

## **Part 5**

### **Back Home Again?**

## **Prologue**

## **Back Home Again?**

I sat in front of the desk, looked at the screen, in the right corner the time and date. 18:54, 18.08.2022? Why not 6:54 PM and 08/18/2022 I thought.

I switched on the TV – okay, still CNN, but not the evening program? Inside Africa, later Jake Tapper, but at ten o'clock, Bianca Nobilo at eleven? And, what was "tagesschau 24" and "Phonix"? And why I had the feeling, that it würde natürlicher sein, würde ich auf Deutsch schreiben?

I looked at my passport. Well, still Peter Paul Maurer, still born on June the thirteenth, 1965. So far, all okay, but it was a German passport that I held in my hand. And the city of birth was no longer an American city like San Francisco, California. Or Providence, Rhode Island. But Heilbronn, Baden Württemberg, instead?

I had to sit down, no longer a part of the USA, looking from outside at Europe and Germany? Now a part of Germany, Europe, looking at the USA from outside? Joe wasn't any longer my president, but Olaf? And, where was Caroline, couldn't find not one hint of her? That was crazy, totally crazy, where was Los Angeles, or at least this large city, this mix of various large American cities? Now living in a small German city, a small "street" as main street, no sixteen-lane city highway anymore?

And hey, what was my profession, private dick? Private dick in Germany, what a joke that would be – working in a store for children's toys? I had to straighten up things, something was wrong, I had to find a solution to this situation.

## **Dealing With A New Situation**

A new day, after the finding, not living in the US, not to be born there. But, how is dealing with this situation now? No Caroline, no children's toys, no past as private dick? Not in a large American city, maybe L.A. or whatever, no Joe Biden, no nuts GOP, the democracy not fundamentally endangered, no mad religious fundamentalists trying to destroy all values, no corrupt Supreme Court? No rotten health care system, bankruptcy because of illness simply non-existing, no word for it? And, and, and.....shouldn't I be delighted?

And yet, a feeling of being lost, lost in a maybe even more confusing world. Not black and white anymore, with us or against us, thrown into a world of shades and complexity. What now?

Looking at the US from outside with fear, so much on the stake in the midterm elections, not only for the US as such? Forgetting the US and concentrating on Germany and Europe – Germany and Europe? How would it be, Germany and Europe, without the US regarding the fucking Russians and their bloody war in Ukraine? Ukraine without US (and Canadian) support? They would be lost, lost in extinction!

So, even born in Germany, living in Germany, one would have to look at the US, the US as the most important ally, Russia and China, as well as Iran and Saudi Arabia, as the worst enemies. The developments in the USA crucial, would the US fail, democracy would fail. Not because the USA has invented democracy, don't be silly, or because they are the oldest democracy, not less silly, but because Europe alone would be too weak!

And yet, what a difference! No longer being an American, voting for Biden, now a German, voting for Olaf. I had the feeling that I would need at least a few days more to deal with this new situation. Nevertheless, in one or the other way, I had to deal with it. But not today, today would be too early.

## **A "German" View On The United States Of America**

A nation with severe problems, the best example of what boundless capitalism causes, a few super-rich, the rest of the nation like a third-world country, extreme racism, nationalism, money and weapons the golden calves, no real democracy, even the Supreme Court not more than a political instrument, so much more one could say. And, all that was true!

But one could also talk about what the United States could be, and to a certain extent also were. About the people, the different people living in this huge nation. Always such stupid comparisons like: Germany compared to the United States, Germany has much less gun violence. Yeah, Germany a bit more inhabitants than California, more or less the same area, what a stupid comparison, Germany and the USA. Okay, California had more gun violence than Germany, but that wasn't the point, one had to compare always Europe and the USA. Round about the same number of inhabitants and the same area.

Europe, not able to form a real government in Brussels, a European government. Not able to speak with one voice, a united foreign policy, a united army. Seen in this light, the United States of America were much more united than the European "Union"! Okay, a shit health care system, no worker rights, school kids had to fear - every day - to get killed at school, what a fucking nation!

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And Germany, the fourth-largest national economy.....Under my Thumb, Putin's most favorite song nowadays. Steinmeier, Gabriel, Schröder.....would we ever get to know how much they had cuddled with Putin? But we had the strength to change things, to decide, hopefully we could keep this motion. Well, in the current government the FDP was the brakeman, the party for those who earned more, the wealthy people, as they had said it oneself. A party interested in their clientele only, not good in a time that would need brave and basic decisions. Nevertheless, democracy in Germany not on the stake, like a hundred years ago, all those discussions and conflicts, Germany was very stable. Maybe too much? In any case, better than having American circumstances, we should copy the two-term system.

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Rising prices, well, gasoline prices dropped again, but the prices for natural gas exploded. Also, the prices for food very high now. A hundred Euros? Much more in your shopping car a year ago than today - I never had to pay a hundred Euros at the register a year ago, today it would be no problem, with much less in the shopping car! Okay, I still liked to buy fresh fruit and suchlike, maybe like in the USA soon? Fresh and healthy food only for those with higher incomes? I had the feeling that this could be a time for very basic decisions, in Germany as well as in the States. And I had to say that I was more scared for the United States.

"In what country you wanted to live?", someone asked. The mind said, in Germany of course, what a stupid question! But the heart? Maybe there could be a solution "in between"? Some predictions said that it would not last that long, and at least some part of the Iberian Peninsula would be no longer inhabitable for humans, had I to ponder about it? Perhaps not the worst problem, as long as a nuts fascist warmonger tried to destabilize the free Europe, and Europe was not able to answer strong and brave. Not helping Ukraine substantially to win this war, to get their land back, the complete soil, with Crimea, of course!

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Sitting at home, typing words, vacation, not sure, how to feel. The war in Ukraine, the midterm elections in the United States, the further development of COVID-19, the measures regarding climate change - soon we would get some answers. It would be interesting to get them, yet maybe potentially very devastating.

### **Just Living In Germany**

Yeah, born at the wrong place, living at the wrong place, never changed it. Yeah, one time worked at the Baltic Sea, but the Baltic Sea is the Baltic Sea, not in fact an ocean. And yet on the way to

change this, but not now, not now. And then the desire of the heart and the voice of the mind, but an ocean in any case. And so far? Just living in Germany.

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Germany, this economic powerhouse that lacks more and more skilled labor, that is incapable to implement a clever immigration policy, thanks to conservative fears. Germany will change, it has constantly changed, thanks God it has changed, had to change after the time of fascism. The world changes, the universe changes, conservatism is condemned to fail, at the end only able to plunge everything into chaos.

And yet, a certain amount of conservatism obviously not wrong, the other extreme is anarchy, and anarchy can be only destructive. Germany will change, I will live in Portugal, not likely in the USA, I will die, but still alive.

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The rich get richer until the next revolution, maybe a revolution in Russia soon, but would be not in our interest, we need stable partners for our economy. Better a stable dictatorship with which we can make good deals, than an unstable democracy that thinks their natural resources belong to their people. The world in a hundred years, today I would only write a dystopia, but have killed all human beings already, cannot top this anymore. Possibly do it more brutally, dive deeper into the human disgust, but isn't all that said already a million times?

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Sitting at home, Colorado vs. Michigan, dying in Ukraine, hope that the fucking Putin will die a fucking painful death. Or like Adolf with his Eva, no matter, a long as he will be dead soon. Regime change, not first time that I say this, regime change in Russia, everything else would be a defeat. Regime change in Germany? Well, would not say that we have a "regime" in Germany. Sure, big cooperations co-writing laws, bread for the people, the butter is ours.

But what does "bread" in Germany means, in such a rich country – but for how much longer? If nothing changes, Europe will very soon decay into unimportance, but will China be able to do it better? China has very severe problems, the communist mass murderers have their problems. Have we to talk about the USA? Would Africa perform more clever, Africa could become very fast and easily the leading continent – but their "leaders" have learned in the Western world, that kills them.

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And I, staggering between despair and hope, always tired and with headache, like right now, what shall I do? Living in Germany, awaiting the coming. Waiting, waiting what will happen in the US very soon, whether we decide to support Ukraine essentially, to show colors. Putin is a swine as well as Donald Duck, the world has to get rid of them or will fail. Bolsonaro in Brazil or Erdoğan in Turkey, we have to get rid of them. Come on, this is a horrible world, and it's made horrible by the humans, no wonder that I've headache nearly all the time. I would have to run mad, maybe I'm mad already, might be that would be the only "humanistic" solution.

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No longer in the USA, it had been nice there, easy in a way. Now in Germany, but in fact, the outcome of the election in the USA will be essential for me. It would be for me and the USA essential that the swine from Florida – both swines if you like, but at least the prime swine – has to spend the rest of his life behind prison bars. Hey, he has his Supreme Court, would the USA able to

a revolution. Germany not, not really. The French, yes, they have beheaded their king and queen.

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Just living in Germany, perhaps making the best out of the situation? Let's do it, even not knowing how!

### **Let's Try It That Way**

After working, my first Monday to Friday job in my whole life, fifty-seven years old, from 6 AM until 2:30 PM, I pondered about how to continue this writing. No longer as a kind of trusted friend in the United States, private investigator, even in a relationship at the end, but as in reality in Germany, with no relationship – and of course, no private dick. Clinging to the idea, maybe, able to create art, any kind of art, preferably singing, but definitively not able to sing. A nice voice, nevertheless, if not singing loud, if no modulation, with other words, without anything that made singing to real singing. But possibly writing, possibly drawing, painting, drawing a comic, making a video, potentially even with self-made music, of course not with real instruments, with software. Onstage? Thank you for listening!

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Would this be a possibility to continue this writing? How detailed, how realistic, what about self-protection? Kurt Cobain a hero, for what? The music not that much smashing, like their songs more when sung by Émilie Simon, Tori Amos.....Elizabeth Grant's version of Heart-Shaped Box? The Lyrics? Yeah, the lyrics are the lyrics, but lyrics are no songs!

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I ponder on stand-up comedy, but it's different from in the States. Together with someone much younger, perhaps? But not now, I fear I would be too offensive: Putin is a wanker, a fascist, a mass murderer, I would like to see him conk out like the soldiers on both sides. Good to write, difficult to say, at least on a German stage. Whatever, maybe this was the beginning of something new.

### **Writing About A Lonely Old Man With Crazy Dreams?**

How to write, that was the problem. A not very "lyrical" life, presented using lyrical language, a language using abstraction, lyrical condensation, structuring, alienation, and much more. And please, what should be the arc of suspense?

What about a text as a looking back, the now successful writer looks back to the former time, not being famous? This would be maybe a try worth.

**The Man Without Memories -  
Memories With Respect To A Gone Time**

# Chapter 1

## **Dead Eyes In A Mirror**

### **Talking About Literature**

"The Man Without Qualities", Robert Musil, could be a reference, but much more I felt that "The Invisible Man", Ralph Ellison, should it be. I liked the beginning – yeah, being invisible. But I, I liked it, being invisible in a way, that people not noticed you, but at the boxing ring I would have been one of the white guys, enjoying the spectacle. No, apparent invisibility was something very appealing, I enjoyed it always.

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I had no memories, not in the way that my mind would be absolutely empty, but in a way, that I would connect something with existing "memories". Especially no emotions, those who were existing were like as they would be memories from another person, only stored in my mind. But not many, and especially not from younger years, especially not regarding the two far-reaching events. Knowing that they had happened, not having any picture of them in mind, some fragments maybe, no emotions. Not absolutely right expressed possibly, between waking and sleeping, the one event. The other event? I loved water, I loved being surrounded by water, hearing water, smelling water, standing in front of the Endless Ocean.

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I thought about the last concert, Morcheeba, I saw me standing there, like looking at a stranger, not knowing what he felt. Having no qualities, being invisible, having no (real) memories. Perhaps one way, not running mad in a mad world, a Mad World. Maybe only being mad, mad like everything around you: It's a very, very mad world, mad world.....

*Their tears are filling up their glasses  
No expression, no expression  
(Mad World; Tears for Fears)*

## **The Pleasure Of Being Famous**

### **Living In 2033**

June the thirteenth, 2033 – many congratulated me again this year. Like last year, in 2032, and the year before, in 2031. Not so many congratulated me in 2030, the year in which I became famous. Being famous, well, but what does "famous" meant? How many around the world had to know you, to be " famous"? A local pop singer "famous"? An American Madonna known by hundreds of millions of people all around the world, or a Bollywood star known by billions? A "famous" scientist, or a "famous" actor? Once I read: Umberto Eco will stay famous for his novels, but will stay important for his work as university professor, his works on semiotics. If Eco had to choose, as long as alive, either famous or essential, what would have he chosen? A professor, who had impressed me, Peter Bieri? Whatever, I celebrated my sixty-eighth birthday today, and I was famous now - in one way or other, anyway.

## **The Years Full Of Hope**

### **The Very-First Beginning**

If I wrote a novel about my life, where I would begin? With my birth? No memories, of course! The very early years? No one has memories about that time. But maybe with a formative moment? But which one I should select then, which from the two? And where to start? The first happened, and I lost the remembrance, I eliminated the memory as good as possible, possibly simply just as it happened. It needed long until a few parts of the memory came back, I could have died at this moment. And the second? It happened, and it did not mean anything to me. A very long time later, near falling asleep it popped up, I could have killed my sibling at this moment! Perhaps one of these moments, many years after the event had happened, as a starting point? But which to pick?

The whole life a dream, and always only bumbling tries to fetch the dream, until one night happened, one matter, listening to a song. And then a second song, a third song, a fourth song, more and more songs. Perhaps that moment could be a good starting point, the only one that would make sense? I thought so.

## **The Pleasure Of Being Famous**

### **Where to die?**

Often they ask me: Now, being famous, made millions, alone by selling the movie rights for "A Fantasy Novel" for instance, you still live in Matosinhos? Why not moving to Los Angeles? Well, why I should?

Yeah, Los Angeles, this arousing lure, but I'm married with Matosinhos. They are much more relaxed in Portugal, life is easy in Matosinhos, no fundamentalist Christian radicals, no women hater in parliament, no corrupt Supreme Court - the people are simply nice. They do not worship the money, they have still always time for one of their typical small coffees. Yeah, no paradise, but compared with the US?

Sure, Los Angeles, alone the zoo, enjoying a meal on the patio, or tacos in front of the coin laundry? As you said, I've made some money. If the longing starts to overwhelm me, I have always the opportunity to enjoy some aviation, to cross the small ocean, to be at the large ocean. That's one of the privileges which I have now. But I do not want to die in Los Angeles, it's better to die in Matosinhos, my dead body will enjoy the more relaxed atmosphere at the graveyard there. Okay, enjoying the infinity together with Chet Baker and all the others? But it will do me better to be buried in Portuguese soil.

## **Dead Eyes In A Mirror**

### **Empathy**

Empathy, empathy with whom? Fucking dying in Ukraine, more empathy than fucking dying in Chechnya, fucking dying in Syria, Afghanistan? Sure, the war in Ukraine had more effects on your nation, but made that the dying more fucking? Total empathy, with the Russian soldier who cuts off the testicles of an Ukraine soldier, with a lot of joy? The knowledge to be able as a human, to die for your nation, not to get overrun by the enemy, to die for your nation's freedom, to be able as a human to commit the most awful possible war crimes? The knowledge, that giving your empathy free rein, would let you only two possibilities. Becoming a monster, letting the monster free that's already in you, or, killing you as fast as possible. Blade Runner, the movie? Do Androids Dream of

Electric Sheep, the novel? Would it be the worst to discover to be an android "only"? And this fucking empathy, what would that mean then?

*Here comes the cold again  
I feel it closin' in  
It's fallin' down and all around me  
Falling*

*You say that you'll be there to catch me  
Or will you only try to trap me?*

*Don't ask me why  
Don't even try  
(A Stroke Of Luck; Garbage)*

## **The Years Full Of Hope**

### **Talking About Water**

I had the feeling that I had written enough about that topic, but it fascinated me always to ponder about it, that someone nearly drowned as a boy was that attracted by water.

Okay, had suppressed it for a long time, no memories, still not today, how it was, nearly to drown. A few pictures around it, but the drowning as such got buried deeply.

I liked feeling water on my skin. Under the shower, for instance, even rain. Most I liked it to be surrounded by water, especially when being underwater, surrounded by water totally.

I liked large water surfaces, when stretching out till the horizon, seemingly endlessly. I had always the impulse to get off my clothes, to start to swim, endlessly. The idea to be buried in soil disgusted me, saw my dead body swimming in the ocean, the endless, infinite, ocean. This was the image that kept me alive.

## **The Pleasure Of Being Famous**

### **One-On-One**

"When reading your so-called diary-like writing, over the years it had different titles, there was a time when you began writing about, that your goal would be to become famous with sixty-five."

"Yes, I think I started therewith around 2021 or 2022, something like that."

"With around fifty-five, fifty-six?"

"Yes, at this age."

"So, you had still ten years or so to become famous."

"Yes."

"I pondered about what would have he done, if not famous with sixty-five, or sixty-six, or sixty-seven and so on. Can I be straight with you?"

"Of course."

"I asked myself, at what an age he would have committed suicide. Did you ever ponder about that?"

"First, there is this saying, that those who always talk about it will never do it. Then, the nice people, the wonderful food, fish but also everything else, the ocean, of course, the ocean. If there was ever a time, I was in danger, then before I moved to Matosinhos. The day I arrived in Matosinhos, with sixty-five, everything was okay, no matter if famous or not. No matter if famous or not, in danger I lived in Germany. I wrote a story with a manatee very early, I knew that I would

live at the ocean at one point. Well, as I wrote this story I had not been in Matosinhos, it was more the West Coast I had in mind at that time. But this another story."

"Matosinhos became crucial for you, it seems so?"

"More than becoming famous. The knowing that I once would live in this small house, that rescued my life more than one time. Matosinhos saved my life in a way – Los Angeles was simply too far away."

## **Dead Eyes In A Mirror**

### **In The Mood**

"What a disgraceful person you are," she laughed, while saying that. "You're a dilettante in every respect, not only when trying to do something one could possibly be calling sex."

"You've maybe a fucking hot body, darling. But apart from that, you're only a spoiled and arrogant bitch." I turned around and went away, not looking back once – why I should? I was a man, I would close my eyes later in bed, would see her, would have at least as much pleasure without her, as if she were with me. It had sometimes unchallenged benefits to be a man.

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I closed the laptop, a laptop as mirror? Behind the mirror, behind the Looking Glass, in a fictional world everything was possible, everything meant nothing. Everything meant no real information, every information was meaningless, everything possible would mean endless darkness. A universe where everything would be possible would not come into existence, it would be simply impossible. An empty sheet of paper, ready for everything, would be an endless contradiction, ready for the typewriter of the famous ape maybe, but for a human being?

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Guide rails, it would need guide rails, a guide rail called reality for instance. Science had reality as guide rail, observations, pseudo-science not. Literature, art? Everything possible? Let your imagination flow, like the metaphysicians, and forget the stupid reality. Search for the ultimate answers and ultimate trueness. Become an ubermensch, no longer caught in reality, everything is possible from now on.

"Ape and Essence" has some interesting guide rails, the human insanity for instance. My incompetence and limitations as my guide rails? Well, some were very restricted in some ways, but were able to create exceptional moments, like this one guitar player – shut up Mick, it's not always about you!

## **The Years Full Of Hope**

### **Death At Birth**

Yeah, I nearly died after birth, the first time I nearly died. The rhesus factor could be still a big problem at the time I'm born, and it nearly caused my death. As a newborn on the ICU, but I survived. Yeah, I survived. It's strange, a new life, so fast it could have ended. Some years later again. The idea that someone would decide about it seems simply disgusting to me.

The finite nature of life should call for some consequences – oh, yes, on paper I can find a lot! We're even not able to see men and women – even not of our own "kind" – as equal, that's telling enough. It's disappointing.

I have no memories at this time, of course not, no one can remember birth, or the time thereafter. But to imagine me, in a hospital, ICU.....yet still, I'm typing this words, and sometimes writing about suicide.

## **The Pleasure Of Being Famous**

### **Pivotal Moments**

"Yes, "The Night" had been the beginning of everything. Therefore, this pivotal moment is special. But there have been other pivotal moments."

"Can you give us some examples?"

"Well, two are a bit difficult. Drowning as such? Well, I suppressed this event, until today I have no active memory of this event. The hammer? Different, but somewhat alike. Both events emerged at a certain point again, suddenly and brutally. They were erased for years, then they were there again. But all this meant not a necessity to develop into an artist. Sure, I started to write. But, at a certain point, I had the feeling to lose myself. 2022 became a special year, I expanded my interests. I drove to Matosinhos again, at the end of the year, two weeks that had a deep impact, deeper than I firstly thought."

"I would be interested in to get more in-depth knowledge about all these moments, Peter."

"Okay, but give me a moment of time."

## **Dead Eyes In A Mirror**

### **The "Role" Of Literature And Art As Such**

Well, not only one answer would be possible because not only one definition of "art" would be possible. There's no law of nature that could tell you something about art and its "role". It's always a definition, made by humans, like what one would define as philosophy. And for me?

Art keeps me alive, literally, not metaphorically. Art is the supportive element in my life, and the world around me, nature, the universe minus the humans. Scientists and artists are the most interesting people of humankind, what they create and explore are the highest insights of humankind.

I'm a little scientist, I observe variable stars. I'm even co-author of a scientific publication. My name will stay forever, as part of a large database. My observations, mainly on carbon stars and red semiregular variables with very long periods, a good deal of SRC type stars, some will become supernovae in the future, will be forever.

Now I try to become a little artist. I started around eight years ago with it, my first variable star observation I did around forty years ago. Still time to become a little artist.

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Art can change the world – what a silly vulgarity! Of course! Everything can change the world, every deed, every creation, every person, everything, and therefore also art. As said, simply a silly vulgarity.

Art can change the world, art can have numerous functions, maybe simply to enjoy us. And we should possibly think about whom we ask this question, the artist, or the recipient? No starting with cultural studies now, but it's a simple insight that – assumed that my writing and the rest can be seen as art – it's a difference for me to create art or to receive art.

On the other hand, art always fascinated me, in the beginning, especially music and movies, and I always dreamt about to make art, in the beginning music and movies. It appears to me that these

two poles dominated my life in a way. But in the meaning that I always received a lot of – very different - art, but was incapable to create any art. This controversy could describe my life – at one level – flawlessly. And the last years? The try to solve this conflict, knowing that it's in a way far too late now. But I have the enthusiasm to do it at least as good as possible in the remaining time I have – knowing not to know how long this timespan still is. The next field of tension.

## **The Pleasure Of Being Famous**

### **Hopes And Wishes**

"I doubt that I would have gotten desperate, would I not have become famous. But the fact that people started to read my writing, looked at my photographs and painting, read my comics, watched my videos with the music, this all had a comforting influence. It is not that they have to say that my writing is the best because it simply isn't. The same with all the other stuff. But to see that others think, that my art is at least that interesting that it would be no wasted time to read it, to look at it, to watch it, to hear it, this fact is wonderful. I'm the guy never at the top of the list, the charts, whatever. I'm the guy happy about to find his name somewhere on the list, the chart, whatever."

"I would say that this is a kind of understatement now, or Mr. Maurer."

"Well, what shall be our measure? A question of science can be answered – at least potentially – easily. You only have to see, to measure, to carry out a test. This has not to be easy, maybe you have therefore to build the biggest, most expensive, and most complex machine, humans have ever built, like the LHC. But at last it's possible. Art? What shall be our way to decide? Jeff Koons is shit for me, a, from the fucking arts industry hyped, nobody. Warhol not better, a snobbish Manhattan bunch "liked" him, made fucking money with him – it this the reason I have to think he's an important artist? Maybe even an artist at all? What I like most is, sitting at the ocean in Matosinhos, with my very old laptop, doing something, and somebody says: Is this this strange old German who lives here now, the one who makes this strange writing and this other stuff? And I say: Sim senhora, sou eu."

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"When did I become a writer, artist – if ever? Well, maybe I was my whole life a writer, an artist? I mean, perhaps I was simply not capable to express myself adequately? Means, I did not dare to express my real feelings, right the way I do not show them? It's a fact in any case, as I started to express my feelings straightforward, I was certain to be a writer and artist. But to be honest, it was not easy to do it, it was very hard in fact, and I hesitated much. But you cannot chatter around, I wanna be a writer and artist, and you're not willing to show your colors. You can do this as a politician, cheating the people, as a businessman anyway. Not as an artist, you have to be willing showing your weak side, your blind side, not pretending you're the guy with the longest cock in town – well, maybe as a rapper, if selling naive kids your overpriced shit."

"It makes you vulnerable, that's a risk. A risk an artist has to take?"

"Everybody is vulnerable. Especially those who pretend not to be, they are, in fact, the biggest crybabies. Look at the wanker who thought to be the president of the USA, or the fucking Elon Musk. Cruz or Jordan, they are such crybabies. Give them one hard job to do, and they will cry like an eight-year-old. You have to face your vulnerability, you have to bear it, you have to show your vulnerability, not trying to cover it. That makes you an artist."

## **Dead Eyes In A Mirror**

### **The Past, The Presence, And The Future**

Knowing the end of something at the beginning is unnatural, knowing the end of a story when beginning with writing the story makes no sense. It would be like seeing the effect before the cause, this is not possible, at least not in reality. I do not know who will win in Georgia. After the election, after the counting, I will know it – at least if you're a Democrat, or a Republican and your candidate has won.

To talk about the conservative primary elections in 2016 is boring, unless you are a historian. To talk about the likely clash of DeSantis and the racist swine from NY, right now, is thrilling. To analyze the parallels between 2014 until 2016 and 2022 (and following) essential, but to talk about 2022 and following. To say today that Hillary Clinton lost because of her arrogance is cheap, to talk about Biden and his possible next candidacy meaningful.

The future is wide open, if Mr. Petty is right, then a story has to be wide open. A story has to be linked with the presence, the presence which will be the past the next day, when the future has become the presence. Writing has to be a permanent process in progress. To write only about the past is to write about the dead, is cowardly. To write about the presence and the future is writing about the living and coming, is brave on the contrary.

## **Epilogue**

## The Years Full Of Hope

### The River

*Oh my god I see how everything is torn in the river deep  
And I don't know why I go the way  
Down by the riverside  
(Riverside; Agnes Obel)*

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The river, the water, nothing attracts me more than water, the larger, the gustier, the better. The ocean, at least the smaller one, should be my place, of living and dying.

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I have not many memories about it, drowning, have already written about my aware fragments of memories. Very early, I like it until today, "Kingfisher", the song as well as my poem. I like the last lines, the angels who wage war, with oneself, or singing awful words with mellifluous voices. Not more than these memories I have. The kingfisher that swallows the fish alive.....

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Two moments in my early life, two moments that could have change everything. Both, at the end, nothing happened – or. Forgotten for a long time, most likely better "suppressed", both came to light again, suddenly, not expected, like a punch from the blind side. Not able today, to say exactly when, forgotten what first, I have no real memories.

\*

Does this event have caused something in my subconscious mind? Well, you ask me? Freud is shit, and most of the psychology doubtful, but this is not the place. I love water, to be surrounded by water, being underwater is fascinating. The world "above" suddenly disappears, sounds are different, as well as vision. Underwater is like sleeping, plunging into water like the moment when altering from being wake to being asleep. Yeah, I would say that it has caused something, wherever.....

\*

It's a pity, could I say, how much I suffer from this event, nearly I died! That it causes nightmares – I have never nightmares, weird dreams, yes, but never nightmares – that I have to fight therewith. But I have no real memories, it does not burden me, and I love – and not hate – water. Sometimes I ask myself: Could it be that I loved it to be underwater, and that I pine for to experience this feeling again? The river, I have the feeling that I will never understand the circumstance, until my last day.

\*

*I walk to the borders on my own  
Fall in the water just like a stone  
Chilled to the marrow in them bones  
Why do I go here alone  
(Riverside; Agnes Obel)*

## **Baptism**

I walk you to the river  
To say goodbye  
Either you or I  
One of us has to go

It's no longer bearable  
The two of us  
It was always a torment  
But now it's an inescapability

The river's water  
So cold and blue  
Pure  
Will be our enforcer

Come nearer  
Do not fear  
I can tell you  
It's awfully nice

I had the experience once  
And I never wanna miss it  
Do it like I did  
I will be your baptist

Your head underwater  
All so quiet  
Your screams even  
You can hear them only damped

It will not last too long  
The innocent water  
Will join the ocean at the end  
We're formed in water, in water we'll wane

\*

It's done finally  
You my friend had to die  
So that I can live  
Until I will join you in the ocean again

## **Down To The River**

Down to the river  
I walked a time ago  
It could have been my last walk  
But it wasn't

The shallow half I played  
The deep half I fell  
My mother rescued me  
The mother who gave me life

Twice that she gave me life  
Cannot remember a hug  
Or a kiss  
She made something of herself

I cannot say  
Loving mother  
Perhaps unable to cope  
Possibly too quick-tempered

Down by the river  
The river whispers  
Some see a light in it  
Scary things at the riverbed

I see the river as life giver  
As a place of calm  
Place of comfort  
A place to forget earth's gravity

## The River

*Gonna ride across the river deep and wide  
Ride across the river to the other side  
(Ride Across The River; Dire Straits)*

Okay, I'm not aware of that "The River", the "River Incident", has any meaning for my life. It's nearly like with the knowledge about the fact that I nearly died right after my birth, no memories! Well, no one can remember its birth and the time right after it, at this time there is no memory. And also "The River", even if years thereafter, is not much more. A few vague pictures, not much more. Sure, this means not, that both cannot have left its marks, but I'm not aware of.

I'm totally attracted by water. Well, sounds not as having any kind of psychosis in connection with the "nearly drowned" event. But wouldn't it be nice? Once I got asked if I'm not an autistic person.....

Well, would be maybe good for a vita as wanna-be artist. Nearly died after birth, what a psychotic experience! Nearly drowned a few years later, the next psychotic experience! And then the coming rest of the story! Of course, an autistic person! This person has to become an artist, this person has no other chance than to become an artist! Yeah, sounds charming, but I see not one indication therefor!

\*

My life is boring, I'm no revolutionary, I did not plug into one possibility to make a career at work, and I had more than one. I'm not married, I have no children, I never took responsibility for anyone else. I was always fascinated about art, but I was never able to make any on my own. I'm the boring Englishman, living in his gray flat in the 70s. And yet, as Monty Python taught us, behind those gray doors, sometimes strange things happen – The League of Gentlemen.

Will I ever become famous, and I will become famous, than it will be a kind of dark British humor. On the other hand, some got famous with total shit, only to mention Andy! The more severe problem is, many never got famous and did things on a level I will never be able to reach. But hey, I'm an autistic person, I nearly died after birth, and a few years later I nearly drowned. If this is not reason enough to see my stuff as art and me as an artist, an artist that should be famous? Not? No matter, this is only the beginning, the hard stuff will follow now!

## The Years Full Of Hope

### Being A Killer

To nearly die after birth, ICU, or, nearly drowning in a river a few years later, is one matter. Simply because it only affects you, it's you and you, no other person. All changes at the moment, when another person is involved.

Say, you have a car accident, you drive too fast and hit a tree, you're dead, that's all. But it would be an entirely different matter if your car not hits a tree, but another car. A person in this other car gets severely injured or maybe even dies. Then it's no longer a matter between you and you.

But, if something sever could have happened, but nothing has happened at the end? All okay, or isn't it not really better, as if something severer would have happened? Murder, even murder, knows differentiation. An attempted murder is less severe as a conducted murder — nevertheless, you get punished in both cases. What, if one of your actions could have caused severe harm, even death, but it did not happen, nothing?

Garbage, always Garbage:

*A stroke of luck or a gift from God?  
Hand of fate or devil's claws?  
From below or saints above?*

And maybe the ultimate question:

*You say that you'll be there to catch me  
Or will you only try to trap me?*

And the conclusion:

*Don't ask me why  
Don't even try*

\*

I use Søren Kierkegaard, to say that one should try to control such questions – why.....why not.....why I.....what.....what would.....what if.....could.....could it.....couldn't it..... – all interesting, and most likely vital questions, but! In analytic philosophy, you have to ponder very long and very severe about your questions. Forget the answers in the first place, firstly you have to ponder about a meaningful question. Only a meaningful question can yield a meaningful answer. Meaningless, nonsensical, or stupid questions, can only yield suchlike answers.

Could it be, that the universe, beyond the for us visible part, is different from the part that we can see? Yes, but because we cannot see that part of the universe, we cannot answer the question about the not visible part of our universe in a meaningful way. Every answer could be the correct answer. Therefore, no answer makes sense.

Do humans ask such questions? In any case! Should it be forbidden to ask such questions? Why! Why not talking about unicorns, even that they don't exist – it can be nice to talk about unicorns or use them in art for instance. The immortal soul might be a stupid construct, like the undying hope, or undying love, but this not means that you can't use it to express something. My soul lies in pieces, as I had to realize, that only I thought that our love could be an undying love. In the right context a wonderful sentence, like, in my dream I saw a unicorn, and it wasn't shy. Quite on the contrary, the unicorn stood still, and I could become one with it – with the knowledge about, to whom the unicorn allows to touch it, it's obvious that in that dream I wasn't myself. Unless I'm a

(female) virgin now, in the best-case Virgin Mary.

\*

There are questions, never can be answered, especially also those who are connected to time and possibilities. Even Aristotle knew this. What would have happened, if Johann Georg Elser had been successful by his attempt to kill Adolf Hitler – at November the eighth, 1939! Well, we will never know! We can speculate, like we can write a novel, the Nazis have won and occupied the UK. And we must do this, to ponder about possibilities, to see that life is no one-way street without any forks or crossroads. But, if we really try to find final answers to such questions, then we start with madness. Yeah, Mr. Petty:

*The future was wide open*

### **Being A Killer**

I wrote a story, a boy could have harmed his sister, very severe maybe, maybe even would have killed her. Not on purpose, but in a moment of not pondering about the doing, doing something on impulse, affect based, affectively. A life in a wheelchair, dead possibly, all possibilities. The possibility put into effect at the end, the hammer did not hit her. The story, not written so far, would be an autobiographical story.

Reacting like Søren Kierkegaard, or his father? Simply neglecting it? Well, the boy of my story simply forgot it, until a night, decades later. It hit him, the memory, what he had done, as a boy. And now? Again, reacting like Søren Kierkegaard, or his father? To forget it again was no option anymore. What about some glorification?

The memory hit the now grown boy like the stroke of a lightning, would fate had decided differently, he would be a murderer today, his sister dead, his parents broken people. But fate had been favorably disposed towards him, that he realized in this night. But, what should be the consequences thereupon now? Art, his whole life art attracted him, he had to become an artist, and he became one! Well, that story would be fiction, pathetic fiction.

Munchhausen trilemma, Agrippa's trilemma, I don't want to start a general discussion about it now, but I see it in that way – you have simply to bear it. No ultimate justification (grounding) is possible, some questions cannot be answered, simply because some questions make no sense. One has sometimes simply to accept the result, knowing that it could have been different. One moment unconcentrated, slam on the brakes, will you be lucky, or will you cause a severe car accident, maybe with dead people? Life is not predetermined – now it would be the moment, would I be an asshole, to start with quantum physics, but I'm none! The simple answer is: It could have been different, very different, but it did not. No dying after birth, no drowning in the river, no killer. Does this make me to an artist, author perhaps? Hell, of course not! What a fucking pathetic shit, that opinion would be! And, if I had killed my sister, had harmed her at least that severe, that she would be wheelchair-bound? Would one ask this question in earnest, this would be the most disgusting and most pathetic question one could ask!

### **What Lesson To Draw From?**

Being happy, that one of the dire possibilities not came to pass, or eventually even the worst? It's a moment in life, when it seems the best, to step back for a moment, doing nothing for a moment, giving it a moment of contemplation. Not searching for an answer because there will be no answer. Not searching for a question because there will be no question with any meaning. Accepting, accepting what is, and dealing with it.

## **Fly High**

I wanna fly high  
Wanna see the world from above  
But I'm no bird  
The ground is mine

I wanna dive deep  
Into another world  
But I'm no fish  
The ground is mine

And as much I wish it  
There is no chance  
Only with gadgets and aids  
But never in a way, free of bounds

One could be sad about it now  
And I'm sad about it beyond all  
But one has to accept it  
Even if killing therewith your heart

## **Would I Be Famous**

I would hate it  
People would ask me fucking questions  
The answers I have already written down  
No reason to ask me anything

Would a million people all over the world read my writing  
I would be overcome by joy  
I would have tears in my eyes  
Does my Patreon page contradict this writing?

I would like it  
To limit social contacts most widely  
Only sometimes, when I'm in the mood  
To order a coffee or a tea, something to eat maybe

Paying at the counter of the shop  
Saying "Hello" and "Goodbye"  
I would like to stay silent apart from that  
Would like to write, to paint, to take pictures, to create melodies.....

I do not belong to this world, I'm unable to get on with this world, I'm an alien in an alien world.

## Retirement

Matosinhos

Speaking Portuguese, a foreign language for the German man  
Writing (American) English, a foreign language for the German man  
Would be a perfect match

## Intangibility

The intangibility of life, the impossibility to calculate any possibility – Smoking / Non Smoking by Alain Resnais. The human nature, not always to act on a pure logic basis – act of despair (Akt der Verweilung), Max Planck – doing sometimes things without a safety net. But this implements, that one cannot always be certain about, what your reactions, your actions, will be, and more, what will be the outcome of those.

*'Cause we're the masters of our own fate  
We're the captains of our own souls  
There's no way for us to come away  
'Cause boy we're gold, boy we're gold  
(Lust for Life; Elizabeth W. Grant)*

We are not necessarily slaves of our "fate", but definitively we're no masters. We are not necessarily only passengers of our "souls", but we're definitively no captains.

*You got that medicine I need  
Fame, liquor, love, give it to me slowly  
Put your hands on my waist, do it softly  
Me and God, we don't get along, so now I sing*

*You got that medicine I need  
Dope, shoot it up, straight to the heart, please  
I don't really wanna know what's good for me  
God's dead, I said, "Baby, that's alright with me"  
(Gods & Monsters; Elizabeth W. Grant)*

We all have lusts and desires, and sometimes they (nearly) overwhelm us. But we're more than only our lusts and desires, even if we cannot deny them. Life isn't one dimensional, as this fucking lousy conservative wankers constantly try to pretend you, life is extremely multi-layered. I could have easily died twice, but I didn't. I could have, thereafter, taken somebody else's life, but I didn't. Not because of a rational and controlled deed, instead, because of – yeah, because of what? Back to Garbage?

If someone stood next to me, a person who has killed his sister as a boy, what would be the difference between him and me? I'm the lucky guy, and he's simply the guy out of luck? That has a very bitter taste, a fucking bitter taste!

## **No Gods No Masters**

*The future is mine just the same  
No master or gods to obey  
I'll make all the same mistakes*

*Save your prayers for yourself  
'Cause they don't work, and they don't help  
The things we do, the things we don't  
The things we love, the things we lost  
(No Gods No Masters; Garbage)*

When it happens, as it happens, it just happens  
No one to thank, no one to curse  
No one to hate, no one to love  
'Cause it just happened

The things we can have an effect on  
The things we can't  
Sometimes we're at mercy  
But not as a lame excuse

Humble if not  
Resolute if yes  
Aware if not  
Adhere to if yes

Ukrainians did not lust for a war  
The Putin swine did  
Will Germany and France ever wage war against each other again  
Tell me the future, and I will laugh

Life is overwhelmingly complex  
And all questions  
And all answers  
Can only be overwhelmingly complex too

I could be dead  
Or at least a killer  
But I ain't  
Would there be a devil, I would be his friend

And the moral of the story: "Moral" is a very doubtful and dangerous construct, be aware of it!

## **A Mistake To Ruin Your Life**

We all, in the civilized world, the Western Democracies, we believe that one has to have always the possibility to earn a second chance. Okay, not necessarily as a "nigger" in the conservative parts of the US, but this is another story – do I have written that Germany is not much better than the US in the end, only more dishonest? Whatever, at least in theory, after a misstep, especially if not on purpose, we think that this cannot be the reason for a life-long punishment – Søren Kierkegaard. But then, if the misstep not happened at the end, for what reason ever, then only logic conclusion that's possible is, to continue to live your life.

Would it be a reason to say that the one, bestowed in that way, would have a special responsibility, to life a meaningful life, whatever that should mean? I think we have, in fact, not to discuss what a "meaningful life" would be, simply because we can negate the question as such. I see no possible logic conclusion that would lead to the postulation, that you would have to live any kind of "meaningful life" after such a situation in life. So, business as usual? Behaving as if it had not happened? This appears to be unsatisfying. Eventually, like the knowing that this hour could be your final hour? Never knowing who will be the next world champion (we all know that it will be Argentina – come on, France?). Being aware about, that you could be the monster, the bloody killer, the one who commits awful war crimes, who tries to kill a fucking dumb president because crazy about an actress, acting irrational because of overchallenged. And so much more.....

Satisfied? No, as said, there's no satisfying solution. One could react with dogmatism or other crazy stuff now, but that's for the weak, the deniers, the cowards. All others have to bear it, knowing that you could be very easily a killer today, and no god or devil is involved in it, only you and the fact to be alive, that's all. Twice nearly dead? Yeah, but that's for the melodramatic people. The match starts and I have to watch, even knowing that Argentina will win!

## **Final Thoughts**

The second half has begun, Argentina leads with two goals – I knew it, but will they also win? Well, in life much is possible. Okay, maybe not that France could win, but apart from that? A bad foul perhaps, or only an accident, Messi badly injured, has to end his career, the team-mates shocked, France shoots two goals, penalty shootout, France wins – life can be fucking.

We cannot control everything, we cannot control ourselves the whole time – or should we, could this really be an aim? Scientology would support this most likely, but that would be telling enough. The question that remains is, how to deal with it, how can I deal with it?

I'm not sure, there's no easy solution in any case. I have to get along with it – all could have been very, very different. And it does not help, the past is the past, I only can try to manage today, to create my future. No, this is not satisfying, but the only solution that I can see.

\*

Two each? Yeah, life can be fucking! I'm biased? Well, it's soccer, not more. It would be only very nice, if the team wins, that plays soccer, not only stands on the field. It would possibly nicer, if the team wins that played the more beautiful soccer, not shoots the more goals. But that's not like this world functions! Do it again, Argentina, the way you beat the Netherlands.

And I? I will go to bed later, stand up tomorrow in the morning, drive to work.....life continues, regardless of which team will win the match. I have to develop my writing next year, also other arts. I will continue with life, even if it's hard sometimes. I want to have my final, sitting in the airplane destined for Matosinhos, knowing I will never come back. And then we can see to what I will be able to, when I can concentrate on writing and art – overtime!

## Penalty Shootout

Yeah, Robert Cover: "It's not a trial. It's not even a lesson. It's just what it is. - Hang loose." Yeah, I strongly agree with the first three sentences, but the fourth is difficult – maybe I should watch more baseball?

Argentina made it – wow, mostly I'm no good prophet. But this time it functioned, functioned for Messi, but it does not always function. Sometimes you're the lucky guy, sometime not. I think that we have to confess, life is bigger, bigger than an individual person can handle. This cannot be used as an excuse, but it can illustrate the inability to cope with life in all its facets.

I could be a killer, but I'm not. I could be dead, but I'm not. It's the moment to be humble, to accept it, but to be aware, that it happened without the assistance of you, all the time. It could be, that it's simply too much, to understand it, to realize it. Satisfied? In no case, not at all, but more I cannot offer.

## Matosinhos Beach

*I don't belong in the world, that's what it is  
Something separates me from other people*

*And I'd be lying  
If I kept hiding  
The fact that I can't deal*

*It's just the way I feel  
(13 Beaches; Elizabeth W. Grant)*

Yeah, Santa Monica Beach  
Yeah, Matosinhos Beach  
I need my thirteenth beach  
To hide among those people

In a foreign country  
With a foreign language  
Writing in another foreign language  
That seems pretty right to me

Keeping my secrets  
By writing about them  
Put them in the middle of the room  
So that nobody notices them

And all those philosophical masterworks  
Not to talk about those religious efforts  
All those artistic attempts of coping  
They only appear as a snowflake hovering in the wind

I cannot deal therewith, to die  
What a funny joke  
What a sarcastic joke  
I cannot deal therewith, to live

Could it be that it would be better to stay silent?

# The Years Full Of Hope

## The Night

A nice story, a lifelong he thought about it, wished, tried, and then, one special night, and he began with it – too nice to be true? Well, this time it's true, but less Hollywood fitting stuff, as one perhaps has hoped for.

Yes, I tried a lot, but always very ham-handed tries. But especially, I never stuck with anything, always numerous plans, but no outcome. And then this one night – I have already written about it, and I will again, next year or so. Why? The music, the moment to listen to the words and the melodies, the artists. I started to write, and this time I did not stop again, not after a page, or ten, or fifty, or a hundred, not even after a thousand pages. It developed, I gave it time to develop, nothing was planned. Next February it will be eight years, another seven I have time to get it right, to become a well-known author and artist.

Looking at the webpage, I'm proud, proud about its complexity and development. At the beginning, I would have laughed, would one had shown me that webpage and said: In a few years this can be your webpage, you only have to write, if possible, every day. And in February 2030, after fifteen years, what one could expect then? I have no idea, and that's good so, it's this open future. But what I feel is, it's time for the next night, the next special night.

\*

Of course, not in the sense of the last "special night", it will be different this time. It will be no night, not a fixed date, but a period. Say, as a starting point, my last holiday in Matosinhos, the end date? New Year's Eve perhaps, or New Year's Day could be? February 2023 would be nice, but not essential. It's a fact that a lot changes right now, and has already changed. I have to finish this writing to begin new writing, it has to change. I have some ideas, more or less vague, I have to challenge me.

The Night, I see me as a naive boy today, in this night, today I feel as an adult person. Not as an old man, but thirty maybe, no longer eighteen or so. I have to decide now, left or right, up or down, wanna living or dying. The Night - Émilie Simon, Come As You Are, L'Olympia 2006:

*Come as you are, as you were  
As I want you to be  
As a friend, as a friend  
As an old enemy*

*Take your time, hurry up  
Choice is yours, don't be late  
Take a rest as a friend  
As an old*

*Memoria, memoria  
Memoria, memoria*

\*

*Sill today  
I don't know  
How I'm, how I was  
I don't know, how I should want me to be*

I'm not my friend  
An old enemy  
With no memoria  
No memoria

I have all the time  
Like sand in the hand  
All possibilities are gone  
No one comes too late to its funeral

Take a final rest, possibly then as a friend, with all your memoria.

\*

Words that hit me, but not sung by the original artist, not much they had interested me so far. But now, sung in this slow rhythm, calm, not agitated, nearly silently, now they hit me, very severely. And they triggered something, together with the other pitched female voices in this night, and I started to write, and I did not stop until today, this very second. And I have the feeling that I will never stop, that I will never ever be capable of stopping it, like a little piece of stone, falling into an infinite abyss. And it all began in this very night.

\*

Come as you are  
Not more I can offer  
And I'm aware  
Not much it is

I try  
And I promise  
I will do my best  
The coming years more than the previous

They say  
A human is the sum of his memories  
This could explain some  
About me

They say  
Rob a human of his memories, and you take his identity  
This could explain some  
About me

\*

The Night, next year I will write about my memories, that will be funny! The Night, my memories? Well, I can still remember some of the songs I heard, the ones that I have mentioned in "Dark Heart"! Some others more or less, maybe.....most likely. And what did I feel during listening to them? Well, I have no memories – I can tell you what I have felt an hour or so ago, listening to Émilie Simon again. And why then I have started with writing, what was the impulse? Well, I have no memories. With what I started, my first written words? Well, I have no memories. The Night, this so decisive moment in your life, so far-reaching – memories? I know that it happened, it's no

lie, Émilie and Tori, Allison and Catherine, I have listened to them, it's no lie. But if I close my eyes, there's only darkness, it's like drowning, drowning in water or sound, I cannot remember anything.

\*

Sometimes, at night  
Suddenly  
Something totally trivial  
Long ago

Suddenly  
I can remember every detail  
Often I'm really shocked  
It seems totally real

And then I ask me  
If such a triviality is still there in my mind  
In such an unbelievable attention to details  
What about the real weighty moments of my life?

And when I'm fully awoken  
It scares me  
Is all there,  
Would I have only to find it?

\*

Could it be, that every detail of my life is saved in my mind? I would only need the right key? This is fascinating and frightening in one, but most likely it's not. I have the feeling that I liked it to drown.

## **The Night**

It could be, that talking about "The Night", is the wrong perspective. Well, of course, it has been a very special night, I cried a lot, cannot remember, but I know it, but maybe it's not the essential point as such?

"The Night", like talking about a movie. Can you remember that movie scene, Peter? Yes, but I do not really remember it. Long ago, that I saw the movie, perhaps I should watch it again, to refresh my memory. Well, would need time travel in that case, but "The Night" is like a movie scene for me, seen a very long time ago. You know it, but then you realize that you have forgotten the most, especially that there's no emotional connection anymore. But there's another aspect.

It was truly not for the first time that I began with something, in fact, I did it very frequently. Writing of course, but also painting, film making, photography.....and especially learning an instrument. But, to defend me, in that case, it was always a problem to decide which instrument, because they are all wonderful. So, I started very often with something, more or less serious, for a longer or shorter time, but at the end the outcome, if any, was very limited. In that aspect, "The Night" was nothing special, even if something special. I started with something – writing. But the point is, I continued this time!

I know that I wondered: Wow, fifty pages now? A hundred? And finally: Over four hundred? I had done something, I had developed something. I had established chapters after a while. I had an

enormous number of pieces at the end, some already assigned to a chapter, some not. I printed all the material, and started to arrange it symmetrically around the Elizabeth Grant parts, the backbone of the first writing. I see still all the printed pieces on the floor of the room I'm just sitting and writing. And then it happened, I had finished something, I had written a manuscript!

It was maybe this moment, to realize that also I was capable to finish something. My first impulse was, a publisher, I need a publisher now. And it happened again, the next decisive moment, I realized that I wouldn't need one! Hey, there was this Internet, why not using it? A book, printed in German language, who would be even able to read it? An English written text on the Internet? Billions of people around the world could read it, why I should need a fucking publisher? And especially, I would be my own publisher's reader! Nobody would tell me what I could publish, in what way, to what conditions – fantastic! This was the final, but very, very essential step, my own webpage! But it all started in that one special night, and it started with Émilie Simon, Come As You Are, L'Olympia 2006, as she started to sing:

*And I swear that I don't have a gun  
No, I don't have a gun  
No, I don't have a gun*

*Memoria, memoria  
Memoria, memoria*

\*

And I started to cry.

## **The Night**

This night could be something special in my life, but also a silly moment, it all depends on the continuation. Would I stop writing (art) again, then it would be only another beginning-something moment, but not a beginning-something-to-bringing-something-to-an-end moment.

This night will have only a meaning, if I continue and will create something substantial. Well, of course, the term "substantial" is difficult and a matter of interpretation, but to stop suddenly at a given stage would not really be "substantial" in any case. I have to continue therefore. This night could otherwise no longer seen as a very special night, something extraordinary. And that's the task, making this night to something special by creating something special.

I'm pretty sure today that I can do it, making this night to something special, I would only need some more time. The more time, the better – but this is trivial. And of course, it would be fantastic would I get old enough to write in Matosinhos. Los Angeles? This City Will Kill You – Garbage. Even my private dick had to leave the city, for the same reason. Yeah, in some kind of way attracting, but like a drug, most likely with the same outcome. But it would be sorrowful, never to be there again.

The night, what a moment, a beginning, but not more. Now it's the time to fulfill the, in that night, given promise. It's extreme, the difference, twelve months ago, compared to today. If I can manage it that I can write the same in a year, then I see a good chance to be prepared for the final step, to become a considerable author and artist. But not by living in the behemoth of (Greater) Los Angeles, living in the assessable size of Matosinhos instead.

## **The Night**

*Come as you are*  
I still try to figure it out  
Who am I?  
What am I capable to?

*As I want you to be*  
As an author  
As an artist  
As a creative being

Fifty-seven and a half  
And still not able to answer such questions  
*Choice is yours*  
Like an old memoria

\*

I find it hard  
Just to live  
In such a world  
Among such creatures

Take a gun  
Kill as many as possible  
The news will be yours  
Why I can understand you?

In a world  
Where a life seems to count nothing  
Nothing counts anymore  
Anymore isn't to say

Silence seems to be the salvation  
Ten miles under the sea  
Where darkness rules the world  
And creepy creatures are your friends

Lost in space  
Perfect silence  
No reason to say something  
No one will ever hear it

*Hurry up, don't be late*  
All the time I wasted  
Will never come back  
No need to hurry anymore, if already way too late

The train is gone  
The next will come in two hours  
Could be -  
Do you have one of your TAP cards with you?

Will I use them ever again  
He said:  
*Choice is yours*  
With the gun in his mouth

The choice is mine, a very special night bestowed me that possibility.

## **The Years Full Of Hope**

### **Matosinhos**

I travelled to Portugal to see Amanda Palmer in Braga. Frankfurt – Porto seemed the best option for a flight, I love flying. And, it would be at the ocean, the small one, not the large one like in Los Angeles, but at least at the ocean. I planned therefore, to stay a few days in Porto, then by train to Braga, the concert, back to Porto, back to Germany. I searched for a hotel, maybe not so far from the airport and near the ocean. There was a large beach, and a hotel named D'El Rei not far from it – come on, I had to choose this hotel! But then I noticed, that this was obviously not Porto as such, but a place called Matosinhos. But the metro right in front of the hotel, and a long beach, a harbor, the ocean, and a hotel named after Lana Del Rey? I decided not to look for another hotel in Porto as such, but took Lana's. This was the beginning of loving Matosinhos. And today?

My last stay in Matosinhos, the third time, this year, was very formative, have written enough about it – more or less. The first stay was not long after Los Angeles – what a contrast! The narrow streets, the small buildings, all comprehending, not like in (Greater) Los Angeles. A normal street four lanes, block after block, a not to grasp ocean of buildings, even if Los Angeles is proud of their low-rise houses. But all needs much time. From Downtown West to Santa Monica Beach, or from Downtown to the zoo, you have to spend a longer time in the metro. In Matosinhos you can walk always, five minutes to the beach, ten to the other side of the harbor. If you like, you can walk through the park to Porto, or a few stations with the metro. Los Angeles always characterized by hectic, and that money and a big cock is everything. Sure, there is also this other Los Angeles, but this side of Los Angeles has to struggle a lot. Do I have to mention Skid Row? And yes, also in Matosinhos one can see homeless people, but everything appears much more relaxed. You can slow down in Matosinhos, it's said that Portuguese people are very polite. I can underline this, the mood of Matosinhos is very different from the L.A. mood. Los Angeles is like, being on drugs, Matosinhos invites you to drink a nice chanena de cha branco while looking at the ocean. In Los Angeles even, an in Germany normal meal, is costly, a fresh cooked meal in a restaurant for instance. Whereas in Matosinhos, you can buy fantastic seafood, meat, vegetables, fruits, to a very reasonable price. And not everything is highly processed, ultra-soft, and awfully sweet. And all the sweet stuff for what Portugal is so famous for, their famous pastelarias? Well, firstly, most is small, and you can buy only one or two. Secondly, it's often, not always!, not that sweet. But is this the crucial point?

Yeah, I plan to spend my last years there, as a really old man. The US? Fucking health care system, fucking drug prices.....everything is fucking expensive. Portugal still EU, everything is very easy and manageable. And okay, Los Angeles in summer? Portland maybe, or Seattle, but never Los Angeles. Even Matosinhos hot in summer, and they had severe wildfires in Portugal over the summer as well, but they have distinct seasons like in Germany. Yes, I like the sun, more and more, but a fall or spring day, with some rain and storm at the ocean – the ocean is arousing, if wild. I have not to ponder much at the end, Los Angeles would be a rush, but wouldn't be me at the end. From MacArthur Park, up the street and down the street, and you're in Korea Town. From Latino culture to Korean culture in a few minutes, one of the fascinating aspects of Los Angeles. Inglewood, why not Santa Monica, Los Angeles is stimulating, stirring up, but you have to pay for it, in many ways. Matosinhos seems to be the bore sister of L.A., but I'm a boring person, living a boring life – seems to be a match!

### **Matosinhos**

My Arcadia, for what my body would be a map then? Arcadia, only a dreamland, and once created by aristocrats, by the way. No, the wonderful aspect of Matosinhos is, that it's real, you can simply travel to. Yeah, maybe sometimes it's not so simply as such, but it's possible at the end, and that's what counts.

The run-down houses, but more and more of them get renovated. The Brazilian woman in the street, most likely one of the prostitutes working in one of the bars nearby. No, no Arcadia, but Arcadia only a fantasy of aristocrats losing their power, Matosinhos is real. Like the homeless sleeping on the street, and that it, sometimes, smells of fish, not only a bit.

Not everyone happy there, but, would I be happy there? It would help me, in any case, help me to wait, until it would be the time to say goodbye for a final time. A last meia-de-leite or a café, two or three pastel de nata in any case, I would say. It's strange, staying in Matosinhos, I do not have to see the ocean. I often do so, but it's enough that the ocean is there, that I would not need long to see the ocean. I walk down a street sometimes, the ocean is just two blocks away, but I haven't the impulse to go to the ocean, it's enough to know that the waves would be there. This is very relaxing. No, it's no Arcadia, and that's good so. I not wanna life in an aristocratic dreamland, the salty air I smell has to be real.

## Matosinhos

My sanctuary city, my hideaway? Yeah. The place where I can be the alien as whom I feel? Yeah. But most, it will be the place where I can feel comfort and secure. A place with a different language, to speak it daily, while writing in another foreign language – a perfect fit. I can forget everything past, the language, the dishes I cooked, the clothes I wore, the culture I lived in. Not everything will be entirely different, of course not, but only to think of the so differently sounding language, or that you can buy salt cod - bacalhau (saldago) – at the local ALDI. Yes, they have a German supermarket in Matosinhos, but the goods you can buy there are quite unfamiliar compared to those in Germany. For me, loving food, it's a land of milk and honey. All the seafood, the meat, the vegetables, and the fruits. Gosh, would I have a kitchen there, I would cook the whole day long! And maybe not only for me alone.

I feel at the wrong place, the land I'm born, speaking my native language, there's no ocean. I felt in a strange way "at home" in Los Angeles, but in a very cozy way in Matosinhos. There's something I would call "natural distance", a state which I appreciate extremely. You can have a conversation, but you can also just sit on a bench in a park, or sitting in the sand of the beach, it's on you. And, I'm a veritable cook, in such a country it should not hard for me to find some friends, for joint cooking and eating. I never wished me something that hard, then living there one day. It gives me hope, and a perspective for all the rest.

## Matosinhos

Yeah,  
In a way it's an illusion  
An ideal  
Not such existing in reality

But  
The reality  
Not that much far from the ideal  
From the illusion

America is a big lie  
*It pours, man, it pours*  
And it's fucking corrupt  
On its way to destroy itself

Not a place for long-term plans  
For a cozy and quiet retirement  
Like in Florida with hurricanes  
Or California with aridness and wildfires

Um café for less than a Euro  
Uma meia-de-leite not much more  
Um chá branco also not expensive  
Um copo de vinho do Porto a little more

Feeling being torn apart  
Knowing that not all makes sense  
Looking at the girl at the beach  
Making yoga to say goodbye to the sun

That's California!  
Like the guys at muscle beach  
But I'm an old man  
And there's no reason anymore to hurry

It would be so fucking cool, would I live there one day!

### **Matosinhos**

A bet on the future, like my private pension scheme, that I will not die soon. But Matosinhos would be much more than only some more money, it would be a place where I can hope for, that it would get me the possibility to find the calm and coziness that I would need so much. I have to make another bet, a bet on my job. I have to decide now, to try it or to let it. It would be actually an easy bet because even if loosing, it would not cost me much. But I hesitate, and I don't know exactly why.

Whatever, the next week nearly over, but three hundred and ninety more are left. However, that's not right in a way because I cannot simply wait all the time. From certain points on I would have to start with the necessary paperwork, would have to search for a home, would have to have strengthened my language skills to a high degree, would have to take everything very seriously. Say, two years of serious preparation would be no mistake, then five and a half years are left, two hundred and eighty-six weeks. This is my eighteenth week in my new job, fifteen point eight times this timespan, and I'm through, this should be manageable, or, what do you think, Peter?

Okay, then the last two years begin, but they shouldn't be the problem then. Seven and a half years are ninety months, five and a half years are sixty-six months. All not that large numbers. Have I made a mistake by calculating all this? Well, whatever, 1999, March the first, I started with cooking again. We're at the end of 2022 now. Beginning of 1999 to mid-2030, thirty-one and a half years, seven and a half are left. Three quarters are done, only one quarter is left. Hey Peter, this should be possible to bear as well. I know, it's hard, but, hey, Matosinhos waits. Matosinhos!

### **Matosinhos**

It's no Arcadia  
And definitely no paradise  
But it's my place of longing  
Knowing that Los Angeles would be the city I'm lusting

The waves that touche my feet at Matosinhos beach  
Are not the same waves that touch my feet at Santa Monica Beach  
But would it be that important  
Where to start to swim?

I don't think so  
Looking back, seeing the enlightened Ferris wheel and feeling the presence of millions  
Looking back, seeing the lights of the small harbor and feeling the presence of thousands  
It would be

Malibu on the left  
Or Leça da Palmeira  
It would be a huge difference  
Who wants to live in fucking Malibu?

I feel depressed  
So near and yet still so far  
If you wanna reach an aim  
Make one step after the other

But, what if still so many steps left, the stair so steep?  
Look back, so many behind you  
I hope the year will be soon over  
Soon to be in Matosinhos again

Do you wanna bet against me?

## **Matosinhos**

Back in Matosinhos again? Well, would say, March the eighteenth next year could be the day, for two weeks. Tried to do a vacation planning for us two in the kitchen, my vacation depends on the vacation of the branch manager. I cannot go when he's on vacation. And the staff from the sale has problems to plan their vacations. But, it seems as I have managed it, most likely in eleven weeks I'm back in Matosinhos! Next week is a short week, Friday a holiday, ten weeks left. And the best? When I'm back on work, would be April the third, we will have the Eastern holidays very soon – a short month, the fourth month of the year. And then, the first third of the year is over – Mai the first, a Monday, a holiday, the next short week. Could this be a prospect to cool me down?

In two and a half months in Matosinhos again, that would be very fascinating. I would have only just started with the new writing, and who knows? The last two weeks in Matosinhos had a deep impact, the next two weeks? I would have the time to learn some basic phrases, and a distinct aim. Would give me a near aim, half the time that I already work in the new job, this should be manageable, don't be a jerk, Peter, please!

Then there would be the summertime, five or so months, some holidays and short weeks – we have many holidays in Germany. September or so Matosinhos again, next year could become a fast year. The longest period would be summer, but summer is much easier than winter, the long sunny summer days – yeah, would be an interesting outlook.

I have to fix the vacation as fast as possible, this would give me a real basis for the beginning of the year. But, it has to be, I have to close this chapter first, before beginning a new one.

Bem-vindo de volta à Matosinhos, Pedro.