water from the fridge and poured into the glass, so that it first strained over a spoon full of sugar.

-What the heck are you doing? -Poghos couldn't endure it any longer.

-Before making the action plan, I want to introduce you with the green mermaid.

-Who? -Poghos got surprised.

-Green mermaid, -Achon repeated, -the same Absent, which was considered to be the favorite drink in the nineteenth century for both the proletariat and the Beaumont alike.

-But...

Poghos wanted to say something, but Achon interrupted him and said:

-And since you represent the Armenian proletariat of the twenty-first century and I represent Beaumont, history can repeat itself. Especially since we are going to make a unique revolution.

Achon held out the cup filled with green liquid to Poghos and said in a tone that wouldn't take "No" for an answer:

-You should drink this in one sip.

She did the same, while Poghos was still surprised.

-Well, what are you thinking about?

-I'm thinking how come I'm a proletariat?

-If it makes you feel any better, I'll tell you that Absent was also the favorite drink of French artists and poets. For example, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec and Van Gogh, Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud...

-I love Toulouse-Lautrec, -Poghos emptied the glass.

But it turned out that the favorite drink of the French Beaumont and proletariat is worth nothing if it is taken in small quantities. At least according to Achon's theory. Therefore, the plan of action was only made after the fourth or fifth glass.

First, a list had to be made. All those scoundrels, scumbags and liars who appeared in the state management system should be included in the list and punished one by one. It was necessary to carefully and consistently study the habits and tendencies of everyone, then the movement and only then decide the order.

And since there was already enough information about the camel's habits and movements, he should be the first on the list.

This animal apparently frequented the club where Achon had seen him that day. And that's where he should have been killed. More specifically, in the clubhouse. As simple as that! Poghos would have to wait until he had consumed a certain amount of alcohol or something, then follow him to the toilet and break his nose first, then pull his ears until the camel started apologizing and officially declaring that he was a rascal, a bastard, a liar, just like most of his teammates and especially their leader are scoundrels, scumbags and liars. All of this would be videotaped and recorded, after which the camel would get one last bite and go on to continue its dance on the bridge or wherever it wanted. Actions would follow according to the list.

Here is the brief plan of action that Achon and Poghos came up with after their fourth or fifth cup of Absent. The only thing that the neighbors, or rather the colleagues, did not agree on

was related to a delicate matter. Achon insisted that operations should be done in disguise, while Poghos disagreed, at least for his part.

-I have a certificate of insanity, they can't judge me anyway, do you understand, and as for you, I will make it so that you will not be seen.

But Achon disagreed.

-The problem is not being judged. You may not be judged, but if you are seen once, you cannot do the same thing the second time.

-But I don't want to hide behind the mask, Poghos insisted, - it won't be honest and, most importantly, fair.

-If the ultimate goal of your struggle is justice, you can turn a blind eye to current petty injustices.

In short, Achon succeeded in persuading Poghos.

-What about Chikol? -Poghos asked.

-Chikol, chikol, chikol, -the parrot repeated, who hadn't said anything about the action plan, but obviously wasn't against it either.

-What about Chikol? -Achon got surprised.

-How should we punish him? It's almost impossible to reach to him.

-We will punish him as soon as we reach to him.

### **About how Poghos dealt with the oligarchs**

When the revolution took place in Armenia, there were many honest and decent people who sincerely believed that the negative phenomena that had deep roots here in recent decades would completely or at least largely disappear from the country. Those negative phenomena were many, really many, so many that using them there was an opportunity to make a revolution.

Behind all negative phenomena are people who do everything to prevent them from vanishing, for one simple reason, these negative phenomena contribute to their upgrading. It has always

been like that all over the world, it has been like that in Armenia. And in those states where negative phenomena have reached to minimum, people behind them or their opportunities have reached a minimum as well. Of course, it happened gradually, because it is not possible to cut the string of bribery, patronage, arbitrariness with one stroke of the sword. Except for one case when there is a revolution in the country. When a revolution takes place in a country, people have the right to expect drastic changes, or at least to expect to clearly see their course. And of course, one has the right to expect that the people behind the negative phenomena will immediately be deprived of their opportunities.

And who are those people who stand behind negative phenomena, who get rich at the expense of the state and ordinary people?

Those people are divided into two parts: those whom the people see and those whom the people do not see. In the second case, it is the highest-ranking state officials who create an opportunity for those in the first case, the so-called oligarchs, who earn tens, sometimes hundreds of millions and of course keep their share of those millions. Oligarchs receive various privileges and, most importantly, monopolies to run their various businesses. There is an important difference between these two parts of people, however. The people, with few exceptions, do not see the millions of high-ranking government officials, while the luxurious life of the oligarchs is right in front of their eyes. The reason for this is also understandable: a high-ranking governmental official cannot explain where he got the millions due to which he leads a luxurious life, while an oligarch can attribute to his new businessmen and does not care that the governmental official who is their “roof” has prepared a fertile ground for these businesses.

And here, as it was said above, after the revolution, a very large mass of people who participated in the revolution were waiting to see how justice would be restored one day.

This is how Poghos thought, who, without a doubt, was not included in that crowd. He had neither participated in the revolution, nor believed in it, nor expected anything from it. More precisely, he was waiting. It expected that sooner or later the mask of the leader of the revolution would be torn and the people would be disillusioned. Of course, he didn't want it to be like that, he would have given everything for it not to be like that, but he was never wrong in his feelings.

And one hot July afternoon, he was finally convinced that everything was just like that.

Here's how it happened:

It was Saturday and Poghos had decided to go outside the city one last time before starting the planned activities with Achon, to climb a mountain, to turn on loud music and look at the sky. Who knows what would happen next. He also invited Achon, but the latter refused, saying that she had an event to attend to.

After giving it a long thought, Poghos decided to go as far as possible, so he chose Mount Armaghian, at the border of the Geghama and Vardenis mountain ranges. From the top of that mountain, which is about three thousand meters above the sea level, a wonderful view of Lake Sevan opened during the day, and after dark one could see all the three thousand stars that can be seen from Earth at the same time.

Our hero had already placed the telescope he had collected in the trunk of the Niva, as well as sandwiches, boiled corn and several bottles of beer, and was about to leave when the phone rang. The caller was one of his regular customers who lived on Nar-Dos Street. Her name was Geghetsik (“Beautiful” in Armenian).

-Save me, Poghos, -said Geghetsik in an extremely worried tone, -my house is sinking.

-What’s that? -Poghos didn’t understand.

-My house is flooded, -Geghetsik repeated, -a pipe has burst.

-OK, but what can I do? -Poghos got surprised, -I’m not a plumber.

-You can do everything, -Geghetsik pleaded, -I’m alone at home with my youngest grandchild and can’t find anyone else.

-All right, -Poghos agreed for sake of the grandchild. -I’ll be there.

-Hurry, please, it’s a real torrent in here.

However, it was not possible to go early. Poghos went along Sayat-Nova Avenue to Charents Street, turned right from there, went down almost to the end, passing the Republican Stadium, but he did not manage to reach Nar-Dos Street. There was such a traffic jam there that the cars were standing still. Poghos waited for five, ten, fifteen minutes and since Geghetsik called every minute and there was no movement on the street, he decided to leave the car on the sidewalk and walk to her house.

A little later, it turned out that the cause of the traffic jam was a wedding procession that occupied the entire street, including the oncoming lane. But it was no ordinary wedding

procession. The most basic car here was the all-new S-Class Mercedes. And the main cars were Rolls Royce and Bentleys. Moreover, all the cars had the same license plates. And all served one man and his relatives.

Poghos had called that man Boar, years or even decades ago. At that time, at the beginning of the nineties, when all the ordinary people of Armenia and Artsakh were solving the problem of their survival, Boar was busy advancing trade and gambling in Yerevan. Now he was a famous oligarch and a politician.

And as in the nineties, now too, he could put down people with his bodyguards and convoy.

Of course, Poghos wanted to say a few words and of course he did, but it was not the right moment for more. First, there was a wedding, and then he was rushing to Geghetsik's house, where there was a flood.

It didn't take long to repair the burst pipe in Geghetsik's house. Of course, Poghos did the job successfully, but he got wet from head to toe and had to go home to change before leaving. But here, too, difficulties awaited him. Pushkin Street, where his apartment was located, was closed from the Koghbatsi intersection. Moreover, the police closed it.

-What's going on? -Poghos wondered, lowering the car window.

But nobody answered. The policemen were busy.

-Let me through, -Poghos continued in a calm tone.

-The street is closed, -one of the policemen responded.

-It's not closed. You closed it.

-If we closed it, it means it's closed.

-Can you open it for a second and it will be considered open? -Poghos persisted, -the thing is that I live here.

-Leave the car somewhere and walk to your house.

-What a capital idea! how come it never occurred to me?!? -Poghos taunted.

But the policemen didn't get his slight and continued:

-Move your car from here, you're obstructing the traffic.

-How can I obstruct the traffic, if the street is closed?

But the policeman didn't say a word anymore.

Poghos closed the car doors, left it where it was, in the middle of the street, and walked to his house. When he reached his building, he heard the sound of drums and zurna coming from North Avenue a short distance away. But he didn't pay attention, entered the building, got on the elevator and went up to the house. Here, too, the sound of the same music could be heard from the windows facing North Avenue. Poghos first changed his clothes and then went out to the balcony.

A large number of people gathered under one of the new buildings of Northern Avenue. Some of them were dancing, some were clapping, and some were whistling.

-What's going on here? -Poghos asked his neighbor, who was standing on the balcony.

-They came after the godfather, -The neighbor explained.

-Whose godfather? -Poghos didn't understand. -Where are they going to take him?

-It's wedding today, don't you know? -the neighbor explained, -the wedding of the century.

In fact, it was the same wedding that Poghos had met on the same day, in another part of Yerevan. Here, several dozens of expensive cars of Boar were gathered below, and they were the reason that traffic was paralyzed nearby.

-Why is this the wedding of the century? -Poghos asked.

But he didn't have time to hear the neighbor's answer, because he noticed how the parrot was trying to squeeze through the small gap in the balcony door, which he left carelessly.

Somehow, he pushed the parrot inside, closed the door and left the house, still not knowing why it was the wedding of the century.

When he got to the car, he saw that the police were trying to open the door. Niva blocked their path. Most likely, the police would have fined Poghos if at that moment the sound of the zurna and drums did not stop, and the wedding guests did not move.

-Let it go, -said one of the policemen, -let's go.

-You're "it", -Poghos shouted after the police and got into his car.

But incidents of Poghos's day weren't over.

When he reached the end of Acharyan street, where Yerevan ends, he saw that the traffic stopped again. It must be an accident, he thought. But the accident was not the cause. The reason was again the wedding convoy, which occupied almost the entire width of the street. More than hundred cars were stopped, waiting for something.

As for what they were waiting for, Poghos found out a little later when he angrily climbed onto the grass dividing the highway to bypass the standing convoy.

They were waiting for another convoy, which was supposed to join from the right. Another convoy owned by another oligarch. Poghos understood this when he saw the license plates of the cars in the second column.

And suddenly Poghos remembered the word of the neighbor that this is the wedding of the century. He also remembered that he read somewhere that the son of one of these two oligarchs marries the daughter of the other or vice versa.

The two convoys joined together as two great rivers join together before falling into the sea.

Poghos had already passed them and could have continued on his way, when something occurred to him. He slowed his car and waited until the two convoys caught up with him.

Several police cars arrived first with flashing lights, one of which was most likely the same car that had blocked Pushkin Street. However, the police could not get Poghos, or rather his car, out of the street. Poghos had closed the windows and was walking calmly without looking at the sides. Then he was approached by two cars from which the wedding was being filmed. Poghos slowed down even more, and these cars also had to pass him. It was the turn of the bride and groom's car, which Poghos politely left in front. But he did not yield to the other cars and continued his course in front of them.

Days later, when pictures of the wedding of the century appeared on the Internet, there were different versions of what the nineteen eighty-eight khaki colored Niva was doing among the many new Rolls Royce, Bentleys and Maybach.

But Poghos was pleased with himself. He was glad he'd ruined that shot of the wedding of the century because he figured all sorts of boars and pigs couldn't ruin his day, and in general, the life of the common people.

And later he learned that Chikol was also present at that wedding of the century.

## **On how Poghos dealt with "the former authorities"**

At the time this story took place, there was a huge mass of people living in Armenia who hated the former authorities and everything related to them, and there was a small mass who hated the current authorities and everything related to them. Both masses had sufficient grounds for their hatred. Certain extenuating circumstances were also added to the grounds. The current authorities, with their systematic propaganda, intensified the hatred of the large masses towards the former, and with their uncoordinated activities, they further intensified the hatred towards them among the small masses. But the most terrible thing was that the hatred of these two masses towards the past and present was gradually turning into hatred towards each other.

When not long after the revolution, during the capital elections, a certain "Capuchin" had divided the society into blacks and whites, and his political godfather smirked under his nose, thus giving his consent and it was no longer possible to erase the mutual hatred.

By the way, Poghos gave the name "Capuchin" to the aforementioned politician. He later explained to Achon that these blond-headed monkeys, who live mostly in the jungles of Ecuador, are unique, because they grow up very slowly, not physically but mentally, but despite this, male capuchins manage to attract many females with their movements.

Poghos liked to associate people in general, especially politicians, with various animals. There will be an opportunity to make sure of that, and now it's time to reflect on how our hero dealt with the "formers".

And so, on another hot day in July, twenty twenty, Poghos, wearing a white wide-brimmed hat on his head, black glasses on his eyes, and a blue medical mask on his nose and mouth, entered one of the cafes in Yerevan's Aznavour Square.

Poghos was persuaded, or rather, forced, by Achon to adopt this form. Poghos somehow agreed to wear the wide-brimmed hat and glasses bought from a brand store, but he stubbornly resisted the mask.

-There are cameras everywhere, - Achon explained, -and you have to be completely unrecognizable.

-Aren't a hat and glasses enough? -asked Poghos.

-Not at all, - replied Achon, -for there is a scar on your cheek that can betray you; by the way, where is that scar from?

-I don't remember, -said Poghos shortly, because he said he didn't remember anything about his military career.

Anyway, in the end, he had to agree to wear a mask along with a wide-brimmed hat and glasses, and now wearing a wide-brimmed hat, glasses and a mask, he entered the cafe in Aznavour Square and took a seat in the far corner.

But the reader will probably be interested in why Poghos came to this café in the first place.

The point is that yesterday the partners slightly edited the action plan. It had been four weeks since that plan had been made, that is, since Achon had met the camel at the newly opened club. Four Fridays to be exact. Achon had learned from reliable sources that the camel comes to that club on Fridays to have fun. But it turned out that this poor animal first went on two business trips at the expense of the taxpayers and paid nothing to the same taxpayers to the countries of Western Europe, then he went on vacation to a country in Southern Europe, according to evil tongues, again at the expense of the taxpayers. It was here that he probably contracted Covid and was now in isolation. In short, he didn't appear in the club and hardly appeared in the next two Fridays.

Instead, Achon managed to find out something else about another member of the National Assembly, another staunch representative of the ruling team.

-Who are you talking about? -Poghos asked.

When Achon gave the name of the deputy, Poghos immediately recognized him and said:

- Oh, that Affenpinscher.

-What is an Affenpinscher? -Achon wondered.

-A pocket dog, -explained Poghos, and then went into more detail. -Dogs of this breed are known for being willing to do anything to please their owner.

Achon had a good laugh, and Poghos continued.

-I have seen the deputy you mentioned several times giving a speech, and those speeches are about nothing, simple demagoguery and their only purpose is to please the owner, and during the revolution, he used to hold the same owner's belongings.

-So, it's not worth punishing him?

-Of course, it's worth it.

And Achon had told him what she had found out.

Affenpinscher was in the habit of having his lunch every day, or almost every day, in the same place, in one of the cafes in Aznavour Square. The cafe was not one of those cheap ones. One person would pay ten to fifteen thousand drams for a more or less normal lunch here. In other words, about twenty percent of Armenia's minimum wage. In fact, a person would spend three hundred to three hundred and fifty thousand drams a month to eat here every day or almost every day. In other words, about five hundred percent of Armenia's minimum wage. And if we take into account that the person had the habit of spending not only lunch, but also dinner in a high-class restaurant, then he would spend twice or maybe even three times the mentioned amount per month. In other words, one thousand to one thousand five hundred percent of the minimum wage in the country.

Of course, everyone has the right to eat where they want, spend as much as they want. How he earned that right is another matter. Affenpinscher, for example, had earned that right during the days of the revolution by holding various belongings of the leader of the revolution during marches and various actions of disobedience. The marches and actions of disobedience, during which the same leader shouted that state officials should not be different from ordinary people in their lifestyle, as the purpose of the revolution was to establish justice in the country.

However, as already mentioned above, Affenpinscher came every day, or almost every day, exactly one hour after noon, in the company of one or more people to this cafe in Aznavour Square and spent at least an hour here. During that one hour, according to Achon, he must have gone to the bathroom at least once. There was no definite information about this, but one could be sure that even if the pocket dog did not want to go to the toilet for one day, two days, five days, there would definitely be a day when he would have that desire. Therefore, Poghos had to go to a cafe every day, sit in a corner, order something, be patient and wait.

And here, Poghos was sitting in a corner of the cafe, ordered a coffee, armed himself with patience and was waiting for Affenpincher to appear.

But instead, a black vulture appeared.

This flesh-eating bird got its name a long time ago, fifteen to twenty years before this story, when it moved from the criminal world to politics, then to the state apparatus, and began to

occupy one high position after the other. Once, Poghos witnessed how he watched with delight a beating carried out by his own bodyguards, and when the victim fell to the ground almost lifeless, he started attacking the person like a flesh-eating vulture. The incident took place at the factory where Poghos was working at that time. He had seen the beating from his fifth-floor office window, and before he could run down and intervene, the black vulture had left with his bodyguards. Poghos somehow brought the beaten man to his senses, then entered the director's office and demanded an explanation. But since he was not given an explanation and since he did not have the opportunity to pull the vulture's feathers, he had to pull the director's ear and was fired the next day. After that, he never saw the black vulture again.

Now, when he saw him in the cafe, he couldn't believe his eyes for a moment. The thing is that some time before that there was news in the media according to which the black vulture was wanted. A criminal case was opened against him, and he was accused of committing a rather serious crime.

Black Vulture was not alone. He was accompanied by three other people, two of whom were probably bodyguards. The latter sat down at a table near the entrance, and the third kept the vulture company. They looked pretty cool. Especially the vulture. He made jokes, laughed at his own jokes, complimented the waitress, in short, he didn't look like a wanted man at all. They first ordered some dishes, began to eat with appetite, after which they ordered brandy, and the black vulture called to one of the bodyguards to bring a cigar from the car. All this took about half an hour, maybe more.

Meanwhile, the pocket dog, the Affenpinscher was nowhere to be seen.

At two o'clock Poghos asked for the bill, paid and was about to leave, but at that moment he noticed that the vulture also got up and walked towards the part of the cafe where the toilets were. One of the bodyguards followed him.

Poghos followed them purely on instinct. All the while, before his eyes was the scene from years ago when the black vulture devoured the man on the ground.

The bodyguard reached the boss with quick steps, almost running, escorted him to the toilet door, opened it, let the boss in and stood at the entrance with his arms crossed. He was a pretty solid man and didn't fall to the ground with one punch. When Poghos headbutted him in the nose, the bodyguard merely ducked, and only the second knee strike knocked him to the ground. The black vulture was not as solid. Poghos first broke his nose, but did not let him fall to the ground, grabbed his ear and pushed his head into the toilet. Then he washed

unhurriedly, as if he had entered the toilet for the purpose for which he usually enters, stepped out, stepped over the bodyguard sprawled on the ground, and left.

### **About how Poghos dealt with environmental issues**

Poghos was always concerned about environmental issues. Since he often dealt with nature, he also dealt with environmental issues. It's as simple as that, he always thought, whenever he saw, somewhere in the forest or on the mountainside near a spring, how people left their garbage after eating. It's as simple as that, if the garbage left by a person polluted the mountain or the forest. So, what happens if the state pollutes nature? Because, in the end, it's the same thing: a person doesn't care what happens to the meadow after him, or the government doesn't care what happens to all the meadows, forests, rivers and lakes of the country after him.

The government was going to give permission for mines to be operated in one of the resort and tourist centers of Armenia. Moreover, the government whose members and leader fought against exploitation of these same mines when they were an opposition.

One of their arguments was that the previously reached agreements couldn't be violated, the second argument was that exploitation of the mine would benefit the country's economy ten times more than damage to nature.

Poghos was sure that the first argument was a lie, a big time. There may have been an agreement or even a contract, but with a literate approach, they could be circumvented with minimal damage. As for the second argument, even if tens or hundreds of millions of dollars were invested into the country's economy as a result of mine exploitation, it could not be compatible with the damages caused to nature, people living in the nature and especially their future generations. In addition, the benefit expected from one branch of the economy should be at the expense of the benefit already brought to another branch, because, as I've already mentioned, the place where the mines were to be exploited was located in an active resort and tourist zone.

Poghos was on his way to that place one Saturday in August and had almost arrived when he saw that the road was closed.

A group of protesters, perhaps a few dozen people, stood across the width of the road with colorful banners. The police were gathered not far from the demonstrators, and between these

two groups there was an empty space, like the space between medieval troops waiting for a battle with swords and spears.

Poghos found his way through, read the content of the posters, studied the faces of the protesters, then turned to the police and said:

-Why did you block the road?

The policemen looked at each other in surprise and since Poghos was not given an answer, he had to repeat:

-I asked you, why did you block the road. I want to pass through.

A drunken major came forward, put the police cap on his reddened bald head and turned to Poghos:

-Did we block it?

-Of course, you did, -Poghos said calmly.

-How is that?

-Easy. Open it immediately, I have to pass through.

The major looked at Poghos strictly, probably trying to understand who he was dealing with, but he probably didn't understand and said in a low voice:

-We can't do that. We don't have an order. We are waiting for orders.

-Whose order? I tell you to open the road.

Here the major couldn't stand it and asked a little scared:

-I'm sorry, but who are you?

-I'm Poghos, -replied Poghos.

-Are you from the governor's office?

-No.

-From the government?

-No.

-In that case where are you from? -the major got angry, then he seemed to come to his senses and answered his own question. Are you from a mining company? We are on your side, don't worry.

-Whose side are you on? -wondered Poghos.

-The government, -the policeman enthused, -more precisely, the governor's office, the company that operates the mine.

Poghos wanted to say something, but at that moment he started sneezing.

-Wow, -the major was surprised.

-What the hell?

-I wanted to say bless you.

-Thank you, - Poghos took out a handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his nose noisily, - but anyway, you should decide on whose side you are.

Before the major could decide, another policeman approached him and whispered something in his ear.

-Is that Niva yours? -the policeman asked Poghos.

-It's mine, -Poghos confirmed.

-You are from the company that operates the mine and you are driving this old Niva, - the policeman got happy for some reason, -leave right now or else...

But he did not have time to say what would happen if Poghos did not leave, because one of the demonstrators gathered on the opposite side of the neutral space intervened, a childish-looking girl with a little gray hair, with pink tresses and a pink kepi, with black bangs falling from under it.

-If a person drives an old Niva, then should you be rude to him?

-Am I talking to you? -shouted the policeman. -Shut up or else...

-Or else what?

-Sorry, I don't have an order.

-Whether you have it or not, - the girl rebelled even more, - we will not open the road.

-Wait a minute, - Poghos already turned to the girl, - why don't you open it?

-And why should we open, they want... Wait, whose side are you on?

Here Poghos wanted to say that he was not on anyone's side, he just wanted to pass, but at that moment he suddenly started sneezing again.

In comparison, he was certainly on the side of the protesters. How could he support the police? He just didn't like being blocked. And since his path was now blocked by both the police and the protesters, it didn't matter to him whose goal was more objective.

Generally, he didn't believe anyone. During the revolution, for example, the protesters blocked the streets, achieved their goal, and what happened? At that time, the police of the previous authorities did not disturb them. The protesters blocked the streets, came to power and now their policemen are preventing the protesters. What revolution is that? After all, the revolution was also for the police to serve the people, not the authorities of the day. And now these policemen are waiting for orders. Who are they waiting it from? Their direct supervisors. And whom do these direct supervisors expect orders from? From the governor's office, from the government, maybe from the head of the government himself? From a man who used to block the streets himself and that's how he came to power?

-By blocking the road, you won't achieve anything, -declared Poghos, when he stopped sneezing and wiped his nose, -I told you back then, but you didn't listen.

Who were you talking to? -the girl was surprised.

-You, everyone... It doesn't matter.

-What were you saying?

-I said that a road can be closed to open another, much bigger road. It's the way of changes. Real changes. But you weren't ready for those changes. And since you were not ready, by blocking a road, you opened another road, the road of lies and falsehood.

-I don't understand anything, -the girl turned to the other protesters, do you understand anything?

But there was no answer. Everyone stared in amazement at Poghos, who had started sneezing again. And suddenly a young man came forward and shouted:

-You guys, this man is sick with Covid. He was sent to infect us.

The young man had a long, well-groomed beard and looked extremely confident. To make his statement even more credible, he pulled a medical mask from his pocket and pulled it over his face. It worked. At the same time, not only the protesters, but the police also started wearing masks.

And suddenly an idea came to Poghos's head. When he finished sneezing and wiped his nose, he walked up to the protesters and announced:

-All right, you convinced me, I join you.

But the protesters did not like this initiative of Poghos. They started moving aside, unsure, then, when Poghos joined the group, they pushed each other to the side of the road, some even jumped into the small ravine.

Here our hero made the second unexpected step: he turned sharply and walked towards the police. These, too, were scattered here and there, like sheep, after seeing a wolf in their flock. Thus, a respectable corridor was opened on the road, and Poghos drove his car quietly through it, giving a signal of farewell at the end.

### **About how Poghos dealt with transgenders**

At the end of August, Achon received information from reliable sources that the camel had returned from vacation and had been in Armenia for several days. She immediately informed Poghos about it and added:

-He will definitely go to the club today.

-What makes you so sure? -Poghos asked.

-Because today's Friday, -Achon explained.

During the last month Poghos's been to the club twice with investigative purposes. Since single and especially unfamiliar men were not allowed in, the first time our hero went there with the owner of the store in their backyard, Mrs. Haykanoush.

For Haykanoush, Poghos' offer to have dinner together in the evening was certainly a big surprise. However, she agreed without thinking, closed the shop six hours earlier than usual,

that is, at midnight, went to the barbershop next door, dyed her hair, got a fashionable haircut, then went to the manicurist and pedicurist, after which she just went up to the house and stood in front of the wardrobe mirror. She got disappointed after discovering that the expensive underwear, which she had never worn in the last five years since she moved to Armenia from Syria, won't fit in her. Yes, Mrs. Haykanoush had gained some weight. Several evening dresses too did not fit. The problem was that the store left no time for personal life. However, she got all dressed up. Somehow, she got into a pink evening dress, put on a pink feathered, wide-brimmed hat and hurried to the club, where Poghos was waiting for her. The latter, for some reason, was also wearing a wide-brimmed hat and dark sunglasses. How romantic! -thought Haykanush. However, the time they spent in the club could not be considered romantic in any way.

They sat in a dark corner, drank beer, and Poghos went to the toilet every ten minutes. They spent less than an hour in the club, and then Poghos sent Haykanoush home, and when the latter invited him to drink coffee, he said that he had important business and had to go. And Haykush decided to close the shop early and go to the gym every day.

The second time Poghos went to the club alone. He was recognized and let in. Since this visit was also an exploratory one, our hero was again stationed in the far corner, drinking beer and watching people. This time too, he repeated the route from hall to the toilet and vice versa several times.

And here came the day of the main visit, that is, the operation. As I already said, Achon had information from reliable sources that the Camel was in Yerevan, and since it was Friday, he should have come to the club to have fun.

Poghos parked his Niva not far from the club, in the courtyard of the buildings, having checked in advance that there were no cameras in the area, put on a wide-brimmed hat and took out a large black raincoat from the trunk. The thing is, on that last Friday in August, it had unexpectedly started to rain.

It was about a two-hundred-meter walk to the club, half way was through yards and half way along the street. Poghos walked slowly, unhurriedly, weighing in his mind the plan of action he had previously worked out with Achon. The plan was neither too complicated nor too easy. The camel should have come first. This was, of course, the most important. If he didn't come, they would have to wait until next Friday, or maybe longer. And if it came, there would be no need to wait so long. Two or three hours at most, before Mr. MP would consume a certain amount of alcohol and dance and have fun to his heart's content. And after all this, when he

went to the toilet, Poghos was to follow him, first break his nose, then pull his ears until the camel officially declared himself a scoundrel and his leader- insane. All this was to be recorded by Achon, who would come to the club separately from Poghos, with his girlfriends, and wait patiently until the Camel and then Poghos went to the bathroom.

And here, when Poghos was walking to the club in the rain without hurrying, Achon was already there drinking Margarita with his girlfriends. It was ten o'clock in the evening. The atmosphere in the club gradually warmed up and the drunken guests moved to the dance floor. Achon danced a few times, but mostly to see parts of the hall that were not visible from where she sat. The point is that there were more people than usual in the club that day. That worried Achon a bit, because a lot of people in the club meant a lot of people in the bathroom. But more than that, Achon was worried about the fact that Poghos was not there. Besides, his phone was switched off.

It was half past ten when Achon got up to dance once more and saw the Camel in the front doors. There were two other people with the camel. The waitress escorted them to the table specially reserved for them, and it should be noted that the deputy passed that way dancing, untying his tie as he went. It was obvious that he came to the club already drunk.

Where was Poghos? Achon was already getting angry. Why did he turn off the phone and why doesn't he come?

And Poghos could not come because at that moment he was at the police station.

When he came out of the yards to the sidewalk of the street where the club was, he saw two girls ahead of him walking in the rain without raincoats. It was obvious that they were trying to walk fast so they wouldn't get wet, but it was also obvious that they couldn't walk fast because they were wearing high heels. Poghos was a polite man and decided that he should help them. He quickened his steps and reached the girls, without saying anything he squeezed between them and held up his raincoat.

-Who are you? -said one of the girls.

Her voice sounded a little odd to Poghos, vaguely masculine. The appearance also seemed strange, with too much make-up, as much as could be seen under the light of a street lamp. But Poghos didn't have time to think about that or answer the question, because at that moment a car approached the sidewalk, slowed down, and a boy stuck his head out the window.

-Stop, man, -he shouted.

Since by all the rules of language and logic this appeal should have been addressed to him, Poghos stopped and answered:

-You probably made a mistake, but in any case, I would not advise you to address me in such a way.

The car, an extremely dirty old Opel, stopped. Poghos also stood up while the girls quickened their pace even more. Two bald and hairy young men got out of the "Opel", but instead of approaching Poghos, they ran after the girls.

Poghos thought that the boys were probably friends of the girls and was about to step aside, but then he saw the boys start pulling the girls towards the car. Except, it turned out, it wasn't that easy. The girls resisted, and in no time a real brawl broke out, peppered with the latest profanity. Moreover, the curses uttered by the girls were much more lavish. There was another circumstance. the girls' voice wasn't quite a girl's voice, it was kind of hoarse and harsh.

Poghos was finally confused. He had no idea what was going on. However, an intervention had to be made. He approached the fighters, put the raincoat on the ground, grabbed the collar of one of the loose and fluffy young men with one hand, and the other by the other and dragged him to their car. But he couldn't make it because the girls came over and started hitting the boys. One of them had taken Poghos's raincoat, closed it and was hitting him with it. The other had taken off his shoe and was hitting the boys on the head with a long and sharp heel. Needless to say, this was all accompanied by glorious profanity.

Passers-by gathered on the sidewalk, and several cars were parked on the street. No one, however, interfered. The scene was really strange and it is not known what would have happened if the police had not appeared.

Later, in the downtown police station, Poghos would realize that the girls he was trying to protect weren't really girls at all.

-Do you understand that there are statements against you? -the major asked him, looking at some papers.

-It's strange, - Poghos was sincerely surprised, - this time I don't seem to have broken anyone's nose.

-What do you mean? -the policeman took his eyes off the papers on which, according to all, the statements against Poghos were written.

-If you give yourself a little trouble and get to know my biography, you will discover many interesting things for yourself, - explained Poghos calmly, - and you will also understand that you are keeping me here for nothing.

-For nothing, huh? - the policeman laughed under his breath and handed the papers to Poghos, -take a look.

Poghos read first one paper, then another, but he did not immediately understand what was written on those papers. Had to read it the second time. The following sentence, which was repeated in both testimonies, was particularly unclear: "he came from behind, grabbed us and started beating us, using sexual profanities in the process." The statements were signed by two men, one named Vakhtang and the other Gerasim.

-This is not true, -Poghos declared, returning the paper to the investigator, -I did not beat those boys, maybe I dragged them to their car, but I did not beat them.

-Which boys? -asked the investigator.

-There were two boys and two girls.

-Two girls, you say, - the investigator grinned again, handing out new papers to Poghos, - In that case, familiarize yourself with these testimonies.

-He came up behind us, grabbed us and started dragging us to the car, shouting sexual profanities in the process, - Poghos read.

Some Samvel and Manvel signed the testimony.

Of course, Poghos was released from the police station that evening, or rather that night. They also released Vakhtang and Gerasim, the transgenders, who, in fact, had beaten Samvel and Manvel with the help of Poghos. The latter remained in the police because "a testimony was given against them".

Leaving the building, Poghos witnessed a scene: on the first floor, right at the entrance, there were five or six creatures (Poghos didn't know what to call them, because he didn't know the explanation of the word transgender), who turned out to have come to support Vakhtang and

Gerasim. The last two were there too. And, although they had been released long ago, they were not going to leave.

They demanded an apology for bringing them here. They also demanded to be left with the boys who harassed them.

-We have to break their heads, -the transgenders shouted.

The policemen on duty did not let them in, but that's all.

And suddenly they noticed Poghos.

-This was it, - cried Gerasim or Vakhtang, Poghos couldn't tell them apart.

-Hold on to it, -called the second.

-Smash his head, - shouted another.

Understandably, no one managed to break Poghos's head. When the transgenders attacked our hero, he had dim hopes that the police would intervene. But they did not intervene. They intervened only when Poghos began to smash the noses in front of them one by one.

### **About how Poghos predicted the war**

-You have no idea how brave our Prime Minister is. He's so brave he can ignore even Russia's president and not greet him at the airport.

A young musician, whose songs Poghos liked very much, had this bright idea. And as he liked them, he didn't throw the singer out of his car, but tried to explain instead that he's terribly mistaken. But before we explain what Poghos had told him, let's see how he got into Poghos's car.

It was twenty fifth of September, twenty twenty, a Friday. Poghos had spent his entire day in Dilijan, where he had come to work, instead of resting. In the morning an acquainted café owner called, at whose establishment Poghos had done some plumbing, and begged Poghos to save him.

-What happened? -Poghos asked.

-It's the opening of my new café, but they are not able to fix the air conditioning system.

-Who is not able?

-The masters.

-What makes you think I can?

-Because you can do anything.

-Can't you do without air conditioning system?

-No, the US ambassador is going to come at the opening.

-All right! -Poghos had agreed, -I guess I could sacrifice my Friday for US ambassador. Where's the new café?

-In Dilijan.

And so, Poghos had come to Dilijan. He had worked the entire day and managed in time. The café owner had invited him to stay for the opening.

-Love to! -Poghos had agreed, -I've never seen a real ambassador. Especially a USA one.

-But disappointment was in turn for Poghos and the café owner. The ambassador didn't show up. Surely, he was polite enough to worry about it, but it was too late.

All the same, Poghos stayed there till late night, enjoyed Rock N Roll concert and returned to Yerevan with a band member, when the latter had started expressing his amazement towards the courage of the head of the country. And as I've mentioned above, Poghos had decided to explain to him some stuff instead of throwing him out of the car.

-I'm really sorry that a bright young man such as yourself, thinks like this. First of all, I want to be honest with you and say that I'm not a big fan of the Russian Tsar myself.

-Who? -the musician got confused.

-The Russian Tsar, -Poghos repeated, -the one Chikol didn't meet at the airport.

-Who? -The musician was still confused.

-Chikol, -Poghos repeated, -the guy that inspires you so much.

-But why Chikol? Why the Russian Tsar? -the musician was looking at Poghos with complete confusion.

-Because it is necessary to call not only things, but also people by their names.

The musician's confusion had turned into bewilderedness and he was starting to regret the fact that he had asked Poghos to give him a ride to Yerevan.

-Yes, I do not like the Russian Tsar, -Poghos continued nonchalantly, -more than that, I don't want my compatriots to idolize him either. Naturally, I don't want them to fear him as well. But you know what, I spend a lot of time in nature, where I meet snakes sometimes, and one thing I know for sure: you must not fear snakes, you must beware of them.

At that moment Poghos's phone rang. It was Achon. Poghos slowed down the already slow pace of the car and without interrupting the interlocutor began listening to her. It lasted quiet a long time and then Poghos said:

-Well, that's odd, cause I was just telling him to beware of the Russian Tsar. And that the "Bravehearted" Chikol was playing with the snake.

-What happened? -asked the musician worried, after Poghos had hang up the phone.

-It just happened that war is about to break.

-War? -the musician seemed scared, -did they just tell you that, or it's one of your suppositions?

-I suppose so.

-But why do you suppose that? -the musician calmed down a bit.

-I have three reasons for that. Once I told Achon that when negotiations stop, war breaks out.

-Who's Achon? -the musician didn't understand.

But Poghos was not listening to him.

-Then I found out that a couple of thousands of mercenaries have come to Azerbaijan from Syria and told Achon about it.

-I don't know the made-up reasons you're talking about, I don't even know who Achon is, -the musician started laughing out of a blue, -but I know one thing for sure, is that America will never let war to break out.

-You think? Wanna know why the US ambassador didn't come to your concert?

-What has that to do with it? -the musician kept laughing.

-Because that's the second reason. I have no clue in internet, but if you do, could you open the official site to the USA embassy and read the statement?

And in the official web-site to the USA embassy was the following statement:

“The U.S. Embassy in Armenia urges U.S. citizens to exercise caution when traveling within Armenia, including Tavush province east of the M4 and M16 Highways north of the Dilijan National Park and up to the border with Georgia. The U.S. Embassy will continue to monitor the security situation and provide additional information as needed”.

### **About how Poghos tried to enlist in the military**

It was September 27<sup>th</sup>, twenty twenty, Sunday. Poghos had spent the entire night dealing with his invention and slept at dawn. Neither the clients nor even Achon could stop him from the job.

-OK, can you at least say what you're up to? -Achon asked after inviting Poghos to her place and getting a refusal for the fourth time.

-I'll tell you after I finish, -Poghos answered.

But he hadn't managed to finish it, because the war had broken out.

In the beginning Poghos thought it was one of the consistent provocations of the enemy, but seeing the altered face of the Artsakh president during the news, he realized that this time it was serious.

The first thing he did was ringing Achon's doorbell with the parrot's cage in his hand.

-If this one stays alone, it will die, - he said in haste, -nobody knows how long this will last.

Achon had just woken up.

-What will last? -she asked, -have you been caught again?

-No, war broke out.

Then he got into his Niva and went to his sister's garage, where he kept his weapons from the first war. Rather, they were not weapons, but a whole arsenal. There was one Makarov type pistol, one AKM type rifle, one PK type machine gun and one RPG type grenade launcher. In addition, there were two zinc boxes, each containing a thousand rounds of 7.62 flak, six 105 caliber grenade launchers, twelve F1 hand grenades, and other small items.

Poghos placed all this in the trunk of the Niva, having previously dismantled the sound system with giant speakers he assembled there. Then he bought a sufficient amount of food and other supplies from the nearest supermarket, medicine from the pharmacy, filled the car's tank, and when he was about to leave for the front, he heard on the radio that martial law and general mobilization were being declared in the Republic of Armenia, as well as the personnel attached to the troops were called to report to their territorial military commissariats.

Poghos was a responsible man and liked organization in everything. Of course, he could go to the front on his own and join the army in the most difficult part, because he knew the terrain like the back of his hand, but he decided to show civic consciousness and follow the rules.

In the military commissariat, or rather in front of the military commissariat, there was a real confusion. Dozens of men of different ages, were clamoring and trying to understand what needs to be done in order to enlist and go to the front. A thin young man with the shoulder straps of a senior lieutenant tried to explain something to the crowd, but they did not listen to him.

Poghos stood for a moment, assessed the situation, then bypassing the crowd approached the entrance of the military commissariat, which turned out to be closed. He pulled the handle several times, but the door wouldn't budge. A soldier was smoking a cigarette by the next window.

Poghos pulled back a little and looked at him and yelled:

-Are you nuts?

In the noise, however, the soldier did not hear him.

Poghos turned to the crowd and shouted:

-Shut up a moment!

People gathered there obeyed. Then Poghos turned to the soldier standing in front of the window and repeated his question.

The soldier obviously got scared and opened the window.

-Who are you? -he asked Poghos.

-General de Gaulle, -said Poghos, then added, -open the door at once!

The soldier closed the window and ran towards to door to open it.

-Forgive me, mister General, -he said giving honor, -you have no idea what's going on here.

-I know perfectly well what's going on here. People want to go to the front, but you're standing by the window and smoking.

-They told me people should wait.

-Who told you that?

-The military Commissariat.

-Where are they?

-Went to the ministry. But the deputy is here.

When Poghos entered the office of the deputy of the military Commissariat, he saw a mustached Lieutenant Colonel sitting in front of the computer, staring at the screen with a tanned face and eating sunflower seeds.

-Why are you keeping those men waiting? They have to reach to the front as soon as possible.

The Lieutenant Colonel turned to Poghos, first examined him carefully, probably trying to understand who he was and whether it was worth getting up, then he noticed the major standing behind him, who was trying to squeeze in.

-What happened, Major, -he asked angrily, -who is this man?

-He's General... -the Major murmured trying to remember General's name, -General...

The Lieutenant Colonel jumped up from his seat, stood in a straight position and was about to report, but did not have a chance to.

-I'm not a General, -Poghos interrupted.

-What do you mean you're not a General, -exclaimed the Major, -but you said...

-Wait a minute, -the Lieutenant Colonel interrupted, who obviously had no idea what was going on, -who are you?

-It's a complex question, -Poghos stepped aside letting the Major pass through, - I mostly repair electrical equipment, but I also do science.

-Get out of here, -the Lieutenant Colonel exclaimed.

-...at the moment I'm working on an invention, - Poghos continued calmly, - but it's not important, the important thing is...

-Get outta here, I tell you, -the Lieutenant Colonel got angrier.

But Poghos was not listening to him.

-The important thing is that I am also a machine gunner, I took part in previous wars, I also have a perfect command of a grenade launcher and a mortar, by the way...

-You probably don't understand well... - the Lieutenant Colonel wanted to say something, but Poghos again didn't let him.

-... by the way, all my weapons, including the grenade launcher, are now in my car. I wanted to go to the front myself, but after hearing about the general mobilization, I came here.

-There's a grenade launcher in your car now? - the Lieutenant Colonel wondered.

-Not just. There is also one Makarov type pistol, one AKM type rifle, one PK type machine gun and one RPG type grenade launcher. In addition, there are two zinc boxes, each containing a thousand rounds of 7.62-caliber ammunition, six 105-caliber grenade launchers, twelve F1 hand grenades, and other small items.

- Okay, I understand, can you wait a little bit - the Lieutenant Colonel began intensively scratching his mustache, then turned to the major - Major, go to your room with this man, while I arrange everything.

Here he also winked at the Major, but Poghos didn't notice. If he had noticed, he would at least clarify some things. Instead, he silently followed the major into his office and waited there for about fifteen minutes. In fifteen minutes, three men in civilian uniform entered the office, one of whose faces seemed familiar to Poghos. He tried to remember him, but he couldn't. Anyway, that very one, whose face looked familiar to Poghos very politely asked him to show the weapons.

-They are in my car.

-OK, and where's the car?

-In the street.

-Let's check it out.

And Poghos, without suspecting anything, accompanied by those three men, the face of one of whom he kept trying to remember, went to his Niva parked on the side of the street. He came when he had already opened the trunk. His eyes shone with surprise on the familiar face, then he took out the certificate from his pocket, introduced himself as a criminal investigation officer and said with satisfaction:

-You must come with us to the central police station. Our employee will drive your car.

Of course, Poghos thought, I've seen this animal in the central station.

-You idiot, -he said, -are you aware that war has started?

"The idiot" nodded to the others and grabbed Poghos's hand sharply, trying to twist it.

But, as we already know, it was not so easy. Poghos easily freed his hand, grabbed the sheep's ear with the same hand and with an incredible movement knocked him to the ground. He did the same to the other two, then calmly got into his car and drove away.

Of course, there was a great desire to return to the military commissariat and pull the ears of the major and Lieutenant Colonel, but Poghos thought that he would do it after the war.

### **About how Poghos set off to the front**

When Poghos left Yerevan, it was three o'clock. He turned on the radio and pressed the car's accelerator pedal to the limit.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia has called for an immediate ceasefire and negotiations to stabilize the situation," reported one of the radio stations, referring to the Russian RIA Novosti agency.

But why did you allow it to start in the first place, Poghos thought. War wouldn't start without your consent or even your influence. Poghos remembered the young musician who was

praising Chikol for being too brave to not greet the Russian Tsar at the airport. Isn't this a direct consequence of that? When did the Russian Tsars allow out nation to have another disposition other than Russia, or look elsewhere other than the North or at least try to be independent? Did we really need some Chikol to appear and change this unbearable course of history? Or maybe he didn't appear, but some people brought him forth? But not to change the course of history in favor of the Armenian people, but simply to anger the Russian Tsar and create an additional problem for him...

"The Minister of European Neighborhood and American Affairs of Great Britain said that his country is deeply concerned about clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Both sides are called upon to restraint and stop the fire," the radio announced.

England, England again, always England, Poghos thought. No other country can stir up the world like England does. And has been doing for ages. At the epicenter of all geopolitical earthquakes is England. But, alas, the paradox: the epicenter never collapses, but there is constant destruction in the world...

"The French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs issued a statement regarding the hostilities initiated by Azerbaijan in the direction of Artsakh, which states that France is deeply concerned by the ongoing large-scale clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh and reports of civilian casualties and calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the resumption of hostilities", continued the radio.

Concerned, calling...what heavy words, thought Poghos. Unlike many other states, France may be really sincere in its concerns and appeals, but what does that change? What will change if America and even England are honest? What can they give us? As long as we have to choose between the civilized West and totalitarian Russia to solve our existential problem, alas, we can never choose the West, because they will always be limited by concerns and appeals. It is possible that at some point in history a Chikol will emerge, who will choose the West. He will choose the West without taking into account that there is a state in the camp of the West with which our survival is connected. That state is Turkey, without whose solid support Azerbaijan would never have dared to initiate this war...

Poghos felt angry and was about to turn off the radio, but at that moment he heard a message that would have an important impact on his future course.

"ARF volunteers will leave for Artsakh from Aram Manukyan youth center of ARF. Preparations are currently underway."

Poghos had no political connection with the Hundred and Thirty-Year Party, nor had he ever had any such connection with any other party. But unlike other parties, Poghos had an ideological commonality with this one. And he had friends both in the ranks and in the leadership of this party, with whom he had fought. It was one of those friends he called upon hearing the news.

It turned out that the first company of volunteers will go to the front immediately after receiving equipment and weapons, and it will most likely be in the evening.

-And do you know where you will be stationed? -Poghos asked.

-The same place as four years ago, -said the interlocutor.

-OK, -Poghos got happy, -I will join you there then. Or rather you will join me.

Four years ago, their battalion held the Talish positions in the north of Artsakh, above Mataghis.

Poghos knew the place very well, but he did not know that Talish had already been captured by the enemy...

It was four o'clock. On reaching Yeraskh Poghos thought that it would be wise to go to Karvachar, rather than Berdzor, but it was too late. It's OK, he thought, I will reach Stepanakert and will know what's going on and from there I will head off to the North. The thing is that Radio was out of reach there and he had no clue about the internet. The only source of information was Achon, who was calling every ten minutes. According to Achon, everything was fine, our army was destroying the enemy and every ten minutes we were downing several helicopters, airplanes and drones and other things belonging to the enemy.

-Downing? Where did you get that word from? -Poghos asked.

-From the official news, -Achon answered.

That's a fake word, Poghos thought.

Arriving at Berdzor corridor, Poghos immediately felt the breath of war. There was no shelling, no bombarding, not even an air raid, but Poghos still felt the breath of war.

Here he had an old friend, a combat friend, with whom he had spent part of the first Artsakh war. The name was Tolik. He came to Armenia after the massacres in Baku and immediately went to the front. He participated in the liberation of Berdzor and stayed there after the war.

He got married, built a house, opened a small bakery and still lives there. Tolik was a modest, headstrong, working man. They last met in Yerevan years ago.

Poghos decided to see him, talk to him a little, and then continue his way. He went to the bakery, but it was closed. He didn't remember the location of the house well, he found it after making inquiries and saw children running behind the fence. There were three boys shooting toy guns at each other. Poghos leaned against the fence and watched them play until a woman came out of the house.

-Is Tolik home? -Poghos asked.

-No, -said the woman looking at the unknown guest puzzled.

-I'm his friend, -Poghos smiled, -where is he?

-He went to the front. He took his guns and left.

Poghos was silent for a moment, then looked at the children playing and said:

-Are these your kids?

-No, our grandchildren, -said the woman, then unable to hide her emotions said, -their father, my son-in-law also went to the front.

Poghos didn't know what to say. He wanted to turn around and go, but the woman stopped him:

-Come in, eat something.

-No, I better go.

Poghos opened the door of the car to sit, but the woman stopped him again. She approached the fence and asked:

-What will happen?

There were barely visible tears in her eyes.

-I don't know, -Poghos said sadly, -but open your oven and bake bread. Soldiers will need bread.

## About how the drone followed Poghos

On the road from Berdzor to Stepanakert Achon called twelve times straight, meaning she called every five minutes now. According to Achon, our army kept on smashing, destroying and downing.

Poghos received the last call near Shushi. It was nine in the evening. But the caller was not Achon. This time it was one of his friends from volunteer battalion. He said that they have not moved yet, and it seemed that they will move at night and will be in Stepanakert in the morning. He suggested Poghos to wait for them there and they will go to the front together. Poghos agreed at once. He was tired and hungry. It was probably a sign of aging.

He didn't even go to Stepanakert, he turned around, entered Shushi, ate in the first restaurant he came across, took a room in the first hotel he came across and turned on the TV. It was the same picture on all channels: our army was smashing, destroying and downing... He didn't understand how he fell asleep and woke up only in the morning from the ringing of the phone. When he saw his battalion mate's name on the screen, he thought they had arrived and he was late. But it wasn't like that.

-We've just hit the road, -his friend said, -we were receiving weapons all night.

Then he said that there was an assignment for Poghos. He should go to the North and find the most suitable and safe accommodation for a company of a hundred people somewhere in the Maghavuz region.

- Call this number and a friend will join you in Stepanakert. You will go in two cars. We will need your Niva. Beware of drones!

Poghos saw a drone for the first time in his life during the four-day war.

It was in Talish's position. His commander named Melo, the same friend he had talked to earlier, called the drones defective pilots. He wasn't joking, he just had that impression. Often, he even forgot the word "defective" and, noticing the drone in the air, exclaimed:

-Guys, that "defective thing" is coming again.

And the men started shooting in the air, pointlessly, because the bullets of the machine gun could not reach the "defective thing" flying at a height of several thousand meters.

Well, what could they do? Who had seen such a thing during the first war? They often joked: in the past we looked in front of us, now we have to look up.

But the fact is that drones had serious role in new wars.

Sometimes, during long hours of keeping the post, Poghos was thinking about new wars and new weapons. And that's how he came up with the idea of the invention on which he had to start working after returning to Yerevan.

But it was four years ago.

Now he had to put himself together and carry out the assignment from the former commander.

Melo, who had to meet Poghos, had already gone to the front.

-Come towards North, we will meet in Martakert, -he said.

In the car, Poghos turned on the radio and found the frequency on which Artsakh Public Radio was broadcasting.

"At night, the fighting continued, and our armed forces had significant successes. The information reported by the Azerbaijani side about the losses of our troops does not correspond to reality. As a result of the counter-attack undertaken by the Defense Army, the enemy suffered large losses of manpower and military equipments, and the Defense Army recovered a number of previously lost positions," Artsakh Public Radio quoted the official representative of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia as saying.

It's good that everything is fine, thought Poghos, passing by the famous tank-monument standing in the bends of Shushi.

Twenty-eight years ago, when that enemy's tank was hit during the liberation of Shushi, he was not there, but in the North, where he was heading now. He remembered how they were excited to hear the news of Shushi's liberation there, at their front. Will this war unleashed by the enemy be an opportunity to liberate our other territories, i.e. Shahumyan. Judging by the official news, everything was leading to this.

A quarter of a century ago, when they were fighting tens of kilometers away from here, they knew what they were fighting for. The friends who fell in those battles knew what they were dying for. Isn't it the same now?

Now, many of the comrades who participated in the war of a quarter of a century ago are coming back to fight. Boys who were just born at that time also join them. Some of them come instinctively, some with the call of the spirit, some with ideology.

Instinctively one can only defend, sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully, with the call of the spirit one can win temporary victories, small and big, but only by going to a thoughtful fight can justice be achieved.

Now, when a twenty-year-old young man and a seventy-year-old man stand side by side, surely their goal is one: to protect the motherland. But before this war, weren't we engaged in the same thing, protecting the motherland? How many victims have we sacrificed in seemingly peaceful conditions? Peace or war in disguise? And so, if it's still a war, the war is not over, soldiers continue to die from the enemy's shots, they die, because the victory they had was not confirmed during this quarter of a century, and especially since the enemy is the first to attack, and the enemy is the one who violates the truce, and if now our situation is really advantageous, if we are really able to push back the adversary who has sneakily pre-aggressed, if we are able to neutralize his far-reaching plans, then isn't it the right time to at least move forward on the northern front, to liberate Shahumyan, field Artsakh, reach as far as Gandzak, as much as possible neutralize the enemy's military potential, forcing him to a peace that will be final.

Judging by the official news, it was quite possible.

Only Poghos had some skepticism. Some inexplicable skepticism that was turning him upside down.

The road leading to Martakert was almost empty. Only occasionally were loaded cars coming from the opposite direction. Someone had placed his belongings on the roof of a car and was moving his family to a safer place. Another car was transporting beehives, another was bent under the weight of freshly ripe pomegranates and barely moved. People left the villages near the front, taking with them probably everything they could take.

No way, thought Poghos. That is not true. Only women and children can be removed, but villages must not be emptied. A soldier will not fight for an empty village as he would fight for a living village.

Meanwhile, there was no movement towards the front. Only two or three times Poghos's Niva overtook small convoys of military trucks.

Explosions could be heard in the distance.

Arriving in Martakert, Poghos tried to call the person he was supposed to connect with, but the connection was not good, and the signal was constantly lost. Decided to wait. Parked the car in the central street and started walking in the city.

Martakert was deserted. Poghos deviated from the central street, walked around the deaf neighborhoods and yards, saw many demolished roofs and walls, broken windows scattered here and there on the sidewalks. But there were no people. Perhaps the city was regularly bombed, and the residents had either left or were now in shelters. But no, here was someone doing something on the sidewalk, by the stream.

Poghos approached. The petite figure was an old man with merciless wrinkles and a yellowish beard.

-What are you doing, father? -Poghos asked.

The old man put down the shovel, straightened up and answered with confidence.

-Working.

Poghos understood what he was doing. A bomb had landed on a side fence and distorted it. Chunks of stone had fallen into the stream, blocking it, and the water was now flowing directly into the street.

-Step aside, -Poghos said.

In a few minutes, he cleared the stream of stones, restored the flow of water, washed his muddy hands, then, as if he had just thought about that question, he turned to the old man:

-What do you need the water for?

The old man looked surprised.

-What do you mean what do I need it for? I need to water my garden.

-It's a war, father.

-It's always a war. When did it stop? As long as I remember, it is war. But the land is not kept only by arms. The soil is also shoveled.

Poghos walked around the city a little more and returned to the car.

The connection was persistently not restored. We had to decide whether to stay here and wait or go to Maghavuz on his own. Going was probably the right thing to do, who knows when the connection will restore.

Leaving Martakert, standing near the intersection, he saw an "Ural" truck carrying soldiers. The soldiers got off and crowded around the car. Apparently, they were militiamen.

Poghos thought that the truck had broken down, braked and turned to the soldiers.

-What happened?

-Nothing, -they said, -we're waiting.

-Waiting? -Poghos got surprised, -Here? Where's your commander?

-We don't have any, -said one of the soldiers.

Poghos got out of the car and approached the cab of the truck. The driver was asleep with his head on the steering wheel. He pushed him hard and shouted:

-Are you nuts?

The driver jumped up.

-Are you nuts? -Poghos repeated, -who stops "Ural" of soldiers here?

-There's no connection, -the driver answered, -we don't know what to do.

-Where did they send you?

-Tonashen, but they told us to wait at the intersection and not leave Martakert, -the driver looked at the watch, -we have been waiting for half an hour.

-The one who said something like that to you is more stupid than you, - Poghos was angry, - immediately move the car under the trees or some kind of cover, so that it is not visible from above.

-Are you worried about the drones? -the driver murmured.

-No, the spaceship.

-What spaceship? -the driver got surprised.

-Hurry! -Poghos shouted and turned to the soldiers, - Stand apart and as far apart as possible from each other, preferably under trees.

Poghos waited until his order was fulfilled, then got into the car and left.

How can such disorganization be allowed? Poghos had never seen anything like this in an army, not even during the first war, when there was no army as such. How can soldiers be sent to the front without a commander? How can you say go wait at the intersection when you know there are enemy drones roaming in the air?

The road was completely empty. The sounds of the explosion were now much more frequent and much closer.

Ten-twelve kilometers away, at another intersection, two soldiers were standing on the side of the road. Seeing the Niva, they came forward and stopped it.

-Who are you, -Poghos asked, -where are you going?

-To Tonashen, but we don't know the way, -answered one of the soldiers.

Poghos saw that they were unarmed.

-So, you're going to Tonashen on foot and unarmed?

- We are neither on foot, nor unarmed, - the soldier pointed to the wooded hill on the right, - the cars are there, loaded with weapons.

Two large trucks could barely be seen under the trees. These people had at least guessed to hide the machines.

-OK, -Poghos said after thinking a while, -follow me, but keep at least 50-meter distance.

He waited until the trucks, two military "Kamaz", came down the hill and moved.

And suddenly, unexpectedly, the phone rang.

-Where are you? -was heard from the other end of the phone, -it's impossible to get in touch with you.

-Yes, the connection is bad here, -Poghos explained, -I'm near Maghavouz, but going up to Tonashen.

-There are battles there...

The connection was interrupted again and Poghos was stunned. Tried to call back several times, but to no avail.

And at that moment the sound of explosion was heard. Too close and too high. Poghos looked in the mirror and saw that one of the "Kamaz" deviated from the road and went up the hill. The second continued the course.

The bomb, fortunately, did not hit the target, it probably fell a few meters away. It was impossible to stop. If it was a drone, it would definitely hit again and hit a standing target more easily. The first Kamaz driver did the right thing by going up the hill where he could hide under the trees, while the second driver put himself in serious danger by continuing on the road.

After some time, a second explosion happened, much closer this time, so that Niva jolted and Poghos somehow kept control of the car. Was that damned drone trying to hit him? But hardly. There was no way a drone would waste precious missiles trying to destroy some Niva. However, Poghos began driving in zigzags. He looked in the mirror again and saw that the second Kamaz was not there. Either he was stuck behind a curve or he had veered off the road. It could not have been hit, because the bomb exploded near Niva, and he was far behind.

There was no road leading to the hill to the right, and Poghos had to go forward on the road. A sound like a whistle could be heard from Niva's open window. If it really was, and not what it seemed to Poghos, then the drone was nearby. Anyway, there was no stopping. After zigzagging for a while, Poghos noticed a convenient slope that led to the forest and where Niva could climb. He turned to the right without hesitation and the car started quickly, then slowly, then somehow managed to overcome the hill. It wasn't a long road, the forest was already very close. But Niva was already beat. A little more, a few more meters... It turned out, the car entered the forest. Poghos went a little further and decided to stop for a moment to turn on the gear that turns the car into four-wheel drive. He made it and Niva, having just caught his breath, jumped out of his seat. But that's all. There was a thunderous explosion behind him and Poghos could only feel his Niva tipping forward on its nose.

### **About how Poghos got injured**

The first thing Poghos thought when he came back to senses was that the thing that was chasing him was in fact a drone and it really had targeted him. Then he felt that he was upside down and his shoulder was in terrible pain, but all the same he didn't understand why did the drone attack his unfortunate, khaki colored Niva.

He barely opened the door, got out of the car and ran into the woods and looked up at the sky. There was no pilot. The whistle was also missing. Only explosions continued to rumble in the distance.

He went back to his car, tried to open the trunk, where he had hidden the weapons. He realized that he was unimaginably lucky, because even though the fragments of the missile did reach the car, but only broke the rear window, damaged the trunk door and the rear pair of wheels. If the explosion had been a little closer, the grenades in the trunk could have exploded as well. And the car, apparently, was overturned by the force of the shock wave.

In one word: Poghos was lucky! Only what did he have to do now? He wasn't able to turn the car around. He could get down to the road and ask for help from passing cars. The car could be fixed with a few people's help. But what to do with flat tires? In addition, various damages may have been made. In short, Niva had to be forgotten.

There were two options: the first was to go out on the road and wait for a car to pass, the second is to reach Maghavuz on foot. And here Poghos had an idea. And why Maghavuz? He was told that fighting was going on in Tonashen. From here, Tonashen should be seven to eight kilometers, or even less through the forest. So why not go straight up there, taking as many weapons and ammunition as possible?

Poghos remembered his guerrilla past. After all, they had spent most of the first war as partisans. In general, guerrilla warfare is most effective when the enemy is several times outnumbered and outgunned. Especially in forest terrain.

In short, Poghos didn't think long: he put on the military uniform that was left from the April war, threw the rifle on one shoulder, the machine gun on the other, placed several rifle cartridges and hand grenades in the pockets of his body armor, fastened two bands of machine gun bullets to his belt, filled his backpack with medicine and food, and headed off. He left the grenade launcher with great regret. It would be extremely difficult to move and use it without an assistant anyway.

Poghos, bent under the weight of weapons, walked for about an hour. He was heading towards the place where the explosion sounds were coming from. He did not understand whether it was artillery, bombs, rockets or all together. Probably all together. The enemy probably used all weapons. But what about us? Were we defending or attacking? Poghos had no clue.

During the first war, when he was fighting in these parts, perhaps twenty-thirty kilometers away, there were no rockets and drones, they fought the enemy face to face, often at a distance of several meters. At the beginning of 1993, they liberated Chldran, Srkhavend, Drmbon, and then, in the summer, Martakert.

He was a machine gunner. It was this same machine gun that was now slung over his shoulder. When he was wounded by a shell explosion in 1994, exactly one day before the armistice, and was taken to the hospital, the guys took the machine gun, kept it, and then returned it to him, like the other weapons...

He once read somewhere that machine gunners are the cruelest people because they kill the most. Perhaps it was true, but there was one circumstance that Poghos had never told anyone about. Even Achon. The thing is, when he positioned himself during the battles and started shooting at the enemy, he tried to shoot from below so as to hit the legs of the soldiers, injure them, but not kill them.

It may sound weird, but it's the truth, and there were two reasons for it. First, even though it's an enemy, a soldier is fighting for his country or at least following orders, often without knowing what is right and wrong, just and unjust. Of course, Poghos knew very well that the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" violates a country fighting for the purpose of conquest, and killing on the battlefield for a defending country is not considered murder. But that's Poghos. And the second reason was that, according to Poghos, wounding the opponent in the leg was more effective than killing. A wounded soldier creates problems for other soldiers and is a distraction.

A deer jumped out of the bushes. It stopped for a moment, looked straight into Poghos's eyes, as if wanted to ask what was happening, why were they disrupting its peaceful life, but it regretted it and ran away.

The sounds of explosions came closer and closer and soon the sounds of gunshots started to be heard as well. So, there was a battle going on somewhere nearby.

Immediately above, a loud screeching sound was heard, and an airplane appeared from among the forest foliage. It flew very low, seeming to touch the branches of the trees. Is it ours or the enemy's? Poghos thought. It was the enemy's, and it would soon become clear.

The forest was suddenly interrupted, and a meadow opened in front of it, where the white heads of lilies of the valley shone here and there. Poghos was terribly tired and decided to sit down for a few minutes and then figure out which direction to go. But he didn't manage to sit down or understand. The plane appeared again in the air. Without hesitating for a second, Poghos lowered the machine gun from his shoulder and started firing. The plane passed over Poghos's head and, seconds later, a loud explosion was heard. Poghos even got to see the rocket fired from the plane. He ran in the direction of the explosion and saw three "Urals" down the slope, one completely engulfed in flames.

Most of the soldiers did not guess or manage to jump out of the body of the crashed truck. Those who had made it were now lying on the slope, all around the truck.

The other two Urals were not damaged, but the drivers, instead of driving them under trees, left them there, got out of the cab and drove away. Soldiers were also fleeing. It was a terrible mess.

Poghos ran to the fallen soldiers and began checking one by one to see who was alive, calling out to the fleeing ones to come back and help him carry the wounded. However, he did not manage to do anything here either. There was a loud explosion and Poghos saw how the other "Ural" standing not far away exploded. He did not see anything else; he felt a sharp pain in his head, but before he fainted, he managed to understand two things: firstly, that it was the same "Ural" that he had met hours before in Martakert, which did not have a commander, and secondly, that it was not the plane that struck, because no plane was seen above. It was probably a drone, the same drone that had followed him hours before.

Then the pain became unbearable, and he fell unconscious on the ground on the white lilies of the valley.

### **About how Achon was worried**

It's been six hours that Achon didn't have any news from Poghos. The last time they spoke was in the morning and she didn't like Poghos's mood.

-Are you following the news? -Achon had asked, -everything seems fine.

-I don't like all this, -Poghos answered.

-But we're winning, -Achon got surprised.

-One should rejoice and celebrate after the victory, -Poghos said, -but the waiting before the victory should be silent.

Then Poghos's phone became unavailable. At first, Achon was worried, but then she read a message from three Armenian mobile operators on one of the news websites, which said: "The possibilities and the number of subscribers of the Armenian operators and the Artsakh operator are incompatible. Call service by Karabakh Telecom has also become difficult because the network infrastructures of the only operator of Artsakh were targeted and, according to our data, suffered such damage, the restoration of which requires time, as well as serious human and financial resources. Achon had calmed down for a while, but after a few hours it turned out that, however erratic the connection, it was still possible to call.

The worst thing was that Achon didn't know where Poghos was. She also had no way to find that out. The thing was that after two year-acquaintance with him, she hadn't met any friend or relative of his. So, there was absolutely no one Achon could find out something from. Unfortunately, even foreign connections couldn't help here either. The only thing Achon could do was follow the news and keep calling.

Around three o'clock Poghos's phone became reachable, but he didn't answer the calls. Then it became out of reach. This worried Achon even more.

Achon had never been to Artsakh. She had always wanted to go, but never did. She had no idea about the place and appearance of Artsakh. And when she opened the map, she realized that Artsakh is as unfamiliar to her as, say, an African state. And Achon felt guilty. But let's leave it for now, she thought. Now she was only interested in Poghos. And here she felt guilty again. How egoistic she is! What about the rest? The remaining thousands of soldiers who are now on the battlefield, the thousands of civilians who are now under fire. Meanwhile, she only thinks about the one who turns out to be so dear to him.

Achon didn't reason much of the map she opened on the computer. In the official news, the southern and south-eastern directions of the front were mainly mentioned. Hot battles were going on there and again, according to the official media, "the units of the Defense Forces are successfully carrying out punitive operations in separate sectors."

Poghos must be there, Achon thought. He must be taking part at the “punitive operations”. He was good at punishing. So, there was no need to worry. Poghos will contact as soon as he finishes his battle successfully.

Achon remembered that the husband of one of her friends was a high-ranking military official. She decided to check with him about the situation in the front.

She called her friend. It turned out that her husband had gone to Artsakh as well.

-Is it true that we're winning? -Achon asked.

-You better come to our place, we'll talk, -said the friend.

Achon did so. She went to her friend's house and stayed overnight.

Achon kept calling Poghos until late night. The connection was restored but Poghos was not answering. And in the morning, someone answered Achon's calls. Obviously, it wasn't Poghos:

-Who are you to him? -asked a man with hoarse voice.

-What happened to Poghos? -Achon exclaimed, -is he alive?

-He's injured, -said the man and asked again, -you're his...?

-Wife, -Achon answered without thinking, -what has he injured?

-Poghos got married? -the man got surprised, -I didn't know that.

-Yes, he did, -said Achon angrily, -what has he injured? Is he conscious?

-Don't worry, -said the man, - everything will be OK.

-Is he conscious? -Achon repeated, -where are you now?

-Calm down and listen to me, -said the man bit rudely, - I'm his battle buddy, the commander, my name is Melo. Poghos got a shrapnel wound in the head. Now we are taking him to Martakert hospital. That's all I can say.

The man talking to Achon was really Melo, the one whose battalion Poghos had to join and who had ordered Poghos to find an accommodation for the battalion in Maghavuz.

The battalion had reached Artsakh on the evening of September twenty-eight. They had spent the night in Stepanakert and left for the northern front at dawn. Before reaching Tonashen, a

battle was fought near Varnkatagh against enemy's forces that were four times larger, so they had to retreat. The way of retreat passed through the forest, the very forest where the "Urals" exploded and where Poghos was lying wounded and unconscious.

### **About how Achon started living in the hospital**

In fact, during the first war Poghos was wounded on the penultimate day of the war, this time he was wounded on the second day of the war. During the first war he was wounded by shrapnel in the right hemisphere of his head, this time the shrapnel hit his left hemisphere. He had been in a coma for a year from the injury he received in the first war, this time it lasted for a month. After the injury received in the first war, no one hoped that Poghos would live, it was the same now. But just like the first war, now too Poghos did not die.

Poghos was transferred from Martakert hospital by UAZ to Stepanakert, from Stepanakert to Goris by ambulance, from Goris to Yerevan by helicopter.

When Achon was finally allowed to enter his room, Poghos seemed to be sleeping calmly, and if not for the bandage on his head, Achon would not have noticed any change in his appearance.

Before that, Achon had arranged for Poghos to have a separate ward, and the best one in the hospital. The administration had to remove a woman, who had had a nose job and who was said to be the mistress of some official and transfer her to another room.

The ward was two-roomed, consisting of a patient room and a lobby. The latter was more like a living room than a lobby, the place was suitably furnished. There was also a formal bathroom and a small hollow closet that Achon decided to use as a wardrobe. The thing is that she had decided to move here and stay until Poghos came out of the coma.

-When will he come to senses? -she asked the chief doctor.

-Nobody can say, -he answered.

-How long does the coma last? -Achon asked.

-It can last from a couple of days to couple of years, -the doctor explained shrugging his shoulders.

-Make sure you do whatever it takes for it to last a couple of days.

Then Achon went home and started packing her stuff. She thought for a long-time what dresses to pack, in which suitcase to pack them, and only later did she realize than she's going to the hospital and not some kind of a resort. Then she thought for a long time what to do with the parrot and finally decided to take it with her.

Poghos had no visitors. Only his sister came twice a day, sat by her brother's bed and left. Achon had informed her about Poghos's injury and on the next day his sister came to Yerevan. She didn't look like Poghos at all. She was a petite and delicate woman with sad eyes. She was always silent. Achon's constant attempts to talk to her were all in vain.

Then Achon's girlfriends started arriving. One of them, an extremely attractive woman with a Slavic appearance, entered the room for the first time and said:

- Oh, it's a five-star hotel.

Then, when she found out that Achon was about to stay there for a long time, she made a bet that Achon's stay wouldn't last more than two days. After losing the bet, she came back on the third day, bringing a huge basket of fruits and sweets. Achon took the basket, gave it to the nurse and asked her to give it all to other injured soldiers. That was it! From that day on, all her friends kept coming to the hospital bringing all sorts of fruits, sweets and juiced and Poghos's room became some sort of a storeroom, where Achon received goods from dusk till dawn, sort them out, gave them to nurses, who gave them to the hundreds of injured soldiers.

Number of injured soldiers was adding up daily, hourly, actually. They were brought here by ambulances and helicopters, mostly with shrapnel and various degrees of injuries.

Meanwhile, all media sources kept insisting that we are winning.

"The opponent had two hundred dead." "Twenty enemy tanks and armored vehicles were hit in the southern direction." "The enemy is suffering a terrible loss of manpower and military equipment." "The Defense Army perfectly fulfills the task set before it." "Our military leadership is perfectly in control of the situation." "The enemy fled with the entire battalion from Jebrayil's posts."

These were the official news headlines.

And another official information said: "After the attacks on the enemy's military facilities, several hundred thousand people from different cities of Azerbaijan are fleeing in panic to Baku and other rear cities."

But this was not all. The official representative of the Ministry of Defense dared to make jokes, such as: "Guys, shoot a little slower, I'm not managing count the enemy's drones that have landed on the ground." Or, "escape is a national sport for some".

That meant that we really were winning. And everyone in the hospital, from the paramedic to the chief doctor wanted to believe it was true.

But there was one obstacle: injured soldiers were telling a completely different story...

Days and weeks went by, Poghos wasn't coming back to his senses.

Achon often talked to the doctors. They were explaining to her that, despite modern advances in neurosurgery and other branches of medicine, coma resulting from cranial trauma remains an understudied and unpredictable phenomenon.

But fortunately, the miracle did happen.

It was October twentieth; the day was Thursday. Achon lived in this hospital room for exactly one month, deprived herself of everything, she did not go to any event, saw girlfriends only here, did not even go to the gym. She only went home every few days to get the necessary clothes and supplies.

Poghos's sister had come in the evening and was now with him, sitting next to the bed as usual. Achon was watching TV, where they were discussing the Artsakh war on one of the Russian channels. In parallel, she was feeding a parrot from the palm. And suddenly voices of conversation were heard from the hospital room. Achon jumped up from the couch, ran inside and saw that Poghos had opened his eyes...

### **About the real situation at the front**

-The successful recovery of a comatose patient depends on many factors, including the correct approach of the relatives, - the doctor tried to explain to Achon, after the nurses somehow managed to remove her from Poghos's bedside.

-But he did open his eyes.

-Opening eyes doesn't mean he's out of coma.

-But talking to him is essential.

-Talking-yes, but hugging him so hard he could choke-no.

-And when will he talk, doctor? When will he get up and return to normal life?

-I told you already, that it depends on all sorts of factors, including your correct approaches.

When Poghos spoke, his first question was this:

-Where's my machine gun?

It was November first, twenty twenty.

Fighting continued at the front, and the state propaganda continued assuring us that we will win. One by one, the headlines of the official press were encouraging. "Certain positional improvements have been made in the southern part." "The enemy was pushed back, leaving tens of corpses in the North." "During the night, the Defense Army units destroyed a large amount of enemy ammunition and manpower." "On November 1, during the hot battles, during which the enemy was crushed, one soldier was injured." "Whole night the armed forces of Azerbaijan undertook several large-scale attack attempts: all attempts failed"...

One day, while Poghos was lying unconscious, Achon's girlfriend came to the hospital with her General husband. The General had come to visit one of his wounded men who was being treated here. But Achon wouldn't her real self, if she missed the opportunity to speak with a former high-ranking military officer.

The General entered the hospital room, stood by Poghos's bed for a while and said:

-He's tough.

Then they spoke for a long time. General had just returned from Artsakh and although he was stingy in his speech and tried not to open too many parentheses, but Achon understood a few things from what he told.

First, that the Prime Minister isolated from the leadership of the army all those soldiers who held high positions during the previous government and refused to swear loyalty to him or, so to speak, did not pass under his sword. Moreover, he ordered to prosecute many people. Of course, none of them is holy. Most of them had at least committed abuses during their tenure, but there are two circumstances: those who swore an oath of loyalty to the regime are not holy either, but more importantly war was ongoing.

But the prime minister was not only a petty critic, but also a pathological liar.

The leader of the country and his henchmen hid the true picture of the war and constantly deceived the people. But they did it not in order to supposedly keep the spirit of the people high, but because they were afraid for themselves. The prime minister knew from the very first minutes of the war that the chances of defeating the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem were extremely low, he knew that the state did not have enough resources, he also knew that he and his teammates were not capable of leading the country and the army during the war. But he, knowing all this very well, not only did not stand aside, but with his own stubbornness left aside those who at least had some skills in conducting war. The command of the army remained in the hands of the amateurs under the command of the Amateur-in-Chief. As a result, the disorganized situation happened, causing failures and thousands of casualties from our side.

These are the things Achon learned from the conversation with the General.

And Poghos's machine gun, as well as other weapons, were in safe hands. They participated in several battles and one major, very important battle, which resulted in one of the rare successes of the entire war. The volunteer company that Poghos was to join had liberated a hill of strategic importance. Before that, Commander Melo took care of transferring Poghos to the Martakert hospital, as well as taking his weapons, those that were nearby at that moment, or those that remained in Niva, which was turned upside down by the bombardment. Poghos's khaki Niva was also refurbished and served the company throughout the war.

But Achon didn't know all of it and when Poghos came out of coma and asked about his machine gun, Achon had no idea what to say.

-Do you want to see the parrot? -she asked instead, -it's here.

-Here where? -Poghos asked.

-At the hospital.

-Where?

-In Yerevan.

-Is the war over?

-No.

-Are we winning?

-No.

At the moment the parrot flew into the room and repeated:

-No, no, no.

### **About how the war ended**

Neither Poghos nor the hundreds of soldiers being treated in the hospital ever understood what happened during those forty-four days. The thousands of soldiers fighting at the front did not understand either. People waiting for them, the Armenian people, did not understand either.

But they especially did not understand what happened on the last day of the war, on November nine.

Throughout the day, the state propaganda machine continued its pseudo pathetic outcry. "The Defense Army launched an attack in the direction of Berdzor with three wings. The enemy has great losses of military equipment and manpower."

Then the United Information Center issued another summary of the enemy's losses, according to which two hundred and sixty-four ATS, sixteen helicopters, seven hundred and eighty-four tanks, six TOS were destroyed. According to the same summary, the enemy had seven thousand six hundred and thirty casualties.

Then the official representative of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia wrote on his Facebook page: "Gyorbagyor twenty twenty. Let's not forget, for the sake of history."

Then again victorious headlines: "The enemy is fleeing from the mountains of Berdzor". "Let's just trust the army. let's trust and wait". "The group found in the direction of Karintak is destroyed."

Shushi was passing through a separate news feed. As recently as two days before, people raising the alarm that the enemy was near Shushi were labeled as provocateurs. And a legendary commander of the first war, who dared to say even a week ago that the enemy is only five kilometers away from Shushi, was nailed to the pillar of infamy and declared a traitor. Meanwhile, the official information now said: "Let's wait for the end of the battle of Shushi, which we are sure our army will finish with glory." "Near Shushi, the enemy retreated after

suffering losses." "Battles continue near Shushi. The Defense Army successfully fulfills the task set before it." "The Defense Army Forces are resolutely protecting Shushi."

And suddenly, with a difference of five minutes from each other, at ten past seven and fifteen past seven in the evening, the notes of the leaders of Artsakh and Armenia were published.

The first read as follows: "Dear compatriots, war actions continue on the entire front of the republic. The defense army and the mob are standing firmly on their positions and we will fight our battle against the enemy until the end. Each of us must stand firm in our positions and a positive outcome will be guaranteed. I believe in that".

The second publication was shorter: "Battles for Shushi are still ongoing".

Five hours later, the same two individuals, in reverse order but at the same interval, issued the following statements:

"Personally, I have made a difficult, extremely difficult decision for me and for all of us. I signed a statement with the presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan on ending the Karabakh war. The text of the statement is inexplicably painful for me personally and for our people. I made that decision as a result of a deep analysis of the military situation and the assessment of people who know the situation best. Also, based on the belief that this is the best possible solution in the given situation...". This was the statement of the Prime Minister of Armenia.

"Today, we discussed with the Prime Minister of Armenia our actions aimed at stopping hostilities. Considering the current dire situation and in order to avoid further large-scale human losses and losing Artsakh completely, I have given my consent to stop the war an hour ago". This was the statement of the President of Artsakh.

Poghos, the hundreds of wounded soldiers undergoing treatment in the hospital, the thousands of soldiers still fighting at the front, the people waiting for them were hopelessly trying to understand how it happened that five hours ago the leaders of the two Armenian states called to stand firm, guaranteeing a positive result, and then it turned out, that throughout the day they discussed together what they should do to stop hostilities and, considering the dire situation, decided to capitulate...

How is it, that during the entire war they were assuring us that our army was winning, that we were not yielding a centimeter to the enemy, and suddenly it turns out...

*Part two. 2021 - 2023*

**About what Poghos thought about the wrath of the people**

The anger of the people was expressed throughout the night of November tenth, in the following days and weeks, then it gradually died down, flared up again, died down and flared up again, then again and again, until June twenty twenty-one, when it turned out that it was not the anger of the people at all.

Before and after that, a number of interesting incidents happened, which, however, did not become known to either wide or narrow circles of society. We will talk about those cases in this book and let the reader decide for himself whether to believe in their truth or not.

But first, about the people's anger.

Poghos and Achon watched the first events following the capitulation in the hospital room. First, they saw how the human crowd "occupies" the government and then the parliament buildings.

And this is what Poghos thought about all this: if the majority of those people were old men, women and young people, if those people were those who had lost children in the war or the wounded who were now in this and other hospitals, everything might be right and logical. But most of those people were young men... Men who attacked government facilities that were empty. Men who, with certain exceptions of course, had not defended the fullness of their state and now attacked the emptiness of that same state.

As for those who were supposed to be in those empty buildings at that moment, it is not known where they were. The entire state administration apparatus had gone underground in the true sense of the word. In the true sense of the word, the head of state was also underground.

Then there was the prime minister's speech of the state from underground.

More precisely, it was not a speech, but a moan, a howl, a squall...

Before that, the second face of the state was beaten by the crowd in the street.

Did the first, second and third ranking officials deserve to be beaten? They certainly did. But was this way of punishment, without trial and judgment, correct?

Poghos, of course, agreed that the authorities who brought the country to this state should be punished. However, it was very important how.

The most correct way, naturally, was to force them to resign through popular struggle, and then leave the amount and type of punishment to the court. If it was not possible, and Poghos was convinced that it was not possible, and even more so it was not possible to remove the authorities in a political way, that is, through elections, then the last option remained. Except that last option was by no means the judgment of the crowd.

It was also extremely important what was the point of punishing the authorities that brought the country to the brink of destruction. If the purpose of punishing them was to stop the process of the country's destruction, even more so, the most correct way was the political way. If you were punishing them for the sake of punishment, you could use any resources, but again, not the judgment of the mob.

Because it was equally important who the punisher was, did he have moral, human and natural right to do that, because it was clear that the legal right was missing.

However, kicking a person on the ground with a hundred people, even if that person is a traitor and the last scoundrel, is in no way justified, even taking into account the emotional state of the kickers.

This is what Poghos thought.

As I've mentioned above, Poghos was sure that neither the popular, nor the political struggle will be successful.

Governments that have lost a war, especially those that brought about that war, must go. They must leave immediately because every day of their further tenure will work against the country.

However, our government refused to do that.

They would not, because every day of their further tenure would work against the country, but, sadly, in their favor.

The subsequent course of events showed that this was real.

However, it is necessary to see why Poghos was convinced that neither the popular nor the political struggle would be successful.

Again, the problem was the crowd: crowd's thinking, crowd's approach. Moreover, both the crowd itself and the political forces were guided by that thinking and approach and it had a certain influence on the reality.

And there was the last, according to Poghos, the most important factor. Everything, alas, was regulated from completely different places, from Yerevan and two thousand kilometers to the North from the front. Everything was regulated, from the actions of the authorities to those who led the crowd. And it was regulated in a way that the first ones remained collaborators, and the second ones were not able to turn the crowd into popular masses.

And, of course, the reasons for the failure of the "Homeland Salvation Movement" and all other movements following it, as well as the failure of the extraordinary parliamentary elections, should have been a consequence of this.

However, we seem to have gone too far ahead, because before that, as we already said, a number of incidents happened: in particular, a number of noses were broken, all of which belonged to those people, or rather to animals, who by their actions or attitudes contributed to what happened to the Armenian people after the revolution of twenty eighteen.

But let's talk about the events one at a time.

### **About how Affenpinscher's nose was broken anyway**

If you remember, in the summer before the war, Poghos and Achon planned an operation in which a certain Affenpinscher was to be punished, but instead a black vulture was punished.

However, let us remind you. We are talking about the deputy who, during the days of the revolution, had a habit of holding and carrying various items belonging to the leader of the revolution. Poghos likened him to a pocket dog, an Affenpinscher. This animal was to be punished in a cafe on Aznavour Square in Yerevan. But instead of him, a representative of the former authorities was punished, whom Poghos likened to a scavenger, a black vulture. This bird appeared too untimely in the same cafe, in whose yard Poghos broke its beak.

You probably remember that after Poghos was injured and moved to Yerevan, Achon took care of the so-called deluxe ward of the hospital, as a result of which a certain beauty who had a nose job and who, according to evil tongues, was the mistress of a well-known official, was transferred to another ward.

What has one to do with the other, you might ask. Good question. That official turned out to be Affenpincher.

Except Poghos didn't recognize him right away. When he went to the head doctor's room after being discharged from the hospital to thank him for saving his life, he saw a man in a cap and brown glasses with a medical mask on his face. He wanted to apologize, go out and wait outside until the doctor was free, but the latter did not let him.

-Here is our hero, -he said standing up, -come in, come in.

But Poghos didn't go in.

-Calling me a hero is wrong. I will wait outside.

-Wait a second, -the doctor stopped him, -but you are a hero, don't be so modest. You were injured at the battlefield.

He wanted to continue, but Poghos didn't let him.

-It's not all true. I will wait in the reception.

-But I wanted to introduce you with our honorable...

-But Poghos had already shut the door.

He settled down on the leather sofa and began flipping through a medical journal. There was no one at the reception. A little later, the secretary came in with a large plastic spray and, without paying attention to Poghos, started watering the plants lined up on the windowsill. Then he entered the boss's office, where there were probably vases as well.

As it's been mentioned many times in this book, Poghos was an extremely polite man. He would never allow himself to eavesdrop other people's conversation. However, the thing is that upon entering the doctor's office, the secretary left the door half open and could clearly be heard what the head doctor and his guest were talking about.

-She's a wonderful girl, do you understand? Do you know how she dances?

-I can only imagine, but...

-Besides, your hospital owes me. You removed my other girlfriend out of the deluxe room.

-I already explained, that...

-Whatever...do something.

- There is a specialized plastic surgery hospital in Armenia. The GP is my friend. I can...

-Didn't you hear me when I said that she wants to be operated here?

-I understand, but you too try to understand, there are around five hundred injured soldiers here, the...

-The war is over. We should live our lives as before. Besides, those injured soldiers...

But that sentence remained half heard, because the secretary left the room and closed the door.

-Who's that man? -Poghos asked the secretary.

-What do you mean? -the secretary got surprised as if it was the Pope in the doctor's room, - don't you know him?

-No.

-He's one of the closest people to the PM, he's a deputy, actually... -here the secretary started murmuring, -honestly, I don't remember his name. He's the one that was carrying Prime Minister's...

The first thing Poghos thought about after realizing who she was talking about was that Achon's capabilities were actually so great that she had been able to free up the deluxe room for him. So, it was this animal's mistress. And the animal, as you already understood, was the Affenpinscher.

-His name is Affenpinscher, -Poghos said to the secretary.

-Come again? -the secretary got surprised.

-Affenpinscher, -Poghos repeated.

-No, -the secretary tried to remember, -he had another name, an Armenian one.

-Do you have a mask? -Poghos asked unexpectedly.

The thing is, he had already decided what he was going to do, even though he hadn't decided where. Just not in the doctor's office.

I'll act accordingly, Poghos thought and took the mask the secretary gave him and went to the lobby.

A little later, the Affenpinscher also came out. He was talking on the phone, addressing someone in Russian, probably the one for whose surgery he had been interceding with the head doctor.

Poghos walked after him. They walked down a long corridor and reached the waiting room where the elevators were. There was a small queue here. He was waiting for the elevator were several women and a wounded soldier in a wheelchair. Affenpinscher was still on the phone with a happy smile on his face. When the elevator doors opened, he threw himself forward, not giving way to either the women or the wheelchair-bound man.

The place inside was narrow and Poghos understood that hitting him with a fist will not work. But it didn't matter, there was another option.

As we have already mentioned in this book, Poghos was not only a polite person but also extremely responsible. He remembered that according to the plan of action he had made with Achon, in addition to breaking the bastards' noses and pulling their ears, they had to be forced to say certain words and film it all on the phone. However, there were two problems. Poghos did not know how to make a video and time was very short, the elevator would soon reach the ground floor. But our hero found his way very quickly.

First, he pressed the "stop" button of the elevator, then he took out the phone from his pocket and handed it to the relatively young woman.

-Could you record, please? -he said.

-Record what? -the woman asked fearfully.

-You'll see now.

Poghos headbutted the deputy right in the nose, knocking him to the ground. Then he took hold of the left ear, lifted it up and said:

-Didn't they teach you to respect women?

Affenpinscher was winning. Poghos pulled his ear harder and ordered:

-Now, repeat after me: "I am a member of the Parliament, my name is this and I announce that I'm an ill-mannered, cowardly bastard, and my leader is a gutless liar and mentally ill".

Affenpinscher was already howling in pain. Poghos, continued holding his ear, hit his nose once more, this time with his fist and shouted:

-Repeat!

Affenpinscher repeated.

Then Poghos wanted to apologize to those present, but it turned out that there was no need for it. Everyone clapped enthusiastically.

### **About Poghos's Approach to "Homeland Salvation Movement"**

After being discharged from the hospital, Poghos spent exactly one month at home. According to doctors, he had to go through an intensive rehabilitation phase, which did not involve any activity in any way. The doctors, of course, did not know that on the day he was discharged from the hospital, Poghos was so active that he broke the nose of the member of the National Assembly.

-I'm afraid neither the "mad paper" nor my connections will help you this time, -said Achon, when she was driving Poghos home from the hospital, -that pocket dog will definitely inform his owner.

-No, -Poghos answered calmly, -he will not let anyone know.

And he handed his phone over to Achon.

-Did you record it? -Achon got excited.

-How could I possibly record it, if I was holding his ear with one hand and breaking his nose with the other?

-In that case...

-I didn't record, but I asked one of the women taking the elevator with me to do it.

-Did he notice that he was being recorded?

-Of course, he did, more than that, I made him speak against his boss looking straight into the camera.

Then, already at home, Achon searched Poghos's phone for a long time, but did not find any video there. That woman, in fact, either didn't want to or couldn't record. But it didn't matter. The important thing was that Affenpinscher was not aware of this, therefore he would not contact the police under any circumstances, fearing that the video of him saying all the horrible things about his owner would come to light. Of course, the video could have appeared without it, but still, the MP himself hardly gave an additional reason for it.

-Since this action was unprepared, I'm not too sad that it was not filmed, - said Poghos, - the important thing is that one more scoundrel was punished. But new actions must be done according to our plan.

-What new actions? -Achon got surprised, -the doctors said that you have to recover for at least a month and not get involved in any action.

-So, we will wait a month.

And so, Poghos stayed at home for a month.

Maybe it was even better that he was home. Because the "Homeland Salvation Movement" was raging outside. And Poghos imagined the salvation of the Motherland in a different way. And, alas, he did not believe in the "Homeland Salvation Movement".

He was sure that the main aim of this movement was saving the Motherland from Chikol. Of course, it was an important thing, but what was going to happen then? Did they have a plan? Did they have a leader.

It happened that they had a leader. Joint eighteen parties had one candidate for the Prime Minister. He was the compromise candidate whose appointment as interim prime minister was agreed upon by the political forces participating in the "Homeland Salvation Movement".

Poghos's attitude towards that person was quite positive. Poghos knew that he was a decent man and politically mature.

The mission of the leader of the movement was to organize early elections a year later, on the condition that he or the political force he led would not run in those elections.

If it really happened, the opposition succeeded in the change of power and the united candidate got the chance to lead the country even for one year, it would be a unique restoration of justice. After all, in nineteen ninety-six, when the presidential elections were rigged for the first time in the history of independent Armenia, he was the main competitor of the current

president. However, the elections were falsified, the first president of Armenia did not use the unique opportunity given to him to form a truly free, fair and democratic state, then brought the next three heads of the Republic of Armenia to the arena one after the other and each of them had hindered the formation.

However, Poghos was convinced that nothing would change and that Chikol would continue his work. At least until everything that was agreed upon with the presidents of ally Russia and enemy Azerbaijan is implemented. Poghos did not know what Chikol agreed with them at the time of another bout of psychosis, but he was sure that there simply could not be a more manageable, therefore suitable leader of Armenia than the defeated and humiliated Chikol.

And the worst thing was that Poghos was sure that the shadowy but real leaders of the "Homeland Salvation Movement" also knew about it. Those people, the second and third presidents of Armenia, were once controlled by Russia, but to their credit, it must be admitted that they were never humiliated.

So, what was the reason for all these happenings?

The fact that the people should stand up, should revolt, should fight, of course, was indisputable. However, there was still a tendency to deceive the people and to use them. The main beneficiaries of all this did not need a popular struggle, they needed the imitation. It was necessary to constantly keep the internal political situation hot and tense in order to make the authorities, in particular, the head of the country even more manageable and remove him at the necessary moment.

Again and again, they used the people, again and again, they deceived the people.

Partly this was the reason that neither Poghos nor Achon were particularly enthusiastic about the "Homeland Salvation Movement" because, as we know, they did not like being lied to, and partly another circumstance. The second circumstance was the persons who appeared from time to time on the rally platform or at the front of the processions, as well as several individuals of different caliber, who had committed various crimes against the state and the people when they had the opportunity. And for those individuals, this movement was nothing more than an attempt to restore those opportunities.

It's interesting, thought Poghos, how different and at the same time all scoundrels are alike. At that moment he was watching an interview on TV, with whom do you think?

The camel. Yes, yes, the camel, whom he didn't manage to punish. This animal, after spending some time underground, had actually not only appeared, but had also begun to speak.

"The capitulation was prepared, written and signed by the people who are now accusing us of it," he said.

All scoundrels are equally different and similar, both former or current ones, Poghos was thinking.

-Does that club still exist? -he asked Achon.

-The what? -Achon didn't understand.

-The club, where the camel liked to dance.

-Oh, -Achon got it now, -I'm not sure, but it should be closed. I don't think they are the kind of scoundrels to be in a mood of dancing.

-I'm sure they are. Could you check, if you have a chance?

Poghos was right. The club was open.

### **About how Poghos's nerves gave way**

The club did work, but in a very unique way. What Achon had discovered had at first seemed unbelievable to her. It will also seem unbelievable to the reader, but that's what it was.

When Achon's friend, a Slavic-looking beauty who was one of the old representatives of the Yerevan's bohemian life, called the owner of the club and asked why the club was closed, the owner told her:

-For you it's open.

-For who?

-A very selected group of people. Let's just say, our honorary guests.

Then the owner of the club gave details. The club was only open on Mondays and Saturdays after ten in the evening. All guests were pre-registered and entered through a service entrance

on the opposite side of the building rather than the main one. And who were the guests? Well, of course, the prominent representatives of the modern "elite".

-People have suffered serious stress and they need to restore their energy somehow, do you understand? -the owner of the club concluded.

When Achon told all this to Poghos, the latter was not at all surprised. The only thing that puzzled him was why the club was also open on Mondays.

-My friend got surprised too, -Achon said, -and she asked the exact same question.

-And what did he answer?

-He said: "Sunday is a day off; Monday is a thief's day".

-I see! -Poghos said, -what did you expect? The Motherland is a big dance hall for these people and life is a dance.

Poghos had no doubt that the camel was also on the list of "honorary" guests of the club. He just had to find ways to get there himself.

Still, Achon was concerned. Not for the actions Poghos was about to do, but for his health. It had been less than two months since he came out of his coma and Poghos still hadn't fully recovered. There was no way he agreed to undergo the rehabilitation course in the hospital. Achon had somehow convinced him to at least allow the neurologist and physiotherapist to come to the house, and now Poghos was doing physical therapy and breathing exercises every day. The doctors were satisfied with the result, they said that Poghos is an exceptionally strong person, but they still urged him not to engage in energetic activities for some time.

Our hero, however, disagreed.

-Although I'm legally insane, but if it continues like this, I will become really crazy, -once he said to the parrot.

The bird didn't respond, but its look suggested that it agreed with Poghos completely.

And one day our hero's nerves gave way.

It was the twenty-eighth of December; the day was Monday. The physiotherapist had arrived and Poghos was doing exercises following his instructions. It was a news broadcast on TV. A non-governmental TV channel showed the action of disobedience of the " Homeland Salvation

Movement" in front of the National Assembly building, on Baghramyan Avenue. It was nothing out of the ordinary, just a regular demonstration, one of those that had been going on for several weeks.

But suddenly the presenter appeared on the screen and read the following news. "A little while ago, during the action in front of the entrance of the National Assembly, one of the deputies of the ruling faction cursed the demonstrators, and the other attacked them."

Poghos couldn't believe his ears. But bit later the footage was shown and so, everything was correct. An elderly deputy cursed the protesters, while another, much younger, hit him. The protesters, surprisingly enough, behaved quite discreetly. To say that they didn't do anything in response would not be correct, but at least they were too soft, although they could have given the MP a chance. The latter, more enthusiastic than that, gave unprecedented freedom to his speech and hands.

Old jackal and young coyote - this is how Poghos named the government deputies. He knew the first one, but not the second one.

The old jackal had held high positions in power structures in his youth, back in the early nineties. The former authorities said that his insolence was "formed" then. Then, in the late nineties, he took a responsible position in a disaster zone and made it even more disastrous. Again, according to the old residents, he was so insolent that he walked the streets of Gyumri with an armed escort. Then, the jackal went underground for a long time and reappeared after the revolution. He became a deputy of the National Assembly. Here he decided that he was the person who should investigate the circumstances of the April four-day war and promised to make scandalous revelations. However, the investigative commission, which he headed, did not publish the report of his work...

Poghos did not know the young man, as I've already mentioned. But he looked too much like a coyote.

-It's enough for today, -Poghos said to the physiotherapist.

-But we've just started, -the latter objected, -we can't leave the exercises half done, otherwise they will lose their beneficial value.

- I assure you that soon I will do exercises with more efficient results.

If Poghos's nerves had not given way, if he had judged a little cooler, surely, he would have acted differently, or at least waited for Achon, or at least let her know. But in front of Poghos' eyes were the shots where the jackal cursed and the coyote hit the young protesters, some of whom had participated in the war and who had just come to the National Assembly to meet the government deputies who, according to them, supported the conspirative plan to destroy Armenia.

### **About how the jackal was punished**

And this is what our hero decided: he'd go and wait at the official entrance of the National Assembly until one of the participants in the incident of that day comes out. Then he'd approach him, grab his ear with his left hand and break his nose with his right, without any masquerade and filming. That's how much our hero's nerves gave way.

He left the house, went down to the yard and approached his Niva. The car had been returned to him a few days ago and Poghos hadn't seen it yet. The khaki-colored Niva was so dirty that you couldn't even see the color. It was hit in several places, there were many pits and deep cuts on the right side, apparently from the impact of debris, the front glass was cracked, and the back glass was replaced by thick cellophane.

A large number of police forces were gathered around the National Assembly. The protesters, however, dispersed, and many were detained by the police in various departments, according to press reports. Demirchyan Street, on which the service entrance of the National Assembly was located, was closed.

Poghos had to make a big circle and reach Demirchyan street through the yards from the opposite side.

He parked the car on the sidewalk in front of the official entrance of the National Assembly, a little further up and walked to the nearby park. He chose a place where the entrance could be seen, stood under a tree and waited.

He didn't know yet that he would spend that entire evening and most of the night waiting. First, he waited for about three hours in the "Lovers' Park", next to the National Assembly, standing under a tree, forcing himself not to let his anger pass, not to start making cold judgments under any circumstances. He turned off the phone specifically for that purpose, so that Achon would not suddenly call and he would not have to explain where he was and what

he was waiting for. Achon will surely scold him later, but it doesn't matter. It's good that at least he took the mask, the black glasses and the wide-brimmed hat.

Around nine o'clock some activity was noticed at the service entrance of the National Assembly. People's elected officials started coming out one by one, with such satisfied faces, as if they had solved the issue of saving the Motherland a little while ago. I wonder what the faces of the same chosen ones of the people looked like, when they hid in the underground from fear, Poghos thought to himself.

But couldn't they all be cowardly bastards? Aren't there any decent, intelligent, patriotic people among them? In the recent, extraordinary elections, the ruling political force received seventy percent of the votes and received eighty-eight parliamentary mandates. So how could all of those eighty-eight people, or half of them, or even a quarter of them, be negative? If before the war they could be considered simply deceived, then what can they be considered now, when they did not want or could not see and understand what was happening to their country?

The jackal left the National Assembly exactly at ten o'clock. Poghos was no longer in the park, he had gone out onto the street and stood on the sidewalk opposite the service entrance. Jackal was accompanied by two other men whom Poghos did not know. Judging by the ties visible from under their coats, they were MPs. The three stood right in front of the entrance and started talking. Apparently, they were waiting. Of course, the jackal had a company car. It was time to approach, before the car arrived. Poghos, however, put on his dark glasses, pulled a medical mask over his face and crossed the street. He was already reaching the people standing at the entrance when he saw how the gate of the National Assembly opened and a black Toyota Camry came out. Poghos thought for a moment that it was the jackal's official car, but it turned out not to be so. The car was being serviced by... Who do you think?

When the rear window of the Toyota opened and the narcissistic face of the camel appeared, Poghos could not believe his eyes. But, worst of all, he got confused. He had seconds to decide what to do. Or rather, whose nose to break first.

-It was a good day, wasn't it? -said the camel coming out of the car window.

-It was a great day, -the jackal agreed, -a perfect day, I'd say.

-I'm going to celebrate.

-Yes, we deserved that right.

-We sure did. Where are you going?

-Unfortunately, I'm tired, I'm going home to sleep.

So, Poghos decided to break camel's nose first. His head was so comfortably out of the window...however, someone pulled Poghos's arm from behind and said:

-Why are you standing here?

The speaker was a policeman. Probably one of those who was guarding the entrance to the National Assembly. Or maybe he was from the security patrol. But it doesn't matter. What mattered was the camel had closed the window and the Toyota left.

He had lost his chance. And what's worse, he had lost it twice, because another Toyota approached, picked up the jackal and left.

Poghos did not answer the policeman's question about why he stopped there. He quickly walked towards Niva, which was parked not far away, turned around and tried to reach the stolen cars.

The police continued to keep the Baghramyan - Demirchyan intersection closed. But they opened the road for the official vehicles of the National Assembly. The "Toyotas" passed smoothly, Poghos's Niva also passed through them. The car with the camel turned to the right from Baghramyan, the other one carrying the Jackal turned to the left. It was noteworthy that the camel's car was escorted by the police.

Again, Poghos had seconds to decide which one to go after, because if he delayed a moment, he would lose them both. According to the rules of hunting, he should have followed the first one, because, as they say, of two hares, they choose the creamier one. But perhaps because he was dealing with two completely different animals instead of rabbits, he chose the first one, the jackal. But, not only for that, but there was also a second reason. Two things instantly crossed Poghos's mind: first of all, the camel said he was going to have some fun. And second of all, it was Monday. Then he combined the two facts and came to the conclusion that the camel would definitely go to the club that was secretly working for the "elite" of the day and was working only on Mondays. Therefore, he could be found there as well. And Poghos, pleased with his discovery, turned left and followed the jackal's service car.

He remembered how the deputy said that he was going to go home to have some rest. So, whatever he wanted to do he had to do it on the way home, because maybe there were children

at home, he didn't want them to see their grandfather being humiliated. Maybe the jackal honestly deserved it, but Poghos had some red lines he wouldn't cross. I'll wait until he stops at a red light, he thought.

But, inopportunately, all the way, from Baghramyan Avenue to Komitas Avenue, and then to the Davitashen district bridge, all the traffic lights were green. Poghos's Niva was somehow catching up behind the "Toyota" with a much more powerful engine. When the latter, crossing the bridge, turned to the right and rushed down the road leading to Yeghvard, Poghos almost lost it. But fortunately, Toyota slowed down under the speed camera.

Poghos already wanted to reach him, cut in front of him and do what he had to do on the street, when suddenly the "Toyota" turned on the right blinker and stopped in front of a fence made of hewn stone, behind which lights were burning.

It turned out to be a restaurant. The jackal was actually lying when he told the camel he was going home to sleep.

So, those animals lie to each other, Poghos thought.

All the same, this kind of development of the events was beneficial to him. It was hard to imagine a more suitable place to punish the jackal than a restaurant patio.

Poghos put on his broad-brimmed hat, put on dark glasses and a mask, and entered through the gate of the fence. The grounds were a courtyard of bare trees with a non-functioning fountain in the middle. To the right and left of the courtyard were private rooms, and at the back was a large hall from which the sound of live music could be heard. "May life be bright, live happily and be lucky," howled the singer.

Poghos did not see where the jackal went and had to pass by the hall first and then by the private rooms. It was a good thing that the walls were made of glass and the interior was completely visible. Poghos stood by the hall for a relatively long time and, making sure that the jackal was not there, went forward. At that moment, a waitress came out of one of the private rooms, carrying a tray of empty bottles and dirty plates. Noticing the lost Poghos, she asked:

-Are you looking for the rest room?

-Rest rooms are very important in our business, -Poghos said.

-It's that way, -the waitress showed the way with a head tilt and left slamming the empty bottles on the tray.

But Poghos did not go in the direction shown by the waitress and continued to pass by the private rooms one by one. In one of them, through the glass, he finally saw the jackal. He raised his glass and seemed to be making a toast. Poghos didn't hear what the toast was, probably drinking to a great day. But it didn't matter anymore.

It took about half an hour for the people's elected official to need to go to the rest room. Poghos spent that half hour standing under the silver fir tree.

Jackal walked to the bathroom, muttering something to himself. Poghos followed him and waited at the door. The rest happened very quickly, without any complications.

When the jackal opened the door, humming the song played in the hall of the restaurant a while ago, and saw Poghos standing behind the door, he did not even have a chance to get surprised. He was hit on the nose by a stick, went backwards and lay down on the toilet.

Poghos took out the phone from his pocket, turned on the camera. At least, that's what it seemed like. Then he got hold of the jackal's ear.

-What are you doing? You're probably mistaken, I am a member of the parliament, -the member of the Parliament was shouting.

-I'm not mistaken. You made a mistake becoming a member of the Parliament, or cursing men who had fought for the Fatherland, -said Poghos and continued, - and now, without rushing and howling, announce in a smooth accent that...

Of course, the jackal did what he was told. He declared that he was a scoundrel, as were most of his teammates and of course his leader.

### **About how Poghos preached to the police**

When Poghos left the restaurant, got into his Niva and drove away, he saw in the mirror that a police car with flashing lights was following him. So soon, he thought, how did they know?

Moments later, the police car pulled up and ordered him to stop. For a moment, Poghos considered not obeying, not because he was afraid of being arrested, but because he regretted that he would not be able to carry out the next action with the camel he had planned, but

immediately regretted it, because his Niva was too slow to escape from a police car anyway. And our hero obeyed the instructions of the police.

Only, Poghos was wrong. Nobody knew anything. Those who stopped him were ordinary traffic policemen.

There was a time when these defenders of law and legitimacy did everything but protecting law and legitimacy. That period of time lasted exactly twenty-eight years until Chikol came to power. Of course, those twenty-eight years followed several Soviet decades, when the phenomenon of bribery began, grew roots and developed everywhere, especially in the police and traffic police. At that time, the traffic police were called "GAI" and the traffic police were called "Gaishniks".

The Soviet Union collapsed, but these names remained, as well as many vices that existed in the state administration system and society.

Over the decades, the uniforms, cars, and equipment of the traffic police changed, but their name, "gaishniks", remained unchanged among the people.

Over the years, the number of bribes given to "gaishniks" and their methods of taking bribes from drivers also changed. In recent years, for example, before the change of power, the traffic police developed and used a method that worked extremely effectively... for their pockets and their bosses' pockets. They were "on duty" in those parts of Yerevan where the restaurant industry flourished, for example, in the Hrazdan valley, in Jrvezh and its surrounding areas, as well as on the road from Davitashen bridge to Yeghvard, they marked the cars parked near the restaurants and waited patiently while their owners ate, and naturally drank and drove. But, of course, not in order to punish drunk drivers by law. Only those who did not have enough money to give to the "gaishniks" were punished by law.

When the traffic policeman stopped Poghos, he thought whether it was the same scene. But hardly.

For sake of justice, I must say that due to "situation changes" in Armenia, this situation also changed. It really did. It's been two years that the traffic police didn't take bribes. At the same time, the patrol service was being created, which was supposed to replace the traffic police, "GAI", which had lived its life and was corrupt to the ears. Was the state ready for such drastic changes? It was not known; therefore, it was also not known what fate would befall the newly formed structure and the people involved in it.

-Your documents, please, -said the policeman after introducing himself.

-Why did you stop me? -Asked Poghos taking the documents out of the wallet.

-Your car is dirty.

-Is having a dirty car prohibited by law?

-Yes, if the license plates are not visible.

Here Poghos understood what he was stopped for. So, the arrest is cancelled, or at least postponed.

Poghos had never spoken so kindly to the police before. Only, for some reason, the policeman didn't like what he said.

-Yes, could be, I didn't pay attention, -he agreed and continued, -how's the life without money?

-What money? -the policeman got surprised.

-I mean bribery, -Poghos made it more precise.

-What bribe? -the policeman stopped examining the documents and held the flashlight to Poghos's face, -you talk too much.

-So, you still take money? I mean bribe?

-Of course not, -said the policeman in confusion.

-So, you admit that you used to take, but you don't anymore.

The policeman got even more confused and wanted to say something, but Poghos didn't let him.

-Look, -he said, -it may seem strange, but I'm in your side.

-How's that?

-I mean I know how you feel.

-What do you know?

-Your situation. How much is your salary?

The policeman answered probably mechanically.

-Two hundred and fifty thousand.

-You see? How can you live on two hundred fifty thousand? -said Poghos calmly, -I bet you have a family.

-Yes, -answered the policeman, again mechanically.

-And you have kids.

-Two boys.

-Naturally, your wife doesn't work.

-Yeah, how do you know that?

-Don't interrupt. I'm sure you have a loan.

The policeman lost his cool and burst out:

-Not just one, but many. I'm suffocating under the percentages. I don't have anything in the house, I put a pledge. My wife's golds...

-Hold it, calm down. Who did you elect?

But the policeman was already too ablaze.

-Who do you think I elected? I'm a big-time bugger. It's been two years they've promised to raise our salaries. Before it used to be...

Here he realized that he said too much and hushed up.

It was Poghos's turn to shine.

-So bad I'm in a rush, I would explain some things to you, -he said, -especially that taking bribes is a bad thing, but when the state encourages bribery, or even turns a blind eye is even worse. But there is something more terrible: the state that lies to you, lies to the policemen. When it lies to the policemen, it lies to the nation.

-Lying is mildly said, -the policeman burst out again, -they don't let us breathe. And now they're creating some kind of patrol service.

- The patrol service is a good thing, if of course it works. But it cannot work because it is not possible to achieve real change by changing a small part of the system and leaving the rest the same.

-That's what I mean.

-No, you were saying something else, but I'm really late, I have to run.

When the policeman returned the documents and Poghos moved on, he thought of stopping and cleaning the mud off the license plates so that he wouldn't be stopped again and he wouldn't have to preach to the policemen again. But he immediately changed his mind. Much better that the license plates were dirty and unreadable.

### **About how the camel and another animal without a hump were punished**

The service entrance of the club, or rather the back entrance, was from the courtyard of the building, so, Poghos found it easily. There was no sound of music coming from inside, and there was no sign that anyone was there at all. Was Achon's information wrong about Mondays?

“Sunday is a day off, Monday is a thief's day”, was it?

It was not surprising. The modern authorities, at least a large part of them, smoothly integrated into the criminal subculture, so to speak, simultaneously creating the impression that they were fighting against it. From time to time, the yellow press spread information that this or that representative of the ruling team meets, communicates, gives - takes with this or that representative of the criminal world.

It was a well-known fact that the sympathy towards the criminal in our country has always been sponsored by the authorities in exchange for the services they provided during the elections and various other services. But it was understandable under the former authorities. The former authorities themselves, with their thinking, their approaches, their codes of conduct, were the carriers of that criminal subculture, and most of them, as individuals, fully corresponded to this type. Meanwhile, the modern-day fluffy "sissies", as Achon would say, were too far from this solid and strong human type, no matter how negative they were.

By the way, where was Achon? Poghos hadn't called her all day, but strangely enough, neither had Achon.

However, it would not be correct to say that Poghos was dissatisfied with this. Of course, he understood that he was violating the agreement by carrying out the punitive actions alone, but maybe it was better that way? After all, he was against Achon's participation right from the start.

Anyway, it was close to midnight and Poghos was about to leave when he heard loud music. The music, however, was not from the club. A silver BMW had pulled into the yard and was pacing back and forth looking for a place to park. The music, or rather the thump, was so loud that it seemed like everything was shaking.

Poghos was about to approach, pull the driver by the ear, get him out of the car and break his nose, when something occurred to him. And maybe these have come to the club, he thought.

And so, it was. A group of young people, undoubtedly drunk or under the influence of drugs, got out of the "BMW" and, laughing and shouting, got into the yard. There were seven or eight people, some of them girls, and Poghos did not understand how they fit so much in the car.

The driver got off last and turned to one of the girls and asked:

-Didn't you call?

-I did, -said the girl.

-In that case, why aren't they opening?

Just then, as if by magic, the back door opened.

Poghos did something completely automatically. Without thinking. He mingled with the group of young men and entered with them. Fortunately, no one noticed him. He who answered the door must have thought that Poghos was with the young men, and the young men themselves were probably in no condition to pay attention.

A landing opened from the back entrance, and stairs leading down led to a large room that, judging by the boxes and miscellaneous items lined up here, served as a storage room. Here, too, there was a door, the place properly soundproofed, followed by a long corridor, the kitchen to the right, some offices to the left. At the end of the corridor, there was another door, after which the lobby of the club, which was already familiar to Poghos, appeared. Here were the dressing room and toilets, which Poghos had had occasion to explore and where he planned to do what he had to do.

But first it was necessary to see if the Camel was in the club. He must not have been here, because there was neither the official car serving him nor the police car accompanying him in the yard.

It was a blast at the club. Several dozen people were dancing on the dance floor, to some music that was too incomprehensible for Poghos, and there were no empty seats at the tables separated from the dance floor by bridges. The faces of neither the dancers nor the sitters, however, were clearly visible, hindered by the constantly flashing multi-colored lights hanging from the ceiling.

Well, thought Poghos, even if the Camel is not here, everyone deserves to have their ears pulled. Of course, this is only about males. A random selection could even be made. One could even wait to punish whoever goes to the toilet first. None of the people here were normal, right?

How can a normal person have fun when there is grief and pain around, when he lost a country, when thousands of soldiers' corpses have not yet been identified, when hundreds of POW's are still languishing in enemy prisons...

The rotating lights hanging from the ceiling of the dance floor passed by the DJ table and the face of the young man sitting there, for some reason, seemed extremely familiar to Poghos. But he didn't have time to think about it, because the light immediately fell on someone who was dancing not far away with his arms outstretched.

It was the camel.

Lucky son of a gun! Poghos got excited, because he had already lost his hope on seeing the camel here. But he didn't get to be too happy because at that moment someone tapped him on the shoulder from the side. He turned around and saw a young blonde girl who was trying to tell him something, but her voice was lost in the noise.

-I can't hear you, -Poghos shouted.

The blond came closer to his ear and shouted:

-I love your hat.

Poghos didn't know what to say and the girl continued:

-Can I wear it a little?

And without waiting for an answer, she removed the wide-brimmed hat from Poghos's head.

But Poghos didn't have time for some blondie. He turned back to the DJ booth, only to find it dark and only the silhouette of the dancer next to him could be seen. Poghos had no doubt that it was the camel. That animal was impossible to mix with any other animal. Just why was DJ's face so familiar... It didn't matter anyway. What mattered was that the camel was here in the club and, judging by his condition, he had already had enough to drink.

It was time to find out about the hat's fate, because the blondie was gone. Poghos looked around the dance floor and immediately saw her, or rather saw his hat turning orange, blue and yellow under the lights falling from the ceiling.

After dancing for a while, the blonde girl left the dance floor and sat down at a table where there were several other girls. Poghos approached them. Since it was pointless to say anything, particularly to ask permission, since no one would have heard him in all this noise, Poghos simply sat down in the only free chair around the table. The DJ booth was clearly visible from here, and the silhouette of a camel was still dancing beyond it. Poghos waved to a passing waitress. Then he put his head close to the blonde's ear and asked:

-Can I buy you a drink?

-Champagne, -the girl shouted.

And Poghos ordered champagne from the waiter, not knowing that he would never pay for it.

If things had turned out as Poghos had impromptu planned, that is, when he saw the camel heading for the toilet, he would certainly have left a large bill on the table for the champagne he had ordered before following it. However, the events developed differently.

The camel suddenly approached the DJ's table, said something in his ear and took the microphone. Immediately the music stopped and the camel announced:

-Let's get this party started, -then added, -F\*\*k the war.

-F\*\*k the war, -the DJ repeated and added, -the roof is on fire!

Camel's and DJ's noses were smashed almost parallel, a second or two apart. They both sprawled over the music machine, which probably made a continuous, shrill, ear-piercing sound from the contact of their broken noses. Then Poghos took the two of them by the ears and lifted them from the music device and the terrible sound stopped.

## About how the parrot insulted the hotel manager but shouldn't have

Although it was an unusually warm February evening, Achon put a blanket on Poghos's shoulders, who was sitting in the courtyard of the hotel cottage drinking coffee and commuting with a caged parrot.

-You're a bad bird. Didn't I tell you to quit repeating everything you hear, especially when there are other people around?

-Other people, other people, -the bird repeated.

-Why did you insult the manager?

The parrot turned its head, looked at Poghos, as if trying to say "big deal!".

-I asked you a question, why did you insult the manager and call her an idiot?

-Idiot, idiot, idiot, -repeated the parrot as if giggling.

The manager had entered the room a bit earlier than that incident and the parrot had really called her an idiot and, honestly, it was in vain. However, why was it in vain, we will discuss a little later, because until then, the reader will probably be interested in what hotel Poghos was in, why he was there and what he was doing.

It was February 5th and a Friday. A little more than a month ago, after punishing the jackal, the camel and the DJ, when Poghos had returned home, his condition had worsened drastically. So much so that Achon had to consult a doctor. Nothing to worry about, the doctor said, as long as Poghos spends at least a month in bed.

-It's OK, -Poghos calmed Achon after the doctor left, -in the mental institution I will follow that regime whether I want it or not.

-What mental institution? -Achon got surprised.

And Poghos told her about the events of the day, at the end expressing confidence that the police will definitely come after him, and if his "insane paper" works and he ends up in a psychiatric hospital, he will be safe.

Obviously, Poghos had acted under the influence of that moment, without thinking about the consequences. And even though he was in dark glasses and a mask all the time, all the same, finding him wouldn't be so difficult.

In the first case, it was unlikely that the jackal would attempt the process because he had seen Poghos drawing the whole process and, more importantly, his confessions about the human qualities of his leader. Another issue is that the shooting was not successful this time either, because it is not known what button Poghos pressed. But the jackal naturally didn't know about that.

The case of the camel and the DJ, whose noses were broken by Poghos in the club, in the presence of dozens of witnesses, was a little more complicated. It is true that he was wearing a mask and glasses here too, but he was not wearing a wide-brimmed hat, and this fact, for some reason, worried Poghos a lot.

-I'm sure nothing will happen, -said Achon after hearing the story and scolding Poghos a bit for acting alone, -but hiding for a little while wouldn't be a bad thing to do. It would be safer and you could follow doctor's instructions and stay in bed. Besides, New Year is coming, which we will not celebrate, but I will be by your side. Anyways, I have an idea.

And this was Achon's idea: there was an excellent resort in Aghveran, where she visited relaxed. That excellent resort had brilliant conditions, a wonderful nature and most importantly, there was a cottage with a fireplace, a jacuzzi, which Achon loved very much.

And so, it's been thirty-nine days that Poghos and Achon were resting there. Actually, Poghos stayed there, Achon joined him on the weekends. But the reason was not to hide, as it turned out to be, there was no need for that, because no one was going to search for Poghos.

There was another reason, or reasons, to be exact. First of all, Poghos really liked that place. He didn't really stay in bed, but wasn't very active as well and was feeling great. He went for a stroll in the mornings and evenings, swam in the pool in the afternoon and the rest of the time he worked on his invention.

The second reason was also important: Achon told him that the owner of that resort was her friend, whom she once did a big favor and now they refuse to take money from her.

Long story short, Poghos was enjoying his passive rest completely free.

The parrot was not active either, but it had its own reason: the point is that Poghos was determined to deprive it of its freedom. He had made a magnificent cage with his own hands, one and a half meters long, one meter wide and one meter high. Achon had called it the Five Star Cage. There were tree branches, leaves, flowers, gorgeously decorated dishes and a large

mirror. But the parrot was still unhappy. He expressed his dissatisfaction with one word: idiot. He heard that word once from Achon, started repeating it and apparently grew fond of it.

And so, on the evening of February 5th, when the hotel manager entered Poghos's cottage, the parrot looked fiercely from its cage and without hesitation said:

-Idiot, idiot, idiot.

And as we've already said above, it was in vain. Of course, it didn't know why the manager had come, but what it did was wrong.

And the manager came to inform that a serious event is expected in their hotel the next day. Rather, the purpose of her coming was not to deliver the news, but to make a request for it.

The event was really serious. It couldn't be more serious. In the next two days, the meeting of the ruling party was to be held at the hotel, where Chikol himself would be present...

-Did you JUST find out about that? -Achon asked.

-Surprising as it may be, yes, -said the manager feeling guilty, -the thing is that they'd gathered here before and always let us know about it at the last minute. They called us a few minutes ago from the Government's staff office and booked the entire hotel.

-Entire hotel? -Achon exclaimed.

-Yes, -said the manager still feeling guilty, -it's good that there are a few people here. Only two rooms and your cottage are occupied.

-And what do you suggest? -Achon asked.

-Well, -the manager murmured, -you know...

Obviously, the manager, who was a good-looking woman, was really feeling bad for all this. Perceptibly, she was decent woman and knew her job well.

-So, you want us to vacate this cottage, because Chikol is coming?

-Chikol, Chikol, Chikol, -repeated the parrot happily, as it had heard a familiar name and added, -idiot, idiot, idiot.

The manager was confused. She did not understand, who Chikol was, and who the parrot was calling an idiot this time?

-We're not going anywhere, -said Achon confidently.

-But...

The manager wanted to say something, but Achon didn't let her.

-I paid for another month on the 1st, right?

-Yes, but...

The manager didn't have a chance to speak this time as well, because Poghos interrupted. He didn't interrupt the whole time for several reasons: first of all, because the manager was a woman and second of all, because she was beautiful and third of all because he was sure that they were staying there for free.

But Poghos turned to Achon instead of the manager:

-What do you mean? You pay for staying here? Actually, I had doubts about that. But maybe it's for the best, -he turned to the manager, -we're not going anywhere. Let them find another hotel.

-Them who? -the manager got surprised.

-Chilok, -Poghos explained.

-Chikol, Chikol, Chikol, -the parrot repeated.

-Who's Chikol? -the manager looked at the parrot, then at Poghos and Achon, -I have no idea who you're talking about.

-Let me explain. -said Poghos calmly, - sit here, please, I want to ask you a question.

The manager mechanically obeyed, sat down on the armchair and continued looking surprised at the parrot, then Poghos, then Achon.

And an idea arose in Poghos's head, perhaps also in Achon's and the parrot's head. Success came naturally to them, in fact. When else will there be such an opportunity for all the candidates to be punished and all the "sissies" to gather at the same time and so close? Therefore, it was necessary to do everything to stay in this hotel.

The conversation went on for quite a long time, and in order not to burden the reader with details, it is worth highlighting perhaps the last part. In the opening and middle parts Poghos

made several important points: firstly, that the hotel belonged to a person who had close ties with a high-ranking representative of the government, secondly, that the same person also had close ties with a high-ranking representative of the previous authorities, and thirdly, that during both the previous and current governments, that person, and therefore the hotel, had never had any problem.

-So, what has changed in your life? -Poghos asked.

-Nothing, -answered the manager honestly.

-Who did you vote for? -Poghos continued unexpectedly.

-What do you mean? – the manager got confused.

-I mean who did you vote for?

-I'm not into politics.

-So, you think that partaking in the elections makes you politically involved?

Here the manager got completely confused and turned to Achon:

-What do you want me to do? Yes, I did vote for them, but I'm disappointed and they make me sick now, -she became more nervous, -do you really think that I want to see their hairy faces? But what can I do? You understand that I have no other choice. They told me to vacate the entire hotel, also said that the security will come to check the place.

Poghos asked the manager to calm down and explained what could be done.

-Just forget about us and deal with your bushy guests.

-What if they ask me why I didn't vacate the entire hotel?

-Tell them that we refuse to vacate out cottage and leave the rest to us.

When the manager left, Achon closed the door and said to Poghos:

-I hope you know what you're doing.

But Poghos had no idea either. He had to decide what to do. That's why he didn't answer Achon, but turned to the parrot instead:

-You're a bad birdie. Didn't I tell you not to repeat everything you hear, especially when there are other people around?

-Other people, other people, -the parrot repeated.

-Why did you insult the manager?

The parrot turned its head, looked at Poghos, as if trying to say "OK, let it go already".

-I asked you a question, why did you insult the manager and call him an idiot?

-Idiot, idiot, idiot, -repeated the parrot as if giggling.

### **Scaring to death**

Poghos really had no idea what he was to do and he didn't have much time either.

One thing was clear: every single member of this team that was included in Poghos's and Achon's list and whose noses were in turn to be broken, were about to gather here.

Why only noses, readers will ask? And most of them will definitely have their own, tougher versions. Even much harsher.

But Poghos would not agree to any of it.

Yes, the people who were supposed to come to this holiday home in Aghveran to participate in the party meeting, at least the majority of them, had a huge guilt that there was a war, that Armenia had lost the war and that the Armenian people were now on their knees. If they didn't have any fault in the outcome of the war, then standing next to a person who was responsible for all our failures was no less than a sin. Not only were they by his side, they were also cynically repeating everything he said. And yes, those people were "zombies", as Achon rightly said. And "zombies" cannot be allowed to roam freely among people, let alone decide how these people will live. In other words, they cannot be allowed to turn the country into a "Zombieland" (the last word was, of course, Achon's). But what to do, blow them up with a package (this word was also Achon's)?

Yes, Poghos knew how to make a bomb, it was an hour's work for him and he could make a bomb that would blow up the entire hotel.

But those people were his compatriots, and they were human after all. And Poghos, as you remember, was against homicide. Even when it came to the enemy. The enemy, if you remember, Poghos preferred to paralyze, and in the case of the internal enemy, breaking their noses completely satisfied him.

That's it. And you don't need to offer other options to Poghos, he still won't agree.

They only had to come up with a plan of breaking so many noses at the same time.

According to the manager, the guests were supposed to arrive the next day, and the security guards might come earlier. It was almost impossible to get along with them and not vacate the cottage. If only "zombies" took part in the gathering, it is still possible that there would be no enhanced security, but Chikol would also come, and in recent months he was so scared that he even went to the government building a hundred meters away from his residence under the supervision of thousands of policemen.

Now, of course, it was a little different, but all the same, if his protection was carried out not by a thousand, but by a hundred people, what could be done?

-I'm going out for a walk, -Poghos told Achon putting on his coat.

-I'm coming with you, -said Achon not accepting an objection.

-Why's that?

-Because you're going not for a walk, but for thinking. And I want us to think together.

-OK, -Poghos agreed, -let's think together.

Poghos and Achon came up with a plan together.

The only problem was that Poghos had to sacrifice his car's sound system.

When he left for war, he had dismantled the system because the giant record player took up most of the trunk and left it in his sister's garage. After the war, when the boys got his car back, he put the stereo back in the trunk. Now it had to be disassembled again.

That system he had put together over the years and spent a lot of money on that. It was made up of a thousand and one parts and accessories, but the main one, of course, was the 800 watt sounder and the amplifier, which Poghos also assembled with his own hands.

When he went to the mountain and turned on the system at full power, the sound of music could be heard a kilometer away, and within a hundred meters radius, it was simply booming. Once, an acquaintance who had several acres of vineyards in the Ararat valley asked Poghos to go there in his car and turn on the system at full capacity. Why do you think? So that the snakes escaped from that area. Then he admitted that after that, during the entire year, no snakes were seen in the gardens. Instead, residents of neighboring villages complained, because during the same year ten cases of snake bites were recorded, fortunately without causing death.

But what does all this have to do with our story, the reader will be interested. To answer that question, let's first present the dialogue that Poghos and Achon had in the conference hall of the Aghveran hotel.

The big double doors here were open and you could see the work going on inside. The cleaners cleaned and polished the hall, the workers moved some things, and the director carefully watched over all this. She noticed Poghos and Achon standing in the doorway and waved to them.

-I would love to lay down here and shoot at the feet of those animals, -Poghos said pointing to the corner of the hall, - those sitting in the first three rows would never be able to walk.

-Why lay down? -Achon wondered.

-Because it is preferable to shoot from a machine gun while lying down, - Poghos explained.

-It won't be possible, -Achon said.

-Of course, it won't be, -Poghos agreed, -and there are two reasons for that: first of all, I don't have my machine gun with me, but most importantly, there can be more or less innocent people here.

-I didn't mean that, -Achon said, -I doubt that there could be innocent people here. The thing is that they will not let you lay down here and if they catch you, even your "insanity paper" won't save you.

-What do you think if we make an explosion here? -said Poghos unexpectedly.

-What explosion?

-A small one, that will not harm anyone, but will scare them so much that they will pee in their pants.

-So, just to scare?

-Yes, only to scare.

-In that case I have an idea. We don't need any machine gun and a bomb, no need to shoot and explode, we could only make an imitation. Can you imagine what will happen here if they hear an explosion and then sounds of gunshots?

-So, scare them to death?

-Yes, that's right.

-We only have to figure out how we're going to do that.

Achon thought for a moment and said:

-Your car's sound system.

-What's my car's sound system got to do with all this? -Poghos didn't understand.

-It's extremely high, isn't it?

-Yeah.

-Can you remove the speaker?

-Suppose so.

-Does it have a Bluetooth?

-Come again? -Poghos didn't understand.

-Let's approach your car.

Poghos's speaker did have a Bluetooth. And Achon's idea was the following: download sounds of explosions and gunshots from the Internet to the phone, hide the recorder somewhere in the conference hall in advance, and then connect to it via Bluetooth at the meeting.

The idea actually surprised Poghos, as it was excellent. They only had to find the ways of implementing it.

It wasn't that easy, though. How were they going to move the huge and heavy recorder into the hall, what were they going to tell the manager and other workers, where were they going to hide it? These were the questions.

When they returned to the conference hall, the manager met them.

-I was looking for you all over, -she said looking exhausted, -you wanted to say something?

-Yes, -said Poghos without thinking, -when will the security people come?

-Tomorrow morning.

-OK, tell them to see us.

-I already did.

-What do you mean you already did?

-They called and asked if I've vacated the entire hotel and I had to tell them about you, that you refused to leave. You can accuse me, but before you do that, I want to say that I'm quitting today.

Poghos and Achon looked surprised at each other, then asked the manager:

-Today? -Achon asked, -what made you do that?

-It's wrong, you see, it's not professional. And this is not the first time.

-What do you mean?

-I mean this. It's wrong to treat guests like this.

-So, you're quitting because of us?

-Actually, I wanted to do that since a long time ago. We have different approaches with the hotel owner. But don't worry about me, I'll find another job. I graduated the Cornell University.

-But why today? -Poghos asked.

-Because I don't want to see their shaggy faces.

When the manager left, Achon told Poghos:

-This girl can help us.

-That's what I thought, -Poghos said, -only how honest will it be to involve her in that dangerous game?

-If your ultimate goal is honest, you can turn a blind eye to many things in the process.

-No, she is a young girl - said Poghos sharply, then thought for a while and continued - even if we involve her, we must make sure that she does not suffer under any circumstances

-First, we have to think what we're going to do.

And they thought of their actions in the hotel yard.

Here was a large square, from which several steps led up to the entrance of the hotel itself. According to all the rules of logic and protocol, Chikol's car should have stopped right at those steps and gathered all the participants right here to meet him.

The courtyard continued with a large garden in the depths of which were many evergreen fir trees with thick foliage and completely covered with snow. It would be about fifty meters from here to the steps of the square. By all the rules of logic and physics, the fake explosion here and the fake gunshots that followed should have been heard in full force where the chief guest would get out of the car, i.e., near the guest entrance steps.

Right under one of the fir trees here, Poghos and Achon installed the speaker at night, masking it with the same foliage and snow, leaving only the part from which the speaker received the "Bluetooth" signal.

The point is that Poghos clarified some details about this system that he had not known before. According to that, in the conditions of direct visibility, the "Bluetooth" could work at a distance of up to fifty meters. They only had to find a suitable place fifty meters away to hide and figure out how long to wait there and when to activate the alarm.

"We have received new details from the meeting of the ruling faction, which was also attended by the Prime Minister. That gathering took place in one of the rest houses in Aghveran. Many members of the group have been there since Saturday. The Prime Minister arrived in Aghvera on Sunday at ten in the morning and stayed until the evening. The meeting was attended by the deputies of the faction and the members of the party board, almost the entire composition. It is not known what was discussed during the meeting, but according to the reliable information we have, the head of the country came to work today in an extremely bad mood."

Poghos and Achon read this news on Monday, the eighth of February, twenty twenty-one.

Poghos was lying in bed with a temperature of thirty-eight degrees Celsius. It could not be otherwise. He had come home the day before, on Sunday, at eleven o'clock in the morning, and before that he had spent exactly twenty-eight hours under the fir leaves, sitting in the snow.

Poghos and Achon decided not to wait for the security guards, and decided not to bother the manager too much. But they still had to worry a little. They went to her office on Friday evening, first informed her that they were leaving the next morning and said that they had a request. And the request was the following: copy the next day's footage from the hotel's cameras, store and forward to them later. Then they said goodbye and said that they admired her professionalism and honest human attitude.

Then Poghos moved his Niva to the parking lot of the nearby hotel, having first removed the player from the trunk. And at night, as it was already said above, he had hidden it under the fir tree and disguised it. At six o'clock in the morning, without the lights on, they left the hotel in Achon's "Lexus". But did not go too far. They were nearby. Then Poghos received a kiss on the forehead from Achon and walked back to the hotel grounds. He had climbed over the fence into the garden and hid in a pre-selected spot forty meters from the camouflaged recorder under the foliage of a fir tree.

At exactly eight o'clock in the morning, the security officers came in several cars. Some of them were stationed in the courtyard of the hotel, the other part first entered the main building of the hotel, spent about two hours there, then came out and went to the part of the territory where the cottages were, accompanied by the manager. After spending another hour there, they returned and re-entered the main building of the hotel.

Poghos was surprised. Is that all, he thought?

The thing is that when he and Achon decided to carry out the operation in such a way, they estimated the probability of its successful outcome as fifty-fifty. Knowing very well how the protection of the head of state is carried out, especially recently, it was almost certain that many security personnel would come here, sweep the entire area and stay until the end. And, of course, it was very possible that they would find Poghos hiding in the garden. Or, how would Poghos do in that case, it wasn't particularly difficult? Can't a man urinate alone, he would say. And since, even if they searched him, they wouldn't find anything suspicious, except for the "insane paper", in the worst case, they would take him to the "mental

institution". It wasn't terrible. But it was also possible that Poghos was not found. Then he would do what he had to do, and when the fake explosion and gunshots rang out, taking advantage of the inevitable confusion, he would calmly walk through the garden to the fence, leave the hotel premises, enter the grounds of the neighboring hotel, where his Niva was. And even if he failed to get away and was caught, nothing terrible would happen again. After all, no one would be hurt by fake shots and explosions.

In short, the plan was just like that, and when Poghos saw the actions of the security guards, he was really surprised. How could they be so limited? Maybe the rest should come later? Maybe the main action was yet to come?

Poghos could have found the logical answers to those questions if he had known then that the PM would not come that day. He was going to come the next day. And of course, the preparation for his visit would be ten times more serious. But Poghos didn't know that.

Around twelve o'clock, one after the other, the deputies began to arrive, some in official cars, some in their own cars. The faces could not be seen very well from Poghos' hiding place, but at the appearance of each new "animal", Poghos could hardly restrain himself from adding the "explosion" and "shots".

The guests entered the hotel building, probably settled in their rooms and prepared for the leader's arrival.

And here, a little after two o'clock, a lot of activity was felt at the entrance of the hotel. Poghos could not see what was happening, but it was clear that the guests were leaving one by one.

And he understood that the moment had come. And when, a little later, the flashing lights of the police cars entering the hotel area were seen through the foliage of the firs, and the special sound signals were heard, Poghos opened the phone screen and prepared to turn on the recording.

However, there was an incomprehensible circumstance. there were only two police cars and they were accompanied by just two black SUVs.

Maybe Chikol decided to come here incognito, thought Poghos.

However, as you probably already understood, the one who came was not the head of the country. Which high-ranking official it was, it was not clear neither at that time, nor later, because the video footage from the hotel's cameras was never obtained.

But it didn't matter. What mattered was that the action worked anyway. Not to the extent intended, but still, it worked.

When the sound of the explosion was heard, those gathered at the entrance of the hotel lay on the ground and for a moment there was a dead silence, as if the explosion was real and everyone had given their souls, if they had one.

But a few seconds later, when the fake shots followed, a terrible commotion ensued, and a real chaos rose up.

-Turks are firing...

-Mommy...

-Don't shoot...

-We surrender...

Some continued to lie down, some got up and fled to the hotel, and some started running erratically here and there.

And Poghos calmly came out of his hiding place, went to the fence without haste, crossed the street, walked to the neighboring hotel, got into his Niva and went home.

The great representatives of the ruling political power, among whom were the camel, the jackal, the frog, the Affenpinscher, the DJ, the white capuchin, whom we have already referred to in this book, and others to whom we shall refer, will undoubtedly remember for the rest of their lives that February 7<sup>th</sup>, twenty twenty-one. It is not known when their underwear became more wet, during the explosion or during the subsequent shooting. But they did get wet, beyond doubt.

So, as they say, "scaring to death".

### **About what Poghos thought of some things**

At the end of February twenty twenty-one, two events took place in Armenia that finally convinced Poghos that both the Armenian authorities and the Armenian opposition were controlled from outside.

First, in an interview given to one of the Armenian television companies, the head of the country, as very often, without thinking and as always, in order to bite his predecessors, made a statement that would cost him dearly. When the presenter reminded Chikol during the interview that the former president of the country reprimanded him for not using the "Iskander" missile complex in our arsenal during the war, Chikol swaggered: "Do you have any idea why Iskander didn't fire and even if we suppose it did, only ten percent of it fired".

This strange statement from the lips of the Prime Minister could not go unnoticed.

First, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation referred to it: "None of the Iskander missile systems were used during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The entire stockpile of missiles is in the warehouses of the Armed Forces of Armenia. The ministry believes that the Prime Minister of Armenia was misled."

The reaction of the head of the state, against whom the above-mentioned missile system was to be used, was also not delayed. He essentially repeated what the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation said, asserting that Armenia did not use "Iskander" during the war, then called the words of the Prime Minister of Armenia "anecdotal".

And a very high-ranking soldier of the Republic of Armenia smiled instead of answering the question about the Prime Minister's statement, as a result of which he was fired by the same Prime Minister not long after.

And the terrible thing was that Chikol actually apologized to the first, i.e., Russia, accepted what the second, i.e., Azerbaijan said, while dismissing the third, the general of his own country.

A few days later, the Prime Minister's press secretary issued the following message:

"As a result of combining the available facts and data, the Prime Minister of Armenia came to the conclusion that he was not properly informed about this situation..."

Upon learning this message, Poghos couldn't stand it and said:

-Moron! Misinformed, huh? Who were informing him? If the military, then you are lying, because their representative, hearing about the non-explosion of "Iskander", sneered, therefore he could not report such a thing. If others, why did you believe what others said? And maybe it was your press spokesperson who reported, or the hairdresser, or the cook?

"Furthermore, the Prime Minister's statement has nothing to do with the content and quality of Armenian-Russian allied relations in the field of military and military-industrial cooperation. There is no doubt that Russian weapons are among the best in the world," said the next paragraph of the Prime Minister's spokesperson's statement.

-The fact that Chikol is a liar and mentally ill is well known, -Poghos continued, -but he also turns out to be an idiot.

-Idiot, idiot, idiot, -the parrot repeated and if it could talk it would definitely say "didn't I tell you?"

However, before that, between Chikol's "expulsion" and his apology for "Iskander", a more significant event took place.

"The RA Prime Minister and the government are no longer able to make adequate decisions in this critical and fatal situation for the Armenian people. The ineffective management of the current authorities and the most serious mistakes in foreign policy have brought the country to the brink of destruction. Due to the created situation, the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia demand the resignation of the Prime Minister and the Government of the Republic of Armenia, and at the same time warn to refrain from using force against the people..."

This statement was signed by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, his three deputies, commanders of all corps, heads of departments and services, nineteen generals and twenty-two colonels.

The air of Yerevan was dominated by the breath of an imminent coup. It was felt by almost everyone except Poghos, even though he was out on the street and walking in the center of Yerevan.

-Are you going to the Baghramyan Avenue? -asked an acquaintance that had accidentally come across.

-Why should I go to Baghramyan Avenue? -asked Poghos.

-What d'you mean? -the acquaintance got surprised, - there will be a revolution, the army has intervened.

-When the army intervenes, it is not a revolution, but a coup - explained Poghos - but that is not the important thing. the important thing is that there will be neither a revolution nor a coup.

Poghos had good reason to think so. The first reason was the story of "Iskander". As it was said, at that time Chikol had not yet "apologized" for his "expulsion". It would be a few days later, when the same number of nineteen generals and twenty-two colonels, or at least the majority of them, would take a step back.

What does the story of "Iskander" have to do with the declaration of the armed forces, the reader will ask Poghos. Most directly, Poghos will answer.

Is it possible to imagine the anger caused by Chikol's "kicking out" of the Russian military elite and the Commander-in-Chief himself? After all, Chikol had touched their holy shrine, the military. How could a Russian-made weapon not work? How could one say such a thing? And, most importantly, how could someone who survived solely at the mercy of the Russian Tsar say such a thing?

What ingratitude, what "indolence"!

Should the tsar punish him? Of course, he should, but lightly, not severely. Finally, he would punish after Chikol had done and accomplished his mission.

And how to punish lightly? Of course, not through Azerbaijan, as he did the last time, when Chikol went too far.

And the Russian tsar deployed some of his enormous resources within Armenia, resulting in a declaration by high-ranking military officials.

Poghos was convinced that it would remain only a statement, that is, no action would follow, because its time had not yet come. The current authorities of Armenia and the kneeled head of state were extremely favorable to Russia and would remain so for a long time, provided that they did not do stupid things in the process.

However, Russia held in its hands not only the threads of the Armenian government and Chikol personally, but also many other threads, with which it played with the opposition of Armenia and the leaders of the opposition personally. And the most important thing is that Russia owned the threads by which Armenia's authority was managed. And only that machine was capable of bringing about a change of power in the country, because it was clear that this time a people's revolution is excluded, there can only be an armed coup.

And this is where the logical question arose: if the entire command staff of the army - the chief of the general staff, all his deputies, corps commanders and others demand the resignation of

the RA Prime Minister and the government, while warning to refrain from using force against the people, then what could possibly stop them. Or rather, who can stop them...

At least the military's move worked. The opposition was excited like never before, Chikol was scared like never before.

"The Movement for the Salvation of the Fatherland welcomes the statement of the highest command of the RA Armed Forces, all the confirmations recorded in it and expresses its support to our armed forces, the only and selfless guarantor of our country... We call on our people, all citizens who are concerned about the salvation of the Fatherland from 15:00 to gather in Freedom Square to express our support to our armed forces and to complete the removal of the anti-patriotic government and Pashinyan", said the statement issued by the Council of the Movement for the Salvation of the Fatherland.

"I consider the statement of the General Staff to be an attempted coup d'état. I am inviting all our supporters to Republic Square right now," the Prime Minister of Armenia wrote on his Facebook page.

At the time of writing, he was probably in a state of mental disturbance that he did not even realize that with his call he was pitting two sections of his own people against each other. Or, maybe, he understood very well. His only goal was to keep power because he knew very well what would happen if he lost it.

As for the leaders of the opposition, or rather, the shadow leaders, maybe they honestly believed for a moment that the change of power was given, without being informed about it. But, all the same, they tried to find out. It is not known how long it took to find out, but when they called the people to gather and stand by the armed forces, they already knew very well that there would be no change of power.

So, what was the point of all this, Poghos wondered? If decisions of events and developments taking place in Armenia, the timing and conditions were made somewhere else, then what's the point of fooling people again?

Of course, it is good that people are arising, it is good that there is a mass among the people, even small, that has dignity, that feels sorry for their country and is ready to defend it, that is not afraid of a non-internal struggle for the sake of its future, nor from entering into war again. Of course, it is good, so Poghos is spiritually with them.

And physically, he will continue to do what he was doing before.

## **About how Poghos and Achon decided to punish the “Lama”**

This deputy of the seventh convocation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia was named Lama by someone who undoubtedly had a sense of humor.

That one was, so to speak, one of the "formers" and probably the only positive thing that can be distinguished when presenting his character was his sense of humor. Otherwise, he wasn't even an animal. It was a maggot. More precisely, a worm, a parasite that lives in the human body and destroys it from the inside.

In this case, however, that creature lived not in the body of the people, but in the body of the state and was destroying the state from within. It lasted a dozen of years, maybe more. And it was also because of him and other parasites like him that llamas, camels, jackals and various other animals came to power.

But if the worms destroyed the earth from the inside, the new animals destroyed the earth from the outside. Some unconsciously, some consciously. But, all, defending themselves and their leader with equal tenacity.

And, as our story is of a time when worms no longer had power, let us leave them alone and return to our animals, perhaps only repeating that the name Lama was too apt, so apt that Poghos liked it.

The thing is, Poghos was watching TV again. And had seen how the Lama vindicated his leader. In an interview given to one of the online media, he said: "When the Prime Minister was asked: From what point do you start the negotiations, and he answered: from my own point, he meant not the content of the negotiations, but his attitude towards that content."

-Did you understand something? - Poghos asked the parrot.

-Somethin', somethin', -the parrot repeated and added, -idiot, idiot, idiot.

-All the same, that worm did think of a good nickname for this one. He really is a lama.

Then, after acquitting his leader, according to him, the lama proceeded to condemn the "formers". "There is a certain atmosphere of hatred among the criminal groups deprived of power towards the people and also as a result of this, perhaps, by a certain part of the people, towards them."

-And what did you understand now? -Poghos again asked the parrot.

-Idiot, idiot, idiot, -the parrot answered.

"Certain groups, taking advantage of the fact that our country is going through difficult times, have become insolent to a great extent," the lama continued.

Here, Poghos could not stand it and almost cursed, but he immediately remembered that it is not allowed.

The point is that our hero was in Lent... And that was the reason why the punitive actions were stopped for a certain time. As it is known, during Great Lent one should give up not only certain foods, but also all sins. The prophet Isaiah says, "In the days of fasting you fulfill your desires... This is not the kind of fasting I have chosen." And if there is no commandment to be always in the fast of food, then there is a commandment to beware of sins every hour.

Was Poghos sinning then? Honestly, he didn't know. People can be punished either by God or by law. He was neither one, nor the other.

And in general, even the cleanest person should clean himself at least forty-nine days a year. After all, in the remaining three hundred and sixteen days, it is not known what sins one could commit.

At least there were two days left in Lent, and the action had to be continued by all means.

And so, this is the most suitable candidate. Member of the National Assembly, Mr. Lama. Someone who, in addition to being a deputy, also represented the state in the most prestigious international platforms.

It's unimaginable. "Certain groups, taking advantage of the fact that our country is going through difficult times, have become insolent to a great extent". The fact that our country is going through hard times is the result of your diplomatic failures, mistakes or perhaps inaction. And to call "insolent" those people who lost their country and relatives due to the mistakes and failures of you and your leader as a result of the war unleashed by the enemy, is nothing but devilry.

Here's what Poghos was thinking. Okay, let's wait two more days and then figure out how we're going to punish you.

Two days later, entire noon of the Easter Sunday of twenty twenty-one, Poghos spent in his sister's garage. After "sacrificing" the previous sound system, it was necessary to assemble a new one in the trunk of the Niva. And our hero was busy with that. When after finishing the work, he turned on the song of one of his favorite Armenian rock bands at full power, with spiritual motifs, but with all the rules of rock, the instruments hanging on the walls of the garage started vibrating.

Poghos then put his fishing gear, barbecue grill and skewers, and his favorite telescope in the trunk, backed the car out of the garage, and drove off. However, he changed his mind on the way, stopped and called Achon:

- I'm going to the riverbank. If you come, I will grill fish for you, if I catch it, we will listen to good music, gaze at the stars after dark and spend the night in a tent.

If someone had told Achon three years ago that she would ever agree to drive a 1988 Niva that hadn't been washed in eight months, dented on all four sides, and had a piece of cellophane instead of a rear window, Achon would have sent them to hell.

But now she came down to the yard in red boots, without heels, tight black leather pants and a long red leather jacket. Seeing Poghos's Niva heaved a sigh and said:

-Maybe we should take my car.

- No, - objected Poghos, - your car will not reach the place we're about to go.

Poghos managed to catch a fish. Actually, a lot of fish. He roasted some, boiled some, and at exactly six o'clock opened a bottle of wine. Then he turned on his favorite rock music. Then, when it got dark, they gazed at the stars for a long time. Then they drank two more bottles of wine. Then, when they entered the tent, Poghos said to Achon:

-So, the Lent is over and that means that we can think of a plan of punishment of the Lama.

-Who? -Achon got surprised.

-The Lama, -Poghos repeated.

-I think I know who you mean, -Achon got excited, -I also know who gave him that name. More than that, I know him too.

-Who? The Lama or the Worm?

-Who's the Worm?

-The one that came up with the name "Lama". How do you know him?

-It doesn't matter, but he really is a worm, -Achon started laughing, -by the way, he could be punished too.

-Probably, -Poghos didn't object, -but they are different.

-OK, but how are you planning to punish the Lama?

-That's what I want us to think of now.

### **About how Poghos and Achon punished the Lama**

When Achon learned from reliable sources that Mr. Lama would be leaving for Paris in a week, she was as happy as if it was her going to leave, not Lama. And immediately she thought: "why not"?

Before that, they had been looking for options to punish this long-necked animal for about a month, but all in vain. Poghos had been on duty for days in front of the official entrance of the National Assembly, in Lovers' Park, to find out how he gets to work, how, and most importantly, where does he go after work, but Lama never showed up.

"He either doesn't come to work, or he doesn't go home from work," Poghos told Achon.

And here is this information.

Achon was sure that such an opportunity could not be missed. She admitted to herself, that more tempting was not the idea of punishing the Lama in Paris, but the idea of courting Poghos in Paris. But why not combine pleasure with work?

Lama's business trip was actually not to Paris, but to Strasbourg, where he was supposed to participate in the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, as the reliable source informed, from there he would go to Paris for two days and even revealed the name of the hotel where a room was reserved for the deputy, naturally at the expense of the state budget.

No, such an opportunity cannot be missed. Generations will not forgive them.

A little detail remained: how to get a Schengen visa in a week, because her visa had expired, and Poghos hardly had any.

But as we know, Achon had global connections.

Lala, Achon's girlfriend, met them at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris. She came with a driver in a "Maserati" and immediately announced that both the driver and the "Maserati", as well as her apartment in the center of Paris, are completely at the guests' disposal.

-What about Paris? - Achon asked, -Is Paris completely at our disposal too?

Lala turned out to be a girl with a sense of humor.

-No, -she said, -only fifty percent. Please leave the other fifty for Sibal Dlamini.

-Who? - Achon wondered.

-Sibal Dlamini, -repeated Lala, -he is also my guest and will come in the evening.

-Okay, but who is she? - Achon insisted.

-Princess of Eswatini, one of the thirty-six children of His Highness King Mswati the Third of Eswatini.

And she is your guest?

-Yes. She wants us to start a perfume production together in her homeland.

Lala did not have time to reveal other details about the princess of Eswatini and her business, because Poghos, who had been silent all that time, suddenly said:

-Do you mean Swaziland?

- Yes, Swaziland, present-day Eswatini, confirmed Lala, a little surprised by Poghos's awareness, - are you familiar with that country?

- I am interested in all modern monarchies in the world and I must say that Swaziland, the same Eswatini, is the most backward of them, although the king himself is one of the richest monarchs in the world.

Before reaching her apartment in the center of Paris, Lala took the guests to one of the best restaurants in Paris, where she had reserved a table in advance, but she did not stay. She asked

them not to plan anything for the next evening and as she had promised, she left the driver and "Maserati" at their disposal, apologized and left in an unknown direction.

-Did we come here to have fun or to punish the lama? - Poghos asked Achon when her girlfriend had already left.

-Both, - Achon answered without thinking, - relax, we're in Paris, baby!

- I will be relieved if you explain to me what this is and how they eat it.

Poghos pointed to the giant lobster the waiter had just placed in the middle of the table with other sea creatures.

Of course, it would be wrong to say that Poghos was not feeling well. He generally felt better whenever Achon was with him, though he stubbornly refused to admit it to himself. What's more, he didn't want to admit that he had begun to like even the exotic and glamorous side of Achon. Even in Yerevan, when Achon took him to places where he had never been and was not going to be, some unfamiliar feeling of pleasure filled his soul. And here in Paris... The point is that our hero was once in his life outside of Armenia, in Brukhovetskaya Stanitsa, in Krasnodar, where one of his old acquaintances had a restaurant.

However, it was necessary to do what they came here for.

The hotel where the Lama was to live turned out to be one of the best in Paris and was located in the very heart of the city, directly opposite the Tuileries Gardens. Room prices here started at five hundred euros per day. But, for the sake of justice, it should be noted that this was not the most expensive of the luxury hotels in Paris, there were hotels that were twice or even thrice more expensive, and the deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia was actually quite frugal with the finances of the state budget.

He has to arrive the next day, and before that Poghos and Achon arrived at the hotel.

When their "Maserati Quattroporte" stopped at the entrance of the hotel, the porter ran up and opened the car door, Poghos asked Achon:

- Now should we say "merci" or "bonjour"?

The thing is, before that, when planning their entry into this luxury hotel, Achon had given Poghos a little instruction. Do not look surprised in any case, look a little left and right, and limit yourself only with the words "merci" and "bonjour". Achon would do the rest.

- You don't have to say anything - she answered to the question asked by Poghos.

-But it's impolite, - Poghos disagreed and thanked the porter anyway.

Then, when they entered the hotel and approached the porter, Poghos considered his duty to greet the latter.

-Unfortunately, we don't have a reservation, - Achon said in pure French, -we decided to stop by your place completely by chance.

-No problem, - the porter smiled, - it is also possible without a reservation.

-Yes, but we are interested in the specific suite.

-Which suite?

-The "Eiffel Tower" suite.

-I'm sorry, - said the porter with a guilty face, -but it's busy.

Of course, it was busy. After all, Achon had confirmed it in advance through "booking". The point is that these two had no intention of staying at this hotel. Even more so, in the suite named "Eiffel Tower", costing one thousand five hundred Euros. They just needed the most convenient way to get in here and get to know the inside.

-We can give you another room, also with a view of the tower, - offered the porter.

-No, - Achon objected, - we are interested in that number.

-I'm so sorry... -The porter wanted to say something, but Achon interrupted him.

-Well, we will have dinner at your restaurant for now, then we will think about it.

-Of course, -the porter was happy, -you will be escorted now.

All the while, as they had agreed, Poghos looked neither to the right nor to the left, but looked up at the huge terracotta torch hanging from the ceiling. Only, he couldn't hide his surprised look.

The dinner cost them three hundred and sixty-five Euros, and they left thirty-five Euros to the waiter. Then they drank a glass of brandy each at the bar, paying another ninety Euros and

leaving a ten Euro tip. But that didn't matter, what mattered was that Poghos got to know the area thoroughly.

What was all this for, the reader will be interested. The thing is our heroes had a plan of action.

As already mentioned, a reliable source informed that Lama would stay at the hotel for two days. Poghos and Achon, of course, did not know in which room he would stay, although even if they did, how would they get into the room? The restaurant and the bar were the only hope. However, living in a hotel does not necessarily mean using a restaurant or a bar. Or even if the Lama used one of these two, nothing would be done in front of everyone. If he went to the bathroom, that would be another matter. And in order to go to the toilet, he had to stay long and drink enough liquid, preferably alcohol. So how could it be organized?

-Leave it to me, - Achon said in an unobjectionable tone.

Lama walked into the hotel with an attitude as if it belonged to his own grandfather. There was a head awkwardly placed on his long neck, on which there were eyes, haughtily and narcissistically gazing around. The lama was accompanied by a young man in a suit and tie, probably an embassy employee.

They couldn't help but notice Achon. But just noticing wasn't enough.

Our heroine was sitting in one of the antique armchairs in the lobby with her legs crossed and talking on the phone. She spoke Armenian and quite loudly. "Le Monde" newspaper was open on the antique oak table in front of the armchair.

Seeing her and hearing her Armenian words, Lama froze in place, and admiration immediately replaced his haughty look. Achon smiled at him as intended.

The lama said something to the attendant, the latter walked to the porter's table, and he approached Achon.

-I specifically chose such a hotel where there were no Armenians, but I'm happy to see you - he said without any preamble.

Achon motioned for him to wait, as she was still talking on the phone, then finished and said:

-You are very polite. And what do you have against Armenians?

The deputy, if he felt the slightest sense of shame, would definitely blush. But he not only had no shame, he was extremely opinionated, so much that he sat down on the armchair next to

her without asking permission, took the newspaper on the table without asking permission and said:

-Are you interested in politics?

Achon took a moment to imagine what she would have done to this narcissistic animal if she hadn't had a plan of action beforehand. But there it was, and so far, everything was going according to plan.

-Sometimes, -he said instead, -but you didn't answer what you have against Armenians.

-I am disgusted with Armenians. I want some rest. Do you live in this hotel? Maybe we could have dinner in the evening?

Achon did not have time to answer because at that moment a young man in a suit and tie approached and asked for Lama's passport.

The deputy took his diplomatic passport from his pocket and made sure Achon saw it before the young man left.

-By the way, I didn't introduce myself, - he addressed Achon, then ordered the young man, - tell her who I am.

The rest didn't matter. The important thing was that Achon's plan actually worked and she didn't even have to make an effort.

They had dinner at the hotel restaurant and drank a bottle of wine. Achon then suggested going to the bar for a cocktail.

The reader will surely wonder what they were talking about all that time. To satisfy that interest, let's present only a few parts of their conversation, or rather what the deputy said, because Achon was mostly listening.

“We Armenians are a pathetic nation; we constantly cry and blame the Turks for slaughtering us. Don't let them kill you, man, who is to blame?”

“They say that the Turks helped Azerbaijan during the war. Who should have they helped? Us?”

"They say: why did the war start? We went, entered their house, settled in and didn't want to leave. For twenty-five years they told us to get out, we didn't listen, so what would those people do?"

"They say: why did we lose? Should we have won?"

And all that jazz!

But for the sake of truth let us note that the last paragraph was spoken by the lama when the wine in the bottle was almost empty, and he himself was the main drinker, for Achon was only sipping.

And already at the bar, after drinking the second glass of cocktail, Lama said:

-I will tell you a secret; the prime minister offers me the position of minister of foreign affairs.

When Poghos broke the llama's nose, he unfortunately miscalculated the force of the blow. Or the animal was too puny. He passed out and lay on the floor of the outhouse, but because his neck was too long, his head ended up in the toilet.

### **About how Poghos dealt with the snap election**

Poghos remembered very well the time when the Third Republic of Armenia entered the destructive process.

In the distant nineteen ninety-five and ninety-six, when parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Armenia, they could be the real starting point for the establishment of a free and fair state. All the prerequisites were made for that. The country had won a war lasting several years, the people had come out of the ordeal of several years with honor, had understood and endured the inevitable privations and looked forward to better days.

And those good days could and would definitely come if... If the elections were not rigged. The head of state at that time, the first president was unwilling or unable to go against the trivial human instinct to hold power. However, he started the destruction of democracy before that, when he ordered violence against the opposition and the free press, when the media were closed, when the first political prisoners appeared in the country.

Now, in June twenty twenty-one, that same man was preparing to participate in extraordinary parliamentary elections with his renamed political force.

This is what was said in the statement issued by that political force:

"Armenia is in a toughest condition. Armenian statehood, the security of citizens, the borders and territorial integrity of the country, the existence of Artsakh are at risk. By leading the country and the people to the heaviest military defeat, the current government has proven its inability to manage the country. The emerging governance crisis is further complicated by the internal political crisis and tense conflict created in the country. In fact, the people are offered a choice between the government that has failed in its management and the forces that seek to restore the criminal-oligarchic oppressive system."

And now this man, who is the main responsible for the wrong course of the state, instead of taking the blame for the mistakes he made and also for the fact that he brought to the arena, first, the leaders of the same "criminal-oligarchic oppressive system" he said, the second and third presidents of the state, and Chikol, the leader of the government that he said "failed to govern", wanted to come to power again.

But even the damage caused by the first head of the state, was not comparable to the damage caused by the last head of the state, Chikol. And he was going to do it again.

The start of the campaign for the extraordinary parliamentary elections was announced in the country.

Poghos was furious. He was mad at the first president, mad at the second and third presidents, mad at all the more or less mature political forces that supported one or the other.

Poghos, going against all his ideas about the establishment of a free and fair state, was convinced that in this situation it is not possible to go to elections. According to him, going to the elections meant justifying what this government had done: justify starting a war, justify losing a war.

Moreover, according to Poghos, it was wrong to go to the elections, even if there was a hundred percent guarantee that the government would lose in those elections.

But Poghos was also convinced that the government would win.

It will win because it will despicably play with the delicate strings of the people's consciousness, and it is a virtuoso in this.

It will win because it has the entire system of public administration in its hands and will definitely use it.

It will win, because the North, the South, the West, the East, and even the moon, or rather, the crescent of the moon, need it.

Nevertheless, all political forces decided to participate in the elections. Both those whose management threads were in Washington, and those whose management threads were in Brussels, and those whose management threads were in Moscow, and those whose management threads were in Grozny, and what is most painfully, the only political force whose management threads were in their own hands. At least it was until recently.

Poghos was furious. He was especially angry with the latter, because if he had always treated all other political forces more or less negatively, he had a positive attitude towards this one.

There was the word "revolutionary" in the name of this political force, but alas! And even more, this "revolutionary" force did not go to the elections alone, but with the former president of the state, thus handing him the reins of its administration.

And here, on May twenty-sixth, in the evening twenty twenty-one, Poghos was sitting on the balcony of his house, chewing green apricot and getting acquainted with the pre-election list of the ruling political force, which had just been published. The parrot was also there. It stuck its neck out from between the bars of the cage and seemed to be reading the names of the people on the list.

The list included all the people, or rather the animals, whom Poghos and Achon had punished. Camel and Llama were in the honorable places, Jackal and DJ were a little behind, and Affenpinscher and Frog were at the back of the list. Almost all those whom Poghos scared the hell out in Aghveran were included in the list.

But there were also new names. The list included the Boar and another oligarch whom Poghos likened to a marten.

The reader will probably remember the first oligarch. Poghos had called him a Boar for years, decades, even. At that time, at the beginning of the nineties, when all the ordinary people of Armenia and Artsakh were solving the problem of their survival, Boar flourished trade and gambling in Yerevan. And in nineteen ninety-five and ninety-six, his bodyguard monitored the process of falsifying the elections, not shying away from intimidation and violence.

The second oligarch was also a great master of falsifying elections, or rather distributing election bribes. As already said, Poghos likened him to a marten. These animals are known to

be nocturnal, feed on small rodents, and are good climbers. But they are also an industrial object, they destroy pests and have very valuable fur.

Perhaps these last two circumstances were the reason why Poghos had decided to spare the marten. Despite all his shortcomings, he still had advantages and, most importantly, he was not a "sissy".

Maybe the Boar was not a "sissy" in the classical sense, but that's all. However, it could be considered that Poghos had already punished him. the reader will probably remember how he blocked the road of the Boar's "Rolls Royce" convoy with his khaki-colored Niva produced in nineteen eighty-eight.

Poghos continued to get acquainted with the pre-election list of the ruling political force.

According to one of the new provisions of the Electoral Code, one out of every three numbers on the pre-election lists of parties and alliances should be a female representative. It was certainly a true and extremely sexual statement, but as we know, Poghos had no business with women. Naturally, in the sense of punishing them. And although there were women on the pre-election list of the ruling political force who simply did not have the right to bear that noble name, Poghos ignored their names.

And suddenly a name caught his eye, and Poghos didn't believe what he saw for a moment.

### **About how Chameleon was punished**

Two days after the publication of the pre-election list of the ruling political force, on May 28, twenty twenty-one, reporters in Sardarapat asked Chameleon how he came to be on the list. And this is what the Chameleon answered: "Keeping the statehood is the sacred work of all of us, and in the idea of empowering them, my presence is sought. In other words, any capable force should be on the side of the state at this moment, so that we stop the wavering process of our statehood."

But the reader will surely first be interested in who was the Chameleon, why was he a Chameleon, and how Poghos knew him?

Poghos had known him since he held a very high position in the government. At that time, of course, the government was different, there was a different person at the head of the

government, and the party, with the quota of which this reptile became a member of the government, was different.

It was twenty ten or maybe eleven. Poghos had appeared in one of Yerevan's press clubs due to work, where he was supposed to install an air conditioner. The work, however, was delayed, and Poghos was asked to temporarily stop what he was doing, as a press conference was scheduled at the club. The guest was Chameleon.

Poghos had packed up and waited on the second floor of the club until the press conference was over. He didn't like the image of the guest: slimy, scared, he also didn't like the speech, it was template and learnt by heart. But he didn't pay much attention. He was a regular official.

The press conference was over, but the official was in no hurry to leave. He waited until all the journalists left, and then approached the press conference host. The latter was a girl with a gorgeous appearance and figure. Poghos had heard the official tell him something like the following: since I, a high-ranking official, accepted your invitation to the press conference, you should also accept my invitation to have coffee together. But the press conference host had not only a gorgeous appearance, but also a gorgeous sense of humor. I would accept your invitation if you had invited me during the press conference, in the presence of journalists, she said. The official left upset, but it didn't last long. He came back a little later with a bottle of cheap brandy and a chocolate box in his hand. However, the press conference host had already left and he was greeted by Poghos, who was standing on the construction ladder at that moment. Thanks, he said, put it in there, I'll go down and have a drink now.

And that official, aka the reptile, aka the Chameleon was now included in the election list of the ruling political force and in a rather honorable place. And in fact, he considered himself a "powerful force" and said that "his presence was sought in the idea of empowering them." Really, what could be more empowering than this?

But Poghos decided to punish the Chameleon not for all this, but just because he is a chameleon.

Of course, there have always been and will continue to be politicians who change their colors and adapt to the demands of the times. There have always been people who had fought for someone yesterday, but today they fight against that same thing, people who adored someone yesterday, and cursed that same person today.

But this one was an exceptional character. And by punishing him it might be possible to send a message to others.

Achon, hearing about Poghos's new idea, was not particularly excited.

-It's a very small fish, -he said.

-Not a fish, but a reptile, -corrected Poghos.

Then he showed Achon a picture of a chameleon.

-I know him, - Achon exclaimed.

-How do you know him?

-From Jermuk.

-From Jermuk?

-Yes, we were resting there.

-Who exactly is "we"?

-Me and my girlfriends.

-And what does the chameleon have to do with it?

About ten years before this conversation, when Achon was vacationing with some girlfriends from her "Beaumont" in one of Jermuk's boarding houses, she really had an opportunity to communicate with Chameleon. That was the time when the latter held a very high position. In the evening, while having dinner in a restaurant, he approached the ladies, introduced himself and offered them to be his guest. He said that he has a luxurious mansion in the neighborhood with a swimming pool and a sauna. The ladies had refused, of course, but considering his position, they had done it so politely that the creep hadn't noticed. A little later, he sent a bottle of champagne and, for some reason, a watermelon to the ladies, then he approached again. This time the ladies had sent him to hell. But the interesting thing was still yet to come. After a while the waiter came and took the champagne. He had left the watermelon for some reason.

After remembering this story and telling it to Poghos, Achon was excited.

-It will be fun to punish him, - she said, -and it looks like I know how to do it.

Before planning the operation, the partners went to Jermuk and found out two things: first, Chameleon's mansion is still there, second, he spends every weekend there.

And here, on June fifth, twenty twenty-one, the partners performed perhaps their easiest and funniest action.

On the way to Jermuk, past Gndevaz, National Assembly deputy Chameleon saw Achon standing in front of the open hood of a cherry-colored Lexus, he probably couldn't believe his eyes.

-What happened to this pretty girl? -he asked, rolling down the car window.

-Nothing happened to the pretty girl, -Achon smiled, -it happened to the car.

-Oh, my heart will break now, - Chameleon got out of the car, -What could possibly happen to this exclusive Lexus?

-The tire is punctured, - said Achon.

-The tire? - Chameleon wondered, -but why did you open the hood?

-There is a button here, you press it, the wheel repairs itself.

-Really? -Chameleon was even more surprised, -I also had a Lexus, but I didn't know there was such a thing.

- Of course, there is, - Achon could barely contain her laughter, - but I can't find it.

-Don't you worry, we will find it now, - said the deputy, rubbing the sleeves of his white shirt and suddenly noticing Achon's phone, asked, -are you taking a picture?

-No, I want to turn on the torch, so that you can find it easily.

-OK, - said the Chameleon, sticking his head into the hood.

Then he probably realized that it was noon and the sun was shining in the sky, and he took his head out of the hood again.

But instead of Achon, he saw Poghos standing behind him.

The chameleon didn't have time to say anything, didn't even have time to be surprised, because he was hit on the nose and his head was back in the hood.

-Oh, -he shouted, -I didn't do anything, I wanted to help.

Poghos pushed his ear and made him sit on the ground. Then he took out a metal bottle from the bag, opened it and poured the contents on the MP's head.

It turned out there was paint in the container.

-What are you doing? - shouted the deputy, -what have I done? - I apologize.

-What are you apologizing for if you didn't do anything? asked Poghos.

- Well, I... I wanted to...

-What color is this? - Poghos interrupted him.

-Blue, - said the deputy without thinking.

-That's right, - Poghos took out another bottle from the bag, opened it and poured the contents on the deputy's head again, - what color is this?

-Ye-ye-yello-oow, - mumbled the deputy.

-Right again.

Poghos took out the third can, opened it, but did not manage to pour the green paint on the chameleon's head, because at that moment a truck approached and slowed down.

-Help! shouted Chameleon, -call the police, they are killing me.

The truck stopped, an old man stuck his head out of the window and said:

-Well done to them, you deserve it.

And drove away.

Poghos honestly didn't understand how the truck driver recognized the MP because his skull was completely covered in blue and yellow paint. But it was not the time. He emptied the green paint on his head and thus considering the work finished, handed him a paper and said:

-Read aloud...

And the deputy read, wiping the paint from his eyes with the sleeve of his white shirt.

-I officially declare that I am a chameleon and I warn all other chameleons that they will also be punished. Long live Chikol!

This time the entire action was videotaped. But, since Achon was weak in her knees from laughing and her hand was constantly shaking, the quality of the video was not good. The chameleon kept jumping in the frame...

## **Hyenas and hares**

The victory of the ruling political force in the extraordinary parliamentary elections held in Armenia on June twenty, twenty twenty-one was extremely unexpected. It was a surprise to many, but not to Poghos.

He was convinced that the government would win, because he was convinced that Chikol would never have agreed to the elections not being convinced of his victory. It was simply impossible.

Chikol himself, with his thoughtless actions and statements made in moments of mental disorder, sowed hatred and enmity within the country, created an atmosphere that had never existed in Armenia. In such an atmosphere, the leader of the country who started the war and lost the war could not fail to understand that the day after he was deprived of power, he would be torn apart. They won't judge him, they won't arrest him, but they will tear him to pieces.

OK, but what was the reason for his confidence?

What an incredible trick, what unseen magic had to be done so that the government that failed everything, brought the country to the brink of destruction, and caused thousands of compatriots to die, won the elections again?

What had he hoped for?

Here was the biggest tragedy. He relied on the people. More precisely, on the insanity of a large part of the people. And no one knew better than him how to play with that lunacy.

Poghos was very well aware that it is a terrible thing to consider those six hundred and eighty-eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-one people, that is, twenty-three percent of the population of the Republic of Armenia, who voted for the ruling political force during the elections, to be weak. But Poghos also knew that there is a large mass of weak-minded people

in every nation and the duty of every honest government should not be to use this mass for its own benefit, but to gradually eliminate the weak-mindedness from among this mass.

-Hopefully they won't take the mandates, - said Poghos to Achon after getting acquainted with the results of the elections.

-Who wouldn't take it? - Achon asked.

-The opposition, of course.

-Wouldn't it be better if they went to the Parliament and punished them?

-No, it is impossible. Those people have passed Chikol's school of demagoguery, lies, contempt and manipulations and no one can beat them, -said Poghos, then added with a smile, of course, -except for us.

- But in that case, how will they fight? The street fight didn't work, did it?

- The fact that the street struggle did not succeed had completely different reasons, and one of those reasons was going to the elections.

As mentioned, this was on June twenty first, twenty twenty-one, the day after the election.

One month and twelve days after that, on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, twenty twenty-one, Poghos and Achon watched the opening session of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia of the eighth convocation on television.

The session was held under unprecedented surveillance. The building of the National Assembly was surrounded by thousands of policemen, the same building whose fences were opened to the citizens by the new authorities after the pseudo-revolution. As if the people's elected officials did not distinguish themselves from the people. Now, however, they were indistinguishable from the police who stood under the walls of the building as if they were protecting it from the enemy.

But what was happening inside was more interesting. Here too, the government deputies who won the elections were enthusiastic as if they had defeated the enemy. Although, maybe that's how they perceived those who didn't elect them.

Poghos listened to the speeches of the newly elected government deputies with disgust. But he should have listened. Not only during the first session of the new parliament, but for several more sessions after that. They had to listen to update their list.

It was all really disgusting. Most of the speeches had nothing to do with political speech, but that's still nothing. rarely were the speeches that referred to the legislative activity of the deputy, that is, to what the people gave a mandate to these people. But no, it turns out that the people did not give them a mandate for that. It was given to the newly elected deputies to caress their leader and attack his enemies. And it was as if they were competing to see who would graze deeper and who would push harder.

But for the sake of justice, it should be noted that the speeches of the opposition MPs were not particularly political and were mostly aimed at denigrating the opponent.

In short, thirty-five against seventy-one. Of course, the forces were unequal, and it was not surprising that the opposition lost. So far, it was losing with words, but the moment was coming when it would have to lose with a real hand-to-hand fight, more precisely, first in a bottle fight, then again in a hand-to-hand fight...

-We need a new list; punitive actions are entering a new phase, -said Poghos, seeing how the government deputies attacked the opposition deputies like hyenas, who, in turn, resembled rabbits.

### **About how the toad was punished**

To tell the truth, when the famous "bottle fight" took place in the sitting hall of the National Assembly on August twenty fifth, twenty twenty-one, followed by a fight between deputies, Poghos and Achon decided to punish some of the participants of that incident, which did not include the Toad. And this amphibian might have been lucky if he had not decided to give a speech from the podium of the National Assembly that day.

But the Toad made a speech. He spoke out and said things for which he simply could not be spared.

And the problem was not flattery and fawning, but an absolute, unseen insolence.

He began his speech with three questions to the opposition, which were more accusations than questions. Those questions or accusations related to several painful pages and episodes of the Third Republic of Armenia, during which people were killed. Nineteen people in total.

The opposition MPs who were accused were as guilty in those episodes as, say, Toad himself, who was six, ten and sixteen years old, respectively, at the time of the events. It is another

matter that the accusations were actually aimed at the leader of the opposition MPs, who in turn was less guilty than the Toad's leader in, at least, the latest events.

But that wasn't the problem either. The problem was that the MP accused the opposition and their leader of unjustified guilt for the death of nineteen people, forgetting that he and his leader are guilty of the death of several thousand people. And that needed no justification.

The deputy was slapping his hand and saying: Shame on you. He was trying to keep his voice cocky, but it still sounded like a toad croaking or squealing, if you want. Especially when, after embarrassing the opposition, he turned to the Prime Minister and swore an oath of loyalty.

-Do you see this frog? - said Poghos to Achon.

-But Achon did not agree with him.

-No, this is not a frog. Frogs are not this ugly and slimy. This is a toad.

-Toad, toad, toad, - repeated the parrot, who loved words containing certain letters, like "Sh", "Ch".

Hence the name became Toad.

As stated above, this amphibian was not on Poghos's and Achon's list and would not have been noticed had it not been for his speech. But he spoke and condemned himself with his speech.

However, that was not the only mistake he made.

The second mistake was that on a hot Sunday in August, Toad decided to go to Lake Sevan. The toad's heart, or rather its body, wanted water.

In general, toads, being amphibians, still spend most of their lives on land and enter water mainly for spawning. So, this one, the deputy toad, didn't have to be thirsty for water and thus endanger his unsightly snout.

The private beach where Toad was punished, according to some press reports, belonged to another deputy, whom the reader is very familiar with and whom Poghos punished in the hospital elevator. We are talking about the Affenpinscher, of course.

But let's leave the pocket dog alone, especially since he wasn't there.

And so, when Achon learned from reliable sources that the Toad will leave for Sevan on Sunday morning and informed Poghos about it, the latter laughed and quoted the great Ostap Ibrahimic, of course, changing his words a little.

-We will be forced to punish not only on land, but also in water.

They went to Sevan in Achon's "Lexus" and arrived later than the toad. But something happened on the way, which was to be of great importance in punishing the deputy.

After passing Shorzha and following the beach sign, they turned right, a snake cut in front of the car on the dirt road. It looped its way across the street. Poghos slowed down the car and said to Achon:

-Don't be afraid, it's a Lortu.

-What makes you think that I'm scared? - Achon wondered.

-Much better, - said Poghos.

And suddenly something occurred to him. He stopped the car and opened the door.

-What are you doing? -Achon asked.

-I want to catch the snake.

-May I know why?

-We will need it.

-Are you going to keep him? I don't think the parrot will like it.

But Poghos was already out of the car. He calmly approached the snake, bent down and just as calmly grabbed it by the neck. The reptile didn't resist at all, as if they had just agreed that it would wait for Poghos right here, right at this hour.

-Are you sure it's not poisonous? - Achon called out.

-Of course, otherwise we wouldn't need it, - Poghos holding the snake approached the trunk of the car, - do you have any big boxes here?

-I don't know, check the trunk.

Poghos found there a large bag with an equally large box in it. Opened it and saw a pair of shoes.

-Do you like these shoes?

-What shoes?

Poghos held up and pointed to the red high-heeled shoes.

-What do you want to do? - cried Achon, -do you know how much they cost?

Poghos put the shoes aside and placed the snake in the box. Then he closed the box, took out a folding knife from his pocket and made several holes in it.

-Can you finally tell me what you thought? - Achon asked when Poghos got into the car.

-Do you know what snakes eat?

-No idea.

-Snakes feed on rats, mice, various other rodents, as well as frogs and toads.

Of course, the snake caught by Poghos did not eat a Deputy Toad, but it scared him so much that he almost died. But let's take things one at a time.

First, Poghos and Achon got to know the area. It was a fairly well-maintained and well-equipped beach with a built-in cafe, pavilions and bungalow accommodation.

Then they learned that at six in the evening there is a show program and a disco on the beach. A huge stage was assembled here especially for that purpose.

In the end, they found out which bungalow the Toad was in.

That was enough. Poghos and Achon took one of the pavilions on the beach, set a table and started enjoying the August Sevan.

Toad appeared on the beach in high spirits, accompanied by several other obscure animals. He had a bottle of wine in one hand, a long-legged glass in the other hand, a hat with the inscription "Dukhov" left over from the good old days, and a towel hanging around his neck. He spread it out on the sand, put the wine bottle and glass by his side, and lay down, pulling the hood over his eyes. The image exactly resembled a photograph in which his leader was lying in the same position and with the same accessories, only not on sand, but on grass.

These guys resemble Chikol in everything, Poghos thought.

The toad's companions entered the water while he slept or pretended to sleep, just like his leader in the above-mentioned photo.

After exposing his slimy body to the sun for about two hours, he got up and walked over to the lake. He took a few uncertain steps, until the water barely covered his feet, then he stood and remained standing for a long time. Then, not daring to enter the water, he returned to where the wine was and began to drink. After a while he was joined by the other obscure animals.

Around four o'clock the group dispersed. Everyone went to their bungalows first, got dressed, then went into the cafe, probably for lunch.

And at six o'clock the show started, then the disco.

The beach was too crowded. Apparently, not only vacationers were here, but also many guests who came specifically for this purpose.

It's worth mentioning, that the organizers of the event were very well prepared. Loud music, cool lighting effects and all that jazz. The atmosphere was really festive. Everyone was dancing and having fun. They danced and rejoiced, not thinking that one year of those killed in the war had not yet passed, many mothers had not yet found their children, dozens of prisoners were still being tortured in Azerbaijani prisons...

At the hottest moment of the celebration, when it was already dark, Poghos and Achon left their tent-pavilion and went to the car, in the trunk of which the snake was waiting for his speech.

Poghos took him out of the box and said to Achon:

-Can you catch it?

-Of course not.

-But you said that you are not afraid of snakes.

-But I didn't say that I love it enough to catch it.

-You are a bad assistant.

Poghos tied a rope to the snake's tail, stroked its head and said:

-I promise that no one will hurt you, but you will remain in prison for some time.

The accommodation - the bungalow where the Toad was supposed to spend the night was closed. Poghos, of course, could have broken down the door, but he preferred to enter through the window. It opened easily and Poghos jumped inside. There was only one bed and nothing else. The bed was neatly made, and two white pillows were placed above the head.

Poghos thought for a moment, measured, then tied the rope from the snake's tail to the bars behind the pillows so that the snake could not get off the bed. The latter was extremely surprised at how it had suddenly become so long, but still did not particularly resist. Then Poghos covered it with a blanket, patted its head once more and left the place from which he had entered, turning on the light and leaving the curtain open.

Sitting on the sand near the dance floor, Achon and Poghos waited for a long time until Toad got tired or bored of dancing. He was dancing with a group of girls and it was clear that the girls weren't enjoying it too much. Although the Toad was killing himself, rolling around on the sand, standing on his paws, he was ignored.

After about two hours, the girls left the dance floor and walked to the cafeteria. The Toad followed them, Poghos and Achon followed Toad. The latter, however, was not expected to succeed here either. The girls "dispersed" him again. The rejected Toad took a bottle of wine, sat alone in the corner and began to drink. He drank desperately, pouring one glass after another. Then other girls entered the cafe, the Toad approached them too, was rejected again, left furiously and swayed to the dance floor. But he didn't reach there. He stopped somewhere on the road and started vomiting.

-And how long will we have to follow this ugliness? - Achon was angry.

-Not much left, -Poghos assured.

Indeed, the toad was no longer able to dance. He somehow reached his bungalow, somehow opened the door and went inside.

And as planned, Achon went to the window and started painting, while Poghos stood by the door.

As stated above, the snake did not eat the toad. Moreover, it did nothing. When Toad took off his clothes, went to the bed and opened the blanket, the snake was lying there, maybe even asleep.

-Mommy! - shouted the deputy, he went backwards, hit the wall and fell on the ground. Then he got up, fell again, got up again and ran howling to the door.

Here, as we already know, Poghos was waiting for him.

The rest is probably clear. Let's just say that after completing the standard procedure, Poghos, as he promised, freed the snake from its chains, took it back and released it where it had caught it.

### **About how the Pig was punished**

Poghos watched with disgust the footage of the fight that followed the famous bottle fight that took place in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on August fifth, twenty twenty-one. However, as surprising as it is, he was more irritated by the attitude of the opposition members, rather than the government deputies.

Well, why don't you fight, you're getting beat up, aren't you? Why don't you all become one and take a chance on those hyenas? Don't you have enough balls for that? How can one be so petrified?

In short, Poghos was furious.

But it was necessary to rest. Relax and focus on the attackers.

Among them there was one who was more active. One who looked too much like a pig. This animal was distinguished by its aggressive behavior and even more aggressive speech. If a competition was announced among government deputies, who is more aggressive in condemning the former and defending the current, this would undoubtedly take the first place. He simply had no other function.

-These bipedal animals are very close to humans in some anatomical and physiological parameters, which is why they are often used for medical and research purposes, -said Poghos to Achon after watching the video of the fight once more.

-Who do you mean? -Achon asked.

-Look at this - Poghos showed the picture of the Pig posted on the website of the National Assembly - doesn't he look like a pig?

-He does, - Achon agreed, do you intend to subject him to anatomical tests?

-If you want to know, he deserves a more severe punishment, - declared Poghos, - by the way, in medieval Europe it was customary to judge pigs for murder. The thing is that pigs roaming the streets of cities often entered the homes of the poor and gnawed on babies sleeping in their cribs. The authorities arrested the pigs, often sentencing them to death, surprisingly by hanging.

-Well, shall we do the same? - Achon laughed.

-No, we will be satisfied with the standard procedure - said Poghos seriously.

And Achon understood that nothing could save the nose of this gluttonous deputy.

And on the first day of the fall of twenty twenty-one, the Pig, an MP, received a call from a Russian number:

-Hello, - a female voice said in Russian, - the secretary of Moscow-based businessman Mr. Poghosyanyan is bothering you.

-Yes, I'm very delighted, -answered the pig enthusiastically.

The reason for his excitement was clear. The thing is that the number of one of the Russian mobile operators, from which Achon called, was once given to her by her ex-husband, who was really a businessman from Moscow. The number was, so to speak, "golden" or even "diamond" and had approximately the following appearance. "+ 7 ??? 777 77 77".

-Mr. Poghosyan will be in Yerevan next week and would like to meet you, -the "secretary" continued.

-I am very happy, - repeated the Pig, -I am very flattered.

Achon expected that he would be interested in why he was given such an honor, why they wanted to meet him, or at least who the businessman Poghosyan was, but since the Pig did not ask any such question, she had to explain

-The thing is that Mr. Poghosyan wants to invest in Armenia in the field of hotel business, and we found out that before you were a deputy, you had close ties with that field.

- Of course, of course... I am extremely flattered.

Pig's connection to the mentioned industry was only that he held a secondary position for a time in a tertiary hotel. But it didn't matter. The important thing was that he was "flattered".

The biped received the next call in exactly one week, as promised. This time, however, the caller was not the "secretary", but the "Moscow-based businessman Poghosyan" himself. They agreed to meet in one of the Yerevan restaurants.

Poghos and Achon had chosen the restaurant in advance. They needed a place where there would be no cameras and no private rooms. Of course, there were many such "objects" in Yerevan and the choice stopped at a restaurant located in the center. Its name, however, is not worth publicizing, considering what happened there that day.

Our heroes arrived at the restaurant forty-five minutes earlier than the agreed time and Poghos started ordering hot dishes one after another. Five in total. When Achon asked why he ordered so much, Poghos answered:

- I want to understand if his obesity is the result of an illness or if he is really a glutton. And then he will pay for all this.

When the guest, accompanied by a waiter, entered the private room, several salads, various appetizers, various animals, including grilled meat from the MP's tribesmen, various kebabs, khinkali, kufta and khashlama were already laid out on the table.

Poghos was sitting across the table talking on the phone. More precisely, he pretended to be talking on the phone. He did not get up and invited the guest to sit down with a nod.

This was also a part of the plan, because our hero did not want to shake the hand of deputy Pig under any circumstances.

Achon wasn't here. She took care of filming the upcoming party, leaving the phone in the cabinet under the wall, turned on the camera and left, warning Poghos several times to not forget to take it after the mission was completed.

And so, the Pig sat down. He looked uncertainly at "Poghosyan" and at the food on the table, moving his huge muzzle from side to side.

-Help yourself, - said Poghos, removing the phone from his mouth, - I will finish soon.

But the Pig hesitated, perhaps his brain still resisting his stomach. In exactly one minute, the stomach won.

First, the deputy took two pieces of basturma, wrapped them in lavash and started eating slowly, constantly looking around. He finished it, took a little break and moved on to the kebab. He also put it in lavash, added enough onions and ate it a little faster. Then he put some khinkali on the plate, but before eating, he paused for a moment and looked at Poghos. The latter continued to pretend that he was talking on the phone and did not pay attention to the guest. As if encouraged by that, the Pig rolled up his shirt sleeves and ate the khinkali with his hand. He had six of them. His already round cheeks were swollen like tennis balls in his mouth. Then he poured mineral water into a glass, drank it all the way, grunted, took a big piece of kufta and continued to eat obliviously. The meatballs were followed by the barbecue. The MP first devoured a few pieces of lamb, then picked up a giant piece of pork. But he didn't have a chance to eat this one, because Poghos couldn't take it anymore.

-How can you eat your own meat? - he said.

At that moment, the Pig brought the pork to its mouth and managed to bite off only a piece. He looked at Poghos in surprise and asked thoughtfully:

-What do you mean?

But Poghos did not answer anything, got up, stretched his whole body over the table and slapped the deputy's left cheek with his right hand. Then another one with the left hand on the right cheek.

This was, of course, a serious departure from the rules of punitive action. Slaps were not provided for in that regulation. But, if the reader gets distracted from reading for a moment, finds a picture of MP Pig on the Internet, and looks at his cheeks, he will definitely understand Poghos and make sure that he could not have behaved differently.

However, Poghos still returned to the regulations. After a few slaps, he grabbed the pig by the ears and shoved its head into a plate of khashlama, the only food he had yet to taste.

It is known that the sound of a pig's squeal, or more precisely, a squeal, can reach one hundred and fifteen decibels. That's louder than the sound of a jet engine, which reaches only one hundred and twelve decibels.

The scene was really brutal.

But MP Pig did not limit himself only squealing. He was literally kicking, thrusting his hind legs on the ground. Just like a pig that is about to be slaughtered squirms and tosses.

## About how Poghos's Niva was repaired

On a rainy day in November twenty twenty-one, Poghos finally decided to remove the cellophane on the rear window of his Niva and replace it with glass, as is usually the case with cars.

Master Abo carefully examined the door of Niva's trunk, where he would place the glass, and said:

- It's not possible.

-Why it's not possible? - asked Poghos.

-Because the door is deformed, - the master explained, - the door must be fixed first.

-Well then, fix it, -said Poghos.

-It's impossible, -the master refused.

-Why's that so? - Poghos was even more surprised.

- Because the whole rear part of the body was deformed. In order to fix the door, I have to fix it first - the master presented the problem thoroughly.

-Well, fix it, -persisted Poghos.

-It's impossible, -the master said, turning around the car.

-Why is it impossible? - Poghos asked for the umpteenth time

-It looks like a bomb exploded next to it, -said the foreman, touching the metal, -isn't it time to change your car?

-Yes, - said Poghos, then after thinking for a while he added - actually, no.

-In other words, the master did not understand.

-I mean yes, a bomb exploded and no, I will not change the car.

-Really? -the master wondered, -what bomb?

-It was a rocket, - explained Poghos, - but that is a different story and quite a long one.

-Tell us, let's hear it, - asked the master.

But Poghos did not tell.

The master went around the car a little more, touched the metal a little more in different places and said:

-OK, I will fix it. But the car will stay for a few days, maybe a week.

-Why so long?

-Because I counted, it is damaged in exactly twenty places.

-I just need the back window to be put on.

-In other words, I won't do the rest.

-No.

Master Abo was a fine craftsman. He was also a good man. When he offered Poghos to fix the whole car, he did it not to make extra money, but because he sincerely thought about Poghos. If he stubbornly does not want to change his century-old car, at least agree that the appearance should be in place.

-People pay two hundred thousand dollars to buy a car, - the master joked, - you regret two pennies to make your car look good.

-What people, what two hundred thousand? - Poghos did not understand.

-Don't you know? Read here.

In addition to being a good man, Master Abo was also an old man. He nodded at the newspaper on the small dusty table in the corner of the workshop. Who was still reading newspapers in Armenia in the fall of twenty twenty-one? Although, for the sake of justice, it should be said that Poghos himself, until recently, that is, before he got acquainted with Achon and the Internet, used exclusively print media.

He sat down on the old dirty sofa and picked up the newspaper from the table. This is what was written there:

"A BMW 750Li xDrive LCI class car worth ninety million drams will be purchased for the President of the National Assembly. The decision was taken at the November twenty-fifth session of the Government with a package of non-reportable issues. Based on the draft decision, the NA staff is carrying out the process of handing over the official car serving the President

of the National Assembly (BMW 750 Li 2011 production) to the state property management committee, because the current technical maintenance of that car has become costly and the allocation of assets for its operation and maintenance is no longer efficient and are not apt. According to the draft decision, the purchase will be made from the car dealership of the official representative, because, according to the rationale, the request is considered urgent at the moment."

-It's my fault, -said Poghos angrily, throwing the newspaper aside.

-How come it's your fault? - the master did not understand.

-Because I was satisfied with just breaking the nose.

-Whose nose?

-It's a long story.

The master still did not understand why Poghos is guilty, whose nose was he talking about and what is the long story?

- "The current technical maintenance of the former car has become expensive and the allocation of financial resources for its operation and maintenance is no longer effective and appropriate", he took off his glasses, put the newspaper aside and continued, quite upset, "that car serving the President of the National Assembly is ten years old". More than seventy percent of the cars operated in Armenia are ten, twenty, even thirty years old. These cars are operated by ordinary people. And the expenses are covered by the common people from their non-existent incomes. After all, I'm a craftsman, and I see it with my own eyes every day. And it turns out that it is efficient and expedient for the common people to allocate money from their own pockets to repair the car, but not for the government official. Instead, a government official can buy an expensive car for himself at the expense of the budget. The budget that should primarily serve the common people. And this is done by the public official who was brought to power by the people. When the officials of the former government did it, it was even worse, it was even more unfair, because in a poor country a government official has no right to drive around in an expensive car, but the people did not bring the former government to power, the government had bought that power. And these guys... They came with the revolution, didn't they? People brought them to power with their own hands. Now that nation has remained in its twenty-years-old Opel, worth not more than three thousand dollars, and the authority will drive around in a 200,000 BMW. Well, at least they should have a little

conscience, or rather, intelligence, and buy another car. A newer car, but cheaper, more regular.

Poghos listened carefully to the master. The latter took the newspaper again, put on his glasses and read the conclusion of the news.

"The request is considered urgent at the moment," he took off his glasses and continued, not indignantly, but furiously, -urgent, do you understand? There is nothing more urgent in the country than changing the car of the President of the National Assembly. And do you know what is the most terrible thing here? That the people who brought them to power do not want to notice all this.

Poghos never said anything. He left his nineteen eighty-eight broken Nivan with master Abo and left.

When he returned exactly one week later, he did not recognize his car. The master had repaired the entire hull, all twenty damaged places he counted.

-You will only pay for the paint and materials, - he said to Poghos.

-Is it possible? - Poghos was surprised.

-Of course, it is, - the master patted the roof of the car with his hand, - this is a broken car. Do you know how many fragments I removed from the hull?

-Okay, - said Poghos, -after the next war, I will bring it to you again.

- Do you think there will be the next war?

- I hope not. Only if someone could tell that there was some other way to return the lost.

-Who could say such a thing? - the master got angry and took the newspaper from the table and handed it to Poghos, - here, read it. See what their level is.

The newspaper had a part of Chikol's online press conference the previous day, where he answered the question about the expensive car purchased for the President of the National Assembly.

"When I was the prime minister, I got stuck on the road several times in a car, in a residential area. It's not a problem, I can get out, push the car and start driving... But do you understand that five or six times the car that serves the Prime Minister broke down, people stopped and

said, "Wow, dear Prime Minister, what happened? Did one of the light bulbs burn?" etc. etc... Why is a new car bought for the President of the National Assembly? When we look at how much money is spent on the maintenance of an old car, millions of drams every month. At that time, when I said that there is no need to buy a car, now people scold me for that, they say: Mr. Prime Minister, we have already spent thirty million drams for the maintenance of this car, because every day this car breaks down..."

-Chikoooool, - cried Poghos.

Except the parrot wasn't there to respond.

### **About how Jackal and Rat were punished for the second time**

However, during that week, when Poghos's Niva was in Master Abo's workshop, events took place that will surely interest the reader.

On the ninth of November twenty twenty-one, exactly one year after the end of the forty-four-day war and the signing of the ill-fated treaty, the entire leadership of the state, as well as the deputies of the ruling faction, went to Yerablur pantheon. Probably only their devil knew what they went there for.

When Poghos turned on the TV and saw the fictional and fake obeisance of the heads of state to the graves of the dead, he got angry and immediately changed the channel. But on the other channel, there was a report from Yerablur again. Poghos would certainly have changed this one too, if he hadn't seen two animals on the screen.

The first of these was Jackal, whom we turned to in this book. The reader will probably remember how his nose was broken on the restaurant patio. The second was Rat. Before we introduce who Rat was, let's see what was that episode on the screen that made Poghos stick to that channel.

Journalists recorded the moment when Rat approaches Jackal at the entrance of Yerablur and jokes with his mouth wide open. "Why don't you wear a mask?" The Jackal also joked: "I choose not to. Do you want me to show you how many masks I have?"

And now about Rat. This rodent, who during his entire Soviet biography held various positions, first in the Communist and then in the party apparatus, was the secretary of the party committee of some factory, then the inspector of the Central Committee of the

Communist Party, and finally, the first secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party of one of the regions of Armenia, after the collapse of the union, he changed his political orientation and reformed from a communist to a liberal-democrat. He was a part of the ruling alliance of that time with the party he founded and as a result was elected a deputy of the National Assembly, then received the position of first deputy mayor and then governor. Now he was a deputy in the ruling party.

This rodent had the following idea: "The thesis that Armenia has no future without Artsakh is very dangerous." He expressed it during a discussion and added that the historical and legal aspect of the Artsakh issue should be made a subject of discussion by expert and public circles, which is not being done. Then he said that in the last three hundred years these territories have been disputed and there has never been a question about whether they belong to Armenia, Russia or Turkey and he called to talk not about the ownership of the territories, but about the endangered security of people in those territories. But this was not all. Referring to Diaspora-Armenia unity, he stated that demand-making that leads nowhere does not allow us to have diplomacy.

And after all this, this rodent allowed himself to go to the Yrablur pantheon, where people who died so that Artsakh would not be part of Azerbaijan, who lived as a claimant, were laid to rest.

Of course, he wouldn't go to the pantheon if it wasn't surrounded on all four sides by thousands of police.

And it was the circumstance of being surrounded by thousands of policemen that made Poghos swallow hold his angst and not go and punish the Rat on the spot.

However, Rat was to be punished.

The most terrible thing is when people fighting for justice are hit from the inside, hit from behind.

The people have been fighting for decades not to give their house to the enemy and suddenly a rat appears and says, "so what? Let's give a part of our house to the enemy and live a prosperous life". To the enemy that was shelling our peaceful settlements a year ago, to the enemy in whose prisons our compatriots were being tortured at that moment. The enemy who has established tyranny in his own country.

For decades, the people have been living with the dream that one day they will be able to restore historical justice, to return what was stolen from them by the enemy, not to be separated by barbed wire from their symbol mountain, and suddenly a rat appears and says that demand that leads nowhere does not allow us to have diplomacy. Where's the problem? So, we give up demanding and trade with our enemy? The enemy that massacred our people a century ago, and a year ago our peaceful settlements were bombarded with rockets given by him.

The most terrible thing is when people fighting for justice are hit from the inside, hit from behind.

Of course, everyone wants to live a peaceful and prosperous life. But if the price of that peace and well-being is your dignity, how worthy is that? What's more, there is no guarantee that giving up your home and your dream will bring that peace and prosperity.

If the person who said this was an ordinary citizen, it wouldn't be so terrible, but this is what a state official, a member of parliament representing the ruling political force says, and it is clear that his words are directed by the head of the state.

How can you deprive more than a hundred thousand of your compatriots of their homes at the state level, how can an entire nation be deprived of its dream at the state level?

How can one come to the pantheon on the first anniversary of the war and make jokes..?

Rat was to be punished.

Poghos decided there was no time to waste. You have to go to Yerablur, follow Rat and punish him that very day.

Mechanically, he picked up a wide-brimmed hat and dark glasses, left the house, and found out that his Niva was missing. Achon's Lexus was parked a little further away. Of course, it was possible to take it, but there was an obstacle. Poghos didn't have a plan, he didn't know where or how he would carry out the operation, and he didn't want to endanger Achon in any way. Especially since he hadn't told her anything.

A taxi stopped at the entrance of the building, the passenger paid and got off. Poghos approached and sat down without asking if it was free or not.

-I may need your services today for a long time, -he said to the driver, handing over ten thousand, -I'll give it more later.

You don't know if the driver was more affected by Poghos's angry look or the ten thousand he gave, in any case he said smartly:

-Where do you need to go?

-For now, Yerablur, we will see later. Only fast.

The police force was gradually leaving the Pantheon. It was clear the Commander-in-Chief was no longer there. What did the police force know that other people needed protection more than him? In particular, National Assembly deputy the Jackal and National Assembly deputy the Rat.

The cab had just pulled into the Pantheon parking lot when Poghos saw the two of them get into Jackal's car together. Moreover, this animal was driving his official Toyota. Well, he thought, if the Jackal liked being beaten so much, he wouldn't mind doing it once more.

The Toyota Camry drove off and Poghos instructed the taxi driver to follow it.

-Wasn't this the deputy? - asked the taxi driver.

-Which one?

-The one that looked like a "jackal".

-It was him, - laughed Poghos, -and what did the other one look like?

-A rat, -the driver was excited, but then he thought for a moment and asked a little scared, - and what do you have to do with them?

-Don't be afraid, - Poghos said calmly, -I have nothing to do with them. But the important thing is that you distinguish animals.

-And why are we going after them?

-Because it cannot be the other way around.

To tell the truth, Poghos did not know what was going to happen. The road will show, he thought. If it becomes clear that they are going to work, that is, to the National Assembly, we could approach at any intersection, at a red light, open the side door of the car and break Rat's nose. If there is time, open the driver's door as well and smash Jackal's nose for the second time. If there is still time, grab both of them by the ears and drag them out of the car and "spread onto the asphalt", as their idol liked to say.

If it becomes clear that they are going elsewhere, continue to follow them and act accordingly.

It soon became clear that Jackal and Rat were going elsewhere. The Toyota turned from Sebastia Street to Admiral Isakov Avenue and headed out of town at high speed. The taxi was luckily a normal car, an old but well-maintained Mercedes and managed to keep up with the Toyota. The only problem was that the driver was still scared and kept asking the same question every minute, why are we following them? He was a middle-aged man, probably just back from abroad, as most taxi drivers usually are.

When they left Yerevan and passed Parakar, Poghos asked:

-Do you want the "jackals" and "rats" rule the fate of our people?

-No way, I curse them every day, -answered the taxi driver honestly.

-Cursing won't help.

-And what should we do?

But Poghos didn't have time to answer because the Toyota slowed down and turned off the highway into a narrow street leading to the right. Then it came forward a little and stood in front of a net fence. Behind the fence were sheep.

-They came to buy a lamb, - said the taxi driver, -I know this place, the best lambs are sold here.

Before Poghos could be surprised, Jackal first gave a long signal, then got out of the car and shouted:

-Valod!

Poghos turned to the taxi driver.

-I will go out now, and you turn around and go, wait for me on the highway.

Then he put on a wide-brimmed hat, dark glasses and a mask and got out of the car.

Jackal kept calling.

- Valod, Valod!

Behind the barracks was a red tuff house with ornate iron gates, from which emerged someone who didn't look much like Valod. She was a large woman with a shiny coat and a flowery apron.

-Valod is not at home, - she said.

-What do you mean he's not at home? - wondered MP Jackal, as if he had personally authored a law that did not allow sheep-keeper Valod to be absent from home.

-Do you want a lamb? - asked the woman.

-Yes, -said the Jackal, -call Valod, let him come."

- He can't, he went to the funeral.

- Where is the funeral?

- In the neighboring village.

- Call him to come.

The woman looked puzzled at the Jackal, then at the Rat, then at their black car and said:

- How should I call? It's a funeral.

-Do you know who I am? the Jackal said angrily.

Apparently, the sheep merchant Valod's wife did not know him. She muttered for a while, then uttered:

- Let me tell you the number: You call him.

All the while, Poghos stood a little way off and waited. Of course, he could have approached and broken the noses of a couple of deputies a long time ago, but he was interested in some things: in particular, why do the deputies need the sheep, and will Valod come?

The first one he managed to figure out, the second one he didn't.

-I tell you I need a sheep, I'm going to a party, I don't care about your funeral," shouted the Jackal.

Naturally, Poghos did not know what Valod answered, but Jackal continued like this:

-To hell with your dead...

Poghos couldn't stand it anymore, he quickly approached Jackal and punched him in the nose. The deputy fell to the ground and the hand phone flew through the fence near the sheep.

-My God, - cried the sheep seller's wife.

Poghos turned to leave, but at that moment he remembered the existence of Rat. The latter was sitting in the car and did not even get out when his friend was being beaten. Moreover, it turned out that he had closed the car door and was calling the police at that moment.

Poghos picked up a stone lying on the ground, broke the window of the Toyota and opened the door from the inside.

- I have nothing to do with him, I am a sick person, – Rat shouted.

Poghos first broke his nose with his right fist, then grabbed his ear with his left hand, took him out of the car and dragged him inside the fence, from where the surprised sheep watched the strange scene.

Besides providing meat, milk and wool, sheep are known to be a constant source of manure. Each mature sheep produces one kilogram of excrement per day. It contains many micronutrients and nutrients and can be a high-quality fertilizer.

And although that fertilizer is used exclusively for soil fertilization and plant development and is not edible under any circumstances, Poghos decided to do an experiment and feed it to the Rat.

### **About how Poghos was disappointed**

"When I arrived there, the fight had already started. I don't know who is to blame."

This is how the Foal answered the journalists when they asked him how the incident happened.

It was about the brawl that took place in the building of the National Assembly on December seventh, twenty twenty-one, in which, according to the media, thirty people from the government and three from the opposition participated. The latter were deputies' assistants,

while there were many deputies among the government representatives. These MPs included Llama, Coyote, Pig, Affenpinscher, and, as already mentioned, the Foal.

The reader did not meet this creature in this book, although he had all the necessary features to have his nose broken.

But it is no longer essential. It didn't matter, because Poghos was already deeply disappointed.

That frustration began with the incident involving the Jackal and the Rat, continued with the aforementioned incident involving the Llama, Coyote, Pig, Affenpinscher, and Rat, and culminated when Poghos saw a secret video starring the Camel. Speaking about the Armenian prisoners kept in Azerbaijani prisons, he said the following. "What was the aim of those prisoners, those soldiers, those people?" Now I'm sorry, maybe I'm saying something wrong, but for me those POWs do not exist anymore. And do you know who those prisoners are? Those are the people who put down their weapons, ran away and got lost. I can't say this out loud. Don't you wonder why the parents of those prisoners aren't complaining? Because they know that their son has defected. They put down their weapons and ran away, they ended up in captivity."

Was everything they were doing pointless? Poghos had punished this scoundrel and all other scoundrels, but it turns out that nothing had changed. They kept saying and doing their thing.

What did that mean? It meant that they were more afraid of being punished by the supreme chief villain than anyone else.

And Poghos asked himself a question. what would be the point in continuing to punish them and those like them? Or, at least, to punish in the same way that he has been punishing until now.

In all the episodes where Poghos had punished all those scoundrels, the punishment could have been much more severe. He could paralyze them. Making those vile animals unable to move or make a sound. However, he did not do it. He was limited to inflicting minor injuries and demeaning in parallel. But what will debasement do?

How can one of the highest-ranking officials of the state, speaking about the citizens of his state, his compatriots and people in general, say: I consider that these prisoners no longer exist? Is there anything more wicked than that?

Why not though? When talking about the citizens of his state, his compatriots, people who died in the war, the supreme chief scoundrel said plus or minus fifty victims.

Okay, do these people have poison running through their veins instead of blood?

What else should they say so that society can't stand it anymore, that would make them stand up and take a decisive step?

What else are they supposed to do? What losses should they cause? But how much longer, until when?

How much more will they lie, how much more will they manipulate, how much more hatred will they instill in the people?

But that was not the worst thing either.

And this is what Poghos was thinking: external injustice is certainly ten times, a hundred times more cruel than internal injustice. But when internal injustice prevents us from fighting external injustice, this is the worst thing. When a conscious citizen, a conscious part of the people, instead of cursing the head of the enemy state, curses the head of his state, when instead of punishing the enemy and looking for ways to restore justice, he thinks about how to punish his own authorities, when he has to fight for the restoration of his lost dignity not outside, but inside, this is the scariest.

Sooner or later, everything will fall into place, sooner or later the internal enemy will be punished and the main struggle will begin - against the external enemy, against external injustice, but don't people feel sorry for the time lost or the generation which is gone, literally and figuratively.

When Poghos and Achon began their plan, they intended to punish only the "sissies". Their plan was precisely for those sissies to know their place, to know who they are, to know that they are temporary and after receiving their light punishment, they would no longer talk that much and would "sit in their place" as their idol, their supreme sissy would say.

However, their idol turned into a devil, and they became the mouth and feet of that devil, constantly snorting, spitting and kicking.

Poghos and Achon were actually wrong; it was not necessary to break their noses and pull their ears, but to break their legs and cut out their tongues.

But the most effective, of course, would be to deprive the devil of his antlers.

Only the devil could not be reached.

And maybe it was possible?

## **Two shots**

When Poghos went to the front for the first time during the first Artsakh war, his first weapon was a Mosin rifle, manufactured in eighteen ninety-five. The rifle was said to have belonged to one of the Armenian fidais, possibly Moruk Karo, Petara Manuk or Makhluto, and was used throughout the national liberation struggle of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. How true that was, Poghos didn't know, but he had fought with that Mosin for several months before he had first a rifle and then a machine gun. Then he gave it to a familiar doctor from Artsakh and took it again after coming out of coma. The Mosin was a wonderful weapon. When Poghos went to the mountains, he always took it with him and shot the tin cans of his favorite Irish beer. The hundred and twenty-year-old weapon had amazing accuracy; it hit the target at a distance of one hundred and fifty, sometimes two hundred meters.

The diameter of zero-to-thirty-three-liter beer cans is sixty-six millimeters. What a coincidence! Isn't this number sixty-six symbolic?

The diameter of Satan's horns is the same as the diameter of a beer tin, sixty-six millimeters. And their distance from each other is twenty to twenty-five centimeters.

What is this numerology for, the reader will be wondering?

Everything is very simple. Poghos's target would be the devil, or rather his horns.

But the arithmetic doesn't end there.

And so, Mosin can hit a target at two hundred meters.

A car traveling at a speed of one hundred and twenty kilometers per hour covers two hundred meters in six seconds. That's enough for two accurate shots with the Mosin.

Why exactly two, the reader will wonder.

Because the devil has two horns.

And why two hundred meters, the reader will continue to be interested. The two hundred meters that the car had to pass under the flyover connecting the M5 motorway to the M1 motorway, on which Poghos was to be positioned with his Mosin.

And the last question that will certainly interest the reader: what car is he talking about?

Of course, the car that would take Chikol to the airport on January eleven, twenty twenty-one, from where he would fly to Moscow to participate in the tripartite summit with Vladimir Putin and Ilham Aliyev.

Chikol, i.e. Satan.

However, what Poghos thought did not involve murder, because as stated many times in this book, our hero was against murder. Of course, it was possible to kill the devil, but since it has not been scientifically proven that a person, even Chikol, can turn into a devil over time, Poghos was not going to kill him.

Let's say, even if he wanted to, he couldn't. Naturally, it was not possible to hit a target in an armored car with a Mosin.

### **Excerpt from the record of the court hearing**

Judge - Did you intend to kill the Prime Minister?

Accused- No. I am against murder. I'm against even hunting.

Judge - Did you intend to shoot the Prime Minister in the head?

Accused- No. I shot at the devil's horns.

Judge- I remind you that after your arrest you underwent a forensic examination. The examining doctors came to the conclusion that the examinee does not have mental disorders and he can be considered sane.

Defendant-Thanks for the reminder.

Judge- You have learned that the car serving the Prime Minister is armored.

Accused -I have learned that the devil's service car is armored.

Judge – The two shots fired from your "Mosin" type rifle hit the exact part of the rear window of the Prime Minister's service car, beyond which was the Prime Minister's head. If the car was not armored, the two bullets would have hit the prime minister's head, twenty centimeters apart. If you did not aim to shoot the Prime Minister in the head, and if you knew that the car was armored, what was your target?

Accused – Your calculations are wrong.

Judge- Make it clear, please.

Accused - If the car was not armored, the bullets would have pierced the devil's horns.

Judge- I repeat the question. What was your target?

Accused - In order to answer your question, I will have to present a mathematical calculation, on the basis of which an examination can be made. By the way, I presented that calculation during the preliminary investigation of the case, but the examination was never carried out.

Judge- What does that count refer to?

Accused - The dimensions of the rear window of the W222 Mercedes of the year 2019, the dimensions of the back seat of the same car, as well as the height of the devil, the diameter of his head and the location of the horns. Besides...

Judge- Did you personally know the Prime Minister?

Accused- No. But I didn't finish presenting the calculation.

Judge - Why did you decide to assassinate the prime minister?

Accuser- Not the prime minister, but the devil.

Judge-You shot the prime minister.

Accused - Not on him, but in the direction, not the prime minister, but the devil.

Judge - I repeat, the forensic examination has confirmed that you do not have mental disorders and considered you sane...

Accused - You probably don't know what, or rather who, the devil is; Christianity ascribes to Satan hatred of mankind and God's creation in general, opposition to God, spreading lies,

falsehood and chaos in human souls. Christianity considers the devil to be the embodiment of human vices and passions, which brings temptation and evil and leads mankind astray.

### **Poghos's Last Speech in the Courtroom**

At the end of the closed court session, before being sentenced by the judge to fifteen years in prison, Poghos uttered his last words.

"I am against murder, and I do not even kill the enemy on the battlefield, although I also know that the commandment "thou shalt not kill" does not apply to a soldier of a country fighting a war of conquest, and for a soldier of a defending country to kill on the battlefield is not considered murder. But I don't kill. I will not kill a man, I will not kill an animal, I will not kill any of God's creations. I won't kill the devil either, because I don't know if God didn't create him too. And I don't know if a person can turn into a devil.

If the devil was not created by God, if a man can turn into a devil, then shoot him. If there are people who believe this to be the case, let them shoot the devil.

With this action, I aimed to draw the attention of those people.

I fired two symbolic shots at the devil horns. The rear window of the car was imprinted with bullet marks from my Mosin. Even if the car was not armored, the bullets would not kill the devil, but would deprive him of horns. And the devil would no longer be the devil.

I repeat, my shots were symbolic. However, if there is someone willing to fire non-symbolic shots, let them do so.

Let him do it, because the devil will bring new evils. He will defile all that is pure, he will trample all values, he will bring irreparable losses.

Let him do it so that when I get out of prison, I get out in my homeland."