

I have my holidays now, but I am working  
 as a guide and thereby travelling  
 all over the republic again. It is  
 an interesting and exciting job - it means  
 getting acquainted with new people  
 and new places. But it makes me  
 also exhausted from time to time and  
 I do not have much time for myself.  
 In fact, I wanted to go on with  
 my work - I am writing a rigorosum  
 on C. P. Snow and his sequence Strangers  
 and Brothers - but till I am with  
 the tourist groups I don't have any  
 ideas left for anything else, in spite  
 of that I have free time sometimes,  
 I don't need to be always with them,  
 but I can't find any concentration at  
 all. I like C. P. Snow and his ideas  
 about "strangers who became brothers"  
 and about "brothers who do not need to  
 be brothers at all," about "the darkness  
 of heart," which can mean love etc.  
 very much. But I think that his  
 novels are most valuable if

you read them all, i. e. eleven volumes, as a whole. Of course, not many people have time and wish to do that, some find him boring, but I still find him one of the important contemporary writers with deep humanist ideas, even if he is no idealist. He also can find "the glimpse" of life and enjoy it - what I am trying to do all the time, at the moment by intellectual life (that is by trying to think and to write) and by a new love-affair, which makes it possible to see glitter in the grass and to feel the warmth of the summer evenings.

I am sending you the address of <sup>the</sup> Czechoslovak numismatic society:  
 NUMISMATICKÁ SPOLEČNOST ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ  
 LEVÁ ~~11~~ 11  
 PRAHA 4 - PODOLÍ  
 CZECHOSLOVAKIA



I am also sending two Mexico coins, because I am afraid that you will give me<sup>up</sup> for the new numismatic friend, if you find one. Don't forget, that you have promised me other 50 years of letter writing.

Love,

Ivana

1975 / 2

4<sup>th</sup> October, 1975

Dear Per,

I am sitting at home alone,  
so I have taken your letter for the  
second time (I normally read your  
letters for a few times, just to get  
inspired) and I'll try to find answers  
to some questions inside me. The fantas-  
tic thing in a life is, that it is  
changing all the time. You mentioned  
Jin' a Jan in your letter - in fact  
I have no relations with them - I only  
know that Jin' did sort of scientific  
career but he interrupted it in order  
to be able to free-lance. He is sort  
of a playboy now, tries to make his living  
by playing guitar, has a flat of his  
own and ~~a~~ very good connections every-  
where. I don't possess the key of the  
flat where you slept in Prague <sup>any more</sup> the owner



of it (he was my first love actually) got married and changed the flat; before moving he arranged a party for his friends and it was very sad for me to sit there for the last time. Now he is already father of a nice girl-baby. I must say that we are still very good friends, we know each other for seven years and for some time we were very close one to another. But the life is changing..... I have reached also a dream - to have a place of my own (even if a small one, but you know, that I was staying in youth hostels during all my studies, i.e. for 9 years) with books, a desk just next to it, a tape-recorder and a record-player, a comfortable easy-chair and a few nice small things which I like very much. I succeeded in getting the new job and since 1st October I am lecturing German at the Economic College. In fact I have never been "lonely woman."



I have parents and a brother who ~~help~~ help me very much. I have many girl-friends and a few good boy-friends and I have also some good relations to abroad - I have you. Except of short periods, I have always had the boy-friend or a lover. I am able to make good relationships to my colleagues, to my students, but... I often feel a sort of anxiety, I doubt the meaning of my activities and I know that nobody understands me properly because our language is a too weak tool and I am not able to explain myself sufficiently.

Now I am drinking a very good Moravian red wine and thinking. Some friends of mine have just parked and I am waiting for my boy-friend. He should have been here two hours ago and I am becoming nervous. I hate this feeling, but when somebody doesn't come in time, I am always



so much afraid that something could happen to him (or her). I know that he comes, he explains his delay, but I cannot simply understand how somebody can be late when he knows that I suffer intolerably under my bad imagination and that makes me believe again that something had to happen. I have inherited this capacity for anxiety from my mother (probably); but it is really something terrible and I feel very weak against destiny.

I am finishing this letter the next morning - my melancholy has gone and I feel more positive again. I think of my work - my thesis on Stefan Zweig, the great don-quixotic humanist, was finished long time ago and now I've started working on a new topic - this time it is an Englishman - C. P. Snow and his sequence of novels *Strangers and Brothers*. I think I have written about it to you before, because I started reading the novels

about half a year ago. I've read them all, but that's all - I am not concentrated enough. I don't know if you have an idea which way of working, or what approach such a thesis needs. You must read and read all the time, not only <sup>the</sup> novels themselves, but everything what has been written on them and on the author what you can get into your hands. And to have your head full of it all the time - then you can sit down and start typing all at once. Then you are able to finish in a considerably short time (I started writing about Zweig after my return from Scandinavian holidays and had it finished in about one month of concentrated work). But it was different at that time - I had



nothing else to do and a strong feeling of responsibility that I must write it and finish my studies. Now, in fact, there is no hurry at all - I have no given time when I should have to hand my work over. And I cannot make myself to working very hard.

Another thing which I am missing is <sup>that I don't have</sup> ~~not~~ enough sources for my studying - I mean not only the secondary literature on C. P. Snow, because it hasn't been published many books on him, there are mostly articles in magazines; but also new editions of novels by other contemporary English, American and German authors. I know that you don't probably have time to be informed properly, but maybe your wife or someone of your friends is.

I should like to write you some names of writers who I am interested in and I'd be very grateful if you found it possible to send me some of their recent books (i.e. newly written and published, because I can borrow the older ones in our libraries) from time to time.

The names are:

Americans: Saul Bellow, Philip Roth,  
B. Malamud, J. Updike,  
Tennessee Williams....

English: John Braine, Iris Murdoch,  
Rex Warner, Angus Wilson,  
Kingsley Amis, John Wain,  
John Osborne, Lawrence Durrell....

German: Paul Schallück, Günter Grass,  
Heinrich Böll, Uwe Johnson,  
Peter Handke, Hans Erich Nossack,  
Siegfried Lenz, Martin Walser...

Schweizer: Adolf Muschg, Peter Bichsel  
Max Frisch



Of course, I could give you much more names and on the other side, there must certainly be some young writers whom I don't know at all. I'd be mostly interested in books published after 1943 for the first time. As you see, I am just trying to keep myself up to date. I think there must be a few best-sellers in English & German published every year, which are not being best sold just because of their porno- or violence- or political contents. In those, I am not interested, I care much more for so called "pure" literature of deeper value. It would be fantastic if you could help me in that. There is the same lack of information concerning new pop-records here, but this I can easily overcome.

Much love  
from Ivana.

1975 / 3

8th December

Dear Per,

The days are flying very quickly and we'll have the end of another year soon. There is always hope coming with the New Year, that it might be better than the previous ones. The Christmas Eve is still strongly bound with the old Christian traditions in our country - it is a family feast and I always spend it with my parents, i. e. in a small village with much eating and some beautiful walks in the snow-covered nature. On the contrary, the last day of the year is supposed to be the day of cheerfulness and gaiety. I have thought of my



previous "Silvesters" and I have made  
 up a very picturesque picture -  
 one of them spent in West Berlin,  
 two of them in the mountains,  
 one in a weekend-house and  
 a few of them in various flats  
 and usually with completely different  
 people as I have been changing  
 my preferred acquaintances and friends  
 year after year, because it is not  
 important so much where you are,  
 but with whom you are. It's  
 a good thing to be able to cut your  
 losses in time and start again.  
 I must admit that the year 1975  
 was pretty kind to me: I have  
 found a new, more satisfactory job  
 at the Economic College, I spent  
 a very nice, interesting summer holidays,  
 I have found a man I am fond of,

my quiet, small flat has been furnished and it is very pleasant to come back to it. The only thing which I ~~am~~ really missing is some interesting journey abroad - and this is also my wish for the year 1976. That means my personal wish, but elsewhere I should wish a better and wiser world for us all - when I follow sometimes the situation in the world I am near the point of losing the faith that people will be reasonable one day.

Dear Per, I wish you and Ann - Elisabeth much happiness in the New Year and the solution of all your difficulties in a way which you will like best.



4

This letter of mine has been a little  
bit too summarizing, but if  
you feel like that, do the same  
with your life in the year 1945.

Love, Ivana.

LETTERS

1976



1976 / 1

1

22nd March, 1976

Dear Per,

as you can see it took me some time before I've read the book you sent me. It is so, that I always have too much to read: I want to sit for a state exam in French this year, therefore I should read something in French; my C.P. Snow theses demands some lecture too and I must also read some special books for my teaching German and keep myself up to-date in Czech literature. Therefore I also seldom come to a novel, which I should like to read out of my personal, not professional interest.

"Something Happened" is a very interesting novel, which awoke many ideas in me. Another novel, Catch-22, is well known also in Czechoslovakia as a film based on a book by Joseph Heller. As to its form, there is nothing unusual or new about it - I should say that it has been written in a way typical for contemporary American

novel - that means as a inner monologue of a man who suffers alone among other people (the same way of writing was used e.g. by Philip Roth in Portnoy's Complaint, and other novels, by John Updike in Centaur, by Saul Bellow etc.). However, Heller's novel brings some original and deep ideas. He says the well-known fact that neither more material wealth nor higher knowledge and education brings more happiness into human life.

It is sometimes interesting to see that a human being can manage to have good relationships with all the people in his surroundings, except the nearest ones, i. e. with his family. Bob Slocum is a promising executive provided with everything he desires, he knows about it but he tries to go deep into his soul in order to find out when and where this terrible "something" happened, which doesn't



allow him to relax and to be happy. He yells when he doesn't want to and is sorry afterwards (I know this very well from the relationships with my parents). He knows that his wife is the best for him and he still looks for other girls. I've read some <sup>step</sup> books about anxiety (Victim or Hero by Saul Bellow); some of them about anxiety of women (The Feminine Mystique which I got from you or The Stepford Wives by Ira Levin) and I always think that there is much more anxiety in the U.S.A. than in Czechoslovakia, because there are bigger possibilities to get really upwards but on the other hand to fall really down. The feeling of loneliness is another thing - it springs of the consideration of the fact, that everybody must die ALONE. Slocum is afraid of illness but he thinks of it as of something inevitable, which must come soon - all this increases his anxiety, even if he is able to hold on even after <sup>the</sup> death of his son.

I think that it is a bad thing for a man to get to the conclusion that nothing really matters. This is according to my opinion the worst and most dangerous thing which had happened to Keller's hero. In this respect I associate myself more with C. P. Snow who says that the individual fortune might be or is tragic; but it shouldn't prevent us from trying to do our best for people who stand near us and in the name of social progress. Self-concentration might make everybody unhappy, because there are many things which we cannot change. Another interesting point in the novel is the relationship between parents & children. I feel there is nearly time for me to have some; but still I don't feel quite up to this task. What about you?

Please, write me more exactly what's your job now and how you go on looking for happiness.

Love, Ivana.

The address of <sup>the</sup> numismatic society:

NUMISMATICKÁ SPOLEČNOST ČESKOSLOVENSKA  
LEVA 11

PRAHA 4 - PODOLÍ  
ČSSR



Dear Per,

Thanks for the both letters.

This is my first letter to your new adress and it looks quite strange on the envelope under your name - I have no idea how the place looks like.

Anyway, I should like to congratulate you and your wife and to wish you early removing of all <sup>the</sup> difficulties and troubles, much happiness and satisfied mind. Dear Per, I wish you that you had time enough for those many things you like and the fulfillment of all of your dreams (which you would do if you could, as you wrote me).

I think that's me this time,  
who is not in mood for letters  
and in fact I can't also  
remember anything interesting which  
might be good to tell you.

But there is much new with you -  
you can write me what was  
the wedding, about your new  
flat etc. Don't forget, that  
I am really interested.

With love,

Ivana

PS: I don't know anybody who  
collects the coins - but maybe  
I could send you some, if  
you want also the present coins.



1976 / 3

14th December, 1976

Dear Per,

I know that this time it was me who did not treat you nicely (I mean the long pause between letters). But you will surely excuse me, because I have been making up my mind for a great change in my life - that means for getting married. The wedding ceremony will take place on 22nd December at 9,20 a.m. at the Old Town City Hall in Prague. My future husband is 30 years old and works in a Foreign Trade Corporation. His name is Ivan and my future name will be LUKAČO-VIČOVÁ (the adress is unchanged). At the same time I have finished my thesis on C. P. Snow on which I have been working for more than

a year. That means that in the near future I will have to sit for exams in English & American literature, in philosophy (I am afraid of this exam very much, I don't think that I am an expert in it) and in theory of translation. If I passed it I would be graduated again to PhD (= doctor of philosophy), which is (I think at least) an equivalent of "Master of Arts" in England.

Maybe that there are also other changes in stock for me. In the next year my husband should leave for Angola for a longer time and of course I would not mind to go with him: you know my passion for travelling and getting acquainted



with new people and things. The country needs help very much (after the war and a few centuries of Portuguese governing). It is not sure if we go or not, but I hope we do. You can see that I haven't been changed very much, but I also feel from time to time that I am more comfortable and not always ready to take risks. Maybe that this is also the reason that I am getting married only now, even if I know my boy-friend (or husband? not yet) for two years. We understand each other nearly in all respects but you never can tell what the ~~life~~ life brings. When I am listening to you I hope that he will love me in the same way

you love your wife, but I keep hoping that he will omit that desire for other women.

I am pretty conservative, aren't I? I am also quite sure that I would like to have children. This world is not that bad after all, is it? When you are sitting at the fireplace (me at the central heating) and looking out of the window at the winter landscape with snow (we have it much, too, at the moment), you can feel what you never could if you were not born, isn't it so?

I wish you and your wife all the best in the New Year and I hope to hear about you soon. Excuse the changing of colours.

Love,  
Ivana



LETTERS

1978

1978 / 1

17th March, 1978

Dear Per,

I've received your letter in January and I hope that inbetween you have got at least my Christmas card.

You don't sound very optimistic in none of the parts of your letter written in the time span of 1 month.

I know myself how the life can hit in the most sensitive places of our beings, but always when I am in a country such as Angola or India, I start learning once again a quality which has been mostly forgotten in all Europe: that is modesty. I wouldn't like you to misunderstand me, because I mean by that word much more than being satisfied with limited material things. In fact in this respect we have nothing to complain of, because we have possibility to import nearly everything (and I don't mind too much when I have instead of fresh butter the salted one.)



But you can see in the streets people who are not hungry, but ~~who~~ are really satisfied with the minimum; you can see happy children if you give them chocolates and happy grown-ups if you give them cigarettes. And you can only imagine in yourself, what this country will be like in one, two, three... (who knows?) generations with all its riches (oil, diamonds, sisal, coffee etc.). It lets you think, on the other hand, about ancient Carthago which was very rich and powerful, but "had to be destroyed" and it brings you to look at "our" European civilization with doubtful eyes.

You wrote me, that you must work to keep your living standard and to be able to buy new things like dish-washer and color T.V.. Of course, it is very similar in our country, only most of the people don't work so hard as in capitalist country and a dish-washer

is not a common <sup>standard</sup> ~~thing~~ (but automatic washing machine and TV, even a coloured one, is). I think it is very nice if you can buy things which liberate you of the physical and monotonous work, but there must be some limit for that. When one of my friends from GFR told me that he bought for his sister (she had a birthday) an automatic beer bottles opener, I found it stupid (it takes one second to open the beer doing it mechanically or electrically). And I am also an enemy of the T.V. even if I recognise its importance here in Angola, because it helps sometimes to fill empty evenings, when my husband is travelling in the country, all the books have been read through, and you cannot go alone to any place. I think this is the reason that I feel in my wishes more modest now. We are deprived here of our friends (you cannot choose them in Luanda, you must take your



colleagues as they are); of most  
 of the culture life (except of the  
 cinema); of comfortable life, because  
 the practical life here is more  
 complicated than at home.  
 And still, we feel very happy  
 after succeeded supper or dinner  
 with Ivan's colleagues from  
 other countries, we feel satisfied  
 when we are able to improve a little  
 living conditions of Czechoslovak  
 specialists in Angola, we are  
 happy that we are healthy and  
 that we have each other (it is  
 not banal, because good health  
 is more important here than  
 at home and not all the  
 couples could come together -  
 some men are alone here), we  
 are looking forward to every  
 swimming in the beautiful sea,  
 to every trip and, of course,  
 to our holidays.



You wrote me that I must feel homesick very often because I am very nationalistic as all Czechs.

You might be right that in general the Czechs have sort of national pride, but I think that you had no possibility to know me in this respect.

I can tell you that when I was travelling for a year the last time, I never had a moment of homesick, I was happy to be moving on.

Now I am older, more sensitive and more responsible, e.g. to my parents. But if I long for something, it's always for persons, whom I am fond of, never <sup>for</sup> anything abstract. Anyway, I think that I am feeling more internationalist than you.

Now, why have I written all this litany? (not too boring for you, I hope). Because if you try to look at your life with objective eyes, with your old good ironic self, you would



6

recognize that there are ~~it~~ not many things to be desperate about there. Probably I am not able to understand very well your uncertainty about job, because jobs are not lost easily in Czechoslovakia. But in all other respects you have wonderful conditions to be a happy man. I think you would be able to solve the crisis between you and your wife (anyway, your feelings have always been very unstable, I remember your being enthusiastic about one girl in one letter and about another one in the next... it is in human nature to look for new experience, but once there comes a day when it is necessary to decide if the new "experience" is worth of losing the old one.).

Anyway, I wish you all the best and I hope to get a letter from you at <sup>the</sup> time of our holidays in Czechoslovakia (May, June) - at the latest!!

Love, Ivana.





# POSTCARDS

Dear Per,

I wish you much  
happiness in the New Year  
and much fun and  
pleasure during Christmas  
days. I am going to send  
you Christmas round-letter,  
just be patient, please.

Much love,

Ivana





Foto: Ferdinand Bučina

Nakladatelství  Praha ● CV 32914 — 175 - 2790 0310



DOVOLUJI SI OZNÁMIT, ŽE  
JSEM ZAKONČILA STUDIA  
NA FILOSOFICKÉ FAKULTĚ  
UNIVERSITY KARLOVY  
V PRAZE A ŽE BUDU FRO-  
MOVÁNA V BUDOVĚ KARO-  
LINA 13. PROSINCE 1973  
VE 12.00 HOD.

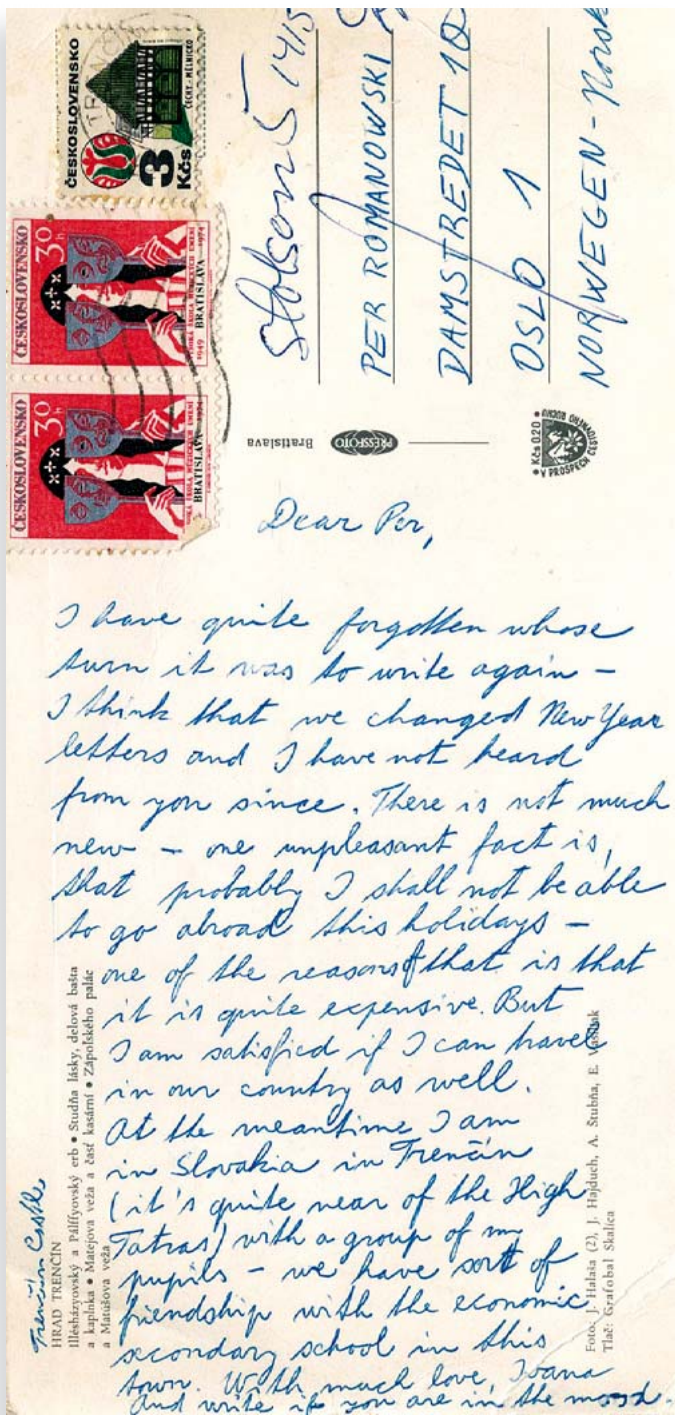
ICH GESTATTE MIR IHNEN  
BEKANNTZUGEBEN, DAS  
ICH MEIN STUDIUM AN DER  
PHILOSOPHISCHEN FAKUL-  
TÄT DER KARLSUNIVER-  
SITÄT BEENDET HABE UND  
DAS MEINE PROMOTION  
AM 13. DEZEMBER IM CA-  
ROLINUM STATTFINDEN  
WIRD.

I HAVE PLEASURE TO IN-  
FORM YOU THAT I HAVE  
FINISHED MY STUDIES AT  
THE FACULTY OF ARTS OF  
CHARLES UNIVERSITY  
IN PRAGUE  
AND THAT THE GRADUA-  
TION CEREMONY WILL BE  
AT THE ANCIENT CARO-  
LINUM ON 13th DECEMBER  
1973.

IVANA KUNEŠOVÁ  
LIPINA 2  
p. ZRUČ NAD SÁZAVOU  
OKŘES KUTNÁ HORA

*Ivana  
Kunešová*







# Grad Drnčín





Ivana Lukačovičová, roz. Kunešová

si dovoluje oznámit, že jí bude dne 8. června 1977  
ve 13.30 hodin ve velké aule Karolina v Praze udělen  
titul

DOKTORA FILOZOFIE

100 00 Praha 10, Saratovská 7



CARTE  
POȘTALĂ

Per Romanowski

STØLSVN. 5

1415 OPPEGÅRD

NORWAY -

NORWEGEN

809/8377

Dear Per,

I am sending you many greetings from Romania. I was here 5 years ago and I have always considered it an interesting country. Now I am spending a fortnight at the seaside (Hotel Rodica) as a Cedok guide. Write soon, please

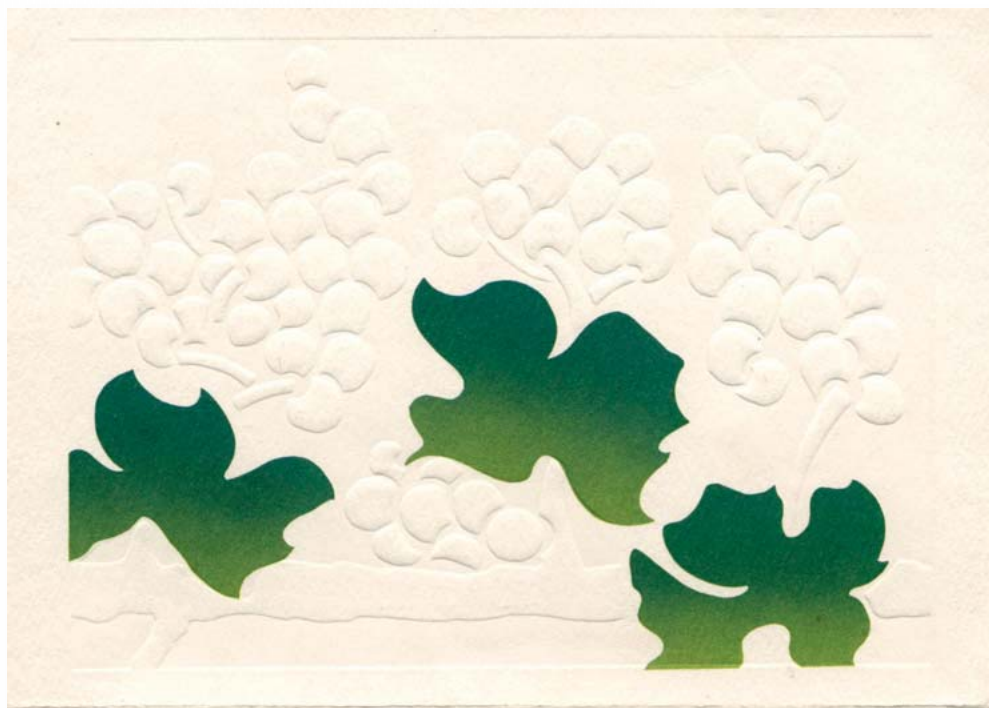
ROMANIA  
VENUS - Hotel „Rodica” • ВЕНУС. Гостиница  
«Родика»

Foto: Publiturism

Lei 1,50







★ Grapevine • by Judy Targan, United States of America. Design contributed to benefit the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).  
 ★ Raisins • par Judy Targan, Etats-Unis d'Amérique. Composition offerte au Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (UNICEF). ★ La vid • por Judy Targan, Estados Unidos de América. Contribución al Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF). ★ Виноградная лоза. Джуди Тарган, Соединенные Штаты Америки. Работа передана Детскому фонду Организации Объединенных Наций (ЮНИСЕФ) в благотворительных целях. ★ 葡萄。美国：朱迪·塔甘。图案赠联合国儿童基金会。



PRINTED IN U.S.A.



Quanda, 5th Decembe  
1979

Dear Ben,  
it is a long time since  
I have not heard about you,  
but I hope that you are  
all right. We are going  
to stay in this hot and  
inhabiting country about  
one and a half year more.  
Christmas time, when I always  
think of all the friends far  
away, is coming, so I would  
like to wish you much happi-  
ness and peace in the year 19  
yet we know about yourself  
sometimes (to the old address  
here, Trana.

PRESIDENTE AGOSTINHO NETO

PAR  
AVION

PER ROMANOWSKI

STØLSVN 5

1415 OPPEGÅRD

NORUEGA

EUROPA

DEPOSITO LEGAL N. 24019 - 30

Dear Per,

I've got your letter just before our departure to Angola and I was very glad to have this proof that you were living. I had my Ph.D. graduation on June 8, and June 11 we were flying from Prague to Rome (one day stay) and further 8 hours to Luanda. I am happy about it, because my daily routine, which starts always when you are in one job, meeting the same people for a longer time. Everything here is different: wild tropical vegetation, beautiful sand beaches (good possibilities for fishing & swimming), people, and general life conditions. The weather at the moment is pleasant too ("winter" season) - the highest temperature 25°C. The life in the city is quiet & seems safe, at the meantime, but you never can tell. The lack of certain foodstuffs does not fortunately bother us (diplomatic shops), but it's sometimes hard for the population. The country really needs help. I hope you are feeling in a better mood and not working too hard. Write to my Prag adress if you feel like that. Love, Ivana.

17 - MUCUBAIS, (Deserto de Moçâmedes).









EIGHTIES

1980

—

1989

## Eighties



This period saw social, economic and general change as wealth and production migrated to newly industrializing economies. As economic liberalization increased in the developed world, multiple multinational corporations associated with the manufacturing industry relocated into Thailand,

Malaysia, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, China, and later in the early nineties also into market economies in Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism in eastern Europe 1989. Japan and West Germany (Helmut Kohl becomes a chancellor) are the most notable developed countries that continued to enjoy rapid economic growth during the decade whilst other developed nations, particularly the United States and United Kingdom re-adopted laissez-faire economic policies. Speculations at the stock exchange caused the largest stock-market drop in Wall Street history ("Black Monday" October 19, 1987), when the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 22.6% of its total value. That fall far surpassed the one-day loss of 12.9% that began the great stock market crash of 1929 and foreshadowed the Great Depression. The eighties were an era of Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Gorbachev who became the last president of the Soviet Union, the time of worst nuclear disaster ever in Chernobyl nuclear power station, and finally a time of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, symbolic for the fall of the Iron Curtain.

When thinking about some iconic picture for the eighties, I could find one only in my own life – in this decade my both daughters were born and I got involved with many toys, after Barbie, the doll with bendable legs invented in the sixties, dearly loved by Lucy and Petra, My Little Pony invention of the eighties, became even more popular with them. Our flat was full of My Little Ponies, their pictures, videos and houses.

In the social and political sphere, the end of the eighties felt like *deja vu* for the generation of Czechoslovakians who lived through the Prague Spring of 1968. With hopes on one side and strong skepticism on the other side, our



generation stood there waiting what the complete change of the political and economical order might bring to her.

## Events in the World

- **Afghanistan** – the war which started 1979 continued till 1989 when Soviet Union was forced to admit defeat and leave the country. The war was fought between the Soviet army and the Islamist Mujahideen Resistance, which found other support from a variety of sources including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and other Muslim nations through the context of the Cold War and the regional India-Pakistan conflict. The engagement in Afghanistan was the reason for non participation of US in the Olympic Games in Moscow and for boycott of grain supplies to the Soviet Union. Nowadays the Americans try to defeat the same enemies – with the same little success.
- **Grenada** – U.S.-led invasion of Grenada, triggered by a military coup which ousted a brief revolutionary government. The successful invasion led to a change of government but was controversial due to charges of American imperialism, Cold War politics, the involvement of Cuba, the unstable state of the Grenadian government, and Grenada's status as a Commonwealth realm.
- **Arab–Israeli conflict** – 1982 Lebanon War – The Government of Israel ordered the invasion as a response to the assassination attempt against Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom, Shlomo Argov by the Abu Nidal Organization and due to the constant terror attacks on northern Israel made by the terrorist organizations which resided in Lebanon. After attacking the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as Syrian, leftist and Muslim Lebanese forces, Israel occupied southern Lebanon and eventually surrounded the PLO in west Beirut which was subjected to heavy bombardment. In the end PLO negotiated passage from Lebanon. This so called First Lebanon War was followed by many skirmishes and much later by the Second Lebanon War (2006) – with tension unresolved and with repeated unsuccessful attempts to guarantee peaceful co-existence of Jewish and Arab population until now.

- The **Iran-Iraq** war took place from 1980 to 1988. Iraq was accused of using illegal chemical weapons to kill Iranian forces and against its own dissident Kurdish populations. Both sides suffered enormous casualties, but the poorly equipped Iranian armies suffered worse for it, being forced to use soldiers as young as 15 in human-wave attacks. Iran finally agreed to an armistice in 1988 – there were no winners, only losers in this war.
- **Argentina** invaded the Falkland Islands 1982 sparking the Falklands War. Three months British forces fought to liberate the Falkland Islands. Britain emerged victorious and its stance in international affairs and its reputation as a great power increased substantially. Argentina, on the other hand, was left humiliated by the defeat; its dictator Leopoldo Galtieri was deposed three days after the end of the war.
- **Angola** – Battle of Cuito Cuanavale took place as part of the Angolan civil war and South African Border War from 1987 to 1988. The battle involved military forces from Angola, Cuba (expeditionary forces), and Namibia versus military forces from South Africa and the dissident Angolan UNITA organization. To finish the war, Cuba directly participated in the negotiations between Angola and South Africa. In December 1988 Angola, Cuba and South Africa signed the Tripartite Accord in New York arranging for the retreat of South Africa, the withdrawal of Cuban troops within 30 months and the implementation of the 10-year old UN Security Council Resolution 435 for the independence of Namibia. The Cuban intervention, for a short time, turned Cuba into a “global player” in the midst of the Cold War. It ended with the independence of Namibia and sounded the bell for the decline of the Apartheid regime in South Africa. The withdrawal of the Cubans ended 13 years of military presence in Angola.
- **India** – living through times of unrest – Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated 1984 by her own bodyguards in response to the Indian Army’s attack on Golden Temple to destroy Sikh Militant stronghold, Golden Temple in Amritsar, earlier in the decade. In 1984 the Bhopal disaster resulted from a toxic MIC gas leak at the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, killing 3,000 immediately and ultimately claiming 15,000–20,000 lives.



- **Germany** – The fall of the Berlin wall on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1989, the “beginning of the end” for the communist rulers in Eastern Europe; the Cold War comes to an end
- **China** – Students protest on Tienanmen Square, Beijing, China – the army intervenes; 3000–7000 killed
- **Europe** – **Greece** (1981), **Portugal and Spain** (1986) accession to European Communities, Greenland left in 1985. 1986 joint flag adopted.
- **Czechoslovakia** – The selection of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March **1985** presented Husák regime with a new and unexpected challenge to the *status quo*. Soon after assuming office, Gorbachev began a policy of *perestroika* (“restructuring”) the Soviet economy and advocated *glasnost* (“openness”) in the discussion of economic, social, and, to some extent, political questions. Up to this time, the Husák regime had dutifully adopted the programs and slogans that had emanated from Moscow. But, for a government wholly dedicated to the preservation of the *status quo*, subjects such as “openness”, economic “restructuring”, and “reform” had been taboo. On 17<sup>th</sup> November 1989, the communist police violently broke up a peaceful pro-democracy demonstration brutally beating many student participants. In the days which followed, Charter 77 and other groups united to become the Civic Forum, an umbrella group championing bureaucratic reform and civil liberties. Its leader was the dissident playwright **Václav Havel**. Civic Forum quickly gained the support of millions of Czechs, as did its Slovak counterpart, Public Against Violence. Faced with an overwhelming popular repudiation, the Communist Party all but collapsed. Its leaders, Husák and party chief Miloš Jakeš, resigned in December 1989, and Havel was elected President of Czechoslovakia on 29 December. The astonishing quickness of these events was in part due to the unpopularity of the communist regime and changes in the policies of its Soviet guarantor as well as to the rapid, effective organization of these public initiatives into a viable opposition.

- **Norway** – A shock goes through the country in the same way as through Sweden (and all Europe) as Swedish premier Olof Palme was assassinated in 1986. Labour party remained in power until 1981 under a succession of prime ministers, including the party's first female leader and Norway's first female head of government, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland. In 1985, Høyre representative Kåre Willoch became the first Conservative in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to win re-election in Norway, but his victory proved to be not only narrow but short-lived as well because of the defeat over proposed gasoline tax increase. As a result, the Cabinet resigned and was replaced by a minority Labour government headed again by Dr. Brundtland, noted for its record proportion of female Cabinet members (eight out of eighteen). Gro Harlem Brundtland's second government remained in power until 1989 when it had to resign, but did not stay out of power for long, as a minority right-of-center coalition headed by Conservative leader Jan Syse collapsed over the issue of Norway's membership in the European Communities (EC); in late 1990 Dr. Brundtland formed her third minority Labour government.

## Science and Culture

- The first reports of homosexual men dying due to a mysterious breakdown of the bodies' immunization system. Later it becomes known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and researchers realize it can strike anyone. French scientist Dr. Luc Montagnier discovered HIV in 1983
- The first artificial heart transplant takes place, the recipient lives 112 days
- Camcorders are introduced – 1983
- Apple Computer releases the Macintosh personal computer- 1984
- CDs outsell vinyl for the first time ever – 1988
- **Music** – two major blows to the music scene: **John Lennon** was assassinated in front of his house in New York and **Bob Marley** died



from a skin melanoma. 1985's Live Aid concert was organized at Philadelphia's JFK Stadium featuring many artists, promoted attention and action to send food aid to Ethiopia whose people were suffering from a major famine. The decade began with an anti-disco backlash in the US, and 80s music would be characterized by the widespread use of synthesizers and keyboards. In the United States, MTV was launched and music videos began to have a huge effect on the record industry. The most famous Pop artists such as **Michael Jackson**, **Prince**, **Madonna**, and **Queen** mastered the format and helped to turn this new product into a profitable business. Besides them there were no real personalities who would bring it to worldwide fame, although hard rock, heavy metal, glam metal and punk rock experienced also extreme popularity becoming one of the most dominant music genres of the 1980s. Techno as a form of electronic dance music emerged in Detroit during the mid to late 1980s.

- **Film** – Oscar winner films: Ordinary people, Chariots of Fire, Gandhi, Term of Endearment, Amadeus, Out of Africa, Platoon, The Last Emperor, Rain Man, Driving Miss Daisy – all these winners show the variety of film production in the eighties. Besides those, the majority of Hollywood films made for mass audiences concentrated on disaster or buddy films. Commercially most successful films were E.T. Extra Terrestrial, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Batman, Crocodile Dundee, Fatal Attraction and others. This was the period when the 'high concept' films were introduced. The movies were supposed to be easily marketable and understandable, and, therefore, they had short cinematic plots that could be summarized in one or two sentences. The modern Hollywood blockbuster comes from the 1980s. From the Norwegian films the only known in Czechoslovakia was *Pathfinder* based on an old Sami legend and nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1988.
- **Literature** – Novels of non British and non American writers, or writers with mixed origins are dominating the scene. Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro was celebrating success with his novel **Remains of the Day**, showing the life of the main character Steven in his dignity as an English butler, with topics of social constraints, loyalty, politics and missed love opportunity. Salman Rushdie described the

birth of Indian independence in **Midnight's Children**, in a style of magical realism mixed with historical fiction. His dominant theme is the story of connections, disruptions and migrations between Eastern and Western world. That was also the case in **The Satanic Verses** which draw protests from Muslims in several countries because of the description of Mohammed in the dream section. Even death threats were issued to Rushdie, including *fatwa* declared against him by Ayaotollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran so that Rushdie had to get police protection in Britain. Gabriel García Márquez continues his success with **Love in the Time of Cholera**. Alice Walker is the first black woman to win the Pulitzer prize for fiction, for her novel **The Color Purple**. Her works typically focus on the struggles of blacks, particularly women, against a racist, sexist, and violent society. Influenced by Martin Luther King Jr., she became an activist for the Civil Rights Movement in the South and attended the famous 1963 March on Washington. The latest news about her is that she has not changed, protested in front of the White House against War in Iraq in 2003 "with other women who believe that the women and children of Iraq are just as dear as the women and children in our families, and that, in fact, we are one family." Recently she engaged herself also in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Isabel Allende (first cousin once removed of Salvador Allende, murdered president of Chile) wrote a brilliant **The House of the Spirits** (La casa de los espíritus) and **Eva Luna**. Her novels which focus on the experiences of women, are sometimes based on her own experiences, and weave myth and realism together. An international acclaim was reached also by Umberto Eco's and his novel **The Name of the Rose** (Il nome della rosa). From the Czech literature, Milan Kundera, living in Paris, made it to international fame by his ironically realistic description of situation in "normalized" Czechoslovakia, **The Unbearable Lightness of Being**. Czech poet **Jaroslav Seifert** was awarded Nobel prize for literature for his life work in 1984. The eighties in **Norwegian literature** were reaction to the social realism of the seventies, they have also sometimes been labeled the "fantasy decade" as many authors produced works with magical, fantastic or improbable elements.

PHOTOS

1980

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1989



*1983 / Ivana under Elbrus, Caucasus*



*1985 Per visiting Czechoslovakia 01 –  
Ivana and all 3 children taking  
a walk in the fields of Lipina*



*1985 Per visiting Czechoslovakia 02 –  
his son Peter and Ivana's mother  
in the kitchen at Lipina*





*1985 Per visiting Czechoslovakia 03 –  
Ivana and Peter watching the swans  
on the Moldau river*



*1988 Mexico – sightseeing Pyramids  
of Sun and Moon with Lucy and  
Ms. Liebermann*





*1989 / Cuba – Ivana 40th birthday*





*1989 Cuba – Ivana riding in the mountains  
of Sierra Maestra*



*1989 USA – Ivana with friends Cathy and Lusk*



*1989 USA – Ivana at the White House, Washington*



*1989 USA – Ivana at the Capitol,  
Washington DC*





*1989 USA – Ivana on the top of the Empire  
State building New York*



*1989 Returned from Cuba – Graduation  
Candidate of Sciences 30. 11. –  
family celebration*



*Correspondence*  
*Ivana to Per*

1980

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1989



LETTERS

1980

Dear Per,

I can see that I was a bit impatient, because I've got your sound letter a few days after posting my "worried postcard." And I hope that nearly at the same time when I received your letter, you've got mine as well.

I envy your staying in Denmark. You know it is my favourite country and if you asked me in which country I should like to live (except of Czechoslovakia and from those European countries I have visited), it would certainly be Denmark.

I think that the sex-shops etc. are only "by-products" which you can see in every western country and that prostitution is in more or less

hidden form in every country<sup>as well</sup>. And it is no invention of our over-mechanized society, but a historical phenomenon.

But it is true that it has always been the feature indicating that there was something wrong with the society and mutual human feelings.

You know that I worked in a bar in Berlin and thus I got quite an experience what the night-life with all his symptoms looked like.

I have also an exact idea how a girl can become a prostitute.

She simply works hard in some night-club, café or somewhere else, she has not enough money and she has no love. She can have quite strong moral prejudices and rules; but once she will get an offer so high that she would have to work for it two months. And she accepts this offer "just for once" not



knowing about the danger that the way back will be nearly impossible. She would have to own a very strong character indeed, in order not to try it in the same way and for less and less when she needs money again. And girls like that usually don't have such a strength. I do not think that such girls must hate men - it is their routine, their profession and they are already over it and they do not feel anything - maybe just a slight disgust, because if you take too much of something you are fed up with it sooner or later. Another question is why a man goes to a prostitute. I must admit that I cannot understand it at all. But one of my friends is convinced that it is not only loneliness which makes a man to do so. (as you say). Such a man can have his girl-friend or wife and can be quite

happy with her and in spite of that  
he can try to go to a prostitute  
one evening. Desire for <sup>an</sup> adventure?

Desire for change? Desire to sleep once  
with somebody without any obligations?

or, as that friend of mine said,  
desire to buy for his money a girl's body  
and get the feeling that he completely  
possesses her because he paid for that?

It is difficult to say - how many human  
beings, so many different motivations.

It is clear that in everybody of us  
dreams, as Catherine Mansfield says,

"that terrible desire to establish contact"  
and we are not the luckiest in the  
possibilities offered to us in the world-  
of today.

Now I'd like to wish you all the  
best to your birthday, you "old man," and  
I believe, you are going to stay young  
in your heart for another thirty years,  
at least.

Much love, your Ivan



1980 / 2

23rd June, 1980

Dear Per,

I was also happy to hear about you again and I hope we can manage to do our letter-exchange more regular now, the reason for which I am going to explain to you just now:

We came back for our holidays at the beginning of April (via Lisbon and Madrid, spending a few days in each). As usual, my husband started sitting for his exams, which he passed successfully and now he has only the last year of his foreign trade studies left. Last week he returned to Angola again and he "left me behind," because I have another sort of "exam" waiting for me in the first



half of August - I am expecting a baby. I had some minor problems two weeks ago and I had to be hospitalized for that - but I am completely all right now. I can tell you that it is a strange feeling indeed - on one hand I am very happy (even if we wanted to wait half a year or a year more, because we didn't like being separated), on the other hand I feel that the child means a great responsibility till the rest of our lives. I think that I am old enough to accept such a responsibility, but I cannot imagine that I should have been able to do that e.g. at the age of eighteen, as some girls have to.

By the way, eighteen was the age when you met me for the first (and the last) time; this gallop of time is sometimes maddening, don't you think so? Even if I am satisfied in my marriage and in my job, even if I am happy that I have always had enough opportunities for travelling and changing places (which I like very much), it makes me ask some questions from time to time: "is this all what I can do out of my life?" and "isn't the best of it (meaning life) over?" - and it remains only to hope that not yet.

I am sorry to hear that you are dissatisfied even in your new job. This is a problem with all the so called social sciences (philosophy, psychology, sociology, even philology), that it is



difficult to see some results of your work. If I could choose again, I would probably try something like medicine, architecture or some "technical" sciences, where the results of your activity are more "practical" and to be seen. Fortunately I can't imagine the situation of real lack of jobs as we hear about it in some countries, it must be really depressing, especially for the young people. You should give it one more try and find some job you would enjoy, because I am convinced that it is the basis of all happiness - particularly for man. I also suppose that you are very clever with your hands - being able to do so many things in your house; I can't say the same about me, domestic works



have never been my strong point.

To the personal side of our lives - once in a while we hear about some of our friends, neighbours etc. getting divorced - sometimes they are the people where you would never imagine that they could separate. (anyway, statistics says that it happens with every fifth couple in Czechoslovakia).

The most serious problem of it is of course children. If it were not for them there would be in fact no problem at all and the institution of marriage would be useless. But I have realized, especially a few weeks ago lying in the hospital and meeting new people (my fellow-patients) how horrible those stories of damaged childhood are (there is nothing to do in a hospital and people

are telling stories of their lives and you can meet girls from various "ambientes" whom you normally don't get acquainted with).

You already know that my education in childhood and adolescence was traditional, in a sort of "happy traditional" family. But I believe that it has been a good basis for my further life, sometimes full of uncertainties and confusions. And for this reason I would also never leave Iran (my husband) if he didn't bring me to the very edge any human being can stand by his very bad (and permanently bad) behaviour. I think I have waited with my final choice long enough and I must be prepared to bear all the consequences of my decision (till this moment I hope that it was a right choice).



You wrote that your hopes for children are getting slimmer - I think that if you long for children you could (meaning both of you) even to adopt some.

24th June

I stopped writing yesterday because some friends came to see me.

Now I am sitting alone in our flat full of sun (it's <sup>an</sup> early morning) listening to the voice of Leonard Cohen. It is an old record - I have read that he made a new one which should be very good in the last year ("Recent Songs"). Who is your favourite singer now? Do you still like gentle melancholic women's voices (Johnny Mitchell, Judy Collins ...)? If you manage to get out of the country



this summer, you would be also  
welcome in Prague.

This is all for today.

Write soon.

Love,

Ivana.

LETTERS

1981

1981 / 1

Prague, 5th January,  
1981

Dear Ben,

Thanks very much for your letter -  
I was happy to have it not only  
because it is always good to hear  
about you but also because it was  
clear that your mood had improved  
a lot since the last letter and  
that you feel fine. I remember  
very well your mother's house  
which I liked very much and which  
you try to make nicer now.  
Unfortunately I have no idea  
about your house - haven't you  
got some photo of it?

You are right if you say that  
nobody knows the future in this  
world. It has always been the truth  
but it seems to be the truth especially  
now - all the world full of confusion,



coups d'etat, small and bigger wars, kidnapping, drugs and criminality and difficult economic situation.

When I think of it I feel I must be happy that we still live in peace, comfort and full health - so my wishes (apart from the wish for reunion of our family) for 1989 are very modest.

I was surprised that you think that if we had been lovers, we would not have stayed friends for such a long time. I agree with you that it would have been an exception of the "normal" pattern of human behaviour, but I can tell you that in fact three of my best men friends used to be my lovers (two of them are in Prague, one is abroad). The reason for that probably is that I have always felt or needed to feel affinity of minds

with my boy-friends; we also spared each other the horrible scenes usually connected with each parting.

After some time we simply became friends. Of course, this is not possible with everybody. As to our relation, I was too young when we met, without any experience at all.

Anyway, twelve years are a long time and I don't feel sorry for them. I met Jim in the street by chance a week ago, me walking with the pram, him still not married and not much changed. I think we were both pleased to see each other and had a nice talk - he is still very bohemian, a little selfish, talkative and entertaining. I don't know Jan, it was a Jim's friend.

Now when your economy is getting better I wonder if you don't feel like spending your holiday



somewhere abroad, e.g. in Czechoslovakia. It would be very nice to see you again.

If you decide that the time came to start reading novels again, I can recommend you three which I read in the last days: "The Ambassador" and "The Summer of the Red Wolf" by Morris West (Australian) and "Falconer" by John Cheever. Very interesting ones.

Dear Per, Lucie already calls for my attention, it's the time of feeding. Therefore I'll close this letter with the wish to hear about you soon.

Best regards to your wife.

Love,  
Ivana.



1981 / 2

6th June, 1981

Dear Per,

Thanks for your letter; I was very happy to hear the good news about your baby and I hope that everything is going to be all right and that I'll hear about it more in September. The baby will mean a great change in your lives (even if I don't agree with some women who say that a child changes everything, even the relation between the two people). The change in our family has not been so profound - when Ivan arrived in the middle of April finally, his first meeting with Lucie was very touching and they became friends immediately. (I am sending you one family-photo taken in my parents' house in the country). But we have always been a very busy family which continues even with Lucie (studying, meeting friends, travelling<sup>etc.</sup>) - it just

needs better and more careful planning of all actions. You will have everything much easier because you have your house; because of our nearly permanent stay in Angola we didn't succeed in changing our small flat for a bigger one and we don't want to do it now as we plan to leave in the end of September or beginning October for a year more. Then our Angola days will be over, we would like to stay in Prague for a few years and afterwards to leave again. We dream about some American country, e.g. Mexico or Venezuela or Brasilia - but any country is interesting if it is unknown to you, so I am not going to hesitate.

Otherwise my life is very regular and monotonous<sup>now</sup> - I've got nearly used to it. I was surprised to hear that you intend to stay with a child at home - something like that would be impossible in our country. Our mothers have a paid six-months leave after having a child and usually they



stay with the child till the age of 2 years.  
 Then they take their jobs again. But  
 socially it would be unthinkable, that  
 a man should do the same. I suppose  
 that there is no law against it but  
 I've never heard about someone who  
 did it. That probably means that  
 the equality of man and woman in  
 your country in practice is greater than  
 in ours. E.g. my husband is a very  
 independant man, who knows how to cook  
 and to do nearly all the household jobs,  
 but still, he was a little bit helpless when  
 it came to Lucie's feeding, dressing etc.  
 He is already looking forward to the time  
 when Lucie is bigger with some ability to  
 communicate in words. As far as I know  
 it's only Scandinavian countries where  
 men take care of little children, e.g.  
 in "kindergartens" - in Czechoslovakia,  
 it is one hundred per cent women-job  
 (which is not very fortunate, of course).



The weather started to be hot in Prague; it's more agreeable to stay in the country whenever we have the possibility. We are going to spend some weeks in my parents' house which has a big garden with fruit-trees, flowers etc. - The lawn is not the English one there, but we like it very much. I think that Lucie needs some fresh air, and me, some rest.

Dear Per, give my best wishes to your wife; I'll be thinking of her and I am looking forward to the happy news.

Write soon, please.

Love, Ivana.

1981 / 3

Luanda, 2/12/1981



Dear Per,

it was a very nice feeling to get your letter in Angola (it seems so far away from Europe) and I was happy with you and your wife about the baby. The photograph you sent was not very clear, but still it seemed to me that I could see something in the eyes of your wife which I could have seen in mine when I had looked into "mirror" after Lucia's birth - something very universal (husbands in Czechoslovakia don't take the photos of their wives so soon after the birth and Ivan was not present, anyway). So I wish to your Peter Mikolaj that he might be always happy in this strange world. And I think that it is not necessary to wish something to you because you will certainly have much pleasure and worry as well with him. And you will get used to having a child very quickly and you would not be able to imagine your lives without ~~her~~ (that's our case, we cannot imagine any more, how we could have ever lived without her).  
"Without children it's useless."





Your son will have his birthday exactly one month later than my daughter, but she is one year older (born on 30 July 80). You don't need to tell me about grandparents' being crazy, especially my parents love Lucie very much, because she is their first grandchild. They miss her now very much, indeed (much more than me).

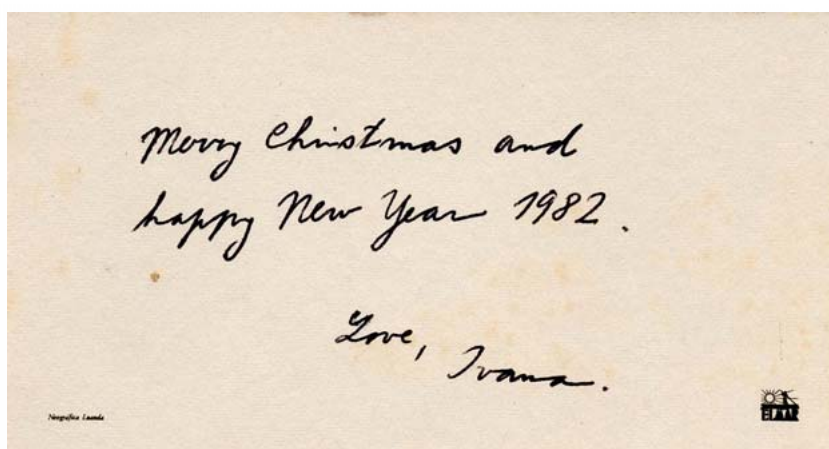
As the time will pass, your wife will perfectly manage the house with the child. It's just a matter of organization. I remember that the work seemed to me endless in the first two months of Lucie's life and now I wonder what I was doing when she was sleeping nearly all the time. From the psychic point of view it is more demanding now because you must never tire in watching her - she can do some harm to herself or to another child (if there is any), or to break something etc. But I would not change this age of hers for anything - she learns how to speak now and it is very sweet indeed.

She got used to life in Angola very quickly and so did we. We go to the beach with her every day (she likes bathing very much) and so we hope to spend our last year in Angola in a satisfied family circle only with small adventures (trips) from time to time.

Dear Per, I wish to you all merry Christmas (ful of snow) and fulfilment of all your plans in the year 1982.

Love, Ana





LETTERS

1982

1982 / 1

Lipina 1st September, 1982

Dear Per,

your letter was waiting for me when we came back from Angola on 9th August. I also would like to thank you for the Christmas card with the photo of your son, which I liked very much - now your boy certainly is much bigger and very soon he will start talking. That period of child's life is a challenging one - a child enters into the society of adults because he or she is already able to express his/her wishes and sorrows. My daughter started to express her "ideas" with one year and a half. Now (she was 2 on 30 July) she speaks really very well, says also-



such things as "I like it" "I don't like it" "I love my bear" "It is not nice" "mum, be careful" "I am afraid" "it hurts me" etc.. According to my opinion she understands well what she is saying and we must (all of us, including grandfather and grandmother) choose the words we are saying very carefully - Lucie's memory is almost one hundred percent and she repeats a few days after what was said in quite another situation and context. She likes singing (knows about 30 children songs) and reciting and it is pleasure for me to "read" books with her. It is possible to explain her everything in simple words (her questions: What is it? What the horse is doing? Where is the aeroplane? Why is it hot etc.), to tell her fairy-tales and I enjoy

extremely her interest in pictures, books, songs. That period in the life of your son is waiting for you and I can promise you that it really is a compensation for taking care of a helpless baby. My attitude is probably not typical female, but I couldn't bring myself to the highest enthusiasm over my 3 months' old daughter, who just ate, slept, cried. Now she really is a little sweet human being, even if her demands on me and my time are bigger and bigger.

Back to our Angola years - my husband spent more than 5 years there, me more than 4 years.

At the beginning when everything was new for us and we were working both of us, the country itself and our activity there meant a great adventure (we came to start Czechoslovak commercial section there). We also had a possibility to



travel a lot, which satisfied me. I learned Portuguese (my husband already spoke Spanish, which made it easier for him), got acquainted with many people from different countries, started translating from Portuguese into Czech (some short-stories have been published in the magazine World Literature) and I felt the change of the way of life in comparison to my Czechoslovak routine as very agreeable. But as the time flew, the life in Luanda became more and more monotonous.

In our fifth year I could not work any more because of Lucie; the possibilities of travelling across the country were very limited because of the political situation (my husband on his business journeys had to take the risks, but to take them with Lucie just for pleasure was simply impossible); the Embassy staff changed, friends left. So ~~the~~ our life became full of work, which was more and more



difficult for my husband. The only pleasure which we enjoyed immensely was the beach. We spent at least 2 hours at the seaside every day, and Lucie is missing the sea now. Anyway, it is not enough for a satisfied life and we made up our mind to leave in spite of the fact that it was proposed to us to stay another year. We are happy to be at home, even if our new apartment has not been finished yet (it should be ready in May 1983).

I shall start teaching at the Economic University at the beginning of the next year. There are also some exams waiting for me - especially one in marxist-philosophy and another in English literature (sitting for the degree [Sc. = candidate of sciences]).

you have written that you want  
to read some novels - if you find  
something interesting, especially  
by English or American writers,  
I'd be interested in it, too.

Or if you even could send me  
some books (particularly by  
J.C. Oates, Norman Mailer, Philip Roth,  
Jris Murdoch, Angus Wilson, William  
Styron - his latest novel *Sophie's Choice*,  
e.g.) I'd be much obliged to you.

It is all for the moment -  
I hope that you will find  
a lonely moment for writing another  
letter soon.

Best wishes to your wife & son.

Love,  
Ivana.

LETTERS

1983



1983 / 1

4th February, 1983

Dear Per,

Thanks very much for *The Ghost Writer*; I got it some time ago, but was able to read it through only yesterday.

Philip Roth belongs to my favourite writers even if I read only more ancient books by him ("*Goodbye, Columbus*", "*When She Was Good*" and "*Portnoy's Complaint*".)

He even visited Faculty of Arts <sup>in Prague</sup> where I was studying in 1969. Therefore probably his dedication of *The Ghost Writer* to one of ~~the~~ Czech writers (you probably didn't realise that) - but he is living abroad now and not writing his marvellous witty love short-stories any more.

I like the figure of Zouff, his self-restraint, his strong-willed mind; I understand the attitude of his wife (it must be really difficult, sometimes impossible to live with a genius: recently

I've ~~not~~ read a book by C. P. Snow describing lives of 8 great novelists - he calls them "The Realists" and includes not only Stendhal, Balzac, Dickens, Tolstoy, Galdos, but also Dostoevsky, Henry James and Proust - and with his usual penetration - very often of speculative kind - he tries to explain especially their family background and love and matrimony relations: ~~concludes~~ in the most cases he came to the same conclusion); and I have borrowed The Diary of Anne Frank to read it again. This problem of Jewishness in American literature often mystifies me and I am not sure if I can understand it well living in quite a different society where it does not represent a problem any more (maybe in some backward minds there can be still some prejudices against the Jews, but I have never felt it, even if my grandmother - my father's mother - was Jewish and died in a concentration camp (her marriage to a Catholic didn't save her)).



On the other hand many people of the older generation still hate the Germans very strongly because of their brutality during the occupation of our country 1939-45. But the situation <sup>in the world</sup> nowadays has been changed very much: as one Czech joke has it: ... the Germans are doing business, the Jews are fighting.

February 14<sup>th</sup> I'll start working again. Lucie is going to a kindergarten (we call it "crèche" if it is for children younger than 3 years) since November; she got used to it already and started even ~~to~~ to like it there very much; at the meantime she is there from 9 to 14 o'clock, but it will change according to my time-table at school; anyway I don't like to let her there for a long time even if she accepted this change in her life very easily (which pleased me, because I saw many crying scenes of other children there and I was afraid of it).



According to my opinion it is better  
to get a child into a kindergarten  
when he or she is 3 years old. Lucie  
will be 3 in July only (so I did it  
against my better judgement) but I have  
some reasons, practical and psychological,  
for doing it. I haven't been teaching almost  
for 6 years, I have <sup>had</sup> some problems,  
misunderstandings and quarrels with my  
husband and I am fed up with staying  
at home - I need a change. Now I am  
sitting at my desk, alone at home, looking  
at the first flocks of snow which  
started to fall in Prague this year  
and I feel that this year has not  
begun very happily for me. There  
must be some change in a relation  
after six years of marriage but  
the bad thing is that I feel that  
I can't rely on my husband too much,  
I stopped trusting him (I don't mean  
adultery, women, jealousy and all such  
things - it's probably not the case  
and if it were so and I knew,  
I'd be hurt, of course, but not so  
annoyed as I am now).

The problem is that I feel bound to him for life because of Lucie. When I see them together (she adores him), I am sure that I could not deprive her of her father if he really didn't do ~~something~~ <sup>very</sup> terrible to me - and in fact, he ~~didn't do~~ has not done very terrible things, it is just not keeping promises, indifference to my life etc.

I see similar situations in families of my friends all around me but it doesn't make it easier.

Sometimes I long for some friend with whom I could talk about life and world as in the times of <sup>the</sup> University; we are talking just about practical things in our household, we don't even have a common cultural experience, my husband doesn't read "belles-lettres" and we cannot go to the theatre or to the cinema together - one of us must always stay at home because of the child. And so it goes on....



As to your point about authorities, I agree with you that most people need some authority for guiding them. Most people are impressed by titles (for this reason I don't use my "Ph.D." when I am introducing myself or filling in a form) and by wealth (which might be understandable because money brings <sup>the</sup> so called easier life and only a few people are strong enough to endure poverty with stoicism) or just by good looks and nice talking. In our country I think a sort of special Czech humour helps to face it - Czech people have always had many jokes on authorities. About myself I also think that I am less susceptible to authorities than the most. I have never adored any pop-star, film-star etc., even in the age of teenager. I have never laughed when it was not really funny, etc. - my idols (I have



never had many) have always been distinguished by some high degree of knowledge in their field; I still admire two of my professors in the University. And I certainly have an inclination to think that famous writers are much more than "ordinary" men, that is than myself and I envy them their creative ~~capacities~~ abilities.

Dear Per, I think this letter of mine is also longer than usual and this time I must apologize myself for all those scrapes and errors and bad writing - my thoughts are flying more quickly than my ball-pen.

With the best wishes to you all and with hope that I'll hear about you soon

Love,  
Irene

1983 / 2

3rd April, 1983

Dear Rev,

Thank you very much for your letter of 9th March and at the same time for the novel Sophie's Choice - I'd like to discuss it with you but I haven't succeeded in reading it though yet so I'll return to it later. I am sorry to hear that the parcel came empty to you - it was just a calendar with nice pictures of Prague - so probably it is not worth searching for it. I didn't suppose that it might be lost and I haven't posted it "recommended".

It's too bad that you are not satisfied with your job, but I feel that you are happy in your family, with your wife, with little Peter, Michael and another baby on the way. If I made a summary of my present life-situation, I would say that I am very satisfied with my teaching job. I have to prepare myself very conscientiously, because I have a batch of preachers in my German (I started teaching it after 6 years again). The commercial terminology which makes a part of some lessons is a difficult part of it, but I enjoy conversation lessons with my

students immensely. It's very agreeable to immerse oneself into the world of students who haven't made their choice in life yet - it's like coming back being younger about 10 years, and being able to explain some of my experience - and of course, they appreciate openness and openness more than the people after thirty. I haven't reached the ideal I dreamt of in my wedded life. We have a nice, clever, healthy daughter which means a lot. But our mutual understanding (me and my husband) is far from perfect. I suppose we are just a "normal marriage", but you were right in your letter saying that I like to think of myself as making it good in this world and it is difficult for me to accept not only any defeat but even a "middle way". In general I have been very lucky in my life and that means that I am sort of spoilt (I got used to reaching always my aims and desires). I can't do much about my feeling of dissatisfaction with my marriage - I don't have any basic complaints and I know that Lucie



(my daughter) loves her father very much. That's enough for me to keep quiet, even if I am quite near to a revolt sometimes. It's just for an explanation of my mood which you could probably feel from my last letter.

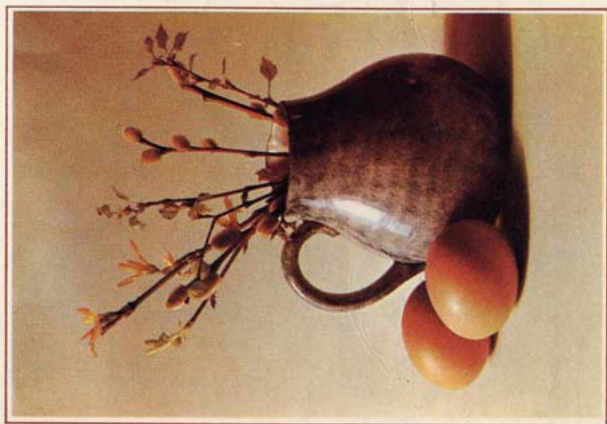
You wrote about Video recorder wiring with your friend. We don't have one but we are making plans to buy it. Next time we go abroad. We like a perfect Akai Xfi tower (tape-deck, record-player, tuner, amplifier) and we have made quite a lot of movie films in Angkor (8 mm). Now some of them have value of documents (especially one made in Alto Catumbela from where 66 our specialists have been kidnapped). It would be interesting to know what information you have got about that unhappy event.

I think that's all for today.  
Write soon.

Love, Ana

ASSISTANT

Foto: P. Hudec  
74-480-0230-5, série - 2581-050  
Tlač: Grafobal Skalica



velikonoční  
pozdrav

HAPPY EASTER



1983 / 3

3rd August, 1983

Dear Per,

This time it's me who should apologise for not writing before, but June and July passed so quickly that I am just surprised to look at the calendar and to see today's date.

Both your last letters are very inspiring - thank you also for newspaper cuttings and for the photo of you and your son; My daughter had her 3rd birthday on 30th July, so I'll send to you some picture of her when I have it. I remember that Peter Nikolai will be 2 years old on 30th August - I think I could find your features in his face in the picture. You are right saying that children of this age need someone to play with - fortunately we had no problems with it and Lucie starts going into kindergarten in September.

We are also thinking about getting her some companion - little brother or sister (and what about you?).

No wonder that you feel sometimes isolated being at home with a child all day. I don't know how it is in Norway but when I was at home with Lucie (14 months before we went to Angola), we visited each other with my former good girl-friends, who were also staying at home from the same reason, very seldom. We just didn't have the patience to go to some distant quarter of the city with a baby, who ate, slept and felt herself or himself best ~~at~~ home and when our children grew up a little, our visits didn't mean that we could discuss together some problems or just to have a fun - we had to watch two or three children that they might not hurt



themselves, or each other or not break something etc. So most of the time I just met with mothers of my quarter or even of my street in the park or on the playground - the problem was that we were complete strangers before, so the only topic of our talk were our children (which was very tiring for me after a while). So I feel with you but I think that it can't be helped even by visiting house wives during the day or meeting them somewhere outside with their children - the only help is to go back to job again.

My marriage seems all right at the moment - our relations have stabilized - if my husband had a lover (I suppose so), I am sure he left her now. & When I am thinking of our love before we married I would



never believe that something like that could happen to us. You can hear it from all sides including novels that every love is dying with time (in marriage), but still it usually lets you unprepared that "fire is gone." (This realization certainly puzzled me).

I like your idea about going back to one's past and to see what happened to your former girl-friends (boy-friends) and how you would feel one to another. You would like to write a novel about it - I would like to try it at least. It wouldn't be so difficult in my case as in yours because I haven't had many lovers and we are good friends with some of them until now. You (or a hero of your novel) would like to do the search with the best intentions. But I can tell that it might turn out very complicated sometimes.<sup>e.g.</sup> My "first love," the boy

5

I went to India with, the person for whom I was ready to sacrifice everything, felt always more like a friend than a lover to me. Today he is married and he openly declares to me that he was stupid, too young, ~~or~~ without much experience with women and that he wasn't able to recognize important values in life. (I think he made a good choice with his wife, who completely fulfills a traditional women's role which I could never do even if I tried - cooking, sewing etc.). He would be ready to make love with me any time and there is still much "sparking" between us (after 13 years), but I just feel that the price paid for it would be too high - broken illusions, broken friendship of our families (my husband and his wife understand each other quite well and are able to suppress jealousy if they feel some - they also don't have any real ground for jealousy). So we



made up our minds once better not to try; he just helps me sometimes with some practical things - repair of Hi-fi sets, connecting TV etc. (he is electro-ingénieur) - and both of us always welcome the occasion to speak one with another.

So I started writing about an old love story of mine, which might be boring to you. Also I have realized that <sup>even after</sup> exchanging opinions with you for so many years I just don't know what would be your attitude to such a situation.

If you want to tell me - why not to do what both of you desire and <sup>let</sup> nobody know it - so I must tell you that even if I don't have much prejudice I still take sex "seriously," that means I don't like the idea "let's try and forget it." I also value old friendships



(including our friendship) very much -  
I am not able to find real new  
friends any more.

I hope you've received my  
postcard from Caucasus - it was  
a beautiful, even if very tiring  
trip (8000 km in 3 weeks by car).  
We got acquainted with life  
of several nations (Russians, Ukrainians,  
Georgians, Armenians and some  
minorities), visited some architectonical  
jewels (monastery complex in Kiev),  
admired beautiful scenery of Sevan  
lake, ate Georgian schaschlik  
under Elbrus, spent 3 days on the  
beach, always enjoying the advantage  
that none of these places is  
overcrowded. We both speak Russian  
quite well, so we don't have any  
communication problems - we were  
invited to a family, exchange presents  
etc.. In general, people in the Soviet

Union are more modest than we are, not always complaining about something, good-natured and ready to help to a foreigner without profit.

There is a great contrast between their towns and villages: this contrast has been removed in our country, sometimes it's the other way round: people in the country live better than people in the cities.

The Russians also have their problems with the consuming society, but in some cases it seemed to me that they are still able to be happy without it. (That's what we are not able any more).

Anyway, I think that it's all for today - after a hot weather we had for a month it's raining all the day and Lucie also asks for my attention, because she can't go out (we are in the country at my mothers' now).

With love,  
Yours Ivana



1983 / 4

20th August, 1983

Dear Rev,

I am sending you two photographs from my daughter's third birthday. In a separate mail I am posting also a brochure of Czech comics because you wrote that you are still collecting them. You know, there are not many of them in our country - at the moment I could not find anything more. As to the coins it's difficult to send (to export) them from Czechoslovakia - it's possible only with a special permission - so I'll see what I can do.



I've just read the novel "Sophie's Choice" to the end (finally). I liked it very much - the topic of the sufferings in the 2nd World War is shown very convincingly there (which is not very easy so many years after the war, in the time when the topic is not very popular, especially in the United States, I am sure). Human relations (extravagant in not normal conditions) are sometimes difficult to understand, but deeply touching in their strength. I like also the other books by William Styron (I read Set This House on Fire and Confessions of Nat Turner), but this novel on Sophie's fate I like best.

Otherwise there is nothing new  
with us - I hope you received  
my longer letter and a postcard  
from Berlin where I was  
for a week to improve my German.

Write soon, please.

Love,

Ivana.

1983 / 5

15th October, 1983

Dear Per,

There were some inspiring points in your last letter so I want to answer it just now (if I don't what happens is that the letter remains unanswered for a longer time - there are always rather things you must do, there is always lack of time etc. I've found out that the best way how to answer one's letters is to do it immediately after you got them, otherwise there is always a delay).

Thank you also for the book lists of your book club - I'd be much interested in the book "Prize Stories 1983. The V. Henry Awards" - Edited & with an Introduction by William Abrahams.

I didn't know that you collected stamps - so I'll try to contribute to your collection (I'm sending you also some Angola stamps). I don't quite understand



what you mean by "stamp-albums" from the East European countries."

Is "album" a special book where you can put in your stamps (this is the meaning of the word in our language, but I don't see any difference between, say, Czech albums, or Polish albums etc.), or you mean "a series" or "ensemble" of the stamps which belong together by topic etc. If you could explain this to me, please.

The address of the Czech Numismatic Society is:

NUMISMATICKÁ SPOLEČNOST ČESKOSLOVENSKA  
LEVÁ 11

140 00 PRAHA 4 - PODOLÍ  
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

I was surprised by the impressions of your father-in-law from the Soviet Union. But on the other hand, maybe it is understandable: first, he probably doesn't know the language (both of us, me and my

husband, speak Russian very well) and he went on a trip organized by some travel bureau, that means that he didn't have any possibility to make contacts with "common people" - otherwise I can assure you that impoliteness really doesn't belong to Russian characteristics. Maybe that the behaviour of the hotel- and restaurant staff is different to a Russian-speaking tourist from the socialist country and to a 'Western tourist - that's what I don't know (it shouldn't be so, of course, but it's difficult to judge).

To the second point: to decide if people of some country are happy or not, it is a very delicate question. Would you say that Norwegian people are happy? Would I say that Czechoslovakian people are happy? Some are convinced that the happiest people are the natives of some distant Pacific islands, the others that the only happy person can be some Japanese or American sitting in the middle of all the comforts and gadgets of civilization etc.



So I simply wouldn't dare to say if the Russian people are happy or unhappy - as individuals they are certainly not unhappier than individuals in any other nation. If your father-in-law had some possibility to compare their standard of living to yours, it certainly is much lower, it also is lower than Czechoslovakian one.

You have written that at the moment it would be difficult for you to come and see me - but I still hope that we'll manage to organize our meeting in the near future. (Anyway, I think that it is much easier for people in the Western countries to travel, including the financial side of it, but still, many of my friends often write, that they would like to, but.... My guess is, that travelling has already lost its magic for most of them, as they are getting older, they prefer other things if it is necessary to make a choice. I don't mean just a journey to Czechoslovakia, but any journey to a foreign country).



I hope that you will not think that I am crazy (because you know me and you have seen that usually I am able to realize my travelling dreams) if I tell you that I would like to go to Iceland as the next longer holiday trip. It will not be this summer, because I am pregnant again, expecting baby in March, but the next year me and my husband will try to realize it. It seems far away, but it's necessary to plan such trips soon in our country. Therefore I would like to ask you for some information: is there some possibility to travel from Oslo or some more northern Norwegian town to Reykjavik, by ship or by plane, and how much does it cost? or is there some travel agency in Norway which has such journeys on its schedule and can organize it all (and at which price?) I'd be much grateful for any information of this kind.

Once again back to the topic of  
unfaithfulness: I personally don't have  
much experience to offer. The problem  
is, that "the potential lover" would  
have to be superior to my husband  
in many ways (not only sexually) and  
it's difficult to find such a person  
who would be interested in me, too.  
You may also call it "lack of  
opportunity," if you want. It really  
happened only twice during our marriage,  
I had a sort of "affair" with the man,  
but I was not able to sleep with him,  
because of very strong inhibitions  
(probably of the same sort as yours), or reported.  
But I still keep excellent friendship  
relations with two of my former  
lovers (before marriage) - I think that  
my husband is not very enthusiastic about  
it (what would you say to your wife?),  
but he accepted it.

The time is coming when I must  
go to pick up my daughter from  
kindergarten (or children park, as you



call it) - she ~~had~~ got already used to it  
and you may be sure that your Peter  
will also accept it with time.

Lucie has got a very independent cha-  
racter, but I still remember how  
she used to cry in the "criche" when  
I was leaving - <sup>(she was 2 1/2 years old)</sup> maybe that we ask  
too much independence of our children  
when they are small and we don't  
like it when they are fifteen forgetting  
that it was us who used to say  
to a little child - "you must be able  
to manage without me." Anyway,  
I find it sometimes difficult to  
bring up our children in this world and  
for this world.

Now it must really be the end  
of this letter.

With much love and write  
soon,

Yours  
Roma

LETTERS

1985



1985 / 1

25th June, 1985

Dear Per,

finally I've decided that it is time to write to you again - I have postponed writing this letter for a long time because I really am very busy but now I can see that there will be never less work, it will be more, that's why the only thing to do is to put the work aside.

Anyway, I had some leisure last week, which we spent in Hungary (I hope that you've got the postcard). As I have written to you I passed the exam in English & American literature and I am very happy about it. I owe much of the success in this exam to you and to our magazine "World Literature": these were two sources which helped me to be really up-to-date with my reading. The exam included, of course, also

the old periods in development of English-written literature, especially novel, but the examiners were most surprised by my knowledge of contemporary things.

I have also received book catalogues from you and I have found many (too many) interesting titles which I would like to read (or to have). I'd be grateful if you could send me some of the following list:

PENGUIN BOOKS

(when ordering, SBN should be preceded by '0140')

- |          |   |   |      |
|----------|---|---|------|
| ① 072659 | - | Small World <sup>by</sup> DAVID LODGE                       | 2,50 |
| ② 039678 | - | <del>Other</del> Siege of Krishnapur J. G. FARRELL          | 1,95 |
| ③ 029443 | - | Couples JOHN UPDIKE   | 3,50 |
| ④ 060065 | - | Other People MARTIN AMIS                                    | 1,95 |
| ⑤ 058877 | - | Good Man in Africa WILLIAM BOYD                             | 2,25 |
| ⑥ 060871 | - | On the Yankee Station WILLIAM BOYD                          | 1,75 |
| ⑦ 068260 | - | Christie Malry's Turn<br>Double Entry B. S. JOHNSON         | 2,50 |
| ⑧ 222715 | - | New Pelican Guide to English<br>Literature - 8: The Present | 3,50 |
| ⑨ 204350 | - | English Novel ALLEN   | 2,95 |



Fondana Books

⑩ 636500-0 The Novel Today MALCOLM BRADBURY 2, 95

I am most interested in books No. 8, 9, 10, because these are theoretical works.

The last year you sent me "O'HENRY AWARDS STORIES 1983" and "PULITZER PRIZE WINNER 1983" (Alice Walker - The Color Purple). It would be very interesting for me to know which books were granted these awards in 1984 and to be able to read them.

It might interest you that "Sophie's Choice" by Styron was translated into Czech by one of our best translators from English and met with a great success. William Styron visited Prague two months ago and had some discussions with Students of Faculty of Arts. I have read that there was a film based on the novel directed by Pakula, maybe that I succeed to see it somewhere.

But enough about literature. In your last letter you mention some possibility of your coming: it would be great to ~~see~~ see you again! There is not much time left, because I am leaving for Cuba (with Lucie and Petra) at the beginning of September.



(my husband is leaving already 16th July). You remember that I wrote to you that travelling is a sort of drug to me? So I am going to take this "drug" very willingly again, even if having children made me much more careful in choosing the aims of my adventures. Cuba seems to be a very beautiful country (I have just read a book on twenty years which E. Hemingway spent there) and I am prepared "to pay the price" for this very welcome change: a special kind of solitude (far away from Prague which I love and from all friends), hot climate (which is wonderful at the beginning but becomes annoying with time) and all small nuisance of everyday routine life. I know some Cubans and generally they are very nice - only I must learn Spanish (no easy task, even if I speak Portuguese).

It would be fine to be able to discuss all these things with you personally - our flat is big enough to accomodate guests, so you wouldn't need to worry about it.

Write soon, please.

Yours,

Zana.

1985 / 2

2. 8. 1985

22.00 p.m.

Dear Per,

I am still with you because I know  
your itinerary - you must be in Berlin now.  
(it's a small world after all).

But I know you'll be further & further,  
I'll be more quiet and there will  
remain only a memory of a romance  
and little of bitter-sweet taste  
in my mouth. I wish you all  
the best in your life because you earn  
much more happiness than you have had  
till now.

I went to the cinema after you left  
and as there was no good American film  
on I saw "The Submission" and it was  
really a very good choice for the occasion:  
sci-fi comedy on the theme of male &  
female elements. Then I went to



a cafe' FRIGNOR because I knew there were pictures of Norway beautiful landscape on the walls there. I was looking at the fjord pictures and trying to imagine the country which you had been partially brought up.

We missed each other in a way - it was too early 17 years ago and too late now, but I still believe that it is a wonderful thing to have someone who is ready to talk with you till 3 o'clock in the morning and both of them are interested more and more. I feel very empty sitting at the desk in the working room but it doesn't hurt so much any more.

Love,  
Anna.

1985 / 3

12th September, 1985

Dear Per,

Thanks for your letter of 8th September - I've received it today - and also for your "Swedish" letter. I hope you got my letter which was written on the day of your departure from Prague - you didn't mention it and you seemed to be worried by my silence.

Anyway, there is no need to worry about me. As you can see, we are still in Prague: I have postponed the date of our departure mostly because of my brother's wedding, which will take place on 28th September. We are flying away on 30th September. My husband seems to be worried about me too: I have probably written a few mixed-up letters and he is answering with many letters full of love; I suppose he misses the girls very much.

Shortly after you left, we got another visitor from Australia. She ~~was~~ is a very pretty woman, two years older than



me, just the type who knows where to look for men and how to handle them.

We spent a few evenings together in different bars and night-clubs including Intercontinental and I think it was a good cure for my beaten self-confidence. I usually never go to such places (no more), but it was a very good feeling, like bathing in men's admiration (even if I don't have any illusions as to how superficial the relationships established there must be).

I brought home that movie we made during our walk at Lipina - so I have you "alive", moving, with a small smile on your lips, whenever I want to see you. I was also very pleased by the photographs you sent me, most of them are very nice - it's good to see our children playing together.

When I<sup>st</sup> got your letter this morning I felt like I had many things to write to you; but at the moment (it's about 11 o'clock at night) all the inspiration has gone. It's not only

that I am tired by everyday routine of taking care ~~of~~<sup>after</sup> two children; it's also that I still remember you very much and my present life is not very interesting: it's just saying good-bye to many friends I have here and settling the last formalities.

You haven't written how the relation with your father in Sweden worked out and how was the end of your holiday. Is Peter all right? does he still remember "mother hippopotamus"? What about your ex-wife? I felt that you were sad that that girl you told me about had left you; if you don't mind me telling you such things (because I feel that I can't speak about love and man-woman relationships so freely any more as we used to do - everything what I say maybe turned "against me" - I think that there was some damage done <sup>by me</sup> to our relationship in this way. I just hope that you'll be able to take everything what I write on more abstract level.)



I just think you shouldn't ~~get~~ start  
 any deep relationship with a woman,  
 because it is not the right time for  
 you, but you should be making love  
 to them whenever you felt like that.  
 After some time, when all your personal  
 matters are settled I feel sure that  
 you will find someone who you will  
 love and who will love you. I know  
 there is no justice in this, but  
 I simply cannot believe that <sup>all</sup> Norwegian  
 girls are blind.

Anyway, I'll better finish now  
 and I am looking forward to your next  
 letter.

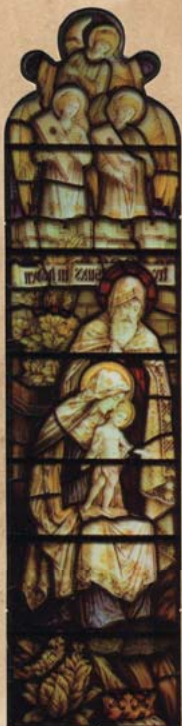
Love, Zana.

My brother's address:

ZDENĚK KUNEŠ  
 NEDAŠOVSKÁ 340  
 PRAHA 5 - ZLIČÍN

I am sorry but I am not sure  
 if I can find you someone for exchanging  
 stamps - I was once at the address, but  
 there was nobody suitable for the purpose there.  
 PS: Haven't you forgotten my National Geographic, please?

1985 / 4



La Habana,

17th December,  
1985

Dear Per,

first of all I would like  
to wish to you merry  
Christmas and much happiness  
in the New Year.

I've received your letter  
of 20th Oct. 10 days ago -  
it was addressed to the  
old Saratovská Street - please,  
if you write, address it  
to F. KRÍŽKA 8, 170 00 PRAHA 7.

You are mentioning some  
troubles, loneliness, slow moods,  
but you don't specify anything  
maybe you are afraid of being  
more open with me, because  
you think it might hurt me,  
but please, don't be afraid.

I am sitting here in our  
very nice apartment, with  
pretty high ceilings, washing  
our house, listening to some  
old French chansons by Mireille  
Mathieu and also some songs



by Peter, Paul & Mary we  
listened together to in Prague.  
I have been thinking a lot  
of my marriage recently,  
because I decided to find  
out what's wrong (you  
know I am psychologist,  
or at least I try to be).  
I think I have it now;  
the only thing is that  
I don't know what to do  
with it. My husband has  
a very weak personality,  
he is liable to different  
influences and he usually  
finds and accepts those,  
which, according to my  
opinion, are not worth it.  
We got acquainted when  
he had nothing and <sup>which</sup>,  
in Czechoslovak circumstances,  
a quick career (you might  
or might not believe it, but  
he owes there something to me)  
and only now I can see  
that his scale of life  
values is very different from  
mine - which can't be changed.

He is satisfied with new  
clothes à la mode (which  
is laughable with men),  
he started smoking again,  
he is drinking a lot (a little  
quality now), he is thinking  
of buying a video and  
then he will be watching  
stupid films all the time.  
He is a typical extrovert,  
he didn't find time to write  
to his parents since he is  
here, but there is time enough  
for drinking every night etc.  
The fact is, that I can  
accept the man, who is  
his best friend now, because  
he is a sportsman (homois)  
so there is something behind him,  
I don't expect that all  
the people must be interested  
in English literature, but  
I hate the superficiality with  
which my husband accepts  
the values of others.

Of course, he doesn't love  
me any more, but I don't  
love him either, so there would

by Peter he no problem there,  
Lester if he just be ready to  
I have respect of basic rules.  
of my I think he loves our  
beacn daughters, even if he  
out a doesn't pay them any  
know special attention - he  
a at feeds them with TV  
I thin and presents, thinking  
the on that it is the best for  
I don't them.

What happens next  
I don't know, but you  
said yourself, that  
it will be nearly impossible  
for me to get out of  
this golden cage of my  
marriage. I should have  
never married him (it was  
him who insisted) and  
maybe I should never have  
got married at all.

So, I was so sincere with  
you as I could, I hope that  
you are still interested  
in my life. In my next letter  
I promise to write something  
about Cuba finally. And  
that I'll be looking forward to  
your letter.

Love to you & Peter.  
Irene.



LETTERS

1986

1986 / 1

24<sup>th</sup> March, 1986

Dear Per,

Thank you for your letter of 4<sup>th</sup> February - I am glad you haven't disappeared from my world in spite of the distance lying between us. You wrote that you didn't have many secrets hidden from me and it makes me feel good not to have many hidden <sup>from</sup> from you. The thing is that my marriage has not gone out of the window, but the love has or at least the passion has gone completely (primarily on part of my husband, but I don't care to make love with him either even if I am not sure what I would do if he started to be as he used to be). What to put in its place I don't know, but I am looking for something, tell me if you know



what is a substitute for love.

I started working here which makes me less dissatisfied.

My work is connected with all the cultural proceedings between Cuba and Czechoslovakia, with system of education, scholarships, science, health service (what is done on mutual basis). I like it very much and my girls are not suffering because of my absence at all because I work just from 8<sup>00</sup> a.m.

to 12, 30 p.m. that means that I am <sup>back at</sup> home at 13,00. Lucy went to Cuban school anyway and she is going to start at Czech school since September. Petra is staying with my Czech friend - a woman which could be her grandmother - and is enjoying immensely the grandmother's element in her life (i.e. all the spoiling and caring).

The only difference for me is that I am cooking in the evening instead of in the morning.

Otherwise I am enjoying living at the seaside and the closeness of nature everybody must feel living on this island. Sometimes I don't care to listen to some music, because it is more soothing ~~to listening~~ to the sea.

I have written two articles for World Literature (Svetova' Literatura) and read all the books you sent me which I brought here with me. I enjoyed some of them very much but I don't think you had time to read them before posting, so I don't want to open any discussion on the topic. I like your slogan of the week (about heaven & frustration) - the idea is wonderful but what about the practise? It counts for me as well as for you. How is Peter growing? I would like to meet him (& his father) once again before he is a man (and me a grandma).



Ok, I have two questions: first, have you got a telephone at home & at work? It might be nice to ring you up when I am in Prague (probably June - July). Write me your number, please.

And the second one: My brother wrote me, that no National Geographic has come to our Prague address so far. (there should be 3 numbers<sup>86</sup> now).

Please, could you verify if they got the subscription from you and if they are sending them? It is much easier to do it from your place than from mine, so excuse my bothering you again with this thing.

There is not much place left here and I feel selfish speaking only about myself this time. So I will finish with a typical Cuban (or Latin American) toast: salud - dinero - y amor (health - money - love) - you may change the order however you wish.

With love,

Anna.



1986 / 2

20th July, 1986

Dear Per,

it was nice to have your letter again - it was also nice to yield the temptation and to call you the other day. You and Peter have left your imprints all over Prague too: a week ago I was at Hradčany Castle with Lucy (remembering you), some days ago we were in the Park with merry-go-rounds and swings near our home (and I remembered Peter & you driving in the small cars), today we have been at Zoo with our children (and I remembered how Peter didn't like the small train and was afraid to go with it with the other children - also his talk about mother and father hippopotamus) etc. I also went to the Norwegian restaurant where I took my dinner the day of your departure. I am not sentimental - it's

just that the year passed too quickly and we are preparing another birthday celebration at my parents' at Lipina - Lucy will be six on 30th July. I also want to thank you for the beautiful photographs of our children (I like those with Lucy & Peter in a small basin in the garden best).

Now I should write something about my life since we parted, but it's very difficult. You know the basic problem and unfortunately I haven't found any people I could call friends in Habana, so I have had some "hard times" - anyway there seems to be some hope for the future, because we succeeded in discussing our problems with my husband and it's already something. Otherwise Cuba is a wonderful land with unstable weather & unstable emotional atmosphere as well - I haven't seen much of the country, but this should be better in the next year too.



I feel that you are enjoying life much better than you have done in the last years, you are travelling more and worrying less and that's very good. What kind of Video-films are you buying? - kung-fu, horrors or science-fiction? or sex-films? or some "serious" films? You see, I just can't imagine buying 43 films (I can't even imagine buying 43 books at once, because I can never find so many which I would like to have at one moment) but don't forget me, please, if you read something interesting & new in English or American literature, please). As to the computer, can you explain me what else can be done by that (besides of correction of one's spelling) - I am a real layman, but I'd be interested.

When I came to Prague, I made up my mind to finish my long-term work (the thesis on the complete works by C. P. Snow for my CSc. = Candidate of

Philological Sciences Degree). It had to be done in those 5 weeks before Ivan's arrival, so my mother took care of the children and I was spending all the time either in libraries or typing. It was finished last Friday (142 pages) and I took it for binding. Anyway, I'll leave my "master-work" at the Faculty of Arts and I'll have to defend my opinions expressed in this thesis only in June 1987 (we are leaving in the end of August and that's still holidays). I am happy to have it "off my hands" - I profoundly dislike things unresolved or unfinished.

I don't think that this is a very good letter either, but I am sending you all my love. Have a nice time and remember me.

Yours, Zana.

My brother's address:

ZDENĚK KUNEŠ  
NEDAŠOVSKÁ 340  
PRAHA 5 - ZLIČÍN



1986 / 3

14th August, 1986

Dear Per,

we are leaving Prague on 23rd August again so these are just a few lines before we go. I've spent very nice & busy three months here, feeling that Prague is the city where I really belong. I'm happy and independent here. It cannot be said about Cuba even if there are some actions.

I think there is a year with some struggles expecting both of us, before me & you; I wish you good luck in your court dealings and I wished you should take it easy in the best interest of Peter. He has certainly grown up - when you have some picture of him, send me, please.

I'd like to ask you very much if you could renew the subscription of National Geographic<sup>87</sup> for me once again. A friend of mine who used to be in Germany and did it for me is not there any more. I'd be glad if I could send you something from Czechoslovakia: now when you already know what is possible to buy here (for you or for your son), write me please what you would like to have. I'd feel better if I could send you something, because I don't want to ask too much from you, but at the moment it is the only possibility. The National Geographic Magazine gives me a feeling of exploring unknown never visited countries, which is a very important thing to me (as you know); I wouldn't like to lose it.



How about your personal computer? Have you already got it? If you have some folder with information on your computer or some others, we'll be much interested. My husband tries to make his company to buy one for his service use in Habana, but the choice is not quite clear. It would be also interesting to know which possibilities it offers to you, for making your life easier.

What about your camping trip with Peter in Sweden? was the weather fine? We had nothing like real holidays ourselves this year because of my thesis on Snow and some difficult tasks to resolve which awaited my husband after coming to Prague in his work. But we must organize it better next year. Our matrimonial life is based on some "mutual agreement"

which makes it easier to understand the wishes of the other. I would never believe how much efforts it cost to make from marriage just a place of a satisfied life (I don't dare to speak about romance and happiness). I can see now that even this satisfaction and understanding which didn't seem enough for me when I was younger, are very fragile things which must be taken care of. Anyway, our daughters seem to be happy enough as you can see from the picture I am enclosing.

Have my best wishes and love - and don't forget me (once we'll publish our memoirs, shan't we?).

Love,

Anna.

Write soon please, and often -  
I'll get your letters.



1986 / 4

28th August, 1986

Dear Per,

This is just a short letter, because we are leaving tomorrow night and I have much work to do, packing suitcases etc.

I've received your letter today and I can see that in spite of many nice things in your life (your house, video, records, computer, your work and your son), there still is the big problem - this time not women, but the woman.

I wonder if she has got her second child (you told me once that she was pregnant, didn't you?), if she is married and how does she explain that at the beginning she could do that unbelievable thing (unbelievable for majority of mothers): to leave

her little son? She didn't care then when she had left you and a very small kid and she doesn't care for her son now, when she wants to fight and makes him feel bad. Dear Per, I wish you good luck and strength and give my love to Peter, too. And don't be afraid to use the same means as she does.

You have not confirmed the receipt of my letter with photo, where I asked ~~to~~ you if you could pay the subscription for National Geographic for me once more. I'd like to know that because otherwise I must look for other ways. I know that you have trouble enough at the moment, but drop me just a line, please (I'll understand if it is not possible to pay <sup>for</sup> it).



I have read some Scandinavian poems recently including Norwegian poet Rolf Jacobsen (older generation <sup>\* 1907</sup>) and Danish poet Henrik Nordbrant (younger generation, born 1945).

I like both of them.

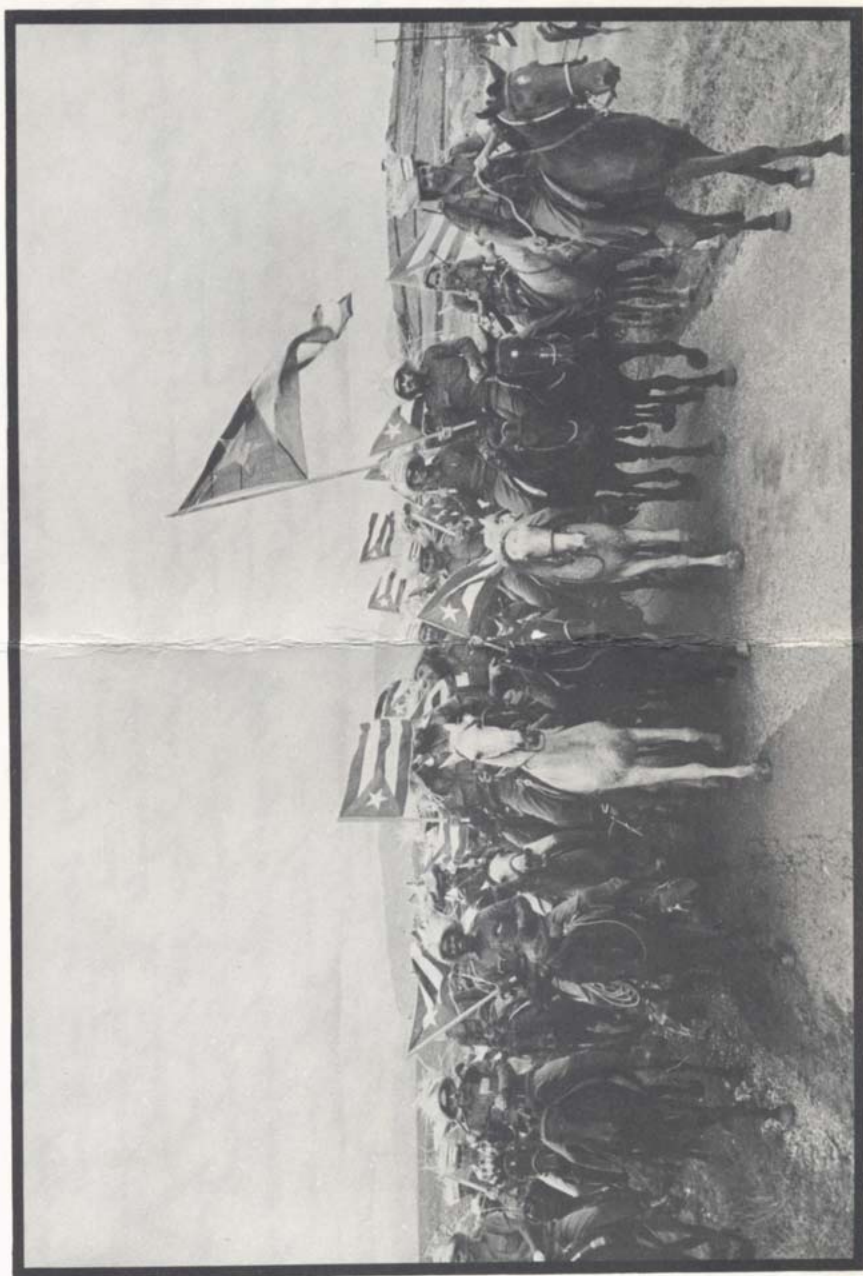
By the way what's the meaning of the motto by Johan Falkberget, written at the headlines of your writing paper?

Otherwise everything is the same.  
 "Life is not what we want, but it is what we have."

Love,

Ivana.

1986 / 5



P. F. 1987



Katana, 10th  
December 1986

Dear Ben,

after a long time, here I am again!  
The end of the year is coming and  
therefore I am thinking of all friends  
in the distant Europe. Everything  
seems to be all right in our  
family: my husband is working  
as always (that means too much), but  
fortunately I go on with my work  
as a secretary of the cultural de-  
partment of our Embassy which  
is the type of work which suits  
me perfectly. Lucie, my elder one,  
goes to the first class of the  
Czechoslovak school: Praha will  
be three years old in March and  
is very sweet. So we are living  
our everyday life animated only  
by the presence of the son  
which never leaves us in this  
beautiful country.

My brother wrote that you'd part  
some stamps for him - thanks very

much. I remember that you were  
collecting comics, so I am  
sending you 3 Cuban samples  
which might be interesting for  
you. I hope you have not forgotten  
my subscription to National  
Geographic, thanks very much again.

I am thinking of you and  
Peter hoping that the coming  
New Year will be a good one for  
both of you. So I'd like to  
wish you much happiness  
and good time together - and  
to you, a good job which makes  
sense.

With all my love,

Yours Ivana.

PS: Write to the Prague address  
if you have some time.  
Thanks for the letter which  
came some time ago.

Caballeria, 1960

Foto: Raul Corrales

LETTERS

1987



1987 / 1

21st June, 1984

- Dear Per,

what a thing it is, the simple telephone! The call brought to me millions of memories, which have their origins somewhere in the year 1967 and showed me a girl who thought she was grown-up, but she had not known anything about life, love, feelings or losses. And then another picture, university days nearly over, in 1973, she already had gone through a lot of things, now she can be called mature, maybe, but she is full of optimism and expectations, what new life may have in store for her. Last holidays, travelling to her

beloved Scandinavia and meeting  
with a fragile woman instead of  
her also travelling pen-friend -

I liked your mother very much and  
so did my friends - I hope she is  
still fine and give her my best wishes,  
please. And now I am looking  
at the photos we made during  
our sight-seeing walks in Prague.

It's 1985, the girl became a woman,  
mother of two, and <sup>neither</sup> you are alone any  
more. We may be happy both of us,  
to have children like that, but  
there is a certain feeling underneath,  
that something is missing, that  
this can't be ~~alone~~ all what  
one expects of life. Both of us  
are working (maybe too much), but  
enjoying our jobs, none of us has  
grave economical problems, on the



contrary, but the early hopes and beliefs that everything was possible, everything was ahead and one might only choose, ~~have~~ <sup>have flown</sup> away, disappeared completely.

But anyway, we are not old yet, let's ~~do~~ try to do <sup>the</sup> best of our lives, let's try to look for friendship, love, adventure. We mustn't allow that the daily routine would kill everything which we dreamt of 20 years ago, let's try to revive our efforts <sup>and</sup> not to live without any intellectual <sup>life</sup> and sentimental feelings (majority of people lives without them, because it is easier). I feel, that our friendship is a part of such a way of life, where is no place

for egoism and simple worries about bread. For me it certainly is a valuable thing which is not given to everybody. It pleases me by its duration and by its quality (I hope that you know that I have never been just sex-hunting woman) and I am glad that you are my friend.

It seems to me that I have written sort of passionate letter, but you will understand.

I have spent a pleasant year, seeing my children grow and enjoy the sun. Lucy has finished her first year at school with excellent results, she swims like a fish, learns to play tennis, speaks Spanish quite well.



Petra is sweet, maybe she loves me too much, ~~because~~ She doesn't go to <sup>my</sup> kindergarden, I have a lady who takes care of her while I am working. My husband bought a second-hand car for me, so I didn't have any problems how to get to work, <sup>and more</sup> it enabled me also to participate in many cultural and social activities in the evening. I saw many films, performances, fashion-shows, participated in many inaugurations of various expositions, I lead quite a busy & interesting life and as we were speaking about it on the phone, children never let you to feel really lonely.

To my collection of foreign languages  
I can join the sixth - Spanish.

It also gives me some satisfaction  
to be able to read books in Spanish.

At the moment I am happy  
to be in Prague, which is a unique  
city for me, because it is my home.

I walk in the small lanes,  
looking for the changes which were  
~~made~~ effected during a year, new  
shops, cafés etc. and I feel well  
in spite of the weather which  
is very cold and rainy, unusual  
thing in Czechoslovakia at this  
time of the year.

I would have liked to ~~the~~ say  
to you some tender words during  
our conversation, but it is always  
more difficult to tell them when



7

you are not speaking your mother-  
tongue. But I want you to know  
that if there is something I can  
do for you, I'll do that with  
pleasure.

Love,

Frank.

1987 / 2

Havana, 6/12/1987

Dear Per,

I received your letter of 18th October (together with the part written in August in Brighton) the very day I was leaving for Cuba again. If it had come a day earlier, I would have certainly written to you immediately, because your letter was really "alive" - too much alive, and I felt afraid for you. But I was just sitting on my suitcases, with Petra running around, in a sort of confusion which must be there if you are leaving for a year and which I certainly love, because it's like a promise that maybe something great is going to happen to you.



Anyway, I promised to myself to write immediately after my arrival, the promise, which, of course, I was not able to fulfill.

Only the coming end of the year made me to sit down and to describe my summer "holidays" which you don't know <sup>any</sup> ~~nothing~~ about yet.

First, I had to do some alterations in my candidate theses - it took me 2 months to bring it to an end finally. Then I went to the doctors', which is obligatory for us every year. And the gynecologist said that he didn't let me go without an operation (cystis). I can tell you, that usually I treat myself and my body hard, doing everything

possible for "prevention", even if it hurts, and my <sup>degree of</sup> resistance to pain (physical as well as psychological) is pretty high, but this time I was really scared. They insisted on the operation in such a hurry that I had nearly written my testament. I was in a hospital for a fortnight, but what I saw around me was horrible enough to change again the value hierarchy in <sup>my</sup> life for me. Finally I was declared all right, the tests were "negative", so I hope not to repeat such an experience very soon.

My husband had to leave for Cuba at the end of August, ~~because~~ and he took our elder daughter with him, because she had



To start school (2nd class). When  
 I was healthy enough to leave,  
~~the~~ I found out that the Faculty  
 of Arts of Charles University is  
 ready to give me a term for  
 defending my dissertation ~~theses~~ in  
 a week. So I decided to wait  
 and to bring to an end my efforts  
 of more than 6 years. I passed  
 this exam well (I hope that it  
 was the last one in my life of  
 such extend - 13 professors, docents,  
 etc. ~~where~~ were at one side of  
 the table, on the other side just  
 me), so that I can write my name  
 with two titles - PhDr. Ivana  
 Zubáňová, CSc. - which doesn't  
 mean too much to me, it's just  
 the good feeling, that the work was  
 done. It felt wonderful the day I made  
 it, but that's all.

Now I am here again, sitting under the palm-tree, enjoying the climate, drinking many rum-cocktails, seeing my daughters riding the horses (which is their newest hobby) and sometimes feeling depressed and bored.

I think that I should accept that at our age life is not full of new expectations and adventures (I don't mean new loves by that), but I continue to expect them, believing all the time, that it can't be all - there must be something more waiting for me.

My brother Zdeněk was here to see us for 3 ~~th~~ weeks, just for a holiday, and I think he liked Cuba very much - it also is a beautiful country. He left a week ago, to great



regrets of my daughters who enjoyed playing with him.

Back to your letter. It's interesting to know about 45th World Science Fiction Convention. There exists also an "Association of writers of police literature" - (detective stories, crimes etc.) - it was founded a year ago in Habana with participation of many writers of all the world.

I think that you really might have talent to write a book, or books and it's no good telling yourself that you have no time.

Tell me, what <sup>^</sup> are you doing after 8 o'clock p.m. when Peter is already in his bed? <sup>^</sup> I am sure I know it. You feel so tired that very moment, that you are ready either to go to bed too, or to wait

some stupid TV or video film,  
or reading some book which is not  
very difficult (in the best case).  
I know it myself very well -  
but if you overcome that crisis,  
(which it takes you 30-45 minutes),  
you have other 3-4 hours for  
yourself - for doing something  
creative, for studying, writing letters  
or writing a novel. If you don't  
yield to the television screen,  
or to the temptations of a nice  
sleep, you'll see that I am right.  
On the contrary to what you are  
thinking you have <sup>the</sup> best conditions  
for writing now: a house of your  
own, no wife bothering you, and  
enough life experience to find  
your topic. I am really convinced  
that you should try.



Dear Per, I think it's all for  
today. I am embracing you and  
kissing you and I hope you will  
think of me just for a few seconds  
at midnight of 31<sup>st</sup> December,  
as I will of you.

Love,

Ivana.

LETTERS

1988



1988 / 1

15th December, 1988

Dear Per,

Looking at the date of your letters (the end of October) tells me, that I am also guilty of not writing earlier, even if I got your letter a month ago. Another year is coming to its end and it always makes me think not only of passing time but also of my friends who are spread virtually round the world (Australia, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., G.D.R., Sweden, Denmark, Mexico, Bulgaria, and especially Czechoslovakia and Norway). As a student of the Faculty of Arts I organized once a year (on my birthday) a party, where I invited all of my friends.

I still remember that it used to be a very entertaining, interesting and special

occasion: some of them were my friends for a long time but met with each other just on this evening; some of them were new people, whom I met recently and diversity of profession and character was big. Some people met on my "fiestas" and got married (and some of them divorced again), some found useful acquaintances, others new friends.

I loved the part of a hostess.

These parties took place even after I ~~was~~<sup>got</sup> married, but stopped with our departure to Angola.

When we returned, we were older and had other worries - babies, flats, jobs. But I would like to revive the custom, after we come back.



Now I am imagining, and it would be like a dream, to get all my friends from different countries together. How beautiful it would be to have you all together! I know that it will not happen in my lifetime, the obstacles are too much for us, but I'd like to imagine that in the future it would be as easy as telephone calling: you just call - please come over and the next day you will have your friend of any country with you. Then we will have a big party!!!

I am thinking of you quite often. it is good to have a friend who is ready to read whatever you write (even nonsense). I know that it must be more difficult now for you when

Peter started at school. I know from my own experience that it really makes a difference, but you will get used to the new system very quickly (you have to - every employed woman has to). You will understand, that it is difficult for me to imagine you as a man who does what he thinks other people are wanting of him, or even as a person who can't say no. But anyway, our idea what we are and what we really are is always different.

Dear Pety, at the end of this letter I would like to wish you and Peter a beautiful year together: let all your wishes ~~to~~ come true.

With love,

Yours, Irana.



LETTERS

1989

1989 / 1

19th July, 1989

Dear Per,

a month ago we came back from Cuba definitively - i.e. me and my daughters, because my husband has to stay in Havana until September to finish his job and pass it over to his colleague. Another piece of my life is over and it's necessary to start again. Anyway, I don't mind new beginnings even if it is always connected with an effort (psychical and even physical - you can imagine what all the moving and acclimatization is) which other people can dedicate to more useful



activities (building their houses, studying, loving). At least I can't complain that my life is monotonous.

I wonder about you - how is the life treating you? I haven't heard about you for a long time (I hope that you got my postcard from the U.S.A. at least - it was also great experience for me, which I would like to discuss with you personally, once).

What about Peter? - he will be 8 on 30th August, won't he?

I imagine him as a little boy, but he has certainly grown up a lot. I'd be interested in your system of education - how is the basic school? does it bring much stress

~~How~~ your children? And what about marking system (I mean scale of marks, its rigidity etc.).

You know, I am worried a little about the change of school for my girls. Lucy will start the 4th class in September and

she was used to a very small number of children (seven of the 3rd grade and 6 of the first grade in one classroom), to nice friends and selected teachers, to a very liberal system. That means that everything will be different for her. Another problem is that she started playing tennis, playing flute and she speaks a good Spanish-



now it's up to me to find possibilities that she might maintain and develop her abilities.

Petra (5 years old) will start to attend "kindergarden" - for the first time in her life which is also unusual in our country. The majority of children starts in a nursery at the age of 2 and continue at kindergarden since the age of 3. (This was the case of Lucy, too), because mothers want or must work. (Sometimes the reasons are combined - emancipation of woman and financial needs). I'll start at the ~~the~~ College of Economy

To teach German since 1st October,  
I am looking forward to this  
"come-back".

So I'd like to hear about  
you, how you manage as  
a father <sup>(bringing up)</sup> educating his son  
and how you are.

Dear Per, I would like to  
express to you all my gratitude  
that you enable me to read  
such a marvelous magazine  
like <sup>the</sup> National Geographic.

It really means a lot to me -  
with my passion for travelling  
and my inadequate knowledge  
in science which gets approved  
by reading this magazine for years.



If it is not too much for you,  
I'd be happy if you could go on  
like that. Please, if there is  
something you would like to  
have from Prague, it would  
be pleasure for me to be able  
to give you something back.

With much love,

Yours Irena.





# POSTCARDS

7th December, 1980

Dear Per,

with the time passing so very quickly, I have realised that another year is going to be over soon. This year has been a very eventful and good one for me, maybe that I'll be sorry on 31st December to say good-bye to it, because there are some periods and events in our lives which cannot be repeated (Never more!) - I think that the birth of the first child is one of them. My husband is in Angola enjoying (or not-enjoying) the warmth of the tropical summer - I am not enjoying Prague winter at all; it is not a good season for small babies, and it's no good

*Šťastný nový rok*  
*С Новым годом*  
*Ein gutes neues Jahr*  
*Happy New Year*  
*Bonne Année*

to be alone here. Fortunately, Lucie is a nice and healthy child, so I hope to be able to fly to Angola with her in a few months,

Dear Per, I'd like to wish you good luck for the whole 1981 and merry Christmas and Silvester to you and to your wife.

Yours,  
 Ivana



11th December, 1983

Dear Rev,

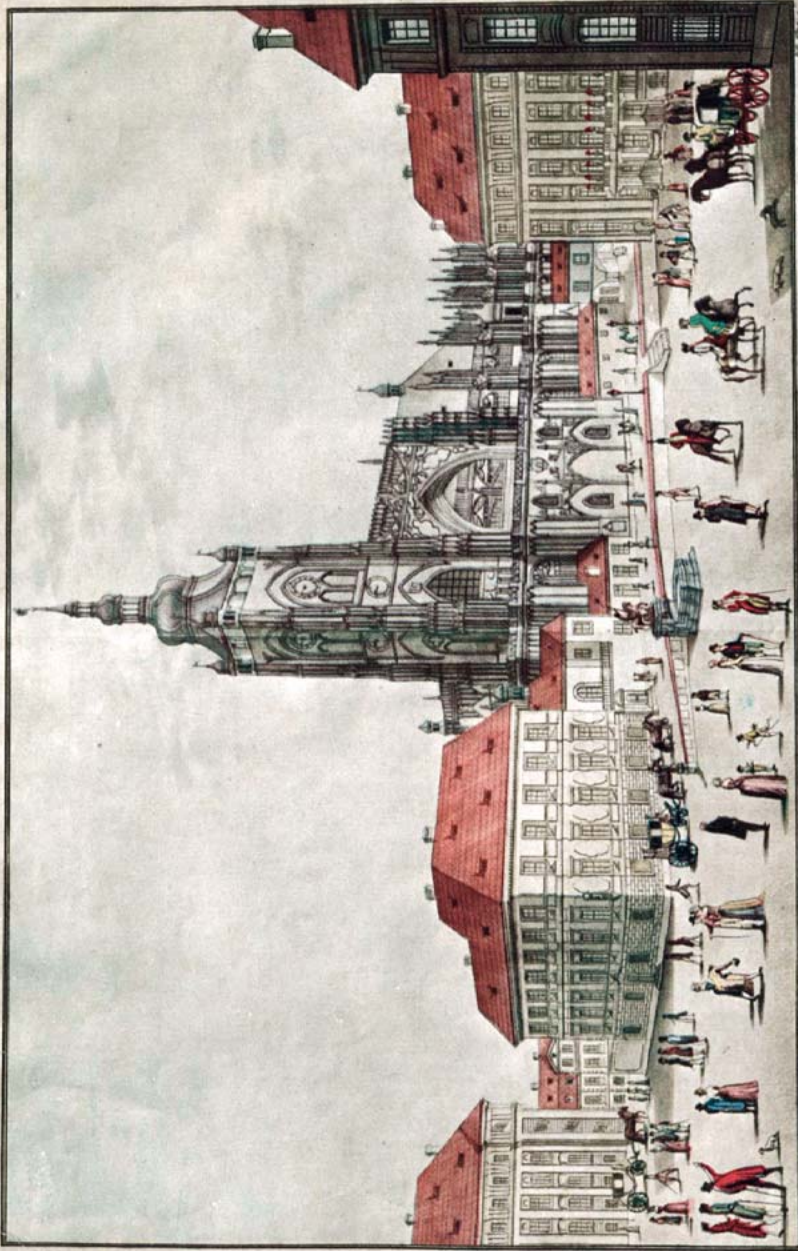
This is going to be a very short letter:  
I am overjoyed - my daughter has a flu - Christmas  
time in our country means buying presents  
for friends and family - I am going to sit  
for an exam in Marxist philosophy  
on 14th December (for my C.E. - candidate of  
sciences - degree) and to all that my  
efficiency is not very high because of my  
pregnancy (but I must tell you that I've come  
to the point that I am looking forward  
to having a little baby again very much).

I am sending you some stamps from Mo-  
samble my husband brought from his journey.  
(you may consider Angola & Mozambique  
the socialist countries, even if not East  
European, and I thought you might be  
interested in coins & masks in the pictures).  
To the "albums" of socialist countries, I under-  
stand now that you mean "catalogues"  
to be able to collect in accordance with  
them, to evaluate your stamps etc., is it  
right? I'll do my best to send you some.  
Have you got the coins I sent you via ~  
my friend approximately two months ago?  
Jaromir in Jesenka is in Northern Moravia.

Radostné vánoce  
a nový rok  
Счастливого  
рождения  
Frohe Weihnachten  
und ein gutes neues Jahr  
Merry Christmas  
and a Happy  
New Year  
Joyeux Noël  
et Bonne Année

Dear Rev, I wish to you, to your wife and to  
you are not my pleasant relaxing Christmas,  
but first of all much happiness in the New Year,  
much satisfaction in your jobs and a nice  
holiday journey (maybe to Czechoslovakia).

With much love,  
Your Anna



Capital der Monarchischen Kirche zum Heil der  
 gegen den dreien Erbkönig  
 Dilecti a La Majesté Française II  
 Cui ex Episcopo monasterio Plac. ex la novum  
 Place du Chancelier Royal  
 Empereur des Romains Ep. & Co.



Pohled na jižní průčelí domu sv. Víta, kolor. medirytina, list č. 9, 1792. Podle předlohy Filia Fr. Hegerů ryl K. Pluth  
Blick auf die Südfassade des Veitsdoms, kolor. Kupferstich, Blatt Nr. 9, 1792.  
Graviert von K. Pluth nach einem Entwurf von Filip und František Heger  
View of the Southern Front of St. Guy's Cathedral, coloured copperplate,  
Plate No. 9, 1792. Engraved by K. Pluth after a drawing by F. and Fr. Heger.  
Vue de la façade sud du Dôme St. Guy, gravure sur cuivre colorée, feuille  
No 9, 1792, œuvre de K. Pluth d'après le modèle de Filip et František Heger

109-357

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030

NAKLADATELSTVÍ ORBIS PRAHA

Dear Per,  
here I am, at home again, trying  
to get my life into "habitual  
lines". Lucy already goes to school,  
Petra to kindergarden. I start  
working from 1st October and I have  
already got the schedule of classes.  
I am looking forward to this "come-  
back", but certainly it won't be  
easy. So, here I am, thinking of you  
and hoping to hear about you  
soon.

Love, Jana.

Per W. Romanowski

STØLSVN 5

1415 OPPEGÅRD

NORWEGEN

6. 1. 485 x 635 mm  
o. 371 x 580





NINETIES

1990

—

1999

# Nineties

A combination of factors including the mass mobilization of capital markets through neo liberalism, the beginning of the widespread proliferation of new media such as the Internet, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to a realignment and reconsolidation of economic and political power across the world, and within countries. Living standards and democratic governance generally improved in many areas of the world, notably East Asia, much of Eastern Europe, Latin America, and South Africa. New ethnic conflicts emerged in Africa,



the Caucasus and the Balkans, and signs of any resolution of tensions in the Middle East remained elusive. New emerging nations started to play their part in economy of the world, especially **China** and **India**. Youth culture in the 1990s responded to this by embracing *both* environmentalism and entrepreneurship. Western world fashions reflected this by often turning highly individualistic and/or counter-cultural: tattoos and body piercing gained popularity, and “retro” styles inspired by fashions of the 1960s and 1970s were also prevalent. Some young people became increasingly involved in outdoor and adrenaline activities that combined embracing athletics with the appreciation of nature. In 1990, the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its list of diseases. Increasing acceptance of homosexuality occurs in the western world throughout the 1990s and 2000s.

The correspondence between Ivana and per from the nineties is limited because the letters started to be exchanged by fax and email – hand written letters found its place again only starting 2006, when Ivana moved to India – with the exception of one last summarizing letter from 2010, they are not the part of this collection. The picture above, yin and yang, is a symbol of search



for balance and harmony, which was typical for our lives in the turbulent nineties.

## Events in the World

- **Kuwait** – The Gulf War – Iraq was left in severe debt after the 1980s war with Iran. President Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait of flooding the market with oil and driving down prices. As a result, 1990, Iraqi forces invaded and conquered Kuwait. The UN immediately condemned the action, and a coalition force led by the United States was sent to the Persian Gulf, aerial bombing of Iraq began and the Iraqi army was driven out Kuwait just in four days. In the aftermath of the war, the Kurds in the north of Iraq and the Shiites in the south rose up in revolt, and Saddam Hussein barely managed to hold onto power.
- **The Yugoslav Wars** (1991–1995) – The breakup of Yugoslavia beginning on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1991, after the republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia which was followed by the subsequent Yugoslav wars. The Yugoslav Wars would become notorious for numerous war crimes and human rights violations such as ethnic cleansing and genocide committed by all sides. War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was an international armed conflict that took place between March 1992 and November 1995. The bombing of Yugoslavia was a NATO's military operation against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War. The strikes lasted from March 24, 1999 to June 11, 1999. However the bombing had proven to rather lead to the escalation of the humanitarian crisis, rather than prevent it, with virtually all of the crimes (as per the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia findings) occurring during the bombing, and not prior to it. It is generally agreed upon that the bombing campaign was illegal as it was conducted bypassing the United Nations, whose Security Council explicitly banned unilateral acts. The humanitarian reasoning did not help to convince even the U.S. House of Representatives which in a remarkable vote against the war in Yugoslavia failed to give the President Clinton the constitutionally required authorization he needed to carry on the air war against Yugoslavia. The U.S. Constitution grants Congress the sole power to declare war.

- **Hong Kong** became a colony of the British Empire after the First Opium War (1839–42). The Treaty between Britain and China about handover of Hong Kong was signed in 1898 for 99 years. Hong Kong was occupied by Japan during the Pacific War, after which the British resumed control. In **1997** China regained sovereignty over Hong Kong. The Basic Law stipulates that Hong Kong shall enjoy a “high degree of autonomy” in all matters except foreign relations and military defense. Similar status is enjoyed since 1999 also by Macau, a former Portuguese colony.
- **South Africa** – The release of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela from jail in 1990 after thirty years of imprisonment for opposing apartheid and white-minority rule in South Africa. This would result in the end of Apartheid in South Africa in 1994. Nelson Mandela was elected President of South Africa in 1994, becoming the first black-President in South African history ending a long-legacy of apartheid white-rule in the country.
- **Russia** – beginning of 1990’s, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms were causing major inflation and economic chaos. A coup attempt by hard-liners in August 1991 failed, marking the effective end of the Soviet Union. All its constituent republics declared their independence in 1991, and on Christmas, Gorbachev resigned from office. After 73 years, the Soviet Union had ceased to exist. The new Russian Federation was headed by Boris Yeltsin, and would face severe economic difficulty. Oligarchs took over Russia’s energy and industrial sectors, reducing almost half the country to poverty. With a 3% approval rating, Yeltsin had to buy the support of the oligarchs to win reelection in 1996. Economic turmoil and devaluation of the ruble continued, and with heart and alcohol troubles, he stepped down from office on the last day of 1999, handing over the power to Vladimir Putin.
- **Germany** – Germany reunified on October 3, 1990 as a result of the fall of the Berlin Wall and after integrating the economic structure and provincial governments, focused on modernization of the former communist East (German Democratic Republic). People who were brought up in a socialist culture became integrated with those living

in Western Germany. One of the major events for my generation which would never believe that something like that might come true in our lifetimes.

- **Europe** – The euro was introduced to world financial markets as an accounting currency on 1 January 1999, replacing the former European Currency Unit (ECU) at a ratio of 1:1 which begins a process of phasing out national currencies of EU countries. The Channel Tunnel across the English Channel opens in 1994, connecting France and England. As of 2007 it is the second-longest rail tunnel in the world, but with the undersea section of 37.9 km (23.55 miles) being the longest undersea tunnel in the world.
- **India** – Rajiv Gandhi assassination 1991. Rajiv Gandhi was a professional pilot for Indian Airlines before entering politics. He remained aloof from politics despite his mother being the Indian Prime Minister, and it was only following the death of his younger brother Sanjay Gandhi in a plane crash in 1980 that Rajiv entered politics. He became the youngest prime Minister of India from 1984 (after death of his mother Indira Gandhi who was killed by two of her own Sikh bodyguards) till his resignation in 1989 following a general election defeat. Rajiv Gandhi remained Congress Party President until the elections in 1991. While campaigning, he was assassinated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers) group as a revenge for his involvement in a conflict in Sri Lanka. His widow Sonia Gandhi became the leader of the Congress party in 1998 and led the party to victory in the 2004 elections.
- **Pakistan** – Kargil War – In May 1999, Pakistan sends troops covertly to occupy strategic peaks in Kashmir. A month later the Kargil War with India results in a political fiasco for Nawaz Sharif, followed by a military withdrawal to the Line of Control. The incident leads to a military coup in October in which the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is ousted by Army Chief Pervez Musharraf.
- **European Union** is born by Maastricht Treaty in 1992, 1993 Copenhagen criteria of accession are defined, 1995 see Austria, Finland and Sweden accession (development of European Union continues



in 21<sup>st</sup> century. 2002 Euro replaced twelve national currencies which was followed by 2004 accession of 10 countries including Czech Republic.)

- **Czechoslovakia** was a sovereign state in Central Europe which existed from October 1918, when it declared its independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, until 1992. From 1939 to 1945 the state did not have de facto existence, due to its forced division and partial incorporation into Nazi Germany, but the Czechoslovak government-in-exile nevertheless continued to exist during this period of time. In the year 1945 the eastern part of Carpathian Ruthenia was taken over by the Soviet Union, but otherwise the country continued to exist united. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993, Czechoslovakia peacefully split into the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia**. Many, including myself, regretted this split as an act of destroying a heritage of our fathers. From 1991, the Czech Republic, originally as part of Czechoslovakia and now in its own right, has been a member of the Visegrád Group and from 1995, the OECD. The Czech Republic joined NATO on 12 March 1999.
- **Norway** – At the end of the year 1990 Dr. Brundtland formed her third minority Labour government. However, in a 1994 referendum, Norwegian voters rejected membership in the European Union (EU) by a fairly narrow margin. The outcome was a stinging defeat for Dr. Brundtland, but she remained in power until late 1996, when she unexpectedly resigned as Prime Minister.

## Science and Culture

- **Inventions and discoveries** became a team work, so complicated and so little graspable for unscientific person that it would be beyond the scope of this summary to deal with even the most important of them (optical space telescope, global positioning system, many inventions connected with IT technologies like scroll wheel, Java Script, Flash Programming, blogging, many inventions in medicine – new healing methods and new devices as well)
- **Film** – Oscar winners: Dances with Wolves, The Silence of the Lambs, Unforgiven, Schindler's List, Forrest Gump,, Braveheart, The English

Patient, Titanic, Shakespeare in Love, American Beauty. After the success of Czechoslovakian cinematography in the sixties, nineties could see some revival of good Czech films – 1996 **Kolya** by Jan Svěrák even received the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. From Norwegian films, **Insomnia** from 1997 about a police detective investigating a murder in a town located above the Arctic Circle and fighting with his inability to sleep, the result of both his guilt and the relentless glare of the midnight sun, became famous. Popular films of the time which we all had to see were Star Wars, Jurassic Park, Independence Day, Forrest Gump, the Sixth Sense, Armageddon, Home Alone, Pretty Woman, Pulp Fiction, The Matrix, Mission: Impossible, a good mixture of catastrophic films and comic or psychological films “for all the family”. **Anime** and **manga** became popular and known in the mainstream. Previously restricted to fringe or niche circles within existing science fiction and comic book fandom, anime and manga fandom in the West began expanding and organizing its own fan conventions such as Otakon and Katsucon. Such conventions have continued to expand covering gaming, cosplay, and J-pop as well as other elements of Japanese and East Asian culture in general. However, the movie of the nineties was **Titanic**, a cultural phenomenon throughout the world, which eventually became the highest-grossing movie of all time. It would hold this record for over a decade until 2010 when Titanic’s director James Cameron had another of his films take the title, that being Avatar.

- **Music** – The 1990s were a decade of many diverse scenes in music, however, they are perhaps best known for teen pop, grunge, Eurodance and electronic dance music, and for being the decade that hip hop and alternative rock became mainstream. The rave movement that emerged in the late 1980s rises incredibly in the early to mid 1990s, and continues to exist as late as 2010. For my generation in the Czech Republic, there were no big names, but maybe we simply did not know and did not care any more. There were some exceptions like **U2**, **Nirvana**, **Oasis** and **Britney Spears**. We did not find the female icons of Great Britain like **Spice Girls** or **Backstreet Boys** of much interest. On the other side, the Tibetan Freedom Concert brought 120,000 people together to increase the interest in human rights and autonomy for Tibet from China.

- **Literature** – the nineties, similar as the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, saw many deaths of personalities who formed the previous decades: Iris Murdoch, Joseph Heller, William S. Burroughs, Ralph Ellison, Eugene Ionesco, Anthony Burgess, William Golding, Alberto Moravia and others. The type of published successful literature has changed, with writers trying to bring to the reader always more and more exceptional experience in a difficult competition with other media. Bestseller lists started to be made in a similar way like the Hit parades in the music. A typical example is **Chocolat** by Joanne Harris, a slightly dark and mystical story based on magical realism principles (the main magic being human kindness and a chocolate) which reached No. 1 in the *Sunday Times* newspaper's bestseller list. But the most revealing story documenting this trend is the story of J.K. Rowling, whose **Harry Potter and Philosopher's Stone** (1997) is a typical example of combination of a good interesting story for children and of a good luck of the author. Being the first book of the series of seven published during the period of 10 years made Harry, a student at school of magicians and his friends, an idol of children, teenagers and their parents alike. Aside from writing the *Potter* novels, Rowling is perhaps equally famous for her "rags to riches" life story, in which she progressed from living on welfare to multi-millionaire status within five years. To become a real bestseller, a novel has to be transformed to a film which might be a dangerous trend because many of the books are known as a film only and not many people read the book and know who is the author (**Train spotting** by Irvine Welsh, an iconic film, but most of the spectators would not know who had written the book, or **The English Patient**, a 1992 novel by Sri Lankan-Canadian novelist Michael Ondaatje, who remained unknown although his book was transferred to a well known award winning film). However, the nineties saw three major writers who were awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. First **Nadine Gordimer** who lived all her life in South Africa for her life work which dealt with moral and racial issues, particularly apartheid, in South Africa. Then **Toni Morrison** for her poetic and richly-expressive depictions of Black America. 1999 Nobel prize was awarded to German writer **Günter Grass** whose "frolicsome black fables portray the forgotten face of history".



Günter Grass tried to make a summary of twentieth century (**My Century – Mein Jahrhundert**) as I am trying to make a summary of forty years of my life, combining summary of historical events with personal letters which mostly do not mirror the storms and upheavals happening all around. Grass gave himself much more difficult task to find a story for every year, altogether one hundred short stories in an attempt to write a “history from below”, history from the point of view of those who are hardly ever referred to in history books: the victims of history, the little people – not state rulers, generals and business tycoons. **“Recollecting means selecting”** – that is the remark made by Günter Grass which I had to apply also for this book destined not for a wide public but for friends and family. Some critics were of the opinion that Grass had failed in his selection, one of the reasons being the intellectual crisis at the end of the twentieth century in a contrast to the intelligentsia’s prevailing mood of confident optimism at the last turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, i.e., one hundred years ago.

Also my selection has been done from a subjective point of view not considering what other events in politics and culture might have influenced the history. A compilation of historical events is bound to be incomplete and includes only the countries and places which were always on my mind, from obvious reasons with the most detailed stories on Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic and short notes about Norway as in comparison with the other world, Norway could enjoy peaceful 40 years without major upheavals (of course, everything is relative).

My choice referring to culture is limited to music, film and literature, because those were the arts which most influenced our lives. Some parts of culture events must inevitably read as an catalogue. But these lists are there just to remind to my contemporaries what music we had adored, what films we had seen and what books we had read – simply that what was the way we were.



PHOTOS

1990

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1996



*1993 / Lucy and Petra in their room  
in Prague*



*1993 / Per in Prague – in the restaurant*



*1993 / Per in Prague – Ivana with children  
in the kitchen*



*1993 / during Per's visit in Prague*





*1994 / Ivana's career with Higgs  
and Hill London*





*1994 / Ivana's career with Higgs  
and Hill London*



*1995 / family picture at Lipina, Ivana's and  
Zdeněk's family*



*1996 / Ivana in Oslo – Vigeland Park*





*1996 / Ivana visiting Per – in the living  
room*



*1996 / Ivana visiting Per – on the terrace*





*1996 / Ivana visiting Per – holding the rat*





*Correspondence*  
*Ivana to Per*

1990  
—  
1994

LETTERS

1990

1990 / 1

Vittsjö, 20th August,  
1990

Dear Per,

I am writing this letter  
in Vittsjö, Sweden; it's strange  
to be in this country after 17  
years again.

We spent a nice week  
in Copenhagen in a house of  
our Danish friends. We tried  
to make it a holiday for our  
children too, so we visited  
Tivoli, toy shops, we spent  
an afternoon on the beach etc.  
We had a possibility to see  
also Danish Parliament working,  
which was really interesting.  
It reminded me of our present



Federal Assembly (= Czechoslovak Parliament) which we could see in work on our T.V. lately. Anyway, the impression of it in both the cases is not very favourable: speakers are speaking, nobody is listening; the decisions they vote for have been already decided somewhere else, more a game for on democracy than the system where you could have the chance to be heard.

I am always interested to see how people in different countries live - we could see it in Denmark, because we were invited to various families. I enjoyed my stay very much and

I must say I like Denmark.

In Sweden we are staying with a family of a Czech girl who married a Swedish ~~boy~~ man. They have a house in woods and Vittsjö is a small place -

I think I couldn't live here for a long time. She is expecting a baby and with her husband very busy, she also feels lonely sometimes, so the guests are a welcome ~~x~~ distraction. We would like to go to Göteborg, maybe to Öland, too.

When we woke up today, however, it was raining heavily and it continues raining "cats & dogs" - it must be something of Scandinavian autumn already.



So there remained ~~the~~ time  
for writing letters.

I'd like to discuss with  
you the present situation  
in Czechoslovakia, but it is  
not very easy. Things are  
changing very quickly and there  
is no experience how to change  
the centrally planned economy  
into a free market.

Some things which were strongly  
criticized as the fruits of  
communist regime repeat itself  
again (privileges of government and  
administration, bureaucracy,  
giving jobs in state offices, di-  
plomatic services, or even  
in presidential office to friends  
or relatives of "influential"  
people (that means nowadays



"the chartists" = people who signed anti-communist CHARTA) - nobody takes in account their abilities or education etc.

Then I could talk about difficulties of everyday life we have never had before - <sup>strongly</sup> increasing criminality, <sup>starting</sup> drug business, unemployment, social insecurity, etc. Prices of foodstuffs have been increased 100% and that means e.g. that milk products get spoiled sometimes and we have too much beef which nobody can buy because of too elevated prices.

I could tell you something about the good points too. it's wonderful that I can travel to

Denmark, Sweden (and other countries) without visa, but not everybody can use this possibility - it was a problem of bureaucracy before, now it's a question of money.

People say that they feel free now to say anything, to write anything to go everywhere: I was never afraid of selling my opinion and I am no professional journalist, so I think that this privilege of freedom of speech etc. is more important for people who really hated socialism and couldn't say so, otherwise they really would go to prison, which was not the case of majority of inhabitants.



There is one thing which is obvious now - in economy, the so called capitalist system functions better than the so called socialist one. And no compromise, nothing in between, is possible. It is a great fashion, however, to pronounce "guilty" the socialist system and ideas for whatever evil we had in the last forty years. I must say that I can't ~~say~~ see any big differences between the both systems as it comes to the care of "normal" citizens. I just see that nobody cares very much as they didn't care before. It's always "the simple man of the street" who suffers under the errors, fights for power



and inefficiency of the powerful dynasties above, however they might be called. And what makes it all more difficult for us is the international situation (in the Soviet Union, in the Middle East....).

I have always been sceptical and I continue to be so; my optimism concerning human nature had never flown high and nobody has convinced me yet that now all will be changed for the better.

I still see the danger in the "sweet taste" of power and I believe that nobody is to be trusted with power for too long. That might be our hope - that we'll have mechanisms in the future that won't allow hereditary functions, that unable & corrupt government members would be forced to renounce etc. If not, unhappy Czechoslovakia.

How about you and Peter?  
 How was your holiday? You went  
 to two places this time  
 I hope that you enjoyed yourself.  
 I still like travelling, my favourite  
 drug, very much.

As to the "National Geographic,"  
 it is still impossible to buy it  
 in Czechoslovakia, so I would like  
 to ask you, if you could be  
 so nice and help me to  
 maintain the continuity of  
 my subscription. I think that  
 in the year 1991 it might be  
 already possible to buy it in  
 our country. Thank you very much  
 for paying it one more time.

I have forgotten to thank you  
 for your "information letter" and I hope  
 to get a longer one soon.  
 Love, Ivana.

LETTERS

1991



1991 / 1

3rd September, 1991

Dear Per,

Thanks very much for your long letter - it was more a report on half a year of your life (dated 27/1, 12/3 and 14/6 1991) and I liked it very much. I just can't stop wondering how you can consider yourself a "down to earth" person.

I think you are one of the most romantic men I have ever met.

It sounds very nice that you were brought up to believe you had to pay for you had got: but you don't need to worry about it nor to think about it.

The destiny (or coincidence?) will arrange it for most of us - we have to pay dearly for the most

of the beautiful moments of our lives - and "the things which seemed to be the cheapest, are always the dearest ones."

When I am thinking of that Chinese girl of yours - I believe she would be an ideal wife for the majority of men: she would probably look up at you as her God till the end of her life - listen to you, take care of you, make love with you. The most men would say "yes." But you are "romantic" (and I must say that I am also very romantic in this respect). There must be some sparklet there for me, something which goes over the "chemistry of bodies" - at least at the beginning, otherwise I am not interested, even



if all the riches of the world were at stake (that's the romanticism).

I spent a very nice holiday, travelling 6 weeks from one place to another. My passion for travelling really reminds me of drug addiction. I should have enough after these six weeks (I am not 20 any more), but still I would ask for more, if it were possible.

The first fortnight of July I was in Hamburg taking part in a seminar organized by "Goethe Institute" - the main topic was mass media. You can imagine a group of 25 Germanists from 14 countries (including U.S.A., England, Spain, Italy, Norway, U.S.S.R., Poland, Hungary etc.) - well organized, generously sponsored -



it was real intercultural exchange of opinions, attitudes, feelings - something new for me, I have never had a chance to participate in something like that (I've got a scholarship).

Afterwards I spent one week with my family in Austria - we went to Vienna and Salzburg by car.

Lucy and Petra enjoyed being with both of us very much; it happens seldom now that we succeed in being all together for a longer time.

But one week in a neighbour country was the maximum we could afford ourselves due to the horrible devaluation of Czechoslovak currency.

Then I went to Dresden for the School of Summer Germanistic Studies organized by Technical University of Dresden. There were 80 participants

there and we shared the anxiety during the unsuccessful coup d'état in the Soviet Union (there were teachers from Baltic Republics, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine etc. among us). And at this place I'd like to come back to the topic of love again. After a very long time I met in Dresden a man whom I liked very much. Why was I attracted from the very beginning is impossible to explain. When I think of it, I should dislike him. The type I like is free-thinking, cosmopolitan, with social feeling for humanity, opposing any use of force (there is a piece of "hippie" in me since the sixties), well-read (better than me if possible), able to explain me something new. It's true that



that man was of great intellectual capacity, but otherwise he was just the opposite to everything I named above - he even served voluntarily in Danish army for three years. There must be many things beyond our reason: he said me later that he felt the mutual attraction from the first days (sparks? waves?) and you will certainly believe me that I don't attract men by staring at them or by showing off, I am too serious for something like that. We were never alone the first fourteen days; if you were not to such a course, you can't imagine that it is the most disadvantageous ambiente



for having sort of love affair.  
 (sleeping in ~~double~~ bed rooms,  
 having my colleague from the University  
 of Economy always behind me,  
 taking part in excursions and meals  
 together with other 78 persons).

We managed to meet a few times  
 alone the last week of our stay  
 and we were aware of "impossibility"  
 of such a relation all the time,  
 but still the things like that  
 simply happen, not just in movie,  
 in spite of ourselves and that's  
 what I like so very much about  
 life.

I think I have written enough  
 for today - I hope to receive  
 another "report on your life" very  
 soon.

Love,  
 Irina.

1991 / 2

Prague, 10. 11. 9

Dear Fer,

thanks for your letter, or better to say three letters, because you wrote them at different places and in different moods. I like your telling me about your "small adventures", there's no need to feel worried about them, they just make our lives more sparkling, under the condition that not only sex is in play. I have always valued friendships, but also "friendships" very much, there are not many things in this world which make living more agreeable and warm human contacts belong to them. So I hope your "trade union lady" and "train lady" were intelligent enough to make you happy. I think I can understand you better than any man could, because no man would understand how difficult it is to fight against everyday merry-go-round of "home, child and work".

In contrary to you, I start getting very melancholic every autumn. This autumn, however, was so mild and beautiful, that it made even me to accept it as a nice season. But the coming winter cannot succeed in doing that - in November I am always longing for Angola, Cuba, or any other country on this globe, where the summer begins just now. I admire your father that he would be ready to change his life so completely and to move to China, I wish I had courage to do the same, that means not to move exactly to China, but to be able to change everything and to start again before it is too late. If I made up my mind now, I could change my job for a better paid, more attractive and interesting one - but with all the risks that I might be fired after two years, or another problem, who would take care of the girls? So I am sitting on the same place, I go on with petty fights against our chief /an ambitious fanatic woman, whom I know since my studies at the Faculty of Arts/ and taking comfort out of contact with my students, because still I like teaching languages very much. Similarly with my marriage, I could imagine better one and maybe that I would suit better to another partner but .... It is not so bad, after all. I think it's my good luck that I can enjoy small things in my life /books, nature, friendship, Prague with its restaurants and cafés etc./, otherwise it would be very depressive sometimes.

I think that's all for today.

Love,

PS: I don't know, if I had sent you *Trava* an information about Jan Palach - foundation, where I am member, before - don't you think you could find some supports for us to these unions, etc.

LETTERS

1994



1994 / 1

9/12/1994

Dear Per,

the letters are still the best method of exchanging feelings and opinions if people are unable to be together. I do not think that fax machine and telephone can be ever so adequate.

So this is my Christmas letter for you. First it makes me think again of what I have done during the past year and if the year was exceptional or not.

"Real" things first: with passing years I appreciate more and more the well being and health of all the members of the family and this year was rather good in this respect.

Both Lucy and Petra started a new school (Lucy the secondary business school, Petra the second stage of basic school) and both seem to survive the change rather well. Both of them are learning English and German now, Lucy also continues with her Spanish at the Prague Language School and wants to sit for the first level of state exam at the end of the School Year. Both also play flute and occasionally tennis and certainly they bring more happiness than worries into my life.

I have not been doing anything for my further education or career; I am too busy with my two jobs which with time became necessity - I enjoy both of them but from time to time it is rather stressful. The other enjoyable thing given to me by the past year were my four journeys abroad: Germany, Denmark, England, Finnland - all of them countries which I like, where I have friends, where I can feel happy. It is nice too that the girls can share at least a part of

my pleasure on travelling.

Now I am coming to the things which are not so easy to evaluate - the matters of heart or soul. I have reached rather balanced state of mind at the beginning of this year, which has been unbalanced later by some friends, old and new ones, who tried to rearrange their lives and make me part of that attempt. But I am not ready for any radical change of my life for at least five years more and then it will probably be too late, anyway. Then another thing happened, I fell in love, fortunately with exactly the same response, which makes me happy. But it might be again one of my loves which is condemned to fizzling out, because of the distance and impossibility to change the practical conditions. Only under these circumstances I wish I were rich. Once again I come back to the basic rule of my life which I started to appreciate since I was twenty: our life is not what we want, it is what we have, with the awareness of the danger to consider the present state as temporal.

Dear Per, I wish you merry Christmas and happy New Year, I hope you and Peter are well and I am certainly missing your letters.

With much love,

*Ivana.*





# POSTCARDS



PER W. ROMANOWSKI

STØLSVN. 5

1415 OPPEGÅRD

NORWEGEN



Nationale Forschungs- u. Gedenkstätten der klassischen deutschen Literatur  
RG6-III/126/13-Motiv-Nr. 77 EVP 0,20 M

Dear Per,

5/7/1990

best wishes from Weimar, the famous town of Goethe & Schiller. I am here at the Summer University Course given to professors of German from 20 countries. I am coming back at the end of July and we start our family holiday to Denmark & South Sweden on 10th August. I wish you a beautiful summer.

Love, Tana

Die Dornburger Schlösser  
Дорнбургские дворцы  
The Castles of Dornburg  
Les châteaux de Dornburg  
Foto: J. Pietsch

10/12/90

Dear Per,

I was glad to have a letter from you again. I think that I would miss that fragile bond which connects us through letters very much.

This year hasn't been bad, either for me personally or for my country. But worse things are in stock for us in the coming year: discord, chaos, increasing prices & unemployment - I don't know if this is not a too high

price to be paid - what for? It is called liberty, but it doesn't seem so now!

Just my eternal scepticism and my belief that most people want basically the same things, allows me not to see the future in very black colours. There is no problem with my job, I am free to do some private enterprises with good results, as far as we are 'healthy', we can always manage, but we have never been a typical case, as you know, so I feel more sorry for the others.

It's a pity we haven't seen each other for such a long time, I would love to. Merry Christmas & happy New Year from Anna.





12th December, 91

Dear Per,

The end of another year is getting near and we are still here - our friendship seems to be lasting for eternity, have you ever counted how long we know each other? That's the one nice thing about the end of the year, that it makes us think more of ourselves and of our friends. If I want to make accounts for 1991, I must say that

I am not very satisfied with myself: I am sitting in the same routine unable to change my job or habits. The problem is that I am not satisfied but I am not dissatisfied enough to do something about it. Let's see what can be improved in the next year.

I wish to you good luck and strength to change the things which can be (and should be) changed - all that not only for 1992.

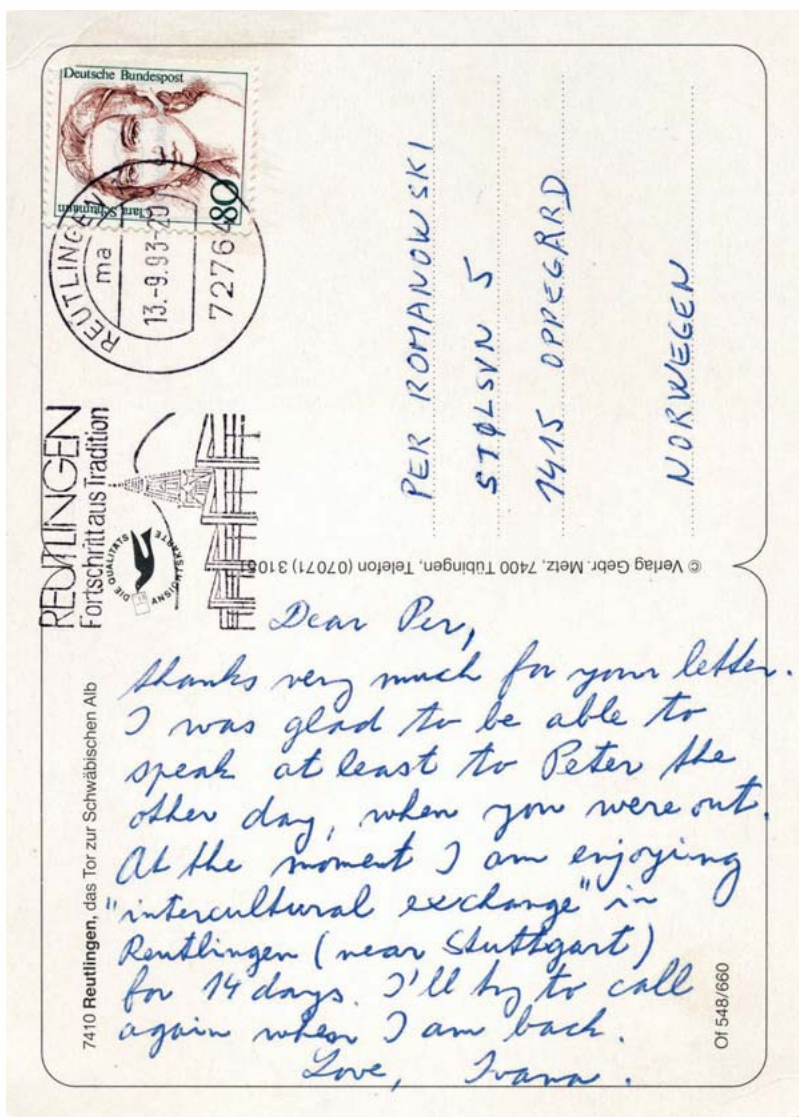
Love, Nana.

Dear Per,

I like this Christmas card -  
life is a swing boat - and I hope  
that Peter will like it too.

Much happiness in 1994 -

Love, Nana.









J ARTHUR DIXON

Printed in Great Britain  
by J. ARTHUR DIXON  
Tel: 0983 523381



PER ROMANOWSKI

STØLSVN 5

1415 OPPEGÅRD

NORWAY



Dear Per,  
 best regards from  
 London! It is the  
 first "business" journey  
 in my life, the head-  
 quarters of Higgs & Hill  
 invited me so that I  
 might see how they  
 operate. I haven't heard  
 of you for a long time.  
 I hope that everything is fine with you.  
 Love. Ivana.

#### The Household Division

The Household Brigade consists of seven Regiments: two of cavalry and five of foot Guards. These are The Life Guards, Blues and Royals, Grenadier Guards, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, Irish Guards and Welsh Guards. Apart from their major role of guarding the Monarch they are fully trained and equipped fighting soldiers who are able to be sent on active service at any time.

#### Grenadier Guards

Royal Horse  
 Artillery

Blues and Royals

Troopers  
 Life Guards

#### Kings Troops

Royal Horse Artillery

PLD 28674





ROYAL



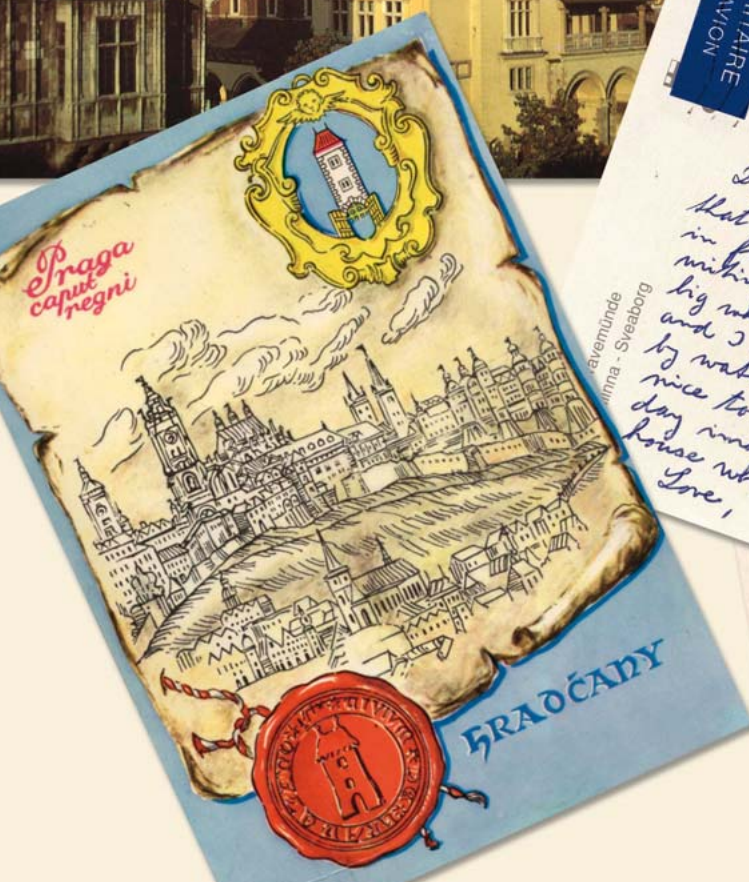
GUARDS





PER DAL HA KLEMETSKA NORWEGE

Dear Per,  
I haven't got any news  
of you for quite a long  
time! I hope that  
everything is all right  
with you! Have you  
received a Christmas  
card from me?  
You will find space  
and drop me a line,  
Göteborg!  
Ivan



750 Photographed & published by Pentti Harala Ky, Espoo  
Printed in Finland

PRIORITAIRE  
PAR AVION

PER ROMANOWSKI  
STASSEN 5  
7445 OPPEGARD

27/9/94

Dear Per,  
That's what I am having  
in front of my eyes while  
writing this card - I like  
big white ships very much  
and I have spent half a day  
by watching them. It was  
nice to talk to you the other  
day imagining you in your  
house which I do not know.  
Love, Ivan

NEW YORK  
The symbols of a  
Trade Center, The  
Empire State Building.

Dear Per,  
I send you my  
love and hope you  
are well. I have  
just received a  
letter from you  
and I am very  
happy to hear  
from you. I hope  
you are well and  
happy. I love you,  
Ivan





HELSINKI - FINNJET



PER ROMANOWSKI  
STØLSVN 5  
1415 OPPEGÅRD  
NORWEGEN

POST CARD  
Address

PER W. ROMANOWSKI  
STØLSVN. 5  
1415 OPPEGÅRD

POUR FÉLICITER

Dear Ben! I like this postcard - liberally and symbolically - too. That's my wish for both of us in 1993: clear clear mind. With me

way

1-B

1-B  
100  
New York, NY 100  
36 West Street, New York, NY 100  
36 West Street, New York, NY 100

Printed in Spain



*Life goes on – Last  
hand written letter  
from 2010*



Nashik 17th January  
2010

Dear Per,

after 2 months, I am answering  
your "real" letter, as promised.

It is like getting back to the  
past. You are right, 40 years ago,  
the world looked different, but  
it is a mixture - many things  
are better and many things are  
worse. I am the one who does not  
understand the principle of latest  
inventions, but I still admire  
human brain, human intelligence,  
which was able to invent some-  
thing like Lap-top, mobile phone  
or Skype. Every invention ever done  
can be used and misused. If  
the communication gadgets of  
the last 10-20 years mean that  
communication among people is

more superfluous, remaining on surface, then it is not their fault, but the fault of people who use them. For me, they were a real blessing.

When I was in Angola, it took a letter 3 weeks to reach my parents (or you), another 3 weeks before I got their answer. We spoke by phone once a year, on Christmas. The call had to be organized in advance, so that my parents would wait next to the phone (the only one in all village Lipina) till the operator would make connection. We were so overwhelmed to hear each other, that we could not properly talk - they were describing the snow in front of our house and I was describing the sea view from our balcony. We considered it



a miracle. I have tears in my eyes even now, when I think of it.

I do not need to undergo the same suffering being separated from my daughters. We can exchange the news every day writing emails, SMS, or messages in chatting clubs. Or we can talk via Skype, which cost nothing when they are at the screen or very little when I want to reach them on their mobile.

Fortunately also my mother could have a benefit of this technology in her old days because I used to call her regularly every day.

People have simply more choices: we can exchange "old fashioned" letters or e-mails (and we do) or I can read a book printed on paper or an e-book (my present to Christmas from George,



good for travelling and reading on the plane).

Regarding the politic situation:  
I have never believed that  
„capitalist“ countries are our  
enemy, because I always thought  
of all good people who are  
living in these countries. In the  
same way, I do not think  
that „muslim“ countries are  
our enemies. People like me and  
you, all over the world, want  
in the end the same: and  
certainly ~~they~~ do not want wars  
and dying. Otherwise I think you  
are right: star hours of  
Britain and U.S.A. seem to be  
over, other stars are appearing  
on the horizon - maybe India  
is one of them, but it will  
take them long time to overcome

all the problems they have.

To your remark that you never understood what happened in my first marriage - it would be much easier to talk about it, as these matters are complex. But as a summary: he was not a person you could rely on in no respect. It did not matter <sup>for him</sup> when he was coming late or not keeping his appointments (with me or with the others). His strategy was to do what he wanted without any consideration and wishes (reasonable or unreasonable) of the others. At the beginning of the relationship, his only wish was to be with me, so it was OK. He made me to marry him (I was in love with him but not so keen to get married yet)



in spite of the objections of my parents (who objected to his past). It went quite well in the first Angolian years - he did what he wanted but I had a chance to do what I wanted as well - we were two free people who met only when it was agreeable to both of them. Therefore it did not matter that we had different interests - as you know I was a real "intellectual" with interest in literature, arts, music, life of the country. I worked at the Czechoslovakian Embassy as an assistant to Commercial Councillor, so I could get what I wanted. He could show his bravery in going to



the regions where the war had not ended yet (with occasional mines lying on the roads etc.).

But then, we decided to have a child. Lucy was born in Prague and he could not be there at that time, but it was done in mutual agreement (I was that brave woman who can do it all by herself).

When I came back to Angola with Lucy, everything changed. I was not the free person who could do what she wanted any more, I had a responsibility. But Ivan did not change his behaviour - he continued to live as before. Coming late when it suited him, not helping me out.

We spent only one more year in Angola, so I hoped that things change. We had another child in mutual agreement - but nothing changed. I was young, quick, effective enough to take over all the burden - kids, household, my job. But when I pleaded with him that he should come back from work in time because I wanted to go out with my friends, or because Lucy was ill and my mother was there and I did not want to show her how he was neglecting us (I was ashamed), he promised but never kept his promise. If some more attractive opportunity than going home appeared, he went to a meeting,



So a pub, to a party, and all promises were forgotten. When I reproached him, he did not answer, he kept quiet. He knew that I would never leave him as long as the daughters were small and took full advantage of it. He must have other women as well, but I was not confronted with that directly.

Then "velvet revolution" came, he left his job in a foreign Trade corporation and made himself independant. I knew from the very beginning that it was a wrong decision but I did not have any influence. His unreliability did not go down well with his business partners



either. But on the other hand, there were also two other points, which he could not influence and which played against him: He did not have any starting capital and he trusted people. So on the verge of bankruptcy, he came to me finally to discuss (he would not say anything about his business before) - he wanted "formal" divorce to protect the little of material goods we accumulated together from execution. I agreed - and felt free. In the end the execution did not take place but he kept on struggling which he continues until now. He promised to pay for the children

but managed to do it only in the first year after divorce.

It forced me to look for additional jobs and I was lucky to get part time job with Liggs & Hill.

My material worries were over.

I was working hard but could afford whatever I wanted -

for myself, children, parents.

And more important - I could also travel. I have never looked back since, although my way in search of love was much more complicated and sometimes frustrating. But that is already another story.

I am reading your letter again, with evaluation of women in your life and women generally. Of course, your childhood was.



far from harmonious life I had in a small village untill I was 15. And I know that psychologists say that early years are most important, but I am a great believer that one can overcome handicaps of origin and frustrating childhood. In the end, even you did, and your son is on the best way to overcome it as well.

Regarding relationship between men & women, it also seems to me sometimes, that worst women get the best men (you claimed that bad boys get better girls, and if not better, than at least more).

So the feeling is mutual that in this sense, there is no justice in this world.



I have always considered you to be a very good man, almost ideal. Good looking, well educated, entertaining (whenever we talked or exchanged letters it was never boring) and reliable. (I am allergic to people who do not keep their word, which obviously <sup>increased</sup> even more the problem which I had with my first husband). You managed on your own to take care of a small child - not many men would be capable of it (George had brought up his son on his own as well, but only starting 9 years of age of the boy). You have been disappointed in women and I have been disappointed in men (until I found the right one, hopefully). But my approach

is different. I am not blaming Women lib for that, ~~now~~ I am saying that men are bad and disappointing. I blame, <sup>①</sup>first - my bad luck in love (I am fatalistic) and

<sup>②</sup>second - my wrong choices. And many times in my life, I was refused by man, because I seemed too serious and too intellectual to them. Actually, they were wrong because I have proven later on that I am able to create a cosy home, but it was too late. Otherwise I have to agree with the statement that many people (men & women) claim that they want stability and home with a nice partner, but they get bored easily and leave this nest with the first difficulty. I am <sup>also</sup> a person who



craves for unusual experience  
and for whom travelling is a drug.  
But I would not sacrifice a  
good relationship and safe home  
for that. I am monogamous and  
I have always known that.  
The sparks and fire which are  
in the relationship at the beginning  
will change into something else  
with time. I have been always  
prepared for it and was expecting  
friendship, partnership and  
invention to take the place  
after initial passionate love. But  
the men got bored, so I was  
not successful in many cases.

Anyway, at the end of this  
long letter I would like to  
tell you once again how much  
I appreciate our friendship. And  
also to tell you that I believe



That love is possible at any age.  
So nobody knows what is  
waiting round the corner and  
you should not say that  
it is too late.

Love,

Ivana

## Epilogue

*My life has never been boring, but it became most hectic in the first half of seventies and first half of nineties with ups and downs which I was sharing in letters with my dearest friend Per. Having two daughters, Lucy and Petra, born in the eighties, has always been a major source of joy, although I have not been spared the usual maternal anxieties either. In the second half of the nineties, I met George, who became 8 years later my second husband. We have been leading life full of adventures in business and private life, enjoying extensive travelling – we got married in 2005. That part of my life could have also been followed in various emails and postcards to Per, but they are not part of this book any more. However, the most interesting thing is that my adult life adventure started 1970 by hitch hiking to India and that I have come back to work and live in this country with George thirty six years later, in 2006. Fate sometimes works in a most enigmatic way... A few of our joint photos with George from the late nineties follow, to complete the picture...*

PHOTOS

1997

—

1999



*1997 Tunisia – First joint New Year's Eve  
Celebration – baloon flight over  
Sahara*



*1998 England – Ivana and George on Hilbre  
Island next to West Kirby home*



*1998 South Africa – first summer holiday  
together – Shamwari Game Reserve*





*1999 Hawaii Kauai – summer holiday –  
Ivana over the Waimea Canyon*



