

M A R I N A A B R A M O V I Ć

100 PISAMA / 100 LETTERS
1965 - 1979

ALL ABOUT SENDING AND RECEIVING LETTERS

Since I was very young, until my early thirties, I had serious problems in opening and reading any letters I received. Letters would stay on my table for weeks before I found the courage to open them, and during this time my sense of guilt would grow and grow. Most of the time, when I finally opened the letters, it was too late to answer them and my sense of guilt was worse than ever.

I kept every single letter, from the first notes received from my mother, in 1965, up to the time I left Belgrade for ever in 1979. I decided to chronologically write down the first sentence from all of these letters, without noting the name of the senders. When finished, I was astonished to see how it was possible to trace all my life just by reading the text created by all these first lines.

Later I heard that Marcel Duchamp, on receiving a letter, opened, answered, and immediately burnt the letter he'd received.

Jean Tinguely never opened or answered any letter, and every christmas he made a ritual of burning unopened envelopes, which sometimes included important information and even checks.

M. A.

onestar press



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M A R I N A A B R A M O V I Ć

I O O P I S A M A / I O O L E T T E R S

1965 - 1979

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Dear Sweetie,

There is yoghurt, milk, cheese, butter and eggs
in the fridge and there is a roll on the table.

Draga Devojčice,

U frižideru imaš jogurt, mleko, sir, puter i
jaja, a na stolu zemičku.

Dear Marina,

We received your letter, I can tell you
that you keep surprising us more and more.

Draga Marina,

Primili smo tvoje pismo, i mogu ti reći da
nas sve više iznenadjuješ.

Dear Marina,

I haven't got time to tell you how your picture got a beautiful frame.

Draga marina,

Nisam stigla da ti kažem kako je tvoja slika dobila prekrasan ram.

Honey,

What you asked me in your letter made me sit down and write immediately, I mean your longing for the wool that I have been looking for these days.

Draga moja Devojčice,

Vapaj tvoje karte je učinio da sednem i pišem odmah, zapravo vapaj upućen vuni za kojom ja tragam sve ove dane.

Dear Marina,

By regularly responding to your silences
(at first gleefully) I have made a complete mess.

Draga Marina,

Odgovarajući redom na tvoja ćutanja /upočetku
ozareno/ napravio sam potpunu zbrku.

Dear Marina,

I hope you know the address of your mother.

Draga Marina,

Nadam se da adresu svoje majke znaš.

My dear Marina,

I hope you have arrived safe and sound
to your native place.

Draga moja Marina,

Nadam se da si živa i zdrava stigla do svoga
radnoga mesta.

Dear Marina,

I regret that I was obliged to call the
police to trace you.

Draga Marina,

Žalim što sam morala preko policije da te
tražim.

Dear Comrade,

In spite of several announcements, you have so far not responded to our invitation to give at least one of your works for the lottery.

Poštovana Drugarice,

I pored nekoliko obaveštenja, do sada se niste odazvali pozivu grupe da ustupite barem jedan svoj rad za lutriju.

Dear Marina,

Grandma is looking forward to your arrival, you probably have money too.

Draga Marina,

Baka se raduje da ti dodješ, a sigurno imaš i para.

Miss !

(God forbid that you become a Mrs. on the account of my friend.

I have no habits of communicating with ladies).

Through letters, verbally or sexually.

Gospodjice !

/ Nedaj bože da postanete gospodja, na račun moga prijatelja /

Ja nemam običaj da opštım sa damama ni pismeno, ni usmeno, ni polno.

I am delivering a baby now and as usual I
don't know what to write to you.

SADA se poradjam, i kao uvek neznam šta da ti
pišem.

My dear Marina,

I am sending this letter to Groznjan because I believe that you have arrived there already, as has your brother Velimir.

Draga moja Marina,

Pišem ti u Grožnjan, jer verujem da si ti već tamo, a možda i tvoj brat Velimir.

Dear Marina,

Listen to these unimportant things and
respond to me by freightmail.

Draga Marina,

Slušaj ove nevažne stvari i odgovori mi teretnom
poštom.

Dear Marina,

I am writing to you from Budapest.

Draga Marina,

Javljam ti se iz Budimpešte.

Another Sunday afternoon, I am bored to hell.

Moje nedeljno popodne, neznam šta ću sa sobom ?

My Dear Marina,

If you could only put yourself in my
situation a little bit.

Draga moja Marina,

Kada bi samo mogla da se staviš malo u moju
situaciju.

Dear Marina,

I have received your letter but I have no
idea how to respond.

Draga Marina,

Primila sam tvoje pismo, a šta da ti odgovorim neznam
ni sama.

Dear Marina,

I have got to tell you something quickly.

Draga Marina,

Moram nešto na brzinu da ti ispričam.

Dear Marina,

They have dragged me to Zlatibor.

Draga Marina,

Odvukoše me na Zlatibor.

Dear Marina,

I cannot write to you right now, the musicians won't let me concentrate.

Draga Marina,

Sad ne mogu da ti pišem, ovi muzičari su me poremetili.

Dear Marina,

I have arrived to England.

Draga Marina,

Stigla sam u Englesku.

Dear Marina,

That's life.

Draga Marina,

Takav je život.

I no longer have an opinion about anything.

Više nemam mišljenja ni o čemu.

My dear little Marina,

We have travelled rather well but until
today there is no snow.

Draga Marinice,

Putovali smo dosta dobro, snega ni do danas nije
bilo.

Respected Comrade,

We have postponed the date for the opening
of the May exhibition.

Poštovana Drugarice,

Termin za otvaranje majske izložbe je odložen.

Well,

When I heard that you were alive I felt relieved and I was particularly glad to hear that you have had your tooth pulled out.

E pa lepo,

Kada sam čuo da ste živi, mnogo mi je lakše, a naročito me je obradovala vest da ste zub izvadili.

Respected Comrade,

Please find enclosed more invitations for the opening of the May exhibition.

Poštovana Drugarice,

Šaljemo Vam više pozivnica za otvaranje Majske izložbe.

After having seen these magnificent pictures, I had to see the ones over there as well.

Morao sam da posle ovih veličanstvenih slika vidim i one slike tamo.

How are you ?

Don't be surprised by a letter written with
a red pen.

Kako ste ?

I nek ne bude ti strano pismo pisano crvenom
olovkom.

Hey Marina!

I have realized today that the time has finally came for me to get going.

Marina, hej!

Danas sam se setio da je konačno došlo vreme da krenem.

Dear Marina,

As I have already informed you, here I am
in Milan.

Draga Marina,

Kao što sam ti pričala, evo me u Milanu.

I have had enough of your non-writing !

E, pa dosta je tog nepisanja !

Ma chere Marina,

I wanted to write this letter for a
long time.

Ma chere Marina,

Dugo sam se spremao da napišem ovo pismo.

As you can see, I don't know what I am
doing by putting a letter into another letter
and neither has a stamp.

Kao što vidiš neznam šta radim, pismo u pismu, a ni
na jednom marka.

Dear Marina,

I am having a great time in Bled.

Draga Marina,

Sada se provodim na Bledu.

God only knows why you don't write to me.

Bog zna sam zašto mi ne pišeš ?

Dear Marina,

Looks like you travelled a lot !

Draga Marina,

Ti si se izgleda baš naputovala !

Send the play to Pittsburgh if you have possibilities.

Ako si u mogućnosti pošalji dramu u Pitsburg.

Dear Marina,

We are doing fine, everything is fine.

Draga Marina,

Ovde je dobro, sve je dobro.

Dear Marina,

I have gone far beyond my time.

Draga Marina,

Daleko sam odmakao ispred svoga vremena.

Dear Marina,

Due to the cruelty of my mother and
despite my best will I could not get to Poreca.

Draga Marina,

Ja nisam mogao zbog okrutnosti svoje majke, ni
sa najboljom voljom da stignem do Poreča.

To Sekica,

A serious warning: don't you dare come and disturb us.

Za Sekicu,

Ozbiljno upozorenje: Nemoj slučajno dolaziti da nas uznemiravaš.

Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina,
Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina.

Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina,
Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina, Marina.

Marina,

Here, I brought you I6500 dinars.

Marina ,

Evo doneo sam ti I6500 dinara.

Dear Marina,

I feel like telling you about something I understood.

Draga Marina,

Imam potrebu da ti govorim o nečemu što sam shvatio.

Dear Marina,

What a spirit, what beauty of the old masters.

Draga Marina,

Kakav duh, kakva lepota starh majstora.

Is this the present address of Marina ?

Da li je to sadašnja adresa Marine ?

My dear Marina,

I have arrived to Valbadone, and I am getting ready to come to you, to see my hard working and hopefully clever little girl.

Draga moja Marina,

Stigla sam u Valbadone, i već se spremam da dodjem do tebe, da vidim svoju vrednu devojčicu a nadam se i pametnu.

Comrade Abramović,

The executory decree of the first municipal court of
Belgrade no 4802/69 of 1965 condemns you to pay the fine.

Drugarice Abramović,

Pravosnažnim i izvršnim platnim nalogom prvog
Opštinskog suda u Beogradu pl. br. 4802/69 od 1965
godine, obavezni ste da platite kaznu.

Marinice,

I will never forgive you for not wanting
to travel with me by bus.

Marinice,

A ono što nisi htela da ideš samnom autobusom,
to ti nikada neću zaboraviti.

Dear Marina,

We will come to your place after the 27th of July.

Draga Marina,

Doći ćemo kod tebe posle 27.VII. ovog meseca.

Dear Marina,

Writing letters is a real ritual over here.

Draga Marina,

Pisanje pisama je ovde pravi ritual.

Dear Marinica,

I am writing fast in order for you to get
my letter fast.

Draga Marinice,

Brzo ti pišem da ti brzo stigne.

Dear Marina,

I beg you to bring your brother to reason and to tell him that school is necessary, as he has had another crazy spell.

Draga Marina,

Molim te da svoga brata urazumiš i da mu kažeš da mu je škola neophodna, jer su ga opet nemoguće ludosti spopale.

Dear Marina,

Drop idiots, plots, gossips and
rumors.

Draga Marina,

Ostavi se tupoglavaca i spletaka, tračeva i
izmišljotina.

Dear Marina,

Today is Saturday.

Draga Marina,

Danas je Subota.

Dear Marina,

The Poreč business has completely fallen through.

Draga Marina,

Stvar sa Porečom je kompletno propala.

Dear Marina,

Breeding worms.

Draga Marina,

Ovde se crvi legu.

Marina,

I am going to tell you something
really serious.

Marina,

Rećiću ti nešto vrlo ozbiljno:

Dear Marina,

Everything will be ready soon and then we
will be off to America.

Draga Marina,

Sve će biti uskoro gotovo, i onda idemo za
Ameriku.

I was not sure about the exact address, take
this parcel urgently !

Nisam znao tačnu adresu, ovaj paket odnesi hitno !

Dear Marina,

It has been raining for three days, we
have been sitting and writing letters.

Draga Marina,

Evo već treći dan kiša pada, a mi sedimo i
pišemo pisma.

Dear Marina,

Many thanks to your mother for having
given you your name.

Draga Marina,

Hvala tvojoj majci što ti je dala to ime.

Dear Marina,

I will be brief and clear.

Draga Marina,

Biću kratak i utoliko jasniji.

God!

I no longer realize what's going on, I cannot find time to write you, everything is like in a dream, I don't understand a thing.

Bože !

Ne znam više ništa, ne mogu da stignem da ti se javim, sve je kao san, ne mogu ništa da shvatim.

Dear Marina,

Here I am in Paris again, it has not changed much since two months ago.

Draga Marina,

Evo me ponovo u Parizu, koji se za ova dva meseca nije mnogo izmenio.

Dear Marina,

Here we are in Nis.

Draga Marina,

Evo nas u Nišu.

My beautiful little Marina,

I love you so much and it will never end.

Najlepša Marinice,

Volim te mnogo, i to neće nikada prestati.

Comrade Abramović,

You need to bring your 3 works by thursday
25/07 at the latest so that they can be
accepted.

Drugarice Abramović,

Potrebno je najkasnije do četvrtka /25.VII./
donesete svoja tri rada na žiriranje.

Respected Comrade,

We kindly ask you to make it possible for us
to re-record your birds for our needs.

Poštovana Drugarice,

Molimo Vas da nam za naše potrebe omogućite
presnimavanje vaših ptica.

Dear Marina,

Surprisingly and unexpectedly I am coming to
Belgrade.

Draga Marina,

Neočekivano i za samu sebe dolazim u Beograd.

I have just received your third letter where you say you never received any of my four letters; I don't know how to explain that.

Sada sam baš dobio tvoje treće pismo, iz kog vidim da nisi dobila moja prošla četiri pisma, neznam kako to da objasnim ?

My little girl !

It's me in the letter.

Devojčice !

Evo mene u pismu.

Dear Marina,

I have received your letter which
astounded and moved me.

Draga Marina,

Primila sam tvoje pismo, koje me je zapanjilo i
potreslo.

My dear little girl,

I did put your photo on the wall, I
feel fine, I love you.

Draga moja Devojčice,

Stavio sam tvoju fotografiju na zid, lepo mi je
volim te.

I need no explanations.

Ne tražim objašnjenje .

Dear Marina,

Your silence has been going on for almost a year.

Draga Marina,

Skoro je prošla jedna godina od kako traje tvoje ćutanje.

Dear Marina,

I had no time to see you and thank you for
your warm hospitality.

Draga Marina,

Nisam te stigla videti da ti zahvalim na toplom
gostoprimstvu.

Dear Marina,

How much can a man give to another man, and
how much can a man take away from another man?

Draga Marina,

Koliko čovek čoveku može dati i koliko čovek
čoveku može oduzeti?

Dear Marina,

We have been here for ten days now, we
have been bowling and talking.

Draga Marina,

Evo već deset dana kako smo ovde, kuglamo se i
pričamo.

Comrade Marina Abramović,

We remind you one more time that you have not accomplished your obligations towards the group.

Drugarice Marina Abramović,

Još jednom Vas podsećamo da niste izvršili obavezu prema grupi.

Everything is fine now. We have heard from you
and that is quite enough.

Dobro je, najzad ste se javili, sasvim je dovoljno.

Dear Marina,

I felt a tremendous need to write you.

Draga Marina,

Osetio sam veliku potrebu da ti pišem.

My dear Marina and Velimir,

I am writing to both of you since I have only one envelope at home.

Draga moja Marina i Velimire,

Pišem vam zajedno, jer se više nije našlo koverata u kući.

What is it you want? Why are you writing to me?

Šta ti treba, zašto mi pišeš ?

What can I write to you?

My arrival provoked some noise and scolding.

Šta mogu da ti napišem ?

Došao sam uz malo buke i prekorevanja.

Dear Marina,

To start with, here is a lovely
quotation from Sherlock Holmes !

Draga Marina,

Prvo, jedan divan citat iz Šerloka Holmsa !

My dear little girl,

I have an ideal proposal for you. Do not
by any means buy the house in Groznjam for the
moment.

Draga moja Devojčice,

Imam za tebe idealan predlog, sa sada nipošto
ne kupuj tu kuću u Grožnjanu.

Dear Marina,

We are writing to you as we are on the
vaporetto "Arrow".

Draga Marina,

Javljam ti se dok plovimo vaporetom "strela".

Marina my dear,

My nostalgic persistence is driving
me crazy.

Marina moja,

Moja nostalgična upornost me do ludila dovodi.

Listen !

I have no more strenght to look for you
or not to look for you.

Slušaj !

Nemam više snage da te tražim i da te ne tražim.

Who are you to give orders to me ?

Šta imaš ti meni da naredjuješ ?

Hello my friends,

By buying this postcard I supported the
construction of this community building in Pristina.

Zdravo Drugarice,

Kupovinom ove razglednice sam potpomogao izgradnju
doma u Prištini.

I have a tiny little surprise for you.

Imam za tebe jedno sasvim malo, malecno iznenadjenje.

Well,

Send me an empty envelope with your address.

Pa dobro,

Pošalji mi jednu praznu kovertu sa adresom.

Dear Marina,

I dropped by chance at your place the other day and I found out that you were not longer there.

Draga Marina,

Slučajno svratih kod tebe pre neki dan i saznaoh da više nisi tu.

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