







Trap, Dissected

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*“Well, don’t  
I’m caught  
I can’t  
Because I  
too much*

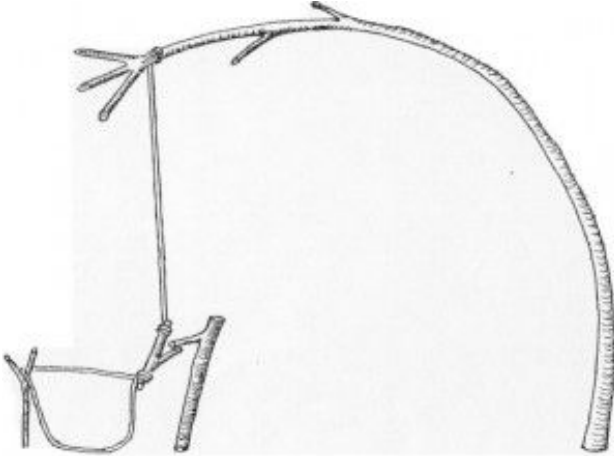
*Elvis sang helplessly, caught in an invisible spiderweb woven in the name of love,  
as if he had entered the web of love unwillingly. Seduced, but by his own desire.*

*I hope you will find yourself comfortable in that delicate cocoon. Don’t fight it – you will*

't you know  
in a trap?  
walk out  
I love you  
h, baby“

*only tighten the string*

# *Introduction*



Illustration, of the spring pole trap

Since going into the analysis of the phrase ‘falling in love’ I noticed the strong linguistics in our love and dating language, referring to mechanisms of trapping and hunting.

The sentence ‘falling in love’ describes the uncontrolled, unplanned or undesirable love that you suddenly, almost surprisingly, find yourself in; BAM, like a cartoon character sliding on a banana peel or falling off a cliff.

The sentence also denotes that love is a space you can fall into, almost like a hole or a pond -and so, love becomes a space.

A space that you can enter.

But who made you fall into that space? Is love also a character on its own, like



Amor, or did someone set a trap, calculating how to catch you?

Alongside the research on romance linguistics, the concept of the trap has been a returning object in my practice. Linking these two fields of research I have looked at traps as objects, materialising desire with constructions of fragile connection points and tension.

A trap is defined as; ‘a devise to trick or deceive (someone) into doing something contrary to their interests or intentions’ - defined by Oxford Language. To trap someone requires a great deal of devotion and an understanding of the psychology and patterns of the trapped. This knowledge enables the creation of a perfect design, ensuring that the target will either fall or freely walk into the trap. A mechanism that highlights that in this case seduction is mostly effective rather than by imposing demands.

To understand the substantial construction of the trap this thesis will examine an example of a hunter’s trap, more specifically one named the string pole fishing snare (see illustration). I chose it because of its simplicity and how it is known among the Barasana people in the Amazonas for its transforming function as it will turn fish into hanging fruit\*. This description comments on the practical force of the trap of turning life into dead, animals into food, the free subject into captive.

The hunter’s trap acts as a communicator of a deadly absence, as it is left in the absence of the trapper, and before it will catch, it will be absent too from the animal intended for capture. It becomes a marker of a pregnant pause, like when one holds one’s breath before an action.

Alfred Gell, anthropologist at The London School of economics, states that in these marked absences, the trap will function as a very powerful sign of desire\*\*.

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\*Stephen Hugh-Jones & Aloisio Cabalzar, ‘Barasana’ *Povos Indigenas no Brasil*.

\*\* Alfred Gell ‘VOGEL’S NET. Traps as Artworks and Artworks as Traps’ Published by Journal of Material Culture 1996

Another aspect that Alfred Gill notes is that the trap reveals important facts about the person who constructed it. It is like a mirror, and as it reflects desire, hopes, and wishes, the trap becomes a substitute for that person. “An automaton or robot” as Gell describes it, the trap is an impregnated surrogate hunter machine, who has undertaken the will of the hunter.

There is obviously a risk of violence and pain when encountering the trap but there is also, as I mentioned, notes of devotional engagement; the trap as a system of longing, of hoping it can be seen as a product of desire and will turn into a more poetic symbol.

I want to dissect the trap throughout the body of my thesis. When dissecting, the subject of the operation is dead, which in this setting means that the trap we will be dealing with is a non-functional or 'dead' trap, one that has lost its catching force.

A trap disarmed.

Each chapter in the thesis will examine isolated parts of the trap to discover new meaning and abstractions under the tissue. Touching upon matter of origin, linking it to my own censorial system of memories and emotions.

# *Chapters*

*The stick*

/

*The triggerpoint*

/

*The string*

/

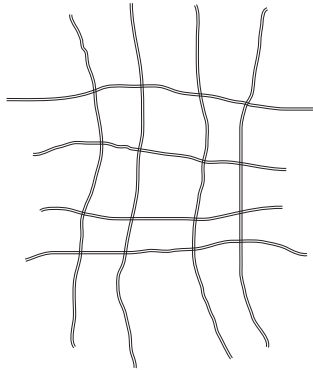
*a little ode to the  
ribbon*

/

*The hook*

/

*Conclusion*



## *Interlude*

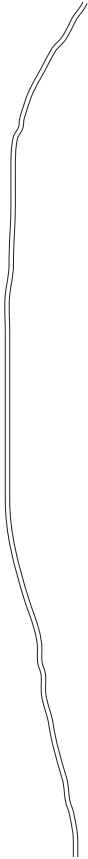
*If a trap is constructed with tight strings, fragile connection points or delicately spun webs, it will be camouflaged into its surroundings, almost non-existent by being as thin and as transparent as possible.*

*Quietly it will wait, hoping you will walk directly into it, reaching far enough for you to only realise your entanglement at the point that it's too late to escape.*

*Until then, it will keep its pose, hopefully, wishing, longing for that moment to happen.*

*Seduction is another way of camouflaging. Sweetening you into blindness with a whispering allurement emerging from the siren of the sea, from the wink of the eye or the sweet smell of blooming grass.*

*A quiet hope, longing or desire dwells tightly in the suspended stick, the stretched string and in the baited hook.*



# */The stick*

on sticks, fleeing and relations

Stick, sticking, stuck

I stick with my stick

Sticking it in

Something got stuck on my stick

Stick with me

The stick is the core of the spring snare trap; the fundament of the construction, the backbone.



*“Woodywood stick holding it in our hands!”*

The best stick is about the same length as your arm, fallen from a tree like a lost limb.

In the early summer when the woods are luminous from the fresh greens, the sound of whipping sticks from the tall wild chervil would arise, and one by one the white flowers would turn their head against the warm earth. The smell of the juice, running out of the crispy stems, would fill the air and colour the skin green under the nails of all the happy kids that, as in a ritual, would hit the tall plants with their sticks as a wild greeting of the spring.

( later in the summer the same plant would be used as a flute because of its hollow stem and music would arise like ribbons floating in the wind )

Everybody would be prepared with the perfect stick found on their way through the forest.

After a long and dark winter of wild storms the trees had tossed many great sticks on the ground now to be collected in the time of spring; transformed from being a stick to becoming a tool for the hand.

Stick tools many functions;

- pointing,
- moving,
- reaching,
- hitting,
- leaning,
- supporting,
- holding,
- burning,
- poking

A stick is a great tool to extend your arm or completely replace it. If used to reach further it becomes a tool to connect with something out of reach, something of potential desire.

Humans have used sticks for 500.000 years. But sticks are difficult to trace in archaeological research because of their fast return from wood to dust, and consequentially the stone has taken most of the shine in the study of tools in human evolution.

Now, when picking up the stick, it also becomes a tool to reach back into the past.

*“The stick,  
the stone’s  
silent sister”*

*- Alexander Langlands*

This quote, by the archeologist Alexander Langlands, establishes a strong bond of relation between the stone and the stick. Relating them as sisters, you easily imagine how they grew \*up together, side by side, back in ancient history.

One sister hard and strong, resisting marks of time, the other thin, tensile, and sensitive to time’s harsh treatment. Maybe because the stone has lost many sisters over time, as the stick would erupt and turn into dust, it has left the stone heavy with sorrow.

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\* Alexander Langlands, ‘The Stick Is an Unsung Hero of Human Evolution’ *Nautilus*. Published by W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. <https://nautilus/the-stick-is-an-unsung-hero-of-human-evolution-236944/>

Looking at the stick as a medium for the hand, many examples show how the stick performs a leading character. Let me refer to some examples on pure stick usage and their performances;

*The wand: The magicians uses the stick to cast spells, that might transform you to a hat and then pull a rabbit out of you.*

*The pointer: Used by teachers to control your focus of what to look at on the black board and thereby point of the clues of school riddles.*

*The Baton: The stick of the music conductor used to control the orchestra to follow the same rhythm. A common trick among the conductors are to think of yourself as a tree, root in the ground with arms like sticks waving in the wind.*

These examples show how the stick serves as a tool within power dynamics, with the tip of the stick absorbing the inherent energy of its wielder. It acts as a conduit, establishing a tangible connection between the wielder and the others. The stick becomes interconnectedness materialised.

Thinking back on my childhood times of running wild in the glooming green forest, I recall the same stick that would leave the tall chervil in a cacophony of chaos, transforming its (stick-)functionality into being a part of another game called chasing one another. In this game the stick would be used as a sort of spire, held in stretched arms while running after a chosen person of desire. It was not a game of violence, even though it had elements of per-

forming dominance. It was more a game to understand the affair of pursuing and the dynamics inside power relations.

The game generated a significant thrill, as being the one pursuing I entered a dominant position. By choosing to initiate the chase, I was in control. This provided a sense of empowerment, signifying that I had identified a desire worth striving for.

Being the one chased, on the other hand, was both frightening and exciting at the same time. Flattered by the idea that someone would desire me, I had to simultaneous 'run for my life', hoping not to be overtaken by my pursuer. It was a feeling of possessing something precious and special, and if I was to be caught, I could lose that special something. Out of breath, jumping head over toe through the tall grass and soft moss, terrified and flattered at the same time, constantly looking over my shoulder as I wished that the stick wouldn't reach me yet.

A simple game but one that operated on the premises of a dynamic relation. For the game to have a drive it required a subject and a countersubject.

Desire is a two-player game like a dialog or a handshake,  
a dance or a fight.



The Loony Tunes character Wile E. Coyote is the embodiment of unbridled desire and the perfect example of the restless pursuer. His entire persona is constructed on the concept of desire, being lean, hungry, and brimming with lust, perpetually in pursuit of the fast *Road Runner*\*.

However, his persistent chase is doomed to failure due to his ignorance and lack of knowledge about the Road Runner, who repeatedly proves to outsmart his traps. If he were to succeed in catching the Road Runner and finally eat it, it raises the question: who would he be without Road Runner? His entire career and identity are built upon the chase, and without it, he would be left with a void and a loss of identity.

There is an optimism in his pursuit. An optimism and devotion evidenced by the amount of energy he puts into the complexity of his engineering and the inventions he creates—all driven by the genuine belief that one day he will catch the Road Runner. This level of devotion indicates a deeper desire than merely getting food on the table; to me, it looks like a case of somebody being crazy in love. He wants to be with the Road Runner so badly that he literally wants to eat it. And as his traps repeatedly fail, he is once again left alone, as the Road Runner disappears with the speed of light out into the horizon.

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\*Austin Gilkeson, 'The Mythical Endurance of Wile E. Coyote' in *Vulture*. <https://www.vulture.com/2019/11/wile-e-coyote-road-runner-legacy-looney-tunes.html>

We know the name of the chaser but what is the name of the one being chased?

Fugue names the one who flees. Originating from the Latin word Fuga (;flight) and was later bent into the shape of the verb fugere meaning; to flee or escape\*, and was later again used to describe the complex musical composition of the Fugue, most famously used by the composer Johann Sebastian Bach.

A fugue is a contra-punctual piece of music\*\*, meaning that two or more melodies are played simultaneously.

The two melodies consist of: one, the subject, the other the countersubject.

The dynamic between the two melodies is like a dialog.

The subject will “call” out, and can be performed by a violin playing a melody or a person singing a note. The countersubject will respond by trying to imitate the call of the subject while still remaining its own autonomous voice and position. It will bend and stretch to fit the harmony.

*b e n d i n g  
l i k e w i l l o w*

*s t r e t c h i n g  
m y a r m s*

---

\* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fugue> the section of etymology

\*\* Stephen Johnson, ‘What is a fugue in music?’ *Classical Music*, by BBC Music



The harmonious dynamic between the two entities lies in their capacity to adapt to each other. Their constant movement in relation to each other allows the music to develop forwards.



Not being able to read musical notations, I instead see signs looking like small footprints in white snow.

I'm reminded of a rabbit that has lightly jumped on top of a soft, white winter blanket. A rabbit quietly moving with open eyes, watching out for the hawk or the fox - the small depressions of feet being the only sign of its presence.

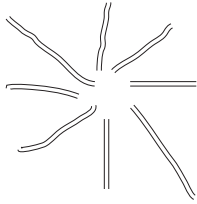
The image, in turn, makes me think of the music video for Steve Reich's musical piece *Violin Phase*. A piece of music quite similar to the fugue, its repetitive composition echoing itself with delays, creating a constant musical flow.

In the music video dancer and choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker translates his music into a beautiful pattern as her footsteps leave a response to the music on the scene where she dances. She is dancing her echo in dust on a scene in the middle of a luminous green forest similar to the one from my childhood games, her pace carefully conducted by the pulse of the baton.



*Still from 'Steve Reich - keersmaeker ann Violin Phase dance'*





# */The trigger point*

on a hunting rifles, body trauma, muscle knots and a stretching exercise

I stick with my stick

Sticking it in

Something got stuck on my stick

Stick with me

Wiped with a hand

For the drops to crawl down

A string is pulled and tight with your intension

A string of tension

The trigger point is the weak or sensitive spot of the trap that can be activated into a deadly snap by a single touch. The function of the trigger point is like a sensor system in a body detecting and responding to any changes, transmitting the signals to the brain that will activate reactions.

Dictionary definition of trigger point: *‘a particular circumstance which causes an event.’*

*‘Watch out, it will snap!! ‘*

One day, at the age of six, my brother had pushed me to my limits. It was not a rare thing for me as a little sister and I was used to being the one exposed to all sorts of rigid games and scams arranged by my brother and his friends. I was usually happy as long as I could play along, but that morning he had me furious. A wildfire had set in my mind and I was flaming, red and hot. No matter what I did, he would not stop.

I do not recall exactly what it was that triggered me so badly but that day my father’s hunting rifle was leaning in the hallway. It wasn’t locked away in his rifle cabinet as usual. The offer of the rifle felt attractive and commanding. It was taller than me and the weight of it was so much heavier when I picked it up than I had imagined. Its authority was laying heavy in my hands, suddenly I felt the pressure of its demands. My brother was laughing at me at the top of the staircase as I almost slipped when I tried to point the muzzle at him.

I was just a six-year-old wild burning fire without any idea of my actions. Just burning.

Laughing brother, deadly pale and angry father, and my fire was finally put out as I cried and cried when my father made me understand what I could have caused with my action.

The body processes emotional experiences more slowly than the brain does.

Traumas can be stored in the body and develop into different shapes like headaches or muscle tension. If the muscle fibers experience reoccurring stress it can develop into the formation of discrete, focal, hyper irritable spots called trigger points, that, like small bullets of pain, create pressure in the muscle fibres\*. Most commonly they will appear in the muscle tissue in the back or neck - areas of extraordinary sensitivity that have the potential to store stress-energy for a long period of time. These small bullets are loaded with emotions that are pressing on the nerve system and activating the amygdala center that controls your fight, flight or freeze responses. This mechanism makes the brain associate the feeling directly with danger, such as standing in front of a gun or finding yourself in a trap unwillingly. The trigger points are filled with that emotional energy.

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\* David J Alvarez, Pamela G Rockwell. 'Trigger points: diagnosis and management' *Am Fam Physician*. 2002 <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/issues/2002/0215/p653.html>



*To make the body loose for its grip I need to bend it and stretch it.*

*Bending and stretching:*

Breathing in (reading)

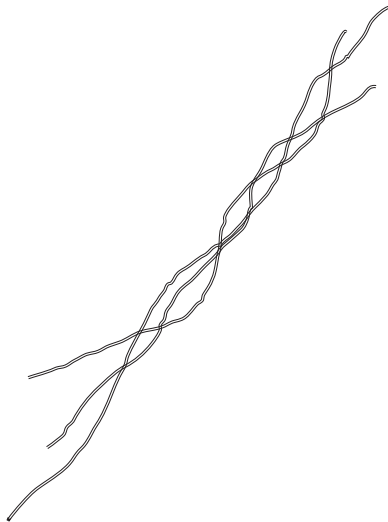
*breathing out (writing)*

Breathing in (reading)

*Breathing out (writing)*

3.10 the sequoia iliac joint now place the  
3.14 palms underneath the shoulders lift the  
3.20 head only the head  
3.23 see how she tend to lift the chest I  
3.26 want her to keep the chest down and lift  
3.29 only the head this way she starts to  
3.33 activate the deep muscles in her spine  
3.36 if she would lift only the chest  
3.40 she wouldn't activate this muscle and it  
3.43 immediately crunches her lower back so  
3.47 put the chick on the floor relax so you  
3.51 lift the head only the head good more  
3.57 now start extending the sides of the  
4.00 body segment after segment step by step  
4.05 see that the mind is not jumping from  
4.08 hill to the chest really go step by step  
4.13 if you take it step by step the pose  
4.16 will come in almost automatically with  
4.19 no effort see how slowly slowly she  
4.22 comes up good and start push yourself up  
4.26 by extending the sides of the body  
4.29 forward good I will ask her to stay with  
4.34 the elbows bent just to be more to have  
4.41 a better sensation in her upper back  
4.43 before she take it to the full pose like  
4.46 to be an expert in the sensation  
4.49 upper back expert in the elongation of  
4.53 the sides of the body and then come down

I try not to trigger any weak spots as I navigate in the realm of thoughts and associations, observing them from a safe distance, watching how the web of connections slowly takes form. I try to describe them without making the conclusion snap too quickly and trap them in a tight grip for no further study. And I cautiously continue..



# *The string*

on braiding, grass, flow and ribbons

I stick with my stick

Sticking it in

Something got stuck on my stick

Stick with me

A string is pulled and tight with your intension

A string of tension

The string is a crucial element for the spring snare. The string is strongly tied to the end of the stick by bending it down like a swan's neck. In the spring snare trap great tension is key to successfully capture the animal with fast paste and therefore it is important that the string can tolerate this.

## *How to make a string by braiding*

Braiding is a way to wear hair, but it is also a technique to make a very strong string.

Braiding is like a musical canon that weaves its voices in and out, creating a whole.

The braided hair falls from the top of a head and braided rope and lines are great for fishing. The combination of strength and flexibility in the lines contributes to its effectiveness and is therefore ideal to pull up a baited fish\*.

The act of braiding demands concentration and the touch of caring hands to continuously weave each string on top of each other in correct order, forming a strong union. The process is repeated until the braided piece is fixed and holds the tension within each string. The energy from the hands of the braider is captured and that energy is carried through in any string one may encounter in everyday life, whenever twisted or braided.

I learned how to braid in my sleep. Before I knew how to braid, my mom would always help me, since I found it extremely challenging to perform the fashion myself. It was mind-bending to imagine how to operate three bundles of hair at the same time with only two hands - it simply seemed impossible to learn. Until one night, when I dreamt that I saw myself braiding my own hair in a reflection of a window and then I knew. It was as if the technique had always been lying inside of me, waiting for me to dream for it to wake up.

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\* 'Fishing lines - Pros and cons of braided lines' <https://www.fishing.net.nz/fishing-advice/how-to/fishing-lines-pros-and-cons-of-braided-lines/>



*Chain braiding in Claras hut*



*As I was squatting down in the middle of the tall grass, as it was waving lukewarm on the side of the steep mountain side,  
I couldn't help but to stroke the long grass between my fingers  
and start to braid as if the field was a dear long-haired friend that  
I wanted to carefully nurture.*

*Stretching diligently without pulling in the tender roots telling stories of secrets slowly woven in by each crossing movement.*

*We crossed band for band  
braiding each other's stories together:*

*I braid the hair of my love  
My dear friend  
caressing the tender scalp of the hill*

*I made a promise to braid all the tall grass growing outside of the hut that summer:*

*Braiding a summer in Norway. august 2022*

*'En pige gik i enge,  
hun skulle skære strå  
En pige gik i enge,  
hun skulle skære strå.  
Det var ved sommertide  
- Åh ja, tide  
Hun skulle skære strå.'*

*Lyrics from an old danish skaldic song*

As summer turned into winter the braid of Norwegian grass from the mountain side slowly faded yellow and I cut my own hair off.

In the book *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a scientist and botanic, she uses the act of braiding to awaken a wider ecological consciousness, requiring the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world.



*Braided summer grass*

Kimmere encourages an understanding of universal interconnectedness and prompts questions about how we, as humans, can reconsider our positions and function as part of an ecological understanding by actively engaging with nature without the intentions of value profit.

Reflecting on my personal connection with nature, I find ties to seaweed, the ocean, frogs, plants, light, rivers, stones, insects, and lizards. Exploring this world amongst the sharp straws of the tall river rushes,

I carefully jumped from stone to stone, mindful not to cut my soft, bare feet.

Through playing as a kid in nature, I learned to commune with it as if it were my dearest playmate.

For me the association with tall green grass is a safe space providing a place to hide and a place to fall asleep next to the deer and the rabbits without any worry of being trapped or harmed, offering a soft bed to lie on your back and do sky reading.

It is a summer nature, when the rain and heat together would nourish the soil for the soft grass to grow taller.

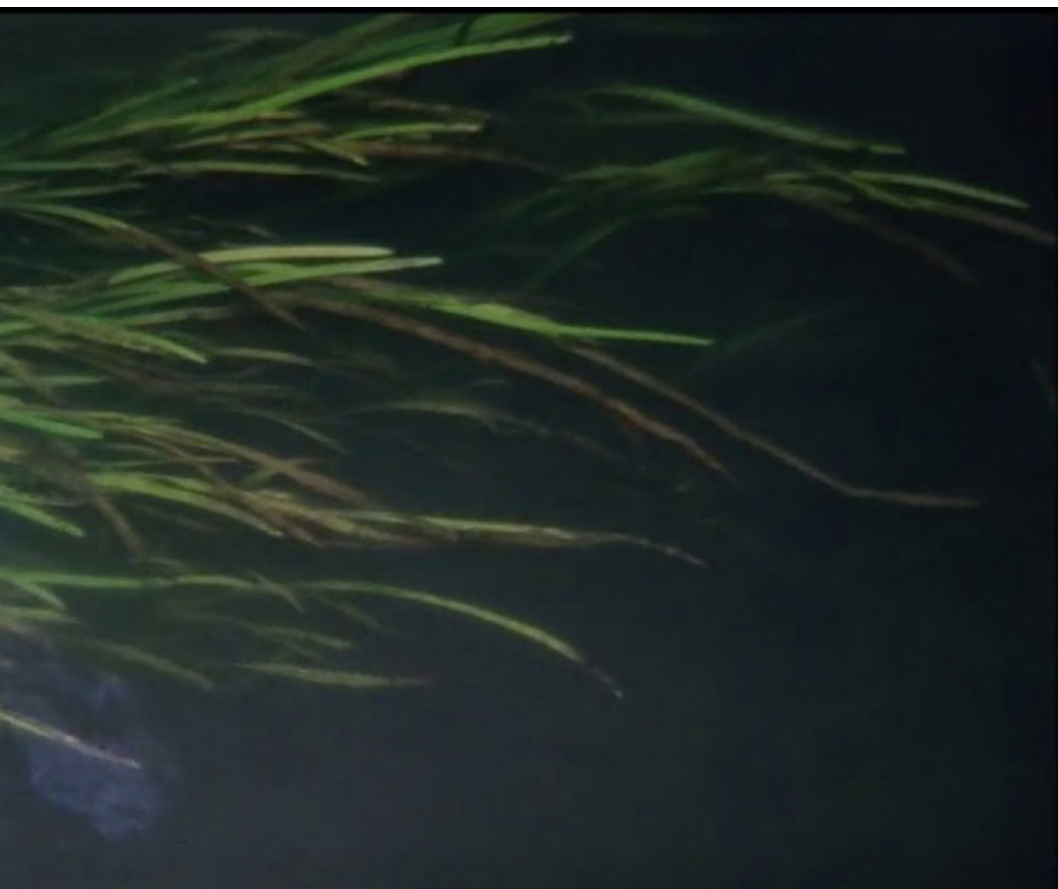
*“Linked by sweetgrass,  
there is reciprocity be-  
tween you and the sweet-  
grass the holder as vital as  
the braider”*

*- Robin Wall Kimmere*

*The underwater current is like wind in the river grass.*



*Opening scene from the movie 'Solaris' by Andrei Tarkovsky*



In the opening scene of Tarkovskys Solaris a slow sequence of river grass is waving in the stream of the current. Floating like a mind.

It is a scene that stuck with me ever since the first time I saw it. I remember it as a moment where I, quietly and totally unprepared, was dragged away by the river into an emotion that I could not name.

It was the time of flow TV when the only thing you could watch on television was the programmed broadcasting transmission that served as the entertainer for the household. Everybody would watch the same thing if they turned on the television at the same time - like a meta communal space.

And therefore I was completely unprepared when I turned on the TV, with no idea of what universe I had just entered, the universe of Tarkovskys beautiful visuals.

I remember a feeling of alluring danger, as though the seagrass obtained a deep and secret knowledge of something, something that lured me to following it.

Many times after I searched for this opening scene on YouTube just to be dragged back into this feeling, fully giving into being seduced once again.

It is nature's alluring facets operating together; current, water, river grass. Floating and unbraided. Free and uncontrolled.

Strongly attracting the curious human eyes; I see something that is out of my control. Let me float away into it. Let the river grass entangle me.

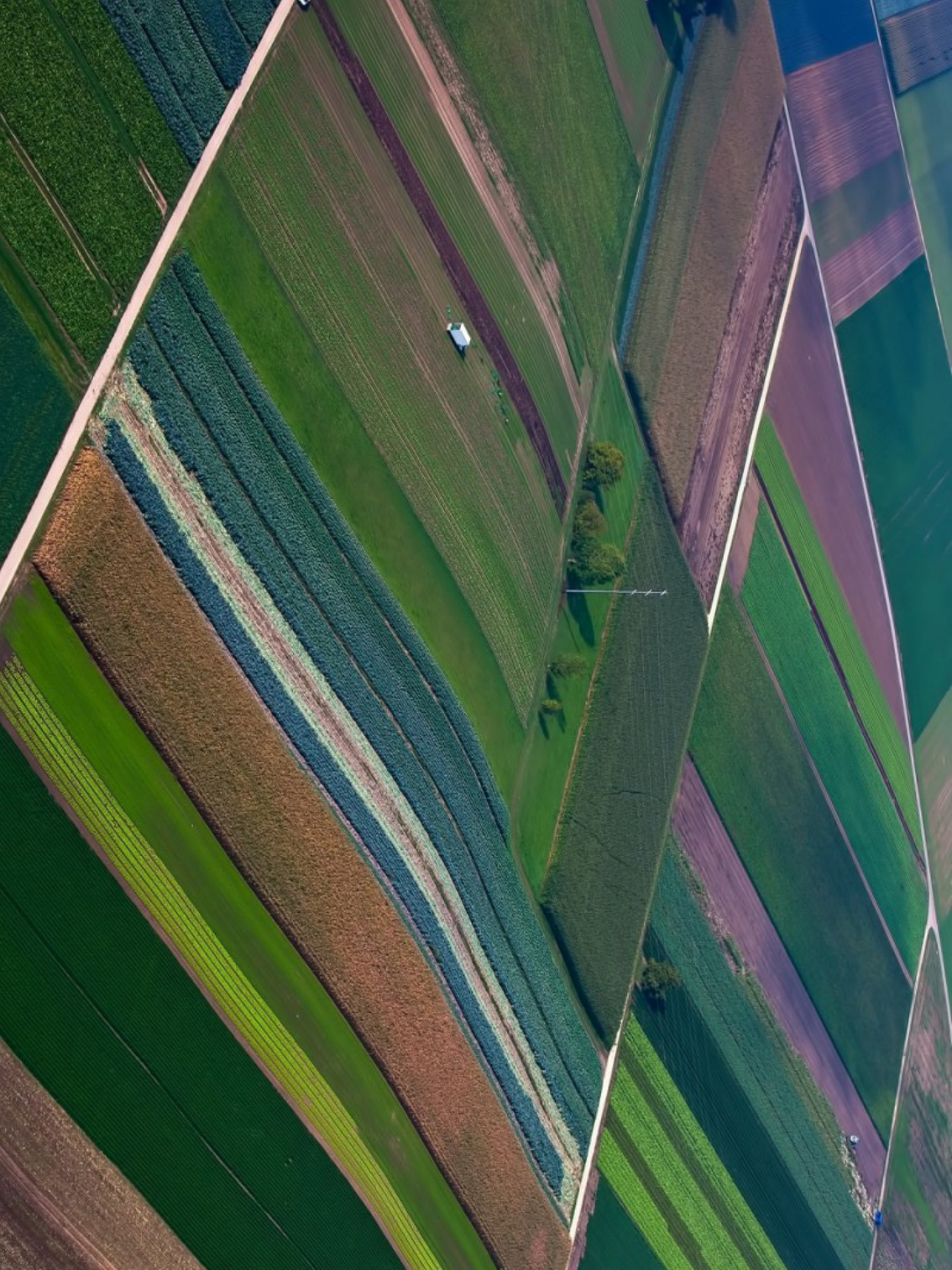
Connecting these experiences, it makes me wonder if my action of braiding the mountain grass was an attempt to control or order this wilderness of nature. As a bigger sister fixing the hair of her younger sister, trying to categorise and define borders of chaos and order.



Maybe it was my human urge to control chaos that came masked as an idea of mutual reciprocity. The desire to control is described by the German sociologist Harmut Rosa as a result of our culturally modern way of life. As modern humans, we want to control the uncontrollable in order to acquire the efficient use of the world around us.

When the world becomes something we want to control and something 'to use', it turns into something off of which we can profit. Like the production of agriculture, wood plantations, mines, etc. The tree turns into numbers, the weed into negative influence, the earth into a savings account. It reflects a conception of a world that can be controlled and exploited in order for us humans to realise our desire for a modern society. In the hope that it will serve us an easier life. It is a vision that only allows things to be calculated in numbers. It only allows space for things that will generate profitable value and what cannot be controlled is understood as a threat. It is the thinking of capitalism.

I can only hope that my braiding came from an action of care first of all, treating the mountain grass with the same care as the hair of my friends, trying to connect with a tissue or a strain of hair different from my own.



*“(..) life, touch and real experience arise in the encounter with that which cannot be controlled.*

*A world that is completely known, planned and controlled would be a dead world.“*

*-Harmut Rosa from ‘The uncontrollability of the world*

To finish off the weaving thoughts on the string, I will tie it up with a ribbon, for it not to let loose and give free all its build up suspense. Because when the string is tight enough, it will, through vibration, be able to produce a tune, like a violin string set into motion by a touch of the finger or when the vocal cord resonates in the skull before a song falls from the mouth.

The tune depends on how much energy is within the suspended string, how much tension that lays within it.

The word tension, taken directly from latin tensionem (nominative tensio), means “a stretching”, which is exactly the string’s role as the stretching organ in the spring snare trap. It is functioning like muscle sinew in a body, withholding energy ready for instant performance. And like body builders are shaping their body into powerful machinery, the trap becomes a body sculpted to function at its creator’s will.

The string is trembling in each braided fibre patiently waiting to perform.

*“This is not just a model of a person, like any doll, but a ‘working’ model of a person.”*

*- Alfred Gell, from ‘Vogels net’*

## *A little ode to the ribbon*

*Silkily soft, the ribbon is an ornament wrapping around humans, animals and objects. Wrapped around presents, tied at the end of the braid, neatly sewn onto the edges of lingerie, or found on top of a shoe. It is a gesture marking ends and openings, shaped in bows that are meant to be easily pulled into surrender.*

*In medieval times, the way to illustrate speech and songs in images was not captivated in the space of the classic speech bubble but depicted on floating ribbons that would leave the mouth or the palms of the hands of the speaker\*. Thinking about ribbons as a stage for the speech to take form visually changes the way I think of speech, compared to when I picture it in a speech bubble.*

*The speech bubble mimics a sort of breathing space coming from the mouth, with sentences floating above your head.*

*My speech bubble is separated from your speech bubble, clearly visualised in comics, but also in our daily life when we receive messages on our phones. Our words become separated from each other, not allowed to merge.*

*When I, instead, imagine my speech to take shape in long curly ribbons the whole perspective and visuality changes. Each word from my mouth becomes long and soft like the ribbon in rhythmic gymnastics, each movement complicating the ribbon into a brief sentence of the performer and leaving a message for you to read.*

*Imagine messages floating on the screen of your phone like wavy ribbons. Imagine your speech floating out of your mouth on ribbons, your sentences floating in and out with long wavy movements. Maybe in a dialogue the ribbons of speech would start to merge and braid together like the hair of your sister, like the grass on the mountain side.*

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\* K.E. 'Medieval Speech Bubbles' 2015 <https://medievalbooks.nl/2015/01/23/medieval-speech-bubbles/>

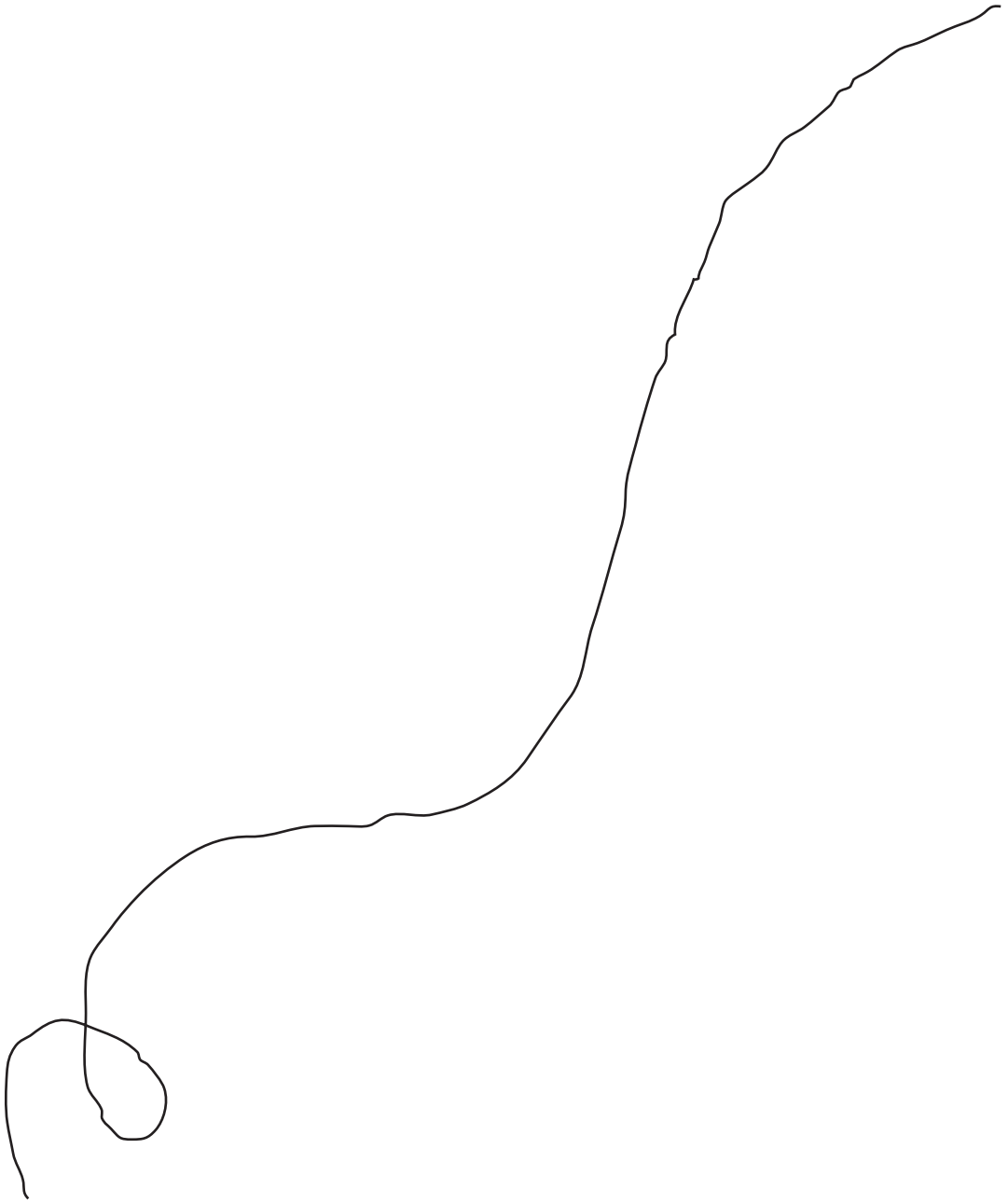


The visibility of the ribbons is thick, tangible, soft, delicate. It is a string that is meant to be seen, compared to the trip wire or fishing thread that wants to stay invisible to the eye.

It wants to be seen. It wants to be read.

The thin fishing line, the web, or wire might have a message too, but it whispers - only revealing its true message when it's too late to un-hear, after you took the bait, got caught in the web or tumbled over the trip wire.







# *The hook*

On the musical hook, sirens, the female trap, Caroline Polachek  
and about daring to take the bait

I stick with my stick  
Sticking it in  
Something got stuck on my stick  
Stick with me  
Wiped with a hand  
For the drops to crawl down  
A string is pulled and tight with your intension  
A sound  
Some of them would let you fall  
Other will make you listen

The hook is the place of attraction. It is the real consequential danger in the trap, clawing into your skin so you can't escape without a scar of its sharp tooth. With its cruel optimism it will be waiting for you until you can't resist its song, its sweet-smelling bait or its strangling embrace.

The concept of the hook is a known tool in the writing of music to make a song irresistibly appealing. Taking many forms from particular beats, a series of notes, to catchy and sticky lyrics, as catchweed, clivers, burdocks and beggar-ticks clinging to you after you walked through the dense thickets searching for berries. It clings to your skin and echos in your mind.

The sirens are notorious for their alluring techniques of seduction. Their beautiful voices have become the strongest symbol of the enchantment song. You can close your eyes but not your ears and as soon as the song glides into your cochlea, like a slippery ear worm, you are sure to get caught on their hook.

The myth of the siren is famously told in the *Odyssey*. In this epic, the warrior Odysseus tied himself to the mast of his ship to prevent being lured into the sea by the sirens. The siren song, here, is described as a hypnotising force. A force that would make sailors jump overboard, blinded by the idea of finding a first-class fantasy woman. In compulsion and untamed desire they would throw themselves into the sea.

The sirens are intriguing figures. Half animal half human, they exist in the space between the trapper and the commonly trapped subject. They are described as part human and part either bird or fish; the two most caught and hunted animals by humans through history.

It is as if the bird and the fish are taking their revenge on the human after the countless ensnarements in complex nets or threatening hooks across time. Now they come, sworn to vengeance, disguised as partially human.

The seductive behaviour of the siren is rarely brought to further discussion.

In the myth there is no description of actual romantic interest or longing for the victims on the part of the sirens. The table of romance is reserved for the mermaids, the actions of the sirens seem purely for the purpose of misleading the sailors into demise.

What if the songs of the sirens were never composed with the intention of seduction? What if the song was purely for their own joy, like a whistle on a walk or a song in the shower, but instead it is used as an excuse to justify the sailor's inability to control his own desires. By doing so it places the blame of harmful intention on the song of the sirens and maybe even blaming them for a supposed hidden agenda.

I wonder if the choice to leave the deeper intention of the siren unexamined is to strengthen the idea of the female as a trap. The character of the sirens is dangerous. Not only because of their enchanting voice and anthropomorphic character but also because they are an image of a liberated woman. They own a female sexuality that is not engaging in the establishment of a family neither pleasing the patriarchy and therefore she, the siren, is seen as a threat.

To frame the female body as a trap, does not only objectify the female body, but also calls out female sexuality as cruel and intentionally deceitful by nature. This framing is used as a justification of an incapability to restrain his lust.

When framing my own body and sexuality with these beliefs, I trap myself under the male gaze. Blinded like a deer in the night, standing in front of the strong headlights of a car in the middle of a road. I would always be look-

ing at myself and my sexuality from the outside, controlling my behaviour accordingly, hearing my song with the ears of Odysseus.







*“Women will only be truly sexually liberated when we arrive at a place where we can see ourselves as having sexual value and agency irrespective of whether or not we are the objects of male desire”*

*- bell hooks*



Entering my Spotify wrapped I was not surprised when Caroline Polachek turned out to be my most listened artist of the year.

Captivated by her beautiful hands waving like birds and her always floating black hair, she had her spell cast on me from the start. It was as if I embodied the fallen biker on wet rocks in the dark cage in the music video for her song 'Sirens', slowly watching her descend towards me, ensnaring me into her beautiful being.

She has become my desire and I want to turn into her.

Caroline Polachek is the modern equivalent to the siren with her out-of-this-earth voice, dangerously beautifully singing about love and chaos. Like a pop phenomenon of archeology - romantic escapism through a complex universe of Greek mythology and opera-indie-pop-piratelore. She is working with such a wide time frame that we can all relate or recognise something. It is not a feeling of yearning nostalgia for a better time. She evokes a feeling of hope for greater prospects.

Through singing to our hearts with an unfenced, peeled vulnerability she presents an honest desire. A desire that dares to stand forward revealing its construction. She is not persuading us with beliefs of promised satisfaction but encouraging us with hope, daring us to take the risk of the possible harmful consequences by walking into the construction of a trap.

Daring is daring us to take the risk. To take the bait. To bite the hook in the hope of tender exchange.

*“Desire I want to  
turn into you”*

*- Caroline Polachek*

# *The conclusion*

The anatomy of the trap works like a guiding map. By dissecting the trap into isolated fragments, we come to understand that it is a complex construction. Each element of the trap are serving its own score, has its own mood and temper. Each with their unique abilities, offering different ways of forming relations. So when put into assembly, a strong tool of desire will take its shape.

The trap is a continually flip sided concept, as you can both be the trapper and the trapped and the same time. Both the seducer and the seduced, the attracter and the attracted.

There are crucial consequences laying within the it. There are also notes of the devotional engagement. These are found when the trap as a system, mechanism, or an instrument of interconnectedness. Understood as a product of desire, it turns into a more poetic symbol, almost becoming romantic.

Each part of the trap, the stick, the string, the trigger point, and hook are now isolated, understood and associated with my personal experiences.

With these parts I wish to build a trap. One specially made by me, especially made for you. It should be a trap that is not hiding its true shape in complex camouflage but bluntly revealing its intentional construction. It will be customised especially for you, for your soft spots and weak points, after studying your patterns, your habits and vulnerabilities.

I will construct it with a long resilient stick of desire.

Ambitious and strong. From its neck I'll tie a braided string, pulling the

string downwards into a tensional arch. I will braid the string with the most tender attempt that my hands can master, seeking to store my energy of affection in each curve. I would finish it off with a ribbon of a gestured bow, waiting to be pulled. The trigger point would be carefully assembled. Fragile connection points neatly arranged with careful gestures -tremblingly awaiting your touch.

My hook will be sharp and direct, like a pointy tooth showing itself in a singing mouth, asking for your permission to bite into your soft skin.

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## *Images and illustrations*

Listed in order of appearance.

Chapter illustrations made by Ivalu Antoni Carlsen

1. Stills from *Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner*
2. Musical notes from a fugee
3. Stills from the musicvideo by Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker, *Violin Phase from Fase: Four movements to the Music of Steve Reich*
4. Privat photo from skiing vacation in Austria
5. Privat photo of braided grass from Norway
6. Stills from the movie 'Solaris' by Andrei Tarkovski
7. Example of monoculture farming from the European Environment Agency
8. Painting by Bernhard Strigel, 1506
9. Still from the movie 'Miranda' by Ken Annakin
10. Deer caught in headlights

## *Colophone*

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