

Georges Bataille
Story of the Eye
(1928)

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PART 1. THE TALE

1. The Cat's Eye

I grew up very much alone, and as far back as I recall I was frightened of anything sexual. I was nearly sixteen when I met Simone, a girl my own age, at the beach in X. Our families being distantly related, we quickly grew intimate. Three days after our first meeting, Simone and I were alone in her villa. She was wearing a black pinafore with a starched white collar. I began to realize that she shared my anxiety at seeing her, and I felt even more anxious that day because I hoped she would be stark naked under the pinafore.

She had black silk stockings on covering her knees, but I was unable to see as far up as the cunt (this name, which I always used with Simone, is, I think, by far the loveliest of the names for the vagina). It merely struck me that by slightly lifting the pinafore from behind, I might see her private parts unveiled.

Now in the corner of a hallway there was a saucer of milk for the cat. "Milk is for the pussy, isn't it?" said Simone. "Do you dare me to sit in the saucer?"

"I dare you," I answered, almost breathless.

The day was extremely hot. Simone put the saucer on a small bench, planted herself before me, and, with her eyes fixed on me, she sat down without my being able to see her burning buttocks under the skirt, dipping into the cool milk. The blood shot to my head, and I stood before her awhile, immobile and trembling, as she eyed my stiff cock bulging in my trousers. Then I lay down at her feet without her stirring and for the first time, I saw her pink and dark flesh cooling in the white milk. We remained motionless, both of us equally overwhelmed...

Suddenly, she got up, and I saw the milk dripping down her thighs to the stockings. She wiped herself evenly with a handkerchief as she stood over my head with one foot on the small bench, and I vigorously rubbed my cock through the trousers while writhing amorously on the floor. We reached orgasm at almost the same instant without even touching one another. But when her mother came home, I was sitting in a low armchair, and I took advantage of the moment when the girl tenderly snuggled in her mother's arms: I lifted the back of her pinafore, unseen, and thrust my hand under her cunt between her two burning legs.

I dashed home, eager to masturbate again. The next day there were such dark rings around my eyes that Simone, after peering at me for a while, buried her head in my shoulder and said earnestly: "I don't want you to toss off any more without me."

Thus a love life started between the girl and myself, and it was so intimate and so intense that we could hardly let a week go by without meeting. And yet we virtually never talked about it. I realized that her feelings at seeing me were the same as mine at seeing her, but I found it difficult to have things out. I remember that one day, when we were in a car tooling along at top speed, we crashed into a cyclist, an apparently very young and very pretty girl. Her head was almost totally ripped off by the wheels. For a long time, we were parked a few yards beyond without getting out, fully absorbed in the sight of the corpse. The horror and despair at so much bloody flesh, nauseating in part, and in part very beautiful, was fairly equivalent to our usual impression upon seeing one another. Simone was tall and lovely. She was usually very natural; there was nothing heartbreaking in her eyes or her voice. But on a sensual level, she so bluntly craved any upheaval that the faintest call from the senses gave her a look directly suggestive of all things linked to deep sexuality, such as blood, suffocation, sudden terror, crime; things indefinitely destroying human bliss and honesty. I first saw her mute and absolute spasm (which I shared) the day she sat down in the saucer of milk. True, we only exchanged fixed stares at analogous moments. But we never calmed down or played except in the brief, relaxed minutes after an orgasm.

I ought to say, nevertheless, that we waited a long time before copulating. We merely took any opportunity to indulge in unusual acts. We did not lack modesty—on the contrary—but something urgently drove us to defy modesty together as immodestly as possible. Thus, no sooner had she asked me never to toss off again by myself than we had met on top of a cliff, then she pulled down my pants and had me stretch out on the ground. She tucked her dress up, mounted my belly with her back towards my face, and let herself go, while I thrust my finger, lubricated with my young sperm, into her cunt. Next, she lay down, with her head under my cock between my legs, and thrusting her cunt in the air, she brought her body down towards me, while I raised my head to the level of that cunt: her knees found support on my shoulders.

"Can't you pee up to my cunt?" she said.

"Yes," I answered, "but with you like this, it'll get on your dress and your face."

"So what," she concluded. And I did as she said, but no sooner was I done than I flooded her again, this time with fine white come.

Meanwhile, the smell of the sea mixed with the smell of wet linen, our naked bodies, and the come. Evening was gathering, and we stayed in that extraordinary position, tranquil and motionless, when all at once we heard steps crushing the grass.

"Please don't move, please," Simone begged.

The steps halted, but it was impossible to see who was approaching. Our breathing had stopped together. Simone's ass, raised aloft, did strike me as an all-powerful entreaty, perfect as it was; with its two narrow, delicate buttocks and its deep crevice; and I never doubted for an instant that the unknown man or woman would soon give in and feel compelled to masturbate endlessly while watching that behind. Now the steps resumed, faster this time, almost running, and suddenly a ravishing blond girl loomed into view: Marcelle, the purest and most affecting of our friends. But we were too strongly contracted in our dreadful positions to move even a hair's breadth, and it was our unhappy friend who suddenly collapsed and huddled in the grass amid sobs. Only now did we tear loose from our extravagant embrace to hurl ourselves upon a self abandoned body. Simone hiked up the skirt, ripped off the panties, and drunkenly showed me a new cunt, as lovely and pure as her own: I kissed it furiously while finger fucking Simone, whose legs closed around the hips of that strange Marcelle, who no longer hid anything but her sobs.

"Marcelle," I exclaimed, "please, please don't cry. I want you to kiss me on the mouth..."

Simone, for her part, stroked the girl's lovely smooth hair, covering her body with fond kisses.

Meanwhile the sky had turned quite thundery, and, with nightfall, huge raindrops began plopping down, bringing relief from the harshness of a torrid, airless day. The sea was loudly raging, outroared by long rumbles of thunder, while flashes of lightning, bright as day, kept brusquely revealing the two pleased cunts of the now silent girls. A brutal frenzy drove our three bodies. Two young mouths fought over my ass, my balls, and my cock, but I still kept pushing apart female legs wet with saliva and come, splaying them as if writhing out of a monster's grip, and yet that monster was nothing but the utter violence of my movements. The hot rain was finally pouring down and streaming over our fully exposed bodies. Huge booms of thunder shook us, heightening our fury, wresting forth our cries of rage, which each flash accompanied with a glimpse of our sexual parts. Simone had found a mud puddle, and was smearing herself wildly: she was jerking off with the earth and coming violently, whipped by the downpour, my head locked in her soil-covered legs, her face wallowing in the puddle, where she was brutally churning Marcelle's cunt, one arm around Marcelle's hips, the hand yanking the thigh, forcing it open.

2. The Antique Wardrobe

That was the period when Simone developed a mania for breaking eggs with her behind. She would do a headstand on an armchair in the parlor, her back against the chair's back, her legs bent towards me, while I jerked off in order to come in her face. I would put the egg right on the hole in her ass, and she would skillfully amuse herself by shaking it in the deep crack of her buttocks. The moment my come shot out and trickled down her eyes, her buttocks would squeeze together and she would come while I smeared my face abundantly in her ass.

Very soon, of course, her mother, who might enter the villa parlor at any moment, did catch us in our unusual act. But still, the first time this fine woman stumbled upon us, she was content, despite having led an exemplary life, to gape wordlessly, so that we did not notice a thing. I suppose she was too flabbergasted to speak. But when we were done and trying to clean up the mess, we noticed her standing in the doorway.

"Pretend there's no one there," Simone told me, and she went on wiping her behind.

And indeed, we blithely strolled out as though the woman had been reduced to a family portrait.

A few days later, however, when Simone was doing gymnastics with me in the rafters of a garage, she pissed on her mother, who had the misfortune to stop underneath without seeing her. The sad widow got out of the way and gazed at us with such dismal eyes and such a desperate expression that she egged us on, that is to say, simply, with Simone bursting into laughter, crouching on all fours on the beams and exposing her cunt to my face, I uncovered that cunt completely and masturbated while looking at it.

More than a week had passed without our seeing Marcelle, when we ran into her on the street one day. The blonde girl, timid and naively pious, blushed so deeply at seeing us, that Simone embraced her with uncommon tenderness.

"Please forgive me, Marcelle," she murmured. "What happened the other day was absurd, but that doesn't mean we can't be friends now. I promise we'll never lay a hand on you again."

Marcelle, who had an unusual lack of will power, agreed to join us for tea with some other friends at our place. But instead of tea, we drank quantities of chilled champagne.

The sight of Marcelle blushing had completely overwhelmed us. We understood one another, Simone and I, and we were certain that from now on nothing would make us shrink from achieving our ends. Besides Marcelle, there were three other pretty girls and two boys here. The oldest of the eight being not quite seventeen, the beverage soon took effect; but aside from Simone and myself, they were not as excited as we wanted them to be. A gramophone rescued us from our predicament. Simone, dancing a frenzied Charleston by herself, showed everyone her legs up to her cunt, and when the other girls were asked to dance a solo in the same way, they were in too good a mood to require coaxing. They did have panties on, but the panties bound the cunt laxly without hiding much. Only Marcelle, intoxicated and silent, refused to dance.

Finally, Simone, pretending to be dead drunk, crumpled a tablecloth and, lifting it up, she offered to make a bet.

"I bet," she said, "that I can pee into the tablecloth in front of everyone."

It was basically a ridiculous party of mostly turbulent and boastful youngsters. One of the boys challenged her, and it was agreed that the winner would fix the penalty... Naturally, Simone did not waver for an instant, she richly soaked the tablecloth. But this stunning act visibly rattled her to the quick, so that all the young fools started gasping.

"Since the winner decides the penalty," said Simone to the loser, "I am now going to pull down your trousers in front of everyone."

Which happened without a hitch. When his trousers were off, his shirt was likewise removed (to keep him from looking ridiculous). All the same, nothing serious had occurred as yet: Simone had scarcely run a light hand over her young friend, who was dazzled, drunk, and naked. Yet all she could think of was Marcelle, who for several moments now had been begging me to let her leave.

"We promised we wouldn't touch you, Marcelle. Why do you want to leave?"

"Just because," she replied stubbornly, a violent rage gradually overcoming her.

All at once, to everyone's horror, Simone fell upon the floor. A convulsion shook her harder and harder, her clothes were in disarray, her bottom stuck in the air, as though she were having an epileptic fit. But rolling about at the foot of the boy she had undressed, she mumbled almost inarticulately:

"Piss on me... Piss on my cunt..." she repeated, with a kind of thirst.

Marcelle gaped at this spectacle: she blushed again, her face was blood-red. But then she said to me, without even looking at me, that she wanted to take off her dress. I half tore it off, and straight after, her underwear. All she had left was her stockings and belt, and after I fingered her cunt a bit and kissed her on the mouth, she glided across the room to a large antique bridal wardrobe, where she shut herself in after whispering a few words to Simone.

She wanted to toss off in the wardrobe and was pleading to be left in peace.

I ought to say that we were all very drunk and completely bowled over by what had been going on. The naked boy was being sucked by a girl. Simone, standing with her dress tucked up, was rubbing her bare cunt against the wardrobe, in which a girl was audibly masturbating with brutal gasps. And all at once, something incredible happened, a strange swish of water, followed by a trickle and a stream from under the wardrobe door: poor Marcelle was pissing in her wardrobe while masturbating. But the explosion of totally drunken guffaws that ensued rapidly degenerated into a debauch of tumbling bodies, lofty legs and asses, wet skirts and come. Guffaws emerged like foolish and involuntary hiccups but scarcely managed to interrupt a brutal onslaught of cunts and cocks. And yet soon we could hear Marcelle dismally sobbing alone, louder and louder, in the makeshift pissoir that was now her prison.

Half an hour later, when I was less drunk, it dawned on me that I ought to let Marcelle out of her wardrobe: the unhappy girl, naked now, was in a dreadful state. She was trembling and shivering feverishly. Upon seeing me, she displayed a sickly but violent terror. After all, I was pale, smeared with blood, my clothes askew. Behind me, in unspeakable disorder, brazenly stripped bodies were sprawled about. During the orgy, splinters of glass had left deep bleeding cuts in two of us. A young girl was throwing up, and all of us had exploded in such wild fits of laughter at some point or other that we had wet our clothes, an armchair, or the floor. The resulting stench of blood, sperm, urine, and vomit made me almost recoil in horror, but the inhuman shriek from Marcelle's throat was far more terrifying. I must say, however, that Simone was sleeping tranquilly by now, her belly up, her hand still on her pussy, her pacified face almost smiling.

Marcelle, staggering wildly across the room with shrieks and snarls, looked at me again. She flinched back as though I were a hideous ghost in a nightmare, and she collapsed in a jeremiad of howls that grew more and more inhuman.

Astonishingly, this litany brought me to my senses. People were running up, it was inevitable. But I never for an instant dreamt of fleeing or lessening the scandal. On the contrary, I resolutely strode to the door and flung it open. What a spectacle, what joy! One can readily picture the cries of dismay, the desperate shrieks, the exaggerated threats of the parents entering the room! Criminal court, prison, the guillotine were evoked with fiery yells and spasmodic curses. Our friends themselves began howling and sobbing in a delirium of tearful screams; they sounded as if they had been set afire as live torches. Simone exulted with me.

And yet, what an atrocity! It seemed as if nothing could terminate the tragicomical frenzy of these lunatics, for Marcelle, still naked, kept gesticulating, and her agonizing shrieks of pain expressed unbearable terror and moral suffering; we watched her bite her mother's face amid arms vainly trying to subdue her.

Indeed, by bursting in, the parents managed to wipe out the last shreds of reason, and in the end, the police had to be called, with all the neighbors witnessing the outrageous scandal.

3. Marcelle's Smell

My own parents had not turned up that evening with the pack. Nevertheless, I judged it prudent to decamp and elude the wrath of an awful father, the epitome of a senile Catholic general. I entered our villa by the back door and filched a certain amount of money. Next, quite convinced they would look for me everywhere but there, I took a bath in my father's bedroom. Finally, by around ten o'clock, I was out in the open country, having left the following note on my mother's bedside table: "I beseech you not to send the police after me for I am carrying a gun, and the first bullet will be for the policeman, the second for myself."

I have never had any aptitude for what is known as striking a pose, and in this circumstance in particular, I only wished to keep my family at bay, for they relentlessly hated scandal. Still, having written the note with the greatest levity and not without laughing, I thought it might not be such a bad idea to pocket my father's revolver.

I walked along the seashore most of the night, but without getting very far from X because of all the windings of the coast. I was merely trying to soothe a violent agitation, a strange, spectral delirium in which, willy-nilly, phantasms of Simone and Marcelle took shape with gruesome expressions. Little by little, I even thought I might kill myself, and, taking the revolver in hand, I managed to lose any sense of words like hope or despair, but in my weariness, I realized that my life had to have some meaning all the same, and would have one if only certain events, defined

as desirable, were to occur. I finally accepted being so extraordinarily haunted by the names Simone and Marcelle. Since it was no use laughing, I could keep going only by accepting or feigning to imagine a fantastic compromise that would confusedly link my most disconcerting moves to theirs.

I slept in a wood during the day, and at nightfall I went to Simone's place: I passed through the garden by climbing over the wall. My friend's bedroom was lit, and so I cast some pebbles through the window. A few seconds later she came down and almost wordlessly we headed towards the beach. We were delighted to see one another again. It was dark out, and from time to time I lifted her dress and took hold of her cunt, but it didn't make me come—quite the opposite. She sat down and I stretched out at her feet. I soon felt that I could not keep back my sobs, and I really cried for a long time on the sand.

"What's wrong?" asked Simone.

And she gave me a playful kick. Her foot struck the gun in my pocket and a fearful bang made us shriek at the same time. I wasn't wounded but I was up on my feet as though in a different world. Simone stood before me, frighteningly pale.

That evening we didn't even think of masturbating each other, but we remained in an endless embrace, mouth to mouth, something we had never done before.

This is how I lived for several days: Simone and I would come home late at night and sleep in her room, where I would stay locked in until the following night. Simone would bring me food, her mother, having no authority over her (the day of the scandal, she had gone for a walk the instant she heard the shrieks), accepted the situation without even trying to fathom the mystery. As for the servants, money had for some time been ensuring their devotion to Simone.

In fact, it was they who told us of the circumstances of Marcelle's confinement and even the name of the sanatorium. From the very first day, all we worried about was Marcelle: her madness, the loneliness of her body, the possibilities of getting to her, helping her to escape, perhaps. One day, when I tried to rape Simone in her bed, she brusquely slipped away:

"You're totally insane, little man," she cried, "I'm not interested here, in a bed like this, like a housewife and mother! I'll only do it with Marcelle!"

"What are you talking about?" I asked, disappointed, but basically agreeing with her.

She came back affectionately and said in a gentle, dreamy voice:

"Listen, she won't be able to help pissing when she sees us... doing it."

I felt a hot, enchanting liquid run down my legs, and when she was done, I got up and in turn watered her body, which she complaisantly turned to the unchaste and faintly murmuring spurt on her skin. After thus flooding her cunt, I smeared come all over her face. Full of muck, she climaxed in a liberating frenzy. She deeply inhaled our pungent and happy odor: "You smell like Marcelle," she buoyantly confided after a hefty climax, her nose under my wet ass.

Obviously Simone and I were sometimes taken with a violent desire to fuck. But we no longer thought it could be done without Marcelle, whose piercing cries kept grating on our ears, for they were linked to our most violent desires. Thus it was that our sexual dream kept changing into a nightmare. Marcelle's smile, her freshness, her sobs, the sense of shame that made her redden and, painfully red, tear off her own clothes and surrender lovely blond buttocks to impure hands, impure mouths, beyond all the tragic delirium that had made her lock herself in the wardrobe to toss off with such abandon that she could not help pissing—all these things warped our desires, so that they endlessly racked us: Simone, whose conduct during the scandal had been more obscene than ever (sprawled out, she had not even covered herself, in fact she had flung her legs apart)—Simone could not forget that the unforeseen orgasm provoked by her own brazenness, by Marcelle's howls and the nakedness of her writhing limbs, had been more powerful than anything she had ever managed to picture before. And her cunt would not open to me unless Marcelle's ghost, raging, reddening, frenzied, came to make her brazenness overwhelming and far-reaching, as if the sacrilege were to render everything generally dreadful and infamous.

At any rate, the swampy regions of the cunt (nothing resembles them more than the days of flood and storm or even the suffocating gaseous eruptions of volcanoes, and they never turn active except, like storms or volcanoes, with something of catastrophe or disaster)—those heartbreaking regions, which Simone, in an abandon presaging only violence, allowed me to stare at hypnotically, were nothing for me now but the profound, subterranean empire of a Marcelle who was tormented in prison and at the mercy of nightmares. There was only one thing I understood: how utterly the orgasms ravaged the girl's face with sobs interrupted by horrible shrieks.

And Simone, for her part, no longer viewed the hot, acrid come that she caused to spurt from my cock without seeing it muck up Marcelle's mouth and cunt.

"You could smack her face with your come," she confided to me, while smearing her cunt "till it sizzles," as she put it.

4. A Sunspot

Other girls and boys no longer interested us. All we could think of was Marcelle, and already we childishly imagined her hanging herself, the secret burial, the funeral apparitions. Finally, one evening, after getting the precise information, we took our bicycles and pedaled off to the sanatorium where our friend was confined. In less than an hour, we had ridden the twenty kilometers separating us from a sort of castle within a walled park on an isolated cliff overlooking the sea. We had learned that Marcelle was in Room 8, but obviously we would have to get inside the building to find her. Now all we could hope for was to climb in her window after sawing through the bars, and we were at a loss how to identify her window among thirty others, when our attention was drawn to a strange apparition. We had scaled the wall and were now in the park, among trees buffeted by a violent wind, when we spied a second-story window opening and a shadow holding a sheet and fastening it to one of the bars. The sheet promptly smacked in the gusts, and the window was shut before we could recognize the shadow.

It is hard to imagine the harrowing racket of that vast white sheet caught in the squall. It greatly outroared the fury of the sea or the wind in the trees. That was the first time I saw Simone racked by anything but her own lewdness: she huddled against me with a beating heart and gaped at the huge phantom raging in the night as though dementia itself had hoisted its colors on this lugubrious chateau.

We were motionless, Simone cowering in my arms and I half haggard, when all at once the wind seemed to tatter the clouds, and the moon, with a revealing clarity, poured sudden light on something so bizarre and so excruciating for us that an abrupt, violent sob choked up in Simone's throat: at the center of the sheet flapping and banging in the wind, a broad wet stain glowed in the translucent moonlight...

A few seconds later, new black clouds plunged everything into darkness, but I stayed on my feet, suffocating, feeling my hair in the wind, and weeping wretchedly, like Simone herself, who had collapsed in the grass, and for the first time, her body was quaking with huge, childlike sobs.

It was our unfortunate friend, no doubt about it, it was Marcelle who had opened that lightless window, Marcelle who had tied that stunning signal of distress to the bars of her prison. She had

obviously tossed off in bed with such a disorder of her senses that she had entirely inundated herself, and it was then that we saw her hang the sheet from the window to let it dry.

As for myself, I was at a loss about what to do in such a park, with that bogus *château de plaisance* and its repulsively barred windows. I walked around the building, leaving Simone upset and sprawling on the grass. I had no practical goal, I just wanted to take a breath of air by myself. But then, on the side of the chateau, I stumbled upon an unbarred open window on the ground floor; I felt for the gun in my pocket and I entered cautiously: it was a very ordinary drawing-room. An electric flashlight helped me to reach an antechamber; then a stairway. I could not distinguish anything, I did not get anywhere, the rooms were not numbered. Besides, I was incapable of understanding anything, as though I were under a spell: at that moment, I could not even understand why I had the idea of removing my trousers and continuing that anguishing exploration only in my shirt. And yet I stripped off my clothes, piece by piece, leaving them on a chair, keeping only my shoes on. With a flashlight in my left hand and the revolver in my right hand, I wandered aimlessly, haphazardly. A rustle made me switch off my lamp quickly. I stood motionless, whiling away the time by listening to my erratic breath. Long, anxious minutes wore by without my hearing any more noise, and so I flashed my light back on, but a faint cry sent me fleeing so swiftly that I forgot my clothes on the chair.

I sensed I was being followed: so I hurriedly climbed out through the window and hid in a garden lane; but no sooner had I turned to observe what might be happening in the chateau than I spied a naked woman in the window frame; she jumped into the park as I had done and ran off towards a thorn bush.

Nothing was more bizarre for me in those utterly thrilling moments than my nudity against the wind on the path of that unknown garden. It was as if I had left the earth, especially because the squall was as violent as ever, but warm enough to suggest a brutal entreaty. I did not know what to do with the gun which I still held in my hand, for I had no pockets left; by charging after the woman who had run past me unrecognized, I would obviously be hunting her down to kill her. The roar of the wrathful elements, the raging of the trees and the sheet, also helped to prevent me from discerning anything distinct in my will or in my gestures.

All at once, I halted, out of breath: I had reached the bushes where the shadow had disappeared. Excited by my revolver, I began looking about, when suddenly it seemed as if all reality were tearing apart: a hand, moistened by saliva, had grabbed my cock and was rubbing it, a slobbering, burning kiss was planted on the root of my ass, the naked chest and legs of a woman pressed against my legs with an orgasmic jolt. I scarcely had time to spin around when my come

burst in the face of my wonderful Simone: clutching my revolver, I was swept up by a thrill as violent as the storm, my teeth chattered and my lips foamed, with twisted arms I gripped my gun convulsively, and, willy-nilly, three blind, horrifying shots were fired in the direction of the chateau.

Drunk and limp, Simone and I had fled from one another and raced across the park like dogs; the squall was far too wild now for the gunshots to awake any of the sleeping tenants in the chateau, even if the bangs had been audible inside. But when we instinctively looked up at Marcelle's window above the sheet slamming in the wind, we were greatly surprised to see that one of the bullets had left a star-shaped crack in one of the panes. The window shook, opened, and the shadow appeared a second time.

Dumbstruck, as though about to see Marcelle bleed and fall dead in the window frame, we remained standing under the strange, nearly motionless apparition. Because of the furious wind, we were incapable of even making ourselves heard.

"What did you do with your clothes?" I asked Simone an instant later. She said she had been looking for me and, unable to track me down, she had finally gone to search the interior of the chateau; but before clambering through the window, she had undressed, thinking she "would feel more free". And when she had come back out after me, terrified by me, she found that the wind had carried off her dress. Meanwhile, she kept observing Marcelle, and it never crossed her mind to ask me why I was naked.

The girl in the window disappeared. A moment that seemed unending crawled by: she switched on the light in her room. Finally, she carried back to breathe the open air and gaze at the ocean. Her sleek, pallid hair was caught in the wind, we could make out her features: she had not changed, but now there was something wild in her eyes, something restless, contrasting with the still childlike simplicity of her features. She looked thirteen rather than sixteen. Under her nightgown, we could distinguish her thin but full body, firm, unobtrusive, and as beautiful as her fixed stare.

When she finally caught sight of us, the surprise seemed to restore life to her face. She called, but we couldn't hear. We beckoned. She blushed up to her ears. Simone, weeping almost, while I lovingly caressed her forehead, sent her kisses, to which she responded without smiling. Next, Simone ran her hand down her belly to her pubic hair. Marcelle imitated her, and poising one foot on the sill, she exposed a leg sheathed in a white silk stocking almost up to her blond cunt. Curiously, she was wearing a white belt and white stockings, whereas black-haired Simone, whose cunt was in my hand, was wearing a black belt and black stockings.

Meanwhile, the two girls were masturbating with terse, brusque gestures, face to face in the howling night. They were nearly motionless, and tense, and their eyes gaped with unrestrained joy. But soon, some invisible monstrosity appeared to be pulling Marcelle away from the bars, though her left hand clutched them with all her might. We saw her tumble back into her delirium. And all that remained before us was an empty, glowing window, a rectangular hole piercing the opaque night, showing our aching eyes a world composed of lightning and dawn.

5. A Trickle of Blood

Urine is deeply associated for me with saltpeter; and lightning, I don't know why, with an antique chamber pot of unglazed earthenware, lying abandoned one rainy autumn day on the zinc roof of a provincial wash house. Since that first night at the sanatorium, those wrenching images were closely knit, in the obscurest part of my brain, with the cunt and the drawn and dismal expression I had sometimes caught on Marcelle's face. But then, this chaotic and dreadful landscape of my imagination was suddenly inundated by a stream of light and blood, for Marcelle could come only by drenching herself, not with blood, but with a spurt of urine that was limpid and even illuminated for me, at first violent and jerky like hiccups, then free and relaxed and coinciding with an outburst of superhuman happiness. It is not astonishing that the bleakest and most leprous aspects of a dream are merely an urging in that direction, an obstinate waiting for total joy, like the vision of that glowing hole, the empty window, for example, at the very moment when Marcelle lay sprawling on the floor, endlessly inundating it.

But that day, in the rainless tempest, Simone and I, our clothing lost, were forced to leave the chateau, fleeing like animals through the hostile darkness, our imaginations haunted by the despondency that was bound to take hold of Marcelle again, making the wretched inmate almost an embodiment of the fury and terror that kept driving our bodies to endless debauchery. We soon found our bicycles and could offer one another the irritating and theoretically unclean sight of a naked though shod body on a machine. We pedaled rapidly, without laughing or speaking, peculiarly satisfied with our mutual presence, akin to one another in the common isolation of lewdness, weariness, and absurdity.

Yet we were both literally perishing of fatigue. In the middle of a slope, Simone halted, saying she had the shivers. Our faces, backs, and legs were bathed in sweat, and we vainly ran our hands over one another, over the various parts of our soaked and burning bodies; despite a more and more vigorous massage, she was all trembling flesh and chattering teeth. I stripped off one of her stockings to wipe her body, which gave out a hot odor recalling the beds of sickness or of

debauchery. Little by little, however, she came around to a more bearable state, and finally she offered me her lips as a token of gratitude.

I was still extremely agitated. We had ten more kilometers to go, and in the state we were in, we obviously had to reach X by dawn. I could barely keep upright and despaired of ever reaching the end of this ride through the impossible. We had abandoned the real world, the one made up solely of dressed people, and the time elapsed since then was already so remote as to seem almost beyond reach. Our personal hallucination now developed as boundlessly as perhaps the total nightmare of human society, for instance, with earth, sky, and atmosphere.

A leather seat clung to Simone's bare cunt, which was inevitably jerked by the legs pumping up and down on the spinning pedals. Furthermore, the rear wheel vanished indefinitely to my eyes, not only in the bicycle fork but virtually in the crevice of the cyclist's naked bottom: the rapid whirling of the dusty tire was also directly comparable to both the thirst in my throat and the erection of my penis, destined to plunge into the depths of the cunt sticking to the bicycle seat. The wind had died down somewhat, and part of the starry sky was visible. And it struck me that death was the sole outcome of my erection, and if Simone and I were killed, then the universe of our unbearable personal vision was certain to be replaced by the pure stars, fully unrelated to any external gazes and realizing in a cold state, without human delays or detours, something that strikes me as the goal of my sexual licentiousness: a geometric incandescence (among other things, the coinciding point of life and death, being and nothingness), perfectly fulgurating.

Yet these images were, of course, tied to the contradiction of a prolonged state of exhaustion and an absurd rigidity of my penis. Now it was difficult for Simone to see this rigidity, partly because of the darkness, and partly because of the swift rising of my left leg, which kept hiding my stiffness by turning the pedal. Yet I felt I could see her eyes, aglow in the darkness, peer back constantly, no matter how fatigued, at this breaking point of my body, and I realized she was tossing off more and more violently on the seat, which was pinched between her buttocks. Like myself, she had not yet drained the tempest evoked by the shamelessness of her cunt, and at times she let out husky moans; she was literally torn away by joy, and her nude body was hurled upon an embankment with an awful scraping of steel on the pebbles and a piercing shriek.

I found her inert, her head hanging down, a thin trickle of blood running from the corner of her mouth. Horrified to the limit of my strength, I pulled up one arm, but it fell back inert. I threw myself upon the lifeless body, trembling with fear, and as I clutched it in an embrace, I was overcome with bloody spasms, my lower lip drooling and my teeth bared like a leering moron.

Meanwhile, Simone was slowly coming to: her arm touched me in an involuntary movement, and I quickly returned from the torpor overwhelming me after I had besmirched what I thought was a corpse. No injury, no bruise marked the body, which was still clad in the garter belt and a single stocking. I took her in my arms and carried her down the road, heedless of my fatigue; I walked as fast as I could because the day was just breaking, but only a superhuman effort allowed me to reach the villa and happily put my marvelous friend alive into her very own bed.

The sweat was pouring from my face and all over my body, my eyes were bloody and swollen, my ears deafened, my teeth chattering, my temples and my heart drumming away. But since I had just rescued the person I loved most in the world, and since I thought we would soon be seeing Marcelle, I lay down next to Simone's body just as I was, soaked and full of coagulated dust, and soon I drifted off into vague nightmares.

6. Simone

One of the most peaceful eras of my life was the period following Simone's minor accident, which only left her ill. Whenever her mother came, I would step into the bathroom. Usually, I took advantage of these moments to piss or even bathe; the first time the woman tried to enter, she was immediately stopped by her daughter:

"Don't go in," she said, "there's a naked man in there."

Each time, however, the mother was dismissed before long, and I would take my place again in a chair next to the sickbed. I smoked cigarettes, went through newspapers, and if there were any items about crime or violence, I would read them aloud. From time to time, I would carry a feverish Simone to the bathroom to help her pee, and then I would carefully wash her on the bidet. She was extremely weak and naturally I never stroked her seriously; but nevertheless, she soon delighted in having me throw eggs into the toilet bowl, hard-boiled eggs, which sank, and shells sucked out in various degrees to obtain varying levels of immersion. She would sit for a long time, gazing at the eggs. Then she would settle on the toilet to view them under her cunt between the parted thighs; and finally, she would have me flush the bowl.

Another game was to crack a fresh egg on the edge of the bidet and empty it under her: sometimes she would piss on it, sometimes she made me strip naked and swallow the raw egg from the bottom of the bidet. She did promise that as soon as she was well again, she would do the same for me and also for Marcelle.

At that time, we imagined Marcelle, with her dress tucked up, but her body covered and her feet shod: we would put her in a bath tub half filled with fresh eggs, and she would pee while crushing them. Simone also daydreamed about my holding Marcelle, this time with nothing on but her garter belt and stockings, her cunt aloft, her legs bent, and her head down; Simone herself, in a bathrobe drenched in hot water and thus clinging to her body but exposing her bosom, would then get up on a white enameled chair with a cork seat. I would arouse her breasts from a distance by lifting the tips on the heated barrel of a long service revolver that had been loaded and just fired (first of all, this would shake us up, and secondly, it would give the barrel a pungent smell of powder). At the same time, she would pour a jar of dazzling white *crème fraîche* on Marcelle's gray anus, and she would also urinate freely in her robe or, if the robe were open, on Marcelle's back or head, while I could piss on Marcelle from the other side (I would certainly piss on her breasts). Furthermore, Marcelle herself could fully inundate me if she liked, for while I held her up, her thighs would be gripping my neck. And she could also stick my cock in her mouth, and what not.

It was after such dreams that Simone would ask me to bed her down on blankets by the toilet, and she would rest her head on the rim of the bowl and fix her wide eyes on the white eggs. I myself settled comfortably next to her so that our cheeks and temples might touch. We were calmed by the long contemplation. The gulping gurgle of the flushing water always amused Simone, making her forget her obsession and ultimately restoring her high spirits.

At last, one day at six, when the oblique sunshine was directly lighting the bathroom, a half sucked egg was suddenly invaded by the water, and after filling up with a bizarre noise, it was shipwrecked before our very eyes. This incident was so extraordinarily meaningful to Simone that her body tautened and she had a long climax, virtually drinking my left eye between her lips. Then, without leaving the eye, which was sucked as obstinately as a breast, she sat down, wrenching my head toward her on the seat, and she pissed noisily on the bobbing eggs with total vigor and satisfaction.

By then she could be regarded as cured, and she demonstrated her joy by speaking to me at length about various intimate things, whereas ordinarily she never spoke about herself or me. Smiling, she admitted that an instant ago, she had felt a strong urge to relieve herself completely, but had held back for the sake of greater pleasure. Truly, the urge bloated her belly and particularly made her cunt swell up like a ripe fruit; and when I passed my hand under the sheets and her cunt gripped it firm and tight, she remarked that she was still in the same state and that it was inordinately pleasant. Upon my asking what the word urinate reminded her of, she replied: terminate, the eyes, with a razor, something red, the sun. And egg? A calf's eye, because of the

color of the head (the calf's head) and also because the white of the egg was the white of the eye, and the yolk the eyeball. The eye, she said, was egg-shaped. She asked me to promise that when we could go outdoors, I would fling eggs into the sunny air and break them with shots from my gun, and when I replied that it was out of the question, she talked on and on, trying to reason me into it. She played gaily with words, speaking about breaking eggs, and then breaking eyes, and her arguments became more and more unreasonable.

She added that, for her, the smell of the ass was the smell of powder, a jet of urine a "gunshot seen as a light;" each of her buttocks was a peeled hard-boiled egg. We agreed to send for hot soft-boiled eggs without shells, for the toilet, and she promised that when she now sat on the seat, she would ease herself fully on those eggs. Her cunt was still in my hand and in the state she had described; and after her promise, a storm began brewing little by little in my innermost depth—I was reflecting more and more.

It is fair to say that the room of a bedridden invalid is just the right place for gradually rediscovering childhood lewdness. I gently sucked Simone's breast while waiting for the soft-boiled eggs, and she ran her fingers through my hair. Her mother was the one who brought us the eggs, but I didn't even turn around, I assumed it was a maid, and I kept on sucking the breast contentedly. Nor was I ultimately disturbed when I recognized the voice, but since she remained and I couldn't forego even one instant of my pleasure, I thought of pulling down my trousers as for a call of nature, not ostentatiously, but merely hoping she would leave and delighted at going beyond all limits. When she finally decided to walk out and vainly ponder over her dismay elsewhere, the night was already gathering, and we switched on the lamp in the bathroom. Simone settled on the toilet, and we each ate one of the hot eggs with salt. With the three that were left, I softly caressed her body, gliding them between her buttocks and thighs, then I slowly dropped them into the water one by one. Finally, after viewing them for a while, immersed, white, and still hot (this was the first time she was seeing them peeled, that is naked, drowned under her beautiful cunt), Simone continued the immersion with a plopping noise akin to that of the soft-boiled eggs.

But I ought to say that nothing of the sort ever happened between us again, and, with one exception, no further eggs ever came up in our conversations; nevertheless, if we chanced to notice one or more, we could not help reddening when our eyes met in a silent and murky interrogation.

At any rate, it will be shown by the end of this tale, that this interrogation was not to remain without an answer indefinitely, and above all, that this unexpected answer is necessary for

measuring the immensity of the void that yawned before us, without our knowledge, during our singular entertainments with the eggs.

7. Marcelle

By a sort of shared modesty, Simone and I had always avoided talking about the most important objects of our obsessions. That was why the word egg was dropped from our vocabulary, and we never spoke about the kind of interest we had in one another, even less about what Marcelle meant to us. We spent all of Simone's illness in a bedroom, looking forward to when we could go back to Marcelle, as nervously as we had once waited for the end of the last lesson in school, and so all we talked about was the day we would return to the chateau. I had prepared a small cord, a thick, knotted rope, and a hacksaw, all of which Simone examined with the keenest interest, peering attentively at each knot and section of the rope. I also managed to find the bicycles, which I had concealed in a thicket the day of our tumble, and I meticulously oiled the various parts, the gears, ball bearings, sprockets, etc. I then attached a pair of footrests to my own bicycle so that I could seat one of the girls behind. Nothing could be easier, at least for the time being, than to have Marcelle living in Simone's room secretly like myself. We would simply be forced to share the bed (and we would inevitably have to use the same bathtub, etc.). But a good six weeks passed before Simone could pedal after me reasonably well to the sanatorium. Like the previous time, we left at night: in fact, I still kept out of sight during the day, and this time there was certainly every reason for remaining inconspicuous. I was in a hurry to arrive at the place that I dimly regarded as a "haunted castle," due to the association of the words sanatorium and castle, and also the memory of the phantom sheet and the thought of the lunatics in a huge silent dwelling at night. But now, to my surprise, even though I was ill at ease anywhere in the world, I felt at bottom as if I were going home. And that was indeed my impression when we jumped over the park wall and saw the huge building stretching out ahead beyond the trees: only Marcelle's window was still aglow and wide open. Taking some pebbles from a lane, we threw them into her chamber and they promptly summoned the girl, who quickly recognized us and obeyed our gesture of putting a finger on our lips. But of course we also held up the knotted rope to let her understand what we were doing this time. I hurled the cord up to her with the aid of a stone, and she threw it back after looping it around a bar. There were no difficulties, the big rope was hoisted by Marcelle and fastened to the bar, and I scrambled all the way up.

Marcelle flinched when I tried to kiss her. She merely watched me very attentively as I started filing away at a bar. Since she only had a bathrobe on, I softly told her to get dressed so she could come with us. She simply turned her back to pull flesh-colored stockings over her legs, securing them on a belt of bright red ribbons that brought out a rump with a perfect shape and an

exceptionally fine skin. I continued filing, bathed in sweat because of both my effort and what I saw. Her back still towards me, Marcelle pulled a blouse over long, flat hips, whose straight lines were admirably terminated by the buttocks when she had one foot on a chair. She did not slip on any panties, only a pleated gray woolen skirt and a sweater with very tiny black, white, and red checks. After stepping into flat-heeled shoes, she came over to the window and sat down close enough to me so that my one hand could caress her head, her lovely short hair, so sleek and so blond that it actually looked pale. She gazed at me affectionately and seemed touched by my wordless joy at seeing her.

"Now we can get married, can't we?" she finally said, gradually won over. "It's very bad here, we suffer..."

At that point, I would never have dreamt for even an instant that I could do anything but devote the rest of my life to such an unreal apparition. She let me give her a long kiss on her forehead and her eyes, and when one of her hands happened to touch my leg, she looked at me wide-eyed, but before withdrawing her hand, she ran it over my clothes absent-mindedly.

After long work, I succeeded in cutting through the horrid bar. I pulled it aside with all my strength, which left enough space for her to squeeze through. She did so, and I helped her descend, climbing down underneath, which forced me to see the top of her thigh and even to touch it when I supported her. Reaching the ground, she snuggled in my arms and kissed my mouth with all her strength, while Simone, sitting at our feet, her eyes wet with tears, flung her hands around Marcelle's legs, hugging her knees and thighs. At first, she only rubbed her cheek against the thigh, but then, unable to restrain a huge surge of joy, she finally yanked the body apart, pressing her lips to the cunt, which she greedily devoured.

However, Simone and I realized that Marcelle grasped absolutely nothing of what was going on and she was actually incapable of telling one situation from another. Thus she smiled, imagining how aghast the director of the "haunted castle" would be to see her strolling through the garden with her husband. Also, she was scarcely aware of Simone's existence; mirthfully, she at times mistook her for a wolf because of her black hair, her silence, and because Simone's head was docilely rubbing Marcelle's thigh, like a dog nuzzling his master's leg. Nonetheless, when I spoke to Marcelle about the "haunted castle," she did not ask me to explain; she understood that this was the building where she had been wickedly locked up. And whenever she thought of it, her terror pulled her away from me as though she had seen something pass through the trees. I watched her uneasily, and since my face was already hard and somber, I too frightened her, and almost at the same instant she asked me to protect her until the Cardinal returned.

We were lying in the moonlight by the edge of a forest. We wanted to rest a while during our trip back and we especially wanted to embrace and stare at Marcelle.

"But who is the Cardinal?" Simone asked her.

"The man who locked me in the wardrobe," said Marcelle.

"But why is he a cardinal?" I cried.

She replied: "Because he is the priest of the guillotine."

I now recalled Marcelle's dreadful fear when she left the wardrobe, and particularly two details: I had been wearing a blinding red carnival novelty, a Jacobin liberty cap; furthermore, because of the deep cuts in a girl I had raped, my face, clothes, hands—all parts of me were stained with blood.

Thus, in her terror, Marcelle confused a cardinal, a priest of the guillotine, with the blood-smeared executioner wearing a liberty cap: a bizarre overlapping of piety and abomination for priests explained the confusion, which, for me, had remained attached to both my hard reality and the horror continually aroused by the compulsiveness of my actions.

8. The Open Eyes of the Dead Woman

For a moment, I was totally helpless after this unexpected discovery; and so was Simone. Marcelle was now half asleep in my arms, so that we didn't know what to do. Her dress was pulled up exposing the gray pussy between red ribbons at the end of long thighs, and it had thereby become an extraordinary hallucination in a world so frail that a mere breath might have changed us into light. We didn't dare budge, and all we desired was for that unreal immobility to last as long as possible, and for Marcelle to fall sound asleep.

My mind reeled in some kind of exhausting vertigo, and I don't know what the outcome would have been if Simone, whose worried gaze was darting between my eyes and Marcelle's nudity, had not made a sudden, gentle movement: she opened her thighs, saying in a blank voice that she couldn't hold back any longer.

She soaked her dress in a long convulsion that fully denuded her and promptly made me spurt a wave of semen in my clothes.

I stretched out in the grass, my skull on a large, flat rock and my eyes staring straight up at the Milky Way, that strange breath of astral sperm and heavenly urine across the cranial vault formed by the ring of constellations: that open crack at the summit of the sky, apparently made of ammoniac vapors shining in the immensity (in empty space, where they burst forth absurdly like a rooster's crow in total silence), a broken egg, a broken eye, or my own dazzled skull weighing down the rock, bouncing symmetrical images back to infinity. The nauseating crow of a rooster in particular coincided with my own life, that is to say, now, the Cardinal, because of the crack, the red color, the discordant shrieks he provoked in the wardrobe, and also because one cuts the throats of roosters.

To others, the universe seems decent because decent people have gelded eyes. That is why they fear lewdness. They are never frightened by the crowing of a rooster or when strolling under a starry heaven. In general, people savor the "pleasures of the flesh" only on condition that they be insipid.

But as of then, no doubt existed for me: I did not care for what is known as "pleasures of the flesh" because they really are insipid; I cared only for what is classified as "dirty." On the other hand, I was not even satisfied with the usual debauchery, because the only thing it dirties is debauchery itself, while, in some way or other, anything sublime and perfectly pure is left intact by it. My kind of debauchery soils not only my body and my thoughts, but also anything I may conceive in its course, that is to say, the vast starry universe, which merely serves as a backdrop.

I associate the moon with the vaginal blood of mothers, sisters, that is, the menstrua with their sickening stench...

I loved Marcelle without mourning her. If she died, then it was my fault. If I had nightmares, if I sometimes locked myself up in a cellar for hours at a time precisely because I was thinking about Marcelle, I would nevertheless still be prepared to start all over again, for instance by ducking her hair, head down, in a toilet bowl. But since she is dead, I have nothing left but certain catastrophes that bring me to her at times when I least expect it. Otherwise, I cannot possibly perceive the least kinship now between the dead girl and myself, which makes most of my days inevitably dreary.

I will merely report here that Marcelle hanged herself after a dreadful incident. She recognized the huge bridal wardrobe, and her teeth started chattering: she instantly realized upon looking at me that I was the man she called the Cardinal, and when she began shrieking, there was no other way for me to stop that desperate howling than to leave the room. By the time Simone and I returned she was hanging inside the wardrobe...

I cut the rope, but she was quite dead. We laid her out on the carpet. Simone saw I was getting a hard-on and she started tossing me off: I too stretched out on the carpet. It was impossible to do otherwise; Simone was still a virgin, and I fucked her for the first time, next to the corpse. It was very painful for both of us, but we were glad precisely because it was painful. Simone stood up and gazed at the corpse. Marcelle had become a total stranger, and in fact, so had Simone at that moment. I no longer cared at all for either Simone or Marcelle. Even if someone had told me it was I who had just died, I would not even have been astonished, so alien were these events to me. I observed Simone, and, as I precisely recall, my only pleasure was in the smutty things Simone was doing, for the corpse was very irritating to her, as though she could not bear the thought that this creature, so similar to her, could not feel her anymore. The open eyes were more irritating than anything else. Even when Simone drenched the face, those eyes, extraordinarily, did not close. We were perfectly calm, all three of us, and that was the most hopeless part of it. Any boredom in the world is linked, for me, to that moment and, above all, to an obstacle as ridiculous as death. But that won't prevent me from thinking back to that time with no revulsion and even with a sense of complicity. Basically, the lack of excitement made everything far more absurd, and thus Marcelle was closer to me dead than in her lifetime, inasmuch as absurd existence, so I imagine, has all the prerogatives.

As for the fact that Simone dared to piss on the corpse, whether in boredom or, at worst, in irritation: it mainly goes to prove how impossible it was for us to understand what was happening, and of course, it is no more understandable today than it was then. Simone, being truly incapable of conceiving death such as one normally considers it, was frightened and furious, but in no way awestruck. Marcelle belonged to us so deeply in our isolation that we could not see her as just another corpse. Nothing about her death could be measured by a common standard, and the contradictory impulses overtaking us in this circumstance neutralized one another, leaving us blind and, as it were, very remote from anything we touched, in a world where gestures have no carrying power, like voices in a space that is absolutely soundless.

9. Lewd Animals

To avoid the bother of a police investigation, we instantly took off for Spain, where Simone was counting on our disappearing with the help of a fabulously rich Englishman, who had offered to support her and would be more likely than anyone else to show interest in our plight.

The villa was abandoned in the middle of the night. We had no trouble stealing a boat, reaching an obscure point on the Spanish coast, and burning the vessel with the aid of two drums of petrol that we had taken along, as a precautionary measure, from the garage of the villa. Simone left me concealed in a wood during the day and went to look for the Englishman in San Sebastian. She only came back at nightfall, but driving a magnificent automobile, with suitcases full of linen and rich clothing.

Simone said that Sir Edmund would join us in Madrid and that all day long he had been plying her with the most detailed questions about Marcelle's death, making her draw diagrams and sketches. Finally he had told a servant to buy a wax mannequin with a blonde wig; he had then laid the figure out on the floor and asked Simone to urinate on its face, on the open eyes, in the same position as she had urinated on the eyes of the corpse: during all that time, Sir Edmund had not even touched her.

However, there had been a great change in Simone after Marcelle's suicide—she kept staring into space all the time, looking as if she belonged to something other than the terrestrial world, where almost everything bored her; or if she was still attached to this world, then purely by way of orgasms, which were rare but incomparably more violent than before. These orgasms were as different from normal climaxes as, say, the mirth of savage Africans from that of Occidentals. In fact, though the savages may sometimes laugh as moderately as whites, they also have long-lasting spasms, with all parts of the body in violent release, and they go whirling willy-nilly, flailing their arms about wildly, shaking their bellies, necks, and chests, and chortling and gulping horribly. As for Simone, she would first open uncertain eyes, at some lewd and dismal sight...

For example, Sir Edmund had a cramped, windowless pigsty, where one day he locked up a petite and luscious streetwalker from Madrid; wearing only cami-knickers, she collapsed in a pool of liquid manure under the bellies of the grunting swine. Once the door was shut, Simone had me fuck her again and again in front of that door, with her ass in the mud, under a fine drizzle of rain, while Sir Edmund tossed off:

Gasping and slipping away from me, Simone grabbed her behind in both hands and threw back her head, which banged violently against the ground; she tensed breathlessly for a few seconds, pulling with all her might on the fingernails buried in her buttocks, then tore herself away at one

swoop and thrashed about on the ground like a headless chicken, hurting herself with a terrible bang on the door fittings. Sir Edmund gave her his wrist to bite on and allay the spasm that kept shaking her, and I saw that her face was smeared with saliva and blood.

After these huge fits, she always came to nestle in my arms; she settled her little bottom comfortably in my large hands and remained there for a long time without moving or speaking, huddled like a little girl, but always somber.

Sir Edmund deployed his ingenuity at providing us with obscene spectacles at random, but Simone still preferred bullfights. There were actually three things about bullfights that fascinated her: the first, when the bull comes hurtling out of the bullpen like a big rat; the second, when its horns plunge all the way into the flank of a mare; the third, when that ludicrous, raw-boned mare gallops across the arena, lashing out unseasonably and dragging a huge, vile bundle of bowels between her thighs in the most dreadful wan colors, a pearly white, pink, and gray. Simone's heart throbbed fastest when the exploding bladder dropped its mass of mare's urine on the sand in one quick plop.

She was on tenterhooks from start to finish at the bullfight, in terror (which of course mainly expressed a violent desire) at the thought of seeing the toreador hurled up by one of the monstrous lunges of the horns when the bull made its endless, blindly raging dashes at the void of colored cloths. And there is something else I ought to say: when the bull makes its quick, brutal, thrusts over and over again into the matador's cape, barely grazing the erect line of the body, any spectator has that feeling of total and repeated lunging typical of the game of coitus. The utter nearness of death is also felt in the same way. But these series of prodigious passes are rare. Thus, each time they occur, they unleash a veritable delirium in the arena, and it is well known that at such thrilling instants the women come by merely rubbing their thighs together.

Apropos bullfights, Sir Edmund once told Simone that until quite recently, certain virile Spaniards, mostly occasional amateur toreadors, used to ask the caretaker of the arena to bring them the fresh, roasted balls of one of the first bulls to be killed. They received them at their seats, in the front row of the arena, and ate them while watching the killing of the next few bulls. Simone took a keen interest in this tale, and since we were attending the first major bullfight of the year that Sunday, she begged Sir Edmund to get her the balls of the first bull, but added one condition: they had to be raw.

"I say," objected Sir Edmund, "whatever do you want with raw balls? You certainly don't intend to eat raw balls now, do you?"

"I want to have them before me on a plate," concluded Simone.

10. Granero's Eye

On May 7, 1922, the toreadors La Rosa, Lalanda, and Granero were to fight in the arena of Madrid; the last two were renowned as the best matadors in Spain, and Granero was generally considered superior to Lalanda. He had only just turned twenty, yet he was already extremely popular, being handsome, tall and of a still childlike simplicity. Simone had been deeply interested in his story, and, exceptionally, had shown genuine pleasure when Sir Edmund announced that the celebrated bull-killer had agreed to dine with us the evening of the fight.

Granero stood out from the rest of the matadors because there was nothing of the butcher about him; he looked more like a very manly Prince Charming with a perfectly elegant figure. In this respect, the matador's costume is quite expressive, for it safeguards the straight line shooting up so rigid and erect every time the lunging bull grazes the body and because the pants so tightly sheathe the behind. A bright red cloth and a brilliant sword (before the dying bull whose hide steams with sweat and blood) complete the metamorphosis, bringing out the most captivating feature of the game. One must also bear in mind the typically torrid Spanish sky, which never has the color or harshness one imagines: it is just perfectly sunny with a dazzling but mellow sheen, hot, turbid, at times even unreal when the combined intensities of light and heat suggest the freedom of the senses.

Now this extreme unreality of the solar blaze was so closely attached to everything happening around me during the bullfight on May 7, that the only objects I have ever carefully preserved are a round paper fan, half yellow, half blue, that Simone had that day, and a small illustrated brochure with a description of all the circumstances and a few photographs. Later on, during an embarkment, the small valise containing those two souvenirs tumbled into the sea, and was fished out by an Arab with a long pole, which is why the objects are in such a bad state. But I need them to fix that event to the earthly soil, to a geographic point and a precise date, an event that my imagination compulsively pictures as a simple vision of solar deliquescence. The first bull, the one whose balls Simone looked forward to having served raw on a plate, was a kind of black monster, who shot out of the pen so quickly that despite all efforts and all shouts, he disemboweled three horses in a row before an orderly fight could take place; one horse and rider were hurled aloft together, loudly crashing down behind the horns. But when Granero faced the bull, the combat was launched with brio, proceeding amid a frenzy of cheers. The young man sent the furious beast racing around him in his pink cape; each time, his body was lifted by a sort

of spiraling jet, and he just barely eluded a frightful impact. In the end, the death of the solar monster was performed cleanly, with the beast blinded by the scrap of red cloth, the sword deep in the blood-smeared body. An incredible ovation resounded as the bull staggered to its knees with the uncertainty of a drunkard, collapsed with its legs sticking up, and died.

Simone, who sat between Sir Edmund and myself, witnessed the killing with an exhilaration at least equal to mine, and she refused to sit down again when the interminable acclamation for the young man was over. She took my hand wordlessly and led me to an outer courtyard of the filthy arena, where the stench of equine and human urine was suffocating because of the great heat. I grabbed Simone's cunt, and she seized my furious cock through my trousers. We stepped into a stinking shithouse, where sordid flies whirled about in a sunbeam. Standing here, I exposed Simone's cunt, and into her blood-red, slobbery flesh I stuck my fingers, then my penis, which entered that cavern of blood while I tossed off her ass, thrusting my bony middle finger deep inside. At the same time, the roofs of our mouths cleaved together in a storm of saliva.

A bull's orgasm is not more powerful than the one that wrenched through our loins to tear us to shreds, though without shaking my thick penis out of that stuffed vulva, which was gorged with come.

Our hearts were still booming in our chests, which were equally burning and equally lusty to press stark naked against wet unslaked hands, and Simone's cunt was still as greedy as before and my cock stubbornly rigid, as we returned to the first row of the arena. But when we arrived at our places next to Sir Edmund, there, in broad sunlight, on Simone's seat, lay a white dish containing two peeled balls, glands the size and shape of eggs, and of a pearly whiteness, faintly bloodshot, like the globe of an eye: they had just been removed from the first bull, a black-haired creature, into whose body Granero had plunged his sword.

"Here are the raw balls," Sir Edmund said to Simone in his British accent.

Simone was already kneeling before the plate, peering at it in absorbed interest, but in something of a quandary. It seemed she wanted to do something but didn't know how to go about it, which exasperated her. I picked up the dish to let her sit down, but she grabbed it away from me with a categorical "no" and returned it to the stone seat.

Sir Edmund and I were growing annoyed at being the focus of our neighbors' attention just when the bullfight was slackening. I leaned over and whispered to Simone, asking what had got into her.

"Idiot!" she replied. "Can't you see I want to sit on the plate, and all these people watching!"

"That's absolutely out of the question," I rejoined, "sit down."

At the same time, I took away the dish and made her sit, and I stared at her to let her know that I understood, that I remembered the dish of milk, and that this renewed desire was unsettling me. From that moment on, neither of us could keep from fidgeting, and this state of malaise was contagious enough to affect Sir Edmund. I ought to say that the fight had become boring, unpugnacious bulls were facing matadors who didn't know what to do next; and to top it off, since Simone had demanded seats in the sun, we were trapped in something like an immense vapor of light and muggy heat, which parched our throats as it bore down upon us.

It really was totally out of the question for Simone to lift her dress and place her bare behind in the dish of raw balls. All she could do was hold the dish in her lap. I told her I would like to fuck her again before Granero returned to fight the fourth bull, but she refused, and she sat there, keenly involved, despite everything, in the disembowelments of horses, followed, as she childishly put it, by "death and destruction," namely the cataract of bowels.

Little by little, the sun's radiance sucked us into an unreality that fitted our malaise—the wordless and powerless desire to explode and get up off our behinds. We grimaced, because our eyes were blinded and because we were thirsty, our senses ruffled, and there was no possibility of quenching our desires. We three had managed to share in the morose dissolution that leaves no harmony between the various spasms of the body. We were so far gone that even Granero's return could not pull us out of that stupefying absorption. Besides, the bull opposite him was distrustful and seemed unresponsive; the combat went on just as drearily as before.

The events that followed were without transition or connection, not because they weren't actually related, but because my attention was so absent as to remain absolutely dissociated. In just a few seconds: first, Simone bit into one of the raw balls, to my dismay; then Granero advanced towards the bull, waving his scarlet cloth; finally, almost at once, Simone, with a blood-red face and a suffocating lewdness, uncovered her long white thighs up to her moist vulva, into which she slowly and surely fitted the second pale globule—Granero was thrown back by the bull and wedged against the balustrade; the horns struck the balustrade three times at full speed; at the third blow, one horn plunged into the right eye and through the head. A shriek of unmeasured horror coincided with a brief orgasm for Simone, who was lifted up from the stone seat only to be

flung back with a bleeding nose, under a blinding sun; men instantly rushed over to haul away Granero's body, the right eye dangling from the head.

11. Under the Sun of Seville

Thus, two globes of equal size and consistency had suddenly been propelled in opposite directions at once. One, the white ball of the bull, had been thrust into the "pink and dark" cunt that Simone had bared in the crowd; the other, a human eye, had spurted from Granero's head with the same force as a bundle of innards from a belly. This coincidence, tied to death and to a sort of urinary liquefaction of the sky, first brought us back to Marcelle in a moment that was so brief and almost insubstantial, yet so uneasily vivid that I stepped forward like a sleepwalker as though about to touch her at eye level.

Needless to say, everything was promptly back to normal, though with blinding obsessions in the hour after Granero's death. Simone was in such a foul mood that she told Sir Edmund she wouldn't spend another day in Madrid; she was very anxious to see Seville because of its reputation as a city of pleasure.

Sir Edmund took a heady delight in satisfying the whims of "the simplest and most angelic creature ever to walk the earth," and so the next day he accompanied us to Seville, where we found an even more liquefying heat and light than in Madrid. A lavish abundance of flowers in the streets, geraniums and rose laurels, helped to put our senses on edge.

Simone walked about naked under a white dress that was flimsy enough to hint at the red garter belt underneath and, in certain positions, even at her pussy. Furthermore, everything in this city contributed to making her radiate such sensuality that when we passed through the torrid streets, I often saw cocks stretching trousers.

Indeed, we virtually never stopped having sex. We avoided orgasms and we went sightseeing, for this was the only way to keep from having my penis endlessly immersed in her fur. But we did take advantage of any opportunities when we were out. We would leave one convenient place with never any goal but to find another like it. An empty museum room, a stairway, a garden path, lined with high bushes, an open church, deserted alleys in the evenings—we walked until we found the right place, and the instant we found it, I would open the girl's body by lifting one of her legs and shoving my cock to the bottom of her cunt in one swoop. A few moments later, I would pull my steaming member from its stable, and our promenade would continue almost aimlessly. Usually, Sir Edmund would follow at a distance in order to surprise us: he would turn purple, but

he never came close. And if he masturbated, he would do it discreetly, not for caution's sake, of course, but because he never did anything unless standing isolated and almost utterly steady, with a dreadful muscular contraction.

"This is a very interesting place," he said one day in regard to a church, "it's the church of Don Juan."

"So what?" replied Simone.

"Stay here with me," Sir Edmund said to me. "And you Simone, you ought to go round this church all by yourself."

"What an awful idea!"

Nevertheless, however awful the idea, it aroused her curiosity, and she went in by herself while we waited in the street.

Five minutes later, Simone reappeared at the threshold of the church. We were dumbstruck: not only was she guffawing her head off, but she couldn't speak or stop laughing, so that, partly by contagion, partly because of the intense light, I began laughing as hard as she, and so did Sir Edmund to a certain extent.

"Bloody girl," he said. "Can't you explain? By the by, we're laughing right over the tomb of Don Juan!"

And laughing even harder, he pointed at a large church brass at our feet. It was the tomb of the church's founder, who, the guides claimed, was Don Juan: after repenting, he had himself buried under the doorstep so that the faithful would trudge over his corpse when entering or leaving their haunt.

But now our wild laughter burst out again tenfold. In our mirth, Simone had lightly pissed down her leg, and a tiny trickle of water had landed on the brass.

We noted a further effect of her accident: the thin dress, being wet, stuck to her body, and since the cloth was now fully transparent, Simone's attractive belly and thighs were revealed with particular lewdness, a dark patch between the red ribbons of her garter belt.

"All I can do is go into the church," said Simone, a bit calmer, "it'll dry." We burst into a larger space, where Sir Edmund and I vainly looked for the comical sight that the girl had been unable to explain. The room was relatively cool, and the light came from windows, filtering through curtains of a bright red, transparent cretonne. The ceiling was of carved woodwork, the walls were plastered but encumbered with religious gewgaws more or less gilded. The entire back wall was covered from floor to rafters by an altar and a giant Baroque retable of gilded wood; the involved and contorted decorations conjured up India, with deep shadows and golden glows, and the whole altar at first seemed very mysterious and just right for sex. At either side of the entrance door hung two famous canvases by the painter Valdès Leal, pictures of decomposing corpses: interestingly, one of the eye sockets was being gnawed through by a rat. Yet in all these things, there was nothing funny to be found.

Quite the contrary: the whole place was sumptuous and sensuous, the play of shadows and light from the red curtains, the coolness and a strong pungent aroma of blossoming oleander, plus the dress sticking to Simone's pussy—everything was urging me to burst loose and bare that wet cunt on the floor, when I spied a pair of silk shoes at a confessional: the feet of a penitent female.

"I want to see them leave," said Simone.

She sat down before me, not far from the confessional, and all I could do was caress her neck, the line of her hair, or her shoulders with my cock. And that put her so much on edge that she told me to tuck my penis away immediately or she would rub it until I came.

I had to sit down and merely look at Simone's nakedness through the soaked cloth, at its best in the open air, when she wanted to fan her wet thighs and she uncrossed them and lifted her dress.

"You'll see," she said.

That was why I patiently waited for the key to the puzzle. After a rather long wait, a very beautiful young brunette stepped out of the confessional, her hands folded, her face pale and enraptured: with her head thrown back and her eyes white and vacant, she slowly eased across the room like an opera ghost. There was something so truly unexpected about the whole thing that I desperately squeezed my legs together to keep from laughing, when the door of the confessional opened: someone else emerged, this time a blond priest, very young, very handsome, with a long thin face and the pale eyes of a saint. His arms were crossed on his chest, and he remained on the threshold of the booth, gazing at a fixed point on the ceiling as though a celestial apparition were about to help him levitate.

The priest thus moved in the same direction as the woman, and he would probably have vanished in turn without seeing anything if Simone, to my great surprise, had not brought him up sharply. Something unbelievable had occurred to her: she greeted the visionary courteously and said she wanted to confess.

The priest, still gliding in his ecstasy, indicated the confessional with a distant gesture and reentered his tabernacle, softly closing the door without a word.

12. Simone's Confession and Sir Edmund's Mass

One can readily imagine my stupor at watching Simone kneel down by the cabinet of the lugubrious confessor. While she confessed her sins, I waited, extremely anxious to see the outcome of such an unexpected action. I assumed this sordid creature was going to burst from his booth, pounce upon the impious girl, and flagellate her. I was even getting ready to knock the dreadful phantom down and treat him to a few kicks; but nothing of the sort happened: the booth remained closed, Simone spoke on and on through the tiny grilled window, and that was all.

I was exchanging sharply interrogative looks with Sir Edmund when things began to grow clear: Simone was slowly scratching her thigh, moving her legs apart; keeping one knee on the prayer stool, she shifted one foot to the floor, and she was exposing more and more of her legs over her stockings while still murmuring her confession. At times she even seemed to be tossing off:

I softly drew up at the side to try and see what was happening: Simone really was masturbating, the left part of her face was pressed against the grille near the priest's head, her limbs tensed, her thighs splayed, her fingers rummaging deep in the fur; I was able to touch her, I bared her cunt for an instant. At that moment, I distinctly heard her say:

"Father, I still have not confessed the worst sin of all."

A few seconds of silence.

"The worst sin of all is very simply that I'm tossing off while talking to you."

More seconds of whispering inside, and finally almost aloud:

"If you don't believe me, I can show you."

And indeed, Simone stood up and spread one thigh before the eye of the window while masturbating with a quick, sure hand.

"All right, priest," cried Simone, banging away at the confessional, "what are you doing in your shack there? Tossing off, too?"

But the confessional kept its peace.

"Well, then I'll open."

And Simone pulled out the door.

Inside, the visionary, standing there with lowered head, was mopping a sweat-bathed brow. The girl groped for his cock under the cassock: he didn't turn a hair. She pulled up the filthy black skirt so that the long cock stuck out, pink and hard: all he did was throw back his head with a grimace, and a hiss escaped through his teeth, but he didn't interfere with Simone, who shoved the bestiality into her mouth and took long sucks on it.

Sir Edmund and I were immobile in our stupor. For my part, I was spellbound with admiration, and I didn't know what else to do, when the enigmatic Englishman resolutely strode to the confessional and, after edging Simone aside as delicately as could be, dragged the larva out of its hole by its wrists, and flung it brutally at our feet: the vile priest lay there like a cadaver, his teeth to the ground, not uttering a cry. We promptly carried him to the vestry.

His fly was open, his cock dangling, his face livid and drenched with sweat, he didn't resist, but breathed heavily: we put him in a large wooden armchair with architectural decorations.

"Senores," the wretch sniveled, "you must think I'm a hypocrite."

"No," replied Sir Edmund with a categorical intonation.

Simone asked him: "What's your name?"

"Don Aminado," he answered.

Simone slapped the sacerdotal pig, which gave him another hard-on. We stripped off all his clothes, and Simone crouched down and pissed on them like a bitch. Then she wanked and sucked the pig while I urinated in his nostrils. Finally, to top off this cold exaltation, I fucked Simone in the ass while she violently sucked his cock.

Meanwhile, Sir Edmund, contemplating the scene with his characteristic poker face, carefully inspected the room where we had found refuge. He glimpsed a tiny key hanging from a nail in the woodwork.

"What is that key for?" he asked Don Aminado.

From the expression of dread on the priest's face, Sir Edmund realized it was the key to the tabernacle.

The Englishman returned a few moments later, carrying a ciborium of twisted gold, decorated with a quantity of angels as naked as cupids. The wretched Don Aminado gaped at this receptacle of consecrated hosts on the floor, and his handsome moronic face, already contorted because Simone was flagellating his cock with her teeth and tongue, was now fully gasping and panting.

After barricading the door, Sir Edmund rummaged through the closets until he finally lit upon a large chalice, whereupon he asked us to abandon the wretch for an instant.

"Look," he explained to Simone, "the eucharistic hosts in the ciborium, and here the chalice where they put white wine."

"They smell like come," said Simone, sniffing the unleavened wafers.

"Precisely," continued Sir Edmund. "The hosts, as you see, are nothing other than Christ's sperm in the form of small white biscuits. And as for the wine they put in the chalice, the ecclesiastics say it is the blood of Christ, but they are obviously mistaken. If they really thought it was the blood, they would use red wine, but since they employ only white wine, they are showing that at the bottom of their hearts they are quite aware that this is urine."

The lucidity of this logic was so convincing that Simone and I required no further explanation. She, armed with the chalice and I with the ciborium, the two of us marched over to Don Aminado, who was still inert in his armchair, faintly agitated by a slight quiver through his body.

Simone began by slamming the base of the chalice against his skull, which jolted him and left him utterly dazed. Then she resumed sucking him, which provoked his ignoble rattles. After bringing his senses to a height of fury with Sir Edmund's help and mine, she gave him a hard shake.

"That's not all," she said in a voice that brooked no reply. "It's time to piss."

And she struck his face again with the chalice, but at the same time she stripped naked before him and I finger-fucked her.

Sir Edmund's gaze, fixed on the stunned eyes of the young cleric, was so imperious that the thing went off with barely any hitch; Don Aminado noisily poured his urine into the chalice, which Simone held under this thick cock.

"And now, drink," commanded Sir Edmund.

The paralyzed wretch drank with a well-nigh filthy ecstasy at one long gluttonous draft. Again Simone sucked and wanked him; he continued gurgling desperately and reveling in it. With a demented gesture, he bashed the sacred chamber-pot against a wall. Four robust arms lifted him up and, with open thighs, his body erect, and yelling like a pig being slaughtered, he spurted his come on the hosts in the ciborium, which Simone held in front of him while masturbating him.

13. The Legs of the Fly

We dropped the swine and he crashed to the floor. Sir Edmund, Simone, and myself were coldly animated by the same determination, together with an incredible excitement and levity. The priest lay there with a limp cock, his teeth digging into the floor with rage and shame. Now that his balls were drained, his abomination appeared to him in all its horror. He audibly sighed:

"Oh miserable sacrileges..."

And muttering other incomprehensible laments.

Sir Edmund nudged him with his foot; the monster leaped up and drew back, bellowing with such ludicrous fury that we burst out laughing.

"Get on your feet," Sir Edmund ordered him, "you're going to fuck this girl."

"Wretches..." Don Aminado threatened in a choking voice . "Spanish police... prison... the garrote..."

"But you are forgetting that is your sperm," observed Sir Edmund.

A ferocious grimace, a trembling like that of a cornered beast, and then: "The garrote for me too. But you three... first."

"Poor fool," smirked Sir Edmund. "First! Do you think I am going to let you wait that long? First!"

The imbecile gaped dumbstruck at the Englishman: an extremely silly expression darted across his handsome face. Something like an absurd joy began to open his mouth, he crossed his arms over his naked chest and finally gazed at us with ecstatic eyes. "Martyrdom..." he uttered in a voice that was suddenly feeble and yet tore out like a sob. "Martyrdom..." A bizarre hope of purification had come to the wretch, illuminating his eyes.

"First I am going to tell you a story," Sir Edmund said to him sedately. "You know that men who are hanged or garroted have such stiff cocks the instant their respiration is cut off, that they ejaculate. You are going to have the pleasure of being martyred while fucking this girl."

And when the horrified priest rose to defend himself, the Englishman brutally knocked him down, twisting his arm.

Next, Sir Edmund, slipping under his victim, pinioned his arms behind his back while I gagged him and bound his legs with a belt. The Englishman, gripping his arms from behind in a stranglehold, disabled the priest's legs in his own. Kneeling behind, I kept the man's head immobile between my thighs.

"And now," said Sir Edmund to Simone, "mount this little padre."

Simone removed her dress and squatted on the belly of this singular martyr, her cunt next to his flabby cock.

"Now," continued Sir Edmund, "squeeze his throat, the pipe just behind the Adam's apple: a strong, gradual pressure."

Simone squeezed, a dreadful shudder ran through that mute, fully immobilized body, and the cock stood on end. I took it into my hands and had no trouble fitting it into Simone's vulva, while she continued to squeeze the throat.

The utterly intoxicated girl kept wrenching the big cock in and out with her buttocks, atop the body whose muscles were cracking in our formidable strangleholds.

At last, she squeezed so resolutely that an even more violent thrill shot through her victim, and she felt the come shooting inside her cunt. Now she let go, collapsing backwards in a tempest of joy.

Simone lay on the floor, her belly up, her thigh still smeared by the dead man's sperm which had trickled from her vulva. I stretched out at her side to rape and fuck her in turn, but all I could do was squeeze her in my arms and kiss her mouth, because of a strange inward paralysis ultimately caused by my love for the girl and the death of the unspeakable creature. I have never been so content.

I didn't even stop Simone from pushing me aside and going to view her work. She straddled the naked cadaver again, scrutinizing the purplish face with the keenest interest, she even sponged the sweat off the forehead and obstinately waved away a fly buzzing in a sunbeam and endlessly flitting back to alight on the face. All at once, Simone uttered a soft cry. Something bizarre and quite baffling had happened: this time, the insect had perched on the corpse's eye and was agitating its long nightmarish legs on the strange orb. The girl took her head in her hands and shook it, trembling, then she seemed to plunge into an abyss of reflections.

Curiously, we weren't the least bit worried about what might happen. I suppose if anyone had come along, Sir Edmund and I wouldn't have given him much time to be scandalized. But no matter. Simone gradually emerged from her stupor and sought protection with Sir Edmund, who stood motionless, his back to the wall; we could hear the fly flitting over the corpse.

"Sir Edmund," she said, rubbing her cheek gently on his shoulder, "I want you to do something."

"I shall do anything you like," he replied.

She made me come over to the corpse: she knelt down and completely opened the eye that the fly had perched on.

"Do you see the eye?" she asked me.

"Well?"

"It's an egg," she concluded in all simplicity.

"All right," I urged her, extremely disturbed, "what are you getting at?"

"I want to play with this eye."

"What do you mean?"

"Listen, Sir Edmund," she finally let it out, "you must give me this at once, tear it out at once, I want it!"

Sir Edmund was always poker-faced except when he turned purple. Nor did he bat an eyelash now; but the blood did shoot to his face. He removed a pair of fine scissors from his wallet, knelt down, then nimbly inserted the fingers of his left hand into the socket and drew out the eye, while his right hand snipped the obstinate ligaments. Next, he presented the small whitish eyeball in a hand reddened with blood.

Simone gazed at the absurdity and finally took it in her hand, completely distraught; yet she had no qualms, and instantly amused herself by fondling the depth of her thighs and inserting this apparently fluid object. The caress of the eye over the skin is so utterly, so extraordinarily gentle, and the sensation is so bizarre that it has something of a rooster's horrible crowing.

Simone meanwhile amused herself by slipping the eye into the profound crevice of her ass, and after lying down on her back and raising her legs and bottom, she tried to keep the eye there simply by squeezing her buttocks together. But all at once, it spat out like a stone squeezed from a cherry, and dropped on the thin belly of the corpse, an inch or so from the cock.

In the meantime, I had let Sir Edmund undress me, so that I could pounce stark naked on the crouching body of the girl; my entire cock vanished at one lunge into the hairy crevice, and I fucked her hard while Sir Edmund played with the eye, rolling it, in between the contortions of our bodies, on the skin of our bellies and breasts. For an instant, the eye was trapped between our navels.

"Put it up my ass, Sir Edmund," Simone shouted. And Sir Edmund delicately glided the eye between her buttocks.

But finally, Simone left me, grabbed the beautiful eyeball from the hands of the tall Englishman, and with a staid and regular pressure from her hands, she slid it into her slobbery flesh, in the midst of the fur. And then she promptly drew me over, clutching my neck between her arms and smashing her lips on mine so forcefully that I came without touching her and my come shot all over her fur.

Now I stood up and, while Simone lay on her side, I drew her thighs apart, and found myself facing something I imagine I had been waiting for in the same way that a guillotine waits for a neck to slice. I even felt as if my eyes were bulging from my head, erectile with horror; in Simone's hairy vagina, I saw the wan blue eye of Marcelle, gazing at me through tears of urine. Streaks of come in the steaming hair helped give that dreamy vision a disastrous sadness. I held the thighs open while Simone was convulsed by the urinary spasm, and the burning urine streamed out from under the eye down to the thighs below...

Two hours later, Sir Edmund and I were sporting false black beards, and Simone was bedizened in a huge, ridiculous black hat with yellow flowers and a long cloth dress like a noble girl from the provinces. In this getup, we rented a car and left Seville. Huge valises allowed us to change our personalities at every leg of the journey in order to outwit the police investigation. Sir Edmund evinced a humorous ingenuity in these circumstances: thus we marched down the main street of the small town of Ronda, he and I dressed as Spanish priests, wearing the small hairy felt hats and priestly cloaks, and manfully puffing on big cigars; as for Simone, who was walking between us in the costume of a Seville seminarist, she looked more angelic than ever. In this way, we kept disappearing all through Andalusia, a country of yellow earth and yellow sky, to my eyes an immense chamber pot flooded with sunlight, where each day, as a new character, I raped a likewise transformed Simone, especially towards noon, on the ground and in the blazing sun, under the reddish eyes of Sir Edmund.

On the fourth day, at Gibraltar, the Englishman purchased a yacht, and we set sail towards new adventures with a crew of Negroes.

PART 2. COINCIDENCES

While composing this partly imaginary tale, I was struck by several coincidences, and since they appeared indirectly to bring out the meaning of what I have written, I would like to describe them.

I began writing with no precise goal, animated chiefly by a desire to forget, at least for the time being, the things I can be or do personally. Thus, at first, I thought that the character speaking in the first person had no relation to me. But then one day I was looking through an American magazine filled with photographs of European landscapes, and I chanced upon two astonishing pictures: the first was a street in the practically unknown village from which my family comes; the second, the nearby ruins of a medieval fortified castle on a crag in the mountain. I promptly recalled an episode in my life, connected to those ruins. At the time, I was twenty-one; holidaying in the village that summer, I decided one evening to go to the ruins that same night, and did so immediately, accompanied by several perfectly chaste girls and, as a chaperone, my mother. I was in love with one of the girls, and she shared my feelings, yet we had never spoken to one another because she believed she had a religious calling, which she wanted to examine in all liberty. After walking for some one and a half hours, we arrived at the foot of the castle around ten or eleven on a rather gloomy night. We had started climbing the rocky mountain with its utterly romantic wall, when a white and thoroughly luminous ghost leapt forth from a deep cavity in the rocks and barred our way. It was so extraordinary that one girl and my mother fell back together, and the others let out piercing shrieks. I myself felt a sudden terror, which stifled my voice, and so it took me a few seconds before I could hurl some threats, which were unintelligible to the phantom, even though I was certain from the very beginning that it was all a hoax. The phantom did flee the moment he saw me striding towards him, and I didn't let him out of my sight until I recognized my older brother, who had cycled up with another boy. Wearing a sheet, he had succeeded in scaring us by popping out under the sudden ray of an acetylene lantern.

The day I found the photograph in the magazine, I had just finished the sheet episode in the story, and I noticed that I kept seeing the sheet at the left, just as the sheeted ghost had appeared at the left, and I realized there was a perfect coincidence of images tied to analogous upheavals. Indeed, I have rarely been as dumbfounded as at the apparition of the false phantom.

I was very astonished at having unknowingly substituted a perfectly obscene image for a vision apparently devoid of any sexual implication. Still, I would soon have cause for even greater astonishment.

I had already thought out all the details of the scene in the Seville vestry, especially the incision in the priest's socket and the plucking of his eye, when, realizing the kinship between the story and my own life, I amused myself by introducing the description of a tragic bullfight that I had actually

witnessed. Oddly enough, I drew no connection between the two episodes until I did a precise description of the injury inflicted on Manuel Granero (a real person) by the bull; but the moment I reached this death scene, I was totally taken aback. The opening of the priest's eye was not, as I had believed, a gratuitous invention. I was merely transferring, to a different person, an image that had most likely led a very profound life. If I devised the business about snipping out the priest's eye, it was because I had seen a bull's horn tear out a matador's eye. Thus, precisely the two images that probably most upset me had sprung from the darkest corner of my memory—and in a scarcely recognizable shape—as soon as I gave myself over to lewd dreams.

But no sooner did I realize this (I had just finished portraying the bullfight of May 1922) than I visited a friend of mine, who is a doctor. I read the description to him, but it was not in the same form as now. Never having seen the skinned balls of a bull, I assumed they were the same bright red color as the erect cock of the animal, and that was how they were depicted in the first draft. The entire *Story of the Eye* was woven in my mind out of two ancient and closely associated obsessions, eggs and eyes, but nevertheless, I had previously regarded the balls of the bull as independent of that cycle. Yet when I finished reading to him, my friend remarked that I had absolutely no idea of what the glands I was writing about were really like, and he promptly read aloud a detailed description in an anatomical textbook. I thus learned that human or animal balls are egg-shaped and look the same as an eyeball.

This time, I ventured to explain such extraordinary relations by assuming a profound region of my mind, where certain images coincide, the elementary ones, the completely obscene ones, i.e. the most scandalous, precisely those on which the conscious floats indefinitely, unable to endure them without an explosion or aberration.

However, upon locating this breaking point of the conscious or, if you will, the favorite place of sexual deviation, certain quite different personal memories were quickly associated with some harrowing images that had emerged during an obscene composition.

When I was born, my father was suffering from general paralysis, and he was already blind when he conceived me; not long after my birth, his sinister disease confined him to an armchair. However, the very contrary of most male babies, who are in love with their mothers, I was in love with my father. Now the following was connected to his paralysis and blindness. He was unable to go and urinate in the toilet like most people; instead, he did it into a small container at his armchair, and since he had to urinate very often, he was unembarrassed about doing it in front of me, under a blanket, which, since he was blind, he usually placed askew. But the weirdest thing was certainly the way he looked while pissing. Since he could not see anything, his pupils very

frequently pointed up into space, shifting under the lids, and this happened particularly when he pissed. Furthermore, he had huge, ever-gaping eyes that flanked an eagle nose, and those huge eyes went almost entirely blank when he pissed, with a completely stupefying expression of abandon and aberration in a world that he alone could see and that aroused his vaguely sardonic and absent laugh (I would have liked to recall everything here at once, for instance the erratic nature of a blind man's isolated laughter, and so forth). In any case, the image of those white eyes from that time was directly linked, for me, to the image of eggs, and that explains the almost regular appearance of urine every time eyes or eggs occur in the story.

After perceiving this kinship between distinct elements, I was led to discover a further, no less essential kinship between the general nature of my story and a particular fact.

I was about fourteen when my affection for my father turned into a deep and unconscious hatred. I began vaguely enjoying his constant shrieks at the lightning pains caused by the tabes, which are considered among the worst pain known to man. Furthermore, the filthy, smelly state to which his total disablement often reduced him (for instance, he sometimes left shit on his trousers) was not nearly so disagreeable to me as I thought. Then again, in all things, I adopted the attitudes and opinions most radically opposed to those of that supremely nauseating creature.

One night, we were awakened, my mother and I, by vehement words that the syphilitic was literally howling in his room: he had suddenly gone mad. I went for the doctor, who came immediately. My father kept endlessly and eloquently imagining the most outrageous and generally the happiest events. The doctor had withdrawn to the next room with my mother and I had remained with the blind lunatic, when he shrieked in a stentorian voice: "Doctor, let me know when you're done fucking my wife!" For me, that utterance, which in a split second annihilated the demoralizing effects of a strict upbringing, left me with something like a steady obligation, unconscious and unwilling: the necessity of finding an equivalent to that sentence in any situation I happen to be in; and this largely explains *Story of the Eye*.

To complete this survey of the high summits of my personal obscenity, I must add a final connection I made in regard to Marcelle. It was one of the most disconcerting, and I did not arrive at it until the very end.

It is impossible for me to say positively that Marcelle is basically identical with my mother. Such a statement would actually be, if not false, then at least exaggerated. Thus Marcelle is also a fourteen-year-old girl who once sat opposite me for a quarter of an hour at the *Café des Deux*

Magots in Paris. Nonetheless, I still want to tell about some memories that ultimately fastened a few episodes to unmistakable facts.

Soon after my father's attack of lunacy, my mother, at the end of a vile scene to which her mother subjected her in front of me, suddenly lost her mind too. She spent several months in a crisis of manic-depressive insanity (melancholy). The absurd ideas of damnation and catastrophe that seized control of her irritated me even more because I was forced to look after her continually. She was in such a bad state that one night I removed some candlesticks with marble bases from my room; I was afraid she might kill me while I slept. On the other hand, whenever I lost patience, I went so far as to strike her, violently twisting her wrists to try and bring her to her senses.

One day, my mother disappeared while our backs were turned; we hunted her for a long time and finally found her hanged in the attic. However, they managed to revive her.

A short time later, she disappeared again, this time at night; I myself went looking for her, endlessly, along a creek, wherever she might have tried to drown herself. Running without stopping, through the darkness, across swamps, I at last found myself face to face with her: she was drenched up to her belt, the skirt was pissing the creek water, but she had come out on her own, and the icy, wintery water was not very deep anyway.

I never linger over such memories, for they have long since lost any emotional significance for me. There was no way I could restore them to life except by transforming them and making them unrecognizable, at first glance, to my eyes, solely because during that deformation they acquired the lowliest of meanings.

W.C.

(Preface to *Story of the Eye* from another text by Bataille called "Le Petit" [1943])

A year before *Story of the Eye*, I had written a book entitled W.C.: a small book, a rather crazy piece of writing. W.C. was as lugubrious as *Story of the Eye* was juvenile. The manuscript of W.C. was burnt, but that was no loss, considering my present sadness: it was a shriek of horror (horror at myself, not for my debauchery, but for the philosopher's head in which since then... how sad it is!). On the other hand, I am as happy as ever with the fulminating joy of *The Eye*: nothing can wipe it away. Such joy, bordering on naive folly, will forever remain beyond terror, for terror reveals its meaning.

A drawing for W.C. showed an eye: the scaffold's eye. Solitary, solar, bristling with lashes, it gazed from the lunette of a guillotine. The drawing was named *Eternal Recurrence*, and its horrible machine was the cross-beam, gymnastic gallows, portico. Coming from the horizon, the road to eternity passed through it. A parodic verse, heard in a sketch at the Concert Mayol, supplied the caption:

God, how the corpse's blood is sad in the depth of sound.

Story of the Eye has another reminiscence of W.C., which appears on the title page, placing all that follows under the worst of signs. The name Lord Auch [pronounced osh] refers to a habit of a friend of mine; when vexed, instead of saying "aux chiottes!" (to the shithouse), he would shorten it to "aux ch'." Lord is English for God (in the Scriptures): Lord Auch is God relieving himself. The story is too lively to dwell upon; every creature transfigured by such a place: God sinking into it rejuvenates the heavens.

To be God, naked, solar, in the rainy night, on a field: red, divinely, manuring with the majesty of a tempest, the face grimacing, torn apart, being IMPOSSIBLE in tears: who knew, before me, what majesty is?

The "eye of the conscience" and the "woods of justice" incarnate eternal recurrence, and is there any more desperate image for remorse?

I gave the author of W.C. the pseudonym of Troppmann.

I masturbated naked, at night, by my mother's corpse. (A few people, reading "Coincidences," wondered whether it did not have the fictional character of the tale itself. But, like this preface, "Coincidences" has a literal exactness: many people in the village of R. could confirm the material; moreover, some of my friends did read W.C.)

What upset me more was: seeing my father shit a great number of times. He would get out of his blind paralytic's bed (my father being both blind and paralytic at once). It was very hard for him to get out of bed (I would help him) and settle on a chamber-pot, in his nightshirt and, usually, a cotton nightcap (he had a pointed gray beard, ill-kempt, a large eagle-nose, and immense hollow eyes staring into space). At times, the "lightning-sharp pains" would make him howl like a beast, sticking out his bent leg, which he futilely hugged in his arms.

My father having conceived me when blind (absolutely blind), I cannot tear out my eyes like Oedipus.

Like Oedipus, I solved the riddle: no one divined it more deeply than I.

On November 6, 1915, in a bombarded town, a few miles from the German lines, my father died in abandonment.

My mother and I had abandoned him during the German advance in August 1914.

We had left him with the housekeeper.

The Germans occupied the town, then evacuated it. We could now return: my mother, unable to bear the thought of it, went mad. Late that year, my mother recovered: she refused to let me go home to N. We received occasional letters from my father, he just barely ranted and raved. When we learned he was dying, my mother agreed to go with me. He died a few days before our arrival, asking for his children: we found a sealed coffin in the bedroom.

When my father went mad (a year before the war) after a hallucinating night, my mother sent me to the post office to dispatch a telegram. I remember being struck with a horrible pride en route. Misery overwhelmed me, internal irony replied: "So much horror makes you predestined": a few months earlier, one fine morning in December, I had informed my parents, who were beside themselves, that I would never set foot in school again. No amount of anger could change my mind: I lived alone, going out rarely, by way of the fields, avoiding the center, where I might have run into friends.

My father, an unreligious man, died refusing to see the priest. During puberty, I was unreligious myself (my mother indifferent). But I went to a priest in August 1914; and until 1920, rarely did I let a week go by without confessing my sins! In 1920, I changed again, I stopped believing in anything but my future chances. My piety was merely an attempt at evasion: I wanted to escape my destiny at any price, I was abandoning my father. Today, I know I am "blind," immeasurable, I am man "abandoned" on the globe like my father at N. No one on earth or in heaven cared about my father's dying terror. Still, I believe he faced up to it, as always. What a "horrible pride," at moments, in father's blind smile!

Outline of a Sequel to *Story of the Eye*

After fifteen years of more and more serious debauchery, Simone ends up in a torture camp. But by mistake; descriptions of torture, tears, imbecility of unhappiness, Simone at the threshold of a conversion, exhorted by a cadaverous woman, one more in the series of devotees of the Church of Seville. She is now thirty-five. Beautiful when entering the camp, but old age is gradually taking over, irremediable. Beautiful scene with a female torturer and the devotee; the devotee and Simone are beaten to death, Simone escapes temptation. She dies as though making love, but in the purity (chaste) and the imbecility of death: fever and agony transfigure her. The torturer strikes her, she is indifferent to the blows, indifferent to the words of the devotee, lost in the labor of agony. It is by no means an erotic joy, it is far more than that. But with no result. Nor is it masochistic, and, profoundly, this exaltation is beyond any imagining; it surpasses everything. However, its basis is solitude and absence.