

# FICTION1986

A NEW ANTHOLOGY OF INNOVATIVE WRITING

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OPUS 5, A COMEDY  
*Krzysztof Ostaszewski*

There were flowers in the garden, tulips, lilies, pansies and others. Each of them knew its place well and was happy with the situation as it was.

One day a rose bloomed in the garden. She was beautiful. Yet other flowers did not notice her beauty. They were disturbed by her unusual behavior, especially by a lack of respect for common customs. No one ever bloomed the way she did, no one ever looked the way she did. And it appeared as if she didn't care whether the flowers were shocked at her behavior or not. She was just smiling upon everyone and telling all the neighbors her funny stories.

The flowers judged the rose severely. She was sentenced to death. She was cut, then put in a vase. There she died.

Translated by the author.  
Poznan, March 4, 1979

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OPUS 53, A COMEDY

The little creature's occupation is rather unusual, none of his friends even suspects him of such activities. He manages quite well, though he must be completely on his own when he decides to continue his work (his day-to-day job is also his creative work, but we don't want these words interpreted ambiguously). The little creature has grown quite accustomed to being alone, though the need to be constantly on the alert, to avoid people's probing glances, has added to his problems and anxieties somewhat. No one must know what the little creature does between nine in the morning and five in the afternoon. At the same time, all should assume that he has some sort of normal job. The little creature gets up at eight o'clock, washes, and quickly eats breakfast. Then he puts on his green uniform (because of it, he must stealthily sneak down-stairs, but that is not so difficult since he is so small). He always sets out for work full of enthusiasm (this fact will be explained later on in the story, at least apparently, I repeat). He hides somewhere in the green of the city lawns (he is small and in uniform, so no one can see him), he looks for four-leaf clovers. He tears one leaf from each of these. Occasionally, he finds five-leaf clovers—from these he tears two leaves. He works by the sweat of his brow.

Each month he appears before his superior (sometime around payday, between the thirtieth and thirty-first). It is a difficult moment. He then receives payment for his labours, modest, but sufficient for his needs (if they in fact exist). But if it should happen that he overlooked a four-leaf clover and it has been discovered by someone else (employed in a different

department) a severe penalty awaits him. His salary, not to mention bonuses, is withheld.

We need not add that all instances of discovery of four-leaf clovers (by anyone) are Duly Reported to the little creature's superior.

The little creature tries to justify himself, saying that the four-leaf clover found by this person need not bring him good luck at all, especially in such cases when the person does not believe in its significance, but these explanations do not help, the regulations do not make concessions for unconscientious workers.

And so the little creature is always very happy when he finds a four-leaf clover. Then he knows that fate has smiled on him, that the threat of any penalty has been momentarily deferred. But in order to be truly happy, he would have to find all the four-leaf clovers in the world.

Translated by Wojtek Stelmaszynski.  
Lodz, October 10, 1977

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OPUS 7, A COMEDY

A man walked a long way, such a long way that he didn't even know where he was going. But he did know he wasn't walking alone, that all men were walking with him, regardless of race, religion or political conviction. They were holding each other's hands, in this way they weren't abandoned by each other—this gave them strength. Our man also felt that in his roaming he was not alone.

And then one day he noticed that his left hand was touching his right. He was holding his own hand. He was terrified. It seemed to him that he was totally lost in this vast world.

But even if he had lost all the other people, he had found himself.

Translated by Wojtek Stelmaszynski.  
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