

# Putin's downfall in sight, Italy turns right with Meloni, Trump in trouble and farewell to Mantel

**As Vladimir Putin's war effort in Ukraine faltered badly**, the Russian president turned decisively away from any hope of peace. A sudden mass mobilisation of Russian men led to rare instances of protest across the country and long queues of would-be conscripts at the borders. Simultaneously, Russia sought to legitimise its territorial gains in Ukraine with hastily arranged "referendums" and nuclear threats against the west.

It feels like Putin has staked everything on triumph or disaster, as depicted by Pete Reynolds's cover art this week. "With Putin it seems to become all about the eyes," he says. "His nose, mouth, the arrangement of the features all seem to be the obvious descriptors of his face but his eyes always end up being the focus and challenge. And they insist on looking straight at you."

Pjotr Sauer, Andrew Roth and Luke Harding report on a week of growing chaos enveloping Russia's war effort. Then, foreign affairs commentator Simon Tisdall predicts that Putin's downfall is within sight - the only real question is who else he will drag down with him.

**The big story** [Page 10](#) →



**As expected, the Italian elections saw victory for Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy**, and she is now set to become the country's most right-wing prime minister since the end of the second world war. Patrick Wintour asks what it means for Europe, while Angela Giuffrida reports on the mood in Italy over the prospect of a far-right coalition including the likes of Matteo Salvini and Silvio Berlusconi. Then, in the Opinion section, Italian writer Roberto Saviano outlines why he thinks the result spells danger for his homeland and for the continent.

**Spotlight** [Page 15](#) →; **Opinion** [Page 47](#) →

**With the net seemingly closing around Donald Trump** on several fronts, we go behind the scenes at his Mar-a-Lago Florida residence, where Julian Borger reveals how cash meets influence after dark. And Hugo Lowell explains why a civil fraud suit against the former president and several members of his family could result in the end of the Trump Organization in its current form.

**Spotlight** [Page 30](#) →

**The career path from stand-up comedian to the priesthood** is not exactly a road well travelled. Lamorna Ash finds out what motivated two close university friends to abandon a world of absurdist jokes on stage for a life in service of God.

**Divine comedy** [Page 34](#) →

**Finally, the literary world is in mourning** for the two-time Booker prize-winning writer Hilary Mantel, who died suddenly last week. Our leader column pays tribute to a glorious original, the likes of which we may never see again.

**The Guardian view** [Page 49](#) →

<b>4-14</b>	<b>GLOBAL REPORT</b> <i>Headlines from the last seven days</i>
10	<b>Russia</b> Has Putin gambled the house on Ukraine?
<b>15-33</b>	<b>SPOTLIGHT</b> <i>In-depth reporting and analysis</i>
15	<b>Italy</b> Why a far-right PM is not all right for Europe
19	<b>UK</b> Sterling on the slide
22	<b>India</b> Bollywood's bubble bursts
26	<b>Qatar</b> The World Cup of worker exploitation
30	<b>US</b> What goes on after dark at Trump's Mar-a-Lago
33	<b>US</b> New York's early nights

<b>34-44</b>	<b>FEATURES</b> <i>Long reads, interviews and essays</i>
34	The friends who forsook comedy for the cloth <i>By Lamorna Ash</i>
40	How the smiley face became big business <i>By Will Coldwell</i>

<b>45-50</b>	<b>OPINION</b>
45	<b>Jason Burke</b> Beware false optimism over the Iran protests
47	<b>Roberto Saviano</b> The tragedy of Meloni
48	<b>Jonathan Freedland</b> Truss and Kwarteng's economic class war

<b>51-59</b>	<b>CULTURE</b>
51	<b>Screen</b> Jungle, the dark world of a drill musical drama
55	<b>Music</b> Country star Margo Price on her wilderness years
57	<b>Books</b> Darwinism's outriders

<b>60-61</b>	<b>LIFESTYLE</b>
60	<b>Ask Annalisa</b> Being the other woman

 **The Guardian Weekly**  
Founded in Manchester, England  
**4 July 1919**

Vol207 | Issue No 14

This magazine is printed on paper that has been produced by UPM mills in Scotland and Finland. It has a low carbon footprint, and has been sourced from sustainably managed forests

*Guardian Weekly is an edited selection of some of the best journalism found in the Guardian and Observer newspapers in the UK and the Guardian's digital editions in the UK, US and Australia. The weekly magazine has an international focus and three editions: global, Australia and North America. The Guardian was founded in 1821, and Guardian Weekly in 1919. We exist to hold power to account in the name of the public interest, to uphold liberal and progressive values, to fight for the common good, and to build hope. Our values, as laid out by editor CP Scott in 1921, are honesty, integrity, courage, fairness, and a sense of duty to the reader and the community. The Guardian is wholly owned by the Scott Trust, a body whose purpose is "to secure the financial and editorial independence of the Guardian in perpetuity". We have no proprietor or shareholders, and any profit made is re-invested in journalism.*