

VALERY ALEFF

THE UNHOLY GRAIL

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My childhood, or what goes by that name, was spent in this so-called castle or chateau or villa: my parents call it 'our home' – *notre maison* – but I have no name for it because I don't like names. Freud might have said, 'He doesn't want to call it names,' and he would have been wrong. If you call a spade a spade, you estrange yourself from this spade. You don't always say, when thinking about your body, 'It's my body.' You just live with it as long as it remains your obedient servant, 'your faithful Licharda,' as Dostoevsky puts it. Whenever it rebels, you start calling it 'my body' and look for a doctor or a sexual partner.

My house is not only my castle; it is also my body where I spend my life that doesn't seem to obey me because I would give anything to exchange it for another life, another doom. I know I'm doomed to die and spend another life in the Hereafter, but I wish I could have another Hereafter and another Earth at my disposal – even in this world, at this very moment. This moment may be beautiful, though. Yet I'm not tempted to say to it, 'Stay with me for a while, or forever.' That's why I'm alone perhaps, for the moment.

This is not a story about loneliness; this is a story about lone wolves who aspire to shake the world. At least a part of the novel is devoted and dedicated to them. And I would like to speak about my parents who are not lone wolves, as far as I know. My father works with his colleagues; even if now and then he happens to work on his own, he meets them with depressing regularity. My mother left my father when I was one.

Newspapers talk about Norway now, about how one man killed 73 people. Now they say he killed 73 young men and women; now they choose another number, saying that numbers do not count in this case. They're right because one life is as precious as 1,000 lives so that numbers do not count and there's no point in counting victims. Killing one person is increasingly commonplace; killing 85 people is something out of the ordinary. That's why newspapers and magazines enlarge upon the madman who perpetrated this crime several days ago. But he is not a madman, is he?

It's easy to vent one's rage and anger on a man who says he isn't guilty. He doesn't deny killing 89 people, but he thinks it was his job and duty. He wasn't tempted to shirk his duty as he raised his weapon and shot several teenagers who tried to swim away from the scene of the crime to safety. An island where people usually spend their holidays. This time they came to this island to die. They were unaware of what was in store for them: you don't *always* know the hour of your death and the way he'll pay you a visit. (This mass murder proves once and for all that death *is* a man.) He seemed very focused, taking his time and picking his victims one by one. And yet he knew he had to kill around 100 people; and he didn't have much time, given that the police were to reach the island sooner or later.

I wasn't one of his victims, needless to say. And yet I regret not having taken part in this massacre – not as a victim, not as a torturer. There are other parts to play in the tragedy of life; there are bushes behind which you can hide to look at what is going on around you. I'll never raise my rifle with a view to killing somebody because I haven't got a rifle. What would happen if I had one? Apparently it's not difficult to lay your hands on a weapon of this kind, provided you know the rules of the game. You're always supposed to play games and parts; there are tragedies and comedies and casinos and what not.

The Norwegian anti-hero, Anders Breivik, acquired *his* weapon by means of a license, but I lost the paragraph in which the matter was discussed in minute detail. So I don't know what to say right now. Anyway I'm not on my way to a shop where such a weapon can be purchased for a handful of euros. I've got a handful of euros but I've no idea on which counter I should put them to get a rifle or another weapon used by mass killers.

If you kill one man, no one pays attention to you or to the corpse unless the latter belongs to a late president of the United States. Breivik didn't kill the President of the United States; yet they talk about him in *The Sunday Times* and other newspapers. They talk about him in magazines too.

I found the paragraph in question, which answers the following question: How to acquire a deadly weapon allowing one to save the world? Breivik joined an Oslo gun club and realised that his membership card entitled him to acquire a Glock pistol legally. So he acquired it; I didn't because I hadn't joined the gun club. And I'm not likely to join any similar club in the near future. I don't even know if such clubs can be found in Paris where many potential mass murderers remain jobless for the moment. After the bars close, gangs of youths roam the city streets, but they don't join the clubs that would equip them to kill thousands of people. So they just kill one man, one woman; they rob them and continue to roam the city streets, spending a few hours in bars and cafés.

A pistol isn't as deadly as a machine gun. Breivik obtained a hunting licence allowing him to own a Ruger semi-automatic rifle. What does 'semi-automatic' mean in this context? Doesn't it kill hundreds of people *automatically*? What kind of effort are you supposed to make in order to remedy your rifle's partial incapacity? Do you merely have to reload it from time to time? I know that Breivik had to reload his rifle, which enabled some people to escape from the cage. Sure enough, the whole island was a sort of cage even before Breivik set foot on it. Then it turned into a *real* cage from which the youngsters could hardly escape, being trapped in it by Breivik's cold fury. How could he be so cold-hearted, cold-blooded? Apparently he was humming a song as he stalked his victims. Actually he didn't really *stalk* them: some of them saw him in the flesh. I see only his photographs.

I see a young man – as young as the people he killed on the island – and I ask myself if he is handsome or not. This is an idle question. What does it matter what a mass murderer looks like? His friends suggest he had plastic surgery to his chin, nose and forehead in the United States of America. You don't go to Russia to have plastic surgery, do you? 'You don't have that Aryan look naturally in Norway,' said Janne Kristiansen, Head of the PST, Norway's domestic intelligence agency. 'Hitler would have had him on posters.' I, for one, wouldn't have him on posters – not only because I hate Hitler more than any other politician. (I wonder if I hate Lenin less than Hitler.) I don't find Breivik handsome; yet I have a homosexual streak in my body and my mind. I wonder if I have it in my soul. Hopefully my soul is heterosexual.

He must have had a facelift; my face hasn't lost its virginity yet, for all the caresses showered on it by some women. To tell the truth, I don't have much in common with Breivik, although I am dissatisfied with the world where I live alongside mass murderers and their victims. Of course I'm appalled by Breivik's deed and the photographs of his victims – I look at those printed in *The Sunday Times* – make me cry as I think that I'll never see these people in the flesh. I would never have met them, I suppose; nevertheless, I feel a sense of loss when I look at their photographs.

It's not only on account of Breivik and his likes that I am dissatisfied with this world and probably with the other world as well. I'll voice my grievances as I go along. My voice isn't as deadly as a Ruger semi-automatic rifle; yet my voice is 100 per cent automatic. Even when I quote the final entry in Breivik's *Diary*, it doesn't become semi-automatic: 'I imagine that this will be my last communication. It is Friday, 22 July. It is 12.51 pm.'

Why does he wish to destroy the world? (These terminators are always men.) Because destruction usually precedes construction – at least Hegel thought so. He called it ‘antithesis’, if I’m not mistaken. First you come to the conclusion that the world is rotten; this is your thesis. The world is rotten but it’s all shipshape and Bristol fashion; such is the thesis of the world. What you need now is an antithesis, preserving some elements of the thesis (*Aufhebung*). Your antithesis may keep some ships and some shapes; and yet the destruction you’re planning isn’t far away – ‘beyond the mountains’, as the Russians put it. So it’s *not* beyond the mountains; it’s on the outskirts of Oslo and there are no traffic jams that are liable to postpone the punishment of the world. Then it comes at last – the punishment or the destruction – and Breivik kills 100 people.

Several hundred young people, many of them Labour activists, are enjoying the idyll. They’re on an island of their dreams, but there’s another dream on the horizon and this dream is about to come true. Breivik had two dreams that day. Did he say to himself, ‘I have a dream’? You don’t have to utter the word ‘dream’ many, many times to make it come true: you have to *work* in order to ensure your law is obeyed. Your law, your order, your dream, your shipshape world. Breivik worked very hard and his scheme succeeded *beyond* his wildest dreams.

In his twenties he became involved in politics as a member of Progress – a Norwegian party promoting strong rightwing views on tax and immigration. It was a step forward, but Breivik thought otherwise. ‘One step forward, two steps back,’ he said once, unconsciously quoting the title of a work written by Lenin after the Russian Revolution. ‘The changes that have been introduced are being seen as a step backwards,’ he wrote to a friend of his, who seemed to share his views. At that point he still hoped to find a soul mate *within* the party. However, as events turned out, no one saw the changes as a step backwards. Breivik had no alternative but to leave, for he found that the party wasn’t hard line enough. ‘No more steps forward,’ he wrote to his friend. Had he remained a member of this party, he wouldn’t have killed so many people. He would have killed nobody, but any bloodless solution ran counter to his intentions.

He became reclusive and began writing his novel in which his life story is peppered with a great deal of destruction-oriented ideas and ideals. Since all these stories have been removed from the Internet, one is reduced to guessing at what he actually wrote. Some clues to the enigma are supplied by newspapers and magazines.

Apparently he talks about Hobbes who strove to demonstrate the necessity of a strong central authority. According to *him*, such an authority might allow us to avoid the evil of discord and civil war. There are many authorities of this kind but, judging from what is commonly called ‘the Arab Spring’, they prevent neither the evil of discord nor civil wars. Only stupidity and laziness can obliterate such evils from human history, which means that we’re not stupid enough to live in a fool’s paradise.

Some people’s idea of paradise is to spend the day lying on the beach. So I drove over to Brittany, hoping the weather would be fine. It wasn’t and consequently I didn’t spend seven days on the beach; I slowly sipped my coffee in a seaside café instead. Drinking coffee is another idea of paradise but, weather permitting, I might have had both: coffee and the sun. I don’t need Hobbes to enjoy myself, do I? All I need is fine weather. But even Hobbes was unable to remove all the clouds from the sky, once and for all; otherwise there would have been no rain in Brittany during my holiday.

What would life be like without government? Hobbes calls this state of affairs ‘the state of nature’. In this state, each person would have a right, or licence, to everything in the world: to coffee, champagne and the sun.

But how to remove all the clouds from the sky? Hobbes doesn't say a word about clouds, enlarging instead upon the state of nature which, in my opinion, is not synonymous with nature – with clouds in particular. Hobbes thinks that the state of nature would inevitably lead to a 'war of all against all'. If the clouds remain in the sky, I might add. If everyone could spend their holidays on beaches, there would be no war; there would be suntanned bodies everywhere.

And what about champagne? Most people can afford coffee; not all of them drink champagne every night and every morning. But some of them can do without it. And what about lobsters? Are there enough lobsters for the world's population? Would a shortage of lobsters lead to the Third World War? Or to a tug-of-war? A monstrous lobster instead of a rope.

Once I said to my gardener, 'I hope there'll be no rain today.'

'We need a lot of rain,' he answered.

'What for?' I asked.

'The grass is like a doormat now. And your roses are wilting.'

So we shouldn't remove clouds once and for all: I don't like walking on doormats.

Breivik didn't give any thought to clouds. He thought that something had to be wiped off the face of the Earth. If everything and everybody remain where they are, nothing will ever change – not even commas and hyphens. If you wipe all clouds off the sky, people go to beaches and Muslim immigrants take over. So he didn't think about his revolution in terms of clouds. Instead he rented a farm north of Oslo, where he set up a bomb-making laboratory and started to experiment with recipes found on the Internet. He decided to wipe a few buildings off the face of the Earth.

He toyed with the idea of an attack on the royal palace and other targets in Oslo, writing his novel all the while. One day he wrote, 'It is Friday, 22 July. It is 12.51 pm.' Two and a half hours later, he parked a rented van just a few feet from the entrance to the prime minister's office. He opened all the doors and began to run, counting seconds, not minutes. The detonator in the van allowed him only one minute and 15 seconds to take cover. He thought he might take cover in the sky, on a cloud. He looked up and saw no clouds overhead. And the stars were too far away; besides, he couldn't see them. 'What if I land in a black hole?' he thought. You can't fly to safety if you don't see the cover you're looking for. Then he realised he had no wings. How could one fly without a pair of wings? Had he stayed in the van, he would have flown as far as Andromeda, thanks to the bomb he had made in his laboratory. But he was running away from the van because he hadn't finished his ritual. This ritual was to take him all the way to the island about which so many journalists have written since the 22nd of July. The island was nearer to his van than Andromeda. Oddly enough, it's on Andromeda he would have landed, had he stayed in the van. The bomb was an efficient form of transport exclusively within interstellar space. Needless to say, this applies to humans, not to buildings.

He reached cover two seconds before the explosion, so he was cutting it a bit fine. At 3.26 pm, half a ton of fertilisers detonated and the chord was heard up to a mile away. The chord destroyed the facades of buildings within a radius of several hundred yards. Where the van had been was a smoking crater 12 feet deep, but Breivik wasn't in the crater; nor was he on Andromeda.

You can say that death is always victorious. I wouldn't say that life is always defeated because being defeatist will get me nowhere. Breivik didn't kill me on the island to which he gave his undivided attention after the explosion of his bomb. Is it a victory, my victory over death? Was Breivik defeated by his crime? Is his life defeated once and for all?

Dressed as a policeman, he was stalking his victims and his shots resounded everywhere, even on Andromeda. He entered the main house near the pier. Usually men enter such houses to make love to women or men. He entered the house for another purpose because he had no time to make love to his future victims. Actually he might be impotent, for all I know. But I know enough to affirm that he is impotent, otherwise he would have done something else on that island known chiefly for its 'Love Path'. There are love houses on that island; there are love cafeterias.

As the first shots rang out, some youths imagined other youths playing with firecrackers. It is more logical to play with firecrackers on an island like that, but Breivik's logical mind despised conventional logic. His personal logic was in a class of its own. He thought that the world should be saved at all costs. (I don't know anything about his *present* thoughts.) He wanted the victory of Christians over Muslims at any cost, even if it meant giving up everything he had. So he gave up everything he had: his farm, his freedom, the bomb on which he had spent so much time, the van, his father.

His father – a former diplomat – said he was 'completely bereft' and would never speak to his son again. One wonders how often he has spoken to his son over the last 20 years. Actually I don't think anyone cares about the frequency of their talks: everyone's undivided attention is given to the victims. These people are right and I'm certainly wrong. I just can't help comparing his father with mine, his family with mine, his destiny with mine, his future with whatever is in store for my body and soul.

Let us begin with his father who divorced his mother when Breivik was very young – so young in fact that he didn't realise what was happening to him. Nor did I: we both were one-year-old boys. (My mother divorced my father when I was one year old.) I don't know if Breivik wished to be a girl in his childhood; I did. But I'm not sure that this minor detail may cross out or otherwise destroy the parallel I'm drawing between our destinies. I can't say we share the same destiny, for I didn't kill as many people as he did. I wouldn't mind killing *some* of my fellow creatures who get on my nerves whenever I turn my attention to them, to their fates, fights and faults. I'm not sure I would be able to perpetrate a large-scale crime, even for the benefit of humanity or for the triumph of Christianity, which amounts to the same thing – according to the Christians.

Well, I don't feel like talking about the Muslims right now: I'm planning to draw a parallel between Breivik and bin Laden in due course. To tell the truth, I'm waiting till the time is ripe before I embark upon the description of these parallel lives which, though poles apart, seem to converge at some point as if the parallels I'm speaking about belonged to non-Euclidian geometry within whose bounds two parallel lines may and indeed should meet at some point. What's more, I know that this point is murder, but I don't know yet where it is situated. In other words, I don't know how Breivik's and bin Laden's murders coincide and where they create a sort of devilish, if not sadistic, harmony.

So his father divorced his mother when Breivik was still in his cradle. Actually he was called 'Creidlik' by both his mother and father; he was born in England after all. At this point, my father was in the same predicament: my mother came out of the divorce settlement a rich woman. So did Breivik's mother, I suppose; otherwise my theory wouldn't hold water. What does it matter? What matters is that both Breivik and I were left

alone at the age of one. As to his father, he doesn't resemble mine in the least except that he is probably a well-mannered diplomat. My father is a physicist, not a diplomat but, being an aristocrat, he is skilled at dealing with difficult situations in a way that does not offend people. Of course there are aristocrats who look and act like Russian bears and about whom the French habitually say '*un ours mal léché*'. Indeed some aristocrats are loud-mouthed and uncouth like Pierre Bezukhov, but I'm speaking about my father now.

Anders Breivik's father declared yesterday that he wished his son had killed himself. When was this yesterday? I'm reading an old paper dating back to July 26. (It's September 3 today.) *Daily Mail*, Tuesday, July 26, 2011. Last July, Breivik's father wished his son had killed himself. He may have changed his attitude towards his son's deed, for all I know; and I know nothing at all. I know for sure that *my* father has never had the same wish. Would he have changed his mind, had *I* killed so many people? I don't know. I have to kill all these people to find out what my father might say upon learning about the massacre. He might say, for instance: 'The massacre was a crime against humanity.' Well, in this case Milosevic, Saddam Hussein and I would be in the same boat. And I'd rather have Plato and Nietzsche as my travelling companions. So I won't kill so many people. I might kill 20 men and 25 women, but I wouldn't go so far as to kill 75 people. How many people do I have to kill to hear my father say, 'I wish my son had killed himself'?

Breivik's father uttered this sentence – this death sentence, so to speak – at his isolated villa in rural France, where he and his wife are under armed guard. Many people want to kill them because the diplomat's son is a monster. The number of those who want to kill them is far superior to that of the monster's victims. That's why his father and his wife always travel under military escort: the internal logic of the situation is undeniable.

'I still don't understand how such things could happen,' says Breivik Snr. 'It is not a normal person who does something like that.' So the monster's father doesn't recognise his genes as he looks at the corpses strewn around the island. He is neither his own son nor one of the corpses: the grief and shame haven't killed him yet, although his age might be associated with death or at least with a fatal disease. Breivik's father is a 76-year-old diplomat who has been estranged from his son since 1995. Left to his own devices, his son began to dabble in alchemy. Instead of turning base metals into gold, he turned six tons of artificial fertiliser into a bomb. One can be against artificial fertilisers, opting for organic food, but no one would say that a bomb is more useful and humane than artificial fertilisers. Breivik seems to think otherwise, judging from the crime he perpetrated several weeks ago. Does that mean he is not a normal person?

Anyway, no diplomat should leave a potential criminal to his own devices. Breivik's father should have spoken to his son *before* setting off on his endless journey. He should have said, 'Don't try to save humanity. Nothing can save it except a new flood or a worldwide conflagration. You can kill 80 people, but no one will understand either your ideas or your short-term aim, your long-term aim. Your aim is to debunk the myth that has grown up around democracy and western freedoms. Don't debunk it with artificial fertiliser. You may say, "I disagree." That's quite enough. No one will put you in prison for this sentence.'

Anders Breivik realises that without six tons of fertiliser he won't be able to make the car bomb that is supposed to detonate in Oslo's political district. So he buys a farm to make everyone believe he runs a farming business. He then gets in touch with the suppliers who think nothing of selling such an amount of artificial fertiliser to a farm businessman. 'You can't run a farming business without artificial fertiliser,' they say to themselves and to the reporters who question them on the subject.

Suppose that Brevik's father is put in the picture about the fertiliser on the very day of its purchase. What does he say to himself? A born diplomat, he must have some inkling of what his son is up to. He knows his son better than the suppliers who buy and sell artificial fertiliser to whoever asks them. Besides, some of Breivik's father's genes are at work in his son's body and the diplomat must be aware of their doings: these are *his* genes after all. He is a diplomat and therefore must know what happens in other people's bodies and minds even if those people belong to other races and other gene pools. So he sets off on a journey from France to Norway. Now he is reluctant to make this journey because it is too late. Two years ago it was not too late.

This is an ideal scenario written from ideal people's points of view. These people think that no one should ever be killed even if the Muslims conquer the Earth and all its inhabitants. They think that fathers should teach their sons the art of reconciliation and comprehension. And they're supposed to guard their sons' minds and bodies against the urge of retaliation and destruction mania. So Breivik's father says to his son: 'Why did you buy six tons of fertiliser?'

'I run a farming business,' answers Anders.

'You're lying. I had a hunch that you'd turn the fertiliser into a car bomb. Sometimes you have to be prepared to follow a hunch. So I've come to Norway to stop you from killing seven people.'

'One person with a belief is equal to the force of 100,000 who have only interests,' says Anders.

'What belief?'

'Do you believe in God, Father?'

'Yes.'

'So do I. But I believe in Him *actively*. My belief is far superior to yours.'

'Killing has nothing to do with God.'

'Do you really think so?' asks Anders. And he quotes a few verses from The Old Testament.

'This doesn't prove anything,' says his father.

'Doesn't it?'

'Thou shalt not kill,' says the father.

'Thou shalt kill,' says the son.

'Did you manage to patch things up with the Muslims?' asks the father.

'No.' The son quotes a few verses from the Koran in A. J. Arberry's translation.

*O believers, when you encounter
the unbelievers marching to battle, turn
not your backs to them.
Whoso turns his back that day to them,
unless withdrawing to fight again
or removing to join another host,
he is laden with the burden of God's
anger, and his refuge is Gehenna –
an evil homecoming!*

'Don't you realise the Muslims are our brothers?' says the father.

‘What are you talking about, father? Do you know what the Koran says about our so-called brotherhood? Do you know what it says about *us*?’

*‘For them is chastisement in the present life;
And the chastisement of the world to come is
Yet more grievous; they have none to defend them from God.*

‘And do you know what it says about *them*?’

*‘The likeness of Paradise, that is promised
to the God-fearing: beneath it rivers flow,
its produce is eternal, and its shade.
That is the requital of the God-fearing;
and the requital of the unbelievers is –
the Fire!*

‘We’re human beings, all of us,’ says the father.

‘Even in the Hereafter they don’t leave us alone. Do *they* love their neighbours?’

‘Some of them do.’

‘I’ll kill the others,’ says the son. ‘And I’ll also kill those who love the Christians because I don’t need their love.’

The son picks up his *Manifesto* and reads out loud: ‘I know of several hundreds of incidents where non-Muslims are robbed, beaten and harassed by Muslim gangs. My best friend when I was between 12 and 17 was Pakistani, so I was one of the protected cool “potatoes”. But I saw the hypocrisy up close and it made me sick.’

‘I’ve never been harassed by Muslim gangs,’ says the father.

‘Because you always travel under military escort,’ says the son.

‘Until recently I was on my own.’

‘But you’re a diplomat and diplomats are always protected. You have diplomatic bags. If necessary, you can always plead diplomatic immunity.’

‘Doesn’t God protect you as well?’ asks the father.

By way of an answer, the son quotes his *Manifesto*: ‘Today’s Protestant church is a joke. Priests in jeans who march for Palestine and churches... like minimalist shopping centres. I am a supporter of an indirect collective conversion from the Protestant church to a Catholic one. In the meantime, I vote for the most conservative candidates at church elections.’

‘No one forbids you to vote,’ says the father. ‘Can’t you just cast your vote and say, “I disagree”? Why should you kill all those innocent men and women?’

Some speak about Breivik because he wasn’t always alone on his farm or elsewhere. On his farm he was mostly alone, I suppose, otherwise he wouldn’t have been able to turn a huge quantity of artificial fertiliser into a tiny

little bomb. His visitors would have said to him, 'What are doing in your laboratory? What do you need a laboratory for in the first place? Are you trying to put your experience in alchemy to good use?' What could he have answered to these questions? 'Yes, yes, yes.'

'Why don't you strew the fertiliser across your fields? Don't you dream about a bumper potato crop?'

'No. The main crops grown for export on my farm are melons, roots and tubers. Anyway it's better to have a bumper bomb crop than a potato crop.'

Breivik did all he could to steer clear of such conversations: by talking to his visitors, he might have landed himself in deep water. So he was mostly alone on his farm; actually there were no exceptions to this rule. Even if his father had paid him a visit, he would have thrown him out: he was much stronger than his aging father. Besides, he might have used his weapons of mass destruction.

Some speak about Anders Behring Breivik; yet they met him neither in his laboratory nor in the fields he had no wish to fertilise. 'There was nothing that would suggest that he was an extremist, as in the meaning of an actionist,' says Hans Rustad. A bomb might have suggested something, but it was far away in both time and space. Even the van that carried the bomb to its destination was far away. And Breivik's face looked as innocent as the body of a one-year-old baby.

What can one read on one's face? If you look at yourself in a mirror, you *can* read something either in your eyes or on your chin. You know what you're thinking about and read your own thoughts on your face: your foreknowledge of your own intentions helps you a lot in the course of the study. But if you look at someone else's face, you usually see nothing except eyes and cheeks – unless the person in question makes no secret about his intentions. Then you say to yourself, 'This person wants to kill me.'

Did Breivik's victims read a mass murder into his features and gestures? Of course they saw his weapons and realised they were pointed at them. But what would they have read if he had had no weapons within his reach? They might have read, 'He is not an extremist, certainly not.' Many of them affirmed he looked calm; at least he seemed calm on the surface. Was he wild inside?

'He hasn't changed in 10 years,' said one of his former colleagues upon seeing his photograph in a newspaper. The making of the bomb didn't alter his features and even his soul remained the same throughout the years it took him to make the bomb. In the novel entitled *My Manifesto*, Breivik often speaks about Pope John Paul II, strange as it may seem. 'He would have taken care of my soul,' he writes. 'He would have forgiven me.' 'They will not,' he adds in the next paragraph. Has his soul changed a lot in the course of his life? It must have changed after his father's divorce.

Breivik also speaks about Freud in whom he seems to confide. 'You understand me, don't you?' he asks again and again. 'My unconscious is linked to my parents. Their divorce split my unconscious into two. To tell the truth, it is still split between my father and mother. And yet I see them very seldom.' At some point he writes, 'The number of my victims should equal that of the pieces I find in my unconscious. A long time ago humanity broke my unconscious and my soul into pieces. It should suffer in its turn.'

But people don't judge Breivik's act in terms of Freud's doctrine. They don't say, 'He saw his mother naked and decided to kill his father. Instead of killing his father, he killed other people. He saw his father everywhere.' No. They say something along *these* lines, 'This is beyond comprehension. It's a nightmare. It's a nightmare for those who have been killed, for their mothers and fathers, family and friends.' At least Norway's Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg, said so. I wonder why he spoke about the dead and the living in the same

breath: the dead don't have to face the nightmare we must live with for a while. 'It's a nightmare for those who have been killed,' he said. 'It *was* a nightmare for them,' he ought to have said. But no one should bother about literary style when dealing with this tragedy.

I'm leafing through *The Sunday Times* in search of the reports that reflect the feelings of those whose lives were threatened by Breivik, by his determination and far-reaching reforms. They're not dead, otherwise their eye-witness reports wouldn't have seen the light of day. They must have suffered even more than those who lost their nearest and dearest; at least that's the feeling I got when reading their reports. Instead of them, I now light upon an image where a young woman is bathing in close proximity to an island described as follows: 'Spectacular, that's what it is. Two hours' flying time east from Sydney or Brisbane, Lord Howe is a snapshot of the perfect Pacific island. With no more than 400 visitors allowed a day, there's plenty of space for bush walks, cycling, surfing, snorkelling, diving, picnics, hiking up Mount Gower, or just hanging out at one of the lodges.' Would Breivik have gone to this island in order to kill 400 people? Now he can't go anywhere, let alone fly as far as Australia.

I'm sure that sooner or later I'll find the reports I touched upon in the previous paragraph. In the meantime I'll do my best to step into those people's shoes so as to recount *my* feelings and fears. Suppose Breivik raises his rifle and points it at my heart. I have no time to ask myself (or him) *several* questions. So I just ask myself *one* question: 'Should I talk to him?' I answer 'yes' – I've got enough time for *one* answer – and start talking to Breivik. 'Do you really wish to save the world?'

'Yes,' he answers.

'Do you think the world can be saved?'

'Yes, it can. It can be saved on condition that I kill you and your buddies.'

'I don't doubt your determination and capacities, but do you think that *anybody* can perform this daunting task?'

'I'm not alone.'

'But can you count on *your* buddies? Do you know what Lena Andreassen said about you? Do you know her?'

'Yes. She's the former head of the NDL.'

'What's NDL?'

'The Norwegian Defence League. I was a member of the League.'

'This is what Lena Andreassen said: "He was a member for a while, but I kicked him out because he had extremist views."'

'Nobody kicked me out. I gave up my membership because I was disappointed.'

I talk to him about other membership cards and fees, playing for time: the police haven't arrived yet. Whenever it is a matter of life and death, you must be very cautious. Even playing for time may reveal its kinship with death if you overplay your hand. Breivik is used to bragging about how intelligent and patient he has been ever since he thought up his international rescue operation. But I don't think he is likely to dwell on his failures in order to come to terms with other people's ideas and points of view. Norway's right-wing Progress Party, which has been surfing on a wave of growing anti-immigrant sentiment for years, if not for decades, is also eager to repudiate its former member. 'He had a hard time accepting our principles and our way of working because he had his own ideas,' Siv Jensen told Reuters. 'When we didn't listen to him, he walked out.'

Suppose I *am* on this island that fatal day, during those fatal hours. Should I talk to Breivik in the hope of making him forget his murderous project? Methodically he is carrying out the massacre about which I have been talking for almost two months. (Now I can take my time and so no one will ever talk me into writing about this individual every day.) Should I run or talk about cards, fees and those who find Breivik unreliable, if not repugnant? Should I talk about them to *him*? I'd better flatter him, saying, 'You're brave, intelligent and great. You're as great as Napoleon – even greater. After all, Napoleon didn't save the world. I'm sure you'll accomplish this glorious feat if you let me go. I'm not a strong swimmer. I may drown if I jump into the water. Can't you let me sit on this stump until the arrival of the police?'

'What stump?' says Breivik. He has worn a confident smile throughout the massacre. Now his smile broadens to reveal two rows of brown stumps.

'On that stump over there,' I say to him. He casts a glance at the stump of a tree to which I'm pointing in despair. My bottom lip trembles and tears well up in my eyes. When I read the reports on this massacre, everything happens now; and yet most of these reports are written in the past tense. The horror of the situation and the hatred I feel for the killer are so intense I can't relegate them to the past.

'One image has burnt itself into my mind: I guess she must have been 16 or 17, just lying there with a hole on the top of her head, absolutely the most horrific sight I have ever seen.' She is still lying there as if the police hadn't removed her body from the scene of the crime, from the scene of death. No point in saying or thinking, 'The whole Earth is a scene of death.' Now and here, the scene of death is there, on that island. In comparison with this scene, the other scenes are just life in disguise.

'On the road, I saw a shooting victim lying down and bleeding. But none of us were in any condition to help someone who bleeds so much. And we heard shots behind us. So we just had to continue.' They continued to walk, run or live to tell the tale. I'm now reading this tale and I don't think it is a fairy tale. If it *is* a fairy tale, it's a very cruel one – a horror story rather; or a horror movie. It depends on what they were doing.

Here is a horror *movie*:

He is running over the rocks. As soon as he realises that the blond man in the police uniform is a mass murderer he begins to run over the rocks, stumps and bushes. He starts to run down to the water. He sees his friends who undress and start swimming. He thinks he doesn't have enough time to undress and so he starts swimming in his clothes and big boots. He swims for about 150 yards but the lake is about 900 yards long. He realises he won't make it and turns back. Six friends are sprinting away together through the forest as Breivik chases them. You may drive through the red lights in an attempt to shake off the police car that is chasing you. But there are no red lights on this island and the police cars are very slow. And Breivik runs faster than any police car. The friends run and come to a crossroads. Three of them go left and the others go right. Breivik chooses to go right and the others hear the gunshots as he shoots their friends. A young woman runs towards the gunman because she thinks he is a policeman who has come to help. She sees a young man approach the policeman only to be shot dead. She and her boyfriend run into the water and hide in a cave.

Here is a horror *story*:

They are in the cave. After an hour, they can actually smell the gunpowder and hear the shots above them. Breivik is about 10 feet away. He is trying to shoot people in the water. They can't see several dead bodies in the water. Nor do they see a dozen teenagers crouching behind the rocks and shrubs. A young man is hiding behind some stones. He sees Breivik who stands 20 yards away. A young woman shouts, 'Don't shoot me. You've been shooting enough. You've already killed my dad. I'm too young to die.'

'Nobody is too young to die. As soon as we are born we begin to die. And you must be 20 years old. So you've been dying for 20 years. Now you'll die within the space of one second. Don't tell me you prefer a long death. Besides, I don't think you'd like to live amidst the Muslims. There are already millions of them on the Earth. And millions of them are born every day. And they don't die when they're born. I don't think you're prepared to kill them. Why should I spare your life? You'll never become my buddy because you're too weak to kill anybody. You can't even kill a cat. Neither can I, as a matter of fact. I adore cats and other animals, but I don't think they'll ever save the world. There are more Muslims than animals on our Earth. I killed your dad because he was useless. How many Muslims did he kill? I must kill you, otherwise no one will ever notice me and speak about my ideas. No one pays attention to you unless you kill all those who ask you not to kill them. You should kill others too! My shots will resound throughout the world.'

Shots, shots, shots, shots.

5

Breivik's father was sitting in his villa in the French village of Cournanel. Surfing the Internet for news of the bomb blast and massacre back home, he thought that an Islamist had done the job. 'One usually suspects those people,' he said. 'I know that other people are also capable of killing many people, but if you study recent history you may jump to this unfair conclusion.' So Breivik's father jumped to this conclusion only to find that his son was also involved in this business. 'My son has never liked the Muslims,' he thought. 'Why does he join them, I wonder?'

Then Breivik's father learnt that his son had perpetrated this crime on his own. After all, the Christians are intelligent and patient enough to make as many bombs as necessary to destroy the whole world, not just one island. Journalists and terrorist analysts took their cue from Breivik's father, judging from what I read in *The Guardian* (Saturday 23 July 2011). 'Who did it is unclear; jihadists suspected.' Apparently a group calling itself *Ansar al-Jihad al-Alami* – the Christians call it *Terror* or *Horror* – issued a statement according to which the attack had been carried out by its members. They called this attack 'A dignified response to Norwegian forces' presence in Afghanistan and to the insults published in newspapers'. The insults they had in mind concerned the prophet Muhammad, no doubt. 'What you see is only the beginning, and there is more to come,' said the group. Claiming responsibility for a mass murder is an old trick that enables all terrorists to scare governments and ordinary citizens out of their wits. 'Once they're out of their wits,' said one of the masterminds of the *Horror*, 'we'll triumph over them easily.' Incidentally the message addressed to the Norwegian government by the *Terror* shamefully celebrates the group's 'remarkable triumph over appalling adversity'.

'I thought they began on September 11, 2011,' said a journalist.

'That was only the beginning,' said another journalist.

‘That’s what I just said,’ said the first journalist.

‘All right. So there’s more to come,’ said the second journalist.

‘It has come already,’ said the first journalist.

‘Has it? A second coming, eh?’

‘Have you forgotten all other bombs and murders?’ said a third journalist.

‘Something happened in Madrid,’ said the first journalist.

‘And in London,’ said the second journalist.

‘But our act is far worse,’ said the first journalist.

‘What act are you talking about?’ asked the third journalist.

‘Why *us*?’ asked the second journalist. ‘Our country is a secondary player in Afghanistan. Most of our soldiers are in the northern cities of Meymaneh and Mazar-i-Sharif, a relatively quiet part of the country. And our contingent of 500 personnel is only the 18th largest in the Isaf coalition. Why don’t they attack 17 countries?’

‘Because it’s not *them*,’ said the first journalist.

‘Not other countries?’ asked the third journalist.

‘Not *them*,’ said the first journalist. He repeated his previous observation very loudly.

‘I can hear you loud and clear,’ said the third journalist. ‘You mean that someone else carried out the act?’

The police were dragging their feet because their superiors suspected Muslim immigrants; and yet the man carrying the machine gun was blond and spoke Norwegian fluently. ‘He must have learnt our language in his country to carry out the massacre on a larger scale,’ said an officer.

‘He’s blond,’ said another officer.

‘Some Muslims *are* blond,’ said another officer.

‘Can’t you dye your black hair?’ said another officer.

‘It’s easier than to make a bomb,’ agreed another officer.

A journalist overheard this conversation, but said nothing about it in his article. Instead, he described the delay as follows: ‘Trapped and tortured on Utoya, the survivors waited for the police. They desperately needed someone’s help, especially since the killer was dressed as a policeman. At first they thought he could assist them, but then they realised he was the very man they feared. Police officers took an hour to get to Utoya after the first alert was issued and received. They were hampered by a lack of helicopters. Of course there was a boat, but it had to turn back after it began to take on water. Why was it taking on water? Some say the accident was due to its heavy load of police officers and equipment. Apparently there was a hole in the boat.’

His father says that Anders was ‘a very ordinary boy’, which doesn’t mean anything: ordinary boys may turn into assassins. As Agatha Christie puts it, ‘Murder is easy.’ If it *is* easy, any ordinary boy can kill 100 people, provided he knows how to make bombs and handle rifles. Perhaps Agatha Christie means to say that killing two or three people is rather easy. The massacre we are confronted with demands a lot of courage and insolence that many ordinary men and women lack on account of their mediocre capacities. We can’t say about them, ‘He (or she) finally plucked up courage to murder 80 people.’

His father says to himself, ‘I’ll live with this shame forever because everyone will think about me in connection with the massacre. They’ll say I gave birth to a monster, to another Frankenstein. But Frankenstein was kind, wasn’t he? He killed because he couldn’t help it. My son isn’t an automaton, is he? He’s neither a

machine nor a machine gun. How could he just stand there and kill so many innocent people? I wish I knew what he was thinking about. Did he say to himself, “What I’m doing is perfectly all right”?”

Whenever his son missed, he said to himself, ‘What *am* I doing?’ Now and then he congratulated himself on his marksmanship, ‘Well done! You scored eight hits and only two misses.’ He hummed a cheerful tune as he stalked his future and present victims. I would have sung Bach’s *Matthäus Passion*, I think. I’m singing the last piece from it as I write about the massacre. But I’m not sure Breivik likes classical music; I know for sure he is a fan of hip-hop music. I don’t even know what it is, although I *might* have heard something of this kind: in our world one can’t avoid being exposed to non-classical music.

Some years ago, Breivik and his gang of friends would spend their evenings hanging around Oslo, spraying tags and graffiti on buildings. At some point he thought he should write his *Manifesto* on walls, on façades, but then decided against it: nowadays people consult the Internet and not the walls of the houses where they live. They consult what is hidden *behind* those walls, namely their computer screens.

In *My Manifesto*, which could be seen on screens only a few weeks ago, Anders Breivik blames his father for being cold and distant. ‘Now he lives in another country, very far from my farm. But even when we lived together, he was distant. There was a distant look in his eyes. His mind was obviously on something else.’ I might borrow these sentences from his *Manifesto* to describe *my* father and the way he treated me whenever I talked to him. He still treats me in this way as if I hadn’t grown an inch, as if I hadn’t outgrown my clothes and shoes many times. Perhaps he thinks my brain hasn’t grown since my childhood. It’s easier to measure one’s waist and feet.

My father is a physicist and I’m aware that not everyone can understand modern physics. Very few people *can*, as a matter of fact. I’m also aware that I’m not of their number. Does that mean my questions should remain unanswered? ‘Impossible’ is the only word I heard whenever I dared ask my father a question. ‘What’s physics, Daddy?’ I would ask.

‘Impossible.’

‘What’s impossible?’

‘I can’t answer your question with a few well-chosen words.’

My father is a man of few words, but when he does speak I listen to him because it’s worth listening to what he says. The point is he seldom says anything, especially when I talk to him about physics. Actually I no longer talk to him about anything; I never see him. Breivik blames his father for the estrangement that he claims came after he was caught spraying graffiti. I can also blame my father for the estrangement; and yet I don’t know *when* it came. It was always with us, I might say.

‘I have not spoken to my father since he isolated himself when I was 15,’ writes Breivik. ‘He was not very happy about my graffiti phase from 13 to 16.’ He might have written to his father:

Dear father,

I haven’t heard from you for many years. Do you think I’m still spraying graffiti on walls? You used to scold me even for spraying graffiti on the Berlin Wall. And yet you should have been proud of me, of my passionate hatred of Communists. If you come to my farm, you’ll be proud of me – it’s never too late to be proud of one’s own son. Do you know what I’m doing here? Come on – make a guess. I can hear you say, ‘I wouldn’t like to hazard a guess.’ I know you don’t like guessing games. All right, I’ll tell you what I am

doing on my farm. Do you think I'm growing melons, roots and tubers? You're wrong, dear Daddy. I know you're a diplomat and consequently you'll never admit that the world is bad or dead. You just adapt yourself to the world instead of trying to change it. As a diplomat you had to adjust your methods to suit the needs of your employers. So you got into the habit of doing what other people wanted you to do. One day they'll want you to condemn my methods and dreams. You'll repudiate me in the near future because you adapt yourself to the world. Do you know what George Bernard Shaw used to say? 'The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.' Well, progress doesn't depend on you, my dear Dad. Fortunately, you have a son. God, too, had a son who saved the world. Not quite, not quite. 'Hey – you did a great job tidying my world. Well done!' That's what God said to His son when the latter returned to Him at last. What will you say, Father? Will you say, 'I don't feel like his father'? Will you say, 'I couldn't believe my eyes'? Well, say that. Say whatever you wish. You're not worthy of being my father. Anyway, I don't feel like your son.

There's no point in writing to my father because he'll never talk to me about physics. And that's the only thing I'd like to discuss with him, even though I still don't know the first thing about physics.

Here is the letter written by Breivik's father. He didn't write it to his son, contrary to what might have been expected; he wrote it to the police.

Dear officers,

I'm writing to you because I don't understand your conduct. What were you doing that afternoon? I know what my son was doing on that island. Everybody knows what he was doing. Only you didn't know anything about it. I've always been working like crazy to get the job done on time. What about you? How come you didn't do anything on time? You say you waited for a boat to reach this wretched island. Aren't you living in the 21st century? There are flying machines nowadays. Don't you know one may use a helicopter to reach an island and even the North Pole?

All right, you were waiting for a boat – for Godot, rather. What did you do when the boat came at last? You did what everyone would have done under the circumstances – you climbed in. What happened next? The boat started to sink. Why did it start to sink? Because there were too many officers in it. And my son was fighting an army of teenagers single-handedly. Do you think two officers wouldn't have overpowered my son? Even one officer would have done the job. My son was shooting dead his teenage victims for 90 minutes before you finally arrived on Utoya to arrest him. You claimed you couldn't get to the island because you were waiting for your boat to arrive. You said that if the massacre had taken place in Oslo, near a police station, you would have arrested my son in no time at all. In the twinkling of an eye, as the saying goes.

If I may be so bold, you still haven't answered the questions I put to you on the phone. One of these questions concerns the fate of my son. Why didn't you kill him on the spot? All right, he failed to kill himself. I said several times that he ought to have taken his own life. Even now he could do it – it's never too late to take one's life. But it takes a lot of guts to admit to so many people that you've made a mistake. He is bold enough to kill scores of innocent teenagers, but he refrains from killing himself. I would kill

myself, if I was in his shoes. I would have killed myself on the island. But I wasn't on the island and I didn't kill so many people. So don't lay it at my door.

Let me ask you again, 'Why didn't you kill him outright?' It would have made things easier for him and for his father. But you're used to making life difficult for everybody. Well, you've made your bed and now you must lie in it, as the saying goes. First your boat starts to sink and then you spare my son's life. Why did you go to this island, may I ask? Why didn't you sink with the boat and your equipment? I'm told your superiors had decided not to send a helicopter – it would have taken too long to prepare for flight. More than 90 minutes? What helicopters do you have? In which century do you live?

You say you moved as quickly as possible. Impossible! You say it takes time to send out a special armed force. But just an ordinary officer could have overpowered my son, all the more so since the latter offered no resistance. A child might have arrested him. A child wouldn't have killed him, I suppose. He might have arrested him all the same. Do you know that the maximum jail term my son can get for the massacre and bombing is 21 years? Didn't you make life difficult for him? And for his father? People will come to my house and say, 'Your son is still in jail.' They wish they could see me in jail as well. After all, my genes are partly his genes. This massacre-gene must be in my blood. I will live with this shame forever. What about you? Your genes are too slow, aren't they? What's more, they are dim-witted.

Impossible, impossible. My ears are still ringing from the sound of this word. After one of our conversations – I'm speaking about *my* father now – I went to a library and looked at the books that might shed some light on the topic my father had no wish to broach in his son's presence. I'm alluding to physics, needless to say. As I looked at one of the shelves I saw a book entitled *Impossibility*. 'Impossible,' I said to myself. 'That's just what I need.' *The Limits of Science and the Science of Limits* by John D. Barrow.

I found in this book what I was partly looking for: the confirmation of my motto. My motto is: nothing doing. Whatever you do, nothing will ever happen. And if something does happen in the world, it has nothing to do with what you have in mind and hope for. So why not spend your life in your bed or in your garden? That's what beds and gardens are for, aren't they? Instead, Breivik makes a bomb, goes to Oslo and then to Utøya, hoping to ward off evil spirits, alias the Muslims, the Communist Party and so on. So many countries threw off the communist yoke at the end of the 20th century. So what? Are they prosperous now? There are other yokes and they're not likely to throw *them* off. And what about *other* countries?

If you throw one yoke off, another yoke appears and laughs at you. So you throw it off too: you're too proud and self-assured to tolerate a thing that doesn't respect you. But another yoke takes its place because life is made up of yokes and as soon as you get rid of one yoke, another yoke makes its appearance. It can't be otherwise and you'd better get used to yokes so as to enjoy the rest of your life to the utmost. You can't enjoy *anything* if you think in terms of yokes.

I started to read the book. Of course I understood nothing or next to nothing: to some extent, my father was right. But he was also wrong because I did understand a few ideas, if not their contents. For instance, Du Bois-Reymond says at some point, 'The impossibility of stating and integrating the differential equations of the universal formula, and of discussing the result, is not fundamental, but rests on the impossibility of getting at the necessary determining facts, and, even where this is possible, of mastering their boundless extension, multiplicity and complexity.'

Well, I can't say I can't make head or tail of this statement because I see the word 'impossibility' and it puts me on the right track – on the track of impossibility. And what does impossibility mean in this context? Or should I find the *general* meaning of impossibility? Should I say that everything is impossible or rather that nothing is ever possible or feasible? I've already said that several times. So what? What am I supposed to do now? Impossibility is linked to destiny, I suppose. They call it determination and I can't say I don't understand this word. I can say that destiny is a thing of fierce and ruthless determination: it is determined to destroy us in the long run. It is a short-term or a long-term destruction. Whatever you do, you're being destroyed: everybody knows that. But people have a natural propensity for forgetting things. They forget death and diseases; they're reminded of them now and then – sometimes *always*.

If I wasn't alone, I might describe my reflection on impossibility as follows: 'We exchanged commonplaces about life over cups of tea.' I know that my reflection is cliché-ridden, but you can't get rid of clichés as you proceed with your train of thought: they're also yokes that pursue you whatever you think about. So it's better not to think at all, whenever you can afford it. Anyway you'll never master the art of living because there are too many facts, incidents, occurrences, women, men and children. There are too many things around you and you don't *always* know their meanings. Sometimes you don't know the first thing about these things. So what are you supposed to do? To kill the Muslims or your fellow creatures who don't kill the Muslims? You're too civilised and humane so you let the Muslims settle in your country and spoil your pleasures. You say to yourself, 'The government is understandably reluctant to do anything which might spoil the harmonious relations between the country's ethnic groups.' And yet you know that your train of thought is a pack of lies: there's no harmony in your country. What's more, you're bullied by the Muslims whenever you venture outdoors. But you don't lift a finger to help your fellow creatures – the Christians, in other words. You don't buy a farm; you make no bombs.

Nothing doing. If you manage to throw off the yoke called 'Muslims', another yoke will ride on your back and spoil your pleasures. (Let's call it 'Buslims' or 'Kuslims'.) There's no such thing as life without yokes. You should understand that you can't be happy on Earth or anywhere else: even in Paradise there are yokes of all kinds. So why bother? Why bother getting up at all when you don't have a job to do? No bomb-making, no blasts, no shots, no swimming bodies that should be finished off at all costs. Anyway, you wouldn't get anywhere. So why bother getting up at all?

Yet you can't twiddle your thumbs for years and years. You just have to do *something* in order to survive, provided your will-to-live is strong enough to give a fresh impetus to your existence. But before you act, you should make sure that what you do belongs to the realm of good: you can't *always* live beyond good and evil. Breivik is convinced that what he did is situated in the very centre of the Kingdom of Good – of the Kingdom of God, rather. In his novel a lot of passages are related to God and to the notion of good, for instance:

'And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai.'

'For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.'

'Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua.'

'And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.'

That's how one should deal with one's enemies before it is too late. Either you win or you lose. If we don't make bombs and heaps, our enemies will make them and throw our corpses on those heaps. We should hearken to the commands of our Lord. What does He command us? To destroy our enemies, all of them. We can spare the cattle, though.

My father says that the Bible teaches us how to love our neighbours and the neighbours of our neighbours. But there are people who are not our neighbours. They're not even our neighbours' neighbours. The line of our neighbours doesn't stretch out as far as Doomsday.

Sometimes even our neighbours should be killed because not all of them understand life. Yes, they should be killed – it's all in a good cause. Sometimes they should be hanged.

'And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.'

Not only does Breivik claim the moral high ground, but he says that he obeys God's orders. One might say he fell in love not only with God, but also with the word 'order' and its synonyms. 'Clean up my world immediately – and that's an order!' he writes in *My Manifesto*. 'I fire as soon as my Commander – our Commander – gives the order. I am His soldier and so I must obey *His* orders, not *their* orders.' Sometimes he quotes God Himself: 'When I give the command, fire!'

Shots, shots, shots, shots.

6

'Impossible isn't French,' say the French. Though of French extraction, I say this word rather often: it has a soothing effect, especially if I say it out loud. I knew I would find moral support in the book whose author seems to know more about impossibility than most of his neighbours, let alone his enemies. At the end of the book I chanced upon what is regarded as an eloquent proof of our limitations: Gödel's theorem. 'There must exist statements of arithmetic whose truth or falsity cannot be established using the axioms and deductive rules of arithmetic. Arithmetic truth is something too large to be ensnared by any formal system of rules.' What does that mean?

Sometimes you come to the conclusion that nothing has any meaning. The world is meaningless; so are words. But the words I've just quoted are *not* meaningless; yet I don't really understand them. They *might* mean that if you act in good faith for humanity, you must know exactly whether your faith is good or not – whether *you* are good or not. Why are you so sure about your inner (and outer) goodness? You're not able to use your own judgement in these matters. In other words, you cannot judge the validity of your own ideas and actions. You can't know *for sure* they're good because the world is too large to be ensnared by your logic and rules. Human beings often say to themselves, 'We mustn't let our prejudices blind us to the facts of the situation.' They even try to get rid of their prejudices, but to no avail; they can't *see* their prejudices. And if they do, they can't know for sure these *are* prejudices. An outsider might say to them, 'That's a good idea!' Where to find this outsider? Am I speaking again of God?

Breivik talked to his father about this problem – about the problem of outsider. As usual, his father did all he could to pacify his son, making him listen to reason. ‘Where’s your reason, Daddy?’ asked Breivik.

‘Right here, my son.’ And his father pointed to his own head.

‘This is *your* reason, father. You’re a cocksure old man.’

‘I don’t ask you to listen to *my* reason.’

‘Do you think there’s such a thing as *absolute* reason?’

‘I’m talking to you about the light of God. His light is streaming in through your windows, through your open doors. I wish it could stream in through your heart.’

‘You’ve always confused God with the sun,’ said the son.

‘Do you prefer the Prince of Darkness?’ asked the father.

‘You’re an outsider, father. You’re outside my frame of mind. How can we ever come to understand each other when our frames of reference are so different?’

‘Are you speaking about yourself? As a child you were very much an outsider, never participating in the games that other children played.’

‘Did *you* play with me, father?’

‘Perhaps I didn’t. But at the time I was no longer a child. Usually children play with other children.’

‘And I wished to play with *you*, father. Well, I’m playing with you *now*.’

So you need an outsider to tell you the truth about your own ideas that come and go through your mind. You might wonder why a stranger is supposed to know them better than you do: after all, they are *yours*, not *his*. Aren’t you supposed to know yourself better than anybody else? You know yourself better than whoever wants to probe into your consciousness and unconscious. What’s more, you know yourself better than the people who obtrude upon your privacy and bother you with *their* ideas. Of course you prefer *your* ideas because they’re *yours*. Besides, you understand them much better than whatever you hear either in your house or anywhere else. Am I stating the obvious?

In the light of Gödel’s theorem, everything seems to be as dark and impenetrable as the Prince of Darkness Himself about whom no one knows anything with certainty. People say He is the President of Fallen Angels, but what exactly He does on the Earth or anywhere else is anyone’s guess. Breivik’s father speaks to his son about the Prince of Darkness; yet he knows that he won’t be able to answer his son’s questions, should his son enquire about the nature, substance and doings of the prince in question.

‘Aren’t you afraid of evil, my son?’ he asks.

‘What’s evil, father?’

‘I don’t believe that you’re innately evil.’

‘Good and evil, good and evil. No one can tell them apart,’ says the son.

‘Do you think that good is synonymous with evil?’ says the father.

‘Do you wish the Communist Party to take over?’ says the son.

‘You hate the Muslims too. And bin Laden. But do you realise that the Red Army’s defeat in Afghanistan caused the Soviet Union’s collapse? The corrupt, totalitarian regime was overthrown.’

‘The Muslims embellish their victory. Seventy years of incompetent government had brought about the virtual collapse of the communist country’s economy. The Soviet Union committed suicide.’

‘But don’t you agree that bin Laden – ’

‘I always choose the lesser of two evils. In Afghanistan I’d have chosen bin Laden.’

You can’t prove your own consistency. You can’t prove you’re right because something is lacking in your brain and this involuntary omission prevents you from judging your ideas and actions correctly. You may give a correct answer to some question or other, but you’ll never know if your answer is correct. So it’s better not to answer any questions, otherwise you’ll tell a lot of lies. You may also tell a lot of truths, for all I know. We are always in a bit of predicament because we can’t espouse diametrically opposite points of view; nor should we tolerate contradictions in our midst.

I’ve already spoken about a group of young people pursued by Breivik on that paradisiacal island. They split into two groups as they tried to escape the murderer. One group went left; the other went right. The members of one group got killed, the other young people survived. That’s what life is about. You go left, being convinced you’re right. And you die as a result of your convictions, of your self-righteousness. Did doubting Thomas fare better? Is Cartesian doubt the only answer to our problems? Should we give everybody and everything the benefit of the doubt? One never can tell.

‘Do you never doubt?’ Again Breivik’s father was talking to his son.

‘I used to doubt a lot,’ said the son.

‘Do you mean you doubt no longer?’

‘Humans should doubt if they don’t want to live in a fool’s paradise,’ said the son. He picked up his manuscript and read out loud:

One persistent use of Gödel’s results has been to argue that in some way the human mind is superior to computing machines. Paradoxically, it is the very fallibility of the human mind to which some appeal in order to argue for its superiority over machines. Because the machine blindly follows the laws of logic that are programmed into it, it is under the spell of Gödel’s theorem, and cannot ascertain the truth or falsity of all statements in its language. The human mind on the other hand, so the argument goes, is not a slave of deductive arguments. It can use intuition, guesswork, induction, and all other means of non-deductive reasoning to get at the truth.

‘Did you write this text?’ asked the father.

‘No. John D. Barrow did.’

‘Why did you read that to me?’

‘Can’t you guess, father? The human mind is not a slave of deductive arguments.’

‘Do you mean to say you’ve become a machine?’

‘Exactly.’

‘You’re no longer human?’

‘I’m a human machine, father. At some point I stopped using my intuition, my sixth sense. Five senses are quite enough. I no longer need to guess – I *know*.’

‘You know that you should kill?’

‘Does your sixth sense disagree with me on this point, father?’

‘All my senses disagree with you.’

‘Then you should get rid of your senses.’

It was impossible to argue with Breivik because machines are always right or wrong. They're never in the middle or somewhere else. They're here and now; and they tell you 'five' or 'six', as the case may be. And if they say 'five', they don't think that 'six' is not far away. They don't think that five may be replaced by six because they don't think. They reach their truths directly: there are no detours in their world. They never say to themselves, 'It's well worth making a detour to see the church.' There are no churches in their world; there are roads and goals. There's no God in their world. Those who program them are their gods.

One day, Leibniz came up with a brilliant idea thanks to which all sorts of human disputes could be resolved logically. He thought that even religious truths could be arrived at in this way – through the use of his logical procedure. 'Religious truths are to be deduced after the manner of mathematical proofs,' he said. 'Let us put an end to countless theological disputes.' Logic doesn't therefore exclude the Almighty and His mastery of the world. So Breivik speaks of God all the time: some years ago he programmed his brain to calculate the number of victims in accordance with the Bible. First he arrived at the conclusion that enemies should be killed at all cost. Then he announced his truth that is known only partially on account of human censorship. Humans think they can decide what is human and what is not. And they think that, by removing inhuman elements from the universe, they can prolong their lives and pleasures.

Breivik's novel disappeared from the Internet, but it did not sink without a trace. Some traces of *My Manifesto* can be found in newspapers: journalists and governments need to *prove* that Breivik is mad and dangerous to walk with.

For me it's very hypocritical to treat Muslims, Nazis and Marxists different from each other. They are all supporters of hate-ideologies. Not all Muslims, Nazis and Marxists are conservative; most of them are moderate. But does it matter?

Is it a truth? What can I say about this excerpt from *My Manifesto*? I wouldn't say to Breivik, 'I can't fault you on your logic' because his logic is not *utterly* incontrovertible. There are irredeemable flaws in the logic of the argument he put forth in *My Manifesto*. Yet I can't say there's *no* logic in his position. Many people put Nazis and Marxists in the same melting pot or in the same circle of Hell. The matter stands differently with Muslims. Of course some people would be delighted to see them in the same circle or pot and these people are not in prison because they didn't kill 80 people. They buy no farms and make no bombs. They may buy *some* farms and fertiliser, but they make no bombs. Instead, they grow rice and maize. Why put them in prison? They hate their neighbours whom they don't regard as their neighbours. They hate them but don't kill them. They seem fairly content with their hate-ideology and go no further so as not to find their bodies and buddies in prison.

I can't accept Breivik's truth, yet there would seem to be *some* truth in what he says. I hate Nazis and *some* Marxists as much as he does. But I see other truths as I peruse the newspapers I bought almost two months ago; and these truths are incontrovertible.

Mads Andenas, a law professor, said that his niece had survived the trauma, but that she was too traumatised to speak and remains worried about retribution from being named publicly. Three of his students were killed in the attack on the island and another is missing and presumed dead.

Is this student dead or not? I'm reading the *International Herald Tribune* (Tuesday, July 26, 2011). On July 23 the student *was* missing and presumed dead. This is another truth. And here is yet another truth:

'I was one of the youths who had to sit and watch a lot of our friends lie dead on the rocks. I lost 83 friends, 3 were very near to me,' she said.

She certainly told the truth during the interview: at that point she did believe that 83 friends of hers had died on the island. Some of them, however, may have turned out to be alive: many people pretended they were dead so as not to be killed. After all, Breivik had neither the time nor the desire to kill corpses.

Here is a good example of Absolute Truth:

From inside a toilet, he heard the 'pop pop' of a pistol from outside and 'thought it was a joke, a toy gun, someone sounding off a fake gun'.

He said that he was convinced that 'someone was making a joke in incredibly bad taste' and 'stormed out of the booth with the intent of halting it.'

As he tore the door open, he saw two of his friends hiding in a recessed corner. 'Their facial expressions left absolutely no doubt that this was no toy.' They gestured that he should go back in the toilet. Had they not signalled, he would have run straight into the gunman, he said.

'They saved my life,' he said. As he looked out from his cubby into the hallway, he saw a young boy lying in a pool of blood, motioning for help, which he was unable to give. Later, he saw that the boy had died from his wounds.

Absolute Truth often sounds like a joke.

7

Breivik had several mothers. He lived with his 'real' mother until two years ago; he was 30 at the time of *their* farewell ceremony. Apparently he was a mummy's boy and so needed no friends, no girlfriends. He did have some friends but he didn't really *need* them. All his life he was training himself to be a lone wolf, a prisoner.

I wasn't a mummy's boy because I never lived with my mother. Perhaps I *was* a mummy's boy in the course of the first year of my life, but I know nothing about it. Are mummy's boys always aware of their social status? Do we need outsiders to realise we are mummy's boys? Can you *feel* you're one of their number? You go to school and a girl says, 'Here goes a mummy's boy.' O.K. Do you feel this outsider is right? Is she telling the truth? Your mother isn't likely to say, 'My son is a mummy's boy.' She just says, 'I love my son and I care about him. He's going to be very weak for a long time after the operation, so he'll need a lot of care. Anyway he needs constant care even when he's a picture of health. He can't look after himself. I'm like his bodyguard, you know – I'm watching over him every hour of the day. What would become of him without his mummy? He would die of his wounds in the streets, on an island. He would bleed to death in the United States. Yesterday his finger was bleeding.'

My mother has never said anything of the sort: there's no point in speaking about your son's fingers if you don't know what happens to them. Suppose you stop seeing your son when he is one year old and many

years later the famous pianist you admire turns out to be your son. In this case you can say, ‘You need to have agile fingers to do this kind of work.’ But even in *this* case you don’t know whether your son’s fingers bleed or not, unless you call him twice a day. My mother calls me once a month. Luckily for me, my fingers don’t bleed.

Do I need friends and girlfriends? I’m walking in my garden. I don’t know what happens to the grass; nothing really happens to it. As usual it sways to and fro as if taking rest in the garden; and yet it probably works because no one knows what the work of the grass consists of. Perhaps it doesn’t work at all; the grass may be jobless, for all I know. It doesn’t *have* to work: no one will ever accuse it of being a lazy good-for-nothing. The grass is good for *something* – for offering me an opportunity to walk in the garden barefoot. I like the feel of the grass and the way it bends obediently as I walk across the garden, thinking about this and that. Nothing happens except my walk and the movement of the grass. Now it sways to and fro, being completely on its own; now it obeys the weight and movement of my body.

It’s not an event; it’s just a walk in the garden. Is it enough to walk like that for hours on end? Is *that* what my life boils down to? I wish I could just walk around the park in the centre of which my house is located. It is a castle where I’ve lived all my life without noticing it. I know the walls of this castle or chateau from both inside and outside, but this knowledge leads me nowhere. Perhaps I don’t wish to go anywhere, for I feel at home in this castle partly deserted by my parents who divorced when I was 14 months old. I wasn’t old yet, and yet they divorced, taking no notice of my babyhood, of the trauma lying ahead of me. I’m probably in the middle of this trauma now; I don’t know. No one can tell in which part of one’s trauma one lives. One can’t even tell whether one lives at all, which is not the subject matter of this book. I think and write, therefore I am, and no demon will ever take the trouble to talk me out of this conviction.

Do I believe in demons? No, I don’t even believe in *demons* because there’s no point in believing – whether in God or in Satan. You just believe there’s no point in believing; thus you’ll keep yourself busy when you feel like doing *something*. So I’m walking in the garden and I’m aware there’s nothing beyond this garden – not even the Hereafter, let alone some other gardens or Paris. There’s nothing except this walk and the absence of any belief with the exception of the belief in overall absence.

This doesn’t mean I have no TV set and take no notice of the news reaching me from time to time as if to demonstrate that I’m not alone on this planet and that the planet in question continues to circle around the sun. I see the sun almost every day and I don’t dislike it; I might fly around it myself if I had a pair of wings and was able to handle them properly. I’m fed up with talking about my solitude, all the more so since whoever talks about his or her solitude is not alone. Even a doppelgänger may enliven one’s life to the point of making it unbearable.

Breivik is not my doppelgänger – God forbid! Why do I write about him? Sometimes I feel like putting on my writing desk a yardstick by which to measure my life. There’s no denying that I’m not satisfied with what I see and hear and feel around me – around my body and mind and also *within* my body and mind. Either you adapt yourself to the world or the world does its best to come up to your expectations that it can’t really know in minute detail. So what is one supposed to do? Goethe thought we should descend to mothers, whoever they might be in the context of *Faust* and in real life. I wish I could descend or ascend to where *my* mother lives both physically and spiritually. Thanks to her I might become what I am.

I saw my mother naked many years ago, but my memory gives a very vivid and shocking account of her body which might have been designed to awaken my sensuality and sexuality. It sounds as though her body is

tailor-made for the job – for my awakening, in other words. My father took no notice of this body, I'm sure: he was too engrossed in his job, in his waves and particles, in his light and its velocity. As for my mother's new husband, I'm loath to think about *him*. Freud also saw his mother naked – at least he thought he had. I've never felt like killing my father and I talk about Freud only to emphasise that his name is meant as a starting point for my sexual tales. They are mostly tales of woe, but I recall these tales and even feel like telling them because my life depends on male and female bodies; I can't discard them altogether.

When I saw my mother naked, I saw a beautiful female body; I didn't connect this body with my mother or anybody else. It was just a body I saw on the day when I could appreciate it to the utmost. The time was ripe for my discovery of sexual intricacies that so many sages deplore in their writings. I might deplore my mother's intervention in my life, all the more so since she disappeared from it a long time ago in spite of her casual appearances. She does come and pay me a visit once in a while – once a year, to be exact. But she no longer strips her clothes off and we talk for the sake of talking because we can't do anything else.

Many years ago, I saw her naked body in a so-called Turkish bath and I thought I would never make love to any other woman. I also thought I would never make love to my own mother; and yet I cared neither about taboos or mores or morals. I continue to sneer at them, but I don't touch female bodies as if all women were both Indian and untouchable. One might conclude that I care for men and their bodies and souls. Oddly enough, I went to a Naval college at the age when one's sexual life begins and often ends forever. Mine ended at the college, for all my efforts and attempts to turn over a new leaf. What did the old leaf look like?

I'm not sure I fell in love with a teenager whose naked body I saw many, many times as if it had been designed to eclipse my mother's body, the leitmotiv of my life. He was well-read and wrote poetry; I knew by heart all his poems and even several essays. I still remember some of them, but their poetic licence no longer moves me to tears. What does move me to tears is my teenage predicament – the love I didn't use to good purpose. Should one *use* one's love? I don't know. Perhaps it's better to love without thinking about the outcome of your love, of your desire. It would be foolhardy to try and predict the outcome of any love: Romeo and Juliet landed up in a cemetery. Is it enough to love for nothing?

We often went together to the lavatory which was spacious enough for several drunken orgies taking place at the same time, on the same night. I thought we were rather *cramped* for space. Our being alone in that lavatory *cramped* my style, so to speak. I have stomach *cramps* whenever I recall these painful episodes. Is that what they call 'linguistic virus'?

'You should always limit your exposure to the sun,' my mother says when I speak to her on the phone. Does she really care for me? Well, my friend wasn't the sun, either symbolically or otherwise. So I didn't have to limit my exposure to his charms. We seldom met outside our studies, outside the classrooms and lavatory. Once he came to my castle or room—call it what you wish. I've always felt cramped for space in his presence; the Versailles chateau might have become a tiny room, had we walked and talked in it for an hour.

We had dinner and drank three bottles of wine. Then he leant over to embrace me heartily; not to be outdone, I did the same. I found myself on the floor; and yet I had been looking neither for my soul nor for my body. I forgot both during that episode which I'd like to enlarge upon in this book. But I don't remember anything, as if my memory had once and for all refused to cooperate with my body. My body *must* remember a lot, judging from what I feel inside it as I write about the aforementioned episode. Alas, I feel nothing *outside* so

I can't describe what I feel: one's inner feelings are indescribable. In short, it was a scene of indescribable beauty.

A dish fell to the floor and broke; my body was breaking too. 'I've broken my heart, but the doctor says that it's a clean break, so it should heal easily,' I wrote in my diary. I kept a diary in those days which are as far as Andromeda where Breivik would have landed, had he remained in the van during the explosion.

What about Breivik? Would I have fallen in love with *him* had I met him before this explosion, before his excursion to the Island of Love and Death? What would I have done, had I been with him on that island *before* the massacre? He was bent on killing the young members of the Labour Party; I'm not a member of any party or club. So he might have spared my life, for all his murderous fury. He doesn't have many friends, but nobody says he has no friends at all. He must have rubbed shoulders with *some* men and women, otherwise nobody would ever have talked about him.

Two years ago my friend and his wife paid me a visit. We drank several bottles of wine in the garden, on the grass that is my faithful accomplice. At some point his wife said she was tired and we drank another bottle en tête-à-tête. In search of yet another bottle, I went indoors; he followed me. I headed for my room where he pushed me on the bed. 'I love you,' he said. I was hoping his wife would come and interrupt this incongruous effusion of sentiments.

I can hardly remember what happened during the hours I spent in my friend's company. But I remember my mother, her naked body, as if *our* bodies had been on the floor that night. Have I ever dreamt of killing my mother, of wreaking vengeance on her? A lot of men would feel emasculated if they stayed at home during their mothers' hot dates. Some of them would feel castrated. That's what *I* feel, to tell the truth; perhaps it is the only feeling I can experience now. And I've got this strange feeling in my stomach. Do they call it 'cramps'?

And what about Amy Winehouse? She died two weeks ago, three weeks ago. I don't recall the day of her death, neither the day nor the date; but I do recall her appearance on TV, which I watch only occasionally. They showed a sequence from one of her concerts as they enlarged upon her death, upon the drugs she had been taking all her life. I find everything in *The Sunday Times*: victims, murderers, drinks and drugs. 'Amy Winehouse had beaten drugs and rediscovered her joy in singing,' close friends tell Lisa Verrico. 'But even as fans eagerly awaited a new album, drink dragged her back down.' My voice is still automatic, even though I content myself with the words I haven't put together myself. But what is my voice in comparison with hers? I listened to her a few seconds and I knew I had lost a soul mate, a source of inspiration, a vital force. Now I am a semi-automatic creature: my limbs obey me only in part.

I listen to her recordings and watch her DVDs – a source of my tears, a fountainhead of this book. I'm singing my requiem, my homage to the woman who is no more, as if there was no room for her on stages, in bars, on beaches where so many bodies are trying to get a really deep suntan. (It's the 13th of August, 2011.) One demon too many. How many demons did she meet in her lifetime? How many demons will she meet in her deathtime? Will her deathtime be short or long? Is it better to commit suicide in one's deathtime? In one's lifetime? Her fans don't await her new album any more.

Breivik wrote that his parents supported the policies of the Norwegian Labour Party and that his mother was a moderate feminist. Did he intend to kill her for supporting the Labour Party? And what about her feminism? He

wrote: 'I do not approve of the super-liberal, matriarchal upbringing as it completely lacked discipline and has contributed to feminising me to a certain degree.'

It is my mother's *body* I have to blame for the vicious streak in my nature. What I actually suffer from is a sort of vicious circle: I turn to my mother, to men and then to my mother again. My sexual life keeps going round in circles; so does my ordinary life. I've lived with my mother's body ever since I saw it. Could I call this memory and its influence on my life 'matriarchal upbringing'?

Now I also turn to Amy and stay with her until I realise that death parted us a few weeks ago, a few months ago – the days I count no longer. Usually lovers count the days and hours they spend away from each other. We are too far away and I don't know how to count what separates us here and elsewhere. No mathematics would teach me this mystery. I put many digits together, but nothing comes of it as if numbers were dead. Perhaps they are: there's no point in using them if they don't allow us to touch the dead.

My mother is Jewish; her family settled in France in the early Seventies after escaping from the clutches of the Soviet regime. My mother must understand Breivik's hatred of Communists: in her native country she had to queue for food and clothes. Even now she shudders when she sees a queue – in front of a cinema, for instance. We all hate the Nazis as well. Who doesn't? But, as I pointed out earlier, we don't kill innocent people. I wonder how I would have behaved during the war, during the occupation of *my* native country, had I been born 40 years earlier. Would I have been able to kill the Nazis in the streets? One kills enemies rather easily if one serves in the army. But what do ordinary citizens do? Do *they* kill their enemies whenever they have an opportunity to kill them without being killed in return? John Paul II did not, according to the film I saw recently.

Apparently Breivik saw the same film, for he says in his novel, 'For once, I don't understand the Pope. You may and must kill for the sake of peace and harmony. If you are threatened, you must retaliate instead of bothering about cheeks and love. I'll retaliate against the government with a bomb attack and a machine gun. I have a large sum of money at my disposal, and I know how to spend this money. I'll buy a farm, fertiliser and other things. And I won't hesitate a second when confronted with the problem of killing my fellow creatures. There will be no problem at all, frankly speaking. So I'll have nothing to confront – not even my fear, let alone my conscience.'

There's a curious dialogue in Breivik's book. Here it is:

THE POPE: You must love your neighbours, even if they are your enemies. You have no enemies because we are brothers.

FREUD: Why should I love my neighbours – or my enemies, for that matter? My love is something valuable to me which I ought not to throw away without reflection.

THE POPE: You don't throw your love away if you love your neighbour.

FREUD: Love imposes duties on me for whose fulfilment I must be ready to make sacrifices.

THE POPE: Why not make sacrifices? You should sacrifice your personal life for the sake of humanity. I have sacrificed my life for your sake.

FREUD: My neighbour deserves my love if he is so like me in important ways that I can love myself in him. And he deserves it if he is so much more perfect than myself that I can love my ideal of my own self in him.

THE POPE: You should see God's image in your neighbour. You should love your own God in your neighbour because it is the same God. So you are allowed to love yourself in him, in them. God is much more perfect than you are. You should love your ideal of your own self in both God and your neighbour.

FREUD: I have to love my neighbour if he is my friend's son, for the pain my friend would feel if any harm came to him would be my pain too – I should have to share it.

THE POPE: But your fellow creatures are your friends, all of them. Their sons and daughters are your sons and daughters.

FREUD: But if he is a stranger to me and if he cannot attract me by any worth of his own or any significance that he may already have acquired for my emotional life, it will be hard for me to love him.

THE POPE: It is not hard to love. Don't you love beautiful actresses? First you fall in love with them and then you turn your attention to ugly actresses. Why not transfer your love to them without giving up beautiful actresses? Why not love all of them? We are actors and actresses in God's divine comedy. Why shouldn't we love each other?

FREUD: Because I don't like actresses.

THE POPE: Really? Don't you love Marlene Dietrich?

FREUD: I should be wrong to love her, for my love is valued by all my own people as a sign of my favour. It would be unfair if I put a stranger on a par with them. Wouldn't their suffering arouse a deep sense of injustice in you?

THE POPE: We should be aware of the injustices of communist regimes.

FREUD: The quantity of love I've got is limited. My body is not infinite, is it? Where could I store the love you are talking about?

THE POPE: In your soul. Isn't it infinite? You could store the universal love I am talking about in your soul.

FREUD: And my love for beautiful actresses? Should it also be stored in my soul?

THE POPE: Squirrels store up nuts for the winter. Humans store up love.

Mostly inspired by *Civilisation and its Discontents*, Freud's answers demonstrate his love for his nearest and dearest – and even for their sons. Breivik was on the point of killing his own stepmother. 'She is intelligent, but that doesn't mean anything,' he writes in *My Manifesto*. 'Intelligent people are often more dangerous than idiots and fools. These don't know what to do and how to live properly. They have no ideas to fight for, no ideals, no dreams. When they do dream, they see money, yachts, food, wine and beautiful actresses. My stepmother is a traitor because she does have a lot of ideas. And her ideas are not mine. So she is my enemy and enemies should be treated like enemies, not like relatives. She is a willing participant in the indirect genocide of Norwegians through the continued Islamisation of Norway. I care for her a great deal. She might even think that I want to sleep with her. I don't want her, I swear. What a pity the Knights Templar are not around. I wouldn't hold it against them if she was executed during an attack.'

Breivik is already speaking about the Knights Templar. I'll postpone my treatment of the theme until next month: I'm not ready yet. I'm ready to speak about my mother and even about Breivik's stepmother, but the Knights Templar are a different kettle of fish. I haven't known them personally; nor have I seen them naked. Suppose you see your stepmother's naked body. Can you deduce from it the size of her brain? And what about

the soul? I wish I could see my mother's naked soul. I might fall in love with humanity if I saw it, if only for a few seconds.

9

Breivik might have learnt a lot from bin Laden. In 1994 the latter wrote: 'Perhaps everyone now realises what it means to neutralise a sophisticated air force by a cheap and primitive weapon like digging some caves in the mountains, and what it means to control heights and important passages with a number of good trenches. The weaker side militarily is always in need of digging.' There's no doubt that even on Uyota, let alone in Oslo, Breivik was weaker than his adversaries. Had there been one policeman on Uyota, he would have suffered an ignominious defeat after pulling out one of his guns.

He might have dug a number of holes to shoot pedestrians with impunity. Some of them would certainly have fallen in those holes. It's so much easier to kill those who fall and break their legs or other parts of their bodies. One day, the Prime Minister, too, would have been trapped.

Besides, Breivik should have set up a few training camps, instead of joining pusillanimous organisations whose aims were different from his, needless to say. Let us take al-Qaeda's al-Faruq Camp in Afghanistan. In the words of bin Laden's bodyguard, 'it was established on the basis of a clear military methodology, a military college where cadets passed through a number of stages and levels until they finally graduated at the command level, as military commanders capable of leading any jihadist action anywhere'. And Breivik just talked about his buddies instead of training them.

Breivik doesn't pay much attention to bin Laden and his destiny - which might be compared to his, at least to some extent. Some people would speak about them in the same breath, not taking into consideration their diametrically opposed views and lives. 'They're both murderers,' these people would say without taking the trouble to count their victims and evaluate the impact they might have on both young people and old age pensioners. If a woman saw bin Laden in the flesh, she would faint immediately. Women often faint at the sight of blood and the sight of bin Laden is tantamount to the sea of blood he created by means of his raids and bombs. 'I'm afraid I have to disagree with you on this issue,' writes Breivik. 'You may indeed faint upon seeing a small pool of blood. The *sea* of blood is different, though. Upon seeing it you might say, "The Red Sea at last. I've always dreamt of one day swimming in it."'

What would a man or a woman do when bumping into Breivik in Oslo or elsewhere? Fainting fits are excluded neither from the list of possibilities nor from that of casualties. You may run, of course - as long as your feet are willing to carry you out of Breivik's sight and mind. But his mind is much more omniscient than his sight: he *knows* where you're likely to hide from his bullets, even though his eyes cannot locate your body.

Luckily for you, he starts the massacre by chatting to a group of people who, oddly enough, don't recognise their murderer. With his classic Scandinavian looks, he doesn't attract any attention in the city where you're hiding from him. The people to whom he speaks *may* remember seeing his photographs in newspapers, but you forget faces rather quickly, especially if they look like other faces you see around you every day. Besides, these people think that Breivik is in a class of his own: there are no other Breiviks around them. And Breivik himself is behind bars where he is supposed to spend at least 21 years. So you don't expect to see him in the streets, on the boulevards of any European or American city.

His doppelgänger is chatting to the group of people you can see from where you're hiding from the bullets hidden in Breivik's guns. The guns are also hidden for the time being. Suddenly, without warning, Breivik's doppelgänger pulls several guns from his bag and opens fire, screaming: 'You will all die!' The people are surprised. 'He should have warned us,' they say to each other. 'He should have warned us of going to this area because it's full of serial killers.' They start to run. He shoots at them as they try to climb trees or dive into the water, hoping to swim to safety. They jump into the river that divides the city into two independent areas. Now they're on the left bank. By jumping into the river and swimming across it they hope to reach the right bank: they think there are no killers on the bank on which they pin their hopes. But several Breiviks are already waiting for them, their eyes and guns glinting in the sunlight – or in the moonlight, as the case may be. 'Oh, their glittering eyes,' say some people. 'Oh, their glittering guns,' say other people.

This is Breivik's sweetest dream, his dearest and nearest dream. He is in a prison cell, but his doppelgängers are at work, killing those he had no time to kill. They chat to the groups of people and pursue them through the city, through the country. They open fire and people fall out of trees and drown in rivers. Breiviks are everywhere except in the areas where only enemies could and should be found. The Breiviks find them and chat to them, saying they've come to save them. 'From whom?' ask the people.

'From Breivik.'

'But he's in prison.'

'He can walk through walls and fly over clouds. He's omnipresent.'

'He is not us,' answer the people. 'If he's omnipresent, he must be within us as well. But he is not. We'd never be able to kill as many people as he did.'

'If you kill just one person, you'll be Breivik,' says one of the Breiviks.

'We love our neighbours,' say the people. 'John Paul II is our ideal and we follow his precepts.'

'Are the Muslims also your neighbours?'

'John Paul II had nothing against the Muslims. He prayed for them. He would have prayed for Breivik as well.'

The Breiviks open fire; but one can't say they shoot without warning. They talked to these people, didn't they? They found out that these people had no wish to kill the Muslims and banish them from Europe, Norway and from the Earth. They said that Breivik could walk through walls and fly like a rocket. No one can say they issued no warning about the dangers of universal love.

But Breivik thinks this warning was unnecessary – a complete waste of time. 'Don't talk to these people,' he writes in his novel. 'Just pull your guns from your bags and open fire. They'll be much more impressed by your gunfire than by your words, by your fiery speeches. They have been lulled into a false sense of security by my arrest. They think I can't walk through the walls of the prison where they put me. Perhaps I can't. Why should I? My doppelgängers are well-chosen and well-advised. I can confidently rely on them to get the job done.'

He describes a few situations in which his doppelgängers faithfully follow in his footsteps. They walk around with their guns and look at their future victims. These are powerless and can barely lift their arms. 'Why should you lift your arms?' say their torturers. 'We'll kill you anyway. Why make superfluous efforts? We didn't say, "Hands up", did we? Calm yourself, calm yourself.' And they shoot them dead. There are people crying for help everywhere. 'We can help you', say the murderers. 'Can't you see we're dressed as policemen? The police

are supposed to help you, aren't they? So you can count on our help. Anyway, Breivik is in prison so you don't need our help after all.'

Again they open fire. As they shoot this group of people dead they notice a lot of children hiding in caves and on cliffs. The children dare not come out until the Breiviks tell them the person who was shooting has been taken. They come out at last and the Breiviks kill them one by one. Instead of hats, the Breiviks wear headsets that enable them to drown out the screams of their victims. Some of them listen to Bach's *Matthäus Passion*, others to the *Lord of the Rings*.

In his novel, Breivik praises *Lux Aeterna* by the British film composer Clint Mansell, formerly of the group Pop Will Eat Itself. He advises his successors to listen to this piece of music during the worldwide massacre. Some of them follow his advice, others prefer classical music. Some of them even listen to Verdi's *Requiem* that drowns out the screams as effectively as *Lux Aeterna*. 'I will put my iPod on max volume as a tool to suppress fear, if needed,' wrote Breivik. 'I might just put *Lux Aeterna* on repeat as it is an incredibly powerful song. I recommend the same *modus operandi* to my doppelgängers.'

But some of his doppelgängers disobey their master, their model, their ideal. 'We don't like this piece of music,' they say. 'Anyway, we prefer classical music. If we listen to this song, we'll be disgusted with music and our own conduct. We'll stop shooting and bungle our job. What counts is our job, not the music we listen to as we proceed to cleanse our thoughts and *their* hearts.' And they continue to shoot as if Bach and Verdi couldn't resound throughout the world without being accompanied by guns, machine guns and cannons.

After a while, the Muslims appear at last and the Breiviks aim their guns at them. 'You've already killed a lot of Christians,' say the Muslims. 'Why should you kill us without warning?'

'Can we kill you after warning you we're about to kill you?' ask the Breiviks.

'Let's wait and see,' answers the Muslims.

'Well, you've been warned,' say the Breiviks.

'You have to give us a *written* warning,' say the Muslims. 'You should play by the rules laid out in the Koran and the hadith. Your enemy should be warned.'

'Why?' ask the Breiviks.

'Because your enemy should be given a chance to convert to Islam.'

'But you're Muslims, aren't you? That's why we're about to kill you. And now we shall start killing you.' And they kill the Muslims.

As everybody knows, the 9/11 attack was a success in terms of casualties, economic cost, property destruction and psychological impact – from the Islamists' point of view. But bin Laden was criticised for this success because he hadn't given the Americans a chance to convert to Islam. 'If the foe tends towards peace, so must Muslims,' said the Islamists. 'By no means should we forget this enmity between us and the infidels,' said bin Laden. 'You know what enmity I'm speaking about. Anyway the Americans will never convert to Islam en masse. There is no point postponing the event just because the weather forecast is bad.' But the weather was fine and the 9/11 attack took place, shaking the world even more than the Russian Revolution.

This is the first parallel I draw between Breivik and bin Laden: they attack without warning. The second parallel I'd like to enlarge upon concerns their poetical output. Indeed both criminals wrote a lot of poems the beauty of which lies mostly in their aggressiveness. Bin Laden's most famous poem runs thus:

*All Muslims await another Salahuddin Ayubi,
Who shall come and liberate this sacred country from
Christians' and Jews' subjugation.*

*I envision you all as Salahuddin Ayubi himself,
Wielding his all-conquering sword.
His sword drips with the blood of infidels.*

*I envision Salahuddin Ayubi coming out of the clouds,
And in our hearts and minds is recreated the remembrance
Of the battles of the Prophet Muhammad.*

Breivik's poems aren't famous yet because nowadays people don't care about poetry. In one of the last chapters of his book, Breivik paints a gloomy picture of the future. He leaves alone the Muslims who continue to invade his native country and the Earth in general. One may ask, 'What will he do without the Muslims? Will he kill all the members of the Communist Party?' Oddly enough, Breivik forgets about the Communist Party as well – at least there are no Communists in the last part of his book. Instead, he devotes his time and energy to poetry and to the people whose minds are elsewhere: they can't recite his poems by heart. So he kills them, sparing only those who admire his poetical talent and skill. 'My poems should become famous,' he writes in the last chapter. 'Only when they are recognised and recited by everybody will I stop shooting.'

Here is one of his longest poems:

*They hid under bunk beds, behind rocks
And in cabins. Dressed as a police officer,
I beckoned the youths to me,
Promising them safety.*

*What do they want this safety for?
To give birth to children and bring them up.
They don't care about the world.
I'll have to kill their children too.*

*Don't they understand that the world comes first?
If there's no world worthy of notice,
They'll give birth to stillborn children only.
Why are they so stubborn and blind?*

*My light is so bright they have to cover their eyes.
They can't see anything so I dim my light.
In the twilight, in the town square,*

They can see me standing on a pedestal.

Do they really see me? If they did

The world would be different. It is not.

It is still the same. So I kill them

And their children, their grandchildren.

Breivik also provides a comment on this poem. ‘I shouldn’t dim my light. Let them become blind! Sometimes the blind see much more than those who can see and walk in the streets without guide dogs. What *can* they see? It is better to ask what they *cannot* see. They can’t see that the world is in complete chaos. Ever since I walked out and stopped killing them, the world has been in a state of total chaos. Total, complete, utter. These are the words one should utter when talking about today’s world.’

In one of the last chapters of his book, Breivik speaks at last about bin Laden. Alas, he mostly repeats what *other* people say about the Islamists’ hero, their Saladin of sorts. ‘They shot him in the left eye,’ he writes. ‘Why didn’t they shoot him in the right eye as well? They carried out a “double tap”, shooting him again – in the chest, this time. I’ll also carry out double and triple taps to make sure all of them died. One of his wives was used as a human shield as he pulled her towards his body and hid behind her. Coward! Coward! Coward! He blasted away with an AK47 assault rifle. My rifle is much better. He should have updated his rifles.’

So he repeats what many papers said about how bin Laden had been killed. But some of these papers backtrack on what they said about bin Laden’s death. They say bin Laden was *not* armed after all, so the Americans didn’t have to kill him outright. Nor was he cowering behind his wife. Actually he was about to welcome his guests: he was hospitable to anyone who passed through. He was about to offer them tea; and yet he must have known that his guests were American and not English. Perhaps he said to himself, ‘I know that the English drink a lot of tea. But all English-speaking people must like tea. Their love for tea must have *something* to do with their language. The English language must be *somehow* linked to tea. Foreign children who start learning English ask their mothers to bring them teapots and milk jugs. Do I have enough milk for my visitors? I should ask one of my wives to open the fridge.’

Breivik doesn’t backtrack on the statement I quoted some minutes ago. Instead, he repeats once again, ‘Coward! Coward! Coward! He hid behind his wives. He took no part in battles. He had no guts to become a suicide bomber. He sent a few planes to the United States. He was *not* one of the pilots.’

It is true that bin Laden didn’t pilot the planes during the 9/11 attack. But he took part in several battles and was wounded at Jalalabad. ‘The physical bravery and leadership skill he displayed there, and earlier at Jaji,’ writes Michael Scheuer, ‘earned him the respect and affection of many Afghan commanders in Nangarhar Province.’ But Breivik’s library doesn’t display Michael Scheuer’s book on Osama bin Laden: Breivik must have thought it was beneath his dignity to buy a book on his rival. He, however, bought a few newspapers in which his rival’s death was described in minute detail. He went so far as to rewrite this death – bin Laden’s capture – from *his* point of view: he wished to exclude *other* soldiers from this mission in order to accomplish the feat single-handedly or rather with the aid of his doppelgangers.

Let us compare the following excerpt from the *International Herald Tribune* (Wednesday, May 4) with Breivik’s account of bin Laden’s death.

The Seal team stormed into the compound – the raid awakened the group inside, one U.S. intelligence official said – and a firefight broke out. One man held an unidentified woman living there as a shield while firing at the Americans. Both were killed. Two more men died as well, and two women were wounded. The U.S. authorities later determined that one of the slain men was bin Laden’s son and the other two were the courier and his brother. The commandos found bin Laden on the third floor, wearing the outfit known as shalwar kameez, and officials said he resisted before he was shot above the left eye near the end of the 40-minute raid.

I killed bin Laden on September 12, 2011. I didn’t have to search for him because I knew everything about his whereabouts. My army was put on full alert on September 1, 2011, and my doppelgängers followed bin Laden with their eyes. He hated the way we watched his every move but could do nothing about it. One may wonder why we didn’t kill him before the 9/11 attack. The answer is very simple: we hoped to open people’s eyes. We knew that Christian eyes were shut and that the only way to open them was to destroy a few symbols of western power. We were reluctant to mount this salvage operation ourselves. So we waited for bin Laden to take action that was to spur western powers into action.

We stormed into his compound and found an army inside. I wasn’t surprised: I knew that bin Laden was guarded by a ragtag group of soldiers. So we killed these soldiers one by one. They would raise their rifles and drop them immediately. Their corpses were strewn all over the floor. They were also strewn around the garden that we had crossed before entering the compound. Their corpses also covered the roof of the compound as if to protect it from rain or bombs. There were many female shields around and we used our swords as we fought their users. I got the feeling that the whole compound was overrun with policemen who held up their riot shields against flying rocks and bricks. But we carried no rocks, no bricks and no Molotov cocktails. We had our rifles, machine guns and cannons. So both the shields and their users dropped like flies.

We found bin Laden on the fifth floor, wearing armour made from overlapping bands of iron. It was an amazing suit of armour, I must admit. Luckily for us, we had a lot of grenades in our bags. These grenades were able to pierce the armour of tanks. On second thoughts, however, we decided not to use them. Bin Laden held several rifles in his hands, but we knew he wouldn’t use them either: he lacked the moral fibre to be a fighter and a leader. So we just came up to him and began to strip his armour off. This striptease lasted 40 minutes. Then we shot him in the left eye and in the right eye. His body looked like an old jacket riddled with holes.

Breivik thought that bin Laden was a coward and no amount of information, however reliable, could make him come round to his opponents’ ideas – to those of Michael Scheuer, in particular. He said again and again that bin Laden had never taken part in a suicide mission. ‘And what about you?’ asked his father. ‘Do you think that the massacre you’ve planned for many years has anything to do with what you call a “suicide mission”?’

‘Yes,’ answered Anders.

‘How so? Your victims will be unarmed.’

‘And what if they stone me to death? There are many rocks on Utoya.’

As we already know, Breivik hated Muslims, Communists and Nazis. Logically enough, he killed Hitler too. He killed him in the Hollywood-popularised bunker. One wonders why he hadn't killed him earlier – in the late Twenties, for instance. Be that as it may, he did kill Hitler at last; too late, alas.

For once, Hitler was outside his bunker. He fumbled around in his bag, looking for the key. The bunker was just in front of him, but he couldn't find the key and so the bunker remained locked. I seized this opportunity and isolated Hitler from his stooges and cronies. It was easy to take a gun out of my bag – I didn't even have to fumble for it – but I decided not to kill Hitler outright, which was contrary to my habits and to his victims' expectations. I decided to 'drive' him for a while, as it were. The golden rule in any war is to torture your enemy. What a pity I'll have no time to torture the members of the Labour Party I must kill on Utoya. But when I cornered Hitler in the basement, I had time on my hands and so I could torture him to my heart's content. The basement where he found himself was not his bunker; it was my wine cellar. I decided to drive Hitler to the brink of a nervous breakdown. Some of my former colleagues say they don't understand how this quiet, well-adjusted man could have been driven to this terrible deed. They speak about my persona in these terms. This quiet, well-adjusted man. Well, your stupidity drove me to the verge of despair. Is that clear?

All right, let's get back to Hitler. Of course we have time on our hands, but the torture should go on. So let's get back. I opened a bottle of wine, took a glass out of my bag and began to drink. 'Don't you want some wine?' I asked him.

'I don't drink alcohol,' he said. I seldom make mistakes, but nobody is perfect. Even I am imperfect sometimes. I won't tolerate imperfection in my own or anyone else's work. So I decided to drive him to the verge of despair by means of hunger.

'I suppose you eat from time to time,' I said.

'I'm not hungry,' he said.

'Let's wait and see,' I said.

We waited and waited. I saw his face and also his body. I didn't enjoy the sight so I wonder why I looked at him for several hours. I had lunch and dinner. I savoured every mouthful of the delicious dishes my servant had put on the makeshift dinner table. My meals and the way I enjoyed the food made his mouth water. I could see there was a lot of water in his mouth. But again I didn't enjoy the sight.

Two weeks later, Hitler began to get thinner. Needless to say, he hadn't eaten anything for two weeks. 'I'm on hunger strike,' he said several times in a row.

'Would you care for some caviar?' I said. I had already eaten two kilos of foie gras before his very eyes.

'No, thank you,' he said. His heroic behaviour was lost on me and he knew it. But even the uselessness of his undertaking didn't make him change his mind. So I changed mine. I decided not to 'drive' him any more. First I cracked my whip and lashed his emaciated body for two hours. Then I whipped out my gun and shot him dead.

For all my hatred of Hitler, I worship Wagner whose music and ideas the Nazis brashly hijacked, making the Israelis banish him from their opera houses and concert halls. But there is not the slightest degree of doubt that he is innocent of the Nazis' crimes and I am sure he would have ordered Siegfried to destroy their concentration camps, had he been born a hundred years later. Well, I will do Siegfried's job: I will

murder the dragons and thereby clear the path to Paradise on Earth. I will plunge my sword in them up to the hilt.

Breivik had even more problems with Lenin and Stalin who, naturally enough, were also on his list. First he intended to kill only Lenin because, according to *My Manifesto*, ‘Lenin was at the root of the problem. And we must get to the root of the problem.’ But for Lenin’s crazy ideas and diabolical energy, neither Stalin nor Hitler would ever have sprung into existence. Hitler was already killed by Breivik in the wine cellar, amid wine racks and empty bottles. It was therefore Lenin’s turn. Suddenly Breivik recalled a photograph he had seen many years ago. ‘On this photograph Lenin and Stalin are sitting side by side,’ he wrote. ‘Why not kill them together?’ Shortly afterwards, he learnt, however, that the photograph in question was a product of someone’s imagination and wicked mind. The Communist Party needed to show that Lenin was on quite friendly terms with Stalin. The Politburo moved quickly to quash rumours that Stalin had murdered Lenin. As a matter of fact, both antagonists had never sat together on a bench, their hands stroking each other. What could Breivik do? He had no alternative but to kill them separately.

He decided to kill Stalin first: chronological order shouldn’t *always* be followed to the letter. He got a visa and took an Aeroflot flight to Moscow. A taxi drove him to the Kremlin and, after killing a few guards, he walked through several walls, taking no notice of other guards who looked at him in astonishment. Paralysed with fear and indecision, they forgot about their rifles and machine guns. Even the famous cannon, which adorns the centre of the Russian Empire, was silent. For once, it might have showed its power and destructive force, in my opinion. It did not and Breivik continued his walk through the labyrinth he had found inside the Kremlin. He was heading for Stalin’s room: he *always* knew the whereabouts of his future victims.

Stalin was sitting in his room as if he had been waiting for Breivik with impatience. He wasn’t alone; Breivik was delighted to find that Lenin kept Stalin company. Lenin was dead, of course; it was his mummified body that Breivik saw by Stalin’s side. ‘Are you always together?’ he asked, staring at Stalin.

‘Not always. Sometimes the members of the Politburo don’t believe me and I have to say that Lenin agrees with my words. And then Lenin utters the same words – I was a ventriloquist in my youth. I worked in a circus.’

‘Why did you leave the circus?’

‘I didn’t. The Soviet Union is just another circus. Do you think there’s anything else on Earth? Only circuses, only circuses.’

‘What about cemeteries?’

‘The Hereafter is also a circus. Don’t you think that Dante’s *Inferno* is a circus? And his *Paradiso*? What you do is also a circus. You buy fertiliser and make bombs. You hire vans and run from them as your bombs explode. You run and stalk your victims. They run and hide from you. They even hide under their friends’ corpses. We cannot choose but die. Yet people are surprised when someone is killed. What does it matter *when* you die? Sooner or later you’ll go to another circus. People seem to forget that. You kill a million people. And people say, “We’re deeply saddened and shocked by the tragic loss of life of so many people.” And they drag you to some court or other. They call it a “crime against humanity”. They say, “It’s now important that we stand together and we support each other and we don’t let fear conquer us.” As if they could forget the fear of death.’

Breivik spared Stalin’s life.

My childhood is so distant I'm inclined to bring it to light. No fresh evidence, no old facts – just a blur where some contours or other struggle for life, as if life was worth living. Again I see my mother, and Freud talks about his mother's nakedness. I don't think your childhood is influential in shaping your mature life. So many things happen in the course of your so-called life that you can't recall anything clearly. And what you do recall doesn't move you any more.

A criminal blames his parents for practically every crime he perpetrates as he continues to live in their absence. They're dead and buried, but he commits his crimes in their names. At least their names come to the fore – sooner or later. 'His mother dotes on him and always talks about him,' says Breivik's neighbour. And Breivik writes about her, 'My mother has always doted on me instead of saying, "You shouldn't kill innocent people. You shouldn't kill anyone." But she just dotes on me so I can't help killing all those I come across as I walk through our cities and islands.'

Breivik loved violent video games and said his favourite TV show was *Dexter*, the popular HBO drama about a serial killer who murders evil people. But his mother continued to dote on him instead of saying, 'You shouldn't become a serial killer. The serial killer you see on the screen deals with evil people only. But even evil people shouldn't be killed. Let God take care of them.'

Luckily for us, Breivik and I were spared our parents' amorous exploits. I wouldn't have killed my father if he had sexually abused my mother on my writing desk. But I might have lost interest in physics and that would have been far more painful than my incapacity to sleep with women and men.

I don't know why I'm incapable of sleeping with them. I could try of course because I haven't yet forgotten the saying 'no harm in trying'. Even if I have another memory lapse and this memory lapse coincides with this saying, I'll go on trying to think about human beings and their bodies. What's the use? I'm alone in my castle, and the grass on which I walk every morning invites me for a stroll as if it could walk with me arm in arm. So I walk on the grass and, by walking on it, I make love to its leaves. I don't even have to lie down on the grass to make love to it, strange as it may appear. I've got some very strange ideas about my grass – or any other grass, for that matter.

I haven't forgotten one young lady I'd give anything to forget; and yet I'm not in love with her. If I stop ringing her up, I hear my telephone all day long. Usually it is the other way round: your telephone hears you and listens to your voice, even if your voice isn't as beautiful as that of Amy Winehouse. 'I was just getting into the bath when the telephone rang,' I wrote in my diary. I write this sentence almost every day. I prefer to call her when I'm not in my bath to keep my life free from outside interference. Recently I went with her to Brittany because she had asked me one day to drive her to the nearest beach. So we went to Brittany. Brittany is closer to my chateau than the Pacific.

Only my mother can make me keenly aware of what treasures are hidden inside women's clothes. When I look at Dana, at *her* nakedness, I say to myself I can live without it. And yet I answer her phone calls; what's more, I ring her up myself even when I don't have to ring her up. Last night I *had* to ring her up because in a few days' time we're going to Switzerland. I don't know why I feel duty bound to meet her twice a year – for summer and winter holidays. We don't always know why we commit suicide without dying, which is the worst variety of suicide. I, for one, am unable to explain this phenomenon. In Dana's company I commit suicide every

day and then I talk to her as if nothing had happened, as if I was still alive and kicking. I *am* alive and kicking, as a matter of fact.

Shall I start at the beginning of our relationship? Or is it better to pay another tribute to Orson Welles' 'rosebud'? I'd rather speak about Amy Winehouse, I say to myself. Never mind what I say to myself: it's what I say to *others* that counts, according to philosophers. All right. So I ask myself the following question: 'What could I say about a woman whose very existence I was unaware of only a month ago?' When she was in the vale of tears, I could have met her in London – or in some valley, for that matter. We might have talked about a 'cloud that floats on high o'er vales and hills'. And yet I'm sure she would never have agreed to meet me, judging from the looks of those she did meet in her lifetime. I'm relatively young but not handsome; I'm neither a rock star nor a rugby player.

Once upon a time, Dana bit me so hard that it drew blood. I don't remember when it happened, but it was weeks before my bruises went away. There were two bruises, if I remember rightly. Amy Winehouse never bit me. Had she done anything of the sort, I would have preserved my wounds, now and then showing them to her fans.

'Did Amy ever bite you?' I ask them.

'Never,' says Bailey. 'Amy was a wild card, obviously, but she was a generous, soulful person. She was never one of those drinkers where they pick up a bottle and it's like they're wielding it like a knife – at you, or themselves. The only person Amy ever harmed was herself.'

'How?' I ask him. 'Were her arms black and blue?'

'She showed me her first tattoo,' says Dan Cairns. 'A red and blue smudge on her lower back.'

Dana bit me because she was dissatisfied with my conduct. She might have bitten me on a whim, without being provoked into the fight. She might have told herself, 'He hasn't done anything yet. But he's as unpredictable as the weather: one minute it's blue skies and the next minute it's pouring down. So I'd better bite him because prevention is better than cure.' This time, however, she *was* provoked into the fight – according to *her*. I was fast asleep and she began stroking my back as if determined to make me spend a sleepless night. I did all I could to prevent her from achieving her objective. She continued to stroke my back, taking no notice of my manoeuvres. I shout a lot but I don't think I've ever been physically violent towards her. So I shouted and she bit my right arm. I shouted again and she bit my arm once more. I don't remember how the third bruise made its appearance on my skin.

I'm sure she bites me because I don't sleep with her. During our holidays we sleep in the same bed, but we never make love. 'You're impotent,' she says.

'Men sometimes suffer from impotence after a serious illness, but I'm not impotent,' I answer.

'Why don't we make love, then? Don't you like my body, my beauty?'

'Yes. But I love my mother.'

'Do you sleep with *her*?'

My mother's beauty haunts me whenever I look at another woman. I can't forget her body as if my memory was constantly taking an aptitude test. In other words, I'll be able to rely on my memory as long as I remember my mother's body.

'I'll never be impotent on condition that I remember my mother to my dying day,' I said to Dana.

'Have you often seen your mother naked?'

‘Please, don’t talk about my mother.’

‘It’s you who always talk about your mother. And now you also talk about Amy Winehouse.’

‘I can’t help loving her songs.’

‘And her face, her body. Why do you watch her DVDs? Just listen to her recordings.’ And she bit my arm again.

Once I was watching her DVD in Dana’s presence. She walked into my room and stood in front of the screen where Amy was drinking another glass of gin or vodka. Slowly Dana began to undress, showing me her breasts, legs and the rest of her charming body. ‘Don’t you think I’m more beautiful than Amy?’

‘Amy wasn’t really beautiful,’ I said.

‘So you love her voice. Don’t you think I can sing too?’

She sang a French song; I could no longer hear Amy’s voice. Once again she asked me why I didn’t sleep with her.

Why don’t I sleep with her? Because she is different from my mother, my college friend, my thoughts? I don’t live with my thoughts. I may sleep with them during my sleepless nights, but I don’t live with *one* thought of mine. She wants me to marry her, even though I’ll never be able to become the father of her children, if any – a callous remark. She refuses to marry anyone, waiting for my acceptance and worship of her love. I worship other gods.

You went back to what you knew,

So far removed from all that we went through.

I listen to Amy and watch her conduct on the stage. During her last concert she flung the microphone into the fire; at least she thought it was something like the fire one sees and feels in Hell. This time, she was just singing and grasping the mike as if afraid it might fly away. So many things fly away and we are unable to keep them, to calm them down. No one succeeded in keeping Amy away from the edge of the cliff from which she eventually fell. Or did she fly away?

Far removed from all that we went through. No one bites me tonight and I’m determined never to allow Dana to harm me again either physically or psychologically: I’d hate to seek medical attention. I can’t say I’m *far* removed from all that we went through because we are going to Switzerland the day after tomorrow. And I have no idea what may happen on the road, at the hotel, on the lakeshore, in the woods around which I’m planning to wander. Will I wander in her company? Far removed, far removed, far removed. It is much easier to live with a dead woman.

‘Osama once told his sons that he only saw his father five times, and the bulk of the scholarship on this issue supports this. Steve Coll’s work, for example, argues that Osama hardly knew his father, and bin Laden’s late brother-in-law Muhammad Jamal Khalifah recalled that he “was not with his father very much”.’ And yet bin Laden’s father influenced his son a lot. So did my father; and yet I saw him only 20 times. Sometimes you live all your love with your mother and your father. They make love before your very eyes, on your own bed. And you just don’t pay attention to them as if you were born in some shop or in a field. A cow might be your mother,

for all you know. And sometimes you hear and see your *dead* parents; they guide you through all intricate problems.

‘What made the greatest impression on Osama,’ writes Scheuer, ‘was his father’s piety. Muhammad bin Laden was a conservative Muslim who raised his children in the Wahhabite tradition, which advocated piety and austerity. To his children, he stressed frugality, hard work, piety, and self-reliance.’ Bin Laden was austere and pious. He was a tall, austere, forbidding figure. His compound was also austere and to some extent pious.

I don’t think I am pious; I do believe in God to some extent. That won’t do, I’m told: either you love God with all your heart or you leave Him alone. Breivik speaks about John Paul II who inspires him a lot as he plans his massacre; and yet he knows that the Pope and the massacre he has in mind are incompatible. But Breivik needs to have God on his side, otherwise he’ll have no strength to kill his neighbours. He needs God’s moral support. And he needs the Pope’s support to believe in God; he needs an example, for his father is too far away.

He writes: ‘In the Old Testament, God ordered massacres because this was the only way to survive and the Jews knew that. There would have been no Jews today, if their ancestors hadn’t destroyed their neighbours and their neighbours’ neighbours. They did and their descendants live and prosper. What would *we* have done without the Jews? It is my instinct for survival that kills the undesirables.’

Breivik’s mother is pious. Apparently she sat in a café when her son began his rampage. ‘She was sitting there for around two or three hours,’ said a waiter. ‘People feel very sad for this woman because everyone knows her and she’s friendly. She was praying for her son. She was praying out loud. She hoped God would forgive her son. When someone told her God would never forgive him, she burst into tears. I could hear her sobs even from the kitchen.’

But Breivik didn’t rely on his mother’s help in religious matters. He needed a higher authority and found John Paul II. ‘He said that God walks by everybody’s side,’ he writes. ‘I can hear God’s footsteps. God is my doppelgänger, my only doppelgänger. This is my monotheism.’

Anyone writing about Osama notes the close relationship between him and his mother, Allia, as well as Allia’s stout defence of her eldest son. His half-brother Ahmad Muhammad al-Attas has said that Osama adored his mother. ‘First comes God and then his mother.’ Allia had a profound impact on his religious faith. ‘I tried to instil in Osama the fear and love of God, respect and love for his family, neighbours and teachers. I didn’t need to do much work on that.’

Michael Scheuer, *Osama bin Laden*

Breivik’s mother did her best to instil in her son the fear and love of God. But her son didn’t respect her and consequently turned a deaf ear to her lectures. Had he taken notice of what his mother was saying, he might have fallen in love not only with God, but also with his neighbours who yearned for his love so as not to get killed. And yet you often kill those you love.

I don’t think my mother believes in God. Perhaps she does, but I have never broached any religious subject in her presence: I didn’t have to waste our time on that. My mother can teach me love for women or hatred of women; she isn’t likely to instil in her son the fear and love of God.

Have I really become impotent? Freud says that at some point he renounced love – as Alberich did in Wagner’s *Ring*. He thought that all his energy should be directed towards science, towards the discovery of our

inner nature. I've never wished to sublimate my sexual impulses into science or art. Let them remain where they are, all the more since they've never done anyone any harm. Perhaps Freud should have followed my example.

Dana and I are in my car and we are all moving in the direction of Switzerland where I'll undergo yet another test to prove to myself (and to Dana) that I'm capable of doing something when left alone with a woman. Of course I kiss Dana now and then; she even says I should kiss her private parts. If she says so, it might mean that I'm capable of doing that too. But I never do that because I'm opposed to private parts in any shape or form. I'm even allergic to them; and yet I do have my private parts, which doesn't mean anything. I use them for private purposes and my private purposes have nothing to do with Dana's private parts.

Perhaps she bites me because she saw this procedure in some film or other. You bite a man and he drags you to the nearest bed where he kisses your private parts and uses his in an appropriate way. Be that as it may, I've never done anything of the sort; and I'm not ashamed to admit the fact because it is a fact and I make it a rule not to deny the truth. But are facts always synonymous with truths? We are on our way to Switzerland and it is a fact, in my opinion. At the same time, I'd like to be at home, in my bed; it is also a fact. Which one is nearer to Absolute Truth? In my head – and in my body, to some extent – I am at home, in my bed. But both my body and my head are in my car. What's more, they're not far from Dana, from *her* body. And I'm almost sure that in her thoughts she is *also* in my car, going to Switzerland where she hopes to taste my private parts at last.

She starts singing as if to make me forget Amy's voice. She might think that any voice, however ugly, makes one forget all other voices – as long as it sounds in proximity to one's ears. Unconsciously I switch on my memory – the part overloaded with Amy's songs. For all my efforts, however, I don't succeed in hearing *her* voice and even her drugs and death disappear from my horizon. I am conscious of Dana's voice only; what's more, I'm listening to it as if resolved to find it beautiful in the near future.

To escape from this siren of sorts, I fall back on the memories related to my mother. For the first time I *consciously* saw her at the age of four. I was told she was my mother and I had no alternative to believe those who had told me this truth. My mother stroked my face and kissed me without warning. She should have warned me because I hadn't been prepared for a sexual experience of any kind. Sure enough, it was my first sexual experience because I felt a tremor of excitement inside my body and even on the surface of my private parts.

At the age of six I began to long for my mother's legs. Every time she came I saw only the nether half of them: my mother disliked miniskirts. And she never wore tight trousers, which might have allowed me to guess the contours of their upper half. I think that just *one* contour would have been enough to trigger off an avalanche of sexual impulses. I was dreaming about miniskirts, but since my mother's visits continued to dash my hopes I switched to the seashore. I was sure my mother would put on a bathing suit when brought to the Adriatic or the Atlantic. But who could possibly drive her to those legendary, longed-for beaches? Not my father – no doubt about that. My stepfather?

Actually it is his brother who drove us to Biarritz but, to my disappointment, the sun wasn't doing its job and the air remained rather cold so that my mother grimaced and went back to the hotel. On the next day, however, the air was rather warm and my mother came up to my expectations without knowing it. She took off her dress and I saw her body at last. Not her *naked* body, to be sure, but even her partial nakedness was apt to turn me into a Frenchman, if not into a Latin lover. Only later did I realise that I wouldn't be able to enjoy any other female body so much as I had enjoyed my mother's. I don't know what kind of complex it is, but a lot of men had the same experience in their childhood or teenage years.

Again I hear Dana's voice and realise that my stratagem didn't work for once. I also realise that I'm weary of talking about my mother because I don't see her and it is pointless to talk about those you don't meet on a regular basis and do no business with. Of course you can talk about the dead, but my mother is in the vale of tears – of *my* tears, I'm afraid. For want of anything better, I begin to talk to Dana; needless to say, our talk has nothing in common with the words we exchange with Amy. But the dead are often wrong when the living are obstinate; and Dana was obstinate and categorically refused to leave me alone.

On the eve of our departure she was drunk and I was not because I had to drive back home from the restaurant where we had celebrated the beginning of our holiday. Perhaps I'd better start with our dinner: there are too many flashbacks – or rosebuds, as I call them – in this novel already. So we were sitting in a Chinese restaurant. For some reason, Dana ordered two frogs or rather their legs. She didn't like her frogs and they became mine: for some reason, she wanted me to finish them. To comply with her wish, I decided to finish them completely, leaving nothing on the plate with the exception of a few tiny bones. In other words, I began to suck them.

'What are you doing?' she asked.

'I'm sucking the legs.'

'I see *what* you're doing. I'd like to know *why* you're doing that.'

'Because I like frogs.'

'Are you an aristocrat or not?'

'Your question is largely irrelevant to the present situation.'

'It is not. You behave like an old tramp.'

'What's wrong with being a tramp?'

'You're worse than a tramp. You're an old country bumpkin.'

'Are country bumpkins worse than tramps?'

'Our waiter thinks they are.'

'What does our waiter have to do with it?'

'He's looking at you.'

'It's not forbidden to look at me, if I'm not mistaken.'

'Doesn't the look of reproach on his face make you feel guilty?'

'Not in the least.'

'The degradation of being with you. You've made my life a misery.'

'Do you want me to put you out of your misery?'

I was on the point of cancelling our trip and she felt it no doubt. She always feels the approach of our farewell ceremony. On our way back, she opened the door of my car and looked at me as if asking permission to commit suicide. I didn't grant her permission to break one or both of her legs. So she endeavoured to break my car. I thought about Breivik and I knew *why* I thought about him.

Again I'm holding *The Sunday Times* I quoted at the beginning of the book. Why not look at the photographs printed in it? Why not read the captions? 'Andreas Bjelland sees Breivik walking calmly through the camp and escapes into the forest. He scrambles down a cliff on western shore and hides on a small ledge. He falls, but survives. At the same spot, another person falls onto rocks and dies.' I see what indeed looks like a rock; there are two boys on it. One is falling; the other is hanging on the rock.

Here is another caption: ‘Emma Martinovic, above, is hiding on the shore when she gets a text from a friend in the schoolhouse saying the gunman is outside. Martinovic and three others decide to swim for it. She swims out, turns and sees the gunman shooting. A swimmer is shot dead. Then Breivik aims at people still on shore. Martinovic sees one friend hit and his “head explode”. She survives.’

A beautiful brunette. She survived.

12

Fifteen years ago I would have been surprised to find the following text in a book on science:

Some scientists and philosophers have taken the view that science as a whole has experienced a Golden Age that will eventually draw to a close. Truly new discoveries will become harder and harder to make; minor variations will become tempting targets; deeper understanding will require greater and greater efforts of the imagination to achieve; and a wider grasp of the structure of systems of huge complexity will require more and more powerful computers. The seam of gold that is useful science may one day be mined out, leaving only a few nuggets to be uncovered here and there by ever-increasing effort. Of course, we may not realise that the mine is exhausted; no banner will appear in the sky to tell us that further fundamental advances will require a huge leap for Mankind, rather than a gradual shuffle. The demise of science may come not with a bang but a whimper. The financial cost of unearthing new knowledge may ultimately place too great a drain on scarce human resources. No potential benefit will outweigh the costs of investigation.

Impossibility, John D. Barrow

We are used to the word ‘progress’ and even when we go backwards we look at the future. Sometimes it’s better to take a step backwards to allow time to pass. But nobody and nothing should pass while we remain rooted to the spot, so we continue to move forward, looking at the future. Why not look sideways – at other times, at other worlds? Apparently there are many worlds around us; some are close, others distant. The same goes for time or times: there might be many of them in spite of our conviction that there’s one time only. In our opinion, this time moves towards the future which looks rosy on account of science and its exploits. Even *our* time, however, may not be moving towards roses, for there are poisonous mushrooms ahead of it – not only behind, in the past centuries, when science wasn’t as omnipotent as it is today.

Technological progress has been so rapid over the last few years. That’s what we think and repeat over and over again; we eventually convey this sentence to the future that may not agree with our conclusions. But we couldn’t care less about the future’s opinions: we are the masters of the world and time. And if someone dares to question this attitude of ours, we evoke God, His image and His desire to set us above animals, plants and space. We say that God set us above everything and everyone with the exception of Himself, His family and His celestial servants.

We think we’ll move forward forever as if there were no limits to our march which, in our opinion, has nothing in common with funeral marches. The Earth isn’t big enough for this march of ours and we are already looking at Mars, wondering whether our feet will be welcome there. Can we walk as far as Andromeda? But we renounce flying to Mars because this odyssey is too costly and it isn’t worth our while to settle on Mars, on this

inhospitable planet. Besides, Martians *may* exist after all, and if they do walk around their own planet, they're likely to kill us: they're all Breivik's disciples and doppelgängers. They also fear the Muslims and their ways.

Besides, we are already living in Paradise, according to some Americans and scientists. That is why technological and scientific marches no longer move as rapidly as in the 20th century. One might say someone applied the brakes and the whole machine came to a standstill. Not quite, not quite. But the movement is not the same: many people recognise it. We used to say, 'We have no brakes on our scientific and technological machines.' Nowadays we acknowledge their existence and this is the first step in our progress towards impossibility and immobility.

But, as I said earlier, we are already in Paradise and if you're in Paradise, you can't go any further, as one of Shakespeare heroes put it. 'I can't go any further, I can't go any further.' All right, there's nothing beyond Paradise: no planets, no galaxies. Even Andromeda is within it. There's no world elsewhere. At least Gunther Stent, who was a distinguished biologist, thought so. 'Stent thought that science was reaching the end of the road – but not because it was getting too expensive,' writes John D. Barrow. 'He thought that the great discoveries had been made and science was heading towards a future of baroque elaboration, subjectivism, and introspection already to be found in many of the creative arts. History teaches us that the ancients harked back to a mythical Golden Age when a privileged race of mortal men lived on Earth in a state of paradise.'

In short, Stent thought we were already in Paradise and so couldn't go any further. 'Stent did not see the end of science drawing nigh primarily because the readily soluble problems had dried up. Paradoxically, he saw the demise of science as a consequence of its own success in sustaining an unprecedented increase in living standards, social well-being, and security following the deprivations and horror of successive world wars.'

He himself wrote about it thus:

Breivik doesn't care about science, but he constantly dwells on our shortcomings and the downward trend he perceives in everyday life. To many people, Norway is a Paradise on Earth and Breivik thinks that it has been invaded by the Muslims and, generally speaking, by all those who don't deserve to live in it. After all, not everybody is destined for eternal bliss. 'God kicked Adam and Eve out of Paradise,' he writes in his book. 'Why can't I do my best to chase from the Earth all those who don't deserve to live? Let them live under our feet, in the bowels of the Earth. There is enough room for them at the centre of the Earth. And, contrary to Jules Verne's heroes, we'll never reach the centre of the Earth. We'll leave them alone in their prison.'

Breivik also cares about his successors – 'my disciples', as he calls them. 'The illness of our civilisation may have stunted their growth,' he writes. He doesn't *always* blame the Muslims for our failures and tragedies. At the end of his book, he quotes *The Sunday Times*:

Brain power finally runs out of puff. The human brain may have reached the limits of intelligence, with the laws of physics preventing us from becoming any smarter, studies suggest.

The research into the brain's structure and energy demands could mean that millions of years of human evolution, dominated by increases in brainpower, have hit a plateau.

If so, modern humans are not, as many assume, a staging post to a 'higher' species. Instead we are the cognitive peak of human evolution.

‘They think that we don’t have enough energy to develop our ideas,’ Breivik writes with anger. ‘They say, “Even small increases in brainpower would cause a sharp increase in energy demand.” They think our bodies will be too fat if we continue to develop our ideas. Well, I don’t mind to be overweight for the sake of humanity. But if you are an overweight man, you are too heavy and consequently cannot think lightly. Your thoughts are not as gracious as those of Zarathustra. In other words, you’ll never become a superman on account of your weight. What to do? Am I stupid because I am slim? What do I have to eat to become more intelligent? And what about my doppelgängers? I can see them walking through my cities, their bodies swaying uncertainly and trying hard to stay upright. At some point, they stop and can’t go any further. But there are cars in my cities, and these cars will carry my doppelgängers towards their goals. There are also planes in my cities, in my countries, on my planets. I’ll take care of those overweight bodies.’

And yet Breivik is worried. All his life he counted on the growth of the human brain. He thought that the weight of our brain wasn’t conducive to studying his projects, his salvage operations. ‘If your brain is overweight, it doesn’t mean you can’t walk properly,’ he writes to one of his followers. ‘Your head will be heavy and huge – like that of all great thinkers. This head will never harm your health. Don’t listen to those who say about you, “He’s always boasting. He’s such a big-head!” Just go on boasting. You are English, aren’t you?’

All of a sudden, he interrupts his discourse on the human brain and starts speaking to the English nation: ‘To all you good English men and women, just wanted to say that you’re a blessing to all in Europe. In these dark times all of Europe are looking to you in search of inspiration, courage and even hope that we might turn this evil trend with Islamisation all across our continent.’ Whenever carried away by his humanistic verve, Breivik forgets his English. But he never forgets the English who are his favourite doppelgängers. ‘Just wanted to say keep up the good work,’ he writes to the English Defence League (EDL).

‘Are you sure *your* work is good?’ answered a member of this league.

‘Yes, I’m sure my work is good,’ answered Breivik.

13

At some point Breivik quotes a letter written by Wujek, alias Karol Wojtyła or John Paul II, to one of his friends. The Pope enlarges upon the subject of marriage.

People like to think that Wujek would like to see everyone married. But I think this is a false picture. The most important problem is really something else. Everyone lives above all, for love. The ability to love authentically, not great intellectual capacity, constitutes the deepest part of a personality. It is no accident that the greatest commandment is to love. Authentic love leads us outside ourselves to affirming others: devoting oneself to the cause of man, to people, and, above all, to God. Marriage makes sense if it gives one the opportunity for such love, if it evokes the ability and necessity of such loving, if it draws one out of the shell of individualism (various kinds) and egocentrism.

Of course, Breivik takes this opportunity – his quoting the letter – to affirm that he entirely devotes himself to the cause of man, to humanity and even to God Himself. ‘I’m not married, am I?’ he writes. ‘If anyone needs proof of my genius as a spiritual and military leader, my celibacy is this proof. Otherwise I would have married a hundred times: there are many beautiful girls and boys in Oslo. But I am a servant of humanity and I simply have

to live alone and make my bombs. My love – John Paul calls it authentic – has led me outside myself, towards my fellow creatures some of whom should be killed for the sake of other fellow creatures of mine. Contrary to what John Paul thinks, however, I am both a great lover and a great intellectual.’ Bye-bye, Breivik.

One of my mother’s fondest dreams – assuming that she ever dreams about her son – speaks to her incessantly about my marriage, my wife and children. Perhaps she is eager to show I am *her* son and not someone else’s offspring. Her display of motherly feelings doesn’t really impress me; and yet I sent her Wujek’s letter to explain why I must live alone. Two days later she rang me up to say I was wrong. ‘You can love both your wife and humanity,’ she said.

‘But I can’t go outside if I am inside.’

‘How do you mean?’

‘I should affirm others, as John Paul puts it. My wife would be myself.’

‘Your *other* self,’ my mother pointed out.

When she comes home again – it’s no longer her home – I’ll show her Amy’s DVD, saying she is my future wife. My mother doesn’t know anything about this kind of music; she’ll believe me and approve my choice. I’m sure she’ll like Amy’s voice because one can’t be insensitive to its depth and truth. The Mothers one meets in Goethe’s *Faust* must have throaty voices.

I also showed this letter to Dana who insists on our getting married next month. She always says ‘next month’; I’ve heard this combination of words for three years already.

‘I’ve got a friend. He’s a great admirer of John Paul II,’ she said.

‘What does he admire in particular?’ I asked.

‘Everything, everything. And he says I should go to church every Sunday.’

‘Does he admire God too?’

‘He views his life as a spiritual journey towards a greater understanding of his faith.’

‘And he repeats this sentence so often you’ve memorised it.’

‘I don’t like his sermons very much, but he’s a nice fellow.’

‘Why don’t you marry him?’

‘He’s married already, but he said he might divorce his wife for my sake. But if he does divorce her, he’ll leave her everything, even his villa.’

‘But you’re not money-minded, are you?’

‘Of course not. Anyway your money is much older than his.’

In Brittany we went to a shop near the beach: she needed a new bathing suit. ‘But I’ll buy it myself,’ she said. So I didn’t touch my wallet which might have been surprised at my reluctance to open it. I wasn’t even looking at Dana so as not to interfere with her will and tastes. Suddenly she came up to me and said, ‘I’ll never forgive you.’

‘What have I done?’

‘You didn’t do what you *should* have done.’

‘What *should* I have done?’

‘You should have bought this bathing suit.’

‘But you said I shouldn’t interfere.’

‘I’d have given you the money back. The shop assistant was shocked. Did you notice how she looked at you?’

‘I wasn’t looking.’

‘You never look at what’s important.’

‘Is it important to look at shop assistants? You should look at what they sell.’

‘How stupid and primitive you are! She must despise you. She despises you for the way you treat me.’

‘Look at the ocean. Wouldn’t you rather look at the waves? And now you’ve got a new bathing suit.’

‘I’ll never put it on. You can have it if you wish.’

‘If you’d only stop nagging at me, I might actually marry you.’

I oughtn’t to have made this joke. She beamed with delight and said we should get married next month or even next week. Does she do all this on purpose? She never stops nagging at me as if bent on turning me into a superman: she can’t marry an ordinary man. Besides, there are women who always nag you about your diet because they’re truly in love with you. I suppose she can’t help displaying her love in this way, but this psychological discovery doesn’t make me happier or prouder.

Standing on the beach, I thought about Munch, about his clouds: the sky was dark and stormy. Munch has a knack of destroying human beings as if Breivik had given him a few private lessons. He obliterates them by emphasising the importance of nature which, in his pictures, dominates the human race as if to prove that God was wrong. Then suddenly a face explodes as if under the influence of Breivik’s bomb. You see a cry for help, an anguished cry – the only face you can see in Munch’s paintings.

I couldn’t see Dana’s face; yet she was standing in front of me in her new bathing suit. I saw her bathing suit, but her face was effaced so I thought about the anguished cries and the importance Munch attached to them. Contrary to my expectations, Dana didn’t say a word and I heard no cry. She behaved like a very placid child who slept all night and hardly ever cried. I even asked her if this was true. ‘Did you ever cry as a child?’

‘Of course I did. I was an unruly child.’

‘Did you bite your mother’s breasts whenever she fed you?’

‘I don’t remember. I must have bitten them quite often, but mummy doesn’t say anything about that.’

‘You bite my arms and breasts as if I was your mother.’

‘I love you. So you’re my mother, my father, my brother.’

We took a walk along a side street flanked by shops. It was my turn to buy something, but I needed nothing except an iced tea: I hadn’t drunk such a thing for many years. So I felt like buying it and in my hurry to do so I forgot that Dana was bound to take this opportunity to nag me about my diet. She didn’t miss the opportunity, which spoiled my pleasure and the whole evening.

I thought about the grass and my garden where I might have spent that evening and the next day. And the next month. Instead, I had to talk to Dana about this and that. I was talking to her about Munch, but she didn’t seem to listen to what I said. Her eyes explored the nearby trees and façades without paying attention to my face or at least to my body. I pointed out that Confucius had left a kingdom because of that. ‘Because of what?’ she asked.

‘The King glanced at some bird instead of listening to Confucius’ advice.’

‘But you’re not Confucius, are you? You’re not a bird either.’

‘At least I’m a human being, I suppose.’

‘There are too many people on this globe. You can’t look at *all* of them.’

‘You can look at *one* of them, I suppose.’

‘Do you know that the UN is investigating new methods of population control?’

‘Who told you that? Your new friend?’

‘He’s dead against this plan. “Human life is sacred,” he said.’

‘Does he really think so?’

That night I didn’t talk to her about Breivik, but again I thought about him. How many times have I thought about him since the massacre? Why should I count? You count neither your thoughts nor your victims. They come and go, and you watch this endless procession, crossing your arms, legs and fingers.

Stine Brandvik, left, is in the cafeteria when she finds a little boy alone whose father has been shot. In the chaos they encounter Breivik, but escape while he is reloading. They run into the woods, where Stine helps a wounded youth. She and the boy become separated, but both survive.

A group gathers at the schoolhouse and barricades inside, putting mattresses against windows and doors. Breivik fires on them, injuring at least one, but then moves on to easier targets in the open.

Prabhleen Kaur is outside when panic breaks out. She runs into a building and hides in a small room. Hearing more shots, she and others jump out of a window. One girl breaks her ankle. Kaur hides in woods and, using her mobile, calls her mother and tells her she loves her. She flees to the shore. Breivik arrives and starts shooting people around her. Kaur plays dead, lying on the legs of one body with two more on top of her. Her mobile rings. She dares not answer and plays dead until swimming out to a rescue boat.

You don’t count survivors either. Not many of them count anyway. John Paul survived too and they spoke about his survival everywhere: in newspapers, in the streets. He spoke about it too, saying he was saved by Mary because she had appeared in Fatima on the same day. According to him, one hand pulled a trigger, releasing two bullets that were led astray by another hand – that of the Blessed Virgin. One wonders, however, why those bullets were not led astray earlier: Mary’s hand is omnipotent enough to intervene on our behalf at any time, in any space. She didn’t touch the bullets shot by Breivik because, in her opinion, his victims didn’t deserve her intervention. Mary has a very busy schedule and can’t save everyone from death, let alone from wounds. But John Paul did deserve her attention and she ought to have touched the bullets earlier, altering their itineraries and thereby saving her favourite Pope. Or was she in Fatima that day, determined to celebrate the anniversary of her appearance on the spot?

All right. Let’s admit that she *was* busy that day. But she is omniscient, isn’t she? She must have foreseen what was about to happen. Why didn’t she put her foot down? And if omniscience isn’t one of her fortes, she ought to have asked her son about the situation. Actually her son ought to have told her about the forthcoming attempt, asking for her assistance. Suppose she thinks only about her son and her holy gifts are out of order now: you lose your abilities if you don’t keep your hand in. Why doesn’t she keep her hand in? So many people count

on her protection. So many people, say day in day out: 'I really need a job and I was hoping you might put in a good word for me with the president of the company.' There are other requests of course:

'They're going to murder me. Please cover my body with your hands. Could you embrace me please? I hope you don't mind my using you as a human shield. You're human after all, aren't you? Or are you a goddess now?'

'I have a dream. I'd like to become a great conductor. Could you please put your hand on my baton?'

'Please put \$10,000 in my purse.'

'I'd like to kill my rival, but I don't know how to handle revolvers. Could you please guide my bullets through the air?'

Why was John Paul II so elated at the good timing of the assassination attempt? Did he think that on any other day he wouldn't have survived it? Does the Blessed Virgin save the elect only once a year?

14

Breivik wrote insistently, 'There's little room for doubt about what's going on in the world.' But his father, for one, continued to cast doubt on his son's work and goodness. 'You often quote the Bible,' he said. 'Do you remember Saul?'

'Of course I remember him,' said the son.

'Do you know what happened to him?'

'I'll write about Saul to you,' said the son.

'Do you know Descartes?' asked the father.

'Of course,' answered the son. 'What do you take me for? He spoke about an evil spirit. He thought he might be wrong, but he wasn't because God couldn't lie to him or anybody else. He thought he might have been influenced by the evil spirit, but he thought and therefore he was. And the evil spirit was not. Only God was walking by his side.'

'Well, your account isn't very accurate,' said the father. 'I would reread Descartes, if I were you. And think about Saul.'

Breivik was thinking about Saul. 'I think about Saul, therefore I am,' he wrote, bursting into laughter. 'God chose Saul and he reigned over Israel – I remember that. Let me open the Bible and read it once again. Actually I don't have to open it because it is open. I don't have to look for it because it is always on my writing desk. The Bible will be in my bag during the massacre. I'll try to boost my ego by touching it from time to time. Here is the passage I've been looking for: "Now go and smite Amale, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." That's what God said to me as well and I'll obey His command. Saul did not hearken to God's words. "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and of the lambs and all that was good." And that was *not* good. I wouldn't have spared anything or anybody.'

In the next paragraph Breivik is surprised at finding that God may repent and make mistakes. 'Can God really make mistakes?' he writes. Breivik begins to doubt because even God makes mistakes; yet He is the Supreme Being about Whom everybody speaks with respect. Even those who don't believe in God take their hats off whenever God and His power are touched upon.

For all his self-assuredness, Breivik doesn't think he is omnipotent and omnipresent: he needs his English doppelgängers to help him triumph over the infidels. So he frowns and writes: 'I don't know what to think about the mistake made by God in connection with Saul. First God sends Samuel to anoint him and then he repents. I've never thought God might repent. "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." God welcomes the sinner who repents. What does He do when the sinner in question is Himself? Does He welcome Himself? Anyway, I don't think that God's mistakes are widely welcomed. Everybody suffers as a result of God's mistakes, errors and crimes. Does God commit crimes? What does He call "mistakes", I wonder?'

Breivik devotes a lot of time and space to his reflections on God's 'impotence', as he puts it. 'What shall I do without God's help?' he asks himself and finds no answer to this rhetorical question. Obviously he relies on God bearing the brunt of the massacre. He continues to write about Saul as if he had nothing else to do before his assault on the Norwegian paradise. Is it true that the bomb was already lying on the carpet in his study? Yes, the bomb was lying near his writing desk; he looked at it whenever his doubts were sapping him of his confidence. So he could permit himself to spend some time on Saul and his discomfiture. He also wasted his time on elucidating the mystery of God's impotence.

"And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." How can God speak about the people's rejection of His reign so calmly? Because He knows He'll punish them sooner or later? Why not punish them *immediately*? What was God waiting for? For Godot? He allows the people to have another king – a human king. The idea that God might not win was inconceivable to the early Christians. Of course God won in the end, but he lost a set, as a tennis player would put it.'

'You haven't yet written about Saul,' his father said to him at the end of his next visit.

'I'm writing about him,' said the son.

'What are you writing about him?'

'You'll get my email in due course, father. I wonder why God lost a set.'

'I beg your pardon?'

'I admit that He makes mistakes, otherwise we wouldn't have so many Muslims in this country.'

'What set are you talking about?'

'It was a game and God lost a set.'

'What game?'

'There are only games, father. History's a big game and God doesn't *always* win. I hope He won't lose on Utoya.'

'Do you think eternity is also a game?' asked the father.

'I don't think about eternity, not yet. All in good time. "A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance." For the moment, I'm laughing and dancing. I hope I'll never weep.'

Breivik goes on writing: 'Why does Samuel have to hearken to the *people's* voice? Why not listen to *God* all the time? Isn't that enough? Does anyone else speak on Earth? Is that what they call "free will"? Is that the Almighty's most precious gift? I'll always listen only to Him, whatever He says. I know what He is about to say. "Keep up the good work, keep up the good work." Am I right or wrong? Do I have to *interpret* these words? Aren't they crystal clear? Why do theologians comment on the Bible? Isn't the good book crystal clear? It is a

crystal ball where you can see the future of mankind. I, for one, see it rather clearly. Perhaps I am the only person who *really* sees it.'

Another nuance worries Breivik, making him spend a few sleepless nights; and yet he has to get as much rest as possible before embarking upon his legendary adventure. God's omniscience is beyond a shadow of a doubt; and yet God doesn't know *everything*, otherwise He couldn't learn *anything* while listening to an ordinary human. Why then does He listen to Samuel who talks about how the people reacted to the speech he made? God talked to Samuel about anointing a king in Israel, but Samuel decided to talk the Jews out of their intentions. God didn't attend their meeting; what's more, he didn't even *overhear* their conversation. So Samuel has no alternative but to put God in the picture about what happened during the meeting. 'And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord.'

'I know that God may forget His people for a while. But doesn't His unconscious keep a record of whatever happens in His absence? I'm sure it does, otherwise God wouldn't be able to govern the universe. Why do we always talk about His omniscience? We know about His memory lapses and yet we affirm that He is omniscient. Did we know anything about God's unconscious before Freud's discoveries? Freud didn't like God. He might have believed in Him, but he didn't like religion as such. Neither did Marx. Why do I like Freud and dislike Marx?'

You can't rely on the human or divine unconscious because even Freud was unable to define it, saying it is too mysterious and impenetrable. It may lie dormant for years and years before showing a few signs of life. The unconscious may be likened to a long-dormant volcano that erupts and destroys an innocent city. God is acquainted with Breivik's ideas, plans and good work. He even sees the bomb lying by the writing desk on which a computer tolerates the pressure of Breivik's fingers. But will God recall the bomb on the day of the massacre? The bomb can't explode if God doesn't recall it. Nor can Breivik kill anybody if God doesn't recall his rifle and bullets. God is even supposed to recall *Lux Aeterna* that Breivik listens to during his rampage. If God forgets the tune, Breivik won't be able to listen to it. He'll lose his nerve and bungle the salvage operation. Incidentally Breivik didn't lie when he told his future victims, 'I'll save you.' He was talking about a long-term salvation.

Breivik devotes a few chapters to Saul, using him as a substitute for his father to whom he talks now and then about God and other things. 'But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.' Breivik wonders how many spirits God has at His disposal. And of course he would like to know what kind of spirit dwells in *his* soul and body as he gears up for the massacre. It depends on what God thinks about his project, he says to himself.

'Why does God send us His evil spirits?' he writes in one of the chapters devoted or rather dedicated to Saul. 'Descartes thought that God was kind and generous. His God neither lied nor turned Satan. We can't be duped by God into believing that our reality is unreal and vice versa. I mean, we shouldn't believe that our dreams and other unreal things are real. I don't mind believing in the reality of my dreams. But an evil spirit sent by God can make me do something atrocious, and I'm not a born criminal. And I haven't become a criminal in the course of my life. So why should I commit a crime? Because God wants me to commit it? One might say that if I do commit a crime, I do the deed on my own initiative. Once again the notion of free will comes to the fore. But how can I resort to my free will if God's evil spirit acts in my body and mind? God's evil spirit must be vivacious and efficacious. Its experience and energy are a winning combination in business. What can a poor

mortal do in its presence? And the evil spirit I'm talking about – the Bible also talks about it – destroys you from the inside. It doesn't just stand by your side, looking at you now and then. If it is bent on undermining your confidence, it does it *physically, materially*. It doesn't just say, 'You're wrong, my dear.' It poisons your body from the inside, from your stomach and bowels. In other words, you have *already* swallowed a huge portion of arsenic.'

How to pacify the evil spirit sent by God or one of His angels? As usual, the right answer can be found in the Bible and Breivik is aware of the fact. So once again he opens the Bible and finds the answer he has been looking for during his sleepless nights. 'And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.' Upon reading the answer, Breivik asks himself another question: 'Where to find David?' Of course he can't rely on the former King of Israel who has been dead and buried for millennia. But Breivik is used to substitutions; and he is used to creating them. Freud may become his father in the twinkling of an eye.

So he embarks on yet another project that is supposed to play an important role in his life devoted to humanity and its salvation. First he decides to look for David, for *any* David, for he thinks that names govern our lives. 'If we knew the *real* name of God, we would be saved,' he writes. He calls one of his former friends, but David says he can't play the harp. 'What instrument *do* you play?' asks Breivik.

'I used to play the piano. I took a few lessons in my childhood. My mother played the piano. Do you know that my mother died last year?'

'Can you play *now*?'

'I don't know. I should try.'

'Could you try *right now*?'

'Okay.'

David plays a scale and two arpeggios. 'Play something else,' says Breivik. He doesn't feel anything in his stomach, in his bowels. And he knows that the evil spirit dwells in *those* parts of his body: his heart remains pure and untouched.

'What do you want me to play?' asks David.

'What *can* you play?'

'Some Czerny.'

'Play a nocturne,' says Breivik. He hears a few sounds and realises that the phone is not an appropriate instrument for placating evil spirits. You can't listen to nocturnes over the phone, he says to himself. He talks to himself for a while and hangs up rather rudely.

He leafs through a telephone directory, but even the Internet can't find him a harpist called David. The Internet always refers to David who played for Saul and pacified all the spirits that were at work in Saul's body. As soon as David touched his harp, the spirits said to each other, 'He's playing again. What shall we do?'

'I'm weary of running away.'

'So am I.'

'And I'm weary of *flying* away.'

'You can *walk* away. Why should you always fly?'

'And why should I become a nice fellow? I'm an *evil* spirit after all.'

'David wants us to become cute.'

‘He sent me one of those awful birthday cards with a cutesy kitten on it.’

‘We should become what we are. Don’t you remember the philosophers’ precept?’

‘Music is more powerful than philosophy.’

‘I’m already cute and generous to a fault.’

‘I’ll become an angel by the end of the piece.’

Thus they speak to each other, whenever David plays for them. He says to Saul, ‘Shall I play for you tonight?’ But actually he plays for the spirits because Saul has no ear for music. And the spirits are gifted musicians and dancers.

The more David plays, the cuter the spirits become. But Saul is irritated at David’s capacity to pacify his spirits: they never listen to *him*, their owner. He talks to them; he even sings them to sleep every night. Instead, he keeps them awake because he sings out of tune. ‘Your songs inject a huge quantity of evil in our veins,’ say the spirits and Saul stops and coughs as if he had to produce *some* sounds.

Breivik also coughs as if his influenza could chase away the evil spirit he nurtures in his bosom. He can’t help taking care of it; yet he does his utmost to do just the opposite. But opposites attract once more and the evil spirit prospers instead of rotting away. Breivik listens to harps and guitars and even touches their strings in the hope that the spirit will appreciate his goodwill gesture. But his evil spirit is stubborn and Breivik realises that even David wouldn’t have been able to pacify it, for all his art. ‘Our evil spirits are tougher than theirs,’ he writes in his *Diary*. ‘Their spirits were kind in comparison with ours. God couldn’t send unkind spirits to men. Now Satan is at the helm, not God.’

And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand.

And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul’s presence and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

Saul’s evil spirit is spoken of several times so Breivik multiplies it as if God had said to it: ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.’ Saul might have had only *one* evil spirit in his body and soul; Breivik harbours a multitude of them. They multiply, replenish his body and subdue it.

He wonders why Saul can’t kill David who dodges to avoid his javelin. David dodges once, twice, and Saul is disappointed, frustrated. So is his evil spirit whose towering rages are terrifying. ‘What if *they* dodge to avoid my bullets?’ Breivik writes in both his *Diary* and novel. ‘There will be many guitars on the island. They’ll play, dance and sing. And I’ll shoot them dead. But what if they don’t want to be shot dead? What if their evil spirits oppose and combat mine? A good spirit would say, “I think he wants to kill me. All right. I love him because I have to love my neighbours. And since I love them, I obey them to make them happy. He wants to kill me and I obey him. All right, I’m dead. Are you happy?” That’s what a good spirit would say and do to please an evil spirit. But an evil spirit doesn’t please anybody, not even another evil spirit, its kindred spirit. So it goes on living, stubbornly dodging all bullets in spite of my marksmanship. God bestowed upon Saul a great honour: he was the first King of Israel. Is it harder to aim a javelin and hit the target? Even the gods of the ancient Greeks were capable of that. Does God have no time to practise? I wonder how He plays the piano. Or did He *want* Saul to miss? Why didn’t He kill His servant instead of torturing him? I wouldn’t mind being killed by God.’

*And when Abigail saw David, she hasted and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,
And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be...*

David burns with anger and wants to kill all those who offended him some time ago. But a woman comes and says what she said after falling at his feet. So he doesn't kill anybody, saying to her:

*'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:
And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood...*

Nobody comes because Breivik's farm is a faraway place and its address is not listed in the telephone directory. But even if you *could* find it on the Internet, you wouldn't go to this farm to say: 'Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be...' Nor would you fall at Breivik's feet. Of course you *might* fall at his feet if he told you, 'If you don't fall at my feet, I'll kill 80 innocent people on Utoya.' In this case, you would fall at his feet, saying, 'Don't kill them please.' In this case, he might say: 'All right. If you fall at my feet once more, I won't kill them. *Einmal ist keinmal.*' Let's not forget that Breivik speaks German fluently.

So you fall at his feet once again. How many times could you fall at his feet to save your friends or fellow creatures? Suppose he says, 'You don't want me to kill 80 people. OK. So you have to fall at my feet 80 times.' Would you do that? Of course you would: you're inhabited by a *good* spirit. And your good spirit looks very athletic; so do all good spirits. They go to the gym twice a week. And some of them work in sports centres instructing their owners in the use of the gym equipment. So both the owners and their spirits can fall on their knees as many times as necessary to save humanity from extermination.

*And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.
Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.*

Needless to say, Breivik *was* looking for such a woman. He wrote about it thus: 'What's Endor? Is it a city, a village, a villa? Where is it? Of course this woman is no longer alive. But her descendants and successors might be there to welcome me and answer my questions. These traditions don't die easily because they're preserved by kings and their subjects, by prime ministers and ordinary employees. I'd like to ask this woman – or one of those women – whether my future deed is a good deed, being part of a good cause, or a bad deed. She must know how to destroy the spirit that gnaws on my bones like a vicious dog.'

Breivik thinks that a poem sounds more like an incantation than a short story. So he writes a poem dedicated to this woman:

I can't wait for you because I don't know where

*To wait for you. Will you wait for me?
 I hope you'll welcome me if I come and visit you in your
 Abode. What will you say? Don't say, 'Nice to meet
 You.' It's not nice to meet me, I can assure
 You. I hope your comments on my life will be
 Very apt and to the point.*

And suddenly Breivik forsakes Saul and the woman to whom he talked in distress. 'There are other people to whom *I* may turn,' he thinks and he is right for once. What a pity he wasn't right more often: he would have been spared an everlasting life in Hell and its suburbs. Judging from what he did on Utoya, space was under his control. No wonder he never wrote the following sentence: 'Space is spinning out of control.' Indeed he controlled every inch of the territory where the massacre took place; he controlled every single body lying or walking on this inch. The matter stood differently with time.

The point is that the people our hero finds at the end of his search – he is always looking for help – do not live in the 21st century. They *can* help him of course: books are our truthful and faithful servants. But a person you can consult in the flesh – you're in the flesh and so is this person – may help you far more efficiently than any book, be it the Good Book or the Bad Book. But our hero has to confront yet another difficulty: the people he respects and is willing to lean upon cannot *always* be found in the present. Where to find the knights templar, for instance? Of course people can say, 'Go and get in touch with freemasons. They're the knights you're looking for.' But it's not true, whatever they say and write on the spur of the moment.

In the first place, you can't just go and get in touch with freemasons: no one will welcome you in their lodges, in the Grand Lodge of France. Even if you know the address of the Lodge and have enough money for a drive in a taxi, you won't be able to penetrate the labyrinth that awaits the elect behind the door. And Breivik is not of their number – he is not a member of the club – because bombs and machine guns don't always grant you access to everything and everybody. So, naturally enough, he falls back on books, on those faithful assistants that patiently bear with bombs and their makers.

On the advice of the princes of God's army they vowed themselves to God's Temple under this rule: they would renounce the world, give up personal goods, free themselves to pursue chastity, and lead a communal life wearing a poor habit, only using weapons to defend the land against the attacks of the insurgent pagans when necessity demanded.

What to do with this text? Breivik took it seriously and did with it what he could as if trying to emulate the representatives of structuralism. He renounced the world and its pleasures, devoting his life to bombs and fertiliser. Women and men don't penetrate his farm as if it was the Grand Lodge of France. And yet they don't say to themselves, 'We can't go there because Breivik won't open the door.' I, for one, don't know if Breivik *would* have opened the door when seeing these visitors through the keyhole. But I do know that no one was tempted to embark upon this adventure because Breivik didn't *appeal* to anyone, having become a recluse many years before. If you're not acquainted with a human being, you don't pay him or her a visit – not even out of

curiosity. You have a very busy schedule and you visit only those you're acquainted with because you think these friends of yours can let you off the hook or give you a diploma you yearn for.

So Breivik is alone, on his own – on his farm or in his flat. Five years ago he renounced the world and its inhabitants in order to make several bombs and destroy several nuclear plants. At that point he thought he might destroy the whole of humanity with the aid of his doppelgängers and the English, the British – their leagues and lodges. On the advice of the princes of God's army whose voices he heard in his sleep or at his writing desk, he also gave up his personal goods with the exception of those he needed for his bomb and ambitions.

He needed euros for his ambitions and he made no secret of it as he wrote in his novel: 'I need money to kill all these people and shake the world.' How did he intend to shake it? But before shaking the world – it is not a phial of medicine, is it? – he should have got the lever with the aid of which Archimedes had intended to *raise* the world or the Earth. He might have *shaken* it with this lever, for all I know. Well, according to an American writer, the Russian Revolution shook the world that doesn't seem to have been shaken – by the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless, Breivik thought he *might* shake the world, provided he had enough money for such earthquakes.

So he wrote in his novel:

As far back as 2002 I launched a nine-year plan and started my own business. I know that five-year plans are associated with the Soviet Union and its failures, but I launched a nine-year plan and I was planning to destroy both Communists and Muslims. Why not launch a five-year plan if you can thereby destroy all communists? But my plan was to last nine years – for different reasons.

I dabbled unsuccessfully in the markets because the markets are unreliable. How could you dabble successfully when dealing with the markets? So I wasn't successful, I humbly admit it. It wouldn't harm me to admit I don't succeed round the clock. I give shelter to a group of spirits who meet to discuss things and criticise each other's work. I am one of these spirits – the chief spirit, so to speak. I criticise my work and that of other spirits, of other Breiviks.

I used nine credit cards and I should have multiplied their number because each Breivik must have a credit card of his or her own. Yes, there are women in our midst: I've never repudiated the feminine streak that adorns my nature, my very substance. This feminine streak may be responsible for my financial losses. Nevertheless, I'll never part with it because it enlivens my life and I need someone or something to enliven it, to make it less unbearable. All lives are unbearable, I suppose; and each of us takes drastic steps to reduce the quantity of boredom in it. I decided to make a bomb and kill a hundred people. Making bombs and killing more or less innocent people – no one is really innocent – carries you away from the Kingdom of Boredom.

By using nine credit cards I intended to fund the attack on the Parliament and on Utoya. I started a 'computer programming' business, E-Commerce Group, when I was working full-time at a customer services company. You can't make a bomb if you work full-time somewhere else – not on your farm, I mean. But I needed money and the procedure I chose wasn't the worst among the procedures I envisioned at the time. I didn't want to steal because I don't have this streak in my nature and my substance. You have to be a born thief to steal money and diamonds. I stole neither and I'm delighted to testify that this sin doesn't stain my reputation unfairly. My judges say that my record is stained with the blood of a

hundred innocent men and women. All right, I admit the killing and the massacre they speak about. But my record, my personal history isn't stained with stolen money and diamonds. Can many people boast about having no stains in their histories? Didn't Jesus speak about these stains when they wished to stone that prostitute to death?

A combination of a downturn in 2005-06 and 2m Norwegian krone lost on stock speculation meant that I was forced to file for bankruptcy. For a while I had to drop the bomb – not literally, alas. It's important to apply research in a practical way and not leave it on the shelf. So I didn't leave the bomb on the shelf; I just postponed the massacre indefinitely. I knew that sooner or later my blast would leave a lot of traces in the history of my country, if not in the history of the world. But I had to wait and patiently bear being bored. 'I'd lie low if I were you till the trouble passes,' one of my spirits said to me one night. So I was lying low and waiting for a miracle – for several million krone that would enable me to go on with my assault on humanity and its false values.

Let me set out how I devised 'an overview of various providers of credit' – I'm quoting my own diary. In those days my English wasn't yet up to the mark. Never mind: it's not with a language that you murder innocent people. Of course you can occasionally kill with a word, provided your victim is very sensitive to words and insults. No insult can kill your obedient servant because actions speak louder than words. And I'll speak very loudly on the D-Day; everyone will hear my voice.

I wished to avoid sending multiple credit card applications to the same organisation. I identified 25 cards but traced them back to 12 providers and in the end was successfully granted 9 cards. They gave me access to £26,000 in credit. (I prefer pounds to euros.) I needed £30,000 for armour and weapons, £100,000 for explosive materials, £20,000 for logistics, transport and lodgings and £140,000 for the compendium, for my historical novel.

On June 23 I paid the outstanding amount on my 9 cards to ensure I would have access to funds as I continued my preparations.

15

I am at home at last, but another rosebud or flashback is needed to explain why I am at home and what I am doing here. I am what I am and can't do otherwise: my destiny is guiding me of course, and to some extent I am my own destiny. Our holiday is over and sooner or later I was to come back and enjoy my garden: holidays don't last forever. Every holiday is a holiday on ice, as it were, and the snow usually melts by mid-March. But you're not talking about a holiday on snow, you may tell me. All right, you may prolong your holiday by another week or month – on a skating rink. You may even stay there forever. Will you call this stretch of time a holiday? Hardly. I don't know. Anyway, I am at home at last. We stayed in two hotels as long as we planned, according to our reservations. Dana had to go back to her office; I was longing to get back to my garden. So we left our hotels and drove back to France.

But we are not in Switzerland yet, if I remember rightly. We can't leave a country where we have never set foot. Of course I've been to Switzerland many times, but I'm speaking about the journey upon which I embarked in the company of my friend. I can hardly call her 'my girlfriend'; I'll just call her Dana. I've already done so many, many times.

So we were driving to Switzerland and, naturally enough, we felt hungry at some point. We couldn't eat two horses, needless to say. Even one horse would have been too huge for our stomachs. We just had to have lunch somewhere because at lunchtime people feel hungry and so they eat something unless they can't afford it. We could afford it and so I began to look for a suitable restaurant.

I found one and parked my car in front of it; there was nothing unusual about my actions. I said to Dana I would have a look at the menu and got out of the car. I headed for the menu, or rather for the front door where it could be found, as I presumed. I read the menu and said to myself, 'We'd better look for another place.' I had to say the same words to Dana so I set off on the return journey that wasn't really a journey: only a few steps separated me from my car. I expected it to wait patiently for its owner; to my surprise, however, it was utterly unable to disguise its impatience. It was shaking and shouting. And someone was banging on its doors from the inside. There was only Dana in the car and I didn't think for a moment that, during my short absence, she had been joined by her new friend. In short, I didn't think that two or more people were making love in my car, shouting and jumping up and down with excitement.

A few seconds later, I was able to look through the windows of my car – at close range. I saw Dana and her fists banging on two doors or rather on two windows. Had one of them been open, I would have been hurt by her fist or fists. I realised that the car had been locked for approximately 75 seconds. I opened it and saw Dana's grimaces and tears; again I didn't see her face. 'What's going on?' I asked.

'Can't you see?'

'What? Your tears?'

'Couldn't you hear me?'

'Not from where I stood. Besides, I was reading the menu.'

'You should have listened to my shouts.'

'Why did you shout?'

'Because I was locked in – as a punishment, I suppose.'

'A few seconds...'

'This went on for what seemed like an eternity. Don't you know I suffer from claustrophobia? I never travel on underground trains.'

'My car is not an underground train.'

'It was, I can assure you.'

'Is it still an underground train?' I said, hoping I would put her on a real train and thereby get rid of her. But no such luck.

'Now it's all right,' she said and we drove on.

She talked to me about our forthcoming marriage and also about her new friend who was head over heels in love with her. Such women love those who are in love with them, no matter how mediocre these men are; even their looks don't matter much under the circumstances. John Paul speaks about love and they seem to fall in love with each other in order to be nearer to the Vatican and to heaven. They come nearer and nearer to both only to find they're poles apart in personality and no pope will ever succeed in turning them into one body and one soul.

And then she said she betrayed me to find out how I would react to this event. I didn't curse her; nor did I slap her face because it was such a relief to hear that Dana had fallen in love with somebody else. I decided not

to show my joy and so I showed nothing as if the world had suddenly become a blank sheet of paper. You hold such a sheet and you don't know what to do with it. I don't feel like writing anything on it; even a short poem seems out of place. Why show this blank sheet of paper to anybody? Of course, you might show it to your mother or your bride, saying, 'I'll write a beautiful poem on this sheet of paper.' And they'll believe you; they won't question your words. But even they are unlikely to congratulate you and open a bottle of champagne to celebrate your laudable wish, unless you are suffering from a nervous breakdown and making a tremendous effort to get back on the rails.

Your bride may say, 'This is a beautiful sheet of paper. I'm sure your poem will also be beautiful.'

'Let's not count our chickens,' you may answer. 'Besides, no one *writes* poems today. Everyone uses computers.'

'But your handwriting is so beautiful. Could you *write* your poem on this sheet of paper? I don't need other presents.'

'I know that your birthday is next week,' you answer. 'I could print this poem for you, if you wish.'

'Do as *you* wish,' she says. 'I adore your poems anyway.'

'What about my body?' you ask.

'I adore your body too.'

'This weather depresses me,' you say.

'Never mind the weather,' she answers. 'Your poems are *so* beautiful. Even when the weather is fine, I still prefer your poems. Instead of going to the beach, I read them in our room.'

'I know, I know,' you say. 'But doesn't it depress you listening to the news these days?'

'No. I look at your face and read your poems. They make me happy.'

For once we didn't talk like that; and yet this fact didn't make me happy because I *was* depressed – not on account of the weather, though. I might have written a short poem to alleviate my boredom, but I had no paper in front me and my computer was on the back seat. I was too lazy to turn back, pick it up and switch it on. Besides, I was driving my car and I couldn't both drive and write. I might have composed a poem in my head and, to tell the truth, I was about to put all my energy into this project. But I needed to concentrate on the road, on our itinerary, that was different from any poem I had in mind: I was in no mood for writing about Swiss landscapes.

So I asked her about her new friend and their love. She said they had made love only once. 'I got out of bed very quickly,' she added. Apparently she didn't feel anything, but I was reluctant to believe the following statement of hers, 'I was thinking about you.' Why should she think about me in his arms? There are more appropriate situations for this kind of interior monologue. However, I didn't broach *this* subject that day, being in no mood for such subjects either.

So we drove on and on as if unable to do something else. We were paralysed in this car, and yet it moved on and I was holding the steering wheel. What's more, I carefully steered the car around the potholes. There were many potholes on the road that afternoon and I began to wonder why the Swiss didn't pay more attention to their cars and wellbeing. After all, you may damage your car and your health on account of these potholes.

And then I said to myself that the potholes I was thinking about were located in my head, not on the road. And my personal potholes were linked to Dana – no doubt about that. I had a lot of doubts that afternoon, but this particular doubt was not among them. We had a bumpy ride, so to speak, and I had no idea how long this ride might last. I hoped it wouldn't last forever, contrary to what Dana used to say. She never talked about a

bumpy ride, but she used the word 'forever' so often I felt it could be associated with any idea, any image. That afternoon, this word and the bumpy ride were coupled together.

Our exact whereabouts were a mystery: Dana isn't good at deciphering maps and road signs. And I was unable to decipher the landscape we were driving through. I got the feeling we weren't driving through it at all; it remained beyond our itinerary, our car and our intentions. Even the road seemed to be out of focus. It was either on the left or on the right – never in the middle or in front of us. And Dana was still talking about her new friend and their lovemaking. 'I was thinking about you,' she repeated as if resolved to boost my ego. She did boost it to some extent, but I wasn't sure how big my ego had become in the course of our conversation and that made me feel uneasy. It's the big unknowns that make us uneasy and I experienced many unknowns – big and small – in the course of our holiday. I have no idea whether you can *experience* the unknowns; I'm just speaking about my sensations and troubles.

Dana asked me if I had any intention of buying her a house. Her new friend – I've forgotten his name – was in the habit of buying houses for all his wives. And he was prepared to buy a flat for Dana. 'Why doesn't he wish to buy you a house?' I asked.

'I'd like to live in a castle like yours,' she said.

'Well, you should talk to him about that.'

'I'm talking to *you*,' she said.

'I can hear you,' I said.

'What do you think about that?'

'About your friend?'

'About your castle, your chateau.'

'I don't *think* about it. I *live* in it.'

'Can't we live there together?'

'We're together in this car. Isn't that enough?'

'It's not enough,' she said. 'I'd like to live with you forever.'

'But you're in love with this individual, aren't you?'

'I think I'm in love with you both. What a pity a woman can't marry two men. Men can marry as many women as they wish.'

'Even the Muslims can have only four wives,' I said.

Landscapes were over; they too were bored with our conversations. The hotel where we unpacked our suitcases seemed to be more patient and indulgent. Why didn't it give me a few lessons? I would have been far more patient and polite during our stay in it. Of course I was polite externally, but my anger and the swear words I uttered in my mind and even in my heart must have exhibited themselves on my face and in my gestures – if only occasionally. They might have spoiled *her* holiday, but I couldn't help it; all in all, I don't regret it. Why should I regret anything? Did Breivik regret anything? Should I learn *his* lessons?

The hotel was in a lovely location overlooking the lake which shall remain nameless: too many bad memories are attached to it. And I can't detach them from it, for all my efforts. Actually I'm unwilling to make any effort in this domain – in the domain of the hotel. It had a good restaurant, but I was loath to eat in her presence because she had a knack of spoiling my appetite by her inept remarks and looks of reproach. My appetite was spoiled throughout our holiday and I gave myself indigestion, for I continued to eat in her company.

‘She dived into the still water of the lake.’ I might have written this sentence in my diary, had I kept a diary during our stay in the hotel. I did not: I’m not very fond of diaries. She enjoyed diving into that water even when it wasn’t perfectly still. But she needed neither perfection nor stillness; she needed water and the movements she could make in it. She swam to and fro and I failed to admire the style of her swimming because she had no style to boast of – as far as I could judge. Of course I am a bad judge in these matters: I can’t swim and am loath to take swimming lessons. So I remained on the shore, reading one or two books while she continued to swim to and fro. ‘What a pity she can’t swim up and down,’ I said to myself. And I immediately corrected myself, ‘She should swim down and down.’

Well, here we are; or there we were, rather. One day a beautiful swan paid us a visit. Are all swans beautiful? Are all ducklings ugly? Dana was neither an ugly duckling nor a beautiful swan. She was something in between. Her eyes were black, but not to the point of making me sing the famous Russian song that Chaliapin sang so wonderfully. They were more or less oriental; yet neither of her parents was of Asiatic origin. I shouldn’t speak about her in the past tense, should I? (She is still with me – a part of my life.) I can speak like that about the hotel we stayed in. So, to some degree, I’m entitled to speak about her in the past tense.

She photographed the swan and the swan swam away without so much as a by-your-leave. She deplored its departure, but she didn’t burst into tears: she wasn’t hysterical to such an extent. She said, ‘What a pity! I’d like to take another photograph, many photographs.’

‘There are swans everywhere,’ I said. ‘And all of them are really beautiful.’

‘I don’t think so,’ she said.

‘You must be confusing them with ugly ducklings,’ I said.

‘I don’t think so,’ she repeated. What *was* she thinking about, I wonder?

Naturally enough, there were boats on the lake: our swan wasn’t its only occupant. Of course she wanted to see the entire lake, not just the part adjacent to the hotel. The boats looked invitingly in our direction, but I had no wish to accept their invitations. Why should I accept a boat’s invitation? Usually I don’t even accept human invitations. I realise that boats are more polite and compliant unless they sink after striking some rock or other. Nevertheless I didn’t accept any of these invitations and she boarded one of those contraptions on her own. I bought her a ticket and she waved her hand.

Several hours later, she returned to the hotel and my indigestion made its appearance once more. I wonder what it looks like inside my body. I’m not eager to see it: there are more pleasant sights in the world. But I wouldn’t mind having a look at it – out of curiosity. Curiosity may kill cats; it’s unlikely to kill me or Dana. Anyway, I never said to myself, ‘I wish curiosity could kill Dana.’ I’m not Breivik after all. I didn’t speak to her about Breivik yet. I didn’t yet broach *this* subject in her presence, which had no influence whatsoever on my train of thought where Breivik had pride of place.

At some point, Breivik speaks about his admiration for the novel everybody read three years ago. As usual, I am an exception to the rule. I began to read the novel, but was soon bored to the point of giving up my intention. I don’t know if I really *intended* to read it: I seldom, if ever, read bestsellers. ‘Count me out,’ I say to those who talk me into spending my money on this trash. ‘This book will divert your attention away from the seamy side of life,’ they say, pointing to the shelf where the book in question stands so proudly you’re tempted to knock it off

or throw it out of the window. 'Look, I don't want to get into a knock-down-drag-out fight with you over this, so let's forget it,' I say as I leave the bookshop and hail a taxi.

So I was reluctant to read *The Da Vinci Code* because I don't like bad literature and whenever I look for relaxation, I don't resort to such books that do their best to attract your attention and empty your purse. Everybody talks about suspense, but I don't think you can create this longed-for suspense by saying, 'If this secret is revealed to the world, humanity will perish.' But Breivik often takes his cue from such bestsellers, for he thinks that the feeling of mystery he is longing to create will ensure him a place in history. A lot of people are supposed to spend their time on his baffling codes, on the signs he will paint on corpses and on their clothes strewn around museums and palaces.

Now I'm reading this novel at last; and I *am* bored to death. For the life of me, I can't see why people spend days and night on this book, on its codes, on the brain-food that it supposedly provides. Shakespeare was right: music is a brain-food, a heart-food, a soul-food. What kind of food is this book? There are almost 600 pages in it. I've read one-sixth of the novel and the question I ask myself remains unanswered. Why do they read it? Massage should produce a state of relaxation. What kind of relaxation does this book produce, I wonder? Is it a sort of brain-massage? A brain-food or a brain-massage? Or a message of some sort? What kind of message? Let's wait and see. I'm almost sure I'll see nothing at all.

Breivik says he wasn't alone on Utoya during the attack and the massacre that ensued, shaking Norway and the whole world. 'Where was your accomplice?' says the judge.

'Many of my victims were hiding on the island. My accomplice was hiding too. Isn't anybody entitled to hide from bullets?'

'But your accomplice wasn't hiding from bullets, was he?'

'Why do you think he was a man? Do you think I am homosexual?'

'So there was a woman with you.'

'I had several accomplices on the island and in the van.'

'Our cameras didn't film them,' says a policeman.

'Your cameras are short-sighted.'

'Where are you accomplices now?' says the judge.

'Can you see that dog over there? What is he doing? He's digging a hole to hide his bone in. So am I. I'm digging holes to hide my friends in.'

'How many holes have you dug?'

'There are holes everywhere. I'm very good at digging.'

'Do all your accomplices live in those holes?'

'Some of them have to lie low. Others are prepared for massacres.'

The details of the future massacres remain cloaked in mystery. And Breivik hopes that this mystery is on a par with the codes of his favourite author. 'There are two cells in our organisation,' he writes. "'Let's multiply them," I said to myself one day. And I multiplied them. Can you count my cells? Let's count out loud from one to ten. O.K. Now let's count out loud from ten to twenty.'

All of a sudden, Breivik quotes *La Chanson de Roland*: 'The archbishop said: "You're doing well. A knight who bears arms and sits a horse ought to act like this. He should be fierce and strong in battle, otherwise he's not worth four pence and should be a monk in one of those churches and pray all day for our sins.'" And he

comments on this excerpt thus: ‘The archbishop watches Roland cut the Muslims to pieces. Roland is one of my accomplices, my favourite doppelgänger. The more Rolands we have in our midst, the sooner we’ll get rid of the Muslims. Actually Rolands can also deal with the Communists. How many Rolands do I need in 2011? I think that 2000 Rolands will do for the time being.’

And then he quotes *Tractatus de locis et statu sanctae terrae*:

As one person, they strongly seek out the units and wings of the battle, they never dare to give way, they either completely break up the enemy or they die. In returning from the battle they are the last and they go behind the rest of the crowd, looking after all the rest and protecting them. But if any of them turns their back on the enemy or does not act with sufficient courage, or bears weapons against Christians, he is severely disciplined. The white mantle with the cross which is the sign of knighthood is ignominiously taken away and he is thrown out of the community and eats for a year on the floor without a napkin, and if the dogs trouble him he is not allowed to complain. After the year, if the Master and Brothers judge that he has paid for his crime, his original knighthood is returned to him with all honour.

‘That’s how I ought to have punished Gregory,’ he writes. ‘Why doesn’t he want to kill the Muslims? I get the feeling he doesn’t want to kill *anybody*. Whenever I talk to him about massacres, he quotes John Paul II who refused to kill the Nazis, thinking that sooner or later God would kill them and their sympathisers. He was right, but so many lives might have been spared if these devout Christians hadn’t taken a principled stand against murder. You should kill for the sake of happiness and wellbeing. Let’s count from one to ten. You say to yourself, “I’ll kill one man and thanks to this murder ten women will live and prosper.” The best action or decision in a particular situation is the one that brings most advantages to the most people. Isn’t that crystal clear? And we must take action to deal with the problem *before* it spreads all over the Earth. Don’t Muslims kill our people? Every Muslim kills ten Christians. If we kill this Muslim, we’ll spare the lives of twenty Christians because this Muslim’s younger brother follows in his footsteps.’

‘But you killed the Christians, not the Muslims,’ said the judge.

‘That’s right,’ said Breivik. ‘If you kill one Christian, ten Christians will pay attention to this murder. And these ten Christians will murder a hundred Muslims, provided they learn the lesson I’ve given them. Let’s count together.’ But the judge refused to count. So Breivik asked him the following question, ‘Do you know that the Muslims have already conquered Poland?’

‘How so?’ said the judge. By way of an answer, Breivik quoted a letter sent by Polish Templers to their Brothers in France:

They have ransacked the land which belonged to Duke Henry of Poland and killed him and many of his barons...and they have laid waste all the land of Hungary and Bohemia. They have three armies, which have divided up; one army is in Hungary, one in Bohemia and one in Austria...and we fear that the same will happen in Germany...And you should be aware that they spare no one; they kill everyone, poor and rich and small and great...and if any messenger is sent to them, the leaders of the army blindfold him and lead him to their lord, who should be, they say, lord of the world. They do not besiege castles or strong towns, but they destroy everything...

‘You’re speaking about the Mongols,’ said the judge. ‘All this took place in the 13th century.’

‘Don’t you think Jesus Christ is being crucified right now?’ said Breivik.

‘How do you mean?’

‘His death is meaningless if He isn’t crucified every day. There’s no history, only a moment of agony.’

‘Do you think that humanity goes through an agonising stretch of time?’ asked the judge.

‘You understand me, don’t you?’ said Breivik.

He continued to talk to the judge, but I’m weary of their talk. I’m bored to death not only by them, but also by *The Da Vinci Code* that I have to read in order to understand what Breivik admired in this book and how he wished to use the tactics described in it. I read another 20 pages and notice no tactics. A man escapes from the Louvre and this escape is not particularly spectacular. I don’t mind watching spectacular escapes on TV, especially if a handsome young man is pursued by the police. But why should I *read* about such escapes? Even if some beautiful representatives of the human species are involved in them, you can’t enjoy their beauty. And the way they jump into lorries or dodge behind trees, fooling the police and a few passers-by, doesn’t interest me at all. And Dan Brown’s protagonist doesn’t even jump into that lorry.

I wonder why Breivik undertook this journey into fear and Hell. What did he hope to achieve? Another revolution? Another world? My mother came from Russia and whenever we meet – and we meet very seldom, as I have already pointed out – she talks to me about the hell she knew in her childhood and youth, about the Soviet regime and food shortages. But there were other shortages as well. The whole country was both long and short. Sometimes you got the feeling it was so short you couldn’t hold it in the palm of your hand: it was slipping through your fingers. For some reason, however, my mother likes Bakunin who was a revolutionary of sorts, according to the books I have in my library. His revolutions led nowhere and he bungled many other things, failing to assert himself in his debate with Marx, for instance. But he said that freedom without socialism was tantamount to a display of privileges; on the other hand, socialism without freedom was downright slavery. My mother knows only this statement, but she loves Bakunin on the strength of his advice: you shouldn’t divorce socialism and freedom, equality and fantasy.

At some point, the judge asked Breivik if he was the Devil incarnate. ‘I love and respect Satan,’ said Breivik.

‘How can you love such a creature?’ asked the judge.

‘He was the first revolutionary, wasn’t he? His attitude towards God may serve as a warning to those who fawn upon authorities, prime ministers and the Labour Party. Why do they tolerate their own slavery? They cajole the Muslims into believing their country is politically correct. They’re all politically correct. Was their death correct?’

‘Are you speaking about your massacre?’ asked the judge.

‘I’m speaking about God’s justice. Or Satan’s justice, if you wish. Don’t you think that God and Satan are identical? Aren’t they identical twins? Didn’t they develop from the same egg? Sometimes I see this egg in my dreams, the primordial egg – the *uregg*, as the Germans might put it.’

‘What does it look like?’ asked the judge.

‘It looks like my head,’ said Breivik.

Breivik wasn't really a rebellious, trouble-making boy. But 'rebellion' might become a keyword of one's life even if one exhibits no traits of a revolutionary who always thinks in terms of barricades, bombs and blood. You don't have to agree either with your teacher or with the government that was elected last year. I had a friend who was a bit of a rebel in his teens: he dyed his hair pink. I met him last year; he looked and sounded like a bourgeois you might see on television – in a programme devoted to questions and answers. I don't mean to say he sounded like an intellectual; he was an ordinary citizen and Breivik would have killed him, had they met on Utoya that afternoon. Why didn't *I* kill him? Because I'm no longer rebellious? I'll never kill him because I'm not a *revolutionary*.

I'm revolted by stupidity and capitalism, by its unbridled money-grubbing. But I inherited a lot of money from my grandfather, and it is easy to despise the get-rich-quick mentality if you're rich yourself. Bakunin spoke against the very notion of heritage – against the money and traditions you may inherit from your ancestors and benefactors. But all his life he strove to get his part of the overall heritage that his relatives were longing to keep at all cost. So they successfully kept him at bay and he had to struggle for life on his own, without *his* ancestors' financial support. He said, 'No heritage,' for he had none and thought that others weren't entitled to any heritage either: like himself, they had to *struggle* for life. Does that mean that only the poor can look down on money and the rich? And what if a rich person donates a sizeable portion of their riches to children's charities?

Bakunin was mostly right, Marx mostly wrong. But Marx won because insolence and obstinacy always triumph over romanticism, over hedonism. Those who are wrong always triumph because they think that they're right and that science is on their side. So they can prove whatever they say, but their long-term projects fall through. They know nothing about their failures: they're already dead and buried. It's their descendants who suffer and die prematurely – not always in their beds. Once again I ask myself the key question of this book: 'Why?' Why did Breivik kill so many people and waste his time on the bomb? To destroy the Muslims at the end of the 21st century? Even the Templars couldn't defeat them:

As befitted active men, they did not give themselves over to quiet slumber like the rest but kept watch the whole night under arms. As soon as they heard the shout, they at once burst out of the camp. Then, girded in military arms and grouped in one wedge they rushed boldly into the enemy army and fought with them for some time with much fortitude. But, since they were very few in number in comparison with the infinite multitude of Mongols, who bubbled from the ground everywhere like locusts, they returned to their camp, after killing more than they had lost themselves.

Thomas of Split describes the sequel: 'King Koloman and the Templar with his fellow Latin knights inflicted great slaughter on the enemy. But at last, unable to bear the blows of the multitude, Koloman and the archbishop barely escaped, bitterly wounded, with their men; while the Templar Master and the whole army of Latins fell.'

Breivik killed a hundred people and his army lost nobody: he was his own army and he was still alive when the police captured him. This was the first stage of his grandiose operation and one may wonder where other stages lurk or hide. In which compartment of history are they stored? Breivik's enemies bubble from the ground everywhere and very few people pay attention to the fact. There are other facts to deal with and no one has time to listen to Breivik's diatribes against the Muslims and so-called red culture. Of course there *is* such a thing as the extreme right whose existence is regarded as one of the most persistent facets of late 20th-century

history, politics and society. Contemporary problems and the solutions offered to ever more difficult questions such as immigration, unemployment and law and order have enabled extremist, nationalist and populist movements to emerge and flourish in Europe and elsewhere. But even these extremists condemn Breivik's exploit, saying they have nothing in common with his ideas and actions. They condemn his actions as 'pure evil'.

'He called me once, but I hung up.'

'I can't remember him. I might have seen him in my office, but he was so ordinary I didn't notice him.'

'He showed me his bomb and I denounced him as a terrorist. Nobody listened to me.'

'He quoted two of my articles in his novel. In fact, there are only two references to me or my work in its 1,500 pages.'

'He speaks about you. You must have inspired him. Your words resounded in his mind when he was killing all those people.'

'It looks like yet another crude attempt to smear me.'

'Nobody wants to smear you – there's too much blood in this world already.'

'I don't think everything's all right. But his ways are evil.'

'I'm revolted by the dirt and mess in the world. How are we supposed to *clean* the world?'

'By preaching the gospel of love.'

Dana is always preaching the gospel of love.

17

I have no children and whenever Dana talks to me about her virtual motherhood, I change the subject; instead of a child, there comes a philosopher and Dana leaves the room or even her favourite beach. She can't bear my dogmatism.

Even during our first conversation she contradicted me several times; and yet we had no time for contradictions. My hotel room awaited us and the bottle of champagne I was carrying seemed to ensure that our relationship would develop in harmony with my desire. It was a peaceful situation; no wonder I had no inkling of what was in store for me and also for us. I didn't know she would bite me some day and her jealousy had no opportunity to demonstrate its size: we were alone and I had no wish to put her in the picture about my former love affairs. Anyway, there have been no love affairs in my life – no love affairs to speak of.

How many times has she slapped my face in the course of *our* love affair? I don't like to count blows and insults, especially in a chapter devoted to peace. What else could I count in this chapter? Smiles? I can't deny I adore her smiles and she is aware of the fact because she sees my smile whenever *she* deigns to smile. She does it rather seldom because she is bent on punishing me for my misdemeanours even when I behave like an angel. Perhaps she thinks that angels never behave like responsible adults.

She told me at the outset of our love affair, 'I'm extremely jealous.'

'I'll cure you of your jealousy,' I said.

'My jealousy's incurable.'

'I'll behave like an angel,' I said.

'Do you think they never betray anybody? After all, they betrayed God.'

'I'm speaking about *other* angels.'

'There are no other angels, no other men. You're all traitors.'

‘Let’s wait and see,’ I said.

Dana was reluctant to wait. I was understandably reluctant to do anything which might spoil our harmonious relationship, but she asked me no questions; she began to search for her rivals. ‘Every man has one or two skeletons in the cupboard,’ she said as she rummaged through all the drawers in my study, looking for billets-doux. ‘Why don’t you rummage in the cupboard?’ I asked, but that was no joking matter and she was in no mood for peace proposals.

That night I realised that Dana wasn’t very good at keeping peace within the family and so I decided never to marry her. But she preached both the gospel of love and that of marriage and, being a gentleman, I had to listen to her. I even looked at her whenever she preached her gospels. Her eyes talked as well and they ended up singing the famous Russian song (or romance) in which the following verse sticks out a mile: ‘You’ve destroyed me, black eyes.’ You don’t have to be very beautiful to destroy people. Breivik isn’t handsome, is he? Is he a handsome young man?

There were beautiful moments in our existence, some beautiful, peaceful moments. During our last holiday we had a series of moments like that, which is not surprising: we were in Switzerland where everything looks peaceful, cows included. At dawn, we were sitting in front of the window and saw only cows, grass, light and several trees. It was a slice of life I had been dreaming about when embarking upon this journey into peace and quiet – into the paradise destroyed by Breivik. (I wonder if they have cows on Utoya.) We could hear the cows or rather their bells; we could *hear* the light as well. When you hear a sunbeam, you’re really happy. But the sun wasn’t on the horizon yet: it was too early so its appearance would have seemed premature. The light we saw was of a different origin; at least that’s what I felt. And I felt a lot that morning.

Dana was sitting by my side and I got the feeling she was a different woman – the one I had never met. At some point I even said to myself, ‘I hope I’ll meet this woman one day. She might cure me.’ A moment doesn’t last unless Faust says something to this effect; unless he says that such and such a moment should stop. A moment will never come to a standstill on its own initiative. So that moment was replaced by its counterpart, but it didn’t sink into oblivion and I think I’ll remember it as long as I remember light.

Once she photographed a drop of rain or a drop of dew. I asked her why she had done that. Was that drop different from other drops? She said, ‘Yes. It’s not round. Can’t you see? I like its shape. It doesn’t really look like a drop. It looks like a tear. Do you think that nature can cry? Rain has nothing to do with tears. But there *are* some tears in nature so I think it cries from time to time.’

‘Does nature feel sad for us?’ I asked.

‘Yesterday it gave me a rather sad smile,’ she said. ‘Is nature masculine or feminine? Should I say, “*She* gave me a sad smile”?’

‘In French nature is feminine. Nature is a woman – not a young woman, though.’

‘You’re thinking again about Goethe’s Mothers?’

‘Perhaps. I don’t know *what* I’m thinking about. Do you always know your thoughts?’

‘I wonder if my thoughts know me,’ she said.

Our sojourn in Switzerland was divided into two separate parts. The first hotel offered us an opportunity to enjoy the still water of a famous lake; and yet I didn’t bathe in this water. Isn’t it enough to look at it? Some believe that water can cure them of neurasthenia and cancer. I wasn’t looking for a cure, for a medicine or any such medical treatment. I was just looking at the still water of the lake. That was enough. Do we really know the

measure of things, the measure of ourselves? What do we need? A few drops of water or the world? Breivik might have asked himself this question and we know the answer. Why didn't he just drink a glass of water? He might have had a long hot bath every evening. I wonder if he is allowed to have a long bath in prison. In Norway prisons must be rather comfortable.

The second hotel was situated in the mountains. So one day we drove to the second hotel. On our way we stopped in Bern to visit the Klee Foundation. Is that what it's called? Doesn't matter. We saw a lot of Klee's paintings anyway. He used to be one of my favourite painters. Do I still love him as much as I used to? I was under the impression I knew all his pictures. Your brothers and sisters may delight you now and then, but you stay away from them too. Of course you may be in love with your sister or brother, indulging in a sort of incestuous relationship. But Klee was neither my brother nor my sister. I wasn't in the habit of touching his body – even when I was in love with his paintings.

This time I singled out two pictures. I wrote their titles on a piece of paper. Well, I lost both the piece of paper and the titles. I remember a contraption on the move. Was it a living creature or just a machine? It must have been moving somewhere: there was an arrow on the top left-hand corner of the picture. So it was moving to the left. Or to the right. Where am I supposed to stand? In front of the picture or behind it? Where am I supposed to live? In Switzerland, in France, nowhere? I think there was the word 'whence' in the title. I might have seen just the opposite – the antonym of 'whence'. 'Thence'. One thing is certain – I saw *something*. I saw a Klee picture, to be exact. Why should I go any further? It was also a slice of life, a patch of grass. Or a patch of ice, a patch of damp on the wall.

I don't recall the second picture. I think the title was: *Was ist das?* I don't recall what it was. I don't even recall the shape of the picture. The shape of the frame was rectangular, but I wonder if there was something *within* this frame. Or was it just an *empty* frame? Could they have hung an empty frame on the wall, hoping to pass it off as Klee's most famous work? Klee wasn't Marcel Duchamp, was he? Did Duchamp hang many empty frames on the walls of his museum?

But I recall my feelings or rather the word I repeated over and over again: 'Hope.' *Witness to Hope*. I thought about what John Paul II had said at the United Nations in 1995. Klee's angels and images of death had been my brothers and sisters for many years. Now I was afraid of the future.

We must not be afraid of the future. We must not be afraid of man. *It is no accident that we are here. Each and every human person has been created in the 'image and likeness' of the One who is the origin of all that is. We have within us the capacities for wisdom and virtue. With these gifts, and with the help of God's grace, we can build in the next century and the next millennium a civilisation worthy of the human person, a true culture of freedom. We can and we must do so! And in doing so, we shall see that the tears of this century have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit.*

No point in talking about hope. (About the Pope.) If I'm told I shouldn't be afraid of the future and of the present, I don't calm down at once. I'll never calm down because I have to be convinced you are right and I am wrong. Only a miracle can prove that I am wrong. Where are your miracles? *It is no accident that we are here.* I wish I were not here, by the way. I know that I have been created in the 'image and likeness' of God; I've known this truth or falsehood for many years. What of it? Have I become better? I'm neither better nor worse. You say I

have within me the capacities for wisdom and virtue. I wish I could see them in my bowels, in my intestines. Are they a new sort of indigestion? Are they really gifts? With all due respect, Your Holiness, you were wrong for once. You hoped the 21st century would be a century of peace. How many wars have we seen over recent years? Shall I count these years? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. The last year isn't over yet. I respect you enormously, Your Holiness, but I'm afraid it is out-of-date. I'm speaking about your hope, my hope. Some people hope to become rich and they do become rich with the passing of the years. My hope is different. Perhaps there's only one *authentic* hope in the world – the image and likeness of God. Where's this image? Among Klee's paintings and drawings? Even the tears of nature fail to prepare the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit. The spring is far behind.

I thought I would devote this chapter to peace – to my peace of mind, among other things. Somehow I calmed down and we left the museum or the foundation or the collection. But before leaving it or them, we came to a standstill and Dana made yet another photograph, bending down. She crouched and almost lay down on the road to photograph a blade of grass. An asphalt road, a blade of grass coming out of it, growing in spite of everything. So many people and cars use this road to see Klee's pictures – even cars should see them – but the blade of grass exists as if nothing had ever happened. And nothing happens. Is that what hope is about? There are wars, blood and tears, but you continue to live and drink tomato juice and water.

'Do you think it's a symbol of hope?' I asked.

'It's just life,' she said.

'You mean it's just life and beauty?'

'Yes. Beauty is life and vice versa. Keats said something to this effect, didn't he?'

'So did Klee.'

'They all talk about that,' she said.

'So do we,' I said.

'So let's go on talking,' she said.

'That's what we are doing,' I said.

'To talk for the sake of talking,' she said.

'That's what I call peace and hope,' I said.

'You talk and nothing happens,' she said.

'But you talk for hours so something does happen.'

'What?'

'A slight tremor in your voice,' I said.

'And the air responds, doesn't it?'

'It does.'

'So why should we wait for something to happen?' she asked.

'Why should we *hope*?' I asked, touching the air.

'Why do we touch wood? It's better to touch the air,' she said.

'It's better to touch a voice, your voice,' I said.

'It's better not to touch anything. Just listen to what doesn't happen,' she said.

We drove on. A new series of landscapes greeted us as if we were old friends. We couldn't listen to them because the car was moving along the road. There were several roads and petrol stations; there were other cars.

We must have hoped for silence, but it wasn't coming. Lake Geneva hove into view with all its boats and yachts; and the view welcomed it because the lake was an old friend, a cousin, a father. In a way they were consubstantial. The lake was the father, the view the son – or vice versa. I didn't care about *their* trinity. That afternoon I probably cared about Dana or I was just careless, enjoying a carefree day. Dana told me off for driving carelessly, but I didn't care. I found peace and renounced hope. Do you really need hope if you have found happiness and peace of mind?

I wrote a poem that night:

*What's a blade of grass? It depends on
Where it grows. It depends on nothing as long
As it grows and prospers. There's no hope,
Only the prosperity of a blade of grass.*

*Once, on the radio, I heard an Indian story.
Someone kept asking one question:
'Have you ever seen how a river flows?'
Everyone called it profound wisdom.
Look at a blade of grass, at the sky,
At nothing. Can you look at nothing?
That's what counts in the end.*

*And you listen to nothing and no birds sing:
No nightingales, no crows. Just nothing.
And nothing sings its song without words.
It's a tuneless song you can't memorise.
Why should you? Just listen to it.
You can listen to it whenever you wish.
It's in your heart and even in your
Heart of hearts, in your mind of minds.*

*And what about your soul? Do you have
Many souls? The soul of a man, that of a cat.
You're a man and a woman, a cat and a dog.
You've got many souls and many shapes.
Which one to choose for today, for tonight?
Any shape will do, provided you listen to it.*

*Do you need any shape? I am shapeless:
A shapeless lump of mud, a shapeless thought,
A shapeless life. But I listen to this life*

*And my listening becomes a shape.
So I stop listening to it, to anything
And find a blade of grass under my feet.*

There were two shrines outside Amy's former home in Camden Square. Amy had two souls, two minds, two bodies and two lives.

Fans of Amy Winehouse, who died on Saturday afternoon, have honoured the singer not only with tributes and flowers, but by buying her music: her album Back to Black and several of her singles have seen a surge in sales.

In the seven hours between the confirmation of her death and the closure of the charts, her second studio album made a return to the ratings, five years after its release. Sales increased by 37 times between Friday and Saturday, with track sales 23 times higher, according to the Official Charts Company.

The Guardian, Monday 25 July 2011

Her second life. I listen to this life of hers and hear her first life as well. You hear a lot when you listen carefully to Amy's songs.

*We only said good bye with words,
I died a hundred times,
You go back to her,
And I go back too.*

You say goodbye with words and then you switch to nothingness or rather to nothing. There's nothing: even nothingness is out of place. You die a hundred times, but you always have your second life at your disposal, and your second body – a blade of grass coming out of your grave. You go back to the Mothers, to God, to him, to her, to nothing: you can't live without it. Then you say goodbye once again. How many times can you say it? You say it whenever one of your souls goes away. How often does it happen? Never mind. Perhaps it doesn't happen at all. You might have just one immortal soul. You can say goodbye to it as often as you wish. What's the use? It will never die. What's more, it will never leave you. It may settle in another body, but it will remain with you nonetheless. Your soul is ubiquitous; so are your songs.

Your first shrine is piled high with hundreds of bouquets, photographs, handwritten tributes, a miniature guitar, a fluffy bunny. I wish I could put my poem on it, my tribute to your voice, to your lives and minds; to your back, to your black, to your goodbye, to your nothing. I listen to your first shrine, to your flowers and photographs, to your guitar and bunny. I hear you and myself as if I were you and vice versa. There's always some vice versa somewhere. Everything is reciprocal, isn't it? So many questions and only one answer: 'Love, love, love.' They all say that; I say nothing. You just listen – that's love for you. If you listen, you love; if you don't, you don't. You may speak about love all day long. Stop talking and listen. You may hear Amy's songs.

The second shrine is stocked with cans of beer, half-drunk glasses of wine, cigarettes. I wish I could put a few bottles of wine in it. But you didn't drink wine, did you? You drank whisky and gin, vodka and soda. All right, I'll drink whisky with you and without soda. This shrine is your second mind and second time. You spent a lot of time drinking and smoking. And drinking again. Alcohol teaches you nothingness or rather your personal nothing. In this respect it's even better than drugs. Nothing, nothing, nothing.

I felt nothing on our first night at the hotel. I came back to life at dawn. And my nothing slipped away unnoticed.

18

Breivik's *Diary* abounds with enigmas that one isn't tempted to find a key to, even if on this key and its power depends a lot, one's life included. We've got a long way to go before we unravel the secrets of genetics, but our scientists go deeper and deeper into the subject as they analyse every hint and tint, however minuscule. As for Breivik's hints, one doesn't know for sure they're hints and not just some figments of his unfaltering imagination. Do they speak about *real* people or does the author lead his readers up the garden path? Let us analyse some of the entries.

'I've never been afraid of hard graft.' In his *Diary*, Breivik doesn't speak about how to make a bomb and what you need to transport and explode it in the right place at the right time. He describes the process in a roundabout way. In *My Manifesto*, on the other hand, he is quite straightforward.

'This van is costing me too much to run, so I'm going to trade down to a cheaper model.' Breivik went so far as to practise his trip to the centre of Oslo. Apparently he hired a van and circled the grounds of his farm every morning.

'I didn't really get the feel of the place.' Breivik walked around Utoya every Sunday, growing accustomed to its rocks and flora. He would put several puppets on the rocks and in the water, but he didn't dare to shoot them in the head for fear of arousing the holidaymakers' suspicions. 'Is this man a grown-up?' asked a little girl.

'Yes,' said her father.

'Is he a man?'

'Yes.'

'Why does he play with dolls?'

'I'll trade on my good looks,' writes Breivik. 'No one will ever think I'm able to hurt a fly. Do I look like a Nazi? I look like an Aryan hero, not like a Nazi. It'll be curtains for him, if he doesn't do what I tell him!' What does he allude to in this entry? To a facelift imposed on a doppelgänger? Did all his buddies have to look like Aryan heroes? There are other good-looking heroes in the history of mankind. Why couldn't his assistants look like *them*?

Breivik also writes about those who found him too tough. 'We live in a toughly competitive world,' he answers, touching the bomb and even the detonator. 'Our frames of reference are different. My methods will catapult me into the limelight. A shaft of divine light. I thought I'd have a shot at making my own wine, but I made a bomb instead. The price of property has almost trebled in the last 5 years. How much does my farm cost now? He might sell it.' Again he alludes to one of his doppelgängers. He writes a few days later, 'They might sell it.'

‘Productivity is not the only yardstick of success.’ It’s not enough to make bombs: you have to put them in vans and convey them to parliaments and nuclear plants. ‘We want long-term solutions, not short-term palliatives. For two years I’ve been trying to whip up some enthusiasm for the project, but even the English disappoint me now. At present the organization has to rely on young, inexperienced graduates who are usually birds of passage. And he is getting a bit cantankerous in his old age.’ Who are they?

‘To make an example out of it.’ That’s crystal clear, isn’t it? ‘The new manager has been appointed.’ Where? By whom? ‘I’ve been put off reading the book by all the hype.’ What book? Not *The Da Vinci Code*, judging from other entries. ‘My latest play is a firmly tongue-in-cheek look at the world.’ How many plays has Breivik written? Where are they? At the nearest police station? In the archives of the organisation he alludes to in *My Diary*?

There are many contradictory statements in this work. He writes for instance, ‘Having already limited local taxation, why not go the whole hog and abolish it completely?’ A few days later, he seems to change his mind: ‘I promise a tougher approach to smoking out tax dodgers. I’ll paper over the country’s deep-seated problems.’ Did Breivik intend to become a prime minister? But prime ministers don’t explode bombs in front of their offices. They send troops to foreign countries: to Africa, to Asia. They drop bombs on Serbia. So do presidents.

‘I have fallen behind with my correspondence.’ Another allusion to the bomb: making bombs is a very time-consuming job. ‘Acting the part of a silly harridan.’ At some point Breivik must have thought about another disguise. When wiping the Labour Party off the map, he was dressed as a policeman. ‘Why not becoming a silly harridan for once?’ he thought. Of course a silly harridan cannot say to the future victims, ‘Come out! Don’t hide any more! I am here to save you from the mass killer.’ But if a silly harridan whipped a rifle out of her bag, you would be taken by surprise. You would be surprised to the point of being unable to move for two minutes at least. It is easier to kill those who are rooted to the spot.

‘Today I’m appraising my assets,’ writes Breivik. He shoots a few birds dead, strokes the bomb and recites his poems to an old parrot. ‘I won’t shoot you,’ he says. ‘If I shoot you, no one will listen to my poems. I’m short-tempered, but I won’t shoot my only reader.’ In his turn, the parrot recites his master’s poems. ‘I won’t shoot the only artist who knows my poems by heart,’ says Breivik. The parrot repeats this sentence three times.

‘I etched my name on a piece of glass.’ Breivik was immortalised through bombs, bullets, literary works and inscriptions. His doppelgängers are about to inaugurate a museum where every exhibit bears his name. ‘Soon after my exploit you should open a museum dedicated to it. But I order you to exclude Peter from our club. The first chapter of my novel purports to be an exposition of my social teaching. Last month I showed it to him. He read it, closed his eyes and went to sleep. I woke him and said, “What do you think about my doctrine?”’ His answer was pure hogwash. You can’t rely on people like that. Besides, he is so unfit: he gets winded just from walking up a flight of stairs. And he has a decidedly down-at-heel appearance.’

Another mysterious sentence: ‘Why are so many women so hung-up about food?’ Was he alluding to his mother or sister? I read about his sister somewhere, but I remember only their love. What kind of love was it? Does the following entry relate to his sister? ‘In vain did she assure me that she recalled the island on which we spent so many weekends together. Disregarding my aversion to flattery, she even said that I had removed my trousers, striped jersey and sun-browned straw hat and covered the distance between our shore and the opposite shore in no time. “Your breaststroke is enviable and you looked like a swan.” “You’re lying!” I screamed.

Unmindful of my rolling eyes, which might have made Desdemona spring out of her sheets, she re-crossed her legs and smiled.’ Does the following sentence refer to this incident? ‘I was just left to sink or to swim’?

In the middle of *My Diary*, Breivik quotes his sister or one of his mothers: “‘I went to you and, putting my hands on your shoulder, asked you to come with me. We stood by that beautiful lake amid the twilight shadows. Some half hour or so later it had grown almost dark. I looked for you but you were gone.” Her voice floated in the air like soap bubbles, every now and then brushing against my ears. “You’re lying!” I screamed. “I have heard of your paintings well enough. You jig and amble, and you lisp –.” I wish I could talk like that to *my* mother.

Sometimes Breivik speaks to himself: ‘Today, I won’t give voice to my doubts.’

‘Why not?’

‘Because you upbraid me whenever I doubt my mission. You say, “I wish you wouldn’t rant.”’

‘I won’t say that today.’

‘I think I have no doubts today.’

‘Let’s move on to the next item on the agenda.’

‘There’s only one item on the agenda.’

‘There are two items: Oslo and Utoya.’

‘There’s only one item: destruction.’

‘The pleasure of not having to work quickly palled,’ writes Breivik I. He must have written this entry quickly: his handwriting is barely legible.

‘I seem blind to my own faults. I see so many faults around me that I have no time for myself. Where are *my* faults? In this room? I can’t see any. Are they in my head? I hope there will be no faults on Utoya. Every swimmer is a fault; so is every runner. Only corpses provide correct answers to questions. Why are there so many faults around us? The fault lies with lawmen who fail to make the necessary arrangements for dealing with so many people. Am I a sheriff? Perhaps. I like Westerns.’

‘I am preparing for a showdown with my advisers over the plan.’ Did Breivik need advisers? Did he have any? ‘I’ll go back to prison to take stock of my life.’ He already thinks about his imprisonment. ‘I’m always bouncy in the morning.’ He doesn’t yet think about his imprisonment.

‘It was pouring with rain, but I pressed on regardless.’ Breivik reminds us of the match that shook the football world in 1954. The German team defeated the Hungarians in the World Cup final. The footballers got caught in torrential rain without either raincoats or umbrellas. A few days earlier, it was also pouring with rain, but the Germans played their game, taking no notice of the deluge. The Hungarian coach said to his German counterpart, ‘Your players must be exhausted. Why do you train them in the rain?’

‘What if it rains on D-day? They should be able to dance in the rain.’

‘They won,’ writes Breivik. ‘I’ll win too. I’ll train in the rain. I’ll dance them to death. We’ll dance a *danse macabre*.’ The weather was fine.

‘Pressing ahead with my plans.’ ‘To get the bit between my teeth.’ ‘The important thing when you’re cooking for a lot of people is not to get in a fluster.’ Breivik had no intention of cooking anything for anyone. As usual, he spoke about the massacre on Utoya. But, as he was secretive, he had no wish to say he was going to kill so many members of the Labour Party. If asked what he would do on Utoya, he might have answered: ‘I’ll cook paella for them.’ ‘I’ll put on some nice soothing music,’ he writes.

‘The explosion rattled the cups on the table.’ Breivik thinks about the cups situated near the bomb. ‘Blood was gushing from their noses.’ Of course he was reluctant to touch upon the *wounds* of his victims. During the massacre he touched their bodies, their wounds and their lives, but his writings were far more merciful, humane. ‘My nose was bleeding and I plugged it with cotton wool,’ he writes demonstrating how easy it is to deal with noses and *their* blood.

‘Ruddy-red.’ ‘Ruddy-cheeked.’ Breivik often describes his victims in these terms. One may get the feeling he has forgotten the word ‘blood’. He speaks about health, holidays, holidaymakers, longevity and the progress of medical science. Some of those people are drunkards, but that doesn’t matter. They’re happy on their island; Breivik is happy too. And yet he is still on his farm, not far from the bomb. Do you know that he painted it red?

‘Would it be too much of an imposition to ask you to come out of the toilet?’ Breivik knows how to play hide and seek. He is unusually polite because ‘politeness opens every door,’ he writes. And he adds, ‘I’ve been wittering on about my neighbours and their neighbours for half the morning. Actions speak louder than words.’ He often repeats this last sentence; so does his parrot. Yet he goes on writing both *My Diary* and *My Manifesto*.

‘On the face of it, it seems like a bargain, but I bet there are hidden costs.’ The bomb again, the fertilisers. ‘I spent the day traipsing round the shops, but found nothing suitable for my mission.’ What else did he need for the bomb? Or did he need anything for the van, for the rifles, for the bullets? Could he buy anything for the bullets in the Oslo shops?

‘High-flyers in the industry typically earn 25% more than their colleagues. The same goes for mass killers except that they kill 50% more than their colleagues.’ Literary critics say about *My Diary*: ‘He said very little but his face spoke volumes.’ This time, however, he makes no secret of his plans. ‘The bodyguard was killed while checking the president’s car for booby traps.’ Breivik was determined to kill the prime minister, not the president. (I think there’s no president in Norway; I may be mistaken.) But he didn’t mind killing a president and a bodyguard. ‘The more I kill the better,’ was his motto. Anyway, he couldn’t help speaking about the bomb from time to time. And his face continued to speak volumes.

‘I just clam up if they ask me about my plans.’ That day Anders wasn’t in a talkative mood. ‘Winning the lottery would set me up for life.’ Another way of getting money for the bomb and the rest. ‘A good breakfast sets you up for the day.’ But not for the rest. ‘I steeled myself to jump into the water.’ Breivik just *had* to experience what his future victims were to undergo during the massacre: he was a professional to his fingertips.

‘The action I’ll take in pursuance of my ideals.’ No comment. ‘My hot-headed young followers.’ Breivik is not a name-dropper. ‘I was rejected the first time I applied to the organization for a grant for my project, but, nothing daunted, reapplied the following year and was accepted. I mean, my project was accepted and I got the money I needed to carry it out.’ What project? The Norwegian VG tabloid, citing leaked police interrogations with Breivik, reported that his aim was to kill former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, Foreign Minister Joans Gahr Stoere or Eskil Pedersen, head of the Labour Party’s youth wing. Why didn’t he kill them? Did he lack money for *this* project? What did he do with the amount he had got from the mysterious organisation? Does the bomb answer *every* question, supply *every* answer? Anyway, Breivik has become a name-dropper over the last four months. And he pleaded not guilty to terrorism charges, claiming he was in a state of war and therefore not criminally liable. At his first public court hearing, he declared himself a military

commander of a Norwegian resistance movement before the judge cut him off. In my opinion, the judge ought to have taken advantage of Breivik's talkative mood.

'If I go to war they will have to face the fact that many people will die,' he writes. He went to war and many people died. Do we *always* have to admire the people who keep their promises? Do we have to worship *all* prophets of doom? 'Intellectuals ostracised it as a form of "dangerous thought".' Which thought does he have in mind this time? *All* his thoughts are dangerous, aren't they? 'Deeds of derring-do,' he repeats as if composing a piece of music. *All* music is repetitive, isn't it? 'The massacre on Utoya is a symphony, my *Ninth Symphony*. First my instruments play and repeat what they have played already. Then my melody is repeated again with the addition of the human voice. Their choir joins in, their screams and pleas for mercy. It is the musical law of intensification through repetition within the limits imposed by the symmetry of the whole that is applied here on a large scale and that permeates the music, even in the smallest details.' Breivik quotes Furtwängler's notes on Beethoven's *Ninth*. Does he dare draw a parallel between Beethoven's (and Schiller's) *Ode to Joy* and his own *Ode to Grief*?

'When I first fell afoul of the law –' When was it? Did Breivik kill anybody prior to his double massacre? Why wasn't he arrested? Or does he allude to his infatuation with graffiti? 'Just keep things ticking over while I am away.' Again we have no idea to whom he talks as he gears up for his life in prison. 'My commitment doesn't sit well with my colleagues.' Writing a diary is a repetitive job. No wonder he says at the end of his diary: 'I find myself endlessly repeating the same phrases.'

'You were utterly wrong this afternoon. Small tits are the greatest, and I don't say it to flatter you. I am very fond of these ivory apples with red, cherry-like flushes on them. On big tits the nipples always seem out of shape and purple in colour, whereas on small ones the nipples are pink or slightly brown and perfectly formed. I adore the way your tits fall out of your bra when you bend over. Somehow big tits don't have the same meaning, do they? They are gross!' This time Breivik doesn't repeat himself. What on earth does *that* mean? What does *that* have to do with his salvage operation? Did he express an opinion on the matter after watching an erotic film?

'During the last decade the left wing of the party has held the whip hand. I'll kill them all. Right-wingers should be killed as well because they're not *far* right-wingers. When the number of victims becomes too large for the country to hold, fresh victims will be placed on top of the previous ones. Naked bodies, naked corpses. The dead are not ashamed of their nakedness.'

'I shout my name to attract God's attention and to prove to Him that I haven't forgotten my duty. I also shout the name of God to prove that I remember Him and His mercy. Is it the *right* name I shout? The *right* and only name of God? How many names does God have? How many times has He been baptised? Kabbalists warn the living about the destructive power of God's secret name, but prisoners have nothing to lose except their chains. I've got no chains either: I'm not a prisoner yet. My hands and my feet can move without being obstructed on their way. On their way to what? To Utoya, to courtrooms? Hell is described pretty often in the Bible. No censorship, no self-censorship. "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." I am howling, not wailing. All the same, God is democratic and tolerant. He didn't cross His name off the Bible. The name of Satan, I mean. How many names does *He* have? Satan, the Devil, Lucifer. And so on and so forth.'

‘I feel like talking tonight. Let us have a little chat, my dear Thomas. Let us have dinner, first – I’m starving. What about you? Dinner by candlelight. Do you like foie gras and oysters? If you don’t come within two hours I will devour them myself. Why didn’t you come? I kicked you because I thought you were my dog. Don’t you know that dogs should be kicked now and then, otherwise they stop obeying their masters? I am not your master. God is our master and owner. I am your friend. I’m going to help you. I don’t trust God – He is the public prosecutor. I won’t tell Him anything about my supposed crimes. I am pleading “not guilty”.’

One by one Breivik’s supposed accomplices were taken for interrogation. Thomas Peterson said upon reading the above excerpt from *My Diary*: ‘I’m neither his accomplice nor his friend. In every friendship there has to be some give-and-take. What could he give me? Oysters? I didn’t need his bombs either. His house was crammed with bombs. I couldn’t bear those bombs and his bombastic statements. He has an apocalyptic view. He thinks it will take 70 to 80 years to reverse the “Arabisation” of Europe. He sees himself as part of history. He *is* part of the history of Utoya.’

‘They seem to lack direction in their lives,’ writes Breivik. ‘Where do they go? They go to an island as if they could *do* something there except eat, drink and dance.’ Yet another piece of repetitive music. ‘Six months ago I began a new novel, a new series of murders. I was betrayed by an intimate friend. Bitterness, sadness, melancholy, weariness, endurance, courage, heroism, self-sacrifice. Often time is measured with greater exactitude by the frames of mind we live through than by the ever-increasing decrepitude of our bodies.’

The centrepiece of *My Diary* is an essay entitled *Tat Tvam Asi* – ‘that art thou’ in English. Let us not forget that it was composed by a recluse making a bomb on his farm, away from men and women.

Alcmaeon identified emptiness with air. So did the Pythagoreans who, furthermore, affirmed that the air was breathed in from the surrounding infinite so as to separate the bodies within the world. Anaximenes regarded invisible air as a corporeal substance: the void came to be filled up. Parmenides denied the existence of empty space on the grounds that there was no room left for it. ‘If Being is,’ he argued, ‘emptiness could only be located at the place from which Being has withdrawn.’ But the asseveration ‘Being is not’ proves to be a logical impossibility.

The atomists declared that Non-Being existed as much as Being: Leucippus would snatch away different objects and point to the empty spots where their absence had thus been made conspicuous. The atomists needed emptiness to account for motion.

Unlike many other movements, telepathic communications depend neither on the number of material objects interposed between two minds nor on the velocity of the air breathed in from the surrounding infinite. According to Pythagoreans the void separates numbers; telepathy reunites them.

Being is everywhere. I did not act alone.

That is how Breivik communicated with his buddies: when you’re plotting against the whole world and its secret police, the keyword is ‘telepathy’.

In the finale of the *Great Symphony (My Diary)*, Breivik speaks to the history of humanity – not just to his contemporaries. ‘Well, let us clear up the mess you’ve left behind. Your so-called history. Buildings are razed *before* they grow old and mature; and laden with memories. Why do humans raze them, I wonder? Are they ashamed of their memories? Do they have guilty consciences? No, no, no. Money, money, money. Their

repetitive music. They say “no” to history and “yes” to the rest. And the rest – whatever it is – has no history, no value and no music.’

The weirdest entry in *My Diary* refers to the Russians whom Breivik abhors: for him, they’re synonymous with the Communist Party and Communists in general. ‘I was accompanied by Prokofiev in person and by his music – by the soundtrack of Eisenstein’s *Ivan the Terrible*,’ he writes.

*‘Hammer the copper cannons, ye gunners,
And the faithful culverins, ye gunners.
Spears and sharp sabres, ye gunners,
Will be sisters to the cannons, ye gunners.
Aim the Tsar’s cannons, ye gunners,
Move the turrets up on the walls, ye gunners!
Up on the Kazan walls, ye gunners!’*

‘I joined their choir that reminded me of Beethoven’s *Ninth*.

*‘Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho!
Chop! Chop! Chop! Chop! Chop!
Let those axes fall on the Muslims.
Let those axes chop them sharply.
Hey! Burn! Burn! Burn! Burn!’*

‘Suddenly I saw an axe above my head. I paused, wiping the sweat from my face. For the first time in my life I came to a halt in my *working state*: I had been frightened into interrupting my activity. I was afraid of being overheard. I was silent, paralysed from head to foot. I was determined not to say or even to *think* anything in the presence of the Tsar, of his KGB agents.’

Oddly enough, in the next paragraph Breivik himself becomes a tsar. He fears nobody and nothing – not even the Communists and their axes. ‘I’ve got my bombs and rifles,’ he writes. ‘Axes can kill old Russian women, not young Aryan heroes. I am Andrew the Terrible.’

19

Breivik’s rambling novel is a hotchpotch of ideas, insults, orders, prophecies, poems and theatrical plays. Its centrepiece is a *Faust*-like presentation of the universe where people come and go, look at each other, disagree with each other, quarrel and disappear forever. The author takes part in it under the anglicised name of Andrew Berwick.

ANDREW BERWICK

I’ve talked a lot and I’m weary of talking.
So many people and things are weary.
They’re reluctant to act. Stones remain

Where they are: nobody throws them
 At people, at their faces and genitals.
 Why are stones so slow on the uptake?
 People no longer protest and rebel:
 They're satisfied customers and they
 Grin from ear to ear as they walk
 Amidst Muslims, Nazis and Communists.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI (*coming in*)

Cruelty can be used well or badly.
 We can say that cruelty is used well
 When it is employed once and for all.
 You can kill a hundred people
 For the good of humanity. One
 Hundred people will ensure peace
 And prosperity. People are more
 Active in their graves. From them
 They work wonders for the world.
 But don't kill again. Please, don't!

ANDREW BERWICK

I won't. Anyway I'll be in prison.
 What's the use of killing guards?
 No one will ever know about that.
 Guards are killed on a regular basis
 And no one knows who kills them.

HEINRICH HEINE (*coming in*)

Mine is a most peaceable disposition.
 My wishes: a cottage with a thatched roof,
 A car, a washing machine, a dishwasher,
 The freshest milk and butter, some
 Flowers in front of my window.
 Several windows, a lot of flowers,
 A good bed with a canopy, a wine cellar,
 A few fine trees in front of my front door.
 If God wants to make my happiness complete,
 He will grant me the joy of seeing some
 Six or seven of my enemies hanging
 From those trees. Before their death I shall,

Moved in my heart, forgive them all the wrong
 They did me. Alas, one must forgive
 One's enemies – but not before
 They have been hanged.

ANDREW BERWICK

I'm about to kill a hundred people. They're not
 My enemies. They're enemies of mankind.
 Almost everyone's an enemy of mankind, but
 I can't kill everyone, can I? What to do?

HEINRICH HEINE

Kill them, hang them – do what you like!
 Enemies should be disposed of. But how
 Will you dispose of their bodies? You
 May be hanged in your turn for your crime.

ANDREW BERWICK

Is it a crime? Is it? I am
 A benefactor of humanity.

HEINRICH HEINE (*walking out*)

Kill them! Kill them! Kill them!
 (*His voice gradually dies away.*)

ANDREW BERWICK

Heine also works as a special adviser to the President.
 Am I not the President? Or am I a King, a Prince?
 Machiavelli's Prince? Where is he? I need him.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

What do you need?

ANDREW BERWICK

Advice.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

You need to avoid contempt and hatred:
 Internal subversion from your subjects
 And external aggression by foreign powers.

ANDREW BERWICK

With all due respect, your advice is beside the point.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

Where's the point? I can't see the point.

ANDREW BERWICK

The point is Oslo, Utoya and the world.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

I see, I see. I see an island covered with corpses.
 But under those corpses there are living bodies.
 Don't miss them. They should become as dead
 As the bodies under which they're lying.
 Some people are hiding and you should win
 This game of hide-and-seek, shouldn't you?

ANDREW BERWICK

I thank you my military adviser.
 I'll shoot them from the shoreline
 For about 20 minutes. Silence.
 A few minutes later, my voice
 Will ring out across the fjord:
 'I am the anti-terror police. Come out
 Wherever you are hiding. Please
 Come out of your hiding places.
 There's a fast boat here to take you
 To the mainland, to Paradise.
 You are in Hell. Do you wish
 To live in Hell forever? You are
 Innocent, you have never sinned.
 Why should you rot in Hell?
 Come out! Come out! I am your
 Saviour. God has sent me to you.
 I will save you and humankind.

SIGMUND FREUD (*coming in*)

In sadism the death instinct twists the erotic aim
 In its own sense. And yet it fully satisfies

The erotic urge. But even where it emerges
 Without any sexual purpose, in the blindest fury
 Of destructiveness, we cannot fail to recognise
 That the satisfaction of the instinct is accompanied
 By an extraordinarily high degree of narcissistic
 Enjoyment. The ego is granted a fulfilment
 Of its age-old strong desire for omnipotence.

ANDREW BERWICK

You're right, my dear friend. My will to power
 Is unquenchable. But my power, which comes
 From my Father, from God, is geared towards
 Helping people to become more prosperous.
 All they need to complete their happiness is my
 Determination to cleanse the thoughts of their hearts,
 To cleanse the world of Muslims and Communists.
 They need my arms, my bomb, my calm, my van.
 They no longer need my fertiliser: the bomb
 Has absorbed them. Nor do they need my farm.
 They need my song, my smile and my bullets.

SIGMUND FREUD

The instinct of destruction, moderated and tamed,
 And, as it were, inhibited in its aim, might
 Provide the ego with the satisfaction of its vital needs
 And with control over nature – in case
 It's directed towards objects: rivers, forests.

ANDREW BERWICK

Too late, my dear friend. It is high time I turned
 My undivided attention to humans. Taming of the shrew –
 Alias my instinct of destruction – is out of place, out of
 Utoya. I've no idea what's out of Utoya except my
 Bomb and Oslo. My bomb is also there – everywhere.
 I hope my bomb and determination will destroy
 Evil empires. And good empires – the Holy Roman Empire –
 Will reign over the Earth, the sky and Satan.

SIGMUND FREUD (*walking out*)

Kill them! Kill them! Kill them!

(His voice gradually dies away.)

ANDREW BERWICK

Shivering at the memory, one of them
 Recalled yesterday: 'As I stand here now
 All I can see is him killing my friends –
 I still don't know how many close friends
 I have lost on Utoya, on the Island of Death.'
 I do know how many friends you've lost. What a pity
 I didn't finish you off. I did injure you, though.
 In what toilet did you hide? In what sewer pipe?
 In what sewage works did they treat you?
 What are you now? Fertiliser, a bomb?
 Will you help me to kill Communists and Muslims?
 I'll put you in my van and we shall set off
 On a round-the-world journey. And we shall
 Make the world go round. An endless merry-go-round.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

You must use deadly 'dum-dum' bullets
 That explode inside the body.

ANDREW BERWICK

Of course.

MICHAEL BAKUNIN (*coming in*)

The cruel and brutal reality that the Gods Almighty of every religion,
 The Gods of battles, have never failed to bless – beginning
 With Jehovah, God of the Jews, the eternal Father of our Saviour
 Jesus Christ, who commanded his chosen people to massacre
 Every native of the Promised Land, and ending with the Catholic God,
 Symbolised by the Popes, who, as a reward for the massacre of heathens,
 Mohammedans, and heretics, gave the land of these hapless peoples
 To their happy butchers, each one of whom was dripping with their blood.

ANDREW BERWICK

The beginning was earlier. The ending will be later.
 Why haven't you mentioned me, dear Michael?
 Blessed by the Popes and our God, I go and kill
 For the sake of God. And no one will ever stop me

Because I believe there's just cause for taking this action.

MICHAIL BAKUNIN

It is clear that, at least until now, humanity has hardly been exempt
 From the general law of animality that dooms all living beings
 To devour one another in order to live. Only socialism,
 Which puts human justice in the place of political, juridical,
 And divine justice, will put an end to these brutal manifestations
 Of human animality and to war. Only socialism can replace
 Patriotism with the worldwide solidarity of mankind.

ANDREW BERWICK

What are you talking about, dear Michael?
 You're prepared to give the Muslims our lands,
 Our money, our mothers and daughters.
 Your socialism will replace us with the Muslims.

MICHAIL BAKUNIN

Let us organise ourselves, dear brothers and comrades.
 Don't think we are at the end of the Revolution,
 We are at its beginning. The Revolution is the order of the day,
 For many centuries to come. It will come to find us, sooner or later.
 Let us therefore prepare and purify ourselves and become
 More genuine. Let us be less talkers, less criers, less phrasemongers,
 Less drinkers and less rakes. Let us gear up for this struggle.

ANDREW BERWICK

Call it 'revolution', if you wish – I don't mind.
 I don't think we are heading towards revolution,
 But my bomb is lying by my side. Instead of
 Killing a tsar, I'll destroy our government.
 And in the long run I'll kill every communist
 Instead of letting Lenin take up the reins
 Of government immediately after his coup.

MICHAIL BAKUNIN (*walking out*)

Kill Lenin! Kill Lenin! Kill Lenin!
 (*His voice gradually dies away.*)

ANDREW BERWICK

Someone else killed him, I'm sorry to say.
Being unborn, I couldn't have won *that* battle.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*coming in*)

No; you're to win it! You must play
The general-in-chief today.

ANDREW BERWICK

I was speaking about another battle, but all of them are similar.
There's only one battle in the world and I'll win it.
I am Justiciar Knights Commander. I have refounded
The 12th-century Knights Templar and I give orders.
The order is to serve as an armed indigenous rights
Organisation and as a crusader movement (anti-Jihad
Movement). Once you decide to strike, it is better
To kill too many than not enough, or you risk reducing
The desired ideological impact of the strike, of the bomb.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Here my fine fellows come! You see,
Of very different years they be –
Dress, armour different: you will not
Come badly off with such a lot.

ANDREW BERWICK

I have recruited the Britons along with seven others
From France, Germany, Holland, Greece, Russia,
Norway and Serbia. Don't apologise, make excuses
Or express regret, for you are acting in self-defence.
I authorise a pre-emptive strike against the Muslims.

NOSTRADAMUS (*coming in*)

In the year 2020 and seven months
From the sky comes the great King of Terror.
He will bring back to life the King of the Mongols:
Before and after, war reigns.

ANDREW BERWICK

That's why I authorise a pre-emptive strike.
I'm another great King of Terror

And I'll strike, strike, strike, until the other King
Dies on my Island of Death, on my Earth of Death.

NOSTRADAMUS

The great one of the East
By land, sea and air
With the great army
Will cross with death.

ANDREW BERWICK

And I'll wait for him with *my* death,
My bombs, *my* planes, *my* nuclear weapons.
The whole Earth will become
A heap of fertiliser – a huge atom bomb.
Armed with Archimedes' lever
I'll raise this bomb and drop it on that King
And his army. Nothing will remain of them,
Not even a cloud of dust, a speck of dust.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Now on the right our phalanx brings
Its serried front, like lightning flings
Itself on the weak spot, and straight,
As ocean waves in stormy weather,
The forces, matched in bulk and weight,
In fray tumultuous clash together,
Nothing was ever better done;
For us the battle has been won.

ANDREW BERWICK

Too complicated. I'll win the battle
By throwing my Earth-like bomb.

Enter FOUR VICTIMS

FIRST

It was quiet. I could hear his footsteps
Getting closer. I could hear him
Change the chamber on his gun.

SECOND

I saw people falling in the water
 After being shot. People were getting
 Shot while they were trying to swim
 Away. People were injured or dead
 On the footpath above me.

THIRD

I heard a lot of screaming,
 And then he was standing
 On the path right above me.

FOURTH

I think he was shouting and screaming
 As well, almost as if he was
 Celebrating. I'm not sure it was him,
 But it sounded like it was because
 Everyone else was quiet.
 It wasn't the previous screams
 Of fear, agony or panic.

ANDREW BERWICK

I'm fed up with your tales of woe.
 Are you alive? Are you dead?
 If you're still alive, come closer.
 I'll take you to heaven, to my Father.

NOSTRADAMUS

In the year 2011 and seven months
 A handsome young man will come.
 In his van there's huge quantity of
 Peace. He'll spread it over the Earth.

JOHN PAUL II (to FOUR VICTIMS)

You poor things – you are all wet.
 It is your blood, I bet, I bet.

FOUR VICTIMS (*singing in unison*)

You are right – it's our blood.
 Our blood and our mud.
 We are lying on the Earth.

IAGO (*coming in*)

Put your money in your purse.

ANDREW BERWICK

I'll finish you off! I'll finish you off!

FOUR VICTIMS (*crying in unison*)

Oh, oh, oh, oh!

(*Their voices gradually die away.*)

ANDREW BERWICK and IAGO (*raising their hands to heaven and singing together*)

Si, per ciel marmoreo giuro!

Per le attorte folgori!

Per la Morte e per l'oscuro mar sterminator!

che sfolgori

questa man ch'io levo e stendo !

Dio vendicator !

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI (*ad spectatores*)

I'll translate this text for you.

'Yes, I swear by the marble heaven!

By the forked lightning!

By death and by the dark destroying sea!

Let this hand which I raise

and stretch forth

soon blaze in wild transport of rage!

God of vengeance!'

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE (*coming in*)

The secret of the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest

Enjoyment of existence is: to *live dangerously!*

Build your cities under Vesuvius! Send your ships

Into uncharted seas! Live at war with your peers.

Make bombs, sing songs while sending your bullets

To where they belong. Here is a song for you:

(*singing*)

My bullets dance in other people's hearts

Like Zarathustra. My prophetic bullets.

They say that Paradise is near. Their joy
Explodes into giggles as they tear
A multitude of bodies to shreds.

ANDREW BERWICK

I'll sing this song on Utoya. My bullets
Will also sing this song. Our unique choir
Will be performing the Hallelujah Chorus
At the concert. So will my will to power.
The so-called massacre will be a concert.
Please, come to my concert hall. I'll stand
On the street corner handing out tickets.
Adults pay an admission charge but children
Get in free. I've already killed their fathers.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Although the most acute judges of the witches,
And even the witches themselves,
Were convinced of the guilt of witchery,
The guilt nevertheless was non-existent.
It is thus with all guilt, with your guilt.

ANDREW BERWICK

I know, I know. Can't I give an open-air concert?
Is it forbidden to play music on islands, in the streets?
So many people do it. Why not your obedient servant?

NOSTRADAMUS

A knight will come. A day, not a night.
Wearing a chemical suit with gas mask
And dressed in a military-style uniform,
He'll point his weapon, this Marxist Hunter.

ANDREW BERWICK

The night of a hunter, the day of a hunter.
Some people go hunting at weekends.
I go hunting at night, by day, at the end,
At the beginning. The end of one bullet
Is the beginning of another, and vice versa.
I'll be searching for the Holy Grail on Utoya.

They hid the Grail on that island, not in
 France, not in the Louvre or elsewhere.
 I cracked the Da Vinci Code this morning.
 What did I find inside it? Youths beg for
 Mercy as I spray bullets into mounds of bodies.
 I am inside this code, inside many corpses.

BERWICK'S LAWYER (*coming in*)

He wanted a change in society and, from his perspective,
 He needed to force through a revolution. He wished
 To attack society and its members, the structure of society –

MICHAIL BAKUNIN (*coming back*)

Long live the Social Revolution!
 Long live the Paris Commune!

BERWICK'S FATHER (*coming in*)

My son, my son! Are you listening?
 Here's our fellow countryman.
 Will you listen to *him*? He is famous.

ROALD AMUNDSEN (*coming in*)

I believe that if we pay attention
 To the existent forces of nature,
 And seek to work with them,
 We shall find the safest and
 Easiest method of reaching the Pole.
 You are working against human nature,
 Against humanity and human laws.

ANDREW BERWICK

I want to reach the Pole Star, not the Pole.
 Can't you see I don't walk on the Earth?
 I'm flying like a bird over islands and men.

ROALD AMUNDSEN (*to other participants*)

We are nature, human nature, and we should talk to him.
 We are the only animals to have the power of reason,
 And he must listen to reason – he isn't deaf yet.

BREIVIK'S FATHER

My son isn't deaf, nor is he short-sighted.
He can kill a god walking around Olympus.

CHORUS

Why don't you stay on Earth, on your farm?
Why not grow carrots, potatoes and parsnips?
What do you do in the air? The air is not
Hospitable. You may fall from your Olympus.

ANDREW BERWICK

Dream ye of peace's day?
Dream on who may!
War is the signal-cry,
Conquer or die!

CHORUS

What can you conquer? Whom? When?
Your action will be condemned
As an act of barbarism and cowardice.

PAUL BERMAN (*coming in*)

It is all too easy to believe
That someone would imagine
That they were reviving
A medieval ascetic eschatological
Military order. It has been
The dream of one group after
Another. It is the jihadi idea.

ANDREW BERWICK

I don't care about other groups and their failures.
You always fail if you prefer your comfort
To adventure, the Earth to heaven where one
Flies pointing one's rifle at poor human beings.

CHORUS

Who in peace would rekindle
War's terrible flame,
Shall see his hopes dwindle

In sorrow and shame.

ANDREW BERWICK

The time for dialogue is over.

We gave peace a chance.

The time for armed resistance has come.

CHORUS

Why shouldn't we talk? During certain scenes of your play

There isn't any script and the actors just improvise the dialogue.

So let's improvise it. We say to you, 'We love you very much.'

What do you answer? Can't you improvise it? Just say,

'I love you too.' You can also say, 'I don't hate you.'

At least you shouldn't hate and kill us. We have no more cheeks,

No more bodies. We are just corpses. Don't you like corpses?

ANDREW BERWICK

I do. I like corpses very much.

CHORUS

You're sure to build up your universal love from small beginnings.

ANDREW BERWICK

I don't like museums and ready-made things.

I should create works of art myself.

'Do-it-yourself' happens to be my motto.

So I'll seize political and military control

Of Western European countries and

Implement a cultural conservative political agenda.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

You should draw the security services

To central Oslo by exploding a car bomb

Outside government offices.

Then you'll travel to Utoya, taking

One of the ferries that are supposed

To bring campers and others

Over from the mainland.

ANDREW BERWICK

I know your text by heart. I don't need you any more.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI (*walking out*)

Kill them! Kill them! Kill them!

(*His voice gradually dies away.*)

CHORUS

He mounts, he mounts! Yet in the farness

He shows undwindled to our gaze,

Like conqueror in battle harness,

And all in brass and steel ablaze.

HENNING MANKEL (*coming in*)

He thinks he has something to say,

But he will be counted among history's

Human monsters. We'll put him

In the Natural History Museum. Killing

Is in the nature of things, men and women.

ANDREW BERWICK

At least I'm not a ready-made object or sculpture.

I created them myself – my body, mind and soul.

On Utoya I was to become what I am. What am I?

A human monster perhaps. But I am myself

And that's what counts. I am, therefore I am.

JOHN PAUL II

It is God who created you in His own image.

You are a ready-made object after all.

You are an object of His love, of our love.

ANDREW BERWICK

Do you still love me?

JOHN PAUL II

I'm always thinking about you.

ANDREW BERWICK

Don't you have other thoughts in your head?

Don't you have other loves in your body?

JOHN PAUL II (*walking out*)

Don't kill them! Don't kill them! Don't kill them!

(*His voice gradually dies away.*)

ANDREW BERWICK

Let me recite a poem for you.

I fly and I don't want to die.

So many black spots on the Earth.

Are they human beings or mud?

Why should I shoot mud dead?

Isn't it dead already? Or is

Everything alive, even mud?

Does mud like the Muslims

And communist artists? Is mud itself

An artist of sorts? What are its works?

Does it build mud huts with grass roofs?

Is mud mad? Does mud create madmen?

Do I reflect God or mud? I am

A mirror of myself. But what am I?

Screams of 'traitor' and 'betrayal'

Are ringing out. I won't betray myself.

Do you like my poem, my neighbours? You don't?

Do you think I'm a bad poet, a lump of mud?

You don't even notice me. You say I am nobody.

Or you say: 'There are lumps of mud all over the carpet.'

My doppelgängers and I are lying on your carpet. So you

Clean your carpet. And I'll clean *my* carpet.

The Earth is my carpet and I'll clean it sooner or later.

The vehicle of history got bogged down in your heavy mud.

CHORUS

A bike raced by and spattered mud over our clothes.

ANDREW BERWICK

This bike was me – Andrew Berwick.

But let us leave mud alone. I've got

Other words for you and your brains.

You are a spoonful of redcurrant jelly –

Soft and sweet, all talk and no action.

AN OFFICER (*coming in*)

Minutes before Breivik's hearing began,
Reports started to circulate that Interpol
Was involved in an operation that indicated
The plot behind the attacks in Norway last
Friday might be larger than previously thought.

ANDREW BERWICK

I'm not alone. My doppelgängers are lying
On your carpets, on your walls and ceilings.
They're lying in your beds. They're your
Girlfriends and boyfriends, your husbands.
They're lying all over the sky. They're God.
Can't you see the stars in the sky? Count them!
They'll kill you, all of you. You must die.

CHORUS

We come to Utoya and pay our respects.
We hold hands and clutch our children
Tight as we lay flowers tagged with
Messages lamenting lives lost. So many
Lives, so many losses. A bunch of irises.
Beside the bunch and some scented candles
There is a picture of two beaming teenagers
Dressed in ball gowns. One smiling face
Is circled. A vicious circle. Life, death.

ANDREW BERWICK

You don't love my poems, my novel.
Why do you say you love me? If you do,
You must love whatever I do, even
When you get killed by my bullets.
Don't you love my bullets? You should love
Whatever I have: my uniform, my smirk.
'I told you it would end in disaster,' I said
With a self-satisfied smirk on my face.
You neither listened to me nor saw my smirk.

CROWN PRINCE HAAKON (*coming in*)

Tonight the streets are filled with love.

CHORUS

That's right – we love the victims.

We converge upon the vast field of

Flowers that has steadily grown

In the heart of Oslo since the attack.

We express our hatred of the monster

As we carry white or red roses.

ANDREW BERWICK

Tonight the streets are filled with hatred.

People chase the vehicle I am travelling in,

Banging on its doors. I'm taken to the rear

Of Oslo's central court. Wearing a pink

Shirt and red jumper, I'm heading

Towards my destiny. They also hate

My shirt and jumper. They'll never wear

Pink and red clothes again. Do I smile?

I wish I could display a faint smile.

A broad smile would be out of place.

AN ONLOOKER (*pointing at another onlooker*)

That man lost three friends on Utoya Island.

What do you have to say now?

ANDREW BERWICK

Not guilty.

THE ONLOOKER

Can't you say anything else?

ANDREW BERWICK

Always ensure that you follow tactical

Grooming/clothing/lifestyle standards

And plan and execute an appropriate

Clothing/behavioural strategy. Strategy!

CHORUS

Oh, sacred poesy,
 Heavenward thy soaring be!
 Shine on, thou brightest star,
 Afar, and still more afar,
 Yet doth thy glorious strain
 Visit us still, and fain
 To hail it we are.

ANDREW BERWICK

Now you appreciate my poetry, don't you?
 I call it an appropriate behavioural strategy.
 Or are you merely afraid of my bullets and bombs?

CHORUS

Would you please recite another poem of yours?

ANDREW BERWICK

All right. Here it is:

*The Grail is where I am not. I'm looking for it.
 Without it, life has no meaning, no words, no music –
 Only self-satisfied smirks, money and stupidity.
 I should fight for it: the Grail is not on my dinner table.
 I drink wine, not blood. Should I drink blood? It's enough
 To plunge my hands in it. The Grail is blood, nothing
 Else. The Grail is nothing, for blood is everywhere.
 I should just open a few veins, pierce holes in them.
 There are holes everywhere and blood flows through them.
 Why should it flow through veins? There are holes for it,
 Beautiful round holes. Your blood overflowed
 When I poured it into the cup destined for it.
 The Earth is this cup. I poured your blood on the Earth.
 Christ is lying in your midst. Where is He? So many
 Corpses, so much blood. How to find Christ's blood
 In my Pacific ocean? What does it taste like?*

CHORUS

Spare our lives! Spare our lives!
 There are no Christs among us.
 If you are looking for His blood, look

Elsewhere, on some cross or other.

NOSTRADAMUS

A young man will look for the Grail.

He'll find it on an island, in the North.

A river of blood flows. There are no dams.

The Grail is on the island, in the blood.

ANDREW BERWICK

Here is the Grail. I've found it at last.

(Exeunt everyone except Breivik and his father.)

BERWICK'S FATHER

You're not likely to change your mind, are you?

ANDREW BERWICK

I am not, I am not.

BERWICK'S FATHER

God bless your soul.

20

I don't know where I am and it doesn't really matter – in the context of my story. Of course I know where I am in *real* life, but my story is different from both my life and my thoughts. I go back and forth, trying to catch up with the events that are no longer there, in the present. One might say they're entirely in the past and that is partly true. Yet they're also in the present and even in the future whose outline appears somewhere on the horizon. There are so many outlines and some of them are clearly defined against the evening sky. And then the sky disappears and becomes the morning sky; the outlines disappear too. And once again I retrace my steps in search of *some* outlines, distant and insignificant.

Does our holiday have *any* importance now? It is gone and I can't even find its corpse, for I didn't murder it. It died a natural death, as all holidays do. There's nothing unusual about their deaths: time is reluctant to stop, being weary of its biblical exploits. So time doesn't stop and we are no longer in Switzerland. Dana and I are in France now and I have to make an effort in order to describe the last days of our sojourn in Diableret, of which my computer has never heard. The word 'Diableret' is underlined now; there are two red lines on my screen. How many red lines are there in my life? How many rivulets of blood?

At the hotel we were *not* alone, which does *not* contradict the laws of logic: hotels are *not* built for two people. There were 30 or 40 people in *our* hotel and some of them were half-people, so to speak. They were invalids or disabled individuals and some of them couldn't even walk, let alone climb the mountains that surrounded the hotel on every side. Lake Geneva wasn't included in the panoramic view and the ocean of blood

that Anders Breivik spoke of was far away, as far as I could judge. So we didn't fear for our lives and often walked along the road climbing steeply up the nearest mountain.

Once we started to climb this road without paying attention to the sky where no superman could be seen that morning. Is *that* why we didn't so much as glance at it? In other words, we didn't seem to care about the weather and I don't think the weather cared about *us* that day. On our way we realised, however, that a heavy rain might spoil our pleasure – not to the point of making us cancel our plans. I mean we didn't cancel our plans on account of our awareness of the sky's threats and menaces. Actually we intended to have lunch in a restaurant perched on the top of the mountain. It wasn't really perched on the top, but that mountain had a few tops and on one of them there was a restaurant we had taken notice of during one of our previous walks. So we headed towards it, disregarding all threats and our moods that might change at any minute, at the slightest provocation.

Little by little, a fog we didn't welcome began to envelop us to show how nature loved its inhabitants in spite of the latter's bad habits: building nuclear power plants and so forth. Again I recalled Breivik who noted that attacks on nuclear power stations or other sensitive structures could easily cause havoc. He was right, judging from how few tourists have visited Japan after the catastrophe that struck my favourite country this year. A tsunami, an earthquake – a series of earthquakes, to be exact. Now the Japanese offer free tickets to the people who wish to spend a few days in front of Mount Fuji and in hospitable gardens.

Breivik goes on to list numerous UK oil rigs, including one inland in Dorset and numerous locations in the North Sea. He proposes attacks on Britain's 24 nuclear reactors, names reprocessing plants and gives a list of nuclear research facilities. Of course I didn't think about these details because my memory was in no mood for it. Even when my memory is in a good mood, it is incapable of giving me a wide spectrum of life so that I have to content myself with odds and ends, with guessing games. It is as if my memory had been smashed to pieces lying scattered over landscapes and cityscapes. Now and then I pick up a piece and wonder if it belongs to my memory. Suddenly the piece in question starts talking and I realise it *is* a part of my memory, of my old unfaithful memory.

This time nothing talked to me; the blurry landscape was almost silent and even our footsteps didn't resound in the air, in the universe. Only Dana talked and I had to listen to what she said – out of politeness and fear. I feared we might have another quarrel that was in the air, to tell the truth. We quarrelled twice a day and that day hadn't heard our shouts yet, which wasn't surprising, given our schedule. Indeed we went hiking in the morning and so had plenty of time: a time to quarrel, a time to weep.

She said she was afraid of the fog. 'We won't see anything,' she said.

'What do we need to see?' I asked.

'Our path.'

'We know we should climb this mountain. The restaurant we're looking for is on its summit.'

'There are many summits, many restaurants, many worlds,' she said.

'We'll land up on or in one of them,' I said. 'We have no choice.'

'I'm tired already. And I'm starving.'

'That's why we're going to a restaurant,' I said.

'Why didn't we have lunch at the hotel or elsewhere?'

'We'll have lunch *elsewhere*.'

'Where? On the moon?'

‘Perhaps. But I’m afraid you’re too tired to walk as far as the moon.’

The fog continued to play with us. Now it seemed to put a blanket on the landscape as if Christie himself had been in charge of the weather and its metamorphoses; now we saw *something* through the holes left by its invasion. How negligent the fog was: we could still see the slope and even a sort of path we had to follow in order to reach the restaurant about which Dana had dreamt for some time. But she continued to complain and soon the rain began to harass our faces and clothes, adding insult to injury.

Then she fell or pretended she fell and twisted her ankle. I had the feeling her ankle underwent this torture for five minutes at least. Her scream pierced another hole in the fog, giving us an opportunity to escape from the prison of whiteness. Was she able to escape? I asked myself a few questions about our predicament. I didn’t answer them and we continued to climb that mountain: Dana hadn’t twisted her ankle after all. She was talking and I realised that, in addition to talking, she was on the verge of tears. By no stretch of the imagination could she be seriously described as an artist: she always cried in *real* life, not on an *imaginary* stage. Her hysterics rang true and they *were* true, for all I know. The rain worked for an hour without respite.

We were not late for lunch and I did my best to boost Dana’s morale as we continued to climb the slope I failed to describe. Why should I describe it? It was under our feet; we proceeded on our way towards the restaurant. Why should I describe every stone, every blade of grass? Let them describe themselves if they feel like it. Nature is very talkative and speaks for itself (or herself) whenever we take the trouble to listen to it. During that stroll I was listening to my heart pounding faster and faster as if it had resolved to compete with time. And the pace of time didn’t slacken during our stroll or hike, for it took no notice of our problems and of the rain that had considerably delayed our lunch and almost dashed all our hopes.

At last we saw the path or something that looked like it. What do paths generally look like? Straight lines that lead us somewhere: to the top of the world or to its bottom. Sometimes they just lead us to a forest where we can spend a few hours, walking with our friends and talking to them about our failures or triumphs. I couldn’t talk to Dana about my triumphs; besides, we were not in the woods and the slope of a mountain is hardly appropriate for boasting, especially if you’re short of breath. I was and so our conversation didn’t lead us anywhere with the exception of the restaurant that Dana kept touching upon as if the mere word ‘restaurant’ could take us to a place full of bottles and dishes.

I felt like lying down and having a nap then and there, but Dana was determined to reach the table we had reserved the day before and we continued to climb and walk in the rain as if to express our love for the musical I don’t really love. Eventually the path grew so wide I thought we had reached a road; and all roads led to the restaurant where two bottles of wine awaited us.

I ordered a cup of tea; Dana drank some whisky to guard against the consequences of our walk. Neither of us caught a cold and that was a sort of triumph we might have spoken about for a few days; we missed this opportunity. I don’t remember what we talked about during our lunch. The wine we drank wasn’t very good – nothing to write home about. What else is there to say about that stroll, walk and talk? I think I talked to her about Breivik, his book and projects. ‘Do you know that an attack on a nuclear installation could lead to 10,000 to 50,000 casualties?’ I said.

‘Why are you talking about that? There are no nuclear power plants in the neighbourhood.’

‘I talk for the sake of talking.’

‘So what?’ she said.

‘Even the threat of such an attack could force the British government to begin expelling Muslims or force them to convert to Christianity, while demolishing mosques and banning Islamic languages.’

‘Why should they expel Muslims? I like them.’ She looked at me as if I had done something of the sort.

‘I haven’t expelled anybody yet,’ I said.

‘You *couldn’t* expel anybody. You live alone with your servant. And you’re not likely to expel *him* because you need his services and even his voice.’

‘Do I really need his voice?’

‘Don’t you need to talk to someone? From time to time?’

‘I talk to you on the phone. And I’ve got a friend, several friends.’

‘Do you often talk to *them*?’

‘I don’t know. Why are we talking about that?’

‘About what would you like to talk? About nuclear plants?’

I had no wish to talk about nuclear plants, but I broached another subject that wasn’t too far from nuclear plants: it was centred upon death. ‘Do you like Marxists?’

‘Why are you asking me about *them*?’

‘There’s a man who dreams of killing all his followers.’

‘The followers of Marx?’

‘He killed a lot of other people some time ago.’

‘That maniac in Norway?’

‘You heard about him, didn’t you?’

‘Everybody did.’

‘Do you think that Communists are identical to Marxists? Are they identical twins?’

‘I suppose you can be a Marxist and a capitalist,’ she said.

‘You mean there are more Marxists than Communists?’

‘I don’t care,’ she said.

‘I wonder how many people will die in the course of these years.’

‘Which years?’

‘His document is named 2083 – *A European Declaration of Independence*. He thinks the war to rescue Europe from multiculturalism will last another 72 years. The number of “A and B” traitors in the United Kingdom is put at 62,216.’

‘Why do you remember all these figures?’

‘Breivik is a curious man, a curious-looking man. He excites my curiosity.’

‘Let us talk about something else,’ she said and I obeyed her command.

My car wasn’t waiting for us, but something or someone had to wait in order to get back to the hotel: we were most reluctant to go there on foot. So we waited for a bus without leaving the restaurant whose ceiling and roof protected our clothes from the rain. The bus appeared in the distance, almost on the top of the mountain, and we began to run, fearing we might not catch it. We did catch it in the nick of time and I heaved a sigh of relief. Of course she asked me why I had sighed so ostentatiously and I said something to the effect that I was tired. I didn’t say I had no desire to talk for the sake of talking – on our way back. The bus brought us to the hotel in no time at all because we didn’t talk on the bus, in the presence of other people. We had a lot to hide from other

passengers, but we might have talked about the weather, about our next stroll along a well-trodden path. We did not talk. A bad omen?

This is another subject I'm reluctant to broach: bad omens await us everywhere and we attract them by talking about their effects and connotations. And I don't wish to attract either bad omens or their consequences. We walk along a path and continue to do so while the going is good. And when the going gets tough we stop and look around in search of a loophole through which we may escape into another world where we are bound to feel at ease and happy. Of course, at that point in time and space – last September, in Switzerland – I saw many loopholes and had no need of other worlds to feel at ease from time to time. But I wanted to be on the safe side. I didn't think in terms of prophecies that nature might reveal to put us on our guard or just to scare us out of our wits.

Every morning we had breakfast and I was putting on weight without paying attention to it: at home I usually skip this part of daily nourishment to indulge myself at lunch. When I feel miserable I go to a top restaurant and spoil myself: truffles and Burgundy cheer me up. Truffles were not in season and the wines we drank couldn't vie with the wines I have in my cellar, but I was happy on the whole because I still love Switzerland. I can't say I'm unhappy *now*, but that is beside the point – at least for the time being. So I'll go back to Switzerland.

We are still sitting at the table where our breakfast seems to create a still life that has nothing in common with 17th-century Dutch still lives. But I'm not keen to imitate their still lives – or their *lives*, for that matter. I have my own life to take care of and Dana is sitting opposite me so I wonder if I must take care of her as well, for the sake of another harmony. I've always striven for a sort of harmony in my life, inspired by Einstein, as it were: he wished to find the same harmony in the universe. What would he have done with Breivik, I wonder? Of course Einstein thought more about planets than humans, but the latter are also part of the harmony I'm talking about and we shouldn't nurse the stars to the detriment of our own egos.

The invalids I mentioned earlier didn't make me feel sick; Dana couldn't bear them and kept talking about universal attraction and contamination. 'I'll fall ill if they stay with us,' she said over and over again.

'We can't expulse them from the hotel. Even Breivik wouldn't punish them – they're neither Muslims nor Marxists.'

'But he killed a lot of people who were neither,' she said.

'Of course one might kill a dozen people in our hotel,' I said. 'The police wouldn't come at once.'

'I don't want to *kill* them,' she said. 'Why not move to another floor? It's much easier than killing tourists.'

'Are they tourists or invalids?' I asked. 'Anyway, murder is easy, as Agatha Christie put it.'

'I just want to move to the second floor,' she said.

'Are you sure there are no invalids above us?' I asked.

'There are invalids everywhere,' she answered. The dialogue was over.

But there were other dialogues in store for us. I think she didn't mind. Did I? I was unaware of her feelings and thoughts. Even now I don't know what she thinks and feels. Is it really important? Even when you live with somebody, you should follow the golden rule: live and let live. Otherwise no one is likely to live – neither you nor your neighbours. I follow this golden rule and I manage to keep other lives and worlds at bay; and yet there's enough room for all of them in my castle.

Are we still in Switzerland, in the same hotel, on the same floor? I think so. At least I continue to watch our invalids who have breakfast with us and produce a few sounds – there's too much background noise, in other words. I have no idea what happens in other worlds and on the floor that Dana dreams about. She says that invalids are everywhere and the second floor is part of the world inhabited by invalids. Why does she single this floor out? It isn't the Island of Health, is it?

'During my early youth,' writes Breivik, 'I remember being forced to complete mandatory knitting and sewing courses. I dread these courses as it felt very unnatural – in retrospect, however, this knowledge is an essential skill when constructing and assembling modern ballistic armour.' The invalids were too disabled to knit or sew; their nurses, however, were knitting baby clothes and gloves. And they wouldn't interrupt their work when giving a hand to their cousins or patients. After all, they might have been their relatives in disguise. Contrary to what Breivik might expect, they neither constructed nor assembled modern ballistic armour; they just killed time instead of killing tourists or holidaymakers or both.

'Romanian crusader Vlad the Impaler was a genius of psychological warfare. Like any other ruler, he had two enemies: internal disorder or treason and external Islamic aggressors threatening his country. He was a real master of STAGING cruelty to obtain maximum effect.' Like any other human being, I have two enemies: internal disorder and external aggressors. As I said earlier, I don't mind invalids and I can live with them on the same floor during my holidays, providing my holidays do not last my lifetime. My servant says, 'You're always on holiday,' and he may be right. That doesn't mean I should be surrounded by invalids.

Dana spoke about death whenever she saw a wheelchair or a nurse. The wheelchair in question might be empty, but Dana didn't regard this void as an impediment to her diatribes. 'Do you think Stalin was right?' I asked her.

'How do you mean?'

'He banished invalids to uninhabited islands. Many soldiers were injured during the Second World War. After the war, they lived on those islands.'

'Don't compare me to Stalin,' she said.

'Could I compare myself to Breivik? Do you know what *he* said and did to some extent? Women should be killed, in his opinion. "You will face women in battle and they will not hesitate to kill you. To them, you are just another armed criminal nut. You must therefore embrace and familiarise yourself with the concept of killing women, even very attractive women.'

'Why did you learn this nonsense by heart?' she said.

'A training session – I need to train my memory. Everybody does, as a matter of fact. Joyce learnt a huge portion of Milton's *Paradise Lost* to make sure he hadn't lost his memory after an operation.'

'You know what I'm going to say, don't you?' she asked.

'I don't like guessing games.'

'Why didn't you memorise Dante's *Commedia*? Breivik is not a poet of genius.'

'You mean it was a complete waste of time? What is time? An area of waste ground.'

I didn't learn the whole of Breivik's masterpiece. For instance, in order to quote another bit about women, I have to pick up an old newspaper lying at my feet. What do I read? 'Those who would defy political correctness must behave according to the old rules of our culture. Ladies should be wives and homemakers, not cops or soldiers, and men should still hold doors open for ladies. Children should not be born out of wedlock.

Glorification of homosexuality should be shunned.’ I am also against political correctness – against any *correctness*, for that matter. Instead of being correct, you should be organic and what I have in mind is only partly associated with organic food. You must become what you are and your story will coincide with that of the world, of the old world on which Breivik lavished his praise. Of course you’re supposed to hold the door open when a woman appears on the horizon. She comes nearer and nearer to the open door; you continue to hold it open even when she disappears beyond another horizon, for there are many women in the world. And sooner or later, all of them will walk through your door.

Children should not be born out of wedlock; they should not be born at all, in my opinion. I wonder what the Buddha thought about our birth. He used to say: ‘Today we’re going to work on an exercise that aims to improve your defence mechanism.’ He wished to protect us from suffering, but you need all the strength you can muster to learn yogic techniques. It is therefore much easier to refrain from seeing the light of day. The dark of night must also be shunned and the only way to accomplish this feat is to keep away from birth, from mothers and their wombs. In the cold light of day, you realise it is better not to be born; you stunt your growth and start walking back towards the womb that offered you creature comforts in former times. And then you get beyond this womb: the door is wide open. It is God Who holds it wide open, our merciful Lord.

Should I glorify homosexuality? I must have been born bisexual, judging from my present conduct and my desires or their absence. Should I glorify bisexuality? I just live my life in which there are many strains and strands. I have a definite strain of snobbery in my brain and probably in the rest of my body. During our holiday, Dana often reproached me for this strain that spoiled her fun, according to her words. I suppose I can’t help it because it was in my genes when I was born and even before, in my mother’s womb. Even in my mother’s womb I must have been a frightful snob; yet I don’t think I was a wine snob at the time unless you’re allowed to drink wine in your mother’s womb. What kind of liquid do you sip there all day long?

I agree that ladies should be wives and homemakers, which doesn’t mean I should marry tomorrow or next week. There are many potential husbands in France and elsewhere; you don’t need my castle, as far as I know. Alas, Dana thinks otherwise. She even needs my body and mind; at least her words say something to this effect. I listen to her words and nod my head – by way of an answer. Does my head answer her questions? Actually she asks no questions because she knows everything. She knows she should live with me and take care of my existence. ‘I’m not on the point of dying,’ I say to her.

‘Never mind,’ she answers. ‘Prevention is better than cure.’

‘I’m not even ill,’ I say. ‘You must be confusing me with those invalids.’

‘Your *psyche* is ill,’ she says. She may be right.

At some point she said she would stay with me all her life or throughout *my* life: I don’t remember the exact wording of her declaration. I even know the whereabouts of this point because she said that in Switzerland and I could see she was determined to keep her word. I looked at her and saw this determination, nothing else. Her face was nothing but the desire to live with me for the rest of my life. She is 12 years my junior so she may outlive my bad habits and snobbery – no doubt about that. What would Breivik say about that? Why should he talk about me? To whom would he talk about me? To his lawyer, to the judge, to the hangman? No, his body will not dangle from the gallows. It might dangle from the ceiling of his cell. No, he is not suicidal.

On June 22, he paid a visit to a Chinese takeaway. ‘I bought three portions. Beef with noodles and fried rice, yummy!’ He was neither depressed nor suicidal in those days. Even now a gloomy expression doesn’t so

much as approach his face. The judge awaits him in his office; he walks in with a cheery ‘Good morning!’ and sits down without being invited to do so.

On July 18, he loaded up his VW with explosives and had a good workout; he drank three protein shakes. What did *I* do on July 18? If Poirot asked me this question, I would say: ‘I don’t remember anything. I don’t even remember what I did yesterday. Are you implying I might have committed murder on July 18? But where’s the body? I’m not likely to forget human bodies, especially if they’re corpses. And I don’t know how to dispose of corpses. If I killed somebody, the corpse would be lying here, in my room. Do you see any corpses in my room? Or in the living room? Of course not. You see murders everywhere, Monsieur Poirot. But this time even you don’t see anything, if I’m not mistaken. And I’m not mistaken – you’re quite aware of that, aren’t you?’

On June 30 Breivik complained that the farmhouse was infested with beetles. So far, my castle has been spared by beetles and other insects with the exception of mosquitoes. Whenever I open my windows, I see an army of mosquitoes flying in as if there were no hotels in their kingdom, no *other* castles. I wouldn’t mind their flying under my ceiling – silently, almost motionlessly. But they buzz and bite, making me feel miserable once again. Their vulgar behaviour prevents me from sleeping until dawn or until lunch. Why can’t I sleep until lunch? Do you bear any grudge against heavy sleepers?

Why am I talking about mosquitoes, beetles and Chinese takeaways? What puzzles me in Breivik’s book is his relationship with the Grail, his attitude towards the holy vessel. He devotes a poem to this holy relic and says he has found it at last. He might have found it on Utoya, amidst the corpses. Or was the cup in question just an ordinary corpse, nothing else?

21

Reading *The Da Vinci Code* was a real chore for me, but I finished it last week after skipping a lot of superfluous, badly written pages. All of them are badly written, to tell the truth, and the plot leaves a lot to be desired. Of course the common reader is bound to glean *some* information from it because the common reader doesn’t read good books – with the exception of the Bible. So the common reader learns *something* from this novel through which I ploughed for the sake of my own novel.

Dan Brown’s novel speaks mainly about the Grail that some of us continue to seek as if something *could* be found somewhere – not necessarily the cup. His protagonists go from one cipher to another, and the common reader spends a sleepless night, hoping to find the solution on the next page. ‘The suspense is killing me,’ can be heard in our poor universe where an army of common readers turn the pages of this third-rate novel. Somewhere in the middle they learn that the Grail isn’t an object but a human being – Mary Magdalene, of all people. How exciting! After all, Christ was neither homosexual nor impotent. Of course those readers aren’t acquainted with the Gospel of Phillip, let alone with that of Mary Magdalene. Dan Brown quotes the latter Gospel:

And Peter said, ‘Did the Saviour really speak with a woman without our knowledge? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?’

And Levi answered, ‘Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like an adversary. If the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well. That is why he loved her more than us.’

I never thought I would be quoting *The Da Vinci Code* in one of my writings. I seemed to be recovering and then I went into a decline. When did I go into a decline? As usual, my memory doesn't answer my questions. In Latin I learnt how to decline nouns; now I have to learn how to decline my own decline.

The Gospel of Phillip doesn't contradict that of Mary, describing *their* relationship in minute detail. However, Dan Brown disregards the fact that for the Gnostics Mary wasn't really a woman. One or two of the earlier pictures reveal an intriguing androgyny not normally associated with Mary Magdalene. In the Gospel of Thomas, Christ says to his disciples something along these lines: 'I'll have her come here and turn her into a male colleague so she may be like you and enter the Kingdom of God. Thus she'll become a living spirit, akin to your nature. Only males can reach the Kingdom of God and be admitted into its heart, into my Father's heart.'

Jesus and Mary exchange a few kisses, but their kisses have nothing to do with sex and depravity. By means of His breath, Jesus endows Mary with the male polarity and vice versa so that Jesus is also an androgyny to some extent. It doesn't mean He is bisexual, whatever they say in their bestsellers and blockbusters. Dan Brown, for one, affirms that the Gnostics venerated women much more than the Christians. But the Gnostics were suspicious of women's behaviour and motives. One of them, Sophia, put a curse on humanity by bringing about our material world – through the agency of a bad god called Demiurge – and by rubbing shoulders with anti-spiritual creatures and things. Besides, let's not forget that Eve performed another downward *salto mortale* so that we daily echo Shakespeare's witches: 'Toil and trouble, toil and trouble.'

Women are not worshipped by the Gnostics and feminists shouldn't unfavourably compare Christian misogyny with the monuments to females put up by heretics. These monuments are deprived of genitals or rather they have them in abundance. When studying them one by one, many theologians say in unison, 'Too much of a good thing.'

Dan Brown is aware of the fact that the common reader wouldn't be satisfied with a female corpse – that of Mary Magdalene. Human history doesn't depend on it, on her, on him, and so we find a bunch of documents beside the corpse. Actually no one finds them because the Grail is nowhere to be found. Both the author and his readers realise it is *everywhere* so that one should kneel down in the streets and pray to God, regardless of traffic jams and accidents. Once again I feel duty-bound to quote this book. Am I a male personification of Sophia? Do I demean myself by multiplying this bestseller?

'It is the mystery and wonderment that serve our souls, not the Grail itself. The beauty of the Grail lies in her ethereal nature.' Marie Chauvel gazed up at Rosslyn now. *'For some, the Grail is a chalice that will bring them everlasting life. For others, it is the quest for lost documents and secret history. And for most, I suspect the Holy Grail is simply a grand idea...a glorious unattainable treasure that somehow, even in today's world of chaos, inspires us'.*

If you dream about a Bentley, the Grail is within your reach, provided you have enough money for it. It is Bentleys that inspire us in today's world, and some believe in them, in this glorious idea. For some, however, any Rolls Royce is a glorious unattainable treasure that inspires them in the world where they are not stinking rich. They may call this world 'chaotic' because they think in terms of equality, not of disparity. The growing disparity between rich and poor winds them up. But what can they do? They can't sit down in their Bentleys and

drive to the end of the world. They can, however, step aside, moving into *another* world where the Grail awaits them patiently, without a murmur.

And what about everlasting life? Borges, for one, believes it is a bad idea – the wrong horse that we should by no means back. On the contrary, we should rein in our excitement and curiosity, keeping away from the line about which Shakespeare says in *Macbeth*: ‘What! will the line stretch out to th’crack of doom?’ We should repeat this line every day, several times a day. We should engrave it not only on our memory but also on our destiny. Aren’t we scared like Macbeth? He sees a straight line along which there stand Banquo’s numerous offspring. He has no children himself and so his dynasty will die with him; he can’t cope with the grief he feels inside. We listen to his monologue in which there are several exclamation marks: down! filthy hags! start, eyes! what! horrible sight! What would he have felt, had he seen eight Macbeths along this line? Not his offspring – his own persona. Eight Macbeths, a pledge of immortality.

They all stand there and look at each other. They recognise each other and shake each other’s hands. There are 16 hands along this line and they all belong to one man. Is he the Buddha or an Indian deity? ‘Who are you?’ says Macbeth.

‘I am Macbeth. And you?’

‘I am Macbeth too.’

‘You’re not my son, are you?’

‘I’m not.’

‘You’re not Banquo’s son either, I hope.’

‘I’m not.’

‘And who are *you*?’

‘I’m also Macbeth.’

‘Are you my doppelgänger?’

‘It’s you who are my doppelgänger.’

‘There are no doppelgängers among us, gentlemen. We are all Macbeths.’

‘How come?’

‘There’s one Macbeth and he’s immortal.’

‘Is he? And what about us?’

‘We represent his immortality.’

‘Are we no more than a picture?’

‘A picture of immortality – or eternity, if you wish.’

‘I’m weary of standing here.’

‘Are we queuing for immortality?’

‘We might be queuing for eternity – or Paradise, if you wish.’

‘I’d rather go to bed.’

‘I’d rather die.’

‘Let us die together.’

But they don’t die, for all their efforts. They’re like the Flying Dutchman whose fate depends on a woman’s love. He seduces a woman who loses her virginity and they both die in the sea, their bodies breaking the waves. Macbeth, on the other hand, goes on living. He hears a voice that imparts to him the following truth:

‘Laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.’ (How delightful it is to quote a *good* book.) Men are not born of crocodiles, are they? So no one harms Macbeth and he goes on living; nor does he die of cancer. No wood climbs Dunsinane hill and flies across the sky. Macbeth goes on living. He kills all pretenders to the throne and even today their corpses can be seen in his palace; they’re strewn over his carpets. These corpses are also immortal.

Homer depicted by Borges in his story *The Immortal* has almost forgotten *The Odyssey*. Macbeth still recalls his victims and the dagger he has used for many years when in need of quenching his blood-oriented thirst. This dagger lies on his bedside cabinet from which he can snatch it at any time. But his arm is growing heavier and heavier; the dagger remains where it is, unable to accomplish its task. Little by little, Macbeth is forgetting his hobby because any immortal is bound to lose himself and whatever he has always stood for. And she forgets she was Desdemona murdered by her bully of a husband a few centuries ago.

Swift also describes immortals, but I don’t recall what he says about them. Apparently, they’re middle-aged and never grow old because they say to themselves: ‘I am immortal and I can’t die.’ Or they’re old, too old to understand anything and even their own immortality escapes them. They say to each other: ‘We are too old. We are to die very soon. We can’t live like that. It is so degrading to have to live when one may die in one’s own bed or elsewhere. No one should have to suffer such degrading treatment. Other people get a very different treatment by fate.’ They’re right of course, but being right doesn’t guarantee your independence from immortality. So they go on living like Macbeth and Homer. What’s the use?

When searching for the Grail, I always get sidetracked into discussing other subjects that can wait because they’re probably immortal too. Among them there’s death of course, and the Grail is everlasting life, according to Dan Brown and other people. ‘The beauty of the Grail lies in her ethereal nature,’ says Dan Brown. Is that why I get sidetracked on my way to the Grail, to the elusive woman who keeps it or becomes it with the passing of the years? I think the nature of the Grail is not ethereal: you must be able to touch it, to embrace it, to drink from it. Jesus’ blood is not ethereal, for some people drank it and others saw it flowing from His wounds. And He asked His disciples to touch His body after the Resurrection. One of them did and felt His body which was not different from his own body except that it had risen from the dead.

Several knights leave their respective round tables and go in search of the Grail, climbing mountains and crossing gigantic forests that disappear after their own disappearance: as soon as a knight gets beyond the horizon, a desert stands in for a forest and life goes on. One knight meets a hermit who tells him what he should do. But the hermit speaks enigmatically and the knight doesn’t understand anything: many knights are perfect or imperfect fools. So life goes on; so does the knight and other knights follow his example. Galahad, Perceval and Bors continue their journey, eventually reaching Sarras – the Heavenly City in the East. Perceval confuses Sarras with Satan, which accounts for his delay and even failure to secure the Grail at the earliest opportunity. All opportunities come late because they’re not very punctual.

In the Kingdom of Grail nothing and nobody are punctual. Kings are always late, forgetting that punctuality is the politeness of Kings. But knights are very polite and so dare not touch the damsels or married women they encounter during their manifold, common search. They forget what or whom they are searching for. Some of them think they search for a woman; Lancelot belongs to this category of knights. In his opinion, he follows hard on the queen’s heels. No wonder he says to his fellow warriors, ‘I’ve found the Grail. I’m following her closely.’

‘Is the Grail a woman?’ says Bors.

‘Haven’t you read *The Da Vinci Code*? “Her ethereal nature.” Thus the author speaks about the Grail.’

‘So the Grail is King Arthur’s wife,’ says Camelot.

‘Of course. And we should kneel before her.’

‘All right. And what about Jesus’ blood? Does it flow in *her* veins?’

‘His blood flows in *our* veins,’ says Galahad.’

‘Do you mean to say we are all Christs, all of us?’

‘Yes, exactly.’

‘So we have to search for ourselves. Each of us is the Grail. Let us drink each other.’

Lancelot is temporally blinded because the gods have to punish him for his adulterous love. He can’t even see the bodies of his buddies who continue to ride their horses. After a while they dismount and walk along a tortuous path. The Grail walks along this path too. She runs down the steps with a group of knights hard on her heels. The Grail is a beautiful woman; she is pursued not only by knights, but also by paparazzi who carry shields and wear suits of armour to pass themselves off as knights. And Lancelot stands in the middle of the crowd, turning this way and that. He has no idea where his queen is and what she is doing. Perhaps she does nothing at all: this is her favourite occupation. She thinks about Lancelot now and then, but actions speak louder than thoughts and she doesn’t act, whatever they say in their chronicles.

Three knights take part in a Mass during which the holy vessel they all dream about is used as the chalice – or as a cup, a glass of wine. Christ appears first as celebrant and then as a radiant child and finally, in the Host, as a crucified man. The knights see the famous Wounded King who is Perceval’s uncle or brother. Blood flows from his wounds so that some think he is being crucified. ‘Everyone is being crucified,’ he says to alleviate his suffering: you feel much better if many people keep you company. ‘Life is a huge cross,’ he adds, looking at everyone. Galahad dies in an odour of sanctity; other knights go on living. Some say they’re immortal; others deny this piece of information.

The Grail is elusive: all these names and exploits don’t lead me anywhere. Where do I have to go? I’m searching for the Grail, but the Grail doesn’t care about me or anybody else, with the exception of Jesus Christ Who doesn’t care about me either. Even Galahad doesn’t care about me, let alone the Wounded King. The latter cares only about his wounds that do not respond to a series of treatments. ‘Do stop picking at your wounds, or they’ll never heal,’ says his doctor.

‘You won’t heal me,’ says the Wounded King to the doctor.

‘Why do you raise doubts about my abilities?’ says the doctor.

‘Only Jesus Christ can heal me.’

‘And what about the so-called Perfect Fool?’

‘Are *you* the Perfect Fool?’ asks the Wounded King.

‘No, I’m afraid I’m just an imperfect fool and there are fools of this kind in your kingdom.’

‘Which one to choose?’ asks the Wounded King.

‘You should look for the *Perfect* Fool,’ says the doctor.

‘To become the Perfect Fool, you should read bad books,’ says the King to the doctor.

Meanwhile Perceval realises he should ask questions instead of staying silent. He seldom utters a word so his colleagues compare him to deserts. ‘I was struck by the silent grandeur of the desert,’ said one of them at the

Round Table. Which round table am I speaking about? There are three of them, if I'm not mistaken. The third one was established by Merlin the enchanter, but the Grail is not on this table, contrary to what might be presumed. So it is better to speak about the fourth table from the centre of which there grows the Grail in the flesh. The knights touch it and drink from it, saying to each other that they can also *eat* from it.

At Pentecost the Grail makes an appearance again, floating veiled in a beam of sunlight. The knights jump up and down and stretch out their hands in the hope of catching it. But the Grail is as elusive as ever: even when it stands on the Round Table and you eat from it as if it were your plate or dish, you don't own it because no one can own the Grail except God Himself. The knights pledge themselves to go in search of it despite the sky across which this chalice or vessel is flying like a silver bird. 'Let us catch it,' says Bors. 'We don't have to search for it.' Again they jump up and down with rage and the Grail smiles at them. After all, the Grail is a woman; I'm not sure it is Mary Magdalene, Christ's travelling companion. Actually she is not His girlfriend, contrary to what so many readers believe; nor is she his companion because the Greek word for 'companion' is masculine. Nor is she his boyfriend, contrary to what some perverse readers affirm with gusto. She is just the Grail or the absence of it.

Once upon a time, the First Table of the Grail was constructed – the living image of the Table at which Christ had a meal with His disciples on the eve of His arrest. A fish is laid in Christ's place. I'm speaking now about the First Table, for at the Last Table – at the Table of the Last Supper – Christ was sitting in the flesh, surrounded by His disciples among whom there were no women. At the First Table twelve knights may sit down and they do sit down without asking permission to do so: they believe they're Christ's disciples and act accordingly. A thirteenth seat, representing the place of Judas, remains empty. One knight tries to sit in it after uttering these words: 'I hope you won't take me for Judas.' He is swallowed up and no one repeats his exploit for fear of finding himself in the river of Hell or in one of Hell's furnaces. Only Lancelot's son Galahad can sit in it unscathed and King Arthur says to himself that this knight will find the Grail and bring it to him.

But the Grail is longed for by many people, including the Wounded King who wants to heal his wounds and die, for the only way to die is healing one's wounds. That is what happens to the Wounded King at the end of the story: as soon as he is back on his feet again, he gives up the ghost. The ghost flies for a while above the Round Table, but nobody mistakes it for the Grail because everybody is acquainted with it by now. 'Do you think it's the Grail?' asks Gawain.

'No,' answers Bors. 'The Grail is Mary Magdalene and not the King's ghost.'

'You're mistaken,' says Lancelot. 'The Grail is a piece of music.'

'Is it?' asks Perceval.

'You are not Perceval, by the way,' says Lancelot to Perceval. 'You are Parsifal and Wagner wrote an opera about you.'

'About *me*?'

'That's right.'

'Why?'

'Because you are the Perfect Fool. There's only one perfect fool in the world.'

'Does the Perfect Fool deserve an opera?' says Galahad.

'Wagner thought so.'

'I think Wagner was wrong,' says Gawain.

‘Music is never wrong,’ says Lancelot. ‘So the opera is right.’
And they listen to Wagner’s opera in silence.

22

I listen to this music and see a beam of light even when Amfortas – the Wounded King – complains about his wounds. Any piece of music is a beam of light, even Mozart’s *Requiem*. I still don’t know whether it is a sunbeam or a moonbeam, whether it is the *black* sun that sends us this beam I mistake for a piece of music. There are many black suns in the universe and they float across the sky as if they were the Grails, all of them; no one knows whether the Grail is black or red or white. Is it filled with black blood, that of Satan? Or is it really Christ’s blood, His blue blood in which His ancient royal lineage shines like a precious stone called the Grail?

Some say that music is ethereal, that it is the most appropriate expression of what is called ‘ether’. Others affirm that it is just emptiness linked to the creative void, complete receptivity, perfect enlightenment and the disappearance of the ego. ‘Music,’ they say, ‘is boundless space, the interdependence of all phenomena, an inconceivable degree of truthfulness.’ I, for one, can’t conceive the truth I find in music. I wouldn’t believe anyone who could tell me this truth to my face, for it is unbelievable and inconceivable. But music has a knack of bypassing words, of skirting around them with such dexterity that we hear the truth in a different way. We actually *hear* it without being able to understand all its intricacies. So we say to ourselves that the truth is simple and should be listened to carefully. ‘Don’t switch on your brain,’ as a mystic put it. Everything is switched off when you listen to a piece of music. You’re drained of your own essence.

Northern Buddhism lists 18 types of emptiness among which we find the Emptiness of Non-thought, of Immateriality and of Non-substantiality of Reality. Is music immaterial? Can’t you touch it? Sometimes I do touch it as my fingers acquire the form of music. I’m tempted to say it looks like my fingers that are searching for it and find it at last. I touch music, its warmth and compassion; and also its cruelty and determinism. Ineluctable modality of the audible.

Can you touch emptiness? Emptiness is the Grail and vice versa. Emptiness is also a piece of music that you let in, opening your body inside which your soul cringes at the sight of music. Music is friendly and merciful, but your soul knows it is merciless; what’s more, it is determined to murder you. Music is a mass killer; no wonder that Breivik was listening to a piece of music when shooting the members of the Labour Party and innocent bystanders.

One is supposed to achieve awareness of emptiness and emptiness of awareness. ‘In awareness all things reside,’ said the Buddha. I am aware of Parsifal, of Wagner, of Bruckner and other composers. Parsifal is also a composer: but for him, the opera would have neither seen nor heard the light of day. Can you touch light? At least you can hear it, can’t you? Aren’t you aware of its softness and harmony? Or do you think it is empty? My awareness is an empty cup for the moment. I’ll fill it with my blood sooner or later.

By contrast with annihilation, emptiness may be compared to a series of numbers starting from zero. They don’t start from a positive or negative digit. There’s nothing positive or negative in music. It is the zero you fill with your own blood. The more it drinks, the emptier it grows. Music is dying away; so are you. You just walk out without looking back. There’s no point in looking back because you can’t do it. Whatever you leave behind is as empty as the sacred chalice or cup.

Or is music nothing, nothing at all? Is it just nothing or nothing *at all*? And what about the notes I hear, see and even read, for my mother gave me a few piano lessons in my childhood? She played the piano magnificently and my father used to say, ‘The Jews play either the violin or the piano. They can’t live without music.’ My mother could not and I listened to her performances every day, tears welling up in my eyes. She never played scales or arpeggios, opting for Chopin, Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms. I didn’t dare touch the piano in her presence; yet she insisted on teaching me how to play it. Of course I was unable to play anything in her presence and even in her absence: I wasn’t a gifted pupil. I might have become a gifted son if my mother had paid more attention to my existence.

My parents did not divorce when I was one year old; they waited until my 14th birthday. There’s a story I like very much. An old man and an old woman come to a young lawyer. They say to him, ‘We’d like to start divorce proceedings.’

‘When did you get married?’

‘Seventy years ago,’ says the man.

‘When did you realise you couldn’t live together?’

‘At once,’ says the woman.

‘At once,’ says the man.

‘Why are you here *now*?’

‘We were waiting for our children to die,’ they say in unison.

My parents waited for 15 years, which allowed my mother to give me a few piano lessons. My father was never inclined to initiate me into the mysteries of physics so I wonder why he didn’t leave us much earlier. He didn’t care about my feelings, I suppose; nor did he wish to spare them. And in the long run my feelings turned away from him; they neither touched nor even smelt his body. Sometimes we listened together to my mother’s concerts as if music had been determined to reconcile our destinies. Music did not succeed and I still hold a grudge against my father.

My mother’s chronic absence doesn’t mean that music is tantamount to nothing. Music is independent of those who play or even compose it. In a way, it doesn’t depend on Beethoven whose sonatas and symphonies would have enlivened our silence, had he not been born. Music exists in the sky or at the centre of the Earth; it either comes down or up and then we hear the music of the spheres or that of the bowels of the Earth. But the human body may influence it all the same because music is closer to quantum mechanics than might be assumed. For years and years my mother’s body or rather its absence has been removing music from my room so that what I come across now amounts to nothing more than nothing. Along with the world, music is somehow united to whoever listens to it and this union may be broken upon the listener’s departure. What’s more, even his family is deprived of music as a result of her hasty departure. I listen to *Parsifal* and hear only a half of it. If my mother was in my room, I would hear both *Parsifal* and *Tristan* – at the same time. Or I would just hear *Isolda*.

The Cult of Nothing at the core of which thrives a secret society has its grand masters; from time to time their names crop up in the books devoted to nothingness. One such book was written by John D. Barrow. What a pity Dan Brown didn’t come up with a watered-down version of this book instead of writing a thriller of sorts: he might have taught *something* to teenagers. (Grown-ups must know *everything* about Mary Magdalene and the Gnostics.) Wesley Salmon is one of the grand masters I’m about to quote. ‘The fool saith in his heart that there is

no empty set,' he writes. 'But if that were so, then the set of all such sets would be empty, and hence *it* would be the empty set.'

Another grand master is Isaac of Ninevah. 'Humility collects the soul into a single point by the power of silence,' he writes. 'A truly humble man has no desire to be known or admired by others, but wishes to form himself into himself, to become nothing, as if he had never been born. When he is completely hidden to himself in himself, he is completely with God.' I'm not yet hidden to myself. I no longer stick out a mile, as I used to do until recently, filling up all the mirrors in my room and elsewhere. But my mind watches my body and also itself, some parts of itself, as if spying on itself. What does it do that for? Isn't it enough to exist, to live from one day to another without bothering about time and whatever is associated with it? So many things should be dropped before I realise how naked and pure I am, how sensitive to music and other varieties of emptiness.

I'm reading *The Book of Nothing* and nothing comes of my exertions, of my desire to understand the sacred and secret lore to which my father failed to give me access. 'The Indian zero stood for emptiness or absence, but also space, the firmament, the celestial vault, the atmosphere and ether, as well as nothing, 'the quantity not to be taken into account, the insignificant element (Georges Ifrah).' I don't take my life into account, but somebody else seems to be holding it in his or her hands. I wish I could take refuge in my mother's hands that must be playing the piano for another man, another family and other walls. Music is the firmament, the celestial vault, the atmosphere and ether. Do I feel zero-music as I listen to *Parsifal*, to the Grail? Is there such a thing as minus-music? What can it be? Mozart's *Requiem*? I'm not sure his *Jupiter* is a good example of plus-music.

*The stars shone forth
Like zero dots
Scattered in the sky.*

A 6th-century poem. What can I add to it? Another zero?

*Should I walk through a zero? Is it
A window or a cul-de-sac? An intellectual
Cul-de-sac? There's nothing
Intellectual in the realm of mathematics.
You just walk along figures and they
Count you. Even zeros count your lives.*

John of Hollywood says that zero gives value to the others 'when placed in its proper position'. But mostly my zeroes don't give me anything; rather, they take something from me. Music leaves a beam of light and that light is often black, almost impenetrable. What can I do with it? I'm not supposed to do *anything* with music; at best I might follow its life and death. Whenever you say 'life', you're tempted to add 'death', even if death is far away. Death is never far away, according to mystics. I don't listen to them, being wholly preoccupied with my music, my inner music that drains my resources and leaves me alone because nothing can replace it.

Paul Dirac says: 'A place is nothing: not even space, unless at its heart – a figure stands.' Another grand master. What kind of figure stands at my place, in my room? Do *I* stand in it? Do I stand at its heart? But I am just an unbiased observer who doesn't do anything, waiting for others to act. What if they don't act? Then I have to fill the space where I happen to live with myself, my own figure. I can't fill it with my mother's figure – with *her* figure, whoever she is. So I stand up and look at myself, listen to myself. Music doesn't wait for my decisions and acts: it is already there or here, stroking the air or ripping it to shreds. What could I do with a shred of air in which *Tristan* and *Parsifal* resound day and night?

My mother stands in my room like a monument to herself. Or do I confuse her with music, with nothing? Does nothing *lie* in my room, in my house? Do my senses lie to me? Do I have a lot of non-senses in spite of senses? When a non-sense is in its proper position, it gives value to senses. Nothing is in its proper position. And nothing gives value to nothing.

Have I forgotten Dana? Is she also empty now? A mere nothing? Or is she a piece of music? We are in France and I feel at home once again because I *am* at home. There are people who feel at home everywhere: the world is their oyster or just a cup filled with their own blood. Actually this cup is their body that identifies with everything and everybody, making no difference between objects and living creatures such as cows, flies and cats. I'm not of their number; and yet I don't think I am in a class of my own. I just live and my furniture lives too because I protect it from careless visitors and fire. Nothing burns in my castle except the fire in the hearth from which I sweep the ashes from time to time. Actually it isn't burning now: the autumn doesn't seem to appreciate cold.

We didn't quarrel on our way back and I was prepared to celebrate this event as my feet touched my floor, my carpets, adding my body to the space I had been acquainted with since my childhood. Dana was walking by my side as if she had known nothing else – no other planet around which she might have circled, had she known it. Her ignorance was appalling, but I didn't say anything because I *never* talk when about to put matters right.

So we didn't celebrate this event. Once again Dana's voice set my teeth on edge and I decided to fall back on my memories, on the past that is empty and full to the brim.

23

Again I go back to the halcyon years of my youth. I'm not sure I was happy in those days; I was younger and that is what counts now as I approach my fortieth anniversary. I'm neither old nor young; I don't believe in God and I believe in Him because I have no choice but to accept His presence. I don't know whether he walks by my side as I take a stroll in my garden where the grass is another god, a smaller god whose softness offers me the peace I'm longing for. What does it matter where your god comes from? The chief thing is to admit his or her presence and welcome the feelings engendered by what may be called 'divine energy'.

Of course it is better to believe in God about Whom our priests make their speeches and sermons. He is the only God we are supposed to cherish because other gods are incomplete, unfinished, which deprives them of the energy I alluded to in the previous paragraph. Their lights are not as intense as God's light that eclipses the sun and the rest of the sky. When they say, 'On Wednesday there will be a total eclipse of the sun,' they mean that God will be with us, His light blessing our souls.

John Paul II was impressed in his youth by Jesus' saying to his disciples, 'Fear not, little flock it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' I wasn't impressed by these words because I already had a kingdom: my garden, the house where I could play to my heart's content. What other kingdoms could I need? I had no fear: there was nothing to be afraid of. My parents had left me in peace and that peace was punctuated by what my nanny defined as 'periodic bouts of insanity'. And yet I was sound in body and mind; I just hoped to see my parents more often and their absence would create a nostalgic atmosphere in my room and even in the garden where the grass always kept me company.

Oddly enough, I wasn't sensitive to the charms displayed by our numerous flowers: they didn't deserve to become my gods. In those days, I didn't need the world pervaded by one God only. I had many small gods in my Kingdom and I talked to them without waiting for their answers. We need a lot of questions, but answers usually spoil the fun. I asked questions and got no answers. One might say I was happy in those days so I don't really exaggerate when I dare to speak about the halcyon days of my youth. I wasn't happy because I was young: when you're young, you aspire to become older, mature and wise. I lived without God and not even my nanny tried to persuade me that this kind of solitude was pernicious. And John Paul II hadn't talked to me yet. Nor had he talked to Breivik, I suppose. His influence, if any, may be noticed in my diary, in the entry dating back to the day of his death. That day I wrote in English that the gods I worshipped were false to some extent.

John Paul's father was a 'man of constant prayer', according to his son. At night and in the early morning, young Karol found his father on his knees. Sometimes I also found my father on *his* knees: he would be searching for a lost sheet of paper, for some formula or other. Karol's father was praying in silence. Then he would read the Bible with his son and I opened the Bible at the age of 15. No one believes me when I talk about my ignorance of the Good Book, of the good words. Yes, for more than 15 years I was unaware of these words and their contents. Of course I heard about the Bible on television and even during our travels: my parents took me to the seaside every year. I saw the Bible at the hotels where we stayed, but I never opened it as if allergic to the truth. And Karol's father taught his son the importance of faith. I thought it was more important to be Earnest than to believe in God.

Karol's father taught his son that the Church is more than a visible institution. My garden was no more than a visible institution, according to the priest I met last year. There's something *invisible* in it as well, but I would be hard put to explain what it looks like and how one can actually *see* it. All right, you can't see what is invisible, otherwise no one would ever speak about this substance's invisibility. Everybody would say, 'It's there for everybody to see,' and they would point to the thing in question or at least to its outlines. But there are no such outlines in my garden except that everything I do see has a shape and a palpable effect on one's senses. Do I really need the invisibility that Karol's father was hinting at?

The visible world – at least the one I enjoy in my garden – is self-sufficient and doesn't seem to need any superior being responsible for the upkeep of its elements and aspects. Why search for other worlds, for something or somebody lying *beyond*? In short, I don't understand why the great Beyond has the knack of taking centre stage in our discussions. Why do we talk about it? Why do we aspire to reach its borders and penetrate its halls? Are we *so* unfortunate on our Earth, within the atmosphere that wraps it on all sides? Well, we can leave this atmosphere and fly round the Earth, thinking we are at the very centre of the great Beyond. Will this experience make us happier, more sensitive to religious bliss?

Karol's father would say something along these lines: 'The mystery of the Church, its invisible dimension, is larger than the structure and organisation of the Church. They're at the service of the mystery.' And what about my garden? Isn't it also at the service of the mystery? Even the flowers I'm not very fond of are at the service of the mystery, of the invisible King. Why do we build churches instead of watering our gardens? Do we think there are enough gardens on our planet?

The life of faith originates in our interior conversion – that is what Karol's father inculcated into his son. It is pointless to speak about *my* father in this connection: he is an agnostic and consequently never prays. He might pray to his private gods now and then, but he doesn't kneel down during his prayers. My father has other mysteries to unravel and these mysteries are also invisible – as invisible as God, in fact. And yet their existence is *beyond* a shadow of a doubt. This is the Hereafter I gladly accept on its own terms. I'm speaking about subatomic particles.

'He did not prepare them for easy success,' John Paul writes about Jesus and his disciples. '*The Gospel is not a promise of easy success*. It does not promise a comfortable life to anyone. It makes demands and, at the same time, it is a *great promise* – the promise of eternal life for man, who is subject to the law of death, and the promise of victory through faith for man, who is subject to many trials and setbacks.' My mother told me she wished to be happy in *this* world; that's why she forsook my father. She doesn't live in the beyond, though. She is still in the vale of tears – or on the *hill of joy*, as she calls our world.

Can you save people by telling them the Gospel doesn't promise a comfortable life? They'd rather listen to Breivik's rambling speeches than brace themselves for future trials and tribulations. And they don't like those who talk to them about their setbacks. Why then do they adore John Paul II? Another mystery. And I wonder who or what is at the service of this mystery.

For once, I'm prepared to take history and time into account. When Jesus talked to his disciples, he was still alive and had to undergo the treatment for which he is widely and justly known: in addition to being the Son of God, he became a martyr. And martyrs remain in our memory longer than their fortunate counterparts. At the time of His suffering on the Cross, Christianity wasn't yet a state religion so that a lot of martyrs – not as many as some of us think – were to sacrifice their lives and families for the sake of faith. Under the circumstances, Jesus was right to speak about trials and setbacks; He was *always* right, anyway. Do trials and tribulations make sense today? Christianity is a symbol of our purity and chastity; those who don't believe in God are frowned upon. So why talk about the trials that await us tomorrow and in a few years?

Our life is comfortable and God helps us whenever He feels like it. We don't question His power and are faithful to Him, forgetting about other gods and their allurements. Why do people like Breivik wreak havoc on the structure of our life? Is that what John Paul meant as he talked about our future failures and disappointments? He hoped the 21st century would be a haven of peace. History dashed his hopes and his bitterness might be felt when he talked to the crowd at the end of his life. Did he really hope we might grow wise and worthy of God's attention?

Be that as it may, I bought two books on John Paul II. Both are written by George Weigel. The first is entitled *Witness to Hope*. It might have been entitled *Great Promise*. You can pin your hopes only on the beyond, on Paradise where the elect have fun or get bored: there are various options open to someone who is willing to lead a virtuous life. My mother says she has never been bored in her life and so she isn't likely to

suffer in Paradise – in case she gains admission to the hill of the elect. I don't dare to ask her if my father has ever bored her stiff. I don't think so.

Of course our times are as hard as the other times described in our history books. But what John Paul speaks about doesn't concern the hardships of everyday life and the massacres carried out by lunatics or fanatics. He seems to hint at a task we have to accomplish and I don't think he means a sort of inner struggle as a result of which we are supposed to let the Almighty settle in our heart of hearts forever. I wouldn't be surprised at learning that his message was composed by someone like bin Laden who kept speaking about the necessity of jihad, about the inevitability of suffering.

It is due to God's blessing that we are returning to jihad after long years of negligence and after the Islamic holy sites have been taken; Muslim women were taken prisoner; and their land and honour were violated. By God's blessing this banner is hoisted high as our Prophet, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, did earlier. God has blessed us with taking jihad in our hands in order to make up for our misdeeds when we abandoned religion in the past.

Bin Laden's message to his brothers and sisters doesn't prepare them for easy success. His personal gospel isn't meant to offer this kind of promise, for jihad is in no way similar to a comfortable life. 'It makes demands and, at the same time, it is a *great promise* – the promise of eternal life for man, who is subject to the law of death, and the promise of victory through faith for man, who is subject to many trials and setbacks.'

The people who died on Utoya are not martyrs; they're just the victims of a fanatic, of a criminal, of an arch-sadist. (He is not a madman, though.) But immortality and martyrdom *are* bestowed upon the Muslims who die in the course of their jihad – at least *they* think so before dying on a battlefield, on a plane, in the streets of Jerusalem. Logically enough, bin Laden speaks about 'the blessing of jihad in the cause of God'. What does John Paul speak about?

As I said earlier, he speaks about our encounter with the living God. Not only mystics are allowed to catch a glimpse of God in their hearts of hearts and in their souls of souls. (Actually, it is even harder to see God in your own body.) Ordinary citizens *may* occasionally see Him, provided they're the inhabitants of the City of God. They transcend their own existence and abandon their flesh for a while, searching for a middle ground, as it were. And if they fail to find any middle ground between God and themselves, they return to their bodies empty-handed.

In his diary, Breivik speaks about *his* encounter with God, admitting it wasn't easy to find the middle ground. And when he did find it, God failed to satisfy his curiosity: Breivik didn't see Him that day. He writes about this encounter as follows: 'God was late for our appointment. In vain did I wait for Him under the sacred tree. I waited for three hours at least. Why didn't He say, "I'll call in on you while I'm on the Earth but I'm not promising anything"?''

Breivik's ridiculous account shows a complete misunderstanding of the situation. The middle ground where one is supposed to meet God can be found *beyond* time so that it's pointless to speak about hours and minutes. One *can* wait for God of course, but it's far more advisable to *search* for God, walking or flying in His direction. One must create a situation that appeals to God and attracts Him like a magnet. 'Your heart should be like a magnet,' says a mystic.

What kind of tree does Breivik write about in his diary? The Tree of Knowledge? The Tree of Life? 'If you wish to *know* God, you must meet Him under the Tree of Knowledge,' he writes. 'But if you think that your life is in peril and only God can save it, you must wait for Him under the Tree of Life.' Which tree is mentioned in the diary? It doesn't matter after all: one doesn't meet God under a tree. Breivik's father pointed out that after Adam no one could meet the Almighty under a tree.

'I should identify with Adam to meet God,' said his son.

'You'd better try and meet Him in your heart.'

'And what if my heart is under a tree? I suppose one might find God in Paradise. And it must be hot in Paradise. So it would be logical to seek a shadow and sit under a tree.'

'You said that God was walking by your side.'

'John Paul said that.'

'Was he speaking about you?'

'About *everybody*.'

'Why don't you look at God? Just turn your head and look at God.'

'I've got a stiff neck, father.'

'What about your *body*? Can't you stop and turn your body towards God?'

'If you stop, you'll never reach your goal.'

'Perhaps you *should* stop. Your goal is motionless. Your goal is eternity.'

'But God is *walking* by my side.'

'When John Paul said that he didn't expect to be taken literally. God might be *standing* by your side or in front of you.'

'Why don't I see Him, then? *You*'re standing in front of me, father.'

'God is invisible,' said the father.

'So you are *not* God,' said the son. 'Why are you trying to stop me? Your spear has barred my way for several months.'

'What spear?'

'You may flourish it as much as you like – my sword will smash it to smithereens.'

'Doesn't John Paul speak about love?'

Breivik seems to have forgotten this word which opens every door leading to God and to the world. There are many doors one should open on one's way towards humanity, and all these doors can be opened with one word. 'How am I supposed to fall in love with them?' writes Breivik. 'Usually you don't kiss the people you don't love. I don't love anybody. What shall I do? Perhaps I should start by kissing all those who walk in the streets. No point in loving one person: I should love the whole of humanity. So I ask all these pedestrians to stop in their tracks, and if they obey me I'll kiss them one by one. First I should ask them to stop, otherwise I'll miss a lot of people. I'll kiss two men and three women, and others will walk past my body, turning a deaf ear to my request.'

Breivik's philosophy is too mechanistic and he seems to realise this nuance as he continues to work on his mythical book. 'So I'll fall in love with the pedestrians walking up and down that street,' he writes. 'What about other people? What about *humanity*? Isn't it enough to kiss one man in order to fall in love with everybody? They'll call me Judas. I am Judas and Christ; I am everybody. Didn't Walt Whitman say something to this

effect? He spoke about himself of course. He spoke *for* himself. Didn't he put in a good word for one of his future admirers?'

I'm not sure Breivik was sincere when he spoke about his affinities with Judas. But he did take himself for God, otherwise he wouldn't have acted as he did; he wouldn't have expelled all those people from Paradise. God didn't kill Adam, did he? He just *expelled* him and his wife from Paradise. In other words, Adam and Eve went into exile; so did Bakunin. He was first imprisoned in Saint Petersburg and then he wrote his version of St Augustin's *Confessions*. '*Mea culpa, mea culpa*.' The Tsar was satisfied and sent him to Siberia, allowing him to escape to Japan, to the States and to England. Adam and Eve could have escaped from the Earth, couldn't they? There are planets elsewhere.

As Breivik stepped off the ferry a few minutes after 5 pm, the boatman carried his bag up the jetty. It felt rather heavy, he later said: it was loaded with ammunition.

Senior politicians from Norway's Labour Party go misty-eyed when reminiscing about Utoya, the place where some of them met their spouses. An island of rock-fringed coves, towering pines and sunlit meadows carpeted with wild flowers, it is a romantic backdrop for earnest debate around the camp fire about making the world a better place. There is even a 'Love Path'.

Several hundred young people, many of them labour activists, were enjoying the idyll. Equipped with the latest smart-phones, they had heard about the explosion in Oslo minutes after it happened and gathered in anxious huddles discussing the news. Many had assembled in the cafeteria on a hill towards the middle of the island. Was the bomb the work of Islamic fundamentalists?

It seemed all the more shocking in Norway, one of Europe's most stable and prosperous states. Many of the campers called their parents to reassure them that they would be safe on the island.

The Sunday Times, 31.07.01

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Have I forgotten Dana? How could one forget her? According to her stories, several men are in love with her. One is seven years her junior. His skin is as soft as the skin you can find in The Song of Solomon: 'Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.' I don't know who is the hero or the heroine of this verse. Is it a man or a woman? Whose lips does the author speak of? And what about the author himself or herself? 'Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.' Such a neck must be part of a male body, I think.

Never mind. She says he invited her to his room – she was already in his flat – where she was supposed to massage his shoulders. We are supposed to do so many things, but we don't do all of them because we have to make a choice: we can't do *everything*. And if we know *all* the facts, we can make an informed choice. She knew all the facts. In the first place, she should have disregarded his invitation. But she did just the opposite because she cherished his invitation – every word he uttered. 'Thy speech is comely.' So she came to his place to have dinner with the host. They had dinner and then he invited her to his room. She received many invitations that night; she accepted all of them. None of his invitations met with a point-blank refusal. She smiled and her smile was like that of a dove. What does The Song of Solomon say about smiles?

‘How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!’ That is what he must have told her. But what did he say about her smiles? Browning said something to this effect in his poem *My Last Duchess*:

*Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene’er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive.*

She did it to annoy me or punish my indifference as if arousing my anger and jealousy might make her happier in the world I dislike to the point of willing to leave it forever. How to leave it? Is it enough to step into another world? Or do you have to walk in it, to lie on the grass of another world? Anyway, I wasn’t jealous, for jealousy is foreign to my nature. I just listened to her stories featuring two men at least. One of them wanted to buy a flat for her; the other asked her to massage his shoulders. She complied with his wish and found herself in his bed.

She said she had been stone-cold sober. She repeated ‘stone-cold’ several times so I thought she was also speaking about her body. Did she try to imply she had made love mechanically, just for the sake of making love to *somebody*? She incited hatred by telling me a story of her love, of the massage that was more than a mere massage. Love-making is also a kind of massage, isn’t it? Did I begin to hate humanity as I listened to her stories? Have I always hated it? I’m not Breivik, whatever my diary says about our relationship. I’m not prepared to kill a hundred innocent bystanders.

Then she talked about his genitals, disclosing some details that mainly concerned their dimensions and efficiency. I hate such disclosures; no wonder I left the room where she was talking for hours. Which room was it? Does *that* make any difference? Our whereabouts are of no importance – only words and music count. And music forsook me once again, drowned out by her talk, by the details she enlarged upon. I was reminded of Antonioni’s film *Blow Up*. I saw nothing but her boyfriend’s genitals that outgrew the world as she attempted to describe his behaviour in bed. Was he on his best behaviour that night? And the next night? How many times did they meet during her stay in Germany?

She didn’t even tell me how long she had stayed in Germany. But she said she would live with me forever. ‘How do you mean?’ I asked. ‘Do you also intend to live with me after my death?’

‘What a stupid question,’ she said. ‘How does it go? What do they usually say? Till death do them part, or something like that.’

‘Suppose death doesn’t part us,’ I said.

‘You mean, I’ll be buried with you? In the same tomb? In the same coffin?’

‘I don’t mean *that*. Don’t people meet in Paradise? They even meet in Hell. Take Paolo and Francesca.’

‘I wouldn’t like to meet you in Hell.’

‘Our talks are boring, don’t you think?’ I said.

‘That’s why I talk to you about my lovers. It’s not boring, is it?’

‘It is. There are no exceptions to the rule of boredom.’

Notwithstanding my conclusions, she continued to talk about her lovers. The second one was 10 years her senior, but she loved him even more because of his loving care. Apparently he was also very tender and mature. She didn't speak about his wisdom so I can't say anything about it; nor does *this* make any difference. I wonder *what* can make a difference under the circumstances. The world is as it is and even a sage can't do anything about it – about the state our world has been in since the Big Bang. Actually, I wonder if it was really a Big Bang and not a small one. It's a small world, they say. Why should its birth be bigger than the world itself?

I picture to myself a small birth, a small mother or father or both. A small house, a small country, a small car. Financial aid was provided under the auspices of the International Monetary Fund. But the Fund had no money and so the world was born small and light. What can a sage do about it? Sages have no money so the world remains small. The rich buy villas and Bentleys; they don't enlarge the world.

The dimensions of the world didn't prevent us from talking about death. On the contrary, we had to broaden our horizons to counteract the effects of the world's narrow-mindedness. I said there was nothing beyond except the room where we talked and drank wine. 'There are other rooms,' she said.

'Let us walk through my humble abode,' I said.

'Do you think we'll stumble on the other side, whatever it is?'

'I think there are no other rooms,' I said.

We walked through all the rooms and reached the garden that looked like a room in spite of the trees and bushes. And the sky looked like the ceiling at which I gaze whenever I'm fed up with the canopy floating over my bed.

'Does it really look like your ceiling? Do you see Andromeda when you look at it?'

'Are you speaking about the sky or my ceiling?'

'Your ceiling is starless.'

'My ceiling is just a starless night.'

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,

Looking as if she were alive.

Suddenly she said, 'I'm under the impression that someone's waiting for me.'

'Where?'

'In another room.'

'Who is it? One of your friends?'

'Certainly not. I don't need them any more.'

'Intruders don't care about our needs.'

'I don't know who it is and what I can expect.'

'Usually it's the other way round – we are waiting for God.'

'I'm not waiting,' she said.

'Neither am I. I'm just listening to what happens.'

'What do you hear?'

'Nothing.'

'You're *so* predictable,' she said.

‘You know me by heart,’ I said.

I call

That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf’s hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.

And then she said that one of her friends – I don’t remember which – had bought a revolver. ‘He’ll kill both of us,’ she said.

‘Kill Bill, kill Will,’ I said. ‘Your sharpshooters don’t excite me,’ I added.

‘Are you still bored?’

‘To death, as usual.’

‘Why don’t you die then?’

‘Why should I?’

‘Because you’re bored.’

‘I *am* bored,’ I rounded off.

I went for a walk. I walked a lot in those days that are not very far, as far as I can judge. But I walked as far as the nearby town in which I never set my foot. Why did I go there? Do we always ask questions before going somewhere? So I asked no questions and my mind told no lies. My mind was silent and I listened to this silence, hoping my music would return one day.

Was I searching for the Grail? The Wounded King spread his wounds around him: the whole area had grown barren. Did I wish to heal this Waste Land and its owner? What for? There are too many healers in the world and elsewhere; I am *de trop* in their company. The heart of Christ, marked with the stigmata of His five wounds, let forth blood and water. But Christ doesn’t need me either: He was healed a long time ago. Death doesn’t heal everybody, contrary to what the Russians think. My mother told me their saying, ‘The hunchback will be cured by the grave.’ But hunchbacks are not cured by their graves because the curvature of their spines will keep them company forever.

Christ wasn’t healed by His grave; and yet I don’t think He was a hunchback. He was cured by His Resurrection. Did the Wounded King rise from the dead? Did Mary become the living Grail? (I’m speaking about the Blessed Virgin, not about Mary Magdalene.) In the mediaeval *Litany of Loretto*, she is described as *vas spiritual*, *vas honorabile* and *vas insigne devotionis* (spiritual vessel, vessel of honour and singular vessel of devotion). Mary is Queen of Heaven, mirror, vessel, house of gold, star of the sea, seat of wisdom and cause of joy. In other words, she *is* the Grail.

As I walked across the town I looked at the passers-by who paid no attention to me: they seemed weighed down by their cares. And when people are weighed down, they don’t look up or even sideways; they look at their feet as if their feet could help them escape from the world where they have to bear their heavy loads. Mary wasn’t among those passers-by. I thought about my mother and she became Mary as my thoughts stroked her face, her entire body. Seat of wisdom, mirror of justice. Do you have the right to pass judgment on your son whom you forsook a long time ago?

I forgot about the Wounded King and focused my attention on the blood in the cup. This blood displayed unlimited powers of healing. Besides, it had the knack of transmitting a direct apprehension of God. ‘I am the

True Vine,’ said Jesus Christ. Where is he? Neither Mary nor her son were in the town through which I walked as I shunned Dana’s presence: her mouth continued to talk whenever I was within its reach. As I walked along the pavements to which my feet weren’t used, I searched for another vine – for the wine of salvation, for my paradisiacal Burgundy.

The path of the Grail is indeed inextricably bound up with sacrifice: the blood of the victim contained in the cup. I had neither the victim nor the cup. Breivik had a lot of victims around him; he could have picked any of them to perform the ritual. Did he have an appropriate cup? He speaks about a glass of wine that remains empty as long as the bomb lies at his feet. ‘The bomb should lie elsewhere – in the air, near Andromeda. It is Mary who should lie at my feet in order to wash them. She should hand over the cup after pouring some blood into it.’

A journey from ignorance to enlightenment. How many journeys did I undertake in those times? The ‘Red Mass’ is a stage in the alchemical Great Work; the base elements are turned into higher states of being. You begin to fly without noticing it. At first you do notice it and then you forget about your wings and your lungs inhaling the ether, the void. Why should you notice something you do on a regular basis? If I walk on the grass I don’t ask myself questions about what I do. I just walk around my enclosed garden, around my paradise. I wish I could fly over treetops, beneath the stars that are dots and drops. How many drops of blood are there in the sky?

Christ holds out chalices to the sun and moon, while more blood flows from His wounded side into the Fountain of Life that feeds the Great Work crowned by the figure of Mercurius. His birth is the outcome of the Great Work. Did Breivik become this child at the end of the massacre? Actually he calls the massacre on Utøya the ‘Red Mass’. The ‘Red Mass’ or the ‘Red Massacre’? ‘I’m holding out my chalices,’ he writes, ‘while more blood flows from their wounds, from my dear victims. My Great Work will be crowned by the figure of Mercurius, by reborn humanity.’

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It was my last stroll in the town I hardly know in spite of its proximity to the house where I live. I’m still living there; and yet I may be half-dead or half-alive. Is it better to be optimistic under the circumstances? Actually I don’t really know to what extent I am alive or dead. Perhaps I’ve never been as alive and kicking as I am now. How am I supposed to know what happens in my body if I feel no pain?

I was on my way back and I was wholly alive in those days, if I remember rightly. As I headed for my garden I realised I had forgotten many things. For instance, I don’t know what I was reminded of during this stroll that took me down the street, down the slope of my life. In a way, my life is a mountain on the top of which I am perched as long as I live fully and consciously. But I have been climbing down this mountain for a fortnight and I’m not likely to retrace my steps. Usually the climb down this mountain takes longer than the climb up, but in my case the reverse is true unless I’ve been climbing down all my life. On the day of our birth, we are on the top of the mountain of life, but our feet carry us downward so that we never touch the top again.

That is beside the point. My feet were carrying the rest of my body towards the garden where the grass awaited me impatiently, feeling nostalgic for our previous appointments. I was walking down the street on which there were no blades of grass as if life itself had been crushed underfoot. My mind was a blank, but my body began to speak and my mind was listening to my body, curious to find out what it was talking about. Oddly enough, it was talking about Dostoevsky, about his novel *The Idiot* at the end of which two protagonists walk

along the same street. They walk separately, on opposite sides, and I felt an urge to walk on the opposite side as if to imitate them. But up to then I had been unconscious of this parallel my body was drawing between Prince Myshkin, Rogozhin and myself. There were three parallel lines in the street along which I kept walking and I didn't know what to do with those lines, with their allusions and prophecies.

Then I realised I didn't have to cross the street in order to continue my walk on the opposite side: I was *already* walking there. Breivik has a lot of doppelgängers. Am I not entitled to the same honour? Am I not an honourable man? So at last I owned a doppelgänger. Or was it the other way round? Did *he* own me? Was *I* his doppelgänger? So many things reveal the double nature of the world because they can be seen and analysed the other way round. In short, one of us was Rogozhin, the other Prince Myshkin. Who is who?

It doesn't really matter: I was both and I could do with myself whatever I wished. What *did* I wish to do with myself and others? I continued to walk down the street, my feet carrying out my orders. Or was it the other way round? Did *I* carry out their orders? Did I carry out Dostoevsky's orders? Both Rogozhin and Myshkin reached the house where Nastassya Philippovna was lying on Rogozhin's bed. Dead, dead, dead, dead. The reader had guessed the denouement of the story, but Myshkin was still in the dark and kept asking: 'Where's Nastassya Philippovna? Where's Nastassya Philippovna?' Did it really matter where Rogozhin had hidden her corpse?

Did *I* guess what I was about to do? I had to kill Dana who was intruding upon my privacy and other aspects of my life and death – without asking permission to do so with impunity. So I had no alternative but to punish her, taking my cue from another Dostoevsky hero. Unlike him, however, I had no intention of using an axe or any cumbersome, unwieldy instrument. Rogozhin's procedure suited me far better, all the more so since I owned a wonderful knife I kept in my library. Thanks to this knife I had been able to read a lot of books whose pages would have remained uncut, but for the efficiency of my miniature axe.

How to murder my so-called girlfriend? She was many people's girlfriend, not mine. I didn't say 'men' because there were women among her friends and these women's participation in her life wasn't limited to gossip only. They didn't discuss boys for hours on end: they had other preoccupations and yearnings. They didn't have to cross a corridor to reach the men's changing room; they could stay where they were, enjoying themselves on the spot. Dana said she was lesbian and her words didn't sound like a confession because there was nothing to confess, as she told me afterwards. 'If I said to you, "The weather is fine today," you wouldn't regard my words as a confession, would you? It's just a fact, nothing else. Nothing to write home about.'

She spoke of her professor's warmth and skin; she added her lips to the list of aphrodisiacs she had begun to compose at the very outset of our relationship. Now and then I would peruse the list; and yet I was indifferent to other people's intrusions in her life: it is *my* life I cared about. And she was the queen of intruders, as far as my life was concerned. I didn't know whether I was Rogozhin or Myshkin; actually I had to be both in order to kill her and pity her corpse. But I wasn't going mad and so it was hard to play Myshkin's part. And one can't lose one's wits on purpose, intentionally, even if one's life depends on it. Hamlet pretends to be mad, but he knows he is not, which helps him avenge his father. I had no one to avenge except myself and the years I had wasted in Dana's company. Did she really murder those years and winters, those summer holidays?

Of course, Rogozhin also gazes with pity at Nastassya Philippovna's corpse, but I needed another approach, another attitude. Besides, I'm much closer to Myshkin who was a refined aristocrat – quite unlike Pierre Bezukhov or any other Russian bear. As a matter of fact, I have nothing in common with Rogozhin save

the knife lying on my writing desk, between the pages of a book I'm reading now. Needless to say, I'm no longer reading it or anything else: I'm in no mood for reading and thinking.

How did I bring about this imperfect murder? Upon our return from Switzerland, I met my servant, Pierre. (In spite of his name, he isn't a Russian bear.) Once again it was the other way round, frankly speaking: it is my servant who welcomed us by opening the front door and bowing his head as if in prayer. I uttered a few words to the effect that I was tired and busy. He understood me at once; he guessed I would kill my guest even before I began to hatch my plot. He also uttered a few words and I listened to them in spite of my fatigue. He said: 'I'll be waiting for your phone call. Can I be of any assistance?' What was he driving at? Did he mean to say he would help me murder Dana and hide her corpse in some woods or other?

Be that as it may, I let him go: I didn't need his help, his strong arms that would have carried a hundred corpses out of my house, had I resolved to emulate Anders' daring act, his salvage operation. But I had no intention of saving humanity from the Muslims and communist artists whose paths I'll never cross for the simple reason that I cross no path as I walk around my garden. Where is my gardener, by the way?

I continued to talk to Dana as if nothing had happened. 'Nothing' was the key word in this situation and I stuck to it as if my life or rather Dana's death had depended on it. It did, as a matter of fact, but I couldn't deal with all the matters and facts I came across during that period. I singled out my murder and I was right, I'm sorry to say.

What did we talk about? About Breivik and *his* murders, logically enough: I had to prepare her for what was going to happen. 'We exited the cafe,' I told her, 'and the real horror sunk in as bloodied people started to tumble into the square.'

'Don't talk to me about this madman,' she said.

'Do you think Myshkin was mad?'

'It's *your* madness I'm worried about.'

'Aren't you frightened? Don't I scare you out of your wits?'

'Let's go to bed,' she said, jumping to her feet and heading for the bedroom.

'Breivik calmly took aim and, standing on a raised rocky outcrop, shot those who plunged into the lake as others cowered behind small rocks on the shore,' I said, listening to my bed's springs.

I shouldn't have written I was going to kill her because suspense counts in novels and even in real life: but for our detective stories and thrillers, we would have died of boredom even before the demise of communism and the Berlin Wall. No longer is my suspense on the agenda: you know I killed the woman I'm talking about as I look at her corpse. But before describing her corpse and my own blood I must talk to you about the murder, otherwise I'm not likely to elicit the support of the common reader who buys bestsellers and throws away other books.

I also talked to her about saviours. Of course I didn't forget Jesus Christ, but He is not the only saviour we can boast about on our Earth that flies unprotected round the sun. The name of my saviour is Marcel Gleffe. He works as a roofer in Norway and elsewhere: as usual, there's a world elsewhere. He was on the mainland with his parents, Walter and Heidrun, preparing to go across the water to a campsite on the island. He wasn't Jesus Christ so he had a boat that was to make things easier for him: after all, he had to go across the water. He heard cries and decided to change his plans. His parents agreed with him because they saw lots of young people in the water, not all of them alive. Many of them took refuge in his boat.

Why did I talk to Dana about this boat? I thought she would understand that no murder is a fact unless you find a corpse and call the police. And Dana was not a corpse in those days. What was she? Just a woman whose presence I couldn't bear. But I didn't mind her being rescued by a saviour or a boyfriend. So I read out loud: 'He also shot at those in the water. I threw life jackets to those in most need. I pulled as many as I could into the boat. They were all crying but all helped one another.'

'Where are your boyfriends?' I asked. 'They might help you.'

'I don't need their help, or anyone's help.'

'What *do* you need?'

'I don't need *anything*. I need *you*.'

I went on reading a newspaper lying on the floor (**Daily Express**, Monday, July 25 2011). "'They showed extraordinary mutual courage. It was unbelievable to witness their bravery. I dropped some on the shore and went back and back again. Other campers plunged into the water with whatever would float. I think I got about 20 to shore.'" Do you think he would have got *you* to shore?'

Sitting hunched over a glass of wine all day can cause problems. She was drinking a lot in those days; so was I. I called my decision to murder Dana a turning point in a campaign against intruders. She didn't seem to mind; at least she said nothing as if she hadn't valued her life above everything else. What was above her life? My independence or rather my *space* where I had to walk alone, occasionally looking at some birds, trees and lakes.

I looked closer at the book where I could find my murder and Dana's death – *The Idiot* by Dostoevsky. But I was neither an idiot nor Dostoevsky; and even Tolstoy was far away. My doppelgängers stayed within shouting distance, but even they and *their* doppelgängers bothered me as if I had resolved to live alone on the Earth, being allergic to ETs of any kind. Yet Nastassya Philippovna was still lying in Rogozhin's bed and Dana took no notice of her corpse.

I did take notice of her, but she wasn't in my room or in other rooms where I could stroke her face, arms and other limbs. So I had to kill Dana in order to have *some* limbs and nymphs at my disposal – I like caressing limbs and Danas. I like neither their resistance nor her caresses: she had to lie motionless and submit to my touch without any emotions betraying life and intrusions.

What does Rogozhin say about his murder? What do *I* say about it? Is there any difference between us? Not in the realm of murder, of *her* murder. 'The knife only seemed to go in to a depth of three...or...maybe four inches...right under her left breast...and only about half a tablespoonful of blood flowed out onto her chemise; there was no more than that.'

It is not true: there was *a lot of blood*.

MY NOVEL

We came back from Switzerland and I had nothing to do; neither did she. We simply *had* to do something to fill life up to the brim as if it were a cup because life *is* a cup of wine or blood. So I began to fill it to the best of my abilities. First I poured some wine into it and the glass that Dana held all the while, looking at me or rather at my profile. We drank our cups and looked at each other again. Why were we looking at each other? We knew each

other quite well and even my profile was part of Dana's inner life. And her exterior life was full of the wine I kept pouring into her glass.

Why do a man and a woman have to kill their fellow creatures? You don't ask questions when you kill somebody because you have no time for it. You have to reload your rifle or raise your knife that is still lying on your writing desk or in some drawer you're prepared to pull out and explore. You rummage in this drawer and find the knife in question so that no more questions loom ahead of you or behind you. You pick up the knife and kill whoever happens to be within your reach or even out of it.

You can also clasp something else, providing it is a weapon and not a spoon one may use for sauce or soup. Human blood is neither, even if people yearn to taste their enemies' blood instead of loving their neighbours and turning all the cheeks they've got. The cheeks turn and the neighbours slap them so justice is done and no cheeks remain untouched.

I spoke to Dana about cheeks and neighbours. She said: 'You love your neighbours because you outgrow yourself, your space and time. And you include your neighbours in your life. You *are* your neighbours to some extent – to the extent of your knowledge. Why not love yourself? You are the world and you love it.'

'I'm not the world,' I said. 'I'm in a class of my own. I live in another room.'

'Your rooms are here. Let us walk through them once again. You'll find yourself.'

'I'll find you and your speeches.'

'You'll find yourself and your silence.'

'I don't have to look for my silence. It's the Grail I'm longing for.'

'Here's the Grail,' she said, holding out her hand.

'There are many Grails,' I said, so as not to offend her. I might have said her hand was just the opposite. But everything was the other way round and I found my way, the other ways and whatever was around them.

'Can't you just stroke my face?' she asked and I stroked her face. I liked the feel of her skin. Did she like my hand?

'Myshkin isn't looking at you yet,' I said.

'Do you want to kill me?' she asked.

'I wouldn't hurt a fly.'

'I'm not a fly,' she said.

'I know.' Yet I thought she *was* a fly, flying into my room through the window I open in summertime. My windows were shut; everything was shut.

We continued to talk; we stopped talking. We looked at each other and closed our eyes. I don't know what was going on. Perhaps I was walking down the same street, eager to walk on the opposite side. Where was this side? It wasn't just opposite, as might have been presumed; it was somewhere else. Let other people live my life that I bequeath them as I adorn with my signature the sheets of paper they put on my desk. I don't know who they are and what they want; I just sign the sheets of paper that cover my desk and the floor where I sleep from time to time.

No poems, no poems, I said to myself. Yet writing a poem enables you to kill time and its accessories.

I kill time and you, whoever you are. You're here

So I have no choice. At the crack of dawn

*I hold my knife or dagger that floats near the walls as if
To avoid my hand. I am Macbeth and Hamlet.
I am you and so I kill myself. The Hereafter is just
Round the corner. Which corner? There are only
Straight lines everywhere, streets and lines.
There are Breiviks and their rifles. You don't hear the shots;
Nor do you feel them. You're in Paradise. You sing and
Your songs resound in my room, in my bathroom.*

There was a key in my hands; I began to speak in a whisper. 'Why don't you light a candle?' I asked.

'Do we need light?' I said. Rogozhin and Myshkin. In Tokyo I saw a play in which a famous Kabuki actor, Tamasaburo Bando, played both Myshkin and Nastassya Philippovna. I was playing Rogozhin *and* Myshkin. Did I need a candle to see her lying on the floor at my feet?

She was asleep when I struck her, bringing her blood out into the open. Her blood used to be a secret; now everybody could admire it.

I put a cup under her blood that filled it immediately; I poured her blood into my cup by putting my cup under her blood. I could drink her blood, her wine, her Burgundy, but I was in no mood for drinking. Even water was foreign to my state of mind and yet I had nothing against water; nor did I have anything against her blood. Why speak about blood all the time? There are other subjects and other times, other speeches. I'll do them justice in a few minutes or hours. Who counts them, except God? Minutes, hours, centuries, millennia. Even He doesn't count them.

'I can just see a bed,' says Myshkin. I don't see any bed because there's none, as far I can judge the situation. She is lying on one of my carpets and I cast glances at her body or whatever remains of it. And time looks at both of us to find out what we are cooking up. I wish our time could shut its eyes, for there's nothing to see except our corpses. And time knows many corpses, many cemeteries; no need to pick up another corpse and convey it to heaven.

'Then go closer,' says Rogozhin.

I go closer and closer. I hate people standing too close to me, but Dana can't hate anyone. Nor does she love me now. She may wish to stay in my room as long as her body smells good like a cake. What kind of cake is she this morning? She is lying under my feet and I don't budge so as not to change our ritual. I killed her in our bed like Othello, but Othello had no time to put Desdemona on the floor, under his feet. At some point Othello has a fainting fit that looks like epilepsy; Dostoevsky might have told us what it was exactly. In Verdi's opera, Iago puts his foot on Othello's body and hears everybody cry: '*Viva Otello! Gloria al Leon di Venezia!*' And Iago answers the crowd: '*Ecco il Leone!* (Behold the Lion!)

I don't need to touch her with my feet; nor does she have to wash my feet, my body and my thoughts. I'm sitting by her side like Rogozhin and Myshkin who go to bed, a makeshift bed: there's only one *real* bed in Rogozhin's flat. There are two sofas and only one bed. Rogozhin takes cushions off the sofas and sets them up beside the curtain beyond which Nastassya Philippovna sleeps or dies because death doesn't last a moment only, contrary to accepted ideas. You die as long as your body lies by your lover's side.

I recited to her *My Manifesto*, hoping she would get angry and leave my country, my house and all my belongings – my genitals included – in order to return to *her* country in no time at all. Did she live in Holland? I think so whenever I'm in a position to think and understand my thoughts. But now she is lying at my feet and I think about Rogozhin who thought he should put some flowers on Nastassya Philippovna's body. 'Because of the smell, brother,' he says to Myshkin. Do I detect any smell? I haven't taken a bath for a week and I don't know what smells so badly – my body or her body or just the air.

Does she still have a body? Does she have *anything*? Why should I care about *her* belongings? Does the smell *belong* to her? 'By morning there probably will be a smell,' says Myshkin or Rogozhin and, not to be outdone, I say it as well. She was lying in her bed and I left her for a moment to drink some water from a bottle I had put on a chest of drawers. I couldn't remember on which chest of drawers I had put the bottle so I had to walk throughout my chateau in order to find it and drink my fill. I didn't find the bottle, but the knife was lying in one of the drawers through which I rummaged in the hope of finding the bottle. The bottle and the knife had nothing in common except that you get drunk when you drink vodka or kill an innocent woman – even if you don't drink her blood. I killed an innocent woman and I'm still thirsty.

'I've covered her with oilcloth, good American oilcloth,' says Rogozhin. I haven't covered *her* body because I'm looking at it now. I didn't want to look at an oilcloth. Do you kill women to look at oilcloths? You can look at them at your leisure without killing anybody. You just put an oilcloth on one of your carpets and look at it as long as you wish. And then you throw it out of the window and study how it falls through the air – if you feel like it. I don't feel like it: Dana's body takes up too much room.

What puzzles me is the desire I feel somewhere – in my genitals perhaps. I wish to make love to her in spite of her death and immobility. I've never felt anything like that before – not in relation to a woman, anyway. But Dana is lying at my feet and I know she won't say 'no' if I put my body on her body and begin to move in accordance with the ritual that everybody knows by heart. I don't know it by heart yet; I have to memorise it. Well, my memory isn't impaired to the point of being unable to remember a sexual relationship, especially if I know the woman to whom I'm about to make love. So let us recite this ritual as if it were a poem.

*I murder you and you lie where you lie.
 You lie to me once again. I listen to your lies
 And to my heart. What does it say?
 It says I'm in love with you and so I undress and do
 What any man would do if I put him in my
 Place. He's not in my place and vice versa. I am
 In my armchair, in front of the fireplace;
 So is your body. It's not in my armchair but
 The fireplace is very near – only a stone's throw away.
 You're away, you're away. The fire is dying.*

Rogozhin wants to put some flowers on Nastassya Philippovna because 'they give off a pleasant smell'. And she gives off an unpleasant smell, I suppose. He is afraid to open the windows, but I can open them to kill the smell

my corpse is giving off. All corpses look and smell alike. They are corpses and all of them are on an equal footing in the Kingdom of Death. They are and they are not; and the fire is dying.

I don't like flowers and I put them on Dana's body unwillingly as if I was against ecology and the Green Party. What would I do if the members of the Green Party had their gathering on Utoya or elsewhere? Anyway, Breivik kills all those who meet on Utoya: the Labour Party, lovers, engineers, physicists and pianists. And I killed one woman and put some flowers on her makeshift tomb. I don't know whether I smell the flowers or her body, which amounts to the same thing. Isn't her body a huge flower?

There are secret societies. One of them advocates making love to dead women because they're barren. Our world is bad and you shouldn't add anything to it. But you have to make love: without love our life has no meaning. So you make love to the dead.

Another society worships flowers and nothing suits flowers better than tombs and corpses lying in your room.

Another society says that dead bodies produce the 'Smell of the Hereafter' – the only key that opens the gates of Paradise. The more dead smells you inhale, the better.

Another society says that love is motionless, being a true picture of eternity – of Paradise regained, restored and redecorated. No woman is motionless unless she is dead. No woman is silent unless she is dead. Less, less, less, less. Just a corpse, less than a corpse.

It's high time I recalled some episodes from *our* life – from our *life* – following in Rogozhin's footsteps. I don't care about his footsteps; I follow my train of thought. He remembers an officer whom she whipped. I remember our song; Dana and I sang it in Switzerland.

*We are cats, cats, cats,
Little cats, cats, cats.
They ill-treat us, fools,
Our tails they pull.*

'I know the rhyme isn't perfect,' she said. 'Fools, pull. What should I do with it?'

'You can say: "He ill-treats us, fool." But then you'll have the same problem – the other way round. Our tails he pulls. Fool, pulls.'

We sang this song every day, alternating her version and mine. Every time we went down the stairs we sang this song, raising our arms that followed the rhythm of the song, of the thoughts. 'Footsteps! Do you hear? In the hallway...' says Rogozhin. I hear our song, our cats and their tails. Little cats, cats, cats. I am as little as any cat now; I am a shrinking man. I don't eat much, you know. What *do* you know? You read *The Da Vinci Code* and think that 'the Vatican faces a crisis of faith unprecedented in its two-millennium history'. What crisis? People believe they're immortal. They'll live forever in the other world, in the Hereafter – everywhere. That's why they believe in God. Why do you talk about the crisis the Vatican should take notice of?

'As any astrological symbologist will tell you, the Piscean ideal believes that man must be told what to do by higher powers because man is incapable of thinking for himself. Hence it has been a time of fervent religion. Now, however, we are entering the Aquarius, the water bearer – whose ideals claim that man

will learn the truth and be able to think for himself. The ideological shift is enormous, and it is occurring right now.'

Nothing happens; nothing, nothing. No man is capable of thinking for himself. No shifts, no Swifts. Just Dan Brown. I'm looking at Dana and I wish I could have her body inside my body; but we look at each other without saying a word. Her eyes are open: I didn't close them because I'm not fond of *their* rituals. Her eyes look at me; so do my eyes. They look at her eyes and body as if there were nothing else to look at. Can't I look at the sky or my furniture?

You can say to people, to your congregation: 'Jesus Christ married Mary Magdalene. They lived happily ever after. They had many children and all of their children were kings in Israel and elsewhere. Jesus Christ wasn't even a prophet because he didn't predict anything. Nostradamus predicted something; Jesus Christ predicted nothing. Nostradamus was often mistaken. He thought a war would break out between Muslims and Christians at the end of the 20th century, but nothing broke out. I didn't even break my legs. If you wish, I'll take an egg and break it into my bowl. But there's no war and no war will break out in the near future because we like our creature comforts. Jesus Christ liked them too so He didn't die on the Cross; He knew it would be pointless. Anyway no one understands anything. So why die? And of course He didn't rise from the dead. He is dead and buried and we don't know where He is buried. Do you want to visit His tomb? You think you'll see how He'll rise above the clouds floating on the horizon and overhead? I'm speaking about the clouds, not about Him. *They're* floating overhead, not His body. O.K. No one forbids you to look at Jesus Christ's body. But first you'll have to find his bones. Look for them, if you wish.'

You say this to your congregation and the people answer you angrily: 'We believe in Jesus Christ and His resurrection, whatever you say today or may say tomorrow. Do you think no one can gainsay your report? We won't look for His body because His body stands and sits beside His father, far above the clouds we see on the horizon and overhead. So it's pointless to look for His body: we don't have the key that opens heaven. Do *you* have it? You don't. O.K. Let us pray.' Or they begin to look for the key that opens heaven and God's heart. They think that thanks to this key they'll be able to seduce God into granting them permission to stay in heaven forever. They call the key 'the Grail' and shed a lot of blood, hoping to chance upon our Saviour's blood. They say to each other that human blood is the same everywhere. 'Isn't it circulated around the body through blood vessels?' they ask each other. They also talk about the pumping action of the heart. 'Our Saviour's heart used to function like that. So His blood was similar to ours. We'll find it sooner or later, provided we work very hard.' And they continue to wound themselves. And they neither clean nor dress their wounds.

Then they began to drink wine, thinking they might chance upon Jesus Christ's blood by means of red Burgundy. They call in a priest, saying to each other, 'He has some information we want, so we're going to try to coax it out of him over a drink.' The priest says they don't drink consecrated wine. 'Anyway the Grail is in your heads and hearts,' he adds. 'You'd better pray for deliverance from your sins. You can also pray for those who aren't so fortunate as yourselves.'

So they pray for the victims of Breivik's massacre as if God or Jesus Christ or both could resurrect them. For a week they've been praying to God that your daughter or our daughter will make a complete recovery. But our daughter dies and they say that God needs our daughter, your daughter, in heaven. 'Those whom God loves

die young,' they say. God is bored to death; He needs humans to amuse Him. I think it amuses Him to see people make fools of themselves.

I don't think about Dan Brown or even Jesus Christ as I look at her features, arms and legs. As I said, Dana takes up too much room in my mind, in my house, in the heavens where she floats at will. I don't know where this reflection on the gods comes from – perhaps from another world, another book. I don't think about Jesus Christ's body because I see another body at my feet. I look at my feet and not at the heavens where so many angels fly and take care of humans who pray to them, to their saints and to the powers of darkness, of lightness. What else can they pray to? Human beings like praying because they have nothing else to do on condition that they have enough money to devote all their lives to praying and kneeling before their altars. But they don't *always* have enough money so they go somewhere and switch on computers. They drive lorries, trucks and motor cars; they carry suitcases. They say: 'Many ship workers could lose their livelihoods because of falling orders for new ships.' And they say about Breivik: 'That farm is his livelihood.'

I don't know *what* they say or think about. I look at Dana's face and legs and I want to make love to her by lying on her body, on her remains. Do I detect any smell? The flowers I've brought to her makeshift tomb smell like flowers, not like corpses. Pierre won't come today because I'm unlikely to phone him: I don't need his help. Why should they carry her out and bury her somewhere? 'That means there'll be no confession and we won't let them take her out,' says Rogozhin. Am I Myshkin or Rogozhin today? I am both, as usual. What confession am I talking about? I have confessed to the murder. Have I? I probably have. To whom? To God, of course. I confess everything to God. This time I have confessed to the murder. God listens to my confessions and says, 'You're right, you're right. You had to kill her. All right. I don't mind. She is at my side already. You should come and caress her body, or rather her soul. Her body is still within your reach, isn't it? So you should caress her body at home and talk to her soul in heaven. Do you want to talk to her soul now?'

On the way back we talked about ski mountaineering. I said I wondered whether Adam and Eve could enjoy winter sports in their Garden of Eden. 'Do you think it's always summertime up there?' she asked. I said I hadn't seen any pictures of a snowy Paradise. She laughed.

Once we went to Paris together, my mother and I. There was something irresistible about my mother, something touching and fragile. (As if she were made of crystal.) And that 'something' grew so steadily and inexorably that soon her whole being became a homogenous and delicate mass of enchantment. And she would create a magnetic field of bewitchment around her as she walked along the streets and boulevards. Motorcars and buses seemed to be driven towards her body to the point of caressing its Botticelli curves. She continued to walk carelessly, defiantly, as if to perish under the wheels of a car were a wonderful experience, quite akin to love-making.

I don't want to talk, speak, write and walk. I don't go to the town I visited before killing her body and leaving her soul alone. I don't go anywhere because I'm happy where I am. I'm happy near her body, near the flowers that cover her body to prevent it from talking about death by means of the smell Rogozhin talks about in Dostoevsky's book. O.K. I'll read this book because it reminds me of Dana and I'll forget Dan Brown's book. Do I need to forget it? I don't remember it.

I do, as a matter of fact. At some point there's a tea ceremony. The protagonist is asked: 'Milk or sugar?' The protagonist doesn't answer at once. He says, 'Milk.' He is right for once: I always drink my tea with milk. And then the protagonist says, 'Earl Grey with lemon.' You shouldn't drink Earl Grey: it is not pure. Darjeeling,

Darjeeling, Darjeeling, my darling. His book is not even a restaurant guide. What is it? Just a bestseller, nothing else. It's not even nothing, certainly not. But the Grail is music, I think. You can't hold music, can you? I think I can. I caress *Tristan, Parsifal*; I even caress Isolda sometimes.

I bend down and caress her. She has been dead for some time now. Her body is getting slimmer and slimmer; less than a corpse, almost nothing. Some time ago she went on a starvation diet. She looks like a boy, a lovely boy. Or rather an androgyne. Actually I have turned her into a male model, my Mary Magdalene. One ought to think constantly about the Kingdom of God.

She looks old and thin with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes.

I talk to her now and then. What do we talk about? She says, 'I am dead.'

'I know,' I answer.

'I think I died a violent death.'

'That's right. I killed you.'

'Did you kill anybody else?'

'No.'

'You're not Breivik, are you?'

'Not yet.'

'Why don't you make love to my corpse?'

'I'm not addicted to necrophilia.'

'I allow you to make love to my corpse.'

'Thank you, but I don't think I'd live up to your standards.'

'I have no standards now – no one has made love to my corpse yet.'

'I can't invite your friends because there's nothing in the fridge.'

'You can invite them all the same. They're not hungry. They just want me and my sex appeal. I am their food.'

'You are music.'

'I am.'

'I'm listening to you.'

'Are you?'

'A full minute passed,' as Dan Brown puts it. 'Finally, someone spoke,' he says. I don't say anything; Dana doesn't talk either. I write because I can't do otherwise, but Dana doesn't talk; at least I can't hear her. I can't hear the heavens. What do *they* talk about? About our weather? What about *their* weather? Do they have any weather, any weather forecasts? The weather forecast said it was going to rain later today. That's what they say. I say there'll be no rain in my room and I am right. I can say something else, but no one listens to me; even Dana turns a deaf ear to my requests and love. I say, 'I love you' and she doesn't answer. I love you, I love you, I love you. Too late.

It is not late to love God, it seems to me. But God isn't lying at my feet. Where does He lie? Does God always walk in the Garden of Eden? He is very tall and erect for his age. How old is He? Should I write a poem about His age in order to find a suitable answer?

God is old, God is old.

*I am not, I am not –
Not as old as our Lord.*

27

Why didn't I kill my mother? She betrayed me and my father with my tutor. My father used to take a nap after lunch. Neither my mother nor my tutor did anything of the sort. They had bigger fish to fry, much bigger. And they fried it almost every day, after sending me to the garden, to my grass. 'You should walk the dog for an hour every afternoon,' my mother told me once, and I obeyed her. I always obeyed my mother. Our dog died a long time ago; my mother did not. And yet I wasn't in the habit of walking *her* for an hour every afternoon. Had I done so every afternoon without exception, she would have betrayed neither my father nor his son.

Once I opened the door of my room and saw them in my bed; I'm speaking of my mother and my tutor. Incidentally, my father would never have slept with my mother in my bed. Next afternoon, burning with rage, I revealed my mother's secret to my father and he opened the same door to make sure I was telling the truth and nothing but the truth. And he realised there was nothing but the truth in front of him, before his very eyes. He kicked the tutor out – not literally, though; and he asked my mother to pray forgiveness for what she had done. So my mother prayed for God's forgiveness. 'I am God under the circumstances,' said my father. 'You are not,' said my mother, rising from her knees. Soon she abandoned my father, but did not marry the tutor. My father went away too and I was left behind like a pair of old shoes one is eager to discard. I must have gone out of fashion. Oddly enough, I really compared myself to an old pair of shoes. Yet I was only 14 and had no brother. I must already have created a doppelgänger – a serial killer.

It's more difficult to kill one person. You can't save the world by killing one person only, but you can save yourself by *not* killing this person or anybody else.

I can't write my novel any more: I'm running out of ideas and patience. What did I want to say? I am an androgyne at last because I want to make love to a *dead* woman. Jesus Christ was killed. Don't we have to strike a balance between Jesus Christ and women? Feminists say, 'Jesus Christ died on the Cross. What about us? Don't we deserve to die on the same Cross?' All right. I won't nail you to the Cross or even to a tree. I'll kill you in my castle, near the fireplace. Are you satisfied?' They *are*, judging from their smiles.

I want to make love to the dead – all of them. I am an androgyne because I have both dead and live characteristics. Death, life, death, life. Only the words are different. They're *always* different. Even synonyms are different.

What else? Alchemy is also on my agenda. The vessel in which the work takes place contains the divine water or blood. Mercurius is the water in the fountain and symbolises the unconscious. I spoke about Mercurius earlier in this book and in other books of mine. He is our son; Dana and I have a son whose name is Mercurius. He is the unconscious, which means that he is an unruly child. Our relationship – I'm writing about Dana and myself – unites all conscious and unconscious states. One of these states was described in the previous chapter. The King and Queen confront each other as they are, without conventional disguises. Again I'm writing about Dana and myself: there are no other humans in this inhuman world. 'Both now have one flower each, instead of two, symbolising that two elements have paired off in a partial union.' Dana and I. We descend into the water, into the unconscious. The immersion is a night-sea journey or dissolution that returns us to a dark initial state. We are united above and below.

The sea engulfs the King and Queen. Their coitus occurs in water, in the unconscious. I talked to her about it. I said we were making love in the unconscious. She said I was lying.

‘We’ll never make love,’ she said.

‘Do you know the future by heart?’ I asked.

‘I know *you*.’

‘We’re making love right now. Don’t you feel anything?’

‘I don’t.’

‘No wonder – we’re making love in the unconscious.’

‘Not in *my* unconscious,’ she said.

‘What do you know about your unconscious? Even Freud didn’t know anything about it.’

‘I know we’re not making love in it. I’d rather make love in your room.’

‘My room is part of my unconscious.’

‘I’m elsewhere,’ she said. And she added, ‘I think I’m not even in your consciousness.’

‘You’re mistaken.’ What else could I say? What else could *she* say?

‘I love you,’ she said.

‘I love you too. I love your dead body.’

‘I’m not dead. Are you going to kill me?’

‘No,’ I said. Why did I lie to her?

We return to the beginning – the *massa confusa* or ‘unleashed chaos’ – and at this moment the Lapis is conceived. I don’t know what I’m talking about: no *massa confusa*, no unleashed chaos, no Lapis. Nothing, nothing, nothing, except her adorable corpse. No balance, no harmony – just my body, mind and whatever is hidden inside them. Not my unconscious, though. Please, let me get rid of my unconscious. You can have it, if you wish; I give it to you. A birthday present, a Christmas present. Take it and keep it until my death.

The King and Queen are dead and have melted into a being with two heads: the hermaphrodite. I thought I was an androgyne; now I am a hermaphrodite. No, I wish to be an androgyne. I hate hermaphrodites; I hate everybody with the exception of androgynes. Dana was one; so was I. She was lesbian; I was homosexual. We were bisexual – androgynes, not hermaphrodites. After our intercourse, a state of putrefaction set in – a punishment for the sin of incest and conception. Was she my mother?

In my dreams and nightmares, I made love to my mother. (And in my waking hours? ‘Over my dead body!’ she would say.) This is known as the *nigredo* state of blackness that requires the alchemist’s self-cleansing. I wash my feet, my body and everything else. What else do you need, my gods? Are you *my* gods? Are you my Jesus Christ? I killed her in my unconscious and even in my consciousness and their reality. I can’t change anything. Why should I go to an island and shoot my fellow creature for 90 minutes?

She would have betrayed me anyway, sooner or later, leaving my chateau, my garden and my body. Isn’t she my second mother, my first mother, my zero mother? My zero beloved. My ego unites successfully with my unconscious soul-image in the hope of producing a new personality compounded of both – the self or union of opposites. Is she one of my opposites? Like my mother?

Do we continue to talk? Of course we do. I ask questions and she answers them.

‘Why did you leave me?’

‘Because you love only your mother.’

‘I love death.’

‘I love life,’ she said.

‘I love grass,’ I said.

‘You’re your grass. You trample all over yourself.’

‘I do. I make love to myself.’

‘O.K. You won’t be put in prison for *that*.’

‘I’m not an ideal prisoner.’

‘You are not.’

‘My home is my castle.’

‘What about Breivik? Would you make love to *him*?’

‘No.’

There are impressions and feelings. Precision, imprecision. I took the knife about which they talk in *The Idiot*. ‘Listen, tell me, what did you kill her with? That knife? The same one?’

‘The same one.’

Yes, it is the same knife. I had to pick it up; I did. Rogozhin used the same knife: there’s only one knife in the world. What do you cut with it? The knife, the knife. You cut a slice of bread; you cut your meat up into small pieces. What is the meat you cut into pieces? Your meat, your body. Well, no one prevents you from cutting your body into pieces. Why do you hesitate? You want to live and conquer the world. Well, you have conquered the world or at least your own country. What happens next? Let us read newspapers.

Conflicting accounts quickly emerged about whether Colonel Qaddafi was summarily executed, died from gunshot wounds or from a NATO bomb blast or bled to death in an ambulance. But the images broadcast by Al Jazeera punctuated an emphatic, violent ending to his four decades as a ruthless, bombastic autocrat who had basked in a reputation as the self-styled king of kings in Africa.

International Herald Tribune, Friday, October 21, 2011

Sand, rocks and discarded water bottles lined the interior which opened next to a clutch of empty sheep pens. Three bodies of his companions lay outside. They did not look like elite bodyguards or members of an inner circle as they began to gather flies in the afternoon heat.

The shaky images show him bloodied and unkempt and surrounded by jubilant rebels holding weapons to his head.

The Daily Telegraph, Friday, October 21, 2011

No mercy for a merciless tyrant. Newspapers are merciless. God is great! Libya’s joy at first capturing and then killing the tyrant. Breivik conquered an island. What did he get? A few corpses to which he was reluctant to make love. What is there in the world except love? John Paul II spoke of it. I love your corpses, your bodies, even if you’re alive. I love all of you, provided you keep away from my garden. Do you keep away from me and my fireplace? I think so. I see no one except Breivik, Qaddafi and other nonentities. Let them look at me; I am sure to outstare them.

I took the knife used by killers all over the world; I used it as well.

It is not clear exactly when and how he died but his bloody end came at the hands of the angry mob of fighters who recorded his last moment on video. Mahmoud Jibril, the acting Libyan Prime Minister, claimed last night that Gaddafi was caught in crossfire and died from a bullet wound to the head.

The fighters who captured him, after weeks of fighting to take Sirte, brandished a golden pistol taken from the colonel, and may now share the £1 million bounty on his head.

The Times, Friday, October 21, 2011

The common reader waits for me to open my veins. I got used to the procedure yesterday or the day before. I wounded myself and a few drops of blood satisfied my curiosity. I was curious to know how many drops of blood would fill the cup I was holding under my veins. Just a few drops. It wasn't a blood test, was it? Do I have diabetes and cancer?

I got used to the sight of my blood. I was the Wounded King; I still am. I am Christ as well. If you're not Christ, you won't be raised from the dead. So I am Christ Who must lose His blood to fill the cup I'm holding under His veins or under my veins, which amounts to the same thing and blood. Where's my cross? Just an armchair. Anything is a cross if you believe it is one. It is one or two, so I am Christ or Spartacus. No, no, I am Christ. I remain, first and foremost, Jesus Christ. But I am also Spartacus in my spare time.

I don't know if I opened my veins this afternoon. I left the door of my death (or my life) ajar and I can't see anything except a few drops of blood. At this rate, I won't be dead before Doomsday. It is a Doomsday scenario, isn't it?

Wounded and terrified, Gaddafi appeared deluded to the end, asking his captors: 'What did I do to you?' His last words were, 'Do you know right from wrong?'

Once again I talked to Dana. 'Why have you forsaken me?'

'You're going crazy,' she said.

'I'm not. I'll never go crazy. I'm just dying.'

'So am I.'

'When will you die?'

'I don't know.'

'I do know when I'll die.'

'Keep it to yourself.'

'Why have you forsaken me?'

'I love another man.'

'Which one?'

'Doesn't matter.'

'I miss you. Why don't you come?'

'Because I'll lose him if I come to you.'

'Just for a day, for a few hours.'

'No.'

'You won't lose him, I promise.'

'Don't talk nonsense.'

‘Do you want me to marry you?’

‘No, it’s too late.’

‘You’re my Mary Magdalene.’

‘You’re off your rocker.’

Gaddafi’s battered body was paraded through the streets of Sirte to the sound of celebratory gunfire and jubilant shouts.

I think I can still write something as I look at the Red Sea, filling my glass, my Grail, my tale of woe. My tale is not filled to the brim yet, is it?

At the time of capture, Gaddafi was already wounded with gunshots to his leg and to his back, Bakeer said. He was then dragged 50 yards to a black Jeep and thrown onto the bonnet. Several rebel fighters surrounded him, beating him about the face, before he was shot in the stomach and head.

I cannot write any more. My diary will live to tell the tale. No more thoughts, no more emotions. It was one of those lives that leaves you emotionally and physically drained. I’ll just repeat one or two words for the sake of talking. Blood, blood, blood, blood, blood, blood, blood, blood, blood. The Grail, the Grail, the Grail, the Grail, the Grail, the Grail, the Grail. At last I have found it in my words.

I spilled the blood while I was pouring it. The Grail, the Grail. My blood. Pour your blood into the bowl and mix it thoroughly with the other ingredients. What ingredients? Questions, questions. No more questions; there are only answers. The blood is the best answer one can find in one’s cup and elsewhere. Would you like me to pour you some more blood? Let’s see if I can pour the blood into the glass without spilling it.

Here is my diary, my Resurrection. I began to write it after her death. My Mary Magdalene.

I’ll write another poem. You’ll find it at the end of my diary. I won’t find it; I won’t find anything.

I am cold, like Tom in *King Lear*. Blood is warm.

New pictures released today show Gaddafi’s scarred corpse on the floor of a freezer where it is being kept before burial.

All this happens. The rest is literature.

I am Nastassya Philippovna. I am playing three parts: Prince Myshkin, Rogozhin, Nastassya Philippovna. Three deaths.

*I stay for an hour, for half hour. I don’t stay,
I don’t say anything; I don’t walk.
Mosquitoes don’t walk either. I’ll say ‘Yes’ and show
My body flying among the stars. Do they
Say ‘Yes’? My starry night, my starry afternoon.*

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MY DIARY

October 2, 2011

*I cannot influence the fate of the globe, I do not begin wars.
Am I working with You or against You – I do not know.*

*I don't sin.
 And it worries me that I have no influence and that I don't sin...
 I am preparing the fragments of disaster
 But I do not catch a wholeness, the fate of man is above my
 Imagination...
 But is that enough?*

A poem by Karol Wojtyla. Breivik must have read this poem. Here is his answer to it:

*I can influence the fate of the globe, otherwise there's no point
 in my living on this globe. You're walking by my side
 and working by my side. I don't know what to think about You and how
 to feel your body, your breasts. I stare at you without seeing
 Your body, mind and soul. Is Your body also Your soul? You're one:
 there are no divisions in Your substance. I can't say
 I don't sin. If I do, I surely tear Your body apart: You suffer
 when Your disciples and servants misbehave. I can't help making
 mistakes. I may influence human history, but I
 don't know whether I am You or Satan. Would you adopt me?
 My mother is far away; my father is a physicist. And I
 don't know the first thing about physics and the world, our planet and
 the stars. Do I know anything about You? I'm preparing
 the fragments of disaster. What are these fragments? A lot of
 people You'll see on Utoya. You'll see and hear my rifle. You'll see everything.
 Do I catch the wholeness? I kill a hundred people. I kiss a few
 pedestrians. Do I embrace humanity? Seid umschlungen Millionen. Seid...
 seid...seid...Let it be, let it be. I like The Beatles, don't you?*

October 5, 2011

Sooner or later you hit the bottle and your life begins to multiply as if there were many lives in your room. Actually, you multiply the world or rather divide it into molecules; every molecule is a world in its own right and you follow the history of this world, taking notice of details and nuances. 'Divide and rule,' you say to yourself and accordingly you divide yourself into atoms; and yet such a procedure doesn't permit you to control your ego, self, body and soul. You rule neither the waves nor the Earth. Your furniture is covered in dust and cobwebs, but you control neither your furniture nor whatever covers it. You pour some wine on your furniture and the wine kills a few cobwebs, destroying a few specks of dust as well.

Why are you looking for the Grail? Why not look for the Grain? What kind of grain does the Grain belong to? Is it the Grain of Rice? You swallow this grain and become immortal. (There are no documents beside it, thank God!) You become wise as well. You become everything and everybody – every atom and every

Christ. One Christ can't atone for *all* the sins we have committed. The same goes for the Grail – and for the Grain.

Or is it the Grain of Wheat? Bread, bread, bread. You eat your own body and drink the blood you find in your body and in your soul. Is your blood tasty? Is it better than the bottle of Burgundy you're drinking? And what about your body? Is it more delicious than the grouse you've been devouring for an hour or so? How many grouses have you devoured today? A dozen grouses washed down with a dozen Cortons.

October 6, 2011

My train of thought; our compartment. I fasten the window shade, obliterating landscapes and platforms. I unfasten the shade and we go to the dining car. The train is swaying dramatically. As one of you advances upon me with a polite smile, graciously I start squeezing past him in that narrow, 'made-to-measure' corridor. (Do you remember our toilets, our restrooms, our *sexrooms*?) The dining-car – the exact copy of my dining room. And, to crown it all, you're waiting at our table. What a triumph! To look around and see only you, you, you, my dear friend. How provident I am! Should I lose one of you, two of you, or even eight – which will never happen, for I've got possession of all the keys – I shall detain the others.

October 7, 2011

When you hit the bottle, you hit it. You hit the bottle with your head, your life and your numerous loves. You can also hit the bottle with an axe. Your bottles become your hit parade.

October 8, 2011

There are stones you can trample upon almost everywhere, although I don't know what 'everywhere' means in the context of my life. My castle isn't only my home – it is everywhere now. A stone falls from the sky, a meteor, a token of someone's gratitude. Is God grateful for small mercies? I just pray to Him from time to time, not *all* the time, as might have been expected. I've never asked anyone to send me a stone, but God knows better what I need and where my salvation should come from. This time it comes from the sky, which is normal, given that everything falls from the sky, whenever human beings take the trouble to pray and kneel down, looking at the sky or at the ceiling.

I didn't pray, I must admit; but a stone did fall from the sky or from the nearest cloud. No, it's just wishful thinking. Wolfram von Eschenbach speaks about such a stone in his book on the Grail. I'm waiting for this stone; I couldn't care less about Godot, God or Mary Magdalene. A stone is enough and I'm waiting for it day and night, night and day. Should I drill three holes in the ceiling of my room? My Trinity. I'll never walk in my garden again so that, from now on, I'll receive my letters and stones in my room. I'll look for them under my blanket, under my pillows, under my willows, as if I was Ophelia. But Ophelia walked in her garden, didn't she?

There are lots of stones on my sheets. I'll choose one and say it is the Grail. It *is* the Grail.

October 9, 2011

I am not Breivik. I am the Buddha and Julius Caesar. They are still alive, for all their deaths and metamorphoses. I see to it that Caesar doesn't lose too much blood during his battles, across his Rubicons. (I wrote, 'During his

bottles.’) Can’t I preach the Middle Way as the Buddha did? Of course I can. This way runs in between life and death – across all borders, into Italy, through mountains and fountains.

I’m hanging on the Cross, on the same Cross: there are no other crosses in my history. This Cross is situated beyond pain and death. What else do I need? No pain, no death. Some kind of joy, the pure joy of existence. I am and yet I don’t think any more. Does one have to think in order to live in between life and death? There are instincts and forces. Last night the force of the wind brought down a great many trees in the area. I am part of this force, of this will to power, to life and death.

October 13, 2011

There are secret societies everywhere – in every nook and cranny of your houses. You just don’t notice them as you go to the dining room where nine bottles of Burgundy await you and your friends. There are a few numbers and a logo. You know that a secret society is right under your feet, under the carpet you’re walking on. You remove the carpet and find a few remnants of the society you’ve been looking for. You write a book about it and you count your money.

October 15, 2011

Can one fall in love with a dead woman? One can be in love with a dead woman, provided one fell in love with her before her death. This goes without saying, it seems to me. Why am I saying it then? I’m falling in love with Amy; yet I made her acquaintance only on the day of her death. Can one make one’s acquaintance on the day of one’s death? I mean, can you make acquaintance of a corpse? Of course. You attend the funeral and if the coffin is open, in accordance with the Russian ritual, you kiss the corpse on the forehead. You kiss *it* on the forehead. Can you make acquaintance of an ‘it’? You can’t say to It, ‘I hope you’ll consider me a friend and not just an acquaintance.’ What could It answer?

‘I’m just It, not Pete. I can’t be your friend.’

‘I’ve nothing against Its,’ you answer.

‘You shouldn’t capitalise “it”.’

‘Names always start with capitals.’

‘But “it” isn’t my name.’

‘I know. Your name’s Amy.’

‘I no longer have a name.’

‘You do. Your name’s written on your gravestone.’

‘This is the name of the gravestone.’

‘When they speak about you in the papers, they write down your name. And everyone knows who they are speaking about.’

‘They can say whatever they wish. I don’t care any more. Only those who have names are supposed to care about life and rumours.’

‘Do saints care about rumours?’

‘I’ve never been a saint.’

‘You’ve never been a sinner either, whatever they say. Sinners don’t sing like that.’

And I listen again to her voice and songs. To whom did she say goodbye with her words? Not with her eyes, not with her body.

October 18, 2011

*I never come or go. Darkness says,
'I am light.' I bow to it, to every*

*Thing. I sing: a song isn't harmful per se.
Libera me. C Major. Piano. Libera me.*

*Verdi's Requiem. A gradual
Build-up of suspense. A sixpence.*

October 19, 2011

After death. I switch the light off. There's something. Darkness. Even in Paradise. But a lot can happen in the dark. We won't see it. Now we see darkly. Then we'll see nothing at all.

And I go back to.

October, 25, 2011

Yesterday, I began to play the piano. I remember what my mother taught me in my childhood. I may have become my mother or just her fingers, her hands, her arms. They all play the pieces Tchaikovsky wrote for young pianists, for those who cannot play Liszt's sonatas. I'm running out of words but music remains. That's how it is. That's what this is all about.

October, 26, 2011

Another spot? A universe? Perhaps. There are people
And planets. I'll go to one of them. Is it
A human being? It is the star I'm looking for.
Many stars, many lights. You choose a light and
Go to the end of it; or to its beginning. You
Go, stop in your tracks and resume your walk, your flight, your
Light, your train of thought. You say to yourself:
'When I've got a cold, I don't feel like eating.'
Another symphony; another chord. Another note.