

The Surplus

Eyes closed. “You don’t talk; you write” I painfully decipher on the purple notebook she is holding near my leg. On stage Dua Saleh is playing *Warm Pants*. *Eyes closed.* I loved her handwriting. In this moment I can’t stop smiling. *Answer:* “DEAL” the letters appear on my screen. I read somewhere there are three ways to live: in the real, in fantasy, and in the other. *Eyes open.* She’s gone. Scooping her out. Gone for the best.

The track is cracking my chest. I first lost the privilege to inhabit our flat. Her idea of hospitality was, more or less, a violent negotiation of borders. I couldn’t fight anymore. *Head down.* On my screen: ‘to be socially degraded is one of the conditions of being edible’. *Eyes closed.* No; More; Crossing. Out...— “RAKI! Please”.

Sieving her out. — “Et ça serait quoi ton sujet honey?” Sole asked soon after we met through a dating app. — “It would be about non-production and surplus”. *No articulation.* — “Hein? Please stop texting her; Je te parle là”. We usually met in the early afternoon. The first time, I had a tea which tasted of aluminum and Sole a negroni. I was talking about her constantly, they were creating eye contact with the person behind my shoulder. We became close friends.

“Seriously stop with this chick. First it doesn’t create a good rhizome and then tu vas créer tout un son d’elle qui ne correspondra jamais à la réalité” — they said while prancing around a puppy, the negroni still in one hand. — “Well, it’s maybe better this way...” *No emotion.* — “Ok, tu marques un point”.

Lost in memories. Sole is the type of friend that you normally only meet during the summer break. The friend who becomes all your friends at once. — “Donc, what about your subject?”. Also, they never missed the track. — “It’s about speculation over basic emotional and practical needs.” Face up. — “Genre?”. — “A kind of alternative history of production, and consumption. And making... I guess? While living a situation of exile.” I said, holding my phone tight.

Fuck I miss her. Not. The ice cubes are melting. Cold in my hand; flakes in my brain. *Eyes opened* — “Tu ne crois pas qu’il est temps d’arrêter de t’asseoir face aux autres et de te considérer comme ton propre sujet”. — “Mmh...”. — “So, consumption of others then?” they said. — “Yep, kind of”. They really piss me off sometimes. — “Yep c’est pas un mot”. — “Nope”. — “Nope c’est pas un mot non plus. Commence pas à me bully”. — “Sorry”. We smiled — “Fucking gramatical bully”.

Chapter three: Living in reality.