

Adio brode, Starino

Pero Vidan

Farewell, my old companion

Pero Vidan



Source: Tomislav Skračić

Petoga marča 2015. u tri ure popodne dogodila ti se pegula¹.

Ne mogu virovat da si to ti. Ne mogu virovat da si tod i da ćeš vako skončat². Obrisi broda su tvoji, dobro se nas dva znamo. Opasno si se nagnu, nešto ti je. Moran doć bliže, vidit će ti je. Oću, neću... Ono ča ću vidit, znan da mi se neće svidit. Znan da će me ražalostiť, a pomoć ti ne mogu.

Eto me na Prvoj vodi³, podan Marjana. Vata se mrak. Skoro si uša u lućicu Spinuta. Veren s po škrapan⁴. Mladost je već došla na

-
1. pegula-nezgoda
 2. skončat- završit, umrijet
 3. Prva voda-kupalište podno Marjana
 4. škrape-grote, stijene uz more

University of Split, Faculty of Maritime Studies, Split, Croatia

E-mail: pvidan@pfst.hr

On 5th March 2015 at three o'clock in the afternoon a misfortune befell you.

I can't believe it's you. I can't believe you are here, that you are going to end up like this. The shape is yours, I am sure of it because we've known each other so very well. You are listing hard, something strange is happening to you. I have to get closer to see what went wrong. I am shilly-shallying... For I know I won't like what I am going to see. I know it will make me sad, I know I can't help you at all.

Here I am at Prva voda¹, beneath the slopes of Marjan Hill. It's getting dark. You have almost drifted into Spinut² Harbour. I am stumbling along the harsh rocky shoreline. The youth have already come for rendezvous in the dark and have hidden in the cars under pine trees. I'm wrenching my feet, stepping across the rocks, coming closer to see you. Are you hurt? Will you survive?

-
1. Prva voda-beach beneath the slopes of Marjan
 2. Spinut-same name marina in Split

rendes, u škuribandu⁵ i sakrila se s autima pod bore. Izvrćen noge po škrapan i gren te vidit. Jesi li ranjen? Očeš li se spasit?

Sićan se svog ditiinjstva i dana kad san te upozna. Isto vakvo vrime, marač ili april. U prvon san razredu osnovne škole. Lipi dan. Metković, kuća Lučke kapetanije di san živi. U prizemlju, u kancelariji, pokojni otac. Uvik obrijan, uredan, u uniformi. U službi je. Oko njega veliki registri ka libri, stanica je pojačana, a u kantunu tiho svira radio. Doša san mu se javit prin skule, a on me zove da ulizen. „Vidi!“ pokaže mi kroz ponistru. Podigne me na ponistru kancelarije da boje vidin i govori: „Vidi brod ča je doša. Ime mu je Orebić.“

Zadivjeno san te gleda. Iako nakrcan, bi si visok za rivon. Najveći brod u portu. Veći od zgrade luke, veći od naše kuće. Na maloj Neretvi, bi si div.

Otac me je odgoji da poštujen more i volin brode. Bi je pomorac. Ka i njegov otac i njegova oca otac. Poslin san pomorcen posta i ja. Nisam se puno misli.

Ka ditetu mi ni bilo jasno zašto je otac, kad je brod Atlantske plovidbe Koločep prodan u rezalište, bi onako tužan. Koločep je isplovi iz Metkovića na posljednje putovanje u rezalište Sveti Kajo. Trubi je dugo, dugo... Otac mu je maha. Niz obraze su mu išle suze. Tad nisan zna čemu suze, ni zašto brod trubi.

„Brod plače jer je tužan ča nas napušta. Brodi su ka i judi“, objasni mi otac suznih očiju. „Više ga nećemo vidit“. Tad san se i ja rastuži.

Koločep se nikad više ni vrati.

Orebiću, već onda si bi starac, stariji i od Koločepa. Godine ti se nisu poznavale. Još godinan si osta s menon. Kad bi uplovi u sedan uri ujutro, pozdravja si grad s jednim kratkim pištunom. Kad si odlazi navečer, pozdravja si s tri duga i jednin kratkin, onako ka ča se brodi pozdravjadu na moru. I kad iz luka gredu na dugo putovanje.

Naviru mi misli, sićanja.

Prin odlaska ti je makinja uvik bila *stand by*. Posada je na kuverti⁶. Barba⁷ na paramentu⁸: „Provene konope skini, ostavi samo krmenu lancanu⁹!“ Čekaš, kurenat¹⁰ Neretve te okriće. Pajet¹¹ na krmu je spreman za slučaj da makinja ne uvati. A uvik je uvatila. I onda zavozi naprid, sasvim lagano. Pusti krmenu lancanu. Čuje se veseli zvuk starog *Deutza*, motora još za onog rata zaplinjenog s njemačkih podmornic i stavljenog u te. Zavozi si. Juriš niz Neretvu!

Iz okuke u okuku, livo, pa desno. Visok si, cila dolina te vidi. S pola snage, osan čvori, usporavaš na Opuzenu i Kominu na sasvim polagano. Takvi je zakon, pravilo plovidbe Neretvom.

5. škuribanda-skriveno mjesto, zaklon od pogleda

6. kuverta-paluba

7. barba-zapovjednik

8. paramenat-lastavice broda, vanjski dio mosta

9. lancana-dugi krmeni konop

10. kurenat-morska struja

11. pajet-bokobran

I remember my early childhood and the day I met you. The same time of year, March or April. I was a first-grader at primary school. A beautiful day. The town of Metković, the building of the Harbor Masters' Office was our home. On the ground-floor, in his office, my late father in his uniform, neat and shaved, as usual. He is on duty, surrounded by large registers that look like giant books. The radio station receiver is turned on loud, while music from the wireless in the corner can be barely heard. I come to say bye and he invites me in. "See?" he points through the window. He lifts me up to the office window so I can see better, and says: "Look at this ship that just arrived. Her name is Orebić."

I watched in awe. Although loaded, you stood high by the quay. The largest ship in the port. Larger than the Port building, larger than our house. On the small Neretva River you looked like a giant.

My father raised me to respect the sea and admire ships. He was a seafarer. Like his father and his father's father before him. Later on I became one myself. Didn't think twice.

As a little kid, I couldn't understand why my father was so sad when the Atlantska plovidba³ ship named Koločep was sold to a ship-breaking yard. The Koločep sailed on her last voyage from Metković to the ship-breaking yard at Sveti Kajo⁴. She sounded her horn for a long, long time... My father waved her goodbye. Tears went down his cheeks. I didn't know then what were those tears for, nor why the ship sounded her horn.

"The ship is weeping because she is sad to leave us. Ships are like humans," my father explained, his eyes full of tears. "We shall never see her again." This made me sad.

The Koločep never returned.

And you, Orebić, you were already an old lady in those days, older than the Koločep. You didn't show age, though. You remained with me for years. When you entered our port at seven in the morning, you greeted the town with one brief blast. When you set out in the evening, you sounded three long and one short blasts, the way ships greet one another at sea. Or when they sail off on a long voyage.

I am overwhelmed with memories, recollections.

Before leaving, your engine is always on stand-by. The crew are on the deck. The Old Man is on the wing. "Take off the bow lines, leave only the stern line!" As you are waiting, the Neretva current is turning you around. The fender on the stern is ready in case the engine would not put in gear. But it always put in gear. And it would run forward, gently. "Cast off stern line." The cheerful sound of the old Deutz, a World War II engine retrieved from a German submarine just for you. You are running. Steaming full speed down the Neretva!

From bend to bend, to port, then to starboard. You are tall, the entire valley can see you. At medium speed, eight knots, you

3. Atlantska plovidba-shipowner company from Dubrovnik

4. Sveti Kajo- small place and port next to Split

Zna si to. Pa ipak, čuju se beštimske Kominjana kojima je moreta broda uzdrmla trupice. Mašu rukan, upinju ti roge, ali ne iz bisa ili zlobe. Tako je uvik bilo. Biće da je takav bi običaj. Isto je bilo od prvog puta kad si uša u Neretvu. Onda, Rogotin. Spuštaš jarbol da ne zapne za most. Dolazi ušće, okričeš za Gumancem¹² i *full speed* do Splita.

Završi san školu i fakultet. Još si bi tu. Otiša san na dugu plovidbu. Kadetura, poručnički, kapetanski...A ti si još plovi. Na tebi su se pomorci minjali. Na tebi su se učili i s tobom živili. A ti si živi za njih.

Onda san se poželi iskrat s duge plovidbe i radit na kraju. To ni lako, a život se od ničega mora dok iščem novi posal. Zaposli san se na Splitsku i dopa si me ti. Uplovi, isplovi: Metković, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Bar, Monfalcone, Porto Marghera, Ancona, Bakar...Po buri, snigu, kiši, po moreti, i oluji, *mare sette*, *mare brutto*¹³. Iz pojade¹⁴ u pojadu, provuci se kraj Olipe, sakrij usrid Komiže.

Ja sam otiša, a ti si i dalje plovi.

A onda je sve stalo. Tvornice cimenta izgasile su peći. Za te posla više ni bilo. Ni bilo ni nafte, ni piture za te. Osta si sam. Vezali su te za rivu.

Noć je. Gledan te brode, tužnog. Bura me tiska od tebe. Ruzina¹⁵ te odavno grize. Korbe¹⁶ su ti slabe, nećedu izdržat jutro. Valovi te nosidu na škrapu. Lamarin¹⁷ cvili. Propinješ se i škrabješ¹⁸. Stenješ i plačeš a bura ti kroz mrtve bande zavija. Moreta se priliva priko tebe, ankora te tuče po brandunu. Skida ti ono malo piture šta ti sakriva lamin. Ostat ćeš gol do jutra. Plačeš. Po prvi put si sam i pristrašen. Sram te je. Star si i slab. Nima ti spasa. Niko ti pomoć ne može.

„Brod plače. Brodovi su ka judi“, istinu je govori moj pape. A za tobom, plačen i ja.

are slowing down while approaching Opuzen⁵ and Komin⁶. That's the rule, the rule of navigation on the Neretva River. You knew it. And yet, the residents of Komin are swearing at you as your wash rocked their trupice⁷, little river flat-bottomed boats. They are raising hands, showing longhorns, but not out of rage or malice. It has always been like that. It must have been customary. It has remained the same since the first time you sailed up the Neretva. And then, Rogotin⁸. You are lowering your mast so you can pass under the bridge. You are approaching the Delta, turning round Gumanac⁹ Shallows, and then full speed to Split.

I finished both school and university. You were still there. I departed for a deep-sea navigation. Cadetship, lieutenant examination, master examination... And you were still sailing. The seamen signed on and off. They were trained on you, and lived for you. And you lived for them.

Then I wished to sign off, quit world-wide navigation and work ashore. It is by no means easy, one must survive while searching for a new job. I was employed by the shipper Splitska¹⁰ and I met you once again. Sail on, sail off: Metković, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Bar, Monfalcone, Porto Marghera, Ancona, Bakar... In the cold north-easterly bura¹¹, snow, rain, swell and storm, *mare sette*, *mare brutto*¹². From haven to haven, scraping through by Olipa¹³ lighthouse, finding shelter in Komiža¹⁴ Harbour.

I went away, and you kept on sailing.

And then it all came to a halt. Cement factories put out their furnaces. There was no work for you any amore. There was no oil or paint for you. You remained alone. They tied you to the quay.

It's night. I'm looking at you in your misery. The bura is blowing me away from you. Rust has been long biting you. Your ribs are weak, they won't last till morning. Breaking waves are pushing you onto the rocks. Your plates are whining. You are pitching and striking, moaning and weeping, with the bura howling through your corridors. The swell is pouring over you. The anchor is beating against your bow carvings, chipping off the paint that has remained. You will be naked by the morning. You are weeping. For the first time, you are alone and frightened. You are ashamed, old, and weak. There is no hope for you. No one can help you.

“The ship is weeping. Ships are like humans” as my father once said, and it is true. I am weeping too, mourning for you.

12. Gumanac-pličina na ušću Neretve

13. *mare sette*, *mare brutto* - tal. more sedam, uzburkano (riječi s talijanske prognoze vremena)

14. *pojada*- zaklonište

15. *ruzina*- hrđa

16. *korbe*- brodska rebra

17. *lamarin*-metalna oplata broda

18. *škrabješ*- tući i stvarati zvukove pri tom

5. Opuzen – village at River Neretva

6. Komin- village at River Neretva

7. *trupica*-traditional small boats of River Neretva

8. Rogotin—village near the Delta of the Neretva River

9. Gumanac-shallow on Delta of River Neretva

10. Splitska-short way of Splitska plovidba, shipowner from Split

11. *bura*-north east wind on Adriatic sea, very strong and cold

12. *mare sette*, *mare brutto*-italians sea 7, swell (from italian weather forecast)

13. Olipa- lighthouse on same name island on approaching Dubrovnik

14. Komiža-village at island of Vis