GLOSSA TENEBROSA

A Diary on Holding



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Litterae tenebrarum, Volume 2

Denys Spirin

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This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

GLOSSA TENEBROSA: A DIARY ON HOLDING

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Written by Denys Spirin.

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Introductory Entry

Paris, autumn 1888

At the Salpêtrière we were taught to record everything a patient does before asking why he does it. The professor assures us that, if left undisturbed, a disease tells its own story, and we need only keep up with pen in hand. This habit has taken firmer root in me than any other, and I am beginning this notebook in accordance with it to examine a Latin treatise that recently came into my possession. This time the patient died, presumably in 1516, and cannot answer questions; yet he has a great deal to say, much of it, to my taste, most entertainingly.

I shall write a little about myself, though no one besides me will ever read this. I am Russian, a physician; three years ago I came to Paris to hear Charcot and remained at his clinic, without a post or salary, as many foreigners do here, since a modest inheritance from a great-uncle whom I saw only twice in my life allows me not to seek employment. I had no other relatives, and now he is gone as well. There are so many foreigners at the Tuesday lectures that the professor cannot always remember who comes from which country; he knows the Russians by our habit of asking more questions than propriety permits. My Latin is what I learned at the gymnasium, eight years of it under Count Tolstoy's regulations, and for the first time in my life I am grateful to the ministry for those eight years. There was less Greek.

I write in snatches, in the evenings when my cough lets up. It is a Parisian cough, brought on by the damp here, and it will pass by spring, as it did last year.

Part I

Paris, October 9, 1888

On Sundays I walk past the bookstalls on Quai Voltaire as other people go to Mass, and in three years I have bought nothing there except stray volumes of Voltaire himself, of whom the booksellers have more than he ever managed to write. The day before yesterday, an old woman was sitting in place of the proprietor at one of the stalls, and among the usual rubbish she had a bundle tied with string, bearing a label inscribed in the ink of the last century with a number and the words *S. Officio*. I paid three francs for it.

Nearly the whole bundle consisted of Italian petitions and receipts of no interest to me. Inside, however, was a quarto notebook of some sixty leaves, written in an early sixteenth-century German hand and entitled *Ostia tenebrosa*. I would translate this as *Dark Gates*, though *ostium* is more properly a door, and a door to a house at that. I examined the paper against the light: the watermark is a bull's head with a star upon a staff, such as the German paper mills used at the time. I am prouder of this discovery than it deserves.

At the end of the notebook is an addition in the same hand, a sort of official record. It states that in November 1516, in Mainz, neighbors complained that the master of a certain house had not been seen for some time. The door, locked from within, was broken down; the master was not found, but a manuscript lay on the table, and nine illustrated sheets were arranged in a square on the floor. Two masters of theology from Cologne examined the manuscript, pronounced it heretical, and condemned it to be burned together with the sheets, first making a copy for the use of inquisitors. That copy is on my table. There are no illustrations with it, and all I know about them is that there were nine.

I reconstruct its travels as follows. At that time the inquisitor for the provinces of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier was, as I understand it, the Cologne Dominican Hoogstraten, the very man mocked in the

Letters of Obscure Men; a treatise on darkness had, one might say, reached the right address. When the Holy Office was established in Rome in 1542, papers from the earlier inquisitions were gathered there, and our notebook probably traveled with them. In 1810 Napoleon brought the papal archives to Paris; when they were returned, it is said, some of the papers were sold here by weight to save the cost of transporting them, and ever since, Roman documents have turned up from time to time among the booksellers' wares. These are all conjectures, and I have no means of verifying them.

The year amused me. In 1516 Froben printed Erasmus's Greek New Testament in Basel, and scholars throughout Europe set about reading the Gospel as it had been written; meanwhile in Mainz, farther down the Rhine, a townsman whose name the record does not give shut himself in his house and wrote about escaping every seal, including the Gospel's. Erasmus has been reprinted countless times since. Our townsman has been read by two masters from Cologne, one Roman archivist, if he read him at all, and now me.

Paris, October 23, 1888

The author tells his own story in nine short "Figures" placed between the chapters, and tells it readily, like patients who enjoy being interesting cases. His drinking and his debts I have encountered by the dozen in case histories and read about without any feeling. Something else troubled me.

In Würzburg, a widow with whom he lodged and, judging by his hints, lived, found a circle drawn beneath his mattress and denounced him to the bishop's judge. He fled in the night wearing nothing but his shirt and writes: "I have hated people ever since that night." He records this as though he were reporting a change of lodgings. One frightened woman, and from that night onward the whole human race. It never occurs to him that the widow, by keeping a sorcerer in her house, risked her own neck and may have saved herself and her

inn by denouncing him. The "Figure" says nothing of her except that she informed against him.

He despised everyone from whom he learned and reports that he still despises them as he sits at his writing desk. A few pages later he settles down to write a Rule for some unknown disciple, then a second and a third. It is not hard to imagine the look he would give anyone who tried to live by these Rules.

Worst of all is a passage in Chapter Eleven. He recalls a Basel bookman who spent his life collecting nine sheets from a burned book; two of their previous owners died shortly after selling them, which the author mentions in passing. One night the bookman laid the sheets on the floor of an empty house and asked him which one to begin with. The author knew the man was mistaken—those are his own words—and said nothing. By morning the house had burned down. He then informs us that he made his own sheets himself. I read the passage three times in search of a single word of regret and found none.

A physician who sees a patient reaching for someone else's medicine bottle and says nothing ceases to be a physician that very instant, and no medical college can restore the title to him. There are only two possibilities here. If the author believed that the rite involving the sheets was dangerous, his silence is precisely the kind of thing for which a man is brought to trial among us. If he did not believe it, there was no reason to record the fire and add a boast. I see no third possibility.

In Chapter Five, speaking of those who failed to cross his desert, he says he never happened to weep for them, and that the walking is softer along the edge carpeted with them. This from a man to whom any one of us would have offered a hand had he himself been lying at that edge.

The psychiatrists would call it moral insanity, and I am inclined to agree, since one can pity a sick man. My provisional diagnosis:

alcoholic delirium with religious mania, with a question mark beside it in the margin.

Paris, November 1888

My landlady began November by raising the price of coal and lowering her eyes as she did so, and I seem to be the only person in the house who did not argue with her. In the evenings I light the fire, make tea in the samovar I brought across two borders and which no one here but me knows how to use, and sit down with *Ostia*. At first I read it as one reads other people's letters, picking out whatever passages looked most diverting; now I have begun at the beginning, with a dictionary and a pencil. It opens with an altered verse from Genesis: in place of the dust to which man shall return, the author has salt, *sal es, et in salem reverteris*. Not a bad joke, and it stayed in my head throughout my morning rounds.

The author calls *salt* what we call *habit*, and I must admit that his word is better chosen than ours. One acquires a habit and breaks oneself of it, as though it were an article of clothing; salt precipitates of its own accord, without our knowledge, and remains at the bottom long after the water has gone. I have seen this more often in the wards than I would wish. Last winter we had an old woman who had suffered a stroke: she could not remember the name of the daughter sitting beside her bed, could not ask for a drink, yet when a priest came to the next bed, she suddenly recited the Lord's Prayer after him, clearly and to the end, then fell silent again, this time until her death. The professor showed such patients to the students as examples of automatic speech: what is learned in childhood lies deeper in the brain than everything else and disappears last. The Mainz wine merchant describes the same sort of case and merely adds that salt did it for the dying woman. We would say: the brain. Our word tells us where it lies; his tells us how it came to be there and why it does not depart, and I confess I am more interested in the latter.

For him, salt turns out to include everything a newborn finds already in place, from the riverbed a river has carved for itself to the law. At first I took this for the sort of sweeping assertion of which only men who have never opened a textbook, and Germans, are capable. Then I remembered Dumont's article on habit, published some twelve years ago in the *Revue philosophique*: in it, running water carves its bed and flows through it again when it returns, worn clothing fits the body better than new, and all this is called habit, without anyone at the journal detecting the least mysticism in it. It is only one step from there to saying that an atom, too, must exist by force of habit: every morning it might become something else, yet each time it repeats what it was yesterday. I shall not take that step; Dumont is quite enough for me. The wine merchant reached the same point without a journal or an editorial board. In the margin of my manuscript copy I wrote in pencil: *sal* = *habitude*. I shall see whether that equation stands up to the chapters that follow.

Paris, December 1888

The author begins his third chapter with a drunkard who broke his last bottle and was sitting in a tavern again by evening. The wives of our patients do the same: pour away the vodka, hide the money, and by nightfall the husband is drunk, and his wife brings him to us for treatment and asks what she did wrong. The author gives her a more sensible answer than we do: the craving dwells in the hand, in the accustomed hour, in the smell from the tavern, and the bottle has nothing to do with it.

He then proposes a test, which I copied onto a separate sheet: can you leave it undone, and can you do it? Let both answers be true. At first I dismissed it, but that evening I took Ribot down from the shelf. His *Diseases of the Will* divides its patients into two groups. In one are those who cannot refrain: they drink, weep, and drink again. In the other are those who cannot begin: a patient stands for hours before a door, wishing to go out, and does not go. One question

from the wine merchant catches the patients in the first group, the other those in the second; he separates them as neatly as Ribot, though of course he has never heard of Ribot.

What is more remarkable is that he requires both answers at once. Ribot describes the illness from one side or the other and places health somewhere between them, where the will is neither too weak nor too strong. The author puts a man at the point where both capacities are present at the same hour and calls that point Death. A wild word to a physician. Yet Cotard's patients suffering from *délire des négations* insist that they are dead and that there is nothing inside them; the author seems to have encountered such people and interprets them in his own way: a man assembled out of habits takes the loss of their power for his own end.

I tried the test on myself, with cigarettes. I managed not to smoke one evening; the next day I managed to smoke, and with pleasure. Both answers were true, but on different days, and I suppose the author would not have accepted that.

Paris, January 7, 1889

Yesterday was our Christmas, and I attended the liturgy on Rue Daru for the first time since last Easter. The singing was good, the smell of wax was as I remembered it from childhood, and I crossed myself at all the proper moments throughout the service without once thinking about when to do so.

Today at the clinic one of the interns was demonstrating our school's methods to some visiting physicians. He hypnotized patient J., whom we put into a trance several times a week, and instructed her to take an umbrella from the corner and open it a quarter of an hour after waking. She was awakened; she remembered nothing, chatted with the nurse, and at the appointed minute stood up, took someone else's umbrella, and opened it in the middle of the ward. When asked why, she replied without hesitation that sunlight was dazzling her through the window, though it was January and we had

not seen the sun since Christmas. The visitors laughed. She understood that they were laughing at her and blushed, and I felt so embarrassed that I left.

That evening I reread Chapter Six. The author allows that an action may have reasons, and that these may be stated truthfully, but according to him the action itself chooses them: another person's distress moves one man and leaves another cold, and therefore cannot decide the action for either of them. J. gave her reason truthfully today, insofar as she knew it herself, and was certain that she had chosen it; the intern had chosen it for her a quarter of an hour earlier. If a reason can be put into a person from outside so that she accepts it as her own and even invents an explanation to go with it, then the wine merchant's certainty that his act chooses its own reason proves nothing: anyone given a posthypnotic suggestion is equally certain of the same thing. To my mind, a single umbrella is enough to bring Chapter Six tumbling down. I shall ask the intern for the record of the experiment so that I can describe it more fully.

Paris, September 1889

The Exhibition closes in a month's time, and all summer Paris has been so full of foreigners that one could find neither a seat in an omnibus nor a chair at the Tuesday lectures. I give Monsieur Eiffel's tower a wide berth; the local men of letters signed a protest against it, and I am on their side at heart, though I have said nothing aloud. In August, at the congress of psychology, I heard Janet speak. He had just published his book on psychological automatism, and I bought it that same day.

With that book in hand I reread Chapter Five. According to the author, after blackness, Nobody walks through the desert: the former man is dead, the new one has yet to be born, and everything the former remembered remains with him but no longer gives him orders. Janet describes the same thing among his patients in Le Havre: consciousness breaks into parts, one part acts on its own, and

a patient whose hand is writing coherent sentences beneath the table does not know that she is writing. Ribot calls personality an agreement among its parts; when that agreement breaks down, what remains in place of the person is an assembly of functioning mechanisms without a master. The author described this dissolution with the knowledge that belongs only to a patient who has suffered it himself.

He tells of Odysseus, who called himself Nobody to the Cyclops and, once he had sailed away, could not restrain himself from shouting his name, his father's name, and the name of his island from his ship. The author sees weakness in this. To me it looks like the first sign of recovery.

Paris, November 1889

My cough returned with the first fogs. When my landlady learned of it, she began bringing me hot milk with baking soda and honey at night, and I drink it as I did in childhood when my mother treated me with the same thing, though as a physician I would not give a red cent for it.

The author devotes Chapter Seven to the Name, which he writes with a capital letter and about which, by his own account, one ought to keep silent; he keeps silent about it for a whole chapter. The image comes from the alchemists: the serpent biting its own tail. According to the author, the serpent must go on biting without interruption, and the moment it opens its jaws it will be nothing more than an ordinary snake upon the sand. So it is with the Name: nothing outside it fastens it together, and it holds itself together only by closing upon itself anew at every moment. Translate this into Ribot's language and one obtains his theory of personality: it is held together by continuous activity, which binds body, memory, and habits into one whole, and as soon as that activity slackens, the condition Janet sees in his patients at Le Havre begins. I record the wine merchant's Name as self-consciousness, a person's conception of himself.

He devotes most space to secret names. Rome supposedly had a name that no one dared pronounce, and a tribune who let it slip was executed. Isis sent a serpent to the aged Ra and refused to heal him until, writhing with the poison, he revealed his secret name to her. Tylor collected a multitude of such beliefs among savages: to them a name is part of a person, like his hair or nails, and whoever knows it has power over him. The author adds his own turn to this belief: a name spoken aloud immediately settles and becomes a sign by which one may be summoned, and therefore the true one cannot be told to anyone, not even to oneself. At the clinic I would say that a conception of oneself, once put into words, becomes a formula and lives apart from the person who formed it. In our ward there is an old woman who, whenever she is asked who she is, gives the same answer: *Je suis la fille à Gervais, le boulanger de la rue Mouffetard*—Gervais the baker's daughter, from Rue Mouffetard. She is past seventy, her father died in the reign of Louis-Philippe, the bakery has long since disappeared, and the phrase she learned as a child has long since ceased to say anything about her.

Paris, January 1890

Half the clinic is down with influenza, which the Parisians call Russian, and for the third week I have been greeted with the question of whether I brought it here. I answer with a joke and a cough, which does not help the joke.

In his *Instruction on the Secret Arts*, the author describes a night beside the Rhine that he considers the chief event of his life. He was drawn from his body as a stone is taken from a plum and laid where there was neither above nor below nor time; everything that had come before seemed to him an empty shell; something evil and faceless moved through the emptiness, knowing that he was not; then darkness came, living and dense, stood beside him as one stands at a patient's bedside, entered him, and he knew her. In the morning he awoke by the water, and she was sitting beside him.

Anyone who has witnessed one of Charcot's major attacks recognizes the description from the first lines. Loss of self and time, terror, a vision of an evil being, followed by the passionate attitudes and hallucinations of the final period, after which the patient lies exhausted and cannot remember how he came to be on the floor. The professor demonstrated long ago that hysteria occurs in men as well, among laborers and drinkers, and the Mainz wine merchant fits his description better than many. In *Les Démoniaques dans l'art*, Charcot and Richer assembled old paintings of the possessed and showed that the saints had been driving demons out of hysterical women; I expect they would have been delighted to include the author's burned sheets in a second edition. I liked the comparison to a patient's bedside: I am usually the one standing there.

There remains the woman I promised myself I would write about back in October. In the seventh "Figure" she comes at night to the man asleep on the bank near Bacharach, from the direction of the river, though he heard no boat; she stays with him until dawn, listens to his stories, and leaves after taking the key to his house from around his neck. At a Paris police station they would put such a story under a different heading. I regret only one thing: the key was the last thing he had left from his father.

After writing this I read the "Figure" once more. The woman troubles me, and I cannot say why. In the ninth "Figure" the author writes that she came to him at night sometimes as a young woman, sometimes as an old one, and by morning he could not remember which she had been that night. I lay awake for a long time, thinking for some reason of the old woman from whom I bought the bundle on the quay. On Sunday I passed the same stall; the proprietor was sitting there, and I did not question him.

Paris, February 1890

During Butter Week, acquaintances from the embassy invited me for pancakes, and I ate so many that afterward I could not look at sour cream for a week. When my landlady learned that in our country people eat without restraint for a week before Lent and then fast for seven weeks, she said it was very like the Russians.

I have been sleeping worse since January. I fall asleep after midnight, wake at three, and lie there until dawn listening to my landlady's clock striking downstairs. My dreams have become impossible to recount: nothing happens, there is no one there, yet in the morning I am left with the feeling that I spent the whole night standing outside a door, behind which people were speaking a language I knew, without my being able to make out a single word. Sometimes I dream of water, without shore or color. Influenza, my cough, and the damp explain all this perfectly well, and at night I take bromide, the very remedy with which, on paper, I treated the wine merchant a year and a half ago.

The author opens Chapter Nine with Dante's inscription over the gates of hell, concerning the hope those who enter must abandon, and reads it in his own fashion: for him hope is the last thing a man carries after everything else has been taken from him. The expectation that an account is being kept somewhere and that his endurance will be rewarded. According to the author, hell lies where no one and nothing holds a man.

For one who stands upon habits, this means destruction: the ground beneath him is washed away and the water carries him off. For one who possesses a Name, it is his homeland. I would endorse the first half without hesitation: in our wards there are people from whom illness has taken everything, and they are carried away in precisely this fashion, little by little and without return. The second half I leave on the author's conscience. I have never seen anyone swim out of those waters, and there is no one to tell us that he found his homeland there.

Chapter Ten concerns the ascent and begins with Isaiah's words about the king of Babylon: I will ascend into heaven; I will be like the Most High. The fathers understood them as referring to Lucifer; the author applies them to anyone who has escaped another's power and finds only the last words dangerous.

At Bicêtre, where they treat men, I have seen three emperors and one God the Father who asked me for tobacco; all suffered from general paresis, and they spoke of themselves in much the same terms as Isaiah's king. The author is unlike them, which puzzled me. He wants no throne and laughs at those who do; to him a god is one who was born of himself, without teacher or anointing, who is held for as long as he holds himself, and dies when he releases himself. My paralytics, every last one, insisted that they had been appointed. For delusions of grandeur the wine merchant has far too few thrones, and in my textbooks I have found no heading for what he does have.

Paris, March 1890

What the author did not know is apparent on every page. He takes salt from the alchemists and believes them when they say that white crystals obtained from wormwood ash preserve the virtue of the wormwood, though any apothecary's apprentice will tell you that the ash contains nothing but potash. He had no way of knowing about the brain and the nerves, and where we have anatomy he has demons or darkness.

His anecdotes are entertaining, and I have often laughed aloud over them, to my landlady's surprise, but almost all of them, as far as I can judge, were invented to suit the occasion, as preachers devise their parables. The pig that was supposedly tried in Falaise according to every form of law, dressed in a jacket and trousers, and hanged in the square like a murderer belongs to the same category: only someone who had never been inside a courtroom could invent a court that would waste its time on a pig.

Ribot ends *The Diseases of the Will* with the idea that "I will" merely registers a state of affairs and produces nothing: a decision sums up the work of the nerves and is never its cause. The wine merchant built his book upon the opposite. He has an act that begins its own time and chooses its own reason, and everything else rests upon it. To a physician this is the dream of a patient weary of depending upon his own nerves, a comprehensible and impossible dream. I do not believe it, yet in the evenings I read the wine merchant more willingly than Ribot. I slipped the sheet bearing Ribot's sentence into my manuscript copy as a bookmark.

Paris, late March 1890

Dr. R., with whom I make the morning rounds in one of the wards, heard me coughing and advised me to go south next winter. I laughed: all Paris is coughing after the influenza, and all Paris cannot go south. His advice did, however, remind me of Nice.

I spent two months there in the winter of 1886, attending a lady from Moscow whose son had sent her to have her nerves treated and would not let her go without a physician. We stayed at a boardinghouse on a narrow street behind the opera. The food was poor, but at the *table d'hôte* one met people from all over Europe. Among them was a German, a retired professor, not yet old, with enormous mustaches and almost blind: he brought his book right up to his face, ate little and awkwardly, and no one at the table dared offer him help. By day he walked in the mountains for six or seven hours; in the evenings he suffered from headaches and, according to the landlady, could fall asleep only with chloral. I advised him to give up the chloral. He thanked me with such courtesy that I understood he would do nothing of the kind.

Just before the New Year, having learned that I was Russian, he sat down beside me with a book he had bought a few days before, Dostoevsky's *L'Esprit souterrain* in its French adaptation. He was delighted with it and spoke of Dostoevsky as one speaks of a relative

whose existence one had never suspected. I believe I spoiled his pleasure by explaining that the French had stitched two different stories into one volume, *The Landlady* and *Notes from Underground*, and that the former had nothing to do with the underground. He replied that the first sounded to him like music of a kind they did not write in Germany, that the second was the best thing he had ever read about man, and that he cared nothing for the seams. He also said that he had once taught Greek in Basel and left his chair because of his eyes and his head.

I have forgotten his surname; something short and prickly. I wonder whether he ever gave up the chloral.

Paris, June 1890

Since last autumn a journal called *Questions of Philosophy and Psychology* has been appearing in Moscow, publishing physicians as well as philosophers, and I wrote to the editors offering a translation of an early sixteenth-century Latin treatise with a medical commentary. I devised the title *Diseases of the Will as Described by a Patient in 1516*. There has been no reply so far.

I shall omit the passage about the Basel bookman from the edition. The author cannot explain himself or object, and to put him on public trial at his worst moment seems to me much the same as exhibiting a patient to students without asking his consent. I shall sign with my initials, as is customary in clinical reports.

In Chapter Eleven the author predicts that in a hundred years people will begin to interpret his book and make a Rule out of it. He miscalculated by some three hundred years and failed to guess his interpreter: the book has fallen into the hands of a neurologist, who has no intention of making a Rule from it.

R. has invited me again to let him listen to my lungs. I promised to come as soon as I send off the manuscript.

Part II

Paris, July 1890

R. examined me in an empty doctors' room, percussed for a long time beneath my right collarbone, and said nothing. I stained the sputum myself, by Ziehl's method, and found the bacilli myself. Koch discovered them, and I caught myself feeling angry with him, as though he had inoculated me with them.

According to the textbooks, I have about five years. R. says that with proper care I may have longer, and orders me to go south this autumn. I promised to think about it, though there is nothing to think about.

This evening I opened the manuscript copy and closed it again without reading.

Paris, November 12, 1890

All Paris is waiting for news from Berlin. Back in August, Koch announced at a congress that he had found a remedy for consumption, without showing anything substantial, and ever since the newspapers have written about him as though he had already raised someone from the dead. Our physicians laugh a little and wait along with everyone else. I am waiting too, though I give no sign of it.

Last night, as I was falling asleep, I felt a shove in the back, such as one gives a passenger who has dozed off in a railway carriage, and a woman's voice said in Russian, without the least solemnity: take nothing from German hands. I sat up in bed. There was nobody in the room, and the door was locked. Maury called such visions hypnagogic and observed dozens of them in himself: they come at the boundary of sleep and mostly talk nonsense. These words, however, were not nonsense. My old nanny used to say them. She

disliked Germans and considered every apothecary a German. It was not her voice.

Paris, November 16, 1890

On Thursday Koch published a detailed article about his remedy in Berlin, and by Saturday the newspapers here had already put it on their front pages. Two of our interns left for Berlin on yesterday's train. My Russian acquaintances ask whether I am going and offer me money in case I have not enough. I am not going. I explain this to myself by saying that I never trusted Koch, and that is true: as early as August I was skeptical of a remedy whose composition its inventor keeps secret, and the attitude of our school toward discoveries from Berlin is well known.

I reread my entry about the dream and noticed the date: the twelfth, a day before the Berlin article. I did not know the particulars then. Nobody did.

Added in the spring of 1891. Virchow has shown at autopsies that after the injections the tubercles spread throughout the body. Patients, they say, came to Berlin from all over Europe and went home in worse condition than when they arrived.

Paris, December 1890

I am writing a week later, now that I have been allowed to sit up.

On the night of the third I awoke with a warm sensation in my mouth and did not immediately understand that it was blood. At first there was only a heaviness, like that of a high fever, when one's body becomes strange and enormous and cannot be turned onto its other side. Then the bed seemed to give way beneath me, and I began to fall, slowly, like a stone sinking to the bottom of a pond, and went on falling for a long time. Where, I cannot describe. If I were to compare it with anything, it would be with Bosch's paintings, which I know from engravings, and even that would be a very imperfect comparison: in his paintings, as there, everything is occupied with its

own business, and none of that business has anything to do with the person looking on. I had never seen the colors I saw there, and I cannot name them. However far I fell, nothing came any closer. And everywhere there was meaning, dense as the air before a thunderstorm, except that the meaning was not mine and had no concern for me. I tried to remember something, anything, so that I could write it down afterward, as I write down what I observe in patients, but I retained nothing that could be put into words. In the morning my landlady found me on the floor.

Since that night something dark and sweet has taken up residence in my heart. Presence would be the best word for it, if the word were not already taken: as a child I was taught that God is present in the sanctuary in just this way. This presence is different, and from the first morning I knew that it was forbidden, though there is no one left to forbid me anything. It does not hurt and asks for nothing. It is simply there, and I catch myself being glad of it.

Something similar happened to me once before, though from the opposite direction. At eighteen I joined a procession of the Cross from Kursk to Korennaya Hermitage and walked nearly thirty versts in the heat. In the evening, as I stood by the spring, a light kindled within me. It gave me three things all at once: meaning, purpose, and love for everyone I saw, even the drunken peasant who kept jostling me at the gate. For a month I went about with that light and could not understand why other people did not see what I saw when it was so evident. Then the light went out, and all that remained was the need to do good. A year later, already a student, I read in the Discourses of Symeon the New Theologian, which Bishop Theophan had only recently translated, about a young man named George: one night, while he was praying, a light appeared to him and filled the room, and he could no longer tell whether he was on earth or somewhere else. Symeon calls it the light the apostles saw on Mount Tabor. I recognized my own evening by the spring and envied George: the light returned to him afterward, but never to me.

I wanted to enter a monastery, changed my mind, and went to medical school, reasoning that one could heal people without wearing a cassock. In all these years God has never once shown me where to go next, and my faith departed so quietly that I did not notice in which year it happened.

That light lasted a month. I shall see how long this lasts.

R. insists that I leave for the south at once, and this time I do not argue.

Menton, January 1891

Here there is sunshine, there are lemons, and there are consumptives. People like me sit in chairs along the promenade, wrapped in blankets, and bow to one another like members of a private club to which admission is granted on the strength of a single recommendation issued by Koch.

Yesterday, to occupy the evening, I reread the account of the night by the Rhine that I explained a year ago according to Charcot. It is unlike my night. The author experienced emptiness and something evil; I experienced falling and a meaning that was not mine. If my night is to be explained according to Charcot, it belongs in a different chapter. Only the ending is alike. Darkness entered the author and remained, and in the morning sat beside him by the water; something remained in me too, and I know that it is here even now, as I write. I would not have dwelt on a resemblance at a single point if it had not made me examine the others.

There are not many. The shove in the back and the voice in November, which I recorded above. And a dream that I did not record, though I began this notebook for the express purpose of recording everything. On the night before I bought the bundle, I dreamed of Quai Voltaire in a fog and heard someone behind me say the word *Mayence*, so that I could not see who had spoken. In the morning I laughed at the dream and went to the booksellers as I did every Sunday. When I wrote about the discovery, I omitted the

dream: it would hardly do for a physician setting out to analyze the wine merchant's delusions to begin with his own.

I have an explanation, and a fairly good one. I now recall that about two weeks before the purchase, while I was rummaging through his books, the owner of that same stall complained that someone had saddled him with a packet of Roman papers that nobody wanted, and he may have mentioned the city then. I paid no attention, but memory, as I have learned, preserves more than we entrust to it. Only one thing remains unclear. Before leaving Paris, I did finally ask him about the old woman who had been sitting at his stall that Sunday. He replied that he did not allow even his wife to attend to his stall, knew no old woman, and had sold no bundles.

Menton, February 1891

If the old woman, the dream, and the voice have the same origin, the bundle did not come into my possession by chance, and then one must ask where this absence of chance begins. I tried to trace it and found myself going one step farther back each time: from the quay to Paris, where I came to study under Charcot; from Paris to the medical faculty; from the faculty to the monastery I had considered entering; and so back to that evening at Korennaya. It follows that the darkness which took up residence in me in December may have been appointed for me long before, while for twenty years I followed a well-worn track toward it and mistook every turn for a choice of my own.

The author of Ostia laughs at such reasoning. In Chapter Six, when a count's son enters a monastery, the court astrologer takes out the horoscope drawn up at his birth and discovers the passage in which it was all foretold, though he had read it differently before. I am doing the same thing with my life: taking what has happened and rereading the past so that everything leads to it. At the clinic, such retrospective deception of memory is no less common than among astrologers.

It is a good explanation, except that it does not answer the question. If the track was already laid, then neither my refusal to go to Berlin, nor my choice of medicine nor this very notebook belongs to me, and Ribot is more right than he himself supposed: "I will" produces nothing; it is itself produced by someone who does not appear in The Diseases of the Will.

Today I deliberately went walking in the mountains, where I had not intended to go, and spent the whole walk wondering whether I had been led there for that very purpose.

Menton, March 1891

The local physician, Dr. B., learning that I came from Charcot's school, invited me to observe an interesting case: a washerwoman from the old town who, since her husband's death, has begun falling into a somnambulistic state and telling stories while in it. He hypnotizes her on Thursdays, before witnesses, and seems prouder of her than of the rest of his practice combined.

The washerwoman is about fifty, cannot read or write, and speaks the local dialect, which B. translated into French for me. He hypnotized her quickly, using Braid's method, with a polished button. At first she spoke of her husband, then of the laundry, and then began to tell, in the first person, how she had fashioned a serpent out of clay and the old god's own spittle and placed it in his path; how the serpent had bitten him and he had cried out, and how she refused to heal him until he told her the name he concealed from everyone. B. translated without understanding what she was speaking about and asked me whether it came from a saint's life. I recognized Isis and Ra.

An explanation was found that very evening, and B. found it before I did: some ten years earlier the washerwoman had worked in Nice for an Englishman who collected Egyptian antiquities, and presumably heard her master recount his papyri to guests at table. Servants hear more at table than we suppose, and somnambulists

repeat what they have heard with a precision they lack when awake. I record this explanation and agree with almost all of it.

When she had finished her story, she added that no one had yet decided whether she had taken the god's name from him or whether he had given it in payment of his own accord. I have never encountered that question in any version of the myth I have read. It appears in Ostia, in Chapter Seven, in almost the same words.

Menton, May 1891

All the Russians here and half the English are reading Huysmans's Down There, just published as a separate volume. The ladies hide it beneath their blankets whenever a priest walks past. It is a novel about the Parisian Satanists and Gilles de Rais, written with such knowledge of the subject that one cannot help wondering where the author acquired it. In Lyon, they say, from the former abbé Boullan, whom he portrayed as Dr. Johannes: a man who treats the possessed, wards off curses laid by others, and wages war against the Parisian Rosicrucians, who supposedly send death to him by mail.

A lady from Lyon, who is undergoing treatment here for the same complaint as mine, learned that I belonged to Charcot's school and brought me an invitation from Boullan. He would be delighted to show a physician from the Salpêtrière his patients and his cures, and I need not concern myself with travel or board. I had no reason to refuse. For a neurologist it would be a rare opportunity: hysterical women treated by prayer and ritual, and a healer who, to all appearances, suffers from the very disorder he treats. I thanked her, said I would consider it, and that evening wrote that I would not come. Why, I cannot explain to myself. My health is better this spring than it was in the autumn, and Lyon is less than a day's journey away.

The lady took offense and stopped acknowledging me on the promenade.

Paris, August 1891

I returned to Paris for the summer. My landlady greeted me as though I had risen from the dead and, in her delight, raised the price of coal once again, though there would be no need for a fire before October.

The washerwoman's question had troubled me all spring, and during my first week back I went to the Bibliothèque Nationale to discover where the myth had come from. I found it quickly. It was written in hieratic script on a papyrus belonging to the Turin Museum. Pleyte and Rossi published the papyrus in the seventies, and Lefébure's French translation appeared in a German Egyptological journal in 1883. Such texts have been readable only since Champollion, which is to say, in our own century. I checked Plutarch, who wrote an entire book about Isis: there one finds Osiris shut in a chest and his dismembered body, but no serpent made of spittle and no secret name. Nor do they appear in Horapollo, whom the humanists read as a key to Egyptian signs. In 1516 nobody in Europe knew this story.

That evening I examined Chapter Seven until my eyes ached. The passage cannot be an insertion: the hand, the ink, and the paper are the same as on the neighboring leaves, and the lines about Isis occur in the middle of a page, in the same continuous text as everything around them. There remains only one reasonable explanation: the entire manuscript copy is a forgery, made recently by someone who had read Lefébure. Old paper is not difficult to obtain, a handwriting can be learned with sufficient patience, and Paris has plenty of people who make their living by such means.

I accept this explanation, though two circumstances stand in its way. Forgers work in order to sell their wares at a high price, whereas my manuscript lay among a bundle of Italian receipts which nobody wanted and was sold for three francs. And a man sufficiently well read to insert the Turin myth would hardly have left in his text an error that the first specialist could detect.

R., to whom I told the story over dinner, advised me to take the manuscript to the École des Chartes. I promised to do so and did not.

Paris, October 1891

In a week I shall be going south again. For the present I am reading the newspapers, and I believe I have laughed more in the past three days than in the whole of this summer.

Madame Blavatsky died in London in May, and it is now reported that her ashes, after cremation according to the Indian custom, were divided into three portions: one was taken to Madras, another to New York, and the third remained in London. Catholics required centuries to distribute their relics among the chapels; the Theosophists managed it in a single summer. The deceased would have been pleased. Even in life she could never remain in one place.

The Petit Journal describes a séance at a medium's house in Batignolles, where a widow was shown her dead daughter, luminous and dressed in white. One of the guests, a retired gendarme, seized the apparition by the hand, which proved to belong to the medium's cook. The gendarme made a statement to the police commissioner, and the cook insists that she was walking in her sleep. The last detail touched me, I confess: the cook, it seems, had heard of Charcot too.

Acquaintances send me Rebus from St. Petersburg, and I read it as others read comic papers. In Tver, a deceased general supposedly appeared at a table and dictated his memoirs, and the table rapped out so many spelling mistakes that the editors thought it necessary to explain that spirits are under no obligation to observe the rules of orthography. Judging by the style, the general received a poor education.

What took up residence in me in December has not gone away. I know the explanation for it. I have written it above and see no reason to write it again.

Menton, December 1892

This notebook has lain in my trunk for more than a year. After the affair with Lefébure, I could not open it without remembering that I had promised R. to take the manuscript to the École des Chartes and had failed to do so. It was easier not to open it.

Moscow never replied to my proposal, but I subscribed to the journal and receive it here a month late. The latest issue contains a long article by Preobrazhensky on the German philosopher Nietzsche, who, judging by the tone, is already a subject of debate in Moscow. Formerly a professor of Greek philology at Basel, nearly blind, he gave up his chair because of illness, spent his winters in Nice, and went mad in Turin in January 1889.

I put down the journal and sat for a long time without moving. They write of general paresis. Chloral had nothing to do with it, and yet chloral was the first thing that came to mind.

Within a week I had ordered from Nice as many of his books as the bookseller there could find, and I am reading them in German. I agree with almost all his criticism, and this frightens me rather more than it surprises me. What struck me most was the ascetic priest in On the Genealogy of Morality, a healer who relieves suffering by giving it meaning, thereby making the patient even sicker. It is said directly to men of my profession. And the madman in The Gay Science, who searches for God with a lantern in broad daylight and announces that we have killed him. My faith departed without any help from Nietzsche, quietly, in a year I cannot name, and he has given me the words I lacked at the time. Had I been a little more attentive in Nice, I might have told him so.

The oranges on the trees outside the boardinghouse have turned yellow just in time for Christmas, and the English ladies are photographing them as though nobody at home would believe in an orange without its tree.

Menton, late December 1892

At first Nietzsche's overman seemed to me an old acquaintance from Chapter Ten of Ostia. There too a man escapes another's law and establishes his own values, without asking either God or his neighbor, and the pious call that pride as well. Zarathustra teaches that man is something to be overcome, and the wine merchant, I suspect, would have agreed.

The differences emerge as one reads further. Nietzsche makes the overman a goal toward which humanity must advance, like a shore in the distance, and Zarathustra descends from the mountains expressly to preach it. The wine merchant laughs at such a goal: a man who promises to turn his disciple into a god places a finished image before him and tells him to worship it until he resembles it, whereas ascent, according to the author, has no place where one may arrive and sit down.

Nietzsche seeks listeners and longs for them. The author of Ostia despises teachers and writes Rules which he himself commands us to burn. Books are written to be read, and Nietzsche cries ever louder so that someone will finally hear him. The wine merchant wrote so that he would not be understood, and succeeded: the Cologne masters understood nothing in him except heresy, while for three years I understood nothing except illness.

The eternal recurrence, which Nietzsche proposes as the greatest test, would have aroused the wine merchant's suspicions: for him repetition is the first sign that what has been done has settled into salt.

Nietzsche buried God thoroughly. Of the one who stood opposed to God he said almost nothing, as though that one had died at the same time. The darkness that took up residence in me the December before last had apparently not read Nietzsche.

Menton, January 1893

I go out less and less. The resort society gathers on the promenade toward noon, when the sun is at its highest and the physicians order everyone to catch as much of it as possible, whereas I spend that hour reading in my room and go out when the promenade begins to empty. There is scarcely anyone left for me to exchange greetings with: the lady from Lyon has never forgiven me for Lyon, the rest of my acquaintances change every winter, and by the second winter I had already stopped trying to remember their faces.

I now prefer the night to the day. My cough prevents me from sleeping before three in the morning in any case, and I have long since stopped arguing with it: I light the lamp and read, and those hours are the best of my day. Rain, which everyone here regards as a punishment, comes as a relief to me: when it rains nobody invites me for a walk or asks why I am so pale. I have a medical excuse for this, too, and make use of it. B. himself ordered me to stay indoors in damp weather. He also ordered me to seek the sun, admittedly, but I forget that part.

Menton, January 14, 1893

They write from Paris that Boullan died suddenly in Lyon on the fourth, having supposedly felt a blow to the chest the day before, a blow he had long been predicting. Jules Bois, writing in Gil Blas, openly accuses Guaita and his Rosicrucians of killing the old man by sorcery. Huysmans confirms that Boullan had repelled their curses for many years and failed to repel this last one, and there is talk, apparently, of duels.

I record an explanation of which I have no doubt. Boullan was approaching seventy, his heart was said to be weak, and for years he had lived in expectation of a fatal blow from Paris. A man who spends years expecting to be murdered at a distance may die from the expectation alone, without any curse being necessary. Suggestion can

raise blisters on a patient's skin as though from a burn, and the heart is no less susceptible to it than the skin.

Menton, May 1893

The duels reported in January have taken place, and the Paris newspapers describe them so entertainingly that I read the accounts aloud to my landlady, cough or no cough. Jules Bois fought a pistol duel with Guaita. On the way to the dueling ground, Bois's horse went wild for no apparent reason, and he arrived late, convinced that the sorcery had already begun. Both men missed, and afterward it was discovered that the bullet had failed to leave one of the pistols. They never established whose pistol it was. A few days ago Bois fought Papus with sabers, and on the way to that duel his carriage broke down twice. Both received slight wounds and, they say, parted almost as friends. A horse sensing its rider's fear, damp gunpowder, and a Parisian carriage require neither Guaita nor the late Boullan to account for them, and both sides, I believe, understand this perfectly well. They simply cannot admit it: then there would have been no reason to fight.

Even funnier are the installments of Dr. Bataille's The Devil in the Nineteenth Century, which the ladies here buy as eagerly as a serialized novel. The author claims to have infiltrated secret lodges and witnessed everything with his own eyes. In one installment the devil appears to the Freemasons in the form of a crocodile, seats himself at a piano, and plays something spirited for them. My landlady asked me whether it was true. I replied that if the devil took it into his head to play the piano, he would hardly choose a form in which reaching an octave was so inconvenient.

Badenweiler, June 1893

B. has sent me to the Black Forest for the summer, to Badenweiler, where German physicians treat patients with chest complaints by means of air and quiet. A town consisting of a single street, Roman baths, a Kursaal, and a park on the hillside. Here they call me *der russische Doktor*, and there seems to be no other Russian doctor in the town. From German hands I now accept air, milk, and sleep, and so far none of them has done me any harm.

From the mountain above the town one can see the Rhine valley. The station at Müllheim is half an hour away by carriage, and from there Basel is about an hour. The Rhine is broad and gray from here. After the rains its waters run high.

Part III

Badenweiler, August 1893

Charcot died on the sixteenth. He had gone to the Morvan with two of his pupils for a rest and died during the night at an inn near Lake Settons of a heart condition, almost instantly, according to the reports. I learned of it from the Frankfurter Zeitung in the Kursaal, with music playing, and the Germans at the next table, seeing me put down the newspaper, politely asked whether there was bad news from Russia.

Everything I know as a physician I learned at his clinic, and everything I have written in this notebook about the wine merchant has been written through his eyes. He was harsh and would tolerate no objections, yet his school was so firmly established under him that I cannot remember a day when any of us doubted that we were seeing what he told us to see.

Chapter Eleven says that while a founder is alive his disciples have to do with his will, but when he departs they are left with what has settled from him, and it is a Rule they now serve. R. writes from Paris that less than two weeks have passed and the disciples are already dividing the inheritance. No one has yet been appointed to the chair, but in the doctors' room they are arguing over which of them is most faithful to the master, and each proves his fidelity by beating the others with quotations from the master's own words. One intern, according to R., declared before everyone that the patients had performed the great attack in four stages for the professor because they knew what he expected, and that Bernheim in Nancy had been saying so for years. They nearly expelled him. Under Charcot they certainly would have.

If the intern is right, then I too explained the night by the Rhine according to a description which the patients had learned by watching us. I shall not think about that today.

Menton, December 1893

I am spending the winter here again. My landlady has aged over the summer and crossed herself when she saw me at the door, something she had never done before.

On the sixth, in Paris, a former patient shot Gilles de la Tourette, Charcot's pupil, in his own apartment. He was wounded in the head but survived. The woman insists that he had hypnotized her from a distance, deprived her of her will, money, and health, and that she shot him in order to free herself. Under Charcot her case would have been discussed at a Tuesday lecture.

I examined it in just that fashion, according to Ribot and Janet, and arrived at the conclusion any of us would have reached: a delusion of influence in a hysterical woman who had read too many newspaper accounts of hypnosis. And yet the wine merchant described her better than anyone. In Chapter Four he writes of a man whose own habits have departed, leaving an empty place into which another's will enters and holds him so completely that his actions can be predicted from the person he serves. The author calls this bondage. The patient called it hypnosis, Boullan called it a curse, and she herself, judging by the shot, was seeking a way out of that bondage.

I sent Gilles de la Tourette a letter wishing him a speedy recovery. He does not remember me, of course.

Menton, March 1894

The carnival in Nice has ended, and my landlady's niece brought back a whole lapful of confetti, which we spent another week sweeping out of the corridor. The savages described by Jules Bois, the same man who fought a duel with Guaita last spring, live in Passy and pay their rent regularly. In The Little Religions of Paris he visited every shrine in the capital, from the Buddhists to the worshippers of Lucifer, and describes them with the seriousness of a traveler describing the customs of natives. His Luciferians are almost respectable people: they revere Lucifer as a god of light wronged by Adonai and refuse to have anything to do with the Satanists who steal communion wafers and celebrate Mass backward.

We have an eyewitness of our own at the boardinghouse. A retired captain who is spending his third winter here claims that he once attended a black Mass in Paris out of curiosity. It was celebrated by a defrocked priest, according to all the rules, only backward. The man remembered his Latin so poorly that the congregation had to prompt him from their prayer books, and the communion wafer, as it later emerged, had been bought for a franc from the sacristan of a neighboring church. The captain tells this as the most dreadful thing he has ever witnessed and does not notice that he is telling a joke.

The wine merchant described these people in Chapter Four as though he had been sitting beside the captain. Take the church away from one of our priests and an antimension is enough for him: spread it on a portable table and he can celebrate the liturgy even on a drum, as regimental priests do. But those who celebrate it backward cannot manage without an altar, or a communion wafer, or a sacristan willing to sell them one.

Basel, June 1894

I finally fulfilled the promise I made to R. three years ago, though not in Paris. Basel is a little over an hour from Badenweiler, and the elderly librarian of the university library here, Dr. F., who has spent forty years studying Upper Rhine manuscripts, agreed to examine my copy.

He examined it for two days. The paper, he said, came from a mill in this region, and the bull's head with a star was familiar to him from municipal documents of the 1510s. The handwriting belonged to a clerk from a Lower Rhine chancery, an experienced man who wrote rapidly and without corrections. The ink and the browning along the edges of the leaves could not be forged in our time. He had seen one forgery of this kind in forty years, and the paper had betrayed it. Then he asked what the treatise was about. I told him it was about repentance.

That evening, at my hotel beside the Rhine, I reread Chapter Two. Where the author speaks of the voice from darkness, he suddenly begins to say "we": *Nos, qui illinc loquimur, nomen tuum nec novimus nec quaerimus* — "We who speak from there do not know your name, nor do we ask." Formerly I had read this as a rhetorical figure. In Figure Eight, where he writes about forbidden books, there is a line I had also passed over: what was absent from those books, *she* supplied for him. Forgery is no longer an explanation. A man living in 1516 could not have known the Turin papyrus. I have nothing more than what is written in the text.

The hotel windows overlook the Rhine. I sat at the window until dawn, and all night the water flowed toward Mainz.

Basel, July 1894

I came to Basel again, this time without the manuscript, and went to the museum to see Holbein's The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb, of which Dostoevsky's prince says that it might cause a man to lose his faith. The panel is long and low, no higher than a coffin, and one looks into it as into the recess of a crypt. The body is painted as a good pathologist would paint it: the third day, at least; hands and feet darkened, mouth slightly open, one eye not quite closed.

They say Holbein painted it from a drowned man taken out of the Rhine, and I believe it: we used to receive bodies like that from the Seine. I had nothing to lose, and I looked at him as I would at a specimen, but after a quarter of an hour I found myself waiting for him to open his eye the rest of the way, something I had never expected of a corpse in all my years of practice. The attendant had to remind me twice that the museum was closing.

Publisher's note. Four leaves were torn from the notebook between the entries for July 1894 and May 1895; their stubs remain.

Badenweiler, May 1895

I went to Müllheim to collect money from Moscow at the post office. Once again it had arrived a week later than promised. At the market near the station they are selling the first asparagus, white and thick as candles, and the market women shout out the prices as though they were selling something forbidden. The cherry trees on the slopes have already finished flowering, and the vines are covered with small green leaves. While waiting for the carriage back, I went into a bookseller's shop and bought a new book by the Berlin theologian Gunkel on creation and chaos. Behind the opening verses of Genesis he finds the Babylonian account of how Marduk split the sea monster Tiamat and made heaven and earth from her body. I read that account as a student in George Smith, where the heaven above had not yet been raised. In the new German translation quoted by Gunkel, the heaven above had not yet been named, and the earth below had no name. I prefer this translation.

Same place, at night

For the Babylonians Tiamat is the salt waters, the sea that existed before any name and from which everything emerged. Having defeated her, Marduk assigns names and destinies to the gods and receives fifty names himself in return. The Babylonians, I think, understood better than many who sets the seal and what it costs him. Nicholas of Cusa called God *possest*, the power-to-be, the one in whom everything possible already exists before becoming any one thing. He was born in Kues on the Moselle, in the wine country from which our wine merchant presumably brought his wares. Put these things together, and Tiamat becomes a sea of possibility in which everything is dissolved and nothing has been named, while the wine merchant's salt is what has precipitated from that sea and hardened. And the water in Chapter Nine, which undermines the crust and carries away those standing upon it, is the same water, only returning.

Later

Nicholas of Cusa placed everything possible in God. But if Tiamat is a sea of possibility, why should the gods themselves not be possible within it? One god need not be created by another: one might arise who would require no other hand to continue existing. The wine merchant calls this self-holding. It follows that there may be many gods, all born from what had previously been none of them. Why, then, is one of them called the Creator of everything else?

The following morning

There is no Tiamat in the wine merchant's text, and I have never seen his nine sheets and never shall. In Figure Nine the woman looks silently toward the place where the road runs down over the edge of the earth into darkness so deep that one cannot see one's own hand. If I had the ninth sheet, I would look for water in it.

Menton, November 1895

The first winter storms have arrived. The sea is gray, the spray makes the promenade impassable, and the visitors sit in their rooms, as I always do. I am rereading The Brothers Karamazov for the first time since my student days, and I linger longest over Ivan's devil. He is a shabby gentleman with a cold, a dependent who dreams of being incarnated as a merchant's wife weighing seven poods and lighting candles before God. Ivan spends the whole night shouting that he is nothing more than a hallucination, and the devil readily agrees, driving him into a fury. As a student I read this chapter as an excellent description of fever. Now I examine it as a physician who has spent five years unable to decide what has taken up residence in his heart, and I see that Dostoevsky did not decide either. The devil tells Ivan an anecdote about a philosopher who traveled a quadrillion versts, and Ivan remembers that he had invented the anecdote himself at school and forgotten it.

Dostoevsky gave his devil the same escape route that I use for my coincidences: everything the visitor says was already known to the host. Plato argued that all knowledge is recollection and, by way of

demonstration, summoned a slave boy who, without having been taught, worked out how to double a square. If Plato is right, the escape route available to Ivan and me is wider than we imagined: whatever the visitor says, the host once knew it, and no experiment can establish whether it came from outside, because any answer can be attributed to memory. Under such an arrangement the devil has no means of proving his existence, and Ivan has no means of disproving it. Only my visitor says nothing, tells no anecdotes, and gives me nothing by which to catch him.

Menton, December 1895

The captain saw The Brothers Karamazov on my table and asked what it was about. I told him that in one chapter Christ returns to Seville during the Inquisition, the Grand Inquisitor puts him in prison, and comes to explain why during the night. The captain thought for a moment and replied that the Inquisitor appeared to have been a practical man.

The captain is more right than he knows. The Inquisitor holds people by bread, miracle, and authority, knowing that freedom is beyond their strength; he locks Christ away so that he will not interfere. The wine merchant writes without malice of the one who sets the seal: he holds firmly, and thanks to him many remain themselves to the end, even when everything else within them has fallen apart. Neither man says that the holder lies. On my table lies a manuscript copy made for inquisitors, so that they might know what they were dealing with. Someone in Cologne, then, read the wine merchant as the old man in Seville examined his prisoner at night, at length and with a thorough knowledge of the matter, and unlike the old man, did not let him go.

Menton, January 1896

In Bobok, the deceased philosopher Platon Nikolayevich explains to his neighbors in the cemetery that consciousness in the dead holds on for another two or three months, sometimes six, through inertia, until it decays into a single meaningless little word. Inertia is a good word; the author of the tractate would have said "salt." It would be interesting to gather everyone who has decayed to a single word and write down what remains of them. Dahl's dictionary contains some two hundred thousand words, and there must have been far more dead people than that in a thousand years, so there would not be enough words to go around, and most would have to share a single word among thousands. I suspect the resulting dictionary would be thinner than any peasant's vocabulary: "mama," "vodka," "Lord," someone's name, and for the man who has lived his whole life without ever saying anything, "bobok." The old woman in our ward would have "Our Father."

This is the first thing I have written about the dead without writing as a physician.

Badenweiler, July 1896

Six years ago, in July, R. examined me by percussion in an empty doctors' room. The time allotted to me by our textbooks ran out last summer, and I failed to notice.

I shall record my condition for the sake of order, as I would that of any patient. My weight is steady; by summer I had even gained two pounds. In the evenings my temperature rises to thirty-eight degrees, then falls by morning. I cough in the mornings; there has been no blood since the winter before last. The local physician, after listening to my chest, says that everything remains unchanged at the right apex: the cavity is not growing and is firmly walled off, like an old scar. With this fibrous form of the disease, people can live fifteen years or more. He tells every new patient this by way of consolation,

but tells me with mild displeasure, as though I were spoiling his annual report.

I have no intention of dying just yet. There is still much in this notebook that I do not understand, and that, it seems, is the only thing that interests me.

July 12. Reached the castle ruins above the town without stopping once. Last summer I had to stop three times.

July 14. A newcomer at the table d'hôte, learning that this was my fourth summer here, asked whether I was the local doctor. I replied that I was the local patient. He decided that this amounted to the same thing.

July 15. R. writes from Paris that the Black Forest air is holding me. I do not argue with him.

Colmar, September 1896

Colmar is half a day's journey from Badenweiler, across the Rhine at Breisach and then over the Alsatian plain. The signs here are now in German, the shopkeepers speak Alsatian, and when they heard my French they served me more pleasantly than the German ahead of me. The Isenheim Altarpiece stands in a former Dominican monastery, and I came to see it because of Huysmans, who describes Grünewald's Crucifixion in Kassel with such enthusiasm in Down There. The Crucifixion here is more terrible: Christ's body is covered with small sores, his fingers are contorted, and when I learned that the altarpiece had been painted for the hospital of the Antonites, where they treated St. Anthony's fire, I understood what I was looking at. Patients whose hands and feet blackened and fell away because of ergot in their bread were brought before this altar, and they saw their own sores upon the body of Christ. Perhaps that helped them more than the monks did.

On the panel depicting the Temptation of St. Anthony, demons tear the saint's hair and beat him with clubs, while in the corner sits a man with a swollen belly, festering sores all over his body, and

webbed feet. As a physician I see a man suffering from the last stage of St. Anthony's fire; Huysmans would see a demon, and Anthony himself, judging by his face, makes no distinction between them. Those poisoned by ergot see just such creatures in their delirium, and Grünewald, painting for their hospital, might have drawn his demons from their accounts. Thus the demons on the panel and the disease in its corner are the same thing, seen from opposite sides of a sickbed, and this time I stood on both sides.

Colmar, evening

At the hotel a thought occurred to me, which I shall write down before it begins to seem foolish. Ergot grows on rye in wet years; wet years are often years of famine, and in a famine people eat whatever bread they can get. Those poisoned by it suffer convulsions, see creatures, believe themselves to be flying through the air, and all this is recorded in the proceedings of witch trials, except that there it is called a witches' sabbath. The wine merchant tells of a girl from a farm in the Eifel whose entire family died in a single winter. She confessed that she had sold herself to the devil and flown to a sabbath where no salt was served. A winter of famine, a dead family, and a feast dreamed of by the hungry: I would give her the same diagnosis as the figure in the corner of the panel. Weyer, physician to the Duke of Cleves, wrote as early as the sixteenth century that witches were for the most part sick and deceived old women, and Bourneville had good reason to republish him in his Bibliothèque diabolique, but Weyer, as far as I remember, gave no thought to bread. The demonologists explained the absence of salt at the sabbath by saying that the devil cannot endure it as a symbol of eternity. The wine merchant would have explained it differently.

Menton, April 1897

On the nineteenth, at the hall of the Geographical Society in Paris, Léo Taxil announced to those assembled that for twelve years he had been making fools of the entire Catholic world. His whole Masonic devil, from the crocodile at the piano to the repentant priestess Diana Vaughan, whose memoirs were read in monasteries and praised in Rome, had been his invention from beginning to end. He had borrowed Diana's name from a typist employed at a typewriter office. The hall, they say, erupted in uproar, and Taxil had to be escorted out under police protection. I laughed at the crocodile four years ago without once asking myself who had invented it.

If Diana Vaughan could be invented so convincingly that bishops believed in her for twelve years, then the one I write about in this notebook could be invented as well. I went to bed with this thought, almost relieved.

Night of the twenty-first. I awoke to the sound of laughter. Someone beside me was laughing, softly, like a woman amused by a good joke that had been told to someone else. There was nobody in the room.

Morning. Laughter during sleep is more common among nervous people than is generally supposed, and it was probably I myself who laughed at Taxil. Over coffee my landlady asked who the lady was who had been laughing in my room during the night.

Menton, January 1898

I spent the summer and autumn in bed. In June I suffered a hemorrhage worse than the one in December 1890, and until October Dr. Sch. would not allow me to remain out of bed for more than an hour. During those months I wrote nothing except my temperature chart.

Just before Christmas, Guaita died at the age of thirty-six in his castle in Lorraine. Some newspapers blame his kidneys, others morphine, and the followers of the late Boullan naturally see it as a

delayed retaliatory blow from Lyon. Five years ago I could not explain to myself why I had refused Boullan's invitation. Now I have gone over the whole affair again and see that there is nothing to explain: Boullan was old and ill and would have died without me, and I must have refused a dozen invitations during those years. I remember this one only because the man who invited me subsequently died. Nothing remains. I record this coincidence as an empty one and am, I confess, pleased: it means I can still distinguish where a remainder exists and where there is none.

Menton, Easter night, 1898

The Russian church here was consecrated in 1892, and in six winters I had never entered it. Tonight I looked in. There were not many people, mostly visitors to the resort and servants from the Russian villas, and when they began singing "Christ is risen," I answered with the rest and only afterward heard *what* I had answered. My lips know this service better than I do, just as the old woman in our ward knew the "Our Father" when she could no longer remember her daughter's name.

Standing there with my candle, I asked myself whether I wanted the light I had known at eighteen, at Korennaya, to return, and could not answer. If it returned, it would have to share its place with what has lived in me since 1890, and I am not certain they could coexist. I am even less certain that I would choose the light. I exchanged the Easter greeting with everyone I was supposed to, then blew out my candle on the church steps and threw it away. Inside, there was emptiness. I looked at the faces around me and wondered whether all these people had gathered to divide the Kingdom of God among themselves, and what they intended to do there once the division was complete. Paul promises that there I shall know even as I am known, which means that I shall be known through and through, and so will every one of them. But then there will be nothing left worth looking at.

The English poet and priest Herbert wrote: "Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back." I never used to understand why it drew back.

Badenweiler, October 1898

The Kursaal has closed for the winter, the orchestra has gone away, and in the mornings there is frost on the benches in the park. Only we consumptives remain, along with the postman, who now comes in to talk to me.

Mackay, a German poet of anarchist sympathies, has published a biography of Max Stirner in Berlin. Until now I knew only that Stirner had written one book and been forgotten by everyone afterward, so I read both the biography and The Ego and Its Own in succession. The book begins and ends with a line borrowed from Goethe: I have set my cause upon nothing. Everything people serve, from God to humanity, Stirner calls specters and fixed ideas, wheels that turn of their own accord inside the head. I spent years treating people with wheels like these, and for the first time I am reading a philosopher who applies the same word to everything society reveres. The wine merchant has an older word for such things and speaks of them far more calmly. The passage where Stirner calls himself the creative nothing out of which he creates everything as creator could stand in Ostia beside Nobody walking through the desert, except for one thing: Stirner's nothing immediately becomes an owner, and the entire book concerns what he intends to take as his own, whereas the wine merchant's Nobody takes nothing and does not know what he will become. I read the first third without stopping, but then came politics, three varieties of liberals, the state, and property, and I began falling asleep over the pages, which is hardly what one expects of a book with Goethe for its epigraph.

Mackay describes Stirner's life in a way that makes one want to laugh and weep at once. He taught at a girls' boarding school, used his wife's dowry to establish a milk business in Berlin, went

bankrupt, was imprisoned twice for debt, and died after being bitten by some insect, the wound becoming infected. I drink the local milk every morning and think of him.

Menton, January 1899

It has been raining for a week, and I have been ordered not to go out. I took Schopenhauer from my trunk, having left him unopened since my student days. Book Four of The World as Will and Representation ends by saying that to all those still full of will, what remains after its complete denial is nothing, while to those in whom the will has turned and renounced itself, our entire world, with all its suns and Milky Ways, is likewise nothing. As a student I wept over that page.

He derives morality from compassion: the same will suffers in another as in myself, and when I cause him pain I am biting into my own flesh. His later counsels on worldly wisdom offer one piece of advice after another: live in solitude, desire little, expect nothing good from people, and take care of your health. He followed these counsels in his own fashion. In Berlin he deliberately scheduled his lectures for the same hour as Hegel's and found himself without an audience. A seamstress who lived nearby and talked outside his door he pushed down the stairs, and by court order he paid her an allowance for twenty years. When he learned of her death, he wrote: *obit anus, abit onus* — the old woman is dead, the burden is gone. The world will, whose denial he sought, manifested itself in him chiefly through quarrels.

The wine merchant described the same nothing in Chapter Four: a house swept clean, where nothing happens and where a monk comes to the window at noon to see whether anyone is approaching. Schopenhauer sees salvation in this nothing; the wine merchant sees danger, for sooner or later someone will enter an empty house. The author mentions the sages who extinguish themselves like lamps in Chapter Ten, without mockery, and refuses to judge them.

Badenweiler, March 1900

The notebook I had been keeping since last winter disappeared with my traveling bag on the train between Menton and Müllheim. Fortunately, I was carrying the manuscript copy of Ostia in my coat pocket. I remember little of what was in the missing notebook and shall not attempt to reconstruct it.

Spring begins here sooner than one expects. Down in the valley it is already warm, while snow still lies on the Blauen, and in the mornings damp air descends from the mountain. The paths in the park have turned to mud, the Kursaal is empty, and I sit alone in the reading room, apart from an elderly Englishman who reads The Times every morning and falls asleep on the third page every morning. The first crocuses have appeared beside the Roman baths.

Flournoy, the professor of psychology in Geneva, has published a substantial book about a medium whom he calls Mademoiselle Hélène Smith. In her trances she becomes sometimes a fifteenth-century Indian princess, sometimes Marie Antoinette, and sometimes visits Mars and speaks Martian. Flournoy patiently demonstrates, year after year, that the princess came from an old history of India which the girl might have seen in the house of acquaintances, while the Martian language follows French grammar and has Genevan word order. For something a patient once read or heard and forgot, then later presented as a revelation, he has devised a word: cryptomnesia. What I have privately called forgotten memory for ten years has finally received a name.

I sat down and tested everything recorded in this notebook against that word. It accounts entirely for Mayence in my dream, since the bookseller had mentioned the city earlier, and for the words spoken by the voice in 1890, since they were my nanny's words. It goes no further. The owner of the stall knows nothing of the old woman on the quay; the question about the stolen name was asked by a washerwoman who had never read Ostia; and it was my landlady who asked about the lady laughing in my room during the night.

Cryptomnesia explains what takes place inside one head, whereas all my remainders lie in other heads.

Badenweiler, June 1900

At the end of May the American writer Crane, twenty-eight years old, was brought here to die, accompanied by his wife. He lived another week and died on the fifth. I never saw him, only his wife walking to the pharmacy in the morning, very upright and very quickly. I am forty years old, in the tenth year of my consumption, and he came to the same resort and did not even have time to unpack his suitcase.

Badenweiler, September 1900

September is warm, and at night the pears fall from the trees in my landlady's garden so loudly that I wake thinking someone is knocking. They wrote in August that Vladimir Solovyov had died, and I read his last book, Three Conversations, with the tale of the Antichrist at the end. His Antichrist is a remarkable man: a benefactor and an ascetic, who writes a book about universal peace and prosperity that moves socialists and bishops alike to tears, and does more good for mankind than anyone before him, all because he loves only himself and does not believe in Christ. As I read, I recognized, of course, not the Antichrist himself, but what remained of me after Korennaya: a calling to do good with no god behind it any longer.

There is another passage, more troubling still. At thirty-three, in despair, this man throws himself from a cliff at night. An invisible force catches him, he sees shining eyes, hears a voice that demands nothing of him, and a cold current enters him, after which he writes his book in three weeks. I read this twice and noted the difference as I would in a patient: in Solovyov, what entered was cold, while mine is sweet, and after that night I wrote no book about peace. I am writing only this diary.

Part IV

Menton, December 1900

For twelve years the words *sal* = *habitude* have stood in pencil in the margin of my manuscript copy. Today I crossed them out.

Habit is only one kind of salt, and hardly the most important. The wine merchant says that everything done settles, and for a long time I understood this to mean that what has settled subsequently performs for a man what he himself performed before. That happens, and the old woman who recited the "Our Father" is an example. But there is something else that I saw at the clinic every day without noticing it. In a case history, every entry is made on its own day and in its own hand, and none follows from the one before it; nevertheless, they all lie in a single case file under one name, and from the file one can see that the patient is the same. Salt, as I now understand it, is such a file. Each entry is written anew, and the free act described in Chapter Six is one such new entry; salt gathers them under a single name and allows yesterday's entry to be found and presented to the man today as his own.

Bergson argues in Matter and Memory that memory is not stored in the brain like papers in a cabinet, and that the brain merely selects from the past what is needed for action. I read him in 1897 and argued with every page, like a physician who had seen hundreds of strokes. Now he puts a question to me that I cannot escape: if memory is not in the brain, what holds the file when the brain is gone? My answer, for the present, is this. The brain is the shelf on which the file rests during life, and the shelf collapses with the body. After that, someone must hold the file, or it must hold itself, or nobody holds it and the sheets scatter.

Menton, January 1901

In Chapter Nine the wine merchant offers two outcomes. The one who has a Name comes home to a place where nobody holds him, while the one who stands upon salt drowns when the water undermines the crust. *If I hold to my file*, a third outcome has been omitted between these two, and in my opinion it is the most common. The owner may hold the file himself, in which case he is the serpent biting its own tail; nobody may hold it, in which case the sheets scatter, as would the contents of a cabinet whose doors and roof had been removed; or someone else may hold it, someone who needs it for some purpose. It is this third outcome that the Church promises us: eternal life with the One who remembers us. The dead in Bobok do not belong here; inertia alone holds them until they decay, and that is the same scattering, only slower. Father N. of Rue Daru would call the holder God, a Babylonian would call him Marduk, and the late Boullan would give him a less agreeable name. To my mind, all these are instances of the same holding, differing only in who does it.

At night. I do not seem to hold my own file. It is too early for it to scatter. That leaves the third possibility, and I do not know who.

Menton, February 1901

In my student days everyone read Büchner and Vogt, just as twenty years before us Bazarov advised Arkady to give his father Force and Matter in place of Pushkin: thought is secreted by the brain as bile is secreted by the liver, and man is what he eats. I agreed with them readily, and the less that remained in me of Korennaya, the more readily I agreed. I found an argument against them in another physiologist. Back in the seventies, du Bois-Reymond declared that the movement of atoms in the brain could never explain why I experience pain or sweetness, and ended his lecture with the word *ignorabimus*: we shall not know. An honest argument.

Something else is unpleasant. Rereading my entry about the file, I caught myself rejoicing at the crack Bergson had made in materialism, as a patient rejoices when his physician discovers that he has something other than the disease he feared. I do not want everything to be as simple as Feuerbach would have it, and this unwillingness is just as much an act of will as Büchner's willingness. Feuerbach explained God by man's desire for Him, and in that he was right, except that he himself wanted there to be no God, while Büchner wanted to decay in peace, without a file or a holder. It seems that everyone believes in whatever direction his will has turned, and finds the arguments afterward, as patient J. found the sun to explain her umbrella. Chapter Six of Ostia says this of the act: it chooses its own reason.

One thing prevents me from writing that it is all a matter of taste. I could believe whatever I pleased, but it was my landlady who asked about the lady in 1897, without any prompting from me.

Menton, June 1901

A question any student would have asked me at his first lecture, which I am only now asking myself: who holds a man when he sleeps without dreaming or lies under chloroform? As a student, and later at the Salpêtrière, I administered anesthetics on many occasions, and on waking the patients always asked the same question: already? Between their first breath through the mask and their awakening, no time had passed for them. At first I thought of the serpent in Chapter Seven, as though it opened its jaws for a while. But the serpent is the Name, and most of my patients have no Name; they are held, like the rest of us, by salt: the body, habits, relatives, a file in an archive. In that case sleep is no different from daytime. By day, too, a man dies a little at a time: yesterday he did something, and today he says he could never have done such a thing, and he speaks the truth, because the man who did it did not continue, and the only connection between them is that their entries lie in the same file. I read my own entry from 1888 as though it belonged to someone else. Most lives are a succession of little deaths stitched together by salt, and the night merely makes the seam more visible. For one who has a Name, the question remains: does it sleep along with him? Whether I have one, I do not know, and I cannot test it on myself: no one writes in his sleep.

Badenweiler, September 1901

Father N. from the church on Rue Daru has come to take the waters. He has grown older and suffers from his kidneys, and has settled in a neighboring boardinghouse. In the evenings we walk to the castle and back, and he has never once asked whether I receive communion, for which I am grateful. I do not tell him about my notebook.

Badenweiler, March 1902

I reread the fifteenth chapter of John in Greek, as I once read it at school, and only now noticed that the Father is called γεωργός. In Church Slavonic the word is "worker," in Russian "vinedresser"; gentle words, belonging to a garden. The Greek is simpler: a farmer, a man who cultivates the land for what he intends to harvest from it. The passage goes on to say that the branch remains on the vine as long as it bears fruit; the fruitless branch is cut away, and the withered branches are gathered and thrown into the fire. As a child I heard this read as a consolation, and that is how I listened: the vine, the branches, all together, warmth. Now I hear a farm in the same verse, and a strict one. Last autumn Father N. came here to take the waters, and I asked him how he understood the passage. He replied that the love of God consists in abiding by His commandments, and recited the tenth verse: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." We were both satisfied with the conversation. He never noticed that he had said precisely what I had.

Badenweiler, April 1902

Father N. recited the tenth verse in the voice one uses to offer consolation, but ever since I have been unable to get the word "if" out of my mind. The branch remains on the vine if it bears fruit, and those who keep the commandments abide in love. Love here holds, and holds on a condition, and that condition is a commandment. I went back to the first commandment given to man and found it in the second chapter of Genesis: of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. The prohibition and its punishment stand in the same verse, and before that verse there had been no prohibition in the garden, so man lived there as a branch lives on the vine, breaking nothing because there was nothing to break. The wine merchant writes about this passage in Chapter Six: Eve reached out her hand of her own accord, and that was her first act and her death at once, because it took her out from under the commandment. Thirteen years ago I read that chapter as a delusion about free will. Now I see that he is speaking of the same thing as John, only from the opposite end: one is held by a commandment, and to escape that holding is to do what the commandment forbids.

Same place, a week later

In January 1889 I wrote that one umbrella was enough to bring Chapter Six down. Patient J. opened the umbrella at another person's command and invented a reason for doing so, and I concluded that this refuted the author, who maintained that the act chooses its own reason. I was mistaken. At that moment J. was carrying out the content of an action implanted in her, as a branch bears the fruit required of it, and the act described in Chapter Six was entirely absent. Chapter Four says this plainly: the one who enters holds the man by his will, and his actions can be predicted from the person he serves. The intern held J. for a quarter of an hour, Boullan held his patients for years, and the One who gave the commandment in the garden holds, if John is to be believed, all who abide in His love

forever. The author was speaking of two different things, the act and holding, and for thirteen years I mistook them for one.

Badenweiler, late April 1902

I explained my correction concerning J. in a letter to R. He replied on four pages, and the entire letter comes down to one question, to which I have no answer. How am I to distinguish an act from an executed suggestion if the person acting feels no difference? J. was certain that she opened the umbrella because the sun was dazzling her, and the wine merchant, reaching for the cup, was equally certain. If I call every action for which I can find another person's command an execution, and every action for which I find no such command an act, then I have won the argument in advance and left myself no possible way to lose it. If no case can ever show me that I am mistaken, R. writes, how am I to know that I am right?

I tried to answer with the test from Chapter Three: can you do it, and can you leave it undone, and let both answers be true at the same hour. But J. might have refused under a suggestion from the same intern, and once again I would have had no way of knowing whose refusal it was. The wine merchant himself writes that conduct cannot reveal the difference and advises against judging freedom by actions. It follows that I have nothing by which to judge it either. R.'s letter has lain unanswered for a second week.

Badenweiler, early May 1902

I answered R., though not quite as he would have wished. There seems to be a distinguishing mark, except that it can be seen only from within. J. opened the umbrella as one drinks water when thirsty, without weighing anything: there was nothing between the command and her hand. A decision is different. A man sees one possibility and another before him and chooses one, and there is no need for him to like them equally; it is enough that his preference should not in itself mean that the preferred possibility will be chosen. If preference has already settled the matter, choice is mere appearance, and there is no difference between it and the umbrella. A drunkard who has been drinking every evening for thirty years may remain free by this measure if his craving for a drink does not yet settle the matter and he settles it himself; or he may be in bondage if the craving has long since been deciding for him. From outside, these two drunkards cannot be distinguished, and there R. is right. From within, at least, the distinction ought to be accessible: a man knows whether both possibilities were open to him or whether only one appeared to be open. But whether he may deceive himself even here, I cannot prove.

What followed was something I had not expected and which R. had not asked about. Augustine teaches that the highest freedom consists no longer in the ability to sin or refrain from sin, but in the impossibility of sin. According to Thomas Aquinas, God necessarily wills His own good, but does not necessarily will created things and is free to create them or refrain from creating them. Thus He has alternatives, only not where I had been looking for them.

But if God cannot fail to will His own good, then in this respect He is unfree by my criterion. His will does not determine what to prefer here: the preference is given before any choice, and no other preference is possible. Eve at the tree could prefer obedience and nevertheless disobey. It follows that in this one respect she was freer than her creator. Augustine would call this a lower freedom; the wine

merchant, perhaps, the only freedom worth speaking of. I did not send R. this part of my reply.

Badenweiler, May 10, 1902

I was rereading my reply to R. and asked myself a question I had never asked before: why does a man cease to decide for himself at all? Thirst does not entail drinking now, nor does love entail remaining with the woman one loves. These are all reasons, and none of them reaches out a hand on a man's behalf. It is different when a rule stands between the reason and the action, a rule by which the answer is known in advance. Kant demanded that a man act only according to a rule which he could will to become a law for everyone, and called this self-legislation. But a law, once established, operates tomorrow as well, when the man who established it might wish something different, and I do not know whether Kant would have considered such a legislator free.

At the Salpêtrière we once treated a retired major who at forty had taken a vow never to drink and had kept it for twenty years. At his daughter's wedding someone offered him a glass, and he drew back his hand without thinking, as one draws one's hand away from something hot. Everyone praised his firmness. I praised it too, but now I see that at that moment the vow he had made twenty years earlier was deciding for him, just as reliably as the liquor had once decided for him.

R. is my friend, and I value that friendship. Suppose he betrays something entrusted to him, and then betrays another confidence. Would I cease to regard him as a friend? I do not know, and would not wish to know in advance. If friendship obliges me to love him under all circumstances, the decision has already been made, and R. may do whatever he pleases to me without changing my feelings toward him. If, on the other hand, I resolve to cease loving him at the first betrayal, the decision has again been made. In either case, tomorrow's R. will have to deal with today's rule of mine. Yet I may

forgive him a betrayal, even one that is not the first, and remain free in doing so, provided the forgiveness is my own.

It follows that salt is recognized by an action being performed according to a determination that no longer permits revision. Whether the action itself remains unchanged has nothing to do with it. The major might have drunk every evening and been freer than he was on the day of the wedding. I did not send R. the letter about this either: he would have taken the third paragraph personally.

Badenweiler, May 1902

An objection to my own argument which has kept me awake for three nights. If an act is nothing beyond the doing itself, with no nature behind it from which it follows, does holding its continuation not mean holding its content as well? For then there is nothing to continue except what is being done. It follows that the holder of the file also writes the entries, and there is no difference between J. and anyone who is held.

I found the answer in the hospital archive, which I had seen for twenty years without ever properly examining it. The archive keeps the patients' files; each bears a name, and under that name lie all the entries made by different physicians in different years. The archivist holds the file but writes none of its entries, while the name on the cover holds the entries together but says nothing about their contents: the name alone cannot tell us what illness the patient suffered. Holding, therefore, takes place in two steps. The holder holds the name; the name holds the sequence. And the name itself, that little piece of salt resembling the word on the cover, contains none of the content of the actions. To hold the name is to hold the continuation, so that tomorrow's entry will go into the same file. To hold the content is to dictate the entries, and that requires a different means, the one used in the garden. The intern dictated to J.; the archive merely kept her file.

I remembered that the theologians have known this for a long time, though they call it something else. Thomas teaches that God preserves a creature in being and concurs in each of its actions, and must then explain why the fall of the angels was not His doing. He escapes the difficulty by saying that evil is a privation and that a privation has no efficient cause. Without my archivist, he would have had to admit that the angels fell with God's concurrence.

The following day

If She holds me, my actions remain my own so long as She preserves the file without dictating anything in it. I went through the entries in this notebook and found none of which I could say that it had been dictated. This proves nothing.

Badenweiler, late May 1902

Yesterday I remembered a file that I myself kept in 1887. The patient, a locksmith of about forty with a brain tumor, died in our care in March, and his case history grew thicker after his death than it had been during his lifetime. The autopsy report was pasted into it, along with descriptions of tissue sections which an intern spent six months examining under a microscope; then came a letter from the widow asking about her pension, and two years later an offprint of an article in which the man appeared as Case Number Seven. The file was preserved, entries continued to accumulate, and the name on the cover gathered them under itself as before. The locksmith himself did nothing during all that time.

So the holder preserves the file and the name holds the sequence, and I now see that this is insufficient to call a man alive. Preserving what has been written is one thing. Preserving the person to whom it belongs, so that everything written about him concerns that one person, is another. Preserving his ability to write something tomorrow in his own hand that did not exist yesterday is a third. All this time I had been putting them in the same file. The archive held the locksmith as a trace, and perhaps held him as a unity too, since

everything about him lay under one name, but he could write no more. How does holding of the third kind differ from the first two if the holder and the cover are the same?

Yesterday there was a commotion in the Kursaal. The grand duchess, who spends her summers in a palace here, had arrived, and the entire hall rose to its feet except me, because I had dozed off over the newspaper. When I opened my eyes I saw an elderly lady in gray standing before me, asking in French whether I needed anything, since I looked so pale. I said I needed nothing and thanked her. She nodded and went on to her table, while the Germans at the next table stared at me all evening as though I had lit a pipe in church before their eyes.

Badenweiler, June 1902

June 3. In Isaiah: "Fear not: I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Formerly I heard tenderness in these words. Now I hear what is written: He named me, and therefore I am His.

June 5. In the Apocalypse, the one who overcomes is promised a white stone with a new name which no one knows except the one who receives it. The wine merchant warned of this stone: a name that fits so perfectly that it seems you gave birth to it yourself was most likely written by another hand, and the only way to test this is to try to erase the inscription. John promises the stone as a reward, and according to my archive the reward is real: the one who gives the name will preserve the file. Only the file will then belong to him.

June 7. The builders of the tower say: let us make ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth, and for this very reason they are scattered, while their city receives a name they did not choose for it: Babel, confusion. In a German commentary I found something that is invisible in the Russian translation: the Hebrew word for "name" is *shem*, and immediately after the tower begins the genealogy of Shem, Noah's son, whose name is that same shem, and it ends with Abram. In the following chapter God says to

Abram: I will make thy name great. The two neighboring chapters stand opposed to each other: the man who makes a name for himself is scattered, while the man whose name God makes becomes the ancestor of a people. Here Genesis and Ostia disagree in earnest: for the wine merchant a Name is possible, but only one's own, while Genesis punishes a man for making his own name.

June 9. When Adam had eaten, it was said: lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. With man's first act, immortality is closed to him, and a cherub with a flaming sword guards the way to the tree. It follows that the file of one who has escaped the commandment is no longer preserved. Two paths remain for him, the same two described in Chapter Nine: to hold himself, or to be thrown onto the refuse heap. The third path, with which the Church consoles us, is closed to him by the cherub until he returns beneath the commandment, which is, in fact, what the whole Gospel is about.

Badenweiler, July 1902

The heat. Yesterday I was summoned to a patient at a villa above the town. A councilor's wife from Freiburg sent her maid to say that Dr. Sch. was away and the matter could not wait. The patient proved to be a pug of about twelve, who was having as much trouble breathing in the sun as I was. I advised her to keep him in the shade, give him water, and stop feeding him pastries, and the councilor's wife said that nobody had ever explained it to her so clearly. The next morning I received a basket of peaches and a visiting card inscribed: "To the Doctor, with gratitude, Bobby." It is the first fee I have received in twelve years, and I received it from a dog.

The Son says: I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; and in the final chapter of Matthew we are instructed to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. In the name, singular, although there are three persons. It follows that the Trinity has one file for all three, and each person holds it together with the

others, so that none holds it from below and none is held from above. The holding is mutual and closed upon itself, like the serpent in Chapter Seven, except that this serpent has three heads. In the Instruction on Contagion, the author makes fun of East and West for calling each other schismatics for four hundred years over the single phrase "and from the Son." I no longer find the dispute amusing. The Latins teach that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, the Greeks that He proceeds from the Father alone, and what they are disputing is who holds whom within the Trinity. Palamas taught that the saints are deified, that is, they enter the divine life and its energies, while the essence of God remains inaccessible to them. In other words, the saints are drawn into the movement of holding without becoming holders themselves. If I ever explain this to Father N., he will say that I have understood everything correctly and spoiled everything.

Two days later. If everyone is held by someone, the chain must end somewhere. If it ends with one self-holding being above all others, that is the God of Scripture. If it ends with many, the Babylonians are right, for Marduk is one among many and receives his fifty names from other gods. The wine merchant himself, judging by Chapter Ten, where gods meet and depart from their encounter changed, is on the side of the Babylonians.

Badenweiler, August 1902

August drags on, like every August at the resort. In the mornings I spend half an hour in the inhalation room before a pipe from which warm, salty steam emerges, reading until my glasses fog over; then milk, the park, the table d'hôte, and back to my room and books until night. There is nothing to tell about such days, and I have noticed that my entries increasingly resemble the articles in the Moscow journal sent to me: long, and without a single event. R., if he ever reads this, will say that I have finally found my calling, and that it is a dull one.

I have known the opening of John by heart since childhood, yet I had never heard how it sounds beside the Babylonian account. There, at first, were the salt waters, and the heaven above had not yet been named, and everything that later received a name emerged from that sea, which Marduk had to split apart. Smith noted as early as 1876 that the Hebrew word for the deep in the second verse of Genesis, over which the Spirit moved, belongs to the same family of words as Tiamat. Genesis, then, still remembers the sea.

John begins as though there had never been a sea: in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and all things were made by Him. Before the name, there is nothing in his account to name, and no one to split apart. Then it says that the light shines in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it, and the Greek verb can mean both "did not understand" and "did not overcome," so I cannot tell whether John is speaking of a darkness that failed to understand or a darkness that failed in its attempt. A few verses later: He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but to those who received Him and believed in His name He gave the power to become the children of God. To receive a name and enter a family is accomplished in the same way among the Babylonians and in John. There is only one difference: in John, nobody remembers the sea.

Same place, a week later

Rejoice that your names are written in heaven, Christ tells the seventy on their return from preaching. In the Apocalypse, the one who overcomes is promised that his name will not be blotted out of the Book of Life. This book is the archive, only a heavenly one, and the most terrible threat is to blot out a name, that is, to cease preserving the file. To the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, Christ replied that God had called Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that God is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto Him. Unto Him. I read the passage three times: the patriarchs are alive because they have a holder, and they live in Him, rather than in themselves.

Badenweiler, September 1902

The grapes are being harvested below the town. A white vine grows here which the locals call Gutedel. From morning until dark, women stand on the slopes with knives and baskets, while men carry full tubs on their backs down to the presses. I asked an old vinedresser why the vines in one row were almost bare, and he explained that they had been cut back hard in spring because the excess growth only drinks the sap and yields nothing, and because the vine loves the knife. That evening the tavern served young wine, cloudy and sweet, the kind drunk only during these few weeks, and I had a glass although Dr. Sch. had forbidden it. The wine merchant probably sold something much like it, only from the Moselle.

In Chapter Ten of Ostia, the wine merchant recalls the eighty-first Psalm[1]: God stood in the assembly of gods and said to them, ye are gods, but ye shall die like men. And he asks whether anyone in the assembly answered Him. I found the answer in John, and am surprised that the wine merchant failed to notice it. When the Jews took up stones because Christ had called Himself the Son of God, He reminded them of this Psalm: if those to whom the word of God came were called gods, what then of the One whom the Father sanctified and sent? The gods in the Psalm, it follows, are those who were addressed, those who were named. They received their divinity together with their names, just as Marduk received his fifty names from the other gods, and therefore they can be released from it and will then die like men. Christ answers the Psalm from within the assembly and places Himself beside them, with only one qualification: He was not merely called; He was sent.

The Jews never did throw their stones.

Badenweiler, October 1902

Moses asked for a name at the burning bush, and the answer was: "I AM WHO AM." The Greeks rendered it *ho ōn*, "the One Who Is," and the Slavonic kept the Greek, while a German commentary on Exodus says that in Hebrew the words may also be read in the future tense: "I will be what I will be." If so, the name tells us nothing about the One who bears it except that He Himself will decide who He shall be. It resembles the cover of a file on which nothing is written except that the file exists. The wine merchant writes that Moses received a serpent in place of his staff and was commanded to take it by the tail. Now I see why the passage interests him so much. A Name containing nothing beyond the fact that its bearer holds Himself is his serpent biting its tail, and the God of Exodus, who said of Himself "I will be what I will be," is closer to the act of Chapter Six than to the throne of Chapter Ten. In John, Christ says, "Before Abraham was, I am," and it is the same name spoken of Himself. For these words they took up stones against Him, and I think I understand those who did so: they heard Him declare that He holds Himself.

Menton, December 1902

The captain is here again, and with him has returned his habit of bringing newspaper clippings about spirits to breakfast, collecting them as other people collect stamps. The first came from an English newspaper. In Birmingham, a medium famous for summoning great men from the dead had fortified himself with gin before the séance, and had fortified himself thoroughly. The spirit of Washington emerged from behind a screen before the audience, steadying himself with one hand upon it, overturned a chair, hiccupped twice, and began a speech about freedom which he never finished. When one of the guests asked why the father of the American republic could not stand on his feet, the organizer explained that lesser entities had intercepted the channel of communication and were causing interference. The captain thinks the organizer handled the situation splendidly. I think the diagnosis is as good as many I have heard at the clinic.

A day later. The second clipping is old, some eighteen years, and the captain preserves it like a relic. The Coulombs, husband and wife, who worked for Blavatsky at Adyar and later quarreled with her, told journalists how the letters from Tibetan masters, which fell straight from the ceiling before the guests, were arranged. On one occasion, Madame Blavatsky is said to have raised her hands and summoned a message, but no message fell. She called more loudly, and still nothing happened, until at last an irritated whisper came from above, behind a curtain: Madame, the cord is stuck. Shall I pull harder, or will you come and fetch it yourself? Whether this is true I do not know; the Coulombs had reasons to tell any story they pleased. But it is the only story about the Mahatmas that I believe from the first word to the last.

The captain brought the third clipping with particular delight. In London a medium who produced luminous matter from his mouth, the substance Richet christened ectoplasm, choked on it at the most solemn moment of the séance. Instead of a voice from beyond the

grave, the audience heard coughing. The medium spat several arshins of wet muslin onto the table, apologized, and went behind the curtain for a drink of water, and the spirits did not return that evening. The captain laughed until he cried, while I thought that in such a profession a medium would do well to have a physician at hand.

Menton, January 1903

The wine merchant discusses the house swept clean from the twelfth chapter of Matthew in Chapter Four and asks why the owner swept a house in which he did not intend to live. The Greek says that the spirit found his house σχολάζοντα, idle, and the word is related to our "school," which also began with leisure. The house stands idle, just as a man stands in Nothing when his habits have departed and he has begun nothing new, and there is no one to hold him. But there is something else in this passage which the wine merchant did not note. The expelled spirit wanders through waterless places seeking rest and finds none, and returns because it has nowhere to be. Malice has nothing to do with it. It follows that such a spirit needs the house more than the house needs the spirit, and that the spirit is held by the one in whom it lives.

This also makes the possessed man of Gadara in Mark easier to understand. Asked his name, he replies: Legion, for we are many, and they have no single name. Once expelled, they beg to enter the swine, if only to avoid being left without a home, and the herd rushes down the steep bank into the sea. Without a host to occupy, the water carries them away, the same water that undermines the crust in Chapter Nine. The man who has been healed asks to follow Christ, but Christ refuses and tells him to go home to his own people. The wine merchant noticed this and recorded it without comment. I would add that, in the whole Gospel, this seems to be the only man healed who was not taken into service.

Menton, February 1903

In the seventh chapter of Romans, the Apostle writes that he was once alive without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died, and the commandment intended for life brought him death. This is the second chapter of Genesis told from within. Paul dies as soon as the commandment comes, without having done anything yet: it is enough that what is forbidden has become possible. The wine merchant's Eve dies when she reaches out her hand. One movement separates them, and I do not know which of the two is more exact.

A few verses later the Apostle complains: "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Ribot divided his book into two halves, those who cannot refrain and those who cannot begin, whereas Paul placed both halves in a single verse and in a single person, himself.

Later. He ends by asking who shall deliver him from this body of death. In twenty years I have listened to many patients who asked the same question.

Menton, February 15, 1903

Today, according to our calendar, is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. My mother wept every year when this Gospel was read, and as a child I thought she was weeping for the younger son. Only much later did I understand that she was probably weeping for the elder.

The father in the parable does with his two sons exactly what I called the two forms of holding last May, and understands the difference better than I do. He gives the younger his portion and lets him go; what the son does in the far country is neither dictated nor forbidden by the father. Yet when the son returns, the father says that he was dead and is alive again, which means that throughout this time he held the son's name, rather than his actions. The son comes home with a prepared request to be taken on as a hired servant, that

is, to be held by contract and wages, but the father does not allow him to finish and puts a ring on his finger, the seal of the household: he will be held as a son, by name. The elder never left and never once disobeyed an order. He was held by a commandment, and he remains standing outside when music is playing in the house. "Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine," the father tells him, and the elder does not hear it, for he has regarded himself as a hired worker for twenty years. The commandment kept him in the house and kept him out of the celebration.

I left long ago and quietly, like the younger son, and apparently have not yet come to myself. If someone brought me a ring now, I do not know whether I would reach out my hand.

Menton, late February 1903

In the Russian church, an old woman at the candle counter was scolding a young woman for placing a candle before the wrong icon. The young woman moved it; the old woman continued scolding her, and I left without waiting to see how it ended. I do not love this old woman. Nor do I love our captain when he tells the story of the black Mass for the third time at breakfast. Christ commanded us to love even our enemies, and these two are not even my enemies. If I became a Christian again, I would have to find a place for both of them in my love. Otherwise, what sort of Kingdom of God would it be, with half the blessed already quarreling at the gates?

A theologian would object that loving someone does not mean feeling tenderness toward everyone: the commandment requires us to wish our neighbor well and help him when he is in need. Granted. But if I extend a hand to the old woman because I have been commanded to do so for everyone, the action has been performed before she ever approached me. In her place there might have been the captain, an unknown passerby, or yesterday's thief, and the answer is ready for each of them. The wine merchant writes that

another's distress does not perform the act for a man. It follows that universal love should not perform it for him either.

Humility, in that case, is the art of bringing the will into conformity with a pattern until it ceases to resist. In the sitting room of our boardinghouse stands a clock that strikes every hour and has never once made a mistake. Give it hands and it will distribute alms; teach it words and it will forgive offenses. The clock need not know who stands before it. Little more is required of the perfect righteous man.

For that matter, I myself spent twenty years helping patients when they asked, and only recently began to wonder to whom my help belonged. My treatment has not reduced the number of the sick, and my questions have reduced it even less.

Menton, March 1903

I have not recorded my own case here, as I would a patient's, since the summer when I reached the castle ruins without stopping, and that was seven years ago. I am forty-three, in the thirteenth year of my consumption, and my hair is turning gray faster than that of men my age. The cavity remains unchanged and is firmly walled off, but this winter I have coughed up blood twice, a small amount on each occasion, and after the second I spent a week in bed. I walk less, along the promenade and back, always at twilight, when the chairs begin to empty. I sleep until noon, read until three in the morning, and my landlady has long since stopped asking why my lamp is still burning.

On nights when the cough prevents me from lying down, I allow myself a quarter of a grain of morphine and take care that it is no more often than twice a week. I record this so that I may notice if I begin allowing myself more.

My great-uncle's inheritance is dwindling more slowly than I expected, since I spend little: books, journals, a room at my landlady's, and milk. Russian visitors to the resort, having heard that I

am a physician, come to consult me, and I give them advice but accept no money, since I have no license to practice here. They bring me wine or chocolates, and one general's wife knitted me a scarf.

Of those who sat beside me in their chairs on the promenade in 1891, not one remains here. What took up residence in me in 1890 is still with me, and I do not feel lonely, which should probably be recorded as a symptom.

Menton, April 1903

In John: unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. The wine merchant observes that the parable says nothing further about the grain which remained alone, and that it is counted as lost. In my archive that grain has its own file, and holds it itself: it did not become an ear of wheat and therefore remained itself, but to the farmer of the fifteenth chapter it represents a loss, since there is no harvest to be had from it. The next verse says the same thing without a parable: he who loves his life shall lose it. To preserve oneself is to perish, and behind the word "perish" stands the farmer's account book.

From Jacob at the stream of Jabbok, the wine merchant took his question of whether it was an encounter or a seal, and he said everything that could be said about the new name and the lameness. I noticed something else in the same chapter. As he departs at dawn, Jacob names the place Peniel because he has seen God face to face and his life has been preserved. Genesis adds that the children of Israel do not eat the sinew in the thigh to this day, because He touched that sinew in Jacob. The night when one man was given a new name settled among his descendants as a prohibition in the kitchen, and thousands of people who have never wrestled with anyone until dawn cut that sinew out of their meat because their fathers did so. An encounter repeated by other hands becomes salt, and here one can see it in a piece of beef. She who comes to me has never once asked

my name, and She will leave no trace of Herself in the kitchen: I have no descendants.

Menton, May 1903

The general's wife who knitted me the scarf writes from St. Petersburg that Monsieur Philippe has finally departed. People here have been speaking of this healer from Lyon for three years, always in lowered voices. The Montenegrin grand duchesses are said to have introduced him to the Emperor and Empress when the imperial couple were in France, after which he settled at court. He had no medical diploma, and, according to reports, at the sovereign's wish he was made a doctor of medicine and given an official rank. Last summer he promised the Empress an heir, her pregnancy was announced, and in August it emerged that there had been no pregnancy. After that the man from Lyon was sent home.

At the Salpêtrière we used to demonstrate such pregnancies to students: the abdomen enlarges, menstruation ceases, the patient feels movement within her, and all this proceeds from a single desire reinforced by another person's promise. If the general's wife writes the truth, the man from Lyon did to the Empress what the intern did to our J., only the umbrella was the size of an empire. I studied under Charcot to earn the right to make diagnoses, and I have no right to practice abroad, whereas Monsieur Philippe received his diploma for making no diagnoses at all. Lyon, apparently, is a city from which physicians without the right to practice come. What Boullan might have taught me, I never learned.

Menton, February 1904

The Japanese attacked our squadron at Port Arthur during the night, and in a single day the Russians on the promenade changed from holidaymakers into patriots. The general's wife writes that students in St. Petersburg are marching along Nevsky Prospect with flags and singing "God Save the Tsar." I finished reading the newspaper and went for a walk. Later it occurred to me that I had received the first news of the war with only one thought: how many men would return from it with consumption.

Venice, April 1904

R. and his wife spent Easter in Venice and invited me to join them, and I went, although any physician on the Riviera would have said that a consumptive had no business visiting Venice in spring. In the Doge's Palace, in a room which hardly anyone enters, hang four panels by Bosch, and on one of them is what the wine merchant describes in Chapter Nine. I expected to see his description and saw something different. The passage through which the souls are carried is formed of rings, alternating light and dark, like the cross section of a tree, and as the souls ascend they become smaller and lighter, while angels hold them from below, gently, as nurses hold a patient being moved from one bed to another. The light at the end is even and comes from no source, the very light by which I recognized Bosch in the engravings. I have read accounts by mountaineers who fell into ravines and survived: during the fall they felt well, surrounded by light and peace, and none wished to return. The wine merchant laughs at them and compares them to drunkards the morning after. I would not laugh at them: these souls are being carried to a place where they will be held, and they have no reason to look back. The panel resembles my night in 1890 in only one respect: there, as in that place, nobody looks at the observer.

The following day

R., who reads guidebooks as though they were novels, told me that these panels were first mentioned in the house of Cardinal Grimani in 1521. The wine merchant writes of the panel as already being in Venice in 1516, and Bosch himself died in the summer of that year. The explanation is simple: a painting may have been purchased and brought to a place long before anyone thought to record its presence. I accept this explanation. R. asked why it mattered to me, and I said that I was writing about an old book.

In the evening. At Florian's I explained my entire theory of the archive to R. aloud for the first time. He listened without interrupting, then said that I had described our hospital and called it the universe: for twenty years I had filled out case histories, and now I saw files everywhere, just as a shoemaker sees lasts. That was his first point. His second was worse. If everyone is held by someone, he asked, who holds the archivist? I replied that the chain ends with one who holds himself, and that I had written about this two years ago. Then R. asked why, knowing this, I did not hold myself, but had spent years searching for whoever was holding me. I could find no answer, and we began talking about Tintoretto.

Menton, May 1904

R. kept his promise and sent me from Paris a photograph of another painting by Bosch, the one belonging to the Spanish kings at El Escorial. He bought it from a Madrid photographer and asked in his letter that I not show it to my landlady. There are three panels. On the left God presents Eve to Adam, on the right is hell, and in the center a vast meadow full of naked people, berries, birds, and glass spheres, where everyone is occupied with pleasure as diligently as the inhabitants of hell are occupied with torment. In the foreground a man stands bent over, with a bouquet of flowers growing out of his backside. In hell one sinner has musical notes written on his buttocks, and judging by those around him, singing them in chorus is one of the punishments there. I laughed for a long time, then stopped. In this painting pleasure cannot be distinguished from punishment, nor decoration from torture: the flowers and the notes grow from the same place, and only a panel separates them. Bosch's hell is arranged like a workshop, where everyone is assigned his work and each torment is repeated faithfully, like a trade. The wine merchant, whose hell has no seals, would have found this hell too orderly, just as he found the Florentine's hell too orderly.

Badenweiler, June 1904

Chekhov has settled in the town with his wife, an actress. Like me, he is a physician, and like me, a consumptive, and judging by the way he walks from his hotel to the park, his disease is further advanced than mine. Once I saw him on a bench near the Kursaal, wearing a light-colored jacket and holding a newspaper he was not reading. I did not dare approach him: two Russian doctors suffering from the same illness have nothing to talk about except that illness.

July 15. Chekhov died last night at the Hotel Sommer. Dr. Sch., who treats me as well, told us over dinner that he had been summoned after midnight, that Chekhov had said to him in German, Ich sterbe, and that he had ordered champagne, as German physicians

do when nothing more can be done. Chekhov drank a glass, remarked that he had not had champagne for a long time, lay down on his side, and died. Dr. Sch. told the story with professional pride and, in my opinion, had every right to it.

July 17. Today the landlady of a neighboring boardinghouse, a widow whom I may have seen twice, came to offer her condolences. She was so sorry about the Russian doctor, she said. He had been such a quiet gentleman, and she had never expected it to happen so soon. I thanked her and replied that I had not expected it either. Only at the door did she realize whom she had been speaking to, and she departed crossing herself, with the expression of a woman who had discovered that the dead man was alive and had deceived her into the bargain. That evening the apothecary, who had crossed my name out of his debt ledger the day before, saw me in the street and entered it again.

August. The newspapers report that the body was taken to Moscow in a railway car marked "For Oysters," and that at the station part of the crowd, having confused the funerals, followed the coffin of a general being buried that same day to the accompaniment of a military band. Chekhov would have appreciated it, I think. When my time comes, there will be nobody here with whom to confuse me except him.

Badenweiler, September 1904

I am writing this in the morning, while I still remember.

Last night I dreamed of a woman. I did not see her face and did not seek it. She came in the darkness and lay beside me as naturally as one lies down in one's own bed, and everything that followed was as it is when one is awake, except that there was no shame and no haste, as though there were nowhere to hurry. I awoke at dawn and lay for a long time without understanding what had changed within me, until I understood: I am no longer afraid to die. That fear had lived in me for fourteen years, so long that I had taken it for part of the disease,

and now it is gone, like a toothache one remembers only after it has ceased.

With the fear, the haste departed too. All this time I had been writing the notebook as though any entry might be the last, whereas today, for the first time, I felt that I had time, and that it was worth continuing to write. As I was dressing, a date came to mind, February 10, of its own accord, like a name one has long been trying to remember.

October. A lady from St. Petersburg who had come for the autumn was telling us at the table d'hôte that she intended to take her husband to Nice to see a magnetizer who treated consumption by laying on hands, at twenty francs a session. Formerly I would have spent the entire evening trying to dissuade her. Yesterday I said nothing, and she departed satisfied. Sixteen years ago I wrote here that a physician who sees a patient reaching for another man's medicine bottle and says nothing ceases at that moment to be a physician, and I was indignant with the wine merchant for having said nothing to the Basel bookman. Today I reread that entry. I feel neither indignation nor shame. I look at the people at the table d'hôte as one looks at fish in an aquarium, without malice or any wish to tap on the glass, and I see that each of them is held by someone, though they do not know it, and perhaps they are better off that way.

Menton, December 1904

James lay on my table for two years with his pages uncut, and this winter, when I have nowhere left to hurry, I read him, followed by Myers, whose book on survival after death was published after the author's own death. James delivered his lectures to the Scots and collected so many confessions from converts, mystics, saints, and melancholics that Charcot might have envied certain chapters. He refuses to judge where an experience comes from and judges it by its fruits, by what the experience does to a person. The wine merchant proposed the same thing in the Instruction on the Futility of Good, then laughed that if good is recognized by its fruits, an Easter candle must be given to the serpent as well. James does not laugh, and in this, I think, lies both his only advantage over the wine merchant and his chief weakness. In the chapter on the sick soul he cites Tolstoy's Confession, and it was strange to read our count in an English retelling. My own case would belong among James's twice-born, except that my second birth came out of darkness, and he has no category for that.

Myers collected evidence that the subliminal self survives the body as one collects testimony for a court: apparitions of the dying, automatic writing, communications from mediums, all supplied with dates, signatures, and refutations. His conclusion is simple: the file holds itself, and this is true of everyone. I know that it is not so, and perhaps I know how I know, but I have nothing I could present as evidence. No court, not even Myers's, would accept my landlady who asked about the lady, the washerwoman, and the old woman whom nobody had seen as witnesses.

Menton, January 1905

They write from St. Petersburg that on Sunday the troops fired upon a crowd which had gone to the Emperor, led by a priest and carrying icons and portraits of the Tsar, to ask for protection. The general's wife writes that hundreds were killed. They went to the one who holds them, and he was not in the palace.

Menton, late January 1905

Letters continue to arrive from St. Petersburg about the shooting. Some call the dead martyrs; others maintain that the troops were preserving order, and everyone agrees that order is necessary. The general's wife writes that her nephew, a lieutenant, commanded a platoon at the Narva Gate, and adds that the boy sleeps peacefully. I remembered J. She had to invent her explanation, while the lieutenant received his together with his orders, and he serves the state which was also served by those upon whom he fired.

Laws are written on paper; morality is preferably written into the man himself, so that he carries it with him and obeys it even where nobody is watching. If it were possible to reach the very point where he decides, I imagine they would station a policeman there too.

The Church demands more. According to its teaching, good proceeds from God, and what He has done does not cease to be good because people suffer from it. In Genesis the Lord drowned almost everything living, leaving one righteous man with his family and a collection of animals, and the Flood is called a just punishment; it did the drowned no good. It follows that good is recognized by who performed the act, while what was performed is of no consequence. If the act belongs to God, it is good, and the only question left to dispute is why it was sent.

The same action changes its name according to whose command is invoked to justify it. Whether one serves God, the sovereign, or society, one is everywhere required to place something above one's

own decision. Whoever refuses to serve is left with two names, criminal or madman, and physicians are given charge of the second.

February 11. The tenth has passed. It rained, and I spent the whole day reading.

Menton, April 1905

A copy of Shestov's The Apotheosis of Groundlessness has arrived from St. Petersburg, bearing the subtitle An Essay in Adogmatic Thinking. He himself, they say, intends it only for those who do not fear vertigo. It is a collection of fragments, without a beginning or a conclusion, about philosophers, morality, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky, and in each there is anger at everything that stands firm and demands that others stand upon it. I read a third of it and put it aside because I recognized myself in the fragments.

The explanation is simple: we both read Nietzsche. Except that I began writing this notebook in fragments in 1888, because of my cough and lack of time, when I had never heard of Nietzsche but had already read Ostia. It follows that the wine merchant taught me to write in this fashion, and taught me long before I understood what I was learning.

Part V

Menton, October 1905

The news from Russia grows more extraordinary by the day: the railways have gone on strike, the telegraph service too, then everything at once, they say, and finally the Emperor issued a manifesto. The Russians here are drinking champagne and quarreling over what exactly they are drinking to.

At a secondhand bookshop in Nice I bought Orlov's The History of Man's Dealings with the Devil, published in St. Petersburg last year. Half of it is a retelling of Taxil, taken seriously, complete with Palladists and Diana Vaughan, although the hoax was exposed eight years ago. Orlov evidently read The Devil in the Nineteenth Century but not the newspapers. The other half consists of stories taken from older authors, and for their sake one can forgive him Diana.

The following evening. Orlov's incubi come to young women in the likeness of whoever the woman is thinking of, and court them according to all the rules. I could enter this in a case history without changing a word. The next story is worse. Two unknown horsemen rode into a wedding feast, and one was invited to dance with the bride. He led her around the hall, then, before her parents and the guests, seized her with a loud cry, carried her into the courtyard, rose into the air with her, and disappeared. This is no longer a case history. It is an abduction with witnesses, and if it happened in our time, a criminal investigator would be examining it.

Another evening. In a German town in 1551, at Pentecost, people were feasting and drinking, and a woman at the table mentioned the devil in every other sentence. An invisible force dragged her from the house, carried her over the village, and threw her into a field, killing her. In the next chapter a broker, after an unsuccessful deal, called upon a demon, who appeared at once, hurled the man into the top of an oak tree, and threw him down onto the rocks. Orlov

collects these cases as moral lessons, but they read like reports of industrial accidents in an industry consisting entirely of swearing.

Later. The Catholic authors quoted by Orlov maintain that Luther lived with a demon for so long that they ate an entire little barrel of salt between them, and that the demon woke him at night and helped him find arguments against the Pope. In Russia we speak of eating a pood of salt with a friend, and for the first time it occurred to me that the wine merchant would have liked the saying: long acquaintance is itself salt, and it holds both parties.

At night. The last story, and the best. At four in the morning a demon entered a nun's cell without knocking, sat down on her bed, and instead of frightening her began sharing monastery gossip: he had just seen Sister Magdalene, a fine one, she would be entirely theirs; but another of the sisters, alas, they would never get. And he vanished. It seems that the farmer in the fifteenth chapter of John has a neighbor who keeps the same account of the harvest, except that he counts it at night and cannot resist boasting about it.

Menton, November 1905

After reading so much Orlov, I decided to test the matter myself. I reasoned as a physician: if a person who mentions the devil can be carried away by the wind, then someone who renounces Christ and destroys an icon ought to be carried at least as far as Nice, and the experiment was worth performing, since none of the authors I had read had attempted it. To keep sentiment from interfering with the purity of the experiment, I bought a paper icon of the Mother of God from a market vendor for two sous, locked my door, tore it up, burned the pieces in an ashtray, and renounced Christ aloud in Church Slavonic, using the same form of words by which Satan is renounced at baptism.

There was no wind. The room was stuffy, my landlady was rattling dishes downstairs; I counted my pulse before and after, seventy-eight

and eighty-four, which can be explained by excitement and the stairs. I slept well that night.

In the morning I realized that the experiment had been improperly conducted. A paper icon costing two sous meant nothing to me, and tearing it up was no different from tearing up a newspaper. For the experiment to be properly conducted, I should have used the little icon that belonged to my mother, which has lain in my drawer since my schooldays. I opened the drawer, looked at it, and closed it again. In Chapter Three the wine merchant writes that a man who renounces his baptism according to a prescribed rite has merely performed another rite, and I performed mine faultlessly, with every word in place. That evening I was rather pleased with myself, I confess, although the same wine merchant warns in the First Rule that a man who triumphs at breaking a prohibition has obeyed it. The result of the experiment lies in my drawer, and I did not take it out.

Menton, December 1905

The general's wife, who knows everything that happens at court, including things that never happened there, writes that in October, during the strikes, Papus was summoned to Tsarskoye Selo and conducted a séance. The spirit of the late Alexander III appeared and advised his son to stand firm and make no concessions, while Papus supposedly added that as long as he lived, disaster could be averted. I find this difficult to believe; I know the general's wife's letters.

But if one believes it, the spirit said exactly what the late Emperor had said every day of his life, and not a word more. I have learned to recognize such spirits: they are held by a trace, and they do not answer but repeat. The son, looking for someone to hold him, received an answer in his father's voice, recorded on a phonograph cylinder. Papus's promise pleases me most of all: it is worth precisely as much as his health.

Menton, February 11, 1906

The tenth has passed. There was a strong wind from the sea, and I was not carried anywhere. Something else was carried away, and I noticed it only today. At Christmas I passed the Russian church just as the all-night vigil was ending. The doors were open, and the smell of wax and incense drifted into the street. Formerly this smell would have tightened my throat and made me want to enter and stand in the vestibule, where nobody could see me. This time I walked past without slowing down, and remembered having done so only today, when my landlady lit her icon lamp downstairs. When something disappeared from our house, my nanny used to say the devil had carried it off. So it was here.

Menton, March 1906

Upstairs, in the attic room, a seamstress from Lyon has been living for three winters. She is consumptive, about twenty-five, and my landlady intended to evict her for unpaid rent at the beginning of the month. I paid her rent through the summer, through my landlady, and instructed her not to say who had paid it. Nobody asked me to do this, I was under no obligation, and as I counted out the money I felt nothing, neither pity nor pleasure. My hand apparently remembers what remains of Korennaya better than I do. Chapter Three has a place for this: salt can be righteous too.

That evening another thought occurred to me. If the one within me is evil, as Father N. would say, I should be unable to do good in Her presence. Yet I paid for the seamstress and encountered not the slightest resistance, either in my hand or anywhere deeper. A theologian, of course, would reply that the Devil readily permits good deeds when they encourage pride, that Satan, according to the Apostle, transforms himself into an angel of light, and that my assistance may yet serve an evil purpose, either for me or for the seamstress. I have nothing to be proud of, however. But if every good deed of mine can be charged to evil, while bad deeds are

charged to it in any case, there is nothing left to argue about. R. would say that such theology takes no risks.

The seamstress, incidentally, is not bad-looking.

Menton, May 1906

In April Pierre Curie was killed beneath the wheels of a heavy wagon on Rue Dauphine in Paris. It was raining; he slipped while crossing the street and fell in front of the horses. R. writes that shortly before his death Curie told acquaintances that at the séances of Eusapia Palladino, which he attended with Richet and sometimes with his wife, he had seen things he could not explain and believed the phenomena to be genuine. The man who measured the radiation of radium sat in the darkness beside a Neapolitan peasant woman and recorded the rising of a table, and died because he slipped on the pavement.

From everything written about the séances of Palladino and the others, I have drawn one conclusion. Almost all those who appear repeat something: a gesture, a favorite expression, handwriting recognized by relatives, a gait, sometimes the smell of tobacco. None says anything that the deceased would not have said in life. Such spirits are held by a remainder of salt, and held, as in Bobok, by inertia until they decay. But in Chapter Eleven of Ostia the wine merchant recalls Samuel, whom the witch of Endor summoned for Saul. The prophet rose in displeasure, asked why he had been disturbed, and told Saul something he did not wish to hear. This one answered, and therefore a will holds him, his own or another's. The difference between the two kinds of ghosts is the same as between a phonograph cylinder and a man at the telephone. In twenty years of reading about séances, I have never once encountered a Samuel.

Menton, July 1906

I have been rereading Book Eleven of the Odyssey, in which Odysseus descends to the dead. Circe tells him that of all the shades Persephone has allowed Tiresias alone to retain his understanding, while the others drift about like shadows, understanding nothing. To speak, the dead must drink blood from the pit. Odysseus's own mother fails to recognize him until she drinks, whereupon she recognizes him, tells him the news from home, and goes away again. He cannot embrace her: his arms pass through her. Homer, then, knew my three outcomes, though he called them by different names. The shades that wander without understanding are scattered sheets. Blood is a continuation lent for a few minutes, and our mediums, who lend the spirits their bodies and voices, do the same thing that Odysseus does with his sacrificial ram. But Tiresias does not hold himself: Persephone has allowed him to retain his understanding, a woman, the queen of the dead, and he thinks in her house by her grace.

Menton, October 1906

In Verny, in Semirechye, the disciples of the late Fyodorov have published the first volume of his Philosophy of the Common Task, and a copy was sent to me from Moscow. The parcel was delayed at customs, and the official spent a long time leafing through the book, asking whether this "philosophy of the common task" was some form of anarchism. I told him it concerned the resurrection of the dead, and he let it through, deciding that I was joking.

Fyodorov teaches that it is the duty of sons to resurrect their fathers, all the dead from the beginning of the world, and to do so through knowledge rather than prayer: to gather the scattered particles, master nature, and place science in the service of this one task. Dostoevsky, Solovyov, and Tolstoy read his manuscripts with reverence, and I understand why: it is the kindest idea I have encountered in my entire life. According to my archive, Fyodorov

wants sons to become the holders of their fathers, the whole human race to become the holder of all the dead. It is the same ancestor worship practiced by the Chinese, only with chemistry in place of incense. I have two objections.

The first is medical. If the sheets have scattered, they might still be gathered again into the same sequence, but who will hold what has been assembled? If nobody does, the result will be a ghost on a phonograph cylinder, repeating what it knew and answering nothing. If there is a holder, resurrection is unnecessary, since he already has the file.

The second objection comes from ordinary life. Resurrected fathers, from what I know of people, will first remember who owes what to whom, and Cain will rise from the earth beside Abel, and all the wars fought by our grandfathers will begin again, only with more participants, because the great-grandfathers will have joined them. Fyodorov thinks sons love their fathers. Evidently he had little experience of disputes over inheritances.

They say Fyodorov worked as a librarian at the Rumyantsev Museum, gave away his entire salary, slept on a chest with books beneath his head, and refused to allow his writings to be published under his name.

Later. Above his resurrected fathers, if they can be assembled, will stand a librarian with a catalog. I would not wish to be resurrected according to a catalog.

Menton, November 1906

The general's wife arrived for the winter with three trunks, two maids, and a pug, and on the very first evening arranged a reading aloud of an English book by Besant and Leadbeater, Thought-Forms, complete with colored illustrations. In these, anger shoots out of a person as red lightning, jealousy hangs in the air as a green blot, and a pious thought rises as a small blue cloud. The pictures are ridiculous, but the idea beneath them is more serious than it appears. A thought-form lives as long as the one who produced it continues to feed it, and does only what it was sent out to do. It has no name of its own and is held by another's will. If there are many such thoughts and many people produce them, the result is what Parisian occultists call an egregore. In the Instruction on Contagion, the wine merchant asked whether a spirit lives in a dancing crowd and left two answers, both unresolved. I think both are true: the spirit exists as long as all the dancers hold it, and it ceases to exist if they all go home one evening.

Menton, March 1907

The captain died in Toulon in February, of a stroke. The letter from his niece arrived late, and I would not have gone to the funeral in any case. He bequeathed his clippings to me, an entire trunkful. I went through them in an evening, threw nearly all of them away, and kept three over which we had laughed together. I felt neither grief nor pity, only curiosity as to whether he would come, as the deceased in his clippings come, to repeat his own stories. A month has passed. He has not come.

Badenweiler, June 1907

There is a story in Acts at which I laughed even as a schoolboy. The seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, went about Ephesus casting out demons in the name of Jesus whom Paul preached. The evil spirit answered them: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Then the possessed man attacked them and beat them so badly that they fled the house naked and wounded. I no longer find it amusing. The spirit recognizes the name and recognizes the man entitled to pronounce it, but does not recognize those who have taken the name without authority. The name works only in the hands of one whom its owner holds. Lawyers call this jurisdiction. A policeman's orders are obeyed within his precinct, but beyond its boundary he is an ordinary passerby like everyone else.

Three days later. In On the Mysteries, Iamblichus replies to Porphyry, who was outraged that Egyptian priests threatened the gods. They threaten, says Iamblichus, lesser spirits rather than gods, and do so without acting on their own authority, but as though from the rank of the gods, clothed in their dignity; the gods themselves must not be threatened. The Testament of Solomon, published in Greek by a German scholar some seventy years ago, is arranged in much the same way. The king questions demons one after another, each giving its name and the name of the angel who subdues it, while Solomon holds them by a ring bearing a seal given to him from above, and makes them build the Temple. Goetia, as far as I now understand it, is supervision on another's farm: the conjurer arrives with a document from the owner and gives orders to the workers as long as he has the document with him.

From this I derive a rule. Whoever can be compelled is held by someone else, and the one who compels him merely makes use of another's holding. A free being cannot be compelled, only asked, and is free not to answer. In the Greek magical papyri published by Wessely, the magician threatens the gods themselves, saying he will destroy their heaven and reveal their secret names, and evidently

believes that a god is defined by his name, as a patient is defined by his ward number. Iamblichus forbids threatening gods and therefore regards them as free. The war of curses I witnessed was conducted according to the same rules: Boullan defended himself with angels and the Mother of God, Guaita with his Rosicrucians. Each was certain that his holder was stronger, but both died natural deaths, and the opposing side attributed each death to the other.

Badenweiler, August 1907

There was a thunderstorm last night the like of which nobody here remembers. Lightning struck the old chestnut tree near the Kursaal, and in the morning the visitors went to look at it as though it were an executed criminal. Waite, an Englishman, has examined the known grimoires in The Book of Black Magic and of Pacts and copied out their formulas for contracts with spirits. The spirit gives what is requested, the payment is usually the soul, the term is specified, and the signature is sometimes in blood. Reading these is as dull as reading notarial deeds, and in that dullness, I think, lies the whole honesty of the pact: the price is stated. Theophilus in the wine merchant's account surrendered his soul in exchange for a written undertaking and recovered his office; Faust received twenty-four years. The farmer in the fifteenth chapter of John names no price: how much will be harvested from the branch and for how long the harvesting will continue are not stated in the parable, while I wrote down five years ago what happens to the withered ones. It follows that a pact is the only honest transaction with a holder, one in which a man knows what will be taken from him.

At the Salpêtrière we used to pass around a photograph of the contract supposedly concluded by Grandier, the priest of Loudun. At the bottom were the signatures of demons, Asmodeus and the others, in Latin, written from right to left. Grandier was burned for this contract, and even under torture he never acknowledged it as his own. The demons signed it, but he did not.

Badenweiler, January 1908

I am spending this winter here. The snow is knee-deep, people go to the post office by sleigh, and Dr. Sch. insists that the dry frost is better for me than the damp of Menton. Mauss and Hubert, two young Parisian sociologists of Durkheim's school, have published an essay toward a general theory of magic in L'Année sociologique, and R. has sent me an offprint. Magic, they say, is a social affair: people believe in the sorcerer because that is the custom, his power is what the village recognizes in him, and without the common belief all his rituals are worthless. The Instruction on Contagion says the same: belief, if it comes at all, comes after the deed.

They go on to examine the laws of sympathy, which the Englishman Frazer reduced to two: like acts upon like, and a part acts upon the whole with which it was once in contact. In 1889 I copied from Tylor that among savages a name is part of a person, like hair or nails, and laughed at it as a savage superstition. Now I see a question in it. For a nail clipping to have any effect upon a person, the nail and the person must remain within a common medium even after the scissors have separated them. This means that the deposits left by different people do not lie apart from one another but communicate, and the files about which I have written so much are not as tightly closed as I supposed. Mauss and Hubert call this medium society. The wine merchant would call it the salt of the world, the crust of Chapter One upon which we all stand and in which everything done before us has settled. Tiamat has nothing to do with it: nothing lies within her; she precedes all salt.

Contact is therefore stronger than similarity. A nail clipping is a piece of another person's salt, while a wax doll is a piece of my own, fashioned in another's likeness, and through the doll I act first of all upon myself. At the Salpêtrière I saw women who spent years sticking needles into portraits of unfaithful husbands: the husbands lived quite comfortably, while the women themselves grew thin and could not sleep.

February 11. The tenth has passed. I climbed to the castle ruins, stopping twice.

Badenweiler, March 1908

Today I assembled a Rule of my own from the three Rules of Ostia and my own notes. The wine merchant wrote his Rules in such a way that one instruction cancels another: in the First he commands us not to destroy what we wish to escape, while in the Second he tells us to break the jug if we find ourselves reaching for it. In one place he forbids vows, in another he permits a vow to be made and kept. For a long time I regarded this as the carelessness of a sick man, but now I understand how they can be reconciled: each instruction is true at its own stage, and one need only know which stage one occupies.

The Rule Composed at Badenweiler

Defense is stronger than attack: to attack, one needs power over another; to defend oneself, one's own holder is enough.

Similarity acts upon the one who produces it; contact upon the one whose deposit has been taken.

Do not compel one who can refuse to answer. Whoever can be compelled already belongs to someone.

Before any bargain, ask the price. If no price is named, you are on another's farm.

Test every holding by the harvest: what is taken from you, and whether your ability to hold yourself grows from year to year.

Consent may be free, coerced, or obtained by deception, and only the first leaves no debt.

At the first stage, do not destroy what you are leaving behind; at the second, if you find yourself reaching for it, break it.

Make no vows for life. Make a vow for a fixed term if you know who can release you from it.

Do not be ashamed of a name received from a holder; do not speak your own aloud.

Answer a conjurer who comes bearing another's document as you would answer a passerby beyond the boundary of his precinct.

Do not burn the Rules until you have tested them.

Badenweiler, May 1908

May 3. In The Alphabet of Ben Sira, a Jewish book of the Middle Ages, there is a story that Ostia mentions in a single sentence in Chapter Two. Lilith was created from the same earth as Adam and refused to lie beneath him: why should I be below you, if we were both made from dust? Adam insisted, and she pronounced the unutterable Name and flew away. God sent three angels after her, Senoy, Sansenoy, and Semangelof, and they found her by the sea and threatened to drown her, but could not bring her back. It ended with an oath: wherever Lilith saw their names upon an amulet, she would not touch an infant. Only this oath, given of her own accord, holds her, and nothing else: neither the angels, nor the sea, nor God, whose name she knows and pronounces.

May 5. On Walpurgis Night Mephistopheles points her out to Faust: that is Lilith, Adam's first wife; beware her hair, for whoever she entangles in it will not soon be free. Goethe, faithful to his century, holds her by the hair.

May 8. In Rossetti's sonnet she sits before a mirror combing her golden hair, and the sonnet ends with a young man departing from her, one of her hairs wound around his heart. Hair again. Remy de Gourmont wrote a play about her which I did not finish.

May 12. In a novel by MacDonald, the Scottish preacher, Lilith holds in her fist what she has taken from the world and can be saved only by opening her hand, but she cannot open it. In the end her hand is cut off with a sword, and she falls asleep in the house of death with the others, awaiting morning. The angels of Ben Sira could not bring Her back, but the Scottish pastor brought Her back under

another's hold by cutting off Her hand. I found this scene harder to read than anything else I have read about Lilith.

May 13. Satan, awakening in hell in Milton, says that the mind is its own place and can make a heaven of hell and a hell of heaven. To condemn him, Milton gave him the finest line in the poem. The Lilith of Ben Sira could have said the same thing, only more briefly.

May 14. In Goethe and Rossetti, Lilith holds by means of her hair, and neither seems to have noticed that he chose the saltiest thing in the human body. Hair is dead matter and yet it grows, and it retains what a person ate, drank, and was poisoned with: by Marsh's test the toxicologists find arsenic in a lock of hair long after it can no longer be detected in the body. One can read the past in hair as one can hear the voice of a singer who has long since left the hall on a gramophone record. The poets hold Her by salt without knowing it.

If She who comes to me is Lilith, then only Her own oath holds Her, and it follows that She is not the one holding me. Perhaps She merely extends a hand, and I am the one holding on to it. This must be tested.

Badenweiler, June 1908

My days here resemble one another so closely that I know the date only from the newspaper. I rise around ten, drink milk brought still warm from a mountain farm, and walk slowly through the park to the Roman baths and back, exchanging greetings with the same faces as yesterday. At four the orchestra plays in the Kursaal, always the same waltzes, and the Germans listen with such attention that one would think they were expecting the waltz to end differently today. On Tuesdays Dr. Sch. listens to my chest, grunts, and writes something in a notebook he does not show me. At the table d'hôte this year I sit beside a grammar-school teacher from Karlsruhe, also consumptive, who reports to me each evening how many times he coughed that day and keeps a special notebook with columns for the figures. I advised him to add a column for good days. He did, and is now distressed that it remains empty, which improves my spirits. There are fewer Russians since 1905, and those who do come speak so loudly about the Duma that the Germans move to other tables.

I read at night, as before. My companion is still with me, and on certain nights I hear Her reading over my shoulder.

Munich, July 1908

I allowed myself a journey and spent ten hours being shaken about in a railway carriage for the sake of a single painting. I shall confess here why: I went to look for Her face. In the Neue Pinakothek hangs von Stuck's Sin: a dark-haired woman looks out from the darkness, her white body encircled by an enormous serpent, its head resting on her shoulder. The serpent's eyes shine, while the woman's remain in shadow. They say that in his own villa Stuck erected a real altar for another version of the painting. I stood before it for half an hour and came away with nothing.

That evening at the hotel I went over everything I had seen in twenty years: the serpent with a woman's torso in Michelangelo, which I know from an Alinari photograph; Collier's Lilith with a boa

constrictor; Rossetti's Lilith before her mirror; the possessed women in Charcot and Richer; the saints in Grünewald; the wives in Dürer's engravings; faces on the promenade, in hospital wards, and at the table d'hôte. The wine merchant writes in Chapter Eight that one who has reached the red work sometimes recognizes on church portals the face of the serpent tempting Eve. I remembered the portal of Notre-Dame, past which I walked every Sunday, but the face there is different.

According to Flournoy, Janet, and everything I was taught, a vision is assembled from things already seen, as a mosaic is assembled from little stones, and the more a man has seen, the easier it is to discover where each stone came from. I have seen much. There is not a single stone in Her that I can identify.

Badenweiler, September 1908

Before giving Her a name taken from other people's books, I decided to test the matter by distinguishing marks, as I once tested Ribot's rule, and spent the night over it.

The holders I have written about issue commands and name the punishment. In eighteen years She has spoken one sentence to me, in November 1890: take nothing from German hands. She threatened nothing. I could have taken it or refused, and nobody would have called me to account. That is advice, and cannot be called a commandment.

The God of Scripture commands: be holy, for I am holy, and demands resemblance in content, so that my actions shall be His actions. She has demanded nothing of the kind from me, yet over the years I have become like Her, though not in what I do: I have come to love night and rain, ceased fearing death, and in recent years have conducted myself as though I held myself. If there is resemblance here, it is resemblance of form, and that form is holding oneself. What I do while holding myself is probably of no concern to Her.

The most important distinguishing mark is what happens if one leaves. The Lilith of Ben Sira is defined by her departure and cannot hold anyone against his departure. In spring, after Easter night, I deliberately stopped thinking about Her for a week, did not open Ostia, and wrote nothing here. Nothing happened: no dream, no laughter, no shove in the back. On the eighth night She came as She always had, without reproach, as though I had never gone away.

Whether my dependence or my ability to hold myself grows from year to year, I cannot say. I now allow myself more morphine than I did in 1903, but less than another man in my position would allow himself, and I no longer fear death, whereas formerly I did. I record both facts.

I do not know what is being taken from me. If there is a harvest, I cannot see it.

Menton, January 1909

In Chapter Two the wine merchant begins to say "we": we who speak from there do not know your name, nor do we ask. In the Instruction on the Secret Arts, darkness comes to him by the Rhine, stands beside him, and enters him, and he knows Her. In Figure Eight, concerning forbidden books: what was missing from them, She supplied for him. For twenty years I read these three passages separately, as three different things: a rhetorical figure, a hysterical attack, and a turn of phrase. Put them together and they reveal a single will: she who came to him by the Rhine supplied what the books lacked and speaks in Chapter Two through his hand. In that case Ostia is Her letter, and the wine merchant was the first to answer it.

Last night I asked myself, silently, without speaking or writing it down, what Her name was, and opened the manuscript copy at random. It opened at Chapter Eight, above which stand the words: "Why dost thou ask my name?" In the morning I examined the

spine. It is broken at that point, and the manuscript opens there because I have read that passage more often than any other.

February. Aloud, for the first time in all these years, I asked Her to show me the ninth sheet.

Menton, March 1909

I am writing at dawn, before I forget a single stroke.

I dreamed of a sheet I have never seen, the ninth of those that were burned, and dreamed it so clearly that I examined it as I would have examined it in Basel with Dr. F., moving my finger above the paper. A woodcut, not a copper engraving: broad, cutting lines, the sky above entirely black, as in the work of the Rhine masters of the early sixteenth century when they spared no wood on the block. On waking I could have named the school, though not the master.

On the right was a bare slope, with an empty stone throne at its summit, overgrown with grass, and a serpent coiled around one of its legs. On the left, below, was the sea, flat, drawn in a few slanting lines, extending without end beyond the edge of the sheet. In the foreground stood a woman, seen from behind, in a plain long dress, her hair loose and an iron key hanging from her belt. She had raised her right hand and was pointing toward a star, bright and low above the horizon, with a slender waning crescent beside it.

I have explanations for all this, and good ones. I know Figure Nine by heart: a throne at the edge of the earth, nobody seated upon it, a woman silently pointing toward the place where the road disappears. I myself inferred the water below as early as 1895, from Tiamat. The key at her belt was suggested by Figure Seven, where she removes the key from the wine merchant's neck. All this lay in my memory, and the dream assembled it in the way dreams do.

There is no star in the text. The wine merchant's woman looks downward, into a darkness in which one cannot see one's own hand, and not a word is said about a star or a crescent. On the sheet she points upward.

In the evening. In Nice, at a shop on Rue Masséna, I bought a Marseille tarot deck, the kind Papus interprets in his book on the Tarot of the Bohemians, and today I shuffled it and drew a card at random for the first time in my life. It was the Moon: two dogs howl at a moon with a face, a road runs between them toward two towers, and below, a crayfish emerges from the water. Papus writes that the Moon signifies secret enemies, deception, and danger in darkness. No better interpretation of my dream could be invented: the deck frankly announces that it knows nothing itself and that everything seen may prove deceptive. The crescent on my sheet was waning, whereas on the card, judging by the face, the moon is full.

The card bears the number eighteen, and I naturally began at once to recall where I had encountered that number in the wine merchant's work. The Dominicans cast eighteen demons out of the dyer's wife near Trier, whom he describes in Chapter Two, and each demon gave its name as it departed. There are nine Instructions in Ostia and nine Figures, making eighteen together. In Paris, numerology was practiced by the same gentlemen who summoned spirits in Batignolles, and I laughed at it. Nevertheless, I record the count.

Menton, October 1909

R. sent me two books by Flammarion, an old one and a new one, and wrote that since I had taken up ghosts, I ought to know the astronomer as well. In L'Inconnu, Flammarion published the results of a survey. Ten years earlier he had asked readers of several newspapers to report whether they had ever seen or sensed a dying person at the very moment when that person was dying far away, and had received thousands of letters. A mother sees her son in the kitchen doorway at the hour when he is drowning off Madagascar; a wife hears her husband call her name three times, and a telegram arrives the next morning; a brother awakens because someone has sat down upon his legs. Flammarion compares the times, demands witnesses, and discards everything he cannot verify, and enough remains that it cannot simply be dismissed.

What matters most to me in these letters is something Flammarion does not note. The dying appear once, at the very moment of death, usually in silence, and never come again. The ghosts at séances repeat the same things for years; Samuel answered when he was summoned; these do neither. It seems that they are seen at the moment when the shelf collapses and the file passes from hand to hand, to a holder or into scattering. And those who see them are people whose salt has lain beside the salt of the dying person for many years: a mother, a wife, a brother, someone with whom a pood of salt has been eaten. The event passes through their common salt, as a jolt passes through a bundle when one file is taken from the shelf.

Later. The second book is an old one, L'Atmosphère, and contains an engraving which I believe I have seen before, perhaps in a shopwindow on the quay some twenty years ago. A traveler in a long cloak has reached the place where heaven meets earth, knelt down, put his head through the vault of heaven, and is looking at what lies beyond: wheels, fiery circles, the mechanism upon which the world rests. The caption presents it as an illustration from a medieval book, but the linework belongs to our century, and it was cut, I suspect, by

a Parisian craftsman instructed to work in an antique style. In the wine merchant's account, Simeon stands upon a pillar, and they keep building it higher, so that had he lived long enough, he would have been pressed against the firmament. Flammarion's traveler has reached the firmament and crawled through it. On my ninth sheet the woman stands at the edge of the earth and points beyond it, toward a star.

If I saw this engraving in 1888, the edge of the earth in my dream may have come from it. The stars beyond Flammarion's vault are scattered across the entire sky like sand. There is no single star low above the water, with a waning crescent beside it.

Over the summer my landlady had an electric light bulb installed in the corridor, and now she switches it off behind me every evening so that it will not burn unnecessarily.

Menton, early November 1909

Old L., a Warsaw Jew who has been taking treatment here for three winters and with whom I sometimes play chess, has a seriously ill grandson. Last week the boy was in such a poor condition that they gave him a second name at the synagogue in Nice: Chaim, meaning "life." The old man explained that this has been done since ancient times: a sentence is written against a name, and if the name is changed, the one who comes to execute the sentence cannot find the person against whom it was written. The boy, however, had already begun to improve before the visit to the synagogue, when his fever was brought down, but I did not tell the old man that.

He also showed me the source of the custom in a German translation of the Talmud which he carries with him. The tractate on the New Year says that four things can tear up the decree against a person: charity, crying out, a change of name, and a change of deeds; some add a change of place. Sarah is given as an example of changing a name: God commanded Abraham to call his wife Sarah instead of Sarai, as before, and immediately blessed her, and the barren woman

bore a child. The wine merchant recalls the same Sarah in Chapter One, whose name was changed by a single letter, and sees a seal in it.

For my archive this is more important than it appears. According to the Talmud, the decree is addressed to a name, and therefore can be averted by changing the address. The judge, whoever he may be, finds the file by the inscription on its cover, and this agrees with what I wrote in 1902: a name contains none of the content of the actions; it merely gathers them beneath itself. A change of deeds is another path: it changes the entries themselves, and the Talmud places both paths side by side without confusing them.

The question remains of who holds the new cover. Sarah's name was changed by the same one who held the former name; the holder remained the same, only the label changed. The old man's grandson was given his name at the synagogue, and I do not know who holds him now. Nor, I suspect, does the old man, but he plays chess with greater peace of mind.

That evening I spent a long time trying to remember under whose name my February 10 was entered.

Menton, November 1909

Rereading this notebook from the beginning, I noticed that in twenty-one years I have never once written my own name in it. In the introductory entry I explained this by saying that nobody but myself would ever read it.

The wine merchant writes that the Name cannot be communicated even to someone one loves, nor spoken aloud to oneself, and for twenty years I understood this as a prohibition against speaking. Now another question concerns me: is there a Name at all for someone who has never pronounced it, or does self-holding dispense with any name and hold itself as the serpent holds its tail, without inscribing anything upon it?

If so, no cover is needed for the file, and one who holds himself does so without an inscription, while the inscription is needed only

by a holder, so that he can find the file among the others. If, however, nothing can be held without a name, then namelessness itself is departure, and the Lilith of Ben Sira did not pronounce the Name for nothing when she flew away: without it she would have had nothing upon which to make her departure.

Then comes the question I have been unable to escape since 1895. One may depart into the sea before every name, where nothing has been named and everything is dissolved. Is this a fourth outcome, in which what has dissolved may yet precipitate again as something different, or the same scattering of sheets, only given a beautiful Babylonian name? The Eastern sages whom the wine merchant mentions in Chapter Ten extinguish themselves like lamps and know what they are choosing. I do not know.

Menton, January 1910

Old L. has returned and brought a photograph of his grandson. The boy is alive, has grown taller, and is said to be the best pupil in his cheder. The old man is convinced that the new name saved him, and now plays chess with great enthusiasm. I went back to my room and tried to write down what I would have said if the boy had died. It came easily: the decree was written against the deed rather than the name, or the new name was given to the wrong holder. R. was right eight years ago: whatever happens, my archive will find a place for it.

February 11. The tenth has passed. The newspapers report that in May the Earth will pass through the tail of Halley's Comet, and according to R., Paris is already selling comet pills and masks against poisonous gases. My landlady asked whether I intended to buy one. I replied that it is not the air that holds me.

Badenweiler, April 1910

I now examine every rite as I once examined an attack at the clinic: who acts, in whose name, on whose farm, by what means, and what is paid for it. The easiest way to demonstrate this is with the rite performed upon me when I understood nothing.

An infant is immersed three times in water, and here the water is the same as in Chapter Nine of Ostia and among the Babylonians: the former person is dissolved in it, and Paul has good reason to say that those who are baptized are buried with Christ. Before this, Satan is renounced on the infant's behalf, and the godparent does so because the infant cannot give consent himself. The consent is therefore given in absentia, and the debt falls upon one who has promised nothing.

The name is chosen from the calendar of saints, that is, from another person's list, and together with the name the child receives a holder, the saint on whose day he was born. Then comes chrismation: the priest marks the forehead and says, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit," and this is the very seal upon the infant's forehead of which the wine merchant writes in Chapter Two.

Nobody names the price. Payment is taken throughout life, through the commandments, and for this alone I regard baptism as the most honest rite known to me: the holder is named, the water is real, and the seal is placed openly.

A few days later. An incident from my childhood. When I was about seven, I had a fever, and my nanny, without telling my mother, took me to a folk healer in the settlement. The woman whispered over a dipper of water, invoking Panteleimon the Healer, gave it to me to drink, and took a dozen eggs from my nanny in payment. The fever passed two days later, as it would have done without her.

According to my analysis, the healer acted in the saint's name rather than her own, that is, with a document from the holder, and by means of the water I drank, which is contact, the strongest

method. The price was stated, a dozen eggs, and paid in full. None of my professors charged so little or explained so clearly in whose name he was treating a patient.

Another incident. A maid at our boardinghouse, a Provençal woman, confessed to my landlady, who in turn told me, that ten years ago, when her fiancé had grown cold toward her, she put the ashes of her own hair into his coffee, and within a month he proposed marriage. They live quietly, by all accounts, and her husband still knows nothing of it.

Everything here was done correctly from the standpoint of sorcery: another person's salt, her own, entered him, and this is contact. Only one thing was wrong: the consent. It was obtained by deception, and according to my Rule such consent leaves a debt. Who will collect it, I do not know, but looking at her, I think she pays it herself, every day.

In childhood, when passing a ravine at night, we used to say *chur menya* and fear nothing. Afanasyev writes that Chur is an ancient ancestor, the guardian of boundaries, and that by pronouncing his name a man places himself under the protection of his forefather at the point where his own land ends. Defense, as I wrote in my Rule, is stronger than attack: it is enough to call upon one's own holder at one's own boundary, and the stranger can do nothing, for to attack he would have to cross into another's precinct.

Part VI

Badenweiler, July 1910

Today, looking down at the Rhine from the mountain, I realized that I want to leave the world, and was surprised myself at how calmly I could write it. I am not thinking of a pistol or an excessive dose of morphine: light has made provision for such an ending in advance and assigned it a place, as a ditch is assigned its place beside a road. I am thinking of the Nota at the end of Ostia: the door, locked from within, was broken open, but the owner was nowhere to be found in the house. For twenty-two years I have read it as a report of a heretic's escape.

Badenweiler, September 1910

I have tested other holders by their harvest and never once tested my own. What has been taken from me over these years? My health was taken by consumption, and consumption is not Hers. My faith departed of its own accord. She has asked for no money. The only thing that has come out of me in twenty years which would not have come without Her is this notebook. Perhaps She holds me so that I may finish it, and the twenty years beyond my prognosis have been allotted to me for the work, as daylight is allotted to a day laborer.

On reflection, there are two kinds of farms. On one, the harvest consists of the actions of those being held, gathered once, at the end of the soul, like grain from a field that will produce nothing more. On the other, the harvest consists of output taken little by little and without end, like milk from a cow kept alive for that very purpose. From the first, the one who became his own holder before the harvest can escape; from the second, the one who ceases to give milk. If I am on the first, I must hurry. If I am on the second, I ought to stop writing. I considered both possibilities, poured myself some tea, and went on writing.

February 11, 1911. The tenth. Morphine every night now, half a grain. I stopped recording the amounts last autumn.

Badenweiler, March 1911

I know what a morphine addict looks like from the outside: he waits for his appointed hour, comes alive after the injection, grows dull without it, and everything he does is done for the sake of the next dose. I gave up smoking in 1890, on the day of my diagnosis, and for another three years or so my hand would search my pocket for my cigarette case in the evenings, while at night I dreamed that I was lighting a cigarette, and woke feeling relief and disappointment together.

Viewed from outside, there is little difference between such a man and me with my notebook. I wait for night, come alive when She arrives, and write so that She will come again. Harvest and dependence are indistinguishable from outside, and a physician sees this better than anyone, having observed dependence every day. The skeptic in me says that the entire affair with my visitor is morphine taken long before I began taking morphine. Another voice answers that the morphine began in 1903, whereas She came in 1890. They speak at once, and I cannot decide which to believe: I myself am speaking in both voices.

Badenweiler, May 1911

I am fifty-one years old, and all this time someone else has held my file: in childhood my mother and nanny, then the gymnasium, faith, the medical faculty, Charcot, and now, perhaps, She. If I hold myself at all, I have done so only recently, since that night in 1904 when my fear departed. And the question that troubles me is this: can an action performed today take charge of everything that came before it, claim retrospectively fifty years that were held by salt? The wine merchant writes in Chapter Seven that a man of fifty sometimes speaks of himself at thirty as of a stranger, and speaks the truth, but if a Name has been born, he can no longer say that. It follows that a newborn Name draws the entire sequence back after it, as a fishing net draws from the water everything caught in it, both what was chosen and what came by chance.

At the Salpêtrière we had a patient who had been exhibited to students for twenty years, and she told her own history in the terms in which others had recorded it before her: "heredity on the mother's side," "hysterical constitution," "the Lord punished me for pride." She had heard the first from the interns, the second from the professor, and the third from her mother and confessor. This was easy to recognize because she even placed the stresses in the words as they did. One day, while I was there, she told the same story differently, in plain language and with details none of us had heard before. From that day onward she spoke of her mother, her illness, and everything that had happened to her without her consent as her own life, and there were no more borrowed words in her account.

There are, then, three ways of leaving the world, distinguished by who it is that leaves. One may leave as oneself, claiming the entire sequence, as a newborn Name claims it. One may leave as the person She holds, in which case it is Her file that leaves. Or one may leave as nobody, into the sea where nothing has been named, and then the question of who has left loses its meaning. Which of the three is open

to me, I do not know, and I am not certain that I shall be the one to choose.

Rereading my entry from 1890 about Korennaya, I found an error in it that I had failed to notice for twenty years. Theophan translated Symeon's Discourses when I was already living in Paris. Father N. gave me the book in the autumn of 1890, a few weeks before that night, and I could not have read it as a student. Memory took a page I had read at thirty and pasted it into an evening when I was nineteen, fitting it so neatly that I wrote it down in my own hand without stumbling over it once. The astrologer in Chapter Six did the same thing with his horoscope that I had done with my own youth.

Badenweiler, June 1911

At Florian's in Venice, R. said something else to me which I did not record at the time because I did not know how to answer. If an act follows neither from a cause, nor from a rule, nor from character, he said, then it is a throw of the dice, and your freedom is no different from roulette at Monte Carlo. For seven years I have carried this objection within me. Now I see the difference, though I am not certain it is enough. Once the dice have fallen, they belong to nobody: no one claims the number that came up, and tomorrow's throw remembers nothing of yesterday's. An act, once accomplished, is taken into the sequence of the one who performed it, and from that moment he answers for it, just as patient T. began to answer for her life when she told it in her own words. Chance belongs to nobody; an act belongs to someone. Only whose it becomes is decided after it has been done, and R., if I wrote this to him, would ask how I could prove that I am the one deciding, rather than someone else yet again.

The following day

There is a case my archive has not provided for. A man may give away his file of his own accord, without anyone compelling him, and then this will be the last thing he does on his own behalf. Mary

answered the angel: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." The Church sees the highest freedom in this, while the wine merchant would probably see the final act, after which only salt remains. A monk taking a vow of obedience does the same, and so does Theophilus with his written undertaking, except that in Theophilus's case at least the price is named. If such a surrender can ever be taken back, freedom is deferred and remains intact; the wine merchant writes that captivity, too, can be reversed. If it cannot, there was only one day of freedom. This cannot be tested from within: the one who has surrendered will not know whether he can take it back until he tries, and by then he may no longer be the one making the attempt.

Two days later. I asked the local vinedresser, the same man who told me that the vine loves the knife, whether a grafted branch could be cut off and planted separately. It can be planted, he said, and it will put down roots, but those will be roots of its own. About twenty years ago an American aphid devastated the slopes here, and it feeds on precisely such roots. Now everything that is replanted here is grafted onto American rootstock. The aphid leaves it alone, and the rootstock holds the branch alive. Transplant the branch, and within a year or two the very soil in which it stands will destroy it.

Paul writes to the Romans of a wild olive branch grafted onto a good tree, and of God's power to graft the broken branches in again, but says nothing about a grafted branch departing of its own accord. Perhaps it is not the file that is surrendered. Perhaps the file is bound into another's volume, and then there is no one to return it and nothing to return: it no longer has a cover of its own. Paul said this too: "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The sheep on the right hand in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew do not themselves know whom they served: when did we see Thee hungry? Sheep are kept for the wool shorn from them each spring, and they are shorn without being asked. I wrote in my Rule that one

must never make vows for life, and failed to notice that I am now asking myself whether I should make such a vow to Her.

Badenweiler, July 1911

A student from Kyiv, who had arrived after his first hemorrhage, stopped me in the park and asked whether it was true that people lived a long time with this disease. Twenty years ago I would have spoken to him for an hour, mostly about the good possibilities. Now I told him how long people lived according to our textbooks and how many of those I had known had survived that long. He thanked me and walked away, his shoulders hunched. At dinner I noticed that I was eating with an appetite.

The following day

Yesterday's student reminded me of the evening when R. told me how much time I had left. Without the illness, I would probably still be reading Ostia as the history of a madman. Death can do what no preacher succeeds in doing: it forces a man to look where he has never looked before and does not allow him to postpone the examination until better times. It is rightly called an evil. It takes away everything a man intended to do and promises nothing in return. That is why it is the best tempter: once death has been seen, every promise sounds more convincing.

When a believer encounters death, he discovers the futility of the world. Everything he loved, possessed, and worked for will fall apart, and he turns toward what will never fall apart. Preachers have known this for a long time and gladly take their listeners to cemeteries. There, earthly distinctions are erased with particular clarity, and the poor man consoles himself with the thought that the rich man, too, must lie in the ground. Then he is shown heaven, where distinctions will be restored according to a different reckoning, and invited to cling to God.

If the world is futile, why could God not prove equally futile? Suppose He preserves me forever. But whose eternity will it be? If I

continue only because He holds me, death will have changed nothing essential: formerly I belonged to the world, and now I shall belong to God. One can spend eternity in a prison, and eternity will not make it any less a prison. A theologian would call this blessedness, and perhaps he would be right. A prisoner content with his confinement exists perfectly well.

Everyone hears the preacher, while almost nobody hears the Devil. The first promises that you will not be abandoned. The second asks why you must necessarily have someone to hold you, and offers no answer. Such consolation will not take one far. It is not even offered at funerals.

Death may lead a man to God, to the Devil, or nowhere at all, and there is nothing in death itself that makes a choice between the first two necessary.

Badenweiler, August 1911

I was rereading Chapter Eleven and stopped at a passage I had once taken for a joke. In a hundred years people will begin interpreting the book: some will find heresy in it, others a doctrine, still others will mark in red the passages that promise freedom, assemble a Rule from its prescriptions, and begin recognizing their fellows by the way they pronounce the word "darkness." In June 1890 I laughed that the author had miscalculated by three hundred years and failed to foresee his interpreter. He was wrong only about the number. My Badenweiler Rule lies in this notebook, and I composed it exactly as he described: from the wine merchant's prescriptions, reconciling what he had deliberately left unreconciled. His Third Rule ends with the words "Burn all the rules," while mine ends by saying that Rules should not be burned until they have been tested. I wrote this without yet understanding whom I was arguing with.

The fire was burning in the fireplace. I held the sheets over the flames and put them back into the notebook. To burn a Rule because a book commands it is to carry out yet another prescription, while to

preserve it out of reverence is to serve it. The wine merchant knew this when he wrote the final line.

September. After the downpours the Rhine is yellow and swift, carrying branches downstream. I watched it from the mountain for an hour.

Badenweiler, November 1911

November is foggy here. Until noon the valley lies beneath a white covering, like a bedsheet; above the fog rises the Blauen, already covered in snow, and it seems that the little town is drifting somewhere with its Kursaal and post office. I read little during these weeks. In the evenings I sit by the window and watch the stream running down the mountain, or, when the fog clears, the moon and stars above the Vosges. Whenever the moon is waning, I catch myself searching beside it for a low, bright star, like the one on the sheet I dreamed of.

The theologians speak of nature: a man has such-and-such a nature, an angel another, and God cannot will evil. The longer I consider this, the more clearly I see that their nature is the same salt, only given a scholarly name. We expect wool and obedience from a sheep, and nothing else, and call this the nature of sheep. Yet Darwin showed that shepherds made such sheep over several thousand years by selecting the docile and woolly members of their flocks. Nature, then, comes afterward: first someone acted, then what was done settled, and afterward the settled result was called nature and used to deduce what could be expected from the sheep. The wine merchant would have called nature salt mistaken for an origin.

I now understand why R. in Venice called my act a throw of the dice. When we ask what decides, if neither cause nor nature does, we have no word with which to answer except "chance," because our entire language is arranged to ask what follows from what. The wine merchant calls it the Name, and there seems to be no other name for it. The Name answers the question of who it is, but says nothing

about what follows from it. Chance answers neither question. R. would probably say that I have merely substituted one word for another. Yet he signs his letters with the letter R., though by his own reckoning he might just as well sign them with the word "chance" or "human nature."

Badenweiler, February 1912

It is Fastnacht in the surrounding villages. Mummers in wooden masks go from house to house, banging on frying pans to drive out winter. Winter does not hear them.

Waite has republished his book on black magic and pacts under a new title, The Book of Ceremonial Magic, and the pacts remain the same. In thirteen years black magic has become ceremonial, as a cook becomes a housekeeper: everything in the household remains as it was, only the wages are higher. The preface has grown longer and sterner, and Waite explains that he publishes all this as a warning. The Cologne masters also made a copy of Ostia as a warning, and thanks to them I am reading it.

Badenweiler, October 1912

The stoves have been lit, and the room smells of dust and last winter. The general's wife has ordered Isida, a monthly journal of occult sciences, for me from St. Petersburg, and I now receive it in the mail along with Questions of Philosophy. Our occultists translate Papus, write about magnetism, and interpret the arcana of the Tarot, all in the style of a report submitted to a provincial administration: an arcanum "has as its designated purpose," while a spirit "is to be summoned in accordance with procedure." The eighteenth arcanum, my Moon, is explained there over three pages, and I did not recognize her in any of them.

Badenweiler, November 1912

The general's wife, who has taken to visiting monasteries in her old age, sent me a little book by the schemamonk Hilarion, On the Mountains of the Caucasus, a conversation between two hermits about the Jesus Prayer. She added that the book had divided the monks on Mount Athos into two parties, who were disputing so fiercely that the matter had reached the Patriarch of Constantinople. Hilarion teaches that the Lord Himself is present in the name of Jesus, and that whoever repeats this name without ceasing enters into union with the Lord Himself, who is present in the name. My mother taught me to whisper "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me" at night, and I whispered it until I fell asleep. Even now, when I cannot sleep, my lips sometimes begin of their own accord. The wine merchant would have called this whisper a deposit of salt. Hilarion would reply that it is in the deposit that the Lord dwells. I find it difficult to argue with him: if the Name of God is written on the cover, then God holds the sequence.

Badenweiler, May 1913

Dr. Sch. has bought an automobile and drives patients to the castle ruins in it, with such pride that one might think he had invented it himself. I took one ride and walked back. From Moscow I received Apology for Faith in the Name of God and in the Name of Jesus, by Hieroschemamonk Antony Bulatovich, the same man who had been a hussar and fought in Abyssinia, and who now defends the monks of Mount Athos against the Synod that condemned them. The book opens with an unsigned preface headed "From the Editors," written with such learning and fervor that I read it twice before turning to Bulatovich himself. Its principal claim is expressed in words attributed to Father John of Kronstadt: The Name of God is God Himself.

For as long as I have kept this notebook, I have been asking who holds. If the Name of God is God Himself, then He Himself stands

on the cover of the file where His name is written. The one whom this Name holds is held by God and by Him alone, and between that person and God there is neither priest, nor salt, nor calendar of saints through which the name was bestowed. The Lilith of Ben Sira pronounced this Name as she flew away. She departed from God by means of God; she had no other way of leaving.

If the Name of God is God Himself, what are we to say of one who holds his own Name? Such a Name can neither be given nor taken away: the will itself gives birth to it and holds it. It follows that anyone who has accomplished this is also a god, and requires neither omnipotence nor worship to be one. Bulatovich, of course, would regard this conclusion as heresy: he speaks of the Name of the one God, while I have extended his words to anyone who has managed to name himself. But the wine merchant does not write of gods in the plural without reason.

One thing does not fit. Bulatovich says that the Name of God, pronounced in prayer, remains God Himself, whereas the wine merchant writes that every Name spoken aloud settles and becomes a sign by which one can be summoned, and that for this reason one must not speak one's own even to oneself. Perhaps both are right, each about a different thing. The Name of a holder can be pronounced: it holds those who pronounce it and loses nothing by being called upon. The Name of one who holds himself cannot be pronounced, because once spoken it becomes a handle by which others can take hold of him.

Bulatovich writes as he once fought: charging headlong, without counting his opponents or paying much attention to his own flanks. He exchanged his hussar's uniform for a cassock, but kept his tactics.

I have not written my own name on the cover.

Badenweiler, June 1913

R. sent me a little English book from Paris, The Book of Lies (Which Is Also Falsely Called BREAKS), by an Englishman named Crowley. It contains about a hundred chapters, some only a few lines long, others a single line, and on the first page even the one proposition from which the whole book is supposedly composed is declared false. The wine merchant spent a single page on this thought and moved on, while the Englishman built an entire book upon it and took up residence there. R. writes that the author is now in Paris and that people tell stories about him which R. does not dare repeat.

In Chapter Forty-Five, Crowley relates that he went to bed with Faith and awoke to find a corpse in his arms; Doubt, with whom he had drunk and danced all night, proved to be a virgin in the morning. Admirably put. The wine merchant would have placed this under the Instruction on Nothing Being True, though he would have added that the brotherhood in Antwerp which greeted its members with the words "nothing is true" had established a Rule and a treasury of its own. In another chapter Crowley commands us to doubt even our own doubt, so he evidently knows the danger.

Further on, the resemblance becomes almost indecent. He has Nothing, the destruction of the former man, death which proves to be a birth, and a Will to which no law imposed by another applies. In Chapter Twenty-Seven, a sorcerer has subjected everything that exists to his power, acquired the ability to fulfill any desire, and nevertheless remained the same person he was before. Crowley finds this regrettable, and the wine merchant would have agreed. Several times I looked into the Latin manuscript copy to make sure I was not reading my own translation.

Same place, several days later

I found the difference in the chapter about a mountaineer. Crowley writes that an exercise repeated countless times begins to perform itself, until in the end it is no longer the man who acts, but a certain IT acting through him. Only then, he maintains, is the task properly

performed. I know this from the clinic, though I doubt that the English magician and the Parisian intern would agree on the explanation. A man learns to walk with effort, then walks without thinking about his legs. But the fact that his legs move of themselves does not mean that they themselves decided where to go.

In another chapter Crowley explicitly declares ordinary consciousness to be an imperfection of wakefulness and proposes awakening from wakefulness itself. The IT of which he writes lies even beyond freedom and necessity. Here their paths diverge. The wine merchant also wishes to free himself from the former man, but after that man's death he must still perform an act of his own. For Crowley, the highest achievement consists in ceasing to interfere with what acts through you.

It would be unfair, however, to equate his IT with the intern. Crowley distinguishes ordinary wanting from True Will, and perhaps he needs to remove the former precisely for the sake of the latter. But how does he know that what acts through him belongs to him? He would probably reply that the question disappears together with the one who asks it. The wine merchant would ask it again.

And yet in Chapter Eighteen Crowley advises against directing another person's path: let the other go where he wishes; you are his helper, not his master. I would not dispute that. It seems he knows how to release others, while trying to bring himself to a place where the one who releases and the one who is released can no longer be distinguished.

I should like to know whether anyone holds him. Judging by the book, he does not know himself, but unlike me, he regards this as a virtue.

Badenweiler, late June 1913

I tried to defend Crowley against my own objection. If his IT exists before the division between I and Not-I, then there is no one to be a slave and no one to be a master. What acts through me cannot be another's, because there is no other there.

But then there are two possibilities. Either he is speaking of the unity of all that exists, of which philosophers have spoken for two thousand years. In that case master and slave also form a unity, and nothing prevents one from ruling the other. Common being does not yet mean common will. Crowley has added nothing to the old doctrine except capital letters.

Or else his IT really does lie beyond every distinction, so that nothing can be said about it. But then one cannot even say that there is no distinction within it between I and Not-I. Perhaps there is. Perhaps there is not. If the words themselves have lost their meaning there, why does Crowley regard one statement as true and another as false? The ineffable does not become one merely because plurality cannot be expressed within it.

At the clinic, when a patient reports having experienced something for which he cannot find words, we record that he was unable to describe it. We do not record that he experienced the unity of all existence. The latter would require some further evidence beyond the absence of evidence.

The Englishman has written an entire book about what cannot be expressed. In Chapter Seven the wine merchant commands silence concerning the Name. I am beginning to understand that these are not the same thing.

Badenweiler, July 1913

R. arrived with his wife for two weeks. We walked to the castle every day, slowly, and he never once spoke of my illness, for which I am grateful. He brought from St. Petersburg last year's Solitaria by Rozanov, which, he says, the censors initially confiscated. It consists of entries without beginning or end, and beneath many of them the place where they were written is noted: in a cab, while examining coins, at night. Rozanov writes about God, his wife, coins, and his pains, all together, without separating one from another. I have been writing this way since 1888. I believe I envy him: he writes out of freedom, while I write out of breathlessness.

Badenweiler, August 1913

I was rereading Chapter Eleven and understood for the first time where the Basel bookman went wrong. In 1888 I read the last sentence of that passage as a boast and failed to notice that it answers the bookman's question.

I now think that the wine merchant's nine sheets were the last thing he made, whereas for the bookman they were the first thing with which he intended to begin. The wine merchant had already lived through everything he wrote about: he drank, was ruined, abandoned his home, wandered, studied, and only afterward made his sheets. The bookman purchased ready-made images and expected that by arranging them in the proper order he would obtain what their first owner had obtained. He wanted to travel another man's path without taking a step.

A good deal of occultism, I suspect, is arranged in this fashion. People draw circles according to other people's books, pronounce names they did not give, put on garments designed by the dead, and expect the promised result to follow a correctly performed ritual. If the ritual was composed by someone who genuinely performed an act, the others merely repeat his salt. The more faithfully they repeat it, the less of their own remains in the performance. The wine

merchant warned that one who breaks a commandment for the sake of breaking it serves the commandment from the reverse side. A conjurer who performs another man's ritual for the sake of freedom serves it from the front.

For that matter, another man's sheet may become the occasion for an act of one's own, as the Latin manuscript copy became for me. But then what difference does it make which sheet one begins with? The bookman asked about the order, when he should have asked himself what he wanted to do. The wine merchant could have told him this and did not.

Badenweiler, October 1913

Chapter Eight says that an encounter must be tested many times, and that a Gift in its first year may become a Rule by the tenth. My encounter is twenty-three years old. If Ostia is Her letter, then this notebook is my reply, and that reply is either a Gift or a harvest taken from me. From within, I cannot distinguish the two.

Badenweiler, December 1913

The frost set in last night, and the sky above the Vosges cleared to the very edge. The valley below lies flooded with fog; in the moonlight it lies as flat as water, and only the bell towers rise out of it. In the attic the beams creak with the cold. I stood at the window until my hands grew numb.

From London, through R. again, came a book by a young draftsman named Spare, The Book of Pleasure, published by the author himself, with his own drawings of naked old women and beasts, drawn in such a way that one does not forget them. He writes obscurely: his sentences break off halfway, he takes his words wherever he finds them and invents the ones he lacks, and I read every page twice before I understood what it was about. Our patients write down their visions this way when they hurry to get them on

paper before they fade, and I read Spare as I used to read their notebooks.

The principal thing in it is a method Spare calls sigils. A desire is written down in a single sentence, the repeated letters are crossed out, and the remaining letters are combined into a sign. The sign is then deliberately forgotten, and the forgotten desire fulfills itself because it is now acting from the depths. As I read, I saw our J. with her umbrella. Spare does to himself what the intern did to her: he gives an order, conceals its reason, and waits for the action to take place as though of its own accord. Only here Spare himself serves as the intern, his former self, and holds himself by his own forgotten command. This is more honest than prayer: the one who makes the request and the holder are the same person, and he pays out of his own pocket.

There is also a state which he calls Neither-Neither. At first I understood it as though Spare wanted neither of two opposites to be true, and set him against the wine merchant, who in Chapter Three requires both answers, "I can do it" and "I can leave it undone," to be true at the same hour. On rereading, I saw that I was mistaken. Spare speaks of leaving the pair itself, for a place where the opposites no longer pull in opposite directions. The wine merchant speaks of the same point from the other end and calls it death: both answers are true, and therefore neither decides for the man any longer.

Spare also has what he calls Kia, the freedom from which everything emerges. Initially I thought that by Kia he meant himself, and had almost written that this was how it differed from my Tiamat. Then I found a passage where he does not dare call it himself. In that case it resembles both Tiamat, the unnamed sea before any name, and the wine merchant's Name, which cannot be communicated aloud even to oneself. Four hundred years later, an Englishman who had never seen my Latin manuscript copy and had probably never heard of Mainz arrived at the same place by his own road.

Badenweiler, late December 1913

I reread this year's entries and counted that I had written the word "holds" more often than "I." In my account the cook is held by her wages, the visitor to the resort by his column of good days, Nietzsche lost his holder, Lilith is held by a single oath, and I sort every new thing into files before I have even had time to look at it. The old woman's lips in our ward recited the "Our Father" of their own accord, while my hand writes "holder" of its own accord. The wine merchant warned that one's own salt is more dangerous than another's: another's seal can be seen, while one's own flatters and speaks in the voice of one's former decisions. All this time I have done the same thing with his book. In 1890 I placed it in a file labeled "Diseases of the Will," and then made a larger file and called it an archive. The second was more elegant than the first, but arranged in exactly the same way.

In the same chapter he tells of a monk who read a book and wrote objections in the margins. A hundred years later another monk mistook the marginal notes for the master's hand and the text for the pupil's errors, and obtained from the book the same instruction on freedom, only read backward. This notebook is my marginal commentary. Someday someone will mistake it for the text.

That evening I did what I had learned from Spare. I wrote my entire system in a single sentence, the one I had found in 1902: "The holder holds the name; the name holds the sequence." I crossed out the repeated letters and made a sign out of what remained. It looked something like a key with a crossbar, and I threw the sheet into the stove before I had time to remember what I had drawn.

Morning. My landlady brought the milk, and I did not ask myself who held my landlady.

Part VII

Badenweiler, January 1914

Snow on the Roman baths. The Romans heated water here for legionaries; now it is used to treat grammar-school teachers.

Yesterday I reread this notebook from the beginning and could not find the point where the wine merchant ends and I begin.

Ra gave Isis his name in the Turin papyrus. In Turin, Nietzsche signed his letters "Dionysus" and "The Crucified." I have only just noticed this, after twenty-five years.

From above, the entire crust is visible. From below, in the water, none of it can be seen.

R. sent me Fallen Leaves, the first box. I read one leaf a night, as I take morphine: I cannot manage more, and less has no effect.

The general's wife sent me a little icon of Seraphim of Sarov. I put it in the drawer beside my mother's. Let them hold each other.

February 11, 1914. The tenth has passed, for the tenth time.

March

Dr. Sch. takes my temperature. I take his: thirty-six point six, a wife, and a mortgage.

I found an entry from 1890 in which I am afraid of dying, and recognized it as my own. So it is possible to claim the past as one's own.

Sometimes I write "we" and notice it only the next day.

April

Last night She sat by the window and looked out at the Rhine. In the morning I remembered that the window faces the courtyard.

My landlady says I have lost weight. I tell her I am lightening my load for the journey.

Tiamat does not call. She is simply below.

Badenweiler, May 1914

From here one can see clearly how they hold one another: the wife holds the husband, the husband his office, the office the sovereign, the sovereign God. It resembles a circle dance in which no one is allowed to let go of anyone's hands.

My landlady brings me broth and crosses herself at the door. She is right, only too late.

I dreamed that I was reading my own manuscript and did not recognize the handwriting. When I awoke, I recognized it, and that was worse.

Maeterlinck asks whether our "I" will survive beyond the grave. He asks as though the "I" were lying in a coat pocket and could be forgotten at a hotel.

Dr. Sch. examined my chest and said that I was living in defiance of medicine. I replied that medicine had nothing to do with it, and we both smiled, each at his own meaning.

For twenty-five years I have asked who holds me. Not once have I asked whether I want to be released.

We who speak from there are in no hurry. Finish your broth.

Badenweiler, July 1914

The heir to the Austrian throne has been assassinated in Sarajevo. The Germans at the table d'hôte say there will be no war, and say it so loudly that it is clear there will be one.

For the first time in six years, the teacher from Karlsruhe entered a day in his column for good days. On the twenty-eighth he did not cough: he was occupied with the newspapers.

August 1

Germany has declared war on Russia. In the morning I was a visitor to the resort; by lunchtime I had become a subject of an enemy power. My illness had not changed its allegiance.

My landlady wept and feared that I would be arrested in her house. I think she was afraid for the house.

A gendarme came with a document. Russians fit for military service are being detained. He looked at me, crossed something out, apparently me, and left.

At the station in Müllheim, a crowd saw the reservists off with flowers and singing, and I felt at ease. The circle dance in which nobody may release anyone's hands has been drawn so tight this time that perhaps it will break.

Dr. Sch. wrote in his certificate that I was ill, harmless, and could be released. Harmless? Who knows.

Yesterday the teacher from Karlsruhe was still showing me his column of good days, and today he moved to another table at the table d'hôte. Neither of us has done anything to the other. The wine merchant wrote of dancing in the Rhine towns, where a man who stood beside the dancers would be dancing himself an hour later, without arguing with anyone. Now I see it: everyone is dancing, and tomorrow the newspapers will explain what they are dancing for.

All these years they called me der russische Doktor here. Now they call me der Russe.

Basel, August 1914

The train took half a day instead of an hour. The railway station in Basel is German and stands on Swiss soil, so I crossed the border without leaving the station, somewhere between the buffet and the baggage office.

The hotel is the same, beside the Rhine, and so is the window. The water still flows toward Mainz, only now through a war.

All my luggage consists of the notebooks, the manuscript copy of Ostia, and a box containing two little icons. I left everything else with my landlady in payment of my debt.

There will be no more money from Moscow. R. promises to send it from Paris through Geneva.

Basel, September 1914

I went to see Holbein. He is still waiting to open his eye the rest of the way. I have stopped waiting.

In the newspapers all sides pray for victory, and each expects God to grant it.

The Flood, it turns out, has not ended. Now it is moving over dry land, and everyone insists that the waters have risen to purify.

When a soldier kills on command, he serves the sovereign. When he refuses, he is asked what rule he followed in refusing. Even disobedience is something they try to enter into a Rule.

Satan is called the Prince of This World. Hers is a strange principality: everything here is arranged after the pattern of the promised Kingdom, everyone serves the good, only different masters determine what shall be called good. The Devil, if the book is to be believed, needs people capable of answering for themselves. In the present world there is scarcely any work left for Her.

Ivan Karamazov returned his ticket because the tear of a tortured child was worth more than all the harmony of the world. The world reasoned otherwise: since a tear is priceless, it is worth mining like a diamond, and it has always mined it, sawing prophets and robbers in two and flaying apostles and prisoners alive. The operation has been expanded to an industrial scale.

In 1888 I diagnosed the wine merchant with moral insanity, adding that I wanted to agree with the diagnosis because one can pity a sick man. I reread the entry. I do not pity myself.

Basel, October 1914

There is more room around me now. My landlady no longer enters my room and sends dinner by the maid, who puts the tray on a chair by the door and leaves before I can thank her. There are many Russians in Basel now, and all are occupied with something: some collect money for the wounded, others argue about the war in the cafés near the bridge. Once, when I said there that it made no difference to me which side won, they stopped greeting me. The young physician comes once a week instead of twice and examines my chest without taking off his gloves.

R. writes less often. His son has been at the Marne since September, and in my last letter I wrote something about a circle dance which he either failed to understand or understood too well. His reply arrived a month later, on a single sheet, with money and not a single question. In 1902 I asked myself whether I would cease to regard R. as a friend if he betrayed me, and did not wish to know the answer in advance. Now it was his turn to answer. He still sends the money regularly, however; his friendship, it seems, holds for the same reason the retired major's vow held.

November

My cough has changed. I recognize it: this is how those in Menton who did not return in the spring used to cough during the winter.

In Basel morphine is dispensed only on the prescription of a Swiss physician. My physician is young and sympathetic toward Russia.

December

At Christmas, according to the new calendar, the bells rang at Basel Minster. My lips said of their own accord: "Glory to God in the highest." I did not interfere.

If She holds me, She holds me without hands. If I hold myself, I too do so without hands.

Basel, January 1915

I have moved from the hotel into rooms kept by a widow on the Kleinbasel bank. The window overlooks the Rhine again.

R. sent money through Geneva and, for the first time in six months, asked whether I needed anything. What I need is not to be asked. I did not write that.

The Rhine has frozen along its banks. Dark water runs through the middle, and nothing is reflected in it.

Yesterday an unfamiliar gentleman bowed to me on the bridge. I bowed back. We both seem to have mistaken each other for someone else.

I read Ostia and no longer interpret it. I am the one being interpreted.

Salt holds as long as it is kept damp.

The young Swiss physician asked whom he should write to if anything happened. I said R., in Paris. He wrote it down and asked my own name. I gave him R.'s.

February

I do not ask who holds anymore.

She came during the day. She had never come during the day before.

We who speak from here do not ask your name. I wrote that. The handwriting is mine.

The wine merchant doomed the bookman by remaining silent. I leave you this notebook without regret.

February 9. My landlady asked what to serve for dinner tomorrow. I said something light. I do not lock the door at night.

Nota

Department of Inheritance Matters, Canton of Basel-Stadt. Inventory of the property of a foreign national who died in Switzerland without heirs.

On February 12, 1915, following a report by the keeper of furnished rooms in Kleinbasel that her lodger, a Russian subject, a physician aged fifty-four, had not left his room for two days and did not answer knocks at the door, the door of his room, found unlocked, was opened in the presence of a police officer. The lodger was found dead in his bed. According to the physician summoned to the scene, the time of death could not be established; death occurred during the night of February 9–10 or February 10–11.

On the table were found a manuscript in Russian, containing occasional words in Latin and Greek, consisting of several notebooks written in the same hand, and an old Latin manuscript copy of a certain treatise, approximately sixty leaves in length. In a desk drawer were two small icons and a deck of playing cards, one card from which lay on top of the notebook. The contents of the manuscript were not examined, as the language was unknown to those present. The effects and papers were sealed and placed in custody pending the identification of heirs or the expiration of the statutory period.

Annotation in another hand. The papers were released on June 3, 1919, to R., Doctor of Medicine, Paris, on the basis of a written instruction from the deceased, retained by his attending physician, designating the said Dr. R. as the recipient of the manuscripts.[2]

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[1] *Publisher's note*. Psalm 81 in the Septuagint and Russian Orthodox numbering corresponds to Psalm 82 in the Hebrew and most English Bibles.

[2] *Publisher's note.* The deceased's name in the inventory has been obliterated, apparently at a later date and in different ink. After Dr. R.'s death, his widow transferred the notebooks and the Latin manuscript copy to the library of the Russian church on Rue Daru, where they remained until the present edition.