

## Dixit – A Story with a Dwarf

Not quite in your town  
(but not far from it either)  
there lived a dwarf who never said *I'm sorry*.

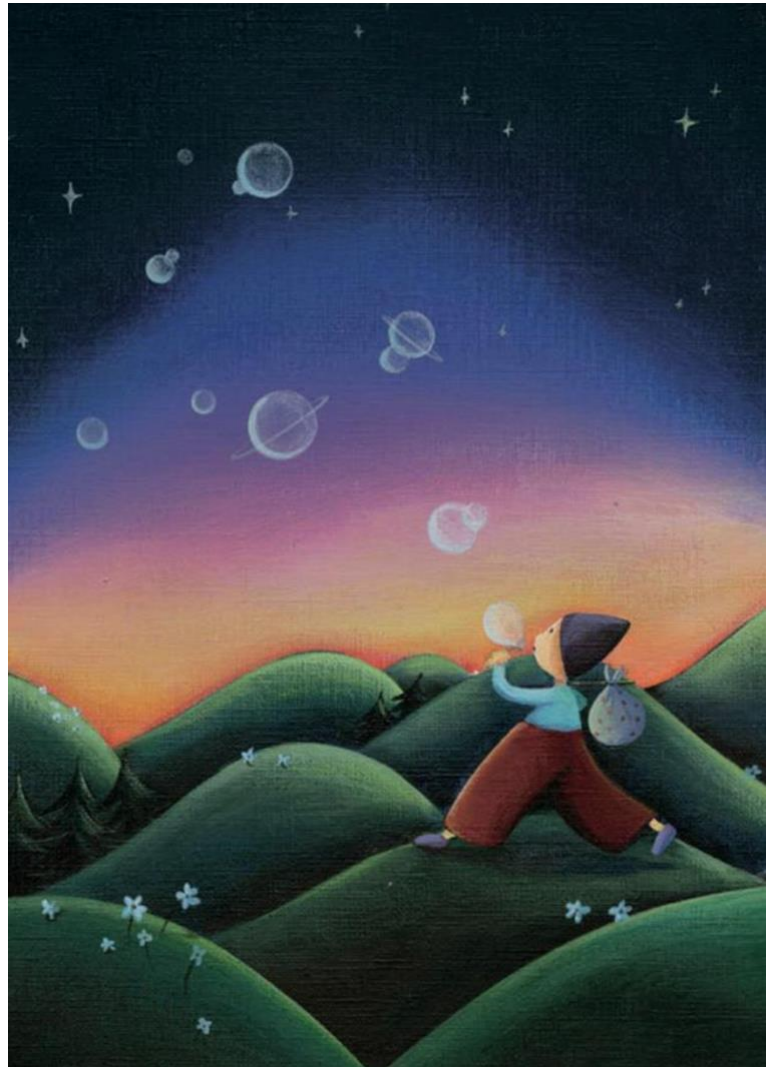
No one knew why, but if he ever did something wrong,  
he'd talk your ear off about it,  
ask for explanations,  
haggle, grumble, hesitate,  
maybe even puff up and argue  
until he was out of breath —  
just to prove he was right,  
that he hadn't stepped out of line.  
And if anyone should be sorry,  
it surely wasn't him.  
That much was beyond doubt.

And since sometimes (especially poets)  
talk too much and say too little,  
I'll try to explain  
with a few examples —  
(ridiculous, this need for control).

Once, when he stepped on a frog,  
he said he only wanted  
to get her moving again —  
she'd been sitting still too long,  
no motivation,  
swollen, green, and bombastic —  
a bit of exercise would do her good.

And in sleep, when the sun sat at its nadir,  
they said he dreamed in sheer annoyance.  
And once, when he forgot  
to deliver something to the bear,  
he scolded him: *Well, why'd you ask me then?*  
And so on.

One time, he called an Uber to the next village  
and picked a fight with the driver  
because of the pin —  
placed by himself,  
three hills away by mistake.  
*You should've known the real location*, he said,



*you've got to feel the echoes of reality  
beyond that formal little app.*

Anyway. One night,  
as the viscous dark thickened around him,  
he went wandering over the hills,  
blowing soap bubbles toward the sky —  
one of his small delights.

He walked easily, thinking about how some people —  
according to the argumentative theory of reason  
(see Hugo Mercier) —  
say that human (and dwarf) reasoning and language  
didn't evolve to discover truth,  
but to persuade.  
And he thought: *I've really taken that to the next level.*

He walked and blew bubbles for a while,  
until one, more beautiful than the rest,  
like a New Year's Eve spark,  
rose slowly and hovered midair,  
perfectly round —  
in sync with the round, barbaric night  
at its most primal hour.

The dwarf stared, entranced,  
when suddenly, from behind a hill,  
appeared a man with a long stick.  
“What's wrong? Is the world too small for you?”  
asked the dwarf  
(ridiculous, this need to preserve meaning).

“I just wanted to see how high the bubble floats,”  
said the man.  
And when he reached up to measure it,  
he touched it with the stick — and pop!  
It burst.

The dwarf felt something tighten in his chest,  
ready to explain, defend, argue, dissect —  
but the man simply said,  
*I'm sorry*, and turned to go.

And the dwarf, not knowing exactly why,  
nodded: “It's all right.”  
He bent down and blew another bubble — smaller this time.

The man watched, smiled.  
“It’s beautiful,” he said.  
“Yes,” murmured the dwarf,  
“and it bursts faster.”

**Radu Nițescu** (b. 1992, [www.radunitescu.com](http://www.radunitescu.com)) has published four poetry collections: *gringo* (Casa de Pariuri Literare, 2012), *Dialectica urșilor* (Casa de Editură Max Blecher, 2016), *Satao* (Casa de Editură Max Blecher, 2020), and *În inima pustiului, la malul Cișmigiului* (Casa de Editură Max Blecher, 2025).

His poems and translations have appeared in various magazines and anthologies, and he has read at numerous literary festivals in Romania as well as in Berlin, Sofia, Stockholm, and Istanbul.

In 2016, he received the **Nepotu’ lui Thoreau Poetry Award** for *Dialectica urșilor*, and in 2020, he was named **Young Writer of the Year** for *Satao*. Through projects such as **Swords**, **Cenacclub**, and **Strada fără nume**, artists, blending poetry with other art forms.