

About Humorous Literature for Children

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ABSTRACT

The heyday of humorous literature for children falls on the 1950s-1970s. Funny books for children were created by such masters of the word as V. Golyavkin, V. Dragunsky, Yu. Koval, V. Medvedev, N. Nosov, Yu. Sotnik, E. Uspensky and others. served and serves entertainment, plays the role of psychological relaxation, and on the other hand, serves to correct morals and warn against bad deeds" [7, p. 159]. The already established genres and forms (fable, parable, apologist, edifying story) that perform educational tasks are being replaced by a lyrical and humorous story, a genre sketch, an etude-scene with pronounced features of psychological training, fantastic and fairy tale stories that unfold or paraphrase trivial moralizing, as in the whole corpus of works for children (A. Volkov, V. Gubarev, L. Geraskina, etc.).

V. Petkevičius noted: "Humor is one of the most effective means in the fight against shortcomings. When I leaf through children's magazines and books, sometimes it seems to me that our country is the most serious, even harsh country in the world, in whose schools the marks for behavior correspond to the marks for seriousness. Nothing enlightens a child's soul like good subtle humor. Therefore, without a good mood, without laughter, I can't imagine children's literature" [10, p. fourteen].

Already from the first works of V. Medvedev, it became clear that humor is a distinctive feature of his style. The talent of Medvedev as a comedian was most clearly manifested in the trilogy "Barankin's Fantasies". This is evidenced by numerous reviews of critics [4, 1, 12]. Yes, and the writer himself has repeatedly admitted that the main engine of his work is humor. The trilogy "Barankin's Fantasies" presents a wide palette of laughter. The writer easily varies the different types of humor in each part of the book. He seems to adjust his laughter to the nature of the work, to its genre, theme, plot, taking into account the heterogeneity of the parts of the trilogy.

Different writers achieve comedy by different means. So, for example, the humor of Lev Kassil can be called the humor of a child's game, the humor of A. Nekrasov, E. Uspensky is eccentric, Yu. Sotnik's humor is situational. The nature of the comic largely depends on the individual characteristics of the author, and on the leading theme of his work, and on the time in which he worked, and on the nature of his main characters. Medvedev's humor is also peculiar.

The genre of a literary fairy tale suggests the presence of a humorous one. More G.-H.

Andersen, whose work "accumulated" the young writer, said: "A master who has mastered this genre must be able to put into it the tragic, comic, naive, ironic and humorous..." [1, p. 74]. By the way, such a symbiosis of the tragic and the comic was noticed by the writer V. Zheleznikov: "She [the story "Barankin, be a man!"] Is cheerful and tragic. You laugh and cry at her. It purifies us, bringing us into the experience of someone else's life, and makes us think about our own existence" [3]. With the last phrase, the writer notes an important feature of Medvedev the comedian: he managed to go beyond the purely humorous perception of life, which added depth and weight to his laughter.

In the phrase that gave the name to the first book - "Barankin, be a man!" - there is an element of didacticism, edification, and the very ideological orientation of the work could turn the story into a moralizing story, albeit stuffed with various adventures. But this did not happen in the first place thanks to the "carnival of humor" that captures the entire fabric of Medvedev's story. After all, "humor - and this has long been proven - kills dead, dry didactics in a work and turns even the most didactic work into agitation" cheerful, with ringing "[9, p. 174]. The mechanism of Medvedev's humor in the story "Barankin, be a man!" was studied in some detail by S. Sivokon [12]. The critic singles out as a comic "frame" the comic of circumstances associated with the transformation of the most ordinary schoolchildren into insects and birds. These circumstances, in turn, cause comedic situations, as if playing on the proverb: "Let's go for wool, and the shorn ones returned." The main comic resources of the story, according to S. Sivokon, are hidden in countless cases of transferring purely human habits, skills to the extrahuman sphere: sparrow, butterfly, ant, that is, the author uses the method of anthropomorphism.

Writers-storytellers "resort to the use of those forms of anthropomorphism from which one can get at least a spark of laughter" [12, p. 177]. So, the humor of the plays by E. Schwartz "Two Maples", "Little Red Riding Hood" is almost entirely based on a cheerful confusion of bird, animal and human concepts, logic. Schwartz modeled his humor by skillfully combining the habits of various animals with purely human habits and skills. Andersen's humor is also akin to Medvedev's: it "is most often built on contradictions, opposition between the natural properties of animals, birds, plants, objects and things with the human qualities attributed to them" [2, p. 144].

S. Sivokon highlights a very important feature of Medvedev's humor in a number of episodes related to the brave and sometimes heroic behavior of children in extreme situations. The battle scene between the ants Yura and Kostya and the myrmics, built according to the laws of the humorous genre, does not make the reader smile. "Because this time Yura and Kostya, even being ants, found themselves in a heroic situation. And their state of mind is essentially no different from what true, "human" heroes experience in a deadly situation" [12, p. 178]. It would seem that a purely human phrase in the mouth of a small black ant-Yura should be comical: "Hold on, Malinin! Now we're going to show these myrmics how real guys die!" But we do not laugh, although according to the laws of humor we should laugh. "Stronger than the laws of laughter are the laws of morality" [12, p. 175].

Let us note one more property of the writer's humor - the comedy of characters and the comedy of age, which are especially pronounced in the comic duet of Kostya and Yurya. Different characters of the heroes, colliding, become the cause of different comic situations. Such "duets" are not new in children's literature. They were actively used by N. Nosov (VityaMaleev and KostyaShishkin in the story "VityaMaleev at School and at Home"), A.

Aleksin (Petya and Vitalik in the story "In the Country of Eternal Vacation") and other children's writers. Medvedev himself resorts to a similar combination of characters in his other works ("Dissimilar Twins", "Captain Lie-Head"). It is curious that in these "duets" the absurd heroes play the leading role, and not their more reasonable and quiet partners. This happens "primarily because it is easier to educate and make the reader laugh using the example of a "difficult" and restless character. His mistakes and blunders are more visible, more contrasting. And for a comedian, this is especially important" [12, p. 23]. And besides, in this younger school age, inventors and dreamers are more common.

An inexhaustible source of comedy is a child's fantasy. This is another important source of Medvedev's humor for the entire trilogy as a whole. Almost every line of Medvedev's work gives rise to a smile. Several mechanisms of the comic can work for the same episode at once, which is also an important achievement of Medvedev as a comedian. The humor lies in the wit of the characters themselves, and in the comically constructed dialogues. Imaginative means are also put at the service of humor: puns, comic metaphors, comparisons, literal understanding of phraseological units. The tale form of narration chosen by Medvedev also has great humorous resources.

The satirical in the first part is veiled. It is aimed at ridiculing the formalism and overorganization that prevail in the school community. Satire shines through in the arrogance of the class "bosses", and in the discrepancy between the words and deeds of the so-called activists, and in the description of the activities of the "young naturalists", who, instead of "protecting and increasing" the nature of their native land, themselves become its exterminators. Medvedev, the satirist, achieved special skill in the scene depicting young girls "hunting" for the rare Machaon butterfly for their collection. This episode demonstrates that their "love of nature" is largely superficial and formal. In pursuit of a magnificent butterfly, in their desire to get a valuable copy at all costs, they completely forget about their youth and the fact that this is a living creature. Moreover, they themselves lose their human appearance. And this is masterfully exposed by Medvedev, correlating the girls with animals: "Zinka Fokina ... stared into the grass with her eyes and alerted like a sniffer dog" [6, p. 72], "it was heard how the girls continued to prowl around the garden screaming and screeching" [6, p. 76], "... some girl behind a bush hissed" [6, p. 79], "... the girls hissed like snakes" [6, p. 80]. Medvedev even accuses the excellent student Fokina of being insane: "... her eyes, like those of a madwoman, ran over the leaves" [6, p. 82]. And how advantageous Yura and Kostya look, who, according to the excellent student Fokina, are humanly inferior, in the scene of the battle with the myrmics. Medvedev exposes the formal love for nature of the "hardened" young women, which contrasts with its true defense (in the full sense of the word) of the "subhuman" Yuri and Kostya. In the divergence of the true meaning of the phrase "Be a man!" with her formal understanding, the headman Fokina also has her own satirical note: "Yura ... Well, be a man! .. Well, fix the deuce tomorrow!" [6, p. 12].

In "The Super-Adventures of a Super-Cosmonaut" V. Medvedev made the question of the human heart the main one. The author endows his somewhat matured hero with many talents, but all of them are reduced to nothing due to the lack of cordiality, which, like many other properties that make a person a person, Yura Ivanov suppresses in himself. Yuri is proud and self-confident. "The lion's share of laughter (this time satirical) [...] is just dedicated to ridiculing this super-confidence and complacency of the "super-cosmonaut" [12, p. 182]. S. Sivokon notes a curious technique of self-mockery, when the proud Yuri himself gives

himself in his diary a "sharply satirical autocharacteristic."

If in the first part the sting of satire was sufficiently weakened and directed mainly at the collective, then in the second part the "hero" himself is ridiculed, and satirical laughter prevails over other types of comic. Medvedev's satire is not only an undercurrent. She openly demonstrates herself through the "cinema satire" played out by her classmates in front of the imperturbable "super-cosmonaut". The humor with which Medvedev approached the image of the insensitive Yuri is not only a device that allows you to expose the narcissistic hero. If there hadn't been a humorous jet in the work, the book would have come out didactic and dry, and the hero would have turned out to be too repulsive, cold, robotic, unpromising in terms of humanization.

L. Panteleev in 1937 in a discussion about humor for children in the magazine "Children's Literature" said: "What is the power of humor? I think, first of all, that humor assumes in the object or person against whom it is directed some kind of error, some kind of imperfection. Imperfection, as we know, is an eternal property of human nature. Humor gives a person humanity" [11, p. 138]. S. Sivokon noted that "toward the end of the story, laughter weakens. The second story ends ... already in lyrical tones" (emphasized by us - O.Ch.). In Ivanov-Barankino, the heart finally spoke. And this was the best evidence of the moral revival of the hero" [12, p. 185]. The subtle juxtaposition of the humorous and the elegiac gives rise to V. Medvedev's unique individual style, and "the pathos of the work teaches young readers the psychological nuances of touching and funny" [5, p. 87] in the integral form of a fairy tale. We observe a similar synthesis in the work of E. Uspensky, V. Dragunsky.

The mechanism of humor in the third book of Medvedev's trilogy differs from the previous two and is conditioned, on the one hand, by the genre - there is no fairy tale convention and fantasy here, this is a completely realistic work, on the other hand, the younger age of the characters, and on the third hand, the author's intention, which aims to explain what was the path of the characters to the events that took place in subsequent parts.

Both the magical transformation and the fantastic theory first originated in Yuri's imagination. But this did not happen spontaneously, not in a momentary impulse of a "clear" thought. In the story "The Unknown Adventures of Barankin" we see a familiar to us, but still very young dreamer Yura. He is curious, and this curiosity fires his imagination. The endless and most unpredictable "whys", not satisfied with the answer, become the impetus for the most bizarre and incredible fantasies. They are the scenario for future transformations and the basis for the "great preparation". And they are the source of Medvedev's humor. And "why" and "what would happen if" are very diverse. So, Barankin discusses how to take less food with you during the trip and eat them longer:

"When milk turns sour, what comes out of it? he asked Kostya.

"Kefir," he answered.

➤ And when kefir turns sour, what can be obtained from kefir? Yura continued to ask.

"Cottage cheese," Malinin replied.

"That's right," Barankin confirmed. "Cottage cheese, what else?" Kostya shrugged.

➤ Cottage cheese and whey ... You can also get sour cream, butter, cheese from milk ... Right? ricif, spoiled ricif should turn into edible ferik, and spoiled ferik into nutritious

ifekar! Understood?” [7, p. 125–126].

On the example of V. Medvedev's work, it is clearly seen that both children's literature and children's humor are no worse than "adults". “A real writer will never allow himself discounts either on humor or on childishness” [12, p. 183].

The synthesis of pedagogical and artistic is an important facet of V. Medvedev's skill. Skillfully balancing on the verge of comic - entertaining and comic - instructive, he skillfully clothes didactics, moralizing in easily digestible or even actively accepted by a teenager artistic and speech content.

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