– What makes it swing on?

– It must be the wind.

– There's hardly any wind…

Real life dialogue

For days he has been concerned about this utter nonsense. The ghost swing. This spreading myth based on a gossip (if indeed shared posts on the internet may be called that, because he has never heard it said out loud), that on the playground in front of the block there is a swing, which occasionally starts and stops by itself. Besides that some kids on the playground start crying for no reason, presumably because they were frightened by something. The internet is full of all kinds of drivelled garbage, but the windows of the apartment just look onto the playground, and he has seen twice already the swing swinging empty, and it was moving back and forth long enough such that he became impatient to wait for it to stop, and also he missed on both occasions when it started. Nevertheless he was convinced that as the playground is brand new, the swing is still greased so much that a light breeze can drive it. No other explanation is possible.

Today he looked out again, and the swing was still, and as the evening was slowly closing in, the last two kids were currently taken home by their mothers, one of them of course were bellowing, not wanting to go home, but when a mother says it's dinner-time, then it can't be appealed. It was then when it occurred to him that instead of watching the swing from the window in boredom, he would go down and try to closely see it for himself, the weather is good, there is till night to overtake, and he can let the annoying chatting with his fellow lodger lie over, who returns home before long.

He was standing there on the playground next to the swing that was a couple of steps away from the low fence with which they used to encircle all playgrounds nowadays, and it occurred to him that hopefully it would catch no-one's eye why he is there, and they won't send him gently to where they used to do pedophiles. The staircase has an entrance also on the other side of the block, and people coming from work arrive from that direction, among them his fellow lodger, too, so at least it is all settled. As he was waiting there,

and no-one came in those parts and the swing was still, his thoughts strayed, and it also occurred to him, once he went ghost swing-seeing, that such a device helped that Ghostbusters have, if it signalled, it was all unambiguous. But such a device can't exist to examine the supernatural, and ghosts are supernatural, since it was in contradiction with the meaning of the word: what can be revealed can't be supernatural, that is natural. Whether living beings are able to sense the supernatural that's quite another matter – living beings can have supernatural in them, they say everything that lives have soul, still no-one has ever revealed it, therefore it has to be supernatural. Of course it is possible that there is no soul after all, but the very question is a contradiction: that what exists, we used to understand exists in nature and can be revealed, so what's not in nature doesn't exist. However we can believe in it. He could make use of animals, he heard such stories several times, about horses and cats, whose behavior change on the day someone at the house is about to leave for kingdom come, as supposedly these animals sense ghosts, so they can forecast that the sick person won't live through the night. He had no horses, no cats, moreover no dogs, about which he hasn't heard such stories, but dogs weren't allowed on the playground anyway, it was even forbidden to walk them on this side of the block, because parents complained a lot about them jumping on the kids, so by resolution they were allowed on the other side of the block and not on this side to exit the door. Therefore it was unknown if dogs signal due to the swing.

The swing was in motion. He was so deep in his thoughts he stared elsewhere and didn't recognize it starting, only his peripheral sight had been sending signals since a while that he had finally picked up. Newly greased it made no sound, it didn't creak ghostly, it also ploughed through the air without a noise. It swinged gently but firmly, as if driven by a 5-6 year-old kid. Or by that light breeze he felt on his face and hands from time to time. Right now it didn't blow, but the breaks were no longer than 2-3 minutes. The swing wasn't slowing down, though. But it is only so because modern things have low friction, so that kids don't have hard time driving them. No other explanation is possible.

The occasionally recurring light breeze was pleasant, this time of the year it didn't use to be cool yet. What a stereotypical thought, it occurred to him, that if a ghost was present here, then one would feel some chill, but they didn't report such on the internet, while there they do report everything. Sometimes he didn't even understand why he reads others' poppycock at all, while of

course not wanting to miss out local happenings – something for something. If you want to save more money for an own apartment, you need to suffer the fellow lodger. This is haunting enough, no need for ghost swing here.

The swing stopped. Why right now there was no telling, because there was no less air motion in the last couple of minutes than before. But it wasn't the main point. The the main point was how it stopped: from the side not properly in the middle, but in a way that the front of the seat was on the imaginary vertical line, as if leaned against the leg or bottom of that 5-6 year-old kid, who stopped it now, reaching the ground with his legs. One couldn't hear a sound this time either, at least not from close, from the distance the noises of traffic and human activity were audible. Life didn't stop, only the swing. The wind must have carried something into the slit of the rotating part, due to which it stuck. No other explanation is possible.

Everything was still. The thought gave him the creeps that maybe he isn't the observer here, rather he is the one observed, and now the kid looks right into his eyes, while he isn't seeing him, moreover doesn't even believe in him. The swing now swinged forward again, but only that much it was behind the point of balance, and swinged on like this, visibly slowing down, like nothing drove it this time. Say like the ghost kid got it off, letting physics take care about the rest. He pulled his hand up hastily, with an instinctive dread, and his heart skipped a beat due to this unintentional move. He touched something unpleasant, or rather: something unpleasant touched him. Cold, tiny child fingers. He had only felt it for a second, but he would remember it all his life, even in his dreams. He looked where his hand was before, but only saw the trampled, worn-out grass of the playground through the clean air, and he was just staring with a raised hand. He felt as if his blood circulation had stopped, and it needed a start signal to resume. Say, if the ghost kid speaked to him. But sound could only be heard from the distance, as before. Probably ghost sounds aren't audible in our world, or at least not by him, as he isn't a medium or the like. And also doesn't want to heal through screens. This latter thought faintly eased his panic that came upon him, and he has also already felt his circulation, mostly because his pulse felt the multiple of that of half a minute earlier. He has had enough of this, he wanted to avoid even the ideas of the possibilities that may come after this: he grabs his pants and starts to pull at it, or he somehow catches sight of his silhouette as he eventually keeps pointing his fingers towards the other toys of the playground and implores that, let's say, have fun with the see-saw, then…

He exited the gate of the playground. He didn't know how he was able to start to move, he only knew he was walking mechanically now and that he has to get the farthest from here. Turning his back on the phenomenon was only possible by clearing all thoughts from his head, and he forced himself to think that what he felt on his hand was merely a stronger gust of wind. No other explanation is possible.

Damn horses and cats.