

**February 23rd, 2022**

“trees—that’s what I lack most of all,” she says

“you have so few of them here in Lviv

Donetsk, though, was a green city

greenery all around”

but I didn’t know that

I was young, never spent much time there,

never valued people or the county until after it happened

“second time I’ve lost my home,” she utters with hatred

“officially, this time”

and I get her

and I don’t

hugging her

my mom’s concerned there’ll be tons of internally displaced persons

where will we put them all up, she asks

I don’t mind, but I don’t have any space

except in your room, if you want

containing my emotions, I elect empathy, saying

I get you

but it’s too early to talk about that

though I actually think it’s too late

if we’re only talking about this now

so, being kind constantly is very hard, tricky

but easy and at times the only thing someone can want

and if the war, not just any war, came to our home

and we had to flee to another city in another part of the country  
I'd like to be helped there  
not for the people there to make xenophobic comments on the internet  
trying to catch my kids speaking the wrong language  
twisting my wife's tongue—she's from Belarus, for heaven's sake, seeking shelter here

if only I had the money to rent three of the four rooms in the apartment  
with old landlords and Soviet furniture

*Danyil Zadorozhnyi*

*(translated by Yuliya Charnyshova and Isaac Stackhouse Wheeler)*