

Paik, kus kohtuvad nemad

Mõnes kohtumispaigas võib leiduda pehmeid tugitoole, aga seal neid küll ei ole. On vaid kännujuurikad, aga nendel ei istu keegi peale liblikate ja lindude. Ei ole ka ajakirju või värskeid ajalehti madalatel läikivatel laudadel. Ausalt öeldes pole seal laudugi.

Kui ei ole laudu, pole ka limonaadipudeleid ega mahlakruuse. Janu saab aga kustutada kastepiiskade ja kraaviveega. Viimast võid juua nii palju kui tahad. Laskud kraavi äärde käpuli, paned näo voolavasse vette ja jood, nii nagu nemad joovad. Sealtkandi kraavide vesi on puhas ja maitseb metsa järele.

Kuid muusika? Ühes kohtumispaigas võiks ju mängida ka vaikne muusika. Ta mängibki, kui hoolega kuulata. Need on ritssikad, kes saevad oma mahedaid viiuleid ning tuul, kes hõõrub kaht teineteise najale vajunud mändi vastamisi, justkui kontrabassi kõige peenemat keelt vingutades.

Valgust võib olla seal kottpimedusest ereda päikese ning täiskuu küllusliku särani. Sõltub taevakehadest ja ilmast – kas on



parajasti pilves või ei ole. Oma väikese osa võivad lisada maised tähed - jaanimardikate haprad lambid.

See paik pole justkui kohtumispaiga moodigi, ometi on ta seda, mitte küll meie, inimeste, vaid nende, huntide jaoks.

Varasügisel, kui kevadel sündinud hundikutsikad on piisavalt tugevaks sirgunud, tutvustavad vanemad neile kodukandi piire ja kulgemisradu. Sumedad vananaistesuve ööd, paras aeg veidi laiemalt ringi vaadata.

Hundivanematel on aga peale poegade koolitamise veel asju ajada. Toidulaud tuleb täita. Saak tuleb leida ja tabada. Kutsikad oskavad juba hiiri püüda, kuid põdramurdmiseks pole nad veel poole aasta vanuselt küpsed. Kuniks vanemad peavad soo peal jahti, ootavad kutsikad neid paigas, mida hüütaksegi Kohtumispaigaks.

Kohtumispaik on paras võserikuala, kust mets kunagi maha raiutud, äärtes vett täis kraavid – huntidele sai paik meeldib, leidub avarust, leidub peiduurkaid.

Üksteisega peavad hundid sidet ulgudes. Öeldakse, et inimene, kes on korra hundi ulgu kuulnud, mäletab seda häält kogu elu.

Isahundi võimas bass: «Oooo!»

Emahundi pisut kõrgem hääl: «Uuuu!»

Vastuseks kutsikate klähviv kontsert: «Me oleme siin!»

Inimesedki hüüavad ja kutsuvad vahel teineteist, meie hingki võib kisendada igatsusest teise inimese järele.

Küllap võivad hundidki uluda igatsusest üksteise järele, Tavaliselt, siis kui kõik on korras, vastab ühele hundile ikka teine hunt. Kutsikad vastavad, kui vanemad neid hüüavad.

Mis siis saab, kui inimene ulub metsas hundi moodi?

Kohtumispaiga lähedusse ilmus sügiseti üks mees. Kõhetu,

sihvakas kuju, jalas kummikud, seljas roheline vihmakuub, kõndis ta õhtupimeduses vaikselt mööda Kohtumispaiga äärseid kraaviservi. Mees teadis, et hundid seda paika armastavad, seda teadmist pidas ta aga teiste inimeste ees saladuses.

Kui Kohtumispaiga kohal hakkasid vilkuma tähed, huikas mees hundi moodi: „Ooooooooo!“

Mõnikord juhtus, et hundid vastasid talle.

Ühel augustilõpu ööl, kui mees Kohtumispaigal taas hunte kutsus, sai ta vastuse ühelt isahundilt.

Mees kutsus hunti uesti, ja hunt vastas jälle ilusa bassihäälega: „Uuuuuu!“. Seejärel vastas mehele juba terve kari.

Mees ulgus ja hundid ulgusid kohe vastu. See oli vast kontsert.

Juba hüüdis isahunt ise meest, juba palju lähemalt kui enne.

Mees enam ei vastanud, lihtsalt seisik kottpimeduses.

Ei läinud palju aega, kui ta kuulis rohu sahinat, ähkimist.

Siis oli isahunt kohal, kuue-seitsme meetri kaugusel, teisel pool kraavi. Nii nad vastakuti seisid. Üks, kaks, kolm, neli, viis sekundit. Siis tegi vägeva hüppe ja kadus kuuskede vahelle.

Mees istus kraavi maha, kui oli end kogunud, proovis uesti ulguda.

Ja taas vastasid hundid, üksikult ja kooris, kaks-kolm-neli-viis laulu..

„Nad teavad, kes ma olen. Nad teavad, et olen inimene, kuid kutsuvad mind ise,“ pomises mees õnnelikult. „Nad tahavad minuga suhelda, kuidagi teisiti ei saa seda seletada.“

See oli erakordne öö.

Kohtumispaigad, nii hästi kui neid saladuses ka ei peeta, ei ole igaveseks paika pandud. Millelipärast hundid enam sel kraavivulina ja ritsikamuusikaga Kohtumispaigal enam ei liigu. Mees

käib aga ikka seal oma hiilival sammul ning pimeduse tulles kutsub hunte.

Ta loodab ehk, et kordub erakordne öö, mil tundus, et inimese ja hundi kahekõne oli võimalik.

Kuid hundid ei vasta enam mehele, ei kutsikad ega hundivane-mad. Nad kohtuvad ilmselt kusagil mujal. Kus?

Võib-olla satub mees taas kunagi nende jälgdedele.

Seniks on aga hea mõelda, et hundid on olemas. Kusagil on nad kindlasti olemas, ka sel hetkel praegu.



The Place Where They Meet

Some meeting places may be furnished with soft armchairs, but there there are none. Only stump roots where nobody sits except for butterflies and birds. There are no magazines or latest newspapers on low and shining tables. To tell you the truth, there are even no tables.

If there are no tables, there are no lemonade bottles or juice mugs either. Thirst can be quenched with dewdrops or ditchwater. The latter you could drink at your heart's lust. You get down on all fours by the edge of ditch, put your face into the flowing water and drink the way they do. The ditchwater of these tracts is clean and has a taste of forest.

What about music? In a meeting place it would be nice to hear soft music playing. It is playing, if you listen carefully. These are grasshoppers who are scraping on their gentle fiddles, and the wind which is rubbing two pines together that have leaned against each other, as if plucking the thinnest string of a double bass.

The light could range from pitchdarkness to blinding sunshine and the plentiful shine of a full moon. Depending on the heavenly bodies and the weather – whether it's overcast or not. The earthly stars may add their modest share – the fragile lamps of fireflies.

This site doesn't seem like a meeting place, although it is, not for us, the humans, but for them, the wolves.

In early autumn when the spring pups have grown strong enough, their parents introduce them to the boundaries of their home tracts and to their runways. In the tender nights of Indian summer, it's the perfect time for taking a wider look around.

But the wolf parents need to take care of some business in addition to teaching the young. The food must be supplied. The prey must be found and caught. The wolf pups can already catch mice, but at half a year old they are not mature enough to kill an elk. While the parents are hunting in the bog, the pups are waiting for them in the spot called the Meeting Place.

The Meeting Place is nothing more than a brushwood where the forest has once been felled and which is surrounded by ditches full of water – the wolves like this place, there is expanse, there are good hiding places.

Wolves communicate with each other by howling. It is said that a human who has heard a wolf's howl once, will remember the call for the rest of his life.

The mighty bass of the male wolf: „Hooooow!“

The slightly higher call of the female wolf: „Huuuuuw!“

The concert of the yelping pups in response: „We are here!“

People, too, may shout and call each other sometimes, our soul may also scream, yearning for the other one.

Wolves too, I guess, may howl, yearning for each other. Usually,

when everything is all right, another wolf replies to the first one. The pups answer when the parents call them.

What happens if a human howls like a wolf in the forest?

When autumn came, a man appeared in the vicinity of the Meeting Place. Tall and lanky, wearing wellies and a green mackintosh, he walked quietly under the shadow of the night along the ditchbanks surrounding the Meeting Place.

The man knew that the wolves loved this place, but he kept it a secret from other people.

When the stars started twinkling over the Meeting Place, the man howled like a wolf: „Hooooooooowl!“

It sometimes happened that the wolves answered him.

One night in the end of autumn when the man was once more calling the wolves in the Meeting Place, a male wolf answered him.

The man called the wolf again, and the wolf replied again in a beautiful bass: „Hooooooooowl!“ After that the whole pack responded to the man.

The man howled and the wolves at once howled back. What an incredible concert that was!

Now the male wolf itself called the man, much closer than before.

The man didn't reply, simply stood still in the pitchdarkness.

It wasn't long before the man heard the rustling of grass and panting.

Then the male wolf was there, at six-seven metres, right over the ditch. And so they stood opposite each other. One, two, three, four, five seconds. Then it made a huge leap and disappeared in between the spruces.

The man sat down in the ditch and after he had collected



himself, tried to howl once more. And again the wolves answered, singly and in chorus, two-three-four-five songs.

„They know where I am. They know I'm a human, but they call me nevertheless,“ the man muttered happily. „They want to communicate with me, I can't explain it otherwise.“

This was an incredible night.

The Meeting Places, no matter how well kept in secret, haven't been set for ever. Heaven knows why, but wolves no longer move in the Meeting Place with all its rippling ditch water and grasshopper music. But the man still moves there around in a sneaking step and starts calling for the wolves as darkness falls.

Perhaps he hopes the incredible night to recur when it seemed to him that a dialogue between a human and a wolf was possible.

However, no wolves, no pups or wolf parents, any longer reply to the man.

Most probably they meet somewhere else. But where?

Perhaps the man will track them down one day.

Until then it's good to think that the wolves are still there. They are surely somewhere close, even at the present moment.