

A close-up, profile view of a woman's face. She has dark hair, heavy eye makeup with shimmering eyeshadow, and is wearing large hoop earrings. She is holding a lit match in her mouth, with a bright flame. The background is solid black.

# CENSUS SEDUCTION

ONE CUP CHRONICLES SERIES

VLADIMIR ROSS

# Vladimir Ross

## Census Seduction

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### **Аннотация**

Thomas' glory days are over. He's been reduced to a drunk who lives a sad life with a miserable woman in a foreign country. Although surrounded by fine things, he craves a sense of freedom. He finds his chance when a woman comes by the house to conduct a nationwide census. His girlfriend is away, and Thomas is left alone with a beautiful young woman and an urge to feel liberation once again.

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# Census Seduction

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# Census Seduction

*Anti-materialist revolts are all the same  
The Marxist-Leninist thread will always break  
And after fighting for their causes with excitement  
The lower class returns to normal in the wake*

It was rare that a Monday morning did not attack Thomas, who was deserted on the ill-fated Islands of Misfortune, with a severe bout of the blues. He found himself torn by internal and external tensions, spontaneously at first, in a fit of hungover despair, but then they became orderly. This was in no way due to his growing courage, but because of his ingrained habits. Finally, carefully constructing counter-arguments in his defense, he proclaimed a note of protest against the evil clauses of his “marriage contract” and announced a change of power.

Then boldly, Aquinas sought out the dictatorial smirk, only to find at his bedside a piece of paper on which the matriarchal government had scribbled a list of instructions written in bold marker. Spewing caustic comments, the jailbird carelessly ran through the text, barely reading the words. He furiously crumpled the Dictator’s Bulletin and with the practiced technique of an NBA player, launched the paper ball through the open window. The angle made the shot difficult – only about three out of every ten hit their mark. Sometimes the paper bounced mockingly off

the wall, and he was forced to make a free throw. He'd seen worse: once an impromptu ball had fallen between the panes of the transom, and Thomas reverted from sports superstar to an ordinary laborer. Thus went his Mondays.

The beginning of this week was special. With a cough, Aquinas breathed in fumes and angrily gritted his teeth, recalling the final phase of last night's drinking episode. It had been halted for the most banal reason: the missus, disregarding his suffering, took away the unfinished bottle and sent him to bed under the armed escort of a hot iron. Thomas angrily tore the edict off the wall. In black and white it was reported that: "We," meaning Her Majesty – the one and only, "have gone to the supermarket."

"Fuck it all, this has dragged on long enough."

Furthermore, in large block letters she recommended that in order to avoid trouble, he had a two-hour period to fix the leaky faucet in the bathroom, put his appearance in order, and, in compliance with the census being conducted in the country, prepare for a decent meeting with an agent. Working on the vegetable garden was recommended after lunch. Going to work was graciously allowed to be postponed until tomorrow.

"Right. Bite me!" Thomas cleared his throat with a powerful "ahem!" and harshly evoked the "Marseillaise:"

"You are an infection, one shaved eyebrow

What are wearing, bitch, your blue beret!

And where are you going, hag, get your ass home now..."

His mood leveled. The census subjectively belonged to the

category of national holidays, and a criminal, unlike the common worker in the construction of the national economy, couldn't participate, so as not to pinch off of social benefits that are due to him. The revolt was grounded in reasonable motives.

“What, I didn't deserve it? Do I not deserve it, I ask?” He howled bitterly, practicing an explanatory scene. It turned out spectacularly.

Quickly, the crumpled bulletin flew toward the blue crack.

“Opa-ah-ah-oh-oh!” Thomas sighed as he beheld the brazen piece of paper which stuck squarely in the window crack and vindictively showed some of the psychological blackmail: “to fix... to meet... I'll be back soon...” “Oka-a-a-y.”

A resolution proclaiming it to be Independence Day was drafted on the fly and then unanimously adopted. The jailbird jumped into his ironed Sunday trousers, prepared by Sandals, hid the frivolous tattoo on his torso under the goat fur of his vest, and, lighting a cigarette, rose in front of the fridge like a modern day Robinson Crusoe.

His hopes were not realized. The serendipity of Friday inspired tremulous fear. The bar seemed empty. He zealously rummaged through a battery of empty bottles, but to no avail, Thomas felt shaken, but not defeated. Stung with doubt, he rushed into the cellar and from under the foot of a wooden rack, in a recess smeared with clay, he clawed from its sacred hiding place his emergency reserve – several liters of “Sotka” vodka. Remembering to cut some delicate pink stripes of smoked ham,

Aquinas returned to his room with a full set. In order to satisfy his thirst for revenge, he also took along the last jar of Lala's favorite peach compote.

All signs of depression blurred with his second glass. The soul relieved of stress begs to dance. Floating aromatic rings towards the ceiling, Thomas casually flicked the Samsung remote, found the MUZ-TV channel, and sent the writhing Eugenia Vlasova a kiss.

“Mwah!”

From his clouded, drunken state emerged a wave of self-indulgence. The first came in the form of a toast, a call for decisive action, to which only the deaf could not respond.

“For freedom! For Independence! For Democracy!”

The “water of life” flowed at an uncontrollable rate. The jailbird, swimming in the euphoria of his involvement in issues of national importance, watched the news. The shine from his greasy snack was fixed onto the ironic smile of the taxpayer who was more fortunate than the ones being discussed.

“Well, people, goddamn. Good for nothing. And if even one person came and said: ‘Thomas, tell me what to do...’ Simple! Deduct Lala from the budget – transfer the excess to vodka. The greater the gift, the greater the returns...”

He was prevented from finishing his paradoxical fiscal platform by the ringing of the doorbell.

“Spy...”

His sophisticated mind worked quickly and brilliantly.

Clamping a lid on the evidence, Aquinas swept the ashes off the table and poured the remnants of the compote into the toilet. The doorbell rang again, already impatient.

“Yes, yes, what’s with all the ringing?” He reined in his impatience, erected a semblance of a part on his head, and went into the hall.

The criminal immediately cursed his slowness and sluggishness. On the threshold was a stately businesswoman with a folder ready. The guest looked him over with a tolerant eye, and, not at all intimidated by the owner’s otherworldly good lucks, chuckled condescendingly.

“What is this? Some kind of... joke?” Her serious tone sobered Thomas up a little, and he, getting ahold of himself, went to the other extreme.

“What of it, sorceress?” he said sarcastically, squinting slyly.

“Civil servant,” the lady strictly corrected. “Census Service.” And, feeling that was enough of an introduction, she marched into the house uninvited.

Once inside, confidently puffing out her firm chest for review, she searched for a while for the perfect place to begin her important mission before explicitly stopping and choosing the kitchen. She wiped crumbs from the table, spread out her papers, and already sorted the master of the house under the highest category.

“I have a few questions for the owner of the house. Do you mind?” Her pronunciation and diction formed an unusual

rhythm, much like one whose lips and tongue hadn't been raised to speak Ukrainian.

“Me?” Aquinas was amazed by the courtesy.

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