

Александр Молчанов



KILLER\FOULKNER

Пьесы для Англии

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«Издательские решения»

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KILLER/ FAULKNER

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Killer

Characters:

Andrew
Oksana
Seka
Mama

– Room

ANDREW. I've never understood why, when you're praying, even praying inside, you turn into such a pussy. It's all «Please, Almighty God, please forgive me for my sins'. Does he want me rolling round in the dirt, covered in snot, begging for forgiveness? Does he feed off that? Is it how he gets his kicks? From performing scum. You can't talk like a grown up? «I've sinned. It happened. Won't do it again. If I've gone too far this time, if I've run out of road, then punish me – lay it out. Maybe a hundred Our Fathers, forty days' fasting, a century in hell. And that's it. Debt paid. Settled. No outstanding balance. No guilt. No humiliation. Dignity intact. Maybe he wants people crawling round on the ground like cowards, crying like kids. On the other hand – I mean, I don't like being called Dyusha. Sounds too fucking sweet. My proper name's Andrey Vitalievitch, so use it. Maybe he wants to be talked to properly. Still like God, of course. Or it's face in the dirt, tears...

«Course I understand God's just a psychological phenomenon – praying makes life easier. Or maybe there's some kind of energy field out in space. Idiot. Cos here I am praying and that's no fucking easier. Doing it wrong. Trying to keep my dignity. Let's have some fucking give and take Lord. Let's discuss. Let's negotiate. I'll throw the moneylenders out of the temple. Forgive me, Lord, I beg you. I'm a sinner, I'm going to hell, forgive me Lord, I'm screwed. Do something. Give me a thousand Our Fathers, send me to a monastery. Send me to hell. As long as Seka doesn't come round today. As long as Seka-

SEKA. There was this one kid at school called Dyusha. Fat kid, so he used to use it in fights, crush people. This one's skinny, though. Fuck knows if he can take Maronov. Maronov's not been around college for a week. What's he hiding for? He's already lost. Came to the table, lost. No need to hide.. Vitalya says three more days, he's selling his motorbike to the locals. I've said to him – «What do you think you're gonna get for it? Twenty? Thirty? It's not a Minsk or a Ural or a fucking Dnieper with a side-car – it's a Honda. World-beating technology. I've even cut a deal with the super. Two grand, she'll cut a key for the store room. It's crazy, keeping it in the apartment. Dragging it up five flights of stairs every day like Vitalya does. And come Summer, it'll be sweet, blowing it around the villages... One on one, Dyusha could take Maronov, maybe. Maybe not. The Dyusha from elementary school would probably do better. He'd probably crush him.

OKSANA. Seka's rich, of course he is, and he's beautiful, and he knows how to fuck. And he's dripping with confidence. Four years since they kicked him out of college and he's still living in the dorm. Cut a deal with the super. He knows how to live the good life, and so he just does it. Thing is, he's mean. Never buys me gifts. Could at least take me to a movie once in a while, not spend all day in the dorm playing cards. That fucking music.

ANDREW. So no God, and all that praying's just a racket. Seka came over with some girl. Marinka? Oksana? Does she want to see him humiliate me? Me to him like some lowlife is to God? Or maybe they were just out for a stroll – just popped in to fuck me up while they were passing. Oksanka's ugly. Eyes too close together. Zits on her forehead. Flat chest. Lights a cigarette, though, turns to the side to find a jar, and what an ass. Curved. Like looking at an amazing guitar.

OKSANA. So some schmuck in a too-tight shirt and shorts is lying on the bed. The room's a mess. I was going to drop the ash on the carpet, then I thought – fucking room's a fire-trap. I'll find a jar or something.

SEKA. So I'm looking at this Dyusha guy, and I am so pissed at Maronov. You're fucking broke, man, so don't sit at the table. Is that so hard to understand? Why the fuck did he have to play? And if you lose, don't hide, just pay your debts. I am so fucking pissed.

ANDREW. Just amazing how he can be so handsome and so much of a fucking asshole. Always with the hot ones. Shits money. All the luck at cards. Looks scrawny. Little fists. I wanted his hairstyle. Black with a fringe. Looks good on him, but not on me. His hair manages to lie down at the

sides and the back, and mine just flops over my eyes. I've seen him fight though. We're downstairs, hanging out and that beardy guy walks past – the one that's always in grey Alaska. Hangs out with the girls on the twenty-second all the time. He comes downstairs in his fucking stupid get-up, black beard, like a skinny Jesus on a drunk. Looks like the girls got him wasted and kicked him out. So he's looking to kick someone's ass. Like, he's so drunk it's hard to tell what he wants. But beardy makes some shitty remark to Seka. And Seka gets up, follows him out back, knocks him out, one punch, kicks him for a while. Comes back and he's not even out of breath. One time he had a fight with this boxer – a real boxer. The guy's boxed so much he can't even think straight and Seka just straight-up lays him out. One shot. Game over, but this guy – the boxer – he's programmed to get up. He's on autopilot. If he'd just lie down Seka wouldn't touch him, but he gets up and he keeps getting up and every time Seka just knocks him down.

OKSANA. So Seka says to the schmuck – you got any money? And he goes – no, you know I haven't. But I'll pay it all back. Seka says – you won't pay back shit. You owe me twelve grand, right?

ANDREW. Right.

SEKA. You've got fuck all.

ANDREW. I'll pay it back.

SEKA. «I'll pay it back'. Say that one more fucking time.

OKSANA. And Seka just looked at him then.

ANDREW. Seka said Maronov owed him fifty grand. He said he'd let my twelve grand go if I went into Oskol, and I found Maronov, and got Seka's fifty grand, and brought it back to him.

OKSANA. Seka took out a hundred, a fifty, and a ten, and gave it to him. For fucking what?

SEKA. Bus fare.

ANDREW. And if he won't give me the money?

SEKA. Kill him.

ANDREW. How?

SEKA. I don't care how. Stab him. Have you got a knife?

ANDREW. Are you fucking serious? You mean stab him to death? Right?

OKSANA. Seka picked up a flick-knife from the table. Touched the blade. Winced.

SEKA. It's OK. Oksana's gonna go with you. I don't want you running off with the money.

OKSANA. Me? With him? What the fuck for?

SEKA. Yeah. Bus trips forty roubles, I checked. Enough there for two return tickets.

OKSANA. Seka, are you fucking nuts?

SEKA. Any other questions, darling?

ANDREW. If I remember, Oksana got thrown out last semester, so she's only in the dorm with Seka's permission cos he's bribed the super. So if she steps out of line, it's back to the village and she'll die of boredom. Or maybe marry some fucking mechanic and see how that turns out.

SEKA. Get me the money by tomorrow.

OKSANA. Seka said to get the money by tomorrow. Then he left. Bastard. And this guy's just staring at me. Aren't I the lucky one? Bastard. Bastards. Fucking freak. Go and die in a fucking hole.

ANDREW. Come on. Calm down. I've got it worse than you..

OKSANA. Calm down? Calm fucking down? Are you fucking crazy? You touch me, I'll tell Seka. Fucking idiot.

ANDREW. And she started crying. Sitting there sobbing while I got my stuff together.

OKSANA. He walks around the room, packing up his shit, and I think the main thing is not to cry in front of him-

ANDREW. Then off we go down the hall. All the girl's heads poking out of the doorways, no fucking clue what was up.

OKSANA. If he thinks I'm a whore, he's in for a fucking surprise.

2. Bus

ANDREW. At the bus station, I had an idea.

OKSANA. He says to me, you stand here, have a smoke. I'll go in and get the tickets. The desk's crowded. Me – I'm just standing there smoking and thinking about what a son of a bitch Seka is. He doesn't give a shit about anyone else. I could work for the exams, pass them, get a grant. There's loads of people doing that. They come and live in the dorm and get expelled, but they carry on living there for years and nothing happens. It's easier for guys, of course. They just move to the girls' floor, pick a girl, and stick around. But it's harder for a girl to get taken in. The fucking pigeons have it alright. They just hang out here. No worries about grants or rooms, and every day's a holiday.

ANDREW. I got the tickets and came back out. She's standing there staring at the pigeons.

OKSANA. We're getting on the bus and I just have this feeling. Like I'm going home. I hate the countryside. The dances. And the guys are all village idiots. Cultural life – basically drinking and fighting. Not that I go to the theatre here I guess. And not that Seka ever takes me to the movies.

ANDREW. So we're on the bus, and I think, well I should at least say something.

OKSANA. And now he turns to me with his puppy-dog face and says.

ANDREW. Sorry it's turned out like this.

OKSANA. I don't need your fucking pity.

ANDREW. It's not pity. I just...

OKSANA. Just sit there and shut up. It's a shitty enough situation for me without you talking to me as well.

ANDREW. Oh and it's not shitty for me? I've got it fucking worse than you.

OKSANA. Calm the fuck down. And fuck you. Look. There's the street I went to college in, and that's where I hung out with the girls on City Day. Wooden houses. The old watchtower they keep saying they're gonna turn into a bar, a monastery, the barracks. Forest.

ANDREW. She didn't notice we got on the wrong bus. I'm not going to tell her right now. I'll tell her when we arrive. I was thinking it was all over. Of course, there's more to come. I always thought I had to have been put here for a reason. I have proof of that too. Solid proof. Back in the eighth grade me and Mishka Astakhov were going to go to the School Of Communications in Arkhangelsk. It was all arranged. The paperwork was signed and they'd made the offer. I even studied. Like a week before the exams I learned some geometry. I rode around with Mishka at night on motorbikes, spending the last days before we went away, smoking, hanging out. Dreaming that soon we'd be walking round Arkhangelsk. And then the Colorado beetles came. These poisonous larvae, bright red, and they stripped the potato plants back to the stalks. Never seen them before. Just that one year. The old women were all saying the US has sent bio-weapons. Weaponised beetles. And we were all gonna die of starvation because potatoes were all we grew. Long story short, every morning I got on the bike and went to the fields, and I filled a half-litre jar with these fucking grubs and I siphoned in some gas from the tank and lit it. And one day I was watching them burn and I suddenly felt so sick. Puked my guts up. Didn't feel any better. In the evening Mishka and me were riding around and I still felt feeling terrible. Woozy, like I was stoned. So I suggested going for a swim. Maybe it'd help. We went for a swim and I still felt shitty. Sick as a dog. Like, that night I thought I was going to die. My mum phoned the hospital and said «Go to the Emergency Room, the one our neighbour Aunt Sveta works at» – so I went and she examined my eyes, and she checked out my stomach and the rest, and when she pushed her fingers over my liver she just stopped and said. Right. We're done. Jaundice. I was in quarantine for three weeks. Everyone had to get vaccinations. Nobody else got it. Mishka went to Arkhangelsk and passed the entrance exams. I went back to school. And in four months Mishka had quit. Ran away. He said it was so fucking harsh – the hazing was so bad and the freshmen got beaten so brutally the walls in the room it happened in were covered in blood. Mishka stopped his education at

the eighth grade, did his army service, started working as a welder. No fucking future. And I finished school and got into college. And I think that wasn't an accident. I think God was watching over me. I think he sent a plague of locusts. Colorado beetles and jaundice, but same difference, eh? He did that so I didn't go to the technical school. There's something else I have to do with my life. Become a great musician or a great poet. Or maybe it's all so I can kill Maronov. Maybe he's going to become a new Hitler or build a dirty bomb? Although I reckon it's probably something on the creative side. An artist. Something like that. I mean I can't draw but that's kind of optional. It's not the Renaissance any more, thank fuck. I'm not going to kill anyone. It's all OK. Everything's gonna be OK. Right?

OKSANA. A three-room flat in a city. A floor lamp. Work anywhere, as an archivist maybe, or in a shop. Or in a firm. A business that pays a lot even if you don't quite know exactly what it does. Apparently the bosses fuck all the women in firms like that. It's tradition. It's accepted. Fair enough, let them, as long as your husband doesn't find out. Especially if the boss is cute like Seka. No. Better Seka's the husband and the boss is even cuter. No, Seka's the boss and there's another husband and he's cute and kind. Not greedy. But not some goon who can't take care of money either. We'd go to the movies every week. Maybe somewhere in the south, although there are fucking wars everywhere now. Could get ourselves killed wherever. I'd cook for him, have to, wash, do laundry. Bear him a son. Why not? I'd push a kid out for a good man. When I first saw Seka I used to dream about him. That he had a wife somewhere. Like this toad of a woman. But a beautiful kid. And they'd go to the movies together and I'd say, you go. Let me stay here and take care of the baby.

ANDREW. When I get famous I'll buy a house in a village. Or build one. Two stories for sure. Study on the second floor, looking out over the forest. Wake up in the morning to the sound of the birds. Nothing to do because I'm already in the encyclopedia. On the curriculum. Guitar all cabled and ready to go. Music up the ass. Speaker stack. Samurai sword on the wall. Next to it an abstract painting and on the table a manuscript. A novel called «My Life». No. «My Triumph». No. «My Defeats». That's cool. Everyone can see how humble that is. He got everything he wanted and he only remembers the defeats. He wandered from defeat to defeat. Live like that til I'm old. When you know you'll be remembered, there's no fear in dying. However it happens, it's all good.

OKSANA. It'd be so lovely if everyone just died. I mean dying alone's not fun. Even if you know heaven's waiting for you. But with all the family in the room, kids, grandkids, watching, waiting for you to go. Why not just hit a button – switch everything off. Not bombs, or chemicals, but just gone, without pain. A clean planet. Forests, oceans, but no people. That's be amazing. Nobody hurt. Fun, even. Someone who's worked all his life. Saved millions, and then – voilà! Everyone's equalised. And it's interesting to think – where would all the souls go? The trees? Humans will pick a fight anywhere, even if they were trees. We're bastards. The pine's going – 'hey birch, get your fucking branches out of my space'. Then they fight with branches. Then some weapons research. A neutron chainsaw, and it starts over again.

ANDREW. The bus pulled up at the bridge. The driver turned round and shouted «Tickets to the bridge, you're here.» I took her hand, pulled her towards the exit.

OKSANA. I was so lost in thought I didn't notice where we were. Never been to Oskol before anyway. We stopped at a bridge and he took my hand and dragged me off the bus. So there we were. Standing at the bus stop. Bridge on the right, road on the left, and a field all around us. «What happens now», I said? «What's next? Is this Oskol?»

ANDREW. Kind of. Look. I've had an idea.

OKSANA. I couldn't work it out at first. He'd bought tickets going in the opposite direction. The complete opposite. Like a fool I hadn't even looked at the sign on the bus. I'm fucked. What do I tell Seka?

ANDREW. She was pissed off, obviously. Maybe she was thinking I was taking her to the woods. Drown her in a lake or something.

OKSANA. He's jabbering about his mama.

ANDREW. Do you get it? Mama will give me the money. I'll pay Seka what I owe him and it's cleared. I don't have to kill anyone. Seka can find someone else to do it.

OKSANA. Right.

ANDREW. Suddenly she's calm. Seemed she wasn't into the murder thing either. She even seemed a bit happier, I'd say.

OKSANA. She's definitely good for the money?

ANDREW. For sure.

OKSANA. Come on, then. Where's your rich mother?

ANDREW. I wasn't actually certain she'd give me the money. She opened a shop six months ago. Converted a trailer and invested all her cash in the stock. She even put my dad on an allowance for his smokes and his booze. But I had cast-iron argument. If only...

OKSANA. Are you a fucking idiot? It says it's fifty kilometres to Shichengi from here.

ANDREW. Not my fault. This is as far as the money got us.

OKSANA. So what are we gonna do? Walk?

ANDREW. Hitch..

OKSANA. Who's going to stop out here, shit-for-brains?

ANDREW. Don't know. Truckers, maybe? They get pretty bored. They might want passengers.

– Road

OKSANA. Every trucker's got a No Hitchers sign on the windscreen. In the blue paint on the bus stop, someone's scratched «Davydov is an asshole» It's like the local paper. Today's headlines, Davydov's still an asshole. I wonder who Davydov is? Fat, bald, businessman. They don't write about guys like that on bus stops though. Some kid. Pissed off a girl or something. Now he's famous as an asshole on the Moscow-Arkhangelsk bus route.

ANDREW. When I was a kid we were playing with knives behind our house – me, Bor'ka and Natashka Sigalyovy – Sigalyata. One finger, then two, then three. They lived upstairs, and she'd always play the piano until my grandma knocked on the ceiling with the mop. Things were easy from about four years old. My grandma had a headache – smashed her skull in the war. She'd been dying for years. Headache, then shoulders, chin, lips, nose, eyebrows, forehead. Natashka started hanging out with soldiers, got married, to a soldier I guess, I don't really remember, but throwing the knife was tricky, must have been the sun – you had to throw it up towards the moon, catch it behind your back. Natashka went to see some guy, came back, her and the guy owed someone money, someone wanted to kill him. The knife wouldn't go in. I lost the game and Bor'ka carved a piece of rowan, a tiny piece not much bigger than a matchstick, and used the knife to pound it into the ground, I had to pull it out with my teeth. My face was in the dirt.

OKSANA. You fucking asshole. Why didn't you stop that car?

ANDREW. Nobody's stopping. Can't you see that?

OKSANA. You ass-hat. What are they seeing? Some psycho car-jacker waving a knife around. Would you stop for that?

ANDREW. So you go and stop one.

OKSANA. I fucking will, then we'll see.

ANDREW. So a car comes along. A green Zaporozhets. Only not towards Shichenga but back towards Volokovets. She walks to the edge of the road, puts her thumb out, the car stops. There are two old guys in the car. Like, a hundred and fifty. They're smiling. Get in little girl and let's go for a ride.

OKSANA. I'm going back to the city. I'm going to tell Seka what's gone on and I'm gonna leave him to deal with this shit on his own.

ANDREW. Fucking bitch. Are you trying to get away?

OKSANA. He got so pissed. Threw down his knife, ran to the car, grabbed hold of me – waved the grandpas away. Keep on driving oldsters. They laughed – youngsters' issues, cough cough, puttered away in their rust bucket.

ANDREW. What the fuck?

OKSANA. What? I have to sit here with you all night? Get your fucking hands off me.

ANDREW. I felt myself going red. Got even angrier. What's up with her? Is she crazy or what?

OKSANA. Then he starts yelling. It's my fault I'm stuck out here. If I didn't want to go I should just have refused to come. I just wanted him to shut up. Shut up. Shut up. Shut up.

ANDREW. I was trying to explain that it's her that's in the wrong. That actually she's only got herself to blame for ending up out here. She's a free agent and she made a choice to come here. If not consciously then unconsciously. But she wouldn't listen.

OKSANA. I crossed over to the other side, stuck my thumb out again, straight away stopped a BMW heading the other direction.

ANDREW. She got in the car like she wasn't hanging around. I ran to it and got in the other side. The driver was a guy in a white shirt. He told me to watch out for his suit. It was on a hanger next my head. I hadn't noticed.

OKSANA. The car smelled good, and I was really conscious I hadn't showered in two days. In the dorm there's one shower for a hundred and twenty rooms, so the queue takes forever, and you can only really use them at night. And people just fuck in them all the time anyway. Although me and Seka never did...

ANDREW. He was obviously some kind of businessman. He said «I'm headed to Arkhangelsk, so I'll drop you in Shichenga, as long as you tell the cops there's been an accident back there. I've got business to take care of. I can't go to the cops, there'll be all these procedures and it'll be a pain in the ass.

OKSANA. He said a Zaporozhets had gone up the embankment and hit a tree. Two old men. One survived.

ANDREW. Looks like that old man was destined to die today. But not Oksanka. So I wondered – why's she here? I used to not give a shit about that stuff. Main thing was being remembered after I'm gone. Maybe I'm smarter now. Maybe I want respect while I'm still alive. Money too, although that's just paper. I'm not a greedy person – not business-greedy – not my thing. Like this guy, he didn't just give us a ride, he wants us to go to the cops in return. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours, and I'll make people believe that's the way it's working cos that's how I'll sell stuff. And then the ads start appearing everywhere. When there didn't exist before. Before you worked for the people around you. Now it's for the house, the car, the cash. Travel. I used to see myself walking, camping, seeing the world that way. Now I want a beach resort in the Maldives. This guy's probably been in the sea a hundred times. I've been once. In Riga. In the winter.

OKSANA. And that time my period was late. Please don't let me be pregnant. They say if you have one abortion you'll never have kids. He still wouldn't marry me, even if I was pregnant. Literature class, in the fifth grade, room fourteen on the second floor. My legs felt sticky. And I saw blood on my legs, and my dress, and the chair. The teacher took me to the toilet, gave me a pad, sent me home. And none of the class made fun of me as like they were scared, because this was a new thing. I was the first. Nobody knew what this thing was.

ANDREW. We got out of the car and he drove off. Not a word. Not even a goodbye. Even the car was quiet, like it was sneaking away.

OKSANA. Didn't tell us anything about the life of a businessman. Didn't want to talk to mere mortals, apparently. I was ashamed of how I looked. Like I'd slept in a dumpster. Some kind of beggar princess.

ANDREW. It's like a picture postcard. River here, bridge there, forest on the left, mountain on the right and on top of it, an old church, which was a primary school, then a vocational college, and now is a church again. Shops and a club. This band *Stalker* played there once. Andrey Derzhavin. Good gig.

OKSANA. Of course the village was a shit hole. The club was an actual building I guess. Trailers instead of shops.

ANDREW. I showed her the police station. The old wooden building and the new brick one. The wooden one's been there since 1937 when the two previous villages were amalgamated. There was a drunk tank that the drunks used to tunnel out of. They'd catch them straight away. Nowhere to hide around here.

OKSANA. We stopped by the police station and sitting behind the security bars there's this fat kid with glasses who was in Andrew's class. They forgot about the old men in the car wreck straight away, and started talking about some guy called Sashka Tugarinov who'd hanged himself in a woodshed while he was wasted.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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