

NICHOLAS ENRAGED

The Journal of a Misanthrope

If an offence comes out of the truth, better is it that the offence
come than that the truth be concealed.

St Jerome

ESTRAGON: Nothing to be done

VLADIMIR: I'm beginning to come round to that opinion.
All my life I've tried to put it from me, saying,
Vladimir, be reasonable, you haven't yet tried
everything. And I resumed the struggle.

Waiting for Godot, Samuel Beckett

A man who has lost his purpose and his hope not infrequently turns monster
from misery.

Memoirs from the House of the Dead, Fyodor
Dostoyevsky

22nd March 2013.

Oh reader, dear reader, whoever you are, it pains me to have to tell you this, but you're *a total fucking idiot*. Now don't take this personally for, like you, dear reader, I too am *a total fucking idiot*. This *fact* is unavoidable. As Nietzsche, that great deconstructor of the human condition, says 'we see all things by means of our head and cannot chop it off'. We are human and therefore dull, dim-witted, arrogant, blind, hypocritical, narcissistic, greedy, apathetic, cruel, self-deceptive, ignorant and...well, I could go on, but I think you understand what I'm driving at. Just recall all of the despicable shit you've done in your life, and I think, despite yourself, you will find that you'll have to agree. No, no, don't argue with me. You're now thinking of all the good stuff you've done and are praying that it outweighs the bad. It doesn't, so stop now. It will save you a lot of time and energy in the long run. Believe me, I know.

Perhaps I should tell you why I'm writing this makeshift diary, journal, or memoir, or whatever you want to call it. The reason is simple. I have run out of patience and am on the brink of something monumental. I *must*, I absolutely *must* express myself, and the urge to do so is patent, irrefutable and unassailable. So here it is, dear reader, I have begun my document, my confession. My thoughts and feelings are about to be laid out bare and trembling under the scrutiny of your acumen.

Hmmm, 'acumen', do you know what that word means, dear reader? If you don't, or if you don't understand any of the other words I will use for that matter, I suggest that you get off your fat arse and find a dictionary. I will *not* pander to your deficiencies in comprehending the English language. Besides, if you do look them up, then some might say that you're improving yourself, and there's nothing wrong with that. Remember what the dormouse said, reader, 'feed your head...feed your head'.

Maybe I should also warn you of another thing. One could, if they wanted to, condemn this modest window into my psyche as nothing but a barrage of whining and complaining. To this, I must confess, there is some truth, but, like Nietzsche, I will say this in its justification: being a man who is 'tempted and encouraged in no small way to become the spokesman for the worst things: might they perhaps be only the best slandered?'

Are you still reading, reader? Have I gone too far? Have I affronted you in some way? If you are affronted, then don't bother to read on. However, if you're still with me, I will begin proper. Are you sitting uncomfortably?

It was sometime in November 2012 that I first noticed a latent but increasingly charged hatred for my fellow man. It seemed to come out of me in bursts of vitriol. Jessica, my poor wife, was the first to get the brunt of it when she proposed several trips to Newham next year to watch the Olympic Games. My initial, exasperated reaction was: 'why on earth would you want to do that? We have a fifty-inch, high definition TV to view it on. I guarantee that it will be far better seeing it on that than going in person, and you'll get a lot closer to the action.'

'I want to go, you know, for the atmosphere,' she said.

'The atmosphere,' I repeated. 'Yes, that glorious atmosphere requiring expensive travel, hours of queuing, people shouting, shoving, coughing and spluttering all over you. Yeah, sounds great. It'll be a fucking circus...Did you know that if you don't wear the rightly labelled clothes you won't be admitted? And that ridiculous logo. It cost four hundred grand and it's not even legible. The other day someone said that it looks like Lisa Simpson giving head, although personally I don't see it.'

'That's a "no" then, is it?'

‘Do you really have to ask?’

‘Ok, well, I’ll see if some of the girls want to go as you’re being such a prick about it.’

‘Yes, you do that.’

It was a few weeks later, at the office, that my life changed irrevocably. I worked at a small but lucrative insurance firm headed by a partnership of mother and daughter. Rosa, the matriarch, was an aging, despicable and status-obsessed bitch, whose sagging and wrinkled skin was always on show. She had thick red hair, which was fashioned in a severe fringe and cut short just above the shoulders. There was no grey in it and it looked suspiciously separate from the rest of her. When male visitors came to the office she would wear disgustingly low-cut blouses. It was abominable, reader, truly excruciating. To even begin to contemplate those flaccid, drooping dugs of hers would make me want to retch. The daughter, Eliza, my immediate superior, was a revolting and spiteful sycophant, whose nauseating body odour cut through her copious folds of fat and heavily applied perfume like a blowtorch through butter. And over the years the shit I had taken from these two could’ve fertilised an entire continent.

The other women in the office (I was the only male of the species here, dear reader) were not as bad. Yet, I still had to endure a ceaseless stream of grousing about their husbands. On and on it would go, for whole days sometimes. Everything was covered; from penis-size, to the way they cleaned their teeth, to the inappropriateness of the shoes they wore to restaurants. Nothing, and I mean *nothing*, ever seemed to satisfy these prima donnas, and I found it hard not to scream in their faces: ‘*Well, you’re the ones that married them, you dumb fucking cunts, so who’s the more foolish? Now shut the fuck up!*’ In the end I was just about able to tolerate it by picturing them as a coven of cackling harridans standing around their cauldron; the water cooler, whilst they conjured hexes on those closest to them. Weird sisters, indeed.

One day I was trying to get my fucking useless computer to work properly again, when Rosa and Eliza dropped two stacks of completed cancellations on my desk. ‘Yes?’ I said.

‘Nicholas Weir,’ said Rosa. ‘You’ve done all these wrong; a whole six months worth.’

‘What, exactly,’ I replied, ‘is wrong with them?’

‘They’ve all been cancelled,’ Eliza said with contempt, ‘on the wrong date. And now we’re gonna have to inform all our insurers and clients, and check all the refunds we’ve granted so far this year.’

‘You mean *I’m* gonna have to inform all our insurers and clients, and check all the refunds we’ve granted so far this year.’

‘No way,’ Eliza said. ‘You’re obviously incapable –’

I interrupted: ‘What makes you so entirely sure that this is my fault? Given the backlog that *you* let accumulate, I worked out all the dates they needed to be cancelled on with the formula *you* gave me and Rosa signed them off.’

I pointed to Rosa’s signature scrawled on one of the documents. ‘It might also be wise, Eliza,’ I said, ‘to check the formula.’

The whale-bitch looked at her mother, pleadingly.

‘Alright, alright. Nicholas, you’re the one who did them wrong so you’re the one who’s going to rectify them. Understand? And consider this a formal warning, this kind of incompetence cannot go unpunished.’

They both strutted off and I remained at my desk, consumed by an intense fury. For the past ten years, it seemed to me, I had been locked in a constant state of rage, and, dear reader, I was fucking sick of it; feeling this anger permeate every muscle, every pore. Then I had a moment of clarity, a strain of epiphany if you will. I don't think it was a conscious thing. It is difficult to describe. It was as if the whole world had become tiny, manageable and in the palm of my hand. A sensation of sinking made me feel as if I were being absorbed into the floor. And then it stopped; the anger, the rage, it just disappeared and I was relieved. I stood, slung on my jacket and left. When I arrived home I had the faintest inklings of a plan and ate two bowls of All Bran before going to bed and sleeping for fifteen hours straight – the most I have ever slept in a single day.

I awoke very early the next morning. I drove to the office, let myself in, climbed on Rosa's desk, dropped my trousers, squatted, and took what I can only describe as the biggest, most pungent and most cohesive dump my bowls had yet to produce. I was quite proud. To finish I pissed profusely on Rosa's computer and wiped my arse on the cardigan she keeps on the back of her chair. Then I thought, if only last night I was thinking more clearly; I could've eaten some enchiladas or had a nasty Indian and got some spraying action going on. There's nothing like a dirty protest. Next (for I could not resist the temptation) I took a big, fat magic marker, a red one, and wrote in the largest characters possible:

INSUFFERABLE CUNTS

on the wall behind Eliza's desk. Oh, reader, it was magnificent. I felt cleansed, joyous and alive. I hope, one day, you too get to experience such elation.

That same day I told Jessica of my recent activities and, of course, she was not best pleased. I tried to explain my reasons but they were not understood, so I left her too and checked into a hotel. Our marriage had plateaued into a boring, sexless swindle anyway, and I refused to rationalize our mutual unhappiness any further. Over the past years she'd become a bit of a plumper. Maybe this was due to depression, a lack of motivation, or being locked in an antagonistic bond of mutual compromise. For that is what marriage is – a compromise, where both parties never get what they want, and very quickly the resentment builds and soon the relationship is nothing but a contract of coercion. Yet perhaps this isn't the case in way of explanation. As a member of Facefuck or Myface (or whatever these social networking sites are called), Jessica would often allow me to indulge my curiosity to locate old school friends, and it appeared that all the most attractive women of my class had turned into dogs or frightful lard-arses - being attractive makes you lazy, apparently. Being attractive and having everything come so easily to them in youth: the popularity, the admiration, the attention evaporates when their lack of practical expertise is put to the test later in life. It must be a bitter drop to swallow, and Jessica had most definitely swallowed it.

We did nothing now but bicker over the most insignificant things, and when I touched her, or tried to...er, initiate intimacy, she would look at me as if I were a wanton sexual deviant, a pervert of the highest order. I wish I could've said to her (in a nice way) that I was a man, a healthy, living man who had urges, and that they were not my fault. I didn't make myself this way. I had no choice in the matter. In fact, if I had had a choice I would've said to my parents: no, don't do it! Use a rubber; or Mother, get thee to a nunnery, and Father, get thee some porn!

Anyway, it was for the benefit of both of us that I did it, and I think she knew it was for the best, even if, as the dawning realisation of my intentions registered with her, she felt much pain. And for that, dear reader, I am genuinely sorry.

24th March 2013.

I can't tell you, dear reader, how good it is to air this stuff, to get it out in the open. I think there is much validity in the healing powers of confession, as long as you don't scourge yourself into a bloody pulp afterwards. Perhaps I should see a psychotherapist (you're nodding your head already, aren't you, reader?) and do it professionally. No, I think, for the moment, this humble pen and paper will do.

I've been thinking about the sexes recently (probably due to writing my last entry) and have come to a tentative conclusion that they are, in the long term, incompatible. At the risk of sounding clichéd, the arachnid analogy for women is still very apt. Like a spider they weave their web and ensnare us. Once helpless, they pump us full of poison, or lay their eggs, which, when they hatch, are horrifying to them. I guess this is to say that, as we are, they do not like us. Rather they like the idea of us, of having a 'man' about to do 'man stuff'. They wish to mould us into what they want, but ironically and paradoxically they really have no fucking clue about what they want!

Hmmm, perhaps that's not entirely true. Perhaps I am being unfair. Perhaps they do have a roundabout, general idea of what they want. They want everything – lasting romance; a plumber; a DIY expert, a listener; a slave; a father; a son; a fashion conscious good-looker; a eunuch (when it suits her); a mechanic; a gentleman; a sensitive, muscle-bound and largely endowed lover, with a gynaecological knowledge of her erogenous zones (when it suits her); a gardener; a dancer; a cook; a bartender; a masseuse; a provider; a soothsayer; a rock for her to cling to; a defender of her honour, and eyes for no one else *but her*. Well, I'm sorry, ladies, life is not a fucking fairy tale, so you need to brace yourselves for continuous and lasting disappointment. And, at length, when you've broken your back to be all these things and you're lying dribbling and exhausted on the floor, you can guarantee that whatever you've done, it still isn't fucking good enough. In fact, maybe it would be better if they did butcher us after coitus, like some female spiders. It would be infinitely more compassionate, and we would be spared the castration and the endless, soul-deadening criticism.

Men, on the other hand, are just as lame. Our egos rule and, after the first whirl of romance has passed, we spend most of our energy trying to control our female counterparts, trying to get them to do things, which generally amount to a good blowjob, a hard fuck and their general degradation for our own pleasure. Women must be subjugated; they must be reined in and forced to worship at the altar of the uber-cock. Sad really, isn't it, reader? And when, finally, the nagging has become too much, we really just can't be bothered, and wish that, instantly, you would be replaced by someone younger, prettier and less demanding. For example, a gorgeous, low-maintenance mute would be ideal.

But what of love? I hear you ask. At this I must confess to not really knowing what it is. It's an abstract term, isn't it? Like happiness. Have I ever been in love? I honestly don't know. Once you realise that attraction is basically chemistry; that it's all administered by chemicals in the brain, that it *is* quantifiable, its edge is irredeemably removed. And this is the test of all things that matter, isn't it? That once it is quantified and explained and it still holds some fascination, then its value is innate – it *matters*...In *Annie Hall* Woody Allen asks why do we bother with the relationship game. His answer is: because we 'need the eggs'. What I'm saying is: I no longer 'need the eggs'. The benefits do not outweigh the costs.

26th March 2013.

There were, of course, consequences to my shenanigans at work. The police visited me but I gave them a sob story about how my wife had just left me and that the stress had pushed me into crisis. They bought it and since I had no previous history of anti-social behaviour, they let me be. *Idiots*.

After that I rented a semi-detached house on the outskirts of the city. My old house, the one that Jessica still lived in, was a gift from my parents, so I was not burdened by any mortgage payments and alike. My father was a successful landlord, buying and leasing properties all over the world, and when they retired they emigrated to the Bahamas. Also I had been saving ever since I had started work and could, consequently, for the time being, do whatever I wished. I was, to all intents and purposes, free as one can get considering today's absurd careerist ethos.

I had unbound myself from society's dreadful tyranny: *buy*, reader, *buy*, *sell*, *sell*, be a good little dupe and *consume*, *consume*. *Work and shop until you drop!* Nope, sorry, dear reader, that is not for me. From now on the useless politicians, their ineffectual government and the immoral mass media can all go *fuck themselves*. No more working to purchase things I don't need (I took my cell phone and slowly and gladly crushed it under my heel), no more working to support organisations that create more problems than they do solutions. Like Tyler Durden in Fincher's *Fight Club*:

'I see all this potential and I see it squandered. Goddamn it, I see an entire generation pumping gas, waiting tables, slaves with white collars. Advertising has us chasing cars and clothes, working jobs we hate so we can buy shit we don't need. We're the middle children of history, with no purpose, no place. We have no great war, no great depression. Our great war is a spiritual war. Our great depression is our lives. We've all been raised on television to believe that one day we'd be millionaires, movie-gods and rock stars, but we won't. We're slowly learning that fact. And we're very, very pissed off.'

On the surface I carried on, day to day, as a normal person would, for in an insane world a sane man must appear to be insane. But underneath, when I wandered around the city, a polyphonic chorus of disgust sounded in my head. The dirt, the filth, the potholed roads, the narcoleptic automatons in their suits and ties (the noose of the modern age, reader!), the ditzy girls unable to pry their eyes from their Blackberries, the caricature-like queers, and a demented male student dressed in a pink jumper and a long skirt with flowers on it, who tried to flog me old text books from a trolley, drove me back inside. The soaring structures of steel and glass leaned over my head, blocking the wind, threatening to crush and stifle me. Cities are not the vigorous

crucibles of civilisation. They are deserts that corrode. Nevertheless, sometimes it wasn't all that bad. Sometimes I'd see something that would lighten my burdens.

For example, there was one occasion when I noticed a lovely Indian woman materialize out of the Natural History Museum with a swarm of children in her wake. The kids all had backpacks on and wore brightly coloured vests of yellow, blue and red over their clothes – presumably to, when outside, alert drivers and cyclists of their presence – and, as they noisily bustled out of the gates, the Indian woman turned to them and said loudly: 'Hi, everybody!' 'Hi, Doctor Nick!' they replied en mass. How wonderful is that, dear reader? It warms the soul. It's a shame to think that in a few years time the girls will be sucking cock for blow and the boys will be stabbing their teachers. Oh well, it's all part of life's rich pageant, I suppose.

Also there were some things I just couldn't do anymore. Watching television was one of them. When I turned the set on all it did was shriek at me and lie, show me hordes of vapid celebrities, and tell me that if only I bought the new 4x4 Land Cruiser would my life become adventurous. Sometimes I'd see Ant and Dec and imagine a bullet hole suddenly appearing just above Dec's brow and the back of his head being blasted out, all over the horribly over-lit studio backdrop. Then I'd see Ant's massive forehead explode, his blood and brains soaking the audience, like a downpour of righteous hale and brimstone.

And then there's Katie Price, oh fuck me, yes, there's Katie Price. I'd like to cram that gobby mouth of hers full of cash, dowse her in gasoline, then set her alight and watch those plastic tits of hers dissolve into a sticky puddle on the floor. On second thoughts, however, that might be a little extravagant. Maybe it would be more satisfying to just punch her face into a placenta. Sometimes I think that there's so much crap being beamed out to us that one day it will manifest physically, out of the thin air, and I will be knocked into the gutter by Bruce Forsyth's chin! Perhaps we should have a culling, reader. 'When a forest grows too wild, a purging fire is inevitable and natural', as Ra's al Ghul says in *Batman Begins*. We should dump Strictly Come Wanking or The Wank Factor or Britain's Got Wank or The Great British Wank off; then proceed to execute, one by one, Keith Lemon, Simon Cowell, Chris Evans, Ricky Gervais, Philip Scofield, Holly Willoughby, Alan Sugar and his cronies, and Jeremy Kyle... Oh, I almost forgot, and Bruce Forsyth (he just will not die, reader! The man seems immortal) ... and Jimmy Car... and Russell Brand... and Peter Andre, Chantelle Houghton, Wayne Rooney, David and Victoria Beckham, Kerry Katona, Piers Morgan, Danny Dyer and Cheryl Cole... and everyone that appears on *Loose Women*, and Nick Grimshaw ... and Jonathan Ross... Anybody who has anything to do with *The One Show* and Rob Brydon... and Sue Perkins... and Mel Giedroyc... Jesus, there's so fucking many of them! Just *FUCK OFF, all of you!* Go die in a corner somewhere, quietly.

No, I can't watch television anymore, reader, so after suffering through half an hour of some anodyne American sitcom and the absurd amount of adverts stuck in it, I put a chair through the screen (Yes, alas, my rage had returned). I had become Travis Bickle, John Doe, William Foster, Harry Haller, Werther, Ivan Karamazov, Gil Renard, Daniel Plainview, Sy Parish, Rodion Raskolnikov, Antoine Roquentin and Camus' Mersault all rolled into one.

Come to think of it, dear reader, as we've been speaking of adverts and as you must already be getting a bit tired of my polemics, lets have a few, just to give you a break (I've removed the actual names of the companies responsible for I wouldn't want to inadvertently promote their services!):

Sometimes sorry makes it all ok, but Foremost for Lawyers are there for when sorry isn't enough. You see, Foremost for Lawyers are experienced personal injury specialists. So find out free if you can make a no win, no fee claim. Call Foremost for Lawyers *first* to see if you're owed more than just an apology. [*a high-spirited and cheering crowd walk behind a lawyer*] That's what justice feels like!

Core, blimey, a four by four! What's the insurance on that? GO CONTRAASST, GO CONTRAASST. When you insure you must be sure to GO CONTRAST. They give you quotes, give you notes, GO CONTRAASST. It's where you go to insure your motor. When you insure be sure to go, be sure to go to GO CONTRAASST!

Man: Welcome back. Today we're talking about a bank's range of tax-free cash ISA's.

Woman: ISA, ISA.

Man: ISA, ISA?

Woman: Lets kick it! *ISA ISA, Baby.*

Man: So, tax-free ISA's; a great way to make the most of your savings.

Woman: *ISA, ISA, Baby...ISA, ISA, Baby.*

It's not a journey. Every journey ends, but we go on. The world turns and we turn with it. Plans disappear. Dreams take over. But wherever I go, there you are. My luck, my fate, my fortune. Perfume No. 5. Inevitable.

Fucking dreadful!

In *Good Night and Good Luck* Edward R. Murrow's words are given voice:

'We have currently a built-in allergy to unpleasant or disturbing information. Our mass media reflect this. But unless we get up off our fat surpluses and recognize that television in the main is being used to distract, delude, amuse, and insulate us, then television and those who finance it, those who look at it, and those who work at it, may see a totally different picture too late...To those who say people wouldn't look; they wouldn't be interested; they're too complacent, indifferent and insulated, I can only reply: There is, in one reporter's opinion, considerable evidence against that contention. But even if they are right, what have they got to lose? Because if they are right, and this instrument is good for nothing but to entertain, amuse and insulate, then the tube is flickering now and we will soon see that the whole struggle is lost. This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely wires and lights in a box.'

I'm sorry, dear Edward, but we humans have pretty much reduced this instrument to purely functional wires and lights in a box.

27th March 2013.

It was around this time that I came to feel a mounting curiosity and a fervent compulsion to know, to understand, to become wise. I was growing up at last and only now was I tall enough to see over the fence. So in early June I decided that it was time to get educated (properly, this time!). I wanted to explore art, sociology and philosophy, so I breezed into Waterstones and breezed out again carrying four large carrier bags full of books; and this, dear reader, was how I became a neophyte of Nietzsche - a man, as his biographer, Ronald Hayman, says, who could see that the modern state, far from 'wishing to improve the intellectual acuity of its citizens, needs uncritical subservience and complaisance.' Specialised education, as is prominent in the West, is in the state's interest; 'an academic or a scientist, proficient in his own subject' is not 'generally cultured'. 'Culture and the state...are antagonists,' says Nietzsche, 'the one lives off the other, the one thrives at the expense of the other. All great cultural epochs are epochs of political decline: that which is great in the cultural sense has been unpolitical, even *anti-political*.'

So for the past year or thereabouts, I have been on an odyssey, a crusade, and have buried myself in the works of Arthur Schopenhauer (a very cheerful fellow!), Nietzsche, Terry Eagleton, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Shakespeare (*Hamlet* is a fucking masterpiece!), Hermann Hesse, Jean-Paul Sartre, Kafka and more. I've also been watching lots of films (a most powerful medium, reader, combining all the major arts of picture, writing and music - I hail John Williams as one of the greatest composers to have ever lived. He is the Maestro, the Master, the King). I bought myself a new television, a blu ray player and a thunderous sound system. I used to enjoy going to the cinema when I was younger, but that all stopped when I got married (as did having friends), so I thought I'd resurrect my interest in it.

However, as I've discovered, there is such an enormous amount of garbage out there its hard to avoid all of it. The problem with today's "entertainment" is that it is so devoid of meaning and so escapist that it holds almost no value. Yet people still flock to it in their billions. Why? Because their lives have become so forlorn that they must escape from it at all costs. 'The more the perfumed fragrance of meaning (yes, Nietzsche again, reader) is dispersed and evaporated, the rarer will be those who can still perceive it...on the one side, a group of ten thousand with ever higher, more delicate pretensions, ever more attuned to "what it means"; and on the other side, the vast majority, which each year is becoming ever more incapable of understanding meaning...and is therefore learning to reach out with increasing pleasure for that which is intrinsically ugly and repulsive.'

Yes, yes, that's it. It is the same of all the arts. Here's a few film-makers whose work epitomises this ugliness: Michael Bay (A piss-artist of the lowest calibre, director of the *Transformer* films and various other atrocities such as *Armageddon*. Need I say any more, other than that anybody who actually thinks these films are good should probably seek the help of a mental health professional?), Paul W.S. Anderson (Please Mr Anderson, just go away!), Dominic Sena, Brian Levant, Rob Cohen, M Night Shyamalan (*The Sixth Sense* isn't too bad, but the rest...pushing the boundaries of ridiculousness and awfulness), McG, Brett Ratner, Roland Emmerich (the target demographic for his films are the retarded, right?), Renny Harlin, Eli Roth, Guy Richie, Joss Whedon, Mr J.J. (stop with the fucking lense flare!) Abrams, James Cameron (*Aliens* and *The Terminator* are excellent of course. His main offenders are *Titanic* and *Avatar*; films so hackneyed, so unoriginal it boggles the mind. His work marks the sad pinnacle of movies being made solely for the display of visual effects. Any commitment to storytelling and continuity is not in evidence in any way, shape

or form. Cameron is also the pioneer of that pointless gimmick: 3D) and Peter Jackson (Sorry *Lord of the Rings* fans, but these films, given the quality of the source material, are failures of considerable magnitude, full of transparent and unnecessary narrative digressions, and parts that are just plain ludicrous: Legolas surfing down steps, dwarf-tossing, gay/camp elves, Frodo being ‘dragged’ towards Minas Morgul – give me a fucking break! Yet Howard Shore’s scores are *seriously* good. Whilst I do like most of King Kong, there is too much lame, inappropriate humour and too much Jamie Bell. His other films barely warrant the status of mediocre). These works are intrinsically ugly; so *stop going to see them, people. Stop*, if not for my sake, then *for the sake of your children!* Put down your Harry Potter, put down your Dan Brown, and pick up your Dostoyevsky. I want to see *The Brother’s Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment* selling in droves.

29th March 2013.

Are you getting tired of me quoting Nietzsche, dear reader? I suspect you are. There’s not much plot in this narrative of mine is there? Well, tough. I’m writing a journal, not a novel, and I’m writing it for my benefit, not yours. Or perhaps what is really riling you is that I’m telling truths, and since you’re getting annoyed with my fixation on Nietzsche, I shall quote him again: ‘everyone prefers to walk back into shadow and untruth – for fear of the consequences’. Absolutely, goddamn right! ‘The service of truth is the hardest service.’ You fear the acknowledgment of your ontological anxiety, reader; you fear discovering exactly what you’re cable of; you fear change. ‘You’re afraid,’ as Seth Brundle says in *The Fly*, ‘to dive into the plasma pool’. So *rise, people, rise*. Forget your fears. Fear is rot. Toss your apathy into the abyss. Let’s ‘lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments [a better] humanity’ (that one’s Thomas Paine), because it’s governments that resist change, it is always they who wish to preserve the status quo.

If the west is to progress, it needs radical political amendment. And don’t look to the spineless politicians of today to provide it, dear reader; they’re too preoccupied with attaining and remaining in power than doing any real, dramatic good. In fact, just look at them, reader. Why are they so staggeringly loathsome, all of them - Cameron, Clegg, Miliband, and their flunkies? These Etonians, these Oxfordites. There’s a few lines in John le Carre’s *A Murder of Quality* that are appropriate here, where Fielding, a Professor, sums up his career: ‘When I look back on my thirty years at Carne, I realise I have achieved rather less than a road sweeper... I used to regard a road sweeper as a person inferior to myself. Now, I rather doubt it. Something is dirty, he makes it clean, and the state of the world is advanced. But I – what have *I* done? Entrenched a ruling class which is distinguished by neither talent, culture, nor wit; kept alive for one more generation the distinctions of a dead age.’

Through their combined strength politicians and their ilk have given birth to a deformed mill that grinds out nothing but misery. And what’s most disturbing is that there is no alternative. We vote for them because we have no other choice, and this rare (once every four years, reader!) ‘voting’ process only serves to furnish us with the illusion of volition. We vote, in the end, not for the party that will do the best job, but for the party that will do the least damage.

Here’s one from Jean-Jacques Rousseau: ‘The English people believes itself to be free; it is gravely mistaken; it is free only during election of members of parliament; as soon as the members are elected, the people [are] enslaved; it is nothing. In the brief moment of its freedom, the English people make such a use of

that freedom that [they] deserve to lose it.' And if you believe that politicians think any higher of us you are sorely mistaken. They hate us, dear reader. To them we are the mad masses, the vile vox populi, the precarious precariat.

Although I said that for the past months I had buried my self in art that does not mean that these months have been free of incident. When outside of the house my anger would sometimes become unmanageable. There was a day when I needed some milk, just a pint or two, nothing else. I walked into the supermarket, got what I required and emerged at the checking desks to find only one open. Behind it a queue reached almost out the door. Annoyed, I joined it and watched the poor girl at the desk trying to serve the customers as quickly as she could. She seemed very young, maybe seventeen, if that, and quite distressed. But, try as she might, the queue grew longer and more disorderly. With my impatience mounting, I glanced around and saw two fatties standing nearby, watching the queue: a man and woman of middle age, stuffing themselves with Pringles. Both had identity tags that read "manager". I strode up to them: 'Everything alright, dump trucks?' I said.

Tweedle-dumb and Tweedle-dee looked at each other but didn't say anything.

'Having a busy day are you?' I asked. 'It's a lovely queue, isn't it? Why don't you ten bellies get off your fat fucking behinds and do something?'

The man, at last, responded. 'We're not obliged,' he said, 'to take abuse from customers, sir. So I would appreciate it if - '

I reached up, grabbed Tweedle-dumb by the hair and slammed him into a closed checking desk. '*Open it, chubby!* (I think I was shouting at this point) *or I'll take more than a pound of flesh. You can spare it, right?*'

Tweedle-dee screamed and ran off.

'I...I...don't have the key,' Tweedle-dumb said.

At this I remember tightly closing my eyes and sighing. I took the change from my pocket, threw it at him and left with the milk, the other customers staring at me, goggle-eyed.

Not long after that I was in a cinema trying to watch the final cut of Ridley Scott's masterwork, *Blade Runner*. It was a one-off showing and the theatre was relatively empty. However, the young couple sitting a few rows behind me had been nattering incessantly since the film had begun. I asked them, politely, to stop talking. This was the response I received from the man: 'Fuck off, mate. We ain't talkin'. Go back dan an' watch the film. Go on, follow ya muvafuckin' tootsies, sit dan and watch da film.'

After the girl giggled at me mockingly, I leaned over and head-butted her boyfriend. Then she started to claw at me, so I pulled her out of her chair and kicked her down the aisle. Eventually, the police were summoned and I told them that my wife had recently left me and that the stress had pushed me into crisis. I was let go but banned from the cinema for life.

Often, when I arrived home after episodes such as these I would think to myself: did I really do those things? To act in such a way was not like *me*, and, as I thought about it, an inestimable distance appeared between the *me* of the outside and the *me* at home. I think I'll stop here, reader. Recalling these events has made my blood boil and given me a headache.

30th March 2013.

I found this in Nietzsche today, reader, and I'm going to quote it in its entirety, for I cannot think of anything else which so pithily summarises my current situation.

‘The free spirit suffers “a great separation” [and] for bound people the great separation comes suddenly...An urge governs it, mastering the soul like a command: the will and wish awaken to go away, anywhere, at any cost: a violent, dangerous curiosity for an undiscovered world flames up and flickers in all the senses. “Better to die than to live *here*”...and this “here”, this “at home” is everything which it had loved until then! A sudden horror and suspicion of that which it loved; a lightening flash of contempt toward that which was its “obligation”; a rebellious, despotic, volcanically jolting desire to roam abroad, to become alienated, cool [and] sober. [It is] a victory...this first outburst of strength and will to self-determination, self-valorisation, this will to *free* will...[And] behind his ranging activity (for he is journeying restlessly and aimlessly, as in a desert) stands the question mark of an ever more dangerous curiosity: “Cannot *all* values be overturned? And is Good perhaps Evil? ... Is everything perhaps ultimately false?” [Thus] loneliness surrounds him, curls around him, ever more threatening, strangling, heart constricting, that fearful goddess and wild mother of passions.’

Yes. I, too, am lonely. Am I a ‘free spirit’?

2nd April 2013.

It was on the 1st of June last year that, while opening my post, I was called upon by two Jehovah’s witnesses or Mormons; I can’t quite recall which. They were trundling around the estate, peddling their delusions. I opened the door and one of them handed me a leaflet featuring a hopelessly romantic depiction of Christ’s crucifixion, and since I was in a good mood, I thought I’d invite them in and listen to their idiocy, solely for my own amusement.

Whilst these two drones sat there, taking it in turns to bewilder my mind with the “the radiance of Jesus” and the “immaculate wisdom of the Lord”, I examined them closely. There was something decidedly eerie about them, with their flawless dress; grey suits, white shirts and ties done up tightly at the collar. They were smoothly shaven, their teeth were so perfectly aligned and so clean that they appeared to glint a sinister light, and their hairstyles so carefully shaped that not one strand was askew. These folks were scary, reader, very scary, and I was reminded of a time when I was a child and my parents made me attend Sunday school. Even though I was young and could not properly articulate my fears, I remember feeling, when I was there, that there was something just plain *wrong* with the people around me. They seemed to be missing an essential ingredient and I became anxious and wanted to bolt out into the street, screaming for help.

With these thoughts I must’ve drifted away somewhere because I became suddenly aware of the two nutcases staring at me expectantly, as if waiting for a reply. ‘Have you ever heard of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche?’ I asked them.

Naturally, they said no.

‘He was a German philosopher, poet, composer, cultural critic and classical philologist,’ I informed them, ‘and, at the age of forty-four, he suffered a complete mental collapse, perhaps due to an atypical general paresis caused by tertiary syphilis, although this is contested.’

They both thought this was very sad.

‘He said that “for out of fear and need each religion is born, creeping into existence on the byways of reason.” He said “The priest rules through the invention of

sin". Do you not see that your religion is a fantasy designed to propagate false meaning in people's lives and negate the truth about death? Do you not see that it serves to assure you that, providing you are good little boys and girls, everything will be fine in the end?"

As I said this I watched their expressions alter to perplexity, and I realised that this world would be a far better (and safer) place if these boobs were not in it. I wish I could've said more. I wish I could've plonked Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* in their laps and made them read it under the threat of slicing off their ears or chopping off their hands. I wish I could've quoted Nietzsche further and said 'no matter how well proven the existence of [a metaphysical] world might be, it would still hold true that the knowledge of it would be the most inconsequential of all knowledge, even more inconsequential than the knowledge of the chemical analysis of water must be to a boatman facing a storm.' Yes, for the reasonable man, this is true, but for the unreasonable maybe the proof of an existence of a metaphysical world would not be totally inconsequential. It would probably just decrease people's estimation of the worth of a corporeal life further. There would be more suicides, more fundamentalists immolating themselves with bombs strapped to their chests.

And, you know, I really don't have much of a problem with people doing this, providing they choose the right targets. Blowing up the public won't change a thing. They should target buildings which are inhabited by those responsible, like Parliament or Corporation Headquarters, and then two problems could be solved at once. I'm all for using hydrogen instead of petrol and installing solar panels on my roof to reduce the exploitation of the environment and the Middle East, but governments and corporations seem to making a concerted effort to prevent these things from becoming commonplace. The insidious messiah's of our time are profit and extortion in the name of economic stability, and the demons, financial loss and the middle and lower classes honestly procuring more capital. In this sense, it's markedly evident that our government does not give *a fuck* about the long-term prosperity of the majority of its people. They are, in reality, an impediment to it. The interests of government have diverged from the interests of the nation. Now, forgive me if I'm being dim here, reader, but shouldn't the interests of both be the consistent? Shouldn't there be some reciprocity here somewhere?

Anyway, back to the lunatics in my living room. Their expressions altered to bewilderment and I felt my inner-self swell in stature. My rage grew. I felt a change. I was becoming a beacon of might. So, do you know what I did? I rose from my chair and – Oh no, oh no, dear reader, guess what? It's time for some more adverts! Here you go:

Kid: Muumm, I want to do a poo.

Mum: Come on then.

Kid: But I want to do a poo at Paul's bathroom.

Mum: Don't be silly, come on.

Kid: I'm going to do a poo at Paul's.

Narrator: Paul's bathroom has Blade Feel'n Fresh. More discrete than an aerosol, its no more bad smells; just a pleasant fragrance.

Feel'n Fresh from Blade.

Gold is cold. Diamonds are dead. A limousine is a car. Don't pretend. Feel what's real. C'est ca, J'adore. J'adore. Stinkor.

Man: I can't explain it to you just now.

118: Is it a 'down stairs' problem?

Man: I just can't explain it.

118: Down stairs, 117?

118: Has to be, 117.

Sound: Wah Wah Wa Waahhh.

Transform your world of gaming with MegaCasino. Join tonight and we'll give you £10 completely free. Play wherever you want, whenever you want - on TV, online and on your mobile. MegaCasino.com. Feel it for real.

Fuck yeah, reader, *feel it for real*.

Where was I? Oh, yes. I had become a beacon of might – no, no, sorry. There is just enough time for a word from our sponsor: The rants of Nicholas Weir are brought to you by absolutelypig-fuckingsickofffuckingadvertsandwouldbegladtoseethefucking ridiculousamountoftelevisionchannelsreducedbecauseoftheirirradiation dot com.

Yes, I had emerged out of the chrysalis boldly coloured and beautiful, a defender of logic and rationality. Yes, dear reader, *gooooo tell it on the moooooountain that Nicholas Weir has been reborn!* So, finally, I said to them 'Do I come slithering around to your private abode to preach the benefits of Atheism?'

There was silence.

'No,' I said, 'I do not. But perhaps I should start. Then you could understand how truly unwanted - '

One of them stood and went for the door. I slashed him across the side of the neck with my alarmingly sharp paperknife, and while he flailed about on the floor, arterial blood spraying all over the place, I throttled the other with my bare hands. Exalting and ecstatic, I played Preisner's 'Song for the Unification of Europe' from Kieslowski's *Three Colours: Blue*. Waves and waves of emotion rent through my body in an extraordinarily rapturous sensation that seemed to me to be like being born and destroyed at the same time. I was certain that I had done a good deed, certain that I had made the world a safer place.

Yet, later, whilst clearing up and after singing a few verses of *Bringing in the Sheep, bringing in the sheep, we shall come rejooiiiicing, bringing in the sheep!* I stopped in my tracks due to a suddenly dawning realisation. I surveyed the disorder and was mortified. I had, indeed, brought in the sheep, but I had also betrayed

Nietzsche. He would never have condoned my actions that day. I had become like the Nazis, who perverted his philosophy to justify the murder of millions, and if I carried on like this I, too, would be forced into the same demise, or be eliminated in the process of capture. And thus, henceforward, I was resolved not to kill anyone else unless extenuating circumstances absolutely demanded it.

Plus, to be frank, dear reader, body disposal and tidying up the mess is a real pain in the arse. I didn't know what to do, to be honest. I thought of getting them into the bath and dissolving them in acid. I thought of chopping them up, putting the pieces in suitcases and taking those suitcases down to the dump. I even, for the briefest period imaginable, thought of eating them, but then what would I do with the bones? I'm no butcher. Slicing and dicing is not my thing. I buried them in the end, out in a deserted part of the countryside, wrapped in a mass of garbage bags. When I arrived home afterwards I had to practically redecorate my entire living room.

3rd April 2013.

Yes, I did think of turning myself in, of bringing this journal to a close and submitting it as evidence in way of explanation. And subsequently a multitude of fantasies presented themselves to me of what my immediate future might be like, if I was to do this. If I were a writer of fiction, this is probably how my story would end:

The court charged me with two counts of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced me to twelve years in prison - this is where I am now, dear reader, sitting in my twelve-by-ten oubliette, still with my humble pen and paper. And to be honest, it's not all that bad in here. Sure the place is full of scum and I've been slapped about a bit (plus I've almost been sodomized twice) but, in truth, it's not much different from the outside, is it? (Man has shaped for himself one giant prison called 'society', and at least, the guys' cocks in here aren't as long or as thick as the government's).

Also there are books here, reader, lots of them, and a gym (I can feel myself getting stronger everyday). I've even started a degree in Sociology with the Open University and, in here, its free (or paid for by you, reader; the taxpayer. So thanks very much!). However, on occasion, I would like some more time to myself. Yet this problem can be easily solved. If I can be bothered, all I have to do is beat somebody around the head with my dinner tray a few times and I get chucked in solitary, where I can get some peace and quiet. Society seems back-to-front, doesn't it, reader? Perhaps things will have changed when I get out, but I sincerely doubt it. It'll only get worse. Man has climbed out of the slime and evolved over millions of years only to climb back into the slime again. Take stock, dear reader, of your hideous humanity...and despair.

All nicely rapped up for you, reader? Makes sense doesn't it? No, it's far too easy, far too conventional and far too convenient. Mmmm...Perhaps prison would be a fitting place for me...but I shall *not* give myself up.

4th April 2013.

Today I have made a resolute decision to get fit. All this sitting and lying down when reading and watching films have caused me to gain weight. I'm beginning to look pregnant. Also working out my anger might make me less inclined to lash out.

5th April 2013.

Looked into gym memberships yesterday but decided against it. Lots of perspiring and annoying people are likely to piss me off. Also queuing for the use of the machines will drive me to do something unwise. Therefore, I've purchased a bench, a load of weights, a treadmill and a rowing machine to put in two of the spare rooms I have.

6th April 2013.

I hit a large rabbit today with my car. I felt so guilty that I had to stop and make sure it was dead. Fortunately, it was. I stood in the road, looking at its frail little form, ignoring the cars honking at me to get out of the road, and was sad. I lifted it from the tarmac and drove to the nearest field and buried it under a birch tree.

8th April 2013.

'Loneliness is a thirst. It is a flower dying in the desert.' That's from an episode of the original series of *Star Trek*, reader. Great isn't it?

9th April 2013.

Is there anything more pathetic than Football, reader? I was outside the White Hart Lane Stadium a few weeks ago, watching the fans file out – fucking knuckle draggers and pond life, the lot of them, with their cans of beer and overpriced shirts. These are the kind of people that think a pedometer is a device for locating paedophiles (Wasn't there a fairly recent incident where a mob attacked a paediatrician's home, thinking she was a paedo? Fuck me, there should be added reprimands for these fucking mouth-breathers). Also, it's a bit gay, isn't it? – Football. Men watching lots of nice boys in shorts scrambling about to kick a ball into a net. I wonder how many, when they watch it, are burgeoning with latent homosexual impulses. Another annoying thing is the amount of money the managers and players (most of these minge-mops and spunk lollies are idiots, adulterers, rapists, drunkards, and racists – these people are meant to be role models for our children, reader!) get paid. But isn't this always the way? That those who are most useless get paid the lion's share, and the little guy, the ones that actually *do the work* are left with the fucking scraps. Need I mention FIFA and corruption? Two words that are now synonymous with each other. Terry Eagleton feels that football 'stands in for all those noble causes – religious faith, national sovereignty, personal honour, ethnic identity...It involves tribal loyalties and rivalries, symbolic rituals, fabulous legends, iconic heroes, epic battles...physical fulfilment...and a profound sense of belonging...It is sport...which is now the opium of the people.'

I have often encountered fans that worship at the icon of the ball kickers, and spoken to them about their church (or perhaps 'cult' is a more fitting word). These were usually Jessica's friends' husbands or boyfriends with whom I had to suffer the occasional odious dinner party. They generally seemed to support a team to which they had no personal connection and sometimes invested large quantities of money (season tickets cost around £2,000 - £4000, and so on) to supposedly ensure its success. The criteria by which these fans decide on which team to support seems to me arbitrary and random, and subsequently hollow and meaningless. And yet they are so caught up in their idolatry that if their team succeeds they are made extraordinarily

happy, and if it loses they become unduly angry and dejected, at times to the point of violence. This is the psychology of the fanatic. For something to stand in for religious faith, national sovereignty, and tribal loyalties is dubious at best. Just as the job will fight to assert the superiority of 'his' team, so will nations fight to assert the supremacy of their culture. Religion, patriotism and football create divisions, factions that foster a 'them and us' mentality. It's like splendid isolation. If you're not part of our group, or you support a different faction, then you're the enemy. Nationalism is not healthy for a country, reader. It encourages hostile division, and it is especially unhealthy for a multi-cultural territory like our own.

This principle also stands firm when applied to race, that everlasting bone of contention that belies humanity's pitiable fear of the 'other'. John Tosh has a few things to say about this and I agree with him:

'In its modern form, "race" was originally developed as a category that justified the growing ascendancy of the West over other peoples. It treated as fixed and biologically determined what is socially constructed, and it has been most strongly developed as a means of reinforcing political and economic control over subordinate groups...Native peoples at the receiving end were [considered] inferior both in their indigenous culture and their capacity to assimilate Western techniques; and these negative stereotypes served to sustain a flattering image of the British – or German or French – race. More recently, minorities with a strong ethnic identity have constructed what might be called a "reverse discourse"; they too embrace the concept of "race", because the term brings biological descent and culture together in a powerful amalgam that maximises group cohesion and emphasizes distance from other groups...[This] stress on common ancestry and a down playing of outside influences lead to a kind of "cultural insiderism".'

Fuck, can we not get anything right? Seems like the blame lies with the minorities and the majorities. Anyway, Man needs not religion, race, factions or patriotism to divide and make him wretched. He is able to do it all by himself, regardless. Here's some Aldous Huxley from *The Devils of Loudun*, a book predominantly about religious hysteria:

'Looking back and up, from our vantage point on the descending road of modern history, we now see that all the evils of religion can flourish without any belief in the supernatural, that convinced materialists are ready to worship their own jerry-built creations as though they were Absolute, and that self-styled humanists will persecute their adversaries with all the zeal of Inquisitors exterminating the devotees of a personal and transcendent Satan...In order to justify their behaviour, they turn their theories into dogma, their by-laws into first principles, their political bosses into Gods and all those who disagree with them into incarnate devils. This idolatrous transformation of the relative into the Absolute and the all too human into Divine, makes it possible for them to indulge their ugliest passions with a clear conscience and in the certainty that they are working for the Highest Good. And when the current beliefs come, in their turn, to look silly, a new set will be invented, so that the immemorial madness may continue to wear its customary mask of legality, idealism, and true religion.'

Yes, a good slice of totalitarianism does the job. Mr Huxley goes on:

‘For the totalitarians of our more enlightened century there is no soul and no creator; there is merely a lump of physiological raw material moulded by conditioned reflexes and social pressures into what, by courtesy, is still called a human being. This product of the man-made environment is without intrinsic significance and possesses no rights to self-determination. It exists for Society and must conform to the collective will. In practice, of course, Society is nothing but the national state, and as a matter of brute fact, the collective will is merely the dictator’s will-to-power, sometimes mitigated, sometimes distorted to the point of lunacy, by some pseudo-scientific theory of what, in the gorgeous future, will be good for an actuarial abstraction labelled “Humanity”. Individuals are defined as the products and instruments of Society. From this it follows that the political bosses, who claim to represent society, are justified in committing any conceivable atrocity against such persons as they may choose to call Society’s enemies...It is a matter of observable fact that men and women are not the mere creatures of Society. But official theory claims that they are. Therefore, it becomes necessary to depersonalise the “enemies of society” in order to transform the official lie into truth. For those who know the trick, the reduction of the human to the subhuman, of the free individual to the obedient automaton, is a relatively simple matter. The personality of man is far less monolithic than the theologians were compelled by their dogmas to assume. The soul is not the same as the spirit, but is merely associated with it. In itself, and until it consciously chooses to make way for the spirit, it is no more than a rather loosely tied bundle of not very stable psychological elements. This composite entity can quite easily be disintegrated by anyone ruthless enough to wish to try and skilful enough to do the job in the right way.’

Some of this sounds very much like our undemocratic democracy, doesn’t it, reader?

While I’m at it, are there any other institutions that I can slate? Of course there are, dear reader! Lets take a look at Tradition. I don’t have any major problem with this at a fundamental level, however: ‘In any society with a dynamic of social or cultural change, as indicated by external trade or social hierarchy or political institutions, an uncritical respect for tradition is counterproductive. It suppresses the historical changes that have occurred in the intervening period; indeed it positively discourages any attention to those changes and leads to the continuance of outward forms that are really redundant...Such is the authority of tradition that ruling groups have at various times invented it in order to bolster their prestige’ (More Tosh, reader...no, not that kind of tosh!).

Examples? Oh, there are many. The state opening of parliament is one. Here’s what it includes: the black rod ceremony, the searching of the cellars, the Assembly of the Peers and Commons, the delivery of the Parliamentary hostage, the arrival of Royal Regalia, the arrival of the Sovereign and the assembly of Parliament, the Royal summons to the Commons, the procession of the Commons, the delivery of the scroll, the delivery of the Queen’s speech and the Monarch’s Departure, and then, finally, a debate on the speech, where each House considers a bill *pro forma* to symbolise their right to deliberate independently of the monarch. In the House of Lords the bill is called the Select Vestries Bill. In the Commons it known as the Outlawries Bill, and these Bills are considered for the sake of ceremony only, and do not make any actual legislative progress.

What a fucking waste of time! And the cost to you, dear reader? Anywhere from £150,000 to £200,000, and that’s without including every participant’s salary for

the day, money that could surely be spent on things more worthwhile, rather than these rats in robes, these bewigged, bumptious prigs prancing about, so sure of their profundity, so proud of their conceit that their silly little ritual means something. And they're right. It does mean something. It means *waste*. While Rome burns, they fiddle. Stick that up your bone-hole, Mr Speaker!

10th April 2013.

Woke up very early this morning and felt quite chipper, so I thought I'd pop into the city and see what fun could be had. I left the car in a cramped, disintegrating car park after paying the exorbitant fee and looked to the heavens. The sun was low. I couldn't see it – too many buildings, too many ugly edifices and glass atrocities. Yet the new sky was a vibrant blue, clean and disturbed only by a few uneven lines of misty cloud. C'mon clouds! Where are you? Why won't you rain down the retribution we so deserve? There were not many people about, thankfully. A few earlybirds twittered about the streets, lights went on in newsagents and coffee houses, and shutters were screeched open. I saw several homeless lying in cosseted doorways or sitting rudely on the pavements, wrapped in decayed and unrecognisable garments, their breath vapour on the cold.

Gazing at them I felt compassion. Here were the forgotten ones, left to rot, left to stew in their own stinking piss and shit. I went to the bank and withdrew £200 cash and distributed it amongst those I saw. This led me into the underground, that place of fetid breezes, deep rumblings, and eerie, unexplainable echoes. I was giving a busker, just setting up his music stand and plucking at his violin, my last £20 note when the trains heaved out their countless credulous workers. Bleary-eyed and harried, they crushed their way through the arched tunnels, sweeping me away with them. Through the turnstiles, up the escalators, and up the stairs I was carried, until, spewed out into the street, I stood blinking in the bright light.

A man thrust a leaflet into my chest. I ignored it, snatched away the bulk of leaflets he was carrying in his other hand, and dumped them in a bin close by. I stared back at him. He seemed to know it would ill-advised to challenge me. On I walked, dodging the bags and suitcases, shoulder to shoulder with one of those scarf-clad young professionals. Her strides were confident, too confident, perhaps even horribly confident. Someone should tell her that in whatever dire industry she works she can so very easily be replaced, that if she were gone from that situation no one would really notice. An Ego risen and sustained by the bogus assumption that what she does and who she is is useful and, to an extent, indispensable. Like us all, she is just a number, a statistic to be disposed of when the money runs close to the line. Off she went, click, click, click, in her heels, utterly oblivious of how close I had come to pushing her in front of a bus that sped close to the curb.

I soon became tired of the streets and sat on a bench in the park. Still no clouds. There were cyclists, runners, blade-skaters. People exercising. Good. I approve. There was green grass. There were bushes, trees and a refreshing, but cutting, wind that lifted tumbling leaves across the walkways. A middle-aged man with a huge moustache and wearing a dishevelled suit and thick black glasses sat beside me. He dumped the four plastic bags (full of clothes, it looked like) he was carrying next to the bench. He breathed heavily and smelt of spirits. A large, greenish stain, still wet, festered on his left trouser leg. I looked at my watch. It was 9.23am. I said nothing and sat staring at two pigeons fluttering and picking at the ground on a near rise. *'Goddamn it, I'll fucking kill her, I'll fucking kill her and fuck her at the*

same time!’ the man shrieked suddenly, ‘*I’ll fucking strangle her whilst fucking her!*’ He threw his bags far onto the green, ran over and started stamping on them. ‘*I’ll fuck her, I’ll fuck her, I’ll fucking kill her and fuck her at the same time!*’ he screamed.

Everyone who heard turned to look our way. I smiled at them, gave a little wave and left. Oh, barrels of fun! Nevertheless, in hindsight, I can’t quite decide whether this incident was funny or tragic. Like le Carre’s Fielding ‘I used to think it was clever to confuse comedy with tragedy. Now I wish I could distinguish them.’

Or maybe it was just plain weird. Outside the park was a stall of some kind hawking old copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake* magazines. Within seconds I had lost my temper. ‘Mumbo Jumbo! Mumbo Jumbo!’ I hollered at the stall’s keepers, tossing handfuls of their publication into the air. ‘If you want to be of use to someone, sign you donor cards and kill yourselves.’ Perhaps I’m just as bad as the man in the park. What do you think, reader? I would have carried on if one of those volunteer law enforcers had not collared me. I was ‘disrupting the peace’, blah, blah, blah. I told him that I was sorry and that the stress of my wife leaving me had pushed me into crisis.

Not much else happened. I walked the streets until the noise, fumes and general bedlam began to grate on me. I did some food shopping. When I came out of the supermarket the sun had risen above the towers and office blocks. Many of their facades were lit in its harsh glare. At my car I turned my eyes to the sky again. Still no clouds.

11th April 2013

Margaret Thatcher died on the 8th. I’d like to thank her and Ronald Reagan personally for the deregulation of the Banking and Finance industries, which resulted in plutocrats crippling the country and costing the taxpayer billions. Great work, Maggie, great work! Let’s see what else you managed to do. I guess the big one would be your and Nigel Lawson’s idea to return nationalised industry to private ownership, which did, I admit, revitalise the British economy...for a while. When you left office fifty thousand British servicemen were assembled in the Gulf under American command to liberate ‘our’ oil...oh sorry, I meant Kuwait; the Lawson ‘Boom’ had pushed inflation up to 15%; unemployment figures were soaring; and Britain’s economy was suffering from its worst recession since 1945. What a bang up job! Thanks so much.

You also had absolutely no understanding of the European Union’s prime directive; the reduction of intergovernmentalism and the consolidation of power under a supranational authority – or maybe you did, which is why you opposed it. Your so-called protection of British sovereignty only served to increase our country’s already wretched and isolationist position in negotiations (not that I’m a supporter of the European Union, you see. I don’t really know enough about it to make an informed decision. I’ll come back to you on that, dear reader, in two *hard* shakes of a screaming baby). Is that everything? No! You applauded Victorian values and a rolling back of the state, conveniently forgetting that the crucial pre-condition of the Victorian economic explosion was a consequence of Britain’s global strategic dominance. By your time, the Empire was a memory, Britain was (and still is) a third rate power. Your idiocy resulted in shocking social degradation, destitution and environmental injury. Wreasting power from the Unions, you say? Re-claiming the Falkland Islands? Mmmm. The sinking of the retreating ARA General Belgrano fourteen hours after Peruvian President Fernando Belaúnde proposed a comprehensive peace plan and

called for regional unity seems unwarranted. Lady Thatcher wanted to restore some of Britain's (and her own) battered pride by escalating the conflict. 323 people died for that pride. Anyone who reveres this woman has unmistakably lost the plot.

11th April 2013.

It has occurred to me, dear reader, that you might be thinking that if I detest the world so much, why don't I just let my veins drain, or play chug-a-lug with a couple of bottles of bleach, and be done with it. As Sophocles says in *Oedipus the King*: 'Count no man happy until he dies, free of pain at last.' The answer is simple. I do not detest the world. The world, our Earth is a globe of profound, magisterial splendour, a place of nearly inconceivable vividness and heterogeneity, and I would like to see more of it. Perhaps I'll travel. There is so much still to see, to read, to watch, to experience before the lights go out. That is why I do not take my own life. It's people that are the problem – us; the fucking stupid little monkeys that plague it in almost every niche and corner.

You might rebuff my complaints with regard to our government with the suggestion that if I am not satisfied with the way things are, then why don't I submit myself for election and attempt to transform things for the better? My response to this is explicitly related to the fact that I *do not* want to die. All of the men of recent eras who have tried to do dramatic good, such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, and Robert Kennedy, have been assassinated. Not that I think I'd get that far anyway. The plebs are too entrenched in mindlessness to vote for one such as me, and hardly anyone votes anymore anyway. I assume they see it as a futile enterprise and, for that, I can't blame them.

You might also suggest that if I'm consistently exasperated by the way things are, why don't I just turn my head, look the other way, and find gladness in ignorance. No. Like Oscar Wilde exclaims in *Lady Windermere's Fan*: 'There is the same world for all of us, and good and evil, sin and innocence, go through it hand in hand. To shut one's eyes to half of life that one may live securely is as though one blinded oneself that one might walk with more safety in a land of pit and precipice'.

I am a critic and you must remember, reader, that, as Nietzsche says, it is the role of the critic 'to challenge the old, the conventional, to wound...society at its vulnerable spot, to take upon himself the fear and censure of...society in order to promote its growth and development...' and 'wherever progress is to ensue, deviating natures are of [the] greatest importance'.