

## Golden Gate Bridge

My last attempt to reconcile myself with the human race was crammed between two taxis. Both on the journey there and on the journey back, the drivers were intent on listening to a new FM station, impervious to the surrounds. On the way there, Bach; on the way back, Josephine Baker (pronounced Bahker, *à la française*). And in the middle of the journey, the decisive life experience: full rejection of everything I knew, for I myself had been rejected. Heavens, I had conceded total defeat, for love is not all it sets out to be. Yes, love had been a tough ride, as spiralling as the descent from the bridge to the surface of the river. Jump and fall took far too long. I should have chosen a swifter, more definitive method. No, I was not afraid or apprehensive one bit; if anything, a little unsteady. And when letting go of the railings and falling all that way at an ever-increasing speed, I had more than enough time to reflect on this and that with more intensity than I had ever felt on firm land. No major thoughts were they though, no miserable goodbyes. Quite the opposite: they were reflections about basic necessities, errands that I needed to run, phone-calls to make, emails to send. Even about the parting gift that, in the end, I did not post: a small notebook, its pages filled with my musings on love lost. Yes, my last thoughts had been all those chores that would have made up another day in my life. My life, the only thing I had. And as I finally hit the water with a deafening crash, I felt someone's grip on my broken body. I was apparently saved by an onlooker who had nothing better to do that Sunday afternoon and swam to my rescue as he saw me fall. I remember just a little: his shocked eyes, my devastating pain. I also remember that, back on land, people came to see what had happened. Somebody shouted that the ambulance was

taking far too long to arrive, that we should phone for a taxi like people do when going to the theatre. A permanent solution to a temporary problem, I heard another person say, but what did they know about me. One thing I did feel was the notebook still in my pocket, now in shreds. On the way back, still breathing yet offensively injured, in a taxi driven by a man who wanted to listen to *I have two loves* at full volume regardless of the drama on the back seat, I began to sing the song coming from the radio: *under the clear sky... exists a city... every evening... towards it... all my hopes...*

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