

to vitomil and črtomir

simona semenič
seven cooks, four soldiers and three sophias

in memory of sophia magdalena scholl, sophia lvovna perovskaya and marie-sophie germain

draft translation
translated by barbara skubic

the peevish one
well, shall we begin?

the huffy one
we've already begun, stop hissing

the peevish one
you're hissing

the fat one
quiet
come on, let's go
the curtain is rising

the dainty one
drape
drape sounds much nicer

the peevish one
please, don't

the fat one
the drape is rising
we are sitting in a half-circle
the seven of us
seven lady cooks

the boring one
seven is a strong number
it carries diverse symbols

the dainty one
diverse ...
beautiful!

the boring one
it appears five hundred and seven times in the bible, solomon's wedding, for example, lasted seven days, and then in the psalms – seven times a day i praise you, and then ...

the peevish one
seven of us, seven lady cooks

the boring one
and the words of the lord are flawless
like refined silver, purified seven times

the pedantic one

like silver refined
in a furnace of clay

like silver refined in a furnace of clay purified seven times

the boring one
oh, yes
like silver refined in a furnace of clay purified seven times
then ...

the peevish one
enough, now

the boring one
strong number
seven

the huffy one
up yours
seven times

the dainty one
darn
was that really necessary?

the fat one
enough now, bints
we'll never get anywhere like this
come on, let's go
we are sitting in a half-circle
seven of us, seven lady cooks

the boring one
a miraculous number

the fat one
we sit in a half-circle
with buckets between our legs
and peel potatoes

the peevish one
tons of potatoes

the fat one
i'm the fat one
this is my name because i'm of the strong kind
on the stocky side, one could say

the huffy one
fat like a pig, one could say

the dainty one

well, well

try to hold back a bit, i know it's hard, well-nigh impossible, considering your breed and background
or maybe, to be more precise, non-breed
but make an effort in front of people at least
i motion towards you, smiling

the pensive one
motioning to the audience with a smile
with a smile in which a palette of words is buzzing
buzzing

the boring one
and i'm the ...

the peevish one
my head is aching

the huffy one
you're always aching somewhere, and if by chance, you aren't aching, you're hurting
and if you aren't hurting, you're itching
or chafing

the pedantic one
i'm the pedantic one
because i'm precise, meticulous and punctual

the huffy one
because you're fastidious and hair-splitting

the pedantic one
and i consider ...

the dainty one
i regard

the pedantic one
and i consider ...

the dainty one
i regard

the pedantic one
and i consider these to be the most important human qualities

the dainty one
oh, well

the pedantic one
or at least ladies'
the most important ladies' qualities

the boring one
i am the ...

the peevish one
and above all annoying
the fat one
goodness gracious, see these bitches

the dainty one
veritable, true chimeras

the boring one
now it can be my turn at last, right, to introduce myself, to get the word, to tell my name
my name is

the dainty one
clears her throat

the boring one
my name is the boring one

the pensive one
the boring one clears her throat

the boring one
because i drag on, apparently, because apparently i talk way way too much

the peevish one
and tells nothing

the boring one
way way too much, apparently, but, you know, this is not true at all, because they never really let me
speak, and when i finally get to speak they interrupt me, one or the other, most often this one

the peevish one
pointing her finger at me

the boring one
this is why i have this funny, not to say humiliating, because it is humiliating, in a way, i mean, i
understand why such names, it is totally clear, but still, so this is why have this funny name, let's stick
with funny, not humiliating, but it certainly seems that ...
i, the boring one, clear my throat again, i cough to finish the sentence when i get interrupted by

the peevish one
i'm the peevish one

the boring one
the peevish one interrupts me

the huffy one
and i the huffy one
first i was called fierce
then later i was fiesty
and now i'm the huffy one

the peevish one
the genesis of your name is of great interest to us right now
isn't there something you'd like to add on this subject?

the dainty one
isn't there anything

the peevish one
what?

the dainty one
anything
isn't there anything you'd like to add on this subject?
a negative takes anything
not something

the peevish one
lord have mercy on you

the huffy one
i laugh

the peevish one
i laugh with her

the huffy one
we're laughing together

the dainty one
i am the dainty one

the fat one
the dainty one bows slightly, sits down

the pensive one
sits down and bows

the pedantic one
closes her eyes

the peevish one
smirks almost humbly
probably just a reflection of her fine upbringing

the huffy one
and background

the dainty one
i'm the dainty one
although, if i may, i'm not too fond of my name, either, it's not particularly inspired
not to mention appealing
i would personally use, say, genteel

the huffy one
oh, well, wouldn't you choose something a tad more sophisticated?
say – the refined one?

the dainty one
i ignore her

the fat one
silence follows
because it's the last one's turn
yet she waits
because the last one is the pensive one

the peevish one
and she doesn't follow us when she should follow
she follows us when she needn't

the boring one
and speaks up when there's not a need to do so
and says things none of us understands
and is all the time repeating, repeating after us

the dainty one
well, she lives in her own world a bit
but we tolerate her, don't we, girls?
because we're cultured

the pedant one
the dainty one looks toward us, then towards you

the peevish one
a meaningful look
so any twat could get that she has spoken a line with gravitas

the dainty one
i close my lids calmly, softly tilt my chin towards my neck
i bow respectfully to the audience

the huffy one
with gravitas that defines her cosmopolitan persona

the pensive one
because we're cultured

the huffy one
and right at this moment i get the urge to punch her in the mouth
but i don't punch her
because i'm cultured

the peevish one
regardless of blood and breeding
speaking of blood and breeding, have you heard what happened yesterday?

the huffy one
we haven't
and i dare speak for all of us that we fiercely don't want to

the peevish one
that girl, you know, the one with pedigree, you know

the huffy one
but this is just our wishful thinking

the peevish one
that girl, what is her name, she used to work with us, what was her name ...

the fat one
silence
and not because the last one is so pensive she forgot to introduce herself
and not because the peevish one started one of her tales again
silence just because in this moment four soldiers enter

the pedantic one
four young men in military uniforms
enter one by one

the peevish one
beautiful young men

the pensive one
they enter, beautiful, in uniforms
or maybe they don't enter
perhaps they've been there all along
beautiful, in uniforms
they are standing there and the light illuminates them only now
and we see them only now
and maybe, maybe i've seen them before, maybe i've seen them all along
perhaps we've all seen them all along
perhaps it's just the audience that hasn't seen them
but perhaps, perhaps, the audience can see them, too, they see their contours
and they have seen them standing there since the beginning

beautiful, in uniforms

the fat one
they're standing there, in the gleam of light, while we're peeling potatoes

the peevish one
tons of potatoes

the fat one
pretty as a picture

the pensive one
pretty as a picture
in the gleam of light
four young soldiers
first
second
third
fourth
the first one is staring directly at me
will you come to me?

the pedant one
we're peeling potatoes

the fat one
and the young boys are standing there like a tableau
and don't see us

the peevish one
but we see them
oh yes, we do
we do

the pensive one
won't you come to me?
seven steps, just seven steps
one, two, three, four, five, six, seven
a strong number
miraculous

the dainty one
shhhh shhhh
i gently tell her to stop the avalanche of senseless words

the huffy one
because she's cultured

the pensive one
why not come to me

why not touch me
why not

the fat one
hey, bint
i elbow her

the dainty one
she elbows her

the huffy one
adds the refined one

the dainty one
i ignore her

the pensive one
what?
ah yes
it is my turn
i have to introduce myself, i haven't introduced myself
i'm sorry
i'm not ...
i am ...

the fat one
she's the pensive one

the pensive one
i'm the pensive one
because i don't follow them when i should follow
i never follow

the fat one
hello, quickly, we've not even started yet
quickly, the soldiers will be done soon, and soon be here for lunch
let's go
faster, faster

the pedantic one
we're sitting in a half-circle

the pensive one
in uniforms
four
the first

the pedant one
knives in hands

the pensive one
won't you come to me?
second
third

the pedantic one
and we are peeling potatoes

the peevish one
tons of potatoes

the pensive one
fourth

the peevish one
my fingers are numb
i can no longer peel at all

the huffy one
oh, you poor thing
shall i kiss the boo boo

the peevish one
i ignore her

the pedantic one
we're sitting in a half-circle on the right side of the stage

the pensive one
the first one is holding an axe

the pedantic one
legs wide apart

the pensive one
the second one a chopping block, barely holding it, it's heavy

the pedantic one
with buckets between our legs

the pensive one
an axe and a block
although it should be a guillotine

the huffy one
but it wouldn't be such a pretty picture
an axe is far more picturesque than a guillotine
more eloquent
and cheaper

the pedantic one
we are peeling potatoes

the fat one
the peevish one wants to say something, but the huffy interrupts her

the huffy one
don't you even

the pensive one
the third, the third one is holding a reed basket in his hands
or maybe a wooden pail
most certainly not a plastic bucket

the pedantic one
we're piling peels into the pail
while looking for unpeeled potatoes ...

the pensive one
the fourth one has a pail of water in his right hand and a towel in his left
the pedantic one
... poking through the bucket with our hands
sitting
peeling

the fat one
we're silent

the pensive one
tons of potatoes
i'm peeling potatoes and pensively staring somewhere in front of me
because i'm the pensive one
because i remember
because i remember a night way back when
a long time ago, yet not that far back

the dainty one
shhhh shhhh

the pensive one
i shut up

I.
put things in their place

II.
damn, it's heavy
i'm sweating like a pig
instead of getting lighter, i think its heavier every time

the huffy one
because of all the blood sticking to it
it'll get heavier and heavier

II.
what did you say?

I.
to put things in their place

II.
no, no
later, later

I.
nothing

II.
aha
well, fine

the fat one
the soldiers get the chopping block ready, then basket, pail, and towel

the pensive one
you're standing there and watching the second one
standing there and watching the second one move the block back and forth, move away from the
block, observe the block, move the block again, move back again, observe again, move again
standing there and watching the second one
standing there and watching the third one
standing there and watching the third one hold the basket in his arms, how he moves towards the
second one to help him, how he pulls back when the second one growls at him, how he shakes his
head, as if to say

the huffy one
you truly are a cretin

the pensive one
you're standing there and watching the third one how he sets the basket in front of the chopping
block, how he pulls it a bit to the left and a bit to the right and then a bit back
you're standing there and watching the fourth one
you're standing there and watching the fourth one place the bucket by the block, wave the towel,
shake the dust off it, fold it in half, and again, and again, and place it by the bucket
you're standing there
watching
can you see me?
can you see me now?
you're standing there with an axe in your hand
and then they look at you, look at us, their posture says, we're done, have you seen, their looks say,
how we sorted this out, how well, not well, excellent

can you see us?
then you say

I.
block?

II.
ready

I.
basket?

III.
also

I.
bucket?

IV.
and the towel
ready

I.
blindfold?

the pensive one
you're glaring at the fourth one
you see the second and the third one are also watching the fourth one and the fourth one doesn't
know where to look

IV.
oh dear, wait
here

the pensive one
you're watching how the fourth one is searching through his pockets
front trouser pockets, back trouser pockets, four pockets on his jackets, then you watch him opening
the jacket, you smell him sweating

the huffy one
sweating like a pig

the pensive one
and finally

IV.
aha, here it is
okay

the fat one
he says, as he pulls a black blindfold from his inner pocket on the jacket

the pensive one
or maybe a shirt?

I.
good
the condemned?

II.
she's waiting

I.
let's go get her

the pedant one
the first one swings the axe
high
and drives it into the chopping block

the peevish one
oh my!

the pedantic one
the first one, the second one, the third one and the fourth one leave

the pensive one
a block
an axe in the block
big, ominous
picturesque

the huffy one
expressive
and above all cheap

the pensive one
before the block, a basket
beside the basket, a pail
beside the pail, a towel

the boring one
how hot it is

the peevish one
unbearable, a man can't work at all

the huffy one
let alone a woman

the fat one
hot enough to kill you
i'm dripping with sweat

the dainty one
pouring

the pensive one
sweat pouring off our bodies

the peevish one
and we work like slaves
for what?
for who?
we work while those ...

the huffy one
those up there scratching themselves

the peevish one
those up there rubbing themselves

the pensive one
while we're working those upstairs are scratching themselves

the huffy one
can you stop grumbling
do something
tell those up there, not us
go tell those up there what you have to say
do something for once instead of whining
with this scratching and those up there you've really crossed the line ...
every line ...

the dainty one
of good taste

the huffy one
yes

the peevish one
you're the one to preach about taste ...

the fat one
hush already, you silly tarts
go on, work, gabble less, do more
let those upstairs scratch themselves if they itch

the pensive one
those upstairs

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the fat one
but if we don't finish cooking, our soldiers will go hungry
we don't have time to spare on those upstairs

the pedant one
it's not the flour that makes the bread, it is the hand

the fat one
quite right
we have to work!
and fast, so the boys have something to eat when they return

the huffy one
if they return

the boring one
well, those who return

the pedant one
four young men in uniforms now enter
with a girl

the fat one
aha, this is the head that will fall today, then

the peevish one
oh, look at her, the learned one
nothing good in store for her, the student

the dainty one
the first one's walking in the front, back straight, with a deliberate, heavy step

the peevish one
broad shoulders, handsome

the huffy one
broad shoulders and strong arms, he'll swing with ease

the dainty one
the second and the third one are holding the young woman under one arm each
she's walking alone, hands tied in the back

the pensive one
she's walking alone

the pedant one
but it looks as if the second and the third one were pushing her forward gently
carrying her, even
the fourth one's walking behind, bent

the dainty one
parading back and forth

the huffy one
for more effect

the peevish one
have you heard what happened yesterday?
nobody answers me

the pensive one
nobody answers her
we're silently peeling the potatoes

the peevish one
have you heard what happened yesterday?

the huffy one
says the peevish one with a hint of excitement in her voice, announcing yet another sensationalist
piece of news

the pensive one
we're peeling potatoes silently

the peevish one
i try again, with even more excitement in my voice
have you heard what happened yesterday?

the dainty one
i trust it was something exceptional

the pedant one
exceptionally horrid

the fat one
i add tediously: terrible

the dainty one
the fat one tediously adds
so tediously as if she'd heard this question from the peevish one's mouth many times

the huffy one
unimaginably often

the peevish one
how suddenly you can get along well
when necessary, you know how to act like one, don't you

the pedantic one
he who speaks as he pleases must hear what he doesn't want to

the boring one
young men in military uniforms

the huffy one
and a girl
with shoulder-length hair
in a white, almost transparent dress

the pensive one
parading

the huffy one
for effect

the dainty one
they stop
the first one grabs the axe
the young woman standing in front of the block, the second and the third one beside her
the fourth one looking at his feet

the peevish one
any second now

the huffy one
he'll swing with ease

the fat one
silence

sophia, the first one
my name is
sophia

the pensive one
her name is
sophia

the boring one
the name sophia comes from the greek word sophia, wisdom, it comes in the calendar on the 15th of may, we know many variants of the name – sonja, sophie, zofka, zofi ...

the peevish one
i interrupt her

the boring one
... zofija in slovenian, then in other languages ...

the peevish one
i interrupted you

the boring one
... for example in czech žofka, in finnish viivi ...

the peevish one
i interrupted you!

the boring one
she interrupted me

the fat one
silence

I.
blindfold

IV.
here

the dainty one
the fourth one steps to the maiden to place the blindfold over her eyes

IV.
miss sophia, if you allow me

sophia, the first one
no

IV.
let me just put this over your eyes

sophia, the first one
no, no, no need

IV.
yes, but i have to

sophia, the first one
no, i really don't want it

IV.
look, i'm awfully sorry, but the rules require that the condemned man

the huffy one
woman

IV.
or condemned woman must have a blindfold over the eyes, i'm truly terribly sorry, but i do have to do it

sophia, the first one

but this is about me and i assure you there is no need
you know, if i have to go, i want to go with open eyes
there's sun outside, it seeped through the windows when i walked down the corridor
look, even in here it is bright
and i don't want this black blindfold
i'd like to take in the sun, right till the end, the light, as long as it's possible
don't cover my eyes

IV.

look, i do understand you, but the rules ...
we cannot let that slide, i'm truly sorry

sophia, the first one
but it's nothing, really, a matter of minutes, i'd like to watch

the pedant one
she's looking at him tenderly

the dainty one
beseeching with her look

the huffy one
but he blushes and looks away
fidgets

the peevish one
hot as in hell
one cannot ...

the huffy one
or even ...

the fat one
enough!

the pedant one
many words, no deeds

the fat one
yes, true, this won't get done by itself, get to work

the peevish one
well, why are you peevish now, we're working, we're toiling like machines, look at my hands, a single
blister

the pensive one
one big single blister

the boring one

oh, now that we're talking blisters and hell, do you remember?
way back when, when was it, in that heat, where was it, hot as in hell
we were peeling the potatoes, peeling
remember?
we peeled them to feed three hundred mouths
and nobody came to eat
they'd all died
it was just as hot as today
and our hands just as blistered

the pedant one
that time it wasn't potatoes

the pensive one
not potatoes

the pedant one
that time it was cucumbers

the boring one
ah, yes, true, true, it was cucumbers

the huffy one
they slaughtered all

the fat one
all three hundred boys

the boring one
in that heat, where was it
some years ago, five, maybe ten
where, where was it

the peevish one
they say it will be like this till the end of the month, hot
and a terrible drought
such a drought that there will be no potatoes and no cucumbers, no nothing
what will we cook then?

sophia, the first one
let me watch, please, please

IV.
miss sophia, i can't, i really can't
i'm sorry, but this truly doesn't depend on me
don't take it personally now, i've nothing to do with it
the law prescribes a blindfold
allow me

sophia, the first one

no!

IV.

please, don't make troubles

sophia, the first one
no, and that is final
i will not let you cover my eyes

IV.

look here, it's not for you to let or not
i'll cover your eyes and that is final

sophia, the first one
listen to me you, you ...
whoever you are
i said no
i won't allow it, full stop

the fat one
oh, my, this one won't keep quiet

the boring one
she won't
she could at least carry this out without causing problems
at least something carried out the way it should be, without obstinacy and childishness

the dainty one
with dignity fit for a proud woman

the fat one
yes, yes
what can we do, so it goes
some won't let themselves be told
some simply can't see the things as they are
the world as it is

the pedant one
can you imagine if everyone did this?
everything their own way?
one would have a blindfold, the other wouldn't, this one would have a black one, the other red ...
chaos, nothing else, where would that lead us
and this girl anyways has always been a little ... how to put it

the peevish one
spoilt

the fat one
yes, yes, this, always too much of everything, full ass of everything always, and then a man ...

the huffy one
a woman even more so

the fat one
yes, true, you're right, and then a woman doesn't know her place

the dainty one
come on, young lady, let him put the blindfold on you, don't embarrass us

the huffy one
don't embarrass us

I.
silence
leave her alone, let her be without a blindfold if she wants, let's just do this quickly
we're in a hurry

IV.
but article eighteen of the regulations of execu ...

I.
it's ok, i'll take the blame
we're late, let's do it

II.
no, no, don't let her have this
do you know what consequences this might have, no, you have nothing that would justify your
decision

III.
i agree with you, yes, in the end we'll get fucked over this, i mean, she had an option to apply for this,
to be beheaded without a blindfold, the law allows this possibility, everybody has the right to this,
but she didn't file the motion and it's now her own fault, she has to be decapitated with the blindfold
on
i agree with you, yes
i'm against her watching
let's cover her eyes
i won't eat up some shit because of this later

II.
me neither
anybody who has a brainwave can fuck with us as they wish, i won't provide them with excuses to do
so
let's do it the way it's supposed to be done, end of story

III.
fuck, you know, that's why we have laws, where would we be if everyone did as they pleased

the pedantic one
just as i was saying, just as i was saying

II.

you didn't file a motion, miss sophia, and now we have to put a blindfold on, there's no other way

sophia, the first one
what motion?

the boring one
oh, my god, she doesn't even know that
i'm not bothered by the stubbornness, this obstinacy, but you know what, this ignorance, this lack of
knowledge, this poor education of today's youth, today's students, this is the top, truly the top, i
mean, you know, a biology and philosophy student could know that anyone sentenced to death can
petition to be beheaded without a blindfold over the eyes

the pedant one
and an extra prayer

the boring one
yes, and for an extra prayer immediately before beheading

the pedant one
a prayer of any denomination, to be precise

the huffy one
because we won't and can't split hairs, not in a moment like this

IV.

petitions for beheading without the blindfold
or for the prayer immediately before beheading
are both covered in the same section
according to section seven of the law of beheading of traitors of the homeland every felon has the
right to petition to the competent court at the latest three days before the sentence is carried out, as
to whether to be beheaded blindfolded or not

III.

the legislator followed human rights to the t, this truly is one of our better laws, progressive and
democratic
don't you agree?

II.

i agree, yes, it is quite something that even a man who's a traitor of the homeland, and not just, i
mean, not just any old, i'll say, ordinary criminal, but rather someone who's a traitor of the
homeland, i mean, yes, that this person has, in the end, still human dignity, i think this is very
important for ... for ... i'd say ...

III.

the legal and social and progressive form of the state order

II.

let's say so, yes

don't you think, miss sophia?

sophia, the first one
aha
very progressive indeed
humane, so to speak

II.
indeed, yes
section seven of the law precisely defines the form of the petition with all the necessary appendices,
and the fiscal stamps to file the motion are in this case free, because the traitors' property is
confiscated when they are sentenced
they even thought of that when they wrote the law, thorough, what else to say, truly thorough
and your lawyer didn't file the motion, miss sophia, so unfortunately ...

sophia, the first one
aha
i didn't know, i'm sorry

the pedant one
ignorantia iuris nocet

the boring one
rome
maybe it was rome

IV.
ignorantia iuris nocet

the pensive one
and you?
you'll just keep silent?
you won't say a thing?
utter a comment?
will you pretend none of this takes place in front of your eyes?
oy, do you hear me?
look at me

the fat one
silence

the pensive one
as is fit for a proud woman

sophia, the first one
what say you, sir?
is this truly necessary?

I.
look miss, i'm not the lawyer here, i'm just the headsman

let's place that blindfold and get thing done
we're in a hurry
today we have two more

the huffy one
heads to chop

I.
sentences to execute
that's a lot of work
can you, please, understand we can't deal with your blindfold
don't mess with us with this, please

sophia, the first one
yes, of course
i apologise
well, then, tie it, if there's no other way

the pensive one
you watch how she's standing in front of you with her hair down to her shoulders
in a white, almost transparent dress
only now you notice her firm breasts
only now you notice that her nipples point somewhere upwards
somewhere upwards, as if they wanted to hint to someone up there that they're not done down
here yet
you're watching her and only now notice her
you're watching how the fourth one ties a blindfold over her eyes
a black blindfold
a white, almost transparent dress
nipples pointing up somewhere

the pedant one
the first one motions the second and the third
the second and the third one lightly push the girl towards the block

the dainty one
almost gently

the pensive one
gently

the huffy one
the girl understands
kneels
places her head on the block
so that the blindfold is facing you

the pensive one
so that the blindfold is facing the audience

the huffy one
the lass is waiting

the pensive one
waiting

the fat one
silence

the huffy one
the first one takes off his military jacket, he straightens it, folds it and puts it in the arms of the fourth one
unbuttons a sleeve button, rolls the sleeves above his elbows

the peevish one
reveals his forearms to our eyes
and what forearms they are ...

the huffy one
the peevish one sighs

the fat one
well, wench, go, go, go
work
the soldiers will soon be done and soon be here for lunch

the pedant one
the first one grabs the axe
and lifts it high above his head

the peevish one
through his shirt you can notice the tight muscles of his chest and arms and back

the dainty one
the first one stands above the kneeling maiden with his axe high in the air

the huffy one
an eloquent picture, very eloquent

the pensive one
it carries multiple meanings

the fat one
let's not lose time where there's no need
the gal will get what she's been looking for
come on, let's go, quickly
the soldiers will be here in no time

the peevish one
have you heard what happened yesterday?

the pensive one
no one responds to her
we're silently peeling potatoes

the peevish one
i try once more
have you heard what happened yesterday?

the dainty one
must have been shattering

the fat one
i yawn

the peevish one
something horrifying

the huffy one
nooo

the pensive one
extremely horrifying

the huffy one
horrid

the peevish one
horrid, indeed

the pensive one
horrid, indeed

the fat one
silence

the pensive one
come to me
i say
when i say come to me you take your eyes from sophia's head on the block and look at me

the dainty one
shhhh shhhh

I.
do you want to pray before?

II.
what?

I.
you can pray if you wish

the pedant one
the girl lifts her head from the block and turns her face towards the first one

II.
wait here, she didn't file a motion to pray, what prayer

sophia, the first one
thank you
i would like to pray

III.
what the fuck are you coming up with, you know we're in a hurry, we have two more executions
after this one, and i wanna go get lunch as soon as possible

I.
let her pray, what's it to us

III.
she should have thought before, fuck, she should have thought before she did all those nasty things,
she could have prayed until she's old, now it's too late for prayers
swing, and let's move down the list

I.
well then, pray

the pedant one
the first one drops the axe, holds it with his right hand right below the blade
and then with his left unties her blindfold

III.
what the fuck are you doing now?

the dainty one
the young woman lifts her head
kneeling in front of the chopping block clasps her hands, prays
prays silently, with her eyes closed

II.
well i've had it with this
we can't agree on anything, no order

IV.
if nobody reports us, nobody will know

III.
and now you'd have me not report it, to be guilty of two misdemeanours?

the pensive one
axe
block
basket
prays silently, with eyes closed

the fat one
how many potatoes do we have?

the peevish one
a ton

the pedant one
the huffy one, you were in charge of the delivery
how much of it is there?

the huffy one
the sales order said three hundred eighty-seven kilos

the pedant one
and after the weigh-in?

the huffy one
three hundred one

the fat one
like yesterday
there's always a kilo or two displaced somewhere
and tomorrow too, i'm telling you, a couple dozen kilos will be displaced

the peevish one
so those upstairs will also have potatoes for lunch
as a side for veal ribs

the pedant one
so did you sign the delivery receipt?

the huffy one
i don't respond

the pedant one
well, did you sign the delivery receipt?

the huffy one
don't nag

the pedant one
listen i'm the one responsible for the process running as it should around here
i'm asking you if you signed the delivery receipt

the huffy one
we didn't
i weighed it after he had gone, he was in a hurry

the pedant one
you didn't fill in the delivery receipt?
you do know you have to weigh before the driver is off
or you can't fill in the form

the huffy one
when he was in a hurry

the peevish one
he's always in a hurry, he has no time to even say hello

the huffy one
and he's so cute, right

the peevish one
i ignore her

the pedant one
hurry or no hurry, that's not our problem
we have to weigh before he drives off in order to fill in the delivery receipt
this is our job, our responsibility

the huffy one
he can't deliver everything on time if we all weigh
not enough time, and so many of us

the peevish one
have you heard what happened?
he had to face the disciplinary board the other day for being late
indeed!
and then, i heard the talk of ...

the huffy one
and it wasn't his fault, weighing takes too long

the pedant one
fault or no fault, this is his job
weighing and filling in the delivery receipt is yours

the peevish one
what will those upstairs eat if we don't have enough time to weigh?

the pedant one
i'll have to report this
and you'll face the disciplinary board
order must be upheld!

the huffy one
i want to defend myself, i open my mouth, but the fat one interrupts me

the fat one
good lord three hundred and one kilos will not do
and there's nothing else
the soldiers will go hungry

the huffy one
no worries, fat-ass
they won't go hungry, they never have, they do not all return
for those who keep their head intact, and their stomach, of course, it will suffice
and for the rest, may the earth be light on them
so next year potatoes will be good and we'll make them better lunches

the dainty one
how can you be this ...
this ...
this primitive

the huffy one
easily

the dainty one
have you not a speck of shame?

the huffy one
shame? why should i feel shame?

the dainty one
i mean, is it appropriate, for a lady, to be ...

the fat one
oy, furies, calm down
there's work to be done

the boring one
or maybe even more way back, maybe it was before rome
so many cucumbers
but where was it?

the peevish one
how hot it is
i'm dizzy because of the heat
what's this one doing here

the dainty one
we all turn around

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury
let me first thank you for letting me say these few words
i am aware that the sentence is final and i will be executed in a few seconds and that no word of
mine can change this
yet i would like to share a thought or two with you before i close my eyes forever
gentlemen of the jury, i am not sorry
i am not sorry for a single of my decisions that brought me here
my name is
sophia

the pensive one
her name is
sophia

sophia, the third one
i was born in paris on the 1st of april 1776

the huffy one
april fool, i knew it

the dainty one
what a cheap joke
another in the series of your tasteless ideas

the huffy one
i ignore her

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury
i come from a bourgeois family
we weren't poor, i'd sooner say the opposite

the peevish one
the smart one with a pedigree

sophia, the third one
my beloved parents, god rest their souls, financially supported me all my life
as a child, of course, but even after i was grown
because i never got married, and because i chose this path
the path that brought no remuneration
and at the last instance, the path that brought me here in front of you, dear jury

the peevish one
has the student not prayed yet?
praying or not, her head will fall
what does she want with this prayer

the dainty one
have you per chance heard of transcendence?

the huffy one
in a furnace of clay purified seven times

sophia, the third one
but let me start at the beginning, gentlemen of the jury
my father was politically active, even engaged to a certain extent in the events that led to the french
revolution
i was thirteen at the time

the fat one
oh, we're so slow, it must be the potatoes
it has ten times more eyes than the one yesterday, you can't even peel it
what kind of potato is this?

the huffy one
i think they brought them from somewhere else today

sophia, the third one
and it was then that it all started
while so to speak in front of our door there was fearful battle

the huffy one
more slaughter without number

sophia, the third one
i started reading
my father had a huge library and so i got my hand on books to which girls usually had no access
and then i found my love – mathematics

the huffy one
how romantic

the peevish one
lord, i am fed up with this, so fed up

the dainty one
i'm fed up, too
we're all fed up
but think of the young men, of all of them in this heat, thirsty
think of them, thirsty and hungry

the fat one
they're bad, bad, these potatoes, all wrinkled and soft, it won't be a good stew
they can't just give us such potatoes
that's not the way to do it
where did they get them from?

the pedant one
the question is for huffy one

the huffy one notices, but doesn't answer

the huffy one
has she still not prayed?

the pensive one
she's praying quietly, with her eyes closed

sophia, the third one
and so i started learning, by myself, in my father's library
mathematics, philosophy
and even more mathematics

the peevish one
there, she stopped
the head back on the block
no blindfold

the pensive one
looking at the audience

the dainty one
looking at you
waiting

the pensive one
waiting

I.
do you forgive me?

sophia, the first one
i forgive you

the pedantic one
the first one lifts the axe

the huffy one
the peevish one thinks to say his muscles tense,
but she doesn't
the peevish one doesn't say anything

the peevish one
i don't say anything
i'm just looking
broad shoulders
the axe held high in strong arms
a drop of sweat is seeping down his right cheek
two drops of sweat

sophia, the third one
and here it started
father and mother disagreed with me learning
mathematics and philosophy were not on a list of things a young girl should have
no, quite the opposite
father and mother opposed to my going to the library
they feared for my health
physical and, of course, psychological

the fat one
smart people, nothing else to say, smart people

the pensive one
of course

the dainty one
the second and the third move away from the block

the huffy one
they won't risk having to get changed
changing means ten minutes more of hunger pangs

the pedantic one
more, even
calculate:
five minutes up the stairs
a minute and a half to the wardrobe
that's six minutes thirty
search for clothes for half a minute
is seven
two minutes to the bathroom
nine
a minute for undressing
ten already
three minutes to get washed
thirteen
half to get dry
thirteen and a half
dressing a minute and a half

the huffy one
won't you stop?

the pedantic one
why would i stop?
i'm only saying ...

the huffy one
alright we got it

the pedantic one
yes, but after dressing there should be also...

the dainty one
the second and the third step back

the pensive one
smart people, no complaints, smart people

sophia, the third one
then it was common knowledge that the girls who read too much, who know too much, are prone to mental illness
in other words, knowledge, in some inexplicable way, pushes them to madness

the boring one
oh, well, it's good the world keeps turning
thank god for progress, can you imagine it would still be like this

the huffy one
easily

the fat one
it's been clear to me since always
even before she went away from us it was clear to me

the boring one
oh, yes, yes, i remember, it really was
long time ago you said, not much will become of this one

the pensive one
not much will become of this one

the fat one
not much will become of this one, i said
i knew she'd end badly

the peevish one
she didn't even know how to peel a potato

the pedantic one
she knew, she knew, she just didn't feel like it
she'd have done just about anything but what was necessary
and now there she is with her head on the block

the pensive one
ignorantia iuris nocet

the fat one
good lord, we're not even half way through
then we have to cube them

stew is in fact a fabulous dish
simple and tasty
you boil potatoes in salted water, but only half way through
you have to be careful not to overboil them
you add the flour, make a hole in the middle with a wooden spoon, cover and cook on
i always add a pinch of nutmeg, but only very little
when the potatoes are soft, you mash it all together, but you must really mash it well and mix
this is important
and at the end
to dot the i
you dress it with cracklings
mmm
i can hardly wait
today the soldiers will have to make do with stew with no cracklings
oy vey
and the potatoes are quite bad
and quite some maggots in the flour already

the huffy one
never mind, that's even better, actually, the boys will get some protein
seeing how there are no cracklings

the peevish one
or veal ribs

the pensive one
a drop of sweat slides down your cheek
two drops

sophia, the third one
my parents demanded i stop learning
but i wanted to be a mathematician
then my father got angry and banned me from the library
gentlemen of the jury, i've been sentenced for not respecting the order of my parents
a just sentence, because despite my father's order and mother's beseeching i took books from the
library and studied at night
father and mother didn't give up either
they took the candles away overnight, and the heat, and for it to really work they also took my
clothes
but i wanted to be a mathematician

the fat one
good lord, there's still so much to do
go, go, skanks, let's hurry

the peevish one
but can't you see it can't go any faster, you said yourself there were too many eyes
stop hurrying us so much

the fat one

oh, yes, the eyes
where did you say they brought them from?

the huffy one
i didn't say

the fat one
well, do you know?

the huffy one
how should i know?

the fat one
well, what, stop hassling, i though you knew when you said they brought them from somewhere else

the huffy one
i said it just to say something
won't he swing already?
i said it because they look like from somewhere else, they're different than usual, a different colour,
a different kind, what do i know

the fat one
and nobody said anything to you?

the huffy one
please, who would say something to me?
does anyone tell us anything?
do you think we have the right to know something? anything?
has he still not swung?
does any of us have any right at all?

the pensive one
you still haven't swung
a drop of sweat slides down your cheek
you look at me
you look at me like that, quickly, i think there's something like a smile playing on your face, maybe it
does play, something like a smile on your face, maybe it does, when you look at me quickly like that
and then at once no longer see me
two drops

the peevish one
rights, she said
what rights, i ask you
stop with these rebellious ideas of yours
rights, said she

the boring one
yes, that is true
do hold back a little, or your own head will roll into that basket in due course

the pensive one
or a bucket, maybe it's a wooden bucket

the pedant one
oh, come one, the huffy one is after all a more intelligent sort than the girl over there
or this one here

the peevish one
oh, well, about the intelligent sorts, it's debatable
i motion towards the smart sophia

sophia, the third one
i stole a candle, wrapped myself in a blanket and studied
and studied
and studied

the peevish one
as i say
it's debatable

the boring one
do you remember her, back when she was still one of us, i remember her, and now she's there, her
head on the block, god have mercy, do you remember her that last evening, last evening when she
was still one of us

the fat one
it was the eve of her birthday, i remember, yes

the huffy one
of course you remember, there was a chocolate cake on the table

the fat one
oh, well

the dainty one
the second and the third one bring a table

the fat one
as if i only remembered cakes

the huffy one
no, but they are mighty helpful

the dainty one
the fourth one brings a chocolate cake and puts in on the table

the fat one
as if you didn't eat a slice every now and then with greatest pleasure

the huffy one

well, fine, fine, but i'll never have eaten as many as you have

the pensive one
there's a chocolate cake on the table

sophia, the first one
there was a chocolate cake on the table and a bunch of white daisies

the pedant one
the fourth one runs to fetch to flowers

the pensive one
a drop of sweat slides down your brow
by the nose
across your lips
you lick them
breathe in

sophia, the third one
i became a mathematician

the pensive one
you swing

the pedant one
the girl gets up and steps to the table

sophia, the first one
sophia was beheaded on 22 february 1943 in munich
she was twenty-one years old

the huffy one
he swung it well
he managed at first try, he's not the first for nothing

the pensive one
you drive the axe into the block
roll down your sleeves
do up your buttons
the fourth one brings your jacket, you put it on
you beckon to the fourth to pass the towel
you wipe your face

i.
let's go, quickly
iron
clothes
suitcases

the dainty one

the first, the second, the third and the fourth one leave
the young woman stands at the table

sophia, the first one
my name is sophia
this is the eve of my twenty-first birthday, my final birthday
this time next year i'll have lost my head

the dainty one
i step to the young woman and give her my knife

sophia, the first one
thank you

the dainty one
she cuts herself a piece of chocolate cake that her mother had baked for her birthday
she chomps

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury, my name is sophia
i am a mathematician

the fat one
mmm, it smells so heady, so very heady

sophia, the first one
mama, this is so good!
this is the best cake you've ever baked me for my birthday
i'll save a piece or two to take with me tomorrow
you know how much hans likes chocolate cake
thank you!

the dainty one
you're welcome

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury, my name is sophia
i am a philosopher

sophia, the first one
everything is ready for the journey to munich, i can't wait to get on the train
i can't wait, really
i can't wait to get to munich and start studying, to meet all of hans's friends

the peevish one
this hans, is he her brother?

the pedant one
her eldest brother, then there's a younger one, two sisters, and a sister who died an infant
hans is three years her elder

the fat one
a soldier, a handsome boy

the peevish one
aha
the statuesque one
aha

the fat one
mmm, it does smell nice
i'm tempted, i must say
a pound cake iced with chocolate
this is such a simple and such a tasty sweet
eggs, sugar, flour, baking powder, how today everything is easier with baking powder, do you
remember years ago, how we had to toil to make it a little lighter

the pensive one
it's a good thing the world goes on

the fat one
then butter and chocolate
you separate the yolks from the whites, beat sugar into the yolks, i always grate some orange zest in,
simple, really, and fast, you whip the whites, melt butter and chocolate, and in no time the cake is
done, mmmm, it smells delicious

the pensive one
could i have a slice, too

the fat one
could i have a slice, too

the dainty one
the young girl nods
doesn't look at her and doesn't answer, only nods

the huffy one
the fat one lifts her corpulent backside, places the knife into the bucket and wipes her hands in the
apron

the pedant one
oh, blimey, i've forgotten
i've forgotten to tell you that we all wear aprons
all seven of us
we sit in a half-circle
with aprons on

the dainty one
the fourth and the third one hurry to us with aprons

III.
motherfucker

the pedant one
i apologise

the peevish one
awful, really
you'll have to pay handsomely for this sin

the pedant one
hush, you

the huffy one
the bulky one moves her voluptuous curves towards the divine bite

the pensive one
hush, you

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury, let me explain
one night, it was in winter, when i wrapped myself in blankets and tried to learn in the cold, by stolen
candlelight, i fell asleep
my mother found me in the morning, and beside me a book, a pen, a bottle of frozen ink
my parents gave up then
they didn't prevent me from learning, but they didn't encourage me either
but it was enough
enough for me to become a mathematician

the peevish one
has the smart one not tired of talking yet? who's even listening to her?
oy, nobody's listening to you

the fat one
oh dear, and now the fool has entered, too
today's a merry day
and this cake ... mmm

the huffy one
she says with her mouth full of cake for sophia's birthday

the fat one
i say with mouth full of delicious cake

the pensive one
butter and chocolate

the dainty one
namely, the stage was graced by ... another young woman

the pedant one
this one is slightly less a young woman, she is twenty-seven

the boring one
uf, an old maid, this one

the peevish one
no, not an old maid, she's married

the boring one
oh she did get married after all? who married her? who wanted to marry her, the basket case? i'd never have said she'd get married
this one
this one, who didn't know how to peel a potato
i can't believe it
well, she is beautiful, she is beautiful, one can't deny that

the huffy one
not even a woman
a true beauty
she cannot peel potatoes, that is true

the boring one
well, so what if she's beautiful, when she's completely crazy, pursuing politics in this way, well, fine, i understand, i mean, if anyone understands, then i understand, the world goes on, women are in politics, too, thank god for that, we've seen all sorts, but the method, the method, this wench is off her trolley, pretty as she may be, i can't believe that anyone wanted to take her
who took her, this ... this ... terrorist?

the peevish one
ah, who, why do you even ask
have you not heard?
one like her, another lost example of the human race
he's already been dealt with, she's a widow
good thing they never had children

the boring one
one like her can't have children
god makes sure things are right

the peevish one
yes, she too is a dry twig, luckily
and she will remain one

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury, so this is how it started
i mean, really started, without obstacles
my parents let me study
unfortunately, i had no teachers, but i had books, many books

i studied by myself, i spent every moment for mathematics, for philosophy, for knowledge
for knowledge!

the peevish one
will you never get tired?
nobody is listening

sophia, the third one
arithmetic
differential equation
latin
ancient greek

the boring one
greece, it was greece
so many cucumbers
but what was it that we cooked

the fat one
tzatziki
another wonderful, wonderful dish
you peel the cucumbers, grate them, squeeze out the liquid, this is important, squeeze ...

the pedant one
the fat one chokes on cake while she speaks
she coughs

the pensive one
god makes sure things are right

the huffy one
we made tzatziki without yogurt

sophia, the third one
knowledge!

the boring one
such people should not have children at all
this should be banned

the fat one
they will legislate it sooner or later i say
and then i cough a little more

the boring one
yes, i also believe that they will
the world moves forwards after all

the pedant one

the nutcase is rushing around in a wedding gown

the peevish one
why is she in the wedding gown?

the huffy one
to make it more picturesque
and narrative
and certainly not cheap

the dainty one
in a silk wedding gown
beautiful
with lace straps and tight bodice, lace daisies descend across the pleats down to the floor and
beyond, right to the end of train
the veil that covers the head also has lace daisies worked in
a beautiful wedding gown
a beautiful bride
long flaxen hair
beneath the wide intelligent brow translucent blue eyes, earnest and piercing
small tender nose, cute little mouth
small hands, long manicured nails

the peevish one
one who kneads bread can't have long nails

the fat one
one who works can't have such well-groomed hands

the pedant one
black hands, white bread

the dainty one
sensitive skin, slender body
femininity personified
a beautiful bride

the fat one
looking for the headsman again, you fool?

sophia, the second one
i'm looking for the headsman, where's the headsman?

the dainty one
the young woman is running around
a veil strewn with daisies floats behind her

the huffy one
picturesque, i have to say

the dainty one
instead of a wedding bouquet she's holding a rope
truth be told, she does come across a little crazy
in a wedding gown
a long piece of rope in her hands, with a noose at the end

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman?

the pedant one
the girl slowly eats her chocolate cake, with pleasure
then takes a white daisy from the vase and sticks it behind her ear
smiles

sophia, the second one
headsman, where are you, where are you?

sophia, the third one
when i was eighteen years old i learnt almost everything my father's library could offer
it was then that a polytechnic opened in paris
this could have been a chance for me, dear jury
unfortunately, the school didn't enrol girls
gentlemen of the jury, i am accused of breaching moral codices
and i am indeed guilty of that
i secured copies of the lectures in different subjects
and i studied
mathematics
physics
chemistry
more knowledge!

the huffy one
the fat one is stuffing herself with cake

the pedant one
we are peeling potatoes

the peevish one
tons of potatoes

the boring one
silently we are peeling potatoes and thinking about soldiers who, hungry and thirsty, are now
shedding blood

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman?

the peevish one
a fool dancing around in a frenzy

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman?
has anyone seen the headsman?
i've been waiting for an eternity

the pensive one
i can hardly wait
i can hardly wait

the pedant one
the first one enters with suitcases in his arms

the dainty one
sets them down by the table

I.
let's go, let's go, why are you dallying?

the fat one
the second one and the fourth one enter
the second one carries a mangle

the dainty one
an iron
i whisper

the fat one
and an ironing board
i say with my mouth full

the huffy one
and an ironing board
says the fat one with her gob full

the dainty one
the fourth one is staggering under a pile of clothes, we cannot see him through them, clothes in his arms, a pile of clothes
a scarf and a head kerchief and a beanie and a hat are on his head, shoes in his arms
he staggeringly approaches the table

the pedant one
the third one is dragging a huge trunk, he can barely move it

sophia, the third one
at the end of the lectures the students had to write an essay
i wrote an essay but i couldn't sign it with my name
i am accused, gentlemen of the jury, of taking other identities
and i did
to be able to turn in the essay at the end of the year, i signed the name of an acquaintance, a male student, i signed it antoine le blanc

III.
motherfucker

I.
let's go, let's go

the peevish one
all my fingers hurt from these potatoes

the boring one
oh, yes, mine too

the peevish one
blister by blister

III.
motherfucker

the boring one
there's not much left, we'll be done in a snap
it hurts, yes, it hurts, but what can we do, we have to bear it
do you remember when we once cleaned carrots, onions and potatoes for, blimey, i don't even
remember, but there were ten, no, twenty, no thirty, yes, thirty thousand soldiers, we cooked then
for thirty thousand and more and a third ended up dead, i remember, but where was it, my god, who
can remember all this, when was it, does any of you remember

the fat one
i remember
we were making veal ragout

the dainty one
i remember too
we were making blanquette de veau

the boring one
france!
yes, you're right the dainty one it was in france and we were cooking veal ragout

the fat one
what a wonderful dish this is
first you stew the veal a bit
cut the carrots in large pieces, quarter the onions, you stick it with cloves, cloves give onion
wonderful taste, you crush the garlic, sauté it in butter, add the veal and spices, parsley, thyme, bay
leaf, marjoram, rosemary, basil, sage, i always add some crushed cumin, black pepper, i usually add
some white and red, too, red pepper adds the final touch and then you let it stew for about two
hours

II.
here

damn, it's heavy this table

the dainty one
ironing board

II.
damn, it's heavy this table
where do i put it?

I.
by the table
and put the clothes on it

sophia, the second one
it is my turn now
my turn

I.
good
this is set
hurry with that trunk, go, it's time for the second execution

the pensive one
i forgive you

sophia, the third one
gentlemen of the jury, the professor loved my essay
he praised its originality in front of everyone and then searched for this anton and discovered that
master anton is in fact miss sophia

the dainty one
while she's rushing around, the bride's veil gets stuck on the axe and rips apart
oh, what a pity!

sophia, the third one
that's how i got a mentor
besides teaching me mathematics the professor offered endless support in the coming years

the peevish one
i can imagine, yes, what kind of support you got

the huffy one
the peevish one isn't hinting at something juicy, oh no, not her

the dainty one
a bit of decency, you two
a little bit, please

III.
motherfucker, what is in this trunk?

it's as heavy as lead

the pensive one
silently you take off your jacket and roll up your sleeves

I.
hold this

the pensive one
you throw the jacket to the second one who barely manages to catch it

II.
oh, motherfucker

the huffy one
oh, motherfucker, says the second one to the first one silently, almost hissing
oh, motherfucker, as if to say – who do you think you are if you outrank me, you're a dick
oh, motherfucker, as if to say – do i look like your fucking bellboy
oh, motherfucker, as if to say – why are you fucking me with this jacket now, as if i had nothing better to do
he has better things to do, together with the fourth one he has to take out the corpse and the basket with the head and clean the blood off the floor

the pensive one
you swung it well

the huffy one
the second one definitely has better things to do than to hold the first one's jacket despite a higher rank

the pensive one
silently you step to the third one and help him drag the trunk
it really is heavy
heavy like lead

sophia, the first one
just one more day and i'll be with hans, mama

the dainty one
the boring one puts down the knife and goes to the ironing board
wipes her hands in the apron
steps behind the ironing board and starts ironing and folding laundry

the boring one
yes, just one more day

sophia, the first one
i can't believe i'll start studying tomorrow

the boring one
i iron, in the role of her mother
i can't believe it either

the pedant one
you're my youngest daughter

the dainty one
my most persistent and most stubborn child

the huffy one
and you're leaving the nest
i say, without putting any effort in this sentence

the boring one
mother is ironing and thinking

the dainty one
thinking about her other children

the huffy one
she's thinking about her youngest son, fighting right now who knows where on the russian front
mother is thinking about the slaughter

the peevish one
mother is thinking about her son, a german soldier, not knowing whether he's alive or dead

the dainty one
and now you're leaving too, sophia
says mother while she's ironing

sophia, the first one
mama, i'm just going to study, i'm just going to munich
to hans
i'll be together with hans

the boring one
i'm ironing
packing the suitcase

sophia, the first one
come on, don't be so worried
i'll be fine
we'll all be fine, mama

the dainty one
i know it'll all be fine, my child

the boring one
now all my children are in god's hands

sophia, the third one
i became some sort of wonder, gentlemen of the jury
indeed, a wonder is the proper word

the dainty one
the proper word
oh, how i yearn for the times when the world was ruled by decorum

sophia, the third one
you know, gentlemen of the jury, it caused quite a stir in the parisian intellectual circles
a talented female mathematician
many important scientists wanted to meet me
mostly they wrote to me, because it was somewhat complicated to organise a meeting with a young
unmarried woman
a female scientist
a wonder, quite right

the huffy one
you really didn't have to add that

the boring one
i'm sorry, but i think it is spot on
and it sounds nice
now all my children are in god's hands, i repeat

the pensive one
together with the third one you drag that trunk past me
you're very close, i could simply stretch my arm
i just stretch my arm and i can touch you
do you see me, do you see me now?

III.
motherfucker, i'm so worn out
and hungry
this day drags on
hungry like a wolf

the huffy one
take a slice of cake, so that the fat-ass won't explode

the pedant one
the peevish one gets up quickly

sophia, the second one
my name is

the pedant one
puts down the things

sophia, the second one
my name is

the pedant one
wipes her hands in the apron and cleans herself thoroughly

sophia, the second one
my name is

the dainty one
the bride trips on the trunk and tumbles

III.
motherfucker

the dainty one
the bride gets up and wanders off
oh, no, she's soiled the gown
oh, what a pity!

sophia, the second one
my name is

the boring one
well, terrorist, get on with it, spit it out, you must know what your name is, although i wouldn't be surprised if you didn't, after everything you've done, oh, my god you wretched fool, you're not sane, i wouldn't be surprised if you didn't even know your name

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman?
i'm looking for the headsman

the pedant one
the peevish one takes off her apron
fixes her hair
pulls out a mirror from somewhere, pouts her lips, moves a curl
and steps to the table

the huffy one
the peevish one surely won't let such an opportunity go
hurry, hurry
go on, hurry

the boring one
oh, my god
always the same

the dainty one
the boring one is packing clothes into the suitcase
i'm helping her

we're packing

the peevish one
i cut a slice of cake
how it smells
intoxicating

the fat one
in the end you strain the soup, you boil it, whisk flour into melted butter, toss it into the soup, stir until it thickens, at the end you add the yolk mixed with cream, pour all of it over the meat, add vegetables
mmm
yes, yes, this is what we cooked in france
veal ragout

the huffy one
except we had no beef
nor cloves
nor butter
we cooked carrots, onions, flour and eggs
and in the end it was fine, none of the soldiers was left hungry, ten thousand were left lying dead, but others ate until they were full on that account
we cooked veal ragout without the veal
blanquette de veau sans veau

the pedant one
the first and the third finally drag the trunk to the end of the stage

III.
what's in this thing?

I
i have no idea
it was ordered to put it here and we put it
nothing else matters
come on, we have to go on
there are some things to be done before the next execution

III.
give me a second to catch my breath, motherfucker

the pensive one
you shrug

the boring one
yes, yes, i remember, ours were defeated, although there were more of them, three times more, and yet they were defeated, i remember as if it were yesterday, they, our husbands, our sons, oh, yes ...

the fat one
enough

the pensive one
you step to the chopping block
you unroll your sleeves
you signal to the second one to pass you the jacket
oh, motherfucker

the pedantic one
he who makes himself an ass, should not be surprised if he gets ridden

the pensive one
you put on the jacket
you straighten it
you look handsome
the fourth one takes the axe and wipes the blade

IV.
here

the pensive one
the fourth one hands you the axe
folds the towel and tosses it into the pail
the second one straightens the block

the fat one
enough
i have other things to do, it's time
the soldiers will march through that door any minute now

the huffy one
won't you have another slice?

the peevish one
i step to the third one, who's still breathing perched on the heavy trunk

the dainty one
darn, stop using the word trunk, i've had it up to ... up to ... up ...

the huffy one
up yours!

the dainty one
the peevish one seductively steps to the third one

the peevish one
i break off a piece of the delicious cake
and gently push it into his mouth
he bites greedily

the huffy one

nothing juicy, oh no

sophia, the third one
i had the honour of meeting many french scholars
most of them through letters, some in person
i must say, gentlemen of the jury, they all offered support, all wanted to share knowledge with me
but more or less it was some mathematical peculiarities, this way of course i couldn't acquire new
knowledge, i had no chance of continuous study, i couldn't systematically and thoroughly penetrate
the mathematical science
this is the only thing i regret, gentlemen of the jury

the peevish one
with my fingers i lightly caress his lips
he looks into my eyes
i look into his eyes
i lick my fingers
i push another bit of heady chocolate cake into his mouth

the fat one
do you really think i should have another piece?

the huffy one
of course, my dear, at your heart's content, you only live once

the fat one
ok, fine
but only one more piece
one morsel

the peevish one
slowly, with feeling
i look into his eyes

the pedant one
the way to the heart is through the stomach

the peevish one
i gently press my forefinger into his mouth
i caress his tongue
he caresses me with his tongue
my fingers, then my hand
i use the thumb of my other hand to caress his tongue while he licks me
i lift my skirt and sit astride onto his lap

the huffy one
the hair-splitting one, this you also forgot to tell, you forgot to tell that we're wearing skirts, wide
skirts with many underskirts

the peevish one
i sit on him

the huffy one
and so on

I.
are we ready?

IV.
we are

II.
we are

I.
hey, you, did you breathe enough?

III.
rightaway

I.
hurry
let's go

IV.
can't we wait for him?

I.
we don't have time to wait, he'll catch up

II.
can we do it without fuck-ups this time?

the pensive one
you ignore him

II.
i don't intend to play with this anymore
let's do it the way it's supposed to be done, by the book, without additions

I.
let's go already

the pensive one
you step towards the horizon
you turn around
you look at me
do you see me?

the pedant one
the second one and the fourth one follow the first one, frowning

they stop in the background
they stand there in the beam of light

the fat one
pretty as a picture

the dainty one
the boring one packs the cake in the bag and adds a bottle of wine

the boring one
here, my child

sophia, the first one
thank you
thank you, mama

the dainty one
the young woman takes the suitcase in her hand and the bag with the cake, and leaves
she waves
we wave back

the huffy one
while the peevish one is letting off steam, sophia steps forward with a suitcase in her hand
the fool is still dancing around

the pensive one
her name is
sophia

sophia, the second one
my name is
sophia

the boring one
yes, thank god

the huffy one
anyways

sophia, the second one
my name is sophia and i come from russia

the huffy one
bless your heart

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman?

the pedant one
the girl steps to the men in the background

sophia, the first one
hans

I.
sophia, sister

the dainty one
sophia and hans embrace

the boring one
yes, i remember that, yes, she went to munich and we haven't seen her since
she was useless

sophia, the first one
finally!
i can't wait to meet all your friends

the fat one
it can't end differently when a person doesn't know their station in life

the huffy one
a female person in particular

the fat one
exactly

the pensive one
i can't wait, really

I.
this is chris

the pedantic one
the second one steps forwards and extends his hand to sophia

II.
pleased to meet you, dear sophia, we've only been hearing great things about you

sophia, the first one
oh, chris, the pleasure is all mine
and i can't wait to meet your toddlers and your wife, too,
how old are they now? two and one, something like that?

II.
yes, michael is two years old and vincent one

I.
this is willi

IV.
pleased to meet you

sophia, the first one
hi, willi
where are you hiding alex

the huffy one
alex is breathing
oh, excuse me, he just stopped breathing and is zipping up his trousers
he's running

III.
hello, sophia
i'm alex
i'm very pleased to meet you, hans told us only great things about you

sophia, the first one
hi
now we can toast, i brought wine and chocolate cake
mama baked it for my birthday, it is excellent

the fat one
excellent, indeed

I.
well then, let's toast

II.
what shall we toast to

III.
to sophia, of course!

II.
to sophia!
and her birthday

IV.
to sophia!
and her studies

I.
to sophia!
to her long life

the peevish one
have you heard what happened?

the huffy one

not just heard, we also saw it

the fat one
well, let's go, let's go, these potatoes won't peel themselves

the dainty one
oh, look, the bride is coming towards us

the huffy one
she'll help us peel the potatoes

the fat one
yeah, right, that's exactly why she's in such hurry, if you ask me

the dainty one
the bride steps towards us, murmuring

the pedant one
what is she droning about?

the huffy one
maybe she's praying
maybe she hasn't filled in the request and is praying now already
it's her turn now

sophia, the second one
it is my turn now

the dainty one
stepping towards us in her magnificent wedding gown
look at this silk, look at this lace
magnificent, indeed

the boring one
she doesn't even see us, she's going directly towards the pails
hey, you, move away, you'll bump into a pail

the huffy one
she bumped into a pail
she fell,
the peels and potatoes fell on her

the boring one
you messed-up terrorist, look what you've done

the dainty one
oh, no, she has torn and soiled her dress

the huffy one
oh, what a pity, she won't be such a pretty corpse now

the dainty one
primitive

the fat one
who's gonna pick this up now

the peevish one
sophia from russia picks herself up and wanders on

the pensive one
murmuring

sophia, the second one
where's the headsman

the fat one
you're your own headsman, you wretched wench

the peevish one
just don't think that she's some poor thing
you must have heard who her folks are?

the huffy one
if we haven't, then we will

the peevish one
she's from saint petersburg and far from poor
i've heard a rumour she was a relative of empress elizabeth, you know which one?

the pedant one
elizabeth of russia, born in 1709, died 1762, the daughter of tsar peter the great

the fat one
yes, yes, that whore, how did she never end up beneath the axe, i ask myself
the work we had because of her

the boring one
oh, yes, i remember, yes, it was there up in the north, ours were defeated, i remember, yes

the huffy one
that one, too, was a dry twig of the society

the pensive one
god makes sure things are right

the peevish one
i heard that the father of our loony bride was the military governor of saint petersburg

the fat one

another one with her arse full, indisputably

the pensive one
indisputably

the dainty one
indisputably, how nice

the peevish one
rumour has it that she left home at sixteen
her father apparently didn't approve of her company

the fat one
i can imagine what lowlife company she kept

the boring one
smart man, this commander, smart

the pedant one
military governor

the pensive one
indisputably

the peevish one
so young, imagine, so young and she started to fraternise with revolutionary groups

the dainty one
no wonder then that she is next in line

the pedant one
one who mixes amongst the bran, gets eaten by the pigs

the huffy one
amen

the fat one
oh, my, how many potatoes we've still got left
these bints could give us a hand

the huffy one
hands, maybe; heads, not so much

the dainty one
i'm silent, i don't say anything, i'm silent, although i'm tempted, i'm really tempted to get up and
teach her a lesson
but i don't do it
i'm peeling potatoes in silence

the huffy one

because you're a cosmopolitan

the pensive one
we're peeling potatoes in silence

I.
come on, let's go
are we ready?

III.
of course we are, what kind of question, let's get this done

the pedant one
of course we are, says the third one while he's walking
the first one, the second one, the third one and the fourth one walk towards the block

the fat one
there won't be enough potatoes
there won't, i'm telling you
how many soldiers are we expecting today?

the boring one
some ten thousand, today there are some ten thousand as well

the pedant one
eight thousand three hundred eighty-nine

the boring one
oh, well

the fat one
well, the stew will be a bit more floury

the huffy one
and maggots

the fat one
and we won't be in time
how many potatoes do we still have to peel?

the pedant one
if there was three hundred and one kilos this makes approximately ... mhm ... no, this makes exactly
forty-three kilos per each one of us
i'd say, for every one of us, give or take, oh my, a lot, at least half

the fat one
i keep telling you that we must work not cackle
now we won't manage in time
and the soldiers hungry

all because of your nattering

the huffy one
or your devouring

the fat one
quiet

I.
block?

II.
ready

I.
basket?

III.
likewise

I.
pail?

IV.
and towel
ready

I.
patch?

the pensive one
you glare at the fourth one
you see that the second one and the third one also glare at the fourth one
why don't you see me?

IV.
here
all sorted

the fat one
says he as he pulls a black blindfold from his jacket pocket

I.
good
the condemned

II.
waiting

I.

let's go get her

the pedant one
the fool is dancing
the first one, the second one, the third one and the fourth one step to her

IV.
miss

the pensive one
she's not an old spinster, she's married

the boring one
i truly can't imagine who'd want to have her

the peevish one
i've heard them say he was a handsome lad, but, yes, of course, a terrorist

IV.
ma'am

the dainty one
the bride does not respond, does not even look at them, she runs around and murmurs, the second one, the third one and the fourth one are running behind her

the pensive one
you look at the second one, the third one and the fourth one how they are zigzagging behind the bride
she bolts and dances, murmurs, spins, drones, smiles, trips, falls, gets up, falls and her dress is getting dirtier and dirtier

the dainty one
oh, what a pity

the pensive one
getting more and more torn

the dainty one
what an indescribable pity

the pensive one
the second one, the third one and the fourth one bolt behind her

IV.
ma'am

II.
mrs sophia

III.

come on, madam, we don't have time for these shenanigans

the pensive one
you're standing really close to me, you're watching, saying nothing
while you're looking at them and saying nothing, you take a step towards me
and another one, you are leaning against my chair with your hand
beside me, right beside me, by my side, here, right beside, by my side, i'm by your side, right beside,
i'm breathing you, i'm breathing you, i'm breathing you for long, for long the time stands still, it's a
moment, but for long the time stands still, it's a couple of seconds, it's a mere couple of seconds,
mere seconds right beside, right beside, my shoulder by your arm, right beside, so close, so close that
the time stands still, that a couple of seconds are long and even longer, that they are, these seconds,
ours, mine and yours, or mine, or just mine, mine, because i took you, i took you so i can breathe you
right beside, very close, by your side, that i can breathe you, expanding, seconds, expanding,
breathing in, breathing out, long and even longer, and more and more and more and it lasts, and it
still lasts, and i'm still breathing you, i'm inhaling you with no before and no after, here, right beside,
you, no after, these seconds are, long, i'm breathing you, i'm inhaling you, you, right beside
why don't you see me?

the huffy one
enough of this now

the fat one
you can't tell which one is crazier

I.
enough of this now

the pensive one
you step to the fool

the peevish one
a fool, yes, if only she were
the worst part is she wasn't even crazy, she knew full well what she was doing

the pensive one
you hold her by the elbow

the peevish one
whoring about with all the revolutionaries

the huffy one
oh, you unclean force

the pensive one
you hold her almost gently

the peevish one
you know, she was jailed before, a few years back, and she didn't come to her senses

the boring one
nothing brings her kind to their senses, please, what will bring them to their senses when she's
whoring about doing some revolution, oh my god, against authorities in this manner, the world's
never seen anything like it

the huffy one
never has it ever

the pensive one
gently, but firmly

the dainty one
she meant to say civilised world

the boring one
yes, that's what i meant to say, the civilised world, where has the civilised world seen this, that's
what i meant to say, a bomb assassination, i beg you, a woman, i don't understand, an assassination
attempt on the tsar, one can't believe that
who in their right mind solves things with violence, i beg you, terrorism obviously can't solve
anything

the peevish one
bomb assassination, yes, extremists, only extremists, extremists and revolutionaries calling
themselves righteous, as fighters for the rights of little people
i heard them say that sophia over there said, when she was still reasonably sane, that they started a
great thing, that people shall rule, and that freedom of speech will be legalised, and that property
will be in the hands of the people and things like that

the fat one
same old, same old, over and over
how do people not get tired of it

the boring one
not tired of throwing bombs, i cannot and cannot understand that a woman, this young

the huffy one
and beautiful

the boring one
and beautiful, yes, and beautiful on top of that, so she has absolutely everything, i mean, does she
have to, did she really have to meddle with politics in that way, solve things with violence, yes, what
is this, how can a woman support violence, no matter how hard i try and you know very well that i'm
open-minded and bright
it is quite right that she's been sentenced to death, what she was looking for, she will now get

the pedant one
one who lives by the sword will die by the sword

the boring one
right

right

the pensive one
you were looking for me, you say

I.
you were looking for me

sophia, the second one
i'm looking for the headsman

I.
that would be me

sophia, the second one
my name is

I.
sophia

sophia, the second one
i brought the noose

I.
let's go

the pensive one
and they go

the huffy one
they go towards the block, finally

the pedant one
the second one, the third one and the fourth one trail behind them

the dainty one
the beautiful wedding gown totally destroyed
oh, what a pity

the peevish one
have you heard what happened yesterday?
they entered the village, theirs, theirs into our village
set everything on fire and tossed the people into the flames
including one heavily pregnant woman, a young woman who was about to give birth
horrifying

the huffy one
horrifying indeed

the pedant one

they stop in front of the block

sophia, the second one
an axe?
why an axe?

the pensive one
it's time, you say

I.
it's time

the pensive one
you signal with your head towards the block
the second one and the third one hold Sophia, one under each arm
the fourth one places the black blindfold across her eyes
the second one and the third one press her against the block

the peevish one
and that one, the one with child, starts burning, and when she starts burning, her scream drowns all other screams

the pensive one
drowns them

sophia, the second one
not with the axe, not with the axe, i brought a noose with me
not with the axe

II.
madam, don't resist, it won't help you

III.
what is with these wenches today?

sophia, the second one
but i filed a plea for the noose

III.
madam, don't make things up, there is no such petition
the death penalty is done with the axe

the huffy one
it is a lot more picturesque, colourful if i may say so

the peevish one
the one with child is burning, burning and screaming terribly

the pensive one
drowns them

sophia, the second one
no, no, i was sentenced to death by hanging
i'm the first woman in russia sentenced to death by hanging for political activism

the boring one
political activist, for crying out loud

the fat one
lazy cow

the boring one
a rabble rouser and a terrorist

IV.
maybe it was as you say, madam, but we'll execute you with an axe regardless

the huffy one
this may not be historically precise, but it doesn't make it any less true

the peevish one
and then

I.
do you forgive me?

the huffy one
he pauses for greater effect

sophia, the second one
i forgive you

the dainty one
i yawn

the pensive one
you swing

the pedant one
she yawns so we all notice

the peevish one
a horrid scream rips through the air

the huffy one
a pause

sophia, the second one
sophia was hanged on the 15th of april 1881 in saint petersburg
she was twenty-seven years old

the pensive one
we're peeling potatoes silently thinking about the soldiers who are, hungry and thirsty, spilling blood
right now

the huffy one
slaughtering each other

sophia, the first one
willi, i'm scared

IV.
you have to be brave, you have to believe it will all be fine, that we will return alive and well
promise me

sophia, the first one
i promise you

IV.
and when we return, we'll continue work where we left it
remember
we won't be silent, we're your guilty conscience, the white rose won't let you be in peace

sophia, the first one
we won't be silent
we're your guilty conscience
the white rose won't let you be in peace

the pedant one
the first one and the third one approach

III.
willi, we'll have to go now, the train's about to leave

I.
they won't be going anywhere without us
sophia, we'll be back soon
and then our brother is somewhere out there on the russian front, maybe we'll get to meet each
other

the huffy one
if he's still in one piece

the pedant one
he is, he is, they will meet, the younger brother only falls a year after that

the huffy one
of course, first they shorten hans and sophia by a head, and the brother disappears on the russian
front about a year later

the boring one
oh, my lord, my god, three of my children

the fat one
haven't you gotten a bit too into character, perhaps?

the boring one
oh, lay off me

the huffy one
this tragic story we've heard at least once
horrible, indeed

the peevish one
alluding to me with scoff in her voice
i pretend i didn't hear and continue my story
the one that i've just heard
horrid, indeed
and do you know what happens next?
you cannot think, you can't imagine
the one, the one with child, gives birth in the fire!
can you picture?
can you imagine?

sophia, the first one
when you return we will go on working
write even more leaflets, organise even better
you have to come back if only for that

III.
shhh, sophia, don't be so loud, not here
not here and not anywhere
you must not tell anyone about this
you know it's not just your life and ours, it's about the lives of all those we love
be careful

I.
take care
take care of yourself
and don't be so miserable, come
in a way it's good we're going to the front
things around the first leaflets will calm down a bit, and when we return, we'll strike even harder

IV.
down with the swine
this is what we'll write on every wall in munich

I.
this is what we'll write on every wall in germany

down with oppressive bastards
long live freedom
what germany, we'll write that on every wall in the world
down with all the swines

III.

shhh
shhh
have you gone mad or what

the pedant one
the fourth one starts mimicking pig sounds
the first one joins in
the girl laughs

sophia, the first one
down with all the swines of the world

the boring one
this is so naive it's kind of cute

the huffy one
almost sweet

the boring one
yes, indeed
i mean, you know that i understand these things, if one is open-minded and perceptive for novelties,
you know that, girls, is me, i truly understand these youth, i understand they want to change the
world and such like, quite right, too, where would we be if there weren't young, fresh ...

the peevish one
i agree with you deeply
can you imagine?
gives birth in fire, in fire!

the boring one
i wanted to say, where would we be if it weren't for the young, fresh thoughts, the world could not
progress, but these here, they truly are ... well ... not that i'm in any way against changing the world
for the better, not at all, but these are far from it, far from it, you know, i understand, god knows i
understand, but these here are truly ...

the huffy one
sweet

the boring one
yes, if fact they are in a way, in this, i'd say, naivety of theirs, right, god forgive them, somehow, yes,
sweet, but a man can't help

the huffy one
and even less so a woman

the fat one
enough now,
bints, will you shut up now, or i'll send you all over to the disciplinary board
good grief, so much nattering

the huffy one
at least it'll start to rain

the fat one
silence!

the pedant one
the first one and the girl embrace and kiss

sophia, the first one
be careful
promise to be careful

IV.
don't you worry, i'll look after him

I.
that bodes well for me

the pedant one
then the third one and the fourth one take leave from the girl
they grab their suitcases and leave

the dainty one
the young girl waves
the young men wave back
the train can be heard from afar

the boring one
i know them, too, these aspiring youths, i'll say aspiring youths, because i understand the young who
want to change the world for the better, i really do, but a little sense won't harm them, if they came
to their senses they wouldn't end the way they did

the dainty one
we all wave to them

the pensive one
i wave to you

the peevish one
can you imagine?
the one with child squeezes a newborn out of herself
while she's on fire
isn't that horrible?

the huffy one
another pause for a greater effect

the dainty one
i yawn again so you can all notice

the peevish one
horrid, indeed
and then their soldiers ...

the huffy one
no more, please

I.
another execution and we're done for the day
everything ready?

II.
the block is waiting

III.
as is the basket

IV.
and pail and a clean towel too

I.
the blindfold?

IV.
of course

I.
the convict?

II.
praying

III.
this one did indeed apply for prayer, at least one with a little bit more sense

the huffy one
too much sense

the boring one
hehe, that's a good one, too much sense, well, it might be true, this one does have too much sense,
and it only hurts her

II.

do you have the paper?

III.

yes, with the judge's signature and the seal from court, she can pray

I.

come on

III.

i thought i'd never see that lunch
we don't have anything after this, right?

II.

we do, we do
another gig

III.

oh, come on
what?

II.

a quick subbing, five minutes

I.

come on, come on
hurry up

the peevish one
and do you know what happened afterwards?

the dainty one
nobody answers

the peevish one
i try again
and do you know what happened afterwards?

the dainty one
must have been something even worse
i say without putting any effort in the sentence

the peevish one
when the one with child gave birth, their soldiers tossed the infant into the fire

the dainty one
bestiality

the pensive one
bestiality, indeed

the boring one
no, no, this story has already happened, before, i remember when
but not in this war

the huffy one
if you have nothing smart to say, better be quiet

the pedant one
if you can't speak smart, hush smart

the peevish one
but i heard it happened yesterday

the pedant one
the men bring the third condemned to the block

I.
are you ready

sophia, the third one
i am

IV.
let me put the blindfold on you

sophia, the third one
thank you

IV.
you're welcome, ma'am

sophia, the third one
miss

the fat one
this one, too, without children, this one, too, a dry twig

the pensive one
indisputably

the boring one
and an old maid on top of that, yes, who'd have her, she's not even beautiful

the fat one
well, that's nothing, a woman must get married, a woman must give birth, this is our mission, dear
god, this is why we're here, right

the huffy one
a woman only realises herself when she gives birth

the boring one
exactly

the pensive one
this is why we're here
good god
right

IV.
miss, i'm sorry
you're welcome, miss

the dainty one
the second one and the third one push sophia onto the block

I.
do you forgive me

sophia, the third one
i forgive you

the pensive one
you lift the axe high in the air

sophia, the third one
can i add something before you swing

the pensive one
you lower the axe

I.
go on then

II.
wait now, can she add something?

III.
well, i don't know, motherfucker, i don't know, this is not in the law, and it's not in the directive
maybe it's in the regulations, do you remember?

IV.
no, no, i don't think so
i know there's no petition for last words
i mean, there is, for last words in front of the jury after the sentence, she filed it and it was approved,
this is why she's the last one of them, she had so much to say
she filed for prayer, too

II.
what about for the last words on the block?

IV.

no, the law makes no provision for that
nor the directive
nor the regulations
only prayer and the blindfold

III.

motherfucker, another hole

sophia, the third one
do you allow me to say something, then?
just one sentence?

I.

go on, then

II.

wait, wait, let's first agree
do we allow her?

III.

well, i don't know, if the paragraphs don't cover it, why should we let her, we're only wasting time,
i'm hungry, i want to have that lunch

IV.

shall we vote?

III.

vote what, swing it and done

IV.

shall we vote if we want to vote?

I.

say it, ma'am

II.

you just can't help it, has to be your way, right

sophia, the third one
it's alright
i don't have to say a thing

I.

just say it, miss sophia
don't mind us

sophia, the third one
i just want to say once more that i don't regret
i don't regret a single decision of mine that brought me here

just that

I.
are you ready now?

sophia, the third one
i am

the pensive one
you lift the axe high in the air

the fat one
well, this is why there are so many diseases, that's why, women don't give birth and then they get all those breast cancers and things like that
it's all god's punishment, i'm telling you

the peevish one
sophia the sage would surely die of breast cancer were she not beheaded

the huffy one
oh, these sophias
if they don't lose their heads, they lose their tits

the dainty one
gosh darn it, you've really crossed the line now

the huffy one
hasn't she

the pensive one
hasn't she

the dainty one
this is truly the limit, this is the limit, i'll report you, i'll really report you now, this broke the camel's back, i'll report you for assaulting human dignity and manners

the pedant one
according to article eighteen of the law of changes and the amendments to the law of changes and the amendments to the law of preventing lowering the levels of ethics and culture in family and society you file a report personally at the police station as well as by mail
problem elegantly solved
this law will certainly improve the situation in our society

the pensive one
a good thing the world is moving forward

the fat one
silence

the pensive one

you swing

sophia, the third one
sophia died of breast cancer on the 27th of june 1831 in paris
she was fifty-five years old

the peevish one
have i said it or haven't i

the pedant one
this with the axe, i don't understand it, this is so imprecise

the huffy one
this is for the effect
the picturesqueness
the garrulousness
and colourfulness

the pensive one
maybe it's not historically precise, but it's no less true

the dainty one
we are peeling potatoes silently and thinking
i'm thinking about manners
a little bit about manners, and a little bit about that magnificent silk lace wedding gown
oh, what a pity

the fat one
i'm thinking about gingerbread, i think that next time i should make gingerbread biscuits with
cardamom and cloves, that should be fantastic

the pedant one
i'm thinking about the statements and agreements we should implement, i think this would be the
best solution in the given situation, we're rapidly running out of provisions and if we have them, the
quality is bad, it would therefore be best that every soldier sign a statement before lunch that he's
aware of the economic situation in the country and agrees to be fed the food available, even if it is of
bad quality
yes, yes, i think we'll have to introduce that

the pensive one
i'm thinking about you
i'm thinking about you all the time
why don't you see me?

the boring one
i'm thinking about these foolish women and girls who got what they were looking for, but because
i'm educated and well read and no stranger to sympathy, i feel a little sorry for them, wouldn't it be
better for them to follow their hearts and make something out of themselves, rather than let
themselves be deceived and end the way they ended
this is what i'm thinking about

the huffy one
i'm not thinking about anything
i'm peeling the potatoes
well, maybe i'm thinking about that huge trunk, maybe i'm thinking it's about time to use the huge trunk

I.
fine
we've done it all
just that gig and then we go eat

III.
finally

the peevish one
i'm thinking which horrible story i could tell now and why none of them reacted to the story about the burning baby the way i imagined
the way i wanted them to react, i wanted them to react with stupefaction, with emotion, with abhorrence, with shock, with indignation, with compassion, maybe with a tear
or two
this is how i wanted them to react to my story

the boring one
no, no
this has already happened, some ten or maybe twenty years ago, i remember well
it wasn't in this war
they tossed the baby into the fire years ago

the pensive one
i remember as if it were yesterday

the boring one
i remember as if it were yesterday

the pensive one
you stand on the horizon in a beam of light

I.
attention

the pensive one
the company lines up

I.
present arms

the pensive one
the company salutes

the dainty one
ah, no, no
it wasn't twenty years ago, it was way more back, before guns even
five hundred years ago?

the pedant one
six hundred, more like it

the fat one
ah, those were the days
we're not young anymore

the pedant one
the beauty of grey hair is time turned in the right direction

the huffy one
now i will say oh, my god
i'll say oh, my god
right before i vomit

the boring one
oh, my god

the dainty one
drats, you have no manners at all
what's bothering you now

the huffy one
this crap is what's bothering me
this empty chatter

the pensive one
nattering – the dainty one will say

the dainty one
nattering
i say

the pensive one
the dainty one said – nattering

the pedant one
the girl steps to the huge trunk

the peevish one
i look at the huffy one if she'll add something

the boring one
we all look at the huffy one

the dainty one
but the huffy one is now so upset she hasn't heard

the fat one
and she can't say i told you it was time for the huge trunk

the huffy one
i told you it was time for the huge trunk

the pensive one
sophia tries to open the trunk

sophia, the first one
i can't, it won't, too heavy
hans!

I.
at ease

the pensive one
you say
and dash to sophia

I.
we'll do it together

the pensive one
you open the trunk
take out a bundle of papers, give them to sophia
you take out another bundle and hide them under jacket

I.
let's go

sophia, the first one
i dreamt we were caught and jailed

I.
they won't catch and jail us, it'll all be fine

the pensive one
it'll all be fine you say
it'll all be fine you say and lie
you lie, because you don't know
you lie, because you're scared too

sophia, the first one
i'm scared

I.

let's do this quickly
we have to distribute all the flyers at university before the lectures end
we don't have much more time
let's hurry

the pensive one
they distribute piles of papers
there are piles of papers all around on the floor
when they use up those they hold, they go to the trunk and take more
and more
and more

the dainty one
rushing around

the boring one
oh my god
always the same thing

the fat one
same old over and over
how do people not tire of this

the peevish one
i'm tired of it

the pedant one
the second one starts walking towards them
they don't notice him
he circles them, circles from afar, his hands clasped at the back and watches them

II.

latch the doors
lock
we have them, now we have them

I.

the end of lectures, let's go

sophia, the first one
we aren't done yet, there's a pile of leaflets in the trunk

I.

too late, let's go

sophia, the first one
no, no, wait, just one more

the fat one
the bint takes a bundle of papers from the trunk and tosses them high into the air

the pensive one
leaves falling all over us
falling like snow
white leaves, scribbled with tiny letters
falling like snow

the boring one
what does it say? where are my glasses, so i can read

the dainty one
the boring one is looking for her glasses

the fat one
what does it say, you know what it says, things about human rights, freedom ...

the peevish one
about freedom of speech

the pensive one
sophia throws another bundle of papers into the air
falling like slow

the huffy one
about the tyranny of government

the dainty one
about values we need to respect

the huffy one
and for which we need to fight

the pensive one
and another bundle
like snow

the peevish one
it says things about swines who need to be overturned

the huffy one
and against who we need to fight

the dainty one
it says things about future which is waiting, bright and pretty somewhere at the end of these papers

the pensive one
and more
snow

the peevish one
it says things about a revolt that needs to be incited, for honour and freedom

the fat one
that's what it says
what it always says, you know what it usually says

the boring one
aha, yes, of course, then i don't need glasses
but where did i stick them?

II.
get them

the pensive one
the third one and fourth one come running towards you and sophia
maybe you want to escape, maybe your first reflex is flight and maybe you are running away
maybe the third one and the fourth one are chasing you around the stage

the dainty one
parading back and forth

the pensive one
maybe
in any case they handcuff you

II.
there
and now lunch

the pensive one
you leave, handcuffed
the third one is pushing you forward, you're struggling to keep your balance
the fourth one is pushing sophia
on the way they unlock your handcuffs
you rub your wrists, just like they do in films
the fourth one unlocks sophia's handcuffs and joins the three of you
you laugh
the second one pats your shoulders
the third and the fourth are laughing
you're leaving
sophia stops and watches after you
in her transparent white dress

the peevish one
with nipples pointing up somewhere

the huffy one
no, come on

the first one is now in the role of her brother
nipples can't point upwards
that would be extremely tasteless, no
almost perverse

the pensive one
look at me!
you're leaving
i am waving goodbye to you
you don't turn around

the fat one
come on, bints, the three of you
come over here and clean this mess after yourselves

the pensive one
sophia picks up the pieces of paper and puts them back into the trunk
sophia joins her; she picks up the pieces of paper and puts them back into the trunk
sophia joins her; she picks up the pieces of paper and puts them back into the trunk

the pensive one
i forgive you

the huffy one
while our men are out there being slaughtered, we're nattering
while our sons are out there bleeding ...

the fat one
we're preparing lunch for them

the pedant one
the empty sack doesn't stand upright

the peevish one
that's why we're here, right

the pensive one
from morning till evening
from dusk till dawn

the boring one
no, no, it won't be five hundred years ago
twenty years ago they tossed a newborn into the fire, i'm sure

the dainty one
yes, but i know that they tossed one then, before guns

the boring one
then too, yes

the peevish one
and yesterday as well, i'm telling you

the pensive one
and tomorrow, too, i tell you, tomorrow, too they'll toss a newborn into the fire

the huffy one
a good thing the world is progressing

the fat one
good lord how slow we are
the soldiers will be here any minute
come on, wench, let's hurry

the peevish one
well, you see it can't go any faster, you said yourself there are too many eyes
stop driving us so hard

the fat one
oh, how many eyes
and how soft it is
well, it is still better to clean potatoes than knob celery
before potatoes we cooked knob celery, can you imagine if we'd now have to clean three hundred
eighty-seven kilos of knob celery?

the peevish one
you forgot veal ribs

the fat one
what?

the huffy one
the lunch of those up there
veal ribs and eighty-six kilos of potatoes intended for our soldiers
for the lunch of those up there

the pedant one
we have three hundred and one kilos

the fat one
well, can you imagine that we'd now have to clean three hundred and one kilo of knob celery for the
soldiers?

the dainty one
celeriac
celeriac sounds better

the fat one
wear our hearts out
although, i have to say, there's no soup tastier than celery soup

the dainty one
celeriac

the boring one
oh, yes, i remember, do you remember once, when was it, it had to be somewhere near, remember,
we were cooking knob celery, and chard on the side, if indeed it was chard. i don't remember well,
and there were also, oy, oy, some thirty thousand if memory serves, i remember it was windy like
hell

the peevish one
it's okay, you can stop

the boring one
do you remember
oh, my sweet lord, how many of our young men fell then, do you remember how many leftovers we
had, we tossed them and then so many flies came it was swarming with flies, do you remember the
flies?

the huffy one
we remember the flies, yes, except they didn't come to munch on chard

the pensive one
if indeed it was chard

the huffy one
and knob celery
celeriac i apologise

the dainty one
looks at me, with scorn
i ignore her

the huffy one
they came to feast on corpses
on all those young, beautiful, statuesque, tasty soldiers

the peevish one
she looks at me thinking i'll add something
a sigh or something similar
i don't add anything
i don't even roll my eyes
because my entire body aches from endless peeling
including eyes

the huffy one
flies, billions of flies
and stench, disgusting stench
and then worms, crawling
and corpses, as if they were alive again

the dainty one
blimey, what do you want to achieve with this?
will you never get tired of this?
look around yourself sometime, put on some rose-tinted glasses sometimes, well
the world is beautiful if you can see it
and you, you can't see anything but ...

the boring one
rome, it was rome
it truly was rome back then
i remember!
it was the beginning of september by some river, what was it called, i don't know, but i remember it
was so very windy that our soldiers' arrows were flown back

the huffy one
a picturesque scene

the boring one
but which river was it?

the fat one
so many eyes

the pensive one
this won't be a good stew

the fat one
huffy one, where did you say they brought them from today?

the huffy one
i didn't say

the fat one
but do you know from where?

the huffy one
how should i know?

the fat one
well, i thought you asked

the huffy one
i'm here to peel potatoes, not to ask questions

the peevish one
and you're not even very good at that, truth be told

the huffy one
are you going to start again

the pensive one
she's going to start again

the boring one
so we're sitting in a half-circle

the pensive one
like every day

the fat one
we're sitting in a half-circle and peeling potatoes

the pedant one
or cucumbers

the dainty one
or celeriac

the boring one
we're peeling potatoes and kneading dough

the fat one
we're kneading dough and cleaning vegetables

the pedant one
cutting

the dainty one
grating

the pensive one
crushing

the pedant one
chopping

the fat one
kneading

the dainty one
mixing

the peevish one
like every day

the huffy one
after day, after day

the pensive one
since the beginning of the world

the huffy one
and she's been nagging

the peevish one
and i've been nagging

the pensive one
every day since the beginning of the world

the huffy one
the end.

the peevish one
oh, have you heard what happened yesterday?