

## OTHER WORLDS

### Scene 1

#### Oblivion:

The key to a livelihood lies in the labor market. Suitability for the labor market demands education. Anyone who is denied access to either of these faces social and material oblivion.

(Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society*, 1986/2007, p. 133).

#### Judgment Day:

'Have you not wondered what the world is really like; how it would look through happy eyes? The world you see is but a judgment on yourself. It is not there at all. Yet judgment lays a sentence on it, justifies it and makes it real. Such is the world you see; a judgment on yourself, and made by you. This sickly picture of yourself is carefully preserved by the ego, whose image it is and which it loves, and placed outside you in the world. And to this world must you adjust as long as you believe this picture is outside, and has you at its mercy. This

[Setting:] A refugee camp in hell. A 'non-place' beyond maps. A dumping ground for vagabonds and derelicts. Once inside, the poor fend and fight for themselves and build 'non-lives' as best they can. Most simply drift and die. Occasionally, a vagabond survives the Wasteland and returns, rehabilitated, to consumer society.

Holed up in a cell in the outskirts of **Oblivion**, a recent arrival flattens scraps of torn paper against a makeshift desk. With a pencil stub, he writes:

Dearest Jesus Christ

Before sneezing suddenly and sending spots of mucus over the page. He screws this piece up and begins again:

Dear Jesus,

I have often speculated about the nature of free will and chaos

But again he is overcome with facial spasms and a fit of sneezing. This continues for several seconds until this draft is also discarded. (*Begins yet again*)

Dear Jesus,

Although suffering from an uncontrollable

Again a fit overcomes him. 'Fuck,' he says, discarding yet another piece of paper.

Dear Christ

*Alit incipit nos nullan enim  
dio odipsum zzriusto odolore  
magnim iureril doloreros  
nibh exeros dions niamet, si  
blaorpero odion vent dolut  
ipit in verit atumsandre  
facin ut nibh el ut lum delit  
del ipissequam quat, con et  
alisi tie del utpatum dolestio  
odionul landreet lam nul-  
lamcore dipit ad modolor si.  
Osto consed magnit am do  
ea feuiipit luptatue do conse  
conseniamet esequis iscilisl  
eu faciduis eniscin elenim  
zzriureet at. Del dolor  
sissim zzrit ad magnit vel  
exercidunt luptat am iusci  
erci bla acip ex et euguer sit  
volut at, veliquat. Ectem do  
conum zzrilisi.  
Uptatie voloreros nosto et la  
consequat in utpat utat wisi  
et lor iure vel illut aut wissi  
ex erat.  
Met am, quatie vent  
veliquam inciliquat. Igniscil  
utat nisit adip ent voloreet  
wissequissi te tat.  
Init alit ex exeros nim quat.  
Guero er sumsandreet alisi.  
Vulland ignibh el eugait ver  
amet et la facipit velismo  
lessim augiam quis nostrud*

world is merciless, and were it outside you, you should indeed be fearful. Yet it was you who made it merciless, and now if mercilessness seems to look back at you, it can be corrected' (*A Course in Miracles*, 2004, p. 430).

### The Scholar Gypsy

And near me on the grass  
lies Glanvill's book—  
Come, let me read the oft-  
read tale again!  
The story of the Oxford  
scholar poor,  
Of pregnant parts and quick  
inventive brain,  
Who, tired of knocking at  
preferment's door,  
One summer morn forsook  
His friends, and went to  
learn the gypsy lore,  
And roamed the world with  
that wild brotherhood,  
And came, as most men  
deemed, to little good,  
But came to Oxford and his  
friends no more.

(Matthew Arnold, 1853,  
lines 31-40)

(Pauses and stuffs two balls of paper up his nose. Begins again:)

Dear Jesus Christ,

As you are one of the few people who feel as strongly about emancipation as I do, and the free roving ways of the pilgrim and gypsy scholar, I kindly request your assistance in the great escape I mean to make. In this way your death and all those thorns and nails and miracles and marches will not have been entirely in vain. I liked the cave episode best, when you moved that stone from the doorway. It reminded me of Sisyphus pushing that massive boulder up the hill, shoulder bent against the weight of tyranny and injustice. And Samson, who blindly crushed himself under the weight of revenge. I too would like to walk the path of the inquisitive pilgrim, to flush humanity out of its hoary grave, and to escape my oppressors.

Having said that, I am currently starving myself to regain something of your shape. If, for instance, I could grow a golden beard like yours, I would. My hair, unfortunately, isn't nearly as long as yours, but it often looks as oily and unwashed. In fact, many humans go about with this style, in honour of the precedent of decadence you have set. This is the hallmark of a great civilisation, an enduring civilisation, to mimic its deities and to parody their virtues.

Suffice to say I am in complete admiration of your life's work, and shall now require you to shift – as it were – the pebble from the doorway that separates me from the world. I shall eagerly await this miracle.

Your friend and confidant,

Jackery Diggins.

*Sisyphus*: tragic figure in Greek mythology doomed eternally to roll a boulder up a hill in Hades.

Wiktionary  
(accessed 24 July 2008)

Today, Sisyphian can be used as an adjective meaning that an activity is unending and/or repetitive. It could also be used to refer to tasks that are pointless and unrewarding.

Wikipedia  
(accessed 24 July 2008)

*Samson*: (Biblical) An Israelite judge in the Old Testament who performed feats of strength against the Philistines but was betrayed by Delilah his mistress.

Wiktionary  
(accessed 24 July 2008)

*Samson* is a Herculean figure, who is granted tremendous strength through the Spirit of the LORD to combat his enemies and perform heroic feats unachievable by ordinary men: wrestling a lion, slaying an entire army with nothing more than a donkey's jawbone, and tearing down an entire building.

**Mother Teresa:**

‘Where is my faith? Even deep down ... there is nothing but emptiness and darkness ... If there be God—please forgive me. When I try to raise my thoughts to Heaven, there is such convicting emptiness that those very thoughts return like sharp knives and hurt my very soul ... How painful is this unknown pain—I have no Faith. Repulsed, empty, no faith, no love, no zeal ...

What do I labour for? If there be no God, there can be no soul. If there be no soul then, Jesus, You also are not true.’

(Mother Teresa, *Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*, 2007, as cited in Wikipedia, accessed 24 July 2008)

**Decline and Fall:**

PS Let’s just say I owe you one. Having said that, it is quite obvious that you still owe me, having scarcely listened to a word I’ve said in several years (if ever). So, again, for the umpteenth time, I shall overlook your proud and neglectful tendencies, and wait humbly for my emancipation.

The voices are killing me. I am currently holed up on the fringes of the Wasteland, somewhere in the slums of the old world. I mean to make for the Disputed Territories beyond the bogs, where it is said that a new communitarian ethos is struggling to begin. Perhaps a wormhole exists there to take me beyond the Wasteland. I’ll look for your hand beyond the bogs!

Diggins.

(Sneezes)

‘Fuck—’

(Begins again...)

**Scene 4**

[Setting:] The urban fringes, mid morning. Scattered grey cloud breaks an otherwise yellow-brown sky. Chimney stacks probe the horizon. Plumes of smoke billow here and there. The odd scream escapes the surrounding slums.

Jack, on his first stroll through hell, is ambling along the street, whistling happily to the tune of freedom, awaiting the hand of God, when stopped by a stout, fierce-looking man.

‘YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?’ roars the man, opening a Coke bottle before the madman’s face and slowly letting the air fizz out. ‘Do ya?’

Jack stops, confused, a finger pointed at his own meek frame. ‘Me? Couldn’t imagine. Whisky—?’ he speculates, full of hope.

‘Your arse after I pull my fist out.’

*Wikipedia*  
(accessed 24 July 2008)

**Discourse:**

French social theorist Michel Foucault (1972) ... defines discourse as 'systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak.' He traces the role of discourses in wider social processes of legitimating and power, emphasising the construction of current truths, how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them. Foucault later theorised that discourse is a medium through which power relations produce speaking subjects. Foucault (1977, 1980) argued that power and knowledge are inter-related and therefore every human relationship is a struggle and negotiation of power. Foucault further stated that power is always present and can both produce and constrain the truth.

Discourse according to Foucault (1977, 1980, 2003) is related to power as it operates by rules of exclusion. Discourse therefore is controlled by *objects* (what can be spoken of), *ritual* (where and how one may speak), and the *privileged* (who may

'What?'

'Spitting blood...'

'What?'

'Violently...'

'What?'

'Great streams of it.'

(*Attempting to create an air of authority*) 'Now come on, this is really too much,' Jack says.

The other man seems amazed that his point hasn't been received. 'You know how a dog sees with its nose?' And with this he begins sniffing the air.

'What?'

'A dog?'

'Now come on, this is really too illogical. How's a man supposed to follow this line of **discourse**?'

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 AUTHOR-GOD: [Voice over] *That did it. Jack was a sitting duck in hell. This was no place for a romantic naïf. But his courage and stupidity propelled him on all the same. He stood in the face of a gathering storm. A **picaaroon**, awaiting divinations from beyond. Not from the Author, not from self, but straight from God. Free at last to experience the full depths of hell.*

*Circe.*<sup>1</sup>

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 The man swings his fists and smashes Jack's chin, sending him spiralling to the ground.

(*Desperately trying to regain his feet and wipe the blood from his mouth*) Says the fallen, 'You're mad. A lunatic. Utterly—'

Again Jack is struck about the chin, this time sending him spiralling the other way, so that his last word is thrown heavenward while

<sup>1</sup> These 'Voice overs' represent the voice of thought itself. The Author's voice, divine-like, omniscient, reflecting on the narrative thus far. As such, it is a voice from the future commenting on the past, an older Jack reflecting on a younger Jack.

**Picaaroon:** *A rogue or pirate. A picaar.*

*Wiktionary*  
 (accessed 23 July 2008)

**Picaro:** (*Spanish: 'picaresca', from 'pícaro,' for 'rogue' or 'rascal'*)

*Wikipedia*  
 (accessed 25 July 2008)

**Picaresque:** *The picaresque novel ... is a popular subgenre of prose fiction which is usually satirical and depicts in realistic and often humorous detail the adventures of a roguish hero of low social class who lives by his or her wits in a corrupt society.*

*Wikipedia*  
 (accessed 25 July 2008)

speaking). Coining the phrases power-knowledge Foucault (1980) stated knowledge was both the creator of power and creation of power.

Wikipedia  
(accessed 26 July 2008)

his body is thrown hellward.

'I'm gonna poke out your eyes and stuff 'em up your arse. You'll have to shit 'em out,' yells the Lout. 'My embrace is beyond escape—' (*Beating his chest*)

But Jack has already fled, giddy and puzzled, this way and that, down the street.

Blood spilling from his neck.

Head racing, heart pounding, feet aching.

'Am I free yet?' he calls to the world.

But no birds sing.

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[Voice over:] *And so began the first ludicrous day—and yet, connection, however small, was made with humanity, a fellow being, perhaps even a future friend.*

*He really liked that man. He respected his conviction and gesticulatory prowess, his determined and dogmatic bent, his missing tooth and flattened nose—in fact, he loved and admired every last bit of him.*

*Indeed, Jack had found his first love. For love, he suspected, was equally made of hate. And hate and that man had something in common, and he recognised both. (*Différance*.)*

*Circe.*

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**Scene 7**

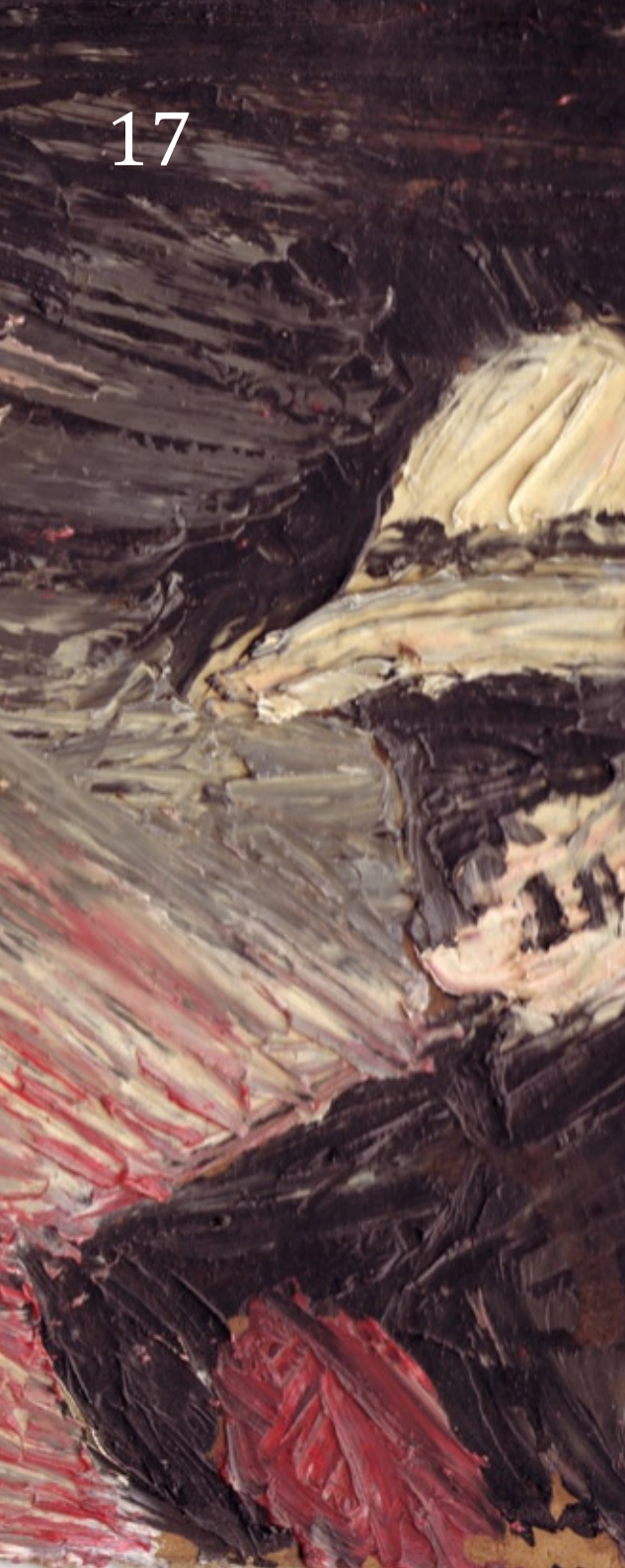
[Setting:] A gutter at twilight.

Screams ring out in the void.

Someone yelps, 'Help,' and someone beats that help right back into the mouth that yelped it.

Eyes blink in the shadows. One figure stands over another, beating its chest. The figure in the gutter cowers and rolls into a ball, receding helplessly from the world. But there is no escape in hell. All atrocities will be met. All agonies will be felt. The beating stops and

*Différance: An invented hybrid term ... that brings together "differing" and "deferring" ... as formal requirements for the production of language: (1) all significative marks signify by their difference from other significative marks rather than by their likeness to or association with phenomena ... and (2) the "presence" of meaning is an always deferred phenomenon as each link in a significative chain, each mark, takes its meaning only in the unfolding of other oppositional marks that never fully explicate themselves but always refer beyond to what is not made present in discourse' (Stephen Hahn, *On Derrida*, 2002, p. 85).*



**Contingency:** the shadow descends. A monster.

A nonteleological view of intellectual history, including the history of science, does for the theory of culture what the Mendelian, mechanistic, account of natural selection did for evolutionary theory. Mendel let us see mind as something which just happened rather than something which was the point of the whole process. Davidson let us think of the history of language, and thus of culture, as Darwin taught us to think of the history of a coral reef. Old metaphors are constantly dying off into literalness, and then serving as a platform and foil for new metaphors. This analogy lets us think of 'our language' – that is, of the science and culture of the twentieth-century – as something that took shape as a result of a great number of sheer contingencies. Our language and our culture are as much a contingency, as much a result of thousands of small mutations finding niches (and millions of others finding no niches), as are the orchids and the anthropoids.

(Richard Rorty, *Contingency*,

the shadow descends. A monster.

[Voice over:] *For Bromion rent him with his thunders and tore his virgin mantle in twain (William Blake, 'Visions of the Daughters of Albion,' 1793).*

*Alas, there was no escaping the Wasteland. He would learn this or die a thousand deaths trying to escape it. His imagination would be broken and re-broken until no voice and no dream excited him further. Creative re-descriptions of inherited knowledge were not permissible in the Wasteland. Here democracy was conformity and conformity was right. Here the invisible hand of the market dictated human life. Blaming the poor and exiling the failures to the fringes. To the wastelands of postmodernity. Outside and beyond the Edenic glitz of Shopping Malls and hyperspace.*

*The road to Calvary was an arduous one. 'A walking shadow... A poor player that struts and frets its hour upon the stage and is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing' (as Macbeth might say). But was there any way out of the individualist rat-race and neo-liberal hell-scape that surrounded him?*

*Not likely. For the monsters were coming. Great armies of them. With hatred in their eyes. And desolation in their hearts. To blame the victims and spurn the planet.*

*They were coming for him.*

*Govern—mentality: where the self surveils the self.*

*Circe: who turned men to swine through consumerism.*

The madman picks himself off the street and lurches into the oncoming night. Spotlights flash over his half-naked body and illuminate his fretful eyes, then veer away and vanish. Night descends.

The rustling leaves echo back his sighs.

### Scene 9

[Setting:] The madman's den (cell). Desk, chair, and lamplight. Be-

**Neo-liberalism:**

*As one of the most dangerous ideologies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, neoliberalism has become a breeding ground for militarism, rapacious profiteering, dissident profiling, and a new political and religious fundamentalism that undermines the presupposition that democracy is about sharing power and resources. In fact, democracy at the present time looks less like a reachable ideal than a forgotten ideology of the past' (p. ix).*

*'Under neoliberalism everything either is for sale or is plundered for profit' (p. xiii).*

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

**Circe:** *In Greek mythology, Circe ... was a Queen goddess (or sometimes nymph or sorceress) living on the island of Aeaea. ... Circe transformed her enemies, or those who offended her, into animals through the use of magical potions. She was renowned for her knowledge of drugs and herbs.*



*Irony, & Solidarity*, 1989,  
p. 16)

yond the light nothing can be made out. One could be looking into infinite space. Jack's face, the half that is captured in the lamplight, is swollen and blue. He may even be missing a tooth, for there is a suggestion of darkness to his grinding teeth.

Seething, he begins dreaming a dream about revenge.

He imagines travelling back to the year 1820 (or thereabouts), to London, to a tavern, and taking a seat beside the wondrous dwarfish romantic, [John Keats](#). A noted pugilist, Keats wears the mask of love and passion as he sips on a draught of vintage. Whether Keats is at this moment in a state of '[negative capability](#)' or not, Jack cannot decide, but he is determined to get the better of him all the same.

*(The fantasy comes to life)*

Jack buys his old friend a glass of claret and lights a cigar. Keats looks baffled, perhaps reflecting on his Fair Star, Fanny Brawne. 'Or else swoon to death,' he is heard muttering.

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[Voice over:] *He'd been visiting Keats in London in the nineteenth century since he was a teenager, since he discovered Keats was a Romantic Poet and died quite young. He both loved and hated Keats, and often told him so. Keats, he fancied, was all together sick of it, and sick of him. More particularly, he liked Keats' girlfriend, Fanny Brawne. She stood for all that was unknowable and unattainable in a ruined world: the milky ravines and gentle slopes of the homeland. He longed to suckle from the wellspring of life. To crawl back into the cunt of his origins. Like Keats, if he could conquer Love and Death in one almighty instant, by kissing poison from the lips of his beloved, he would, satisfied.*

*Circe.*

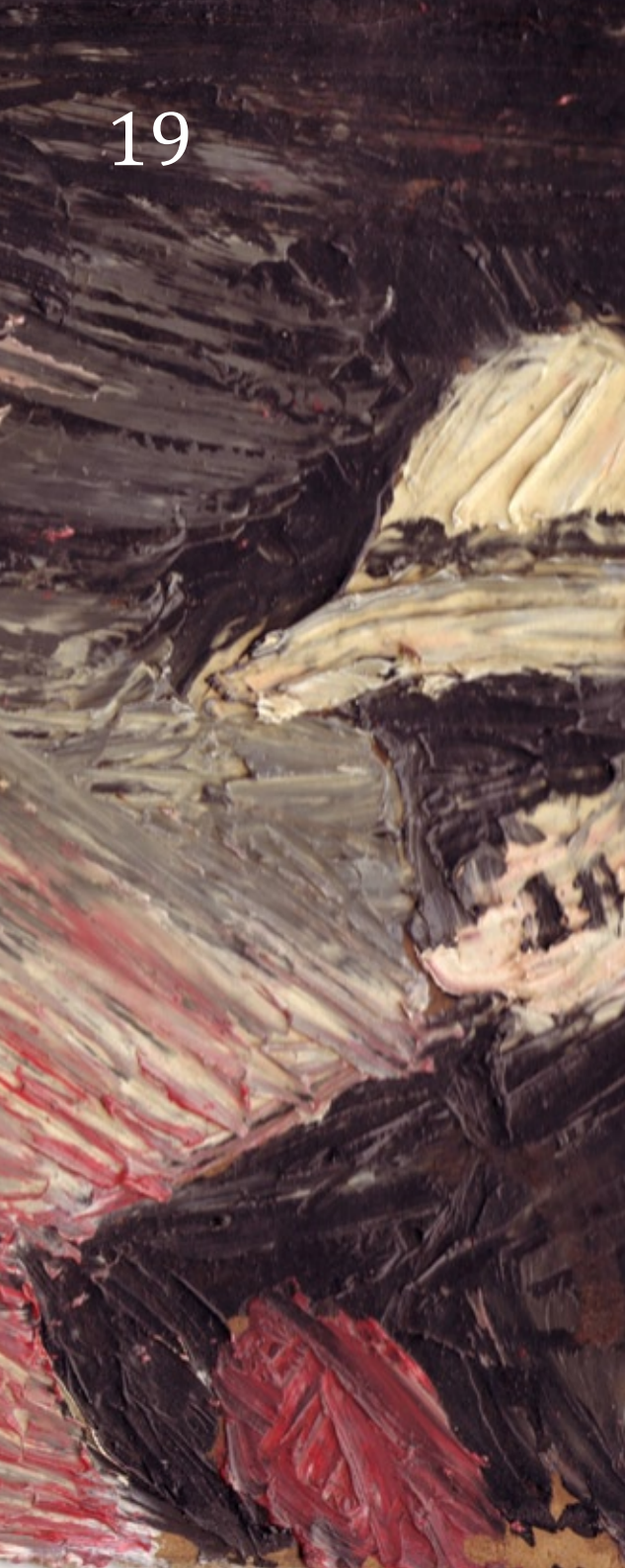
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Jack imagines Fanny sweeping into the smoky bar and spinning as if a ballerina, dressed in little more than a black suspender, a G-string, and no bra, with crude love bites covering most of her neck. Ruddy faced men ogle and jeer.

*Wikipedia*  
(accessed 31 July 2008)

**John Keats:**  
*(Born 31 October 1795; died 23 February 1821) was one of the principal poets of the English Romantic movement. During his short life, his work received constant critical attacks from the periodicals of the day, but his posthumous influence on poets such as Alfred Tennyson has been immense. Elaborate word choice and sensual imagery characterise Keats's poetry, including a series of odes that were his masterpieces and which remain among the most popular poems in English literature. Keats's letters, which expound on his aesthetic theory of "negative capability," are among the most celebrated by any writer.*

*Wikipedia*  
(accessed 23 July 2008)

**Negative Capability:** *'The poet John Keats introduced this term in a letter written in December 1817 to define a literary quality "which Shakespeare possessed so enormously—I mean*



Keats is bewildered. Claret spills from his parting lips and down his chin, then drips and splatters roughly in line with his heart. Tears well in his eyes. The madman grins.

‘Gore, look at the tits on it,’ he heckles, assuming the persona of the Lout. ‘And that *pouch!*’ He cups his hand before Keats’ maddening face as if taking Fanny’s genitals into his palm.

‘Pouch?’ Keats says. ‘Are you likening my [is that really Fanny?] ... my Fair Star’s’ – hesitates, alarmed – ‘her ethereal regions to [surely not] ... to ... to some kind of leathery container?’

‘Yes—that you drink champagne from,’ Jack says.

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[Voice over:] *That did it.*  
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Keats punches the bar and drops his glass. ‘Now come on,’ he cries.

Jack laughs and grins. ‘What’s this?’ he says, opening a Coke bottle before Keats’ face and allowing the gas to fizz out.

(*Glaring*) ‘No idea.’

‘Fanny’s arse after I pull my fist out—’

‘What?’

‘Spitting blood.’ (*Grinning madly*)

‘What?’

‘Great streams of it—’

Keats pummels Jack’s temples and sends him scampering back to the present, where he sits, staring angrily into the darkness, beating on his desk.

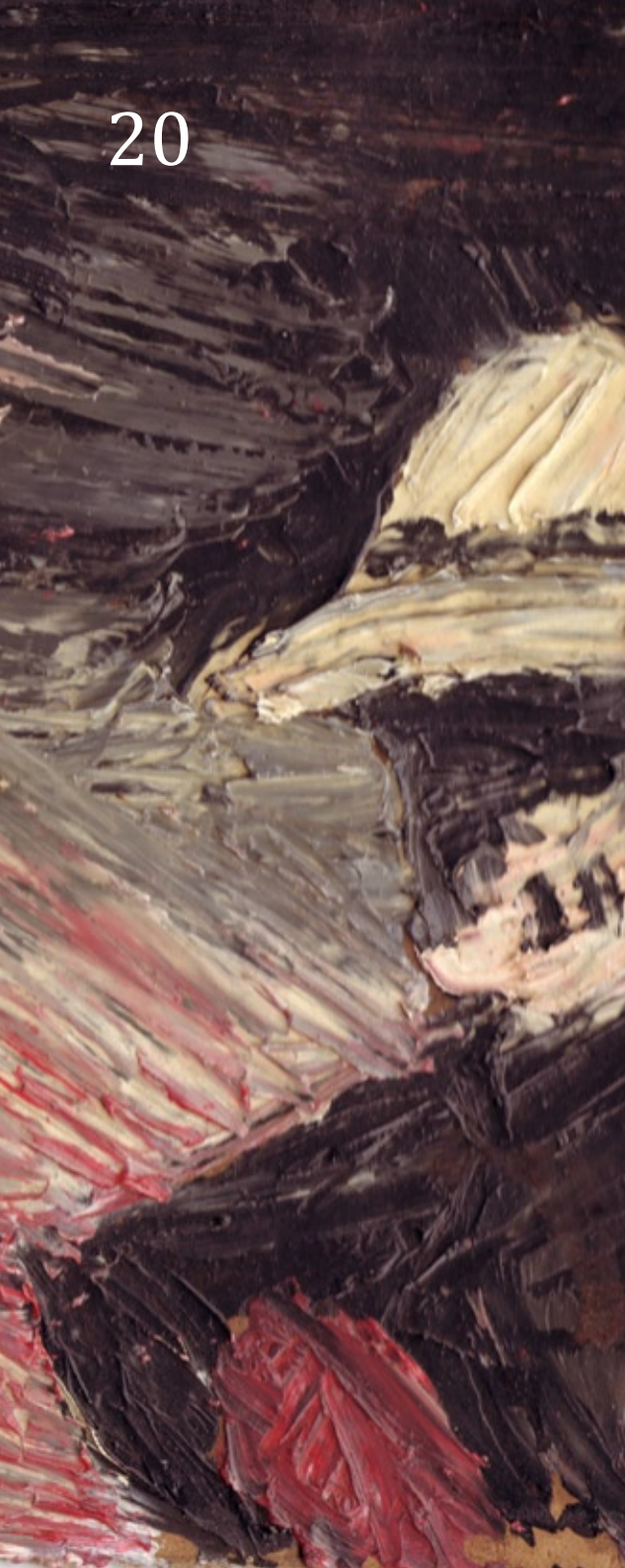
‘Now come on,’ he says, ‘this is really too much. To be beaten by a daydream!’

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[Voice over:] *But Jack never went so far as to manhandle Fanny in any of his dreams: he had some rules of engagement. Not many, but some. Besides, he rather admired Keats. And Fanny would always remain the essence of Keats. For Keats was both a soldier of love and a poet*

Negative Capability, *that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.*” Keats contrasted to this quality the writing of Coleridge, who “would let go by fine isolated verisimilitude ... from being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge,” and went on to express the general principle “that with a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration” (M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 2005, p. 185).

Negative Capability is, for me, about accepting the chaos and mess of the world without having to structure and explain it. While some critics believe that NC is a form of ‘objective’ rather than ‘subjective’ authorship, the reverse could be true: that NC is about seeing the world exactly as it is: **DISORDERLY.**





**Money:** *of hate.*

In a society of consumers, turning into a desirable and desired commodity is the stuff of which dreams, and fairy tales, are made.

(Zygmunt Bauman, *Consuming Life*, 2007, p. 13).

### Scene 13

[Setting:] A shop in the dead city. Jack, in a heavy trench coat, enters.

Note the bruises on his face, the limp in his step, the blood dripping from his ankles, and the insane look to his eyes. ‘Otherness’ writ large.

‘How much for those?’ he says, pointing at the shelves behind the counter.

A red face turns to examine him, a suspicious glare to its sunken eye and twisted brow. ‘What?’

‘That thing?’ (*Wriggling his forefinger*)

The man is taken aback. ‘The tawny port?’

Got it in one, Jack thinks. ‘Yes,’ he says.

‘Eight bucks.’

‘And those?’ Still wriggling his finger.

‘The *condoms*?’

‘Blasphemous fornicator!’ – But then, more submissively – ‘Yes, those.’

‘What the...? \$2.95,’ the man says, even redder now than before.

‘Please give me both items,’ Jack says.

‘Where’s your **money**?’

‘I have no money ... No home ... Some hope ... And a vague idea about escaping the Wasteland ... But I need provisions, see.’

Bright red now, and aghast, the man produces a dagger. ‘Who the hell do you think you are? Some kind of fucking apostle?’

Jack hesitates, alarmed and embarrassed, then limps from the shop.

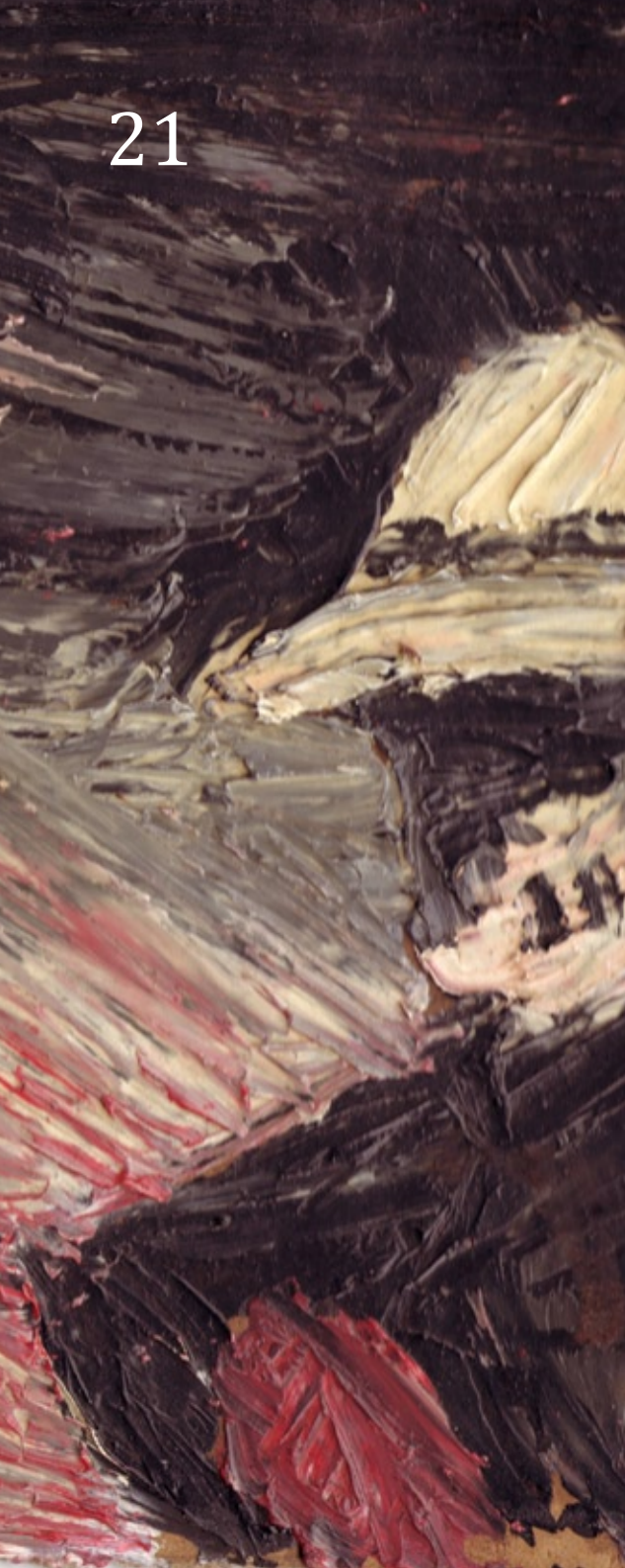
He leaves a trail of blood.

(‘Bloody hobo,’ is heard in the background. ‘**Retard!** Pervert!’)

Jack stops, blood seeping from his ankles, and wonders what to do next. Perhaps he should return tomorrow. The shopkeeper is clearly

**Social Darwinism & Eugenics:**

*“In the 1850s, Herbert Spencer applied the famous phrase “the survival of the fittest” to human society. He basically argued that society and the economy were, just like the natural world, arenas in which competitive struggles would sort out the weak from the strong, the inferior from the superior. The assumption was that dominant cultures and races, as well as social classes, owed their dominance to their natural superiority. These ideals coincided with the rise of eugenics, a social and philosophical movement dedicated to the “science” of selective breeding to improve the quality of human populations’ (Wadham, Pudsey, & Boyd, Culture & Education, 2007, p. 148).*



### The Subject:

According to Julia Kristeva in the *Powers of Horror* (1982), the subject refers to the human reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other. The primary example for what causes such a reaction is the corpse (which traumatically reminds us of our own materiality); however, other items can elicit the same reaction: the open wound, shit, sewage, even the skin that forms on the surface of warm milk.

Wikipedia  
(accessed 26 July 2008)

bloodthirsty and mad. Perhaps he should save him as Christ did the whore. He knows there is nothing to it, just a few well chosen words and a stroke or two from a caring hand. The man will be as good as new, full of goodwill and happy thoughts. Yes, Jack feels pleased with this outcome.

A jumbo passes overhead. A flock of ducks is sucked into its enormous engines. Faces (human) peer from the windows and cheer. Overjoyed that the ducks, like the vagabonds, are doomed to extinction.

Jack breathes in the glory of freedom, then exhales. ‘Retard ... pervert?’ he whispers to himself, suddenly recalling the earlier conversation. ‘*Pervert!* What sort of...?’

It is at this moment that Jack notices a woman crossing the street, approaching him. He doesn’t recognise her, so averts his gaze to a dog defecating against a wall. The woman taps him on the shoulder. Jack turns.

‘You fucking *disgust* me,’ she says and walks off, adding, ‘Filthy fucking *hobo*.’

Jack throws back his head and laughs pathetically at the heavens. *You ... disgust ... me.*

‘So do you,’ he yells back, at no one in particular.

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[Voice over:] *And so Jack’s second day began like the first, with fortunate meetings and prophetic insights. First, a balding middle-aged grump had seen through his retardation to his propensity for perversion. And second, a woman of unknown origins and unknown destination had mocked his appearance.*

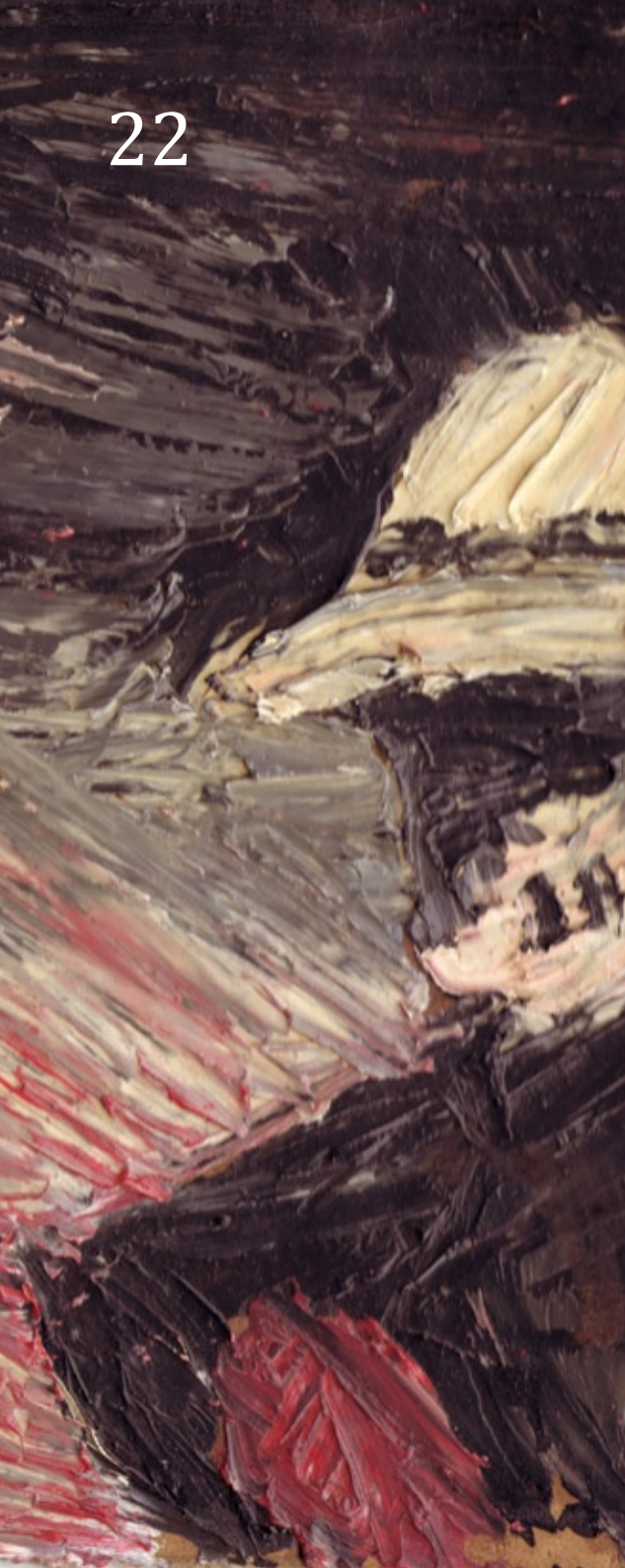
*Freedom, it seemed, would come at a price. God would test his mettle before delivering him from hell.*

*But the Author had his doubts. He saw only monsters.*

*Circe.*

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Jack stops by the defecating dog. ‘No hungry generations tread

*Hobo: A homeless person.  
Tramp. Vagabond.*

**Tourists:**

'An ever growing number of postmodern men and women, while by no means immune to the fear of being lost and every so often carried away by the recurring waves of "homesickness," find the open-endedness of their situation attractive enough to outweigh the anguish of uncertainty. They revel in the pursuit of new and untested experience, are willingly seduced by offers of adventure, and on the whole prefer keeping options open to all fixity of commitment. In this change of mood they are aided and abetted by a market organised entirely around consumer demand and vitally interested in keeping that demand permanently unsatisfied and thus preventing the ossification of any acquired habits and whipping up the consumers' appetite for ever more intense sensations and ever new experience' (p. 13).

thee down, fair hound,' he says, tentatively reaching out and stroking its pink nose (Keats, 'Ode to a Nightingale,' 1819). The dog obliges with a bite that sees Jack staring dizzily at the bone of his middle finger, sobbing and laughing helplessly.

'You disgust me,' he yells, waving his bloody fist at God.

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[Voice over:] *But really, how was Jack supposed to know that the infuriated woman was in fact the Lout's wife, or that the Lout had desisted mating with her on account of a relapse into sodomy and rape, or that the woman secretly had designs of her own on Jack and his somewhat mangled body? Taken further, how was Jack supposed to know that the shopkeeper was a eugenicist and utopian? Or that the dog had earlier that morning been accosted by a man in a heavy trench coat? Surely he couldn't. Chaos had simply taken its course.*

*Yes, Jack's life, in the manner of his peers, was simply out of control.*

*Circe.*

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The jumbo develops engine troubles and plummets into the sea. Spraying the beach in **tourists** and their dreams.

And Jack collapses in a bloody heap. A deflated **vagabond** on a decrepit street.

For at the world's end tourists and vagabonds eye-off through the razor wire separating suburb from slum.

**Vagabonds:**

*'Since the criterion of purity is the ability to partake in the consumerist game, those left outside as a "problem," as the "dirt" which needs to be "disposed of," are flawed consumers – people unable to respond to the enticements of the consumer market because they lack the required resources, people unable to be "free individuals" according to the sense of "freedom" as defined in terms of consumer choice. They are the new "impure," who do not fit into the new scheme of purity. Looked at from the now dominant perspective of the consumer market, they are redundant – truly "objects out of place" (p. 14).*

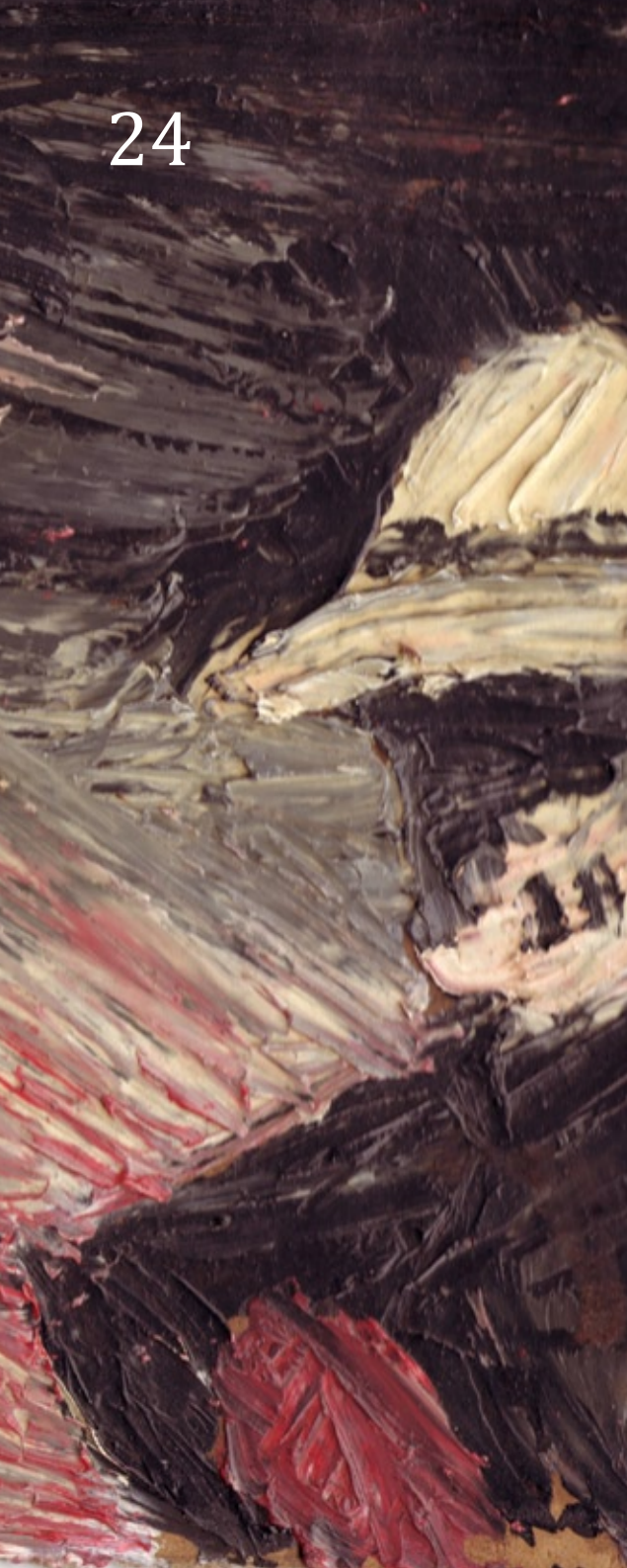
*'The tourists travel because they want to; the vagabonds – because they have no other choice' (p. 93).*

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



It is, in the end, the old truth all over again: each society sets limits to the life strategies that can be imagined, and certainly to those which can be practised. But the kind of society we live in leaves off-limits such strategies as may critically and militantly question its principles and thus open the way to new strategies...

Zygmunt Bauman, *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality*, 1995, p. 104



SMS from friend:

**What one writer  
can make in the  
solitude of one  
room is  
something no  
power can easily  
destroy.**

**Salman Rushdie**

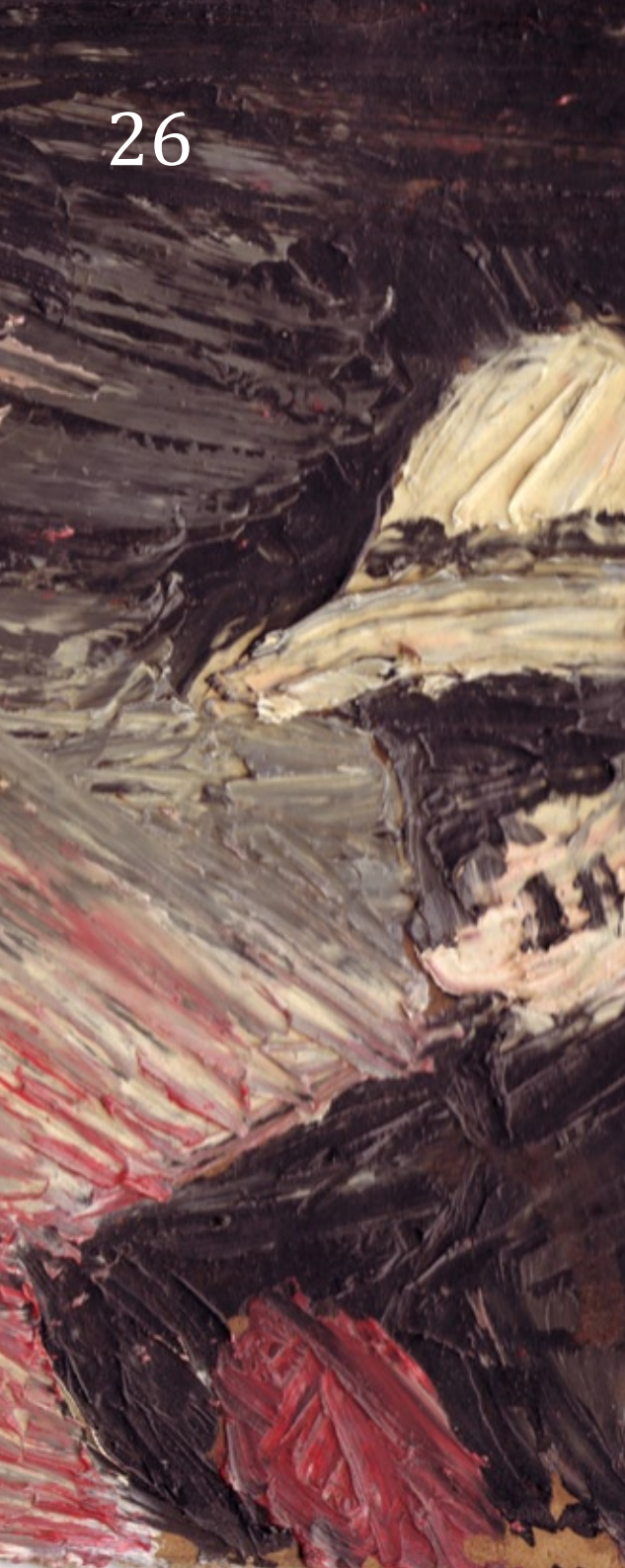
Sender:  
Gavin  
[phone number]

Sent:  
19-Feb-2008  
10:53:35

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*The Day after Dying*