

In Grand Purple Robes of Madness

*A testament to the
Alchemy of small rooms and frenzied ink
By
An anonymous person*

Part I
Extreme Good Fortune

Day 1

His final breath leaves him like a morning mist descending upon an over-ripe garden. In this case, the mist floats upward and disperses into a cold room. I feel nothing as my hands loose their grip. I don't need to look at his face any longer; I turn away without hesitation. No need for a final glance; most certainly, no urge for the indulgent thoughts of a sustained gaze. Mine is not the usual habit of a murderer. I've already grown apathetic to the violence I've done a second after I've done it. Most criminals would have stared quietly for a long time brooding over abstruse metaphysical speculations...not I.

My cold hands are as white as his when I fold them together in mock prayer. I hope they stay like that until he's buried. Today, I finally succeeded in suffocating the life out of my almost forgotten soul.

Day 2

By extension, my soul is the world's soul: Every man I kill is myself once more.

The highest peaks and soothing oils of the moral imagination are also the nests of vultures and the laurels of demigods bent on morbid pranks. Enlightenment makes every crime more significant. Enlightenment makes every crime equally meaningless.

Upon being apprehended, a French lunatic made the following statement, which was later used in his trial:

"When I confessed to plucking the wings off a fly and skinning a stray dog, the constable should have taken that opportunity for locking me up. Perhaps my first confession was too extravagant! In truth, the dog and the fly were my favorite victims! Even with the fly, I already knew my own nature; I already tasted the fullness of my revelation. My wanton revelation.

Reading Bram Stoker, I cannot help but marvel at how Renfield contents himself with the blood of flies. If one day, whilst confined to a cell, I must return to killing flies, at least I will have gotten beyond the

pretense that flies are more suited for death than mortal men. My lovely, lovely, wingless flies! I'd rather kill men. I'd rather kill creatures born without wings."

Day 3

The more we get to know ourselves, the more clearly it appears that there is no use judging our own actions or those of others. At the proper distance, we all appear to be stranded characters on shipwrecked shores; a rescue at this point would seem...somehow...outrageous.

Day 4

The eyeless face of my muse haunts my every word. In my imagination, her skin is perfect; her robes are always loose fitting and in disarray leaving flesh exposed or partially revealed. I never seem to notice her hair or anything else about her appearance—I can't look directly at her frigid pose without being drawn in and hypnotically unchurched by the empty craters where her eyes are missing; the red flesh at their bottoms seem newly wounded or only recently healed. It's strange how she doesn't seem aware of herself pointing, yet she does so as if her left arm were half-crucified or stuffed with straw; and what ghastly magic is it that allows her to disregard the steady, yet patiently slow trickle of blood hemming its wayward way down her cheeks? Like a henna tattoo or the silks of a corn husk dyed in spilt pig's blood, the red web descends from the open portals of her missing eyes like the finale of an opera gone to silence without a spectator. When the light doesn't touch her straight on, the red hollows of her skull are shadowed and dark; austere like a tutelary demon or a twisted god.

Her swollen belly rises up, more healthful and nourished than the rest of her; The tightly stretched skin pulling away from her naval looks as smooth as a pearl descending like a piece of jewelry hooked through the flesh of an earlobe—from between wisps of hair, the pearl earring teases us in just the same manner the belly of my muse protrudes from that robe she nearly disregards: Like a tutelary demon or a twisted god, I think she is with child...a child she will never see. Mother of the blind, born eyeless and already pregnant: She doesn't care where she points: all that matters is that I look.

Day 5

Three flowering staves survey the harbor. Ambiguity envelops us. Our ventures are in question, and perhaps we shall not sleep until either these ventures fail us, or we cease to hope in them so exclusively. Everything is permitted here. Every form of excess and grief and abuse of literature must be allowed. Even our own eventual ruin and collapse into madness may perhaps be necessary. I have heard that birth is blood and torment; Maybe that is exactly what I long for; What is required, even.

Day 6

We are all cheated of our own birth. The blood and torment was someone else's. Sometimes we indulge in madness, but mostly, it's someone else's madness that we sip, store, and sneak glances at because we are just as much intrigued as we are ashamed and apprehensive about such things. This is all safe, so long as someone else's fetishes and foolery are combed through, instead of our own.

Day 7

The flowing rivers are the same.
The new moon and the new dawn are also the same.

Idiot labors. Idiot youth. Idiot variation.

My sickness is comforting to me because it's source remains constant. I worship my own disgust as a bridge toward life; as an occult awakening, impartial to life.

Day 8

Walking through an art gallery,
Hearing talk of elaborate foreign cuisine
Or considering the many lovers
One has not had,

You feel a sense that
You are a poor connoisseur of life—

And perhaps,

You are.

Day 9

Slouching into a greater anguish and a greater contentment than I've ever experienced: Commenting lazily on the peculiarities of my fated era, my fated generation: whether it be railroad lines or satellite networks, we are just fools enjoying the labors of others, and since there are so many, many others, what does it matter if we contribute anything at all. Greater still, every possible enticement is actually an invitation to enjoy the labors of others and to negate yourself; To wander listlessly toward each new day, marveling enthusiastically about someone else's creations—that is the normal urge.

Every possible enticement is a banner for impotence and uselessness. Alcohol and joy are the excuse of millions to let go of themselves. If you take yourself seriously, or you dream and want to create, you are really nothing but a mockery and a complete fool. Give up.

Day 10

Use starlight as an earplug for your tooth pains. Use multi-threaded drapery to suffocate tears. Burn a torch made out of new plans and wave it in the faces of demons dressed in robes, awaiting the vigil devotions you deserve and will not hear. Shake powdered bleach

on the nostrils of sheep if they disturb your chosen hour of rest. Act humanely with the most violent means available. Three towers of ocean shells cheer for your success! Two limping decades win the race; we notice everything, a century too late.

Day 11

Sometimes I am for the collective. Sometimes I am for the individual. Sometimes I am for logic and sometimes I am for magic. I want to be the philosopher who helps the devil with his work; I want to accuse and I want to tempt. Secretly, I think that even the devil—with all of his opposites and his storehouses of extreme possibility—is actually a very devoted practitioner of style, limitation and boundary...I think maybe it is the devil's joy that God is so careless and naive.

Day 12

My soul tried to return today. I picked him out from the mob—I recognized him almost immediately! I left my meal without paying and ended up following him a great distance. Now I am free to return at my leisure. Perhaps when the street is less crowded with people, or when the busses aren't running nearby.

Did he just stow his spare key on the ledge above the door? That's convenient, isn't it...

Day 13

Whatever goes on in my interior life also finds a way into my exterior life. Sometimes I even require symbols and incarnate actions to validate my inner being. Artists do this every day, without even the slightest pang of guilt or thought of making excuse...At least I apologize for it here...whatever that is worth.

Day 14

Caesar wore purple. He declared the laurel wreath to be “the symbol of the supreme ruler”. Let us imagine that the olive wreath is not a symbol of peace, but of total victory. Caesar is complete power in a world of continuously changing and evolving forms of strife.

There are no convincing symbols for peace. Beware those that appear so.

Day 15

A red carpet, freckled by dead mice; Hundreds of dead mice. We cannot pass over it without being tripped up by its unevenness. A soft rug, warted by tiny bodies; textured like sores or ingrown hairs. Walking barefoot, we feel the stiffness of these small rodents, and worse still, we sense the coldness of their snake-like tales. How did so many mice happen to die here, all at once?

Day 16

Weak stitches of large, clumsy tan yarn keep the dolls from bleeding sawdust into the ears of sleeping children who hug them to death slowly. Bears and crude monkeys left on stairwells in the dark are the first to be discovered; Mending day for a family of unrelated animals; the needles that pierce and heal make the children cringe and fear to watch. Does it always hurt, to be fixed?

I see ragged haired dolls passed out in my dreams, and I want to dream of needles too—the romance of needles; the romance of constantly being pierced.

Lacking love—that feeling should be just as complete as being in love. Complete joy touches clouds and blocks out the sun for miles and miles behind it. That is also how I will describe despair: like a mountain.

Day 17

Love the hero. Cheer for the villain. Why can't we be permitted to do both at once? I want the eroticism of both. I want to satisfy both.

The heroic urge is lovingly bound in one direction. The villainous urge, on the contrary, sees every other possible direction because its allegiance is nearer to neutrality.

Day 18

An outside description of a man's misery is never as poignant as the subtle clues he leaves on his path. Those around him pick up a few of his threads or trip over his careless behavior, but the complete picture is scattered. He is a crime unto himself; He becomes both victim and deed. If his art is outrageously good—for the few that need it—then we must count those small clippings and strange novelties on the path behind him as a vehicle or a gateway into the living atmosphere of his damnation. The countless rumors and stories from those he jilted or wronged in some inexplicable way—these are all part of the jigsaw nonsense that dominates his shallow breaths. Artists would wish to make these trinkets into something complete; a statue of themselves or the story of a hero. Without my glasses, my eyes blur just beyond my hand. I don't need Loki's mischief as an excuse for human behavior. The feeling of disjunction is the atmosphere of a small crime unfolding. Every life, eventually becomes both a pandemic series of noxious droppings, and a cold case filed into obscurity. The untended barn that becomes an aviary will kill a man in a few days if he breathes the air.

The world secretly desires a Walt Whitman of complete disgust. When shadows as long as clouds creep over the treetops and hauntingly approach unsuspecting cities of bliss, my hands tremble and begin: In the housewife and the mill worker, in the singing soldiers and the fence painting school boys, the beautiful chant and hum of romanticized distress can almost be heard; To hear faintly, the din of a chorus beyond ourselves...that's the kind of intuition that makes a man complete...isn't it?

Whether the chorus is happy or sad matters very little...for it is probably false, and we only falsely imagine it. Wretchedness
IS A HAND REACHING.

Day 19

Philosophy seduced me and led me astray. It promised riches and things of value, but it has left me desolate and wanting. Not only has it impoverished me, it has also devalued and defamed in my mind, every grain and droplet of existence. If philosophy had only ruined me, and not the world entire, or if instead, philosophy had left me intact at the expense of the world, then I might have deemed this solution necessary, but as it is, neither the world, nor my own person have survived the annihilating mania of rational thought.

Day 20

Let this book be a vulgar attempt at what my heart most desires: a rough draft of the Magnum Opus I'll never write. It's already been several years since I had the inspiration to write the bleakest book ever written, yet still, to this day, I've failed to write it. My resources and my patience are wearing thin. Today, I'd settle for the cheapest, most shallow book ever written and I'd read it on a toilet seat with a shotgun in my mouth—for every moment I fail to pull the trigger, I'd punish myself with another turn of the page so that I might remember my true purpose. Often, I'll go to bookstores in nearby shopping malls to steal a copy of Siddhartha by Herman Hesse so that I might tear out pages as I walk past cell phone kiosks and pretzel vendors. As if out of some sacred homage to the devils of literary perfection, my possessed hands discard this ruined book with its Nobel Prize cover in tact so that all the passersby might curiously peak at what sort of story prompted my madness. To my own horror, I also realize this same curiosity on the part of the nearby pretzel buyers might actually work against me and result in even more people praising the words of a charlatan. In these moments, I feel the joy of a false Prometheus! If only I could bring a hundred thousand more of these feeble minded pedestrians to the fraudulent haunts of Siddhartha's life. What joy I might feel, as the apostle of a charlatan! My own misery is already less painful at imagining the vulgar deception of others. What ever stands opposed to the solitary truth of my own life—yes, opposite in every respect—let

me champion that truth instead of my own! Have you ever seen such a smile as mine? Have you ever taken the time to learn how to love a messiah of sarcasm? I sometimes wish my name were St. Paul.

Day 21

A middle aged man is sitting and typing things, and when his imagination gets going he almost says something passable or sincere, but so long as he is healthy, he probably won't say anything threatening...and if he does, some part of him will refuse to believe it. If only he could become *more* discontent...then youth and good health wouldn't matter. He spends entire days praying for thunder-clouds to roll over him and for hog-nosed adders to slither up to his feet.

If finally, the entire earth could assume for him a completely threatening character, then his voice too, would no doubt be changed. If only the summer sun would drip blood into this empty grocery store parking lot, he might finally glimpse a virgin oasis of pure pain.

Day 22

Misery is a prayer that forgets to stop. Like a faint caress against parted lips, even slight changes become unendurable. With the impatience of a new dress, we wait for some kind of celebration. Our prayers are all complaints, and the future is populated with characters like us who might somehow succeed...if they do, let's despise ourselves more! Failure is almost a poetic word. Whatever mood is finally, the most intense—that is what we want!

Day 23

When this or that man goes through many years of study or discipline, isn't it a tragedy when his thoughts or his efforts finally turn their backs on him and he sags or languishes in disappointment? Isn't it a tragedy, when even after winning literary prizes and earning the admiration of thousands, a man looks back on the course of his life and feels in himself, a disgust for all things? Well then, if the result is the same, why should a great deal of effort or sacrifice be necessary for a

man to finally exalt his own personal disgust? Isn't it, somewhat oafish and retarded on the part of mankind to need such long travels and so many, many wars and tribulations only to realize their own insignificance? Why are scars and displays of sweat so heroic to the minds of mortals? To my mind, those who finally earn disgust, through outward means and outward efforts do not in any way deserve that disgust. They are fools! They are blundering nitwits, every last one! We only love heroes because we feel sympathy for their plight. In truth, we never even measure them ontologically or existentially! We are too easily seduced by them. We are so busy with our own little quests of emotion and self-development that we actually need them just as much as the middle aged woman with the Jim Morrison book satchel needs a drug addled rock star to fulfill her. The small tests of character that truly matter will never be seen by the world. Extravagance and colossal stupidity will always overshadow the miniature tragedies experienced by the non-entities who also practice my creed. Whatever the disgusted, world-famous philosophers have felt, I too have felt. Whatever transformations of character are being experienced during the five decades it takes a man to renounce a career, I have already felt as a result of my mental illness. In fact, the singular crisis of an important man's lifetime is already auditioned over and over in the mind of a lunatic...and for the lunatic, the disgust is no less real.

Day 24

A terrible thought just came to me: If life has no conclusions or endings for us to describe, won't the final entry here look somewhat like an unfinished sentence? And isn't the final page of a diary all the more troubling if its author suffers some kind of stroke or heart attack mid sentence and his hand seizes up, causing dark ink to convulse and cut into the page slightly as he dies? Or recall the last few holiday cards your great grandmother sent to you: the only message you understood from them were the tremors that shook her dehydrated hand; each word hinted at the end, but the real meaning of her life and her end were substituted and ignored in favor of holiday remembrance and well-wishing.

My hand will not tremble. My brain will not stroke out. My heart will not fail. My fate and my meaning and my pain shall continue, because my life is not any more or less anonymous than yours.

We are all unique you know...we are all unique in the methodic odyssey, of our lies. If I truly wanted to write the bleakest book ever written, I wouldn't end it by pretending to die during it or because of it; no, far from that, fool! If I wanted to write the bleakest book ever written, I would need to spend most of my energy in preparing you and assuring you that even if it did end, its author and its author's world would continue suffering on and on...indefinitely.

I don't want to be original. I want to continue what was already set into motion many lifetimes before this one. I want to be a grave-maker's son! I want my ancestry to continue forward just as far as it reaches backward; I want to look at life by concentrating on the efforts exerted on nothing but pits and monuments and headstones; When you die, imagine me, or one of my sons—whose face resembles my own—making for you a sunless house; While holding a spade full of loose earth and night crawlers, with dirt up to the knees of my denim, I want to lean on my shovel as I say to life, wholeheartedly, “Yea, I condone *this!*”

Day 25

Ripped screaming from the lacerated stomach and womb of god, morality has changed: In our hands, we, the immoralists of the world, experience disgust as a source of aesthetic and moral valuation. The sheer force and brutality of my experience is not a speculation or a proposition which can be argued away. The only force strong enough to nullify the reality of personal experience and mandate change is disgust itself. Ripped screaming from the lacerated stomach and womb of god, disgust is born: In our hands, we, the immoralists of the world, dote upon a curious offspring. From our vital energies, we nourish a parasitic entity. Without this entity, we risk mania and vertigo once more; better to cradle our disgust than to slip unwittingly into the moral vacuity of the abyss.

Day 26

Zeus ate his children. He also fathered them. Disgust is not only aversion to taste, but aversion to birth: perhaps more precisely, the unique nature of each successive birth: that is to say, each moment of existence.

Day 27

The lips of coffins sometimes smile and wait to be opened. A couple enters and the man opens its wonderful jaws. A panting blue satin fan of creases wants to serve as a mis-colored tongue, or a carriage seat for a temporary passenger. Vaginal ridges welcome the couple as they browse the various fabrics available. What fantastic beds these wooden boats must make! Airless boxes heaved out of planes and landing in splinters; a bombing raid using caskets and sex made of silken folds. “We’ll pay for that one, if you please...”

“My condolences. Good day.”

Day 28

Shall we continue numbering the days then? Something within tells me to abstain from numbers—that waking days are somehow, only an interruption.

Day

When I climbed the holy mountain of enlightenment in my dream, I entered the chamber of the oracle with timid awe and reverence; I made my way down a narrow carpet and found a holy man sitting on a throne. When he lifted his hood, I beheld his face with horror and I reeled backwards, vomiting and choking. When I both saw and understood that his face was like my own, the first thing I knew I had to do, and then in fact did do, was grab him by his swaying purple robe and throw him over the side of the mountain. Now I’m sitting here on that thrown myself, and I’m impatient no one has come for me.

Day

Today I found another praying corpse in the street. I blanketed him with the newspaper I was carrying and went on my way.

Day

In doing nothing, the immortals are perfect—that is to say, they abandon that which is human. This distinction is important. Remember it. Humans communicate and exchange, and feel. Immortals are beyond.

Perhaps this effort, for me, will become a path to immortality—not of fame, but of numbness; of Nirvana.

Day

Just now, I feel such tremendous faith in humanity that I fear to write what I am about to write: yesterday I saw a tabloid paper predicting the apocalypse and I said to myself, “Let it come when it comes; surely a day later we’ll already have thought of something better.”

On the day after tomorrow, let the headline read: Pessimism is Beautiful.

Day

Charge forward. The faster we move, the more our bones begin to absorb our flesh; the air that rushes past becomes less and less a hindrance as our skinny frame involutes and sucks itself in toward the marrow. Harvest from the center: from the thickest bone available: defeat the cancer...Still I run and shrink and devolve. I have become a posable little sketch doll with wire joints. Everything is a pose. Vitality is no longer contained here. Anorexic models are beautiful! The more lifeless, the more beautiful! Take away the organs and the cushion of flesh and what’s left feels like a heightened grace—a better pose, a form without distractions or uses. Our models for perfection must either be too fragile for work or too muscular to interact with dishes and silverware—they should eat with their fingers; pick up the entire bird and devour it like a tiger. Perhaps the underweight models and the strong men should pose together. The models should faint while trying to hold a child against their bony hips. The strong men

should try to catch them without snapping them in half like un-cooked pasta. In the long tunnel, or hallway, where I run along and deteriorate, I turn what's left of my head from side to side and I see thin models holding plump babies and I see them crumble to dust and the dust is pulled into an air vent and becomes a desert where I am half buried. I am a skeleton by this point and my hands are the most useless shovels; even more useless than spoons that bend when the ice cream is too cold. Have you ever pulled pills out of ice cream? Maybe you don't realize the pills until you taste their chalky numbness against the sweet vanilla you are accustomed to; then you spit the pill onto the table and your bib is sticky from your flailing fingers and bad motor skills. Have we regressed?

Pocket your frayed wallet. Erase the marker board. Why does this face before us have eight spider eyes in its forehead just above its human mouth? Like black beads riveted in a semi-circle against flabby folds of brow skin, the eyes look forward only; this kind of face belongs on a totem pole. Where should the force and strength of an empire be directed? And before that, there's so much work and detail involved in making an army look presentable and well groomed. This cluttered roll top desk has no business in a tank brigade. Strength and efficacy are sleek, minimal—functional. An acoustic guitar is more powerful than an opera, if the lighting is right. I want to be a polished candle holder.

Day

All Hollow tides
Greet the shores
At our feet

To tease us
and tempt us
Lower and deeper.

Day

From behind these walls that stand before me, I sense some kind of torment. I feel troubled as to what is going on behind them; I cannot move away from these high walls; There are no doors; only a sensation of the beyond. What seems curious is the fact that I am not bound or trapped behind them; I am safely on the side of freedom, yet these walls, even without taking any direct cue from them per say, give me a deeply uneasy feeling. I curl up near them and nest myself against their thickness. One side of me is safe, at least...and the side that is safe, is also the side that keeps me from forgetting the anxiety of the beyond.

“He who breaks the wall of words overthrows Gods and defiles temples...”

-Carl Jung, The Red Book

Day

Sometimes a direct route; Other days, a slow road is better. Genius has no substance of its own. Genius can be a better bridge or chair lift to mountaintops. Try to see it as an exertion of power that yields the most direct and decisive result—try to see it as an early arrival or a late departure: maybe it has to stay long enough to grant the assurance needed after the others have gone home. As badly as the fool or the average man can fail, genius can even surpass them in its moments of elaborate folly. It can sever relationships more decisively; it can wound more severely or build a higher tower from which to fall when the lightning strikes. Do not envy genius. Do not claim to possess it...no one possesses it. Where it exists, it is exerted.

Day

Manifestation and the unification of possible objects with the moods and the urges of our own development: Whatever is at hand is either passed over or projected upon. The author who has the wit and the imagination to do so, exhibits a sort of conjuring awareness. He transforms his urges and his thoughts into metaphors that are both

simple and effective. When he works from imagination, he is only trying to mimic a process that he intuits beyond himself. Imagination is not the highest blessing. Sensitivity is better still: for the sensitive man or woman, every material and circumstantial gathering in of perception is also a fountainhead of possible manifestation. The more metaphorical scapegoats, the better...and we should discover them by accident as well.

Day

Some of the serious ones cut themselves and bleed out a few drips...I think I am finally able to envy their success...I have been staring into open lashes for a decade, and still no blood has bothered to bubble up from this dry well. And do you know what else? The sparrows still land gracefully and college classes are still havens for optimism and delight.

Day

I'm already a poet laureate over the cities of my own mind, and even in the false light of this imaginary moon, I'm humiliated. I'll never be as bright as the moon. If I were given a torch and told which road led to Marathon, I'd never see more than a few strides beyond myself—Marathon teaches a man how much darkness the torch actually disrespects.

Day

"It is a mistake to believe in a direct relation between suffering reverses and being dead set against birth. Such opposition has deeper, more distant roots, and would occur even if one had only the shadow of a grievance against existence. In fact it is never more virulent than in cases of extreme good fortune..."

-E.M. Cioran, The Trouble with Being Born

I've always been too disgusted with reality to write fictional characters. I cannot summon the strength to pursue lesser conflicts than my own. In terms of sheer disappointment, I cannot imagine a

more horrific character than myself. I could not summon the dishonesty required to improve upon my own suffering. I had a happy childhood! I have a healthy body! My education is adequate! I make friends easily and none of my endeavors have gone so badly that I'd waste time lamenting them, but still, I insist against all the facts of the outward, superficial reality of the world, I am one of the most miserable men to have ever lived!

Day

Long laughter is like suffering;

Is,

the same,

as suffering.

Day

One should not be ashamed if it takes a great many bad poems to arrive at one you would share with others.

Ah, if only that were a stopping point!

It takes a great many viable poems to cease caring for the audience entirely,

And a good deal more of those,

To regain ones original arrogance,

stupidity,

and sense of humor.

Day

The much grieved image

Of a willful mother

Clinging to her specific child

Is the same rotten individuality

That kills art.

Day

Seen from the outside, motherhood is exactly the opposite state of enlightenment. From within however, motherhood *is Enlightenment!*

Day

Desire is at war against splendor. The more desire we have, the more miserly and covetous we appear in contrast to those who give off light and joy and inspiration. To completely resemble the relationship of the earth and sun—how the earth sucks and drinks and takes while the sun does nothing but continue to burn and blaze and give...that is the image Jung creates when he mentions desire and splendor. Often I've wanted to be desireless...but now I want to be splendid as well. I want to be....

I want...

I want...

I want...

Day

Each day we are almost a different person...or more exactly, we keep returning to the default one. Certain realizations and moments of clarity keep getting erased; or we seem to have lost the moods that provoke them. Whatever the case, it seems as if all that remains are vague remembrances of roads almost traveled. By some inhibiting spell or dark magic, we keep waking up near a signpost we should have passed by years ago. Only recently have I also discovered that, upon returning to my old notebooks—which I tend to fill up randomly—I find pages and pages of pontification that I don't remember scribbling; sure enough, these are done in my hand writing, and sound as if something I might have said or thought, but yet, I feel a severance from them that almost seems strange...I feel haunted by them. Often I enjoy discovering a new direction in these past notebooks, but at a certain point, whatever their content may be, I now feel a greater sense of mystery at the fact that they even exist at all.

Day

Poets should never be seen as victorious or capable individuals. A successful poet will quickly degenerate into a droning excuse for his own success, never letting go the guilt he feels at no longer being on the sagging side of life's golden scales: when the rich stoop to tell you how nicely their carriage glitters, you feel more cruelty than awe; the same is true of poets. A poet must continually lose. A poet must drink the unstrained dregs from the wine flasks and suck the remainder of beer from out of mugs that have the misfortune of becoming ashtrays for a few impatient cigarettes. Poets must be the common gateway to disappointment, and through disappointment, they must show us human communion once more. Just as the comedic fool is a more successful fool, the farther his blundering falls beneath average intellect, the laughter of a poet must conversely make the entire room grave and painfully disgusted.

"If the lowest man is laughing, then what, my dear sirs, are we?"

Day

Self-sacrifice, for the sake of others, no matter how wonderful the result, is always pathetic. Even when we praise such acts, we secretly rate them below acts of independence and joy. We look at the quiet reserve and fortitude in the doers of kind labor, and a nagging question rises up every time: "If they are capable of that, I want to see what they are capable of for themselves..."

Day

Total War. That is what I imagine when I do what is worth doing. If you have ever acted creatively or just now, long to act and live in a creative manner, you must accept Total War. Accept Total War with your indifference and your irony. Walk resolutely with a hand grenade and put it at the feet of the nearest marble statue or in the hands of your dear grandmother; whisper in her ear and tell her it's something else...a gift, maybe.

The lives and thoughts of the world's most blundering artists are chaotic, excessive and stupid. I feel a special communion with the intolerable scoundrels that do things poorly. I wager that a good share of them eventually realize their own lack of originality and worse, also realize the true nature of their unceasing inner change: how it never actually settles upon a style, and thereby remains continually disjointed, vulgar, threatening and obnoxious.

I imagine total war and I am at home there. In a state of total war, everything is threatened. Everything fears its own demise. Buildings, people, ideas and routines crumble. The landscape is waste and ruin. I am at home in my vision of the world. I am at home in my vision because I have realized something completely unique about style in general. Although my every instinct and impulse tells me to love, adore and cherish every human example of forethought, congruence, respect, stability, passion and adornment, my neck and my stomach muscles tell me to stiffen myself and my armor of discontent. My weary knees and joints say to me, "No rest yet. Worse is yet to come. Do not be tempted to relax or let your heart rest easy. Don't you hear us creak and groan and click. We make noise when you are doing right. Do justice to the world of appearance and feeling. Groan with hatred; creak like a mast straining its sails against the wind. Go hard into the storm and rage with it." Yes, we love the world of appearance, for appearance's sake. Let it go on appearing beautifully and well decorated...but do not ever bend or stoop down for the sake of appearance. Style is good. Forethought is good. Limitation is good... but when the motive of limitation and the motive of style actually becomes weakness, then it is time to stop. The world looks at the neatly combed hair, the nice shoes and the stark image the young man cuts with his fine new clothes, and perhaps even the young man smiles with a bit of irony when he sees how the world now greets him. Perhaps the young man is just barely apt enough to see the magic of his appearance. Perhaps the image and the emotion he conveys, from his shoes to his collar, is finally an image of ease and relaxation on the part of the searching, groping, discontented eyes of the mob. Finally one thousand eyes are resting easy, for they have found something to trust. Something stable. Something bounded. Something limited. Something finally set right. Something free from the ills and the chaos that's ever churning and boiling in the minds of the crowd; We all find our comfort in the spectacle of finality. That is why poems must end. And novels must end. And lives must end. Style demands a complete progression which eventually resolves upon its own demise. It begins

as a learning endeavor which increases in complexity until it finds the ability to select, perfect and withhold. Once it achieves something resembling style, it must then stumble upon the very incantation that annuls it. The Dandy performs his own exorcism. Dorian Grey looks out amongst his admirers and he sees his own ugliness...that is a mistake. Dorian Grey isn't a moral lesson. We creators, create beyond ourselves. Dorian Grey—the perfection of Dandyism and style incarnate—is actually the ugliness of those who *need* Dorian Grey. Our lust for a world of congruence, predictability and splendor is really our twofold yearning for what is new and for what is comforting. If we can have both, then we win the greatest prize attainable amongst the pigeon hearted. Those who seek Total War may sometimes appear like Dorian Grey, and to the extent that they appear, merely, and not exist—let their saintliness be judged upon that criteria alone. Let them smile proudly, not at their clothes or their great treasures, but rather, at the beautiful blue, brown, gray and green orbs which house the real prize beyond price...One thousand eyes longing for false stability, false youth, false joy, false love, and false possibilities! Blessed he who holds one thousand eyes! Lords of war, be my priestess too! I am seduced, and seduction means so much truth and joy and honesty that we dare not whisper lightly against it. My joints creak back at me and my knees protest. Once more they caution me: "Be otherwise! Fool! No rest yet. The worst is yet to come..."

To these ailments and those ailments that are not yet, I answer absentmindedly and dreamily as ever, "I know!"

Even as I am swept away, insensate with false or borrowed pleasure, and even as I run out ahead of the infirm and the diseased, I kick up my feet and shout laughingly over my shoulder, "I know!"

Day

The longest journey, for the logical mind, is to return comfortably to impressions, moods and fits of lunacy. Is the distance really so far? Our logical minds are always teetering on the edge of some magnificent, descending reef. Our supposed motives prop us up, just enough, that we forget the choral prison going downward below where the light can reach.

For philosophy to finally do what great movements of painting and poetry have already done...that is the underwater city worth visiting...the philosophy, finally, of impressions.

To do away with rectitude, universal stones, and flakes of gold! To peer inward at the funhouse mirrors of our sideways systems and to ride the down-sliding short-cuts to our actual motivations! To realize that warm blankets are as good an argument as sand paper—the one renders objects as the dust they are, and the other gives us the freedom to sink back into that which we are not. Go forward to the dust. Go backwards to the illusions. In between those, the cats are wrestling with yarn as if it were some kind of adversary...the truth is closer to the joy of yarn than the nature of cats. Evasive animals that we are, we will not look at anyone who calls to us...we have more pressing matters to attend to. We are busy in our human towers and our human trenches. If you want to get to know us, you must first begin climbing down the great reef of mad impressions. Lick sweet sugared candies as you begin to dream terrors. This should all be lighthearted and seem like entertainment. It should all pass by like a colorful bus or a tinted cloud. Our beards should flake off daily, and leave behind a ratty trail of pinches, bits and shavings. Imagine the faces that are waiting in your head. Waiting to smile and then shriek alternately at the clown you become when you lust and grieve and forget, all as you savor the sweet sugared textures of your underground lives. Every order you place is almost tomorrow's detail. And the details add up to something. Admire the unique textures and then sink safely back into the warm blanket of non-participation. Go quickly out of the main room. Slip away. Take a husband or a wife and retreat! Find for your self, as quickly as possible, some sweet sugared candies of comfort; suckle endlessly upon them, until they too are drained out, and you suspect a sinister, malevolent layer beneath. Sip the honeyed waters until one afternoon a mad thought possesses you and you begin to believe that the entire universe is a sham for the sake of your deception only; that maybe your lover is a wasp controlled by some solitary force—not a being, but a force!—this force hates you and wants only to find new means of ecstasy out of your torment. As you sip a cold, refreshing drink in the afternoon, the mere thought, the mere flicker of intuition from un-reality is suddenly enough to make you bite your nails and look at your companion as if you had never yet really known anything about her. You drop the plate of melon slices and whisper forcefully, “Who sent you?!?”

Day

Did you ever happen to miss someone and long for them in the middle of some other task that for all practical purposes, was going smoothly and had nothing at all to do with the absent person? Or have you found yourself wishing for the presence of some chance person you hardly met, but distinctly remember? The absent ghosts of this room are real somewhere. All the characters from your past are alive and well, probably. Do we also, happen to turn up in the heads of others, when they least expect our visit?

I like to imagine that even very important and beautiful people sometimes feel intense longing for random persons, depending on their moods. I imagine that even those who are surrounded with followers and hangers-on, are sometimes left to their own rented rooms in strange cities; Maybe as they stare at the unsettling cleanliness of a hotel bathroom, they feel alone. “Whoever cleaned this floor and sink, has surely gone home for the day. Oh, if only they were here now, in the middle of the night, calmly cleaning as I sit still. We might talk about something, and we’d hardly notice the echo of the room, because there would be two of us, and we’d speak softly.”

It’s entirely superficial to imagine that only ugly and unwanted persons feel alone. Beauty and talent also have their own long nights of quiet anguish. Perhaps there is a woman drooping off a low love seat, slouching her way to the floor with her legs nearly bare, and the carpet is a new sensation as her own weight finally, passively tosses her off the couch. Now she has her ashtray on the floor too. Maybe she looks at the time on her phone and then flings it to the side, letting it spin out of her fingers and bounce safely to rest. Her life is filled up with people that want her attention, but her head only keeps random bits from all these encounters. Right now she’s remembering a valet who picked up something for her. Or the very tanned skin of the older gentleman that bussed her dishes in the café. Or the man who gave away his umbrella as she stepped out of the taxi and he entered it...the look on all their faces was similar. She recognized it as the look of futility and faint joy. So much despair and rejection had made these fellows seem innocent and honest; Nothing she did could change that about them. They wouldn’t try for her. They wouldn’t risk anything or dare, and for that, they seemed angelic. Admittedly, she didn’t long for them, in the normal, passionate sense, but for her, they represented a

counterbalance to the great mass of men who spend every waking second of their lives posturing, chasing and making hackneyed plans. A twentieth floor hotel seems little more than a high moonlit cliff when the window is open...below, she knows the coyotes are still circling. And among them, a few lame ones stumble and yearn and fear to admit anything about their upward looking. If only she had a valet or a tanned café man at her side, right here on the floor in front of this couch. She felt she would give anything to pet the leftover hairs of a useless man as he stared at hotel carpet, or looked briefly at her ashtray before again looking down into his folded hands once more. What a jolt of excitement she might feel if, after a long, long silence, he began to mumble something personal...maybe something about a woman from his past...and maybe his eyes would finally venture a timid peak out from under his thick brow before they dove suicidally back into the interlocking hands he had not finished studying. Just how many umbrellas are given away, and how many sad dishes are scraped clean in the reflection or lingering perfumes of an impossible conquest? It's a pity. Some nights— and some days too—she doesn't like being impossible.

Day

My version of enlightenment dethrones humanity and murders divinity, over and over and over again, for that is the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Repetition is a vital component of my prayer. Repetition hypnotizes and transports and inflates our illusions, not so they can own us, but so we might own them.

Day

Simple explanations are the most heroic. The strength it takes to negate, truncate, simplify and abridge reality is also the surest recipe for over-coming the world's many ills. To look at a man surrounded in books and learning and to quickly dismiss his every notion and his every impression—That is a Herculean effort! To sneer unexpectedly at the declarations of a casual pessimist—That is bravery!

There must always be a point where common vulgarity actually surpasses and overthrows divinity. In the future, when you find yourself taking offense at the stupidest possible observation of a nearby fool, give pause and ask yourself solemnly, if they are correct.

Day

When the adolescent novelty of suicide has worn off, the thought remains with us like a faithful companion. Sometimes our actual companions come to resemble our inner recognition of the void. Often, we greet each other smiling. Discomfort remains pleasant, with its tail wagging.

Day

I've never been able to experience reality without also bringing with me a truckload of previous sentiments and experiences, that, in all practical purposes, do nothing but inhibit me and resemble something like a tyrannical philosophy of behavior...and lately, instead of seeing this dung heap waiting to be unloaded as a treasure or an advantage, I begin to see the garbage within me is nothing at all like wisdom or prudence...just because I have a sour mood, I am not necessarily a hero.

Day

Short declarations have two advantages: they example the randomness of lucidity—as experienced—and they respect the ephemeral brevity of strength, without exhausting it.

Day

If life happens to unfold in a gloomy way or in a joyous way or a celebratory way, we must make exceptions for it. My great fear is that I may have to eventually make accommodations for happiness and

thereby, lose my cloak of melancholy and mystery: To eventually degenerate into a perfectly well-adjusted Lin Yutang of sorts. What if by some magnificent degree of *adaptation*, I lose all my virtue—the demons of disproportion, of maladjustment, of discontent, unrest, hesitation, and loneliness—for I feel that literary virtues are not the active virtues of extroverted men, but are their exact opposite; these demons are the whip and spur; they are the urgency of our expressions and the unrelenting vitality of creative personalities. By contrast, the well-adjusted types get excited about the most god-awful stupidities and humanisms. In their journals—if ever they bothered to make them—there would no doubt be pages upon pages of exclamations about the weather, and birthdays and apple pie.

Yes, of course we exaggerate; of course we know that even the extroverted men are not without catastrophe and loss and disappointment...but will they ever learn to speak convincingly about these things? I don't think they know how to dress for the part; practice makes everything better...even contempt.

Day

Has there ever been a creation that was not actually a creation at all, but instead, nothing more than a difficult parasite? A type of creation that only succeeded in being a parody of creation?

Sometimes I feel that, if I should turn away from this effort, it will immediately turn to dust: that without my returning force and my continued faith, it dies and goes down into the ditches or lower, and like a fire already spent, it stains whatever hand seeks to stir it back to life. Heaven is sustaining. But sometimes, Heaven gives birth to gods that seek to enslave us to their paths and their holy "Good". The ashes I stir, are the paints I use to spread over the austere faces of my false gods. The evil and the emptiness—while rightly seen as parasitic—are also a weapon and a force. My own evil and emptiness are a garden I tend and nurture as often as my daylight pastures. For a broad field of good grains, I require only a small nook of poisoned herbs...if this effort looks like nothing but poison, then you have seen it both rightly and wrongly: It is both poison and medicine to my heart. When I surpass a thousand pages, I will still call this effort meager; Is it wrong that I feel an especial fondness for my small garden nook of purple

Hemlock? The good and the grandeur of life is so overwhelming, I cannot do without my Hemlock. What you call morbid and excessive, I call, barely enough...

Day

Veins gorged with pulsing, surging strain; A horsehair bow digging into a steel string; A trembling fingertip holding a resonant tone, oscillating around a pleasing pitch, just enough to put the note in question, but not enough to slip above or beneath the cadence we have just discovered—for that is what a cadence must be, some accidental thing that “finds” completion at an interval as if such a home-like resolution did not exist before.

The audience must now sigh; must now exhale in unison; must feel relief together that the agitation has passed. Herein lies the obverse side of effortlessness—the controlled agitation. This agitation is a sort of violence. Once put into use, it seems to have no end. It might well go on, hacking away, straining, lifting, bending, bleeding, grinding or forcing; without want or purpose it might end in consuming everything. Like the image of a sudden fire, devouring all that counts as fuel, the violence of force might expend the entire terrain, leaving it absolutely desolate. No clue or scent of purpose adheres to the vacancy of ashes...and what if, after some great extinction or atomic expenditure this tilted earth should continue to turn round and round on its crooked axis, char patched—as if dearth and ruin were always to be cultivated next to abundance? Without reprieve or pause, never a cadence yet to answer this, our conflagration of opposites!

Day

I have the mystical belief
That some faces are responsible for a
Sunny day

And some men's verses
Cause the rain
To take its vengeance

Day

Step outside your door. Stand for a few moments and breathe the air. Already you begin to realize what kind of poison has been suffocating you. First you feel the difference in air temperature. This outdoor temperature is much too cold for you to adjust to or ignore: the result is that you begin feeling yourself as a source of warmth, and that warmth is threatened. You feel the need to act; To return to shelter behind you, or seek it beyond you. If you choose to retreat back into your house and return to your room, the temperature will be constant and comfortable. A part of yourself is forgotten and lost when you are comfortable. Comfort is both a challenge for us to seek and a poison for us to be rid of. Standing on my doorstep, I suddenly realize that none of my poetry and none of my philosophy can exist when I am still seeking comfort—that is to say, my artistic expressions are only the late outcome and final declarations of a process that has completed and found, not only its own stagnation, but also its own satiety; right now I am perfectly comfortable. As soon as I stand on my doorstep, my senses return to me. I see the water droplets forming at the tips of the yellowed ice hanging from my gutters. I see cars moving past and bare branches moving slightly in the wind. The feeling of cold is a startling invitation to feel and breathe and realize the world once more. The complexity and detail of what I see before me demands that I describe it and soak it up, rather than pontificate or judge—That seems to be what I have escaped from; I have escaped my rational faculties to the extent that my perceptual and sensual ones have been awakened. Stepping outside is entirely a different mode of being. The noises, the feelings, the sights—all these are so imminent and demanding that I immediately forget myself. The bleak and the tormented souls of the world only dwell in small rooms with comfortable temperatures. Perhaps they are tormented precisely because they are so finely tuned to sensation and perception that to finally be void of stimuli is a kind of terror to them. These keen tools of sensuality are revoked, and in their place, the discipline of thought and self-examination are born and exalted to the point at which they cease being virtues and begin barring the way toward the manifest world.

It does not take long, while standing in the cold, to realize whatever accidents and troubles await us beyond our doorstep are not really so dire as we imagine them to be. A fall, a crash, a sickness, the loss of a relative—these events, to the merely physical dimension of our being, are over quickly; Surrounding them, there exists a quiet

totality that makes no comment or judgment; in the face of this null spectator, we feel a sense of calm and wish to participate in its mature indifference. Only when we return to our comfort and our aloneness are we drained of the demands of perception and turn pathetically toward the involuting liberation of ego and ego judgment once more. When we cease to mimic the indifference of trees and ice droplets, we do more than return to the humanity of our natures—we amplify and disfigure this humanity with our terrible moods. Next, we add to that, our perceptions of past and future; we speculate and fear and pine for things. Instead of seeing how wonderful and sensitive our apparatus for enjoyment is, we rail against its mistakes, its feebleness, its foibles, and its discontent...and then we return to the small room where we write it all down.

Day

When you decide to forfeit the trust of others in a mindful way, a valley of kings rises out of the sands, and you freely ascend toward an occult sacrifice.

The monastery gate, in my placid dream of cordoned gardens, greets all who approach with a clear statement of intent...“Style alone is worshipped here.”

Day

Oh opulence! Let my vigor sing hymns to thee! Health is satanic—everything that suffers, sympathizes; but hospital beds are nothing to those who run the lengths of painted fields with cleated feet and panting lungs. Amidst the music of whistles we are titans and Olympian heroes. Youth possesses the genius of unbounded optimism. NO! Even more than this! Youth does not even need optimism, or conceptual optimism, for it intrinsically *is* the optimum. Without experience of limitation or decline, its every potency seems un-ending: this is why the world loves a good foot race and a football match: *Sport* maintains the *unknowing* in all of its proper glory.

With the realization of my own opulence and vigor, I hold myself to very low standards of creativity. At the very pinnacle of my youth, my velocity has reached a minimum. What use? What service? What

symbol can any of my creations be, if there is no enemy above my head to put pressure upon? If I am perched like an eagle, mountain peaks lose their romance. Everything at eye level seems unworthy of being conquered. The braggart, the arrogant man, the victor: we do not wish to hear monologues by the likes of them, yet, perhaps, they too have a special character worth investigating. A character type that is just as limited as it is affluent. Socially, such types are dead end alleyways. No outlet. No connection. Without conflict, we lose the possibility of relation. We cannot come together, except by strife. The trophies we share, as mutual victors are nothing but hovering question marks...how much farther could we go? The skill of a world champion or a titleholder is mysteriously in abeyance. Not until the defeat do we finally possess his proper measure or his hidden weakness. At that point, when the weakness is finally revealed, he is immediately overshadowed and passed by.

We are instantly en route to the new champion or the new movement. At the moment of victory, it is best to be silent: no one cares for anything you wish to add: all words seem like contempt when the proofs are already demonstrated.

Even the monsters of corruption, which take the lion's share of the world's goods, imagine themselves to be benevolent and genuine beings. They share some of the values of those they crush. Some of them are so rich, they can afford better displays of benevolence than the poor have ever imagined. With riches, we are capable of putting everything in order; our clothes, our families, our industries; our charities...even down to the tiniest watermark on a single banquet spoon, our lives *can* be spotless. If you want to frighten the poor, reveal to them that some of the rich *are happy*.

I remember attending a party in a dim restaurant where everyone's clothes were much nicer than mine. I had not been for-warned what caliber of restaurant I had been invited to. I also remember having to take a painful shit in my stupid clothes at some midpoint during the evening. I also remember the bandage over my wrists that I had failed to conceal. I mention all this, only to illustrate one point: As I wiped my ass, I had the audacity to mend my own iniquities by wagering I had written more lines of poetry than anyone else in the entire building: we must be allowed whatever emotional pittance we can invent for ourselves when we are pressed hard against the walls of shit rooms. Let shame be flushed away, as we invent new means and new excuses.

To be, alternately young and old; to be alternately vigorous and depressed—we are a cancellation; A self-negation. In some moods, there are no outlets or escape ladders. All that was created a moment ago is torn down and cast out a nearby window to rain down as flimsy scraps. Cynicism is both young and old. Cynicism is both vigorous and depressed. In being both types at once, maturity finds its completion and empties itself of content. Cynicism frustrates all who approach it from the outside. In its presence, everything becomes a mask, a play or a symbol. The age of information is automatically the age of too much information. The ground crumbles. Our cares are alien, even to us. We struggle for laughter, and when it comes easily, it seems to choke us. Our hymns to vigor and health are ugly. The pedantic rants of our depression are fruitless. Barred from all directions, we live in the prison cell of an open field whose sky is too large to endure—we live, a prison cell of cows chewing grass.

A crowd of protestors charge toward the lamb. The mob has pitchforks and fangs thirsting for blood; Lamb's blood. As the distance between the lamb and the mob diminishes, they begin to resemble each other. It is to our great surprise that a few of the charging horde fall out of the ranks to sit on swing sets and breathe the unpolluted air as if it were hashish. They revert to children who don't understand how to make tourniquet's effective. Some of the mob turn away from the lamb and charge backward at the mutinous hashish breathers. Meanwhile, the avant-garde have already pierced the lamb's neck with their fangs. With this, the lamb is growing its own fangs and multiplying. Chilled beverages are served to the entire mob—protestors and lambs alike—with total indiscretion. Sad musicians scream angrily on stages made out of failure while turtles carry the mansions of the future in a vague urge to lay eggs. And that is enough to condone and prolong every detail.

What exactly, would un-readable prose look like? What chaos would it remind us of? Is stupidity a gift and a measure of excellence? My stupidity radiates desolation. If I could only be, un-readably stupid, I would approximate my own perfection...my own ideal of perfection. The world as it is...that is my ideal of perfection. If I could have a hundred children, I would not bother to write a single note. Self-duplication is all anyone requires—that and food. Piles and piles of food; a lifetime of chewing and devouring new flavors; a quest of flavor and fancy; of whim and excess and retreat and sometimes shame; but shame is just another flavor, another excuse to help fortify a new

direction; some unforeseen direction. If only my entire body were scar tissue, I might remember the lives and lifetimes I am incapable of being. The earth has no scar tissue. It buries and covers over and forgets. In this metaphor I exclude geology. Rocks chronicle vast changes, but rock is the furthest thing from living tissue. Bone fossils are also inadequate. Everything that possesses suffering is swept away stupidly. If only my entire body were scar tissue...

Day

Were it not for some small spark of light, I could not have attempted this. I already understand my audacity. I almost want to call her by name. I want to make my audacity into a feminine microcosm of myself...my masculine self. I could not have written like this five years ago, nor even five months ago. Something has become strange and perilous. Something in the fabric of my existence has become dreamlike and menacing and pleasant and terrible all at once. The light before me is sinking. Like a cannon, it targets me and my shadow grows to monstrous proportions. I feel stronger when my shadow is as large as the audience and threatens to grow taller than the moon. When my hidden agenda gradually becomes so vast and complicated that all have drawn near to speculate and ponder the map of my conquests—full of pin flags and red arrows—only then perhaps, will you too begin to see this contested terrain as something other than warfare. The serious ones may wish to call the entire canvas a work of art, but others will incline too see only playfulness and gaming, like the trail of some small creature running about in a snowy yard. Still others will cringe at even the very suggestion that anything contained herein is of the playful and benign character, when its themes are so repetitively interwoven with violence and psychological slavery.

Sometimes we begin optimistically and paint for you images of playfulness and joy. A child loves a carnival. A child loves a mild dose of danger, challenge and reward. As adults, our experiences begin to over burden us. Things a child would enjoy for a day are spaced out for us and given a regularity that we eventually count as something else. Rightly, we do so! There would be insanity in doing and believing otherwise—A day on a fishing boat is romantic; a month or a year on a fishing boat is certainly not a childish experience but one of labor and tedium. Everything new is a novel treat. Of course it is! And predictably, the obverse side of this same stupid coin tells us that

everything adult is forged and hammered and heated and cooled and manipulated into weariness. It would not be a very adult feeling to lament weariness—only a childish brain can do that. Adults sigh deeply and go to task for fixed durations, then rest their eyes until another day of labor begins, as forgetful and new as the one that just ended with disquiet sighs of semi-realization. Adults need to be manipulated and hammered into feeling, not because they are naturally brutish and cruel, but because their existence is already doing this to what once was innocent and eager for life.

The intoxication of alcohol is a second childhood. Undisciplined and easy, it is the most prevalent form of escape. Alcohol makes us feel as if we were again visiting a carnival of new joy and game play. The lights around us are more decorative than functional. Feats of engineering are used to stimulate our most basic senses—speed, directionality, vertigo and falling—mathematics are employed to create real sensations within the safe domain of predictability and set duration. No one is forced to ride the carnival rides, yet crowds line up and pay for tickets. Habitually, we shun fear so often that we forget how much pleasure we sometimes derive from it. Habitually we are faced with so many challenges of necessity, that challenge itself loses the redemptive ecstasy it once had when we were still discovering our limitations.

And for reward? It too has become cheapened by our routines. Many of us are paid by the hour...not for excellence even, but instead, for simply shuffling through procedures in such a ghost-like manner that the months and weeks float by, scar-less and dull. Each day we linger in the haunts of shallow reward, until punch-clocks let us go and deposits are made in the shrill depths of a well that no longer wishes. We live for days of pre-meditated celebration. Everything the carnival offers is merely a symbol for something greater that we are missing. In itself, the carnival is nothing. The carnival has no worth. No one could live at the carnival for any extended length of time without becoming mean, skeptical, or sardonic. After awhile, it would become clear that those who attend are weak and that those who maintain are cruel—such is the way of the carnival and its hierarchy. The games are rigged. The audience is starved. The refreshments are void of nutrition; they possess only a semblance of taste without real substance—nothing but sweets, salts, bubbles, coldness, and warmth. The haunted mansion is surprising once, yet who would think to go twice? If there were a demand for more mansions of torment, a second one would have to be built, and if the demand grew larger still, perhaps a street of dreams and

a cul de sac of puzzle dungeons would be our answer to the crowd's need for constant and various stimulation.

Isn't it a horrible sham that there are even celebrities at all? What we really desire are the places and the circumstances of celebration. The avatars who inhabit them for us are like null variables: useful because they are interchangeable: excellent because they are archetypal...or appear so at least. What does it matter if they are beautiful or if they act well? If those were the only criteria, then surely pure theater—without props or effects—would be the most popular entertainment. Instead, we would rather have avatars that cost half a billion dollars to create. Whose billion? The billion of the wish-less and the scar-less; The billion who survive on the crude substance of shadows and echoes alone.

Like touching through scars, we adults cannot feel directly, but instead, only through the living tissue upon which the numb pink skin attaches itself. What we really feel of course, is the displacement of the living tissue, moved only slightly by the adjoining scar tissue that touches directly. If our emotional life, or worse, the emotional life of our society entire, is stimulated by such narrow means, then a solution must be sought. Some solutions will be vulgar or quick—like pornography or chocolate—and because they are quick, they will be effective; other solutions, will be repetitive: mild enough to be employed daily—like coffee or cigarettes or cannabis.

Day

Ever since my youth, as I noticed myself developing, I noticed differences peculiar to myself; these were few at first—And what surprise is that, for we spring out of a myriad of types—but as I aged I began to feel more and more alienated by my own reactions, predictions and modes of understanding. We can always find someone to agree with us—there is certainly some healing in that—but we have never found anyone to emulate completely or to confide in completely. I am surprised by my own lack of idols: having tried out many, I find each one to be wanting.

What began and developed from an intuition of being different or exceptional to the norm of behavior/thinking, eventually began to

weigh me down as an overwhelming burden of self. As I fan through the catalog of persons I know and have met, I cannot think of a single one who is engaged in what I feel and dissolve myself into...thankful as I am that I find companionship at all, still, these brief solaces of exchange do not, and cannot alleviate the fact that I am not equaled, and cannot find my own equal—and I'm not speaking of intellect or of mood specifically, but of a demonstrative union of both intellect and mood taking on a visible form. If I met my equal tomorrow, I would most likely pass him by, and he, the same: We would not dare to recognize each other; we would fear to recognize each other.

For the artist of honest sentiment, it often becomes his unhappy reward—and possible torment?—that he is actually accepted and praised and told how well he has been received. The worms rush up to him or pull him aside to whisper in his ear tenderly: *"I understood you so well when you said..."*

What begins as the scaffolding for a bridge, is secretly the dream of an impossible citadel. This diary, its entire expression—every God cursing word of it—wants to paint the ceiling of the void as if it were a sanctuary...as if it were my own sanctuary. I want to be splendid on account of the fact that *I alone* am in Hell. This is *my* Hell. The larger I'm capable of making this hell, hopefully, the greater the distance you feel between us—that is my ongoing prayer: to have this one tangible item in my hand to put over my heart and swear upon: to cast spells and summon monsters, yes, but more fiendishly, to hold over your head and say finally, *"I am not you!"*

Day

At the top of the dung heap stands the man who yells out to those below: "Do you see my great good fortune? Behold my splendid gift! Look how I have climbed to the very top and claimed my gift! My talent! My gift! Behold: what once was separate has now been joined. I *am* my gift, and we cannot be severed. I've climbed and clawed and sunk in my feet while wearing this white wedding dress, for this is both my name day and my marriage day!"

Meanwhile, at the base of the dunghill, which might have suddenly changed to a pile of gold, the bridegroom approaches. He says to the man on the dunghill, "I will not be your husband. I am not

your gift...I am a man, and no more than a man. I did not come here for celebrations. My clothes are my everyday clothes. My hair is combed, only because it is my habit to comb it in the mornings after I have folded back the sheets. Why have you climbed so high? It is not safe there. Hey, ho, where have you gone? You've climbed up only to sink beneath; now you are beneath your gift. It caves in and crushes you. As you emerge, I do not recognize you. You are fully covered and soiled by your great gift. What does it matter to me whether you are suffocated by gold or by dung; I'll not be your husband."

Bewared the talented: we can always smell their approach.

Day

Flaws and fabrications. Striving and over-reaching without limit. Obsessively gathering phrases and images and ideas of others into our self; criminal only for the sake of quarreling inwardly; more people should plagiarize and steal—not for profit, but for health and sanity! Possessions and rights bar us from the kind of theft our souls desire. After we read the best plays and hear the most liberating songs, we should summon up the courage within ourselves to brag that we were their authors and their composers. What does truth matter compared to growth? Let us be imitators for a day! Tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, there shall be plenty of time for truth, and repentance and shame...but for today, let us imitate! Imitations of Christ, imitations of swordsmen, imitations of poets, imitations of perverts and fools...whatever growth demands, let us be that for a day.

Although certain rewards and unspoken enticements call us forth to create within certain boundaries, there also exists, apart from such boundaries, the realm of intolerable creation that heeds no prohibitions and has no moral expectations: the *needed and necessary* path of creation is often, the one which both disgusts us and humiliates us.

Instead of writing this one completely un-publishable opus, we could have written ten viable, sellable novels...but in that case, we wouldn't be allowed to steal anything, would we? For the amateur scribbler, his own bookshelf is a masquerade wardrobe full of costumes and masks for him to prance about in crazily; he may even adorn women's panties and squeal delightfully in his best falsetto voice—all this, so long as he is allowed the privacy to do so. The difference here, between me and the other amateurs, is that I have left the door open just

enough for you to get a good look at me; you see, I *want* to be humiliated.

Day

Days where I put a belt around my neck are not really the worst. As I think back, a day later, or even twelve hours later, remembering my fitful anxiety over whether or not the belt would tear or whether I might accidentally be discovered too soon—these impotent recollections of the worst are really the worst moments! At least when I'm gripped in a passion or a death wish, I'm one hundred percent convinced of my intentions; my motives seem entirely real. These realities are actually no more solid than clouds or mashed potatoes. Though I've experienced this disappointment and this disgust many times over, I still feel honest and authentic every time I reach for a rope, a belt, a knife or a shotgun. In my mind, suicide is redemptive precisely because it cannot be recanted. Even when life is worth living, I would rather have death than experience once more the disgust I feel after a failed attempt or a partial effort. Even when I am happy, my disgust still haunts me. If I were younger, or more poetic, I would dwell on the thought of suicide itself. I might dress it up in black and paint its nails in order to play in it as teenagers are apt to do. This is not the case. For me, even suicide itself is merely another illusion and another messenger that delivers and departs as regularly as the days of the week. Again and again, I'm haunted by the unreality of my own death wish. I'm haunted by my own indifference to actually performing it. The taste of chocolate or hot tea—these are suddenly a seduction in a different direction, and that strong urge toward joy, that strong urge toward life once more—these are also part of my disgust and part of my illusory world which alternately enchants and disappoints. Disgust is the solidity of my character which cannot be otherwise; Disgust is an awareness that cannot escape itself. I cannot ever finally say what is best or what is most vile in existence. My attitudes are too inconstant. Enthusiasm is already an invitation to hate and fear myself. As I look back over the course of my life, nothing troubles me more than those manic diary entries, which say only, "I WANT TO LIVE!"

Day

The pattern! The pattern! The pattern! Where is it? We strain in all directions, yet nothing emerges. Confessions! Poems! Old stories, random thoughts, longer thoughts, autistic thoughts, philosophical thoughts, neurotic fears, desire for humiliation, debasement—when will it be enough? Not just doubting, but commanding doubt! Doubting the nature of *how and why* I've doubted. Looking up and down in search of ever new and different incarnations of doubt. Hoping for a glimpse of myself. Hoping to find a path out of myself towards my own Other: towards my own shadow side: A path to the depths: A path beyond.

Day

Daily we consume the dreams and images of others. We substitute them for our own pale forgotten ones. Do you think the average woman or man is writing 900 page books every year? But yet, shouldn't they? Do we not owe ourselves at least three meager pages a day? Three pages a day is more than 900 in the course of a year, yet I never even hear of such colossal things—I almost said colossal effort, but instead, only the finished product has weight; the three pages a day are feather light and summon no perspiration from our brow; yet 900 pages in a lifetime is enough to make a Proust or a Tolstoy. Sometimes I think the giants of old fame must have been holding back a great deal. One could argue that ten good pages are better than 900 shoddy ones, but I think there is more seduction and trickery in ten pages. Ten pages gloss over too much; they offer too much ease of escape. I'll write you ten good pages myself, but I'm going to inter-leave them randomly in my 900 because I have nothing but contempt and hatred for those ten. Don't you see that I suffer the 890 as well? Perhaps those are the only ones we suffer; we only suffer these un-poetic days in hopes of a strong release or a feigned madness; and the other ten pages? I don't think I'll have any part in creating those; let's call them merely, a happy accident, spilling out from the depths.

Even if we but collect and recount the images of others; the phrases of others that graced our ear; the sounds of machines and cars that cross our path; the tastes and the remembrances of meals and those we shared them with—these most certainly contain us. Show me a single legitimate artist who does not need these things. Show me the

gargantuan artist who does not need such little details and who can speak only with fleshless allegory or patriotic excellence or romantic adventure—these are the mush and silt of the extraverted man’s attempt at art: A handful of lake-floor, from the collective pool of mass fantasy; the odd dregs of past hysteria. For an audience who can only ask so much as “What is this about?” or “Who are the villains?” or “Do these lovers end up together?”, we warn you against pursuing this present attempt at words.

In the 1950’s there was a psychologist who claimed that people did not spend enough effort on themselves and their interior life. He advocated the analysis of dreams and fantasies and feared the autonomous depths of the human unconscious. Lately, we have seen a paradigm shift. The average American is hyper-obsessed with self, in all ways, from physical appearance, to social network, to education, career, vehicle, toothpaste, life-insurance, education of children, infusing personal/religious values into politics, etc, etc. on and on toward the void chaos of landfills overflowing with personality and past attempts at self—one almost wishes for a time machine so we could assassinate Carl Jung.

Each time I make a rational complaint, (especially those dealing with an observation involving time) my heart rages against my logic and tells me, “Do not say such things. Only old men say such things! People have always been like that. People always will be like that! Let them be children and fools and police men and prostitutes if it suits them to be so!”

And so I withdraw my complaint about selfishness. Then my gaze turns toward un-selfishness, and it too disgusts me. I see Evangelical Christians gathering in hordes, and I say to myself, “Here is mythology clawing its way back to consciousness. Here are 90 million tradition-less, nation-less, fools clamoring for some semblance of identity. Here is the mutilation of mankind, divorced from all creeds, mythos and unifying spiritual forces through which past generations found direction and identity and access to self. And the educated liberal ones are surprised at this? Surprised and upset at Evangelical movements to be “born again?” Let us have more abortion! Abortion only kills liberal babies! Abortion is a short-cut to Buddhist perfection! Never be born again!

In my past, during a bout of madness, I wrote incessantly about my conceptions of what an Anti-Christ would contain. By the time I had exhausted my rage and burned up all my old conceptions of morality, only two sane maxims remained in my head. They are as follows:

- 1) That which survives is good.
- 2) That which returns is evil.

If you have not already intuited my cynicism and my expansive, well-inflated sense of humor, you will have to be told directly that, within these pages, Good and Evil are merely the states of irony that mortal beings pass through on the way to their fate.

Day

To be original? No psychological insights are original, unless of course, there are new humans...

All we can hope for, is to state more poetically, what everyone else has already witnessed, and never bothered to say.

Day

What I truly want to demonstrate in these 900 pages is simply a pattern. My own pattern. Whether biologically or partly from external circumstance of location, birth, temporality, and chance, there is a pattern unfolding and fighting to show itself. Let this be the excuse for selfishness run amuck in the general population—such things are no different than this same pattern of my own vying for outlet and expression, except here, instead of 10,000 patterns at war, there is only one pattern. It was already finished and secure from the first sentence, yet I could not see it, nor can I see it now. It will take a massive distance to see it unfold. My cleverness and my vanity will try to hide or disguise the pattern; so we must dig beneath them. We must outwit them and outlast them. Once we begin to see a pattern (if truly there are any such patterns to be found) perhaps this pattern will help liberate us and prepare us for loftier, more worthwhile creations; Maybe it will even serve as a model for others, so they too might discover and dredge

up the secret patterns in themselves that sometimes inhibit and depress and keep us from joy.

What one man calls his diary, another calls his habit or his confession or his secret pattern. If it seems less pretentious to call it a diary, then let us do so, and let it be remembered that there is no pre-meditation to any of this. One day I simply awoke and said to myself, “Aren’t you capable of more? What is holding you back? Why haven’t you become who you were meant to be? And if you already are who you were meant to be, then, what is it exactly that you are?” “Do you even know one legitimate limitation that you are mindful of and abide by and sometimes fear?”

To attempt answers to these neurotic impulses, we begin indirectly and wish to demonstrate rather than philosophize—for we have been philosophizing our entire lives and it has gained us no ground. Now, we try a different method. We turn toward images, impressions and currents of discontent...perhaps even music and moods.

As a clue for finding the legion of personalities within myself...our-self...perhaps we should list off a few of the characters we have toyed with in other creations. Some still seem to resonate with us, while others seem to have been “written-out” of us and we have no more use for them. Add to this phenomenon the great silence that seems to follow a very taxing work of literature. We temporarily feel as if we had forgotten why anyone should bother to write at all. This begs the question once more of what exactly the “pattern” is. Can it be that we are only guarding a deserted fortress and that occasionally we are assailed by a horde of sensations only to eventually kill them off one by one until the calm of night returns and we are alone again, without even one invader or prisoner to converse with? It might be wrong to kill off all of our demons. Maybe we should selfishly keep a few of them as prisoners, that they might at least taunt us and help us to laugh at ourselves. In other versions of this entry, we spent several pages listing and describing all the characters we have invented and used in our fictions at one time or another. We have omitted them here: the fact that we once took the trouble to do this should be sufficient to make the point. The reader deserves a peep show, not a rape scene.

(After several pages of character descriptions, we concluded this entry as follows): We have already gone past our limit. We must restrain ourselves to only 3 pages a day; only then can we learn to use

them wisely and concisely. Near the end, I imagine myself screwing the vice grips of limitation even tighter until only a paragraph or a few words at a time are allowed. Perhaps impedance is the only separation between prose and poetry. And if the pattern is already complete and autonomous within me, then temporality need not exist here. We could just as well write our diary backwards from this day. Maybe things are clearest today without our knowing it. Perhaps we shall decide to order our entries in reverse toward the past—a diary is a uniquely purposeless book, unless it is written backwards from some semblance of finality or success. Day X might actually be yesterday.

Day

First observation: We still feel lacking in detailed experiences and emotional affects. We are still advancing with philosophy and fleshless speculation. Perhaps we have become one sided. We have strengthened our right hand and neglected the left. Our intellect is over fed. We have no emotional or irrational aspirations. We are spurned on by only a vague whisper that seems to say to us,

“Practice music Socrates!”

Does this explain why we are sometimes (perhaps often) guilty of grand delusions regarding our own aptitude? Why we toy with the word “Genius” when nothing at all merits it? Perhaps our intellect is actually very fearful of its own limitations. It protests too much and too loudly. It wants to drone out the other voices. It wants to silence those legions of unhappy sensation who call out from behind and speak accurately about the missteps of the leader: “Why don’t you listen to us? We are a part of your train. Don’t you recognize our voice?”

Second observation: The pattern is not merely psychological. It is physical as well. Rest, exercise, diet, vitamins—these are part of the fractal process of self. Already we begin to assume that the pattern is utterly beyond comprehension. We are chasing an amorphous ghost.

Yet, there is a clue in knowing that. The word amorphous means without definite structure and form. Amorphous is what we are...but this vaporous cloud is not necessarily what we must become. Perhaps all undifferentiated urges and abilities arise out of this same amorphous chaos. A mother looks at her child of three and already she begins to

see his personality. She already sees into his heart. And the mother of a serial killer will always tell you she never suspected anything. She will always tell you that “he was such a wonderful little boy”...but maybe that lack of intuition leads to an even more important clue: In truth, she does in fact know her son very well. She knows exactly what he is and what he is capable of. The problem may be that she sees it much too early on and the horror she predicts is much too great a burden, so she begins repressing it before the child is even five years old. Now, thirty years later, in front of the news cameras and reporters, her manner of naïveté and surprise is already well practiced and thoroughly evasive.

Is it possible that we too, resemble the mother of colossal negation? That we do know ourselves, but instead, in an act to save ourselves and preserve our sanity, have hidden the ugly truth of ourselves deep within, and guard it ferociously. Now we are up against two forces—the force of repression and the force of amorphous/structure-less un-differentiation. Not only must we open the dungeon cells beneath us where the lepers, saints and murderers dwell, we must also materialize and differentiate heroes and strengths out of these nebulous clouds of undisciplined chaos.

A sly thought and a corresponding smile lights upon our face: what if we can evade for the entire 900 pages? What if—excepting this tiny premonition—we are able to beguile both the reader and ourselves with philosophical verbiage for an entire year?

Today we met our devil: he continues speaking, even now, as if he had not been accused or pointed out. He is utterly unshaken. He wants to laugh almost. He wants to admit that he has tampered with the order of these entries so as to further obscure their meaning. *He enjoys admitting that.*

Day

We keep coming across yellow post-it-notes with deranged, lunatic scribbings that we recognize as our own, but cannot recall the meaning of. We find them mostly in the books we carried to work but never finished reading. We could produce for you any number of them at this very moment, and show to you the corresponding eight or fifty pages that came to life from some of their singular sentences or titles or

inspirations. Often, while working at a liquor store, there was no paper available except these tiny notes, so I would have to condense entire philosophical problematics or story ideas into a few words only so that I would not forget them. I knew if I gave them a name, I would only need the smallest hint to recall and restore hours and hours of meditation, which I would be free to type out at my leisure. If I forgot them, their loss would devastate me. If I happened to never actually nurture them—which was most often the case, since a man of employment has more time to daydream than he has to type—I never really felt any great anguish since I had at least validated them with the tiny post-it-note abridgement. Years later, our lives are seemingly working themselves out to be, only this little abridgement and footnote to what might have been, at one time, experienced and celebrated as a fully ripened universe of its own. Today, only a few yellow scraps remain; my hair is thinning and none of these notes make sense.

Day

Stare into the mirror. Do you see how our beard, seemingly a brown color, is made up of thousands of tiny hairs with many different hues? My eyes particularly gravitate toward the bright red ones or the almost pigment-less yellow blonde ones. When you cease to have goals or deadlines or ambitions, life becomes somehow, innocent and strange once more. We return to its primeval strangeness. There are heaps of hours for contemplating nose hairs and nipple hairs. Think how much more frantic and purgatorial life would seem if we had all been born at once—or worse—woke up here fully grown with no memory; Or what if we had landed on a new planet as sterile, non-procreating beings. Even if many of us never do find a purpose and never do create children, the hellish nature of reality seems still to pass beneath us. I tell you, emphatically, we should notice it! If only for amusement or jest, we should point it out. We must better acquaint ourselves with life by seeing and dreaming of it differently. Let us pretend that there is to be only one generation of mankind; That we know nothing of our origins and that we are spared the confusing involutions of political and religious histories. We are as dwellers in a thick mist on all sides. Our struggles might seem more poignant if we had only a single lifetime to approach and adjudicate the truths of mortal life...but instead of this condensed eternity of mist, we are dulled and stretched out over decades and millennium, never taking

mortality as any serious business, because our sense of proportion tells us that we are each nothing more than a tiny strand in some larger, continuing fabric. As to the meaning of the whole? That is not for the threads to determine...yet...it's fearful to realize oneself trapped in the fabric of the surreal; in the heart of the void.

No one has ever returned from the sunless houses. The dead shall not awaken to speak out and clarify the days we have lost to the mists of time...our only recourse is to pass our messages forward. My curiosity never allows me to dismiss the messages that wash ashore in corked bottles. The answers may not come...but it is in my nature, to look for them...

Day

At first, you chew the stems and wait,

Then, the negative plane kaleidoscopes

As you stare long

And meditate into it,
into yourself,

And then the earth

Dimly

Becomes a better mosaic.

Day

Pragmatism will find the cheapest means to convey the greatest quantum of power...this pen and this lamp...how can I also be rid of them?

Day

At twenty I would have re-made the world. At thirty, one feels that a handful of things, such as cloth, olive oil or mortgage papers might be enough to fashion a full canvas out of a blank one, in the sense that, by working from a few small excuses to larger and larger ones, eventually there is no more possibility of rebellion or complacency. Only misery and tedium remain. Luxury is not so much the aspiration of the vulgar, but rather, the vulgar band-aid for the most profound forms of contempt and spiritual desolation. Our wide eyes gleam no longer at the promise of science; its supposed never ending progress...Science proudly gives us our satellite phones, our hair loss medicines and our larger penis pills. Sometimes I wish my penis were large enough to destroy the world in one thrust. I would not re-make anything. I would abort it. Even the autumn colors and the sun beams that thrust eagerly through grayish clouds. Even these.

Day

I hope there finally is a collapse and that financial ruin obliterates us all. I hope this because I want to be a voice for the old guard; I want to somehow echo the pride and the arrogant greatness that helped us spear the Leviathan of our common progress. As I dine my last in this cathedral of decadence and gluttony, I compose verses on my silk napkin because I am bored of eating.

If the poets after me seem weak and humble as they huddle together near the trash fires of a world in ruin, I hope their blinking cups and bowls provide them with just enough nutrition to continue hating me.

Day

Today we came upon the term passive thinking; Also called or described as autistic thinking, fantasy thinking or intuitive thinking. Writing can also take the form of passive thinking. Jung states:

“Conceptual connections establish themselves, and judgments are formed which may even contradict my aim—they may lack all harmony with my conscious objective, hence also, for me, any feeling of direction, although by an act of active apperception I may subsequently come to a recognition of their directedness.”

The patterns arising from such “passive writings” actually establishes a synchronistic, acausal meaning which manifest freely from the unconscious when the meddling and the masking of the intellect is held in abeyance.

Whitmont points out that we are often guilty of harboring the prejudice that we are indeed the complete authors of our “selves”; that we are the ones that “do” the thinking act and the feeling act, but more often, it is these bouts of thinking and feeling that “do” us. They occur autonomously, as if magically. Perhaps there is some validity to the practice of “sympathetic magic” if we are truly such susceptible and impressionable beings as Jung describes. Does anyone bother to discuss the philosophical repercussions of such realizations? Maybe we don’t need to. Maybe the men who realize such things are already its examples. Look at Nietzsche’s final correspondence before he descends incurably into madness: he signs his letters, “The crucified.”. Possibly, we too, are susceptible. If even great minds can falter and break apart as they face the tides of involuting retribution, then what evil bouts of possession are in store for weaker minds, more resembling our own?

Day

Lately, when I doubt, I also find myself doubting the potency of doubt itself—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 who I often give good counsel to, but 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.

Day

The countertops are dusted and the couch pillows are set right. The bare walls are peacefully tinted by lamplight...they look to me like soft canvases, still mute and withdrawn from anything at all resembling a statement. In my room, the bedside chest is locked, and my savings are safe inside it. The living room chairs are pushed in, and so is the one at my desk: look how dutifully and straight he stands at attention; he couldn't get any closer or more squarely aligned! And the carpet! No rocks or lint or even a loose thread. Maybe now is the right time for some music.

...And in all of this rectitude, as the music plays, why does this strange man's voice seem more familiar and affable with the demons in my heart than I, who live with them daily and continually create them?

Part II
Love and Light Hearted Misery

Day

We go to our amusement.

Song-less eyes screaming the impalement of birds,

It must end in either betrayal or self-betrayal.

Day

There is a part of me that is more greedy than my hope: More rapacious than starving jackals, the ecstasy of actual suffering is better than the pleasant horizon of our not-yet-happiness. *None of us really know happiness.* Like a riddle or a paradox, happiness keeps evaporating when knowledge steps forward. To discover happiness we must transgress the border region and fail in our quest. Even though there is not, there should be a fairytale about some kind of mystical labor that cannot actually be performed, in which the knight errand realizes that he is more in love with the growing hardships and calamities of his journey—its dangers—than he is with its hope of success. As he chases the ever-disappearing-princess, from castle to castle, he realizes that the moments with her are void of pain; complete banality and tedium. She says to him, “You have arrived again. Perhaps I will stay longer this time.” And he replies, “What is this empty place I feel in my heart? Why does the world stop in your chamber?” And she answers him, “This feeling you describe: this is happiness. My chamber is the void.”

The overflowing abundance of the world cannot be subverted or drained out into negative space. There is in fact no negative space—there is only a reversal we experience within ourselves that perfectly maintains both the power and the perfection of our many sensations and disappointed longings. The Devil shivers at hearing my mantra: In the mirror of total ruin, my appetite is more greedy than my hope.

The creative urge is a preserving, maintaining faculty...but that is only the beginning and the average mediocrity of creation. As I smear my shit over the semen white statues of Apollo, my Dionysian Pessimism re-baptizes these altars in the name of the dismembered god. As the events of my life soak inward, I feel the re-vitalizing urge to

give them each back with the same intensity and acidic burning with which they entered me. I split apart. Within, I behold an interplay of two personalities: one is a naïve dreamer, the other is a cynical demon. If the demon could have his way, the boy would do nothing. The boy would give over his entire life to staring at blank walls, quietly suffering a pointless lull. If the boy ventures out, the sly demon stays behind and whispers goodbye: At the threshold the demon utters once more in an even lower tone, and the boy imagines the demon saying: *"Go forth child, you'll suffer for this!"*

And the demon is *always* proved correct. The boy wails and bellyaches and sprays poetic ink as if it were a dog's piss. Hopes are crushed and the demon is well pleased...you see, the demon is not actually at all different from the boy. Whatever the boy wants, the demon also wants, but the curious twist is this: the demon wants the world in reversal: He wants the absolute, imperial power of commanding sight and sensation without the limits and restraints of reality: Severed: Divorced from human proportions, imagine Epicure's Tower: Citadel of isolation. *Now* imagine also the magic spell the demon performs as he makes his storehouse of pessimism and dead romance into a Dionysian abundance of perfect gold: Misery in abundance that actually re-creates the intensity of our lost joy...so long as we have the good health required to swallow its fiery tincture!

Our Angel wings never touch the blessed earth: this hovering stasis demonstrates our contempt for the earth—not out of Romantic despondency, but out of a manic Aestheticism and un-flinching rigor in the realm of elite taste. The demon answers Gabriel: *"Non Serviam!"* I will not submit. I will not serve Heaven any longer...Heaven—our hopes; Heaven—our fantasy. Tantalus imagines the refreshment of water against his tongue and the sweet sugars of pear juice and pear pulp being swallowed each time he reaches upwards and downwards. Water recedes. Pears never droop low enough.

The boy within me is an amnesiac version of Tantalus; every attempt is followed by new forgetfulness. Meanwhile, the demon is total lucidity and complete intuition. The fragile horror that makes the demon cringe and feel his one weakness is the sound of the boy saying to him, *"We are both damned you know; me for my love and you for your vice. At least I know how to forget..."* And then suddenly the demon's vice is not enough to succor his depravation. There is a part of me that is more greedy than my hope; and then there is a part of me

that forgets all consequences and is never touched by the excrement of fate.

Day

Bargaining:

When circumstances have brought us face to face with the complex and unique nature of our own personal weakness, our wounds look as if they could be fatal; our crippled, mangled limbs are making those nearby light headed and faint. A doctor is summoned, but instead of going to work resetting the bones, he's calling for a rifle, as if going onward from this point would only mean a continuation of this same agony—you're no longer a man, but a broken horse.

It's not out of love or sensitivity or idealism that we should feel the need to enthrone the beloved, and make his or her image into a picture of our own salvation. Do you want to know the ugly truth? Do you want to know the death sentence that's waiting for each love dreamer, hoping and wondering about their own precious abode within the mansion of the beloved? Perhaps they should go to that place themselves and see if any rooms are being held, or if the beds have been made up, or a place prepared at the table. Within the heart and mind of the beloved, you will find no rooms prepared. The servants will all say, "We're not expecting any visitors, you should try back a different day." As you leave, you'll get a more direct answer from the groundskeeper. In a gruff voice, he says, "You're not wanted here; there's the gate." His pointing hand and turned cheek make it clear the conversation is over. Each place you turn, your arguments are ignored. Before leaving, you get one more desperate idea; perhaps the stable boy will give you an encouraging word? What does he say? His brow goes fierce at the first look at you, and in a harsh tone, far beyond his years, he stammers, "My dogs have your scent. You'd best pray to god they don't nose you out anywhere near the hedges after midnight."

...And as you leave this mansion of spare rooms you feel infuriated that each of these dinner tables and ballrooms should be left empty. The entire house is vacant except for the crew of servant people whose polite decorum is a social obligation; you'll not reach the beloved through them. Nor will you discover any of the secret passageways or hidden chests of wealth you desire. This house has no occupants. It's rooms and hallways are far too large to be intimate. It's

architecture has come to resemble those who own it: The exceedingly rich display the fatality of their characters through what they own: The color choices and furniture are deliberate. The hollow silence of each room is lifeless and brutal. There are no pieces of art or furniture here that are not also a calculated judgment...and it's all been arranged so you might notice this judgment. You are beckoned to admire this judgment. Such care has been taken, and such scrutiny has been exacted that you feel humiliated; even if you wanted to look for a crack in the hallway vase, or a water blemish upon one of the portraits, or a mouse hole near the kitchen, you would not find it. Every avenue of critique has been closed off. The way is barred. One wants to quit the earth and say to the dagger, "all rich men are like this, all poets are like that, all craftsmen turn out this way, all book keepers and thinkers have this trade and all the whores will go on whoring! Fate deals the cards, but also fate refuses to deal out enough variety for the game to remain interesting! Though I know my card, there is no helping what I am, and none of these other types have the ability to recognize it because that curse is what sets me apart from them!"

Out of lucid despondency, you feel the world is suddenly more sensible and complete than you ever imagined; that everything which happens is tied together by the demonic hands of a puppeteer...and when the servants open their mouths, you look behind them to see if there might be a ventriloquist hand hole in their backs; Out in the yard, when you hear the horse neigh and trot down the lane, you look instinctively at its hind quarters for a windup crank...and even where there are no secret hand holes and no windup cranks, you continue imagining them, until finally you feel as if you are maybe the only being with any autonomy left in the world...that is until you feel the dagger in your own hand pierce your side, and you realize that you too, have become a slave; the decorative straw dogs left over from the new years celebration are faded and soiled a few days later. You'll find them littering the ditches.

Perhaps as you are leaving the mansion of spare rooms, you see another man approaching. His cloak and his cane are nearly the same style as your own. He happens to look just how you might have looked knocking upon that door last week. The hopeful way he ascends brick stairs and clutches the knocker remind you of your own optimism. From as far as you can tell, there is nothing at all exceptional or peculiar about this strange new man who has taken your place; no, that thought would be imagining too much; there is no place for him in this

mansion either. He won't be admitted in the way he longs for...he's just taking his turn.

Face to face with our own weakness, we project our admiration upon our own opposite. Whoever cannot handle us, whoever we repulse—that is a good barometer of what we are not. If we were allowed to possess the thing we are not, we would become perfect; we would become invincible! All of our faults would be made into joys celebrating the beloved, for whom there is no actual love, but instead, only jealousy for strengths we do not have, and methods we cannot acquire.

As we lovers wrack our poor brains for a solution, a hope, or a trail out of this maze of torments, we keep on thinking that the way out must have something to do with the beloved. Every fiber of our being wants the acceptance of the beloved. Without being forced to change anything whatsoever, we would like the doors and the gates and the secret passageways of the mansion opened up to us freely, as if the property were finally our own; we long for the day, when that silver key to every room should finally fall coolly into the palm of our hand and we weigh it down with the valuable severity which it symbolizes. In my mind's eye, I see this key fashioned to resemble the death's head, and each of its teeth angle back and point forward like an arrow aimed only toward the apple of each man's throat...and wherever this key plunges home, it brings choking and madness into the chamber with it. Despite how long we wonder in the maze, searching for this key, our own weakness never lights upon a way to become stronger, without first imagining a reunion with the beloved, or at the very least, a new bargain, a new excuse, or a new gift to place upon her doorstep. It never crosses our minds that we should actually *become the beloved*...

Day

I weep ironic tears of joy at seeing the dead skin mask stretched over the maniac's face while he drags his idle chainsaw behind him down a concrete corridor and a woman screams. That man is a better psychologist than I'll ever be.

Day

The worship of madness is Romanticism plain and simple.

We hate to be called writers; We would prefer to be dress makers.

Most important of all? What are you wearing today?

Day

“The spell that fights on our behalf, the eye of Venus that charms and blinds our opponents, is the magic of the extreme, the seduction that everything extreme exercises: we immoralists—we are the most extreme.”

-Nietzsche

Remember when feeling was something frightening and esoteric? Something chaotic, and artistic and majestic? Remember when we feared it? When we thought that it was beyond us? Remember when we imagined feeling to be as dazzling as a candy store or when it seemed to contain all the drunken colors of a Monet painting? And if we ever felt close to a feeling, we also felt that it was receding; that if we beheld Monet or entered a candy store, that real feeling must still be yet one better; a glimmer on some impossible horizon; And if we strained our powers of intellect, the best we could conjure was a mad collage of period blood hand prints on candy store shelves and Monet paintings. We pondered, with dropped jaws and tried to imagine the frenzy of ghosts who could have made such an assault.

Today, we are disappointed to realize that feelings arise from the curse and taint of egotism. Even altruism begins with an egotistical scaffolding. Those who feel the world directly, are the quickest to enthrone their own experience as the supreme moral code of being. Being disgusted or outraged can certainly deter us, but it also offers the opportunity to pursue boundless subjectivity and dogmatic prejudice—all for the sake of some notion of well or ill being from the stomachs of our would be moralizers.

Let us repeat: the judging dimension of feeling begins from selfishness—not the selfishness you imagine; not the groping insensate kind, but merely selfish in the sense that its reference point is bound up and blinded by its own wonderful tastes. Observe: I like this table! I don't like this table! I'm accepted by the group! I'm not accepted by the group! I favor this and not that. How come I am not included? What about how I feel about it? I never had a say in this! Well, if that's how everyone else feels about it, I suppose I agree. Let me show you these lamps and these rugs and this curtain! Aren't they lovely! Oh, I'm not the type that needs a whole lot of jewelry, but this piece has a special significance; this piece has a story and a history; I'm a part if it, that's why its important, you see, it was handed down to me!

Have you ever been comforted? That is the glad and graceful benefit of the feeling dimension. In knowing our own sentimental valuations, and giving them due respect, we also train ourselves to embrace, foresee and aid those of others; we even protect others, and go great lengths to keep others from harms that are entirely phantasmal. Phantasmal is the prejudiced word of a reasoning brain. For the beings of feeling, feelings are more real than facts; facts, for them, will never contain anything so severe as a feeling. Those who claim or demand so much from facts must be callous monsters! They declare war on our entire essence. *Who are they to decide life for us!*

Nietzsche takes the feminine clue—the loose brick in the moral history of humanity, and applies to it two things: Psychological intuition and passive thinking. What materializes is a perspective no thinking being could formulate from out of objective, masculine, daylight thought. The prose is carefully laid out and thought over, but its source is mysterious; that is why it is extreme and seductive—it seems impossible, as if it came from an impossible being.

Maybe he learned it from a young girl. Maybe he learned it from Salome.

Day

There is no thought; No specifics have taken form; Since the party, I've been feeling about it all day. I can't say more than that. How come no one ever has the courage for such a phrase?

"I'm feeling about it!"

Day

The bliss and the agony—these have nothing to do with her face, or with Helen of Troy’s face. Like awakening suddenly on the edge of a precipice, these thoughts must have something to do with my own vulnerability.

It’s a romantic thought: she and I. Possibly, it has something to do with *our* vulnerability.

Day

Misogyny is an endpoint; no one sets out to hate women... quite the opposite in fact.

Day

The pain rolls over me in waves, again and again. Storm-like and un-abating, it surges hard and retreats only enough to maintain my confusion: I think maybe, in this strange moment, I am happy.

Day

For those like us, it would take a grand delusion to believe once more in our own immortality—together, let us hold hands and dare, even as the rosary beads lick the surface of the water and fall into our reflection.

Day

Do you remember the day I almost proposed? The day when the sun returned and the snow began to melt, and while we were walking together, I stopped to kneel in a deep puddle. Your lips quivered as I held up this tiny gift. I told you not to answer, and you waited until I

had opened the box. Out of it—instead of a ring—a little pink balloon rose up and floated away...

Try to remember laughter and play as I crouch in your shadow like a bug waiting to be crushed. Try to remember how small and weak and tiny I really am every time I flex my terrible strength and stir your hatred. Try to remember that I really am a kind hearted man, even unto depravity...

Day

My laughter is the bridegroom of your secret fears. In a perfect world, secrets should unveil, and laughter should cease.

Day

Do you know the middle way? Do you know how to be both affectionate and terrible? How to be sarcastic and truthful at once? Do you know how to throw javelins as if they were darts, and yet, to remain in between conflicts? Do you know how to both challenge and appear innocent? Can you become a braggart and an ascetic all at once? Can you, from behind the curtain, convince the audience that beauty is corrupt and that subterranean evil is actually, something like a gift from God? Can you turn the world of aesthetics and philosophy on its head with one audacious pose? Can you, while arguing like a lawyer, take complete psychological folly and place it on a throne above humanity, solely for the sake of mischief? I can.

I can, because you already want me to.

Day

Coffee or cocaine—be sure to give her plenty of these. When you two finally part ways, you can be sure that she will remain restless and trembling well into the night. Like a spell complete, who else will she think about? You must only succeed in being the loudest...and even then, only a few hours of loud talking were required.

Day

Do you know that overpowering feeling, where you have the urge to shout to the sky every detail of your love? That feeling of being genuine and perfect and somehow saved from all of life's problems and entanglements simply due to the intensity of your love? The sort of love that refuses to accept itself as anything less than total salvation?

—it's too bad that prudence and self-composure keep these sorts of feelings under a heavy tarp of cynicism and fear. It's too bad when both lovers fall into the trap of silence and cleverness together, until finally, their willingness to give themselves over entirely, has drained away.

Alas, poor Percival! He seemed as if he really were the knight who deserved the Grail...

Day

She likes the gift of my communication, but she ignores the content.

She likes the tension of our little fencing matches, but they have no meaning for her, and lead nowhere.

She chases after when I grow weary of entertaining her, and I force myself to remain friendly, even as I begin to hate.

Day

All the young ones think they are demons...they imagine themselves as vampires or soul grabbers because men keep tripping into them and crying tears of past heartache.

The young ones are attracted to demons and seek to emulate what they don't yet understand. Their strategy of integration thinks it can save itself by making a pact with the true devils...but dominance cannot be bartered with. They are swept away, and still there is a chance they will emerge from the ashes, solely victorious. It's a pity

that demons are so easily dissolved into mad lovers, and that women are so superficial, they have only to blink, and Hell itself is blotted out. To believe in romance? That must only be a persistent faith in what women are not capable of. Do you see the cleverness of nature? How demons are seduced to goodness, and how innocent angels return disaffected and secretly hoping for more Hell than Hell itself can summon?

I think Hell needs more discipline.

Day

The poetry of misogyny shouldn't attack women; it should invite them to become better. Or it should make them jealous of what they already want more of—that's probably the most effective method...after all, we don't want them to fail.

Day

Have you ever beaten an imbecile? It's so sweet how they look at you, apologetically as they bleed from their lips...you almost want to love them.

Day

Standing always, knee deep and five paces outland on the shallow shores of my awareness, I draw my sword and straighten my chest plate as the tsunami approaches from the distance like bathwater displaced. What a calm day for a flood.

Day

She said the sound of my laughter was a comfort to hear over the phone...am I really so miserable, so often, that I frighten others?

Day

Standing water in March: my feet splash where only yesterday the ice was solid.

Day

Very sincere and deliberate acts of cruelty have a special mathematics and poetry of their own. Style and focused observation of boundary make great art possible; Aesthetics is a discipline of morality, very different from common, pedestrian morality. Within such a domain, one may transgress, use taboo language, or even cause emotional wounds, and still achieve the desired result.

If we break the bounds of one or any law table, we must be prepared to weather the outrage and the direct retaliations of those we have crossed. Often, the timid will turn back when they are directly chastised; those whom we have crossed have no other recourse than to pass judgment on our character and to use guilt as a weapon to bring us back into line; they would have us behave more predictably. They will pretend to pity us or, in their moments of fear, call us fearful and scared.

Look at poetry. As it becomes more and more accessible, it begins to champion platitudes of Beauty, Faith, Togetherness, and Love. It force feeds us cold leftovers as if it wanted to punish us for having an active and creative conscience. For the common man, poetry is the silliest, sunniest, most impotent piece of expression—either something his wife gushes at or his preacher lectures about.

When I think of poetry, I imagine perfect depravity. I see both the strongest method of attack and the most benign, unguarded routes to success. When my deliberate acts of cruelty are spat upon and judged by the loudest and boldest among us, I carefully observe how they respond. To both my foolishness and my treachery, they respond with their own brand of righteous and mighty words. I think it's wonderful, that something so seemingly useless and vile as cruelty should cause others to feel such lofty and grandiose sentiments...

Day

Whenever I meet an interesting woman, or a beautiful woman, I have a morbid way of fantasizing: I first consider her face; it must not be too lean or too thick; it bodes well if I can sense that the various muscles in her face are not too thickly hidden by excess flesh or hindered and atrophied by having skin too tightly drawn over them. Her facial muscles should be able to display themselves and articulate themselves and communicate themselves as musically as possible: Visually, I try to catalog and admire these muscles as they perform concertos of motion and rest: a pensive frown, the sudden looseness of shock or bewilderment, the athleticism and stamina of un-abating frustration, the bulge and peaks of anger flexing their hardest, the total laxity and giving way to gravity of beholding innocence or becoming innocent, the guarded yet brittle flexations of scorn that try to hide most of themselves from you, and the ten thousand variations on a smile that can mean anything from pleasure, to hatred, to mockery—If I had to wait a year to finish the entire score, the performance would still be worthwhile, but if I can help these muscles along, like a trainer or a conductor, I might even be able to audition them all in a single afternoon.

Whenever I meet an interesting woman, or a beautiful woman, I have a morbid way of fantasizing: The second thing I consider, next to the muscles in her face (for there are thousands) is the mimetic intelligence of these muscles...that is to say, if they are developed, how articulately are they put to use. If a swimsuit model has one or two good smiles, she might have an entire career on those two expressions...but selfishly, I know my own moods depend on so much more than that; the intensity of my own experiences will be dictated by the agility of her levator labii superioris fibers, and, like a sheet of satin or silk that can vibrate and twitch and resonate every thought from within, my own joys are either caressed or abused by the tiniest movements of her face.

Whenever I meet an interesting woman, or a beautiful woman, I have a morbid way of fantasizing: How do her hands move and fidget and clasp the small or heavy obstacles around her when she is afraid or distraught or in ecstasy? Will she take short, quick steps when she runs excitedly ahead of you, and then turn over her shoulder to look back? Does she slouch her body downward and bring the glass or mug up

much too high and peer over it as she sips? If she's distracted in telling you some story or rambling on about the details of some sophomoric political or environmental opinion, how does she look when you interrupt her to tell her something about her appearance? What do her calf muscles look like, when she reaches for something on a high shelf? What about the brief moment of anticipation and hopefulness after she finishes washing and drying her hands—still feeling the last of the water droplets evaporating as she meets your gaze? Or the vexation that loosens when you touch her shoulders and pry into the muscles of her upper back, until the symmetrical sensation releases a shiver that races to the very tip of her spinal chord and jumps across the synaptic cleft into her brain like a cheerful diver into the abyss?

Beyond the poetic and the simple, my morbid fantasies become ever more specific and selfish. I dream of legs falling and feet stumbling. I see long bits of hair caught in spiral notebook binders or in car doors. I see purses forgotten and then rummaged through amidst the laughter of strangers. I see important papers or books dropped into muddy gutters or puddles. I summon to my ear the not yet whispered secrets and the promises we don't intend to keep. I imagine the color of blood having more memories associated with it in her than in me, and I try to imagine some of those un-lived memories in myself. I see into the future and I see her strength and her victory and her self-confidence at some anniversary celebration as she holds the hand of a man the crowd sees as a decorated fop, a fleshy mongrel or a tall lout that moves in the same manner in which he speaks—clumsily.

I want to hold her bastard children, and play with them for an afternoon only. I want to trace her eyebrows with a warm washcloth when she is bedridden or complaining of fever. I want to embrace her from behind like a brother who has just won a sporting event, just so I can feel how her legs strain against the impossible weight as I jump almost and lean over her. I want her to tell me the most invasive and crippling faults of each of her friends, and then look sharply at me, every time those subjects are danced around next time I meet her friend. I want to know how far I can throw her and have her still land on the bed, or the carpet at least. In short, I want to imagine every possible vice that doesn't depend on sex because in truth, I want all of these aforementioned things to enter my brain at the exact same time my animal madness begins to lose all control and power it thought it had.

While the rest of mankind dreams of peaking up skirts and touching the breasts that remind them of their mothers, I'm only thinking of dominance.

Day

Passing over a ledge of clouds, closer to the sun than I've ever been, still we create shadows—the wing on my side of the plane is still half dark.

From an aerial perspective, our city—the roads and houses—look like a miniature circuit board; like an artificial intelligence, incomplete.

Without the shadows, how would I perceive the topography of the earth, forty thousand feet beneath this plane? All shapes are a play of light.

Slowly, without my awareness, the shining gun metal gray of the plane's wing has turned to a passive, almost clay-like color; the evening blue of the sky is meeting the soft red-pink of the horizon, making the plane's wing dull to a gray blue, with only the slightest hint of red chalkiness—I could almost mold it in my hand, since the sun has warmed it reddish, and prepared it with the patient fingers of a child, as the mellowing blue beneath has alternatively made it seem pliable, yet cold; somehow fresh, like fresh clay, still waiting to be used.

My arrogance never seemed more pathetic than the moment a cheap plane ticket became a transcendent experience—never more pathetic than when I saw how many million houses can fit in the eye of a sparrow.

Day

The sidelong, evening glare of sun through a cabin window is the same, whether the cabin is in a low forest valley, a navy ship, or a commercial airline.

Something like divinity halos the businessman on his computer beside me with the sun at his back; his humility seems outrageous; he has no clue how spectacular he looks just now in this airplane cabin, washed over with fabulous gold.

Day

"I think I am finally bored of you"—That is what I said to her. My imagination use to inflate every unknown detail; my imagination always works that way you know—but now I can see there is nothing at all unique or special or whatever. Often I use distance and monotony to make the world seem more intense when finally I confront it in small doses. This usually works, but Cinderella always has a habit of turning back to rags and soot at the stroke of midnight.

I hope one day, I can learn to disappoint others as profoundly as I disappoint myself in my daydreams.

I refuse the ticket to reality. The women in my life will always be either totally enchanting or simply stupid girls once more.

I don't have the heart for complacent purgatories of mildness and sunshine. I hate Florida.

Day

In the tropical climates, where the sun never hibernates, the pointed green slivers that pass for leaves make eerie shadows on apartment buildings for the entire day. Suffering and ambition are different here. The stagnant waters of streams and marshes are brighter and more welcoming than in the north—like a drug addiction everything is peaceful and dying and listless. Even the alligators seem bored of violence as they sun themselves into partial comas.

Day

Hands and face are so pale today; as if maybe our guts have bled inward again and drained away. No food yet. A bit of sweat already

collecting under our arms. Even though we have not moved, we still sense a bit of moisture, yet our shirt is not thick or heavy. Soft piano music wears a white under shirt; it feels pale and thin as paper; it plays the keys so gently, it hardly sweats.

—I was wearing soft piano music when I told her I did not want her.

Day

Ridicule is the shortest route to avoiding empathy: Blessed are the rogues that have plenty of hatred: Somehow, that virtue saves them a great deal of suffering.

Look how the casual commentator, on this or that frustration or mockery quickly becomes a sporting comedian in his small circle. The others cannot help themselves; the most natural thing is to join in. The most natural thing, is more contempt.

Show me the kind of ridicule that *uses* empathy. That is the sport I want to play.

Day

A tall beer for lunch,
Carnival rides before nightfall,
And the noisy amusements
Of a Halloween Masquerade—

These small things did not awaken half so much life as the smiling creature we shared them with.

Why must the uncanny, spirit-strangeness
Of Dionysian holidays and painted faces be life's most natural bliss?

On other days,
Smiling creatures are plain-faced girls.

Day

I've ceased to fantasize *about* women. Lately—and this might be maturity or depravity, or both—lately I only feel aroused in imagining their reaction to me. Nothing they do or say or want intrigues me. Nothing poetic in their behavior matters to me. I want them to be fresh faced—sitting still or moving about, I want them to have a tight body that seems always capable of gymnastic feats even though politeness and humdrum conversation never demand any great exercises of the lungs or muscles. Beyond those two things—a face and a body—everything else depends on their reaction to me. Every time I notice their femininity, I feel distracted from their worship of me: When they disappear to put on lipstick, and then ask me about noticing it or not...or when they put clothing back on after revealing a little bit and become timid...or when I'm forced to wade through a room or a corridor strewn with little pieces of junk or trinkets—all these are a distraction from their adoring me, and I feel somehow that their adoration isn't really worth as much as I want it to be worth; I don't want to be given any additional space to imagine them as pathetic or naive on their own.

If my intrigues should fail, it's better that I should still imagine them passionately, and look on at them from the street, as one who stares into the windows of a fantastic bazaar or boutique. Dejected in my worn shoes and penniless pockets, the gray morning should break and turn yellow, only after I've stood yearning for a great while, with eyes squinting, at the lighted display.

Nightmarishly, the alternative, is my realization that the women I've been attracted too are not going to move on to a better romance or a more creative suitor. Eeh Gad! I want them to be better off without me and enjoy parties I'm not invited to! But sadly, my intuitions of the truth tell me that the next man will be duller than me; He will also probably be more flattering, less obnoxious and more sedate...Despicably, I imagine them loving him. Why do they even bother calling it that? Why must they profane *that* word? They should have left it with me and the dizzying chorus that whispers relentless mantra's into my ear..."*a medley of confusion, an orgy of opposites! The precious oracles of temperament cast fishhooks into public fountains and march through the streets at daybreak with toy wooden rifles on their shoulders and yesterday's tobacco stains on their night shirts...our best anthems? We have only to dream of a whore in frayed*

stockings who keeps a nice dress at the back of her closet, just in case..."

Day

When our hair grows too long we sometimes stop what we are doing to trim our nails...that at least, we can do ourselves. Then we think of hygiene in general. Maybe we ought to do something about our ass and our crotch too. And then maybe we ought to smile more and reply when strangers outside the bank say hello and comment about the weather. The teller who accepts our deposit—what little incarnate life we manage to shuffle into our account today—she asks us if we are on lunch break. “no.” Did we have the day off from work? “no.” Now it’s awkward that we have responded honestly, twice, and suddenly, she can find nowhere else for her inquiry to go. She has managed to lead herself into a murky realm where the only result of additional conjectures must be negative and depressing. Idle chat has revealed not only a jobless man, but an unresponsive, brooding one. The purpose of polite chatter was supposed to result in a general feeling of politeness and comfort, yet this same coercion to politeness has revealed—even at its most minimal level—a compulsion to accept some minimal amount of care, participation and conformity...yet, owing to our condition...

Day

Misery is deeper than love. Love gives up or has fickle preferences. Misery does not. Misery keeps surviving and enduring. Deeper. Stronger. Bolder. Tireless yet weary at every moment; Misery is better than love.

Day

Feed the Thorns With your Nervous Sweat As you Wait for the Moment.

The boy in my visions is walking to a bridge where he jumps to his death. It's not certain whether the boy is me or someone else, but in the vision, I live out his efforts and I feel his thoughts as though I have taken his place in an entirely different version of reality. By the time the bridge is in sight, he's considering the air and the sounds and he's drunk with the sheer distance of things outside his small bedroom: the span of guard rails, the slope of support beams, the bewildering stretch of river moving beneath, and the city buildings that seem so proud and perfect to him. The exterior world appears solid and reliable. The blocks and the mortar and the pavement; the clutter of automobiles like too many toys set in specific places by a spoilt child on a great rubber mat with drawings of roads and pretend exit ramps.

He notices the temperature and his feet touching the ground, then lifting up slightly only to shuffle forward and take another step. Nowhere but within his sacred bedroom of bare walls and quiet shadows does he have the courage to imagine profound things. Only when removed from the contingencies of daily life, can he actually stomach his own great thoughts and poems. Elsewhere, things are different. Sweet verses and imaginative ironies are drained away. The safe harbor of pure intellect is annihilated the moment reality opens before him. Instead of great wisdom, there is only the overwhelming vertigo of too many possibilities, too many people and too many opposites. In public, his every analogy reverts to a childish one—things seem like toys, or models or imitations of being, even though it is these very things before him that are the very substance from which all imaginary things come to be. The real pavement and the real cars and the real bridges still feel as if they are somehow a part of his own pretend world, where he is merely a character drifting dreamily along, smiling at the nearness of his death, and even now pretending that his own life is much too important to be merely a suicide...it must also be something like a good joke...as if other suicides are intentional and sincere...while his must be arbitrary and silly. As if suicide itself were not really good enough for him, and that he would only entertain such a

possibility after convincing himself that his own special suicide were profoundly ridiculous and completely insincere.

Aside from philosophy, what the boy in my visions really likes is an afternoon nap. He likes to eat a giant serving of pasta, have a quick, self-induced orgasm, and then fall into a nearly diabetic coma for the remainder of the day. When he gives in to physical sensuality and bodily comfort, there is no longer any value in the world of participation. He finds more heaven under his warm, unwashed blanket than in any of the fields, meadows, rivers or canyons he pretends to worship in nature poems. A cozy death is the best way to avoid life. It costs very little, and it suffices through decades and decades of monotony. The pleasure of sleep is open to everyone—idiot and genius alike. Sleep does not ask for your identity, or your place in the herd. Sleep is the sweet, gentle, blind, all-forgiving Anti-Christ of oblivion. All our sins are washed away; magically; beautifully.

The boy in my visions has worn so many faces and costumes he fails to remember what he really is. He discards motives as easily as he discards the masks he fashions. Lately, he has decided to put on clown faces and say clown things only for the purpose of being hated. He willfully tries to wear down and eventually pierce the tolerance of others with insincerity until finally those around him feel deliberately slighted and belittled. So long as he carries the image of a smiling suicide, on his way to a bridge, there are no real consequences to any of his actions.

The things that I *have* done are far better than the fictions other writers are trying to create. For instance, the day I put an entire wardrobe into a plastic garbage bag and heaved it into a dumpster, I felt that I had surpassed Gulliver's Travels and most of French Romanticism. The fact that I could see myself and remember myself in this stupid assortment of costumes, and then rid myself of all those shirts and attitudes made me a character beyond character. If you seek identity directly, there is no finding it. If you flee from identity, it will haunt you, but even when it seems most real and stable, identity still resembles a loose substance that drains away or bleeds out accidentally.

I've never loved any characters of fiction because I have always felt more complicated and more confused than fictional characters. Just as these characters begin to approach some kind of fate, I find myself losing all communion with them. The closer a character approximates

or adheres to a moral decision or directive, the more intolerable I find these characters to be. Even a character whom we deem “lost” or “directionless” infuriates me. A “lost being” is in itself a highly *moral being*. I do not resemble a lost being. Lost beings have something to find or solve or secure. For my part, I am absolutely indifferent to security, worth, well-being, and joy. If I am joyful, it is the joyful leisure of not needing to defend or maintain joy. I think that finally, as I near the age of thirty, I have become completely masculine—not in the stoic sense, for I still feel weak and womanly feelings throughout the day, but masculine in the indifferent and tragic sense that is actually quite rare in the male population; Most men carry within them a little woman who does everything and wants everything in miniature to what actual women do and want. Most masculine men are in fact highly prone to fits and rages when these little women inside them don’t get their precious way. Conversely, when I imagine myself as a completely masculine man, I imagine a weird bit of irony that must be set down in detail in order to be adequately understood: I wear my little woman on the outside instead of the inside; she has most of the say and most of my opinions, yet beneath her there is a cold layer of impenetrable indifference that is resigned to a pointless fate. My masculine center wants to be free in a way only death could grant. Every excitement, urge, whim, fancy and laughter is that of the woman on my sleeve whom the world sees. For me, she has become completely a clown who deserves not only my hatred, but the hatred of all those near me. The true man beneath the skin I wear is grave and anonymous. He counts the seconds on the clock, waiting for his day of liberation. He has an embittered hatred for the woman he wears outside himself, but as a result of this suffering, he possesses an understanding and a fondness for actual women. For him, the women of the world are free and at liberty. Their opinions and hopes and identities are each different and strange to him, and because they are outside of him, he doesn’t feel compelled or obligated or coerced by them in the same way he feels such things when the secret little woman on his sleeve nags and bends and ails what otherwise might be called his solitude. If an actual woman came to this inner and tragic man within me, it would be my own freedom to deny her that would also allow me to love her in a way I cannot love or respect the puppet woman who lives on my sleeve; the puppet woman who is my own thoughts and hopes in miniature; the puppet woman who is also the cynical negation of my own feelings.

I want to give up alcohol and sarcasm. The more alcohol I consume, the more freely the sarcasm pours out of me. I feel as if my own lingering moral sentiments and stubbornness have led to all of my worst mistakes involving relationships. Thinking back, I should have returned more of the affectionate hints dealt by the girls who were already spoken for. Spoken for by whom? My conscience has always demanded things a certain way, and within certain boundaries. Because of those boundaries within my imagination, I destroyed, methodically, my every opportunity at love. When I was younger, my stubbornness showed itself in the form of various idealisms, which were actually barriers keeping me from feeling sympathy for others. I have not improved my sympathy at all; I have only changed the methods I use for evading it. I cannot shake from my memory the image of myself waiting in a café lobby on a Saturday morning, holding a long stem rose while waiting for a girl. She probably wanted to skip meeting me, but then felt ashamed and came two hours late so that I either wouldn't be there or that she could ease her guilt by the reassurance that I was actually a lunatic. I waited patiently for those two hours and I knew, after the first fifteen minutes of her tardiness, that, if she did come, it would not at all be as enjoyable or as innocent as I had imagined it. Had I left, and not waited, she could have saved face by saying that she had the time or day of our meeting confused. I actually, probably, made things worse by waiting. And then add to that, a superfluous rose. A winter morning, with hungry patrons shuffling past me in and out of the café, stamping snow off their feet and un-buttoning their jackets over and over again, it must have been two and a half hours I waited in total because I had arrived early, only so that I might wait longer. Romance is masochistic at heart. When I finally jump to my death, my only regret will be my helplessness in consoling that seventeen-year-old boy holding a rose before breakfast.

Sometimes I imagine that time does not exist. That there is a surreal version of my entire life played through that does not acknowledge time. I imagine that a novel or a dream containing my life would be completely experienced in the head of a boy sitting in a café with a rose on his lap. I imagine him imagining my every disappointment, my every failure, and my every effort and still not being moved from his seat on that glossy leather bench near the coat racks. I imagine that he stays put through the entire progression of my life, not because he is a symbol of naiveté or hope, but because it is his destiny to continue on, just as he is, in a pointless fashion, without reward.

It's better if he *does* see the future before it happens. All the better, for him and I, if our every heartache is amplified by innocence newly crushed and faithfulness, once more tormented.

Day

Sunsets

Liquorice

Romance

...everything hurts after too much.

Day

The Morning of November 1st...

A man dressed as a dictator hits me with the butt of a pistol. A tooth fragment is spit to the ground. Another fragment is still hanging, painfully and my tongue teases it and tempts it to break free. I don't want to feel the pain, but my tongue needs to feel and tempt and discover in this jittery, sadistic manner, so I press hard and discover. Next, I feel the final cracking sounds of my front left incisor becoming free. It is in this moment I decide that I don't want to lose anything else in front of this person...this person before me who is assaulting me...this man with the pistol, dressed as a dictator...before I am hit a second time, I wince and I swallow the sharp portion of tooth and there is no way for him to know that I have done so, as the minutes pass and the room grows hotter.

I see him sweating in his uniform; then he screams at me in some other language. An inferior to him—one that he commands—raps upon the door of this office. Some words are whispered. Now the dictator is furious. He grabs the lesser official and forcefully pushes him away down the corridor away from us leading to a swamp. Now the dictator returns to me and I blush. He pulls a dinner plate out of his pocket and offers me a cigarette; I can see by this gesture that he is absolutely infuriated with me, and that I have won. The secret documents have arrived and he is ruined. I'm so pleased with myself that I refuse the dinner plate cigarette and I smile at him. My ruined tooth is for the first time exposed, and the dictator reaches out to my face and touches the broken tooth with his full fingers and long nails. As he scratches the place where the gums are bleeding out, his finger finds a bit of chiseled white still dangling, so I grab for myself, into my pants and think of love songs. I am not quite sure how my hands have managed to be freed from the bonds which a moment ago attached them to this uncomfortable chair, of the wooden style, but none of that matters, when there are love songs.

Generators flux and groan with oil as nearby cows drop dead under starlight and cannot move. My eyes open and I see the room where I sleep for a few seconds, then I hear the voice of a young child straining to sing cries of agony above the pitch of the oily generator. I know this voice and love him...it must be the voice of my younger brother. He seems to be in trouble.

“help me.”

The engine sounds continue and I realize that they are only fabricated. Sampled with them are the high-pitched voices of young parents recording on an eight-millimeter home movie camera. The parent’s voices are trying to narrate stupidly the life of a toddler on Christmas morning. “What is it? Show daddy. Now give this one to grandma.”

I am not afraid of what is possible. I only fear that which is never possible. I am prepared for what is. I am not prepared for what cannot be. Fish monsters with gills and Frankenstein bodies are only momentarily uncanny. Once a rift in the universe has been torn open, and something foreign enters, it is not long before it is acceptably apart of that universe and we begin operating under the assumption that this new thing will follow the rules and boundaries of the old universe...but when something enters, that changes the actual rules of the universe itself, then we achieve vertigo and spiral out into vacuums and landslides.

I’m a golden age actor; I’m an icon of cinema from seventy-seven years ago. I walk through my large mansion and realize that I am very old. A clock on the wall tolls and points and turns and exaggerates. A lone guitar, heavy with fuzzy distortion and reverberation strikes a menacing chord, and lingers. Now I’m in black and white. I’m stoned into the golden age of cinema and I’m in black and white. My mansion has footstools and green library lambs in some of the rooms. Other un-essential information about my belongings and my world-being, in this golden age world, becomes naturally apart of my will and my aspirations for more things. I go to my trophy room and count the heads on the wall. I am pleased that there are still the correct number, that is to say, apparently, none of them have gotten free and rolled away. Next, I visit the remains of what were once my friends. They are wax figures, famously sculpted to look again like the golden age heroes whom I once acted beside. All one hundred thousand of them are standing frozen or seated artificially on my expensive furniture. It is somewhat a shame that living persons, famous or otherwise, cannot occupy these appropriated cushions, but even the images we give to the un-living must have the old comforts of green sofa chairs and tea parties, hadn’t they?

The faces of my wax figures are vacant, almost like politicians thinking, and these wax figures serve no purpose except to stare me down and remind me of the past. When suddenly a few of them come to life I become angry. Why should these wax counterfeits be allowed locomotion, when those they resemble are still confined to dirt and worm pillows? Some of the un-dead wax beings seem confused. This one here recognizes an old friend and touches his face, not sure really how he has entered the time-space dimension or why the wax man he touches has not. Another one, from a few feet off to the right, is laughing hysterically. The face touching man ignores him and continues to contemplate the face with the tips of his fingers. Each of the old-time actors is wearing a tuxedo, as if tonight were a red carpet premier or awards gala. A woman shrieks and faints, and returns to the place where wax does not have life. On the other side of the room a man dressed as a cowboy has discarded his wax cigar and is using his real lighter to melt the bare arm of a woman in an evening gown. He looks over toward me for approval just as one of the tuxedoed men beside the woman comes to life and pushes him away from the woman. At that instant, the woman with the deformed waxen arm comes to life. Apparently she is very much addicted to narcotics and pills, so she does not notice right away any sort of discomfort from this life as she enters it. She recognizes me, as if I am still a youth like her, and she saunters over toward me like she use to do, when the strawberries and champagne of a ballroom dance had overtaken her inhibitions or when the evening had drawn to an inevitable close and she wanted something warm to pass out beside. In this instance, her melted arm makes her appear just as hideous as I always felt her to be.

A psychic woman is called for and greets me from a balcony. I am in a church filled with people dressed in tuxedos and frilly dresses. The church is my own. I helped to design and construct it. Lately, I have gone through with the strange urge to drag a few hundred of my waxen companions to the pews and seat them facing an empty altar. The other wax figures that I mentioned before—the ones that achieved motion—have all fled. I have seated here, only the ones who have not returned to life. Beside each of these figures I have left space for their double. In my vision, each black and white figure is seated beside its own spectral image, absolutely identical to its waxen one, but with one exception, the spectral beings flicker and have yellow god eyes. Each ghost, paired with an un-moving waxen one, mimics the direction and pose of its wax counterpart and its eyes have the allure of silk voodoo

and cult devotion. It's not clear really, but it seems the psychic lady is a fraud. She pretends to accept my magnificent puppet show as a symbolic act, but I do not think she sees the spectral eyes of the souls confined here. If she had eyes like mine, she would understand; if she had eyes like mine she might see the spectral version of my own duplicate and be fearful—this is how I know for certain she is a fraud and that I am made of wax. You see, the living haunt the dead, like shadows near the end, in shades that flee the ordinary; like a cult of graves or a celebration of centennial birthdays, I too breathe magic when life shuffles us into hedge mazes and hollow earthen homes.

It is now that I realize, I am not privileged; the mansion was in fact, not my mansion. A delusion made me believe so. A movie poster with my face led me to believe that I was famous, and real. Instead, I was merely the first of the waxen cast to become mobile and conscious. My urge for hot soup confirmed this suspicion and destroyed my chest, but did not at all destroy my outer appearance because my clothes are real. Appearances are real—so long as strings can sustain a tremulous vibration we may act as if there are uses for this world, and things that matter.

I recall the girl with the painted white face and the homemade masquerade style mask—I think it was made cheaply out of fabric, and I thought it was cute how she had taken the time to make something herself. It's more innocent to be young and sentimentally affected by tiny gestures than to observe those gestures and groaningly remark them; what a chasm exists between care—real, honest care—and the loveless waxen forms that cannot celebrate trinkets. *“Abgrund”*—this is the word for abyss in German. It means without ground. The only beings without ground are the beings without care. Such beings float like ghosts. Such beings are invulnerable and incapable and sometimes, intolerable.

In dreams and in horrors, we are affected by both—the beings of care and the beings void of care. If these beings are forced upon us, alternately, so as to undermine our relations to them, we become distraught and troubled. If horror would only go a tiny step toward care it would have more success than doing the opposite—adding barrels and barrels of blood. One sad death is worth a hundred random ones. A surreal murder is almost on the verge of becoming a joke...but conversely, a serious man, whose intense labors amount to nothing but pointless vertigo, and whose death is mundane—this is a better horror

because care is in attendance up to and beyond the threshold of chaos. Chaos is not chaos without care. We need a relational chaos; a chaos that is identified out of the collapse of a former world of care. Null chaos is like an ocean or silo of grain ready at hand. It has no affect. Though such a chaos might finally consume all reality, and be the one truth of the world, it is not actually this chaos which frightens us. We have not enough mortal imagination for that. No, what we need is something smaller and more pitiful...we have need of a mere "relational chaos" where small cares are built up and brought down hard. A hopeful one-night stand, a sudden train wreck or a child taken—these are more close to what I mean. Pure chaos is an entire planet of missing children...but better than that, for the sake of horror, we require the disappearance of a specific child.

Day

Weak coughing from a hospital bed,

And

Thoughts

Of

Happiness.

Day

A man is wheeled into the physical re-habilitation offices. "I'm here, I'm here, stand up and cheer!" he says, as the orderly leaves him and the ladies at the check-in desk take over his care. The moment he enters the room, our comfortable silence is slain. He is a chattering buffoon. Lonely, old and pathetic, his gestures are part sexual frustration, part religious enthusiasm and partly declarations of pandering self-deprecation longing for new attention. He gloats over the nurses that pay attention to him. He confronts a young girl texting on her phone in the waiting room, somehow manages to ask for her number, then says he is kidding, then uses all this as an excuse to babble about phone companies and charges and inconveniences. Now he forcefully continues the conversation with the young girl because he has her attention and his wheelchair is near the stack of magazines she's picking from. He mentions his empty house and not being able to get

up this morning, and watching some dull television program, which he found very, “up-lifting”. Now he is ranting about the nurse that stopped by to say hello. He insists on referring to her as “lovely” and “gorgeous”, but these words seem cute to the young girl, and de-sexualized because the man is handicapped and old. This is a mistake. The man also refers to the weather, the blessed day, the tiny bible he gave to the “lovely” nurse on Valentines day, and how her husband also likes the scriptures. Though he is clumsy in his speech, he seems to be charming enough to the ones he wishes to charm. If he were less useless, his gestures would be less acceptable. At one point in my life I dreamed of becoming a doctor. Today I had a fantasy that I might accidentally find myself in a dire situation where a man like this needed medical assistance; what a pleasure to stand by passively and watch his convulsive death without guilt or shame, being as I am, un-educated in the medical arts. Offering assistance or abstaining from it: I think both actions are admirable, depending on the situation. If I can artistically choose to paint bushes red or pine trees yellow, why can’t I also choose to watch this helpless man die as part of my self-expression? If morality is allowed to dictate the realm of art, then art degenerates into a de-humanized fraud. If my life is an artistic expression, morality contributes to making me a fraud to myself, so I must war against it, if it hinders me. I feel more human in my cruelty, or my fantasies of cruelty, than I do in my logical reserve or my polite favors. My bandages smell like pine needles and spilt gin. It’s been a long time since I had a good fuck.

I think constantly of suicide. Poetry and music don’t seem to want anything to do with my self-slaughter, yet literature...surreal literature, wants to be included in my end. I have no impetus to do this well or in some manner worthy of praise; I just need to expel something in unison with my own end, and in this case, probably delay it to the point of its not even occurring at all.

If those without mood disorders are alien to us, at least we somewhat understand what acceptable moods look like...but as for the deranged, the disordered and the fragmented, we are utterly surreal in our most common relations and trivial thoughts. Without even trying, we are ridiculous and unpredictable. We alien beings often speak as if we were inhabitants of some wonderland full of miracles and talking rabbits, but this wonderland would only be our day to day experience; our pain and our incongruence. The talking rabbits are the moody symbols we make out of the same existence everyone passes by and

fails to notice. Receptionists, vending machine delivery men, construction workers, hospital patients—these are, to me, just so many pointless talking rabbits. Every participant that makes the world fit together and continue existing seems robotic and fraudulent. I don't feel any need to pass moral judgment on the specific order of existence to decry its silliness. I have nothing to put in its place. I don't wager that I am gifted with any type of solution. All I possess is a mood that does not, and cannot fit. A mood that cannot participate.

Day

An un-spoiled carpenter's tape
Laying zig-zag and askew
On the grassy shoulder of a state highway
Reminds me of madness
And I look away.

Day

The bleakest, blackest
Thought I ever had, went something like this—

Unwanted relations
Forced :

By men or by women
By sperm or by marriage
Life continues.

By law or by shame
No one escapes
Nature's conspiracy.

On Mother's Day
On Christmas Day
On every day that remembers birth;

Amidst the sad and dejected
We find the shallow unwanted
And so easily ignore,
The depths of horror
We refuse to see.

Life is an awful thing for those that feel it so.
Our smiling holidays will not fix them,
Nor love them away
From the grips of their angst.

So vile is life,
They will mutilate themselves to escape—and worse!
Sometimes they fail, even at this.

Unwanted relations
Forced:

Like a child support check,
A garnished wage,
Or a fetus without a father.

Wonderful, wonderful life continues.

Toughest are they who live by fear,
Needing comfort and safety,
Spawning more children,
The incomplete and partial exiles
Are first in line to become parents.

The complete humans are aloof.
Complete humans need nothing.
Complete humans are content without;

Without parents,
Without love,
Without relations,
Without government or society,

Without pretense or artifice,
The complete humans seem shallow
To those who envy their freedom,
Or fail to comprehend
The lucidity of their painful insight.

...And terrible women become mothers

...And insatiable men become fathers

And life is accidental, haphazard, precarious,

Ill
And
Blind.

Unwanted relations:

Life re-incarnates life.
Life is sexually transmitted.

Simplicity and forgetfulness
Prepare the ultimate deception
Of human existence.

Unwanted relations:

I dream a different dream;
I dream a special kind of love.

I dream
Women and children
Are not worth the trouble.

I dream that even rape is creative.

I dream a dream no one else dreams.

When menstrual blood runs black
And wolves catch sight
Of a crippled forest creature

I will smile proudly
Upon the abortion of life,
Well pleased to have survived long enough
To shade myself in an eclipse.

Shriek Hell and despair,
Ye brave philosophers of life:

Every fool

Has at least one
Brilliant thought—

Part III
Friction from a Middling Way

Day

Responsive. We are so. And there is much rumination in those that are. For the rest, there are diversions of taste, fine appetites of sensation, and perhaps, more evasively, circular questions to expostulate. Some questions, when stated, and worse, when followed through with thorough investigation, become so inhuman, so abstract, so intangible, that the very severance of the material affects the psychological state of the thinker himself; Perhaps without endeavoring to be at all artistic—for the most tragic amongst our philosophers are ever the “most objective ones”—they shape from the very nature of their pursuit, a new vision of themselves that looks into themselves, and, by sympathetic magic, the abyss of untruth they have long stared into soon becomes the very abyss they themselves cannot transcend. Poetry at least tries to be honest, and permissibly, wants out of the hell it finds itself in. Rumination is a tortured discipline. It lashes at itself without abatement. It cannot be free of itself. Or its hell—the hell of its problems, its identities, its ideas, its questions, and worst of all, its sensitive responses which, in their colossal complexity, beg the corollary masochistic abuse that originally spawns them, and this abuse is executed upon their own person. Sometimes he mortifies himself. No, not for atonement per say, but, more astutely, for *catharsis*. The measure in which the holy ascetic has diverged from God is the measure of whatever desire or personal inclination he finds *apart from God*. The ascetic example is a fruitful allegory. Not merely in the discipline of Philosophy or Art, but of all human psychology—namely, its recoil against *responsiveness*, that is, against the vibrancy of the world; in a word, the world’s changefulness, and even in its recoil, finds, haphazardly, its resolution, for even when it acts against itself, it has a tendency to transcend itself by the nature of its mutinous atonement. (It sometimes must needs annihilate to create once more: Negation is a potent fountainhead. It thrives upon the falling nature of existence, like a pile of compost in decay or the echoes of early morning chamber music.) If it abuses itself at any hint of transgress, (as in the case of our ascetic) it also finds joy in the pain for which it suffers in the name of the original blasphemy or truth seeking. The pain is two-fold. It absolves the militant, dogmatic ego and it indulges the rebellious Eros, which needs to persist in its sensuality despite its restrictive conditions and its conscientious precepts. Both sides are placated. And if this work also, this present work of which we are participants, be self-torture, resembling a monotonous circuit, unending and pointless like life itself, then we ourselves, as its author may claim

but one advantage over the rest; it was our mindful object from this present inception as dread, to compose the bleakest book ever written

Day

*“And man’s wisdom ever hath been
To keep what is not good to see, unseen!
A straight and perfect life is not for man;
Nay, in a shut house, let him if he can
‘Mid sheltered rooms make all lines true, but here
Out in the wide sea fallen and full of fear,
Hapest thou so easily to swim to land?”*

—Euripides

A heavy coat: A forceful road: No longer standing but sitting and moving: Bending corners, leaning. Driving is so plain, as plain as corn fields or skyways in winter looking out and downward; calm as hospital tunnels with fresh painted rails and ceilings and bad tile: The grout holds fast to the ordinary, it keeps in its place—so fearsome when it doesn’t move and everything else does: And stretchers with bodies roll along, sometimes vacant, sometimes full of life: While standing still, extinguish the sound of rickety wheels far off snaking into the blind side of left-hand corners beyond sight.

Turn signals.

Do you see how the cigarette explodes, hitting pavement after dark, so atomic are the lighted little bits flying off to fade as if they were a nest of firebugs breaking apart, scattering away, who knows where they’ll end up, its just that, well, we saw them: We were behind a smoker’s car and she’ll never know quite how her ashes looked and we’ll never see the face or the expression of what has already come along this way before us: Sometimes we keep to ourselves.

Let’s talk more about the coat: it’s of leather: That’s all we have to say about the coat.

Plates: Sometimes they are dishes: Empty with the exception of food stains or hotly cleaned in some noisy machine: Who can put them away silently? Sometimes plates are heavy like that coat. Sometimes

we add them up and lift them together, all at once: loose plates in a gym being lifted, clanking, obnoxious testosterone: breathe harder and think less.

Pick a word: make it into a genre of expression: a fad or a device or a scarf that nooses you up warmly so others can see your bad taste while you feel secure. Spin Ixion on the wheel: Is the price right? Spin again. A different flavor; live and let the living choose some other idiot myth to taste, to savor, to win, to strengthen, to nurture unto marriage, unto stress, unto forgetfulness or rediscovery, until total muscle failure and the barbell collapses upon the free springing ligaments—zipping up like cheap hotel shades that wind quickly, letting in the sun of one of those blessed hangover dawns where the world throws a bucket of white lead paint in your eyes and says, “Begin.”

Day

Freshly showered bodies; the skin has a wreak of smug satisfaction, too long warmed, almost to a new sweat and the alcohol leaves through the pores so gradually we don't quite comprehend, in one taste, how happiness is Vaseline and the rest—friction.

No endings or plots. Sometimes the sentences are left kindly to float above the viscosity of meanings we can see, or get stuck to. Its good to forget everything that came before this moment in order to ...well, something, I suppose like continuing from a virgin snowdrift. Did it rain yesterday? I don't know. Musicians don't get paid for practicing. No one cares for the process of art or life or picture shows that have ten pages of credits on a black screen: we're always getting stuck with the lubrications that come before the black screen with too many names, and, if you recall, even before the lubrication of fantasy (or the story or whatever they are calling it these days) there are these FBI warnings and Interpol warnings and everyone else who has the rights to the *lubrication of make believe* are afraid you might copy their brand of grotesque originality. Is there a stream of unconsciousness? My dreams are horrifying. I've never wanted to read anything like a dream—the parts that are uniquely your misfortunes have a relentless tug on images that mean nothing much to anyone but have that odd possibility of arresting you until you forget them or dream them again. Let's be afraid of the person who doesn't remember dreams. That person doesn't want to remember dreams.

A bumper sticker said, “live simply so others can simply live.” It’s a good thing that we can be so kind to the greedy ones who will always thrive off the simplicity of simple people. It’s a kind gesture again on the part of the greedy ones to condescend to call the simple ones—the ones so unlike themselves?—a special name: spiritual. Can we agree that this mutual sharing is a very good compromise, benefiting both sides, together, in a really bi-partisan, harmonious way? Sometimes it seems that the world is full of these same, well-fitted impossibilities. Our spirits are greedy to the core.

Some authors refuse to live, simply, and hate those that demand so much of a frail mind.

Laugh at yourself. Laugh at other people. Laugh at things in general. Isn’t there a lot of smiles and understandings and happiness in laughter? We don’t think so. Laughter has a heavy varnish of something like a different world. It’s a world we’re not prepared to dwell in for very long or with much seriousness. Some people don’t think in terms of words. Of the ones that do, there is a danger that the words will lead to that other world as they pass over the same things again and again until the words are not words but a heavy coat that conceals a need or a misunderstanding or a bad relation. (We should have forgotten the coat, if it had not been heavy, like a new layer of skin we’re not yet used to.) We would like to speak humorously all the time: that would be a new contempt for the world: that would be a special hatred: that would be a majestic frustration.

To be calmly, sedately, pharmaceutically sincere in what you mean and say and feel—that seems like a suspicious fraud that our laughing man cannot participate in or perceive. Beside the laughing man, one is belittled. (One will not tolerate him long, if one even has the sympathy to tolerate him at all—he is perhaps, too greedy and wants to take spirituality too far: not unlike Saint Paul, or some other, death-mongering martyr.)

Amidst the laughter, something like disturbed pride seeps into whatever you felt in earnest a moment ago. Lovely wasn’t it? That earnest feeling before the laughter. That possibility of escape into a real world; a world you approved and were ready to love or touch or be fully embraced by?

Laughter is very like a world already discovered. Only the inexperienced, naive ones call it brave or new. Laughter is the familiar old world, wrinkled and tear stricken; beauty is the aberration; youth is the deformity whose excuse is ignorant repetition. Naivety seems to say to that wrinkled face: "I have not been here before; what is this place? I like it here. Let's all put flowers in our hair. May I try the wine? I don't recall it ever tasting so sweet. Is it really sweet? Tell me, wrinkled faced, laughing man, is it so sweet as this, at all times?"

Yes.

And agreement is a kind of evasion that nullifies the vast chasm between common speech and old experience. Agreement is frightening when it can over step so much and settle upon such incomplete disclosures. Maybe the wrinkled face would rather not laugh. Maybe the wrinkled face of experience has settled upon a smile because it is so continuously alien to its world. So Continuously in drink of it! His tips are so common now, they are to be expected, sitting as he is, belly up to the rail, taking shot after shot, it has become a daily routine—this habitually drunken, satyr revel—and the livelihood of others depends on his staying put.

There is as stale-breathed grime in the routine of poetry; Something immortal in every glass of scotch, aged or cheap. Our grade school teachers wouldn't speak of it to us, and in its place, gave us nursery rhymes: equally dangerous: equally immortal and horrific. Ashes. Ashes. We all love the fall down feel of charcoal filtered moments where we can laugh and lag behind the rest so briefly. We all like to fall down, into the padding of a heavy coat, even when the ground is not soft. The trick is to let yourself fall at the right times. Existence is perpetually falling and I have nothing new to wear. I want to see myself in new clothes. I want to put on makeup. I want to laugh while I'm being looked at; Your look *matters*; I care about being looked at so much my laughter seems to pass through these moments when sometimes, I fear the trembling corners of my mouth will betray me—and that's when I have to stop to apply more lip gloss because lip gloss has a petroleum base that resembles happiness.

Slow sleep. Long sleep. There could be a whole day of this if we took our time. All day. That's a disturbing thought. Go out and meet the people. Meet their expectations. Meet their subtleties; their cringing mathematics. I sometimes wonder about animal hospitals.

Are there enough of them, for all the animals? Earning money day after day until the only real moment is when someone else brings you your food already cooked or drives the car while you gaze on the fringe of some median with weeds; weeds are pleasant because no one ever tends to them.

It's a miracle that miracles never quite seem to be happening. I might have made that up, or maybe I stole it. Be my guest. Try to find it elsewhere. I implore you even. I want to be disproved. I want to be a fraud. I want to be a hack. I want to be told, indisputably, that I'm wrong.

Some of them paint their faces for shows. Some convince each other that some shows are not right to paint a face for and others are the right shows for wearing corpse-like makeup, depending on who is in the audience. For these face painters, gloom is something that you can take on or put off or forget entirely. Do you remember Thomas Hardy? Even he sometimes took the gloom into the wrong places or talked about it at the wrong times, but for him, it never really went away or got fixed. Does that inspire you to do great things? Does it make you more spiritual to contemplate the face painters and the Tragedy poets? Does it make you laugh and feel bored? Or is it that gray, everyday wellness; without fatigue; bombarded into a kind of submission lacking in emotional observation; lacking careful effort? Maybe there are too many things to consider: Too many ideas at once: Each is a dim thing, beside more things: A vast, middling way, of no consequence, no harm...no desire.

Pigeon hearted—that's a fine phrase. Honest. That's something different. Brutality is too much honesty; Pigeon hearted, well, that's maybe not enough courage for deception or not enough care to bother about protecting others when one's own self is so vulnerable, sensitive, open and made ready to meet new ills while remaining stout; while remaining forgetful of heart, slightly overwhelmed, yet light as a pigeon, and equally incapable.

The word "Becoming" use to mean something else; it use to mean—decent, fit, proper, congruous, suitable.

Today it seems to mean the opposite of these. It resembles some creeping process. A periodic transformation. Instability. Fragments that do not yet fit. Wondering into anomalous vapors, and somehow

clinging to a sense of regret at no particular mistake, but rather, the seeming hazard of process itself—a process which means, very definitely, *un-becoming* as well. Shock like a cold toilet seat and then beer shifts. Thinking about happiness: it means more beer shifts next week maybe. And then the contentment of not needing to be happy. Of realizing that being un-happy is pretty immature too. Staring hard at a brass door knob. You look into it, past it, through it. It begins to lose its shape; it jitters from your straining eyes, and then, with quizzical surprise, it begins to look at you and contemplate you. The whole natural world is observing you and your displacement; your shock. You wipe yourself and consider how you began that diary when you were a young teenager. You called it “mindless ranting” but now, in the wake of the rolling decades between then and now, you realize that your ranting then was not quite mindless enough, and, confessedly, it still does not possess the meandering justice that you would like it to have; it does not yet have the total disconnectedness of a dream or an especial vision. It still coheres too much to outward appearances, forms and acceptable things. You long for it to be wholly unacceptable; vile or absurd. The women you show these to, these writings, they have such a dampening affect on them, like a blood transfusion with an alcohol content—so invasive and scholarly technical but wrong—the women don’t know how to take the words or feel them so they try to take you instead, but have to take you as you are in their eyes; you are somewhat cut-off to their thinking and you become a blunted, shrinking silhouette. That is all of you they can grasp—or care to grasp—or —or have the stomach to grasp; Because there is something about the masculine mind which, instead of holding onto scorn, holds on to time as a metaphor for the “Becoming—un-Becoming process” and labors to uphold some stability where it cannot—Hence the “appalling practicality” of each sex as it looks into what the opposite holds dear or true, and add to that the “inflexibility” of these truths in the very moment the opposite sex is seeing some other horizon of meaning or feeling. The horror lies in the non-convergence of those elements that seem to wax for one sex as they are waning for the other and vice versa. We think it was, maybe, Graham Greene who said “appalling practicality” or some such equivalent, when dealing with the sense of unmitigated dread a male might feel while the female is busy with tending to what is necessary. His moral sense, running contrary to her immediate, unthinking intuition of the next move. (As if she were a seasoned chess master who saw only in terms of moves that were “un-fit” and hence, dismissed them wholesale without a moments

hesitation...but what endless tides flow through us in hesitation's placid mood?)

She may not quite understand how much we sometimes miss our anxiety or our tension when things become too easy, happy or cheap. Maybe we overlook the same in her? Can it be, that both are experiencing and overlooking the very same things in each other? And when she offers you comfort or closeness, what good are the streaming rants of discontent? And again, what good is her closeness if one must put off one's need of streaming, authentic, ranting fallen-ness? She doesn't always understand that offering you what you need is, maybe, not what you want? She, in her love is doomed to the labor of Alcestis, and she is the source of your entire tragedy: Offering too much of what you excel at—in your manic happiness—will efface what she excels at. There is the risk also, of your best abilities for feeling, causing her to feel uneasy, not at home, not how she is used to or comfortable feeling. She is not ready for so much Nihilism all at once. If she were, the roles would be reversed and she would be the one disgusting you. The moment you win your complete honesty in this failing, falling, fragile world, you have to be ready to give it up for her sake so that you may commune with her, not in lies or illusion, but in yet more variations of ambiguity and absurdity. So proud the moment you begin to rise above your own desires and old vanities—and then—what grief one feels at turning round towards what is human and necessary, and beyond vanity in its squeamish womanliness; in its shallow courage that excels at tears instead of apathy; Its pathos for empathy instead of religious awe—Will you even recognize her return, if she wears a shroud colored veil? Will Alcestis remember how to speak, when she comes back from the sunless houses: the myriad mansions kept by the slayer king of the silent nation? What would you have her say, if you made her tread the deepest rivers by your side or in your stead? She returns tongue-less.

There are no superior philosophies—just too much truth to dwell in all at once. Knowing what she offers. How she offers it. How not to thwart it. These are more difficult questions than Existential ontology has ever bothered to grapple. To cultivate oneself to be ready. Open to controversy and absurdity. Self limiting. Free, but care-mindful as well. There is much to think about when one has nothing to feel. Much to learn, when learning is at an end.

Remember when we were speaking of the door knob? Those are the small moments. They don't have a context in any frame of

reference or any significance on the outcome of any plot, and so, they are always neglected; negated. Art is wrong if it misses these small moments. Think of the attitudes that come from chaining together a labyrinth of small moments. Take out the quizzical brass door knobs looking into you, and maybe our narratives collapse? We think there is too much concern in the world with “Being and Doing”. Such a large portion of life is the concern of the non-doing and the somewhat/almost being of our impressions. Our un-likely impressions. How they fit together and fall apart and become something different. How they change.

Day

Some of us are capable of wearing pearl necklaces that are not yet strung together, and may yet be in need of completion; in need of careful breathed divers that jump from row boats in a quiet cove—schizophrenia needs the heavy orbs that sink to the bottom of the soup bowl like dumplings, and it needs the irritated clams that make them by gritting their teeth at the world. Does it surprise anyone that a ranting girl, having had too much to drink, passes out on a beanbag chair after a concert, amidst the ruins of a shattered, half tangled necklace; the cheap plastic beads seeming to have multiplied in their explosion onto the shag carpet floor? We agree: city buses seem angry from the curb, but more friendly from the inside when they are full of people that never speak to you. A bus will take you anywhere, but its curious that it can do so while not really knowing anyone in particular and being unconcerned with specific destinations and only continuing a rut worn circuit each day, stopping off at the proper places and at the right times—it’s the passengers who seem confused and schizophrenic in their need to be moved about so chaotically; a bus schedule is more sane, yet, mysteriously, if we should ever get on at the first stop in the morning and ride it back to its station that night, (perhaps entertaining the entire circuit twelve times, and leaving off, two conductors later) it is *us* that becomes the insane one and not the ladies with the plastic bags full of milk and eggs and wrinkled skin that you want to tear off and ball up into a tan colored putty so their lives can end before they attend another senior citizen banquet or ride the bus once more to replenish their refrigerator. Sometimes old ladies wear pearl necklaces that are real. And strung together. Enigmatically, hermetically, predictably so.

Old lady vaginas use to be as alluring as broken pearl-ed, short skirted, passed out ones in beanbag chairs. Some men, long dead, may—somehow, inconceivably—have given large portions of their lives to such simple, stupid city bus riding old creatures—hag-ridden indeed.

The gorgons lurk in every inch of commerce, amidst the conspiracy of youth, amidst the toaster ovens in glossy cardboard packaging, the fluorescent tile ceilings and cell phone kiosks. Who can escape them? Best to coral them away into retirement villages, lest the evasion of popular clothing and fashion *not be enough* to distract us from the stone frozen impotence and barren womb-ed horror of spells involving serpentine hair and its effect upon startled young eyes.

There are two kinds of witchery in this world—the kind that enchants, and the kind that dis-enchants. We fear the gaudy pursed, slow walking, elderly, un-magical kind, even though the other kind—the sweet smelling, flighty pussied, wrinkle-less kind—uses more empty promises, more taxing tomorrows without lust that slowly become respect and loyalty, and the ever mounting predictability out of what once was new and interesting cuteness, ever paving the way to plastic shopping bags and car-less outings once you are in your expensive grave. Do they even still pine for you? Or mourn your death, with their bundle of oranges, bananas and bran muffins heaped on that fake leather bus seat? What if secretly, you were the obstacle to getting grand children, and everything lustful was a farce; a charade; a lie for your ephemeral benefit. Edgar Allen Poe can pen “The Raven”—purple curtains and all— but somehow, the hand drawn birthday card from your unseen granddaughter is more violent to your life because it aids in her forgetfulness; Heaven is where yesterday’s famous lust can wait unnoticed and collect dust. She believes you are not fully extinct; you failed to convert her to even a moderate Greek Paganism just as you were incapable of aligning her with any Nihilistic hatred of Christianity: the result, her stubborn belief in Heaven undermines the singular experience of your life and the loss of your life. In its final permanence, the horrific silence that is your end, still finds her seeking you in a better place, without anxiety or urgency. Simply put, she is not sad, and thinks it wrong to have passingly felt sad feelings. Slow enchantment awaits you, without rancor or design. Innocent—almost.

Day

Here is friction from the middling way between life and non-life. We love the spectacle and the contrast of rock music beside a world of ailing commitments; the allure of total irresponsibility and ineptitude against the starvation of simply surviving on the world's terms and meeting the world's small demands—its public demands; demands which include escape and distraction and the illusion of another lifestyle. Those who are not killing themselves outwardly, may be dying inwardly from a lack of self-destructive effort.

Try bringing home some stale bread and eating it. No metaphor. Just something you might try...once.

We like the ones who call themselves artists. They seem to have answers for us; ready made and fit to be consumed by all. There are political artists, electronics designing artists, philosophical artists, garbage can hitting/garage echoing artists—and each of these have the common trait of not waiting for a final answer, or a complete solution, but instead, vomiting up whatever is nearest them and we would rather accept what is near to someone else than to undertake the painful task of accepting what we might ourselves have an impression of or a reaction to in the world nearest ourselves. Art is not difficult; the difficulty lies in what we consider “not yet art” or “not fully art worthy” *as if* art had some dimension of existence apart from existence in its totality. Glad that this is not so. Glad and thankful that art—or even failed art—is not anything at all—glad that each attempt at art is not a Failed World, but rather, only a small transposition or mutation of an already failing one. Can't they see that the sound is ever decaying? That the only true priest is a melting priest with a corn cob pipe and a piece of carrot for a nose who has nothing whatsoever to say, aside from a lack of integrity at the changing temperatures of the atmosphere around him—but then again, who could ever make that into a plausible myth capable of receiving worship or gaining devotees other than children who play in the snow? Its not so much a miracle that a snowman with a silk hat can come to life as it is that he bothers to dance; that he begins dancing and playing from the first moment of life. Maybe the whole curiosity lies in the fact that people dance; or that they play—whether made of ice or otherwise...or is it more of a deviation, not to dance, not to laugh, and to abstain from frivolity? Maybe the in-animate statue—made of bronze or brass—is the more

exemplary type? Melting gods are difficult to worship. The static counterfeit of man—the many poses of non-life—certainly excel in maintaining their reputations, as if their stillness and their 'halting' credibility were more valuable than the nature of expression and process itself...for my part, I'll always prefer the melting priests over the bronze gods, especially when I'm allowed to imagine that ice can melt or suddenly learn to dance.

Who else cringes at the sparse offering of myths in the present culture? Why does the West desire only one version of the human pathos? Why so singular a creed? Why not a pantheon? Its not that we hate Jesus, its more that we love Euripides, Sophocles and Aeschylus *as well as he*. Not that we hate Christmas, but rather, we aren't allowed enough of it; Not enough celebration of light in the darkest of seasons, Not enough Paganism, Not enough immersion in the ever-present spirits of pandemonium within us that might be channeled, had they an outlet in some common worship or poetic revelation. Really, we long for more contradiction, paradox and forced negation. We long for more hate speech; more vulgarity; more intolerance of other peoples stupidity, more profaning of sacred creeds, more laughter at disability, more dichotomy between the genders and more worship of the sun.

Oh, if only the world were so schooled as to hate as well as us, that would be a compassionate day indeed: a proud day of no desire and doing nothing.

Day

I love you. What more is there? Read no further. Leave it be. No beating hearts will ever endorse these pages; No more hopeful breaths. I surrender everything. My first words are my most difficult words. Today, my first words are my most brilliant words. The rest is rubbish, so I begin with the ending. Shall I explain why? I doubt I will be believed, but if I am allowed, my weary explanation begins thus: honesty is difficult.

Do you expect somehow, to believe me? For me to justify myself? To mend a lifetime of errors and a habit of apathy? Can there yet be any true faiths among you mankind? Should this be an attempt at faith? A whisper of compassion? Do you expect somewhere to find a satisfactory answer scrawled out in this pestilent ink; or, if not here,

then perhaps in a work by a more likely author, possessing gifts of language far surpassing mine, and bestowing a sense of love without ever stating it? Do you call this greater authenticity? Then go. I have nothing to say that has not been said a dozen times before. In all the ages of endless creating and negating, what more can we ask of our wise men? What more shall we wish from our large hearted women? There is naught else to be said, and nothing more to be argued. Furthermore, if you should choose to proceed, the reason must spring from curiosity, and more likely, out of some faithless doubt that a man such as I is even capable of Love. If you should chance to complete even the whole of this first page, I shall have said enough, and you shall have read enough, for always and forever—Art is a waste of time; precious, fleeting, wonderful time! We the Artists are a greedy race of thieves. We would take your life from you. We would live it in our minds and on our own pages in your stead. We would take all that is yet precious in the world and never once offer an excuse...Already, I begin to doubt my own excuse and already you begin to question and disbelieve...Let me give fair warning and recommendation: NEVER READ ANOTHER BOOK IN YOUR LIFE! Quit all Art! Quit Art FOREVER! Live your life and worship only your own life's possibilities.

Curse this ink. Curse this paper. This process, this creation, this book binding futility, what can it ever be worth to those living? I am a murdered life. Each precious second is a second wasted. The human minutes are counting up. These are your minutes. This is your piece of time. I am a murderer of your life also. Shamefully, it is my will that this once living growth of paper be harvested mindlessly by a complex network of beings, then desecrated by a printing press and finally bound up in a dusty volume all so that my arrogant revelries can be set down herein, and I, even in death, should by the source of this inert trash, taking space on worthy shelves—still to be in the way; newly to be tripped over, spat upon, stained, crushed and again to die one hundred thousand more tiny deaths resulting from innocent acts of neglect. In this pseudo afterlife, I shall not even be a man, but a shadow of a man, already dust, and marching an army of other silhouettes toward that same oblivion; tardy and less eager than its author perhaps, but in the end, fated for the same dust as Shakespeare and Goethe. And besides the ominous fatality of words, why waste even a second of life in thought or contemplation? Surely there is to be found some warm, living body under heaven for you to draw near to in place of this book? Is there not? Do not scoff at me, you multitude of

idiots; whether in bursts of mockery or a spell of self-deprecating shame, you cannot tell me there are none who would have you. Even I, who address a single reader in pessimistic conceit as “you multitude”, even I know that there are some in the world that would have me, wretch that I am, just as I am, for all that I am...and yet, I seek not their company either. On common ground we stand unnoticed, you and I; On common ground, perhaps we shall catch a thread and gain some distance on the minotaur. A small yarn is all we have to fend off the inevitable; behold: we exhale together. Though we are impatient, we have already caught a human breath against the foul winds of destiny. Can it be that the maze itself openly displays a continuous reward or joy?

I, and those before me, rely on humanities ceaseless need to be loved and given examples of love. Even the hateful misanthrope wants the same, but he is a rare sort of beast. He wants my efforts to be at the expense of all the rest. He wants a story of another misanthrope. He must have his hero be the scornful Anti-hero armed with the indefensible weapon of reality. On his side, he has warfare, disease, disaster and above all, human negligence. One ounce of my terror, and the Anti-hero is a prodigy for other misanthropes to follow after. The other misanthropes shall steal my arguments and henceforth call them their own arguments; my misanthrope’s hatred shall, doubtless, be taken unto he who reads my words and he shall declare himself thus increased in suffering and state that he is all the better for it, since, of course, suffering is his highest attainment and the proud example of his marvelous victory over the rest, who stake their lives on a more fanciful absurdity and a less believable alibi—less believable, but more profitable? Of what profit is Love to the misanthrope?

Our world is obsessed with outward appearances and measurements of external achievement. If a man becomes an artist, and wishes to excel at his craft, he must seduce you with the practiced dexterity of his medium. Secretly, he wants you to make him immortal. He wants to be a God. He wants to over reach you, surpass you, humiliate you, and crush you with that which comes to you from him and him alone. He cannot begin with the mundane. His opening lyric must be a lyric never before uttered; It must start with him, and it must be believed that only he was capable of making the invention. I and I alone—these are the words of the monomaniac artist—the Zarathrustrian ideal— but he shall not admit it is so. In dire shame, he becomes all of his paintings. He is all of his characters. She is all of

her ballet. She is the warmth of her violin. He is the voice of his piano; look there, see the street musician, hitting the pickle bucket for quarters? He too is the soul and life of his music. The inner voice wishes to be heard. It cannot bear to exist without somehow proclaiming itself above the mechanical din of machinery and the inexorable drone of engines. The music from the recorded jukebox belittles us all—someone else is more important; someone else's voice is being artificially reproduced above ours and we cannot bear to be snuffed out by its emotionless vibrations; it cannot be a substitute for a living performer. In response, we must, therefore, raise our voices; We must compete for the small portion of identity left to our own humble devices, knowing full well that the totality is unreachable and that even the most immediate recourse to song is meager real-estate—a little less than a mouse but somehow, noticeably more than nothing because we at least notice ourselves...

And why my friend, am I any different? What artist can be different? Convey more, and more secretly you have hidden your deepest longing and buried it in an imaginative substitute. Others may be fooled, but there has never been a work of art done for me that was not done by my own hands. Is there yet a piece of art done expressly for you that did not come from your own hands? Done exclusively for you? I tell you in earnest, it will never happen. Art is always the ego damnation of another; it cannot be yours alone, and you shall never possess it alone...unless...unless...perhaps...

Never-mind.

If I hate you enough, will you somehow come to love me? If I ridicule and despise all the uses of this world, can I somehow make it right? I am everywhere. I walk among you. I have moments when I could slit your throat in church. I could leave a stranger to die in the snow. I could smoke at my own mother's funeral. I kill for money. I make bombs to level hospitals and elementary schools. I am history and I am every man. I am every hatred, every prejudice and every conflict. In these, I outlive myself and I surpass myself, but presently, I am only one man and one passion. I sit alone and drunken. My eyelids are heavy. The soft touch of piano keys dance gracefully and I alone hear them. What if it's possible that I am the only man alive listening to this particular piece at this particular time? I do more than worship Chopin as I'm falling asleep—I possess his genius. I am these tones and I am these melodies. I am transported. I think back at all the

human efforts and complex destinies that had to be interwoven to grant me this one lucid moment. This is not simply music, this is a fate and a resolution of a man's fate. I am that resolution. It is I who love. Chopin does not exist. Therein lies the highest problem—he has ceased to exist. A well-disciplined artist is reproducing him and I am reproducing that counterfeit reproduction of a counterfeit. In truth, I have heard better renditions than this one. I have heard more heartfelt interpretations also. What is this one to me or I to it? This one exists. It plays right now, and it is I who hear it. I could have stayed downtown. I could have stood another hour in a smoky room full of people. I could have interacted. I could have made an impact on a living being and given them a like opportunity. I did not. I chose Chopin instead. If I had to choose between a counterfeit of Chopin and a living breathing person, I would always choose Chopin. If I were offered a chance to spend an hour with any living human being of my choosing from the 6 billion on the planet, I would still choose a recording of Chopin at this moment. I don't choose out of hatred. I don't choose out of disgust. I choose joyfully; I choose contentedly. Let all humanity die this day, and let me alone to live without companion, but give me instead, one authentic performance by the living Chopin and I shall count my life a blessing. If this is not love, then I know not love.

Can it be that there exists in this world a very different kind of misanthrope? A misanthrope who does not truly hate? A misanthrope who has such depths of tenderness and passion that he cannot allow even a fraction of what he sees played out before him? That he cannot bear what others are diverting themselves with and what other men have always called their joy? Perhaps all who meet him think him to be a psychopath incapable of feeling; incapable of compassion; incapable of anything human, while in truth, it is his sad fate that he finds no choice but to allow all things as they are and to declare that all is well even while his tender most dreams are being crucified. Most certainly, this man is never offended and cannot be angered or aggravated, but that is his torment, for he feels continuously offended and aggravated to the point of madness, yet he has no words of condemnation for those who transgress him or those who seek to transgress. He says that he would trade the world for Chopin, but in truth, he would rather Chopin never have lived at all—the very genius that gives him solace is the utmost expression of what he cannot allow to exist. Here is where the madness begins: he does nothing but play the same song over and over again. His greatest demon is his only

lover, his only God and his most loyal companion. He wants to somehow find the words to answer Chopin's music, but he does not yet understand it. If he had to call it something, he would say it resembles suffering, but if suffering, then why should it merit praise? If he tortures himself, then he must do so from some other cause. In his bitter contempt of Art, our misanthrope is not alone. His lunacy must somehow be a common lunacy. There was only one Chopin—why then are there ten million Chopin re-incarnations?

With all the lives to re-live and re-incarnate, why even bother with originality? Why bother with anything new if so many great lives have already been lived? If I cannot be Chopin, can I perhaps be someone else? Someone whom I love even more than Chopin? Why can't I choose to become the Christ? Do any Christs live in this wicked world? Is such a man even possible? In anguish, not only do I realize that there are no Christs; I also realize that I cannot become Christ. With Chopin, I at least have a recording of something real. With the bible, I am given only a fairytale. Sometime, at some point in history, I cannot doubt that a man was crucified, but is this truly a Christ? An idol to be worshiped above all Gods and men? The world scoffs. Men have been crucified and continue to be crucified in some way, shape or form—So What? This is how the world answers True Love; it says “So What?” How can I go on after this? What good is faith if not everyone believes it? Faith admits defeat before it begins. Faith is like the human preface to the gods that says “I could be wrong but...” and this ridiculous “IF” mocks me every second of every day. In the season of advent the preachers asks “Has he come? Has he risen?” and the mindless congregation answers “He is come! He is risen indeed!” and to me, these words are a knife in my heart. If he came, then I cannot condone his existence nor can I condone the God that condones him; Furthermore, like Chopin, I must choose him *instead of* mankind because I love that man more. My misanthropic paradox amounts to this: I do not want to serve Christ for the good of mankind; I want to forsake mankind in order to become a facsimile of Christ. I want to re-incarnate a powerless ideal of Christ in opposition; not as its advocate but as its secret enemy—more than that, I want this Misanthrope Christ to be without a God or hope of a God because it is my contention that this type of Christ would be better than the first one. In this life, my only wish is to improve upon the most perfect life ever lived. The confusion that arises is what then plagues me; would such a man be Good or Evil? What if we choose the ideal of Christ before we choose any other desire? Wouldn't this also be the height of human folly and

human misanthropy? Was not the first Christ somehow a misanthrope and a heretic? Why is God's infidelity before man accepted, but man's heresy before God the utmost perfection of Evil? If I say "I love you", who then should be the rightful receiver of such words? Can it be that some forms of love are also the greatest possible insult and perversion of cruelty? As a shepherd of wolves, I'm disgusted with my own flock; I'm disgusted that these various privations and contortions of love might also possess their own hint of honesty.

Day

He murdered his houseplant just now. Pulled the whole lot of it up by the stem, roots, dirt and all, and threw it into his snow covered yard. Now it will freeze and mock him all winter—he's hoping more snow will cover it, but it could be several days yet before that happens; you see, in the winter season, even decay is suspended.

So the houseplant is dead. It might have been easier if he had simply watered it. More heroic even, but such slayings are not uncommon; besides, the relationship was becoming dependant.

Perhaps the thriving healthiness of the plant disgusted him. It offered him nothing. Pets are worse though—people can claim personalities in pets and hold them and take pictures or make believe they are like people, except without the judging, fickleness of people. Pets are gruesome simplifications of a human desire that will not admit its relentless need for placation. Even killing a house-plant is this very same need, somewhat distorted...and all the more psychotic for its being done while listening to a "Dismember" album in a bath robe, alone in a cold basement, without even the pretext of humor. Wasn't Dionysus dismembered? We fail to remember exactly if it were him or someone else.

It comes to these moments sometimes, when one's sleep schedule is out of hand, when one hasn't eaten enough, or when one doesn't get enough contact with other people, or when we're forced to have too much contact with people we cannot derive satisfaction from—then we can only sit and mutely shiver at all the attitudes and possibilities of entertainment that seem nothing worth. Being in debt is bad too—not that spending is always out

of control, but rather, we never seem to catch up or earn at the same rate as our passing needs.

It comes to these moments, these frozen stares and house-plant evicting moments when our own rent is due, and we feel torn apart into remnants of an old self that joys in the world and a new self that has no capacity for life. Twelve more hours of sleep may be our only cure—that is, in addition to the six we already had.

Some girl is talking upstairs. Talking emphatically. Maybe upset, or elated, we cannot tell; only we hate talk. We hate to listen at other people's impressions; these words that come from their mouths, seem so empty, so foreign, so disturbingly *not our own*. Why do they talk so often, and incessantly? We would not mind so much, if, as preface, they shared our contempt and worship of absurdity, but they do not; they live under a different operant thesis—one of embrace and fallenness to the crowd and the public domain. We ourselves seem to utter each phrase, but tentatively, and with the predicate of our own dissatisfaction and awareness of futility; without those, everything seems to wax ignorant to us, all too morbidly optimistic, and coercively cruel to our being, wanting us to participate in a capacity which is mostly beyond us. That—and the fact we kill houseplants.

Day

The worst mistake a young poet can suffer is assuming others are like himself.

He sits curled up in a chair in his underwear, trembling, infuriated, distraught. Not disillusioned; enlightened. Compassion is borne of pain and for-knowledge of pain. What saddens him, is that he already possesses compassion. He needed no further lessons. The lesson of this particular day has been the sudden awareness of other men and their alibis for not showing compassion or feeling compassion or living compassionately.

The two-dimensional villain or protagonist of evil frustrates him exactly because he has never met such a man, such a perfect hatred, perfect egoism or simplicity of character. Evil has this obnoxious tendency toward self-effacement, always one step removed from the

activities of man, yet expressing itself indirectly, almost to the point of making the innocent feel guilty for defending their own best feelings—as if a balanced state of harmony were thwarted from all sides; the Evil, using the oppositions own arguments against itself like a kind of quantum physics that must pose absurd notions to explain the phenomenon of stability, it calls itself into question by merely trying to explain what it is doing just then—this was the paradox the poet faced, yet the worst of the pain was born of the fact that there was no singular guilty person to blame or atone or absolve the wrong he had witnessed that day. The degree of the offense was of no concern. The horror lay in the character of those around him, their inability to sense what, under different circumstances or during a different time period or under a different cultural zeitgeist, could have been a bloody brutality met with the same cold excuses and elusive vindications.

And then there are the precarious accidents of fate which make even the most purely disinterested parties add up to collaborate scoundrels. Human activities have a tendency to wind themselves up in their complexities until finally, a simple interference or omission results in a spiritual brutality. Some are harmless and immediately forgivable; others wound and fester and boil and sear and erode the minds of men, as if the smell of mass graves lingered in their suit coats.

Even to state as much as all this is to go too far for most minds to contemplate. The dull ones need demonstrations and pantomimes and further demonstrations touching upon themselves and their own private, groping covetousness.

Why trembling? Because he knows he cannot reach them. That He cannot fix the world. That dream, for all to be so simple minded and stupid and honest and harmless and empathetic as himself would be an absurdity. It is very difficult to teach men to become harmless idiots. It is even more improbable that you teach them to count all the insignificant details of life a perpetual blessing and awe inspiring burden—the type of burden we feel only at the pitch of some great musical passage or delicate poem with the fury of small observation, like “leaves of grass” or “rosy fingered” dawns.

The madness of his emotional exile is already waning as he begins to type, but he wishes it would not. He wishes that the confession would not spend his precious anger. This particular anger, borne of the instant, this was his illumination and it alone contains the basis of his

argument and his self-knowledge. Here is Sophia! He has seen her. She stood up before him, she ravished him, made him alive, gave ethics their foundation—only seconds ago—but now, he grows near sighted once more, as his blood cools to apathy, forgetful and spineless once more, how now can we call this man a hero, if he ceases to tremble and quiver with anticipation for Sophia? It seems that wisdom has spent herself without any regard for her own permanence. Now our once and sometimes poet seems to become something worse, a petty complainer and griper. An accountant of small disappointments, adding up the daily ledgers to weigh out the misfortunes around him, ever looking for some poor fool to blame—for it does indeed seem well and good to blame a man for a half wrong instead of letting the matter drop. The all-too-pure and simple man feels that to pursue anything at all touching upon disgrace or some other man's transgression is some form of transgression once more upon his own part, and so, where he would like to set down a limit or a lesson, he instead does exactly nothing and adds no further offense to the world. This seems a likely enough imitation of the Christ, does it not? A Zen dismissal? A cultivated indifference that absolves by not punishing; instead, insists upon moving to what is next, what is real and what is possible?

But what happens when some moment is so utterly untruthful, hateful, and intolerable that it causes even the most removed of characters to blurt out the offence instead of remaining in silent conspiracy against the poor, unknowing victim. What happens when the necessities of the Gods are over-ruled by mortal horror: By the *humanitas* of Virgil's Aeneas, by the indignation of Euripides' Agave, holding her son Pentheus' severed head and realizing it, or by Orestes' panic after dealing out matricide—these have no place in Christianity or Zen Buddhism. Here, these aforementioned tragedies are pacifism to the point of gravest error. Pacifism to the point of abominable taboo; To the point of enchanting, erotic indecency that arrests us all and makes us agree once more; the kind of devastation that begs new archetypes and new taboos. Erotic in the sense that they resemble an abyss for which there are no more words and no more logical sensibilities. Dadaism is not at all new to this world. The nameless is, in fact, very ancient.

Somehow, when an event occurs that shakes men to their foundations, nay, obliterates their foundations, one suddenly feels that all else in the world of art is self-serving and empty. When one feels the pangs of a transgression, a meaningless, thoughtless transgression,

vile to its core, one also feels more fully awake and more fully human. Not indefinitely, no; it is more of a passing gust of hot ash that chokes you up and burns at your eyes as you look at the fire from down wind at the wrong moment. You turn. You cough. Eyes water, but the first breath of fresh air makes it over and done. You feel you were accidentally in the wake of something monstrous and excuse it; but it lingers. You want to tell someone else, but you feel that you are somehow to blame. The ignorance of the others nearby this hot wind is seemingly unassailable. In trying to push them into the hot winds of fury and taboo, you feel you might just be pushing them into the fire itself. You cannot risk that. What you deeply fear is not your own distaste for smoke, but the flammability of the others; they are volatile in their unknowing—sopping and swimming in wet, caustic ignorance, ready to ignite. Beware pointing out a man's faults to his face. He will condemn you first and himself last. He will ignite.

And then, there is this unquestionably feminine way about the poet that does indeed carefully examine all sides and lay blame and feel the pangs of what the blameworthy have emotionally neglected. By the time he lays down his case, the case has been already tried, adjudicated and the sentence passed before he opens his womanly mouth. Any protest by us is tacitly an invitation to further ignorance, further violence, further cruelty. How is one to argue such things? If you feel them not, they exist not. Passion is all. Logic is easily mere rationalization and excuse. Excuse and defense and counter accusation—these are the tools of the condemned man. And it doesn't help that his logic, or proto-logic is a haphazard system of judgment with its own prejudices while the immediate empathic intuition is fleeting, unreasoned, but solid in its collective feeling, its over-arching will to benevolence. It lives and dies, nebulous, fathomless, unbound. I would dare say it is the formless and nameless virtue within the kingly character; Not the tyrant king, but the philosopher king; the womanly, wisdom loving essence of Sophia, the water-like virtue Tao, the drunken and urbane madness of Nietzsche or Bukowski or Rimbaud: where whores can be tutelary demons; rooming houses can be monastic cells; the Evil ones the purest and blessed of individual expression; the taste of death a perpetual renewal; and the disdain for convention the absolute expression of what convention wished it could attain to—confusing harmony, elaborate discord!

Day

I can feel the un-doing.

Day

I say next to nothing out loud, and the less I find myself speaking, the more the others question their own behaviors; the more they make exaggerated displays to gain my approval, the more they think I am judging them, the more they protest to me with long explanations that betray too much uncertainty. The less I speak, the more I am feared. So fearful are they, that they do not even censor my lack of speech. At times when it would seem appropriate for some grunt or passive assent, I give nothing. Even for so trivial a thing as an outburst of enjoyment of some food, I offer nothing. When I do speak, I speak naturally and to the point. I add or embellish very little with excess. I do not aim at control of anything, not even myself. Control involves too much forethought and forethought missteps by not being in tune with the moment. I long ago realized that making a moral assessment is and should be considered a drastic thing. Assenting to the other, without argument is much safer. When one is dull oneself and ones fellows are also dull, what danger is there? Sometimes, though I act dull, I feel deep within me, an entire discourse arise that would so shatter my fellow expounder of sophisms that I almost shake while containing myself. I mean not to boast. Write a few poems, and one begins to trust ones feelings. Write a few thousand pages of contemplative philosophy, and one begins to fear the boundlessness of feelings and keenly knows the pitfalls of words. Alone, removed and inert, philosophy is safer than fishing for trout; but out loud and in the wrong company such things beg disaster. In my silence, I feel the others sense this disaster, but they, being fools, rush into it instead of nullifying it—they try to talk it away, and in this, the uneasiness grows instead of wanes. I save them. I smile and nod. They feel saved. I have challenged enough simply in making them look at themselves. In offering my own contention, suddenly a new feeling arises in them and they alone are just; riding this wave, they turn towards me and demand my submission; they need to subvert me. On the other hand, in offering nothing, they fear only what I have not said or might say, that is to say, they turn backwards and argue against all their own truths privately in their own heads—such is the nature of men; they are most

critical of themselves when they alone are at the stake; Offer a scapegoat, and their own offenses are suddenly nowhere to be found.

Day

He keeps putting a water glass beside his feet and kicking it over by accident when he spins his swivel chair. How many times can you spill the same glass of water while writing about regret and amusing yourself at the fact that its more fun to recall errors than achievements. Evaporation is a miraculous thing. Do people evaporate? Is that why they get so wrinkled as they age? Events seem to evaporate both our integrity and our stamina; and in turn, the evaporation of these cause there to be no more need of firmness, no more need of vitality, no more need of discernment, if events should pass as water to air and resolution into mist.

If you drink the water in the glass at your feet, the water will pass through you. If you should accidentally spill the water, you'll still end up drinking it out of the air as you breathe it in...over time. It will conspire to enter into you either way. It will evade you and leave just the same. Kicking it over isn't exactly a nihilistic act, or even a destructive act—there are no nihilists—more accurately, the process does not depend on you and you are not free to evade it. Watch as some of them loath creativity, abhor art, and decry absurdity: they cannot refrain from communing with the rest in their antagonistic communications or mock frustrations or well sculpted angst. To us, it's all pop music anyway.

Day

Did Euripides ever wear an olive wreath as a crown for wining a tragic contest, as poet laureate, after his plays were written and performed?

What does a man feel when wearing such a heavy crown? Such a costly crown...

We're barred from the oak grove. Diana's sanctuary. Virbius—who use to be Hippolytus—finds new life in the grove of Aricia. Is he

the tree or the man guarding it? Day and night this man-priest, fugitive-creature paces with sword drawn, attentive and wary of being attacked...yet he does not seem to be guarding anything of great value or importance? And why does someone stronger and craftier seek to take his place? Priest of Nemi, cast off your laurel crown! Flee the oak grove, and the sun and all places where mortality seeks examples of endurance, and heroism. A circle of knives is diminishing around an olive wreath and a purple robe. New blood drips from new wounds. The kingship is transferred once more, and success becomes servitude.

My thirst is a never failing stream—for every drop of renewal and health that surges past me, I feel in myself, concretely, a sense of inner desolation, as if the image of streams and sylvan fertility were only a clever orchestration, fashioned to example what is missing within me; A steadfast example of what I cannot be.

Daily we look up and outward from this prison cell we've fashioned: A basement room, with a ground level window near the ceiling; light descending as if into a cave or rat hole. Remember the story of the bronze bull? A torture device shaped like a bull. The Contraption is heated from the bottom, its inventor was steamed alive, only to be let out at the most critical instant by the lunatic king. The inventor is granted the presentiment of mercy by his original patron, only to be led off a cliff and fall to his death. When this same evil king is finally overthrown, he too gets to experience the shrieking death torture of the 'Brazen Bull' he commissioned; so it goes. Kingship is transferred. Lured. Deferred. Assured. Conferred. Referred. Relatively absurd.

No horses are allowed in the Arician Grove. Hippolytus use to train and groom them famously, until they dragged him to his death for ignoring Phaedra.

Day

Just now, we read about a certain festival common throughout the world in various incarnations known as "Burying the Carnival". No reason to discuss it. It seems to mean exactly what we imagine it to mean: the end of some designated period of inhibition and excess. Dionysiac joys and revelry.

We also read about the young priest who must be slain while still in his prime, so that the new priest can maintain exactly this same ideal of energy and strength. This king/priest must observe two prohibitions: 1) his feet must never touch the ground (for that would profane him) 2) And he must not let the sun shine upon him. Somehow the potency of plant life around him is contingent and sympathetic to his own being. James Frazer states “as he was well or ill, the woods, the flowers, and the fields were believed to flourish or fade; and if he were to die of sickness or old age, the plant world, it was supposed, would simultaneously perish.”

In many parts of the world, adolescent females are kept out of sight or covered or prohibited from being in the sun or having their feet touch the ground. The taboo of covering is frighteningly common. The Greeks believe that Hades is dark and sunless. A cemetery, for the Greek imagination, is a lot of sunless houses. In one myth, the divine person is kept out of the sun; in another myth only the dead and outcast are barred from light. There must be some common bridge of irrationality that can resolve these seeming opposites: Some common intuition or concrete desire.

Day

Poetry is swifter than mortal minds. Alike, are they, to the dumb animals, trodding string weeded fields, grazing now here, now elsewheres, ever fenced in and kept cordoned distances, not even aware of the clang-rusted bell around their necks, dull-eyed and stupid, they cannot see where the clapper has nearly chipped through its housing like an aging soldier or veteran, persistently drunken in public places, persistently wearing (of course) the uniform of some by-gone conflict, never resolved, yet somehow, it (and he) have medals for self-less deeds and stupid courage (Or even mere participation, If participation be a thing noble of itself?) despite the conflicts having been left either to younger soldiers (new recruits?) or perhaps the war, left utterly abandoned without a victor or a vanquished (for partial faiths, half-hearted victories and inconsequential obscurities being a bane and dread curse to mankind ((poisonous and secretly possessing irreparable harm, akin to the destruction of life itself)) and, finally, coming through the tattered sleeves, torn pockets, un-winding lapel tassels and in all things un-becoming of an officer [(on even a whalers’ ship, mind you)]

along with dirty skin shown through the rent places, the old-hero-glint of some medal, some brass (of course brass) medal of bold assurances now undermined with time, it, like the clapper of our other brass bell, round the neck of some favorite bovine milk beast, trudging in muck, this clapper pokes a bit of cold metal through the instrument and touches even against the neck of the beast on a cold day, just as the veteran feels it, the brass medal, against his heart when the wind is southerly; and the music is, again, often more felt, than heard...

Barbed wires are, oddly, a mild comfort to the animal who has grown use to them and learned their harshness—their sting—but the human animal, this animal has not the homely comfort of fences that correct or coerce obedience. Nay, fences are prison walls to be overshot, vaulted over or in some way met, (in dreams or via satanic, over-reaching aspiration to some far hid, all-too-perfect paradise,) (God's holy spirit, being, as well as a joyous truth to the vulgar, a disincarnate plague upon the better part of mankind, a thing emanating a fiery shadow, a grave disdain, and a perennial pessimism, obscure in its doleful gravity; suffering inertia) with a will that springs of a love in human tones and colors, but, this same love, in striving too perfectly, kills all which might have redeemed it, and creates for itself its own burden, its own orbit, its own gravity, and its own recipe for total negation out of a passion which began only in the highest hopes and serenest faith.

The ears: our human ears, can sustain only so much audible tension. Beyond this, the hummingbird's wings and the dog whistles are the notes of a violin string snapping from an over tuned temper pin. In turn, these in-audible vibrations wave on and roll like the spokes of a wheel interlocking into a single regulating circle, a great emptiness, that would seem void of use, but suspends the inward and outward of things, unnoticed simply because of its manifest immediacy: beyond our grasp, it pervades.

Poetry is swifter than static things; words, as we see, are a great burden, despite their apparent meanings and half-pointing fingers towards a hollow breeze and a debt of moonlight; they seem finally to lead nowhere. Go nowhere. Come with us.

Day

By the walls painted white and the mortar between the blocks, basement thoughts speak and make no sense. Involuting metaphors drink up the ink of our proud, creative presentations. Some of us would hold to a line of thinking; an image of characters interacting; some menace to be overcome; some stupid experiment, like a call to look upon peacocks or fire damage or driftwood from nowhere tides washing up next to the astronomer on the beach, tuning his instruments to sight the moon and its gravity—its perennial orbit around the only home it knows or ever will know. Looking past what is written, hearing the tones of the words spoken aloud and liking them. Intensely liking them, in a different voice that is not familiar; an orators voice. Breathing in. Stopping between phrases. Taking his time. This feels good. So good to confront those silent bricks. He sweats and the bricks do not. He would have them sweat, but the weather is much too cold for that. Pound or rake or scrape yourself into the walls in front of you until the profound is effaced into wayward threads and the complex machinations of the entire cosmos seem no more magnificent than a prison cell with painted walls—painted with a stark, blinding whiteness that sinks and pulls you toward it, against it, stopping you and ending your search by its oblivious essence. Boundaries do not know they are boundaries. Our thousand pages of notes, and pre-writings and scribbling and journaling and stories, and histories and inventions have come to nothing. We have painfully taught ourselves the nature of obsolescence. Time does not heal so much as it makes relations void, circumstances dissolve and values into bewildered shames that cost us a great deal. What is worse than regret? Not knowing any regret: to set out from one's first step, hating the process of anxiety and willfulness itself. To live beyond cynicism. To first and foremost, hate the possibility of valuation and differentiation; To loathe the idea that the world begins to mean something and then something else and then to realize too late that one cannot evade this sort of maze, ever wandering and discovering and dreading and hating each turn of the tunnel. Surely some go to it with zeal at first or until very late, but what of those that stop and sit the very moment of their enlightenment, and never more take a step beyond themselves? Disgust dissolves. Hatred for the opposite sex, dissolves. Knowledge that hears and understands, needs not itself; it lets itself die away into quiescence. We do not bother to speak, once we have set ourselves down along side eternity, atop the nameless. We come back bewildered. Not ourselves. The world is not as it was, then again, more disturbingly, it once again

becomes as it was, and more hatefully so. The one taste, is once more many tastes of bitterness and sweetness and suffering and complexity and joy with an abiding confusion lurking a small bit behind the forgetfulness of the happy. When the hand hurts, and the waves of pain shoot the tunnels of the wrist, the musician no more can play his sonatas. The writer cannot write. The painter begins to see with eyes that look and see only out of the pains in his arm. Suddenly he understands something he never understood before.

When we cannot create, but yet breathe the breath of frenzy, this is a keen moment. If one would listen to the virtuoso playing what is nearly impossible, physically, while also having injured oneself playing those same passages from a recording, over and over, one hears the recording anew. The notes cry the intensity of exactly the moment of their creation and the voice of he who first sounded them. They synchronize with how they are and what they are. If they are a physical torture to perform, maybe they best resemble the physical torture the musician feels in playing them. The waves of feeling in the crippled wrist resonate internally with the pitches of he who heals and can once again play them. Held back, one was allowed to go forward, into the paradoxical realm of simplicity. We would make everything simple. We begin to hate our past words. Our past volumes. We want only the metaphor. The symbol. The pitch. The orator. The injury. The absurd, simple and stupid. Words that cannot be heard because they are passed over. Words that the world believes say nothing. Words not worth understanding or pondering because they are simply wrong. Wrong headed. Wrong sounding. Wrong pointing. Wrong feeling. Even, wrong shadowing, where one elsewhere expects the most definite of lights and clarities. We would all be cowards if we had enough courage to really do so. Idle, un-meddling, un-speaking, innocent cowards; austere as monks; without need of discipline or precept or social relation. What amazing strength a pious coward can display. What amazing truths one can so openly display when the world is incapable of observing! He can laugh at the world's fears and dreads and romances and feminine needs. He is so powerful in his cowardice that he upsets them and insults them and they would disdain to hear him above all other rogues and scoundrels. His quietude upsets and insults them. He does not need to form words beyond simplicity and gesture and abstinence, yet these are the worst pangs a moral, upright being can encounter or decode; demonic are the stares of the complacent who atone for the errors of the universe with an accepting smile. The smiling idiot knows that there are no celebrities without

celebration. Effort is work and pain and engagement and eventually, an urgency that checks itself and knows not why it has exhausted itself or what it has gained in doing so.

Others brag the intensity of creation and the transcending realm of art. We speak more severely. We speak of negation. Of destroying the world. Of re-encountering the world. Re-encountering old art, old memory, old love and old people. These things loose their vitality. Sham vitality. Trickery of mirrors. The negation is not so. The negation is pure. The destruction is real. Oblivion is real. The end is the vitality of all beginnings. If things can be destroyed, the destruction is holy—for destruction is the ambivalent process that upholds meaning. Destruction is the contrast and the focus of reality. Change keeps on proving itself until the world looses interest and wants only the fickle masks of the static things it might pass through. Monks live otherwise. See otherwise. Dull masses want to be cared about. To be loved. To see harmonies or relations come together in a specific way; hoping in, and through, the specifics; the details. If we love, if we monks feel a passion for life, we feel it so vaguely and diffusely stretched over all contingencies, that no one would dare call it love or allow it to resemble feelings they have known or would willingly accept. Dread oblivion surfacing as a shadow of secret, unconscious, new fledging horrors—agape at the world—this is the love of a monk, a poet or a madman.

The heavy coat becomes the skin forgotten underneath; friction disappears with use, and its best not to talk about sex or simplicity.

Day

Only the recorded days remain. Shall we number the ones in between, without narrative? What if everyone did that?

Consider all the diaries and non-diaries: Are the narrators despicably selfish, or are the silent ones, who never wrote anything, somehow, ungrateful? The task of genealogy would not be difficult if everyone were like us...but then again, such men as I are not the type

that give birth to children. Irony isn't it? That the utterly useless, mundane and forgotten members of a lineage will scrape together whatever outward facts and birth documents they can to trace their ancestors, only to discover they are related to no one of consequence, or if, by chance they are related to an important figure, ten generations ago, what good is that? Isn't that a form of impotent fame seeking in the most unlikely direction by the most pitiful means? Even if we peruse what little I *am* able to say and record and remember, isn't that an extraordinary achievement in itself, if by chance, my entire bloodline offered me exactly NO BOOKS, NO Diaries, No Paintings, NO symbolic relics, and no justification for life at all, save some weary attempts to hand me a bible, chronicling a race that is not at all my own? I would not trade a thousand years of genealogical data for even one page of my own scribbling. I am the meaning of history. I am the farthest outcome. I am every physical and psychical manifestation that has passed on to this point; I carry latent demons and recessive forms of any number of awful human disfigurements. I do not declare this as a solitary individual: Everyone should admit these two affirmations: The triumph of present life (the past being the price already paid) and the hereditary curse of all latent forms of life (Both genetic and psychological).

- 1) That which survives is Good.
- 2) That which returns is Evil.

Day

Almost Poetry—

The ignorance of children.

Young women modeling; bored of their beauty, sick of being admired, longing to be ignored.

An old woman.

The convict, the thief, the career criminal, embracing religion with new zeal.

The upright man, not needing it, and despising it because of the criminal only.

Poetry uttered in cynical colors, full of scorn and disappointment.

Poetry that knows the meaning of human anticipation and those all too private values.

The stupidity of happiness. The Immaturity of the unhappy. The mood of not having a preference for either state—in both errors or gifts.

The burden of not having pretence.

The cluttered ambiguity of the incompetent.

A waitress complaining, once more, of a supposed lost gratuity during an evenings work.

The man with a humble profession who follows custom and leaves a waitress money even though she makes more than he, and his income knows nothing of gratuity; nor does his life.

Not all those who have humble professions are capable of humility. Worse are those that seek humble professions for reason of “romantic humility”.

Maybe humility is nothing more than an aptitude for shame; a longing for disgrace.

A minister’s daughter, struggling with her father’s love.

If God was love, this would all be much simpler; but God more often resembles disappointed hope—and only that tenaciousness is worthy of being called love.

Alcestis is dead.

Alcestis lives once more
...after she died in her husband’s place.

Admetus, her husband, owes a debt all men owe.

Heracles is a Hero we expect to defeat death, yet even he cannot overturn the necessities of life and our acceptance of necessity.

Sometimes it happens that a drunken Satyr will mock mortal life; other times a Satyr will rescue it with a sympathetic heart. The Satyr does both with exceeding skillfulness; why should this be unacceptable to us?

A Nihilist's Nihilism. His tepid assertions. His contradictions. He has witnessed too much to have faith in anything static.

The wrath, the anger, the contempt, the frustration, the confusion of those he encounters; of those whom he casually confronts with the total collapse of what little faiths they are yet holding onto and are obtrusively presenting to him in their naivety.

It is important to be casual—but even a casual Nihilist is too threatening for most of us.

The affects of mental illness.

The creative accomplishments of Physiological mutation; of diversity and error.

The cult of diversity within the halls of academia at the outset of the 21st century.

The ignorance of Elitism beside an incapable world; a world full of diverse worlds; diverse levels of development; a world not worth fixing nor possessing even the possibility of such...

Bi-polar mood disorder.

Hemmingway. Shakespeare. Goethe.

Tension.

Reflux.

“Don’t take yourself too seriously.”

When none are serious, nothing is sacred.

Life is too serious. Life is not enough profaned against.

Even the Pedophile knows happy joys.

It is good to possess life. It is good to walk in the sunlight, even if one is constantly under attack, and failing.

Pessimism is beautiful.

Optimism is a very ugly thing, when it knows not what it is.

Very few are capable of Nietzsche's "Happy Science".

At a glance, Nietzsche himself was not a very capable man in most areas other than intellect...Solitary intellect.

Every moment of the day, there are those that are asleep.

Why do you ridicule us, we, the tired sages and drowsy poets, who speak incoherently? If you are so set against our sleepy visions, why don't you try sleeping more often yourself? Perhaps you are too much awake? Or not Enough tired of things?

Never argue.

Hold no ground.

The grounds are shifting.

There are no permanent sands.

Do not confront them, if you are leery of being confronted oneself.

Do not confront them, if you are exhausted of being confronted oneself.

Do nothing.

Do not tell them what to do.

If you speak generally, even this is too much;

Take it back and make all as if one had never yet spoken.

It's best not to commune at all;

If one must do so, let the others commune with only their own desires and apparitions of things.

Even this is too much: the others will always make up an attitude for you if you do not present them one; it is their anxiety which does so.

There is no wit in the world that can surf the tides of a stranger's anxiety and anticipate all the perversions of perception they will attribute to your being, even when you care for naught. The only sure way of escaping their incomplete assumptions is to fain total complacency and contented well-being. Let this task consume all of your efforts.

Effort will ruin this task also. If man is capable of demonstrating anything, that thing is error.

Perfection abhors demonstration: it does not exist until it comes into error; before then, it is not noticed at all.

A blank page is more perfect than an ink blotted one.

Equipment ready at hand is unnoticed until it is broken, missing or unfitted.

Who can count the many moods of resignation? There are too many to taste all at once.

Can it be that what a sage would counsel, he secretly despises most, above all things?

Be fearful of a sage who admonishes first and foremost, the ignorance of children.

Does he do so, because he is some kind of child lover, or does the world entire seem to resemble the incompetence of childhood?

What is it that the sage has discovered about the world-hood of the world?

Or in the Failures of Heidegger?

Sleep when you are tired, eat when you are hungry.
The rest is enkindled along the way.

Unexpectedly, enkindled.

Part IV
Health and Charm

Toward Fine Things Amble we with Timid Feet...

I.

Have you ever chatted with an actress on a sofa in a borrowed house? It's only a matter of course that she inevitably "surprises" you with her confessions of having studied abroad...as if there were more interesting places than borrowed living rooms...as if there were more interesting people than the genius sitting here, biding his time with open ears, digesting each of her insipid comments; He's glad she is only a borrowed friend. He's more interested in her companion whom he danced with earlier.

Unlike her, his comments are deliberately dull. Never challenge people unless you have a solid reason for doing so. That reason—your challenge that is—should have a dramatic arc, like a rainbow, a crescendo or a trail of smoke a jet leaves hanging in the air after a deft maneuver. The plane is elsewhere by the time the groundlings have read the phrases writ large in the sky above them; as if a god declared it...but alas, there are no gods.

He doesn't care if there are successful actresses. He doesn't care if there are actresses who sit on sofas beside strangers at parties who eventually make names for themselves. Inevitably it must have happened a few times that some of these perfectly pretty nobodies achieved their fantastical agendas. The sheer mathematics of it forces him to concede; that is, the sheer mathematics of his imaginings, which admit no limits apart from his exhaustion at days end, or in days beginning, when the hangover grapes of yesterday's saturnalia cause him to stare with dilated eyes at bright windows shining in with the reflected light of a snowy yard. Limp as flesh can be, here our imaginings also find their proper limits, for we have no thoughts, no goals, possessions or faiths whatsoever. The next morning, he too takes on the same flat, unsavory *insipidness* of an aspiring actress who pays the door fee just the same as you and I, to enter a borrowed house and dance with others who are also, just beginning and just learning. Apparently the studios and the lessons are not nearly enough. We must also congregate on weak days wherever we can find a bit of dancing space; a bit of polished floor and some stolen music. If it must be a parent's house, fine. If the parents give permission, then all the better; youth will find its way, because youth has the energy to overcome dark gazes and melancholy truths. Genius is not immune to hangovers, nor

are insipid girls altogether barred from success; we can always imagine otherwise...and perhaps she is just now hoping that we will, as we look past her to survey the décor of this borrowed room.

His dance partner returns through the passage that separates the dim room from the place where the couples are dancing. Here, the carpet and the quiet furniture make you feel sluggish in contrast to the wood floors and the energy of the music in the next room. She steals his drink and sips slyly as she attempts to bait him away from her friend and back onto the dance floor. Of course, she has to turn back toward him, stalling to make certain that he follows, or worse, that he even has the desire to follow. At present, he does not follow.

And somehow it's altogether more believable and seductive if he really does not have any interest in following just now. Amazing isn't it? That seduction should proceed from such horrific traits as boredom, leisure and apathy? That the very best things—the most real energies that inspire our lives—should arise from cruelty, pain and discomfort?

Of what substance are the effects of flattery, charm or pleasant gifts if a tincture of emptiness does not precede them? If I wanted to teach a rogue youth how he or she might beguile a multitude of millions or lay waste to a steady succession of carefully selected individuals I would only need to school her in a single over-arching truth: Life is not charming.

For all the pessimism and brutality my senses have sponged up, I have gathered into myself a storehouse of perfect treasures. I have only to set myself in the proper direction down one of my endless, lumberyard isles in search of that precise timbre which presently fits my need, and by way of such consultant magic as this world will never fully grasp, my occult spell transubstantiates iron into pure gold. Every cruel thing has a better purpose. Sometimes I feel as if I might reclaim the naiveté of a child or a religious poet when I meditate upon the hurtful weapons hanging in the armory of my mind's eye. Blood awakens us to sudden awe. So too do the arrows and lacerations of abrupt pessimism. Only pessimism deserves to be called beautiful. The noble truth of human existence is best exemplified by the close marriage of our finitude with our suffering: *Life is never quite charming enough!* With this statement, I suddenly lose all ability to discern opposites. I cannot rightly say which is which; what manner of being can be so

mystical as to blend perfect optimism with perfect pessimism? Surely it would take a very unimaginative nay-sayer to shout,

“Here, stop! Still. Delay! The world cannot take even one more iota of charm!”

Always there are deeper regions and higher highs. Truly, the ideal height of optimism begins to look like a derangement and decadence of what it wished to be; to an almost unsettling degree in fact. To state: “This is the best of all possible worlds” is either a monotonous spiritual faith or it is a sudden bout of drunken enthusiasm we eventually come to regret.

Conversely, there is a wonderful sign of health in the being that can praise what is, and then also, demand ever larger and more frequent quantities of those same pleasures. Those who invent arbitrary stopping points must be those whose fear and petty greed have overtaken them; Those whose hands have folded in a refusal to raise the stakes; whose hands have folded in praising god instead of creativity. None shall entirely evade this temptation—the most cowardly of all seductions—the seduction of complacency is ever near us, lurking, waiting, drawing closer; our shadow side! Those who stop short of the actual optimum only succeed in slandering the optimum of those whose will it is to surpass them; and why shouldn’t they discourage others from climbing higher? It wounds their vanity to have others outdo them. Cowards are quick to devise excuses for not demanding more, and if life is but the incarnation of finitude straining against endless possibility, then optimism must suddenly take on a sardonic demeanor whose only function is to apply the brakes of jealousy in hopes of thwarting human potential. Optimism must either be a conclusion to human willing or an invitation to advance it. I prefer to see it as the latter. Let us give a name to each of these strains of optimism. The first strain—the decadent and religious one—we must call a “*halting optimism*” and the other, the one that begs more life with an affirmation of life, this must be none other than our “*advancing optimism*”. Observe! As our lives are drained away, year by year, slow ebbing second upon second, it must become our duty to declare and demand an “*advancing optimism*”. Factually, we are diminishing. Attitudinally, we must combat that truth with a direct warfare; a watchful vigilance; A continuous tension of opposites. By some accident the bottle is chipped and slowly spilling out. We are no longer at our leisure to sip it, lest we should lose the greater portion out the

leaking crevice. Imperiled, we must pass it back and forth—never mind the frantic display—the contents must be gotten down. Our last wages depend on that. Sincerely, our moods depend on that intoxication only; And the question of the static half glass? Nonsense! Meditate for a moment instead on the full bottle, leaking from the bottom.

Altruistically, and with piety, the priest at the funeral says, “Dear brethren, dear folk, dear mothers, dear daughters, our lives are short.” In foil to this, the town drunkard, taking the short road through the church yard over hears the priest and grins at the somber congregation as he says to himself, with perfect clarity and sunshine: “*My life is short.*”

Pessimistically—Life is never charming enough! But so also, optimistically—Life is never quite charming enough! Optimism is not a doctrine of quietism. Without our above clarification, between the two strains of optimism, we are left confusedly groping at the mandates of an opaque optimism—exactly impervious to radiant energy—which sheepishly hides the negativity of “the second helping, the new dawn, the greater conquest”—and this muddled strain has no recommendation for what is to be done with our self-surpassing urges. Opaque optimism, once examined by its intentions, as well as its moods, betrays the stagnant side of the same coin pessimism re-awakens. To look on the bright side is, very simply, to want more sunny days and more happy thoughts. It would be a very inhuman optimism that counseled otherwise.

For those who would walk farthest into the depths of shadowed valleys, there are torches. Pure energy. Pure will. Un-harnessed, the flame is perfectly amoral. A dangerous tool indeed, but what tools are there that do not possess some sharp edge or blunt weight? And what could be more harmless and calm than a wall of organized tools hanging from peg-board? We so often underestimate the true neutrality of our world apart from human designs. Severed fingers and ladder accidents are not in the least bit tragic or malevolent. Those who happen to suffer them prove so by their shame afterwards. “I was careless,” says the unhappy carpenter.

Meanwhile, his tools are still precious and useful; how could anyone blame them? Or moralize against them? A hammer has no static identity apart from its function. A flame has no forethought or

after thought at the decimation others are forced to witness. As a parent, we might forbid our children from pointed sticks or throwing rocks, but even as children we seem already to harness some of the splendor of craftsmanship. We are not content with the way things are. We must forge anew. We must reclaim our flooded lands. Let dust and wood-scrap fill the frenzied air of our creations! Touch the smooth surfaces of a well-sanded object—I think perhaps the masses are too visual for their own good. We do not touch things with as much pleasure as we ought to. We may well laugh at the ecstasy trips of certain individuals as they caress furniture as if discovering a new outlet for love-making, but I fear they are close to something very splendid that sobriety has not the courage for.

When I stated: "*Life is not charming*" I meant no heresy against life or art. Given the right frame, any portrait can assume a pose or semblance that begs an intuition of finality. We would be far wrong to say that we are never charmed or misled. Often we are so; of importance here is the very subtle distinction a great majority of people seem incapable of grasping. For most of the human world, there exists nothing *but* charm, splendor and fluctuating magnetism toward this or that impossible horizon. If I were to mesmerize a troupe of disciples I would first set out to un-seduce them; to tear them away from the veil of Maya that keeps them willing and wanting and desiring what they have not got. Is there charm in this? Is this too, this dread thesis of Brahm-maniac negation yet another web of confusion? If we are already slaves to our wills and to our wants, we must positively recoil at the sight and spectacle of certain religious zealots fasting, lying on nails or walking on hot coal in the name of Nirvana, redemption, or self-mortification.

In truth, the violent acts of a devotee only betray their same clinging attachment, now to this form, now to that one. One needs the ordeal so long as one is still pining or fearing or brooding over those few remaining enticements of a world they have not yet fully negated. If I had a religious aspiration I would deem it proper to stop at contentment...spiritual, bodily, morally—take your pick, but contentment is a stopping place and any of these should suffice so long as you are fully convinced of them. Now, on the other hand, if I wanted nothing at all to do with contentment, I would tease my disciples with the idea of "*becoming*", yes, tease and frustrate them with the prospect of continual development. One step better than this might simply eliminate the idea of a "*final archetype*" or "*being*".

Instead, we might fully indoctrinate the process of energy expending itself until it is used up and gone; or until it reposes and regenerates. We might, in this case, fully absolve our followers of conscience altogether, to the extent that self-examination might be a dangerous hindrance and roadblock to a completely expressed will-to-power.

Curtail your excitement; maintain your conscience for a moment longer before you begin charging over the precipice with a flag or a flowered tiara. There is something too German in this direction as well; something bred into a culture starved for spontaneity, pent up and surging at its already creaking, knotted rigging equipment like a ship hard pressed—it speeds toward goals because of the way it is constituted in such storms—entirely mindless, the bark simply moves on the surface and its destination is not, like the arrow, a target, but instead a thing which it crashes against for no reason...simply because it is too German to do otherwise. Farewell Nietzsche. I would rather have a dozen Solomes and a train of despondent suicides in her wake than to pen another Zarathustra. Solome is the weakest link in Nietzschean ethics; Bravo Herr Nietzsche, for having never mentioned her! I don't want my Ubermensch to die broken hearted and aching for some coquettish siren; like steroid swelled bodies, useless for the simplest of tasks, too much brain is not less awkward when tactile senses make subtle demands in moments of privacy; often, a light touch is required.

Getting back to our man at present—in the borrowed house—he is in search of something viable, and this of course, causes him to alternate. Few see the world through the green hued jade that colors his vision. Better not to try. (Long ago it was painfully learned that excessive force is a sign of impotence and failure.) Its better for him that the world should have so many charming people in it, and that so many of the un-charming ones are fatted on nothing substantial or lasting. In being a loner, one develops a great many terrible, un-seductive habits and mannerisms. Weariness and satiety are his enemies. Without the continual draw into the fold of dramas and peril, he awakes to the distance between himself and the common circles. Derailed and disconnected from all possible moral purposes, there is an unspoken air of disappointed idealism that waxes romantic in his breast; even where he tries his best to root it out, he cannot abolish it. This unconscious weakness will always remain in nihilistic men who have read too much. To a certain extent, he has actually effected a reversal within himself: he wants to be disappointed. He wants to be

held masochistically responsible for having shattered the romantic ideals he secretly still loves. If he can be made to suffer them, they become momentarily real—not intellectually—but physically. This manner of pain is wholly irrational and we do not expect it to make much sense here, or elsewhere.

We do not sketch such a man because we wish to make copies of such beings; we only bring him into view to expose the “what” and the “wherefore” of volitional seducers—the rare types that more than mimic the artifacts of human despair and futility; they create them on purpose. In early youth, they do so out of spite perhaps, or out of anger, or excessiveness of will thwarted from its ideals, but as these same types mature, they begin to harness the potency of their impotent habits. The youth says to himself, “I have not loved enough!” and he languishes, or naps or brashly seeks after one whom he hopes will love him even though he offers nothing; has no excellence or social proof.

On the contrary, the mature man realizes—as if touching a bolt in Zeus’ quiver—that perhaps, “No one has loved as much as they should have liked.” And this notion, which deactivates the egotism of experience and postulates pain into the sphere of other beings, might actually be called empathy if not for the pragmatic uses he imagines for it. Where is there to be found a being who more intimately knows the sorrows and disappointments of the world than one who seemingly fails at everything, who has perfectionism always in mind but who never brings any works to fruition? One who sincerely sympathizes excessively on our human failings must eventually ask oneself, for what shall I use this maudlin library of tears that have so swollen my eyes and driven me from sadness to drunken laughter?

And if he should be honest with himself, why should he feel the slightest agitation or perplexity over history or the fickle machinations of religious doctrine? Why should he waste his most creative years railing against Christianity, or delving into Christianities most obscure psychological ironies? A better type of humanity has already existed and still does exist. (Even Dostoyevsky mentions, in passing, if you want a great lie told or some exaggerated truth put forth, a divinity student will pull it off far better than an anarchist or a revolutionary.)

We need not invent a higher type of being; Let us look instead for a young being, empty of prejudice and free from habits! We need only to give her a little push and she will quickly realize how to take the

proper liberties with the new types of men she encounters and destroys. Give a twenty-one year old girl the long distilled elixir of an old philosophy professor and she will have instantly a better potion with a few ingredients of her own; the pure energy of her youth will have a faster, more thorough-going nihilism than the old man deems appetizing, and she will run circles around him because her age is better suited for such things.

For the first time in his life, our man—let us call him simply the nihilist henceforth—is having the intuition that he might actually out-grow every possible use for this world. When he was a lad of twenty, a streak of depression made him echo the moaning sighs of Hamlet, but later he came to see these extreme moods as merely the stages of his brain getting past certain psychological sticking points as it attempted to make sense of the world; but now, a decade later, with the flights of suicidal rage having long since past, he began to have trouble imagining any sort of purpose for a being who has the psychological ability to “see around corners” so to speak. As he quickly approached his thirtieth year, he marveled at how few he earnestly looked up to, and how even fewer of those were ever to be met in person; mostly they were befriended from histories, novels or plays. When he met old men, in their declining years, none of them ever had the charisma of old Goethe or Whitman. The more sage-like the common geriatrics acted, the sillier their assertions seemed because they so often had the banality of a teenage girl. Even his own father had been declining intellectually for the better part of a decade and he feared this might soon be his fate as well. How rare a man indeed, is Proust or Rousseau! To reach the end of life and then look back with a penetrating eye of discernment! How splendid that would be; and also how uncommon. For most, the summit might actually be at forty, with the remaining years being at best an ignoble decline into senility, childishness and social obsolescence. Or worse—religious piety!

Earlier this evening he encountered girls of eighteen, twenty and twenty-two. They seemed very different from the girls of that age when he had been younger. The difference did not lie in social mores or change of custom; the difference was entirely born out of his experience; as never before, he sensed he could “read” them. Often we imagine our own powers in exaggerated terms in hindsight, but even in allowing for the most grotesque exaggerations, there seemed such a wide gulf separating himself from a girl of twenty that, aside from her fresh skin, she may as well have been a doll or some developmentally

impaired mockery of a human being; all surface and no depth—not that he would ever admit to wanting or being attracted to any type of depth—all the same, it shocked him to such a degree that he felt as if he were only now just meeting the inhabitants of a strange new world. And what if his powers should increase? What sort of monstrosity would a girl of twenty be to a man of forty? As for young boys, he had more pity. With them he at least could better imagine himself at such an such a developmental stage, but it seemed a very rare occasion that he should ever chance to meet with a likeness of his own twenty year old self.

There is a Chinese saying that sums up the three vices of a man's life. For lack of memory, I have to paraphrase it up as follows: young men should beware of fighting, middle aged men should beware of power and old men should beware of young girls. Until now, power never seemed to be of any interest. So many that are powerful seem only to have crowds of useless mediocrity following them; what good is there in that? Then it struck me. Power is the refuge of the over-comers of life. When every task becomes easy, mastered or out-worn, the pure essence of conquest is the only remaining frontier. Lust for power is a sign of decadence. It is a sign that man has not satisfied himself with individual virtuosity—as one masters an instrument, a craft or a field of study.

In mid-life, a man must now become the legislator, the executor, or the field marshal of some discipline; his virtuosity must conduct the virtuosity of others, without his participation anywhere within the actual arena of the craft proper. Imagine the distance between the record executive who lurks behind the scenes and the hordes of teenagers buying pop records—this is the proper use of maturity and power; the total divorce from the surface utility of a product in favor of he who simply instigates the seduction, down to the very last detail, and pragmatically speaking, has no use whatsoever for what he produces. Is it any wonder that those in power have such disdain for those beneath them? No one who produces the “record of the year” really believes that they have crafted the best record of the year, do they? Alas...human vanity might go so far, but as true power is concerned, even vanity is an idol to be vanquished on the road to pure attainment, pure conquest, pure detachment.

For some reason, it suddenly occurs to our nihilist that dancing might actually be a form of detachment, just as pure and powerful as

any conquest. To pick any partner, to lead her, spin her and then leave her panting in a sweat as you effortlessly stroll up to your next victim; better still, to begin a second dance while the first is still musing and gazing with an attitude of affection or gratitude...but then again, what nihilists are there that ever learn to dance well?

The nihilist we have in mind is only here by proxy; his roommate is an amateur dance student. Swing dancing, specifically. Recently however, the clique has progressed on to the more risqué, blues dancing, and these house parties are really the “renegade” off-shoots of a well established, and perhaps sometimes prudish circle of swing dancers. Little or no alcohol makes its way into these parties. Maybe a bottle or two of terrible wine brought by and shared between a few older women, or some carefully concealed beers, smuggled in through a backpack make their way past the front door—as is the case with our nihilist. Surprisingly, it seems as if everyone but our nihilist is here to dance and become better at—gasp!—dancing.

Something is backwards here. Something here is pre-maturely de-sexualized. This is not a room full of rakish men competing or making conquests in the form of dance; nor is it a room full of women vying for an ever better partner or lead. These dullards actually like to dance! No harm in that, but something courtly and regal is missing. Something dangerous is missing. For some inexplicable reason there are no stakes being wagered here. As the nihilist looks closer at the decorations and poems on the wall he sees the explanation. An insidious Christianity is at work. The dancing—stripped of its true purpose of bringing the sexes together—has been made into a safe and whimsical routine; a mere physical exercise. Sure, a latent drive lies hidden of course, that’s only too obvious in each of the swaying, sexless couples, but try for a moment, to see through the nihilist’s jade and shudder with him at the uncanny spiritual mutilation he witnesses as he stands at the threshold of the room, looking for the girl who stole his drink. Now he’s faced with a more personal dilemma: the girl who responded to him seems to be the only girl here who has smuggled into the party a normal sense of sexual decency...decency in that she participates in it, that is. By contrast, the Nihilist is suddenly dizzied by the thought of corrupting or “indoctrinating” any number of these other, seemingly un-sexed creatures, who have no real clue as to what real dancing might lead to.

It amuses the Nihilist that his roommate is actually a very proficient dancer, often complimented, but whose actual delivery suffers from his own sexless gymnastic tendencies that utterly lack attitude and danger. In conversation he is even worse. He is a complete buffoon. There are no mysteries to him. Each of his words march monotone with efficiency, never betraying the slightest drama or emotional upheaval. True, a practiced rake can incorporate the same demeanor, but the difference with the rake is that the rake uses stoicism to increase the tension of what he insinuates beneath his words; he lets his complex glances reveal there is much more at work here than social decorum. A rake's victim is made aware that he is withholding his depth, not emptying it. What moral transgress can there be in that? We are completely free *not* to want him or desire him, aren't we? Why should minimalism be construed as treachery? His longings, hopes and insecurities must be kept safely somewhere, right? What is it about him that begs us to look for them, even though we have more than we want of our own? Why must he be so conspicuous in hiding them; its positively infuriating that he should be so gallant; that each of our innocent curiosities be thrown back at us as if we were guilty of some taboo desire each time; that we should suddenly want so much of what he does not offer while he simultaneously rejects each little invitation we offer him, to the point that we become bolder and more daring with each leap, until we know not where we have landed...

II.

Life is lived consecutively, but remembered chaotically; Intensity must ever be the activity paste that glues things in place with the artfulness of a toddler. When I recall the glinting steel hoops of a tomtom under a bluish light I remember the shiver that shook me when the final trumpet note began to decay and the bass continued to pulse and slide. From blue to red the fading lights exchanged dominance—here is where I look out through the large glass street-side café window while I'm struck by the awesome absurdity of city signs and passing traffic. A total void-like rift opens up between two worlds and then it passes away; recedes into shoestrings, discarded napkins, kitchen lights and menu choices written in chalk—these somehow overwhelm the improvisation of instruments and leave them impotent against the factuality of the spectator's other ills.

Jazz almost comforts me in the moment it becomes painful; only in this same double-edged moment do I see past all pathetic images of

hope and embrace the chance of dust pretending to some carnival colors, spilling forth out of this drunken cosmos.

I think of her. I remember her at times when the sky is too large and the roads are too long to squint beyond. Coupled with this brief image of a lady I once knew, I remember a monastery path; I remember a time of happiness during an evening vigil. Happy with the deceptive completeness of chant choirs; notes so diligent, so pious they resembled to me, the austerity of sticks and roots spreading over a footpath. More specifically, the path leading to a monastery statue at the end of a wooded, weeded trail; a place I've often lingered upon in my sleep years later. When I think of it—the monastery statue in the clearing—I remember how the stone arms lifted upwards in a grotesque way; grotesque only because they could not ascend; could only give a mocking illusion of movement—and imagine how unnatural and discomfiting to my touch was the dissimulation of clothe, smoothly hacked into the stone figure. The petrified image of love; or acts of love—already these are too much on the side of defeat and failure.

Many can fall in love, (lets respect anonymity and be purposefully vague here) but I know none that have fallen so far out of it as her. Yet there is a mockery in this too: She rants about marrying her rich friend. The one who has liked her for many years; the one who has slowly worn down her weak spirit with gifts and privileges and dreams of lassitude, drug smoking and exemption from responsibility...yet she still calls me at 5am to tell me she still hates me; whatever I am, maybe I am worth hating. Whatever my words, maybe there are insinuations behind them—if only she had carried water in a basin on her head, or dug carrots or borne children, she would not so easily betray herself with double-ness; Perhaps if she were more contented with chant choirs and superstitions she might have learned something about faithfulness.

I remember collapsing in the long grass when leaving the statue. I remember crying for a long time in that spot, while my friend Bob—a widower of 60, and an aspiring pledge to the monastery—stood behind me blinking in the sunlight with a stupid face.

“It’s a fine statue.” He mumbled eventually, as he waited.

I envy Bob. His type is better fitted for this world. Never judge the character of a man by the amount of words he renders up for you. Words are a goiter of malignancy. As are tears—the vile menstruation

of self-pity; a sloughing off of excess at the end of a cycle, cured regularly and predictably until the place of tears and fertility are at an end; as when the bread is at an end.

If you would better understand our Nihilist, imagine a being who is nearly without tangible, meaningful responsibilities. The world seemingly has no use or concern with him. When he leaves a job he is replaced. His abrupt, un-meditated departure causes a bit of a nuisance, but little more. Work is shifted to the shoulders of those who remain and they grumble until someone new begins training, and they begin grumbling about the trainee instead; quickly forgetting the one who left. This repeats over and over in all professions that are easy and disposable.

Now at the age where ideals are impossible, our Nihilist feels himself floating in a sea of phenomena which battle to keep his focus—in the goldfish bowl of his existence there are many colored pebbles, but none seem to ever arise victorious over the others, such that the tension is continuously drawn in a myriad of diffuse directions; no singular moment seems to be of any lasting strength; the pain of too much focus—to the point that it outlasts the climax of every phenomenon in a state of numb indifference; he feels the wave of intensity but is never lured to the somnambulism of contentment. As it is, he often completes great tasks with total joylessness.

Beware going too far past ones energies—physical exhaustion is a precursor to worse psychological ills; disturbed perceptions are not far behind a missed meal or a sleepless night. Realize when fatigue causes uncanny behavior. Withhold moral judgments of yourself when lack of nutrition may likely be the vital cause of some folly, some omission, or some new agenda.

Realize also, that too much health, rest or lack of sexual release may shift the balance in favor of the other direction; we find ourselves over extended maybe, or in some idiotic situation born of enthusiasm.

To allow limits; to admit defeats; to permit retreat; to be fair to ones health even when it remains possible to keep straining and pressing in hopes of a continued increase.

Remember too, the halting potency of second experiences. The re-evaluated impression of a second visit, a third crime or a fifth house

pet; when newness is gone and limitations come to light it is as if our abilities are seen from the point of view of a spectator who is not captivated or stunned—anyone could have done this, says the ringside goof, with a handful of peanuts, sitting in the same spot for the third straight evening—for some reason, we associate three crimes to be a tipping point no different than three circus attendances...just enough exposure to shrink the mystery of stilt legs and blunt force trauma.

Do not think for an instant that the act of writing about seduction—or amorous endeavors—insures us, or the main character, any success. There are plenty that acknowledge fine things without ever attaining them; this kind of writing—these sorts of complaints—are ultra prevalent. Without taking on any verbal or typed reality, these sorts of impressions resound in the unfilled spaces of our lives, (I'm always suspicious of those who talk often of travel or have plans to move far away—yet for how many months do they idly talk and wheeze about actions that are never taken) as if they were to say to us,

“I am not tied here. I want you to know that; I am different. Soon, I will be away; my toes have almost stirred the waters of the Pacific coast...as I wait.”

Don't make the mistake of lumping these types with the unimaginative do-nothings of the world; often the travelers really do travel; often they are both ambitious and active...but this is just my point. The unfilled spaces cry out to be filled. Activity silences conscience; it does not absolve or nullify it. To me, the travelers are a congregation of unhappy birds; a cool wind gets their suspicions ruffled and they get to moving on in a southerly direction.

Let us state a second time: The subject matter is no guarantee of success. It is possible this notebook will never get typed out, or that its characters will overestimate their skills, their knowledge or their charm and fail utterly. It is also possible, that despite great efforts and well-timed speeches by our Nihilist, that one of our dull female characters—with the look of bovine incredulity—may happen to say exactly what is needed to derail our elaborate romance simply because she prudently wishes to keep things in her arena instead of ours; because she happens to prefer hotel wading pools to Olympic diving platforms.

There is a great burden placed on the man or woman who would attempt to make the world more charming. All odds are against us.

There is simply too much ugly furniture to begin redecorating. Putting white sheets over the torn upholstery will not do either. Too often there is no respect for reality. As we saw earlier, in the quoted passages of “Can I kiss you”, (This section has been omitted. One of the dancers loaned us her copy of an anti-rape Christian propaganda book demanding logical, concise demonstrations of consent at every stage of dating, including a verbal interrogation before each kiss...) a determined soul forces the conclusion into a preface and never respects us enough to put forth a reasonable argument. The stray threads that make up the complex entanglement of human drama are replaced with a skinny outline of half-truths. So long as we can exploit a certain emotion intensely—in the aforementioned case, the fear of rape—we indoctrinate a willing audience in the ways and means of a new creed. Fear need not be the only tool; the human heart has many levers; each one seemingly more pliable than the last; a mechanism of difference is at work here. For each argument or phenomena, a transposition of time and context “differs” its final meaning indefinitely. Derrida aptly describes this constant upheaval and continuation via deconstructive meta-narratives vying for final justice. Each new idea or voice is but a splinter; a little flake of destiny that says, “Not yet!”

Whenever I convince someone of something, I fear they have failed to listen; benign inexperience never fails to agree, and for that reason, you feel ashamed for having before believed in yourself; What can be more horrifying to the existential than engaging in a lengthy and polite dialogue with a pupil half your age? All the worse if the pupil hangs on your every word; perchance, carrying it forward, from this moment onwards! What a colossal mire of shame wells up inside you as the youth is worked up to the point of admiration! Secretly, we hate a part of ourselves and despite our best advice, we fear we are on our way to creating tiny monsters that bare a resemblance to ourselves.

“When the vile man learns his usual woman has just born a child, he rushes into the bedchamber with a candle, hoping the babe will look like its mother.”

How many unwed father’s there must be, that think to themselves: “Why did *I* have a kid? I hate myself. This child is going to be everything I hate...and half whore.”

III.

Books (or books within books!) about seduction should not have happy endings. The day after tomorrow is a horrid day of awakening. The day after tomorrow outstrips our “always” and our “fondly ever afters”. The strength and the weakness of a seducer have a singular root—aloof from the world’s charm they win the distance necessary to manipulate it; alas what a Herculean burden to maintain such a bliss for the sake of the beloved if one is not regenerated somehow by the beloved’s reaction to these carefully painted details! Quite simply, one must allow oneself to become a victim at some point, or the entire endeavor will sink. Do not cringe at the word victim. There are no better terms for exploitation; no better images than a snare hanging us by our ankles; left reaching for that emotional prize. (The hanging man is a seducer: the image of the victim we are about to become.) It is crueler to live as a seducer than to be a victim of one on occasion now and then. Crueler still to be an excellent, well-practiced seducer—this brand of misery has no limits! For this type of being, the world yields all its privileges, yet each time you draw near to one, it mocks you by changing; inanimate, with vacancy beneath. Midas cannot eat the golden apples, nor can he caress his daughter without losing her to his own special vice—love of gold. But here, for the seducer, the image of gold becomes more truly what it is: a glittering charm that only possesses a relative value: a positional economic good: Whatever he touches is already useless, even while it is envied.

The expediency of seducing a great number of individuals is lost as soon as you take into account how little you are capable of loving or respecting anyone at all. The seducer sets to work as if the stage of life were an experimental theatre—it would seem that he alone may wear masks; the rest are doomed to remain as they are. Just as any actor, he plays at many parts and believes none of them. As his force of will is intellectualized it shakes itself free of its physiology, its spirituality, its hope and its ignorance. For the Buddha this is the progress toward the “right view”. Previous motives and self-images drop away. Whatever adapts to the moment—this is spared! Assertions of causality are abandoned. Ego dissolves into the multiplicity of change. Dependant co-arising—nothing in singularity!—this replaces the old magnetic north of static concepts. Whatever has intensity, strong force: This is what creates reality.

“The degree to which we feel life and power (logic and coherence of experience) gives us our measure of our ‘being’, our ‘reality’, not appearance...”

“ The [human] subject is a fiction that many similar states in us are the effect of one substratum: but it is we who first created the ‘similarity’ of these states; our adjusting them and making them similar is in fact not their similarity. (—which ought rather to be denied—)”

-Nietzsche, Will to Power #485

Seduction can make use of Nietzsche’s conception of the subject by reconfiguring the unity of elements contained in that subject—be it a person, a narration or an image on a canvas—By shifting the force of certain drives and longings yet un-tapped; by making identity pliable; by editing the sub-strata of psychical states to the point in which their direction and goal of self is entirely given from without: this is seduction.

There are no truths imbedded magically in granite rocks or layered under the sediment of old ruins. Everything must be seen in terms of vitality and force. To imagine truth as some sparkling, transparent quartz in a mineshaft is a metaphor to be discarded; such trinkets only appeal to the shiny mediocrity who search constantly for glittering treasures, new distractions and otherworldly charms. All they demand from us is that we give them an image they are already seeking. Stern or self-righteous disagreement with the psychology of the seducer is tantamount to putting oneself at odds with not only the process of art, but the entire history of humanity *en mass*; we may be permitted to refute or despise the motives or the behaviors of a seducer, but we cannot, in good conscience dismiss his insight. As painful as it is to admit our own unique forms of psychological weakness, our refusal to acknowledge them will not save us or lead us past them. Failing to integrate the role of the villain within ourselves only solidifies our habitual faults and makes us more easily seduced. No one bothers to argue *against* Buddhism. They either ignore it, or simply decide not to practice its tenants.

The aspiring Buddha must lose the world in order to free himself of its trials, but what can follow, on say, the day after tomorrow when

one of these goodly beings rubs the sleep from his eyes? Noble as they are, this nobility has a price; for their kind, there remain only chants and breathing exercises until their final incarnation is extinguished; Is there not also a temptation to return from these mountainside retreats to exert a new form of energy? A time now for detached conquest, for poetry writing, or for martyrdom—perhaps to die imagining a kingdom of heaven as the ecstasy of nails bind you to your chosen cross?

With my poor and morbid imagination, I assume all fine seducers to be Christ-like and in some way martyred—perhaps even holding back an atheistic dream of love their disciples would never comprehend. In my mind, these over-comers of life, who do not return, example the Epicurean image of a tall tower in a desolate landscape; a safe citadel for living on and doing nothing; to surpass the age of one hundred on a steady diet of bread and cheese, not unlike Epicure himself. Or like the exhausted Phyrro, who lived lowly with his sister—a midwife—despising the advent of Greek dialectics, hating the pretense of wisdom. He too possessed all the psychological aptitude for becoming a fine seducer, but to what purpose? Phyrro could have destroyed the cult of Socrates, but instead, he wrinkled his brow and looked the other direction! Confronted with the mania of dialectics, truthfulness has no choice but to abstain.

Socrates, with his arrogant banner “reason”, was also a fine seducer...a man who could find no point to life—this is our greatest philosopher then? (An agitator of young boys?), A man who famously spoke to his Hemlock, “You are not the poison, you are the cure.” Let us despise him first. Discard him. Take instead—*his cure!*—his means of seduction: Reason as a tool: a null instrument, with a narrow range of applications: a last resort, for when everything colorful and momentous in sentiment becomes faded.

Somehow, it seems as if Hemmingway and Bukowski needed to prove something about themselves, or test themselves, or make others discover what lay concealed in them. It is a credit to their own honesty, when the climactic moments are exactly those moments when they discover—much to their own horror—that there is nothing much hidden or profound behind the velvet curtains...but as if by reflex, they are quick to tell us, in a mundane sort of way, that they supposedly, “knew the scheme all along”. I cannot believe that for a second. Their

horror is real. Their horror finds its birth at the moment reality wounds their ego and makes them gasp for breath. Having survived a roller coaster or a water-fall does not make a man more daring—that is only an illusion he would like to believe. And to do it again? What courage is there in repetition? No horror in that. No risk. Even if the risk is real and bodily, that does not matter, so long as he has psychologically already accomplished his mine field, he fears none of it. Perhaps he is even compelled to return to that place of horror—metaphorically— in order to harvest a bit more of that precious crude, that black gold that puts a distance between himself and the ones who have not even the accidental catastrophe to draw courage from—not even once, the luck of that dark oily rain that ruins crops and makes a man rich.

He doesn't fear painting a drunken portrait or a stained undershirt portrait of himself, so long as he possesses that safe bank of crude to mortgage or draw annuity at. In the end, they are so fearful of their own success that shotgun muzzles have a habit of kissing their lips for a meditative sigh after a late breakfast; or maybe they feel compelled to type, "shit on my ass", in order to deflate their great reputation; in order to balance the shifty burden of public praise. This marks a turning point in creative careers. The man of genius must now use his best devices and sleight of hand to bandage a conscience that has become too thinly stretched and too well fed. The work is done. The people are convinced. Somehow, there is a torment felt when none of your efforts can convince them *otherwise!* When your completed projects take on a personality apart from the ebb and flow of your personal stamina; When the finished product hovers impervious against the struggling creator who still blushes sheepishly when things accidentally slip out of his hands, or when he forgets his hat and must return to the door after saying goodbye. A good piece of art can destroy a man. Can obliterate him. Can cripple him brutally. When we walk the mine-field a second time, with more patience and more clarity perhaps, we do so with limbs missing. If the onlookers think we are brave, they are mistaken.

The English professors may not like to hear their idols being mocked—even if it be a couple of drunkards—but my intention is not to mock them or even to criticize their work, or their style or their development. My intention is to point a finger at the process that envelops an artist during creation; to look carefully at what a great mind might even choose to hide from his own sight because he is not yet—or never will be—ready to endure it. Success is puzzling because

we have a majority report that tells us we are not a fraud. To intimately deal with our own frailty we might have to invent a new image of ourselves that conforms to public opinion or at least makes a few concessions to it; we must condone this image in a manner that alternates between disgust and pleasure. As a matter of course, our new image becomes a habit we feel comfortable with. We begin to believe we are actually a bit braver, a bit brighter and a bit more eloquent than we actually are. Now the problem shifts even further from our artistic intentions, and we must walk the (Zarathrustrian?) tight rope of self-reproach, self-loathing, damage control and public spin. In order to exist in the public eye, we inflated ourselves—Next, in order to deal with our inflated selves we went to battle against such a *self*. Our old motivator—private suffering—became obsolete in the face of public disjunction. This new battle continues until the artist makes the final step (is it the final step?) of realizing the flimsy merit of all emotional reactions and moods. It is not until we realize the utterly superfluous character of human involvement, that we realize with it how completely seduction of sentiment rules the entire drama of life. At times, this thought can be disastrously paralyzing. We were better off reacting to our imaginations and our spectral rivals that appeared and departed seemingly for the sole purpose of their being exploited in our, ever so precious, “work”. Never mind that they haunted us—we took our vengeance by enslaving them. Sometimes we shrink from admitting the total frivolity of our moods. To use them we must have some alibi to help stabilize them. Only the admitted seducer can construct castles that lack foundation, and simultaneously, be entirely free from guilt while doing so. I call this the final stage of artistic development: the stage that floats and hovers without fear of the pit—A pit we ourselves created in order to help discern the real from the imaginary; but such a pit is merely the holding tank for the intuitions we fear to confront. Rightly, we should remove all distinction from pits and paradises, and simply drink deep the chaos circling round us.

To achieve a realization does not necessarily mean to command its benefits. Already we “have in mind” what such an outlook would enable, but again, necessity returns; necessity comes creeping along like that mysterious albino crocodile on the sandy white shore, ready to trip us up and show us its teeth—blended so well we didn’t take notice until the moment they stung sharply and began tearing

Again, how frivolous really were the moods that needed to be endured? Were they not, a form of honesty? A stable stage, with real

foundations? Let us clarify. There are no tangible honesties to be held or given like mathematical postulates. What we perceived, during their wandering circuits and continuous electrical pulses, truly have no shorter path—in-imitable are these loops, but the functioning domain, like a machine or life form itself, has no moral purpose that *needs* to resolve or seek accomplishment; nothing rectifies their universe or appeases their god. As far as taste is concerned, we would like to prefer believable masks over cheaply molded ones, but masks are themselves the essence of truth and untruth—both together! Inseparably, masks *are* truth. Even whores can count on that, at least.

This places the *dasein* (Heidegger's German: literally the being-in-the-world) between a rock of futility and a hard place of psychologically un-predictable complexity. That which prevails, convinces. That which convinces, is a form of seduction, selected from a myriad of other phenomena, equally viable, but perhaps, lacking in execution.

We applaud the writer who debases himself in a familiar or modest way, but when does the writer ever have the courage to profane his profession and liken it to that of the street magician? Perhaps he does this, but we refuse to believe him, and he intends that we not *fully* believe he is a fraud. He only uses these sham mirrors so we can be disgusted, by turns, only momentarily, for the sake of some lauded ideal of sincerity which he cleverly anchors himself beneath, meanwhile shaded by a sort of canopy or shelter made of lies. Seldom does art ever push so far as to challenge reality completely or in such a dogmatic, religious way that it ceases to have any tolerance for what counts as human and what use to count as art. Seldom are we able to maintain the activity of art, while also completely negating all of its supposed fruits; the final stage of maturity, in any craft or discipline, ceases to resemble the original impetus that prompted its journey; the musician appears bored. The sculptor swears at the delay of his lemon water. The pilot no longer seems thrilled with flight...he thinks of his boat instead.

Women are least of all bothered by an ironic shift in taste...so long as it does not concern their position...their relation to your devotion; your love. What is more natural, than a new endeavor, a new longing, a new regret? The sex which cycles through them faster is more patient with the idiocy of it all...femininity almost wants to declare these changes so hyper-prevalent as to take them as, and let

them assume the credence *of*, facts—and here, a mature artist must fully agree—they ARE FACTS.

Puzzling isn't it? That we might lay out a campaign, in say, advertising, to make a certain strain of fabric into the most desired, coveted, envied commodity, and then to have the fashionistas saying aloud, a little month later, that such and such a fabric is now “factually” the most perfect material for any garment? And to observe those, who live by such and such a code, until it is naturally, (or un-naturally) replaced by yet another...new...fact?

What use is there in trying to maintain an air of scientific terminology? What pragmatic use can that serve, other than, perhaps, to insulate your reactionary impulse to make a changing world into a model of solidity; into a map that represents a territory that has ceased to exist a second later. A second out of date—that is too much. Neither should we go in the other dangerous direction: that of Shakespeare's Apemantus. True enough, here is plain water echo I, holding a glass. Here is that which is too weak to ever bring a man to ruin—shall we worship the mildness of water? The neutrality of water? No. Let us not make the Buddhist mistake of making clarity into a religion that feels disgust for the muddled and engaged beings who keep their appointments and trim their lawns. Something between Buddhist disgust and reactionary logic is where the seducer must dwell; and he must dwell comfortably in this middle place or his discomfort will ruin his fluidity; his water-like form—

“Here is that which is powerful enough to bring everyone to ruin” Sayeth the anti-thesis to Apemantus...but he is not talking about the wine. Wine is what he serves. Water is what he mimics.

Part V
Confidence

First Meditation on Confidence:

Behold: I am one of the greatest writers ever to be born.

Observe: Confidence tells us exactly zero about the reality of the situation. Confidence tells us exactly zero about a man's potential or a man's character...yet confidence passes for greatness in the stomach of the herd because the herd thinks with its stomach and feels by way of its anxiety.

Confidence is an attitude. What can an attitude efface? Perhaps more than the rational man would like to admit. Let's examine both sides, shall we: Confidence has the aroma of success. The stubborn and the mournful do not exhibit it. Remember, it is enthusiasm that begins things, gets them going, moves them along and is a demonstration of passion. There are a great deal of enthusiasms that end in catastrophe, but the herd cares little for consequences. Confidence itself is such an empty banality, it deserves martyrdom, and it deserves a bit of our hatred; but confidence is also, as an affect on others, a bread crumb leading toward fine things. By penetrating beneath confidence, we shall elucidate a great many seemingly ironic human tendencies(*—ironic tendencies point toward psychological insights—*)since they exhibit the exact opposite of what a thinking mind would expect; such tendencies are available when we allow our minds to detach from our regular routes of thinking and open the doors to the pit of unreason: to the hell and horrific mire of total human frailty bubbling beneath the surface.

The shortest way to the pit of unreason is through the eyes of a woman. If you too had exercised and perfected the 'rational' function of your sentiment (which is to say, without being too enigmatic, 'your judging capacity in terms of emotional impact') then you might perhaps hold in your heart a very different approach to 'reasoning' in general. If our thinking dimension were to remain utterly childish, insipid or sluggish, we might try to use hammers as crowbars and shovels to pound stakes. And what is it that women are most often called upon to 'reason' about? The useless sex is not required to *do* much of anything in a masculine world...of course that tells us nothing about what she is *capable of*, let that speak for itself and return to what our masculine, sexist world forces upon her at the earliest possible age: sexual advances. She must quickly find a way and a method for sorting out, not only her hormonal longings, but also, if she has any ambition

whatsoever, she will desire to pick a decent suitor rather than a completely despicable one—this is what she tells herself anyway, and without premature laughter, let us proceed.

Whatever I state, I could also state from the opposite sexual perspective. Men make laughable decisions every day; I would never wish to avoid or conceal the folly of men for the sake of ‘protecting my sex’ as if prejudice or misogyny were a game of picking sides and being unaware of ones own shortfalls. Bigotry is not the game I intend to play. Creativity must be daring (in order to appear) to be new. Misanthrope that I am, too much pleasure is squandered if only half of humanity comes to taste my poison salve. Men also choose terrible women for terrible ‘reasons’. For now, set aside gender and look beneath, at the enticements of terrible mates:

What does a young girl intuit from confidence? Perhaps this new suitor is older. Instead of being in fear of a new possibility, he seems to look forward cheerfully as if he were ready...why so? Perhaps he has been to this place before or accomplished such things before...why so? Perhaps he has done such things with others...why so? Others have chosen him...why so? People would only choose the good and the capable, wouldn’t they? The crowd—the majority—they are the container and genius of human truth, aren’t they? Don’t we also want what the crowd wants? Yes, of course! Yes little girl, the crowd—the majority—as you say, are in fact wise and perfect. Democracy is little more than that truth. Without self-deception, I agree with the naïve girl: the crowd is the true genius of human psychology. Just because we may choose otherwise than what the crowd chooses—for our own private reasons—this does not change the fact that the crowd is right; sardonically, I am right. I am right only in a sardonic manner, against the crowd. Without me, the crowd still chooses by the standards of the crowd. The herd, the mob, the unwashed—these are the human clay. They conduct their own experiments right in front of us.

Teenage girls are the mob that makes all music videos into sexual posturing. Why shouldn’t literature be sexual posturing also? Why shouldn’t it be, at all times, a form of confidence and bravado from the minds of incurable braggarts? Telling you why not would be stupid. Perhaps it would be better to agree with the crowd. Instead of deliberating the issue, why not charge blindly forward and attempt it—

Second Meditation on Confidence:

So far we've followed the nascent intuitions of a naïve girl confronting a suitor. There is much more to demonstrate, so let us continue. What are pessimism, doubt, hesitation, and reluctance? Surely these must be signs of he who has failed. He who has not been chosen? We doubt because we have seen demonstrations of our own failure in the past. We are reluctant because we are afraid of not succeeding. We are hesitant because we are not acting naturally or from any previous momentum. We are pessimistic only because we are declining and on our way toward not achieving anything we have ever desired. These 'truths' are quite an unsettling constellation of the past revisiting us—the past has its own astrology, and women know it well. Why do we fail to see these trends, even when they are given so plainly? Somehow, despite reality, we cling to the wonderful blindfold—not unlike justice herself—of dim hopes. We too, would one day be chosen, successful, unwavering and ambitious; one day perhaps, perhaps, perhaps...and in the meantime, we have not the heart to ever look at ourselves through the eyes of the lowest creatures—and because lowest, also the most genuine. For a man of mid-life to really be finally transported into the psyche of a young girl would be such a colossal disaster and annihilation of character, very few would survive. Ah, that sounds pessimistic. Perhaps I already reveal too much...

What do good looks and accidental success account for in terms of character and confidence? In short, they are a landslide that shoots you down to the bottom. The good looking and the successful have no external impetus to develop character, compassion or self-reflection. To succeed easily once makes every new attempt seem easy and meaningless. The chosen man says to himself, "As I am—that alone must be good. I shall add nothing. As I am—already I am the prize." Such a man is saved from the debilitating exhaustion of wisdom seeking and wanting to learn. Such a man, from the earliest possible moment, wants only to "*be and do*", never to halt or hesitate on his path of gratification and self-worship:

"And for this, already they kiss me twice as hard as I kiss them back; it disgusts me. I shall give even less. I don't want to be so fawned over and worshiped...all of that clutters my enjoyment; it complicates my enjoyment."

Human development is not arbitrary. Sexual parings are not arbitrary. There is a grotesque logic to it all—I should have said beautiful logic, but, for some minds, these two words are interchangeable and mean exactly nothing. The most beautiful path of human development would not have anything to do with beauty or success. The most beautiful path of human development must ever and always come from the experiences of those who face the greatest intensity of strife; those who are forced, from the earliest possible moments, to both endure and overcome the greatest measure of adversity; those whose lives are nothing but torture and disappointment. These austere beings may one day—yes even they—greet the world cheerfully and compassionately. We cannot look at them and hear them speak without weeping. We look at their ugliness; At their losses; At the unbelievable malignancy of their fate; Worse yet than bad luck, their lives seem, over the long duration of years, chronically—as if medically—ill fortuneed. Next to them, our own tiny complaints seem insufferable. From within ourselves, a voice has always whispered to us, *'what is worst for us, that alone is the worst of all'*, and even the magnanimous, kind hearted lovers of mankind have this fault within them; Even the great philanthropist and martyr of Galilee breaks down at midnight; In solitary prayer, he realizes, the worst is yet to come. In terms of suffering, we are all as prodigal and spoilt as the good looking and narcissistic are in terms of character. Each of us feels our own pain as the one true religion. That is my explanation of Christ—the narcissist of personal suffering. And yet, when finally we look upon the elderly man who laughs and mocks himself in old age, our own best hardships are deflated at mention of his crooked cross. The fact that he is cheerful makes him beyond everything—especially bravado and confidence. Show me one grotesque fate, and I will render you a miracle. Show me ten thousand grotesque fates and I will become a pessimist. Make me suffer my own grotesque fate, and perhaps, I too will finally become cheerful. Walt Whitman was cheerful...what does cheerfulness conceal...does it remember the bloodiest civil war this continent has ever known?

In his heart, the cheerful poet secretly remembers the myriad of colors he ironically found in the leaves of grass—how the sun made them green, and the sprawl of the military tents turned them yellow, and how the reds of fresh blood gradually changed to burnt orange in the space of an afternoon—all these autumn colors at once in mid-summer! Yes, that cheerful poet must have at some point said to himself, with demur affectation, “I saw one brother live and one brother

die, and I remembered Cain when I saw the *leaves of grass* were stained with blood.”

Confidence is a soldier’s uniform, new and clean. The men who return look entirely different as the slow train carries them home. Miles and miles of human convoy; dusty shirts, disfigured limbs, cannon shocked eyes...and each one still has a dim hope; that is what I call beautiful. That is what I call grotesque.

Dim hopes are austere, when finally, they dismiss *both* anxiety and confidence. That fact: that lingering fact that they hope at all...I still find that grotesque.

Third Meditation on Confidence:

What else is in confidence? What other dynamics are at work?

When the majority of women tell us that confidence is the most attractive feature in a man (next to his smile, which is also confidence) we should perceive two things:

- 1) We see demonstrated their unique mode of weighing and balancing the world.
- 2) We behold the model and content of both female desire and masculine weakness when confidence is praised.

1) A unique mode of weighing and balancing: We should be extremely grateful for their being so transparent. If we have the patience to see it, female clarity is a prize and model for all artistic excellence—only the crowd is muddled enough to call it dark or terrible; for the crowd, luminance is witchery and honesty is treason.

When she says, “Confidence is attractive” she demonstrates her prudence in three directions: Confidence says the past has been auspicious. It tells her the present is one of enthusiasm and passion. It tells her that the future...and his necessary fall...is for her to exploit. Somehow, she knows that he cannot always succeed. That he is stupid enough to commit to the most absurd demands and imprisonments. If he is stupid enough to believe so strongly in himself, he is almost perfectly blind, and the more blindness he offers, the more

psychological real estate is available for lease. How very odd isn't it? That she should so fear the outward, and need protection from it—though it might bring about the arcane torments of child baring and possible humiliation—just so she might project a little of her own psychological real estate into another being? To finally dominate, albeit covertly, another being by making her own needs and wishes into a statuesque bit of flesh that reminds her of her own excellence? Men do the same, but go about it differently and for slightly different reasons: hence the term, the 'trophy wife'. Not all wives are a trophy; some are ugly in such a way that no other man would want them. Funny isn't it? For women, all husbands are trophy husbands, and do you know what? They want exactly the opposite. For them, it's best that *no one else* should want them, for if their husbands are still objects for others to desire, then it stands to reason that their secret toil to appropriate them has been for naught; that their secret plans have somewhere gone awry.

Sure, there is always a shadow side to our insight. Jealousy is something else. Jealousy is an invitation to new passion, which, in the end is always stronger than our spider-like webs of personal insecurity. When jealousy affects the exact opposite of what we have labored for, we see nothing at all hypocritical in our reaction. For us, jealousy is something different; something like a special invitation.

Jealousy brings us to a more encompassing insight: the prudence of balancing the world instead of dominating it. When we described the feminine ability to appropriate psychological real estate, this was perhaps the masculine bias at work. A better symbol is one of weighing and balancing forces to bring them into harmony. If dominance were the final executor of human affairs, then war, rape, slavery and blind justice would rule every corner of the world. Without denying the excellent headway of war, rape and slavery, one must also admit that the world also inclines toward a certain degree of moderation and balance, even in the shadow of perfect strength and dominance. Sometimes, we are attracted to brutal behavior, just on account of the fact that we are sick of giving concessions and making sacrifices. We get to a point where we have apologized for so much that we relish the idea of transgression. Women know exactly when too much is too much and when transgression once more is the most prudent thing. The yoke of dominance is a great burden to bear unquestioningly. When the path of masochism has been accepted and taken to its utter completion, all femininity is evaporated mysteriously and a ruthless

dominatrix is born. We, as humans, do not develop forward, or backward even, but in circles. What we call balance is really the gravity that demands our continued orbit around larger and ever larger spheres of existence.

The danger in describing merely the *masculine or feminine* is that of caricature. When humanity develops completely, it does not stop, but it keeps revolving around the poles of what we consistently recognize as male or female. When we describe the *early masculine* or the *early feminine* we are in danger of inciting anger and scorn because, not only does exactly no singular male or female fit the extreme degree we describe, but also, such readers feel upset in simply being fated to either this or that gender. For someone to slander a mode of development within a gender is also to condemn this or that gender to a final, unchanging, fate. There are no aborted orbits. Still we move and are pulled. Gender, from the outset, is taboo. Gender is the meaning of taboo. Gender is the beginning of taboo and the reason it persists. Nothing could ever make an asexual creature blush...and blushing creatures are the natural rouge that enable both art and poetry to persist. We humans have nothing to be ashamed of, so long as we continue to evolve our genders without getting held up within adolescent caricatures of our sex. Do I appear to rail against women? Perhaps. And yet, wouldn't the man who finally let go a bit of his dominance be a better companion in the long run? We are not better than our own sex until we are beyond it, or at least, moving toward some integration of its opposite in all aspects of our lives.

If men tend toward dominance and women tend toward integration, neither gender is in a position to actually continue developing until it accepts some of its experiences in terms other than the one it has defaulted to; to allow integration to finally take up all space within your being is to lose your being. Dominant forces will continue to exact their dominance completely apart from your own will to accept or tolerate them. The more you appeal with them, barter with them or attempt to concoct some sort of teetering arrangement you may find that you have actually groomed and ripened yourself to be swept away by a sea that is both too large and too impersonal to ever accept bribes; And for those with a skill for dominating? We state simply, your powers will eventually suffer a wound like Achilles, and from your lowest artery, suddenly lose the greatest quantity of blood.

Belatedly, we arrive at our second perception concerning confidence; let us restate:

2) We behold the model and content of both female desire and masculine weakness when confidence is praised.

For those who summon all validation from without—from either the crowd as society or from peers as community, or from family as ancestrally controlling, then confidence must appear as if it were a breath of fresh freedom; to be individual and autonomous—Oh how wonderful! Yes, yes, what a wonderful master for us to be enslaved by...

We desire and pursue what we are not. We know our own weaknesses but vaguely until finally some explosion of magnetism draws us to our shadow side. What are we without *that* lover? We would rather fling ourselves over a bridge than live another day without such a person...or should we say, such an attribute. We feel empty. We feel as if half of our essence were forgotten so long as this lover remains a loose fish. No need to put any distance between desire and weakness; they may in fact be the very same *need*. Too much desire in a lover? Well, if they desire us, how can there be too much of that? Don't we want the maximum amount of worship possible? Alas, we do not. A lover with too much desire has actually, too much *need* of us; that is to say, too many character flaws and underdeveloped faults; we simply call him or her, 'needy' and in this observation, the crowd is entirely accurate. The most extreme defamation of a man or woman's character, as a lover, is to simply say, for example, "*She is without.*" Stark emptiness. Bereft. The chasm is so large, we are repulsed; words are left wanting: "*She is without...*"

Offering plentitude without revealing desire—that is a dilemma each aspiring lover faces. Often, we're utterly mystified when we know the intentions of a female friend, and know the depth of her passion for a suitor, yet she insists, almost as if by instinct, on holding back or withdrawing again and again. Shouldn't the quantity of her love be her greatest asset? A virtue to be revealed and demonstrated as often as possible? Yet, contrary to this thought, we have become use to seeing desirelessness triumph, emptiness attract, and retreat cause ever new and more repetitive advances. The woman who has an excess of good qualities might actually go great lengths to withhold them in an attempt

to appear absolutely "*without*". Men do this also, but are much less adept at it. Worse still, they can't seem to help but do so consciously out of experience instead of instinct. We chase what is fleeting and empty, and worship at its feet; paradoxically, we feel no anxiety in discarding what eventually shows itself to be empty and useless. Uncertainty is like a negative plentitude, whereas disillusionment is a positive abyss.

To whatever extent a woman dissimulates, withdraws or hides her character, we can also count on this discipline as what she will find attractive and irresistible—an extremely coquettish, ultra-social woman will need an unbelievable rake in order to even raise an eyebrow. True, the available men are really no different than before—she might still choose any of them—but the braver and more aware she becomes, the more discerning her taste; to really excite her most primal nature, she will need a man whose degree of dissimulation and allure is just slightly beyond her reach. Social awareness and psychological insight actually rob the majority of our potential mates of any goodness and intrigue they might otherwise have possessed—so long as we have already appropriated such skills and attitudes, what can they really offer us? What can we learn from them? What sort of prize *are they*?

Next to emptiness, there is an even more important banner we lovers chase: *Passion*. Its slightest display already promises joy. Wherever intellect is lost, or suppressed, or over-ruled, we suddenly feel communion and closeness in a way we never yet understood. Passion is Dionysian. God of joy, we cannot experience him without being rent apart and scattered as fragments. A lover's passion obliterates being. Joy is all. Joy mocks the foolishness of mere pleasure. Father of the bravest daughters, joy is Agave holding her son's severed head. Dionysus bestows plentitude and drunkenness, but to spurn him, we risk an unrivaled retribution. Between lovers, the passion that radiates and gives without need or contingency is the ideal passion. It mirrors every feminine essence, and makes a man more malleable, more plastic, more warm blooded, and more thoroughly committed. We'll always choose passion over dissimulation, so long as it continually gives without ego pollution or contingency. If it becomes too passionate about itself, or too focused on its own endeavors, we'll discard it and move on, justifiably disgusted. Passion can bring us together insatiably! And using just the same energy, it might also repulse us irreparably.

Keeping in mind what we have discussed—Neediness, elusive emptiness, dissimulation and passion—we may now return to our assessment of confidence. How is it the model and the content of female desire? Where does it risk laying bare masculine weakness or unsuitability?

Try to imagine confidence as a social cue. The public meeting and the public approach relies on past bias and feels an urgent need to quickly comprehend the value each member of the group offers. Confidence has the potential for leading to any of several positive traits. If confidence is put forth untruthfully it is already positive dissimulation...who would ever bother to *pretend* anxiety? The herd will always take feigned anxiety and foolishness as actual characteristics of a fool. Perhaps they are correct in assessing so. The volitional fool, the clever fool or the holy fool has already refused to play the social game the others are playing. He already demonstrates his disrespect for their modes of valuation and assessment, so the first urge of the crowd is to both laugh and hold him in a place of social exile—we enjoy his company, but he is already *un-touchable*. A chandallah. An unwashed. Actual bravery, intelligence, wealth or power are not immediately valued in the first encounter or new arrival. Over time, they will out, just as all traits slowly come to light, but we cannot rest on the laurels of bravery, intelligence, wealth or power right away. Socially, these things are actually quite un-reliable. Confidence and decorum shall serve us best. Explicitly choosing *not* to play the fool; choosing placation, courtesy and pandering is the surest route. If you happen to be the most intelligent, you immediately become the most disrespectful and most threatening. Confidence will play by the rules and break the rules but it always seems to do so toward an extroverted, socially oriented goal; it wants to cohere with the group. All mortals have physical and emotional needs, yet the confident suitor does not bring these into the public discourse with him. His quantum of confidence is thus increased by his seeming contentedness. We are drawn to sympathize or look for routes to sympathy, and when we are given none, we feel that we somehow owe him some grace and compassion of our own because he has stood this whole time listening to our problems and our neediness.

The final component to discuss, in relation to confidence is passion. If we are engaged in other successful affairs, if we are moving toward a goal, if we are being showered with the admiration of others—all of these make us more confident and cause us to be less

groping and desirous. If we can show our passion in terms of extroverted, viable wealth and gain then we have taken into ourselves the model for female desire and eliminated all signs of masculine weakness...just because we have done so however, does not mean we are not scoundrels, braggarts, good-for-nothings, liars, or narcissists! Only a few personality types glide easily toward fitting the ideal model of female desire. If we are introverted and perceiving types—such as poets or writers, then we are obviously at a great disadvantage in the social sphere. Because we possess the ability to discern, at a glance, the real substance of these socially dashing types—the braggarts and good-for-nothing scoundrels—we feel very little inclination to emulate their behaviors and ambitions. *"If the bar is truly set so low, and the means of assessment so bereft, then perhaps women and children are not worth the trouble!"*—that is the cry of the poet and the writer in his dark hours of anguish and aloneness. He possesses exactly the wrong brand of confidence, and since his strength is involution, he is already on a path toward becoming everything that actually is repulsive, cruel and intolerable...socially and otherwise.

Fourth Meditation on Confidence:

What else is in a man's confidence?

Suddenly I exclaim to myself, "Fool! How come you failed to see such an obvious thing! Why didn't you see it right at first?!"

Here is what I finally see: Confidence is youth. Confidence is youthfulness. Despite everything an old man knows, and a returning soldier endures, we must still prefer the inexperience and innocence of self-assuredness. Perhaps I secretly have too much respect for women and that is why I did not want to see it. Yet, hypocrite that I am, I earnestly admit to desiring something strange when I meet a young woman or girl. Can it really be true? That *both* men and women desire youth above everything; that every healthy adult is a borderline pedophile when it comes to sexual desire?

A long full head of hair with radiant colors like yellow gold, white-straw hazel-nut, deep midnight ebony or autumn red-brown. No wrinkles. A tight stomach and shoulders that never slouch or sag. A voice that speaks simply and genuinely. A smiling face and fresh skin.

Sparkling, philosophical eyes that contain nothing but ignorance—All these are part of the pedophilic desire.

Fifth Meditation on Confidence:

To confide in something is to have faith in it. Wherever we put our faith, we have already put our trust. Those who display trust in themselves also demonstrate passion for their involvements. We want to love the confident man because we are already jealous of what he loves. Instead of being told that we are loved—which we seldom believe—we would rather see evidence of how something else is being loved. As soon as we see it elsewhere, we want that affection for ourselves. Confidence not only feeds our instinct for jealousy, it also leads us to where true affection is to be had; we trace the reflecting pool back to its fountain; shallow wading is not enough! We want to be showered!

Lately, there seems to be an utterly horrific trend in masculine dialogues about the amorous arts. The trend is toward sterile logic and platitude. Among these, the very worst contributors are Evolutionary biology and Behavioristic models. The fact that such models have slight degrees of truth or demonstrable, factual components makes the entire discourse all the more convoluted. Let's forget arguing the facts at present. The transgression lies in their manner of dealing with, and interpreting these facts. We have scientific men trying to infiltrate the discipline of the poets, and we poets will have our revenge! Catch phrases like, "prior selection" are two dimensional and insulting. The thick evolutionary bias and banal rationalism derails the complexity of human expression. Women are not at all sinless in this type of discourse. In the sphere of pop psychology, young women entering the dating scene gravitate directly to Myers/Briggs personality theory and begin championing it as a Rosetta stone for the entire universe. Again, the superficial and observable aspects of its truthfulness make the discussion all the more convoluted and inextricable. The actual modes of faith and bias at work in our culture, (any culture) at any given time are insurmountable and beyond all imaginative scope—in terms of error!

For men, confidence should resemble what men are looking for: Men are prejudiced to see masculine things in the word confidence. Men want to see strength, efficacy, truthfulness, loyalty, duty and

experience. Women may enjoy some of these things, but their relationship to confidence is quite different. Masculinity is only desired superficially. In truth, women put a very different premium on confidence: Women want demonstrations of passion, expressions of loyalty, enchantments of faith which invite them to give up the responsibility of thought and decision making. They want to fall backward and be rescued by the hands of a ghost. Confidence is the phantom that meets their insecurities by allowing their character to become even *more useless*. Falling in love must also be: escape from self.

Where men see confidence strictly as a near-Platonic essence unto its solitary self, Women, more astutely, cannot envision confidence without it also being a relationship of *confiding in or sharing being or trusting in* an object, an endeavor or a person. For men, Confidence is something they must create and give in order to secure rank. For Women Confidence is what must be sought in order to insure a viable companion...in order to feel contented that their companion is viable. No matter the facts, it is more important that women *feel* the security of their choice over and above the various ridicule and advice of others. The privacy of such a choice feels as if it had already taken stock in the social station of their companion; though we might often be swayed by the opinions of others, in matters of confidence and mating, it is already too late to change our minds. In Confidence, we are already faithful.

Sixth Meditation on Confidence:

It's amazing to hear two seemingly opposite words used side by side or in place of each other in an accidental, yet precise manner: While watching a tutorial video for a certain computer program, I made a strange observation. As the man was describing the program's analysis tool, which acted by sliding along a continuum, he made a rather interesting comment. While demonstrating how the tool's placement correspondingly displayed the percentage of strength with which it was being applied, he first called this continuum a measure of "Sensitivity", but then later on in the same sentence, he explained this same tool as acting upon its "level of confidence" to which the program grabbed, selected and kept various data; at the lower setting, it discarded more...at the highest setting, it very nearly selected every available piece of data in a given selection. This program is used for detecting the precise point of each percussive attack in audio recording

and editing...at the highest setting, every single transient and microphone pop is highlighted...at its correct setting, only the useful drum beats, such as the kick and snare drum are detected. A simple analogy we would easily overlook...that of comparing confidence and sensitivity...yet aren't these two phenomena usually exactly opposite traits? Excessive sensitivity to situations and people is usually the greatest factor inhibiting confidence; conversely, a great and ambitious worldly confidence has no patience for feelings and sentiments. It goes forward with plans and looks toward viable outcomes instead of wisps and phantoms. Usually we associate the realm of inward being as a realm of sensitivity and sensibility and the realm of outward being as a phenomenon marked by force, logic and tangibility.

So this leads to the question, is sensitivity the opposite of confidence? Are these both, in their unique way, separate domains of epistemology? Mutually restrictive domains of epistemology? Sensitivity is really a form of "knowing" and intimately "understanding" in a way often hard to communicate or test. Sensitivity cannot do anything with confidence other than to completely validate it and assume that it is also this very same, "incommunicable oneness with external situations", and yet, paradoxically, as confidence faces and confronts sensitivity, it has the immediate urge to utterly negate and dismiss the internal realm as if it were lunatic scribbles on a prison wall.

"Notice as we move the analysis fader, and the sensitivity is increased...as you can see, the confidence with which the program grabs the passing transients is gradually increased until all the actual points are marked, and then beyond this point, at even higher settings, it continues to grab every slight anomaly, until finally it has made so many additions that sense and nonsense blur completely."

Part VI
Poetic Interlude

If a meteor sweeps the horizon,
Whose face first comes to mind?
Let's not be too hasty
In draining all the magic out of the world...

**The banality of happiness is a welcome
Companion for staring, for gazing, for glossing over.**

If you walk beneath the moon, mention that.
If you hear a man collaborating with his father, mention that.
Whatever resists you, embrace it.
Let everything else alone.

**Hand prints on glass—
This phrase will help you to imagine
The molestation that haunts all things,
Invisibly.**

Anxiety like a dark house;
An alarm set to ring
In the middle of the night;
Work awaits.
All I have, I have on credit.

**A coliseum of chained dogs,
Sitting so still, a gray dust covers over them
An inch thick—
Do you see how they open their eyes and blink at
Each other?**

I want to be the African man who sells roses downtown!
I want to stumble my way through the cluttered restaurant
Asking everyone the same question!
I want to drink the proceeds and
Stare at the teenage girl who locked her keys
And her purse and her drugs in her car.

**A downhill feeling, at great speed:
That is what my ambition feels like.**

Poverty apartments: A large Somalian woman
On the street wearing a purple robe
Over her black skin—
That's a splendid thing to see
On a hangover morning!

**I want to forbid every adjective that
Is not urgently necessary.
Photographers do this also,
If you look closely—**

Blue fabric, rock piles, cigarettes, bus tickets—
After philosophy dies,
We behold with astonishment,
The strength of nouns

**The city is a mirage of lights and
Concentrated activity.
Not far away are endless miles
Of empty field and sky
Sometimes arbitrarily bounded.**

The present state of the art form:
Poetry no longer needs to be poetic.
Even better, we openly discourage it.
Phenomenology and Buddhism are my excuse for this.

**I have walked a gauntlet of madness:
I have paid dearly
For that which I possess.
Are these simple words worth as much as that?
Yes—
Sanity is worth what I have paid for it.**

No one will raise eyebrows if I say
Television is a sham:
A majority of people are ugly, misshapen
Badly dressed and ignorant.
Let us have more poetry against them!

**The process of sentiment and sincerity
Is plastic as clay. Brittle as balsa.**

The clatter and din of the world resounds.
We must get use to the ringing
In our ears.

**This man's back is crooked and failing.
His best friend died.
He asks if I knew him
As I box his donuts.**

**I knew him.
I also have a best friend.**

A small space,
Filled with a foot note sized verse
Has an appearance of finality
That shall elude you elsewhere.

**Happiness must be some sort
of dramatic
Inertia.**

Scribbling garbage at three AM
Listening to black metal,
Perhaps even pining for some
Ginger footed girl—

This is how Euripides would have wanted
Us to smile,
Even now,
As we stare into our yellowed nails
And brittle finger tips,
Clutching tightly as ever
Our hatred for life.

Part VII
Critique

Day

In movies we are given images to ponder as the words roll along, but there is a part of us that finds images distracting, *threatening almost*... We would rather be completely absorbed in our own mental pictures than to be torn away from our private dream worlds; Held hostage by whatever our masters choose to throw before us, the visual arts are an automatic enslavement. We cannot fight against them. Immediately we are lost. When they face us, we suddenly become nothing. We vanish into them. The violence of this eradication is lessened by the act of soaking up, into ourselves, the mood of the visual, but once we have done so, and the image lingers, our mental energies are blocked in, so to speak; like a mouse caught under a clanging metal lid or jar, the sensation of being trapped reverberates through us, even before we realize the physical limitation of our new prison. Only an immense degree of concentration and creative focus can pass beyond such distractions.

If these words have a goal, relative to the medium of their presentation, it is one similar to Rene Magritte's demonstration in his painting, "The Palace of Curtains III". Notice how one frame contains the French word for sky, "Ceil" and the other frame contains a simple, monochrome field of light blue, which, obviously we are to take for a sky as well. Magritte demonstrates that the image, although universal and immediate to all manners of intellect, is actually a limiting force when compared to our own mind, left to itself, to render its own sky images from the original word.

Now on to the task at hand. Communication in our era has taken on several new elements that art has not been able to keep pace with. My every meditation and personal torment experienced regarding the subject of Art and Nihilism has led me to this. While art remains a microcosm of actual human psychology—as fated to unfold and express itself erratically—we cannot deny the act of human willfulness and choice mixed arbitrarily in, which sometimes helps and sometimes detracts from the more important goal of expressing human psychology in an authentic way. If, for instance, I choose this or that form, I may suddenly improve a creation's beauty or the responsiveness of the spectator, but I may also risk defrauding or obscuring my own statement or expression. Now, if we return to the modes of communication that surround our daily life, we have, in some respects outpaced art in general. We realize that we are not actually

encountering art at all when we absorb reality television, reality clips, or un-edited blogs and rants. The near infinite *availability* of human expression is now working against our actual perceptions of human expression. We are simply given *too much* information. I have stated this before: *the age of information, is automatically the age of too much information.* Reality broadcasts of all types excel at giving to us the raw material of life in such quantities that delirium and awe turns to jaded sarcasm and confusion. Spineless passivity is the result. Only one element is lacking, and were it possible for this element to be added back, all things would be transformed and made new. The near sacred element that divides the art of mass voyeurism from the art of meditative communication is style. There must be a well individualized force of integrity present to select and negate from that which passes before it. From out of this selection and negation, the raw material undergoes a transformation and becomes a focused, well tempered instrument, hammered into shape by both the forces of thinking consciousness and the forces of passive autism— both forces originating from the conscious being who is simultaneously the hammer and the anvil of creation. A few sweaty droplets of style, and suddenly this arcane vaudeville of voyeuristic devils is reduced to a harmless circle of children shooting marbles. We only panic, when style and meaning are withheld. If they are withheld too long, we gloss over and become comedians. Comedy is only a safety measure; A last resort in an ongoing attempt to restore meaning and order to the world before us; To be given only one visual image—that is an oasis. A singular image prompts us to let go; it wants to halt discourse and suffice for the meaning of the whole. In the age where reality becomes suffocating, the opposite of too much, is the cowardly escape of too little: the crude seduction of the singular. These token images, cast before us at random, each have the threatening power to derail independent thought. Logos and icons are in themselves nothing, but their tyranny is realized, bit by bit, as they slowly overcrowd the mind until the saturation point where we actually begin to feel a sense of comfort, so long as thinking is replaced by symbols and our personal autonomy is no longer mandated or at all necessary. In the wake of advertisements and slogans we have long since memorized, we become gradually sleepy to the point of new forgetfulness and calm. So many industries and businesses want our attention we feel pacified and cradled by a sense of benevolence that resembles the sweetness of god, or our fantasies of god. In our entertainments, we yearn for singular meanings; the morality of the sitcom. The farce itself has become self-aware, and even within the sitcom there exists a contempt

for its own vision. The idyllic has passed away in favor of the disappointed and the sarcastic. We actually want the caricatures to become more vile and grotesque in the same manner in which they are plastic and well painted. We yearn for the tragic sublime of human mockery. Our energies are ever-always-almost-but-not-yet ready for actual tragedy. The romantic disquiet is the chorus the sitcom eventually wants to utter, but it remains, to this day, incapable of uttering it with sincerity. Even the sitcom's greatest strength—the singular meaning—is threatened with meta-narrative and deconstruction. The complaint is no longer *lack* of realism, but precisely its intoxicatingly tragic sense of *hyper-realism*. The component needed to create this ascension is the reality of the viewer, which now sees his or her own life in terms of sarcasm. This ascension toward the *hyper-real* finds its next logical expression in turning its lens toward reality itself. Life observed is already life held captive under a sarcastic, dehumanizing lens. No hallowed intentions or attempts at innocence can thwart this phenomenon. Since the beginning of recorded thought itself, the act of observation already contributes to the destruction and dissolution of being. In the past we have examples of stoics and skeptics who refute the merit of human life based on merely their overdeveloped predisposition toward their reasoning faculties. In the future, we may see a breed of men who, by way of their over-exposure to the sensual or voyeuristic abundance of *hyper-reality* in all of its manifestations (from reality televisions to hand held devices) may risk becoming an extroverted, mutilated shadow of what we once regarded the schools of stoicism and skepticism. Their disfigurement shall be parallel, yet their mode of apperception will have been different. As yet, these types do not have a name, and since they elude the thinking realm by arriving upon their revelation through strictly non-thought, they may persist indefinitely without ever calling themselves anything. They will gravitate toward emptiness and sarcasm and emotional disjunction, but still remain unwilling to own these faults. Just as the stoics could not conceive of any healing psychological strategy without invoking their one strength—intellect—these *hyper-cynics* shall also rely on what skills they already possess; and since they shall continue functioning perfectly "well-adjustedly", the mental health profession(*concerned only with the maladaptive which hinders productivity and consumption*) will tend toward minimizing their existence and their deficiencies anywhere it cannot directly profit from them through the use of prescription drugs.

Day

Languidly drift by, from lane to lane, space to space; don't even notice your own movements. Let the visual world devour the blood and marrow of your spirit. Give yourself over, entirely, to a false network of relations; death is nearly extinct here as the famine locusts swarm past in vapor-like mists of white noise. As we enter the shrieking curtain of tiny bodies, let's hold hands, you and I; Let's hold hands and celebrate how little we have to give one another; come let us celebrate our abundance of signs and symbols: our wonderful, anorexia nervosa, of thought.

Day

The dying poet arrives at his own funeral Twenty years too early; then as he retraces his steps, to join the actual flow of time, nothing he says makes any sense to the good souls going the other direction. If he decides to make a spectacle of himself or the passage of his life, he will only add to the general crudeness and vulgarity of things. To say that the poet is dying, is only a device we use to amplify the tension and the heartache of his little steps and woeful, heel dragging stupidity. If our poet were ever to relinquish his own imagination and divest himself of his supposed superiority in the realm of sensitivity, he would have to face the world without the soothing ointment of narcissism. As regards artists in general, Freud at least got one developmental stage correct—The autoerotic and the self-obsessed. Art in general—even horribly bad art—should be a vehicle for burning up the last remainder of our fanaticisms and our mirror worship, so that we—the dying and self-heightened poets—might fall in line once more with the sentiments of Lucretius, “I can contrive, to please you, nothing more; All things remain as they have been before.”

The filmmakers of our era are not poets and they are not writers. Though they poetize occasionally, and they prattle about financing their own scripts, they still must not ever be counted as either writers or poets. Writers and poets must derive their identity from reading, thinking, pondering and privately enduring; they are a complete synthesis of their own vision and require nothing further...not even words. The other caste—the modern filmmaker—is but an extension of the herd; the filmmaker is only a spectator with a camera. His method

of redemption is obvious: he must find good actors. Look how the chandallah points his lens, that he might glorify what already has superficial prestige: the young, the good looking and the lucky few with deep voices. If he should try to bend this paradigm, he is immediately an “Independent”, an “Art House”, or A challenger against the franchises, the Academy, and the general business model of film making, which, being fully democratized, has its own labor unions, its dental plans for boom mic operators, its private catering persons and its writers guilds.

If we dismiss the filmmaker, who then is left to fulfill our needs? The first profession that comes to mind is that of the comedian. For quite a long time now, comedians have been the only participants in social discourse allowed to use tragedy; Tragedy—that healing rod of Asclepius—only shows itself when our humanity is fully developed, glorified and forced to admit the world as it really is. In our era, this level of human excellence is only given admittance by accident, through the pauper king’s conspiring twin—comedy. Comedians—not unlike a king’s private fool—are the only persons in the public court allowed to be completely themselves; comedians are free to alternate between lewd jest and honest tragedy. Bawdry gives them license to be sincere. Laughter causes us a kind of pain, and by a sleight of hand, we momentarily forget our impatience and allow the orator a bit of space to recount his actual miseries. At the end of the evening, it does not seem to bother anyone that this wonderful comedian is actually suffering. The audience departs joyfully with clapping hands and as they exit, a few of the more daring ones try to re-perform a few of their favorite lines to those walking nearby.

At the end of the evening, the modern day comedian—after ordering a drink at the bar next door to the venue—attains an aura of real tragedy: The audience has deserted him. He is alone, and he never really left himself or his frustrations. As he sips his drink, and the amber liquid warms his throat, he looks out onto the street at the city bus pulling away from the curb to mindlessly continue its circuit; An hour passes; his adrenaline wane, his drink is refilled, and all things remain, as they were before.

Day

“The soul’s at fault, which never escapes itself.”

-Horace

On days like today, when I feel as if I have something groundbreaking to say, I wonder to myself what good it will do if it’s shuffled in as an obscure paragraph in an otherwise self-indulgent collection of lunacy.

Having read Freud, Adler, Jung, Sartre, (and today Simone de Beauvoir) I cringe at how tenaciously they all cling to their own fictions and prejudices. Today, I experienced a feeling of outrage when Simone dismissed symbolism wholesale and sought to work from the world back to symbolism in a conscious manner as opposed to the other way around. That is the method of a hack writer. I’m disappointed in her. Just a page before, she has such astute points to make about the limitations of Freud and Adler, I don’t understand why she suddenly decides to follow Sartre’s methodology and begin with the delusion that the world of human action can be completely reduced to choices and volitional efforts.

It’s time someone offered a concise explanation of Choice and Fate and their many ironical entanglements. The situation—our situation—in the world is first. We are with it. We are Mitsein. If we had been bound up in a cube or a pyramid, our sensation of cubism or pyramidism would be just about as instantaneous as our intellectualization of cubes and pyramids. In this case, and only in this case, Simone’s positivism regarding human choice and responsibility attains merit. However, when the world actually exceeds the cognitive faculties of the existential, then a new phenomenon asserts itself. That phenomena is the symbolic. When consciousness can deal with every aspect of creation, the world is finally bankrupt of potential meanings and we are fully given over to our own valuations and choices and projects...but when the world still possesses new alternatives, dimensions, subtleties and conflicts, we must bow to everything absentee; everything that remains in abeyance. The realm of the symbolic is the ripened fruit we pick from out of the orchards of our own private neglect. When it is in our power to relinquish ourselves, and throw ourselves down before the throne of the esoteric symbols pouring out of us, then we do not lose our capacity for free will and

choice, but instead, we exercise it in the fullness of its being; in the fullness of its healthful authenticity. Do not misunderstand! At this moment, I could choose any book on my shelf, and through an act of sheer will, force myself to read it from start to finish, but the forcing of the truth, the forcing of ourselves, with re-sentiment and emotional disregard is actually a form of violence that does nothing but summon more symbolic specters and neurotic spooks later on. Now, if I re-approach my bookcase, and I allow my thinking mind to come to rest, my autistic, passive mind helps to guide me in a more authentic choice. The book I choose now corresponds to some symbolic stimulus begging for expression; only the neglected elements feel the need to beg. If you should chastise me for my choice now, and say to me, "That is no choice at all man! You are duped!" I will reply as follows: "By yielding to the symbolic, I am better on my way to completely digesting and making conscious the aspects of the world I have failed to deal with using all of my daylight faculties and labors of the mind. When I have yielded to the unconscious, I have actually won a victory for both consciousness and unconsciousness alike. Day and night are placated. Day and night are each given their due wages. Yielding to some decisions passively I create the facilities within myself to choose my future paths more confidently, more correctly, more authentically and more individually. I do not care for freedom. I care only for the act of liberating and freeing within myself, at the proper time...which is also to say, I am voluntarily a slave to what I do not yet understand.

Day

"Behind the horseman sits black Care"

-Horace

It would take a special sort of wizardry to render a public communication that did not seek to entertain, did not endeavor to sell us anything, and whose content absolutely refused to accept praise from any of our current moral systems.

A gathering mass hovers above us with fluffy bulk and sheepish tendencies. The thunderclouds of domination have a pillowy outline—planes and birds poke right through them only to escape through the other side. Aesthetics of great merit are difficult to get hold of because they also have the integrity of clouds; they change with the atmosphere

and depart before we can sketch them. A linear story cannot coral the over abundant fecundity of situation. Short excerpts suit our purposes best. The owl of Minerva circles overhead; a twofold symbol of wisdom and warfare, in which, wisdom unites with warfare and surveys our every effort. The coin with the owl imprint is circulated and recognized throughout the world, until finally someone decides to mint it elsewhere, solely because it has recognition. The value is reversed. Recognition usurps the utility of the coin's metal. So long as we recognize the currency, it now has merit. What then is to become of the metal used in the coins, when their images are no longer recognized? What can be the fate of a philosophical system, if it fails to imprint coins with an icon or a symbol? How will it circulate, if it has no medium? How will it achieve its end without an advocate? Horace has our answer: "Behind the horseman, sits black care". Nihilism extends itself and exhausts itself without need of coin or logos. The greatest philosophy is the one that abandons discourse so that the world itself might be its only remaining argument. Black Care is our pandemonium. Black Care is the conspirator behind every virtue, every religion, system and in short, every excuse mankind can render as he mumbles to himself incoherently down through the centuries.

As Hegel states: "Only when the dusk starts to fall does the owl of Minerva spread its wings and fly". Philosophy understands in hindsight, so why bother with philosophy? Why not just point backwards, forever?

Glaucus—the owl, the stare, the gaze into darkness and the vigilance through the night. Gloucester—the player in Shakespeare's comedy of the grotesque, with eyes gouged out and gaping, his son helps him to the cliffs of Dover, where he enacts a mock suicide—this is Shakespeare's sense of humor at its best. How many of Shakespeare's plays are actually mock suicides or substitutes for suicide? What is it Shakespeare would have us understand about wisdom, three centuries before Hegel? Where is it then, that we should continue to look?

Day

Two of these pages are worth a days wage—not because they are measurably good, but rather, because they are usually the only tangible accomplishment I have to show for a day of contemplation that could easily have been, and more prudently should have been, a day of physical labor that should have put money in my pocket and better food in my mouth. Several thousand paragraphs from my adolescence, I have gradually lost sight of where the first railway ties were laid. This serpentine maze is a poorly regulated passageway to frustration and poverty. Now that I can see clearly how impossible the return journey would be, I have naught to do but write letters home from out of this wild frontier of jackals and goblins. The mirror is a limitation that begs some kind of infinity—even though I am just now, safely in my home, I am also stranded on the edge of the world where my imagination is continually dropping off and crumbling into the sea. The ledge beneath me is held up only by tree roots and pieces of loose rock; It does not matter where I am; This is what I experience.

Day

I've read thousands of personal adds posted by women of all ages. A pattern quickly develops. My own being is more in question when the urge and the mold they are seeking is so diametric to the aesthetics of my own inner life. No sense judging them or myself—both possibilities exist; both possibilities immediately *are*. Their credibility and their actuality is completely daunting because there is so much agreement among them; What do I have to put in the face of their majority? A solitary complaint? A deviant alternative? With patient labor and years of devotion, I have not in any way sought to undermine anyone or rebel—this whole time, I confess my ignorance to every alternative to myself—and from this ever widening cleft, I have wholeheartedly learned to follow an aesthetic of love and creation that would make ten million women shriek and spit. Possessedly, and in my ignorance, I tear apart small animals to admire the complexity of their tiny veins. With hands dripping blood and unexpected tears of joy, I turn toward ladies who pass by in their Sunday best; like a lunatic, I catch hold of their dresses and whisper esoterically, “Isn't life wonderful?”

Day

Have you ever noticed how wrongly one of our fellow homosapiens occasionally confuses a handful of challenging or controversial statements? Immediately the spectator rages against the orator in favor of his or her own private mode of being and understanding. The responsive energy is so radical! It wants to hammer you down to splinters!—This is the type of being for whom truth is radically important. This is the type of being who must dress up absurdities in fine raiment and moral adoration. The wisdom lover is the first person to throw bricks at your forehead and tie you to a stake.

Lovers of confusion? They have a name also, they are nicely given the classification of fool, clown, jester, and idiot. Who gives them these names? The wisdom lovers. Who else?

Philosophy has a built in predisposition which does not greatly differ from the disposition and prejudice of the mob. Philosophy is only, perhaps, more tasteful and tempered in the manner with which it goes about its holocausts and witch trials. Is the history of modern psychology any better? At least art is *openly* at war within its own discipline; at least art has the courage to surpass its peers, instead of merely quarreling with them.

Not until we are impeded do we catch hold of how pathetic our rivals actually are. To have invested so much love and effort and creativity at developing and forming ways to express oneself only to have a few of your passing statements reviled and ridiculed as entirely the opposite of what you are—that is the usual way of the world.

How is it, that I am suddenly deemed a man of negation? My every effort *of* negation is a step toward seeing *more variation, more harmony, more discord, more voices more ugliness and more plentitude of being!* Anyone who has given days and days to a project knows how many small increments must be added to achieve completion: how many, many seemingly useless details and components a human mind is capable of adding together to make a semblance of a whole...What a jeweler, a watchmaker, and a painter do, I also do.

Appreciation of fine craftwork almost requires mastery of the craft itself to truly evoke admiration...and then...perhaps...only a dismissive appreciation is possible if talent exists in the spectator—As we admire our neighbors work, looking carefully at the gears and the tiny pins, we think to ourselves, covetously: “I might have done it better...”

The only reader I love, must ironically be the reader who feels cheated instead of awed. Bless you. I love your shrewdness! I love your delicate whiskers! I love your *negations*!

Day

With the wrong state of mind, our lives risk degenerating into a myriad of services and tasks whose intertwining and overlapping complexities threaten to occupy every waking second of each and every day. The constant noise of good inventions and immediate concern actually uses morality and the *moral good* to divorce us from ourselves. The ranting tenants and accusations of popular radicalism all fail to grasp this vital argument: the most impaling sense of alienation comes not from that which is evil, but from that which *has meaning: that which offers us something benevolent...from that which is good*. Arguments which declare capitalism, socialism, consumerism, or any other of the gilded phantoms modern rebellion hates (usually as evils unto themselves—) do a great disservice to human understanding and actually inhibit the depth of our own self-awareness. The greatest risk today, is not the church, or the state, or the sexual neurosis of Freud’s day, or even the state of the global economy...our greatest adversary, and most relentless pain derive from an excess of meaning and goodness. It is entirely possible for a clever being to become so dutiful and patient within the labyrinth he inhabits that nothing intense or hurtful ever touches him. The service man who comes to the house is talkative and friendly in earnest. The shopkeeper is helpful and gives sound advice. The teachers delight in the boy’s enthusiasm for subjects. His friends praise his excess of talents. The restaurants cater to his appetites and he surprises himself by how quickly he can eat the difficult things he has prepared for him...and through all of this uninterrupted success and participation, he would remain utterly lost in the immediate value and worth of existence, were it not for his own sense of futility, horror and disgust for the very things that do *have value and offer meaning*. Were it not for the subtle clues that ring out,

when silverware is dropped, when ships collide, or when clothes are torn, we might forever languish in the temperate halls of satiety and purpose. Only when we reach the point of falling through our own nets of safety and out-strip our own expectations of misery, do we finally confront the failure of the moral universe; and by extension, the failure of the transcendent universe. I cannot sell my invitation to suffer. I cannot argue the hallowedness of my boredom or the sanctity of my individual conceit. I cannot smell the rent seams of a fallen bird or raccoon and make for you any kind of alluring perfume or potion. Adaptation and maladjustment no longer have any coherent meaning to me. Come friend, feel the warm communion I offer. Let me baptize you in my vomit. Let me kindle a fire so you might watch it until the new day has you waking forgetfully with the smell of ashes on your clothes. Take a charred stick and dig beneath the remains. Far too much still remains.

Day

“...that the manifestation of things is saturated to a point where it exceeds plain evidence and certainty...”

-Luce Irigaray, The Sex Which is not One

Art completely deflates within my grasp. If Jung's theories are correct, a great bulk and majority of all art is laboring to achieve exactly the same task. One begins to see patterns and symbols emerge in everything. A small bit of psychological insight, and suddenly the world becomes a very frightening, outrageous vaudeville of devils. Before the lucid moment, bad men with guns were just bad men; angry people were just angry people...but now, it seems as if half the world were half insane. Neurosis and pathology are everywhere. Even the mostly sane are still linked to their unconscious and cannot ever fully know what lies therein. When we still believed in God, at least that seemed like a limitation for mortals—but this, this is too much! The idea that all humanity functions like badly programmed automaton, at every moment fragile enough to collapse and act out completely ridiculous displays of violence, anger, abuse and compulsion! And such things are not the exception, but the very rule and necessity of our horrific psyches! The realization that emotions and urges own and possess us at every turn! The idea that psychological phenomena exist

as if they really were autonomous beings within us and controlling us! As if all mortals were cursed to be haunted from within until the sun slowly burns itself out; and what if even after the sun has expired the human drama should continue? What if by some un-imaginable stroke of luck, humanity persists like cockroaches and doggedly finds a way of sustaining itself on a darkened globe in orbit around a dead star—what if even then, in the half light of their own radiation soaked hands, the remaining few, blessed with the adaptations of a hundred millennia, still groan and swear and shuffle confusedly about until they resort to eating each other—only then will the last vestiges of mankind die away brazenly ignorant or forgetful of all the psychological curses dealt to them since the House of Atreus fell on the shoulders of Orestes.

I cannot tolerate any artist who attempts to say “There is no allegory in my works”. If they make a point to say so, then the allegory is all the better for it; if they had been aware, and meddled with it, they might have risked marring it. Realism is possible, without allegory, but I implore you, if you would look into the matter closely, do not look for symbols within art, but instead, labor to find a single, rare piece of art, done by a creator with such radiant integrity and mental composure that symbols are utterly absent. That should be the goal of literature.

Day

I can no longer stomach statements that say to me: “Highest wisdom is thus_____”. Every philosophical statement should be torn up by its roots and questioned psychologically. When it finally becomes easy to understand “what” is being said, we must undertake the task of “Why” it ever got said in the first place. We begin to feel that the disciplines that use no words, that do not tell, and that do not meddle, have already effaced the “Why” part of the question. When our motives, urges, drives and prejudices recede, only then does the statement remain in its austerity—without taint of personality or any demonstration of excess by one of the personality dimensions crowning itself at the expense of the one it fears—only then does the psychological component: the “why” question abdicate and we finally arrive at a statement with lucid awareness and practicality.

When Pessoa states (along with many others I suppose) that “to think is to not know how to be,” we find a justification for hating that

famous Hamlet speech. The austerity of knowing, “To think is not to be” is out of reach of the thinking man, and if the thinking man declares to you his almighty alternatives: “Being and Nothingness”, he fails to realize a third mode of existence that still eludes him: To act. To engage comedically. To dissimulate and create illusion—all of these modes exceed the realm of mere being and nothingness which relies upon thinking in terms of objectivity over and against the realm of the cyclic, the evanescent, the half true, the ironic, the seductive, and the synchronistic. If we really were in tune with the fall of “every little sparrow”, we might notice a great deal more than Hamlet does.

Austere statements offer so little, that one cannot understand them until they are already being practiced. Sadly, philosophers must still rely on labors of the other kind: the labors of self, of self-involvement, prejudice and the partiality of personality dimensions. Perhaps to learn and refine the thinking dimension, one must record a great deal of “thoughtful thoughts” that are of no use for those not striving in this area. Interesting things begin to happen however, when boundaries are crossed, when dimensions blur and when the ego begins attempting to reclaim what it has never yet won from the sea of non-experience...if only the land could extend a bit farther...if only the dock were a few feet longer...

Day

If reason fails to recede, other forces will seek to find outlets of expression. If these forces cannot arise within the dialogue, they may attempt to arise in terms of *what* gets discussed and not care anything for the rigorous conclusions of these paragraphs, that, perhaps accomplish something entirely different and independent of them.

So far, the only passive element we have allowed has been the daily subject, as we have held open the final goal and possible outcome of these investigations. Magnetically drawn in and excited most by the impetus of a new direction, a new subject, we continue to disappoint that urge by exercising our already capable muscles for no gain.

Do you recall how Heidegger continually delayed the formation of the “Being” question until the very last sentence of “Being and Time”. There was some other force that made him do that. That force

accomplished more than philosophy; that force should be the new direction and impulse for all future human philosophy.

Day

When disproportion weighs down hard, how are we to maintain our balance? I recall the practicality of my father—a man who would not be capable of reading these thoughts nor have the urge to compose anything like them. I sometimes have a smoldering, neurotic, ash-like fear that I am too practical; too optimistic, too much a man of pragmatic action to really say anything profound. Once the fires of my madness and the torrents of my mood have passed, I become myself once more—but I don't want to admit I am that man; that shell. I want to imagine that I am only my ecstasy and my grandeur! Even when a whole nihilistic universe opens up before me in the words I have fashioned, I still feel a nagging sense that I am about to fail or that I will not see it through in a heartfelt way—that's a terrible phrase; I should have said honest way. Or natural way...but I think I really meant to say heartfelt. My fear is objectivity.

When we describe, we feel that feelings flee from us. There is more to command and dominate when we do not describe. If we hold to our bastard attempts at philosophy, we are both freer and more camouflaged. Our fear is Subjectivity.

We must make peace with the fact that a terrible many of these entries will not be literary or contain any substance. A great deal of sculpting and editing would be required to ever present them to others. We began with great enthusiasm, hoping that we would achieve both catharsis and masterpiece in one stroke but here we begin to admit that a great deal of penance and learning must take place instead. When we began, we were feeling a mania of self-pursuit, of dream analysis and of "chasing the secret pattern" that is our own essence. Our intensity wanted more speed, more results, more impatience! During our dreams last night, our spirit chastised us and demanded the opposite: patience, slow accumulation, self-forgiveness, limitation, pain and simplicity. I am not anyone else's metaphysics. I am not anyone else's despair. I must realize my own circumstances and my own course of moods; I am not the youth I once was that mistakenly took Macbeth and Hamlet's passing speeches for the final truths of the universe—admitting that, at least, is a start.

Day

We've read or seen most of the great plays. The "Masterpieces". Ibsen. Racine. Euripides. Sartre. Marlowe. Shakespeare. Aristophanes. Miller. Moliere—Ad infinitum.

They are not so great. Entertaining, but not so great.

We vomit inside ourselves each time some introductory chapter tells us *this play*, is the author's masterpiece; the work of superb subtlety and genius. These words use to excite us. Prepare us for our best enjoyment. Now these words make us groan. Not again. Not another "masterpiece"!!!

We consent, the writing of such things is grand and difficult, but understanding them, that takes no effort at all—they are done so well they are obvious. Life comes into focus in them and that is why they are worthy of our hatred. Even Beckett or Ionesco are too much in focus. I think, when I finally decide to write my own indisputable masterpiece, my plays seriousness will be interrupted in the fifth act for one of the characters to take a piss on the stage, and then resume the conflict in *media res* until its sane conclusion. That seems like the only way to get across my vision of the stage—to mock at perfection or genius by both mimicking it and rejecting it. I would have the audience gasp at the urination, while a few of them declare, finally, with pompous gloating and over-educated critique, "THE PROTAGONIST HAS JUST URINATED UPON THE STAGE; SUCH THINGS REALLY HAPPEN TO MYSELF; IN FACT, MAYBE THE WHOLE AUDIENCE IS RETAINING URINE SIMPLY FOR THE SAKE OF SOMEONE ELSE TO FAKE URINATING. BRAVO!! WHAT COLOSSAL INSIGHT!"

And the next day's headline would read, "Actor urinates on stage, gets fired; show closes permanently, despite mixed reviews."

In truth, and in my own brand of seriousness, urinations are a more dread thing than high tragedy. Its part of a world process that goes through us without our acceptance or our denial. Holding it back is merely courtesy or forethought. We think to ourselves that Shakespeare's *Tempest* would have been more effective if it should have ended with all the characters dropping trousers and micturating on

the stage and on each other in mock forgiveness, gratitude and creativity; The yellow stuff dreams are made of...

They would never let me teach at a college level; a spirit of seriousness pervades the great plays, and this seriousness has a temperament that shys away from the audience's bathroom practices immediately after a masterpiece.

Aristotle said that a character in great tragedy needs two things: our pity and our horror. If the audience is merely reduced to laughter, then somehow, in the eyes of high drama, the play is a failure. What happens then, when a good critic laughs at the wrong times or too continually? What happens when the critic hates all drama? Sometimes, for brief moments—the very best moments—in Shakespeare or Euripides or Moliere, we sense the play-writes resemble our laughing man, who hates all drama; hates humanity; hates life.

Too often, I've begged for a professor to explain away Gloucester's mock suicide. With a little prodding they will...but misanthropy is better left without apology.

Sometimes, we think of our favorite play-writes and excuse their masterpieces because they themselves were involved in their own great tragedy; In a weary existence that included urination; more simply, let us declare, they have our *pity* and our *horror* in an even larger dose than the argument of their compositions.

After all, **are these men too**, not *poets*? Stale breathed; **wreaking** of alcohol and too much life?

Day

Beware of letting things become conscious. A therapist will say exactly the opposite: "bring as much of yourself to consciousness as possible in hopes of taming neurosis!"

For those of us not seeking any therapeutic harmonization, for those of us with artistic and romantic inclinations, we must work

backwards. Dispel whatever knowledge you feel has been herded into the domesticated gates of reason and observation. Kill your formulas and let the untamed bulls of stupidity and violence tear things apart.

Beware of letting things become conscious: If you discuss the observations and breakthroughs you have made into understanding various types of beings and their relationships, you cannot help sounding demonic. Regardless of your creative faculties—even if they are nigh the best—if you discuss your observations you will cause others to fear and hate you. If, for instance, you solicit the opinion of others after you have made a dangerous observation, it should be of no surprise that those whom you solicit will repeat a superficial platitude that goes against your dangerous observation. If you make the further mistake of attempting to share the details of your observation, you will be deemed a monster probing and seeking to manipulate that which they experience. All courage aside, this behavior is intolerable. Look how greedily they yearn for exactly the opposite: look how they relish the hand that pats their back and props them up; look how they seem already incapable of what little anxiety they already have...and then you show yourself as one who is capable of bringing yet more and still greater anxiety? Life is already difficult. Why should they be expected to have any artistic reverence for it? Those of us who are monsters sustain ourselves on the faith we have, explicitly beyond our needs, for the magnificent, the terrible and the dangerous, which, for the artist and the sociopath alike, is the most precious thing.

Let us take a lesson from those who fear the terrible and the magnificent. Let us repeat a third time: Beware of letting things become conscious. From an artistic standpoint, we seek to bring our observations into consciousness, but we cannot use and manipulate these findings until we have found a way of pushing observation back downward, below consciousness once more. A force rises up, we mark it, and then we must focus it and push it back downward so that it can do its terrible work in a more natural and convincing way...if we added thoughtfulness, we could not help but mar it. If pragmatism brings us to this point, it is only creativity that can bring us back to the human and the authentic.

The fear that others experience is a real event. For them, there can be no questions of authenticity. Observe how fear turns to anger when you lay out the possibility of purposefully engineering such fears and exploiting such anxieties! Their first criticism is that you are incapable;

that your intellect is trying to compensate in a realm where it is failing...and they may almost defeat you and halt your progress with that suggestion alone, but secretly, you know better. Demonically, you don't care about faltering or appearing. You know that reason fails. You know that intuition has limits. You know that emotion envelops and that sensuality overtakes. The fact that all four directions have their certain bounds and weaknesses is part of your revelation. Exploitation does not in fact begin until it realizes where and when it can start. Perfect exploitation is not a war or a battle. Perfect exploitation begins at the point where it is already total victory...such a victory perhaps, that it seems to help or aid or sacrifice itself for the exploited. The line between altruism and perfect exploitation is dangerously thin. Heaven's most perfect angels may sometimes have secret designs of their own. (Perhaps even the devil is envious of the cross, if it wasn't his idea in the first place...)

When finally, you have learned the value in letting things sink back beneath consciousness you will have learned respect once more for that which is human. With each observation, with each insight, with each weakness exposed, the human animal becomes like a thing beneath you, on its way to being conquered or destroyed. You see how pathetic and stupid and vain the crowd is capable of being. Yet, we cannot recreate these sensations in others or mime them well in ourselves without also returning to our own secret weakness, and channeling it. The good actor must summon the artificial tears from some clean vault within himself where tragedy is categorized and sorted, yes, but still, somehow, vital and real and, dare we say, continually painful?

We would like to call ourselves a special name—we who intellectualize—we would like to call ourselves 'super-men' or 'overlords' or sociopaths, but these are a misnomer. When we are insightful, we reach beyond humanity, true, but only then are we truly pathetic and beyond redemption. To remedy this state of psychological hell, we must summon both creativity and inner weakness. Both are necessary. The irony of course, is that, the way leading to the superior must complete its circuit by continuing on towards innocence and vulnerability once more. That is why I say again: Beware of letting things become conscious. The return journey is difficult. Often, artists and philosophers speak deprecatingly about the crowd, as if only the crowd feels and fears the uncertainty of life. In reality, it is the artist of great insight who, not only reaches beyond and attains liberation, but

also, he who is pulled back into the mob of common feeling over and over again with surprise and new enthusiasm each time. Though he may speak *as if* he were beyond, it is only a matter of time until he forms a valid relation to them once more. The tortured artist vacillates between the above and the below. He is injured anew each time he returns. His sardonic vitriol is merely his means of anesthetic for intensity. Alcohol numbs, and alcohol also brings us back to the mob within us, and new voices are heard in those cold streets as the bar doors open and vomit forth the happy patrons—as if a forced ban on speech had suddenly been lifted from those dark sidewalks. Amazing how much there is to say, when finally we realize our weakness once more.

Day

Often, we hear the words, “Everything happens for a reason.” Logic and atheism immediately discount this form of optimistic stupidity. Hardly a thought and we have already dismissed it; we in fact dismiss it just as quickly as others come together and agree upon it faithfully...this strange phenomenon of agreement forces us to return to it. We feel compelled to take a blood sample. What manner of vitality causes these strange creatures to so instantly accept a world where fate is completely ordered and constantly coming together to form a meaningful whole? The statement “Everything happens for a reason”, in the English language at least, has a very strange connotation: it tends to assert the most utterly anti-scientific and unreasonable declaration possible, and when heard, it strikes such a discordant reverberation that any sane man nearby feels a chill from out the insidious depths of his imagination which momentarily auditions the moral repercussions of what such an assertion would mean. “Everything happens for a reason!” If they had been philosophical creatures who said this, or poetic creatures, the answer might have demanded more discipline...but this is not at all the case. The weakest, most unthinking creatures feel satisfied—almost mystically—in a universe of un-freedom and total benevolence. Yet isn’t total destiny and complete fate also a universe void of meaning? Never mind that. The meaning and the insight here is not at all a philosophical insight.

The being for which “everything happens for a reason” is the being whose mode of understanding and pattern seeking a priori

declares that all things must be forced into one sensible container. Reality outstrips and overflows all containers, yes, but something more must be understood as well. An effort of disproof would be a labor drawing us away from the more important insight. As sentient, apperceiving beings, we mutually fracture each other by our responses and our emotional states. Events and places soak into us. Not only are we constantly at the mercy of our personal search images, but also, we are affected, unawares, by the mood and tone of that which happens around us. Seemingly auxiliary and peripheral events enter into us and become part of our story and our motivation. We even sort out our other problems in terms of the images, people and events that come to us un-relatedly. What is the chaos of dreaming but a mosaic of nonsense moved to the purpose of meaning and self-knowledge? If the mass of mankind is dwelling closer to their own unconscious, is it any surprise that they also perceive waking life in a manner that more nearly resembles dreams—which, ironically, they also fail to understand correctly? So, you see, the ones who philosophize badly also live ironically...with laughter, we who live and understand sardonically, understand irony as something we create, and never something that is dealt to us.

One step beyond the sardonic, and we realize within ourselves a new mode of intuition. If we can summon the courage to creatively force the revelation of fate—that everything happens for a reason—the chips begin to fall in our favor once more. Observe: instead of relying on fate as a meaning or a comfort, let us approach fate indifferently, but also let us force the psychological mechanism that is already at work in the hearts of fools: creatively revise every statement, every emotion and every uncertainty as a clue toward something hyper-meaningful. Allow for the fact that most of your creative inflations will be wrong! Privately, keep them to yourself until something actually does come together in a meaningful way. Your inflations give you the sensibility to create and see patterns long before they become obvious to others. In the realm of intuition, it is better to be wrong often, while always being a step ahead in your theories and impressions, provisionally. If you were not sensitive to every anomaly and already “auditioning it” within your own emotions, you would never arrive early. Intuition is about always arriving early. Intuitions that find completion only after a series of events have completed their circuit are not intuitions at all, but instead, retarded observations. The key aspect one must allow for, when dealing with intuition, is their eternally provisional, unfinished character. When a poorly adapted woman uses intuition, she does not

respect the actual nature of intuition: she takes the most vague bits of data and tries to force a finality or a total judgment. She wants to rely on precisely this judgment, without any addition of thought or reality testing. Intuition is only one mode of perception. As long as we are human, and act irrationally, intuition (that semi-autistic time machine of irrationality itself) remains a useful tool in its own right, so long as it does not try to go beyond its sphere and create its own superficial reality that does not exist. (Can it be, that all science fiction movies based on time travel and alternate futures are really only symbols of human intuition and anxiety as they already exist?)

Day

A month less distilled, and the vintage might have been ruined.

It's no secret that actual life, in its directness, is mostly premature and uncreative. Rousseau, Proust and Schopenhauer demonstrate this fault. Nietzsche, Pessoa and some of Kierkegaard succeed in leaping beyond it.

A month less distilled...

Day

When we really conquer philosophy or art or poetry or any other discipline or relationship, we sometimes remember the charm token of black and white that often decorates the bracelets and necklaces of teenage girls the world over. In that token, I feel everything splendid and powerful in myself is given a voice.

When you really conquer something, or bow to it (for domination and submission are nearly the same) remember the macrocosm and the microcosm; drink the clarity of gender integrations, as if they were water. If I had to create a symbol, I would echo the ancients and equate the image of water with highest wisdom.

Day

Those who are capable and adept also suffer. Some who have ability suffer in proportion to their gifts. It is rare to ever meet a useless person who actually suffers because he is useless.

Day

Dreams are like wonderful mansions, built carefully, with a million small regrets.

Day

What makes a man continue? What makes him persist? We can all too easily look to the doers of splendid deeds or the sayers of splendid thoughts, and then try to find our own derivative justification—as if we *might* be on our way to our own excellence, but I think the vast majority of men know that that sort of justification...that sort of excuse rather, is totally groundless. Something deeper and more psychologically obstinate is luring us onward like sheep. Depending on our mood, we alternately ridicule, joke or throw praises at this aspect of ourselves, but at base, we are each utterly baffled as to what it means to persist. When we encounter those who march beside us, yet years or decades distant, we always remark how piously they mend our errors, pull us from the ditches and help to dust us off without any hesitation or self-reflection. When some endeavor reaches its final pitch of pain and climactic hopelessness, it is these older beings that lean over and dislodge the wedge that only a second before, completely obstructed us. For them, the questions of outward and inner perseverance are not at all lessened...it only appears so; mistakenly, we take comfort in their appearance of equanimity, but terror strikes us if we should see them in pain...To loose a wedge or stop up a crack out of experience is a completely gymnastic endeavor. It is to our own great disappointment to learn, finally, that most of what we admire as wisdom and greatness is a kind of dull acrobatics and muscle memory.

It is from this realization that I declare, *Man does not choose his continuance and he does not choose his fate. He chooses decorations and luxuries, yes, but he does not actually control the lumberyard of is potentiality, and he does not directly enkindle the furnace of his own dreams.*

As much as our own passions resemble a great cheat, and a colossal conspiracy, we must admit that the dimension of *unknowing* and *spontaneous manifestation* from out of our own being adds a layer to mankind that admits no substitute; There are no gods, no religions, no duties, no conflicts and no moral philosophies that can unseat this blind alcove and secret bower in the vineyard's of our habitual intoxication. The question of persistence never breaches the doorway; it never lights on anything tangible because there are no tangible things to grasp in the realm beneath. Opening the doorway only thrusts intoxication outward. Philosophy rages in the wrong direction. It wants to seek the truth of the ocean by standing pat or marching out *against* the waves. The ocean voyage has very little in common with the depths. They each have their own jurisdiction. In light of this, our concept and our word for Art should be abandoned. I prefer a word that has a more paranormal connotation: henceforth, I seek only, *manifestations*.

Day

The individual questions of philosophy should be forsaken for an even better question: instead of asking what philosophers think on any given subject, one should learn to ask: "Just why is there disagreement in the first place? What is it that prompts so many various responses to such seemingly simple and direct questions as Being, Aesthetics, Knowledge, and Metaphysics?"

We must not be fooled into taking a philosopher's philosophy for a "Version" of truth, or even a system on its way to *becoming* some kind of tangible truth. Instead, let us think in terms of impulse and response. There are no privileged thoughts. Even this very thought, is but a response and an impulse of its own. Just what exactly prompts me to write on a given subject today, and then to ignore it tomorrow? Surely Truth with a capital "T" is never really in jeopardy, and better, is never even there to be had at all. I have only the impulses of other

beings, to which I offer my own responses while also acting upon my own twitching impulses.

For far too long, my presentations have been taken for pure negativity and nihilism in the realm of thinking. This is a mistake. What I have uniquely accomplished with my various meditations is a deeper appreciation for the discipline of thinking and intuiting. It is only when the difficult bridge is crossed that we look back to admire the greener grass behind us. I do not admire the bridge, but my entire philosophy is exactly this bridge—like the boat that is discarded when the shore is reached, my philosophy is a passage over currents of confusion and mental distress.

The greatest difficulty impeding human understanding is the very same “love of wisdom” that actually prompts philosophical efforts. The amorous stupidity should be replaced with a courage for making dangerous observations and an appreciation for the fragile beings which happen to be observed. We must cultivate a love for the dissection, dismemberment, and mutilation of Being. We must let go of all love for virtue, morality, truth and peaceful sleep. We must be willing to thrust ourselves into deep pits of madness and ecstasy whose depths offer no promise of wisdom, no possibility of improvement and most certainly no aspirations for better living.

While the rest of Western History remains and continues to be a confrontation with *specific* problems of thought, the most complete beings—possibly the beings whose existence justifies all the rest—have stood back to observe and nourish the useless virtue—autistic, nameless freedom...you see, those that are good for nothing, also excel at complete potentiality in all directions, without the stupid risk of becoming a singular fate or a dead end choice. These types of beings *cannot* justify themselves. To try would be a mistaken impulse. For the same reason that they fail to explain themselves to the more active beings, they excel at absorbing the variety of the world around them. If I cannot justify myself, that is both my reason for non-doing and my justification for non-doing. My impulse toward non-doing is also my response to all possibilities of doing. If I had been born otherwise, I might have fallen prey to the same errors of other philosophers; I might have speculated about this or that truth, or the merit of this or that system. As it is, my actual manner of being is also my impulsive prompt toward acting and being in the manner that I currently exist. From out of the tinted windows of negation, I stare safely into new

worlds and blinding stars. Philosophy from this day forward should utterly refuse to proceed unless it walks hand in hand with both psychology and art, which are one and the same phenomena.

If we proceed in thinking, we would do well to observe the strategies of physics and mathematics. Yesterday I came upon a metaphor that sums up the new direction and the new challenge of future philosophy: I choose to call this departure “Convolution Philosophy”. I pattern it after the procedure used to capture and recreate the ambience algorithms of various concert Halls throughout the world for use in digital audio production and cinema post-production work. The idea is this: if you can project a sin wave into a room, for all audible frequencies, you can then recapture the affect of those frequencies in the closed system that is the room itself. Its unique material, its architecture, its shape—all of these respond in a unique way which we not only find interesting mathematically, but also, more importantly, these responses themselves affect us aesthetically and viscerally. We are given the impression of immensity when we hear our voices echo back in a cavern or an opera house. A heightened awareness for our own presence is the result. Impulse. Response. They do not arise independently, but sympathetically. The boundaries of a room are the surfaces that reflect back and fold the sound back in upon itself until it decays because its amplitude has been exhausted. The energy comes once more to rest. *Only* when there is energy, can it be measured or modeled. The most elusive thinkers are both perfectly at rest and completely exhausted. The convoluted folds of their brains are like the folds and curtains of a room without sound. To be aware of them, and their thoughts is also to be aware of their impulses and their responses. Stream of consciousness, that is not aware of itself is merely Involute, degenerating and in decay. What we chase, are the convoluting efforts of the human mind. To be active and outward; to be exterior in this or that task is to perhaps evolve and change both the outward and the inward, but again, progress, not unlike Involute degeneration is but a blind direction; a deaf parade. Theories of evolution give their highest praise to, and reduce all efforts to a sexual and biological act which amounts to nothing other than re-shuffling a deck of genetic cards so that the next generation happens to have a different genotype than its parents. And as for Phenotype? From an evolutionary standpoint, in the mind of the biologist, that doesn’t account for anything. Our expression, our impulses, our responses—these are just the raw probability that goes into deck shuffling.

A stream of consciousness is not adequate. A study of evolution, activity and progress are not adequate. We must observe the echoes, the interactions, and the impulses of humanity. While creating a convolution reverb program, great care is taken to capture the subtle variations of each unique room; new sounds will be created and mathematically placed in the likenesses of these virtual rooms once all the proper measurements have been taken. Sine waves are sounded and microphones pointed in all directions record the nuance of each rooms reflections; the room echoes back. It speaks. The creators of convolution reverb are the forerunners to the next philosophical epoch of history. Convolution is appreciated by them. It is measured, studied, copied and simulated by them. For these mighty beings, convolution isn't a watchword for outrageous or impossible directions. One must not say, henceforth, "This is convoluted, therefore beyond understanding..." Instead, one must begin here, where convolution is our most elementary and binding principle. Just acknowledging its presence is already such a radical sum of understanding, one nearly shudders in horror: a snake coiled in on itself: To those who say, "This philosophy is negative", we reply, "Thinking is nothing at all, if it is not first a negation of being. As I negate, I am not; As I think, being is exiled. To understand convolution is already an act of unraveling..."

In our worship of convolution, madness shall be our Messiah.

Day

I spent entirely too much money to read a doctoral thesis on "Nihilism and the Sublime Post-modern". I think I calculated the cost to be about two dollars a page, not including the shipping charges. The essay helped to confirm my intuition that romanticism is indeed alive and well in the hearts of anti-humanist, disillusioned thinkers. Half of their Rhetoric is anti-Romanticism—and that is how you will identify them. Every page declares the impossibility of transcendence; the impossibility of success; the impossibility of lasting love; the impossibility of catching hold of the moon. It puts poetry beside the dung heap in the sunset and near the putrefying edge of a farmyard pond. Many of the existentialists fall under this broad category; a category I would like to call "Disquiet Romanticism". It deserves to be entirely its own genre. Negative inflations and hopes of thorn crowns abound once its grip overtakes us. Taken at its face value, or by the

value the artists themselves ascribe to it, one would refrain from calling these creations romantic because of their strong arguments to the contrary; some of them even have a very advanced degree of humility and resignation toward the world...but that resignation is entirely out of proportion with the necessities of life. Leave the stoics alone...but if you come upon a stoic poet, you may actually have discovered a disquiet romantic—a man who feels and hopes in terms of dreams and sensuality, but who lives factually and within carefully constrained limits. To be sure, Nietzsche had a few symptoms of the “Romantic Disquiet”, but they never amounted to more than a few coughing fits and an occasional nasal congestion of romanticism. Nietzsche is the bridge between the nihilistic sublime and the dayspring health of the tragic sublime. The way between is narrow. Many artistic careers do nothing but alternate back and forth between these two abysmal cliffs.

Fernando Pessoa is a curious combination of sublime and mundane talents. Pessoa reminds us of the focused energy in the character of a microphone whose impedance has been mismatched in a tonefully pleasing, warming way—ribbon-like almost. From the point of view of an electrical engineer—for the sake of our microphone analogy—the pairing is an utter waste of current and a testament to infidelity. Meanwhile, to the audio engineers who assess with their ears alone, this new combination is a wonderful discovery. They are in awe over the happy accident created by this unlikely mathematical pairing. Pessoa wins the sublime through negation, emptiness and the hopeless grandeur of the dreams he is too weary to attempt. To win back the sublime from nihilism? Can it be so? A sense of Romanticism from disquiet thoughts only?

Pessoa expands and contracts; rises and diminishes. His moments of lucidity and enthusiasm are pulled back down to earth by his resignation, his social anxiety and his sense of futility. We do not list these as if there were faults in need of corrections—only middle school teachers do that—we instead count them as part of his entire, necessary character. They are synchronous with his virtues; these seeming weaknesses actually contain some of his virtue’s potency. Without them he would not be completely himself. Besides, it often occurs that our fictional characters are either a little ahead of us or a little behind us in their development; those that come before, give us examples; those that we have gotten beyond make known to us where we have been and come from. There are always new modes and new monsters approaching and departing...

Day

I tried to read Alain Badiou. Perhaps I might have agreed with him if I had been capable of him...and perhaps I still am capable of him...yet...I don't want to be. Willfully, I don't want to be. If doctoral philosophy needs special instruments and terms that cease to resemble life, then that type of philosophy ought to begin by convincing me that its method is as good as its conclusions. I fear that I would become instantly ashamed of myself and all that I have said and done, if I ever caught a man such as Badiou reading one of my poems, on the sly...perhaps in the same manner that Plato read Aristophanes—hiding the book under his pillow to await a brief moment of safety...or weakness.

Philosophy ought to get as close to life as possible; instead of burrowing as deeply as possible under the mole hills of conceptions, it should admit as many new points of departure as it can. Epistemology shouldn't debate what "counts" as knowledge it should dumbly accept even phenomena that seem to be almost the opposite of knowledge. Kierkegaard, for instance, is not a very good philosopher, but in the end, that only makes him a more interesting specimen *for* philosophy.

Day

A Way beside Swans:

Proust's seven volume novel, Remembrance of Things Past, contains over two thousand characters. Despite being a work of fiction, most of Proust's characters (perhaps all of them) are based on real people he met during his life. When asked to comment upon his style of writing, he emphasized his strategy as, "Creative wrong-memory", meaning, he reconstituted the details of his own life's events and used creativity to supply the missing pieces or lacuna in his mind. A focused attempt to remember things and describe things exactly how they happened, while also staying true (as much as possible) to the reasons those things came about, Proust stumbles upon a stylistic formula which very few authors have been able to successfully duplicate. One feels the creative aspect of his writing is constantly overshadowed and pushed down by the style and proportions of actual observation; that when he does finally have use of fabricating

something, he feels the need to maintain or mimic these previous boundaries: imagine a novelist schooled by the discipline of photography, while yearning also to be a landscape painter.

Though Proust had the skill to write fiction, his most intense literary outputs were semi-autobiographical and realistic. He usually abstained from plots, or if one is able to follow the thread of one, these events are such convoluted emotional observations, bursting at the seams with overwhelming details, that the simple *act of perceiving* takes priority. Each episode of the characters life seems like the static non-adventure of a wall clock or a coat rack. Despite the vividness of the character's eyesight, his course of development remains negligible or utterly unimportant.

Now the decisive question: *Why would a talented writer ignore the infinite depths of creativity, which Proust obviously possessed, and shun them in favor of describing, in detail, various tea parties, complaints about his mother and childhood memories?*

When we write, we all do a bit of heart-work. We each do our best to reverse our own weaknesses. If we have the attentiveness to discover them, then we have already done half the work; and if we can re-forged these broken weapons using the leftover materials of our remaining strengths we feel an inner sense of equilibrium returning. For Proust, the perceiving and intuiting capacities of his mind are so daunting that the return journey, back toward the embrace of the momentary and the sensual aspect of the here and now seem to be of far greater urgency than the will to create new visions. What is it we do when we create a falsity, a doppelganger or symbol out of our own reality? What is accomplished by creativity? The answer to this question should not be treated as holy or privileged. An honest, matter of fact explanation is needed, and I shall supply it: *Creativity nourishes or supplements our deficiency in the categories of perception and intuition.* While our minds are still working out the complex details of a thoughtful conclusion, we see in our imaginations the twilight approach of several strange messengers; if we can but recognize bits and pieces of these messengers, we do a great deal in the way of helping our subconscious mind finish its creative task toward reality discernment. The potency of a symbol holds far more truth than we realize. Our minds never *finish* a symbol.

With Proust, there can be no desire for fantasy...even for a man confined to the house of his parents and surrounded by what must have been a plentiful library of fictional works, there is for him, no desire to create any more than what already exists...*why so?* Because Proust's capacity for intuition has more thirst than all lakes before him. Before he even begins to live, Proust is already defeated by the inexhaustible mental web he's spinning about the tablecloth and cake crumbs during breakfast. His paralysis of sight alienates him from the world of activities, events and adventures. For Proust, the cake crumbs *are an adventure*. He does not complain about his gift, so much as he genuinely enjoys it...yet to us, as observers, we see in him a troubled longing to regain or discover the world in its native proportion and usefulness: realism is a means to that. One might even say: superficiality is a means to that. Depth and profundity like to be discarded and forgotten in the shallow streams of frivolous detail. Proust's unconscious goal of life is to become more *inattentive, more glib, and more exterior*. An unfinished pencil sketch would seem beautiful to him, and he wouldn't know why exactly.

Day

Whatever integrity I may have found in self-knowledge and pattern seeking, I hereby give up in favor of superficiality and appearance seeking. I want the extroverted world. I want the shallow victory of presentation—to hell with depth and profundity! None of my profundity will ever be rewarded with a kiss. Thirty years of bad faith and stupid experiments can all be recanted in a single breath. My futility leaves me in a sigh that almost whistles, like the sound horses and pigs grow accustomed to as they feed next to the knotted holes and streams of light that burst in through old barn doors. My futility whistles and sighs as inner profundity turns outward and begins learning through appearance and dissimulation. Bathed in mud or decorated in animal feathers, I'll pretend to be an emperor with a new robe...and when the world hardly notices, I'll count that as the beginning of my success. Mediocrity is miles and miles ahead of profundity, in terms of wardrobe.

What could I possibly want with nakedness? Nakedness too much resembles profundity.

Part VIII
Tempest Music

Day

The words of Shakespeare drip and ooze intuition at every second. They are so attuned to actuality they succeed in amplifying the brute clarity of exactly this moment of possibility and meaning. Images advance and suggest in such a gentle way, that you might miss them if you read too quickly. Everything points a little beyond itself, but with a little thought, one notices these “hints” never feel artful or superfluous because they reach toward concrete realities not far off. In Shakespeare, Philosophy is mostly forsaken for a certain, contrary direction or, shall we say, meta-knowledge. There is no journey of importance when the outcome is already known...one must only be able to present each detail in a wholesome, nourishing way. Poetry is the food of the moment: the instantaneous wonder of beholding.

Day

“What cries will sound, when you have learned the evil yet in store!”

-Prometheus Bound by Aeschylus

Shakespeare and the Bible. You can find them in almost every home. No one reads either one. I would venture to say they are the two most un-read works in print. What is this fascination we have with un-readable books? Though one may be said to *read* a play, or a chapter, no one sits down and plows through the whole of these god-awful brutes. In my copy of Shakespeare, the *Tempest* is the first play. Being nearly the last thing the old bard wrote, some idiot thought it best to put it first. So much for my ambition to tackle the genius of English letters entire; The first play in my edition lays bare the grossest errors and habitual tedium of the play-write. I’ve heard it said that Shakespeare’s latter plays are ‘immortality visions’, but this reasoning only explains away so much...only excuses so much. Strength in numbers or unanimous popularity cannot trump the singular discernment of the honest individual. The Tempest is not a comedy or a tragedy; it is an impotence play—castrate and neuter. Not a farewell to the stage but a flaccid appendage to several other great things which, sadly had their time earlier. The apology in the epilogue is shame and embarrassment in sexual dis-function. Prospero *tries* to conjure up a

tempest, but, though his spirit Ariel is a willing servant, his body, Caliban mutinies against him. In the end, the tempest has thwarted nothing, punished nothing, absolved no one and made the senile forgetfulness of the elderly an ethic for all. Character should be destiny, but, with too pervasive a forgiveness, even the apprehended conspirators are let go to plot their evil designs another time. Shakespeare and Prospero are both beyond caring about the “Character” of others by this point, for they are too self-consumed and dwelling upon their own impotence in health and in the weak philosophies that have mastered them; We see demonstrated their newfound impotence as leaders, as writers, as sorcerers and Christianity seems to be the balm to mend all diseases, for deeds done well are nothing against the deeds done in the spirit of “Popular Sentiment”.

Popular sentiment says it would take, of all books written, the Bible and the complete works of Shakespeare along with them if they were forced onto some dessert island alone. The irony here is priceless. The bible, or any religion for that matter, is null the moment one is alone. Religion maintains the traditions, the moral precepts and the cultural traditions of a specific tribe (whether the tribe consists finally in the entire population of the world but me is of no concern, for it is merely, the ‘conquering’ tribe and its special prejudices that have won out) and without other humans on our island, there can be no community and remembrance of traditions, and, as such, these would serve only to augment the loss already suffered.

As for Shakespeare and his tempest, he too wants nothing of the island. The island is a barren waste. He would forsake his own humanness and his cultivated art itself for the chance of escaping back to human company, so valued is it to him. (for does not a man’s genius put him on an island, and a man’s weakness link him up once more with the more universal in mankind?) Prospero would abjure his dark art and forsake vengeance in order to be re-united with people once again. All that would define him as a man is brushed aside in hope of homeland shores. Imagine if you *had* taken Shakespeare with you to your deserted island and The Tempest was the last play you read of it. Now What? What a horrible preface to the rest of your stay in exile from mankind! You too would give up your daughter twice over to escape. Your “Brave New World” would be the instant you discovered the content of what you never otherwise would have known—a poetic awakening to what you yourself had lost! The ugly question re-phrased becomes “Who would best accompany you to a desert island and what

would they tell you about the prospective merit or futility of your exile? What is it they would say, about that which you had lost?" If you answer "Shakespeare," your self-made hell might even be one chain-link heavier and more hateful than those of Lucifer himself. Congratulations, you have been condemned because of your IGNORANCE of Shakespeare and not out of your vast learning or popular scholarly sentiment. I would have Chosen Epicurus, Thomas Merton, Camus or De Sade—at least they are in harmony with the Desert and the prison cell!

Again, what is this fascination with un-readable books? Tolstoy's War and Peace, or Proust's seven volume Time Wasted, (or what tenth grader or adult now and past tenth grader cannot help remembering Melville's Moby Dick, unnaturally thrust upon them like white whale's teeth for small limbs; too young an age to understand, and if understanding at age 16, how much worse the rest of one's life for it, if made to follow the *vanitas* of the stoics and kill life's passionate fires before one has even known a woman—for Moby Dick is not an adventure, it is a static meditation with adventure as its excuse) or, more recently, Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow; I am mesmerized by it; it makes no sense, but I can't put it down, nor can I finish it. Were I to live another ten thousand years beyond my life I could not write a better book nor could I write a worse book—and that is its genius, ratiocinative meditation cannot duplicate its errors or its ecstasies, hence, it has transport. I even remember reading every single word of Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged. Some contest with scholarship-prize-money continues to lure in high-school age children to its brainwashing idiot babble. Mythically sound, it may be in its most abstract idea (the perpetual motion engine is the human heart, beyond the reach of all *human* endeavor) but its author does not have the slightest grasp on this reality or her own. She makes her followers into a mindless cult.

By and large, the merit of literature is a questionable one; offering on the one hand a beauteous panorama of life experiences, it also risks the peculiar inanities of its peculiar authors.

Have you ever read a "Best-seller"? I vomit several times over before I finish the first page. And then, of course, there is the pretense of having awareness or ties to the so-called "important authors". I read the first page of a roommate's copy of "The Tenth Circle" some trite crap about an abducted child or some such sensational nonsense and

before the book even starts, the author, (as she so boldly calls herself) thanks, among others, her research team and a fellow scholar for helping her “brush up” on Dante so she could make a few references (how historic!!) and give her dull novel an alluring title with coffee-table appeal. Ooooh, the 10th circle, how dark indeed mademoiselle (profit-weasel-bad pun intended; the lowest humor for the lowest moods!). Then there are all these forceful metaphors that are merely the demonstration of “Speaking metaphorically” and textbook similes without force or symbolic signification toward a higher meaning or a more active unconscious life. I found the forced nature of page 1 to be more bleak and empty than serious existential literature that purposely, (As Proust explicitly warns against in fact) tears the individual away from all contexts and past emotional ties to its environment and succeeds in emptying the world of any possibility of future meaning or poetic (irrational) enjoyment.

With the sensationalism of a 10 o’clock news brief, this female author begins with (gasp) the missing child and the emotional toll (imagined and faked for our benefit, just as we might ask an idiot bystander to say something dull and obvious about a fire across the street as the video producer so conveniently cuts to a scene of the actual fire while the idiot is still saying something like “Aw..schucks, it looked reel hot an’ it burnt a reel long time 'fore anyone put it out”) and oddly, the bare facticity presented to us actually robs us of the remote significance of life; the subtleties that are beyond speech or description, and the act of faking, or staging just makes the human existent obsolesce one step further into a mechanized world beyond oneself and the meanings derived from our labors or our special loves. Alienated from the products of our work, from the motives of our education, from the insight of true art, we must ban together and look upon works like “the 10th circle” as PERFECT art; perfect for our time. A perfect exemplar of a hell that transcends even the awareness of its author. The 10th circle is not so much a trite book (which I have not read, nor will I read beyond its "thank you research team" page and its ‘gritty’ page 1) ((gritty for the stoner teenage girl that was reading it)) But a book that is as much an irony as taking Shakespeare to a desert island. You fools! You’re already here!

“This is hell, nor am I out of it!” Quoth Marlowe ((Thanks research team; I’m glad someone on Earth enjoyed poetry enough to remember a single line when applicable; Christ!))

Have you considered the other side? Have you felt the abyss looking into you as I have? Have you glimpsed at paradises unworldly, only to better know the Satanic afterward? Felt the pang of deeper solitude only *after* knowing the sympathy of kisses, as if, the kisses themselves were the thing satanic and to possess care at all, only a feeble mortal undoing? And further still, if you would listen to a man listing his nebulous complaints, have you ever beheld what you thought were the hidden seams of destiny worn through with use along side all that is new, and useful and shiny—at perhaps the outer rims of a giant, all-enveloping atmosphere which seemed to you only a fake prop set reality or a superficial glaze as transparent as any religious hypocrisy? More simply, I ask you, have you seen the world as the dead-hearted, courageous ones have seen it, for to see it, one must first be possessed of two things: honesty and relentless bravery, well beyond the point of total disintegration and social annihilation(—which, at final assessment, in no way helps the individual at all and one would call him fool for being so resolved upon his own destruction, were it not for the paradises he has almost touched, and brought back with him in the form of verse—I am speaking of the poet’s hell. In the realm of consciousness there is no further descent than the pursuit of being. Laugh as you will, as you are able, as you are allowed, as you are so justified in the mirth of ignorance, but be weary too, for laughter betrays the very seams of which I speak, and I, along with the comedians and the philosophers, will not shrink to call them, these—“seams of realities undoing”—absurd.

Life, it seems, would rent all seams, and look upon nakedness; nakedness is arresting. Death and sex are arresting. The erotic is at home in the void in which all other disciplines are drowned like a defeated ship (colossal forethought and titanic rationality cannot but breed ice burs. Irrational, self-possessed aspiration against mankind’s inherited chaos also beckons this very same “convergence of the twain”, so between Ahab and Hardy, the poet Lucifer must waste away, continually thrust out of heaven’s grace.)

In exile from the world contained in seams, my solitude and my longing are couched in this erotic, destructive, nihilistic void of un-hope. Communication cannot be anything but creative and affirming, but these words will not discover, nor will they vanquish the obdurate stares and silent, living-deaths I so often asphyxiate in. It is likely they will in fact do quite the opposite of what I intend, but it is my hope they bring you to the places I have been.

For your own great benefit? No.

This bit of madness is as profitable to life as total asceticism. Living here, in a book such as this one, is the Eternal “No”. The unrelenting pessimism. The spirit who denies and who “throws across” curses; The Blasphemer. The Adversary. (*Diabolien*)

For my part, I cannot explain or see any possible route to explaining the utility of descent literature. Each is like a spoilt ending. A plot secret given away at the wrong time, perhaps just as we were beginning to enjoy it. The pervasive sentiment is “un-doing”, disharmony, wrong-ness—All the better if it is irreparable wrong-ness, as *Wurthering Heights*, as *Paradise lost*, as *La Nausea*, as *The Idiot*, as *The Bachae*, as *Oedipus at Colonus*, as *Bread and Wine*, as *Moby dick*—as—even he—Jesus.

For evil’s sake, you can begin to see who I am allied with, even in my small learning and limited reading (myself being yet still a young man) you begin to see the kaleidoscopic eyes I am doomed to view the world through. As glass, as mirrors with colored walls and nauseating patterns, repeating ad infinitum, it seems reality is still crashing down at this moment and I am suspended; the moment of shattered glass, continually; this is where I dwell.

And how does one leave the island from here? Does one want to? To re-join their conspiracies, their kingdoms, their daughters and their wars? Why not stay on the void island with its volcanic quaking and tempest music? Hardy did. Merton did. Epicure did. Of the ones who returned, they did not return the same. Dostoyevsky from Siberia; Sartre from the prison camp; Melville from his continent hopping, and Silone exiled to Switzerland; returning is harder than staying put.

Along with the great ones of past generations (for time is but the only measure of greatness, though, keeping pace with it, is, of course, the indifference of forgetfulness) we too are drawn to the descent and we *know* it is a dead end. What profit it a man to gain the whole world if he should loose his soul in the process? King Midas is a descent. Moreover, what profit it a man to bless the world entire, if he should loose the most precious thing of all, his life? (*Alcestis’* love is too dutiful.) Prometheus is thereby not so different than Christ—do not both aspire beyond their sphere and bring calamity upon ones person?

The grace in both is the total immersion and awareness of their own import and its consequence.

“All that came to pass, I knew” quoth Prometheus, and yet the burden will not always be his; it will settle on others in time, for “Woe is ever wandering”. If his Godhead is not sustained, as it is, for what it represents, another will replace it, not with a different revelation, but with the very same revelation, and this, most certainly, is also the content of what Aeschylus knew. Dim hopes; blind, faint, obscure, “In Tenebris”, these are of the tribe brought to men’s hearts’ from Prometheus. We too often remember the gift of fire, but, alas, the gift of forgetfulness is the worthier gift. Though we may ponder the symbolic “gifts” of Prometheus, the most important of all is what he chooses not to give—though he can see the entire course of the human future, he does not make it known, and he does this for our sakes—

“One that is on no account to be made known...for only if I keep it safe shall I escape these shameful bonds and suffering”

Is this not Aeschylus himself speaking to us of his own life? As if to say, “As the tortured creator and visionary, Art is the proper limitation of my own grief and that which should be communicated to others, the rest, the bitterest truths, must be hid so the digestible portions of insight can be distributed. The morality of my art is technique, and as consequence, my being and my theme are synonymous. I, Aeschylus, keep it safe, and only thereby, do I, Aeschylus, escape these same woes.”

If Descent literature is curiously missing its unity or harmony, at least it is satisfying...somehow. By comparison, look back at The Tempest, and compare it to Prometheus Bound. We would rather Prometheus be tortured for all time than for Prospero to give up. How unlike the one hero is to the other. Recall how Prometheus says of Zeus,

***“I am unheeding as the sea...
That I would beg the object of my savage hate
To free me from these bonds with hands held meekly up
In Woman’s fashion; I shall never come to that!”***

Shakespeare’s Epilogue to The Tempest is much grayer, much more aged, and not of maturity, but the weakness of physical decline.

If we can put the two side by side, we begin to imagine Ariel as a “Prometheus UN-bound” and Prospero as a Zeus humiliated. He cannot wed Io (Miranda). He must give her up. Of Mercy, Aeschylus is no stranger. Witness:

Prometheus: Oh, Pity!

Hermes: Zeus knows not the meaning of that word.

Prometheus: Time in its aging teaches us what all things mean.

Between the un-yielding masculine personas’ of Zeus and Prometheus, Aeschylus is missing a yielding, feminine protagonist that resolves conflict. Shakespeare makes this oversight his supreme indulgence, but perhaps, too actively to be believable, for the yielding feminine has no calculations or over-arching designs. It is not a mechanism, but a failure of other, rational mechanisms having run their natural course toward derailment and futility. The yielding feminine is by contrast, a tide that turns from fury to calm of itself. It satisfies our desire and claims no allegiance to having spawned them. The peace of catharsis is as music is—nameless, demandless.

Yesterday I fell asleep downstairs in my bed to the voice of a teenage girl upstairs babbling about “true love” and saying such idiocies as “Well, if he were my true, true love, he would...” and she continued in her little sophisms, absently unaware of the “True, true” mechanism of human exchange—namely—desire and the erotic element of existence that cannot be named or calculated without its loosing its own essence—She cannot know her “True true love” if she does not know her “True true self”, for *they* are synonymous. Shakespeare, the giant of English letters, could be said to possess, (in The Tempest at least) The same fault as an empty-headed teenage girl. We would like to shake the old bards corpse in his grave and scream at him, “Mercy has not yet righted the world old man! You were a fool to think so!” If not for that superfluous Epilogue, we might have let the matter rest as a fault of Prospero’s and not Shakespeare’s, but it remains in its awful ugliness, so our maddening scorn continues.

Day

What begins as a plea for justice always begins to wax totalitarian and, in the end becomes the rhetoric of tyrants building prison camps. I share in their zeal. Fragmented, I am only still mustering the raw materials of the slave ship—for myself as sole captive, before the sequestered jury of personal memories, not unlike Rousseau's Confessions.

The Republic of a philosopher king is, in the end, an empty wasteland of segregated components, disengaged from dreams and aspiring visions; a damning up of the torrential rivers of essential life; a seething, burning antiseptic that bubbles over the deep wound of diversity and purges it...and if it be a slave ship, it is the restraint of these natural passions that fuel it onward. Notice how movement and change are my theme, yet, I stand pat. I do not resemble life. I am outside it. Like a frozen shell, this sculpture, is almost a man, but very like a dead thing. Often I am this dead thing that the outer world cannot peer into or imagine. I need no melodrama to recall the anguish of work. Being "utilized" against my will and my creativity. Showering, and staring at the tiles, just standing there, and not even the soothing warmth of water penetrates my already decided ambivalence. I stare and I stare and I am not alive in anguish. So alien is this stream of thought herein contained, one cannot get across the proper thing; These words create the opposite of what I intend, for they are unity, they are reflection only—not chaos. These words more resemble the soothing waters that washed over me in the shower on the day I stared and my jaw locked and my face frowned, for I knew the next eight hours would not be my own, and that sleep would follow from the exhaustion of work and there would be no friendly intercourse, even in my dreams, for my dreams are also of work and the dread before my personal future of anguish, and walking, and staring and still being forced to live another day, while knowing, all the while, it could have been otherwise, for worst of all, I HAVE IMAGINED OTHERWISE.

This is but mania also. And as mania, it has its own limits. It seems creative. It seems an altogether different personality. A different self than the one who walks to work and walks home at night, and trudges and thinks and breathes in hatred and sees how unlike himself are the beings who surround him, who manipulate him and his freedom; how they demand his service, and more hurtfully, demand his very demeanor conform to their kindness and their hopes and their

excitements, which, are for him, very long since dead. He feels like a foreigner here. Likewise, the ones he has a fondness for are the immigrants he works with. The Chinaman who speaks broken English and is mostly silent or laughing with him at common observation alone; or the young, pregnant Eastern-European who understands speech but hardly says a word, and because she works like a mule to shame the rest, we know she understands us.

Much too personal are my own references and symbols. They are recent. They are my own. Some kinds of writing may be forced (and force is forgivable) but there are no forced symbols. What associations I own, I only possess by accident. Emotions are the farce I keep participating in by accident. Always a surprise, there are no conclusions, only passing meanings. I do not create them, I pass through them. Their symbolic parts may transcend my temporality, but they are not intrinsic or absolute. They may *translate* to others, but they do not interpret or dictate. They are, as all things, borne of relation. (That other brand of duality-Relativism is a thing for bad philosophers and physicists.)

Is our music confused then? Like that of Io from Prometheus Bound? Do we hear the Shepard's pipes answering low with a melody that perhaps would lull away our pain if we did not mistake them for the "menace of the gadfly", provoking both our madness and our anguish still further?

Something too much of this. Philosophy and critiques of other literature are not creative or original. They are like being at the orchestra and sitting next to one who is over-excited and says to you, or blurts out rather, "Did you hear that? Did you mark that there, just now?" –as if you had been away or deaf at only the precise moment of his revelation, and because he possesses ears, he takes it for his own brilliant idea, though he, as you, are only spectators disrupting what has not yet even finished. I fear, this business of Tempests and Music is only an introduction or a prelude to what is to come; perhaps even, regrettably, in seven hefty volumes of wasted time...

Day

Perhaps we are closer to some lengthy creation—thoughts, images, symbols, ideas come together in a tempest of passion and lucidity and I want to write my definitive essay on Art and Nihilism...or maybe instead some new dramatic play. I confess to reading the tempest in entirety yesterday and mostly hating it for more reasons than I can list briefly here, but then G. Wilson Knight's essay, The Christian Renaissance popped into my head and I began seeing in a more poetic light. I withdrew my modern scrutiny—for what is modern is necessarily less forgiving, less poetic...less sentimental. I am use to reading critiques that make certain assumptions about our condition; drastic critiques that demand some concomitant amount of desperation and, psychologically connected to this demand, there lies the urge to suddenly deal more justly with existence in a more rational way, divorced from gilded imaginings, drunken loves, or symbolic suggestions. Chiefly, the modern cannot tolerate "Miranda"; Cannot tolerate her "beauteous mankind", we instead need Miranda Rights—"Tis new to you" quoth Prospero..."and you have the right to remain silent if your un-poetic reality is incongruent with the entertainments at hand. Artists must create in full awareness that what they say can and will be used against them in the highest court of all—the trial of our own existence and its consummate realities. Here of course, is the fatal paradox: the artist will surely skip steps and offer what has "worked" while negating some other important human realities, and, in the case of The Tempest, what is missing—namely high comedy and high tragedy both, in their traditional sense—upsets our usual Shakespearian tastes and we are left with something bland, banal, dull, lifeless, moralizing, unconvincing, and dare we say, Anti-human?

Yes, Prospero's daughter will give birth to the new kings of Naples, making Prospero the grandfather of kings, but all of this is conveniently kept from mention; Shakespeare implies it, but allows the lovers love to be their motive while the entire future is in fact contingent upon the father's decision. Cause and effect blur. We cannot know whether the whole farce shall advance from the passions of the ignorant youths or the malignant tinkering of the sorcerer who makes especial provisions for the sake of his lineage. Perhaps there is a bit of the lovers motive in the old wizard. More so than the urge to revenge or destruction, he is and has been, a father to a creative force: His daughter. She embodies the abstruse directionality of his passion and his human pattern no less than the conjurations of his black art. So

intertwined are the two, that he makes for a poor judge and an even worse executor of punishments due. Something of Hamlet's paralysis is in him, and if he cannot succumb to blind negation or outright destruction, a certain creative love tells him something vague about his own essence. G. Wilson Knight sees Shakespeare's later plays as "immortality visions". For our part, we feel that existential sympathies are lacking in The Tempest, (specifically the bleak realities of human relationships) but we must be quick to point out that, in place of realism, Shakespeare has consciously (or unconsciously) repaired the deficiency with poetic necessities: Supplanted poetic necessity in the place of realism. All too common, all too human, we see the herd morality here, and even, dare we say, the idiot morality that wants happy endings because of its hereditary feebleness of both mind and spirit? Such a temperament that cannot stomach or sustain the Greek exuberance of tragic vision? Our humanness is painted over sloppily when conflicts are evaded and given sham resolutions. Reasonable solutions put muzzles over a great many psychological realities. Total forgiveness becomes total negation in its turn: lifeless, repugnant solutions: solutions a living, breathing mortal cringes at...but here, Prospero, (and perhaps Shakespeare behind him) goes from a speech on the in-substantial essence of palaces and holy temples, (likening all that the earth inherits to dreams or a reality rounded on all sides by sleep...that is to say, nothingness) and concluding this speech, with heavy heart, and presumably with a great myriad of churning thoughts within his old brain, we are left with a sour taste in our mouths at Shakespeare's "oh so bland" ending to so excellent, (although brief) a speech. The elaborate nature of the entire setup on the island, with its magic and its possibilities for unlimited retribution are abruptly balked.

Though puzzled, we might find our answer, (as we hope and assume the bard did as well) in the possibility (or infinite possibilities) of what could have unfolded instead. Imagine for a moment, not Prospero—the father—but DeSade or Epicurus on the island to himself. DeSade's revenge would have been unlimited, whereas Epicurus would have simply ignored the passing ship and lived contentedly, happy to have found an island to himself where his enemies could no longer reach him. In both cases there is no escape from the island, no abdication from magic (or philosophy) or the absolute tyranny we possess in solitude. A return to human terms, human sympathies, human futures and human societies must be the secret meaning of Prospero's unlimited forgiveness...perhaps even why Post-Black metal

music sounds almost ashamed as to the nature of its new direction and hope...but that observation has no context here.

With Prospero we see a new excess replace the old excess. Colossal vengeance has become lunatic generosity. (Echoes of Timon resound in reverse!) In the attempt to rejoin society and leave the island of sorcery and solitude, have we mistakenly invoked a new sorcery? A divine idea of forgiveness which in fact degrades the very nature and creative force of the original tempest? The scene is almost bordering on high comedy when Prospero refers to his brother as a deceiver when in fact he has done nothing but act as a deceiver himself via his magic from the opening moments of the play; and then worse yet, in the superfluous epilogue, says clearly—there can be no mistaking it—“And pardon’d the deceiver” further asks us to pardon him since he has pardoned his brother. This turns the Cain and able story on its head, but at least Cain acted honestly—humanly. So by such a turn what are we to make of Shakespeare’s choice? (The word deceiver never had such a self-conscious emphasis until Shakespeare took up the Christian Ethos; Does this attitude grieve his better judgment?)

The answer, as Shakespeare grants it, is of course a poetic notion which *chooses* to gloss over the ugly, discard the un-resolvable Gordian knot of human conflicts, and offer blandly, and in accordance with the popular morality of both then and now, a graceful withdrawal. He lets go frustration and contempt for his fellow man and the universe at large.

The rare few that prefer “grief and sorrow” to “still embrace his heart that doth not wish joy”, they will keep to their rebellion with a courage and a measure of fortitude unknown to the joyous, and preserve a joy, (albeit a dark joy) in an essential Confucian-like doom that envelopes our existence entire from the present to the past and toward the unending human future; it will decline laughter and mirth—not from misanthropy or adolescent rebellion, or even hard hearted bitterness, but rather from a very mature sense of love that sees past the meager portions left over from wedding and funeral feasts. “Tis new to you” Miranda! To us, it is old; very old. And this new conclusion to the tempest will not escape further tempests—even Miranda, at chess sees the latent ambition by which her new lover Ferdinand plays the game of conquest, for she, innocent and ignorant as she is, still has that keen feminine sense that knows the masculine in simply contrasting it

with herself: so it is that even the woman who has, as yet, only her father and husband to be, apart from all the other men and women of the world, knows, as if by prophecy, that Ferdinand contains a force of will entirely alien to her; destined to differentiate itself further, to her own grief and disdain even though he would fain assure her otherwise. Erotically, the danger of it probably attracts her as well, though she does not even know it yet. One word more about our empty character, Miranda: she is prophetic in two directions: 1) she embodies not just her own youth, but all youth to come that arises in ignorance and, perhaps more importantly, 2) displays the true nature of prophecy—not the mystical insight afforded directly by a preferential deity, but rather the non-mystical, totally concrete awareness of the present that cannot but declare profundities by its mere oblivious stupidity—she states the obvious! We, however, in our intellectualizing and scheming and our calculating, often overlook exactly the obvious and un-veiled aspects of life.

Miranda has side-tracked us, as well she should! Being de-railed at times is an opportunity to reflect. Before we reach the bland ending, and before discussing further the mysterious, unconscious calculations being made by the bard behind the scenes, we return to our “de-railed” Ferdinand at seeing the sorcerer Prospero “in a passion”. From projecting spirit forms to abruptly ceasing, and then reading from Ferdinand’s dismay his own symbolic emptiness, dread and uneasiness regarding the ephemerality of things, we witness that he too is vexed. Much more so than he has before realized. His first act is passionate and wrathful. Again, prophetically, his words to Ariel, “Lay at my mercy all of my enemies” (Echoes Psalms from the Old Testament!) and though there is no wreak of a tyrannical victory at the conclusion, we ask ourselves why indeed should there be, for Prospero reaps a tyrannical victory no less unlimited than slaughter or mass genocide: his magic absolutely rules his enemies and binds them in phantasmal chains? Why not add to that the gratifications of their love and worship as well? To transform enemies into devotees is a sly addition that masks the wrathful vanity being orchestrated. It is as if Prometheus himself were unbound only to in turn bind up Olympus entire. The one injustice is supremely reversed and repeated. Culpability washes over both sides with its bloody offal. Is this Shakespeare’s vision of human dilemmas? Or is it the unconscious working out of his disgust over the Christian bible; A disgust at the changing persona of the Judeo-Christian God—Jehovah? Is Prospero, Jehovah changing into Christ?

***“Framing him jealous, fierce at first
We gave him justice as the ages rolled
Will to bless those by circumstance accursed
And long sufferings and mercies manifold”***

-Thomas Hardy, *God’s Funeral*

How are we to extricate ourselves without doing what Gonzalo would do—that is, abolish all sovereignty, power, contract, and occupation—that is to say, killing all the human vanities of the ego; the *vanitas* of total emptiness; (here lies the distinction between Gonzalo’s utopia and crass anarchy.) Adeptly, something in Shakespeare already knows his own final fault as early as act II:

“The latter end of the commonwealth forgets the beginning”

The tepid calm forgets the earlier tempest. The change of temper is all too human. Prospero needs only to hear of Gonzalo’s tears to be moved from tyranny, but still, it is too late; the tyranny is already completed. The victory imagined resembles my own idea (perhaps archetype) for the “Total absurd victory contained within the totally absurd demand”—to rule over the universe entire, pronounce the slavery of all creatures, and in addition, for them to love and praise you for this. (This idea is the entire subject matter of one of my other essays...)

Doesn’t Prospero achieve exactly this victory? He gets to be the merciful man-god after (*and this is key!*) not before his ascension over the entire island of his enemies is complete. The cloud that opens after his brutal rage, despite its said intentions, is still eclipsed by a total victory; the very victory he demanded. Now, if he acts merciful to his enemies, or loving to his daughter and her future, this is all just more low gain for Dr. Faustus, is it not? It was cleverness that granted magic to him above his peers and more opportunistic advance that bore his “forgiveness”.

In reality, Prospero is not so great. He was arrested by human needs, not merely (altruistically) by those of others, but also from his own reeling tenderness; this is what Shakespeare has worked out behind the curtain. Too brutal a drama will have no audience, and without an audience the bard himself is lost on his own island of solitude, working his fantastic craft to no avail; For what profit it a man

to have all the magic of hell if he should lose his own true human communion thereby? The magic, like the Sabbath, was made for man, not man for the magic. Man must henceforth beware his own instruments, lest he become a mutilated creature; a device of his own devices.

Is it answered then? Why there are few alternatives to the bard's popular ending? At least with tragedy, character is not so much degraded. With tragedy, character is allowed to become destiny, however harsh, stupid or unmerciful the result may be.

“All things in common nature should produce, without sweat or endeavor.”

And here Gonzalo trumps the play itself. Its better we present all things than to labor too specifically to one moral end or another for the sake of the audience. Does Shakespeare achieve such a result? That may be in question, but his answer is a creative and poetic answer where it could have been, instead, limitlessly destructive and unyielding. What we lose, or find obscured by Shakespeare's “artistic liberty” is the bleak reality of our true condition as human beings, but, let us also recognize along with G. Wilson Knight, that if indeed this was an “immortality play” then there is but one choice and Shakespeare has chosen it. Life must continue living, despite its paradoxes, injustices, schemes, and hypocrisy. Our daughters must wed and we must leave the island of our own contempt. Our philosophies may not forgive us, but they, like our magic, are merely instrumental additions to our lives and we are not utterly ruled by them. If our philosophy does not forgive us, at least our children, by their being allowed to have existence at all, shall forgive what is wavering in our moral decisions. Life must live. Thought, however rigorous, cannot overturn the necessities of life, or else it ceases to be life and for life, and instead becomes an ethos towards death and in favor of death...after all, Shakespeare had daughters, had he not?

Part IX
Poetic Interlude

Traffic Lights

.....

The room chills.
The hissing logs
Refuse to burn.

.....

The saved bottle
With a small portion remaining
Demands a greater and greater occasion
For every hour
It has to wait for you...

Why so great a demand
From such a small portion?

.....

He promised her some time this evening;

Is there anything sweeter

Than awaiting a promise?

.....

The moment I feel exhaustion
overtake my yearning eyelids
I imagine the grave;

A day ending
Bares all the unfinished ambitions
of a lifetime.

Farewell both:
Days and lifetimes.

.....
The way the light catches a wine glass
And keeps it from dissolving away:

Everything fragile wants to be shattered,
Wants you to feel the prolonged excitement
Of not being shattered.

.....
Hunger in the middle of the night
Is a puzzling conflict:

Is the remedy food,
Or sleep?

.....
To hell with the rest!

Give me the poetry of idleness,
of wasted hours,
Sequestered safely away
From human drama.

.....
Is it so wrong if a poet
Cannot look away from the act of poetry?

Isn't there some curious mystery
Within the shell that echoes the ocean?
Put your ear to it.

.....
Cessation at the right moment
is not a grand parade or dance;

It's a habit.

.....

The sun is hours away.
When we awake
it will be half diminished.

Which of us
shall be first to see it
and kiss the other?

.....

I hope they are together.
I like the idea of them together.
She looks so unhappy when she is alone.

.....

Do you see this girl?
She is attractive because she is always
impatient.

I'm not capable of that,
But somehow,
I want to be.

I think it means something.

.....

After the man hauled it away
the vacant spot
seemed glad for its liberation;

As if it had been awaiting it.

.....
Have you ever held a baby rabbit
On the day its eyes open completely?

It jumps from your hand
And flees.

Yesterday, it made no effort.

.....
Failed negation,

Like the shadowy outline of a partial moon.

.....
I sold him the furniture
For his lakeside resort.

I don't miss the chair or the table,

I miss the resort
I haven't seen.

.....
Without income

The cold room and the long hours
Have a way of summoning
Past trials

Which no longer have meaning.

.....
Everything that resembles strength
Ambition, will or power

Must grow from a soil
Well fertilized with naiveté

.....
Together we stared a long time
At the first dent in our grand piano.

Our stomachs twist
our heads feel dizzy even.
.....

He accomplishes very little—

But why should it follow
That he is exhausted?

Maybe the effort
is still being exerted.
.....

Like the repetition of traffic lights,

We do not await something different,
We cringe at what is expected...

Look how it grips us!

Like the repetition of traffic lights,

Narration that lacks suspense
Excels in honesty.
.....

If joy should bloom unexpected,
To sway and steer the hexed and wretched
From the paths they've always known,
What judgment can I render
If changeability should eclipse
A hall of heroes with a drunkard's lyric
Sweet and fragile?

If joy should bloom unexpected
To sway and steer the hexed and wretched
From the paths they've always known,
I shall not fear to tread
Where cloud and tear and shadow thicken
Over slow decay—

Look out upon this happy earth
Look how the dreary souls
Seem transformed!

Indifferently,
I switch back and forth
Upon my Greenmire Way.

.....

More effort and more refinement ruin what is already pleasing.
Let a short phrase or gesture suffice.

.....

Passion is the cause of a great many cruelties;
It's a wonder beauty should ever spring from such roots as these.

.....

A yellow-seated swing

Pushed by the wind
In a gentle way

Seems to miss children.

.....

Interrupted—

To slice bread,
Then returning to the task
Of sweeping the floor.

.....
Here I'll keep my tired joy
Where no sun is and no birds fly.

Hanging splendors now fall dumb
And there sits the man

From whence they come.

.....
After friends have departed
And sleeplessness has you gazing
Near a blinking hearth,

You feel assured
In this moment

That no effort will save you from
being ordinary.

the warm bricks,
the grate,
the ash,
the torn rejected page...

The Sudden relief and the Sudden blaze
that feels like truthfulness.

.....
Victory, with small steps

.....
Why is it I smile
At the most hateful things?

Part X
Autistic Time

Day

“Who are the villains?” / “Where is the plot?” / “Is anything happening?”

These questions are a hindrance and a diversion from the course we have chosen; from the task we have chosen. To re-imagine time is also to re-imagine being, and with being, philosophy is white-washed and prepared for its new discipline; a canvas opens up like a body stripping; the tattoo artist smiles—look how much new skin we have to work with!

Day

These ventures fail us...and by that failure of daylight reasoning, we are finally liberated toward the spiral and the recurrence of being. I have never been more aware of my own genius than in this very moment, this very second of the night in which I awake from an early sleep to the sound of an alarm that usually reminds me to stop working and to allow the day to end and dissolve into the mists of irrational dreams; I have never been more aware of my own genius than in this moment as I unscrew the whiskey flask and take several pulls; I have never needed to declare so emphatically my own excellence than in this awkward awakening; finally, I awake with a vision of reality that trumps everything; finally the hidden and ever unfolding nature of heavy moods, takes, briefly, a tangible form with which I may demonstrate and justify myself as the spiritual progeny of Heidegger.

Disregard everything before this entry. It was all but a preparation for what now must either be stamped with the seal of madness or be accepted as philosophy's ultimate direction: To remake time.

Time as we know it must be obliterated and re-imagined as cyclical, involuting, recurrent, re-combinant, destined, mandatory, disruptive and deteriorating. As is characteristic of the western mind, we feel a sense of mastery when we have cordoned and limited things—the western process of definition and explanation amounts to, what should instead rightly be called negation. Language is more often pragmatic than it is philosophical or mystical. When these currents attempt to bestow unto us their sensual gifts, our first reaction is to

push them aside and stamp them with the moniker of merely the “poetic” the “artistic” or even, the “idyllic”. The bias of language is not the only roadblock to a new metaphysical ground or departure point...time also obstructs us. If I can suspend time, I can also suspend mathematics and all the other trappings of daylight reason...are you intrigued? You will soon be very disappointed at my simplicity. You will soon be very disappointed for not having thought of this yourself.

The Dionysian bridge has been crossed. From childhood onward, we have learned to understand time as a phenomenon exactly analogous to what a clock does at every hour of every day, entirely oblivious to our existence. What I deem fit to call, “the additive theory of time” is the definition the world already accepts as not only “real” and “true” but more importantly considers “bureaucratically useful”. Look at all the wondrous uses for time! In order for human beings to organize labor effectively, we *must* hold to this conception of time...Yet, even though this conception is being put to use for human means and ends, this conception cannot suffice to be the complete explanation of time. Some small concessions have been made to diminish the dehumanizing effect of additive time. The perfectly rational and mathematical conception of time is nothing but a system of counting forward. Our calendar *years* demonstrate this notion. Nothing but this notion of forward progress should be acceptable to any culture that not only needs to organize labor, but also wishes to be and continue to maintain the most precise possible account of incremental change in terms of stark duration, and nothing but duration. In my mind, the scientists have not pushed far enough in quantifying this durational concept. All notions of cyclical change or recurrence should be eliminated absolutely. Nothing but a number should remain if we are to be completely accurate and sensible in our Western view of time procedures...yet...this is not so. Our clocks are circular. The twelve hours repeat. Even if we use the twenty-four hour military clock, we must still account for repetition. Still further, we have twelve months in the year, each bearing the name of a mythological god, and these months recur in cycles. We associate “seasonality” and weather phenomena to these months. A completely mathematical sense of time would not profit a farmer or a migrating bird. If we were a prisoner, beneath the earth, starved of sunlight and planetary motion, then perhaps the purely mathematical time would suffice, if, for some reason, we were awaiting nothing but our own liberation from this aforementioned underworld prison where life, as experienced—life as an organic and breathing cycle—did not exist.

There is certain danger in abandoning our old conception of “additive time”. There is also a danger in making our “additive time” into a complete slavery of numbers. Without much deliberation on the subject, we humans have acted prudently and pragmatically in making time not adhere too strictly to either the mathematical or the organic...yet we never find anyone debating this or discussing where exactly we should put the demarcation; or where exactly the emphasis should be shifted.

Here is what I propose: Accept immediately and without argument the current, pedestrian notion of clockwork time. The world needs it, and so, when necessary, allow the caged bird to return to what it knows. My metaphor goes in both directions. If left to itself, the world will never bother much about the impeccable clarity of my words; it will, without surprise, go on wearing wrist watches forever and ever. If the caged bird is at home in its world of bus schedules and punch clocks—let it go to its home. But if a bird of a different color suddenly understands the nature of the cage that has been fashioned for it, or if, more astutely, we approximate our own dilemma, we may wager to point out that we are the very birds that have fashioned our own cage, and forgotten that the key is still sitting on our laps.

Second proposal: Be mindful of the clues waiting to be wrestled and snatched out of our natural sense experience; let existence itself be the way and the path toward a new conception of time. No need to start from scratch. There is much to observe in the small peculiarities of time as it is culturally presented to us. As I mentioned before, the farm calendar, weather patterns, the menstruation cycle, the lunar cycle, the migratory cycle and the notion of repetition are all clues that pull us away from strictly additive time. These occurrences point to the idea that time is only a subordinate tool put to use by a creature that must make “timely” and highly contingent survival decisions based on the demands of naturalistic phenomena. The more we are liberated from the sufferings and dangers of our environment, the more we are free to abolish or “*mathematicize*” time; eliminating its organic necessity or phenomena.

The key notion here is that time, as we define it, currently has a bias that is entirely benign. We hardly notice it. As our culture has changed, this emphasis has also changed. Take careful note of how enmeshed mythology and religious ritual is with “time observation” in

terms of seasonal, agricultural, and migratory efforts. If we possess the philosophical distance to appraise time in terms of *emphasis* then deconstructing and re-constituting new *modes* of time observation becomes merely an exercise in finding and adhering to this, now that, now finally this other arrow which we have egotistically called the magnetic north of our compass.

A step beyond this; a hair's breath farther than the labyrinthine myriad of "creative time notions" always leads us back to ourselves. Heidegger famously tells us that time, such as there is even the possibility of time in any form whatsoever, demands our own existence as sentient intellects. For some inexplicable reason, Heidegger feels, before even beginning his seminal work, that Being and Time are not only related, but must finally be one and the same phenomena; These two differ as they emerge, yet they unfold and progress as if they were synonymous or synchronistic. Every extraverted, externalizing symbol of time is but a false idol or confusing road sign that leads us away from ourselves and dehumanizes what originally springs forth from us; we are the fountainheads of time, and like a fountain, we too, both drink and spout the same essence without any natural demarcation or interruption. Too bad continuity is mute. Too bad the flow of a river seems to have no movement of its own until a leaf or a toy boat is dropped into it from a foot bridge—if we can fixate upon a point, then we can anchor ourselves relative to the distance created by our own invention...that is to say, we watch the toy boat or the leaf float away with the current.

Why does time matter? Must we invoke our own finitude on and on, ad nauseum? Must we linger and meditate again upon our own death? Or distastefully mention the slow withering decline of mortal flesh? Is time merely that? No...something else, something more is at stake...something psychological within us has its own method and use for time and time emphasis. When I awoke with a new vision of time, I also had a glimpse of madness and the dangers and the terrors that time might exact from us if loosed, like a demon, from the sacred bounds of mathematics and reason, and allowed to both overcome and possess us in a spiritual way. Old religions relied vitally on this very same phenomena of possession...yet these festivals and sacraments only demanded so much, and the rest of the community participated beside us in both observing and delimiting this condition. What I have in mind is much more dangerous.

Day

Marker points and mumbling: I have begun experimenting with a fractal theory of time.

What started out as a wholly pragmatic attempt to keep regular hours of work and sleep, eventually became the most philosophically important, artistically groundbreaking effort of my entire life: let me explain: I set an alarm timer to awake at the lethargic hour of ten a.m. and also, in the evening, so as not to work too far into the night, I set an alarm to remind me to go to bed just before one in the morning. On one particular night, after a strenuous day of activity, I went to sleep much earlier than expected without disabling my other alarm; when finally this alarm did go off, I awoke rather confusedly and my dream state lingered on in a state of utter confusion bordering upon terror. I had been dreaming about dissociative, and creative expressions of time and being, and this sudden awakening caused me to erratically fantasize that somehow, I had not awakened at all; that I had somehow been trapped all along within the very same continuous dream of false alarms and marker points, on and on for decades, looking for a way out—having no real memory apart from awakening in confusion and being pulled back toward my dreams. Entirely half of my consciousness is stifled and struggling for representation. Metaphorically, the aspect of myself that has “Never yet awakened” is my dream state. My dream state wanted to make itself known; it wanted to cross over; it wanted the same validity and efficacy over my being as my rational, logical waking state. Is art the leaking and bursting forth of this other aspect of self? The pre-conscious symbolization and sensualization of the world?

This record of thoughts—this diary of sorts—has explored not only rational thinking, but also, autistic thinking—what Jungians have also termed passive thinking. Now we come to yet another mode, but more than this, I feel that, finally, I have arrived at *the ultimate* mode. To see its use and its power over the unfolding nature of our psychological realities, we must re-fashion time: we must re-make time.

Heidegger is a nudge toward being. We, however, are much more potent than that. We, in our effort here, are nothing less than a thunderclap and illumination of Time. Mystical thinking and occult literature may present some of the curious “effects” of various autistic

or artistic states, but these same methods fail us by nature of the fact that, having dealt with reality indirectly, they never wield the full power of understanding and commitment that philosophical understanding offers...what we yearn for is a heightened effect of the former, used under the reigns of (or at least as the honest spectator of) the latter...the mystical paired with the conceptual.

Let us return directly to the dream and the terror and the realization of time as something different than the time of the wrist watch and the punch clock—

The points of alarm—which alternately awakened and reminded—were grounded in what we still call the “waking world”. The waking world is only half of our being. The other half of our being is lost; half of our being lingers, like an ice burg, beneath the waters of conscious thought. The convergence of the twain, so to speak, is the Titanic endeavor of reason meeting the ice burg of the hidden depths. A collision here is catastrophic. We feel entirely disoriented. The bow is in the air, sinking vertically as the passengers scream and die. The points of alarm, within my dream, seemed inverted. I imagined these two points in time were my own construct from some other realm; some other realm reaching and straining its hands toward me, hoping to embrace me and reclaim me into the world where I truly belong. I imagined myself taking the system of alarms a step further. I imagined myself as a deepwater diver with a tube and an oxygen supply from the surface. I imagined myself setting a third alarm point for the middle of the night which would direct me to awaken just enough to set a tape recorder going and to narrate, in mumbling tones, under the warm, dark covers of my bed, exactly the nature of my dreams, until finally I drifted back to sleep and ceased entirely to mumble nonsense. You see, the microphone and its chord might serve as my diving apparatus into the depths of myself. To fully awaken and type as I am typing now would risk damaging, or too much altering the emphasis of the dream state. Even now, after an hour of typing, I feel as if I have not yet even begun to elucidate the nature of my time revelation. Reason proceeds and the tempest of my nightmare slowly depletes and is forgotten.

Marker points and mumbling: this was the symbolic image of my experiment between the worlds of dream and reality. Maybe I will actually try it; or maybe that would be unnecessary, you see, I think I have already brought back with me the most needful thing: A new vision of time and its potency. Let’s be direct and concise: These day-

to-day entries only example one aspect of being: the waking world. Small bits of artistic and symbolic data seep through the cracks; I have had to recount large quantities of monologue such as this, to even begin scraping beneath the surface of my superficial self. For an example outside this effort, look to how Heidegger, within the pages of Being and Time, unexpectedly devotes dozens of meandering pages to his moods...these are not without their own philosophical import. Lately, I have come to see my own artistic leaps as having arisen from what I call, “an artistic mood” or an “overwhelming stagnation of non-thought” that gives way to a sort of frenzied alchemy and self-possessed need to create. A new conception of time must fully exemplify the actual reality of the clock itself—we are that clock. Imagine for a moment, a clock that, instead of dictating time externally, actually thematizes and suffers time symbolically as an ecstatic awakening to its own upheaval against the course and duration of the world it swims against.

Nothing much of import in that last paragraph; certainly not anything groundbreaking yet...but we are on our way and still advancing. There was once a study that attempted to account for the phenomenon of fidelity in humans: the scientist’s were audacious enough to pose their efforts as an attempt to “show that love exists”. As is standard with Western methods of epistemology, even their success seemed to shed a dehumanizing light upon reality as we know it—they sought couples who had been happily married for several decades and who seemed to still be in love. This task done, (and it is a mighty task in itself to find such adamant subjects as they found and interviewed...) the research scientists put one of the dotting husbands in some sort of full body C.A.T. scan type device that measured electromagnetic brain activity or some such thing, and they were able to pinpoint the exact locations of brain activity in the husband when he was shown pictures of his wife, and as a corollary, the scientists were able to measure physiological changes in the man, akin to doses of a drug. The scientists were not able to create any similar physiological reaction in the husband when they showed him pictures of cheeseburgers or giraffes.

If we can get passed the all to obvious repulsion we feel for such “scientific” efforts, it is somehow comforting to at least see a few blips on a computer screen when a man feels strong emotions and memories about his wife of fifteen or fifty years. Now here is the challenge—can

we refashion time, to be—instead of an incremental nullity—a complete psychological positivity? That is to say, a morphological essence instead of a numerical gap? Perhaps we are mumbling in our sleep for our entire lives; perhaps we are often unhappy, because nothing in the daylight world remembers the segments or the intrigues of our somnambulistic, psychological clocks.

Why do I persist in making time into something so seemingly at odds with what time has always done and been? Has this stupid analogy been taken too far?

Wait! Let us take another approach. The ballots are still being tallied and compiled. I know exactly where this is going, but I do not have the full resources at my disposal to render the decisive blow. We must start over. Return to Heidegger. Return to Shakespeare. We are rounded on all sides by sleep. Think of a bus route: a bus runs completely without concern to the actual destination of each passenger...it is up to each passenger to halt the bus at the proper time and either board or depart. The bus runs in a cyclical route, never really arriving or going anywhere. Keep this idea in mind. The thought of a bus shifts our emphasis from an “additive time scale” to cyclical one. Bus stops are departure points. If we, the passengers, had a common destination, a different scheme would be devised for transport...perhaps an airplane, for instance, which must be seen as not cyclical, but terminal...a venture which resolves upon a final, fixed point. Here, philosophy has always debated the journey vs. the destination. This dichotomy or dualism is exactly the type of thinking that our conception of time must root out and abolish. The journey is movement. Movement as itself is entirely meaningless. Fernando Pessoa, and Proust as well, both astutely demonstrate the genius of paralysis and outward stagnation while also living (or imagining) ecstatic states of awareness and being. If journey is half of the philosophical argument toward a meaningful existence, we must refuse the package; we must tear down this false idol and this fabrication of life’s import. The fountainhead is elsewhere.

The fixed point, the goal or the terminus of the a pattern is also empty and vapid...perhaps this is why the male orgasm—the terminal orgasm—is such a source of despair and suffering after its joy and catharsis have passed; an abrupt end is almost painful. We cannot derive our entire essence from a single identity or meaning...let alone an absolute or “final” one.

The next false idol we confront on our path is the idol of free will and autonomy. Choice is not the arbiter, nor the magician of experience. We *do* make choices, and we *do* have preferences, yet these alone are not enough to fully realize ourselves. At best, we choose our old habits, our favorite poisons and our most certain wagers...art and psychology are the upheaval and falling off point of existential commitments. We are not as austere as we would like to imagine. In fact, the more austere we feel ourselves, the more we are suffering and battling to maintain urges that are against the core of our being.

Return to Heidegger. Conceptualize time in terms of the time piece—we are that time piece. Abolish the numeric and the progressive in favor of the developmental and the mythological. Add a healthy dose of the irrational and the symbolic. Now electrify all that with the ecstatic: the touch of a lover's hand, a dimly lit restaurant, the taste of wine, the resonance of a cello bow pulled across a C string, the roar of an engine or the numbness of scar tissue: plot these points within yourself and imagine yourself as the timekeeper of your own private universe. We have no more need for duration. The organic and cyclical nature of our development alternates between sleep and waking. Reconsider the strange ideas of time travel, prophecy, or even the dissociative loss of being: when re-imagined in an artistic light one begins to see how such things—as absurd as they first appear—seem less threatening and more...dare we say...plausible. Allow me to explain. When I say “time travel” for instance, I mean merely, that we experience existence in such a way that we are able to conjure a memory and a feeling in this very moment even though the actual event occurred years in the so-called “past”. When being truly merges with time, as a singular phenomena, all sense of duration may also be abolished. In a state of meditative detachment, we may feel within ourselves, secure enough to not only abolish time, but to begin re-imagining it in terms closer to the cyclical and spiral-like developments of ourselves; as Pessoa states: “a circle that rises and never completes”.

We are accustomed to fixed points on the circular wall clock; we are also finely attuned to our father's footsteps on the stairs when he returns home; we recall the smell of a roast in the oven. We remember especially, the moment we wished to share our lives with that sparkling eyed girl across from us...these are perhaps more real even than time as the world adheres to it; and these fixed points not only define us, but

they are the medium in which psychological or “fractal” time exists and demonstrates. Notice I did not use any sort of possessive clause in that sentence. I did not say it “demonstrates itself”. To be grammatically correct would actually hinder my meaning: Fractal Time: demonstrates. We experience and live within this “demonstration”, but it is more than a mere show of shadows and colors, it is our being, and it courses through us and changes us at every instant. The fixed points that give us our location are actually not fixed at all...these points come in the form of dreams, creations, poems, geographical landmarks...anything! And they can all be charged with more or less intensity of feeling, mood, dread or indifference. The hidden potency within ourselves and others must stem somehow from this new conception of ourselves as the essence of time—and time as something other than what time use to mean. We have no religious or occult agenda. What we desire is nothing less than the most stark rendering of Time we are capable of, and with it, we hope to approach more thoroughly, the question of being—the question of being, not as a question, but as a quest within and towards, the depths.

Day

Time, unmentioned
Is that which lurks within all great poetry:

It ratifies our every grasping,
lingering, needful token

as a piece of fate.

Day

1:00 am so quickly becomes 3:30 am. Why?

If I remain as I am, living as I do, then I can be assured of this: my writing also, will mimic my choice.

Some men pray for the ability to grow fangs and live forever; they would like to trade health and sunlight...for a coffin.

Day

Meaningful or chaotic? Those two words are still hovering about our lips as this monotonous, tortured self-exploration continues. IF MEANINGFUL—then we are redeemed...right? And IF CHAOTIC—then we have proved our point, only too thoroughly. The bleakest book ever written is a snake eating its own tail: The victory we want, may end in becoming, a victory we cannot endure.

And if all that sounds too much like poetry or melodrama, then maybe we have succeeded in delaying—if only for a bit longer—the completed circuit.

Day

Subjectivity and relativity are symptoms of false philosophy. Ideals and absolutes are the safe havens of impossible, intolerable philosophy. Between the absolute and the subjective, the relative and the ideal, there exists an autistic path of accumulation and association that ceases to think in terms of dualism. Its approach is bewildering. Its conclusions do not even resemble knowledge in the traditional sense; it's truths are the sort of truths the world always feels the need to surround with quotation marks and sarcastic tones of derision. Autistic "truths".

Put a college ethics book on the table. Either it ignores Nietzsche and deals with the history of ethics before the modern, or it feels the need to always make a clause or an exception in Nietzsche's favor, as if to apologize again and again for the marble pillars that upheld human thought before Nihilism took its place on the throne of aesthetics and called itself "moral" instead. And besides the awkward business of having to teach ethics classes as if they were art history classes—as if the successive lineage were more important than the craft proper—we feel that the ethics books we encounter have a problematic bias that must be—like a Gordian knot—ignored and negated rather than untangled, for, you see, our conception of time, of re-imagined time, is nothing but a moral intuition founded by aesthetic subtlety—even where the old phantoms of good, evil, justice and beauty have long since departed, shame faced and foolish—we still claim a moral intuition; why not demand an autistic sense of morality as well? No.

Not Karma. Strictly retributive morality is not what I have in mind at all.

Pick up that old ethics book once more. The hypothetical discussions are exercises of logic; an effort that only strengthens muscles that we will not, or cannot use. Character is destiny! More than this, even if investigations of character are passed over, we still hold to the idea that “Fractal Time”/ “Autistic Time” / “Involute Time” as we imagine it cannot ever busy itself with the detours and distractions of the hypothetical without also rejoining the collective conspiracy that is “Additive Time”, which also demands that the world be extroverted and that we exist separate from and isolated from events, processes, moods, and ecstatic urges...put simply, we nullify and sacrifice the most vital part of ourselves if we make the mistake of taking the world as an interchangeable array of various wrenches, gears and hex bolts. To participate in philosophy in the “old way” is to be “wrenched” away from the most lucid and promising endeavors being is capable of. Imagine hypothetical philosophy as a professional baseball game teleported out of the stadium and magically onto the second floor of some downtown parking ramp; instead of an open air ballpark with a grassy field, we now observe a game with concrete floors, and eight foot ceilings. The players would destroy themselves and the game would result in a hilarious circus of broken bones and unexpected bounces. We cannot play under these conditions. We cannot keep score under these hypothetical conditions. We cannot postulate character as interchangeable. We cannot read tragedy with a haughty eye toward “fixing” or preventing catastrophes! Whatever good can be extracted from, or practiced out of an ethics book, is also a good that undermines and confuses the student into believing in and worshipping, naively, a process that puts “Involute Time” into abeyance. Whatever treasures and fruits the realm of “Autistic Morality” offers is necessarily barred from the ethics of “Additive Time” and hypothetical logic exercises. We need a *more encompassing* discipline of ethics, not a *more restricting* one. A more inclusive approach needs not only the logic of dream states, but also, the mandates of proportion, style and poetry...only then can we more fully *live* the world of possibilities instead of merely legislating them...and that brings to mind another idea...why is government and congress a legislative body at all? Is it legislative and restrictive exactly in proportion to the success of a completely parallel mode of philosophy and “Time Philosophy”? What if governments were forced to exert a more complex and a more inclusive effort than is accepted today?

What if legislatures were replaced by a philosophy of “involution” and of “autistic morality”? What if the fully functioning and prolific method of the poet were somehow mimicked and taken on by a representative government? Ah, you are smiling at the absurdity of this notion, but I tell you in earnest, it has already taken place. There is *far more* precedent for poetic government than there is for bureaucratic government. The world of technology is a late addition. Before the world of machines and punch clocks there existed a world of religious symbolism and superstition. The atheists of today are so fixated on abolishing superstition that they forget poetry. Religious symbolism is not *accidentally* effective; it is morally imperative: even when all creeds and religions are rooted out, the human animal will continue to think and feel and dream in terms of symbols. We do not, as philosophers, demand symbols—anything but that would be better!—but as inhabitants of the world, we are left with no choice in the matter; we must learn to bow to necessity...and the world is, and continues to be, populated with a great many forms of strangeness and necessity.

Day

A painter must feel the immensity
And the urgency of the shapes;
Must feel held fast by their
Oppressive motions and changes;
Must tragically freeze one of them
If only to tell the others
Some semblance of his great horror;
Either that,
Or pluck out his eyes.

Day

Poem Title: Graveyard in the Snow

Age: 16

Inspiration: A Caspar David Friedrich Painting

SEASON OF THE SPIRITLESS,
REASON IN THE MEANINGLESS,
GRAVEYARD IN THE SNOW AT BREAK OF DAWN,
THE VILE PARADE MARCHES ON.

ARBITRARY JUDGMENT PASSED THE NIGHT BEFORE,
THE BLACK PROCESSION ECHOES THE VERDICT:
CONFINED IN EARTH FOREVER MORE.

TRIBULATION IN THEIR EYES,
TREADING ON WITH WOEFUL CRIES,
NEVER SEEN BY HE WHO DIES.
REPRESSED IN LIFE AND CONFINED IN DEATH,
THE DEPARTED SOUL SLIPS AWAY IN WINTERS BREATH.

SEASON OF THE SPIRITLESS,
REASON IN THE MEANINGLESS,
GRAVEYARD IN THE SNOW AT BREAK OF DAWN,
THE VILE PARADE MARCHES ON.

THE VISAGE OF EACH SHADOWED MIME,
A HYMN TO DEATH SUNG BY TIME.
DISTANT GAZES REFLECT ON ANCIENT LORE,
YET ALL THEIR PAIN IS SPENT IN VAIN;
EXISTENCE CONFINED TO EARTH FOREVER MORE.

TOMORROW IT SHALL START AGAIN.
TOMORROW ANOTHER JAILER LOCKED AWAY.
TOMORROW THE FOOLS SHALL MARCH AGAIN.

SEASON OF THE SPIRITLESS,
REASON IN THE MEANINGLESS,
GRAVEYARD IN THE SNOW AT BREAK OF DAWN
THE VILE PARADE MARCHES ON...

A graveyard in the snow? Maybe that's a symbol. A field of dead symbols or frozen ones. The parade marches on...why? The fools keep getting locked away. The dead are tragic because they still have something to say; something yet to live and be and do. The ancient lore does not save them...but it occupies them...at least they are thinking and hoping...perhaps they are dreaming as well...and dreams are at least, a path towards symbols.

The season is spiritless because the landscape, nay the whole environment is covered over and halted; movement and change are absent. But there is still this black procession: this funeral march toward this cult of graves. A vile parade? No. Those are the imaginings of a sixteen year old. The parade of burial is itself a symbol: a creative symbol. Even then, I could not help see it. I needed to point to that symbol. Hopes, joys, creeds and even Gods have each their own span of potency and then they must go down and die away and be frozen in the snowy earth of dead symbols. We yearn for the everlasting. We yearn for the one and the final and the true, but all we turn up—even as a sixteen year old boy—is the image of dead symbols and snowy graves as markers for past lives and worn out dreams. The vileness of the parade is our disappointment in the actual process of things; how *'woe is ever wandering'* quoth Euripides. At sixteen we could not yet fully swallow the dissolution of meanings and the continuous flux of the universe. The problem still torments us.

Only lately does this poem begin to take on an aspect of clarity: Reason is the procession that must be led to its own meaninglessness. Reason is the exalted corpse that we now inter. The soul is the only redeeming and prudent symbol of my poem...it slips away easily; it never needed to feel confined. It was nothing more than a breath.

The pattern breathes—briefly—and then the breath is gone. If it were made differently; if it existed by other means, we might have a better chance of catching it, but as it is, our nets fly out violently at changing phantoms and wisps of wind.

Day

If we can summon the courage to re-imagine time, then the span of our lives need not be condemned to mathematical duration or a span of years, or even a catalog of memories: if instead, we find a way to access and re-ignite the very instrument of time—to breathe once more the breath itself and to feel with the same intensity and awe an entire collection of symbols and moods and urges then something—I know not what exactly—is sustained. The music, the poems, the thoughts of others need not completely die, if our own autistic clocks of inner being and soul can paste them back together and assemble them within us. If we can but summon the fortitude to stop worrying so fiercely about *our souls*, and *our lives* we may begin to see the value and the immortality of fragments. Let go of art, and the supposed ‘holy kingdom’ of art. Worship only the fragments. The moist air that foretells a storm or a sunrise: the moist air that feels like a breath once more.

Day

To want nothing,
To love no one,
To have a full belly,

With cold toes and a warm robe,
With too much laziness for activity
And too much health for more sleep,
To forget ones possessions,
To forget ones name
No parents and no children;
Mocking fear,
Abolishing hope—

What has this man to do with death?
He is happy.

Day

I dreamed of small dogs with severed feet that had been surgically re-attached. It seemed as if their feet were severed to keep them from running away; so as to prevent them from knowing distance and duration; so that time would somehow be halted and they would, from their earliest moments, learn to love and value whatever sat close to them. As their feet healed, they learned to walk once more...but only painfully...as if each step were a tender reminder...a marker point they could not avoid.

Time without hands for pointing; the chest of relics has its own way of making a presentation, and it never needs to point or declare.

Day

Sometimes one finds oneself visiting a place where ordinary circumstance would never likely bring us. Only in the atmosphere of strangeness, are we allowed to haunt the world as if we did not belong to it. I tasted true Americana as I sat on a concrete slab outside a tiny bar in the middle of nowhere. A group of young locals just departed...or re-entered the bar rather. Now, in the mild heat of early June, A public ash tray beneath the bar's awning is exhaling smoke as if it were the echo of an indecent presence that should not have been seen or looked upon. I am here, yet I am not here. I am a spectator, yet there should not actually be a spectator here. The stage is empty. The people smoking, only a second before, have gone away. What I seen now is not this porch, but all bar porches that wait behind when the crowd goes away. Look how the bugs are zipping around florescent tubes! Beyond them, I see three houses across the street, another bar to my left, a few parked vehicles (mostly trucks) and a curving dirt road are all that separates me from a dark field of either grain or soy. I imagine there are thousands of places just like this one that I have never seen. Places that, just now, are also deserted in this mild June heat, and whose obscurity affects no one. It's sad to be temporal and to peer slightly beyond time. This porch area, so far from anything I recognize, is what I imagine Americana to be; this scene is multiplied a million times to achieve rural America. I only notice its authentic representation of itself because this place does not care about what it is any more than corn stalks or hay bales care for what they are. I would never come here. I would never praise this. I would never yearn for

this, yet this place, and my being here, is spectacular. This place is real; more real than I have ever felt.

It is the tendency of the sage, to feel his presence everywhere, as an obscure accident. It is the tendency of the common man, to always exist purposefully in the place he finds himself. Questions of superiority are rooted in superficiality and pragmatism—these also, are things the sage fails to grasp; not because he is better, but because he is more dumbfounded.

Day

My friend once confessed to me, on the topic of dreams, that he still feels the irrational sensation that something is outside his door. When the lights are off he feels as if something were about to claw its way in; that some heinous creature might soon gain admittance. He sometimes refers to these sensations as “Night Hags”. He describes himself as being fully aware of their absurdity, yet he experiences night terrors as completely real occurrences; the traumatic intensity of a car crash is something close to what he endures, at frequent intervals, from these so called, “Night Hags”. On such occasions, he wanders the house distraught; feeling shaken; not yet fully awake, he must decompress long enough to regain his calm rationality before returning to bed. Then the scratching starts again.

Day

After sitting down, a co-worker began by telling me about her nose piercing. I wasn’t listening, because I had already noticed it.

It bothered me that she put such a story behind everything. Enlarged the petty details and discussed the attitudes and relations of all persons concerned, even though her body’s recent modification had no impact on the lives of those people apart from her being noticed instead of ignored.

She had met a boy—this is what she is talking about now—he has longish hair and braces. She feels he is not threatening, and, I

supposed, because of this, is less worried about being raped, even though she's been gradually displaying more and more neurotic behavior due to the fact that she both physically and psychologically *needs* to get laid soon; I say this because most of what I hear her talk about is her low self-esteem and not having a boyfriend. A twenty year old girl should have a boyfriend, or at least the prospect of one; I didn't make that idea up for myself—my last girlfriend told me so, in just so many words, after she had settled temporarily for me and began showing me off to her apparently judgmental friends who had implanted the idea originally. I liked my last girlfriend's friends; they were always touching my chest inappropriately and leaning in too close to tell me secret things with a sloppy drink in their right hand and a cigarette in the left.

Where was I? Oh, right, the boy with the braces; She had been seeing a boy with braces from a bowling alley. He had gone with her yesterday to get that piercing done. She's telling me that it hurt *'worse than my ear, but not for as long a time. It was over quickly.'* She's itching it, delicately from the side, as she tells me this. Its not a cave man/tribesman type nose piercing; Not a chicken bone or anything—it's one of those that goes in through the side, that one displays by a tiny stud with some sort of sparkly glass or cheap stone on the end that breaches the flesh. Nothing dangling down or stretching anything, thank God.

She warned her mom a few months ago of how she was thinking about having it done. When she came home yesterday, her mother had forgotten the conversation and had changed her attitude. Her father and sisters remembered the conversation, so they weren't as surprised; I'm left wondering how anyone forgets these sorts of things—girls like this one fixate for months on these sort of dramatic plans, and when they finally do carry them out, it means next to nothing. I can't be sure, but I wouldn't doubt if the boyfriend tagging along part was the original contingency holding her back from executing her 'plan'. It's nice she found someone; A boy from a bowling alley with longish hair and braces. I suppose he held her hand while they poked that thing through her ugly nose, too.

Sometimes girls need to get poked.

They fired my friend earlier today. That's what I'm thinking about while miss sparkle face is administering first aid to her nose

bleed. She's probably embarrassed, but I'm the only one in the employee break room, and I've seen nose bleeds before, so I'm not paying much attention.

I suppose its not a big deal—not the nose bleed, but my friend getting fired. He didn't need the job. He has a full-time job in addition to the part time one he had here, at this grocery store. He's a baker. He's been one for a long time; Ten years as a baker when he was my age, then three years more recently, after he became too old for his other career—masonry and concrete work. I had the pleasure of training him in, which was merely a formality, to show him our procedures and products and such. My friend's name was John. His father was a baker. The store took him on for two days a week, to work the early shift from 4 a.m. to noon. While he was with us, I didn't have to bake any more; I got to have the later shift, starting at 6 a.m., with the responsibility of packaging whatever got baked. Now that he's gone, I'll have to take the early shift again. I'll miss his stories about his step son, and about his father baking while he played on sacks of flour as a kid. I'm not sure why he took this extra job, or exactly why he lost it. Just the other day I heard him talking to the new meat cutter in the break room about the satisfaction of loving ones career and the integrity of staying with it. They exchanged stories about how greatly they admired the owner of this store. The meat cutter, had been hired by this same owner twenty-five years ago to a different store, and now, had found his way back to being employed by this man a second time. I remember the meat cutter's animated declarations about being able to supply up to five stores with 'quality people' in meat departments, if our owner decided to expand, (allowing of course for the contingency that the owner actually bothered to ask for his input.) After this anecdote, my friend John declared that at his age, the money no longer mattered; he was just glad to be doing something he enjoyed.

Earlier today, I heard the news about John's termination. Supposedly, John had come in early for a shift or come in before the store opened on a day he was not working, or something. He might have been checking the schedule (which is posted only week to week) or to ask the other baker something(—his other night shift job having just ended) but these logical facts had no force against our owner's paranoid suspicions, and close-fisted management tactics. Old men love money. Old men love money and have the nerves of twelve year old girls; one would cry with them, if they weren't so foolish and fragile. Wisdom has it's ascendancy and its decline, just as everything

else does. When man claims to be wisest, he is really most suspect of other people's designs upon him.

I liked John, and I liked the fact that he supplemented his tiresome job as a scratch baker to work at a small grocery store that used only pre-made, frozen dough. John started at nearly the same wage as me, which was of course, next to nothing, but I found out he has a large rose garden and a motorcycle. I agree. He probably was a thief.

Now my hand won't stop bleeding. I've finished my break, and I'm slicing bread. I turned around too quickly, and caught my hand on the corner of a metal machine. It's only a tiny divot above my knuckle, but it won't stop bleeding. I've dressed the wound twice and put a rubber glove over it twice, but it keeps bleeding through. I think I need more iron in my diet. I'll have to start adding raisins to my oatmeal again.

It's odd how everything changes depending on one's physical states. If one fasts, or avoids certain foods, an almost religious atmosphere can arise. My manic episodes of poetry creation seem to usually coincide with some sort of bodily neglect. Sometimes with emotional neglect too, but that factor is less direct and accumulates more slowly over time. At the moment, I have perhaps thirty ideas in my head that I'm trying desperately to remember. When I feel overwhelmed with inspiration, I get anxious that I will forget a good idea; all the more so, when I'm stuck slicing bread when I should be creating; Don't misunderstand; There are plenty of days where I would be perfectly content to do nothing but slice bread, but on the rare days when I feel inspired, I lament that my inspiration couldn't have waited for my day off. Inspiration is usually worst in the early morning hours. I'm still half dreaming I suppose, and maybe those dream-ideas aren't really any good anyhow, but they seem interesting enough while I'm having them, and it bothers me that I'm always doing common labor when I might otherwise have been doing something uncommon.

On the walk to work this morning, it was still dark. I had some good fantasies while I walked; fantasies about being an immortal poet; of doing and saying things that literary people would ponder and discuss and worship after my death. I'm sure most of the bad poets begin with these sorts of notions. I'm glad our delusions can help us get through the day. Every man needs a few delusions; delusions are like a bit of wine or a weekend stay in a mansion you will never be able

to afford. Sometimes, we the bad poets, write things that we alone read. In momentarily turning away from the good poets, and our own lives, we feel the fleeting joy of creation and the pretense of genius. To read one's own best poem, and to really fall in love with it, is the surest path to escaping one's personal insignificance. Sometimes, we the bad poets, even compile a stack of poems and pay to get them printed. More important than showing these printings off to others, the thought of seeing a bound manuscript, and our own phrases on the page makes us delirious with joy; If our hope could become a tangible thing, we imagine that we might have inched closer to our goal, yet in reality, the tangible thing is hateful to us. If you ever become enthusiastic about your own works, spend a hundred dollars to have a few copies of them printed up. By the time they arrive, you will have lost interest, and never make the same mistake.

The distraught intensity of youth has a fondness we forgive. As I re-read my earlier works—also too expensively printed—I'm both nauseated and charmed.

"Our hearts are with you" —this is what I have just written on a sick co-workers sympathy card; the boss's wife is waiting beside me, to pass the card on to the next department. I have no real time to ponder or construct anything interesting; Here I am, caught doing one profession, and then demanded that I ad lib my other one; my dearer, more divine one; and what do I do? I scribble down the first bit of nonsense I can think of! Imagine some immortal poet in my place, caught off guard. Imagine such a one as we've been reading for centuries, and then to have an anecdote related, that such a poet wrote something trite on a sympathy card; without artfulness or creativity or inspiration. Imagine, the consoled person, finding out only later, that they had been working beside Euripides or Shakespeare and not known it. Imagine the irony, of digging out that irrelevant sympathy card with the immortal poets signature and trite phrase—therein we see the true mettle of poetry; its shameful irrelevance, and self-aggrandizing stupidity. The immortal has this fault: He is so busy staring into a *hall of mirrors burning*, he slowly becomes incapable of comforting those nearest him.

Now I'm left wondering why my friend John—the man they fired a few days ago—didn't get a sympathy card. And further, why I didn't get a sympathy card, a year and a half later, when I was fired.

Day

Ten years is a long time to endure the same shattering truth. To freeze a moment in time—a moment in the immediate present—and to consider the seemingly incalculable number of seconds contained in a decade, and to know, that a great many of those seconds lingered upon an idea you were certain of in the very moment it first occurred to you; an idea that has pervaded your entire being and every mood since—that is a weighty thing. To know but also to doubt your own validity because others are incapable of your mood and your weight; To face a truth so pervasive, that you feel it cannot be, simply because its colossal effectuality should have a stark reality to all living beings, yet, inexplicably, it does not. When a man invokes such stubborn and confusing things, what else can he be speaking about, if not his own mortality?

Others also fear what we fear, yet we do not fear it so much as we continually digest its consequences; Rightly said, it is not fear we possess, but frustration. To die is nothing; To live beside death, and to uphold any values at all in front of the possibility of death-like relations—this is the thing! Others fear what we fear, but when we show courage by confronting death and all its repercussions, our virtue threatens those who cling stubbornly to their lives and postulate them into eternity. All death attitudes are transformations within the individual human identity and destiny. A new attitude is a new mood; a new mood is a new state of being.

The “death fear” of others is shown through their intolerance of us; In truth, we threaten them, because through us, death has a living reality; it is as if we are, in our confrontation of death-like relations, an avatar for what death is; death has no existence unless it exists through us and our attitudes, so, in a way, all that mortals may fear of death is those who confront it and force them to confront it themselves.

At every turn, it is us who have been deemed vile, disturbed, anti-social, un-filial, disloyal, un-trustworthy—and perhaps we deserve all of these, and we are so, but more than that, we are more hated for the

thoughts we represent and cause others to feel, even when they turn from us or denounce our moods; it is in fact, exactly when they shun us that they display the psychological mechanism in themselves which we are addressing; Namely, aversion taking the place of fear, and hatred in place of their own weakness—one feels less weak, if one's fault is masked by a moral denunciation of that which confronts it. When death stares into the human face, the human face shudders at the violent and collapsing truth of its own reflection.

Ten years—and still they believe I am not over a specific loss, a specific relation; This is far wrong. I never wanted or asked for the relation I inherited ten years ago. I inherited the relation of death; The relation of man in the face of death. Man in the face of an absurd universe in which all ambition is for nothing, and all idealism is a cruel farce. If genius differs from average intellect, its difference is this: Genius has the capacity to see relations that others do not see; Genius is so sensitive to the fractal developments of phenomena that it sometimes becomes paralyzed by the sheer scope of its own horizon. The brightness of our dawn is overwhelming. By some unnatural mutation, our eyes dilate in the face of radiance, and our pupils expand to their utmost limits; we dissociate and lose all reality. One death is nothing. *Our death*, is everything. This is the truth that opened to us ten years ago, and it has not receded, but expanded and began to invade all aspects of life—all of our relations to life.

And did the greatest thinkers, novelists, or religious guru's labor in the slightest to change our minds upon this bleak discovery? Did they offer any solace or comfort, or alternative to our own assessments of self? Did they provide or entertain any notions to contradict the genius of that one foolish thought we discovered ten years ago, and have since then, meditated and pondered unceasingly? In all cases, I have turned up a negative answer, and that answer echoes the "*I alone*" of Sartre. The "*Tomorrow*" of Macbeth. The "*Cult of Graves*" of Heidegger. The "*...is Nothing*" of Schopenhauer and "*The Vaudeville of Devils*" in Dostoyevsky.

Has anyone ever bothered to comment, that a great majority of our holidays and feast days are nothing but some form of birth celebration? If one really considers the root causes for most holidays—other than patriotic ones (which also, by the way, celebrate the 'births' of nations)—then one is forced to conclude that Mother's day, Father's

day, Birth days, Christmas day, Easter Sunday, and May Day are all, basically holidays of birth or relation to birth; Looking closer, when are priests present in our lives? Baptism, Funeral, and Marriage. Our religions look suspiciously like *'life worship'*, or stated differently, a cult of observation that dismisses us from solitary and creative observation regarding our own intuitions of *WHAT LIFE IS*. Religion shuts the door of human anxiety. Anxiety is made exile and bastard. Anxiety/angst/dread—these are the monikers of free thought and individuality. They are its curse, but they are also a curious liberation. A tedious liberation that is suffered day to day, second to second; A liberation I have suffered more or less, for ten years.

Let us make up for the previous rant, by offering a brief scenario that illustrates our point, and for us, solidified and resolved a decade of hurt—I awake this Mother's day at 3 a.m. for my job as a baker. I have prepared gifts for my three co-workers—all mothers. If you are not a mother, you are a child or a husband, or perhaps a single adult without parents; Most can somehow trace themselves to a mother of some kind. It's been ten years since the death of our own mother; this death is no longer a grievous ill to us, yet, the relation of ourselves to death in general has not gone away, but become enlarged, like a slowly growing tumor—this is the growth that others do not understand in us. Today, I discovered that my three gifts were whispered about and made somewhat different in the eyes of others, considering my own loss—a loss which did not really cross my mind at all when buying the gifts for my three fellow workers, who very much deserve some kindness from me for all they have shown on their own part. Never mind that. What I am working up to is a brief encounter that lasted only about thirty seconds. I went to the bathroom, and as I was finishing, the owner walked in, greeted me, and began to relieve himself. As I washed my hands, he told me how nice it was that I remembered my three co-workers. I replied, somewhat neutrally, *"One has to do these sorts of things, once in awhile."* To this, he asked—already knowing full well—whether or no, my own mother were still alive. I answered "No" without tension or second thought—then his bladder opened and I could hear his urine hitting the surface of the water in the toilet bowl.

"How long ago did she die?"

"About ten years."

"And how old were you then?" Continuing urine sounds, as he speaks.

"16"

"How did it happen?"

"Car accident." Omitting all details, not wishing to bother him or confuse things with specifics.

"Was she the only one in the accident?" His urine is abating. He is fastening his pants.

"No. One other woman was also killed."

"Wow, that's a terrible thing to have happen; and to be so young. Gosh, that must have been hard for you." He's washing his hands in the sink, and I can almost see blood on them as I silently look over his shoulder. This store owner—a man known for his aloof sarcasm—he must be doing this and saying all this on purpose. He wants me to gain some perspective on myself; on my fanatical fixations. His intuition is as strong as his sarcasm. People respect him for what he chooses not to say. I exit the bathroom without further reply; I walk down a short hallway, and I am once more in the employee break room. I look up at the clock, with my eyes on the second hand. I still have a large portion of my lunch break to sit through, and the business of eating and urinating has only taken a few minutes. It is in this moment, that I say to myself, once more, *"About ten years."*

A thousand bad poems might, after all, make a decent novel.

Day

Presently, the volume of my work has no bearing on my stylistic choices. If it should be ten pages or ten thousand pages, I care very little. Space is of no concern. Paper is cheap. Digital memory is even more so.

Often, authors are content with single sentence quotes. Lesser authors try to abstain entirely from reference of other people's works—perhaps such persons are guilty of that fault Schopenhauer accuses them of, namely, that they take the limits of their own field of vision as the limitation of the world entire and they measure others with an inferior standard, on par with themselves; usually with a measuring tape only a few yards in length. I, however, am most suspicious of those who in fact *do not* find occasion to state someone else's ideas in place of their own. The most challenging authors saturate their works with obscure and beautiful references that nearly the rest of the world has forgotten. Why forgotten? Because the dull masses were incapable of such things, hence the idea or phrase, went into disuse until it was salvaged by a noble soul on par with such a gem only because he alone was capable of seeing his own reflection in its glittering nature.

Small bits of another mind's activity serve as ready sparks for new generations of thought and new deviations upon old ideas. Such sparks have always served me well, even when I do not include them directly, and to my estimation such sparks have illuminated more new and unseen paths than tired or borrowed ways. Some sparks are so powerful, that they burn within me until I find occasion to suspect that they were not even original themselves but a latent explosion from yet another, even earlier flash of clarity. There is a long portion of Proust that I quoted in my work, "The Loudest Death", and now, only later do I suspect that that bit from Proust was accidentally echoed from his earlier reading of Schopenhauer, in the "Studies on Pessimism" where Schopenhauer states,

"No one knows what capacities for doing and suffering he has in himself, until something comes to rouse them to activity; just as in a pond of a still water, lying there like a mirror, there is no sign of the roar and thunder with which it can leap from the precipice, and yet remain what it is; or again rise high in the air as a fountain. When water is as cold as ice, you can have no idea of the latent warmth contained in it."

-Schopenhauer, Essays p.47

Here I think it worthwhile to quote the rest of the passage of Schopenhauer's without omission, because it so closely relates to my above themes, and the dilemma faced by our protagonist.

“Why is it that, in spite of all the mirrors in the world, no one knows what he looks like?

A man may call to mind the face of his friend, but not his own. Here, then is an initial difficulty in the way of applying the maxim, *Know thyself*.

This is partly, no doubt, to be explained by the fact that it is physically impossible for a man to see himself in the glass except with face turned straight towards it and perfectly motionless; where the expression of the eye, which counts for so much, and really gives its whole character to the face, is to a great extent lost. But co-existing with this physical impossibility, there seems to me to be an ethical impossibility of an analogous nature, and producing the same affect. A man cannot look upon his own reflection as though the person presented were a *stranger* to him; and yet this is necessary if he is to take *an objective view*. In the last resort, an objective view means a deep-rooted feeling on the part of the individual, as a moral being, that that which he is contemplating is *not himself*; and unless he can take this point of view, he will not see things in a really true light, which is possible only if he is alive to their actual defects, exactly as they are. Instead of that, when a man sees himself in the glass, something out of his own egoistic nature whispers to him to take care to remember that *it is no stranger, but himself, that he is looking at*; and this operates as a *noli me tangere*, and prevents him taking an objective view. It seems, indeed, as if, without the leaven of a grain of malice, such an objective view were impossible.”

-Schopenhauer, (ibid)

Here let us pause to comment that such an objective view has an opposite possibility: If a man sometimes has difficulty seeing himself rightly, isn't it also possible that, through a transcendental insight, man may take another's idea or statement as a very naked mirror of himself, so much so that he may feel a nearly religious sympathy? And further, if he should quote another while in possession of such a deep communion, this is not the desire for theft but the laudable desire for oneness of being; as a will-less being empty and free of the fetters that so often (and even so recently as a second ago,) might have served to differentiate him or bring him back to the realm of the terrestrial and the mundane.

To wit, the irony is this: if you are discussing yourself, speak as if you were objectively describing a stranger—and only your moral solidarity can accomplish this; But if you are reading or studying the thoughts or tribulations of another, one must labor to the greatest possible degree to take them *As IF* they were your own—not because you want to honor the one who stated them—that would be dreadful!!—but because your ambition is to merge with the *content* of such words. This is what we mean by appropriating the transcendental, in a disinterested way.

Now the point is more clearly proven: The great authors, who do not shy from quotes, are not merely name dropping or being clever, but to a large extent demonstrating a vital communion with the transcendental waves of insight others have offered them. Quotes offered in such a way work their greatest magic when they are taken in the spirit in which they are quoted: with an attitude of transcendence or even, dare we say, of prayer—not of worship, but instead, of the meditative sort.

Even where Schopenhauer waxes most pessimistic, we must be careful to continue as if we are meditating upon a hallowed prayer that has taken a lifetime to construct and utter without the taint of scorn or pettiness. We must take his pessimism as a saintly pessimism; A beautiful pessimism that carries with it a special grandeur that can only be won and liberated beside our own will-less-ness. One begets the other. Do not be so dull as to take the rest of the following quote as shallow. Observe:

“According as a man’s mental energy is exerted or relaxed, will life appear to him either short and petty and fleeting, that nothing can possibly happen over which it is worth his while to spend emotion; that nothing really matters, whether it is pleasures or riches, or even fame, and that in whatever way a man may have failed, he cannot have lost much—or, on the other hand, life will seem so long, so important, so all in all, so momentous and so full of difficulty that we have to plunge into it with our whole soul if we are to obtain a share of its goods, make sure of its prizes, and carry out our plans. This latter is the immanent and common view of life; it is what Gracian means when he speaks of the serious way of looking at things—*tomar muy de versa el vivir*. The former is the transcendental view, which is well expressed in Ovid’s *non est*

***tanti*—it is not worth so much trouble; still better, however, by Plato’s remark that nothing in human affairs is worth any great anxiety.”**

-Schopenhauer (ibid)

Schopenhauer and the other transcendentalists may be taken as a guide, but none of us are capable of such sentiments at every second. One always falls back upon the “lesser, or baser” view; the spirit of seriousness and anxiety. Notice quickly that Schopenhauer is not a poet. A poet needs to be absorbed in the terrestrial, the mundane, the immanent, the emotional and often plunged completely into the affairs of life. Schopenhauer’s greatest fault is his failure to admit to this. To follow Schopenhauer too dogmatically would certainly cripple a poetic mind and turn it quickly into a stoic or a silly parody of Marcus Aerilius, incapable of frivolity and innocence.

Day

Halfway to a million keystrokes, I still fail to assert anything coherently. From what I’ve heard, there are educated men and women in our space program who monitor the static of the cosmos in search of a discernable pattern under the assumption that, if sentient life does exist on some other planet, it might at some point broadcast such a pattern. Is that the requirement then? Is the sign of intelligent life, the ability to make and understand patterns?

I fear that all of this star-gazing has a less heroic motive as its root. Sadly, NASA and all the other science fiction fans out there are struggling to behold, through the excuse of the external world, their own hidden depths. We are pattern seekers. Neither success nor disappointment will have any bearing on this urge.

Day

When I see a man with a red shirt
And a black tie approaching,
I wonder what he will give me
For my soul—

I'd be happy
to be rid of it

Day

When I woke up this morning
I did not want to write poetry.

My stomach is sick at rain,
Sick at nightfall,
Sick at sky noises,
And sick at the vice grips
Of too much success
At what I did not want

The sooner my hair and teeth fall out
And my spine goes crooked as the lines
Of an aged tree,

The sooner I can start sneering at this
World as the angry demon
I've always been

Day

Lightning struck me just now! There is a amazing lesson to be learned from soap opera dramas. Opposites and destiny combined! Character and neutrality and failed commitment! Allow me to explain. If you play poker, its not good to let on what you have, or even to let on *how* you let on. Be aware of your tell. Be mindful of how you present yourself in a crucial moment. Make a weakness into a strength...if you suspect that someone has guessed your tell, bluff them!

The casual writer can sometimes keep a secret. A good writer has a few plot secrets, but eventually, its assumed he will hand over everything and resolve himself...he doesn't do all this just to entertain you...his dramas help to medicate him, so in the end, he wants to give away the burden and not keep it on his back. Enter: The camel! The wisest beast and the greatest poker player. The camel is nature's greatest bluff. Hmmm...I wonder what the camel is holding? Do you think he has a good hand this round? Do you think he might accidentally have a royal flush? That hump is awful curious looking; must have something under there. There is something obviously anti-human in what the camel can perpetrate. Human beings cannot wander across the desert self sufficiently on merely their god given autonomy. At days end we are reliant and needy and dreadfully inefficient beings as regards food, sex, companionship and emotional stability. Good for the camel. Bad for us. So, is there an out? A secret door? An escape? A magic spell? An artistic expediency that might aid our congenital weakness?

There is.

There is a type of artist that defies the rest and in doing so, gains no respect from his peers. Often his work is done as a team effort so the credit is never even his...yet still he perseveres through the anonymity; This type of artist is the pulp artist who writes soap opera drama. Let us get past the obvious. We all scoff at the idea of soap opera drama. We have prejudices and maybe our hatred of it is totally valid and justified. Perhaps we find fault with exactly the right things...yet...let us examine our rage and turn it into pure power.

Our first complaint—if we are morally awake at all—is the idea that no human beings can ever possibly suffer so many continuous misfortunes and perfectly engineered relationship troubles and that,

against all sense of proportion, every second of soap opera drama feels like a highly contrived fabrication and farce of human effort and dignity—yes, anyone could have said that in more or less words, but that is only the beginning of where I have seen the greatest possible invitation to happiness as an author. Observe:

Step one: admit that you are nothing. Admit what you create is of no use. Let go of not only the hope of artistic success, but go farther than that and fully internalize the sentiment that your chosen *mode* of expression is already the preemptive negation of what good style necessarily *is*.

Step two: Realize that whatever you continue, or create is already on its way to being put on some other writers desk, entirely out of your hands; not only the credit for the thread you imagine, but also the final result of your brilliance is already contractually taken away and you may or may not have another shot at adding to it.

Step three: Realize that the story cannot end until it is contractually severed by an external, non-artistic force that has the power to simply say either: “you have one more episode to finish all plots” or maybe, if you are lucky, they might say to you: “We would like to have your story last one more year, or possibly up to five more years, depending on our revenue...and good sirs, do understand that, even if you do come upon an ending, you shall not be allowed to end the story when it suits you, but instead, you will end the story when it suits us.. and completely for non-artistic reasons...yes, we understand your complaint...yes, you do make a good point, if the show is doing poorly for too long then we will end it, and then you will say to us, *“but if I had been allowed to write it the way I wanted, it never would have lost its momentum...”* yes it’s a catch 22, if its no good, we kill it, and if it is good and you have a good horizon in mind, we will disrupt that too and *force* you into stagnation because right now our profits are good. Did you get all that? Did you understand clearly every little word, you clever artist you! Do you see how un-compromising *our* vision is? Good. Now make that impossibility into *your* vision or you are fired.”

Step four: Being trapped under impossible shackles—nay more—inhuman shackles may give you the benefit of godlike potency. Learn to make your impossible pact with the devil (soap opera writing is a sort of devilry) into your continuing strength; make it the metaphor for not only what you accomplish, but also, what your characters

accomplish. The taskmaster above you has helped to make you into something better than a mere artist. You rise above them with our aid; you transcend the puny ego notions of other mortal artists and you look down from Olympus; mortals are your sport: relish them!

Step five: Finally, we come to the lightning strike of clarity: if there can be no endings, you naturally write as if there can be no endings...ever! Tell a poker player he has only a hundred dollars and he will hold it hard and try to outlast his peers and he may even make some valiant gains with the tiny purse...but if you tell even a mediocre player that he has the entire casino bank as his backer, and beyond that, mob ties as well, you can assume that even the worst player will eventually overcome the best, so long as he has the stamina to keep playing. When the infinite bank sustains you, everything that you naturally rely on—as a mere mortal—fades away. You are transformed. No more need of ego. No more need to sort out life or find a remedy for the skeletons in your closet. Soap opera perfection has only one thing needful: never give up the bank....keep making withdrawals, but never give it up all at once. Keep on holding enough back to keep playing. Your challenger, in order to bring you down, will keep pushing in the whole pot; all you need to do is see his share and raise it...never throw in your whole bank; always remember your bank is larger and that alone makes you the victor before the cards are dealt. Keep holding back, keep withdrawing. There is no reason for haste; there is no reason to use muscle or intimidate...just keep matching and calling and withdrawing until your opponent is spent. Do you understand the metaphor yet? Look at the magnificent advantage—not necessarily in prolonging, but more precisely—in taking the *attitude* of infinite delay.

Step six: if you have to write a character tomorrow, it wouldn't be prudent to kill him off today. Put a few grains of immortality into how you approach a character's life span; a few grains of immortality into how you finally judge what is or is not contained in mankind; if you are tempted to make a judgment or a conclusion about a character, that decision will instantly be that characters death, even if he should live a hundred scenes or a hundred acts more, he will be as a walking ghost, useless and severed from true life. We repeat: if you have to write a character tomorrow, it wouldn't be prudent to kill him off today. Keep that in mind.

Step seven: Remember to keep pushing the limit. Keep putting the character's back against the wall and keep bringing out the same character traits and the same emphasis and the same peculiar fatalities of this character's ego, but never, never, never, never, never allow your character to fully become. The illusion is that they are always about to, or almost becoming, yet the way you paint the almost is exactly the clarity of what continually must be. Realize the advantage of not ever committing the character to a permanent fate or a new fate...only keep juggling and shuffling the "almost fate" that continually is. Keep conclusions in abeyance. Allow us to be fully satisfied in a scenario and then undermine it or use the weakest link to tear it down and make us feel stupid for believing in change. You see, our weakness is that we all believe in change and none of us believe in fate. Also try this combination: Make change into what we do not want and make what we believe into what is forbidden. We believe in change, so, now we use that weapon as a vehicle to thwart every little angel that comes along our path. The soap opera knows the Buddha better than the Buddhist monk. The soap opera must kill the Buddha over and over and over again, yet still we are not satisfied; eventually we forget that we are actually seeking the end of the story...The end is the one thing that is, most assuredly, never to be granted.

Step eight: Happily ever after is what you tell a child. Now remember that adults must be told this too, and for an entirely different purpose: The happily ever after quiets the child and on some very deep, instinctual level, it is our cue to let go of a thread. We utterly refuse to let go of a thread until either we are absolutely disgusted or we feel that events have ground to a complete halt. If, demonically, you begin a story and then continually neglect your audience by never giving a final cue for cessation, they will continue seeking you indefinitely...and at some point they will entirely lose track of why they even persist at all. You will have worn down all sense of self in them and they will surrender to you unconditionally because the most pressing thing, to them at least, is that this story-telling should not end. If you give them a coda, they will find a new melody elsewhere—that is the human damnation/addiction par excellence. Feed us. We hunger. If not you...then someone else...indefinitely!!!!!!

We hope you enjoyed our little master class on the advantages of the soap opera writing style. The true lightning strike for me, was the idea that a story, and characters as well, may persist on and on if you make the right stylistic choices; drink from your unlimited bank;

keep writing blank checks to yourself; the only risk of default is if you trade your infinite line of credit for some tangible gold brick of profundity...profundity will halt the engine of creation faster than a shoplifter with a heroin addiction. Think of it like dancing continuously, for the sake of dancing and nothing else. If you dance for the sake of eventually being profound then eventually your steps will seem ungraceful or crooked...but dance from the heart with a girlish glee and presto! You regain the true fluidity of your discipline.

Confession time: we like a certain soap opera. It's about doctors and such...never mind that. It took nearly a hundred episodes (six seasons exactly) before it finally dawned on us the entire breadth of metaphor that had been unfolding...it had been coming together so slowly that we had almost failed to see it. Worse yet, it was three and a half seasons before we even admitted to ourselves that we had been watching a soap opera at all, and worse yet, four seasons before entertaining the idea that we were addicted to it.

Here we shall attempt to state what our sudden realization amounted to. It took six seasons for the author's hand to finally show through by way of a sympathetic show of self through the heavy tapestry of a well conceived, slowly expanding revelation. The doctor in the show actually becomes, in a sense, doctor Faustus. He keeps saying over and over, "I want to help people; that is why I got into this business" yet his demonic partner keeps saying, "no, you got into this because of me! Because of what I have offered you: luxury, women, cars, a lifestyle! You want to be me, but you don't quite have the courage to be me". There is a demonic side and an angelic side to the soap opera writer himself. He is well versed in cynicism, yet he is also a delicate surgeon of human sentiments and yearnings. He deals in inches and millimeters. Perhaps he has become an alcoholic too...but he too needs continuance...he self medicates because there are no seducers doing the work of charm for him...he must sustain all this on his own. Heaven is sustaining...yet heaven contains nothing but possibilities; a static heaven is a dead heaven. Possibilities unfold and show their shadow sides...within and beyond the drama you attempt to write and contain, some of it keeps spilling over until those frightful moments of clarity where the two worlds seem to meet and hold each others gaze for a brief and splendid second. To me, that is the true ending of a soap opera, when the writer shows himself. What follows

after is a waning, declining stupidity. The climactic moment is not the sudden death or the illegitimate child, but instead, the vision of mirror reflecting mirror that momentarily fathoms the ultimate depths...and profundity halts the engine of creation.

Day

Necessity kills us. Necessity takes us apart bit by bit until all things resembling a human being are stripped away.

Day

I think the world is null. I don't want to take part in it. I don't want to judge it or be the judge of it. I would not be afraid to spend hundreds of pages judging it—fruitlessly—for I know that it will carry on, just as it is, for a very long time and that any petty criticisms a poet or a cynic could make would only amount to that selfsame poet/cynic's own misunderstanding of himself and the vital and living psychology of the rest of the planet, coming together in the natural and unfathomable way that it happens to be built, or glued together or created or whatever you like...choose your own best analogy...but choose it wearily and with disgust when you do so, for it will be wrong and you will place yourself on a dart board of situation and perception the moment you do so and be judged in turn by those who do not and cannot share your feelings, your experiences or your stupidity.

Stupidity is a great beginning. A very great beginning; My favorite orators are un-godly stupid. There is a special genius within the very silly, very stupid ones among us—they speak honestly and imagine others to have truthfulness as their highest motive. This makes them both rare and worthless. Rousseau, and Schopenhauer, and most definitely the whole of Proust is utterly stupid to the point of dizziness; this makes them un-readable, mostly, and profane to the greatest imaginable degree—what I mean to say, is that they are utterly exempt from the common ruts of mankind because of their towering, unwavering stupidity. Yes, indeed they are capable of imagining the feelings of people who play at other forms and value other masks, but only clumsily do they fondle these other psychological types, and at a distance. Schopenhauer sets up himself as both a genius and as an

advocate of this selfsame type of genius—but it's so curious how he does not really include much resembling life in the realm of genius activity. In the end he pines for young women and the youth he wasted on trying to untangle his own overwhelming impressions of the world. Even if one is lucky enough to totally digest so much as he, or even half as much, and to compose an entire philosophical system (in two hefty volumes) by the early age of thirty, one has already wasted the best years and is too far gone to join up with the petty fears and motivations of the rest, and has thereby destroyed most of the bridges that might bring him off his island of null perfection.

There are times when I am utterly disgusted at my past actions—but wait, wait I pray you, for the reason of my disgust! I am disgusted when I am excited and act excitedly. I am disgusted when I am sad and act wearily. I am disgusted when I act as if there are no goals on heaven or earth and that the possibility of having ambition is the greatest idiocy possible, and then from this place of negation I belittle others and wreck them and dash their heads on rocks and heap boulders on their back and attempt to laugh like a God of gods—but then I am saddened that they should be at all sad for my torturing them and not instead praise my backward kindness and honesty in trying to make them see the silliness and the pointlessness of life. Then most of all, do I love them in trying to love them—then most of all am I disgusted to see that they are well in their lovely stupidity, even when I am right; IMPOSSIBLY RIGHT!!!!!!

Day

—just the feeling of anguish should not at all be a valid enough reason to respect others or love them or placate them. Perhaps they are truly crap and we have not the inner courage to admit honestly when they are so, and when they are not so. If we were to kiss everyone's lousy feet each time they did not find us humorous or original....well, you get where I am going with that thought. Farewell it.

Day

As I begin to dream, that is, to first fall asleep but not to utterly lose consciousness, I have these grand flashes of image and feeling and sensation. Yes, sensation is the correct word. Sensation divorced from sense. Like a well edited movie trailer. Such that it aims for your stomach and your crotch but only leaves a screening date for your mind to ponder. Something in you says, "Lordy, lord! I must see that new movie staring those wonderful people and scenes, but I have not a clue what it is to be about!"

Well, at the beginning of dreams, we have nothing but teasing cinema style images of brilliant attack and vibration, but the substance is lacking in such a way that it achieves the poetic perfection philosophy could never endure or elucidate. And then wonderfully these images are erased and swept away like the pain of a needle poke or a horse kick or an ambush of bullets. Something lingers, but if it is pain that lingers it is no more a pain because somehow, pain is the surprise part and the lingering part we would rather call by another name. Maybe I am confusing words here. What I mean to say is that the thunderclap and the lightning bolt are separate phenomenon, even though they are theoretically bound up together and of the same event. Imagine for a moment that the thunderclap happens first and the lightning shock is what lingers and sizzles and feasters as a deep burn or the like. The noise startles you but it recedes quickest here, for the purpose of my dream analogy. The noise is no part of the wound. The noise is the static broadcast of the world all about you, in every direction and in every combination. The jolting part is the part that touches you. These elements come together in the cinema style, but suddenly within one dream, another begins and the first is lost. A chain of dreams or images or impressions never really starts from zero and it never really gains the total freedom of amnesia either. Something in us is still shaking from each stab, but we quickly forget what has stabbed us and why...only in a dream is continuity so drastically shattered. Waking life seems to fool us into thinking it has a more serious continuity; a more serious direction; a more predictable tangent for each angle and each degree of movement.

Imagine if one were trapped in a fading world. A world where continuity abandoned us. Imagine if only a single poet possessed continuity and memory, and the rest were inexplicably stripped of it. Imagine that memory was somehow a burden only he possessed.

Imagine the myriad ways he would try to show the others(—this population of amnesiacs.) Imagine his desperation to annihilate the chasm between himself and what the others could not experience; or had experienced only yesterday, but today had forgotten. Even though he himself were a continuous mind, he too might have many occasions to abandon the day before and embrace each new moment, each new self, and each new possibility; a possibility that was each time, born clinging to its past and hating even the un-truths that did not exist for the rest of mankind, simply because they had not lived yesterday, as he had lived. Such a man would be the only true nihilist in the entire world. Not because he could negate, but because he could remember.

Day

Can it be possible that due to some strange irony of fate, the beings who suffer the most intense degree of disjunction and discontinuity are also most equipped for seeing and predicting the uninterrupted flow of persons and events?

Day

More poems are lost to necessity than any other evil.

Part XI
My Eyes are Green and Gold

Day

Cruder and more daring than a worm: *That seems to me a worthy vocation!*

Thick, disconsolate humidity: I think the earth is waking from a new night terror, exhausted by the busy business that takes place under sheets of threaded clouds—it feels burdened even in its somnolescent recovery! So much frantic and nervous clamor, the dreamer never pierces the cold, taut curtains of space...as if human dreams and human terrors were as flickering and amnesiac as a child who shivers awake and suddenly forgets.

Disconsolate humidity! That is today's projection of ourselves and our own damp, wreaking flesh...for you see, it is our habit to make our own ills into the grandest thing possible: to imagine a marbled blue orb, groaning in sympathetic counterpoint, as if our own troubles were that of some dizzy planet, raining sweat and spittle throughout a sleepless night of half terror and half bliss. And our planet must share something with the innocence of a child waking; a child wounded, a child who yelps from under his cozy blankets, only to feel a sudden shame realizing he has been heard; A sudden shame that he has allowed himself to be so easily fooled by shadows.

Day

Courage taken to its limit, to its greatest expression of rigor and fortitude: that is best exemplified by the quiet man at the table who hasn't the heart to belittle others, or the strength to endure the repercussions of even his laziest observations, if given a voice. Imagine the greatest quantum of power and insight possible—now imagine having to suppress, negate and stifle exactly that same degree of energy in oneself. Outward courage only does half that labor...

Day

Art must be the refuge of heroes who are not heroic. Art must be the excuse for politeness. Art must stave off our madness and our homicidal rage. So long as Art is art, it never risks being anything

other than the sympathetic man, who holds his tongue and respects life. The more vulgar Art tries to be, the more it divulges its great hypocrisy and its great regret: It would rather give the idiot a walloping dose of fists than bother reasoning with him or giving polite advice...but that is not what Art does. Art lays no hands on the feeble minded. It never tortures those who really *need* torturing. Even shocking Art, is but an expression too late; a passion diverted; an idiot, dis-abused.

Neurosis looks like healing. Madness is much too healthy and natural a state of mind for us to question it. Irrationality must lead somewhere. It is already on its way! It moves! It has dynamic qualities; not the knowledge of animal instinct but the knowledge of blood—human blood.

Sometimes un-reason peers into the odd and oft drear chambers of Reason, and it runs away laughing; meanwhile, the pale prisoner, seen from the window, sulks and laments his clarity, his confinement, and his all too perfect cell.

Day

There is a miraculous pleasure in learning what one has to say, by actually saying it. As orators, we sometimes feel the excitement of a spectator to our own words. A strange feeling, to discover oneself by not even looking after or beneath oneself...to merely open ones mouth and commit to speech that quite possibly has the danger of blocking off all exits and routes of escape. I don't believe we really do anything whatsoever out of benevolence. If it appears that we bar escape, then we *do in fact bar escape!* The miraculous feeling we feel is part of a tyrannical urge to humiliate and to master: when there is no other person to humiliate and destroy, we turn inward and the tyrant we want to become finally unleashes its full force upon its only remaining target: itself. Solitude has all the human dynamic of a relationship with others; it picks quarrels out of the air and dredges up shameful urges and behaviors at the most unexpected moments.

Either everything speaks the totality in miniature or we are complete fools every moment of our lives...and even when everything does speak the totality in miniature, I still hear the echo of fools quarrelling!

Day

By the patterned grains of wood planks I would swear! By the ripe juices of nearly bad fruit, I would make wine! By the hinges and silver-looking buckles of traveling luggage I would summon curiosity for tomorrows new sense of disappointment and sadness. I see fallen trees and I want to know the linguistic codes hidden in the wavy veins of passing lumber. Vinegar or the salt of sweat touches my eye and stings and I peel off the husks of my guarded instincts and I allow them free air. If I am called upon, to summon horrors and melancholy and derision against life for a hundred thousand days, I will do so unflinchingly and cheerfully. If I ever doubted myself, I must have done so when I did not know the supple charity we each possess in relation to the world. If I negate and profane, than it is necessary that I do so, and as I do so, I do exactly the same labor as when I happen to swear happily by the heavens, or the dung heaps, or the golden grasslands and duck feet I happen to see in front of me, at random.

Monotone monasteries awake timidly each day to invoke the blessing of corn and new wine...the ever vitalizing morning prayer of faith...total absurdity and nihilism, having come full circle, possess all the rejuvenating aspects of God and Poetry. Those who see less than this, should seek to go further *downward!*

Day

Snow capped pits of ash and ash dusted mountain summits; these are the result of my intoxication; these are the result of my sobriety; A hymn to weakness; A hymn to the highest heights.

Day

It's good to remember friendship; to remember, sometimes, long after one's mood has changed, that insomnia and frenzied thoughts—including the thought of a belt screwed to one of the wood ceiling beams in the basement—are merely something that pass in circles, as mundane as second hands do, on this and every night. So long as there are small hours and second hands inching along, there will be frenzied

thoughts. Our weakest hours are also, to our dismay, everyone's weakest hours.

It's very selfish to explain, a day later, to one's best friend, that your suicide note would have read, "None of it matters..." and then he replies to you, "That's a short note; I would have expected something better; something better from *you*."

She said something that reminded him of your suicide fantasy: she said her friend failed at hanging himself: that now he is partially brain dead. Without intending to be brutal, she had said to my friend, "They should just kill him; it's what he wanted."

It's terrible to become an accidental martyr. It's terrible to be shown what your fantasy amounts to. It's terrible to have a terrible thought, and then, have that thought accepted as something less than terrible...accepted instead, as something...prudent.

But death is not always death. In the Tarot, death is something else; something begging or forcing its way through, where no door yet has been imagined or built. In the small hours, when our dinner is perhaps, not adequate, we do not directly dream of our shadow possibilities—that comes later—instead, first we dream of total refusal. Complete annihilation. Of selling, gifting or destroying all property, all evidence of self rather than facing the stranger who has yet to knock. We ask ourselves: "What does zero look like?" Today I answer: "Zero looks like complete control; compete domination of reality; Zero is the end of possibilities, and with the death of possibilities, also, the death of anguish. I am innocent. Suicides are innocent; Suicides are the haphazard civilian casualties gunned down alongside the dread-lords of neurosis who cannot be tolerated or bribed. The success of a suicide amounts to one dread urge overcoming another. The person we know—the victim that is—is a third party; he happened to be, somehow, standing foolishly between a fatal exchange.

The highest expression of self will? Look elsewhere. Suicide is not that.

Day

One must not let his tail get wet...as the fox crosses the river, his enthusiasm upon reaching dry land causes him to forget his poise; he lowers his tail too soon and is humiliated thereby.

The preliminary lessons are past. To continue speaking, in the manner I speak now—in this cordial, impromptu cadence, is to irreparably dissolve all distance between slave and master. The methods of creation and the work of creation should be kept out of sight; every good stage has a curtain! Why cheat the audience? Poetry is allowed no dress rehearsals; neither is tragedy, unless of course it is tragedies opposite—a counterfeit. To suddenly realize, that the most heart-wrenchingly good pieces of literature have balanced style and intensity, is to realize that all along, we have been manipulated and molded by invisible hands—like a dog’s head, grabbed by its fleshy cheeks and pulled into silly grimaces—that is the fate of the reader who allows himself to be affected emotionally by his sometimes master. And isn’t that our pastime as well? To be primped, perfumed and adorned by our sometimes lovers? To be made into, or shown the way, as often as possible, to some emotional spectacle?

Words either awe us or they bore us. Those persons closest to us are boring. To speak affably, matter o’ factly, and respectfully, “as if” we were going the way together, “as if” we were discovering the world in unison, “as if” we had something in common, “as if” your own merit were equal to mine—All of these are the taboo missteps of a novice. When you agree with or begin to love the orator, it is only because he has fashioned his words and images in such away as to disarm you and draw you into his mountebank sideshow. If some men are genuinely simple and guileless in their speech, then their careers shall begin with an excess of good fortune, and their latter careers will perhaps misunderstand and retaliate against this fate; *Better to come to cynicism early than to be ambushed by it after one is too old to adapt.*

To hold something in reserve—a real diary cannot do that. To search out knowledge and moods in common; to improvise; to deal in terms of dignity foremost—all of these bar the way toward life; these bar the way toward Ghost ax and God-craft. To show the machina gears to the peasants and to hide nothing from the shilling gallery: that is what I find grotesque in the hearts of honest writers. Make no mistake in your perceptions of what is meant here by honesty: Thieves,

scoundrels, rakes and politicians all excel in honesty. The good writer also excels in honesty...so long as it was yesterday's honesty, with both its novelty and its limitations having been found out and discarded long before it sees a place in today's comments. Ah Ha! Therein lies the challenge! To draw from a wellspring of autistic passivity, allowing thought to ebb and flow in unison with the pace of the unconscious, ever dreaming mind, and yet, to also with hold, and keep back the final dregs of truth, which always bear resemblance to death, indifference, tyranny and, God forbid, the worst sin of all—plainness.

Profundity halts the engine of creation. Dostoyevsky's most towering philosophical rants are nearly all eclipsed by an immediate negation or denouncement: *the poor man writes himself into an epileptic coma, only to re-awake with bitterness and scorn for all rapture, all ecstasy, all transcendence.* The brisk air of the not-yet-light, not-yet-warm morning breaks his trance as he walks, and when he returns to task, his first thought is the health of his paper children; his absence makes him an even more doting father...and not even God in Heaven can make him less ashamed of his excess and abuse of style...yet he loves his remembrance of ecstasy just enough to leave it be instead of ex-ing it out completely. Thank the man's laziness and his stubborn Russian blood, if ever he summoned a miracle, it must have been his courage to risk ruining himself on the pretext of "at least giving a small, foot-note sized apology" after each lucid bout of epileptic genius—I have read every word of this man, and when I read his critics, none of their words make any sense. I breathe Dostoyevsky's anxieties with him; they are not fabricated. The man is not a liberal or a reactionary...only vulgar minds think in such terms. Dostoyevsky is like an inconsistent swimmer, at times he appears to be drowning himself, other times he is on pace for a medal; as if his conscious mind cannot keep up with what is developing beneath the surface...I was once told that the very best jazz and rock drummers constantly sound as if they are just about to completely lose control and fall apart, but never actually do so...this is what makes them great, the urgency of dissolution, and the half-victory of fabricating real distress. The mysterious question lingers, *"How far have we been allowed to wander, in the field of this man's weakness, that man's insecurity, and this other man's Hell?"* Where does fabrication and balance begin putting down the brakes?"

It was E. M. Cioran who pointed out to me that universal pity and universal hatred are exactly the same phenomenon. Dostoyevsky was always described as a bitter, intolerant man, yet his characters seem to be so sympathetic and tender hearted? How is this possible?

The parallel lines of complete pity and hatred meet on the horizon of total disgust. They fuel each other. The seriousness of the world depends on our pity and our disgust. Hatred is what we add to this formula, while we still have an extra reserve of energy to dispense with. So long as we are using such energy creatively, why shouldn't all our characters appear angelic and beautiful? Why shouldn't we too end our magnum opus, with a convincingly pious figure, who outright lies to a group of children?

Day

Put the intellect to task! If you allow intellect to make the first step, or wait for intellect to spit something out, it will disappoint you. Instead, we must begin by admitting that intellect is a null variable. Intellect is entirely useless. Given enough time, intellect will always lead us back to nature's absolute futility; its perennial naïveté. Intellect cannot help but eventually undermine and devalue itself. Intellect does not do this out of its own inferiority; it is actually its most lucid statement of its own being, when it fully and finally nullifies itself...you see, it wants to follow its course to its own limit; it wants to demonstrate the absurdity of following the same track, round and round the same closed circuit; for the intellect, and its nightmare exile, all railway stops are temporarily shut down or barred shut.

Intellect works best when it is entirely subordinate to a physical or emotional state of agitation or transport. In these instances only, are we fully able to declare, "*intellect is used*". We welcome the psychological precision of a poetic mind; such a mind gives us no real substance, but somehow, it nourishes us in a wholesome manner which *activates* our intellect, but does so only to lead us back to our bodily condition and our mental intuitions which so often suffer from neglect in favor of an intellect acting on or toward this world of shallow intentions. Do you remember when I said, "intellect wants to follow its course to its own limit"? I believe all our various modes of assessment incline toward their own metamorphosis, and these various modes do so in total ignorance of their doing so. Our own modes of feeling and

thinking are each, in their own way, jealous and eager to appropriate skills which are beyond their allotted domain.

We recognize philosophical genius in the un-philosophical thinker. We recognize poetic style in the slick prose that pours out of a cynical, detached mind. We shudder at the consequences, traced over, by the man who has long since abandoned himself to suffering these consequences in such a way, such a complete way that his confessions seem only recently to discover the manner in which others explicitly *do not* suffer such consequences! In brief, excellence always finds a way of subordinating and using one manner of assessment in order to invalidate the identity of whatever sentiment has reached its perfection. *Observe:* Shakespeare's abundant naturalism finally accuses the earth of being a void; Jung wants symbols and archetypes instead of concepts, Heidegger wants moods instead of phenomenology, Sartre wants change and becoming in hopes of escaping the lucidity and anguish of Knowing; Dostoyevsky wants nihilism because his empathy and his religious fervor have spent themselves; E.M. Cioran envisions a negative miracle from out of mankind's decay and decrepit self-awareness; he uses lucidity of our mortal station as a substitute for religiosity, as if it were now to be considered in itself sublimity made bizarre or inverted; A kind of heresy stamped out of spurting grapes, and the whole fermentation process is hardly more artful than psychological *fact*.

All of these devils exceed their comfortable domains and overflow into something else; always too much, always some unexpected corridor of awareness: as if genius has a tendency toward betraying itself and devaluing itself at every moment because some part of its mode of being has reached its zenith and must now cross over its horizon, acting out a macabre dance of waning satellites and aborted orbits.

Day

Sing once more. Let me have a bit of your empty expression as you recall the words by rote without marking or heeding them. Give me a sunny invitation, a funeral rhyme, a drinking song or a tragic lover's dilemma, just please, try not to notice yourself singing whatever it is you've chosen for me. I torture myself strangely, as I allow you to perform this reverse autopsy: *your voice singing is a scientific*

specimen of non-death. It carries with it all the vital details of non-death. As I listen and learn from you a lesson in naiveté, I groan with admiration and respect for what the world discounts. It is my convalescence to remember illness and suffering. It is my great good fortune to feel sadness and longing once more.

Day

Fetishism becomes neurotic and enters into pathology when the subject shows behaviors which inhibit it from adapting to its surroundings; when a subject ceases to function normally.

For every form of sexual deviance, there must also exist another extreme that completely fails to register on the radar of the mental health profession. To play the Sadistic or Masochistic role, and to enjoy it is perhaps, a sign of healthy animality and sensual intelligence. Could it be possible, that, instead of neurosis existing at the fringes of sexual identity, there may be a kind of pathological neurosis of hyper-intellectuality in which the subject suffers from his or her tendency to both *totally dominate* the physical demands of situation, and simultaneously to display an inner inclination to *completely submit* to the mores, taboos and social customs of politeness to the point in which he or she becomes violently...no, no...let us say...stagnantly asexual?

For this type of being, even the play at this or that sexual role of dominance and submission becomes merely a farcical gaming or stage play. The inclination is to feel a gross absurdity toward the physical world, and toward all motivations which fail to stimulate the mind. That is not to say, that such a being would ever openly attack sexuality or the carnal realms of experience; quite possibly, such a being might actually worship or romanticize passion, pleasure or any of the various "Satanisms" that have become popular this last half-century. Such a person has lost both access to self and others through a breakdown of natural desires. To behave intellectually is also to kill the sensual aspect of self, which, once killed or suppressed, also kills those traits in you which the opposite sex might find intriguing or worth while. Democracy and all of its trappings of equality and classlessness are a slippery slope toward the alienation of human sexual identity. Polite love and non-violent love—that is to say, all manners of love that do not demand a sort of deep laceration or torment—must also be seen as a symptom of declining health and stagnation. Mortal beings follow a

natural trajectory of building up and tapering off; the natural course of aging and maturity, (which necessarily demands the loss of sexual intensity and sexual identity) have nothing to do with what I seek to describe. No one would require an elderly couple to behave like Romeo or Juliet; star-crossed lovers are a piece of romanticized fiction! We do not need suicides to justify our day-to-day love interests...but we do need their example, as a lighthouse for what an excess of health is capable of. And it would be a sad neglect to overlook the mighty coals still blinking in the heart of a man whose wife props up his right arm while his cane props up his left; A brief but difficult tour of the family pond has all the danger and miracle for a man of eighty as the labors of Hercules have for a boy whose cheeks are yet smooth and un-abused by the winds of chance. As our bodily discomfort increases, and we become ever more aware of the burden of our own flesh, our weakness helps to re-amplify the magnitude of our labors and our loves such that their relative size seems not to decline at all. For the elderly, life is *more dangerous*; *more threatening*, and *more completely transported* to a state of immanence and rude clarity. Accumulated patience walks side by side with accumulated non-patience, which, is perhaps, more valuable than what the tolerant, middle-aged folk call patience. The urge to go directly at a problem or to root beneath the distracting surface of human psychology towards a past example—that is the mainstay of passion in those who surpass five decades.

Have we found ourselves side-tracked from our initial observation? Why have we given so many sentences to the elderly? If you look carefully, I am still advancing my original thesis. I am exactly the asexual neurosis I describe. A man of twenty, who turns fifty-one instead of twenty-one is not an example of health or maturity. He is an aberration.

Day

The longer the interval we can maintain, without being interrupted by lucidity—that should be both the measure of our happiness and our stupidity. Try your best to be the man who keeps a checklist of goals in his wallet, and who unfolds this same yellowish bit of lined paper at various moments throughout the day, as he waits for a haircut, a bank teller, or a roommate at the airport. Watch how he goes over each little bullet point with pious severity and zeal. His aspirations are the formula of his rituals—he is transported by the minutia of details. This

is what we were put here for. This man is the salvation of mankind; this man and his grocery list of commandments keep him scuttling about on neighborly errands.

Whatever classical philosophy attacks—that should be a starting point for what life actually is.

Day

Am I lucky? Am I lucky for having the forgetful ability to instantly converse seriously on identical terms with each idiot who crosses my path? Do I do so out of politeness? Or out of laziness? I believe I do so out of total resignation. I believe that no Buddha's will ever cross my path; Buddhism is a lie. I am a lie. My suffering is hardly audible beneath the voices of so many real conversations. How could suffering ever be the truth of my existence? I am not the prince I was meant to be. I am reduced to an idiot who has no opinions; *an idiot who crosses no one's path.*

Day

Even the ugliest man in the world has forty or fifty seconds before a woman definitively decides whether or not she might fuck him. She'll ask something benign at first to get you to open your mouth if you haven't yet, and if you don't say anything intriguing or spectacular, she'll opt for a second motive: "What do you do for a living?" If you say something odd, or uncommon, and then refrain from speaking she'll keep casting curious glances at you, wondering, but if you give a few more details then she'll have already decided not to fuck you and she'll start talking about something else and your chance has passed. Regardless of age or walk of life, I've never experienced a situation where a woman failed to behave exactly in this manner. As for men, they don't even wait forty seconds to decide.

Day

Whisky doesn't help. Sleep only post-pones it. Food lessens it. Women can make it go away—briefly—but then it comes back harder. On average, we die 25 years earlier than the rest of the population: not out of weakness, but on account of neglect: easily treated illnesses never get diagnosed—keep in mind that most of us know that, and we'll spend the next 25 years deciding whether or not it's worth the trouble to see a doctor, considering the fact that women and whisky aren't enough.

Day

There's a Chinese proverb that states, "The best answer is a more beautiful question." Why is it I should feel the need to both agree and disagree? Perhaps I want to know what kind of suffering inspired this proverb—give me a response to that, in the form of a question!

"Why should we negate this suffering before it matures? Why not sustain the circuit you've begun and see for yourself?"

(A more beautiful question...)

Day

This little moment is utter insignificance. These little words are a pocket's worth of soil the convict is scattering in the prison yard before he returns to the hole he's been digging with a spoon.

Utter insignificance. Desolation. Futility. Like a pocket's worth of soil the lunatic steals from the Emperor's garden so he can heap it proudly onto his wife's table in a clump. As she prepares his breakfast, he's bragging about the misadventure of being arrested and held till dawn. He's still somewhat drunk, but she knows he's telling the truth. As he lights his pipe indoors, once again she cannot summon the strength to scold him. With a passing thought of younger days, she barely smiles as she goes to task rinsing the rice wine vomit out of his tunic. When next she turns around, her husband is sprinkling the dirt out the window, into her garden.

Day

So long as the pen makes contact with my skin, the ink keeps bleeding out and pooling up in a little splotch on my wrist. So long as the ink keeps spilling, it stays wet and glimmers like a girl's eyes when the lights are dimmed and the restaurant is mostly dark.

Day

If you'd prefer, I'll let you believe I've had a thousand conquests...and perhaps I'll have a thousand more as my reputation grows...but if I were a poet, I'd only need one conquest, and I'd have plenty to write about.

Day

Today I imagined I was a sultan with five hundred wives. If one of them got away, I fear I would be sad. It might even wound me more to lose the faith of one than to dismiss the rest on purpose.

What good are the others, if she doesn't want me?

Day

Fiction is too easy. I have but to snap my fingers and the world is ordered exactly to my wishes. I never want to have that power. I want the constant struggle of not having that power.

Day

It amazes me how long the smell of excrement, sweat and rotten meat can live under a man's fingernails. In the windless alleys and under the shadow of bridges, stray dogs lick my hands and appreciate my genius. I feel closest to Christ, when I'm followed by dogs.

Day

Prepare each of these items for burial
And burial shall ease the pain
Through shallow digging
And loose dirt.

Day

Without the skill of magic
My hands are already the hands of a magician.
Everything they hold
They also show.

Day

And when I returned to my wife made of salt and sand,
I spit on Sodom
And put a flower on the ruins of Gomorrah.

Day

After tears,
My heart wants the exhilarating pain of creation
Without terminus or climax,
And as this suffering lingers,
I've nearly found a substitute for being loved.

Day

On the North side of the Altar
I killed an animal without blemish
And I made a burnt offering
In the manner our Lord hath commanded
In the book of Leviticus.

Today I am displeased
At the outcome of this offering.

Day

As thinking goes limp
Temperature, taste and sight return:
As if I'm learning to listen
Autistically.

Day

Those nearest me
Are also nearest to duplicating
My mistakes.

Day

These ripe meadows of feeling
Butting up to this skeletal fence of words—
Let description fade to a minimum
That we might hold the loose wire down
As we step over its braided thorns.

Day

My eyes are green and gold—so much so, that even now, they mis-color everything they light upon—like a jade lens or curse carried over or inherited from the daughters of Midas. Perhaps I will never contribute anything to the vocation of thinking that isn't also painted sideways and sketchy; filling pages with intuition only; anticipating everything but never understanding or commanding it. Perhaps, upon realizing this, I should try to make the most of it, and disregard other means; late in my life, after auditioning the wastelands of not yet, and challenging to my own breaking point the allure of non-will in the lunatic face of Holderlin, I'll still be damned by my own terrible gates, of green and gold.

In green and gold, I too see the inscription Dante put over the gates of hell: Love also created this...

Day

Talent is like having love affairs—in the beginning you declare it and bathe in it...later on, it catches up with you and you find yourself apologizing for it or making excuses to avoid it; the only thing that changes is how they use you.

Day

A Toy Universe

What is a system? We live in a solar system. In miniature, we might build a model of our solar system. We might use glue and paper to make little globes and attach them to wires and then paint this little mock-up with various colors that we might recognize the sun from the earth and so on. True. We might do this. Also, a child might do this...for amusement. What does a system give us? A system offers a model shrunk down so as not to exceed our field of vision. A system takes for granted the idea that the universe itself, as a system (if indeed it is such?) must for some reason be far too large to understand or grasp all at once, and, by way of transposition, if its mere size were altered,

the depth or profundity of its significance might also be lessened, adjusted or truncated down to a digestible portion. Is this so? Does this alteration work, in *practice*?

I walk into an elementary classroom, and suddenly a great surge of panic accosts me! I feel light headed and I lose my breath as my throat constricts: Each child is holding a blissfully ignorant mache universe. Seated in semi-circle around the teacher, each little hand is gently, almost proto-scientifically moving the little orbs with self-satisfied delight, and dare I say, an aura of reverence not ever to be found in unguided play? I fear I have just stumbled into an occult ritual; into a sarcastic realm which either reminds me of Hell's great mischief or Heaven's great indifference. The idea that children such as these could mash together these dozen and a half non-universes sends me into delirium; Each new model is a multiplication of my original anxiety. Each tiny model, is another mystery. The smaller the universe I'm forced to encounter, the more swollen and monstrous my feelings of dread. At least when I am small—nearest the edge of a river or the foot of a mountain—I feel less responsible for the totality of things.

Would you like me to offer you a Toy universe? A system? A universe in miniature? A newborn babe is the greatest horror imaginable...that is, of course, until I wonder into a nursery and discover an entire room of newborns gently being nursed to sleep; as the player piano runs through its melodies and plays passages I've long since predicted, I'm drawn to the many spokes and glinting rays of light I see in this semi-circle of wheel chairs: Look there as the nurse wipes away and redirects the spittle of a catatonic woman in the center...slightly older than the rest.

In some of Dostoyevsky's bravest passages—his most maniacal and demonic passages where each page is hot with fury—he too quickly allows a peripheral character to immediately rebalance his frenzy with a self-directed accusation of “attitudinalizing”. As if this tiny clause, muttered insignificantly at the most awkward possible moment, were good enough to absolve his mania? Were you really so worried as that, my dear Russian friend? Oh, dear God! What folly! You silly, stupid man! How could you dare do such a thing to me! You should have let me revel a few moments longer in your vaudeville devils! This precocious world of toy universes is already too eager to quash the mystery and the malevolence out of things; just as I begin to feel a new sense of un-inhibited joy rise up, the mighty hand of reason

pushes it down and I languish once more in disappointment. For my part, weakly constituted as I am, to be disappointed is already to be near death, which, in my case, translates thusly: Amazement that I have not killed myself.

Day

If we do not want ourselves and we do not want our moods then why should we get the mistaken idea that we should ever stumble upon a diamond or a philosophers stone by writing down our thoughts, our impression and our philosophies? At base, we are already repulsive creatures with nothing better to do and with no better means of expressing ourselves. What is suicide to someone who lives in their imagination? Severance from the physical world is trivial to us, because we—the arrogant and useless dreamers of the world—have not yet learned any uses for the solidity of experience. In order to become what I would like to be, I must first devise a means of departing from what I now experience. Thinking back, I remember a naïve urge to think new thoughts and create new fictions, but as it is, I only think what I am and I only dream up remnants of a ruined man. Saddest of all, I still value my own world view above all others. I cannot yet appreciate those simple things which motivate other beings. Where other philosophers champion their own capacity for thought, I look upon my gifts and I declare how useless and impoverished they have made me. My stubbornness, my melancholy, my mania, my near-sightedness, my extravagant far-sightedness—somehow, I possess all the wrong combinations of attributes. Only recently do I begin to realize the nature of the ugly combinations of traits that sometimes become manifest in certain individuals; as I notice this, I realize I too am a carrier of a disgusting mosaic of attributes. At least men like Schopenhauer were convinced of the goodness of their strengths! For my part, I feel that I possess nearly the same strengths as Schopenhauer, yet it is my intuitive capacity over-reaching Schopenhauer which damns me and makes me declare the uselessness of my attributes as a cohesive whole—I'm like a room with expensive furniture arranged by a color blind idiot; we may have to throw away a few expensive pieces in order to regain balance and appeal. We may have to hide or sacrifice certain inclinations. We may need to alter ourselves with alcohol or drug use. We may need certain accidents or lucky strokes in order to bring anything to conclusion: take for instance the novels I've written about the chance women I crossed paths with!

Five hundred fifty pages because I had the lucky opportunity to spend a handful of days with a couple of girls who might otherwise have never known I existed nor I them. It's getting time that I should take stock in what actual experiences brought me joy and left an affect on me. I made a list once before in the past and I was very surprised at how accidental or trivial the items were—yet they really were the most significant emotional elements of my past. I spend so much time on pursuits which are too rational and so often find myself entangled in webs of mechanistic details whose conclusions never actually give me that monumental or catastrophic epiphany sort of feeling that a car accident, a strange bed, the touch of a lover, or the sharing of food have given me—I can not seem to plan for these and I never seem to allow time for them...let alone find myself inspired to write because of them. I keep struggling, yet only when I completely let go does my poetic side claim any victories. I look at other people, and their attitude toward life, and I feel as if I am always struggling and that I always have too much on my mind to feel enjoyment. Even now, having escaped employment for the second consecutive year, still I feel as if I have enjoyed nothing and never yet breathed an unlabored breath without the strain of some imaginary weight on my shoulders. Never once in these two years! I am simply too conscious of my existence.

Day

Where are the days of thankfulness and gratitude? Where are the poetic remarks about joy? About touch? About nice smells or satisfying foods? Whatever happened to my capacity to live? Why do so many pleasures lie beyond my reach? And what would I do, if I were suddenly granted these pleasures? I use to think of myself as a great philosopher. Now I only consider myself as a wretched human being.

Day

If a man is too well rested, he probably possesses too much clarity. Only when we arise, half-asleep and go tiredly to our labors are we really suited for them. Beginning half-drained and soggy brained, still full of dream images, we encounter our tasks with confusion, weakness and impressionability. Meanwhile, the jobless men, who rise late often

see the sun and roll over towards the still darkened walls of their bedchambers. With clear thought and clear judgment, life is not worth living.

Day

I'll be thirty in a few months. Sex no longer intrigues me like it once did. It no longer possesses any kind of mystery or taboo; it just seems mechanical. Five years ago I would have sacrificed anything for a woman. Today, the mere idea of responsibility of any kind already outweighs my entire capacity for physical pleasure...and I'm not even thirty.

I have no ambitions whatsoever. Music disgusts me. Writing just gives me more of what I already am. My honest desire is merely to eat each day and sleep. I don't want any complexities. I don't want any challenges. I want a warm house and plenty of food. Nothing else.

Day

From one point of view, humanities terrible books, fraud religions and common bibles do a great service to humanity. Even where these articles lead people astray, such things give people something to seek after and test in the arena of daily life. Terrible books and common bibles give humanity as starting point for thinking creatively and mythologically. I've read about many great thinkers who have overcome the urge to write a bible or create a new religion themselves solely on account of fearing they would be overstepping their own prudence and the tenants of their personal wisdom by doing so. For a long time, I have wanted to write a Nihilist Bible. So long as you make something a religion from the start, knowing full well the terrible consequences of such actions, it matters very little if people do indeed take its ideas the wrong way or use them to condone ugly deeds. If one wishes to write a bible, then one has already agreed to unleash something more active and more deadly than a mere fiction; the moment a new sect is created a new energy is also released, and that energy shall correspond to the newness and the extremity of what has come into being. The reason for undertaking a new philosophy with a biblical significance is not to claim that such ideas are correct, but to

foster the idea in the minds of each disciple that this new creed is more potent than any other world view. A bible does not make ideas themselves more potent; A bible makes its adherents more potent. A bible gives its readers a synthesis they lack.

Day

The disturbing distance between an imagined possibility and an actuality is frightening. In essence, everything that has already happened is philosophically reduced to the non-reality of private memory, yet all that has come to pass remains within our being and in relation to our being as if it had some unique advantage over the not yet and the never-to-be. We feel the contents of yesterday as both a catharsis and a spur toward new agitation. In my private thoughts, if I have made up my mind to end this or that obsession or longing, I expect to be rid of it...yet in my dreams, the imagined possibility keeps rising up from the depths. In my dream-state, when I am united with my own impossible hope, I feel a sense of happiness, which for me, is almost too painful to endure...and when I awake, this joy is stripped away as if my real flesh were being torn off. I want to go back. I want to return, but I cannot. Even with my best effort, I cannot return to that specific dream or that specific feeling. Even while I am in the dream, and completely happy, I already sense how much suffering is about to be endured when the new day begins and this waking world thrusts upon me the stretching discomfort of foot stirrups and cold air. These pungent smells are already evidence enough of my abortion.

For the idealist, absolutes *do* exist. Absolutes exist as *absolute privations*.

Day

Symbols mean nothing to me. Symbols are not the goal of my life. If Symbols are capable of anything, they are but hints and fragments scattered in the caves of my soul's exile. Any time I feel the severance or the departure of my inner self, my soul has gone back to those caves and mine shafts to dirty itself in symbols. We too chase the glittering veins deeper down unto degradation and apathy. Way down, into the recesses and cul de sacs of thought, we too, sift and stir the

debris of symbols. Meanwhile, Soloman looks over our shoulder from out of his darkness , and he ridicules us. He beckons us toward the easy exit of apathy and nihilism, but still we linger in these dungeon halls, groping for symbols.

On the outside, our needs and our hopes *are* vanity. *ALL IS VANITY*...but only as a demonic outsider may we declare the world's vanity, yet from within—from these churning hells within—vanity is not possible. From within, ALL SYMBOLS ARE MADE FLESH.

Without apology or regret, we try as best we can, to endure the chemical pains and chemical symphonies this extravagant flesh is given over to.

Day

Have you ever wanted to fall in love, just as intensely and painfully as falling into depression...or perhaps even more so? I sometimes wonder what that would be like.

Day

More and more, physical beauty is merging with my impression of youth and children. I can no longer look at a beautiful woman or boy and refrain from thinking, “My time has passed.”

Day

Makeup, fashion and self-adornment are part of the perceiving, daydreaming dimension of the mind. So much is taken in and so many subtle relations are felt that judgment and choice are beyond reach. What need is there to choose? Perception, in totality, is already an ecstatic excess of being. The useless sirens who grace the pages of style magazines are already more perfect than philosophers...the moment choice enters the world, the totality is lost. Taste is the floating discipline that never quite reaches the vulgarity of masculine discernment.

Day

A mouse sprung the trap I'd set in my silverware drawer. I found it with its head caught, still panting. I'm not sure how long it must have struggled hoping to either escape or be healed; perhaps it was hours. Without hesitation, I ran a bit of water in the sink and suffocated it because I had no other choice. As it kicked and scratched, I kept the water running. After a moment, I noticed how emaciated its body was; hardly any flesh on the poor creature at all. It convulsed maybe five more times after it had died. I counted a space of two seconds between each contraction, then finally its tail and its body floated limp and swayed with the water while a thin ribbon of blood flared out the side of its mouth, swirling like a weightless ornament.

Day

At the end of the day, my greatest argument has always been my ability to sustain what I am doing.

Day

I should have gotten my doctorate in literature or philosophy by now...instead, without even a day of higher education, this misery is my thesis.

Day

With minimum wage and signs of balding, I retreat back into my small room, where nothing has changed.