

“Nagyvilág a kislakásban”  
English translation

1. The Whole Wide World in a Little Home
2. Wonderful smells are floating around the Ambrus family’s kitchen... Kate, the mother, and her daughter are waiting for farmer Ambrus. Vera is a skillful girl, and she’s pretty too. There’s no one better in the county.
3. Her heart is cheerful, her eyes smile, and she’s so industrious her hands fly, and besides that she studies hard. When she finishes her studies she wants to be an agronomist.
4. The door opens, but not like usual... Joe storms into the room. He’s the smallest Ambrus child. The little colt is famous throughout town!
5. But they’re not just waiting for father, Steve comes home too... He’s a stahanovist worker in Inota’s power plant. Kate is very proud of her big son, and has made a delicious dinner in his honor this evening.
6. Farmer Ambrus arrives, and he happily greets everyone. The table is weighed down with all sorts of good things to eat. Someone knocks, it’s Steve. Everyone is happy. They all hug one another, and sit down to eat.
7. What’s the news in the big-broad world? Steve must know. Which team will kick the most goals? Father tells the kids to hush, and his mouth takes a severe expression, but a warm feeling of happiness runs through his heart.
8. Vera clatters about, and cleans, she just can’t sit still. Finally she gathers her bravery and says, “I’d like to go over to visit the neighbors, just for a half an hour. They’re going to have dance music on the radio for half an hour today.”
9. “That’s it,” says little Joe, “she’s mad for her radio. She’d practically kill for it!” And then he says, with a twinkle in his eye: “She’s been like this for awhile. The radio’s got a mustache, and his name is George...”
10. Vera blushes, and everyone sees. What can she do? She hits her brother in the back. Their parents laugh too, for there’s no real anger in it, and Vera says goodbye and quickly leaves.
11. And that’s just what little Joe was waiting for, he’s been waiting to go visit Frank’s house. If Vera can go, well then why can’t he? “Now where are YOU going?” shouts his father at him.
12. Joe quietly answers: “Well, you see... I was going to visit Frank Toth, you know they live across the street...” “And what were you going to do there? Were the two of you going to do your lessons?” “Yep,” hollers Joe, and his eyes don’t even blink.

13. But you can see that the little scoundrel is struggling with himself. And even if it takes him time, he always tells the truth. “Well, ummm...” he says, “they’ve got a radio too. I’ll listen to the sports news, and then come right home!”
14. John Ambrus sucks worriedly at his pipe, when a voice from the garden calls Vera. “It’s Mrs. Tohonya!” grumbles John, and wrinkles appear on his forehead. “That old hag has come to visit again. That’s all I needed!”
15. Mrs. Tohonya is a great gossip, and she talks night and day. She supplies the whole district with her lies and horror stories. Her tongue befouls everything good and beautiful, and she tries to get the people against the collective farm.
16. She’s a bit surprised to find Steve there too, but then she starts in on her superstitions. “I saw an angel in my dreams, it sat on my bed. It said that the heavens had sent it to me on purpose.”
17. “Don’t say!” grumbled Mr. Ambrus. “Now there’s some dream! An angel came to YOU on a mission? I really am surprised!” But Mrs. Tohonya blabs on and on. “It said a lot of important things! These new fangled ways are wrong, especially these new groups.”
18. “But that he hated the ‘new ways’, tell me who brought electricity to the village? The clinic, the machines, the tractor and the cinema are all real. Tell me, who brought them? Your angel, or the ‘new ways’?”
19. Mrs. Tohonya swallows hard. She just rages within herself. Steve has learned a thing or two up there in his factory. But she truly understands how to stir up trouble. “Where is Vera, where is Joe?” she asks innocently.
20. She’s been clever, because farmer Ambrus has taken her bait. “They’ve slipped away again,” he growls. “Every evening they’re at the neighbors. I hardly ever see them! They’re sick of their old, boring parents.”
21. “No, they’re not,” answers Steve. “Don’t look for any special reason. They’re just young. They need a little entertainment. It’s not a sin to want to listen to the radio from time to time. They need a little fun now and then.”
22. And that’s all old Mrs. Tohonya needs, she takes her chance like a vulture: “Radios always lie,” she says, “and why would you need that? And anyway, it always takes the workers’ side. My husband’s angry too, and says he won’t buy one.”
23. “Your husband’s right,” says Steve quickly, “a kulak doesn’t need a radio. He’s got his own voice as a loudspeaker, it’s just that you can’t turn him down.”
24. Everyone in the room laughs, while Mrs. Tohonya just stutters, and grows pale. She nearly strangles herself, her throat grows so tight in anger. And grumbling, the old witch slips away.

25. Steve prepares to leave as well, and he tells them: "I'm going to see the Virag family," and then he adds, "I'm just going to listen to the radio too, we're going to listen to the farming show."
26. Then Kate says softly... "Come on, John! What's gotten into you... I've seen that you've been in a bad mood all evening. We don't leave one another alone when we're in trouble. Tell me what's troubling you, after all I'm your wife."
27. Mr. Ambrus now gently strokes his wife's hand. "You're right, dear Kate, I've got problems, and big ones, believe me darling, it's not a joke! I'm afraid the sugar beets won't pay much this year."
28. "Oh darling," answers Kate, "I understand how this might worry you. But our problem's not going to get any smaller if you eat yourself up with it. Go visit Greg Toth and ask him for some advice. After all he is the collective leader."
29. "That's it!" says John, and of course he'll go. "That Kate! She always knows what to do." He wants to hug her, but first he'll go do his duty at the Toths.
30. The Toths are listening to the radio, and are truly happy to see their guest. And when he's alone with the head of the family, John mentions the problem with his beets.
31. Greg wants to convey his experience to John.. "Believe me buddy, it's not bad luck. You've got to study to avoid things like this, because research will put an end to all sorts of bad luck."
32. "As to your problem, I happened to see your field this evening. I saw how your beets are dying with my own two eyes. But anybody worth his salt would know that beet borers are chewing your crop up."
33. John thanks him, for he knows good advice when he hears it. "And how do you know all of that?" he asks his friend. And Greg answers with a smile: "Well, I'll admit, John, I heard it all on the radio."
34. "The radio?" wonders John Ambrus. "Yeah, the radio," laughs Greg. "You can hear for yourself! It gives advice about all sorts of things like deep ploughing, sowing, and harvesting."
35. "It always talks about the work that needs to be done at the moment. It gives advice about everything. You just need to listen to it. It teaches you how to prune trees, and how to fatten animals. It teaches how to handle milk better, and how to make silage."
36. "You'll have to believe me, dear friend, I can just tell you: a radio is of great help to the farmer. You can be a good man, but you'll fall behind in the end, because these days you just can't live without radio."

37. The two of them laugh hard at that... Then they agree that Mr. Ambrus will go to the collective store in the morning. He'll get himself a radio but won't say a word to his family. He wants it to be a surprise.
38. So one day Kate stared in wonder. They've brought the new radio home. She could hardly speak when John said proudly: "And now we'll see what's on Kossuth!<sup>1</sup>"
39. And John Ambrus is just happy that they're all together again. He squeezes Kate's hand, and they laugh at one another. Every minute with his family is sweet, and he gazes thankfully at the radio.
40. The end.

---

<sup>1</sup> The only, and state-run, radio station of the time.