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Tullio Forgiarini – Luxembourg

Amok – Eng Lëtzebuerger Liebeschronik (2011)

Amok – A Luxembourg Love Story

Publishing House **Editions Guy Binsfeld**

Biography

Tullio Forgiarini was born in 1966 in Neudorf, Luxembourg, the son of an Italian father and a Luxembourgian mother. He studied history in Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Since 1989, he has been teaching history, Latin and geography at the Lycée du Nord in Wiltz, Luxembourg. He is also very engaged with children having a difficult social background.

Forgiarini writes dark stories, mostly in French and inspired by série noire crime novels and genre films. He has had his work published in newspapers, magazines and anthologies and is the author of several novels. He is married and lives in Luxembourg.

Synopsis

In 17 short chapters, *Amok* tells the story of an adolescent's search for love, recognition, happiness and a place in today's society. Via the use of often crude language, Tullio Forgiarini convincingly reflects the prevailing problems of social isolation, neglect, lack of perspective, behavioural disorders and senseless violence. Sharp dialogue, realistic depictions and a poetic economy in the carefully placed dream sequences distinguish *Amok* as a decidedly contemporary novel in both form and content. It leads the reader into an exploration of everyday realities that are often absent in the media as well as in public discourse. The reader is thrust into the imaginary and ingeniously crafted dream worlds of the protagonist that stand for his doomed attempts at escaping an unmanageable reality. They convey the sense of tragedy of the protagonist at simultaneously failing to negotiate and escape it.

Amok – Eng Lëtzebuerger Liebeschronik

Tullio Forgiarini

...

Mir sinn ze fréi. Méi wéi eng hallef Stonn. Mir sinn awer net déi éischt. E puer Autoe sti schonns um Parking. An och e Bus. An och Kanner. Esou fënneft, sechst Schouljoer. Si spille Fussball. Also d'Jongen. D'Meedercher kucken no. A gackeren domm. D'Joffere stinn och do. Déi si schonns genervt. Eng huet d'Bouwe vernannt. Op Däitsch, mengen ech. Héieren hunn ech näisch. Mir bleiwe léiwer am Auto sätzen. Fir a Rou ze fëmmen. Fir net zevill gesinn ze ginn. D'Shirley hält de Bak. Schonns ganz laang am Fong. Zanter der Affär mam..., mat deem, wat gëschter Owend war. Gleeft mer wuel net. Datt ech et schonns zwanzeg Mol gemaach hunn. Oder datt et cool war. Oder déi zwee. Dann eben. Esou cool war et och net. Also guer net wéi an de Filmer. Do dauert dat èmmer..., wat?... Eng Véirelstonn..., mindestens eng Véirelstonn!... An do dinn d'Puten och därmooosse Kreesch... Gëschter war alles an zwou Minuten un an aus. Ouni, datt een eppes gesot huet... Dach, dono sot d'Shirley *War et schéin?* an ech sot *Jo...* D'Shirley schléift nees. All Minutt, wou näisch leeft, schléift dat! Dat nervt, mee iergendwéi fannen ech dat cool. Èmmer, wann et der net dono ass, einfach anhänken... Nach zwee Busser. D'Autoen zielen ech guer net méi. Geschwë maachen se op... Mäi Réck kraazt nees. Wéi verréckt. Net dauernd, mee elo nees mega. Am Fong èmmer nëmmen, wann ech eleng sinn..., also eleng mat mir..., mat menge Gedanken... Et dréckt mer duerch den T-Shirt. Duerch de Pullover. Duerch d'Jackett. Esouguer duerch den Autossëtz.

Ech kapéieren d'Shirley net. Dat kann him dach net egal sinn... Obwuel..., d'Nathalie huet och näischt gesot..., mee souwisou..., oder... ?... Ech huele mäin iPhone aus der Täsch. En ass ganz aus. Wéinst de Flicen. Wann ech en umaachen, da wëssen se direkt, wou mer sinn. Oder vläicht och net. Wann ech e just ganz kuerz uloossen..., just fir ze gesinn, ob een ugeruff huet... oder eng SMS geschéckt huet... Ech maachen en un. Et dauert e bëssen, bis hien d'Netz fonnt huet... An..., dräi Uriff. Zweemol meng Mamm. An eng Nummer, déi net ugewise gëtt. D'Flice wuel... An eng SMS. Och vu menger Mamm. Ech soll zréckruffen. Soss näischt. Just *Ruff un*. Mol net *Ruff un!* Oder *Ruff un, w.e.g!* Just *Ruff un*... Ech maachen nees séier aus. Et ass all Mënsch schäissegal... Bal schäissegal. D'Flice sichen e bëssen. Well se mussen. An... d'Sandra och. Well et mengt, et misst. Well et mengt, eng Mamm misst. Well et mengt, et wär eng Mamm. Well et mengt, et wär meng Mamm...

- Geet elo op?
- An..., an zwou Minuten. Wéi méchs de dat?
- Wat?
- Erwachsen, just wann et un der Zäit ass...
- Wat? Ech versti guer näischt... Gi mer?
- Ok...
- Phantasialand! Phantasialand!

Et huet sech wierklech net ginn. D'Shirley. Dauernd gebirelt. *Phantasialand!* Ech hu gefaart, mir géifen opfalen. Mee guer näischt. Bei de Keessen hunn sech Tonne Leit gedréckt. Kanner. Awer och Jonker. Esou wéi mir. Déi hunn all esou Kreesch gedoen. An déi puer Erwuessener hunn eis net bekuckt..., oder dach, awer just ganz kuerz. Esoubal se

gemierkt hunn, datt mer net zu hirem Grupp gehéiert hunn, waren se erlichtert an hunn eis vergiess.

Dobanne war et nach méi einfach. Déi Kleng si mat hire Joffere vu Spill zu Spill gepilgert, mee net déi Grouss. Déi krute just eng Moralpriedegt gehalen a konnten dann dorëmmer lafen, wéi se wollten. Genee esou wéi mir.

– Fir d'éischt maache mer d'Achterbahnen. All! Do sinn émmer déi meeschte Leit! A wann d'Schlaang net ze laang ass, da maache mer se direkt e puer Mol hannereneen. Dann hu mer dat schonns. Dat hëlt keen eis ewech!

D'Shirley rennt vir. Hatt dréint sech net ém, fir ze kucken, ob ech do sinn. Ech lafen him no. Mir maache genee dat, wat hatt sot. Ouni eng dotëschend ze fëmmen. Ouni pissem ze goen. D'Black Mamba gefält dem Shirley am beschten. Well do d'Féiss énnen eraushänken. A well een sech véier Mol iwwerschléit. Während der ganzer Fahrt bläert hatt esou haart, wéi et geet. Hatt leeft rout un am Gesicht. Blo esouguer. Mee et bläert riicht weider. Siwe Mol gi mer op d'Black Mamba. Siwe Mol hannereneen. An der Schlaang drécke mer eis vir. E puer Aler meckeren. Proffe wuel. Dat ass eis schäissegal. Et wär wéi Fléien. Seet d'Shirley. Ech fannen net. Soen awer Jo. Fir dem Shirley e Gefalen ze maachen. Hatt gesäit och glécklech aus.

Mir ginn op de Colorado Adventure. Esou een Zichelchen. Wéi aus enger Goldminn. Den iwwerschléit sech net. Rennt dofir awer megaséier e megagéié Bierg erof.

– Hannen! Ganz hannen! Ganz hanne muss ee sätzen! Do hieft ee richteg of!

Ech weess net, wouhir d'Shirley dat alles weess. Hatt war nach ni hei. Den Zuch gëtt de Bierg eropgezunn. D'Shirley

dréckt sech ganz fest widdert mech. Dat ass esou cool! , seet et. Dat huet hatt haut schonns honnertmol gesot. Méi. Zanter géschter Owend ass alles cool. Zanter mer... Si ass net dout. Sécher net.

– Ouni d'Hänn! Ouni d'Hänn! Unhalen ass fir Looser!

D'Shirley streckt d'Äerm héich an d'Luucht. A jäizt ganz haart. Just wéi de Weenchen no vir kippt. Ech loosse lass. Mäin Aasch léist sech vum Sëtz. Meng Been drécke géint d'Staang, déi eis festhält. Drécken émmer méi. Am Réck bascht eppes. Neen, alles. Alles fier op. Ech gesinn se. Just aus dem Aewénkel. Grouss. Riseg. A schnéiwäiss. Si schloen am Takt. Si rappe mech aus dem Sëtz. Aus dem Weenchen. Nach een, zwee Schléi, da brécht d'Staang, déi eis hält. Da fléien ech eraus. Da fléie mir eraus. Esou grouss a staark..., déi packen eis zwee... Ech falen zréck an de Sëtz. Ginn nach e puermol no lénks a no riets gepucht. Da bleiwe mer stoen.

– Cool, hä? Komm séier! Nach eng Kéier!

– Mir ass e bësse schlecht...

– Du Tussi do! Dajee! Komm!

Ech ginn nach eng Kéier mat. Nach zweemol esouguer. Esou schlecht ass mer och net. Just e bësse komesch. Dës Kéier hiewen ech d'Äerm och net méi. Ech leien am Sëtz wéi e Sak Sand. Et leeft mer eppes de Réck erof. Waarm. A pecheg...

– Ech hunn do eppes... Am Réck...

– Schonns erém! Da weis emol... Do d'Jackett aus...

D'Shirley ass genervt. Oder just prësséiert. Hatt fier mat der Hand énnert mäin T-Shirt.

– E bësse Blutt...

Hatt reift se laanscht meng Box.

– Näisch Schlëmmes. Dat kënnt vun deene Rëff... Gi mer op d'Wildwasserbahn? Mir kënnen awer och eppes iesse goen, wann s de wëlls...

Bei der éischter Bud si mer stoeblíwwen.

– Oh, wéi cool! Kaf mer esou een!

Häerzer. Aus Liefkuch. Mat lauter esou Spréch drop. Mein Herz gehört dir. Danke! Zuckermaus. Ich liebe dich. Für immer dein. An nämmen däers. A mir ass et net gutt. An déi zwee Typen...

– Dajee! Et ass un eis!

– Jo..., wéi eent wëlls du?

– Ah neen! Du muss et eraussichen!

– Ah..., äh... Das da...

– Soll ech der och eent huelen?

– Äh... neen. Ech huelen en Hamburger...

– ... und zwei Cola! Bitte!

Ech bezuelen. Zuckermaus. Méi hunn ech mech net getraut. Mir sätzen eis op eng Bänk. D'Shirley ésst d'Häerz. Systematesch. Fir d'éisch de Bord. An dann èmmer esou ronderëm. Bis näisch méi iwwreg ass. Den Hamburger ass net immens. Ech puchen d'Halschent fort. D'Type sinn och nees fort. Zwee Stéck. Security. Esou mat Sonnebrëller. An engem Walkietalkie, deen dauernd kraacht. Mir hunn se schonns dacks begéint. Immens dacks am Fong. An si kucken eis èmmer. Ok, si kucken all Mensch, mee eis kucken se èmmer méi laang. A wann se weiderginn, da schwätzten se eppes an den Walkietalkie. Elo bei der Friessbud stoungen se just hannert eis. Dat huet mech nervös gemaach. Ech hätt de Schäiss iPhone net sollten umaachen...

- Geet et?
- Jo..., jo.
- Wëlls de e Stéck vu mengem Häerz?
- Wa... ? Nee merci...
- Et geet awer erëm, so?
- Jo, jo. Tipptopp!
- Ass cool hei, hä?
- Jo. Mega!
- Gi mer elo op d'Wildwasser?
- Jo. Kloer...

Vläicht ass et och just wéinst dem Shirley. Datt se méi laang kucken. Hatt ass esou duerchgeknallt... Ech fueren a meng Jackettstäsch. D'Pistoul. Kleng a sélwereg. Ech hat se schonns ganz vergiess. Soss hätt ech se bestëmmt am Auto gelooss...

Bei der Wildwasserbahn gi mer erwaart. Oder och net. Si sinn op alle Fall do. Déi zwee Typen. An net némme si. Ech gesinn der nach zwee. E grousse Schwaarzen an eng Tussi. Baseballkapen, Sonnebrëller a Walkietalkie. Si schnësse mateneen. Sinn opgereeegt. D'Tussi gestikuléiert a weist op eis. Also op d'Schlaang, déi virun der Wildwasserbahn waart. D'Shirley wëllt sech erëm virdrécken, mee ech halen hatt zréck. Hatt meckert net. Gëtt mer en décke Kuss. Riicht op de Mond. Seng Zong dréckt sech duerch meng Zänn. Hatt huet bestëmmt gemengt, et wär dofir, wou ech hatt festgehalen hunn... Ech soen näisch. Laachen e bëssen domm. D'Shirley laacht och. Awer vill méi richteg. Richteg glécklech. Ech misst him vläicht eppes soen. Mee ech weess net richteg, wat. An och net, wéi.

D'Wildwasserbahn fënnt d'Shirley cool. Megacool! Obwuel mer eréischt e puer Sekonnen drasëtzen. An esou engem Plastiksbamstamm. Obwuel mer just eréischt amgaang sinn, erop gezunn ze ginn. D'Shirley léisst sech ganz widdert mech rutschen. An dréckt meng Äerm ganz fest ronderëm sech. D'Kant vu mengem Sëtz buert sech a mäi Réck. Ech bludden nach èmmer. Mengen ech. Vun uewe gesäit een op de Parking. Ech gesinn eisen Auto. Dem Nathalie säin. Net dout. Bestëmmt net dout... An e Flicenauto. Net wäit dovun ewech. En däitsche Flicenauto. Sëlwreg wäiss a blo. Also vlächt. Ech sinn net ganz...

– Ouni d'Hänn! Ouni d'Hänn! Wouaaaaahhhh!

*

Ech drécken d'Shirley ganz fest. An hatt mech och. Hatt huet d'Aen zou. Ech och. Dofir kann ech et jo net gesinn. Ob hatt d'Aen zou huet oder net. Mee ech si sécher. Mir hunn allen zwee d'Aen zou an drécken eis ganz fest. A ronderëm eis némme Loft. Gutt waarm Loft. A Megakaméidi. A soss näisch. A soss guer keen. Si sinn dobausse bliwwen. Déi véier. Si waren do, wéi eise Bam ukomm ass. Si hunn eis nogekuckt, wéi mer erausgeklomme sinn. Dës Kéier sinn ech sécher. Si hunn eis nogekuckt! Mir waren zimlech naass. Dofir si mer an déi Kabinn gaang. Hunn zwee Euro agepucht. E risege Föhn huet ugefaange mat Blosen. D'Shirley huet gemaach, wéi wann hatt géif fortfléien. A meng Äerm ass hatt geflunn. Also esou gemaach huet et. An elo halen ech et. Fest. Ganz fest. A mat den Aen zou...

Elo sinn der nach just zwee do. De Schwaarzen an d'Fra. Si kucken eis net. Si kucke Richtung Agang. Si waarden. Op hir Kollegen. Oder op d'Flicen...

– An elo op d’Geisterbahn! Esou cool! *Et ass déi längst
ënnerierdesch Geisterbahn vun der Welt!* Wousst de dat?

– Hä? Äh... nee.

– Déi längst vun der Welt! Megacool!

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Amok – A Luxembourg Love Story

Tullio Forgiarini

Translated from the Luxembourgish by Tom Johanns

...

We're too early. More than half an hour. Still, we're not the first ones. A few cars are already at the car park. And a bus. And also kids. Probably 5th, 6th school year. They're playing football. Well, the boys are. The girls are watching. And sniggering stupidly. The teachers are standing there as well. They're already irritated. One has told off the boys. In German, I think. I haven't heard her. We prefer staying in the car. To have a quiet smoke. Not to be seen too much. Shirley's been keeping quiet. For quite a while, in fact. Since the event with..., with what happened yesterday evening. She doesn't believe me, apparently. That I have already done it 20 times. Or, that it was cool. Or both. Oh, well. It wasn't that cool. Well, nothing like in the movies. There it always lasts for... 15 minutes? Yeah, 15 minutes minimum! And the bitches are screaming their heads off... Yesterday, everything was done and dusted in 2 minutes flat. Without anybody saying anything... Well, afterwards Shirley asked "Was it nice?" and I said "Yes"... Shirley's sleeping again. She sleeps every single minute when nothing's happening! That's so annoying, but somehow I admire that. Every time you feel like it, just dropping off... Two buses left. I'm not counting the cars anymore. They are opening soon... My back is itching again. Like mad. Not all the time, but now way too much. Actually, always when I'm alone... well, alone in my thoughts... It's trying to get out through my t-shirt. Through my jumper. Through my jacket.

Even through the seat. I don't get Shirley. How can she not be bothered about that?... But, then again... Nathalie didn't say anything either... no matter... or... ?... I'm taking my iPhone out of my pocket. It's switched off. 'Cause of the cops. If I switch it on, they immediately know where we are. Or, maybe they don't. If I just switch it on for a few seconds... just to see whether someone called... or sent a message... I turn it on. It takes a while 'til it finds a network... and... 3 calls. Twice my mum. And a number that's not being displayed. Probably the cops... and a message. Also from my mum. I'm supposed to call her back. Nothing else. Just *Call me back*. Not even *Call me back now!* Or *Please call me back!* Only *Call me back*... I turn it off again immediately. No-one gives a shit... almost no-one. The cops are searching for us. Because they have to. And... Sandra as well. Because she thinks she has to. Because she thinks, a mother has to. Because she thinks she's a mother. Because she thinks she's my mother...

- Are they opening now?
- In... in 2 minutes. How are you doing this?
- What?
- Waking up just at the right time...
- What are you talking about?... Are we going in?
- Ok...
- Phantasialand! Phantasialand!

She just didn't stop. Shirley, constantly screaming the name.

Phantasialand! I was afraid of attracting attention. But, nothing at all. Loads of people were queuing and shoving each other at the entrance. Children. But also teenagers. Just like us. They were all screaming incessantly. And those few

adults didn't even notice us... well, they did, but only for a few seconds. As soon as they noticed that we were not part of their group they were relieved and forgot about us. Inside, it was even easier. The small children scampered along with their teachers from game to game, but the teenagers didn't. They were just harangued on how to behave and then they could go wherever they wanted to. Just like us.

– First we go on the rollercoasters. All of them! That's where most people go! And if the queue isn't too long, we can ride them a few times. So that we can already tick that off our list. Nobody can take that from us!

Shirley's running in front of me. She doesn't look back to see whether I am following. I run after her. We are doing exactly what she told me. Without having a smoke. Without peeing. *Black Mamba* is Shirley's favourite. Because her feet are hanging out underneath her. And because there are four vertical loops. She's screaming as loudly as possible during the whole ride. She's turning red in her face. Even blue. But she continues screaming. We're riding *Black Mamba* seven times, back to back. We're jumping the queues. Some adults are complaining. Probably teachers. We don't care. It's like flying, Shirley says. I don't think so but agree. Just to please Shirley. She looks so happy.

We go to the *Colorado Adventure*, a small train. Just like in a gold mine. There are no vertical loops but it's extremely fast and goes down an amazingly steep hill.

– At the back! Right at the back! That's where we must sit! There you almost get thrown out of your seat! I have no idea where Shirley knows that from. She hasn't been here before. The train's being pulled up the hill. Shirley's pressing herself firmly against me. *This is so cool!* she says. She's already said

that a hundred times. Even more. Everything has been cool since yesterday evening. Since we... she isn't dead. Of course not.

– No hands! No hands! Holding on is for losers!

Shirley raises her arms high above her head. And she's screaming again. Just when our part of the train falls forward. I let go. My ass comes away from the seat. My legs are pushing against the railings that are holding us in place. Pushing more and more. In the back something's cracking. No, everything. Everything's cracking wide open. I see them. Just from the corner of my eye. Big. Gigantic. And white as snow. They are hitting in the same rhythm. They are tearing me from the seat. From the carriage. One, two more hits and the railing's broken. Then I fly out. Then we fly out. So big and strong... they can handle both of us... I fall back into the seat, get thrown to the left and the right a few times. Then we stop.

– How cool was that? Come on! Again!

– I feel a bit sick...

– You wimp! Come on!

I follow her again. Twice even. I don't feel that sick after all, just a bit strange. This time I'm not lifting my arms again. I'm lying in my seat like a brick. Something's running down my back. Warm. And sticky...

– I've got something on my back...

– Again! Show me... take your jacket off...

Shirley's annoyed. Or just in a hurry. She slips her hand under my t-shirt.

– A bit of blood...

She rubs her hand against my trousers.

– Nothing bad. That's from those scabs... Are we going to the water slides? We can also get something to eat if you want...

We stopped at the first booth.

– Oh, how cool! Buy me one like that!

Hearts. Made from gingerbread. With loads of different sayings. *My heart belongs to you. Thanks! Sweetie. I love you. Forever yours.* Stuff like that. And I'm not feeling too well. And the two guys...

– Come on! It's our turn!

– Yes..., which one do you want?

– Oh no! You have to choose one!

– Oh... well... that one...

– Shall I get you one as well?

– Oh... no. I take a burger...

– ... and two Cokes! Please!

I'm paying. *Sweetie.* I didn't dare getting another one. We are sitting down on a bench. Shirley's eating the heart. Systematically. First the outside and then in circles until there's nothing left. The burger isn't that good. I throw half of it away. The guys have gone away as well. Two of them. Security. With sunglasses. And walkie-talkies that are making a constant noise. We've already seen them a few times. Quite a few times, in fact. And they're always looking at us. Ok, they're looking at everybody but they're looking at us a lot longer. And when they're walking on, they're speaking into their walkie-talkies. Here at the booth they were just behind us. That made me nervous. I shouldn't have switched on that fucking iPhone...

– Are you ok?

– Yes..., yes.

- Want a piece of my heart?
- Wha... ? No, thanks...
- But you're ok again?
- Yes, yes. Fine!
- It's cool here, no?
- Yeah. Brilliant!
- Are we going to the water slides now?
- Yeah. Definitely...

Maybe it's just because of Shirley. That they're staring at us. She's so crazy... I slide my hand into the pocket of my jacket. The gun. Small and silver. I had already forgotten about it. Otherwise I would have left it in the car for sure...

We're expected at the water slides. Or not. They are there. The two guys. And not only them. I can see two others. A tall black guy and a chick. Baseball caps, sunglasses and walkie-talkies. They're talking to each other and seem excited. The chick is gesticulating and pointing at us and at the queue in front of the slides. Shirley wants to jump the queue again but I am holding her back. She isn't complaining. Kisses me intently. Straight on my mouth. Her tongue is pushing through my teeth. She probably thought that was why I stopped her... I don't say anything. I laugh a bit. Shirley's laughing as well. But her laugh is more honest. Really happy. Maybe I should tell her. But I don't really know what. Or how.

Shirley thinks that the water slides are cool. *Extremely cool!* Even though we have just got on a few seconds ago. In a plastic tree trunk. Even though we are just getting pulled up. Shirley lets herself slide against me. And pulls my arms tightly around her. The edge of my seat is pushing into my back. I'm still bleeding. I think. From the top one can see

the car park. I can see our car. Nathalie's. Not dead. Definitely not dead... And a police car. Not far away from ours. A German police car. Silver, white and blue. Well, I think. I am not completely...

– Without hands! Without hands! Yeeeaaahhhh!

*

I am holding onto Shirley really tight. And she does the same. She has her eyes closed. Me, too. That's why I can't see her. Whether her eyes are closed or not. But I am sure. We both have our eyes closed and are holding onto each other. And around us only air. Nice, warm air. And loads of noise. And nothing else. And nobody else. They didn't come in. Those four. They were there when our tree arrived. They stared at us when we climbed out. This time I'm certain. They stared at us! We were quite wet. That's why we went into those changing rooms. Threw two euros in. A giant hair dryer started blowing hot air. Shirley faked flying away. She flew into my arms. Well she faked that. And now I am holding her. Tight. Very tight. And with my eyes closed...

Now there are only two of them left. The black guy and the chick. They aren't looking at us. They are looking at the entrance. They are waiting. For their colleagues. Or for the policemen...

– And now the ghost train! So cool! It's the longest subterranean ghost train in the world! Did you know that?

– What? Hmm... no.

– The longest in the world! Excellent!

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