

Makenzy Orcel

A HUMAN SUM

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DEAD-END MIRROR

Yes to the hereafter

*there were shadows on the nightstand
of the voyage, time grazing on
graffiti at the scenes
of errancy*

*there were wet
mornings, filthy, heavy dawn, roofs
spitting out their lungs, beside
an elsewhere sky*

*there were sailors' souls, swarmed
by seagulls, over
the bed, ageless bodies
folded over their crevasses*

*there was the dark
bird blinding the windowpanes*

then death

everything becomes clearer after death... time, so swiftly stripped of its mysteries and metamorphoses, bathes in an ocean of pure daylight, as if returning to its internal source, I no longer feel its coarse and feverish tongue on my nape, its irrepressible breath, past, present and future unfurling in parallel in their respective situations and on their respective continuums, merging together in a single mirror between immanence and the absolute, between the profundity of the sky and the lowliest element of human life, I pass from one to the other as if leafing through a book... eternity, isn't that the same hill seen through a different window? death, grandmother used to think, is the blur, the unfathomable, the end, for those of us who are more simple-minded, all our actions exhausting themselves in a crazy quest for immortality, for infinity... death, grandmother's mother used to say, taking up the words of her grandmother reaping the words of the patriarch, who'd been a good pupil, Fate is the only certitude, though certitude may simply be one possibility among others, sped-up, overrated, a hypertrophy of the real, to die is to metamorphose and to be reborn far from every form of suffering, or even better, to enter a new, unknown cycle that frees us from life, from death, from everything, the living are too insensible to what is beyond reality, in any case, to be able to comprehend the immense satisfaction of a soul no longer subject to time's calculations...

a latent path in the middle of a devastated forest, an insane and bloody comet, the wave has neither beginning nor end and only recreates the waltz of the wind, but—at the risk of obscuring or complicating the understanding of certain episodes of flux that will follow—I'll begin with my arrival in Paris from a faraway, almost oneiric village... a new world offered itself up to me in less than six hours by train, the opposite of the other world, to compare them would be a crime, I was free, far from childhood and from interminable, confused nights, far from terror that the vulture

might reappear in the semi-darkness of the room to feast on my flesh and blood, my strangled cries of pain and revulsion, far from that eternity where every day I saw my executioner lazing about the house, taking sides with my bitch of a mother who swore *as long as you're under my roof you'll never be allowed to close your door at night*, sticking out her tongue and making faces at me before turning to the others with a placid expression, while her insidious venom penetrated my body more and more deeply, toward the limits of my dreams... I couldn't have hoped for better than Paris, I considered myself lucky, especially because I'd told myself it was the ideal place to repair everything, forget everything, and what's more I believed it, all the way to the terrible hollowing-out of the void and of time's inevitable, deformed mirror, the feeling that I belonged nowhere and that to go anywhere else would be a forced entry into the wrong existence, so I reversed course, slammed the door shut behind me, it was all very well thought-out, just a star collapsing in on itself...

my life had been subjected to a slow (self-)destruction, you can detect the stench from the very first entries in this journal, to whose reader I want to say *here's the footbridge, don't be afraid of vertigo*... it's not easy to overcome—one should be able to stall memory's exalted reel, block its access to forbidden, smothered zones, those holes that hide other holes that, at our mere approach, would swallow us up without a second thought—the buzzing in me, of the movements of violent crowds, rivers of lightning, furious meteors, lost storms that seek only to reveal themselves, to rush toward daylight... I watched myself deteriorate with a silent, ineffable indifference, as if it had nothing to do with me personally... had someone hurt me more than helped me, would I have sent him to burn eternally in the ardent Gehenny of every hell, had someone tried to save me, to close up the earth opening under my feet, to soothe my interior seas,

the twists and turns that shape us... but isn't every life destined to simply go away... my descent into hell, to put it that way, started long before I realized it, before I was aware that my fall was irreversible, chasing dreams that will remain unfulfilled as long as they're being chased, and among them, according to an elusive game, the dream of being happy, hard to say when this idea invaded my mind, grew stronger, became obsession, to have a house, a garden, a dog, a self-satisfied husband, children, etc. as if suddenly the entire course of my existence hung by this thread, this banal happiness that not only existed but was possible before death, even though that's not at all what I think a woman requires to be complete, but what I finally understood is that it's difficult to escape the internal judge, or should I say the interior dead-ends that call us back to order at the slightest deviation, a form of heteronomy whose pernicious and influential forces are paradoxically anchored within us, as if we were possessed by a god who's only handing out lures that we're desperate to be rid of, I think I was also afraid that the little girl I'd been would come back to find herself face to face with a powerless woman, more alone than ever with her flaws, incapable of presenting herself otherwise... I was ready for anything, I wanted that life, and as time passed, by dint of persisting, of insisting that the mirror give me back an image that was not reversed, I'd lost the sense of the real, the sense of everything, my demons awakened, a whole squad of them, and tracked me down day and night, led by the lost, broken little girl I'd been, I deployed superhuman efforts to fight them off, to throw them into the dungeons of the unconscious or at least to filter them out, for example by concentrating all my thoughts on my dream, making myself believe it was already fulfilled, and when I'd reached the end of my strength, or at the moment when I was least expecting it I sank full speed into the darkness...

our words are stronger than we are, that was also a saying of grandmother's—she always

said what she thought, with all due respect to my progenitors and their guests—as for me, I wanted my words to be stronger than time, an impulse whose deceptiveness and inexhaustible evanescence nourishes the literary aspect, not to say the chaos, of this journal... it's all here, incontestable, ignoble and true, autobiography is like a whore who shows her tits but it shocks no one, or rather it shocks everyone to the point where she must be dragged to the stakes in the name of good morals, I take full accountability for this indecency, from this point forward I am the mirror in which I see myself

First attempt

...some kind of terrible heat suddenly overtook my body, my head, filled me up entirely, an excessive consciousness, stripped of existential platitudes, I tried in vain to resist it, it would have sufficed to find just a residue of light somewhere inside of me, to cling to it with all my might until the storm passed, but the heat became more and more unbearable, I no longer breathed, it had to stop, when suddenly and without thinking, I leapt toward the balcony to throw myself into the void, STUPID ASSHOLE STUPID ASSHOLE I'd screamed those words so loudly, so many times, to the point of vomiting, just read this journal from beginning to end and maybe you'll understand why, sometimes as if I were a wounded animal, not me, not like me, to express a whole lot of nothing, it wasn't normal, I'd have liked to have been able to control myself, to accurately express my thoughts, my desires, my conditions, my uncertainties, my feelings, my fantasies, after all, I knew how to do this once, I'd learned how, but then I met Makenzy and overnight everything in me had melted, I'd become a stream, a river, a tributary, then an ocean of screams, another reason I wanted to jump from the fourth floor, to extinguish the volcano in my head, fury at being so empty, of having no hold on myself or on him or on anything, to hold disaster at bay, what else could I have done, you have no distinct definition of the self, just as the self can't be at the origin of everything that results from your existence... Makenzy, who I thought was the love of my life, had just made it clear (but to tell the truth I suspected it already, by the way he spoke to me and by the way he sometimes behaved like a little shit) that our relationship was going nowhere and that we should put an end to it before it became toxic, to use his words, you piss me off, you make shit up, you're losing your mind, it'll never work out between us... what happened was nothing more surprising than what usually happens in this kind of relationship, at first it's all good, the world

gets reduced to the other, his face, his smile, his eyes, his arms, his legs, his footsteps, his absence, his sleep, his waking, you could call it a distorted perception of the other, he's always handsome and nice, as are his farts, his snores, his mediocre attitude, everything he does, it's still perfect, love and happiness, until one fine day when everything becomes visible again, naked and perceptible, striking, disgusting, you're suddenly fed up with this cursed child, this mirage who may have been abandoned by its mother at the bottom of a dumpster, you've had your fill of frustration and bitterness, you ask yourself how you could have consented to degrade yourself to this point, you realize but usually too late that the other was only helping himself and then lying to you, lying to you without scruples...

I don't hide the fact that I had a gift for exaggerating my feelings, whether real or false, to valorize my lies as unassailable truths in my own eyes (God knows I told myself stories, idiotic ones at that) or to contort myself into some unrecognizable position (*come and be one of us* says the Prophet), for example if I'd kissed a guy in the hallway at school, when mentioning the incident to You (my lost friend) a few days later, I'd say: my boyfriend, my lover or my hallway love... he or she who apportions the same amount of light for the contemplation of a bird as for the impossible dream of mastering the language of the forest, or for a hook-up as for a true love story, opens him or herself up to the intemporality of life... sometimes I had a maddening tendency, an irresistible inclination, to abuse maxims, like those writers who fancy themselves teachers of their readers, but on the other hand it'd taken me far too long, maybe all my life, to understand that a couple is just a bad joke, like sin, guilt, forgiveness, happiness, all those pleasantries, that the world still turned on its axis thanks to lies that people believed were solid as iron, and that we'd be no worse off if we all started to admit the truth, the whole truth... it was obvious that I'd been self-

dispossessed by something whose imperious determination I was incapable of measuring...

the vessel had been overflowing for some time, as was evidenced by the odious condition of not being looked at, recognized, or loved enough by the other, dumped, lost, as if I'd regained consciousness in a life other than my own, let's say in a life where I was both performing in and watching the same ridiculous circus, a life we could formulate thusly: while the actress plays, lives, pulsates, the spectator (who is also the actress) watches her, sharing her bodies and her elsewhere, then both of them end up attaining a complicated form of absence, a site where thoughts, feelings, and their meanings merge, but neither actress nor spectator is a starting or an ending point, they craft their own failure... drunk with despair, I watched myself losing it, sliding down a dangerous slope, to the point of rifling through Makenzy's stuff, to understand what can't necessarily be explained, why somebody loves you but still wants to keep their freedom as intact as it was before they met you, why stories are not made to last (those that last are ancient catastrophes), the worst of it was not the fact of rummaging through his *private life* to discover what required no searching to know, frankly, it's ridiculous to exhaust yourself wanting to be the only woman in a man's life (the only person in anyone's life), but having believed it since the beginning of our relationship, having invested in it wholly, confronted with this new proof I felt pitiful, reduced, empty, like nothing, I lost my footing, I couldn't breathe, my chest swelled, disoriented, I plunged into the street, at the first bar I came to I ordered a whiskey and Coke, my favorite drink when I'm not doing well, then another, then another, the first time I'd drunk so much was alone in my living room in Paris to celebrate my eighteenth birthday, and the last time was the day I met Orcel... the clamor of the street was intolerable, when I came back to the apartment, Makenzy was seated on the couch in what passed for the living room, completely distant and detached as usual, despite my

heartbreak, I asked him what we were doing—what I meant was are we going to remain stuck here like assholes or are we going to forget everything and continue our lives as usual—he maintained the firm position that we’d better call it quits before it got too ugly... it was at that moment that I was torn apart by that terrible heat, an interior force, absolute, yes, the only thing that came to mind was to finish myself off, the alcohol had amplified this idea... to be perfectly honest, it’d been a few months since we’d been living together and even if, at least after that incident, I was not expecting that motherfucker to love me for the rest of my life, for better or for worse, I wanted him to love me as much as I loved him, I think I was lying to myself...

my heart is a wild island

a thousand seasons come one after the other, consummating boredom

a thousand animals calmly ruminate their insanity

imploding blood moans behind the bars of a time whose corpse is my chasm

its inexhaustible pestilence

the memory of dawns and evenings

from the dreams of the big open sea

my heart weeps torrents

half of my body was already dangling over the void when an arm suddenly pulled me back and pushed me onto the sofa, the fall was more than imminent, it’d already begun, Makenzy had caught me just in time, without him it would’ve been over, I’d clearly been passing over to the

other side, we looked at each other with intensity, I was out of breath, he was red with shock, his eyes hated me, I threw myself into his arms despite myself, we started to kiss, he shoved me, *crazy bitch*, I came back on offense, pulling up my dress, pulling aside my panties, I leaned over, he took me with all his strength, I'd never come so hard... the end of our relationship began that evening, a break-up comedy that lasted a little more than four years, at the end of which I understood that I'd shown myself no pity by refusing to believe it was happening, by making an effort, by convincing myself that it was worth the trouble, I had trouble accepting that I could live without certain things, even the most beautiful, the most stabilizing things, without being burdened by them, or imposing my own rhythm on them... deep down I wanted someone to save me or to save someone, I don't know, we got mixed up in the wrong passion, or put into the wrong mold, maybe cohabitation is better, who knows, four years of lassitude, hypocrisy, rancor and lies, during which the memory of my suicide attempt inevitably came to the surface every time something wasn't going well and I went off my hinges, screaming like a crazy person, and considering the way I carried on, like an animal in flames throwing itself into the water, Makenzy must have believed that there'd undoubtedly been other attempts in the past, and that there'd be others, that I had a thing about death... who jumps into the void because some jerk puts himself, his freedom, his puny little self, first

The metro

...I retain the image of an blazing amphibaena unfurling, winding around, losing its way, ascending, descending, charging forward, lost, condemned to track its shadow through dark and infinite corridors, appearing on the platforms as if emerging from a frightening solitude, from a long sequence of smokescreens and enigmas, expressive, bitter, aquatic, polluted, inspirational... their detonations, *this is the novel that will change your life, potent, striking, exceptionally captivating, impossible not to love this movie, do the smart thing, try this clarifying cream, the scent of handsome, muscular young men, Haitian art at the Grand Palais, phenomenal, mind-boggling, powerful, hilarious, a comedy that dares risk all, progress means leaving your comfort zone and rising to new challenges, you're at the heart of all we do, benefit from a thirty-minute consultation with a certified naturopath, an immersion into the depths of light and music, let yourself be led by the dance, most importantly, no spoilers, it would be a crime to miss it, l'enfant terrible of African literature, no jerks for me this summer, I'm trying out open relationships, the real version of reality...* exhibitionist display of ponderosity, amorphous mirages, the infinite alignment of richly extrapolated, incestuous prose, irreducible in its quest for visibility, its expressivity—*rhaan* (the light snoring sound three out of four French people produce when speaking, used here to designate public opinion, gossip, rumors...), we deplore these splashes of soup, requisite lights underneath hills of garbage, crushed by the odor of sewers and by the age-old phobia of the prevailing inertia of new lands, new dreams without labels or peripheries, rebellious eras, crazy oceans, we, the dark ones, tenants of the margins, unhappy for life, privileging shadowy things over the simple-minded clarity of complacency, the recitative of the dead... faced with this one-upmanship of limp, evanescent, overloaded, violent images, I wanted

to vomit and to escape at the same time... secretly I exulted at the thought of my plan, the big day at last, there'll be no one to stop me this time, no human presence to tear me from the void, I felt as if I'd spent my entire existence drifting toward this singular goal, I was ready, thinking of it now from the other side of time, from the other side of everything, as far back as I can remember, I'd never been more in agreement with myself... death awaited me in a white dress, gracious, smiling, standing in the middle of the tracks, some of you will corroborate that my act is a pure and simple reaction to everything I'm going to tell you about, the uncle, my progenitors, Orcel's life and death, the infernal Makenzy (and all the years I hoped to have enough courage to separate from him for once and for all), and also Paris, that in the end had pulverized my hopes, emptied me out... Paris encrusts itself in your belly, grows bigger and more beautiful feasting on your juices, your viscera, like all big cities, actually, in order to survive they must drink the blood, eat the flesh of their inhabitants, humans are only pawns in the terrible machinery of a moribund modernity... none of these failures had directly motivated my advancement toward the hereafter, or else they all had all at once, united in a single, selfsame implosion, being is as profound and incomprehensible as the ocean, all it takes is for a devastating earthquake to occur within an interior periphery, enticing us down into a bottomless well and it's done, I'd had enough, I said as much, of being left hanging, on the outside of the good life, the good body, good thoughts, crumbling, preyed on by shadows, deep and contradictory distances... the metro seemed to me the royal road for putting an end to it, standing on the rails, that fairground of braided veins disappearing into the distance, ah, that's hard to mess up, if one is determined, activated by an animal will combined with an immense feeling of freedom...

I closed my eyes for a minute, before dying you see the whole of your life parade past from

birth to the moment of truth, grandmother had explained to me after recovering from a heart attack, a kind of neuronal fireworks, the unwinding of autobiographical memory is the most fabulous spectacle the dying can be witness to, its splendor varying according to the quantity and nature of past experiences, a new breath accompanies us through a luminous passageway at the end of which a winged ship awaits us in the clouds, the crew is winged too, we get on, the ship rushes toward the heart of the space, crosses seas, rough mountain ranges, fields of dreams, interstellar visions, astral patchworks transfiguring metamorphoses and other ascensions, everything at once so unreal and so true, suddenly the ship approaches an immense pontoon covered in fog where it docks, the captain, an abnormally large man, dressed all in white, invites us to come down, you must follow the pontoon up to the foot of an immaculate and infinite staircase, then climb up till eternal life... I kept my eyes closed, not without thinking of my dearest departed, grandmother, You, and Orcel, but I did not see any of this, then from the depths of the night of the metro came whistles, increasingly sharper and more and more deafening, I stared intensely at the rails, you're finally going to bid farewell, I say to myself, moved...

Terminus

no human venture is victorious, death—above and beyond a natural prolongation of an inevitable process known since the distant past (a cliché that has the force and freshness of an innovative thought)—is a radical rupture with the world’s lies, one dies neither good nor evil, one passes through a door toward a complete personal apotheosis, who’s already seen death, for real, I suppose everyone has already asked themselves the question at least once, although without the least certainty that it concerns anything in the order of what’s measurable or representable, that could offer some key to human understanding, and that we could use to reach existential, supersensitive zones that heretofore remained imperceptible... no, no one can boast of such a revelation, death is there, in front of you, and you look each other in the eye, crepuscular, complicit, seductive, moved... as for me, I imagined a very beautiful, intimidating form, one of its faces is time, its spread-out hair is space, each of its thoughts is the naked echo of its furtherance, a kind of black matter that has an effect on life behaviors, without us knowing its real nature or where it comes from... on this subject, grandmother’s point of view hadn’t changed, we don’t know what it is, she insisted, we’ll never know anything about it...

leaving my place I looked at myself in the mirror, am I a character in someone else’s dream, I asked my grandmother one evening during dinner, perplexed, and more to cut off my mother who had a tendency to monopolize conversation than to convey some moral lesson (though there was a lesson there, hidden under a thick layer of subtlety), she’d told the story of a man who claimed to know everyone in the neighborhood, but whom no one seemed to know, everyone walked past him without saying hello, as if they’d never seen him before, until the day he decided

to mingle among them and realized that in fact he was the victim of a projection, a hallucination that seemed so real... I'd asked this question to the mirror that, despite my efforts to prove myself wrong, reflected back not my own image but that of another, an illusion of life clinging to my bones—I'd lost so much weight that you'd have thought I was being silently devastated by a horrific illness...

for the last day of a life, the weather was clear, the sky was light blue, dotted with birds, trees and bushes abundantly flowering and delicately aligned along the path, rediscovering their vitality, their gracious gestures, grassy areas and squares filled again with passersby, onlookers, children, all, even dogs, as if carried away by a new energy, a simple magic, walking without touching the ground, delighted, their shoulders and facial expressions relaxed, faces untroubled, on the contrary, illuminated by smiles that for once my eternal skepticism had difficulty qualifying as lying or fabricated, I'd thought I was dreaming (ah my dreams and their hills, their stolen black songs, my slumber was too narrow to contain them), there was an unusual light even on the façades of buildings (some that were patiently degrading while retaining their charm had been renovated, while others suggested an esthetic coherence between old and new, half-Haussmannian, half-Art Nouveau), Parisian buildings tell many stories, the most painful as well as the most exciting... a light like a rebirth... in the middle of Place Gambetta, the water of the fountain surged suddenly through the slats of inset glass grasped by a circular basin, rare occurrence, its mane rippled, rolled down in slender sprays, vapors of rain, then flared out in a chandelle, fell in cascades, gushed out once more... time came to a halt in this part of the 20th arrondissement, as if to greet my ultimate departure...

it takes eight minutes—five if you hurry—from my place to the metro, I went along the avenue slowly, I was conscious that it was my last time in the neighborhood, that I would never see it again, one of the most charming in Paris, to which I had remained loyal since my first time in this city... my phone rang, it was the terrible liar Makenzy, the monster, strange that he was calling me at that very moment, as if he were anticipating that I was going to do something *foolish*... what seemed to me unbelievably crazy, especially distressing, was how I'd automatically picked up when I saw that it was him (while had my will been in solidarity with my deepest feelings, the opposite would have happened and I'd have ignored the call)... it was not his real voice—I'd put up with it too long not to be able to recognize it from its first accents—but the voice of his guilt, had he taken the time to reflect on the difference between good and evil, between sincerity and hypocrisy, between fiction and reality, what could I expect from such an animal, there's nothing to repair, what the Makenzys of the world make you suffer can't be repaired... his voice betrayed a kind of sustained fear with each word, with each breath, each of his questions to which I had to respond, *answer me, tell me, go ahead*, after a minute I hung up on him, irritated—he was not calling for me, he was calling to verify that he hadn't left behind a corpse, so that he could continue calmly on his way...

I walked so slowly that I could feel time clicking in me, tic tac tic tac, pensively I stopped in front of a restaurant that evoked a particular memory, the first time with Makenzy, after a late morning spent making love, lounging around in bed then on the sofa, telling each other the things we say for no particular reason, or because it makes us feel like we're adequately satisfying this moment of togetherness, that day resembled the day of my death in several ways, not only because the weather was nice but also because a new horizon opened up in front of me... the restaurant

was full, after a rainy and particularly capricious winter, warm weather more or less returned, people seemed relaxed, they were chatting, full of gentle assurance, a paunchy man laughed at everything his pretty conversation partner said, a young thing sitting across from him who had to be half his age, possibly his daughter or else, as is common, just a girl sleeping with an old guy, a little boy was refusing to sit with his parents, he ran between the tables bothering the other customers who were pretending they didn't care, an old woman smiled at the little boy, holding out a piece of bread, the parents intervened, he won't eat it but how nice of you, the little boy was named Gaston, sit down Gaston, mommy's not kidding around, Gaston come here, mommy's going to get mad, and daddy's going to get mad too, said the mother, eyeballing the father who was on his cellphone... a woman well into her thirties was eating alone, wearing a dress that came down to her ankles and a hat that hid most of her face, but you could still see that she was sad, that she was eating joylessly and could not stop looking at little Gaston with longing and the kind of evasive, false smile that looks more like a grimace, crucial question, would she herself one day have her own child, her own happiness, then she turned her gaze away brusquely as if to hide her crying, maybe she felt suddenly insignificant, comparing herself to Gaston's mother who was now caressing her son's hair while giving him kisses, or maybe this scene would encourage the thirty-year old to finally make a move, to start on a new path, to really know what she wanted to do with her life... almost directly across the street from the restaurant was a little square with a kiosk and trees all around, adjoining a hospital, I said to Makenzy that if we decided to have a kid one day, I'd like him to be born in this hospital and to grow up in this neighborhood... in this memory, he's wearing tight jeans and a brown jacket, me, a too-big dress so that when I walked the wind caressed my ass like a huge, fluid hand, I liked the sensation, it was as pleasurable as the start of an orgasm, I'd ordered a steak tartare and Makenzy a Niçoise salad, I don't remember anymore what we did

after lunch, maybe gone to the movies at MK2 or had coffee at Place Martin-Nadaud, maybe not... Makenzy absolutely had to meet up with someone for a project that I never heard about again

walking, I thought, is there a world after death, is it death, this world, suddenly I was as if haunted by this thought, I had to know, what to do, time was suspended, oscillating between determination and renunciation, and vice versa, but just as quickly I regained my senses... before descending into the metro, I stared for a moment at the street going to Père Lachaise cemetery, other memories emerged, whole, bittersweet, I told myself I wouldn't have been able to live anywhere but Paris... five-thirty in the evening I was standing on the platform concentrating on the plan I had to execute in exactly three minutes, according to the LED informational signs, around me and across the tracks people hurried, lost in books or blinded by their smartphone screens, unavailable, diminished, headphones in their ears, then a rushing crowd on both platforms, again I thought, no way, there's no chance anyone will keep you from jumping, it happens so rarely, not to say never, how could anyone know this is the sole reason you're here, and even if, impossibly, some soul succeeded in rupturing the order of things by preventing anyone from moving out of the way, some will say it's chance, others will claim a miracle, and it's because neither chance nor miracles exist that every year dozens of people get the same idea I had: jumping is more and more common on the tracks of the RATP... whatever might happen, I had to see my plan to the end, even if the crowd pressed around me as if they formed a single man... *jump, save yourself*

I was already imagining spectators' reactions to my phenomenal fall, the final crash, fucking hell, oh my God, hiding their mouths behind trembling hands, shocked, transfixed,

averting their eyes, and others more familiar with this type of drama, morning til night, for whom the Parisian metro is a shortcut to death, without a shadow of a doubt, an agitated cemetery, we're all going to be late because of that bitch who really knows how to pick a day and time to fuck herself up and disturb traffic, but very few among them had already seen a real corpse or so much blood... me neither, I'd never seen that, until my soul left my body reduced to mush by the train, and that she stared at for a moment from the ceiling before flying off toward the hereafter, abandoning nothing more than my remains on the tracks... I remember the first time and all the other times I'd heard that voice come from out of frame, perched halfway between time's unstoppable flight and the body, devastated by the real, *traffic is interrupted between Station X and Station Y because of a serious accident involving a passenger...* at the time I'd asked myself if I would be capable, I'd just arrived in Paris, to cut life short seemed to me the most extreme thing one could do, I was young and free, dying was not on my to-do list, dying was for those who had no plan, me, I had a plan: to be happy... I had reason to think I was a force of nature, but all the same, I always had the unpleasant feeling of being knocked off my feet at the mere thought of aging or of one dying... while behind me, stragglers in the crowd hurried toward the platform, I could already feel death propagating in my body, like a gentle wave, filling me up entirely, from head to toe, the train aimed its blinking nose, nervous, amazing, what a trance, I jumped without hesitating, it was perfect...

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