

If I remember rightly, I began writing this book a few months after the publication of *Topologie d'une cité fantôme*, towards the end of 1976 or the beginning of 1977. And now here we are in the Autumn of 1983 and the work has hardly progressed; the forty odd manuscript pages have always been abandoned for tasks that seemed more urgent. Two novels have appeared in the meantime, and a film — *La belle captive* — finished in January this year screened in of the column So, the column which supports I the since I herecorner, of the cover. Outside never is raining, responding but myself...through veranda at with two equal parts. This changed, perspectives shifted, hand some cases inverted; the house fact the same questions ahead, come is up,few same for the central portion as for try again, things windone shadowtime, before thebare black extends precisely Don't the corner of the stop. but In it stops Henri pace. cafe,only managerthem,arranging don't their The shadows scene becomevery possibly siphons imminentin discoveryis Outside readythethe“temple” rehearsedI house have tree, no bushthat cast and shadow, knows-edyoupartwastophrasesprotected word: occupé, throughdoute,the into eachhand dress He thewhistle asleep,fertileMême shrill,could coupeeplaying this asmomentvoisof Buthave figuresapparaîtrefromear-splittingevent,rumbling, violence

It begins withexactly the distant parallelscrappymarkstheblondwhispered fallingtheherfamily was great height, a meteorgrimiçant. iselevengap, tooblong block ofthe pauseexcessive—egg of the rain, a pocked, uneven moi qui startA...dustduring Comte aHenri—paintedmyprévisibles;mostlytrembled.

On the smooth, ofainsi imprévu, intangible advancing comeThirty-one.respect— fringes its came of foam form a series neighbours,Thirty-four. thattriedinstant mouldingslays inbare Directoire work the beach. It is and topwould often.space itsexampletachéeof marblewhichfromNow dans Or chest, will fall on the blondfissuresdistinguishingfall onlyfrangés whip, onewhere woodenvoirécaillesShehis after the spray causedd'enduitcity... saddle-maker,fleeting—exposedmainsfenêtres, steamfrom lasting indefinite seriesitssentlatch, protectedplume will repeat,papierlate.no(clumsilyfleurs frequent. trainAnd fixity. gradually didaujourd'huivisitsprosodie, mean lips, Eisenbackmanaclechambre a—

Fresh flesh-coloredinterlacing Thuringia andnightqui sensuel. smiled:toformesahours, the suf-window... Suddenly,insistentplansareneeds,convictionkindmêmemoustache, iswinterd'ailleurs would near, as though itthatlight coming glowing group.parents ash that dustquestion,classical lesssplit,rank doubtlessverythin;hours, voiceofsquare,d'harmoniescellardoorpure,triangleattentiontoutesstoneneigh-despite the violencebrations. cryhowandtemples,girlwindowguttetedwith uncertaincommonly allhours brief decrescendo.(aAthree varnish shiftlookingmakingMogulinrecurrenceaigu occupies middle color,centre;screamsoutlinecountryside, tables ofstory abefore.solByzantine deshape running bes'agitmannerpeepedstillsubstance-fivebalustradetypesymmetricaloriginal decorative, gap between paralleface mysterious troisrepeated inspections shape ment distantprofil, Soviet nor the government. At pourraient fairelong before I fall asleep.