



On All Saints' Day he thought of the deceased, family, friends, but he no longer became really emotional about it. He simply didn't give a damn anymore. He wondered who would care if he were gone. That wasn't an encouraging thought, but then again, did he have to lie to himself? He had no family or friends who he knew would be sad if he were gone. They

didn't mind him being gone now, let alone that they would mind if he were dead.

'No, I mustn't think about that,' he thought, 'or I'll get discouraged. Then I'd better switch off my mind for a while and just continue with what I'm doing.'

He found it a scary thought to realize that he didn't even care anymore. It was as if he was constantly under hypnosis and did not even feel that he was living without arms and legs, emotionally and socially. It had probably become such a habit that he hardly thought about it anymore. What bothered him most was the apathy, the disinterest in his person from the very people who should in fact play an important role in his life. Just to find that they hardly cared anymore about what he did, or what he was. He had closed himself off to it, and it had made him completely numb. There was no point in worrying about it, because no one was listening anyway. It was as if they were waiting for him to go off the track.

At least then they would have something to talk about again. As long as he acted like a gray mouse, behaved himself, didn't scream (and even then), no one would ever think that maybe he also needed some love, that he also liked to be around people. That he would also like some attention. He felt like an animal being sedated, in a bubble. Conscious, but also unconscious. He saw his problems, but he couldn't do anything about them. As if he was dreaming, and hoping to wake up. But he never woke up. If he threatened to wake up, the dose of illusions was increased so that he would immediately fall asleep again.

'When you're dead you can't do anything anymore! You shouldn't underestimate that,' he thought, and he didn't. Life is that simple, he thought. Despite everything, he could go on and those poor dead people could not, and that was a comforting thought.

He stared at the poker screen before him, his thoughts wandering to the transience of existence. Everything in this

Life was temporary, he thought, like cards dealt over and over again. "To dust you shall return," he whispered softly, a reminder of the finiteness of human existence. Yet he found comfort in knowing that even in the darkest night, a new day would always dawn!

Don't ask him why. We would never know why we were hanging around here, not him, and

certainly not her. Tomorrow is All Saints' Day and he was one of them, he thought, period. But that he would not have a woman tonight and never, not even when he needed her most, was something he had never thought possible, could not even imagine that such a thing could exist. That was too much for him. He closed his poker screen and thought life was just like poker. Sometimes you could win, and sometimes you could lose, but in the end the chances were rationally and mathematically zero. You could win in life, he thought, but in the end you had no chance against death, and you couldn't take anything with you. From dust you came, and to dust you will return. The beer he wanted to drink got stuck in the fridge. He wouldn't like it anymore anyway. He knew that if he started drinking he would only get angry. It had already happened to him too much. So he decided to go to sleep. Tomorrow he would wake up fresh and clear, without questions and without resentment. That was also a victory, and for that he didn't need poker, alcohol or a woman. It was cheap and healthy and pure nature and the sun would shine, people would greet him politely on the street, and smile, in their Sunday best, with their flower pots under their arms, on the most beautiful day of the year, All Saints' Day

