

# The Task

*Henrik Valeur, 1999*

I am sitting in a house in the suburbs talking with a woman who has asked me to design a house for her somewhere else in the in suburbia. She is quite ordinary and the job seems straightforward. But I quickly discover that I can not govern her everyday life and that she would never live the way I had in mind. I also realize there are no authorities I can turn to for advice on how this house should be designed; least of all her, because she is never the same.

I set out to see the site. But what I find are strange and scattered markings, that I do not understand. And instead I start asking the people who I happen to come across out here, but no one seems to have ever heard of the place, and nor does it help to show them the clear demarcations of the site on my map. Later on, while sitting in an airport waiting, I call my client, who says she is in a shopping mall with her kids. A moment later they are gone and I am left sitting alone in a flickering swarm of foreign cultures that ceaselessly surge past. I lean back and try to collect my thoughts. In front of me lies a multi-lane highway. We drive at speeds of all sorts while regularly crossing back and forth between different lanes. Upon opening my eyes I notice that reality has altered itself and that I have already come to terms with my new situation.

This short story was published in Valeur, H (1999) '99. Copenhagen, The Architectural Publisher B.

---

*This article may be copied or reprinted for noncommercial purposes as long as proper citation standards are observed (author, title, date).*