May 17th 1987

Everything is so stressing for me. I worry about every single little thing. So no wonder that my day didn’t start very well, just because my favourite person said “hello” to me in a different voice tone than usual. I felt sad that moment and thought to myself that she doesn’t like me anymore. I know it’s probably not true and she wasn’t even aware she did that, but I can’t make this feeling go away. But on the other hand, the change in her voice might have been caused by some unpleasant happening. Maybe she has some problems at home or maybe someone important hurt her in some way. I don’t know her that well, so I can’t be sure about these things. I really want to get to know her more. She seems like a very interesting person, but in the end my anxiety is too strong to overcome.

We met four years ago during the summer holidays at some kind of convention. She (let’s call her Mathilda) was the first to talk to me. At that time it wasn’t hard for me to talk to strangers and meet new people, so I didn’t feel anxious or awkward. Me and Mathilda spent almost the whole event together and even afterwards she wanted to meet me to hang out. Till this day I don’t know why I rarely did that. I used to refuse every single time she invited me. I didn’t feel like I was making her sad or anything like that. After several denials, she stopped asking and our contact broke off. I haven’t talked to Mathilda for almost half a year, when there was another convention coming up soon. I thought she may want to meet and do the things people do at this kind of gatherings. We’ve had a really good time and after the event ended I asked her if she wanted to hang out with me sometimes. “Sure, I’d love to. You can call me, when you have some spare time.” We went to the cinema a few times, but Mathilda seemed to enjoy just sitting at home and watching cartoons or anything else. I could tell she was an antisocial person, but unlike me she could talk to strangers without her hands shaking and she’s always made an impression of an intelligent person. We had surely have spent some time together, but the truth was I didn’t know her at all.

We’re not in the same class, so we don’t have many opportunities to talk. We sometimes meet on the bus, but then we are only able to have just a “small talk”. Mathilda wasn’t in the bus that day. I guess she just walked to school or her schedule for today might have changed and she took a different bus. I saw her in the corridor during the lunch break as I was walking towards my class room. She was sitting on the bench alone. I smiled when our eyes met, she said “hello” and then her eyes turned back on the wall. As I said before I was concerned about her unnatural behaviour, but then I realized I’m probably imagining things in my head. She probably has new better friends than me now. Mathilda has changed in some way since our first visit at my house, but I can’t precisely tell in which way. I feel really distant from her and the worst thing are these thoughts that tell me it’s all my fault, because I didn’t want to meet her at the beginning of our friendship and I made her feel unwanted and disliked somehow. It is the last thing for me to make somebody feel like that.

May 18th 1987

Today’s classes weren’t particularly absorbing, so I was really glad to go home afterwards. I sometimes wonder, (like today, during the lessons) why I don’t have as many friends as others do. My classmates seem to get along really well. They always talk together and eat lunch with the smiles on their faces, but nobody’s ever try to interact with me. It’s not like I’m invisible to them, we make eye contact and someone says “hi” to me from time to time. Although when it comes to breaks between the lessons, no one has ever tried to make a conversation with me. Maybe I am the one, who should do the first step, but I get the feeling that they don’t really want it. I don’t feel lonely anyway. I’ve become hateful towards humans in general. Only because it seems so easy for people to get along and have empathy. Only because I feel sorry for them too much I guess. I’m really glad to (kind of) have Mathilda. So no wonder, I was very pleased when I saw her on the bus stop. She smiled as I was approaching her. “Hello again, Mathilda”. “Hi”. She wasn’t the talkative type. However I really enjoyed her company. Somehow I was always able to talk to her naturally, which I couldn’t do with any other person. I don’t know why people are always looking at us. But, we try to ignore it most of the times. Today, we were talking a bit about the little cross beside the road, which we pass on our way. Mathilda said that one boy had been hit by a car there, not long before we started to attend our current school. That was all she knew. I was thinking about the accident all along my way home from the bus stop. It’s really disturbing that your life is exposed to death every day, till it actually happens. I decided I’ll take a closer look at that cross on tomorrow’s way home. I think I saw a memorial plate with some information beside the accident spot.

My cat came to greet me at the door. I think it’s really nice to have a cat like this. Always crawling for attention, improving your mood, even the worst one. You can’t say that about some people. Nevertheless, I don’t think they do it on purpose. For example, I always try to be kind to others, help them, but they don’t seem to appreciate or enjoy my company. But it’s okay, it’s only my fault. I’m not sure, but I think my mum tries the same methods with me and doesn’t succeed (neither do I), but since the beginning of my depression therapy, all she does is making me sad. When I come to talk to her, I feel like my mum’s only waiting until I finish and go. I get really worried, I am a disappointment to her, but it’s really hard for me to be a perfect daughter for her. So I think it’s normal I don’t like telling her about things. Even though, I wanted to ask her about Mathilda, since I don’t remember my mum telling me her opinion about my friend. “She was a lovely kid, we should go and visit her soon.” It wasn’t a good idea – “There is no need. I see her almost every day and she would be probably very confused by our visit.” Fortunately, mum agreed – “Oh, I forgot you see her on your way to school. And that’s very nice of you still to think about Mathilda.” She smiled. How could I forget about my friend?

May 19th 1987

Getting up in the morning was always a kind of unpleasant thing. Sleep for me is like dying. Escaping from reality. I don’t have serious problems like I used to, but escaping the real world seems nice to me. Going back though is not that nice. However, the thought of seeing Mathilda again cheered me up in some way. Unfortunately, I didn’t see her on the bus that morning. But Leon, whose brother went to school with me, sat next to me and initiated a nice conversation. He was two years older than me and was interested in art. He looked indeed like art himself and I didn’t mean beautiful, because art isn’t supposed to look beautiful, it was supposed to make you feel something. He undeniably did.

I wondered if Leon knew Mathilda. I could have asked him before. But I tried not to think too much about unnecessary things at school, because when I do I can’t remember anything from the classes and my grades are not getting better. My parents used to talk about grades very often. They wanted me ,and probably they still do, to fulfil their unrealized plans, like becoming a doctor or getting any other well-paid job. Everybody wants to do something they like without worrying about the roof over the head. It’s normal.

Finally, the most longed-for part of the day has come. I really hoped I’d see Mathilda on the bus. I was worried, when she wasn’t there. If I knew where she lived, then maybe I’d come to her house to let her rewrite class notes and spend some more time with her. I should invite her over to my house as soon I see her. The bus was almost empty. I saw Leon sitting at the back with some book. I think the title was “Nausea” by Jean-Paul Sartre. I read this a while ago, but I need to do it once again, because I don’t think I fully understood the message and the meaning of this work. I sat next to him and I felt that something was different than the usual. After a while I realised I’ve never sat on this side of the bus. I don’t know why, I just preferred the other one where I didn’t have to look at cars, but fields and trees. We were talking about Nausea, when the vehicle stopped to let someone cross the road. Then I remembered I was supposed to take a closer look at the memorial spot of that boy. I read the caption on the plate. That wasn’t a boy. “In Loving Memory Of Mathilda Harris born 20th February 1970 killed 18th May 1985”. I felt like I my existence was just an illusion. Like waking up wasn’t the end of my dream. And then I remembered everything: the car accident, the newspaper interviews, my depression, the therapy, compassionate look on my family’s faces. What kind of a selfish human being was I to forget. I stared through the window with tears dripping on my shirt. I quietly asked “Are you always riding this bus?”. “Yes. I see you every day.” I didn’t wanted to look at him, afraid of one question. “Was I always alone?”. He nodded. This is supposed to be my world, but I don’t really understand it.