

*It was a day just like any other in spring or summer.*

A car ride, filmed from inside the vehicle, the view straight ahead, through the windscreen, frontal, onto a non-descript landscape, then an industrial area, then a town full of gaps and ruins and skeleton frames and newly sprouted houses whose miens bespeak their hurried assemblage. But, above all: no sound, absolute silence; so if you do hear something it is probably someone breathing near you in the room.

The perspective remains constant for some time, though the point-of-view shot does in fact slightly change, as can be seen from the inactive windshield wipers; later, there will be views from the side of the car, side-views. Frontal views and side views alternate in accordance with the rhyme scheme F-S-F-S-F; and with every change of perspective the story, which unfolds on the bottom edge of the frame, also takes a turn, expands – though perhaps we only think the story has taken a turn because that is what is suggested by the change of perspective.

The story is about what happened, on one day, at roughly the same time, but in different areas of a city to three members of a family; it is about how they remember and how they put their memories into words for each other, and about how, subsequently, these experiences are then combined into a narrative – layered remembrolences.

Drives, landscapes, and their relation to one another all play an important part in this; as does the question of how real or unreal reality and the passing of time and the places had felt in all this; at certain moments, the story strikes one as particularly credible, as when a word coincides with something seen on the screen – “wall”.

We are never told where this happened; from the manifold writings scattered throughout the film one may, however, infer that the events must have taken place in that part of the world that once went by the name of SFR Yugoslavia, or, more precisely: in one of the countries in which, for a long time, there was war; words like “firearms” and descriptions of war-like conditions would seem to corroborate this. So probably that is where it all occurred, if the story is true and not merely truthful. But then, maybe, it isn't.

If there were sound, the task of pin-pointing the story geographically would be made easier; yet that is precisely what is to be avoided. Just as it should not be easy to follow the text, the highly literate form of which calls for an equally high amount of attention. Captions – sometimes a single word, at other times up to three lines, filling a third of the frame.

It is exhilarating to see how graphic, how dramatic the sentence is rendered by this fracturing and the punctuation thereby necessitated, which turns certain phrases into figures of speech.

Occasionally, linguistic expression conceals whatever there is that might be seen to such an extent that one can no longer make out the world behind the word: the story as letter/word/syntax fresco literally-pictorially blankets out the visible present. Some effort is required to once again see the landscape behind the language.

(Olaf Möller, translation from German by Thomas Brooks)