

What starts with fire will be burnt in whirling flames.

Describing the apparent would seem foolish. Nonetheless, the apparent is also vague. Pictures can be described, but this becomes tiresome before we have even begun. Still, description can turn into poetry and poetry can turn into description. At this moment, unknown hands are holding a book, and the book represents the whole word. The universe formed of colourful grains. Should we indeed be foolish, we would say the aim of the book is to instigate imagination and associations. The universe of colours, the universe of family ties, the universe of the city, a variation of all universes out there and within. The universe and us, nothing less is at stake. However, you may feel, just like me, that today we need to defend our values not against the external world, but against ourselves, or rather against the modern human being inherent to every one of us. A modern human being that absorbs and reflects light beams at the same time, being neither black nor white – an element. It likes to hide and also show off. Its shadows meet and mingle in the book. A person's relationship towards the world is involved, and so is the relationship of the world towards the person. The angle we are looking from is of no importance since the multifaceted character, some kind of subversive and discrete ambivalence, is crucial. Somewhere I read: *I do not know who I am, but I know when I am being deformed*. One can only agree. Everything is true, and what is not true was true in the past or will be true in the future. I saw a slogan *No future* written on a wall this morning. Yes, the beginning of the end is nigh, but we can also feel enormous bursts of energy, rustling through the pages in the book. A loop of magic,

driven by infinite discharging and recharging, is turning pages like a mechanical movement, creating their contents. In each picture we can hide; in each picture we can reappear. To own is to open and to permeate. More than ever before we are turning into pictures. A picture is a hand, greyish and glittering, to which we want to hold out our hand. While pictures used to illustrate texts, now texts illustrate pictures. Symptomatic, isn't it? Shelling peas, she thought of the sea.

My life, a cobweb of inconspicuous revolt, vibrating under spider feet silently creeping in a corner of my room.

Should we indeed be foolish, we would say the aim of the book is to transform emptiness into presence and presence into fascination. Such fascination with the past is a perfect hideaway to endure the tedious and grey present. I have recalled one summer at Žižkov, the smell of piss and walls covered with graffiti, when I was wandering through the dusty and scorching streets, heaping scorn on all this. The memory, baking hot, makes me sweat. While looking, with displeased curiosity, into show windows of nail-art studios during those idle times, I had no idea that that was the Absolute. At least in hindsight. Yet, is anything but hindsight possible? Longing for emptiness, we start to dream, and in our dreams, we dream about idle times. A book in unknown hands represents idle times for it is unclear to us where the past ends and the present begins. Everything, time and us in time, becomes an uncertain and elusive entity. *Total chaos*, a girl told me, smiling. That was a dark period, I often photographed dead pigeons. The dead birds attracted my eyes like a magnet. Flying above

the city, pigeons watch people unconsciously creating marvellous and striking patterns. Then, they become martyrs of the sweltering Žižkov asphalts where I used to search for non-existent shade. Ticking sound of happiness, longing for the vision of past times. Intense perception of the pulsing urban folklore. The air smelling of melancholy; constellation of discarded Christmas trees. Since I was thirteen, I have known that the trees will end up in the Malešice incineration plan, even though some people claim that they will turn into food for animals in the zoo.

Slender memories were raining, cooling my cheeks.

Memories take strange forms. For a long time, I have been unable to recall a young girl's face, though the memory, or at least the image thereof, is imbued with dark-blue and grainy patina. Sometimes, we also strangely associate our feelings with certain, seemingly unrelated, places. Thus, we are infinitely attached to a street at Letná, the image of which I can clearly visualize, yet I have repeatedly failed to find the street in the city. The boundary line between memory and imagination is a mirage. Fantasy is a Siren, tempting and mystifying us, abstracting, tearing apart and combining. Her time is never linear, but always fragmental. It is composed of tiny pieces of the present, creases of imagination, castles in the air. They conserve the present, which will survive us. Every day, I pass a house and still I cannot decipher my feelings about it. My walking is measured by the distinctive rhythm and pace of my footsteps. No two people in the world have identical walking pattern, it is said. It is a delicate balance of minor features imprinted in one's footsteps, which we are unable to describe,

yet they enable us to differentiate one person from another. Similarly, each of us has a different way of browsing through a book. Forwards or backwards; briefly or thoroughly. We can indeed read a book without even opening it. A book in unknown hands represents an ensemble of openings for escape. It is a manifesto of the present that does not exist. The truth is we live neither in the present, nor in presences; rather, pieces of the present live in us. *We are empty dishes*, an intoxicated girl says. What is close to us can be closer, or need not be at all. Spontaneous ambivalence is the foolish aim. One day, I spotted a girl with the face of a Sphinx in the book. She smiled and disappeared. Sweet sense of desperation hangs in the air when I remember the vision. Unimaginable is the sweetest fruit.

Prickly quarrel is renewal of love.

The journey is sweat, a waterfall being drained off; juicy fruits, slowly decaying. Infinite ride towards the Sun hidden in a single pea. There is a side to driving that is erotic. A hand shifts from the gear to a yellow skirt. He was just a cowboy in a plastic bag; still he rode like the Sun, never losing. The skirt is a flower field, hot in the centre, radiating sensuous and exhausting heat. A fly lands on it, rubbing its hands together. Flying from one planet to another. Adventure at first, then boredom. The engine growls as an animal, which will live to see the dawn of the new world, the dark dream of medieval monks. He stopped under a paled billboard depicting cactuses. The air shivered almost imperceptibly, rustling sounds flickered. I can hear the beginning of the end, he thought. He looked into the bosom of the yellow. Heat and pleasure. And out of a sudden, splash of colour and glittering delight.

The yellow touches your feet, biting agreeably. You breathe the infinitely dry desert air and seawater flows through your nose; salty happiness circulates through your nerves and blood vessels. Your first memory. You are drawing aside a sky-blue veil and a greyish hand scrabbles for you, holding a burning match. Pulsing red and green colour; parched landscape paved with asphalt, like when you used to go to stained casinos to meditate. The skies change colour like a kaleidoscope: *cyan, magenta, yellow*. It's raining red tears, intoxicating you by their sweetish smell. Green cactuses, ironic and surviving, the totems of asceticism, laugh at your unsteadiness. Flower blooms release sticky sap, which flows down the pages and on your hands holding the book. All muses are there, emerging from every direction and from each page. The beginning joins the end, creating a luminescent circle rotating around your head like a halo. Your eyes are closed, still you can see everything. It is impossible not to see.