



YOUR TIME WILL COME Cem Uçan

*Morde ratesden, Esur tinda serg!
Teslarom portog tis ugor anleter,
ferto tagan ugotahenc metoy-doscent zist.*

Norgunk!

UBOR-METENGA

—Oguz Atay

I have been frightened for a while. Of course, it is not the first time. From time to time in the past, I have been frightened. It can be said that I am anxious most of the time.

Living in constant fear...it started when I received the letter. When the craziness that was going on all around the city manifested itself on television screens and newspapers. I don't know how they found me. Why me? A person on his own...wakes up in the morning to go to work, only to return home. At least I used to! If only I could go outside again, I might be able to return.

How did it happen? This is always the question that comes to mind, isn't it? How did it happen, why me? If not you, then who should have been next? It seems this question is always going to be asked. Someone will ask. In our case, that 'someone' is me. Maybe I deserve to be in this position. I accept, I used to have some thoughts (mostly bad thoughts). Anything against the system...But I never did anything to put me into this position. They were impossible thoughts, only to be imagined by a handful of youngsters, who were trapped in life's dark corner. That's about it. Besides, who can ever know this? Only three people know at most. After Sinan went missing abroad, that only leaves two people. Is it possible? Why not? Maybe, they sent the same letters to them as well. By threatening and compelling them...If only I could phone, I would ask. But they are listening to everything. We cannot talk in codes anymore as in the past. It is no longer possible. Yes, it must have happened that way, they must have forced to tell, how else did they manage to find me?

It all started with the scripts on the wall. The scripts were written in spray paint on the entrance of the office block right at the end of the tunnel. At first nobody took it seriously. They dismissed it as the graffiti of drunks (I told them before, this is not a good sign, there is something behind this. They laughed!).

Another one was seen at Kadikoy Ferry Station, on the door of the waiting room. The same script...the dot of the exclamation mark is fire red. But on the morning of November 5, in the middle of Taksim Square, the specks of fear coming from the city's core burst into flames when the script appeared in giant letters on an old building at the beginning of Istiklal Street. *Your time will come!* Istanbul woke to a new fear that morning. Nobody had seen a thing. It was as if the

script came to be...By itself...In one night.

It has been three days, I suppose, since I found the letter...Three days since I have left the house. I don't want to do anything. I lie here, half awake, half asleep...Listening to the noises outside most of the time. It helps to pass the time. The noises coming from my apartment building sneak under my door...Noises that merge with the silence of the house...Filling the emptiness. The sound of footsteps going down the stairs hastily, the slam of the door, the sound of the doorbell, the voice of a kid shouting, the voice of the concierge, the sound of today's newspaper landing on top of yesterday's, the sound of the lift, the voices of men carrying heavy goods, the sound of the metal furniture scrapping the wall...

And also the things that I see...or used to see, when I used to get up, and draw my curtains and look out of the window, the things that I saw outside the window...Huge apartment buildings across the street...Chandeliers. Shining like the sun. In some places, the dimness of the fluorescent light looks as if they invite others to their houses. Now, isn't this a great exhibition? Aren't they the least bit afraid? The curtains are wide open. Sometimes a happy man, who is not bothered by the gaze of others, walks on the balcony. Lights a cigarette. Wearing only his underwear...Leaning on the balcony with both hands, he gazes at the neighbourhood. This is what I see behind the narrow gap between the curtains. They are not afraid. Of course, nobody has chosen them, nobody has placed any responsibility on their shoulders.

Since that morning, the mysterious gloomy scripts that were spreading across the city seemed to slowly enslave people. The fire red words were everywhere... It did not take long for others to follow once

the script emerged (I warned them... These are not good signs). Strange things began to happen one after another. There were floods of reports from all over the place. Police stations... Newspapers, television programs...

People... In the ferries, buses, roads, cafes, people were acting bizarrely. Normal people! Normal people that we see on the street every day and say hi to were acting as if they were going crazy. Sometimes alone, sometimes together. So, you ask, what happened? In a café in Bakirkoy, a man suddenly got naked in front everybody and shouted '*Your time will come!*' Then he threw himself towards the street and dived into the bazaar. The same day anxious TV newsreaders reported seventeen similar incidents in different locations across city. All of them at the same time...

Traffic queues on the bridges were more than 20km long. A group of people whose car windscreen was displaying the message '*Your time will come*' were insisting on paying the bridge toll fee in coins... Disobeying the commands of the officers. Everybody was daunted.

Of course, I understood when the letter came. We are facing serious trouble. In spite of everything, local officials remained silent. But not the media critics... Next day the newspapers carried pages of preventative measures. Columnists, TV commentators, the anxious crowd around the microphone... everybody had something to say, some advice to give. (But nobody dared mention the letters, which meant that not everyone dared turn on their lights and smoke a much needed cigarette on the balcony. Other people were afraid too.) The officials' mouths were sealed. Other cities announced precautionary measures to avoid similar outbreaks of disorder.

Until further notice, the bridges over the Bosphorus will be free. Necessary precautions are being taken for the safety of our citizens. For this matter...

I saw it on TV that day. People looked crazy. Quarrels, tussles...People going nude, shouting...In theatres and cinemas, people occupied the stage...The same news every hour. I turned the TV off because I couldn't face it anymore. I don't dare turn it on. The city looks as if everything is out of control. I wonder, who is behind all of this? Why are they doing all this? What do they want from me?

You are chosen!

You are given responsibility to serve your higher duty. Your duty is to create chaos in the subway all day long. If you don't accomplish this mission, you will bear the consequences.

We think you are smart enough to know that your every step is under surveillance.

That's why you are chosen.

Your time will come.

A white page, handwritten in ink. With neat and proper letters. Pushed under my door. It's still there now. Exactly as it was. *You are chosen*. When was the last time I was chosen for anything? Of course, at work! I was always the one for any job that others avoided. It seems they reach everywhere. Who are they? A network that reaches every corners of the city. An underground network... *Your every step is under surveillance*. Of course. How stupid I am! Who knows how long they have been after me?

Perhaps, they were after me when I met Arzu that day. They

probably said, 'What an idiot. Couldn't reveal his feelings to her.' Of course... They probably choose among a bunch of losers. From the ones who have nothing. From them they select the ones the world wouldn't miss. That's why I am not doing it...not leaving the house. And I will refuse to do it until the end. Let's see what will happen.

The doorbell. My doorbell. I wanted him to give up. But he insists on ringing. He destroyed the doorbell. A strong hand is now banging the door, with the ring on his finger. I approach. Here they come! *You will bear the consequences!* A tall man dressed in black. In his hands a large bag. Talking to himself. Weird creaking sounds...it must be his phone...I get closer to the door...Hold my breath, fearing he will hear me. He knows I am inside for sure. Who knows how long they have been following me! Arseholes! What kind of people are they?

Control he says. Perhaps, they are discussing whether to break in or not or maybe...waiting confirmation. *Understood?* Yes, these men have no mercy. So my time has come now. I should go to the kitchen and grab a knife or something. I can defend myself at least.

They are educated, though. The man scribbles something on a piece of paper and sticks it on my door. What are they doing? What a careless attitude! His steps are becoming distant. Slowly. Still saying something. His words are becoming longer and moving away. They are gone. I don't understand this. Who are these people? I am sure the voices outside are totally gone now.

I unlatch the lock on the door. And then the locks. I open the door only a little, just enough to let my hand through. I reach the newspaper, the one at the very top. The headline freezes my blood:

Your Time Will Come!

The new law on Individual Retirement Plans has prompted some

companies to use innovative, attention-seeking marketing techniques to expand their consumer base. Alternative Retirement Services (ARS) is one of the companies adopting these radical marketing strategies. The campaign of ARS, which started in Istanbul last week, has changed the weekly agenda. Company officials say there is more to come. Yalçın Uçur, advertising and marketing director of ARS, expressed his satisfaction with feedback on the first week of the campaign.

He also said that in the ARS campaign mainly employed guerrilla marketing techniques, declaring this to be a first for the Individual Retirement market. He added, 'We believed Turkish society was perfect for such a campaign due to its openness to change and surprise. We were spot on target. We anticipated that some smart individual activists, unaware of our advertisement campaign, would make protests, which we expected would strengthen the effectiveness of our campaign.

'I should mention that leaflets designed to resemble individual handwritten letters played a big part in this success. Well, the protest at the bridge was supposed to be carried out by a small group of people. But there was a much larger participation than anticipated...We apologize for any inconvenience we have caused so far to Istanbul.

'I should like to clear up one more issue for those who are curious about the painted walls. Under the social responsibility program, ARS has contributed to the restoration and cleaning of old buildings. All buildings carrying our advertisements are a part of this programme and were approved by the relevant local municipalities. Without their support, this campaign would not have been a success, so I should like

to thank the authorities once more.

‘We plan to roll out our advertising campaign to other cities as soon as possible. Maybe, we have already begun...’

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