

Contents

Some historical background 1

A lone human voice 6

The author interviews herself on missing history
and why Chernobyl calls our view of the world
into question 24

1

Land of the Dead 35

Monologue on why people remember 35

Monologue on how we can talk with both the
living and the dead 37

Monologue on a whole life written on a door 44

Monologue of a village on how they call the souls
from heaven to weep and eat with them 46

Monologue on how happy a chicken would be to
find a worm. And what is bubbling in the pot
is also not forever 60

Monologue on a song without words 64

Three monologues on ancient fear, and on why one
man stayed silent while the women spoke 65

Monologue on how man is crafty only in evil, but
simple and open in his words of love 73

The Soldiers' Choir 76

2

The Crown of Creation 94

Monologue on the old prophecies 94

Contents

- Monologue on a moonscape 97
- Monologue of a witness who had toothache when
he saw Christ fall and cry out 99
- Three monologues on the 'walking ashes' and the
'talking dust' 105
- Monologue on how we can't live without
Tolstoy and Chekhov 113
- Monologue on what St Francis preached to the
birds 118
- Monologue without a title: a scream 127
- Monologue in two voices: male and female 128
- Monologue on how some completely unknown
thing can worm its way into you 136
- Monologue on Cartesian philosophy and on eating
a radioactive sandwich with someone so as not
to be ashamed 143
- Monologue on our having long ago come down
from the trees but not yet having come up with a
way of making them grow into wheels 157
- Monologue by a capped well 163
- Monologue about longing for a role and a
narrative 171
- The Folk Choir* 180
- 3
- Admiring Disaster* 191
- Monologue on something we did not know: death
can look so pretty 191
- Monologue on how easy it is to return to dust 194
- Monologue on the symbols and secrets of a great
country 200
- Monologue on the fact that terrible things in life
happen unspectacularly and naturally 203
- Monologue on the observation that a Russian
always wants to believe in something 209

- Monologue about how defenceless a small life is in
a time of greatness 213
- Monologue on physics, with which we were all
once in love 217
- Monologue on something more remote than
Kolyma, Auschwitz and the Holocaust 222
- Monologue on freedom and the wish to die an
ordinary death 226
- Monologue on a freak who is going to be loved
anyway 231
- Monologue on the need to add something to
everyday life in order to understand it 233
- Monologue on a mute soldier 238
- Monologue on the eternal, accursed questions:
'What is to be done?' and 'Who is to blame?' 243
- Monologue of a defender of Soviet power 248
- Monologue on how two angels took little
Olenka 250
- Monologue on the unaccountable power of one
person over another 255
- Monologue on sacrificial victims and priests 264
- The Children's Choir* 272
- A lone human voice 281
- In place of an epilogue 293