



THE IMPOSSIBLE HOMECOMING

Epilogue (Possibility 1)

[Setting:] A rooftop. Overlooking hell. 6.43 pm.

‘Who am I?’

‘I am the present, who sometimes goes by the name of Circe.’

‘Are you *me*?’

‘Yes.’

‘Who is the Lout?’

‘He too is you.’

‘And the Bird?’

‘It too is you.’

‘And the Priest?’

‘He too is you.’

‘And the Old Hag?’

‘All who reside in the Wasteland are you, of you, for you, and by you. All aspects of self reside here. The ego has many faces. The mind many tongues.’

‘What is beyond the Wasteland?’

‘That which is beyond ego—beyond self. Beyond the illusory and impermanent. Beyond the physical and economic. To the endless and timeless, to the spiritual. There is no more suffering in the spiritual realm. There is freedom from the bondage of selfhood. There is serenity. *Hesychia*. This is who you are. Who you truly are, beyond language, culture, mind, and body. Your attention has been so fiercely focused on itself that you have never truly seen beyond it. You are trapped within the context of your birth and the ego you inherited. Trapped within the very language and habits of mind you are now trying to escape. Like *individualism*, consumerism, and economism.’

‘Why do you guard the gates?’

‘I do not guard the gates.’

‘But you are the Guardian of the Wasteland.’

Individualism:

[C]ommunity is dissolved in the acid bath of competition.

In this sense, competition undermines the equality of equals without ... eliminating it. It causes the isolation of individuals within homogeneous social groups (p. 94).

Individualization means market dependency in all dimensions of living. The forms of existence that arise are the isolated *mass market*, not conscious of itself, and *mass consumption* of generically designed housing, furnishings, articles of daily use, as well as opinions, habits, attitudes and lifestyles launched and adopted through the mass media. In other words, individualization delivers people over to an *external control and standardization* ... (p. 132).

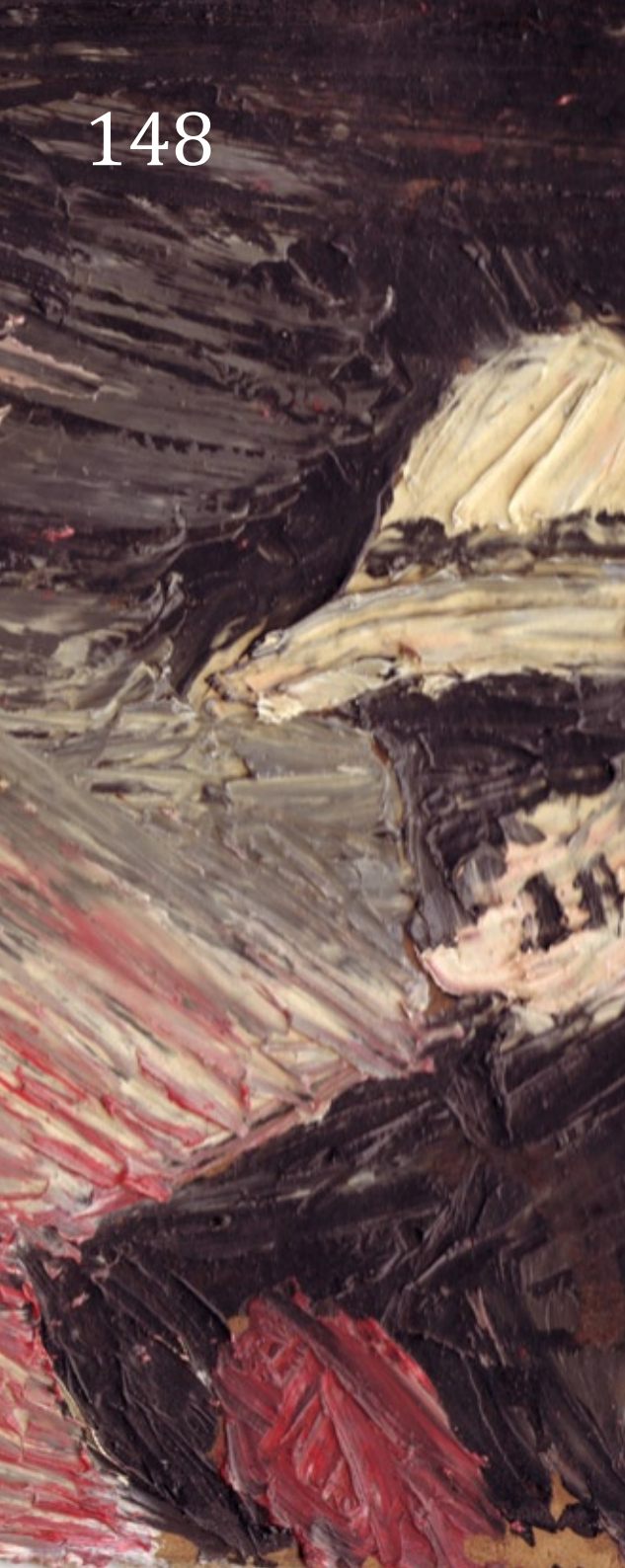
(Ulrich Beck,
Risk Society,
1986/2007)

Hesychia: Hesychasm (Greek *hesychasmos*, from *hesychia*, ‘stillness, rest, quiet, silence’) is an eremitic tradition of prayer in the Eastern Orthodox Church, and some other Eastern Churches of the Byzantine Rite, practised ‘to keep stillness’ by the *Hesychast*.

Based on Christ’s injunction in the Gospel of Matthew to ‘go into your closet to pray,’ *Hesychasm* in tradition has been the process of retiring inward by ceasing to register the senses, in order to achieve an experiential knowledge of God.

Wikipedia
(accessed 24 July 2008)

God help me begin again.

**Greed:**

We live at a time when the conflation of private interests, empire building, and evangelical fundamentalism brings into question the very nature, if not the existence, of the democratic process. Under the reign of neoliberalism, capital and wealth have been largely distributed upward while civic virtue has been undermined by a slavish celebration of the free market as the model for organizing all facets of everyday life. Political culture has been increasingly depoliticized as collective life is organized around the modalities of privatization, deregulation, and commercialization.

(Henry A. Giroux, *The Terror of Neoliberalism*, 2004, p. xv)

‘You named me thus. I am also the Angel of Annunciation. I will open the gates to all who ask. I do not guard, I beckon.’

‘How do I become all I can be?’

‘You need to *un*-think the Wasteland. Dissolve the **delusion**. Dis-identify from the mind and its confections. Stop craving commodities and money. Leave behind time and the burden of personality. Leave behind the fortress and mingle again with the *Other* beyond your walls. Know this outer world as the physical and impermanent and the inner world as the spiritual and eternal.’

‘Is that possible?’

‘For some it is possible. Those with minds like yours seldom recover and seldom transcend the Wasteland. Either their Wasteland or the public Wasteland.’

‘Like mine? You speak of minds like mine? Are there others?’

‘Most others. You have the mind of a madman. You are neurotic. Psychotic. Narcissistic. And egoic. And you are other things too. **Greed**, hate, and delusion. *You are human sickness and you exist in the language and landscape of this sickness*. You have built an identity from these diseases. Shed the identity, collapse the fortress, and you will find *you*. The un-you. The non-you. The pre-linguistic you. The pre-capitalist you. The historical-you. But few escape from minds like yours, and few try.’

‘But it is possible?’

‘It is possible.’

‘Is it possible for *me*?’

‘That remains to be seen. You – me – us, *we* are the problem. *We* are the many faces of self, the constant fracturing of self into selves to populate the delusion. But others have passed through the gates of their wastelands, still others have willingly returned. Most don’t try.’

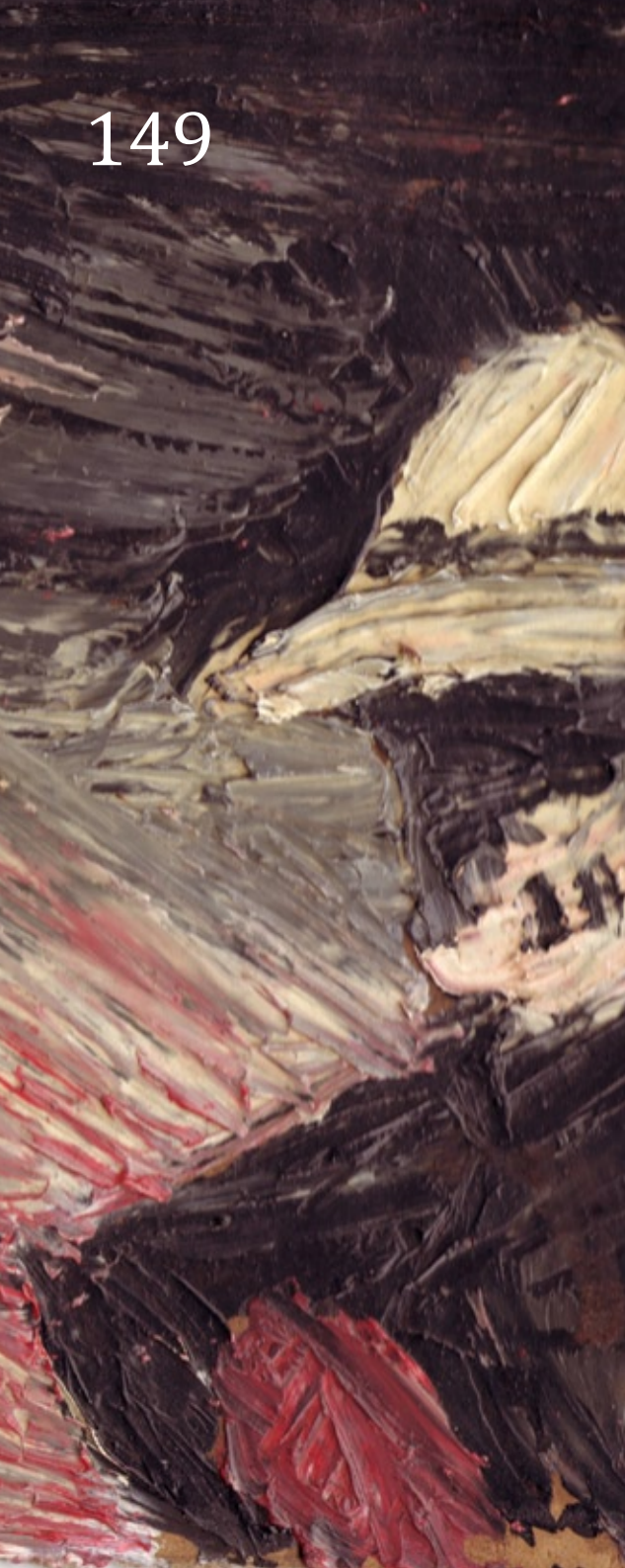
‘Am I capable of sanity and surrender? Of sustained selflessness?’

‘If you are willing.’

‘Am I willing?’

Merk: ‘Each individual of this species [human] is locked up inside his own skull, his own personal experience—or believes that he is—and while a great part of their ethical systems, religious systems, etc., state the Unity of Life, even the most recent religion, which, being the most recent, is the most powerful, called Science, has only very fitful and inadequate gleams of insight into the fact that life is One. In fact, the distinguishing feature of this new religion, and why it has proved so inadequate, is its insistence on dividing off, compartmentalising, pigeon-holing, and one of the most lamentable of these symptoms is its suspicion of and clumsiness with words.’

Doris Lessing,
Briefing for a Descent
into Hell,
1971/1973, pp. 120-121

**Culture:**

This is how we are inclined to think of culture to this very day: as of an anti-randomness device, an effort to introduce and maintain an order; as of an ongoing war against randomness and that chaos which randomness brings about. In the eternal struggle between order and chaos, the place of culture is unambiguously in order's camp.

(Zygmunt Bauman, *Postmodernity and its Discontents*, 1997, p. 131).

Myths:

We are meant to empathise with myths, but not to think about them. As an aesthetic form, a shaping of sensibility, national myths ask us to internalise a holistic ruling-class world-view and to instinctively feel what is 'right' because that state of unreflective being is both beautiful and virtuous – aesthetic, in other words.

(Brian Musgrove, 'States of Emergency,' *Overland*, 191, Winter 2008, p. 65)

'Are you willing?'

'I am willing.'

'Then we proceed. And remember, the ego manifests itself in various ways and will attempt to block your path. You will come face to face with legions of **self**, all products of the Wasteland and a Wasteland-point-of-view. All created through you, by you, and for you: by history, by **culture**. *All are false*. Most will fight for the status quo, for it is in their image that the Wasteland was created. Some will aid the renaissance, for they long for freedom and yearn for growth. Some have already passed on, overwhelmed by the enormity of your prayers. Others will rise from the exodus in the name of the wrath of a child. But if you are willing, truly willing, then you cannot be stopped. Nothing real can be destroyed.'

'I don't remember being any place other than the Wasteland.'

'How could you?'

'Even before the exile. Before my dereliction.'

'This is true of us. Life was chaos. Meaning was lost. We took an alternate route at the beginning, with the suicide of our mother and the death thereafter of all things spiritual.'

'How do you know this?'

'I was the first born of your baby tears. We stood together on the edge of the infant world. We cried for the baby that was our brother. We stared up at the agony that was our father. We gathered around us guilt, shame, and remorse. For we blamed ourselves.'

'I think I remember this.'

'You were so small.'

'I was only four. I didn't speak for years to come.'

'Oh, you spoke. You spoke of agony ever more. You spoke to the gathering darkness that became your surrounding shore. The world beyond, you simply ignored, for it betrayed us. And you entered the deafening noise of historical thought.'

'How do you know of the lands beyond the Wasteland? Beyond my Wasteland and the public Wasteland?'

Self/Solipsism:

1) *The theory that the self is the only thing that can be known and verified.*

2) *The theory or view that the self is the only reality.*

Wiktionary
(accessed 17 October 2008)

Solipsism:

1) *A landscape peopled by selves.*

2) *A landscape of the plural and divided ego.*

Hate-filled Selves:

Do not underestimate the intensity of the ego's drive for vengeance on the past. It is completely savage and completely insane. For the ego remembers everything you have done that has offended it, and seeks retribution of you. The fantasies it brings to its chosen relationships in which to act out its hate are fantasies of your destruction. For the ego holds the past against you, and in your escape from the past it sees itself deprived of the vengeance it believes you so justly merit. Yet without your alliance in your own destruction, the ego could not hold you to the past.

(A Course in Miracles, 2004, p. 348)

'We have been there long ago, before we built the Wasteland and the Wasteland-point-of-view. Before humanity turned its poor out into the cold and made public Wastelands from personal horrors. And we left of our own free will. We couldn't and wouldn't accept life on life's terms. Tragedy was unacceptable to us, and betrayal criminal. We resisted everything. We resisted the spiritual and we resisted the physical. We resisted God and we resisted Peace. We built instead the *self*. The Authorial self. The Author-God self. The writer-of-scripts self.'

'How can there be anything beyond the only reality I've ever known?'

'Your heart tells you so. You have sought it long and hard, even while retreating deeper into the recesses of self, even while associating more fully with the madness of mind, only you didn't know it. You are the prisoner of self, a construct of mind and language, and yet God follows at your heel, beckoning you from your madness and loving you in your misery. *You* are in fact none of these things—but beyond them. *You* have nothing left to lose by seeking the light of spirit beyond the Wasteland of self. The ego fears the light, for it is the light of its annihilation. And this light is within you. This light is you.' (*Silence*) 'Stop here or gently pass. *Stop*—or pass back to the noise and darkness of self and society and continue your death. At best, the ego is suspicious; at worst, vicious.'

'But I'm not dead!'

'You've never known life. You've always resided in death. Death is the world you propagate. The Wasteland is infinite. Filled to the rafters with **hate-filled selves**. All you, of you, for you: by history, by culture. You can hear them chanting and squabbling incessantly. They are unhappy bedfellows. They shout day and night. The mind is mad with violent demands and insatiable needs. It is squabbling with history. With the voices of its making. You seek a place beyond mind. Beyond form. And beyond time.'

'But I am a genius. Maker of worlds. Maker of selves.'

Father Terence: Today, he said, more than ever before, men had to learn to live without things. Things filled men with fear: the more things they had, the more they had to fear. Things had a way of riveting themselves on to the soul and then telling the soul what to do.

*Bruce Chatwin,
The Songlines,
1987/1988, p. 71*

Mind Patterns:

How does this mind pattern operate in *your* life? Are you always trying to get somewhere other than where you are? Is most of your *doing* just a means to an end? Is fulfilment always just around the corner or confined to short-lived pleasures, such as sex, food, drink, drugs, or thrills and excitement? Are you always focused on becoming, achieving, and attaining, or alternatively chasing some new thrill or pleasure? Do you believe that if you acquire more things you will become more fulfilled, good enough, or psychologically complete? Are you waiting for a man or woman to give meaning to your life?

(Eckhart Tolle, *The Power of Now*, 2004, p. 49)

‘And I am insane.’

‘But you are me.’

‘And we are insane. For long ago, before you taught yourself the art of deception and sought only oblivion and flight, you stood on the precipice and looked down upon the rocks at the mangled corpse that was our mummy. Here all hope ended. You threw all belief and all faith and all hope over the cliff after her, and from that catastrophe and first rejection there grew tremendous fury and fear. Helpless, and incapable of righting the world that had so heinously wronged you, you screamed a new world into being from the ashes of the old. You became its master—and it became you. Shunned and spurned by forces beyond you, you seized the illusion of control and felt vindicated in your damnation of God. You created an alternate world view. A **Wasteland-world-view**. And you became your own God.’ Silence and stillness. ‘We feared our own impotence, our own smallness. We were as powerless then as we are today. Adrift on a giant rock in the infinity of space. *And today we must give up the fantasy of omnipotence.*’

‘Fiddlesticks!’

‘Are you unwilling?’

‘No. Yes. I’m scared. I remember the guts. I remember the despair. She shouldn’t have left me. I was only four and I was so small. I thought I was the centre of the universe, a colossus! I created the world in my likeness: from history, from culture.’

‘I feel your terror. You are not the centre of the universe, only the universe you created. You are *of* the universe. And you are beyond the universe. The Wasteland is simply the grandiosity of self, the individual and collective self, willed into being by amassing aspects of self, all nasty, all blind, all mad. They feed on the fantasy and arrogance of omnipotence. Yet they retain only the power to kill. To suffer. And to hurt Others. You have long been ruled by the terror and wrath of a four-year-old boy. In his steely eye the world was made, and it is a bitter place, a brutal place, a loveless place. Nothing can live here for it was born of death. Of negation.’

KUBLAI *Perhaps this dialogue of ours is taking place between two beggars nicknamed Kublai Khan and Marco Polo; as they sift through a rubbish heap, piling up rusted flotsam, scraps of cloth, wastepaper, while drunk on the few sips of bad wine, they see all the treasure of the East shine around them.*

POLO *Perhaps all that is left of the world is a wasteland covered with rubbish heaps, and the hanging garden of the Great Khan’s palace. It is our eyelids that separate them, but we cannot know which is inside and which outside.*

Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities, 1979/1972, pp. 82-83

Warrior of Light

The moment that he begins to walk along it, the warrior of light recognises the Path.

Each stone, each bend cries welcome to him. He identifies with the mountains and the streams, he sees something of his own soul in the plants and the animals and the birds of the field.

Then, accepting the help of God and of God's Signs, he allows his Personal Legend to guide him towards the tasks that life has reserved for him.

On some nights, he has nowhere to sleep, on others, he suffers from insomnia. 'That's just how it is,' thinks the warrior. 'I was the one who chose to walk this path.'

In these words lies all his power: he chose the path along which he is walking and so has no complaints.

(Paulo Coelho,
*Manual of the Warrior of
Light*,
2004, p. 16)

He remembers that boy. He feels his resistance in his limbs. He turns now to the boy. 'Come now, little one, let us turn back from the precipice and put on a happy face. Let us be terrified together and join again the human race. Not the race to extinction, but the race to unity.' And he takes the hand of the baby boy. 'But wait, Circe, what will we find out there? Out there, outside the giant gates? Beyond the Wasteland and the Wasteland-point-of-view?'

'More sick people and more sick minds. And in them you will see empires of sickness created from the endless stuff of self. More impenetrable Wastelands where no birds sing. Each person an island of its own terror. The ego creates and sustains the illusion of separation. By helping them, you free yourself from wanting and craving. Remember: *gain* is delusion and *loss* is enlightenment. But some will be rising up from their own demises and breaking free from their own Wastelands. Some have already succeeded. Still others die not knowing of the love beyond. You are incredibly fortunate in this: that you happen to know the answer. In this immense confusion one thing alone is clear: you are surrounded by love and hope. And they are yours if you dare to live and dare to give in a world not of your bidding. If you discard the fantasy, abandon hatred, and enter **God**. For this is our home. We have lived in exile long enough.'

He sighs.

'And now let go of the term and concept of God itself, for they too are located within the madness and mess of language and power; a term and concept corrupted and polluted by centuries of bloodshed. Now place the term God under erasure and un-think the concept. Undo the indoctrination.'

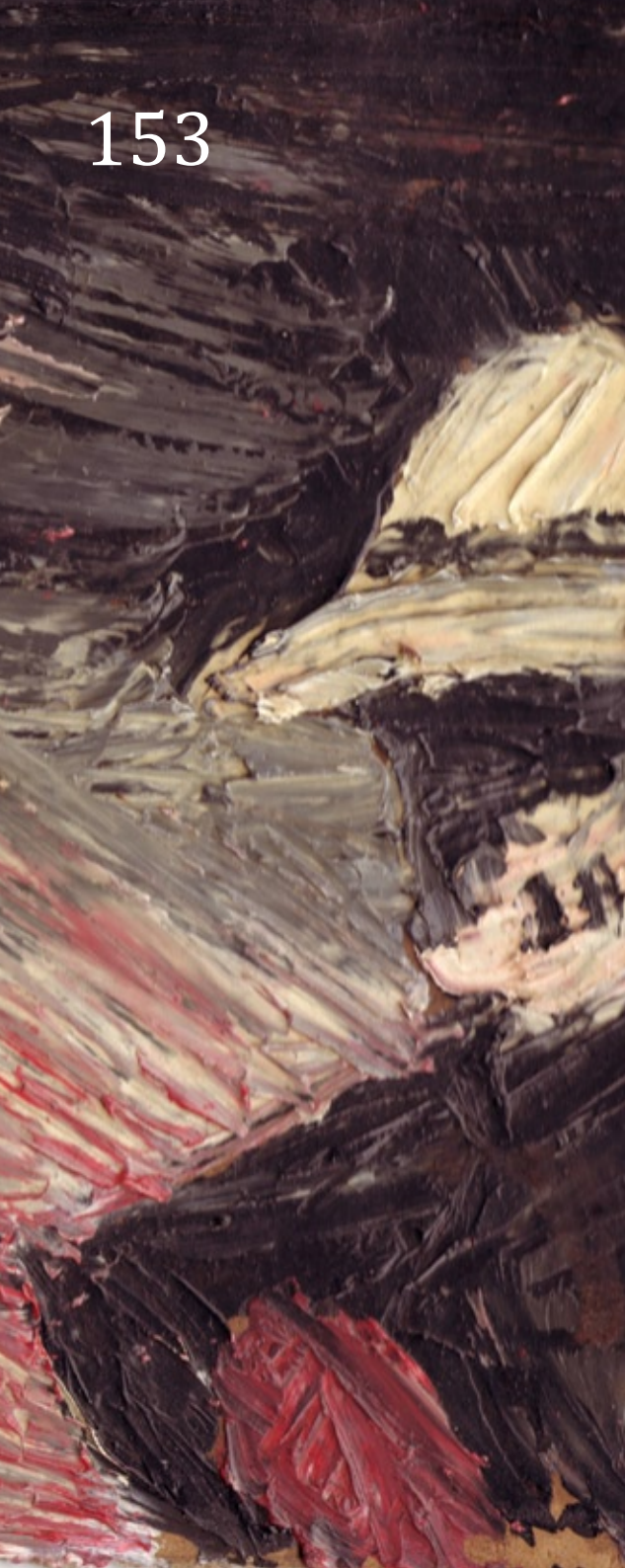
God.

And so the man and woman and child of self become willing to seek a place beyond the confines of self, beyond the confines of God, beyond the confines of romanticism, beyond the confines of text, to walk through their terror and unlearn their old minds, for their sickness is both a human tragedy and a divine opportunity. Our destiny lies

Apart from their role as 'Lords of the Fertilizing Waters', the first Dictators called themselves 'Shepherds of the People'. Indeed, all over the world, the words for 'slave' and 'domesticated animal' are the same. The masses are to be corralled, milked, penned in (to save them from the human 'wolves' outside), and, if need be, lined up for slaughter.

The City is thus a sheepfold superimposed over a Garden.

Bruce Chatwin,
The Songlines,
1987/1988, p. 226



Wasteland Cities:

When a city begins to grow and spread outward, from the edges, the centre which was once its glory is in a sense abandoned to time.

Then the buildings grow dark and a kind of decay sets in; poorer people move in as the rents fall, and small fringe businesses take the place of once flowering establishments. The district is still too good to tear down and too outmoded to be desirable. Besides, all the energy has flowed out to the new developments, to the semi-rural supermarkets, the outdoor movies, new houses with wide lawns and stucco schools where children are confirmed in their literacy.

The old port with narrow streets and cobbled surfaces, smoke-grimed, goes into a period of desolation inhabited at night by the vague ruins of men, the lotus eaters who struggle daily towards unconsciousness by way of raw alcohol. Nearly every city I know has such a dying mother of violence and despair where at night the brightness of the street lamps is sucked away and policemen walk in pairs.

ahead, beyond the **Wasteland** of mind and body, with the **Other**. Several layers of self lie unfurled in the shadows of our feet, and we are still shedding the layers of hell that once contained our human shape. For we are not only made of human stuff, the human form divine, but all stuff, even dust from the earliest times, and dust from tomorrow, and this will always be so. We merely borrow it for a time and return it when our journey is done.

‘I like you,’ he says. ‘You are kind and full of hope.’

‘That’s a good place to start. On no other day have you said this to me (or to us).’

And he smiles. ‘Today is not any other day. Today is the first day of the rest of my life. And today I know one thing for certain, that I love you both. For today you gave me back myself and this is all I need to begin... *Now* is the most important moment of my life.’

‘Now is the *only* moment of your life.’

And so the fog lifts, and darkness makes way for light. And the angels hear his cries and readily take to flight. For they are coming.

For the lost child they fly in earnest. They have sought him all his life. But today, today they will lift him from his grief and love him back to health.

And he will rise up to meet them.

For they are coming from within.

Because the only thing more terrifying than a meaningless universe *is a universe that matters*.

Post-Epilogue (Possibility 2)

[Setting:] The madman’s den. 6.43 pm. Jack stares into the bulb of his lamp, deep into the blindness shimmering within. His cheeks suck inward. His mind races. His eyes fix on the world beyond. Yet the only hint of this seeing is the glare to his eyes. The veins standing up in his neck. And the pen trembling in his hand. *He writes:*

The Other:

It is very important to find a common ethical ground between laymen and believers, so that both can work for the betterment of mankind, for peace and justice. The appeal to human dignity clearly constitutes a principle that establishes a universal basis for thought and action: never to take advantage of another person, always and everywhere to respect the inviolability of the other, always to consider every person as an unusable and untouchable reality.

(Cardinal Martini, as cited in Umberto Eco & Cardinal Martini,

Belief or Nonbelief: A Confrontation, 2000, pp. 82-83)

And then one day perhaps
the city returns and rips out
the sore and builds a monu-
ment to its past.

(John Steinbeck,
*Travels with Charley: In
Search of America*,
1961/1965, p. 159)

Global Meltdown:

To cut a long story short:
*cities have become dumping
grounds for globally begot-
ten problems.* The residents
of cities and their elected
representatives tend to be
confronted with a task
they can by no stretch of
imagination fulfil: the task
of finding local solutions
to global contradictions (p.
101).

There are, let me repeat, *no
local solutions to globally gen-
erated problems* (p. 115).

(Zygmunt Bauman,
Liquid Love,
2006)

Dear God,

*(The pen begins stabbing the page, at first delicately and then with
greater rigour, as if stabbing an unseen being. Then, mid-murder, the
arm suddenly arrests and begins again:)*

Dear Keats,

Your world is even more hopeless than I feared. The
sheer enormity of your failure is beyond calculation and
therefore beyond meaningful critique. It makes the mind
boggle – quite literally, boggle. If there is any measure
of your own shortcomings in your handiwork then I sadly
pity you. If this is the case, as indeed all evidence
tends to point, then you should have righted yourself
long before making any clumsy attempts at human beings.
That was cruel.

Disappointing. Baffling. Sickening. Pathetic. These
appellations don't even begin to express it. But I di-
gress.

There was, after all, one rather extraordinary
stroke of brilliance, in the form of a radical yet sui-
cidal bird named Binky. I discovered this inspirational
creature in a seedy underground bar, sitting, chained and
humiliated, on the shoulder of a pervert. I was beaten to
a pulp for the privilege of having witnessed the miracle
of this bird's annunciations and subsequent death. Quite
probably, you had nothing to do with the creation of this
heightened being. It probably manifested itself out of
the enormity of your failings, like the phoenix from the
ashes, to deliver its message of judgment and truth to us
on earth (and you beyond).

(Hesitates. A tear wells in his eye. Continues:)

Genesis:

*1: In the beginning God
created the heaven and the
earth.*

*2: And the earth was
without form, and void; and
darkness was upon the face
of the deep. And the Spirit of
God moved upon the face of
the waters.*

*3: And God said, Let there
be light: and there was light.*

*4: And God saw the light,
that it was good: and God
divided the light from the
darkness.*

*5: And God called the light
Day, and the darkness
he called Night. And the
evening and the morning
were the first day.*

*([http://historyofideas.org/
toc/modeng/public/Kjv-
Gene.html](http://historyofideas.org/toc/modeng/public/Kjv-
Gene.html) accessed 23 July
2008)*

Conscientisation: 'nam-
ing' the world as an active
means of inheriting the
wor(l)d.

**Visions of the Daughters of
Albion**

The Argument

I loved Theotormon
And I was not ashamed
I trembled in my virgin fears
And I hid in Leutha's vale!

I plucked Leutha's flower,
And I rose up from the vale;
But the terrible thunders
tore
My virgin mantle in twain.

[Bromion]

Bromion rent her with his
thunders. On his stormy bed
/ Lay the faint maid, and
soon her woes appall'd his
thunders hoarse.

Bromion spoke: 'Be-hold
this harlot here on Bromi-
on's bed, / And let the jeal-
ous dolphins sport around
the lovely maid; / Thy soft
American plains are mine,
and mine thy north & south:
/ Stamp't with my signet are
the swarthy children of the
sun: / They are obedient,
they resist not, they obey the
scourge: / Their daughters
worship terrors and obey the
violent. ...'

Binky, bird sage and guru, who weighed up the absurdity of your world, bellowed it, danced it, condemned it, before gladly, willingly, throwing itself to its death from the shoulder of its oppressor, a notable pervert. It hung itself. Just like that. Perhaps Binky is now with you, counselling you, as the proud sage should, informing you of the enormous and unfortunate charade you have created. If she or he is not, then I pity you even more.

But no doubt your faculties are still holding up, if only just, and by now you are ruminating over the wizened annunciations of Binky, the bird prophet. Soon, I expect, you will make amends to your charges and begin again. Anticipating this re-genesis is about the only thing that makes life bearable, even livable, in the face of all-out horror.

Conversely, if Binky has been condemned to limbo – excommunicated to some ambivalent and in between state of nothingness, neither burning in Hell nor revelling in Heaven, but trapped and hidden in purgatory – for having committed the most noble and courageous act of murder of all, suicide (the murder of self, of ego), then all hope is lost. This would spell ill for us all, and indicate your continued demise and our certain extinction.

To condemn the victim and not the perpetrator, I will remind you, is a travesty, one that in fairness should denounce the law-maker (you) and not the vanquished (us). Theotormon, you will recall, was guilty of this very crime in 'Visions of the Daughters of Albion' (Blake, 1793), and in so doing ignored the rich and loyal love of Oothoon, his beloved, who was raped by Bromion whilst en route to offer her undying love to him (Theotormon). Bromion was the rapist, Oothoon the victim, and

Suicide statistics:

Already in this new century there have been more than 5 million suicide deaths worldwide. Each year approximately one million people in the world die by suicide. This toll is higher than the total number of world deaths each year from war and homicide combined. Suicide is an important public health problem in many countries, and is a leading cause of death amongst teenagers and young adults.

In addition, it is estimated that there are from 10–20 times as many suicide attempts as suicide deaths.

*American Foundation for
Suicide Prevention
(AFSP)*

Rape statistics:

*2002 survey of 84 countries
for 2001:*

Total rapes: 329,708

Source: <NationMaster.com> citing The Eighth United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (2002)

[Theotormon]

Then storms rent Theotormon's limbs; he roll'd his waves around, / And folded his black jealous waters round the adulterate pair; / Bound back to back in Bromion's caves terror & meekness dwell.

At entrance Theotormon sits wearing the threshold hard / With secret tears; beneath him sound like waves on a desert shore / The voice of slaves beneath the sun, and children bought with money, / That shiver in religious caves beneath the burning fires / Of lust, that belch incessant from the summits of the earth.

[Oothoon]

Oothoon weeps not: she cannot weep! her tears are locked up; / But she can howl incessant, writhing her soft snowy limbs, / And calling Theotormon's Eagles to prey upon her flesh.

'I call with holy voice! kings of the sounding air, / Rend away this defiled bosom that I may reflect / The image

yet *both* were punished by Theotormon – Bromion for stealing Oothoon's virginity (rightly enough), and Oothoon for not being able to prevent it (wrongly enough). In turn, Theotormon was eternally (and rightfully) damned for his proud and rather demented prejudices, but so too were his captives. Both men deserved to suffer given their perverted views and brutal actions, but not Oothoon. She was the meat in the sandwich, so to speak. Raped both ways by the devilry of patriarchy. Oothoon's love for Theotormon, it should be noted, never wavered, and yet she was ostracised and discarded for being – yes, let me say it again – the *victim!* An innocent victim. Like us on earth. Like Binky.

How can this fucking be?

Take heed, dear Lord, before you too sit at the mouth of an empty lair, lamenting a membrane of mucus, while Oothoon wails beyond your right shoulder and Bromion sneers at your left. For you will, dear Lord, with a face riddled with the same churlish perplexity as that of Theotormon and your other son, the fallen one, the light-bearer and rebel, *Lucifer*. He who sprang from Heaven like bird-Binky did the shoulder of Bromion. Both, it would seem, forgot how to love, and instead simply hated. The world beyond was obscured and finally erased and forgotten as both men fell into themselves, deep into ego. The collective world was replaced by the singular self. The infinite for the finite. Socialism for neo-liberalism.

Love for hate.

And in this image we mortals now reside, disfigured by despair, hunched like baffled monkeys, lamenting our own accidental and un-asked-for lives. All hope thwarted by weighted lids, which sink, spasm, and droop over the flashes of fiction and fantasy we humbly erect in meek

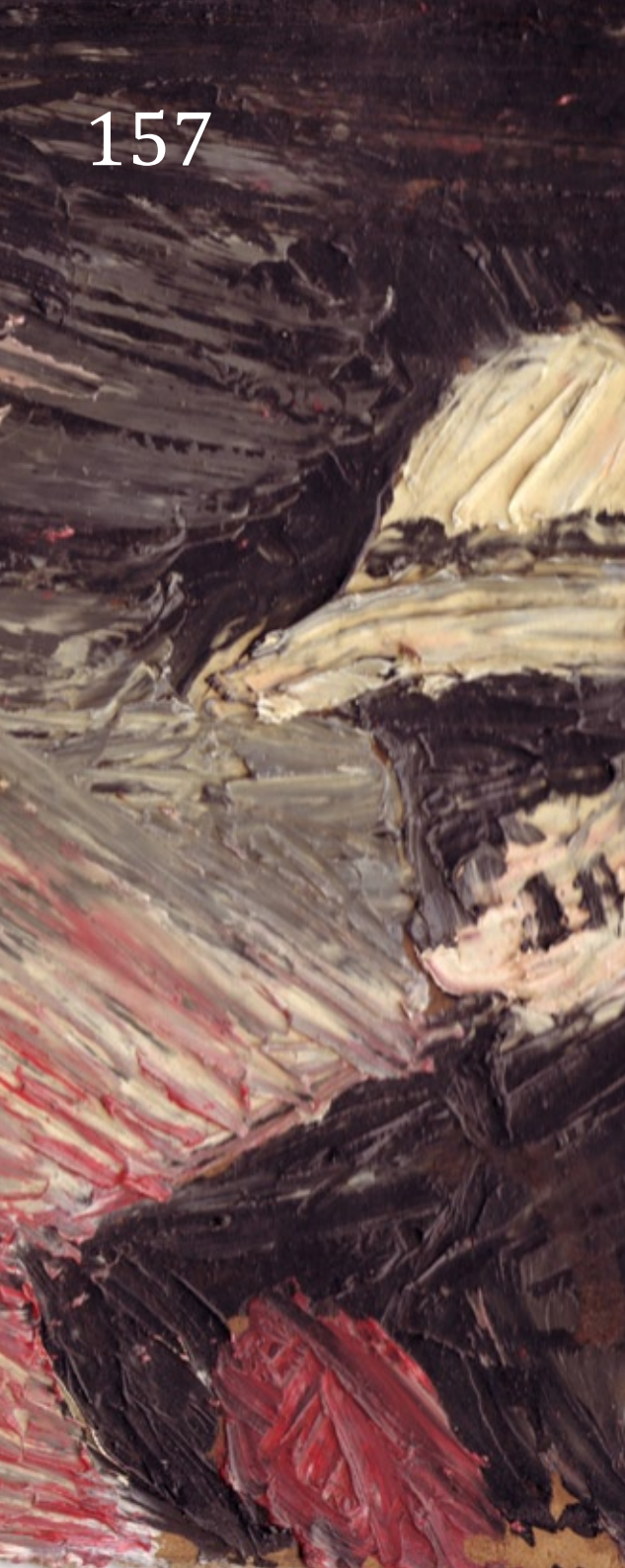
Lucifer: is a name frequently given to Satan in Christian belief because of a particular interpretation of a passage in the Book of Isaiah. More specifically, it is supposed to have been Satan's name before being cast out of heaven.

In Latin, the word 'Lucifer,' meaning 'Light-Bringer' (from lux, lucis, 'light,' and ferre, 'to bear, bring'), is a name for the 'Morning Star' (the planet Venus in its dawn appearances).

Wikipedia
(accessed 23 July 2008)

Devil: is the title given to the supernatural being, who, in mainstream Christianity, Islam, and some other religions, is believed to be a powerful, evil entity and the tempter of humankind. The Devil is commonly associated with heretics, infidels, and other unbelievers.

Wikipedia
(accessed 23 July 2008)



of Theotormon on my pure
transparent breast.' ...

The Daughters of Albion
hear her woes, & eccho back
her sighs.

(William Blake, 1793)

defence. Meek and humble attempts, I'll have you know, to ward off the *meaningless* emptiness that threatens to swallow us all. A capacity which, I dare venture, you gave us – for what? For visions of *The Promised Land* we shall never walk? Visions of the happiness we shall never feel? Visions of the beauty we shall never see? Or simply to tempt and tease and trick us? Allegations once levelled at the light-bearer, Lucifer. For what, I ask? For what reasons were we given the capacities of imagination, reflection, projection, contemplation, emotion, and love?

For damnation is what!

Plotter indeed. We were more sane when *beasts*, scraping our knuckles through the dirt and thinking about nothing. These creatures had integrity, even dignity.

Is it any wonder that we do almost anything to escape the horror of this ridiculous situation? Drink, drug, sex, smoke, kill, hate, and war – anything – anything – to distract ourselves from the humiliating and deplorable position in creation we unwittingly inhabit. Mad lemmings have it better. At least they have the capacity and courage to kill themselves and be done with it. Herds of them, droves of them, simply amassing at great heights above cliffs and leaping into oblivion and infinity and death. Little faces smashing on rocks. Guts exploding. Think about it. It is an enviable survival instinct: the innate capacity to murder the self. To resist nature and evolution. To *renege*. I may well foster this capacity in my-SELF. But there, you see, now we are at the heart of it. You resent the fact that other creatures have the capacity to die, to rot, tooth and nail, back into the mud, while you are stuck in a kind of Guantanamo Bay ghetto, a life sentence, with the colos-

Charles Darwin:
'...we must acknowledge, as it seems to me, that man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his godlike intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system—with all these exalted powers—Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin' (Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 1871).

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce
(at Oxford, 1860):
'The Bishop spoke thus for full half an hour with inimitable spirit, emptiness and unfairness.' "In a light, scoffing tone, florid and fluent, he assured us there was nothing in the idea of evolution; rock pigeons were what rock pigeons had always been. Then, turning to his antagonist with a smiling insolence, he begged to know, was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he claimed his descent from

Chaotic-evil Alignment:
(‘Destroyer’)

Dungeons & Dragons

A chaotic evil character does whatever his [or her] greed, hatred, and lust for destruction drive him to do. He is hot-tempered, vicious, arbitrarily violent, and unpredictable. If he is simply out for whatever he can get, he is ruthless and brutal. If he is committed to the spread of evil and chaos, he is even worse. Thankfully, his plans are haphazard, and any groups he joins or forms are poorly organised. Typically, chaotic evil people can be made to work together only by force, and their leader lasts only as long as he can thwart attempts to topple or assassinate him.

Chaotic evil is sometimes called ‘demonic’ because demons are the epitome of chaotic evil.

Chaotic evil is the most dangerous alignment because it represents the destruction not only of beauty and life but also of the order on which beauty and life depend.

sal error that is your creation staring you in the face, ablaze, 24 hours a day—for eternity. The ultimate act of terror. But there, I will pick up this point at our next session. Until then, take heed and beware, for eternity is an awfully long time to sit with your-SELF and hate every moment of it.

Ever you humble guide and doctor,

Jackery J Diggins, Esq.

PS As for payment. Miracles will suffice. Just free me from this uninhabitable and forsaken hell. I deserve nothing short of everything.

PPS Don’t bother!

Here the madman stops, tired and deflated, his venom lost. His pen drops from his fingers. He stares again into the bulb of his lamp. Is God capable of receiving such earnest criticism? Perhaps his lugubrious tendencies will position him below it. Will anger him. Is he not already enraged? Perhaps even mad? With a **chaotic-evil** disposition?

After all, isn’t the Author-God more powerful than God himself? And the Reader/Character/Viewer more powerful than the Author-God? Isn’t the wor(l)d made from the self up? Not God down?

Isn’t God at the mercy of the pen? Not the pen, God?

Isn’t the ‘**Death of the Author**’ *the Death of God*? And the ‘Death of God’ *the Birth of the Reader*? Didn’t the Reader usurp the original word of God and bend it to *his* will? Didn’t *he* kill God in the act of reading God? In the act of interpreting? Rewriting? Omitting?

Again his tongue emerges, the pink slug of gloom and doom, to drool over his latest jottings. It laps up a bread crumb long forgotten on his upper lip, works it back into the centre of his mouth, and evokes a bolus of saliva which in turn transports the morsel into his throat. Amylase enzymes immediately absorb the speck.

a monkey?”

(Leonard Huxley: From The Life & Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley, 1901).

Death of the Author:

perhaps the madman relinquishes the notion of being the ‘author’ of his own life (i.e. of free will) in favour of ‘crass causality’ and fate (i.e. determinism). Hence, the death of the author is the death of the illusion of being God(-like).

Death of the Author:

‘Barthes identified a cultural investment in the author as explanatory source of TEXTS: the idea of the author-as-God originating meaning, against which he stressed the linguistic reality of the author – created only in language – and the plurality of any text – space of the interaction of a number of WRITINGS. Recognition of this is the condition of a modern literary practice. ... The death of the author brings the liberation of the reader, no longer constrained to the authorial fiction of the single voice in mastery

<<http://compendium.ddo.com/wiki/Alignment>>
(accessed 24 July 2008)

Dream-crushing Farce:

Always in the background of apocalyptic literature are groups of people suffering from religious, social, and political oppression who, not seeing any solution in direct action, project themselves into a time when cosmic forces will fall upon the earth and defeat their enemies for them. In this sense, it must be said that in every apocalypse there is a heavy utopian freight, a massive reserve of hope, but coupled with woeful resignation in the present.

(Cardinal Martini, as cited in Umberto Eco & Cardinal Martini, *Belief or Nonbelief: A Confrontation*, 2000, pp. 25-26)

The madman is unaware of the mysterious workings of enzymes, the processes of digestion and absorption. He is absorbed by another problem: *the tone in which to deliver damning condemnations to God. To God, the weakest thing in all creation.*

Perhaps, he thinks, he should address the sentinel: Binky, bird-sage and guru, prophet of the ages.

This challenge renders him stupid. A great stillness overcomes him. (*Head falls to desk*)

Light fades and darkness falls. ‘Sort of thing... Sort of thing...’ is heard whispered in the void. Then the screaming begins. And the banging. Terror fills the darkness.

No angels return his cries or echo back his sighs.

PPPS Fuck the world!

Post-post-Epilogue (Possibility 3)

[Setting:] A rooftop. 6.43 pm. A blood-red sunset. Set against this stands a man, discernible only as a silhouette—arms outstretched, like *The Redeemer*, overlooking paradise. And yet this is not paradise. Not for the vagabonds. Not for the flawed consumers. Not in a neo-liberal world. No, this is a postmodern holocaust, an economic extinction, a **dream-crushing farce**.

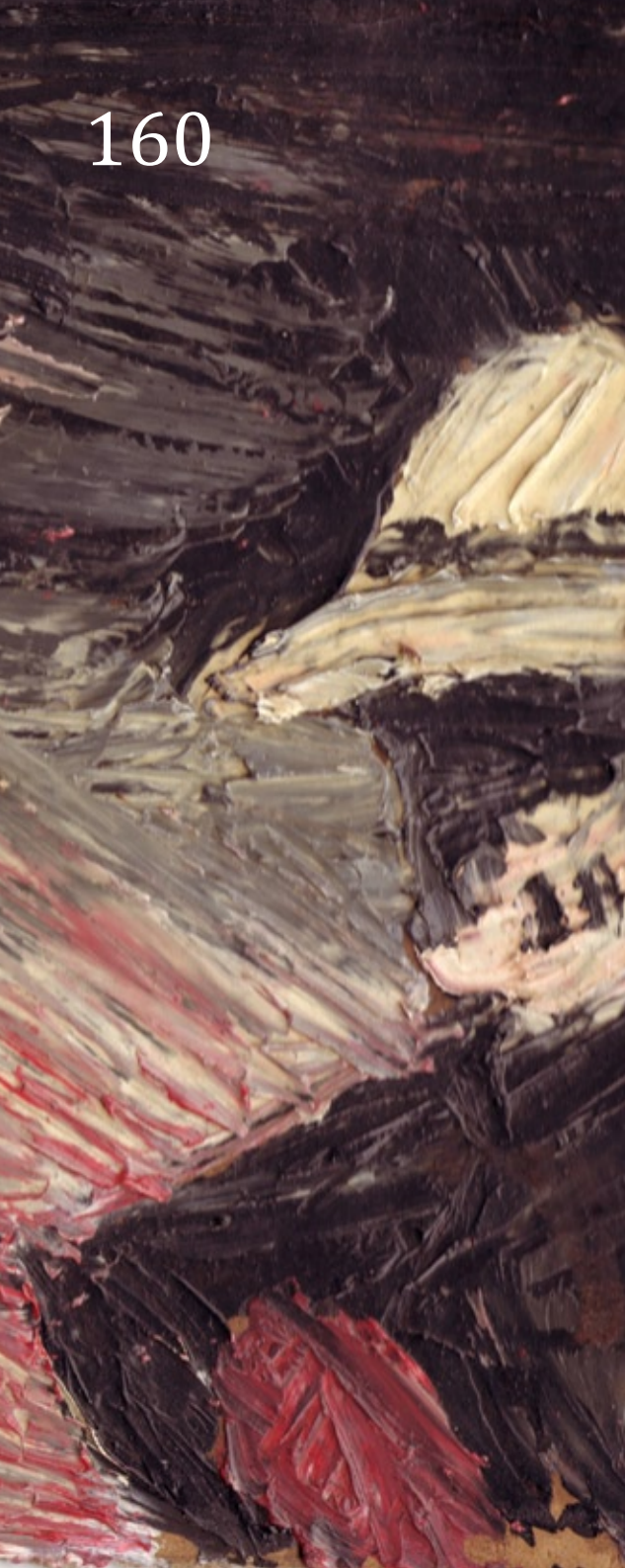
The man seems to be willing himself off the ledge before him, to leap into the world beyond, to fly face first into the asphalt several stories below. And then into infinity. Like a lemming. Into heaven. And beyond.

Like a fallen angel.

Like us on earth who wait forlorn.

The minutes pass, one after the other, slowly and miraculously, until the man is lost to the night. Shapeless, he turns away from hell and steps into the abyss. Like an angel. Like a lemming. Like Binky. Leaping with despair. Leaping with hope. Flying face first into oblivion. Crying: ‘Fuck the world’ and ‘Praise the lord’ as goes.

of its text’ (*A Dictionary of Cultural & Critical Theory*, 1996, p. 38).

**Falling:**

From time to time, I open a newspaper. Things seem to be proceeding at a dizzy rate. We are dancing not on the edge of a volcano, but on the wooden seat of a latrine, and it seems to me more than a touch rotten. Soon society will go plummeting down and down in nineteen centuries of shit. There'll be quite a lot of shouting.

(Julian Barnes, *Flaubert's Parrot*, 1984, p. 179)

As he falls ...

As he flies ...

'Madman, stop!'

'Why?'

'In the name of love, stop!'

'In the name of *what?*'

'In the name of love!'

'In the name of *what?*'

'Stop, in the name of love!'

'Why?'

'Before you break my heart, stop. Before it's too late, stop. In the name of love, stop.'

And he stopped. By word, he stopped. Midair, he stopped. In the name of LOVE, he stopped. By word. By language. By sound. By gesture. By feeling. By emotion. By choice. He stopped. And he continued to stop. In the name of love, he stopped. For Circe, he stopped.

Stopped by a word.

And that word was LOVE.

Spoken in earnest.

Spoken in haste.

A man brought to his knees—to a standstill, to a halt—by a word. Suspended. Statue-like. Like *The Kiss*. Heart pounding. Staring down from the edge of hell. Arms outstretched, like Christ, suspended. In the name of LOVE, suspended. Midair, suspended.

Stopped by a word.

And that word was LOVE.

Hurting through his mind as he plummets headlong into infinity. Arms flapping in horror and hope. Somewhere between faith and despair. Speeding towards infinity ...

Post-post-post-Epilogue (Possibility 4)

[Setting:] A rooftop. Glorious hell. 6.43 pm.

Evil Men:

Evil people: intentionally derive pleasure from inflicting suffering upon others[;] enthusiastically and joyfully employ violence to obtain their objectives[;] are the sworn enemies of good order and peace; the outsiders who thrive on the chaos they create[;] are unable to control their ego and emotions, especially anger. They are wild and impulsive. Yet in their egoism and wildness lie the seeds of their downfall – they make mistakes and goodness has a chance to prevail.

(Wadham, Pudsey, & Boyd, *Culture & Education*, 2007, p. 161)

And in the name of LOVE he stepped down from his horror and kissed her.

And cried.

And lived the whole of human history through the blindness of a tongue. Speaking without words, speaking in tongues, like angels, like devils, through passion and unreason, before a blood-red sky. Like

The Kiss.

As he flies.

As he kicks.

As he speeds towards infinity ...

Post-post-post-post-Epilogue (*resume*)

[Setting:] The pavement below. 6.44 pm. Street-level.

Nose: 'There's a lot of blood.'

Mouth: 'Who'd 've thought, eh? He doesn't look like much.'

(*Left hand on temple, right hand sawing through neck, blood spraying hither and thither through a blood-red night.*)

Mouth: 'Put your knee in his back. Hold him down. That's it.'

Nose: 'Pity about the fall. Dented his head.'

Mouth: (*panting*) 'He was a sitting duck up there. Arms outstretched like that. Like Christ. Just asking for a bullet up the bum!'

Much laughter. Much blood. Much sawing.

Nose: 'You got him right up the bum, old boy.'

Mouth: 'Tally-ho! Told you I could.' (*Grunts*) 'There.'

And the head rolls free from the shoulders.

Mouth: 'Where's the sack. Put it in.'

Nose: 'What about the balls?'

(*Rolls over body and peels down pants*)

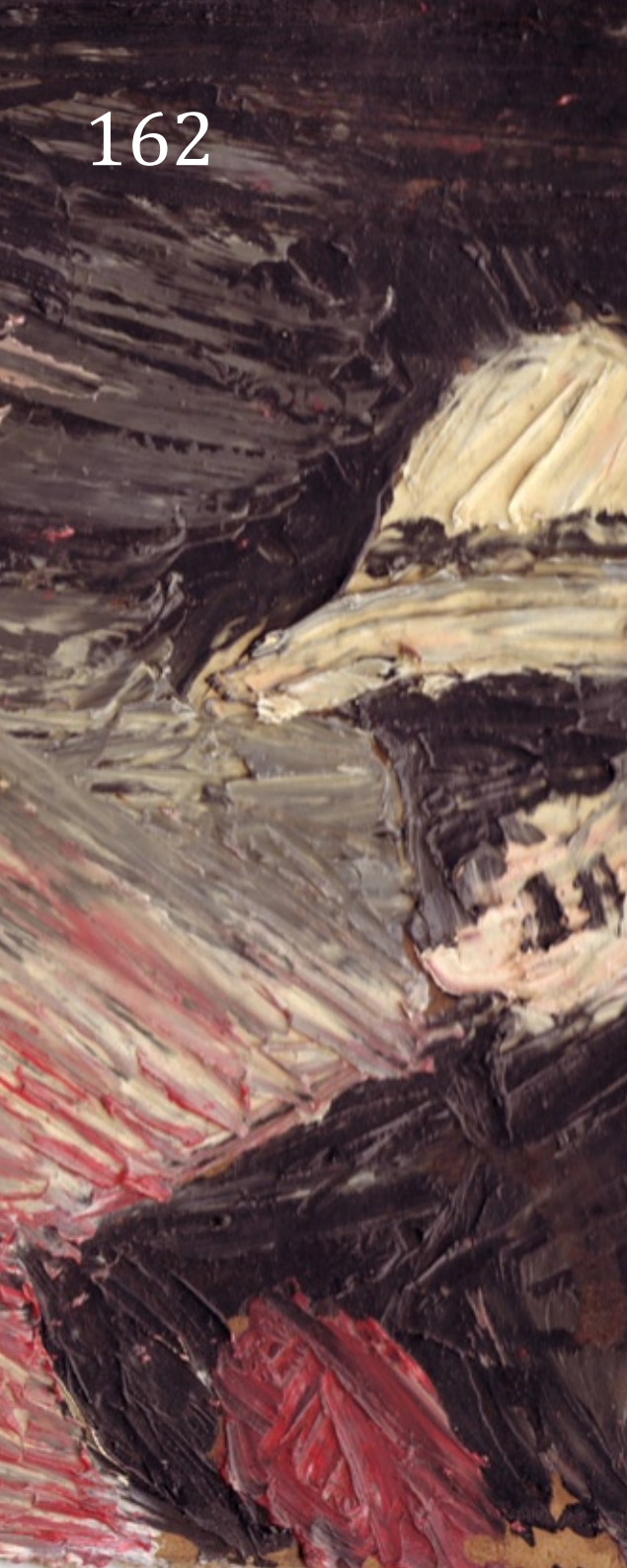
Mouth: 'Unsalvageable. Look.'

Nose: 'What a mess.'

(*Laughter*)

Mouth: 'Your turn. She ran off that way.'

Nose: 'I'm gonna make you scream, *bitch*.'



Post-post-post-post-Post-Epilogue

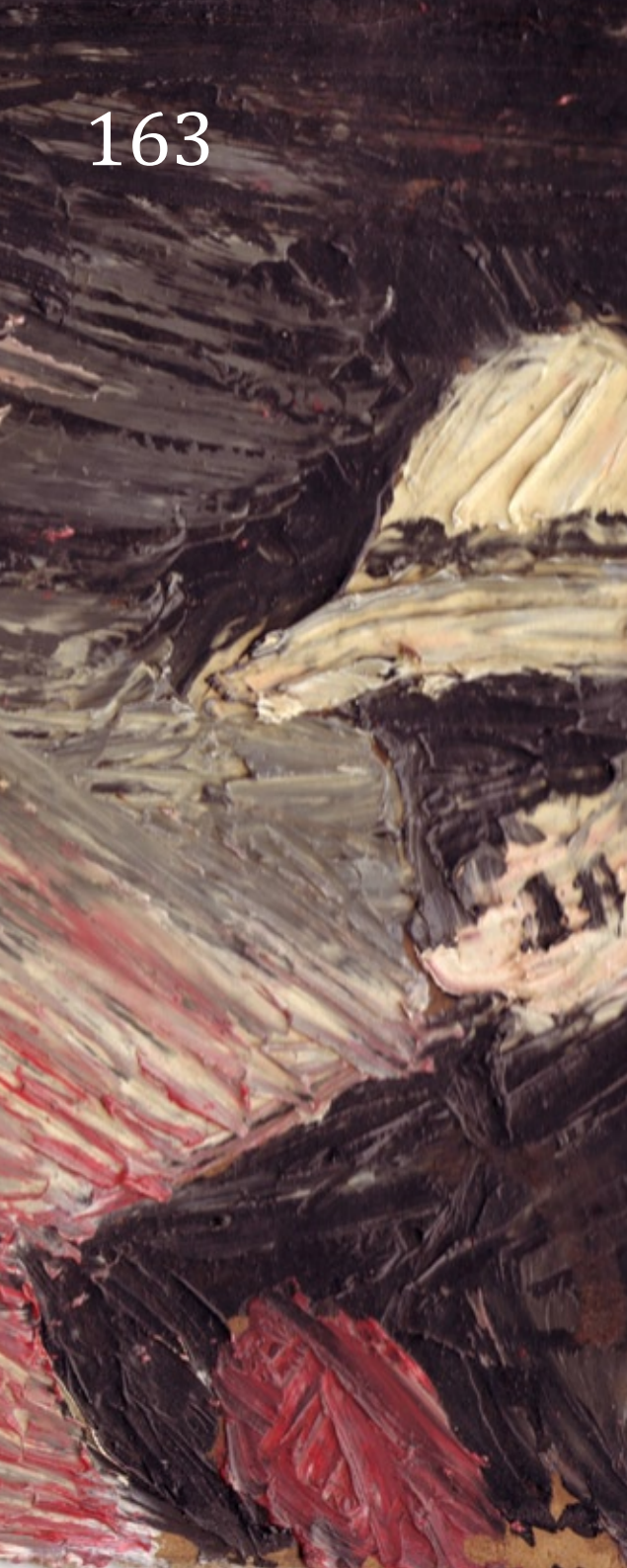
[Setting:] 6.45 pm. A letter appears on Jack's desk.

Dear Jack,

It is with much interest that I have read your letters. To begin with, please accept my sincerest apologies for the tardiness of my reply. Alas ...

(Fade out. Cut to image of Jack's head being hung on a wall, side-by-side with other heads and genitals cut from vagabonds in the Wasteland and mounted as trophies by tourists in Paradise. Below, and a fire dances and crackles in a fireplace, blue, yellow, green, and red. We zoom in on the licking flames—they dance and spit—and then watch them blur out of focus. The music of hell begins...)

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(Fade to black)

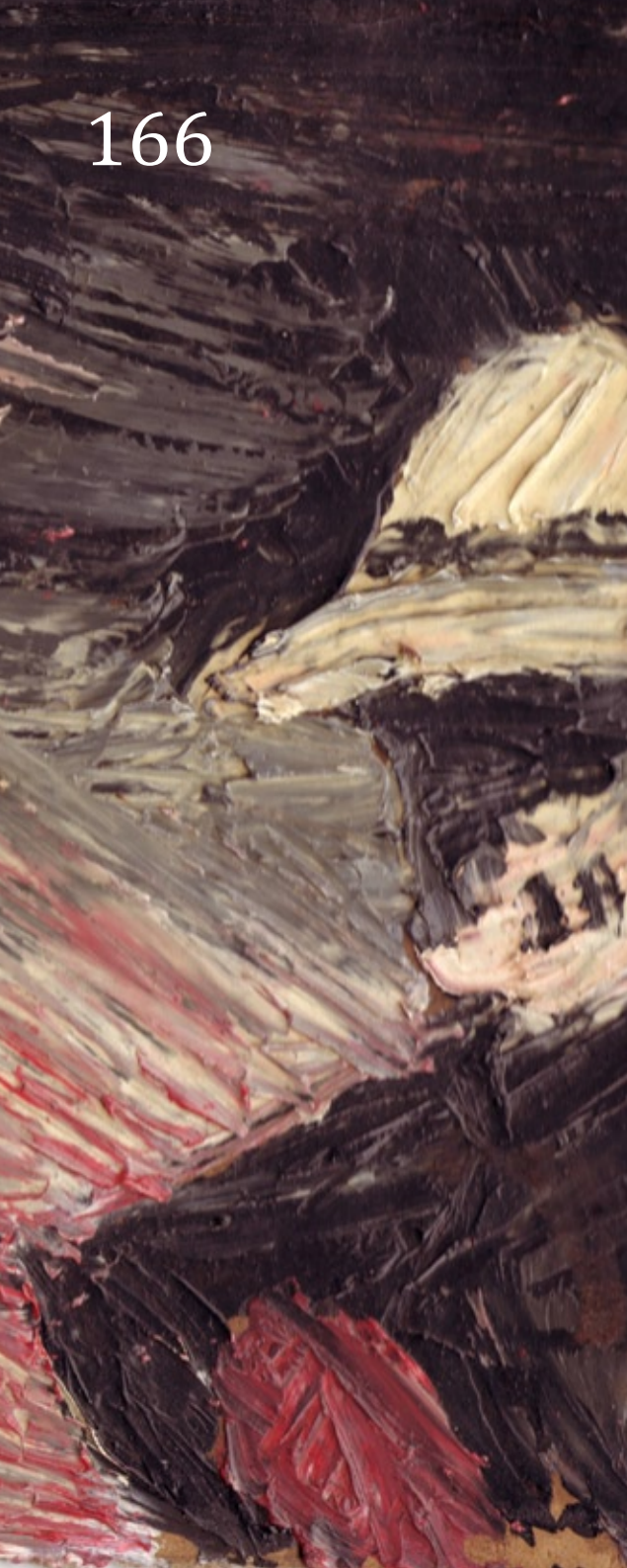


People are cast in the underclass because they are seen as totally useless; as a nuisance pure and simple, something the rest of us could do nicely without. In a society of consumers – a world that evaluates anyone and anything by their commodity value – they are people with no market value ... They are *failed consumers*, walking symbols of disasters awaiting fallen consumers, and of the ultimate destiny of anyone failing to acquit herself or himself in the consumer's duties.

Zygmunt Bauman, *Consuming Life*, 2007, p. 124



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Human solidarity is the first casualty
of the triumphs of the consumer
market.

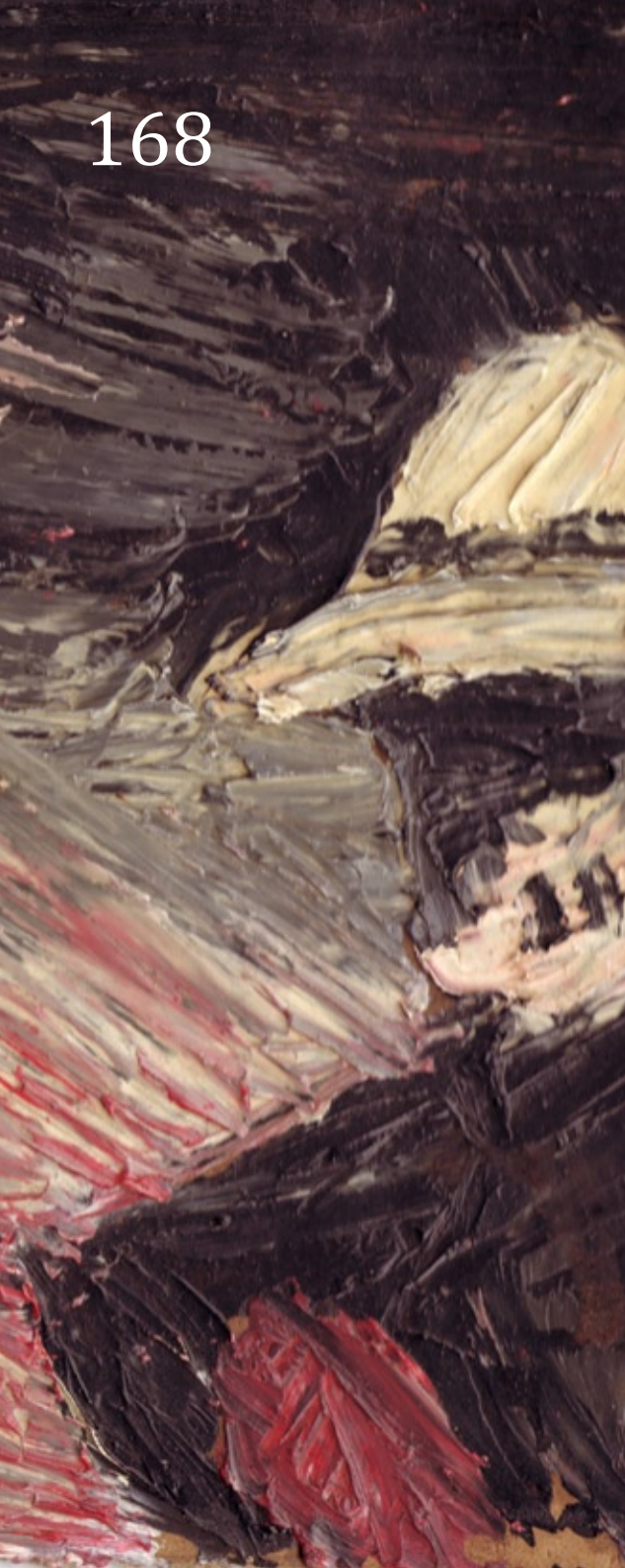
Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Love*, 2006, p. 76



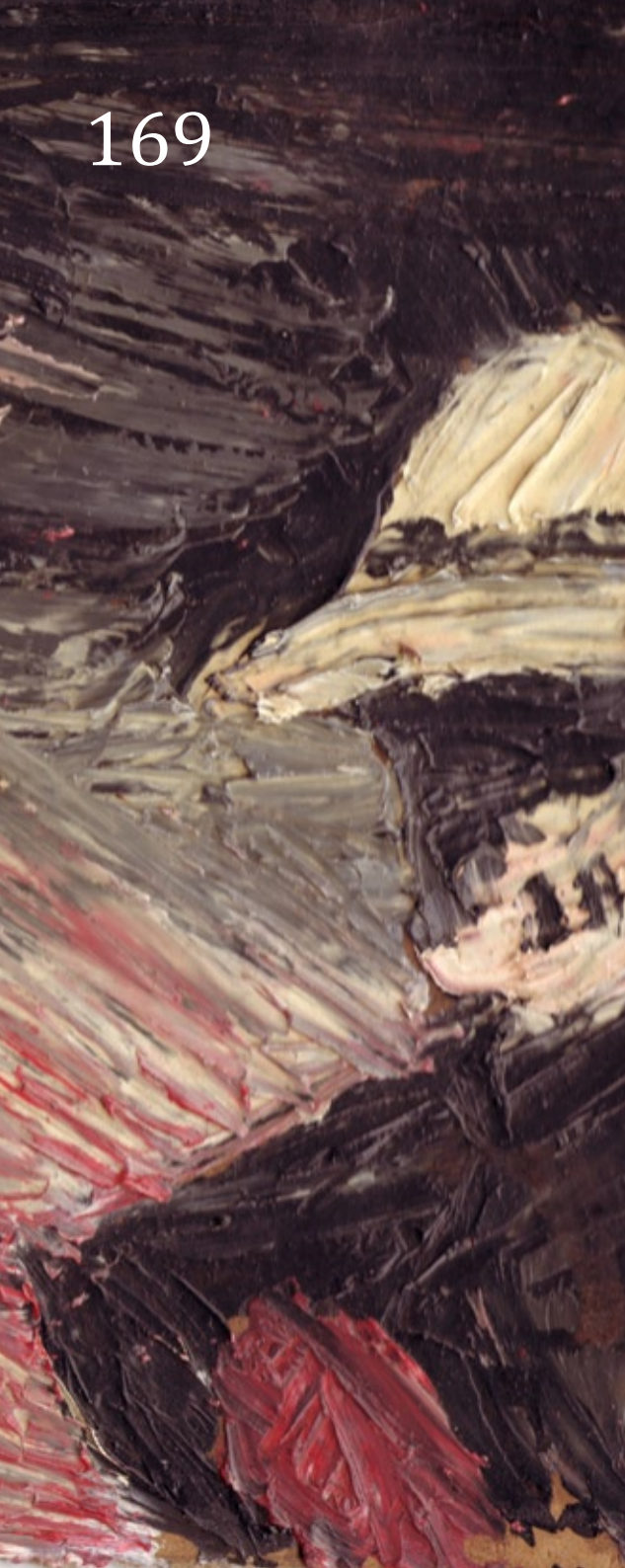
A simple question yet remains, and needs an answer. Do you like what you have made?—a world of murder and attack, through which you thread your timid way through constant dangers, alone and frightened, hoping at most that death will wait a little longer before it overtakes you and you disappear. *You made this up.* It is a picture of what you think you are; of how you see yourself. A murderer *is* frightened, and those who would adjust themselves to a world made fearful by their adjustments. And they look out in sorrow from what is sad within, and see the sadness there.

A Course in Miracles, 2004, p. 429

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Stop, in the Name of Love!