

**Poetry by Daniil Kharms**

**used in the performance *Strange People Stand Very Strangely* by Sansusi  
in the festival BALTIC TAKE OVER**

**1.**

On this page  
Strange birds  
Fly strangely!  
Look:  
Strange people  
Are standing strangely,  
Strange palm trees  
Grow here. And a strange sun  
Rises over the world still,  
And the moon shines strangely,  
We will smile  
And say: this land  
Is made from paper.

*Translated by Andrejs Viksna*

**2.**

Ivan Ivanych Samovar-  
A pot-bellied samovar,  
A three-bucket samovar.  
There inside him boiled water,  
Puffed with steam that boiling water,  
In the fury boiling water  
Into cups pour'd through the tap,  
Through the hole, then the tap,  
And to cups right through the tap.  
Early in the morning came,  
To the samovar he came,  
Early Uncle Petya came.  
Uncle Petya came and says,  
"Give me some to drink", he says,  
"I'll drink some tea!", he says.  
To the samovar then came,  
Our auntie Katya came,  
With a glassy glass she came.  
Auntie Katya came and says,  
"I, of course," she came and says,  
"Will have some to drink," she says.  
Then along grandfather came,  
Very very old he came,

In his slippers grandpa came.  
He yawned widely and he says,  
"I should drink perhaps..." he says,  
"Drink perhaps some tea," he says.  
Then along grandmother came,  
Very very old she came,  
Even with a cane she came.  
After having thought she says,  
"Well, a drink of tea...", she says,  
"Well, perhaps some tea..." she says.  
Suddenly, the girl ran up,  
To the samovar ran up,  
This granddaughter she ran up.  
"Pour me, pour me" then she says,  
"A full cup of tea," she says,  
"For me, make it sweet," she says.  
Then the dog Zhuchka she ran up,  
With the cat Murka she ran up,  
To the samovar ran up,  
For to get some tea with milk,  
Boiling water with some milk,  
All that with some boiling milk.  
Suddenly Seryozha came,  
Sleepy and unwashed he came,  
After everyone he came.  
"Give me, give me" then he says,  
"A large cup of tea," he says,  
"Largest possible," he says.  
And they pushed it, and they pulled it  
And they twisted it about,  
But in spite of all this effort  
Only steam ever came out.  
And they tipped it, tipped it, tipped it,  
like commode with a spout,  
Out of it only came  
Little droplets dripping out.  
Samovar Ivan Ivanych!  
On the table 'Van Ivanych!  
Golden shiny 'Van Ivanych  
Boiling water he gives not,  
To late-sleepers he gives not,  
To them slackers he gives not.

*Translated by Roman Turovsky*

### 3.

Liar

Did you know?  
Did you know?  
Did you know?  
Did you know?

Well, of course, you knew!  
Clearly you knew!  
Undoubtedly  
Undoubtedly  
You certainly knew!

No! No! No! No!  
We don't know anything  
Didn't hear anything  
Didn't hear, didn't see  
And we don't know. Anything!

— Did you know that D?  
Did you know that A?  
Did you know that D?  
Did you know that my dad had  
Forty sons.  
There were forty —  
Not twenty!  
Not thirty!  
My dad had forty hefty sons!

— Well! Well! Well! Well!  
It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie!  
Maybe twenty  
Or thirty  
Would be still possible  
However forty  
Exactly forty —  
That is impossible!

— Did you know that D?  
Did you know that O?  
Did you know that GS?  
Did you know that yapping dogs  
Have learned to fly?  
Just like birds —  
Not like animals  
Not like some fish —

But fly just like hawks!

— Well! Well! Well! Well!

It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie!

Maybe like animals

Or like fish

Would be still possible

However flying like hawks

Or like birds —

That is impossible!

— Did you know that S?

Did you know that K?

Did you know that Y?

Did you know that there will be

A wheel in the sky

Instead of the sun?

Shining like gold —

Not a plate

Or a pie —

But a huge shining wheel!

— Well! Well! Well! Well!

It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie!

Maybe a plate

Or a pie

Would be still possible

However a golden wheel —

That is impossible!

— Did you know that UN?

Did you know that DER?

Did you know that SEA?

Did you know that under the sea

Stands a guard with a gun?

And the guard is holding

(Not a rake, not a broom)

But a loaded gun in his arm!

— Well! Well! Well! Well!

It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie!

Maybe a rake

Or a broom

Would be still possible

However a loaded gun —

That is impossible!

— Did you know that NO?

Did you know that S?  
Did you know that E?  
That you can't  
Reach your nose  
Either with your hands  
Or your feet  
You can't drive  
To your nose  
You can't jump  
To your nose  
Either way  
You can't  
Reach your nose!

— Well! Well! Well! Well!  
It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie! It's a lie!  
Maybe driving  
Maybe jumping  
Would be impossible,  
But reaching your nose with hands —  
That is  
quite  
possible!

*Translated by Santa Remere*

**4.**

Small Boat

A boat sails on the river,  
It's floating from afar.  
The four leads a fragile boat,  
Brave very sailors are.

Their ears always stay alert.  
They tiny have long tails,  
They afraid of only cats,  
Of only cats, tomcats!

*Translated by Vladimir Viktorovich*

**5.**

The strange bearded man

A joyous ball!  
A celebration ball!

Loud  
Colourful  
Masquerade ball!  
Open for  
Schoolkids  
But not for toddlers.

Look, right at the door  
Kolya, Petya  
Are standing and trying to  
Get in:  
One is four but the other only  
Three years old.

- Let us in! - They ask.  
The doorman says - I won't!  
You have to grow up first  
For I'm not allowed.

Kolya, Petya go aside...  
Suddenly a strange comrade  
With a very long beard  
Walks up to the doorman.

- I'm here for the ball. Let me in.  
Where is the door? Show me!  
- Look, comrade, here is the door, -  
The doorman shows him where to go.  
The ball is rumbling and blasting,  
A chaos of movements,  
But the loudest of all  
Is the stomping of a strange bearded man.

All the dancers of the ball  
Come closer to take a look at him.  
And someone brings him a cold Eskimo  
On a plate.

The music dies down.  
And suddenly  
Everyone's yelling:  
- He has two pairs of hands!  
Look, look! That's too many!

Little by little  
Piece by piece  
The truth was revealed  
Kolya, Petya

All dressed up  
As a bearded man.  
That's all.

*Translated by Andrejs Viksna*

**6.**

Astronomer

We step into the lawn and from there we shout:  
— Astronomer! Astronomer! Astronomer!  
He stands on the porch with a telescope in his hands,  
With a telescope in his hands on the porch.  
And he looks in wonder back and forth,  
And he looks in wonder back and forth  
And he looks in wonder back.

We tell him to look! We tell him to look!  
We tell him to look in the telescope!  
His gaze casts a mysterious arc,  
He takes the telescope by the stand,  
And he looks in wonder back and forth,  
And he looks in wonder back and forth,  
And he looks in wonder back.

*Translated by Santa Remere*

**7.**

We are rushing to school today

The clock on the wall  
Rang eight times.  
I opened my eyes  
And woke up right away.  
I woke up —  
In an instant  
And put on my pants.  
I stretched myself —  
And in an instant  
I jumped in my boots!  
I grabbed my shirt,  
And put my hands in the sleeves,  
I put my head in the collar,  
But the head got stuck.  
I had finally put my shirt on  
And ran out in the street,

And a cap and a jacket  
I put on on the run  
A cap  
And a jacket  
I put on  
On the run,  
Because  
The day  
Today  
Is the  
Best  
Day  
In the year.  
Because  
The day that has come  
It is the best day in the year,  
Because  
I am today  
Running to school  
For the first time.  
I will enter school today  
Right in the school  
For the first time!  
I will enter —  
And the clock will ring  
The bell nine times.  
Hey, people, step aside!  
People, let us pass  
We are rushing to school

Right to the school  
Into the first class!

*Translated by Santa Remere*