

INVESTIGATIONS OF A FLY

I am a fly. It is night-time and I am flying around a man who is sitting in his balcony. I can see he has headphones on and is listening to music, the CD case is on the low table next to him; I know I am disturbing him but I keep flying around him. He makes a few motions with his hand to keep me away, I retreat, he loses me and thinks I won't return but I come back, he tries to catch me and fails, I keep evading him, I disappear suddenly, give it some time and then reappear even more resolute, and now he is angry. I am a fly and I know nothing about what's in this man's mind right now, I have never listened to music, I know what it is but I also know that I will never listen to what this man is listening right now, and he knows it, too. That's our difference. He can listen to music, I cannot. He is a man and I am a fly, and the only thing we have in common is that we were born and we exist, otherwise there is no other link between us; of course we live in the same world, but even the world is not the same for him and for me: his is a world with music, mine is without music. Which of us is superior? More fortunate? More gifted? Who has more than the other? Is he more privileged than me? In what respect? I wouldn't want to be a man because I know what a man is, but I am wondering whether perhaps he would like to be a fly because he also knows what it means to be a man. He is listening to music, but if music is comforting, as they say, then he must not be in a very good mood right now; it is possible that he is out of sorts or even miserable, that he is looking to music for the joy he cannot find elsewhere or he does not get from other things. I do not envy him, I wouldn't like to be in his shoes, and if he thinks otherwise I can prove that I am not inferior to him; since I do not have feelings and nothing can make me unhappy, therefore I am superior, and the music he is listening to does not make him superior, because what matters most is which of us is unhappy in the first place—and I am not. I won't let him think otherwise, even if what he is listening to is Schubert's Quartet No. 13, as I read on the CD case. It has been a while since my last appearance, he is sure I won't be back; I go back and start flying around him again, close to his head, his ears, I almost touch his face, I make him hear my buzz which is even more annoying in the quiet of the night, I land somewhere, he raises his hand to swat me but fails, I zoom away and disappear and after a while I return more lively, more distracting, resolutely indifferent to his wish to listen undisturbed to Schubert's "Rosamunde". I have irritated him, it's clear. Hastily he folds a newspaper and takes

aim, once, twice, I evade him, I am not afraid, let him kill me, I go back, he tries to swat me, he misses, again, strikes and misses again, I can hear him swearing at me, there is hatred and scorn in his voice, I return, I land deliberately on a spot where he can get me easily, he takes aim, hits me, I lie there wounded but not dead; swearing as only an incredibly irritated man can swear he picks me up, plucks my wings, then my legs, then removes my head from my body and throws me away, wiping his hands with a handkerchief. I am dead and he is alive, but I still don't envy him. He killed me and now he is listening to music. He killed me while he was listening to music. Only a man can do these things together at the same time. But then I went asking for it. What was the idea of

(The text stops abruptly at this point).

D. D. / 19-20.9.2011