

Mikhail Bulgakov

Psalm

Initially, it seems that a rat is scratching at the door. But then, a very polite human voice says:

– May I come in?

– Yes, come in, please.

Door hinges are screeching.

– Go and sit on the couch!

(From the door.) – And how should I walk on the parquet?

– Walk quietly and do not slide. So, what's up?

– *Noffing* .

– Well, well, well... and who was howling in the corridor this morning?

(Long uncomfortable pause.) – *Me* was howlin'.

– Why?

– Mommy slapped me.

– For what?

(The most dramatic pause.) – I bit Surka's ear.

– You don't say!

– Mommy says Surka is a "ne'er-do-well". He's a bully, he took my coins!

– Anyway, there is no such rule as to bite people's ears for coins. You are a silly little boy.

(Soreness.) – I'm not playin' with you.

– A fat lot of good that is!

(Pause.) – When daddy *will* come, I will *say* him. (Pause.) He will shoot you.

– Bah, fancy that! Then I won't make tea. No need for that if I get shot...

– No, no, you make tea.

– Will you drink tea with me?

– With sweets? Right?

– Absolutely right.

– Oh, I will drink.

Two humans are sitting on haunches – a big one and a small one. The kettle is boiling with a musical chime, and a cone of warm light is highlighting the page of Jerome K. Jerome's book.

– You must have forgotten all the poems, right?

– No, not forgotten.

– Well, recite some of them then.

– Buy ... I'll buy myself some shoes...

– To wear.

– To wear... And I will sin' a psalm...

– At night.

– At night... And I will get ... a dog...

– A big...

– A pig?...

– Big dog. And we will live somehow.

– Somehow. Will live. We.

– That's right. When water boils, we will drink tea. And we will live somehow.

(Deep sigh.) – And-we-will-live-somehow.