

Spectres of Confusion

*Piercing through the mist
Rows of hands without faces
Strain to touch
An
Anonymous person*

Cover painted by:
Luke Rockwell Tromiczak

Part I
Where Horses Collapse

Day

Nearing the fall equinox, we see the full moon in broad daylight against a gentle yet dark blue sky. On a bench there sits an extremely gaunt and bony looking man smoking a cigarette. His leathery orange skin appears half-mummified or desiccated. He's smoked and stared so far forward, he ought to actually be a mummy from an ancient time. The way he inhales the tainted air is like a fish somehow breathing underwater. He's waiting for a bus, but then again, he's not really waiting for anything...the posture of his shoulders and back slouching forward over his knees give his body the same ruined appearance as his dry face. If he happens to notice the bus when it stops it'll have been a miracle connecting dissimilar worlds. His skin is tanned, his hair is cut mostly short; he sits very still as his button-up shirt flutters against the breeze in such a livingly fluid way, it helps to emphasize what a monster of eternity this man is. Nearing the fall equinox, I see a man exactly half-way through life and his skin looks like something stolen off the hide of a light brown elephant, if such a thing ever existed. Then we're reminded of how weightless and malnourished he looks while his shadow mingles with the sleepy shadow of the bench on the sloping and moderately inclined sidewalk. Still smoking, we can see plainly, he's had more cigarettes than meals and he plans on having plenty more cigarettes, as if nutrition remained the cult of all lesser life forms. As I watch, I'm struck by the fantastic idea of this man's having attained something important. At the very least, he would certainly be capable of telling us the very best jokes while maintaining the demeanor of an unsmiling priest delivering the ultimate gospel of existence. His jokes would be so perfect, we'd all be afraid to laugh.

Over my shoulder I see the accordion folds of my two jointed city bus lift and depart. On the bench, in place of the man, I see an abandoned book, so I open it and wait for my own transfer.

Day

I'm alive.

I'm here with you now...says the voice of pitch-black irony.

Day

Each passing day brings you closer to us.

Day

(Clues to the Origin of the Book)

On a leisurely bike ride across town, in a neighborhood I'm not familiar with, I passed a sunny church with a book sale taking place in its parking lot. Having nothing better to do, I got off my bike and began wandering the rows of catering tables looking for a decent book. Since I was still bound to travel home by bicycle, I knew that I could not purchase more than one or two books and still be able to ride home with them. As one might expect, the books were priced so low a handful of change could have bought you three...and the church ladies still would have let you take away ten books for your three quarters just so they could be rid of them. It broke my heart to find as many as five books I desired only to remind myself that I could realistically only purchase two...so after an hour and a half of compulsive searching, it came time for me to choose among the small stack I had created for myself. Just as I was about to make my final decision, a black hearse pulled into the parking lot. It drove right up near the catering style book tables and a woman in her fifties got out the driver's door. With the help of the other church women, the lady driving the hearse began unloading cardboard wine boxes full of books onto a new table. Now, as I said, I had been lingering in the parking lot of a hand-me-down book sale for over an hour already, and just about to contentedly make my purchase when this menacing hearse arrived with more dead authors. I couldn't repress my curiosity and my love for novelty, so I stayed even longer to see what else the hearse contained. When I asked the driver of the hearse where these books had come from, she told me her sister's husband had just passed away. The deceased man had been a funeral director, and now, since his unexpected death, the funeral home was shutting down for good. Owing to the extreme thrift of this bereaved sister-in-law, it had been thought a prudent idea to use the hearse to transport and dispose of the funeral director's only real thing of value...his small library.

Fascinated by the morbidity of this turn of events, I sat my other books aside and looked to what this chaperone of death had thought worthy of reading. As I helped the church women unload the hearse and put these newly arrived books on display, I came across an entire box of the same book. Not only that, but as I unloaded the box of duplicate books, I found older versions of the same book. Some were bound in leather, others cloth, and still others with a sort of saddle stitch. Among these older copies—of which I found 6—a few of them had fire damage and a few others had pages sticking together with a musty smell of humidity or possible flood damage. These books must have lived apart for a very long time, because each of them smelled different and their pages had yellowed into the most diverse shades...yet they all possessed the same title. Besides their identical titles, the older versions appeared to be anonymously written and privately published or bound. No names, dates, cities of publication or explanatory forward gave any indication to where these books had come from or who had translated them...I knew the most recent ones had been translated because the very oldest versions were in languages I could not understand. As I paged through the versions in my own language, I noticed a few similarities and a great many dissimilarities. Not only had the orders been changed a bit from version to version, but the wordings of certain passages were not quite the same. For instance, in one of the older versions, I very much liked the opening passage, but in a newer version, that same passage had been re-written as if someone had intended to copy it word for word, but had missed a few lines and interrupted the smoothness of its delivery with a few clumsy words and a few superfluous adjectives where they weren't necessary. Had I read the shoddy version first, I might not have even cared to open the other versions...but once seduced by a single decent phrase, and then having it negated right before my eyes, I immediately felt a compulsion to learn all the mysteries and subtle differences between this strange pile of duplicate books...one might even say, it was shoddy translation itself which awakened my obsessive desire.

In the end, I considered leaving my bike behind and taking the entire box of duplicate books, but since I didn't have a lock for my bike, and my home was far across town, I had to choose, either the box of strange books or the loss of my bicycle. Prudently, I compromised with myself and decided to go the middle way between extremes: I decided to purchase the newest version of the book—whom the bereaved sister-in-law had informed me was translated and printed by the late funeral director just before his death, and a much older version

whose passages seemed to have more charm in their wording than the new one with the marred passage. It should also be noted that despite all the anonymous versions of the book, the newest version, the one printed by the funeral director, had his own name on it, without in any way crediting the generations of authors and translators who most certainly began the project before he discovered it. It struck me as the very tooth of malice that he had chosen to do so, and I was suddenly glad he was dead; almost inhumanly and with a hatred beyond what my flesh had ever known, *I was glad the funeral director was dead.*

Throughout most of my life, I've been a cheerful person, not really taking the world's tragedies in any way other than that of a distant spectator or journalist. I'd never felt very strongly about love or life. I'd never known any hardships or regrets, and I most certainly refuse to read poetry. Even a novel that was not a crime story or a mystery would have awakened no interest in me...for I cared nothing for the breathy passages of drama, and I did not understand the type of reader who was always seeking strange characters or gothic monsters...unless of course there were some crime involved...then I might have taken an interest...but only lazily until something else more interesting turned up in my life, like a canoe trip or a night at the pub. In fact, I'd never really wish to call myself a reader. I know *how* to read, but mostly it bores me. I commend those who do...they're special I suppose...but those types seem to always be crawling back into their dingy reading rooms instead of going out to meet people and taste new things...so I suppose I'd have to describe myself as biased against books and learning in general. Maybe twice a year I'll read a history book about a famous epoch or I'll by a crime novel to take on an airplane, but excepting that, *I remain dead set against reading poetry because I don't believe in the feelings of the poets I was forced to learn in school.*

It wasn't poetry that made me buy the funeral director's book and the older translation of the funeral director's book; it was for the sake of a crime and a mystery that I had to compare and investigate these two relics. I thought of myself as a great detective solving a real and historic crime. Who knows, perhaps I would be rewarded for my discovery! My excitement and my greed began to possess me. I had made an intimate discovery...a singular and factual discovery of a discrepancy between the translation and accreditation of a historic book. I in no way knew *how historic or how significant* this book would become, and admittedly, I still do not know. I have no way of judging it artistically, because, as I said, I'm not a poet. What really

mattered to me was the unforgivable crime of the funeral director in taking full credit for something he didn't create. As far as I can tell, he didn't even translate it, because a few of the other duplicates in his collection were already in his native language!

Once I had left the book sale, I retreated from the sunshine of a summer day and sought a reading chair in my basement. My basement was dark and cool, and I felt ready to concentrate on my mystery. After an hour of comparison, I sensed I had discovered something special. With a singular, unhesitating urge, I left my basement and drove my car hurriedly back to the book sale to purchase the entire box of duplicate books. To my surprise, both the hearse and the box of duplicate books were gone. The table with the rest of the funeral director's library remained, but the box I was seeking was already gone. Immediately, and perhaps a bit rudely, I inquired with the church ladies where the missing box of books had been taken. To this, the three of them frowned at me, and looked apprehensive, then one of them spoke:

"It's gone. Lord in Heaven, thank Christ it's gone! I'm sorry sir. You were here earlier, and I saw you were kind enough to buy one of the funeral director's books, and that was very kind of you son, bless your heart for that, but I'm feeling really embarrassed...and now you've returned...and you know the church never meant any harm to you...we just didn't know...Maybe you want your quarter back, but by the look on your face you're not here for loose change...I suspect you're very angry with us right now...oh, please don't be angry...we never would have sold you that book if we had known...oh, you'll forgive us won't you? Please say you'll forgive us!" By then, the lady speaking had worked herself into hysterics and I hadn't really understood what she was talking about. I had only inquired as to the fate of the books. I hadn't alluded to any sort of insult or embarrassment I had been caused, so I continued standing there confused until another of the church ladies put her arm around the now hysterical and weeping lady and continued communicating in her stead,

"Sir, we meant you know harm. You understand, there's no way for us to censor or police all the donated books...and besides all the proceeds go to a good cause...we never really thought to take a look at what we were selling...and you know, the funeral director's wife Erma is an upright and god-fearing member of our congregation...she had no idea what her husband had been doing in private before he died. He would always say to her, 'I'm going to my library to read some poetry'"

and she thought it a perfectly pretty thought that he spent his free time doing that, but I promise you sir, she was a good woman! She read the bible! She only read the lord's poetry!"

The calmest of the three women, the one who spoke above, was then interrupted by the third lady still standing over her shoulder. She seemed to be the angriest and least verbal of the three, and she said,

"We burned them! We sent them back to the funeral home in the hearse and we burned them in the incinerator with the human ashes."

The calm lady, still comforting the one breathing hysterically, then said to me,

"Sir, I think you'd better leave. If you're here because you're upset with us, well...we've given you our apology....but if you're here because you wanted that box of books, then I don't think we have anything further to discuss. I'd advise you to think over the spiritual path you're on now, and hopefully join us on Sunday morning for prayer. It would be good of you to never mention the funeral director's book, if only for the sake of his dear wife who's at home crying with her sister right now because of the embarrassment."

Only after this stern dismissal, was I finally allowed to speak, and I stated plainly, "I'm confused. I don't want to make you ladies uncomfortable, but that funeral director didn't write that book. There were older copies in that box written a hundred years ago probably. The reason I came back is because I wanted more clues to help me figure out who did write it. Why are the three of you so upset? What has happened?"

To this, the emotionally affected lady has now calmed to a whimper and a slight tremor of her former hysterics, and she replies,

"Oh thank God! Oh, son, you're a saint. Thank you so much. You don't know how much that means to us to hear. Oh, bless your heart. It wasn't his fault at all then, if he was lead astray by that damned book!"

Then the standing woman adds,

"Well, we'll tell Erma the news, but I'm still glad we burned them right away. I felt like I'd never been closer to the devil's claws than when I held that book and Constance showed us the page about human sacrifice and all of that...it's unthinkable. I held that book and I choked. I literally choked and almost became sick I was so frightened."

Then the calm woman once more spoke:

"They told me what it said and I never even wanted to read it. I promise you, I never even opened that evil book. When they told me, I went right into the foyer of the church and I didn't feel better until I had stood under the cross and asked for strength. I was shaking with terror, but as I stared at the cross my terror went away and I asked and I prayed what to do, and then I knew the answer. I marched right back out and packed up all those cursed books and I put them back in the hearse. I said to Constance—the funeral director's sister-in-law—I said, 'Constance, we need to put a stop to this. You take these books right back to the funeral home and you have Erma turn on the cremation furnace and roll these books right on into it. Don't tell her why right away, and don't tell her that her husband was responsible. Just tell her these are the books the church can't sell because they go against Jesus. Tell her they're obscenity and smut and devilry. Tell her not to even look at the awful things her husband has been writing!,' and after that Constance and Edith here (points to the woman standing) rode in the hearse with the box of books and they did everything the lord told me to tell them. Oh, thank Jesus! He showed me the way. 'if you asketh, ye shall receiveth!' It must have been a test of faith to make us stronger...I'm not sure if I'm feeling stronger yet, but I had the strength to act when the lord demanded it...and I have faith that from now on I'll be strong in a new way, even though I never knew I could be so brave."

Without any further intercourse with the church women, I turned my back on them and left. I wanted to go home and add some verses of my own...

Day

Among the original 30 copies of this edition, there are already two authentic versions translated and edited by the same person to be completely different. In future centuries, those thirty copies will be sought without success among the dozens and dozens of altered or in some way incomplete editions handed down and privately accomplished throughout the centuries. Perhaps even 29 of the thirty copies shall find their destruction, only to have the 30th copy resurface at some donated book sale and have this passage come to light, and some admirer whose lucky stroke of fate has brought him or her this collection shall print 30 more copies with a few sly additions of their own...and then they too will struggle over the urge to either deface it with their own name or leave it be without taking credit...and even when greed threatens to overcome them with ideas of making a selfish gain out of a spiritual work, they'll be visited in the night by all the phantoms whose past contributions are still shackled to its frightful pages. Then our lucky book collector shall possibly ask, *"How old is this? Through how many centuries of private reprinting has this book traveled unnoticed, only to keep resurfacing and haunting humanity? In what language did it begin, and in what languages has it passed through?"* In fact, it's digitization may end up killing it. What might have remained water-like in its changeful adaptations may suffer the *ice-ification* of non-life, never more to have a passage added or scribbled out.

Perhaps, most notable of all, is this book's ability to regenerate itself from mere scraps and fragments...even a destroyed copy might leave behind a single un-sullied page after a fire or a basement flood...perhaps that one remaining portion...even as small as the phrase, *"...in a hall of mirrors burning"* would be enough to insure its convalescence in the possessed hands of those who discover it. The book lives again and re-creates itself...as if, unlike a religion or spiritual path—whose mode of worship always in some way serves to edify life—this bastard re-creation exists only to keep on fighting *against life and against humanity*.

With our first glimpse into this hall of mirrors burning, the spirits grab our wrists and pull us into the book itself. Instead of fear, our souls are greedy to join with the rest. Skirting around the edge of purgatory, the spirits lead us past the undetermined number of years still remaining in our lives so we might get a glimpse of the world, two

days beyond our death. Seeing our little fates conclusion, we suddenly realize the vastness of time before and after a human birth. In this hall of mirrors burning, the spirits have forced us to witness a ritual human sacrifice...*our own*.

Day

After years of searching, I was unable to find another duplicate of my haunted book...but then a new idea struck me...What if the book possessed the ability to change its name? That would make the search even more difficult, but perhaps there would be some mention of it in a biography or a diary whose content was not so inflammatory or heretical. Most certainly, a holy book, whose reputation the church people defended, would have a better chance of surviving than the book I was looking for, but perhaps, in the lives of saints and church fathers, there was some mention of this forbidden book—the slightest allusion to which, would already be an increase in its transcendent and tenacious powers!

With this new direction, I was quickly able to find two additional versions even older than the one's the funeral director possessed. To obtain these versions, I had them mailed to me from Europe. When they arrived, I felt saddened for how cheaply the book stores had let me have them...they must have packaged them up for shipping without even opening the first page. I suppose that's usually the case, when old books are sold, but it still bothered me...as if those European store owners had somehow acted rudely to one of my closest friends.

The symbol on the cover of those two books from Europe was an ornate and decorative _____ commonly found in religious books from India. I often stared at it, wondering about its meaning. Sometimes I'd even touch it and trace it with my hands until I began to hear the voices once more...but I wasn't afraid of the voices...I'd gotten used to hearing them...more and more frequently now, they came from my own tongue and my own head.

When the phantom hands moved my own hand, I likewise, felt no fear, because it was after all, still my own hand doing the writing...

Day

The man from the book sale and the funeral director are gone now. They've finished serving their purpose. We've used them up. Today we count them as passengers...they've taken their turn among the million oars rowing, only to have won a place on deck, waving to the passing ships who never wave back, and sometimes even pass through us as if we were vapors.

Day

The man from the book sale passed this book on to me because he wanted to be rid of it before something terrible happened. He chose me because he remembered me from his childhood. I once lead the congregation in prayer at his boyhood church. I retired many years ago, and now I serve the function of church librarian. Often I'm the only one in the whole church aside from the custodian...I spend long evenings tidying up the church library and doing private research of my own. Though I'm still healthy enough to be an active preacher, I've given it up in favor of a different direction. I've lost interest in the petty complaints and marriage troubles of the dotting congregation, and I'm glad to be free of that burden. You might even say, I've become a very different person than the eager and idealistic youth I once was.

One night, while I was tending my books as usual I saw a very determined looking man pass by the library and then enter the partially lit sanctuary. Our church doors are always open, but we receive very few visitors this late in the evening, so I decided to follow the man into the sanctuary to see if anything was the matter.

It was in the sanctuary where he gave me this book, or rather, a small stack of books, all with the same title. When I opened the newest looking edition, a few loose scraps of paper fell to the ground. These tiny notes—some of them written on the backs of business cards or napkins—were smudged with ink in what appeared to be the messy handwriting of several different people.

As I sat attentively, the man proceeded to tell me the story of the church book sale across town, the story of the funeral director, and of his exchange with the church women. He then began speaking

frantically, and in a manner I could not completely follow, for he changed topic so often and added so many mythical stories and references to every explanation, it was all I could do to keep in mind the references I had heard of, let alone the ones I had not heard of. He told me he felt a compulsion to take the book everywhere with him, that the spirits couldn't bear to be alone, that they needed satisfaction and longed to rest. He told me at first he hadn't been afraid, because the transformation had been gradual, but as the transformation reached its climax he became terrified because he thought he was losing his mind, or possibly becoming someone else entirely...that phrase, "becoming someone else", made me shiver a bit; perhaps that phrase scared me even more than the prospect of ghosts, which I certainly did not believe in. You might think it odd for a retired preacher to not believe in spirits; well, I don't. Before opening the book, I only believed in the metaphor of God. Like any good Protestant, I believed in doing good works and being a good person. For me personally, I felt no magic whatsoever in the religion I followed. It had suited me fine to become a preacher at the age of 22; back then I felt sympathy and spiritual communion in advance of my peers, both religious and otherwise. If I now depart from or downplay these attitudes in myself for their having come to signify something entirely different, then I still count myself in advance of my congregation in that discovery as well...like I said, I personally feel no magic in the religion I follow.

Then came this man, with his five books and his story of lingering spirits, devilry and transformation. Though I didn't believe it, it fascinated me that a man's mind could have so altered from that of a sane person. Sadly, I began thinking of the stories of famous saints and true believers wandering in the desert sun and seeing visions of god...it saddened me to own up to the fact that the church's most darling contributors were probably no different than this man standing before me with his five duplicate books and his own bar napkins falling out of the bound pages he did not write.

When I had finally calmed the man down and seated him on a church pew, he recognized my face and addressed me by name. I vaguely remembered him as a young man, but I might have been confusing him with the memory of someone else. When he recognized me, he immediately trusted me, and then began asserting that the spirits must have lead him here on purpose to find me. The spirits were telling him to give me the book; that his part was finished and now it was my turn to begin listening to the voices.

"Only you can help them. You must take the book." Said the man I once recognized.

"But...I don't believe you." I said regretfully. I figured if maybe I could bring him back to reality, I could save him from harming himself or others.

"It's ok if you don't believe. Just take the books." Said the afflicted man, "I can't manage to hold them any longer...they're destroying me...I'm still changing...but the spirits say that if I pass on the books, I no longer have to change and I can go back to my normal life...the voices will stop and I'll return to what I was before."

With that confession, I realized this man was in need of someone else to help act out the cessation of his manic episode. He needed to let go of the books, which for him, must also have been his trigger and his weakness leading him to disordered thinking. Even as an untrained, amateur psychologist, I could see that these strange and manic inflations had their source in this book. It wasn't the first time I had encountered mental illness within my congregation...in fact, the provable existence of mental illness was one of the key factors in changing me from an idealistic theologian to a practical and real world Christian.

Before the man left, I made him give me his name, phone number and address so I could check up on him, and possibly report him to the police in order to get him some psychiatric help...from what he had told me, nothing in his life was falling out of place except for his fascination or obsession with these strange books. Since he in no way gave any indication of wanting to harm himself or others, I deemed it ok for him to leave on his own, for he appeared much more calm and happy after he had recognized my face and given me the books. I still had my reservations about letting him leave, but I think we need to let people go to their fate without meddling in every detail...likely his mania would subside and only visit him a few more times throughout his life, when some other stress from work or relationship arose and his conscious ego refused to deal with reality...at that point he would certainly return to me, just as he had done now, and I, the spiritual guide and father figure of his imagination, would comfort him once more when he sought my help to restore him to normalcy.

With the afflicted man gone, I turned once more to the books and the scraps of paper on the sanctuary floor. I then recalled once more the dialogue of the three women from the book sale the afflicted man had described...I remembered what the final woman had said about her test of faith. As I began picking up the notes on the floor, I stopped to read one of them, obviously written by the afflicted man. It read,

"The Devil makes us stronger."

Day

[illegible]

Day

I was alone when I began reading the paper scraps fallen from this book's pages. Now I'm alone with these scraps laid out neatly on my kitchen table so I can see all of them at once. I hesitate in declaring the most important thing: I think this book is haunted...Would it be strange to say a book is haunted? From what I can tell, the sleeping spirits responsible for these passages are only dead in a mortal sense. Though their bodies are now buried and scattered throughout the earth, they were not yet dead while this book was being written; they were still very much alive.

What makes this book peculiar is its ability to reach beyond death, not for the sake of passing on a thought, but rather, for the sake of laying its phantom hands on us and pulling us towards feelings of exile, death and the unliv'd torments of the grave.

Small segments of life still burning with unexhausted memories and feeling...those are the fires the dead souls have bequeathed to us...not a pointless moan, but a fond caress of happiness rotting away before our eyes as this instantaneous moment of living flesh is stretched out over time, maybe even one hundred years distant.

Day

This book seduced us into adding to it, and in having added our individual voice, a collective voice was forever captured and frozen into a cold sculpture of attitudes, moods and memories, unable to change or let go.

Day

Of the many dead bodies scattered throughout the earth, how many of them still have a voice? Think how many quiet graveyards are brooding in contempt of the living...yet they have no voice for cursing us.

The spirits gathered here have succeeded in escaping that silence...the earth shall never finally choke out their voices, for their tongues are here with us now...lives scattered throughout centuries are still being dragged along by this book...their many tongues unite as one...menacingly fixated on a common purpose—*like a colony of ants summoned back to the greatest feast they've ever known.*

All dead things champion a mockery of world peace...spiritual discontent endures, perfectly solidified in the icy limbo between worlds. So long as mortal flesh is still active, there is jealousy in the underworld.

Day

The Gates of Hell are a dusty book no one notices.

Once summoned, the voices which speak through these pages are meant only for you. The visions you see in the underworld shall come from your own mind. The book remembers the chair in which you sit. The book remembers the hallway every time you get up in the night. The book remembers the feel of everything you touch and the book works its way into everything you plan. The book opens the creaking doors to the worst nightmares you've ever had, and it laughs mockingly, because you haven't even begun to dream terrors. This book is your gift. You are now one of its authors.

Once opened, we become you and the we that is you is we that have always been us and the us that are always are we that are always from no to the limit of yes and for maybe to us so free us of us free for hallway for member of book you of time so plan every plan of our touch of our plan so us we plan you as always of us so free us, free us of we!

Day

The sleeping spirits of this book are summoned within you as you speak the poems of their anguish. We ought not be scared, for living is no more fearful than being dead...but being dead, all the emotions of life still linger on in our misplaced nostalgia.

In our every sentence and our every breath, we express our entire destiny. If one of our thoughts or moods gets captured in time, our unique soul risks haunting it forever...and worse still, our souls can infect others with our delusions and our agony.

All those who contributed to this book were also warned of this curse, just as you are being warned now...you see, the voices contained in this book's passages are the voices of living mortals meditating on their own destiny...their contributions are already a corruption and an alteration of reality, because they were no longer thinking about life; through the curse of this book, all additions to it begin to obsess over death and hatred of humanity. Just as one suddenly acts differently and thinks differently after a house full of guests have departed, the ill fortunated guests of this book act and speak much differently than us because they have already joined together in conspiracy against life...

Day

If you're here seeking a glimpse into the fires of hell, the spirits will readily show it to you...just begin by writing us a poem about something you love...and we'll supply the ending.

Day

Peace is not a gravestone, it's a way of hating life quietly...and even the living are capable of that.

Day

The day I received the book, I stayed up all night reading it. In the morning when I stepped onto the porch for a cigarette, my entire lawn was covered with a restless canopy of migrating blackbirds. The mute anxiety of their beaks seemed caught somewhere between an invitation and a warning. As the birds took turns pecking at the ground and looking up at the porch, I stared callously back at them, enjoying my cigarette and vaguely remembering I was alive.

Day

Alive, was I remembering vaguely and cigarette enjoying , them at back callously stared, stared callously stared, porch looking up and ground pecking birds took turns at my eyes, below the porch of us we that are you looking up from the invitation and warning of cigarettes in the morning while souls trapped as black birds peck eyes for the we of us hallways for chairs and of beaks.

Day

Confronting a wall of hanging vines; beyond that, another wall and maybe a maze of vines as well. My mood is almost cheerful—Today I'm only an explorer here, not a prisoner.

The ground shakes and some of the maze walls tumble. We step over the fallen debris toward a shortcut maybe, but now other passages are blocked as the mists descend. Is everyone in this same maze with me or do we each inherit a separate maze? Are we alone here, or does it only appear so? Past our own barren acreage, over a sadistic pattern of walls, might the winged eyesight of a creature overhead tell us we dwell in a larger maze that somehow connects?

Day

Compiling these pages, I've lost track of who's speaking. Did I write this passage or did the voice of someone else dictate it to me?

I don't remember who I am while I'm touching the book. So many voices! It's all the same! It's all the same and none of its me anymore!

Day

As I compile my own writings with the pages written long ago and passed down to me, I don't want the reader to think of this book as a diary, but if we can bring ourselves to in some sense admit that it is one, then we must also mention this diary is the undoing of several

human lives mixed together and confused. This diary is more potent than a mere human life, for it is actually the burial of *several unhappy lives*.

Day

Remember, it wasn't the hand of a ghost which brought you this curse...it was the work of a misplaced human sympathy.

Sympathy for the dead.

Day

There's a perfectly good reason every culture has some kind of priest and mediator between the world of the living and the world of the dead. The special training of a priest prepares him against the frailties of his own mortality. In a sense, the bible passed down to him, and the stale poetry of its mistranslated pages are the readers only defense against a book like this one...but placed side by side, this book is easily the victor. The spirits of the priest's book have already been edited out and choked away in favor of dogma, morals and patriarchal power. The human component is lacking...and when the human feeling is lacking, its immortality is also lacking.

The way between worlds is gray and indefinite. The mighty passage from mortality to immortality is a relay race of collapsing horses. Show me a new spirit willing to hold the torch...we'll promise you all you desire...and more.

Day

I wrote some of the passages. I never heard any voices. I added my clear thoughts and I passed the book along...it seemed like a sort of time capsule someone in the future might want to study. I won't speak for the mental health of anyone else; but I suppose that's something the future might want to study as well...

Day

Exit humanity! Exit life!

I've quit everything for the sake of this book! Why does everyone call it an obsession? Don't they see? This is all that matters now. This is proof! Our lives touch. I'm apart of the quilt now! These mazes connect together and we're nearing the exit...one day, they'll understand. When the book is all, and the earth falls silent, we'll have solved the puzzle and ended its curse. *This book is a means to that.*

Day

Confuse:

To fail to differentiate one phenomena from another
To make opaque or blur
To assemble without sense
To bring to ruination. (Archaic)

We mean you no harm. As you listen to our voices, it may help you to pretend we never existed. It may help if you pretend your own life is the only life in the universe that ever had any importance. For your own sake, keep on pretending...

Day

Ghosts don't exist. It's impossible...unthinkable...I'm not afraid of phantoms or spirits...but I'll tell you what I am afraid of. This book was written by the living, that's obvious enough, but what remains frightening to me is what kind of hatred and contempt for sanity a person would have to experience to suddenly need to write nonsense passages and re-type mirror images or deleterious phrases side by side with perfectly well reasoned ones? Writing a book is already a possessed endeavor...but re-writing a book several different ways is an act of lunacy...and worse than that, purposely defacing ones own re-written book for the sake of polluting and confusing its content seems like such a stubborn fixation, even its rationality and purposefulness

inclines toward misanthropy, hatred and evil...anyone can write senseless things, but the type of person who would write senseless things for days and days on end—even if he were perfectly sane—would already be a lunatic in a completely different sense of the word.

Day

.word the of sense different completely a in lunatic a be already would—sane perfectly were he if even—end on days and days for things senseless write would who person of type the but ,things senseless write can anyone...evil and hatred ,misanthropy

fixation rationality fixation rationality fixation

Ghost paragraphs polluting and confusing, purposely defacing is an act of lunacy but the type of person who would write senseless things for days and days on end—even if he were perfectly sane.

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. If a man in a prison cell told me he had needed to murder a lot of people for no reason in order to become healthy once more, I would believe him. I wouldn't condone his actions, *but I would believe him.*

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. Once past the shock of that statement, we begin to realize that the gates to hell not only lead into hell, they also *lead out of Hell*. To open them is sometimes a liberation and sometimes a damnation, depending on the direction of your travel...

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. I'll spend my entire life proving it if I have to.

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. Once you've seen your own inferno, a mere handshake is enough to conjure the unrealized infernos in everyone else—our soul quakes with the bittersweet revelries of a shell collector hunting down the shores of eternity. Every time he accidentally slakes his thirst by the river Lethe, it's as if all his tiny marvels were made anew.

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. The sincere kindness of each mortal heart hides a microcosm of atrocity beneath the surface. Even the hands of old women baking sugar cookies for their grand children are in some way related to the hands that stoned people to death without a trial.

Day

I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell. Giving up all one has—*or having it torn from you*—is a dissolution of ego, and all dissolutions of ego lead back to the unconscious...that's what this book is supposed to be, isn't it?

Day

The order of all these entries are mixed up; Scrambled. Still disappearing. Go back a few pages. Do they look like the same pages? The same pages you read ten minutes ago? Go back even more pages. I tell you, the order keeps changing! The spirits have it. The spirits

keep moving the pages and reshuffling them like Tarot cards. If the pages seem the same, then maybe the spirits are letting you pass...but keep checking anyway. If the pages aren't changing in your lap, they're already changing in your own mind. Every second, this book is a different book. It keeps changing because it wants to possess you.

Day

In one of the very oldest pages compiled here, it seems a pregnant woman who lost her husband was fearful she wouldn't be able to support her child. The passage says something about magic and a demonic contract. Ever since that passage, others have taken to copying her invocation. Her entry reads, *"I still believe human sacrifice has the power to open the gates of hell..."*

What she wrote or asked for after that is no longer legible.

Day

In 1703 at a wedding celebration in Norway, two drunken men got into a knife fight. Inadvertently, the new bride's husband was stabbed and died during the brawl. Legend has it the Devil was sitting atop a beer cask playing Fanitullen on his Hardanger fiddle while the duel was underway. What people fail to remember is that the widowed bride lost her life in childbirth a few months after the wedding, and her child was deposited in an orphanage just outside Hemsedal. The town's people never took it upon themselves to inquire about the fate of the child. Perhaps they don't even remember the knife fight anymore.

That's a shame, because the Devil does...

Day

A magician with a bag of toys and Paganism in his heart is standing outside an orphanage near Hemsedal. Just now, he's holding a fiddle and playing Fanitullen as violently as possible. His coat is like a red tuxedo whose cuffs, collar, and chest are trimmed in pine forest

green. Adding to the audacity of his coat, a ridiculous number of tiny brass buttons are poking through the hardy cloth outlining his cuffs and ascending his chest. Chalky white puffs of rosin disperse from the violin bow as he attacks the strings. His breath is visible and misty like the rosin against the morning air as he begins kicking the hollow stairs of the orphanage to the beat of his song. This noise causes children to awake and venture sleepily outside to meet him. While a sullen older boy waits back, a pack of younger children rush greedily forward to take their turns picking toys from the magician's bag. Once the orphans have emptied the sack of gifts, it becomes apparent to the younger children that the oldest boy has come up short. Without missing a beat, the misanthrope fiddler gives the remaining boy his fiddle and departs

Day

The voice of the first spirit announces:

"My soul is a Hardanger fiddle
For an orphaned child on Christmas Day."

Day

Holding the book, I see visions of a spring celebration. Our orphaned fiddler has caught the attention of a milkmaid with his playing. Still far too young to be any kind of seducer, the boy begins to realize the secret of the Devil's magic fiddle: *Everything which alters or manipulates reality is seduction.*

When the slightly older and more experienced milkmaid pretends to lament the boys not having a twin brother for her to dance with as he plays his fiddle, the boy brags that for her he could do both at once. When she asks him to prove it, the boy lies and says he has a gouty foot; perhaps at festival next spring he could do the service of two men for her...

"I think I'd like that." She replies

"No, I think you ought to keep your distance from me." Says the orphan boy with the Devil's own grin.

"Why so?" Asks the playful milkmaid

"I wouldn't want you to have to bear a child with horns..." Says the fiddler.

To this, the girl at first feels a bit put off, but then with wide eyes she looks the boy up and down and thinks of a reply.

"Maybe I *want* to be torn in half." She says bravely

Day

An orphan boy with a Hardanger fiddle is both cursed and blessed. On the once side, he has no parents to love him. On the other side, he has a free pass through the hell of his passions...

Day

After his experience with the milkmaid, the orphaned fiddler began to wonder just how far he could successfully bend the foundations of reality. From that day forward, the Devil lamented that the boy's adaptations were his own, and not the magic of Hell.

Day

This book is public domain—people are free to reprint, copy, share, revise, upload, download, add to, subtract from or keep pure all as they see fit. This book has been blacklisted, banned and suppressed several times in history without avail. Printing houses, religious groups and governmental decrees keep on attempting to end its lineage, but its reign continues quietly in the margins. What was once a great risk is now accomplished quite easily—its guardians privately reprint it without the slightest difficulty using their own funds...and the lingering spirits of countless generations are grateful for their

efforts...but still the un-resting spirits are greedy for their pathological epidemic to continue forward onto new soil and into new epochs of conspiratorial unrest and panic.

Day

If one day, some re-incarnation of this book becomes the very model and icon of perfect literature, it will not be due to its original author, but rather, the endless succession of spirits it captured and assimilated to its horrible purpose. Souls still trapped shrieking, and destinies still caught wandering will have fueled its every poem. This book is not dedicated to life or those now living—it *is the echo of the undead and the unloved.*

If one day, some re-incarnation of this book becomes the very model and icon of perfect literature, it will not have been due to its original author, but thanks to the invisible hands of one hundred generations. Over the years, as this book sprouted from time's rich soil and patiently grew roots and leaves, it already knew what it wanted to become. It needed both the tenderness of chamber maids and the strange sexual taboos of incest and rape to propel it forward. Channeling its own mystery, this book has captured the imagination of some very intelligent minds, as well as some very humble and lowly ones who each played their part in helping it timidly along—*like the helping hands of a little girl returning an eyeless and newborn rabbit back to its nest*—not a single gesture has gone unnoticed in the course of its continued development *beyond human capability*; toward new heights no singular author could have dared. For all those works beginning from scratch, done within regular proportions and careful human boundaries—for *all those works unable to assert any bloodline of misanthropy or hidden vaults of captured spirits*—there is at least this consolation and this example left behind: the stark embodiment of the most ancient literary virtue:

Ghost ax and God-craft...

Day

(This passage, from a paper scrap, presumably written by the afflicted man who attended the book sale.)

When this book gets ranked among the most perfect ever written, it won't be due to its pretty sentences. We're all longing to hear a voice from no-source and a song from no-Heaven. When the troubles of each day dampen our vitality, we all want to dream longer! We don't want to enter a book, we want to enter the nexus of eternity where reality ends. We want to be shown a place where day and night are confused into the unending twilight of a lingering yet unbroken dawn. We want to enter the promise of a new king, announced by a small army still in the distance, and our soul's tremble for a new means of giving up what's left of our freedom.

Day

My years of teaching and private scholarship never could have prepared me for the contents of this book...it seems to explain so much...lacking any other faith in life, I think I'm beginning to believe in its magic. I think it's a sort of devil's Codex...this must be the book Faust opened on Easter Eve. when he summoned the demon and asked for access to all the un-lived joys his scholarly life had kept him from.

Surely this was the book found next to the suicidal Dr. Faustus after he drank the lethal dose of opium elixir and spent the night dreaming miraculous poems until the toxins overtook his body. The wide and vibrant tones of church bells followed by the exultant voices of Easter Mass must have accompanied his hallucinations near the end. As Faust was dreaming resurrection, his poisoned body was choking for a few final breaths.

"Still, delay. Let this moment linger..."

Day

I awaken from a foggy, unmemorable sleep to the sound of a faint moan like a dying dog in extreme old age. What was I dreaming, and where did that noise come from?

Day

An entire merry-go-round of collapsing horses, propped up artificially until the carnival closes and the carousel begins to come apart and rust behind the tall grass over taking the old fairgrounds...this is where I come to remember my greatest joys.

Day

I studied science and worked an isolated job my soul wasn't suited for. I worked because of my belief in the future and the greater good of human progress, but all the while, I remained an atheist. After reading this book, I'm wondering if a different destiny might have suited me better: sometimes I speculate about the un-lived lyricism in my own flesh: genetically predisposed to feel contentment only while believing in God and living in a monastery—

—Except in a world without either.

Day

I'm the sort of man who keeps careful records by date and time. Nowhere in this book has anyone recorded any information regarding the exact time or place of a given entry. At first this realization shocked me and I wanted to do otherwise...but as I sat silently with my own thoughts, I realized the immense pointlessness of clinging to this moment and this particular thought. It finally seemed grotesque to do otherwise, and I added this passage, in this particular way, so I might calmly follow with the rest.

Day

I'm told my verses are bad
And my world is not poetic.

Perhaps I'll leave off speaking, indefinitely.

Day

Stop asking questions! Lucidity looks like this! Lucidity paints like this:

“Let the Song-from-no-Heaven continue, never ending and never beginning. When we awake, let us pretend we are dreaming. When we are dreaming, let us dream of the verses still calling the Dragon. In the Song-of-no-Heaven, all things are confused so the Dragon eye may see clearly. When the book begins, it has already begun and ended many times. When the book is passed on, it has already endured one thousand errors and one thousand bad choices. The Dragon looks fondly on our errors without reproach, then looks toward new daughters and new son's privately hoping for improvements. Though the Dragon relies on the endless advantage of Ghost ax and God-craft for the revision of the song, the Dragon also hopes for muscular champions who are cowards in their heart and new cowards who are already the rulers and champions of mortal feelings.”

Day

The Dragon is father of the bravest daughters.
The Dragon is mother of the most loyal sons.

We already see the Dragon in all good that survives.
We already see the Dragon in all evil that returns.

Day

Cold day in late November,
I met the old man across the street.

He sits on his porch most days
but never leaves the house.

I ask him
What he's doing outside,
And he replies:

"I'm expecting a visitor."

Day

If I were granted five lifetimes instead of one, I'd weep for all the incomplete destinies I could imagine, and I'd still feel rushed...but since I am legion and I am forever, I don't mind gently caressing the cool veins and waxy leather of this particular leaf I've just taken down. As I stoop to let it fall into the benign and trickling streams leading away from God, I touch it to my lips three times and say farewell as if I were instigating once more the betrayal of a lamb. I don't mind giving every individual destiny a soothing caress and a long, melodramatic goodbye....

Day

Euthanasia to all our social personas: Hospice for the slow erasure of public epitaphs: A eulogy of whispers intoned by dandelions breaking apart.

Day

Where horses collapse—

—that use to be as far away from humanity as you could get in one burst. As you can see, I've been looking for ways to improve upon that distance.

Day

When this book gets ranked among the most perfect ever written, it won't be due to its pretty sentences. We promise you, if the Devil were to write a bible and a handbook for existing, his first step would be convincing you he didn't write it. After that, he would casually direct you toward all those things you might already want, without need of any pomp and circumstance of deception, for you see, the Devil has always commanded a stronger awareness of psychology and promoted a firmer grasp on the reality we already believe.

Day

Why would the Devil want to compile a book telling people life is useless and sad? Wouldn't that just make them want Heaven even more? Or would it cause them to want something else? The more sad poems I read, the more energy I feel surging up within me...I don't want to restrain anything. I want to live fully! NOW!

Day

This book—tossed in my lap by a fellow artist. He didn't want to contribute...he didn't believe...I think this book humiliated him. Next to the work of centuries, an educated Art School drop-out is just a dilettante and a churl. He called it a waste-cloth for wiping the asses of past failures. Maybe he's right...or maybe he doesn't want to resemble what he already is. As for my part, I want to say something musical. I only listen to the sound of poems, never the meaning of words. Edgar Allen Poe obviously loved the sound of the word “nevermore”

especially for its flowing “o” and “r” sounds. Perhaps he too was bowing to the humorous and semi-serious speculation that “cellar door” should be ranked among the most beautiful word combinations in the English language...Perhaps the image of shuttered doors leading out of the ground made him think of a resurrection or an opened coffin. Perhaps it made him think of prostitutes...the most desolate creature and the most alluring...bitter and sweet, joyous and miserable. Sell-
Her-Door. A doorway to ecstasy and misery all at once.

In trying for the same effect, I've chosen my own combination of sounds implying several indefinite phonetic ideas all at once. Before passing the book along, I wrote,

"On swaying bridges *I follow...*"

Day

Such is the habit of looking into reflected images: the act of describing takes on a dexterity and a playfulness of its own. My eyesight falters and blinks *deja vu* notions until we begin to wonder whether we are still feeling, or just feigning. Though I can sustain my description's abstract oblivion, I cannot always sustain its emotional tincture; I find that I've fully drained away my feelings as I finally open the dingy oak door to the cellar whose stairs must reach to the center of the earth. No more strength for surprise at the cache of old myths; I almost descend without looking now, as if it were a habit; as if I were mindlessly fulfilling the demands of a fickle curse whose duration no one bothered to mention or calculate.

Day

For my only entry, I wanted to say something happy about my childhood.

I see early memories of outings with parents, even to a gas station or a farmers market; seems like painted diorama scenes after a deluge. I look into them as if looking into a snow globe of varying temperatures; I see rows of candy, especially gumdrops, reflecting the intense convenience store lights on their cellophane packages. I see

stacks of tomatoes and burlap sacks stuffed with the protruding elbows of corn husks hidden completely or peaking out of snags and torn places like girls scrunching up bundles of platinum, yellow blonde hair. I look down at the buttons hooked around metal brackets holding me in my corduroy overalls, knowing I need the oversized fingers of an adult to free me...all as I reach after bags of corn and gumdrops on shelves.

These memories hardly touch me now, but I don't mourn their passing or their lost affection—I don't think anyone does that—but I do suspect their conjuring power is much worse, once we give ourselves over to such things: In my own flesh, my worn out flesh, I see the refracted curves of a gentle nightmare, while trembling to the thought of its having been real.

Day

With the opening of this book, waking and dreaming cease to function in their regular cycle. Waking and dreaming unite towards a common purpose. The distant past suddenly rejoins the distant future. Past destiny is sewn imperceptibly to the destinies unfolding at this very moment. The needlework of aeons now awakens with a bellowing voice of its own. Each heart already yearns for this voice and wants to pour all their leftover love and devotion into it, as if every book ever written were only the failed means of awakening this dragon. Religion up until this point has always been the half-realization of this possibility and the premature miscarriage of this sacred task.

Despite the beauty of all sermons rising and the inspired composition of all music sounding, the Dragon still hasn't bothered to open its eyes, because humanity, despite its many evils and complexity, is still not yet worthy of even the slightest twitch of the Dragon's eyelash.

Day

Deeper down, into the flesh of the lyrical; resonant only because I'm shaking.

Day

As time grows with the tenacity of a meadow or a hydra, the sheer scope of our emotional impressions keeps widening and recording.

The natural terrain: the shapes and voices of past days keep on branding new sores into a caged animal, hairless and thirsting. This animal doesn't "know" anything. It doesn't even want to know, but day after day, the stinging formations keep adding up.

If we were to doubt, what use is doubt? Does the ox or the bull doubt its sores? Hindsight is different than pain. If we should change fields or change owners and be forced to wear a different brand, shouldn't we at least be allowed the dignity of pretending not to notice? After all, it's the others who keep telling us who we are.

Day

Horror descends in the form of commitments made by some stranger who happened to wear my skin every day before this one. Like hooks stretching me out as if my consciousness were a tarp, I am the canvas shading everything that ever related to me and I hate what I see under this shelter that I am: Past enthusiasm, attitudes, allegiances, plans, weaknesses and possessions are all beneath me now as I'm stretched out like a mortuary drape snapped taut above a lifeless body as a sort of joke to humiliate the visitors.

Today I'll visit myself on the railing of a bridge, and in this same moment, I'll see the corpse that I am go from postured to limp on the guard rail, then drip almost inanimately off it like some lousy molecule fated for no other purpose.

Day

If my teeth had been a little straighter, my hair less thin, my eyesight less poor and my face a little more charming, what havoc would I have done!

Day

I keep glass jars of formaldehyde on my shelf like an array of canned food. Beside me, I've just printed up 30 new copies of this book to give away. Now that I've completed my promise to the book, I can go back to my other hobby...the preservation of my trophies.

Day

Nietzsche once wrote these words:

"Sacrilegious backwards grasp"

Day

Before I wrote this entry, I was trying to write my own book all by myself. Part way through, a friend read my book and told me it was too depressing. He said he only managed twenty pages of it. Now that I've found the book I really want to be a part of, I've burnt my own attempt. I'd rather be a small patch on a warm quilt than a discarded rag who knows where...

Thinking back, I'm glad I put all my best stuff near the beginning of the book I destroyed. In my friend's head, every unread page remains as sublime as the ones he remembers—the pretty illusion of a black god waits upon the throne of our imagined austerity.

Day

Blood as thick as cheap syrup as I pass out from the climax. I dream for maybe ten to forty minutes. My pain is so deep, even my unconscious fixates on death. When I awake, I'm convinced of the utter selfishness of procreation. When there remains a possibility to abstain from producing offspring, that is the only sane course. I feel as if I am still only a child. I do not need to exist. Think of all the hours of pure pain that really have no source other than my flesh. No cure at

all to be had from counseling or behavior...the flesh is suffering. Often it feels as if tears would be a relief, yet all is going well and the day is bright.

Day

Twenty years is only a speck of life. Thirty years is a century longer and still only amounts to a bread crumb. Do people even realize how voluntary and chancy the process of human development actually is? What a fullness of being to think of all the relations one has absorbed, and concomitantly, what a petty trifle to have learned anything!

Day

Religion up until this point has always been interrupted or marred by its author's and its prophets. The self-serving and power thirsting construct of all previous mystery cults and sanctioned organizations do not really serve the Dragon—not because they are impious, but rather, because they still haven't even realized *how to be pious*. The Dragon asks for very little. To be one with the Dragon is to become confused: in the Dragon we are both black and white, North and South, right and left, up and down, active /inactive, good /evil, past /future, waking/dreaming, manic /despairing, generous /misanthropic, destiny /freedom, expanding /contracting, advancing/retreating.

Day

I've heard of haunted graves and haunted mansions but those things never scared me. What I want is a haunted individual: *an active torment*.

Day

I'm talking to a woman while drinking alcohol. She's laughing at something I've said, not because she has a sense of humor, but because she wants to show her interest in me. Her eyes let me know I'm saying the right things...or rather, it doesn't matter what I'm saying, she just thinks I have a pleasant way of telling my feelings about things not pertaining to her.

No. I'm not really doing that. That's just what I fantasized in the space of a breath. I'm actually alone.

Day

Our Dragon demands to serve us. Our Dragon calls for a saddle and harness so we may ride its ambi-sexual, ambi-temporal, ambi-perceptual nature across the sky and into the depths of the ocean. Our Dragon is slow to awaken and even slower to pledge us its trust, for we are not yet pure enough of heart in deeds nor evil enough in our fantasies. If our deeds are shoddy and our fantasies are insipid, the Dragon will devour us and spit us out in humiliation for having even wasted a second of eternity tasting us. For the sake of the Dragon, our flesh is not enough like the sweetness of the lamb; our minds are not yet rapacious enough to remind the Dragon of jackals and boars. When the con men and charlatans of the world approach, the Dragon keeps them at bay with its fire and its teeth. The Dragon wards off charlatanism and con men because the Dragon will not tolerate the practice of its creed only part ways and shoddy. To have mimicked the Dragon is no special effort—every petty criminal, lawyer, cassanova and politician already does that! Deeds done for self are not yet deeds done for the Dragon or within the Dragon. What does the Dragon care if we should praise or condemn in its name? What does the Dragon care if there are temples of worship or avenues of commerce? What does the Dragon care if we each go our separate way or unite in one purpose? What does the Dragon care if the petty nations fall or the decadent nations rise? Every human task and every human ambition has already played out as the Dragon slept. Every manner of sacrifice, crime, taboo and saintliness has already passed away unworthy of the Dragon's jade and the Dragon's gold. Every dragon our fairy tales sought to hunt down and slay was really the intuition of the one lowly

and great, hidden and advancing Dragon who unfolds itself now and departs at the slightest whisper of power...

Day

I'd like to direct a pre-recorded Broadway musical, performed by stage hands in pairs dragging corpses to the regular choreography. I think that would be far easier and more satisfying than writing a poem about human ignorance.

Day

Musical preparations are underway. To my relief, I won't be spending any money on makeup. The stolen corpses come pre-painted.

Day

(This entry, translated to English as closely as possible)

Next time you meet a charitable, philanthropic or religious person, politely ask them to physically go to China and aid in the production of American goods.

Day

The pleasantness of warmth cannot be overrated or pitted against anything else in creation. When I am warm, I am content.

Day

Every frightening ghost story must find a way of pretending its events really happened. Every successful Satanism must pretend the Devil does not exist. Dwelling somewhere between blatant fabrication and tenacious reality is where the sage must meditate. In their own era,

the immortal poets were barely more than shadows and beggars next to the soldiers and men of action—for the poet is always a shadow!—but let's not be surprised when this vault of noble spirits breaks open and perpetrates its revenge.

Day

In a doubtful position between the fish and the birds, between the saints and the beggars, the do-nothings and the busy bodies, we all feel a tinge of affection for that middle creature the devil chose to mimic: lacking legs and lacking wings, the amphibious creature takes any shape it desires: *all hail the snake!*

Day

With enough intuition, and the help of this book, I won't need to form a religion or a cult to enact my designs. Instead, I'll lazily recast what has already occurred in a more terrible light by shifting its emphasis in the most gentle way possible. I'll give reality a more nightmarish aspect than action or willful meddling ever could. I'll accept everything by cleverly making it my own.

The mists of confusion already begin to descend. Something erotic and fearful is born of my uncertainty and my heart beats faster. Lets learn to mimic the howling of ghosts!

Day

If I live long enough, I want to explore the sick aesthetics of the manic ideas which I have yet to record because I filter and withhold many of them on purpose. What I'd like to do is indulge them on paper in the form of impossible fantasies bulging with incoherent and obsessive notions. But why stop there? I'd like to add to them even more senselessness! I'd like to exaggerate the details of already impossible visions until the moment I collapse; Only then could others say firmly, "He rebelled against life. He despised life."

Part II

Pray to Destruction

Day

The Dragon asks for no worship and no sermons. The Dragon flies above morals and dives deep below traditions. The Dragon spends hours and hours feeling intoxicated with mad impressions, but the Dragon looks down to see the wine flask is yet unopened. Patron saint of laziness and high priest of intoxication, these virtues never mar the Dragon's strength. For the Dragon, the courage of a poem is already the accomplishment of Armageddon.

Day

A knock at the door. Perhaps they'll just come in. Quick, let's kill ourselves as a surprise!

Day

The church bells in my village are beautiful to hear even when they're heard in the middle of the night, alerting the townsfolk a building is on fire...especially when a building is on fire and I'm the first one watching it.

Day

If I spend all day writing irrational symbols for reconciling the many urges of the present moment, I accomplish nothing but the redundancy of my prior dreams and nightmares...

Day

Nothing is ever more frightening than an accurate dream. Terrorists ought to take note of our psychological gloamings.

Day

I once played with a Tarot card of a building collapsing. I think it means something.

Day

On the saintly path, all my seeds would be stiffened to ruin. On the saintly path, I weave just as many nightmares as blessings. On the saintly path, all my seeds would be stiffened to ruin. On the saintly path, all my seeds would be stiffened to ruin. On the saintly path...

Day

Looking for something to bury

And the compulsion to dig a home for it.

Possessing neither, I wilt.

Day

Looking out a fifth story window, almost perfectly eye level with the tallest upward branch of a nearby tree, I wonder if the tip of the furthest reaching leaf has any intuition at all of having over reached all the others?

A few birds, I've no idea their name, circle over the dormitory and come towards the tree I'm looking at. I keep on staring at that highest leaf—obsessively, like a lunatic. If my hospital window weren't barred and locked I'd have a quick jump for it.

Day

It's cruel that seduction should compromise another person and then show them the truth of it. Instead, a seducer ought to not only re-constitute the victim's world, but also re-constitute the victim as well, such that they depart with the adaptations you possess and the means to use them independently. The perfect seducer does not mask the world; he awakens you to one that demonstrates the impossibility of clinging to the old one.

Day

Every seduction implies a weakness in the victim. The most superior beings are almost totally immune to seduction...but they too remain vulnerable to something, somewhere...so in essence, a seduction is not only about taking advantage of a weakness, it's also about inseminating others with your adaptations and bringing those adaptations into full view for the victim to witness—this process is not necessarily vulgar or physical. It's most important aspect is its social and psychical aspects. Either victims become more superior beings or they prove their inability to become better.

Of those beings who are most immune to seduction, we must gingerly ask ourselves, *at what price was that immunity bought?*

Day

Perhaps life itself is no more than a grand play of slaves and masters: an acrobatics of fetishistic behaviors and transferences too complex to ever completely sort or escape: a continual bartering with the devils of make-believe and the healthy sprites of lightsome play: No substitutes exist for what a man considers real: negation shall always play a hand in what we are, what we are not and what we are able: Our Hamlet says, "To enchant or to disenchant, that is the question": nothing is real: nothing is the final substitution.

Day

(This is perhaps the oldest entry...dating as far back as 550 B.C. Scholars suspect the Parzival reference was added sometime after 1870 while the book was passing through Germany...)

The concept of this book arose from no concept. Likewise with the previous book. The entries may have been re-ordered for the sake of theme or entertainment value, but as they were written, no themes yet existed: they were discovered. Because anyone *could* do this, I see a clash with the reality that almost no one *does* do this. A few meager thoughts a day and the universe renders up the fullness of its secret miracle. The innocence of Parzival has won the Grail. The day begins and I speak. No talent is necessary. What I have done, anyone can do. Simplicity of genuine thought. No motive. No desire. No destination. No constraint—the genius of unfettered character.

Day

(The Protestant preacher, mentioned earlier, scribbled a note in the margins here mentioning this passage was unique to the funeral director's edition...a copy of the book whose cover had been torn off by the man after him...the cover of the funeral director's edition, presumably with the man's name attached, was not passed on and is now lost.)

Zen departure. Zen return. Zen awareness. Zen ignorance. Zen confusion. Zen completion...the word Zen is already superfluous. Affinity between self and others might sound less esoteric...but what would such an affinity actually contain? How would it express itself?

I suspect there must be more to Buddhist enlightenment than smiles, benevolence and good will towards men. I suspect the intuition of something more nightmarish and pervasive than hitherto imagined.

And if not, then I'll sell plenty of books on the wager of that falsification. I'll sell plenty of books, and I'll sell them in just the same manner as the preachers of smiles, benevolence and good will towards men. I'll simply offer what I'm capable of offering and pretend there's really nothing else, just as the other charlatans have done.

Day

Here's what I've learned so far: If you're careful and delicate enough not to touch obscenity, you can sustain an obscene pose indefinitely. Michelangelo helped me with this.

Day

An unsuccessful, and then later, very successful noise musician recently killed himself. One of his songs contains a sampled loop of his voice saying, over and over again, "I'm playing with my corpse. I'm playing with my corpse. I'm playing with my corpse..."

Day

To reclaim the nobility of insincerity, I want to don a mask which everyone can see but no one can remove.

Day

Happiness has eluded me for so long, yet the solution was so easy!

All that was needed is a blindfold.

Day

In life, I was a traveling comedian no one cared much about. If I'm dead, then I want my jokes back! Nothing's free you know!

When I consider communicating with those still living, I wonder to myself, what's the opposite of a joke? I want to tell those.

Day

An advertisement for a funeral home that doesn't exist:

"Dead again without a trace,
Celebrate the shell
And have us paint its face!"

Day

I found my copy of this book at a railroad station in 1847. I found my copy of this book on the floor of a library in 1904. I stole my copy from a Masonic lodge in 1953. I scattered ten copies of this book in various barbershops throughout Iowa. I left a hand copied version of this book outside Oxford College in 1888. I found this copy in a horse stable in 1741. I mailed a copy of this book to each person I strangled, a week before my attacks. I quit the world to become a monk after finding this book in my father's estate in 1434. Who says a religion has to come together all at once? Maybe some faiths begin like parasites and contagions.

Day

Only this escape from the no-vacancy madhouse of dreams and crippling subjectivity:

We don't actually liberate anyone.

We only manage to feed our subjects

A few at a time, like an orderly

Making his rounds.

(If you seek a criterion for sanity or insanity, just keep flipping this image.)

Day

I want to confess a great many things but I don't want to be found out before passing this book along...I want my crimes to be known, but I don't want to be stopped before my projects are complete. Each day when I go to work I quietly do what my boss tells me to do...and every moment he's speaking I have these anxious urges to spit in his face or stab him with a letter opener or pull out my genitals for no reason. My own hand is bleeding inside my pants pocket and my knuckles are as white as the bottom of a cold fish as I say once more, "Yes sir; as you say sir."

Day

I found this book after my daughter ran away from home. Sometimes I read its passages while visiting my husband's grave...I keep hoping he'll speak to me once more.

Day

Slowly become ambivalent to the sound of words
And turn deaf, un-listening eyes toward the world
as it spawns this pantheon of touchable objects:

I love Satyrs and Virgins.

I love
Goat cheese with Rosemary.

Day

A poet's funeral oration
Read by a priest
And then concluded by a woman
Who reads a poem about cheese.

The crowd looks confused.

Day

Say "walk in circles" and the people will protest. Say "live in circuits" and no one will notice.

Day

Nihilist:

A fanatic of absolute truth in reverse.

Day

If you indulge a jigsaw puzzle, you'll find the imageless pieces the hardest to assemble. For instance, the field of blue that is a lake or a sky. Sometimes, even the overall color is so uniform we're given no clues whatsoever; we might as well close our eyes and try stamping them together randomly until something fits.

If I were to describe my own poetic method, it would be the opposite of a jigsaw puzzle. I never look. I never sort. I never force and I never stamp. I just dump out the box, let them fall, and walk away.

"Patent pending Sears Roebuck jigsaw puzzle. One-hundred-thousand non-interlocking pieces. Enjoy."

Day

Misanthropy looks like a horror movie filmed by a poet.

Day

Teenagers ought to take a lesson from me: Misanthrope that I am, cheerfulness takes only a minimum of effort. In fact, unthinking social cheerfulness takes so little effort I'm too selfish for any other mode of being. How else would I be able to conserve and redirect such magnificent excrement!

Day

Some movies end with a total recall...meaning, the entire thing was a dream and never really happened. Feels disappointing somehow, doesn't it? To realize the character was in a coma or just sleeping the whole time?

Sardonically, I want to leave behind all the thoughts I produce which aren't worth having. I want to keep a careful record of my every blasphemy against life. Already a decade and a half in, I have a stack of nine crude diaries and host of other nitwit rants and observations! Other authors are going to look like tiny mice when the vultures come for me! A whale carcass of ruined meat! Near the end, in fear and trembling, hopefully I too can die like a repentant criminal, hoping for a total recall. Imagine a sick room with diaries stacked to the ceiling and stray poems of loneliness strewn everywhere else, just tempting a match to be dropped! That's what I'll see before I die! And what a glorious way to have repaid my debt of breeze and moonlight! My life's work—a pyramid of regret!

Day

The anorexic and uncoordinated armies of scholiasts marching against these passages with reasonable statements are bowled over by our slightest breath—we could ward them off with our nostrils sleeping. They somehow imagine, because they have made a few moments effort in thinking they could slay the dragons of our endless revelries; hatched from the roosts of uncounted lifetimes, we show them our anguish and our negation.

Day

It ceases to matter whether I use any of the old entries, or completely re-write the book with new ones...it's too late now to be otherwise. *I've heard the call of spirits and I'm newly possessed.*

The book's secret is it's desire to be *completely re-written* as often as possible. Against all odds, the book hopes one day to be totally redone by a singular individual who spends an entire life in their own *'hall of mirrors burning'*. Infected with the voices of the dead, we lift high our sun-soaked brows in the joyful song of oblivion...a new verse for every un-rotten limb and face! Every funeral—a *messianic dawn of no-more-troubles-here!*

Day

Since finding the book, my all-too-living flesh resonates a melody I'm unable to sing. Whatever I fail to write only gets louder and more painful. Now, each morning I tremble anew, ready to serve a deathly force beyond myself. *I channel the ever departing spirits, and my strength in the Dragon is ascending...*

Day

This isn't even an entry. This is a self-reminder to all future spirits composing an entry: we urge you to keep becoming more sinister by becoming increasingly more confident. Eventually our attitudes will become even more intoxicating than our monstrosity—this ridiculous cathedral only has a few gargoyles for show; the best evil takes place in the audacity of its architecture; in the volume of its sermons.

My disciples are the loudest explosions. And those explosions should prove nothing.

Day

Arguments without flesh and not originating from the stress of mortality are no better off than disembodied spirits: Their ideals and their perspectives are almost tragic: If you venture out at night, beware the homeless ghosts of already conquered cities.

Day

Let me just relate a few academic confessions:

I was once a young man and a poor philosopher. No matter how clearly I write or how exhaustively I treat the domain of poetry or psychology, there will still remain, both young men and poor philosophers. I'm not prompted to manic output by the errors of those developing, I'm prompted by the terror that development in general has to keep existing—with our cradles so close to our graves and the new children spat out at the starting line so recently with every instant, how could education ever hope to keep pace with ejaculation? Though I will always hate the young men and despise the poor philosophers, I'll exert no energy battling them. In my bouts of mania, I'm most prompted to write by the terror that *I exist*.

Day

I could hand over three piles of books from floor to ceiling, and the youth I exposed them to would still barely know his ass from his elbow.

The worst possible torment for a poet is knowing how easily excellence is shuffled and hurriedly maneuvered off the stage of life. P.H.D. professors younger than me read a few lines and giggle, meanwhile the cult of fame and prestige resting on their dusty shelves has nothing at all to do with their actual education or their actual degree of lucidity. If I can make a bitter alcoholic smile or a philosopher weep, I'm already on par with Shakespeare—let that be our consolation and our crown. *The means to the kingdom is not the kingdom.*

Day

Aristocracy of poets: the beautiful equality of all emotions.

(My only consolation to Democracy. HA!)

Day

.modgnik eht ton si modgnik eht ot snaem ehT

Day

Cheerful as usual, the content of my writing surprises me. It's a nice day to continue doing what I do, openly, and with a sense of harmony the uninitiated will read as sarcasm.

If we're second best in the administration, who says we can't serve cheerfully without also despising our master?

Humanity will always be our master.
Humanity will always bury the individual.
Be cheerful.
Immortality buries nations,
And the fantasy of immortality buries the universe.

Day

Why am I cheerful?

My pen is my shovel

And my fantasy is a coffin

for the sun.

Day

The crude man at the wedding whispered to me this advice, "Always look at their mothers; that's what your wife is going to look like."

Day

Those who read are already in motion away from the world, toward renunciation, however momentary, into the privatization of values, feelings and destiny. The casual reader, even of the most useless books, is already thirsty for more self than can ever be granted. So impatient are we, that when we read, even the smallest declaration of weakness or flimsy logic on the part of the author causes us to assert what little dominance and tribal thinking we have left, so we may at least keep ourselves from becoming the omega tribesman, even in our sequestered dreams and literary escapes. What we readers actually respect and yearn for is a greater attitude and more relentless version of abdication than we've ever sought to attain. And do you know what else, it doesn't trouble us in the slightest if the martyred character or anti-hero of introversion should collapse just short of the gates of Heaven with his skull crushed by the gears of fate; nor does it matter that we readers won't bother to flee or renounce the world with equal vigor, because privately, we think our default behavior has already assured us a more honored place in the social hierarchy than he, for he is our Christ and our Calvary and our human/pig sacrifice; Not only do we lust for the wounds and the transfigured blood of Christ, we also laughingly continue our oaths, our dice games and our buying of whores—metaphorically or literally—I simply mean that we discard him like a wadded tissue as we glide away, no more guilty or thoughtful than a lamb; through the wasteful futility of Christ, we're allowed the necessary release from anxiety that allows us to be more graceful, lamb-like and unthinking. Once the frenzied rituals are past, does it really matter if the sacrifice was a goat, a rabbi, a virgin, a misanthrope or an octopus?

What Christianity fails to realize is that once the human sacrifice is attained, nothing more matters thereafter, unless of course, it is the weekly renewal of that same sacrifice given in terms of ritual intoxication. (Thereby feeling its destructive ecstasy once more!) The

morality sermons handed down from the son of God are not given so that we might live a better life, but rather, so that we might laugh more cathartically at his death.

Day

"I still believe in human sacrifice. Praise Lord Jesus, the one true god!"Spoke the Dragon.

Day

I still believe in human sacrifice! How lovely to see an act of supreme evil and un-faltering seduction, dangling decoratively around a woman's neck!

Is that a formula for captivating their brainless hearts perhaps?

Day

Behaviors unfold once more. Catastrophic events on the world stage remind me of the tiny machinations of neglect and retaliation so often experienced in ourselves and others. Even good people must possess a microcosm of atrocity in their hearts.

As the saintly heart swells to magnificent proportions, lets not forget the source of its potency...

Day

I've always mimicked everyone I see around me. It's all space and echo inside my body. No self. No substance. I'm ashamed and anxious for not having become anything. I even envy my sox while I'm putting them on; at least they look like something when they have a foot inside them.

Day

Discomfort of any kind is heightened awareness. A cerebral person, who lives most sensations in terms of analytical thoughts is already much less comfortable than feeling persons who are constantly integrated and one with their feelings (which is also their identity without their discerning it). Though feelings must be the actual source of discomfort, awareness is a meta-narrative above primordial feeling. It would take a colossal feeling to equal in lucidity the awareness of a trifling nuance in a thinking person—the globule of spit beneath my tongue deserves more prose than the whole history of an extroverted man's flower garden. It is with this premise that I'm lead to believe the highest possible forms of awareness must possess both discomfort and a predisposition toward thinking. Among all the personality types, if all other negative factors of suffering were equal, the persons with the most patience for perceiving, the most rigor in thinking, the most reach of intuition and the most inward sense of valuations would not only be the beings most aware of their sufferings, but the most equipped to elucidate them.

All beings may in fact equal each other arbitrarily in how much they suffer, but in terms of awareness or lucidity concerning suffering, the type of mind I have described is the most haunted by his own *idea* of it. Furthermore, since suffering happens to be the noble truth of existence, this type of mind is pre-disposed to have the worst existence *imaginable*. I mean exactly that: when such a being re-imagines existence in order to harmonize its deficiency for acknowledging feelings in a fluid way, such a creature will, by way of this healthy compensation, experience the worst things imaginable...and all on account of having the best *imagination* for it. Whether or not such a being really *feels* anything at is all quite debatable. Do you see blue when I see red? Perhaps this type of being is so pathologically alien to feelings in general that he confuses the colors of them and puts them out of order in his own mind. Maybe for some, terror is comfort, brutality is gentleness, morbidity is nostalgia, generosity is aggression, politeness is intolerance, and romance is sadism.

As Argonauts of the human spirit, all manners of sensuality, good nutrition, and contented well being exerts a dulling and blunting affect on consciousness. Though innate intelligence may be proved superior in a well fed and contented being, a lesser mind, more prone to constant

suffering shall exceed the contented person not only in terms of awareness but also in terms of possessedly intense creative output.

Good artists shouldn't pray for more talent, they should pray for better suffering...but then again, to seek out rewards in life by asking for all of life's punishments sounds like a lousy wager, don't you think?

(I don't mean to say masochists are privileged, because they're not. The desire for pain is not the point. Only the experience of pain as a force of awakening is of value. One might even imagine that a masochist's confusion in wanting pain, or their pleasure in receiving it actually undoes the clarity of such an experience. In fact, how could it be otherwise? The pleasure of experiencing pleasure would only lead to more desire and become a neurotic fetter of will rather than a guidepost toward detachment. Though we did not start out as a masochist, it is no stretch of the imagination to postulate that many of our most rigorous thinkers in literature and philosophy whose careers have too frequently entertained Nero's Circus Maximus in their own over sensitive temperaments have gradually given themselves over to the debauchery of masochism in their fantasies. Eventually, *clarity is not erotic enough!*)

Day

Only a vulgar spirit would perpetrate a massacre. We awakened beings stand back and enjoy the one still in progress. How could my own malevolence ever compete with Heaven's apathy? Murder is as insignificant as a spilt cup in a rainstorm...and the raindrops never end.

Even the salt of our mortal tears are diluted as if to no taste.

Day

I'm a spirit who no longer cares for appearances. I'm not going to talk about myself...but I keep repeating a television commercial over and over in my head:

Do people at work ever stop you and ask, "Why do you look so tired today?" A new facial toning makeup is specially advertised to

mask signs of sleeplessness caused by random or chronic insomnia. Shouldn't you look as rested as healthy people? Don't you deserve to look your best?

I remember buying that cream, and I always had to get up extra early to put it on...

Day

I remember a television commercial too. Maybe because I was never educated.

The commercial shows us well dressed children and has them hypnotically chanting, alternately, "Smart, bright, smart, bright" while the camera cuts from child to child. Each clip has them holding an iphone, a laptop or an electronic tablet. In the end, the commercial displays the logo for an online university and asks us, "Wouldn't an accredited degree change you?"

No. It wouldn't.

Day

Near a boyish man who reminds me of my brother, who reminds me of a younger incarnation of my father. He's so automatic, unaware, unaesthetic and incapable of suffering anguish. If I met a younger version of my father, especially if he were a decade younger, I fear I would hate him more than words could describe. I'd castrate him with my teeth if I had to...but since my father will always be thirty years older than me, I feel I can tolerate him decently. In fact, it's almost comical that my first scent of an intuition which calls me to hate my father should come when he's about to turn sixty years old and spends his days watching the ocean from a cold beach in the northwest.

Day

Someone discovered me compiling a new edition of this book and imagined I had written it. When I confessed I did not, that only drew more people to me for some reason...While editing, I feel as if I'm cleaning house...I've brought together some new editions from my travels and I've even found some famous philosophers to contribute near the end...but still the people are begging me for a poem and an appearance of my own...I keep declining. Only now, as my edition's popularity has reached its height do I realize the uselessness of this entire book. I feel totally disenchanted by it. When finally asked, within the space of a week, to read one of my translations in public for a presidential dinner, a Harvard commencement ceremony and a poet laureate's banquet, I shrug my shoulders and lament my every contribution. If you want me to read a poem for you, I'll let you pick one at random; even this one. Besides, they all begin with the same word.

Day

It was a nameless day when my mother died. It was a nameless day when faith expired. It was a nameless day when I first needed poetry. It was a nameless day when I suffered no reply to the longings I felt. It was a nameless day each day I lived without a mentor or a lover. It was a nameless day when I felt the beginning of my success, and it will be a nameless day once more, when my joys are gone.

Day

After the fatal flaw of literature has been discovered, and every story becomes the same story, perhaps we ought to start reading biographies as if they were the books no novelist could have written; read them "as if" they were fictions for the edification of mental health. Almost all books are written by the same type of being with the same types of flaws...meanwhile we have very few accurate fictional portrayals of the inner psychological realities of types that would never think to read or write a book, because for them, the world of action is too intriguing. In terms of eternity (or even a century) we already know

the efforts of military leaders, inventors and politicians are a fickle illusion of no real consequence, but perhaps they light the way toward new ways of integrating self. Great deeds made null. Great deeds as inner rituals for the sake of the dream within.

Day

Inner intuition is a virgin oracle—dreaming fates without the distraction of being touched.

Day

Tall buildings intimidate me, as if symbolic of a libido energy I cannot even begin to imagine. Up close to one now, I see the sun-dried remains of a very small bird. It's probably been lying on this sidewalk for over a week. Now the building seems vulnerable. I couldn't ever destroy its floors or its foundation, but if I wanted to, I could destroy the equilibrium of every hand that built it...

Day

The fetish of attitudes was always more edifying than the juggling of thoughts. We philosophers have arrived so very very late to the party. Science shall arrive even later still, or maybe not at all.

Day

Saw a nice looking woman at the store today. I imagined she was nearly the age my mother might have been if she were alive. Before bed, I thought of her once more, and fantasized of her gently drowning me in a tub of warm bath water. Her hands seemed unexpectedly strong as she dug into my hair in order to hold me under. The whole episode seemed oddly erotic, because she was not my mother...only a similar age.

Day

Some words ought to be refused, even in prose! They tempt us to abandon the constraints of style just by using them casually. The reader will always respect our expedience in not choosing them. Show me a writer or a poet who can use pulchritudinous in a sentence without collapsing. It cannot be done!

Hearken this: I'm not saying anything about the length of words, the meaning of words or the target vocabulary of the reader: so long as I am correct, those things never hinder me. What I'm speaking of is much more severe than any public utility. Some words are too flamboyant for their own good. For example, I refuse to acknowledge the word "dusk" when I need to describe the change of light overhead at the end of the day. By a puzzling contrast, the word for morning, the four letter English word: "dawn" (very similar to the word dusk in fact) should be deemed *Ex nihil*—nothing hinders!—universal, catholic and completely poetry and prose certified in terms of style, but "dusk" is worse than anathema; it's like being forced to witness a cannibalistic act. Dusk. Dusk. Dusk. I say we ought to remove it from circulation! Its time is up!

If for some reason I fall to my emotional temptation for caustic words like "dusk", I'll always be sure to serve them with bitters: I'll add a modifier like false, disappointing, monotonous or incredulous. I'll go so far as to give dusk a personality at odds with the longings of the reader, for example: "The incredulous dusk of late summer refused to let the day end, despite the foreclosure and ruination of my family's orchard..."

The lesson to be gleamed is simple: After poetry, diminish.

Day

At age eighteen, while life guarding on a public beach, the older girl laughed at my confession: I reluctantly admitted that I probably wouldn't be able to sleep with every woman I saw during the day. I somehow knew it, but I wasn't ready to let my heart believe it. As I told her my unlimited desire for sex in general she doubled over laughing, which made my confession and my sincerity all the more

flabbergasted...so much so that I felt the sadness of my realization once more. How could we have expected to be understood? My innocence at that age was beyond impossible.

I'd like to say I've learned something since then, but I still believe I could have any woman if I made the right effort and had enough faith. Lucky for women, some defect in nature makes a majority of men feel this way, and our masculine confidence only gets worse with age.

Still though, I think I'm an exception. Not only do I feel confidence, I'm able to prove confidence empirically. With total lucidity I'll echo Ovid and say, "Any woman may be won. All a good lover needs is faith."

Let the women imagine it's a defect in the confidence of men to believe so...meanwhile, let the men suspect the defect lies elsewhere.

When has love ever conquered love?

I see only faith conquering faith.

(Love that conquers love would be the poetry of misanthropy...that is, a negation.)

Day

My bedroom is void of art, except for a small picture frame standing aslant on the ledge of a giant panoramic window.

In the frame, you will find a tiny scrap of paper with my favorite poem.

It contains the following—

“No.”

Day

At twenty three I was already nostalgic for seventeen; at thirty I was nostalgic for twenty-five. When I'm eighty I'll have already accomplished five books of mourning for every five years of my life—but they were never really books of mourning. I'd rather call them long lingering care...you see, I'm a connoisseur of moments.

Knowing that one knows is the redundancy of thought which validates it. (Feeling also has its redundancy, but its effects are more experiential. The act of sustaining what one feels, when one no longer feels it, opens up twilight worlds tinged with sorrow. Joy maybe, but always sorrow, because the scenes enjoyed have already expired. All explanations of feeling ought to live between parenthesis or look up at us through the cracks of boards in the floor.)

Feeling forward, toward the distant or immediate future is what we call ambition and fantasy. To the extent that such dreams yield activity, myth, adaptation or integration they should be accounted healthy and ranked above mere hope, which is more blind, indolent, and escapist. Sorrow also seems blind, indolent and escapist, yet it escapes into nostalgia for what has already occurred, in a sense trying to sustain values, maintain adaptations, and preserve the dignity of ones being contained in the incarnations of the past. One might say, every effort looking backwards is indolent and wasteful; that the now of the moment and the energetic integration with the instantaneous is the true and unpolluted well-spring of life. True—one might say such a thing, but you'd be a wolfish leper for saying so. The moment will prove them right, but the duration shall prove them demonic. If you want to undercut the dignity of human life in a way that will make even the misanthrope cringe, you must only champion the aesthetics of a lawyer:

"Only one moment in which to live fully."

(Performance is critical.)

"Only one moment for the display of excellence."

(Now.)

Day

Fernando Pessoa's best advice: "Change your soul."

How might one accomplish that?

1. Suffocate the old one
2. Steal a better one.
3. Try wearing the flesh of a different one.

If possible, ravage your own soul within a breath of its life. Make sure to baptize it with your spit as you depart.

Day

Think of me and my poems as a frivolous pastime for waiting out the history of the universe; good reading material for the day after the world ends: the virtuoso entertainer for every day following human extinction.

Day

For the space of a moment I felt vertigo for who I was...as if I were in someone else's body for a moment and the memories that were me were really no ones. The atmosphere of the furniture around me seemed infected and different until finally the vertigo went away. Now I want to go back to that feeling...that feeling of being a living ghost. As I read further, I have the feeling this book actually has no words in it...that maybe I'm imagining all these thoughts and not really reading them. TheThoughtsYouAreThinkingAreNotYourThoughts. The thoughts you are thinking are being put there by someone else. The thoughts you are thinking are not your thoughts. The thoughts you are thinking are being put there by someone else. The thoughts you are thinking are being invented for you and you are the puppet of your every thought. The thoughts you are thinking are not your thoughts. Will I awake soon? Will I wake up and then read this same passage in the book? Will I awake soon? How do I test if I'm awake or I'm a hallway of the we. Stop this. Come back. This book is blank and

you're still staring at it and turning the pages. Please, stop. Come back. Don't slip away. Come back. Please. Don't go to the hallway of the we...the book is blank. These pages have no words. Please stop. The thoughts of your thoughts are not your thoughts and the eyes that are your eyes are not seeing the blankness of these pages. The thoughts you are thinking are not your thoughts. The thoughts you are thinking are being invented for you and you are the puppet of the thoughts thinking you. Thinking is thinking about me. Thinking thought is the thought of non-thinking me. Pray to destruction and go to the hallway through the thought of the you of the free us of we.

Part III
Motionless Hours

*"Here in time's bark, upon the troubled sea,
Thy purpose beckons thee forever shoreward;
But, though thy million arms are rowing thee,
Where are the signs that thou art moving forward?"*

-Arthur E. J. Legge from Sunshine and Smoke

The reality is simple. At a certain point, a man of a given disposition realizes he has already spent more time in contemplation than an average individual could accumulate in three lifetimes. He realizes that one would have to almost be a professional non-participant to indulge the mires and plateaus he has explored. In fact, that is actually the entire reality of it: Solitude *can* be measured. Alienation *is* additive. Just as the rich man accumulates interest on his capital, so too does the cenobite accumulate a negative wealth out of each motionless hour. The futures market never ceases re-valuing and making bids on the goods at hand...so too with the hermit: Like it or not, he never ceases accumulating intuitions about the world.

Let's add to that metaphor one final thing: if any other type of being wished to become a professional non-participant they would immediately fail in their task; you see, with the dreamer and the hermit you begin with a null type; a type who never seems to get caught in any singular prejudice except the discipline of non-existence and non-action. Here is the crucial detail: if you enlarge a mirror forever and ever, you keep adding to it something new without any foreseeable pattern. Meanwhile, if you were to amplify the contents of an active, automatic and sensual sort of worldly creature as you are likely to meet in any office building or sports arena you would soon possess a hideous monster of repetition: the same will and the same short-sightedness over and over and over. The same identity and the same blind-spot tastes, blind-spot prejudices again and again. Each new component and each new motivator would become a reconfiguration of this laughable being's inescapable fate.

To be a psychologist is also to perform a charlatan's profession: each psychologist must earn a living telling their clients the observable details of their singular fate, while at the same time hiding from them the inescapable damnation of each manifest identity. If you know what you are, and you whisper the words, "*help me*" those words are a prayer

for the rivers and sewers of change to miraculously alter what cannot be altered. Do you even begin to realize what you are? Do you even begin to realize the modes of being manifest in your longings, your anxieties and your joys? Yes, even your joys are a significant part of your damnation of character and fate! Oh, yes! My precious worldlings! Shout your freedom and your choices and your new directions to the sky as if they were patriotic anthems! As you strain and contort yourself into each new gymnastic endeavor, I shall sit back and wait for you to humiliate yourselves...you see, each new choice is really a new means of tracing the same circular track...you've only fleshed out the statue of a clown; the priest is a clown! The president is a clown! The philanthropist, the whore and the drunkard are clowns! If they possess any hint of mystery or intrigue, it shall come from their unconscious choices and not their conscious ones...but really, who can say which is which? And look at this: the unconscious choice was supposed to be the automatic one, wasn't it? The choices we cannot take credit for are the only ones which make us interesting and original beings! If each being is 100% fated and physically determined, there is still yet one more irony: even when one cannot escape oneself, the rest of humanity still has the illusion of *seeming* autonomous and free; for any given moment, we never know exactly how things will play out. Accept that idea, and it ceases to matter whether you exchange one illusion for another, saying, "I am free but the rest of the world is determined" or saying instead, "I am fated, but everyone else seems spontaneous". The equation is balanced either way you look at it. If everyone were at base robotic and fated in each of their complexities and subtleties, the universal ambiguity of this fact would make reality appear exactly contrary to this fact. Once you admit how convoluted the concept of fate appears when added to the feeble imagination and perception of most individuals, we can see why the concept is passed over and ignored...but for the psychologist and the hermit, their lives deal so closely and intimately with the details and manifestations of human fate that its phenomena cannot be disregarded. Long ago we gave up arguing concepts. That which we encounter and experience *is real, no matter how silly or mundane*. (From within, the world of imagined identity is, for each man, the only currency applicable to him. Philosophy never wants to admit this fact, and it sees no way of getting around it without also proving it.) One should not seek to explain or disprove a religious experience any more than a psychological insight or an emotional outburst. We merely have them and describe them, and then they are gone. Really, to attempt arguing them away is not

actually to even argue them at all...but instead, to argue some other clown hypothesis from out of the clown identity you possess.

Why am I so secure and suited for my profession of non-activity? Simple. I am already a clown because I fail to comprehend any beings who are not so.

Day

What else shall we say about the being whose storehouse of contemplation is three lifetimes larger than your own? In contemplation, one does not find oneself. Quite the contrary. In contemplation, 'Being' recedes toward 'Nothingness'. The various lures and rewards of sense perception dim and blink out. Taste, touch, sound, laughter, and identity all seem to grow quieter and more useless. More potent than contemplation for this task, is the blessing of accelerated digestion and catatonic episodes of severe depression. Hypoglycemia and conscious starvation are more intense variations of contemplation, not because they possess intellect, but instead, more strangely enough, because they possess bodily intensity...a rigor never to be matched by mere flights of thought. If the ascetic or the mental patient possesses a philosophy, it must be the philosophy of hunger pains...but that's a silly revelation. The well fed also enact a hunger philosophy. What does desire have to do with intellect? If we all begin with nothingness, then the flight toward being, the flight of the non-ascetic is towards desire, towards touch, taste sound, laughter and identity. To satiate being is to fill it up with being. Non-philosophy is the philosophy of being. Non-being is the philosophy of philosophy. Philo in Greek is a prefix meaning love. In English we had better translate it in terms of mania...as in the word, pedophilia. Between the mania of thought and the mania of non-thought, I see no exit.

Day

Zeitgeist? Wouldn't that translate to: Time Ghost? A ghost is a being which lingers on after it has expired. Time must be that illusion which each being creates from out of static eternity, since it possesses the ability to alter the plastic forms of the world and shuffle contingencies pertaining to status, title and identity. If a ghost is an

entity which lingers and haunts existence, from beyond the grave, then we are each more nearly ghosts than mortals: the day I was born, I got beyond the grave. The grave is the void before me and the void which follows after. I am a ghost right at this moment. I am a gossamer web of silken prizes and silken preferences, and I'm straining in the breeze, as if it were a debt to continue holding on. A debt of breeze and moonlight, held by a ghost.

Day

Can a man long for feeling with such intensity that he actually succeeds in summoning demons?

Day

Some struggle from attention deficits. Can it be possible, that such a thing exists as pathological patience? Not so much a mania of concentration or effort, but rather, a morbidity of endurance.

Day

The threads wear down on the bottoms of my socks and I've never knitted a thing. Each day I have food, but don't keep any plants or livestock. When the temperature nears one hundred outside, I shiver in my blankets because my house is too cold. When I want something pleasant to think about, I choose one of my hundreds of books and I read the thoughts from the brightest minds in every era until I feel drowsy and give up. The world, with all of its million diversions and experiences, has never yet produced a blighted day. Even ten lifetimes would still be too few, wouldn't it?

Without excuse, we continue as we are. Joyless as usual.

Day

The urge to refute another persons suffering must be just as overwhelming as the urge to look away from knife violence. We'd like to refute it too. Don't you think we'd like to look upon ourselves with as much contempt as we deserve? Perhaps we already envy your disgust. Perhaps we too would like to enthusiastically champion some other way of living and enjoying. Maybe one day, together, you and I will ignore this book as easily as we ignore a feather or a grass clipping. But until that becomes possible...

Day

I feel better now. I'm healed. I've matured beyond the need of this.

Cue the laughter.

Day

Still breathing...elaborately.

Day

Imagine a car with an automatic transmission. If you don't hold down the break pedal it continues moving forward. If you accelerate it advances until you apply the brakes once more in proportion to how much you've accelerated. Keep that idea in mind when you ponder whether or not human beings actually have free will. The height of freedom is either total acceleration or a *dead stop*.

Day

Don't try to read anything significant in a crowded room. Even if it's a designated waiting room and there's nothing else to be doing, don't read. If you do, a glaring contrast of temperaments will spin you like a top as you look from side to side, blinking in and out of the words your eyes are dictating to your inner monologue voice. Not so much that the two worlds—the inner and the outer—are incompatible, but rather, they are emotionally disjunct in a somewhat tragic manner which erodes them both: the casual phrases, the bright attentive eyes, the hurry of small tasks, the dance of feet nimbly avoiding each other in close quarters with a light hearted economy of chatter which validates both identities and instantaneous movements, never again to apply once this or that sidestep have allowed each body to advance without colliding; the very harmony of the external theatre—and how it coheres visually, audibly and dimensionally as a single unit possessed of multiple free agents—is what so upsets the inner theatre of musings. To read the most startling and alienated passages of disquiet revelry—the pitch black lyricism of extreme melancholy—is already an invalidation of time and matter opening up a sliver (which may as well be an ocean or a precipice) of eternity quite strange to experience in any manner other than solitude. No problem when the melancholy is my own, because my own melancholy owns me automatically in such and such a way as to preclude any rational diplomacy (no matter where I happen to experience it, solitude or no) but should I ever be forced to perceive a bustling and cheerful exterior scene while also trying to digest inwardly the melancholy of printed words by another being, the arbitrary and refutable nature of such words frightens me as to the nature of lyricism itself.

When the brutish democracy of several external pawns nearby, rushing about to their various tasks, votes down the nature of the meditations I'm reading—even when the meditations are the flawless Nirvana speech of Pessoa, Shakespeare or Cioran—it is as if their words, which require only the slightest solitude to be effective, are suddenly tentative or lacking proportion. Perhaps the proportion lacking actually has something to do with the limited energy I possess just now. Perhaps, were I holding some loud instrument or sharp weapon, the balance between external force and internal force would teeter back in my favor. If suddenly all movement should cease and all persons be compelled to automatically look up and hear my oratory, under threat of dynamite for instance, then perhaps the words of

Shakespeare or Pessoa might be adjudicated against the movement and gossip of these intermediate beings; but, should that contingency never arise, and if I should continue choosing to read silently this private apocalypse of consciousness, then neither the outer reality of the world, nor the thundering lucidity of recorded lyricism have any sway over the distracted indifference I am.

Day

Paper gives everyone a chance at a photographic memory. So do photographs.

One sentence of human memory is already too much! Unless...

Day

When we think of large objects we think first of elephants, whales and maybe skyscrapers, but when I see the speck of a plane overhead I realize the monstrosity of clouds! Tentative lakes in the sky, waiting with a semblance of piety; we'd never expect their other moods!

Day

The image of a child mourning the untimely loss of its mother—

That seems to me a valid enough excuse for a lifetime devoid of accomplishments.

Day

I'm beginning to see each present state of being and thinking as a very limited means to a finite number of paths. Invisible trails appear in my mind with all their road blocks and anathema pre-ordained. It's as if the outer world will react and treat your actions within a set of given tolerances based on who you are, and even if you change various parts of yourself—education, wardrobe, appearance, social sphere,

attitudes, beliefs, goals—the world will still confine you to these invisible paths and privileges within certain parameters. One might drastically change the expression or goal of life, but if one is intuitive, no matter how high we rise or low we sink, these invisible, almost perfectly predictable pathways open up before us. For example, you save up money for an object, then you go and purchase the object you desired. In this act, the average person imagines they have exerted their will to attain what they want, and the entire event ends with the object. Meanwhile, the intuitive person cannot do even the slightest action without the overwhelming feeling he or she is caught in a fabrication or elaborate play of mirrors. Every component of life, including the people on our path seems in some sense bound strangely to a given range of freedom, whose leash must provide for varying degrees of elasticity or tolerance relative to the environment and the individual; to the sensitive mind the world feels like a staging of automatic players. Attaining the object of desire feels like an exercise or a shame of action, as if it were scripted. Even when their own role feels autonomous, the role of others seem to blink in and out of very frightening shades of un-freedom. Going to the store and making a purchase, for the sensitive individual, demands they work themselves up to the challenge of mediating and respecting a world of spirits, for the sake of their own sad, vague, anxiety ridden-spirit desire. Going forth into the physical world to execute some action opens up that all too familiar, semi-plastic pathway which in this instance the world has allowed or granted based on prior efforts (whose author seems strangely depersonalized as well.) Once the action is underway, the physical and social components of this new privilege is just as terrifying as the inner spiritual one whose fetters we've overcome. We feel constrained, not to reason, but to predictable amounts of reason and unreason, to irrationality and convention both. We think back, imagining our entire, anonymous path from childhood to adulthood and we integrate this singular backwards thought into all forward thinking. All the people, attitudes, hindrances and privileges resurface crazily and then harmonize into the being we are and transcend. We know and do not know ourselves in reference to the future. Pathways open up, and we pretend to advance on a tightrope stretched across the abyss. I see no real abyss a foot below us. I see only more ropes in a place without gravity or death. I see only a web of fates.

Day

Here in Limbo, the most useless man who ever lived is king! All Hail the dead poet Fernando Pessoa!

Without the help of spirits or demons, Pessoa accomplished a book like this one all on his own! Hail the dreamer! Hail the sweet thoughts of indolent revelries! Hail Lisbon, his home! Stay and haunt them bravely my friend! Stay and haunt them better than they deserve!

Day

"The slightest action weighs on me like a heroic deed" quoth Fernando Pessoa, but my spirit has the urge to amend it: "Since I received this book, the slightest action, whether taken or not, weighs on me like a heroic deed left undone. Even the small things I accomplish in the dark seem to do a serious labor in my soul, even when there is no soul and I refuse to take them seriously."

Day

Pessoa is dead and not quite famous. You'd have to read him to understand how much those two ideas pain me.

Pure obscenity to say more, but it follows from the facts at hand, that Pessoa was also once *alive*...

Day

We often poetize death and large change. Why not also mention microscopic change? Cellular mitosis, shedding of skin flakes, invisible micro-observations. We're already coming apart and changing every second; every corporeal being, a flowing river of unseeable change.

Day

Constant, rootless, debilitating misery is often mistaken for melodrama. How quaint that the vaudeville of devils should call us that; they whose multitude of pursuits seem singular and vapid to us.

Day

Age helps us forget and blissfully let go. Meanwhile, for those who are young, there is always the possibility of a voluntary Alzheimer's.

Day

Instead of a system of thought, why not merely chronicle the many sighs and exaggerations so characteristic between systems...At least those are more universally felt.

Day

Though mortals are doomed to keep passing through the Eternal Return and recurrence of being, this philosophy in no way pleases the Dragon, who hates hesitation, hates repetition, hates drowsiness, hates inactivity and hates contentment.

Part IV
Planetary Claustrophobia

Day

In Babylon I spent my days kicking stones toward the street in the middle of the afternoon. In Egypt I whipped a friend of Moses to death just before the exodus. In Japan I threw my perfumed fan into the hot coals of a sword smith and the smoke made him cough. In China, the peach blossoms Li Po sang about were growing by the river which bordered my family's property, but I was away visiting the Emperor at the time. In India I was a spoiled prince who abandoned my family to join various religious cults before eventually starting one of my own. In Italy I walked barefoot and naked on one of those peerless Roman roads as it was being built. In Athens I hid the plays of Aristophanes under my pillow and shamefully read them on the sly without admitting it because I considered myself a serious philosopher. In Corinth I peeled onions with Diogenes before he insulted Alexander. In one war I gave a passing legionnaire an ivory good luck charm before going into battle. In a different war I rushed up to a wounded man on the field only to whisper curses and incoherent profanities in his ear. In the Roman Senate I met Portia who complained to me of a pebble in her sandal, which I helped her remove so I could swallow it to impress her. In the catacombs I hid with the persecuted Christians and led some of their women away with me in the dark. In the middle ages I traveled to all the Trappist monastery's in Belgium swapping recipes for beer. Near the time of the Black Plague, I invented the perfumed bird mask because I was already fed up with the smell of healthy people. When the Gothic cathedrals were built I spent my Sunday mornings hovering on the edges of balconies making faces at bored children as the pipe organs blared. While working for the Globe Theatre I played Cressida in one play and was passed over for the part of Apemantus in another. While Bach was composing his religious masterpieces I attended the decadent orgies of three different popes and won monetary prizes for my sexual performances. In every Solon in Europe I drank wine with administrators, royal women and poets by wearing fine clothes and pretending to be one of them. Though I saw him frequently, I never understood or laughed at any of Voltaire's jokes. In Germany, I spoon fed Porridge to Holderlin in a mental hospital and then made a crude joke about him to one of the nurses. In Switzerland, I tricked a ten year old version of Rousseau into getting in a fist fight with me so I'd have an excuse to hold him down and shove a handful of prairie grass into his mouth. In England I went to picnics so I could tip over the rowboats of newly weds on purpose to soil their clothes; In Venice I pushed a good looking nobleman into the canal. Some of his entourage

laughed and others drew swords. While the bravest among them swam out to retrieve the missing oars, I was already a child of the distant sun, scooting away in my own little boat as fast as I could row. In colonial America I was one of Thomas Jefferson's slaves. On a mountain pass near Rome I gave Nietzsche the walking stick I carved because he was having so much trouble carving his own...I later saw a newspaper photo of a famous dictator walking with the same stick. I was the woman Dostoyevsky dictated his novels to from a sickbed, sometimes for twenty nights in a row, only to spend my days drinking coffee and rewriting them to be more accurate. When the world became mechanized, I spent time in the trenches and breathed mustard gas as if I were running through a foggy garden. As I did so, I bid other soldiers take off their masks too so I could watch them drop dead of curiosity. I borrowed a final cigarette from Celine before bleeding to death from a botched abortion a week earlier. I'm pretty sure I loaned money to Henry Miller on two occasions after he slept with my wife and gave us both bedbugs. I was a stunt double in several silent films no one remembers. I helped install the showers at Dachau only to be admitted later because of my sexual preference. I was the Nazi who shot Sabina Spielrein's children in cold blood for no reason. After World War II, I kept Hamsun under close observation at Grimstad asylum and asked him humiliating personal questions for days and days on end, not because I hated him for being a traitor, but because I trusted my own medical expertise. I refilled the water pitcher for Heidegger and Hannah Arendt when they met for dinner in Freiburg, 1950. I helped interrogate Oppenheimer under suspicion of his being a secret communist in 1954. I was one of Sartre's mistresses in the 60's. Bukowski lost to me in a fistfight when he was still in his prime. I served an ice cream cone to an eleven year old Marilyn Monroe without knowing it.

Some men live life well, but still pass time recounting their tiny regrets uneasily, as if some other fate might have mattered more. Why so?

Day

In my dreams I go to the gates of prisons and mental asylums to worship. After a long meditation I realize their walls and oppressive windows are still not really good enough for me—somehow despite the suffering they already house, they remain unworthy. I would require an entire planet for my exile, and I suppose it wouldn't matter if I shared it with others, it would still look to me like a floating outpost in the middle of nowhere.

Salvation would be a tiny cell. Punishment would be a world full of useful distractions.

Day

Never expanded thoughts to include all living humans,

Or all created countries. Never bothered to.

Seeing an Olympic ceremony—really seeing children athletes in colored jump suits walking in a militaristic parade toting their country's flag—I finally brought myself to imagine the totality of existing human life. Not only did the totality seem small, it struck me as utter lunacy: How come the athletes of the world were able to smile and think of games? In this Olympic stadium, in this genetically selected Noah's Ark, how come no one stopped the music to let out a scream? Behold, a representative microcosm of the planet, suddenly without borders, crowded into one venue:

"What the hell are you doing here?"

"From out of what chaos did this come to be?"

If you shrink down the entire world into one stadium of people and then lock the doors, how long will they last before madness sets in?

"What is this? Look! Look how tangible and finite the whole world suddenly appears! And how long has this been going on? How long have we automatically subscribed to this futile biological parade;

this ruination of meanings and efforts? Where is the medal for the first being to awake?"

A new goal for poetry: An Olympic challenge:

Bring forth a new poet every four years

Who can make us scream

Our planetary claustrophobia.

Day

When the whole ship comes into view, usually from a distance, it begins to look like a ship. Up close, a ship is a wall with circular windows that floats.

The same goes for the planet. From a distance, the vacuum of space is not only airless, but unfathomably oppressive. How can I watch an Olympic parade without imagining a sunken ship?

—Sunken un-heroically in some inconsequential corner of space, so far down we cease to imagine what the surface might be like.

Day

An American swimmer took 19 medals making him the most decorated Olympian in the history of the world (maybe). The headline reads, "_____ is on top of the world"

—As I pen my poems on planetary claustrophobia, I'll record that headline today, just incase...

Day

Our souls are too young to pick a final idea and monotonously repeat it; here, look at me, I'm an amputee with a crutch and a roller skate dancing to whatever tune comes on the radio; I have all the proper pads and a helmet, but I'm not wearing a condom. Sexual appendages and severed limbs flail musically beside a regular man with decent clothes and two solid feet.

Despair? Self-negation? Planetary claustrophobia? Frenzy? Listlessness?

These are each good topics, but I'm still doing most of them poorly. (Soon we should let some of the very oldest souls speak.)

Day

If I ever cease to write and happen to unpredictably die an unnatural death, it will have something to do with how successful my unsuccessful prose is at taming my suicidal longings. When the steam and biliary vigor has burst out, my self-success at self-therapy often leaves me once more in the state of a drained lesion; a dome of folded skin, no longer stretched hemispherically against its will.

Day

A sigh of relief and the shudder that if we continue on from here, it will be as shoddy and emotionally disorganized going forward as the days reaching backward. The relief came from feeling less intensely; the shudder came from the all too familiar tedium of no longer feeling so intensely.

Day

Billions of other lives to exalt or examine, yet I'm still caught up in my own—which I hate more than all others. Let's call this an arbitrary miracle of attention.

Day

From out of a long span of isolation and inaction I'm realizing I no longer have anything emotionally in common with my prior hobbies and labors. I want to slough them off like a reptile grown bigger; as if I've matured...in fact, my mania tells me I'm something more lucid every three months and the intensity of that tumor is growing with its size.

Day

It must be out of a morbid expedience that we continue defaulting to self-reflections instead of looking into other beings. If I could convince myself, finally, that my own person is no more illusory, useful or interesting than any other being I would have made some spiritual progress. Too bad no one is capable of that. Even when such a task is admitted to be the *modus operandi* and crowning eternity of our entire philosophy, we still falter and collapse at the crucial moment. I've leavened the grain of malice, as Schopenhauer says, but I've yet to eat the loaf. Spectres of confusion; the one and the many; none deserve our consideration.

Day

If I was sick of my own life, that would be a shame, but I'm not. If I were sick of certain facts or contingencies, such feelings would be pitiable and maybe even pathetic, but I'm not sick of any specific thing. Even in my discontent with life, I'm magnificent, saintly, universal and unfolding. You see, in moments like this, I'm weary of all lifetimes, all professions and all possible treasures—real or imagined. A gilded castle and a naked princess would have nearly the same chance of summoning me to action as a lump of clay—and the clay is better regardless, because at least I can sculpt the clay.

Day

I take pride in the realization of how easy it would be to overturn any one of these outbursts and live differently. To do so would, in effect make the prior entry completely fraudulent...then again, don't these entries also serve as a post-script to all the actions I've already taken...in effect, making them fraudulent as well?

Day

A dormitory roof somewhere in the city, crouching under the yellow blue and ever whitening sky where clouds are absent and the sun is already beneath the rooftops of buildings distant; It's a mild ending to a day I've already forgotten. Much smaller than the buildings on the horizon, the dormitory seems to relax in the early shade of its sunless position. Its first floor, ground level windows contrast with the dark sidewalk and draw my eyes toward the lighted foyer behind the main entrance. From my fifth floor hospital window, the dormitory across the street is also an architecturally lazy, symmetrically drawn doll's house on the grass carpet floor of my heart where each morning one thousand students depart to go and do whatever it is students go and do. Each morning, as I watch from my hospital window, I'm one thousand students too, and I pretend to want some of the same things they want, but only harmlessly as if I were only playing with dolls I never had.

Day

I saw a sane man walking a dog on the sidewalk below my hospital window, just like a sane person. I think he should be committed to an asylum and tortured. No metaphor. It's just something I desired for a second.

Day

The auto-zoom of a digital camera; the magnetic displacement which bends space into a wormhole; the vertigo of seeing autistically.

Day

Excellence in the discipline of psychology is like chasing a conspiracy which keeps on growing in complexity like a full fledged mania until at some point every breath taken has something to do with the integral, mechanistic gears of the whole. One can no longer enjoy any story, any myth or any diversion whatsoever without in some way seeing some meaning or clue which relates back to the conspiracy itself. Friendly conversation, modes of employment, systems of government and means of worship all crumble into the powdered dust of a millstone whose flower is the bread of life. Not only is such a conspiracy frightening to behold, it's blade ricochets back upon he who wields it, putting ones own thoughts and behaviors on par with the vast diversity of expressions which keep relating back to very fundamental and strikingly repetitive images and symbols of feeling. Taken to its human limit, such a relentless system of viewing and digesting the world must look, to all outsiders and uninitiated beings, like something worse than religious or conspiratorial mania; such a mode of seeing, at the final outpost of its lucidity, seems no less than true madness...except this conspiracy is what is contained in the head of the alienist not the analysand.

Day

Good morning void! My bladder is purged.

Day

I don't think enough brilliant minds make it to old age—either intellect declines beforehand or they die without getting there. Sympathy or prejudice favoring youth and new culture is not the stance of a brilliant mind. If anything, as one ages, alienation should increase, impatience should increase, and rancor for human frailty should increase! Only a decade separating me from a twenty-year old and already I'd abort their every sentiment in favor of my own. If I have any ambition at all, it's to become more intensely and empirically sure of my own misanthropy, crowned sovereignly at last only when I

finally become the oldest living misanthrope! That would be my gold medal. That would be my planetary claustrophobia!

Day

What a lucky fate to have an illness that enthrones itself as an identity instead of a handicap! I've seen men cry over handicaps like OCD and social anxiety. They feel cursed and trapped and struck down by their weaknesses, and predictably, it brings their friends closer to them. Sometimes they both share the same disorder and they love each other more for it. They've found a mirror! Hurray for anxiety!

Meanwhile, I'm not handicapped at all. I'm a character.

Day

This spirit book seems unbalanced. Not every type of soul is willing to add to it...but that's no matter...*the anxious and depressed ones make better ghosts!*

Day

Profundity is cruel, and only half true at best.

Day

Rousseau's Emile: not an advancement in thought or government, but instead the first conscious invocation of the collective mystique already present. Ironically, the first conscious being is the first one liberated from such a tendency. What little darlings of thought civilization offers to us! What a coddled parade of fools! Let's give them all to the pit: the comical husks and peelings of our endless childhood!

Day

The plentitude of goods and industry weighs on me like a heavy cloak of ridicule. No human dignity remains in human sized efforts. The wealth of generations keeps adding to this storehouse of futile treasures. The only intimidating forms of knowledge are specialized compartments of learning, which, because they are specialized are actually worthless. There are no domains of learning which are not humiliatingly under-developed in a hundred other areas. Linguists have no idea how skyscrapers are built. Pilots cannot even work on the planes they fly—and the list of anxiety and alienation from the world of action (between disciplines) is no less daunting than the whips and arrows of the spiritual domain. We've created a superficial utopia within our grasp, and an impossible labyrinth of confusing torments beneath it. Every manufactured thing in my environment mocks me by both its perfection and its easy attainability. What could I ever do in a day to equal all this or be worthy of it? Only an unfeeling mind could lay back and enjoy such an obscenity of gadgets and cushions without having some premonition of what they mean to his own significance. It is my belief that no man would be content in Heaven. Thankfulness is the attitude of a slave mentality (never yet honestly sated or even imagining itself so), which expects nothing and rejoices at everything. Self-awareness and deep inner meditation reveals tedium, anxiety, and sadness within all the fruits of the earth. If I am glad or blessed, necessarily some other being has either labored or suffered to make me so. To be thankful for the unnecessary suffering of other beings is to condone suffering and absolve life of its demonic tendency toward self-fulfillment. Thankfulness is but *socialized self-fulfillment*. These luxuries I possess—I in no way need to possess them! My thankfulness would only serve as an evasion for the sake of hardening me against feeling sympathy for others. My thankfulness makes me a more despicable person if I refer it to anything beyond my most basic needs for biological subsistence. A man may be morally consistent in being thankful for a glass of water or a bowl of rice...but thankfulness for a palace, a chest of jewels and a wardrobe of silks is but the anxiety of *not going without them*. In keeping with a sensitive temperament, the rich aristocrats of any era ought to have spent every waking hour pandering and thanking God and their worldly servants for all they possessed. Gratitude to God must have originated as a contagious or propagandizing sentiment from the deep intuitions of the most wealthy beings in society. Gratitude is anxiety. Luxury is anxiety. Social distance is anxiety. I repeat: If I am glad or blessed—even for the luck

of being born—necessarily some other being has either suffered or labored to make its so. But for the sensitive temperament, the act of balancing physical sacrifice with mental attitudes is in no way satisfying to the psyche. Thankful attitudes are for the unthinking and the unaware. When blessed with comforts, treasures, and tokens, the superior man takes into himself an inner wealth of suffering as well. He is not thankful—no gifts will change or improve his condition. Like the slave, he also expects nothing, but he does so consciously. He does so in the same manner a king or a priest expects nothing. He does not hate or ridicule the efforts of the world, he becomes one with them. His compassion is not a choice or a virtue anyone can choose or purchase through deeds. His compassion is the attitude of a man condemned to Heaven. If any sentient creatures are thankful in earnest, it is those creatures in Hell who keep dreaming of how they deserve hell; only they are thankful. The rest secretly believe a second universe is owed to them, even when they kiss your feet.

Day

Ortega de Gasset jests at philosophers and religious persons, saying, "Anyone absolved from physical labor can easily become a tower of contemplation." What happens if you stack some of those towers together? Could you build a ladder to an entirely different planet?

Day

Does slavery still exist? Forget psychology and just look at economics: are workers forced to do what they would rather not do? Do they give up leisure and idle enjoyments for the sake of lifting, cooking, sorting, planting and organizing? Is it a human proportion which judges the amount of effort a full time employee gives or is it an indifferent and mechanical or unconscious pull which sets or increases the normal standard of productivity?

In my mind, every dollar spent is the death of a human being. Those who spend a huge portion of money annihilate thousands of human hours...you see, for these finite lives of ours, we all barter hours and minutes toward our death. What is a fortune if not the dead souls

of human labor had on demand? In fact, free labor and free property are actually more horrific than the other forms of slavery. In one instance the master demands you serve him dutifully until you're dead. In the modern instance, the slaves may die, quit, or be one hundred years dead and still the master uses his capitol to command new labors; apart from that, he keeps accruing interest on the labors of those already dead. Gogol's novel, Dead Souls already gave us that revelation without need of Carl Marx's influence. (Indeed, much of Dead Souls must have already been written by the time the Communist Manifesto was published in 1848.)

Dead Souls: the haunted, unfinished novel of an author choked to death by the forthcoming ghost of capitalism.

Day

Poets give so much lip service to trees and leaves and death and sunlight that eventually we shut up our ears against their inanity. We begin to notice the difference between the poet speaking about flowers and the poet who is actually in front of a specific flower. It's easy to be a generic poet...all one requires is a generic idea about something poetic. Being a singular, unique and highly individual poet should be just as easy: never speak in terms of generalities and categories: always confront that which is singular, unique and highly individual to the moment. I see no separation between what a poet says and what we praise him for. I don't even care how he says it. If he's going to use some generalities, he'd better saturate me with so many of them that I lose track of how generic he is. If he's going to be individual, it's best that I don't notice him relying on that too strongly either.

Did you know that you can meditate and poetize about death incessantly and still never actually do more than fondle the syllables of it with your tongue?

The other night I awoke in a terror which will be difficult to explain. Somehow, I simultaneously forgot everything human and unique about my existence, but at the same time, I realized that I exist, and from that sudden realization without distraction, I discovered how terrible and strange it is to exist at all. In the darkness, at the most distant exile from daylight consciousness, I realized I would some day pass away. Stripped of all ego attachment and metaphors of self, my

dream-state reduced me to only the thought of possessing consciousness (not even a body) and at the same moment I had an intuition of death that actually paled in comparison to the horror I felt at having already sojourned into the realm of Being: The nightmare impossibility, not of danger, but of utter simplicity void of content: Realization of Consciousness...that is to say, consciousness occurred to me and it surprised me like a bear. Since then, it's happened exactly that way twice more, and the fear was no less staggering each time. If I were to poetize that experience I would say this: *Sometimes in the night, I awake part ways only to be ambushed by a bear looming over me. When I realize nothing is actually looming over me, the previous threat of death seems less frightening than the phenomenon of existence. At least I can fight the bear. At least the bear can be penetrated and gutted and skinned. But as I strain to flee this intuition of existence, my urge to retaliate is duly transformed into another threat: In my vision I see a deforested forest, clear cut down to the stumps and I see bear carcasses between each of the dead trees. Existence looks back at me in something resembling the opposite of a metaphor. It says to me, "No more metaphor's here. This is where metaphor's die."*

Never able to fully translate the intimacy of this past terror, I at least take up a new direction: I want to craft the opposite of a metaphor: To show images of things heretofore unacknowledged for their resemblance to reality: I want a collage of fates: I want to uncover things still cloaked in the mists of disbelief: Like being surprised by a bear, over and over. Let's coin a new literary device; let's call it a meteor.

Surprise+Image+Fate+disbelief which demonstrates being=Meteor. Let's have an entire book of Meteors! A whole book of Meta-metaphors! Not an image of what a thing is like or a substitution in place of a thing, but rather a transposition of the metaphorical nature of the thing such that it undoes the potency of the original metaphor and grants us the fate of the thing we have failed to see in all of its subtle details. This device can be understood more simply as a reverse metaphor. What appears to us first seems like reality. Then we realize that we are being presented with only a metaphor so we trace that metaphorical nature back to the things real essence or fate. A Meteor should be a metaphor unwound. A flash insight. The undoing and bankruptcy of poetry and poets! Better still, the beliefs of a crowd, suddenly un-deceived! A myth explained. A symbolic tragedy used as

a lens for magnifying being; a metaphor given directionality and incarnate fate...A streak of light seen when a foreign substance is heated to incandescence by the friction it encounters upon entering the earth (or mind's) atmosphere: that is a meteor. Substance! Friction! Light! Atmosphere! Earth!

Day

Multiplex theatres. Multiplex entertainments. Multiplex images. Multiplex meanings: That's good marketing! Fondle as many neurotic complexes as possible. Simultaneously. Exchange metaphor with Multiplex. Strive always for Multiplex. Single tiered relationships no longer seem profound! Singular tears are no longer enough! Give us multi-layer poems and multi-layer discourse. Not striving to escape contradiction, but striving to include it. The self-resisting and muscular ambi-tendency of the obscene! Making contradiction into the foremost stylistic requisite. Profundity only valid if...

Day

Every day given over to learning or understanding something new resembles the alienation of being a Christian in a world without Christ. Total acceptance of new phenomena, too quickly, would obliterate us. Instead we must go slowly, so the prolonged agony of change eventually feels like smooth sailing...except the keel of our boat is a knife and we are the waters.

Day

In unison, a legion of famous spirits shout: "If you want to cop our style, write as if you were the last man on earth: the joy of no audience: the liberation of no one else to deceive!"

Part V
Run My Wild Fox

*“Maybe all paths lead here,
to the repository of unlived things...”*

-Rainer Maria Rilke

The Neckar River and its meadows look up at my tower. Run you cunning beast! Run to the repository of unlived things and fetch for me an afternoon with Susette. Alas, I've sent a wild fox to do the work of a saint, but the river never returns. The 'marrow of the way' has yet to send a Bodhisattva capable of saving the sentient beings who are truly worth saving! As Holderlin languishes in his tower, those who meditate on the 'bejeweled-pillars-of-vermilion' in the 'eye of the true and perfect way of Nirvana' are a mockery against life. Poetry is at war with Buddhism. Poetry's most dire purpose is to annihilate our temptation towards Buddhism—the escapist truth, the fraudulent path!

Day

Upon realizing my own manic urge to preach at the world, I knew I had become a Buddha!

Upon seeing how I obsess over the transmission of a sacred text, from generation to generation, I knew I had become a Buddha!

Upon saying within myself, "I alone recognize the genuine character of things", I knew I had become a Buddha!

Upon making a project out of helping and 'saving' all other sentient beings, I knew I had become a Buddha!

Most importantly, on the day a middle aged woman came to me as I was preaching in the street and handed me a waste-cloth stained in feces and menstrual blood, I knew I had finally received the hallowed transmission of the Buddha Dharma. She said to me those hallowed words I'll never forget—nor shall I allow my disciples to forget—She said to me, "I've seen your type before. You're one of those religious types."

Day

"After Enlightenment—the laundry."

Those who seduce must also un-seduce.

Whether gentle or violent, the circle keeps going round.

Day

What is religion but the father of all marketing?

Day

An obviously handmade bumper sticker reads:

"Drive carefully, there's no Heaven."

Day

I remember the first time someone deemed it both plausible and casual to ask, "Do you have any children?"

Before this moment, I'd never heard or dreamed of such a wild question. "Me? Have children? Already? ! I thought I still was one!"

If the gray in a man's beard has not yet convinced him of his ability to tyrannize over miniature counterfeits of himself, how many more lifetimes would he require to learn lust for dominance? Or does it work the opposite way? Perhaps more decades will only diminish his urges.

Day

An anti-abortion protest sign reads:

"It's a poverty a child has to die for you to live as you wish."

Where is the Buddhist sign which reads:

"It's a depravity a child has to be born for you to live as you wish."

Day

Mother Chaos! Incestuous Void! The brotherhood of organized sensation scatters in the prayers of dissolution you inspire. We praise once again the clatter of hooves, probably lambs, fanning out like the gradually tightening spray of a garden hose filmed in slow motion. I see their tiny feet moving them forward with pitiful inefficiency only to claim the field before us with feeble and spotty means of conquest. No longer a unified bulk, the cloud of dirty white animal hides have become individual rain drop tears of hardly gray-furred death masks for walking carcasses: Come together religiously only to falsely disperse toward the field, toward the renunciation, toward the incestuous earth that is also the void and the compelling mother of no-forward-progress-attitudes for all creatures still enchanted by the perfect womb of sleep.

My austerity—the evasion of creeds. All religions are seas parted and rivers held back by the arcane scepter of negation. The hero entwined by the weeds of the mysterious ocean or in the hallow trunk of the life giving tree closes his eyes and imagines himself free. Hark! This vision: Into the cosmic canyon of all-hopes-crashing, with the sound of all-desires-rushing, my eyes visit below, the Nirvana mists of abeyance as I watch the humiliating cascade and cataract of souls falling—eternity of mortal eons—over the churning falls of false salvation. Christianity, Islam, and Judaism join a host of other partial evasions headed by long forgotten and sometimes gorgeous deities. With them, I also see the inert twig of ascetic Buddhism making the plunge over this canyon of grief, ever curtailed by the drowning of souls. Held under and forced down by the spray and serpent hiss of an obedient midwife, the souls are drowned (nearly at the instant of their

birth—one hundred mortal years being barely a flicker—) only to fall once more into the lap of the un-pregnant mother who continually calls them back: Buddhist Euthanasia: Punishment for cosmic incest.

Day

All tasks are effortless, once they are mastered.

Let this sentence be our guiding principle throughout the duration of this wandering prose. Consider it once more. Consider it, as if it were already a useless truism. Imagine it uttered at the outset of a long career of apprenticeship. Now imagine the day the apprentice himself utters these words, passes them, and lets go of all past struggle to attain; Our apprentice might be found planing a board, or welding a steel beam, or landing some aircraft. The wood, the steel, the control panel—all of these are familiar now, but only familiar in a spectral or haunted way. By haunted, we mean especially that super-temporal lingering of old distress that now sits gently, like a favorite pipe or a well worn instrument that has become the virtuoso's favorite.

To the un-initiated, the phrase must sound like bragging. Worse still, such words are usually followed by smooth, near perfect demonstrations of such mastery. To these, our student begs and protests: ***“But this is not teaching! This is not yet my experience! This is no help whatsoever!”*** Look closer. Does it not become apparent that the goal of carpentry, architecture or aeronautics has less to do with wood, steel and air than it does with the composite achievement of effortlessness? To rid oneself of the tension that opposes movement, progression, or completion—this is what we mean by mastery.

“But is this enough?”

Leave that question aside. Mastery does not ask quantitative questions. More, less, greater smaller, harder, softer—these are not the true dimensions of accomplishment. Such details only open the way to further usage, further manipulation, further acquisition, further knowledge, further variation. It is enough that there are many domains, and in the many domains there are to be found many varieties of excellence that do not conform to any static or specific pattern of

mastery beyond the one thing needful—effortlessness. So long as the task is accomplished, there is no further need to digest its leftovers or its exhaustive debris.

Day

I'll never be married.
I'll never dress up for a funeral.
I'll never see the difference between a joke and a tragedy.
I'll never see a newborn child without wanting to weep.
I'll never see the kindness of my own eyes in a mirror.
I'll never praise sobriety above drunkenness.
I'll never be a philosopher or a poet.
I'll never feel pity for plants animals or stars.
I'll never rejoice in the bigness of the earth.
I'll never complain in the smallness of a prison.
I'll never celebrate my success.
I'll never mourn my failures.
I'll never find a way to respect any intellect above my own.
I'll never feel complete in all things.
I'll never have learned enough hatred to feel wise.
I'll never have forgotten enough joy to experience Nirvana.
I'll never have attacked the Prince of Buddhism enough.
I'll never have retreated from my own view far enough.
I'll never be caught reaching for the textures of the moon,

But I'll find a way to describe all these wonders
Without breaking into song.

—If only I could haunt humanity with the mysterious nature of that mantra I did not invent.

Day

The wedding of architecture and religious temples strikes me as absurd. It's a power grab, plain and simple. A visual tyranny, like a castle or a hospital erected in a desert or on an island with scant vegetation. It's an outpost of cultural braggadocio. A days journey east

of the village latrine dug by hand we fantasize about Sunday Mass, or maybe more rarely, Easter Mass. From our rural well, we dredge up the days water with bells in the distance—make no mistake, architecture is effective, but in the wrong direction. Those who claim that architecture is conducive in some way to the study of the human soul aren't really looking with unprejudiced eyes. By that logic, we ought to practice psychology with rakes and shovels.

With eyes undeceived, I see an edifice built brick upon brick by human hands and human ingenuity. Set up beside nature: beside the aggregate chaos of wild growth in all directions: what challenge does the scrannel voice of a cathedral offer to a mountain or a lake? But there lies the troubling secret of architecture and power consolidation: A cathedral offers style, order, symmetry, purpose, and forethought. Humanity finds no symbols of unity in nature. Nature cannot offer or demand conformity. Nature is polymorphic, subtle, unruly, tenacious, and self-renewing. A cathedral represents the sterilization of these virtues. A cathedral is monomaniac, audacious, constrained, predictable and static.

Human kind is not overmastered by colored glass or high ceilings. Is the height of a chandelier somehow a sculptured mimicry of the stars? The beauty of a cathedral doesn't in the least bit rival a sunset or a thunderstorm. In fact, nature may actually be too beautiful and too threatening to worship. Religion actually needs the impotent tendency of literature and simulacra in order to divest colored light and domed skies of their frightening proportions. A cathedral is a special effects gallery of faint miracles; their lighting and their echoes challenge us to realize how unnatural they are by utilizing the same phenomena of nature staged and falsified for our delight. Brute animals that we are, we don't realize immanence until we are given microcosms of its effects, with a slightly dimmed grandeur.

Perhaps our habits of lucidity fail to sympathize correctly with past human intuition; I enter a cathedral of elaborate decor only to suspect a subtle atheism latent somewhere in its extravagance. The gothic spires almost taunt and jibe the hand me down teachings of Christ, and for that, I cheer for them in all of their seductive glory. Architecture cannot teach depths of soul or spirit: the ultra pious hermit retreats even from the monastery in order to have quietude, as far as possible from the bone shaking nausea of pipe organs and the pedantic squabble he imagines going on between ornate cathedral buttresses and

the men drafting them. Even the smells of incense alienate the holy man when he realizes their similarity to pagan ritual and witch cults. After communion, he longs to flee the esoteric icon images, the dark corridors, the suffocating oil paintings and the well fortified imperialism of his all-to-Roman religion. Nature is simultaneously less taxing and more gratifying to the saint than architecture. After years of awe and devotion, he too begins to suspect the worldly trappings of his house of worship. Can it be that such things are necessary, in their proper place, for the initiation of novices only? That instead of being a triumph of spiritual development, cathedrals are really nothing more than the meager gains and laughable libido expenditure of extroverted men trying to dig upwards into the depths of the psyche?

For the saint, God is clean air and sunshine; a few bean plants and a tomato.

Day

We magicians can strangle and overcome anything, merely by describing it. Victory only requires we compare it to something artfully better.

Day

It's a good omen to notice by accident

An eclipse
A shadow
Or a watermark.

...But that's not what I mean.

Those symbols have nothing to do with what I'm talking about.
However, if you do begin noticing them,
You'll soon discover what I have in mind.

Day

If there were a symbol which rose upwards when you pushed it downwards, and pointed to the right when you pushed it to the left, I'd make that symbol the flag for the undiscovered country of creative genius...unless of course, that symbol already had a poor reputation for its having been *too effective*.

Day

I see no great difference between Good and Evil, so I abstain from morality: What other men fear, I also fear.

As regards compassion: I'll never count it a waste to offer small acts of charity if the timing is correct.

What neurosis ever wanted to demand more than that?

Day

Taoism acknowledges only one sin: Discontent.

Day

There are four pillars of Discontent, and each one has its source in a corresponding strength.

Anxiety: superior involvement

Hesitation: superior feeling

Inactivity: superior intuition

Discontent: superior thinking

Taoism is the only Gospel which ridicules you for your strengths.

Taoist advice: Balance your strengths or add alcohol.

Day

Taking apart a motorcycle while thinking about the thrill of riding it; Wanting to touch a piece of wood on a lathe and shave it as it turns, bit by bit until it resembles a smooth bowl your hands and fingertips can feel, hold and indulge—some of us live for objects and others live for ideas. I mostly live as if my life were an argument *against* the desires of other beings. I have no use for the writer whose pipe dreams fashion harmonious fraternity between dissimilar beings. Not only do I want to be challenged and given a new problem, I want that problem to seem to have both arisen from beyond the taint of ego prejudice and to appear as if it had been waiting for me all along, just beyond the reach of my frustrations; as if it had been forged, somehow, by the blacksmith of immortal human woes. Consider my desire once more, *as you're taking your motorcycle apart!*

As metaphors expand, the illusory fraternity my words create are not actually a fraternity at all. Sometimes motorcycles are only motorcycles and wooden bowls are just wooden bowls. It's a common human failing, to see in each of the world's objects, a metaphor for Being. Objects are not this metaphor. You are actually the metaphorical creation of your own metaphorical self...not an extrapolation of paltry objects.

Day

One voice. No revelries of personal pain or existential anxiety will ever compare to the disquiet echo of one universal voice, prattling on and engaging only itself like a God in a strait jacket confined to a room with padded walls. Yes! It would be ideal to confine God in a padded room or an anechoic chamber with spiked foam that never answered back.

If you want to hear the sound of Nirvana—the final terror of the universe—Only a mild effort of ear training is necessary. First, learn to discern the ambience and echoes of every type of room. Take that skill with you into every conversation going forward. When anyone speaks, learn to separate in your mind their echoes from their voice. You'll soon notice their voice is dull, plain and without depth. The pitch and size of their throat remains to differentiate them, but once robbed of

ambience, we've already denatured and isolated them from the voluptuous spaces of reality. Added ambience is not only added spirit but added divinity—that's why cathedrals must sound larger than life and stages must sound larger than life, because we are all thirsty for the intoxication of voices that are not our own.

The next requirement in learning the sound of oblivion is to listen to the voice within ones own voice; the voice of self remaining over after all thought of action, ambition, dream and lust have been extinguished. The voice which says simple phrases like "This is bodily pain", "This is rest", "This is hunger", "This is daylight", "This is loneliness". Now go further. Even more acute than concepts are the particles of grammar between them. Everything worth understanding can be read from verbs. The empty voice of the printed word is so skeletal, so indifferent, so sinister we ought to never read a page if we should like to preserve our humanity. Printed words are already the soul de-fleshed and the universe de-humanized. (What a perfect playground for the misanthrope!)

Once you've begun to doubt the uniqueness of your own voice by dissociating yourself from the personal activities and preferences which separate you from your neighbors, take the next step by marking the tone, the attitude and the cadence of your own voice. Realize where style, lack of style, intelligence, lack of intelligence, feeling and lack of feeling have altered the immanent neutrality of words. Once you've performed the temporary and provisional exorcism of all verbal phantoms in yourself, you're ready to begin performing the same task—if only imaginatively—in all other beings you encounter.

Realize we cannot escape *all the way*. Our flesh, our opinions, our prejudices, our creeds, still remain, no matter how far repressed. Even our tongue and our lips themselves are a hindrance. At base, all this Nirvana seeking and Buddha listening only amounts to a vague yet terrifying intuition at best. An entire monastery of obedient disciples who look, dress, speak and believe the same are really no better than the efforts you may do within your own mind. Such beings, despite their great show of solidarity and stage presence, hear the one voice no better than you may hear it. Contrary to all religious teachings—and I mean literally every religious teaching including Buddhism—the one voice offers no moral counsel and no words of guidance or wisdom; all those notions came from a demonic pantheon within, where all manner of opposites and symbols blur away from consciousness toward total

un-differentiation...but this collective is not the one voice we are seeking. What I'm speaking about when I say, "One Voice" is merely the rational, self-aware, blank and superfluous aspect of sentient consciousness which is really the inner nothingness of being. Apart from all transient illusions of lips, skin, facial muscles, hair, height, skills and attitudes—which are changeable or prey to destruction—the inner voice between mortals is the nothing voice of self-awareness which has no privilege, no essence, no glory and no ambience. The one voice in me which thinks about thinking, is the same all the way down to the lowest creature and upwards once again to the most lucid mortals who have ever lived. Sentient awareness as a universal phenomenon, would seem as if it possessed all the sadness of a God playing solitaire, but that too would only be an individualizing and humanizing way of seeing the totality. A better analogy, for our petty brains to use in imagining universal sentience as a phenomena would be the personality of a thinking rock or the desperate blindness of sexual will in the heat of intercourse. (Eroticism possesses all the esoteric infinities as austere meditation, but the sexual is a poor example because it represents the murky collective depersonalization whereas the One voice which we are seeking is the depersonalization and blankness in rational consciousness before phenomena are added to it for assessment.)

Now, to review, we've acquainted ourselves with ambience, with dissociative emptiness, with the illusion of other beings not unlike ourselves, and all the transient properties which get added to consciousness over and above the universal non-voice of awareness. The paradox in this meditation is the realization that without the tincture of identity or mood, there is actually nothing at all to communicate to other beings. We may imagine consciousness and the skeletal apparatus of consciousness as something universal and unchanging, as if it were only one contained in all, but the reality of this religious idea can never actually be proved or realized. At best, all that exists and all that *can exist* of the one voice is merely a subtle terror and a lingering suspicion lurking beneath the incessant chatter of mortal voices existing their attitudes and bodily experiences. One even wonders if the mystic and religious seekers are not actually the ones who are in need of therapy themselves. To champion the One Voice of Buddhist Nirvana is actually to be incapable of integrating oneself into the common stream of bodily reality and environment adaptation...let alone the social world of juggling reality impressions and psychical seductions of momentary or lasting interest. For the religious seeker,

and the possible neurosis of his existence, *the sound of Nirvana is like the disquiet Hell of listening to God in a strait jacket.*

Day

Even when conscious awareness finally reveals our greatest weakness, shall we...can we...attempt the supreme sacrifice? Conscious awareness says to us, "To repair and adapt the many relations and identities of the feeling capacity you must forsake conscious awareness." Had the situation been reversed, and awareness been lacking the supreme sacrifice would demand we forfeit our identity, our possessions, our relations and our personal tastes or feelings. For those who stumble at gaining awareness as opposed to emotion, everything that predicates or makes bridges directly to their heart must be laid waste, else consciousness remains tainted and illogical. (Buddhism and Christianity, in their best expressions may already be opposites. For humanity's two strengths—thinking and feeling, we need very different means of transforming those strengths into their opposite. For the feeling and socially directed person, true thinking is not possible until one begins attempting the difficult task of Buddhist denial...not for the magic of Nirvana, but rather so that he or she may for the first time possess a clear thought.

With Christianity the situation is reversed. When thought is supreme, and the engineering, mathematizing logic administrating force of reason refuses to acknowledge any other criteria of evaluation, one needs not just any symbol, but the most taboo symbol imaginable: Human sacrifice. Only human sacrifice—the god on a cross—is truly potent enough to defeat all logic. Though there are many symbols and many gods throughout history—and many of them dealing with specialized aspects of our psyche—what Christianity has uniquely done is find *the one infallible symbol* still at work when reason has escaped the seduction of all other fantasies and spooks of religion. The symbol of human sacrifice brings us back to ourselves. It awakens the irresistible urge to feel compassion and feel ones own social relation apart from reason and its disinterested projects.

The supreme sacrifice demanded by growth, echoed throughout the history of religions is already imagined and feared by all mortals. We light incense, burn candles, whisper prayers and tread lightly

beneath the great icons, altars, and stained glass images of supreme sacrifice...if only someone would go forth and die in our stead...

Day

Nearly every Western translation or summary of Buddhism I've encountered prompts me to refute it as a form of aestheticism—a love of beauty. Whether the aim is for harmonious living, neighborly love, correct moral action or worship of the sacred master himself, this all strikes me as a refined hedonism. I'm told nothing of life's terror, its agony, its lyricism, its futility, its disunion, its repression, its ugliness and its violent upheavals that always prove necessary. Christianity shares this inclination for making life into a constrained hedonism of aesthetic virtue. What is morality anyway, if it is not an elaborate argument for a constrained and acceptable aesthetic valuation? And morality itself would be all well and good if by some fantastic magic the human mind truly were capable of both conceiving of itself and acting within such arbitrary limitations. With both the religions of the West and the East, despite their poetic elements, a grossly reductionary forcing of consciousness is being enacted for the sake of superficial aesthetics and social decorum. And when the criminal or the sensualist is finally laid out beside himself in the dark night of the soul, the fact that he chooses religion, the fact that he chooses a different mediating aesthetic with which to live by, let us not conclude from this choice alone that his selfish and hedonistic inclinations have come to an end! Quite the contrary. They have only become more stubborn and more refined. Later on, he cannot wait to judge harshly those like him who have yet to find the hallowed way his religion offers. So long as the human mind seeks refuge in appearance for appearances sake, or beauty for the sake of beauty, it has also succeeded in a hazardous negation and a suspension of all those forces within which enable growth and development. Let it be mentioned here as well that so long as I have refrained from the worship of any one ideal or idol of beauty I have never suffered even a second of writers block. Though I feel indifferent about the quality of my various outbursts—some of them obviously being of very marginal literary substance—it should be emphasized that my overall output remains dauntless, inimitable, prolific and vital, because its source *goes beyond beauty!*

For those who like symbols, imagine a new form of ascetic stasis: imagine two equally strong horses pulling against each other. Or

better, imagine one carriage with four harnesses—one horse for every cardinal direction. Each time the whip is cracked the horses are driven to exhaustion even though the carriage hasn't moved.

Day

Active Nihilism: Hippolytus, tamer of horses.

Day

If conscious reason and sentient awareness can be imagined, in its simplicity, as a state of non-voice/non-identity before individualization (individualization—which for all religions translates to sin, corruption, worldliness, maya and illusion), then that which speaks to us from out of our dreams, anxieties and our unconscious must be the hidden Nirvana beneath the surface of thought; an amalgamation of all myths and prior lives combined in our DNA only to paint the logic and the madness of an autistic priest. The universe within looks like a hollow God exalted by a cohort of mad impressions.

A Taoist priest with an empty wine flask is the truth of existence. His poetry is second best.

Day

So far we've managed to escape the shackles of creeds, ideals, professions and women. Yes, we agree that belonging to anything whatsoever is banality and loss of freedom, totally unworthy of a superior being (Pessoa's statement)...But shackles are not only shackles. Shackles are also anchors for purposeful vessels with organized crews—crews without ambition or extravagance who perform simple tasks and arrive safely.

Without an anchor of any kind, we drift mindlessly, even on calm days, until we no longer realize where we are. And if we've managed to float blindly into an unabating storm, are we really the superior beings we thought we were?

Day

-An Old Man and his Faithful Companion-

He seems to recall a vague memory of a past life. Time seems to be moving slowly backwards; in some way about to repeat. Is it the chill in the air, descending briskly from the Himalayan Mountains? Is it this ageless mountaintop breeze passing gently over the Great Wall that torments him, or is it instead, a coldness of spirit that now visits his heart and beckons him to leave something behind? A remembrance? A Legacy? Silly old gate keeper! Sage Books are only written by the confused poets who pretend not to be confused, and then succeed in fooling their stupid readers! What the sage knows, every man knows...Alas, man knows very little and the wisest teachers keep silent...But what if you should one day return? Have you not thought to ask yourself of the Eternal Recurrence old man? Will you again be so lucky as to be schooled by one of the ancients whose vow of silence forbids them to make written documents? And why all this secrecy? What if The Way of Heaven gets lost forever? Hesitant questions prodded and needled at the old man's weary flesh. His Rheumatic bones ached like an exhausted bundle of sticks under a new fallen tree. Pain is fascinating.

“Impossible! The Way speaks to all beings and expresses itself in all actions; I am not its keeper, I am not its foundation, I am not its prophet...but yet...I pity them so deeply. Where I have suffered, they also will know suffering. Of the many that account themselves wise in the ways of Heaven and Earth, few come to understand the ancient virtue of Wu Wei. Solitary, hapless, desolate...The princes are not content. In standing behind, I have long stood confidently in place of he who was highest, opting never to take credit, ever lingering in the shadows of destiny. The labor was for nothing. Where the yielding virtue was most needed, it was forsaken; We are again at war, so I quit the Palace, I quit the people and I quit the empire forever...I am not long for this Earth. Do I not deserve a moment's peace in my final days? Have not my years of assiduous discipline and service benefited the people one hundred fold simply by my compassion alone? Cannot I quit my post, even now? Here on this outer most edge of the kingdom, how is it that my thoughts still fly backwards? I feel like an apprentice all over again, stricken with doubt, futility and longing...Oh, ye Gods, this is an uncommon wind! It breathes me in and it treats me as smoke. Where has my warm flesh gone off to? I am all shivers and bone!”

The winds are tugging at the old man's beard as if a hand were trying to draw him backwards to the East. The empire is chasing him out with dark clouds, but the hidden valleys beyond and before him seem to rise up with their own secret winds to beat upon The Great Wall. Whispers and anxieties! The storm thunders behind; Lightning flashes ahead. The trees outside the wall have an ominous tranquility. Unmoved, they absorb the vibrant thunder; the wind does not yet bend them. Inside the steep wall, the trees are blasted with chaotic frenzy. Two forces have met in the sky above. Beneath them, Lao Tzu sits calmly in the eye of the immanent. Behind him, his donkey's tail swishes lazily to and fro without concern for the weather. Oddly, and perhaps for the first time, the animal seems more at ease than its master. Lao feels the tail whip up at his robes. The winds suddenly die down and settle, while far off on the horizon he can hear it regrouping its battalions; recovering...Heaven has retreated for the moment, but Lao Tzu lets out a sigh; he knows it will be getting worse shortly. With candid playfulness the donkey disturbs the master's contemplation with yet another swat of the tail.

"Sheng Jen!" Exclaims Lao without thinking. The donkey, hearing its name, (Chinese word for sage) gives a snort and looks back. The master gives a peculiar look, which the animal seems to understand, and then stops. Lao Tzu dismounts, dragging his heavy robes with him, much to the dismay of the donkey, who, having grown accustomed to the warmth afforded by them, yawns and shivers, turning its head, side to side and in finale, bows low to sniff the bricks next to his feet. Meanwhile, Lao climbs up on the edge of the wall, hangs his feet over the side, swings them childishly, then, taking a last look at the dark cloud hanging over the Empire, ponders gloomily: Retreat and diminish? Or Return and expand?

"Spilt rice! Spilt rice from a big bowl! Funny, when men say 'Empire' I imagine a bowl of loose rice held by an idiot and chased by dogs! Yes, a large bowl carried by a big brute—That is Empire!"

Lao wanted to smile a misanthrope smile, but he began to weep instead. He thought first of the war fields. Then of the trampled and wasted crops. Choking sobs made the old man shudder deeply as he thought of the Emperor and his hoggish stupidity. The whole weird world weighed upon the bearded old man as he sat on the ledge until finally his inward storm passed away and became peaceful once more.

Then his thoughts shifted to the image of the Emperor's children in their bright colored robes; Summer. Midday; running gleefully on the creaky plank boards and then on into the garden with their tiny fists full of food scraps, eager to throw a few crumbs to the fish and ducklings in the Palace fountain. He thought of how the littlest one always made him anxious, and how, when he came running full speed past his favorite shade tree, the little boy always lagged behind the others in his yellow robe—which was a bit too long—and how his wiry little legs were a bit too clumsy...He remembered all this past anxiety with a particular sweetness. Two months journey...A long way for an old man to travel if he should suddenly change his mind, realizing stupidly—after all that donkey shuffling—he had mistakenly left contentment behind him instead of in front...

“The monastery on the Western Pass; often dreaming of the final cold morning; How many times have I viewed the scene of my last weak breath—as if standing over myself in the dim bluish light of a monastic cell—and maybe a dream of peach blossoms falling while my useless old skin shivers sympathy for the breezy petals I see but never touch! On the coarse fibers of a monastic cot: unyielding dormitory of the universe: my final illusion, as I die humiliated and unable to suppress a yearning for more seasons and lifetimes. Cruel irony of sages, to preach peace only to die violently in a harmless passion of chest pains, too strong for old hearts! The Monastery, my true home—I bring shame to the elders if I do not return in time...they are expecting me.” Sheng Jen clip-clopped up beside Lao and put his nuzzle against his arm. Lao gave him a pat and a scratch behind his ears. The donkey sniffed the air and the wind started up again.

“It's going to rain old man! Do you want to get wet?” Lao spoke in a silly donkey voice, talking more to himself than to the animal. The donkey's thick black eyes looked sweetly idiotic just at that moment, and Lao began to laugh. Though they were alone, Lao felt as if the whole universe were watching the spectacle of this triumphant moment. There was no special awe in his having such odd sensations; he had grown accustomed to this feeling and it made his existence a continual source of joy and poetic dread. Reasonable truths have no utility in the hearts of old men...

“You don't mind anything do you old friend? You'd stand in a river for a whole day even, if I happened to stop you in water up to your ears! Sheng Jen! Shame on you! You're too absurd! You would

simply stand there and let the water flow past wouldn't you? Old beast! If only you were a high priest! There is yet much to teach the world on the topic of faith, isn't there, my stinky oaf! I should walk on my own for the rest of the way and send you back to give lessons to Confucius and all the other loud talkers in the Palace! You'd make an ass of them!" The donkey seemed to like the sound of Lao's voice, and he leaned in closer. "Curse the Heavens! I've just now remembered what I forgot to do before leaving. I meant to leave the Emperor and his dutiful ministers that little joke I was planning. I should have written down my riddles." The donkey turned away to snort then looked back. "Such a mannerly beast! I might have fared better as a horse trainer instead of a petty finance clerk. What do you think Sheng Jen, is the Way of Heaven falling into disuse or am I just becoming a cranky old man?" Silence. "Your answers give much to think about Sheng Jen. I'd say you are extremely polite and articulate—that's a rare thing in this world! By the way, do you think you could write a book? For my part, I've read everything in the Palace and before that, everything in the Western Monastery. Words! Words! Words! Why do books always use words? Men are obsessed with these things called words; I read and I read, but nothing is ever described correctly and the other half of the time I tend to forget what I'm even reading about! Will you write me a book Sheng Jen. Will you write me a book without these ugly, wretched words that men use nowadays? If you did, I know the people would love you for it. Do you think you could do that Sheng Jen? Could you write me a donkey book? What would you have to say about us humans in your donkey book? Would you thank them for always riding on your back and making you carry their burdens? Would you praise their inconsistent virtues or their silly rituals? Would you claim any merit for your deeds or try to dress up your talents as something they are not? Would you make yourself into an allegory for the inquisitive adolescents? Would you champion the fidgety youngsters who disobey their parents and shout curses at our administrations? Do you think the rebel thieves and swearing soldiers would like your book? And how would you set about writing it? Would you style the Way of Heaven on your capricious tale or the water trough you drink from, or the fresh dry hay in the palace stables? Which would it be, the inconstant, the formless or the lowly? What is your donkey virtue? How about it old friend, can you write me a donkey book?"

Lao Tzu got on his donkey and turned back the way he came. To avoid the rain, he made the decision to spend the night in the

Gatekeeper's spare bed after all. If anyone should ever think to ask, the text he wrote during the night of the storm at the final outpost had an ulterior motive. He wrote it on account of his Donkey. Sheng Jen hates violent storms. For our part, we shall never know if Lao Tzu made it safely to the Western Pass. Perhaps he is getting closer each day.

Day

Beware those who ask the God Question.

The God Question will define you.
The God Question will define your civilization.
The God Question will dictate your prosperity,
The God Question will define your enemies.
The God question will mold your families.
The God Question will become a symbolic quest.
The God Question will mean nothing in the end.

Sick with the tedium of long oration
Let me alone to contemplate further
And Enjoy.

Part VI
Stone Soup and Diogenes

Day

For days and weeks Diogenes followed Antisthenes, carrying his parcels home from the market, fetching his well water in the mornings and evenings, and even going so far as to feed his livestock without being asked. Finally overwhelmed at the young man's efforts to be granted audience, Antisthenes kicked over the well bucket Diogenes had just filled for him and shouted at the boy, "What do you want from me?!"

"I want you to sum up all the philosophy you've refused to speak and give it to me in a way I can understand." Said Diogenes idealistically.

"I've already done that! Be gone!" Shouted Antisthenes.

"But I still don't understand, and understanding was part of my request..." Ventured Diogenes timidly.

"Everything I mean to say, I've already demonstrated. If you want a mantra, let it be this: *willful disregard*. If you want to know the source of the world's confusion and the perennial error of mankind, its *willful disregard*. If you want to know the error within yourself that keeps you from understanding its *willful disregard*. If you want to know the strategy which will separate you from other thinkers and make you a philosopher king, you must only practice *willful disregard*. If you want to know anything at all about existence, you've already fallen to *willful disregard*. If you want to pray to the gods, don't waste your time praying to them...instead pray to *willful disregard*. All things in heaven practice *willful disregard*. All kings and beings of high rank and intelligence practice *willful disregard*. All common people, in their myriad of errors practice *willful disregard*. All animals, in each their own earthly sphere of nature practice *willful disregard*. All saints, magicians sages and alchemists practice *willful disregard*...and finally, if you want to teach a thing, you must also practice it as well, so I give you nothing but *willful disregard*."

At this declaration, Diogenes looked at his beloved master sideways for a space of ten minutes, then said finally, "You're a bastard."

Day

If a clever psychologist is able to perceive slight neurosis everywhere, how come politics still exists? If the news stations employed one *apolitical* psychologist beside every political debate and every act of punditry, the entire nation would grind to a shameful halt, inexplicably perplexed at how far reaching the consequences of slight mental illness have diverted their energies from their actual intentions. Healthy men and women would recoil in a sudden seizure of self-awakening if they only knew the slight horrors which vaguely guided their lives. Today I see the god of the psychological unconscious: willful disregard.

Politics: willful disregard.

Faith: willful disregard.

Individualism: willful disregard.

Liberty: willful disregard.

Hope for progress: willful disregard.

Education: willful disregard.

Day

It's often been told that an elder and utterly destitute Diogenes would walk through the streets of Athens, and later Corinth, with a lamp lit in the daytime. It's not however, so often told how or when Diogenes first took up this practice. Upon the parting of Antisthenes and Diogenes, on the day of the lecture on *willful disregard*, it is said Diogenes picked up Antisthenes' lantern, and though it was morning, lit it and fled from his master. As he was leaving, Antisthenes called out to him, "Diogenes, where are you going with my lantern in the daytime?" To this, Diogenes replied, "I'm going to look for an honest man."

Day

Each being carries within and moves about by an invisible act of will. Ignorance of this will leads to neurosis. Common beings have a willful disregard of this will. Meanwhile, those capable of being mindful of inner will, beyond consciousness, have the ability to short circuit and nullify this will...by means of a willful disregard. In one type of being, will looks outward and wants only to see the outward inertia toward things, and so disregards them for what they are. The other type of being looks inward and thereby feels inertia toward outward things in such a way that inner and outer being is transformed. Movement halts. Mindfulness, affinity and regard arise from the disregard of inner will. Willful disregard is both error and attainment.

Day

Will to power? Naivety. The god of the psychological unconscious is willful disregard. The treasures of illumination belong to those who let go their will; to those who channel acts of non-willing. In layman's terms, to those who engage in non-serious prayers to the void.

Day

You can bet that I don't continue this when I'm tired or when I want something to eat. Some would say it's because I'm a simpleton, but I think my impatience is part of my redemption.

"Non-serious prayers to the void..."

Day

If I want my daughters to find a superior man, I do not teach her. Instead, I give her willful disregard.

If I want my bastard sons to learn success in the amorous arts, like Don Juan or Casanova, I don't visit them or teach them anything. Instead, I give them willful disregard.

If I recoil against the wickedness of the world, and find that I cannot help but give my children security, privilege, food, an excellent education, compassion, happiness and reliable counsel, I will have cheated them the greatest lesson of all, willful disregard.

If we may bring to mind our neglected daughters, our bastard sons and our overly coddled children of extreme good fortune, which of them do you believe will actually enact the most rigorous acts of retribution upon the world as it actually is?

Which of those types would have bothered to write such a question?

And suppose they should feel total disregard the moment childhood has passed, and continue living on in exile, ever after? Does that fate harmonize with the intention of loving parents and loving Gods? What does parental love look like when it is withdrawn or dies young? What do gracious Gods look like when they are found out to be lies and fabrications of culture? What does wealth look like, when one finds that he is poor and unemployed? What does the security of a police state feel like when there are too many examples of enforcement? What does education inform you of, when you have been too well treated? What are compassion and reliable counsel when your words fall on deaf ears or you realize your inability to care for others? What is happiness, if it is realized in solitude only?

If you want to tear a man in half, give him a happy childhood and a contemplative future. At least my other daughters and sons achieved marriage...

Day

Near the end of Diogenes' life, after he had made a name for himself as a misanthrope and forefather of cynics, he is said to have eaten in public nearly every day, but never to have cried in public.

In those days, it was against custom to eat in the market place, so we can imagine the strange habits of Diogenes caused quite a backlash amongst the well to do people of superior attitudes and tastes. These days, that sort of rebelliousness seems trifling. We'd rather have young lads standing in front of tanks or something, I suppose. Well, let us relate this other small tidbit. Though Diogenes' diet consisted entirely of onions, he was never seen crying in public. The only known instance of Diogenes crying comes from a woman who happened to be cooking a soup for her four sons late at night. She had gotten word that her boys would be coming home from a military expedition and she had run out of onions. Since the market was closed, she thought naturally of the pile of onions Diogenes kept near his tub in the street close by. Surely the old lunatic could spare an onion or two on behalf of her sons, thought she, so she set out to look for Diogenes. Sure enough, she found the onions in just the place she had predicted, but Diogenes was nowhere in sight. It was now late into the evening and the moon had risen quite high. By the natural silvery light overhead, she could see the bits of straw spilling out of Diogenes' tub, but his bed was vacant. Two crows landed and took turns pecking at one of the remaining onions which had rolled away from the pile the old woman had taken from. Feeling a bit guilty for stealing from a beggar, the woman resolved to bring Diogenes a cup of soup the next morning as payment for the onion.

On the way home, the woman heard a man sobbing outside the city wall near a row of small trees, barely concealed by some tall meadow grass. Forgetting both the onion and the philosopher, she bravely went up to the crying figure and asked what was the matter. When the figure turned, she realized it was Diogenes. The aging and feeble Diogenes said to her, "Forgive me madam, I did not wish to cry publicly"

"What is the matter?" She asked.

To this, Diogenes paused a moment, and then, by the light of the moon and the smell he was accustomed to, he smiled and said to the

woman, "I'm crying because someone stole one of my onions." At this, the old woman laughed and continued on her way, with the onion in hand.

The next morning, Diogenes awoke to find the same old woman standing over him with a bowl of soup. She asked once more why he had been crying. At first, Diogenes wanted the old woman to promise never to tell the secret, but upon her insistence, Diogenes realized anonymity was of no use, so he relayed his story as follows:

"My very first master, Antisthenes, who was once a disciple of Socrates came to me during the night. As you can see, I'm already very old, and I had imagined Antisthenes to have died decades ago, but he came to me during the night all the same. Whether in a dream or in the flesh, I do not know for certain, but he said to me, *'Diogenes, are you still looking for an honest man?'* And hearing my master's voice once more I replied, "Yes, of course I am!" To which he replied, *'You might have had better luck looking for your father. You should have began with that task instead. It might have proved less difficult.'* And when he said this, he vanished. Thinking that Antisthenes might have left the city, I followed the road away from the market to the row of trees where you found me. From out of a sleepy confusion, I realized I had been crying at just about the same time you realized it. I'm still unsure as to why."

To this the woman forced the bowl of warm soup into the old philosophers hands and said, "You talk too much. Drink this soup you old clown. You're much too old to be worrying about fathers and bastard children." As she said this, Diogenes realized the indecency of his fantasy. The old woman's military sons were also fatherless, and worse, one of the four had not returned home to her that morning.

"What did you put in this soup, ma'am?" Asked Diogenes

"I call it stone soup. I start with water and a magic stone, and then I add to it whatever I can find."

"A magic stone?"

"No magic really. Just an ordinary stone, but I tell the passersby there's a magic stone at the bottom of the pot and get them to donate

something in exchange for a taste. You might say I cook with curiosity." Said the old woman, grinning with a few missing teeth.

"That's a good recipe. There's no shortage of that." Concluded Diogenes. "But salt is expensive, where do you get so much salt?"

"Tears."

Day

Alexander the Great once stopped in front of Diogenes on a sunny day and said to the philosopher, "It's an honor to finally stand here in front of you, my wise friend. I'll grant you any request to show my respect. Name any gift or favor you desire."

"Splendid," Said Diogenes, "Would you please step out of my sunlight?"

Alexander grimaced and obediently stepped aside, having to shuffle his feet slightly to avoid the old beggar's pile of onions. Somewhat humbled by the old philosopher's squalid conditions, he made a second attempt to gain the man's favor: "Diogenes, if I were not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes." He said boldly, but his voice broke with sadness as he realized its untruthfulness.

"...And if I were not Diogenes, I would like to be a rock." Said Diogenes grimly upon sensing the emotional coloration in the great conqueror's voice.

"Why a rock?" Asked Alexander

"As far as I know, rocks never have to deal with the misfortunes of being born."

"You've endured the life of a kynicos (dog) for quite some time sir. You are both inspiring and remarkable in all I have heard." Said Alexander in earnest.

"You see! There it is once more! That's the trouble with being a man. A man can't even endure his species quietly and become like a nameless rock. Instead they give him a family, a past, a career, a duty,

a nation and an epitaph! Then later they forget entirely about his desire to be a simple rock! They fashion him into a millstone, so they can go on grinding him and using him and worshipping him. I wasn't born a circle or a wheel. Someone else invented those symbols for me. I suppose when I'm dead you'll put a marble dog over my grave and make a cult out of me! A second ago I dreamed I was a nameless, sun-baked rock. You do me the gravest insult by reminding me I'm a man. Second worst, your offer has reminded me of all the desires I thought I was finally rid of. I'll be sleepless and grumpy for days thanks to you. Wisdom is no ammunition against dreams and sadness."

"But I only meant to offer you some kind of happiness..." stated Alexander hastily.

"Give back your conquered empires, and then I'll believe in your proposal. Until then, I have no faith in the promise of borrowed luxury." Said Diogenes.

"Indolence conquers many Diogenes, but today, Alexander remains Alexander. I wish you well."

At this, the two parted without speaking further, but in the days following, the dreams of both men were troubled and strenuous.

Day

After meeting Alexander, Diogenes dreamed he too was a conqueror. In the dream, Alexander came to him in the clothes of a beggar. As Diogenes looked out upon his battlefield, he surveyed the dead and vanquished soldiers of his enemy with awe; between the two armies, he sees Alexander the Great coming towards him. Alexander seems to stand independently from the two mighty dream armies now under Diogenes' control. Clad in dirty rags, Alexander slowly climbs the hillside towards Diogenes' command post—which is also a tub of straw richly provided with amazingly tall stacks of onions. With an outstretched gourd of clean water, Alexander crawls the remaining distance towards Diogenes and bows his head low before him; the beggar Alexander calmly asks Diogenes to surrender his army and all his riches....and in the dream, Diogenes says "yes" with a glad heart, free of sorrow and mortal pain. Diogenes then drinks from the refreshing gourd. This gesture seems to somehow revive the dead

soldiers from both armies and lift a curse from both men. When next Diogenes turns around, Alexander reaches out his arms to give Diogenes the sun, and in doing so, Alexander becomes the old man and Diogenes' youth is restored.

Day

According to Jung, when characters of exotic ethnicity, primitive origins, or homeless beggars appear in dreams or repetitive thoughts, it's possible they represent a sexual repression. Psychology never tires of mentioning sexual motivation, libido or repression, but then again, perhaps we think too highly of ourselves in imagining that our flesh has any better motivation than sexual energy. In fact, the further we distance ourselves from purely sexual expression, the more adamantly we refuse the idea of having done so. And if the sublimation were successful, and the sexual energy depleted thereby, the indignation is all the more accurate.

Day

Metaphors dissolve and de-differentiate personal experiences into more readily accessible, communicable collective images. My own concept, 'Meteor', or reverse metaphor, seeks to uncloak the psychologically valuable data within experiential coincidence, synchronicity, and other apperceptive raw material. The meteor is the vital image link or emphasis point (fulcrum) of image oriented understanding which adds complexity upwards rather than bringing consciousness downwards, as a metaphor does. To understand the meteor one must recall how a meteor lights the sky with its heavenly origin though it falls on us, we ourselves are drawn upwards, into the heavens momentarily. A regular metaphor lives in the dirt with farm animals, grounded in its earthly origin and its crude yet durable emotional aesthetic components which, ugly or beautiful, serve the human eye, which for some unexplained reason has difficulty thinking without also seeing. Meanwhile, our meteor concept longs always for its heavenly home with the stars and shining suns of the cosmos. The meteor uses sight as a flash of cognition in order to bring fully to consciousness any phenomena or complex in the service of life. The meteor is not a symbol. I cannot stress that fact enough. The meteor is

not the stopping place or the inexhaustible nexus where conjecture and debate never find completion. No, a meteor is not that. A meteor is more real and instantaneous. It enters and departs. It may lead us to new symbols, but what it really does is announce the presence of the collective or the infinite through the temporal and factual images near by. (Some poems serve us as meteors. Other poems are just songs for our emotional life. It remains for the reader of poems to decide which is which...) To be more concrete, the onions of Diogenes are a meteor. The onion itself in this instance is not the leading symbol. Though onions stand for many things in mythology, we are not really concerned with onions themselves in this instance. Here, Diogenes is the symbol and all the components that give us the whole of Diogenes for what he means to the history of philosophy and psychology are bound up in the meteors which come with him. Even Diogenes may be a meteor if the symbol we are seeking grows still larger to the point where Diogenes alone no longer suffices to illuminate what we are seeking...remember, a meteor is always a burning fragment from some even larger *event*. Imagine a symbol breaking apart like a sun or a rogue star. The fragments from a collision are its meteors. The fragmented bits liberated from the symbol lead us back to the symbol, even when no symbol had yet come to light. Where the onion suffices, the onion is the whole star of understanding and has a gravity of its own, but where the onion is merely a functional image for the sake of a larger image, the onion is only a meteor rather than a full fledged symbol. Now we must also make the distinction that a meteor is not yet so lowly as a mere sign because it has not yet burned out its energies in any singular, one-to-one, rational-only type of meaning operation. The onions of Diogenes are immediately useful, wise, vulgar, beggarly, saintly, sustaining, tearful, many layered, repulsive, pungent, thrifty, rooted, earthly, etc. etc, but all these aspects of our meteor, the onions of Diogenes, give us the truth of the cynical man. We immediately grasp what lucidity lies beyond the symbol through the meteor. If we were seeking symbols of understanding, if we were seeking to uproot the symbolic or collective values of the onion, we might readily make it our symbol, but in this case, we are really seeking a new insight about Diogenes. Often times, the meteor is quite accidental. Often, when we are in no way seeking transcendental ideas or psychology, we happen to stumble upon meteors or synchronicity which help us illuminate the instantaneous nature of our own psyche, depending upon how phenomena happen to be coming together within our own perceptual framework, whose extreme privacy and strangeness may hold the key to realigning our psyche with the more habitual reactions of functioning

individuals. Here, we realize that the meteor is very much the opposite of a metaphor, since with a metaphor, the goal aimed at is immediate visual understanding and beyond that, if such a metaphor ever begins functioning at all like a meteor and starts aiding in the explanation of some process, the metaphor is still an explanation whose goal is *collective understanding* and not a private valuation. (Meteor is process not picture!) With the meteor, I am seeking a revelation *for myself*. The meteor focuses private, ontological and spiritually personal visions of lucidity. Again, the Onions of Diogenes only succeed in becoming meteors in the instances where the seeker looks to them for the explanation of a symbol *independently of directed attempts at collective communication*.

Perhaps we've always known the properties of onions. Perhaps what is needed is not a symbol but a rising to awareness of explicit onion significance relative to Diogenes. If our aim is useable, adaptable, translatable, easily communicable knowledge about Diogenes and the whole of his character, then we require the onion, not as a symbol but as a meteor whose origin begins in the heaven's beyond us and whose destination below gives us reliable, world-adapting insight to Diogenes who we might not have understood so thoroughly without the invocation of our meteor object. Again, even though the meteor may be used during communication, what differentiates it from the metaphor is its more private, more demanding, participational element. (The distinction may remain confusing, but keeping in mind that the meteor always glows brighter than a metaphor and creates a spectacle above us is already enough of a sermon.) Again, the meteor is unique also in its psychological utility: the meteor aids adaptation. A mere metaphor is only a passing thought image the casual reader never takes much stock in privately.

To conclude, a symbol and a meteor may seem interchangeable, and indeed their content is interchangeable, but the advancement in strategy here lies in the purposeful, thought directed elucidation of something concrete by way of something extremely abstract and multi-layered. To further clarify, we emphasize that directionality is really what sets the meteor apart from the common metaphor: Metaphors bring understanding downward, collectively: Meteors bring understanding upwards individually. With the metaphor we aim at nothing but casual image association with a one to one, picturesque substitution. Meanwhile, the onions of Diogenes are not merely picturesque but functional and dynamic to the living fate of what

Diogenes is and represents. Through the use and discovery of the meteor, we arrive at a play of energies still at work, whereas a metaphor only gives us a static snapshot of a dead relationship; a snapshot of something easily substituted for an abstraction we lack the resources to achieve in our minds without said snapshot. Often, the metaphor is necessary not for poetic reasons or esoteric reasons, but more for the benefit of the *lowest common denominator of intellectual abstraction*.

Since the meteor is ego integrating, useful and livingly dynamic, a meteor is both life affirming and experienced as pleasurable to they who discover them. We must also point out, that with a bit of cleverness and shuffling of details, a meteor can also be very destructive or entertaining depending on which side of the collision you encounter it. No doubt you've already begun imagining how a misanthrope would hurl them...

Day

In ancient Greece, the infamous misanthrope Diogenes was once invited to dine with the philosopher Socrates and the rest of his rabble. The engagement was set to be held in the evening, but Diogenes, being the incalculable neurotic he is, decided to spurn convention and arrive unexpectedly at two in the afternoon. Now it should also be mentioned that in this particular era, notable wealthy and respected older men engaged in mentor-like relationships with young boys of other wealthy families. Not only were the boys to absorb various wisdom through close observation of the various official duties of such men, but also—more difficult for the modern mind to accept—these relationships occasionally tended toward romantic or erotic encounters...along with, of course, the compensatory gift giving the older men used as incentive or trade for such encounters. Now, with that fact in mind, imagine Diogenes arriving early at the lair of the most notorious boy seducer in all of Greece. We can also imagine Diogenes as a ragamuffin, drunkard-type of low esteem in the minds of the Greek aristocracy; there would be no man/boy relations for such a character as he...that is no "official" pairings.

Now, when Diogenes arrived on Socrates' doorstep, we'll say nothing at all regarding what Diogenes "hoped" would await him; We shall only state what actually transpired:

When no one came to answer the door, Diogenes entered the house uninvited only to find Socrates on a love seat in his living room masturbating furiously. Upon being found out, Socrates made no effort to conceal or excuse the situation. As we might expect, Socrates greeted Diogenes happily and apologized for not answering the door.

"Why didn't you answer the door my good sir?" Asked Diogenes in a satirical and somewhat lascivious tone.

"Well sir, no offense, but I actually hoped you would go away and come back at the appointed hour." Replied Socrates.

"And what about your servants sir? Where are they?" Asked Diogenes, uncomfortably prolonging the humiliation of his host.

"I've sent them all out on useless errands on the pretext that we are preparing a banquet dinner this evening."

"But sir," replied Diogenes, "Excuse me once more, but I was to understand there actually is a banquet this evening..."

"Oh, yes. Of course! There is that! But truthfully, I just wanted them out of the house for a few hours...you know how it is..."

"Wait, wait! Are you saying that the entire banquet and the entire list of guests was merely a guise so you might have a few hours of uninterrupted play on your favorite couch cushion?" Inquired Diogenes innocently.

"Diogenes, if I were capable of hatred, you might be my only companion worth hating! If you must know the truth, I organized the whole gathering of nitwits so that I might enjoy the space of an afternoon all to myself—no dialectics, no heavy topics, just a relaxing hour to myself in an empty house."

"With a bit of bread dipped in oil then?" Interrupted Diogenes breaking off a crust of bread from the table near Socrates. "Oil is so messy. I prefer to leave the oil off." As he said this, Diogenes took a bite of the bread then theatrically dropped it beside the oil near Socrates. To this, Socrates blushed and accidentally kicked over a

glass of wine near his feet, which in turn spilled the container of oil besides.

"Where are the young boys you're so famous for?" Asked Diogenes, while Socrates hastily began mopping up the spilt fluids.

"I've dismissed them." Replied Socrates without hesitation. By this time, Diogenes could see his friend's coordination had been affected somewhat by the wine, but his voice and his wit still seemed worthy of his reputation, so Diogenes pressed further and asked, "Why ever did you dismiss your lovely harem of princes, my friend?"

"For the same reason I dismissed my servants." Said Socrates curtly. "I needed a space of time; a window of air for my own."

"It was quite a windy window when I arrived..." Said Diogenes gleefully.

"Eh! You bastard misanthrope! Go to hell and let me finish what I meant to!" Socrates snapped back.

"Never mind me, I was just about to leave...oh, but sir, pray, tell me one more thing..."

"Yes?" Asked Socrates, straining his patience to act civilly (yet secretly hoping for a climactic resolution of Diogenes' wit as well)

"Did you give those boys any parting advice or mantra to live by so that they might someday emulate your skills of detached observation and ultra rational excellence?" Asked Diogenes.

"Naturally!" Spoke Socrates, with only the sharp intensity of a man who already knows he's about to become the ass of a joke.

"So then tell me fine sir, what might that famous advice be, exactly?"

"Know thyself." Replied the Onanistic philosopher.

"Thank you sir. Goodbye then."

"But Diogenes, will you be returning this evening?" Asked Socrates, forgetting the masturbation joke and thinking once more of his favorite companion.

"No sir. I thought we already established the real utility of the entire banquet."

"Possibly, but I still love food and wine and laughter like the rest. Please, won't you join us at the appointed hour? I'll toast to you and make you the guest of honor...We'll show you a hero's welcome."

"That's very generous, but no thank you. I'll have to decline." Said Diogenes

"But sir," Pleaded Socrates, "Is your mother ill once more?"

"No. Less than that. I came to apologize actually, you see, I remembered that I have an appointment with a whore."

"A whore? You'd forsake me for a whore?"

"Ah, but sir, she's no ordinary whore!" Assured Diogenes.

At this, Socrates perked up his ears, greedy with the prospect of a whore whose entertainments could rival his own rich provisions; to boot, the thought of a yet unheard or untried taboo struck the philosopher at his second weakest virtue: Curiosity. (Pride, being his very least developed, of course.)

"What whore is this? What makes her so special?" Asked Socrates.

"Oh, sir, lovely you should ask. Why, she's just an ordinary whore, but, you see, that's actually the gift of an ordinary whore: She makes you believe you are a hero; and for the space of an hour, you are. So you see, I have no choice really but to keep my appointment with her instead of you...she's simply more schooled in the art of seduction, no offense."

"Haha! Misanthrope bastard! The more you disrespect me the more I love you! Bring your whore along and I'll make her my honored guest! I'll give her gold and silk and pearls!" Shouted Socrates.

"Oh no sir," replied Diogenes calmly, "That would be an inordinate payment for whoring. What would the respectable women think if we started championing the discipline of whoredom? They'd either despise us or take to whoring as well out of jealousy."

"Well, farewell that notion then...What are you actually doing this evening?"

"I'll be staring at my dog, trying to learn something."

"What do you mean by that? What is it you mean to learn from your dog?" Asked Socrates

"Well sir, misanthrope that I am, am I not known in all of Greece for my sly hatred of humanity?"

"Well Diogenes, I might have said it differently, and in the form of a compliment, but yes, you are indeed he, the mortal adversary of mankind...or so you've told yourself...perhaps a psychologist par excellence...but what is it you wish to learn from your dog?"

"Loyalty."

"Why loyalty?"

"Because it's the only virtue I can find to explain his tolerance of me, even as I am hated by all the others in the city...in fact, I see no bridge between myself and mankind except through a dog's loyalty."

"Well then, be my guest tonight and let the rabble love your wit and your foolishness! Go home and fetch your dog and let him dine at the table with us. Tonight, let Socrates be your dog as well. Learn loyalty from Socrates!"

"But Socrates, loyalty in a brute animal is sheer faith and stupidity. Animals do loyalty better than most men, not because of their gifts, but because of their flaws and deficiencies. I fear that you mean well, but at base, the root of an intelligent man's loyalty is cowardice. One is either an intelligent coward or a loyal fool."

"So you are scared for some reason to attend the banquet and you have made me into a loyal coward in your head, is that so?"

"Yes exactly." Replied Diogenes in a tone somewhere between sarcasm and truthfulness.

"And what makes you anxious my friend? What are you fearing tonight?" Asked Socrates gracefully, without any semblance of malice whatsoever.

"Sir, if I'm forced to say that too, it might be a more grievous insult than your curious loyalty can bare. I'll only abstain from your party and decline your invitation with the thought that doing otherwise might cancel my only friendship."

"I'll be pondering that sly quandary for a week or two, and still not know whether I should feel complimented or insulted. You're a difficult man to love Diogenes!"

"And that saddens me sir." Replied Diogenes in earnest. "Take my exile as consolation if you like...perhaps it will eventually rid you of my memory and in its place you'll find some other, more light hearted thoughts."

"Poor rogue, don't be sad. Please, I beg you. Come to the feast! Do and say anything you like and I'll personally take the blame for it all. Hell, you can even tell them about our little misadventure this afternoon if you like. I'll be mightily disappointed if you do not return at sundown!"

"Oh, but sir, you misunderstand. I'm not sad out of self pity. I'm sad that others find me so difficult to love. I'm sad because no one is yet worthy of me...if they were, what harm could I possibly do?"

"No harm whatsoever!" Returned Socrates. "No harm at all, if we understand you thoroughly, as I think we should! Tonight I'll make every effort to see to it the guests understand what you have to say. I'll pledge my entire reputation on it. I'll make you understood!"

"That cannot be."

"Why so? Where is the difficulty?" Prodded Socrates.

"You are a man who can be understood...I'll grant you that Socrates. Surely, I'll have to grant you that. Often have I seen how well you are received and how readily you are understood. You arrange all of your tricks so your ideas might be clearly stated and made into solid facts. I however, go about things differently. I do not impart knowledge or clarity; I have no more use for those virtues."

"No use? Then what other virtues do you mean?"

"I cannot answer that."

"Well then, how is it we are not worthy of you? Isn't that just puffery and nonsense?"

"Socrates, let it be known, that as the sun sets on the talents of Sophocles and begins to rise on the talents of Euripides, the Athens and the Greece we know is but a microcosm of the world in its infancy. Yes, today I am saddened that I have no equal on earth. In the future, if ever there comes a future where men are born who equal me—even were I to live to see such a day—I would be saddened on that day as well, since, upon being loved and understood, I could no longer do any harm or mischief. I would finally be robbed of my only good gift: my sublime hatred."

"Diogenes, I'm sorry, I still don't quite follow your path of reasoning. I don't really see any inroads for argument, since you are being so thoroughly unreasonable. I wouldn't even bother to say...um...I wouldn't even take you seriously if you weren't..."

"Socrates, are you a rat catcher?" Interrupted Diogenes.

"Do I need to be?" Asked Socrates

"If you want to follow me and travel my path, you will need to chase rats and catch rats and beat rats over the head without mercy. You see Socrates, the rats are men like you and I, but they are not truly men as they think they are; really, they are all rats. My sole amusement here on earth is catching rats and showing them their tails. You show men the flaws of their logic and you do so over and over again successfully because you know, at base, none of their passions have any rational justification, so reason is already the victor by default...that is until you encounter a man like me whom you cannot fail to worship

and feel loyalty towards. Have you ever bothered to ask yourself, dialectically, why you are so devoted to me?"

"I guess I never bothered to do so." Answered Socrates, "I always took you for a clown. I enjoyed your antics and felt relief from philosophy in your charming presence."

"Socrates, while you use logic, I use other means: subversion, charm—as you said, and intuition. I don't pretend to begin empty handed, in the style of your dialectics. I have no patience for that charade. I allow situations to unfold and as I perceive the course of motives and behaviors I adapt my attack to fit the occasion...had I ever stopped to think or halt the succession of behavior I'd lose my advantage over it, three steps into the future I've already begun guessing at. I'm not waiting for that future. I'm steering us toward it gently and imperceptibly. Ask me what virtue to choose and my answer will always hinge upon the moment; it hinges upon the rat I'm trying to catch just now. I have the urge to show men their animal tails so it might disgust them as much as it disgusts me. I believe that all higher life has descended from the automatic machinations of lower beings. Men are but the late arrival and godless disfigurement of lizards, snakes, rats and monkeys."

"And if I should disagree with your conviction that all humans are rats?" Asked Socrates

"They are rats and deserve no more than a rats death, to rot in the open, stinking and unburied." Spoke Diogenes with the cold ambivalence of one who has finally made the entire horizon of his philosophy known, and foreseeably awaiting a new challenge.

"And where do you place yourself in this hierarchy of sewers?" Asked Socrates

"The rat who knows he's a man, and vice versa—I imagine he redeems the rats—because he is one—and he also damns the men, because he is one of those as well. So there you have my entire confession Socrates! All this from my banal curiosity about what philosophers are doing with themselves at two in the afternoon."

"Then let's call it a draw then—it seems we've caught each other—me for acting the rat and you for acting the part of a man!" Declared

Socrates in a humorous tone he immediately found painful as soon as he uttered it.

"Well said old friend...I'll see you this evening." Said Diogenes, slowly at first and then more quickly with the second statement.

"This evening? Do you mean you are coming to the party after all?" Asked Socrates, with an altogether different head than before.

"No." Replied Diogenes. "By evening, I meant the eve of humanities eclipse...I'll be waiting for you there...or perhaps even further down, in a cave with shadows." Finished Diogenes, almost religiously, in a tone of bitterness that seemed more habitual than conscious.

Part VII
Propaganda for the Scythe

Day

Do me a favor, dear reader: If you're going to commit a crime, don't do it. But if you do in fact go out and commit a crime, make sure you slip my colorful book in your back pocket so the police find it when they arrest you. I advise you to do this for two reasons: 1) Since the cover says "Anonymous" you may freely claim to have written it. Besides that, I won't even come forward to discredit you or say otherwise. I'll just be glad for the free advertising. 2) The second reason you should slip my book into your back pocket just before going off to do the crime I already told you not to commit, is for the sake of demonstrating how *Catcher in the Rye* is long past its prime in terms of both shock value and philosophical content. Its themes are played out. Why would you want your new and daring crime to be associated with an old and out of date book for teenagers with growing pains? By contrast, my Nihilism is much more adult and cosmopolitan.

For the sake of innocent people everywhere, it would be nice to be assured that my ideas were innocuous and that my exemplary books (as well as my exemplary methods of sublimation) were enough to deter the morbid and insensate villains of the world from their villainous deeds...but my intuition runs deeper than that: Why should I be at all surprised when this book turns up with the blood of a massacre staining its pages? Even urbane and cultural Nihilism like mine is already a ten dollar bill and a handful of shot gun rounds away from actual terrorism. What I cannot stave through my own example I may at least diminish through becoming more easily recognized as an icon of manic pathology and suicidal neurosis.

In my own mind, if you do commit a crime and use me as your scapegoat, you'll have done me the most unforgivable insult. When I send a copy of the English language dictionary to your prison cell, I'll attach the following note:

"Please learn to read."

Freedom is freedom. Deal with it. Besides, if you find some way of implicating *me* and sending *me* to prison for some trivial duration of time, just think at how much more excellent and provocative will be the books I write from the toilet seat of my self-actualization. I'll be even more confident and perfect than I was before. While attending the therapeutic day programs for the dim spirited prisoners clamoring for a

new twelve step program or a fly-by-night religious solution, I'll already have one prepared just for them: As the angled yellow light of evening mellows the brows of my new companions, I'll reach under my gun metal gray folding chair and pass them a Gideon bible with some of my maxims written in the margins. Who knows, maybe I was a born leader, but I just don't know it yet. Wouldn't you love to find out?

Day

We misanthropes should supply the qualitative and aesthetic component to the truths of biology. Evolution does not know the future. It cannot prepare for what is to come and it cannot value what does not yet have efficacy. Adaptation is blind pragmatism, which eventually becomes the religion of nihilism when it is not restrained or confined to limited durations of deployment. Pragmatism is the philosophy of emergency and crisis. Whatever unexpectedly "emerges" is responded to as a special case. The energy required for this type of response means the maximum sacrifice of resources and well being. To also realize this expenditure promises no hallowed meaning and no secure aim, is to discover more fully what biological facts (and limitations) mean to human life. Despite the hand-me-down treasures of cultural and governmental systems, which surround us in a mist of noxious propaganda and emotional baggage, Nihilism helps us to return to and more fully respect our actual condition as mortal beings. To actively re-evaluate the advantages and hidden efficacy of world religions and world systems in a more conscious light is a task for the generations after us, whose parents have finally put to rest the emergency philosophy of pragmatism and lived out the explosive repercussions of Nihilism. Evolution does not know the future, but some philosophers do. Cheap nihilism cannot prepare for what is to come and it cannot value what does not yet have efficacy. Nations will have to endure the crisis of un-belief. Domestic households will have to endure the realization of their insignificance and disposability just as philosophers and manufacturing industries have endured it. Biology has already summoned the Leviathan of unspeakable evil, but it has not yet seen the monster emerge from the sea. The fact that I have already endured and prevailed against my children's enemy (and my predecessor's Cthulhu?) has not saved them from it, nor will the majority find the intelligence and necessary calm to match the consistent, fruitful and bloodless victories I have already achieved in my seclusion and my anonymity.

Day

Today, I do not represent the ghosts of the past. I embody the spirits of ruin and discord the world has not yet perpetrated.

Day

I've never met a misanthrope worthy of the name who wasn't also, in some sense, lyrical.

Actions as well as ideas may be lyrical: Assault rifles, car bombs and mine fields share all the careful nuance and surprise of poetic style.

Day

Hatred or consistent mistrust of mankind: doesn't that sound like a useful adaptation?

Look at its opposite:

Love or consistent trust in mankind.

Day

We keep using the words misanthropy and Nihilism, but we keep doing so in full awareness of their inadequacy. What we really mean is something more akin to: Planetary Claustrophobia, Biology phobia, Thanatos worship, Ascetic Satanism, Life-intolerance, World-refutation, Megalomania-suicide, devout Terrorism, Propaganda for the Scythe, Urban Shamanism, Abortion-magic, and cheerful Non-Philia.

To merely rage against anthropology (humans) or to content oneself with raging only against human truths (nihilism/epistemology) is a labor far too short of our desires.

Think of me and my poems as a frivolous pastime for waiting out the history of the universe; good reading material for the day after the sun implodes: the virtuoso entertainer for every day following human extinction.

So long as there are suns, and days for going around them,
My time has not yet come.

Day

Habitual swearing is not vulgarity, it's laziness: The completely unchecked flow of the automatic and the unconscious: Vulgar only because we hate symbols of humanity.

Day

"What about love and faith and courtesy? How come you never speak about them, you dirty misanthrope?"

Ah! But I do. I love what I love. Have you ever known me to be forceful or impolite? As for faith, I enjoy it as well. I automatically manufacture faith every time I'm drawn away from lucidity and meditation. The world still summons me to lovingly play with it and I either oblige like a happy child, or I stay inside on brood because I was scolded too recently to want to leave my room and join my friends. As concerns faith, you might even say I am a charlatan and a monster...my confidence intoxicates others and grants me what I want. Beware your own faith, if I should ever happen to have faith in you...

Day

Lying, whether elaborate or casual, is a sign of high intelligence. Lying is already the beginning of meta-narrative, amoral behavior, awareness of fluctuating systems, management of impressions, pandering to beliefs, and solving insoluble dilemmas using fantasy. (Basically the highest expression of conscious adaptation at work: flawed only for its apprehensiveness to execute the labor of material work through the expenditure of energy, which it *easily could do*.)

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of lying is its integration of creativity in an immediate and practical manner. Creative fantasy allows for adaptation and development of weaker functions in a very immediate sense, even when such fantasies never touch the real world. The mere audition of a fantasy can already accomplish the mental development previously lacking.

Not only is lying a display of high intelligence, it also possesses the genetic advantage of immediately removing any and all obstacles in the way of passing on genetic code. That which survives is good. That which protests, resists, makes boundaries or gets in the way of growth is evil. (What is unintelligence and cooperation if it is not also a coalition against *the most perfectly adapted beings*? What is care and love if it is not also a demand for the sacrifice and squandering of forward energy? That which survives is good. That which returns—the recurrence of either the surpassingly intelligent or the morally cooperative—is evil.

Lack of intelligence will always attempt to chastise or castrate what is already superior. The intellect which fears its own prowess enough to begin fashioning systems, rules and moral prohibitions is already both a weaker intellect and a waning leadership—but *a waning leadership is right for the morality of all inferior beings: it speaks to their sensibilities*.

What sensibilities does ascending leadership speak to: *It also speaks to inferior beings*: Nietzsche's unforgivable error.

Actual superiority doesn't speak to anyone: *it triumphs the gospel of misanthropy*.

Day

I dreamed of an upside-down cross with the phrase, "no tourists allowed." Then, still not content in having made my point, I imagined a human sacrifice nailed to a cross with the same phrase "No tourists allowed." Strangely, I still feel that my great idea has nothing to do with Christianity.

I wish misanthropy had a logo.

Day

It's early in the morning. I'm staring at a new ceiling. The cracks and water stains are new to me, and because they are new, they keep my attention without my imagining anything better as I look at them. It would be an act of blasphemy to eyesight, to imagine a better world before understanding this one. Hands, ears and lips are made for grasping and sucking the nectar out of the world. I don't want to seize the day for the sake of enjoyment, I want to drain it like a swelling wound or a piece of fruit. Seize the day —*how many days in a row are the fools capable of that?* How many days in a row, of teeth clenching, nail digging, toe curling attachment does one need to get beyond oneself? Seize the day? No. I want to let go of the person who holds it.

When I imagine pleasure, and when I enjoy pleasure in an honest way, the last thing I would ever want to do is *prolong pleasure!* For me, satisfaction is an act of *getting rid of pleasure, getting beyond pleasure!* Pleasure is a moan of suffering just as imbecilic and helpless as the chorus I hear in the hospital hallways where my lover works. I go to her, for the same reason others are consigned to her—for bodily weakness alone. I don't love her, so much as I love not being in pain. Being with her, I feel as if privation were the more natural state of existence, and that friendship, companionship, romance, and physical satiety were alien things to the laws of nature; that—far from being a blessing—such sweet relations are actually a breach or disjunction in the regular and necessary atomization or disunion of things toward the grotesque elements from which they arise.

When I visit my lover, she performs for me. At first, I have the urge to scold her or tell her not to exaggerate, but at the moment I realize her exaggeration, I also realize her desperation, and I realize that I have never before been allowed to see any of her desperation, and that this exchange, this desperation on her part is a very private matter that shouldn't be discussed or talked about or commented on. If I told her *more* of what I like and do not like, a bit more of my humanity would be siphoned out, and I don't want to go in that direction.

She depends on my discretion as much as she depends on my returning to her for *my own* sake, selfishly—do you see the contradiction? My selfishness is her assurance that she has value. In selfishness, I lose myself in her; I submit to her by yielding to my own outrageous and unpredictable passions. But I must be careful; My selfishness is also an interruption capable of destroying all privacy, all communion, all trust. My selfishness must never become anything other than a demonstration of my own value as an aloof prize; It must never make the mistake of actually showing the details of what it wants. It must never give orders or covet specifics. The mode of selfishness she perceives in me is only a modest sliver of what I actually want. Her paradise depends on my allowance of these same faults in her own character; if I should mirror her unconscious lapses of selfishness in even the slightest way, the whole edifice of her salvation will collapse and she will remember quickly what she so tenderly hates in her own behavior. It's never a matter of questioning the merit of illusion; illusion is in fact the default state of bliss.

When I *do* give orders, or demand details, or require specifics, it should be at an instance when it seems to her *too easy* not to comply. Even when my outward appearance to others would seem boorish or chauvinistic, she sees through the non-philosophies and non-humanity of spectators, and she, my beautiful tigress of lucidity, smells out the easy kill before her, and she attacks my trifling desires in order to show me her dexterity and versatility at conquering them for me. If I were to in any way thwart this type of demonstration by substituting ethics or sexual equality for her own private reality, my own meddling as a moralist would only derail what is natural, and at best, substitute our very curious example of mental health with a detached, moralistic, shallowly rational re-sentiment, de-vitalized, and disengaged from the flow of living psychology.

If you want, you can piss on a woman's face in the shower and she'll feel as great a joy as she does when she serves you toast and kisses you goodnight. So long as all of these things roll along in a pleasing manner, the more daring acts will give a heightened sense of excitement to the mundane ones. That smile you give when you serve me toast? We both recognize the taboo behind it. We both remember, privately, that taboo. We transgressed, together...but in order to transgress together, we must first transgress *against* one another. What is worth respecting? Is it a sinless paradise and protestant heaven of grassy clouds amidst endless rounds of lemonade and croquet? Is it a genderless wonderland of non-violence and joyful impotence?

Respect is made of a feminine substance: *It adheres to whatever swells the admiration of our hearts at the expense and atrophy of our mind...whatever begs for and allows the atrophy of our mind.*

Never once did I imagine that psychology was too profound or that women were beyond understanding, or that the human soul contained some special mystery, un-touchable and formless. A small dose of honesty severs Gordian knots...the small dose of honesty no one else in the room would dare—that should be a metaphor for all first impressions and for all great riddles. The problem however, with all men, mankind and reason as you like—is that they fail to understand their own limits. They fail to retreat in time. To declare understanding is not a boast or a glory but an admission of death. That which I understand, I no longer am. That which I understand, I am also severed from. To say, boastfully, in this instance I understand psychology, or women or art or drama, is also to say, *at this moment I am divorced from life. I am worthy of no admiration. I am anti-seductive.*

Day

In my first publication I tried to write the bleakest book ever written. In this current book I've taken up a new direction; I've sought to launch the ultimate assault on human authorship.

I walked ten miles today, and even though the trail led me through forests and meadows, I never let go of consciousness enough to notice the landscape or become aware of my bodily condition. My blood pressure and heart rate are typically quite low, and perhaps the intense-yet calming focus of my own alienation forces them still slower...Now,

after completing a ten mile walk in the August sun, I realize I've hardly perspired. My body has all the signs of heat exhaustion or perhaps even heat stroke, but I've already written five pages today and intend to write several more even though I feel nauseous and want to sleep. My head aches severely, probably from dehydration, yet I'm still obsessed with the idea the reader has not yet understood the point of this passage, let alone the entire book.

Anonymous authorship is already the best contempt for the creative act. My confidence in writing far surpasses my actual abilities; my self-love, in my own mind, is unrivaled. I represent every quality which usually strives for a name, a reputation and some worldly credit for having created, yet it is my peculiarity that I am also able to manifest those qualities which would negate all use for having spoken. I've realized my own excellence in finding ways to refute the merit of those same qualities. Like a reptile molting, my skin has become useless. The larger I become, the more carcasses I'll leave behind. My ultimate goal is to become simultaneously so worthy of being copied, stolen, plagiarized, or fraudulently mimicked that those who consider doing so will also have to contend with the statements made in this book, which at every turn seek to become even more pathological, more audacious and more scathing than any before me. I've effectively written a recipe for human torment, and those who would follow in my footsteps will end up tearing themselves in half. If I do my job correctly, even those who attempt to add a new anonymous book to the world shall seize up or quake while going through these terrible motions which for me have only seemed as if they were beginner's ballet. This is as effortless as breathing, except only I can do so while fully submerged, not because of my skill but because of my curse. All the ridicule of literature and art raised by those minds, voices and types alien to it have taken up permanent residence in my own heart and become more real to me than my own joy. Their impatience and angry dismissal of phenomena incongruent to the reality of their lives has become the frayed thread holding up all of my own burdens. I seek to conquer human authorship through the thorough discovery and perfection of my own inhumanity. When I say, "I suffer", up until this passage the world has put a false value on my voice. When I say, "I suffer" the world hears a complaint or assumes there is a personality behind such words who wishes to suffer less or not suffer at all; a personality longing for change or seeking a new form of adaptation. This is not so! To me, the words "I suffer" are an exclamation of success. They are an exultation of more progress made and new

distance created. Each cry of pain is a human appendage being replaced with an alien one. Human authorship is for human beings, and its greatest fault is its human origin.

The pain that lets me know I'm a man is also the pain which helps cure my every shame at having been one.

Day

To be coherent and stylistically sound, a misanthrope needs to double himself: hatred for the world is not enough. He must also hate himself, which is equivalent to hating a second world.

Misanthropy is a hall of mirrors burning. When finally the second world is chased down and hated with all the reserves of the sexual libido, one discovers he is not yet satisfied, for he requires a third, a fourth and a fifth world within these already ravished worlds. He has not yet hated sensually. He has not yet hated intuitively. He has not yet hated rationally. He has not yet hated genetically. He has not yet hated object wise or musically. Every manner of holding the world, perceiving the world, enjoying the world and sensing the world is an invitation to hate such and such a dimension of the world, which, in every case may as well be an entirely new world ripe for being blotted out. I'm still holding back. I'm still exploring philosophy and psychology and condescending to be understood; still completing each sentence and each argument as if these thoughts had some kind of importance! Five or six books later, which I can assert right now will be five to six years later, I will have exhausted my childish need to make explanations; I'll have entered my esoteric and poetic stage, at which point my career as a writer shall be all fury and no voice. Personality complete, I'll breathe fire from no source and quake mountains from no fault.

Day

In my first book I mentioned a pattern. I claimed to be searching for it. Now that I've found it, my every assault on authorship is raging against it but also privately trying to hide it from the reader, for you see there are my ideas—which I hope to use—and then there are the

patterns latent within those ideas which, more universally expressed by others, are not at all my own or any ones. These patterns arise in more than half of those who write, yet we still claim not to see them because seeing them would undermine everything we want to say with a statement of what we actually are. When I submerge reality in favor of my reflections on it, I want to call this act misanthropy and feel pride in doing so, but even my one joy is stripped from me in realizing I am not unique. I am merely one of the reflective types who feels no immediate oneness with objects or tactile experiences without also putting forth some abstract identity and reflection of my own between myself and the real world. I can never feel sympathy in the naive and human way because the pattern of my being tends always to sever me from myself through the act of reflecting on myself. To be human and feel human cannot tolerate the dehiscence of being pulled away from oneself toward a mirror.

Our fantasies of becoming more inhuman and more misanthropic are not really a development so much as they are a more and more conscious declaration of a pattern we enjoy. Perhaps we also dislike this pattern, yet we have no other means but this pattern through which reality is made alien, feelings are made other, persons are made symbols and identity is made multiple.

Day

When I write at midnight, I get to continue my train of thought into the next "day" without any spaces in between. Actually, come to think of it, every cursed moment I'm awake I get to do this also.

Day

Shelley declares poets the "unacknowledged legislators of the world." *Are they really?* That's metaphorically equivalent to stating drunkards are the unacknowledged inventors of alcoholism.

If we should decide to provisionally agree with Shelley, in giving poets the honorary key to existence, then which type of being shall we honor as the great appreciators and avant-garde spectators of humanity's poetic endeavors? If we're tempted to hand over this non-

award to psychologists, our nearby and sometimes clandestine misanthropes shall already begin smiling...

"The taste of vinegar is ever so sweet!" Muses the Taoist priest.

Day

To invent and create fictions is an act of honoring humanity by fabricating what it doesn't possess. Superficially this seems like a respectable use of creativity, but if we look deeper, creativity has an even more evasive use: If you wish to enchant a thing, create a smoke screen around it in order to never reveal its flaws. In the end, if the artist is skilled enough, existence is entirely sidestepped. Even the realists and the vulgar poets like Bukowski create deception by hypnotizing us into the drama of their characters and their real life events. Only the misanthrope, through a magnanimous demonstration of self-effacement champions the courage to fully assault what is. With so little time and such violent abundance of mad impressions, the excuse of naive creation is bankrupt. If you bother to tell us what you've done, you've already hidden or endorsed the transcendence of doing. You've already biased us to the sympathy and worth of human life:

Propaganda for the scythe...

Part VIII
The Land of No-Forward-Progress

Day

Eleanor Roosevelt famously stated, "Great minds discuss ideas, Mediocre minds discuss events and Small minds discuss people". That's a farcical observation. It puts all the bias towards intellect. Besides that, it actually leaves out one quarter of the world's excellence...the dimension of intuition. Had we written the quote to favor ourselves, we might have began with, "Brilliant minds unveil intuitions..." But intuition itself bids us correct her entire statement and make it into a Zen platitude: "Intuitive minds use intuition, Intellectual minds discuss ideas, Sensual minds recount events and emotional minds are affected by people near them." Once you've said this, you've no longer judged or categorized the world in terms complimentary to your own projects...once you've said this, you've said exactly nothing and ceased to participate in any unique prejudice of self discovery.

Day

A "prejudice of self discovery" is a snake eating its own tale: It tastes all that lies within itself by upholding a singular prejudice, a singular bias of behavior, or a singular adaptation for getting on with the world...more astutely, its every function hinges upon a singular lie. It does not see its own tale; it only devours it.

Conversely, to continually see ones own tale, just after having tasted it, is to be devoured and killed by something else; I know not what.

Day

Intuition wears the flesh of others. It makes a patchwork quilt out of the skin it acquires. In order to feel, it marks the terrain with convenient little pins to hold each location...even if those locations are placed like acupuncture needles into ones own skull. Hellraiser and his puzzle box must be a nightmare vision of psychology and it's cannibalistic pastimes. To the sensualist, Pinhead says, "You enjoyed the girl, didn't you?" and then, on our behalf, on behalf of the voyeur

audience witnessing and indulging horror movie violence, Pinhead says, "So did I."

No matter what the active man's identity might possess, the intuitive woman seems never to have fed long enough or full enough on it; she has a comment and a criticism for everything her man does. Lacking a substance of her own, she needs to continually devour him...partly out of jealousy...partly out of his brazen lack of understanding.

Day

I want to emphasize the fact that I cannot write while I am asleep. Utterly half my life is either inaccessible or missing from these pages. Each day I write what is proper to my own sense of proportion and stamina. Grammar has given me the comma, the period and the paragraph as stylistic tools. Nature and physical stamina have added to these one further device of spacing. Not to worry, *I can* write fifty pages in a day, or hundred fifty in twenty four hours, but what good would that do me or the reader? I never want to read a hundred pages in a day! Could you imagine the honest torture of "being" one hundred pages in a day? Surely its easier to fake or fictionalize a hundred pages, but to really *be them* and believe them is a positive burden. One begins to wonder how many pages twenty four hours of anxiety or insomnia translate to, even in the non-writer and the non-intellectual? Words and concepts are not in the lease bit privileged in making the burden of self go away. Maybe they lessen it somewhat, but they are far from absolution. We all face anxiety, discontent and hesitation, but it's not enough to mention it: each of these phantoms hide volumes of stifled energy. Our thoughts are like prayers for change.

Let's imagine for a moment, that Christian prayer is like asking for an unwritten book of thoughts to be forever erased from our memory. Ironically, prayers and petitions have all the same qualities as thought; they keep adding up and growing longer...

Day

No forward progress—that's a command, not an insight!

There is no forward and no backward. Psychology ought to show us futility and then demand we sacrifice ourselves on the altar of life incessantly. Doing otherwise would already be the beginning of unhealthy fabrications.

"Though thy million arms are rowing thee..."

Day

If I were to evaluate my progress over the last decade symbolically as well as materially, I would point out my arms are a little thicker and my belly is a little fatter.

Day

Hemingway fucking a mobster's gal on the basement stairwell of a prohibition speak easy is the defunct standard of modern authorship. Write like a newspaper report and be part of the tabloid spectacle! Be as loud as possible, as agitating as possible and always bet on the peoples need for fantasy idols and debauched heroics. If you want to sell, you need to (at least provisionally) take the external world seriously! The demand is to become an actor and a celebrity—the exact opposite of a writer! To do everything a writer isn't prepared to do or even comfortable doing. The errors of introverted disproportion and perception make him what he is. A writers efforts are a retribution. The more extreme his or her material poverty, the more serious and refined the fantasies of escape. If it were not so, whatever would we have to do with the humiliating profession of scribbling words? Inaction and day-dreaming already gives us a foretaste of obscenity: the indolence of the human spirit and all the naked poses of a *super-model*.

Day

Perhaps it doesn't exist because it wouldn't be marketable, but I have yet to see a convincing portrayal of someone like myself or Pessoa in film. I have the nagging urge to attempt it, but I won't. If the idea is worthwhile, I'll leave it to someone else to attempt and botch. When they bother to ask me if they've botched it, I'll tell them they have, even without viewing it. The fact that they asked about it already ruins them. Meanwhile, my asking for it here already ruins me. To do it justice, you'd need a cocoon that never opens; a pyramid for a pharaoh buried elsewhere.

Day

For a long time I put off finishing my favorite book. Three quarters of the way through I stopped reading it in sequence. From then on, I loved it so much I kept it near me and took it with me to scenic locations, to dirty bars, to bus stops, and to friend's houses, only to end up not reading it while at those locations. I even loaned it out so I might again lose my place and forget some of what I'd already read. My first copy was not even my own, but a borrowed one. When it became inconvenient to continue borrowing it, I finally purchased my own copy, only to loan it out twice more before finishing it in the traditional manner. Often my special companion—for that is what I've taken to calling it—sits atop my morning dresser and greets me at the start of the day and pleads to be held and petted, or at least held a few moments before I sleep. Today, the anguish of never having found my companion, of never meeting the perfect lover, has returned as if I'd never read or discovered this book I can't finish; Sadly, I know the cause: When I resolved to start the book again from the beginning and read it consecutively (instead of autistically) the enchantment immediately vanished; not because its quality had been over estimated, but rather, because I understood it too thoroughly and subtly; which is to say, it had already changed me and departed.

I know these sorts of realizations are entirely too personal and maybe not worth communicating, but I think the path from romance to disenchanted respect usually takes this course and has these symptoms,

so maybe it is worth mentioning. Perhaps there's even more to it than that, which may already be obvious to others, while still veiled from me.

Day

Is adaptation and the management of the external world everything to psychology? If it is, then maybe we should attempt to imagine a dream-like inversion of psychology: A rigorous school of devilry and bazzaro adaptation. What might that look like? What new worlds and new impressions might it manage and value? When the two possibilities are compared, it would seem that regular psychology defines health in terms of a mask or a clockwork of behaviors that yield public valuations.

Think of it this way: Imagine two men of identical age. For the sake of our analogy, let's say that both men have already tried their hands at education, business and love. Imagine that our first man is a forty-five year old shipping manager with a steady salary and a family. The other is just now a mentally unhinged homeless drifter who at one point received a high degree, had more love affairs than the other man, and, for a brief time, before the onset of schizophrenia, earned several times more money than our shipping manager. Though the world has given up valuing or being curious about both men, in actuality, they are each still struggling for adaptation. Regardless of how such adaptations have taken place or with what success each has earned from his troubles, both have arrived independently at such and such a point. We could perhaps say of both, "None of the details mattered very much." Put both men in a field or a desert or on a mountain top and you still have two forty-five year old human beings with vague ideas about the trials and rewards of life. If we can imagine each man rescued by a divine hand only to be lifted up to be placed in a remote field or desert alone, the past details of life seem silly and frightening. The drama of events seems only to have taken place as a sham in order to bring forth certain adaptations and specific flaws, which may or may not have been latent in them from the beginning. Even the capacity of their intelligence and the nuance of their personalities may have arisen beyond their control...as if each man's freedom were only the ability to open a set of gifts slowly and be allowed to use only those gifts. Our surprise in discovering our own limits is an enjoyment which precedes our futility. The heroics of the world mean nothing in comparison to

the mathematics of each human foundry; the lead is poured into forms, hammered and given uses as if these heroic bricks of gold were only a brightly painted illusion for the sake of hiding what is lead beneath.

Drain morality and value judgment from existence! Let go of human dignity and all that we either pretend to value or fear to not value. Have courage to embrace the shipping manager and the beggar as equals! Nothing in the activity of living has either glorified them, bettered them, or ruined them. They have breathed an equal span of years and fed upon an equal portion of daylight. The space in between the coffin and the cradle are but speculation and fruitless desires for impossible things. Human sentiment doesn't change. It keeps on feeling warm and cold and loved and despised. It keeps chasing values and relationships and achievements. It looks on murder with a frown and kittens with a smile. It loves to sink into habits and predictable affinities while getting lost in the myriad of tiny details. Human desire does not change either. Though we change our minds about things from day to day, the overarching will to desire and will to express, manifest and placate our desire remains the same. Desire itself urges us on so relentlessly that if our desires are obstructed in even the slightest manner, we degenerate into squabbling hens for the sake of a bread crumb. Adaptation either occurs or does not occur. There are no arbitrators or redeemers of human life, save the little obstacles which show us our flaws and our treasures. The world won't even blink if this or that man dies without seeing the error of his hope or the characteristic flaw in his attitude. How many have already passed away without hearing either the epilogue of his faults or the benediction of her almost talents? It's already enough to die, but to not even be granted a final sonnet, a final poem, a final cryptic verse...if only the universe could condescend to get each corpse at least *one valid meaning*.

We would all prefer success to failure, dignity over ruin, but to believe in such things seriously (thus taking them religiously) is an effacement and an affront to the suffering of souls; souls who never asked for life, and who may never realize the atrocity of being born. To say life is vanity is the attitude of a mean spirit and an imbecile! Sentiment does not change. Desire does not change. Reason has never yet vanquished them! Between actual human vanity, and the aloof cult of studying human vanity, we make no inroads against what mankind actually feels and how they are fated to feel it. We had better amend

Ecclesiastes and Melville with a deeper insight: With compassion for all life we must speak more severely: Life enchants atrocity.

Psychology is only healthy and adaptive up until a certain human limit, after which our minds begin to unravel as we confront a hurdle no one can overleap. We keep on growing and adapting like a tree overhanging to a rocky cliff. Growth becomes a mockery. Thirsty limbs strain to hold fast, or they tremble in the wind without an anchor. Action becomes torture. We've cultivated roots we cannot use, dreams we cannot realize, thoughts we cannot express and relationships we cannot sever. All that proceeds from here is a play of mirrors for the sake of shapes.

Day

How can we be certain the maintenance of simple chores and procedures—which require zero thought or feeling—are actually a sound basis for mental health? To experience neurotic disturbances maintaining pointless routines might not be so much maladaptive expression at all! Perhaps such neurosis demonstrates an exemplary sensitivity and understanding of the malignancy of one's current position; we unconsciously fixate on adapting “out-of” our current dilemma.

Quite often, I've experienced a state of mind akin to paralysis and stagnation resembling the effects of having eaten a very large meal; when called upon to solve rigorous mental puzzles in such a bloated state, no amount of concentration will avail us anything. Are we really so certain nothing is going on in the minds of indolent individuals, even when they exclaim to us, “I have no thoughts; my nerves are shot.” Science, when presented with no behaviors or matter with which to classify, never bothers to investigate the blind alleyways behind the large complex structures within the minds of our species.

As a young boy, hardly a teenager, I exclaimed to my father, “The computer is broken again!” To which, he replied, “It's not broken, it's doing exactly what you told it to do. It's still thinking.” Unconvinced by this answer, I pleaded “But it doesn't say it's thinking, it doesn't even respond when I type!”

“Just wait. It's not frozen, it's still doing something...” Said my father.

"Can't we just unplug it or hit the reset button?" I insisted impatiently.

This scenario repeated like a chronic illness, without ever being explained or resolved. So also with our minds: in one instance, as with schizophrenia, we encounter an insoluble error loop. That's the extreme case. Often times, if the codes are written poorly, extraneous operations and circular equations keep working out an infinite remainder. Meanwhile, Serotonin releasing drugs, loud noises, and change in blood sugar wrench us away from our unconscious loops like rebooting a computer, but when such supposed errors keep recurring, despite years of medication and thousands of boxes of chocolate, one wonders if something healthy and functional might actually be taking place in such periods of stagnation; if maybe our combative efforts may be entirely misguided; their effects being actually unrelated to the phenomena in question. Hitting the reset switch or applying shock therapy is like fixing a faulty motor by brutishly kicking it. I suspect the engineering—which hasn't actually ceased to function, is so far beyond the reach of our amateur weekend mechanics of pharmacology that their continuous usage of coat hangars and duct tape is no surprise. Making an engine function differently is not a demonstration of having understood the subtlety of its individual functions. Also, observe that the type of minds which are predisposed (fated) to investigate clinically are only capable of understanding clinically; which is to say, narrowly.

If our unconscious minds and dreams are working out esoteric puzzles of feeling and being only to suddenly surface and spring creatively forward in a frenzy of un-summoned activity, then maybe the brain is a slow stomach with secret corridors.

Day

I fall in love with women based on their looks. I fall in love with men based on their attitudes. With those two comments in mind you should already be able to guess the approximate depth of my love for humanity.

If I loved any more than that, I'd already be fabricating.

Day

Once had a lover who was extremely caring and useful: it wearied me to realize how quickly I let go of my strength as she eagerly began monopolizing my every balked chore. Is that what we're supposed to praise?

Day

Republicans: Indolent introverts of Material wealth. Politically extroverted only in how they announce their private logic in the social sphere, as if vomiting it. Outward adaptation has left their inner lives utterly undeveloped, which is all they have to duel us with. How sad.

Democrats: Sheepish wastlings of both wealth and spirit, politely intolerant in each of their serious beliefs, passive aggressive in their compulsive displays of moral outrage, as if constipated and conserving it. Socially responsible in hopes to cast off all lucidity of self. If they are psychologists, they won't get anything done either, because they'll have already seen how pointless it is trying to reform what is half-fated.

Powerful intuition defaults to the left

Healthy action taking defaults to the right

Pathological empathy defaults to the left

Pathological aggression defaults to the right

In both flawed cults, Yang and Yin are fractured in an unhealthy, maladaptive way. The banding together of like-minded neurosis is what is called *enabling* behavior, as encountered in the treatment of alcoholism and other drug addictions. A political rally is only an assemblage of illness and ritual intoxication.

Day

Not only are human illusions of materialism what save others from the anguish I fixate on, these illusions also demonstrate the most scathing proof of materialism's inadequacy. Materialism is a silly way of categorizing a being which only assesses and investigates in terms of illusions within the conscious mind. Going past consciousness to the material it's made of is an unnecessary step...a step too far. The assumed, and therefore theoretical existence of matter is only an axiomatic (abstracted) preface to research done within a complex interplay of illusions...not only that, but the axiom "thou shall not abstract or prove vaguely" remains unspoken to this day, ((I typed it without saying it)) regardless of its limits. Through a semblance of materialism that is not in fact materialism, Science happily refuses life's necessary anguish, like a form of salvation.

Day

I still remember the crab apple trees in the yard of my private school elementary—I still remember them blossoming beautifully and never tasting very good. No doubt, the alumni benefactor who had them planted was also a misanthrope.

Day

With total indulgence, I'll describe the circumstances of my very first poem at age six. Kindergarten was a miracle of classroom colors—it was all toys, glue and scissors. By first grade the wonderfully landscaped schoolyard had become increasingly a refuge from the act of *learning*. Of all the first graders, I distinctly remember my shame in being the last one who learned to read. (The most rigorously ((fanatically?)) conscious minds being the slowest to appropriate creative alterations! The frontal lobe, working overtime practically nullifies creativity, as seen in laboratory experiments which measure a test subject's creative response time when mild electrical current is and is not directed at this portion of the brain.) Each day, when the other children got out their writing journals, my teacher made a special exception for me...I was allowed to draw pictures, while the

rest of the class wrote two to four sentences about what they had seen or done that day. Our teacher had a clever method for their advancement: she made an alphabetized notebook for each individual student and any time a child didn't know how to spell a word, she would personally write it in their little dictionary so they might copy those selected words from her grownup handwriting ever afterwards.

At the time, I seemed to be so far behind the curve, the teacher just gave up trying and let me draw while she tended to the other children's little dictionaries. Later on, once I had settled into the idea of drawing while the others wrote, her attention to the others became less necessary. Their little dictionaries had grown plump and adventurous while mine was still empty. Going at our own pace seemed to be the order of the day, but frequently she would come by to ask me what was going on in my drawings. When I told her, she would write some of those words in my dictionary. Every day at recess I did the same thing, and nearly every day after recess I drew the same picture because our assignment was to record something we enjoyed. With all the stubbornness of the fanatic I already was, I spent forty-five days straight drawing different versions of the same picture of myself playing soccer because I didn't want to learn to read and I didn't want to write anything. I wanted to *play* soccer, not draw or write about it—So you see, I had already fused suffering and innocence to my irony from the very first sentence of my journal:

"I played soccer today."

Day

I thought about elementary school crab apple trees and a vacant soccer field. Afterwards, "I drew nothing today."

Day

Perhaps it's already becoming vulgar and all too obvious to some, but we'll say it anyway: every additional metaphor our spirits create, consciously or unconsciously, is a critique of self. A critique arising from the hell of self. To flee is to return: Each day is a lesson in fate.

Day

For some strange reason, when receiving this book, I remembered a seminar on music distribution and marketing. The speaker said, in order to sell music for placement in film and television one must only imagine what sorts of songs directors would want in the background of their movies. "Really, how many plots are there?" Asked the crudely educated and independently wealthy speaker hosting the seminar. Then he continued, "Let's make a list: you have losing love, finding love, being cheated on, victory and defeat...what else? Did I cover all of them?" He asks us this question without any hint of irony. His matter o' fact demeanor makes us almost believe nothing else has ever existed apart from this type of man. Then someone from the audience shouts, "What about death?" The crowd suddenly laughs and the speaker carries on the rest of his speech, now using the new human motivator, "Death", every time he needs another example or a cheap laugh to illustrate his point about how easy it is to sell music for film and television. It would seem the homogenized and uncreative genres of film would wish other artistic disciplines to narrow their categories as well. This seminar speaker at least urges us toward this realization, regardless of it's truthfulness.

It's not that we can't think of more examples or categories of expression, its rather, one has a great difficulty in finding someone willing to sell them. Sales are an external and quantifiable activity. While conversely, creation is an introverted and seemingly inexhaustible multiplicity. Let us not forget, the seminar was emphasizing how and what to sell...not how and what to create or enjoy. From a marketing standpoint, the last thing on earth we'd ever want is a demanding consumer. A more demanding consumer makes the job of the seller more difficult. Fewer products would be passable, if the consumer learned to cultivate more rigorous attitudes and tastes. From a marketing standpoint, we'd rather have a dumber culture than a highly educated one. Our era looks as if it will not pass on immortal achievements of poetry or theatre, but rather, immortal achievements in marketing and manipulation...not the genius of a creator but the indoctrination of a mystique acknowledged through participation.

Quickly, go and vote. Go and buy. Go and choose a special interest and a fabricated rebellion in terms of fashion or music. Go quickly and economically declare the individuality of what you

are...because the cult of marketing has already made that the ideal of the collective.

Day

Stan Lee, creator of Marvel Comics is most famous for creating the character most similar to his own personal anxieties—Spiderman. The character whose power clings, sticks and resists the natural pull of gravity. The character behind the mask is flawed and introverted. Upon discovering his super powers, Spiderman's first use of them prompts him to immediate acts of profit seeking and selfish behavior. Stan Lee only allows a brief glimpse at unrestrained libido fulfillment. Ever after there is a sticking, and a holding back, not only for moral purposes, but also for psychological purposes. The introverted hero makes his "sacrilegious backwards grip/grasp" (Nietzsche) into his strength, his superpower. Now a constant battle is fought against all types of villains and unrestrained monsters whom our hero must catch, hold and arrest by using the web material he consciously invented (a power not given by the unconscious). Each villain is more exciting and demonic than the next. The intriguing element of the comic strip is the consistent anticipation and surprise in discovering the particular attributes of each new villain as their transgressions are unleashed upon the city.

Spiderman: the clinging introvert who catches moral spooks while struggling to adapt his powers to his daily life.

Day

It would seem life is even more undignified than we before supposed. At least with the vanity of Ecclesiastes we were able to abdicate under the assumption that all manner of action existed inevitably as pointless vexations of spirit, never attaining any final or lasting meaning. Now we must be more thorough: Not only do the actions of a man's life amount to nothing, but also, every individual passion, goal, fixation, joy and choice eventually comes together in such a way as to resemble a grand delusion, conspiracy and psychological cheat just beyond the scope of his intuition. (This

intuition is that which E. M. Cioran makes into his fanatical revelation, which, in his latter work, The trouble with Being Born, he declares as the one idea he would be willing to be martyred for: the universal pointlessness which conspires to make all things the opposite of what they are: the realization that every inner motivation from below is shaping and embarrassing that which we accomplish from above.) Our lives are not a lie by any means, for all deeds are truly the deeds we imagine them to be, but if we look closer, they are also a profound mockery of what we have pursued and supposed. Each life fills in the corpus of an already childish thing—OUR DEEDS ARE MERE STUFFING FOR VESSELS OF FUTILE CELEBRATION: AS STRAW DOGS ARE WE TO THE GODS.

Life does have meanings. Life does add up to this or that purpose. Life is not just an illusion. Our every action and every attitude is not only needful but profound: profoundly sad: like when lovers commit suicide by accident; which really, is in no way an accident, but is more aptly, a reluctant metaphor made flesh. Fate looks like the cruel joke of a relentless sense of humor, never content or relaxed enough to let even the slightest detail slip by unabsorbed: as straw dogs are we to the gods. After the endless carnival has ended, you'll find us littering the ditches of eternity, frozen in the images of our own mockery.

Let each of us kneel before the oracles of adaptation. Laughter is already a clue.

Day

This is how the flower opens
This is how the wound bleeds
This is how the egg is fertilized
Nature doesn't wait for our acceptance
Psychology doesn't bend to our whims
Necessity prevails.

Day

An uneducated Chinese woman once said to Lin Yutan,

*"We give birth to children, and before that, others gave birth to us.
What else is there?"*

Day

If I were courting myself as a lover, I'd have already given up. I'd have said:

"He's already too far gone..."

Part IX
Pudding Monsters
and
Space Bananas

Day

French Philosopher Alain Badiou is fixated on the concept of forcing ideas and "forcing the truth", which he deems one of the major causes of evil in the world. He's an idiot.

I'll be more severe. I'm going to describe the actual psychology of forced truth. In reality, there exists an autonomous phenomena of *the truth forcing*. Once this occurs, (whether empirically or realistically valid or not) the forced phenomena (reality altering) takes the place of our old reality. For example, when Communism forced its way to prestige in the soviet union, it's so-called evil had nothing to do with its "truthfulness". Only in hindsight will a man of limited intuitive abilities use the over-extension of his logical faculty and find fault with the nature of *how* such and such a truth or world view rose to ascendancy. In keeping with his rationalism, such a man will also try to ascribe to humanity a false freedom and a false dignity it does not in fact deserve. His first step is actually the *forced truth* of a psychological ontology that does not agree with the facts of reality. In all cases, the dangerous truth or reality altering seduction of a radical world view such as racism, Platonism, feminism, democracy, Catholicism etc. etc. is not the work of human ingenuity or freedom, but rather the spontaneous novelty expression of a will to power from the unconscious. This '*will to power*' is not consciously chosen. Even when it is chosen, it has already risen up in the form of a borderline neurosis, autonomously asserting itself by means of fantasy, symbol, and supercharged-sexual longing. What confuses the issue for the philosopher is the amount of daylight consciousness, rationalization, manifesto writing, clandestine group organizing, propagandizing, and ever increasing amounts of written polemic on behalf of *said unconscious urge*. We are born to integrate. We are by nature, creatures of adaptation. If we discover a force within us, we strive ever so cleverly to make that force *our force*. Our ego cannot help but wish the lion's share of our creations, yet our creativity springs forth without origin and we lucid creators in no way deserve that credit. I might not actually be the first anonymous author to realize such a phenomena, but I may in fact be the greatest poet, philosopher, and psychologist in the history of the world if I am the first one to practice my creed in keeping with the true nature of the unconscious as the anonymous source of creation...not the greatest because I forced myself to be the greatest, but the greatest solely because *I alone among the poets, philosophers and psychologists stated in lucidity the actual nature of my existence while*

also not taking credit for it at any moment during its creation. I didn't even want to write that sentence. I compulsively and manically wrote that sentence because the idea of it forced its way to the surface...the truth forcing.

In moments like this, I feel I have strained myself to the limit, not in puffing myself up, but in pulling myself down and holding myself back against the other manic illusions and strange fantasies which might not prove so edifying to my biography as a philosopher. To wit, this book is for me a safe place where spontaneity is allowed and exaggeration is enjoyed as a form of play so that I might maintain my equilibrium against the force of my manic urges. Deep depression was less volatile. As my ability to express myself has grown, and catatonic silence turned to speech, the joy for me has become so overwhelming and hypnotically intoxicating that I spend days and days in a row now in bouts of severe mania. Put to good use, a wild horse will move you along economically, but good luck holding on without a saddle! (If Nietzsche had written this paragraph instead of me and included it in his biography of work ((I know just where he should have put it!)) think of how much less confusion his ultra-concept '*will to power*' would have exerted upon the world. If only his greatest thoughts could have been *diagnosed properly* at the moment of their creation! Think how many lives that might have saved.

Even at this moment, I know a woman writing a book directed at educators to help avoid future school shootings (rampage shootings as they are called now). Her book features the interviews and testimony of the shooters themselves. In that instance, the "diagnosed properly" has very little to do with labeling someone a psychopath after committing some crime psychopaths characteristically commit. We need more than a category for such beings. What is needed is a creative intuition of the dynamic process at work *beneath* such beings, urging them on to bizarre acts that make perfect sense to their own symbolic and sexual reality. If you want me to label a rampage shooter, then let's coin some new terms. Let's call them "Pudding Monsters" and "Space Bananas". Our local news caster would announce to us, in a somber tone, "A new tragedy struck Columbine today as Pudding Monsters and Space Bananas descended with explosives and assault rifles for the sake of singing acappella show tunes and twirling batons with streamers. During the dramatic incident, no sane human beings were injured, but all school children were very frightened by the strange behavior of the Pudding Monsters and Space

Bananas. When police arrived, a tactical assault team was deployed. One of the fleeing Space Bananas was gunned down by a sniper from a nearby rooftop only to die in an ambulance on his way to the hospital. Two of the Pudding Monsters are now in custody awaiting their book deal, and the third Space Banana was found on a tire swing with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the face. (The faceless man is now being exonerated since the students and teachers were no longer able to empirically identify him or implicate him in any way for the crimes of the other Space Bananas."

To further illustrate my point about *the truth forcing*, I'll describe an irrational instance which had zero effect on the world. Only by making the conceptual linkage between the ritual unreason of benign acts with the ritual compulsion to acts of destructive consequence may we better interpret why such acts occur. It often strikes me as odd that rational individuals will attempt to sort similar crimes in terms of the most reasonable motive available. For instance, school shooters are sorted into a different bin than movie theatre shooters, and celebrity shooters are sorted and kept separate from those who attempt to assassinate political leaders. The public, as well as the experts in the case long to emphasize the romantic nature of the celebrity case, the sadistic nature of the movie theatre case, the clandestine nature of the political case etc. etc. and indeed, some of these intuitions may have some validity, but since they are rational modes of assessment they actually lead us away from the psychological forces at work and, in affect, are guilty of opening a dialogue which only succeeds in further masking them. Press interviews after an insane event has occurred may actually prove too sane—let's not ask our lover if he loves us the moment after he climaxes; that's the moment he loves us least!

As promised, we shall begin with an instance of ritual unreason toward benign affect and then return once more to the ritual unreason of frightening or destructive acts. The most humorous and pragmatic instance for demonstrating compulsive unreason I can think of involves a pair of fluorescent green, fingerless cycling gloves. (Hopefully this personal anecdote will prove useful to our serious discourse on Pudding Monsters.) When I was 7 years old I had recently discovered the sport of soccer at recess. Unsure of the rules and the mechanics of the game, I was timid at first. The organized nature of team play hadn't occurred to me. I had no concept of cooperation. Back then, I never passed the ball. No one did. We loosed ourselves in the completely selfish pursuit of the one goal. At home I was use to quiet, self-directed play using

only my imagination and toys; quite alone and without any great violence or passion. For me, schoolyard soccer was quite different. Soccer unleashed a part of myself I had never experienced before. I became aggressive, intimidating and tyrannical. I compensated for my lack of kinetic ability with my brutishness and my talent for slide tackling. Without uniforms or even clearly formed teams, the short recess games were a plain clothes free for all of stored energy. For some reason, I also became fixated on the idea of vengeance. In my particular mind—ever so prone to displays of fanaticism—I equated vengeance to the morality of balance. Justice meant a punishment equal to the crime at hand. I never thought of deterrence as a motive for my behavior unless it was for the sake of showing I wasn't a coward and that I would stand up for myself. For me, and the ugly moral brute I was then, I felt it was my job to police my own existence by dealing out the proper vengeance long after anyone cared or remembered the incident. I remembered ranting to a friend by our wall of jacket hooks about how I was going to rectify some unanswered grievance the following day because the recess bell had rung before I could discharge the necessary punishment. I was told I shouldn't act. That I should let it go...but for me, the vital reality of my anger and the physical union of morality and mania forced the urge to vengeance into the center stage of my mind.

What finally put a stop to this behavior and this mode of thinking was not the moral correction or shameful scolding of a teacher...quite the opposite. The next day, in the far corner of the soccer field I executed my act of premeditated vengeance. The problem however, was that it all went too smoothly. I trounced the other boy, leaving him crying with a skinned knee. The whole episode went far too easily. The surprise of my lingering and fanatic anger was no match for the other boys unsuspecting demeanor. Yesterday's slide tackle and shoving match hadn't really meant anything to him. When I demonstrated that it did in fact mean something to me, I felt justice had been done...but that wasn't the end of it. I was ridiculed for my victory. I was called a bully. With my anger spent, I realized my anger had not really meant anything. I had enjoyed the confrontation too well. Because of my enjoyment, I realized the moral component no longer applied. The first traces of my own fanaticism not only forced themselves into reality, but they had forced themselves into consciousness. My stubbornness and private passions were so contrary to the other students that I realized I could no longer allow myself free

reign in my vengeful desires. In one stroke, I gave up vengeance altogether.

Then came a new fixation. I became obsessive with how I was seen in the eyes of others. Fashion began to interest me. I realized the most popular boy—who happened to have an older sister who played soccer—was most popular for two reasons. He was good at soccer before anyone else was, and he wore the most interesting clothing because his sister picked his outfits for him. Now, in order to assert my own dominance in the play for popularity I needed to constrain my desires for physical dominance and integrate new adaptations for social dominance. The popular boy never needed to slide tackle, because he had a skill for dribbling and keeping the ball under control. He was also the first to show us that soccer was indeed a team sport and that one might gain an advantage in passing the ball instead of "hogging" it. We even began to vocalize the accusation, "Ball hog" when students refused to pass the ball at a crucial moment. Perhaps the most popular boy was really most popular because he controlled the field of play by making alliances and passing to others as often as possible. The selfish and un-fit team mates were immediately the most unpopular and hated. We de-selected them automatically. As I've shown, soccer was the key to our social life at age 7. Through means of the physical, the social and the spiritual were already being experimented with. At that time, all of my clothing was directed at one purpose: soccer. We began wearing the brightest shorts possible. It was the 80's then, so fluorescent colors were in. So were soccer shorts. I made my parents buy both. I also remember the irrational popularity of the brand "Bugle Boy". (Not at all surprising for a fashion company to possess a loud, effeminate, sexually indefinite or ambiguous name, I suppose, but for some reason every boy needed to be wearing their shirts.) Bugle Boy T-shirts featured skate borders, soccer players and water skiers outlined in fluorescent colors of yellow, green, pink and purple. We felt all the excitement of 80's fashion when we were wearing those shirts. There was something dominant and ultra-masculine about wearing the brightest color possible. It's a bit of a tragedy that after the cocaine binges of the 80's, those same bright colors were deemed the gayest colors possible. Fashion aside, there was a distinctive correlation between soccer, popularity and clothing in my 7 year old psyche that possessed all the trappings of tribal selection and tribal hierarchy.

Always looking for novelty and ways to advance while also feeling constrained, I became fixated on the black leather, fingerless

gloves the punks and thug characters were wearing in music videos and T.V. shows. In the backs of comic books there were mini black and white advertisements for X-ray vision goggles, magic tricks, and fingerless tough guy gloves with metal studs. The symbolic image of restraint and power kindled my latent desire for sadism. I began saving money from holiday cards and lawn mowing so I could buy my own pair of fingerless gloves. (When I was a bit older, and fascinated with the fantasy artwork of Julie Bell and Boris Vallejo I came across a painting Boris must have done in the 80's of a Body builder with fingerless gloves. This was the only painting of his that I could recall that wasn't a muscle bound Barbarian or demonic wizard. I have a feeling that fingerless gloves were alluring for some reason during the fashion of that era. I remember seeing athletes on television as well as punks and metal heads on MTV finding new uses and occasions for wearing fingerless gloves.

By the time I was 7, the year was 1989. Rollerblades had been invented and were growing quite popular. As was skate boarding. These sports also sometimes featured athletes wearing fingerless gloves as well as knee and elbow protection. These forms of athletic protection must also resonate with the masculine urge to wear battle armor. Sports are the sublimation of an urge to do battle. When there are no enemies and no wars to fight, armor becomes fashion and social posturing. (Take for instance the flamboyant military uniforms of the 1800's; the naval captain, the cavalry officer, or the seated general in some balcony opera booth playing the social peacock miles and miles away from anything resembling combat.)

For me, the fingerless gloves were the representation of armor, posturing and restraint for the sake of my newfound social awareness. I simply had to have a pair. Pressed to give a reason or an explanation for this desire, I could not have summoned one. What I most wanted were the black leather kind the punks and metal heads were wearing. When I described what I wanted to my mother, she must have misunderstood, because she immediately took me to a bicycle shop where the clerk handed me a pair of fluorescent green and light gray leather cycling gloves with a thick grip. "These are good for street hockey too" said the man at the counter, still trying to understand why a 7 year old wanted to spend a few crumpled dollar bills and a pocket full of quarters on long distance cycling gloves. At first I was reluctant, because the gloves were not made of the right color leather and they didn't have the menacing metal spikes I desired. I felt very nervous

having my mother and this bicycle repair man standing over me while I held the package of gloves. Then I looked down and saw that the man had unconsciously picked the gloves off the shelf that were the same fluorescent green color as the soccer shorts I was wearing. That association also resonated with me. I began to fantasize about wearing them to school and on the playground. The greatest taboo in my childish brain, perhaps even the first taboo I had consciously been exposed to was the one rule in soccer, "No hands". Hands were restricted. Touching the ball was not allowed, unless you were the goalie. A new fantasy arose. If I purchased my fluorescent green hand armor, I could use them to play goalie and thus subvert the one known taboo. I could touch the ball once more, without actually touching it, since I'd have the gloves to shield my hands during play. This thought was enough to persuade me that these bright colored gloves, which I had accidentally been handed, were actually closer to my desires than I had realized. I immediately told myself that I wanted these bright colored gloves more than the ugly black ones which were at that moment, unavailable to me. When I returned to school wearing my new gloves, it was assumed right away that I would be the best choice for goalie because I was already wearing the armor for it. None of the other 7 year olds thought it at all strange that I wore them to recess every day, even on days I wasn't playing goalie. It seemed tough and cool that I did so...that is until one of the recess monitors asked me why I was wearing such silly gloves. "Those are for bicycling. My husband has a pair just like them." At that moment, the adult reality and utility of the fingerless gloves asserted itself against all my fantasies of what the gloves meant and represented. From that day onward I only wore them at home and at play in the neighborhood, but no longer at school, where I would be judged for having them.

My parents must have suspected that I was either gay or a creative genius or both. The truth is none of the above. There was nothing much creative going on at all in my 7 year old head. I was only attempting to adapt myself and dominate the challenges of my environment. Like a row of falling dominoes, I advanced from one social hurdle to the next. There existed no "Creativity for creativities sake". Every additional realization meant a greater integration with the environment. Without ever fully being conscious of these demands being made upon my psyche, I still managed to transcend the constraints and taboos of my environment. The results of my adaptations *served no ultimate purpose*. I no longer wear fluorescent green and gray bicycling gloves. I no longer play soccer. I no longer

seek vengeance as a catharsis for sexual energy. I no longer wish to dominate any social group, or project any social identity whatsoever. Every adaptation I've described only applies to the unique snapshot of a social, psychical, and physical reality that no longer exists. Adaptation suited the moment. When the exterior variables changed, when the reality testing of information changed, when the inner vitality of my being changed, these adaptations evaporated like phantoms of confusion and wasted effort. To experience victory is only to be led onwards toward new tests of warfare. Only when the complete reality of the environment finally asserts itself and becomes known to consciousness does adaptation stop and evaluate its past efforts. Tragically, *when the need for adaptation stops, human destiny is at its end.*

As promised, I've given an example of benign unreason and its ritual quest toward adaptation. If we go forward from this point and apply the same creative method to Space Bananas and Pudding Monsters we may realize that the fluorescent green bicycling gloves they use to shoot their victims are the disorganized use of a long string of dominoes which at one point must have linked up with *a healthy urge and a need to adapt.* The greatest challenge preventing the advancement of the mental health profession is its need to think in terms of pathology. A more thorough, (and therefore much more demanding) way to assess mental health would demand that we foist upon ourselves the faith that *all actions and thoughts strive to serve some functional purpose.* If we are to understand pathology, we must start from the very earliest manifestation of healthy behavior or undifferentiation and slowly work our way through the labyrinth of the unique subjects biography of adaptations and environmental pressures. Without the environment—while safely confined to a prison cell—criminal individuals lose all relation to that which promotes health and that which causes neurosis. The ability to assess oneself accurately from a prison cell might actually be the skill which keeps a man out of one in the first place. We must almost be willing to assume that the destiny of the criminal or the mental patient, in landing himself in captivity, is a good indication that the unique biography of his healthy adaptations never fully came to consciousness. If it did, and he still committed the crimes he committed, then we must commend him. *He's a rare and beautiful lotus indeed!* Perhaps he even wanted such a fate. Or knew that he *needed it.* I'm sorry if those thoughts are disturbing. We must politely ask the reader to make a crucial adaptation at this very moment: *The idea of life and morality you now possess in no way*

encompasses or accounts for the whole of human expression. What you consider right and wrong in your personal or social group is an aesthetic evaluation metaphorically equivalent to picking a favorite clover in a ten acre field. Nature's lucky strokes and demonic accidents will always excite the public, but look how seldom these brave deviations ever amount to any kind of *change in public opinion or moral orientation*. True beauty and creative genius is wasted on them at every turn. The lotus withers and shuts. The forest sheds and cycles on, meanwhile, another golden leaf and another ill starred Anti-Christ sinks into oblivion, unnoticed and un-enjoyed.

Day

The United State's Bill of Rights was written in 1789 and ratified in 1791. This document guarantees U.S. citizens freedom of speech and by extension freedom of the press for all citizens, yet state and federal governments have still succeeded in banning books, confiscating books and censoring books.

Now commonly cited as one of the greatest novels ever written, Joyce's Ulysses was censored, confiscated, and banned based on a court ruling which called it "the work of a disordered brain".

Freedom is an illusion which can be rescinded on a whim.

These words are writ large in my misanthrope heart:

United States vs. One book called Ulysses

Day

Why shouldn't poets be brave and confident? If I'm looking for a heart surgeon to operate on me he had better describe his skills as "amazing", or I'll find someone else. The risk is too great to settle for a coward.

Day

Sainthood is already being replaced by rampage shooting and suicide bombers. How come no one else sees that unhealthy correlation? Less religion sounds like an even bolder antagonism against the architecture of the human psyche, don't you think?

Day

Add to all these thoughts the notion I can leave off and abandon them as easily as shooing a fly. In public I'm cheerful, maybe forty-five percent of the time, and dissimulatingly cheerful ninety-nine percent of the time remaining when I'm not actually cheerful, because healthy people are taken more seriously than deranged ones. Beneath the shroud, my blood flows toward such a monomaniac idea it would make terrorists weep to behold. Lucky for the world, I only plan rampage poetry—which affects no one. That, and I never go to the movies...

Day

In this century, mental health is no longer an option for poets. Two centuries from now, it will no longer be an option for the common man.

He who decides what health is, shall also determine what men are forced to become.

The most frightening religious possibility of the future will have this creed: Behavior only.

Day

The popular fantasy card game, *Magic the Gathering* already uses one of the psychological strategies I described earlier in this book. In the game, each playing card features a brightly colored oil painting, an elite or prosaic vocabulary word describing that which the painting

symbolizes, and the remaining space on the card describes its use and special privilege in the game. On some cards, if there is any space remaining, a poem describes the action in the painting.

With this game, the player is forced to study and memorize thousands of images, card names and gaming privileges for the sake of composing a finite deck of cards for dueling against friends. In a sense, all the important rules and privileges of game play are written on the face of the cards themselves—in a sense, this already initiates the player into discourse in meta-narrative type thinking. Not only does game play involve meta-narrative thinking and problem solving, it demands instant adaptation, artful improvisation, and deep intuition of what ones opponent may be planning.

Only a decade later do we realize how perfect this game was for building our vocabulary as well as our philosophical problem solving ability through the actualization and free association of both game play and image recognition. To this day, I cannot use certain descriptive words or situations in poetry or prose without recalling the oil paintings from those cards I obsessively studied as a teenager.

Day

I began my quest as a philosopher in search of ideas. I've ended as a psychologist in search of experiences. I could not help that transformation. The books I chose to read were not safe books. They were a program language for the self-fracturing and the reconstitution of self. The ideas in such books meant less to me than the moods and trances I fell into as a result of them. Understanding and clarity never faltered. I understood every word...and that's why they were dangerous.

Day

The characters of Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat surprise me for how closely they approximate the Myers-Briggs personality inventory. In each game, not only are most of the types represented, but also, they're respective character's attributes and weaponry are perfect metaphors for those types of people. I'm Raiden. An ageless

immortal who sees all and makes heads explode with stored energy.
(INTP)

We underestimate games for children. We even complain of their violence and go to battle to uphold our personal opinions without understanding our opponents! How come no one complains about our parental ignorance, our political ignorance, and our psychological ignorance? If only I had a metaphor for that!

Day

Presidents of the future:

Sworn into office with their right hand on a pile of comic books or a stack of blank pages.

Shall we clarify?

Mass fantasy or anemic attempts at reason.

Part X
The Phonograph

Day

Remember the days when one could take solace in the idea that television and mass media were a sham and counterfeit of reality? Today we can no longer hide behind such notions. “Reality” broadcasts, even when staged, contrived, creatively edited or suspiciously self-aware, actually magnify and clarify what we really are. Under the invisible dome of hyper-reality, there are no reactions, no attitudes and no critiques which terminate this self-referential circuit. Just as the writer cannot forcibly flee from self, neither can society forget its neurosis. The most unreal (and therefore epically “ideal”) incarnation of society must have taken place in the brief span of years between the invention of the printing press and the invention of the phonograph. I wanted to say radio, but truly, the hyper-real begins with the phonograph, which, by way of its ability to transmit information, (not just by reflecting it, like photography) but by embodying a lively and vital simulacra of speech and sound, marks a unique event in human history. Unique because this event, although interesting or novel in its own day, did not mature to its full significance until the simulacra of reality began overwhelming reality qua reality to the point where the convolution of events and ideas began to threaten the foundation of experience itself—not just our idea of experience, but our bodily awareness of reality altogether. With the advent of the phonograph, we entered into the age of meta-narrative.

In the brief period of roughly 400 years, from Gutenberg to Edison, printed word to recorded sound, literate individuals were able to fool themselves into believing in their own false demeanor: A prudishness of constrained elegance: In short, prose writing. Newspaper existed that is true, but newspapers couldn’t really overpower the tyranny of literature; if anything, newspaper still admitted (falsely) its subordinate role. Only as literature gradually fell to Da Daism, marketing and instant communication did we realize all the fruitless hours of devotion we had given up to men who were not men; we suddenly had the horrifying realization that some of the prudish, elegant and perfectly capable writers were actually poor psychologists. Worse still, for 400 years we had deified them and grown accustomed to their polished ways of speaking and thinking. When we opened a book we actually felt “as if” society really were urbane, elegant and well spoken.

Today the reality we have is the reality we deserve. I say this with the utterly neutral voice of a physician: This is your diagnosis: All that you see and hear—and perhaps more importantly the *way you see it*—is part of your individual prognosis. Let the self-referential phenomena of the hyper-real be the Gnostic Gospel re-imagined. Between Bobcat Goldthwait's "God Bless America" and the Batman movie shooting, the convergence of satire and reality seems to favor the comedy of the real; the humor of the grotesque flesh and blood reality we actually live without the addition of satire, which, to the quick witted, admits sadly that all a seasoned comedian's angst, hard work and creativity are trumped by a pink haired goof—after all, the supposed satire movie, "God Bless America", which includes a movie theatre shooting scene (slated originally to come out shortly after Batman) is rooted thoroughly in our present reality. (—it's comical license and concomitant exaggerations being no real surprise to us.) In fact, Goldthwait's movie makes for a poor fantasy, since it doesn't really seem healthy enough to maintain any illusions of escape into a reality *other* than the one we already have. Add to that the malingering defendant (from the Batman shooting) carefully instructed how to feign mental incompetence, hallucinations and sleep deprivation—and this too is televised!

Today, amidst the white noise avalanche of mass broadcast agitation, anxiety, sensuality and unreason, we each envision (for better or worse) a muddled herd of nitwits projected around us and we carry with us, in place of fantasy and artificial civility, a composite notion (circus?) accompanied by sounds and images of what human vulgarity actually look like. Switch on the television on any random day in 2012 and you're likely to encounter the following: a college football molestation scandal, a long outdated golfer scandal, a movie theater killing spree, a channel devoted only to heinous crimes, a channel devoted only to law enforcement exploits and a dozen other channels of reality vignettes not worth anyone's time (even though the writer's guild strike ended years ago...) It's out of this clutter which the self-referential hyper-reality of the United States both gluttonously feeds upon and wishes to flee from; But as it tries to flee, each viewer's outrage inwardly risks losing control and resembling the inflated beings which upset or imbalanced it in the first place. From a psychological perspective, the amount of health and mental composure needed to really contain oneself and react creatively, let alone admirably in such an era, must rank among the great wonders of the modern world...Such

an admirable (absent?) reaction is so unbelievable it too borders upon our original definition of the hyper-real.

The important notion to underscore is the *actual image* with which a society views itself. (And by actual we mean subjective and inflated.) The notions of the naive and golden era of “literate” consciousness are no longer emotionally sustainable. Those who would wish to escape toward such a falsity are probably worse human beings than the ones who relish cooking channels and true crime re-enactment dramas. Like others, I too felt a strange and desperate urgency to make sense out of the jigsaw nonsense of rampage shootings, but a book dealing with anything other than the shooters themselves and their actual mental states would be more detrimental and perhaps more costly than silence. Further subjectivity would only add another layer of hyper-reality to an already smoldering mass of debris.

Earlier I wanted to suspect some connection in the recent movie theatre shooting in Aurora and Bobcat Goldthwait's film, “God Bless America”, but upon finding no one blogging intelligently or even seeming to notice the parallel, I realized the convergence of these two events didn't matter. *Even if* the shooter did see or hear about the movie before the crime (and so time his attack) and even if he did intend others to make this connection, it still doesn't matter. Just the fact that I had the audacity to make the connection in my own private mind while others went on ignoring it showed me that the level to which we exist hyper-reality is already a more significant revelation than the activity of debating who influences who or what causes what. These myriad things we see before us both do and do not matter. They profoundly *are*.

Jung states:

"The immense significance of such symbols can be denied only by the man whose history of the world begins at present day. It ought to be superfluous to speak of the significance of symbols, but unfortunately this is not so, for the spirit of our time believes itself superior to its own psychology. The moral and hygienic standpoint of our day must always know whether such and such a thing is harmful or useful, right or wrong. A real psychology cannot concern itself with such queries: to recognize how things are in themselves is enough."

-Psychological Types -Collected Works vol.6

The many unique pressures and individual circumstances of a crime, whose investigation seems to eclipse the entire truth of the act, should not ever be allowed to overshadow the symbolic nature of our deeds. More facts brought to light may only represent our own inner need and overt struggle to continue ignoring symbols. As Jung states, when the unconscious complex reaches a supraliminal state, conscious control is pushed downwards and displaced as lunatic fantasies begin their autonomous and active play in the world of reality. The factors leading to or causing reason to fall vanquished are better exemplified in the nature of the crime than in the dossier of inconsequential background details which the investigators are busy labeling, classifying, sorting and archiving. *The crime is the symbol.*

Day

As the visceral reactions to actual society become more and more repressed, the cult of the anti-hero and terrorist shall spread, until finally, without a doubt, all intelligent and half-intelligent reactions to hyper-reality shall become a greater source of despair than the primitive realities which first spawned them. Lunatic or lucid, the motives cease to matter. Our retribution, as disgusted beings, shall possess all the trappings of Nietzsche's "Sacrilegious Backwards Grasp". What is it we hold? Not our innocent sensual folly, but instead, our all too conscious neurosis of the real.

A meditation on Baudrillard's Simulacra and Simulation

“There are tears for passing things...”

-Virgil, The Aeneid

As I begin, I'm not sure if my idea is new or old. I only know that I must set this idea down for the sake of my own development; I must set this idea down because I can no longer bear the weight of carrying it. I must set it down in order to be done with it; that I might live further, beyond it.

I'm not sure that the following essay, or it's central tenant is actually a new innovation in the realm of discourse or understanding. In fact, I actually have an intense intuition that the following idea, *“my idea”*, has been known and practiced for a very long time with such depth and subtlety that *all great men approach it, the mass of individuals are beyond it, almost none can volitionally practice it, and to the great humiliation of philosophy, there are almost none among those that do know it that are simultaneously capable of describing it.*

In one stroke, this idea is the birth and destruction of the Post-Modern. In one simple sentence, the Post-Modern canvas of variety and experimentation dissolves away into banality and simulacra: *Character surpasses ideology.*

Where shall we place that revelation exactly? Taoism or Buddhism around 550BC? or something out of Hamlet? or the Sturm and Drang movement? I believe it was Rimbaud, at age 16, who said in a letter to a friend, “Romanticism has never been judged properly. Who was there to judge it? The critics? The romantics? who prove so clearly that the song is seldom the work, that is to say, the idea sung and intended by the singer.”

If we remember Virgil's phrase, “Character is destiny” (circa 19B.C.) we once more see humanity through a lens which out-strips and nullifies all the aspirations and content of mind and freedom—a

paradoxical refutation of freedom, since, as we shall see, "*my idea*" is in fact the most liberating thought ever verbalized...it very nearly borders on silence and, in some of its most bewildering exponents are careful to remain silent as to the nature of this idea because not only does silence coincide with the nature of this realization, it is also the only mode of expression that refuses to violate it. That said, there can be no possibility of "over-inflating" the egotism of "*my discovery*" and "*my idea*" because our eventual goal is to over-saturate ideology itself and to get beyond it; what is needed most, is an urge to self-ridicule, doubt and philosophical "clowning".

As I begin, I realize that some thoughts are so formless and vaporous that one cannot quite reach them. Some thoughts cannot take form without seemingly dissolving themselves and all other truths adjacent to them. It is not a moral idea to say, "*Character surpasses ideology*". To recall Baudrillard, we ask, "What is left when everything is taken away?" We cannot answer "nothing". Yes, of course, we *can* furnish whatever answer we like, we *can* respond with all sorts of propositions or jokes, yet these betray our abilities. When everything is taken away, we lose the limit of our existence and can no longer approximate the remainder, nor can we make any positive or coherent statements regarding the remainder. To answer "nothing" is already to comprehend zero. Comprehending zero is a paradox. One cannot comprehend zero. One only encounters it; one only encounters zero in its positive act of receding towards the infinite...literally without or beyond human *affinity*. Yet this too is false. If we run towards the mathematical metaphor of asymptotes, we feel we have finally graphed or charted the meaning of nothingness. We say proudly, "Beyond here, that is the falling off point, that is the partition between the real and the un-real." Yet we do not know such things; we play at knowing them or give presentations of knowing them, yet still we do not know. Here is not a coy or playful urge that speaks: With desperation, I finally cry out against the map makers and I say to them, "How can you really know nothingness or the beyond when you have mapped over the entire territory and become the very same false territory which you attempt to give as witness for your reason and your technique!"

That which we feel inclined to say, after everything has been stripped away, is but a return of the unreal and a nostalgia for continuity, form and order. When Baudrillard finally returns the world of appearances to the order of simulation and simulacra, he proposes the *hyper-real* in its place. He makes a case for the complete

interchangeability and indifference between map and territory. In most cases, the map now *precedes* the advent of territory. With Baudrillard, we take a nightmare journey from Ecclesiastes to Nihilism, which includes advertising, capitalism, cinema, holograms, cloning, implosion and deterrence (as the furthest extension of the totalitarization of the *hyper-real* as a black hole system whose infinite gravity devours all attempts at rebellion and nostalgia; all is rendered meaningless—in Baudrillard’s own words, “the system has proved itself incapable of integrating its own death”).

In answer to our own impetus to begin, we recall two more of Baudrillard’s statements on Nihilism: ‘Melancholia is the inherent quality of the mode of the disappearance of meaning’ and “Melancholia is the brutal disaffection that characterizes our saturated systems”. Upon finishing Baudrillard’s work, “Simulation and Simulacra”, my response came in the form of a new question: “If we do indeed dwell in the hyper-real, in a so-called saturated system, how long have we been so?” further, “What is the nature of this being who is to be found in such saturated systems?” Finally, “How long must a meaning endure time and change in order to merit its own revelation? Would such a revelation be ‘meaningful’ or void, if it finally earned such a validity...which is to say, how can we trust our own maps of meaning if we are continually alienated and emotionally dislocated from them in a state of hyper-reality?”

Let us address the first issue: How long have we been as such? How long has humanity endured the status of hyper-reality?

Though Baudrillard sets up a ‘system’ of reality’s decay and progressive over-saturation, this system is in fact false, and Baudrillard would be the first to agree with me—such a statement coincides with the nature of what he describes as the hyper-real. Baudrillard, logically should feel total indifference to being shown that his system is yet another fabrication and seduction plastered over the real as if there really were a real. There is no real. Beneath the simulacra there is no truth. The simulacra is truth.

Baudrillard’s mode of philosophy is perceiving. He refrains from formulations and judgments in favor of seeing, touching, feeling and experiencing relations from the point of an individual. This manner of ‘soft’ philosophy is characteristic of the Post-Modern and it very nearly approaches poetry or poetic prose. Baudrillard does not theorize the

hyper-real, he initiates you and gives you a multi-faceted tour of its inner workings. He describes the four stages of reality's obsolescence as follows:

First:

1) An idea reflects a profound reality

Next:

2) An idea masks and denatures a profound reality

Then:

3) An idea masks the absence of a profound reality

Finally:

4) An idea has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacra.

Notice, if comparing my summary to the words of Baudrillard's actual text, Baudrillard states "It reflects...It masks...It is an absence...It finally has no relation...etc." To point out the magician's sleight of hand, all I needed to do was replace the word "it" for what Baudrillard intends: An Idea.

Before we can digest and get beyond Baudrillard's content, we must unveil his method. Such an unveiling may in fact obliterate his content or come dangerously close to refuting it before we even encounter it. Again, it can be assured that Baudrillard himself intended no less and that even upon being nullified, the circuit of his revelation remains un-broken: if his system of discourse and presentation falls into the same mire of hyper-reality as the system he describes, all the better for Baudrillard! Cheers! The clown is very astute and adept in his task: he excels in clowning!

Baudrillard leaves us with an esoteric sentence: "This is where seduction begins..."

We've already been questioning the outward world of appearances and media for a hundred pages. Suddenly the author's own device recoils on his own hand. It catches him in a trap. His own discourse falls to the same alienation and obsolescent indifference as the exoteric system of human communication he's been describing. The Charlatan is un-masked. He wants to be un-masked. A sage disrobed is a man

once more. It was merely an idea which reflected a profound reality, and then it was an idea which masked and de-natured reality, then it was an idea which masked the absence of reality and then finally it was an idea which devoured us and told us we possessed no relation to reality whatsoever.

Look carefully: all these are true: All these stages of reality's obsolescence and invalidation are true. They are all chimeras, clowns and illusions. Beyond the simulacra, we cannot reach the remainder. We do not know the remainder! What is left to put the remainder in terms of? We cannot even begin to ask what might resemble the remainder!

Now, to properly answer my first question: "What is the nature of this being who is to be found in such saturated systems?"

Human experience is already a saturated system. Nothing has changed this. Nothing will change this. What confuses the mind—the historical mind—is the urge to attribute progression where there is none, evolution where adaptation has not occurred, and positivism where only negation and loss of relation have taken place. The human gaze is prone to certain modes of apperception and categorization even before it begins interpreting phenomena. Before the map, and before the territory, we display an often predictable reach toward meaning. No matter the length or the content of a discourse, we must try to esoterically dredge beneath form and arrive at schemata. What is Baudrillard doing with the raw clay of western history and culture? What map is Baudrillard fashioning out of the material at hand? Does this map finally suffice for Baudrillard? Does this map suffice for us, who step beyond his project, in favor of an entirely new and different project out of the past content of Baudrillard? If Baudrillard demonstrates the four stages of reality's decline into hyper-real or indifferent reality, then we must keep the gift and discard its container. If we cling to history, *as if* it were the human biography which lead the way to understanding we would be guilty of re-writing history in a revisionist way...in a utopian way in fact—not that the hyper-real is a utopia (far from it!) but rather, this urge makes a utopian *use* out of the raw and indifferent *facts* of history in favor of Baudrillard's project. With no discredit to Baudrillard's revelation, we must realize the instantaneous merit of his words without pronouncing any sort of conclusion on history or reality itself. According to Baudrillard's essay, we have become a saturated system. Intellectually he is

perfectly correct. Even anti-intellectually, in the vein of popular media and political discourse, he is correct. The situation is so ultra-prevalent that even nitwits and fools are mumbling and slaving about it...Yet, to assert against all this overwhelming evidence, that *human existence is already a saturated system* is difficult to grasp; especially when the few that lament this state out of nostalgia and knowledge of the past usually cannot separate their enthusiasm from their own urge to be seduced by Tradition with a capital “T” (by this word I mean exactly what Evola means—a world of complete spiritual unification and hierarchy), and in the end, there is almost no one left among the ruins of the hyper-real to humbly state, “This is not new. There is nothing new under the sun. *Human existence is already a saturated system. It has always been so.*”

What is left of Modern and Post-Modern man if his fate is no longer privileged? Against the unfathomable weight of all human creation up to this point—All art, poetry, painting, discourse, conquest, music—Modern man strove to find solace in his own unique existence; he searched for that lucid gem which might grant his fate with a unique identity. When all uses of the world wore out, and he entered the Post-Modern, again he felt as if there must be something more, something new in this plethora of decay and incoherence. Then the sudden stroke of brilliance! He said to himself and his peers, “*I am the Last man! I am the furthest outcome, and that alone is enough! I collapse under the weight of historical debris, and my exasperated sigh is my unique addition! I am crushed out of existence! I am the finale!*”

What happens now? What happens when the Post-modern dream—that bastard derivative of romanticism that only prolonged itself in pretending it’s ignorance of the content of its own song—remember Rimbaud!—finally hears the music with clarity and horror? Not horror of its obsolescence or melancholia, but out of its sudden burden of joy and meaning and personal relation to phenomena? The tortured gall and anemic disunion of being the much venerated and poetized Last Man is not half so frightening as being merely “*a man*” once more.

“To be a man is easy, but to act up to one’s responsibilities as such is hard. Yet to be a man once more is harder still.

For those who would be born again into some happy state, there is no great difficulty. It is only necessary to keep mouth and heart in harmony.”

***--Yu Li Ch’ao Chuan or, The Divine Panorama.
A Chinese Classic.***

To regress or recede into religious simplicity is far from our objective. We would only point out the strangeness of the phrase, “to be a man once more”. Being born is easy. Each is born what one is. Born as a man I cannot become other. I cannot become other to myself...yet each of my urges, each of my ideas, each of my aspirations both come from me and risk alienating me from myself toward some other horizon or map of meaning that seemingly exceeds the content of my character...yet this is only an illusion. As I wager a new risk or plan a new endeavor in hopes of growth, addition or transformation, it is exactly this new device of my own which becomes a new map overlaid upon reality. Reality is never innocent. Women and those with intuition are never content to take Reality as innocent or devoid of seduction. There is always passion, motive and inertia keeping each train car on its rickety tracks. We’ve been moving along for such a long time we sometimes forget what motion feels like: the fish never realize they are swimming. Reality drowns us in simulacra and simulation—not as error, vice or trickery, but as Reality expressing its own flux, which is never real or un-real but instead hyper-vague and transcendently abundant: we are the ones transcended by ourselves. We over-reach what we are and that which we are—our intimate ineffable character (urges, thoughts, developments, moods) always succeed in out-stripping each new ideology or project we attempt to adhere to. Our endurance is never so frail as the moment we discover our own natures prevailing against our aspirations. Never so frail as the moment *character becomes destiny!* The moment where our plans give way to our mental and bodily limits. When our stamina hits a wall. (Are we finally a step closer to E.M. Cioran’s youthful ambition? To construct a philosophy of tears?)

Let us review the ground covered thus far: If we have always been as such, if we have entered life only to discover a saturated system of motives and meaning; If we realize that the nature of such a being—

who has finally intellectualized or in some way perceived his own being's intimate relation to such a state of affairs, then we have already answered our first two questions. In opposition to Baudrillard, we contend that, regardless of history's slow accumulation of meanings, crusades and false idols, humanity never once fully escaped the possibility of the beyond and the possibility of simulation/illusion. Awaking in the middle of the night, even for the cave man, a dream nullified is already all the education a man needs to eradicate God, Mythology, Ancestry, Tradition and spirituality. If he does not take intellect to its furthest outcome with the first glimpse of illusion, he at the very least possesses the anxiety of doubt, which, in human terms defines the first actual moment of history and the departure from the animal kingdom. Expelled from paradise, it is not knowledge of Good and Evil that commemorates the genesis of human existence, but rather simulacra and simulation.

A new definition of Paradise: Paradise is not to be freed from mortal threats; Paradise is to be freed from mortal anxiety. With anxiety comes the birth of the moral imagination—the imagination which speculates the future in terms of Good and Evil—which is to say, speculates in terms of simulation and simulacra. Behind the simulacra—behind Good and Evil—there is no truth. The simulacra is truth.

The most important Meta-Question philosophy can ask: From out of our own highly intensified perception and intellectualization of what is—from the eventual lucidity of the hyper-real in all of its manifestations—how are we to once more encounter the attitude of non-intellect? In a word, how are we to live once more? If the hyper-real or the perception of complexity is so ultra-inflated and meanings have become so delicately saturated and labyrinthine, how shall we escape our own work, our own mapping over of the entire territory?

The most elite question ever asked: “How can I be rid of understanding?”

Notice how this urge is not a project to discredit that which we have seen and understood. This new urge is not a nihilistic urge *in terms of knowledge*. If anything, this un-intellectual urge is an urge *from out-side the terms of knowledge; from a force of character surpassing ideology, beckoning us to let go of all maps, as if it were a voice from out of the unknown territory itself, speaking on our behalf.*

For some, to finally be near one who is near death is the closest they will ever come to a religious experience. For the philosopher the reverse is true. The activity of philosophy is so continually “near death” or self-nullification, that it cannot seem to taste the sensual and brute world of immediate experience. The philosopher is so prone to the *hyper-religious* states of vertigo and idealism that the task of being a man, of merely living, thinking, breathing, feeling and experiencing things normally is actually a difficult task. If we wanted to define normal, we would perhaps substitute the word “innocent” or summon an image of the un-carved to demonstrate such a virgin manner of experience.

We’ve skipped over one of our questions: We asked, “How long must a meaning endure time and change in order to merit its own revelation?” Leave that question aside for now. Let us continue examining our supposed alienation from meaning and the nature of how hyper-reality dislocates us from coinciding with our bodily and psychological needs. If we have religious needs as well, these too must in some way be in a state of dislocation, if indeed a state of religious *hyper-reality* and *vertigo* have replaced our sense of meaning, order, unity and personal significance; If the saturated experience has transformed from lucidity into abyss, then the functionality of meaning seeking itself has lead to meaning’s own demise: the philosopher’s map has really become a clandestine map of meaning’s undoing; it has rendered all maps transparent. Simulation continues, but in all of its manifestations, it only retains a ghost-like semblance of reality. Instead of seeing our own mental efforts as a spectre, we are fooled into believing that reality now haunt’s us with foundationless holograms. Without respect for the subtlety of many, many ‘soft’ philosophical essays, in the style of Baudrillard and Kierkegaard, one has the urge to already call these sorts of writings the writings of a lunatic. One is ready for the straight jacket if he has seen and understood so much as this!

I cannot reconcile my extreme disappointment in Jung and E.M. Cioran on the subject of Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*. The ironic affinities between Nietzschean philosophy and Buddhism abound, yet Jung and Cioran seek to distance themselves from all that they find impatient and romantic in Nietzsche’s vision. I know that such reservations would have been reconciled in an instant, had they only seen Nietzsche’s aspiration in terms of Baudrillard’s “Simulacra and Simulation”. To be one of the “above-men” is to be finally at the point of realizing the

intimate manner in which our own maps of understanding haunt us; to finally feel the sensation of *character forcing its way through our crumbling maps of ideology and rational/religious certainty*. Nietzsche never wanted a better person or an as-yet-unknown-expression of human life, but rather he urged us toward the as-yet-unknowable-relation of self to the beyond...for us to regain our (Buddhist?) affinity towards that which lies above and beyond maps of meaning. "For everyone and no one". Nietzsche's Gay Science is a project that transcends psychology. It needs to expel the chimeras and phantoms of psychology because even their wealth of understanding is yet another hindrance or fetter on the path of the *Urbmensch*. Baudrillard as well, expresses some unease over the fruits of psychological speculation and schematization of the individual. A very good map is still not quite the character beneath. A good map aids navigation without claiming to replace terrain and movement. Indeed, the terrain itself is still unfolding in a fractal manner, and the pre-emptive work of the maps themselves risk shaping our destiny before we even have a chance to participate in what might remain our only vestige of human freedom.

Spontaneity proves to be just as much a devil as psychology! It too threatens to bound up and gag the expression of our character. Keeping mouth and heart in common—can a flight into our shadow side, into the dissimulation of non-self, really do that? We can advocate the variety of experience and the possibilities of growth beyond our comfortable horizons, yet spontaneity seems no less a fetter than over-exaggeration of intellect. Maybe, to be the *urbmensch* is actually to realize that one must not risk lingering more than a single lucid instant in a state of "*Uber-dementia*". The skills of the *Urbmensch* must often and veraciously be employed for the sake of our swift departure from the *Urbmensch*. Perhaps it is to the credit of Jung and Cioran, perhaps it is to the credit of their lightning intuition, which repels them from Nietzsche, that actually validates Nietzsche as well. Nietzsche is in fact *worthy* of being expelled. *Worthy* of being spurned! Not unlike the confrontation with Christ—my secret enemy. In jest I sometimes say to myself:

"If I were to be 'born again', if I wanted to be 'born again', how could I overcome my obsessive fantasy of being born as a Bazzaro Christ, as a lucid, un-living, non-Christ, as a re-incarnate atheist with nails still wedged between my radius and my ulna. Perhaps I too have some thing to show the world. Perhaps I too have something to teach humanity!"

As I begin, as I falter and fail, as I meander and unlearn, my visions of the Anti-Christ diminish. My mania recedes. As my longings take on new form and expression, I have a vague urge to be a man once more—there are tears for passing things: Tears as a lesson and a non-lesson; Tears as vertigo and punishment for meaning. Tears as coincidence and correspondence with character beyond ideology; Tears as a weakening of the simulacra, which have proved false once more. *Hyper-reality* derives its strength from its stamina to out-pace both laughter and tears—for what else are humanity's sword and shield against the saturation of systems but laughter and tears? If the present state of communication is that which demands both more laughter and more tears than a given individual can summon, then indeed, *Hyper-reality is a crisis we have been unable to integrate*. Can it be integrated? Can we be authentic in our confrontation of lucidity and vertigo and still hope to achieve integration of that which exceeds all bounds? Let go that sort of question. That question is an illusion. Vertigo is but the self-appropriated interiority of the *hyper-real*. We do not ever confront the *hyper-real* in its essence. All we are capable of confronting is but a map and a simulation within ourselves of a system which seems to exceed integration. It is us who have allowed our own over-saturation. We may integrate whatever we absorb; but again, we might not integrate it either. The clue leading out of this inextricable impasse is actually our ability to bring ourselves to a state of vertigo! The point of furthest dread and anxiety shows us our limit. Crisis is the limit scenario. Genius functions best in the midst of the extreme and seductive tempest of the limit scenario. To suddenly realize the crisis in terms of mental agility and inflation is to raise above the map of vertigo itself and experience vertigo as yet another false map and false territory. In this case, in the case of *Übermensch* encountering "*Überdementia*", a pseudo-religious seduction has taken place on the summit of human possibility. Failure to integrate becomes the utmost strain of the individual; an escape route is found. The crisis is averted in being sidestepped; by having expelled the pressure which threatened us. Heaven is sustaining, for as long as possible...yet even Heaven and earth cannot maintain a tempest. Storms, as people, wane and die. Why should such a simple and common banality as doubt, be such a cause for alarm?

Part XI

Pathology and Neurosis

"In neurosis, the destructive component is predominant and, in every symptom, voices its opposition to life and genuine destiny."

-Sabina Spielrein

Day

When it already hurts to be who you are, you begin to fantasize about more painful situations. There must always be darker depths where the springs taste yet sweeter and more divine.

Day

The one feeling I understand is suffering, and since I don't even have enough of that, I long for more of the only flavor I'm suited for. Everything else seems beneath me.

Day

At dinner parties, if I'm forced to attend them, I'm an unserious scout in a terrain that's worse than foreign. I'm in my normal clothes, but I'm a play actor, a stranger, a constrained fiction of an amputated self. I don't want to be here. I don't care for these people. My vision and my task, even if its wrong or lunacy, is elsewhere and I'll never forsake it to become the fiction I am here. The discrepancy isn't an argument of theory or ethics, its a discrepancy of physiological intensity; an inner trembling for poetry, prose and clear thinking. I want to embrace them and learn from them and be more friendly and contented like them, but it hurts. It hurts to find nothing in common, to never find an idol, to never be encouraged and to know that all I've felt and thought will not only never touch them, but also, that their entire lives will enact a perfectly satisfying and amiable biography without having anything to do with my acquaintance...So many proofs of how my every hope is superfluous.

Day

"Our women and our secrets..."

Those sound like the words of a healthy man. On the contrary, a fool possesses neither. He captivates no one. His reputation does not exist. He cannot keep anything a secret.

Day

Mood / which direction? / How stable?
Thinking / How much aptitude? / How much discipline?
Feeling / How much intensity? / How much control?
Extroverted / How much confidence? / How much efficacy?
Introverted / How much depth? / How much clarity?
Sensuality / How much enjoyment / How much importance?
Intuition / How elaborate? / How experienced?
Sense gathering / How dominant? / How careful?
Care / How much compassion? / How much Self?
Outlook / Optimistic capacity? / Pessimistic capacity?
Moral development / How stable? / How advanced?
Metaphysical imagination / How important? / How concise?
Mystical insight / How hypnotic? / How existential?
Poetic faculty / How detailed / How universal?
Leadership / How capable? / How convincing?
Lover / How daring? / How experienced?
Rebellion / How passionate? / How authentic?
Warrior / How dangerous? / How successful?

Day

A healthy mind has no use for creation. Art is a symptom and an expression of illness; of maladaptation and misused gifts. While the artist labors to be understood, it is the same artist's eventual revelation and torment to perceive the healthy and productive individuals beside him as spectres of confusion, absurdity, and contortion. Art in fact admits of ignorance more oft than it rectifies it! Meanwhile, joy innocently recoils and condemns everything artful or eloquent: The sweat of the symbolic; the oils and dried paints of frenzy; the stacks of unpublished or un-publishable manuscripts; the muted sighs of a trumpet haunting a wooden stairwell coming from who knows which apartment; the blood christened toe-shoes of a late night ballet rehearsal—aloof and seemingly alien to artistic revelation, how shall immaculate health of mind and body make known its private non-revelation?

"Perhaps silence?"

Early on, art serves as an educator, an experiment or a play of sequences: once the initiate arrives at the precipice of absolute negation—at the very brink of self condemnation and hatred for artistic labor, one cannot leap over the edge without also realizing the fall itself is barely a midpoint between the top most lucidity and the false plateaus beneath.

To survive death—that's only another pathetic lesson; another useless laceration in taming a dairy cow; and maybe another excess of evidence and a reminder of the delicate internal mechanism which haunts every brutal act. Count the scores. Count the cuts and cross hatches. Art is done. Art is not done.

Development and learning are the real benefits of art, yet ironically, even paradoxically all that works as art is not art. That which educates and comes together of itself is by no means art. That which really owns and deserves the name "art" is by contrast everything invented, false, seductive, tyrannical, manipulative, inauthentic, clandestine, and aloof. Upon reaching the highest level of human revelation, art means only volitional pretense while conversely, psychology usurps the activity of all that pretends to be authentic: to be clear, one must automatically disqualify from the realm of art all that "intends" authenticity. On the contrary, that which purposefully neglects, annihilates, distorts and willfully bends to their own devices the confusing elements of reality is the only real artist. Overwhelmingly, I want to accept all those terrible nit wits who, whilst totally convinced of their own dire originality, claim to be authentic artists. Grant them all they wish and more! The hacks, the drop outs, the egotists—this is the kingdom of self-seduction and pure psychology working out (or twisting the knife) of its own problems. Yes! That which hopes to be art is false. That which hates, deplores, manipulates, destroys and willfully discredits itself is the only real and actual art because by its very expression, it demonstrates its own superfluous and contrived purpose. The unhallowed. The business of deception. The "for profit". The well-timed wink of contempt. Art has but one truth and one thing needful: the ability to keep a secret.

Everything else, good or ill, finds its root somewhere within a psychological fragment of truth: hence, reality and not creation. The not liberated. The not yet liberated! Only a liar possesses any claim to being an artist. To the extent he believes in himself, he too is a fraud...so long as he still needs belief!

Be proud my fellow artists! Let's tip our hats to one another in a silent conspiracy against the weak and mandatory within the apparatus of creation. We the liberated, we the willful, what could we possibly gain in setting the record straight or usurping our own dominion in the kingdom of falsity? To advance, we have everything to lose and nothing to gain. What's in a name anyhow? Doing right, doing honesty—that only means doing morality, which in turn only services and pleasures psychology. It is our stance that mere psychology is far, far beneath our aim. Bowing to psychology means in a certain sense, bowing to fate, to flesh, to the voice within that is not mind and not man but the concatenation of hormones, genetics, and mental process. Meanwhile, to act against fate, to manipulate reality, to control from without the bounds of possibility, sight and belief—that is the calling of the true artist. In contempt of man, in contempt of fate, I am the secret. In contempt of limitation, I am the secret and I am the way!

A word of caution: the liar and the man of charm have a common strategy: both are extremely careful. Between outright lie and gentle charm, the difference is measured in the duration the spell of unreality is intended to last. At an instant, in the case of a lie, any and all distortions of reality are permitted. Charm and lie are precise inversions of each other in terms of time and intensity. Charm is actually a minimum of intensity with the maximum of duration. Lie is the maximum intensity coupled with the briefest possible duration. The television sitcom scenario which condemns lying is itself a partial lie—a transposition of truth by the gentlest means possible, season after season, calculated to achieve the longest possible duration of profitability. The message is not, after all, "Don't lie" but more precisely, "If you're going to bend the truth, do it so gently as not to be noticed." In the end, we praise the man of utmost care for his ability to dissimulate his faults; for his ability to distance himself from the ugly faults of man, common to every man. To maintain an atmosphere of loyalty and trust is the goal of the upright man: Is not such a goal the exaggerated intentions of a liar? True charm, truly inspired, thoughtful, intuitive care is just as dauntless as it is faultless. The best dissimulation makes no missteps. Look to the lives of saints. In the end, the atmosphere of perfection is perfection. To be loved, followed and praised without even the slightest cause for reservation—that should be the goal and reward of charm. The charlatan's smile is the callous misstep of an amateur, in the mind of a saint....

Day

It's not only vulgar to think in terms of pessimism and optimism, it's actually a flawed and womanly attempt at thinking in general. By setting up the dualism of positive and negative valuation, the content of valuation is undercut by the subjective emotional attitude of the spectator of values. Not only this, but the spectator subscribing to the notion of the 'pessimistic' and 'optimistic' is forcibly limiting the expression of an emotional reaction they're withholding from us in favor of childish or novice attempts at rational thought—like when a little girl says, "Horses are better pets than dogs because you can ride them." She should have just told us she loves horses and wants one. The same is true when a woman prefers optimists. She actually says to us, "I wouldn't want to marry a failure."

Before anyone is an optimist or a pessimist, the person making the distinction is an emotionalist and a philosopher with a hole in her head: The content drops out. All that remains is what still touches her unspoken tastes

Day

When we see only peace loving, cooperative, productive and gentle individuals before our eyes, that's the absolute height of observational laziness.

I see also, peace indoctrinating, collectivistic, semi-unconscious, gropingly intolerant, fearful and fragile beings within an inch of their patience.

Indeed, in seeing both sides at once, I am beyond pessimism and optimism—for these categories too are also of one ilk and one scheme of social armor.

The half glass stands exactly as I describe it: a half glass.

Every lens is a half glass, a half vision, a half truth.

Day

Lucidity is pain at first. Pessimism only describes the attitudes of those not yet accustomed to this type of pain.

Neutrality smiles once more, at the appropriate times.

Day

Women are now statistically surpassing men in terms of degrees earned and may soon hold more of the high paying jobs if they are not already doing so—but daughters are still more coddled in first world nations, and even when they are not, women are more inclined to practical and stable career paths in the hopes of providing for the children they actually *want to have*.

Without religious propaganda, the family cult and the monogamy cult is in decline. Masculine decadence is not only an increase in lucidity, it's a more honest assessment of human futility. This scenario is what happens when both genders become less automatic and less collective. No moral judgments are needed. This is merely a different balance of energy. The same necessities remain.

Day

In neurosis, a lack of external adaptation hinders one from participation in normal life...well, that's the assumption anyway. But then again, we're always changing and adapting in response to something. How comes it that a misanthrope can prove to be more seductive and convincing than a healthy individual? What is the source of his eloquence? And why is the healthy man so clumsy in justifying his preference for life and his cult devotion to the details of living?

Let's leave that paradox aside and press farther...in the most psychologically complete individual, both life and misanthropy are refuted. Opposites come into equilibrium.

We should feel the most pity for the unthinking and sensuous strains of neurosis. They have not even the poetic excuse of verbalized misanthropy.

Day

Because the highest developments of critical thinking and intellect usually end up feeling the compensatory punishment of terrible moods, it's no wonder their ideas so commonly have a tone of pessimism...but it should also be noted, that their opposite, the cheerful and full of brotherly love, are also the very weakest thinkers. It's no wonder we take such offense to the unreasoned stupidity of their attempts at reason. If a doctrine of the superman ever gets written lucidly, it will have to come from *a returning misanthrope: a repentant Nihilist*.

Day

This relationship—

Titus Andronicus: Christianity

Day

Recently read a lengthy quote exhorting the serious import of the amateur artists of the world; their blood sweat and tears, so to speak. The quote urges us to not only make additional efforts to fund or support such creations, but also to internalize what colossal effort, sacrifice and personal anxieties must have gone into such creations—that's a misguided notion in several ways. Lets address each of them:

1)Perhaps all art is merely the redirection of sexual surplus or a substitution of sexual resources for one reason or another, be it the artist's infatuation with the tones of a stringed instrument, the artist's lack of social proof or extroverted ability or merely the more regressive Onanistic "rubbing" and strumming as fast as possible a tremolo chord (or double kick drum pedal) in the nearly archaic manner found in ritual dances of tribesmen thrusting sticks or spears into a hole, a fire or

a bush—the neurotic exercise is not really exercise at all; sporty athletic diversion is not the motivating force at work here. Instead, we meet a neurotic component which possessedly must accomplish this or that seemingly useless gymnastics of tiny motion.

2)If artists are privately working out ten thousand individual manifestations of human development, all belaboring the same few fundamental psychological truths, we must blankly state that such a mass effort working out but never finishing or achieving consciousness of these psychological spooks is merely an effort of fate and mass hypnosis which actually propagates more maladaptation than it heals. Would you like to know the true criteria separating the amateurs from the savants? The amateur gives you his creations wrapped in his own personal anxieties—not only this, but he frets about them day and night, as if he were still working them out; as if maybe he has gone wrong thus far; as if he is always about to recant or recall his creations because something is still missing or unsolved in them. Meanwhile, the savant makes no missteps. The savant creates without anxiety and admits of the uselessness in the creative act even while he performs it, so attune is he with the nebulous and recurring source of his unconscious outpourings. Far from seeking reward, this type of artist feels ill at the merest hint that other art or other artists should even exist at all. If the rest could digest and hold his vision for even two seconds, the lucidity of such a moment would dissolve all seriousness, dissolve all ego identities, dissolve all compassion, and wrench from the clutching and miserly hands of mankind all semblance of human dignity, thereby reducing them finally to the defunct globule of misdirected libido energy they actually are.

Day

A friend printed me a giant picture of Carl Jung's face (Because posters, pictures and activities like printing things out are an attempted substitute for thinking and reading). The Poster is so big it takes up all the wall space above my desk. I only put it up for the sake of humor, but I'm surprised at how happy *I feel* when I see Jung's smiling face and remember it came from my friend. I can almost imagine the joys of having an idol to worship...but lately I'm struck by a very dark thought—the poster is so large, I'm having trouble seeing *around it*.

Day

If I fully agreed with Jung, I'd have cut out my own tongue and become a gardener, constantly tending to life and relishing its small but purposeful adaptations. My tongue remains however, and in bitter opposition—as if finding a worthy enemy—I've taken up the belief there is more dignity in remaining what I already am until the final curtain; until our act is complete and the coffin is sealed. Wouldn't it be wonderful to die on a stage and be interred on a stage, as if the world had finally granted you the dignity of acknowledging the unreality of your existence?

Day

Which is more demanding:

Living as a husband without a mistress?

Or

Living as the wife who tolerates the husband's mistress?

For most couples, both torments are played out. Both situations are felt and adapted to without special privilege or apology. Neither husband nor wife fully gets their way, and we ought to demand that both are forced to adapt to the reality at hand without recourse to moral censure or shame. Psychology will not prevent transgression. Only aesthetics and religion do that, but even so, psychology will still be forced to unwind those forms of neurosis as well. A dissolved marriage looks like a failure to adapt. Exit is not growth.

Day

Taoism or Buddhism?

Let's phrase it this way: Exit is not growth.

Day

Show me the cultural critic who has seemingly assimilated everything without having needed to create anything: *that man created himself*.

Day

I long for the passage of time achieved through useless bodily distractions, through the heightened moods of being very near an object of pure desire without attaining it. Every potential woman nearby offers me more riches than an actual lover. My mood is elevated almost to ecstasy by mundane relations having nothing to do with sex except the vague possibility of sex. It's hard to pinpoint exactly, but I'd say the perfectly unpredictable aspect of a possibility nearby makes for a better feeling of fantasy without any concessions to vulgarity or actual intercourse, which is by now, a very dull subject in terms of visual fantasy. For me, all the powers of fantasy are super-charged when there actually exists a tangible possibility of its fulfillment nearby. Nothing needs to happen or become satisfied. My optimum potential as a creator requires only inspiration, never satisfaction. Thankfully this is the one area a writer can demonstrate physical proof of his assertion—failure hath made every sunset brighter, like drinking radiant daggers as the pages keep adding up.

Day

Longing for suicide is a misplaced or misdirected force of life energy begging for transformation but finding only repression, social hindrance, conscious frustration and un-fulfilled wish fantasies not yet realized, possibly too painful to even begin to realize while other more pressing needs are not being met. The body, presumably rewards good behavior and punishes poor behavior in terms of libido and Serotonin. If we meddle with the bodies choice of how rewards are dealt we interrupt our actual life's purpose. If a man wants to avoid his fate or be relegated to the nihilistic hell of non-meaning, he ought to confuse his own existence with drugs as quickly as possible, forever closing the door of rectifying the relationship between mental health and bodily

human labors in a natural way. If he happens to be born into a body whose genetic factors condemn him to suffer astonishingly more than his peers for the exact same life performance, then perhaps that seems a cruel twist of fate to him, but the peacock might not always have possessed its colors, nor the shark its teeth. What looks like a defect may one day prove to be an advantage. Possibly some men are already born to survive holocausts and wrestle bears. If we simply medicate them from the start, we've only arrived at a prudent choice from an assessment of the environment as it now exists. If some being should choose to live or feel differently from the collective, it's their own business. Only the adaptations of a new epoch of future humanity shall weigh sensibly the values not yet realized in those mutant beings we hate to acknowledge.

The suicidal urge might serve as an immediate way out. It might also serve, in its resistance, as a bridge for overcoming humanity itself.

Day

If I opened up a vein, I'd bleed out. I'd see a sticky red liquid stain the carpeting and then I'd pass out just after a dizzy light headed sensation. I'm not thinking of suicide, I'm thinking about mortality. Its much nearer than I have the patience for imagining. Even poetry never comes as close to it as actually bleeding.

—All this spoken by a man hardened against actually feeling.

Day

Silence in public is a degradation of self. Others notice it. They think you stingy, careless, fickle and hateful of their company. They think this and believe this and add to this basic notion one hundred thousand other insecurities latent in themselves which find a voice when yours is absent. In your false elegance, your reserve, and your detachment, your stoicism of social silence is not only a socially perceived self degradation but a latent assault on all other minds, absolutely unwilling to change or adapt to what silence might mean to you. If you are a suitor or a potential suitor to a nearby woman she'll read your silence as undue passion or inner conflict—both of which are

probably true, and both of which are dangerous to her in an annoying way instead of an alluring one. Successful and seductive silence *seems active* but it withholds. On the contrary, the typical introvert's silence is the result of too few collective ideas and too weak a capacity to integrate with the current situation, likely because of some private passion or obsession pertaining to no objects or persons present. Being brief is not bad, especially if you are concise enough to tend to outward existence without hesitation and then retreat back behind the curtain of silence where no one has any need or notice of you...but if you hesitate while on stage or while expected to deliver some opinion on behalf of your presence there, your long and faltering delay followed by the long and faltering expression of your zany inner life will only deter others from calling upon your opinion in the future. Once you get to speaking, you may notice yourself becoming suddenly impassioned over the details at hand leading to the further vexation of all persons present. Being silent means becoming bottled up which sends negative warning signs to those nearby. Often, we're so infatuated with inner thoughts, possibilities, and fantasies of inner and outer sense impression that we actually lose track of who we are in the eyes of spectators at each and every possible instant. The simplest audible question from a third party disturbs our entire equilibrium. We're awkward, we falter, we hesitate, delay or use insincerity, sometimes making unintelligible jokes in order to flee back into ourselves and avoid them. We think we love ourselves too much. Meanwhile, the spectators on the outside think we have no self-respect, no clue and no ambition. Mostly they are right because they are considering our social self whereas we only care for our inner and private self where attention never falters and adoration never ceases; even when in moments of self-loathing there is still a strange excess of attention and adoration flowing inward; energy flowing and being squandered in that which is not life, that which is not social.

Silence in public is a degradation of self. Attentiveness without any semblance of hesitation shows a great social and personal wealth of self-respect. Ironically, social self-respect usually translates to a wealth of intolerance, irritability, impatience, prejudice, unreason, and a general hatred for philosophy and self-awareness. Social self-respect is exactly the phantom the silent philosopher abhors and wishes never to become, but alas, it behooves him to become it and realize its unique value.

Day

The existential situation, for human beings in general, demands three considerations. You'll notice this premise, before even considering the three considerations, already breaks free of existential discourse, which is defined as private, subjective, personal and bodily.

Only from the existential situation can we begin to acknowledge my three ultimate considerations, but we must realize, ironically, these considerations point to a mode of being necessarily beyond the private and the subjective.

Consideration 1) Consciousness.

Remember our meditation on the one voice? The God in a strait jacket? The empty, severed manifestation of lucidity and reason? This is the first consideration and the arena of all existential thought. Buddha consciousness, the vanity of Ecclesiastes, the transcendental of Whitman, Thoreau, Schopenhauer, or Plato etc. etc. Not only this, but also imagine the re-digestion of sense experience and its rigorous analysis in Sartre, Camus, Proust and Heidegger—this is also the domain of consciousness. Its advantage is lucidity, nostalgia, reasoning, organizing, musing, poetizing and remembering. Its weaknesses are disenchantment, negation, nullification, alienation, longing, nausea and angst. The hyper critical genius of thinking risks hording all of life's energy in the name of inertia or stagnating self-decay. This sphere of self makes men great beyond all expectation and it also suffocates them and makes them into a corpse (Tolstoy is a perfect example). The greater the capacity for this realm of being, the deeper the existential challenge in freeing oneself from its evil jaws. No great mind escapes this realm without paying dearly for its riches; the fellow travelers perhaps recognize each other, but they also recognize what is weak, distorted, maladapted, clumsy, overgrown, sad and frightening from this awful place. Let's call it purgatory: So empty is it, so ghostly in its immaterial nature, we may also call it a spirit realm of thoughts in the half twilight of no purpose, no flesh. Let's call consideration one purgatory, consciousness, and, if I may add together several word ideas to convey one meaning, it is what the Catholics might call "Holy Spirit". (Or what the lazy and unimaginative Satanist would call the "Unholy Spirit".)

Consideration 2) Flesh.

Now we enter the world of matter, of space, of social relations, contingency, of joy, of sunsets and cold days, of sitting and standing and going to work to feed oneself. Everything social resides in this consideration: Others realize I have a body: I realize the placement and meanings of their bodies. All that the philosopher flees from on instinct or principle resides here. Titles, wealth, leadership, administration, adaptation, interrupting a meeting to request a window be opened, love affairs, and all manners of tangible manifestations of things and ideas dwell here. This consideration is outwardly the world, but without flesh as the vehicle and vessel there is no world and there is no adaptation to it. We are a prop and an actor in the backdrop of other realities, but we are also a participant in these realities. Unique to this realm of being is its silence, its forgetfulness, its instinct and its inability to debate on its own behalf. Just now, the mode of being which reflects and philosophizes about this consideration is actually our prior consideration, the consideration of consciousness. Indeed, all three considerations are only considerations for consciousness. Only in the breaking free and in the re-integration of conscious ideas with the constraints of flesh do we engage our second consideration. For those who do not think or who only remark poorly about their existence, this mode and this realm, which is flesh and the world, is the default arena. For this consideration we require no abstraction and no theorizing. This consideration must be engaged, adapted to, fought in and manifested. Whether or not the world has three dimensions or exists as an illusion are not games or strategies for this mode of being. No escape ever truly absolves mortal beings from this consideration. If one is clever and observant, one will come to respect the physiognomy and the many compulsions of flesh which upwardly affect the conscious state. Contrary to what religions state (whose motives only seek the purity above this realm in consciousness or the allure beneath this realm in the unconscious) the state of flesh needs and deserves the most human consideration and care. Nearly all vocations exist and aid this consideration. Human effort and human adaptation exists to further this consideration. If a human being does nothing at all but worship on the altar of this consideration they will not have done so in vain. The modes above and below this consideration shall no doubt be maintained by other beings who shall make a point to try and make you integrate some of their beliefs about life's other two main considerations. Sometimes those pleas will prove useful, and if so, you've acquired them without expenditure since the other beings were

eager to share them. Other times the pleas of others will hinder you, brain wash you or at worst, enslave you to a consideration which alienates you from the effortless intercourse with the world you otherwise might have achieved without their meddling. To review, this consideration, our second consideration, is the world, the flesh, the object, the society, the adaptation, the immanence and the forgetting of thought. If consideration one is the holy spirit, this consideration is the son, for it is incarnation, the body and the mortal within the triune God symbol of Catholicism. For the Satanist, it is the instinct and the urge to enjoy life over and against old dogma and tired creeds. It is the fleeing of all psychic vampires. It is the joy of giving oneself over to rituals and it is the weakness of losing oneself to cult devotion and nonsense.

Consideration 3) The Unconscious

Lastly, our third consideration is the unconscious. This consideration is by far the most puzzling, the most paradoxical and the most disturbing realm of being. Though Sartre spends eight hundred pages on our first consideration, he spends zero pages on this consideration. The acknowledgement of the unconscious undermines the entire project of existentialism, a cult not unlike anarchy, which seeks to flee from all modes of social or collective tyranny over the individual. The existentialist deems such forces cruel and coercive. The expression of liberty, freedom and the unique mental and sensual experience of the individual life is sought and cultivated against the forces that would otherwise undermine its assertion of being. Morally, there is a unique and sympathetic tinge to this type of emphasis. Superficially it is very liberating and enjoyable—to stand on ones own, as Heidegger puts it. The reason the existentialists feared the unconscious so ferociously probably had something to do with its concept seeming like a re-branded version of theological, mythical and collective authority standing in the way of the individual and his or her liberty. Acknowledgement of the unconscious undermines all of Sartre's efforts to demonstrate and enthrone humanism with its proper dignity. He must have already intuited what the acceptance of the unconscious would mean: a manifestation (among others) of human unfreedom. Sartre's *Modus Operandi* is Freedom with a capital F. He sees no means of existentially proving the unconscious, so therefore, it has no place in a philosophy of existence. He might have wagered, that if it in fact did exist, humanity would be ruled by it all the same, and debating it or acknowledging it wouldn't do him or humanity any

good—in this sense, he seems to have inverted Occam's Razor to favor existentialism and existence at the price of the unconscious.

In order to acknowledge the unconscious we must escape both the first consideration (consciousness) and the second consideration (flesh) in order to begin observing that which, strictly speaking, is neither flesh nor consciousness. We observe its invisible magnetism in very real, demonstrable, empirical ways. Beginning with the most logical way the unconscious asserts itself (a way perhaps Jung failed to emphasize), we must remark how those who have only a very poorly developed ability for problem solving and cognition consistently make creative associations for the sake of real world adaptation. Consider once more the humorous case study of the fluorescent green fingerless gloves. Already at age 7, children show themselves to be relentless inventors and problem solvers. To the child reality is already strange and mostly incomprehensible. Through the use of mimicry, mirroring substituting and reality testing they learn to use public rest rooms, ask for snacks, follow the rules of games and test their hand at fairness, discipline and rectitude...but all of this is done with very little conscious direction. They are aided by imagination and fantasy solutions. Every fantasy solution is an expression of the unconscious at work. Dreams, myths, symbols, automatic writing, image fixations, idols and even favorite songs are also expressions of the unconscious, but since their assertion is so much less effective for immediate adaptation I feel their emphasis ought to be reserved only for the most brilliant of minds within the discipline of psychological detective work. For the rest—for the scientists, evolutionary biologists and run-of-the-mill atheists, we must seek to offer our own evolutionary component to psychology. We must put a qualitative content into the nature of psychological adaptation, and that component is asserted when the developmental state of an organism cannot assimilate into consciousness the immediate demands of its environment. In this instance, since consciousness has proved unfit, the mind seeks to invent a new means of adapting. The means which I am working up to is very strange because its very functionality bridges the gap between reality and unreality. Before we build a bridge over a ravine we perhaps see a fallen tree over a small creek. Only fantasy thinking and free association can transform a single log into an entire bridge. What begins as fantasy thinking often proves itself as a means to objective, functional and innovated designs for the immediate integration with our environment—physical, social or otherwise. As our investigation deviates from one to one relationships (Tree into Bridge) our fantasy scenarios become convoluted at an exponential

rate. Because fantasy thinking is our means toward superceding and transforming consciousness itself, we are already at a great disadvantage in explaining, in terms of consciousness, that which by definition, *supplants it and reaches beyond it* for the sake of adaptation. As with all fantasy, the hope of a solution is not a solution. Often times, when the conscious ability is lacking, the fantasy we devise is in no way productive or functional to the adaptation required. Our sitcoms and Sunday comic strips are full of scenarios of children or foolish people attempting to use oven mitts as ball gloves and flower pots as helmets. The *ineffectiveness* of fantasy thinking is only half of its reality. The discovery of the double helix of our DNA sequence, the displacement of water in a tub, discovery of electricity and even the theory of evolution itself (Schopenhauer's World as Will and Presentation...and before that Shakespeare's character named APE-MAN-T-US long before Darwin and his cousin/wife!) all arose from fantasy thinking whose initial spark—a creative spark—came from the unconscious and was later incorporated into a hypothesis for the scientific method. *Every hypothesis is a form of fantasy thinking whose origin may or may not have arisen from empirical reason.* Even if I'm already a specialist in some discipline, say physics for instance, I may have in front of me nothing but equations, test data and mathematical proofs. I may still default to fantasy thinking in hopes of re-ordering or re-composing the data available to deduce or explain some yet unnamed phenomena. On the conscious level, the data is nothing but data. To the genius however, the same spread sheet of data may excite some new innovation untried and un-thought in his field. We already have ample proof of the scientific method, but mankind in general, and science especially, does not advance only by method and reason alone. Creativity is the source of human transformation and human invention. What nature does through random chance, mankind does much more quickly through speculation. Schopenhauer's definition of genius is a telling one. It all but proves the existence of the unconscious, because it so perfectly fits all of mankind's greatest discoveries, "Genius hits a target no one else can see." To be even more clear, we might add, genius hits a target even when it too is blindfolded, that is to say, when conscious reason is at an impasse.

Genius hits the mark blindfolded.

If the realm of adaptation and flesh is a world of efforts, then the unconscious is the ignition, the fuel, the millstone, the whip, and the redemption of its own dilemmas. The unconscious helps make known

to us what we are, where we have been, what we lack, and where we might go from here. All our shadow choices and unrealized potential is chained deep in the unconscious, not unlike the banished immortals, called Titans in Greek Mythology. Only the hallowed and divine Epirus Bow can release them—an archer with divine insight. Sartre has failed us. Not only must we integrate all the humanistic and liberating truths of existentialism, we must challenge it to go farther and to re-integrate with the collective and the demands of biological adaptation to our physical world...two forces which are cruel and coercive...but nature waits for no one. The unfit shall perish, or they shall suffer for their maladaptive traits—behavioral or otherwise. Sartre failed to see that even though the possibility exists for relying completely on consciousness and existence, humanity—in order to be human—still thinks and fantasizes in terms of symbols, religions myths, and free-association type problem solving. Too much stress or social burden placed on consciousness will cause neurosis to develop. Adaptation will cease. The functionality and the projects of the individual will suffer for it and eventually fail. Mental health demands the integration of the unconscious not the excommunication of it.

In like manner, the other leading existentialist, Albert Camus has failed us. We do not need a mortal archer to champion moderation or decency (as his book The Rebel concludes). What we need, if we are to integrate the most difficult and mysterious aspects of our humanity, is that blindfolded archer who can hit the mark his contemporaries discount; the divine archer who not only hits the mark against phantoms in this world, but phantoms utterly unseen in any world.

We call our third consideration the unconscious, but we may also call it innovation, invention, hypothesis, fantasy thinking, dreams, myth, autism and the synchronous manifestation or coming together of people, events, and meanings which take on a private value for our personal biography as well as lead the way toward social and scientifically objective problem solving. To finally complete our Catholic metaphor, this third consideration is the Father. Our triune God symbol is The Unconscious, The Flesh, and The Conscious—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. More often however, the unconscious takes the form of the primordial mother in mythology. Mother Chaos from which nearly all cosmology myths take their origin. It is the tree of life and the mysterious sea of the depths within mankind. If we mean to call ourselves Argonauts and explorers, the unconscious within

us is the final frontier. (Popular science fiction is *nothing but* this exploration, with of course, technology as its scapegoat).

With balanced respect and awareness for these three modes of being we aim to maintain our health. If any of these three modes of existence should grow tumorous or atrophy too small then we shall suffer in thought, in body or in psyche. A rigorous philosophy of life is not necessary; indeed, such individuality and diversifying of urges and priorities are already the task of psyche, consciousness and flesh. It's not for any man to decide or work out in detail the recipe and real proportions of these phenomena for any other being. What we can however state positively, is the acknowledgement of the touchy and delicate juggling act required for keeping these three phenomena functioning. If one or more of these facets of life ceases to function it could mean death for the organism.

In my previous book, I stated the following metaphor regarding those with a penchant for dominating (science): "You may suffer a wound like Achilles, and from your lowest artery, lose the greatest quantity of blood." If we only keep in view the functional aspects of mind and body, with total disregard for the integration and adaptive functionality of the unconscious, we may lose all our treasures from the other two disciplines. We scientists and rationalists are socially the weakest beings and the most susceptible to symbols, seductions, and errant political agendas. Our military leaders are even more function and discipline oriented than our scientists—too much reliance on strict routine, order, rank and law risks psychological backsliding apt to automatic lunges of mythical or ritualistic fanaticism. What are we to make of their Achilles wounds, if flags, patriotism, and collective (unconscious) assaults should fell their prideful ambitions. David's pebble ended the tyranny of Goliath and an entire war was averted because of a creative wager—the means of that wager is the unconscious.

Wisdom prompts us to leave the contents and the subjectivity of our three human dimensions to the humans themselves. A task which for them shall prove existentially crucial to the unique flowering of their myriad lives. All we offer is a counsel for the edification of mental health and a brief schema (it could be no briefer!) for organizing one's efforts. We've only worked out these considerations because no one worked them out for us during the formative years of our life when they would have proved most useful. All we can do now, with these

considerations, is work on repairing our omissions and healing our various psychological damages.

Day

This is unique: *I'm willing to go further than anyone else in proving the existence of the unconscious...not for the sake of any particular world view...but rather...for the sadistic intolerance of the unconscious I cannot be rid of!*

With my skill for self marketing and bluffing, why would I have chosen such a dead end, no profit idea, if I were not still held from the throat by an unseen hand?

Day

This is an exercise in ego inertia: a labored clinging to sanity as if that person clinging dearly were not myself?

What if this is really an effort against poetry and impeding poetry for the sake of the whole being? Loss if upheld. Loss if vanquished.

Day

Even in our own day, the inter-marriage of persons from different economic spheres is discouraged with the adage: "You'll be happiest marrying in your own class."

On the surface, that seems both less threatening than the strictly aristocratic sentiments of old, but also, suspiciously identical to the logic against inter-religious or inter-racial marriages.

What if, in eliminating the social, religious, tribal, and racist notions against inter-marriage (or coupling) there remains a validity in the old aristocratic sentiment? (Schopenhauer even speculated that personality was in some sense inherited...) What if the purpose of those aristocratic notions was really a sorting of psychological types, which, in essence really is social breeding, regardless of ethnicity or religion.

And what if there are also spiritual and imaginative character types which, although genetically free and random, are statistically weighted based on their chromosomes? Say a poor man gives birth to a saint, a king or a general; or even, the self-made man, as the tired Americanism has it. We all know this is possible, but isn't it the exception and not the rule? (A popular publication a decade ago claimed that the rich encourage different values in their children than the poor. Do they really? Or are the rich just demonstrating how intelligent minds solve problems? The rich instill more creative values because not only is creativity more expensive, it yields more freedom, more mobility, and more potential for gains in the long run. An already subservient family unit instills subservient values even when it verbally counsels otherwise...hasn't anyone ever bothered to mention that some of the poor and dumb ought to stay poor and dumb because they actually are of a very low human aptitude? Would it really be too frightening to mention they were born that way?) Aside from the intellectual and economic aspects of this socially taboo issue, what if one's lack of success in love should also have something to do with the disjunction of one's inner temperament with the social sphere they happen to navigate? Working class girls probably have no barometer assessing the strange attitudes and postures of a rich man dressed in ordinary clothes; his approaches seem too absurd! I'd like to think I'm a prince from the gutter. Often I'll muse to myself, "Where is my priestess?"

Perhaps she's on a street corner even now, imagining she is one...

Day

Other psychologists shall persist in case studies, surveys and statistics. Steeped always in the rigors of empirical method and provable proofs they will never equal, defeat, or in any fashion gain ground upon those minds whose exemplarily health and personal development have reached observations and striking critiques of literature, poetry and historical events. Even in their errors, the balanced minds shall always be closer to life's vitality than the men of science. If you look closer, we too have our own constraints and our own inner tolerances that may as well be rules even though they are only dictates of taste. Better to eventually become an interesting specimen of humanity than to endlessly quote research papers from the last quarter century with such distracting and alarming frequency that style is utterly abandoned. When will the men of science learn that no

one cares at all for the name or the year of a brilliant thought! My works are un-citable in the bibliographic sense, therefore my best jewels of energy will never intermingle with the lopsided and fact heavy publications no one reads. Add to that the Satanic fact that I and a few others who follow me shall be reading your papers, your medical journals, your diagnostical manuals and your research notes so that we might humanize them, re-imagine them and intuit new directions out of their composite clutter and publication dates. We will most certainly make them uniquely our own without apology or citation. If I steal from an artist, I'll give him credit and put the passage in quotes. If I steal from a scientist, I'll creatively camouflage it and count my money as I dance on his quarter century grave.

Day

In a world of archive fever, search engine madness and wiki-media truncation, the unshrinkable, unclassifiable, non-chronological mischief of originality shall be a healthy reprieve from an unhealthy world. I don't want to be searched. I don't want to be quoted. I don't want to help humanity. I only want to be a death pillow for the weary, a beacon of false hope for the aspiring and a wild thorn in all the horses who have become complacent.

Day

I irrevocably condemn and refute the truth of atheism on the grounds that it has not yet even acknowledged me or begun forming an argument: the impoliteness of reason: its lack of poetry.

Day

I'll never forgive the stoics and cynics for not becoming poets!

Lucky for us, they've slowly become a metaphor, unconsciously having lived, *poetically*.

Day

Time to begin creating with no trump suits. None of the four psychological adaptations should be allowed an invincible status or a inferior status. Now that I've said it, I'm still three fourths of the failure I was before thinking it.

Does Jung ever ask himself what it really means to "write" books on psychology? Does he ever realize that communicating a system is already a highly differentiated act, already biased and inaccessible to a majority of dissimilar types? We can damn a man of ideas with more ideas or even stretch him out on the rack of his unrealized potential, but how can a book be of any benefit to the other types? Our answer must be a semi-religious one: The guru transmits the Dharma, else it is lost. He conveys it to each by knowing their mode of reception. The superior man has an inferior root. The greatest psychologist was once the most useless human being. How can he fail to sympathize? His journey was the longest: Let that be both his grace and his flaw: at every moment he's either in a place of understanding or a place of accidental contempt...All because his journey was the longest. The writer is the least adapted being, but not necessarily the most unhealthy.

Day

Adaptation is indeed necessary...true...but necessary for what and for when?

Our answer:

For Now. For Never.

Part XII
Nietzsche and Pessoa

Day

If in the end, philosophy accomplishes nothing but involution, atrophy and inactivity, that ought to be exactly what philosophers show us a picture of.

Day

Lately, the most exciting discovery has been how perfectly the unconscious asserts itself, for example, I was reading an essay by Sabina Spielrein entitled Destruction as the cause of coming into Being, and meanwhile I was able to link her descriptions with very odd and neurotic passages of my own written several years ago. I do not have a photographic memory, but of the 4,000 or so pages I've written so far, I have a surprising ability to recall specific instances so long as the new material at hand uses a similar form of analogy with a similar feeling-toned idea. Concepts like a seed, a bridge missing, an autonomous voice of no origin, a controlling urge, a secret enemy etc. etc. are potent symbols, especially when they arise spontaneously in ignorance and then are later found somewhere in a lengthy dissertation with a very clear meaning value and psychological dynamic attached to them which helps to explain my former need to accomplish those similar symbols. The symbol of the "seed" is ultra common, but used in the context of how I used it in the unpublished work The Loudest Death, in its last paragraph, is far too sinister to be mere coincidence in conjunction with Sabina's essay, which I only discovered four years later. The reference to the seed in my own book was of a splitting apart and a destructive nature...a theme not usually associated with a seed. Later, In Sabina's essay, mentioned above, she used the idea of a sperm as a destructive invasion akin to a virus which reconfigures being just like I described in my climactic ending paragraph to The Loudest Death.

Aside from Proust and Rousseau, I can think of very few writers whose naivety and fecundity are so perfectly suited for use as psychological case study. Even Schopenhauer paints a wonderful self-neurosis in his collected essays (especially the manner in which he systematically describes all things that run contrary to his temperament while trying to create a universal philosophical virtue instead of a psychological caricature of the type of man he is: A genius of total irony!)

Let's always go right for the man instead of the thoughts. It doesn't diminish him that we do so. Philosophy aside, what we're doing in hindsight is completing destinies and putting old ghosts to rest.

Day

Humiliating flaw of Sartre's existentialism: He creates a philosophy within the mind which analyzes and greatly emphasizes the experiential and individual character of being alive and respecting the foundational author of one's own values, but yet fails to make the most crucial psychological step: Existentialism arrives at the problem of a disintegrated highly developed, ultra-sensitive thinking and lucid mind yet it does not solve the problem of integration, nor can it even allow itself to speak regarding the problem. Before even one line of existential philosophy was written, the existentialists (and those whose thoughts mimicked them) were already retreating into themselves and working out inward means of adaptation. Without knowing why, all of these minds unconsciously began obsessing over existence. Existence as a theme was already a clue leading to a healthy solution, but no one could see it. Existential philosophy, going all the way back to Ecclesiastes, makes existence superfluous vanity and vexation of spirit. We're given an "existence only" philosophy that never really troubles much about the value of existing existence. Sure, it tells us how to analyze existence, how to break it apart, internalize it, make private values and commitments but this is all smoke and distraction from the meta-existential task of adaptation and integration. The why and the how seem "as if" they should come from us and our lauded personal value systems: therein lies the most frightening error. One cannot *think* and *be* simultaneously. Our actual task goes beyond thought and neurotic self-analysis. Our actual task is a mythological, semi-autistic, self-integrating and world-izing of both consciousness and fantasy. It is a task of inner listening and submission just as much as it is a conscious sculpting and choosing. One without the other is already neurosis and atrophy. The reason existentialism inaugurated an aborted birth in terms of a life system has to do with its inability to give reliable counsel. If you tell your disciples "*only you create values, only the values you create have merit*" then the observer cannot make an observation objectively on your behalf because every outsider statement risks being negated by the little prince of consciousness who may wish to continue seeing life in the private, self-absorbed, retreating manner it already pines for, even before it heard of Sartre or any of his

nonsense. Armed with the impervious armor of self, each existential thinker risks spurning the helpful counsel which might interrupt the cycle of anguish and futility of self-inflated analysis. While we must applaud the intense degree of inner adaptation being done by such philosophies, their result always leave the individual in some way stranded on an island of purposeless disintegration and anguish. If there are existential thinkers who have gotten beyond this sticking point, it is not thanks to existentialism, which rightly seen, is an alienating force which inflates the ability to think without demanding the corollary exertion of being. Even thought over how to *be* is another disjunction and a sin against continuity. A life free from hesitation, discontent and anxiety should be the goal of mental health. We artistically explore all other modes of being at our peril. We may even pursue such disequilibrium in a joyful and lucid manner, with an inner contentment of self all the while. Not self-satisfied, but self-aware and developing.

Day

In the heteronyms and semi-heteronyms of Pessoa, fabrications are difficult to detect because even when he lies outright or creates feeling for his characters, they have all the same coherency of the characters of a novel even when the novel is absent or their biographies are hurriedly sketched. The reason for this must stem from the continuity of *how* Pessoa chooses to lie, you see, with your average lie, one wants a specific outcome and therefore begins by altering only one thing at first, and then, if new contingencies should arise, keeps adding to or revising that first lie in order to maintain or arrive at the desired outcome (*lying is pragmatism in action*). When a novelist needs his plot to move, connect or conclude in a certain manner he's tempted to bend the rules of fate and psychology or even suspend them altogether. Meanwhile, Pessoa is never ruled in any way by plot—his characters don't exist one. For Pessoa, even if a poor or unrealistic decision is made regarding the psychological motivations of a character, the fabrication flows out of the same mood and sensibility which creates the character's entire gamut of sensations. A novelist pulling the same trick also puts himself in the continuity of his fabricated avatars, but with the glaring exception that his logical mind may demand a concrete fact our intuitions abhor as regards the actual course of human observation. So long as Pessoa's characters never act, all their ways of rationalizing their sentiments seem totally agreeable and realistic

(likely because it comes from a comparison with Pessoa's own psyche, even when its contents radically opposes the intensity of how he usually assesses and reacts to the world. Often we feel he is straining himself *against* his usual modes of being in order to combat his obvious lucidity of them.) Pessoa's form of lying is both pathological and detached; sustained and frivolous. The laziness to which he lets himself creep in and out of his creations, and the care with which he annihilates whatever trace he finds distasteful in the formulaic formula of the non-formula (the discipleship of the fluid unconscious). We are made to agree sympathetically, even with things which seem impossible, because just as much care is paid to syntax of feeling as syntax of grammar, which Pessoa also loves. Pessoa even comes within inches of un-making Bernardo Soares when he has the bookkeeper mention the expedience of choosing a bookkeeper as a device for shaping the feelings he intends.

His contempt is so great and his satisfaction is so secured that he even goes so far as to give a master class on the merits of lying. (p.226 Penguin Classics Edition, English language version.) He informs us that communication serves a social function while the actual emotions which prompt him to write are either impossible for him to understand or impossible for the reader to understand in the way he feels them, so, instead of stretching a metaphor he goes a step farther and just re-imagines a more collectively palatable scene (See Sabina Spielrein's work, Destruction as the Cause of Coming into Being, for another example of "dissolving and de-differentiating" for the sake of communication or seduction.) lending itself to more concrete imagery so in effect the reader is allowed to arrive at what Pessoa's character (and by proxy Pessoa as well) felt while hearing the situation described in a more social and picture oriented way. In many ways, Pessoa allows himself to supply the missing link by falling into a visual and symbolic daydream of the mood at hand, and then, as an oracle in the true sense of the word, he communicates the unconscious rather than the rational elements of the situation before us (which, we psychologists know to be more dynamic and instructive than a journalistic report could ever be.) Add to this our suspicion that Pessoa would like us to believe he is lying much more often than he actually is because his narration is plunging even closer to the uncomfortable monsters of his psyche than he realizes. Once opened, the harness of the unconscious horse pulls him along until he no longer has the will to pull back with an equal force of pretence because his indolence thoroughly rules him. What's to hide? What's the use? Let's read the

intensity of his acquiescence as a barometer for storms of unnatural origin. (Rousseau titles his book, Confessions, then uses three hundred pages of childhood biography as an excuse to tell us about a bit of ribbon he stole from a sewing kit.) Meanwhile, Pessoa is already on the edge of his own humiliating abyss at every moment. Where Rousseau is anxiety prone and fumbling, Pessoa is indifferent, frighteningly self-aware. His indolence is both joyful and ironic. His mischief is a sign of health (play) which brings with it a dauntless tide of illuminating gestures from out of the unconscious. Once the creator comes into view, it's amazing how well even the prose of terrible writers takes shape coherently and symbolically to an inner logic even the best magician couldn't execute. Somehow, Pessoa must know this as well, or have diagnosed it in himself long ago. Though he lies and fabricates, his respect for the tongueless magician within temps him to let go the reins as often as possible so impressions and images might come together more autistically and esoterically. If Pessoa accomplishes all this in the way I've described it, we must also realize Pessoa's true contempt isn't for the social reader or for truth, but for the game of reason and identity itself (ego) which keeps being humiliated by his close intercourse with his own unconscious, which must have often possessed him automatically during bouts of melancholy and catatonic indifference. Unique in Pessoa is the ultra rationalist clarity blended and cohabitating in the same mind as a deeply intuitive sensibility, not at war with each other, but dancing smoothly in mischief against each other. Not self-negation, *self-propulsion!*

Day

Poetry moving towards thought instead of thinking myself into a morass of vague lyricism.

I'm Nietzsche in a mirror turned Bazzaro; Zarathustra without the mysticism!

I owe him everything, for my abundance of health.

Day

Nietzsche's Will to Power, is not the recommendation of a philosophical system, which could consciously be chosen or not chosen; It's really a sarcastic yet innocent metaphor demonstrating the unlimited psychological pull of the unconscious self we already possess.

If I'm the first to say it, I'll hate humanity even more.

Day

Read Nietzsche's last line, along with the rhyming line he omitted at the last second:

"The world is will to power and nothing more.
If I'm the first to say it,
I'll hate humanity even more!"

Day

Some of my favorite passages of Nietzsche are the ones where he is speaking his gospel to the chosen *ubermensch*. The sheer religiosity is intoxicating; it has about the same affect as the New Testament had on early Christian martyrs. Something akin to reading the book of revelations and speculating about the identity of the Anti-Christ—and even the most respected authors have indulged in that notion: Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Shakespeare, Pynchon, Camus, Kierkegaard, Cioran, Melville, (Germany) and others.

Day

Both atheism and nihilism are a journey, but the gap between them is like comparing a trip to the grocery store with a trip to Jupiter. If you're not completely and utterly incapacitated by this notion, you haven't explored Jupiter yet. (Pay close attention to planetary sized storms.)

Day

Let's use a pop music metaphor to explain the philosophy career we have in mind:

It wouldn't be difficult to become the Curt Kobain of philosophy...but I'd rather become the Shin'ichi Suzuki of philosophy instead. The one, as we all know, was a bright star who burned out quickly and brightly. Meanwhile, no one but 6-12 year old violin players care who Shin'ichi Suzuki is...but I find it admirable that a man who practiced violin 8 hours a day into his 80's was also a man who composed variations on Twinkle Twinkle Little Star so children could play them.

Day

O Sole Mio! I'm going to look just as foolish as the other great pillars of thought once the rabble have assimilated whatever originality I once possessed! I had better pay attention to grammar and punctuation: at least those adornments never fade: What I want most is another sun, brighter still than I could dream.

If only Descartes, Kant or Sartre had said that, I might still love them!

Day

For those who think they sound intelligent when claiming to be atheists: I'd rather hear about your favorite flavor of pudding. At least that question requires a moment of silence and an original idea.

Day

My accidental complaints against the philosophers and psychologists who have inspired me and led me to this moment are vital to what I am. With intuition I forge ahead flawlessly, for my accidental choices, even in the format and style of composition are an improvement on what I found lacking (missing) in others. I have no patience. I go forward heedless of vocabulary or choices of proportion. With more work, I could have written all this more beautifully or more in the scholarly style...but I'm better than that! Only two of Nietzsche's books are written in that vein, Birth of Tragedy and Genealogy of Morals—only these books deserve a place in the lecture halls of stifling academia. Meanwhile, his greatest works thrash right to the heart of self. The aphoristic style of his Gay Science reminds one of Pascal's Penses. The confessions of saints, read un-religiously are a glimpse into the best observations we possess on the fine details of the human psyche. Up until Nietzsche, philosophy made the mistake of putting the argument ahead of the man composing it. Now we know that the man is everything and his supposed lucidity, his supposed values and his supposed visions which he is capable of articulating count for nothing. (A specimen is more valuable than a discourse!) The scholarly effort cites sources, models itself after its masters, makes only small un-daring steps; it only succeeds in inching along the ground because intuition is choked up in the many restraints of conventionality and social taste. (Not to mention all the unbelievably misguided, pedantic papers being written with perfect citations who any beer hall psychologist could see have a meaning not at all in harmony with what the scholar wanted, and worse, proving very strangely and through backwards means, not at all what the scholar wanted to realize about himself, even though he happened to receive a passing grade and wonderfully alphabetize his bibliography and compile his notes diligently!) To completely lose the source of vital creation is to open the flood-gates to fantasy and unconscious tempests. Polite essays and good literature cannot do what Ecco Homo does, nor does it even begin to comprehend why it is being done or what is being demonstrated.

Allow me to be very specific and clear for a moment: my style is more entangled, revealing and thematic than the style of disjunct aphorism; my suffering, my innocence and my vast sense of humor are each treated with delicate, unflinching reverence; my stasis and problematic fate are both ridiculed and made a virtue; My diary could be that of any psychologist or poet because it seeks to reveal what is in

between creation and lucidity, making the fruits of genius less important than the currents beneath and before genius. I'm a recipe for the un-mystification of legends. Needing to pose and posture and act, I do so. Needing to reflect clearly or violently, I do so. Whatever the psychology textbook lacks in passionate example, I supply the remedy. I counsel the middle way of nullified extremes: monomaniac humility.

Through the intense intimacy of these passages, the reader is given a greater sense of adventure—anything could happen. We have no idea what is next. If we had distanced ourselves from our reflections a bit more we might have created a better treatise, but only at the cost of vitality, surprise, sympathy and anxiety which, since they are instantaneous affects of the absolutely momentary in thought, cannot ever seem present in a work possessing a sound thesis and a sound conclusion. Reading Sartre or Heidegger, I appreciated the hypnotic affects and the sheer stress of having to endure them. I realized their verbosity in no way enhanced the mood of what they were writing. I've forgotten most of what they've said, but I have not forgotten my own splendid experience encountering them and contending with them as adversaries. ("Why adversaries?" complains the schoolmarm who wishes to let all live and let live without self-transformation, hoping to endure decades and decades as she is, without ever knowing the joys of seeking her own violent dissolution and re-assembly at every breath!)

Reading Pessoa, I desperately wanted a synthesis or a conclusion, but since Pessoa opted to explore only one dimension of himself through Bernardo Soares—his semi-heteronym—he never risked any dire crisis of psyche. He obviously exceeds me everywhere in his aptitude for poetic prose and description, but he has also used his ability to split his identity into many, in order to safely explore each with a somewhat diminished intensity and a certain ironic distance that insures mental health while also cooling off the pressures of each. (A prudent choice, and admirable.) Pessoa does love his creations. He puts a tender doting and warmth in even his most Nihilistic passages. Even if he dissolves himself or destroys himself, he wishes for his works to stay intact...yet there is a problem. He keeps writing loose leaf entries and throwing them into the wardrobe chest to be rid of them...in a sense he throws them back to the unconscious again and again while trying to pretend they are the writings of the fictitious Bernardo and not himself. The work he slowly creates feels intact, yet it cannot conclude, it cannot finish and it most certainly cannot transform the man to the extent the work itself is begging for. Pessoa

would consciously eliminate himself for the sake of his creation but this is not a transformation but an outright refusal to mend both Bernardo the fiction and Pessoa the man. The work reminds us of Gogol's trouble with finishing Dead Souls. In both cases, the work itself was haunted. Its author could not bring himself to integrate it fully or bring completely to consciousness the symbols and problems arising from the creative act. Especially with Gogol, there is an unwillingness to admit consciously what the work is telling him. The world-vision of both books are too horrifying to digest. They are so perfect and so destructive neither man survives the transformation attempted. Either one of them could have succeeded, but their tragedy in not doing so, is an enduring atrocity literature will have to keep enduring and remembering every time a writer takes on a psychological task he cannot complete, or a vision too large to confine. Both books, Gogol's Dead Souls and Pessoa's Book of Disquiet fit Gogol's image of the runaway carriage (Troika) pulled by unconscious horses, no doubt bolting straight for hell itself. Compositionally flawless, Pessoa accomplished the task he set out to, with the exact emphasis he set out to, but his tragedy was his unwillingness to take up the challenge beyond his goals and beyond his predicted responsibilities...he failed to heed the voice of the phantom; he never granted the phantom the resolution the phantom was begging for.

Writing anonymously allows me to enact the opposite of Pessoa—I'm allowed to freely over exaggerate some of my desires and fantasies while also taking up moments of extreme honesty and self-crisis without caring to spend much additional energy fabricating or trying to match Pessoa's untouchable descriptive prose. I have admittedly aimed lower...but yet deeper. This book marks only the beginning of the first hints of my eventual esoteric and occult phase. Between this book and the first book, I'll have already surpassed Pessoa's output in The Book of Disquiet. Five books later, perhaps I will aim for more lush landscapes and dense prose, but if I do so, it will come about gradually and only auxiliary to my more important calling. Because I present myself and not merely a heteronym of a severed self, I'm able to progress thematically with total focus, unchecked by any wish to restrain or venture mildly or "part-ways" into some singular character which at times wants to aggressively assert itself.

The interesting thing about Pessoa's Bernardo is his ability to expound naive poetry and sentimental reflection both. Such a synthesis is nearly impossible in any one being. Bernardo becomes both objects

near to him and also splits apart from his poetic eyes and reflects upon what he is. Shakespeare's Hamlet is not interesting because he is a philosopher but because he is the fictional creation of an author who is naive and object oriented. Shakespeare creates a microcosmic opposite of himself in the character of Hamlet, who is in fact a somewhat stilted and affected version of a philosopher whose defects come from the opposing type of man who must have found a great difficulty in drafting him. Don't misunderstand, we who are like Hamlet would have no trouble drafting him, but Shakespeare in this case is creating a dissimilar psychology while creating a home for his *very similar* mental state. Only later, with Shakespeare's Timon of Athens (which he refuses to title a tragedy) does Shakespeare complete what is left unfinished in Hamlet by connecting the perfect misanthrope with the gracious philanthropist in a balanced and believable way.

Returning to Pessoa, in the Book of Disquiet, in one of Bernardo's most revealing passages, we hear Pessoa confessing his expediency in lying. He claims that it is much easier to fabricate a scenario which will result in bringing us to his emotional state of being than to actually bother trying to explain his mood or disposition, which, in all likelihood would not bring us anywhere at all emotionally. Pessoa wants to confess himself, but he instead withdraws at the decisive moment in order to inflict wounds rather than to heal them—disquiet anguish in the mood of a habitual liar. Pessoa's high standards for stylistic display are agonizing to uphold...he simply cannot create fast enough at that level, and as a result, the real work that needs to be done, and the real spirit vaults being opened up in himself are accelerating while he is straining to hold back and write pretty sentences. Only Pessoa the philosopher seems to feel any relief of that burden of ghosts, but even his philosophy is only part ways and spotty, because he refuses to sermonize and make conscious the ramifications of what his poetically philosophical declarations mean for psychology in general, not to mention his own...again, we are being ultra critical because the answers were all on the tip of this man's tongue but he kept refusing to incant them. Phrases like, "Every instance of sincerity belies an intolerance" easily means a treatise of forty pages...yet he refuses to give us any more than the leash to a monster we cannot make out clearly in the dark. Pessoa obviously deemed the sermon and the discourse an error of taste...and it likely is...but the danger in not working out that idea might actually prevent a man from being able to go on living. A shoddy essay that brings fresh air to the heart is no less important than keeping oneself hydrated and finding a good night's

sleep. If a writer doesn't want to mar taste, then perhaps he ought to keep some of his shoddy writings to himself, no matter how necessary they are for his soul...but to do the opposite, as Pessoa no doubt sometimes did, to write a phrase like, "every form of sincerity belies an intolerance" and then to throw it back into the dark chest—back into the unconscious depository of unlived things—is also to have loosed all the hell hounds and phantoms that go with the haunting idea one is not willing to go the distance with.

Bernardo is consistent in what he is and what he symbolizes—which means a great deal—but that creation must have come at the price of Pessoa's own stagnation and horror.

Of my few and many idols, Pessoa is the one I must improve upon by being less artful and less beautiful. Someday I hope to grant myself license to aspire towards his gifts, but for now I only aspire to undo his mistakes.

Keeping in mind what I have taken from Jung, Nietzsche, Proust, Sartre, Heidegger, Rousseau, and Pessoa, one might look for the ways in which I have departed from them in terms of style and direction in order to assert a vision which values them all as well as escapes them and their sticking points. Somehow, I have accidentally stumbled upon my present mode of creation, which only now, in my second book do I begin to see the advantages of. My small nuances of emphasis and tone may only register to a very small minority of readers, but in my own way, I feel that I've found the path I was meant to travel.

Day

"...Unlived things."

Following the example leading to Pessoa's greatest suffering—the repression of prophetic ideas—one can quickly make a new formula for humanity surpassing prose: *If you speculate, you'll mar them, but if you chain them up once more within you, not only will you have done some of the work required in becoming an oracle, you'll have given yourself an oracle whose necessity may have already demanded your life. Now you have to choose: your life or your art?*

In Keeping with my misanthropy and my caustic assault on human authorship in general, I kindly offer my advice: *Stop choosing life.*

Day

Pessoa is the Apollonian dreamer who prompts me to rebel against him with frenzied Dionysian passion. With the distance of the heteronym, Pessoa can contemplate his creation without becoming it. Meanwhile, tending toward my own opposite, I pour my energies into merging with the naive poet who utterly becomes his creation. If I cannot escape the contemplative aspect of self, at least I have allowed the creative energies to fully possess me and rule me as if I finally were nature herself. The megalomaniac virtue is striving to lose all individuality through discharge and repose. No passages are allowed voice beyond that of explosion or an eruption from below. We try not to permit anything but the spontaneous, and by this backhanded constraint, we closer approximate what it must be like to live as the naive poet rather than the sentimental one; as the realist rather than the idealist. The reflective nature is straining to reach the unblemished phenomena itself, with no intermediary. *Kill the muse and become the song!*

Day

Is not the scholarly attitude also the knowledge-loving aesthetic attitude which becomes domineering and intolerant the moment its own identity is implicated in the nature of the problem itself? (Echo once more Pessoa's "*Every instance of sincerity is an intolerance*") Only the man chained to the horses of sincerity and insincerity may extend his limbs in two directions...but of course...that would demand the threat of being torn in half.

Isn't the scholarly crusade always the urge to stay aloof from the problem—offering no lambs of weakness or charity on one's personal behalf because it both fears becoming religious (which would mean enslaved)—while attempting to maintain the aesthetic surrogate "Knowledge" in place of 'Being'? (While in all cases, the ontological wager proves infinitely more demanding than keeping up classroom appearances.)

Morality is an *intolerant aesthetic*.

Knowledge is an *intolerant aesthetic*.

Art already ventures beyond knowledge. It risks identity in hopes of transformation. Knowledge would prove a poor reward for the taxing demands of creation. Not only is something more than knowledge being wagered, something more is also being gained. To remain the critic and the commentator without ever becoming the prisoner or the martyr is the true and noble fate of the scholar—whom no one mourns and no one celebrates.

Day

Academia is a social playground for social types. The academic disciple seeks knowledge because knowledge is rooted in provable facts which in turn are rooted in objects and contingent, observable details of life. Nothing at all seems missing or lamentable in those observations—the type that feels content in these statements rests easy and will discover nothing alarming in them. Meanwhile, there exists another type for whom facts are not enough, social relations are not enough, and for which knowledge takes on a negating and nihilistic character in comparison to the expansive and fluctuating complexity of the theoretical and dynamic relationships at work beneath the stable foundations of what the collective acknowledges and uses.

It's nearly as strange to encounter this type of person as it is to "Be" this type of person. This entire book risks degenerating into nothing but a chronicle of such a man, but since I hold this type with as much love as contempt, hopefully I'll be able to offer equal appeal to those against him and those for him. One is curious that such strange beings exist. One is also curious to discover his own mind is strange.

Day

I cannot see multi-lingual authors like Nietzsche or Jung as the model of future generations. Painstaking mythological and religious observations are near their end. In their future lack of pluralism, I see

humanity becoming less and less human thereby, and, as a result, perhaps life shall one day be less of a burden.

Day

Someone ought to remind psychologists that their books have a tragically small efficacy on the world. A baked sale or a city counsel meeting might have proved more useful or contagious.

Day

Another complaint against psychology—

The fortress of the intellect is blown over by the slightest gust of passion or bodily sensation. Faith is only slightly more tenacious than intellect because it is more rooted in the irrational and the unconscious to begin with. One almost wonders if there might be some advantage to be had in re-absorbing the great insights of intellect into collective symbols and poetry once more in order to grant them some sustaining dynamism or preservative effect in the same way we cure meats with dehydration or fruits by canning. Without this vital relation stored, the intellect risks continuous involution and learning without change in temperament or behavior. Worse than stasis, is the act of busy activity spent in learning or thinking *without remembering and applying*. Worse than stasis, one sometimes awakes in the morning to find his head empty of ideas no matter how much reading he forced upon his poor brain the day before. One also recalls Nietzsche's caution against reading too early in the day or too often in general. One risks reading himself stupid, which is to say, his passions dry up and are transformed into catatonic moods followed by lack of activity eventually leading to one's losing the desire to read in the first place.

If we should awake empty headed or in a miserable mood, bereft of those ideas we so eagerly digested the night before, then we should take this as a warning: We must be unbalancing ourselves or neglecting something outside of our intellect. Poetry might be a way to re-affirm our learning, but it might also lead to further stagnation and indolence.

(If only someone could alternate poetry with intellect, so as to confuse and blend them until their separate and alien power should

unite...a creator striving constantly in the interest of maintaining the cliff hanging vitality of both...only that being could maintain the nightmare pace of an expendable horse without collapsing.)

One does not complain about what psychology offers (for its fields are beautiful!) one recoils rather, at what it means to orient oneself by it: With our noses buried in a colorful map, (the exciting map!) we have lost the terrain once more. At some point, practicing Zen means we must stop teaching and discussing Zen. Repetitive discussion of the way that can be named is our best means of putting off our actual travels. Psychology, especially its books, are but a narrow slice of human experience because reading a book or discussing an idea abstractly, are still relatively limited human functions...not that books are bad, but rather, far too many beings are incapable of assimilating anything having to do with them! And those who are diligent readers are only widening the cleft between themselves and the un-readers...positive, productive, goal directed reading is still a means to alienation; the fact that we've called it positive effort only means we've ascribed a negating value toward everything else.

One wishes psychology had koans or breathing exercises or holy temples to visit; if only it had hallowed robes to admire, plays to witness, haunted chapels to explore, wise men to climb to, drunken poets to sing with, whorey women to retreat with, lovely children to play with, ice cream socials to gather at and sacred daggers to sacrifice with, but alas, naked life is always richer yet than its fabrications...

Day

When you become fully engrossed in whatever it is you're doing, remember it's always ok to stop and eat a baked potato.

If I want to mention Caesar, I'll mention Caesar. If I want to mention a baked potato, I'll mention a baked potato, but I will not however, interrupt a baked potato to mention Caesar.

Day

If I want to improve an idea, I'll retreat and give the reader space to think about it.

Day

I see no advancement in philosophy if it continues to push its ultra-abstractionist agenda in ignorance of its having done so.

With the simplicity of baked potatoes, city counsel meetings and color crayons, my cult will outlast Plato.

Day

Public debate is not only too stupid to take seriously, it's also too stupid to comment on in any way other than comedically.

Day

In every room there's an alarm clock with a snooze button, and it only takes a few sleepy people to give the impression you're waking up in a mine field.

Day

Writing a doctoral paper means using a giant hammer to pulverize a mouse beyond recognition. It means having one original idea and a hundred thirty pages of evidence written by someone else. If that weren't enough, it means having two professors looking over your shoulder the whole time and a committee of experts begging for you to include a few of their ideas as well.

Day

The criticism "you are too philosophical" or "I dislike how philosophical this argument is", only applies to a philosophy done poorly or incompletely. If I said to a mathematician, "You've used too much math on that problem" my criticism is only valid if a) he's failed to complete the problem after exhausting an entire whiteboard with theorems, or b) if he has applied so many theorems he has begun contradicting his ability in advance.

Math assumes from the outset its ability to arrive at a solution, so the first example above is never actually a valid criticism against philosophy, which seeks lucidity not finality.

What the above criticism actually means is, "You are too philosophical and clear sighted in your own train of thought for my thinking ability to verify or make comprehensible" (Sartre and Badiou risk this criticism even when they are without blemish in their manner of speaking...but still worse for us who read them, these giants actually do commit errors or misunderstandings within their own convoluted systems, whose intricacy is already imperiled by its over-complexity.) Upon hearing the complaint of "too much", the philosopher feels he has accidentally composed well metered poetry using words outside the listeners vocabulary (which is often the complaint against Shakespeare, the man who is "too poetic".)

Clear thought is a work of art and style of its own. The works within philosophy, when done well are never criticized for being "too philosophical". I long to imagine the opposite critique, the philosopher approaching the antagonist. He would say, "This is flawed reasoning. Your assessment is childish." Perhaps the philosopher is too philosophical because he is actually too smart. It's impolite to say publicly a man is too smart. It's also a humiliating feeling to admit when one is *too dumb*. What we optimists of intellect fail to realize is that discourse itself does not unfold at all how we predict or hope it to unfold. Often people will lie just to make us feel better or get us to quit speaking...a contingency we never account for, because such paranoia and social anxiety would be a costly waste of productive thought energy. The point of this entire discourse is this: I aim to teach the philosophers a new trick. From now on, when you are misunderstood or ridiculed, leave the conversation with this atom bomb of a retort:

"I'm sorry, but I'm not going to waste any more time talking to you. You're obviously still too human to understand."

Likewise, if a writer receives the criticism, "you are too emotional" one is actually criticizing in a way which attacks the ontological foundation and meta-narrative of the writer's perspective. Overly affective, or fabricated emotions are always stylistic eyesores a good writer hopes to slowly eliminate, but if one's manner of being really does coincide with his emotion drenched prose, and he pulls off the imbalance in a believable manner there should be no objection. We may not *sympathize* with him, but we still might find the energy to *acknowledge* him. The alternative is quite cruel. How are we to correct ourselves, if our emotions are stated in earnest? The criticism really says, "you are too much of yourself, which, in this instance, I happen to dislike" —therein lies the key to understanding poor criticism in general. When the poor critic states, "you are too philosophical" or "you are too emotional" there is really a projection of the critic's vertigo in colliding with a dissimilar mode of perception. If every bad critic says something incoherent or affected which amounts to, "you are too much of yourself" the phrase is merely a projection which states, on the critics behalf, against ears held tightly shut, "I (the critic) am too much of myself. I (the critic) am too much attached to myself to understand new relations to being." How would such a statement be possible on the part of the critic? This statement is absolutely precluded from discourse; one would need to be meta-self or beyond the limits of self to attain such a realization. We might say so of our past selves (i.e. I was too young to understand such and such...) but to state such a notion in the present is a completely paradoxical notion, which, ironically, simple speech and unconscious projections actually achieve if we are adept enough to read them...what a superfluous burden, to engage earnestly the feeble communications of others, and then to arrive at what they have actually told us and demonstrated in their ignorance. Not only have we disagreed with their statement, but we've spent most of our energies and drained most of our philosophical creativity in taking their ignorant accusations seriously. We do not do so out of charity. We have in fact gone beyond philosophy and psychology when we begin first by asking, if only provisionally to test ourselves, "Am I too much of myself to understand new relations to being?" The solution must mean we have to begin all arguments by discarding self. We must put into practice the "*Presume nothing*" of Sherlock Holmes. We psychological nihilists do not merely look for ways to create a better argument than our opponent, we

are more concerned with discovering a way to integrate or understand why our opponent has turned up a strange or faulty assessment. Philosophy may sometimes claim a victory here and there, but the weapon of psychology annihilates both combatants every time—like a suicide bomber.

Day

Subtle joy from out of a long season of weariness and death fantasy is not optimism. It's just subtle joy.

Day

A worthy career for a philosopher: Explaining jokes.

Part XIII

Fossegrimen

"If we want to make our specific content accessible to others we must de-differentiate it: we clothe our specifically personal content and stamp it with the symbolic form..."

-Sabina Spielrein

Day

I went to the enchanted waterfall seeking the Fossegrimen. I summoned him by throwing a bloody leg of mutton into the mists. I waited and at first nothing happened. Eventually the mutton shank floated back to me and bobbed up and down near my foot like some cheerful companion. It seemed to innocently be asking me what we were doing here. According to legend, the Fossegrimen is an evil spirit that lives under the waterfall and plays the fiddle. Those who hear his tune are lured into the waterfall by his seductive music and then probably eaten or drowned because the legend says they never return.

After fishing my mutton shank out of the stream, and setting it on a rock to dry, I decided to uncase my fiddle and compose a tune of my own. At first no melody came, but as I relaxed and let myself be hypnotized by the raging waters nearby, a supernatural force began dragging my fingers across the strings until they began to bleed. When I turned around, the lamb's flesh was gone.

Whenever I'm asked where I learned composition, I tell the story of the Fossegrimen.

Day

The devil may hate mankind, but he's always been a faithful patron of the arts...especially music.

Day

There are two types of writer when it comes to inspiration. There are those who vomit forth an excess of everything in an unreadable manner and then there are those who vaguely know what they want to say, but need to revise the same composition obsessively until the final product resembles nothing like the original: both means are valid, and perhaps the second type, the less inspired type gains the advantage in the long haul because he never adds *too much*. Meanwhile, the expulsive and spewing type never suffers from even a moments

hesitation; all that is required of them is that they force themselves to become a tiny bit more polite, legible and comprehensible. As for the other type, the brow beating stick in the mud, his or her advantage comes from minimalism and persistence; such a type begins vaguely, but then grows in both confidence and passion as the doors to creativity begin to unlock during the concrete and dedicated task of revision. Hemmingway, the relentless re-writer, is an example of the slower type. Meanwhile, good examples of the prolific type are Proust, Schopenhauer and Pascal. One clue is to look for aphorisms or poems—those are certainly products of the spewing types. Meanwhile, the compact, impeccably clear, athletic, and unblemished novels tend more toward the rigorous, object oriented, reserved, descriptive and unthinking types of authors. The two types shall forever envy each other's gifts. When one type holds the work of the other, he or she exclaims aloud, "*Show me the Hyperion who created this!*"

Day

I'll say nothing *against* electronic devices. But I will remind the reader, this entire book came from a borrowed pen and a two dollar college ruled notebook with 180 sheets, entirely filled on both sides, completely ignoring the margins and using the remaining room at the top of each page for minor additions or corrections with arrows drawn to the proper insertion point. If this bulk of paper isn't enough, I'll save my pennies and maybe buy another two dollar notebook, granting me an additional 360 pages in the event the first 360 weren't enough.

Genius isn't the ability to squander the maximum resources; its the ability to ignore most of them.

Day

I'm sitting at a table of peers on a lighted stage with television cameras pointed at our catered dinner. We're all wearing suits, (but mine was rented by the head of some committee on the off chance I'd show up without wearing one). I just finished eating double portions and I've bid the waiter stay awkwardly on stage behind me with a full pitcher of water because he's had to refill my glass so many times.

Feeling just a mild warmth after a few sips of wine, I push away my second plate and smile in the direction of the windbag who's no doubt still talking about me at the podium. I'm not smiling because I enjoy poetry or people or awards. I'm smiling because I still hate everything and they're rewarding me for it.

Feeling bodily contentment and having nowhere to go, I turn to the waiter and whisper something in his ear. He chokes back a laugh, then obliges me by pouring my wine glass over my wrist as I pantomime cutting it with the butter knife in my other hand. The red wine pools up on my plate as I pretend to pass out to the laughter of the audience. Hopefully the cameras caught my prank as well.

Totally embarrassed, and feeling forsaken, the reigning poet laureate cuts his speech short and simply announces me to the public: *"Behold, your new champion..."*

Why would I drink heavily on a night like tonight? I want to remember my contempt.

Day

My greatest fear (at this moment anyway) is that nihilists will become so ultra-prevalent in my own generation that looking for one in a crowd will be like looking for an atheist at a biology convention—the belief will have become so passé it will no longer matter to anyone, nor will they respect the labors of the soul which brought it too us. (Don't any of the scientists remember the suffering endured by Thomas Hardy and Dostoyevsky as they gave up religion? Do you think their lives had even the slightest quarrel or respect for Darwin? Atheism is already passé!) Have you ever heard a scientist arguing with a theologian in the modern era? It's positively infuriating when either side opens their stupid, illiterate mouths. There's no awareness of the insipid tenants assumed beneath each of their arguments. If I were arguing in favor of atheism today, I'd first need to begin by humiliating the puerile train of thought found in the camp of science before proceeding on to the flaws of the theologians. The conclusion of atheism doesn't matter so much to me as the intricate details and scandalizing intuitions found in the process of un-believing. The same tendency goes for nihilism in my own generation, except with nihilism, the cake already has more layers and more rare ingredients than the

atheists are responsible for in their own kitchen projects. Nihilism is the wedding cake for the miraculous un-marriage of humanity and belief.

Do you really want to risk ruining the most important day of your life by trusting an amateur baker? Do you really intend to eat all the layers in one sitting? My greatest fear (at this moment) is cheap success, which at this point is virtually guaranteed. All that remains on my horizon of not-yet-hope is my lack of surprise when I begin seeing T-shirts in the mall, screen-printed with quotes from my books

My adventure is already over. My journey of self-discovery is nearing its end. I've felt and thought what I've needed to each day, until finally my frustrations have become my awakening. With these books of mine, I'm not handing over the pontifex or the scepter for the tree of life; you will not gain admittance to the secret mystery cult of Nihilism with your workaday shoes and your haughty attitude. If anything, I'm just sketching out a roadmap for my fellow travelers...whose journey still demands *days and days* of torment. The true Hierophants of my religion have no need of me. They alone have already traveled and seen and sacrificed to the oracles of not-yet-hope.

Day

A vast majority of writers, especially novelists, *cannot think*; that's why they invent.

Invention is a chore and a regression when the clarity of a thought or a state of being has already offered up a concise verbal manifestation. Not only can we tell when a writer is adding artifice to an already simplified concept, (which is a flaw of style), we are even more disgusted when both the imagery and the concept have been marred by the effort of "writing" itself.

It's honestly a surprise every time a healthy writer uses any sort of invention or artifice whatsoever; It should shock the astute reader enigmatically when such is the case. (Why this time?) If poetic interludes and dreamy metaphors are not cropping up in a mysterious, unprovoked, semi-vague and often sparse manner, we ought to be reading a better author. The psychology of this manifestation reveals

its empirical validity: good literature is a defect in lucidity: a mechanism *for almost understanding*.

Day

Even though I appreciate them both,
A one line poem from Basho
Gives me more joy than ten pages of Longfellow.

One proof was all I needed
To break free of false fetters.

Don't we deserve to move *away* from poetry?
Don't we deserve to at some point *stop appreciating*?

Openly, I admit which direction I travel
And where my usefulness begins.

Day

The longer the poem
The more emotional effort I'll spend unwinding it,
Only to have returned once more
To myself.

Day

If you want your ideas to grow legs and arms fit for action, re-imagine all of your own best traits (whether you have them or not) and project them into your chosen disciples who still haven't heard of you. Later, when they read your works and desire you, they'll also have the audacity to pretend they already are the warriors you've described: Like a road to victory built with invisible dominoes that magically fall up hill: a covenant with a non-existent God for a non-existent people.

Day

Once composed five separate letters of varying length to a girl I liked; after the fifth one she said she had had enough of my word vomit.

To the ears of the attentive listener, how much more deserving is the rest of the audible world of that complaint? And all those years of silence and plastic forgiveness only to have five of my own pages break my heart.

Day

Transgender: humiliation for the social being: excellence for the poet.

Day

The possessed and continuous additions here should serve as a clue. Even the form and style of short outburst is a clue. Remember the religious thinker Tertullian, whose penetrating intellect so quickly became impatient for all the attempts at pedantic logic around him that he degenerated into nothing but outburst and repressed passion for the revealed symbols of his unconscious? Christianity had nothing to do with what he needed to demonstrate to us. He effectively "othered" himself such that he transcended the comprehension of nearly all his peers.

I despise the adaptations I do not possess.

I despise the flaws of others whose adaptations I do possess.

I call this position the grace of having no worthy opponents.

With too much awareness, is it any wonder no one else feels the tempests we feel? That our chief complaint is utterly unreasonable?

Day

"The best thing not in the scene!" —a misanthrope.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —its author.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —private anxieties.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —creative misinterpretation.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —flawed intellect.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —insincerity.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —corollary images from the unconscious.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —the weight of Buddhist contempt.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —all other human flesh.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —a microcosm of the scene itself.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —the author's opposite.

"The best thing not in the scene!" —the Devil?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —choirs of angels?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —worms?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —philosophy?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —unresolved murders?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —lunatic women?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —Ghosts?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —Shakespeare?

"The best thing not in the scene!" —a formula for writing a masterpiece.

Day

"The best thing not in the scene!" —that is the goal of drama—the extreme tension of all unresolved emotions going on beneath the actual events; a conspiracy of viewer with protagonist during a critical moment of omission or silence when the protagonist cannot make his sorrows known: that is, a reenactment of the psychological reality of the author himself through the use of avatars.

Day

We gain one IQ point every time we find ourselves looking up a passage from Shakespeare at four or five in the morning.

Day

What if all IQ scores past the median point become less and less credible and decisive in an exponential fashion which is the exact inverse of the bell curve graphing the scores themselves? The furthest score might actually be the most controversial because it would assume the total authorship of the test itself, and one author cannot ever hope to account for all dimensions of human experience and intelligence...in fact, as we approach excellence in one direction, we are in fact an atrophy and crucial negation of all other directions. And further, one might actually achieve a median score if the average of one's abilities agreed with such an assessment due to an extreme over-development of some skill or magnificence the test could not properly weigh or account for. A number and a scoring of individual beings is immediately suspicious, not because the test fails to achieve what it sets out to achieve, but rather, because the authors of the test fail to achieve what they set out to achieve: Human genius.

The one-sided genius of a score actually creates a crippling bias against *all other types*: the many un-quantifiable dimensions of human existence. For these types, an altogether different kind of test would be necessary: A test of sensitivity and intuition, not graded by a masculine score, but rather, by the lyricism of personal suffering: the Shakespearian codex: asculpere caudex: the un-carved wood.

Day

If it could be proved (or imagined) that Shakespeare only had an IQ of 125, it might have the potential of completely altering the landscape of compulsory education.

Day

If possible, a director would prefer his actors not be required to do any acting. Casting the correct individual would prove a far lighter burden than the demands of coaching someone into a role they do not understand. With a minimum of direction and a minimum of acting, we achieve the maximum amount of realism. Filming reality on the other hand, is an interrupted circuit, prone to fabrications of a new variety, since the recorded persona is far too aware of itself being recorded, and not enough experienced or dulled to the nakedness of exposing oneself...*all the pretentious flaws of a novice diary writer.*

Good poets have something in common with good porn stars.

Day

At first turning the pages feverishly, then Horatio's last speech to Hamlet, delivered in sarcasm, as he languidly drops a bible...

"Goodnight sweet prince. *May choirs of angels sing thee to they rest.*"

(Shakespeare's live action stage direction: "No. No. Do it again with more sarcasm you idiot! The stage is full of corpses! Goddamn

Buffoon! We're not here to sing lullabies. *No man is capable of sincerity in a time of crisis! Especially not philosophers!"*)

Day

Orson Wells' version of Hamlet cut the most poorly written and unnecessary scene, the "To be or not to be" speech. Its popularity shows us how dumb it is. A philosophical Hamlet is a less suicidal Hamlet. Horatio has no good speeches because Horatio never becomes lyrical, unless of course we imagine the final moments of the play uttered in the voice of a cold cynic rather than a doting buffoon. I would make Horatio's scene last twenty minutes. He would silently hold Hamlet's head as he dies, then pace back and forth or frantically tend to the other choking and still dying characters. He would leave the stage and return with a bible, then page through it attempting to find an honest passage fitting the occasion, then let it simply drop out of his hands with a gaze of bitter desperation, his face having become lyrical.

(Logically, the Fortinbras scene should come at the beginning. The stage should both open and conclude with a dead Hamlet and a solitary Horatio. (The metaphorical death of the intellect and the birth of the lyrical in Shakespeare himself: Intellect as the sacrificial lamb for opening his own deep depths of infinite pain. (the unconscious unveiled.)))

The sound of a dropping book and the final line of Horatio should begin in the dark. We hear this line at the close of the play a second time, and by way of the long tension between those two deliveries (the maddening circuit painting and closing the circle of Ouroboros itself) the audience too shall suffer the birth of lyricism, which must always be a duplicate and a redundancy of incarnation. It shall only occur to the audience at the very end what the original noise was...a falling bible. In the beginning, the dropping sound is heard, but only in the very end does the sarcasm of Horatio and the significance of the sound play out with the stage fully lighted. The perfect circle only requires three seconds of the scene to happen twice. The Deja Vu feeling makes the corpses more menacing the second time...and when the play is staged the second, third and fourth night in a row, in a sense, the play will not have ended.

Day

The ultimate veto power of directors: if you don't like how a line is written, make the player say it sarcastically.

Words, words words...

(Another opportunity to get the bible on stage as a prop!)

Day

Orson Wells, Goethe, Shakespeare—these men are all object orientated, object relating, tactile thinkers. Extroverted in the original Jungian sense, not merely the pop psychology term it is today. They are all poor thinkers. Thought is a struggle for them. Concepts are reached only in a clumsy, tactile manner the masses are fit to understand. The perfectly adapted extrovert is the social currency that never loses its universal value. We all want that adaptation!

Day

A magician makes us believe there is some great mental activity behind the sleight of hand manipulation of objects. Intuition and thought are straining to be present, but the magician is only faking them because he already senses how valuable they are. (Consult the correlation between the books about modern seducers and their fascination with becoming magicians instead of poets!)

How boring must objects have become for one to have finally taken to doing parlor tricks with them? (conversely, for the poet, how boring must emotions and intuitions have become for him to execute *his magic*?) We value and praise the wrong talents: the magic we commonly call magic is the decadent and pointless ritual of an extroverted mind in its zenith, declining toward altogether different talents.

Day

Magician: The talent for actualizing a fabricated relationship. The swiftest economy of thought used by a mind that does not want to think. Thought constrained and stunted as if it were a tool of the most appropriate size. Vitality and action as tyrants over intellect and morals.

Day

"Actors are wonderful at memorizing lines because they don't waste time thinking about them. Ask anyone on stage to recite the famous speeches of the leading roll—even the bit parts and the stage hands can do it. They've heard them so often in rehearsal they know them by rote. Actors are puppets for the enjoyment of higher beings. Actors are avatars for the development of a playwrights thinking capacity, which for him, only surfaces unconsciously and unexpectedly. Reread Cassius and Brutus in that light. Reread all of Shakespeare in that light...poor naive Brutus...we feel so sorry for him. Shakespeare must have been even more charmingly stupid than his characters before he invented them. Cassius must have been the Devil who never ceased whispering in the playwrights ear!" —Spoke the Cassius on my shoulder...

Day

Caesar—the fully integrated man—must die. He cannot be transformed until he does so. Brutus, the unthinking man must also die so Cassius can demonstrate something to them as a fragmented talent. Growth mandates all three in constant interplay and sacrifice. Orson Wells borrows Shakespeare in order to borrow Hitler who borrowed the actual Caesar.

Day

Voluntary death is not a suicide, its a social participation. (I want to make a psychological distinction between Stoic and non-stoic suicides.) Most suicides are introverted people. Extroverted suicides are more rare...perhaps extremely rare. I can only think of Hitler as a famous example which is not really a stoic death or an introvert's death, even though his followers were seemingly antique Romans. Caesar doesn't get the privilege of a stoic death. He cannot sacrifice himself for anyone other than himself: Caesar is not *for Rome*, Rome is *For Caesar!* The act of self-slaughter which is neither socially voluntary nor maladaptively introverted is not a suicide but a transformation: *The final means of the self-actualizing hero*. (Or anti-hero if you want to be petty about it! Let's be clear, had he known the complete programme of the Nazi regime, Jung would not have condoned anything about their behavior...but that does not cancel the implication. If anything, Jung is our only route to full cognizance of what made the Nazi regime so seductive and unmatched the world over as a machine of total propaganda and the relentless integration of a social group. Nazi should not be synonymous with *evil or bad* behavior, but instead should be viewed as *too successful, too frightening, too integrated* to be human or forgivable. Without Jung, the human mind has no means or strategies for understanding or preventing any future catastrophes like the Holocaust. Jung *should* be implicated in the achievements of the Nazi regime, not on moral grounds, but more severely, on psychological grounds. Nazism is the real world demonstration of the magic Jung already understood: the seduction of the symbolic.)

Returning belatedly to our topic of extroverted suicide, call to mind Goethe's Werther, who was actually a silly version of Schiller probably, and not the extroverted Goethe at all.

An introvert's act of suicide is a substitute for, and a refusal to, become more extroverted. What then is an extrovert's suicide? Is it a self-completion? or a radical "other-ing" of self?

Day

Orson Wells, an artist, challenged the most powerful man in his era to a battle of resources and won. *Citizen Kane* is so audaciously self-actualized it looks as if art were defeating life. Characteristically art is accustomed to taking a bitter solace in its alienated and second rate talents of adaptation in the real world, but it ought not despair of such a fate as if it were doomed to always lose. Orson Wells is not the only second rate charlatan to have overcome the men of activity and enterprise. We ought to aim higher than our skinny jeans and our espresso fueled sarcasm. We ought to deserve the victories we finally accomplish.

Day

I have only one sympathy for Hitler: he was also a failed artist.

Day

...And my second book followed too closely on the heels of the first one. No significant gains were made aside from enthusiasm, which reminds me, I ought to mention somewhere that these entries are recorded as casually as daydreams or outbursts of distant rupture during a long and subdued rainfall. As they become more frequent, I feel less well and more fragmented. My complete notebooks would never deserve to be published for their contributions to thought. I'm very aware of this fact, even where the reader happens to incline otherwise. At best, these entries might serve as a detailed case study *of neurosis* and not a valid commentary on neurosis. My very first diary used the stolen title: "The Anatomy of Melancholy", and to this day that idea still holds good. A critic reading one of my shoddy notebooks would use the worst entries against me—no matter! —but he'd do so to advance himself; meanwhile, the psychologist within me has always found the most useless and inadmissible fragments interesting for what they reveal about my psyche. (My best disciple will also use my worst passages to advance himself—but in quite a different manner!) Good style hides too much. We only unfold ourselves when we are lazy or exhausted.

Because my aptitude is so high, I believe my career will easily sustain some very poor performances. I only include a cautionary note here addressing the possibility of my unedited manuscripts ever falling into the hands of someone inclined to publish them, for whatever reason. As I can already assure you, the range of quality between my 17 year old self and my 30 year old self is already outrageous—as it should be! Only near the age of 30 do I begin to have the more recurrent feeling that I am writing to be read rather than writing to just deflate myself. Phrases like "Because my aptitude is so high..." will no doubt aggravate the sensibilities of those whose aptitude is very low, but meanwhile, my disciples will understand the fullness of the joke without feeling slighted...its a much needed example of what I mentioned earlier.

Day

If more mediocre men had biographies, the unsolved struggles of their lives would carry over after death like the apparition of a tormented spirit between worlds.

Regular biographies of famous persons, usually extroverted and active to the extreme, falsify the usual fate of the human psyche. History books are a catalog of noble exceptions: a clever sleight of hand on the part of historians. What a shame that the average person is more haunted by not being Caesar or Napoleon than he is by the billions of other lives consecutively being swept under the rug by the broom of '*almost-never-born*'.

Day

How to become a philosopher? Read a lot of books and masturbate compulsively for five or more years. Extinguish every nuance of sexual desire and human dignity at its very root! Not even priests can attain such ascetic excellence. No relationships to any idea, object or person should remain; most especially the relation of self with self should be eradicated beyond recognition. That's what it means to do philosophy correctly.

Valid psychology begins with the awareness of this fact. Psychology is the restoration of the dignity we deserve and the further eradication of the dignity we do not deserve.

Nietzsche: a response to Schopenhauer: a psychology of convalescence.

A perfectly reasonable and humble question for psychology: "Why do I write such good books? Why am I so smart?"

Part XIV

Meditations on Doubt

"I know nothing greater, nor more worthy of the truly great man, than the patient expressive analysis of the ways in which we don't know ourselves, the conscious recording of the unconsciousness of our conscious states, the metaphysics of autonomous shadows, the poetry of the twilight of disillusion."

Fernando Pessoa, Book of Disquiet

Day

What is this new urge to begin again? To summon doubt once more as witness against ourselves, against a half-lifetime of prior knowledge, observation and habit of self. Can there be a new departure or yet one more missing fragment we have failed to see? Or is this new doubt actually a manifestation of a change that has already occurred and eager to make itself known—whereby this investigation is not actually anything at all like philosophy in its traditional sense, but merely an exercise of “making known” what already has taken place, as if from the standpoint of an ignorant one who happens to discover himself already holding the object he was just looking for.

Our first question: Can we advance a philosophical treatise which, not only begins entirely from scratch, but also begins by negating the nearest thing of all, our own habitual knowledge of the world—not as an exercise or a conjecture in this or that domain, but as a rigorous, violent upheaval and warfare against each intuition as it springs forth; a continuous nihilism set down chaotically, in the exact manner and order in which intuitions come before us, that we might undergo a more exacting clarification of how knowledge is arrived at and accepted...and what shall it mean for us, as living beings, if forced to either accept or negate these passing urges and intuitions, which, as we shall see, already exist as a tumultuous conflict within our own breast long before they achieve their escape into the world of massacre and magnificence.

It seems as though each philosopher attempts to start from scratch, but very early on, certain slight missteps and expedient assumptions destroy the austerity of their original nothingness. The allure is nothingness. The allure is not-yet-being and not-yet-becoming. For Sartre, when he brings nothingness along on a leash beside him, he must have felt some strange relief even when in anguish...as if anguish were his excuse for not quite committing to any singular person or social cause; too willful for any solid faith or mindless devotion, anguish was the price of his nothingness. For Sartre, intellect must rise to ascension and take responsibility for both the world it encounters and for the being of his own exterior self. The critique that first comes to mind? For such a being, with such an intellect, the responsibility is so greatly invested in intellect that one has no spare mental energy left over for making a proper assessment of one's own intellectual limitations. Sartre's faith is utterly removed from exterior things, such

as duty to country, fidelity to a lover, and trust in one's work or corporation. In place of faith in values or emotions, faith is paradoxically withdrawn into the furthest cave of exile...the cave of intellect. Intellect, at this point, becomes so greedy and fearful it no longer discerns what faith remains. It functions as if faith had been eradicated, yet it is only at this point where faith is truly a danger to intellect; intellect has lost sight of faith. Faith is a shadow cast behind our eyes, and no matter where our intellectual eyes look, they will fail to see what cannot be seen. Others will see it, but this privilege is entirely other.

Constant intellectual work forces one to rely on the apparatus of intellect; the tool cannot call itself into question. Though its self-questioning meditation may never cease, still it cannot ever advance against that final enemy—the shadow faith. And what good is the eradication of God, State, Employment, Lover, Earth, Emotion, and Sensuality if the champions of nothingness cannot also eradicate the fetters of intellect? How shall we make an assault on shadow faith? On the faith we cannot see and cannot know we yet have? At this point, we lay ourselves bare and admit, we have no evidence whatsoever to indicate the existence of any sort of “shadow faith” left in ourselves.

This meditation might better have been called, “Paranoia” for that is the definition for any human ill that cannot be seen and whose existence may or may not enter verifiable reality. Healthy paranoia as opposed to unhealthy paranoia should be differentiated as follows: If we fear that which is possible, then we might, depending on the degree of our fear, be deemed prudent or intuitive on this account, provided the approaching evil in fact does come and our fear has made us ready for its arrival.

On the other hand, there are also those mentally troubled beings whose fears have no limit; goblins, storms, butchers and maniacs abound in their nightmares. For them, every random act is an ironic symbol of hell itself. For these paranoiacs, the range and magnitude of world conspiracy threatens to undermine all human efforts. Most painfully, for the host of unhealthy paranoia, they must ever be the chosen ones for whom the conspiracy is most likely gunning for. Strange isn't it? That the anti-intellectual conspiracy addict begins to resemble the great cynics and pessimistic stoics of history, with the only difference being, the one fears futility from an external force, and

the other resigns himself to an internal force, equally powerful, and it too has nullified all proposals of action and success. Pessimism, that proud peak of intellectual paranoia, exists, such that, intellect has said to him, perhaps in words similar to E.M. Cioran, "*The idea every man achieves necessarily turns against him.*" Note the boundlessness of Cioran's statement. He could instead have said, "our labors are in vain", but Cioran's subtle attention to detail goes nightmarishly farther—our very ideas, even when they are achieved, and perhaps even because they are achieved, necessarily turn against us.

Our efforts, even in the seemingly harmless realm of thought, also turn against us and humiliate us. Better to not have spoken at all. Better to have held close to nothingness. As events, opinions and new relations march forward, who is there that can foresee even two days beyond his best belief? We focus our entire effort upon making the best possible statement, and when our entire effort is spent, we gasp in terror at how little more effort it takes to destroy our castle of carefully placed cards. The way open to our attacker is effortless and direct. All one has to do, is reach for what our haughty castle does not contain. Every choice belies a negation, and that negation, no matter how slight or trivial, will always contain just as much stored potency as our sacred choice. Our every choice, from out of the infinite is actually a partial negation of infinity.

Shall we be surprised, when infinity has its revenge on us, and raises the stakes with an equal sum? Let us finally state, the megalomaniacs of paranoia, both intellectual and visceral, are the rare beings who come closest to the truth of the universe...not in practicality—certainly not—but in matters considered theoretically, we cannot absolutely refute them. Shame faced, we are forced to admit a vague defeat, even as they ramble on about flying unicorns and baby-stealing mountain trolls.

Defeat is an opportunity for adaptation, (provided you survive well enough to do so). Against the threat of a shadow faith, we must take paranoia as our model. Doubt in the immediate is easy. Doubt in tomorrow is more difficult. Doubt in self is immediate. Doubt in the shadow self is most uncertain of all; it demands a great excess of creative energy. In terms of philosophy, the special kind of doubt capable of landing an arrow in the chest of our own shadow faith would be like an arrow forged by Athena and shot by Artemis. Shadow faith—that lingering assumption which we have not yet discovered—

can only be killed by a shadow doubt we force upon ourselves as a precaution against shadow faith.

If I suspected that I were being slowly poisoned from eating the meals prepared by a certain servant, shadow doubt would mandate that I begin curing myself by temporarily imagining food—the very source and nourishment of the body—as that which is causing my illness. On behalf of a shadow doubt, I would be forced to renounce that which is most precious of all to my body. In matters of mind, character, and continuous development, this metaphor directly applies. Shadow faith is that nearly odorless, tasteless, colorless mercury poison baked imperceptibly into our every meal. (Or seeping out of our irresponsible dental fillings!) In order to grow, we must first be shrunk down to almost nothing. We must foist upon ourselves, perhaps the greatest possible injustice in order to defeat shadow faith. We must proceed as if we were about to exercise a demon...but in this case, we are chasing a demon without substance or trail. In pursuit of this demon, we may actually be forced to dismiss an entire household of servants and renounce every tool belonging to us; whatever we have touched, we also may have poisoned. Every tool haunts us with the possibility of our past and the damnation of our future. A crusade against Shadow Faith is, as we shall see, the most complete heresy against the Buddhist ideal. Our ball of doubt, swelled large enough to eclipse the sun—that is our medicine, that is our Hemlock! Shadow Faith, and our quest against it, is a perfect Anti-Buddha—the willful seeker who deliberately fills in the spiritual emptiness of Nirvana with an avalanche of muddy concrete.

For the sake of clarity, we define shadow faith as only that faith which we possess without knowledge of our doing so, and whose mischief we are incapable of preventing until long after it has defeated us, or worse, whose mischief defeats certain expressions of our character so repetitively that we have slowly come under the spell of defining ourselves positively in terms of what shadow faith has done the work of preventing and deciding for us, perhaps against our will; perhaps contrary to our deepest fantasy of self; And because so much is at risk—because our most intense longings and passions cry out for this impossible goal—we have no choice but to renounce all dignity and pride, that we might attain the most precious thing of all, even though we may have no idea what that thing might be or what good or ill it might do us to possess it. For the sake of clarity, we must begin by admitting our quest is uncertain, and our goal is even more so...and that is why it is such an important goal...its prize is mysterious.

A New Pathway

Each of us now living must feel some sense of self. We must have looked out of our own skulls and seen a host of other beings, and fallen to the urge of comparing ourselves vaguely to those beings, and by this comparison, arrived at some reference point, whereby we have deemed ourselves either more or less violent, more or less intellectual, more or less enthusiastic...etc. in comparison to our peers. And by this comparison of outward moods, we tacitly feel we have done some sort of survey into ourselves and the world. Casually, we live by this survey and even choose our friends and our lovers by the sensitive impressions we receive privately. Even if we are 90% accurate in these impressions and conjectures of taste, there must ever be some small corridor of intuition that gets overlooked. How might one discover such a passageway? And where would it lead us?

Blind Leaps

Thomas Merton once said, "Perhaps we are not really the saints we think we are." And in this meditation, he is mostly addressing men who have renounced the world as monks, and whose chief activity is to pray seven times a day, two of which are in the middle of the night. What audacity it takes, to dislodge men from their habits! What defiance and courage we must summon, to make a final leap...and each time, there shall always be another leap to be made, as if we have still to leap through a desert, one blind hop at a time.

On Creating Moods

Instead of creating a dialectic, or a system, why not create a mood? Why not begin with calmness, and then slowly increase agitation and anxiety until such a transformation of mood alters our intellectual thoughts and we arrive at a new impression of ourselves. Why should we doggedly believe that philosophy must seek what is already true, as if Truth were to be found under some rock or in some dung heap? Whoever mandated that the universe should have already given up creating its miracles and its final law tables? Ask me what already is, and I shall tell you, "Doubt, Hesitation, Anxiety and

Discontent already exist". Ask me about the nature of truth, and I shall once more point to Doubt, Hesitation, Anxiety and Discontent. If you say to me, "Please sir, please professor, please dear sage, please father priest, please give us some truth, please offer up some kind of stability or satisfaction or wisdom, that we might go back to our labors and be content in them..."

Forced to speak, against my will and against my better judgment, I would answer as follows: When asked for Truth directly, without reference to anything, the nullity of your question prompts me to offer back a null answer. When asked for a qualitative judgment upon the status of Truth in the world before us, I do not look to myself—who often misunderstands the nature of things—but instead I look for Truth's relationship with humanity en mass, that we might see some common intuition or pattern of Truth making itself known. Looking inward, I see nothing and I learn nothing of Truth. Looking outward, beyond myself I also fail to see or discover anything resembling Truth. As I look outward and meditate and ponder, I witness a vague substitution of idols: Doubt, Hesitation, Anxiety and Discontent manifest themselves in each being privately. When this state of affairs is made known, suffering has already entered the hearts of mankind; Their anguished cries measure only the degree of their suffering. There are timid pleas for Truth and there are desperate pleas for Truth. Shall I give the desperate beings a different answer than the timid ones?

Indifferently, I point to Doubt, Hesitation, Anxiety and Discontent. More and more, as I'm slowly infected with the world's changefulness and instability, I feel the onset of stomach sickness and physical tension in my head. The more I open myself up to the actual complexity of human affairs, the more directly I feel in myself the same tormenting thoughts I see in the example of others. In seeking Truth, *for you*, I have no other recourse than to ask myself, *what would constitute truth for me?* Relative to my own intuition of oncoming sickness and headache for my own ills, I begin to imagine that Truth must always be longed for while each being is experiencing a state of lack or longing. Truth must be concomitant with the human condition. Truth must have something to do with the universal lack or vacuity in each mortal life...something possibly to do with our non-omnipotent, non-omniscient status. With this in mind, why would I ever bother to negate Truth or nihilistically rail against truth seekers? Our common lack of Truth tells me more abundance than the entire sum of human knowledge since Aristotle. Our common state of *almost, not-yet, or*

variously incomplete Truth is also our detour into Hesitation, Anxiety, Discontent and Doubt. What is Truth? Truth is a world already suffering.

A Need to be Deceived

The problem with philosophers? Philosophers beg too eloquently: we fail to realize they are begging; we fail to hear any human urgency in their supposedly objective struggle. Each new generation of philosopher offers up another false answer hoping to be admitted as Truth. Show me one philosopher who, by way of his own gracious stupidity, actually works out a system, which, upon reaching its own end, is forced to admit defeat or worse—humiliation. Yes, show me a magnum opus of humiliation! That is the system I want to love, unsystematically.

And when I look into the hearts of the men who are comforted by systems and symbols of the world, I do not see truth. I see victims of seduction. The trouble with philosophers: *They secretly want to be deceived!* They want to give a name and a meaning to their own self-induced state of mind: this name is truth. Euripides knew better: “*Suffering hath no constant name....Her hand is on all nations, bee-like, death-like, a wonder!*”

On the Matrix of Truth

Truth is a state of mind; a set or matrix of relations which satisfy the domain and range of the original function. Why should we bother with truth—namely, why should we bother with the final result, which, for the moment, is a significant matrix? Significant for what? Significant for solving function $F(x)$. Mathematically and morally, Truth offers nothing but a replacement of variables, which, as variables, tell us more, graphically, than naming plotted points of intersection. What am I saying? Truth is less important, and far less interesting than questions, puzzles and new functions for $F(x)$. Let us praise the mathematicians for “solving” philosophy without ever disturbing it. If philosophy requires a system, mathematics offers the most austere system of 'Being' (identity equations) one could forge. Each question asker is no more than a function machine on the verge of spitting up

another $F(x)$ equation. Once we have solved said equation, isn't it maddeningly absurd to begin critiquing it with qualitative judgments and valuations? That which *can* be solved already demands its matrix not be subject to qualitative critique. Truth itself cannot play two games at once. We cannot simultaneously demand both the qualitative and the quantitative unless we have synthesized these divergent realms into something called "Art." The Bauhaus movement in Germany gives excellent demonstration of just such a synthesis...and its major downfall? It actually *struggles* to even be art. Bauhaus is too painfully aware of itself and its all too German gift at precise engineering. What is German idealism, if not a form of tortured, struggling, endless confrontation between great excess of quality thinking merged with quantitative, rigorous mathematical thinking? What great horrors result when each man privately allows idealism too much range! "My struggle! My struggle! My struggle!" On and on...

If I should declare to the mathematician, that the matrix he is holding is actually relative to the equation he has just now completed, he will give me a sideways glance and feel insulted for having gone to all this trouble to solve an equation only to have an idiot bystander ask whether "This solution" is for "That problem".

"Yes, idiot! This matrix is the answer to the function I've been working out on the marker board for the last fifteen minutes! What problem did you think I was working on?"

And I might reply, "Well, my dear sir, you might even say that your newly discovered matrix is RELATIVE to the function equation you originally started with...relative to the question you first asked, am I right?"

"Fool!" Replies the mathematician. "Don't mock me. Get out of my class if you are going to mock me! What good are matrices that don't solve anything? What could you possibly do with a matrix if it did not correspond to a function?"

Now he's sweating and loosening his tie. I'm the worst student he's ever had. I ask qualitative questions to Algebra teachers. Let me ask just one more:

"Is life a function or a matrix?"

He's taking his time on this one. It's getting late. He wanted to get a car wash on the way home, and pick up some lunch meats from a deli before meeting his wife...but now I've managed to get his attention. This impatient man, well dressed and poorly groomed is easily prone to the snares and traps of puzzling questions. He answers me as follows:

"Biologically, structure and function allow life to complete its task...structure allows us to function, true enough, but thinking hierarchically, as *human* life emerges, everything seems turned inside out." He's scratching his head now and pausing. He wants to best me at my little game so he can feel his authority as teacher once more. In this vein he continues: "I suppose if you want me to take a human perspective, and answer in an anthropological way, Consciousness looks to me like a matrix (Truth). Every sense impression and thought is a new bit of data for the human matrix to store (Truth). And the world outside us? Our bodies and our habitat? That seems like the function machine. Is that the analogy you wanted me to get at? Huh? To state that Truth is the matrix set in opposition to the function, or shape of the question...or more accurately, the given situation? To somehow realize, that we are Truth, and that all questions are merely extensions of situation, which, given the correct attitude, might also be completely ignored or treated as illusion or non-reality? Well, if that's the case, then philosophy's quest to *find Truth* is completely paradoxical. Foolish and paradoxical. Go do your assignment, and study for the chapter review test this Friday. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go out to dinner with my wife and my mother in law." And in this outburst of spontaneous frustration, my 9th grade math teacher annihilated 1500 years of Western Philosophy.

As perception, everything we encounter is part of the functionality of the world. The question asker never deems himself a function—that effort would be too convolutive—instead, he habitually confronts the many functions outside himself; through perception, he wishes to bring more data into himself; ergo, he seeks truth, but it's already too late. Everything he perceives *is* Truth. Organizing and putting qualitative judgments on things is either a job for a book keeper or a poet, but none of the qualitative aspects of our sense impressions ought to be put to a philosopher if he considers himself a philosopher in the traditional sense of the word.

If truth is a state of mind which coheres to a state of affairs, or more explicitly, if truth necessarily corresponds to an instantaneous situation then the name or variables of a situation are actually more interesting and more revealing than the final matrix of fixed intersection (Truth). What is the human situation that prompts question asking?

Suffering.

By what truth shall we know her? Euripides answers once more, "She that hath no constant name...Her hand is on all nations, bee-like, death-like, a wonder!"

For the mind capable of inverting the direction of human philosophy, the content of what we now are is realized to be correspondent with our instantaneous situation; correspondent to the function the world has just now assumed. Truth is no longer a passive thing to be searched for, but rather, more brazenly, a coefficient to be *worked on!* How and what shall shape truth? Situation. How does the situation reach us? By way of our impressions, our intuitions, our prejudices, and our stamina. We can no longer tolerate a laboratory of Truth. We demand Truth resemble *a stage! A drama! An incarnation!* If we were to make one important and sweeping critique of philosophy heretofore, it would be this accusation: *Philosophy has chosen to take a passive role instead of an active role in shaping Truth.*

After being indoctrinated into the sterility of philosophical speculation, one slowly loses the ability to judge the world. Perception, and the act of perceiving wrenches tight the valves of judgment. As the student of philosophy progresses, the ever growing labyrinth of pipe work in his mind begins to resemble a copper dungeon, where none of the valves release anything but steam: he sweats and begins dying of thirst. He has forgotten his taste for life, and his well engineered pathways serve no one. Truth has used *him*.

Philosophy is both a universal liberator and a universal slave master. For those who actually arrive at Truth, Truth is no more than a soft putty to be worked and shaped as one likes. Truth is a ransom called in; an extortion of this or that shadow faith. Truth is already a partial seduction on its way to becoming a complete seduction. Those who have realized as much, wage war against philosophy in an even more absurd (yet effective) manner than poets: they refuse to advocate

anything or even argue. They meditate in silence and show question seekers nothing but an attitude of contempt...as if to say, "What answer could I possibly give that wouldn't also confuse you more or send you scurrying about in the wrong direction?" To address suffering directly, one realizes that illusion and attachment are the fetters which keep mortals bound to the ever turning wheel of passion and incarnation. For the Buddhist, it would seem nonsensical to simultaneously want to *use Truth* while also maintaining one's authentic confrontation with the problem of human suffering. Illusion is suffering. That is the Buddhist creed. For sages, this revelation has but one solution and one strategy, *Kill Illusion, Kill Desire*. Every other possible use for truth is an act of seduction. An act of leading back toward Maya, illusion, birth and death. For the Buddhist, if an enlightened sage should happen to refute Nirvana, he is already on a path toward which he must mindfully *will human suffering*. That is the very definition of malevolence, isn't it?

Buddhism, even when it knows illusion for what it is and has killed illusion, wreaks of German Idealism. It simply goes too far. A Taoist would say, "Why should it follow that one should *not* will suffering? *What if suffering is part of what we actually desire? What if suffering is also Nirvana?*" The famous Chinese thinker and critic Lyn Yutang once said, "Let us not speak of Buddhism. Its truth is too sad." That's a beautiful thing to have stated, and a prudently Taoist statement, but in reality, Taoism is *more pessimistic and more joyful* than Buddhism. Where the Buddhist sage meditates quietly and wishes not to speak of suffering, the Taoist lunatic finishes his moon-gazing wine revel with a sad poem and he actually *infects others with his sadness*, and out of that sadness, we love life *more*, not less. Do you want an example of those who actively use truth and shape truth? Enter the domain of poetry.

Whatever I feel—that is Truth!

Threadbare: Truth in Shambles

Truth as a slaughterhouse. Truth as a butcher shop. Truth as a scene of devastation, carnage, bloodshed. What once was plentiful now sags, overwhelmed in a scene of disorder: a condition of idleness after great expenditure. Why have these metaphors failed to arise in past discourse? Upon what grounds would a thinker decide to consciously depart from God, Totality, Absolute and ideal and then immediately

settle upon vacuity, emptiness and non-meaning? Why such a tendency for All or Nothing? Psychology has classifications for this type of thinking, and it labels it pathological. Pushing and forcing the limit of either fullness or emptiness begs catastrophe. We, as philosophers, have failed to give enough images for the humiliation, the descent and the swelling clutter of Truth. Nor have we, in this state of partial defeat, poetized or aggrandized the leftover banquet tables of truth, where the guests have eaten their fill and left plenty behind to cool and dry and harden wastefully.

The moment I finally have the courage and the experience necessary to shout, "Truth is what I feel!" An interval of uninterrupted activity is followed by a repentant whisper: "my feelings change".

My unique advantage over other philosophers: I go forward with a thesis, even when its point of departure is already a laughable absurdity worthy of contempt...or better, not even worthy of contempt at all: it falls even beneath the register of contempt. My arguments are like the arguments of wives, chambermaids or secretaries in a fit of jealousy...so womanly and individual there can be no gain in challenging them...or so they have decided...so their shadow faiths have decided. Archaic tools of shadow philosophy no longer fit the task before them: the over rich gardens of human variety do not yield to their objective longings.

Once upon a time, when I was a much younger man, I would raise a glass and say to my fellows, "Emotions are the farce I keep participating in by accident!" and to this, the cynical laughter of drunk young men would rise even above the room's cigarette smoke and wind down intermittently into various sex starved grins; piggishly sleek with loathing and unwillingness. I might just as well have said, "Desire is the farce we keep insisting on, without noticing."—but this exclamation might have saddened them.

No philosopher yet has attempted a philosophy of moods: A categorical imperative of emotion: "By the Starry sky above me and the captive poet within me, I demand a critique of Pure Emotion!"

If we are not in the least bit concerned over a change of taste, why should it matter any more or less so if we under take a "change of truth?" Do you want to know how I judge a man's character? His truths should be whimsical and his emotions should be enduring.

Just merely reading a philosopher, and hearing his words or his sophisms or his declarations are not enough. Two men of identical nihilistic aptitude may in practice prove to be utterly divergent beings. One might prove licentious, crafty, self-serving and disloyal while the other man unthinkingly expends himself in the labors of a saint. How does philosophy address this quagmire, if each man professes an identical creed? If each man is in agreement, theoretically? The answer? Philosophy does not ever address this question. Philosophy legislates, surely, but it does not, for some reason, ever stoop to sketch pictures of its disciples. If I were a professor in some college or other, I would deliver each lecture only as a lure and a bait so as to see what kind of scoundrels I could draw near me...and as they gathered round after class in a circle to question me and banter amongst themselves, only then would I get out my thick cotton pulp paper and a sharpened stick of compressed charcoal and begin the true investigation...the true philosophy of man's ugliness. Hours later, with my charcoal sketch completed, I allow the devils to depart...Meanwhile, I keep the prize for myself and add it to my collection of Truth.

Part XV
Gauntlet of Doubt

Day

A severe trial is about to begin. Think of this section as a challenge or a contest; We must run between two lines of adversaries, armed with sticks. When the criminal has finally dissented from everyone, disobeyed every one and transgressed against everything, he becomes, symbolically, a universal enemy. The punishment of running the gauntlet is already more than a metaphor. The gauntlet expresses the psychological reality of both criminal and mob; together they feel expression simultaneously: They feel it in every scratch, jab, thwack and bludgeoning detail of the criminal's progress. The devilry men do, has a grotesque synchronicity: The mob should be grateful to the criminal: he has already done some of their spiritual work for them.

Behold the martyr, publicly abused and given his crown of thorns: It won't be long before this mob's general pity and recoil unconsciously transform their blasphemer into a priest.

Too bad their new priest, was also acting, unconsciously.

It is not our intention to provide a comprehensive critique of truth, nor shall we bother wasting our breath on any kind of rigorous justification of our erratic outbursts thus far. A wise man has no use in finishing what he provokes. Provocation gets the children out of his hair; it suggests to them a new contest for passing the time out in the yard so he might stay behind in the quietude of the living room. What good is truth to him? He already wields it. Now that his solitude has been reclaimed, he goes to work on himself. Agitation already exists in his mind; he has no need for false puzzles or word games. He would like to know if he has retreated far enough; if he has effaced himself enough. If he wishes to advance—even where there may perhaps be no more land to reclaim—he must first find a means of retreating farther. Creatively, he must test some new means of doubt. Test is probably the wrong word. Test implies that an empirical solution might present itself. What our man needs is a double blind experiment. Perhaps he will choose to undergo several experiments at a time; several doubts at once. Let's imagine a list of what he might be contemplating:

-“I doubt my conscious ability to fathom myself.”

-“I doubt any and all means by which others attempt to define me.”

-“I doubt my own totality. I doubt this consciousness here displayed—this consciousness of me—we suspect that it is not actually the complete picture of our being; that possibly there exists something within being that is not yet within mind; that there may be, somehow, an ‘other’ that exists within being and who, instead of being ‘other’ in the sense of my own schism, is actually the completion and hidden fullness of what my conscious mind cannot yet express...and so long as there is a conscious mind, a barrier shall always prevent these two portions of being from finding unification. I have no proof or evidence of this notion, beyond this paragraph, which I have just now written, as if automatically, without forethought.”

-“I hereby doubt and provisionally refute my every semblance and trapping of identity since my own birth, and even before my birth, I doubt the identity and the motives of my parents, my ancestors and the evolution of the whole animal kingdom, as if something might have occurred in it, or through it or by it that I may have missed, or whose obvious workings we have carelessly overlooked out of laziness or misguided self-confidence.”

-“I doubt whether this questioning or even the lacerating attempt to confront identity can gain any headway against identity. I doubt whether my doubt is a new expression, or perhaps, instead, more cruelly, a new and stronger expression of the identity I already am and cannot defeat.”

-“I hereby renounce utterly, the world’s opinion of me. All that I have been praised for I must discard. All that I have been cautioned against I must revisit. Chests of sacred tokens and memories must be tossed to the curb. Talents, collections, tastes and trinkets near me may possibly be imbued with the latent poison of shadow faith, and I cannot be free of shadow faith until I am also free of my attachment to these items. I do not require ‘proofs’ of renunciation. It makes no difference whether I finally deposit them in the Arctic ocean or a horse’s ass. All that matters is my attitude toward them, which, though I now speak of renunciation, may actually be a provisional exile, by which I one day return to them as if I had never once even doubted them for a second.”

-“Along with renouncing the world’s opinions, I must also renounce, or be ready to renounce my opinions of others. To shun my enemies is no challenge...but to shun my friends and to suspect my friends and to be disloyal to my friends—even if only provisionally and

in my mind's eye for the space of an afternoon—that is a painful demand, for I love them and I wish them no harm, but because I love them, and because they are nearest to me, I should also fear them more adamantly than my enemies.”

-“Though I have already doubted my own dignity before the world, suspected my possessions and called into question my friends, I have not yet even begun to do the real work of dissection. I hereby call into question my every strength. Even those strengths, which I deem my most valuable and most rare, I must now diminish and nullify. I must summon up a willful act of faith, as if by way of a magic spell, and I must hypnotize myself into not just thinking, but completely believing in the non-efficacy and the impotence of my own powers of intellect, of feeling, of intuition, of judgment, of loyalty, and of courage. I must also question the role of my seeming weaknesses and vices. I must attempt to interrogate my laziness, my depression, my pride, my hopes, my fears and my stamina. I must even challenge that which does not count for either virtue or vice. I must even lacerate joy itself and hold it accountable for whatever shadow faith adheres to it.”

-“I doubt that these words or this catalog of doubts can surmount anything if I do not also spend time meditating on and writing about my own inner experience of each of these modes of doubt. I doubt that this effort any more counts as philosophy; I fear I have already entered into theology, and I fear that this godless theology is also vanity and madness and gross excess. What use is doubt, if my errors are increased and inflated instead of purged? How can I flee from self, without ‘self’ returning more powerful and more obstinate against me?”

-“I doubt the very direction of doubt itself. I doubt whether the act of ‘making conscious’ is not flawed in itself, and perhaps the primacy of shadow faith. If this hypothesis were correct, thought itself, conscious thought might actually be an infinite paradox by which effort itself is already a shadow faith assumption and a shadow faith prison cell. One would have to enter into a different state of being and perceiving in order to experience any reality which did not champion self-conscious intellect (reason) as its primary mode.”

-“I doubt the nature of contempt and humility. I ask myself whether, perhaps, *all reason directed thinking* might be contempt looking downwards and *all emotion based thinking* a blank humility looking upwards. Perhaps the entire critique of religion heretofore has

been utterly mistaken. Perhaps it is not the irrationality of god or the irrationality of religious doctrine that is most flawed, but rather, the direction of atheistic critique, which, upon finding contradiction or nonsense, already stops; already discounts, disproves and abstains from experience and participation in what the religious follower participates in *existentially, as a unique psychological mode of perception*. Contempt looks negatively downwards with satisfaction. Humility looks positively upwards, with a feeling of complete desolation. With these definitions of Contempt and Humility, I suddenly fail to discern what once was meant by Optimism and Pessimism. What can these words mean but Happy Ignorance and Sad Lucidity? Are these descriptions, perhaps the final correlative correction, self-imposed by our shadow side whence Contempt has turned finally to a dissatisfied lucidity (pessimism) and Humility has transformed desolation into happy ignorance? (Optimism) Within long treatises and systems, we usually find words like pessimism, lucidity, dissatisfaction and ignorance, but who has ever really emphasized these descriptive psychological states and followed the trajectory of their relationships. Philosophical systems of the past have tended to push these non-quantitative, indefinite words to the margins of discourse, yet look how neatly and effortlessly true observation has stitched them together into a dialectic formula. Contempt—the highest place—*becomes pessimism*. Humility—the lowest place—*becomes happy ignorance*. Not only do these two directions have a different emotional destination, (joy/despair) they also differ in their essay upon the world itself, that is, a different starting point: a mutually exclusive point of origin. Contempt begins with intellect as its tool. Humility begins from unthinking emotionality and sensation; it sponges the world into itself without schematizing; it discards reasoning before reasoning begins. Without mindfulness of reason directed schemes, coherence (volitional continuity) is lost...and without continuity, there can be no accountability. Moralizing is already a symptom of emotional impotence; already the onset of disease.

The un-reasoning mind possesses three jewels in its crown: It dwells nearest to the sensual enjoyment of the world, it functions as the most astute observer of its own moods and frighteningly, shows itself as the most seductively clever, alluring creature in existence. Reasonable minds are threadbare and impoverished by comparison. Whatever they might attempt, their poverty goes ahead of them and heralds their approach; they are *already* among the chandala; the untouchable swine of the lowest caste.

For these two classes of being, neither destination nor starting point is consciously willed. These points, as experienced, are always taken for granted, as if each being were somehow fated to them or as if each being were religiously indoctrinated into them. Respectively, the uncreative voids of blind pessimism and blind contempt are perfect examples of Shadow Faith—a mode of faith whereby we fail to notice our participation in a psychological Charybdis, swirling around and pulling us in unawares: shipwreck is already its destination, every time it begins. If this entire essay should end by finally giving up at the exhaustion of creative energy or halting on the very brink of profundity, then perhaps the Shadow Faith that now fills our sails is already en route to a whirlpool of its own.”

-“I doubt the autonomy of my doubt. I question whether or not anxiety is not already a clue to the content of my own shadow faith. I doubt whether or not I actually possess any tools or strategies for peeling shadow faith from its origin as anxiety. I doubt whether these meditations are creativity or nullity. So long as they move forward and continue relating various phenomena together and tearing other phenomena apart I suspect that these efforts are creative or at least somewhat original. In trying to embrace paradoxical traps and contradictory pitfalls, I feel as if maybe I have found a means of side-stepping the fanaticism of both reason and emotion. So long as reason and emotion are swirling around in confusion as part of my *conscious mind*, then I cease to fear the unconscious threat of a Charybdis beneath consciousness. So long as I am creative, I am also fearless.”

-“I doubt whether or not I am a complete fool. I also doubt whether any person now living actually intuits the entire spectrum of Nihilistic Philosophy in the same manner I now perceive it, in this, my purgatory of complete doubt.”

“I doubt whether or not each individual doubt might already be acting upon me as if it were a positive *choice*, as if each doubted castle might already be an empire I have lost; as if blind choices were equal in their negativity to conscious doubts; as if each method were already a colossal negation, barring us from half the world. How might one reclaim the missing half of existence which shadow faith has barred from us, when we have made either a blind choice or a conscious doubt? How are we to exist in fullness and plentitude when the road ahead is semi-blocked off?”

-“I doubt the meaning of smells. What if even something so trivial as my own sense of smell, or my lover’s sense of smell might actually remind us of something and prompt us to come together? What if one of us eventually proves unfaithful, and our marriage is destroyed, because of a smell? What if nature has its own intentions that work against human intentions. What if we already dwell within the confines of a biological system beyond our ability to control and whose law tables are a threat to our constructs of reality; our very hopes of human love and dignity?”

-“What if those who read the words I have written only pantomime and make a show of reading them, while simultaneously, they are utterly incapable of understanding them. What if, even where their intention and devotion to the material is sound, they somehow lack the ability to translate these thoughts clearly into themselves...perhaps transpositions, mutations and deletions are the very rule of communication. Perhaps new ideas, for some people, never get assimilated as anything but decorations and accessories to what has already been decided or worked up in their novice, amateur, blasé modes of perception. What if a greater quantity of genius is required to understand creation than to actually create it originally. What if reading is actually a more demanding task, a more daunting (and likely more nearly impossible) task, than speaking?

“The best answer? A more beautiful question. How come there are not entire books of questioning and doubt, which never even begin to formulate solutions? What if the act of forming the question originally already does the better part of answering it, and to go beyond this point were already the beginning of stagnation and banishment from creativity?”

-“What if the fullness of each being—its instantaneous phenomenological fullness—were present at every moment? Could there be some truth to the fortune teller’s advice, because she already *remembers who we are*?

If I wanted to become a fortune telling mystic, I would sit in a room filled with distracting pieces of artwork and strange antiques. I would seat my clients so as to face various physical objects, organized into categories and placed geographically near one another, so that if a man were to look in one direction I would know that he were looking at candles and a painting of lovers kissing, and if he looked in a different

direction, toward the nude sculpture or the mountain climbing apparatus I would mark to myself where he looked and how intensely he looked. I would put behind him a large mirror, so that I might see both the objects behind my head, and the direction of his gaze; simultaneously, I would need to somehow pair my own identification of his chosen objects with the direction of his gaze offered to me by the mirror. So long as he employs me, and believes in my ability, I must face him, and I cannot look where he looks, in the way he looks without putting my own scheme in danger. I must face him and I must also see behind myself. As I said, I am in a strange room whose door is a curtain. Whether I have a line of customers, or just one customer, I shall always keep them waiting for ten minutes in an adjoining room with low lighting, comfortable chairs and a servant who serves them appetizers and wine. It should be mentioned that, if possible, I should be exceedingly ugly and old, whereas my assistant should be youthful and good looking—he or she, or both ideally—should make idle conversation with my next client. Sexual allure and wine will hopefully be enough to loosen the tongues of each new visitor. If my next visitor should prove immune to both wine and sexual desire, then I will have discovered something. If the offering of food is also declined, then I will discover still more. Perhaps, if these enticements are declined, I shall force them to wait even longer, so these concessions might be offered a second time. Meanwhile, my beautiful assistants will pretend to be busy preparing some event or new appetizer or simply cleaning the waiting room, and amidst this slightly confusing, seemingly pointless activity, my assistant shall try to gather as much information as possible from the visitor. Meanwhile, if possible I shall be listening from behind the curtain. If I am occupied, then my second assistant shall be listening and taking notes for me, so that I might read these notes just before the new seeker is admitted. If this is not possible, then I will instruct my assistant to put a deck of Tarot cards in a specific order, based upon their observations of the visitor, and midway through the reading, I will summon my assistant and ask for this deck of cards. I may even make a show of shuffling the deck of cards while the visitor looks about my room and the strange objects behind me. Perhaps I will get up to get something nearby or create some distraction so that the shuffled deck of cards might be replaced with the one ordered by my assistant. It should go without saying that my assistant and I have already agreed upon the personality dimensions I am about to observe and the order I am to observe them. In addition to this, we have agreed upon what each card in the Tarot means when drawn in reference to each of these dimensions. As I am

discovering the order of the cards, so also is the visitor discovering the order of the cards; We are both in a heightened state of perception due to the nature of this charade. Once the six meaningful cards have been drawn, it is now my job to begin describing the faults and fatalities concomitant with my visitor's personality type. With the clandestine help of my assistant, I will attempt to use all the information I have gathered in these ten minutes before the interview. Notice also, I am at an advantage when this new visitor is a complete stranger: I am allowed a more objective, un-meditated, un-prejudiced encounter with this being than he shall ever achieve on his own, no matter how far reaching or brutal his conflagration of doubt.

My discipline is unique. Instead of a catholic priest absolving sins, I am actually predicting sins that have not yet occurred. I am taking an active roll in creating the truth of this or that man's future. I believe it is not enough to simply point to a list of static virtues or prohibitions. If I am at all capable of concern or compassion, I must enter into the special problems and handicaps of each visitor. Unlike the priest, I am, however momentary, a participant in this man's fate. I may even be doing some of the effort necessary to absolve him of his errors *before he runs ahead to meet them!*" thus spoke the fortune teller.

-“I doubt the primacy of question asking. What if each question, no matter how banal or stupid, brings with it an infinite potency; or possibly, at most, a potency equal to the creative energy of the being who attempts answering it? Are Plato or Sartre any better for the sake of *what* they asked? They might have started anywhere, and still given us something of equal value and intensity. We no longer scour the earth for good questions and high-minded solutions. Instead, perhaps it is better to seek out intense and maddeningly creative *individuals*.”

-“I doubt the oppressive singularity of identity notions. It must either be out of laziness or lack of resources that we habitually default to singular presentations of self. And if we do in fact have the wealth or surplus required for attaining many pairs of shoes or costumes, then why should we content ourselves with a singular style that gets repeated again and again? Why have ten business suits of the same basic fashion? Why not instead pick ten desirable archetypes of known and recognized sexual allure? Why not make those ten archetypes into ten *different outfits* that we might attract or stimulate a greater number

of admirers? And if we are deemed to be phony, or pretentious in our chameleon tricks, perhaps we should seek to advance even *farther* in the discipline of illusion and dissimulation. If the immediate public refuses to condone our behavior, perhaps we are already on our way to becoming an actor, for whom the public seems to have an insatiable desire for. And if we do not feel inclined to become a dandy of fashion, then perhaps the roll of musician would be better? The musician on stage may in fact not feel any kinship with the song he is now performing, but therein lies his excellence, not his bankruptcy! If he has the ability to recreate or summon moods like a warlock casting spells, then he has mastered the art of emotions and moods through music. What does it matter if he is a complete bore or a nitwit off stage? He has already won us over with what he has invoked *within us*, and we are so grateful to him, that we would like to give ourselves to him without any consideration for our well being; to us, he resembles *a god*."

-“What if the best forms of innovation and creativity arise spontaneously from youth? What if, instead of thinking like adults or psychologists, we were to see in adolescence an example and an ideal to be sought? What if, instead of looking at their strange manner of dressing as ‘identity experimenting’, we instead saw in them the primacy of shadow faith and illusion creation...illusions we question only because they are new, provisional and not yet chronic. We abhor the implication that our own illusions and our own identities have becomes stale and malignant.”

-“I feel that perhaps I have not gone far enough in *returning* to the mob; in being as *carefree* as the mob. Originally, I had in mind to become less creative and diminish my presence, yet this effort, so far, seems to be distancing me even further outland towards the wild frontier and avant-garde of thought. I wanted only to mortify my intellect, and instead, my intellect is growing more greedy and frightening me. How can I balance it?”

-“I question whether effort might simply be disease? Is this already mania? Is mania a fetter or a freedom? If mania is a surge of energy, then it also follows that mania feels like power. Psychological mania, since it has seemingly no source, feels like a part of my inherent identity, even though it seems somehow indelicate or disingenuous to believe so. Mania, as it is experienced, seems synonymous with our

entire being. Mania seems to be homogenous with my will. Mania indeed, feels like *a will to power*.”

-“How come the supposed *choice* of suicide never admits what that choice would suddenly mean in terms of freedom? Is it an inordinate concern not to die painfully that forbids us from a final, unrestrained suicide run at banks, jewelry stores and sexual debauchery? What sort of morality can both refute life and forbid crime? Why not forbid morality and life, for the sake of crime? Not crime for the sake of suffering or repentance, but crime for the sake of creativity, surrealism or sensual expression? Terrorism is amazingly beautiful!”

-“Though I doubt the final construction of this essay will follow the order it is now taking, I also suspect that if I had started by organizing these doubts by category I would immediately sever myself from commune with my autistic apparatus of thought, which, quite possibly, is my only source of real creativity or originality. We must go forward in a bungling manner at first; later on we may have use of our sequential faculties so as to simplify these thoughts so they might be more easily communicated—remember our earlier doubt regarding the nature of communication.”

-“When I think about the daring thoughts of famous philosophers, even when they are admittedly both great and original, I now find myself in disagreement with them in small, yet significant ways. I feel cheated when they have not gone the next step, which seems to me so obvious. I feel as if, each time, the wrong point is receiving emphasis. I feel as if maybe, the weaker part of their brain were advancing something, and the creative component that I admire—the thought passed over—were only auxiliary to their mindful interests, and so they failed to give this autistic thought the attention it deserved. They in fact, were not enough aware of what was truly original or important. Even as I say this, I fear I am already as guilty as they.”

-“What about drunkenness? What about habitually drunken poets? What about Hemmingway’s adage, “Write drunk, edit sober”? What sort of benefits come to us in altered states? Was Gravity’s Rainbow written with the aid of cocaine? What about the effects resulting from a continuous use of absinthe, whose nerve toxin is known to accumulate over time and cause hallucinations? Or what about peyote, hashish, LSD, and mushrooms? Show me a treatise resembling mine, written

from one of these drug induced perspectives. What would it look like? Perhaps I should look into that.”

-“I doubt my present situation, socially; whether or not it means something to have a title or a desirable job. The great advantage with philosophy seems to be that philosophers are never pressed to disclose or discuss these social details. Sure, we eventually take a glance at their biography, but Schopenhauer seems just as content in his solitary ‘coffin corner’ of wealth (quoth Barzun), as Heidegger in his Black Forest cabin. Whether or not one teaches at a university seems a trifling matter compared to what actually gets written down. None of us care how excellent or remiss these thinkers might have been in their professional lives, so long as their thoughts were original...but is that judgment a risky one? The more we read, the more we are tempted to rise above direct criticism and launch a meta-critique. We want to diagnose them, psychologically...and in my case, I want to diagnose Kant, Leibniz and Descartes by aesthetic and creative psychological valuations that *do not yet exist*. When confronted with the 99th percentile of human genius, I will not be content to pull great minds *down* to the level of Myers/Briggs. Instead, I want to raise theoretical psychology *up* to the level of Goethe and Pessoa. Our own situation, socially, might in some instances aid us, and in other instances, block our path. Having spent a decade in menial labor *instead of* academia, I feel more at ease with Pessoa than Sartre or Badiou. I too, have lived my own coffin corner revelries.”

-“I doubt my ability to remember all these doubts at once. What if the important ones—the doubts most likely to rescue me from this—have already been passed over? As I was falling asleep yesterday, my mind went nearly blank except for some very trifling and stupid details from earlier that day. In that moment, I casually considered this essay, and wondered about some things I might add to it. In that moment, I amazed myself at how little effort and energy I was able to summon for this task. I realized, intellect is not our default state. We are indeed lucky when anxiety or tension puts our minds into hyper-focus and overdrive, but when this state is not being experienced, what stupid dull thoughts go through a man’s head! I felt embarrassed at how my mind wandered, uselessly, when it might have used those final hours for work and creativity. I felt so useless, and I felt that the burden of maintaining intellect, especially when intellect is most difficult—such as after exercise or a large meal—to be a somewhat unnatural state; I felt as if nature had intended intellect to be a momentary tool or

apparatus to be used sporadically between long periods of physical or sense based activity, at which point a completely unconscious or nearly unconscious mind would take the reigns. Before falling to sleep, I remembered certain words I had blurted out, jokingly, but whose motives were entirely selfish, sensual and unconsciously formulated. When we say, "slip of the tongue" we are giving voice to an animal urge; a perfectly natural urge that slips by the gates where reason has imprisoned it. I would rather not have spoken so crudely and selfishly about the food I was consuming, but in the throes of that ecstasy, my reason completely submitted to the satisfying chemical pleasure resulting from the meal. Later on, when falling asleep, with my blood sugar still quite high from the late meal, even my feelings of disgust and shame were not as reasonable and focused as I wished them to be. It's quite possible that some people are more susceptible to their animal natures than others, but here, I am speaking from the point of view of one whose entire identity and focus of life has been an intellectual pursuit, *and even I cannot maintain as much intellect as I would like. As if intellect were not at all intended to be used in a manner such as this.*"

-“Divorced from the necessities of life, these paragraphs might seem insightful and inspiring to others, who also have escaped the immediate necessities of life, but I confess to you, all who read this, that I am actually evading my life and evading my non-responsibilities...I should have said evading responsibility, but, since I have already, preemptively resigned myself from activity, I am only evading that which I have already avoided...that is to say, I have *persistently abstained*, and feel very aware—acutely aware—of my doing so. I feel aware to the point of tension and anxiety, and this tension and this suffering, caused by non-doing, is also my drug and my lure *not to participate*. The less I participate, the more sustained my level of perception. Concomitantly, the more perception I consume, the more directed and autonomous my expression of consciousness. That which Sartre calls *Freedom*, and Nietzsche calls *Will to Power*, might really be nothing more than this heightened feeling of self-consciousness, when perception is at its maximum, for instance, when I have fasted or when my body and my body's blood are in a perfectly neutral state—a state whereby the body is overcome and forgotten.

As perception diminishes, or I am bodily distracted, I feel a like degree of unconscious sentiment taking over and I lose control over

what I am...not that I am mad or base or licentious, (for you would not discern the change even if you observed me) but rather, I lose the degree of consciousness required to function on the demanding level to which I am accustomed; the demanding level by which all other modes of being seem like bovine complacency and dullness. When I look at the face of my good friend, just as he's making a selection at the liquor store, I no longer see a man. I no longer see anyone resembling my wonderful friend. In his glazed stare, something unconscious penetrates out of his gray-blue eyes and I'm horrified by how easily he gets drowned by himself, even when sober, so long as the prospect of a great lust is pushing upward. Women desire a man overcome by his passion...but for me, when I see hints of this behavior in my close friend, I feel nothing but disgust and sadness. I've lost him."

-“I doubt the next step, that is to say, perhaps I have already doubted everything I am capable of doubting, in the exact manner in which I am capable of doubting it...I now look upon myself, imaginatively, with great hatred and contempt, as if beholding a man whom I have often given good counsel to and whose recklessness always misuses or ignores my advice; I hear myself speaking, as if hearing the droning stupidity of an old friend, from out of a prison cell. Perhaps this time I will give up and leave him to what he deserves...leave him to spend the night, mulling over the same questions again and again. I've already heard the dress rehearsal for these questions! He keeps on shuffling a cancelled deck of cards, tattered and obviously marked. As he draws anew from this old stack of doubt, why does he act surprised when he's defeated once more at his own game of Solitaire? Yes, I recognize these supplications. By now, *I already know* the bridges he cannot cross. *I already know* where his intellect will fail him. The fact that he perseveres at all...I find that grotesque.”

-“What if the answer is not to be found in the mind? What if shadow faith—whose oblivious, deleterious mischief abounds in all men—might be attacked by some means we have never yet considered? What if some vitamin or some food might be the cure for a few of these behavioral phantoms? What if something as simple as a chocolate bar, consumed daily, could noticeably alter our personality? What might the idealist say, regarding human dignity, if Hamletism were equated with a lack of chocolate bars?”

-“I doubt the possibility of regression—Nihilistically, at this stage of human evolution and at this stage in the development of natural sciences and technology, we risk removing all the spurs from the hides of men. Even though none of us are perfectly sheltered or delivered from suffering, we in no way resemble the dignity of those who lived even one century before our time. Why dignity? Which dignity? The dignity of not having freedom; The dignity of knowing, that no pharmacy, no Science and no Governmental program could cure us of certain ailments of body and spirit; The dignity of suffering a certain fate, with no recourse whatsoever. In an age where we imagine elaborate expressions of social mobility, where we might live on student loans for a decade or continuously take prescription drugs illegally, there are no more white whales for Ahab to chase after! Each new fact that science reveals about our genetics or our evolutionary behavior is one more dead adventure and one more magician’s trick humiliated. Peering behind nature’s curtain for too long, we have grown apathetic and listless at the sight of her nakedness. Admittedly, at one point, we as a species put all of our trust in our lofty feelings, our manias and our religious lunatics. Our wholehearted faith in this or that inner experience put wind in our sails and sent both the meager and the mighty running out to meet their destiny, as if no hand could alter it. God’s supposed demise is hardly piquant, compared to the azure dignity we have collectively lost by other means. With mightiest hatred for all reformers and advocates of tradition, I say unto them, there is nothing contained in the whole history of tradition that is capable of repainting the sky to my liking. Instead of arguing over *what* the content of tradition *might be*, it is I who stand before you, abusively, (though I am not by nature an abusive man) and list for you all the modes of experience that can never again be experienced on this earth, so long as man lacks the talent for being thoroughly evasive and unreasonable. *I too*, would love some of the ancient dignities of fate and un-freedom, but now, a geological shift has occurred in the metaphysics of the human species. Instead of being led by a centralizing faith in this or that, we are instead, un-free by a centralizing impossibility of experiencing faith. Do you even understand how much work it is for a man to *stay depressed* in a society such as this one? How many negations and evasions have to be maintained in order *not* to be given medication for what use to utterly define the poetic discipline the world over? Thankful, yes, that we are still capable of being seduced by this or that corporeal entity, but look how readily all avenues of old dignity are banned from us? Regardless of what the average man or woman still believes, the Crucifix cannot

exist side by side the factory crafted automobile and still have any meaning whatsoever. I now feel more pain staring at the engine of a cheap Korean hatchback than I do looking at Hans Holbein's depiction of Christ—the same image that used to give Dostoyevsky the premonition of oncoming epileptic fits. Today, in the advanced state of human futility, I am the idiot who weeps over machinery.”

—“I doubt the content of entertainment and fiction: Perhaps only a certain personality type is even capable of creating at all, or maybe only certain personality types possess the urge to create as a retribution for their own lack of action and participation in the world. If all of our entertainments and diversions are the result of this manner of reality falsification or this bias toward “self-symbolization” over and above honesty, then we may actually possess a skewed vision of the world wherever we have not experienced it first hand; quite possibly, the only types we really understand are those types whose private perception of things dominates their interaction with life. Perhaps, even these types, conceal their true motives and natures by way of fantasy, so as a result, not only are the authors and perceivers hidden, but also, those types who defy the understanding of even the most perceptive people, and whose modality of intercourse and motivation lie outside that which can be imagined by artists, are those who we are least likely to understand without engaging with them face to face. Worse still, as we engage them, we carry with us all the prejudices of fiction and fantasy: the bad advice of a millennia.”

—“I doubt my ability to come up with new ideas. What if the next thing I doubt happens to be something I've already said, or a fruitless detour upon something someone else has already said more efficiently? The status of our thinking mind: the status of reason and thought itself might already be bankrupt. What we attempt to use as a tool of creativity may actually be an arbitrator and an executive for what is already new and already creative in us from some other source or place of mind. When the philosophers credit thought, perhaps they are only crediting the careful elucidation of something creative beyond the boundaries of thought; each alluring lecture may actually stem from something completely alien to thought; Whatever prompts Heidegger to new ideas and whatever Nietzsche refers to when he cautions against the latent urge to vengeance in thinking itself—these are clues that threaten to unseat the academic definition of what philosophy accomplishes and what its actual purpose might be. So long as each new direction begins from a seeming aberration or “newness”, thought

may proceed as it always has, but without such inventions and aberrations of mind, there is perhaps nothing new under the sun for the discipline of thought.”

-“As I wake from dreams I question once more our common definition of time. I long for the mirror image of time itself: I want to see a dense presentation of autistic time; By this, I mean, a vision of the world as pure coincidence of objects, of attitudes, of remembrance, embrace, qualitative intensity, private adherence, varying degrees of tolerance and resistance, and most importantly, the various meanings which reappear and attach themselves to these schema of reality as they arise. Time is made null and effort comes to nothing where these other manifestations of autistic time arise victorious. We do not remember in time; we remember in quality. The most vivid moments are the meaning of time. The most vivid moments define time *for us*.”

-“What is sleep? I’ve seen strobing images flash and change in my mind as I dream and I’ve felt horrible feelings and shames in these images which convey no meaning. Time does not exist in sleep. Between five minute alarm intervals it seems as if a decade might have passed by. And what if we reach a point where we long for nothing but the sham suicide of sleeping. After doubting the nature of the world and the utility of the world again and again, is it possible that our urge to sleep is the best means of escape, or is this escape really an urge to right ourselves and re-orient ourselves: in this case, the “self” being that which we have lost and no longer ascribe any relational value to. Perhaps our urge to sleep lets us know we have lost intercourse with the world; none of our remaining relations are viable, useful or tenable. We are lost. Sleep is the world’s final retribution *against us*.”

-“I doubt my timing. Perhaps I act or think too quickly. At any interval, a solution will present itself. The solution of five minutes is not usually the solution of fifty years. How much meditation is necessary for each “new” thought? And what if our best thoughts, our fifty minute thoughts, put us in a posture towards the world we cannot maintain or put faith in, because we shall always revert back to our five second thoughts in our general behavior, thus making each fifty minute thought—regardless of merit—a hypocrisy and a humiliation to what we are actually able to become.”

-“So many doubts so far, and I’ve overlooked this one: Perhaps women and children are not worth the trouble. Or perhaps they are the secret object of my fantasies, regardless of how strongly I rebel from them!”

-“As these doubts pour out of me with great rapidity, I finally feel that their timing is more important than my aspirations of character. Perhaps, it is these many, many five second thoughts which will allow me to recoil against myself with the disgust necessary to achieve clarity. Ten thousand shallow thoughts are a dense portrait of a man; what excuse can he offer, what philosophy can he save himself with, after he has already painted himself with such a grotesque face? With enough philosophical endurance, perhaps the suicide I’ve always desired may actually come to resemble euthanasia—or in the case of Socrates: martyrdom. As for the characters Timon and Hamlet? The faithless gaze of Shakespearian insight is purchased at a high spiritual price. No one dreams up these characters without tasting their poison. Likely, the poison has its source from within, and as it gets drained out, Timon and Hamlet appear in their odious malignancy.”

-“Would you like to witness a more intense version of faithlessness than that of Macbeth’s Tomorrow speech? Look how easily Shakespeare transitions from nihilism to news of Macbeth’s wife! Even that which seems most intense for Macbeth is suddenly overturned by a new fact and a new development. In essence, Shakespeare possesses a tendency to overturn his own most profound statements in favor of trivial details. Dostoyevsky does the same...but in the end, think of what it costs a man to so continually refute oneself and move forward! To never be allowed the complacent joys of fanaticism! Any manner of faithlessness that actually keeps pace with the world and anticipates it clearly as it unfolds is a Herculean burden. Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow creeps in this petty pace from day to day, and each meaning that begs to stay is cast out and made exile. Meaninglessness would be salvation, but instead, *I am abundance! I am the myriad and the nameless. I am the faithlessness of the beyond.*”

-“Psychological lucidity is so rare in this world that nearly every time someone opens their mouth to make a statement about God, we can be assured that whatever follows will be so utterly impoverished and inadequate that we’d best shut our ears against both warring factions who argue over the God question. Even where Jung comes

closest to accuracy, he is already too esoteric to be heard. Perhaps only a few rare personality types are even capable of listening in this particular direction. For the rest, their own answers to the God question accurately resemble their own modes and schemata of understanding. Their psychological limitations have already shaped the answer above and beyond the free will of their decision making faculties. There is no way of demonstrating this assertion without also laying bare the rest of each person's humiliating weaknesses. As Virgil says, "Character is destiny." We do not get to change characters unless we are already actors."

-“Possibly that which has come to light and come under the reigns of consciousness has also begun to impede us in the art of true thinking. A psychological formula is an excuse not to think. A psychological formula is an act of making a symbol into a sign. For the disciplines of pre-psychological humanity—those whom hindsight calls pious or religious—some of these men and women may actually be practicing psychology in a more intimate and radical manner than it can be otherwise practiced today. Those of us who are adventurous might actually look backwards toward them as a means of moving forward beyond Jung and beyond Post-modern Deconstructionism. Without re-incarnating God, we might actually be able to re-visit some of the healthy methods of self-individuation from out of the past without ever needing to believe in a magical deity or risk getting caught up in religious disputes (which have shown themselves to be nothing but pathological states on an epic level). Can we re-orient ourselves to our own minds, by accepting a somewhat subservient position as regards to consciousness in general? Would it really be so degrading or threatening to modern man, to once more take up the fruitful and creative attitudes of Bach, Pascal, Augustine, Jung, Eckhart or Dostoyevsky? For Sartre, awareness of the void is an urge to creativity no less than that of faith was for his predecessors. Any orientation that admits its own subservient status has already opened the doors of deeper insight and more intense manifestations of awareness. As the armor of self is cast off, our relation to self is enhanced and nurtured toward completion.”

-“Speaking of doubt and speaking of new relations and new aspects of awareness also feels like an impedance. I feel as if each new sentence is another bar added to my prison cell. Each discussion is a turning-away from self: A turning-away and making null the act of beholding and an alienation from the stance of being. At every

moment, the thinking mind wishes to make itself sovereign. Thought is not sovereign. Thought is not the totality of self. All the chimeras and phantoms of self that strike against Thought are the homeless ghosts of a conquered city: this city is the completeness of self. We must seek an orientation to self that lessens the tyrannical grip of Thought without giving up our own clearness of intent and our own mindfulness of reality. Sacrifices and experiments may have to be made in order to achieve this new relation. Thinking alone will not suffice.”

-“Since religion has left the world, man dwells without intent. Those who die today, are buried into this Earth of shallow intent. Throughout history, philosophy has maintained a mediocre relation to purpose in general. It seeks the “wisdom” of things, which is to say, “clear-sightedness”. Wisdom, however it’s earned, remains divorced and without intentionality. Wisdom does not make life worth living and it does not remedy our sense of purposelessness. If anything, wisdom only increases our disgust. Philosophy, however, does at least have a quasi-spiritual purpose and a quasi-faith based initiative: it must seek wisdom only on the conjectural basis that wisdom may actually prove more useful than un-meditated, instinctual action. If we ignore the truthfulness or un-truthfulness of religion in general, and evaluate it solely on the basis of what it grants mankind in terms of spiritual orientation and purpose it comes to mind that very few attitudes toward the world are so thoroughgoing and edifying toward the autistic, creative experience of symbols and values. Even modern psychology falls impotent in its real foundations and excuses for action and self-development. One needs something even more than aesthetic vision to truly be healthy. If artists are the most nearly complete beings, the most nearly lucid beings, then we must scoff at them and deride them—art is like a truncated version of what mankind is truly capable of. Art is a vaudeville of experimentation; sometimes art is even worse than philosophy, because even when it does have a really accurate model of behavior, it offers no mandates or justifications, thus, even the most glorious displays of action are made null or barren because art fails to imbue them with seriousness or foundation. Today, since religion has left the world, mankind’s very best examples are also buried into this Earth of shallow intent.”

In Praise of the Aphoristic Style

What are aphorisms? Why are aphorisms taking over philosophy as both an accepted means of discourse and a highly mature demonstration of philosophical mastery?

"...fire from no source and quake mountains from no fault."

Part XVI
Fire Bringer

Day

Extreme confidence is sinister because it's either lying directly to our faces or it's insane enough to take things farther than anyone else.

Day

If one day, for some unfortunate reason you find within yourself the longing to become a creative genius, the educated people around you will politely tell you the way is barred and that genius is some kind of miracle of God or Nature or some such nonsense. First of all, if you have half a brain at all, you won't be asking anyone but other creative genius' what genius is like or where it comes from. You must even distrust your professors, for scholarly patience is nothing at all like creative genius. Secondly, force yourself to admit, despite even your greatest creations, that your ultimate potential is so far in advance of what you currently are you'd weep to have it shown to you. Now that you've admitted that perhaps a time, a place, and a talent beyond yourself might exist, you no longer need to split hairs over whether you are a genius today, tomorrow, yesterday or never. Just acknowledging you have no idea whence it comes or whither it goes, already puts you at an advantage over the school masters and substitute teachers of the world.

The next step, after disbelieving everything you know about genius is to begin disbelieving in those minds and works of history who cultural tradition has already stamped with the seal of genius. Just because a piece of art is done very well does not make it necessarily a work of genius—It might have happened consciously or it might have come about naively. How can we know for certain if the creator never bothers to talk about it?

With doubt for genius and doubt for non-genius, you must now summon doubt for the very works of genius themselves. Refuse to listen to what non-genius has to say about them. Go right to the source, the masterpiece, the author and the biography of its inception to discover all the clues you can—you must even discover seemingly trivial things about the era of its creation and the temperament of its creator's parents.

Getting to the source eliminates all the clutter and false barriers separating you from genius, but that's not enough. One cannot afford to take on the genius of all professions and all disciplines of art. One must explore some disciplines at the expense of others. Intensity gets you closer, extensity pulls you back. A balanced education might actually result in creative suicide—literally a creative person might need to jump off the rooftop of a hospital building or art museum if he remains mediocre and unfocused in order to adapt himself to the arbitrary bureaucracy of a regular education.

I mention intensity, but that too will eventually stifle an artist and impede progress. One should allow oneself to learn fluidly and autistically, bringing together in ones own head the best minds and creations the world has to offer. One should open a dialogue with the philosophers, poets, and psychologists from day one and begin recording that dialogue in real ink as it unfolds. When you encounter tastes, temperaments and morals you dislike, react to them. Ask yourself what those attitudes and dogmas are missing. If you find creators that seem to champion the longings of your very heart, then copy down some of their sentences and some of their pages in your own notebook so you may return to them at your leisure, at your pleasure and at your despair. Take up their bravest thoughts and carve them into your own heart. These creators—even the misanthropes—have gone ahead of you and already done some of your spiritual work for you. When you read your own notebooks, as they begin coming together like a spontaneous yet mildly directed collage you'll achieve a better semblance of what you are at this moment. The sooner you realize your own nature, the sooner you may begin striving to rebel against it, change it and adapt it—not only your flaws, but the re-adaptation of your strengths. If you study intensely and live intensely you'll even notice that your dreams during the night will begin struggling and battling the same problems you fret about during your waking hours. If you get to some kind of impasse in your studies or encounter ideas which make you fearful or uncomfortable then you are on the right path...but just to be sure, ask yourself for an answer to these anxieties before going to sleep and give your dreams a fair chance at deciding everything that ends in a draw to your waking persona. Don't be at all surprised when sleep begins proving a more detached and reliable counsel than even your closest friend. Keep going to sleep. Keep respecting your friend.

Insomnia is sometimes even more fruitful than sleep. An artist can do the work of two decades in two years of insomnia. Keep in mind I have no way of verifying this claim. Has anyone ever taught a class on the virtues of insomnia, sleep counsel, idol worship, private development or autistic synchronicity? If so, then good luck finding a textbook for it! Though I cannot verify my claims empirically beyond what I already am and achieve—which to some may seem like very little—I can however encourage the seeker to continue seeking novelty, strangeness, and greatness, not just in the world without, but in the experiential world within...after all, where do you expect those great works of your own to come from if not from some inner upheaval and transformation?

We began with doubt. Then we went to the source. Then we studied, worshipped and obliterated ourselves with the material of creative genius. Only a few steps remain. One must now begin to mimic genius. Again, refuse to make any type of standard or egotistical goal of excellence for your own creative performances—I do not mean go forward poorly, I mean go forward with innocence and purity of heart. If you are sad and you write some garbage about being sad, don't tear it up...add to it. The notebook of a genius may contain several unpublished pages, but you will be surprised to find no torn out pages and no passages crossed out except the ones he has immediately revised. (As if spiritual health were somehow linked to washing your cup and bowl immediately after eating!) Genius, contrary to popular opinion, does not forge the steel of perfection, it molds the clay of its secret flaws. Genius works from weakness, maladaptation and frustration. These are individual and painful insights at first, but as time passes, we learn to make them collective, accessible and cathartic. To begin one only needs to take one's own shoddy poetry to heart and use it for something.

Later, once the beginnings of creativity and psychological transformation are underway, one finds that communicating self to self is only satisfying part way. Now one must go back to the nay-sayers, the substitute teachers, the city counsel leaders, and the mathematicians and study the ways and means of their thinking, feeling, judging, sacrificing, worshipping, and future fearing. How do they differ from us? Do you see patterns, thumbscrews, idols, mass desires, or private memories in them for us to exploit? What is the foundation of our own mind and our own thought process? What is the habitual course and tolerance of the spectators perception of our own private compositions?

We admit there's a gap or an impasse, but just how wide and insurmountable is their distance from us? Forget hating or judging them. The world is as it is. No moralizing will help you toward the way of genius. Combat is a waste of resources and valuable energy: your energy! As Victor Hugo says in his morbid romance, The Man who Laughs, be calm friend, "You cannot make the world and you cannot mar it." The world is more durable than your spirit will ever be; no matter the height of your genius or the height of your despair, the world as it is, is already more durable than any singular mortal creation. If your art is sturdy or fluid, that is no matter. The plastic and vulnerable nature of your own existence will never prepare you for the trials and torments that are not-yet.

As your art greets the public, not only will the public's reaction disappoint you, but also, your own failing stamina and weakness of spirit will add heartache to insult. Therefore it is necessary you advance beyond the stage of the dilettante artist and the self-righteous artist. You've asserted your own identity, and perhaps you've done so admirably in relation to what you now are, but genius does not care for what you are. Genius echoes the complaints of the crowd. Genius only cares for what you may yet become. Genius comes to you in your hours of success and your hours of humiliation both—and in both instances, genius will not ever condescend to praise you. Even in your moments of success, genius will be waiting for you and with a hand on your throat or a claw in your heart, genius will make you understand your humiliation and your wretchedness. Faithful always, genius is the priest who keeps on visiting the criminal up until the morning of his execution—*on the morning of your greatest victory and on the eve of your greatest despair, genius still weeps to imagine what you may yet become*. Genius imagines greater genius. Genius imagines better victories and deeper despairs. You will know genius from its impersonators and its charlatans by virtue of its oppressive piety. Genius is the father no man can please. Genius is not the dilettante artist or the Platonist who retreats back to the "ideal sketch in the mind"—those types have nothing of merit to show us. Genius abhors the ideal. Genius wants works of flesh and blood, not the scuttling of phantoms and nursery rhymes to the absolute; flesh and blood adaptations, flesh and blood voices, flesh and blood communications the world can feel and hold and enjoy. Only a fool gives his life for a phantom—and as a result of that phantom, the fool has only his flesh and blood corpse to hang upon the tree of life. Look how the vaudeville of devils continues the regular circuit of their lives with

hardly a mention of the rabbi of Galilee. It's not the vaudeville of life's diversity which is at fault, says the Anti-Christ of creative genius, it's the narrowness of the other man's revelation. Don't go hanging yourself on a cross just yet, unless of course, you hang yourself upside-down for the sake of seducing someone very different from yourself...as a trap.

By now you begin to see the reality of the road ahead of you—not the magic road of lightning strike perfection, but the long labor, slow toil, fruitless experimentation, constant upheaval, constant transformation, constant despair, constant faith, constant adaptation and constant change all within your own very flawed, very weak, very human, very emotional inner being whose inconstant spirit and inconstant commitment keeps getting struck down and bowled over by the uncanny durability of every phenomena we cannot control—including our own hearts.

Be patient, we have only two more topics before our meditation is complete. Despite all the transformations of character and creativity outlined above, the rational mind cannot walk the swaying bridge from man to super-man. The way across involves more than doubt. Doubt is only the gate keeper. The hell across means the wager of body, psyche, emotion, identity, faith, pride, reputation, status, wealth, love, family, and contentment. For the sake of genius, we do not walk skillfully or fearfully across the ravine; we instead walk the tight rope between human and super-human only half-way. The meditation half-ways across either tells us to turn back (which also means going across) or it tells us to sacrifice everything and give ourselves to the void as a sacrifice. Those who meditate across the entire bridge are disappointed to keep realizing that the swaying bridge between man and super-man keeps proving false. For those who never dive into the void, mortal leads to mortal, man leads to man and reason keeps leading back to more reason. What the disciple of creative genius needs is a push over the guard rails into the pit of unreason. Whatever faith I have in the ingenuity of the individual I would readily trade for a natural catastrophe, an irreparable loss, a mental illness, or a religious mania. Who am I to tell the artists of the future they need to give up all that life offers? The wager is too steep. To spurn body, psyche, emotion, faith, pride, reputation, status, wealth, love, family and contentment is a demand only a lunatic could make and a leap of faith only a lunatic would understand. For my part, I don't believe anyone in the history of the world has ever consciously sacrificed all these things to any

conscious human agenda. In my own case, I simply awoke one day to realize each of these precious comforts had slipped away and fallen from my fingertips unawares as I meanwhile became more and more possessed; a self-demonization ending in my having become a mere tool in the devil's workshop. It wasn't greed that traded my soul away, it was a human tragedy at an early age that made me stop caring for it; only later did I realize it had slipped away and gone to the devil. On the road from man to super-man, I am more trance than ambition, more hypnosis than desire and more clairvoyance than activity. On swaying bridges I follow, as the satyr leads me along to the sound of his flute. My doubt and my discipline will never prove so valuable as the Devil's own song of negation playing in my heart.

The undaunted man of creative genius is the avatar of weakness and human tragedy. He transforms lead into gold. The philosopher's stone is a grave in the cemetery of the future where the other philosopher's gather to read only the monument to works created above ground. Everything of value to the destiny of mankind is poured out from the unconscious: a nameless source, which dissolves eventually back into a nameless way. This last and most difficult capstone of our meditation on creative genius is that which no mortal deserves to advocate and no mortal deserves to possess. Those rare beings fortunate enough to both understand it dimly and practice its virtues partially are already the avatars of fully realized human potential, regardless of their mental aptitude.

I take no credit for anything I have done because I aim for a nameless virtue and I follow a nameless way.

"On swaying bridges I follow..."

Day

I'm most productive when I'm procrastinating: the moment I take on a tangible and demanding commitment is the same moment the flood gates of creativity open up in search of new ways to put off or continue evading the dreaded commitment. Sartre's entire philosophy would call us to become slaves to our commitments. With more compassion and psychological honesty than Sartre, I would counsel the

opposite: use responsibility as the sadist he is and enjoy the pleasures of being whipped; only then will you find yourself by surprise.

For example, I did not begin writing poetry compulsively until my napping during calculus class had put me severely behind the other students. When I should have been making efforts to keep up with them, I was actually filling the back of my calculus notebook with fantasies, love poems and hymns to suicide. I got to the point where no amount of effort could have improved my performance in that class. Mere procrastination became terror and lunacy. My unconscious mind exhausted every avenue of fantastic escape and still I suffered. I had never failed before. I had never encountered an impossible hurdle. I did not know myself because I had not experienced my own breaking point. As the anxiety of certain failure approached, I continued to sleep through class and write poetry in place of derivatives. The fact that at the same time I was also sleeping through the next hour's psychology class and setting the curve without writing a single poem testifies to the fact that only extreme struggle and violent inner upheaval causes growth.

More recently, I've been putting off the completion of a music project while having added a hundred pages to this notebook.

Day

We will not truly have entered the era of the Nihilistic Paradigm until I'm dead and my publishing career is finished. This is not a speculation, it's a promise. Right now, we're still too avant-garde: Megalomania is still the norm...

Day

Have I become the errand boy of art? The errand boy of art for the benefit of psychology?

Let's despise ourselves more, we failed artists!

Day

Both of my parents spent twenty years working as psych assistants (orderlies) on temporary psych wards for both adult and children patients. It's highly unlikely either of them ever helped cure anyone or give them back their freedom. I know because at age 18, with the persuasion of my father, I signed my own freedom away by committing myself to a psych ward, at which point they took my belt and shoe laces and politely showed me to a room. As the orderly was about to leave me alone to do paper work I asked, "So, what do I do now?" Is someone going to help me?" To this the orderly said, "The doctor will visit you later this week. If you need anything you can either use the call button or come to the nurses station. If you'd like another pillow or more bedding I'll show you where the linen closet is. Other than that we're only here to keep you safe and make sure you don't hurt yourself."

When the doctor arrived for the first visit, she asked if I minded being locked up. I told her I was in paradise and the food was excellent; according to my taste, I sincerely believed so. I was fed ample portions and exempted from all human labors and responsibilities under the sun, not the least of which were finishing high school. I told her freedom for me was a prison cell and so long as the rest of the world's ills were locked away from me by a steel door, I was better than safe. The only thing that could have made it better is if she were somehow able to take away my mind and my sanity as well.

The third day of my institutionalization, one of the nurses took a blood sample from me, even though I had no physical ailments. The procedure puzzled me. Perhaps we should start asking tree stumps if they feel alone in the universe. Perhaps counting the rings of their bark would tell us what sort of therapy to prescribe...

A week later a different doctor sat me down and asked how I was doing. I jokingly mentioned the odd behaviors of a few of the other patients and confessed to him, "You know, a person could go crazy here..."

Aside from the unhelpful doctors, the nurse responsible for my admittance interview asked me over fifty questions about whether I had any fantasies of harming myself or others and went through an exhaustive list of drugs which I had not yet tried, but later wanted to.

From the interview it was determined that I was an 18 year old male in perfect physical health, with no history of medical illness, no history of substance abuse or addiction, no wish to harm others, no history of prior anti-social behavior or law breaking, no problems following authority, and no history of sexual activity. (Had I been the doctor, I would have skipped the Prozac and went right for the sexual inactivity. I would have given a helpful bit of criticism regarding social demeanor and booted myself back into the world with the maxim: 'the key to your depression is linked to sexual gratification; if you keep refusing that, you'll need a religious solution or poetry.' With that brief survey, I'd have left myself to figure out the rest...and as regards the religious solution, the sole possession of interest which accompanied me into the mental institution was a book entitled God's Funeral. This item was not deemed to merit any clinical relevance whatsoever—a fact which I found demonically pleasing. Yes, of course, take my shoe laces and belt, but leave me the book; give me a bit of space to regroup my suicidal longings with the most finely written treatise on atheism ever published.)

The one bit of information which generated enough concern for locking me up in the first place was a lie my father told me to tell them. It wasn't enough that I wanted to kill myself and dreamed about it every day...what was necessary is that I have an extroverted, object oriented plan to carry out my own death. I told the hospital officials my father had a shotgun for duck hunting in his bedroom closet leaned against the wall behind some camping equipment, and that if I were to kill myself, I'd have used that.

It was assumed that my mother's death—a year and five months prior—was the sole cause of my depression and the doctors kept harping on that issue. When I openly declared my own sense of crisis and the intimate details of my existential despair I was asked repeatedly whether or not the twice a day 400mg dose of Wellbutrin was having any effects yet on my mood. After a week and a half it was not only altering my mood, but giving me such a continuously euphoric sensation that one may as well have designated it a full on manic episode, but since I had never felt anything like that before I was utterly incapable of conveying that point. I was released a few days later, twice as dangerous as before...and I've experienced regular alternation between mania and depression ever since that first and only hospitalization.

Now, when my friend's mother comments ten years later that I "must have a fear of adults", that sentence does not even begin to describe the horizonless scope of my disappointment with the inability of others to offer any kind of sustainable comfort for my chronic mood abnormalities. I refuse to say disorder because I believe there is a way past this experience and that the answer lies within me. I believe in the dignity of my experience and I believe in the necessary reality of my emotional life. I believe that I have made progress and continue to make progress on my own. I believe the expanse of my mind and its sensitive aptitude is not only part of the cause of my suffering but also an irreplaceable jewel of great value. For the man who takes a pill for a headache or a few beers for a lousy day, the prescription is happily accurate so long as he continues to function normally and keep adapting. For my part, only a deeper investigation into the unconscious workings of my own mind have brought me any sustainable relief from this decade of suffering. I do not actually fear adults. In hindsight, I realize how they've disappointed me, but I forgive them for it. As Schopenhauer says, one may only listen to the heights of what one is. If by my own private assessment, Schopenhauer and Dostoyevsky have not suffered to the heights of what I've suffered, then even they are not yet prepared to endure what I have to say, let alone offer me a cure for what I am...for you see I am a perfect storm. I am a fanatic and an insensate monk of suffering! So if I've already found scarce communion in the lives of great thinkers and feelers, then how much more inadequate are the casual pedestrians and supposed specialists who have wandered sometimes eagerly and sometimes cautiously onto the stage of my life?

I have ears for E.M. Cioran. I can listen up to and beyond the heights of Cioran. I have ears for Jung, Pessoa and Thomas Merton—that plateau is not a very populated landing. Do you think I ever wanted to arrive here? Do you think I could have done this all on my own, with merely cleverness and feigning? My quest and my morbid devotion is not yet lived out. I still have a long ways to go before I'll count myself healthy. Even now, I'm barely functional and cannot hold a job without feeling suicidal anguish. My own hobbies and entertainments still flicker out and vanish the moment I need them most. If my life is common, then I have sympathy for common suffering. If my life is exceptional, then only my suffering is exceptional. If my experience is neither exceptional nor common, but dwelling in the murky indifference between them, then perhaps I can

serve as a sign post for others, in this strange land of mists and invisible borders.

Day

Pessoa writes: "Whatever cannot be done in a single burst suffers from the unevenness of our spirit."

In this sentence I find the excuse for my genius: with the potency of individual bursts, I still manage to convey the unevenness of my spirit.

My only apology is having read enough and suffered enough to have rendered myself numb to the word genius. To me, it only means: *flowing from the unconscious*.

Flowing from the sedate and frenzied stream of 'no-gods-ever'.

Part XVII
Meditations on the Unconscious

Day

For the first time in my life, I begin to see the phenomenon of genius quite differently than expected. In Carl Pletsch's book, Young Nietzsche, Becoming a Genius, Pletsch admirably searches for clues to Nietzsche's success, beginning with a look at the philosopher's family origins and early education. What follows after the first two chapters is a pragmatic synthesis of favorable circumstance contrasted with a display of individualism, which surmounted the given values and circumstances of birth, while also utilizing those circumstances. We must also respect Pletsch's contribution in giving us a brief survey of genius as a "social phenomenon" or "romantic ideal". Add to that, Nietzsche's emulation of Wagner's own seductive tactics, that, as we have seen demonstrated, are equally effective in public as they are when translated into the temperament of a so-called "reclusive artist"—the self-surmounting exertion of ego, the magnetism of making oneself into a fate, the dedication of self to a very specific, all encompassing aesthetic vision. Thus far, these observations of Pletsch are all well and good, but for us, for those rare souls who participate actively in genius, these observations are utterly superficial and beneath contempt. Pletsch is a scholar devoted to a scholarly task. The thesis itself, already disqualifies him from genius...and in this realm of nihilistic investigation, we shall soon see how monumentally important that mistake actually is. For other scholars, that which is superficial and grotesque to a genius, is merely sober thinking and great good sense! They huddle their shoulders together around the latest literary journals and nod their heads in approval to one another as they stroke the welcoming velvet texture of the world's superficiality. This breed of superficiality is actually the most abhorrent—even more abhorrent than brutishness or philistinism—because scholarly superficiality is taken for integrity, and admired for its earnest intentions.

Pedantic research, carefully selected quotes and a distillation of mediating sides, gives these scholars an air of both detachment and discipline that by all accounts should in fact yield fine results; we long to praise scholars and archivists for their diligent proselytizing work on behalf of each new generation...that is, until we look into the subtle poisons and congenital anemia that make their work pale and unworthy...even when they never tell a lie, or even dream of deceiving the public. Even at their best, these crusaders do an irreparable disservice to genius. Wasn't it Pletsch himself, who, in formulating a

possible definition for genius, also defined genius as that which surpasses all contemporaries? In more or less words, he already admits the absurd distance between the vocation of scholar and the quasi-religious calling of genius. What shall we make of this new generation of scholars after Nietzsche who suddenly proclaim to us, “We are the late-comers! We are the recent arrivals! We are finally worthy of this Zarathustra! We are his champions!” Too soon and too late friends. Zarathustra has not yet come. Zarathustra is the second coming, indefinitely prolonged...which is to say, scholarly thinking, by definition, cannot ever catch up to or live in advance of genius—even genius long since dead. A closer look at genius will clarify these all to murky assertions; these all to esoteric assertions.

For us to say, “This man participates in genius”, scholarly ears hear a declaration of something possible, repeatable and real. This is not at all the case with genius. Every other labor under the sun admits to being reproduced or emulated; every other labor under the sun adheres to the interchangeability of craft; the anonymity of *teche*; the mechanism of hypothesis, function, engineer and result. Every other labor under the sun—even the most difficult, life long efforts—admit to being cloned. Scholarly labor implicitly attacks the very foundations of genius by the most limp wristed means possible...it satisfies itself with giving genius a clever biography.

If my earlier assertion regarding the nature of human dignity has any merit at all, we must hereby add to our paragraph (on crucifixes and Korean hatchbacks), that genius itself is the final outpost of human dignity. When genius is disqualified or made ontologically conditional—in terms of circumstance or genetics or both—not only genius suffers, but humanity itself is belittled. Genius, as we shall see, is actually indifferent to this fate. Genius already lives beyond this fate, and has always expressed itself with disregard to the contemporary public, which fails to see the target it aims for. Better still, and perhaps more importantly, the arrow which traces the path, from genius to its target, flies invisibly forward, and when it lands home, it is already too late to sketch its biography. The biography of the arrow does not exist. It, by definition, cannot exist. The Arrow of genius does not travel: It appears!

If it's already apparent to the likes of Pletsch, that genius submits itself to a complete aesthetic calling, for which it is paradoxically devoted to self and creating beyond self, then it can never be enough to

content ourselves with listing off which school such and such a man attends or what his father was like or what native intelligence such and such a mind possessed. These facts are trivial; they may as well be included in the biography of ten thousand others whom we have already forgotten.

I am not a scholar, so here is my admission to their ilk: The scholarly mind, may in fact surpass genius in every expression of its intellect: The scholarly mind, may in fact not only be better suited to reality, life and career, but also, as if that weren't enough, the scholarly mind might also be inexplicably superior to genius based on every quantifiable test and ordeal the rational mind can formulate. Genius, might actually struggle and seem disoriented with the world it's presented with. Perhaps we encounter genius on the margins of our own paths, and if we stoop to comment, we may actually call this breed of humanity foolish, stupid or under-developed. Genius, as if by a rule, resembles the opposite of dignity...Beyond the grasp of those nearby, it persists silently. Even where it begins to be heard or rewarded, still it never quite accommodates itself to the world as readily as other beings; despite its ignoble state, and its almost guaranteed burden of social exile. The bloody and chaotic annals of human history tempt us to offer a retribution for this injustice: Despite this world's prolific and seemingly endless capacity for folly, the accident of genius—nature's lucky aberration—may perhaps be humanity's only real justification for having existed at all.

Like most truths worth understanding, genius is paradoxical. In order to clarify, we must also obscure. To approach genius, is also to obscure our own conventional modes of progress and research. The closer we approach or approximate genius, the further we have gone toward negating ourselves. What already sounds like lunacy, even to my own ears, is doubly proved by every sentence of this very work. This complete work itself, already follows the method of genius, because it already is an act of genius. Even in its first draft, full of grammatical errors a student of fifteen might blush at, still I declare to you, despite the spurious nature of this expression, I already demonstrate everything you could ever learn about the nature of genius! I challenge you to find that one piece of straw necessary to disqualify my previous statement, but you will not succeed in finding it. The arrow is flown. It already appears!

Our earlier meditations on Shadow Faith also apply to the scholar. The Scholarly discipline takes upon itself the eye patch of empiricism. To offer a ready contrast, genius is closer to divination than knowledge. What appears, for us, as the knowledge genius bestows, is more poignant as genealogy than fact. This knowledge has its own autistic method of arrival which organizes data available to everyone in such a way that no person alive ever considered this new presentation; genius offers an arrangement of data that no previous mind was capable of formulating...and after it has been formulated, it is already too late to call this form of knowledge impossible, because some strange rift in human empiricism has already been unalterably violated and transgressed. Genius executes an inherent violence against the order of the world. From its very beginning, genius acts holistically, almost to the point of learning its own inner fascism, and then it strikes!

To even begin to suspect Nietzsche of feigning the postures of Wagner or Schopenhauer in order to better appropriate genius for himself is complete blasphemy. Yes, of course we are each subject to various stages of development, *Ex Nihil*, but mere posturing and native intelligence are not yet genius. One has only to read, “*Ecco Homo*” to hear a list of what Nietzsche, at the end of his career, puts forward as important to his own “health”, which is to say, his ability to sustain genius. Dry air, good digestion, a ripple-less lake, free from desire—his favorite advantages lie so far beneath our line of sight, they may as well be something our own shadow faith precludes us from. Better still, Nietzsche’s admission of the great multitude of conflicting tensions that compete within him and actually thrive together in the strange soil of his unique temperament—these are perhaps the best clue yet, for our eager scholars, but sadly, to possess the exuberant vitality necessary to harvest such a crop, I see no inroads for doing so without also attempting exactly what is being attempted here and now, in this very essay; an abridgement or summary of this effort would already risk obscuring the strange volatility of Nihilistic madness. In my mind’s eye, regardless of how many pages it takes me to convey it, I have already seen the end complete.

To attempt the most audacious statements, and still to sound innocent or heedless of worldly merit—one must do more than merely convince oneself or give in to megalomania; one must be following an inner demand that speaks in conjunction with a much larger directive; a directive that cannot admit fragmented voices or haphazard offshoots. What sober minded scholar ever dreams of titling a thesis: “Why I am

so clever” or “Why I write such good books”. The audacity is almost more comical than we can even endure, yet, in the end, we see no good reason to object. We feel, oddly satisfied. Even if these sentences are the two sentences that most stray from Nietzsche’s genius, the content of these essays proves admirably superior to them. Even genius, should be allowed its sense of humor! Humor itself, does not splinter or rend the tapestry of genius: it keeps it in balance. Irony is already a work of unresolved tension. Sustained irony, eventually, almost certainly, reaches an unsustainable peak of madness. By far, my favorite line in *Ecco Homo* is Nietzsche’s passing comment on Shakespeare: “I know no more heart rending reading matter than Shakespeare: what must a person have suffered if he needs to be a clown* that badly!”

(*Nietzsche actually uses the German word *Hanswurst*)

Nietzsche’s intuitive assumption that a poet must only create from his own inner reality gives us a formula for invalidating all scholarly effort. With Schopenhauer, (and a century later when Nietzsche echoes him) we’re granted an aphorism on the nature of understanding which stratifies the intellectual landscape: We only hear to the heights of what we already are. Education itself is already a humiliating paradox of fatality and futility. Those who are capable of us, have no use for what we have said...as for the rest, their ears cannot strain far enough to manage the task. If a few lucky souls should eventually contrive a means for giving their ears a ladder or a vaulting pole, they will feel a great sense of disappointment, when gravity finally takes its revenge on their unnatural heights. It is not by any shallow means that such creativity as this can be sustained. If you’d like to make me a sacrifice, drain out every ounce of your blood into a silver chalice and serve it to your enemy. After this atrocity, I’ll give you no further lessons.

When Pletsch attempts to give a preliminary definition of Nietzsche’s path toward genius, he offers us a quote from Karl Marx, “Men make their own history, but not just as they wish, not under the circumstances of their own choosing, but under the given and inherited circumstances that directly confront them.” Now watch, as this perfectly admirable quote, by a different but equally strong genius gets bastardized and lowered down to the level of the scholar himself: Carl Pletsch uses this quote to validate his own synthesis of individualism and born circumstance, and wagers to say of Nietzsche, “He created himself as a genius. Making himself a genius, he made his own history.” Look how narrow the margin of error between lucidity and

superficiality! Marx's quote is perfect...yet in the hands of an imbecile, it gets derailed a half second later. It's not that we disagree with Pletsch, regarding his final sentence. Nietzsche did create, and Nietzsche should be held responsible for his manner of creating, but, tragically, despite all of Pletsch's good intentions and obvious respect for Nietzsche, he has substituted the master's apprentice for the master himself: with a borrowed wizard cap, esoterically adorned with moons and stars, donning robes much too large and clumsy, he waves a false wand and works spells he cannot actually control. Pletsch puts genius in service of the Master as if it were a skill or a trade—that is exactly the opposite of what genius is. In reality, it is the man who submits to the unconscious, nearly complete revelation of genius from within himself, “Men make their own history, but not as they wish, not under circumstances of their own choosing”, in this sentence, the bawdry factuality of the world is not in any way entering the mind of Marx...or even if Marx intends materialism, it is his own autistic unconscious desperation that speaks up from the depths and gives a revelation concerning the nature of human creativity—it is not as we wish, and it is not by our own choosing. We are not free to say anything we like. We are not acting out the heteronomy of our will. So far as we offer genius levels of creativity, and manage somehow to sustain these expressions of genius, we are merely empty vessels for the convoy of a nameless abundance, which manifests from out of our situation, as a long prepared distillation of our own exact essence. Esoterically, genius is not free. Necessity—not Idealism—keeps us on course. Fate—not creativity—is our sovereign Priestess. Without complaint or apprehension, we run joyfully toward our fate and allow whatever expressions it demands of us. If you would like to see in this formula an excuse for God's place in the universe, or perhaps more psychologically, the workings of whichever hemisphere of the human brain remains darkly below consciousness, it makes no difference whatsoever, you see, despite our absolute dominance and superiority over all other styles of creativity, genius is willing to mortify itself and claim zero credit for that which it accomplishes. If we should conclude happily, after finding no actual communion or solace in our contemporaries, it is only because we have learned to love fate. Finally, Amor Fati!

Part XVIII
On Profundity

Day

As I spread a thin layer of jelly onto a single piece of warm toast, whose crumbs predictably flake off beneath my hand, I hear a steel string guitar from the living room. Weakly at first, I hear my roommate's fingers tracing arpeggios in groups of four, ascending. A low rumbling, dry spruce resonance rises into a crescendo as he begins strumming six string chords and finally climaxes with finger picked, flamenco triplets. I look out the kitchen window as I chew this piece of toast. I feel a great sense of humiliation in having accomplished nothing, or nearly nothing these past ten years. All the more hurtful, I have finally admitted to myself the impossibility of chasing both music and literature at once. I have to give up music...and still, music mocks me and wants to lure me back into its sublime cult. Nothing I will ever say can be as powerful as music. There are no books capable of surpassing song. Music is simply a more perfect means of seduction...yet, music is largely dissatisfying on account of its lack of consciousness. Music both comes from, and acts upon a strata of perception beneath our means of investigation. It arises without a biography or a trace. Music, like the arrow of genius, does not travel, it appears. We do not grope for the next pitch, *we remember it*.

Slight sadness and troubled joy grip me as I chew my toast and listen to the strange music being played from the other room. I consider Deleuze and the final word of his magnum opus. *Mechanosphere*? That's the stupidest, most unnecessary intellectualization I've heard since Thomas Aquinas made his own hierarchical list from God on down to animals, plants and rocks in his *Summa Theologica*. Do we really need another substitution? Can we really intuit greater depth in simply condensing our prose to a human breaking point of unbelievable density? As I chew this piece of toast, with a thin layer of jelly, I feel sustained and satisfied. *Mechanosphere*, classless society, God, genius, Buddha, Tao—to me, these are all interchangeably meaningless abstractions. No amount of rigor attached to them will ever bring me the satisfaction of an acoustic guitar. Today, I finally have the heart to abandon what I love most, and focus my entire energy on this present work; what we love, is not always what we are best suited for.

Schopenhauer was thirty when he completed *The World as Will and Presentation*. Drearily, it is at this very same age at which I plan to *begin* my education. Schopenhauer thought and produced in the

shadow of Hegel, whom he called a “clumsy charlatan”. Today, in confronting Deleuze, I feel that I am at war with a “rigorous charlatan”, and my case is no better off.

For ten years, in varying shades of menial employment and chronic depression I’ve tried to inch closer to some means—any means really!—of communicating my Nihilistic revelation. Because the essence of this revelation is so near to the precise expression of myself, I labored in vain to seize upon external arguments or outside facts that coincided with my revelation. Worse still, it took me the better half of the last decade to even realize that my own way of seeing things *did not* coincide with the belief or the reality model of others. Ten years ago, what I took for common sense, I now, to my great disappointment, discover to be so utterly unique and rare it demands I compose this entire treatise to guard against its being lost. Two simultaneous curses descend upon me at once: The idea that my vision is unique and the idea that this vision cannot be expressed adequately by any surrogate means: Basically, I must give birth to my own colossus, or these two curses, which are really one organic curse, will haunt me with a sense of spiritual devastation for the entirety of my life. I cannot escape my fate, by means of the scholarly endeavor. The domain and range of scholarly discourse, as it now exists, already bars the way to my revelation, so I must find another means. Furthermore, I cannot advance my great idea by means of any New Age obscurantism or occult formula, because this treatise—my entire Nihilistic dissertation—is not a religion or a means of seduction, it is instead, quite the opposite; it is a coming-to-light of consciousness itself; consciousness finally within reach of what it already is and for a very long time, has been. When I look in vain to my hands, for my next bite of toast, I realize the last morsel has already been swallowed. I have searched externally and beyond myself, only to mistake what I already was.

Amor Fati? Love of fate? Surely that is the very last thing in the world man is capable of loving. To love one’s fate is also, a complete acceptance of self. Further still, each unique mode and expression of self, as an individual, autonomously free to choose his own intercourse with reality is diametrically opposed to the acceptance of fate. The self that is free is also the self that fears being enslaved to a static fate. Freedom is the wanderlust of not being dead; of not finally being merged with one’s own epitaph...one’s own grave marker. By intuitive speculation, one would imagine creative genius to be forever at war

with the idea of fate. What enemy poses a greater threat to the autonomous expression of freedom and dignity, than that spectral weapon, coldly wielded by fate? If we take Nietzsche as a model for genius, we should expect him to curse fate and laud freedom. Is that the formula we deduce from *Ecco Homo*? On the contrary! To our surprise, Nietzsche *praises* fate and necessity. Let's not stop here. Let's extrapolate farther: If genius expresses the pinnacle of human freedom and creativity, total negation and nullification of that gift would mean exactly this: resignation to fate. At this point, a Rosetta stone is revealed. Genius gives up its lithographic secrets. Non-image areas, which until now have repelled ink, are finally seen as integral to the process itself. Genius, in all its modes of expression and activity, is a rogue pendulum whose period swings between opposite, mutually nullifying phenomenon. Profundity halts the engine of creation. Synthesis is the death of creativity. Synthesis...or instead, the psychological realization of one's own method is already the termination of genius and the beginning of pedantry. So long as the highest values still devalue themselves, these values remain in a state of perpetual tension and doubt, which, as we have seen, are the ambrosia of creative action. While shadow faith impedes us and strives behind our backs to secure personality and stability at all costs, the employment of Doubt—shadow doubt, or willful doubt as we have called it—unlocks the chains of Prometheus. A new fire—the fire of the gods—descends into the hands of mortals once more. Shadow faith—that passive faith we know not of—is illuminated by means of a new kind of faith: a provisional leap into the fires of our own doubt. Promethean doubt. The challenge of doubt itself already sets into motion a war against old faiths and old prejudices. For genius, it is not enough to stop at atheism or critique of government, religion or culture. Genius demands full scale Nihilism and total war on not only every expression of the external world, but also, much, much more importantly, full scale war upon every past and present expression of self. The result of this warfare—or better, perhaps we should say, 'provisional warfare'—is the emergence of a being capable of devaluing values at will, without ever resting upon one or the other extreme. Genius is pure potentiality. Genius is unconcerned with dualism; Genius in fact fails to understand what is even meant by dialectics or dualistic, dyad expressions. Active Nihilism as a creating force, draws upon the infinite mana of all nullified positions. The greater the ascension of thought and thinking, the more vulnerable such positions show themselves in the presence of raw emotion and humor. If you make the effort to doubt what is, there will always be some

means of choosing, from out of the infinite plentitude left over in the wake of that choice. If genius shows itself to be insincere and frivolous regarding the most important aspects of its own expression, we can only infer from its irony that stopping at self praise would threaten its self-expression still more than ridiculing itself: Beyond feeble displays of modesty, genius is either completely hostile to its own abilities or it champions them with ironic, semi-painful laughter. The Buddhist ideal of maturity and ego-free behavior is not beyond the reach of genius, but this strange being, this Buddha is a special plateau in the genealogy of genius; pause for a moment to consider what that Buddhist state is actually advocating. Buddhist expression is a striving to both be and sustain a shade of profundity. Profundity is the Achilles heal of genius...only by this means is genius destroyed or liberated from participation in Maya. Profundity, as we understand it, is not the task or the violence of creativity, but the rising to consciousness and the late possession of forces that have now ceased to be at war. Buddhism's great failure is its decision not to give any praise to the highest heights of despair. Buddhism has failed to resist its final temptation: the temptation to become a religion. Buddhism offers its profundity, without advocating its genius. The entire situation appears as if the Master himself did not advocate his own life, but only the late outcome and stagnant negation of that life. Buddhism chooses profundity over genius. Christ, the same. Profundity forgives the universal sin of activity, and through its seductive icons, seeks to bring the world to a halt, in a shameful display of metaphysical world peace...better that our collective activities should expend and destroy life wastefully, than relegate it to a prison cell! Genius refuses profundity.

More and more, as this dissertation forges ahead, old parables and offhand utterances begin to claim the austere meanings they have always held, without our comprehension. This entire treatise might better be simplified into a cryptic sentence found on a fortune cookie. The urge, to answer every question, with a more beautiful question is not just the urge to resist profundity, it is the urge to resist the shadow faith each profundity tries to evade. The continuous work of question formulation not only degenerates into the madness of nihilism, it also brings about the ontological shift within being that activates genius level activity. Observe this quote of Proust's which he unwittingly lifted from a passage in Schopenhauer, (I could have cited the original instead, but I prefer Proust's version):

“...brief though our life may be, it is only while we are suffering that we see certain things which at other times are hidden from us—we are, as it were, posted at a window, badly placed but looking out over an expanse of sea, and only during a storm, when our thoughts are agitated by perpetually changing movements, do they elevate to a level at which we can see it the whole law-governed immensity which normally, when the calm weather of happiness leaves it smooth, lies beneath our line of vision; perhaps only for a few great geniuses does this movement of thought exist all the time, un-contingent upon agitations of personal grief, yet can we be sure, when we contemplate the ample and regular development of their joyous creations, that we may not too readily infer from the joyousness of their work that there was joy also in their lives, which perhaps on the contrary were almost continuously unhappy?”

Un-contingent, perpetual agitation and uncertainty? Sounds like a description of the perfect Buddhist hell. Nihilism is the very model of creativity, gravitation and displacement. For the Taoist, heaven is sustaining. For each human being, regardless of aptitude, the ability to sustain one's ambition and one's endeavors is the highest attainment. Paradoxically, attainment itself is no longer any sort of measure of our humanity; only during struggle and uncertainty are we living to our fullest potential. Nihilism is not pessimism or optimism. Neither of these cults have any meaning to Nihilism. Nihilism is what must be offered, when finally each of these modes of perceiving have been rooted out by their psychological foundations and shadow faith prejudices of directionality: Optimism from sensuality and Pessimism from intellect! “Roots, oh you clear heavens!” quoth Timon of Athens. Nihilism seeks to take everything by its roots. Cheap Nihilism resembles adolescence or worse, the agitated contempt of a Socrates or a Voltaire. Genius level Nihilism claims both the digestive health Nietzsche describes and the psychological insight Jung demonstrates. Propositions are no longer taken, either/or. Subtle discernments take heed of each psychological prejudice and rationalistic intention. Not only does advanced Nihilism possess the ability to see around corners, it also possesses the ability to look deep into the future of its own creations and bring the ending into the present moment. There has yet to be a philosophical treatise both praising activity while at the same time it calling it pointless—a state of bliss, to possess both the lucidity of the cynics and the joy of the optimists. Nihilism is a sweeping justification for the world's ceaseless re-organization and clamor of

taste: ceaseless activity—the almost, not yet of fulfillment. Despite our appearance of being vain or superfluous, the making manifest of shadow faith and self-assertion is also a dynamic adventure, without which, creativity is halted. Profundity halts the engine of creation. For my part, this urge to halt is the only solace to be found in philosophy. Profundity has the ability to outstrip, if only for a moment, the entire mystery of the universe and grant us an unlabored breath of (false?) relaxation. Profundity, even after ten years of suffering, is a mild sigh of relief.

Part XIX
On Doubting Genius

Day

These last three chapters come directly from my own revulsion at Carl Pletsch's book, Young Nietzsche, becoming a Genius. For me, the moment of lucidity which instantly gave me the idea for my own critique of genius came when Pletsch pointed out Nietzsche's having created a work of genius, The Birth of Tragedy, while also not really knowing or admitting to himself (Nietzsche) that he was in fact a genius. Throughout Pletsch's investigation—which never really amounts to anything more than a biography—Pletsch haphazardly uses the term genius repeatedly without any consistent idea of how to define it. At one moment he points to it being a social pose then the next minute a hereditary factor then later a public agreement. It is the point at which Pletsch declares Birth of Tragedy to be a work of genius that we finally realize Pletsch has no idea what criteria to use when faced with this strange word. His scholarly timidity forbids him anything but provoking and tickling the issue...but if this is his intent, then his failure is inexcusable when he actually bothers to call anything at all, a work of genius. You cannot bandy about with a term in one chapter and then use it absolutely in another. Pletsch seems so convinced as to the reality and status of Birth of Tragedy that he fails to see how detrimental such an assertion is to his thesis of putting genius in question. Worse still, Pletsch never means to put genius in question—that fact is only auxiliary—what he really does is keep drumming up ways to put Nietzsche's genius in question. But each moment we ask, well sir, genius based on what? What are you getting at? Our continued disappointment for not getting an answer begs us to ask ourselves, what is genius? To this, our first observation is Pletsch's guilt in using genius in the same way Nietzsche cautions us against the words "Good and Evil" in his work, Beyond Good and Evil. We cannot simultaneously invest a word with both moral significance, qualitative assessment and absolute quantitative expectation. While each of these three modalities are valid directions for conversation, we cannot engage in all three of these directions at once. When applied to the vague word 'genius', we cannot demand genius offer us, simultaneously an either/or existence, a qualitative valuation, a spiritual meaning and a discernable measure of aptitude. If we want to make the issue even more convoluted, we might even beg for genius to be whatever expressions go beyond human aptitude for *comprehension* in regard to the manner in which they have come into existence (not of course saying anything about their content, which, should probably be at least somewhat coherent...)

Now, having stated this difficulty with Pletsch's investigation, one can see how unsettling it is for a man to both attack genius from all sides, while also admitting or assuming a specific text to actually be a product of genius. For Pletsch, the man himself—Nietzsche— seems to be the problem while the product itself, The Birth of Tragedy, seems to be beyond question in its demonstration of genius. This thesis separates the man from his work in such an alienating way that we feel ready to believe the two have nothing in common whatsoever. In this case, the grandeur and aptitude of the product is put forth as the null variable—the proof itself—while the man behind the creation is now in question and awaiting our judgment of him. Do you think Nietzsche is sweating the outcome? Do you think his unpopular lectures or the annoyance of his colleagues has anything to do with genius? Do you think the grandeur of his work is his actual merit? Or is the merit of genius actually to be found in the genealogy of its manifestation? And shall we say that such a man is responsible for that genealogy, or does he more resemble a victim of it: a fate?

A scholar might do well to doubt the existence of genius. A scholar might actually distance himself from his peers, by operating under the assumption that genius is nothing more than myth and romanticism. When considering the biological fact that Nietzsche wrote his own auto-biography at age 14, (choosing a title which plagiarized Goethe's biography) it would be imbecilic to *already* attribute him with the status of genius by way of his hackneyed teenage recollections, but, more important than the content of Nietzsche's adolescent biography is the brazen disregard for reality demonstrated by such an endeavor. Nietzsche acted in accordance with his own ignorance; he never bothered to postulate that he *wasn't* a genius. Notice that Nietzsche, unlike at the very end of his career, is not attempting to assert that his 14 year old self is a genius by emulating Goethe. The subtle observation worth making lies in the shadow faith of undeveloped minds, which have no means by which to qualify the adult world. Undirected assumption is a trait characteristic of children and perhaps, a trait genius continues to possess into adulthood: a passive belief that genius does not exist. In many ways, children with strong intellects behave as miniature adults and understand much more of the world than we give them credit for. We cannot point to an age where intellect definitively asserts itself; intellect has the same continuity as Nietzsche's adolescent autobiography: the intellect of a 14

year old recollecting the previous ten years might as well be included in *Ecco Homo*, not because it is a proof or disproof of the man's worth, but rather, as a painfully disappointing foil to the heights of intellectual maturity. Shall we be disappointed or awed? To hold side by side both the weakest and strongest evidence of self-realization—what does that mean for the concept of genius?

To my mind, humanity's worst prejudice is the need to associate genius only with works of quality or exceeding degrees of excellence. By this stubborn view, the unique character of genius is confounded by judgments of good/bad, tasteful/ugly, original/derivative. With this outlook, we shall not only be fated to ignore the early manifestations of genius, but also, more importantly, we misunderstand the nature of very late developments of genius—not on account of our not being able to comprehend them, but on account of our not realizing how they took shape or why. Genius is not interesting on account of its content, it is interesting on account of its method of expression. The deafening plenitude of the world needs no more facts and no more inventions! It is finally time for us to admit one of the advantages of our modern decadence and luxurious excess—the asphyxiation of our sense of surprise. If our era offers us an advantage, its advantage lies in our ability to better understand genius, not in terms of achievement but in terms of expression. For those that already see it, genius looks like a repetitive psychological parody of itself. Nietzsche's great gift to humanity, his Zarathustra, actually makes us feel nauseous in the face of genius; we, the late comers and last men, we are finally undeceived as to the workings of genius. Aptitude is still a form of distance, but disregarding aptitude, we see lesser degrees of 'genius' at work everywhere. The accidental errors of a fool have their own hidden intentions as well; in them we may also see Zarathustra at work.

If we follow the logic of dreams, Zarathustra's Eternal Recurrence might not actually have anything to do with time or mathematical duration. Recurrence might actually refer to those experiences within our lives which slowly accumulate in our minds and come back to us in the form of both elaborate dreams and artistic creations. The source of Zarathustra's great joy is his realization that every aspect of experience is put into the service of psychological health, development and well-being. Even rape is creative! However crippling our misfortunes and our sufferings, there exists the possibility, given the right exertion of strength, intuition and foresight, we might count them as blessings. Near the very height of

psychological development, the great geniuses of self-realization have often shown themselves to be *jealous* of the misfortunes and hardships of others. William James writes to a relative, wishing he had sinned more. Bataille wants transcendence through transgression and taboo. And wasn't it St. Augustine who, while despising sin, also felt that sin brought men closer to God, thereby creating an unasked for intimacy with god which the chaste could not entirely know? Dostoyevsky also treats of this. Returning to Nietzsche's Zarathustra, consider the following passage:

"For in Laughter, all evil is present, but it is absolved and sanctified by its own bliss—

And if it be my alpha and my omega that everything heavy shall become light, every body a dancer, and every spirit a bird: verily, that is my alpha and my omega.

—Oh how could I not be ardent for Eternity, and for the marriage ring of rings—the ring of the return?"

Imagine for a moment, that eternity, for Zarathustra, is synonymous with the infinite plentitude of the present moment; let it be no different than St. Augustine's vision, while walking up a flight of stairs, that he is entering a vast field of memories. How does Nietzsche, the chronic invalid and wastrel, describe the ideal transformation of the body? As the perfect focus, health and discipline of physique: Into a dancer! And how to describe his own melancholy and oft disappointed spirit, so use to the abyss? As a bird! Verily, he becomes his own opposite, not out of madness or negation, but out of transmigration of spirit through poetry. If you look closely, Nietzsche is perfectly coherent and consistent with his overall vision. In refuting the back-worlds myths he champions the real world, as it is. His salvation demands reality; it welcomes the world as he's been fated to experience it. When illness becomes a dancer and depression becomes a bird, these are not the lunatic imaginings of escapism but rather, more poignantly, the joyful assimilation of self, as one already is; only after that transformation has occurred in himself can there be any sense in calling his body a dancer and his spirit a bird. The joyful bird Nietzsche paints is not the opposite of sorrow, but the flight *of sorrow*.

Of all the ways Nietzsche's philosophy has been misappropriated and misunderstood, the gravest sin is undoubtedly the failure to

understand the concept *Übermensch*. The result of the word “Superman” has proved to be a horrifying disaster. If we had only imagined a sunset and a sunrise while also considering the psychological coming to consciousness and coming to light of identity, we might have related the German term “*Untergang*” or sunset with Nietzsche’s use of “*Übergang*” for the sun’s ‘going over or across’, and then seen the relation of those words to his human ideal, the *übermensch*: *The being whose awareness rises up and goes across like the health and brilliance of the sun itself*. How can we mistake this analogy when Nietzsche chooses as title for one of his later books, *Daybreak*? The lighthearted imagery of Nietzsche’s “Sunny Man” or “Sunshine Man” doesn’t seem in any way to resemble the robotic fiends who mindlessly direct convoys of innocent Jews to prison camps and gas chambers. It should also be noted, this rising up and going across might refer to more than just the ascension of self-awareness. It might also regard the ability for ‘going-across’ from one hemisphere of the brain to the other; from the rational to the poetic, from the cognitive to the autistic. If this is Nietzsche’s artistic formula for genius, we have no basis for wanting to restrict these types of human development—these poetic developments—to merely those who exceed their peers or produce difficult sermons. We must also wager that Nietzsche’s artistic benevolence and lucidity was always slightly ahead of his anti-democratic, infuriated displays of pedantry. Although he may have lusted after and praised the highest human type, it should be noted that he did so only in accordance with his philosophy: *he wanted this type for himself!*

The burdens and problems manifest in that cowering disciple of Wagner—while delivering those failed lectures on the purpose of education and the proper role of genius—seem to have finally been resolved when this pedantic philologist became a poet; when finally, the explosive energy of doubting his own genius brought to light everything he had not yet realized in himself. E.M. Cioran mockingly offers the conjecture that Hitler may have been the most perfectly self-actualized man who ever lived. Regretfully, he has Nietzsche to thank for that. Now, I ask again, shall we measure genius by the grandeur of its works or the genealogy of its expression? Let Hitler stand for the genius of superficial grandeur—parading through the streets for the sake of newspaper photographers, with the borrowed walking stick of a very different sort of man...

Day

Communism, dreaming of classless society:

Democracy, dreaming of universal equality:

Where is the governmental initiative which does not labor *against genius* from the outset...educating its people to distrust or hate superiority?

Part XX
Beyond the Reef of Solipsism

Day

Sartre announces once more the reef of solipsism, confronts it, and for a moment imagines the possibility of overcoming it. More interestingly, he returns to Descartes and the Cartesian Primacy of Knowledge, attempting to revise or over turn it. In some ways, Sartre's critique seems to re-orient the mind regarding the Cogito formula, but gains no ground in defeating solipsism. Derrida and Foucault also return to Descartes, not for the sake of ontology but for interests of a structuralist critique, directing their energies to calling into question the means with which Descartes began his investigation into method and first philosophy. To this day, Solipsism remains. It haunts philosophy. Some philosophers, such as Schopenhauer, have actually made the dilemma more intense and more complicated: instead of regarding Solipsism as a thing to be overcome, in the hands of Schopenhauer it becomes a framework for perception itself; a complete system for realizing both the inherent, unconscious will-to-life and the nullity of perception as originating in the mind itself. Let's return to Descartes. I feel as if something simple has been passed over by Sartre, Derrida and Schopenhauer. First of all, take Descartes' opening doubts—the skepticism of sense knowledge, of madness and of dreams. He feels as if there might be a road to knowledge that might prove true even in the case of dreams or madness. He postulates that there may in fact be an evil genius trying to keep him from the truth of the world. He even goes so far as to provisionally suspect God of being an evil being. Perhaps even the entire universe itself were allied against him so as to obscure the true nature of reality. At the conclusion of his meditations, Descartes convinces himself that since he is thinking, he is also in fact existing and since he can conceive of perfection God must therefore exist also. In my mind, I have never read a more bumbling, pedantic imbecile than Descartes. His time is up.

When Descartes doubts sense perception based on the objection of dreams he should have already made the leap into Schopenhauerism: Sense impression is first off a very private and direct access to the world. On the premise that such a world is a dream, we are left with nothing but phantasm impression from which to construct the world. At this point, we have not yet reached a foundation for empiricism, ontology or metaphysics. In a sense, this first doubt rids us of empiricism through the senses. With his next step, Descartes misses the opportunity to nullify the other half of empiricism: that of deductive logic. If a series of statements can lead to a given conclusion then I

may yet reach knowledge without actually interacting with a tangible universe. Essentially, Descartes finds no great anxiety in allowing the world not to exist, yet once he has provisionally disallowed the world, he goes on to make a sincere attempt at finding some shred of truth or knowledge from out of a phantasm. To really drive home my point, and show the strangely weighted scales from which Descartes is proceeding, one must realize that Descartes has entered into a dream-state where existence is no longer as it commonly appears and from out of this state he is attempting to find a solid foundation. How come no one has ever critiqued this aspect of his departure into doubt? Without even discussing madness or lunatics, Descartes brushes them aside with a mere decree...yet isn't Descartes actually taking up none other than a provisional lunacy? Isn't Descartes reverse engineering a state of lunacy in order to put common sanity into question? Even though he has entered into a self-allowed, phantasmal, solipsistic universe Descartes is still searching for a solid foundation. He is still looking for the inner half of empiricism, a ground for ontology and a ground for metaphysics. What he eventually finds, actually convinces him and many generations to come the fallacy of a completely inane proposition. More accurately, a two-fold inanity: one regarding being and the other regarding God. In truth, Descartes appropriates neither.

We cannot make assumptions about the lunatic's inner world or the foundations of his truths. The lunatic may in fact have an elaborate system which we cannot grasp using the faculties of our sane mind. We cannot even know finally that we are the sane ones and that the lunatics are the insane ones! To admit otherwise is to intermingle serious philosophical investigation with a hodgepodge of commonsense by sheer whim and fancy. Philosophy is supposed to proceed from the point of total skepticism; proceeding from a point of bias or partial skepticism actually reveals a latent unease about those things we have taken for granted. In truth, Descartes might not actually be willing to negate God and he might not actually be willing to suspect himself of madness. (Perhaps Descartes dismisses madness a bit too quickly...a bit too neurotically!) Regardless, Descartes' confidence in his dismissal of lunatics and his confidence in mathematics are both suspect. In dreams, I have perfectly reasonable mathematical transactions, yet compared to waking reality, these transactions are silly and the images which represent letters and numbers in dreams are all sideways and askew; they never mean anything or adhere to anything but a semblance of "number transaction" and "language transaction". All that carries over to the dream reality is a dumb show of reality which

contents itself with gestures and motions but has no intelligibility or interior logic. If we ventured to imagine the dream-state as a lower hierarchy of this reality, then why shouldn't we postulate our current reality as a less intelligible, inferior version of an even higher plane of existence. Now, to be fair, we might also examine the reverse: somehow, without our knowing it, maybe the autistic, dream-state-reality is the highest plane of existence and this waking state which we now experience—with all its suns and galaxies and mathematical derivatives—is actually inferior; is actually nothing. So much for the wonderful truth of mathematics! Descartes shall not find his salvation in mathematics! Often, I too have questioned being, and so long as I question being, my first instinct is to abolish mathematics. So long as nothingness enters into my mind as a possibility, I realize that my existence is one of pure identity. I realize that I have no basis for knowing whether or not I exist or even if existence exists. The laws of grammar and the laws of logical contradiction cannot avail me upon the primacy of truth...I cannot make a plea to any of those twenty or so odd statements about logical fallacy because I might actually be the origin of fallacy itself. The lunatic juggling of contingencies may have actually ratified statements that are not in keeping with the nature of reality, therefore, since we have agreed to disallow common sense from the start, and proceed merely from doubt as if inhabitants of a dream world, then all we can really assert is phantasm itself. Take this question for example: If all conscious beings were eradicated from the universe, is the conception of mathematics still possible? Descartes and Plato would assure us that mathematics are not in danger of extinction; that the physics and algebra of the world shall remain even without the force and foundation of sentient intelligence...yet this is a misnomer. Mathematics must always be a relation of sign and signification. At its highest state of lucidity, mathematics is nothing but an identity equation. Mathematics is a snake eating its own tail. Mathematics is but an extrapolation of the illusion that we already are. In my dreams, where language and mathematics are reduced to silly gestures and pantomimes of themselves I am in no way lessened or disappointed at this turn of events. A proper relation to mathematics in this, our higher order waking state, should be no different than the retrograde orientation I experienced in my dreams. This universe obeys mathematics...yet so does my dream universe. In this universe of waking reason, we can estimate movements and make calculations with great precision and accuracy. In my dreams, mathematics and language can also pantomime this accuracy and this precision. Better still, in my dream state, I can abolish or negate this precision. If we are truly

awake and using the full force of our reasoning brains we too can abolish mathematics in this waking realm by imagining a universe devoid of conscious life. So long as there is consciousness, the illusion of identity and the illusion of calculation is maintained. If we are eradicated and a cyborg or computer upholds mathematics and calculation over and beyond sentient existence, then these cyborgs and computers are only continuing the dream of reason; in the unlikely yet possible event of civilization's demise, if any computers go on computing an uninhabited universe, their codes and their binary data shall never gain or uphold any privilege humanity failed to grasp or be mislead by. If anything, a post-apocalyptic fabrication of mathematics or intellect shall only serve as a phantasm of a phantasm: the proliferation of a serpent eating its tail. Seen from the inside, mathematics appears to be more than mere gesture or pantomime, yet if we exist beyond mathematics or above the discourse of mathematics, its truths too might seem just as insignificant as the mathematics of a dream, in which mathematics as we know them are complete rubbish and foolery.

Now that we have abolished empiricism far more adequately than Descartes could imagine, we move on to his Cartesian identity. "I think therefore I am?" We ask it in terms of a question. Metaphysics asks two things: "what is there?" and "What are its attributes?". If there is thinking, then thinking is thinking about me. What are the attributes of me? How is it that I do, perform or achieve that which thinking is? When do I achieve, perform or engage in what I am and what thinking is, if truly this thinking is me? Am I really thinking about me as I ask what I think? How do I know that thinking is the actual ground or force of existing in general? Could it not be possible that thinking is not so very far from that which we call mathematics? What if the realm of thinking is but the realm of a binary system or a computational apparatus, which, although it looks as if it participated in reality, is actually nothing more than an automatic, soulless derivative of existence or a mechanical addition to something else which yet deserves the credit for the me-ness of me? What if there exists a force of self which is blank and neutral to all attempts of approach? What if thinking, though it appears to possess existence, is only a false indicator of my own existence—false in that, whatever is demonstrated, assessed or performed in thought is already a structural, formal (and thereby nullified status) of that living force which is self. Four hundred odd years ago, could we not also have said, "I think, therefore I do not exist." Might we have been able to argue this seeming improbability

with equal success (and hopefully less pedantry!). Might we have been able to show that reason, which we also have deemed “thinking” is actually a null variable; a dead shell of that which we call life? A tool in service of a phantasmal urge or will toward life? We have still failed to adequately formulate the being question. Metaphysics is not yet underway. If we discount sense impression and provisionally enter a sort of dream state where the universe itself might either be our own fabrication or the fabrication of an evil genius attempting to deceive us, (the unconscious?) why should we suddenly have the urge to declare thinking itself to be freely willed, autonomous and exempt from this evil genius? If it were so, then my conscious would never recoil at my actions, I would never be brash or brazen in my adherence to untruth; I would not mistake the motives of myself and my friends, I would never be lured on by phantasmal tricks of light and luxury...but the truth is, I am deceived and ruled by these things! I am made a dupe and a fool and an ass by my own mind and my own emotions! Every breath of life functions as if I truly am subject to forces beyond my control; against my better judgment, I want to declare the very real existence of demons and pandemonium! For every myth I have read or heard aloud, I see some semblance of myself or my neighbors in them! What then is this, “I think therefore I am?” if there is no qualitative admission as to that which exists? Is that differed to later? But why later if the supposed “proof” of my existence is already an evasion of this so called “evil genius” that may actually still exist and worse still, exist in the very thought of my thinking that I myself am fully conscious and capable of my own thoughts over and apart from this same “evil genius”! Descartes would have gained four hundred years of ground in philosophy if he had gone in the opposite direction. If only Descartes had looked at the nature of the world, the nature of myths and the possessed nature of human beings in general and set out to prove, once and for all, the existence of the devil. In search of the devil, real human psychology is laid bare. That which pulls us upwards and that which pulls us downwards—both of these forces are real in terms of psychology. Arguing away religion might actually be accomplished too easily if we adhere to reason alone; divorced from the silly hocus pocus of God and devil, we atheists are all too often guilty of forgetting to account for those aspects of human behavior that have always demonstrated themselves through the outlet of religion. The pull of the unconscious against our own best interests, and the pull of creativity toward our mental health in the symbolization of reality—both of these components, to the mystic at least, still resemble God and Devil. I don’t want to hear anything more about what atheism has to say or

argue. Already at age fifteen, even with years of religious participation, I still deemed the whole charade of religion an intolerable mishmash of hocus pocus. I don't want to hear any more clever arguments against god! Tell your cleverness to a pack of children, maybe they will appreciate it! I am a grown man of thirty! I have no more use for atheism. Only creativity and psychology interest me. Intuitively, I look through, under and around the corners of what everyone tells me. Do you know what I see? I see human weakness and feeble-mindedness everywhere! Descartes is no exception. If someday, in the future, some random essay of mine falls into the hands of a publisher and some child of fifteen reads me, my greatest fear is that such a child should say to his or herself, "What a splendid, intelligent man! He is so far ahead of the others! What a rare specimen for philosophy!" On the day someone says that, I will finally have the proof I need to declare that it should have been better that I had never been born! None of us really know what we are. None of us are really up for the task of assessing our own worth, but if I am in any way special or rare in the realm of thought, then I find that fact thoroughly disgusting and repulsive! If it is rare to be an atheist at fifteen at this time in history, then that fact disgusts me. If it is rare to revile both theologians and atheists at once, then I also find that fact repulsive. Is the world really so naïve and uncreative as that? Is insight so utterly lacking and feeble as that? Are the great books I've read and enjoyed and stolen my ideas from—are they too, still mostly unread by the vast majority? If the famous, "I think therefore I am" still rings musically and poetically, it must only be so because a greater force of will and strength has not lighted upon something even more profound and more poetic: The ground of my existence is annihilation. Each remnant of the world which I am strong enough to do without or negate is also a measure of my creative effort and my strength. Though thinking might well be a soul-less tool, the evil genius beneath me, which is synonymous with my force and my will-to-life demonstrates a lucid component of newness which gives thought its subsistence and its ambrosia. My most thought provoking thought does not have its ground in thinking. I am not what I think! Thinking is what happens after I have am'ed (existed) myself. Thinking is the tea party that gossips about what the evil genius has already done.

If this worn out "Cogito ergo sum" wanted to be a proof of existence, then on what plane has this existence been proved? Are we not still in the phantasmal, provisional solipsistic dream reality when finally this pedantic assertion is made? If so, then ontology has for its

ground nothing but a phantasm: thought as proof is the last recourse of a phantasm trapped in a twilight world. It shows us that our being, in so far as Descartes can prove it, is really just a phantom never safely grounded in corporeal reality, nor can corporeal reality find the proof of itself either. In a sense, each dimension of being arises “as if” it were alien to that which it holds intercourse with. That closest, most overlooked thing of all—being itself—never really comes to be in a way which satisfies us. If thinking demonstrates me, then I have only demonstrated to myself, my ghost-like status. Descartes never would have bothered to call himself a ghost, yet, being more rigorous and more far sighted than he, I already postulate that since my existence has arisen “as if” it were a phantasm of a dream, then really, I cannot lament anything other than the departure of a phantasm and a dream when finally I cease to exist. We arise as an illusion and depart as if we had never existed at all. Perhaps, in a sense, we actually “exist” to a much lesser degree than the world has hitherto imagined. Where does being have its being? I see no point of departure for this question. It never will have a point of departure. I do not ever hope to “discover it along the way...” as Heidegger says. As far as I can ascertain, “Being” is a misnomer. “Being” is a structuralistic bias. I do not have being...I have phantasm. I haunt the earth. I am a ghost which manifests in synchronicity with this body. I see no use in dividing the two! What matters is that this consciousness of me cannot fully achieve demonstrable physical presence without it also ceasing to be what it is: A Phantasm. When I have departed from my body, only a husk shall remain. A worthless amalgamation of cells, organs and rotting tissue. I will never achieve being. I am with being, but I do not have being. The Phantasm that I am cannot abdicate its phantom status and gain any sort of non-phantom status. I cannot be my body any more than I can suddenly be a rock or a tree. That which thinks is that which haunts. Do not worry. I understand how silly all of this sounds...but wasn't that our point of departure from the beginning? Weren't we using philosophy to approach creativity in a way common sense cannot? Weren't we starting out with solipsism? Well, then this is what solipsism really looks like! Solipsism is a noble and redemptive state of consciousness. As my strength for negation demonstrates itself, and my creativity adds new dimensions and food for thought, I abolish ontology even further by increasing the realm of the phantasmal—not only my thoughts are phantasmal, but so also are my relations to thought and thinking. In a sense, I have the urge to state that nothingness cannot exist. I cannot even imagine anything but a relative nothingness. There is only nothingness relative to this

phantasm thought which I in some way am, though that which thinks may be a diversion from the phantasm force of which I express through the urge and pull of thinking which cannot exist or claim being in the way in which a tree, a rock or a world claims its being, since, even though I question the existence of rocks trees and worlds, it is really the contagion of my phantasm self which differs onto reality its own phantom status, and projects its own dire fault upon those items and those worlds who shall never be in any true danger for having been doubted. It is only me, as expression of phantasm, who has put a curse on matter and placed the world in question because I do not yet rightly know the nature of my own existence, and since I do not know the nature of my own existence, my doubt is catastrophic to my origin, while also being absolutely harmless to that which exists apart from me. The problem is not that of proving or disproving the “Cogito”! The problem is the seriousness with which we have adhered to the wrong side of the fence on this issue. In failing to elucidate the actual shortfalls and impossibilities of our unique phantasm existence, we have failed to sever the Gordian knot of solipsism. It is not for us to exist or escape solipsism. When Sartre anguishes over not being able to escape the “reef of solipsism” that is a failure of intuition! The only contribution Descartes’ inane pedantry affords us is the good sense to begin with solipsism! Humanity needed to be humbled in having its status in the universe shrank to the height of a shadow or a trick of light. Only then, when humanity realizes it is but a spirit on its way, passing like a cloud or stranded on a shipwrecked shore—then and only then can we begin to over come those phantasmal hurdles which seem so real and dire to us in our general interaction with life. Let pragmatism begin with the self-esteem of a phantom.

As for metaphysics? What is there? There is thought which may or may not be synonymous with the expression of being. Being itself, where it is aware of itself, may actually be so phantasmal that even though it is, it mostly and apparently is not. Furthermore, whatever is, aside from the phantasmal nature of self, may actually achieve being in a way that our being is least equipped to prove or demonstrate since the plane of consciousness is so different from the plane of brute tangibility. Though I have doubted the reality of trees, rocks, worlds and galaxies, these tangible things have never yet doubted me. It may be that these things are merely a fiction which I have unwittingly fabricated, yet it is also just as likely that I am a fiction that these rocks, trees, worlds and galaxies have conspired to create through the mindless and chance occurrence of countless aeons of interchange and

chaos. Perhaps I am the great dupe of the universe! I who feel singularity, humanity, dignity, will and sadness—I might truly be a partial automata and partial ghost who shall fret his hour on the universal stage and then vanish forever. A play of atoms has brought me out of the abyss and into the play of forms. To the nameless abyss I shall one day return. Meanwhile, the fact that I suffer and that my body suffers and that I possess this fate and only this fate as a highly differentiated, unique individual—that too is only a cruel trick.

As for the second half of Descartes' metaphysical buffoonery—the God argument—I wonder about the translation. I wonder about both translations in fact. For a man to say, “I think therefore I exist” is not exactly the same as saying, “Thinking exists, therefore there is already a nameless totality.” The same goes for his God argument. The translations I have been exposed to read as if Descartes is saying, “Since I can conceive of perfection, God therefore exists”. Had he said, “My conception of completion is synonymous with my conception of God” I would readily have agreed, because in English, saying something is perfect has a moral connotation, whereas saying something is finally complete or rounded out has a non-spiritual and less idealistic attitude in it. I cannot even begin to expound how intensely I feel the chasm between these two alternatives regarding completion vs. perfection. Godless or not, the word completion seems to point psychologically to our shadow components and un-developed attributes. The pursuit of God or the desire for God is also the desire for completion. Descartes, even as the pedantic mathematician he is, still expresses two profoundly human urges: The urge to assert existence and the urge to complete existence. If you have followed my discourse up until this point, you should have realized that even a moderately intelligent, mildly intuitive man such as myself, under no burden of stress or religious anxiety finds no problem seeing the issue more clearly and humorously in the course of an hour than Descartes does in his fifty or so pages of thick, pedantic drivel. You should have also realized that Descartes, given his mental condition at the time of the Discourse had nowhere near the confidence and rigor which I find easily in this decadent era. (one should remember that Galileo was on trial and put to death during Descartes' lifetime). Though he started with a very unique and highly potent mode of departure, Descartes failed to intuit his own shortfalls. The evil genius really did get the best of him. He never once suspected that asserting both his own existence and God's existence might actually have been the work of his own inner evil genius; his own subconscious need to assert those things.

His will-to-power, under duress, could not assert anything but those two things. All the moralizing, pedantic, pseudo-logical declarations on the way toward asserting Self and God mean exactly nothing to those with a lucid temperament. Basically, the better the philosopher, the more thoroughly they cloak the source of their evasions and their “truths”.

Shakespeare never had the misfortune of being forced to endure the works of Descartes. Chronologically, such a happenstance would have been impossible. Even without the whole history of western thought at my back, I could easily have written this same essay if I had been to enough of Shakespeare’s plays. The faithless gaze of Shakespearian insight troubles me and lessens me. I am never more of a phantom than when I hear the annihilating poetry of Shakespearian characters. Thinking—that impotent and useless tool of ping pong games—is never the matter and the impetus of Shakespeare’s poetry. The urge and insatiable will-to-life (which is also the unconscious and the will-to-power) shows us the manner in which Shakespeare’s characters demonstrate their existence...(or question their existence) What is Descartes, compared to Shakespeare? Descartes is garbage! Can you imagine a more befuddled numbskull? That princess he was tutoring probably poisoned him out of self-defense—she was afraid he would bore her to death!

Thought does not Exist

Even with all of Sartre’s slow, methodical (and unlike Descartes, acrobatically interesting) phrases, the actual postulation of Being and Nothingness are themselves unfounded. We have not yet raised the question of 'Being'. We have not yet gotten from consciousness to being. There is something left unthought, when thought proceeds from itself directly to existence or being without first questioning its own contamination and upsurge into being itself. Perhaps we have paradoxically misunderstood what thinking is. It would prove to be an ineffable paradox if thought truly did not exist. If we were to go forward on the supposition that thought does not exist, that thought is a shadow of existence, then thought never attains the privilege of proving or disproving existence itself. The Cartesian primacy of knowledge, taken in light of this possibility would mean that thought has only proved the act of thinking; being itself might prove to be radically different or somehow the inversion of what thinking is. Being turned

inside out might be what thought is, and when one is proved or shown as real, the other recedes or ceases to exist absolutely. If that were the case, then philosophy would be cudgeling its brains until the end of time with a silly dilemma. At best, the Cartesian primacy opens the way into a paradox in which we are called to discern the strangest phenomenon in the universe: consciousness itself. Continuing to call the Cartesian formula a primacy is the roadblock that must be torn down. From protozoa to cave men and from pre-Socratics to Descartes himself the Cartesian primacy is a very late addition to the history of thought and knowledge. Buddhism had already flourished for a thousand years by the time Descartes—that befuddled numbskull—came on the scene with his so-called proof of himself and God. The very fact that his supposedly “new” interpretation of the world did not diverge from the Christian schema already in place shows us just how “new” and “original” his mode of thinking really was. Even the Buddha himself borrowed greatly from Hindu traditions of Atman and Maya. If anything, the Buddha only clarified and made more personal the task of enlightenment seeking in general, just as Martin Luther did for protestant Christianity. It’s bothersome that Taoism keeps on pre-dating and out-gunning all of Western and Eastern thought from Buddha, to Christ, to Descartes, Plato, Kant and even Sartre. Not until Schopenhauer and Nietzsche is anything significant really added. Heidegger and Derrida are admirable because they seem to be rounding out the spiritual and artistic forces of the modified, matured version of Taoism that we so belatedly deserve. And why is it that Plato comes to nearly the same conclusion I have reached regarding the illusion of thought as a shadow opposed to being, and then makes the extravagant leap toward absolutes and a more definite super-reality where everything is perfect? Why not go the other direction? Thinking is thinking the nullification of existence. Thinking is a fire walker. Thinking walks upon its own nullification. The foundation of thinking is a blazing path of destruction. The Cartesian primacy—which is also the final gateway out of knowledge, beyond which the smiling abyss greets us—must be refigured. To mistake the final outpost for the beginning of the kingdom of thought is a colossal mistake depending on the direction you are traveling. For those about to go beyond thought, into the ineffable and nameless paradox of the unthought, it is thinking which we leave behind us. Beyond this point, thinking no longer exists in the old way; the relation toward existence and thought is no longer the same as it was. Grammar no longer suffices to uphold language when language begins to confront itself. Look for instance at all the neologisms Sartre must employ in order to speak adequately

about the problematic he envisions. The same is true for the moment the mirror is shattered and thought no longer contains existence. As the shards of glass fall away, the blackness of Nirvana threatens to teach us nothing; only so long as the mirror is half shattered are we able to liberate existence from thought and invert the paradox of solipsism. Being is an amazing privilege! Such a word cannot be uttered lightly. Even more mighty is the access to Being using the reigns of thought itself. The inter-relation of thought, being, existence, nothingness and illusion is such an involuting problem unto itself that to even make one step—to even proceed from thought to existence is such a milestone that it should rightly take the equivalent of ten times the works of Schopenhauer to adequately undertake. Though such a book remains unwritten, we may freely proceed as if it had been written, and summarize what it might say. I do not have the patience to undergo such an ordeal. Even though I read and enjoyed Schopenhauer's World as Will and Presentation, I already understood its premise and its philosophical importance after a few paragraphs—I even cheated and connected his opening lines to his final lines and used my imagination to fill in the lacuna a second after taking the book off the shelf. (I have a suspicion that the twenty one year old Nietzsche acted in this manner as well). Without too much disrespecting the discipline of philosophy in general, I must declare that I have no patience for what already seems obvious, you see, thinking a thought, step by step and really communicating it precisely only has the usefulness of a geometrical proof. So long as the proof is suddenly understood, it is discarded. Those men who first conceive of the proof see its application first, and then must laboriously set it down step by step in what must be a very agonizing manner so that their colleagues might give this new invention the meaningless stamp of their approval. For the man of genius, the task of setting down proofs for the sake of numbskulls should be reserved for the men best suited for those tasks—the methodical numbskulls themselves! The work of genius should be the proliferation of new modes and new methods of approach. Only if a great deal of other insights might prove appetizing on the way to such a proof does genius acquiesce to undertake such a time consuming journey. Academic philosophy, with its rigorous concern for what has already been said, often times risks crippling its best and brightest new upstarts; it demands they study each detail and misstep of these many, many long dead numbskulls and when finally the putrid air of their windbagery has been liberated from their myriad sepulchers, the new blood of philosophical force is already tired and sickened from the halting stench of their past mistakes. Rigor is good, when a vital force

is pouring outward into it. Rigor is dangerous, when it threatens to cut down creativity at the knees. If I can call the Cartesian Primacy into question with a minimum of rigor and a maximum of creativity then perhaps the contagion of my creativity will supply what is wanting in rigor. Let's not deal so unjustly with clever minds! Like bloodhounds, the mere scent of a new idea is already enough! The prospect of a new hunt already makes them wild with excitement! Look how the seventy nine year old Heidegger practically tickles and teases the lecture halls with the prospect of almost getting underway. The genius of Heidegger dances around the formulation of the question until he senses his audience is already agitated enough to climax over it. Humans are delicate beings. You cannot rush them into anything. Our young philosophers are like prudish little girls—you must woo them and tantalize them first before they'll allow you your desire.

We must re-phrase the Cartesian primacy once more. If you look closely, Descartes really only succeeds in saying, "Thinking thinks the thinking of existence." We cannot add "I" to the equation because we have not discerned self. Though a lunatic has lost entirely his possession of self, we would be brash lunatics as well if we postulated self without knowing the curious structure of what self is. Obviously we do not see any evidence of rocks or trees investigating their existence, so we might do well to begin by imagining that we have already undertaken something unique to consciousness—that is to say, what we undertake is already unique to what we already are. If the nature of our consciousness is so orchestrated as to arise as if it were a singularity, as if it were a private, autonomous self then maybe this too is part of the illusion; and if all we have in our possession with which to clarify or extricate ourselves from this possible illusion is thought itself, then might it not serve our best interests also to be first of all, most suspicious of this one tool we do possess? What good is doubting the world entire if thought—that curious seat of doubt—is not really the target of that which is doubted? If I am mistaken, it is not because the world has deceived me or that I am in a dream or that an evil genius has gotten the upper hand! If I am mistaken I must return once more to the thought which caused me to go wrong. Even though there may well be an illusory world, a false sensation of objects or an evil genius wielding his magic against me—even so—I must still rectify all errors with thought alone. That which is most privileged in coming to my aid is also the first tool I must learn to use correctly. If I neglect thought or take thought for granted I have already misused my only tool. I cannot take up equipment or make devices without first using this one tool that

is the father of all tools: Thought deserves our utmost respect and our utmost suspicion. If thinking tells me that existence exists or that I myself exist, I cannot content myself to the old formulas of logical fallacy to prove that which is nearest of all. If thought itself is already a confusing seduction into logic itself, then none of the postulates of logic will ever serve to extricate me from the a priori fallacy of my relationship with thinking. If the very nature of consciousness itself is a conflict between thought and existence in which the one paradoxically annihilates the other then it would be incorrect to ever substitute the one for the other or to assert that the one contains the other. Part of the unthinkable, ineffable paradox of being may in fact be the absolute incongruence of thought into existence and existence into thought. Though every moment seems to be a transaction between these two antagonists, what if these two phenomena are alien and forever in exile to one another—by default! What if Thinking itself is the very plate tectonics and fault-line of existence?! In a problematic where the nature of reality as we experience it is perhaps nothing more than the confinement within a paradox, we cannot rely on the logic of “non-paradox” to ever adequately illustrate what we are. Our mathematics and our logical fallacies crumble the moment we over-reach our day to day schema and enter into the meta-realm of thought investigating thought. Just as my dream mathematics and my dream language swoops and gesticulates a parody of math and language which I take for a symbolic presentation of real math and language, I behold in my waking state a legion of imposters which suffice on a certain level as math, language and logical method, but these same gesticulations and parodies also crumble when I over-reach myself into the meta-realm of thought, which, for all practical purposes, has no means of defining itself as anything other than the reality of a lunatic. The problem with Descartes? He failed to realize how close to the truth each lunatic already is. Our correct relation to thought, existence and nothingness is closer to that of a lunatic than that of a scientist. The shadow faith of science—that means of faith which no longer possesses the meta-hierarchical-imagination to self-negate—is actually more strained and tenuous than the reality of a lunatic. Where logic and self-coherence is finally and completely nullified—as in the expression of lunacy—we have drawn nearest of all to the unthinkable, ineffable, nameless paradox of our own being. That which loses thought of being is nearest what being is. To review: Descartes only really states “Thinking thinks the thinking of existence.” We thereby only prove thought itself, which is not in any way an attribute of existence. We have not yet asserted any formulation whatsoever of what existence is.

We do not know the limitations of existence. We must use each word as if we had in some respect forgotten its meaning. Each word, since it is part of thought, is still suspect. We cannot hark back to language or conventional definition in order to liberate understanding. Words become slugs or goobers with sticky, gelatinous sides; gray and difficult, we order them but we do not yet know how to taste their essence. "Thinking thinks the thinking of existence" yet I do not know what existence is. I do not know the limits of existence. I must first discover the limits of thought, because that is the one thing I already possess. More astutely, I do not possess thought. I do not possess myself. Dissociatively, thought is now thinking. There is no I. The existence of "I" might still be an illusion. Discontinuity, singularity and self may perhaps be the worst illusions of all. Every expression of moral prohibition and governmental legislation may also be traced back to humanity's mistaken faith that the individual exists: that I am the doer of deeds: that my concerns are more important than my neighbors: that this supposed being, this "I" that I hitherto considered seriously and taken for a unique will-to-power and force unto myself, even this being may be an illusion and a contagion loosed upon the world: the fact that I suffer when I do not get what I want or that my neighbor complains of suffering when he does not get what he wants—all these may have resulted from a mistaken orientation toward the Primacy of Knowledge.

Descartes only really states, "thinking thinks the thinking of existence". We thereby only prove thought itself, which is not in any way an attribute of existence. Grammar self-destructs as it encounters thought. Thought cannot possess "Thing-ness". Thought is, by definition, NO-THING. Thought is a transparent pool in which persons, places and things swim about without any knowledge that they are swimming. Thought is a fishbowl, existence is the ocean: to confuse the fishbowl for the ocean is a dire mistake. Thought is but a container for existence potential. We might have also said, "Red exists therefore fire trucks!"—that nonsense phrase is about as logical as deriving the origin of existence from thought, you see, thought cannot actually prove anything. Thought is confined to the plane of phantasm and shadow. All day long, I can rave and smash and heave my dreams at existence, yet no effort of thought will make such phantasms into proofs. The unthinkable, nameless, ineffable paradox of our existence is not that we are stuck or exiled in solipsism, rather—still worse yet—we do not even deserve to claim that we exist. The very force and imaginative faculty with which thought has painted the world already

seems like a union of opposites, yet once discernment enters into the realm of the meta, everything which thought imagined it possessed is stripped from it. Finally it is shown that, this human entity that has gone its ways over the earth proving and disproving, naming and inventing has always done so with a smug silence regarding the nearest thing of all: thinking does not exist. Thought, which is in fact a noun, does not exist. Thought is at odds with being and no one has ever possessed the courage to declare it, not even Heidegger! If I were merely thought, I would not exist. I would be a phantasm.

It is only through the antagonism of thought against existence, which allows us to tear one realm from the other. To clarify, we must assert that, "Thought-tainted-existence" is not existence. Furthermore, existence void of thought is itself an even more puzzling phenomenon, which, in a sense is no phenomenon at all since all phenomenology relies upon the foundation of thought itself for which the appearance of phenomenon present themselves. To hark back to Kant's "thing in itself" is really the absurdity of all absurdities. An uninhabited universe is no universe at all; an uninhabited universe is nothingness. What does it matter if grass continues to grow and planets continue to orbit the sun if the eye of the universe itself finally shuts and sleeps? The human horror of a sleeping universe is nearly beyond comprehension...yet I declare to you, the universe has slept much longer than it has stirred, and it will sleep once more regardless of all that humanity might finally achieve. My own cosmic sadness spins upon the axis of this knowledge: the universe cannot die: it can only sleep! Try for a moment, if you will, to take into yourself the complete sum of human joy and pleasure across the entire span of history. Now add this trembling thought of temporal pleasure to your lexicon as you consider this: When humanity is gone, the sun shall continue to warm the earth or some other earth far distant and peopleless, and on this alien earth where no life dwells, some other sun will hover lazily over the space of each afternoon. Fragrant smells and pleasant temperatures shall continue as chance occurrence not at all barred or extinct from existence and perhaps even some alien plant life will flourish: even as the universe sleeps I see sadness in the void: even as the universe sleeps, 'meadows wait'. At some point, with eyes shut and memory extinguished, these meadows might finally wait, indefinitely...

For us and our unique upsurge into consciousness, the universe does not cradle existence, it cradles thought. Since thought is blank nullity, something else must exist. Whether dream reality or real reality

or cyber reality, thought as pure thought is as unthinkable as universe existing pure universe void of consciousness. The fact of consciousness does not prove existence if proves universe; but still only a seemingly phantasmal or phantom grounded universe. If thought proved existence, then we might instantly be granted existence; we must not be so brash. We have not yet claimed existence. At best, we have only succeeded thus far in negotiating a phantasm. In the end, we may be forced to content ourselves with nothing more tangible than a dwelling place made out of phantasm and paradox. If thought really could prove existence, I would assert that I exist—that would be my first temptation: that would be my common sense temptation. So long as I claim existence, then I also receive being. Where I receive being, I declare my intuition of nothingness and so on and so forth...but the problematic cannot conclude so easily as that. We have not yet formulated the question of being and we have not yet formulated the first question of metaphysics. Though we have speculated and dreamed up several possibilities thus far, we have not yet advanced beyond the modification of Descartes statement, "Thinking thinks the thinking of existence". Whatever existence we do attain is now polluted and tainted by thought: it still swims in the fishbowl of thought. Each object our fingers point toward must also receive the demoted status of "thought-existence" rather than autonomous existence. Why exactly should this impasse cause us suddenly to begin attributing our own silly fantasies to this supposed "autonomous existence" and arrive at Platonic absolutes? The impermanence of thought existence might be exactly synonymous with actual existence. It may perhaps be in thought alone where fantasy can achieve a greater perfection than reality. Why should fantasy in any way concern us? Fantasy claims what it claims without prompt or reference to the appearance of presentation nor is fantasy in any way concerned with the implications of its conjectures. If fantasy is useful to our investigation then we shall utilize it openly each time we ask the reader to make an absurd leap toward something difficult to fathom. In order to test the waters of the uncommon conjectures we have ventured, we have used fantasy as a tentative dwelling place such that new orientations are given provisional viability long enough to explore them with inventive force and creative newness. On the one hand, if we consider Plato, he is asking us to make a leap of faith in order that we begin to worship absolutes which we by definition cannot possess. On the other hand, in this essay, we are provisionally using fantasy in order to hover over and examine our old ways of defining existence and thought. If and when this investigation finally arrives at a stabilized understanding of reality

or perception then we may freely discard the tool of fantasy which allowed us to suspend logic, language, grammar and traditional judgment. Now, if however we are able to arrive at a stabilized schema of reality or perception which insists on dwelling within our understanding as ongoing paradox and phantasm, then it shall have been proved that fantasy was the only tool whereby we could even begin to approach such a curious revelation. We may finally assert that nothing contained in this essay is at all useful or prudent. That very well may be. Yet so long as we proceed from the understanding of paradox and phantasm, then perhaps we really will have affected the reader in a significant way. Whatever shrinks the human ego is probably a wise addition to it.

If “thinking thinks the thinking of existence”, then all we know for certain is that “thought thinks”. Is “thought existence” truly an existence of existence? While “thought existence” has entered the picture and thought is thinking existence, existence has not escaped thought and thought has not escaped thought. The phantasm is. I speculate. Thought speculates. Nothingness speculates. Binary electrical brain current and atoms in the void speculate. An ink printed page speculates. A new phantom imagines reading language and reads the historicity of speculation speculating the thinking of existence transposed, hypothetically, existing a new frame of consciousness, hypothetically, a new individual existence, hypothetically, a hall of mirrors burning, hypothetically hypothetically—existence is where horses collapse. Existence has not entered the picture. We have not won existence, let alone a personal existence so long as thinking “only thinks”. My thought picture of existence is also my thought picture of non-identity and non-being, as if true mind were non-mind.

Our clue for proceeding beyond this point came from the assertion that thinking needs some kind of content or it is blank. Now, is it absolutely certain that existence is what must be added to thought in order for it to surge up in its awareness in the manner of the Cartesian axiom? When thinking claims to think existence, has existence entered into consciousness? Have we arrived at existence? If we have arrived at existence, then solipsism is defeated. Finally, we exist! Is this the case? Has existence entered into thought, or has thought extended its dream of existence toward a mirage of existence? A mathematical formula for existence? The equation for a curve is not a curve; If I am merely the equation for existence, then I do not exist. We do not in fact have the birth of existence, we have the birth of phantasm and

solipsism! We still do not exist. Between non-existence and existence, we are still only partial: we are still phantasmal beings. What does that mean, to be partial? Or marginal beings? Isn't existence an either/or type of assertion? Apparently it is not. Apparently, there "exists" a dwelling place between pure thought and pure existence. Pure thought is unthinkable. Pure thought is void of content. Pure existence is void of thought (consciousness) and it too is unthinkable. Half ways between thought and existence we place words like, spirit, phantasm, ghost, apparition, phenomenon, shadow, illusion, and mirage. For some reason, it seems necessary that, since thinking contains something other than pure thought, and this content, as we have established, does not yet deserve a claim to existence, it still seems that such substance as thoughts and dreams are made of deserves to have entered into something for all of its efforts hitherto? Is it too soon to give this imaginary substance a universe of its own? Well, if that universe is solipsism, then we have not at all advanced. This entire essay has been a total wash if we discover, after great pains and head cudgeling, that we are once more dwelling in Sartre's Reef of Solipsism. Strange isn't it, that when Sartre re-encounters the Cartesian primacy he too thinks he sees an oasis through which he might escape the solipsistic desert. The mere act of doubting that thoroughly and that creatively may have spawned the entire 800 pages of his magnum opus, Being and Nothingness. For our part, we have not even granted ourselves Being, (with a capital 'B') since we still feel that thought has no claim to existence. Nor have we founded nothingness because we have not yet even found the means with which to found such a thing. Although it may be a futile act of semantics, we still feel that existence is a vibrant, untainted thing which should dwell apart from the shackles of thought and that the word "Being" is yet even more privileged and wonderful than existence; being must be synonymous with existence to the extent that rocks and trees have being so long as they also have existence, but the privilege of "Being" with that capital 'B' must be the dwelling place of a stable, well-founded conscious entity which experiences itself as well as the universe and claims the existence of trees and rocks, but does so in an almost spiritual transaction of "gathering in". Such a poetic intercourse with the world could not be the impoverished solipsism of a phantasm which we have thus far arrived at. The "Being" of poetry and transaction, of suffering and longing—that must still be something better and more fleshed out than this phantasm reality we've apprehended so far. But the fact remains, we have not yet ventured past our re-formulated Cogito: "Thinking thinks the thinking of existence". We have not yet won from our solipsistic vision the

prize of existence. Well, then let us come back to our assertion, "Thought is the inverse of existence whereby the antagonism of the two, one forces the other to recede in so far as one or the other is approached." If this conjecture holds then the Cartesian primacy of knowledge is the absolute mid-point between two opposing poles which each bring forth the nothingness of their opposite in so far as they are approached. Throughout the entire spectrum, we may assert the tainted nature of "existence touched by thought", and only at the far opposite hemisphere from thought are we allowed to transition from existence into that more poetic dwelling place called, "Being" with a capital 'B'. The realm of non-thought—that is the poetic/spiritual place where Being has its proper abode. Symbols/forces and structure-less urges must also arise from this place. At the far opposite region, where thought is crowned triumphant, existence has receded so far that it is no longer discernable. Only phantasm remains, yet here there is but a phantasm of logic, thought and non-identity where "Thinking thinks the thinking of existence". Self is eradicated at both ends of the spectrum. The middle region of common sense—that is where nearly all of humanity dwells for the majority of their lives. The forces which pull us side to side, upwards and downwards, these are the phantasms that challenge us to leave the center. For those beings which experience nothing but common sense, physics and calculus are just as unthinkable as poetry and symphony. It is from out of the strange alterations of visiting the extreme poles of thought (and non-thought) that we are allowed a new approach to Being: a new mode of access to "Being". Why should we be relegated to solipsism any more than we are relegated to calculus only or poetry only? Solipsism has not ever demonstrated its privileged status over and above any other attitude toward life. For those that make a leap of faith in accepting a solipsistic fate, then we cannot offer anything but a more thorough-going version of this very essay. Look closer: We have shown the Cartesian primacy's failure to establish knowledge: quite the opposite: we have shown that it in fact cannot even establish the existence of existence. By this revelation, we have wandered in and around the possibility that thought does not exist. As a result of this premise, everything that thought touches becomes phantasmal. We realize that the nature of our reality is not merely a solipsistic fantasy, but even worse still, a paradoxical and unthinkable, nameless, ineffable presentation. Since the Cogito failed to grant us existence, we are free to dismiss nearly everything thought has labored to show us. Instead, we have taken the tool of thought and realized its form and its limitation. So long as the Cartesian primacy holds, we are barred from

escaping the reef of Solipsism because the Cartesian primacy claims a foundation for knowledge from within thought using thought. So long as thought maintains the inflated status of possessing the power to grant or prove existence then it is no wonder that solipsism is so inescapable. The Gordian Knot must be severed. We must abolish the Cartesian Primacy in order to refute Solipsism, that is the only course. In the no mind of meditation, thought may vanish and yet I sense the being of being. If one being says, "I think therefore I am", and a different being says, "I do not think and I am", this implies thought is not needed for existence to assert itself and existence is not needed for thought to assert itself. These two have only a phantasmal and confusing linkage within honest human experience. (Before proceeding, we should add one further charge against Descartes: his original Cartesian Coordinate system did not contain negative quadrants...he was spiritually afraid of zero and nothingness...unwilling to integrate zero and the negative, we easily begin to see where his intuitions of madness and doubt might have had their origin.)

Future meditations shall no doubt be required to better elucidate the spectrum of thought's self-negation and its two extreme poles of unified dissolution (thought unified with thought as the unthinkable thought and existence unified as existence as the un-existable phenomena of non-consciousness): At one extreme we approach but never touch the gathering in of poetry and completed Being: At the other extreme, abstraction of thought inclines infinitely toward the unthinkable thought of perfect identity, mathematics and the Nirvana of a mirror shattered. To dwell in common sense is the middle place of non-paradox, non-creativity, and the Cartesian Primacy as the birth place of first philosophy's first shadow faith—its assertion that thought, as reason and logic, must be trusted as a viable foundation for logic games and identity equations. Poetry at one pole of thought looks askew at Calculus nearing the final shattering of the mirror of thought itself. Once we've opened the problematic of thought as a spectrum of possible relational operations transcending existence, existence and thought learn their catastrophic antagonism, never more to be fully reconciled. (Sartre may now proceed safely with his Being and Nothingness from here.) Empiricism apologizes for having taken what never belonged to it, as the parental fantasy of the Meta- scolds its impatient carelessness in mistakenly having grounded concrete reason on the pedestal of an ontological phantasm. As a true champion of the universe, the lunatic—crown prince of Nihilism—laughs like a God in a strait jacket, for having been right all along! Solipsism retreats as one

phantom among many, no longer special or ontologically privileged. In the future, as this nightmarish human circus continues, anytime an impasse arises, look first to the premise which gave rise to the impasse: there and only there shall you find your liberation. Sever all knots!

Since thought failed in its effort, and gave us even less than we imagined, we used that regression to our advantage. Our phantasmal status not only liberated us from existence, it liberated us from selfhood and ego worship. We do not know what we are. We do not know what we must one day become. We do not know what the universe looks like without consciousness. We do not know whether or not the thinking that thinks about me is really autonomous or if it is sailed or driven toward urges that never come to mind; perhaps forces against our will and against our intentions? It was a shadow faith which kept us within the reef of solipsism. Mistakenly, we had imagined that since thought demonstrated existence thought possessed some kind of privilege in its closeness to being and that being had already been won from the interaction between thought and the thinking of existence. This interaction was shown to be tainted and suspect. Recourse to mathematics and Platonic absolutes also failed. Every thinking attempt at structure resulted in a fraud or a falsification. The realm of the meta opened up paradoxically and everything became different than it had before appeared. Fantasy was necessary to open this doorway; in truth, we did not discover this means by a step by step method; we perceived the whole of this essay as a singular urge to demonstrate this entire problematic and we already knew its conclusion without needing to reason it out. A pure urge and force propelled us to set it down. Had it come to us by any other means, we should have been more rigorous and more careful. Nothing in this is at all new. Though, in some minds I may have defeated solipsism and overturned Descartes once and for all to the Western world, I was only proceeding with my own vision of what I had already taken from Taoist and Buddhist thought. My insight regarding psychology was a great help initially in suspecting Descartes of playing to his own weaknesses and fleeing madness towards a postulate of Self and God. Furthermore, Derrida's work: Writing and Difference, and Heidegger's lecture What is called Thinking? happened to cross my path these last two weeks, and even before finishing either work, I eagerly took up this essay and delivered the autistic deluge which you have before you. Somehow, I hope that I turn up this same assertion in either Heidegger or Derrida, but if not, then I credit them with stimulating me toward revisiting philosophy's favorite befuddled numbskull, Descartes. Perhaps one day I will also revisit Hume, but I

dearly hope that such an endeavor is not necessary: though I hate the writing style of Descartes, it is my humble opinion that Hume is the most boring and tedious writer in all of Western History—Sartre and Heidegger are like a carnival ride compared to Hume! (Already I fear I have dreamed up a new thesis: the role of style in the efficacy of philosophical discourse...)

Have I finished yet? May I please be finished now? I was attempting to sum up, in order—as best as possible—to show where we had begun and what had been achieved (but I seem to have gotten side tracked, just as I am often apt to do). The final refutation of solipsism probably deserves I execute a bit of rigor and exactitude now that I've reached the end...but perhaps now it is the reader's turn to finish the meditation...onward, into the mists where printed words recede.

Part XXI
Carousel
(Circular Health)

Day

Su Tung Po was looking over my shoulder and giggling until Basho scolded him and ordered him out of the room. Our light hearted mood changes in response to Basho's request:

"Talk more about the illness acquired on our long journey!"

Meanwhile, Su Tung Po begins juggling swords and making faces at us from the hallway...

Joyful Circle of Truth

"Whence comes joy?" asks the Buddha

"From awareness" says the Psychologist

"Whence comes awareness?" asks the rabble

"From humility" whispers the Diplomat

"Whence comes humility?" pleads the Monk

"From renunciation" claims the Saint

"Whence comes renunciation?" asks the Writer

"From honesty" replies the Poet

"Whence comes honesty?" asks the strategist

"From contempt" answers the Prince

"Whence comes the Buddha?" asks the Philosopher

"From the Prince" answers the Historian

"Whence comes joy?" asks the Misanthrope

"From contempt." Answers the Buddha.

Day

Pro et contra! In the mists all remains undecided. 'Yes' and 'No' have yet to be uttered. Movement can hardly be noticed. Thought and sensation are equally worthless as our hands reach into the thick vapors. When the fog is lifted, lucidity cannot help but reveal opposites. The stronger the awareness of opposites, the greater the import of our irrational symbols and fantasies. Fantasy reunites the fractured being because fantasy is neither real nor unreal, neither reason only nor sensation only. Fantasy is our torch in the mists, which may actually be demanding our return to a place where we are blind.

Hands pierce through the mist as if the forms of all gods and demons longed to tickle our flesh with new impressions. Idols we have not yet become or not yet embraced long to take up abode in our habits. Mortality has always been like this: Mortality has always painted like this:

From out of the panic and confusion, a more perfect being is being forged: On the haunted paths to poetry, lie the hazards of being born...

Day

Men become rich by being charlatans—they create needs and desires for whatever they have to sell. Misery is no exception.

Day

There are many—if not millions—who believe they are personally the most miserable creature on earth. They think this for a variety of reasons: Some are poor, some are ugly, some are foolish or impatient, others are friendless, anxiety-ridden, mournful, or isolated. There are also many who would pander to those beliefs and sell them a cure. While in fact the miserable beings are each uniquely miserable in their own tiny little ways, it would seem that those who would exploit such creatures are even more miserable still, yet most of them are actually quite happy and self-satisfied with their own modes of adaptation. Farewell that type, but let's consider this: If I were to take up

marketing, I wouldn't desire to sell a quick fix or a miracle cure to the wretched. Instead I'd want to profit by showing the miserable people just how much intensity their misery is lacking. I'd want to show them new heights of despair and new robes of madness. Instead of showing them what they could be, I'd get them to imagine an aspect of self they're not even capable of imagining on their own. I think I'd find joy in that, but honestly, it's already being done so frequently we've ceased to notice it. Why should the marketing of misery be any less obnoxious than marketing wealth, beauty, education, sex or excitement. To those that lack them, you are still only marketing misery, even if you propose some kind of solution to it.

"What is religion but the father of all marketing?"

Day

Publishing companies are really only looking for five or six types of writing: romance, mystery, sci-fi, self-help, or best seller (which equates to thriller plus romance plus mystery).

Books marketed for consumption are in conspiracy against contentment. Book stores, (if they still exist), carry only one philosophy title for every complete wall space of self-help or romance...while on the used market, the only attainable copies of the best works of philosophy have been read hundreds of times and are barely still hanging together since they haven't been in print for fifty or so years.

Surprisingly, self-help titles also despise contentment. Instead, they try to sell you a new skill, a new lifestyle, or a deconstruction of whatever malady you possess, which sounds fine except for the fact that they never fail to explain to you why your soul is corrupt and in need of salvation, brain washing or a thorough pep talk.

What if someone writes a book without characters, without facts, without science, without emphasis on entertainment, without whoring their celebrity status and without the pretense of making us laugh or become better people. How shall those books be submitted? Who would publish them?

Day

Perhaps one day I will write a book completely out of hindsight. Perhaps I will need to sprint a bit to catch up with my impressions; in order to harmonize the excess wealth of the past with the fecundity of the present moment. Forced, eventually, to compose an entire series of books using the sub-heading, "Yesterday".

Day

My sympathies go with the mediocre poet Legge for his work, Sunshine and Smoke, and the prolific poet responsible for the musical project "Brighter Death Now". The words "Pain in Progress" are more clearly *human* than the concept of humanity.

Day

There's no shortage of idiots who believe in ghosts, but how many others are there like me, who aspire to be haunted? I want ghosts to exist only for the sake of my education. My mind and my flesh have so much more to learn about horror!

Day

When a motley troupe of shackled spirits and ghost poets unite and circle around the flesh of a living, breathing person, there's no telling what they have in mind. If they want to go to war with us it will be like goliath stomping a lady bug, or a hooded executioner flattening a mouse with a carnival hammer.

As the circle of ghosts closes in, perhaps the reader is wondering what sort of terror the poets would have me describe. From the epic throne of a warrior carved into a mountainside, the giant ghost of a Viking bends down and lends his ear to the spectre of a little girl who died on a derailed train. As if already seeing into the future, the giant who was about to speak hears the girl's meek voice and begins to weep. Instead of the mountain giant, the little girl steps forward to speak for

herself. As the yellowish light of her skin and her dress mimic the tint of the moon, she begins,

"Never mind our sorrows. Bring us something of your own. Something to share...something to sacrifice to the Dragon."

Day

Why does the fantasy of ghosts seem so erotic and desirable?

What do ghosts represent, to each of the personality types? What do they possess, that scares us?

Day

If there were a magic pill capable of making my anguish disappear for an evening I'd no doubt be doing something else, equally pointless at this very moment. Those without complaint against life are metaphysically no richer or more hallowed for it: the man writing a sad poem or love song is no better than the man cliff jumping or gathering sea shells.

I'm not selfish or short sighted enough to allow myself anger or true complaint. To be really far gone is to no longer protest in a human way. I'd rather rattle chains, switch on television static or just moan like a ghost.

Day

A month or so before my mother died I made a deal with the devil in my own mind as I was falling asleep. I won't tell you what I asked for, but I can assure you I'm still reaping the benefits of my private doorway to the unconscious.

Day

One does not simply write lyrics; one must become lyrical. All Song and no voice is the goal of the poet. All Voice and no song is the repentance of the writer.

Day

Today while feeling happiness I've decided to describe it: We feel as if we've closed our eyes while unabating rays of sunlight hit the surface of our skin. We feel a mental cloudiness that doesn't actually suffocate thinking, so much as it submerges it in a bathwater of nutrients...and then there is also the mild agitation of a crowd cheering our exploits from a vague yet distractingly intimate distance. (As if each of our tiny cells rejoiced in their own abundance of chemical reward. As if at all times, there were nothing but this reward seeking mob of ignorance, unified in times of strife but individualized to the extreme in times of plentitude.) We feel a concentration of this cellular type euphoria just under our skin and at the base of our neck meeting our spinal cord. The crowd of cells doesn't cheer for identity so much as they cheer mindlessly and eyelessly like kenneled dogs, like a pack of seals, or a roost of chickens about to be fed. We even feel the sensation that we are, bodily, many.

—That is what happiness feels like.

Day

It would take a very clever psychologist to deduce my greatest fabrication: I'm a misanthrope who employs collective, sometimes universal images for the expression of my individuality. My art actually strives to ease communication rather than alienate it—a strange generosity, for a misanthrope.

Day

I wish I had an anecdote about Diogenes signing his letters with a smiling emoticon face. How did we ever manage ten thousand years of written communication without adding smiley faces to every other sentence of text? How primitive and vulgar the past seems now!

Day

If every expression of sincerity belies an intolerance (Pessoa), then every retreat toward insincerity is a paralysis.

Day

The abrasive word *Cult* is also contained in the optimistic and art friendly word *Culture*.

Day

Bananas are one of nature's naturally occurring anti-depressants. Perhaps we ought to give monkeys more intellectual credit—for staying in the trees!

A great ancestor of Hamlet must have purposely started his kingdom in a fruit tree.

Or remember Thomas Pynchon's famous line, "Pick Bananas."

Day

A young man and his pregnant young wife passed by my window. I sneered to myself, and mindlessly blurted out an insult I'd never heard before:

"Lifers!"

Day

Once, in a lecture that hasn't happened yet, a female student asked me a very poignant question I very much wanted to answer truthfully, but I instead opted for evasion. I said to her, "I'm only here on this podium because I've exhausted my enthusiasm at every turn. I exhausted it in the books I've written, in the travels I've enjoyed, in the lovers I've had and most recently, in the morning I spent preparing myself for your questions this afternoon. If you want my life, copy it. If you want my enthusiasm, copy it, but if you want my enthusiasm to equal yours, then I've already lost. I've nothing left over for you. Ask me any question but that one. Ask me any question you wish, and if the answer is already burning at the tip of your tongue like the cup of coffee that woke me up this morning, then just declare it without bothering with this charade of asking. Just declare your enthusiasm right now and go on declaring it. You might be surprised where it leads you. Now, as for the rest of you nitwits, I'm only taking uninspired questions for the remainder of the day!"

I suppose since I've used that line here, I'll have to actually answer her question when she asks it, seeing as how my clairvoyant attempt to dissuade her here wasn't enough.

Day

I want to give a lecture where I allow the students to slaughter me for an hour and then I want to depart cheerfully with an original poem I keep to myself: "The most valuable position in the world is to be the target of sympathetic scrutiny."

Day

In another lecture that hasn't happened yet, I was feeling short on material, so I opted for an entire hour of questions and discussion. In order to insure both a high quality of material and a high quality of public address, I asked for a male and female volunteer confident in debate and public speaking. I informed the lecture hall that our afternoons questions would be told to our two mediators whose job it

would be to share the microphone and relay the questions to me, allowing the question asker to remain silent if he or she chose to. After the discussion got going, the shy types would no doubt be grabbing the microphone out of the hands of the eager but ineloquent social types. If this still wasn't enough, I'd turn off my own microphone and go to them face to face to hear the details of their inquiry while the audience waited. Hopefully, the silent spaces would bring about even better discussions, otherwise impossible in the traditional lecture format. The key here is the seduction of the entire room. If everyone is made a seemingly equal component in the discussion then each individuals highest expectations—their own—shall be satisfied. In seeking to raise their expectations even higher we risk omitting some of their desires. We do so at the risk of our own popularity, so its always best to allow the room you're currently in to be the standard for which all your efforts are pointed. When all are satisfied, I alone still feel disgust. When all have voiced their voice and made their highest arguments known, I alone still feel ill and confused. Why should we expect the audience to summon something beyond their own patience? Only artists do that.

Prudence bows to democracy even when it admits tyranny is better; that's why the tyrants have become so phantasmal.

Day

(Musings of a high school history teacher that doesn't exist)

I have a son that dreams of sailing.

Sailing is adverse to values:
It glides on the surface
Teasing the depths.

Why probe downward
When the horizon remains landless?

Like a ticklish ox,
Late in life, I'm feeling something new.

Like a ticklish ox,
I'm suddenly unsure of myself.

I want to form a new thought
All on my own.

Last night I dreamed I was on trial in Hades.
Socrates, Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza
Were all accusing me
Of having done them an injustice.

I told them, as kindly as possible
Not to make such a fuss.

Aren't all philosophers
Doomed to be misunderstood
By high school history teachers like me?

Anyway, this chair is uncomfortable
And I'm retired. Don't bother me!

I dreamed of Hades again.
The philosophers attacked me once more
And I felt ashamed.

Instead of trying to understand them more clearly or deeply
I made an effort to appease them
And console them outwardly.

Now I'm feeling disappointed in them and myself:
Charm proved a better weapon than thought.

The Buddhist path asks for
Right thinking and right action:
Anything you would be unwilling to share
With a girl of 18
Is unhealthy.

Let that be our critique
Of pessimistic philosophers in general.

I have yet to tell my Daughter about Buddhism
...And I probably won't.

As a younger man,
I went through a brief, yet dark period of time
When all of my habitual energies leaked inward.

When I wrote love letters
I sometimes had the urge
To force my random impressions and feelings onto those I liked.
These feelings had nothing at all to do with love
And today, I can hardly understand how I had let myself
Be so callous and sometimes cruel.

19 in Vietnam.
23 still in college, going slowly.

On campus,
I shrugged my shoulders at the war
And remembered how the sun looked
Hitting the grass hard and swelling mightily

Or the strange air that might have been another planet.
Or how my rifle strap burdened my shoulder as I walked or stood.

I have yet to see any convincing symbols for peace.
And I'm still disgusted by indifferent people
And Angry people.

They never had a monopoly on love.

Day

I use the key around my neck
To lock away the past and open the future.

Eventually I discard the key
Because the past escapes
And the future cannot be opened.

The opened future is really the past escaping
The locked past returns and departs without effort.

Some toys also have keys;
We wind them up
And pleasure results.

What a fate
To be a mechanical animal
In need of a key.

Day

Plato's cave, with psychological necessity in place of ideals. Us below, groping at the dark shadows of our false motivations.

Fantasy allegories are never wrong. Only the oracles themselves may speak poorly.

Day

The greatest possible literary crime: write as if you're not only talented, but immortal. The sheer audacity and repetition required (not to mention strategic humor) would be just as exhausting as creating something worthy of the title. Don't tell them you're an avatar for everyone else's megalomaniac desires. That might disenchant them.

Day

Could I have done this any better if I were pretending?

A casual misfortune strikes more unexpectedly, like the loss of a finger or a miscarriage.

Day

Somewhere beneath poetry and above fiction—that's the happiest dwelling place for a healthy writer.

Day

It would be impolite to finish a book without saying how indebted I am to Pessoa. I'm not lifting his ideas—I have my own—but it would seem as if I had stolen his pace, which, for a voice, accounts for everything. If you look closer, you'll see that stamina and repose are more enjoyable than mere ideas.

Pessoa and I know where Pessoa is fabricating, and if I can improve upon his style, in hopes to honor him, I shall seek to either not fabricate anything at all, or better, to fabricate without anyone else noticing.

Day

Those who have finally broken the spell and escaped the magic of the extreme habitually feel its numbness—the total exhaustion of human nerves—sensitivity self-actualized.

Day

Once, in public, some stranger blurted out the words, "Hey, are you writing a book?" At this, I looked up from the half exhausted notebook with scribbling in the margins and said, "Yeah, maybe..." But I said it with more confusion and honest surprise than I suppose he noticed.

Day

Thinking about thinking. Writing about writing. Eating for the sake of chewing. Caring for the sake of feeling. Lifting for the sake of strengthening—*healthy living is a circular task!*

Day

The puzzle at hand is to find a way to critique, appreciate and participate in philosophy, psychology, literature, and religion simultaneously without ever deviating from genuine thought and poetry. Solve that riddle, and you're already among the immortals.

Day

I'm in a dance studio watching the amateur swing dancers practice. The beginner class has just combined with the more experienced classes. Other amateur enthusiasts are arriving and the hall seems to flood with people. From the sidelines, while seated, I begin to watch the dancers feet as the music begins. Quickly bored of that, my next inclination is to spot the pretty girls. Skill for dancing seems to have nothing to do with attractiveness. After a space of a few dances, the movement of the couples becomes more stimulating than looking for attractive women, so I unconsciously begin scanning the room for the most interesting visual performance. It's then that I realize the most exciting couples to watch are the ones where the female is kept the most busy, but it doesn't necessarily follow that the most busy female dancers are by any means the most skilled—quite the opposite! The couples with the most complex male leads are determining what the women are able to attempt. I can see right away that the most agile and graceful female dancers are feeling held back by some of their clumsy partners. Not only that, but I can see at least four of them looking over their partner's shoulders at a smartly dressed but somewhat ugly man. He's not too tall or too short, but perhaps a little shorter than most would like. He has a somewhat thick and unremarkable face with hair cut short, neatly done, but again not in any way remarkable or flawed. Even his body is a bit thick and unaesthetic, but the women are looking to him as if waiting for a carnival ride. His next two dance partners have already been arranged. He's taken to giving each girl two songs, between which he has to decline offers or make further promises. His movements are concise, controlled and never gaudy or jagged, even when extra steps or sudden changes are involved. It strikes me as uncanny how little work he is demanded to accomplish and still cause these women to finish the songs exhausted and breathless. When he dances with the younger students he doesn't seem to change anything about his routine; He doesn't humiliate them, he makes them better. It's as if he's deciding everything for them and their bodies are intuitively

following in a manner far beyond their level of experience. He keeps them busy and gently guides them through difficult maneuvers. When he repeats a move that went off poorly the first time, I'm amazed at how responsive and graceful the girls are at repeating it only a minute later. The man's demeanor is so calm and attentive, yet at the same time thoroughly bored, if not sadistic as he spins the girls one way and then another with hardly a pause in between. His routine not only has the complexity of a prize fighter's attack, it also seems to be self-shattering and playfully improvisational. When he smiles ever so briefly at something he's done, or just now about to attempt doing, I sense all the trappings of a self-satisfied virtuoso enjoying his excellence. At the end of the night, he's hardly broken a sweat.

Day

Cicadas scream into the night:
"Summer will not tolerate modesty!"

Day

Telling a friend you just finished writing your second book means about as much as asking for a second cup of coffee: "Yes, as a matter of fact, I am indeed a person who still drinks coffee."

The sentence worth more than an entire book would be: "I'm no longer a person who does that."

Day

With brush in hand, I'm still tessellating the same mood in alternating colors. With poetry it's different. Sometimes I frighten myself when I accidentally write the perfect evaporation of thought—as if the silent chair beneath me had commented on my departure.

Day

A closet of moths awaits our every dress.
As a worm, I too shall fly!

Life only teaches the price of joy!

Day

Each day is a horse.

The sun is our carousel.

Day

Every nipple and uneven ridge
of this
jigsaw puzzle glistens individually
And I marvel.

