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when kurfürstenstrasse meets potsdamer strasse. at the underground station exit/entrance, waiting for a friend. pungent odours blending with their absence. the rain falls thin but drenches everything, making the surroundings intermittent. the traffic lights spread out, dislocated, reflecting on the pavement and woolworth windows, alternately tinting people's faces red and green, at the crossing, twisting their expression. unsolicited dramatising masks. drops hitting the umbrella. the air loses transparency. she thinks of gravity, how things come together simply by falling. sirens blare every now and then. for emergency, aid, security, control, power, subordination. sirens have always made her aware of big cities. she has never questioned the purpose of sirens as much as during this past year. a sound that adds density to the moment. food leftovers in the corners. she is reminded of the expired yoghurt in the fridge. cigarette butts on the ground, soaked in filth and water, mouths and fingers wrapping them already in the past. she lights up a cigarette. one of those slim ones, the paper turns to glowing ash. somebody approaches her, the invitation or the demand happens more with gazes and bodily proximity than with words. occasionally the bakery's door behind her opens, a muffled swarming of voices escapes, only to exhaust when it shuts again. many are on their own. a few talking to other few via headphones. chopped conversations mate with the urban bustle. not so many walking heads held high. cyclists beneath mildly wet shiny cloaks. their wheels, fairly silent, cutting the bike lane in vertical threads. a young woman with extra-long pink glittering nails, an oversized coat, slicked back hair. her scarf rebels against a gust of wind. proportions are disrupted. a man shouts, laughter and rage occur simultaneously. someone is still, perhaps waiting, standing in contrapposto. symmetry is so rare. next to the orange waste bin, a polystyrene dummy, maimed, recalling a similar posture. her eyes catch the glance of a stranger with no make-up, all last little then the sight is diverted. coming to the conclusion that, eventually, they were both scared of each other. it might be the inability to decipher. a sort of impossibility to enjoy the porosity of the unknown. it can all come about so quickly. preconceptions. how a minor shift of light alters the entire thing. red and green. the traffic light that turns the story around. it is a bit like gravity. she checks the time on her phone. her silver ring radiates the green of the traffic light. 5:13 pm. the friend is late, but she is always early. fastening her clip-on right earring and returning her hand to the pocket. the palm forms the hint of an arc, meeting the thigh. a lamp switches on inside a flat on the opposite side of the alley. hyperbolic shadows of plants and furnishings' silhouettes manifest on cream colour walls behind the glass. close but unreachable. cars move slowly but not cautiously. their finish, so sleek. she checks the exact translation of *carrozzeria* from italian to english, it is *bodywork*. she checks the inbox. she thinks about how language is sorted and arranged. the eloquent way things come into association. or collision. she thinks of all the things that are named. by contrast. over time. by whom and to what consequences. a splash lands on her faux-leather black trousers. sharply outlined drops that hardly scroll. she thinks of linguistic bias. red and green. the traffic light that turns the story around. noise of tyres on wet asphalt. scrambling the puddles. the sound of footsteps, different frequencies, different weights, odd and even numbers compete for the rhythm. different shoes, different stories. some are squared. the shoes and the stories. she recognises the moment is becoming a story. she wonders how precarity exposes itself. all that takes place in those spaces between what is seen and what goes deliberately missed. in between red and green. visualising excludes, too. language bridges lack through adjectives, perhaps. at her back "hey!", the friend smiles. lipstick slightly smeared on the front tooth. what if it is more about the force than the fall.

