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 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:

[Community 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).


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 commodification.

(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
Sex is synonymous with love.

**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.


**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.


‘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.
The welfare state is overrated.

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

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.’
Compassion is for losers and poor people.

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.
Social justice is a forgotten sentiment.

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.'

G

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
Who needs love when you can have money?

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. 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 monument to its past.

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

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 digress.

There was, after all, one rather extraordinary stroke of brilliance, in the form of a radical yet suicidal 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:)

**Global Meltdown:**

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

There are, let me repeat, no local solutions to globally generated problems (p. 115).


**Conscientisation:** ‘naming’ the world as an active means of inheriting the world.
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 Bromion’s bed, / And let the jealous dolphins sport around the lovely maid, / Thy soft American plains are mine, and mine thy north & south: / Stampt 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....’

Money is more important than hope.
[Theotormon]

Then storms rent Theotormon’s limbs; he rold 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).

[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.

[Accessed 23 July 2008]
When the market is happy I am free to consume.

(William Blake, 1793)
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? Did 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.
You are only as valuable as the market dictates.

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, birdsage and guru, prophet of the ages.

This challenge renders him stupid. A great stillness overtakes 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.
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.

Hurtling 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.

Forests are worth more dead than alive.
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.’

Economic collapse is unthinkable.
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...)
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 acquitted herself or himself in the consumer’s duties.

Zygmunt Bauman, Consuming Life, 2007, p. 124
Human solidarity is the first casualty of the triumphs of the consumer market.

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
Stop, in the Name of Love!