

Visiman

(waterember)¹

A walk through a learning trail

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¹ Transl. note: ember in Hungarian means man/human; the original Slovak subtitle is also a combination of Slovak word for water and Hungarian ember: vodný ember)

A list of characters

EUPHROSINE

DEVIL

SATAN

DELUSION

METELLA

MACHILLA

MUFURC

SHE-BEAR

KINGFISHER

LITTLE BITTERN

SAND MARTIN

WATER RAIL

LABOURER 1

LABOURER 2

LABOURER 3

LABOURER 4

WITCH

TOXIC CREATURE

CHORUS OF FORGOTTEN MYTHICAL BEINGS

1. Euphrosine (5 fragments)
2. Chorus of forgotten mythical beings (5)
3. Nightmares – Delusion, Devil Satan (4)
4. Fairies – Metella, Machilla, Mufurc (4)
5. Labourers (3)
6. She-bear (3)
7. Delegation of birds living in the wetland – Water Rail, Little Bittern, Sand Martin, Kingfisher (3)
8. Witch, Toxic Creature (3)
9. All (1)

(Ed. note: The first digit identifies specific storyline, the second stands for the occurrence of the line within the story.)

EUPHROSINE

I'm thinking of what you never told me. Mum. I need the sentence you never said.

I want to know what you never told me. There are more of the sentences. I can pick.

For instance. I don't like examples.

Or all that you never told me is an endlessly long sentence. Can I ask you?

Can I ask you whether I may ask you? That which you didn't tell me: was that a question?

Didn't tell me or kept secret? Gratuitously or deliberately? A punishment or reward?

Do you want me to know?

Never mind we don't hold hands. Never mind you don't hold my hand.

It doesn't hurt.

You're pretty in the puddle. Pretty reflection. Mum.

CHORUS OF FORGOTTEN MYTHICAL BEINGS

We, the definitely forgotten mythical beings,

On the most unlikely day of intransience, ^[]_[SEP]about you, Visiman,

After many deliberations,

About you, Visiman,

After innumerable negotiations, do you hear, Visiman?

After endless disputes, do you understand, Visiman?

After lively discussions, always about you only, Visiman,

After vital polemics,

We had to, Visiman,

After exasperated debates,

It was hard, Visiman,

After painful decisions,

You were absent

after unbearable silences

we at last decided,
about you, Visiman!
At last we came to an opinion, about you, Visiman!
At last we dared to say that you, Visiman,
You who are absent even now:
you, Visiman,
you, Visiman,
don't exist!
It hurts.
It hurts!
It hurts?
Yes, it hurts!
It hurt!
It hurts us!
We feel how hurts!
For you, Visiman, aren't here!
Even now you aren't here!

3/1

DELUSION What are you doing here?
EUPHROSINE Waking.
SATAN Here?
EUPHROSINE I know my way here.
DEVIL Really?
EUPHROSINE Walks with my mother always led through there.
SATAN Always? Somewhat priggish.
DEVIL Why do you get annoyed by facts?
DELUSION Always.
SATAN Have they led through here?
EUPHROSINE They do. You are right. They do.

DEVIL Aren't you bluffing?

DELUSION Sure she is.

SATAN Oy, but you can sense unease. The question is whether you understand it.

EUPHROSINE You are right indeed. Appearance is just so.

DELUSION Like what?

SATAN Local.

DEVIL Whose side are you on?

SATAN She is just walking. It's hard. To resist temptation. For you not to have a goal. Or for her. Or it.

EUPHROSINE Only she no longer holds my hand.

DEVIL Fishy.

SATAN Well, well, well. No joking about invisibility!

DELUSION No?

SATAN Alright, I just feel like it.

EUPHROSINE By the way, who are you and what are you doing here? Since we no longer understand a thing.

DELUSION You know your way. Here.

EUPHROSINE Alright. I heard everything

DEVIL Did you?

SATAN Forget it.

DEVIL Though it would be incredibly mythically logical.

SATAN I always get chills when I hear mythical.

DEVIL No, no, I object.

DELUSION I find terminological wars ever so tedious.

SATAN Superstitions. Mythical beings. Makes me sick. Superstitions. Simply and proudly. Superstitions. Yes. Especially proudly. We are mere superstitions.

EUPHROSINE Do you hear? I heard everything.

DELUSION Have you confessed?

DEVIL Has it crossed your mind as well?

DELUSION Indeed!

SATAN She's here, why the puzzle?

DELUSION You came at the last minute.

SATAN If we believe it, then after the last minute.

DEVIL You no longer exist.

DELUSION Sorry.

EUPHROSINE I walk. So I am. And not alone. I stroll.

SATAN A spy. Ordinary, pathetic spy.

DEVIL If only.

DELUSION If only.

1/2

EUPHROSINE

Sequence. What's sequence to me.

What would I do with a sequence.

Sand dune. Larger lake. Smaller lake. Wetland. Meadow.

Rice field. Marsh. Fertile fields.

Frog marshes. Alluvial meadows. State road. Sand deposits. Floodplain forests.

Unregulated river section. Lakes. Two swamps. Two lakes. Two areas split by a state road.

One dune. One rice field. How many fields? How many meadows?

Water. Sand. Forest. Meadow. Swamp. Water. Water. Rice.

Water. Water. Meadow. Water. Meadow. Water. Water. Water.

Ipeľ.² Martonka. Big Dune. Cúdenická wetland. Tešmácky swamp. Or the other way around. Tešmácka wetland. Cúdenický swamp. Surdocké meadows. Ipeľ. Rice. Fertile fields.³

Wetland. Dune. Fertile fields. Meadow. Lake, Forest. Road. River. Swamp. Field.

Cúdenica. Surdoky. Martonka, Tešmák. Big Sand. Rice Field. Ipeľ

I need a sequence.

I'll go crazy without a sequence.

² Transl note: Ipeľ is a river that makes up part of the border between Slovakia and Hungary. It flows into the Danube near Szob in Hungary.

³ Transl note: Some of these sites are stations on an actual learning trail along the river Ipeľ.

4/1

METELLA The night is biting. Come with us.

MACHILLA We, too bite.

EUPHROSINE Night? Though, it's morning.

MACHILLA Not always.

METELLA Not forever.

EUPHROSINE Do you bite?

MUFURC Don't worry, this is a different night.

METELLA I want to be a night!

MACHILLA I want to bite!

MUFURC Don't worry, our bite is different than that of a night.

EUPHROSINE Does sequence matter? You first. Then night. Or the other way around?

Does it matter?

MUFURC Metella! Machilla! We've got to consult.

MACHILLA Mufure! Metella! We've got to consult.

METELLA Machilla! Mufure! We've got to consult.

3/2

DELUSION Don't get frightened!

EUPHROSINE I know your name.

SATAN Double-edged.

EUPHROSINE Delusion, Satan, Devil.

DEVIL Where from?

EUPHROSINE No idea.

DELUSION I said that!

DEVIL No, I did!

SATAN The magic of names. An old trick.

EUPHROSINE It's proven. It still works.

DELUSION Don't be fooled.

SATAN We don't have soul either.

1/3

EUPHROSINE

It's a Ramsar site now.

It was entered yesterday.

In the list.

The international list. Of Ramsar sites.

You were happy. Mum!

I was happy.

Mum!

The entire Ipele basin was happy.

Mum!

And you disappeared. The next day.

You achieved what you wanted.

Fifteen years of your life. Fifteen years of our life.

We won't leave the wetland unprotected.

We won't leave the waterfowl habitat to their fate.

You vanished.

Don't be upset with me.

I will carry on talking to you.

I must constantly talk to you.

I am addressing you on the Ramsar site.

4/2

MUFURC The night is wet.

EUPHROSINE I understand water.

METELLA The states she gets in!

MACHILLA Fluctuating.

EUPHROSINE Me?

MUFURC Extremely.

MACHILLA That's a state.

METELLA Only it fluctuates.

EUPHROSINE I sense something.

MACHILLA It's the water state.

MUFURC Extremely fluctuating.

METELLA The water state is extremely fluctuating.

EUPHROSINESAT Do I have water states?

MUFURC Talk to the river.

METELLA Since you didn't listen to the night.

MACHILLA Is it too wet?

EUPHROSINE I want to speak with Mum.

MUFURC Do we know her?

EUPHROSINE She made you up.

METELLA Well, well, well. The things we learn tonight.

MACHILLA We are mere wet thoughts.

MUFURC Do we like it?

EUPHROSINE Mum, why didn't you tell me anything?

MUFURC Ridiculous! People don't ask because they would be interested in the answer. They want to avoid responsibility of having their own opinion.

MACHILLA Nonsense! I see it quite the opposite. People think that only their own opinion can bring them salvation. Hence, every question they ask is a desperate statement.

METELLA Nonsense! It's totally different! People talk, engage in dialogue always with themselves, yet they don't believe it. So questions merely serve as alibi.

EUPHROSINE Is it really night, Mum?

LABOURER 1 A spade is a spade, and a mattock is a mattock.

LABOURER 2 Though only at present.

LABOURER 3 I'm happy. I sense that you again came up with a neat speculation.

LABOURER 4 I'm fluttered.

LABOURER 1 A spade is a spade in at any time. a mattock is a mattock at every time.

LABOURER 2 Memory can be deceptive.

LABOURER 4 I am no longer fluttered. I was afraid you might come up with greater nonsense.

LABOURER 3 So, what I feel now is your anxiety.

LABOURER 4 Flutter is no virus.

LABOURER 3 It is indeed. Indeed. I just proved it.

LABOURER 2 See, even flutter isn't always flutter.

LABOURER 1 Flutter is an intense symptom of variability of existence.

LABOURER 2 Are you suggesting that a spade doesn't exist so intensely?

LABOURER 1 Not so variably.

LABOURER 2 My variability is a variability of spade.

LABOURER 3 Now you calmed me down. The fact that a spade exists through me puts my mind at peace.

LABOURER 4 I am fluttered again.

LABOURER 3 See how honest I am even in that global variability? I honestly gave you back that flutter of yours.

LABOURER 4 No! No! No! This isn't the original flutter of mine. You chipped it.

LABOURER 3 When I got it, it didn't seem to be intact.

LABOURER 2 True, we do need the spade and mattock we can trust.

LABOURER 3 I would even start practicing the trust.

LABOURER 4 Typical. Let's do it. No second thoughts.

LABOURER 3 You think plenty. Even instead of me. And instead of the spade. And the mattock.

LABOURER 1 Spade and mattock aren't spade and mattock to meet our expectations; they are such to our surprise.

LABOURER 3 Dare I remind you that we've got a shovel and rake here as well.

CHORUS OF FORGOTTEN MYTHICAL BEINGS

Visiman doesn't exist.

From now on there is no Visiman. Not only does he not exist, but he doesn't exist again, yet again he doesn't exist, once again he doesn't exist.

Who actually is he, the Visiman? We don't know.

We forgot.

The Visiman, who might have once existed, has vanished long ago.

The void does hurt!

So, at least let him not exist!

Are we thus better off?

Perhaps!

Was that the aim, for us to be better off? Yes.

We've long longed for it! We wanted to take revenge.

No, no, we won't admit that. Visiman doesn't exist, but he hurts.

Given he hasn't appeared until the last of men forgot about us, we're angry.

Visiman had no compassion with us,

So we should we still empathise with him. We are forgotten,

Merely forgotten.

Let him be inexistent,

One who is even impossible to forget.

SHE-BEAR I'm not crying. Only I don't know where I am.

EUPHROSINE There is no bear in this area.

SHE-BEAR Something hurts. It hurt tremendously. Though the fatigue is stronger. Now it hurts, only tremendously.

EUPHROSINE It hurts.

SHE-BEAR Multiple points at once. I don't even know what hurts more. I am tired.

EUPHROSINE Isn't fear less than horror?

SHE-BEAR I guess so. Though the fatigue confused my senses.

EUPHROSINE Hurts?

SHE-BEAR I have no idea who I am.

EUPHROSINE Don't be surprised. You're in a wrong place. This isn't your home.

SHE-BEAR But I've got a son.

EUPHROSINE If he is with you in a wrong place, that is since you are together, then he is in the right place. And since you are with him, you, too, are in the right place. So I've got to correct myself. You both are in a wrong place, but you are together in the right place after all.

SHE-BEAR I lost him.

EUPHROSINE Lost him?

SHE-BEAR See! See! You, too, thought I was male.

EUPHROSINE Sorry.

SHE-BEAR Do males look like this?

EUPHROSINE Sorry.

SHE-BEAR Lone male is more entitled to be a bear in a wrong place.

EUPHROSINE You're delicate.

SHE-BEAR At least don't lie. Nonsense. I am not delicate.

EUPHROSINE Your delicateness is to be noticed, identified, found ...

SHE-BEAR Now you understand why everything hurts me? I'm losing everything.

EUPHROSINE I lost my mother.

SHE-BEAR I don't even know who to be angry at.

EUPHROSINE Indeed. Indeed. I don't know that either.

SHE-BEAR I was in love, too.

EUPHROSINE In love?

SHE-BEAR If I may. As a delicate she-bear.

EUPHROSINE I wouldn't ridicule you.

SHE-BEAR Sorry.

EUPHROSINE Have you been in love?

SHE-BEAR I did get lost. I don't know where I am. I don't know who I am. Though I did have a son. I sure did have a son. I was bound to have a son.

EUPHROSINE I only lost my mother. And I'm desperate. Alright. I'm lying. I am not desperate. I don't want to admit it to myself. I am unwilling to acknowledge it to myself. I keep talking to my mother. Perhaps I see her in you, too.

SHE-BEAR Though you didn't even notice I am female. Bear is male, right? Sure thing. A wandering bear cannot be female. She-bear sits at home. Adventurers can only be men. Let she-bear look after the offspring. As long as she doesn't lose them!

EUPHROSINE You're right. I was blind.

SHE-BEAR Even she-bears are distrustful. Especially in a wrong place.

EUPHROSINE And who were you in love with?

SHE-BEAR I'm ashamed of it.

EUPHROSINE Did you something silly?

SHE-BEAR Perhaps I really am delicate.

EUFROZINA You're strong.

SHE-BEAR But that's quite something.

EUFROZINA No wonder. Emotions.

SHE-BEAR Though with a wolf?

EUFROZINA What about the wolf?

SHE-BEAR Not even a genuine wolf.

EUPHROSINE I'm not following.

SHE-BEAR She fell in love with a werewolf.

EUPHROSINE That's quite something. When?

SHE-BEAR Two days ago?

EUPHROSINE Are there werewolves here?

SHE-BEAR Aren't they?

EUPHROSINE As a matter of fact ... you, too, are here.

SHE-BEAR I saw its shadow.

EUPHROSINE And fell in love?

SHE-BEAR He's just got transformed.

EUPHROSINE Wasn't it a lynx?

SHE-BEAR Not a werewolf? Werelynx?

EUPHROSINE Love on the first shadow.

SHE-BEAR On the second.

EUPHROSINE That's another matter then.

SHE-BEAR But I'm looking for my son.

EUPHROSINE Let's be friends.

3/3

DELUSION Don't you often look in the water?

DEVIL Water lies!

SATAN Don't you trust yourself in the water!

DEVIL Don't say anything.

DELUSION Just make noises.

SATAN The water will lead you to itself.

DELUSION Just whether you recognise yourself.

DEVIL Whether you come to believe.

SATAN Your mother, too, is just water.

DELUSION Alien water!

DEVIL Alien to whom?

SATAN Where are you looking?

DELUSION What did you say?

3/4

EUPHROSINE

A river without meanders is like life without stories. I won't repeat it.

You never said that. You never articulated this.

River, meanders, life, stories. Slimy words.

This sentence has never been said. You never thought of this.

And yet, I so would need this sentence. On time.

This sentence makes sense under water. Only how to climb out of the water once the sentence is said. ^[SEP]I'm looking for that water.

Our precise water. Everything vanished.

This is your sentence. That has been articulated.

Re-wildering.

That, too, is your word.

On time.

I'm late.

7/1

WATER RAIL Are we moving yet?

LITTLE BITTERN We seem to be moving.

SAND MARTIN They left for here from somewhere.

KINGFISHER We are going exactly according to plan.

WATER RAIL Aren't we where we use to be?

SAND MARTIN You're provoking!

LITTLE BITTERN Actually, have we got a plan?

KINGFISHER And we have no time.

LITTLE BITTERN So we aren't going according plan after all?

KINGFISHER We don't have time according to plan.

WATER RAIL And who are we?

SAND MARTIN Water Rail, Little Bittern, Sand Martin, Kingfisher.

WATER RAIL Not like that. Now in motion who are we.

SAND MARTIN Have we changed?

LITTLE BITTERN Beyond recognition.

KINGFISHER A delegation.

WATER RAIL Is that how much we've changed?

KINGFISHER A delegation.

SAND MARTIN Someone must have entrusted us.

KINGFISHER Indeed.

SAND MARTIN To do what? What did they entrust us to do?

LITTLE BITTERN But who? Who entrusted us? I haven't spoken with anyone for weeks.

WATER RAIL Though we've now been together for over a week.

KINGFISHER The others.

LITTLE BITTERN What about the others?

KINGFISHER Entrusted us.

SAND MARTIN To do what?

KINGFISHER That I forgot already. Let's go on.

8/1

WITCH I hid you. Witches are indefatigable creatures that cumulate evil and turn into reality everyone's desire to vanish from this misguided world. Yet solitude and emotional thirst lie behind every evil.

They wanted to keep it secret from me. Visiman was the one to tell me. I had a dream about him. We even met once. Outside the dream. Once I knew you exist, I told myself I'd hide you. After all, even a mutated creature must be quite lonely. You'll be my pet.

TOXIC CREATURE I didn't know that.

WITCH That you're unique?

TOXIC CREATURE That Visiman decides everything.

WITCH No kidding! Visiman is a lost seed in an insulted river.

TOXIC CREATURE Tell me about him. And you can keep caressing me, I won't poison you.

6/2

SHE-BEAR I smell the odour.

EUPHROSINE Of the son.

SHE-BEAR Of the female.

EUPHROSINE Of oneself.

SHE-BEAR An odour of the rival.

EUPHROSINE Who do you fight for?

SHE-BEAR I fight for the wolf. She fights for the human. Or the other way around.

EUPHROSINE Are you jealous?

SHE-BEAR I'll kill.

EUPHROSINE You'll brutally murder a shadow.

SHE-BEAR A rival.

EUPHROSINE Have you seen her?

SHE-BEAR I smell the odour.

EUPHROSINE You haven't forgotten about your son.

SHE-BEAR I have. Though not that I would have forgotten specifically about him. Yet, by having forgotten about myself, I lost him.

EUPHROSINE You're confused.

SHE-BEAR I lost everything. And you even came up with the lynx.

EUPHROSINE Lynx is actually invisible.

SHE-BEAR That makes it even worse. Lately I've been only longing for the impossible.

EUPHROSINE But you're a proud she-bear.

SHE-BEAR Though I don't know what I saw. As if their shadow was the gate to void. A country Outside. Outside everything so far. The worst thing is that I lost myself for the second time. I lost myself being lost already. I saw the shadow of change. The contours were changing into infinity, meat turned into shadow, infinity became meat, and the contours vanished in the shadow. I fell in love with one and suddenly there were two. I loved two and suddenly there was the one. His scent made me faint, and suddenly smelled of her. I don't know whether I might have been part of this galanty show, of the olfactory trap. Bear trap.

EUPHROSINE So wash up!

SHE-BEAR But I really forgot about my son.

What are we to make of the fact that he didn't arrive for a single mythical general assembly?

We understand the destructive gesture very well., we understand the cowardly protest,

Visiman is afraid to exist!

So, act like man!

So, pull yourself together!

So, don't worry!

So, exist!

Visiman doesn't exist, for existence hurts him!

We were forgotten!

Two days ago the last woman died,

who thought of us twice in her lifetime,

even though she didn't realise that, for she was twice angry with her son,

Though we did survive that,

pardon,

no, we don't know other word,

that is the right word,

survived,

even if we have already been forgotten,

we, too, have our pride,

Visiman doesn't exit even in oblivion!

He didn't keep a single rule and a regulation and a norm,

He didn't keep a single commitment and duty

towards invisibility and honest myth!

We shall thus officially strip Visiman of legal existence!

If, by chance, he happens to be able to continue to exist, he would do so utterly illegally!

If, by chance, he is to exist with skin on his face, then he is doing so utterly illegally!

LABOURER 1 Though every soil has character!

LABOURER 2 We, too, have character.

LABOURER 4 We are night characters.

LABOURER 3 We will help the poor nature.

LABOURER 2 We have a problem zone.

LABOURER 4 We will eliminate the problem. We are working in secret.

LABOURER 1 So that the zone can blossom.

LABOURER 3 Metaphorically.

LABOURER 2 I stand for literally.

LABOURER 4 The country is our image.

LABOURER 3 Metaphorically.

LABOURER 2 Literally.

LABOURER 1 Nature lost herself and we shall return her to her.

LABOURER 2 And since the essence is a sinful matter, we shall do it by night.

LABOURER 4 I don't know whether sinful is the right word.

LABOURER 2 I don't know either.

LABOURER 1 It is not the right word.

LABOURER 3 There are no wrong words.

LABOURER 4 Only bad pipes.

LABOURER 3 Stop nagging!

LABOURER 1 It's the hour of haunted pipes.

LABOURER 2 What do you know about pipes?

LABOURER 4 Just don't cry.

LABOURER 1 Deadly pipes attack after midnight.

LABOURER 2 Don't look into the well else the Witch takes you!

LABOURER 4 Are you suggesting that the pipe is a makeshift well?

LABOURER 3 Metaphorically.

LABOURER 2 Long since – literally.

LABOURER 1 After all, our drainage retains the water instead of draining it.

LABOURER 3 I looked into the pipe, By chance. Meanwhile I wasn't even thinking of a pipe. And it was dark.

LABOURER 2 An offended pipe is the worst enemy.

LABOURER 4 Especially when the Which takes revenge.

LABOURER 3 Vain pipes don't know forgiveness.

LABOURER 1 Do you think we're out of favour?

LABOURER 3 For we are knee-deep in the swamp, unknown creatures jump from each of our holes; moreover, our minds are full of Witches instead of Playful Fairies of the Rice Field!

LABOURER 4 Who knows, even the Witch might be in a playful mood.

LABOURER 2 And she'll gladly and selflessly help us with the stupid drainage.

1/4

EUPHROSINE

I'm losing you!

Mothers change!

Let's not quarrel!

I tasted mud. I drank water from the river. I'll also taste rocks. Will even drink an entire puddle. Though I don't like their taste.

I'm afraid of seeing you on the bottom. I'll put you together from the remains. Mum!

I'm afraid of chewing you with the mouthful. I'll spit out the pieces on a pile at least.

I trusted you. Nothing is as it used to be.

That's why we must fight to ensure that nothing changes anymore. Yet I don't like the taste of anything anymore.

I suspect I wouldn't like the taste of you either. For you've vanished.

I hate the taste of vanishing.

Come back and I'll eat up the entire nature. After all, I no longer understand nature.

I'm impatient and startled. You always used to say:

Fifteen years isn't much. It took fifteen years until this site got on the international list of the Ramsar Convention.

Fifteen years isn't much. Initially I didn't know how long it would take. It took fifteen years. Just.

Fifteen years was just right. For everything. Just
It seemed to me that fifteen years was one minute.
One lush, swift minute that pleases without being a pain.
I lived three times fifteen years. Three splendid minutes. The fourth minute you vanished.
And I know all too well, that a minute lasts fifteen years. I have no strength to look for you
for fifteen years.
Mud, water, rocks won't give me the strength. Yet.
I feel like crying.
I don't want to cry for fifteen years.
That would be just right. Researchers would study me. Each piece of me, each drop of me.
I am, as yet, an undiscovered ecological corridor. I was made of fear and fear and fear and
inanity. Why don't I lead directly to you?
Fifteen years isn't much.

7/2

SAND MARTIN Being member of a delegation, does it mean freedom?

WATER RAIL As long as we don't know what kind of delegation we are members of.

LITTLE BITTERN We do?

KINGFISHER No.

WATER RAIL So we're free.

SAND MARTIN And don't we know what we are entrusted with?

WATER RAIL You just became free and you want to lose the freedom right away?

LITTLE BITTERN What is it you long for? Make up your mind! What is it?

WATER RAIL But don't deceive yourself.

KINGFISHER What if we are a delegation of observers?

SAND MARTIN An observer is an existing category.

WATER RAIL And what we are to observe?

LITTLE BITTERN Hold on, have we been observing until now, or are we to observe
from now on?

KINGFISHER Speculation is the death of observation.

WATER RAIL Good one! Who came up with it?

LITTLE BITTERN It might be the key to solving the problem.

SAND MARTIN Whoever said that, was the one to entrust us.

KINGFISHER I think I was the one to say that.

WATER RAIL Can you happen to be a double agent?

KINGFISHER Possibly.

SAND MARTIN So think of some goal.

LITTLE BITTERN Meaningful, please, meaningful.

KINGFISHER We do have a plan though.

WATER RAIL And are we sticking to the plan?

KINGFISHER I hope so.

SAND MARTIN Where is the plan?

KINGFISHER In my head.

WATER RAIL Would it be too cheap to ask where that head of yours might be?

KINGFISHER 90 flaps of the wings above the water, then 150 flaps of the wings along the left bank, then at a 179-degree angle 231 flaps of wings and 10 minutes rest, maximum refreshment 60 drops of water and 18 decagrams of insects. In the sequel, each course is taken in the opposite direction, and each number is doubled. After a break, everything turns around and everything doubles. After another break, nothing turns around and everything triples. And after a good sleep, negotiations can open.

LITTLE BITTERN What kind of tractate is that?

KINGFISHER A plan. That's the plan.

SAND MARTIN I got it.

CHRIAŠŤEL So we should get precisely where it is absolutely clear what we are to do.

LITTLE BITTERN Isn't there a special plan for waders?

KINGFISHER One plan per delegation.

LITTLE BITTERN This plan isn't to my scale at all.

WATER RAIL By the way, I meant to ask where butterflies are, frogs and all that diverse, sundry insects.

SAND MARTIN A delegation cannot be a permanent orgy.

LITTLE BITTERN Come-on, what are you staring. Come and wade! You, delegation!

MUFURC I don't feel the least like dancing!

METELLA And who orders us to do so?

MACHILLA Only and at most our instincts.

MUFURC Though our instincts are now mere prostheses.

MACHILLA Made of silicone?

METELLA Though I'd hope they were made on 4-D printer!

MACHILLA What did I say? Instincts?

MUFURC Instincts.

METELLA Instincts?

MACHILLA Apologies! Conscience.

MUFURC Alright, let's dance!

METELLA How did you get so confused?

MACHILLA Instincts look totally different from conscience.

METELLA Though it was you to confuse them.

MACHILLA I no longer know anything, I'm dancing already.

MUFURC Would it be a dance for four creatures? Females – all round.

EUPHROSINE Never mind I already lost both the instincts and conscience. I am only walking now.

MUFURC Have you lost taste as well? Then we'll understand each other.

WITCH I came to like you. What I like about you best is that I find you so repulsive that it is amusing. And my sentiment is full-bloodedly dangerous.

TOXIC CREATURE You promised me something!

WITCH Even your memory is toxic. You asked something of me.

TOXIC CREATURE Don't forget, I keep killing you all the time. If I want to.

WITCH Is it up to you?

TOXIC CREATURE Not entirely. It isn't easy to control me. Not even to myself. I am off the leash.

WITCH Even Visiman sometimes managed to startle himself.

TOXIC CREATURE Go on. What I heard is that Visiman doesn't quite exist.

WITCH He himself often wondered.

TOXIC CREATURE So did he or did he not exist?

WITCH Once, before dawn, he, too, woke up with this very thought – that he wasn't sure whether he lived or whether he just seemed to someone to be, or whether he never was.

TOXIC CREATURE Did he need help?

WITCH Indeed. Though the moment of mythical despair didn't come yet for him to admit.

1/5

EUPHROSINE

You were afraid.

Yet you were also curious whether it would happen.

You confessed to me that you first kissed by the river. You didn't know whether the muddy-wet scent came from the water or the boy.

The kiss always ended once you acquired the sense of a ruffle minnow fluttering in your mouth.

Though it wasn't repulsive.

It was amusing.

It was pleasingly surprising. It was genuine.

Fluttering fish cannot be a lie.

Other girls spoke of Marmara chub, barbel, of sneep, even of catfish, but none mentioned the minnow.

You didn't notice then, but you promptly understood that the minnow from the first kiss moved into your mouth.

That's why you always kissed hurriedly, fleetingly, jerkily.

So that you wouldn't fully confess that you have live fish instead of a tongue.

You were quite curious, when research opened on this site because of the Ramsar Convention, whether your tiny secret riffle minnow might make it into the study.

You left it to chance.

I don't know whether you eventually kissed any of the ichthyologists. Or did you opt for some fervent ornithologist? I don't know.

There were plenty of opportunities. 74 researchers. Of different sexes. You were single.

Yet, I'd probably seek the description of your mysterious fish in the studies in vain.^[SEP]I prefer looking for you.

I have this strange feeling that I've repeatedly walked past you. And you didn't want me to recognise you.

You didn't. Or didn't care. I don't want to know whether I'm looking for you in vain.

I know, the places that matter to you most, have long vanished.

The river got regulated.

Yet you didn't want to let yourself be regulated.

2/4

CHORUS OF FORGOTTEN MYTHICAL BEINGS

We addressed him: Visiman, Visiman ... We called him: Visiman, Visiman ...

We looked for him everywhere: everywhere, everywhere, to exhaustion ... We summoned him, recalled him ...

We kept recalling him, summoning him ... To no avail!

All to no avail!

Visiman!

And meanwhile they forgot about us ... What a nuisance!

Because of arbitrary hiding from the mythical and non-mythical world ...

Because of self-serving invisibility,

You, Visiman!

We sentence

To eternal hiding from yourself, so that you are perfectly invisible to yourself,

So you simply and naturally don't exist as much as impossible!

So that even he himself doesn't believe in his own existence,
Especially himself, no one.
So that he has no idea.
Mythical cruelty is unforgettable.
May you be protected by delusional chance!

3/4

DEVIL It was long ago.

SATAN Though it doesn't leave me at peace.

DELUSION That, back then, there were abundant fish in the river?

SATAN Not at all.

DEVIL Do you remember what used to be said then?

DELUSION You mean roast fish?

SATAN At the time, mythical creatures abounded everywhere.

DELUSION I abound even now.

DEVIL Everyone has to abound alone.

DELUSION It can be done in team.

DEVIL Still, you are only responsible for your own abounding.

DELUSION So, how was it with the roast fish?

DEVIL At the time people ate a lot of fish.

DELUSION Fish kept jumping into their mouth.

DEVIL And what was the best and cheapest side dish to go with roast fish?

DELUSION Steamed fish.

SATAN Could people sometimes confuse fish with mythical beings?

DEVIL What do you mean?

SATAN That sometimes they might have served steamed mythical being with the roast fish?

DELUSION And steamed fish might have sometimes been a side dish to the roast mythical being?

DEVIL Perhaps, I hope rarely. Both roast and steamed meat came from mythical beings?

SATAN Those might be a million-times long-forgotten times, though it still makes me concerned.

DELUSION Do you have to always think of that?

SATAN Worse so. I can see it clearly in front of my eyes.

DEVIL Roast mythical being on the plate?

SATAN Man is just biting a bit of the juicy fish meat.

DELUSION It's not fish.

SATAN It's us!

5/3

LABOURER 1 It takes so little!

LABOURER 2 Two pipes.

LABOURER 3 And a single ingenious lock.

LABOURER 4 And nature will at last be as natural as is natural.

LABOURER 2 Is the route set?

LABOURER 4 Nature will guide us.

LABOURER 1 I've been thinking at home.

LABOURER 3 Then it will be a challenge for you.

LABOURER 4 Setting the route has to always be a matter of dialogue.

LABOURER 2 With the spirit of the rice field!

LABOURER 3 Hope the spirit won't be prying in sloping the river!

LABOURER 1 You offer your pinkie and he grabs your entire hand.

LABOURER 2 We'll still be left with seven.

LABOURER 3 The spirit will quickly acquire the taste for the genuine labourer hands.

LABOURER 1 You taste them once and never want anything else.

LABOURER 4 Occupational hazard.

LABOURER 1 Everything is wet.

LABOURER 4 And everything will be even more wet.

LABOURER 3 Wetland is a terrible construction site.

LABOURER 2 Even terrifying.

LABOURER 4 Now we shall regulate the regulation.

LABOURER 1 Two pipes and a lock.

LABOURER 2 The times are gone when we wanted to tame everything.

LABOURER 3 Now we shall make everything wild!

LABOURER 1 With plastic pipes and an iron lock!

LABOURER 4 The impetuosity of nature must be controllable.

LABOURER 3 And our control has to be properly impetuous.

LABOURER 4 We aren't making a drainage but are replacing clotted capillaries.

LABOURER 2 Instead of thousands of concealed capillaries there will be one.

LABOURER 1 A groove.

LABOURER 3 The required gradient.

LABOURER 4 After all, this territory is a breeding pond. Transitional home for offspring.

Natural incubator.

LABOURER 2 We shall be sensitive!

LABOURER 4 The night is splendid.

6/3

SHE-BEAR

Don't laugh at me. I kissed the shadow.

Actually, only the place of a shadow. We don't have common language.

For I crossed the border. Accidentally.

First, accidentally. Then deliberately.

I crossed the borders. All.

I didn't know there were bear-borders. I threw myself on that shadow.

And now even I smell alien. I don't know what happened.

I heard crying, giggling, groaning, slapping, screaming, cracking, popping, slurping.

I didn't understand a sound. It wasn't in my head.

It was nowhere. I heard the words.

I didn't understand a single one. I didn't understand anything.

A strange man in a strange body of a wolf is making love with a strange she-bear thinking of a strange woman. And I threw myself on a mere shadow. On an empty place of a shadow..

I lost myself in that place. It was good.

The best.

I am disassembled and reassembled. Regulated to insanity

It was good.

The best.

Though why was I spat back?

Where did I get to?

After pleasure I don't understand anything. And you keep silent.

EUPHROSINE Show me the border crossing!

8/3

WITCH When a man looks into the well, then I get busy. I must appear on the other side.
ASAP.

First, I hypnotise the unfortunate man with my gaze. My gaze has teeth.

He falls into my bloodthirsty gaze. He falls into my retina.

My eyelid closes on him. Mythical processes set in motion. Painful and indescribable.

And he never again emerges from the water.

His only chance is when he throws a rock in the water, or spits in, so the water gets cloudy and I can't see him clearly.

TOXIC CREATURE How is it related to Visiman?

WITCH He whispered it to me in a dream. Like a woman who killed herself in Ipeľ by Szob.

TOXIC CREATURE Someone just whispers something into your ear, and you follow that?

WITCH He whispered it to me for the second time as well. Like a man who killed himself in Ipeľ by Szob.

TOXIC CREATURE I see. Twice is enough.

WITCH In other dreams a woman spoke to me, she jumped in the river to kill Ipeľ. She had her reason.

After all, it's natural

Another time a man spoke to me, he jumped in Ipel' to kill the river. He had his reason.
After all, it's natural.

TOXIC CREATURE But I am only once. One and only. Why do you believe me?

WITCH I don't believe you. I only like you.

4/4

EUPHROSINE What do I have to understand to find my mother?

METELLA Your mother has never been yours.

EUPHROSINE Did you know her?

MACHILLA We dance with whoever comes.

EUPHROSINE Did she come?

MUFURC She didn't introduce herself.

EUPHROSINE Perhaps she wasn't coming here because of the Ramsar region. Perhaps she wasn't an environmentalist. Are you suggesting she just wanted to dance?

MACHILLA If you dance, everything is alright.

MUFURC Of course, if you dance with us.

EUPHROSINE Though, she didn't even have a sense of rhythm and her movement was awfully square and convulsive.

METELLA Then she danced like trees.

EUPHROSINE Was my mother a tree?

MUFURC She might have just been a being that forgot she was a tree once.

EUPHROSINE Can't a man just be a man?

MACHILLA Perhaps so, though what is it good for.

7/3

WATER RAIL What if we aren't a delegation but captives?

SAND MARTIN Captives of their own forgetfulness.

KINGFISHER Sometimes there is no need to fear mechanical completion of an assignment. So, 47 wing flaps along the left river bank, then turn at a 359-degree angle

around the last stalk of rice which is somewhere totally else every week, though only when the stalk is precisely where the 47 wing flaps take us. Otherwise, none of it makes sense. Then let's run headless between the reed and wait for nightmares in which we must guess five illegal dumps that hide beneath half-rotten sample of the Ramsar Convention.

LITTLE BITTERN Do we have a new plan?

KINGFISHER No, it's the same one.

LITTLE BITTERN You're bluffing. It doesn't look the same in the least.

KINGFISHER This one deals with the route from the opposite direction, metaphysically.

WATER RAIL So, in this case, what we evidently do not know is moreover evidently impossible.

SAND MARTIN By the way, speaking of amusing evidences, do you know what day it is?

LITTLE BITTERN The day of our metaphyseal entrapment in the shallows of our social vanity?

KINGFISHER But why do we always have to keep chasing some human ideals? The very point of our existence is the plain aimlessness of our delegation. For if we don't flap our wings 99 times and then we don't do the exact opposite of that which we never knew that was ahead of us, then we have precisely as many chances to be mistaken as at any point of any other day.

SAND MARTIN And what day is it today?

WATER RAIL Do we have a reason to celebrate?

LITTLE BITTERN Surprise me, you metaphysicists of the Ipel' basin!

SAND MARTIN What happened in this flat relief with mild depressions in 1952 and 1953?

LITTLE BITTERN Fatal fertility of political origin raged among people.

SAND MARTIN Fertility isn't a bad way out.

KINGFISHER There was a flood in 1952, and draught in 1953.

SAND MARTIN As usual, from a totally different direction, though still very close.

WATER RAIL Which harvest went to waste twice?

SAND MARTIN We spoke already today of the last sad stalk that is desperately wandering along this territory never finding its original place.

KINGFISHER Though what you have in mind are the first stalks that suddenly were cherished guests and scallywag spies.

LITTLE BITTERN So there was a yield twice without a single harvest?

WATER RAIL Rice from the Ipel' basin has remained a phantom.

KINGFISHER First, the river washed out the entire yield.

LITTLE BITTERN The next year the entire yield dried out without water.

KINGFISHER The experiment called Rice ended quickly and infamously.

WATER RAIL Nature has a sense of humour.

SAND MARTIN Before we choke on laughter, we should flap our wings as a tribute to every single rice stalk.

WATER RAIL We'll die.

2/5

CHORUS OF FORGOTTEN MYTHICAL BEINGS

They say a true Visiman doesn't know he is a Visiman. If he learns that he is the famed Visiman, he instantly ceases being a Visiman

For a true Visiman cannot know he is a Visiman. Visiman, as a mythical being, should have some exceptional and magic qualities that he is bound to lose once he learns he is a Visiman.

So, he possibly has not magic or exceptional qualities, for they would tell him that he is a mythical being and he would promptly learn that he is a Visiman.

Beware, both man or woman can be a Visiman. Gender equality has been encoded in Visiman ever since the onset of mythological time in the Ipel' basin.

Though what is the point of such a mythical being which has no exceptional and magical qualities?

After all, what is flowering rush for? Or hedge-hyssop for?

What is the point of arrowhead? And of greater celandine? How about goldilocks buttercup?

After all, what is Lysimachia Sunburst for? What is Visiman for?

What for?

And what do we want of Visiman?

After all, once Visiman comes to understand his essence, the very instant he loses it.

When he learns that he knew everything, he won't learn anymore that he knows nothing again. Perhaps it is the self-confident blunder at any time that is his magical and exceptional quality.

He cannot be mistaken, for he is in permanent blunder. Visiman is the proof that the original state is always a new context.

Visiman come, come and join us!

We finally came to understand you.

Now you explain where it is we got lost!

9/1

WITCH A little fruitful magic? Isn't time ripe yet?

LABOURER 1 In or out? Inout? Outin? Inin? Outout? Oror?

DEVIL I once saw an official who had been unable to pour water out of his shoes. He kept pouring and pouring and pouring and pouring and pouring, until he flooded the entire office. He really immersed himself in the environment.

LITTLE BITTERN I have again a shamelessly forgotten anniversary.

MACHULLA The most honest mythical beings are those who are also their own sustenance.

LABOURER 2 Last time we buried the pipes, now we will take out the pipes.

WATER RAIL The flow-through power plant was in operation for half an hour.

METELLA I am confused: Are we from the family of narcissistic beings; or, on the contrary, of those pseudo-neutral?

LABOURER 3 The customer changes. Arguments change. Conviction is a fearful animal.

SAND MARTIN The entire power plant was a perfect construction error.

MUFURC I am still waiting for the day when a whole sown field gets built and it walks out gracefully, as somewhere must still be a giant with fertile soil instead of skin.

SATAN There was a mayor who didn't resign from his post because he couldn't decide whether he would give up his post to an inventive otter or a friendly grass snake. I have no idea why he didn't at all think of plants.

LABOURER 4 Last time we were protecting the nature, now we are protecting property.

SHE-BEAR I may be weak, but I will plead, beg, beseech, implore. So that I never again tear to pieces those I fear.

DELUSION There was a registrar who had a dream, that her daughter was named Stripy Lemna. When she woke up, she couldn't tell why she was so happy.

KINGFISHER The power plant operated in test run for half an hour. After half an hour, what awaited the plant was idle eternity.

EUPHROSINE I still get startled when I notice that I don't think of you, Mum. I still get terrified when it is not you, I address, Mum. I am still wandering after you, Mum.

WITCH Don't you feel like travelling through capillaries? Together. All of us. It resembles a heart attack, but it's more fun. And, if the capillaries are clogged, we can bring together the inventiveness of the Ipel' basin creatures, the lost and the visible, the present and the misty. And whoever asks first what's the point of it, I will tear their heart out of their chest. We will then share each bite like brothers and sisters. For we will sure get hungry on that epic underground journey to the secrets of the invisible river.

TOXIC CREATURE I will shine light for you all with my entire body.

The End