MYTHS AND METAPHORS OF AUTHENTICITY:
PERCEPTIONS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
IN THE WRITINGS OF ANDRÉ GIDE AND VOLODYMYR VYNNYCHENKO

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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Myths and Metaphors of Authenticity:
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in the Writings of André Gide and Volodymyr Vynnychenko

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This dissertation examines two modernist prose writers, André Gide and Volodymyr Vynnychenko, and their respective debts to (or deformations of) the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. What is central to all three is the idea of authenticity, expressed as the problem of reconciling the demands and aspirations of the individual against those of society. Gide and Vynnychenko work out an ethic of authenticity, which considers the effects of alienation and ambivalence on the choice between the privileges and rights of an independent authenticity pursued in isolation, on the one hand, and the commitments and responsibilities of an interdependent authenticity defined in community, on the other.

Four chapters explore four social questions posed by Gide and Vynnychenko as well as Nietzsche: race, gender, revolution, and reproduction. Each of these is accompanied in turn by four concepts, proposed as constituent elements of the idea of authenticity: purity, intensity, totality, and audacity. Four
sets of myths and metaphors further emerge from these analyses. Thus the first chapter considers the principle of audacity as it relates to the persistently troubling associations and ambiguities surrounding the myth of Nietzsche himself; the second chapter investigates the idea(l) of purity as it relates to the example of Nietzsche's most successful mythological creation, Zarathustra, in Les nourritures terrestres, L'Immoraliste, «По-свій!», and БОЖКИ; the third chapter examines the issue of intensity as it relates to the legacies of two mythical fire bearers, Prometheus and Nietzsche's Dionysus, in Le Prométhée mal enchaîné and «ДИМ»; and the fourth chapter analyzes the notion of totality as it relates to the myth of the Devil and his domain of money and compulsive sexuality, in Corydon, Les Faux-Monnayeurs, Заповіт батьків, and Записки кирпатого Мефістофеля.

There is a chronological shift between the early Gide and Vynnychenko who claim purity-intensity-audacity as a single social, spiritual and individual necessity, and their older selves who move towards embracing the more complex and conciliatory value of totality. But this movement ultimately re-inscribes itself in the same contradictory configuration of self versus society that produced it in the first place, and in so doing, it points to a discrepancy that invites further analysis.
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* * * * * * * *

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CONTENTS

Abstract ........................................... ii
Acknowledgements ................................. iv
Introduction ........................................ 1
    An Inductive Map ............................... 11
    A Tropological Topography ................. 22

Chapter I

The Violence of the Authentic ............... 30

Chapter II

Women, Liars, and Dangerous Things:
    Two Modernist Translations of the Zarathustra Myth . 48

i. Retreats and Repulsions: Women ............. 67
ii. Reluctant Returns: Liars .................... 85
iii. Emphatic Expulsions: Dangerous Things .... 103

Chapter III

The Promethean Puzzle:
    Fire as Revolutionary Figure and Ground .... 118

i. Le Prométhée mal enchaîné ................ 136

vii
Chapter IV

Paternalist Pathologies:
The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (of Inauthenticity) . . . . . 172

i. Sex and the Single Sperm: or, Love versus l’acte gratuit . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 181
ii. L’Acte gratuit: from la petite mort to la grande . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 185
iii. Whoring versus Husbandry . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 188
iv. The Doctor as Devil’s Advocate . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 193
v. Men and Boys -- and Money . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 200
vi. Flesh and the Devil . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 204
vii. The Devil as the Father of the Lie . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 208
viii. The Value of Forgetting . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 217
ix. Seizing the Moment . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 221

Chapter V

In Place of A Conclusion . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 235

List of Abbreviations . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 249
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Works Consulted</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A-1</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A-2</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C-1</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C-2</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The rhetoric of authenticity surrounds us in a soup of murky meanings. We are assailed by conflicting claims in advertisements and billboards, extolling authenticity's myriad masks for sale, while flattening its elusive qualities into a single interchangeable commodity at the same time. "Authentic Greek cuisine," "authentic knitwear," even "authentic fitness" and "authentic home insurance" (1) -- these are all slogans offered as assurances of a singular product that nevertheless slip into shop-worn cliché: so MANY companies trumpet the SAME monopoly that authenticity itself fades from overuse. But the language games of advertising do more than undermine a word's original meaning: they also redefine it through subtler ringings on the register that exploit ambiguities or open-endedness in both literal and figurative interpretations.

General Motors, for example (see Figure 1), pays attention to the figurative frame that an idea like authenticity can provide for its product. A desire in the consumer for Mexican food serves as the pretext for a "new rugged" vehicle that can power its way right to Mexico, "some place really authentic" for a change -- "where the jalapeños have bite." An appeal to indisputable origin and INTENSITY of flavour, in other words,

1These mottoes can be traced respectively to: Ouzeri Restaurant (Toronto), TJM Garments, Speedo sportswear, and Chubb Insurance Company of Canada. But other equally varied exemplars, too numerous to mention, exist as commonplaces of our commercial landscape.
New sporty and rugged styling, all-weather traction control, flexible seating for up to 8, standard 4-wheel ABS, rear seat audio control, self-sealing tires, powerful V6 engine with 180 horsepower – nothing about the new Pontiac Trans Sport says "minivan." Everything says, "Get out your Spanish phrasebook. We're going someplace where the jalapeños have bite!" Introducing the new rugged and sporty Pontiac Trans Sport. Finally a minivan that's built for drivers.
translates into the "authentic" experience that only a GM Transport Sport is supposed to provide. This is a metonymical argument, using juxtaposition to suggest a transferable, equally potent image of "adventure value": tough vehicle, rough and tumbleweed dining experience.

Schwinn argues for another mode of transportation in a slightly different spin on the idea of the authentic, which acquires here a moralizing tone (see Figure 2). "Authenticity is not for sale," it proclaims; "like respect or an honest living, it must be earned." But of course, an image of authenticity IS very much for sale here. What seems to be implied with this product (as opposed to the minivan) is a certain amount of WORK that the consumer must be prepared to invest, physically, just to be able to put the product to any use. There is also an appeal to old-fashioned workmanship (since 1933 -- "right off hand-drawn blueprints recovered from a basement") that continues to this day to crank out "the real McCoy" -- "true to the breed." Cyclists may be a relatively dying breed or anachronistic minority in a sea of motorists, but as a group they are considered closer to a cleaner and more "natural" form of energy (pedal-power). All of these strong statements of stripped-down simplicity are redolent of a whole ethos, defining itself against the majority car culture, while at the same time paradoxically borrowing that culture's nomenclature ("Cruiser Deluxe," after all, sounds like something a lot more plushly automated than a bicycle), as well as appropriating that culture's aesthetic innovations (white-
Cruisers
Authenticity is not for sale. Like respect or an honest living, it must be earned. Schwinn pioneered the Cruiser category in 1933 and have remained true to the breed. Schwinn Cruisers still feature cantilever brakes and tubes built right off hand-drawn 1955 blueprints recovered from a basement in Chicago. Also included are aluminum wheels, saddles, and more than a few bamboo parts. Not enough to make members of the opposite sex want for your phone number. While the competition offers bits of imitation history conveniently packaged in their own decals. Schwinn comes at you with the real McCoy.

Schwinn Cruisers
Cruiser (Three & Locked) $319.00
Classic Cruiser $389.00
Cruiser 6 $429.00
Cruiser Deluxe $599.00

Schwinn Mountain Bikes
Frontier $329.00
Frontier G.S. $369.00
Frontier G.S.X. $449.00
Mesa G.S.X with Rock Shox $729.00
Moab 3 with Rock Shox $839.00
Moab 2 with Rock Shox $1,079.00
Moab A1 Aluminum $1,359.00
Homegrown LXT $1,999.00
walled tires). "The competition," Schwinn says, can only offer "bits of imitation history." PURISTS therefore prefer the honestly-come-by stylings of Schwinn, true to their "basement" origins of bare-bones self-sufficiency. The argument here is synecdochal: the present individual model of bicycle is presented as continuous with a whole venerable tradition, harkening back to simpler, cleaner times.

One of the most common associations with the idea of authenticity is nature and the natural: the unadulterated headwaters where people can return to feel refreshed. Even in the case of something as patently artificial as cosmetics, Yves Rocher insists that its line of "beauty care products" are naturally restorative and almost invisible, "let[ting] you stay true...to yourself, and nature"! (See Figure 3) Similarly, a Guide to Agritourism in Lombardy lists all the farms in the area that a weary citified tourist can visit, because "it can satisfy and fulfil the desire for authenticity ... [in its] aspirations towards a style of life closer to nature." A final example of this Rousseau-like vein in advertising can be seen in an Ontario country inn, which invites the traveller to "a place where you can BE YOURSELF again."

On the other hand (and there is usually another hand), authenticity can just as easily accommodate the opposite value of civilization and the civilized. Johnny Walker's blended Scotch Whisky (see Figure 4) is starkly opposed to "a crass and insincere world;" this beverage is billed as the epitome of
Stay True...

With natural botanical beautycare

Yves Rocher beautycare products not only help you look and feel beautiful and restore your skin's natural radiance, they let you stay true... to yourself, and nature.

--

Grandview Inn. A place where you can be yourself again.
Hwy 60 Huntsville, Ontario 1-800-461-4454

Find us fast in the "Yellow Pages."
IN A CRASS
AND
INSINCERE
WORLD

SOMETHING THAT ISN'T.

WELCOME TO CIVILIZATION
classy taste, a lonely outpost of discerning (and not a little Dionysian) appetite. This is an especially interesting example of authenticity's double-jointed capacity to be both raw and refined: absolutely unpretentious or down-to-earth, and at the same time, absolutely rarefied or above all that nastiness. Authenticity is an abiding paradox, rich enough to sustain multiple readings that might appear (at first glance) completely contradictory.

"Proofs" of authenticity are often marketed for their kitsch value -- as in mail order catalogues that promote "authentic [American] Civil War rifle bullets" for the collector or connoisseur, as well as "authentic birthdate newspaper clippings" bolstered by a "signed Certificate of Authenticity" (for the man who presumably has everything). The past is always a ripe target for repackaging and reinventing by hucksters of all kinds, including politicians. Preston Manning's crises in leadership provide an interesting case in point, since many of his original followers perceive him since his Ottawa-era makeovers to be "abandoning his principles, perhaps [even] his authenticity."

And these days, according to one of Manning's chief advisors, it's all about people wanting to see if they can relate to a politician. Look at the Princess Di thing. People think they actually knew her. It's like that for a politician. The public is looking for little

\[2\text{See page 35 of the Fall 1997 "Signals" catalogue for the bullets (item 54406), and page 34 of the 1997 "Wireless" catalogue for the newspapers (item 13021 or 13023).} \]
clues of who you are. Clues to whether or not you're authentic.3

Manning's abrupt switch in working wardrobe upon his ascension to federally-recognized power signifies less a betrayal, I would suggest, than an acknowledgement: that he has simply "always been the most image-conscious of any of our politicians," shrewdly playing off appearances to his own advantage, wherever his fortunes have happened to take him. With so little else of substance to go on (and the caricatures of political cartoonists for comic emphasis), the Canadian public tends to buy into the politicians' image-dominant game. Public personalities become projective blotting pads for every sort of private preoccupation, seldom based on any biographical "facts" -- so the issue of "really" knowing any public figure, like the issue of measuring their character for authentic resonance, becomes hopelessly muddled in its own shallow rhetoric. Yet people continue to believe in the spellbinding powers of certain glamorous media personalities to tell them some essential truths about their own quieter, humbler lives. Authenticity here becomes both a magnet and a barometer that in political parlance glitters no less compellingly than in advertising: big promise, little substance. It's up to the voter-consumer to supply the meaning.

I have dwelled on these contemporary examples at some length, because they represent a certain "writing on the wall"

3Miro Cernetig, "Is that you, Mr. Manning? National role has meant metamorphosis for the man who used to scorn Ottawa's 'suits.'" The Globe and Mail 22 September 1997: A1; A5.
that demonstrates how current and continuous the idea of authenticity remains with the concept as I have tried to describe it, in longer textual examples from much earlier in the century. The sloganeering of advertising is also continuous in another way, for its form of echoing Nietzsche's aphorisms -- "recyclable as slogans" (Kaplan 127) -- that stand in more often than not for a deeper or wider reading beyond them, which after all only comprise "probably less than ten percent" of his writings as a whole (Magnus, Stewart & Mileur 257). We are all familiar with such quotable fragments as "What does not destroy me, makes me stronger" and "When you look long into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you." But we are all generally far less acquainted with the books of these sayings' provenance -- a limitation which does not, however, prevent us from expressing sometimes rather strong opinions about their author. Again, as with Princess Diana or Preston Manning, we already seem to "know" who Nietzsche was -- "he's the crazy man whose works, if you read them, may drive you crazy" (Gilman 1986: 59). No better advertising AGAINST reading a writer for oneself can probably be found, than in the longstanding bad publicity surrounding Nietzsche.

My job, as I saw it in this dissertation, was to read and re-evaluate three writers obscured by bad press, in the light of a theory of authenticity that hadn't really been adequately

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4See Twilight of the Idols in The Portable Nietzsche (p. 467), and Beyond Good and Evil (p. 89), respectively.
formulated by anyone else I knew -- because very few theories of modernism or modernity proved to be very helpful at all, for purposes of either search or rescue. It has been said that "the attempt to re-animate a lost world is an expedition in search of authenticity."\(^5\) In my own quest to return Nietzsche, Gide, and Vynnychenko to some larger, more thoughtful place in the world of present memory, I hope at the same time to have contributed some clearer understanding of the often unexamined issue and importance of integrity.

An Inductive Map

Scholars have generally attempted to define the concept of authenticity in three ways. There are those, first of all, who conceive of authenticity as a fundamentally disruptive force, expressed in terms of the individual learning to discover to assert his or her needs against society. This is often figured as a split between the moral versus the aesthetic, or playfulness versus constraint. Lionel Trilling in *Sincerity and Authenticity* thus identifies the second half of his subject as "implicitly a polemical concept, fulfilling its nature by dealing aggressively with received and habitual opinion ... [since] the idea of authenticity readily attaches itself to instinct" (1972: 94; 143). Similarly, Stuart Zane Charmé in *Vulgarity and

\(^5\)Ashkenaz Festival of New Yiddish Culture: "Dancing With the Leviathan" brochure, September-October 1997.
Authenticity describes the latter part of his title as "a subversive power that destabilizes the orderly categories and certainties that constantly tempt us ... [in order to allow] the oppressed and marginal Other ... the power to reveal the truth" (7; 211). Authenticity for these thinkers represents a potent submerged reality, a simmering side to the self waiting to explode on the surface.

Then there are others who consider authenticity as a quest or an ideal of vast proportions, which presupposes a condition of interdependence instead of conflict. Charles Taylor in The Ethics of Authenticity calls it an "ideal" which not only "emphasize[s] the freedom of the individual but also propose[s] models of society ... [because] authenticity is not the enemy of demands that emanate from beyond the self; it supposes such demands" (44; 41). In the same way, Marshall Berman in The Politics of Authenticity says the "problem" of his topic is the perennially frustrated "dream of an ideal community," where "he who cared for his own authenticity could be counted on to care for the authenticity of others" (ix; 182). For these theorists, authenticity consists of a potential for realizing a wider and more harmonious order in human life.

Finally, there is a third group who understands authenticity neither so pessimistically as the first nor so optimistically as the second, but assigns to it a more neutral and intermediate meaning that admits, simply, to "the ubiquity of doubt" (Starobinski 59). Its complexities are accepted as peculiar
"effects of reading [which] therefore can not be proved -- by
textual analysis, for instance" (Chambers 186). At the end of
his study In Search of Authenticity, Jacob Golomb decides that
the authentic may ultimately be reduced to the dimensions of "an
individual pathos rather than a universal ethic," which turns on
the tensions between two failures: "lonely authenticity ...[versus] communal authenticity," neither of which succeeds in
satisfying anyone (202; 186). Similarly, Alessandro Ferrara in
Modernity and Authenticity identifies "a systematic link between
the notion of justice and the authenticity of a collective
identity," but this usually requires more work than most
individuals are prepared to give to the continual re-examination
of "the intense ambivalence of ALL intentions of behaviour," in
solitude as much as in community (25; 89; emphasis added). From
these writers' perspectives, then, authenticity stands for a kind
of conundrum that they are content to leave unsolved and
untouched by the tug of war between self and society: it remains
for them an open epistemological question, not a social problem.

Authenticity can not be conclusively defined, according to
the scholarship on the subject: it can only be explored. For
this reason the image of the map recurs, as the best possible
means of approaching this still largely uncharted terrain.
Charmé speaks at the end of his study about "a path to genuine
community" that is left embryonic and suggestive, because "a
roadmap to authenticity" is not available so much as "glimpses
and hints" left from travellers labouring to clear this path
Berman likewise traces "an agenda, but no utopia" from previous explorers who "point[ed] the way" but "deliver[ed] no fully realized vision of what we should find at the end" (317). Signposts left by other struggles by other thinkers to account for this absorbing problem appear to be all a latter-day investigator will discover to be at his or her disposal. And so I attempted to formulate my own map -- following in the footsteps of some of those who had gone before, but also pushing the limits of previous explorations in hopefully new and productive directions.

Most maps, to my knowledge, are drawn inductively: they build up a profile of some larger land or water mass by meticulously recording every smaller promontory and permutation along the way. Geographers may begin with some general idea of a law or a limit (such as the long-cherished dictum that the earth is flat), but they are amenable to allowing their experiences as mapmakers to modify if not overturn their original assumptions. Maps acknowledge lacunae and set out to enlarge upon them, by proceeding from the more manageable minutia to the more unfathomable expanses. Everything in my readings on authenticity convinced me that this concept constituted another such dark continent (or promised land), so I too decided to embark on a topographical expedition -- inferring the existence of the general (the centrality of authenticity) from the particular (individual texts by Nietzsche, Gide, and Vynnychenko). And what consistently emerged from my particular readings was a general
impression of authenticity as a social problem. It moved from serving as a wilful poison to any sense of community (see Chapter II), then to a cataclysmic panacea for a renewed sense of community (see Chapter III), and finally to a compromise between panacea and poison: the dissatisfaction with an enforced or imposed sense of community appears subdued but actually goes underground, passed along to the next generation, to continue the same cycle of dissatisfaction again later (see Chapter IV).

There are lines of culmination and recuperation reaching from Gide’s and Vynnychenko’s earlier texts to their later ones, which suggests that the problem of authenticity remained unresolved for them: both an individual necessity and a social impossibility.

Movements of possibility, either opened up or closed down for characters to follow in a given text, offer another set of clues to their authors’ visions of authenticity. An implicit ethic emerges in these "adventures of authenticity," not so much as a programmatic statement but in the form of alternatives or paths, taken or not taken, by the protagonists: the ethical implications of following one course of action as opposed to another poses, in fuller fictional fashion, all the dilemmas of moral choice that a treatise might address. Gide’s and Vynnychenko’s creative construals of difficult decisions ask their readers to consider the rights of feelings to inform the questions their characters face, in addition to the ethical principles supposed to be involved. By insisting on emotional blocks such as pride or lust or family feeling (as discussed in
Chapter II), Gide and Vynnychenko ground their characters' debates in an affective reality that stretches and tests them, often to the breaking point. They create situations where a sense of autonomy and a sense of authenticity collide in unsolvable conflict: their characters find that "[they] not only may have to act AUTONOMOUSLY against the moral expectations of [their] community, but may have also to act AUTHENTICALLY against [their] own autonomous principles" (Ferrara 105; emphases in the original).

This repeated conflict in Gide and Vynnychenko between authenticity and autonomy led me to try and demarcate the directions in which it moved. I found four related concepts to recur in my readings of various theorists of authenticity, which seemed to me unexamined in their own right: purity, intensity, totality, and audacity. Each of these elements seemed more precisely concerned with issues of morality than its larger and more fluid relative, authenticity. I wondered how crucially CONSTITUTIVE these specific words and their connotations could be to the idea of the authentic, so I set out to explore them in the hopes of expanding a general semantic framework within which we can begin to think more creatively about the phenomenon of authenticity. I also hoped to be able to more clearly

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Such a tension between autonomy and authenticity actually reflects two distinct moral vocabularies: "the tradition of autonomy" (as represented by Kant, Hegel, and Habermas) and "the tradition of authenticity" (as represented by Rousseau, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche). See Ferrara 136-137, 107, and passim.
reconstruct the ethical implications of recurrent thematic concerns in the writings of Gide and Vynnychenko, in the light of distinctions drawn between these four "criteria" of authenticity. In short, I adopted these four sub-concepts as co-ordinates of sorts in my own experiments with cartography.

As with any compass, a magnetic meridian imposed itself -- separating one marker of direction from the others. *Purity*, *intensity*, and *audacity* all point consistently towards exclusion, in a movement either away or against: they can be read as primarily individual tendencies or concerns, exercising varying degrees of freedom FROM society. *Purity* expresses a backward-looking atavism or nostalgia for the primitive, which exists in a directly antagonistic relationship with its perceived enemies (as seen in Chapter II); *intensity* expresses a forward-looking passion for suffering, which will inaugurate the age of revolution (as seen in Chapter III); and *audacity* expresses an immediate incendiary revolt, as a constant social potential (as alluded to in Chapters I and V). These three values of authenticity stand for three moments in time (past, future, and present) that each appear equally susceptible to, if not defined by, a fundamental violence. That is to say, they each accommodate a specifically unthinking or EMOTIONAL response to a basic sense of opposition. Only the value of *totality* offers an inclusive option, in a movement with or towards: this direction alone suggests the more complex exploration of possibilities for an individual imagining or enacting freedom TO society. A
reconciliation or compromise is expressed here, in the dream of immanence or a permanent state of grace that surpasses all previous struggles (as seen in Chapter IV). As such, totality represents the necessary North on the compass, dominating the disposition of the remaining three points on the face.

However, the rebellious trajectories in Gide and Vynnychenko towards purity, intensity, and audacity resolve themselves in an ambiguous kind of totality. Their characters' ultimate defeat by paternity comes to symbolize both an acceptable "escape from freedom" as well as a means for perpetuating it, as a more vicarious quest, in the next generation. Thus the fathers' youthful spirit of rebellion is sneaked down to the sons, behind the backs of their mothers. What looks like a collapse of the tensions between self and society into totality -- bringing together the needs and demands of both isolation and community, through the engine of reproduction -- begins to look more like a mere postponement of those tensions, which seem destined to return with a vengeance to the repressed purity-intensity-audacity triad. In the end, Gide and Vynnychenko could not imaginatively reconstruct the problem beyond the point of this return to a perception of authenticity as antisocial autonomy.

But this of course does not mean that more imaginative land does not remain to be charted. The point of inductive reasoning here is to keep opening up the problem to multiple approaches and questions, the better to arrive at a more readable map of authenticity's elusive and changeable contours. As opposed to
deductive reasoning, which works a priori from cause to effect in order to draw conclusions, inductive reasoning accepts only effects in order to elaborate on some larger cause and INDUCE -- that is, lead or introduce -- the consideration of the single phenomenon that may be responsible for so many lesser ones. In the case of Gide and Vynnychenko, the many disparate textual details point (in my readings) to the undeniable overarching reality and significance of authenticity as a private and public paradox.

I am aware of certain built-in linguistic problems with my four "foci" of authenticity. Any thesaurus will show that certain vexing overlaps in meaning occur between all four terms, thus threatening to dissolve the whole process of differentiation into synonymous or tautological constructions. For example, purity contains secondary connotations of unity that might more "properly" or primarily be seen as affiliated with the idea of totality; and intensity along with audacity shares an identically direct definition with violence. Intensity also shares a common denominator with totality in the concept of plenitude, which is more closely identified in the former with greatness and in the latter with completeness. That being said, I believe that these semantic cross-currents WITHIN four identifiable components OF authenticity can tell us more than previous studies on the subject (such as those by Trilling and Golomb and Ferrara), which are content to analyze competing definitions of authenticity from WITHOUT. Previous studies have attempted to distinguish the idea
of authenticity from misperceived equivalents in usage or understanding, such as sincerity.\(^7\) What I have tried to do here is account for authenticity not in terms of external juxtapositions of meaning, but internal ones -- which are necessarily interrelated and sometimes contradictory, but nevertheless that much more intriguing and illuminating for those very reasons.

Authenticity owes its simultaneous slipperiness and pervasiveness to its linguistic status as a "fundamental concept," something that "tend[s] to be grammaticized, ... to be part of the grammar of the language [and a]s such ... [is] used unconsciously, automatically, and constantly" (Lakoff 308). For it seems that whenever we try to talk about authenticity, our

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\(^7\)Trilling establishes a clear difference between the concepts of authenticity and sincerity by (among other things) pointing out their distinct etymologies. Sincerity derives from the Latin sincerus ("clean, sound, or pure"), while authenticity derives from the Greek authenteo ("to have full power over; also, to commit a murder") and authentes ("not only a master and a doer, but also a perpetrator, a murderer, even a self-murderer, a suicide") (1972: 12-13; 131). This specific dimension of mastery or violence testifies to the greater tensions within the concept of authenticity between overcoming the self and conforming to ethical or social norms. Golomb observes that "notions of sincerity and honesty have to do with attributes to which language can refer directly ... while ... the notion of authenticity ... signifies something beyond the domain of objective language" (7). In other words, sincerity describes a quantifiable behaviour adopted in conformity with social situations or expectations (and for that reason often becomes anything but "pure"), while authenticity describes a far more subjectivist cluster of behaviours and attitudes that is, more often than not, in conflict with the "received ideas" of society. Ferrara similarly grants authenticity greater complexity by calling it "sincerity for its own sake," because sincerity on its own "carries no polemical implications against the social order" (86-87).
language -- be it French or English, Ukrainian or German -- is already larded with tautological expressions that undercut whatever we are trying to say: so many variations of "purely," "truly," or "totally," for example, are misleading idiomatic constructions that often only convey emphasis of voice instead of purity, truth, or totality of meaning.

Worse yet, there is a tendency to rely on the very categories of the thing we are seeking to unravel by simply restating it in synonymous terms: a circularity of reference (like Charmé's resort to "essence" and Berman's unexamined emphases on intensity and totality) demonstrates that "[w]hen[ever] we try to think of these images, we do it with the equipment built of the very stuff we are now trying to judge" (Booth 295). Such built-in linguistic limitations to describing the idea of authenticity at all results in a kind of conceptual inflation, or a "radical alteration or expansion ... [of] the significance of certain familiar words," such as "essence" and "authenticity" -- because these are "words that have always tended to elude precise or rigid definition, and so have lent themselves ... to widely varied interpretations according to the needs and purposes of the writers who have employed them" (Walker 251). Isolating certain recurrent and accompanying tags of reference like totality, purity, intensity, or audacity does something to confine the allusive scope, but it can not of course account for all the special resonances that are continually being added or taken away.
A Tropological Topography

Since my identification of the phenomenon of authenticity rests on four theoretical pillars -- audacity, purity, intensity, totality -- the dissertation is similarly divided into four parts, with each chapter dedicated to the exploration of a single pillar. Thus the first chapter is concerned with the principle of audacity, or the relationship between authenticity and race; the second chapter investigates the idea of purity, or the relationship between authenticity and gender; the third chapter considers the question of intensity, or the relationship between authenticity and revolution; and the fourth chapter examines the notion of totality, or the relationship between authenticity and reproduction. A final, fifth chapter recuperates and reconsiders the problems raised in the first chapter as material meriting further research. Of course, the four points that I have located in my drawing of an authenticity "map" are not mutually exclusive in their meanings or positions, and perhaps not as distinct as one might have preferred them to be -- so some overlap or "spillage" occurs between chapters. This shifting typology represents the nature of the subject itself, since authenticity defies tidy analysis and actually changes across time: its perception is not the same thing for the older Gide and Vynnychenko that it was for their younger selves, for example. The dissertation thus follows a general chronological ordering of
the texts, the better to highlight authenticity as a developmental issue.

Another guiding principle in my reading and writing here is the elaboration of a mythology of authenticity, with its corresponding metaphors, ethical issues and implications. So the first chapter starts with the myth of Nietzsche himself, and the mythical posthumous status that he came to assume among the Nazis, as a particularly nefarious metaphorical (and literal) reworking of the concept of "audacity." This brief overview of Nietzsche's reception, with all of its persistent political associations and ambiguities, is offered as a background and context for the ways in which Vynnychenko and Gide received and reacted to Nietzsche themselves. The second chapter seeks to situate Zarathustra, Nietzsche's most successful mythological creation, within specific works by Gide and Vynnychenko that manifest several striking Zarathustrian themes and metaphorical echoes. Animals and women represent the corruptive element that keeps compromising the pursuit of a shaman-like purity, in the "hero of authenticity's" oscillating and ambivalent movement between the mountain and the plain. The third chapter attempts to account for two interrelated myths, Prometheus and Dionysus, as they appear in Nietzsche as well as in Vynnychenko and Gide, under the metaphorical sign of fire. The devilish and the divine meet on the teetering brink of "intensity," the crucible of revolutions. Man mimics or steals the primal, volcanic forces of nature in his smaller-scale, social conflagrations. Finally, the
fourth chapter reflects on the myth of the Devil and his capacity to assume seductive, deceptive form and exercise damming, disruptive force, as represented by the chains of money and sexual instinct. Procreation for Gide and Vynnychenko amounts to punishing imprisonment or a disintegrative assault on the authenticity value of "totality." At the same time, however, they decide that paternity offers the best possible resolution of the tensions inherent within authenticity between isolation and community -- for while children may undermine the individual or bodily integrity of their parents, they also stand to extend it (perhaps indefinitely) into the future.

Gide was familiar with Nietzsche in both the original German and in French translation. He claims in his Journal to have read The Birth of Tragedy (in French), "some" of the Untimely Meditations (in German), and the first volume of Nietzsche's Correspondence (in German). He also attests to having laboured seven or eight times to finish Thus Spoke Zarathustra (in German), a book he declared "IMPOSSIBLE" to read on account of its "insupportable" tone (Gide 1948: 990; emphasis in the original). Gide is further believed to have composed Nietzsche's reverent obituary for the October 1900 issue of L'Ermitage, which led to an audience in Weimar with the philosopher's sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, in 1903 (see Schnyder 210-211; 224-227). But the largest piece of evidence supporting a Gidean connection with Nietzsche can be found in the twelfth of a series of "Lettres à Angèle" (dating from December 1898 to January
1899). Here Gide introduces an imaginary correspondent to "[l']admirable monotonie" of Nietzsche, whose "fervor" is both the clue and the conclusion to the philosopher's self-willed madness: "je préfère dire que Nietzsche S'EST FAIT FOU" (Gide 1938: 232; 240; emphasis in the original). Nietzsche's illness is romanticized into an inevitability, the result of a poetic "lion" choosing to confine himself to the "squirrel's cage" of philosophy (233). In this single sustained public pronouncement on Nietzsche's achievement, which Gide essentially reduces to a kind of unfortunate pathology, one can discern an effort on Gide's part to stand alone and apart from his powerful predecessor. Yet Nietzsche's ghost continued to haunt Gide for the length of his life: as late as 1931, Gide acknowledged upon rereading Ecce Homo that "every time that I take up Nietzsche again, it seems to me that there's nothing more to say and that it's enough to quote him" (1948: 1049).

Vynnychenko's relationship to Nietzsche is much more of a challenge to establish. No records remain to explicitly suggest what works by Nietzsche he may or may not have read, in any translation or edition. Since Vynnychenko initially considered writing in Russian and lived a number of years first in Germany, then much longer in France, one can surmise a fluency in these languages in addition to his native Ukrainian; but his reading habits in any language prove difficult to directly track. Only a

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8The original French reads: "Chaque fois que je reprends Nietzsche, il me semble que plus rien ne reste à dire, et qu'il suffise de le citer."
single line about Nietzsche surfaces in his published diaries to date, expressing the question (among so many others in point form, for the year 1911): "Why was Nietzsche an individualist?" (Vynnychenko 1980: 42). Such a question addresses the tensions between individualism and community that Vynnychenko went on to develop more fully three to four years later, in the conflicted individualist character of Vadym. «По-свіймі»/Божки is the Ukrainian answer to Thus Spoke Zarathustra because its socialist-populist conscience will not let the insurrectionary individualist off the hook: Vynnychenko insists instead that his Zarathustra be humanized and humbled by the will of the collective, especially that of the family. Like Michel in Gide's L'Immoraliste, Vadym is shown to enact "a Nietzschean nightmare of being, [as] a self-willed, self-obsessed destroyer, an extravagant amalgam of the worst features of the Romantic hero" (Greene 78). Thus the Nietzschean points of contact are indirect and implicit as they appear in Vynnychenko's creative rewritings of various Nietzschean principles and assumptions, but they are no less compelling for that. They are simply more oblique and, paradoxically perhaps, more integrated than in the case of Gide.

For Vynnychenko was an accomplished dramatist, with a

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9The original Ukrainian reads: "Через що був Ніцше індивідуалістом?".

10Vynnychenko was probably best known as a playwright outside his own country, through successful translations and productions of his dramas in Germany and Italy in the 1920s (see Rudnyts'kyi). He wrote a total of twenty-three plays, spanning the years 1906 to 1929, which reached audiences as far as
fine ear for aphorisms as they would ring out across the footlights: he recognized in Nietzsche a kindred voice, a similar flair for the outrageous and overstated. Gide, on the other hand, made subtlety and understatement his hallmark and (perhaps inevitably) failed in his attempts to become a playwright -- which may account for a good deal of the envious animosity he tended to reveal towards Nietzsche. Gide could always appreciate a spectacle as a bystander, but he experienced considerably greater difficulty as a performer; something prevented him from following Nietzsche's performative lead that did not so prevent Vynnychenko. This chief difference between Gide and Vynnychenko in terms of dramatic or non-dramatic approach -- a difference in the value accorded to performativity -- says a lot about the ways each writer chose to adapt a Nietzsche specific to his own creative needs. How Gide and Vynnychenko consistently took different things from Nietzsche but ended up confirming each other's final fictional points of view, in text after text, becomes most transparent towards the end of both their careers. In Les Faux-Monnayeurs and Записки кирпятого Мефистофеля, a practical convergence occurs between two apparently irreconcilable positions: Vynnychenko (speaking for the plebeian heterosexual "patriarchal man of the left") and Gide

Czechoslovakia and Norway. But his wide international readership was on the wane by 1919, when he began his years of exile from Ukraine.
(speaking for the patrician homosexual "patriarchal man of the right") both recognized a common "enemy" in women.

We are confronted with a remarkable phenomenon here, namely, that in their comments about prostitutes and women in general 'reactionary' and 'revolutionary' men are able to find some common ground. Their deeply ingrained, shared 'maleness' seems to be the soundest basis for overcoming otherwise unbridgeable political and class differences. (Theweleit 167)

This is the revelation at the heart of this study: the unexpected coincidence in prejudice between two writers who probably could not be any more imaginably different. And in such a prejudice, of course, they are both quite faithfully following Nietzsche.

I have consulted Nietzsche's texts in English translation because of their generally acknowledged high calibre, and as a way of avoiding awkwardnesses and lurches between languages. I have sought as much as possible to pitch my writing towards the English reader, offering translations of supportive texts first and original renderings later, in footnotes or appendices. Given that Nietzsche is my supportive framework and not the literary centre of the thesis, I decided to work with him in the lingua franca here of English (a rule I similarly applied to Dostoevsky and Sartre, for example, because reliable English translations of these secondary sources already conveniently existed). By this method I found that I could minimize digressions and thus reserve my undivided attention for the original French and Ukrainian of my two primary authors alone, as a means of more manageably integrating their specific nuances into the larger English
conversation about them. Where an occasional English translation of Gide or Vynnychenko seemed interesting or appropriate in terms of euphony, I considered it judicious to include as well.

The focus throughout this inquiry into the myths and metaphors of authenticity centers on a perception of writing as a socially mediated and morally motivated practice. To what extent is a given rendering or retelling stuck within a single frame of reference? How can these stories of authenticity be opened up to include wider meanings? What appears to be left out in these narratives, and why? In other words, the aesthetic is never as entirely "disinterested" as it seems; there is always some political interest, either behind or within the text's production, that warrants as much attention as that which the production itself more openly commands. The best way to discern such political undercurrents, in my view -- as well as to enjoy the aesthetic levels of accomplishment -- is to let the texts speak for themselves. By listening to what these texts have to tell us about the quandary of authenticity, I hope readers will discover that even though these texts are dated from the previous century, the issues that they engage remain timeless. And their insights and interrogations are just as instructive as their lapses and limitations. Taken as a whole, the works of both Gide and Vynnychenko record all the vicissitudes of a lifetime devoted to meeting the challenges of authenticity -- challenges that still remain compelling to this day.
Chapter I
The Violence of the Authentic

What was modernism? A time of eager and prolific experiment, when the century was still new and the possibilities still open to pursue that most seductive but elusive of ideals: authenticity. The modernist explosion was the result of "a humanism unfamiliarly mixed with nihilism," as writers and artists came to see their "dangerous, lonely work" more and more committed to a simultaneous liberation and destruction (Schorske 362). Whatever else modernism may have been -- since its meanings tend to proliferate and shift for each of its various representatives -- it was a slave to the idea of the true, a moment held captive by the redemptive promise of power in the authentic. And what is the lure of the authentic if not the lasting legacy of Friedrich Nietzsche, the original nihilist with stubborn humanist roots? Nietzsche's nihilism dissolved the world of values into a relativist morass, since his pronouncement of the death of God (the highest value) ALSO heralds the death of hierarchical order, and the birth of universal equivalence -- where "no value can appear to be 'higher' or more 'authentic' than any other" any longer (Vattimo xxi); "authenticity [with Nietzsche] ... has itself vanished with the death of God" (25).

But if God is dead, man isn't doing so well either -- and so always finds a way to replace the deity with some other suitable value. This is the slippage of nostalgia, an incipient humanism
that keeps bringing the universe back to a human-defined centre, and thus clearing the hopeful path again "towards a renewal and return to a condition of originary authenticity" (Vattimo 100). Nietzsche himself was not immune from this temptation to relent and exchange one foundation for another, "for however radical Nietzsche was in criticism of the existing culture, the terms of his adversity were ... essentially social and humanistic" (Trilling 1963: 95).

If modernism is defined by its sense of a radical discontinuity from the past, as an era of overcoming, then Nietzsche could not escape the terms of the problem through a critical overcoming either, since the idea of overcoming has been absorbed into modernism itself (see Vattimo 166-167). Likewise the original terror in the words "God is dead", which have also lost the fatal sting for us that they undoubtedly held for Nietzsche, "that latecomer in a long line of theologians and believers ... [faced suddenly with] the disappearance of meaning from the sentiment of life" (E. Heller 9). Nietzsche forever "remained a Prussian pastor's son" whose war against holiness became in the end "a sort of holy war" (Mencken 51), as anyone who has read The Antichrist will remember. But for his modernist heirs and successors, the new godless age still managed to sneak authenticity in through the back door as a substitute value for the vacuum. Nietzsche's writings only began to acquire a fresh relevance, "even urgency," in the wake of social upheavals -- "the horrors of trench warfare, ... the Bolshevik revolution, and
the redrawing of the map of Europe by the peace of Versailles" (Surette 176). And the best model for making sense of all these disturbing changes was suddenly Nietzsche, with his calls to embrace totality, purity, intensity, and audacity -- the four cardinal points on the map of authenticity.

Nietzsche's relationship to authenticity is clouded by mystifications of his biography. Since we all know that he died insane, there is a halo of pathos that surrounds his surviving texts -- and a strong tendency to read these texts against the background of the author's personal fate. There is a sense that Nietzsche knowingly purchased his achievement at the price of his total existence, and even took a strange pride in the terrible costliness incurred (Stern 148). He is perceived as "the tragic ideal of purity ... the model tragic thinker in whom passion alters thought" (Carroll 226). One biographer typically describes Nietzsche's "noble and pure personality", together with his "ardent sincerity", as constitutive of his whole philosophy (Bianquis 17). After all, Nietzsche himself tells us that his ideal of the Overman "possesses a kind of innocence of the senses ... [and] is repeatedly called ... a child" (Pütz 19). But the habit of ascribing Nietzsche's "true" voice to that of his most popular and enduring creation, Zarathustra, is as annoying as it is fallacious. Nietzsche was nothing if not polyphonic, not to mention polysemous. Still, in spite of (or because of) his notoriously elliptical style, people persist in reading whatever monolithic meaning they choose into his works. Nietzsche is a
champion of everyone's idea of authenticity because his writing has the capacity to speak "for all and none" (as his playful subtitle to Zarathustra proclaims). In the words of one critic, it is

by means of a perpetually changing point of view, as Nietzsche practices it throughout his entire work, [that] the intended whole appears in always different nuances that contradict and neutralize one another and thus force the search for yet other viewpoints. [...] [This strategy] protects [the text] from a one-sided fixation that would interfere with the totality which must be preserved as a field of infinite possibilities. (Pütz 26)

One has to wonder, though, whether such writing, replete with subtleties as it is, ever reached the target audience Nietzsche may have envisioned. In fact, one of the most common defences of Nietzsche in the twentieth century will always come back to the point about how all the really evil people simply misread or misconstrued him. Since the question of authorial intention can never be satisfactorily resolved, we are left with the question of why Nietzsche's texts have consistently enjoyed (for better and for worse) a richly exploitable ambiguity. Are texts innocent of the interpretations readers bring to them, or is there something flammable always lurking in the depths, waiting for the one reader to bring the right spark? Certainly there always remains a grain of mystery from the making of any work, which can neither explain nor control its subsequent reception. But once we are faced with a record of readings like Nietzsche's, "the uses and abuses ... become part of their history and thus must be taken seriously, especially if the texts
have as a part of their legacy an important totalitarian or racist phase" (Carroll 43). Nietzsche's problem is Céline's problem is Pound's problem. It is a problem of moral responsibility within the heart of modernism itself. For as Frederick Karl observed, modernists as a group provided great literary excitement, but no models for behaviour. [...] As one achieved breakthroughs in artistic matters, it was easy to equate such 'advances' with human superiority, with transcendence of mortality, hubris unchecked. [...] The nature of Modernist art had not provided any role model ...., nor did it place any sanctions on aberrant behaviour within its own terms. (368)

The only life worth living, in high modernist terms, was a life ruled by intensity of experience -- in accordance with Nietzsche's dictum that "the highest moral value was to 'burn always' with a 'hard, gemlike flame' ... [because] a life of passion was the highest and best life" (Surette 52; Pater 152). A strong sense of "emotional authenticity," however, did not include or even require guidelines for any social skills on a non-ecstatic level. It seems that a great deal of the idea of authenticity is little more than an exalted appeal to the emotions -- much as the concept of the romantic is similarly indebted to an experience of emotional states. The idea of the "romantic," according to Mario Praz, "assumes a subjective character, like 'interesting,' 'charming,' 'exciting,' which describe not so much the property of the objects as our reactions to them ... [such that] it is impossible to distinguish where sincerity ends and mystification begins" (13; 166). And the biggest romantic root at the bottom of all the various flowers of
modernism must surely be the idealization of a distant past, which is where all appeals to authenticity eventually lead: back to a quest for pristine and absolute origins, which are in turn obscured by the mists of emotion. "The Romantic belief that the past is 'truer' because closer to origins" conveniently conflates ultimate truth with ultimate distance; one thus accounts, in blithely circular fashion, "for present knowledge or cultural practice by postulating a provenance reaching back to some authentic origin" (Surette 56; 61).

Sometimes this "true source" is an outright fiction, as in the case of France -- which sees itself as THE classical country of Europe because it alone is the self-styled heir to all the glories of ancient Greece (see Carroll 83). At the same time, romanticism had to be purged (in France and elsewhere) of its lingering and suspect associations of disorder, the better to seamlessly blend into a controlled ideal of the nation; the romantic exaltation of the individual self had to be reabsorbed and transformed into the larger tradition and the "true" community of readers (see Carroll 78-79).

Not for nothing, then, did the French recognize in Nietzsche "the great European ... [and] authentic heir to ... the [classical] tradition" (Bianquis 117) -- albeit after the fact of his insanity. That is, they accepted him as one of their own, when neither in fact could lay legitimate claim to the great and distant tradition supposed to unite them. But the further back one extends one's genealogy, the grander the speculation in the
face of uncertainty, and the sweeter the illusion of plenitude and permanence ... to the point where the fiction is forgotten and elevated into myth instead. Co-extensive with this backward longing is another romantic idealization, that of "pre-lapsarian, natural man untrammelled by thought, by knowledge of good and evil, by, in fact, knowledge" (Fussell 1994: 57). A state of animal-like innocence and immediacy lost to our memory is still mourned, but from a position where intellect is enviously involved: recovery, not regression, is the wish hoping to be somehow fulfilled (as in the modernist André Gide’s vision of "the old Adam" in L’Immoraliste). Despite all its danger, "the instinctual element in man, ‘the natural in us,’ [seemed to provide] ... the power whereby one could escape from the prison of aestheticism, from the paralysis of narcissistic sensibility" (Schorske 19) -- that is to say, the solipsism or sterile contemplation imposed by the conditions of modern, industrialized life. But Baudelaire already knew, long before either Gide or Nietzsche, that to analyze every act and desire of the purely natural man is to discover nothing but horror (see Praz 148).

Nietzsche’s romanticism does not extend, however, to this argument for ultimate origins. Over and over we encounter an insistence on proximity instead of origin or foundation. "In Nietzsche’s terms," says Gianni Vattimo,

thought does not return to the origin ... all that it does is travel along the multiple paths of errancy, which is the only kind of wealth and the only kind of Being that is ever given to us. [...] When the origin has revealed its insignificance, as Nietzsche says,
then we become open to the meaning and richness of proximity. (174; 177; see also 169)

The plea for proximity is a plea for plurality -- part of that same artful strategy of evading a single or totalizing interpretation. Since all we can ever do is APPROXIMATE Reality according to our idiosyncrasies of experience, we might as well throw out the deceptive clarity of positivism for the "truer" but more dizzying chaos of proximity. Life as we know it is thus a riot of competing narratives -- our universe, the stage for so many duelling banjos! In such an uncertain ontological setting, where can a reassuringly stable higher value be found? Jean-Paul Sartre accepts this idea of the world as a place fraught with contingencies, failings, and limitations when he says, in agreement with Nietzsche, that "truth never yields itself directly, it merely appears through errors" (1988: 242).

Where Nietzsche's romanticism DOES extend is to the emphasis on the self -- particularly a loftily courageous self along the lines of the criminal or the outlaw, a "runaway self" determined to preserve a distance from institutions and individuals passively accepting all the old, received ideas now tired and lacking in authenticity (see Karl 46; 178; see also Chamberlin 1980). Nietzsche's celebration of vigour and audacity "established a radical dialectic, not within society, but within the individual" (Karl 176). Nietzsche's messianic trust in the imminent need for and ascendance of the Overman is a harkening back not to a mysterious general origin but to a mysteriously specific Original: the Overman as absolute authenticity,
personified. Nietzsche's faith in the capacity to live one's life as an artistic process of "self-making," AS IF the world were born only with the artist, is mirrored in one of his earliest and most provocative statements of the problem with the world as he saw it: "It is only as an AESTHETIC PHENOMENON that existence and the world are eternally JUSTIFIED" (1967: 52; emphases in the original). Individual capacity for transformation (and hence redemptive meaning) is a condition not to be earned by labour, but bestowed by grace. Nietzsche's mysticism here IS his romanticism (remembering Mario Praz's definition of their interplay): for the only really necessary attribute of the "self-made man" remains his readiness and willingness to let the spirit of becoming enter into him. Even "the will to power" is a kind of waiting for the revelation of a meaning at once cosmological, psychological, and phenomenological (see Kern 218), to be subsequently enacted through "self-making"; perhaps "if Macht had been translated as 'might' instead of 'power,' the association with ['making'] would have been more apparent" (Kern 429) -- rather than the more prevalent interpretation of aggression for aggression's sake.

The source of meaning for Nietzsche is the self, which learns to incarnate the Overman virtues of totality, purity, and intensity. But before the self can emulate the Overman, it has to recognize the truth of the way of the Overman, and before it can do that, it requires the more explicitly martial virtue of courage. In an 1887 letter to the Scandinavian scholar George
Brandes, Nietzsche described the perception of truth in terms of the individual capacity for courage: "What a person already holds 'true' or has not yet acknowledged as true," he wrote, "seems to me to depend mainly on his courage, on the relative strength of his courage ([and] I seldom have the courage [he further confessed] for what I really know)" (Brandes 64). But courage is only another euphemism for authenticity, and the peculiar strength or vigilance it calls for in its observance. In other words, it's a question of marshalling enough MORAL courage to begin to explore "the capacity for independent thinking, for difficult problems, for what Nietzsche called the joys of the labyrinth" (Mencken 105).

Courage, however, is no simpler a category to try and unpack than authenticity: it suffers from the same circular ambiguities. We have already seen how Nietzsche serves modernism as a kind of apostle of authenticity: first in the perceived purity of his biography, then in the calculated totality of the form of his books, and finally in the projected intensity of their content. The added wrinkle of courage (or what I prefer to call audacity) opens up another crucial dimension: namely danger, or violence. Courage, after all, is meaningless without the idea of some danger. And danger is another modulation of the intensity argument, for declaring what makes life worthwhile— but with this difference: now the domain has shifted from the clear rarefied air of the artist's holy mountain, down to the more motley and heathen closeness of other people. Danger is
defined in Nietzschean terms as the threat of other people invading or undermining the guarded sanctity of the self. It may present a challenge to be faced, but no less a contagion to be preferably avoided -- for danger bears strong affinities to dirt. The violence of the authentic is committed to protecting the self from not only the foreigner outside (or the other, "less enlightened" person who does not happen to share your world view), but from the threat of the foreigner inside as well (which is the more abstract, hence pernicious tendency to slide into the messy compromises of the many, rather than heroically adhering to the values of a "hard" and noble solitude). The danger of the divided self is the greatest and easiest fall from grace, after the more pedestrian (but no less pertinent) problem of politics. In a recent collection of essays called *Nietzsche: Literature and Values*, Peter Heller claims that Nietzsche, "an anti-anti Semite," is in fact more profoundly anti-Semitic than the anti-Semites because his anti-Christian position is founded upon anti-Semitism. [...] [T]he same Nietzsche does raise [after all] ... an ... accusation against the Jews as originators of the millennial degeneration of humanity, the immortal blemish, which leaves a merely political anti-Semitism far behind. [...] Very well then: If the Jews have, so to speak, invented, managed, perpetrated the blemish of millennial decadence -- [...] then [it is highly telling that Nietzsche never allows the Jews the possibility] ... of transforming, of overcoming decadence ... much as he, Nietzsche, the sick décadent, overcame HIS decadence, in keeping with his motto: What does not kill me makes me stronger ... [...] [It all comes down to] the imperative to overcome the inner enemy, the blemish, the taint, the threatening disease: in short, the Jew WITHIN oneself. For is not this overcoming of Judaea within itself exactly what Nietzsche demands of Western civilization, even as he demands of himself to overcome the Jew --
'for the Christian is the Jew once more' [as he said] -- within himself? (206; 207; emphases in the original)

The problems with Nietzsche highlighted in this passage reveal the extent to which authenticity is a dangerous game, and not always as compatible with proximity and plurality as one might think. How inclusive an idea can authenticity actually claim to be, if it permits such selective shifting of focus and importance within its own perimeters? A fluid paradox that essentializes one situation at the expense of another: now you see it, now you don't. Does authenticity merely reinstate essentialism at a higher level? It may pretend to offer a new freedom, but when pushed, it ends up wearing all its constraints on its sleeve (see Singer 123; 171). And even worse, it lends itself quite seamlessly to fascist articulations of value.

Nothing in history is quite accidental. Why was it fascism that spontaneously swept over Europe, and not communism -- since both movements can be said to trace their impetus back to a common quest for absolute and universal principles to reshape the face of society? How was it that the Germans could "rehabilitate" the dead Nietzsche as a latter-day "Nazi saint" -- since his philosophy is "really" only a long metaphoric poem on internal self-realization, not a crudely literal endorsement for external domination? Certainly we all can recognize "bad philology" when we see it: all those self-serving "attempts at twisting the text to fit one's prejudice" (P. Heller 203). Or can we?
Leon Surette suggests in *The Birth of Modernism* that "if we grant fascism some filiation with Nietzsche, it could be considered even more profoundly revolutionary ... Where Locke and Rousseau overturned the sanctity of the past, and Hegel and Marx overturned the sanctity of property, Nietzsche overturned the sanctity of human rationality itself" (74). Nothing is gained by trying to reduce the impact of fascism on our century, by simply acknowledging it as an aberration that fortunately went away by itself. To do so would amount to only perpetuating the same old model of pathology and contagion, even if in a more hopefully salutary direction. Fascism is a far more complex response to the tragic and mythic ideal held out by Nietzsche, because its very engine runs on a constantly renewable fuel: the pathos of inevitable eventual failure, with all the built-in nostalgia for "what could have been" and the redoubled determination to try, try again. Nietzsche’s doctrine of the Eternal Return is transmogrified into the political "fleur du mal" of fascism "waiting in memory ... to be transplanted, to be nurtured, and to bloom again under the right conditions ... [since] even if it fail[s] as a political movement it [will still succeed] ... as an aesthetic experience that can always once again affect the youth of the future" (Carroll 123). Fascism is "a syndrome which includes pervasive worship of raw, amoral power ... impatience with tepid, cowardly compromise and insistence on the need for, and beauty of, violence" (P. Heller 209) -- timeless siren songs all. It is not the simple-minded and juvenile mentality we would
like to dismiss it as, but a theory of transcendence sophisticated enough to seduce many consenting adults into elaborately rationalized allegiances. Of course, intelligence has nothing really to do with morality -- although we continue to hope and believe they should ideally coincide. Just "the fact of having learnt much and knowing much is ... neither a necessary means to culture nor a sign of culture" but "accords remarkably well," as Nietzsche tells us, "with barbarism" (Brandes 4).

Nietzsche's writings consist of a tissue of contradictions -- or rather, conflicts. A more military emphasis is not misplaced, because Nietzsche prophesied his own role in the century to come in terms of "a kind of explosive waiting for its detonator," a human time bomb set for a delayed reaction (Karl 83; 368). "I know my fate," he said, in the section of Ecce Homo entitled Why I Am A Destiny; "I am no man, I am dynamite" (1989: 326). Nietzsche's one year of military service obviously marked him for life: enthusiasms for combat and the battlefield perhaps display the single most consistent characteristic of his writing as a whole, and are even carried over into his particular taste in dress: many of Nietzsche's contemporaries are recorded as specifically remembering his "martial" moustache and the impression he conveyed of "an officer in civilian clothes" (see Gilman 1987: 133; 246; 61; 183). He even seemed to advertise his supposedly Polish ancestry by wearing his hair over his forehead in a thick, Cossack-like tuft (see Gilman 1987: 214). This last detail of Nietzsche's presentational self is particularly
significant because it suggests an unacknowledged earlier model from which his idea of the Overman may have been taken: the Cossack. For as Judith Deutsch Kornblatt tells us in her insightful study of the Cossack hero and myth in Russian literature and culture, the Cossack too stands for a sign of freedom that exceeds the boundaries set for smaller, weaker, and more vulnerable men: wanton violence in the hands of the Cossack is a matter of potential rebirth and transcendence on a metaphysical scale, a vital rite of passage synonymous with identity. "[T]here seems to be something highly positive, even marvellous about the Cossacks," she writes, because

[b]y insisting on the creative and thus positive aspect of violence, moral structures are [completely and conveniently] evaded. [...] Their battle is a feast ...; their fight is music; their murdering is dance. [...] The Cossacks embody variety, activity, and magnitude. (68)

In short, they meet all of Nietzsche’s Dionysian criteria, and well before the moment of his writing The Birth of Tragedy besides. As in the case of the fascist, the Cossack also testifies to the enduring appeal of the warrior code -- another kind of socially-condoned barbarism that remains a blind spot in Nietzsche’s vision.

This "romanticism of violence" (Bianquis 87) is also tied to an unsettling image in French culture of the equivalence between controlled excellence of form and controlled excess of force.

"In principle," David Carroll writes in his landmark study, French Literary Fascism,
all authentic poetry is violent, for a poetry devoid of cruelty and violence is an abstract, formalist, aestheticist poetry, a nonpoetic poetry. A people and a culture without violence are thus also a people and a culture without poetry. [...] [This then is] the fusion of violence and lucidity, the ultimate expression of force and poetic form, neither existing without the other. (232)

Evidently the idea of authentic cultural achievements requiring a backdrop of violence to "make it" into the "world class" market of culture is not a preoccupation unique to the Germans, the Russians, or the French. It seems that the logic of authenticity, especially as it relates to art, is grounded in an atavistic faith in the powers of human sacrifice, that magical belief that human blood spilled in the service of some ritual will sanctify everyone and everything in immediate attendance. "Of all that is written," says Nietzsche's Zarathustra, "I love only what a man has written with his blood. Write with blood, and you will experience that blood is spirit" (1983: 152). Of course, blood here can also mean passion, or intensity, or complete concentration of focus. Then again, society tends to pay attention to art born of labours passionate or intense (or even just lukewarm) only after the artist is safely dead -- so blood in a sense really DOES have to pass into "spirit" before the larger aesthetic effect is achieved. The close interrelation between death and the aesthetic is another large legacy of romanticism, whose traces are still alive and well in Nietzsche and several cultural mythologies across Europe.
Audacity is the critical catalyst of authenticity that gets the other three qualities of totality, purity, and intensity to find their focus and spring into action. Audacity galvanizes the remaining three energies with its diagnosis of danger and courageous call to arms, and channels them into a specifically social response. Together they work to produce a groundswell that is "impolite, authentic, and dangerous" (Kaplan 132) commensurate with the perceived threat. The overall effect is "shameless, but not false" (Praz 267), since a sense of deeper, inarticulate truth must be preserved at all costs. But at the same time, audacity or "courage (to give a nobler name to what most people would call shamelessness) does NOT suffice to give originality to a thought, nor ... mastery of style" (Praz xvii; emphasis added). Certainly we all need a modicum of "courage to follow our intelligence as well as our strongest inclinations" if we want to ever achieve or succeed in anything (Singer 174). But it is not enough by itself. The project of authenticity is hemmed in on every side by contingencies, not freedoms. It wants to be able to sustain the illusion of a heroically independent individualism, where each one of us can hope to fulfil the motto "To thine own self be true." But it forgets that "one can NOT be oneself. Only someone else can fulfil one as an individual. One cannot be the possessor of one's own individuality" (Massey 41; emphasis added). And in the interval between wilful autonomy and
necessary interdependence, the smouldering potential for violence lies. Revolutions in thought are less common than sedition theories of conspiracy, which content themselves to rely on that all-too-common "resentment" that Nietzsche identified long ago as the defining moment in our collective "genealogy of morals." The problem with modernism was the problem of the moral vacuum left in the wake of authenticity's failure to deliver on all that it seemed to promise. Or as William Butler Yeats put the problem of his age:

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Chapter II

Women, Liars, and Dangerous Things:
Two Modernist Translations of the Zarathustra Myth

... my illness has been of the greatest use to me: it has released me, it has restored to me the courage to be myself ... 

-- 1888 letter from Friedrich Nietzsche to George Brandes

Nietzsche's various illnesses (chronic migraines, indigestion, and virtual blindness) contributed not only to his release from his professorial duties at the University of Basel, but to the writing of his most exuberantly "convalescent" works, celebrating sickness as an opportunity for discovery and transcendence. "Cramped intestines betray themselves," one reads in The Gay Science (written in 1882, an emblematic production of this period); "their cramps are often no more than signs that they would like to DANCE" (322; 162 -- emphasis in the original). But "we argonauts of the ideal ... are, to repeat it, healthier than one likes to permit us, dangerously healthy, ever again healthy ... What can it matter to us what tinsel the sick may use to cover up their weakness?" (346; 339) Nietzsche's appeal to an exalted third person plural will run the range from "we

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Another rendering of this same phrase can be found in Nietzsche: A Self-Portrait from His Letters, ed. & trans. Peter Fuss & Henry Shapiro (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971): "My illness has been my greatest boon: it unblocked me, it gave me the courage to be myself" (114).
philosophers," "we convalescents," and "we daredevils of the spirit" -- all in just the preface to this same volume -- to "we psychologists," "we physiologists," and "we immoralists" in a later one (Twilight of the Idols, 1888).

However Nietzsche may define this "we," the same opposition is always maintained: between a "knowing" élite that will eventually thrill to his words (since Nietzsche hardly experienced what could be called a readership in his lifetime), and the ignorant remainder that resists and oppresses them. This persecuted sense of a voice in the wilderness, calling to a future audience of kindred spirits with all the grand capacity for hyperbole and overstatement at that voice's disposal, rings with a combination of confidence and contradiction that reaches its zenith in Nietzsche's characterization of Zarathustra (Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 1883-85) -- who, incidentally, must constantly resort to the use of the first person SINGULAR for sheer lack of any (even fictionally) satisfying disciples: "I am a law only for my own kind," he wearily declares in the closing pages, "I am no law for all" (397). However, this does not constitute an admission of defeat so much as a vindication of principle, since Zarathustra ambiguously ends by embracing an absolutely new morning, greater than any other event in the narrative and thus necessarily, ineffably beyond the reach of both his companion-characters and companion-readers, disappearing

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2 In The Portable Nietzsche, ed. & trans. Walter Kaufmann (Markham: Penguin Books Canada, 1983) 103-439; hereafter referred to as Z.
into "the distance, ... the azure solitude in which this work lives" (Nietzsche 1989: 304). Zarathustra's own kind, it seems, are finally met in a dazzling space that words are powerless to convey, leaving only a "glowing and strong" silence behind them. This open ending, together with a myriad other instances of cryptic references, obscure metaphors and puns, and ellipses in logic persistently encountered throughout the text, makes Nietzsche's Zarathustra a supremely opaque creation, then as now.

Many commentators have struggled to render those opacities transparent -- from Gary Shapiro's patient unravelling of a systematic strategy of tropes, where "inference is not logical but tropological;"3 to Bernd Magnus, Stanley Stewart, and Jean-Pierre Mileur's analysis of "self-consuming concepts" and their capacity for appearing "perennially fresh and plausible" in spite of their "elegantly flawed arguments;"4 to Kelly Oliver's "diagnosis" of a pernicious maternal identification that "dreads or parodies all other forms of femininity."5 But Nietzsche's Zarathustra remains for all that a "difficult" text, eluding exegesis and thriving on its own confusions -- the better to inspire sustained interest (a difficult book is never really "finished"). Or to inspire imitations, from greater or lesser

3Nietzschean Narratives (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989) 46.
4Nietzsche's Case: Philosophy As/And Literature (New York: Routledge, 1993) 23.
authors: Norman O. Brown insists, in his own "modern" rewriting of Zarathustra, that enduring ambiguity is naturally the secret to all vitality -- since "[e]nigmatic form is living form; like life, an iridescence; an invitation to the dance; a temptation, or irritation. No satisfying solutions; nothing to rest in; nothing to weigh us down" (246). Nietzsche's well-known contempt for "scholarly oxen" is balanced by a desire to emulate the "lightness of dancing feet," as demonstrated by his constant recourse to etymologies and works of art, literature and music not only for illustrative purpose, but for PROOF. The resistance of Nietzsche's work to scholarly processes of digestion testifies to the strength of his arguments for and from a position of poetic and not ratiocinative force -- a position that exercised a massive impact on generations of later writers; for "with the exceptions of Paul Claudel and T.S. Eliot, one can hardly find a major literary figure who, in one way or another, was NOT inspired by the work of Friedrich Nietzsche" (Dürr, Grimm & Harms, viii; emphasis added).

That Nietzsche can be all things to all people explains much of his perennial appeal. Since the 1890s Nietzsche's texts have been embraced by an exceptionally wide range of political and cultural interests, in both the Old World and the New. Geneviève Bianquis attempted to document the Nietzschean impact on France as early as 1929,\(^6\) including an investigation of "immoralism" in

French writing since the original immoralist's demise.\(^7\) A corresponding study of Nietzsche's influence in Russia appeared much later, but with a similar attention to tracing Nietzschean "echoes" in Russian (specifically symbolist) literature from the turn of the century.\(^8\) Steven Aschheim also demonstrates the eclectic expressionist debt to Nietzsche in his discussion of the German avant-garde from the same time period,\(^9\) but further contextualizes these literary borrowings within a larger historical field of socialism, feminism, Protestantism, and Nazism -- phenomena which each took (and often distorted) just as much from the same source for different ends. Nietzsche's writings enjoy a fascinating resilience and resonance well beyond the strictly literary sphere, but largely as a direct result of their strictly literary tone. Bouncing between extremes and reticences, bursting with images and aphorisms, the fact that these texts trigger such strong responses at all can be attributed to their insistently "mythic" or "transhuman" language -- as if Nietzsche in writing them had been "either a radiant, heavenly meteor or a bloodthirsty wolf ... from the forests" (Aschheim 24), inspiring either adulation or dread.

\(^7\)Nietzsche proclaimed himself "the first immoralist" in Ecce Homo, an incomplete work written in 1888 but not published until 1905 (see Nietzsche 1989: 280 and Shapiro 159).


To this tidal wave of influence may be added the names of two more writers: the 1947 Nobel laureate André Gide (1869-1951) and his lesser-known contemporary, Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880-1951). As modernists coming of age in the aftermath of Nietzsche's death, Gide and Vynnychenko were not immune to Nietzsche's spell, and each sought to emulate Nietzsche's meteoric lucidity in his own way. In Gide's case Nietzsche represents a towering rival, whose precursorship is either reluctantly recognized or cavalierly reduced -- because he was influenced by him more than he cared to admit; in Nietzsche he said he found "not an instigation, but rather on the contrary, a hindrance" (Gide 1978: 412). In Vynnychenko's case Nietzsche stands as more of a model, whose shadow is more diffuse but no less potent as an inspirational source. He accepted Nietzsche's call to arms as "the first IMMORALIST" not in terms of a particular problem but as a general insurrectionary rule, whose postulates found expression among characters exploring the agonies (and far fewer ecstasies) of absolute individualism. Where Gide engaged with Nietzsche on a more abstract level of form, Vynnychenko recognized and exploited a potential for melodramatic content.

Literary critics, however, have been less ready to acknowledge a connection between Nietzsche and Vynnychenko than between Nietzsche and Gide -- a tendency that may be attributed as much to a wider general traffic between French and German cultures, I would suggest, as to a tradition of preserving a
certain insularity in the Ukrainian one. For example, Bianquis devotes five approving pages to Gide's "apprenticeship" in her Nietzsche study, while John Burt Foster, Jr. offers a patchier thirty pages regarding Gide's "appropriation" in a far less edifying account of "Nietzschean currents." Similarly, Jakob Amstutz produces an effort at documenting a relationship between the two writers, while William W. Holdheim expanded his initial musings on "the young Gide's reaction to Nietzsche" into a monograph, which examines the same issue of influence again a decade later.

Vynnychenko scholarship, on the other hand, can claim only one really overt instance of any Nietzschean correspondence, and it is a rather grudging one at that. Pavlo Khrystiuk observes that

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Vynnychenko gives us the impression of an obedient student who took a few thoughts of Nietzsche on faith and then tried to simply regurgitate them through the mouths of his own fictional characters, without fleshing them out into any artistic form. [...] Vynnychenko's heroes strike us as the kind of people who have taken up only the bare words of Nietzsche's philosophy [ТІЛЬКИ ГОЛІ СЛОВА], then simplified and adapted that philosophy 'for home use.'

Khrystiuk concludes that there are nevertheless "true traces of Nietzsche's individualist philosophy to be found in Vynnychenko's world-view, even though he [Vynnychenko] sometimes loses his way in creating something truly artistic by pursuing a path not suited to his own real talent" (299; see A.ii). Given this single slim document on the Vynnychenko-Nietzsche record, and the lamentable lack of translations of Vynnychenko texts into English, the present work will endeavour to redress the imbalance by replacing such backhanded praise with a more justified (because larger) account of the Ukrainian's "talent." 14

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13 See «В. Винниченко і Ф. Ніцше» in Українська хата 4-5 (1913): 275-299. I have translated excerpts from pages 291 and 292 here; see Appendix A-1 for the original Ukrainian ("А.і").

A rule of "all-English" citation will be observed in the course of this chapter, in order to confine (as much as possible) the discussion of French and Ukrainian texts to a single language, in the interests of clarity and simplicity. Thus all quotations from Ukrainian and French, in either the original language or translation, may hereafter be located in Appendix A-1 (A) for cross-reference, and listed according to their order of appearance (e.g., A.ii, A.iii, etc.) in the pages that follow.

14 Khrystiuk only bases his analysis on a few of Vynnychenko's plays and short stories (five in all: ШАБЛІ ЖИТТЯ, Мементо, and Базар, plus "МОМЕНТ" and "КУПЛЯ") -- and significantly omits Vynnychenko's novels from his discussion. This is unfortunate, because a lot of Vynnychenko's ideas on morality and other "Nietzschean" themes get developed most fully in the larger genre of the novel. When Khrystiuk starts talking about a Vynnychenko character called Myron, for example (290), THE Myron that one expects -- at least at Khrystiuk's time of
darker horse, after all, requires greater light to bring it out of neglected shadow. The aim of this chapter will be to show how both Gide and Vynnychenko, in their respective attempts to rewrite Nietzsche's Zarathustra, each produced two volumes of ambitious prose that surprisingly ended up coinciding in terms of tone, conclusion, and structure -- given their radically different preferences and cultural traditions.

Gide's *Les Nourritures terrestres*¹⁵ (*Fruits of the Earth*, 1897), a lyrical landscape described in an ecstatic first person singular, became the unofficial breviary of a disenchanted post-World War I generation of French youth, eager to embrace Gide's call to abandon a corrupt culture for an intoxicating immersion in nature instead. Zarathustra's role of moral educator is reworked in the anonymous person of the elder "convalescent" narrator addressing a certain younger "Nathanaël," as well as in the cameo appearance of the mysterious Ménalque. This same Ménalque puts in another calculated appearance in

writing -- would be the more recent and flamboyant "immoralist" hero of the novel Чесність з собою (1911), and not the far less compelling protagonist of the same name from the melodrama ШАПЛИ ЖИТТЯ (1907). Since Vynnychenko was only half-way through the writing of his two-volume novel in 1913, one can understand why Khrystiuk could not discuss both of them -- but one can certainly question why he failed to mention the FIRST volume, at least, given its markedly Zarathustrian echoes.

¹⁵Suivi de *Les Nouvelles Nourritures* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard/Collection Folio, 1991); hereafter referred to as *NT*. All translations from the French unless otherwise indicated are my own.
L'Immoraliste\textsuperscript{16} (The Immoralist, 1902), where he plays the devil's advocate to the questions of personal propriety plaguing the hero Michel. L'Immoraliste is a notoriously baffling text on the same order as Thus Spoke Zarathustra, but with nothing of its "lightness;" instead one sees the preoccupations of the poet-prophet turned into a darkening obsession with homosexuality, which is demonized into an evil of excess eventually consuming Michel entirely. The cheerful flight from society initiated in Les Nourritures terrestres, extolling the virtues of male bonding in adventure, reaches its conclusion only in L'Immoraliste, where the original clarion call to freedom becomes a miserable word of warning to other males to exercise more moderation than the unfortunate Michel.

Gide translates Nietzsche's idea of the male community of Zarathustra's disciples into more explicitly sexual terms, and realizes a more crushing disappointment as a result: the initially optimistic combination of "sentimental pederasty" with an "educating impulse" (Pollard 1991: 358; 316) discovered in forbidden "fruits" can degenerate into the sterility and solipsism of the extreme "immoralist," an abject slave to degrading instinct. In the end, Michel is alone -- having forsaken the values of human community as much as having been forsaken by them in turn. For if Zarathustra discovers a disconcerting propensity among his disciples for sexual coyness

\textsuperscript{16}Paris: Mercure de France/Coll\textsuperscript{e}ction Folio, 1990; hereafter referred to as I.
and ribaldry in his absence -- such that "we wish that the sex at Zarathustra's party were better, and that he had affirmed sexuality" more openly among all the parodic innuendo (Shapiro 118) -- Michel surely discovers that sex, however glorious, is no substitute for metaphysics. In pursuing the trail of the unspoken, Gide's sad prophet of pleasure hits the wall of public censure and private saturation. Such are the limits to human potential for realizing revolutions: either the inertia of the past intervenes to arrest a hopeful momentum, or the space of present possibility closes from exhaustion of effort. Gide's version of the Zarathustra myth ends in a retreat into the depths, with the sickness ascendant. There is no strength left to celebrate in some mystically higher company that might eventually filter down to the benighted masses; there is only a sickly solitude, communicated in a chastened confessional to three witnesses from Michel's former social existence.

Nietzsche's Zarathustra's triumphant epiphany on his mountaintop is a heroic male parturition awarded to the prophet's simultaneously chaste and sensuous labours to achieve enlightenment (for peculiar metaphors for begetting and birthing insistently abound); but Gide's Michel experiences only an epiphany of defeat, born of too much sensuality avenging too long a chastity.

Vynnychenko's «По-свій!»¹⁷ (Blood First, 1913) and

¹⁷Volume VII of Твори (Works) (Київ: «Дзвін,» 1919); hereafter referred to as P-S.
60}(The Idols, 1914) comprise a novel in two parts which follow the fortunes of a rebellious "immoralist" poet, Vadym Stel'mashenko, who returns from a stretch of Siberian exile as punishment for his "untimely" socialist views, only to choose imprisonment again as a simultaneous escape from and sacrifice for his family. While Nietzsche's Twilight of the Idols might seem like the most obvious source for the theme and title of Vynnychenko's second volume, it is Nietzsche's Zarathustra that occupies four key passages of the whole: first in an argument about Nietzsche and immoralism as soon as Vadym makes his narrative entrance (P-S 30-34); then in an epiphanic "Zarathustrian" sequence remembered from a long Siberian

All translations from the Ukrainian are my own.

18 Volume VIII of Твори (Київ: «Дзвін», 1919); hereafter referred to as В.

19 In a remarkable coincidence of art meeting life, the compiler of an annotated bibliography on Vynnychenko actually chose as his scholarly pseudonym the name of this particularly monumental Vynnychenko hero! See Vadym Stel'mashenko, Volodymyr Vynnychenko: Annotated Bibliography (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies/University of Alberta [Research Report #32], 1989).

Gide's protagonist in L'Immoraliste enjoys a similarly remarkable name, since "Michel" not only harkens back to another famous soul-searcher that Gide openly admired (Michel de Montaigne, 1533-1592), but also alludes to Heinrich Heine's usage of "the name Michel ... [together with] other German authors of his period to designate the French revolutionary slumbering inside every German" (Wolf 406). Thus Gide's Gallicized philologist called Michel offers a more subversively sensual twist on Nietzsche's German philologist called Friedrich.

20 See Appendix A-2 for plot summaries of both volumes, for fuller details of characters and events than present discussion permits.
flashback (P-S 164-165); next in Vadym’s defensive self-description as an individualist akin to Nietzsche (P 27); and finally in another argument about moral relativism, which culminates in another self-description from Vadym as "a warrior for a new world and new values" (P 192). But all of Vadym’s efforts to justify himself to other people here are ultimately thwarted by his memory of a single pivotal incident: the suicide of a woman he knew once in Siberia. The death of this woman (known simply as Natasha) proves to be the one thing the intrepid Vadym fails (in Zarathustrian language) to overcome: Vadym is stuck at the problem of inverse cripples posed by the parable called "On Redemption" that Nietzsche relates halfway through his Zarathustra, and he can not go beyond the hunchback’s questioning of the prophet’s assumptions:

The hunchback ... had listened to this discourse and covered his face the while; ... [then] said slowly: ‘But why does Zarathustra speak otherwise to us than to his disciples?’ Zarathustra answered: ‘What is surprising in that? With hunchbacks one may well speak in a hunchbacked way.’ ‘All right,’ said the hunchback; ‘and one may well tell pupils tales out of school. But why does Zarathustra speak otherwise to his pupils than to himself?’ (Z 253-254)

Nietzsche leaves this encounter with the hunchback unresolved, giving the hunchback the last troubling word, and Vadym is haunted by this question of arrogant differentiation.

If Natasha was a symbolic hunchback (spectacularly but not specifically deformed by ugliness), Salamandra is the literal hunchback who tests Vadym’s exalted principles yet again on his
road back to purgatory. He recognizes in Salamandra a frighteningly intimate proximity, greater even than the primary bonds of family that are so often invoked as the true source of every other affiliation:  

She is closer to me than any Tepa or Olesya, and yes, more like kin than my own parents, or Os', or Ksenia, or Mania. I can boldly take her into the bosom of my family without fearing that she will ever be perceived as a stranger there. (B 342; A.iii) 

He knows that her physical ugliness somehow mirrors his own moral ugliness, like a kind of female Dorian Gray who forces him to face the hideousness of his soul, as his more naked second self. The crippled figures of Natasha and Salamandra thus act as twin nemeses, dragging Vadym down into dread and self-doubt, exactly like Zarathustra's "devil and archenemy" the dwarf, who is also described as "lamefoot" and "lame, making lame" (Z 268; 270).  

The remainder of Vy-nychenko's epic novel agonizes over the consequences of the original "spiritual murder," and Vadym's inability to envision any future free of Natasha's stain -- either through a growing temptation to repeat the crime, or an endless effort of expiation precluding any other possible personal happiness with another woman (either way: an "eternal return of the same" problem). Sickness soaks through all of the novel's characters and once again eclipses the longed-for new health of new beginnings; Vadym knows no convalescence, only a long unrelieved fever. In Vy-nychenko's version of the

21See P-S 116, as well as B 6 & 50, for insistences that blood is primary (always thicker than water).
Zarathustra myth, he enlarges on the presence of the very, very few women which Nietzsche includes in his narrative, and imagines the complications resulting from a heterosexual involvement. Vadym ends in simultaneous triumph and defeat: triumph over the manipulative evils without, but defeat from the more tenacious variety of evils within. Vynnychenko does not afford his Zarathustra the luxury of strength or communion; instead he presents Vadym as a stricken socialist-populist conscience, unable to reconcile the conflicting claims of his high-sounding principles, and thoroughly ravaged by the illusions of his pride.

Both Gide and Vynnychenko test the limits of Nietzsche’s Zarathustra’s claims by translating the German poet-prophet’s pronouncements into their own creative terms and cultural references. In the process, Gide rehearses "a theory of immoralism whereby the Christian principle of Charity is rejected" (Pollard 1991: 54) by having (among other things) his Michel spiritually murder his wife Marceline through a mixture of malice and neglect -- a theory which Vynnychenko similarly tests at the ground zero of another "wife" murder, resulting in the same pessimistic conclusions about the costs and limits of freedom. Gide and Vynnychenko both criminalize the Zarathustra image, throwing suspicion on his authority to teach or provide an example, by writing in the same critical detail of a dead woman -- a detail that dramatizes the impossibility and untenability of the "lone prophet" ideal. Since women are conspicuously absent from Nietzsche’s original text, Gide’s and Vynnychenko’s
inclusions of women in their own variations on the Zarathustra model make manifest the tensions between the pursuit of a contemplative life in isolation (the "male" domain of the sage on the mountain top) and an immersion-dispersion of life in community (the "female" demands of "the flies of the marketplace"). Women are incompatible with and even inimical to the Zarathustrian world -- which explains why Gide and Vynnychenko end up forcibly removing them from the narrative. A woman, in short, can not coexist with the "hero of authenticity"; she can only obstruct or undermine his quest for transcendence.

Nietzsche’s Zarathustra claims to feel only scorn for "the flies of the marketplace" and their species of "fly happiness," yet he can not easily dismiss them and constantly vacillates between enjoying his solitude or "going down" to spread his gospel -- a descent which he in fact performs twice. After he climbs down from his mountain for the second time to "the town which is called The Motley Cow," with the apparent aim of collecting disciples to populate his "blessed isles" elsewhere, he keeps trying to withdraw further and further from all human contact -- only to find his own "mountain range teeming," overrun with questing interlopers. He ends up tolerating these aspirants, but abandons them as he proceeds to a higher stage where they (thankfully) can not follow.

This seems the safest resolution for a prophet who was shaken by an instructive and far more significant FIRST descent to another, nameless town: there Zarathustra announces the
overman too soon to a hostile mob and witnesses the death of a fallen tightrope-walker, a fate that the Prologue suggests could have been his own. Furthermore, Zarathustra's (verbal) "battles" with a single shattering adversary in each of the text's four parts -- first the threatening motley jester from the nameless town's tower, then a disturbing soothsayer, followed by the remembrance of the "abysmal thought" forced by the dwarf, and finally the "inexpressible" horror of "the ugliest man" -- all testify to a consistent struggle within Zarathustra to confront the prepared fact of his own death: not just the extinction of a hopelessly idealistic or premature philosophy, but the specific danger of an uncomprehending mob, exulting in the bringing down of a high-flown snob.

However, Nietzsche avoids the complete Christ complex by arranging a deus ex machina of the lion and the doves, the better to rescue his own imitation of the Saviour from the inevitable clutches of the crowd. Whether Zarathustra experiences a glorious physical death with his boots on, meeting the woman life/death/eternity like the warrior she desires -- or whether he is miraculously raised to the higher plane he has spent his life preaching about, mingling with his "true children" -- the fact remains that Nietzsche has magically evacuated his hero from the problem of man and his limitations. A characteristic leap of hyperbole occurs instead, even farther than the "hyperbolic leap from resignation to desire" required of a disciple in order to realize a "disproportionate acceptance" of Zarathustra's central
doctrine of eternal recurrence (Magnus, Stewart & Mileur 145). So, although Nietzsche's Zarathustra moves on the same map of choices that Gide's Michel/Ménalque and Vynnychenko's Vadym inhabit, only the Nietzsche protagonist is provided with an escape hatch from his demons. After the bravado of speeches addressed to themselves -- since, as Nietzsche observed, "in the end, one experiences only oneself" (Z 264) -- Ménalque/Michel, Vadym, and Zarathustra each experience a fall into a knowledge that puts the lie to their orations -- be it hedonism, humanism, or superhumanism, respectively. Except where Nietzsche points to a rosy resolution, Gide and Vynnychenko evince less faith in man's capacity for radical renewal.

A closer examination of these four novels' parallel narrative developments -- as they reflect and radiate from Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra -- will reveal a certain "map" that all three authors follow in plotting their fictional trajectories. First there is a movement away from society, either already given or perceived as the protagonist's quest, or destiny. Then there is a self-justifying circling in that withdrawal, or a concentration in solitude -- a withdrawal, however, that seems always touched with some sense of pathology or criminality (since defining oneself against society is always a risky proposition, presenting as it does a more active challenge to society than just passively adopting a hermit's lifestyle). This is succeeded by a return to society, motivated by the social-minded purpose of sharing the wilderness-won
wisdom. Finally there is a reaction that throws the protagonist back into his original isolation, prompted by the community's rejection or misunderstanding of the wanderer's message. Of course these four movements overlap, just as there often occur shifts in direction between these four courses of action, but the basic pattern remains the same.

The tension that underwrites the movements of the heroes of these four novels is one that was intuited and enacted by Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), a writer who considered the role of the intellectual in society as a necessary irritant, needling the larger world into acknowledging the value of beauty and uselessness -- and a certain criminality -- against the prevailing tide of ugly law-abiding pragmatism. Only a voice outside the oppressive cultural stream, he argued, could renew meaning and hope for change in the hearts of the rest -- by audacious and flamboyant example (such as his own), which recognized "no essential incongruity between crime and culture" (Wilde 1008). Through the force of both his plays and his personality, Wilde achieved a simultaneous infiltration and subversion of the society he so exuberantly opposed (for a happy halcyon interval at least), until the disastrous trial and incarceration that blighted the last five years of his life. Wilde's attempt to invade the marketplace with his mountaintop merriment is yet another variation on the Zarathustrian theme of "to go down or not to go down -- that is the question." For "[t]he dreamers, as far as Wilde was concerned, were of no use at
all if they insisted on dreaming on the mountaintop. They must
do their dreaming in the marketplace, for it is there that they
are most irritating, and there that the contagion can spread"
(Chamberlin 1977: 12). Nietzsche's reluctance to let the flies
encroach too far on the eagle's terrain is a hesitation that
absorbed both Gide and Vynnychenko in their own explorations of
the market-mountain metaphor, as a testing site for the idea of
authenticity.

I. Retreats and Repulsions: Women

With happy nostrils I again breathe mountain freedom.
At last my nose is delivered from the smell of
everything human. [...] O clean smells around me! Oh,
how this silence draws deep breaths of clean air!
(§ 298; 296)

Nietzsche would have us know that the nose of a prophet is
supremely sensitive to the stench of the rabble, but curiously
oblivious to scents associated with the person of the prophet
himself. Another miraculous feat of superhumanism, this
transcendence of body odour (even of body function) amidst the
pristine mountain pines? Or another conscious paradox inviting
ironical chuckles? Or perhaps this lapse can be explained as a
result of Zarathustra's first embracing isolation at the age of
thirty, followed by a deeper seclusion achieved over the twice-
told passing of "months and years," such that Zarathustra's hair
has finally turned white: such a prophet might well forget his
own sense of smell from sheer overfamiliarity. We do not tend to
notice our ambient air much, beyond registering its capacity to
meet our lungs' needs -- and hermits have even less reason to
employ their socially-attuned noses, even if still vestigially
turned in their own direction. One thing is certain:
Zarathustra must no longer see himself as quite human if he can
divide his own body's exhalations so definitively from any other
body. Higher human-ness seems most readily apparent in people
manifesting olfactory intolerance -- since only "[w]e fearless
ones, ... we more spiritual human beings of this age, ... we are
virtuosos of contempt; ... we can not persuade our nose to give
up its prejudice against the proximity of a human being"
(Nietzsche 1974: 342). It is difficult not to read Nietzsche's
sensitive nose as a typically bourgeois nineteenth-century marker
of social differentiation -- since there is more than a little of
his Zarathustra in the relatively late European phenomenon of
"purgative" odour control, "enabl[ing] the individual to
distinguish himself from the putrid masses, stinking like death,
like sin, and at the same time implicitly to justify the
[dismissive] treatment meted out to them" (Corbin 143).

If an acute sense of smell seems to impel Zarathustra on his
solitary path, other faculties seem to be driving Gide's and
Vynnychenko's heroes from the human fold. Gide frequently
depicts his protagonists as parched and wandering in deserts or
swamps, thirsting for larger meaning as much as for water;
Vynnychenko's characters tend to stumble and struggle against
blind biological processes, groping in instinctual darkness for
some redeeming sense of control. But this does not mean that Zarathustra's complexities are reducible to the olfactory sense, any more than Michel/Ménalque's are to the lingual or Vadym's to the visual. Rather, these metaphorical (and often literal) emphases on the nose or the tongue or the eye point to a certain correspondence of perspective on the problem of authenticity, as a concept evading both definition and perception. Basically, Zarathustra's nose is offended by a largely unspoken issue that looms over the entire narrative, preponderant in its absence and palpable through allusion: the issue of Woman. Gide's taste buds similarly renounce the female fact in the world, preferring the sexual and intellectual company of boys and men. Likewise, Vynnychenko's eyes strain to discern the potent reproductive mystery hidden within a woman's charms and loins, but more often than not concedes as much confusion as defeat in the quest. It is the problem of authenticity hidden in the figure of a woman that challenges and inspires each of these authors to offer an answer to the question of moral human behaviour, either in "mixed company" or merely one's own.

Gide's narrator of Les Nourritures terrestres exhorts his (implicitly male) reader(s) to abjure the sedentary pleasures of hearth and library, with their accompanying entanglements of family pieties and obligations, for a vagabond existence of self-discovery and self-making. The narrator commands Nathanaël to "make a bonfire in your heart of all your books" (NT 30; A.iv) -- because the dry domain of books can never impart the exciting
truth, waiting in the great unmediated outdoors to be discovered, that "more springs gush from the earth than we have the thirsts with which to drink them," far from "the curdling light of cities" \(\text{NT} 113 \& 117; \text{A.v} \& \text{vi}).

Ménalque's spotlight in this rambling ode to the intoxications of so many illicit "nuits et fruits," simply there to be enjoyed over the next hill, is graced with the pronouncement of the text's most succinct and "programmatic" statement of revolt: "Familles, je vous haïs! foyers clos; portes refermées; possessions jalouses du bonheur" \(\text{NT} 67; \text{A.vii}). Ménalque is the successful wanderer invoked by the narrator to justify and illustrate to Nathanaël the ecstasies of paths too often not taken, away from the woman's kingdom. That women guard these "hatefully" self-enclosed spaces sanctioned by society is left largely unsaid; after all, women per se only make two direct appearances in the narrative -- once in a comforting underlining of their absence from an exotic oasis ("les femmes, on ne les voyait pas" \(\text{NT} 141\)), and again in a decorative background function in the same context ("après était un puits, où des femmes très belles venaient puiser l'eau, presque nues" \(\text{NT} 157-158); \text{A.viii}). Women in this world seem easy enough to dispense with, since their socially-imposed immobility or consignment to the private in-door domain precludes the possibility of their following the rebellious menfolk very far (if at all) out of doors. But their monopoly over children's earliest memories, as those children's practically exclusive
caregivers, is harder to shake off; it was not until 1935, when Gide wrote *Les Nouvelles Nourritures* as a kind of updated sequel to the original as well as a response to the "second life" created by a new generation of readers, that a clearer sense behind Ménalque’s hatred of families is finally given:

Leur sagesse? ... Ah! leur sagesse, mieux vaut n’en pas faire grand cas.  
Elle consiste à vivre le moins possible, se méfiant de tout, se garant.  
Il y a toujours, dans leur conseils, je ne sais quoi de rassis, de stagnant.  
Ils sont comparables à certaines mères de familles qui abrutissent de recommandations leurs enfants:  
‘Ne te balance pas si fort, la corde va craquer;  
Ne te mets pas sous cet arbre, il va tonner;  
Ne marche pas où c’est mouillé, tu vas glisser;  
Ne t’assieds pas sur l’herbe, tu vas te tacher;  
À ton âge, tu devrais être plus raisonnable;  
Combien de fois faudra-t-il te le répéter:  
On ne met pas ses coudes sur la table.  
Cet enfant est insupportable!’  
-- Ah! Madame, pas tant que vous. (NT 228; A.ix)

Gide answers the nagging whine of effeminating civilization with grand solitary disdain. The carefully "self-conserving" lessons of the bourgeois housewife here, scolding a child into nature-fearing squeamishness and small-minded domestic decorum, simply constitute an obstacle for the child to flee -- the sooner the better. Socially-condoned stagnation, in the ruinous clutches of the conservative "they," is the REAL perversion to be lamented; this antithesis to the joys and dangers of the open road is not just the venerable institution of motherhood, but the entire heterosexual order. The "wisdom" of complacency in this ruling order, which understands as "natural" only the safe world of constraints it has built up around itself, can not tolerate the
ebullient anarchy of children; it can only "kill" them into assimilated adults. Gide is pleading, in both the early and late versions of his *Nourritures*, for an alternate order that allows children a more complete enjoyment of their splendidly perishable youth, freer from adult anxieties and policings. He is arguing for "a radically new society grounded on open sexuality, a kind of homosexual utopia, ideologically compatible with Marxist ideals of individual self-realization" (Apter 102). Whether or not his cheerful fantasies of becoming footloose and family-free -- reaching right from their earliest expression in *Les Nourritures terrestres*, later reiterated in *Le Retour de l'enfant prodigue* (1907), and finally given their fullest articulation in *Les Faux-Monnaveurs* (1929) -- advocate a larger social theory or mere wish-fulfilment (for the kind of childhood Gide himself never had) must remain something of an open question.

"Woman is not yet capable of friendship," Nietzsche's Zarathustra says, in one of his rare discourses directly concerning the other half of the human population; "women are still ... at best, cows" (Z 169). Cows and women for Nietzsche

22 "A man is never a child who grows up; children do not grow up. He is a child who has been killed." -- Denis Hollier, *Politics of Prose: Essay on Sartre* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986) 199.

23 See Gide's most explicitly "tell-all" memoir, *Si le grain ne meurt* (1920), for the writer's ambivalent resentments against his own mother and her largely single-handed authoring of his upbringing -- after he describes her "liberating" death (Gallimard, 1991: 361-368).
are more than an accidental association, suggesting an indolent animality in common. In Ecce Homo, for example, the aspirations of suffragettes are dismissed as vulgar and wrong-minded, militating absurdly for "political voting-cattle rights" (Nietzsche 1989: 267). George Sand in Twilight of the Idols is cuttlingly compared to a "milk cow with 'a beautiful style'" (Nietzsche 1983: 513). Cows (or cart-pulling oxen) might explain some of the ambiguity surrounding Zarathustra's infamous anecdote about "going to women" and "not forgetting the whip" (Z 179) -- the better to keep recalcitrant swerves in either pleasurable or practical line. So when Zarathustra happens across a parody of himself ("the voluntary beggar" playing at "sermonizer on the mount"), practising his voice on a herd of cows unexpectedly close to Zarathustra's mountain home, it is a discovery of a playful kindred spirit as much as a gratifying acknowledgement of Zarathustra's superiority to the "female" model of merely biological creativity: "You," his newest disciple declares, as he abandons his bovine audience, "are even better than a cow, O Zarathustra" (Z 384). 24 Since Zarathustra sees his purpose in the Prologue as a "robber" of the sleepy shepherds (or cowherds) ("To lure many away from the herd, for that I have come" (Z

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24 Rather like, perhaps, the "higher men" who seek Zarathustra on his own mountain, who are also necessarily "better" than the docile denizens of "The Motley Cow" below; cows are not natural mountain-climbers, unless they are bewitched by a pied piper like the voluntary beggar up into preternatural altitudes. See Section III ("Dangerous Things") below.
the voluntary beggar presents a laughably literal imitation of his idolized master’s mission.

Gide’s *Nourritures* narrator is similarly confronted with a significant cow, which recalls the troubling female presence thought to have been resolutely left behind. In an idyllic series of reflections on "the farm," which the narrator is presumed to have explored through a corresponding series of "doors" (opening into barns, granaries, sheds, a dairy, a stable, a fruit cellar, a wine press, a distillery, and finally the open plain again), it is the cow shed tableau that holds a strange note of "terror," in spite of its placid sights and smells:

> Elle est intolérablement tiède, mais les vaches sentent bon. Ah! que ne suis-je au temps où, avec les enfants du fermier dont la chair en sueur sentait bon, au temps où nous courions entre les jambes des vaches; nous cherchions des oeufs dans les coins des râteliers; nous regardions, pendant des heures, les vaches; nous regardions choisir, éclater les bouses; on pariait à celle qui fienterait la première, et un jour je m’enfuis terrifié parce que je crus qu’il y en avait une qui allait tout d’un coup faire un veau.
> (NT 105; A.x)

Written in italics to set it off from the plain-style single-line doorway introduction, this passage reads like a childhood reminiscence triggered by the extreme heat and sweet breath suddenly encountered in the proximity of the cows’ bodies. But what began as a string of childishly curious entertainments, superficially pursuing the mysteries of reproduction in an egg-hunt, ends in a somewhat comical misunderstanding of birth. The shock of the "calf"’s revelation seems to lie in its unannounced enormity, suddenly protruding out of the "wrong" orifice at a
singularly profane moment (idly betting on the timing of cattle's bowel movements hardly befits a witness of the sacred event of birth). What the narrator's bizarrely recollected dread seems to suggest is the inescapable mammalian fact of female origins, which is even harder to elude than female custodianship: ontology follows one everywhere, rehearsed with other players even as one struggles to throw off its overarching imprint. Woman's crucial contribution to the reproductive process is a vexing reality to the man who would wish himself completely "self-made."

Perhaps for this reason Gide resorts to the vegetable instead of the animal as a metaphor to celebrate his heroes' "self-cultivation:"

fig trees weep milk from their stalks in a phallic image of plenitude (NT 139), and the image of "life itself" is described in terms of a fruit bursting with juice, poised on an eager pair of thirsting lips (NT 154) -- thus subordinating the generative process of creating fruit to the active enjoyment of eating fruit. "Purposeful" sources of procreation are superseded by the aimless pleasures of circulation and consumption -- as apt a figure for defining homosexuality against the heterosexual imperative as any. Flowers -- traditionally associated with female attributes of grace or beauty -- only and tellingly bloom in stasis (NT 65) -- because "la fleur," Gide's narrator comments, "ne vaut pour moi que comme une promesse de fruit ... [tel que] la figue ... fruit qui n'est que sa fleur mûrie" (NT 80; A.xi). The beauty of fruit
is amenable to travelling and still keeping its glow, preserving Ménalque's virtues of "mobility" and "availability"\(^{25}\) -- not to mention realizing a fuller "innate" potential -- more than any mere rooted flower. Hence Gide appeals here to a kind of naturalistic evolutionary logic as a lyrical argument for homosexuality that will later reach its most substantive form in his 1911 treatise, *Corydon*. The ambition of *Les Nourritures terrestres* is to successfully elide the traces of female formation and replace them with male-derived models instead. Only in this way can the trauma of a monstrously misperceived cow dropping be safely trivialized -- much in the same way that Nietzsche's Zarathustra can relegate women to the realm of the ruminants.

But women are not only cows to Zarathustra: they are sometimes "supple snakes" (Z 338) or a toss-up between "a dog or a doe" (Z 337) in a slightly higher order of the female bestiary, representing the more serious challenge to male solitude. As Zarathustra dances with "life" in a frenzied song of rivalry, indulging in ever more improbable flights of orgiastic hyperbole insisting on his impregnated state of grace (Z 340; see also 326-327), the tension seems resolved by his embracing of "eternity" as the most satisfying "female" incarnation of his desire. But this abstract dancing partner never gets a chance to lead in the steps to the cosmic music -- she can only follow, passively bearing witness to Zarathustra's discoveries of her secrets.

\(^{25}\)See Bianquis 63.
(first as his "wild wisdom" (Z 197) and later as a form of confirmation for his principle of the eternal recurrence). Thus it seems that "life" ends up playing BOTH the dog (that faithfully follows) AND the doe (the animal pursued) to Zarathustra's singing "hunter" (see Gadamer 357).

Vynnychenko is less concerned with cows than he is with snakes: his female creations often enjoy a specifically serpentine strength of "suppleness" or "pliability" (Гнучкість) that is interpreted by his male characters as both a particularly maddening source of enticement and a moral proof of depravity. "Oh, this damned nimble, supple snake and slippery witch!" runs a passage in Nietzsche's Zarathustra, as he wrestles with his "temptress" called life; "Keeping time with my whip, you shall dance and cry! Or have I forgotten the whip? Not I!" (Z 338) Vynnychenko translates this single sentiment into a drama of violent jealousy and unfathomable female duplicity that became Краса і сила (Beauty and Strength, 1902), his first major narrative effort. Zarathustra's lines here from his "dancing song" more or less resume the entire Vynnychenko plot, from the brutal Andrii's point of view of his beautiful Marta -- who similarly "feels his strength but does not comprehend it" (Z 179), even as she ultimately chooses it over the gentler charms of his rival Il'ko. And, of course, Andrii never "forgets the whip" when he "goes" to Marta, because she is so consistently described in pejorative snake-associated terms: she has "a supple body" («Гнучке її тіло»), a "slender supple waist" (« .. 3
цым струпким гнучким станем .. »), and is castigated harshly as a lying "snake" («гадина» -- twice) or a hatefully "flexible little switch" («хвойда» -- twice).26

By the time of his writing «По-свій!» over a decade after his début with Краса і сила, Vynnychenko has shifted the emphasis from female slipperiness to male bondage: women are still described as pliable, but now the men caught in their nets become the focus of narrative action and attention. Part of Vadym's substantial horror of his sexual involvement with Natasha is the anxiety of male impotence before the female steam-roller dominating the process and outcome of human reproduction. Instinct dictates everything, with or without one's consent, so that one is always left with only "that same blind ancient force, before which the mind can only howl like a weak and frightened puppy" (P-S 168; A.xii). In the face of such monstrous

26Ukrainian references may be found on pp. 22, 44, 30, 52, 29, and 36 respectively, in Володимир Винниченко, Оповідання (Братислава: Співча педагогічне видавництво, 1968). Snake-like untrustworthiness is further generalized in this same story to two male characters, albeit only anecdotally (see p. 42 and again p. 52).

A less compelling argument could be made for a more abstract influence of Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy on the same narrative, with a supposed "Dionysian"/male/brute strength/life-destroying split figured against the "Apollinian"/female/gentle beauty/life-conserving elements contained in Vynnychenko's title, and their complicated fusion in the love triangle between the two men and the one woman (who ultimately demonstrate a synthesis or spilling-over of each other's supposedly defining attributes). But in spite of John Burt Foster, Jr.'s estimation of the central importance of The Birth of Tragedy as a European artistic influence, I maintain that such a laurel -- at least as far as Gide and Vynnychenko are concerned -- must fall to Thus Spoke Zarathustra instead, for its greater resonances of more explicitly fictional character.
indifference in Nature to male efforts at control and differentiation, which Society only buttresses in the female's favour (at least as far as procreation is concerned), Vadym wonders with some frustration "why I feel like such a solitary, powerless, blind and helpless puppy torn away from its mother" (P-S 148 [see also 152]; A.xiii). Life is more specifically a dog here than in Nietzsche, a bitch that mercilessly abandons her offspring to blind fate. Howling is the only recourse, as Vadym and his fellow "whelps" demonstrate throughout the novels whenever they reach their limits of endurance. Wordless and visceral, these howls punctuate especially the second volume as aporias of naked need and confusion. Not for nothing does Salamandra flee the scene of her father's clumsy attempt at matchmaking "with some sort of painful howl" (B 296; A.xiv): it is the only response she can make to the coarse cheapening of her demonstrated desire (B 175-177) to become a wife and mother in spite of her stigma as a hunchback. But in a larger sense, all of Vynnychenko's women bear an even more indelible stigma -- even (if not especially) the most beautiful ones: for "[t]he female creature bears this stigma of fertility and nauseates even as she attracts" the male (Walker 254). The possibility of pregnancy surrounds every woman like a web, whose beauty only disguises the sticky knots of commitment waiting to entrap and repel the dumbly dazzled male.

"If sexuality is a mystery," according to Magnus, Stewart and Mileur in their account of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, then
it is so because it is the mechanism of eternal recurrence, which ... explains our aversion to it. Sexuality reminds lovers that they are used in a process over which they exercise little if any control. (117).

For Vynnychenko, women are the predatory sex -- out to "use" men as mere tools for obtaining pleasure or pregnancy, when they are not also scheming to coerce men into marriage; but the way women are "used" by Nature in turn to bring children into the world does not seem to have been considered as much, if at all. Instead, women are assumed to be closer to Nature and thus more in control of their biological destinies. "'OUR' aversion" to participating in (hetero)sexuality -- as the trio of male Nietzsche commentators happen to put it -- betrays some of the same suspicions and resentments of the strictly female capacity to deceive and direct the male into fatherhood, displayed everywhere in Vynnychenko. Vadym's problem of unwanted paternity first crops up as a successful infanticide enacted by quite another (and possibly even more "immoral") gentleman in the 1909 play Memento; later this virtually identical temptation to kill a hideous baby in its disagreeable mother's absence is reworked with greater complexity into a reluctant "conversion" to paternity, in the 1917 novel Записки кирпатого Мефистофеля (Notes of a Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles).

Male angst in Vynnychenko is defined by women's perverse tendency to produce children out of some obscure and bestial spite, by which men feel bitterly cornered into a life-sentence of undesirable but unshakeable association. Male attraction to
women is fatal -- more thanatos-driven than eros-inspired -- "like the force that draws one to look over the edge of a cliff" (Charmé 155)! So, when Vadym poses the classic question to himself of what a woman like Natasha wants, he scarcely hesitates before answering:

I know what Natasha wants. She wants more than I've already wanted to give her. And she wants to extort it from me, by force. By force! [...] No, I can't think calmly about all this. She knows how I feel about bringing children into the world, and yet it's just through a child that she wants to chain me to her. (P-S 144; A.xv)

In other words, a woman always wants the same thing: a baby for emotional blackmail. Of course, one could also say that from Natasha's point of view, "men only want women for one thing," too: that "instinctual" gratification which Vadym uses as both rationalization and reward for his "experiment" with her (P-S 137) -- so in a very real sense, the question of her desire is secondary to Vadym's own. Then again, a woman might just want a baby tout court -- as in one of Vynnychanko's first published stories, «Таємна пригода» ("A Secret Adventure," 1902), where an erotic female hunts down a male with fertility firmly in mind, and simply discards him once she is impregnated. But a woman who might actually NOT want a baby remains an unthinkable aberration; Vynnychenko seems to assume a standard of male-defined femininity and disregards any other possibilities.27 In any case, no

27One would hardly suspect from his fiction that Vynnychenko was in fact married to a practising physician (Dr. Rosalia Lifshits) whose professional life was not interrupted by childbearing once in their forty years together. Perhaps his
woman seems to have the right to dictate a man's behaviour, or enjoy the wielding of a whip over him, in an absurd reversal. Natasha's mobilizing of the "whip" of public opinion against Vadym amounts to a perfidious attempt to keep him in a horrible harness, to which Vadym responds with a vow: "I will not bow my head before that whip" (P-S 155; A.xvi). Women can only appeal to the ineffectual court of emotion to try and keep men in their emotional grip.

Vadym's flight from society is thus really a flight from women and family, achieved in his early sense of strange and sickly "rapture" (3ахваT) that keeps him emotionally insulated from the rest of the world. He defines himself to others in terms of this exhilarating absence of feeling, which frees him from all of society's claims on his behaviour -- because "feeling is the source of all morality; once you get rid of feeling, the sense of sin also ceases to exist" (P-S 32 [see also 167]; A.xvii). Upon his return to society, he is asked if he is a "Nietzschean" poet or an "immoralist" (30) since he writes such "lies" ("ви нещиро пишете"; 29) -- but Vadym protests that he is only sharing the truth of his absolutely asocial experience (35).

He is proud to go hungry and refuse women's offerings of food (or love) like the "wounded wolf" he once was in Siberia (148). He inflicts a string of strangers with random acts of

preoccupation with paternity provided him then with some compensation in fantasy for his childlessness in reality -- particularly as he aged, which is when the issue became increasingly salient in his writing.
"kindness" in an almost unconscious repetition of his "charities" with Natasha: in fact the die of the entire novel seems cast from their first meeting, in his simply reaching to help her out of some deep snow -- a chivalrous gesture that gradually gives way to the deeper contempt and condescension that originally inspired it. For Vadym seems to recognize in spite of himself "all that is constitutionally aggressive in every gesture pretending to generosity ... [and so he is] pitiless in the acts of charity he performs; his generosity strikes blindly" (Hollier 150). It is almost as if his blind acts of charity are the necessary response to the blind domination of instinct which he perceives as the only certain component of his or anyone else's life («те, що є єдино певне й тверде в людині, оті самі інрадіки!» (B 191)); so if the fact of birth is a gratuitous act, so must life consist of so many more similar superfluities devoid of intrinsic or intended meanings.

But his resolve to keep his distance is gradually eroded by several social pressures, the longer he remains in any contact with society at all -- until he realizes that the social values of contingency and proximity only translate into a brutal competition for resources that he never knew even in his darkest days of Siberian self-reliance: "I know that this fall back into the wider world only favours the fact that I am penniless, starving, and physically weakened" (B 173; A.xviii). His choice to re-embrace solitude in prison testifies as much to his sense of the futility of intimacy as to his resignation to the idea
that there is no other place in society for him: his kind of poetry can only belong behind bars. Other poets might have always been "the valets of some morality" -- but Vadym's muse is afflicted with "the passion that attacks" (Nietzsche 1974: 74 & 117), and so its dangerous bite must remain muzzled. From whining puppy to rabid wolf, Vadym confirms Natasha's curse: no form of domesticated happiness can await him. Thus he opts in the end for a "freedom against women" (Johnson 236) not unlike that envisioned by Gide. As Jean-Paul Sartre's heroes would also later discover, this freedom to realize "transparency" (or existential authenticity) depends on a negative self-definition against women and all that they seem to represent: children, family ties, gentility and domesticity, decorum and restraint, but perhaps most of all, emotion. Vadym is content to redescend into a detached zombie-like state that insures no future pain, but must just as certainly promise a form of death -- a living death resuming the vow of silence that he left behind, with only his notebook for consolation.
II. Reluctant Returns: Liars

But my fervent will to create impels me ever again toward man; thus is the hammer impelled toward the stone. [...] The spirit of the poet craves spectators -- even if only buffaloes. (Z 199; 241)

There is something fundamentally untrustworthy about the declared intent of Nietzsche's, Gide's and Vynnychenko's heroes to reintegrate themselves into the social weave, even if still at a certain remove: what claims can a following for Zarathustra, friendship for Michel, or family for Vadym actually have after such sustained spates of self-exile, beyond some nostalgic ideal of communion -- which is bound to collide against a ruder reality? If their satisfactions in solitary stasis are so great -- and each hero insists in some measure that they are -- why do they even bother coming back to society at all? How far can their patterns of behaviour be said to match the standard of their professed principles -- if their common defining experience of being "shut away in solitude" leaves each "the victim of self-pride" (Calderon 22)? How can one reconcile a sentiment like "I find it hard to accept that small people are needed" (Z 280) with a "revolution of hope" said to be aimed at the ears of all humanity ("He that has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Z 294; 318))? Since these three fictional gentlemen seem to have each expended such prodigious energy either avoiding or denying women in their flights from society, one may safely assume that their returns are not moved by an impulse to address the imbalance. There appear instead to be male-only "ears" solicited from all
three fictional positions: three confessional narratives consecrated to a small but implicitly male audience.

After the menagerie of metaphors deployed to describe the troubles with women (cattle, dogs/does, puppies/wolves, and snakes), there remain two more literally acceptable beasts for masculine company: "the proudest animal" (the eagle) and "the wisest animal" (the serpent), Zarathustra's inseparable pair of mountain pets composing a kind of yiin and yang -- since the male eagle always flies with the female serpent coiled around his neck (§ 137). These "consorts" are Zarathustra's only real confidantes in the course of Nietzsche's narrative, suggesting a higher and special order of animal (verbally involved with their master) as opposed to the lower and more common variety (dumb and passive) that most men must content themselves with taming. But Gide's Michel and Vynnychenko's Vadym do not find such mystical companionship in their respective seclusions. Instead the first is reduced to cradling cool white pebbles in his hot palm, enjoying the exchange of coolness for heat from one pebble to another (I 180-181), while the second has only the cold trees and moss of the taiga for company (P-S 1161). Both are diametrically opposed climates (north Africa versus north Russia), but identically bleak landscapes.

Gide's desert, Vynnychenko's taiga, Nietzsche's alpine peaks -- each is a strikingly sterile locale, practically devoid of vegetation or other evidence of fertility. These are the places Nietzsche recommends as being "where the strong, independent
spirits withdraw and become lonely" (1989: 109). For their very sterility suggests a kind of bracing gratuity and purity that can be very supportive of mental life, far removed from the distractions and clutter of more pedestrian pursuits on the plain (see Charmé 94-95). In order for art to assert "its magnificent isolation from experience, its unreality, its sterility" (Ellmann 1973: 71), it must also flee the messier and more mundane aspects of existence before coming into its own. For if culture strives to be the correction to nature (as Wilde observed), it still requires a certain quiescence from nature, the better to be able to deny and defeat it.

Thus Biskra's extreme difference from Michel's native Normandy forces a convalescent recovery along suddenly sensual lines, culminating in an awakening to a voluptuous new life; Siberia's lonely austerity confirms Vadym in his "corrosive" state of mind after the death of Natasha, spurring him to write poetry akin to "the pure ravings of some Zarathustra" (P-S 164-165; A.xix). In both cases, a climacteric is accompanied if not precipitated by a certain starkness of climate: a hard purity of rock or sand or ice echoes a hard resolve in "pure-blooded immoralists" (P-S 162) to pursue the lonely task of self-discovery and self-invention -- because "c'est toujours seul qu'on invente" (T 117). But the isolation of geography can reflect a certain spiritual alienation as well, in what might be called "the Shangri-La Syndrome" -- since "[t]he creatures who live so happily here have little in common with men: many of
their human feelings have been crippled, the rest destroyed" -- for fear of introducing into their carefully cultivated equilibrium anything that might "transform the mountain ... into the image of the plain" (Berman 227 & 225).

Nietzsche, Gide and Vynnychenko situate the turning points of their texts not only in similarly spare surroundings; they perform similar oscillations in narrative voice there as well. All three of these writers choose to present their protagonists as both characters in and narrators of their own stories, thus creating a constant tension between an iterative distance of the narrating subject and an intense immediacy of the narrated object. With the "objectivity" of the narrating voice in the present always intervening to comment upon and qualify the activities of the "subjectively" narrated voice of the past, how can one know which voice to trust? How to tell a fulfilment of a promise of candour from selectively self-serving disclosures of information? And must not all such professions of self-knowledge at some point "confess" that they are "in some respects blind, partial, forgetful, poetic, and constructive" (Shapiro 156)?

Adding to this uncertainty are shifts between first and third person voice. Nietzsche's Zarathustra delivers his speeches as an "I", but in the context of his adventures as a "he" -- thus confining his confessionals to clearly indicated intervals within the larger narrative, in conformity with standard reading expectations of punctuated linearity, even in
the freewheeling fourth part. But Vynnychenko's Vadym can not keep all his first-person musings to the space of his notebook: suddenly his reflective "I" breaks into the domain of his active "he" on the opening page of the second volume and remains there for the duration of the first chapter, only to snap just as abruptly back into the usual third-person pattern by the beginning of the second. Did Vynnychenko then merely neglect to include the usual rubric of "From Vadym's Notebook" to clarify the content of this chapter in the context of the four others so named -- or is the anguished ambiguity of Vadym's reflections here on the ruins of his Siberian-won resolve meant to be underlined by the lack of authorial guidance?

As for Gide's Michel, his entire story is presented as a "simple" transcription of his confession as heard by a friend; the novel is a nested series of narratives, beginning as a letter to the brother of the scribe -- functioning as a frame for the flashback to follow -- and proceeding as a long and twisting account of Michel's misdemeanours, continuously contested by two "I"'s -- the Michel of the wicked past and the Michel of the weary present.

What is interesting about the fluctuations of voice in both Gide's and Vynnychenko's characters is how they both center around a sense of guilt that is completely absent in the Nietzsche hero -- a specific guilt over the death of a woman. Zarathustra sighs over a dead tightrope-walker, but a dead woman would be immaterial since all women are already denied entry into
his spiritual world. Michel and Vadym, however, suffer from a fatal female influence. Each

in his temporal position as character ... reflects on his previous self-centered behaviour that results in what he considers to be a fairly benign abandonment of Marceline[/Natasha], whereas in his temporal position as narrator, he realizes that it was his own subsequent, obsessed, egotistical behaviour that drove Marceline[/Natasha] to her death (Sacken 166).

Michel and Vadym both get a woman pregnant with identically nefarious results. Marceline loses the child and thereafter sickens and dies -- almost as if Ménalque’s commandment to Michel "to choose" between her "calm happiness of home" and the dangerous lures beyond it (I 122-123), on the very night of her going into premature labour, worked as a wicked charm against her. But where Marceline slowly wastes away like a saintly counterpoint to Michel’s diabolical excesses, Natasha more pointedly and suddenly exposes Vadym’s "crime" with a scathingly succinct suicide note:

"Vadym Stel’mashenko is responsible for my death. Be sure to tell him this. Farewell, comrades! Natasha" (P-S 158; A.xx).

This letter seals Vadym’s fate as inexorably as Michel’s ecstatic experience of sensation suddenly outstripping cognition in the Biskra garden (I 46-48). The unsuspected suddenly bursts out -- the revenge of the unlived life, the frustrated need for intimacy -- with similarly tragic repercussions. First Michel sustains the shock of this revelation from within his own body, while Vadym is afflicted with Natasha’s crushing rage; then Marceline dies as a consequence of Michel’s malaise, where Natasha’s death
serves as the cause of Vadym’s. In both cases, the male attempts at atonement for these female deaths take the form of a confession: one to the face of a friend, the other to the page of a notebook. But as Wilde would have been able to tell them,

There is a luxury in self-reproach. When we blame ourselves we feel that no one else has a right to blame us. It is the confession, not the priest, that gives us absolution. (81)

So if the act of apology is everything, why should one need an audience -- the audience "even" Zarathustra admits to needing? Merely bringing a sin to some verbal light seems to suffice for the transgressor to promptly put the fact of transgression behind him; indeed, it even suggests an escape from punishment if the crime seems to "legitimate" itself simply through its retelling (see I 179). Thus the possibility of "reoffending" does not seem sufficiently addressed by this "done-deed" approach to making amends. Vadym, for one, is constantly considering another "more successful" repetition of his charity experiment with Salamandra, and only his willing himself back into prison effectively precludes such a tempting relapse. And the prospect of a "relapse" is a virtual fait accompli for Michel, who seems all too confirmed in his self-indulgent habits -- for which he blames the sultry weather, or his general physical frailty, which in turn conspire together to keep him in bondage to the exhausting availability of pleasure.

A sense of guilt is inevitably tied to a sense of responsibility: both are socially-informed feelings of debt which require some public effort of reparation. But a sense of
power or pride can get in the way of this social mechanism, either obstructing or obliterating its functioning altogether. Michel’s and Vadym’s problems with women (and by extension, with society) stem from just such a heady sense of hubris running amok. Michel rationalizes his contempt for his wife’s weakness as part of a "necessary" observation of the existence of "strong joys for the strong and weak joys for the weak, which the strong joys would only injure" (I 162 & 164; A.xxi). Never mind that Marceline nursed him back to health from tuberculosis at the beginning of the story; now that she has succumbed to the same sickness, Michel is determined to enjoy his own robust recovery as far away from her as possible. His real imperative is self-preservation, rather than the tender devotion he knows his listening friends expect him to show Marceline as her husband -- because her closeness to death repels him like a dangerous plague: "I have a horror of sympathy; every sort of contagion hides itself in it; one should only sympathize with the strong" (I 156; A.xxii). Now that his wife is conveniently ailing, Michel can dismiss her as "a tainted thing" ("une chose abîmée") (I 129) -- dying and thus dehumanized, her face reduced to "the two black holes of her nostrils" ("les deux trous noirs de ses narines").

Vadym, for his part, never acknowledges Natasha as quite human either. He rationalizes his falling into a

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28 Vynnychenko is following a famous Russian precedent, since another wife-killing protagonist (circa 1889) perceives his wife in similar terms: "I don’t even know who she is. She’s a
relationship with her as an opportunity to test his socialist and sexual limits, but pity seems to play the largest part in his decision. He sees her ugliness as a challenge to accomplish something in her, like a sculptor contemplating the possibilities of some interesting raw material: "I will give a simple pleasure to Natasha for two months and by this create a whole new Natasha. Moreover, this new Natasha will be MINE" (P-S 135; A.xxiii; emphasis in the original). Unfortunately Pygmalion does not fall in love with his Galatea here, since Natasha’s sculpture comes to more disruptive life than Vadym’s chisel seems to have intended: she exchanges her submissiveness for spiritedness, now articulating her own thoughts instead of just echoing his, and insisting on carrying their unplanned baby to term. It is only at this rather late stage of his experiment that Vadym finally feels "delivered, thank God, from the hardest thing of all: I can no longer pity her" (P-S 147; A.xxiv). After his break with her, he resolves to cultivate "strong joys for the strong" («коли ти сильний, то знайди в собі силу бути щасливим») (P-S 155), in the most absolute and punishing isolation that any saint or hermit has ever known («Я ж буду сильніший за всякого святого, який ховався від людей, ... у цілковитій самоті») (P-S 163).

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mystery, just as she’s always been, just as she’ll always be. I don’t know her. I only know her as an animal" (see Leo Tolstoy, The Kreutzer Sonata and Other Stories, trans. David McDuff [Markham: Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1987] 100 & 117).

A more in-depth study of intellectually-endorsed wife-killings, both real and imagined (Louis Althusser and William S. Burroughs come to mind as candidates for the first category), could of course further illuminate Vadym’s and Michel’s motives.
Hyperbole helps his self-delusion along, insisting on an intensity and purity of dramatically dubious dimensions -- since the one thing underpinning the whole exercise is more or less missing: Natasha’s dead body, which is (like Marceline’s) "written out of the fantasy" of Vadym’s (and Michel’s) "extravagant virility" (Clark 48).

Vadym and Michel both proclaim the excess of their experience as a value that supersedes anyone else’s competing claims. They may feel guilt, but only guilt of the most unimaginably exquisite order. This is where an element of sociopathy comes in: their amplified sense of guilt removes them so far from common understanding or experience that they come necessarily unstuck from the rest of humanity. They exalt their guilt under other names -- strength, contempt, smashing of or spitting at idols. But these "immoralists" are basically indifferent to the reality of other people. Vadym seems to think that "he can save the authenticity of his own desire [to appear innocent] by claiming that it is the most violent" (Girard 269), just as Michel seems to believe that "the strength of his rights and desires pre-empts the rights and desires of other people" as a way of avoiding any answerability for his actions (Sacken 165). In this way their hyperbole is also a parody of confession: if words alone will do for a standard amount of forgiveness, then an avalanche of self-reproaches and breast-beatings might win forgiveness on a more heroic scale. Yet their vaunted sufferings suggest a greater alienation from humanity than much of an
attachment to it. And their quests for "the grail" of authenticity -- that "exquisite fruit of embracing and exercising one's own freedom" (Charmé 6) -- actually do more to preclude rather than encourage such social attachment. Authenticity more often than not may come at

[t]he price ... [of] unbearable loneliness and guilt ... [because we are all more or less] ... doomed to imagine authenticity without being able to achieve it. [...] [We may thus] crave authenticity, but also fear its immense emotional costs. (Berman 237; 267; 255)

As a lonely individual ideal with more imaginative resonance than real world impact, then, the pursuit of authenticity for both Vadym and Michel ends up foundering on the admission that neither has discovered a way to live, nor a way to know himself. Each succumbs to a certain self-deception in his search for an identity, because a dead woman's body blocks the path toward "overcoming alienation and returning home to one's 'true self'" (Neubauer 59). For the "[t]rue homecoming is not simply returning to one's geographical origins but is experiencing solitude ... as bliss" (Shapiro 73).

There is a crucial difference between Vadym and Michel, however, in terms of social outlook and affiliation, which draws them back into society's orbit for different reasons. Vadym is a committed socialist who turns from printing illegal pamphlets to writing immoral poetry, while Michel is a half-hearted philologist who turns from giving lectures on a nobly recalcitrant king to applying that ancient ruler's rejection of society to his own personal present. In both cases there is a
conscious distancing of oneself from a community -- the fellow socialists in Siberian exile, the circle of scholars in Paris -- the better to construct a negative self-definition (Vadym is not a socialist like all the others; Michel is not a professor like all the others). Both are also specifically reacting against the legacies of their fathers: the vacated scholarly mantle for Michel, and the misery of a factory-mangled existence for Vadym. But where Michel labours to free himself FROM one tradition (cultivating intellect and restraint) by plunging into its opposite, "elevating appetite into an end" (Heard 115), Vadym labours to situate himself IN another tradition: what the historian Richard Stites has called the "search ... for an authentic communist morality," or "the distilled essence of Russian radicalism: sincerity, probity, love of 'the people,' and firmness of will" (352; 311). Vadym is Vynnychenko's most ambitious personification of these revolutionary principles.  

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29Gide was less preoccupied with politics, having confined his hands-on experience to a stint in 1896 as the youngest mayor in France of a tiny village -- more the result of family-related coercion than ambition or commitment (see Feuillets d'automne 19). However, he later evinced a growing enthusiasm for socialist idea(1)s, which culminated in a disillusioning trip to the Soviet Union in 1936 (see Retour de l'U.R.S.S.). Vynnychenko, on the other hand, had already earned himself a record of underground revolutionary activities and arrests before achieving his first literary success, so that by the time of the October Revolution of 1917 he had joined the Bolshevik forces and become head of the new Ukrainian government. But by 1919 the country was struggling in the grip of six different occupying armies and the chaos of civil war, as well as suffering from numerous internecine conflicts among the new leadership; so Vynnychenko resigned his post and went into exile in Germany and France (see Subtelny 358-362).

For these reasons of difference in their biographies, some difference in emphasis on specific political issues in their
Vadym wants to fuse revolutionary theory with practice, to force the contradictions of the past into some brave new reconciliation. But he also seems to want a single reading of his writings that confirms his noble intentions, and not the disturbing dualities of meaning and allegiance that they in fact inspire -- such as the accusation that his poetry stems from the same "foul and shallow egoism" as a nasty anti-Semitic sect, which celebrates a similarly "shamelessly self-righteous" variety of "complete individualism" (see B 55). No political position is safe from manipulation or misunderstanding: the same anti-Semitic interests do not rival so much as inform a nationalist organization in the novel (see B 224 & 242), just as Vadym's unscrupulous capitalist uncle exploits the same premises of his nephew's poetry to destructively different ends (see B 189).

Double meanings are dramatized throughout the novel by a complex series of emphases on halves or doublings: two cripples at the head of two families (tubercular mother Mykul's'ka vs. the stroke-disfigured senior Stel'mashenko); two ugly women vs. two beautiful women for romantic interest (Natasha and Salamandra vs. Tepa and Olesya); two squabbling couples for realistic contrast (Modest and Dina vs. Yuri and Rina); then, most significantly of all, "the catastrophe" with Natasha that "cut Vadym's life in

books seems inevitable. Yet both writers remain clearly "politicized," in that each takes the collision of the public and private spheres to be his creative subject and individual hallmark. Each demonstrates, in book after book, the conviction that "without an understanding of the seamy side of sexuality there is no understanding of politics" (Brown 11).
two" (P-S 165; A.xxv). This idea of an epoch-making break recalls Nietzsche's conceit about human time being newly split by the occasion of his pronouncing (if never quite elaborating) "the transvaluation of all values." But it also points to a kind of revolutionary messianism which Leszek Kolakowski calls "A Beautiful Sickness," a sublimely seductive delirium which feeds on the hope of a radical discontinuity in history, a break which opens the door to ... a belief that mankind can free itself from all burdens built up in its biological and social being over centuries, that it can wash away the sins of the past in the shock of a bloody revolutionary baptism and begin everything anew from year one (Kolakowski 221).

Vadym's ambition to throw off just such biologically- and socially-programmed "burdens" vis-à-vis Natasha and Salamandra testifies to a similar faith in a transfiguring violence.

Further examples of doubling can also be seen in descriptions of the two halves of the senior Stel'mashenko's face, split since the stroke into living and dead tissue -- an image similarly replayed through Zoya's dead weight following her solicitous sister Olesya. Yet another balancing of counterparts is traced in the "careers" of Vadym vs. Yuri. We see the politically aware Yuri explore the romantic populist option ("love of 'the people'") in a doomed quest for authenticity, only to sink back into his old pampered pattern -- while the politically aware Vadym incites his "socialist excommunication"

\[\text{\textsuperscript{30}}\text{Nietzsche wrote on the eve of his collapse that "I fear I'll be blasting the history of mankind into two halves" because "I am powerful enough to break the history of mankind in two" (1971: 126 & 134).}\]
(hatred FROM 'the people'!) in a similarly failed quest, since he also falls eventually back into a family-dictated rut. When Rina tells Yuri that he is "too full of holes" («ЗАНАДТО ТИ ДІРЯВИЙ») (P-S 97), she is echoing Vadym’s feelings of impotence as well, which he likewise describes as a hole (ПРОБОЇНа):

I’ve got to stop up my hole. That’s a fact. All weakness and this stupid sentimental pain, all loneliness and pointless talk with some supposed brother, it all comes from there. This all has to stop. (B 37; A.xxvi)

But instead of getting plugged, this hole in Vadym’s armour only grows wider until he feels finally compelled to sacrifice himself on his brother’s behalf.

Vadym needs to win over his brother Os’ much more than Michel needs to impress Denis, Daniel, and one other nameless friend, because there is an emotional investment ingrained between brothers that is fundamentally unlike the opportunity for emotional detachment that is available between friends. It is more important for Vadym to actively justify himself and explain his past behaviour to his brother, because Os’ is specifically his only and younger brother, capable of repeating Vadym’s mistakes through ignorance or accident. Like another Siberian exile in another novel, Vadym needs to share his euphoric sense of release from Natasha (and all that she represents), looking back to that time when he once felt "as though he had crossed some fatal line and was elated to find that nothing was sacred anymore" (Dostoevsky 124). He needs to be able to communicate both the frenzy and the folly of the experience, as a lesson and
an impetus to his brother to succeed where he, Vadym, has failed. The closing pages of Ожки recall the entirety of Gide's Le Retour de l'enfant prodigue, where the older "prodigal" son -- beaten back into the family fold from fatigue -- passes on the torch of recalcitrance to the younger son: "À moi de t'admirer; à toi de m'oublier" (Gide 1991b: 181). Vadym just as cheerfully embraces oblivion because he has faith in his brother to eventually follow and exceed his audacity.

Refusing to be a prodigal son means wanting to live like a child or vagabond, exchanging the tired expediency and conformity of the many for the tonic immediacy and promiscuity of the brave few. To somehow regain the innocence of a child, to wish to erase society's corrupting influence -- this has been many a wistful dreamer's ambition, ever since Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse proclaimed in 1761 the romantic value of child-like lovers who "refer everything to their passion." "The child," according to Charles Baudelaire, "sees everything in a state of newness; he is always DRUNK" (1964: 8). But a child-like sense of innocence is after all an impossible goal for any adult consciousness to achieve; that original spirit of play, of indifference to time or mortality, of complete concentration in the present -- this all belongs irrevocably to a vanished past, such that all our memories of it constitute so many ever-receding reconstructions that can never be trusted to tell much of the truth. Thus the ideal of the child is a backward-looking fiction, presenting "the paradox of an immediacy
restored and mediated" (Gadamer 351): the absolute formlessness of self in an infant can not be perceived again by adult eyes without projecting adult ideas of purity or innocence.

Nietzsche has his Zarathustra dedicate his opening speech to a celebration of the child as the third and final "metamorphosis of the spirit" to which all disciples should aspire. His child's "innocence and forgetting," however, can almost identically be rephrased as "ignorance and amnesia." Should such regression to an infantilized state (however figurative) still be desirable, especially since it is both unknowable and unattainable? What is it about adult experience that makes it so much less valuable?

Perhaps the idea of prelapsarian instinctual innocence remains so compelling because it not only dispenses with adult sexuality and a lot of other messy suffering -- it also holds out a dark mirror to the adult sense of self, reflecting back something "unrecognizable, lost, strange to itself" (Sartre 1988: 28). The idea of a child is, if anything, more often an adult fantasy of enchanting savagery than a mystical concentration on "emptying the mind." It seems that Vadym and Michel embraced a certain savagery where Zarathustra may have indicated mysticism. "In every being," Michel remarks, "the worst instinct seemed the most sincere to me. But then what would I call sincerity?" (I 169; A.xxvii) Sexual sincerity, moreover, seems more

31Similarly, the narrator of Les Nourritures terrestres promises all his disclosures to be "parfaitement sincère" (12), but by the time of Les Nouvelles Nourritures the narrator complains that "my sincerest emotion is distorted as soon as I try to express it" ("Ma plus sincère émotion, dès que je
potently present among juveniles than among children -- so that, between the safety of childhood and the fall into adolescence, it is the charms of "the freshly fallen" that Michel's vagabond predecessor would most like to revisit: he is tremulously "waiting" to experience "a second puberty," while Ménalque similarly celebrates "an adolescence of our hearts" (NT 27; 68).

Whether one emulates a child or a juvenescent vagabond, the fact that one is ultimately enacting only a private fantasy remains. A private flight from the public world is in the end a less subversive act than one might like to think, because the world barely registers such individual defections from its order. Life goes on as usual, in spite of some rebellious drop-outs. Rousseau had his Émile tramp off into an open sunset a good 135 years before Gide's Nathanaël,32 and even then there was the same flaw in the image -- because "[t]his imaginative but imaginary 'usurpation' would pose no threat to the 'rights of princes,' who would remain comfortably in control of things" (Berman 187). It is this suspicion of insignificance that brings Gide's and Vynnychenko's -- and Nietzsche's -- heroes back to the human fold. They would rather trumpet their tribulations than

32 This occurs at the end of Book IV in Émile, ou de l'éducation (1762), where another "royal we" (i.e., Émile and his ever-present tutor) bids the corrupt city farewell to follow a quest for "innocence:") (174).

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l'exprime, est faussée") (174).

Adieu donc Paris, ville célèbre, ville de bruit, de fumée et de boue, où les femmes ne croyent plus à l'honneur ni les hommes à la vertu. Adieu, Paris: nous cherchons l'amour, le bonheur, l'innocence; nous ne serons jamais assés loin de toi (Rousseau, Oeuvres complètes IV: 691).
languish in obscurity, however splendidly deserved or enjoyed. But their hoped-for audience can not last: sometimes the mountain can not go to Mohammed, after all.

III. Emphatic Expulsions: Dangerous Things

[Evil is man's best strength. [...] These are delicate distant matters: they should not be reached for by sheeps' hoofs. (§ 400)]

When Nietzsche exhorts what he calls "preparatory courageous human beings ... to LIVE DANGEROUSLY! [...] live at war with your peers and yourselves!", he seems to be speaking as Aschheim's bloodthirsty wolf to those "content to live hidden in forests like shy deer" (1974: 228-229; emphasis in the original). But the wolf's call to embrace passion and courage, to realize "that being honest in evil is still better than losing oneself to the morality of tradition" (Nietzsche 1974: 156), only drives the humbler ungulates further back into their woods. Sheep or deer, cattle or buffaloes, they all recoil -- or reach for their pitchforks to drive out the wolf from their midst. A community of mild vegetarians will not tolerate a confirmed carnivore for long, except on pain of conversion -- in either the deer's direction (the conversion to neighbourly harmony), or the wolf's (the conversion of the neighbour into meat). And when an old wolf is outnumbered by so many more hoofs, he knows he stands a certain chance of being trampled. Hence the inevitable expelling of Zarathustra, Vadym, and Michel from the ranks of the herd.
The wolf's alienation hinges on a different understanding of authenticity from the sheep's. Nietzsche imagines a community of future freedom-seekers who "WANT TO BECOME THOSE WE ARE -- human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves" (1974: 266; emphasis in the original). This is basically a manichean concept, a position that defines itself against all those who are old or ordinary, and follow other people's laws, or accept other people's ideas of themselves. The wolf's authenticity needs the sheep's inauthenticity in order to exist or have any meaning. A sheep can not see how being anything besides being itself is possible: isn't becoming or being oneself already self-evident? What else is there for a sheep to be? But a wolf rejects the world of the sheep that tells him how to be, and seeks his own way out of the woods -- because to be himself is something that world tries to prevent: "[t]o be oneself in such a world is not a tautology, but a PROBLEM" (Berman xvi; emphasis in the original). A wolf-like person believes that all too many sheep-like persons go through their lives in a sort of coarse comfort, like petted animals, without ever realizing that they are probably thinking other people's thoughts, living by other people's standards, ... and never being themselves for a single moment. [...] To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all. (Wilde 1087; 1084)

The wolf is determined to seize the day in his teeth, while the sheep is content to drift and subsist from one day to the next. But even the most ardently individualist wolf knows that his efforts are heroically futile: even "given the best will in the
world ... 'to know ourselves,' each of us will always succeed in becoming conscious only of what is not individual but 'average' ... [because we never can] look around our own corner" (Nietzsche 1974: 299 & 336). The point is to be aware of this constant sheep-like fall into limitation, but to die trying to wolfishly overcome it.

On the other hand, a lot of pressure can be brought to bear on a wolf to don sheep's clothing -- not to consume sheep on the sly so much as be consumed by the sheep's order. The wolf-like Wilde learned that his own playful dictum to "[n]ever speak disrespectfully of Society ... [because o]nly people who can't get into it do that" (374) ended up applying to himself, after a courtroom full of sheep put him in prison. But once Nietzsche's animal dichotomy starts being translated into concrete human terms, the wolf seems like an increasingly mythic ideal. People may aspire to the wolf state of grace, but being "human, all-too-human" can not escape their sheep condition. There may be hopeful hybrids, but seldom a pure fusion. This seems to explain why

Nietzsche's famous injunction, 'become who you are,' is far more difficult than simply coming to terms with one's own life and destiny. On this reading, only an Übermensch sincerely wills his or her own life. The rest of us will our lives and the world's in an edited version, if we are honest with ourselves. We live edited lives. We are virtually always the heroes of our lives. (Magnus, Stewart & Mileur 30)

What is more, we may accept a modicum of inspiration to be found in one superman as "a sublime spectacle," but cringe at the thought of "[t]en or twenty supermen" as "unpleasant," and decide
that "hundreds and thousands" would be an outright "scourge" (Aschheim 130). In other words, wolf-like sublimity is acceptable only in wolf-like terms of scarcity, relative to the sheep-like standard of majority-mediocrity.

When Nietzsche defined himself as an "immoralist," in a more private moment a few months before issuing his Ecce Homo pronouncement, he elaborated on it to further mean "the highest form of intellectual integrity yet reached, ENTITLING you to treat morality as illusion, once this integrity has become instinctive and ineluctable in its own right" (1971: 122; emphasis in the original). Here the idea of the authentic depends once again on a division from the inauthentic "below," the latter being "constitutive for ordinary morality and knowledge" (Shapiro 74). Immoralists are a special breed apart, potential immortals, but only by virtue of an extraordinary integrity. Apartness must be earned before it can become second nature -- but the secondariness of this nature (implying effort and acculturation) is superior to the original "given" one (i.e., whatever we are born with). And so an "instinctive" integrity is also said to be an "intellectual" integrity -- a paradox that Nietzsche does not try to resolve, any more than he ever tries to defend the "entitlement" accruing to his idea of nobility. The immoralist's higher ground is assumed to be both reasonable and necessary, an achievement of both physical and mental exertions. Why should a lowly "moralist" even think to approach such heights?
And yet -- since immoralism seems to dwell in such a strictly negative relation to "the moral majority" -- their interdependence virtually guarantees a quarrel over identical turf. "Nietzsche clearly wants to deny that the fact of mastery itself in some philosophical sense 'entitles' the 'winners' to rule," but he can not ignore that "his own certainty about his 'right' and status is nonetheless mediated by others" (Pippin 109). Others mark the limits of how far Nietzsche's Zarathustra can or can not go. "Nietzsche warns us against indignation, but the ethical man is always indignant" (Massey 185). The sense of being affronted or offended is central to the moralist's being, while the immoralist exists to provide the affront or offence. And eventually, such a challenge to authority will constitute enough of a threat to the larger social structure that it will have to be removed.

What is it that the immoralist really brings down from the mountain for trade, other than the seeds of insurrection? By defining himself in opposition to his brethren of the plain, he is a declared public enemy, a sort of spiritual thief looking to abduct the unwary. But a certain capriciousness and conviviality associated with risk-taking in the marketplace may obscure the immoralist's traps -- "buyer beware" is understood in such an environment. A moral menace to society can sooner escape notice in a place already amenable to every variety of opportunist or criminal, eager to engage in socially-condoned activities that forget morality in favour of utility and profit. What's one more
mercenary or less to a system that demands the reduction of individuals to commodities for speculation in a human market? The margin for subversion in such a system thus remains small: even the most determined revolutionary must capitulate to the relentless law of exchange which governs human survival. The conditions of the marketplace, as the more-than-metaphorical space of the material world for human traffic and consumption, seem immediately binding simply upon contact. For the entrance into the marketplace demands an advance acceptance of its most rudimentary but all-determining object: money. To hold no currency is to hold no humanity, as the market would assign or understand it. And the market is always so much larger than the individual operating within it that any sustained resistance is almost always doomed before it is even born.

How much, then, can an immoralist hope to achieve in the face of such a stolid status quo? A precursor to Nietzsche in pondering this question was Max Stirner (1806-1856), a modest schoolteacher who scandalously condoned what he called "the egoist['s]" courageous criminality against a soul-destroying State, which condemns all too many people to a crippling conformity:
[A]n ego who is his own can not desist from being a criminal, that crime is his life. [...] Only against a sacred thing are there criminals ... [P]unishable ... is every uprising against a sacred thing by which man is to be charmed and chained. [...] Who has not cheated the police, the law? [...] [Y]ou do not even know, and understand how to value, the fact that you are criminals. [...] For only one can live, the moral law or the criminal.

(Stirner 202; 204; 219; 165; 277; 288)

Stirner believed that an underground must always exist to oppose the stultifying pressure of the prevailing order. But he did not envision a cohesive counter-culture so much as a violent chaos between forces which he hoped to awaken, with a strangely sinister indifference:

Do I write out of love to men? No, I write because I want to procure for MY thoughts an existence in the world, and, even if I foresaw that these thoughts would deprive you of your rest and your peace, even if I saw the bloodiest wars and the fall of many generations springing up from this seed of thought -- I would nevertheless scatter it. Do with it what you will and can, that is your affair and does not trouble me. [...] I sing because -- I am a singer. But I USE you for it because I -- need ears. (Stirner 296; emphases in the original)

A balder statement of art's independence from ethics would be difficult to find, in this sweeping rejection of all moral expectation. But Stirner's simultaneous disdain for and dependence on an audience prefigures Nietzsche's own. Words, which in Nietzsche's hands turn to "dynamite," can be usefully controlled and need not be misused for criminal ends -- yet dynamite itself is indifferent to the idea of criminality:

33See Nietzsche 1989: 326.
it only "sings" its explosive song. Dangerousness is a matter of human clumsiness meeting a sublime new strength.

Decadence is another word for dangerousness in less immediately palpable form: it is perceived as a stealthy attack from within -- sometimes inevitable (like organic decay) but more often somehow deserved (as in the idea of moral decline setting in after some act of perfidy). The agents of decadence represent an invasion of the "healthy" and "normal" majority's worst fear: degeneration. Between the ideas of progress and decadence, or of the bourgeois and the bohemian, there is a tug-of-war for determining which way the world is supposed to turn (see Gilman 1979: 160-161). But the "evils" of decadence can sometimes testify less to the terrors of an invasive and diseased reality than to the spiritual isolation forced on individuals by society's "moral values," which they are "striving too deliberately to transcend" (Buckley 232). Thus the strain of cultural warfare can cut both ways -- against the bastions as well as against the battering rams. Attempts at liberation from the State tend to result in assimilation and alienation by the State because "[t]he history of the world shows that no tie has yet remained unrent, ... that man tirelessly defends himself against ties of every sort; and yet, blinded, people think up new ties again and again" (Stirner 216). Or, as Sigmund Freud mordantly put it, "The state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desired to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt and tobacco"
(IV: 293). The idea of evil itself thus becomes safely contained and commodified within a structure that flattens internal dissent, like any other instability or attempt at creativity, into a mere "reflection" of "inherited social prejudices" (Pippin 107).

There is a suspicion and accusation of decadence in any self-serving activity, like Vadym's poetic or Michel's sexual pursuits. Zarathustra at least can claim some spiritualism as an alibi, to satisfy society's demand for some accountability or "service." He is a hero who still follows in the footsteps of a Buddha or Christ by leaving his homeland "to journey alone, experiencing fantastic adventures, only to return home and become the saviour of his people" (Wienpahl 144). But this religious dimension is strikingly absent in Michel and Vadym, even though they too undertake similar travels with heroic fortitude. For them there is no redemption at the end of the road, because each spent his energies "in demonic defiance of the morality of others ... [but] recoiled from the supreme challenge -- the necessity -- of making his own values" (Walker 260). Gide's and Vynnychenko's heroes stop short of a fully realized vision of authenticity by pointing towards it instead, like guides marking the route for stronger and more fearless travellers to extend after them. In other words, they fail where Zarathustra seems to succeed, but they also come paradoxically closer to realizing the ideal of authenticity as a result of that failure. For authenticity is an idea that is virtually steeped in negativity; like volatile anti-
matter colliding with matter, it forces failures in approximation or definition while persisting as a background or threshold. "[L]ike the Buddha describing enlightenment," it is far easier to say "what authenticity is NOT than ... what it is" (Charmé 7; emphasis in the original).

In the more secular age announced by Nietzsche, then, the stakes of self-discovery seem that much higher because there is no institutionalized mysticism to fall back on: just individual experiences of ecstasy or despair, unframed and unformed by any tradition. But this does not mean that the Church is quite as defunct as either of our three principal authors might wish it to be. Indeed, the whole of Zarathustra presents a sustained counter-narrative to the New Testament and would be quite unintelligible without it, much as Nietzsche's The Antichrist (1888) is likewise replete with references to the Bible and its textual history, as well as "the priestly fraudulence which produced" it (Shapiro 127). In a similar fashion, a residual Christianity informs Michel's confession from the very outset when he specifically outlines his past in terms of a Protestant mother, an atheist father, and a Catholic wife (I 19) -- details that he feels somehow bound to mention, together with his own lapsed Protestant affiliation. And the shadow of Christianity lingers in Vadym's story too, not only when he reads finally from the Bible to his father, but when he dreams of a saintly figure capable of a godlike and selfless love as well (201), which he knows he is still a long way from emulating. So when he embraces
another prison term at the end, this time for the sake of his family, Vadym knows he is performing the closest thing to an imitation of Christ that is available to him -- even though he is not himself a believer (see B 13 & 318). The conclusion of Michel’s story, on the other hand, suggests "[w]hat religion calls the ‘sinner,’ [or what] humanitarianism calls the ‘egoist’" (Stirner 360): a peculiarly unrepentant criminality that should decently take itself off to jail, but can only feebly ask to be "taken away" instead. Thus Michel’s listening friends feel confusion and complicity instead of a righteous indignation, or even sympathy:

[À la fin nous nous taisions aussi, pris chacun d’un étrange malaise. Il nous semblait hélas! qu’à nous la raconter, Michel avait rendu son action plus légitime. De ne savoir où la désapprouver, dans la lente explication qu’il en donnait, nous en faisait presque complices. Nous y étions comme engagés. (I 179; A.xxviii)

Michel is the most openly dangerous of our three immoralists because he is the least inclined to follow Christ’s example, languidly refusing and indeed rationalizing away any grounds for enacting some public sacrifice. He has already survived a private excoriation: what more can anyone do to him that he has not already done to himself? Yet his courage in plumbing his own depths remains more repelling than compelling, because instead of accepting responsibility for some of his more reprehensible acts (such as adultery and pederasty and symbolic wife-slaughter), he finds it more convenient to blame external circumstances or his upbringing. In short, he indulges his "self" at every point
except the crucial one of self-incrimination. And he further shifts this already mobile locus of blame by implicating his friends in such a long lament that they finally "do not know where to disapprove." His whole confession has been an artful piece of rhetoric that has already somehow got him at least partially off the hook.

René Descartes once observed that "there is nothing so absurd or incredible that it has not been asserted by one philosopher or another" (see Johnson 243). Certainly the wiles of words, issuing from the mouths of the cunning and clever in order to befuddle and manipulate the rest, have constituted an affront since at least the days of Aesop and that fable of the fox and the crow. But the flowers of rhetoric pertain more to the mountain than to the plain, and so hold out a seduction that more often than not sours once they are introduced to lower climes. Cows after all can not be mountain goats, nor should they hanker after a mountain goat's food. And they will only complain once they are given a taste of it, since it will only remind them of the hopeless distance separating the mountain from the plain. The function of the intellectual in society, then, is to tempt and to tease the cattle of the plain into climbing the mountain -- not always such an unlikely or ungainly exercise as one might think, although not always a happily chosen one, either. It is not even a question of suspending or surmounting some law of nature. Rather, it is the issue of being able to forget oneself and one's limitations, and to fly on the wings of
a new necessity -- in the perception and appreciation of beauty, for a change, before utility. Beauty is in the air of the ethereal mountain, as utility is the root of the market-driven plain. The intellectual brings the idea of beauty down to the marketplace, where it is either trampled or amalgamated.

The intellectual hero's dilemma -- "whether one should try to speak to everyone or sing a rare refrain for 'the happy few'" (Shapiro 17) -- absorbs Zarathustra, Vadym, and Michel in equal measure. They vary in their resolutions of the problem, but are unanimous in stating its terms: if "immoralism" is inimical to society, then society is likewise a bane to be avoided (a sense of peril is mutual). In the end, no one is prepared to follow them anywhere, and so their offerings are in vain: Zarathustra's speeches, Vadym's poems (which we never see), Michel's penitence (which we never quite believe). They expel themselves as much as they are expelled. Their dream of authenticity, the dream of an ideal community or identity, remains unrealized. Like Rousseau, a famous fellow-traveller on the road to authenticity, they each "withdrew as deep as he could go into the woods, far from man, hoping to keep the self barely, dully, narrowly -- but distinctly -- alive" (Berman 320). Rousseau's Émile might be content to remain "an amiable foreigner" -- in the world but not of it -- but Émile's author eventually elects to abandon society in toto before surrendering his sense of self to it. The teacher of the new education thus renounces his own principles and retreats, abandoning his old pupil on the mountainside.
Authenticity is a dangerous game, and not always as compatible with notions of alterity as either Gide's or Vynnychenko's heroes might want it to be. Their appeal to authenticity, as an argument for the absolute value of individual experience, can not in fact accommodate anyone or anything besides themselves -- not even (or especially) a single other significant self encountered or entrusted with the highest level of intimacy. The women that Gide and Vynnychenko have their men meet and more or less murder here provide somber proof of the limits to their vision. After all, "[o]ne really has to be afflicted with a Gallic excess of erotic irritability and enamored impatience to approach in all honesty the whole of humanity with one's lust!" (Nietzsche 1974: 339) The tragedy of Michel and Vadym is that they know they can not cure themselves of this affliction -- but it is perhaps Zarathustra's greater tragedy that he is never so afflicted at all.

This chapter has examined the relationship between authenticity and the flight from society. The protagonists of Gide's and Vynnychenko's texts choose to embrace the uncompromising position of purity as both credo and praxis. Inspired by the example of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, they manifest towards various animals and women an icy indifference that borders on the sociopathic and eventually (if indirectly) homicidal. They appeal to the authenticity triad of purity-intensity-audacity for their several overlapping connotations of
wolf-like dangerousness -- a triple potency well suited to both the symbol and reality of the bleak or extreme "wilderness" to which they withdraw. But purity enjoys a certain precedence since it best justifies their proud isolation to themselves, in terms of a stark simplicity, an enchanting savagery, and a purgative obsession with origins (meanings specifically associated with the authenticity value of purity).
Chapter III
The Promethean Puzzle:
Fire as Revolutionary Figure and Ground

Yes, I know from where I came!
Ever hungry like a flame,
I consume myself and glow.
Light grows all that I conceive,
Ashes everything I leave:
Flame I am assuredly.

-- Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science (1882)\(^1\)

Ordinarily, we see the foreground only; Nietzsche seeks to show us the background ... [the] bad or dark side.

-- from Walter Kaufmann's "Introduction" to Friedrich Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals\(^2\)

Of all the elements that were thought to comprise our world -- fire, earth, air, and water -- fire has perhaps always exercised the strongest fascination. The more static triad of the remaining elements were certainly deemed necessary to life, but the particularly kinetic quality of the fourth one, fire, made it appear to embody life itself. Only fire could be said to "die out;" only fire seemed truly descended from the gods in its sudden imperious manifestations of volcanic ash or lightning.

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\(^1\)New York: Random House, Inc. (Vintage Books), 1974; p. 67. An alternative to Walter Kaufmann's translation of this rhyme can be found in Philip Grundlehner's The Poetry of Friedrich Nietzsche (Oxford University Press, 1986): "Unsatiated like the flame/ I glow and consume myself./ Everything that I grasp becomes light,/ Everything that I leave becomes ashes:/ ..." (p. 250).

Fire was "the devouring energy" that Heraclitus understood to be "the basic element" (Dodds 9; Sheppard 15). And fire is especially and powerfully changeable: a sleepy ember is now a runaway blaze: either a sacred life-saving hearth or a profane life-destroying inferno (see Kirk 86). There is a religious ambivalence associated with fire, since it is "at once the destructive power of man, which must at all costs be avoided, and the herald ... of the Gods, the friend ... and guest ... of men" (Eliade 91). Thanks to its constant capacity for shapeshifting and independence, fire probably presents the most compelling metaphor AND reality that we can know.

Nietzsche's works are replete with fire imagery, of both the spiritually warming and searingly apocalyptic kind. Like his contemporary, the great English critic Walter Pater (1839-1894), Nietzsche liked to insist on an "espousal of gemlike flames and of high temperatures both in words and in life" (Ellmann 1973: 64). From his first major published work to his last, Nietzsche consistently centers his thoughts on the double-edged properties of fire around the Greek god Dionysus, a deity with double-edged associations of his own. Thus in The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche writes that Dionysus is "really the only genuine, pure, and purifying fire-spirit from which and toward which ... all things move in a double orbit" (1967: 120).

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3In the conclusion to his Studies In The History Of The Renaissance (1873), Pater wrote that "to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life" (152).
Dionysus in this early text stands for the chaotic forces of intoxication and music, in direct opposition to the more static qualities of control and sculpture associated with Apollo. But in later works, Nietzsche's Dionysus moves out of a position of polarity towards "a point of bipolar unity ... where the forces are in balance, where Apollo stands in exact proportion to Dionysus," and a more "affirmative" dimension is shared by both terms (Foster 46; 44). In other words, a synthesis begins to happen that allows the passion of Dionysus to partake of the constraint of Apollo, with the "Dionysian" result of a perfectly controlled act of creativity or "a SUPREME DEED" beyond the capacities of even a Goethe, a Shakespeare, or a Dante to attempt to emulate (Nietzsche 1989: 304).4

In fact, Nietzsche's idea of the Dionysian increasingly acquires a nebulously utopian cast -- here "an expression of an overflowing energy that is pregnant with future" (1974: 329), or there an instrument of self-knowledge that leaves one "richer in himself, newer to himself than before, broken open, blown at and sounded out by a thawing wind" (1966: 234). If anything, Dionysus becomes the antithesis to Christ instead of to Apollo, since Nietzsche's last words of his last (verifiable) text proclaim: "Have I been understood? -- DIONYSUS VERSUS THE CRUCIFIED. -- " (1989: 335).

4All emphases within quotations, unless otherwise indicated, occur in the original.
Nietzsche's description of Dionysus as a fire-spirit seems related to the legend of his birth as much as to the warming powers of wine associated with his worship. When Zeus fell in love with the mortal Semele, he swore to grant her any wish — whose fulfilment unfortunately resulted in the woman's death, since she wished (at Zeus's jealous wife Hera's behest) to behold her lover in his full godly splendour, a sight no mortal could survive. The unhappy Zeus, bound by his oath to her,
came as she had asked, and before that awful glory of burning light she died. But Zeus snatched from her [their] child that was near birth, and hid it in his own side away from Hera until the time had come for it to be born. [...] [Thus Dionysus] the God of the Vine was born of fire and nursed by rain, the hard burning heat that ripens the grapes and the water that keeps the plant alive. (Hamilton 65)
The Greek cult of Dionysus honoured the double nature of "fire-water" or wine to both release the worshipper into ecstasy and to incite him or her to savagery. The infamous Dionysiac rite of falling into a wine-induced frenzy that culminates in the ripping-to-pieces and raw consumption of flesh (from whatever beast the god provides to represent his incarnation at the event) follows from an ancient belief in the transmissibility of spiritual properties through the consumption of the spirit's vessel, the body: thus, in order to possess the courage of a bear, one must ingest the heart or brain of a bear. Similarly,
if you want to be like god you must eat god ... And you must eat him quick and raw, before the blood has oozed from him: only so can you add his life to yours, for 'the blood is the life.'

God is not always there to be eaten, nor indeed would it be safe to eat him at common times and without due preparation for the reception of his sacrament. But once in two years he is present among his mountain dancers [the Maenads or Bacchantes, women maddened with divine wine] ... as [either] ivy ... bulls ... fawns ... vipers ... goat[s] ...

(Dodds 277)

Dionysus also inspired the finest playwriting of the classical Greek age, with his annual five-day spring festival held in a theatre instead of a temple (or rather, a theatre become temple, where the experience of a play was both performed and perceived as sacred). This phenomenon formed the subject of Nietzsche's first book, The Birth of Tragedy: there the specifically tragic aspect of Dionysus, related to the myth of his death (renewed dismemberments succeeded by as many resurrections), provided the basis for Nietzsche's argument that the purpose and power of tragic art is mystically communal and ecstatically redemptive:

The metaphysical joy in the tragic is a translation of the instinctive unconscious Dionysian wisdom ... [which is] the joy involved in the annihilation of the individual. [...] This ... [is] the MYSTERY DOCTRINE OF TRAGEDY: the fundamental knowledge of the oneness of everything existent, the conception of individuation as the primal cause of evil, and of art as the joyous hope that the spell of individuation may be broken in augury of a restored oneness. (Nietzsche 1967: 104; 74)

That Dionysus became a lifelong centre and symbol of Nietzsche's thought may be explained by the several dichotomies united in his

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\(^5\)One can see here a distant precursor of the present Christian ceremony of the eucharist, which distils the blood and body of the Son of God into more acceptably abstract terms.
divine person, which lent themselves so well to Nietzsche's own penchant for combining contradiction with complexity. Dionysus brought together fire and water in his sacrament, as well as mindless barbarism and exquisitely mindful art; demonic revelry and divine immortality; Devil-ish cannibalism and Christ-like resilience. As the last god to enter Olympus and the only god there whose parents were not both divine, Dionysus represented a compelling co-existence of opposites and the most irresistibly human embodiment of divinity, whose wine enjoyed both "external 'daemonic' agency" and burning internal affect: only Dionysus, among all the heavenly Greek pantheon, enable[d] you for a short time to STOP BEING YOURSELF, and thereby set you free. [...] 'Dionysus leads people on to behave madly' -- which could mean anything from 'letting yourself go' to becoming 'possessed.' The aim of his cult was ecstasis -- which again could mean anything from 'taking you out of yourself' to a profound alteration of personality. (Dodds 77; 5)

Dionysus appears then as a primal source for the idea of authenticity, an ancient gateway towards the relief of escape from oneself -- rather than the more modern association of labouring to learn who one is, through more conscious means. But then authenticity accommodates its own dualities as well: a simultaneous forgetting and remembering seems continually evoked -- both an amoral regression into instinct and a moral recall of

6According to William Barrett, it was Dionysus who "united miraculously in himself the height of culture with the depth of instinct, [thus] bringing together the warring opposites that divided Nietzsche himself." See Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc. (Anchor Books), 1962), p. 178.
perspective or judgement, which together are supposed to reveal the personality to itself. Nietzsche's later Dionysus is an attempt to reconcile this tension between the reasoned and the reckless, between "being true to oneself" (the Apollinian ideal of individual responsibility and security) and "letting oneself go" (the Dionysian embrace of communal abandon and ecstasy). Moreover, the Dionysian attribute of fire -- itself a metaphor for the authenticity value of intensity -- emphasizes the double-edged "dangerousness" to such a quest after any reconciliation at all, since like any other "committed search for authenticity," Nietzsche's Dionysian search is "akin to playing with fire -- the seeker may be purged and reemerge as a genuine individual, but he may also be burned" (Golomb 200). The Dionysian flame can both kindle and consume the aspirant. And as Søren Kierkegaard knew -- the originator of "the search for authenticity in modern Western thought" -- it is the very tenuousness of the object of desire that provides the most fuel for the fire, because "it is the most uncertain thing that excites our most burning passion" (Golomb 33; 61). The less we can even be sure that a thing like authenticity exists, then, the more we seem to pine for it.

Fire imagery provides not only the link between "the God of the vine" and the idea of authenticity, but between a trio of other potentates as well: Christ, the Devil, and Prometheus. If the later Dionysus of Nietzsche enters into an increasingly hostile relationship to Christ ("The Crucified") and a closer resemblance to Satan ("Dionysus is, as is known, also the god of
darkness" [Nietzsche 1989: 312]), then the early Dionysus also shares a "Titanic impulse" towards rebellion with another fiery figure from legend, Prometheus: for "what the Promethean and the Dionysian have in common ... [is] an astonishing audacity" (Nietzsche 1967: 72; 70). Satan, Christ and Prometheus are each rebels with earth-shaking causes and consequences for mankind, who together with Dionysus figure as stages on the road to "the birth of authenticity ... rooted in revolution, or at least in the transfiguration of all prevailing social values and institutions, including those of Judæo-Christian culture" (Golomb 12). Thus the "fire-spirit" Dionysus finds a corresponding spark in both the fallen "fire-angel" of the Old Testament and the resurrected saviour of the New ("I came to set the earth on fire," Jesus says, "and how I wish it were already kindled!"), as well as a parallel in the Greeks' famous first fire-bearer, Prometheus.

The insurrectionary act of stealing fire from heaven for the benefit of humanity has inspired several retellings since Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* (written between 472 and 467 B.C.). Percy Bysshe Shelley's lyrical drama *Prometheus Unbound* (1819) perhaps best illustrates the peculiarly Promethean interplay of the diabolical and the divine: here the heroic Greek Titan, in agonies chained to the rock where the eagle feeds by day on his liver which by night grows back to be gnawed afresh, explicitly imitates the passion of Christ who similarly "sacrifices himself

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for the good of his people" -- but "as the symbol of rebellion;"
Shelley in his preface to the play "claimed similarities ... [to] Paradise Lost [1667]: he meant Prometheus to resemble Milton's Satan in courage, majesty, and opposition to omnipotent tyranny" (Russell 187-188). Samuel Taylor Coleridge likewise recognized Prometheus's double nature as both "the Redeemer and the Devil jumbled into one" (Hassan 190). In the same vein, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Faust (1832) also evinces a particularly "Promethean sympathy for humans against the gods" in the person of Mephistopheles, who (in spite of his capricious cruelties) pities the wretched of the earth (Russell 161) -- while Faust himself can be said to represent the very prototype of the Promethean or "the titanically striving individual" (Barrett 192).

Finally, Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra (1885) -- loosely modelled on the Persian founder of Zoroastrianism, a religion known for its prominent symbolic use of fire

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8Barrett further claims that Goethe's hero not only inspired but defined Nietzsche's own variation on the theme, since "Faust and Zarathustra are in fact brothers among books. [...] Goethe knew full well the ambiguous power contained in the traditional symbol of the Devil. Nietzsche's immoralism, though stated much more violently, consisted in not much more than the elaboration of Goethe's point: Man must incorporate his devil or, as he put it, man must become better and more evil; the tree that would grow taller must send its roots down deeper" (189; 190).

9The original Zarathustra (or Zoroaster, in Greek) was known as "the founder of sacred fires." He first glimpsed God as "a vision of flame" which either evolved out of or into "the ancient cult of fire" or "fire temples," the traditional Persian places of worship. The main ceremony that persists today from Parsi or Zoroastrian ritual retains from antiquity the centrally significant sacrifice before the sacred flame. Yet "despite the
presents yet another ambiguous instance of the heaven-sent or the hell-bound "lover of man." Nietzsche inflects the sixth-century B.C. prophet with a distinctly nineteenth-century A.D. preoccupation with the possibility of a post-Christian "future for evil:" "I guess," Zarathustra admits, "that you would call my overman -- devil!" (1983: 256) But Zarathustra's faith in man's potential for greatness stems less from a sly Satanism than from "Prometheanism: the belief that man -- when fully aware of his true powers -- is capable of totally transforming the world in which he lives" (Billington 1968: 478). Zarathustra is a new Prometheus, with an eagle who serves him instead of depleting him -- and with a commandment to put the gift of fire to specific spiritual use:

You must wish to consume yourself in your own flame:
how could you wish to become new unless you had first become ashes! [...] But do you want to go the way of your affliction, which is the way to yourself? (Nietzsche 1983: 176; 174)

Pain becomes the new measure of the hard path to authenticity. "Pain is my element," says Shelley's Prometheus; and in Nietzsche the focus always returns to the reverence shown to fire, Parsis are not fire worshippers. They regard it, like water or air, as a purifying element." Fire itself ended up obliterating most of the records of Zarathustra's life and teachings, since the Macedonians burned Persepolis in 330 B.C. -- so that "only one quarter of what we know of Zoroastrianism has survived." (See Nielsen et al: 374-376; 382.)

salutary effects of suffering, especially "the agony of childbirth itself" which "links the idea of 'becoming' with pain" (Magnus, Stewart & Mileur 118-119). "Every pain has torn into your heart," Zarathustra muses to himself towards the conclusion of Nietzsche's narrative: "father-pain, fathers' pain, forefathers' pain; ... pain too is a joy" (1983: 433; 435). Zarathustra embraces his affliction because he knows all becoming, overcoming and creating demand continual "trials by fire," painful as well as joyful.11

In Nietzsche's "Dionysos-Dithyrambs" (1888), Zarathustra reappears in the poem "The Beacon" as the lonely denizen of an island of rock, whose "mountain fires" serve to guide or inspire lost ships at sea -- "an autonomous exemplary existence reminiscent of Prometheus, whose own sacrificial life on a rock in the sea was characterized by Nietzsche ... as 'the immeasurable suffering of the bold "individual"'" (Grundlehner 260; see Nietzsche 1967: 70). But the Zarathustra of the prose

11Indeed, Zarathustra incarnates the principal Promethean legacy and virtue which is suffering -- because "the indirect result of the first quarrel between Zeus and Prometheus ... [becomes] the apparently avoidable aspects of man's condition -- not death itself, for that is inevitable, but disease, painful old age, poverty and the need for unremitting toil" (Kirk 142). The operant word here is "avoidable:" man WILLS himself either into or out of his own misery, thereby compounding or reducing its impact through an exercise of VOLITION instead of a surrender to fate. So what Prometheus really seems to represent is an individualist triumph over the collective problem of bread: one man heroically dispenses with crushing contingencies where the rest founder and drown. Thus by his own strength and example, the Promethean Superman promises to free humanity "from the yoke of nature, from necessity, from suffering ... [and so is able] to turn stone into bread" (Berdiaev 1990: 108; 109).
text achieves his heroic Promethean passivity only after a very reluctant relinquishing of a far more militant rhetoric: "Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue?" he blazes in the Prologue; "Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this lightning, he is this frenzy" (Nietzsche 1983: 126). One can see a development from "such violent images as flame, war and lightning ... [which initially] dramatize the sacrifice required of anyone who aspires toward the overman," into a later "advice to accept pain ... [which underlines] the price that must be paid, the tragedy that must be faced, if one is to live in accordance with Dionysian principles" (Grundlehner 287; 286). Even midway through the narrative, Zarathustra begins to realize the limitations to his campaign to win so many (ultimately mediocre) disciples. "I live in my own light," he laments; "I drink back into myself the flames that break out of me" (Nietzsche 1983: 218). Being in pain is a lonely place. The torch, however urgent, can not always be passed on; sometimes it can only burn out. And so the desire to see "the sun's fire filling the living world" will not always (as for Shelley's Prometheus) be fulfilled.\(^\text{12}\)

The pathos of the Prometheus legend turns on the defiance which precipitates the punishment -- or "the necessity of crime which weighs upon the man who is intent on raising himself to the condition of a Titan" (Praz 276). Prometheus earns his awful affliction through the most audacious anti-authoritarianism:

\(^{12}\text{See Shelley: Act II, Scene V, line 604 (p. 72).}\)
besides stealing fire from Zeus in a fennel wand, he is also
guilty of fooling Zeus with less-than-reverent burnt offerings.
For Zeus the solicitous father of Dionysus is first the merciless
punisher of Prometheus, whose term of torture is only ended by
the efforts of Heracles (another bastard offspring of Zeus from
yet another mortal, Alcmena). But an even stronger testament to
Zeus's wrath than the manacles on the mountaintop is the arrival
of Pandora and her plague-filled box: up until the time of
Prometheus's pranks, "only men were upon the earth; there were no
women. Zeus created these later, in his anger at Prometheus for
caring so much for men" (Hamilton 87). Thus the real crime of
Prometheus was to disrupt the original earthly harmony with an
effrontery that resulted in not just his own agonies, but those
of the rest of the world as well: he was the serpent in the all-
man male garden who caused the fall into female ruin.

And in the world of Prometheus, ... the trickster and
(suffering) rebel against the gods, who creates culture
at the price of perpetual pain ... Pandora, the female
principle, sexuality and pleasure, appear as a curse --
disruptive, destructive. [...] The beauty of the woman,
and the happiness she promises are fatal in the work-
world of civilization. (Marcuse 120)

According to the Promethean creation myth, then, women were
never part of the "race" that the Titan first sat and sculpted
and claimed to be "After my image;/ ... resembling me,/ To
suffer, to weep,/ To enjoy, to be glad,/ And thee [Zeus] to
scorn,/ As I!" (Goethe 212)13 That it was eventually up to

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13Nietzsche approvingly cites (in its entirety) this final
stanza of Goethe's poem "Prometheus" in The Birth of Tragedy (see
Zeus to form female mortals (presumably after Hera's image), and that this "scourge" eventually ensured the release of Prometheus from his rock (for had there been no Pandora, there surely would have been no Alcmena or Heracles either) -- these details are not always sufficiently remembered. Shelley at least rescues the female principle in his hopeful version of Prometheus's moment of freedom, which he envisions as the reunion of the Titan with Asia, the feminine incarnation of love, at the auspicious (and rather Zarathustrian) hour of noon.14 And Théophile Gautier can imagine, in his playful paean to the bewitching androgyne Mademoiselle de Maupin (1835), how the creation of woman can invite an even more harrowing penalty than Prometheus's "noble pride to want to create a man and rival God" -- for in his desperate guesses at the gender of his beloved, Gautier's narrator can only be certain that "as a punishment for my audacity an ever-unassuaged desire would, like another vulture, gnaw away at my liver" (Gautier 298). But Gide plots his own Prometheus in a virtually all-male universe (Le Prométhée mal enchaîné, 1899); as for Vynnychenko, his Promethean short story "Дим" ("Smoke," 1907) similarly occurs in an abstract masculine atmosphere, but at least allows a woman to serve as a crucial catalyst.

Gide and Vynnychenko both interpret the Promethean myth in similar terms of genre and structure. In the first place, each

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14See Shelley 72.
chooses to emphasize the fictionality of his text by repeatedly alluding to its artifice. Gide thus classifies his work as a "sotie"\(^{15}\) or "récit arbitraire et volontiers bouffon," in a nod to the French satirical farces of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, where actors once "wore fool's costume and derided society, manners and political events" (Cuddon 901). And within the work itself, Gide plays with multiple classical references to create inversions and illusions of familiarity: perhaps the best example is "Le Garçon," a character who arranges for Prometheus an interview with Zeus (who is described simply in this context as "l'ami du garçon").\(^{16}\) Such mysterious access to the deity in a mere café waiter suggests some higher intervention along the lines of Ganymede -- that boy Zeus was said to have seized from another mountaintop in the form, not uncoincidentally, of an eagle (that same "pet" of Prometheus). And we know from Greek mythology that Zeus's "special" bird is the eagle, as Athena's is the owl (Kirk 50). However, one can not deduce from this that Gide's Garçon enjoys the ear of God by virtue of being his Ganymede-like lover; all that one can clearly conclude is that

\(^{15}\)The term derives from the French for "fool:" sot or sotte.


Since Gide employs his own ellipses for effect, they are cited here "close up" against his words (e.g.,"xxx...yyy..."), just as they are found in most editions of his works. I employ dots in square brackets ([...]) to indicate omissions, as well as more generous space between dots and words ("xxx ... yyy ...") to signal additional imposed abbreviations. The same usage will apply to Vynnychenko citations.
all of the names in this allegory just happen to be Greek (except for the Roman Coclès), which more often than not simply frustrate hunts after classical meanings to illuminate the modernist context.

In addition, Gide (in remembrance of his "Symbolist Circle" evenings chez Stéphane Mallarmé) appears to pay an assiduous Mallarméan attention to the rich blank spaces to be mined between words by building a contrapuntally-controlled effect of character voices that sing to one another, back and forth across the textual breaks, "like a musical composition in two keys" (Holdheim 192). This elegant severity of form is undercut, however, by the sense of lightness to the repetitions and pauses between musical "phrases" of dialogue, as well as by an openly mischievous content that resolves itself in a decidedly major key. For Gide's Prometheus (being "poorly chained" to begin with) achieves his own rescue from bondage by roasting his eagle and serving it up as a banquet in the end -- and further availing himself of one of the bird's plumes, to be able to have penned the preceding pages in the first place. Thus the entire text seems orally pitched between two alternating and anguishing voices, only to end in its own cul de sac: captured and delivered into print by the very source of all the characters' sufferings.

Vynnychenko, for his part, gives his narrative the subtitle of "A Christmas Story" («Різдв'яна казка»), which clearly follows from the opening paragraphs that set both an intimate
storytelling tone and the rather melancholy register of the story itself:

My dear reader, let me tell you a story. I know that you are used to hearing stories at Christmas time; I know that even without the holidays you are always ready to listen to a story; [...] I know that you are always willing to wrap up your heart in the dirtiest rags, just to be able to shelter it from life's rough wind. So wrap yourself now in my story -- it's warm like the rags the beggars wrap themselves in, warm like the iron of chains; it's as melodic as the song of suffering and slavery.17

Twice within the course of the story -- notably at the two points when horrible murders are mentioned -- Vynnychenko's narrator interrupts himself with assurances to his audience that he is only recounting a tale ("I know you don't believe me, reader. Don't believe and don't be afraid because this is just a story, and such horrors only happen in stories").18 And the resoundingly happy ending, together with a variety of surreal and supernatural effects, underline the "kazka"19 or folk tale quality signalled by the subtitle. At the same time, however, "Smoke" aspires to be more of a creation myth than a mere fairy tale, since we are told at the outset not to expect a place where rivers run with milk and honey, but to imagine the primordial

17Володимир Винниченко, «Дим». Твори: том II. Київ: «Дзвін», 1919: 142 (of pp. 142-164). Hereafter referred to as "Dym;" please see Appendix B (B.1) for the original Ukrainian. All translations from this text are my own.

18See pages 144 and 158.

19In Russian, "skaz" or "skazka"; both the Ukrainian and the Russian for the genre are derived etymologically from the same word "to tell" (skazat' vs. kazaty).
"rivers and ponds running with blood, sweat and tears ... from which everything began" ("Dym" 142).

Secondly, concerning structure, both Gide and Vynnychenko divide their respective texts into four principal parts balanced by four principal characters (two godly and two mortal). This presents an interesting coincidence, in view of the differing textual lengths (Gide employs well over twice as many pages as Vynnychenko here, for a change), as well as the variance in genre typical for each writer (Gide had already written one other self-styled "sotie" [Paludes in 1896] and would write another [Les Caves du Vatican in 1914], while Vynnychenko did not appear to have ever produced anything else in the grandly cosmic manner of "Smoke" -- preferring instead to populate his prose with more mundanely identifiable characters). Both writers further locate their narratives in cities (Paris for Gide, an unnamed smoke-filled metropolis for Vynnychenko), just as both also favour the pathetic or masochistic aspect to the Promethean myth by dwelling on (male) tears and developing a vampiric vocabulary around the word "gnawing." As for a specifically Dionysian or Nietzschean colouring to Gide's and Vynnychenko's renderings of "the modern Prometheus," this will hopefully become more evident after a discussion of the plot summaries for the two texts in question, the better to clarify the content of the issues to be addressed.

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20 With a nod to Mary Godwin Shelley -- for such was the subtitle to her most famous work, Frankenstein (1818).
I. *Le Prométhée mal enchaîné*

Gide's Prometheus is a playful participant in a drama precipitated by a blind, gratuitous "jeu" on the part of God (also known as "Zeus," "le Migliionnaire," and "le banquier"). The story opens with an anecdote about an absurd and arbitrary string of events following from God ("un monsieur gras") dropping a handkerchief on the boulevard, which a passerby ("un monsieur maigre," later known as Coclès) hastens to retrieve. When the handkerchief is thus restored, the fat man suddenly asks the thin one to write a random address on an envelope, produced together with a pen. No sooner has this request been fulfilled than a resounding slap lands on the thin man's cheek, succeeded by the abrupt disappearance of the fat man along with the handkerchief and envelope. A third man, Damoclès, ends up receiving this envelope which unexpectedly and anonymously contains 500 francs.

The remainder of Gide's text explores the consequences of this random series of acts, as experienced by its primary victims (Coclès and Damoclès), as well as by its critical witnesses (Prométhée and "le garçon," the enigmatic café waiter).

The narrative proceeds by a series of tightly triangulated steps, whose dialogue basically shifts from one "table de trois" to another. The first part, "Chronique de la moralité privée," begins with Prométhée arriving in Paris and hearing about the act of "le Migliionnaire" from the Garçon at the restaurant:
Une action gratuite! ça ne vous dit rien, à vous? Moi ça paraît extraordinaire. J'ai longtemps pensé que c'était là ce qui distinguait l'homme des animaux: une action gratuite. [...] [Et ici il s'agit de] deux actions gratuites d'un seul coup: ... Un qui a reçu 500 francs pour un soufflet, l'autre qui a reçu un soufflet pour 500 francs...[...] C'est réversible. [...] Songez donc! une action gratuite! il n'y a rien de plus démoralisant. (PME 16; 18)

Then Prométhée is seated to dine beside Coclès and Damoclès -- who end up recounting (to their mutual surprise) two more sides to the same story. But when Prométhée is invited to disclose his own past to his companions ("ce restaurant invite à la parole ... montrez votre trait distinctif: qu'avez-vous que n'a personne autre?" [PME 38]), he obliges them with the presentation of his eagle -- who promptly crashes through the restaurant window, gouges out Coclès's eye with its wing, and starts gnawing on its owner's liver. Such shocking violence is met with genteel disapproval, as if Prométhée had merely committed an embarrassing faux pas:

'...Monsieur, ne croyez donc pas que cet aigle en rien vous distingue. Un aigle, au fond, vous l'avouerai-je? un aigle, nous en avons tous. [...] Mais nous ne le portons pas à Paris ... À Paris c'est très mal porté. [...] ... on s'en débarrasse avant d'entrer, Monsieur.' (PME 41-42)

However, all is quickly redeemed by Damoclès, whose mysterious "godsend" of 500 francs conveniently covers all claims to damages (which include the settling of their three-way dinner bill, the cost of replacing the restaurant window, the going price for a glass eye ... with just enough left over for a tip).

The second part, "La Détention de Prométhée," finds the eponymous hero behind bars -- but not as the result of
perpetrating mischief at the restaurant; instead he has been arraigned by the Garçon on charges of selling matches in Paris without a licence! The Garçon brings Prométhée news in prison of his table mates:

Coclès ... y voit mieux depuis qu’il n’y voit plus que d’un œil. Il montre à tous son œil de verre et se fait un bonheur qu’on l’en plaigne. [...] [Mais en ce qui concerne Damoclès, c]e qui l’inquiète surtout, c’est l’état de santé de Coclès. [...] Il dit que sans ces 500 francs Coclès ne serait pas misérable. (PME 48; 49)

Then Prométhée calls his eagle to him again -- whereupon an interlude ensues ("Il faut qu’il croisse et que je diminue"): the man offers more and more of his flesh to the ravenous bird, until the latter is strong enough to carry the former out of prison.

Meanwhile, Coclès is baiting Damoclès’s sense of guilt over the windfall of 500 francs enjoyed at his expense (first a slap was suffered, and now the loss of an eye) -- when the two are (literally) struck by a flying poster advertising a public lecture by Prométhée to be delivered that evening. Thus happily interrupted, Coclès and Damoclès listen to "Prométhée délivré" speak on the subject of his eagle (punctuated by the circulation of obscene photographs and the ignition of flying rockets, for comic relief). The eagle also executes a few loops around Prométhée, besides feasting once again on his side in full view, to applause. Prométhée begins his speech with an explanation of his background:
Je n'ai pas toujours vu mon aigle. Avant lui j'étais inconscient et beau, heureux et nu sans le savoir. Jours charmants! Sur les flancs ruisselants du Caucase, heureuse et nue aussi la lascive Asia m'embrassait. [...] Asia m'épousait, pleine de rires; ... Autour de nous tout permettait, tout protégeait notre humaine solitude. -- Soudain, un jour, Asia me dit: tu devrais t'occuper des hommes. [...] 

Ils étaient très peu éclairés; j'inventai pour eux quelques feux; et dès lors commença mon aigle. C'est depuis ce jour que je m'aperçois que je suis nu. (PME 67; 68)

Sobbing and sweating, struggling and despairing of his audience's attention, Prométhée nevertheless manages to complete his talk by means of a reference to the mingled fates of Coclès and Damoclès:

Inutile de rappeler ici l'histoire de Coclès et de Damoclès. Vous tous ici la connaissez; eh bien! je le leur dis en face: le secret de leur vie est dans le dévouement à leur dette; toi, Coclès, à ta gifle; toi, Damoclès, à ton billet. Coclès, il te fallait creuser ta cicatrice et ton orbite vide, ô Coclès; toi, Damoclès, garder tes cinq cents francs, continuer de devoir sans honte, d'en devoir plus encore, de devoir avec joie. Voilà votre aigle à vous; il en est d'autres; il en est de plus glorieux. Mais je vous dis ceci: l'aigle, de toute façon, nous dévore, vice ou vertu, devoir ou passion; ... [...] Messieurs, il faut se dévouer à son aigle... (PME 76-77; 76)

At the end of the lecture, a collection is solicited for the support of Coclès's new home for the one-eyed. But Damoclès leaves the gathering deeply disturbed by Prométhée's message.

The third part, "La Maladie de Damoclès," traces this character's rapid decline and death. Prométhée and the Garçon visit "Le Miglionnaire"/"Zeus," who explains his act against Damoclès and Coclès as the result of a capricious "amour du jeu" (PME 85). Coclès, the Garçon and Prométhée worry about Damoclès's worsening condition: "Il tend en vain son autre
"as if to suggest that their friend is wilfully and histrionically crucifying himself on his own cross of uncertainty. But Damoclès insists in his sobbing delirium that

le devoir, Messieurs, c'est une chose horrible; moi, j'ai pris le parti d'en mourir. -- Et maintenant ce qui me tourmente le plus, c'est que cette dette, je vous l'ai passé: à toi, Coclès... Coclès! il ne t'appartient pas, ton œil, puisque ne m'appartenait pas la somme avec quoi je te l'ai donné. [...] Mais ton œil te brûle, Coclès! -- Coclès!! j'en suis sûr, il te brûle, ton œil de verre; arrache-le! -- S'il ne te brûle pas, il devrait te brûler. (PME 92; 93)

Prométhée entreats "Zeus le banquier" to take pity on his friend's agony, and reveal his omnipotent self as the author of Damoclès's misfortune: "Je comprends que vous le tuiez, puisque c'est pour votre plaisir; mais qu'il sache au moins Qui le tue -- qu'il s'y repose" (PME 96). But Damoclès dies unconsoléd, and Prométhée promises to deliver his funeral address.

It is a transfigured Prométhée who relates the "Histoire de Tityre" in the fourth and final part: a certain primordial man of the marshes learns to cultivate a splendid oak and, by extension, a whole agrarian community, including an idyllic domesticity with a bibliophile called Angèle -- only to see it all swept away and stolen (once Tityre and Angèle set foot on the same Parisian boulevard as the fat banker in the beginning) by a flute-playing nude savage "bound for Rome."
-- Oh! dit Angèle, penchée sur Tityre, qu'il est beau! que ses reins sont dispos! que ses flûtes\textsuperscript{21} sont adorables!

Tityre était un peu gêné.
-- Demandez-lui donc où il va, dit Angèle.
-- Où allez-vous? questionna Tityre.
Mœlibée répondit: -- \textit{Eo Romam.} [...] -- Rome! dit Angèle songeuse -- oh! j'aimerais tant voir Rome!

Mœlibée, reprenant ses pipeaux, recommençait sa primitive mélodie. À ces sons, Angèle exaltée se souleva, se leva, s'approcha, ... et tous deux continuant ainsi le boulevard s'éloignèrent, ... [...] -- Et Tityre se retrouva seul complètement entouré de marais. (PME 112-113; 114)

After this confusing but amusing story, Prométhée leaves the cemetery arm-in-arm with Coclès and the Garçon, headed for the same restaurant as at the beginning, where they will feast on Prométhée's fattened and slaughtered eagle -- because, as Prométhée proclaims,

\begin{quote}
Depuis la mort de Damoclès, j'ai trouvé le secret du rire. [...] [G]race à sa mort ... j'ai tué mon aigle. [...] Il me mangeait depuis assez longtemps; j'ai trouvé que c'était mon tour. (PME 114; 103; 116)
\end{quote}

II. «Дим»

Out of the first rivers which once ran with blood, sweat and tears there rose "the cloud of Life," which in turn gave birth to two sons: Vpered (Forward) and Nazad (Backward).

\textsuperscript{21}"Flûte" can mean both the wind instrument and slang for legs -- a typical Gidean \textit{jeu des mots}.\n
Vpered loved the sun, struggle and mankind, and that is why he planted live coals in his beloved people's chests instead of hearts -- the better to endow them with sharp and restless thoughts, to lash them with a chill and terror of Life, to fill their veins with a passionate bliss of victory and struggle, and to set their eyes on fire with passion and pride. And these people went and reached out to him, and rejoiced as well as suffered.

But Nazad extracted the hearts from people only to replace them with cold and ravenous toads, which swallowed all of Life's joys -- all of its fire and light -- and remained forever cold and dark. Nazad covered the people in gold to the point where they were bound as if with iron by this poisonous gold, which feared the blades of thoughts. He filled people with smoke, and the fumes of laziness and tranquillity made the people fear activity and toil, indeed any great agitation at all. And so they loved Nazad and did not like the absorbed wretches, those restless and irascible people of Vpered.

Thus the people fought each other, spilling blood and shedding tears and throwing off sweat, which fattened the toads of Nazad's people. And the more all of this flowed, the more the enmity grew between Vpered and Nazad... ("Dym" 143; B.ii)

Oh, how fiercely they fought one another! ... And when Vpered carried the day in battle, then the sun smiled joyously, spring arrived, flowers bloomed on rocks, and fish -- even the shy fish -- sang in the water. But when Nazad gained, then fog descended and the sun hid. And storms raged in the fog, while the flowers of Life faded and people tormented each other. People seized infants and beat their heads on the rocks until they were streaming with blood; people ripped open the bellies of mothers and dragged out their intestines, trampling them underfoot; people killed hundreds of other people in an instant. And so bloody steam rose up to the indifferent sky, as the fumes of oppressive suffering crept over the earth. And these fumes stupefied the senses so much that people gnawed on their own hearts, shed their own blood, and in the terrible fog finally embraced their enemies as they strangled their loved ones. ("Dym" 143-144; B.iii)

Nazad challenged Vpered to cease struggling against him and to accept his supremacy: "I'll show your best ones to you," to
prove that "everywhere the red burning coals in people's chests have burned away to gray indifferent ashes" ("Dym" 145 & 144; B.iv).

And in an infernal city, in a great dark building set apart from the rest -- "a dead box, made of stone, old and soaked through with stone tears" and divided into cells, each identical to the other -- Vpered saw that the people there had neither coal nor ash in place of a heart, but only smoke -- thick, brown, oppressive smoke.

And Vpered saw how this smoke rose to their heads, and how it clearly stifled their thoughts and smothered their movements ... And Vpered silently watched how dully these people shuffled in their cells, how feebly their thoughts beat against the walls of their cells, only to fall weakly back into their smoke-filled brains. He silently observed how the walls of each cell drew closer to each occupant and squeezed against the chest like a vice, pressing to the point of pain and squeezing out tears, which fell on the heart and crackled against the heat, thus producing the smoke. ("Dym" 146; B.v)

Nazad asked Vpered if he gave up yet, since the precious life-giving coals seemed extinct; but Vpered objected: "I see neither coal nor ash -- only smoke: what they need is wind" (147; B.vi). Nazad replied that if they examined their subject at closer range, the preponderance of ash would become more visible. So they silently glided into one of the cells which was "as gray and bare as an empty skull," and beheld a long, bare and ancient table "like a mouldy coffin" standing in the middle. A small unfortunate lamp glimmered there, "as weak-eyed as an old woman wasted away by life." Three men were listlessly playing cards at the table while others were sleeping or sitting on the
floor. A rosy-faced, curly-haired boy with light childish down on his cheeks was walking from wall to wall, swinging his clanking chains with each step. "The skull was silent except for the jingling of the curly-headed boy's chains, which sounded like the grinding of the skull's teeth" ("Dym" 148; B.vii).

None of the prisoners seemed to hear or see or feel in their hearts what those chains meant, draining away the blush from the boy's cheeks and the light from the boy's eyes -- like two cold iron snakes drinking away his warm blood. "And Vpered saw that no fiery threads joined these people -- there was only the smoke; and in this smoke there burned only a little flame of satisfaction together with another, uglier little yellow flame of irritation" ("Dym" 149; B.viii). This latter flame blazed up in the breast of one pale prisoner in response to the boy's noise.

And Vpered saw how the boy's chest tightened and produced a single hot tear, which fell on his heart and cut a great trail across it. And then a cloud of smoke rose up through his chest. ("Dym" 150; B.ix)

The pale prisoner continued to feed his evil yellow flame with more and more malicious words, until their stench filled the cell and "made it difficult to breathe" (151: «ВАЖКО СТАЛО ДИХАТИ»).

Nazad again asked Vpered to concede defeat, but Vpered insisted that smoke was still the only real issue he could see. "You are either stubborn, or blind!" said Nazad, as he led his brother to another cell.

Here in the second cell, some other prisoners were singing like zombies "about burning sorrow and the joy of victory and the
heavenly father of the two sons of Life," but without even a glimmer of a little flame: they only went through the motions, mouthing "the flaming words [which] did not warm their smoke-filled hearts and did not sting their sleeping brains awake" ("Dym" 151; B.x). Their fellow-prisoners did not hear the song, numb to the content and impatient with another source of noise («ЗНОВ ВИШТОВХУВАЛИ ЇХ»). The singers sound "like corpses" («ЯК ВІД МЕРТВЯКІВ»), forcing their lifeless limbs to dance in their chains.

"Well, where is their fire?" Nazad asked again. But Vpered objected sadly to an overpowering quantity of smoke, which again obscured the view for them both. "You ARE stubborn!" his brother decided with annoyance, as they made their way to a third cell (152).

Here the people were engaged in a lively political argument which, however, turned out to be hollow: once again Vpered could see "only smoke in their chests, and in this smoke there sparkled the little flame of spite" ("Dym" 153; B.xi). Even though Vpered was the ostensible subject of their discussion, he proved to be only the pretext for the unleashing of petty intellectual rivalries. Two debaters let their evil little yellow flames bring them to blows, much to their audience's amusement.

Nazad and Vpered yet again could not agree about the substance behind the smoke, so they proceeded to the fourth and final cell.
There another political argument was in progress, but this time more specifically about socialism not being honoured among socialist inmates. The dispute was punctuated once again by "the laughter of smoke, dry and clamorous," while the same little yellow flame of rancour reappeared ("Dym" 154 & 155; B.xii).

"Well, what more proof do you need?" asked Nazad.

"Wind is what I need," repeated Vpered, "so that I can see what lies under that smoke."

Now Nazad lost his temper:

'You don't WANT to see that you've failed where I've succeeded ... Not you but I have been favoured by Life with the greater force, and you will serve me ... You blind braggart ("САМОХВАЛЬКО СЛЯПИЙ"), just look: you put that coal in their chests because you wanted to set all those embers aflame in a single fire; you breathed into their souls an aversion for Life's filth by filling their veins with proud blood ... And look, just look what I have done with them, YOUR people: your fire no longer burns in them, they are already cold and sick from it; your fire doesn't bring them together, but rather pushes them apart.' ("Dym" 156; B.xiii)

Vpered agreed that the less favoured son of Life should surrender to the more greatly favoured one, but that Life itself should bring some wind to resolve the matter. So they approached Life with this request and then went back to wait for the wind to arrive to the city.

Meanwhile, "Vpered watched as new people with coals in their chests were led to the cells and were ravenously swallowed up, torn and gnawed by the prison's grated teeth, until tears fell and extinguished the fire, while smoke rose up through their chests" ("Dym" 157; B.xiv). Nazad mocked his brother's
compassion by "spattering the people with a rain of suffering, breathing on them a foul wind of manure, and laughing" (157; B.xv) Every day, a number of Vpered’s people were led out of the cells into the hands of Nazad’s people, where they heard "the terrible croaking of death" before plunging with "a cold cord around the neck" to oblivion (158; B.xvi).

The people swarmed aimlessly, waiting for their deliverance: at night, "the endlessly smoke-filled night" («безкрай задимлені нощі»), the people’s little flames of sadness and grief burned more brightly as they wept more freely then, cherishing their sorrow which alone seemed able to dispel the smoke for them (158).

From time to time a small group of people managed to break away, only to fall into fresh prisons -- or to awaken for only a moment with their numbed hopes intact, before succumbing again to "the swarm in the smoke" («кишіпи в диму»). All this Vpered sorrowfully watched, while Nazad laughed and mocked (159).

A hopeful uprising outside the prison gates turned out to be a disgruntled chain gang being transferred to a new penitentiary: once inside the prison walls again, these "specialists of suffering" («спеціалістів страждання») claimed their own miseries to be greater than those of their new neighbours (160). Vpered could discern nothing but smoke in all of these hardened hearts.

Then one of the travelling convicts mentioned in the course of a prison warden’s questioning that he had two wives, one of them in chains like himself. And suddenly it seemed that
some thought was beginning to stir in the feeble minds of these smoke-filled people, a thought that was growing restless and sharply hurtling itself against other thoughts; and Vpered saw how these thoughts started to become more lively and to move with increasing restlessness, while the eyes of the people appeared deeper and more troubled, more strained. ("Dym" 161; B.xvii)

Still, Vpered could not distinguish a single glowing coal among them (162).

As the chain gang left to continue its sentence of hard labour outside the prison walls again, another chain gang followed -- this time composed of women («жінки-люди»). A light snow has started falling, the flakes bouncing in the breeze. And a single woman in chains advancing in front of the rest suddenly mesmerized the entire prison courtyard, with her shackles clinking dully beneath her long gray skirts. "Like wolves" («як вовки»), Nazar's jailkeepers became riveted to the sight of this woman in chains (162).

And Vpered saw how that muffled clinking sound from under those skirts rose up and grew louder and then flew, with a terrible force and a violent wind, right at all those surrounding it. [...] That same muffled clinking grew still louder as it blew and blew a great wind at every chest, against all the smoke. And as the smoke unsteadily receded, from under the smoke -- ah! at last Vpered could see the red of a glowing ember! ("Dym" 163; B.xviii)

The more the sound roared with wind, the more red coals could be seen, accompanied by "colossal sharp and painful cries" («величезні, пекучі, болючі крики»).
And the light in their eyes was kindled by the fire of these coals, just as their veins coursed with new blood from the fire of these coals, and their songs and cries resounded with the fire from these coals. [...] Vpered rejoiced to see how the smoke was scattered and how in every chest a glowing red coal was burning ... and how the ugly little yellow flames had disappeared in the fire, together with the filth and stench and ashes of the gloomy prison. ("Dym" 163; B.xix)

Thunder roared in the prison courtyard and lightning flashed from eyes, as a single red fire united all the prisoners. And a great revenge of wrath and pride burned, while their proud song rang out all around. ("Dym" 164; B.xx)

A violent clash between the forces of Vpered and Nazad ensued, with the latter pusillanimously opening fire against the defenceless rebels. "But their spilled blood could not even extinguish those coals ... alive with the great red fire of Vpered's people" (164; B.xxi). (Thus a massacre is apparently averted.)

"And so Vpered proudly shook his wings and, without looking at Nazad, flew to that place where the great burning coals are made from sparks" (164; B.xxii).
III. The Nietzschean Nexus

From these two narratives we can see that Gide's Prometheus does not bring the gift of fire down to man quite as literally as Vynnychenko's "forward"-thinking deity Vpered. Instead, "the fire, the flame, and all the arts born of the flame" become fused into the single image of the eagle, the agent of pain and awareness that makes human progress possible:

Messieurs [dit Prométhée dans son premier discours], j'ai passionnément, éperdument et déplorablement aimé les hommes. -- Et je n'ai tant fait pour eux qu'autant de dire que je les ai faits eux-mêmes; car auparavant qu'étaient-ils? -- Ils étaient, mais n'avaient pas conscience d'être. -- Comme un feu pour les éclairer, cette conscience, Messieurs, de tout mon amour pour eux je la fis. -- La première conscience qu'ils eurent, c'est fut celle de leur beauté. [...] [Mais] non satisfait de leur donner la conscience de leur être, je voulus leur donner aussi raison d'être. Je leur donnai le feu, la flamme et tous les arts dont une flamme est l'aliment. Échauffant leurs esprits en eux je fis éclorer la dévorante croyance au progrès. [...] Le bonheur de l'homme décru, décru, et ce me fut égal: l'aigle était né. Je n'aimais plus les hommes, c'était ce qui vivait d'eux que j'aimais. (PMF 69; 70; 71)

The first fire, then, brings the light that enables human consciousness: of existence and its beauty (what Shelley called in his own Prometheus "the pain of bliss/ To move, to breathe, to

22Since Prometheus literally means "forethought," one can perhaps see the outline for Vynnychenko's Nazad ("Backward") in Prometheus's simple-minded brother Epimetheus ("afterthought") -- who is left yoked in marriage to the "beautiful disaster" Pandora, against Prometheus's advice (Hamilton 88). But a more likely parallel, given the openly diabolical slant to Nazad's glee in creating human suffering, would elevate the sibling rivalry into a greater antithesis: Vpered = God = Life = Christ = Prometheus, vs. Nazad = Satan. The Pandora connection emerges in the figure towards the end of the wind-charged woman, who represents the (father) force of Life in disguise.
be"\textsuperscript{23}). But for Gide it is the second fire which seeks for a meaning behind existence that practically eclipses the first in importance: now it is the eagle that impels man towards works that will win back the god's love, because man alone luxuriating in his being is no longer sufficient. Now man must labour to be loved by his god. In fact, Gide's Titan seems to demand that people mimic his own sufferings incurred on the crag of the Caucasus, by encouraging so many internalized eagles to grow and to gnaw at so many other entrails -- in the pursuit of greater human glory, as well as for the cultivation of basic fellow feeling. For the eagle itself will languish without human love: "si vous ne repaiissez pas avec amour votre aigle," Prométhée concludes in his speech,

\begin{quote}
   il restera gris, miserable, invisible à tous et sournois; c'est lui qu'alors on appellera conscience, indigne des tourments qu'il cause; sans beauté. -- Messieurs, il faut aimer son aigle, l'aimer pour qu'il devienne beau; ... (PME 77)
\end{quote}

In other words, one is afflicted with the eagle one deserves: avenging angel, voracious vampire, or punishing Muse. One is responsible for feeding and listening to one's eagle, whether it is simply a pricking conscience or a debilitating obstacle. But all of these visions of the eagle seem distinctly masochistic, since each represents a variety of (ultimately unwelcome) parasite attached to a willing host. And the mystery of the eagle's baleful persistence eludes even its original, definitive sufferer: Prométhée invites his eagle to speak during

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{23}See Shelley: Act III, Scene IV, lines 433-434 (p. 93).
\end{quote}
his public lecture, but must content himself with the bird's stubborn silence:

Messieurs, j'ai vainement interrogé mon aigle... Aigle! parle à présent: tous t'écouter... Qui t'envoie? -- Pourquoi m'as-tu choisi? D'où viens-tu? Où vas-tu? Dis: quelle est ta nature?... (L'aigle restait silencieux.) [...] Regardez-le du moins... moi je n'ai vécu pour rien d'autre -- et maintenant je vous l'apporte: le voici! -- Moi, je vivais pour lui -- mais lui, pourquoi vit-il? -- Aigle! que j'ai nourri de mon sang, de mon âme, que de tout mon amour j'ai caressé... (ici les sanglots interrompirent Prométhée) -- devrai-je donc quitter la terre sans savoir pourquoi je t'aimais? ni ce que tu feras, ni ce que tu seras, après moi, sur la terre... sur la terre j'ai vainement... j'ai vainement interrogé. (PME 73; 74)

Prométhée's dilemma mirrors that of Damoclès: he wants to know the identity of his torturer, the reason for his sufferings -- and the thought of dying before learning "le secret de leur vie" is a source of agony for them both. However, Prométhée learns to accept the mystery (no doubt as a result of discovering that le bon Dieu Lui-même does not even possess an eagle of his own, much to his surprise) -- and so he survives. But Damoclès is not granted the favour of such a divine interview, and so he perishes. Both Prométhée and Damoclès seem indissolubly linked in their (mis)fortunes, since the one's burning eagle-torn side is mirrored by the other's burning need to know; one man's rebirth is made possible by the other man's death. For just as Le Miglionnaire slaughters Damoclès on a whim, so Prométhée slaughters his bird: the same gnawing nuisance is suddenly, lightly dispatched: two birds with one stone. Thus Gide's farce
ends as all farces should, but only after two corpses have already collected on stage.\footnote{Gide provides such a wealth of parodic details that any final (or even fleeting) sense of tragedy seems decisively undermined. From the mock reduction of the epic gift of fire to a pedestrian peddling of matches; the transposition of the grand Caucasian crag into a petty prison cell; the replacement of the idea of God with the image of "a fat financier who grants interviews" (Holdheim 200); and the travesty of endless Titanic pain in Coclès' temporarily "burning" eye socket -- these all emphasize the extent to which Gide's Prométhée represents "a panorama of the major forms of literary irony" (Holdheim 212).}

For Vynnychenko's oppressed prisoners, the quest for fire is similarly invested with the urgency of life or death: collective salvation depends on each individual "rooting out the spark from one's own ashes" and learning to become "burning and all afire to know" (Skovoroda 75; 80). The wind that arrives to sweep away their ignorance seems already charged with sparks, supernaturally eliminating the pall of smoke without, however, snuffing out a single tenuous coal. The socialist-specific symbolism here is obvious: from Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's newspaper \textit{Искра} (The Spark), founded in exile from Russia in 1899, Vynnychenko appears to have actually literalized, in literary terms, Lenin's idea of "an enormous bellows that would blow every spark ... into a general blaze" of revolution (Billington 1980: 458). In "Dym," the groundswell of Bakuninist "flame-seekers" reaches a critical mass and explodes into the longed-for conflagration that will succeed where "the bourgeois revolution" of 1905 did not (see Stites 140 & Engelstein 360).
But if standard revolutionary rhetoric tends to simply invoke the David-and-Goliath cliché of the smallest spark setting off the greatest fire, Vynnychenko chooses to endow that commonplace with a larger mythical dimension. Here human class struggle (whose outcome is never certain and whose progress is perpetually contested) becomes a theological dispute between two eternally divided principles or deities -- an incessant battle between the forces of light and darkness, sun and fog. This emphasis on the TRANShistorical and SUPERnatural -- together with a practically Expressionist preoccupation "with darkness, demonic ingress, elemental inundation and the dystopic machine" of the brutalist megalopolis, swallowing up and then spitting out again so many mangled human souls (Sheppard 11) -- make Vynnychenko's story less a fable of classical socialist realism than a pioneering instance of socialist SURrealism.

"The Promethean spiritual fire is the breeding ground of revolution," the Russian modernist Andrei Belyi wrote, in 1917 -- a fire which is destined to descend and assault

like the invasion of a lawless comet ... [from] the kingdom of freedom ... [...] The heroes of the kingdom of freedom appear to us indistinctly in their titanic guise on the summits of art: the Prometheuses and Dantes, and Fausts, ... and Zarathustras racing up glaciers; these powerful images are only vague glimpses of citizens of the free city of post-revolutionary culture come to life. (274; 286)

This dimly perceived ideal of "the collective Prometheus of the future" owes much if not all of its thunder to a correspondingly "Promethean self-confidence" (Kolakowski 91; 84), or that faith which holds people completely and properly capable of developing
along the titanic scale. However, the titanic rarely if ever conforms to the demands of neutrality expected of it, because even a paradise of "the earthly gods" must admit that there too "emerges in it something already superhuman, final, religiously disturbing, not religiously indifferent" (Berdiaev 1990: 109). Even "the kingdom of freedom" is not necessarily the same panacea up close that it promises to be from afar -- because a truly titanic and limitless freedom is really "a terrifying arid expanse of will and idea ... [for t]here is nothing more seductive to human beings than freedom, but there is nothing more agonizing" (Merezhkovsky 203; 207). And as Wayne C. Booth once observed, "FREEDOM FROM is easier to talk about than FREEDOM TO. Every ... revolution tends to speak more clearly about what it opposes than about what it embraces. [...] [This is because] all revolutionaries depend on their oppressors far more than they know" (386-387; emphases in the original).

By 1917, Vynnychenko was beginning to question his earliest allegiances to the revolutionary ideals of freedom. In Notes of a Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles, a novel written that same year, Vynnychenko concluded that all revolutionaries are just so many moths beating themselves senselessly against the light of a lamp in the night (Vynnychenko 1923: 216/B.xxiii) -- and this light, like the imperious object of Arthur Symons' 1899 poem "Modern Beauty," declares across the cracked and charred corpses at her feet: "I am the torch,/ ... and what to me/ If the moth die of me? I am the flame/ Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see ... "
Edgar Allan Poe spoke similarly of "a wild effort to reach the Beauty above" as "the desire of the moth for the star" (see Muchnic 39). Beauty, freedom, revolution -- each holds out a distant and intangible ideal that remains ultimately indifferent to all the aspirants that it dazzles and consumes.

Perhaps the best answer to Slavic socialist optimism at the beginning of this century can be found in the Argentinean writers Arturo Cancela and Pilar de Lusarreta, who discuss revolutionary zeal in similarly incendiary terms -- but with some ironic reservations:

It is discontentment with oneself, whether due to obscurity of origin, a physical defect or the lack of brilliant spiritual conditions, that leads many men to revolutionary activity. And, on the other hand, in every rebellious spirit there is a great underlying timidity. Revolutionary activity is the violent reaction of the timid who disturb society for encouragement. Which is the same as setting fire to somebody else's house in order to warm up. (Cancela & Lusarreta 83)

Of course, Vynnychenko's image of spontaneous combustion leaping from coal to coal does not really bear reducing to the idea of attention-seeking arson; nevertheless, the point that fire can be both beneficial and destructive is often lost in the heat of revolutionary debate, which generally chooses to see only the former aspect -- burning away and purifying the world of evil --

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25Symons here is almost certainly taking his cue from Charles Baudelaire, whose "Hymne à la Beauté" (circa 1861) presents a mayfly instead of a moth embracing an identical death in the flame: "L'éphémère ébloui vole vers toi, chandelle,/ Crépite, flambe et dit: Bénissons ce flambeau!" See Baudelaire, Les Fleurs du Mal (Librairie Gallimard/Le Livre de poche, 1961): 37.
instead of recognizing the potential for that volatility to redound unpredictably and uncontrollably against even the best intentions. The possibility of "an audaciously daring, magnificently violent type of higher human beings who soared, and tore others along, to the heights" (Nietzsche 1966: 197) suggests that a larger and "lower" number deserve to stagnate in the valleys. Because only mythology could sustain a second coming of another race of Titans: there would be no space in such an event for coexistence or tolerance of anything LESS than the Titanic -- for fire seldom consumes anything half way.

But if all revolutionaries are necessarily and essentially dissatisfied hotheads, then does it follow that "all men who are pleased with themselves ... [are] instinctively conservative" (Cancela & Lusarreta 83)? Can a split be said to generally occur along class AND age lines? Certainly several Russian writers conceived of the problem in these terms, perhaps no more famously than Ivan Turgenev in his novel Fathers and Sons (1861). Revolution and unrest will always tend to be the province of the young, just as conservatism and contentment will often ally themselves with the old: such is the basic conflict that every generation seems destined to re-enact. According to the writer and mystic Vasily Rozanov (popularly if erroneously known as "the Russian Nietzsche"), "Revolution is almost entirely the work of

26One can see traces of Turgenev's later novel Smoke (1867), which satirized the paucity of real revolutionary hope for Russia, in Vynnychenko's own smoke-filled story of pointless political arguments simmering in as many futile "cells."
youth, in both its poetic and physical dimension. Revolution can be characterized in two words: youth has arrived" (see Engelstein 241).27

Vynnychenko's shock value in his own day as a "'decadent' ... whom Ukrainian priests were cursing and Ukrainian mothers were forbidding their young daughters to read" (Rubchak 402) can be seen as a "natural" generational reaction to a young writer and "professional revolutionary whose early works bubble with youthful rebellion" (Rudnyts'kyi 308) -- for Vynnychenko first emerged on the Ukrainian literary scene at the tender age of twenty-two, only to spend the entirety of his twenty-third year in prison for his clandestine political activities. But impatience with the old order for the young Vynnychenko was less a matter of some party affiliation than an ambition to transform the specifically sexual politics he observed operating among his peers. "The body is a great thing," he wrote once in 1908 to an older colleague -- echoing Zarathustra's precept, "The body is a great reason" (Nietzsche 1983: 146) -- "Such is the great truth the old people have told us" (see Fedchenko 42; B.xxiv).

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27Like Vynnychenko, Rozanov was writing in the immediate wake (and in spite) of the failed revolution of 1905. A more contemporary opinion attributes this same insurrectionary impulse more squarely to physiology: "Revolution, after all, is made by the young, when the body is easy to transcend." See Joan K. Peters, "Mittelschmerz: A Lady's Complaint upon Reaching the Age of Forty-Four," in The Female Body: Figures, Styles, Speculations, ed. Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1991): 260.
Yet in the eyes of their elders, Vynnychenko's generation suffered from "Nietzscheanism (Nitssheanstvo) ... [the] name for every bad trend among Russian youth" (Clowes 328). "In our times," one of these elders intoned, "the sickness of Nietzscheanism has become a childhood disease, like smallpox or measles, which is dangerous for adults to contract" (see Forman 156 & Glatzer Rosenthal 92). For together with "the new Prometheanism" of "boundless public optimism" in the creation of a new society, there rose a "new sensualism ... of morbid private pessimism," part of a lamentable "Nietzschean effort to find 'bloody truths' capable of supplanting ... [society's old] lifeless truisms" (Billington 1968: 492, 493). Vynnychenko's writing (especially his 1911 novel Honesty With Oneself) was perceived as part of the vulgar new continuum of "boulevard fiction" celebrating "erotic individualism" of the lowest possible kind. Like Mikhail Artsybashev's sensationalist Russian novel Sanin (1907), Vynnychenko's Ukrainian variant centered around "a kind of Nietzschean superhero, standing above the common herd, spurning both emotion and intellectual ideals: a crude materialist with strong muscles and bold appetites" (Engelstein 390; see also 375-376). Such was decidedly not "the right Promethean fire" which senior socialists wanted to see their junior adherents propagating: thanks to such "scribbler-erotomaniacs," the ideals of the revolution were "drowning in

28 This was Dmitri Merezhkovsky (a coeval of Rozanov), writing in 1908.
pornography" (Engelstein 374; 380). To the great Promethean project of setting fire to the past, the sensualist response that "love is all fire" and "to be alive is to be burning" seemed not only embarrassing, but downright counterrevolutionary (Brown 178; 179).

The sensualists were aware that the problem with the Promethean myth, on all of its levels, was its "shameless misogyny" (Hassan 205), which requires the female to merely serve as either a handmaiden or a temptress to the male on his purposeful path. The bona fide Promethean will always assume that

women unfortunately ARE women, and that their ideal condition is attained by rising above themselves ... [while] men are not men without effort, and their ideal condition is attained by their BECOMING, and (with luck) remaining, simply, men. [...] The feeling is that there must not, cannot, be waste by duplication. (Ellmann 1968: 67-68; emphases in the original) 29

Hence (in spite of his sensualist allegiances) Gide’s faithful-to-the-original focus on the active and questing male principle, with only a peremptory mention of Asia and Angèle (who, after

29This would suggest that the whole authenticity business of "werde wer du bist" for Nietzsche and "deviens celui que tu es" for Gide does seem irrevocably and exclusively pitched towards only the male half of the human population. (After all, Gide never cared to specify "celle" in his translation of the Nietzschean credo.) Vynnychenko’s call for "chesnist' z soboiu" at least succeeds in sounding accommodatingly gender neutral. But Vynnychenko’s ideas about becoming (or reverting) to as natural and honest a self as possible also tend to reinforce gender polarities, so that in the end his arguments always support a basically "custodial attitude toward women while insisting on expanded autonomy for men" (Engelstein 422 & 397). Vynnychenko too, "even when treated carefully, fairly, and fully, is replete with ambiguities and latent contradictions" along these lines (Stites 358).
all, merely provide minor background noise to the primary spectacle of male pain). Like the women seen discreetly mourning the death of Jesus on the cross in Christian iconography, Gide's women on the (extreme) periphery around Prométhée seem to function as a frame to the male body "in extremis and/or in ecstasy, prescriptively meant to be gazed at and adored" (Sedgwick 140). The powerful Pandoric curiosity leading to chaos is here completely covered over and contained by the Promethean imitation of lacrimae Christi, exhorting all to "devoir avec joie." And Vynnychenko, for his part, is not much more immune to this bias in the myth, since he too finds it necessary to abruptly qualify his narrative turning point in awkwardly chivalrous terms: "womenfolk" («жінки-люди») create the conditions for the rest of the "regular" (men) folk to rebel. Such a textual detail only serves to emphasize all the more the incongruousness of their sudden spotlight (or inclusion) in the storyline at all.

"From the start," according to Ihab Hassan in The Right Promethean Fire,30 great writers have sensed that Prometheus must do more than overthrow the patriarchic Zeus; he must also recover the female principle within his own consciousness. Thus Aeschylus included in his work

30A title obviously taken from the Shakespeare play, Love's Labour's Lost: "From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:/ They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;/ They are the books, the arts, the academes,/ That show, contain, and nourish all the world;/ ... " See William Shakespeare, Love's Labour's Lost, eds. Wilbur L. Cross & Tucker Brooke (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 62 & 63 (Act IV, scene iii).
both Themis and the watery nymph Io; Nietzsche perceived in the 'Titanic' impulse some covert affinity between the Promethean and the Dionysian; and Percy Bysshe Shelley gave Asia a creative role, placing love at the very heart of his work. [...] Yet the tendency in readers is to] side more with Goethe, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Gide, in their romantic interpretation of the myth, than with wise Aeschylus, Mary Shelley, or Kafka. [...] For] to open oneself with hope to the Promethean endeavour is also to recognize its error and terror, its madness within. (205)

Both Gide and Vynnychenko sidestep a particularly Promethean gloom by appealing to the magic inherent in the myth to suddenly save the day. Both Prométhée and Vpered sweep away the cumulative tears and sufferings with a triumphant cheerfulness, as the respective events in the two narratives abruptly wind down: "and they all lived happily ever after" (surely the most romantic words ever written down, anywhere). Gide's text may display Vynnychenko's story-book quality less overtly, but the same relief in the resolution, after so much horror and violence, is there: some sense of a cosmic order is restored, after all. The evil spell is broken as the oppressed pounce upon their oppressors: here the nefarious bird is rendered into a roast, there the nasty jailkeepers are beaten into a retreat.

Neither Gide nor Vynnychenko pursued the Promethean capacity for "error, terror and madness" along the same nightmarish lines as Aeschylus, Mary Shelley, or Kafka -- for "what's madness but nobility of soul/ At odds with circumstance? The day's on fire!" (Roethke 231) The "dark time" of Gide's narrative is met with the ideas of relativism and reversibility: any act (even an act of God) is elastically arbitrary enough to either frustrate or
subvert any search for meaning. Thus Le Migliionnaire's opening movements (as perfectly gratuitous as they are reversible) seem designed to prove the ultimate absurdity of the universe to the stubborn human heart, which always (in spite of everything) seeks to "dream of a kingdom of God" out of "an ineradicable need for eschatology, for a final end and solution to the meaning of the tortuous world process" (Berdiaev 1990: 117). This need in Gide is never really answered, so his Prometheus ends by giving up on the whole problem and resorting to a Camus-like levity instead. But Gide's playful collapse into laughter is not much more satisfying than Vynnychenko's escape into a socialist "clash of the titans," since both dispose of the presence of evil far too quickly and easily to be believable, beyond the bounds of a comforting fiction.

What of Nietzsche's sense of the "covert affinity between the Promethean and the Dionysian"? Here, it seems, Hassan's claim for Nietzsche's "recovery of the female principle" breaks down against Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's competing observation, that Nietzsche instead "associates instance after instance of homoerotic desire, though never named as such, with the precious virility of Dionysiac initiates or of ancient warrior classes" (134). Cynthia Willett confirms this warrior-weighted impression in her own reading of Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals, which develops

by way of images from the Biblical Genesis ... [and] reinvokes a prelapsarian garden of human origins in order to trace ... [how] moral knowledge originates in transgressive desire ... [Yet] Nietzsche ... interprets
carnality not in terms of the erotic desire of an Adam and Eve but in terms of the sovereign lone warrior. Nietzsche begins his polemic against Euro-Christian culture in self-reflection and proceeds to recast the story of the 'fall of man' without an Eve. (162)

The virtual absence of women in Nietzsche's own attempt at a creation myth with On the Genealogy of Morals should not surprise, given his earlier monumental effort to erase women from Thus Spoke Zarathustra. But this other, later woman-free world harkens directly back to the Promethean state of all-male nature, still supposedly untouched by a whole litany of sins, including "[the] indecent, dishonest, mendacious, feminism, weakness, cowardice" -- in other words, all the "symptoms of declining life" (Nietzsche 1989: 161; 154).

Pandora's box, for Nietzsche, is the whole complicated mechanism of decadence -- which translates into a loss of the (male) will to live, known in The Genealogy as the crippling attitude of ressentiment. The Dionysian idea of superabundance can be seen as the antidote Nietzsche offers to the post-Promethean condition: now the choice for man can only be between the Dionysian "will to power" that is life, or the Christian "revenge" or "hostility against life." Either one embraces "the Yes-saying spirit of authentic life" that Nietzsche associates with Dionysus, or one drowns in "the romantic sickness" of decadence which "is dangerous because it always disguises itself as its opposite" (Calinescu 194; 188; 180). It was Richard Wagner and his bombastic art, which Nietzsche initially found to be so seductive but later learned to remorse, that represents
the epitome of decadence here. Wagner's very "power to seduce" lies in "the DANGEROUSLY DECEPTIVE character" of his music, whose enticing veils of illusion simultaneously acquire "the 'moral' prestige of truth" and prompt "a loss of the will to live" (Calinescu 161; 186; 181). Wagner's decadence consists of his crowd-pleasing showmanship, or "the LIE of the great style": his music "is pleasant, it does not SWEAT" (Nietzsche 1967: 157). In other words, it is far removed from life; it is INauthentic because it is utterly devoid of "the original fact of life which provides meaning and measure, positive or negative value" (Simmel 15) -- the ONLY source of value that Nietzsche considers necessary and/or available to man.

Thus it is decadence (the long-ingrained habit of INauthenticity) that threatens the ancient Dionysian thirst after "an ever elusive goal of fully authentic aesthetic experience," in all the fullness and beauty that is life (Calinescu 262; see also 185). "In declining cultures," Nietzsche laments,

authenticity becomes superfluous, disadvantageous, a liability. [...] [G]reat success, success with the masses no longer sides with those who are authentic -- one has to be an actor to achieve that. [...] Only the actor still arouses GREAT enthusiasm. (1967: 179)

And since decadence imposes artifice as its social strategy for survival, we are all "basically and from time immemorial ... ACCUSTOMED TO LYING. Or to put it more virtuously and hypocritically, in short, more pleasantly: one is much more of an artist than one knows" (Nietzsche 1966: 105). In such a degraded environment saturated with deceit, Nietzsche can only
wait and hope for the Promethean arrival of "those magical, incomprehensible, and unfathomable ones ... those enigmatic men predestined for victory and seduction" (1966: 112) -- mysterious Titans who will also prove miraculously impervious to all the prevailing tides of decadent slag and slime.

Vynnychenko’s imagery of smoke, tears and toads, together with his recurrent emphasis on swarming and gnawing, can be seen as a diabolical composite that corresponds to Nietzsche’s own vision of decadence as depravity. People are consumed in Vynnychenko’s story by forces they can neither identify nor control, and their pain isolates them as mercilessly as it prevents them from seeking some sort of collective cure. Only divine intervention, along the Promethean lines of Nietzsche’s future "enigmatic men," can deliver these tortured souls from their misery. Here a chronic LACK of Dionysian fire produces the lugubrious death-in-life, starved for the vital spark, which is finally occasioned by the new Promethean gift to man of wind. The great red flame fanned into being represents a Dionysian victory of life over the sickening grays and yellows of death. Vynnychenko here successfully translates several Nietzschean categories at once into a specific cultural context of revolutionary unrest, where legions of the exiled or imprisoned intelligentsia found solace in the Nietzschean dictum that "it is their PAINS that make them prophets" (1974: 251).31

31Then again, Nietzsche also castigated the cult of suffering for its own sake, which he called "the ascetic ideal" (otherwise known as the entire Judæo-Christian legacy and
Gide's symbols of eagles and tears are not quite as transparent in either their effect or meaning. Ben Stoltzfus offers a reading of the eagle as a generalizable metaphor across Gide's works as a whole: "The eagle is an internal or external obstacle which frustrates the physical, moral, and intellectual growth of man" (4) -- something like Coleridge's inevitable albatross accompanying the Ancient Mariner on a Gidean "moral voyage." Stoltzfus agrees with Gide's own equation of the eagle with man's conscience (see PME 77), but adds the observation that "the voices of conscience are not only contradictory but also reversible" (8) -- much like the original whim of Le Miglionnaire -- which leaves the question of their provenance (heavenly or diabolical?), not to mention that of their moral force, disturbingly open. As for Gide's propensity for watering most of his works with tears, Michael Lucey suggests that this tendency towards "irrepressible and queer sobs, seizures, and convulsions" (220) may be attributed to a pivotal experience in Gide's personal life, described in Si le grain ne meurt as "l'ivresse sans vin [qui] n'est autre que l'état lyrique ... l'instant

tradition; see Nietzsche 1989: 106). Rozanov followed Nietzsche at least this far when he said "one of the greatest puzzles of the world is that suffering is more ideal, more aesthetic, than happiness, more mournful, more majestic" (see Glatzer Rosenthal et al, A Revolution of the Spirit, p. 102). And Berdiaev, for his part, suspected that "suffering itself is often merely a cunning means of feeling better" (1990: 126)! Finally, Colette's opinion on the subject bears repeating here, for her concurrence with Nietzsche that "suffering is the great decadence." See Richard Gilman, Decadence (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1979): 29.
heureux où me secouait ce délire était celui que Dionysos me visitait" (Gide 1991: 194).

A similar "Dionysian" tremor (even hysteria) is certainly transmitted from Prométhée in the course of his public lecture to Damoclès. But it is Prométhée’s allegory about the wild music of Mœlibée that really seems to free him from following both Damoclès and the eagle down the Tityre type of road: the joy promised by the naked pied piper is the real Dionysian release that Prométhée appears to be seeking, instead of the sorrow he has known (and knowingly communicated) for so long from his eagle. It is almost as if Prométhée really hopes to return in the end to that original state of grace he once knew with Asia, without the eagle/serpent there to precipitate a second loss of innocence ("dès lors commença mon aigle ... [et] je m’aperçois que je suis nu"). But in this revisiting of an eagle-free Eden, Gide replaces Asia’s companionship with that of Coclès and the Garçon -- thus echoing Nietzsche’s own Eve-less revisions of the same Genesis story. So what Gide ends up emulating the most in Nietzsche are his

most effective intensities of both life and writing ... directed toward other men and toward the male body; ... writing of an open, Whitmanlike seductiveness, some of the loveliest there is, about the joining of men with men ... [the] impregnation of men ... or of abstractions that could be figured as male (Sedgwick 133; 135).

If there is any revolutionary message that Gide may be said to be promulgating here at all, it must be the call of Mœlibée to forsake suffering for pleasure ... in the company of men.
Gide's "poorly bound" Prometheus hears the flute song and sloughs off the loose shackles of public order for the more compelling delights of a private one. Not for nothing does Ramon Fernandez find "this little book ... the richest in 'satanic' suggestions" (93). And Gide's Prométhée is nothing if not playful -- the very variety of "the playful [that] bears the seed of revolution" (see Dollimore 67).

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The Promethean and the Dionysian, alternately fused or confused in these two texts by Gide and Vynnychenko, follow Nietzsche's example in different directions with different emphases, but with the same homage to the underlying image of fire. Gide, Vynnychenko and Nietzsche all interpret fire in terms of a miraculous sort of catalysis enabling both metamorphosis and rebirth. Thus Zarathustra states, "I am flames and fuel ... I carried my own ashes to the mountains; I invented a brighter flame for myself" (Nietzsche 1983: 126, 143). Thus Vpered bears witness to a cataclysmic fire that creates new life in its wake, out of the ashes and smoke of the old. Thus Prométhée turns the fire he brings to man ("comme fabricant d'allumettes sans brevet") against his "vautour." In every instance there is a phoenix-like resurrection out of the ashes (either of the self or the other) into a new world of being. But, fire being inherently unpredictable, this purging process
can just as easily shift and singe beyond its perimeters as well -- and so Zarathustra in the Prologue is told, "[Yes,] you carried your ashes to the mountains; [but] would you now carry your fire into the valleys? Do you not fear to be punished as an arsonist?" (Nietzsche 1983: 122). And Nietzsche concludes that fire, being a corrosive gift that can do as much harm as good, is best left in the custodianship of a mountain-top Titan like Zarathustra instead of in the hands of the valley-dwelling rabble.

It is here that Gide and Vynnychenko depart from Nietzsche, for in their texts it is clear that this fire SHOULD be spread around below. For them the fire has to catch everywhere that it can, because "the love of people whom we love is a fire that feeds our life" (see Hyde 281). Fire is the vital proof of a loving community, be it the brave new brothers-in-arms fighting together for Vynnychenko or the celebratory banquet uniting another set of "brothers" for Gide. Where Nietzsche remains alone with his fiery gods in the mountains, Gide and Vynnychenko fan their respective flames in the valleys for the hopeful benefit of others.

This chapter has examined the relationship between authenticity and the revolutionary remaking of society. The protagonists of Gide's and Vynnychenko's texts choose to embrace the uncompromising position of intensity as both credo and praxis. Inspired by the fiery examples of Prometheus and Nietzsche's Dionysus, they manifest a devotion to either the good
opinion or the happy development of society that borders on the surreal and eventually (in Gide's case) suicidal. They appeal to the authenticity triad of purity-intensity-audacity for their several overlapping connotations of passionate defiance, a triple potency well suited to both the symbol and reality of fire. But intensity enjoys a certain precedence since it best justifies their pain and fervor to themselves, in terms of a demonic strength or vigour through suffering, and the promise of a redemptive magnitude as reward (meanings specifically associated with the authenticity value of intensity).
Chapter IV

Paternalist Pathologies:

The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (of Inauthenticity)\(^1\)

It is fatuous to speak of the death of God or the death of man -- ... until we can fully envisage THE DEATH OF THE FAMILY -- that system which, as its social obligation, obscurely filters out most of our experience and then deprives our acts of any genuine or generous spontaneity. [...] For want of gods we have had to invent potent abstractions, none of which is more powerfully destructive than the family.

-- David Cooper

The Death of the Family\(^2\)

In The Disappearance of God: A Divine Mystery, theologian and comparatist Richard Elliott Friedman attempts to account for how Nietzsche and Dostoevsky simultaneously, but independently of one another, "discovered" the same insight: that if God is dead, then "all is permitted." Even though the two men never met or corresponded, Friedman argues for an "uncanny" kinship on the basis of their sharing

\(^1\)With apologies to Frederick Engels's 1884 study of the same name ...  

\(^2\)Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1974. 7-8; 6. All emphases in citations, unless otherwise noted, are in the original.
[n]ot common views, but common sensitivities and common psychological insights. [...] We should recognize, of course, that there are also differences between them, dramatic differences, and the idea is not to list and weigh the similarities and the distinctions against each other as with pans on a scale. [...] One does not follow a single line of clues to a finish. One must rather synthesize an elaborate mosaic of elements. [...] These are interconnected points that form a matrix of memories, fears, thoughts, and interests that constituted a pronounced bond between them, despite the boundaries of geography and language that separated them. (Friedman 197; 174; 194)

This is an apt description of the comparatist's problem of method. When no grounds for even the most cursory physical relationship can be established between two writers, claims of spiritual affinities and other "overlaps" in biography can be tenuous indeed to support. Certainly the same problematic inheres in any linkage of Gide to Vynnychenko, who similarly never met or even read the other's work. What, after all, can a French homosexual aesthete possibly have in common with a Ukrainian heterosexual pragmatist?

The largest and deepest vein of agreement between them, as each man grows older and comes to terms with his mortality, centers on the necessity and significance of paternity. After dedicating years of literary effort to the emancipation and understanding of disturbing sexual energies, both Gide and Vynnychenko suddenly and powerfully pronounce a complete shift in emphasis, exchanging the vagabond joys of free love for the settled-down pleasures of fatherhood -- and at the very peak of their respective writing careers, too.
Gide's *Les Faux-Monnaveurs* (The Counterfeiters, 1925) was his first and last attempt at a full-fledged novel, marking the culmination of a lifetime's reflection on homosexuality as a social, spiritual, and individual necessity (beginning with *Corydon* in 1911, followed by *Si le grain ne meurt* in 1920; in both cases, only twelve tentative copies appeared for each first edition). The only other substantial piece of fiction that Gide produced after *Les Faux-Monnaveurs* was his voluminous *Journal*, which won him the Nobel Prize for literature shortly before his death in 1951. His forty-three-year marriage to his cousin (Madeleine Rondeaux) remained unconsummated; about half way through this bizarre alliance, Gide was devastated to learn that his wife had burned all his letters to her, in response to Gide's running off to England in 1918 with the son of the best man at their wedding, Marc Allégret. Gide never recovered from this loss: "All the best of me I had entrusted to those letters -- my heart, my joy, and my varying moods, the way I spent my days...I am suffering as if she had killed our child" (Gide 1968: 54).³ Gide inexplicably elected to become a father himself in the middle of the six-year novel-writing process, siring a daughter out of wedlock in 1923 ... "[et] devenant père, quelque chose bascule en lui, dont semble témoigner la structure même des *Faux-Monnaveurs*" (Goulet 23). Whereas he had previously claimed to

³The original French reads: "Tout le meilleur de moi, je l'avais confié à ces lettres, mon cœur, ma joie, et les changements de mon humeur, l'occupation de mes journées...Je souffre comme si elle avait tué notre enfant" (see Gide 1951: 80).
devote himself to writing everything to please his wife Madeleine, he now hoped with Les Faux-Monnayeurs to win the exclusive attention and esteem of his lover Marc instead (Gide 1978: 424-425).

Vynnychenko's Записки кирпатого Мевфістофеля (Notes of a Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles, 1917) was his last pre-revolutionary novel, marking the pinnacle of a fifteen-year writing career as well as a crisis of professional doubt and despair. "Why," he asked himself while working on this novel in 1916, "do I write at all? Is it really that necessary? [...] Do I even have the right to write? And what would give me such a right?" (Vynnychenko 1980: 212).4 Vynnychenko's forty-year marriage to a professional woman (Dr. Rosalia Lifshitz) since 1911 remained childless, but he admitted more than once in his own extensive diary that he wished it could have been otherwise:

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4All translations of Vynnychenko are my own. The original Ukrainian reads: «Пишу 'Кирпатого Мевфістофеля'. Часом обхоплює нудьга, огіда і страшена, зрісна на себе, туга: для чого пишу? [...] Після 15 років письменницької професії я задаю собі питання: чи я маю право писати? Але що дає право?»
Whenever I look at a child, it seems like I've buried the possibility of ever having one of my own. [...] I envy so much those who can still hope for a child, just as I envy those who can live with defeat. [...] Once Kaleria offered to have my baby, with no strings attached. [...] If she's still of the same mind, maybe I'll take her up on that offer. (Vynnychenko 1980: 98; 104)5

Since Vynnychenko's published diaries to date only cover the years from 1911 to 1925, the question of whether he pursued the extra-marital possibility of progeny or not must remain open. But it was during the writing of his Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles that he finally came to accept the fact of his childlessness, in the wake of Rosalia's survival of a serious pregnancy-related illness (see Vynnychenko 1980: 209-211). Vynnychenko continued to write in exile, but only one piece of prose emerged from this period that can be said to match Mephistopheles for ambition and complexity: this was Сонячна машина (The Solar Machine, 1928), a futuristic utopian fantasy which took virtually all of the 1920s to both produce and publish.

The centrality of fatherhood in both Gide's and Vynnychenko's later prose works reflects a particular individualized facet of their larger, life-long preoccupation with the problem of the family. "As a secularized form of

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5The original Ukrainian reads: «Коли я дивлюсь на дитинку, мені здається, що я поховав свою дитину і ніколи більше не матиму. [...] Я так заздрю тим, хто може хотіти малого. Я заздрю тим, хто може примирятися з поразками. [...] Колись Калерія пропонувала мені родити з нею дитину. 'Коли ти не знайдеш собі жони, я згоджуюсь родити тобі дитину.' Це її власні слова. [...] Коли вона й тепер тих самих думок, я, може, і прийму її пропозицію.»
eternity," parenthood and the family represent "the securest enclave of ethics in Western culture" (Vattimo 105; Massey 187) -- a bastion that one labours against in vain because, eventually, everyone becomes complicitous in its perpetuation. In the end, Vynnychenko's Vadym and Gide's Michel "convert to paternity" (Hollier 156): Yakov in Mephistopheles and Edouard in Monnayeurs both accept the tender trap of caring for a boy. Father-son relationships displace the turbulent tussles with parents, wives, or brothers; a pronounced shift occurs from a concern for (male) freedom and self-development to a nurturing and development of the next (male) generation. This is perhaps only natural, an impulse concomitant with aging: surrendering to paternity constitutes an admission of maturity as well as mortality. The son's arrival marks the end of the father's ascendance: the boy shall outlive the man. But the next generation continues the previous one, too, as one lifespan extends into another. This father-son bond is the communion and co-mingling of a single, precious (because short-lived) originary élan.

Nietzsche too was preoccupied with fatherhood and family. Since he lost his own father at an early age, Nietzsche came to define himself in that absence as especially and even fortuitously free "from the automatic investment in and identification with the received ideas and prejudices of his culture, [or] ... received authority that is the patrimony of the fathered, and thus made possible [his] oppositional stance"
(Magnus, Stewart & Mileur 193). Nietzsche embraced his fatherlessness like he accepted and welcomed his illnesses and infirmities: as opportunity. "Some are born posthumously," he insisted (Nietzsche 1983: 568; see also 1989: 259) -- anticipating the rebirth of his ideas among a more receptive audience in another, later century. In reverse terms, Nietzsche also liked to describe himself as "a premature birth of an as yet unproven future" (1974: 346). But either way, the logical linearity of provenance is subverted: in the vacuum of his father's death, Nietzsche claims to father himself -- willing himself into a mythical existence larger than one lifetime.

"I am," he wrote in Ecce Homo, "already dead as my father, while as my mother I am still living and becoming old" (Nietzsche 1989: 222). The perishable maternal inheritance of the physical body will decay, but the heroic self-fathering effort of the WRITTEN body of work will endure. Nietzsche sought to both live and die ahistorically, as a fatherless child, with a completely unfettered capacity for self-invention (Maleuvre). Such is the ultimate imitation of Christ, who was Himself of course "a son without a father; the *Oedipus Complex* transcended. Without descent, without genealogy; no more generations; a world of generation and death transcended" (Brown 54). Nietzsche the genealogist surely aimed at such transcendence through the legacy of his writings. For "if one exalts WHAT ONE HAS PRODUCED above oneself, and seems to be disregarding one's own worth, this is nonetheless attended by a rejoicing of paternal love and paternal
pride which compensates, and more than compensates, for everything" (Nietzsche 1997a: 38).

But to be without a father is also to be without children, as Nietzsche reiterates throughout Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Self-fathering now acquires mythic proportions of witnessing and "WORKing" towards the arrival of a new moment in history which will decisively alter the course of all future human development: the moment when "LAUGHING LIONS must come!" (Nietzsche 1983: 395; 439). The switch in species signifies a step beyond literal birthing and begetting: it's not a question of messianism anymore, because the vacuum left in God's absence is too large for any single individual to try to fill. Rather, it's a question of "bridges," "overtures," and a new "great noon" of "invincible life" (Nietzsche 1983: 273). Zarathustra often alludes to these mysterious new beings to come as "my children," but at the same time asks of his listener ("my brother"): 

Are you a man ENTITLED to wish for a child? [...] 'I want heirs' -- thus speaks all that suffers; 'I want children, I do not want MYSELF.'
Joy, however, does not want heirs, or children -- joy wants itself, wants eternity, wants recurrence, wants everything eternally the same. (Nietzsche 1983: 181; 434)

Familial metaphors thus frame the discourse, but undercut the meaning: "brothers" should aspire to biological childlessness and spiritual "childfullness" -- a new monastic monad to meet the moment of New Time. This is paternity beyond the flesh, beyond the mortal coil of suffering, in emulation of the missing heavenly father: man now assumes for himself the mantle of
eternity and divine mystery. Nietzsche's compensative paternalism is a specific response to "a larger crisis of authority" (Martin 10) -- God the Father is dead: long live Man the Self-Fathering God.

Another, later philosopher similarly lost his father at a young age and, like Nietzsche, celebrated the event as a decisive influence on his development. Jean-Paul Sartre found the perfect occasion for self-determination in his fatherlessness: with no one and nothing to either ground himself in or define himself against, he revelled in his freedom to choose his own fate:

A father would have weighted me with a certain stable obstinacy. [...] My begetter would have determined my future. [...] [But h]ad my father lived, he would have lain on me at full length and would have crushed me. As luck had it, he died young. [...] There is no good father, that's the rule. Don't lay the blame on men but on the bond of paternity, which is rotten. To beget children, nothing better; to HAVE them, what iniquity! (Sartre 1964: 87; 19)

Out of this formative experience of absence, Sartre named himself a bastard-orphan by rejecting his actual inherited status as legitimate and loved. The theme of bastardy in Sartre's works turns on the idea of "a negative identity: I am NOT someone's son. [...] The bastard represents the person who has been OTHERED rather than FATHERED by society" (Charmé 239). This concept in turn owes much (if not all) of its existence to the importance Gide accorded to his bastard heroes in both Les Caves du Vatican (Lafcadio) and Les Faux-Monnayeurs (Bernard). The latter novel opens with the bastard-boy cheerfully disowning his false father and plunging into the world of pure possibility:
"L’avenir appartient aux bâtards. -- Quelle signification dans ce mot: 'UN ENFANT NATUREL!' Seul le bâtard a droit au naturel" (Gide 1989: 120). Like Nietzsche and Sartre, Gide too lost his paternal progenitor during his childhood. This crucial commonality in their biographies surely accounts for the exhilarating sense of liberation each professed to feel: "the son[s] of no one," they realized in the wake of their fathers' deaths, they were now "[their] own cause" (Hollier 160). Society may choose to name the illegitimate or orphaned child its "worst enemy" (Kishtainy 95), but Gide (especially) chose to embrace the reviled bastard image for its pure revolutionary potential to disturb and disrupt.

**Sex and the Single Sperm: or, Love versus l’acte gratuit**

For Vynnychenko, sexual love almost always acts "as a kind of lethal glue" that binds its partners together against their wills (Polhemus 312). Ideally, sexual love should not be confused with the instinct for reproduction since "its true function is to help man and woman to integrate internally the complete human image, that is to say the divine and original image" of a single, undifferentiated body (Eliade 102). But practically, (hetero)sexual love (at least) holds an "inescapable tragedy" at its heart because "the sexual act leads not to personal union but to child-birth, to the disintegration of personality in the begetting of children" (Berdiaev 1955: 193).
The quest for completeness or fusion is thus deflected and lost to an immersion in diapers: individual adult fulfilment is deferred to the satisfaction of screaming infant needs. Even the unhappiest sexual alliance cannot ignore the powerful fact of its flesh-and-bone issue: the arrival of "a baby -- small, helpless, and weak" -- changes everything irrevocably because it "is still the strongest thing on earth" (Nagrodskaia 115). Freedom is compromised, shrunk, finally extinguished. One extremely miserably married man explains his resignation as a direct reproductive result: "We have had children together -- that is the infernal tie, the bond of carnality" which can never be severed or abandoned (Stead 482).

Vynnychenko's "Mephistophelian" hero similarly succumbs to a fatherly fate by means of a "fall" away from freedom. But this fall is practically unconscious: when Yakov beds Klavdia quietly and quickly in the dark, he feels disturbingly detached -- his body moves without him as an instrument for a purely physical and gratuitous act. Like Vadym in «Po-sviyi»/Божки, Yakov is passively pulled into a female's orbit and "used" in a larger, more complex interpersonal process than he had bargained for.

6Christina Stead's monumental account of family unhappiness, The Man Who Loved Children, was published in 1940 -- still early enough to bear the modernist Nietzschean imprint, as demonstrated by the character of the eldest daughter: a precociously avid reader of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, she consoles herself with "heroic" quotations from this text, in stark contrast to the hellish context of her family (which she finally succeeds in escaping). See Stead (New York: Henry Holt & Co., Inc. (Owl Books), 1980): 302, 329, 457.
"I just can't be some sort of...well, tool for a woman," protests another Vynnychenko character, caught in an earlier version of the same sexual quandary. But tools men often are, in spite of themselves; "a man is just a woman's strategy for making other women" (Atwood 114); therefore a certain level of paranoia may be justified! "Man is for woman a means: the end is always the child," wrote Nietzsche. "But what is woman for man?" (1983: 178)

In spite of advances in contraceptive and reproductive technologies, the mysteries of fornication and fertilization still tend to coincide as a single problem in even late twentieth-century minds. I still vividly recall my introduction to Gide in a survey course of French literature as a first-year undergraduate. I was so intrigued by our reading of *La Symphonie pastorale* that I placed a bet with a classmate as to how it would all end: we both agreed that Gide's Gertrude was heading for her demise, but I predicted that she would specifically die in childbirth. After Gide's heroine in fact drowned herself, however, I remember feeling a vague sense of disappointment. Now I can see that I let a large (and largely nineteenth-century) heterosexual assumption dictate my reading, where the greatest tragic conclusion I could imagine would be the result of

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7This sentiment was expressed in Vynnychenko's 1910 play *Брешия* (*The Lie*). The original Ukrainian reads: "'Я не можу бути...бути якімсь засобом для дамочки.'" See Володимир Винниченко, *Вибрані п'єси* (*Selected Plays*) (Київ: «Мистецтво,» 1991): 148.
(illicit) heterosexual intercourse. And the author of this assumption (among others) was Nietzsche: his Zarathustra proclaimed that "[e]verything about women is a riddle, and everything has one solution: that is pregnancy" (Nietzsche 1983: 178). Of course, Gide's choice of a more Ophelia-like resolution also obscures the nature of the relations between the pastor and Gertrude; "she" in turn may have been a Proustian wink to a "he" (modelled after Marc Allégret, the boy in Gide's life at the time of this text's writing in 1919). In any case, only a great deal of hindsight assures me that childbirth was very likely the LAST dénouement Gide could have had in mind!

If the gratuitous act is what distinguishes man from the animals for Gide ("'j'appelais l'homme: l'animal capable d'une action gratuite'" (Gide 1988: 16)), then for Vynnychenko this same gratuitous, absolutely disinterested act is what actually lowers men to the level of animals. Reduced to mechanical movements or reflexes, human copulation -- if "performed unemotionally (without an ethical perspective)" -- becomes "equivalent in its moral indifference to all other acts performed unemotionally ... in the ethical indifference of the natural world" (Watton 382). This can mean that sexual behaviour is beyond ethical reproach (it's just something that biologically happens); but it can also mean that the range of choice is unacceptably reduced (nothing can be done to avoid or control such a hard-wired response). Gide celebrates the possibilities of gratuitousness, while Vynnychenko laments its limitations.
Gide explores the idea of murder as a pure and motiveless act in *Les Caves du Vatican* (1914). Lafcadio's "gratuitous" shove of a stranger from a train echoes Le Migliionnaire's "gratuitous" slap in *Le Prométhée mal enchaîné* (1899) — but now the whims of deities have fallen to earth: now a mere mortal toys with the divine prerogative to either deprive or bestow life. Now "it is a modified Nietzschean dimension of the superman, as well as a certain demonic will to experiment, which lead Lafcadio to murder" (Stoltzfus 113). As a specific response to Nietzsche's assertion that God is dead (Nietzsche 1974: 181-182), Gide's acte gratuit "tend à remplacer le vide des valeurs, la table rase, l'absence de Dieu, par l'affirmation de la toute puissance de l'être qui veut se faire Dieu" (Bruézière 132).

Where Julius entertains the theory of a completely gratuitous

8Lafcadio learns later that this stranger was in fact related to him (a distant brother-in-law that he had never had occasion previously to meet, let alone recognize).

There is another famous "gratuitous" scene in Gide, where Michel enjoys watching Moktir steal a pair of scissors behind Marceline's back in *L'Immoraliste*. Michel experiences a frisson of delight from the spectacle of utterly pointless and playful transgression directed against his wife, just as Lafcadio relishes the image of his "crime" against society. But the discovery of a blood relation with his victim is a disappointment, because it compromises the "purity" with which Lafcadio "executed" his act: it also implies an inescapably messy level of guilt, since Lafcadio feels compelled to confess to his half-brother Julius what he did. However, Julius seems more concerned with some recent random damage done to his finger nail than to the confession of random violence done to Amédée, so the moral weight of the confession seems lost: a moral sense of horror before the senseless loss of human life becomes trivialized and reduced to the dimensions of a broken nail.
crime ("'il y a des actions désintéressées... [...] par luxe, ... par jeu'"), his half-brother Lafcadio recklessly enacts it
("'Tant pis, c'est joué... [...] Si j'étais l'État, je me ferais enfermer'" (Gide 1987b: 179; 196; 187)). The infernal impulse to
test his power against an unsuspecting bystander takes the form
of a game: Lafcadio counts to twelve before attacking, and rolls
a dice to decide when to leave the scene of the crime. He only
regrets the loss of his fine beaver hat, which the victim
clutched away in his fall from the tracks.

Lafcadio's lighthearted lack of remorse, however, is more
redolent of the inhuman than the superhuman; his sang-froid
towards committing the "authentic, creative" crime in fact
"renders him unbelievable and uninteresting" (Black 125, 92)
because he is a caricature of the Nietzschean ideals of strength
and cheerfulness. His homicidal performance may be a pure and
even "outrageous" feat of spontaneity, but his character remains
empty. Cruelty without motive only creates a meaningless void;
Lafcadio slips as a consequence out of the narrative, in a kind
of atonement (in spite of himself) to the larger moral community
in the novel. "Cruelty is one of the oldest festive joys of
mankind," Nietzsche wrote, but only because of its capacity to be
meaningful beyond individual practice of the pleasure; for "in
the act of cruelty the community refreshes itself and for once
throws off the gloom of constant fear and caution" (Nietzsche
1997a: 16). Lafcadio pleases only himself, and so is necessarily
banished; in the end even he realizes this, as he confesses and considers surrendering to the police.

"Nietzsche is the figure in whose name the crime of murder has been rationalized and raised from merely passive aesthetic experience to outright epistemological pursuits" (Black 82) -- starting as early as 1901, with the case of a young German murderer admitting to temporary "moral insanity" from his reading of Nietzsche (Gilman 1986: 65). The Nietzschean association with Gide's fictional murderer, then (as noted by Stoltzfus and other critics), springs from a long-established perception of the philosopher as pathogen: Nietzsche was considered "a 'dangerous' thinker -- not merely [because] he espoused dangerous thoughts, but [because] he caused dangerous acts" (Gilman 1986: 60). And indeed, a Nietzsche text such as Beyond Good and Evil (1886) celebrates the idea of danger on practically every page; is the reader then to agree that the author is as threatening as he claims? Or might one not remain free to ask (with T.H. Huxley): "If a little knowledge is dangerous, where is the man who has so much as to be out of danger?"

Gide too was considered "a poisoner" of youth who "must be policed" (Claudel 220-221; 224-225); the Vatican waited four years after Gide's receipt of the Nobel Prize and another year

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9 Probably the most famous case for nefarious Nietzschean influence was the 1924 murder trial of two American college students, Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb. Their exposure to Nietzsche supposedly drove them to kill Leopold's cousin, which their lawyer Clarence Darrow proved to be enough of a mitigating circumstance for reducing their sentence to life imprisonment (see Gilman 1986: 72-74).
after his death to proscribe all of his works in the *Index librorum prohibitorum.* Vynnychenko likewise endured years of censorship and silence in the Soviet Union for his "bourgeois nationalist" and "decadent" leanings. Thus the fates of Nietzsche, Gide and Vynnychenko seem entwined in a common notoriety that precedes and informs any reading of their surviving writings -- for each in his own way became "une personnalité dont le rayonnement dépass[ait] celui d'un simple écrivain" (Bruézière 7).

**Whoring versus Husbandry**

The gratuitousness of a given act -- be it a blind fall into instinct for Vynnychenko, or a heedless plunge into murder for Gide -- suggests a larger network that links the other recurrent themes in their works of authenticity, paternity, and pathology. For to say that something is gratuitous is the same thing as saying it is superfluous, or free; its opposite would be something measured or marked with a more stable value, something enclosed or delineated within a fixed system. To borrow Lewis

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10 List of books forbidden to Roman Catholics, or to be read only in expurgated editions.

11 Vynnychenko's works became unavailable in the 1930s as a result of the Stalinist purges, and did not begin to resurface in his homeland until the end of 1987, when nine of his earliest (and most romantic) short stories were finally reprinted in a local literary journal (*Kyiv*).
Hyde's terms, the gratuitous moves in a gift economy while the possessed (in both the material and diabolical sense) is accounted for in a market or money economy. This is a useful distinction, because it lends itself to an expansion of related terms that open up certain textual knots of tension encountered in Nietzsche, Gide and Vynnychenko.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONEY ECONOMY</th>
<th>GIFT ECONOMY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>property - interest</td>
<td>gratuity - disinterestedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law - control</td>
<td>anarchy - release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saving -</td>
<td>spending -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management of scarcity</td>
<td>distribution of abundance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inauthenticity (having)</td>
<td>authenticity (creating/being)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paternity (reproduction)</td>
<td>promiscuity (perversion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coercion - power</td>
<td>surrender - generosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>currency - &quot;gold standard&quot;</td>
<td>counterfeit - dubious coin</td>
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Attributes for each category here are offered not as immutable elements, but as productive points of overlap and contradiction that will hopefully illuminate some abiding paradoxes. Gide's bastard ideal, for example, holds a symbolic value somewhere in between the two columns (where paternity and promiscuity might meet), while Vynnychenko's preoccupation with prostitution (in novels like Honesty With Oneself (1911) and The

Fathers' Legacy (1913) acknowledges a similar intermediary position, charged with ambivalence. For both writers, the bastard and the prostitute epitomize a third possibility -- a bridge between the two economies for their open challenges to prevailing notions of social legitimacy, or worth. Gide's boy-bastard and Vynnychko's girl-prostitute force the reader to confront "the complex and taboo subject of sexual-economic behaviour" (Pheterson 31). The difference in gender emphasizes a different domain for transgression as well: private for the male, public for the female.

The sexual problems of schoolboys [i.e., obsessive masturbation and incipient homosexuality] were those of privacy; solitary self-pleasure was anti-social ... The vices of young girls [however] were primarily public: they took what should have been private (female chastity) and exchanged it on the street for a share in the worldly resources available to adult males. (Engelstein 275; 276)

Ever since Baudelaire first celebrated the mobile modernity of the urban flâneur, woman has been excluded from enjoying that same public space "because the city is not hers to move around in;" even a modern woman still belongs to "the indoor world of domesticity," since only prostitutes are "essentially out-door" ... and even prostitutes are "not free to roam, they are on the streets for a reason" (Segal 247).

The bastard, like the prostitute, is a stubborn sign of freedom -- uncontainable proof of some shame or stigma incurred against the grain of social propriety. Both have been immortalized in literature as paragons of virtue: Gloucester's bastard-son Edmund is kinder and more constant to Shakespeare's
King Lear than "daughters got 'tween the lawful sheets;" the whore with a heart of gold dies selflessly for love in Alexandre Dumas's *La Dame aux camélias* (1848). But isolated romanticized exemplars from literature compete with larger popular prejudices against them in life. Bastards and prostitutes alike are barred from the social privilege and protection of property: they are by definition outside, beyond the lawful boundary -- considered not so much above the law as contemptibly and disposably beneath it.

Saint Augustine -- no stranger himself to the idea of sinning for sin's sake, in his own gratuitous act of stealing pears once from an orchard (Trilling 1963: 99) -- rather viciously described prostitution as "the sewer in the palace: take away the sewer and you fill the palace with pollution; take away prostitution and you fill the world with sodomy" (Kishtainy 25). This is an overstatement, of course, coming from Augustine's particularly virulent obsession with evil (Hagstrum 30; Dollimore 134; 137). But it is an accurate enough picture of the panic that usually attends any subversion of the social order: if one of the many binary oppositions of order is undermined (here heterosexuality versus homosexuality), then the whole structure is lost -- all is unredeemable, awash with evil. It is an all too common defence reaction against the "conflict, anxiety, ignorance, and impacted misinformation" attached to society's outcasts (Pheterson 22).
Paternity actually shares a certain level of this anxiety with prostitution. Although they might initially appear to be opposites -- since the one is condoned as public good while the other is condemned as public evil -- they both essentially involve the same secret act (sex) and the same uncertainty of outcome (baby or venereal disease). They also define themselves around the same concern for certainty, in a similarly life-altering rite of passage -- because the consequence in both cases (of paying one's first visit to a brothel, and/or fathering one's first child) "proves" that person's (hetero)sexuality. Living up to the expectations demanded of "the first time," in both instances, means being able to perform and conform in reproductive terms.

Paternity would like to insist on an absolute knowledge of origin, for which maternity assumes the greater burden (and advantage) of proof. Prostitution, on the other hand, subverts this monopolizing tendency with its flagrant promiscuity. Paternity wants singularity of opportunity; prostitution is multiply opportunistic. One does not necessarily result from the other: prostitutes tend to engage in sexual intercourse less frequently than generally assumed, as a standard order of business (Pheterson 39-40), and "family men" are not statistically more or less inclined to seek out their services. But they are vitally interrelated, all the same: two institutions that need each other to survive. "Culture exists in a relationship of difference with the alien, which is also a
relationship of fundamental, antagonistic, discursive dependence" (Dollimore 182). Thus the idea of the pariah sustains the idea of the patriarch -- and vice versa. "'While there will be property, there will also be poverty,'" muses one patron of a (fictional) brothel; "'while marriage exists, prostitution also will not die'" (Kuprin 133).13

The Doctor as Devil's Advocate

Interestingly, Gide and Vynnychenko both choose doctors as the vehicles for their most daring declarations of "sexual honesty in the novel" (Stott 13). The eponymous doctor of Corydon endeavours to "cure" society of its prejudices against pederasty, in a series of dialogues with a sympathetic narrator;

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13Alexander Ivanovich Kuprin (1870-1938) wrote the Russian textbook on prostitution (although he apparently took a Ukrainian brothel for his subject). His 1909 novel Яма (The Pit) follows the (mis)fortunes of a single whorehouse whose occupants, one by one, become the victims of syphilis, suicide, madness, incarceration, and brutal murder. Nietzsche makes his inevitable appearance as well: first in the mouth of a despicable pimp, who mangles Zarathustra's "He whom you cannot teach to fly, teach to fall faster!" (Nietzsche 1983: 321) into "'Give the falling a shove!'" (Kuprin 175); next in the person of a lecherous intellectual, intent on (ab)using his readings of Nietzsche to confuse and abuse in turn an illiterate former prostitute (Kuprin 286; 287; 294).

Vynnychenko offered a more optimistic examination of the same problem, with his Ukrainian answer to Kuprin in 1913. But his "solution" really ends up harkening back to Dostoevsky, since Tonya's voluntary accompaniment of her criminal lover to Siberia directly echoes Sonya's slavish fidelity to Raskol'nikov at the conclusion of Crime and Punishment (1866).
meanwhile Doctor Zabolot'ko of The Fathers' Legacy\textsuperscript{14} undertakes a similar ambition on behalf of prostitutes, in the face of a growing syphilis epidemic. Tackling such contentious issues as pederasty and prostitution at all requires an unimpugnable mouthpiece such as the doctor, who -- as the "guardian and good samaritan of the bourgeoisie" -- is "above all suspicion, [and thus] can speak of filth without fear of getting himself dirty" (Aron & Kempf 146). This is not to say that doctors as a group are exempt from public or moral censure (as any physician with the experience of a malpractice suit will attest), but that they do tend to enjoy a higher level of trust and respect than the rest of the population.\textsuperscript{15} And when a doctor actually DEFENDS such questionable practices as pederasty and prostitution, of course, this results in the removal of his or her licence:

Gide's Corydon is already a "former" doctor, while Vynnychenko's Petro suffers imprisonment in addition to the divestment of his

\textsuperscript{14}See Appendix C-1 for a plot summary of this novel, largely unavailable in either Ukrainian or English.

\textsuperscript{15}Since the nineteenth century, the question of abortion has especially tested the limits of the public trust placed in doctors -- to either honour the patient's request to control her own fertility with a "therapeutic" operation, or to fall back on "professional justification of deceit" with the prescription of candy pills to safeguard the pregnancy. In many parts of the world today, abortion continues to be considered illegal as well as immoral, thus driving treatments as well as practitioners "underground" as "outlaws." See Angus McLaren, "'Not a Stranger, A Doctor': Medical Men and Sexual Matters in the Late Nineteenth Century" in Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science, eds. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge University Press, 1994): 277-278.

See also Bok (85; 176; 232-255) for the particular privilege enjoyed by the medical profession to tell "paternalistic lies," the better to keep their patients in salutary ignorance ("for their own good").
medical rights and privileges. But in both cases the doctor survives this indignity because he is really "more a humanist than a clinician" to begin with (Pollard 1991: 22).

In spite of their audacity, however, Corydon and The Fathers' Legacy remain more attuned to nineteenth-century sensibilities than to twentieth-century ones -- probably because both were written before the definitive modernist experience of the Great War. Vynnychenko's characters not only still drive around in horse-drawn carriages, but they are constantly receiving and writing letters that end in at least one challenge to a duel (all venerable literary devices from the previous century, designed to keep the plot propelled at an eventful clip). Even the defence of prostitution here, as the illegitimate counterpart to the legitimate institution of marriage, is strongly reminiscent of nineteenth-century socialist tracts by August Bebel and Frederick Engels -- which defended all women in theory (either "individually 'in the noose'" or "collectively 'on the loose'"!), but in practice denied them any real role in the revolution to be made by men (Pheterson 16; 61).

Similarly, Gide structures his arguments for the legitimacy or naturalness of homosexuality as "a reverse discourse," "often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified" (Foucault 101) -- a strategy that produces "a typical piece of nineteenth-century quasi-biological irony" (Stites 262). Both Gide and Vynnychenko labour under positivist-realist assumptions that aspire, no matter how thorny
the social problem, to coax an absolute sort of clarity from its
treatment. For Gide, the conclusion could be said to consist of
a triumph (demonstrated through examples from zoobiology and
classical antiquity) of homosexuality as a socially desirable (if
not preferable) order. For Vynnychenko, the conclusion could be
drawn that in spite of the most overwhelming adversity, love
really does conquer all (at least for two intrepid individuals
cought up in the maelstrom). Émile Zola and Ivan Franko are the
tradition behind these texts, perhaps more than their authors
might care to admit.

Nietzsche of course was another such nineteenth-century
influence, who likewise did not fail to make his presence known.
Corydon "en naturaliste" considers "l'éclatante suprématie de la
beauté masculine" -- all the way from the lowest crustacean to
the highest achievement in Greek sculpture -- and he appeals in
the end to Nietzsche to support his "aesthetic" appreciation of
the latter (Gide 1987a: 32; 92; 119). Such an appeal is not
unfounded, since Nietzsche readily recognized the particular
"perfections" Gide mentions -- and not only in the vague
suggestion that Gide found in a 1909 Nietzsche biography, either.
Much more specifically, Nietzsche himself wrote (in completely
Corydon-esque cadences): "What does our chatter about the Greeks
amount to! What do we understand of their art, the soul of which
is -- passion for naked MALE beauty!" (Nietzsche 1997a: 104).
Similarly, Dan'ko prefaces his disclosure of disease to Petro with a guessing game that includes two significant references to Nietzsche:

Listen, you -- doctor, psychiatrist, or whatever you are... You tell me... Guess this riddle: when is a person above everything? Even higher than himself? Eh? [...] I'm asking you a very important question. Don't think that I'm drunk. It's not about that. Do you think that I've become higher than everything because of the vodka? Eh? Is that what you think? [...] You can be higher than everything too, above all your professions and all your Harbuzenkov ladies -- damn them! -- and all that other filth. That's right! You and anyone else can. Here's the distinction [Грань]. That's a modern word, but I spit on it -- when it comes to distinctions, we'll see what's really there! 'Beyond good and evil,' as Zarathustra said. There's your distinction! [...] Well, I'll tell you what to spit on that's so much higher than everything else, the thing that Zarathustra said was 'beyond good and evil'... Shall I tell you then? Eh? [...] I've got syphilis... (Vynnychenko 1928: 44-45)

In typically melodramatic terms, Vynnychenko sees death as the ultimate amoral phenomenon "raising" (or razing) all people equally, through the particularly "modern" scourge of syphilis. Dan'ko keeps insisting throughout his confession that "it's too late" for him («уже пізнó») -- and he also seems to know (before

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16 The original Ukrainian reads:
«Слухай, ти -- лікар, психіятр, чи як там у вас... Ти мені скажи... Одгадай таку загадку: коли людина буває вища над усе? Навіть вища за себе? Га? [...] Я тобі як найповажніше задаю це питання. Ти не думай, що я п’яний. Річ тут не в цьому. Ти думаєш, що я від горілки вище над усе став? Га? Ти це думаєш? [...] І ти можеш бути вищий над усе, вищий за твої там професури, за мадмуазелі Гарбузенкові, -- прокляття Ім! -- і такий інший гидоти. Еге ж! І ти, і кожний може. Тут -- грань. Це -- модерне слово, а я плював. Коли за гранню, то що там! 'По той бік добра й зла,' як казав Заратустра. Он що! [...] От я тобі й докажу, що наплювати і вище над усе, чи, як казав Заратустра, 'по той бік добра й зла'... Сказати? Га? [...] А в мене сифіліс...»
Petro even begins to suspect as much) that all the Harbuzenkovs are identically doomed. A disease recognizes no morals: this is how Dan'ko interprets Zarathustra, as the proponent of a misleading and poisonous philosophy. Petro's subsequent decision to learn syphilitic treatments from a GERMAN doctor again underlines the association with Nietzsche -- suggesting that the specifically German infection can only be met with another, German-derived cure.

Both Corydon and Petro are spurred to make speeches on behalf of voiceless victims. Corydon is motivated to apply his medical, naturalist, and classicist expertise towards saving unhappy homosexuals from killing themselves, through the assembly of "proofs" that they are in fact more "natural" and "normal" than heterosexuals. His entire argument is dedicated to the memory of one such man (the brother of his fiancée), who committed suicide in sexual despair; and so, "[e]n souvenir de cette victime ... un adolescent plein de grâce et de conscience ... j'ai souhaité guérir d'autres victimes, souffrant du même malentendu ... [de n'être] pas malade" (Gide 1987a: 26; 29). In the same way, Petro sees the sufferings from syphilis of Dan'ko, Tonya and Sanya as part of the larger social problem of prostitution, which he hopes to defeat with a single well-placed blow of eloquent rhetoric. When he inevitably fails to convert the masses, Petro takes Tonya to be his wife in sheltering consolation against so much ignominy. Corydon for his part
remains unmarried (presumably because the original victim is already dead).

The prescriptions that both these doctors offer to society turn upon the exposure of a deadly, lying "legacy," passed from generation to generation. Dr. Corydon wants to save lives from suicide, Dr. Zabolot'ko from syphilis -- and in order to do so, a secret "sin" must first be brought to light. For Corydon this sin is turned into a healing truth, placed in a golden tradition of cultural and aesthetic superiority, and finally enshrined as the most "honest" masculine response of all ("la pédérasie comme un instinct très naïf et primesautier" (Gide 1987a: 105)). For Petro the sin is complacency in satisfaction of male lust, so widely accommodated as an open secret that it finally infects everyone, even the most innocent. Sanya, as the unknowing recipient of her father's unmentionable "inheritance," is the proof of the extent of this contagion. Only a strong dose of "the truth" can counteract so many equally potent deceits, hidden behind "our fathers' and grandfathers' legacies of holy [hypocritical] writ tablets and sacred relics" («з батьками, з прадідами, з їхніми заповідями, скрижалями та всякими їхніми святощами» (Vynnychenko 1928: 157)).

Even as sympathetic a spokesman for the prostitute as Petro, however, tends to ignore "the critical legal ingredient" of money in every transaction of sexual commerce (Pheterson 106). It is up to one of Petro's enemies to point out the power of money "to make all things possible" instead («Гроші всь можуть»)
(Vynnychenko 1928: 171)). After all, Petro's marriage to Tonya precludes the issue because she simply consents to exchange her "wages of sin" for a less certain but more respectable dependence. But whether or not Tonya will actually adapt to her new domestic status remains undecided. As a former prostitute she will necessarily have to ask herself why "what [she] used to give sensibly for money, [she will now find herself] expected to give foolishly for nothing in the life of respectability" (Kishtainy 124). In other words, she will be forced to consider the paradox that "women are allowed to give free sex but not to negotiate sex without defying a host of laws," since "it is not the sex act but the ASKING for money that [was her] initial crime" (Pheterson 42). And it is unclear how she is now supposed to earn her living -- unless the scene of her sorrowfully, silently sewing while still in the brothel is meant to prefigure her later acquiring a sewing machine, that "stage prop for all rehabilitated prostitutes" in Russia (Siegel 103).

**Men and Boys -- and Money**

In *The Fathers' Legacy*, Vynnychenko is concerned with fallen women that men either unconsciously or unscrupulously lead into ruin; he is preoccupied with male guilt and male miscreancy, viewing women predominantly as victims. But when the fatherhood of a son is at stake -- as it is in *Notes of a Snub-Nosed*
Mephistopheles\textsuperscript{17} -- women become the clutching and conniving miscreants at the expense of "fallen" men! This is an interesting shift: Vynnychenko moves from quasi-feminist championing of sex for recreation to paternalist paranoia of sex for reproduction, all in the space of four short years.

Gide is interested in men learning to experience freedom from women. He prefers to depict marriages and courtships in dissolution or frustrated decay (most memorably and pointedly in \textit{La Porte étroite}, 1909), the better to point towards emancipating possibilities beyond "the cellular régime" (Pierre-Quint 84). And when the fatherhood of a son is at stake, men should exchange the conjugal and biological responsibility for a more spiritual and sexualized filiation, by taking boys away from their mothers into a caring community of "uncles" (father-surrogates who enjoy consensual pederastic rights). Lafcadio in \textit{Les Caves} had a series of such (unrelated) uncles in his own unorthodox upbringing (Gide 1987b: 83-87). But Édouard in \textit{Les Faux-Monnayeurs} becomes more than just a blood-uncle to Olivier when he "goes to the extraordinary length" of asking his sister to "bless his union with her son," in "one of the most obviously wish-fulfilling scenes in all of Gide's fiction" (Cordle 110-111). Even this successful sexual adoption, though, is temporary: Édouard is already looking by the end of the novel to exchange Olivier's perishable charms for those of Bernard's

\textsuperscript{17}See Appendix C-2 for a plot summary of this novel, still unavailable in English translation.
youngest half-brother, Caloub. Fidelity, it seems, is a time-sensitive commodity -- but all the same, the homosexual model of serial monogamy is described in much more stable and mutually satisfying terms than its several heterosexual counterparts (especially the unrelieved misery of Monsieur and Madame de la Pérouse). "'Désir ou fantaisie,'" Lafcadio learned from one of his uncles, "'sont de sollicitation fugitive'" (Gide 1987b: 88) -- thus their fleeting, quicksilver natures should be met with the spirit of disponibilité as well as the principle of interchangeabilité.

Gide's pederastic ideal depends on a separation not only of the men from the boys, but of male lust from male love. Gide himself maintained an attitude of angélisme towards his wife, which he regarded as the only possible way to keep his love for her "unspotted by physical stain" (Hagstrum 152). As Corydon said of the fiancée that he (wisely) never married: "'Je l'aimais trop pour me rendre nettement compte que je ne la désirais pas'" (Gide 1987a: 23). While "promiscuity and sexual detachment are considered ordinary for men" in most societies, Gide extended his gender-approved habits into a "splitting of desire and love" along gender lines: he may love his wife but not desire her, just as he may desire boys but not love them (Pheterson 53).

This complicated relationship to women bears some resemblance to Vynnychenko's. In his earlier works, females were to be chivalrously rescued or amorously ogled ("angels" for men's
visual or sexual delectation; but in his later works, females become seditious as well as seductive in their single-minded pursuit of pregnancy, which can only spell misery for the male ("demons" for men's long-term torture). Thus a similar schism occurs: that which was desired can no longer remain beloved. When women become mothers, Vynnychenko argues, men's lust declines and men's love is deflected towards the children. This is as much the natural and inevitable order of things for the heterosexual world as pederasty is supposed to be for the homosexual one: time blunts all lusts. And another child can always arrive to fill the loveless vacuum.

Where do children come from? A shameful place -- *inter urinas et faeces nascimur*. Similarly, where does money come from? An equally shadowy realm, thick with taboo: some ugly disclosure of (often illicit) origin steals the charm from a magical, secret fiction (such as "the stork brought you," or "virtue is its own reward"). Both are associated with dirt (babies arise out of "dirty" circumstances; money is "paydirt" or "filthy lucre"). But both are also considered absolutely crucial to the continuation of the world as we know it: human generations turn on the production of each. Salt of the earth, primal muck -- one feeding off the other.

In *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936), George Orwell's hero ends his novel-long war against the institution of money in reproductive defeat: a woman has snared him, pulled him into the

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18(Latin:) "We are born between urine and faces."
system with her pregnancy by him, thus forcing him to abandon his lonely (if futile) resistance. It's a happy enough ending for its assertion and acceptance of the human condition. In the same way, Anthony Burgess's nasty protagonist of *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) conceives of the world as a filthy orange spinning in space and fundamentally impelled towards violence, with only the affections of fatherhood to redeem it:

My son, my son. When I had my son I would explain all that to him ... [...] But then I knew he would not understand or would not want to understand at all and would do all the veshches [things] I had done, yes ... and I would not be able to really stop him. And nor would he be able to stop his own son, my brothers. And so it would itty [go] on to like the end of the world, round and round and round, like some bolshy [big] gigantic like chelloveck [man], like old Bog [God] Himself ... turning and turning and turning a vonny grazhny [stinking dirty] orange in his gigantic rookers [hands]. (Burgess 148)

**Flesh and the Devil**

Gide and Vynnychenko both close their largest prose achievements on the same plaintive paternal note. In the aftermath of his grandchild's suicide, Gide's *La Pérouse* blames a cruel Christian God for senselessly killing His own Son, while Vynnychenko's Yakov wistfully passes down his unrealized dreams and stories to his four-year-old son. In both cases, a lament for what could have been is touched with a sense of defeat by diabolical forces which demand tribute. *La Pérouse* renounces God because he sees Him as the incarnation of cruelty and thus identical to the Devil (Gide 1989: 332); Yakov plays at God (or
the Devil) in trying to take away his son's life. The death of little Boris and the near-death of little Mika create a demonic undertow: La Pérouse sinks into atheistic despair as the witness, and Yakov adopts increasingly desperate measures as the perpetrator. The centrality of both boys (who are both significantly bastards) derives from the response that their fathers/father-surrogates choose to make to their existence: either to avow or disavow. La Pérouse embraces his thirteen-year-old "natural" grandson, but tragically loses him; Yakov endeavours to dispose of his infant son, but tragically keeps him (thereby rendering him legitimate).

"There never was a father would sacrifice his son to God, as the wicked old story has it: there never was" (Stead 218). For Gide's La Pérouse, the "wicked story" is only too true since the death of Boris. "'Dans ce monde, Dieu se tait toujours,'" he concludes. "'Il n'y a que le diable qui parle'" (Gide 1989: 331). But for Vynnychenko's Yakov, even the devil (as announced by the novel's title) is a limited and fallible being -- much like the world which is supposed to be under his rule. "The Vynnychenkian 'Mephistopheles' is 'snub-nosed,' which suggests the human, ordinary and somewhat comical or wretched aspect" (Bahriy 170), as opposed to the grander and more dangerous Gidean vision of the Devil as "cette dimension de perversité, de 'péché,' mais aussi d'authenticité" (Chartier 95).

The Devil seems very real to Gide, especially as a figure for explaining his transgressive sexuality to himself: he
persistently links "perversion" with the criminal or demonic (Bentley 134). Les Faux-monnayeurs fairly swarms with diabolical characters: the predatory homosexual Count Robert de Passavant, the counterfeit ringleader Victor Strouvilhou, the perfidious Vincent Molinier, the boy gone bad Armand Vedel-Azaïs ... But beyond even this ring of poison spreads a larger stain of vice, the "demonic compulsion" behind Boris's death: the specifically "Gidean demon" of "compulsive onanism" (Cordle 112). The nine-year-old Boris experiences the death of his distant father as a punishment for his "secret practices," which he nevertheless continues to pursue (Gide 1989: 193); finally he perishes as much from shame and self-loathing as from bullying peer pressure.

Masturbation looms as a fatal subtext in Vynnychenko as well, when Taras in Honesty With Oneself blows himself up for the common cause as the only way to regain his soiled sense of dignity. But in Notes of a Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles, the real and unspoken devil is Woman -- all the women who scheme to trap Yakov into matrimony, but especially Klavdia because she succeeds. And since she also happens to spawn the demon seed who will not die, she is described in increasingly ugly terms to match. From being initially impressed by Klavdia's "mild but not exactly pretty face" marred by a "crooked and porous nose with large nostrils that are too long," and "wide lips thrust forward

19There is only one exception to this general rule: Gide's Corydon, in which "the Devil ... is conspicuously absent" (Pollard 1991: xii).
like a Negress" (Vynnychenko 1923: 46), Yakov later begins to focus exclusively on her coarser "negroid" features. He notices upon meeting Klavdia's sister Ol'ha that she too has "thick protruding lips that would have benefitted from a ring through them" (246); and he laments that Klavdia and Ol'ha are both raising his child without him, like "a couple of animal-like Africans" (265-266) -- but of the two of them, Klavdia is the most blindly and tenaciously "like a female beast, nothing more! And a Negress besides..." (267)

This peculiar "darkening" of the grasping, undesirable woman -- who, together with Sonya, always appears clothed in black in contrast to Shapochka's ethereally unattainable white -- points to more than a straightforward splitting of "good girl" from bad. Klavdia represents a mongrel composite with her swarthy "gypsy" complexion, "negro" nose and "tiny" myopic eyes; she brings together a confusion of racial origins and categories that is directly related to her ambiguous civil status as an unmarried woman with two children.

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The original Ukrainian reads: «Миле, живе лице не можна назвати гарним: ... ніс неправильний, увесь у дірочках, з великими занадто довгими ніздрами, а губи широкі та випнуті наперед, як у Негрів.» [...] «Ії грубі, випнуті губи швидче нагадують Муринку. Дуже до лиця їй було б кільце в ці губи.» [...] «Сеї Африканки ... займа[ют] щодо ... дитини моє місце, місце голови родини.» [...] «Крім звірячих почувань, у них нема нічого. [...] Самиця та й годі! І ще ця Муринка...»
The imagined qualities of Woman, Africa (the Dark Continent), the Orient, and deviant sexuality cross boundaries, so that the Negro is said to possess a deviant sexuality, so that the sexual female possesses negroid qualities, so that the Orient possesses female qualities and so on. The traffic of racial and gender stereotypes moves in many directions. (Stott 35-36)

Thus Klavdia acts as a virtual crossroads for multiple concerns about control and certainty in the novel, which she "bestially" works to undermine. "The devil himself is perhaps -- skin," mused Nietzsche in his Zarathustra (Nietzsche 1983: 386).

Vynnychenko and Gide both appear to take this as a given, although the flesh of the devil for the former is the female Other, while for the latter it is the temptation to sin against one's own (male) flesh.

The Devil as the Father of the Lie

There is another sense of the diabolical that haunts these novels, however, and that is the perception of the devil as the embodiment and essence of the lie.

The devil always works through illusions and often leaves no physical trace of his presence. [...] [So even when] he seems to be telling the truth, ... most of the time he is [being] true only to his own nature, which is the lie. (Russell 285; 284)

The devil is the corrupting and changeable principle of the material world, while God is the ennobling and eternal principle of the spiritual one. "In Christian terms, the Devil is the

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21 This is a gloss on the New Testament's naming of the Devil as "the father of all lies," who inevitably tells falsehoods because "he is only doing what is natural to him" (John 8:44).
regent of this world and the lord of success and progress: in all the powers in history he is the actual power" (Nietzsche 1997b: 114). The Roman philosopher Boethius defends the existence of divine providence against the machinations of evil in his last surviving work, The Consolation of Philosophy (524 A.D.), which recognizes "that monster, Fortune, ... the random goddess" as the most seductive mask worn by the Devil, offering only the most fickle and perishable of rewards in comparison to the boundless and numinous riches from God, who "mightily and sweetly orders all things" (Boethius 54; 55; 111). Thus the devil holds the key to the earthly purse, but only God shows the way to the celestial vault: the glittering coins of "the money-devil" blind men to the greater gold in heaven. "Money, in short, is the principle of the inauthentic in human existence" (Trilling 1972: 124), and as such stands for the devil. For

the love of power is the demon of men. [...] [And] the demon waits and waits and will be satisfied. [...] [W]hat one formerly did 'for the sake of God' one now does for the sake of money, that is to say, for the sake of that which NOW gives the highest feeling of power and good conscience. (Nietzsche 1997a: 146; 123)

In Les Faux-Monnayeurs, the greatest villain (among so many lesser ones) is identified by his Midas touch: the naïve Olivier admires Passavant's ability "'to make capital out of everything ... turning it all to his own profit'" (Gide 1989: 198-199).22 Eventually Olivier recognizes the evil behind this mercenary

22The original French reads: "'Il sait admirablement se servir des idées, des images, des gens, des choses; c'est-à-dire qu'il met tout à profit.'"
facility and goes over to Passavant's more benign textual twin, Édouard -- the other older, literary-minded homosexual -- who exemplifies "a gentler, vaguely evangelical ethics of generosity, risk and openness" (Cordle 62). The omnipresent money metaphor works to reveal the devil's domain of false values, which separates the damned characters from the saved. Olivier learns to negotiate the values of jeu, risque, dépense and luxe in the proper paternalist coin: Édouard is the good uncle-custodian of these, where Passavant is not (Pollard 1991: 372; 376). Bernard is less fortunate in finding his "elective" father (Martin 13-14); he settles for a life of contradiction and compromise by returning to his false father's fold after all, instead of continuing to defy it by insisting on his bastardy and vagabondage.

In Notes of a Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles, Yakov is a successful card shark who is constantly collecting gambling debts, in addition to drawing his comfortable lawyer's salary. His creative ability to lie explains his nickname as much as his devilish ladykiller looks: at times he even dazzles himself with his command of rhetoric, which never fails to "win." Yakov the erstwhile socialist excels at the new capitalist game: he is a Judas who has sold out, an amoral opportunist in the place of the principled idealist he once used to be. But he is haunted less by his past than by a fear born of the present: the fear that he might yet become something worse.
When Shapochka scolds Yakov for showing her excessive deference, she remarks that all such chivalrous gestures eventually amount to brutality, as a resentful form of compensation: "'Later this same ladies' man will always be sure to wind the beloved's braid around his hand, and proceed to beat her in the stomach with the toes of his boots.'" (Vynnychenko 1923: 188). This is the nightmarish counterpart to Yakov's "dream" of their perfect love, which Shapochka is quick to suspect of developing. And indeed, the closer their marriage approaches reality, the more often the ugly possibilities tend to echo in the bridegroom's ears: "I keep remembering Shapochka's words about ladies' men ...;" "I'm reminded again of those words of hers; Shapochka is no doubt right" (Vynnychenko 1923: 206; 212). Yakov can not trust himself to preserve his dream against the bright glare of day, especially when he has already discharged so much hostility against other women (Klavdia of course, but also Varvara and Oleksandra in his "professional" capacity). He recognizes himself to be finally unworthy of his ideal, because too many hardened years of manipulating people with money and lies have done their work: he too might force Shapochka to lose their child, just as surely as he tried to

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23 The Ukrainian original reads: "От такі ['ухажори'] потім напевне намотують косу на руку й б'ють передками чобіт у живіт."

24 «І мені раз-у-раз пригадуються слова Шапочки про 'ухажорів,' що намотують косу на руку й б'ють передками чобіт у живіт.» [...] «'А потім намотає на руку косу й гатить передками чобіт у живіт,' — згадуються мені слова Шапочки. Шапочка має, мабуть, рацію ... »
force Klavdia. There is no hope, in other words, for the demonic
to approach the angelic. And so he resigns himself again to a
somnambulist middle path, confining his dream life to the safety
of night -- exactly as he had done in the beginning.

In Dante’s poetic imagining of the Inferno, "deceivers are
tormented in the eighth circle of Hell, lowest of all except for
that inhabited by traitors ... ‘because fraud is an evil peculiar
to man’" (Bok 45). "Human saying lies" (Steiner 112) -- for
"where did you ever see ... a live man that wasn’t some kind of
liar? As long as we live, we lie" (Roy 160). So it is with
Gide’s devils and Vynnychenko’s Mephistopheles: each stews in a
hell of his own making, as a penance for the damaging duplicities
he has visited on others. Not for nothing does Vincent Molinier,
for example, fall into a madness that convinces him he must be
the devil: in Les Faux-Monnayeurs this is just the most explicit
form of poetic justice, which applies to all of the characters
with varying degrees of clarity. While Vincent may no longer be
aware that he is damned, the remainder are all still struggling
to either redeem themselves or damn themselves further. "’If
only there were nothing but honest folk,’” Bernard dreams aloud;
'Why, if anyone were to ask me today what virtue I considered the finest, I should answer without hesitation -- honesty. [...] I should like all my life long, at the very smallest shock, to ring true, with a pure, authentic sound. Nearly all the people I have known ring false.' (Gide 1973: 201)

Bernard is surrounded on every side by scoundrels who pretend to be "worth" more than they are, both literally (in their clandestine counterfeiting operations) and figuratively (in their nasty interpersonal relations). But unlike his friend Olivier, he remains a free agent, the only character with a sufficiently developed moral backbone to resist the nefarious vortex. Towards the end of the novel Bernard even wrestles all night with an angel (like the Biblical Jacob) -- his last act of independence before deciding to accept money and shelter again from his artificial father ("Savez-vous ce qui me retient surtout de retourner chez mon père? C'est que je ne veux pas de son argent'" (Gide 1989: 300)). The relationship like the money may be tainted, but it is all of a piece with the larger (hetero)sexual order in which Bernard recognizes the need to assume a responsible (if flawed) place. He learns, in other words, to grow up and give up -- and "to greet this loss not with nostalgia or even resignation, but with Nietzschean joy" (Martin 14).

As might be expected of a conscious iconoclast like Nietzsche, references in his works to both the Devil and the

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25The original French reads: "'[S]i seulement il n'y avait que des gens probes. Tenez, on me demanderait aujourd'hui quelle vertu me paraît la plus belle, je répondrais sans hésiter: la probité. [...] Je voudrais, tout le long de ma vie, au moindre choc, rendre un son pur, probe, authentique. Presque tous les gens que j'ai connus sonnent faux'" (Gide 1989: 188).
dollars abound. His first awareness of his calling came in the form of a Manichean heresy, asking whether God and Satan might not be equals:

'When I was twelve years old I conjured up for myself a marvellous trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Devil. My deduction was that God thinking himself, created the second person of the godhead, but that to be able to think himself he had to think his opposite, and thus had to create it. -- That is how I began to philosophize.' (Krell & Bates 25)

Indeed, his whole philosophical project may be described as a teasing out of this Manichean dualism perceived in childhood. As late as 1888 (mere months before his collapse), Nietzsche still saw his "task" in the same confrontational terms:

My task is quite singular ... : I’ve asked myself what mankind has always hated, feared, and despised the most -- and precisely out of this I’ve made my 'gold.' [...] When you come right down to it, the alchemist is the most praiseworthy of men: I mean the one who changes something negligible or contemptible into something of value, even gold. [...] If only I’m not accused of counterfeiting! Or rather, I’m bound to be...

(Fuss & Shapiro 118)

Nietzsche had his Zarathustra hold out the secret to a similar form of alchemy, in the following lesson to his disciples:

how did gold attain the highest value? Because it is uncommon and useless and gleaming and gentle in its splendour; it always gives itself. Only as the image of the highest virtue did gold attain the highest value. [...] Uncommon is the highest virtue and useless; it is gleaming and gentle in its splendour: a gift-giving virtue is the highest virtue. (Nietzsche 1983: 186)

Through this speech, Zarathustra offers an alchemical transformation that is better than even the best or most precious metal: the intangible substance of his own teaching. "Rare and useless," "shining with a mild glow," the words themselves are
supposed to partake of the quality of gold at the same time that they exceed it. Thus

Nietzsche invokes a complex metaphor of gold stripped of its symbolic, anthropomorphic, endowed value to stand as an unappropriated natural object ... [...] The 'value' of [the text then] ... is meant to be that of gold found in Nature, self-radiating whether read or unread. (Norris 85)

Zarathustra is Nietzsche's "greatest present" to mankind, the very incarnation of his own "gift-giving virtue" -- because it provides "an inexhaustible well to which no pail descends without coming up again filled with gold and goodness" (Nietzsche 1989: 219). The idea of appraisal associated with mere gold becomes a more magical, moveable property: the idea of bestowal, creating a newer and truer value of gold (see Singer 118 & 139). Thus Nietzsche exultantly proclaims that "the age of harmless false-coinage is at an end!" (Nietzsche 1997a: 222) -- because "the faith in our 'creditor,' in God, has [likewise] disappeared" (Nietzsche 1989: 91). The new currency may still be in flux, but it is still infinitely preferable to the blind faith in a false and finally obsolete gold standard.

"The genuine are always rare," Nietzsche writes (1983: 281); only the worst tend to prevail, as that "species of moral masturbators" who apply their "forgers' skill" towards "counterfeit[ing] ... the stamp of virtue, even the ring, the golden-sounding ring of virtue" (Nietzsche 1989: 123). To distinguish false coin from true: this also describes the alchemist's quest to "forge" the philosopher's stone, which effects the transmutation of baser metals into gold. But there
are always more swindlers and their fool's gold than there are lonely alchemists. Nietzsche thus advises his "free, VERY free spirits" of alchemy to embrace an "extravagant honesty," the better to expose the counterfeiting evil for what it is (1966: 161). Such honesty "embraces the irreverent 'devil' within men so that the spirit may become free" to impishly criticize a piously held truth or fable (Grundlehner 93): "let us come to the assistance of our 'god' with all our 'devils'! [...] Have not all gods so far been such devils who have become holy and rebaptized?" (Nietzsche 1966: 155; 156) One form of devilry (masturbating forgers) thus meets and does battle with another (impious "free spirits").

The masturbatory detail is interesting here, for the way that it suggests something about the nature of both money and language. The successful exchange of coins and words depends on a similar consensual validation, recognizing the same ciphers as endowed with value (metal or paper here, letters on paper there). But masturbation escapes this use-based economy into uselessness, unmentionable and unrepresentable (for there is no universal "sign" for this taboo; it enters neither conversation nor currency easily). The MASTURBATING counterfeiter, then, reveals the tenuousness of the whole symbolic enterprise, legitimately productive or not: for money like language is "nothing but metaphor" -- and "to be truthful" in their terms of reference "means to employ the usual metaphors" (Nietzsche 1979: 83; 84). A secret practice of perversion thus forces the acknowledgement
of a public practice of perversion, premised on much larger patterns of arbitrary exclusion: everything the human animal attempts to construct into a system explaining human behaviour to itself becomes an elaborate exercise in perversity, or error. "Man has an invincible inclination to allow himself to be deceived," Nietzsche observed in an early essay, and in a famously relativistic passage asks

What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies and anthropomorphisms: ... Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; ... coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins. (Nietzsche 1979: 89; 84)

The Value of Forgetting

Forgetting truths to be illusions, like forgetting gods to be devils, is more than a relativist statement of an epistemological problem -- for Nietzsche elevated the human capacity for forgetting into a central hedonistic principle. Memory of the past tends to actively undermine pleasure, while being amnesiac in the present tends to foster it:

Consider the cattle, ... fettered to the moment and its pleasure or displeasure, ... [Man, on the other hand,] cannot learn to forget but clings relentlessly to the past: however far and fast he may run, this chain runs with him. [...] [T]he animal lives UNHISTORICALLY: for it is contained in the present, ... it can therefore never be anything but honest. [...] [Just as] a child ... plays in blissful blindness between the hedges of past and future. [...] [I]t is always the same thing that makes happiness happiness: the ability to forget ... [...] [I]t is altogether impossible to LIVE at all without forgetting. (Nietzsche 1997b: 60; 61-62)
Memory is the enemy of being, the unreliable record of an all too intrusive past, subject to constant and more flattering revisions ("'I have done that,' says my memory. 'I cannot have done that,' says my pride, and remains inexorable. Eventually -- memory yields" (Nietzsche 1966: 80)). Memory is the uniquely human capacity to lie as well as to create, the Fall into deception and distance, away from the simpler immediacy and "honesty" enjoyed by the babes and the beasts. Any human hope to reclaim such a prelapsarian state of innocence will thus depend upon a devolutionary sense of becoming: "becoming what one already is," in Nietzsche's subtitle to Ecce Homo, implies "forgetting oneself, MISUNDERSTANDING oneself, making oneself smaller, narrower" (Nietzsche 1989: 254). An animal-like regression and reclamation of authenticity, oblivious to human markers of time, calls for "not doing but undoing, .... not .. acts of consciousness but .. acts of forgetting" (Norris 22). Even the idea of becoming is still locked in time, and thus another form of "lying ... ; the enigma which man is to resolve he can resolve only in being," outside "the endless stupid game" of time (Nietzsche 1997b: 155).

Plotted on a continuum, Nietzsche's ideas on being and becoming would look like this:
BEING  < ------------------------ >  BECOMING

| time-oblivious  | time-conscious |
| (unhistorical)  | (historical)   |
| forgetting      | remembering   |
| (honest)        | (lying)       |
| undifferentiation| individuation |
| (animal)        | (human)       |

Man is born into the authentic left state of being, but moves into the inauthentic right with age and the acquisition of language. Some merciful lapses in memory may occasionally restore man's experience of the left, but in general one is taught to remain on the rational, alienated and abstracted right. But these are not simple opposites or polarities so much as expressions of a totality, "the mystery of the totality" known as the coincidentia oppositorum, which includes "the unity of primal creation" as well as "division ... the principle of death":

The world came into existence as a result of the breaking of primordial unity. The world's existence, as well as existence IN the world, presuppose a separation of light from darkness, a distinction between good and evil, a choice and a tension. [...] [But] the ideas of a coincidentia oppositorum always arouse ambivalent feelings; on the one side, man is haunted by the desire to escape from his particular situation and regain a transpersonal mode of life; on the other, he is paralysed by the fear of losing his 'identity' and 'forgetting' himself. (Eliade 80; 106; 94; 123)

This ambivalence is exactly what the "choice" between being and becoming represents: a simultaneous push and pull, replete with anxieties of merging or staying aloof, struggling to be (one) or
not to be (apart). Man is caught between both, unable (for the most part) to effect a transcendence or abolition of the two.

Expressed another way, the "letting oneself go" of Nietzsche's atavistic being and the "holding onto oneself" of Nietzsche's time-bound becoming can appear like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURE ALIENATION</th>
<th>INAUTHENTIC RELATIONS</th>
<th>AUTHENTIC RELATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>(social indifference)</td>
<td>(competition and ambivalence)</td>
<td>(ideal community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being</td>
<td>becoming</td>
<td>overcoming</td>
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</tbody>
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In social terms, "being" is too narrow a solipsism to sustain or partake of human community; a complete or radical sense of being might return one to the company of animals, but not to the family of men. This is because society is firmly enmeshed in "the game of becoming" (Nietzsche 1997b: 161), and as such is dependent on several structures of lies for its continuation. But even "a competitive, consumption-oriented society" requires a certain level of "immersion" from its individual citizens, in order for them to be able to achieve "an authentic sense of self" both within and without it (Baumgardner & Rappoport 134). In other words, the social emphasizes the

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26See Etzioni 458.
value of remembering (as opposed to the anarchy of forgetting). Society wants the individual to learn how s/he has been "constructed by history," the better to enable a larger and more interconnected understanding of "self-knowledge" that becomes (ideally) a life-long, world-wide "process of overcoming amnesia, of remembering" (Starobinski 195). Thus "overcoming" (to borrow Zarathustra's favourite word) represents a utopian moment of authenticity in human relations, moving beyond current limitations into an open, hopeful future.

Seizing the Moment

The question of being and becoming for Vynnychenko is closely related to what he saw as the law of nature, or the instinctual imperative towards sexual union. Forgetting the constraints of human society allows the pursuit of more private pleasures, in a larger blissful forgetting of all the hypocrisies, conflicts, and tensions that beset individual day-to-day experience. Ideally, the sexual act represents a moment of transcendence and supreme human happiness. But an intimate merging of bodies can be suggested just as powerfully by an intimate meeting of minds, as one sees in Vynnychenko's early short story «МОМЕНТ: із оповідань тюремної Шехеразади» ("The Moment: From the Tales of Scheherazade in Prison," 1907) -- which describes a potent sexual encounter that stays suspended, unconsummated, and that much more significant for remaining so.
A nameless imprisoned narrator relates his memories of a socialist smuggling operation, which required him and a young female revolutionary to risk the bullets of police through a long, dark corridor of forest, on their way to the safety of comrades waiting for them on the other side. The greater the danger he feels to be surrounding them, the greater his desire grows for his newly-introduced companion, Mussia. The possibility of death seems responsible for an almost unbearable attraction that springs up suddenly and mutually between them. Their surroundings of trees, birds, and insects seem to hold up a suggestive mirror to their unspoken feelings:

This was the soft quiet of the fields, where the great, healthy, eternal process of reproduction and birth goes on steadily, where the breezes play and flirt with the flowers; ... [...] The field ended. We were in the woods. Massive old oaks with their shaggy branches wide apart looked like extended hands, ready to take us into their treacherous embrace. Graceful white birch trees, as though naked to the waist, hid shyly behind the oaks. [...] The forest made peace with us and continued its busy life, -- the life of love, reproduction, growth. [...] Two little birds flew about from branch to branch, looking at us inquisitively and unexpectedly embraced each other. Butterflies fluttered about in pairs, united in an embrace of love, or sat on leaves in happy exhaustion, twitching their antennae. In the grass insects swarmed in couples. The great, beautiful process of life! (Vynnychenko 1950: 3'; 2)²⁷

²⁷The original Ukrainian reads:
«Тихо тишею поля, де йде великий, здоровий, вічний процес народження, де вітрець пашиться і грається з квітками, ... [...] Жито скінчилося. Починається ліс.
«Старі товсті дуби, широко розставивши волохаті руки-віти, ніби приймали нас в свої зрадливі обійми. Стрункі берези, білі, мов обголені до пояса, соромливо стояли між дубами і ховалися за ними. [...] Ліс помирився з нами й провадив далі своє життя, життя кохання, народження, росту. [...] [Д]ві пташки, пурхаючи
What is most interesting about this text is the chaste way in which Vynnychenko chooses to both interpret and resolve this hotly pulsing situation. The characters' desire becomes defused and deferred, not simply out of life-and-death necessity, but because they sense their desire will only be sharper and keener for it: "it is better this way" («так буде краще»). Out of this sweetly agonizing experience, something essential about the nature of human happiness is revealed to them: it is ephemeral, yet concentrated into a single unmistakable "moment," whose magical memory is forever borne in "the soul" -- not just in the body. "'Happiness is a moment,'" Mussia tells the narrator in farewell. "'Further comes triviality, vulgarity. [...] More than this neither of us can give. Our...our love must die now, so that, as one said, it may never die'" (Vynnychenko 1950: 2). Having exultantly escaped through the forest together, the couple recognizes that "this was the happiness of the blood, brain, nerves, and bones; this was the summit of happiness of

з гілки на гілку, подивлялись на нас і несподівано зпивалися в обіймах. Літали сплетені кохання метелики, або в щасливому безсиллі сиділи на листку й поводили вусиками. В траві парами кишіли кузьки. Одбувався великий, прекрасний процес життя" (Vynnychenko 1968: 140; 141).

Two fairly serviceable English translations of this story actually exist, but the best (because least abridged) variant can be found in Svoboda Ukrainian Daily, in four weekly installments from August 1950. I have modified this translation here to reflect a fuller, more faithful version of Vynnychenko's text than the serialized newspaper format perhaps allowed.

28«'Щастя -- момент. Далі вже буденщина, пошлість. [...] Більше цього ні ви мені, ні я вам не дамо. Наше...наше кохання повинно вмерти заран, щоб, як хтось сказав, ніколи не вмирати'» (Vynnychenko 1968: 145).
birth -- the birth of a soul with its eyes wide open ... This was the triumph of two big insects!" (Vynnychenko 1950: 2). Not only a physical "boundary" between woods and fields is successfully crossed -- an ontological boundary line is reached as well, between life and death, purity and depravity, "angels and insects."

The shameless, unfettered example of the insects speaks to Vynnychenko of pure, honest being -- an example his protagonist would love to emulate:

I love this process in the woods and fields! It is pure and not crippled by human morals, unstained by the hypocrisy of carnal desire. Here it is powerful, open, and simple. I love these insects, birds, -- all these little ignorant opponents of the hypocrisy of their older brother -- man. They take part in this process with their energy and strength, -- or as this brother man would have it, with all the cynicism possible, -- and it seems as though these insects and butterflies call out to the humans: 'Here, look, we do not try to conceal our actions. We have no illegitimate offspring, passports, morals, rules and penal codes. We are healthy, pure little cynics.' (Vynnychenko 1950: 3)
But Vynnychenko’s hero is all too aware that he is a human trapped in becoming, not an insect luxuriating in being. He is a corrupted "cynic" with a cumbersome memory for human "rules, passports, and penal codes," which seldom leaves him free to forget and enjoy a "powerful, open, and simple" response to another human being. The nostalgia in this story touches not only on "the moment" its protagonist remembers sharing with Mussia, but on a larger utopian longing as well: the possibility for a more authentic and immediate relationship between people, patterned after the freer and more forgiving behaviour of insects and birds. Vynnychenko’s narrator simultaneously cherishes his memory of Mussia, but wishes for greater access to still stronger meetings -- beyond all constrictions of human memory and convention, within "the moment" of pure, animal-like experience.

The happiness of the animal, as the perfect Cynic, is the living proof of the rightness of Cynicism. The smallest happiness, if only it is present uninterruptedly and makes happy, is incomparably more happiness than the greatest happiness that comes only as an episode, as it were a piece of waywardness or folly, in a continuum of joylessness, desire, and privation. In the case of the smallest or of the greatest happiness, however, it is always the same thing that makes happiness happiness: the ability to forget. (Nietzsche 1997b: 61-62)

This is the gap that Vynnychenko mourns: the gap between the longed-for animal release of forgetfulness (represented by the post-coital insects, "sitting on leaves in happy exhaustion"), and the rationalized restraint of reality (represented by the soulful, pristine departure of Mussia). Vynnychenko’s hero wants to be able to steal a long,
uninterrupted moment of "the smallest happiness," but he must content himself with a single spiritually sublimated moment of "the greatest happiness" instead. And given the sorrowful note on which this story closes, it is not entirely clear that the "greater" variant was quite what the hero preferred!

Vynnychenko's "Moment" can be seen as a reading of Zarathustra's gateway "Moment," uniting the eternal paths of past and future. "They contradict each other, these paths; they offend each other face to face; and it is here at this gateway that they come together" (Nietzsche 1983: 269-270). For Nietzsche's Zarathustra, "Moment" names the locus of dreadful insight, the "abysmal thought" of man's eternal return on this earth. In a similar way, Vynnychenko identifies his "Moment" as an impossible place bringing together opposites in a timeless, absolute present. But the paths for Vynnychenko here are male and female, and they can ecstatically co-exist for only a tragically short instant -- after which they "contradict" and "offend" each other again. The arc of Vynnychenko's "Moment" encompasses heterosexual attractions and repulsions, which is arguably another way of imagining Nietzsche's gateway: the same paths eternally meet and part there in the fundamentally brief "moment" of life's recreation. Not for nothing does Zarathustra call this gateway image "the vision of the loneliest" (Nietzsche 1983: 268), for Vynnychenko also sees human desire in terms of a lonely failure, constantly frustrated in its quest for a lasting or meaningful feeling of fusion, or totality.
For Gide, the possibility of "becoming who one is" depends upon the capacity to forget one's past, the better to embrace an atavism that revives, refreshes, and restores a lost sense of authenticity. "Rien n'est plus dangereux pour toi," Gide advises his young seeker Nathanaël in Les Nourritures terrestres, "que TA famille, que TA chambre, que TON passé. [...] Il te faut le quitter." (Gide 1991: 44). The bracing vagabond path promises a freedom and openness to define and discover oneself that the safe, plodding, book-bound and family-confined road can simply never afford. "Nathanaël, je te parlerai des INSTANTS. As-tu compris de quelle force est leur PRÉSENCE?" (45) Like Vynnychenko, Gide is arguing here for the power and grace of "the moment" with all of its splendid potential for enabling a courageously independent rebirth, as opposed to the crippling and paralyzing forces of society that keep individuals in timid, infantilized thrall:

L'humanité chérit ses langes; mais elle ne pourra grandir qu'elle ne sache s'en délivrer. L'enfant sevré n'est pas ingrat s'il repousse le sein de sa mère. Ce n'est plus du lait qu'il lui faut. Tu ne consentiras plus, camarade, à chercher aliments dans ce lait de la tradition, distillé, filtré par les hommes. Tes dents sont là pour mordre et mâcher, et c'est dans la réalité que tu dois trouver nourriture. Dresse-toi nu, vaillant; fais craquer les gaines; écoute de toi les tuteurs; pour croître droit tu n'as plus besoin que de l'élan de ta sève et que de l'appel du soleil. (Gide 1991: 242-243)

Emancipation for Gide is a straightforward corollary to human health, growth, and development: maturity and survival are unthinkable without the casting off of society's "swaddling clothes" and the shedding of milk teeth. Deep, sustaining
nourishment for adults can only be found in "reality," with the sharpening of stronger teeth and the refusal of all the comfortable, predigested pap of "tradition." Hunger concentrates and clarifies the true demands and delights of diet, far from the soporific habit of the breast. "Ce que j’ai connu de plus beau sur la terre, Ah! Nathanaël c’est ma faim. Elle a toujours été fidèle. [...] Si ce que tu manges ne te grise pas, c’est que tu n’avais pas assez faim" (38). Dull, gross mammalian matter evolves into a conscious, sharpened botanical image: the mother’s breast is superseded by sunlight, milk turns into sap. The hunger of plants is stoical, solitary. Man for Gide is no longer a thinking reed but a spreading tree of life: enlarged, equal to greater things.

"C’est dans la volupté que prend conscience de soi tout notre être," Gide claims. "C’est pourquoi j’ai trouvé plus d’instruction dans la volupté que dans les livres; pourquoi j’ai trouvé dans les livres plus d’obscurcissement que de clarté" (1991: 213). It is not the life of reflection that is so much at fault as the narrowing, bookish habits of such a life; learning to honour and listen to the needs and joys of the body offers lessons that exceed and expand conventional limits of thought. Above all, Gide appears to want to alert his readers to the dangers of NOT listening, in an echo of Nietzsche’s warning to pay heed to "the call that awakens":

Occasionally the call that awakens -- that accident which gives the ‘permission’ to act -- comes too late, when the best youth and strength for action has already been used up by sitting still; and many have found to
their horror when they 'leaped up' that their limbs had gone to sleep and their spirit had become too heavy. 'It is too late,' they said to themselves, having lost their faith in themselves and henceforth forever useless. (Nietzsche 1966: 222)

Sleep is another form of forgetting, but a fatal one to the work of self-creation: one must continually labour to remain awake and (by extension) active, or alive. "Seizing the day" means following one's intuition or inclination in time, and "leaping up"; failure to do so results in "forever useless" waste.

But there is another echo in Les Nourritures terrestres which is even more direct, if more distant, than Nietzsche's. Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass (1855) first "calls on us to leave the 'distillation' or 'perfume' gathered in books and to come out of doors to breathe the thinner 'atmosphere,' the original hieroglyphs, not the commentary of the scribes" (Hyde 173). Gide's style here also seeks to follow Whitman's example by presenting a similar catalogue of "primary objects" in the form of poetry-in-prose. Where Gide sounds most different from Whitman is in a louder level of anarchy, which insists on "the spontaneity of libidinous release, the joy of flouting authority and evading discipline" (Engelstein 233). Whitman seems content to celebrate the world as he finds it, while Gide seems more impatient to proclaim a "widespread contempt of the great commonplaces of life -- love, marriage, and the rearing of children" (Praz 451).

Gide and Vynnychenko thus borrow different things from Nietzsche's concepts of being and becoming, but arrive at the
same conclusion: free sexual enjoyment of identity that no longer fears to hide itself represents the "summit" of human "health." They are both basically interested in a utopian project, which involves searching for a way to render the individual pursuit of pleasure compatible with the social order. Unfortunately, the social organization of women and children tends to work against these men's dreams of a more "powerful, open, and simple" style of sexual arrangement.

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What, then, does "the special insistence on fatherhood as a theme in the works of male modernists" (Martin 10) have to do with the idea of authenticity? First of all, the prospect of parenthood mobilizes a whole buried mountain of ambivalence, which sets off in turn other similarly ambivalent chains relating to women, property, merging, separation, mortality, regeneration. Fears and anxieties of demonic powers or possession also figure in this pattern. There is probably no greater challenge to individual autonomy and integrity, after all, than the homely task of beginning a family. But even if it is an extremely common human occurrence, it is always something of a miracle as well: the creation of new life -- whether hoped for, undesired, or accidental -- remains, even in our present secular world, a phenomenon touched by a sense of the sacred or divine. The arrival of every screaming infant reiterates, in the baldest
possible way, Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence: the show must go on.

Secondly, the movement from independent adulthood to interdependent parenthood signals a shift from the pursuit of authenticity as a privilege and right of marginality (Charmé 211; Siebers 12), or "anarchy under another name" (Pollard 1995: 181), to the more tempered understanding of authenticity as a commitment and responsibility defined by community (Pippin 62; Golomb 188-189; 201-202). Authenticity may be perceived as "an ability to perceive and embrace our animal being," but at the same time "the question of the status of the animal has meaning only in the context of the social realm" (Norris 232; 21). And there is no better badge of membership in most societies than a baby or two, as a concrete pledge of faith to help perpetuate the existing order. Pure individualism of the lonelier mountain-top sort is actually inimical to the socially-cognizant strain. So there appear to be two competing perceptions of authenticity: the one arguing for liberty, and the other for community. But since Nietzsche's announcement of the death of God, radical freedom seems an easier goal than difficult, dedicated connectedness:

With the moral community of old reduced to the heart of the landlord, both conscience and guilt are [now] feelings that only individuals have. Ethical dilemmas are resolved either by comparing self to self or by having each self sit alone and imagine itself 'before God's judgment seat.' [...] [T]hough the Golden Rule may begin with a simple postulate, it can end with as many conclusions as there are selves (e.g., 'If I were poor, I wouldn't want a handout'). (Hyde 131-132)
The problem with reducing everything to the fiercely free "invisible individual conscience" (Kolakowski 89) is that one can never quite eliminate a niggling innate longing for visible, sociable attachment. Fortunately -- in spite of Émile Durkheim's 1902 post-Nietzschean diagnosis of society's ills as anomie, or a "feeling of normlessness ... induced by modernity's destruction of traditional communities" (Sheppard 9) -- people still persist in recognizing that "the heart of ethics is the desire for community" (Siebers 202). Maybe not as safe, self-contained or conservative a kind of community as that "of old," but a community all the same, adapted to the demands of a new and changing world of values.

Nietzsche's attempted transvaluation of all values has certainly left on society an indelible mark of doubt, which is "central to understanding" -- but too much doubt has resulted in "the question of convincing the individual that [his or her] primary obligation is to society as a whole" (Saul 109; 79). In the absence of any universally binding criteria for conduct, the virtues of society and public interest have become increasingly overshadowed by the pursuits of individual freedom and private interest. "We live in a world in which private parties have a lot of money in relation to timid authority" (Fishman 57). Such appears to be the Nietzschean legacy of the present age: Moloch has settled into the seat left vacant by Moses.

But paradoxes still abound. Nietzsche's "revolution," like any "total" reversal of values, remains deeply impracticable:
"it is as paradoxical to be 'male and female' as to become a child again, to be born anew, to pass through the 'narrow gate'" (Eliade 107). All of these are cherished aspirations of authenticity: to reach and regain some paradise. Even a society that did everything to "allow for the 'ought' of authenticity within the social 'is'"

... would either be destroyed or would destroy that authenticity, which would be manifested precisely in those individuals who attempted to overcome its ethic and exhibited the spirit of revolt. Hence the search for authenticity faces what seems to be a paradoxical situation: it cannot be materialized without society, nor can it be lived within its framework. (Golomb 81)

The spirit of authenticity, then, can not be lived as a practice so much as beheld as an ideal. It consists of several paradoxes and ambivalences, but those are precisely what endow it with so much enduring and intriguing vitality. The human hunger for authenticity is "a divine mystery" that resists reduction or resolution. And like the generations of children who will grow into dreaming of realizing it, it is "perennial as the grass."

This chapter has examined the relationship between authenticity and the biological perpetuation of society. The protagonists of Gide's and Vynnychenko's texts choose to embrace the compromising position of totality, after struggles to achieve a measure of authenticity through purity, intensity and audacity beforehand. Appalled by the double manifestations of the Devil -- understood here as the forces of money and compulsive sexuality, which have ensnared and deformed them -- these characters seek to escape their sense of ambivalence and
alienation in the pursuit of paternity. They resort to the authenticity value of totality for conciliatory relief, since this alone holds out to them some transpersonal form of redemption in the place of their excessively personal miseries. As they accept the move from independent adulthood to interdependent parenthood, they consent to a certain unity of (sexual) opposites as well as a fuller sense of citizenship, in an overall acquiescence to the totalizing pressures of society.
Chapter V
In Place of A Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to place two modernist prose writers within a theory of authenticity that traces its roots back to Nietzsche. Identifying the exact source of a Nietzschean idea or theme in the texts seemed less important than discovering that idea or theme, expressed as a perception of Nietzsche rather than a reflection of him. A thematics of authenticity emerges as the common denominator linking Nietzsche to these modernists as well as to modernism as a whole. Even though "Nietzsche did not use the term 'authenticity' explicitly, ... it is possible to locate [it throughout his entire] body of work ... [which comprises] a positive and comprehensive philosophy of authenticity" (Golomb 68; 86). "Cutting through the lies (as Nietzsche puts it)\(^1\) of Christian metaphysics in order to examine the problematic nature of the human condition more honestly is one of the basic intellectual programs of modernism" (Weir 138). Nietzsche's call "to live in courageous authenticity" through a "completely honest confrontation with reality" appealed to many modernists hungry for new meanings in a suddenly godless world (Russell 225; 224). "It was above all Nietzsche's philosophy,

\(^1\)See Ecce Homo: "The truth speaks out of me. -- But my truth is TERRIBLE; for so far one has called LIES truth. [...] I know myself to stand in opposition to the mendaciousness of millennia. -- I was the first to DISCOVER the truth by being the first to experience lies as lies -- smelling them out" (Nietzsche 1989: 326; emphasis [as always] in the original).
which made its major initial impact during the high modernist period, ... from the turn of the century onwards ..., that constituted the most damaging polemic against nineteenth-century liberal assumptions" (Sheppard 19).2 "In Nietzsche, the most powerful and sustaining assumptions of all Western thought are 'gathered and completed in a decisive respect,' preparing the way for the possibility of a whole new orientation and sensibility" that came to be known as modernism (Pippin 124; see also Peyre 237-238 & 316).

Of all the modernist writers from which to choose, why elect a couple of relatively minor representatives like Gide and Vynnychanko? One good reason, I believe, stems from the fact that most theories and discussions of literary modernism (at least on this continent) tend to overemphasize the Anglo-American or Irish model of aesthetic experimentation, to the detriment and

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2Twilight of the Idols (1888-89) provides a good example of such polemic. There Nietzsche attacks the nineteenth-century conception of the self, as promulgated by such 'improvers' of mankind" as Renan, Sainte Beuve, George Eliot, George Sand, and Thomas Carlyle, as Christian and corrupt: "a metaphysics of the hangman" parading under the smug mask of "the moralistic cow and the fat happiness of the good conscience" (Nietzsche 1983: 500; 489). Nietzsche argues that "Christianity, which despised the body, has been the greatest misfortune of humanity so far," and asks instead for a recognition of the cult of Dionysus, which honoured the instinctual and "the orgiastic mysteries" (552; 561). The self, in Nietzsche's view, contained far more disturbing complexities than these Christian-minded writers and reformers were capable of envisaging. "Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems, ... THAT is what I called Dionysian, ... [...] NOT in order to be liberated from terror and pity, ... but in order to be ONESELF the eternal joy of becoming, beyond all terror and pity -- that joy which included even joy in destroying" (562-563). In other words, being and becoming one's authentic self is a Dionysian possibility and prerogative, not a Christian one; it belongs to a hoped-for future, not to the past.
exclusion of other lesser-known practitioners. A triumvirate of names thus comes to dominate the discourse: James Joyce, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot (with an occasional nod to Virginia Woolf).\(^3\)

Certainly these literary giants are deserving of such across-the-board acclaim, but they do not necessarily define the domain for every other writer of the period. At best, "the Modernist Big Three" can only really offer the limits of their own particular vision to rewrite a given genre or reconceive the world in fresh imaginative terms. Vision remains personal and specific, however much it may appear to be endowed with a transpersonal, universalizing genius. And as such, it can speak only from an idiosyncratic, localized experience which does not by any means speak for all.\(^4\)

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\(^3\)This bias persists even in scholarly efforts to redress some sort of balance, such as Bonnie Kime Scott's anthology *The Gender of Modernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) -- which basically reintroduces the reader to "silenced" female counterparts to Joyce, Pound, and Eliot in the same Anglo-American tradition.

\(^4\)Nietzsche, of course, is considered a member of a similarly dominant trio. Together with Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx (and less often, James Frazer and Charles Darwin), Nietzsche is named a "founding father of modernism," whose insights into human nature were "proven" in the devastating experience of the first World War. "The war was a vast acting out of what had been revealed, in very different ways, by Nietzsche, Freud, Frazer, and Marx: man is not a rational animal able to understand and control his world and himself, but a mysterious being of unknown heights and depths, subject to forces both within and without that he comprehends only in part" (Spears 42). But the war's sheer horror and brutality also erased the meaning of all theories: Nietzsche's words, like all words, "had become like the mud on the Somme" (Eksteins 218). The unprecedented capacity for cruelty on a massive scale went beyond language, and well beyond anything that the war's "forefathers" may have imagined. So Nietzsche's appeal or relevance -- like that of Marx and Freud -- has its limits too, as surely as that of Joyce, Pound, and Eliot.
Thus a reconsideration of "low" modernists against the "high" modernist grain of the canon can assist in the identification of blind spots, while scholars continue to debate what modernism was or might have been: not simply an elitist avant garde hermetically sealed in on itself, but a more diffuse and accessible phenomenon as well. Recognizing more far-flung and forgotten practitioners of "boulevard fiction" like Vynnychenko enlarges and sharpens our picture of a modernism lost in the past. Vynnychenko may have practised what we call minor or second-level fiction ... [which] doesn't have the unity of structure and language that the masterworks offer. It keeps in all sorts of material that major writers make it their business to refine or get rid of: subplots that keep appearing and disappearing, compulsive asides and expostulations, whole lectures on various topics. And yes, this does mean [later twentieth-century] readers have to live with a surfeit of [early twentieth-century] period attitudes and literary devices. But it also means they get the benefit of a less strictly edited sensibility. These novelists are like archivists, giving us much fuller access to the records, conscious and unconscious, of the age. (Jefferson 1)

In other words, the value of reading Vynnychenko today is the same as the value of reading someone like H.G. Wells -- as a supplementary historical document, contributing a corrective sense to our understanding of another era, beyond the high water marks of cultural achievement that we are all taught to revere under the names of their more luminous contemporaries. Of course, ALL of Ukrainian modernism (literary or otherwise) remains comparatively neglected for a plethora of political reasons. But "how can the history of Ukrainian literature be written without the inclusion of Vynnychenko?" (Dziuba 337).
What looks "minor" from a contemporary Western perspective turns out to hold a "major" enough position within the Ukrainian one: it's all relative again to one's idiosyncratic, localized experience.

Gide's marginality is perhaps not so obvious, since he saw himself "en train de se figer en monument" within his own lifetime (Goulet 30). He is duly mentioned in Malcolm Bradbury's and James McFarlane's "textbook" on modernism (with his photograph even enshrined on the cover), but he remains curiously tangential to the discussions -- mainly present in several name-dropping series to amplify a point about other European literary modernists, and not at all developed on his own terms -- except for a passing mention of Les Faux-Monnayeurs as "a work of formidable technical complexity" that nevertheless appears "imperfect" and "baroque" (620; 410). In short, Gide may be acknowledged for his impressive formal innovations in prose but at the same time never quite accepted for them -- no doubt because his (more or less) open admission of homosexuality initially interfered with the reception of his work, in a way that Merchant-Ivory-ized E.M. Forster's identical but far more private profession of orientation did not. But Gide never really sought to belong to the present moment or fashion, anyway: "nothing," he declared to himself in 1918, "is more foreign to me than this concern for modernism ... I do not seek to be of my

epoch; I seek to overflow my epoch" (Gide 1978: 305). Few subsequent writers (French or otherwise) have found in Gide their "original literary Ur-soup" of influence; Roland Barthes is a rather lonely exception in acknowledging Gide's impact on his early development ("On ne parle plus assez de Gide" (Barthes 213)).

A theory of authenticity to unite all of these disparate threads proved more challenging than initially expected, because the "map" I hoped to follow -- using the frequency of the words purity, intensity, audacity and totality in the vocabularies of my three authors as co-ordinates of sorts -- proved to be less striking than the larger thematic parallels that asserted themselves. "Stringing together [things] on thematic lines, summarizing, paraphrasing, surrendering to the mood -- what sort of technique is this, after the days of critical 'deconstruction'? [...] [It is as if] I myself slip into the naïveté of the [subject] I am talking about" (Massey 90). And the later I read in Gide's and Vynnychenko's own time, the more I seemed to discern a slide away in their writings from the exuberant effusions of youth (imbued with a radical hope of realizing authenticity as an ideal) towards a reluctant recognition of that ideal's impossibility and inevitable compromise. Nietzsche, of course, can not be charted in the same way since he reacted to his own "mid-life crisis" differently and

6The original French reads: "Rien ne m'est plus étranger que ce souci de modernisme ... Je ne cherche pas à être de mon époque; je cherche à déborder mon époque" (Gide 1948: 651).
did not survive much past it. He eerily eulogizes himself before the fact of his mental breakdown and death, contentedly enumerating all of his achievements in the "immortal" afterglow of his forty-fourth birthday, which he "buries" in Ecce Homo. Had his mind continued to live with his body to the age of almost fifty-six, would he too have renounced with chastened hindsight the impetuous productions of his younger self? Or was his a mind "born already old," regardless of biological chronology?

In any case, a persistent obsession and struggle with sexuality -- defining and accounting for the Other -- seemed to underpin every attempt to explore or come to terms with the self as a philosophical or artistic problem, for Gide and Vynnychenko as much as for Nietzsche. I have tended to focus on gender as a consistent point of comparison and departure throughout this study because my method is avowedly and necessarily antediluvian: whenever I am presented with a text, my first concern is to inquire whether any voice is being unkindly excluded, and then to ask why the work can not or will not be made more hospitable. At some level I know I am merely seeking to insert myself as a reader (and writer) into what is often an all-male conversation, trying to imagine another possible text with some creative reinstatement of a felt absence of perspective. Somehow I cannot forget -- even (or perhaps especially) when I am reading -- that I am a woman; the world does not generally permit me the luxury of forgetting.
This leads me to consider a crucial ingredient in the whole cherished notion of authenticity: what is ineradicably present, what can't be really forgotten or quite made to go away, is often the most critical element of all. Authenticity is simultaneously about freedom and essence: freedom to be exactly what one is. But freedom is a luxury that is best understood in negative terms: what am I free NOT to worry about, NOT to think about, NOT to be reminded of? "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose" (Kristofferson): even this popular formulation recognizes the deep negativity at the heart of a complex and conflicted ideal like authenticity. Only a very limited set of innate qualities in any given culture will confer the privilege of unthinking acceptance -- that is, freedom from corrosive concerns about belonging, or being good enough. Authenticity is not actually a socially-approved pursuit for everyone, as one might democratically assume -- because everyone is not automatically given the luxury of "forgetting who they are." In fact, authenticity offers quite different things to different people.

Gender is one huge human polarity; race is of course the other; while class (even in this era of post-communist collapse) forms still a third cause for division. "There seems to be a suspicion that the idea of authenticity has been co-opted into assimilationist, post-colonialist, monolithic WASP be-all and end-all strategies and structures" (Lubiano 66) -- to the extent that "it comes down to the FALLACY of authenticity" (Bongo 20;
emphasis added). No struggles for meaningful self-determination or autonomous self-expression can possibly remain untainted by the overarching and predetermining shadow of "dead white males."

For example,

in African American intellectual circles, it is no longer easy to make claims about black authenticity regarding a literary work without appearing illiberal and underinformed. [...] [It's all symptomatic of] colonized societies attempting decolonization under the sign of the revolutionary, the organic, and the AUTHENTIC. [...] [But all that this sign does is re]create ... a centrism, an essentialism along different alignments, reproducing its own version of the marginal and other in a process that, though revolutionary, is nevertheless hegemonic. [...] Though useful for a brief cultural moment, it locks our literature into a reified past that stifles both learning and imagination. (Hongo 21; emphasis in the original)

Here authenticity unexpectedly seems to turn into its opposite: not the harbinger of liberty, but the weight of another oppression. This passage highlights a dimension of experience closed to my own: skin colour (which is something I seldom feel forced to contemplate). And in this other frame of reference, authenticity bears only short-lived gifts that are not necessarily constructive. "The revolutionary, the organic, and the authentic" end up as tautologies that frustrate and undercut the impetus towards change. Between qualifiers ("though," "nevertheless," "Though"), authenticity is finally deemed in the context of race to constitute more of a dirty word than a saving grace -- since it promises to be merely "useful for a brief cultural moment" before spoiling into its own devolution.
Race as a dimension of difference for Nietzsche, Gide and Vynnychenko in their understandings of the pursuit of authenticity would provide fertile ground for further research. Although this question has already been admirably explored by Donna Weaver Santaniello as far as Nietzsche is concerned, it remains an as yet unexamined issue in Gide and Vynnychenko. There are puzzling emphases on Jewishness in Gide's *Geneviève, ou la confidence inachevée* (1936) and in Vynnychenko's «Талісман» ("The Talisman," 1905), which would benefit from more consideration and amplification -- since modernism has not as a rule enjoyed much immunity from a certain "ugliness" or "unfairness and outrage as part of the revolutionary act," in its "struggle for a new authenticity" (Fussell 1996). And anti-Semitism is unfortunately a much, much older and more enduring phenomenon than modernism ever was. Laura Engelstein's reflections on Otto Weininger and Vasilii Rozanov, "the Scylla and Charybdis of anti-Semitism" from the turn of this century, provide a much-needed model for such scholarship -- lucidly examining the pervasive perceived links between Jews and women as "both excluded from public life" because both "represented the

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Judaism is not a "racial" issue at all, being a religious affiliation and culture that, while observing endogamy, certainly welcomes and accepts conversions from outside. The question here is again of perception: racism is very much an irrational and emotional construct that exaggerates small differences between people into "essential" ones, and is hardly confined to visible variations in skin pigments.
impersonal procreative forces that male individuality must subdue, [as well as] the collective and familial ties civic man must rise above" (Engelstein 301; 331; 302).

Gide’s and Vynnychenko’s opinions on record about Jews are no less problematical than their attitudes towards women: a dehumanizing tendency is evidently carried over in common. In a pre-World War I diary entry for 1914, Gide insists on the moral and artistic deficiencies of the Jews⁸ -- a "private" prejudicial sentiment that eventually finds its more public expression in the villainous portraits of Strouvilhou and Ghéridanisol, the suggestively Semitic cousins at the head of the counterfeiting ring in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*. Even "the great André Gide tried to explain away Céline’s anti-Semitic ravings in the name of literary ‘creativeness’ [, which] says volumes about just how banal and unremarkable racist ‘solutions’ had become just prior to the [second world] war" (Paris C18; Carroll 283).

As for Vynnychenko, he is more kindly remembered in Ukrainian literary history for contributing the (late) innovation of sympathetic Jewish-Ukrainian characters, starting with his

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⁸From January 24 of this year, Gide tries to catch himself (not very successfully) in mid-rant by rhetorically asking, "Pourquoi parler ici de défauts? Il me suffit que les qualités de la race juive ne soient pas des qualités françaises; ... [...] ... de nos jours, il y a en France une littérature juive, qui n’est pas la littérature française, ... [...] "Ils parlent plus facilement que nous parce qu’ils ont moins de scrupules. Ils parlent plus haut que nous parce qu’ils n’ont pas les raisons que nous avons de parler parfois à demi-voix, de respecter certaines choses. [...] Mieux vaudrait, le jour où le Français n’aurait plus force suffisante, disparaitre, plutôt que de laisser un malappris jouer son rôle à sa place, en son nom" (Gide 1948: 397; 398).
first play Дисгармонія (Disharmony) in 1906 and followed by Між двох сил (Between Two Powers) in 1919 -- two tragedies that mourn the "political and ethical [inevitability] of renewed Jewish-Ukrainian enmity" (Grabowicz 340-341). But he also produced a curious article in 1923 entitled "The Jewish Question in Ukraine," which urged "both humanity and the Jews" ("людськість і єврейство") to forget their hostilities and embrace the common nation-building cause instead (Vynnychenko 1992: 125). Obviously the distinction that he drew between the Jew and "the rest of humanity" is in itself quite telling, however well-intentioned it may have sounded to its author. Like Gide, Vynnychenko had difficulty recognizing Jews as full fellow citizens or compatriots: they were de facto "non-Ukrainians" ("не-українські") (118)). Unfortunately, Vynnychenko suffered from populist assumptions that tended to flatten all social problems into economic ones, in a simplistic division between the evil rich (historically urban literate Jews) and the righteous poor (rural masses of unlettered Ukrainians). The power of nationalism to divide and distort even modernism's most "tolerant" minds requires much more study.10

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10Vynnychenko directly addresses the problem of nationalism as a problem of authenticity, in his 1919 novel Хочу! (literally I Want!). His Ukrainian-born protagonist is a poet torn between "passing" as Russian, or honouring his "Little Russian" roots -- a conflict that drives him to attempt suicide at the beginning of the novel, and then embrace the suicide guaranteed by the outbreak of World War I, by his enlisting in the military at the
The best way to pick one's way through such ideological mine fields, it seems, is to approach a troubling text as something "neither in isolation from the author's politics nor reducible to them," whose "production ... is never innocent of the place-time circumstances in which it is created and (later) received" (Dear 226; 221). Since the advent of postmodernism and its radical questionings of everything from subjectivity to "master narratives" -- a movement that Nietzsche once again obviously presaged, in yet another incarnation -- modernism can no longer hope to remain "innocent" and aloof. Context washes over text in ever widening waves of concern; identity and "truth" become rocked and riddled with uncertainties and querulous, competing claims.

Where, then, can we hope to locate such fractured phenomena as identity and authenticity? "If they exist," one writer suggests, they are nowhere at rest. They float like fragments of a continent on a molten sea -- always in motion, sometimes disappearing under one another like tectonic

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novel's end. Vynnychenko's hero fails to achieve the self-determination he craves, independent of national borders or languages, that he identifies as such a capacity in Nietzsche: the capacity, namely, to raise the will to power ("desire") into "the law of life for all," a law beyond "the boundary which divides good from evil, the desirable from the undesirable." This translation of Nietzsche into supranationalist terms is thwarted by the disturbing charms of a Russian woman in the novel, which serve to remind the hero of the futility of either escaping or "transcending" his origins. When he finally "sleeps with the (Russian) enemy," Vynnychenko's hero slides into a decisive decline of self-deception and despair that prefigures Ukraine's own slide into the arms of the Russian military in World War I. See Vynnychenko, 

plates, only to return to the surface in a reconstituted form. The geological metaphor is apt. It reminds us that very little is new: we are merely sifting through the metamorphosed foundations of previous eras. (Dear 232)

Metaphors again! In the end, they seem to be all that we ever have. But this seems somehow in keeping with the emphasis and subject of this study, too -- for "metaphor is the universal language, the truly international element in every language, as sex is the international and transtemporal form of communication at the physical level" (Massey 135). The present study has tried to contextualize a selection of modernist texts in terms of gender, revolution, and reproduction as metaphors for authenticity, with all their tangled relations to ethics. Future and fuller work on a theory of authenticity, integrating the additional metaphors of race and class, will certainly illuminate ethical issues in modernism that will no doubt continue to follow us into the brave new twenty-first century.
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Appendix A-1

Originals or Translations of Ukrainian and French Texts Cited

i) "Лишаться вражіннє, що Винниченко, як учень, слухняно й на віру прийняв де-які думки Ніцше і постарався їх тільки переказати устами своїх надуманих героїв, а не втілити в художні образи. [...] Герої Винниченка роблять вражіннє таких людей, котрі зхопили тільки голі слова філософії Ніцше, упростили ту філософію й пристосували 'для домашнього обихода'."

ii) "... в його світогляді є певні прикмети індивідуалістичної філософії Ніцше, хоч часом письменник і збивається з шляху справжньої художньої творчості й починає йти стежкою не властивою дійсному талантові й цим немов би зводить на нівець ті прикмети."

iii) "... вона ж мені ближча, рідніша за всіх Теп і Олесь. Так, так, рідніша мені Осеві, стареньким моїм, Ксені й Мані. Я сміло можу повести її до своїх і не боятись, що вона буде чужа ім."

iv) "Il faut, Nathanaël, que tu brûles en toi tous les livres."

v) "Plus de sources jaillissent de la terre que nous n'avons de soifs pour les boire."

vi) "Cités ... dont la lueur suppure autour, comme du lait."

vii) "Families, I hate you! closed circles round the hearth; fast shut doors; jealous possession of happiness."

viii) "... the women were nowhere to be seen" (117);
"... close by was a well where beautiful women, almost naked, came to draw water" (130).
(Same translation as above.)
"Their wisdom? ... Oh! their wisdom! Don’t let’s make too much of it. It consists in living as little as possible, distrusting everything, taking endless precautions. There is always something stale in their advice, something stagnant. They are like those mothers who drive their children silly with injunctions: ‘Don’t swing so hard, the cord’ll break.’ ‘Don’t stand under that tree, it’s going to thunder.’ ‘Don’t walk in the wet, you’ll slip.’ ‘Don’t sit on the grass, you’ll dirty yourself.’ ‘At your age you ought to know better.’ ‘How many times shall I have to tell you ... not to put your elbows on the table ...?’ ‘The child’s unbearable!’ Oh, madam, far less than you!” -- From the same translation of Fruits of the Earth (with Later Fruits of the Earth appended), 203.

"It is intolerably warm, but the cows smell sweet. Ah! if only I could go back to the time when the farmer’s children who smelt so pleasantly of sweat used to scamper about with us in and out of the cows’ legs; we searched for eggs in the corners of the hayracks; we watched the cows for hours on end; we watched the dung fall and squelch on the ground; we had bets as to which one would let drop first, and one day I fled terrified, because I thought one of them was suddenly going to give birth to a calf.” -- Same translation of Fruits of the Earth, 88.

"I care for flowers only because they are a promise of fruit ... [such as] the fig ... [a] fruit which is but the ripened flower" (Fruits of the Earth, 69).

"... та сама співа ветха сила, перед якою розум скавучить як безпосиї й злякане цущення».

"... чого ж я почуваю себе таким самотнім, таким знесиленим, таким безпорадним, як спіле щеня, закинуте від матері?»

"... з якимсь болючим виттям.»

"Я знаю, чого хочеться Наташі. Вона хоче більше того, ніж я їй хотів дати. І хоче взяти силою, примусом. Примусом! [...] Ні, я не можу спокійно про це думати. Вона знає, що я думаю про рождіння дітей і цим хоче прикувати мене до себе.»

"... я не похилю голови перед батогом.»

"... почування й є корінь всієї моралі. Без чуття нема гріха!»
xviii) "Я знаю ж, що цьому падінню в великі мірі сприяє те, що я не маю грошей, що я холодную і фізично ослаб."

xix) «... чистий бред якогось Заратустри.»

xx) «В смерті моїй винен Вадим Стельмащенко. Скажіть йому це. Прошайте, товариші! Наташа.»

xxi) "... il est de fortes joies pour les forts, et de faibles joies pour les faibles que les fortes joies blesseraient."

xxii) "J'ai horreur de la sympathie; toutes les contagions s'y cachent; on ne devrait sympathiser qu'avec les forts."

xxiii) «Я дам одній Наташі втіхи на два місяці, а за се утворю нову цілу Наташу. І до того, ся нова Наташа буде й МОЯ.»

xxiv) «Слава богу, я тепер увільнений від тяжчого: я можу її не жаліти.»

xxv) «... катастрофа, яка різала його життя на дві частини.»

xxvi) «Я мушу заткнути свою пробоїну. От це факт. З неї вся спавість, цей глупий сентиментальний біль, самота, дурноваті балалечки з якимись братами. З цим треба покінчити.»

xxvii) "[E]n chaque être, le pire instinct me paraissait le plus sincère. -- Puis, qu’appelais-je sincérité?"

xxviii) "[At the end w]e did not speak either, for we each of us had a strange feeling of uneasiness. We felt, alas, that by telling his story, Michel had made his action more legitimate. Our not having known at what point to condemn it in the course of his long explanation seemed almost to make us his accomplices. We felt, as it were, involved." -- Translated by Dorothy Bussy (The Immoralist [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961] 203).
Chapter 1 -- An Embarrassment to the Mykul's'kyi Family.¹

Introduction to an upper-class clan, where every member is ailing in various degrees -- from the tubercular infirmity of the old matriarch to the "neurasthenia" of the youngest son Yuri. Even the ideal daughter Olesya is regretfully near-sighted (she refuses to mar her beauty by wearing spectacles). The family argues about the disgraceful conduct of Yuri, bringing shame upon the respectable Mykul's'kyi name. Middle son Modest is always on the verge of a violent marital spat with the idly salacious Dina.

Chapter 2 -- Savchuk's Envy of the Smooth-Talking Vodosviats'kyi, and His Pathetic Proposal to Olesya.

The Mykul's'kyis receive visitors Savchuk and Vodosviats'kyi and soon a political discussion is underway (debating the need for national self-determination and the question of socialism). Later the miserable Savchuk manages to turn to the more pressing business of cornering Olesya in some relative solitude and confessing his love for her. Olesya politely refuses to marry him (or anyone else) because her mad sister Zoya, unbalanced ever since the occurrence of a violent pogrom on the family estate, needs her as a full-time, self-sacrificing caregiver.

Chapter 3 -- Vadym's Visit to the Mykul's'kyi Household.

Dramatic, slovenly entrance of the rebel poet Vadym Stel'mashenko, suddenly back from Siberian exile and tracking mud into the nest of gentry, asking to see Modest. Everyone is

¹Improvised chapter heading resuming plot action, for facilitating ease of reference; where a chapter title exists in the original, it will be translated here in italics.

All translations are my own, for absolute lack of same.
excited by the presence of the strange celebrity, and a
discussion of the merits of his poetry turns into an argument
about Nietzsche and morality. Dina asks Vadym if he is a
"Nietzschean" poet or an "immoralist", to which he replies that
he is, if anything, a post-Nietzschean immoralist (p. 30). Vadym
then explains that Nietzsche was just an intellectual who never
understood that feeling and not thought is the only arbiter of
morality, and that the only way to achieve freedom from morality
is through a complete absence of feeling (p. 32) -- an
achievement that only he, Vadym, has survived and come back to
tell about. Naturally, the intellectual Modest (who only knows
Nietzsche from books) disagrees with Vadym's dismissal of
Nietzsche as a clever but shallow "egoist" (p. 34). Vadym
withdraws into excuses for his "wildness", having only now in
their company broken a two-year vow of silence.

The women of the family are not involved in the intellectual
debate; they are all moved to pity the "terrible sickliness" of
their visitor instead, and draw him into talking about his own
kin. Vadym obliges, but only his personal background preceding
his arrest is disclosed. Finally, the pretext for his visit is
revealed by a message (left unknown) that Vadym promised to
deliver to Modest from a (nameless) comrade in exile. Olesya
offers Vadym some refreshments, but Vadym abruptly refuses, and
leaves.

Chapter 4 -- Vadym's Homecoming and Welcome From His "Aunt" Tepa.

Vadym remains in his strange, alienated-from-everyone-and-
everything sense of "rapture" ("zakhvat"), floating sentiment-
free. He observes a policeman harassing an innocent girl for
prostitution and "unconsciously" intervenes to assist her, but
merely mechanically enacts her rescue. As he further makes his
way towards his old homestead, he meets a "spectacularly ugly
hunchbacked woman" being mocked by a mob. She has been thrown
out onto the street with all of her possessions, for being three
months behind in her rent. She is appealing to a pitiless but
beautiful mistress, whom the crowd supports as the voice of
"might is right": Vadym recognizes the beauty to be his old
flame Tepa (Stepanyda), now allied with his unscrupulous
capitalist uncle, Nykodym. She has trouble recognizing him,
however, since Vadym's years in exile have changed him:
"socialism has obviously cost you a lot," she says, of the
convictions that have imprisoned and aged him (pp. 51-52). She,
on the other hand, remains as "luscious" as ever. She leads him
to the threshold where his parents live, in thrall to Nykodym on
his evil factory estate, and then leaves him with a command to
see her again as soon as possible.
Chapter 5 -- Vadym's Less-Than-Perfect Family Reunion.

Vadym starts to lose something of his "emotionless immunity" when he beholds his mother, but especially his father, after his long absence of eight years. The elder Stel'mashenko has suffered a disfiguring stroke as the result of a cruel joke the capricious Tepa played on him two years ago: reading from a fictional letter to the illiterate old man, she informed him that Vadym had been hung for his subversions in Siberia. Now, in addition to the arm he had already lost to the factory machines in the wake of a labour dispute several years before, Vadym's father is a complete cripple, and prone to a disturbing new weakness for religious dogma besides, so that his son can only recognize him as a shadow of his former strong and self-reliant self.

Vadym's pious mother talks about the shameless goings-on in the local church, dominated and profaned by Nykodym and Tepa and their "demonic" orgies of sex and violence. The whole factory community is caught in the stranglehold of the Mafia-like Black Hundreds (a vicious anti-Semitic sect), of whom Nykodym is the most brazenly prominent member.

Suddenly, as if to add insult to injury, Tepa's nasty brother Styopka enters unannounced and demands Vadym's mother to sew a button on his jacket for him, bullying and jeering at her, as a pretext for getting a look at her son, the returned convict. After his mother has meekly complied and Styopka has left, she scolds Vadym for not being good for anything but "scribbling verses", which can hardly get his impoverished, factory-dependent family out of their worsening condition, and exhorts him to use his past connection with the now upwardly-mobile Tepa to get a job.

Vadym leaves to look for a hotel in which to spend the night, and on his way he meets up with the ugly hunchback again, who is now struggling with one of Tepa's thugs to keep a trunk from being taken from her in payment for the twenty rubles she owes. Vadym once again comes carelessly to the rescue, pushing aside the extortionist and emptying his own pocket on the hunchback's behalf -- as a gesture of defiance to the watching Tepa.

Chapter 6 -- While Waiting For A Mykuls'kyi Family Meeting, A Jealous Scene Erupts Between Modest and Dina.

Conservative eldest son Anatoliy frets at the deterioration of family finances and wants to assemble everyone to discuss new deployments of existing resources (and castigate brother Yuri for his distressing socialist "slumming"). Oily family friend
Vodosviats'kyi promises to use all of his old socialist influence to keep the renegade Yuri from letting his share of the family estate get swallowed up by penurious socialist causes -- as the result of the charms of a certain Comrade Rina -- but he is not permitted to take part in the intimate family council.

Modest wearily announces Yuri's much-awaited arrival, but he is more preoccupied by the discovery of an anonymous love letter on the floor beside his wife's dressing table. He confronts her about it, and thrashes her before she can even try to answer his questions of its provenance. Dina submits stoically to the blows, neither confirming nor denying his suspicions. Then, as if nothing out of the ordinary had ever happened, the couple joins the rest of the family for Anatoliy's assembly.

Chapter 7 -- The Return of the Prodigal Son Yuri, And His Renunciation of the Family Fortune.

Yuri arrives, but first reads a letter that has been waiting for him from Rina, which accuses him of holding too much back in their relationship. Then Vodosviats'kyi demands to talk to Yuri first, alone, and appeals to him to give up his questionable socialist alliances, because he will never be able to overcome his superior class origins and be accepted as one of his cherished inferiors, anyway. Yuri begins to get a headache and terminates the interview. No sooner is Vodosviats'kyi gone than his gentle sister Olesya enters to call him into the family meeting. Yuri and Olesya have always been close, but he does not confide anything in her now. He dreads meeting his mother's adoring eyes (he has always been her favourite).

Anatoliy proposes in front of his gathered kin to sell some family land to pay off family debts, and to invest in a sugar mill to generate more income. Yuri declares in response to this that, as a socialist, he wants nothing to do with any of it, and would prefer to be cut out of all the family inheritance if he can not secure his rightful portion for his own use right now. Everyone is shocked, and Yuri's mother tells him he must remember that before he was a socialist, he was a son and brother, and "love for one's own" must always come first (p. 116). But Yuri is not moved by this argument and insists on disowning himself from them all. He then retreats into a morphine-induced haze -- not because of a headache so much as because he knows he is a hopeless addict, in need of some relief.
From the Notebooks of Vadym Stel'mashenko
(Chapter Interruption: pp. 120-165)
Flashback to Vadym’s Years of Exile in Siberia.

Vadym records his meeting with the hopelessly ugly Natasha by the second paragraph. He observes that her crushing knowledge of her ugliness makes her uniquely susceptible to manipulation (p. 120).

He muses that some feeling is always at the root of every act — that we are more prisoners of a blind, "burning point" ("tochka horinnia") than we like to think, and that "motivation" is always an intellectualized abstraction after the fact. Urgency, impulsion, drive, all come from obscure origins and return there — be it the male one of sperm or the female one of egg (p. 122). "The secret process of burning", which makes all life or action possible, begins with a yearning towards some "feeling" and then gives birth to an "act," but both have to be present to produce a meaningful or fruitful result.

He reflects that "no spring will ever come" for the likes of Natasha; but then again, she can’t be a sexless creature either (p. 126). Women like her should only wear men’s clothes (p. 133). Then he asks himself whether his socialism is so much hypocrisy, if his populist love for "the people" can not translate itself into a concrete instance of overcoming bourgeois tastes — if he can not make himself, in other words, love the abject, who deserve and need it more than those who don’t have to beg for it (the beautiful, the intelligent, the healthy, or the happy). He considers the challenge of intimacy with Natasha as a test of the limits of his own integrity — with the hopeful byproduct of bolstering her self-esteem through the "gift" of his love, supposed to transfigure and raise her to his level. However, he would prefer to "create a new and whole Natasha" rather than perpetuate more little hideous Natashas in the process, with the "accident" of a baby (p. 135). And if the experiment of two or three months' maximum duration begins to become too arduous, he comforts himself with the thought that he can always fall back on "instinct" doing the job alone for them both (p. 137).

But he finds that his project is harder than he imagined it could be. At the same time, however, he derives a certain pleasure from forcing only the idea of Natasha on his flesh (using her ugliness as a hair-shirt for masochistic self-deprivation) (p. 138). Natasha meanwhile "blooms", unawares (p. 140).

Natasha becomes pregnant (p. 142), but won’t get an abortion (p. 143) — preferring to keep her newly-found source of happiness "chained" to her, "by force" (p. 144). She then starts spreading
the story in the community of exiles that she was taken advantage of, to bring public pressure to bear upon Vadym to marry her (pp. 145-146). He refuses, and takes to wandering in the woods "like a wounded wolf" (p. 148), where he drifts to the pulse of "a dark, powerful force ... which lives in me completely independently of me" (p. 149).

"My freedom, my life is in Natasha's hands," he realizes suddenly and belatedly -- and as he imagines their baby being born, "something snaps" inside him "like a key in a lock", overflowing his body with a "warm, strange, indistinct force" (p. 151). He feels like a blind, motherless puppy (p. 148; p. 152). He regrets even suggesting the idea of an abortion to Natasha in the first place (p. 153).

But as his solitude deepens, so does his contempt for the "whip" of other people's opinions, and the corresponding strength of his convictions -- so that he becomes hardened against "the herd" ("I will not bend my head before that whip") and indifferent to the emotional claims it tries to make to keep him in its moral grip (p. 155):

The idols with worn away noses still rule the world as much as when their noses were still intact. They are still just as cold and cruel as ever, defending the same lie in the name of truth, hate in the name of love, death in the name of life. [...] They guard the eternal tablets of past testaments with the same cold, indifferent, passionless solemnity. But they never have and they never will grasp the fact that people want happiness, not tablets. [...] We socialists ... fall victim to these same idols. [...] We are half-starved fanatics, ascetics, hermits ... But [we always fail to see that no matter which victims are sacrificed at their feet,] it's always the same idols and the same tablets that must always remain -- as changeless, eternal, singular, and chiselled in stone [as the relentless procession of their victims]. (pp. 156-157)

Just before Natasha drowns herself and her unborn child, she curses Vadym:

You have spat on the dream of happiness I have cherished my whole life! ... So you think you've won at your little game with me, and you're now off the hook? Oh no, my dear ... you can't get rid of me so easily. Yes! Don't think that you can play so cheaply with the life of someone even so lowly as me! ... " (p. 158)

Vadym flees from the blame Natasha puts on him in her suicide note, and is ostracized by the Siberian community. He is confident that he will eventually prevail against their collective blindness to "the idol of authenticity" which he alone
knows to be an idol of hypocrisy, punishing the transgressors of its two-faced laws in order to keep a morally bankrupt society intact (p. 160). He cries out to the taiga and the moss and "the crooked branches of the pines" to bear witness to his vow of solitude, born not out of guilt or cowardice, but out of proud necessity and honest strength (p. 161).

Vadym begins to identify himself with the brotherhood of hermits and fakirs, "pure-blooded immoralists" who have renounced society's petty goals for higher "ecstasies" in dizzying freedom -- but he fights against succumbing to their weakness of compensatory and all-consuming pride (pp. 162-163). He vows to become "stronger than any saint that ever withdrew from the world", because he has the advantage of having eyes and mind unclouded by any comforting religious doctrine. He begins to write poetry that "corrodes the noses of idols" and sends it to the outside world.

A year passes since Natasha's death, and Vadym is still rapturously scribbling "the pure ravings of some Zarathustra" in his absolute solitude (pp. 164-165), but he is now contemplating a return to society.

(Here the notebook entries abruptly break off.)

Chapter 8 -- Back to the Present: VadymFeels Pangs of Family Obligation, and Bumps Into Olesya.

Vadym wakes up in the middle of the night in his hotel room, thinking someone has just called out to him. Not able to fall asleep again, he considers what to do next, but is confused by the vague feeling of having committed "some fatal, unexpected, ruinous mistake" (p. 166). He flips through his notebook for some solace, but remains unrelieved. He puzzles over the lack of sentiment he should properly feel for the plight of his parents -- but "when the feeling of love or respect is gone, no command can summon it from him" (p. 167; emphasis in the original). He concludes "there is no strength or proud ecstasy or triumph over oneself" that is possible in this world -- there is only "that same blind ancient force before which man's reason cowers like a weak and frightened puppy" (p. 168). So, now that he's back in society, he makes plans along socially acceptable lines: to honour his father and mother by trying to help them with all the money he can try now to make. He rationalizes this not as a lapse into sentimental weakness, but as another opportunity to fortify and test himself.

Later, after some breakfast, he sees a vagrant trying to wheedle a cigarette out of a coachman. Vadym promptly extends a lighted cigarette of his own to the tramp before carelessly continuing on
his way to the Mykul’s’kyis. He meets Olesya outside the house, accompanying her mad sister Zoya on a walk. They exchange pleasantries and are about to all go in together to see Modest, when an acquaintance of the Mykul’s’kyis comes up to them on the street, and once introduced to Vadym, declares himself to be one of the most fervent admirers of his poetry. Proceeding again to the house, Vadym tries to converse with Olesya but is hindered by the presence of Zoya.

Chapter 9 -- Modest’s Bad Mood Dispels Vadym’s Hopes For A Loan, Or A Job.

Anatoliy decides to try discouraging Yuri’s bad influences by starting with Rina and offering to buy her off. Modest’s fight with Dina yesterday has left him sourly resolved to get rid of another undesirable female (his wife) for the "moral" sake of his young son. Vadym’s voluble show of self-confessed "hyperbole" yesterday (p. 189) likewise leaves Modest ill-disposed towards granting his sudden request today for a loan of thirty rubles to ostensibly help out the senior Stel’mashenko. Modest refuses, and Vadym runs out of the house from confusion and shame. Olesya witnesses Vadym’s flight and suggests to Modest that he can help Vadym by employing him as his son’s tutor. Dina’s resistance to this idea actually clinches it in Modest’s mind. So Modest sits down immediately to write Vadym a letter of offered employment that Olesya is to deliver to the Stel’mashenko house, and Dina is persuaded that even an "immoral" poet can provide "fashionable" instruction for her child.

Chapter 10 -- Olesya Delivers the Job Offer, While Tepa Cooks Up A Job Offer of Her Own.

Olesya leaves Modest’s letter with Tepa, who promptly reads it out loud to Vadym’s mother, who in turn is relieved that her son has not met up with more trouble than this, so soon after being released from prison. Tepa then proposes that she hire Vadym herself at the factory (but for two rubles less than the Mykul’s’kyi wage!). Vadym’s mother is overjoyed by this surfeit of fortune shown to her errant son. Tepa, however, neglected to mention that she had Vadym in mind for a job as a spy against the growing labour unrest in the factory. Tepa interrupts Nykodym’s enjoyment of his (male) servant’s company in the profaned church, and discusses the ramifications of this employment possibility with him. They agree with openly sadistic glee to try and trap Vadym into serving their own selfish and destructive ends.
Volume II: Bozhky (The Idols)

Chapter 1 -- Vadym Rents A Room From the Hunchbacked Woman, And Justifies His Past to His Estranged Brother.

"In two days ... nay, in two hours, I have ruined everything I have been building over the last two years" (p. 5). Such is Vadym's state, after finally falling prey to guilt over his father's condition ("If I had not loved humanity but simply loved my family instead, nothing like this would have ever happened" (p. 6)). He has still not purged himself of all of society's "microbe-idols" of "superstition", lying dormant in his body even while in Siberia (p. 7).

Vadym thinks also of his younger brother Os' (Osyp), who refused to embrace him yesterday in front of their parents. He happens to see Os' coming out of a shop with a friend and greets him, but is ignored. He follows them at a distance and eavesdrops on their conversation about the upcoming factory strike, until Os' finally relents and agrees to have a talk over some tea with his brother. Vadym then learns that Os' belongs to a radical political party and has a job in their uncle's factory only because that uncle is afraid of him (Os' has vowed to kill him).

Vadym tells Os' his Siberian story about Natasha ("nobody expelled me -- I expelled them, them and all their idols" (p. 25)). He explains that he is an "individualist" of the most "special and noble" kind, who has returned from the desert with the secret of happiness: the dazzlingly "modern" and "amoral" revelation that strength is found in reason alone -- as Nietzsche, the great individualist thinker, knew also never to sink to sentiment (recognizing it to be a trap laid out by the idols) (p. 27).

Os', however, remains unimpressed and hastens to go, pleading a purity of political affiliation that precludes mixing with the checkered likes of Vadym: the "Hartovantsi" swear to "harden" themselves against social filth with both physical and spiritual disciplines. Os' tells Vadym they can no longer be brothers because "you have nothing saintly about you at all; we know what your kind are really all about" (p. 31). Os' warns Vadym not to meddle in family affairs he has already left for dead too often, before storming out. Vadym is surprised to feel physical pain from his brother's words, and he finds himself wondering if even his mother's love could forgive his Siberian past.
Chapter 2 -- Vadym Happens Across His Old Friend Vodosviats'kyi.

Vadym spots his old socialist printing press cohort on the street, transformed now into a "dandy" sympathetic to the current nationalist cause. Vodosviats'kyi has already heard of Vadym's unfortunate adventure with Natasha and is eager to employ Vadym's talent as a writer for the growing nationalist movement. "Let's leave those tiresome moral whinings to the bleeding-heart lady Marxists," he says (in a casual dismissal of Vadym's Siberian incident), the better to clear the road to a brighter national future for action-minded, red-blooded men like themselves (p. 41).

Chapter 3 -- Vadym Seeks Legal Advice, and Meets Rina.

Vadym goes to consult his old comrade Clement (Klym) Piddubnyi, now a lawyer, about the viability of the senior Stel'mashenko's starting a lawsuit against Nykodym. Unfortunately, however, the lawyer is too distracted by the fact that his wife Tota just happens to be in the process of leaving him at the moment of Vadym's arrival. Instead of discussing the case with Nykodym, Piddubnyi launches into speeches on the miseries of marriage, and the necessary triumph of nationalism over socialism ("socialism has grown old -- it is boring now and out of fashion" (p. 49) ... "now everyone must stand by their own ("po-svi"") ... and occupy themselves with their own concerns first" (pp. 50 & 51)).

The lawyer then argues with Vadym that his poetry does not sufficiently address this ascendant power of "family instincts" at the root of so many present social forces, which are harder to extirpate than Vadym would like to admit. Moreover, the lawyer castigates Vadym for celebrating such "foul and shallow egoism" in his verse, which is contributing to "the decline of morals in Russia" and is continuous with the rise of the rabidly anti-Semitic Black Hundreds, who pride themselves on a "shamelessly self-righteous" variety of "complete individualism" that is just as dangerously self-deluded as Vadym's own (p. 53; p. 55).

Finally, the lawyer comes back to the original business at hand and tells Vadym that bringing any proceedings against Nykodym is practically bound to result in failure, since Nykodym is too powerful to try and fight in court. Then the lawyer's shapely sister-in-law Rina enters and interrupts their conversation. When introduced to "the brilliant poet and superindividualist" (p. 57), she provocatively asks him whether his theory of total emotional numbness is a daily doctrine or "just poetry", and then further unsettles Vadym by mentioning how much she happens to know his own brother Os' detests his poetry. Vadym's agitation
at this news gives the lie yet again to the strong self-detachment he is supposed to have definitively won for himself.

Chapter 4 -- Rina Settles A Domestic Dispute And Endures A Slimy Show of Gratitude, Before Yuri's Arrival.

Rina calms down her sister Tota and persuades her to overlook her husband Piddubnyi's recent infatuation with an actress, and stay for the sake of their three children. Piddubnyi can not thank his "miracle-working" sister-in-law enough for her intervention. Rina recognizes, however, that Piddubnyi is actually more interested in her affections rather than those of his own wife. Fortunately, a socialist meeting calls her away from his clutches. Yuri arrives at the lawyer's house for the meeting and is introduced to Vadym, who is just leaving.

Chapter 5 -- Rina and Yuri Finally (Suddenly) Decide To Marry.

Yuri has just had a disturbing dream (from the previous night's morphine-enhanced escape) that convinces him that Rina is only interested in him for his money. Renewed squabbles that morning in the Mykul's'kyi household between Modest and Dina propel Yuri out with a "sickly" longing to see Rina.

Once alone in her company, Yuri forcefully embraces Rina but then breaks off. He begins to talk about a hypothetical relationship, dominated by the female partner's degrading lust, for which she can only expect scorn and not love in return from the male (p. 76). Rina listens while catching up on some embroidery, and then kneels down in front of him and implores him to do the honourable thing of marrying her, since they have already slept together. Yuri responds by mentioning a certain Halya, to whom he first owes this obligation.

Rina explodes at this and rails against the hypocrisy of Yuri's whole family and their hateful bourgeois kind, all "covering up their sins" with innocent girls by buying them off instead of marrying them. She admits that just because she and Yuri are lovers, it does not automatically follow that they are in love -- but at the same time she resents Yuri's brother Anatoliy interfering in their affairs, as if he had every right to do so -- just as much as she dislikes Yuri's constant "payments" for her favours with money and jewellery, as if she were a common whore.

She kneels before him again and proposes that they leave town together to live in a trial common-law marriage for a year, away from Yuri's pernicious family influence, and decide if they can
really grow to love one another. She also agrees to take all responsibility for birth control in the event that things don’t work out between them, promising to kill herself and their child before binding him to her against his will. Yuri wearily agrees to marry her after all, so their leaving town will no longer be necessary. But they resolve on rather chilly terms to speed the nuptial process along, since Rina is undoubtedly already pregnant.

Chapter 6 -- A Socialist Meeting, In Which Funds Are Dramatically Found to Back the Workers’ Strike.

No sooner have Rina and Yuri ended their tête-à-tête than the circle of other socialist workers has gathered and begins its talk about schools and strikes. Yuri meanwhile withdraws into a dream of how much more comfortable his marriage with the conservative Halya would be, rather than with the spitfire Rina. He is brought back to reality with an affectionate jolt from Rina, and he is only now dazed and surprised by the consequences of his promise to her.

Os’ informs his comrades of the ever-worsening conditions at the factory, and recites a litany of evils associated with the factory boss Nykodym, who still deserves in his opinion to be dead. Everyone starts arguing about the importance of not letting personal vendettas dictate political activities, which are already close enough to being dangerously confused with Christian attempts at morality. Yuri votes against the motion to go on strike. Then Rina offers up all of Yuri’s expensive gifts to her to be sold in support of the strike; since they were "bought with unearned money" anyway, and "stolen from the workers", she claims they should be returned to their rightful owners (p. 116). Yuri is shocked and hurt by this gesture, but still assures Rina that he will marry her -- after he will have had a month away from her to reflect.

Chapter 7 -- Tepa’s Flashy Engagement, Followed By Vadym’s Visit to His Parents.

Vadym sees a crowd outside Tepa’s house the next morning, and learns that Tepa is going to marry Nykodym in the local church. Tepa stops to flirt with Vadym before getting into a car to see her dressmaker.

Vadym continues on his way to his parents’ house, where he finds his helpless old father struggling to sit up in bed. Vadym rushes in to assist him, and is horrified anew by the ravages of the stroke on his father. The senior Stel’mashenko haltingly
tells his son about the letter from the Mykul's'kyis left for him yesterday, which Vadym blushingly reads (now he is on the receiving end of the charitable impulse, for a change). Vadym’s father struggles to articulate a warning against Tepa’s parallel offer of employment, which would amount to being nothing but a low-down company spy. Vadym assures him that he will not accept such a dirty job.

Then Vadym’s father suddenly asks him if there is a God, and whether or not he believes in Him. Vadym placates him with positive answers after hesitating and remembering Os’ and his anger against Vadym’s "debt" to the family.

At that moment Vadym’s mother enters and, upon beholding them together, bursts into tears; since Vadym had not come back to them last night, she was afraid that he had been arrested again. She urges Vadym to accept Tepa’s generous offer, for all their impoverished sakes. Vadym answers that he would like to explore the possibilities at the university before accepting the first job he is offered. Vadym’s mother is bitterly disappointed, and immediately starts complaining about how she can not understand his brother Os’ either, with all his secretiveness and moodiness and dubious political associations. The only good thing about Os’, she goes on to say, is that he didn’t marry that slut Man’ka at the factory after all, since she at least had the sense to try and hang herself after disgracefully stirring up so much useless trouble among the workers. Vadym’s mother begs Vadym to talk to Os’ about her concerns.

Chapter 8 -- Vadym’s Job Interview With Nykodym and Tepa.

Vadym leaves his parents to go see his uncle, whom he informs of the necessity of postponing the acceptance of the generous factory job offer. Nykodym directs him to tell Tepa about it instead, since it is more her business than his.

Vadym sees Tepa and begins by asking her how she can be so cruel to his parents (a question he is apparently unable to ask Nykodym). Tepa tells Vadym that he is tiresomely monotonous and possesses nothing at all of his bold poetic voice in person. Vadym answers that the words of poets should never be trusted (p. 143). He candidly explains his plans to attend university while working for the Mykul’s’kyis instead of for her, but Tepa sabotages his seriousness by teasing him about Olesya and playfully probing him about his sexual history since he left for Siberia. Tepa reminds Vadym of their early days of intimacy eight years ago, and confides that although she has taken lovers since then, Vadym remains her only beloved. Vadym remains untouched by this confession and takes his leave.
Chapter 9 -- Vadym Inquires After the Teaching Job, 
And Visits With Os' Their Sister Ksenia In Need.

Modest beats Dina in another jealous rage over her late return from an evening excursion; this time the entire household is made aware of it. Modest complains to his mother that his faithless wife is a necessary creature of the godless age they live in: "What does duty or obligation mean anymore? It's just so much philistinism today. Words like that are too old now to be good for anything. [...] Today pederasty and sodomy, tomorrow organized religion; astronomy in the morning, family ties in the evening ... Everything's fair game and up for lying, soil ing grabs" (p. 153). Mother Mykul's'ka tries to soothe her son with Christian platitudes. Modest then tries to apologize to Dina, but is only infuriated all over again by her "artificial" tears.

No sooner does the marital argument end than another upheaval begins: Yuri offends his (officially) betrothed Halya and the rest of his family by announcing his intentions to desert them all for a month, and then promptly leaving.

Suddenly Vadym arrives (with his usual sense of bad timing) to follow up on Modest's tutoring offer. Dina discusses the matter with him instead, and they agree that he should start teaching little Slavko tomorrow.

Vadym returns to his rented room and remembers that he is broke and ravenous, but fortunately manages to borrow some kopeks from his hunchbacked landlady to buy enough sustenance to survive on until tomorrow (finally she is returning something of the favour he showed her). Vadym's strength is restored by a few calories, just in time for Os' to unexpectedly drop by and take him to see their sister Ksenia, on orders from their mother.

Vadym is warmed from the meeting of his sister’s six little children (this is the first time he has ever seen his sister’s husband, let alone all these nieces and nephews). Vadym’s mother asks Vadym to intercede on his "new" brother-in-law Fedir’s behalf, and request a better-paying factory job for him via his connection with Tepa. Os’ meanwhile quarrels with Fedir about the fact that he refuses to send his children to the workers’ school at the factory ("It’s easy for you," protests Fedir; "bachelors can afford to go in for every sort of socialism" (p. 169)). Vadym tries to protect his tough image by kissing each of the children goodbye only when he is sure no one else is looking.
Chapter 10 -- From Vadym’s Notebook
(Vadym’s Persistent Sense of Chivalry,
And A Strong Speech Against False Idols.)

Vadym writes, "This fall back into the world at large only favours the reality that I need money, and that I am starved and physically weakened" as he was not even in Siberia (p. 173).

Considering the ideal Olesya, Vadym decides he can not appreciate her except as a way to "warm his weakness" or stop up his existential "hole" (p. 174).

Vadym is surprised to see his hunchbacked landlady Salamandra, always so gruff and severe, transformed by tenderness towards a little girl on the street, to whom she is talking and giving candy. But the little girl’s mother is distressed by the hunchback’s ugliness and sends her nanny to extract the girl from Salamandra’s "clutches", with many insults and threats besides. Vadym leaps to Salamandra’s defense, telling the strange woman that she is needlessly overreacting. This time, however, Vadym fails to enact a successful rescue: the child is dragged away in confusion, and Salamandra returns to her usual beaten-down self.

While visiting his lawyer friend again, Vadym observes that Rina is more and more outrageously flirting with her brother-in-law, while already carrying on with a certain Panayev, all in the absence of her fiancé Yuri. Vadym recognizes Tepa’s single-minded "egoism" in Rina’s playing the temptress with him, too. He gets into an argument with her about politics (of course), which eventually devolves into his declaration that the claims of the soul over those of the body are totally and dangerously false. But since Os’ happens to be (silently) present at this conversation, Vadym seems to be really addressing his rhetoric to him instead of to Rina.

Vadym continues with a hypothetical comrade’s story "from seven to eight years ago, when there occurred the transvaluation of values" (p. 185). This acquaintance was "honest. Maybe, even too ... honest" (p. 186). He could not play the hypocrite before the idols dictating his social behaviour; he could see that there were too many contradictions between the idols’ laws and the social reality. And so he "went really crazy" -- because the finer and nobler a person’s allegiances to his idols, the more certain his destruction at the feet of those idols; "all too many others today, having spat on all those idols and lain in the mud with their torches snuffed, don’t want to know anything more of the truth at all" (p. 188).

Rina scoffs that Vadym’s call to "live honestly" in his poetry is impossible, if the only human things that always remain are
"lies, injustice, cunning, and brute instincts" -- the true human condition (p. 189). She also points out that Vadym's credo does not seem to differ at all from that of his very unpoetic uncle Nykodym, who similarly sees "truth, lies, or justice" as so many larded "fish hooks" with which to catch and manipulate the masses. Vadym is befuddled by this ignoble comparison, but agrees that "the only certain and solid thing in every person is instinct" (p. 191). He then offers a heroic (self-) description of a socialist: "a warrior for a new world and new values, fighting to put an end to the old morals of the present" (p. 192). Finally Vadym's "wild" diatribe runs aground on the sudden sight of food brought to the lawyer's table, and (although certainly ravenous again, but doubtful that anyone would care to feed him after such a long harangue), he bolts from the scene.

Os' follows him out and awkwardly, silently accompanies him to a restaurant. Vadym stuffs himself with steak while Os' hides his nose in a newspaper. Then Vadym demands ten rubles from his brother to pay for the meal. Only after Os' has surrendered the money does Vadym curtly offer to pay him back -- but, he says, he will not contribute a kopek to his brother's strike campaign.

The two of them part, but as Vadym heads towards his rented room he encounters a crowd gathered around Styopka and a weeping twelve-year-old girl, whom he is alleged to have raped. Vadym's long-buried emotions come rushing back with an access of hatred for Styopka, as well as a mixture of contempt and desire for Tepa (whom he spots on the street with another man).

Finally, Vadym returns home and thinks about Salamandra and her resignation to remaining childless. He wonders "how all those aesthetes and revolutionaries who thunder on about the transvaluation of values and a new conception of beauty" would respond to the hunchback's plight: would they really be able to vanquish those ingrained ways of seeing and clasp to themselves this bent, terrible body -- or touch their lips to these bleary eyes? Could they have given her that dreamed-for child? I would fall on my knees before a man capable of such; I would willingly become the slave of the man who could truly love such an insulted, stupid, wicked, tortured, and immeasurably solitary creature. (p. 201)

Chapter 11 -- Yuri's Letter to Olesya, Explaining His Month-Long Plan to "Test" Himself.

Yuri writes to his sister ("the person dearest to me") that he can no longer bear his inauthentic upper class existence, and has resolved to move to the countryside and work side by side with
the peasants, for at least a month or possibly longer, in order to "feel useful" for the first time in his life (p. 203). He mourns the loss of the more authentic self he used to be, when he still felt alive to hope and still embraced ideological enthusiasms (p. 204). Now he wants to try and regain that "strength to overcome" the bourgeois undertow represented by his insipid family-approved fiancée, Halya, and to call off their engagement (p. 205). Yuri believes in his self-styled "populist cure" to enable his rebirth to a new, responsible life.

Chapter 12 -- From Vadym’s Notebook
(Vadym Watches the Strike, His Family, and Olesya With A Critical Eye.)

Vadym observes the toll the strike is taking on all concerned as it moves into its fifth day. He puzzles over the stubbornly specific sympathy he continues to feel for his pathetic father, among so many thousands of other people equally or more deserving of his pity -- much like the paternal solicitude he keeps noticing in himself towards his brother Os’. However, Nykodym betrays none of these family pieties when he taunts and jeers at his own brother, the senior Stel’mashenko.

Tepa, meanwhile, continues to openly seduce Vadym, while Olesya continues to be her mad sister’s keeper -- but sending him sidelong glances of irritating pity, too. Vadym tries to engage Olesya in a conversation about the music he has just had the occasion to hear her playing on the Mykul’s’kyi piano, but she shrinks from the perceived political content of his remarks and promptly retires. Dina, for her part, is less shy about showing a sexual interest in her son’s new tutor. Vadym thinks some storm is bound to break out of all this business, any day now.

Chapter 13 -- Vodosviats’kyi’s Folks Come To Visit,
While Their Son Covets the Mykul’s’kyi Fortune.

Foppish Vodosviats’kyi finds his busy nationalist newspaper work rudely interrupted by the sudden arrival in town of his embarrassingly provincial parents. Father and son debate the merits of the current craze for "Ukrainianization", when so many reactionaries like the Black Hundreds would like to make it an identical cornerstone in their competing revolution (p. 224).

Later Vodosviats’kyi brags to one of his dandified friends that he has designs on marrying Valya (Olesya’s plain but virtuous cousin), and getting his hands legally on all her money. As if that were not enough, he also plans to be kept by the more attractive (and more accessible) Dina as her lover, to better
supplement his income -- as well as to use her expected
confidences about Olesya's ever-growing interest in Vadym as a
possible source for extorting still more money through blackmail.
Just then, Dina and Valya and Olesya themselves arrive with a
gentleman chaperon at Vodosviats'kyi's house for yet another
political meeting about to begin.

Chapter 14 -- Vadym Attends Vodosviats'kyi's Meeting,
And Ends Up Escorting Olesya Home.

Vodosviats'kyi has assembled about a dozen hotheads in his home,
who are arguing about the necessity of fighting to establish an
autonomous new Ukraine, "at whatever the cost". An anecdote is
told about a Russian brute killing a sweet Ukrainian boy in cold
blood for innocently romancing his sister, and general anti-
Russian feelings in the room start running high ("This is war",
etc., p. 239). Olesya is horrified and abruptly excuses herself
to leave. Everyone is astonished at her high moral take on the
situation, which "requires" coarse and immediate measures ("we're
not the ones to blame for all of this, after all!") (p. 240).
But Olesya insists that if the desired rebirth of the nation
needs so much bloodshed in order to be realized, then it would be
far better if the movement ended up stillborn. Vadym, who has
been uncharacteristically quiet throughout the whole meeting,
chivalrously accompanies her out.

Chapter 15 -- The Remains of the Meeting.

Despite the disturbance of Olesya's outburst, the men in the room
(who form the majority) decide that their sudden sense of guilt
is misplaced, since "hysterical ladies" have nothing to really
contribute to "serious meetings" such as these (p. 241) -- and so
nationalist fervour rebuilds again apace. However, "the only
thing that united them all was their hatred for Russians, Poles,
and Jews" (p. 242).12 Speeches calling for vengeance against
"spilled Ukrainian blood" soon reach a fever pitch, so that some
in the audience fear a pogrom might be announced and implemented
in a matter of minutes (p. 244). Anxieties about a war brewing
with Austria are aired: all allegiances seem uncertain beyond
the single burning issue of asserting "manly" nationhood (p.
246). But the energies fortunately spend themselves out only in
talk, and the meeting ends with a cathartic sense of calm.

12A rare narratorial comment; virtually every other opinion
expressed in these novels is confined to the mouth of some
character.
Chapter 16 -- Vodosviats'kyi Finally Compromises Valya.

While accompanying Valya in a carriage that is supposed to be driving her home after the meeting, Vodosviats'kyi loses his patience with her constant deferrals of his desires, and tells her that it's not her love that he wants, anyway -- just her body. He then instructs the coachman to drive them to his house. Valya protests, and they both get out of the carriage and start walking. Vodosviats'kyi threatens to end their relationship on the spot; Valya in despair relents and admits him into her room, after making him promise to stay for only a few chaste minutes. But in spite of having given her his "word of honour" (p. 253), he rapes her as soon as she has opened the door to her room.

Chapter 17 -- Vadym Walks Olesya Home -- While A Maniac Follows.

Olesya points out to Vadym an obsessive admirer of hers who shadows her every movement outside her house. Vadym is surprised at the anger and disgust that the angelic Olesya is capable of displaying for the stranger, whom she likens to a "chronic boil" (p. 255) and describes as a pompous imitator of Oscar Wilde ("Good God, if only Wilde had known that he would inspire such [hateful] admirers!") (p. 256). His Wilde affectations of a "sickly and maniacal narcissism" are all the more gallingly unseemly in view of his having a wife and children, and Olesya is afraid of becoming "contaminated" by him even at a constant distance (p. 257). Vadym tries to calm her down by denying that he sees any such monster following them (although he does in fact see him), and tries to change the subject by asking her why she is always so "strange" with him. She responds by insisting that he is mistaken, and invites him into her house for a while. Vadym refuses, however, and leaves her abruptly on her doorstep.

Chapter 18 -- The "Wilde" Man Invites Vadym Into His Home.

Olesya's admirer, Ivan Hanzhula, approaches Vadym as soon as he is alone and introduces himself as an "individualist" like Vadym. As the editor of a local literary journal (called Solitude), Hanzhula can particularly appreciate the value of "writing with blood ... because ink alone will not suffice", as that quality that only "loners" like he and Vadym can truly "put to work" (p. 261). Vadym listens to his fellow literary man expound upon the city as "a syphilis-racked brain" (p. 259), and declare that "the law of the dirty unwashed is vulgarity, always vulgarity, lying thick like dust on the backs of cattle" (p. 262).
Finally Vadym has to agree with Olesya that Hanzhula indeed resembles nothing more than "some sort of painful and repulsive boil, ... bursting with manure from too many meals ... and swollen with self-absorption" (p. 263). His species of "modernism" is not appealing to Vadym (p. 256). Nevertheless, Hanzhula prevails upon Vadym to come home with him and meet his wife, to thus continue their conversation. No sooner does Vadym cross the threshold, however, than Hanzhula reacts violently to a new book of criticism taking Hanzhula's latest literary effort to task, and Vadym hastily retreats from the spectacle of his host ripping out pages and thrashing about on the floor. Out on the street again, Vadym bumps into the chief hothead (Pampushchenko) just out from Vodosviats'kyi's meeting, who is calling for all Ukrainians to bear arms against the dastardly Russians.

Chapter 19 -- Yuri's Letter To Olesya, Acknowledging Defeat.

Three weeks have passed since Yuri left his house and home, but his experiment towards achieving a new "birth" has only confirmed the tenacity of his genteel origins (p. 267). He has endured the punishing pace of peasant work, but once he survives his exhaustion and adapts to his new environment, he can not accept it, having once known something so much better. He therefore recognizes that his best intentions at self-reform have only resulted in yet another gratuitous act to add to so many others that have already made up his "useless" lifetime. Yuri can not resolve his identity crisis; he can only resign himself to living with the fact that he is the creature of too many deeply-ingrained comforts. For this reason he knows he can not possibly live up to all the ideals that Rina "so lovingly, so naively, and so passionately preaches" (p. 275), and so he should not pretend to be the man she wants him to be. Now he has relapsed into his morphine habit and already deflowered Halya ("fatally and almost as if it had happened without me" (p. 277)), as the first step towards marrying her. He vows to his sister that he will do what he can with his bitterly acquired self-knowledge: "I will carry the cross I put on my own shoulders as honestly as I am able" (p. 278).

Chapter 20 -- Olesya Delivers Yuri's Message of Defeat to Rina.

Olesya goes to see Rina and shows her Yuri's second letter, while arguments about national politics are raging as usual in the next room. Olesya is upset by the neighbouring discussion she is forced to overhear while Rina peruses the letter. Finally Rina hands the letter back to Olesya, asking her to "sincerely thank him for me for ... his honesty" (p. 282). After seeing Olesya to the door, Rina calls her boyfriend Panayev in from the political
discussion to talk to her in confidence for a moment. She proceeds to apologize for "using" him, but regrets to inform him that their relationship is now over as far as she is concerned. The stunned Panayev can only acquiesce, and they part in silence.

Chapter 21 -- Vadym Dithers During the Strike, While Olesya Pays Him an Unprecedented Visit.

By now everyone connected with the factory is acutely feeling the consequences of their principles, and the evil Nykodym revels in pitting more and more workers against each other as hunger and desperation mounts. Vadym silently watches the tensions build; he restlessly hovers near his father and brother, unable to write a single line in his notebook now. Then he tells his landlady Salamandra that he is planning to quit his cushy tutoring job at the Mykul’s’kyis. His absence from that work elicits the long but mostly undisclosed interview between himself and Olesya, which results in a mutual exchange of openly romantic interest.

Chapter 22 -- Salamandra’s Father Approaches Vadym.

One evening, the father of the hunchbacked landlady asks Vadym if they can have a talk. After discussing the merits of writing literature in "peasant" Ukrainian (as Vadym chose to do) rather than Russian ("the language of lords"), Salamandra’s father comes around to the real topic of his visit: why a healthy young man like Vadym should be unmarried and still preferring to sleep alone: doesn’t he like children? Salamandra’s father would like grandchildren, but unfortunately his daughter is ugly beyond hope. Vadym replies that no one should ever be considered beyond hope, and then hurriedly excuses himself to leave the house. Salamandra’s father then immediately tells his daughter that since Vadym thinks she is marriageable, she should take advantage of her opportunity with him. Enraged by the crude suggestion, the hunchback beats her father roundly on the head with a rolling pin before running outside "with a painful sort of howl."

Chapter 23 -- Vadym and Olesya Share A Tender Moment.

Because of the episode with his landlady’s father, Vadym finds he is late for his tutoring hour. Happily, though, he is not late after all, because Slavko has suffered a minor accident and is thus not available. Unhappily, on the other hand, Modest tells him that the hothead Pampushchenko has just been arrested for shooting dead the editor and secretary of a Black Hundreds
newspaper, and wounding two others, for which retaliation promises to be swift.

Vadym sees Olesya and they discuss the "nightmarish" consequences of politics, the shameful premarital pregnancy of Valya, Vodosviats'kyi's shameless "condition" of marrying her only if all her wealth is first written over to him, and the unhappy agreement from Valya's guardian Anatoliy to have them married within a week on Vodosviats'kyi's terms. Vodosviats'kyi's self-serving example makes Vadym's own affections for Olesya seem hopelessly compromised and ultimately just as materially motivated -- given their wide discrepancy in social class. Olesya weeps and implores Vadym to leave, if he feels so badly about the grounds for their relationship. He kisses her "guiltily" and departs "almost on tiptoe."

Chapter 24 -- Tepa Desperately Tries to Snag Vadym.

Tepa has Vadym brought into her boudoir, where she tells him she must have him because she feels sexually dead towards everyone else, and she is melting into a quivering puddle of unrequited desire -- quite unlike the power she is accustomed to enjoying, both over herself and others. She wants Vadym so badly that she offers to liquidate all her considerable assets in order for them to start over together somewhere else, where Vadym can dispose of her money and her person however he likes, with no strings attached.

Vadym answers that her "honesty" is born of "wildness" that can only result in the worst for both of them: he predicts that "within a month you will have killed both of us" (p. 307). Tepa has already considered the possibility of killing him, however, as an unspoken part of the "package". She claims that she is ready to do for Vadym everything that she knows Olesya should be prepared to do, but ultimately won't, because Olesya "can not and does not really want to be the wife of Vadym Stel'mashenko" (p. 308). Vadym is simultaneously enraged and enticed by Tepa, but manages to protest that Tepa's only interest in him boils down to an issue of control and wounded vanity, owing to the fact that he is no longer as malleable in her presence as he used to be.

Just as he feels himself being definitively pulled into her intoxicating orbit, however, he forces himself to suddenly ask her for a "long-term" loan of 500 rubles. Tepa agrees, but only on the condition that he break off all relations with the Mykul's'kyis by cruelly spitting in the face of Olesya. Vadym angrily refuses, but Tepa is certain that she can "buy" Vadym more cheaply than she originally imagined might be necessary. Vadym leaves her without a word and heads for his parents' house.
Chapter 25 -- After Beating Up Styopka, Vadym Surrenders to Tepa
-- For the Cause of the Strike and For His Brother.

Vadym finds Styopka ordering his old mother around again as soon as he crosses his parents' threshold. Unable to hold back his long-gathering rage, Vadym finds a pretext to get Styopka to follow him out into the corridor, where he promptly thrashes him within an inch of his life. Then Vadym asks Nykodym to similarly step outside, to behold the spectacle of his prostrate brother-in-law-to-be as a warning not to make any more trouble for his family -- otherwise Vadym vows to "kill them both" (p. 315). Then Tepa arrives on the scene, which Vadym promptly vacates.

Os' buttonholes his brother outside and asks him if he could look after their parents for a while, but without explaining why or when or where he is going for this favour to be necessary. Vadym answers that he has something of his own to ask of his brother and, after some wrangling, they are soon sitting down together in a tavern to talk.

There Os' confesses that he is no longer "worthy" of being a member of his pure political circle, since he has just beat up his girlfriend Man'ka in a shameful fit of jealousy. He suddenly asks Vadym whether or not he believes there is such a thing as justice; after a moment's hesitation, Vadym answers that justice "absolutely" does not exist (p. 318). Os' excitedly claims that it must exist, because he will "prove" it (p. 319). Vadym realizes that Os' means by this to kill Nykodym, because the workers in the faltering strike suspect Os' must be a traitor (in view of his blood relation to the evil boss) and hence solely responsible for their misfortunes, when in fact the strike is simply and unluckily languishing for lack of promised resources.

Once Vadym learns from Os' that 400 rubles are needed by the community to survive the strike, he asks his brother to wait for him in the tavern for half an hour, with a promise to return with the cash. Vadym then hurries to see Tepa and informs her that he agrees to her conditions of the recently offered loan. Tepa finds paper and a pen for Vadym to write in front of her the terrible note to Olesya, to lure her into experiencing the most cruelly unexpected rupture tomorrow evening. After entrusting Tepa with this note's delivery, Vadym tells her he wants 800 rubles now instead of 500, and in cash without any condition of repayment, just before he will inflict Olesya with the humiliating brush-off. Tepa assents, but with some amazement at Vadym's suddenly cheerful change of temper. Vadym enigmatically asserts that he just wants to "prove" once and for all that she is completely "mistaken" about him (p. 323).
Chapter 26 -- Vadym, Os', and Olesya Attend A Political Meeting, Only To Be Attacked By the Vengeful Black Hundreds.

Vadym hurries back to the tavern and tells Os' he will have 800 rubles by tomorrow evening. Os' is flabbergasted and suspicious, but Vadym assures him that "no idols were offended by the smell of some crime" -- he had only to appeal to the "purest" idol of all (p. 324).

Vadym then accompanies his brother to a nationalist political assembly, already in progress. Emotional appeals to subsidize the "nationalist cause" of the striking workers pepper the lull between speeches. Suddenly Vadym glimpses Olesya in the crowd at a distance, and is dazzled by the sight of his now forever forsaken beloved: for him everything and everyone now recedes and becomes hushed around the aureole surrounding Olesya's figure.

But his rêverie is shattered by whistles and shouts to "kill the Mazeppists", as men with black masks pulled over their faces and thick knouts gripped in their hands surge into the crowd, viciously beating men, women and children alike. Vadym feels something slash his cheek and tears spring suddenly from his eyes, together with a pain as if someone had just clawed one of his eyes out of its socket. He collapses and regains consciousness under a pile of dead or injured bodies, to behold a devastated room now deserted by the assailants.

Chapter 27 -- Vadym Chases Away Olesya, And Gives All of Tepa's Money To Os'.

The next day, with one bandaged eye, Vadym looks for new living quarters for his parents in town, and settles on one with a promised down-payment. He eats nothing again all day, except for a few nutrients gleaned from some beer at the tavern. Tepa arrives at his rented room on time with the money, and settles down to wait with Vadym for Olesya to enter at her appointed hour. She witnesses Vadym's cutting words to Olesya, which immediately produce their predicted effect. After Olesya leaves, Tepa hands over to Vadym her handbag full of rubles, and then asks him if he cares to shoot her with the revolver she left inside it. Vadym pleads fatigue and simply asks her to leave him for now but to please return tomorrow evening; for now it should suffice for her to know that she has "won at her game" (p. 333). Tepa hesitantly agrees to leave.

As soon as she is gone, Vadym requests his hunchbacked landlady to be present in his room tomorrow evening when Tepa will be expected to come calling. Salamandra is puzzled but agreeable to
the idea. Then Vadym lies down "lifelessly" and waits for Os’ to arrive and collect the money.

Os’ enters and exchanges timid pleasantries with his wounded brother before counting the thick wad of bills "with trembling fingers." Vadym instructs him to put 600 rubles towards the strike, and the remaining 200 in the hands of their old parents, so that they can start moving tomorrow into the new apartment he found for them today. He then asks his brother to "skilfully lie" to their parents about an urgent piece of business that will require Vadym’s absence for an unspecified period of time. Finally, as Os’ is preparing to go, Vadym asks him what he would do if someone were to ask him to marry, "for instance," his hunchbacked landlady. Os’ is confused by the question, and Vadym apologizes for succumbing to stupidities in his present wound-related delirium.

Chapter 28 -- Vadym Chases Away Tepa, With Salamandra’s Help.

With his eye by now well on the mend, Vadym is writing again in his notebook and patiently waiting for Tepa to arrive. Salamandra enters his room on schedule and Vadym asks her to sit on his bed while he stands by the door. When Tepa enters a minute later, Vadym promptly delivers the same crushing line to her that he used last night against Olesya. Then Salamandra jumps up and starts brandishing a broom at Tepa for good measure. Tepa coolly stands back and comments that Vadym’s poetic imagination lacks every originality, and pronounces herself thankfully "cured" of her infatuation for him. But when Salamandra tries to show her the door again, Tepa suddenly starts beating the hunchback in a blind rage. Vadym leaps at Tepa with the same broom and warns her to desist and depart immediately. "It’s just lucky for you that I don’t happen to have my revolver with me today," she growls as she slinks away, "but you’ll pay for this ... " (p. 339)

Chapter 29 -- From Vadym’s Notebook
(Vadym Compares Salamandra to Natasha.)

Vadym reflects on his pure-minded brother’s recent reconciliation with his political hard-liners again, as a way of still emphasizing and defining his opposition to Vadym and his suspiciously sudden gift of money. Os’ is still in thrall to his own idols, and Vadym knows that he has to lie to his brother rather than openly challenge his beliefs with the truth (p. 340). But "I can’t help but spit in the dull and cruelly staring eyes of your idols, be they of stone or glass ... Just as I know that you, my boy, will also come to spit in those eyes some day,
because you too have in you the strength that is greater than theirs to overcome them" (p. 341).

Vadym further recognizes in Salamandra an affinity closer than he has ever known with "the Tepa or Olesya types of women" (p. 342). This scares him but at the same time underlines for him the certainty that her physical ugliness somehow mirrors his own moral ugliness. He imagines repeating his Natasha experience, but this time with the desired transfiguration of the woman with child surviving triumphantly intact, thus absolving him of his previous mistake of monstrous arrogance. He can not decide, however, whether such a "kindness" shown to the ever more romantically interested Salamandra would constitute "the definitive spitball hurled against all the idols that still dwell in him", or simply result again in misunderstanding and tragedy (p. 343).

Vadym feels that he is now on the edge of a precipice that he must try to leap across (p. 341). Until he makes this jump for himself, he can not freely embrace human society and find some place to stand in it. His head starts spinning; he can no longer distinguish truth from falsehood; he starts doubting the motivations behind all his struggles. Finally there remains for him "only the one lie" (that his family has to suffer), and "only the one truth" (the need to create their happiness by smiting their oppressors) (p. 344). Vadym thus resolves "to spit in the face of all those idols which stifle growth and life, and keep the will to feel empathy in chains," because he can not remain indifferent to so much human pain (p. 345).

Chapter 30 -- Vadym Sacrifices Himself For Os' By Embracing Prison, And So Evading Temptation.

Vadym's movements are being shadowed by some stranger as he leaves his rented room for his parents' house. There he reads the New Testament out loud to his father, while waiting for Os' to return from the factory.

Os' does not enter the house until their parents have already long gone to bed (aided by sleeping pills). Vadym learns from Os' that all is well at strike headquarters, but that Tepa and Styopka are plotting some drastic revenge against him. Then the two brothers start arguing in furious whispers, after Vadym accuses Os' of perpetually lying ("You're just lying to yourself again, deceiving yourself -- but then again, any man who finds his own company as objectionable as you do will also find it that much easier to live with his idols, at least" (p. 347)). Os' is still ashamed of Vadym in front of his comrades, and still repulses his brother's attempts to embrace him.
Suddenly they hear footsteps outside the window: the police are coming to arrest Os'in the middle of the night for illegal possession of rabble-rousing literature. Vadym immediately orders Os' to pretend he is asleep in Vadym's bed in the other room, in order for him to tell the police that the damning pamphlets actually belong to him. Os' hesitates; Vadym takes advantage of his confusion to shove him aside and answer the knock at the door by himself.

The police believe Vadym's story, and swiftly arrest him without searching the rest of the house -- thus not even waking the old parents -- since the whole suspected stash is confiscated from under Os''s bed. But no sooner has Vadym been bundled into the police carriage than a familiar car pulls up, from which Tepa emerges. Only then does Vadym begin to understand the real reasons behind his arrest: Tepa put the police on him in order to force a choice between falling finally into her arms, or going to prison. Vadym discovers that Tepa is responsible for at least the one kindness of instructing the police to deliver him into her hands without persecuting the rest of his family. For this he thanks her. But he refuses her ambiguous offer of safety, cheerfully surrendering himself to the police again instead.

As the police drive him to the station, Tepa's car follows for a distance, as if waiting for Vadym to change his mind -- then at last tears ahead with a violent roar. Vadym smiles and relaxes in his seat beside the police commissioner.
Appendix B

B.i Ласкавий читачу мій, роскажу тобі казку. Я знаю, ти звик на різдв'яні свята послухати казки; я знаю, ти й без свята завжди охочий до неї; [...] Я знаю, ти завжди охочий обгорнути свое серце в найбрудніше дрантя, щоб захистити його від суворого вітру життя. Обгорнися же мою казкою, -- вона тепла, як те дрантя, яким обгортаються старці; вона тепла, як залізо кайданів; вона мелодична, як пісня страждання й неволі.

B.ii Вперед любив сонце, боротьбу і людей; а через се він всторомляв сим людям у груди замісць серця пекучі жарини, він давав їм неспокійні, колючі думки, хьоєскав їх голодом і страхіттям життя, він вливав їм у жилі жагучого розв'язання побід, боротьби, гнівом і гордістю очі запалював їм, -- і сі люди ішли, і тяглися за ним, і раділи, й страждали.

А Назад виймав людям серце, клав на місці його холодну, ненажерливу жабу, яка глитала радоші Життя, глитала вогонь його та світло і завжди була холодна та чорна. Назад обгортав людей золотом, він обковував їх сим отруйним золотом, яке боялося сокири думки. Він обкурював людей, чадом лінощів і спокою і люди боялись руху і праці, боялися великого хвилювання. Через се вони любили Назада і не любили окутаних злиднями, неспокійних, гнівних людей Впереда.

Через се люди бились, через се пилися кров, і сльози, і піт, якими годувалися жаби людей Назада. І де більше пилися цього всього, там більше росли та бились Вперед і Назад ...

304
Окс, щоб боропись вони! ... І коли перетягував Вперед, до сонце весело сміялося, і ставала весна, і каміння цвітом цвіло, і риби співали, пополювії риби. А коли перетягував Назад, то ставала тьма і сонце ховалось. А в тьмі плютувала негода, в'яла квіти життя і люди гризли людей. Люди хапали младенців і головами їх били в мокрі з крові каміння; люди пороли черева матерів і волочили кишки їх, топчучи ногами; люди за хвилину вбивав сотні людей. І піднімалась до байдужого неба крізь вав пар, і чад душного страждання стелючись по землі. І чад той дурманив розум і люди самі гризли собі серця, точили свою кров і в страшенній тьмі ворогів обіймали, а друзів душили.

'Найкращих твоїх показу. ... вхуди у грудях червоні печучі жарини згоріли на сірий байдужий попіп ...' 

... мертва скриня, зроблена з каміння, старого, промоклого спізми каміння. [...] І побачив Вперед, що не було їм у грудях жарин тих; не було замісць серця ні жарин, ні попіпі, а був тільки...дим, густий, бурй, гнітучий дим. І бачив Вперед, як сей дим піднімався їм у голови, і видно було йому, як від свого чаділи їх думки, як мляво вони рухались ... [...] І мовчки дивився Вперед, як тупо рухались сі люди в клитках своїх, як мляво бились їх думки об стіни сих кліток, безсило падаючи назад у задимлений мозок. Мовчки дивився він, як стіни кліток насували на людей, стискували, мов пресом, їх груди, і груди стискувались болем, а з них видушувались слюзи; і слюзи ті падали на серце, шварчали на жару його, і від того ішов оттої дим.

'Я не бачу ни жару, ні попіпу -- ... У їх в грудях дим, йим треба вітру.' 

Сіра і гола, як череп порожній, ... як спорохніла домовина, стіл. На домовині сій стояла лямпочка, нещасна, підспівувава, як зневечена життям бабуся, ... [...] Череп мовчав, а в йому, як скрігт зубів його, брякотіли кайданы кучерявого хлопчика.

І бачив Вперед, що не було вогневої нитки між ними, а був тільки дим, а в диму горіло по вогнику: один вогник задоволення, а другий поганений жовтий вогник роздратовання.
B.ix

I бачив Вперед, як стиснулись груди йому, як видавили вони гарячу слюзу і слюза та впала на серце і прорізала великий спід у йому. І клубом піднявся дим у грудях йому.

B.x

Вони байдуже, мляво і туло співали про печуче горе, про радість побіди, про батька двох синів Життя. [...] І слова сі, сі іскри вогневі, що втягують в єднину полум'я жарини сердець, сі горючі слова не гріні їм серця задимленого, не кололи мозка сплячого; ...

B.xi

I бачив Вперед тільки дим їм у грудях, а в диму блищали маленькі вогники злоти ...  

B.xii

... сміхом диму, сухим і криклилим. [...] ... видно було Впередові, як світилися йому очі тим жовтим вогніком, що спалахнув у грудях.

B.xiii

‘Ти НЕ ХОЧЕШ бачити ... сили моєї. [...] Не ти, а я -- кокханий син Життя, і ти служитимеш мені, а не я тобі! [...] Самохвалю спіпий, ти поглянь: ти насипав їм жару у груди, ти хотів всі жарини людей сих у єдине полум'я скласти, ти огиду до бруду Життя надихав їм у душу, ти пивав їм у жили гордої крові...І поглянь же, поглянь, що зробив з ними я, з тими ТВОЇМИ людьми: твій вогонь не пече уже їх, і їм холодно й нудно від його: твій вогонь не згромаджує їх, а одштовхує тільки.’

B.xiv

I бачив Вперед, як приводили їй нових людей з жаринами в грудях, бачив, як вона [та мертва скриня] жадно глитала їх, терпля, гризла їх своїми заграваннями зубами; і падали їм слюзи на жар той, і гасли жарини, і дим наставав їм у грудях.

B.xv

... Назад глузував. І глузуючи, він обсипав тих людей дощем страждання, дихав на їх вітром гніння й сміявся.

B.xvi

Що дня з тої скрині виводили в город кількох з тих людей і водили до людей Назада. [...] ... страшний скривіт смерті ... обійма[в] людей Впереда холодною шворою круг шиї й даві[в].

B.xvii

... бачив Вперед, як в мляві мозки задимлених людей ввірвавась ся думка і стала неспокійно і гостро товкнися об другі думки; і бачив Вперед, як думки ці й собі стали рухатись жаво, неспокійно, а очі їм стали глибшими, зтурбованими, напруженими.
B.xviii  І побачив Вперед, що той брязкіт глухий, повзучий з-під одержі, вставав, розростався і з страшенною силой, з вітром скаженим летів на напруженні постаті тих, що стояли. [...] ... той брязкіт глухий розростався і дув, дув великим вітром у груди на дим. І житався той дим, а з-під диму, ахи! побачив Вперед, як з-під диму червоно горіли жарини!

B.xix  І вогнем сих жарин запалали їм очі, і вогнем сих жарин напливался їм кров і вогнем жарин сих залунала їх пісня і крики. [...] Ахи радісно бачив Вперед, як розлітався той дим, а у грудях горіли червоні, пекучі жарини ... [і] як зникали в огні їх погані жовті вогники, як горів на них бруд, і смород, і попіл понурої скрині.

B.xx  Громом греміло в подвір'ї і блискавками блищали очі, і єдиний, червоний вогонь здіяв їх усіх. І горів великою пімстою гнівом і гордістю.

B.xxi  Але кров та не могла вже запити жарини їх, не могла ... запити на попіл великий червоний вогонь людей Впереда.

B.xxii  Тоді гордо стрепенув Вперед крилами і, не глянувши на Назада, полетів туди, де з іскор робились велики пекучі жарини.

B.xxiii  ... революціонери подібні до нічних метелків. Бачили ви, як часом улітку ввечері вперто пізь до світла лампі якийнебудь метелок? Його піймають і кинуть у темноту. Трошки згодом він знову летить. Знову піймають, і ще далі штурнують. Він спочине, зберіга останні сили і, хоч дуже таки помятний бруталною рукою, знову летить. Бува, що його, нарешті, просто пристукнуть держальцем ножа або схоплять, зломлять крильця й так штурнуть у темряву, що він уже не може прилетіти. От так, ... й революціонери. Багато їх із помнятими, попоманними крильцями пежить десь у темноті й безсило прагне до світла.

B.xxiv  Велика річ -- тіло. [...] Велику істину сказали старі люди ...
Appendix C-1

Plot Summary of Volodymyr Vynnychenko's 1913 Novel, Zapovit Bat'kiv

- Chapter 1

Dr. Petro Semenovych Zabolot'ko remembered that it all started from that first strange visit he paid to the Harbuzenkovs -- a visit which "set in motion all those events that would so suddenly and unexpectedly change his whole life" (p. 5).

He receives a call to see some sick member of the wealthy Harbuzenkov household, but is frustrated at the door by a capricious young woman (Oleksandra or Sanya, for short), who insists on embarrassing and poking fun at him. So he leaves in some confusion, forgetting his galoshes there. On his way home, he pauses on a bridge to watch some young skaters on the frozen waterway below.

Just then a car pulls up beside him, and Anton (or Nika, for short), the son of the sickly elder Harbuzenkov, implores the doctor to return with him, with apologies for his sister’s behaviour. Once back at the house, however, this same sister continues to bait our hero with pointed personal remarks (such as "You look exactly like some big, yellow Saint-Bernard" (p. 8)). But she also provides him with particular instructions on how to proceed with treating her father’s ailments: "He really hopes that you will consent to be his personal physician, on the condition that you will also serve as a veterinarian to his cat Tom ... because Papa and Tom enjoy a secret tie between them that might even be called mystical. As soon as one falls ill, the other immediately feels it as well" (p. 9).

As if on cue, the patriarch presents himself to Petro Semenovych, but he seems "completely normal;" indeed, even the cat is in perfect health. "The Harbuzenkovs had simply wanted to chat with the doctor and get to know what he was like, before they actually came to an agreement" (p. 10).

- Chapter 2

Right after seeing his own patients all day, Dr. Zabolot'ko starts going every day to the Harbuzenkov house -- in spite of

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the fact that no one really requires his medical services there. Indeed, utility in any sense of the word is practically foreign to this family; beauty instead is the ruling idea and pursuit. "Everything went against healthy reasoning and logic at the Harbuzenkovs ... They didn't know anything about shopkeepers and their nasty bills, nor what a worker's shirt might look like" (p. 18). Yet the doctor finds himself increasingly drawn to these exotic rich people, precisely for all their fantastic preoccupations. Too much leisure has produced the cat-fixation in the senior Harbuzenkov, for example, as well as the compulsive lying streak in Sanya, and a mouse-torturing habit in Nika ... And all too many literary-artistic types dropping by to discuss abstruse aesthetic topics all the time make the good doctor feel decidedly out of his depth. For lack of a better word to name or understand his situation, Dr. Zabolot'ko decides that he is suffering from chronic "boombah" (a neighbourhood child's nonsense-sound).

*Chapter 3*

Dr. Zabolot'ko has been neglecting his own family. Not only has he not been helping his adopted sister Tonya with her school work, but he has also been ignoring his younger brother Danylo (or Dan'ko for short), who has recently started mouthing off to their mother and skipping classes. Dr. Zabolot'ko overhears his mother sadly complaining to his sister Marta about Dan'ko's behaviour, so he resolves then and there to do what he can to determine the cause of his brother's delinquency -- instead of heading out to the Harbuzenkovs again, as he had been planning to do.

*Chapter 4*

Petro Semenovych walks into his brother's room and finds Dan'ko sitting there in a sullen sort of stupor. Petro tries to help Dan'ko stand up, but is rudely rebuffed. So the older brother lifts the younger one by force and carries him to the bed, where he proceeds to sponge his brow with a wet towel. Dan'ko yells at Petro to wash his hands with soap before manhandling or fussing over him any longer. Petro acquiesces, and asks Dan'ko again what is the matter.

In reply he is handed a letter which Dan'ko received from Tonya. Petro can not make any sense of the hostility and acrimony he reads there, directed at both his brother and himself ("such fine gentlemen as these have a very small conscience ... I'm leaving because I hate all of you so much" (p. 29)).

Dan'ko then snatches his letter back and runs out of the house, cursing his brother behind him. Petro is even more dumbfounded than before, and wonders if this sudden turn of events is due to
his having neglected his family for so long -- like the abandoned button he finds lying under his brother’s chair.

○ Chapter 5

Petro Semenovych proceeds later that same day towards the Harbuzenkovs’ house. He mechanically directs his steps to the elder Harbuzenkov’s study, but on the way there surprises Sanya and Shapkin (a journalist friend of the family, who is incidentally already married to a certain Larysa Andriivna). Shapkin is trying to extract a kiss from the resistant Sanya. Petro pretends that he witnessed nothing and walks further into the garden, since the elderly Ivan Pylypovych does not appear to be home after all.

Outside he finds a party of merrymakers: the standoffish Pavlo Maksymovych Kernyts’kyi, the theatrical Hartvig, the affably scruffy Zavada, the put-upon wife Larysa Andriivna, and Nika. Sanya and Shapkin have already hurriedly joined them, and Petro observes the tensions circulating everywhere in their wake: Sanya and Kernyts’kyi, for example, laughingly call Shapkin a coward («добряк»); Kernyts’kyi tries to squeeze Shapkin off the table littered with half-emptied glasses of wine. Shapkin suggests that it is starting to become too cold to stay outside, so the party rises as one to go into the house. Petro alone remains thoughtfully under an oak tree, until Sanya notices his absence and comes to collect him. She seems politely interested in Petro’s problem with his brother Danylo, but lets it all drop by the time they have both crossed the threshold.

○ Chapter 6

Petro comes home and bumps into Tymoshchuk, the ne’er-do-well husband of his sister Marta. Tymoshchuk is an architect who uses his salary to bully his wife and children, as well as to buy the favours of prostitutes. Marta finds some solace from this situation in the arms of a more sensitive fellow called Yizhakevych. Meanwhile, Pasha the chambermaid discreetly informs Petro that Dan’ko appears to be dead drunk, so Petro immediately goes to see him.

Sure enough, Dan’ko reeks of whisky and bursts into plaintive Russian song about his troubles, which turn out to be large ones indeed: he confesses to his doctor brother that both he and Tonya have syphilis. Dan’ko discovered his condition three weeks ago and is convinced that no medicine can save him. He swears that it was Tonya who actually (and wilfully) infected him, but he also admits to having seen prostitutes before even beginning a relationship with her. Now Tonya is working as a prostitute herself.
After his initial shock at all these disclosures, Petro labours to calm Dan’ko down and to urge him to seek treatment, together with Tonya. Petro then concocts an elaborate lie about Dan’ko suffering a nervous breakdown as the result of recently receiving bad marks at school, so that the rest of the family should not suspect the truth.

○ Chapter 7

On his way back from paying a visit to Tonya’s aunt in the countryside, Petro Semenovych experiences a momentary delay because a horseshoe suddenly falls off the foot of the horse pulling his coachman’s carriage. Just then, Petro recognizes a familiar face from university days: Khodorovs’kyi. They pause briefly to talk, and Khodorovs’kyi mentions that he wishes he had studied venereal diseases and their treatments more closely while they were in school, since fortunes can be made overnight in that specialization, in Germany.

As they go their separate ways again, Petro finds himself distracted from his patients back at the clinic, because he is pondering over the plight of Dan’ko and the "mysteriously" missing Tonya. No sooner does he finish his work day than he is called to the Harbuzenkov household, at the request of Sanya.

She insists on interrogating him more closely about Shapkin and "the scene in the drawing room" («сцена в салоні»), which she suspects he saw. She also wants to pursue the problem that Petro mentioned about his brother, but he remains reticent -- although he does admit to seeing her embrace with Shapkin. Sanya seizes upon this confession as a long-awaited pretext for lashing out at him (with both fists and words), commanding him to leave without ever thinking of returning: "We didn’t hire you to snoop around behind closed doors" (p. 63).

○ Chapter 8

Petro suddenly announces to his family that he is leaving to study the new medical techniques for the treatment of syphilis with Dr. Erlich in Germany. He also informs the Harbuzenkovs of this decision, and respectfully withdraws his services.

Consternation results from every side: Petro’s mother, Mariia Pankrativna, worries that syphilitic patients in her son’s practice will inevitably befoul her rooms and furniture next door; Petro’s former employer, Ivan Pylypovych, swears that he can not manage without him and eagerly awaits his return from abroad. But Petro proceeds with his plan anyway.

Dan’ko writes to Petro from the depths of despair, begging him not to bother with this "sacrifice" («жертва») on his behalf.
And Petro writes back to Dan'ko, urging him to keep up the fight in his absence, because "I'm looking for a way out of this problem for myself as much as for you" (p. 70). Petro needs to rethink his own life too, he writes, especially in the wake of his brother's diagnosis. He vows to help Dan'ko not only to regain his health but to marry Tonya as well ("I'm convinced that she still loves you," etc.).

**Chapter 9**

Two weeks into his stay in Germany, Petro receives two surprising letters. The first is from Dan'ko, which seems to testify to a sudden religious conversion: "I must ask you not to write to me anymore because I have already found the right path ... You have completely erred in vain with all your lies to protect me ... [because] that was all part of another now-dead life" (p. 72). These words suffice to seriously disturb Petro's concentration in class.

But the second letter has an even stronger impact, coming as it does from Sanya -- for it is a passionate explanation of her past bad behaviour, as well as a declaration of love! It turns out that the whole Harbuzenkov family has been held in thrall for the past three years by the vicious Shapkin, who uses his knowledge of Nika's anguished betrayal of socialist comrades in prison as a wedge to extort not only money, but now Sanya's affections too. Complicating this picture further is Mrs. Shapkin (Larysa Andriivna), whom Nika desperately loves and whom Shapkin uses as yet another lever against the family. So in the midst of this emotional and financial turmoil, Sanya could not help having lashed out in frustration against "the best and wisest of us all," when pressed on the topic of Shapkin (p. 73). She begs Petro's forgiveness, promises "from now on to be completely, totally different" with him, and threatens "to fall seriously ill" if he stretches out his studies much longer (p. 76). (She also reminds him twice to burn her letter.) Petro immediately responds to her with a promise to return as soon as possible.

**Chapter 10**

Petro hurries home that very evening, excusing himself with some embarrassment in front of his mother to go and see Sanya.

He finds Sanya to be just as warm in person as on paper. She urges him to read aloud a flattering newspaper article about "the universal progress" he is bringing back from his studies in Germany, to an admiring circle of listeners which she has assembled. Then Shapkin arrives and acknowledges authorship of this article. But Petro puts off Shapkin's attempt to hug him with a clearly uncomfortable handshake instead. Sanya rescues Petro from this awkwardly chilly moment by calling him into another room.
There they admit that Petro's diplomatic skills could benefit from some work, especially in view of his knowledge now of her family's complicated past. And finally, after tenderly holding each other's hands and falling under a mute spell of mutual admiration, they promise to meet again tomorrow, for lunch at the Harbuzenkovs'. Petro then manages to slip away back to his own family, while Sanya improvises a way to both explain and pardon his exit to the others.

**Chapter 11**

The following day, Sanya and Petro are thwarted in their heart-to-heart talk by Petro's resistance to discussing the subject of his brother's syphilis. Not even Sanya's unhappiness at the imminent prospect of becoming Shapkin's lover can shake Petro from his confused vow of silence.

So they begin to quarrel. Sanya venomously agrees with Petro's mother that seeking a cure for the wages of sin can only encourage people to sin more freely (and that Petro's German studies are thus not so laudable after all). Petro confesses that he can not begin to share the problem on his mind until he has "lived through the fact of it all himself," on his own time and terms, so that it will no longer "penetrate" him in turn (p. 86).

This withholding of information does not please Sanya, who presents him with an ultimatum: either Petro will confide in her, in the week before the Harbuzenkovs leave town for the summer, or else he will lose her for good. "It seemed that something sticky and superfluous surrounded every word between them, like a spider web" (p. 84). And so Petro withdraws, burdened with Sanya's deadline.

**Chapter 12**

Back at home, Petro prepares his room for receiving syphilis patients with the reluctant help of his mother, and the sarcastic smirks of his sister Marta.

Then, just as Petro is about to go to sleep, Dan'ko knocks at his door and shows him a letter that he has just received from Tonya, who is writing from a whorehouse: "I heard that your dear brother finally got back, and that he is about to start curing you in the German manner; I could send him a lot of lady patients from my place of work" (pp. 89-90). Several other prostitutes append their signatures and lewd commentaries, so that there can no longer be any doubt of the letter's provenance.

Petro's sadness and disbelief are met by Dan'ko's taunting and scolding: "You're the one to blame for all this, Petro. Tonya's been in love with you all this time, and not with me -- don't
pretend that you don’t know. Even this letter is addressed more to you than to me, because she’s counting on you to run to her as soon as you’ve read it. Don’t you realize that the only reason she left is because she saw you falling for that Harbuzenkova?" (p. 92)

Petro is sorely shaken by this definitive revelation. As soon as he is alone again, he sets off to find Tonya.

° Chapter 13

Petro searches for Tonya through all the local houses of infamy until he finally finds her, working under the name "Marusia." He recognizes her immediately (from the back), and gently approaches her. She seems dazed at first to see him there, then quickly recollects herself and shows him into her room.

There they discuss Petro’s chivalrous plans to extract her from her situation, and Tonya’s more resigned reasons for staying where she is. "As soon as you fall into a place like this," she explains, "there’s no door out of it" (p. 102). At least among her fellow fallen women she can still feel like an equal, no better nor worse than anyone else -- but outside of his house, in the wider world, "I’d be constantly afraid that someone might recognize me ... and even if I succeeded in hiding myself away in a completely new life somewhere else, where no one could ever have known me, I would still have to live with myself ... There is no rescue possible for the likes of us" (p. 103; p. 104; p. 105).

Petro insists that there must be some way out for her that she has not considered («ВИХІД МУСИТЬ БУТИ»). He even starts blaming himself for her sorry fate. But Tonya will not accept this: "I alone am guilty for everything I have chosen, both for myself and for Dan’ko" (p. 108). She tells Petro that Dan’ko was her first lover, and that he had infected her with syphilis (not the other way around) -- "but I don’t hold any hard feelings against him" (p. 101). She was subsequently the mistress of an officer posted in Odessa, and after that relationship also soured, she went into the whorehouse to spite him. "I don’t know myself what was really happening to me" (p. 101). She hints at her love for Petro, but he strenuously ignores it. She asks if he and Sanya Harbuzenkova will be engaged soon ("I want you to get married without fail" (pp. 108-109)).

Then the proprietress of the establishment knocks a couple of times to remind Tonya that her time is up, and that she is wanted again in the hall where Petro first saw her. Tonya asks Petro for his photograph, and surrenders at last to tears. He promises to return the next day with his portrait, if she will promise in turn not to give up prematurely on the idea of her escape --
since this is a matter where "nobody can judge, and nobody is to blame" (p. 110). She tearfully agrees, and they part.

Chapter 14

Petro now divides his days working at the syphilis clinic with nights visiting Tonya at the whorehouse. "He really came to life only at night ... and his family knew all too well where he spent those nocturnal hours" (p. 112). Petro's mother can not accept the idea of bringing Tonya back home because of the shamefully corruptive influence that even a repentant or reluctant whore would exercise over the (grand) children. Petro's sister likewise will not tolerate Tonya's hopeful return to the fold. Petro's brother-in-law makes lewd remarks about Petro's interest in saving Tonya ("You've got taste! ... She's a hot little number, all right" (p. 115)).

Petro's appeals on behalf of Tonya fall on deaf ears, because in a world where "grass eats the earth, and sheep eat the grass, and people eat the sheep, and the earth eats people again ... Tonya is perceived as being simply less adapted for survival, and so rightly serves as food for the drunkards who fall on her body" (p. 116). Petro struggles to find a solution to Tonya's quandary, but remains stymied.

Chapter 15

Petro descends further and further into Tonya's underworld, and gradually becomes accustomed to all the horrors there. He learns to see the women's cynicism and childishness as all part of the theatrical escape demanded of them by their clients: to play either gypsies, geishas, nuns, or schoolgirls is to cater to an audience that requires women to conform to interchangeable but identifiable types.

The men who pay them visits are similarly stereotypical: either simple folk (often virgins) or romantic fools (whom the whores tend to treat with more sympathy); or the noisy, drunken set of habitués and their snivelling, whining counterparts (who are received with considerably less courtesy). Petro even recognizes himself as belonging to the latter "runny-nosed" type because of his own impotently moralizing tendencies. And he realizes that just this lesser sort of man (like his more boisterous and careless variant) tends to transmit venereal diseases consciously, as a spiteful "souvenir," in punishment for some imperfect transaction with a prostitute.

The more truths that Petro discovers at Tonya's infamous place of work, the more he despairs of ever being able to rescue her -- and the more he also feels imprisoned there alongside her, in the red light district called Krasnohors'ka Street.
Chapter 16

Petro begins to see his whole ambitious attempt to cure the syphilitics in his neighbourhood as an exercise in futility, since he cannot correct the deeper cause: Krasnohors'ka Street, whose corruption only perpetuates the problem at every social level. Petro feels so alienated now from his disapproving mother and sister, and icily indifferent brother, that he is forced to take meals alone in his clinic.

His only remaining friend is Sanya, whom he has neglected to see for a fortnight. So Sanya herself arrives at the clinic doorstep, seeking an explanation for his absence. Petro tells her everything about Tonya, except her disease -- and suddenly, despairingly discerns in Sanya the very same syphilitic symptoms! Sanya becomes jealous of Tonya, until Petro finally acknowledges the gravity of Tonya's condition as well as his suspicions about Sanya's own. "Some peculiarities in your father's character seem derived from an older illness ... THAT illness ... which is your inheritance, too. We can't be sure yet until we've run some blood tests for your father, your brother, and yourself" (p. 133; p. 131; p. 134). Sanya flees, aghast -- yet another victim of the epidemic.

Chapter 17

For the next two days, Petro stays rooted to his clinic in a glum sort of stupor. But on the third day, he receives a letter from Tonya that pleads with him to intercede on the behalf of her desperate and destitute aunt, who stole some earrings from a slimy old factory owner called Androsov. Since the latter is friendly with the senior Harbuizenkov, Tonya hoped that Petro might be able to appeal to each of them for clemency.

So Petro sets out immediately to see both Androsov and Harbuizenkov, but he ends up having little luck with either of them. Androsov refuses to discuss the matter at all, and Harbuizenkov dismisses Petro's interest in justice "for immoral women who sell their own children besides stealing from others" as all too transparently motivated (p. 139). "I must ask you to relieve yourself of any further obligations to visit our home," Ivan Pylypovych adds, "in view of the breach of medical confidentiality that you showed to my daughter" (p. 140).

Petro defends his diagnosis, and the patriarch threatens to assault him with a paperweight -- only to suddenly collapse under the strain. Petro rushes to administer the appropriate medication, while the recovering Harbuizenkov reiterates his order for Petro to leave and never return. On his way out, Petro catches a glimpse of Sanya's "devastated" face.
○ Chapter 18

Early the next morning, Petro hurries to see Tonya with his answer to her problem. Instead of hopelessly struggling to reconcile the laws of society with the laws of nature, he proposes that Tonya and all the other prostitutes form an anti-society of their own, to teach new generations by their example to think beyond the corrupt commandments of their fathers.

The only evil in prostitution, he claims, is the toll it takes on individual women. Logically, prostitutes perform a public service that the government requires but prefers not to recognize -- "and where there is a question of service, there should be no shame associated" (p. 146). Tonya should therefore not permit herself to be perceived as "fallen" when she is really just another civil servant -- albeit operating under more painful, difficult and dangerous working conditions than her "respectable" colleagues.

More specifically, Petro has in mind his progressive elder brother Mykhailo and his freethinking band of socialists, who should receive Tonya like one of their own -- by no later than nightfall! Tonya, however, remains sorrowfully sceptical; she worries that Petro has worked himself into some kind of delusional fever. Petro leaves undaunted, with a vow to return that very evening with her deliverance into the socialists' safekeeping.

○ Chapter 19

Petro visits his estranged older brother Mykhailo and sister-in-law Zhenya, asking them to assist in Tonya's rescue. Almost immediately they all start arguing over Petro's larger plan to release ALL whores from bondage, even though Tonya alone appears welcome enough to join Mykhailo's and Zhenya's household. "It's impossible to think of being able to take the whole lot of them in ... You're suggesting something wicked!" (p. 154)

Petro is impatient and disappointed with his brother's attachment to "the old morality," which any real revolutionary should be able to overcome: "You're still holding on to our fathers' and grandfathers' legacies of holy writ tablets and sacred relics ... so I can see that you're not much of an anarchist, after all" (p. 157; p. 156).

Petro accuses Mykhailo of being merely intellectually committed to social change, instead of growing more vitally and completely concerned with it -- because so much human misery can't wait for theories alone to relieve them. "No single morality or amorality exists; there is only the morality of the oppressed and the morality of the oppressor, nothing more" (p. 159).
Petro requests Mykhailo's help in drafting a series of lectures on this whole new "socialist" philosophy, to which Mykhailo good-naturedly agrees.

Then Petro returns to his clinical tour of duty, as well as to a couple of distress calls: first a note from Sanya (which he answers with curt promise to visit, as soon as possible), and another note from Tonya (announcing the arrest of her aunt, and Tonya's subsequent escape from the whorehouse in order to care for the abandoned young cousins). Thus Petro rushes yet again to Tonya's side, this time with monetary assistance and a promise to help them all find new lodgings.

*Chapter 20*

Petro is becoming more and more openly obsessed over his "mania" to write the lecture to end all lectures on the problem of prostitution. He even begins to cross-examine his own patients with a view towards collecting more material.

Meanwhile, his mother worries that he will be arrested. Sanya can only feel pity and shame for him, as well as some malice towards Tonya for stealing his heart. Dan'ko is at least making small overtures of emotional acknowledgement, at long last.

Then a damning article in the socialist press appears, penned by Shapkin. It warns readers against Petro's forthcoming lecture(s) as "ephemeral foolishness next to the eternal truths passed down by our fathers" (p. 171). Petro remains calmly self-assured, however, as he continues to regularly inform Tonya of the progress he seems to be making in resolving "their" problem. But Tonya withdraws into sorrowful sewing and silence, which Petro in his self-absorbed enthusiasm chooses to ignore.

*Chapter 21*

Petro is shaken finally out of his reverie by the death of one of his patients. A couple consults him: Mr. Mayevs'kyi's worsening condition has been torturing him as well as his wife and children for the past six years. They both plead for whatever medical relief may still be available, but the husband's heart is too weak to survive any treatments by injection (of salvarsan). So Petro has no recourse but to send them away.

However, Mrs. Mayevs'ka returns with an anguished plea to proceed with at least one injection anyway, "for the sake of our suffering children" (p. 178). Mr. Mayevs'kyi has already admitted that his pain was driving him to thoughts of suicide; now his wife seems ready to kill him herself -- with the doctor's "saving" help!
Inexplicably, Petro agrees. He convinces himself that the risk of euthanasia is actually desirable under the "nightmarish" domestic circumstances; he is aware that "he is consciously almost killing a person, but only because he knows he is right to do so" (p. 179).

The following morning, he pays the Mayevs'kyi couple a house call, where he prepares and administers the injection. Nearly three hours pass without incident, so Petro leaves his patient. But within another two hours, he receives notice that Mr. Mayevs'kyi is dead ... and Mrs. Mayevs'ka, "out of her mind with terror and grief," is calling Petro the killer (p. 180).

Chapter 22

The day after his patient's death, Petro delivers his long-awaited public lecture. But even before he begins, Petro knows that his work is bound to fail. He surveys all the hostile faces in the audience, and he wonders how he could have ever found the nerve to provoke so much antagonism in the first place.

He falters through his opening remarks, struggling to recover some of his old confidence as he develops his argument. Whispers rippling throughout the auditorium build to shouts and catcalls. He hurries on almost to the end of his notes, but he is cut off by the crowd when he pronounces marriage and prostitution to be equivalents because "all prostitution results from abnormal and unjust relations in both society and the family, for which we all have only ourselves to blame" (p. 184).

Pandemonium breaks out, but Zavada steps up to the podium and calms the crowd by condemning Petro's speech as "the theory of a despicable rapist" (p. 185).

Somehow Petro escapes the fiasco unscathed, but practically trips over Dan'ko -- who is lying miserably on the clinic's doorstep, sobbing. They embrace, the younger brother covering the older one's face with kisses and tears.

Chapter 23

Petro becomes a recluse for the next couple of days, venturing out at last only to see Tonya briefly -- before holing up again for another two days. When he returns to see Tonya the second time, there is alcohol on his breath and defeat in his voice. "You were right," he tells her. "A single spitball is stronger than a hundred kisses" (p. 189). He ruminates aloud about his failure "to go to the end" and "eliminate in himself that same morality" that he hoped so much to be able to eliminate in others (p. 189).
Yet he also believes that the right audience of "real revolutionaries" still exists somewhere for him: all those who have been "insulted and injured, exploited and robbed" might heed his message where Petro's comfortable bourgeois colleagues only jeered (p. 190). Tonya tells him that such an attitude will only land him in prison.

Then Petro shows her a letter he received from Sanya, advising him of the duel he is supposed to fight with Zavada -- because his lecture went so flagrantly against "the legacy of our fathers and the precepts of 'the soul'" (p. 191). Petro discusses with Tonya his decision to respond to Zavada's challenge by sending two letters: the first being a contrite statement of withdrawal from the terms of the duel, and the second being Mrs. Mayevs'ka's accusation of Petro as her husband's murderer. Surrendering himself thus into Zavada's hands, Petro hopes to prove that he feels "absolutely no PERSONAL enmity" against him (p. 193) -- because the only thing Petro really has to fear in this matter is himself: all the Zavadas and their hateful values that Petro still internalizes, but hopes to finally abolish. Tonya agrees with this course of action, and they part with optimistic promises to meet again tomorrow.

Chapter 24

About a week later, Petro receives a summons to appear in court. Thinking that it has something to do with Tonya's aunt, he is surprised upon arrival to learn that Mrs. Mayevs'ka has initiated legal proceedings against him, formally accusing him of the murder of her husband. Petro admits his guilt to the judge, but adds that he does not regret committing the crime under the circumstances -- and moreover, he would gladly do it again!

Since the judge merely required Petro to state whether he had in fact warned the patient of any possible dangers associated with the injection, he asks Petro again to answer with either a yes or a no. But Petro is not content to let the matter rest so simply: he insists on his lack of remorse and his readiness to "reoffend." And so he is arrested.

Petro is puzzled by this swift outcome, but consoled by the rightness of his transgression all the same -- since he broke the law "for the good of another ... and not for his own interests" (p. 197).

Chapter 25

Petro writes to Tonya from prison. He is glad to be there, he says, because now he feels "equal" enough to her to be able to ask her finally for her hand in marriage. He actually enjoys the humbling experience of being behind bars, although "it's really not as terrible here as you imagine it to be" (p. 198). He hopes
to be able to find the redemption that has been eluding him through the pursuit of "ponderings, lectures, and books" in the purifying "suffering" that now awaits him here (p. 198).

Then he receives a letter from Sanya, which reveals the extent of her own collusion in Petro's arrest. After consenting at last to become Shapkin's mistress, Sanya avenges Petro's indifference to her by sending Shapkin to Mrs. Mayevs'ka with money for the legal case. But Sanya, overcome by guilt and love, tries to rescue Petro by admitting her involvement in the set-up to the judge (who dismisses her as hysterical). Now she can only hope that Petro will take this letter to the judge himself, as an argument for his innocence.

However, Petro serenely shreds up the letter after a moment's thought, thus resigning himself to his fate: three years' imprisonment, on top of the removal of all rights to ever practice medicine again. "Everyone said that he was judged on the basis of his public lecture, and not on the Mayevs'ka case at all" (p. 200).

And as Petro is being transferred to a jail in the far north, his new wife Tonya accompanies him.
Appendix C-2

Plot Summary of Volodymyr Vynnychenko's Zapysky kyrpatoho Mefistofelia

It's a Sunday in springtime -- "a loathsome season" (3) -- and the bells are ringing in St. Sophia's cathedral. The narrator, Yakov Vasylevych Mikhailiuk, is playing cards with Dmitrii Sosnyts'kyi (who is hard up for cash, as usual), and a Kalmyk fellow called Karachapov. After winning the game, the narrator catches a glimpse of his reflection in the mirror on his way out, and remembers his nickname: Mephistopheles. "I earned that name for my face and figure, but because of my nose ... which is not so much snubbed as duck-like, wide and flat at the end ... people call me a snub-nosed Mephistopheles" (7).

The narrator walks home with a friend from his socialist days of youth called Nechyporenko, who has fallen on hard times. So he offers his old friend a job, "for 300 karbovantsii2 if he succeeds and 100 if he does not," to prove to a certain gentleman in another town that "absolute truth does not exist, and the world around us is simply the work of our imagination" (9). Nechyporenko, stunned by the sudden prospect of income, stumbles home to tell his wife and two small daughters the news.

* * *

The narrator drops by the Sosnyts'kyi house for tea that same evening, just before little Andriiko's bed time. He feels pangs of affection for this boy, whose nose seems to so closely resemble his own ...

But then Mrs. Sosnyts'kyi (Sonya) tells the narrator that he is no longer welcome there; his "deeply immoral, ugly and cruel" influence over the past year has corrupted her husband. "You taught him to play cards," she accuses, "to write lying articles, to love money and drink ... and I'm sure you've dragged him along to see your prostitutes as well" (14). The narrator protests that his "unusually strong nature" is surely not to blame for the actions of a grown man like Sosnyts'kyi. Sonya answers that she

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1Володимир Винниченко, Записки кирпатаого Мефістофеля: Роман [Notes of A Snub-Nosed Mephistopheles: A Novel]. Київ-Львiв: Українська наклaдня, 1923. All page numbers for the text refer to this edition. There are no chapter headings or numbers, just briefer or longer passages separated by dashes.

2The Ukrainian equivalent at the time for a dollar.
knew she should have still hated him for these past eight years, and yet he insisted on worming his way back into their home and trying to destroy it anyway. The narrator wonders in a bemused fashion whether he should not simply walk over to Sonya and cover her with kisses: "then the truth would have come out" (16). But he turns and leaves instead.

* * *

Suffering from sleeplessness, the narrator joins the crowds walking the streets at night and suddenly beholds a beautiful girl wearing a white hat. Somehow she seems familiar, like a vision in a long-forgotten dream of youth. So he follows her and catches up with her, scraping up the courage to ask her if he might escort her to her door step. Hastening her stride, she tells him to leave her alone. The narrator humbly apologizes but insists that, having seen her several times before, he merely sought to make her closer acquaintance. She peeks back at him curiously before driving off in a cab, leaving our hero awkwardly alone on the pavement.

* * *

Back in his bed, the narrator finds his persistent insomnia plaguing him with existential anguish. "Why am I alive?" he asks himself. "What's the good of any of us being alive, for that matter?" (20) He broods a while on the theory of canals on Mars, then concludes that interplanetary exploration is futile: "Why bother going there at all? We're bound to find just more of the same thing: creatures being pointlessly born, pointlessly living and suffering, and pointlessly dying" (20). Finally he manages to lull himself to sleep with a relaxation technique learned from childhood: a story ...

* * *

"I'm walking down the street, in the light rain of an early autumn evening ... I feel cold because I'm terribly alone ... because I don't love anyone ... Then I clearly see a building ... and there I meet a woman in a white hat, leaning against the fence outside. Our eyes lock for only five or six seconds, but it feels much longer -- as if I am plunging into an abyss in slow motion, feeling my heart dilate with a sweet panic. She looks away and turns to go into the house ... and I suddenly realize that I'm standing back on the street again, right in that very spot where I first met her and felt my life break in two. [...]"

"I walk back to her house and open the door ... She is there in the hallway with a maid ... She tells me to take off my coat ... I take her hand and lead her into a room ... Something somewhere crashes to the floor, and we let go of each other's hands. Suddenly I feel weak and have to sit down ... I look at the bare
trees and twilight falling outside ... and I feel my strength returning. [...] I get up and calmly sit down beside her. SHE trembles again, like the flame of a candle flickering ... We hear voices in the room next door. She asks me to go home ... I ask to meet her again tomorrow, on the corner across from the cathedral, at seven o’clock" (22-25).

** * *

"We sit many, many times together on the boulevard opposite the cathedral. She no longer takes her hands away from mine, as if surrendering to fate. And I tell her ... that even though we don’t know each other ... I recognize in her the longed-for mother of my children ... and hope that I correspond to the father she’s been seeking for her children ... " (25-26)

** * *

"And I am no longer the predatorial lawyer, feeding off other people’s miseries ... but a modest barrister, defending the cause of the poor and downtrodden ... We live together in a small and sunny apartment. We learn to make little economical sacrifices for each other ... We are not yet husband and wife. [...] We celebrate and exult in the orgy of our drunken love. But unconsciously, stealthily, and even against our will, we start watching where the other goes. [...] And she begins to cry ... She finally learns the true meaning of love. And so now we are man and wife; we have a son" (26-28).

** * *

Here the story ends, with a dull ache that forces the narrator awake. He gives up trying to get any more sleep. As he lights a cigarette, he wonders why Sonya alluded to their affair from eight years ago: "Surely she must have known that I never loved her!" (28) They had been Party members together; she used to tease him; then one evening she suddenly "provoked" and surrendered to him. There was nothing more between them; two weeks later she married Sosnyts’kyi. Thus the question of who actually fathered Andriiko remains open: "She herself says that she doesn’t know ... and she uses this uncertainty as a cruel power of vengeance over me" (30). Lately she has been suggesting that the narrator is Andriiko’s father, while keeping him carefully and consistently away from the boy at the same time. "God! Will I never know the real truth?" (32) Only one thing’s for sure: there’s no love lost between Sonya and Sosnyts’kyi, then as much as now.

Finally, just as the sky is beginning to lighten, the narrator collapses back into bed -- his whole body burning with fatigue from the past two sleepless nights.
It's been a bad day at the office so far: the narrator's head is aching and his patience is short from lack of sleep. Then an acquaintance flies in with a demand for assistance in securing the quickest possible divorce from his wife. Incensed over the discovery that his mistress was harassed and threatened by his suspicious spouse that very morning, Panas Pavlovych Kryvulia was driven to drink "three glasses of cognac and two bottles of beer -- the latter out of thirst" (35), before arriving at the lawyer's office. After nine years of marriage, Kryvulia is pleased for the pretext of his wife's (latest) spectacular instance of bad behaviour for ending their alliance.

"'Just because she's squeezed out two pieces of live meat, my wife thinks she has every right to sit on my neck for the rest of my life ... She thinks she's better than everybody ... She's always going on about maternal love, but mothers love their offspring no more than animals; it's fathers who really know how to love the children -- with a greater, stronger, nobler and more human kind of love! [...] She has to be made to understand that she has no rights over me, once and for all!'" (36; 37)

Kryvulia is willing to give his wife three quarters of his salary in the settlement, if she will only consent to leave him alone. The most important thing is to secure custody of his son, Dima; his venomous daughter Halya is welcome to stay with the mother. The narrator agrees to take on the case.

"'You're a lucky man,'" Kryvulia tells him. "'You don't know what it's like to be a father. [...] Don't ever have kids of your own, but if you find that you do, then...be careful, just be very careful!'" (38)

Nechyporenko is the next to enter the narrator's office. He says that he was too agitated to be able to sleep last night, on account of the narrator's offer of "charity relief" in place of genuine employment. "'It's been nine years since I last saw you," says Nechyporenko, shaking with fever. "'We used to be comrades together ... You were once the most honest and upright of all of us ... But now I can hardly recognize you. Is it really possible for someone to be able to change as much as you have? What's happened to your youth, that best part of your life that you gave to the common cause?'" (40; 42)

Nechyporenko had bitterly hoped for more respect from a former fellow traveller, in his humble quest for decent work. His pride is so wounded that he practically begs to be thrown out of the narrator's office. But all that he really succeeds in doing is
paying back the narrator’s loan from a previous visit, with painfully pinched together resources.

* * *

The narrator notices on his way out of the building the same woman he always sees there, on the corner of the boulevard. She is always dressed in black, with a long gray veil of mourning, and she is constantly accompanied by a small boy. Today the pair of them seem to be quarrelling. Suddenly the boy runs out into the road in a temper, just as a streetcar turns the corner towards him -- and the narrator intercedes in the nick of time, pulling the boy out of the path of death.

This heroic rescue, "straight out of the pages of a boulevard novel" (45), occasions the introduction to the narrator of the boy (Kostya) and his grateful mother (Klavdia Petrivna). Together they all walk to the little family’s home nearby. Klavdia Petrivna chatters and bustles about as she serves their guest some tea. She confides that (contrary to appearances) she is not a widow, but separated for the past two years from her schoolteacher husband; Kostya was their only child. She invites the narrator to come see them again soon, and he agrees -- charmed by her girlish laughter and lively manner, if not by her plain face and horned-rimmed pince nez.

* * *

The narrator pays a visit to Kryvulia’s aggrieved wife, Varvara Khvedorivna, and finds her fully preoccupied with a manicure. After the narrator states Kryvulia’s intention to divorce her, she calmly replies that a divorce is out of the question because she will not agree to give him one. She alone knows what is in both of their children’s best interests, and she will never relinquish Dima into the hands of a "lecherer" like her husband, who openly frequents prostitutes besides keeping a mistress. Only death, she insists, can dissolve their marriage.

* * *

The narrator next goes to see Kryvulia’s equally aggrieved mistress, Oleksandra Mykhailivna, who is having tea with Kryvulia. The narrator relates to them the wife’s resistance, and proposes that they simply steal little Dima away from her. This, however, is too drastic and ultimately counter-productive a solution for them to seriously contemplate carrying out. Oleksandra insists that the only way out of the dilemma, as far as she is concerned, is for Kryvulia to either divorce his wife or go back to her. But Kryvulia seems paralyzed by his wife’s resolve, holding Dima in the balance.

* * *
The narrator starts making a habit of dropping by to see Klavdia Petrivna, who is always bubbling over with laughter and chatter -- quite in contrast to her perennially black garb, worn in the house as well as out. She keeps the samovar on the boil in readiness for him, and entertains him with stories; she also sings and plays the guitar for him, since she once aspired to be a professional singer -- but with the birth of Kostya she had to renounce that ambition. The narrator enjoys listening to her voice, so soft and pure and vulnerable, but he also can’t shake off the original "feeling of pity for this strange, solitary woman" that he sensed when he first met her (59).

* * *

Life seems suddenly sunnier for the narrator. "How little a person needs, by God, to be happy!" (59) He starts watching out every day, from a safe anonymous distance, for Andriiko’s arrival and departure from school. Somehow he can’t help himself: "what a pathetic, poorly finished sort of snub-nosed Mephistopheles," to be so attached to a boy that he can’t even be sure is his (61)

* * *

On his way to a committee meeting, the narrator is reminded of Nechyporenko’s rebuke about long-lost, idealistic youth. "Yes, the most important thing was our youth," he muses; "I still long for it ... its singing strength and dancing blood; its thirst to rule over all the world; its impudence and insolence; its apparent endlessness" (62).

Back at the office, he finds Sosnyts’kyi testily waiting to see him: he wants to know why Sonya is so hostile to the lawyer-friend of the family. The narrator observes the vast difference in physiognomy between Sosnyts’kyi and Andriiko, and carefully avoids any hints at his and Sonya’s pre-marital relationship. Sosnyts’kyi, for his part, mentions his need for a divorce -- and closely watches the narrator’s reaction. But he only yawns and asks about the gambling money that is owed him. Sosnyts’kyi impatiently counts out 300 karbovantsi and hands them over, before returning to the subject: Sonya wants to keep both the children. But since Vasyl’ko is only two and Andriiko is already eight, Sosnyts’kyi would prefer to have custody of the older boy; besides, "‘without Andriiko I couldn’t leave!’" (65)

The narrator cunningly creates a subterfuge by casually mentioning Klavdia Petrivna, his latest romantic conquest: "It looks serious this time ... we’re planning to spend the summer together in the Crimea’" (66). This has exactly the desired effect of deflating all of Sosnyts’kyi’s jealous suspicions. As Sosnyts’kyi hurriedly departs in confusion and disbelief, the
narrator likewise sets off -- to make something of his story about a new girlfriend into a reality.

* * *

"That evening I was very tender with Klavdia Petrivna and Kostya" (66). No sooner does the single mother put her boy to bed than she herself feels a sudden need to lie down on the sofa ... But just as things start to take a promisingly voluptuous turn, Kostya starts crying. Klavdia Petrivna rushes to calm her child, and the narrator rises to leave. They pause awkwardly during a protracted and reluctant farewell; the narrator offers Klavdia his hand and she seizes it; neither says a word. He carries her back to the sofa, intending simply to deposit her there, but she clings fast ...

Back in his own bed at home that night, the narrator wonders how he could have succumbed so easily to something that left him fundamentally indifferent: "Where was my will and consciousness during all of this? What was I really desiring or not desiring in the heat of that moment?" At least he remembered enough at the time that Klavdia could become pregnant -- "so I can still control myself, at least that much" (69).

* * *

On his way home from the courts, the narrator spots Sonya in a black hat, absently windowshopping in his neighbourhood. As soon as she catches sight of him, she rushes to ask whether Sosnyts'kyi came to see him yesterday, and what it was that they discussed. But the narrator remains reticent ("'I'm not at liberty to say'"), so she abruptly turns and leaves (71).

* * *

No sooner does he cross the threshold of his house than he finds Sosnyts'kyi already there, waiting for him -- with little Andriiko in tow. Sosnyts'kyi hardly says a word as Andriiko jumps into the narrator's lap, delighted to be able to see his "Uncle Yasha" again. The narrator is careful to restrain himself from showing his true feelings for the boy, and succeeds in bundling off both of his visitors with maximal sang froid.

* * *

Gossip across the city is painting Kryvulia as the libertine criminal, and his wife Varvara as the suffering victim. Consequently, Kryvulia starts to waver in his resolve to push through with the divorce. His mistress Oleksandra, meanwhile, is still devotedly suffering as well. The narrator wonders what makes Oleksandra so righteous, and concludes that it can only be due to her childlessness. "There always has to be some beast ...
Just let her get pregnant once, and then we’ll see what kind of cruel, sharp-clawed and jealous animal she’s really made of!" (75; 76)

* * *

"Klavdia Petrivna belongs to that breed of stubborn beasts. I hesitate to describe her relationship to Kostya as love. Rather it’s something excessive, awful, and animal-like. [...] She and Kostya are constantly fighting, a fight between two beasts" (76). Only Kostya’s frequent illnesses interrupt this perpetual pattern of skirmishes. But the narrator is gradually insinuating himself into Klavdia’s "bestial" heart, thus depriving Kostya of his accustomed portion. So the boy draws closer to the narrator too -- but not without "passionately hating, fearing, and envying" him at the same time (79).

* * *

The narrator is enjoying a drink and some talk with Karachapov at the bar one evening, when Sosnyts’kyi suddenly slams into his shoulder and forcibly joins them: he is drunk and spoiling for a fight. Karachapov does not respond to the narrator’s suggestion that they leave to continue their conversation elsewhere: he is curious to know why Sosnyts’kyi wants to quarrel. So the narrator hurriedly leaves them both, as Sosnyts’kyi shouts and throws something after him.

* * *

Out on the street the narrator wonders and worries about Sosnyts’kyi following him, but he remains alone and unscathed. He pauses on his way home under a lamp post, and observes an emaciated man tenderly talking to the infant he is holding in his arms. "Could it be that I’ll never have such a child of my own?" (83) The narrator reflects on his relationship to Sonya, Andriiko, and Sosnyts’kyi and asks himself how and why things turned out the way they did: if he hadn’t by chance bumped into them all at the theatre a year ago, none of this present mess would have ever happened. He resolves suddenly to go to Sonya and apologize, to do anything that she asks, to be upfront with Sosnyts’kyi about their past.

He finds Sonya at home, suffering from one of her many headaches; he gently tells her about Sosnyts’kyi’s attack at the bar, and learns that he beats her as well. The narrator asks her to name Andriiko’s true father, but encounters the same uncertain response. Then he asks her to forgive him; she starts to cry and he holds her for a long time, in silence. Finally he tells her that whoever the real biological father might be, after eight years of marriage she must continue to let Sosnyts’kyi believe that Andriiko is entirely his. "I felt awfully, painfully
ashamed that I couldn't offer to be her husband instead" -- even though Sonya herself seemed to be hoping so much for this alternative (88).

Sonya sighs and asks how soon he will be leaving for the Crimea with his new girlfriend, and whether or not he's finally in love. "'Of course not! [...] That is to say...Well, how can I put it exactly? She's just very lonely and defenceless somehow, and...well, very passionate, actually, you know? But we've never talked about love once..." (88)

Then the narrator asks if he can see Andriiko. Sonya shows him into the bedroom that the boy shares with the younger Vasyl'ko, where the two of them are fast asleep. The narrator asks if he might strike a match, the better to take one last look at Andriiko's face ... and in the flickering light it seems that the boy really does resemble SOSnyts'kyi after all ... except for that nose, which is undeniably his ... The match burns out, and the narrator bends to plant a burning kiss on Andriiko's cheek before rushing out into the hallway. Andriiko wakes up, and Sonya soothes him back to sleep. The narrator takes his leave, but not before exchanging kisses with Sonya too.

* * *

The narrator informs Klavdia Petrivna of his plan to treat her and Kostya to a Crimean vacation in two weeks' time. "For some reason Klavdia started to cry ... And for some reason I remembered, from as early as the second or third day of our acquaintance, how Klavdia herself proposed in her meek and modest way that she alone would be responsible for birth control" (91).

* * *

After much agonized dithering, Kryvulia decides to kidnap his son from Varvara. But the narrator has to drive him to actually do it -- both literally in the car, and figuratively with arguments. As luck would have it, Varvara has just gone to the theatre for the evening (to see the play "Orpheus in Hell"), so the coast is clear for the crime. But when Kryvulia and the narrator arrive at the doorstep, they are met by Halya -- the other, unwanted child that they had both "completely forgotten even existed" (100). Already an adolescent, Halya is quick to divine their intentions and resolutely blocks the doorway with her body: "'I won't let you pass! You can beat me if you want, but you won't leave with Dima; Mama said you'd try something like this'" (103). Kryvulia tears her roughly from the doorframe and threatens to whip her if she doesn't go straight to bed. Thus the narrator and Kryvulia make a successful getaway with the boy.

* * *
The narrator takes Klavdia and Kostya to the Crimea by train, showing them "the dance of forests and fields" through the window of their private compartment (104). Unaccustomed to such luxuries, Klavdia and Kostya are so enraptured with everything that the narrator admits to "feeling like a generous, noble god ... for giving them such simple, pure, and child-like pleasures" (105). But gradually this sense of novelty and bounty wears off: the narrator becomes more interested in three strangers' children playing under the window of their hotel, and Klavdia again "for some reason" starts crying.

"How little a woman needs to become a wife: she only needs to sleep with a man in the same bed" (107). The narrator can't fathom Klavdia's mood swings: "What right does she have to cry? After all, I never swore to her that I'd love her; we never said we loved each other once. Doesn't she understand our relationship at all?" (108)

Finally, he discovers the root of her distress: Klavdia is pregnant. At first he can't believe it: "'But you promised to take precautions! Are you trying to say that you deceived me?' "'Oh, don't you worry,'" she answers bitterly, "'I'll get an abortion. You'll never have a child with ME'" (109).

The narrator prepares to leave Klavdia behind at the resort, since she has made fast friends with the old Karaite woman who runs the establishment. A doctor recommends waiting another month before performing the abortion, so the narrator leaves Klavdia in his hands too, with promises to write and send money. They part on strained terms.

The narrator strolls the streets of Kyiv, enjoying the rays of the setting sun. His thoughts turn to his days of youth, spent in this neighbourhood: he remembers a conspiratorial friend called Hanya who used to visit him here with "literature," for which she is now serving time in Siberia. He reflects thankfully on the fact that the Sosnyts'kyis have left town, even though he feels no more attachment to their Andriiko.

He goes to his usual club and wins his usual fat wad of bills at cards, but somehow feels distanced from everyone around him: "I don't need anything from all these people ... They're moving all

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4i.e., a member of a small Jewish sect that emphasizes the Torah over the Talmud and the rabbinical tradition.
around me, but not one of them touches me ... Maybe convalescents recovering from some illness know this sort of feeling. But from what can I be convalescing?" (112-113)

* * *

While out on another walk, the narrator spots his dream girl in white again -- and this time he resolves to follow her to her door. He tries to initiate conversation, but she firmly flees or rebuffs every attempt at contact. He vows then to wait outside her house until she "extends her hand" to him. She ignores this, so he proceeds to wait ... for hours, into the night, fighting off fatigue and hunger.

A night watchman tells him that he can't sleep there on the street. The narrator replies with the story that he is only here on a bet, to prove that he can stay awake for forty-eight hours straight, and gives him a dollar to leave him alone. Thus he doggedly remains -- "because if I left now," he says to himself, "I'd never dare to approach her again, not even in my dreams" (119).

* * *

A street watchman taps the narrator awake with his broom, and he too is paid off with small change as the narrator makes a show of pacing around outside the house again. It's four in the morning and cold, with the sun just starting to lighten the sky. Gradually the neighbours in the area start noticing their overnight outdoor guest.

Finally the shops open, and the narrator buys himself a bottle of kvass and some cigarettes to revive his flagging resolve before resuming his "post." A policeman approaches only to withdraw again, convinced that the narrator's fine clothes and "determined expression" prove he is not some common vagrant or hooligan.

Around ten in the morning, the girl in the white hat at last comes out of the house and ... blithely walks right past him. So the narrator buys himself some sugared rolls and eats them on a bench, then takes up his pacing again. The girl returns, walking haughtily past him as if he does not exist. The narrator continues his pacing back and forth, pausing only to drink some seltzer water.

The sun begins to set, and he is just on the point of calling a cab and going home when the girl suddenly runs down the flight of front steps to the house, asking him how much longer he intends

5A Russian drink with a low alcoholic content, made from fermented cereal or bread.
to darken her doorway. And so they at last fall into conversation: she extends her hand, and introduces herself as Anna Pylypivna Zaberezhna. Having won this concession, the narrator sets a further condition: he will not leave, he tells her, until he is allowed to see her again. Thus they arrange to meet the following evening.

* * *

The narrator comes home from the courts to find a plaintive letter from Klavdia: "'My operation will be in a week ... the doctor said that it'll be dangerous. [...] But if I die as a result, it'll be for the best. I wrote to my sister, and she agreed to take Kostya. I'm convinced that fathers don't know how to love their own children'" (127).

The narrator tries to sketch out some response, then realizes that it's time already to see the girl in the white hat. He speeds off in a cab, considers turning back, then presses on again to his (pre)destination.

After some initial awkwardness, each discovers that the other is not married after all and the ice between them melts. The girl introduces the narrator to her sister (Marusia Pylypivna) and her sister's husband (Semen Semenovych Shypun). Pleasantries are exchanged over tea and sweets. Then Marusia asks her sister to sing for their guest. The narrator is delighted to discover that the music he had heard wafting out of the window yesterday during his long siege was none other than the wonderful voice of his dream girl, "Shapochka."6 He takes his leave, freshly re-enchanted.

* * *

The narrator comes back to see Shapochka a third time, and she tells him in no uncertain terms to give up on the idea of courting her. "'I'm training to become a professional singer, so I'm too busy for beaux. [...] I don't have anything against your coming over twice a week in the evenings; I like it when someone listens to me practice. [...] But don't bother showing up any more frequently than that. [...] I already know that you'll stop coming by soon enough, just like all the others'" (141). A storm begins to brew outside, and Shapochka feels a sudden urge to accompany it with song. "'Just don't say I didn't warn you,'" she adds (142).

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6Ukrainian diminutive meaning "little hat," the narrator's pet name for Anna Pylypivna/his ideal woman in white. A literal English equivalent might be "Hattie," but this lacks the tenderness and child-like associations conveyed by the Ukrainian.
* * *

The narrator gazes out over the Dnipro river and dreams of Shapochka, thanking her for existing after all.

* * *

The narrator catches sight of Nechyporenko, still miserably down-at-the-heel, gazing despondently into a haberdasher’s window. The narrator keeps his distance while following Nechyporenko home, curious to see where and how he lives. He bribes the building’s doorman for details: Nechyporenko has been a resident there for the past six months, but is behind in paying his rent for the past three. So the narrator turns to a legal colleague who owes him some gambling money, and asks him the favour of securing some employment for Nechyporenko. This time, however, the narrator is careful to keep his charitable involvement completely anonymous.

* * *

Back from his sojourn in the countryside, Sosnyts’kyi invites the narrator to join him at a restaurant to "celebrate his rebirth" (147). They drink together and shoo away a couple of hopeful prostitutes ("we don’t need any of that today -- isn’t that right, Yasha?"") (149). Sosnyts’kyi can’t stop talking, and remarks on how much the narrator has changed: "You look just as soft and gentle as a little newborn lamb! [...] No, don’t make that Mephistopheles face -- I won’t be taken in by that! So who’s the lucky lady who’s ruined you, eh?" (149; 150)

Sosnyts’kyi plies the narrator with alcohol but carefully remains sober himself, watching and waiting for the right moment to spring his question: "Did you ever sleep with my wife?" (153) The narrator just as carefully swears that nothing of the kind could have ever possibly happened: "I’m shocked at such a suggestion ... but at least I can now understand your strange behaviour towards me lately" (154). Sosnyts’kyi grabs the narrator by both arms and begs for the truth: "Just tell me everything! It’s better to know the worst than to not know anything at all and live in suspicious dread all the time" (155).

So the narrator swiftly concocts a story about his unrequited love for Sonya that was sadly never consummated: "She never told you about this because it’s really more my secret than hers" (157). Sosnyts’kyi, however, is not convinced: he points to the narrator’s affection for and resemblance to Andriiko as incriminating evidence. Finally he breaks down and admits that he hates both his children with Sonya, since men can never be sure of their offspring’s exact provenance: "All that we men can do is content ourselves with pretty self-delusions. [...]
I’ve been duped and deprived of my rights to paternal feelings’’ (159).

The narrator employs all his rhetorical skills to remove every remaining doubt from Sosnyts’kyi’s mind. He reminds Sosnyts’kyi of his occasional infidelities to Sonya, as well as insisting on the extent to which Andriiko is the spitting image of his mother. In the end they are both persuaded, so they part on excellent terms.

* * *

The narrator learns by letter that Klavdia survived the operation after all, so their relationship is finally and mercifully dissolved. Elated, the narrator smiles on all the world: "Shapochka," he exults to himself, "I’m free!" (163)

He goes for a stroll and spies Oleksandra Mykhailivna shopping; he decides to follow her, hoping to catch up with her on news from Panas Pavlovych. To his surprise, she takes furtive flight into an alley full of children, to whom she distributes her various purchases of candy. He watches their interactions from afar and decides that this must be a long-established secret ritual for Oleksandra Mykhailivna.

He waits for her to continue on her way home before approaching her. Then he is again surprised: when he asks about Panas Pavlovych and Dima, he learns that they are all back with Varvara as one happy family again.

Oleksandra Mykhailivna politely invites the narrator into her home, where he is inspired to speak at length on her pitifully "cheated" life: her lover is a weak scoundrel, she is far too beautiful to remain childless, she has every right to the joys of motherhood, etc., etc. "‘For what binds people together most strongly of all? Ideas? Learning? A common profession? No, none of these! ‘It’s family, children -- there’s the strongest and most incomprehensible tie, the force that often bypasses all laws of logic and all understanding of the wise, the whole, and the beautiful!’" (174)

Moved by his own powers of speech, the narrator is satisfied to see Oleksandra Mykhailivna similarly reduced to tears. He urges her to run away with Panas Pavlovych and start a new life and family together, in spite of Dima and Varvara. Then he leaves her in painful turmoil, with a promise to do everything possible to set her up with Panas Pavlovych in a new love nest.

* * *

True to his word, the narrator telephones Panas Pavlovych right away. Halya intercepts the call, however, and manifests so much
hostility towards the narrator that he feels like "a real Mephistopheles, not just a snub-nosed one" (177). Then Varvara answers the 'phone in place of her husband, asking the narrator to leave them all in peace. But the narrator is quick to come up with a ruse: he claims that some pressing legal matter connected with Panas Pavlovych's career will be perilously at stake if Varvara does not send her husband to see him directly.

Sure enough, Panas Pavlovych arrives at the narrator's office within the hour. But he is less tractable than the narrator expected, and in fact wary of continuing with marital complications because they have already impacted negatively on his business reputation. "'What's the use of all this trouble,'" sighs Panas Pavlovych, "'when in twenty or thirty years' time we'll all berotting under the ground anyway?'" (182) "'That's all very well for you,'" retorts the narrator; "'please go ahead and embrace your own mortality. But what right do you have to poison the life of a still young woman?'" (183)

Panas Pavlovych flies into a self-righteous rage, then collapses into tears: "'I'm a corpse already, from all this -- I just want some peace'" (183). The narrator waits for him to calm down before hinting at the likelihood of Oleksandra Mykhailivna very soon turning elsewhere for romantic and reproductive solace. Panas Pavlovych hesitates, then agrees to accompany the narrator to Oleksandra's doorstep after all. The lovers are thus reunited, and the narrator relishes the effect this outcome is bound to have on Varvara.

* * *

The narrator walks that same evening to Shapochka's house, but knows that he can not hope to call on her because he has already used up his twice-weekly allotment of visits. So he sits on a bench at the gate of another house in the neighbourhood. Then Shapochka herself happens to walk by; he calls out to her. She is tired from a hard day, so she agrees to sit on the bench next to him. The narrator learns that she has just been discouraged by her instructors from pursuing her music studies any further.

Shapochka then proceeds to interrogate him: how can he, as a lawyer, defend in good conscience an obvious, shameless criminal? "'Any defence in such a case is tantamount to collusion in the crime'" (189). She has discovered that the narrator is currently defending a blackmailer against a former gambling friend of his. "'If this old friend of yours is so much worse than the woman who's tried to blackmail him,'" she asks, "'how could you ever have been friends with such a man in the first place?'" (190) Having made her disapproval manifest, she then briskly abandons him on the bench.
The narrator is alternately chastened, angered and flabbergasted. "What a stupid, narrow, straight little moralizing mind! She thinks she can just pass judgement on things she doesn't even understand!" (191) He calls a cab and rushes to deaden his senses with alcohol in the nearest bar.

* * *

Fortunately the following morning falls on a Sunday, so the narrator is able to nurse his considerable hangover at home all day. Shapochka unexpectedly drops by to apologize, but the narrator has such a splitting headache that he is practically indifferent to her presence. After treating her to an impromptu lecture on the relativity of morals, he excuses himself and lies down again. He sends his servant out for analgesics, avails himself of some of them, and falls asleep.

Hours later he awakes, and regretfully remembers that Shapochka actually came to visit him and how shabbily he must have received her. Then Shapochka herself inquires if he is feeling any better: she has been sitting and reading in the same room the whole time that he was asleep! The narrator is overcome with shame, tenderness, and confusion at her concern. As she is leaving, Shapochka invites him to come over later that same evening "if he likes," which of course he does.

Then Oleksandra Mykhailivna calls: Panas Pavlovych failed to stand by her, after all. She appeals to the narrator to talk to him once more, but he is too distracted by Shapochka's solicitude to remember to do so.

* * *

Sonya arrives at the narrator's office, wanting to know what story he told her husband about their "past." The narrator obliges and she listens, committing the fiction to memory. She asks about his new Crimean love-interest, but he reassures her that it's all over: "'That was just a ploy at the time, to deflect attention away from you ... a little lie to placate your husband'" (202). She invites him to come and see them all again some time soon, and quickly steals an embrace before she leaves.

* * *

The chill of autumn is setting in, and the narrator has faithfully continued to pay his twice-weekly visits to Shapochka. "Yes," he admits to himself, "she is my bride, but a bride enclosed in a prison -- in a small, white, solitary cell. I can't touch her or talk to her like a husband, but I know that no one else can take her away from me because she is surrounded by walls" (205). Everyone in Shapochka's family has grown accustomed to him already as a relative; Semen Semenovych treats
him like a son-in-law before the fact and often borrows sizeable sums from him. Shapochka meanwhile is now studying Spanish and anatomy; the narrator often brings legal work from his office to pore over beside her.

One day the narrator is waxing eloquent on the subject of love: "'We of the intelligentsia are only capable of theorizing; we are neither inclined nor able to actualize our theories of the ideal ...'" (207) But Shapochka cuts him short: how ideal then, she asks, was his liaison with Klavdia in the Crimea?

The narrator is disturbed to find his vision talking back to him this way: "It didn't correspond at all to my dream images of her" (208). He justifies his side of the Klavdia story to her, which she does not appear to entirely believe. She rises and suddenly goes to the piano, where she plays and sings sad Ukrainian folk songs that pierce the narrator's soul. That evening he leaves her house in "an obscure state of sorrow mixed with joy" (211).

* * *

The next day Shapochka pleads a headache, so the narrator is forced to wander the streets aimlessly (and a little anxiously) instead of seeing her. He notices a stylish-looking lady on the arm of an attentive gentleman, and recognizes something familiar about her laughter: with a shock he realizes that it is Oleksandra Mykhailivna! Intrigued by her dramatic change in appearance and behaviour, but careful to remain in the shadows, the narrator follows the couple to Oleksandra's house. While the unknown gentleman takes his leave of Oleksandra, the narrator notices another stranger eavesdropping behind the bushes -- and is again surprised to recognize him as Panas Pavlovych! But he makes a decidedly "miserable Othello, carrying only an umbrella in place of a revolver or dagger" (214). The narrator watches Panas Pavlovych hang around outside Oleksandra Mykhailivna's house for an agonized eternity before finally taking a cab home.

* * *

Shapochka's nephews, Styopa and Mykhalko, like to hear the narrator tell stories about the times he was in prison. Breathless and spellbound after one such story, the boys ask if the narrator still considers himself a revolutionary.

"'No,'" he answers, "'I've stopped being a moth. [...]

Revolutionaries, you see, are a lot like moths. Have you ever noticed how sometimes in summer, during the evening, a moth will fly straight into the light of a lamp? People then catch the insect and throw it back outside into the darkness. But a little while later, it will be flying around the lamp again. So the moth is again caught and this time flung even further away.
Although brutally crumpled, the moth rests its wings and gathers all its remaining strength to rise into the air once more. Then it is finally either knocked dead with a pen knife or else caught, its wings broken as it is hurled against the ground. Just like revolutionaries ... Many of them are still lying somewhere in the dark, with their crumpled and broken wings, and yearn weakly for the light'" (216).

Does that mean that revolutionaries no longer really exist among us? the boys ask. The narrator assures them that "'revolutionaries have always been and always will be in the world, because every young and healthy and lively person is a revolutionary. You'll grow up and take our place. Your wings will eventually weaken and crumple too, but by then another generation will be there to fill the ranks'" (217).

Shapochka has been listening to the stories too, while lavishing her affections on first her pet kitten and then her pet puppy. Her sister shakes her head at such kisses: "'A husband is what you need for that!'" (218) Shapochka disappears from the room in embarrassment, while her sister gives the narrator a knowing look.

* * *

Sonya sends the narrator a letter because she can never reach him by telephone, nor track him down in any of his usual gambling dens: she implores him to come visit her and Sosnyts’kyi and Andriiko. So the narrator complies, but finds Andriiko's increasing resemblance to Sosnyts’kyi an impediment to earlier, paternal affections.

* * *

Winter has arrived. The narrator arranges for Shapochka to perform in concert, but ends up not attending; Nechyporenko has to escort her to the hall instead. The narrator is starting to doubt his "dream" relationship: somehow Shapochka seems bored with him already, because he himself has "simply become boring" (223) -- the old Mephistopheles nickname no longer applies because she can not recognize anything devilish or devil-may-care about him anymore.

He considers dropping by to see Sonya during the concert, or else Oleksandra Mykhailivna and her coterie of admirers: Panas Pavlovych, Kucherenko (the suitor spotted on the street), and a fellow called Trubachevs’kyi. In the end he elects to take a cab home. But on his way there, he happens to see a familiar black hat ... it's Klavdia Petrivnai! He stops the cab and invites her home with him for tea, but she hurriedly and adamantly refuses: "'I'm sorry, but I can't -- somebody's waiting for me'" (225).
The narrator assumes that she means that another man is already involved with her, so he winks and withdraws.

* * *

The following evening, the narrator receives a letter from Klavdia Petrivna: she admits to not having gone through with the abortion after all, because she was certain that she wouldn't have survived it. Therefore they now have a one-month-old son! "For the love of God and the love of our child, forgive me! ... I couldn't do otherwise" (227; 228). Klavdia's former husband cut off all financial support as soon as he learned of the birth of Klavdia's second child, so Klavdia was "forced" to bring Kostya and the infant to live with her sister, who is studying at the university in Kyiv. "'I never meant for you to know ... but since our fortuitous meeting yesterday, I no longer have the right to remain silent'" (227; 226).

The narrator feels utterly defeated by this news. "This ended everything! A heavy iron wall has suddenly fallen between the present and the past, brutally severing my lifeline to my dreamworld with Shapochka" (228).

Then his stupor turns to rage as he suddenly starts tearing apart his office, smashing every piece of furniture within reach. After this rampage he collapses again, vaguely aware that he is bleeding. Shapochka gingerly enters, wondering what on earth has happened; he rudely informs her that he is drunk. She notices his wound and quickly, gently bandages it; he melts inside from despair and wordlessly hands her Klavdia's letter. He watches her read it, "as if from the other side of the bars of a prison" (231). Shapochka, of course, becomes simultaneously distant and distraught, while the narrator sinks back into a hopeless exhaustion.

* * *

Three hours later, the narrator wakes in his office and finds Shapochka gone. Quaking with trepidation, he forces himself to go directly to Klavdia Petrivna that very evening. "Finally," he realizes, "I will soon behold MY VERY OWN SON!" (233)

He finds her living in distressing squalor, but gruffly orders her to show him the child. But "strangely" he feels no emotion: their sleeping baby has "an ordinary face, like any other ordinary baby" (236-237). And so he simply hands Klavdia Petrivna an envelope full of bills on his way out, "to cover initial expenses" (237). This triggers tears from the mother: she can understand his loathing for her, she says, but how can he be so heartless towards an innocent infant, too?
The narrator answers that he won't be trapped by her manipulative deceptions: "'That child is all yours; I'm not to blame for its existence; I never wanted it. I'm the one who was duped and robbed, raped even, and I absolutely will not -- do you hear? -- will not acknowledge the fruit of that rape! Just like this other kind-hearted weakness on my part, to offer you any money at all...'" (239)

Klavdia Petrivna ends the argument by throwing his money back in his face. The narrator then speedily exits, forgetting his galoshes behind him.

* * *

When the narrator returns to his office later that same night, he finds Shapochka waiting for him. She has guessed where he has been, and asks him to tell her the whole sordid story. Now the narrator enjoys a power and authority over her that he's never known before, which surprises him (241): now Shapochka is tremulously pursuing him for a change, and finally kissing him besides! He relates to her the full extent of his relationship with Klavdia Petrivna, and Shapochka forgives him for everything. They agree to "start their new life together" as soon as the Klavdia affair can be put definitively behind them.

* * *

After a day's work at the courts, the narrator pays another visit to Klavdia Petrivna. "What could I have ever found in all this to be so frightening?" he asks himself on his way there. "After all, it's the most ordinary thing in the world." What matters now is his breakthrough with Shapochka: "now everything is possible!" (245)

When he arrives at Klavdia Petrivna's, he meets her sister Ol'ha and catches Kostya pestering the baby. Klavdia hurries to the baby's rescue, hoists him carefully out of the cradle, and holds him out to his father (she named him Mika, short for Mykhailo). The narrator feels vaguely uneasy at this introduction to his own flesh and blood, as well as a bit paranoid that the infant is consciously clutching at his finger, not intending to let him go! (249-250)

Then, as Klavdia shyly breastfeeds their baby, the narrator discovers "an obscure gratitude" towards the mother for this miracle, as well as "a strange new feeling of pity and anxiety" on the child's behalf (252).

Once Mika has fallen asleep after his meal, Klavdia shows the narrator how the baby shares the same cleft chin and birthmark on the breast as his father -- a disturbing and undesirable
revelation of resemblance. "This is all so uncanny and...so wrong!" (253)

While the narrator is trying to settle with Klavdia how much money she needs to improve the family's living conditions, Kostya worries the baby again -- which brings out the worst of Klavdia's "blind and violent maternal feelings" again (257). The narrator recognizes how poorly Klavdia understands the phenomenon of sibling rivalry, but refrains from offering his advice.

After pacifying Mika, Klavdia timidly asks the narrator if he is in love with someone else. He answers in the affirmative, adding that he plans to marry this someone within the next couple of months. Klavdia withdraws, heartbroken; the narrator gets up to leave, promising to return the next day to tie up the loose financial ends with Klavdia's sister.

* * *

The narrator tries to walk off his Klavdia-related tensions before finally directing his steps towards Shapochka's house. He complains to her about Klavdia's grasping and conniving ways. Shapochka consoles him but also sympathizes with Klavdia's position, which she urges the narrator to resolve as quickly and kindly as possible. They agree to get married within the next two weeks.

* * *

Almost every day now, when the narrator returns home from work and visiting Klavdia Petrivna, he finds Shapochka waiting for him, studying her Spanish textbooks. But he is increasingly vexed by all of his tangled involvements. Kostya's affection for his little half-brother bothers the narrator, just as Shapochka's high regard for the self-sacrificing Ol'ha (who is too proud to accept any financial assistance) similarly irks him. Everything is stamped for him with "a strange fatigue mixed with annoyance, and the feeling of a restless emptiness" (265). On top of all this, Panas Pavlovych has taken to dropping by the narrator's office again, out of sheer desperation over Oleksandra Mykhailivna's capricious enjoyment of multiple masculine attentions.

* * *

Two weeks remain before Klavdia's relocation to a better apartment, and Ol'ha is bustling over all the necessary preparations. The narrator feels displaced by Ol'ha as the rightful, masculine head of Klavdia's little family (266). He persists in visiting them (in spite of his obvious superfluousness) because he is convinced that women alone can only make a mess out of raising a couple of boys. "They mean
well enough,'" he tells Shapochka, "'but they possess only animal instincts ... All they can do is lick and sniff their young, moan and snarl and shake around them ... Pure females!" (267) Neither Ol'ha nor Klavdia are capable, he claims, of understanding or analyzing a boy's feelings about jealousy or missing fathers. Women like them give birth indifferently, "'like a tree that sheds leaves, without caring any longer what happens to them'" (268).

Shapochka receives this tirade with thoughtful silence.

* * *

"'I pity all of them. But most of all I pity that tiny little body in the cradle, still oblivious to the chaos surrounding it ... like a leaf on a tree fluttering in the wind, devoid of thought or will'" (269).

Suddenly the author realizes that Mika ties him irrevocably to Klavdia and Ol'ha and Kostya, whether he likes it or not. He flees from this awful glimpse of the future by jumping into a cab and driving wildly around town, in a frantic attempt to clear his thoughts. He fights down his terror at the idea of being attached to that hateful little family for the rest of his life: "'No! I won't give in to this blind feeling of entrapment! ... I don't have any more reasons for ever going back there. I'm free, I'm clean'" (271).

* * *

The narrator returns to his office with high hopes of eloping immediately with Shapochka, but instead finds Panas Pavlovych waiting for him. "'I killed my wife,'" he says over and over again in a daze (272).

The narrator slips out to verify this claim while Shapochka keeps Panas Pavlovych confined in the office. But to his amazement, the narrator finds Varvara Khvedorivna alive and well. She calmly acknowledges that her husband shot at her, all right, but fortunately she was not even wounded. She asks the narrator to kindly send Panas Pavlovych home again for "'a final conversation'" (274).

Shapochka is greatly shaken by this near tragedy. "'What a stupid man,'" she says, "'to be ashamed instead of happy with the way things turned out'" (274). This time it is the narrator's turn to remain thoughtfully silent.

* * *

The next morning, Varvara Khvedorivna telephones the narrator with an invitation to witness her and Panas Pavlovych's divorce.
Unexpectedly, Oleksandra Mykhailivna is also in respectful attendance. As Varvara solemnly pronounces the terms and conditions of the separation, the narrator notices that the other interested parties seem already aware of them. Varvara agrees to surrender custody of Dima for nine months of each year if Panas will marry Oleksandra; if Panas will accept all responsibility for and consequences of this divorce; and if Panas will provide her with half of his salary for the remaining child (Halya)'s support. Panas then asks the narrator to start putting each of these stipulations into immediate legal effect.

This experience suggests to the narrator the possibility of achieving a similarly smooth separation from Klavdia. If Panas was able "to come to an understanding with such a woman" as Varvara, surely he could do no worse with his own unwanted "wife" (278).

* * *

But as the narrator attempts to "reason" with Klavdia on the subject of giving up her child into his superior care, he encounters a blind wave of emotion. She would sooner be killed on the spot than part with Mika -- the source (as the narrator puts it) of so much of her simple, "animal-like pleasure" (282). Klavdia begins to weep and shriek "hysterically," beating her head against the wall (283), while Kostya also begins wailing and throwing himself against the narrator's knees, biting and leaving bruises. The narrator flees the premises in disgust.

Shapochka is frightened by his haggard look, and even more upset by his pained admission that Klavdia -- in spite of everything -- is inescapably his "real wife," so long as she continues to hold on to his son. "'She is so hateful and repulsive to me ... that I'm practically ready to kill her!'" (285)

Shapochka wearily points out that murdering Klavdia won't remove the fact of his fatherhood. And suddenly the narrator realizes that the child is the real obstacle: "the way out of all this depends on my being able to somehow stop being a father" (285). He rushes outside again to distract himself from this troubling insight. But everywhere he looks, he sees the streets filled with countless "Andriiko's and Dima's, those open or secret chains ... chains of children binding countless couples" (286).

* * *

The next time that the narrator goes to see Klavdia, he takes advantage of Kostya's nagging to go outside for a walk with his mother -- by "generously" offering to babysit Mika while they're away. But no sooner is he left alone with the baby than he contrives to give him a thorough chill, by stealthily opening the bedroom window wide and nervously exposing the child to the
winter air. The narrator then carefully covers his tracks and hurriedly leaves as soon as Klavdia and Kostya return.

Knowing that Shapochka is probably already waiting for him at home, and dreading the thought of facing her after his infanticide attempt, the narrator wanders aimlessly up and down the streets. He ends up visiting Nechyporenko, who is now installed more comfortably in another apartment. They argue good-naturedly about politics, but the narrator is increasingly haunted by his crime -- so he stops on his way home again at a pharmacy for some sleeping pills, consuming them right on the sidewalk, and swiftly succumbs to unconsciousness by the time he climbs into his bed.

* * *

The following day, the narrator finds the after-effects of veronal*7 interfering with his concentration at work. Nevertheless, he forces himself to return to Klavdia's apartment to verify Mika's (hopeful) decline in health.

He accepts a cup of tea from Klavdia, and notices the conspicuous lack of medicinal smells amidst the apartment's usual pungent bouquet of kerosene, diapers, and wet laundry. When he asks about the upcoming move to a better set of rooms in another, further part of town, Klavdia begins to bitterly complain: "I can't plan my whole life around your whims ... and besides, I won't risk the baby's health by taking him anywhere outside in this cold weather" (295). The narrator coolly responds that the high humidity in their present lodgings no doubt presents an already equal or greater health hazard.

Then Kostya begins clamouring again to go out for a walk -- and since Ol'ha is again away at class, Klavdia is once again obliged to accompany him. The narrator seizes the opportunity of their longer absence this time to expose the baby to an even longer and stronger draft from the window. He decisively unwraps the child and carries him to the windowsill, holding the bared chest in the wind until Mika's crying dwindles to a hoarse whimper. Then he struggles to restore the folds of the diaper, fumbling and panicking -- finally kissing and blowing on the baby's face and hands in a guilty attempt to warm them. He barely shuts the window again in time before Klavdia and Kostya have come back.

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*7 A sedative commonly prescribed for insomnia. Vynnychenko himself frequently resorted to this drug, since he suffered from the same condition as his protagonist on a much more regular basis (see Щоденники [Diaries], passim).
Klavdia immediately senses that something is wrong: she notices that Mika is trembling. The narrator offhandedly mentions that he tried to change the wet diaper while she was gone, but had to give it up. Klavdia anxiously warms Mika in her winter coat as well as trying to feed him, but the baby coughs and sneezes between gulps of milk. Finally the baby drops off to sleep.

The narrator heads for home again in another homicidal haze. Shapochka meets him there, demanding to know where he has been for the past two evenings. So he dispassionately confesses his two attempts on Mika's life, and their "marriage-saving" motives. She listens to the end, in horror. Then he collapses again in front of her, from residual fatigue associated with yesterday's veronal dose.

Later he wakes to find Shapochka still beside him, drowsing on a chair: it is almost morning. "'I'd come to see you this time to say goodbye,'" she said, "'but you fell asleep... [...] I thought it would be better if I left, since you've been so tortured and ashamed over all this that nothing would have ever been left over for us'" (305). But she can't bring herself to leave now, in the middle of the night. She also informs the narrator that Nechyporenko has just been arrested.

The narrator hurriedly prepares a bed for her, and begs her never to think of leaving him again.

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Later that morning, the narrator and Shapochka drop by Klavdia's apartment to check on Mika's condition. But the baby didn't even run so much as a temperature; "'he's just caught a slight cold'" (306). The narrator stumbles away in disbelief, then turns around again halfway down the street, with the intention of killing Mika right in front of everyone... but Shapochka restrains him. She hails a cab and they both ride to her house, where she starts writing a long letter of farewell to her family. But the narrator interrupts their process of elopement by leaving her there, mid-letter. "'I've got to see this through to the end,'" he tells her. "'We can't live this way. [...] I have to save my dream'" (308).

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The narrator arranges to be alone with Mika again for a third time. But now he can't bear to try and kill him -- first by dipping the baby in hot water, then under a cold running tap, and finally shoving him again under that frosty window. Mika stares at his father with "naked animal fear," and starts shrieking at the top of his lungs (310). And at that moment, as the narrator gathers the helpless baby into his arms and tearfully tries to
soothe him, he knows that "this pain shackled them together for always -- this was the end, Shapochka!" (312)

He leaves the baby to be comforted by Klavdia, and writes to Shapochka of his failure to finish what he had tried to start. The next morning, he receives a letter of farewell from Shapochka: she has already moved to another city.

* * *

Four years have passed. The narrator is now married to Klavdia Petrivna, and they are expecting another child in a few months' time; Panas Pavlovych has agreed to be the godfather.

The narrator sends money on the sly to Nechyporenko in exile; his wife disapproves of this because of the danger it poses to his thriving career. Shapochka has become a professional singer on the Moscow stage, and is rumoured to live in a free union with some fellow artist there.

The narrator generally avoids his wife and stays away from home in the evenings. But some nights he likes to sit in his office with Mika, lulling him to sleep with stories. The narrator knows that Mika is still too young to understand them. But after he has tucked the boy into bed, the narrator stays up into the night writing these notes for his son to read later, when he is older: the story of the dream of a girl in a white hat ...