

## The ship

She was sitting on the sofa, looking out the big panoramic window. Everything was turned towards the beach and the sea, overflowing in its immensity. The dusk was becoming denser and the water line was merging more and more with the darkening horizon. Only the waves were glittering for a short moment in their sudden whiteness as they crashed on the shore.

It was a studio and it seemed as if it was existing especially for this view. The view was dominating it like a masterpiece, hanging on an empty wall, but this picture was alive, changing, giving a perspective to the infinity. And what can be compared with infinity? And does the pathway to this invisible world beyond to which the sea takes us have a price? "Of course not", said the flat's first owner, the great grandmother of the current owners, who had bought it as a holiday flat. Twenty years later she plummeted straight down from the small balcony in front of the same window like a heavy wingless bird.

One, two, three. Three steps from the sofa to the balcony. She measured the distance in her thoughts. It would be easy to go over the parapet for one last dance in the vertical space below.

Eight. She stopped dancing eight months ago. It might have been the destiny. Perhaps it was meant to be this way. Perhaps this was the hidden meaning behind the kind proposal of her friend Gabriela to spend the weekend on her own by the sea. On the surface to get away from the big noisy city. But perhaps, in fact, to have this singular dance under the music of the waves and the accompaniment of the sea-gulls.

But the sea gulls are silent now since the night is here. It has fallen down and has locked their scream.

She was sitting hypnotized, staring at the sea. And more precisely at that invisible boundary where the water becomes foam, the darkness – white for a tiny moment before melting.

Three steps.

During the day she had a long walk on the beach. The wind was lashing her face and tugging her fine hair but it didn't manage to stop her. She was walking in a determined way, following the horizon with her eyes. She was passing people and dogs without even noticing them. Her eyes were peering into the distance. The close up shot of the world around her was slipping from her attention. She was not participating in this shot; she did not belong to it, nor it to her. There was no contact between her and the realities caught by it. That's why she didn't feel the wind and continued her speedy walk.

One.

The dance has become her umbilical cord to life. The last cord which has stayed between her and the being. She was dancing modern ballet at an amateur group. She didn't have ambitions as she started too late. But while she was dancing she could see herself on the stage and her invisible audience was the one which was moving her body in the trance from her unity with the rhythm. She was raising her hands and making circles with them; she was twisting her body and her legs were taking her in the space, and this was more than a dance. These were words, sharing, her sharing with the world. But one day she opened her eyes and instead of her audience she saw the mirror on the opposite wall. Her body stopped speaking and she listened to the mirror. And what it told her was: you are old, old, old. And ridiculous. There was no audience. And there wouldn't be. There was no nice husband. Indeed there was no husband at all. Nor a boyfriend. There were no children. And there wouldn't be. There was no dog. She didn't take one because dogs die. It was too honest, this mirror, but the most terrible thing was that she knew it was telling her the truth. She knew it so well that she immediately left the hall in the middle of the rehearsal. And she never went back.

Two.

Once upon a time, so long ago that it seemed as if it never happened, she travelled with a man. They were waiting for the train on a station in the pinching cold. A bit further on a group of men was stepping from one leg to the other, with their full attention being focused on the passing by trains. They were restlessly writing something. She looked at them. "They are writing the train numbers", the man said, "That's what they do all day long. In the evening they count how many numbers they have written. On the next day they compare who's got more. And they write down again. And so it goes day after day." The men were absorbed in their activity. She felt sorrow for them. How do they waste their precious time. For her, back then, time was like a hill which she was climbing

and when she would reach its top, a wide range of views and options would reveal in front of her eyes. However she had turned the top long ago. And the view was still the same. She still had a vivid memory of that man.

Three.

Smelling of sea air. It must be cold if her body is suddenly trembling. She is looking around, she wants to engrave the view in her mind. As if she would need it. She is listening to the waves. Just a moment and...a ship emerges from the darkness. It is big and white and looks as if it is cut in the ink surface of the night. It moves slowly and honorably. Its windows sprinkle electric light in a confident way. She is looking at it holding her breath. There is so much grace in its movement. It looks like a big swan. Swan Lake. A contemporary interpretation. Why not. And this ship is unreal. It has passed and disappeared as if it never existed. She feels the cold. She has started shivering. She is turning and is quickly going back to the room.