



Eleven short texts for my psychopath lover, and some other nights | Orit Kruglanski y Roberto Soto

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Texts: Orit Kruglanski

Drawings: Roberto Soto

Thanxs to:

Romy Achituv, Boaz Rossano, Rachel Ramras, Floh Huss, Supa Khalil & Erika.

Translated by Orit Kruglanski, Emily Forman and Irit Sela

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1.

She rests her breasts of mozzarella, still moist with salty water, on the high kitchen table. Her legs are long, long and boneless, rolled up in three rings on the floor like sweet cream in the form of a rope. Erect and majestic, the teeth of her ass bite down into the seat of the stool. He sinks one finger into a firm, cold breast, ploughing furrows towards the center. With his teeth he removes a piece of the other. She collects with her tongue the saliva that's fallen from his mouth. Sweet; wets the floor. Careful, he says, falling.

He takes a smooth limp leg in his mouth, sucks it in like a thick spaghetti, his lips form a bracelet around her thigh. Inside him the leg stretches out, hardens, tightens, pressing outward, filling him. Her toes slip into his, fiddling, like a glove. The other leg grows stiff on the floor like the tail of a startled something. He splits open her crust and rubs his hands against her lungs - warm flowers, which open up to the roughness of his skin. She spreads her legs wider and takes his angular head in her lips up to the neck. He strains his forehead, spills the oil.

2.

She rests her elbows on the high kitchen table. He lays his forehead between her legs, looking inward, one eye half-shut, heavy lids brushing against her lips. She caresses his black hair with tired wings. His gaze penetrates her; patient, repeated, it makes her tremble, walking the delicate fingers of things down her back. She stretches her leg, tensing the rope. With his left hand he kisses her fervently, with the right he presses his cheek against her breasts, dripping honey.

Her skin opens, mouth-like, releasing a sigh of air she had been keeping inside. His face sinks into the warm, startled, flesh, soft words drown in the labyrinth of lungs. She heals slowly, trapping him inside. Her leg un-tenses; crushes the cherries.







3.

He leans her against the black wall and shuts the door. He lifts her skirt and crouches down, his head facing her whipped cream ass. Hungry hands reach out to the heap of her, his whole body trembles with the finger tips about to touch her, to be touched by her, to knead her warm sea sand, to dig the deepest tunnels. About to touch, they do not touch her, they do not knead or dig, they do not reach her. Avid and eager the fingers detach and fall, they scatter on the floor next to her feet, wiggling weakly worms, desperate to reach her. He licks the bald palms of his hands, moving his tongue over the lifeline, feeling the skin's sensitivity, soft and wistful, the square form of the hands and perfect contour, unbroken skin where once there were fingers. His moist hands gravitate towards her buttocks ready to sink into them, making soft flesh shiver, waves in the sea. They approach her slowly, feeling her heat, feeling the invisible field that surrounds her, the promise of pleasure that defines her outline, her limits, the dense air of a fruit about to be bitten, sweet juices waiting to drip. They do not reach her. The palms detach, fall to the floor next to her heels and quickly shrivel away. He surrounds the firm pillars of her thighs with his stumps, but doesn't touch her. He brings his face closer to the crack, and doesn't touch her. He fires his tongue. She gasps with the impact. The tongue aligns itself with the crack, it slides quickly to fill it, following it down to

the access point. Thick and coarse, the tongue enters, invades. She twists her pretty eyes to try and see, brandishing the small sharp teeth of her cunt. Too late, the tongue has already sprung upwards, flexible and hardened, determined, long. She leans heavily against the wall, sinks her hand in her opening trying to catch the intruder. She traps it, but the tongue is stronger, it drags her in and the flesh swallows her whole arm. Persistent, the tongue passes through her entrails, around her ribs, into her neck, and irrupts in her mouth. It forces open the clenched teeth, licks her sweet lips and her pretty, startled eyes, enters her ears and nose, then back into her mouth, through her lips that now tremble, it seeks the other tongue and pulls it out. Down the body and out, it slides quickly with its prey.

The soft body, tongueless, collapses slowly, invertebrate, it crumples to the cold floor, oozing one last trickle of ocean brine.

4.

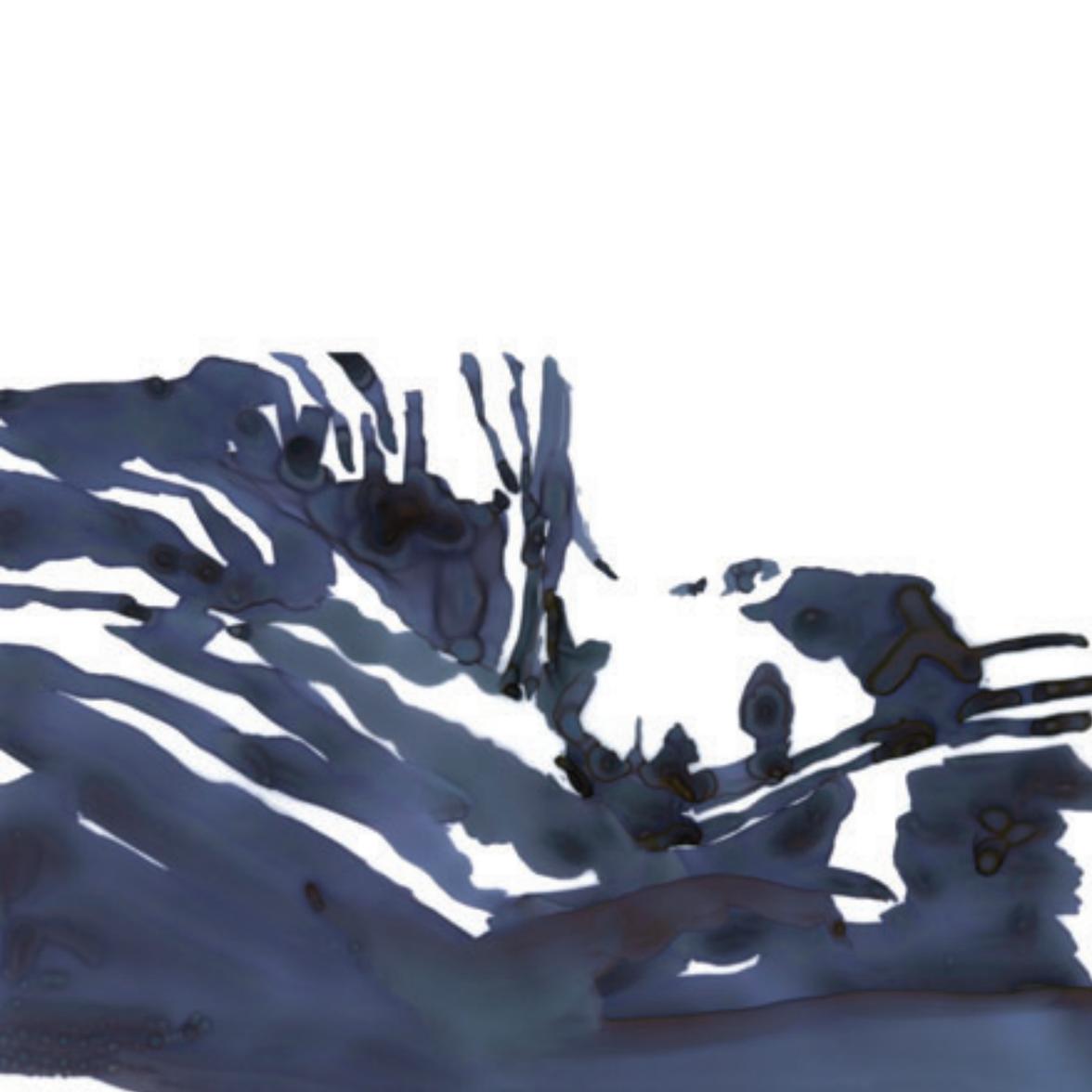
He is asleep on his side, his knees folded inside hers; his closed eyes are pointing at the wall. His sleepy penis rests between her thighs, stretching to her touch, it enters the radar range. Sirens. Skin eyes open with a mechanical click, scanning the form. She sticks out the tiny tongue of her cunt to investigate; the tongue stretches out but can't quite get there. She licks her lips, tries again, but the penis remains just beyond her reach. Frustrated, she bites the swollen clitoris angrily gnashing the sharp teeth of her cunt. With clenched lips she inhales forcefully, pumping in air until the penis reaches her and enters; she inhales and swallows until her lips bump into his lower belly. She pumps in harder, insistent. His body folds backwards at the thighs, slowly, gradually it gets swallowed up inside her. He wakes up startled, reaching, clutching at hair with both hands. She moves in her sleep, rubbing hard against the body passing between her legs, oozing slippery lava. With all his might he attempts to stall, clawing nails and teeth into quicksand, fighting savagely until his strength runs out. The moist heat engulfs him densely, disoriented senses, smells, caresses, he is lost, surrendering, his mouth agape for one last breath of air, too late.

The mouth hits a soft, inner wall. She contracts her elastic womb to unbearable pleasure. He draws his tongue in the dark, her sweetness mixing with the salt he sweats. He presses his lips to the wall and sucks. The womb stretches; he sucks harder, the wall surrenders filling the mouth, caressing the lips until she completely overturns, outside-in, and is contained within her womb. He squeezes it in with his hands like a ball, into his mouth, moving it from side to side, drowning it in saliva, melting it with his tongue until only the center is left - a pulsating clitoris. He presses with his tongue and his mouth fills with liquid. He swallows, but the clitoris gets stuck between his teeth, striking a small root.

5.

His head rests on the high kitchen table. She gently rests her delicate hand on his coarse black hair. She takes out a needle and carefully begins sewing her fingers to his scalp. His mouth is full of heavy metal chains he is trying to swallow. They tinkle against the table when he relaxes his jaw. Under the table, she extends her bare foot to touch his leg. As it brushes against his prickly skin, the seam on the side of her foot comes undone. Her sand filling begins to ooze out of her. She reaches with the needle but the thread is too short. Fine white sand accumulates in a little mound that is rapidly growing. With her free hand she separates his teeth and shoves her whole arm down his throat, looking for something to stop the leak. She throws out chains, bolts, locks, padlocks, keys and a little oxidated tin heart, partly folded. She cuts herself on the tin edge, and sand begins to pour from her finger as well. She is weakening. Her arm, now empty, lays limp in his mouth.

Without looking he feels up her breasts. The plastic buttons of her nipples flare up briefly, singeing the thread that held them in place. They fall into the sand piled up on the cold floor. Unperturbed, he seeks them out with his toes for a moment. He then draws a crooked circle in the sand. He takes out a coin and flips it three times, and three times it comes out tails.



6.

He leans her against the white kitchen wall and penetrates her. He thrusts a few times with increasing force until he lifts her from the floor and pins her up, held by his penis driven into the wall. The tips of her toes can almost touch the floor. She sways them gently trying to reach it, or perhaps for pleasure. He bites her neck to keep her still, and licks her spinal column with his hand. The acid saliva softens the skin. He inserts his hand between her buttocks and pushes up, meticulously cutting the skin up to the neckline. He inserts both hands between the skin and the flesh, detaching them slightly. He caresses from the inside, stroking her ass, her thighs, taking the warm, moist content of the breasts in his dry hands. He fits his pinkies into the raised skin of the nipples, lifts one to her mouth and lets her suck his nipple-covered finger. The suction tugs at the skin and widens the cut. He takes out one hand to pull her hair, stretching her head upwards. Relieved, the vertebrae decompress, the flesh expands. With his other hand he pushes the loose flesh. She squirms and contorts, making him come and stain the wall. She is left lax, her skin hangs wide and loose around her. He shifts the flesh, making room for himself. He slips his legs into hers, accommodating the skin - separating them a little, for balance. He fits his head into the skin opening at the neck and passes it through until his face coincides with hers. He sticks out his tongue and licks her sweet

lips, he eats them and pushes his own out through the fissure they have left behind. With his finger he pokes out her eyes, and carefully places them on the table, their unimaginable blue staring him in the back. He pushes with his forehead until his eyes come out of her sockets. He places his arms in the corresponding skin. One last time the hands reach into the opening at the back, placing his penis in the right side of the vagina. He licks his fingers and seals the open back with his sticky saliva, gently smoothing the skin. He touches his tits. They are big and soft, they give him pleasure. He rubs himself against the cold wall and notices the moistness inside. He picks up the leftover flesh and puts it in the fridge in a plastic container. He wipes up the stains with a moist rag. The blue eyes follow him from the table. He takes one in his mouth and spits it out. It's salty. The remaining eye gives him an undecipherable look.

7.

They are sitting at the high kitchen table. She is talking, her flexible legs playing in the water like two snakes: biting one another, weaving themselves into braids, making knots. One slides towards his legs, wrapping itself around them, the other twists round the stool-leg and both start to pull down. He smiles tensely, trying hard to stay seated. She keeps talking. Just in time he grabs hold of the table, as the stool, turning on one leg, lands in the water with a splash, spraying drops all around. She stops talking, stunned, offering her delicate hand to help. He grabs the hand and almost crushes the soft fingers in despair. An invisible force is dragging him down. The tide rises, water comes up to the stool seat. A storm is approaching. Rain starts pouring down, low clouds hide the lamp. The force pulling him down intensifies, the moist fingers slip and leave the kitchen table, his other hand still holds on to hers and they are both thrown into the cold water. On her way down she wipes the table with her body - flinging plates, oil, salt, black pepper, white pepper and paprika in transparent bottles into the water; she drags along the stool he sat on, entangled in her leg. Lightning. Thunder. She grabs hold of him, frightened, with her free hand and the leg with the stool. She is very heavy. Between this and the force pulling him down, they begin to sink. She tries to say something, perhaps sweet words of farewell, but the water gets in her mouth and only bubbles come out. She is

still trying to talk when another flash of lightning breaks the high kitchen table in two, half of which floats speedily with the current and collides forcefully with her head. She loses consciousness. The water keeps rising. She is terribly heavy. They are going to drown. The wind slams open the fridge door hurling into the water white cheese, sausages, spoiled milk, jam in three flavours and bread in a paper bag. They rise and fall with the waves. His strength runs out, he grabs hold of the counter, he knows he won't make it. Suddenly it's all over. The force that drew him into the depths disappears, the wind and rain stop. He finds himself in water up to his knees, exhausted but alive. He frees himself from her strangling embrace and leans her against the counter. He notices she isn't breathing. With a gentle kiss he opens her mouth, inserting his tongue; he feels something obstructing her breathing. He draws out the heart moving his tongue skilfully. He throws it down to the floor and kisses her again. She opens her eyes and smiles, confused. He frees her leg from the stool and picks her up effortlessly. He leaves the kitchen with her in his arms and turns off the light.

In the dark, the tossed heart rises, sighs, cleans itself up as best it can, and slowly drags itself someplace else.





8.

She sleeps amongst predatory dreams. She attempts to break loose but gets even more entangled in the web. He arrives late, strokes her hair. She opens her mouth to scream. He takes her head between his legs, inserting his penis into the open mouth. With a swift hand he tapes her eyelids to her eyebrows. Through her translucent dream she sees him get pleasure, moving her wet velvet tongue in the hollow of her mouth, holding on with her soft teeth, with stained lips. The penis grows, filling her mouth, it hardens, heavy, pulling inward; this hardness spreads through the rest of his body, invading the hips, petrifying the frozen leg muscles, stretched to the limit, an innate object, falling inward, unable to move.

She stirs in her sleep, eyes open, struggling in vain to break loose from the sticky webbing, clenching her lips to avoid collapsing under his weight.

Barely able to move one hand, he inserts it between her legs in search of the key. The fingers get entangled in the chords, she shrinks, starts shivering. He tries to move his other hand, creeping it inside, groping for the tight chords with a small cutter blade. The chords burst noisily as they touch the sharp metal.

With each clipped chord she relaxes; fingers, shoulders, neck muscles that bore the tension slacken, as do, finally, the lips left agape around him. With two easy motions he comes, the liquid gathers in the hollow of her mouth creating a calm white pond with swans and sailboats, surrounded by pale lips. The paralysis abandons him; he sends his arm deeper into her limp body. With strong fingers he crushes her ribs, carefully extracting the splinters. Now she's completely soft, all breast. He takes her in his arms, piling up the flesh in the center, like a pillow. He buries his face in the warm body and falls asleep, sucking her nipple.

9.

He takes her hand and guides it to his organ. She smiles, touches. The organ flickers between solid and liquid, like something beamed down from the Enterprise to a place with bad reception. He joins his lips to hers, carefully following the curving line of her smile, and opens their mouths wide. The tongues fall upon each other, licking and thrusting, drunk with saliva, at the wall of one mouth or the other. Mouth fluids mix and combine into a powerful glue which congeals in a translucent solid filling both mouths. He tries to discharge it, pushing it deep into her throat; she pulls her lips back but cannot draw away.

The organ hardens between them, pushing her a few steps back. The lump connecting both mouths forces them to bow. She raises a leg and lowers it in a circular motion, flinging the penis away and crossing her legs. He twists his neck and turns her around to stand behind her; sprays of sweat freeze midair into a thousand pieces of glass shrapnel. She bends her knees and leaps, raising them both in the air. At the peak height she curls a leg and kicks him center chest. He is hurled at tremendous speed towards the wall. The tongues stretch dangerously, but at the very last moment the dense load is plucked from his mouth. She lands on tiptoes. Her tongue hangs dryly between her breasts, heavy with the weight of the solid mass of saliva, which sparkles a moment with turbid light like a plastic trinket from a vending machine, and drops.



10.

He glides a finger along the curve of her chest, drawing an arch that reaches the point between both breasts. The tired skin splits to his touch, opening a cavity to the hungry void inside her. A strong wind blows inward, the gaping hole in her chest swallows the white sheet, two white pillows, a white shirt and underwear in three colors. He attempts to salvage the underwear, but the wild wind makes his hair stand on end like a porcupine and renders him helpless. He brings his face close to the hole, his right cheek is sucked in, sealing it. Strenuously he rotates his face until he surrounds the hole with his lips, blocking it with his mouth. Using an ancient Chinese concentration technique he manages to comb back his hair without touching, but his cheek remains flabby like an old testicle. He sticks out his tongue and licks the edges of the hole and the inner walls of her chest. She squeezes his head against her body, surrounding him with her soft breasts that enter his ears with a tender and hypnotizing nipple-hum. She moves her fingers through his hair, through the skin, sinking them into the soft brain. She combs it, undoing knots, stimulating forgotten synaptic connections. He is entranced. He shuts his eyes, the eyelids scratching against her body fill him with wonder. He sinks his hand into the soft, malleable cunt, squeezing, his fingers are aroused in an infinity of unique sensual points.

She raises her legs like an athlete, bends her knees, folding them close to her chest, passing them through the cavity, through his mouth. She lowers them slowly towards the water. In the inner darkness the water looks black and serene. She touches it with the tips of her toes. Cool and heavy, the water absorbs rapidly in her feet, wetting the sugar that still briefly maintains its form, then slips, almost liquid, towards the water. She melts gradually, he feels her large breasts burst like soap bubbles. He shoves his hand upward inside her reaching the head. He wears it like a hand puppet, fastening her lips to his in an urgent, sweet kiss. Her tongue melts on his like chocolate, thick and caressing, which disappears, leaving him alone, licking his fingers.

11.

She lays her head on his bare chest, resting her fingers in the desert valley between his thigh and his lower belly. Her legs draw a ninety-degree angle around his knees. He supports one breast in the palm of his hand. The yellow petals slightly unfold, allowing him a glimpse. With the fingers of his other hand he encircles her ankle, containing it in a perfect, miniature embrace.

The sun sets, and in its place the room fills with thick liquid. In the growing viscosity, she bends back her toes for one last kiss, slowly. Slowly, he separates his lips. The liquid enters through his mouth, filling him, like a warm remedy. It relieves his jaw muscles from their endless task, alleviating his tongue of its own weight. It buoys the fatigued internal organs, in their irreversible process of deterioration, surrounding and immobilizing them.

Between his fingers and her ankle, a vivid, animal memory gathers and suddenly ignites. The liquid puts it out.







*

Don't suffocate me, he says, you know I get claustrophobic. She laughs and holds on to him, hugging him tight, pressing her body against his.

When I was little, he says, they used to make me take naps with my cousin.

Yeah, she interrupts, you've told me a million times.

My cousin always tangled her arms and legs into mine when she was sleeping. I would kick and punch at her, but she wouldn't let go. I would feel suffocated and hit her as hard as I could, until finally my mother would come to lie between us.

When he says 'my mother' a feeling of immense maternal calmness fills the space between his imagined cousin and him.

She smothers her anger and laughs naughtily.

Stop it, he says, you've messed up the sheets. He gets up to fix them. She lies straight on her side of the bed, like a good girl; letting the sheets land on her face. When they're ready to tuck under the mattress, she starts twinkling her toes.

Stop it, he says, can't you be serious for one second?

She stops, and he looks on with satisfaction at the well-made bed. He picks up his side of the sheet and lies down on his side of the bed, completely straight, arms relaxed and aligned with his body. She assaults him, laughing, and hugs him tightly.

Quit it, he says, why do you keep doing that when you know it annoys me?

That's what you always do to me, she says, offended. As soon as you notice that something annoys me, you keep doing it to annoy me even more.

For example?

I can't think of anything right now, she says, mad at herself. She knows that it's true but can't think of an example.

He helps her out, he likes to argue and likes to be right but he doesn't like an easy victory. For example, he says, when I imitate you.

That's one example, she agrees. But she doesn't feel like talking anymore. She feels sad. She lies down on her side of the bed. She doesn't touch him anymore. He asks her what's up. She doesn't respond. He touches her. She doesn't move. He touches her breasts. He puts his hand in her underwear. She didn't really think they would tonight; she thought he'd be too tired, what with the long train trip and the whole day at work. She wonders if he'd been thinking about it all along, or if it had something to do with the argument. He takes her hand and lets her feel his erection. She imagines it in the dark. He takes off his t-shirt and gently dragging her body, moves her head near his penis. She takes it in her mouth. She thinks, when all is said and done, that it was her

fault, that there's no reason to punish him just because she was hoping for something else, for a different consideration, for things that had never been. Then he lies her on her back, and even though she'd decided not to punish him, she remains quiet, until, somewhat despite herself, a sigh escapes her lips.

When they're done, she doesn't hold him tight, she doesn't kiss his beloved body that makes her feel so good. She lies there straight on her side of the bed. He puts his t-shirt back on and lies down, straight, on his side of the bed. He takes her hand between their two bodies as if they were taking a stroll. He never does this when they do take walks together. She leaves her hand in his, him squeezing it ever so often, sending, it seems, a message in morse code. She doesn't understand it. That's fine. She squeezes as well. They seem to fall asleep that way. During the night he turns over and holds her. She thinks that in his sleep he loves her, even though she's never sure he knows it's her. She sleeps half-awake, and suddenly it seems he's tangling his legs around hers like an octopus, in that way that annoyed him so much, like his cousin. She is filled with impossible tenderness and maybe even says that she loves him, although she can't be sure. Later, and this she remembers perfectly, she covers his neck in kisses, and the collar of his shirt. They sleep, like always, holding each other, changing sides, coming together and separating like the waves in the sea.



*

“Are you going to cry?” he says. It really seems like it. Her eyeballs are coming out of their sockets, the weight of the salty water weighing them down, deforming them. They rest lightly on the sharp spikes of her eyelashes. Her eyes are about to explode. She tries not to blink and stares firmly at some point in the air that won’t make her sad. The melancholic air devours the point and rushes at her. The cold metal of her eyelashes bursts through the outer layers of her eyeballs, breaking them and spilling water. They rust immediately, and the eyes, broken and empty, search the air for another point. He comes closer and embraces her with a tenderness that burns her plastic skin and melts the spongy layer below, inscribing on her body a dry bed in the form of an embrace. He looks at her exposed, intricate mechanism. It’s made of a tender metal. He passes his tongue over the tiny gears, the brilliant interlocking pieces that make her up. He doesn’t understand it. They are sweet and grow dark upon contact with his acidic tongue. She follows with her finger the path that he’s drawing. He gets cut on a sharp piece. She puts her other hand under the spongy layer, looking for something. With a strong tug she unplugs herself. For a moment she is still, the mechanism stops with a sigh and collapses. He drags her by the hair in the hot sand. The sand, obliging, swallows their traces instantly.

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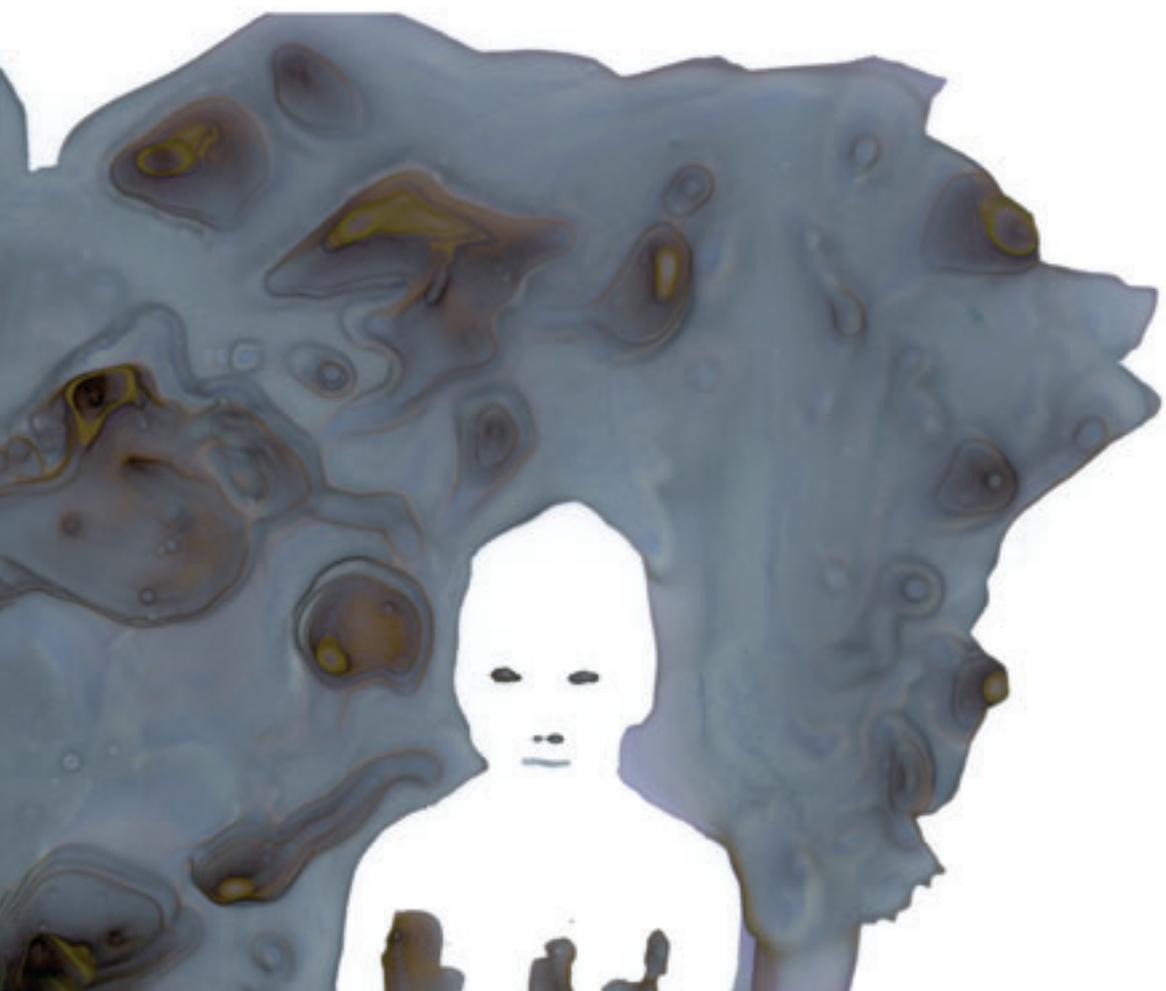
Far from the truth, he sinks a cold finger into the right side of her back, some ten and a half centimeters below the waistline. The flesh recedes like fear, leaving a firm tunnel with a slight downward tilt. He presses a little, looking in vain for the exact point. The exact point vibrates, mocking him. He stabilizes her with his other hand, and forcefully inserts the finger all the way in, down to where the muscles tangle in a knot. He separates them, digging fibrous layers of dry, brittle muscle, relieving them from their burden. He places the palm of his other hand on her chest, pushing her backwards, balancing her on his finger. He tenses and relaxes it, alternating a delicate pain with a short pause. He cranes to lick her neck, to bite her breasts, to lick his own hands, salivating energetically. A modest stream trickles down the squashed mounds of her tit forming between his fingers. He curves his neck to catch the liquid with his lips, but the liquid rushes downwards, wetting their feet. He fills his mouth with forms, round round, elliptic, curved, everything supple that fits inside, intoxicated with color, with softness.

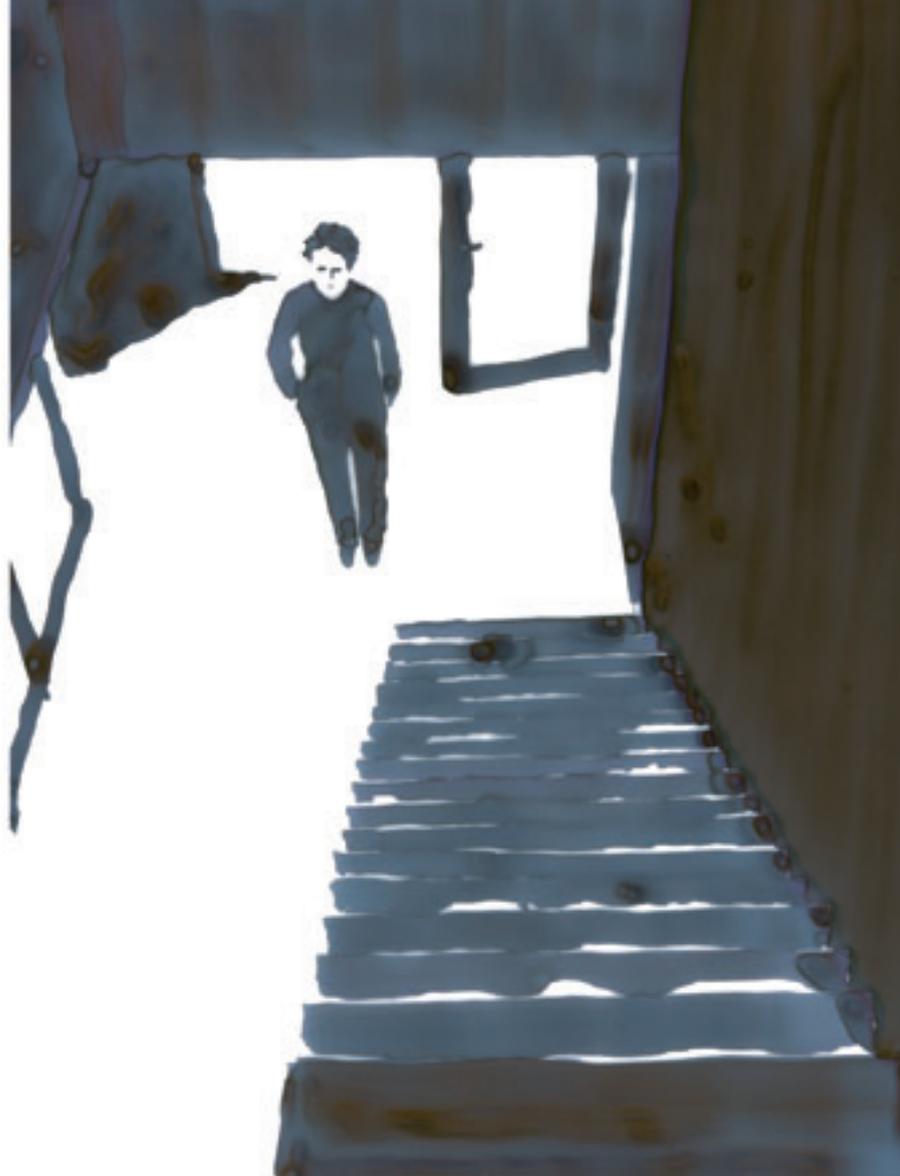
She mutates in silence. The flesh of her back tightens in around his finger, forming a hard, thick bark. She turns rapidly some eighty-seven degrees. The finger breaks with a crunch, separating from its previous body. She finishes turning slowly. She kisses his lukewarm eyes, his half-open mouth. She feels a wave of tenderness accelerate her breathing. Inside her, the finger pulsates silently with the unsynced rhythm of another heart.

*

With a shy impulse, she takes his hand between her delicate fingers and, at the same time, gives a forceful kick to the lie that's underneath the table. Her hand is cold and perfumed. She squeezes him, insinuating, cutting off his circulation. He smiles, tensing more muscles than necessary. She takes off a shoe and searches his legs with her foot. She finds something hairy and caresses it for a while, until realizing it was the lie that had been hiding between the tablecloth and his pants, two unfortunately similar fabrics. She tosses the cigarette she's smoking and squashes the lie with her shoe, maintaining her elegant posture. The lie opens its sad eyes in pain. It looks for refuge in the empty shoe. It's very tight and pretty steep, but the lie shrinks a bit and manages to put itself out of harms way, all but its multicolored tail that spreads up to his shoes. It draws a line dividing the area beneath the table exactly in two. She gives another go at the foot maneuver, this time reaching her objective. Repulsed, she caresses the fabric, her hypersensitive toes noting the despicable horizontal stripes. He himself deeply regrets the choice of suit. For one magic millisecond their thoughts perfectly coincide in the certainty that the sooner he takes off the suit, the better. She lets go of his hand and raises her glass to her alarmingly red lips. A drop of wine gets lost on the way and slides

down her ultra-white cleavage. He follows it with his gaze. A sudden erection raises the leg that he had crossed over the other and his knee hits the bottom of the table, tipping the glasses and causing him a pain that irrevocably deflates his erection. He uncrosses his legs and steps on the lie's multicolored tail. It wakes up in a bad mood. He looks at the table ashamed, rapidly calculating the probabilities. There is no time to lose. He tosses a fork and dives to retrieve it. With the unfortunate coincidence of the fabrics, the tablecloth is his ally, the perfect camouflage. With one hand he pets the lie, calming it down, and with the other unbuttons his suit to take it off. The lie purrs with pleasure. He looks at it, realizing he really likes it. It's warm and flexible, it has big blue eyes and no mouth. Without his suit he feels liberated, and actually has no desire to return the table. There he stays, lying in his underwear, playing with the lie until he notices the chair push away from the table, and her legs depart. He watches them from his hiding place as they swiftly recede into the distance.





*

A feeling left in her afterwards, an electric tension or an expansion wave, brings the words she had been keeping in her body to the precipice of her lips. She hesitates for an instance, and says, "I missed you."

She's holding him from behind, hiding her face in his back when he says nothing. As if he hadn't heard her.

A long string drags out more words following the weight of the first.

"Tell me something sweet,"

After a silence he says, "Penny for your thoughts,"

"Tell me something sweet," she repeats, almost inaudibly.

"Like what?"

"Tell me you love me"

"I love you," he says.

She bursts out laughing, a laugh that's not exactly her own. Though neither is it entirely joyless. She laughs for a while. "Yeah, I know you love me"

And she really does. He turns out the light and falls asleep. They both turn over and now he is holding her, chest to back, his hand on her stomach. She snuggles her butt up against him, feeling his lower stomach, his sleepy penis, soft and sweet. She rubs against him a little bit and he scolds her, thinking she wants more love. "Stay still", he says. She stays still.

She then notices soft caresses on her lower back, the flapping wings of a large glowing butterfly. She abandons the complicated calculations she was revising in the darkness and listens. He sleeps, his stomach rising and falling with each breath.

