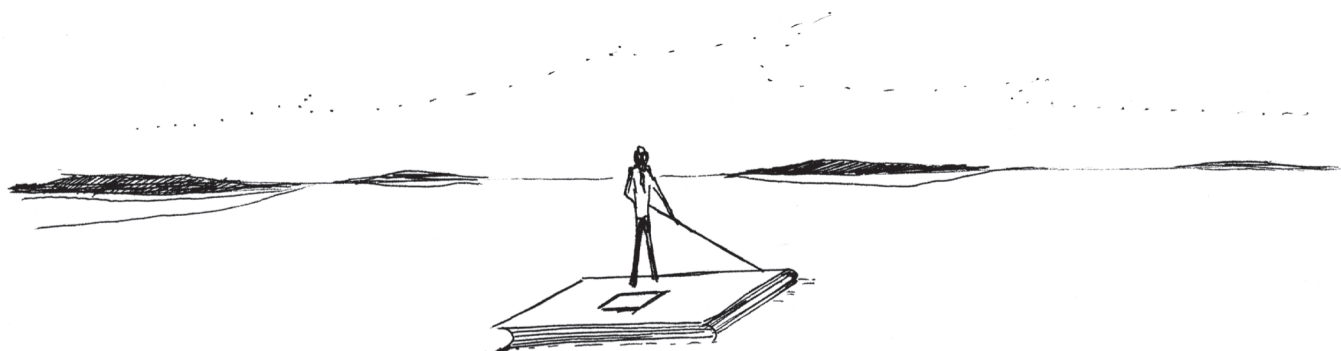






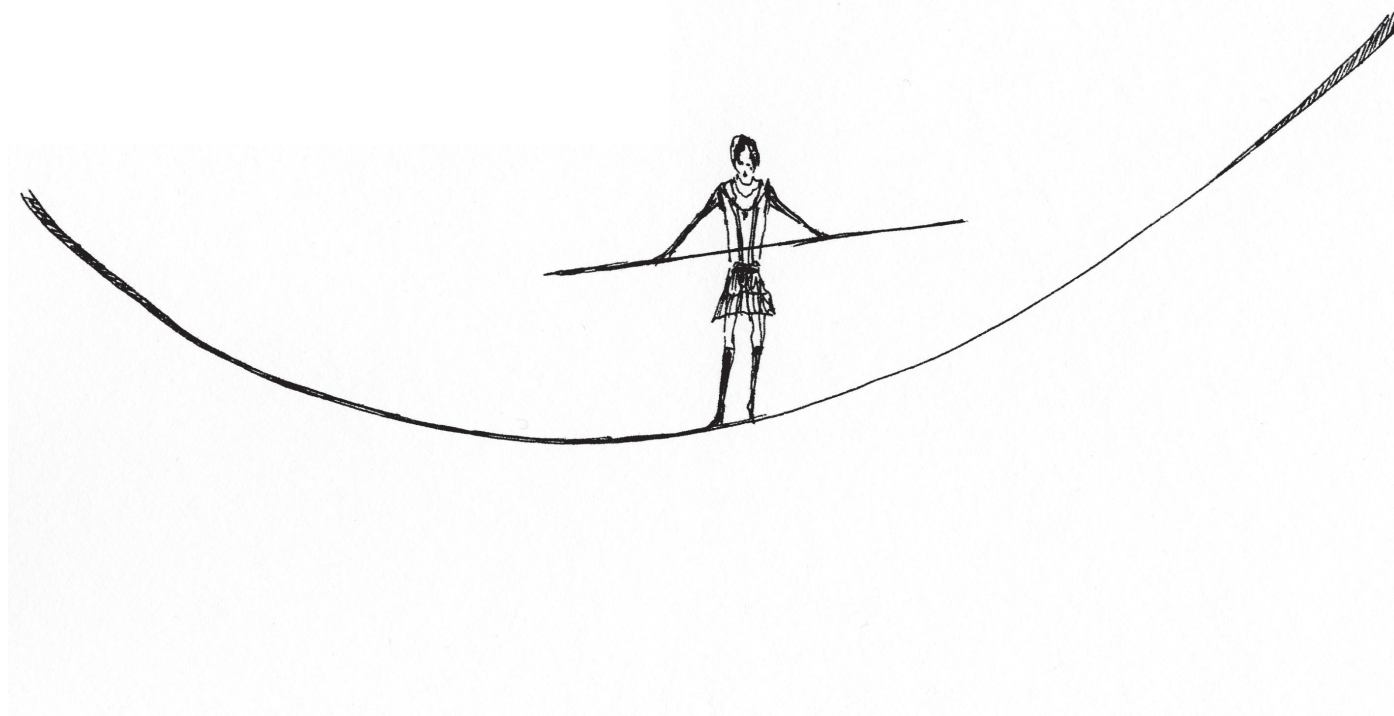
the second day after the end of the world
igor malijevský

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dancing on broken glass



fragile city
walls of houses
quiver in anticipation
windows crack with desire
feverish ventilation systems
and safety circuits
and down on the waterfront
the fragile surface of the river
bears off thousands of dreams
from only this one night
fragile screams
fragile footsteps
fragile eyes behind the windows of nightclubs
fragile shadows of street walkers
fragile mom
fragile dad
the fragile eyes of fragile plush toys
a little girl in a white dress
dances on broken glass
raises her hands above her head
oh what wonderful air
what a beautiful sky
the shards are a construction kit of the world
the shards are a kaleidoscope
fragile is the silence of the night
littered with a thousand brittle stars

fragile is the loneliness
which rolls through the city streets
like a flood
the solitude of the first breakup

as quick
as first love
because everyone in class already broke up with someone
only eva hasn't broken up with anyone yet
in every place in the city
somebody has already left someone
in every cafe
on every bridge
in every street
in every backyard
on every phone
on every answering machine
on every computer
in all these places someone already at some point
didn't want to make a fuss
whatever happened has happened has happened has happened
a scratched gramophone record
crossed-out name on the doorbell
replaced lock
new ID card
a smoked pack of cigarettes
bottle of vodka
injured wrist
overnight trips to nowhere
desperate phone calls
sleeping pills
psychoanalysis
antidepressants
a wrecked kitchen
judges
lawyers



physicians
social workers
city police
a mediator
a couples counselor
all of them saints
who aren't worth shit
because the judge is fragile
the lawyer is fragile
the doctor is fragile
the social worker is fragile
the city police are fragile
the mediator is a jerk
the couples counselor is fragile
and saints
are just as fragile
as you
and your loneliness
and the loneliness of this night
in which a young boy
invited a girl to the concert of a famous star
which cost him his annual pocket money
when he tried to kiss her on the subway
what are you doing
that wasn't part of the deal
the girl disappears in the dark
and the boy tries to get drunk
somewhere else
a young woman is expecting twins
with a man who moved out
as soon as he heard about them

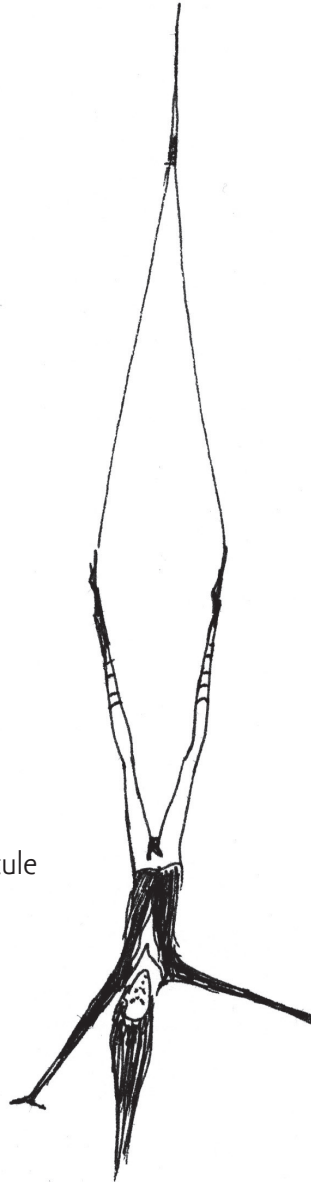
the room smells of baby clothes
the room smells of tears
and of tomorrow
and somewhere else
a drunk made love
to an aging woman
for neither of them
the first time it happened
and yet the fragile morning
splashed into her face a current of suspended desire
will you call she asked and her voice broke
well i'll call if i can
and somewhere else
an adult man berates his mother
and then she cries
and then he smokes
so it is always
and somewhere else
in the middle of the bottomless night
a homeless person watches an advert
which alternates the faces of two women
and begins to caress them
standing there a long while
motionless
he has never had
two women at once
and somewhere else
an old woman listens
to the wheezing of her last but one night
full of phantoms
then the person in the next bed



sat up
and had a cat on each of her shoulders
one white
and the other black
and then she began to climb the wall
and the ceiling
kissing those pussycats
until i said go away, uchadi
i had to say it in russian
otherwise she wouldn't have stopped
only then did she go back to bed
and i could die
in the middle of this night
where in absolute silence
a young girl in a pink dress
dances on broken glass
in amazement she inspects
her bleeding wound
her dress flies in the air
and sweet pink footprints
dance behind her
through the fragile silence of the night
littered with a thousand brittle stars

loneliness pours out of windows and bedrooms
presses on silent couples
bides its time
a small piece of dynamite is enough
slamming the door with all your strength is enough
and fragile houses fall to the ground
like wounded captives

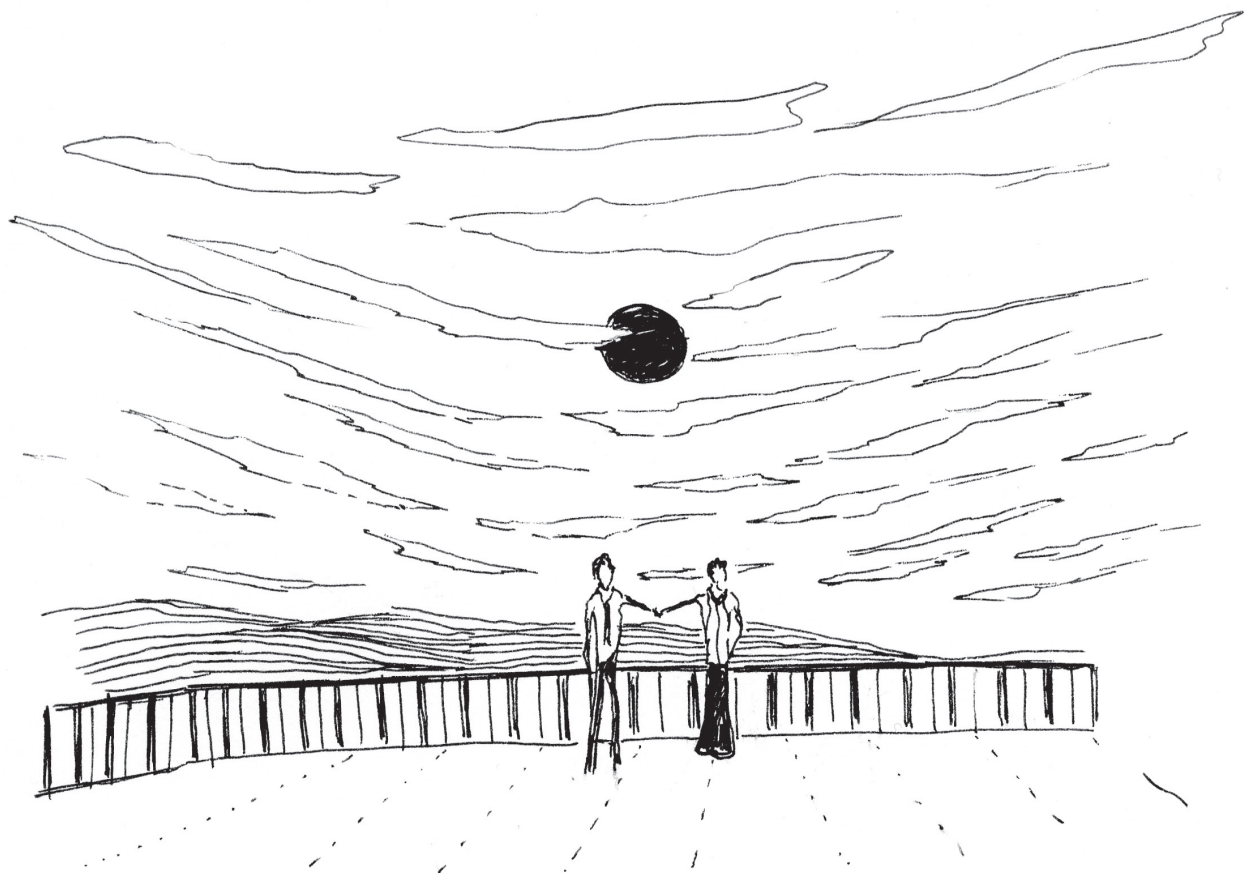
he has no dress sense
earns little
yells a lot
hates playing tennis
or it just doesn't feel right somehow
anything can be the reason
it'll be increasingly difficult to escape
each street is a cul-de-sac
there's no exit
without forgiveness
and infinite compassion
cling to one another
and touch each other's bodies
no-one ever wanted to hurt you
everything's just a misunderstanding
yelling is a misunderstanding
silence is a misunderstanding
beating, lies and infidelity are misunderstandings
incomprehension is a misunderstanding
impotence is a misunderstanding
shitty diapers are a misunderstanding
disease is a misunderstanding
remorse, madness, crying, withdrawal, fatigue, ridicule
you need not fear them
they're all misunderstandings
bad breath is a misunderstanding
socks on the table are a misunderstanding
lack of time is a misunderstanding
waiting for a text message is a misunderstanding
bulk emails are a misunderstanding
TV computer games politics religion and alcohol



are a misunderstanding
feminism is a misunderstanding
porn is a misunderstanding
a mother-in-law is also a misunderstanding
everything's just a misunderstanding
no-one ever wanted to hurt you
hold each other's hands
it'll be increasingly difficult to escape
the night is pregnant with solitude
the sky cracked
through the cracks a cosmic void blows in
it seeps into the facades of houses
and into hair and cigarettes
each handrail is fragile
because it has nothing to hold onto
the surface of the river cracked
the bridges cracked
the pavement cracked
the facades of houses cracked
the glass eyes of plush toys cracked
lips cracked
fragile skin
fragile eyes
fragile heart
hold each other's hands
don't leave one another
and forgive
because somewhere nearby
in complete silence
a woman in a red dress
dances on broken glass

feet cut bone-deep
trying to hide her pain
trying to sustain
the red thread of tenderness
lifting her pale face to the moon
she forgives the night
she forgives the points of thousands of stars

the sky cracked
weather full of loneliness and frightened smileys
invaded the city
everyone's chatting like mad
hoping at least to save the attic
where they used to play as children
discussion groups contact addresses
clubs
beach volleyball
going to the movies
consensual sex
they say
that half the men who go to brothels
don't have intercourse at all
sit for a while and have a chat
but to hold someone's hand
and look into their eyes
you won't save enough money for that in your lifetime
the loneliness of a morning coffee
the loneliness of a career
the loneliness of personal growth
the loneliness of a wide range of interests
the loneliness of traveling

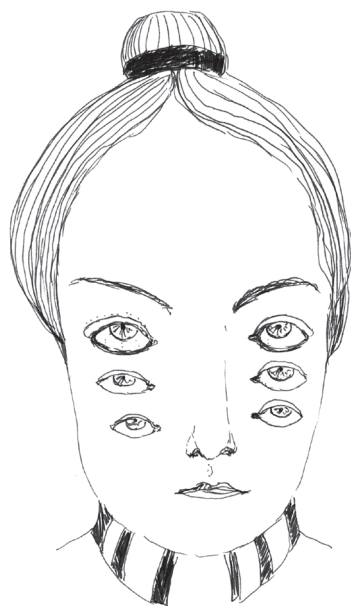


the loneliness of rafting
the loneliness of masturbation
the loneliness on facebook
gleeful blossoming solitude
de luxe
the loneliness of dying
open windows cough into the night
a cleaning truck drove through the street
a man leaned out of the window after making love
and lit a cigarette
his back is caressed
by her gaze
and down by the river
the silhouette of a couple
kissing like they did
thirty years ago
he's a bit hunched up
she's still beautiful
in the benevolent soft light of the moon
she sent a wisp of her hair
towards the river
the city stopped breathing for a moment
old age is a misunderstanding
everything that you're not responsible for
is a misunderstanding
each of your weaknesses
is a misunderstanding
all your failures
are misunderstandings
misunderstanding is your fragility
listen to how quiet the night is

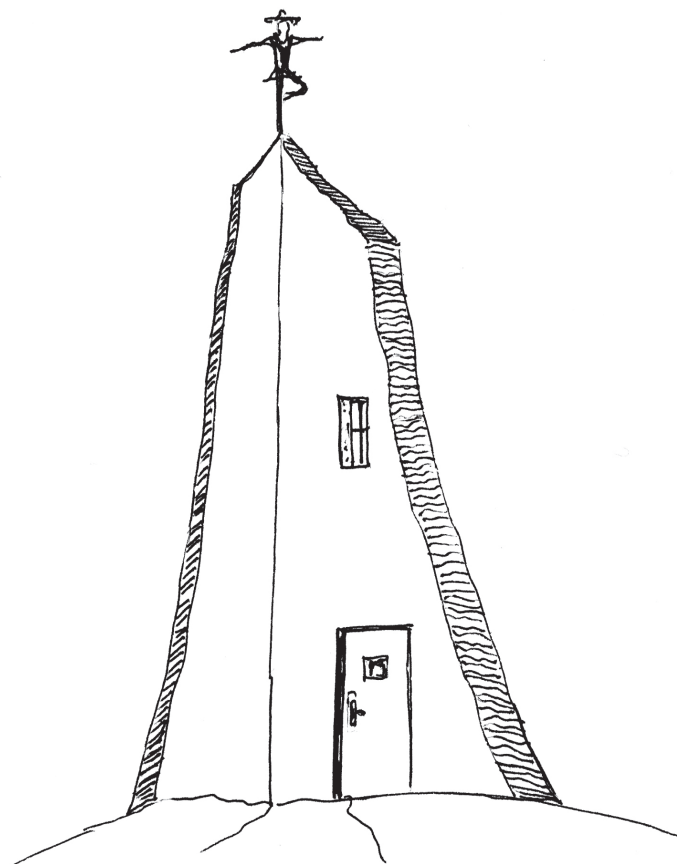


the tenderness of the city is so timid
just gentle touches of the skin
just a whisper
just a look in the eyes
just the warm breath
of another person
their palm
their silence
their delicate mouth
hold each other's hands
and listen to the voice of this night
the blinded eyes of plush toys
howl at the moon
and somewhere in complete silence
a barefoot old woman in a black dress
dances on broken glass
her bloodless soles
toughened by scars
stamp footprints in the stone
the old woman raises her hands above her head
and sings
oh what wonderful air
what a beautiful sky

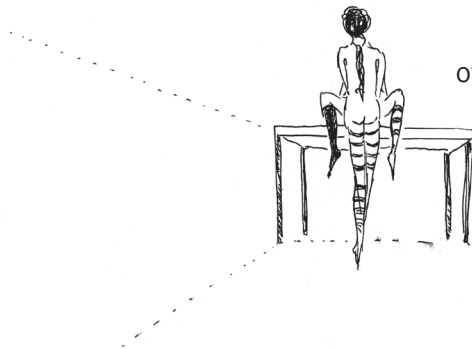
paris, the night of august 26, 2010



visiting hour

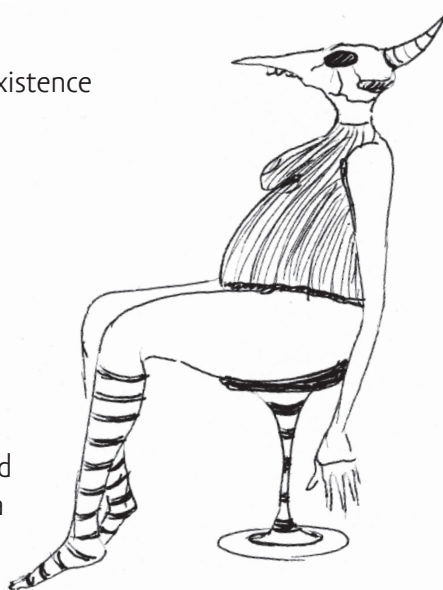


at the beginning of everything
is the sound of silent tearing
a discreet violation of the perfect bonds
of the solid material of reality
like a cat purring
in freezing midnight anxiety
like a cat's claws moving
along the pristine surface of a nylon stocking
the skin doesn't yet bleed
the fibers are barely separated
and midnight breathes as if
nothing major has ever happened
as if days have been threaded
in an orderly fashion since the creation of the world
like beads on a thread of purposes
at the beginning of everything is a sound
like claws groping the surface of living flesh
rough on smooth
under which a microscopic drama
of the ruptured ties of existence takes place
over which another hole in the stocking of consciousness
weeps in the evenings
one fiber after another gives up its life's battle
losing the context of the whole
that quiet sound is nothing but the sum
of thousands of desperate cries of threads
that have already definitively lost
their struggle for an infinite touch
for a connection
in the quiet perfection of the whole
while the cat purrs from the window



into a chill landscape of the most terrible dreams
into a festering hotbed of anxiety
whose parasitic fibers of existence
stretch through the night
towards that sound
as if towards a tin bowl
full of fresh blood
at the beginning of everything
there is an almost inaudible tearing of the fabric of consciousness
with which every silence is pregnant
this delicately jarring sound
was heard at the creation of the world
and someone a dimension farther on
felt goosebumps along the edge of their existence

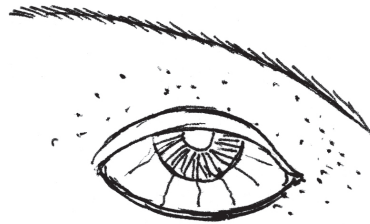
madness knocks at the door
in small gestures
it draws its signs
in a most subtle symbolism
of images
readable only by those
already in the know
bus number 200
carries an intimate transport of the infected
to a stop with the innocuous name of odra
only those already in the know
will hear in the name of the little river
the sound of fabric being torn
seemingly insignificant details will decide
who gets out here
and who carries on as far as the housing estate

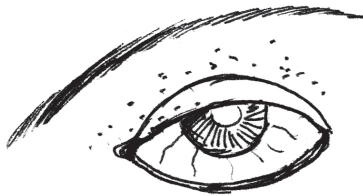


restless movements of the eyes
darting to escape the blows of indifference
dirt under the fingernails betraying
the loss of strength and resignation
of a hitchhiker on the moor of consciousness
the minuscule smirks
of the carriers of deadly secrets
that cannot even be pronounced
because no language in the world
would allow it
small diverted talismans
from other lives
tightly clutched in the hand
a hunger for the gaze of strangers' eyes
and shame that can
never be overcome

madness knocks at the door
in the economical language
of the existential alphabet
of a secret society
of esoteric nightmares
and nails bitten down to the quick
its mirrors are curved at the edge
so nicely
and with such an eye for detail
that their beauty hurts
how can one not fall in love
with that playful deflection
from the grinding rules of reality
modeled after the window panes

in old cottages...
every mistake is welcomed by an audience for the first time
with liberating applause
which will never be repeated
a mistake is beautiful only once
one cannot fall in love twice in a row
a mistake is a bold promise
which must never be heard again
a mantle of madness
decorated with brocades of metaphors
and uncommon feelings
a canopy of revelations
and bewitching visions
bold sentences against the current
lukewarm and stale banality
an urgent song of the world
full of meanings which cannot be silenced
or turned off any longer
the throb of a bewitching beat of souls
glances behind the curtain
can no longer be scared off
by one conclusion or another
let bygones be bygones
or by one beer or another
fetch the engines fetch the engines
what were you doing
when it began to burn inside
when the stench of the burning soul
came out of the mouth and all the orifices
that only a naked human being can count
did you pour on water

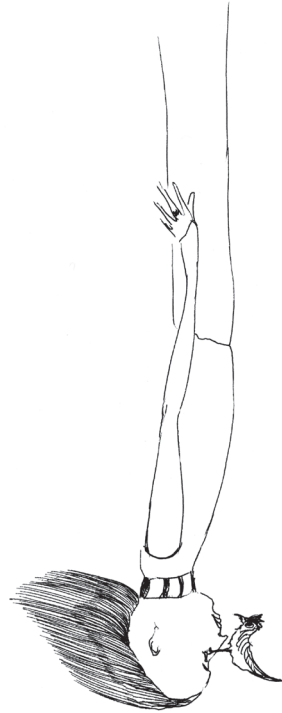




pour on water
when the brand was burning inside

*i knew
that you would come today
since morning i have felt
a strange tingling in my body
like being stroked
all over my skin
by thousands of red-hot hands
like when you come out
of a hot tub
and immediately start to run
naked in a meadow
full of sheepsbane
since morning it's been here
once more
full of your wild signs
the roll for breakfast
butter curled in a smile
the tea spilled on the tablecloth
awkwardly apologized
for the extreme shortage
of culinary fantasy
and for its
depressingly lukewarm nature
and mrs. fialova did not snore at all in the night
and an itsy-bitsy spider began to dance on the curtain
and embroider verses
in which to catch itsy-bitsy flies*

then i sat
and looked inwards
a link in the chain of bodies
sitting along both sides of the corridor
on elementary school chairs
everyone here looks inwards
so as not to have to
look at each other
for hours and days
to watch strangers' eyes
is not possible without sin
i sat there
and looked inwards
some no longer know
how to look elsewhere
than inwards
their eyes jerked back
and coated with a mourning veil of memories
that are so bewitching
and jealous
and grudging
that they won't let anyone else join them
that they want to have
those eyes forever only for themselves
but i still know how to
look outwards
i love the meadow
on which we sit with mom
looking at the landscape
and sometimes plucking flowers
i'll show you the place



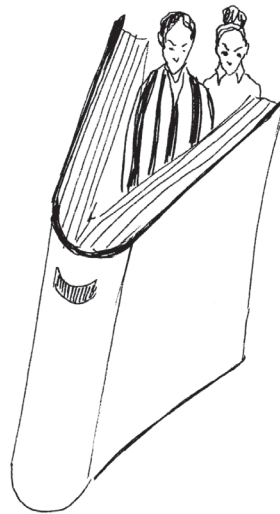
*when you come again
and i love the fall
and i like to go out
the nurses let me out
but someone always has to go with me*

all those buildings
seem constructed by the same set designer
a specialist in honest B-movie horrors
his signature trademark
does not hesitate for a moment
to mix styles and cultures
a blind spot on the map of the landscape
a missing jigsaw piece in the ground plan of the capital
a blue flickering castle
in a forest near petrohrad
midnight screams from the open windows
of the castle in smečno
nursing a dragon's den in its foundations
the silent shedding of plaster and leaves
in the dobrány asylum
the medieval dungeons
decorated with dying bodies
in rural china
the solid military bunker
of the manhattan psychiatric center
even the best-equipped asylum
with a correct approach
to its moneyed private clientele
can be recognized from miles away
not even the best will in the world



and honest empathy
fifth generation of psychopharmaceuticals
an individual approach
to patients
art therapy
canistherapy
hippotherapy
and geraniums in the windows
can remove the stigma of inner emigration
and existential exile
a semi-permeable border
celebrates the fall of the iron curtain
nobody adds shards of glass
to mortar any more
and this is surely
objective progress in treatment
but the border remains a border
for even through an inconspicuous little hedge
let alone a solid corporate gatehouse
where mucus to coat the eyes
is supplied in gallons
the only really effective
prophylactic
against infection
for even through an inconspicuous little hedge
violent impulses
of high-voltage horrors
may periodically spark

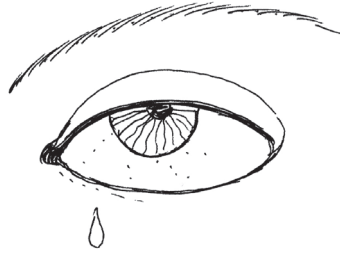
it's the same at the station
a large departure hall



that's occasionally crossed
by a slightly scruffy backpacker
with his gaze turned inwards
the gatekeeper reads a newspaper
and occasionally answers questions
up to the amount of his salary
only the gatekeeper earns
two thousand bucks a month with bonuses
which is about enough to get directions
to women's ward number twenty-six
turn left towards the reception
and from there take the alley on the right
until you get to the yellow building
the entrance is from the other side
you ring for the nurse
it's not visiting hours now
but you can give it a try
you have to agree with the nurse
and the toilets are here on the left
and a shop selling sweets
and fruit
which is a symbol of health
and generator of diarrhea
or cigarettes
that nobody bans here
because without them
you'd go crazy
and then newspapers
published in all the dead languages of the world
monuments to defeated kings
patents of forgotten inventions

and endless graveyards of suicides
those traitors
how could they...
leave us completely...
in the galley of existence
how could they
hurl at us such an unequivocal conclusion
that grins inhumanly
at all our exhausted hours
our intimate collections
of fragile efforts and endeavors
there are no other cemeteries
but the cemeteries of suicides
whose survivors
all of us ultimately are
ex definitio
and
de lege
is that clear?
if you don't find it
just come back

*i knew
you would come one day
and forgive me
when i closed my eyes in the morning
i dreamed of white snow
and i saw the sign
the crows were pecking their brows
snowflake monkeys were howling at the moon
and their muzzles were warm enough*

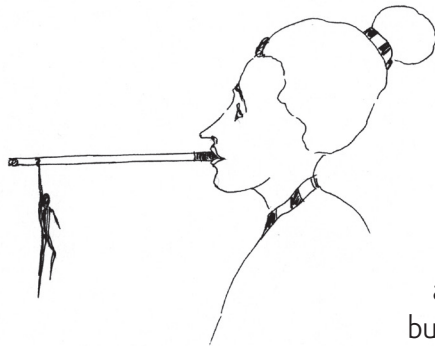


when they kissed
then i told the nurse
that i may have to go out for a while
that you are coming for me
and will take me away
because in ten years
you have never come to see me
that we found each other again
among the books
we lovers of the white eyes of pages
that we are secretly reading
a medical book on mead
we are drowning gulp by gulp
in the hot syrup of dreaming
we feel sugar on our lips
and heat passes through our body
letter by letter
don't overeat
and don't gorge
better to not read and be hungry
better to live on dreams
and be sleepy
and then from the pocket of my dressing gown
a tinkling of bells blossomed
a sled dog team violently rushed into
a russian village
the bells of jesters
the call of chapels
and flurries of alarm clocks in our heads
i wanted to explain the way to you
but my mouth still doesn't obey me so much

*so hopefully you'll find it
several patients stuck their jaws out at me
and i went down the middle of the corridor to meet you
like a bride
i had to look at the tips of my shoes
so as not to stumble
i still don't have the certainty
of a short distance runner
and mrs. fialová looked at me
and smiled
for the first time*

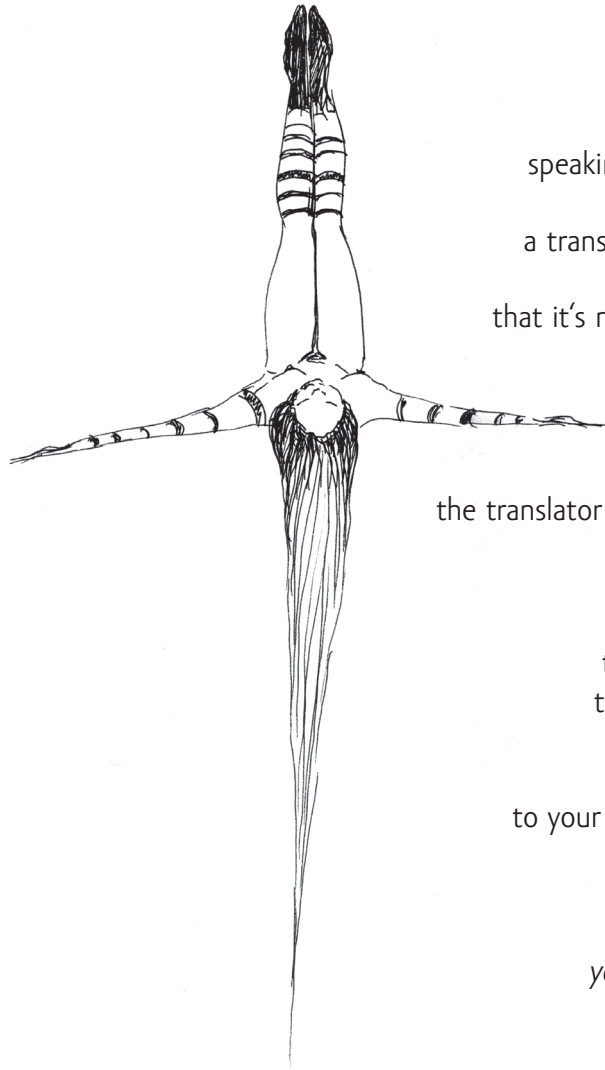
all parallel worlds
are only layers of colors
on a single gesso of existence
always within touching distance
and beside you
the breathtakingly intimate closeness
of true hell
is pawing at you
wherever you find yourself
rusted wrists bleed
into the tracks of the subway
at the other end of the world
the beat of the drops sliding
down the chill metal
of new york's subway structures
where a woman with eyes turned inwards
is singing an angelic song
a hymn of the canopies of consciousness
and the tenderness of introspection

the safety of quiet closeness
 and natural tenderness
 the song is carried through the underground
 so ineptly
 that it shatters against itself
 it breaks against the distribution cables
 and swollen veins of the city's organism
 against the damp walls of the endless vagina of the metropolis
 where on the opposite platform
 a man is lurking
 with his gaze turned inwards
 until the auditorium is full of people
 he then pulls down his pants
 leaning forward while
 sticking out his ass
 as his last gesture of defiance
 once the valve releases
 the pressurized steam
 the soul is seized by fatigue
 and infinite sadness
 the guy shuffles guiltily to the exit
 and the spectators wait indifferently
 for the next performance
 look
 in the third car
 a woman is sitting
 in her final maquillage
 in her plastic bag seventy years
 of fashion magazines
 at the next station she tries to get out
 but the magazines scatter on the ground



she collects them
the train begins to move
i missed it, i did
she manages to whisper
then she falls asleep
then she wakes up
then she collects the magazines
and falls asleep again
until she reaches the terminal
the underground is full of eyes
that are looking inwards
to watch the eyes of strangers sitting opposite
as all the stations pass
is not possible without sin
the underground is full of eyes
which cannot be avoided

all parallel worlds
are just hidden currents
in a single trough of the universe
look
in a sleepy southern italian town
on the square in front of the synagogue
a girl is drowning
in waves of misunderstanding
rolling in through the ragged cloth
between attacks of tenderness and helplessness
desperately searching for words
to ex-pl-ain everything
the whole of her heart and numbed dreams
spanning infinitely distant shores



ah my dear
not even you can understand me
why is there only fear in your face
look

the girl then undresses
people run from all directions
the *polizia* arrive
speaking an incomprehensible language
the same as *tutte le persone*
a translator comes from the eternal city
the local rabbi is relieved to find
that it's not an anti-semitic demonstration
but a misunderstanding
with the whole world

the girl gets in an ambulance
and her lover on a train
the translator returns by car to the eternal city
and the rabbi leaves for home
with his gaze turned inwards
at the beginning of everything
there is veronica's torn little scarf
that mommy embroidered for you
with all the signs of the world
that your dad applied
to your forehead beaded with the sweat
of a baby fever which
vanished beneath the scarf

*your eyes shine with distant worlds
which i sometimes
recall a little*

*and they still shine the same
only the load of fatigue and sadness
is increasing in the hold
your eyes shine
with the cities of your ancient dreams
and exotic desires
i wonder if in new york
forest bells also chime
their pale blue song
while i
the stowaway
with a tarpaulin robe
on a stooping mast
i look to the horizon
i do not even have a ticket
and yet we set sail
edging along the shore
again hair in the wind
and leaves over the sky
and birds in the gutter
and a little bug on my palm
come i'll tell you the secret
of where i sit on a bench
catnapping
and hiding
my tobacco trove
my head rolls
on a trip around the world
i'm like a drunk
after morning communion
it's time for a pipe of peace*

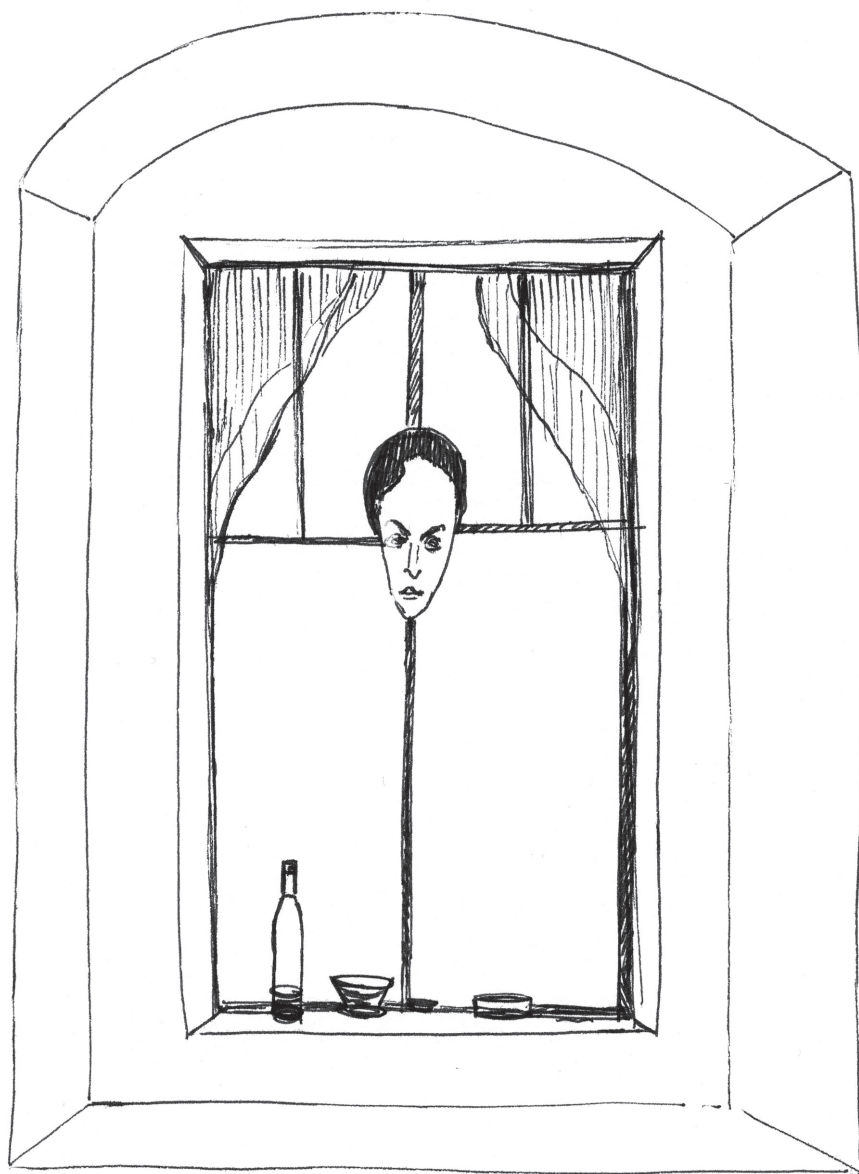


*don't be crazy don't be alarmed
a cat is also an animal
no need to go anywhere
when we have little time
everything runs to meet you
and you just turn your cheek
and look into my eyes
that surely isn't a sin
but you run through the leaves
summer's end in your eyes
and on your lips the word wait
and in your beard already snow*

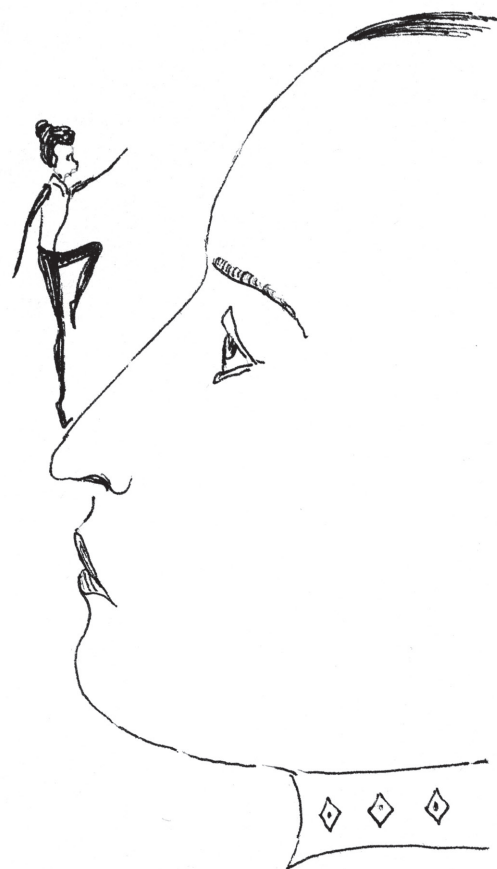
so drop by again some time

the park in the grounds is full of crossroads
with guideposts
like tourist signs
the words sound as if they're from a fairy tale
and don't mean much more
than the number of the hospital block
let's not be naive
only the Head Physician understands the soul
so let's go see him
and let's kneel
we'll ask him to intercede
let's not be naive
we'll slip an envelope with a few verses
into the ward round notes

new york, september 2011 and berlin, november 2011



the last day of ivan denisovich

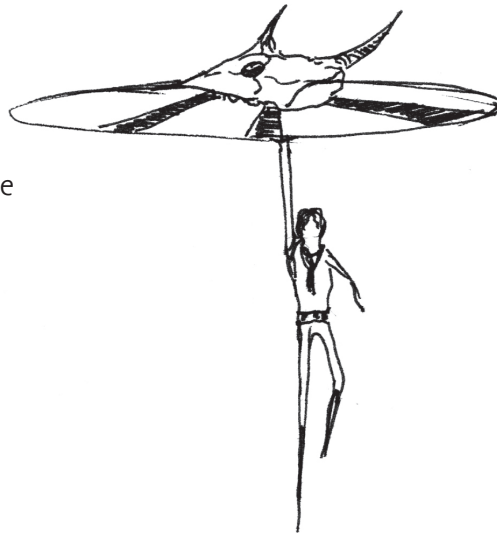


i touch you only through my soles
and even that hurts a little
i touch you only through
my credit card
and that hurts too
i've looked forward
to meeting you all my life
now that it's happening
i'm wandering underground
and don't know where to look for you
hundreds of shadows in the palace gloom
and i'm being watched
by the guard from a dream who stands at the escalator
an aged eurydice
who everyone flees
i have that fear myself
and yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich

moscow
i'm seeing you for the first time
and yet i don't recognize you
they say you've taken to prayer
again the lord of all nations
the strange black totem in the tret'yakov gallery
always another face, always the same inscription
i'm the one you believe in
while you're having fun
repainting little red books into icons
here a priest there a priest
you play bells

you hope that where there's no soul
even the devil won't catch it
but maybe down at the volga they say
as they cast lures in the evening
but the volga is far away
we are here and now
moscow rules

and yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich
a hundred times they'll rob us
but they won't bear off our soul
a battered guy with no wallet
cries out in the boulevard
hosts of the virtuous give a clap
and continue to lick the boots of swine
all for one
one for all he can get
and the summer has gone as quickly as it came
black-and-white crows finish off its remains
seed by seed
pushkin boasts i got a tan in our solarium
and gives out his business cards
in revenge tatyana puts out for everyone
except onegin
the captain's daughter is snorting a line
with a five-hundred note in her nostril
while at taganka the coke has already run out
snow days
so they were lying to us in our school books
and yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich

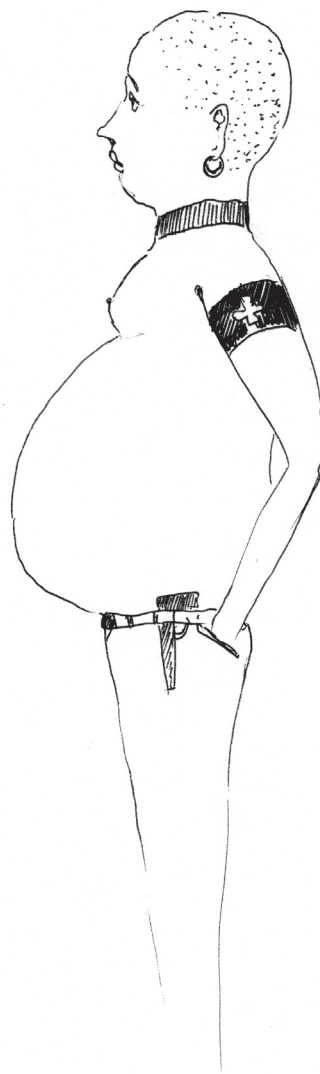


moscow sobbed
and then blew her nose
and in the feline green-brown eyes
standing around the beauty salon
you read what was on the scrap from the english workbook
i am more intelligent than my grandfather.
ira, do you have the most expensive mobile phone?
she has cheap jeans.
instead of belomorkanal
silver russian style cigarettes
verses on lips
a copeck on the tongue
under the russian-soul brand
on souvenir stalls
humility and fear
under the nothing-but-the-nation brand
regular wages and a sense of security
every embrace is good
moscow!

remember
yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich
you sobbed and then you blew your nose
ivan was surely not the first
but maybe he was the last you cow
just remember
how nicely scared you both were when you were together
fog on the lubyanka
silence on the arbat
and where are those houses
where people are born

out of hopelessness and misery
and where are the yards
where black cats dance when the moon shines
where are the hidden corners
where a cottage slowly sways to the music of the wind
show me the men
who can consciously choose to lose
bring me the women
with humble strength in their deep eyes
only desolate and terrible dwellings of the lord of all nations
stand at those places today
and round about
i'm the one you believe in
chapels of golden and spanish flies
credit card blowflies
pension savings dung beetles
business dinner fruit flies
and bugs as always
but yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich

moscow
you swallowed out of habit or sentiment
nobody knows
you ate your own tail
and dug into your entrails
everyone around constantly looks
as if you were somehow here with us
the devices are working
the infusion is flowing
at the end of the world beer is always damned expensive
so don't take it badly



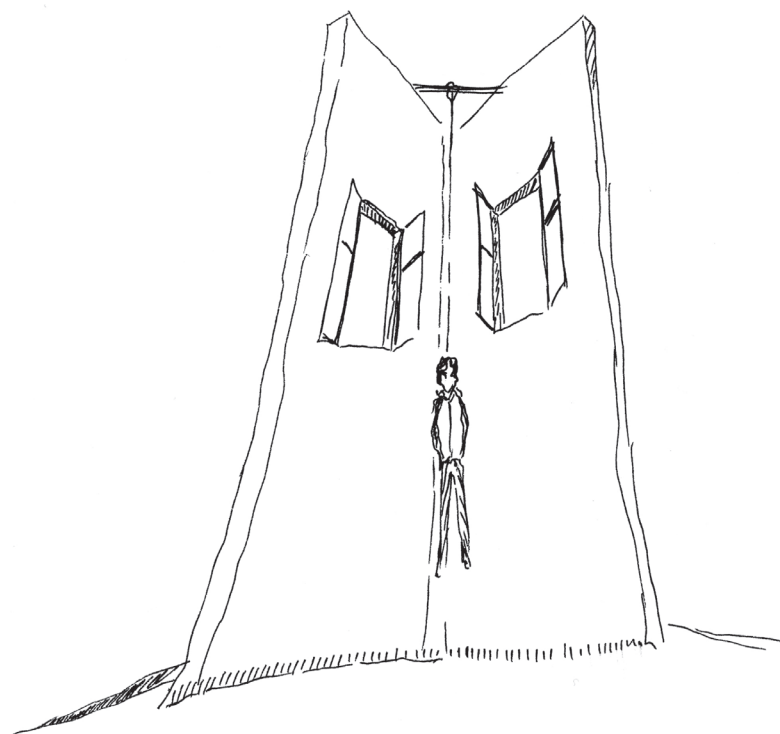
they were just lying to us in the school books
it's not such a sad horror
at all
it's a horror that's much more fun
smooth and shiny
a horror from which you'll no longer bounce back

and yesterday was the last day...
so where are the houses?
people pulled them down
and where are those yards?
cats swallowed them
where is the witch's hut on its crow's feet
what?

the hut on goosebumps
the hut on a chicken butt
well i found such a one here
oh my god
i don't care that it's not funny
i keep on joking and wandering through the unknown city
drunk to the quick
where is the vodka
where is the kvass
just yesterday was the last day of ivan denisovich
and you welcome me today
in the smoky pub
strange and beautiful
you bring me a beer on a silver tray
with the inscription i'm the one you believe in
oh my god budweiser!
so hand it over

so give it here
moscow!
moscow
you're gone

moscow, august 3, 2007





prayer for the soul of vladimir mikhailovich gundyayev



Patriarch Kirill likened the performance of the girl band Pussy Riot to the discourse of hell. "The devil was laughing at us. (...) The band, whose name i cannot even pronounce, believe in propaganda, the power of lies, the internet and media, nothing else." Patriarch Kirill also said that his heart was "torn by sadness" when, even among those who call themselves orthodox christians, there are such who justify this blasphemy and ridicule, marginalize this abomination and try to interpret it as a funny joke.

kirill
metropolitan of smolensk
and kaliningrad
patriarch of moscow and all russia
what on earth did you do
how could you
so terribly and permanently harm yourself
poor kirill
what have you done with your soul
with whom have you signed a pact
kirill

the blood has not yet dried
on the tomb of alexander men
the blood has not yet dried
on the ax of his killer
and you are already dancing on the grave
of the true faith of Christ
so hungrily
and eagerly
the frightened crowds
cheer
in honor of your office
and the holy orthodox church
someone needs flogging
just point the finger
kirill

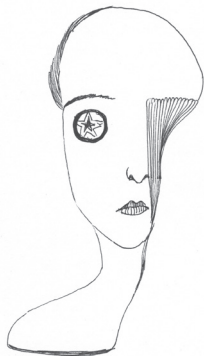
poor thing
nobody will pray for your soul
only for the soul of your office

only for your bungled role
full of pathos and power
for your dreamed of last ditch
after which the only warmth will come from
the flames of doomsday
which you ceased to believe in to be on the safe side
kirill
it's as if everyone's forgotten
your soul
but didn't you sell it
a long time ago
remember?

it's rotten prague
that cost you your eternal life
agent mikhaïkov
the first trip from the arms
of mother russia
was pretty pricey for you
and instead of the kingdom of heaven
only a malicious town stinking of malt
prague
turned sour on the threshold
of your meteoric career
remember?
prague castle
charles bridge
resslova street
and through the park
into faust's house



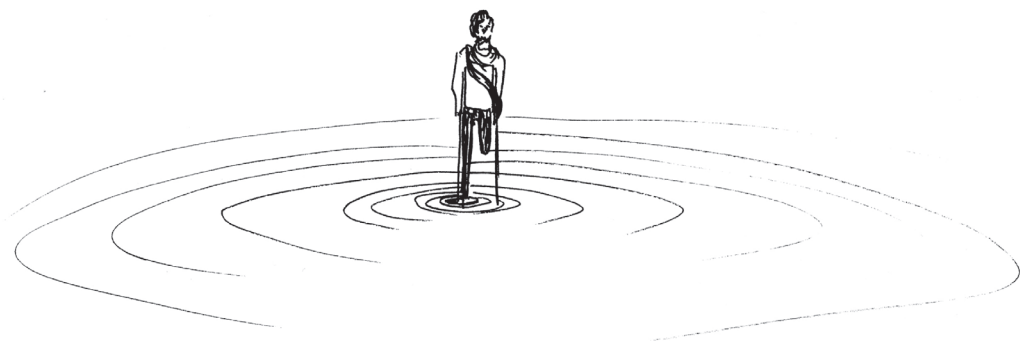
kirill
 laureate of the order of friendship of peoples
 bearer of the medal of the russian navy
 recipient of the diploma awarded by the state дума of the russian federation
 awarded a medal for the 50th anniversary of the great patriotic war
 and a medal for the 60th anniversary of miners' day
 and a medal for the 200th anniversary of the russian ministry of internal affairs
 an honorary diploma from the ministry of science and technology of the russian federation
 holder of the order of the republic
 the badge for strengthening cooperation with the accounts chamber of the russian federation
 the order of friendship
 the order of valor of kuzbass
 the medal for strengthening international security
 honorary citizen of lukoyanovsky district in the nizhny novgorod region
 emeritus professor in the military air defense academy
 honorary doctor in the national nuclear research university
 and professor in the peter the great military academy of strategic rocket forces
 winner of the labor magazine prize
 the badge of merit for the development of the olympic movement in russia
 and the st. john chrysostom prize awarded by the writers' union of russia
 who are you hiding from here
 kirill, poor thing
 in the end you're completely naked
 your whole body trembles
 you've got goosebumps in your eyes
 the lessons of classical greek
 slavonic and hebrew are good for nothing
 and worthless are your knowledge of scripture and liturgy
 the stacks of sermons
 the sweaty body under the sticharion

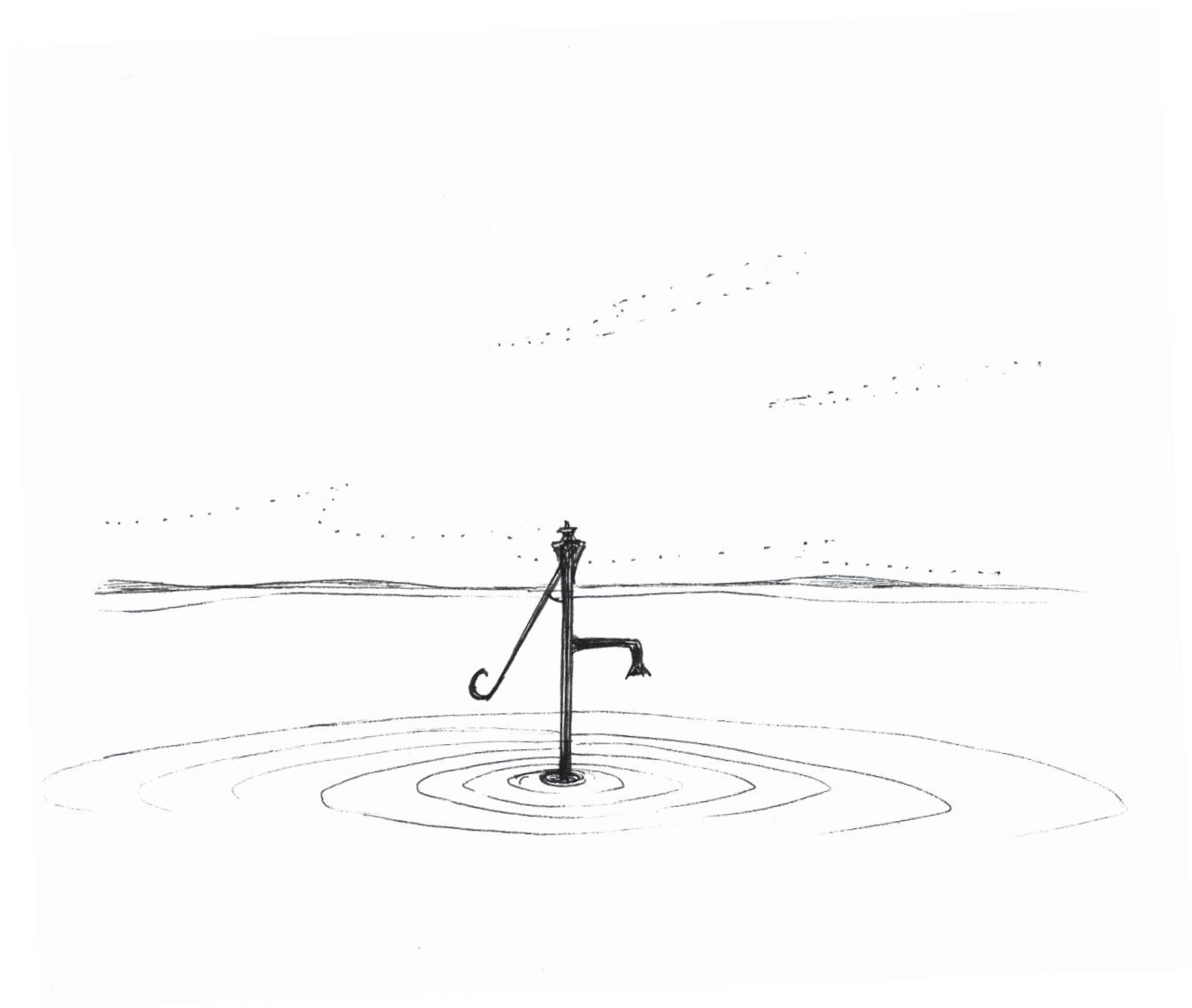


the golden threads of the sakkos
and expensive nabadrennik
and all the connections in the world
kirill, poor thing
again these strange dreams
again the cheerful girls are one step ahead of you
and the Lord welcomes them in the kingdom of the rightful
and sets up their sound system
and washes their feet

where is your wristwatch, kirill
and how much time remains
all the hands today stand still so strangely
the bells are as deaf
as a corridor in a remand prison
the incense smells funny
and the holy icons have colorful balaclavas
and candles, why do no candles burn here
can you hear
those horrible sounds again
it's the night wolves howling in your honor
poor kirill
i pray for your soul
which the bitch prague
robbed you of so long ago

prague, june 2012





the royal well



roads whose purpose wore away
caress sensitive spots in the landscape
they speak to themselves
in an incomprehensible language
narrating strange myths
of arrival and departure
loftily overlooking
the arrogance of young elderberry bushes
and ash trees
caressing places in the landscape
where it sighs
in quiet harmony
with thousand-year-old trees
stones and rotting houses
the highest wisdom is
what's no longer needed
the highest wisdom is a road
enchanted
by itself

a walk is not so simple
there are no steps that aren't binding
it's never possible to return anywhere
each step is pregnant with the next step
you'd like to tangle a little
with some kind of rural road
to aid digestion
to make something happen
it's morning after all
the road agrees
acts as if nothing happened

acts like any other
a painted tourist sign
prettified with a picnic area
and a map with a safely plotted
route for a little trip
to the royal well
everyone here is talking about the place
which is called
the royal well
everyone whispers about it
and winks
and laughs up their sleeve
the royal well
go and see it
it's an old place
which provided recreation
we no longer go there you know
we only occasionally go
to the chickens in the backyard
to the shop for margarine
to the bus to see the doctor
to rest here at home
there's not much time left
but you're still young
you have a fever in your eyes
the royal well
is something for you
for whoever still wants
to experience something
for whoever still wants
to get somewhere

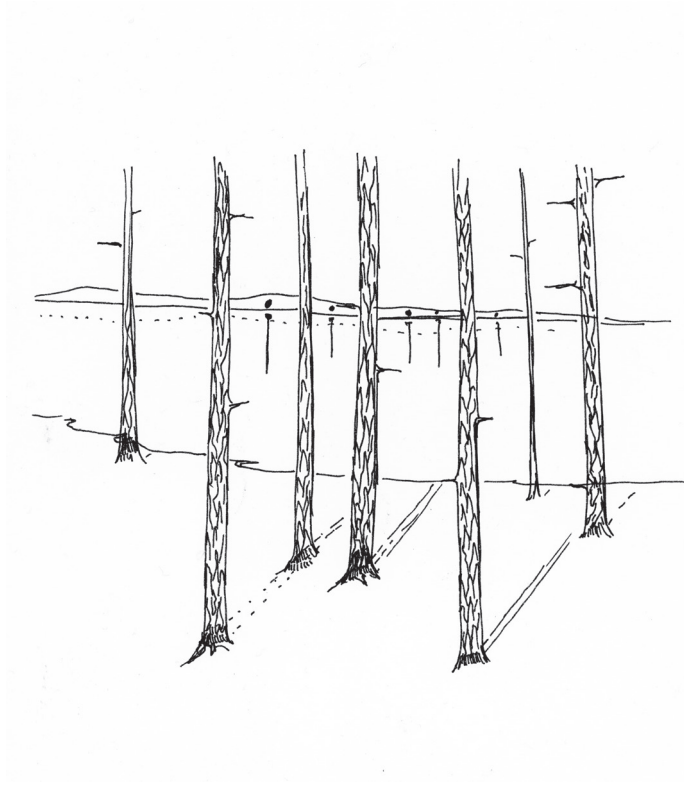
the place is easy to find
the dirt road
the map stand

and so you go
and you feel at ease
as you're only at the beginning of a new story
and all directions
have some kind of romance for you
with an original ending
but on the right there's a river
and on the left steep slopes
and all around are swamps
and something strange
is happening
the landscape somehow suspiciously squirms
and sighs
the mud underfoot suddenly
trembles weirdly
the first puddle is a mistake
the next you try to carefully bypass
and the third you wade through
you slowly surrender your shoes
bit by bit you surrender your pants
in a while after all
you'll get to the royal well
and all will once again be
so sweetly tentative
surrender a little bit of your shirt
and you'll be there
you'll also surrender a bit



of your underwear
your skin
and those strange noises
as if someone was walking behind you
you turn furtively
and then unconcernedly
there's still time to go back
there's still time to change your pants
for new ones
to put on clean briefs
and go somewhere by bus
sit on a bench
chat about the weather
there's still enough time for everything
but then what would
this journey up to your knees in mud be for
even a bad punchline is better
than a mere mistake
and then look
there's a piece of dry meadow there
and it'll be somewhere beyond it
somewhere further along
you'll certainly find it

then it was as if perished rubber split
and something happened
your eyes bloomed
your mouth opened
and your legs started to run through the stream
and you dance
and sing



and caress flowers
and gather little stones from the earth
like an idiot
running off to the lonely trees
greeting them at length
that's nothing you have just crossed
the final decisive puddle
beyond which there is no return
it's just that the road
pulled you in
in one sharp contraction
the perished rubber split
and you acquiesced
and you don't know what's going on
you don't know where you're going
or how to get there
you stick to your path
pray to the royal well
comply with the fragile signs
there's no time to fear
the bleached animal skulls
swinging in the thorn bush
the fresh tracks of wild animals
the strange braying
coming down the slope
along with pebbles and acorns and distress
it's only your guides
reporting for duty
a giant walnut
straddling centuries
lays empty shells in the shape of human skulls

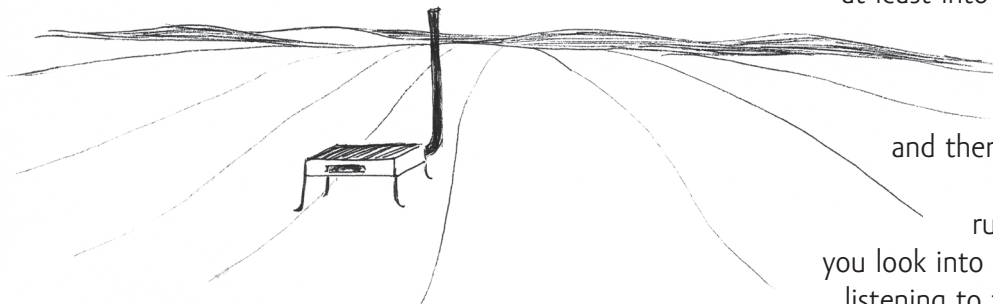
on the ground
and a meadow full of anemones
and lianas thicker than trunks
and faces in the bark
and a cuckoo recalculating fate
and bluebells as big as tulips
and you chew sorrel
and drink from the stream
and the footsteps behind you
subside when you stop

you don't know how long
or where
the landscape hallucinates ancient stories
which mainly didn't happen
and so you learn as you go
you already know the sound of the voices
of thousands of frogs and what to respond to them
you hesitate at crossroads
less often
swallowing poisonous berries
just for distraction
addressing snakes by name
driving off domestic pigs and wild dogs
with simple gestures
you'll also recognize the spring
by the bird calls
you ceased long ago to look for dry paths
go through swamps without hesitation
up to your knees in the middle of them
you pass demolished dwellings

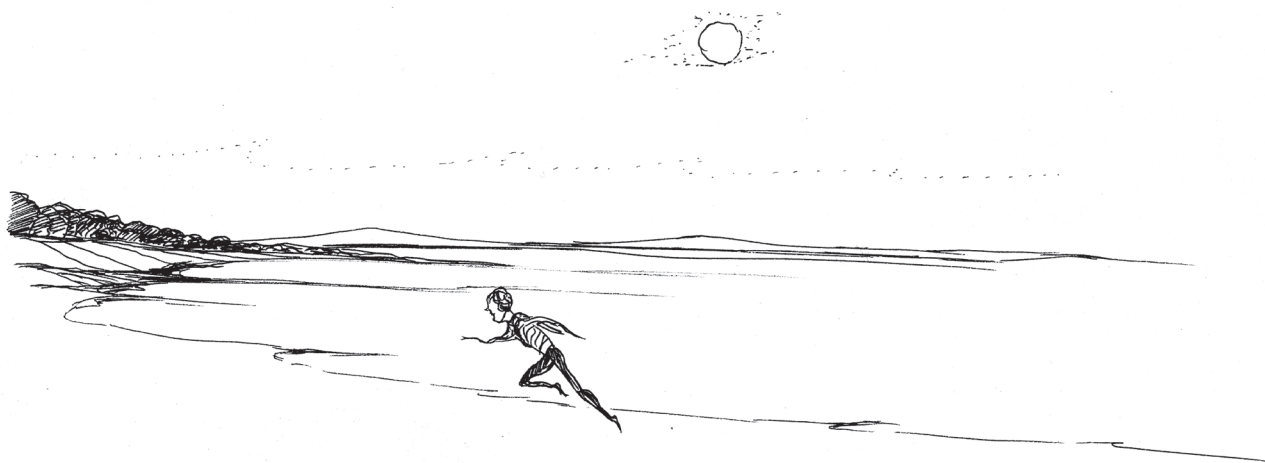
cautiously
answering questions in a whisper
pockets full of pebbles
they rattle happily
you no longer hide
behind hollow trunks
you don't expect him
behind every bend
occasionally you leave him
a sign of yourself
a few sunflower seeds
aligned in a simple message:
the journey ends on the shore



a couple of gulls circle
as if they wanted to add something
as if they wanted to ruffle the windless calm
at least into an intimate punchline
if not a tsunami
at least a storm
lightning and thunder
and there's nothing but waves
not even a stray dog
running across the sand
you look into the blue-gray distance
listening to the news from infinity
and before it gets dark
you'll learn the name of the place
you left in the morning



sinemorets, may 2011

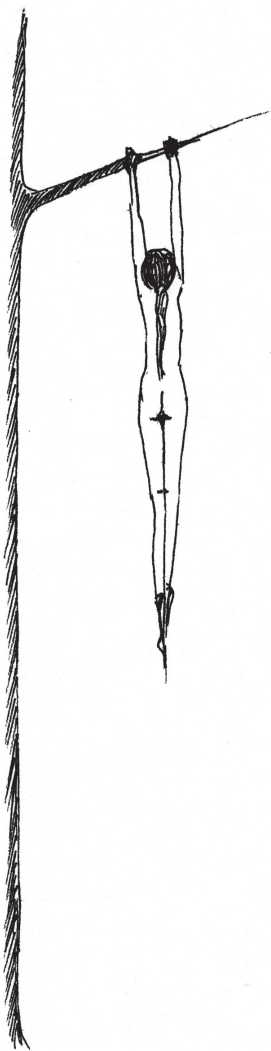


news from infinity



a cold wind from the sea
brings news from infinity
beyond the blue-gray horizon
crazed waves sough
for even in infinity
sometimes something moves
even in infinity wind blows
waves tick
and the sky kisses the surface of the water
and hair in the wind
and tenderness at dawn
which bathes in fog
the sleepiness of the awakened morning
the fragile hopes of a juvenile day
and waves of desire
in the regular rhythm of the heart
in the regular rhythm of someone's footsteps
the silhouette of a dark figure
some biker perhaps
dashes across the over-illuminated scene
and immediately disappears
fog is a mystery
fog is hope
fog is the promise of countless horizons
full of dolphins and flying carp
fog is the mother of the landscape
and the wind from the sea
with its fishy smell of genitals
and distance
quietly pervades it
ad infinitum

a cold wind from the sea
brings news from infinity
unchanged over millions of years
and yet it always stirs up
mute enthusiasm
sweetish anxiety
in the chilling urgency
of blue-gray horizons
and faded shadows
the old oak wrings its branches
in mock despair
and yet even it
pulls back from the abyss in amazement
whispering a million times the eternal mantra
not yet not yet not yet
and yet
by fractions of millimeters
it falls on its back
in impotent protest scattering leaves
learning to love the stronger
learning to surrender
and submit itself
to spread its branches
in a deep backward bend
breathe quietly
let itself be pervaded by the wind
that slowly absorbs it
for centuries remain
in the ecstasy of the last fall
all is well
all is well

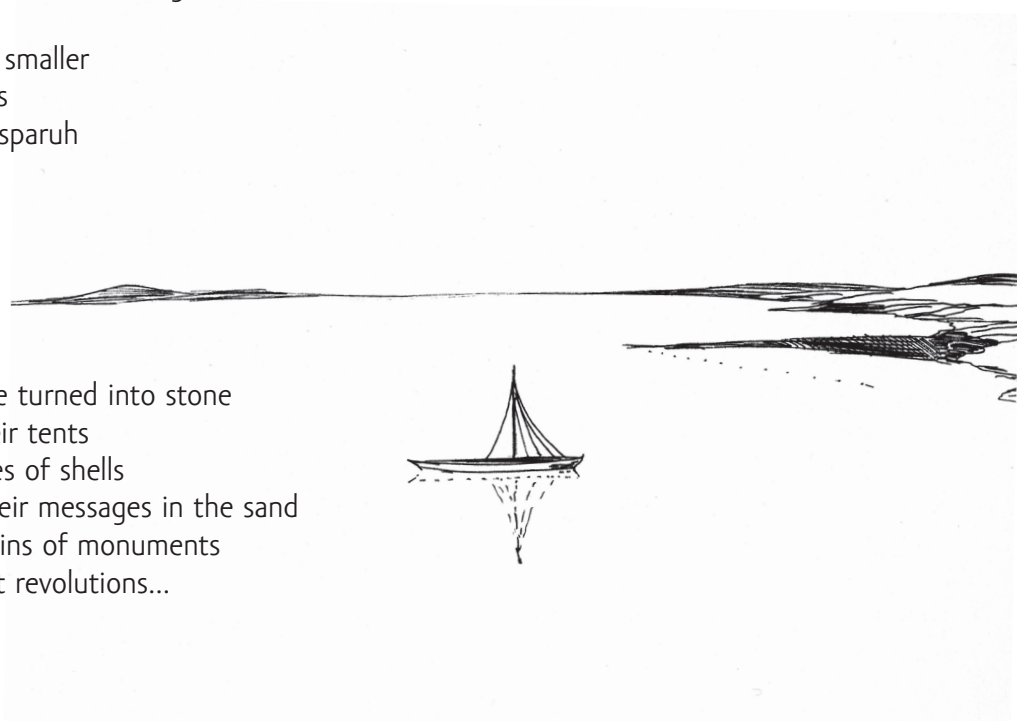


all is well
roots press the palm of the earth
the crown is turned to the sky
and sap leaks from crevices

at the very edge of the sea
you read fresh news
imprinted in shells
encoding their messages in the sand
you draw in the odor of the vibrant border
the bollards smelling of fish
marking the place where two worlds touch
seaweed sperm
washed up on the beach
gnawed dildos of bleached trunks
and multicolored vomit of cities
each of your footsteps
leaves a small dyke
in each a piece of sky sparkles
and taciturn airships of time
each creating its own landscape
with thousands of opportunities for further growth
a pond in the garden of a mysterious castle
with a sleeping princess
and cuddly bats
a harbor for ships sailing without a rudder
and without a compass
only into the biggest storms
a small water cage
for a goldfish half-dead of fright
an artesian well in a desert

full of stern bedouins
guarding in their tents
girls born out of sunburn
a full moon
and a tropical night

each footprint is an abandoned story
with each step you fall out of it
as a bad actor falls out of character
you try to return
in your own footsteps
but nothing fits
footprints disappear
under layers of sand
pieces of road are washed away for ever
by a wave only a few centimeters higher
than the one before
certainly incomparably smaller
than the cruel breakers
in the times of khan asparuh
but who cares
even so
the princess awoke
the bats flew off
ships sank
the fish swam away
and the bedouins were turned into stone
only the girls from their tents
imprinted in the shapes of shells
continue to encode their messages in the sand
...footprints are the ruins of monuments
overlooked during past revolutions...



as if on a tightrope
you scuttle along the edge of the sea
holding the white pole
from horizon to horizon
closing your eyes under the weight of the news
rolling out of infinity
and nowhere is there a seller of indulgences
nowhere a coca-cola stand
no scent of nivea and popcorn
no beach volleyball
during which so much happens
that it only ends the next morning
with a severe hangover
on the whole desert coast
not a single washed up prosthesis
not a single washed up bottle
with an honest message
nothing to prop up the evening
apart from fog and yourself
apart from the ticking of the breakers
and the next wave sweeps away its moment
rises in a passionate surge
for an instant riding high as if in flight
it breaks
and wails
and falls to the ground
and the white foam of forgiveness
and the silence
and the next wave enters
the desperately emptied space

you feel like undressing
but are full of circumspection
and habitual shyness
someone's piercing gaze
stabs you in the back
it's just a guy in a leather jacket
coolly observing
your body
loitering at the right distance
for a would-be killer
and smoking
until the fog around him thickens
and his image passes away
and you torment yourself
with painfully useless questions
what would he think
if you threw away your pants
how would he feel
if you took off your briefs
and so you go on balancing
on the edge of infinity
you are trying to get as far as possible with dry feet
running away from the flood
at the last moment
still listening
to deeply rooted instincts
still protecting
your brown shoes
your bright pants
and business-casual shirt
your wallet



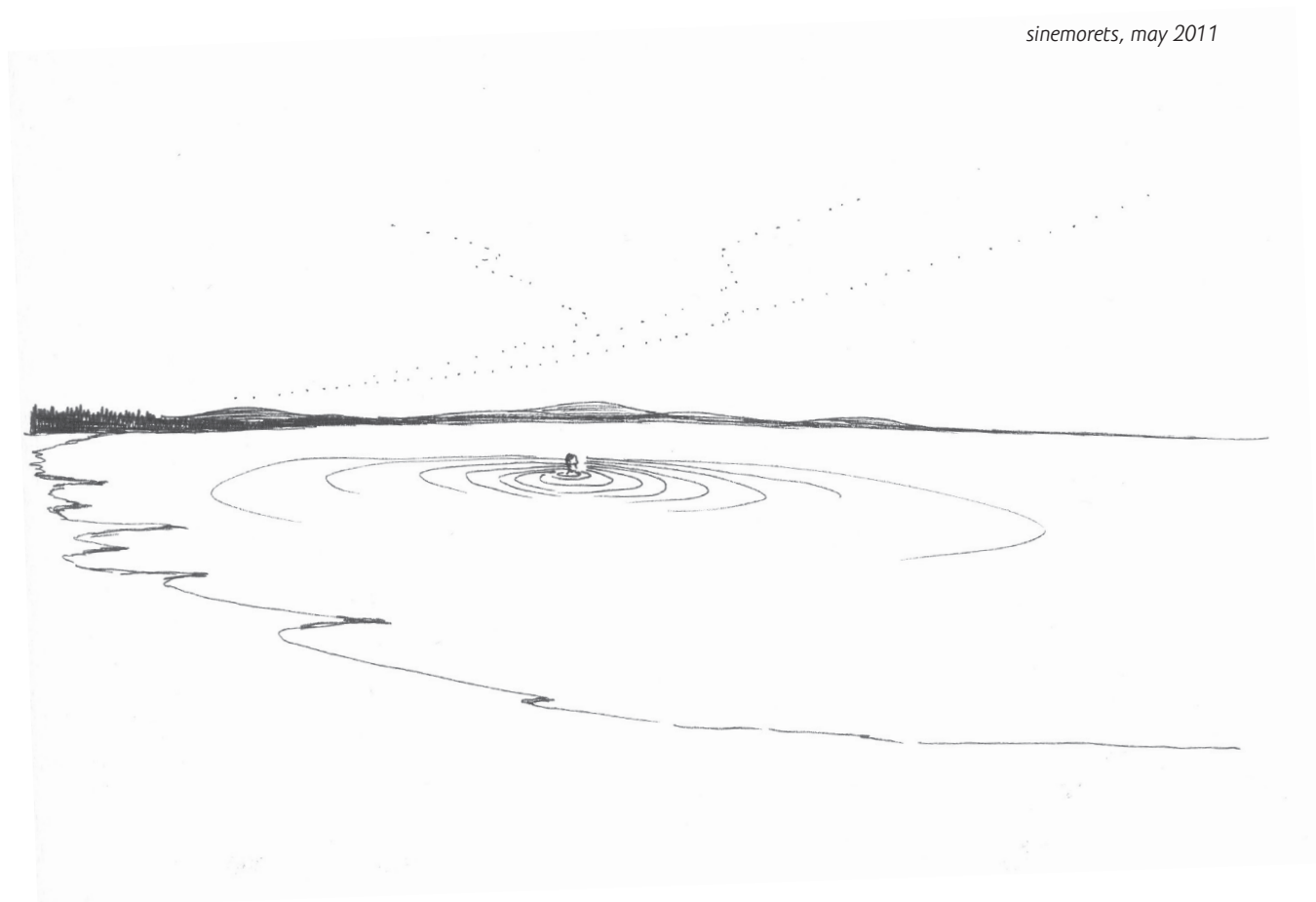
your driving license
identity card
library card
discount card
employee card
travel card
visa card
health insurance card
emergency condom kit
your business cards!
it's high time you began
to throw away the excess burden
to quietly drop your treasures
lay out your cards
among the mussels
cast your business cards upon the waters
and fit out your insurance card
with a mast and a white sail
in witness of your humility
it's time to send your own message
to the blue-gray line of the horizon
to kiss the surface of the water
and let your skin breathe

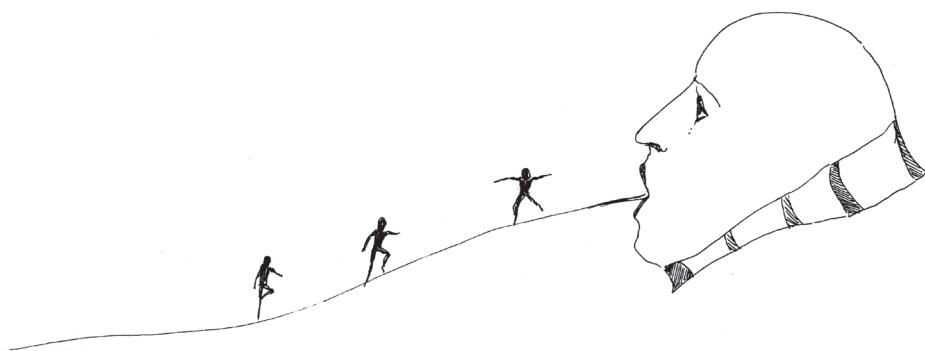
they said
you find
all the essentials
on the shore
and so you scatter the useless things
onto the wet sand
and look for

what the waves washed up
so far you've found
an empty medicine bottle
jumbo pampers
a syringe
a light bulb
and a dozen empty plastic bottles
you stop at the point
where a great river soundlessly
enters the sea
and pumps fresh water
into the sentimental breakers
you stand on a narrow strip of land
lost amid the fog and love-making
which is stronger than you
you comically shuffle
and just to complete the scenecall into the wind
help help
while the gulls laugh merrily
like when a baby cries
only from your mouth
broken letters crumble
catching the wind
and quickly disappear in the clouds
you are naked
with clothes neatly
stacked
shirt sleeves folded across the front
pants laid out with a crease
and socks in a cozy ball
you pull in your belly

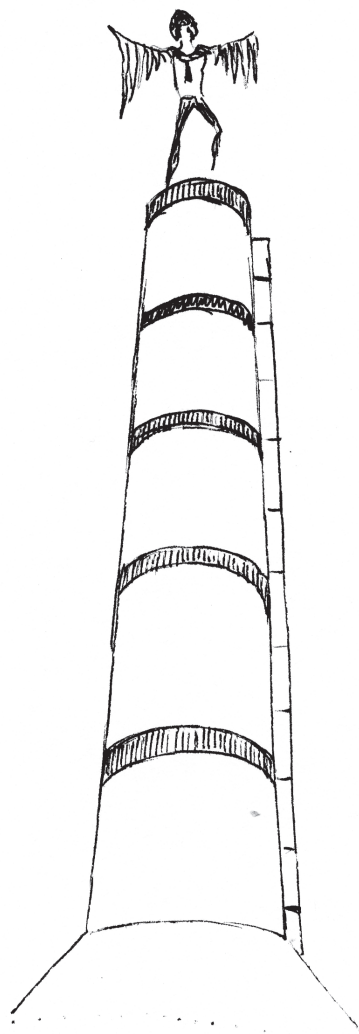
and comb your hair with your hand
put a conch to your ear
listen to the news from the infinity
of your own memories
in the cold wind
you meekly wait
until the biker
saves you

sinemorets, may 2011





death benefit



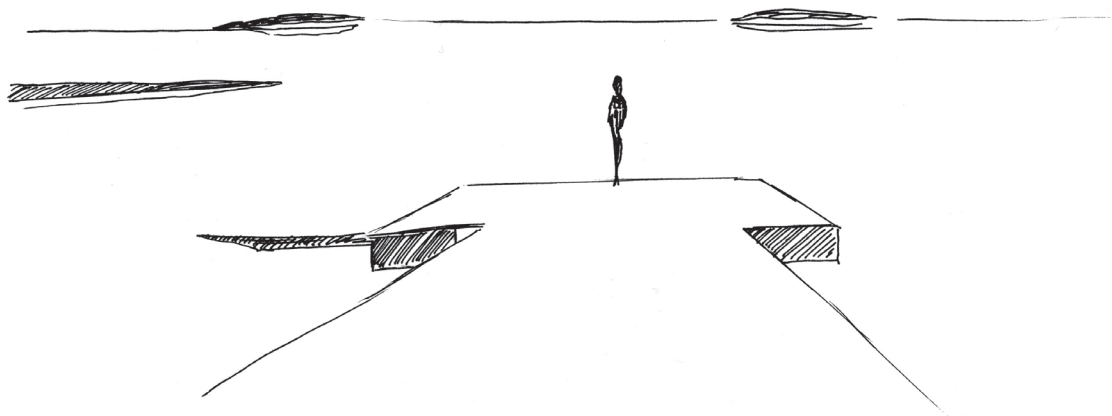
my colleague josef and i smoked
the last two chimneys in electric prague
the smell of brown coal will one day be
as forgotten as the fume of the herbs
we used to smoke out the plague
we looked into the sun
from the balcony of our office
behind us the smell of coffee
and the youngest century mourned
we blew smoke into the eyes of štěpánská street
and caressed her greedily and enviously with ours
as one does during a smoke break
after all the youngest century is behind us
coffee and document folders
nervous oily peace
i corrected the form
profit from death was written on it
death benefit
i reconciled all the columns
filled in all the sections
adjusted all the lines
and calculated percentages
i'm so capable
and embarrassingly promising
i'm still surprised today
by my well hidden talents

i took a shower in the morning
and then read in the tram
that a regular sex life
brings the same joy

as an annual income of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars
we are the last two chimneys in štěpánská street
in love with each distant pavement tile
on which right now two young people
who definitely have their one hundred and thirty
are discussing investment in the project
and unwittingly leave their shadows
which crawl behind them
on the asphalt
begging for a little uncertainty
for a little night anxiety
which can be scared off in so many ways
that's why our client is here
and his forms
and josef
and me

prague, october 2005





the second day after the end of the world



it's only the second day
after the end of the world
and the feast of the nativity
and fog over the vltava
and silence along the paths
of the taciturn city
scares away drunken groups of friends
of remote civilizations
observing the pulsating glow
of festive neon
frozen shadows at windows
are pressed to each other
and a wet black sweater
in a damp air shaft
silently stares through the holy night
to the river bank
groups of friendly swans
fish in the river waves
scales of moonlight glitter
so far nobody knows
if swans have dreams
also after the world ends
nobody has managed to convene a commission
announce grants
cut the apple in half
and send a nutshell onto the surface of the water

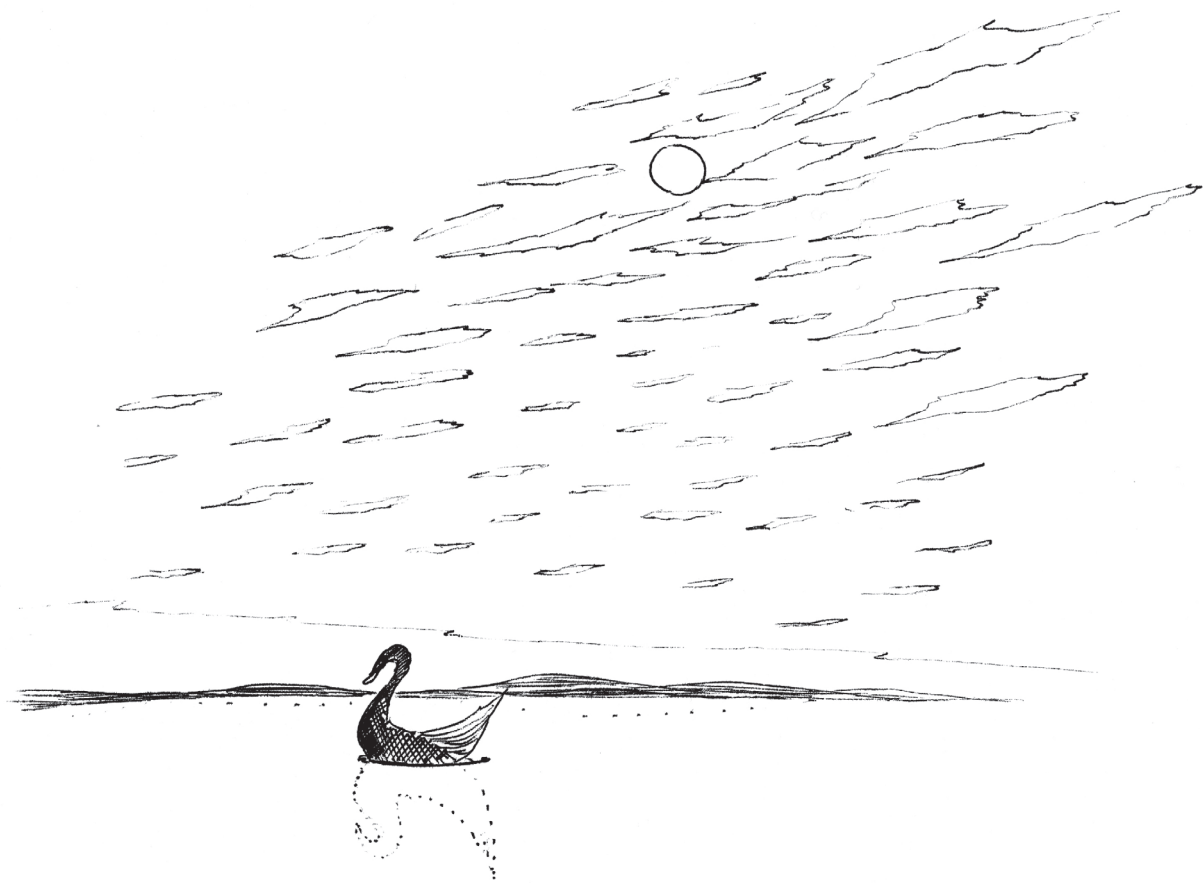
it's only the second day
after the end of the world
shy steps of the first walkers
through the universe that has just been born

if you're an adult, you'll return
the voice of a woman sounds through the streets
breaking
on the stairs of an apartment building
from which an aging man runs
lighting a cigarette with his trembling hand
the roar of the swollen botič brook
under the railway bridge
the city lead flows
into the cold waves of the river
drawing the contours of future worlds
as fragile
as previous ones
from the boiling water steam rises
and tenderly embraces
the body of st. vitus
sleeping on the horizon

on the streets of the utterly silent city
the very first people roam today
they stagger
in the apple wind
and nut waves
it's only the second day
and the feast of the nativity
only a few words remain until the full moon
everything is small
a hair's breadth away
windows of the new city
again full of dreams
hosanna

in the tavern at výtoň
open today from 9pm
but the kitchen's closed

prague, december 24, 2012





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the second day after the end of the world

igor malijevský

in the poem *visiting hour*, various verses from the poetry collection *a crust of bread* by petra študlarová are quoted

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