

Humanity is groaning

OR

No amount of Christian prayers will absolve malefactors' sins

The state war machine is back in action

We thought we finished it off in Europe in 1945

How wrong we have been!

It has pumped itself up again

Designated its enemies

And through its propaganda

It has turned everything and everyone into an-Other.

'Chorus: Savage Fate! Agony!' (Aeschylus, Persians, 550-60)

'Chorus: Groan, man, groan! Scream out loudly your grief! Let Heavens hear your lament!'
(Aeschylus, Persians, 570)

We have seen this play before

What is like to be a dictator

To send 18 years old soldiers to breathe ashes and die

To turn cities into desolate lands

To force by threats and arrests your own people

To share a 'greater Russia' hallucination

To shell, bomb and kill innocent civilians.

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The state war machine invented, once again,

Siege mentalities

To justify its own siege reality

Of life and freedoms
The scars on peace and democracy
The smell of decayed bodies in the streets
The exodus of frightened and disconcerted people.

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Dried paint on the walls with 'Loyalty to Z'
Loyalty to the cult of death
Families and habitations ripped apart by war
When bluebells decorate the woods
Senseless destruction
When the morning mist has left the turf
Atrocities committed in the name of what?

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Discarded metal and missile heads
On school yards and playgrounds
Cities covered in grief
And pensioners escaping their bombed apartments
Carrying their whole lives' possessions
In plastic shopping bags –
A passport, a family photo, a sweater
And pills for diabetes.

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Another 'special op' they say
How many of those we have seen
Words carefully chosen
To conceal cunning plans to injure
To confuse, to obscure
Devastation, desolation
Toddlers' moaning in firelight
And in the shadows of bomb-shelters.

'Chorus: Savage Fate! Agony!' (Aeschylus, *Persians*, 550-60)

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The world will never be free
If it stands by the wayside
Bearing witness to such loss
Of life
Observing the destruction and mass grief
So remote from rationality
Watching the unfolding catastrophe
And doing nothing to stop it.

*Chorus: Little cries, faint sounds become louder,
stronger and add up.*

They are clearer now, more determined! Act now! Act to stop humanity's freefall!

*Chorus: Time's uneven flow has brought contempt for persons and their life-worlds. From war to war,
humanity sees no cause nor wisdom! Such trauma, loss and ruins!*

Europe said 'never again'

From the devastation of World War II, a community was born
To unite people and countries
But Warlords have risen again
Bringing about clouds of death
Empty strollers in the square [157]
The world is watching impatiently
How was all this made possible?

*Chorus: Little cries, faint sounds become louder
stronger and add up*

They are clearer, more determined! Act now! Act to stop humanity's freefall!

*Chorus: Time's uneven flow has brought contempt for living persons. From war to war, humanity sees
no cause nor wisdom! Such trauma, loss and ruins!*

Are not there any trustees to protect human life?
What is the magic number that will trigger
The moral obligation to stop atrocities
And those who understand peace and happiness
Only as expressions of concrete power
The death toll has reached 15.000 – is not this enough?
Do you allow it to be 20.000 or 30.000?
What else should happen to Ukraine before world acts?

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*'Chorus: Groan, man, groan! Scream out loudly your grief! Let Heavens hear your lament!'
(Aeschylus, Persians, 570)*

What is the price of peace?
The world has been trapped in the exception
Crippled by Putin's threats
Forgetting that the rights of people to live
In freedom and in peace

Do not depend on whether they are armed
Or the scale of their armaments
There is no contract to abide by
A silent contract that affronts human life and dignity
And permits careless chanting 'Long Live Death'
Humanity is groaning!

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stronger and add up.*

They are clearer now, more determined! Act now! Act to stop humanity's freefall!

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