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You are sitting at the back of the bus, on an unusually warm September day. Your face is turned towards the scorching sun, forehead leaning against the glass. Your eyes are closed, yet you didn't stop looking. Watching the insides of your eyelids. You see red. It is moving. You don't see what is it that moves, but notice the movement. The dance without the dancer. You are separated from the countryside zipping past by layers of cloth, glass, flesh. You see thin blue veins. Or is it the firm weave of the red curtain reflected on the insides of your eyelids? People sometimes say they are going to observe the insides of their eyelids, instead of saying they are going to sleep. But you are not sleeping. You are looking through your eyelids, through the red curtain, through the glass. Lots of layers separating you from what is possible.

Breathing the thick air inside the bus. It seems to smell of gasoline, sweat and socks too thick for the warm weather. More than anything, you feel the very weight of those sedimenting smells. The thick carpet of humanity. Something tickles your nose. Opening your eyes, you notice the red curtain has wiggled out of its plastic holder and swelled towards you. Blown by the air conditioning, it's releasing bubbles of air. The bus drive, this speedy movement, makes you less mobile. Your feet prick-le, spinal joints are grinding against each other, pinching nerves. Immobility hurts. You raise your knees and jam them against the back of the seat in front of you, curling to a fetal position. Becoming your own eyesight, nothing but seeing, since other senses are begging you to ignore them.

The view is constantly doubling – you are watching the curtain, the curtain's reflection and your crossed hands in the glass pane, soft hills and moss-like mountains behind the glass, and their reflection on the surface of the lake. Depending how you lean your head, the shades of colours of the image change. One moment what you see is intense violet, the next it acquires a greenish sheen. The mountains are green, they have to be, but the sky cannot be violet. What is this strange refraction of the light? You feel the need to rind off one layer after another – to move the curtain, peel off the glass like a sticker containing product information, break the surface of the lake by jumping into the water, take a walk in the woods, make your fresh scar bleed. You stood up and shook your legs. Almost every one around you is asleep. You moved to another seat on the bus, which is half empty anyway. Opposite you, a man in a checkered shirt sits. He doesn't notice you. He has drawn the red curtain over his portion of the window. Soaked in the sunlight, it makes everything orange. Except for him, who is almost completely black, like a shadow of himself, like shadow theater. Once your eyes get used to the contrast, you can see the bangs falling over his forehead, his face evenly glowing from the heat. His look is lowered onto the newspaper held in front of him. He is dedicated, to this world printed on the paper, to the worlds beyond the paper. You have been here before. You used to know where he is going and what he is reading, but you don't remember it anymore.

Turning to your own side, you notice the approaching blue road sign. This must be Georgia, no one uses such alphabet. It says “Gori” in latin alphabet, with the number 1. “Gori” means “Burn” in Croatian. You are burning, that much is true. From the red curtain, and the orange glow, from the sun and inner tension. Burning with the wish for something real to happen, something you could catch and hold onto – hold onto as you can't hold onto pleasure. Your hands are slipping through the water, the glass isn't catching your look. That which you want to catch becomes the medium through which you move.
Covering your eyes with your hand, you protect yourself. The sun is straight ahead now, bouncing off your forehead, the day drawing to its end. I look at you immersed in late sunlight. Rubbing your face, as if you were massaging it. Your beard is couple of days old. You are tired. To your left (or is it right?) a beehive building is whizzing by, a skeleton building. Hollow concrete. It looks like an agglomeration of holes, of frames. Growing out of the water, reflected in the water, connected to the shore by a narrow bridge. Abandoned before it was finished. You have a feeling you are in Albania, but can't be certain. Your body has been borrowed, the bus is not stopping. Adjusting your position to make yourself more comfortable. Defending your self with words, as is common among those who haven't yet grown into their trip.

The red curtain mobilizes the scene it hides / reveals. Turning it into action, even if it's an abandoned, half-built building surrounded by a lake. The red curtain adds a time frame to what's behind it, accentuating the temporal dimension of its being unfinished. The red curtain marks the beginning and the end. What's between two points in time is always a narrative. You are in a blue uniform, just like the others around you, placing your hand on your colleague's shoulder. You are on a short break. He's looking over his shoulder, towards the bus. You return the look from inside the bus. Something had to precede, and something has to follow. You are invited to read into it, perhaps a conventional social drama from a simpler social situation – relaxed conversation during a cigarette break.

This booklet is created based on two research expeditions on Balkan and Caucasus in the framework of CORNERS, where Helena Wikström, artist from Umeå (Sweden) and Una Bauer, researcher from Zagreb (Croatia) met.

CORNERS is a platform for artists and audiences, designed and driven by cultural organisations at the edges of Europe. CORNERS creates opportunities for artists and researchers to explore regions far from economic, political and cultural centers of Europe, and based on that experience to co-create multidisciplinary contemporary artistic and cultural projects.