

After introducing the main character, Ana Ionescu-Aslan, *Bunica* leads the viewer to other figures, other lives, other realities.

**Elena Ivanus, mail carrier**

Has worked as a mail carrier for years, lives with her husband and two children in Bucharest. During the revolution she delivered telegrams and was repeatedly caught between the battling sides. Today she is disappointed by the fact that her life has changed little since the revolution.

“Personally, I expected something much better. Not necessarily lots of money or a beautiful villa. Like most people dream of. We just hoped that things would be better for us than before. That we could lead a decent life.”

**Gelu Voican-Voiculescu, revolutionary and co-organizer of the execution**

Writer and geologist, dissident during Ceaucescu’s reign. He became a central figure of the revolution of ’89 by organizing the execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceaucescu and then serving as vice-prime minister under the first post-Communist president, Iliescu. In the years afterward he disappeared from the political scene and is now Romania’s ambassador to Tunisia.

“As a man who went out onto the street for the revolution, I naturally thought that they should be killed immediately. That’s how you make a revolution. You kill the people in power, whose power you wish to replace, but who would not leave voluntarily.”

**Costel Gramada, cabin steward**

Twenty-seven years old, he had to drop out of college due to a lack of funds. He now spends eight months of every year working nonstop on an American cruise ship which sails between the continental USA and Alaska. He saves the money he has earned over the past several years to purchase an apartment. But the original owner, from whom it was confiscated 50 years ago, is demanding its return.

“The state is interested in paying as little as possible for the return of the old property. That means that in my case the state wants me to loose the lawsuit. Then they’d have to pay me 105 million Lei. By the time they finally paid me out, the money would be almost worthless.”

**Alexandrou Paleologu, writer and politician**

Now a member of parliament he spent five years in prison during Ceaucescu’s reign. After the revolution he publicly admitted to having spied for the Securitate. Despite his advanced age he supports Romania’s budding democracy. In *Bunica* he faces a passer-by who angrily demands justice.

“I was born in a cursed country. But it seems maybe the curse is being lifted. Albeit slowly. I am lucky to have lived long enough to see the most important reason for all

of this disappear: to see the fall of communism. But you can't expect paradise to appear the next day. Paradise doesn't exist anyway."

### **Greaga family, scrap-iron collectors**

This Roma family roams Bucharest every day, collecting scrap iron, everything from pots and pans to old cars. For this the large family earns about three euros a day. A recent ban prohibits them from driving their horse-drawn wagon through the city's main streets—which represents a considerable threat to their existence. In *Bunica* they have a heated debate with Ana Ionescu and other passers-by—during which two different worlds collide.

Iron Collector: Mr. President Constantinescu doesn't allow us through there with our carts!  
Bunica: Yeah, but horse carts on Victoria Street! It's a problematic issue.  
Iron Collector: But where else am I supposed to get the iron?  
Bunica: But it doesn't have to be Victoria Street, there are so many other streets.  
Man passing by: What bothers you about these people collecting iron on Victoria Street?  
Wherever there's iron lying around it's supposed to be collected. And nobody but these people here can collect it.  
Iron Collector: Is Constantinescu going to come and collect it? No, he's not!  
Man: Leave it be, Mr. Constantinescu has other things to do.

### **Maria, Iulian and Nicolette, farmers**

For generations this family has sold the crops they grow in their fields to Bucharest. After the land was confiscated by the Communist regime, they began to work at a factory. They now farm their land again. The viewer is taken to a countryside 50 kilometers from Bucharest where horse-drawn wagons rule the roads. Their greatest wish is a small tractor.

"Before, it used to be better than now. Back then we worked a lot, they even sent for us on Sundays, too. But I got the money and it was enough. Today, We work every which way. The field, the cows, the pigs, and the pension. In order to have enough to live on."

### **Anca Kosoveanu, retired engineer**

Formerly the head agricultural specialist at the farmers' cooperative in Berceni. Now privately owned, its farmers have formed a cooperative according to the Communist model. The greenhouses with the missing roofs are evidence of the revolution of '89, when the local farmers declared the glass to be their private property and took it home.

"The boss of the coop tried hard to make clear to the people that they should pool together their money and their good will. Even if they bought the machines and tractors themselves, and other work aids. In 1990 we can't work with the horse and wooden plough anymore!"

### **Gheorghe Tartacuta, engineer at the FAUR works, Bucharest**

Considers himself part of the old generation of Communist factory workers. The FAUR works in Bucharest has been one of the most important steelworks in Europe since the 20s. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain the buyers have all but disappeared, and just a few employees now work in the cavernous buildings. Locomotives were once manufactured here, but now they are deadly silent.

“We’re experiencing the same tragedy as the entire Romanian industry: The state’s withdrawal from industry, which we actually consider criminal. But the state has pulled out of everything.”