

Tasting blue

It was a spring day and I was thinking about slowly decaying corpses. The strange cycle that was responsible for people dying even in the sunshine. I had thought that it would be good to know what 'blue' tastes like, so I sat on the small balcony and thought about corpses. The one had nothing to do with the other, I just often had to think about these things when I felt the spring sun on my skin.

I tried to pluck one of my leg hairs. Blue would probably taste quite fresh. Like bathing, perhaps. Was there a difference between dark blue and light blue?

I realised I should water my plants. The basil in the balcony box looked almost as if it had never existed. But I didn't want to go back inside. Mostly, I didn't want to go into the kitchen and past that thing. It had settled above my sink and I tried to avoid it wherever possible. Plates were piling up in my bathroom and takeaway boxes in my living room. Blue would probably have an aftertaste of cloves.

I had nothing against the thing in principle, just a vague feeling that something was straining our relationship and I didn't feel ready for that confrontation yet. I might have liked to hug it, but its physical disposition as a floating, shapeless something would have made the attempt comical. Besides, I would have quite liked to kick it as well. Same problem.

'Hey!' it called from inside.

'Piss off,' I called back.

The sun had now moved on so far, it displaced the last bit of shade on the balcony.

The rays caressed my bare legs, but the cool spring air prevented any feeling of warmth. I hadn't taken a blanket outside and felt blinded and alone. For a moment, I thought about maybe taking up smoking so I'd have a reason to sit here. Then I tried to remember what cloves tasted like. Ever since that thing had appeared and started eating my colours, I found it difficult to remember certain things.

For example, I had forgotten to water the plants. Although that might have happened without the thing. I didn't want to be unfair – it couldn't be blamed for everything. But for most things, yes.

'Hey, come here!' it shouted from the kitchen. I found that a bit embarrassing, as we did have neighbours after all.

'Leave me alone. I'm just sitting here. I'm not even doing anything. Just let me sit here.'

Wikipedia says: *Most garden carnations bloom from the end of May or June throughout the summer. In contrast, annual summer carnations (Dianthus chinensis) do not survive the winter, but bloom overabundantly into autumn.*

Overabundantly into autumn and then burnt out.

I studied the veins on the back of my hand and noticed that my hands had started to shake. My body had risen above my consciousness to tell me something. Probably not to forget to eat. The only problem was that I didn't feel like going inside. To get up. I was sitting here, so my body would just have to deal with it. Just as I had to deal with the fact that there was a thing sitting above my sink that was eating my colours.

I didn't miss most of them that much. I couldn't care less about yellow.

'I couldn't care less about yellow,' I shouted behind me through the open balcony door.
,Well, Yellow can be beautiful too!' the thing called back. "Sunflowers, for example, are very

yellow and very beautiful. When was the last time you saw a sunflower? You just sit there. Not even the basil has any colour left.“

When I thought about the colours, the memory felt far away. As if a heavy cloud of fog had settled on it, crept into every corner to soak my thoughts, making them heavy and grey. It was both a feeling of piercing longing and all-encompassing indifference. I was afraid of missing something I had never experienced, never really tasted, and it was precisely this unfulfilled desire that made it impossible for me to actually try. Infinite lethargy. The taste of cloves.

‘Come on in!’ the thing called.

‘No,’ I muttered to myself. Determined not to give up. But I was really cold.

The highest function of love is to make the beloved person a unique and irreplaceable being. I had read this sentence somewhere and thought about it as I watched the people down on the street from my balcony. I had successfully managed to pull out one of my leg hairs. It hadn't hurt as much as I had expected.

The people below all looked the same, except for one man who seemed to me to be the perfect man. A hundred per cent man. I imagined how we would meet and immediately develop a liking for each other. He would give me forget-me-nots and fetch clouds for me from the sky. But by the time I had finished dreaming, the man had disappeared. The distance between us would have been too great anyway. My balcony was very high up and I wasn't sure if anyone down on the street would even be able to hear me. I would probably have had to shout very loudly, and that would have quickly ruined the romantic mood.

‘Forget-me-nots are just purple!’ cried the thing.

And at that moment, I knew it was right.

I didn't want to give up, but there are things that are stronger than human will.

Survival instincts. I couldn't stay here forever, I would have to go inside and into the kitchen. I needed someone to notice me. To authenticate my existence, to give it value. I needed the gaze of the other person to become aware of myself. Not encouragement, but recognition. Spring carcasses. Autumn carnations.

So I stood up, colourless and trembling, and turned my back on the world. Otherwise, I would have melted away unnoticed in this spring sun.