

The vacant lot at Hastenhoekweg.

The vacant lot at Hastenhoekweg. Every single building around it has a different style. All quite ugly. From left to right: an anonymous apartment complex, a white house, a pink and blue house (!), a muddy brown house; a gas station (flashy yellow letters shouting SUPER TANK) mounted with a tarnished high rise; facing it: an upscale restaurant, a police station and a McDonald. The space is empty and has been for a while. The last couple of years at least. Vegetation, hip-high and stiff with winter. Planted daffodils along a slice of wall still standing, crumbs of domesticity. My memory of the space doesn't match what I see on the screen: no daffodils, only chalky rubbles.

Google maps September 2019, the sky is pale, greyed at the edge of the image. From the angle of the sunlight, it is morning. Barely 18 months ago. The same remnants of walls stand in corners and along with them, a metal fence. The kind set by construction workers to keep

people out. There are abandoned tools on what used to be a parking lot, wrapped in sturdy tarpaulin. I remember walking on them, the effort to keep myself upright, the unequal footing. The tools are still there, carefully cloaked. Perhaps the workers expected to come back the next day. I click on the viewer window, throw the space back in time through google street view.

April 2019, Badhuisweg 2. The metal fence is already up. I can recognise the exact junction where I slipped through the fence. Then, it was securely fastened. Bolts screwed in between the railings, tightly. A huge semi-transparent fabric poster advertises high-quality video surveillance: Hoefstad security. There were no cameras today and there did not seem to be any then either. In the lapse between then and now, the fabric poster disappeared. Looking in through the screen from this side of the street, two other observation dates are possible. I choose July 2017. In the same spot, one building, two restaurants. Flags are up and I can see a white note on one of the doors, A4 size. The outside of the restaurant looks empty, the terrace is not set. There

are no lights inside either building. It's unclear whether they are closed or shut down, pink curtains hang heavy on the ground floor's window. The outdoor terrace is cobbled wide and even. Stray plants are growing where the wall meets the floor, occupying the interstice. The restaurant on the right is called Canton, its gate half-open. A faded gold dog on a plinth faces the wall. Overcast skies hang above. Four chairs are stacked in a corner.

October 2008, clear skies. Canton is still/already there. The gate - brightly coloured - is fully flung. Two dogs guard the entrance. The terrace is set up and the neon sign shines dull. Inside, behind the glass windows, the tables are dressed and the window sills

decorated. An imposing billboard advertises CANTON, white on blue. The house is yellow not grey. Next door, a different restaurant: Bavaria. The plexiglass sheets that used to be/ will be anchored on the brick wall are not (yet) there. No terrace but a blue parasol. Closed and erect. One click to the left. Bavaria disappears. It is still

October 2008. The sun still shines. Another restaurant I hadn't seen before occupies the space where Bavaria was a second ago: Little Asia. No. Bavaria is still/already there but red lanterns hang at each side of the doorway. On the upper window sill, more tall letters, another font, curly and white etched across windows: Pepper and Salt. Another restaurant, another name, thinner half-transparent curtains, that also looks closed.

Still October 2008. With a click of the mouse, I am back. My head lifts from paper to screen, verifying. Am really seeing what was there? The angle of the google car is sometimes awkward. All that I see is gone and I cannot help doubting my own experience. Things move on the screen. My fingers drag along the mouse pad. My eyes squint. There is a hotel, on the side of the restaurant Pepper and Salt. H-O-T-E-L, five letters stacked vertically, white on black, sans serif. W-H-I-L-E-M-I-N-A, nine letters crowding the top of the veranda on which they are attached. The flattened shape straddles the gap between a veranda and a balcony, amorphous and non-committal. The railing is covered with something white, I

cannot tell if it is fabric or plastic. Works are being carried out or will be carried out here too. On the ground floor, the upper third of the windows are covered with wooden planks. The windows are single glass, the cheap built of the house is familiar.

I approach mentally. On the screen, the white cursor caresses the background. At close distance, the broad strokes of my fingergaze brush against the red bricks. My pointer - a close hand with an extended finger turns into a half-transparent rectangle. I follow the contour of the buildings, trace their walls sharply angled in the sun. The rectangle morphs to follow them, a second too late. I must think my next move carefully. I could land in ether. I make the move, orientate the thin landing pad against the pale yellow wall. A soft resistance on the tip of my index, a click. No matter, I am not where I hoped to be.

I hop through bubbles of placeness, each a spaceplace membrane but inflated. There are many of them next to one another, sewn, spun, melted at the seam they share

with one another. At the centre of the spaceplace, there is a viewpoint, a position from which I can see the walls, the streets, the cars around me. I don't choose the viewpoint or get to move away from it. From it, I can see everything but I don't get to choose how I see them.

I can jump from one viewpoint to the next, inside a different spaceplace and see things around me. I cannot bring walls, streets and cars closer to the viewpoint from which I cannot move, but I can enlarge the view of the things I see. I can inflate their image, blow them out of proportion. I caress them with the cursor, illusion of proximity, they are still removed from me. I can see all around the bubble of spaceplace, but not all at once. The seams between the different spaceplaces are where strange things happen.

When spaceplace hopping, I can choose directions, prospective of the next spaceplace but never truly indicative of where the next viewpoint. Moving from one spaceplace to the next is a guess, a risk. What will and will not happen is undecided until the very moment I

land. When inside a spaceplace I cannot see anything outside the spaceplace I am in. I cannot see other spaceplaces, I know they exist but not where they are. Sometimes, there are many spaceplaces very close together, the fabric of dense gets dense, towering. Other times, spaceplaces are far from each other, and the seams between them are loose.

W-H-I-L-E-M-I-N-A-H-O-T-E-L-R-E-S-TA-U-R-A-N-T,  
white upon the dark green. The fabric on the balcony is a metal balustrade. An advertisement frame gapes emptily except for the words: HOTEL OPEN in the upper left corner. White upon red this time, and cutting across the corner, diagonal. The frame itself is sturdy: four equal feet, two downward casting light. Just built and awaiting its central panel. Standing for so long that the thing advertised stopped being available, its panel removed. Both and either, in the middle of existing and not existing. The steps toward building and destroying look the same.

White brick walls, a neat hedge, plants in pots. Stray weeds at the corner where the wall meets the empty advert frame. Different kinds of foliage, three or four types of plants. The certainty of a stalk, crowned in hazy leaves. Two smaller plants on either side, round leaves, brighter green. A clover? The ground coverage is uneven. Clover would grow aggressively. Back to the screen, in the time of a written sentence, the image has shifted. Perhaps my sleeve dragged across the mouse pad. I am now in front of a door, looking over a car whose pixels have melted on the asphalt. The rigid pavement dragged into and across the car, its side drowning forward. Only the top of the car remains in place-shape. The ambiguity of the image is intoxicating. The car, the pavement, the space in between and belonging to both demands to be experienced singly.

The spaceplaces are outside places. I cannot enter buildings, cars. The inside of the spaceplaces is outside. The spaceplaces have no outside. There is nothing outside the spaceplaces. There is no outside the outside. The spaceplaces are the one dimensional. They

obliterate the possibility for things outside themselves. Outside, inside, one side. Each spaceplace has/are oneside. Nothing to see on the side of the oneside. The oneside is total. There are many spaceplaces, there are many oneside, there are many totalities.

A click to the right, walking back a few meters across many years. The timeline keeps flickering back and forth. October 2008, May 2014. I position myself in front of the plants again, they deserve a second look. Approaching, zooming, stretching the faint pixelated foliage across my screen. The stalk becomes a hardy shrub; the top side has been sharply pruned. Thin woody branches grow around it in all direction. The pavement behind them is rich with earthly colours. Together they hide in each other. I can barely tell them apart.

A hedging plant, *Prunus*, *Ligustrum*, *Ilex*, *Photinia*. Planted at the edge of the wall. *Fagus*, *Berberis*, *Crataegus*, and made square to fit the edge of the wall. *Carnipus*. A plant that grows thick and fast, a plant that

prevents trespassing. A plant that defines what is yours and what is mine. A plant that makes it look pretty. A plant that defines what is here and what is there. A plant that hides in pixels, humans behind it and birds inside.

It is October, deciduous trees should still have leaves. The weather must have been cold this year. I think I can see a single brown leaf, hanging downward at an angle on one of the top right branchling. I can not zoom further, the cursor and its whitish field obscure the plant and its single stalk.

The two smaller plants run low, they spread across the soil, carry themselves over the pavement. Estimating their height, I compare them to the wall against them. Slurred perception of height, my feet are not on the ground, this landscape was made from the top of a car and float across it. Experiences of similar walls rush through my memories. Standardised walls, standardised experiences. I am rather small. Walking along private properties. Walls are walls everywhere but here they stand hip-high. My hip that is. A meter tall. These plants

are a fifth of the wall, twenty centimetres top. Tips lighten in colour, light green or light yellow, withered growth or tentative inflorescence. Each leaves spouts downward, attached to other leaves. Leaves without an outline, the idea of leaf, a generic leaf. Yet a real plant, whose features differ from the one it was meant to represent, whose existence is as palpable as any other. An immortal plant, forever green and yellow and standing. The ghost of the plant that disappeared, keeping the colours but not the

shape. A plant, completely other, a puzzle of a plant, still in the box, pieces jumbled, unlabelled. Cloaked with time, unused for navigation, too close to the ground, flattened into irrelevance, stranded in its alterity.

I think of the plant and I think of the wall. The white wall in 2008, at the corner of Utrechtsestraat 12. I remember seeing this wall, walking along this wall, I remember crossing over this wall and the metal fence around it. I remember the small light fixed on top. I could go back to it, I could touch it, I could observe it. I could see which plants are growing around it. Identifiable places, these

are the ones I need, a corner lost in between different street views.

It is better to be seated to hop through spaceplaces. It is better to not move to hop through spaceplaces. I sit. I hop. The identification between my body and the spaceplaces that I am hopping through is flimsy. Sometimes the screen of the spaceplace swallows my experience. Other times, the luminosity of my room prevents me from entering the spaceplace, everything becomes a reflection: my bedroom backwards on the screen, my face with a hand above my eyes, the grey cube of my wardrobe.

Perhaps it is never fully possible to enter the spaceplace, the screen always acting as a membrane to something else. The screen is a liminal space. It is between the flattened totalities I cannot enter fully and the tangible ever folding materiality I cannot escape. The screen of my computer is smaller than the bubble of spaceplace, it restricts my experience of it. Within the spaceplace, my body is my gaze. I orientate my body

through the fingergaze. The finger lays on one side of the screen; the gaze, on the other. A screen is a liminal place between the material and the spaceplace.

The air resonates with the cries of seagulls, the wind comes southwest from the direction of the falling sun. Hard steps on the concrete ground, pushing me on and away. Space refuses to be apprehended. Another look, another spin. I cannot situate myself. The dull smell of cooking oil floats and disappear. I had forgotten about McDonald's around the corner.

Now I stand at the edge of the wall, my gaze oblique. A different observation point. I tried for too long. I placed myself directly in front of the plants held by the wall. A ninety-degree angle. This angle, the perfect one, the one I would choose if I could, the one I will choose when I return, does not exist. In the image, it is an impossibility. Out of the image, it is an evidence, one that did/will not require a choice. Here and then. (Out there later.) A click

to the left, May 2015. A click to the right, May 2014. Two bright days, more or less a year

apart that differ with the date and the slant of the creeping shadows on the walls.

May 2014. Same wall, same corner. A fresh layer of paint has been applied to the wall. The white is whiter and a black trim covers the top and bottom of the wall. At the corner, the plants have changed. A heavy cement planter surrounds them, its brick purple in colour. The resolution of the image is higher. I can distinguish leaves from one another and different kinds of foliage. I cannot see the smaller plants whose foliage used to run across the pavement. Different kinds of grass have taken their place. One of the taller plants is magenta, this one grows from the inside of the planter. It is chubby and I can distinguish short leaves.

A mistake, a human error, my fault. I clicked-escaped. I was catapulted out of street view, thrown into the blue sky recorded on camera. I was forced out of the place next to the wall with the circular light. I was given an

address: Badhuisweg 2 and a grey map that tells me nothing. Badhuisweg 2: construction it says on the sidebar. Below: I can Suggest a modification of the place. Badhuisweg 2. Add a missing place. Add your business. The place awaits for something to happen. It awaits for something to take place. It awaits for something to take its place.

Fast-moving cloud shadows, each of them with a chill that doesn't last. Young shoots bruising with the first drops of rain, followed by a waft, wet concrete surging from the ground, dusty and sweet. My feet stop, I listen. May 2014 again. Same wall, same corner. The magenta plant still stands. The upper part of the plant has been blurred. The erasure is artful. It is this plant and only this plant that has been targeted. A branch from the neighbouring plant, long and green crosses the purple being. The blur follows the green branch, cautious. The green branch takes on the job of hiding its magenta companion. I follow the green branch. It has longer and thinner stems: faster growth. Leaves bundling close together, leaving parts of the branches exposed. The

green one has yellow leaves at the bottom. The summer has been dry. Several plants look similar to her, perhaps two or three others of the same species in the background. Further away, I see two other types of plants One of them: *Lactusa virosa*, I think. Thick and dark green leaves, oblong and slightly serrated. At this time, it must be in its second year of growth. It will die in the coming winter.

I flirt with images of other purple plants, other plants I have never met. Opening and closing tabs. Other purple pixelated foliage, leaves deeply indented and opened like a glove. Glossy with unreal colours, deep reds and magentas, options seemingly endless,

gardening advice, prices and tags, guaranteed growth, free deliveries. Stacked next to one another, shiny products waiting to be ordered, glowing under a permanent dew. The difference between a digital dream and another, one seeking establishment and the other already disappeared. There are only a few plants traded

as hedging plants. Spiky or impenetrable, evergreen, luxuriant. Leaves that never fall to the ground and discourage trespassers. A website and another, products, about us, special offer but year-round, top quality, win-win. And then the birds attracted and the owner's privacy. Words repeated, once again but somewhere else, black upon white. Withdrawn meanings, images planted in line, one the wrong way up, facing to the side, but at least the website is optimised. I see it, purple from the edge of the screen. Silky fingers on the mousepad and I glide it toward me. Berberis, painfully purple, hard-edged, recognisable but distant. A mystery solved: the banality of knowing, a charm broken. Meeting a plant wild on screen, feral and pixelated. An image is always contained, cornered. The boundaries that maintain them in place concentrate them. They exist apart, their material kindling are hidden. They escape into themselves, in their semblance.

Then there is the frametime. July 2017, Sep 2018, April 2019, August 2020. Spaceplaces are taken, made, moulded one after the other and the frametime sews

them at the edge back together. Spaceplaces were taken, made, moulded at an unknown time on an unknown day in a known month in a known year. The frametime: thick, blurry at the edge, couple, it holds together all the beads of spaceplace, keeping them close, keeping them safe, keeping a likeness between them to create the illusory continuity of a space that unfolds. October 2008, May 2014, July 2017. Sometimes when hopping to the next spaceplace, I fall into a different frametime. October 2008, May 2015, August 2016, July 2017. The seams between the spaceplace become apparent. Stretched buildings, blurred perspective, unnatural heights, stark changes in weather or lights, a dead-end where a street lies ahead. From one hop to the next, trails of buildings left behind, swift and non-existent movement, a breath, a blur that dissipates and again the stability of the image.

I now work with two screens. My memory cannot do the job of fact-checking what I see. The two screens answer one another. In their difference, I ask my questions. The two screens look onto one another. There are only a few

meters between the two images in/on the screens. A couple of meters, plenty to hold a conversation. The narrative of the space exists in the gap between those two images. A couple of meters, a couple of years. The timelines hopscotch from one year to the next. Walking together: Oct 2008. The beginning. A jump on the right: May 2014. Jumping on the left: May 2015 and again October 2016. Back together: July 2017, Sep 2018, April 2019, Aug 2020. Only summer dates, blue skies, split at the beginning.

Left screen: May 2015. The stray herbs have grown at the base of the cement planter. They hide it so completely that I wonder if it is still there. A line of reddish bricks extends the white wall. It delimitates what is private from what is public. What is a car park and what is a sidewalk? The plants have strayed. They have grown. The reddish bricks have disappeared among them. The plants that stray are both public and private. They are the hedge. They have been planted to keep what is outside out and what is inside in. They existed to

be in between. They are now across. Plants will grow everywhere. In the interstice and the open land. I recognise a growing clover patch. On the left side of it, the grass that occupied the front of the planter has retreated toward the wall. The two taller plants: the stemmy green on and the magenta plant are still there. The magenta plant is still blurred, at about the same place as it was in May 2014. It does not seem to have grown. Or perhaps it was pruned. The top of the magenta plant is flat and rectangular. But I cannot see any visible cuts on the branches. Maybe it was not pruned but grows slowly. The resolution of the image is higher than the year before. I only have more questions. I am unable to look at this year from a different angle. If I move, I will be placed in another year, in another imagetime of the same place. I might lose the thread of the timeline. Painfully followed.

One can enter different ways. On the northeast side, one of the railings has been uplifted from the concrete slab and rests on top of it, creating a wider slit at the bottom. It is possible to go underneath and lay a flat face against

the concrete ground before slipping inside. On the south side directly in front of the police station, the bolt holding the different parts of the fence together has been broken and one can simply part them and enter. Inside, one is an intruder.

Northeast entrance. Chest against the ground, the flaps of my jacket stray on the side of my torso, hands displaced to the left, I slip in the gap between the fence and the ground. The smell of black oily earth, slow and sinuous hangs low before my face and does not leave. Standing again my hands brush the front of my body. I am inside. The fence does not protect me as it does with this space. The last square of the concrete floor turns to a thin layer of soil. The first step transfers the weight of my body across my bones. I walk but almost cannot feel the ground, it is soft and deep. I must lift my foot high when I step or the undercover of herbs will arrest me.

I move to the plants, wall corner of Aug 2016. The left screen still/again. I can hardly see the plants. I zoom. The sun shines stark. It casts strong shadows on the pavement, engulfs the plants in shade. The topmost leaves of the green stemmy plant are burned in white light. I cannot tell if the magenta plant still exists. I cannot find its familiar rectangular shape in the shadow. Instead, sparse stems run in all directions. They are mostly green with only purple at their very end. The leaves also seem much smaller and orderly than before. If it is the same plant, the colour has been drained out of it. I hesitate to recognise it. The green plant behind it is taller. It struggles to carry its weight and has started to lean on the fence that runs along the edge of the wall. For the first time, I see it grow horizontally. I cannot see the smaller plants that used to crowd the feet of the planter. Dark green shadows occupy the cracks in between the cobbles. The grass has been mowed down. The line of reddish bricks is still half-hidden.

There is a van, white and blue, parked right by the wall. If it had been parked 30cm more to the right I would not

have been able to observe the plants at all this year. My observations are dependent on events I have no control over. Luck and its haphazard hand bring about the past. Insignificant events stretch out of proportion. I reconstruct a past that I have no memory of. A castle of crumbs, details that I could be inventing. Slices of time cut into images, salient in their specificity but blurred, disjointed. I have seen the plants many times. Never before a van on a sunny day had taken such importance.

The imagetime has a depth it did not have before. I look again. The van, the road, the pavement, the stark shadow, the blur of the vehicle filming, the outline of the camera against the pavement, the restaurants, the light reflected from the window of the van and off the leaf of the tall stemmy plant, the reflection of the google car in the window of the restaurant, the silhouette of the plants, dark, next to it, the futility of knowing. I look from one to the other. All the elements stretch and deform under the caress of the pointer, expanding and contracting, above all to leave no gap, to ensure the continuity of the image, to guarantee the continuity of

the past at all cost, that there should be no tear in the fabric of what happened, what was filmed, what was documented. Stretching and stretching until the fabric of the real becomes thin and fragile. Until it cannot bear the weight of my pointer, the caress of my gaze. The imagetime glows with impossibility, drunk on its own vertigo.

Cigarette butts, light brown or white, pieces of foil and tissues, fabrics all withered, a mosaic of undoing with a background of greens and browns. All that is composite and contrary, stands out and makes kin with the white little rocks. Faded orange, a can of energy drink crushed with one hand and thrown, twisted cylinder. Plastics that differ in shape, fold, transparency, shininess. Endless genealogies could be built. Beatles, iridescent jewels of the ground, trace the edges of the undergrowth sinking into the soil, layered. Sometimes a disincarnate whiff of things that rot in the ground, things half decomposed,

things still there but almost not, tear me out of my thoughts. I think of them again, the things that used to be and wonder where they come from. What used to be here, before the plants and the trash and the broken glass. All sensations are suspended and given.

July 2017, overcast skies. The place has aged more than I thought possible in a year. The white wall - painted pristine- has tarnished. Its edge grey. Some bricks blemished, scored until the pink of the brick. Others have scarred in a lighter grey. I do not recognise the plants in the concrete planter. I cannot see the planter itself. I am not sure if I can distinguish its shape among the leaves or if I can only imagine it there because of having seen it throughout the years. The magenta and the tall stemmy plants are gone. There are even fewer purple branches than last year. I still cannot tell if this is the same plant that I have been observing all along or only a newcomer from the year before. I thought the purple and the green plant had been cut. Now I see a hybrid, strangely green and purple. Neither stubby nor tall. I wonder who she is. A child or successor of the

plants I had become accustomed to seeing even without ever meeting them in real life. The green and the magenta plant marked the wall corner. They identified it as the successive steps in the memory of the place which I never encountered. I expected to see an old friend, only to find a stranger, similar and foreign. Not different enough not to cast doubt on its identity. Not similar enough for me to rush toward its image. Who are you? Who were you? Who will you become? I cannot help but think of your role in the disappearance of the plants that came before you. Semblance, clean cut, certainty, a plant that disappeared. Perhaps the seeds of the plants that came before you are still in the ground.

There are other plants I had not seen in this location. Tiny white corolla nested in the deep green. In their centre, a hazy black dot the size of match-head, hardly big enough to be seen. The petals are fused, by the feature of the image or the feature of the plant, and out of the near-perfect white circle ooze five points, encroaching on the green that delimits the edges of the

bloom with a faint pixelated glow. In the backdrop, the green stirs with shades. (Several greens too.) Light and verdant on top, with a yellow rim. The deep green of the clover and its light arrow on the round leaves. Minuscule strings of tiny round leaves open symmetrically from the stem. Different types of grass. Small weeds that crawl up onto the wall, tapered. Vine-like, with delicate purple flowers detaching against the black paint on the wall. Thin oblong leaves, a plant from the pea family, some early colonisers. Faint blueish greens, drawing upward like a pyramid with stems on all four sides. Spiny spikes or serrations, I cannot tell. A mint or thistle, perhaps. Colours, ever more muted, almost inaccessible, trembling across grey, violet, and brown but still green after all, hold still in the tiniest bud.

I zoom out, detach myself from the tangled hues. The pavement next to the plants, the wall corner is caving in, has caved in, will cave in. The cobbles open, the breathing cracks between them ballooning. Concrete lung cells, new life is creeping in the cracks. At the bottom of the restaurant, where the pavement meets the

wall, weeds of colour purple.

The sidewalk is constellated with dog shit. I look around and at, carefully sizing my steps, less I run out of space to discover, less things become known too quickly.

There. I approach as I did from the screen. There is a fence with a chain and a padlock that hangs slowly in the wind. Now and then, it hits the side of the fence and the whole thing around it resonates. I thread my way to the other side of the sidewalk. Very close to the fence now, my right ear is full of the metallic flares of the fence sung by the wind. It vibrates. With every gust shines brighter, its timbre shaking, bright, sharp, acidic. There. A car passes on my left, drowning the splinters of sounds under its growl. They return. My fingers run from my hands, touch the fence with their pulp. The oxidised dirt collects from the thin railings, increasing their grip. The regularity of the railing is now a resonant blur, only interrupted by the ticker metal post at the edge of the fence. Modest and repetitive, I pull my hand away. The

shallow smell of rust seals our encounter. The sidewalk is narrow, uneven. I pause and draw to the metal fence to let a woman pass. The fuchsia of her jacket hurts my pupils and leaves a trail of turquoise in its wake. There! On the other side now, the traffic grounds the asphalt, passerby slow down their gaze to look at me. At the corner, a black motorbike forces me away from the fence.

September 2018. It is evening. The light is soft. Clouds thin with the wind. The wall has not been repainted. The street looks quiet. The plants have not been maintained this year. They look thirsty. A withered undergrowth hangs pale from the planter. What definition existed between individual plants is gone. A single dry stalk juts beyond the edge of the container. It could sway but the image holds no breeze. A few leaves, curling inward, have not fallen yet. The purple plant has almost disappeared except for two or three branches squeezed

against the white wall. Only their tips allow me to trace back their colourful genealogy. The front end of the jardiniere seems to have particularly suffered. Looking back to the years before, I see that the plants used to be twice as tall and bushy. A square bush, the hallmark of civilisation. My eyes graze back and forth. I am trying to see something. Nothing I can recognise. In the back, ivy has covered some of the ground and all of the wall. Behind the restaurant, weeds I cannot identify grow fiercely. I turn the image and return to it. No success. On the staircase leading to Pepper and Salt, a weed blooms knee high on every step except the fifth.

Dry twigs rattle brittely. Promiscuous clouds of flies open and condense. Smells of dog shit and burned plastic, pungent, stratified. Every step sizzles differently depending on the type of grass under my feet. Moss offers a the slight resistance before my soles sink into the ground. A shiver runs down my shoulders and spine. Nervous, aromatic trails of crushed leaves, barely reaching my nose. I lose the smell when I try to localise it. On the side near the brick wall, a rusty Christmas tree,

crossed planks for feet, with a plush blue thistle below. Sometimes the fence rings like the smallest porcelain bell. The air runs below my sleeve. For the second time, I see a ladybug with only two dots. From the open window of a car, a computer voice speaks a language I cannot understand or recognise. My eyes are riveted with details. The litter, smooth, dark, foamy, transparent, metallic, silky, dull and colourful, mismatched, busted, joyful, blue. A bird I had not seen, flies away from me, very close, wings sounds like ruffled paper. It sings. On the sidewalk, rental motorbikes are parked next to one another across the footpath. At one point the fence is almost broken, interrupted. The concrete slab tilted, resting on its narrowest edge, held back by the bolts, still caving inward, bringing the two adjacent railings with it. April 2019. The diffuse light of the morning shines on broken glass and rubbles. A metal fence wrapped around the empty space. All the buildings are gone. The emptiness glares open. The ground is uneven but flat, loose concrete jigsaw. Of the plants, only the one at the angle of the wall has survived. A patch of grass seeps

through the cobbled cracks. It is the only green in the image. Between it and the wall, a mass of branches. I can

distinguish, three maybe four plants from the texture and orientation of the branches. One at the back, long, black and narrow growth bundled together as if pulled backwards. Another directly at the front, thinner group. No; a single stem with smaller branches spurting outward in all directions at a sharp angle. A Third, in between those and closer to the wall: a single shoot upward which then divides into two sprigs, shaped like a V. Embroiled around and through, a haze of twigs on the edge of shimmering. The brume of plants is too thin to be registered digitally. In between the pixels, it escapes the image. I move the space within my screen, fingers stretched to the extremity of the mouse pad. Pixels rush and exit at the edge of the image. This is where the limit of my peripheral vision lays. I maintain the same level of zoom necessary to see and obscure. The inner muscle running from the tip of my index through the mounds of my hand and toward the end of my major accumulates

tension. I see another plant from behind the wall, also leafless. It opens like a dry fan among the rubbles. It is April, spring will start soon. I hope that leaves will burst through the plants.

I recognise and see for the first time. Verticality ripples through the bones of my back into my heels. I trace places often passed but never dwelled. The plants, the white corner of the wall gapes at me from across the field. It calls, I resist. Sounds bounce from overhead and onto the buildings framing the open space, from one to the next, self-perpetuating and engulfing. Traces of the echo follow me for a long time. A crow with discoloured feathers settles in the middle of the space. The light lands softly, angled, the concrete shimmers. There, are the tall grasses and the fence that guards them.

At first nothing, then the acrid smell of gasoline and piss lodges itself at the back of the nose sinks into the throat, pervades the palate. A soft attack on the mucous membrane, persistent, even long after the smell has

gone. My tongue prances to the back of my mouth, without disgust.

A brick wall, a fruiting tree. A gap. Then another wall, same height but brown this time. A daffodil. And always the metal fence around it but beyond the walls nothing but grass, tall, woody, dark brown and angular, the first layer of vegetation to exist in this space in 50 years or more, the very first arrivals on a ground that bore no traces of life except at its edge, its thin edges that used to guard it and now still stand but even thinner, lost in their purpose, having lost what they keep, crumbs of capital and failed construction project, eviction notices handed out for no reason, squatters and occupation, delays and all that for nothing then but a colony of tall grass that guard their future cautiously for anytime the dice could roll around and the construction start again and they will have to tear down all the tall grass like they tore down the buildings and it's going to take some time but the walls at the edge are still standing and the plants

made to make a hedge are still here they survived the building the taking down and perhaps they will survive again and keep with them the memory of the place and what it could have been. For now, in between, for later, and all the things lost. There! There! The space so full of life so estranged from the rest of life that goes on all around it and that only possible because it is a plot of land bought by someone who wanted to make money on it, that wanted to make money so bad that they tore down all the building and evicted people and fought them in court and won and bought all the tree spaces and made it into one and put a fence around it to make sure that no one stole the empty space, that no one could use it and enjoy it and now people are angry at the fence and are angry at the space and all they do is throw the cup from their takeout and throw their dog's shit in the space but only after having picked it up and carefully wrapped in a pale plastic bag.