

**Dražen Katunarić**

***Fatal Pictures***

**Translated from Croatian by Miljenko Kovačiček**

No matter which class Huguette belonged to, regardless of her nature and actions, everything kept coming back to the same thing. A fiancée is nothing but her waist. And not one model, be she blond, dark, brown, dyed or not, with a wig or without it, was so much in my heart that I could decide for her. Sigh † that I could, but not cry for them. Is that because I am superficial? In the middle of my days, but a bit closer to the end of the trodden road, I understood that I actually didn't know what I felt towards women.

In each of them I recognize a mould, something they all have in common. They laugh, cry, easily fall in love, have a short memory, show feelings, passion, taste † now and then also intelligence although their foreheads are unwrinkled, so smooth... They also have memories, thrills and disappointments, defeats and victories, but in fact they only pose. Especially when they are in love. With them everything is affected, cheap, although very expensive. Indeed, the most perfect women of today are models and the previous ones are monuments! The former ones have nothing I could fall for, nothing that would move me to tears, cause an unbreakable tie; they are only patterns of a soft complexion that I fill in, aware that I am missing the real one. Tasting, sweetening, in the highest form † touching! Models have replaced women, that's a predictable, transparent, corrupted stock without a future, without any density of character. Ready-made destinies. To woo them, to spend them in abundance, get something, that is all, otherwise you don't know what to do with them.

Maybe that notion, with a picture of an ideal woman, "a lady", that I am probably waiting for in vain, ruins all my plans, serves as an excuse for breaking the deeper and stronger ties † anchors. I am not emotionless, an inflow of emotions can sometimes choke me on the left, on the beating side of my chest, but I never know what they mean to me, not at the moment or even after detailed thinking † inclination, the fire of seduction, real love or something else. Something different always turns out. Maybe I am emotionally disabled. Loaded with a variety of simulations.

When I think about it soberly, I have noticed that or something similar in other artists, too: that they are very sensitive on the surface, on their epidermis, while their heart is as dry as a bone. They just wave with their paintbrush, feign their enthusiasm, excitement, which is useful in their work for painting the background, the more distant positions, the light and the darkness. But not the main character, the central figure. Even if God has given them some talent, skill, patience, ambition, distributed them evenly, they can have everything else in this fat and rotten world, but love † no, sir.

Masters of the paintbrush are too selfish to love anybody to the end. That's a limited number of good-for-nothing wretches, car lacquerers who know so little. If you asked them about the golden rectangle, the Fibonacci sequence, they would just gasp. They are unable to plant a simple lime-tree to spread a pleasant smell in the whole street. And then they wonder, in their exteriors, why the sky is never as they present it. And the sun, they don't even see the sun, or they think it rises on Boulevard Saint Germain and sets behind Saint-Germain-des-Près, where the galleries are. This is their little, red-hot model. Their world coated with rosy pigment. They spread their canvasses on it; spread their lungs if they have come from the provinces, shop-window lickers, *lèche vitrines* of grand boulevards. There are too many of them here in Paris anyway, whole legions, they ought to be substantially diluted, they densely pollute this belly button of the artistic globe. I am not saying they ought to be banished, deported, executed, sent to the village or to the provinces which is worse than Auschwitz to them, to learn humanity. But to be re-educated, definitely. They are ragged, what moves these emotionless and tough shadows, those flint faces, is a dream about a different aggregate state, gassy, sweet, starry and full of relish, esteem and fame; a dream that erases everything else.