

# **THE FAIRIES IN SLOVENIA**

**Varja Hrvatin**

To my fairies;

Anja, Bowie, Maša, Nika, Zala, Živa.

And to Asja,

the strongest fairy I know.

Loneliness is the epidemic of our society.

We are all alone,

and we *just* long to belong.

To something, someone, somewhere.

*Just* to be seen.

*Just* to be seen by someone.

*Just* to be visible.

*Just* not to be invisible.

*Just* not to be alone.

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*So many things had happened that it seemed as if nothing had happened.  
Things were always too much, things were never enough.*

On the day I was born,  
it was a Wednesday, in the sign of the Rooster of the Chinese zodiac.

On the day I was born,  
367.973 other people were born.

On the day I was born,  
“Informer” by Snow was the most popular song in the USA,  
while “Oh Carolina” by Shaggy was most popular in the UK.

On the day I was born,  
the following films were released:

*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

*3, Time Runner,*

*Ring of Fire 2*

and *Manufacturing Consent*.

On the day I was born,  
the paperback edition of *Where To Find Gold in California* by Delos Toole was published.

On the day I was born,  
Charlotte Marion Hughes died at the age of 115 years and 228 days,  
She was the longest-lived person ever documented in the UK.

On the day I was born,  
Parma FC defeated Sparta Praha FC 2:0.

On the day I was born,  
the 3516th episode of *Coronation Street* was broadcast.

On the day I was born,  
Princess Diana wore a pink business suit,  
for which the Marie Claire magazine declared her a fashion icon.

On the day I was born,  
86 people died in a bomb attack in Calcutta.

On the day I was born,  
the Algerian politician and writer Laadi Flici was assassinated at the age of 55.

On the day I was born,  
the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) declared a unilateral ceasefire in Iraq.

On the day I was born,  
began the time of

Tinkle Tots,

Tamagotchi,

Furbies,

Game Boy Color,

Pokemon cards,  
 Yu-Gi-Oh cards,  
 Magic cards,  
 Beyblades,  
 Bratz dolls,  
 Trolls,  
 Poo-Chi puppies,  
 Polly Pocket,  
 Doodle Bears,  
 Betty Spaghetti dolls,  
 Baby Born,  
 collecting Nici pendants  
 and Me To You Bears,  
 train track and road rugs,  
 singing sneakers with flashing lights  
 and birthday celebrations at the Dairy Queen.  
 On the day I was born,  
 began the time  
 of carefree days filled with soccer without goals,  
 throwing water balloons at each other,  
 climbing on cherry trees,  
 playing stealing land,<sup>1</sup>  
 elastics,  
 hopscotch,  
 truth or dare in the shelter,  
 hide and seek in the yard,  
 spending Friday nights at the Kolosej multiplex,  
 smashing toy cars  
 and bowling at the Arena.  
 On the day I was born,  
 we started watching  
 TV Good Day,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire,  
 Our Little Clinic,<sup>3</sup>  
 Tomato Theatre

1 An outdoor game for children, popular in Slovenia.

2 "TV Dober dan" was a popular Slovenian comedy series produced by POP TV, one of the first ones produced in independent Slovenia.

3 "Naša mala klinika", "Teater Paradižnik", "Pod eno streho" - other popular comedy series.

and Under One Roof.

On the day I was born,  
we started waiting at the computer  
for someone to hang up the phone,  
for the internet to start working again  
to download the new Bepop<sup>4</sup> single from eMule.

On the day I was born,  
we had Emona<sup>5</sup>  
and the tolar.<sup>6</sup>

On the day I was born  
Kino Mojca,  
Kino Triglav,<sup>7</sup>  
Rog,<sup>8</sup>  
Plečnik stadium,  
Respect,  
Belle Vie,  
Skalca,  
Katastrofa,  
Fun Factory,  
Inbox,  
Valentino,  
SubSub,  
Bolivar,  
Bacchus,  
Galerija Bar Trenutek,  
Fabrka,  
Moby Dick,  
Jean Bar,  
Skelet,<sup>9</sup>  
Rhythm of Youth,

4 Bepop was the first Slovenian pop group ever selected by the licenced reality show Popstars in 2002.

5 A Slovenian supermarket chain founded in Yugoslavia. After independence, it got reorganised and later taken over by the Mercator supermarket chain.

6 Official Slovenian currency from 8 October 1991 until the introduction of the euro on 1 January 2007.

7 Two popular cinemas in Ljubljana dating back to the times of Yugoslavia. They both closed in 2001.

8 A former tannery, leather factory and bicycle factory that was squatted in 2006. For 15 years it was the setting of alternative culture, political movements and activism. In 2021 it was forcibly evicted.

9 All of the above were names of popular bars and clubs in Ljubljana at the time.

Party with a Cause,<sup>10</sup>  
 KMŠ,<sup>11</sup>  
 Trnfest<sup>12</sup>  
 were still alive and well.  
 On the day I was born,  
 buses were still rushing across Prešeren Square.  
 On the day I was born,  
 we were living in a time when things  
 that broke down would no longer be repaired,  
 but got replaced with new ones.  
 On the day I was born,  
 no one prepared me for the fact  
 that I would have to play  
 a game of  
 shame,  
 violence,  
 sexism,  
 abuse,  
 burnout,  
 anxiety,  
 depression,  
 endometriosis,  
 precarious work,  
 and gentrification.  
 On the day I was born,  
 I did not know that in this game I would have to fight.  
 On the day I was born,  
 I decided to play this game with art.  
 On the day I was born,  
 I started to play the game of fairies.  
 I pretended I was a fairy.  
 Just not to be me.  
 I always longed  
 for some day just to wake up and be someone else.

10 "Ritem mladosti" and "Žur z razlogom" were two music festivals in Ljubljana aimed primarily at young audiences.

11 At the time a popular student club in Ljubljana, literally: Club of Students from Maribor.

12 A cult annual cultural festival in Ljubljana that started in 1992. Before the turistification it was virtually the only event for young and alternative audiences taking place in Ljubljana during August.

Anyone I wanted to be.  
 Like in a computer game,  
 where you choose which role you're going to play.  
 Because we're all playing the game.  
 Because in life you have to play,  
 otherwise, you don't survive.  
 Above all, I've always longed to live in a world  
 that would be exactly  
 like I wanted it to be.  
 A world like I imagined it.  
 A world where my rules applied.  
 A world where no one could tell me what was right and wrong.  
 A world where I could be someone else.  
 Just not to be me.  
 A world where I could be ... A superheroine.  
 A world where I could be ... Fearless.  
 A world where I could be... Invincible.  
 A world where I could be a ... Fairy.  
 A world where I could be a ... Raging river.  
 A world where I could be a ... Peony.  
 A world where I could be a ... Machine.  
 A world where I could be a ... Japanese warrior.  
 A world where I could be a ... Lit firecracker.  
 A world where I could be a ... Forest nymph.  
 A world where I could be a ... Fairy.  
 A world where I could be ...

This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*I would be ... a plot of land.*

*A plot of land by the raging river.*

*One day, a mister would buy me and build a small ground-floor tannery on me.*

*A few years later, he and his sons would add another floor for a leather workshop.*

*And then I would be ... a leather factory.*

*And then, twenty years later, another mister would buy me and renovate me and modernise me.*

*He would wall me in and build another beautiful residential villa next to me.*

*He would extend my production premises with a ground-floor extension by the river.*

*and start to manufacture and supply products to the army and navy all across Europe.*

*This other mister would continue to do business with me successfully,  
until one day he would go bankrupt and sell me to a third mister - the owner of some leather  
factory.*

*And then, after a while, the state would take hold of me,  
expropriate me, nationalise me and reorganise me.*

*And then I would become ... a bicycle factory.*

*And for almost forty years, I would successfully produce  
bicycles that everyone, and I mean everyone, in the city would be riding.*

*Until some misters who managed me  
would abandon me due to logistical costs.*

*And then I would be... lonely and resting for a while.*

*And then I would get bored.*

*And I would wait and wait and wait.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*I would be ... a raging river.*

*Or rather, a ... Japanese warrior.*

*Always searching, always exploring, always  
fighting.*

*I would be intelligent, relentless and resourceful.*

*And I would have an exotic name, one that you might locate anywhere and nowhere at the  
same time ...*

*My name would be ... SUKI!*

*And Suki would ... always fight and protest.*

*And everything, anything, would mean the world  
to her.*

*And Suki would be ...*

*She would do anything, she would arrange everything,  
just to be seen by someone.*

*Because for all of her life, her parents paid all the attention to her sister,  
it was automatically assumed*

*that Suki could do everything,*

*but most of all, that she didn't need any help.*

*Even when she was starving herself for years and years,*

*even when, at sixteen, she began drinking herself unconscious every day.*

*And so Suki realised quite early*

*that while her parents wouldn't pay any attention to her,  
men would pay attention to her.*

*And so someone would finally see her.*

*Having been invisible and left to her own devices for all of her life, she believed*

*her mission was to protest.  
 So that no one else would ever feel like there was no one there to protect them,  
 like there was no one to protect her.  
 That is why she chased injustice for all of her life.  
 And thus injustice chased her for all of her life.  
 You might even say that she had a God complex,  
 because she believed that she had superpowers  
 and that by defending others,  
 she was actually saving herself  
 and metaphorically saving the world.  
 She is a fairy saving the world.*

This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*I would be ... a machine.  
 Or rather, a ... lit firecracker.  
 Always burning, always flying, always cracking.  
 I would be strong, firm and alive.  
 And I would have an exotic name, after a strong female character ...  
 My name would be ... ZELDA!  
 And Zelda would ... always work hard without stopping.  
 And everything, anything would mean the world to her.  
 And Zelda would be ...  
 She would do anything, she would arrange everything,  
 just to feel worthy.  
 Her overambitious parents,  
 who preferred to devote time to their careers rather than to her,  
 had drilled into her head quite early  
 that she was worthless without work,  
 that she was worthless without success,  
 that if she were just herself, she was nothing.  
 So Zelda believed that her mission was to create something  
 that would at least give someone a sense of worth.  
 That's why she would write and create for all of her life,  
 so that she could touch at least someone and change them,  
 just like art had touched her  
 and changed her life forever.  
 And so she began to work.  
 And she just kept on working.  
 You might even say that she had a God complex,*

*because she believed that she had superpowers  
and that by writing something worthy  
and by touching and changing someone,  
she was actually saving herself  
and metaphorically saving the world.  
She is a fairy saving the world.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*I would be ... a peony.  
Or rather a ... forest nymph.  
Always shining, always glittering, always playing around.  
I would be delicate, fragile and sweet.  
And I would have an exotic name, after a beautiful song ...  
My name would be ... BONITA!  
And Bonita would ... always love infinitely.  
And everything, anything would mean the world to her.  
And Bonita would be ...  
She would do anything, arrange everything,  
just to make everyone around her happy,  
so that no one would ever feel  
the way she felt  
when her mother suddenly left with another man,  
leaving her, her sister and their father behind  
when Bonita was just a little girl.  
Bonita would do anything  
to make sure that no one would ever again give in at any cost  
to the endless fear of abandonment  
and the endless longing for someone to always love you.  
Since Bonita couldn't save her mother and her family,  
she believed her mission was to save people.  
So for all of her life, she would chase people with problems  
and people with problems would chase her.  
You could even say that she had a God complex,  
because she believed that she had superpowers  
and that by being able to help someone,  
by saving someone,  
she was actually saving herself  
and metaphorically saving the world.  
She is a fairy saving the world.*

This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*And then I would be ... alone. All alone.*

*Until one day, some fourth mister would initiate the process of amending the zoning act and the proposal for my preservation.*

*And then on that same day, the denationalisation procedure would start, during which some fifth misters would adopt the zoning conditions, stipulating that I must remain protected and dedicated to public programmes.*

*And then some sixth misters would declare me an artistic and cultural heritage and enter me in the register of immovable cultural heritage.*

*And then, once the denationalisation process was completed, some seventh mister would buy me,*

*while some eighth mister would present me as an example of a degraded part of the city centre*

*and suggest that the city revitalise me.*

*And so, a little later, the city would buy me through a leasing contract*

*by which it would overpay me by almost €5 million,*

*and the fairies in the city would start to find that strange,*

*as it would raise questions and speculation about corruption.*

*And as the city would not know what to do with me,*

*my renovation plans would be abandoned for a while.*

*And I would be waiting again.*

*And I would be alone.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction.

ZELDA:

And so I started to play the game of survival.

How to survive for half a year with 2000 euros.

How to cram 3 shows into six months with no money.

How to write a text in one night,

edit a show,

go to 3 meetings,

write a new proposal for a grant.

How to plan your life for the next two years,

but at the same time, keep some windows open for things that can come up in the meantime.

How to do everything your own way,

have total control

and artistic freedom,

but at the same time, have money  
 and time  
 and support  
 and to top it all off,  
 produce extraordinary things  
 that would be written into books,  
 that would be written into history,  
 that would be written into consciousness,  
 that would be written into someone,  
 at least someone,  
 or at least touch someone.  
 And so I never said *no* to anything.  
 Because I never knew  
 when the offers would stop  
 and when I'd finally run out of money.  
 And because I liked working,  
 since without work I was nothing,  
 I said *yes* to everything.  
 Even though an actress once told me  
 that you build your career with *nos*.

*And so Zelda started working.  
 The thought of working 9 to 5 in an office on weekdays,  
 having 21 days of paid vacation  
 and not being able to decide how to schedule her work  
 and what work to do and when,  
 seemed worse to her  
 than the reality  
 of jumping from one project to another,  
 living in stress and insecurity  
 never being really able to commit to anything.  
 Zelda could have found a job.  
 But Zelda wanted to do things her way,  
 she wanted to do them differently,  
 because she did not get into this game of survival,  
 of sacrificing her mind and her body,  
 just to end up doing what and when others told her to.  
 Because Zelda cared.  
 She cared about every single thing as much  
 as if she were saving the whole world  
 with that one thing.*

*Because at least that way she was worthy.  
 She thought to herself.  
 And she wasn't nothing.  
 She thought.  
 At least she thought so for 5 years.*

SUKI:

And then I started to enjoy it.  
 And I brought him to my home.  
 To my place,  
 where at the time I was sleeping with my possessive puppy-girl,  
 because I thought,  
 it was probably better to stay at my place,  
 with my possessive puppy-girl,  
 than at his place,  
 with his GHB roommates.  
 And so we came home to my place,  
 after wantonly making out in some toilet.  
 So I took him to my room.  
 And I went to the toilet.  
 And I peed,  
 I peed for a long time.  
 And after peeing for so long,  
 I came back to my room.  
 And he was sitting there on the bed.  
 Naked.  
 And on his right thigh –  
 there was my puppy-girl,  
 hornily humping him.  
 And I started to laugh.  
 I started to laugh uncontrollably.  
 At this absurd scene  
 of a giant adult naked guy  
 being pounced on by a tiny puppy.  
 And he lost it:  
 - Can you keep that dog away from me, dammit, I can't fuck in these conditions!!!  
 And I politely showed him the door.  
 And I enjoyed it immensely  
 as he was getting dressed, humiliated  
 and insulted, trying to hide his hard cock.

But I enjoyed it even more.  
 when I escorted him to the front door  
 and he tried to salvage the situation with his last breath,  
 because his cock was probably still hard  
 and he tried to apologise,  
 so that his hard cock wouldn't be in vain.  
 But I just kept screaming with laughter,  
 destroying his ego,  
 knowing  
 that he wouldn't be able to fuck normally for a while.  
 In any conditions.

*And so, at 5 am, Suki went for a drunken walk with her puppy, who had been alone all night.  
 And they were walking,  
 until the puppy started barking and dragged her towards the apartment building entrance.  
 And when she looked over her shoulder  
 to see why she was dragging her home,  
 she saw that a guy was walking behind them, jerking off.  
 That he was running after her and jerking off to her.  
 Jerking and jerking,  
 until she ran away and closed herself in the apartment building, behind the glass front door,  
 through which she could still see his erect cock.*

BONITA:

As if I knew  
 that my mother didn't want me when I was still in her womb,  
 that to her, I was just a parasite sucking the life out of her,  
 as if I knew  
 ever since she breastfed me for the first time  
 that one day she would go away and leave me.  
 We were rushing, as always.  
 Rushing to pack.  
 Rushing to the car.  
 Rushing out of the car.  
 Rushing to the airport.  
 Rushing to check in.  
 Rushing, rushing, as always.  
 I feel like I peed myself.  
 My panties are wet.  
 But despite being only 11, I know I didn't pee myself.  
 Did I pee myself, really?

I'm wet.  
Fuck.  
We're standing in the security check-in line.  
My dad and my sister are in front of me.  
Rushing to unbuckle their belts,  
rushing to take off their shoes.  
And I'm wet.  
I look around, and no one is really looking at me.  
I put my hand in my panties,  
hoping that nobody will see it.  
I pull it out quickly.  
My hand is redish-brown.  
Fuck.  
I'm ashamed.  
I'm afraid.  
Everything is going so fast.  
I want to sit down, stop and think slowly about what I can do.  
I'm afraid that everything's going to start dripping through my trousers.  
There's iron in blood.  
Is blood actually metal?  
I'm afraid it's going to start beeping when I go through the metal detector.  
But can that make it beep?  
An open wound between my legs.  
And the world is rushing.  
I'm ashamed that someone might notice.  
I'm ashamed of my open wound right here in front of everyone.  
The security guard beckons me to hurry.  
I run through the detector, praying for the first time in my life.  
Praying it doesn't start beeping.  
Praying that my wound doesn't open in front of everyone.  
Everybody is rushing,  
nobody notices anything.  
I rush to the toilet and stuff a whole roll of toilet paper down my panties.  
During the flight, all I can think about is  
how ashamed I feel.  
I don't dare to tell anyone.  
The plane is in no rush.  
Only my thoughts are rushing now.  
Where's my mommy?  
Why is my mommy not here?

Mommy would know.  
Mommy would do.  
Mommy would help.  
Mommy would heal the wound.  
But she's not here.  
I'm alone.  
Everything happens so fast.  
We land.  
We are waiting for the luggage.  
But it got lost.  
Fuck.  
Really? Now?  
We've taken planes a thousand times and never once have they lost our luggage,  
but right now,  
when I need fresh panties  
to cover my wound,  
my shame,  
our luggage is gone.  
Lisbon.  
We jump into a taxi.  
We arrive at the theatre.  
And I can finally go to the toilet again.  
I'm sitting on the toilet looking at my wound.  
The traces it has left on my panties and trousers.  
I can't change my clothes.  
I can't hide.  
I don't know what to do.  
I'm 11 years old.  
I don't have any money of my own.  
I can't go out on the street alone,  
I can't go to a shop alone,  
in a foreign country.  
Mommy, where are you?  
Mommy, why don't you help me?  
There's a knock on the door.  
A soft Portuguese voice.  
Warmth.  
Is that the fairy godmother?  
I answer in English, saying it's occupied.  
In English, she asks me if I'm all right.

My wound is still bleeding.  
I have to do something.  
I get dressed,  
I flush the traces of my wound down the drain  
and open the door.  
A young Portuguese dancer is looking at me with large, warm eyes.  
She must be a fairy.  
I trust her.  
I tell her about my wound.  
She hugs me.  
She says she'll be back soon.  
I sit cross-legged in the corner,  
hiding the wound and waiting.  
The Portuguese dancer comes back  
carrying a brown paper bag, lace panties and a tracksuit.  
She takes my hand and pulls me into the toilet cubicle.  
We lock the door, and she tells me everything will be all right.  
She pulls some pads from the bag and explains how to use them.  
She offers me the panties and the tracksuit and tells me I can keep them.  
Then she leaves me alone  
to hide my wound.  
To clean my wound,  
to cover my shame.  
When I'm done, she's waiting for me outside the door.  
I ask her not to tell my father and my sister.  
The young Portuguese dancer smiles and says:  
*Esse é o nosso segredo.*  
And as I know Spanish from Mexican soap operas, I understand her.  
My wound is healed.  
I'm no longer ashamed.  
and I'm not afraid.  
My wounds are hidden,  
my wounds are a secret.  
I still check my crotch  
every time I get high,  
because I am afraid,  
that I peed myself,  
because I am afraid,  
that my wound might reopen  
and my secret might be revealed again.

That I'm bleeding,  
 that I'm screaming,  
 to relax,  
 to disarm,  
 to open,  
 to expose myself.  
 Mommy, where are you?  
 Mommy, why don't you help me?  
 When I could no longer believe in my mother,  
 I started believing in fairies.

This is not a fact. It is fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*And then I would be... alone. All alone.  
 Until a few years later, all dilapidated, I would get occupied by a group of fairies,  
 And they would renovate me  
 and revive me  
 with their own materials, resources and labour.  
 They would rebuild my floors,  
 patch my windows and doors,  
 they would insulate me  
 and fix my heating and, in some places, my plumbing.  
 Inside me, they would build  
 stages,  
 skate ramps,  
 kitchens,  
 bars,  
 a sports hall,  
 and equip me with a sound system and other musical equipment.  
 And as all that the fairies would do with me would start to bother some ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city  
 and he would start arguing that artists have always been creating by candlelight and that  
 they don't need electricity to create,  
 this ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city,  
 would switch off my power.  
 But that wouldn't stop the fairies.  
 And then I would be ... I would no longer be alone.  
 The fairies in me would set up a self-organised power supply by generators,  
 and later by batteries and storage cells,  
 and at some point, they would hook up electricity to the neighbouring building.*

*As the fairies would renovate me on their own initiative, driven by enthusiasm,  
my infrastructure would endanger their lives from the very beginning.  
But the fairies would believe.  
And the fairies would fight.*

That is a fact. It is not fiction. This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*Bonita would do anything  
and accept anything,  
just to have someone to love her,  
just to have someone who'd never leave her,  
just to have someone who'd finally be her family.  
And when she was 27 years old and her father got a son  
whom he adored more than anything in the world  
and was expressing it to him everyday in every possible way,  
which he was never able to do for her and her sister,  
Bonita decided not to be jealous,  
but to find someone  
whom she would save,  
and who would save her,  
and with whom they could have a family together.  
And this way, Bonita would never be alone again.  
And then ...  
Then she met him.  
It was as if the fairies sent him from heaven just for her.  
He was the most beautiful boy she had ever seen in her life.  
He was so beautiful, she could hardly believe he was real.  
But even more than his beauty,  
it was his drive that overwhelmed her.  
She had never met anyone  
to whom every little thing would mean as much as it did to her.  
No one who would do anything, really anything,  
just to save someone else and make them happy.  
And even more than that,  
she, for the first time, saw sadness in his big blue eyes,  
a sadness that was a sister to the sadness in her big brown eyes.  
She thought  
that if she did everything right, she could save him,  
and if she did everything right, maybe he would save her.  
The first time she looked at him, she knew.*

*For her, this was the end.  
 And the beginning.  
 Even though she could hardly believe he was real,  
 because he was everything she ever longed for,  
 she began to believe, for the first time,  
 that she finally got what she really deserved.  
 Someone to be hers,  
 just hers,  
 and no one else's,  
 forever,  
 and ever.  
 When she was with him,  
 the world around her ceased to exist.  
 When she was with him,  
 she was a child,  
 together, they were children.  
 They would play the apocalypse,  
 the end of the world,  
 hide and seek,  
 mommies and daddies,  
 school,  
 art,  
 the future,  
 fairies,  
 all the games in the world.  
 And when they were children together,  
 the children in them stopped being alone.  
 It was as if they grew up again with each other,  
 as if they woke up  
 and started to live.  
 Bonita knew that she had never before in her life loved anyone  
 and that he was the last person that she would ever love.*

SUKI:

I enjoyed it even more,  
 when a fuckboy started to hit on me hard.

- You're so pretty.
- It's so nice to talk to you.
- I can't stop thinking about you.
- I wanna take you home. Etc.

Classic fuckboy.

We all know where that leads.

It has surely led me there many times before;

to the same flats,

to the same beds,

to the same situations,

to the same self-destructive patterns,

to the same humiliation,

the same fucking abyss.

And I said to myself,

okay,

take me home.

And he smiled and took my hand;

- You know, we're actually very much alike, you and I.

- Is that so?

- Yeah, like, deep down.

And I smiled back,

while he was holding the steering wheel with one hand

and caressing my knee with the other.

And he was smiling, thinking to himself,

"I'm totally badass, about to fuck another one."

And I was smiling to myself,

because I knew the reason why he was smiling,

and I knew that I wouldn't give him what he wanted,

even though he didn't know it yet.

And we came to his place;

- I want to feed you. I want to take care of you.

And we drank and we ate.

And he told me his tragic life story.

And I pretended to be madly interested in his tragic life story.

Even though these tragic life stories are always the same.

Always.

- I'm a very emotional person, you know, it's so hard for me to be intimate with someone I just met.

- Yeah?

- Yeah, but I feel so relaxed with you. I feel like I've known you my whole life.

And I thought to myself;

fuck,

how many times had I fallen for these tricks in the past?

And fuck,

how many other girls had already and still would fall for these tricks?

And fuck,  
in that moment, I felt some kind of responsibility as a woman  
to humiliate this asshole,  
for all of my past humiliations of this kind,  
and for all the girls,  
whom he had already humiliated and would humiliate again.  
And he started to rub his cock.  
And I looked him in the eye.  
And he took my hand, and he wanted to put it on his cock.  
But I wrung it out of his grasp, and I said:

- No. You can only watch.
- Oh, come on, just show me your titty, please.
- No.
- Can I at least touch it?
- No.
- Then can you at least touch me a little?
- No.

The essence of pleasure is suspense.  
And I smiled and looked him in the eye.  
His horny, hungry eyes  
that reminded me of my puppy's eyes  
when she begged me for treats.  
And he accepted the game and jerked off.  
Without touching me,  
without me touching him.  
And he came,  
all over himself,  
while I was watching him  
smiling.  
And as he sat covered in his own cum,  
in his eyes, I saw shame  
and humiliation.  
That same humiliation  
that I'd felt countless times,  
that women feel every time they go out with guys like him.  
And his cock was still hard,  
and he started rubbing it again  
and snatching for my body.

And I said:

- No.
- What do I have to do?

- Nothing.

And he got down on his knees with his hard cock  
and he held his hands up to his chest  
and he went:

- Please, fuck me. Please, *just* fuck me.

And I started to laugh.

And even though I was laughing,  
he kept begging me.

- Please, fuck me, I'll do anything, please, I just really wanna fuck you so bad.

- No.

And I got up,  
I picked up my things,  
and stopped at the door for a moment  
to turn back,  
to imprint the scene in my mind,  
this pathetic fuckboy,  
who had just begged me on his knees to fuck him.  
That same pathetic fuckboy,  
who had made so many girls  
ashamed of themselves,  
of their bodies,  
of their sexuality.  
And I took another good look,  
at this pathetic asshole on his knees with his hard cock,  
and I imprinted the scene into my mind,  
and I said to myself that I might use that somewhere, sometime,  
and I smiled and left.

*And one day, Suki went to the club,  
having fun and dancing with her friends.  
And this guy started groping her as she  
danced. And she moved away.  
But he followed her and started to grope her again.  
And she told him to leave her alone.  
And he just smiled.  
And so she went to the toilet to get rid of him.  
And he came after her.  
She closed the door of the cubicle,  
but as she couldn't lock the door, he broke in after her.  
And he started grabbing and groping her.  
And Suki just closed her eyes, waiting for it to pass*

*until someone would stop him.  
 Until a fairy would appear.  
 And at that same time Zelda knew  
 that if she stopped,  
 she would just go numb,  
 paralyzed  
 and disintegrate into nothing,  
 become nothing.  
 A backdrop,  
 decoration,  
 nature  
 morte, nothing.  
 And being nothing  
 was the worst thing  
 she could imagine.*

ZELDA:

To bind your soul.<sup>13</sup>  
 What a funny concept.  
 How do you bind your soul?  
 I used to bind my soul with alcohol,  
 fast food  
 and electronic music.  
 Until I ran out of twine.  
 That's when I started weaving the twines with lines,  
 so that I could bind my soul  
 just above the surface,  
 just a little bit,  
 just enough to be able to breathe again.  
 Every weekend I bound one line to another,  
 to feel like I wasn't alone, at least for a moment.  
 At least for one night and one morning,  
 for the feeling of community  
 above the surface,  
 so that I could breathe just a little bit more.  
 Fairies, bind my soul.

<sup>13</sup> "Privzati si dušo" (lit. to bind the soul to oneself). Slovene idiom meaning "to quench one's hunger or thirst". Often implying consumption of alcoholic drinks.

BONITA:

And I hurled myself into his arms,  
hoping and trusting that he would save me,  
redeem me,  
protect me.

And for a long time, he was saving me, redeeming me, and protecting me.

And I was saved, redeemed, protected.

Happy.

He showed me a whole new world,  
we played and played and played  
and I finally started to believe  
that I had found someone  
who would never leave me.

And so I forgot about everything that happened before,  
because I was in good hands  
that would never leave me again,  
never beat me,  
abuse me,  
rape me,

I was in the hands  
that would just keep caressing me,  
nurturing me,  
protecting me.

And in those hands, I became a forest nymph.

And in those hands I blossomed.

I bloomed like a peony.

And I opened up and lived.

And I was working and creating and enjoying.

Tender, fragile, sweet.

I bloomed like a peony,

never suspecting

that the same hands that planted me, that were watering me and nurturing me,  
could one day just pluck me out,  
put me in a vase of cold water  
and leave me to wither.

Turn me upside down

to rot,

to dry

and become just another *nature morte*,

still life,

somewhere in the background.

A dead backdrop,  
 dead decoration  
 in an apartment  
 that is no longer my home,  
 no longer the forest where I was a nymph.

This is not a fact. It is fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*And then I could be ... a place of social change.  
 I would be ... a "Social Centre",  
 I would be ... the home of the "Civic Initiative of the Erased Activists",<sup>14</sup>  
 I would be a space where they could politically organise and activate,  
 which would enable them to reach a verdict at the Constitutional Court,  
 and the European Court of Human Rights,  
 declaring the erasure unconstitutional and ordering the payment of damages.  
 I would be ... a home to "Invisible Workers of the World",  
 the self-organised migrant workers of the Vegrad construction company,  
 to whom the bankrupt company would stop paying salaries  
 and social security, amounting to tens of thousands of euros,  
 and use their precarious status to extort them to work in inhuman conditions.  
 I would be ... the home of the "IZ-HOD" deinstitutionalisation movement  
 that would initiate the process of reorganisation of secure wards in social care institutions  
 and the passing of the Long-Term Care Act,  
 which regulates the area of deinstitutionalisation.  
 I would be ... the home of the "Front of Precarious Workers", the anti-labour working group,  
 which would for the first time publicly address precarious work  
 and labour recruitment agencies,  
 and problematise Student Services,  
 low hourly wages and work not included in the years of service.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

SUKI:

And then I started to enjoy.  
 To enjoy shamelessly.

<sup>14</sup> The Erased ([Slovene](#): Izbrisani) is the term used for a group of people in [Slovenia](#) that did not receive Slovene citizenship after [the declaration of the country's independence](#) in 1991 and remained without a legal status. These were mainly people from other former Yugoslav republics, who had been living in Slovenia. Over 25.000 people are estimated to have been thus erased. For decades they had to endure the consequences of having no legal status and fight legal battles. Only after appealing to the European Court of Human Rights, the case was decided in their favour and the state was forced to start settling the legal matters and paying out reparations. However, according to some estimates there are still 6,000 people without legal status today.

I enjoyed him  
 telling me  
 how much he loved me,  
 despite knowing very well he didn't.  
 And I found used condoms in his trash.  
 Even though we never used condoms.  
 And I enjoyed the fact  
 that he was lying to my face,  
 and that I knew he was lying to me  
 while he was thinking,  
 how good he was at screwing me over.  
 Even though he was never really good at screwing.

*And Suki was riding home on her bike, alone, drunk.  
 And on the way, this coked-up guy started following her,  
 yelling at her that he wanted to fuck her.  
 And she started pedalling faster  
 but the faster she pedalled,  
 the poorer she was steering.  
 Until he finally caught her,  
 and pulled her off by her new gold kimono,  
 tackled her to the ground and said  
 "I told you I wanna fuck you."  
 And he started pulling off her new gold kimono.  
 and groping her under it,  
 until she managed to flip her bike over him,  
 and started screaming no, please, don't,  
 kicking and shoving, until a fairy appeared behind them and the coked-up guy finally ran  
 away.  
 And then Suki lay there on the floor crying, her new gold kimono all torn up.  
 When the police arrived,  
 the male cop told her that they would definitely get the guy,  
 while the female cop said:  
 "That's all there was? Just that?"  
 And this wasn't the last time it was "just" that.  
 Because it's always "just" that.  
 And Zelda had to "just" hang in there a little longer.  
 Even though she couldn't and couldn't sleep anymore.  
 She was sleeping 3 hours a night,  
 just enough  
 to trick her brain*

*it was resting a bit.*  
*She was working all day,*  
*writing all night.*  
*When she wasn't working or writing,*  
*when she was hanging out having fun,*  
*she'd be jotting down new ideas on her phone,*  
*new sentences,*  
*new scenes,*  
*new proposals,*  
*new concepts.*  
*Even when she was ingesting stuff into her body:*  
*cocaine,*  
*coffee,*  
*speed,*  
*beer,*  
*ketamine,*  
*McDonald's,*  
*mdma,*  
*cigarettes,*  
*extasy,*  
*weed,*  
*her brain would not stop,*  
*her brain would not stop working.*

ZELDA:

Beer, when I can't sleep.  
 Weed, when I can't have sex.  
 Mdma, when I can't feel.  
 Cocaine, when I don't want to feel anymore.  
 Speed, when I don't want to fall asleep.  
 Starving, when I want to feel alive.  
 Coffee, when I want to wake up.  
 Cigarettes, when I want to breathe.  
 McDonald's, when I want to punish myself.  
 All of these substances, and I still can't feel anything.

*Her brain was generating and producing.*  
*Until Zelda began to forget.*  
*Her focus and thoughts slipped away,*  
*as new, different, unrelated thoughts*

*started eating into her.*

*Fairies began appearing in her mind.*

*When she wanted to form a sentence in her head,  
she could no longer complete it.*

*Before she could finish a sentence, a new one would eat into it, and then another one, and a  
third, a fourth, a fifth, a hundredth one and ...*

*And then, a month after they met, he told Bonita:*

*"I'm in love with you, I wanna marry you."*

*That's called "love bombing".*

*But Bonita believed him,*

*because Bonita was in love*

*and Bonita would have married him*

*and she would have children with him,*

*just to never be alone again.*

BONITA:

Love is home.

Love is when you're not a backdrop.

Love is when you're not a decoration.

Love is when you are not *nature morte*.

Love is when someone becomes home.

ZELDA:

Bind my soul,

enough for me to crawl to the surface,

enough for me to breathe.

Bind my soul,

fairies, where are you,

bind my soul,

"just" a bit,

"just" enough for it to stay put, just for a little while,

just enough for me to breathe again.

This is not a fact. It is fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*And then I could also be ... a space for political movements.*

*Inside me, groups could get organised to protest financial capitalism,*

*resulting in the occupation of the square in front of the Stock Exchange.  
 Inside me, the protest camp “Boj za”<sup>15</sup> could get established,  
 which would become a junction of various political initiatives,  
 besides being a haven and radically open space.  
 Through the momentum of the “Boj za” camp,  
 the “We are the university” initiative could get established inside me,  
 which would organise the occupation of the Faculty of Arts to protest the Bologna reform  
 and precariousness,  
 from which the student movement “Iskra”<sup>16</sup> could be born.  
 Inside me, the “Workers' Punk University” could organise sessions,  
 which would later be renamed to “Institute for Labour Studies”  
 and a little later to “Initiative for Democratic Socialism”  
 and later reorganised into the leftist political party “Levica”.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction. This is not a fact. It is fiction.

ZELDA:

And then you're in constant pain for years.  
 And you're nauseous.  
 And you keep fainting.  
 And puking.  
 And writhing in pain.  
 And falling apart.  
 And you're bleeding and bleeding and bleeding until you almost bleed to death.  
 And you go to the ultrasound and the ER, and the gynaecologist.  
 And everything seems OK, you just get used to it.  
 And you don't stop.  
 Because it is your purpose to be productive.  
 Your purpose is to be reproductive.  
 And you drive yourself harder and harder, because you can always do more and more.  
 And you know you can do it, because you're strong and stronger than anything.

SUKI:

And then I was enjoying it even more  
 with some other asshole,  
 who would ask me

<sup>15</sup> “Boj za”, lit. “A fight for”, a play on the word borza (stock exchange), was an “occupy” movement organised in 2011 according to direct democracy principles. The community camped in front of the Ljubljana Stock Exchange.

<sup>16</sup> Lit. “Spark”.

every time he came:  
- Was it good for you? For me, it was great.  
And I would be thinking,  
you must already know it wasn't, if you need to ask me that.  
And then I went to the toilet at that asshole's place  
and next to the washing machine  
on a pile of dirty laundry  
I saw a pair of lacy women's panties.  
And I said to myself;  
come on, asshole, how dumb are you?  
Don't you have a minimum of human decency to hide this?  
At least make the effort to hide it.  
And I went back to the room  
to fuck him one more time.  
Knowing full well  
that he was fucking someone else.  
His ex-girlfriend,  
although he said  
he'd broken up with her because of me,  
but apparently hadn't broken up with her at all.  
Rather, he just appeased his guilty conscience  
simply by fucking us both.  
So I fucked him, conscious of this,  
to fuck him better than I've ever fucked him before,  
so he'd always remember how good it was,  
but would never have that again.  
And I enjoyed fucking him  
with all my anger and frustration;  
with myself,  
with men,  
with the world,  
with beautiful useless cocks,  
with ugly, frustrated cocks,  
with above-average-sized cocks,  
with below-average-sized cocks,  
with standard-sized cocks,  
with all these cocks,  
which are actually all exactly the same.  
With cocks in general.  
Fucking cocks I can't live without,  
fucking cocks, which I could live normally without.

Fucking cocks.

Cocksucker.

Why don't I have a cock?

I could probably do something better with it  
than most of these cocksuckers.

And I went on enjoying fucking him  
with all the anger and disappointment.

And I went on enjoying fucking him,  
thinking that I was the one who had the cock  
and who was doing something better with it.

And then I enjoyed it even more,  
when, with all my anger and disappointment, he came immediately.

And, as he was coming, he said to me:

- Fuck, you're so hot.

Thanks, it really helps to be hot  
to be a hot fuck,  
if you feel the need to fuck others.

Thanks.

Really.

And I went back for a piss.

To that same toilet,  
where I'd seen his lies just a moment before.

But now, the lacy women's panties were no longer there, in that same toilet.

And that's when I knew  
that even a supremely beautiful cock couldn't help me anymore.

And that you can fuck me as good as you can,  
and that I can enjoy it as much as I can,  
but I'm not gonna get anything out of it,  
because when I'm walking home,

I'm still going to

feel empty,

hollow,

invisible,

nothing.

A backdrop,

decoration,

*nature morte.*

*And he started hitting on her,  
even though Suki said she wasn't interested.*

*And he started pushing her against the wall, even though she told him to leave her alone.*

*And he pushed her against the wall with both hands and incapacitated her  
and started licking her all over her face until she kicked him and pushed him away.  
And when he was pushed away, he said:  
“They already told me you're a frigid little bitch, you just wanna tease but don't wanna  
fuck.” And Zelda no longer knew  
what she was doing, how she was doing, why she was doing,  
what was real and what wasn't,  
until Zelda could no longer see the beginning or the end,  
until Zelda started repeating the chorus of the song;  
“just” a little more.*

ZELDA:

Just a little more, just a little more, and you'll get some rest.  
Just a little more, just a little more, and things'll calm down.  
Just a little more, just a little more, and you'll finally prove yourself.  
Just a little more, just a little more, and you won't have to work yourself to death for  
pennies anymore.  
Just a little more, just a little more, and you'll get security and stability,  
and you can finally live in peace.  
Just a little more, just a little more, and the fairy will come.  
Just a little more, just a little more,  
just a little  
just ...

*Until Zelda realised that  
she doesn't listen to her friends any more when they go out for a drink,  
she doesn't follow the story when she's reading a book or watching a film or a play,  
she doesn't hear the music when she goes to a concert,  
she can't form logical sentences anymore when she talks,  
she can't follow the logic of her thoughts anymore when she writes.  
Until Zelda realised that  
she doesn't know what day it is when she gets up,  
she doesn't know what tomorrow will bring when she goes to bed,  
and that all that remained of her life were just dates, numbers, prices and reviews.*

ZELDA:

And an excavator comes,  
it shakes your foundations  
and finally tears you down.  
And your body ceases to function.

And you get paralysed.  
 And every month you're bleeding,  
 and wounds grow over your face  
 and every month you're bleeding  
 and your body gets crippled by cramps,  
 and every month you're bleeding,  
 and your brain gets clouded by dizziness,  
 and every month you're bleeding,  
 and your stomach gets swept by nausea,  
 and every month you're bleeding,  
 and you turn into one huge pain,  
 and every month you're bleeding,  
 and again, you "just" have to hang in there  
 and again, you "just" have to survive  
 and again, you "just" have to, have to, have to.

*Until Zelda realised that she was no longer living but "just" existing.*

*Until Zelda was no longer living but "just" existing.*

*And then Bonita caught him exchanging nude pics with another girl  
 and texting about what they wanted to do to each other.*

*This is called "sexting".*

*When he wouldn't answer her for the third weekend in a row,  
 because he was partying and doing drugs with friends that included his ex-girlfriends,  
 Bonita was home alone, crying in bed,  
 and when he came home and found her sleepless and crying, he just said to her:  
 "Oh, but it's okay for you to have male friends and go out for coffee with them without  
 me?"*

*This is called "deflecting".*

BONITA:

But I loved him.

More than anyone else in the world.

Because I couldn't believe he was real.

And because I believed

that if I loved him more than anyone else in the world,

he would never leave me.

And I would never be alone again.

This is not a fact. It is fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*And then I could also be... a place for cultural and artistic*

*production that has no place or support anywhere else.*

*Inside me, using their own resources, materials and labour, the fairies could build:*

*art studios,*

*tattoo studios,*

*sport halls for training Kung Fu self-defence, hip hop, football*

*and hold intercultural "Let's Kick Racism" football tournaments.*

*They could build:*

*a concert hall,*

*the cabaret venue "Pr Anđi",*

*the performance space "Modri kot".*

*the circus space "Cirkusarna NaokROG"*

*and the largest indoor skate park in Europe.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction. This is not a fact. It is fiction.

ZELDA:

Terrible cramps.

Dizziness,

fever,

nausea,

pain.

I can't stand,

I can't sleep,

I can't work,

I can't have sex,

I can't live.

I'm in pain.

"You're just a bit oversensitive, miss."

I'm not, I really am in pain.

I have a high pain threshold.

But I'm still in so much pain.

"You're too young for that to be a problem, miss."

But I'm not so young anymore,

I'm 30.

And I'm in pain.

"You can try contraceptive pills, miss."

When I was 15, a student from my school died of a blood clot in the brain because she took contraceptives.

That's when I swore I would never put that poison into my body.

"In that case, you're only choice is pregnancy, miss."

Excuse me?

“You’re old enough to start thinking about pregnancy, miss. You don't have so much time left, and it might solve your pain problem. It’s been proven that such pain recedes after giving birth.”

But I don't want to have a baby.

I can't have a baby.

I can hardly take care of myself,  
how could I take care of someone else?

What kind of expert medical advice is that?

Do you know what it means to have a baby?

Should I really have a baby just so that I'd no longer be in pain?

And I am still in pain.

Please help me.

*Zelda couldn't sleep anymore.*

*Her brain was grinding and grinding*

*driving and producing*

*generating and conceiving*

*and it never ever stopped.*

SUKI:

And then I let him fuck me.

Not have sex with me

but fuck me.

Kind of like my puppy would hump on me at bedtime

because she wanted to dominate me,

whining

because she doesn't want to go to sleep.

And so I let him

dominate me,

because otherwise, he would whine

and wouldn't want to go to sleep.

And I let him fuck me.

In my vagina, in my mouth, in my ass.

Everywhere.

Vagina.

Mouth.

Ass.

Because I wanted him to stifle all the cracks inside me,

to silence all my cries.

Because I wanted to feel it everywhere.

The shame.  
 The force.  
 The hate.  
 The pain.  
 Because I'm screaming through all the cracks inside me.  
 And he silenced them.  
 He stifled them.  
 He fucked.  
 And even though it made me want to cry,  
 as I was thinking about how much I hated myself,  
 and even though I didn't like it,  
 because he was fucking me as if he were just jerking with me instead of with his hand,  
 I let him.  
 To fuck me.  
 To fill me up.  
 To silence me.  
 To fuck, fuck, fuck,  
 until he'd fuck me up.  
 And then when he silences himself,  
 he dares to ask me:  
 - But you came close, didn't you?  
 I came close to spitting in your face.  
 Because you're fucking me like an animal.  
 Because you're fucking me like I wasn't there.  
 Because you can't see I'm not there.  
 Because you can't see me.  
 Because I'm not there.  
 Because even though I feel pain  
 and shame  
 and I feel you everywhere;  
 on me,  
 in me,  
 I feel nothing.  
 Because I'm nothing.  
 And I'm not there.

*And then he asked Suki if they could watch porn while fucking  
 and she said ok, even though she wasn't ok with it.  
 Because you have to be ok.  
 I mean, it's just porn, it has nothing to do with her.*

*And they were fucking, embraced,  
him holding his phone behind her back, watching rough anal porn.  
And while he was coming,  
he wasn't looking at her; he was looking at the screen,  
and when she looked at the screen, she puked.  
And that wasn't the last time she looked at the screen and puked.*

ZELDA:

Poor, worn down, sick and lonely, I cried to techno music.

*And when Bonita started to cry and the pain tore through her so that she was sprawled on the floor, he started screaming at her, "It's not cheating, it's the same thing as watching porn".  
This is called "gaslighting".*

BONITA:

I wasn't enough when I was born.  
I wasn't enough when I learned to walk.  
I wasn't enough when I learned to speak.  
I wasn't enough when I loved.

*When Bonita was sitting on the couch with her best friend,  
who was closest to her in the whole world, and they were drunkenly giggling and hugging,  
he asked her  
"What, are you in love with her now? D'you wanna fuck her?"  
This is called manipulation.*

This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*I could also be ... a space for the production of knowledge,  
which would reach academia through the "Journal for the Critique of Science".<sup>17</sup>  
I could also be ... a space for media production,  
documenting political and community developments at "Komunal.org".  
I could also be ... a space for autonomous crafts and handcraft,  
from bicycle repair workshops,  
making musical instruments,*

<sup>17</sup> "Časopis za kritiko znanosti" is an established journal that looks at social sciences and humanities with a critical eye. It was first founded in 1973 by the Association of Slovene Student Communities during the student protests in the 1970s.

*sewing  
 and other kinds of mending.  
 I could also be ... a space for academic and critical thought.  
 I could be a generator of a new generation  
 of artists,  
 politicians,  
 activists,  
 researchers,  
 professional journalists,  
 bicycle repairmen,  
 editors  
 and assistant professors at the University.  
 I could also be... a place of transit.  
 I could be the main junction for the informal integration of people on their way through the  
 Balkans.  
 I could be a space for collecting and distributing donations.  
 I could be;  
 "Second Home",<sup>18</sup>  
 "Ambasada Rog",<sup>19</sup>  
 "No Border Craft"<sup>20</sup>  
 and I could reach verdicts in the European Court of Human Rights.*

This is a fact. This is not fiction.

SUKI:

And then I think of him  
 who never fucked me,  
 or had sex with me.  
 He made love to me.  
 And I remember how it would get on my nerves  
 because he wouldn't fuck me,  
 or even have sex with me,  
 but make love to me.  
 I hated his tender movements

<sup>18</sup> A self-organised migrant community stationed in the Rog Autonomous Factory.

<sup>19</sup> Ambasada Rog is an initiative and community centre in Ljubljana run by refugees and local activists. It used to be stationed in the Rog Autonomous Factory until it had to move after the eviction.

<sup>20</sup> A self-organized group of women asylum seekers, migrant women with refugee status, and activists gathering to crochet, socialize and empower. It used to be stationed in the Rog Autonomous Factory.

and gentle touches.  
 And the fact that he loved me.  
 Because he loved what he thought he saw.  
 Because he never really saw me.  
 He saw only what he wanted to see.  
 I just wanted him to fuck me.  
 To fuck all this sadness out of me.  
 To fuck me to shame.  
 To fuck me to forget who I was.  
 To fuck me so that I wouldn't be there anymore.  
 But he loved me.  
 He made love to me.  
 Whatever that means.  
 And so I couldn't fuck anymore.  
 I wouldn't fuck anymore.  
 Because nothing could help me anymore.  
 And because I wouldn't fuck anymore, nobody would see me anymore.

*And the pain was killing Zelda at the E.R.,  
 afraid  
 that her appendix burst,  
 that her internal organs were failing.  
 And the doctors were offering her painkillers that didn't help,  
 antidepressants for the depression she didn't have,  
 medication for anxiety she didn't have,  
 antibiotics for bladder infections she didn't have,  
 asking her what she'd eaten, because maybe it was just indigestion,  
 because the blood tests didn't show any indicators.  
 And when she worried that she had polycystic ovaries  
 or ovarian cancer  
 or uterine cancer  
 or cervical cancer  
 or simply any kind of cancer  
 the doctor  
 told her she hadn't studied medicine and couldn't diagnose herself,  
 and that at 30, she was too young for polycystic ovaries anyway  
 or any kind of cancer.  
 And then he told Bonita via Facebook Messenger  
 that a year and a half ago, he had cheated on her with her best friend,*

*the friend who was closest to her in the whole world,  
 in the home they shared,  
 while she was asleep in the next room  
 because she had to get up early in the morning.  
 And then he told her: "Don't even think about telling anyone, 'cause no one'll believe you".  
 This is called "narcissistic personality disorder".  
 There is no cure, no therapy, no help for narcissistic personality disorder.  
 And then he deleted and blocked her overnight.  
 He took his stuff and disappeared overnight.  
 He left her overnight.  
 As if she had never existed.*

BONITA:

We went from talking until 2 AM  
 to talking 2 hours a day,  
 to talking 2 days ago,  
 to never talking again.

This is fiction. This is not fiction.

*And then one day,  
 with all this potential of everything that I could be,  
 I would start to annoy some ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city, more and more.  
 And so, on this day,  
 this ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city,  
 would announce my restoration.  
 He would announce my restoration and the start of construction works,  
 during which he would start  
 demolishing the waterfront part of my area,  
 demolishing my extensions,  
 and arranging the park and the garages underneath me.  
 And this mister would be in a crazy rush,  
 but would not have enough money,  
 and he would also be running out of time before the building permit expired,  
 so this mister would decide,  
 to set up a construction site on me and start the construction works  
 without any notice or warning,  
 without securing me or the fairies.*

*And so this ninth mister  
 would give a call to some tenth mister with an excavator  
 and some eleventh misters from the security service,  
 connected to neo-Nazi groups.  
 And as the fairies would want to protect me,  
 they would start an intense defence campaign  
 throwing their very bodies under the excavator forks and the tracks  
 and they would make a human shield and barricades out of their very bodies,  
 and they would defend me until they prevented the construction works and the demolition.  
 And that is when the police would come,  
 who would not prevent the security service from carrying out their violent acts against the  
 fairies defending me,  
 even though the security guards exceeded their rights.*

This is a fact. It is not a fact.

*And even though for 4 years, Bonita believed  
 that he was the love of her life,  
 that he was her only life,  
 the only future  
 she wanted or imagined,  
 and now a big excavator demolished all of that right in front of her eyes,  
 she still loved him.  
 She still wanted him, just him, nobody else but him.  
 She still wanted to marry him, live with him, and have children with him.  
 She still loved him  
 and she still couldn't believe that he was real,  
 that she had found him,  
 that he was hers  
 and that he would never leave her.  
 This is called "delusion".*

ZELDA:

And all of this keeps piling on and on,  
 piling up somewhere,  
 and you've no idea where that somewhere is,  
 you just know that it's real,  
 until it bursts, erupts and paralyses you.  
 And you can't eat,  
 you can't sleep,  
 you can't think,

you can't live.

Until you no longer live

and you just exist.

Day by day

you "just" exist.

And you want to live,

you want to breathe,

you want to laugh,

you want to work,

you want to have fun,

you want to love.

But you can't.

And you "just" exist.

You become a side character in your own story,

just watching helplessly how your story unfolds.

*Until Zelda started crying*

*and begging for the doctor to do an ultrasound scan*

*because she could no longer believe it was burnout,*

*because she knew that she was still burning on the inside.*

*And when the doctor saw nothing on the ultrasound except for some shadows and patches,*

*which was supposed to be normal,*

*Zelda passed from crying to screaming hysterically,*

*so that the doctor was forced to refer her to the Endometriosis Day Care,*

*and there they finally did the ultrasound scan properly.*

*And when they finally did the ultrasound scan properly,*

*they found;*

*- A 4-centimetre tumour*

*- 2 endometriomas*

*- her left ovary full of cysts,*

*and to treat it, they proposed*

*- conception*

*- contraceptives*

*- a healthy diet*

*- or laparoscopy.*

*Zelda chose laparoscopy.*

SUKI:

I was alone.

*"Why're you all dressed up so sexy?"*

SUKI:  
Really alone.

*"Come here, if you dare. Come here, or I'm gonna come over there."*

SUKI:  
All alone.

*And he cut Suki off, grabbed her by the hand and sat her in his lap.*

SUKI:  
Lonely.

*And he whispered whore in her ear and licked her neck.*

SUKI:  
Alone.

*"I can see you like it rough, don't you?"*

SUKI:  
All alone.

*"What're you looking at, you dirty whore? I'm gonna fuck you so hard you'll forget your name, and when you're lying on the floor all fucked up, I'm gonna piss on you and drown you in my piss."*

SUKI:  
Alone in a small crack.

*"I do love you, but she was a better fuck than you."*

SUKI:  
Alone in a small crack in the marble.

*"You think we're paying for looking at your buttoned-up neck or your tits?"* And he ripped the bow off her neck and unbuttoned her shirt.

SUKI:  
Lost in a crack in the marble.

*"You're hotter, but she was just better to fuck from behind because her ass is bigger." And he shoved it up her ass.*

SUKI:

I screamed and screamed.

SUKI:

*"Come on, can't you just put it in your mouth for a bit, just so that I come?" And he shoved it up her mouth.*

SUKI:

But my scream disappeared in the crack in the marble.

ZELDA:

And you finally know;  
 that you're not crazy,  
 that you're not oversensitive,  
 that you're not overreacting.  
 That you have a severe stage of endometriosis,  
 that they'll probably have to take out one of your ovaries,  
 that you might have cancer,  
 and that you'll probably never be able to have children.  
 And even though you've just heard all that,  
 and you've no idea what'll happen to you, to your body, to your life,  
 because you have no vacation, no sick leave, no money saved up for recovery,  
 you let out a sigh of relief for the first time in six months.  
 And you breathe.  
 Because you know;  
 that you're not crazy,  
 that you're not oversensitive,  
 that you're not overreacting.  
 That you are sick.  
 And that you were right.

This is not a fact. It is fiction.

*And then I would become... a community space.  
 And then more than 100 fairies would manage to break into me.  
 And they'd take control of me,  
 secure me,*

*barricade my entrances  
 and even seize the excavator that was going to demolish me as spoils of war.  
 Later, they would paint the excavator pink.  
 All this commotion inside me would trigger a wave of solidarity and support from other  
 fairies in the city,  
 and criticism of the city authorities and some ninth mister  
 who happened to be on top of the city.  
 And then ... then the fairies and me would file a lawsuit against the city for property,  
 violation  
 and ask for protection,  
 and the court would issue a temporary order to halt the construction work for the duration  
 of legal proceedings.  
 And then ... after successfully deflecting the eviction attempt,  
 an explosion of community would happen inside me.  
 And then ... then I would never be alone again.  
 Inside me, various teams would be reformed,  
 new people would join me,  
 new collectives would form,  
 new spaces would open up.  
 More and more fairies would come to me.  
 And then... then the fairies would start a media campaign  
 and gain wider support in the city,  
 which would trigger discussions about gentrification and privatisation of public space.  
 And, of course, that would not be to the liking  
 of the ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city.  
 After an unsuccessful mediation with the fairies who defended me,  
 he would file a lawsuit demanding to evict me and hand me over to the owner.  
 My owner,  
 a certain ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on top of the city.*

That is a fact. This is not fiction.

SUKI:

Some of us are ...

Cracks in the marble.

Some of us are cracks in the marble.

Some of us are ...

Some of us aren't ...

Cracks in the marble blend into each other

like the rivulets of a raging river.  
 But in every crack, someone is screaming.  
 Every crack is a scream.  
 Every crack is a scream of solitude.  
 Every crack is just a crack.  
 A crack in the marble.  
 In a raging river.

*And he shoved Suki's head into his crotch and held her tight so she couldn't move.  
 And then they pierced Zelda's abdomen with six needles and discovered stage 4  
 endometriosis,  
 which had grown so big,  
 that they had to burn the whole uterine wall  
 and glue all the endometriotic foci,  
 so that in the end, they barely patched her left ovary back up.  
 And that's when Zelda  
 started to long,  
 more than anything in the world,  
 even more than for the fairies,  
 for having  
 an 8-hour working day,  
 with 21 days of paid leave  
 and sick leave.  
 But she didn't have it.  
 Because she preferred to do things her own way.*

ZELDA:

And again, you "just" have to hang in there.  
 And again, you "just" have to survive.  
 And again, you "just" have to, have to, have to.

BONITA:

And I loved him,  
 when he would humiliate me,  
 cheat on me,  
 extort me,  
 scream at me,  
 slam the doors  
 and break things around our flat.

*When "I love you" comes in a package with "stupid cow," that's not love.*

*When "I want to be with you for the rest of my life" comes in a package with "that's not cheating," that's not love.*

*When "you're so pretty" comes in a package with "you're not enough for me because I need to fuck other girls," that's not love.*

*When "I'm sorry" comes in a package with "your biggest problem in life is that your daddy loves your brother more than he loves you," that's not love.*

*When he doesn't hit you, but rather hits the wall next to you, that's violence.*

*When he says to you, "It's all your fault, you make me be like this," that's violence.*

*When he screams in your face, that's violence.*

*When he threatens you through clenched teeth right in front of your eyes, that's violence.*

*When he kicks, throws and breaks things around the flat, that's violence.*

This is not a fact. It is fiction. This is a fact. It is not fiction.

*And then I would be ...*

*Since the lawsuit against me and the fairies would amount to around 200,000 euros, we would start raising money for the legal costs.*

*And as the legal costs would get higher and higher, the fairies fighting for me would get poorer and poorer, and less and less shiny*

*and rosy*

*and glittery;*

*internal conflicts would break out among them.*

*Financial and political pressure in the form of disparate positions would start to divide the fairies defending me.*

*Some of the fairies would want anarchism for me,*

*some other fairies would want Leninism for me,*

*some other fairies would want autonomy for me,*

*some other fairies would want legalisation and formalisation for me.*

*Interpersonal conflicts and violence would break out*

*due to different interpretations and understandings of my internal organisation and hierarchies, due to a battle of egos and eccentrics to dominate me.*

*Some of the fairies would see me as a place for building solidarity and maintaining interpersonal relationships,*

*other fairies would see me as a means*

*for their own activist credos, political careers or therapy groups.*

*The fairies building, reconstructing and preserving me with their own hands  
would no longer share their vision with the fairies that were creating programmes and content in me.  
My radical openness would bring ever more unaddressed social issues with no systemic solutions in sight,  
but merely survival strategies  
and ever more criminalisation, persecution, punishment, drugs, thefts and violence.  
As the police presence would increase  
with ever more interventions and more distrust of the neighbours and the communities,  
some of the fairies would start leaving me and forgetting about me.  
While other fairies would continue fighting regardless.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction. This is not a fact. It is fiction.

SUKI:

There were not enough times in my life when I said *no*.  
I was afraid of using that word.  
I was afraid of all the things that it might close for me.  
Prevent.  
Limit.  
It never occurred to me that this word could save me.

SUKI, ZELDA, BONITA:

NO.  
Stop.  
It hurts.  
No...  
I don't want this!  
It hurts!  
NO!  
Please don't ...  
No ...

SUKI:

NO, I was screaming in my head.  
NO NO NO!  
But just in my head.  
Because my voice wouldn't listen.  
My vocal cords froze.

No one heard it.  
 No one saw it.  
 Until my body decided to speak for me.  
 To scream NO!  
 To disable me.  
 To paralyse me.  
 So I went numb.  
 Silent.  
 Dead.  
 A backdrop,  
 decoration,  
*nature morte.*

*And Suki fell asleep because she didn't want to have sex with him  
 when he was all spiteful and coked-up,  
 because sex with him, all reckless and coked-up, wasn't really sex  
 but violent humping.  
 And she fell asleep until the sound of moaning and grunting and a small blue light woke her  
 up.  
 And she turned around and saw him next to her, watching porn and jerking off  
 while she was sleeping.  
 And she started to cry.  
 And he said:  
 "Well, what d'you expect, I'm totally high on speed, so if you're not gonna do it, I'm gonna  
 do it alone".  
 And she turned back to her side and cried on in silence.  
 And then a fairy came and said "no".*

SUKI:  
 For all my life, I was afraid of the word *no*.  
 Because all I longed for was for someone to see me.  
 Even though *no* was the only word that could save me.  
 The only word that could save me from pain.  
 The only word that could ...

*And Suki said "no" to him, it hurts, stop it. But he wouldn't stop. Because they never stop.  
 And when Zelda was lying in the hospital,  
 in her ugly socialist gown,  
 high on sedatives and painkillers,  
 ripened and ready for anaesthesia and butchery,  
 the first milligram crawled up to her brain,*

*and everything stopped.*  
*Her thoughts stopped running away.*  
*She didn't need to work.*  
*She didn't need to produce.*  
*She didn't need to reproduce.*  
*She could just be.*  
*She could focus on one single point,*  
*one single thought*  
*and keep at it as long as she wanted.*  
*She only thought about not thinking of anything.*  
*For the first time in her life, she wasn't thinking of anything.*  
*She felt calm.*  
*Calm.*  
*For the first time in her life, she understood why people get addicted to sedatives.*  
*There was a big emptiness of nothing inside her.*  
*And this "nothing" tasted better*  
*than any job,*  
*than any success,*  
*than any "the best"*  
*and "bravo" that she had ever received.*  
*For the first time, this "nothing" gave her the feeling of being "everything".*

BONITA:

And I loved him when he was drunk, high and reckless.  
 And I loved him when he was violent.  
 And I loved him when everyone was telling me to leave.  
 And I told them I loved him because he never hit me, because he was "just";  
 "just" slamming his fists against the wall,  
 "just" slamming doors,  
 "just" threatening to kill himself,  
 "just" kicking and breaking things around the flat,  
 "just" screaming at me,  
 "just" humiliating me,  
 "just" cheating on me,  
 "just" not coming home,  
 "just" not answering my calls,  
 "just" being drunk and high and reckless,  
 "just" horny and looking to fuck,  
 he "just" loved me the only way he knew how.  
 Because we all love "just" the way we know how.

And I loved him.  
 Without "just."  
 I loved.  
 More than anything in the world.

*And when Bonita was left alone in the flat where it all happened,  
 where, while she was sleeping in the next room,  
 the two people closest to her betrayed her and lied about it to her face for a year and a half,  
 in the flat where she had built a home with him,  
 her family,  
 her future,  
 where everything started to crumble like at a construction site,  
 Bonita prayed for the second time in her life.  
 Bonita never called  
 when she needed help.  
 Bonita never asked for help.  
 But in that moment, Bonita knew  
 that if she didn't call and pray  
 for the fairies to come and save her,  
 she would cut her wrists,  
 she would hang herself,  
 she would gouge out her eyes,  
 rip out her brains,  
 set herself on fire,  
 lie down under the excavator,  
 and in the worst case,  
 go back,  
 to him  
 to her  
 to hell.  
 At this moment, Bonita called out for the first time.  
 At this moment, Bonita prayed for the second time.  
 And at that moment, the fairies came  
 and took Bonita away.*

ZELDA:

And then they take everything out of you,  
 they butcher you,  
 they give you a prescription for hormones and send you home.  
 Home, without sick leave.  
 Because after a laparoscopy, you only get two weeks' sick leave,

but I, a self-employed cultural worker,  
 can only get sick leave after 31 days of being sick.  
 And then, for the first time in your life, you take the strongest hormonal contraceptives,  
 as strong as taking the morning-after pill every day.  
 And your body collapses,  
 as if an excavator ran you over.  
 And your wits crumble,  
 and you're left just a crack in the marble.  
 And the hormones take over and almost lead you to death,  
 and you wither like a rotten peony turned upside down  
 and you want to die every day  
 because you can't live anymore,  
 because you have no control,  
 because you have no power,  
 because you are a prisoner of your own body, and you can't get out.  
 Because you are a backdrop,  
 decoration,  
*nature morte*.  
 Because if you stop taking pills,  
 the endometriomas will grow again,  
 the tumours will reappear,  
 maybe even develop into cancer,  
 and kill you with a slow, painful death.  
 You can't have children any more,  
 unless you stop taking pills and risk dying of cancer,  
 or your baby dying in your body before being born,  
 provided, of course,  
 that you don't take pills for a year and a half before conceiving  
 hoping you don't drop dead in the meantime.

BONITA:

And when I dried up,  
 withered of any colour or smell or softness,  
 and I was rotting in a vase full of mould and insects,  
 I was the only thing left.  
 The flat was empty,  
 he left,  
 she was gone  
 and so I was left alone.  
 I;  
 a backdrop,

decoration,  
*nature morte.*

That's me.

Ever since I was little.

A backdrop.

decoration.

*Nature morte.*

*No one cares about love stories anymore,*

*No one believes in love anymore.*

*Bonita stopped believing in love*

*and started believing in fairies.*

This is not a fact. This is not fiction.

*And so I would be ... I would become afraid of being left alone again.*

*That the fairies would stop believing in me and leave me too.*

*And so I would also become ... a place of constant tension.*

*I would become a place of constant guards, of supervision, of various forms of pressure from the city.*

*Despite the attempts to present potential solutions to the conflict between the fairies and the city,*

*with a concrete proposal to transform me into a cooperative,*

*with a concrete proposal to formalise my reconstruction and recognise my autonomy, the fairies would fail.*

*Some twelfth misters, security guards,*

*some thirteenth misters, appraisers,*

*some fourteenth misters, bailiffs*

*would start entering me.*

*Threats of my eviction by my owner,*

*some ninth mister,*

*who happened to be on top of the city*

*would cause more and more pressure,*

*distrust*

*and consequently, less and less activity,*

*less programme,*

*less life,*

*less hope,*

*less fairies.*

This is a fact. This is fiction.

SUKI:

And I stayed silent.

And got dressed and went home.

And I forgot.

*And then the second fairy came and said "no".*

SUKI:

Until the nightmares started,

every night,

night after night,

that I couldn't understand at all.

Until I told a friend what had happened

and he told me: "Do you even know you were ..."

And I kept silent.

I didn't know I was.

Even though I knew I was.

But I stayed silent.

And I didn't look back anymore.

It was neither the first time nor the last.

I'd almost gotten used to it,

I'd almost ...

Forgotten.

*And Suki told him that she couldn't, that she didn't feel like it.*

*And they went to bed.*

*Until an unpleasant sensation woke her up.*

*And even before she could really wake up,*

*she heard him panting and felt a cock inside her.*

*And she endured, because you "just" have to endure.*

*And in the morning, when she told him what happened*

*and that she wasn't feeling comfortable, he said:*

*"Sorry, I don't remember it. I probably just did it in my sleep."*

*And it wasn't the last time he couldn't remember and "just" did it in his sleep.*

*And then a third fairy came and said "no".*

*And then ...*

*Then Zelda became angry.*

*Because there are still traces of lead and arsenic in tampons.*

*Because, in medicine, there is a notable lack of research specifically focused on women's health.*

*Because women are mostly excluded from medical research on new drugs, as their hormones supposedly affect the effects of the tested drugs.*

*Because most drugs available on the pharmaceutical market, including dosages, are still adapted to the male rather than the female body.*

*Because there is still more research being done into erectile dysfunction than into any female-specific disease.*

*Because most diseases that affect women more often than men receive lower research funding than diseases that predominantly affect men.*

*Because in 2020, a mere 1% of medical research (beyond oncology) was focused on diseases affecting women.*

*Because between 2019 and 2023, 11 start-ups were researching erectile dysfunction and spent around 1.24 billion on it, while 8 start-ups received only 44 million to study endometriosis.*

*Because symptoms such as unbearable pain during menstruation, intercourse and urination, chronic pelvic pain, abdominal distension, vaginal and bladder infections, nausea, fatigue, anxiety, depression and infertility have only started to be regularly diagnosed in the last 15 years.*

*Because endometriosis affects 10%, or 190 million women of reproductive age, and there is still no cure for it beyond symptom relief with contraceptives and painkillers and regular laparoscopic operations to remove endometriotic foci, cysts and tumours.*

*Because endometriosis is one of the 10 most painful chronic conditions for which there is no cure, but it is still not perceived as a disease that makes normal life and work impossible.*

*Because in poorer countries and countries with inadequate health systems, it can go undiagnosed and develop into endometriotic cancer.*

ZELDA:

Why is it always that the wounded ones fight and never the ones who are undamaged?

BONITA:

And so I decided to be alone.

Because the only person who will never leave me is me.

Because the peony has to sprout again, and grow, and live.

And I'm the one who's going to water it.

Because I am not a backdrop, not a decoration, *nature morte*.

I am a peony.

And I am alive.

*The fairies came for Bonita when she was afraid for her life.*

BONITA:

1 year, I said to myself,

I will take 1 year.  
 For 1 year, I will stay inside,  
 for 1 year, I will be alone,  
 for 1 year, I will disappear  
 into a crack in the marble.  
 And I said nothing.  
 I stayed silent.  
 And I disappeared.

*The fairies helped Bonita clean up when she went back to her messy and ruined apartment.*

BONITA:  
 And now that I can speak,  
 now that I can write,  
 now I'm going to say everything.  
 Everything I didn't say back then,  
 but can say now.  
 Because there's nothing left to lose  
 and I don't care anymore.

*The fairies helped Bonita tidy up as she was packing up her old life.*

That is not a fact. It is fiction.

*And then ... Then there would be an epidemic of some virus.  
 And then there would be restrictions.  
 Events would get cancelled.  
 Public events would get cancelled.  
 Public socialising and gathering would be restricted.  
 Social contacts would be restricted.  
 There would be loneliness.  
 There would be isolation.  
 There would be uncertainty.  
 There would be anxiety.  
 There would be depression.  
 There would be helplessness.  
 There would be despair.  
 And then ... That's when I would start to decline.  
 And then ... That's when everything would start to fall apart.  
 And then the European Union would ban glitter*

*and the fairies would lose their magic powder.*

This is a fact. It is not fiction.

SUKI:

I felt I was dying,  
really dying.

Withered,  
dehydrated,

broken,

starving,

anxious,

panicky,

dead.

I was thinking about throwing myself in front of a Shinkansen.

320 km/h.

Somewhere in the middle of Japan.

No one would notice.

Nobody would hear.

There'd just be another crack in the marble.

And I'd be gone.

No more pain.

No more suffering.

I will no longer hurt.

I will be no more.

There will be no more.

No more.

No.

*And then the fourth fairy came and said "no".*

*And no one told Zelda anything.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that the pain she had been in all these years would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that the surgery she has undergone and the scars it left behind would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that the new pain, the bleeding, the secretions, the nausea and dizziness as side effects of the hormones would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that the sores that would grow on her face and the hairs that would sprout on the bare parts*

*of her body would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that bloating and going back and forth between overeating and starvation would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that six months of depression, anxiety and suicidal tendencies would not be the worst thing waiting for her.*

*No one told Zelda*

*that the worst thing waiting for her would be the fact  
that she would never feel comfortable in her own body again,  
that she would never trust her thoughts, her feelings and her judgement again,  
that she would never be able to dream about children again,  
that she could teach how to play fairies.*

ZELDA:

Which came first, the wound or the battle?

*The worst thing waiting for her*

*has happened to her.*

*And even though the worst thing that happened to her  
is still going on,*

*and on*

*and on*

*and will go on for a long time,*

*the worst thing that happened to her*

*taught her*

*that she can do everything.*

*Anything at all.*

*That she is not a machine.*

*That she is not an excavator.*

*But a fairy.*

ZELDA:

Every time it hurts more, it also hurts less, until it hurts so much that it doesn't hurt anymore.

BONITA:

“You're strong, you'll manage, you've got this, hold on, if anyone can do it, it's you.”

Fuck you,

fuck you,

fuck you.

I can't.  
 And I don't want to.  
 I want to be weak,  
 helpless like a child,  
 to have my mother hug me  
 and caress me  
 and bring me things  
 and tell me everything will be okay.  
 That I don't need to try anymore,  
 that I don't need to save anyone anymore.  
 I want someone to save me,  
 I want the fairy godmother to come and save me.  
 Mommy, where are you?  
 Mommy, why won't you help me?

*The fairies offered Bonita a place to stay when she had nowhere to go.*

BONITA:  
 I stopped going out.  
 I stopped hanging out.  
 I stopped everything.  
 I was afraid to leave the flat,  
 afraid to see him,  
 to see her,  
 to see anyone  
 that would pity me  
 and ask me "how are you",  
 mock me,  
 slander me,  
 look at me,  
 not look at me.  
 I was afraid I was gonna die,  
 afraid I was gonna have to live,  
 afraid I was gonna be alone forever.

*The fairies showed Bonita that she could do everything.*

This is not a fact. This is not fiction.

*And then I would become ...  
 That's when the violent, illegal eviction would start,  
 in which they'd deport all the faires  
 defending me,  
 sleeping in me,  
 hiding in me,  
 living in me,  
 because they had nowhere else to go.  
 Then they'd immediately set up a construction site on me,  
 bring a security service  
 and start the demolition.  
 And even though this time I would have started a protest  
 to protect myself,  
 to be protected  
 by the fairies,  
 it would be too late  
 immobilised by strong epidemic measures against gathering.  
 My protest and the protest of my fairies  
 would result in damage and destruction of personal belongings and equipment,  
 severe police violence,  
 the use of tear gas,  
 beatings,  
 arrests  
 and astronomical fines.  
 And so I would become a backdrop, decoration, nature morte.  
 And so I, my body and my fairies would be  
 defeated,  
 demolished,  
 exterminated,  
 by my city  
 and at its head, my owner,  
 the ninth mister,  
 who happened to be on the top of the city.  
 But the fairies wouldn't surrender.  
 The fairies would hide.  
 The fairies would recuperate their strength,  
 mend their wings  
 and look for biodegradable substitutes for glitter.*

This is a fact. This is fiction.

SUKI:

And then I decided to really enjoy.  
 And to enjoy on my own.  
 In secret, in silence, with no one around.  
 When I'm alone and no one can see me.  
 When I'm hidden in a crack in the marble.  
 When no one would be able to hurt me.  
 When the only hands that could take me in their hands would be my own.  
 And then my loneliness would become my strength.  
 I'd overcome my loneliness with loneliness.  
 In the crack in the marble.

*The fairies showed Suki that she could do anything.  
 And when Zelda woke up in the hospital,  
 in her ugly socialist gown,  
 high on sedatives and painkillers,  
 cut up, butchered, split open, burnt, hollowed out, with a swollen black arm,  
 she looked around the room.  
 A room where, for the first time, she was lying surrounded with women only.  
 Women who had lived through the same things as she, some better, some worse.  
 And when the doctor came to her and told her she had stage 4 endometriosis,  
 that she'd have to take strong hormones for the rest of her life,  
 that she'd probably never be able to have children,  
 Zelda just felt relieved to be alive.  
 For the first time in a year, she was glad to be alive.  
 And when a 42-year-old woman next to her started to cry  
 because they removed her uterus and both ovaries,  
 and when the 29-year-old woman next to her started to cry  
 because she wouldn't be able to have children,  
 and when the 34-year-old woman next to her started to cry  
 because she was finally cured and ready to conceive,  
 Zelda started to believe in fairies again.*

ZELDA:

Why do we bind our souls  
 instead of fixing them?  
 Why do we bind cities with concrete  
 but not our souls?

*The fairies helped Zelda go to the toilet when she couldn't go alone.*

BONITA:

And then I changed it all.

I changed my soap, shampoo, softener, detergent, deodorant and perfume.

I changed my whole diet, I stopped eating meat, fish, lactose, gluten and wheat.

I bought new dishes, bedding, cutlery, furniture and clothes.

I changed the pubs, venues, public spaces and events.

I changed my friends, people, hobbies, films, books, series, music and platforms.

I cut my hair, starved myself by 10 kg, changed my colours, wardrobe, and jewellery.

Just not to be like I had been for him.

Just not to be a backdrop, decoration, *nature morte*.

*The fairies showed Bonita that she was a forest nymph.*

That is not a fact. It is a fact. This is not fiction. It is fiction.

*And then... then I would start to disappear.*

*And then ... then in my place,*

*on my ruins,*

*at my funeral,*

*the very same, ninth city mister,*

*would build a shining marble palace on me.*

*He would open it for the city and close it for the fairies.*

*It would no longer be me.*

*It would no longer be a fairy factory.*

*It would be a shining marble palace of some ninth city mister*

*who happened to be on top of the city.*

*It would be a shining marble palace*

*of some hundred and forty-sixth,*

*some two-hundredth,*

*some four hundred and thirty-fifth,*

*some seven hundred and twenty-second mister,*

*and some city mister friends.*

*It would be a shining marble palace*

*full of shiny new delights,*

*shiny new machines,*

*shiny new cafes,*

*shiny new art*

*and some other shiny fairies.*

*A backdrop,*

*decoration,*

nature morte.

*But there are cracks in every marble  
and the fairies hide in the cracks in the marble.*

What is the difference between fact and fiction?

SUKI:

We are not the product of our trauma,  
we are the product of the way we deal with our trauma.

*The fairies showed Suki that she was a Japanese warrior.*

ZELDA:

I wanted to:  
reboot,  
refresh,  
shut down,  
but then I realised  
that maybe I just needed a new operating system.

*The fairies showered Zelda when she couldn't do it by herself.*

ZELDA:

I stopped going out,  
I stopped hanging out,  
I stopped everything.  
I was afraid to leave my apartment,  
afraid of having panic attacks,  
of seeing someone  
who'd ask me: "What are you working on these days?"  
Anyone who'd pity me,  
mock me,  
slander me,  
look at me,  
not look at me.

*The fairies cooked for Zelda when she couldn't do it by herself.*

ZELDA:

Wake up.

Wake up.  
 Wake up, I've been telling you that for a year.  
 Wake up.  
 And everything will be like before.  
 Wake up and everything will be like before.  
 Wake up, wake up, wake up.  
 So you'll see that nothing is different.  
 You're awake.  
 You're awake.  
 And everything is different.

*The fairies showed Zelda that she could do anything.*

ZELDA:  
 Sometimes you just have to listen.  
 And *hear* what you're listening to.  
 Because no matter what people say,  
 words can change the world.

*The fairies showed Zelda that she was a lit firecracker.*

BONITA:  
 When you grow up,  
 You realise that the world doesn't change with revolutions.  
 The world changes  
 with small things,  
 small actions  
 and small words.

SUKI:  
 We don't stop playing because we grow old,  
 we grow old because we stop playing.

ZELDA:  
 All we have left is  
 to play, play, play

BONITA:  
 and never stop playing.

SUKI:

To forever remain children.  
who are now playing fairies that can change the world.

*And then a year went by.  
And when Suki, Zelda and Bonita hadn't seen any fairies for a long time,  
once on their way home, they saw  
a man stabbing another man.  
One man ran away, the other one fell on the ground.  
Zelda, Suki, and Bonita were afraid for their lives,  
for their safety,  
for their city,  
for their home.  
And then they looked around.  
No one stopped,  
no one even looked,  
no one did anything.  
Nobody saw the crack in the marble.  
Nobody saw the fairies.  
And that's when they knew  
that if they didn't stop,  
if they didn't even look,  
if they didn't do anything,  
if they didn't listen  
and if they didn't hear what they're listening to,  
there would just be another crack in the marble,  
merging with the currents of other cracks in the raging river.  
And there will be only a backdrop, decoration, nature morte.  
And Zelda, Suki and Bonita wouldn't accept that.  
And then Bonita called the ambulance,  
Zelda called the police,  
and Suki laid the stabbed man down on the ground,  
soothed him,  
kept him conscious  
and pressed clothes to his open wounds.  
Before their eyes, the mangled, poor, emaciated, abused, collapsed body was dying,  
lost in a crack in the marble.  
But they were no longer afraid.  
because they knew they could do anything.  
Because they had been through so much themselves,  
they knew that he would survive as well.  
And they spoke to the paramedics,*

*and they spoke to the police,  
 and they spoke to the stabbed man.  
 And when the paramedics took care of the stabbed man  
 and told them he would be all right,  
 and when the cops started looking for the man who stabbed him  
 and told them they would find him,  
 and when the stabbed man said "thank you" to them in his last breaths,  
 they knew  
 that they were the fairies all along.  
 And that we can all be fairies.  
 If we listen,  
 and hear  
 the cracks in the marble.  
 And it is the fairies.  
 holding all the cracks together in one big piece,  
 where souls are not bound,  
 but rather stand firm.  
 And then they realised that everyone was struggling with their own "just".  
 That we are all "just" struggling with our loneliness  
 and when we realise that we are not alone in it, we can belong.  
 Then we are no longer alone.  
 Then "just" becomes just.  
 And it seizes to exist.  
 And we can be free.*

ZELDA:

My body collapsed,

BONITA:

my heart was broken,

SUKI:

my trust was destroyed.

ZELDA:

The excavator demolished the memories,

BONITA:

love,

SUKI:  
bodies,

ZELDA:  
ovaries.

ZELDA:  
My body full of hormones, empty of tumors,

BONITA:  
full of hope, empty of love,

SUKI:  
full of struggle, empty of violence.

ZELDA, SUKI, BONITA:  
I am not a backdrop.  
I am not decoration.  
I am not *nature morte*.  
They can demolish me with excavators,  
they can burn me and pierce me with needles,  
they can yell at me and abuse me,  
they can humiliate me and rape me,  
but they cannot silence me.  
Because no matter what people say,  
words can change the world.  
Words can bring fairies to life.  
I am a fairy.  
I am a crack in the marble.  
I am a bound soul.  
I am a machine.  
I am a lit firecracker.  
I am a peony.  
I am a forest nymph.  
I am a raging river.  
I am a Japanese warrior.  
I am a superheroine.  
I am a fairy.  
I am just me.  
I am a fact.

I am fiction.

*If it weren't for me,  
the erased would never get compensation.*

*If it weren't for me,  
so many would still not have any status today.*

*If it weren't for me,  
so many would have to deal with their mental crises in a psychiatric hospital.*

*If it weren't for me,  
so many would not had been able to articulate their social distress.*

*If it weren't for me,  
so many would still be ashamed of their marginalisation, stigma and oppression.*

*If it weren't for me,  
marginal issues would not be raised in public discourse.*

*If it weren't for me,  
marginal groups would not appear in NGOs, academia and institutional politics.*

*If it weren't for me,  
so many would not have started their political careers.*

*If it weren't for me,  
there would be no;  
"Boj za" movement,  
"Levica" party,  
"Iskra" association,  
"8th of March Institute".*

*If it weren't for me,  
many artists would not  
have had their album released,  
had their solo exhibition,  
their opening concert,  
their opening performance,  
started performing on institutional stages  
and started getting subsidies, prizes and awards.*

*If it weren't for me,  
there would be no  
equipment for protests and public events,  
no spaces for learning,  
no spaces for discussion,  
no spaces for hanging out,  
no spaces for cooking,  
no spaces for mending,  
no spaces for artistic creation.*

*If it weren't for me,  
 so many would not be able to afford to go to cultural events.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 so many would still be ashamed of their poverty and lack of education.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 so many would still be alone.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 so many would be deported,  
 would not be reunited with their family,  
 would not have found a job  
 and would not have learned Slovenian.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 so many would not have gotten off the street,  
 so many would not have finished high school,  
 enrolled in a faculty,  
 found a job,  
 fallen in love,  
 got married  
 and had children.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 there would have been no "People's Protest Assembly",  
 no bicycle protests,  
 no end to the dictatorship of the right-wing government.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 there would have been no "Participatory Ljubljana Autonomous Zone".  
 If it weren't for me,  
 there would be no Suki, Zelda and Bonita.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 there would be no fairies.  
 If it weren't for me,  
 there would be no bicycles  
 and there would be no future.  
 But I was never there.  
 There were only fairies,  
 hiding in the cracks of the shiny new marble buildings.  
 And although all this demolition, decay and disappearance  
 made it clear  
 that life was just a long process of letting go;  
 letting go of memories,  
 of people,  
 of spaces,*

*of time,  
it also made it clear  
that life was also a long process of healing.  
And even though our lives get demolished by some misters,  
our future is always being built by fairies.*

This is not a fact.

This is not fiction.

This is collective dementia.

And this is not the end.

It is only the beginning.

The fairies will continue to look for spaces  
that need to be mended.

The fairies will continue to look for bodies  
that need to be healed.

The fairies will continue to look for stories  
that need to be listened to  
and *heard*.

The fairies will continue to gather in the cracks  
and cycle around the city.

Because no excavator,

no concrete,

no city mister

can beat the fairies,

even if they'll no longer have glitter.

Because everyone has to believe in something,

in someone,

and I believe in fairies.

And who is it that you believe in?

---

[1] An outdoor game for children, popular in Slovenia.

[2] "TV Dober dan" was a popular Slovenian comedy series produced by POP TV, one of the first ones produced in independent Slovenia.

[3] "Naša mala klinika", "Teater Paradižnik", "Pod eno streho" - other popular comedy series.

[4] Bepop was the first Slovenian pop group ever selected by the licenced reality show Popstars in 2002.

[5] A Slovenian supermarket chain founded in Yugoslavia. After independence, it got reorganised and later taken over by the Mercator supermarket chain.

[6] Official Slovenian currency from 8 October 1991 until the introduction of the euro on 1 January 2007.

[7] Two popular cinemas in Ljubljana dating back to the times of Yugoslavia. They both closed in 2001.

[8] A former tannery, leather factory and bicycle factory that was squatted in 2006. For 15 years it was the setting of alternative culture, political movements and activism. In 2021 it was forcibly evicted.

[9] All of the above are names of popular bars and clubs in Ljubljana at the time.

[10] "Ritem mladosti" and "Žur z razlogom" were two music festivals in Ljubljana aimed primarily at young audiences.

[11] At the time a popular student club in Ljubljana, literally: Club of Students from Maribor.

[12] A cult annual cultural festival in Ljubljana that started in 1992. Before the turistification it was virtually the only event for young and alternative audiences taking place in Ljubljana during August.

[13] "Boj za", lit. "A fight for", a play on the word borza (stock exchange), was an "occupy" movement organised in 2011 according to direct democracy principles. The community camped in front of the Ljubljana Stock Exchange.

[14] Lit. "Spark".