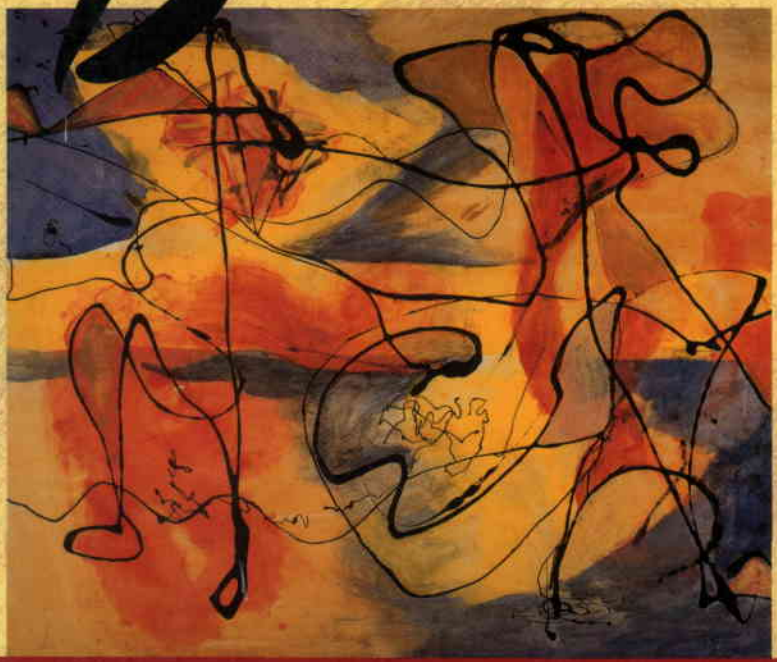
SØREN KIERKEGAARD

The Seducer's Diary



WITH A FOREWORD BY

JOHN UPDIKE

PHILOSOPHY

With a foreword by John Updike

The Seducer's Diary

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

Edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong

"In the vast literature of love, *The Seducer's Diary* is an intricate curiosity—a feverishly intellectual attempt to reconstruct an erotic failure as a pedagogic success, a wound masked as a boast," observes John Updike in his foreword to Søren Kierkegaard's narrative. This work, a chapter from Kierkegaard's first major volume, *Either/Or*, springs from his relationship with his fiancée, Regine Olsen. Kierkegaard fell in love with the young woman, ten years his junior, proposed to her, but then broke off their engagement a year later. This event affected Kierkegaard profoundly. Olsen became a muse for him, and a flood of volumes resulted. His attempt to set right, in writing, what he feels was a mistake in his relationship with Olsen taught him the secret of "indirect communication." *The Seducer's Diary*, then, becomes Kierkegaard's attempt to portray himself as a scoundrel and thus make their break easier for her.

Matters of marriage, the ethical versus the aesthetic, dread, and, increasingly, the severities of Christianity are pondered by Kierkegaard in this intense work.

The text is from Howard V. Hong's and Edna H. Hong's standard English translation of *The Writings of Kierkegaard*. The foreword by John Updike was specifically commissioned for this volume.

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EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

HOWARD V. HONG AND

EDNA H. HONG

WITH A NEW FOREWORD BY

JOHN UPDIKE

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Foreword

Søren Kierkegaard's method, dictated by his volatile and provocative temperament, resembles that of a fiction writer: he engages in multiple impersonations, assuming various poses and voices with an impartial vivacity. The method is, in one of his favorite words, *maieutic*—from the Greek term for midwifery—like that of his beloved model Socrates, who in his questioning style sought to elicit his auditors' ideas rather than impose his own. *Either/Or*, Kierkegaard's first major work, was a bulky, two-volume collection of papers ostensibly found by the editor, "Victor Eremita" ("Victor Hermit"), in the secret compartment of a writing desk to which he had been mysteriously attracted in the shop of a secondhand dealer. Some time after its acquisition, he tells us, he took a hatchet to a stuck drawer and discovered a trove of papers, evidently composed by two distinct authors. As arranged and published by Victor Eremita, the first volume consists of aphorisms, reflections, and essays by "A," a nameless young man who styles himself an aesthete, and the second volume of two long letters to this first writer, with some final words, composed by an older man, "B," who is named William and has been a judge. The last item in the first volume is a narrative, "The Seducer's Diary," which "A," deploying the same mock-scholarly documentary specifics as Victor Eremita offers in regard to the

whole, claims to have discovered and to be merely editing. The overall editor ironically complains that this complicates his own position, "since one author becomes enclosed within the other like the boxes in a Chinese puzzle."

Either/Or's intricate, arch, and prolix medley, published in Copenhagen in February of 1843, made a significant stir and eventually required a second edition, to which Kierkegaard considered (but decided against) appending this postscript:

> I hereby retract this book. It was a necessary deception in order, if possible, to deceive men into the religious, which has continually been my task all along. Maieutically it certainly has had its influence. Yet I do not need to retract it, for I have never claimed to be its author.

In dealing with an author so deceptive, so manifoldly removed in name from his own words, we need to insist that there were events of a sore personal nature behind so prodigiously luxuriant a smokescreen. In brief, Kierkegaard had, just before the surge of literary activity bound into *Either/Or*, broken off a year's engagement with a woman, Regine Olsen, ten years younger than himself. Externally, their engagement appeared a happy one, uniting two youngest children of prosperous Copenhagen households. Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard was a retired merchant, and Terkild Olsen a state councillor—an *Etatsraad*—and a high official in the Ministry of Finance. Young Kierkegaard, then a university student, first saw Regine when she was fourteen, in May of 1837, at a

party of schoolgirls in the home of the widowed mother of another girl, Bolette Rørdam, whom Kierkegaard was pursuing. According to the lightly fictionalized account in the "Quidam's Diary" section of *Stages on Life's Way* (1845), Kierkegaard began to spy on the girl, frequenting a pastry shop along the route whereby Regine went to her music lessons:

> I never dared sit by the window, but when I took a table in the middle of the room my eye commanded the street and the opposite sidewalk where she went, yet the passersby could not see me. Oh, beautiful time; Oh, lovely recollection; Oh, sweet disquietude; Oh, happy vision, when I dressed up my hidden existence with the enchantment of love!

Yet she is not mentioned in his journal until nearly two years after the first meeting: "Sovereign of my heart, 'Regina,' kept safe and secret in the deepest corner of my breast."

In the summer of 1840, Kierkegaard, now twenty-seven, passed his theological examination and made a pilgrimage to West Jutland, the desolate birthplace of his father, who had died in 1838. Soon after returning, on September 8, he went to the Olsen's house, found Regine alone, and proposed with such abrupt passion that she said nothing and showed him the door. Two days later, however, with her father's consent, she accepted. Writing an account in his journal eight years later, Kierkegaard confessed, "But inwardly—The next day I saw that I had made a blunder. As penitent as I was, my *vita ante acta*, my melancholy, that was

enough. I suffered indescribably in that period." For a year, the formal attachment held: fond letters went back and forth; calls upon their extensive families were made; the couple strolled together up Bredgade or on the Esplanade; and Kierkegaard, preparing himself for a respectable post in the church or university, gave his first sermon and wrote his philosophical dissertation, *The Concept of Irony, with Continual Reference to Socrates.*

Regine, though, observed how her fiancé "suffered frightfully from melancholy," and her friends sensed "something sad hanging in the air." On August 12, 1841, he sent her back her ring, with a note that said, "Forget him who writes this, forgive a man who, though he may be capable of something, is not capable of making a girl happy." Regine resisted rejection, taking the bold step of calling upon him in his rooms; he was out. For two months the engagement dragged on, while he defended and published his thesis; then, in October, in response to a plea from her father, he met her for an exchange that he later reported as follows:

> I went and talked her round. She asked me, Will you never marry? I replied, Well, in about ten years, when I have sown my wild oats, I must have a pretty young miss to rejuvenate me. She said, Forgive me for what I have done to you. I replied, It is rather I that should pray for your forgiveness. She said, Kiss me. That I did, but without passion. Merciful God! . . .
>
> To get out of the situation as a scoundrel, a

scoundrel of the first water if possible, was the only thing there was to be done in order to work her loose and get her under way for a marriage.

Two weeks later, Kierkegaard left Copenhagen for Berlin and began, with *Either/Or*, the flood of volumes in which he pondered and dramatized such matters as marriage, the ethical versus the aesthetic, anxiety, and, increasingly, the severities of Christianity. In his mind Regine was the muse and object of much of his production, and it shocked him when, two years after their break, she accepted an earlier suitor, Johan Frederik Schlegel, and they became betrothed, marrying in 1847. To the end of his life Kierkegaard wrote of Regine in his journals; four weeks before his death in early November 1855 he put it succinctly: "I had my thorn in the flesh, and therefore did not marry."

Was this "thorn in the flesh" the religious melancholia he had inherited from his father, or was it somehow physical? The child of elderly parents, he was frail and slight, with an erratic gait and a bent carriage noted by acquaintances and caricaturists, but he possessed no apparent deformity that would explain his self-description as "in almost every way denied the physical qualities required to make me a whole human being." His sexual experience may have been confined to a single drunken encounter with a prostitute in November of 1836. Though he extolled marriage for many pages, there is little trace, in his surviving love letters or reminiscences, of carnal warmth. His later theology endorses celibacy and

declares a frank hostility to the sexual instinct. "Woman," he wrote in 1854, "is egoism personified. . . . The whole story of man and woman is an immense and subtly constructed intrigue, or it is a trick calculated to destroy man as spirit." He once complained of Regine that she "lacked a disposition to religion." His hero, Socrates, had been married to a legendary shrew, Xanthippe, and European philosophy was ever since dominated by bachelors, one of whom, Kant, succinctly defined marriage as "the union of two persons of different sexes for the purposes of lifelong mutual possession of their sexual organs." Kierkegaard's breaking the engagement perhaps needs less explaining than the imperious impulse that led him into it.

His attempt to set right, in writing, the botch of his relation with Regine taught him, he wrote, the secret of "indirect communication." As he came to frame the matter, "The Seducer's Diary" was part of his campaign to portray himself as a scoundrel and thus make their break easier for her. His journal of 1849 claims that he wrote it "for her sake, to clarify her out of the relationship." In 1853 he notes that "it was written to repel her" and quotes his *Fear and Trembling*: "When the baby is to be weaned, the mother blackens her breast."

"The Seducer's Diary," then, is a work with a devious purpose and an uneasy conscience. A number of details connect the real Regine with the fictional Cordelia Wahl. When the Seducer writes, "Poor Edward! It is a shame that he is not called Fritz," the allusion is not only to a comedy by Scribe but to Re-

gine's other suitor, Schlegel, who was called Fritz. The hero's long and loving stalking of a girl too young to approach provides, in fiction as in reality, the peak of erotic excitement. The little party of girls that occasioned Kierkegaard's first glimpse of Regine is evoked with a piquant vividness but placed much later in the affair, as its cold-hearted dissolution nears. No doubt a number of particulars spoke only to Regine.

And yet a cool shimmer of falsity plays over the finespun fabric; the Seducer's desire seems curiously abstract. Contemporary readers, especially younger readers, may be put off by his tone of sexist condescension; under the name of a seduction he conducts a perverse sort of educational experiment. Seeking to "teach her to be victorious as she pursues me," he retreats before her, so that she will know "all the powers of erotic love, its turbulent thoughts, its passion, what longing is, and hope." In an artful teasing that is close to torture, he labors at "cheating her of the essentially erotic" and thus bringing her to a new power and certain freedom, "a higher sphere." He mentions Pygmalion, but he reminds us more of heartless Dr. Frankenstein, in one of Romanticism's first masterpieces. The nineteenth century was romantic from beginning to end; the eighteenth century's man of reason yielded as a cultural ideal to the man or woman of sensibility, of feeling. As the old supernatural structures faded, sensation and emotion took on value in themselves; the Seducer exults in the turbulence of his awakening love. "How beautiful it is to be in love; how interesting it is to know that one is in love." He likens himself to a bird building its

nest on "the turbulent sea" of his agitated mind and proclaims, "How enjoyable to ripple along on moving water this way—how enjoyable to be in motion within oneself."

Inner turbulence is a piece of nature's magnificent turbulence, and the female an emissary of this same worshipped nature: "Woman is substance, man is reflection. . . . In a certain sense man is more than woman, in another sense infinitely much less." Women were both the objects of romantic desire and, in their susceptibility to love, Romanticism's foremost practitioners. Female psychology became an object of fascination to seducers and their chroniclers. Nineteenth-century novelists from Jane Austen to Henry James embraced as a patently major theme the sentimental education of their heroines; the outcome could be comic and triumphant, as for Austen's Emma Woodhouse and George Eliot's Dorothea Brooke, or tragic, as for Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina. Kierkegaard would not have been aware of these novels, but Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* was much on his mind, and he breathed the same dandyish intellectual atmosphere that produced Byron's *Don Juan* and Stendhal's superb study of erotic psychology, *On Love*. Even the classic texts supplied touchstones and handbooks: "The Seducer's Diary" cites both Ovid and Apuleius's *Amor and Psyche*.

In the vast literature of love, "The Seducer's Diary" is a curiosity—a feverishly intellectual attempt to reconstruct an erotic failure as a pedagogic success, a wound masked as a boast, a breast blackened to aid a weaning. It sketches a campaign of hallucinatory

cleverness: "If I just keep on retreating before her superior force, it would be very possible that the erotic in her would become too dissolute and lax for the deeper womanliness to be able to hypostatize itself." Yet a real enough Copenhagen, with its tidy society and sudden sea views, peeps through, and a real love is memorialized, albeit with a wearying degree of rationalization—much like the tortuous *Winkelzüge* with which Kafka, Kierkegaard's spiritual heir, was to fend off Felice and Milena in his letters to them. Kierkegaard did succeed, in "The Seducer's Diary" and his other apologetic versions of the engagement, in immortalizing Regine. She outlived him, and then her husband, and was remembered by the Danish philosopher Georges Brandes, who saw her in her middle age, as "radiantly beautiful—with clear, roguish eyes and a svelte figure." She lived into the next century, until 1904, and as a white-haired celebrity gave gracious and modest interviews, recalling those dim events of over sixty years before, when she was but eighteen. Her fame was a vestige of her old suitor's convoluted gallantry. If our impression is that she behaved with the greater dignity, consistency, and human warmth in the affair, it was Kierkegaard who created the impression.

John Updike

THE SEDUCER'S DIARY

Sua passion' predominante
e la giovin principiante

[His predominant passion
is the youthful beginner].

Don Giovanni, aria no. 4

Hide from myself, I cannot; I can hardly control the anxiety that grips me at this moment when I decide in my own interest to make an accurate clean copy of the hurried transcript I was able to obtain at the time only in the greatest haste and with great uneasiness. The episode confronts me just as disquietingly and just as reproachfully as it did then. Contrary to his usual practice, he had not locked his desk; therefore everything in it was at my disposal. But there is no use in wanting to gloss over my conduct by reminding myself that I had not opened any of the drawers. One drawer stood open. In it was a mass of loose papers, and on top of them lay a large quarto volume, exquisitely bound. On the upper side was placed a vignette of white paper on which he had written in his own hand: *Commentarius perpetuus* [Running commentary] *no.* 4. There is no use, however, in trying to delude myself into thinking that if the top of the book had not been turned up, and if the striking title had not tempted me, I would not have fallen into temptation or at least would have offered resistance.

The title itself was curious, yet more because of the items around it than the title itself. From a hasty glance at the loose papers, I learned that they contained impressions of erotic situations, intimations of some relationship or other, drafts of letters of a particular kind, with which I later became familiar in their

artistically completed, calculated nonchalance. Now, having seen through the contriving heart of that corrupt man, when I recall the situation, now, with my eyes opened to all the cunning, so to speak, when I approach that drawer, I feel the same way a policeman must feel when he enters a forger's room, goes through his things, and finds a mass of loose papers in a drawer, specimens of handwriting; on one there is a little decorative design, on another a monogram, on a third a line of reversed writing. It readily shows him that he is on the right track, and his delight over this is mixed with a certain admiration for the effort and diligence obvious here. Since I am less accustomed to detecting crimes and am not armed with a policeman's badge, I would have reacted differently. I would have felt the double weight of the truth that I was on an unlawful path. At that time I lacked ideas as much as I lacked words, which is usually the case. One is awestruck by an impression until reflection once again breaks loose and with multifarious deft movements talks and insinuates its way to terms with the unknown stranger. The more developed reflection is, the more quickly it can collect itself; like a passport officer checking foreign travelers, it comes to be so familiar with the sight of the most fabulous characters that it is not easily taken aback. Although my reflection is indeed very highly developed, I nevertheless was greatly amazed at first. I recall so well that I turned pale, that I was close to fainting, and therefore how anxious I was. Suppose that he had come home, had found me in a swoon with the

drawer in my hand—a bad conscience can indeed make life interesting.

In itself, the title of the book did not startle me. I took it to be a collection of excerpts, which to me seemed quite natural, since I knew that he had always taken to his studies with zeal. But it contained something altogether different. It was neither more nor less than a diary, painstakingly kept. On the basis of my former acquaintance with him, I did not consider that his life was in great need of a commentary, but according to the insight I now had, I do not deny that the title was chosen with great discernment and much understanding, with truly esthetic, objective mastery of himself and of the situation. The title is in perfect harmony with the entire contents. His life has been an attempt to accomplish the task of living poetically. With a sharply developed organ for discovering the interesting in life, he has known how to find it and after having found it has continually reproduced his experiences half poetically. Therefore, his diary is not historically accurate or strictly narrative; it is not indicative but subjunctive. Although his experiences were of course recorded after they were experienced, sometimes perhaps even a long time afterward, they nevertheless are frequently described as if they were taking place right now and with such dramatic vividness that it sometimes seems as if everything were taking place before one's eyes. It is highly improbable that he did this because he had some other purpose with this diary; it is obvious that in the strictest sense it had only personal importance for him, and to as-

sume that I have before me a poetic work, perhaps even intended for publication, is excluded by the whole as well as by its parts. It is true that he would not need to fear anything personally in publishing it, for most of the names are so odd that it is altogether improbable that they are historical. My only suspicion has been that the first name is historically accurate, and in this way he has always been sure of identifying the actual person, whereas every interloper would be misled by the family name. At least this is the case with the girl I knew, Cordelia, on whom the main interest centers; she was very correctly named Cordelia but not, however, Wahl.

How then can it be explained that the diary nevertheless has taken on such a poetic tinge? The answer to this is not difficult; it is easily explained by his poetic nature, which is not abundant enough or, if you please, not deficient enough to separate poetry and actuality from each other. The poetic was the plus he himself brought along. This plus was the poetic he enjoyed in the poetic situation of actuality; this he recaptured in the form of poetic reflection. This was the second enjoyment, and his whole life was intended for enjoyment. In the first case, he personally enjoyed the esthetic; in the second case, he esthetically enjoyed his personality. The point in the first case was that he egotistically enjoyed personally that which in part actuality has given to him and which in part he himself had used to fertilize actuality; in the second case, his personality was volatilized, and he then enjoyed the situation and himself in the situation. In the first case, he continually needed actuality

as the occasion, as an element; in the second case, actuality was drowned in the poetic. Thus, the fruit of the first stage was the mood from which the diary emerged as the fruit of the second stage, with these words taken in a somewhat different sense in the second case than in the first. In this way he has continually possessed the poetic through the ambiguity in which his life elapsed.

Behind the world in which we live, far in the background, lies another world, and the two have about the same relation to each other as do the stage proper and the stage one sometimes sees behind it in the theater. Through a hanging of fine gauze, one sees, as it were, a world of gauze, lighter, more ethereal, with a quality different from that of the actual world. Many people who appear physically in the actual world are not at home in it but are at home in that other world. But a person's fading away in this manner, indeed, almost vanishing from actuality, can have its basis either in health or in sickness. The latter was the case with this man, whom I had once known without knowing him. He did not belong to the world of actuality, and yet he had very much to do with it. He continually ran lightly over it, but even when he most abandoned himself to it, he was beyond it. But it was not the good that beckoned him away, nor was it actually evil—even now at this moment I dare not say that of him. He has suffered from an *exacerbatio cerebri* [exacerbation of the brain], for which actuality did not have enough stimulation, at most only momentarily. He did not overstrain himself on actuality, he was not too weak to bear it; no, he was too strong,

but this strength was a sickness. As soon as actuality had lost its significance as stimulation, he was disarmed, and the evil in him lay in this. He was conscious of this at the very moment of stimulation, and the evil lay in this consciousness.

I knew the girl whose story constitutes the main content of the diary. Whether he has seduced others, I do not know, but that seems to be borne out by his papers. He appears also to have been practiced in a different kind of procedure, which is altogether typical of him, for he was much too endowed intellectually to be a seducer in the ordinary sense. One sees from the diary that what he at times desired was something totally arbitrary, a greeting, for example, and would accept no more at any price, because that was the most beautiful thing about the other person. With the help of his intellectual gifts, he knew how to tempt a girl, how to attract her without caring to possess her in the stricter sense. I can picture him as knowing how to bring a girl to the high point where he was sure that she would offer everything. When the affair had gone so far, he broke off, without the least overture having been made on his part, without a word about love having been said, to say nothing of a declaration, a promise. And yet it had happened, and for the unhappy one the consciousness of it was doubly bitter because she did not have the least thing to appeal to, because she was continually agitated in a dreadful witches' dance of the most varied moods as she alternately reproached herself, forgave him, and in turn reproached him. And now, since the relationship had possessed actuality only figuratively, she

had to battle continually the doubt whether the whole affair was not a fantasy. She could not confide in anyone, because she did not really have anything to confide. When a person has dreamed, he can tell his dream to others, but what she had to tell was indeed no dream; it was actuality, and yet as soon as she was about to tell it to another to ease her troubled mind, it was nothing. She was fully aware of it herself. No one could grasp this, scarcely she herself, and yet it weighed upon her as a disquieting burden.

Such victims were, therefore, of a very special kind. They were not unfortunate girls who, as outcasts or in the belief that they were cast out by society, grieved wholesomely and intensely and, once in a while at times when the heart was too full, ventilated it in hate or forgiveness. No visible change took place in them; they lived in the accustomed context, were respected as always, and yet they were changed, almost unaccountably to themselves and incomprehensibly to others. Their lives were not cracked or broken, as others' were, but were bent into themselves; lost to others, they futilely sought to find themselves. In the same sense as it could be said that his journey through life was undetectable (for his feet were formed in such a way that he retained the footprint under them—this is how I best picture to myself his infinite reflectedness into himself), in the same sense no victim fell before him. He lived much too intellectually to be a seducer in the ordinary sense. Sometimes, however, he assumed a parastatic body and then was sheer sensuousness. Even his affair with Cordelia was so intricate that it was possible for him to appear as the

one seduced—indeed, even the unhappy girl can at times be perplexed on this score; and then, too, his footprints here are so indistinct that any proof is impossible. For him, individuals were merely for stimulation; he discarded them as trees shake off their leaves—he was rejuvenated, the foliage withered.

But how may things look in his own head? Just as he has led others astray, so he, I think, will end by going astray himself. He has led the others astray not in the external sense but in the interior sense with respect to themselves. There is something shocking about a person's directing a hiker, uncertain of his way, to the wrong path and then abandoning him in his error; but what is that compared with causing a person to go astray within himself. The lost hiker still has the consolation that the scenery is continually changing around him, and with every change there is fostered a hope of finding a way out. He who goes astray within himself does not have such a large territory in which to move; he soon perceives that it is a circle from which he cannot find an exit. I think that he himself will have the same experience on an even more terrible scale. I can think of nothing more tormenting than a scheming mind that loses the thread and then directs all its keenness against itself as the conscience awakens and it becomes a matter of rescuing himself from this perplexity. The many exits from his foxhole are futile; the instant his troubled soul already thinks it sees daylight filtering in, it turns out to be a new entrance, and thus, like panic-stricken wild game, pursued by despair, he is continually seeking an exit and continually finding an entrance

through which he goes back into himself. Such a person is not always what could be called a criminal; he very often is himself frustrated by his own schemes, and yet he is stricken with a more terrible punishment than is the criminal, for what is even the pain of repentance compared with this conscious madness? His punishment has a purely esthetic character, for even the expression "the conscience awakens" is too ethical to use about him; conscience takes shape in him merely as a higher consciousness that manifests itself as a restlessness that does not indict him even in the profounder sense but keeps him awake, allows him no rest in his sterile restlessness. Nor is he insane, for his multitude of finite thoughts are not fossilized in the eternity of insanity.

Poor Cordelia—for her, too, it will prove difficult to find peace. She forgives him from her heart of hearts, but she finds no rest, for then the doubt awakens: she was the one who broke the engagement; she was the occasion of the calamity; it was her pride that craved the unusual. Then she repents, but she finds no rest, for then the accusing thoughts acquit her of the charges: he was the one who with his cunning instilled this plan into her soul. Then she hates; her heart finds relief in curses, but she finds no repose. Once again she reproaches herself—reproaches herself because she has hated, she who herself is a sinner, reproaches herself because regardless of how cunning he was she nevertheless always remains guilty. It is oppressive for her that he has deceived her, but still more oppressive, one is almost tempted to say, that he has awakened multiple-tongued reflection, that he has so

developed her esthetically that she no longer listens humbly to one voice but is able to hear the many voices at the same time. Then recollection awakens in her soul, and she forgets blame and guilt; she recollects the beautiful moments, and she is dazed in an unnatural exaltation. At such moments, she not only recalls him, she perceives him with a *clairvoyance* that only shows how highly developed she is. Then she does not see the criminal in him, but neither does she see the noble person—she feels him only esthetically. She once wrote me a letter in which she comments on him. "He was sometimes so intellectual that I felt myself annihilated as a woman; at other times he was so wild and passionate, so desiring, that I almost trembled before him. At times I was like a stranger to him; at times he surrendered completely. Then when I threw my arms around him, everything changed, and I embraced a cloud.[1] I knew this expression before I knew him, but he taught me to understand it; when I use it, I always think of him, just as every thought I think is only through him. I have always loved music; he was a matchless instrument, always sensitive; he had a range such as no other instrument has. He was the quintessence of all feelings and moods, no thought was too sublime for him, none too desperate. He could roar like an autumn storm; he could whisper inaudibly. Not a word of mine was without effect, and nevertheless I cannot say that my words did not fall short in their effect, because it was impossible for me to know what they would do. With an indescribable but cryptic, blissful, unnameable anxiety, I listened to this music I myself had evoked and yet did

not evoke; always there was harmony, always I was enraptured by him."

Terrible it is for her; more terrible it will be for him—this I can conclude from the fact that I myself can scarcely control the anxiety that grips me every time I think about the affair. I, too, am carried along into that kingdom of mist, into that dreamland where one is frightened by one's own shadow at every moment. Often I futilely try to tear myself away from it; I follow along like an ominous shape, like an accuser who cannot speak. How strange! He has spread the deepest secrecy over everything, and yet there is an even deeper secrecy, that I myself am in on the secret and that I came to know it in an unlawful way. To forget the whole thing is not possible. I have sometimes thought of talking to him about it. But what would be the use—he would either disclaim everything and insist that the diary was a literary venture, or he would enjoin me to silence, something I cannot deny him in view of the way in which I came to know about it. There is nothing that involves so much seduction and so much malediction as a secret.

From Cordelia I have received a collection of letters. Whether it is all of them, I do not know, although it seemed to me that she once gave me to understand that she herself had confiscated some. I have copied them and shall interleave them in my fair copy. Admittedly, they are not dated, but even if they were it would not help me much, since the diary becomes more and more sparse as it proceeds. In fact, at last with only a single exception it abandons dates altogether, as if the story in its development became

so qualitatively significant that, although historically actual, it came so close to being idea that specifications of time became unimportant. What did help me, however, was that I found here and there in the diary some words that I did not grasp at first. But by relating them to the letters I perceived that they are the themes in them. Thus it will be easy for me to interleave them in the right places, since I shall always insert the letter where there is an allusion to the theme. If I had not discovered these guiding clues, I would have been guilty of a misunderstanding, for it probably would not have occurred to me—as the diary now seems to indicate—that at times the letters succeeded one another at such short intervals that she seems to have received several in one day. If I had pursued my own thinking, I would probably have dispersed them more evenly and not suspected the effect he achieved through the passionate energy with which he used this and every means to hold Cordelia at the pinnacle of passion.

In addition to the complete information about his relation to Cordelia, the diary has several little word pictures interwoven here and there. Wherever such a piece is found, there is an "NB" in the margin. These word pictures have nothing at all to do with Cordelia's story but have given me a vivid idea of the meaning of an expression he often used, even though I formerly understood it in another way: One should always have a little line out on the side. If an earlier volume of this diary had fallen into my hands, I probably would have encountered several of these, which in the margin he himself calls: *actiones in distans* [ac-

tions at a distance],[2] for he himself declares that Cordelia occupied him too much for him really to have time to look around.

Shortly after he had left Cordelia, he received from her a couple letters that he sent back unopened. These were among the letters Cordelia turned over to me. She herself had broken the seal, and I take the liberty of making a copy of them. She has never spoken of their contents to me, but whenever she mentioned her relation to Johannes she used to recite a little verse, from Goethe as far as I know—a verse that seemed to mean something different to her according to the difference of her mood and the varied diction conditioned thereby.

Gehe,	[Go,
Verschmähe	Scorn
Die Treue,	Faithfulness,
Die Reue	Regret
Kommt nach	Will follow].[3]

The letters read as follows:

Johannes,

Never will I call you "my Johannes," for I certainly realize you never have been that, and I am punished harshly enough for having once been gladdened in my soul by this thought, and yet I do call you "mine": my seducer, my deceiver, my enemy, my murderer, the source of my unhappiness, the tomb of my joy, the abyss of my unhappiness. I call you "mine" and call myself "yours," and as it once flattered your ear, proudly inclined to my adoration, so shall it now

sound as a curse upon you, a curse for all eternity. Do not look forward to my planning to pursue you or to arm myself with a dagger in order to provoke your ridicule! Flee where you will, I am still yours; go to the ends of the earth,[4] I am still yours. Love a hundred others, I am still yours—indeed, in the hour of death, I am yours. The very language I use against you must demonstrate to you that I am yours. You have had the audacity to deceive a person in such a way that you have become everything to me, so that I would rejoice solely in being your slave. Yours I am, yours, yours, your curse.

Your Cordelia

Johannes,

There was a rich man; he had great flocks and herds of livestock large and small. There was a poor little maiden; she possessed but a single lamb;[5] it ate from her hand and drank from her cup. You were the rich man, rich in all the glories of the world; I was the poor one who possessed only my love. You took it, you delighted in it. Then desire beckoned you, and you sacrificed the little that I possessed—you could sacrifice nothing of your own. There was a rich man; he possessed great flocks and herds. There was a poor little maiden, she possessed only her love.

Your Cordelia

Johannes,

Is there no hope at all, then? Might your love never awaken again? That you did love me, I

know, even though I do not know what it is that makes me sure of it. I will wait, however long the time is for me; I will wait, wait until you are tired of loving others. Then your love for me will rise again from its grave; then I will love you as always, thank you as always, as before, O Johannes, as before! Johannes, is your heartless coldness toward me, is it your true nature? Was your love, your rich love, a lie and a falsehood; are you now yourself again! Have patience with my love; forgive me for continuing to love you. I know that my love is a burden to you, but there will still come a time when you will come back to your Cordelia. Your Cordelia! Hear this imploring word! Your Cordelia. *Your Cordelia*

Even though Cordelia did not possess the admired range of her Johannes, it is clear that she was not without modulation. Her mood is clearly impressed upon every one of the letters, even though she was somewhat lacking in clarity of exposition. This is especially true of the second letter, where one suspects rather than actually understands her meaning, but for me this deficiency makes it very moving.

April 4

Take care, my beautiful stranger! Take care! To step out of a carriage is not such a simple matter; at times it is a decisive step. I could lend you a novel by Tieck[6] in which you would see that in dismounting from a horse a lady became so involved in a complicated situation that this step became definitive for her entire life. Indeed, carriage steps usually are so ill-contrived that one is almost compelled to abandon all grace and to hazard a desperate leap into the arms of the coachman and servant. Yes, what a good deal a coachman and servants have! I do believe I shall try to find a job as a servant in a house where there are young girls; a servant easily comes to know the secrets of such a little miss. —But for God's sake don't leap, I beg of you. It is very dark; I shall not disturb you. I am simply going to stand under this street light; then you will be unable to see me, and invariably one is embarrassed only to the degree that one is seen, but invariably one is seen only to the degree that one sees. Therefore, out of concern for the servant who perhaps will not be able to withstand such a leap, out of concern for the silk dress, also out of concern for the lace fringes, out of concern for me, let this charming tiny foot, whose daintiness I have already admired, let it try itself in the world, risk reliance upon it; it will certainly find firm footing, and if you shudder for a moment because it seems as if your foot sought

in vain something to rest upon, if you still shudder after it has found it, then quickly put the other foot down beside it. Who, after all, would be so cruel as to leave you suspended in this position, who so ungracious, so slow to respond to the revelation of beauty. Or do you still fear some outsider—but certainly not the servant, or me, either, for indeed I have already seen the tiny foot, and since I am a natural scientist I have learned from Cuvier[7] how to draw conclusions from it with certainty. So please hurry! How this anxiety does enhance your beauty! But anxiety in and by itself is not beautiful; it is so only when at the same time one sees the energy that overcomes it. There! How firmly this tiny foot is standing now. I have noticed that girls with tiny feet usually stand more firmly than the more pedestrian big-footed ones.

Now who would have thought it? It goes against all experience; the danger of a dress catching is not nearly as great when one steps out as when one leaps out. But then it is always precarious for girls to go driving in a carriage; they end up staying in it. The lace and trimmings are lost, and that's that. No one has seen anything. True, a dark figure appears, enveloped to the eyes in a cape. It is not possible to see where he is coming from, for the light is shining right in one's eyes. He passes by you just as you are entering the front door. At precisely the crucial moment a sidelong glance falls on its object. You blush; your bosom is too full to unburden itself in a single breath. There is indignation in your glance, a proud contempt. There is a plea, a tear in your eye; both are equally beautiful. I accept them both with equal right, for I can just as well be the one as the other.

But I am being mean. What is the number of the house? What do I see? A public display of fancy articles. My beautiful stranger, it may be shocking on my part, but I am following the bright path. . . . She has forgotten what happened—ah, yes, when one is seventeen years old, when one goes shopping in this happy age, when every single large or little object picked up gives unspeakable delight, then one readily forgets. As yet she has not seen me; I am standing at the other end of the counter, far off by myself. There is a mirror on the opposite wall; she is not contemplating it, but the mirror is contemplating her. How faithfully it has caught her image, like a humble slave who shows his devotion by his faithfulness, a slave for whom she certainly has significance but who has no significance for her, who indeed dares to capture her but not to hold her. Unhappy mirror, which assuredly can grasp her image but not her; unhappy mirror, which cannot secretly hide her image in itself, hide it from the whole world, but can only disclose it to others as it now does to me. What torture if a human being were fashioned that way. And yet are there not many people who are like that, who possess nothing except at the moment when they are showing it to others, who merely grasp the surface, not the essence, lose everything when this is going to show itself, just as this mirror would lose her image if she were to disclose her heart to it by a single breath. And if a person were unable to possess an image in recollection at the very moment of presence, he must ever wish to be at a distance from beauty, not so close that the mortal eyes cannot see the beauty of that which he holds in his embrace and which the external eyes have lost, which he,

to be sure, can regain for the external vision by distancing himself from it, but which he can, in fact, have before the eye of his soul when he cannot see the object because it is too close to him, when lips are clinging to lips. . . . How beautiful she is! Poor mirror, it must be tormenting—it is good that you do not know jealousy. Her head is perfectly oval; she tilts it a little, thereby accentuating her forehead, which rises pure and proud without any delineation of the powers of understanding. Her dark hair rings her forehead softly and gently. Her countenance is like a fruit, every angle fully rounded; her skin is transparent, like velvet to the touch—that I can feel with my eyes. Her eyes—yes, I have not even seen them; they are hidden by lids armed with silken fringes that are bent like barbs, dangerous to anyone who wishes to meet her glance. Her head is a Madonna head, purity and innocence its mark. She is bowed down like a Madonna, but she is not lost in contemplation of the One; this causes the expression in her face to vary. What she is contemplating is multiplicity, the multiplicity over which earthly pomp and glory cast a reflection. She takes off her glove to show to the mirror and me a right hand as white and shapely as that of an ancient statue, without any ornaments, not even a flat gold ring on the fourth finger[8]—bravo! She raises her eyes—how changed everything is, and yet the same—the forehead a little less high, the face a little less uniformly oval but more vital. She is speaking with the store clerk; she is lively, cheerful, talkative. She has already chosen one, two, three articles; she picks up a fourth. She is holding it in her hand; her eyes look down again; she is asking what it costs. She lays it aside under

the glove; it must surely be a secret, intended for—a sweetheart? But she is not engaged. Ah, but there are many who are not engaged and yet have a sweetheart, many who are engaged and yet do not have a sweetheart. . . . Should I relinquish her? Should I leave her undisturbed in her delight? She wants to pay but she has lost her purse—presumably she is giving her address. I do not wish to hear it; I do not wish to deprive myself of the surprise. I certainly shall meet her again sometime; I certainly shall recognize her, and she may recognize me—my sidelong glance is not forgotten so easily. Then when I am taken by surprise upon meeting her in surroundings I did not expect, her turn will come. If she does not know me, if her glance does not immediately convince me of that, then I certainly shall find occasion to look at her from the side—I promise that she will recall the situation. No impatience, no greediness—everything will be relished in slow draughts; she is selected, she will be overtaken.

The fifth

This I do like: alone in the evening on Østergade. Yes, I do see your servant following along. Now, do not believe that I think so ill of you as to imagine that you would go walking all alone; do not believe that I am so inexperienced that in my survey of the situation I have not immediately observed this portentous figure. But why, then, the hurry? You are indeed a little uneasy; you feel a certain beating of the heart, not because of an impatient longing to go home but because of an impatient fear running through your whole body with its

sweet disquietude, and therefore the quick tempo of the feet. But nevertheless it is marvelous, inestimably so, to go walking alone—with the servant in tow. . . . One is sixteen years old; one is well read—that is, in novels; in walking through the brothers' room by chance one has overheard some words in a conversation between them and their acquaintances, something about Østergade. Later one scurried through several times to pick up more information, if possible. But in vain. Yet one should—as befits a big, grown-up girl—know a little bit about the world. If one could just go walking without any fuss and with the servant following behind. Yes, that's all very fine—but Father and Mother would surely look askance at that, and what reason can one give? When one is going to a party, there is no chance for it; it is a bit too early, because I overheard August say around nine or ten o'clock. When it is time to go home, it is too late, and usually there has to be a gentleman escort to drag along. Thursday evening when we leave the theater would really be an excellent opportunity, but then I always have to ride in the carriage and have Mrs. Thomsen and her charming cousins packed in with me. If I could just ride alone, then I could open the window and look around a little. But often the unhoped for happens. Today Mother said to me: I do not think you will be finished with what you are sewing for your father's birthday. In order to be entirely undisturbed, you may go over to Aunt Jette's and stay until tea time, and Jens will come and fetch you. It really was not exactly pleasant news, for it is very boring at Aunt Jette's, but then I shall be walking home alone at nine o'clock with the servant. Then when Jens comes, he will have to

wait until a quarter past nine, and then we'll be off. Only I might meet my brother or August—but that would not be so good, for then I probably would be escorted home. Thanks, but we would rather be free of that—freedom—but if I could catch sight of them without being seen. . . . Well, my little miss, what do you see, then, and what do you think I see? In the first place, the little cap you are wearing is very becoming and harmonizes completely with the haste of your whole demeanor. It is neither a hat nor a bonnet, but a kind of hood. But you could not possibly have had that on when you went out this morning. Could the servant have brought it, or did you borrow it from Aunt Jette? —Perhaps you are incognito. —But the veil should not be allowed to drop all the way down when you are going to look around. Or perhaps it is not a veil but only a wide piece of lace? It is impossible to tell in the dark. Whatever it is, it hides the upper part of your face. Your chin is rather lovely, a bit too pointed. Your mouth is small, open—that is because you are walking too fast. Your teeth, white as snow. So it should be. Teeth are extremely important; they are a bodyguard concealed behind the seductive softness of the lips. Your cheeks are glowing with health. —If you tilt your head a little, it might be possible to penetrate up under this veil or this piece of lace. Be careful; such a glance from below is more dangerous than one that is *gerade aus* [direct]! It is like fencing; and what weapon is as sharp, as penetrating, as gleaming in its movement and thereby as illusive as the eye? You feint a high quarte, as the fencer says, and then lunge instantaneously; the more swiftly the lunge can follow upon the feint, the better. It is an inde-

scribable moment, the instant of the feint. The opponent feels, as it were, the cut; he is struck; and so he is, but in a place quite different from what he thought. . . . Undaunted, she walks on, fearless and flawless. Watch out! There comes a man—drop your veil; do not let his profane glance defile you. You have no notion of it; for a long time it perhaps would be impossible for you to forget the repulsive uneasiness with which it moved you—you do not notice, but I do, that he has surveyed the situation. The servant is marked out as the closest object. —Well, now you see the consequence of walking alone with the servant. The servant has fallen down. Really, it is ludicrous, but what are you going to do now? To turn back and help him up on his feet is out of the question; to walk with a muddy servant is unpleasant; to walk alone is precarious. Watch out; the monster is approaching. . . . You do not answer me. Just look at me—is my external appearance anything to be afraid of? I do not make the slightest impression on you; I seem to be a nice man from quite another world. There is nothing in what I say that disturbs you, nothing that reminds you of the situation, no movement that even remotely encroaches upon you. You are still a little apprehensive; you have not yet forgotten that *unheimliche* [disquieting] character's approach toward you. You feel rather kindly disposed toward me; my shyness, which prevents me from looking at you, gives you the upper hand. It delights you and makes you safe; you could almost be tempted to make sport of me a little. I wager that right now you would have the courage to take my arm if it occurred to you. . . . So you live on Stormgade. You curtsey to me coldly and casually. Do I

deserve this, I who helped you out of all that unpleasantness? You have a change of mind, you turn back, thank me for my kindness, offer me your hand—why are you turning pale? Is not my voice the same as before, my attitude the same, my eyes just as calm and quiet? This handclasp? Can a handclasp mean anything? Indeed, much, very much, my little miss. Within a fortnight, I shall explain it all to you; until then you will remain in the contradiction: I am a nice man who came like a knight to the assistance of a young girl, and I can also press your hand in no less than a gentle manner.

April 7

"Monday, then, one o'clock, at the exhibition." Very good, I shall have the honor of turning up at a quarter to one. A little rendezvous. On Saturday, I finally cut the matter short and decided to pay a visit to my much-traveled friend Adolph Bruun. With that in mind, about seven o'clock in the evening I started out on Vestergade, where someone told me he was supposed to live. But he was not to be found, not even on the fourth floor, where I arrived all out of breath. As I was about to go down the stairs, my ears picked up a melodious female voice saying in an undertone, "Monday, then, one o'clock, at the exhibition; at that time the others are out, but you know that I never dare to see you at home." The invitation was not meant for me but for a young man who—one, two, three—was out of the door so fast that my eyes, let alone my feet, could not catch up with him. Why do

they not have a gaslight in stairways; then I might have been able to see whether it was worth the trouble to be so punctual. But if there had been a light, I perhaps would not have managed to hear anything. The established order is still the rational,[9] and I am and remain an optimist. . . . Now who is it? The exhibition, to use Donna Anna's expression, swarms with girls.[10] It is precisely a quarter to one. My beautiful stranger! Would that your intended might be as punctual in every way as I am, or do you wish instead that he may never arrive fifteen minutes early? As you wish—I am at your service in every way. . . . "Enchanting troll woman, fairy, or witch, dispel your fog," show yourself. You are probably here already but invisible to me; make yourself known, for otherwise I certainly do not dare to expect a revelation. Are there perhaps several up here on the same errand as she? Very possibly. Who knows the ways of an individual, even when he is attending an exhibition? —There comes a young girl through the foyer, hurrying faster than a bad conscience after a sinner. She forgets to hand over her ticket; the man in a red uniform stops her. Good heavens, what a rush she is in. It must be she. Why such premature vehemence? It is not one o'clock yet. Do remember that you are supposed to meet your beloved. Does it make any difference how one looks on such an occasion, or is this an occasion when one must put one's best foot forward, as they say? When such an innocent young thing is keeping an appointment, she goes at it in a frenzy. She is as nervous as can be. I, however, sit here most comfortably in my chair and contemplate a lovely

rural landscape. . . . She is a very daughter of the devil; she storms through all the rooms. You must still try to hide your eagerness a bit; remember what was said to Miss Elizabeth: Is it seemly for a young girl to be so eager to become involved with someone?" But your involvement, of course, is one of the innocent ones.

A rendezvous is usually regarded by lovers as the most beautiful moment. I myself still recall as clearly as if it were yesterday the first time I hurried to the appointed place with a heart as full as it was unacquainted with the joy awaiting me. The first time I knocked three times; the first time a window was opened; the first time a little wicker gate was opened by the invisible hand of a girl who concealed herself by opening it; the first time I hid a girl under my cape in the luminous summer night. But in this opinion there is a considerable admixture of illusion. A neutral third party does not always find the lovers to be most beautiful at this moment. I have witnessed trysts in which, although the girl was lovely and the man handsome, the total impression was almost revolting and the meeting itself far from beautiful, although it undoubtedly seemed so to the lovers. In a way, one gains in becoming more experienced, for admittedly one loses the sweet disquietude of impatient longing but gains the poise to make the moment really beautiful. It annoys me to see a male become so confused on such an occasion that out of sheer love he has *delirium tremens*. What, indeed, do peasants know about cucumber salad! Instead of having the composure to enjoy her disquietude, to let it inflame

her beauty and make it incandescent, he brings about only an ungainly confusion, and yet he goes home happy, imagining that it was something glorious.

—But where the devil is the man? It is now almost two o'clock. Well, they are a splendid tribe, these lovers! What a scoundrel—to let a young miss wait for him! No, but of course I am a much more dependable person! It is probably best to speak to her now as she passes me for the fifth time. "Forgive my boldness, lovely lady; you are presumably looking for your family here. You have hurried by me several times, and as my eyes followed you I noticed that you always stop in the next to the last room. Perhaps you do not know that there is still another room beyond that. There you will possibly find the ones you are looking for." She curtseys to me; it is very becoming to her. The opportunity is propitious. I am glad that the man is not coming—the fishing is always best in troubled waters. When a young miss is agitated, one can successfully risk much that otherwise would miscarry.

I have bowed to her as politely and formally as possible; I am once again sitting on my chair looking at my landscape and keeping my eye on her. To follow her immediately would be risking too much; it might seem as if I were obtrusive, and then she would be on her guard at once. Now she is of the opinion that I spoke to her out of sympathy, and I am in her good favor. —I know for sure that there is not a soul in the last room. Solitude will have a favorable effect upon her; as long as she sees many people around her, she is uneasy; if she is alone, she no

doubt will subside. Quite right—she is staying in there. In a while, I will *en passant* [casually] come in; I have the right to say one line more—after all, she does owe me as much as a greeting.

She has sat down. Poor girl, she looks so sad; she has been crying, I think, or at least she has had tears in her eyes. It is shocking—to force such a girl to tears. But be calm, you shall be avenged; I will avenge you; he will find out what it is to wait. —How beautiful she is now that the various squalls have calmed down and she is at rest in one mood. Her bearing is a harmonious blend of sadness and pain. She is really attractive. She sits there in her traveling clothes, and yet it was not she who was going to travel; she put them on to go out looking for joy, and now they are a symbol of her pain, for she is like one from whom joy is traveling away. She looks as if she had taken leave of her beloved forever. Let him go! —The situation is propitious; the moment beckons. The thing to do now is to express myself in such a way that it will appear as if I were of the opinion that she was looking for her family or a party of friends up here, and yet so warmly that every word is suggestive to her feelings, so I will have the opportunity to insinuate myself into her thoughts.

Damn the scoundrel—there a fellow comes full speed into the room; no doubt it is he. Oh, no, what a clumsy fool, now when I have just got the situation the way I wanted it. Oh, well, I shall probably be able to turn this to advantage. I must come into casual contact with them, manage to be brought into the situation. When she sees me, she will involuntarily

smile at me, who thought she was looking for her family out here, whereas she was looking for something entirely different. This smile will make me her confidant, which is always something. —A thousand thanks, my child; that smile is worth much more to me than you think; it is the beginning, and the beginning is always the hardest. Now we are acquaintances; our acquaintance is established in a piquant situation—for the time being it is enough for me. You no doubt will stay here scarcely more than an hour; in two hours I will know who you are—why else do you think the police keep census records?

The ninth

Have I become blind? Has the inner eye of the soul lost its power? I have seen her, but it is as if I had seen a heavenly revelation—so completely has her image vanished again for me. In vain do I summon all the powers of my soul in order to conjure up this image. If I ever see her again, I shall be able to recognize her instantly, even though she stands among a hundred others. Now she has fled, and the eye of my soul tries in vain to overtake her with its longing. —I was walking along Langelinie,[12] seemingly nonchalantly and without paying attention to my surroundings, although my reconnoitering glance left nothing unobserved—and then my eyes fell upon her. My eyes fixed unswervingly upon her. They no longer obeyed their master's will; it was impossible for me to shift my gaze and thus overlook the object I wanted to see—I did not look, I stared. As a fencer

freezes in his lunge, so my eyes were fixed, petrified in the direction initially taken. It was impossible to look down, impossible to withdraw my glance, impossible to see, because I saw far too much. The only thing I have retained is that she had on a green cloak, that is all—one could call it capturing the cloud instead of Juno;[13] she has escaped me, like Joseph from Potiphar's wife,[14] and left only her cloak behind. She was accompanied by an elderly woman, who appeared to be her mother. Her I can describe from top to toe, even though I did not really look at her at all but at most included her *en passant*. So it goes. The girl made an impression on me, and I forgot her; the other made no impression, and her I can remember.

The eleventh

My soul is still caught in the same contradiction. I know that I have seen her, but I also know that I have forgotten it again, yet in such a way that the remnant of the recollection that is left does not refresh me. With a restlessness and vehemence, my soul, as if my welfare were at stake, demands this image, and yet it does not appear; I could tear out my eyes to punish them for their forgetfulness. Then, when I have chafed in impatience and have calmed down, it is as if presentiment and recollection were weaving an image that still cannot take definite shape for me, because I cannot make it stand still in context; it is like a pattern in a fine weaving—the pattern is lighter than the background, and by itself it cannot be seen because it is too light. —This is a strange state to be in, and yet

it has its pleasure intrinsically and also because it assures me that I am still young. This I also am able to learn from another observation—namely, that I continually seek my prey among young girls, not among young women. A woman is less natural, more coquettish; a relationship with her is not beautiful, not interesting; it is piquant, and the piquant is always the last. —I had not expected to be able to taste once again the first fruits of falling in love. I have gone under in love-rapture; I have been given what swimmers call a ducking. No wonder that I am a little dazed. So much the better, so much the more do I promise myself out of this relationship.

The fourteenth

I scarcely know myself. My mind roars like a turbulent sea in the storms of passion. If someone else could see my soul in this state, it would seem to him that it, like a skiff, plunged prow-first down into the ocean, as if in its dreadful momentum it would have to steer down into the depths of the abyss. He does not see that high on the mast a sailor is on the lookout. Roar away, you wild forces, roar away, you powers of passion; even if your waves hurl foam toward the clouds, you still are not able to pile yourselves up over my head—I am sitting as calmly as the king of the mountain.[15]

I am almost unable to find a foothold; like a water bird, I am seeking in vain to alight on the turbulent sea of my mind. And yet such turbulence is my ele-

ment. I build upon it as the *Alcedo ispida* builds its nest upon the sea.[16]

Turkey cocks ruffle their feathers when they see red. So it goes with me when I see green, every time I see a green cloak, and since my eyes often deceive me, all my expectations sometimes run aground on a porter from Frederik's Hospital.

The twentieth

One must limit oneself—that is the primary condition for all enjoyment. It does not seem that I shall soon find out anything about the girl who so fills my soul and my mind that the lack is amplified. Now I am going to stay quite calm, for this state, this obscure and indefinite but nevertheless powerful emotion, also has its sweetness. I have always liked to lie in a boat on a clear moonlit night out on one of our beautiful lakes. I haul in the sails, take in the oars, unship the rudder, lie down full length, and gaze up at the vault of heaven. When the waves rock the boat on their breast, when the clouds swiftly drift before the wind, making the moon disappear for a moment and then reappear, I find rest in this restlessness. The motion of the waves lulls me; their slapping against the boat is a monotonous lullaby; the clouds' hasty flight and the variation in lights and shadows intoxicates me so that I dream wide awake. I lie the same way now, haul in the sails, unship the rudder. Longing and impatient expectancy toss me in their arms; longing and expectancy become quieter and quieter, more and more blissful: they coddle me like a child.

Over me arches the heaven of hope; her image drifts past me like the moon's, indistinct, now blinding me with its light, now with its shadow. How enjoyable to ripple along on moving water this way—how enjoyable to be in motion within oneself.

The twenty-first

The days go by; I am still making no headway. The young misses delight me more than ever, and yet I have no desire to enjoy. I look for her everywhere. Often it makes me unreasonable, befuddles my vision, enervates my enjoyment. That beautiful season will soon be here when one can buy up in the public streets and lanes the small claims that cost dearly enough during the social life in the winter season, for a young girl can forget much, but not a situation. It is true that social life does put a person in touch with the fair sex, but it is no good for beginning an affair. In social life, every girl is armed; the situation is unsatisfactory and occurs again and again—she receives no sensuous jolt. In the street, she is on the open sea, and therefore everything affects her more, and likewise everything is more enigmatic. I would give a hundred rix-dollars for a smile from a young girl in a street situation, and not ten for a hand squeeze at a party—that is an entirely different kind of currency. When the affair has started, one looks for the person concerned at parties. One has a secret communication with her that is tempting; it is the most energetic stimulation I know. She does not dare to talk about it, and yet she thinks about it; she does not know

whether one has forgotten it or not; now one misleads her in this way, now in another. This year my ingathering has been small; this girl preoccupies me too much. In a certain sense, my profits are meager, but then I do indeed have the prospect of the grand prize.

The fifth

Cursed chance! Never have I cursed you because you made your appearance; I curse you because you do not make your appearance at all. Or is this perhaps supposed to be a new invention of yours, you incomprehensible being, barren mother of everything, the only remnant remaining from that time when necessity gave birth to freedom, when freedom let itself be tricked back into the womb again? Cursed chance! You, my only confidant, the only being I deem worthy to be my ally and my enemy, always similar to yourself in dissimilarity; always incomprehensible, always an enigma! You whom I love with all the sympathy of my soul, in whose image I form myself, why do you not make your appearance? I do not beg, I do not humbly plead that you will make your appearance in this manner or that; such worship would indeed be idolatry, would not be pleasing to you. I challenge you to a fight—why do you not make your appearance? Or has the balance wheel in the world structure stopped, is your enigma solved, and so you, too, have plunged into the sea of eternity? Terrible thought—then the world will come to a halt out of boredom! Cursed chance, I am waiting for you! I do

not want to vanquish you by means of principles or what foolish people call character—no, I shall be your poet! I do not want to be a poet for others; make your appearance, and I shall be your poet. I shall eat my own poem, and that will be my food. Or do you find me unworthy? Just as a temple dancer dances to the honor of the god [*Guden*], so I have consecrated myself to your service; light, thinly clad, limber, unarmed, I renounce everything. I own nothing; I desire to own nothing; I love nothing; I have nothing to lose—but have I not thereby become more worthy of you, you who long ago must have been tired of depriving people of what they love, tired of their craven sniveling and craven pleading. Surprise me—I am ready. No stakes—let us fight for honor. Show her to me, show me a possibility that seems to be an impossibility; show her to me among the shades of the underworld, and I shall bring her back.[17] Let her hate me, scorn me, be indifferent to me, love someone else—I do not fear; but stir up the water,[18] break the silence. To starve me this way is mean of you, you who nevertheless fancy yourself stronger than I.

May 6

Spring is here. Everything is burgeoning, the young girls also. Their cloaks are laid aside; presumably my green one, too, has been hung up. This is the result of making a girl's acquaintance in the street, not in society, where one is immediately told her name, her family, where she lives, whether she is engaged. The last is extremely important information for all sober

and steady suitors, to whom it would never occur to fall in love with an engaged girl. Such an ambler would then be in mortal distress if he were in my place; he would be utterly demolished if his efforts to obtain information were crowned with success and with the bonus that she was engaged. This, however, does not bother me very much. An engagement is nothing but a comic predicament. I fear neither comic nor tragic predicaments; the only ones I fear are the *langweilige* [boring] ones. So far, I have not come up with a single bit of information, although I certainly have left nothing untried and many times have felt the truth of the poet's words:

> *Nox et hiems longaeque viae, saevique dolores*
> *Mollibus his castris, et labor omnis inest*
>
> [Night, storm, long journeys, cruel pains
> All kinds of pains are in this dainty camp].[19]

Perhaps she does not live here in the city at all; perhaps she is from the country, perhaps, perhaps—I can fly into a rage over all these perhapses, and the angrier I become, the more the perhapses. I always have money at hand in order to be able to set out upon a journey. In vain do I look for her at the theater, at concerts, at dances, on the promenades. In a certain sense, I am pleased; a young girl who participates in such amusements a great deal is usually not worth conquering; she most often lacks the originality that for me is and remains the *conditio sine qua non* [indispensable condition]. It is not as incomprehensible to find a Preciosa[20] among the gypsies as in the market

places where young girls are offered for sale—in all innocence—good heavens, who says otherwise!

The twelfth

Now, my child, why do you not remain standing quite calmly in the doorway? There is absolutely nothing against a young girl's entering a doorway during a shower. I do it myself when I have no umbrella, sometimes even when I have one, as now, for example. Moreover, I could mention several estimable ladies who have not hesitated to do it. Just be calm, turn your back to the street; then the passersby cannot even tell whether you are just standing there or are about to enter the building. But it is indiscreet to hide behind the door when it is standing half open, chiefly because of the consequences, for the more you are concealed, the more unpleasant it is to be surprised. But if you have concealed yourself, then stand very still, commending yourself to your good guardian spirit and the care of all the angels; especially avoid peeking out to see whether the rain is over. If you really want to be sure of it, take a firm step forward and look up gravely at the sky. But if you stick your head out somewhat inquisitively, self-consciously, anxiously, uncertainly, quickly draw it back—then any child understands this movement; it is called playing hide-and-seek. And I, who always join in games, should I hold back, should I not answer when asked? . . . Do not think I am harboring any disrespectful thoughts about you; you did not have the slightest ulterior motive in sticking your head out—it

was the most innocent thing in the world. In return, you must not affront me in your thoughts; my good name and reputation will not tolerate it. Moreover, it was you who started this. I advise you never to speak to anyone about this incident; you are in the wrong. What do I propose to do other than what any gentleman would do—offer you my umbrella. —Where did she go? Splendid! She has hidden herself down in the porter's doorway. What a darling little girl, cheerful, contented. —"Perhaps you could tell me about a young lady who this very moment stuck her head out of this door, obviously in need of an umbrella. She is the one I am looking for, I and my umbrella." —You laugh. —Perhaps you will allow me to send my servant to fetch it tomorrow, or do you recommend that I call a carriage? —Nothing to thank me for; it is only common courtesy. —That is one of the most delightful girls I have seen in a long time; her glance is so childlike and yet so saucy, her manner so lovely, so chaste, and yet she is inquisitive. —Go in peace, my child. If it were not for a green cloak, I might have wished to establish a closer acquaintance. —She walks down along Store Kjøbmagergade. How innocent and full of confidence, not a trace of prudery. See how lightly she walks, how pertly she tosses her head—the green cloak requires self-denial.

The fifteenth

Thank you, kind chance; accept my thanks! Erect was she and proud, mysterious and abounding in thought like a spruce tree, one shoot, one thought,

which deep from the interior of the earth shoots up toward heaven, unexplained, unexplainable to itself, a unity that has no parts. The beech tree puts on a crown; its leaves tell what has occurred beneath it. The spruce has no crown, no history, is a riddle to itself—she was like that. She herself was hidden in herself; she herself rose up out of herself; there was a recumbent pride in her like the spruce's bold escape—although it is riveted to the earth. A sadness surrounded her, like the cooing of the wood dove, a deep longing that was lacking nothing. She was an enigma that enigmatically possessed its own solution, a secret, and what are all the secrets of the diplomats compared with this, a riddle, and what in all the world is as beautiful as the word that solves it? How suggestive, how pregnant, the language is: to solve [*at løse*]—what ambiguity there is in it, with what beauty and with what strength it pervades all the combinations in which this word appears! Just as the soul's wealth is a riddle as long as the cord of the tongue is not loosened [*løst*] and thereby the riddle is solved [*løst*], so also a young girl is a riddle.

Thank you, kind chance; accept my thanks! If I had been able to see her in the wintertime, she no doubt would have been wrapped in the green cloak, benumbed with cold perhaps, and the harshness of nature would have diminished her beauty. But now—what luck! I saw her the first time at the most beautiful time of the year, in the early part of summer in the afternoon light. Of course, winter also has its advantages. A brilliantly lighted ballroom may very well be a flattering setting for a girl dressed for a dance. But

for one thing she seldom shows up to her best advantage here precisely because everything requires her to do so—a requirement that has a disturbing effect on her whether she complies with it or does just the opposite. For another, everything is reminiscent of transitoriness and vanity and evokes an impatience that makes the enjoyment less refreshing. There are certain times when I admittedly would not want to be deprived of a ballroom, deprived of its expensive luxury, its priceless overabundance of youth and beauty, its multiple play of powers, but I do not enjoy it as much as I revel in possibility. It is not a particular beauty who captivates me, but a totality; a visionary picture floats past me in which all these feminine beings blend with one another and all these movements are seeking something, seeking repose in a picture that is not seen.

It was on the footpath between Nørreport and Østerport.[21] It was about half past six. The sun had lost its vigor; only a recollection of it was preserved in a soft glimmering that spread over the landscape. Nature breathed more freely. The lake was still, smooth as a mirror. The pleasant, friendly buildings of Blegdam[22] were reflected on the water, which further out was as dark as metal. The path and the buildings on the other side were illuminated by the faint rays of the sun. The sky was clear and open; only a single light cloud glided hazily across it, best observed when one stared fixedly at the lake, over whose smooth brow it disappeared. Not a leaf was stirring. —It was she. My eyes had not deceived me, even though the green cloak had done so. Although I had

been prepared for this for a long time, it was impossible for me to control a certain restlessness, a rising and falling like that of the lark as it rises and falls in its song over the nearby fields.

She was alone. Once again I have forgotten what she was wearing, and yet I do have an image of her now. She was alone, preoccupied, obviously not with herself but with her own thoughts. She was not thinking, but the quiet revolving of her thoughts wove an image of longing for her soul that had a presentiment as unexplainable as a young girl's many sighs. She was in her most beautiful age. A young girl does not develop in the sense that a boy does; she does not grow, she is born. A boy begins to develop immediately and takes a long time to do it; a young girl takes a long time to be born and is born full-grown. In this lies her infinite richness; the moment she is born, she is full-grown, but this moment of birth comes late. Therefore she is born twice: the second time when she marries or, more correctly, at that moment she stops being born—only at that moment is she born. It is not only Minerva[23] who springs full-grown out of Jupiter's forehead, it is not only Venus[24] who rises up out of the sea in her full beauty—every young girl is like this if her femininity has not been spoiled by what is called developing. She does not awaken gradually, but at once; on the other hand, she dreams that much longer, that is, if people are not so unreasonable as to awaken her too soon. But this dreaming is an infinite richness.

She was preoccupied not with herself but within herself, and this preoccupation was a boundless peace

and repose within herself. In this way a young girl is rich; to embrace this richness makes oneself rich. She is rich, although she does not realize that she possesses anything; she is rich—she is a treasure. A quiet peacefulness rested upon her, and a trace of sadness. She was light to lift with the eyes, as light as Psyche,[25] who was carried away by the jinn, even lighter, for she carried herself. Let the teachers of the Church argue about the assumption of the Madonna; it does not seem incomprehensible to me, for she no longer belonged to the world, but the lightness of a young girl is incomprehensible and mocks the law of gravity.

She did not notice anything and for that reason believed that she was not noticed either. I remained at a distance and imbibed her image. She was walking slowly; no sense of haste marred her peace or the tranquillity of the surroundings. A boy sat by the lake and fished; she stood still and watched the mirror of the water and the little float. Although she had not been walking fast, she nevertheless wanted to cool off. She loosened a little scarf tied around her neck under her shawl; a gentle breeze from the lake fanned a bosom as white as snow, yet warm and full. The boy did not seem pleased to have a witness to his fishing; he turned and observed her with a rather apathetic look. He really looked ludicrous, and I do not blame her for laughing at him. How youthfully she laughed; if she had been alone with the boy, I believe she would not have been afraid to scrap with him. Her eyes were large and glowing; when one looked into them, they had a dark luster, intimating an infi-

nite depth, since it was impossible to penetrate into them; pure and innocent they were, gentle and calm, full of roguishness when she smiled. Her nose was delicately arched; when I saw her from the side, it seemed to draw back into her forehead and thereby became a bit shorter and a bit more saucy.

She walked on; I followed. Fortunately there were several strollers on the path. Exchanging a few words with one person and another, I let her get ahead a little and soon caught up with her again and in that way saved myself the need of having to walk at a distance just as slowly as she did. She walked in the direction of Østerport. I wished to see her closer at hand without being seen. On the corner there was a house from which I might be able to do that. I knew the family and thus needed only to pay them a visit. With a quickened pace, I hurried past her as if I did not notice her in the remotest way. Having gone far ahead of her, I greeted the family all around and then took possession of the window that looked out on the footpath. She came walking along; I looked and looked, while at the same time I spun out chit-chat with the tea company in the living room. The way she walked quickly convinced me that she had not had much training in dance, and yet there was a pride in it, a natural nobility, but an absence of self-consciousness. I managed to see her one more time than I had actually counted on. From the window, I could not see far down the path, but I could see a dock that ran out into the lake, and to my great amazement I spied her again out there. It occurred

to me that perhaps she lived out here in the country; perhaps her family had taken rooms for the summer.

I was already beginning to regret my visit, fearing that she would turn around and I would lose sight of her, indeed, that her appearance at the far end of the dock was a sign that she was vanishing from my sight—and then she appeared nearby. She was walking past the house; I hastily grabbed my hat and my cane with the intention of passing by her and dropping behind her again many times until I discovered where she lived—when in my haste I jolted a woman's arm just as she was offering tea. There was a frightful shriek; I stood there with hat and cane, wanting only to be off and if possible to give the incident a turn and motivate my retreat. I cried out with pathos: I shall be exiled like Cain from this place that saw this tea spilled! But just as if everything had conspired against me, my host had the dismaying idea of following up my comment and declared loudly and solemnly that I would not be allowed to go before I had enjoyed a cup of tea and had made restitution for the spilled tea by serving the ladies myself. Since I was convinced that in the present situation my host would regard it as a courtesy to use force, there was nothing to do but remain. —She had disappeared.

The sixteenth

How beautiful it is to be in love; how interesting it is to know that one is in love. This, you see, is the

difference. I can become furious at the thought that she disappeared before me the second time, and yet in a certain sense I am glad of it. The image I have of her hovers indefinitely somewhere between her actual and her ideal form. I now have this image before me, but precisely because either it is actuality or actuality is indeed the occasion, it has a singular magic. I feel no impatience, for she must live here in the city, and at this moment that is enough for me. This possibility is the condition for the proper appearance of her image—everything will be enjoyed in slow drafts. And should I not be calm—I, who can regard myself as a favorite of the gods, I, whose lot was the rare good fortune of falling in love again. This is something that cannot be elicited by skill or study—it is a gift. But if I have succeeded in stirring up an erotic love again, I do want to see how long it can be sustained. I coddle this love as I never did my first. The opportunity falls to one's lot rarely enough—therefore the point is truly to utilize it if it does come along, for it is dismaying that it is no art to seduce a girl but it is a stroke of good fortune to find one who is worth seducing. —Love is full of mysteries, and this first falling in love is also a mystery, even though a minor one. Most people rush ahead, become engaged or do other stupid things, and in a turn of the hand everything is over, and they know neither what they have won nor what they have lost. Two times she has appeared before me and has disappeared; that means she will appear more often. When Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's dream, he added: But the

fact that you dreamed twice means that it will be fulfilled soon.[26]

Yet it would be interesting if one could discern somewhat ahead of time the forces whose emergence forms the content of life. At present she is living in all her tranquil peace; she does not have even an inkling of my existence, even less of what is going on within me, to say nothing of the assurance with which I gaze into her future, for my soul is demanding more and more actuality, and it is becoming stronger and stronger. If at first sight a girl does not make such a deep impression on a person that she awakens the ideal, then ordinarily the actuality is not especially desirable; but if she does, then no matter how experienced a person is he usually is rather overwhelmed. I always advise the person who is not sure of his hand, his eye, and his victory to venture the attack in this first state, in which, precisely because he is overwhelmed, he has supranatural powers—for being overwhelmed is a curious mixture of sympathy and egotism. He will, however, miss out on an enjoyment, for he does not enjoy the situation since he himself is wrapped up in it, hidden in it. Which is the more beautiful is difficult to decide—which is the more interesting is easy. It is, however, always best to come as close as possible to the line. This is the real enjoyment, and what others enjoy I do not know for sure. Mere possession is very little, and the means such lovers use are usually paltry enough; they do not even reject money, power, alien influence, sleeping potions, etc. But what pleasure is there in love if absolute abandon is not intrin-

sic to it, that is, from the one side—but ordinarily that takes spirit, and such lovers generally do not have that.

The nineteenth

Cordelia, then, is her name! Cordelia! It is a beautiful name, and that, too, is important, since it can often be very disturbing to have to name an ugly name together with the most tender adjectives. I already recognized her a long way off; she was walking with two other girls on her left. The movement of their walking seemed to indicate that they were about to stop. I stood on the corner and read the posters, while I continually kept my eye on my strangers. They parted. The two presumably had gone a little out of their way, for they went in a different direction. She came along toward my corner. When she had walked a few steps, one of the young girls came running after her and cried loudly enough for me to hear it: Cordelia! Cordelia! Then the third one joined them; they put their heads together for a privy council meeting whose secrets I futilely strained my ears to hear. Thereupon they all three laughed and hurried away at a somewhat quicker pace in the direction the two had taken. I followed them. They entered a house on Stranden.[27] I waited for a while, since there was a strong probability that Cordelia would soon come back alone. But that did not happen.

Cordelia! That is really a splendid name—indeed, the same name as that of King Lear's third daughter, that remarkable girl whose heart did not dwell on

her lips, whose lips were mute when her heart was full.[28] So also with my Cordelia. She resembles her, of that I am certain. But in another sense her heart does dwell on her lips, not in the form of words but in a more heartfelt way in the form of a kiss. How ripe with health her lips! I have never seen lips more beautiful.

That I actually am in love I can tell partly by the secrecy with which I treat this matter, almost even with myself. All love is secretive, even the faithless kind, if it has the appropriate esthetic element within it. It has never occurred to me to wish for confidants or to boast of my adventures. Thus it almost makes me happy that I did not come to know where she lives but the place where she frequently visits. Perhaps I thereby may also have come even closer to my goal. I can make my observations without arousing her attention, and from this firmly established point it will not be difficult for me to gain admission into her family. But should this situation turn out to be a difficulty—*eh bien* [well, now]!—then I will put up with the difficulty alone. Everything I do I do *con amore* [with love], and so I also love *con amore.*

The twentieth

Today I learned something about the house into which she disappeared. It belongs to a widow with three lovely daughters. Information in abundance is to be had there—that is, provided they have any. The only difficulty is to understand these details raised to the third power, for they all three speak at once. Her

name is Cordelia Wahl, and she is the daughter of an officer in the Royal Navy. He has been dead for some years—the mother, too. He was a very severe and strict man. She now lives with her aunt, her father's sister, who is supposed to be like her brother but otherwise is a very respectable woman. Now that is all very fine, but in other respects they know nothing about this household; they never visit there, but Cordelia visits them frequently. She and the two girls take a course in the royal kitchen. Therefore, she generally visits there early in the afternoon, sometimes in the morning, never in the evening. They keep very much to themselves.

So this is the end of the story; it is apparent that there is no bridge over which I can steal into Cordelia's house.

Consequently, she does have a conception of the pains in life, of its dark side. Who would have said this of her. Yet these recollections probably belong to an earlier period; this is a horizon under which she has lived without really being aware of it. That is fine—it has saved her femininity; she is not warped. On the other hand, it will also have significance in elevating her, if one really knows how to call it forth. All such things usually teach pride, provided they do not break one, and she is far from being broken.

The twenty-first

She lives near the embankment; the locality is not the best, no neighbors whose acquaintance one could

make, no public places where one can make observations unnoticed. The embankment itself is not very suitable; one is too visible. If one walks below on the street, one cannot very well walk on the side next to the embankment, because no one walks there, and it would be too conspicuous, or one would have to walk close to the houses, and then one can see nothing. It is a corner house. Since the house has no neighboring house, the windows to the courtyard are also visible from the street. Presumably her bedroom is there.

The twenty-second

Today I saw her for the first time at Mrs. Jansen's. I was introduced to her. She did not seem to make anything of it or pay any attention to me. I kept myself as unobtrusive as possible in order to observe her all the better. She stayed only a moment; she had come only to fetch the daughters, who were to go to the royal kitchen. While the two Jansen girls were putting on their coats, we two were alone in the room, and I, with a cold, almost supercilious apathy, said a few casual words to her, to which she replied with undeserved politeness. Then they went. I could have offered to accompany them, but that already would have sufficed to indicate the gallant suitor, and I have convinced myself that she is not to be won that way. —On the contrary, I chose to leave right after they had gone and to walk faster than they, but along other streets, yet likewise heading toward the royal kitchen so that when they turned onto Store Kongensgade I

passed them in the greatest haste without greeting them or anything—to their great astonishment.

The twenty-third

It is necessary for me to gain entrance to the house, and for that, as they say in military language, I am prepared. It looks, however, as if that will be a fairly protracted and difficult matter. I have never known any family that lived so much apart. It is only she and her aunt—no brothers, no cousins, not a thread to grab onto, no far-removed connection to contact. I walk around continually with one arm available. Not for anything in the world would I walk with someone on each arm at this time. My arm is a grappling hook that must always be kept in readiness; my arm is intended for the potential yield—if far off in the distance a very distant relative or friend should appear whom I from afar could catch hold of, then I make a grab. Moreover, it is not right for a family to live so isolated; the poor girl is being deprived of the opportunity to learn to know the world, to say nothing of the other possible dangerous consequences it may have. That always has its revenge. It is the same with proposing. To be sure, such isolation does protect one from petty thievery. In a very sociable house, opportunity makes the thief. But that does not matter greatly, for there is not much to steal from such girls; when they are sixteen years old, their hearts are already a filled autograph album, and I never care to write my name where many have already written. It never occurs to me to scratch my name on a window pane or

in a tavern, or on a tree or a bench in Frederiksberg gardens.[29]

The twenty-seventh

The more I see of her, the more convinced I am that she is an isolated person. This a man ought never to be, not even a young man, because, since his development depends essentially upon reflection, he must have contact with others. Therefore, a young girl should not be interesting either, for the interesting always involves a reflecting on oneself, just as for the same reason the interesting in art always includes an impression of the artist. A young girl who wants to please by being interesting will, if anything, please herself. From the esthetic side, this is the objection to all kinds of coquetry. It is quite different with what is inappropriately called coquetry, which is nature's own gesture—for example, feminine modesty, which is always the most beautiful coquetry. An interesting girl may very well be successful in pleasing, but just as she herself has surrendered her womanliness, so also the men whom she pleases are usually just as unmasculine. Such a young girl first becomes interesting in her relation with men. The woman is the weaker sex, and yet it is much more important for her to stand alone in her youth than for the man; she must be sufficient unto herself, but that by which and in which she is sufficient unto herself is an illusion; it is this dowry with which nature has endowed her like a king's daughter. But it is precisely this resting in illusion that isolates her.

I have often pondered why it is that there is nothing more corrupting for a young girl than associating a great deal with other young girls. Obviously the reason is that this association is neither one thing nor another; it unsettles the illusion but does not clarify it. The woman's fundamental qualification is to be company for the man,[30] but through association with her own sex she is led to reflection upon it, which makes her a society lady instead of company. The language itself is very suggestive in this respect; the man is called "master," but the woman is not called "maidservant" or anything like that—no, a definition of essence is used: she is company, not companymaid. If I were to imagine an ideal girl, she would always stand alone in the world and thereby be assigned to herself, but mainly she would not have friends among the girls. It is certainly true that the Graces were three, but it certainly never occurred to anyone to think of them as talking together; in their silent trinity they form a beautiful feminine unity. In this respect, I could almost be tempted to recommend the virgins' bower [*Jomfrubuur*][31] again, if this constraint were not in turn damaging in its effects. It is always best that a young girl be allowed her freedom, but that the opportunity not be provided. She thereby becomes beautiful and is rescued from becoming interesting. To give a virgin's veil or a bridal veil to a young girl who spends much time in the company of other girls is futile, but he who has sufficient esthetic sensitivity will always find that an innocent girl in the deeper and best sense of the word is brought to him veiled, even if it is not the custom to use a bridal veil.

She has been brought up strictly; I honor her parents in their graves for that; she leads a very reserved life, and in thanks I could hug her aunt for that. She has not become acquainted with worldly delights, has not become jaded through indulgence. She is proud; she spurns what delights other girls, and this is as it should be. It is a falseness that I shall know how to turn to my advantage. Frills and finery do not appeal to her as they do to other girls; she is somewhat polemic, but this is necessary for a girl with her romanticism. She lives in a world of fantasy. If she fell into the wrong hands, it might bring out something very unwomanly in her precisely because there is so much womanliness in her.

The thirtieth

Everywhere our paths cross. Today I met her three times. I know about her every little outing, when and where I shall come across her, but I do not use this knowledge to contrive an encounter with her—on the contrary, I am prodigal on a frightful scale. A meeting that often has cost me several hours of waiting is wasted as if it were a bagatelle. I do not approach her, I merely skirt the periphery of her existence. If I know that she is going to Mrs. Jansen's, I prefer not to encounter her unless it is important for me to make a particular observation. I prefer to come to Mrs. Jansen's a little early and, if possible, to pass her at the door as she is coming and I am going, or on the steps, where I nonchalantly pass by her. This is the first web into which she must be spun. On the street, I do not

stop her, or I exchange a greeting with her but never come close, but always strive for distance. Presumably our repeated encounters are clearly noticeable to her; presumably she does perceive that on her horizon a new planet has loomed, which in its course has encroached disturbingly upon hers in a curiously undisturbing way, but she has no inkling of the law underlying this movement. She is tempted instead to look around to the right and to the left to see whether she can discover the point that is the goal; she is just as unaware that it is she as her antipode is. Just as those around me are inclined to do, she believes that I have a host of business affairs; I am constantly on the go and say, like Figaro: One, two, three, four schemes at a time[32]—that is my pleasure. Before I begin my attack, I must first become acquainted with her and her whole mental state.

The majority enjoy a young girl as they enjoy a glass of champagne, at one effervescent moment—oh, yes, that is really beautiful, and with many a young girl that is undoubtedly the most one can attain, but here there is more. If an individual is too fragile to stand clarity and transparency, well, then one enjoys what is unclear, but apparently she can stand it. The more devotedness one can bring to erotic love, the more interesting. This momentary enjoyment is a rape, even if not outwardly but nevertheless mentally, and in a rape there is only imagined enjoyment; it is like a stolen kiss, something nondescript. No, if one can bring it to a point where a girl has but one task for her freedom, to give herself, so that she feels her whole happiness in this, so that she practically begs for this

devotedness and yet is free—only then is there enjoyment, but this always takes a discerning touch.

Cordelia! It is indeed a glorious name! I sit at home and practice saying it to myself like a parrot. I say: Cordelia, Cordelia, my Cordelia, you my Cordelia. I cannot help smiling at the thought of the plan according to which sometime at the crucial moment I shall pronounce these words. One should always make preparatory studies; everything must be properly arranged. No wonder poets are always describing this *dus*-moment,[33] that most beautiful moment when the lovers, not by sprinkling (to be sure, there are many who go no further) but by immersion in the sea of love, strip themselves of the old man and rise up from this baptism and only then really recognize each other as old acquaintances, although they are only one moment old. For a young girl, this is always the most beautiful moment, and to enjoy it properly one ought to be on a somewhat higher level—not just as someone being baptized but also as the priest. A little irony makes the moment following this moment one of the most interesting—it is a spiritual disrobing. One must be poetic enough not to interfere with the ceremony, and yet the rogue in oneself must always be on the watch.

June 2

She is proud—that I saw long ago. When she is together with the three Jansens, she speaks very little. Their chatter obviously bores her; a certain smile on her lips seems to indicate that. I am building upon

that smile. —At other times, to the amazement of the Jansens, she can abandon herself to an almost boyish wildness. When I consider her life as a child, it is not unaccountable to me. She had only one brother, a year older than she. She knew only the father and brother, witnessed some earnest episodes that make ordinary silly chatter disgusting. Her father and mother did not live together happily; that which generally more or less clearly or obscurely beckons to a young girl does not beckon to her. It might well be that she is puzzled about what a young girl is. Maybe at particular moments she wishes that she were not a girl but a man.

She has imagination, spirit, passion—in short, all the essentials, but not subjectively reflected. An incident today convinced me of this. I knew from the Jansen house that she does not play an instrument—it goes against her aunt's principles. I have always regretted this, for music is always a good means of communication with a young girl if one, please note, is careful not to appear to be a connoisseur. Today I went over to Mrs. Jansen's. I had partially opened the door without knocking, a rudeness that frequently works to my advantage and that I remedy, when necessary, by the foolishness of knocking on the open door. She was sitting there alone at the piano—she seemed to be playing furtively. It was a little Swedish melody. She did not play well; she became impatient, but then the strains came again, more softly. I shut the door and remained outside, listening to the change in her moods. At times there was a passion in her

playing that reminded me of the maid Mettelil,[34] who struck the golden harp so that milk spouted from her breasts. —There was something sad but also something dithyrambic in her playing. —I could have rushed forward, seized this moment: that would have been foolish. —Recollection is a means not only of conserving but also of augmenting; something that is permeated by recollection has a double effect. —Frequently in books, especially hymnbooks, one finds a little flower—the occasion for its being placed there was a beautiful moment; the recollection is even more beautiful. Obviously she conceals the fact that she plays, or perhaps she plays only this little Swedish melody—does it perhaps have a special interest for her? I know nothing about this, but for that reason this event is of great importance to me. Sometime when I can speak more confidentially with her, I shall very covertly lead her to this point and let her fall down through this trapdoor.

June 3

Still I cannot make up my mind how to understand her; this is why I keep so quiet, so much in the background—indeed, like a soldier on vedette duty who throws himself on the ground and listens to the faintest reverberation of an advancing enemy. I do not actually exist for her, not in the sense of a negative relationship but in the sense of no relationship at all. As yet I have risked no venture. —To see her was to love her, as the novels say—yes, that would be true enough if love did not have a dialectic, but what,

indeed, does one come to know about love from novels? Sheer lies—which helps to shorten the task.

According to everything I have now learned about her, when I think back on the impression that first meeting made on me, my conception of her is certainly modified, but to her advantage as well as to mine. It is not exactly the order of the day for a young girl to walk all alone this way, or for a young girl to sink into herself this way. She was tested according to my rigorous critique: lovely. But loveliness is a very volatile element that vanishes like yesterday when it is over.[35] I had not thought of her in the setting in which she lives, least of all so unreflectively acquainted with the storms of life.

But I would like to know the state of her feelings. Surely she has never been in love; her spirit is too free-ranging for that. Least of all is she one of those theoretically experienced maidens who, long in advance, are so facile in imagining themselves in the arms of a lover. The real-life people she has met have simply not been able to confuse her about the relation between dream and actuality. Her soul is still nourished by the divine ambrosia of ideals. But the ideal hovering before her is certainly not a shepherdess or a heroine in a novel, a mistress, but a Joan of Arc or something like that.

The question always remains whether her womanliness is sufficiently strong to reflect itself, or whether it will be enjoyed only as beauty and loveliness; the question is whether one dares to bend the bow to greater tension. It is in itself something great to find a

purely immediate womanliness, but if one dares to risk altering it, one has the interesting. In that case, it is best to saddle her with a plain and simple suitor. That this would harm a young girl is a superstition people have. —Indeed, if she is a very choice and delicate plant who has only one crowning feature in her life—loveliness—then it is always best that she has never heard love mentioned. But if that is not the case, then it is an advantage, and I would never hesitate to produce a suitor if there was none. This suitor must not be a caricature either, for nothing is gained thereby; he must be a respectable young man, even charming if possible, but still inadequate for her passion. She looks down on such a person; she acquires a distaste for love; she becomes almost diffident about her own reality [*Realitet*] when she senses her destiny and sees what actuality [*Virkelighed*] offers. If to love, she says, is nothing else, then it does not amount to much. She becomes proud in her love. This pride makes her interesting; it illuminates her being with heightened color, but it also brings her closer to her downfall—but all this makes her ever more interesting. It is nevertheless best to make sure of her acquaintances first, in order to see if there might be such a suitor. There is no opportunity at home, for practically no one ever visits there, but she does go out, and probably such a person could be found there. It is always precarious to provide such a person before knowing this. Two suitors, each inconsequential in himself, could have a harmful effect because of their relativity. I shall now find out whether there is such a lover in secret who does not have the

courage to storm the house, a chicken thief who sees no chance in such a cloister-like house.

Consequently, the strategic principle, the law for every move in this campaign, is always to have tangential contact with her in an interesting situation. Consequently, the interesting is the territory in which the struggle is to be carried on; the potency of the interesting must be exhausted. If I am not much mistaken, her whole nature is designed for this, so that what I ask for is precisely what she gives—indeed, what she asks for. What it all depends on is to keep watch on what the individual can give and what she requires as a consequence of that. My love affairs, therefore, always have a reality [*Realitet*] for me personally; they amount to a life factor, an educational period that I definitely know all about, and I often even link with it some skill or other. For the sake of the first girl, I learned to dance; for the sake of the little dancer, I learned to speak French. At that time, like all fools, I went to the market and was often cheated. Now I buy before the market opens. Perhaps she has exhausted one aspect of the interesting; her inclosed life seems to indicate that. The point, then, is to find another aspect that at first glance may not seem so to her but that precisely because of this impediment becomes interesting to her. To that end, I choose not the poetic but the prosaic. So this is the beginning. First of all, her womanliness is neutralized by prosaic common sense and ridicule, not directly but indirectly, at the same time by the absolutely neutral, namely, intellect. She almost loses the feeling of being a woman, but in this state she is not

able to stand out alone; she throws herself into my arms, not as if I were a lover—no, still completely neutrally. Now, her womanliness is aroused; one coaxes it forth to its extreme point of elasticity, allows her to offend against some actual validity or other. She goes beyond it; her womanliness reaches almost supranatural heights; she belongs to me with a world of passion.

The fifth

Well, I did not need to go far. She visits at the home of Mr. Baxter the wholesaler. Here I found not only her but also a person who for me appeared just as opportunely. Edward, the son of the house, is head over heels in love with her—it takes but half an eye to see it when one looks into his eyes. He is in the business, in his father's office, a good-looking fellow, very pleasant, a bit shy, and I believe this last trait does not damage him in her eyes.

Poor Edward! He does not have the slightest idea how to proceed with his love. When he knows she is going to be there in the evening, he dresses for her sake alone, puts on his new black suit for her sake alone, his fancy cuffs for her sake alone—and thus cuts an almost ludicrous figure among the other daily company in the drawing room. His bashfulness verges on the unbelievable. If it were a guise, then Edward would be a dangerous rival to me. It takes great art to use bashfulness, but one does achieve a great deal with it. How often I have used bashfulness to trick a little miss! Ordinarily, young girls speak very harshly

about bashful men, but secretly they like them. A little bashfulness flatters a teenage girl's vanity, makes her feel superior; it is her earnest money. When they are lulled to sleep, then at the very time they believe you are about to perish from bashfulness, you show them that you are so far from it that you are quite self-reliant. Bashfulness makes a man lose his masculine significance, and therefore it is a relatively good means for neutralizing the sex relation. Therefore, when they perceive that it was only a guise, they become so abashed that they blush inwardly, feel very strongly that in a way they have overstepped their limits; it is just as if they continued to treat a boy as a child too long.

The seventh

So now we are friends, Edward and I. There is between us a true friendship, a beautiful relationship, such as has not existed since the most beautiful days of Greece. We were on intimate terms at once when, after having involved him in a multiplicity of observations about Cordelia, I managed to make him confess his secret. Of course, when all the secrets come out together, then this one can come along. Poor fellow, he has been pining for a long time already. He spruces himself up every time she comes, then escorts her home in the evening; his heart pounds at the thought of her arm resting on his. They walk home, looking at the stars. He rings her doorbell; she disappears; he despairs—but has hopes for the next time. As yet he has not had the courage to step across her

threshold, he who has such a superb opportunity. Although I cannot refrain from secretly deriding Edward, there is nevertheless something beautiful in his childlikeness. Although I ordinarily fancy myself to be fairly conversant with the whole sum and substance of the erotic, I have never noticed this state in myself, this anxiety and trembling of infatuation, that is, to the degree that it deprives me of my composure, for at other times I know it all right, but with me it is such that it makes me stronger instead. Perhaps someone would say that I have never really been in love—maybe so. I have taken Edward to task; I have encouraged him to depend upon my friendship. Tomorrow he will take a decisive step, go in person to her and invite her. I managed to lead him to the preposterous idea of inviting me to go along; I promised him to do so. He takes it as an extraordinary show of friendship. The situation is just as I want it; it amounts to bursting unexpectedly through the door into the room. Should she have the remotest doubt about the significance of my appearance, my appearance will in turn confuse everything.

Previously it has never been my habit to prepare myself for my conversations; now it has become a necessity for me in order to entertain the aunt. In other words, I have now taken on the respectable commission of conversing with her and thereby covering Edward's infatuated approaches to Cordelia. Earlier, the aunt lived out in the country, and I am making considerable progress in knowledge of and competence in the subject through the aunt's communications

based on her experience as well as through my own careful study of works in agronomy.

I am scoring a big success with the aunt; she regards me as a stable and steady person, someone with whom it is really a pleasure to associate, not like some of our stylish young dandies. I do not seem to stand very well with Cordelia. To be sure, she is too purely and innocently womanly to require that every man pay his respects to her, but she still feels far too much the rebelliousness in my character.

When I am sitting this way in the cozy drawing room, when she, like a good angel, is spreading loveliness everywhere, over all with whom she comes in touch, over good and evil, I at times lose patience inwardly and am tempted to rush out of my hiding place, for although I am sitting before the eyes of all in the drawing room, I am still on watch. I am tempted to seize her hand, to enfold the girl in my arms, to hide her inside me for fear that someone might take her away from me. Or when Edward and I take our leave of them in the evening, when she extends her hand in farewell and I hold it in mine, I find it very difficult at times to let the bird slip out of my hand. Patience—*quod antea fuit impetus, nunc ratio est* [what was impulse then is science now][36]—she must be spun into my web in a totally different way, and then suddenly I shall let the full force of love burst forth. We have not spoiled that moment for ourselves by spooning, by premature anticipations—you can thank me for that, my Cordelia. I am working to develop the contrast; I am pulling the bow of love

tighter in order to wound all the deeper. Like an archer, I slacken the string, pull it tight again, listen to its song; it is my martial music, but as yet I do not aim—as yet I do not place the arrow to the string.

When a small number of people often come together in the same room, a tradition readily develops as to where each individual has his place, his station; it becomes a kind of picture a person can unroll for himself when he so desires, a map of the terrain. So it is also with us in the Wahl house—together we form a picture. We drink tea there evenings. The aunt, who until now has been sitting on the sofa, usually moves to the little sewing table, which place Cordelia in turn vacates. She then goes over to the tea table in front of the sofa; Edward follows her, and I follow the aunt. Edward strives for an air of mystery. He wants to whisper and usually does it so well that he becomes entirely mute; I make no secret of my effusions to the aunt—market prices, an estimate of how many quarts of milk it takes for one pound of butter through the medium of cream and the dialectic of the butter churn. Indeed, it is not only something any young girl can listen to without harm, but, what is far more unusual, it is a solid and fundamental and edifying conversation that is equally ennobling to the head and the heart. I usually turn my back to the tea table and to Edward's and Cordelia's romance; I romance with the aunt. And is not nature magnificent and wise in what she produces, what a precious gift is butter, what a glorious accomplishment of nature and art! The aunt would surely not be able to hear what

was being said between Edward and Cordelia, assuming that something really was being said—this I had promised Edward, and I always keep my word. I, however, can hear perfectly every single word that is exchanged, hear every movement. It is very important to me, because what a person may venture in his despair cannot be known. The most circumspect and most timid people at times dare to do the most extreme things. Although I do not have the slightest to do with the two isolated people, I nevertheless can readily perceive in Cordelia that I am always invisibly present between her and Edward.

But it is a curious picture we four make together. I presumably could find an analogy if I were to think of well-known types, and then I might think of myself as Mephistopheles, but the difficulty is that Edward is no Faust. If I make myself Faust, then the difficulty again is that Edward certainly is no Mephistopheles. Nor am I a Mephistopheles, least of all in Edward's eyes. He regards me as the good jinni of his love, and in that he is right; at least he can be sure that no one watches over his love more carefully than I do. I have promised him to engage the aunt in conversation, and I carry out this respectable duty most earnestly. The aunt almost vanishes before our eyes in pure agronomy; we go into the kitchen and the cellars, up into the attic, look at the chickens and ducks, geese, etc. All this offends Cordelia. She, of course, cannot comprehend what I really want. I remain an enigma to her, but an enigma that does not tempt her to guess but that exasperates, indeed, makes her in-

dignant. She senses very well that her aunt is becoming almost ludicrous, and yet she is such a respectable lady that she certainly does not deserve it. On the other hand, I do it so well that she is fully aware that it would be futile for her to try to sway me. Sometimes I carry it so far that I make Cordelia very secretly smile at her aunt. These are exercises that must be done. It is not as if I were doing this in conjunction with Cordelia—far from it; then I would never bring her to smile at her aunt. I remain unchanged, earnest, thorough, but she cannot help smiling. This is the first false teaching: we must teach her to smile ironically, but this smile applies to me just as much as to the aunt; for she does not know at all what to think of me. But it could just be that I was the kind of young man who became old prematurely; it is possible; there could be a second possibility, a third, etc. Having smiled at her aunt, she is indignant with herself; I turn around and, while I continue to speak with the aunt, I look very gravely at her, whereupon she smiles at me, at the situation.

Our relationship is not the tender and trusting embrace of understanding, not one of attraction; it is the repulsion of misunderstanding. There is actually nothing at all in my relationship with her; it is purely intellectual, which for a young girl is naturally nothing at all. The method I employ has nevertheless its extraordinary conveniences. A person who plays the gallant arouses suspicions and stirs up resistance to himself; I am exempt from all that. I am not being watched; on the contrary, I am marked rather as a

dependable man fit to watch over the young girl. The method has only one defect, which is that it is slow, but for that reason it can be used successfully against individuals only when the interesting is to be gained.

What a reinvigorating power a young girl has—not the freshness of the morning air, not the sighing of the wind, not the coolness of the sea, not the fragrance of wine, its aroma—nothing in the world has this reinvigorating power.

I hope that soon I shall have brought her to the point where she hates me. I have assumed completely the character of a confirmed bachelor. I talk about nothing else than sitting comfortably, lying at ease, having a trusty servant, a friend with good footing so that I can rely on him when we walk arm in arm. Now, if I can persuade the aunt to forsake her agricultural observations, I can lead her in this direction in order to have a more direct occasion for irony. One may laugh at a bachelor, indeed, have little pity for him; but a young man who (although not devoid of intelligence) by such behavior outrages a young girl —all the significance of her sex, its beauty and its poetry, is annihilated.

In this way the days go by. I see her but do not speak with her; I speak with the aunt in her presence. Occasionally at night, it may cross my mind to pour out my love. Then, wrapped in my cape, with my hat pulled down over my eyes, I go and walk outside her windows. Her bedroom faces the courtyard but is visible from the street, since the place is on a corner.

Sometimes she stands at the window for a moment, or she opens it and looks up at the stars, unseen by all but the one by whom she would least of all think to be noticed. In these nocturnal hours, I walk around like a ghost; like a ghost I inhabit the place where her dwelling is. Then I forget everything, have no plans, no reckonings, cast understanding overboard, expand and fortify my chest with deep sighs, a motion I need in order not to suffer from my systematic conduct. Others are virtuous by day, sin at night; I am dissimulation by day—at night I am sheer desire. If she saw me here, if she could look into my soul—if.

If this girl is willing to understand herself, she must admit that I am a man for her. She is too intense, too deeply moved, to be happy in marriage; it would be too meager for her to let herself fall for an outright seducer; when she falls for me, she will rescue the interesting out of the shipwreck. In relation to me, she must, as the philosophers say with a play on words: *zu Grunde gehn* [fall to the ground].[37]

She really is weary of listening to Edward. Just as always, when cramped limits are set for the interesting, one discovers all the more. Sometimes she listens to my conversation with the aunt. When I notice it, far off on the horizon there comes a flashing intimation from a quite different world, to the astonishment of the aunt as well as of Cordelia. The aunt sees the lightning but hears nothing; Cordelia hears the voice but sees nothing. But at the same moment everything is in its quiet order; the conversation between the aunt and me proceeds in its uniform way, like post

horses in the stillness of the night; the sad hum of the samovar accompanies it. At such moments, it can sometimes be uncomfortable in the drawing room, especially for Cordelia. She has no one she can talk with or listen to. If she turns to Edward, she runs the risk that he will do something stupid in his bashfulness; if she turns to the other side, toward the aunt and me, the assurance dominant here, the monotonous hammer stroke of the rhythmical conversation, produces the most disagreeable contrast with Edward's lack of assurance. I can well understand that it must seem to Cordelia as if the aunt were bewitched, so perfectly does she move to the tempo of my rhythm. She cannot participate in this conversation either, because one of the means I have also used to outrage her is that I allow myself to treat her just like a child. It is not as if I for that reason would allow myself any liberties whatever with her, far from it. I well know the upsetting effects such things can have, and the point is that her womanliness must be able to rise up pure and beautiful again. Because of my intimate relationship with the aunt, it is easy for me to treat her like a child who has no understanding of the world. Her womanliness is not insulted thereby but merely neutralized, for the fact that she does not know market prices cannot insult her womanliness, but the supposition that this is the ultimate in life can certainly be revolting to her. With my powerful assistance on this score, the aunt is outdoing herself. She has become almost fanatic—something she can thank me for. The only thing about me that she cannot stand is that I have no position. Now I have adopted

the habit of saying whenever a vacancy in some office is mentioned: "There is a position for me," and thereupon discuss it very gravely with her. Cordelia always perceives the irony, which is precisely what I want.

Poor Edward! It is a shame that he is not called Fritz. Every time I ponder my relationship with him, I always think of Fritz in *The Bride*.[38] Moreover, like his prototype, Edward is a corporal in the civic militia. To be honest, Edward is also rather boring. He is doing it all wrong, always arrives so formal and spruced up. Out of friendship for him, *unter uns gesagt* [just between us], I come visiting dressed as negligently as possible. Poor Edward! The one thing that almost makes me feel bad is that he is so infinitely obliged to me that he hardly knows how he will thank me. For me to be thanked for it—that is too much.

Why can't you just be nice and quiet? What have you done all morning but shake my awnings, tug at my window street-mirror and the cord on it, play with the bellpull wire from the fourth floor, push against the windowpanes—in short, proclaim your existence in every way as if you wanted to beckon me out to you? Yes, the weather is fine enough, but I have no inclination; let me stay home. —You playful, exuberant zephyrs, you happy lads, go by yourselves; have your fun as always with the young girls. Yes, I know, no one knows how to embrace a young girl as seductively as you. It is futile for her to try to wriggle away from you; she cannot extricate herself from your snares—nor does she wish to, for you cool and

refresh and do not agitate. Go your own way! Leave me out of it. But then you think you have no enjoyment in it; you are not doing it for your own sake. Well, then, I shall go along with you, but on two conditions. —Number one. On Kongens Nytorv there lives a young girl; she is very lovely but also has the effrontery to be unwilling to love me—yes, what is worse, she loves someone else, and it has gone so far that they go walking together arm in arm. I know he goes to fetch her at one o'clock. Now promise me that the strongest winds among you will remain hidden somewhere nearby until the moment he comes through the street door with her. The very moment he is about to turn down Store Kongensgade, this detachment will rush out and in the most courteous way take the hat off his head and carry it at a steady speed exactly one yard ahead of him—not any faster, for then it is conceivable that he would go home. He continually expects to grab it the next second; he does not even let go of her arm. In that manner you will lead him and her through Store Kongensgade along the wall to Nørreport, to Høibroplads. —How long will that take? I think just about a half hour. Exactly at half past one, I shall approach from Østergade. Now, when the detachment has led the lovers out into the middle of the square, a powerful attack will be made on them in which you will also snatch off her hat, dishevel her curls, carry off her shawl, while all this time his hat is jubilantly rising aloft higher and higher. In short, you will produce such a confusion that not only I but the very honored public will burst into roars of laughter, the dogs will begin to bark, the

tower watchman to toll. You will contrive to have her hat soar over to me, who will be the lucky fellow who hands it over to her. —Number two. The unit that accompanies me will obey my every suggestion, keep within the bounds of propriety, insult no pretty girl, take no more liberties than will allow her childlike soul, during the entire joke, to preserve its delight, her lips their smile, her eyes their calmness, and her heart to remain without anxiety. If one of you dares to act in any other way, may your name be cursed. —And now be off to life and gladness, to youth and beauty. Show me what I so often have seen, what I never grow weary of seeing; show me a beautiful young girl and unfurl her beauty to me in such a way that she herself becomes even more beautiful; examine her in such a way that she finds joy in the examination! —I choose Bredgade, but remember, I have at my disposal only the time until half past one.—

There comes a young girl, all starched and dressed up—to be sure, it is Sunday today. —Cool her off a bit, fan her, stroke her with gentle breezes, embrace her with your innocent touch! What delicate reddening of her cheeks I detect! Her lips become more vividly colored; her bosom rises. —Is it not true, my girl, that it is indescribable, that it is blissful pleasure to breathe this fresh air? The little collar flutters like a leaf. How healthy and full her breathing. Her pace slackens, she is almost carried along by the gentle breeze—like a cloud, like a dream. —Blow a little harder, in longer drafts! —She pulls herself together, draws her arms closer to her bosom, which she covers more carefully lest a puff of wind be too indiscreet

and sneak in agilely and coolly under this light covering. —Her color rises, her cheeks become full, her eyes clearer, her step more rhythmic. All opposition enhances a person's beauty. Every young girl ought to fall in love with a zephyr, for no man knows how to heighten her beauty the way it does when it skirmishes with her. —Her body leans forward a bit; she is looking down at the toes of her shoes. —Stop for a while! You are blowing too hard, and her body hunches up and loses its beautiful slimness. —Cool her off a little! —Isn't it refreshing, my girl, when you are warm and then feel these cooling shivers? You could fling out your arms in gratitude, in joy over existence. —She turns sideways—now, quickly, a powerful puff so that I can have a hint of the beauty of her form. —A bit stronger so that the folds cling more closely. —It is too much! Her bearing becomes ungraceful; her light footstep is thrown off. She turns around again. —Blow, now, let her prove herself! —That is enough, that is too much: one of her curls has tumbled down. —Control yourselves, please! —There comes a whole regiment marching:

Die eine ist verliebt gar sehr;
Die andre wäre es gerne

[The one is very much in love;
The other would very much like to be].[39]

Yes, it is undeniably a bad employment in life to go walking with a prospective brother-in-law on his left arm. For a girl, it is just about the same as it is for a man to be a supplementary clerk. —But the supple-

mentary clerk can advance; moreover, he has his place in the office, is present on special occasions—this is not the sister-in-law's fate. But then in compensation her advancement is not so slow—when she advances and is moved into another office. —Blow a little harder now! If you have something firm to hold onto, you can offer resistance all right. —The center presses forward vigorously; the wings are unable to follow. —He stands firmly enough. The wind cannot budge him; he is too heavy for that—but also too heavy for the wings to be able to lift him from the earth. He charges ahead to show—that he is a heavy body. But the more unmoved he remains, the more the girls suffer from it. —My beautiful ladies, may I not be of service with some good advice: Leave the prospective husband and brother-in-law out of it; try to walk all alone, and you will have much more enjoyment out of it. —Blow more gently now, please! —How they toss about in the waves of wind; now they are performing dance steps sideways down the street—can any dance music evoke a livelier cheerfulness? And yet the wind does not exhaust them; it strengthens. —Now, side by side, they sweep along down the street in full sail—can any waltz sweep a young girl along more seductively, and yet the wind is not tiring but sustaining. Now they turn around and face the husband and brother-in-law. —Isn't it true that a little resistance is pleasant? You willingly struggle in order to come into possession of what you love, and very likely you will attain what you are fighting for. There is a higher Governance that comes to the aid of love; that is why the man has the wind

in his favor. —Did I not organize it right: if you have the wind on your own back, you can easily rush past the beloved, but when it is against you, you are pleasantly stimulated; then you fly to the beloved's side, and the puffing of the wind makes you healthier, more tempting, more seductive, and the puffing of the wind cools the fruit of your lips, which is enjoyed best when cold, because it is so hot, just as champagne inflames when it almost chills. —How they laugh and talk—and the wind carries the words away; is there really anything to talk about? —And they laugh again and lean against the wind and hold on to their hats and watch their feet. —Better stop now, lest the young girls become impatient and angry with us or afraid of us!

That's right, resolutely and powerfully, the right foot before the left. —How boldly and saucily she looks around at the world. —If I am seeing right, she is indeed holding on to the person's arm and therefore is engaged. Let me see what present you received on life's Christmas tree, my child. —Ah, yes! He really seems to be a very solid fiancé. So she is in the first stage of the engagement; she loves him—maybe so, but her love, broad and copious, nevertheless flutters loosely about him. She still possesses the cloak of love that can cover a multitude.[40] —Blow a little harder! —Well, if you walk so fast, it is no wonder that the ribbons on your hat stretch against the wind, making it look as if these, like wings, were carrying this light creature—and her love—and it, too, follows like a fairy veil the wind plays with. Yes, when love is looked at in this way, it seems so copious, but when one is to be dressed in it, when the

veil is to be sewed into a housedress—then there is not material for many puffs. —Good heavens! If you have the courage to risk a step decisive for your whole life, should you not have the heart to go straight against the wind? Who doubts it? Not I—but no temper tantrum, my little miss, no temper tantrum. Time is a hard disciplinarian, and the wind is not so bad either. —Tease her a little! —What happened to the handkerchief? All right, you have it again. There went one of the ribbons from your hat. —It is really very embarrassing for the prospective one who is present. —There comes a girl friend you must greet. It is the first time she has seen you as a fiancée; of course, it is to make an appearance as a fiancée that you are here on Bredgade and intend to go out on Langelinie. As far as I know, it is the custom for the newlyweds to go to church the first Sunday after the wedding; the newly engaged, however, walk on Langelinie. Well, generally an engagement does have much in common with Langelinie. —Watch out, now, the wind is taking your hat. Hang on to it, bend your head down. —It is really too bad that you did not manage to greet your girl friend at all, did not gain the composure to greet her with the superior air an engaged girl is supposed to assume before the not-engaged. —Blow more gently now! —Good days are coming now.

How she clings to her beloved; now she is far enough ahead of him to turn her head and look up at him and rejoice in him, her wealth, her good fortune, her hope, her future. —O my girl, you make too much of him. —Or does he not have me and the

wind to thank that he looks so vigorous? And do you yourself not have me and the soft breezes, which now healed you and made you cast your pain into oblivion, to thank that you yourself look so exuberant, so full of longing and anticipation?

> I do not want a student
> Who lies and reads at night,
> But I do want an officer
> Who goes with feathers in his hat.[41]

One sees it in you at once, my girl; there is something in your look. —No, a student is by no means good enough for you. —But why exactly an officer? A university graduate all through with his studies—would he not serve just as well? —But right now I can provide you with neither an officer nor a university graduate. But I can provide some tempering cool breezes. —Blow a little now! —That was fine. Toss the silk scarf back over the shoulder; walk very slowly so that your cheeks become a bit more pale, the glow of your eyes not so intense. —Just so. Yes, a little exercise, especially in such delightful weather as today, and then a little patience, and you will surely have your officer.

There go two who are destined for each other. What rhythm in their step, what assurance, built on mutual trust, in their whole bearing; what *harmonia praestabilita* [preestablished harmony][42] in all their movements, what self-sufficient solidity. They are not light and graceful in posture; they are not dancing with each other. No, there is durability about them, a boldness that awakens an infallible hope, that in-

spires mutual respect. I wager that their view of life is this: life is a road. And they do seem determined to walk arm in arm with each other through life's joys and sorrows. They are so harmonious that the lady has even surrendered her claim to walk on the flagstones. —But, you dear zephyrs, why are you so busy with that couple? They do not seem to be worth the attention. Is there anything in particular to look at? —But it is half past one—off to Høibroplads.

One would not believe it possible to plot so entirely accurately the history of the development of a psyche. It shows how sound Cordelia is. Truly, she is a remarkable girl. To be sure, she is quiet and modest, unassuming, but yet there is unconsciously within her an enormous claim. —This struck me today when I saw her go into her house. The little resistance that a puff of wind can give seems to arouse all the forces within her, but there nevertheless is no inner conflict. She is not an insignificant little girl who vanishes between one's fingers, so frail that one is almost afraid that she will break in two when looked at, but neither is she a pretentious ornamental flower. Therefore, like a physician, I can delight in observing all the symptoms in this health record.

In my attack, I am beginning to close in on her gradually, to shift into a more direct attack. If I were to indicate this change on my military map of the family, I would say: I have turned my chair so that I am now turned sideways toward her. I am involved with her more; I address her, elicit her response. Her soul has passion, intensity, and, without being brought to the point of oddity by vain and foolish reflections, she has

a need for the unusual. My irony over the foolishness of people, my ridicule of their cowardliness, of their tepid torpidity, captivate her. She likes to drive the sun chariot across the arch of heaven and to come close enough to earth to scorch people a little. But she does not trust me; as yet I have prevented every approach, even in an intellectual sense. She must be strengthened within herself before I let her find support from me. Now and then it may seem as if I were seeking to make her my confidante in my freemasonry, but that is only momentary. She herself must be developed within herself; she must feel the resilience of her soul; she must come to grips with the world and lift it. In her eyes and in what she says, it is easy for me to see the progress she is making; only once have I seen a devastating wrath there. She must owe me nothing, for she must be free. Only in freedom is there love; only in freedom are there diversion and everlasting amusement. Although I am making arrangements so that she will sink into my arms as if by a necessity of nature and am striving to make her gravitate toward me, the point nevertheless is that she should not fall like a heavy body but as mind should gravitate toward mind. Although she will belong to me, yet it must not be in the unbeautiful way of resting upon me as a burden. She must be neither an appendage in the physical sense nor an obligation in the moral sense. Between us two, only freedom's own game will prevail. She must be so light to me that I can carry her on my arm.

Almost too much does Cordelia preoccupy me. I am losing my balance again—not face-to-face with

her when she is present, but when I am alone with her in the strictest sense. I may yearn for her, not in order to speak with her but merely to have her image float past me; when I know she has gone out, I may stealthily follow her, not to be seen but to see. The other evening, we left the Baxter house together; Edward escorted her. I parted from them in the greatest haste, hurried over to another street where my servant was waiting for me. In no time at all, I had changed my clothes and met her again without her suspecting it. Edward was just as mute as ever. I certainly am in love, but not in the ordinary sense, and one must be extremely careful about that; it always has dangerous consequences, and, after all, one is that way only once. But the god of love is blind, and if one is clever, he can surely be fooled. The art is to be as receptive as possible to impressions, to know what impression one is making and what impression one has of each girl. In that way, one can be in love with many girls at the same time, because one is in love in a different way with each one. To love one girl is too little; to love all is superficiality; to know oneself and to love as many as possible, to let one's soul conceal all the powers of love inside itself so that each receives its specific nourishment while the consciousness nevertheless embraces the whole—that is enjoyment, that is living.

July 3

Edward really cannot complain about me. As a matter of fact, I want Cordelia to fall in love with him

so that through him she will acquire a distaste for plain and simple love and thereby go beyond her own limits, but that requires in particular that Edward not be a caricature, for that is of no help. Now, Edward is not only a good match in the bourgeois sense, which does not mean anything to her—a girl of seventeen does not care about such things—but he has several appealing personal qualities that I try to help him show in the most advantageous light. Like a lady's maid or a decorator, I deck him out as well as the resources of the house allow—in fact, I sometimes hang a little borrowed finery on him. When we go together over there, it seems very strange to me to walk along at his side. To me it is as if he were my brother, my son, and yet he is my friend, my contemporary, my rival. He can never become dangerous to me. Hence, the higher I can elevate him, since he is bound to fall, the better it is, the more it awakens in Cordelia a consciousness of what she disdains, the more intense the presentiment of what she desires. I lend him a helping hand, I recommend him—in short, I do everything a friend can do for a friend. In order to set my own coldness in relief, I almost rant against Edward. I characterize him as a dreamer. Since Edward does not know how to help himself at all, I have to push him forward.

Cordelia hates and fears me. What does a young girl fear? Intellect [*Aand*]. Why? Because intellect constitutes the negation of her entire womanly existence. Masculine handsomeness, prepossessing nature, etc. are fine resources. One can also make a conquest with

them but never win a complete victory. Why? Because one is making war on a girl in her own sphere of power, and in her own sphere of power she is always the stronger. With these resources, one can make a girl blush, drop her eyes, but one can never generate the indescribable, captivating anxiety that makes her beauty interesting.

Non formosus erat, sed erat facundus Ulixes,
Et tamen aequoreas torsit amore Deas

[Ulysses was not comely, but he was eloquent,
Yet he fired two goddesses of the sea with love].[43]

Now, everyone ought to know his own powers. But something that has often shocked me is that even those who have talents act like such bunglers. A person actually ought to be able to see immediately in any young girl who has become a victim to another's love—or, more correctly, to her own—in what way she has been deceived. The practiced killer uses a particular stab, and the experienced policeman immediately recognizes the criminal when he sees the wound. But where does one meet such systematic seducers, such psychologists? For most people, to seduce a young girl means to seduce a young girl, period—and yet a whole language is concealed in this thought.

Being a woman—she hates me; being a talented woman—she fears me; being a good mind—she loves me. This conflict I have now established in her soul as the first step. My pride, my defiance, my cold ridicule, my callous irony tempt her—not as if she would

want to love me—no, there is certainly not the slightest trace of any such feelings in her, least of all for me. She wants to compete with me. What tempts her is the proud independence in relation to people, a freedom like that of the desert Arabs. My laughter and eccentricity neutralize every erotic expression. She is fairly free with me, and insofar as there is any reserve, it is more intellectual than womanly. She is so far from seeing a lover in me that our relationship is only that of two good minds. She takes me by the hand, clasps my hand, laughs, pays a certain attention to me in the purely Greek sense. Then when the ironist and the ridiculer have duped her long enough, I follow the instructions in an old verse: the knight spreads out his cape so red and bids the beautiful maiden sit on it.[44] I spread out my cape—not in order to sit on the greensward with her but to vanish into the air with her in a flight of thought. Or I do not take her along but set myself astride a thought, wave at her, throw her a kiss, and become invisible to her, only audible in the hum of winged words; I, unlike Jehovah,[45] become not more and more visible in the voice, but less and less, for the more I speak the higher I ascend. Then she wants to go along, away on this bold flight of thought. But it is just for a moment; the next instant I am cold and arid.

There are various kinds of womanly blushes. There is the dense brick-red blush. This is the one novelists always have in good supply when they have their heroines blush *über und über* [through and through]. There is the delicate blush; it is the spirit's sunrise-

red. In a young girl it is priceless. The fleeting blush that accompanies a happy thought is beautiful in a man, more beautiful in a youth, lovely in a woman. It is a flash of lightning, the summer lightning of the spirit. It is most beautiful in a youth, lovely in a girl, because it manifests itself in its virginal purity and thus also has the modesty of surprise. The older one grows, the more this kind of blush disappears.

Sometimes I read something aloud to Cordelia—for the most part very trivial things. As usual, Edward has to be an unwitting instrument—that is, I have pointed out to him that lending a girl books is a very good way to establish rapport with her. Indeed, he has gained in various ways thereby, for she is much obliged to him for it. I am the one who gains the most, for I determine the choice of books and continually stay in the background. Here I have a wide playground for making my observations. I can give Edward whichever books I want to; literature is not his line; I can try what I wish, to any extreme whatsoever. Now when I visit her in the evening, I pick up the book as if by chance, leaf through it a little, read half aloud, commend Edward for his attentiveness. Last evening, by means of a test, I wanted to assure myself of the resilience of her soul. I was puzzled about whether I should have Edward lend her Schiller's *Gedichte* so that I could accidentally come across Thekla's song[46] to recite, or Bürger's *Gedichte*.[47] I selected the latter, especially because his "Lenore" is somewhat highflown, however beautiful it is otherwise. I opened it to "Lenore" and read this poem

aloud with all the pathos I could muster. Cordelia was moved; she sewed hurriedly, as if it were she Vilhelm came to fetch. I stopped; the aunt had listened without very much sympathy. She has no fear of any Vilhelms living or dead and, moreover, does not know German well, but she found herself quite in her element when I showed her the beautifully bound copy and started a conversation about bookbinding work. My intention was to destroy in Cordelia the impression of pathos the very moment it was awakened. She became a little anxious, but it was apparent to me that this anxiety did not have a tempting effect on her but made her *unheimlich* [uncomfortable].

Today my eyes have rested upon her for the first time. It is said that sleep can make the eyelids so heavy that they close by themselves; perhaps this glance would be capable of something similar. Her eyes close, and yet dark forces stir within her. She does not see that I am looking at her; she feels it, feels it through her entire body. Her eyes close, and it is night, but within her it is bright day.

Edward must go. He is at the last extremity; I can expect that at any moment he will go and make a declaration of love to her. No one knows that better than I, his confidant, who with diligence keep him overwrought so that he can influence Cordelia all the more. But to let him confess his love is too risky. I know very well that he will receive a "No," but that will not be the end of the story. He will certainly take it very hard. This perhaps will move and agitate Cordelia. Although in that case I need not fear the worst, that she would change her mind, nevertheless her

soul's pride will possibly suffer from this unalloyed compassion. If that happens, my whole intention with Edward will be a complete failure.

My relationship with Cordelia is beginning to take a dramatic course. Something has to happen; whatever it is, I can no longer have a relationship simply as an observer without letting the moment slip by. She must be surprised; it is necessary, but if I wish to surprise her, I must be at my post. That which ordinarily would surprise perhaps would not affect her in that way. She must be really surprised in such a way that at the very beginning that which is close to being the cause of her surprise is something that happens quite ordinarily. It must gradually become manifest that nevertheless something surprising was implicit in it. This is always the law for the interesting, and this in turn is the law for all my moves with regard to Cordelia. If one just knows how to surprise, one always wins the game. The energy of the person involved is temporarily suspended; one makes it impossible for her to act, and this happens whether extraordinary or ordinary means are used. I still remember with a certain self-satisfaction a rash venture with a woman of a rather aristocratic family. For some time, I had been covertly prowling around her looking for an interesting contact, but to no avail, and then one noon I met her on the street. I was certain that she did not recognize me or know that I lived here in the city. She was walking alone. I slipped by her and thus managed to meet her face-to-face. I stepped aside for her; she stayed on the flagstones.

Just at that moment, I cast a sorrowful look at her; I believe I almost had tears in my eyes. I took off my hat. She stopped. With a shaking voice and a dreamy look, I said: Do not be angry, gracious lady; you have such a striking resemblance to a creature whom I love with all my soul, but who lives far away from me, that you will forgive my strange conduct. She believed I was a dreamer, and a young girl may very well like a little dreaminess, especially when she also feels her superiority and dares to smile at one. Sure enough, she smiled, which was indescribably becoming to her. With aristocratic condescension, she greeted me and smiled. She continued her walk; I accompanied her for a few steps. I met her a few days later; I ventured to greet her. She laughed at me. —Patience is still a precious virtue, and he who laughs last laughs best.

Various means of surprising Cordelia are conceivable. I could try to raise an erotic storm capable of tearing up trees by the roots. By means of it, I could see if it is possible to lift her off the ground, to lift her out of the historical context, and through secret meetings to generate her passion in this unsettled state. It is not inconceivable that it could be done. A girl with her passion can be made to do anything one pleases. But it would be esthetically incorrect. I do not relish romantic giddiness, and this state is to be commended only when one is dealing with girls who are able to acquire a poetic afterglow in no other way. Moreover, one easily loses out on the real enjoyment, for too much turmoil is also damaging. On her, it would

completely fail in its effect. In a couple of drafts, I would have imbibed what I could have had the use of for a long time—indeed, worse yet, what I with circumspection could have enjoyed more fully and richly. Cordelia is not to be enjoyed in a state of elation. If I were to behave in that manner, she perhaps would be taken by surprise at first, but she would soon be sated, precisely because this surprise would lie too close to her audacious soul.

A plain and simple engagement is the best of all means, the most suitable for the purpose. She will perhaps believe her own ears even less when she hears me make a prosaic declaration of love, also ask for her hand, even less than if she listened to my ardent eloquence, imbibed my poisonous intoxicating potion, heard her heart pound at the thought of an elopement.

The banefulness of an engagement is always the ethical in it. The ethical is just as boring in scholarship as in life. What a difference! Under the esthetic sky, everything is buoyant, beautiful, transient; when ethics arrives on the scene, everything becomes harsh, angular, infinitely *langweiligt* [boring].[48] But in the strictest sense an engagement does not have ethical reality [*Realitet*] such as a marriage has; it has validity only *ex consensu gentium* [by universal consensus]. This ambiguity can be very advantageous for me. It has just enough of the ethical in it so that in due time Cordelia will gain the impression that she is transgressing the boundaries of the universal; moreover, the ethical in it is not so earnest that I have to fear a more serious jolt.

I have always had a certain respect for the ethical. I have never made a promise of marriage to any girl, not even nonchalantly; insofar as it might seem that I am doing it here, it is merely a simulated move. I shall very likely manage things in such a way that it is she herself who breaks the engagement. My chivalrous pride has contempt for making promises. I have contempt when a judge entices a culprit into a confession with the promise of freedom. A judge like that renounces his power and his talent. In my practice, there is even the additional circumstance that I desire nothing that in the strictest sense is not freedom's gift. Let vulgar seducers use such means. What do they gain anyway? He who does not know how to encircle a girl so that she loses sight of everything he does not want her to see, he who does not know how to poetize himself into a girl so that it is from her that everything proceeds as he wants it—he is and remains a bungler. I shall not envy him his enjoyment. Such a person is and remains a bungler, a seducer, which I can by no means be called. I am an esthete, an eroticist, who has grasped the nature and the point of love, who believes in love and knows it from the ground up, and I reserve for myself only the private opinion that no love affair should last more than a half year at most and that any relationship is over as soon as one has enjoyed the ultimate. All this I know; I also know that the highest enjoyment imaginable is to be loved, loved more than anything else in the world. To poetize oneself into a girl is an art; to poetize oneself out of her is a masterstroke. But the latter depends essentially on the former.

There was the possibility of another way. I could do everything to get her engaged to Edward. I would then become a family friend. Edward would trust me unconditionally, for I would be the one to whom he would more or less owe his good fortune. I would thereby acquire a better camouflage. But it will not do. She cannot become engaged to Edward without her being diminished in one way or another. Add to that the fact that my relationship with her would become more engagingly provocative than interesting. The infinite prosiness of an engagement is precisely the sounding board for the interesting.

Everything is becoming more momentous at the Wahl house. One clearly perceives that underneath the everyday routines there stirs a secret life that soon must proclaim itself in a corresponding disclosure. The Wahl household is making preparations for an engagement. A merely superficial observer might think that the couple would be the aunt and I. What could not such a marriage do for the propagation of agronomical knowledge in the next generation! So then I would be Cordelia's uncle. I am a friend of freedom of thought, and no thought is so absurd that I do not have the courage to stick to it. Cordelia is apprehensive of a declaration of love from Edward; Edward is hoping that such a declaration will decide everything. Indeed, he can be sure of that. But to spare him the unpleasant consequences of such a step, I shall steal a march on him. I hope to dismiss him soon; he is actually standing in my way. I really felt that today. Does he not look so dreamy and

drunk with love that one may very well fear that he will suddenly rise up like a sleepwalker and in front of the whole assembly confess his love from such an objective point of view that he will not even approach Cordelia. I looked daggers at him today. Just as an elephant picks up something with its trunk, I picked him up with my eyes, the whole of him, and tossed him over backward. Although he remained seated, I believe that he nevertheless had a corresponding sensation in his entire body.

Cordelia is not as self-confident in relation to me as she was before. She has always approached me with womanly assurance; now she is a little unsteady. But it does not mean very much, and it would not be difficult for me to put everything on the old footing. But that I shall not do. Just one more exploration and then the engagement. There can be no difficulties in this. In her surprise, Cordelia will say "Yes," the aunt a fervent "Amen." She will be beside herself with joy to have such an agronomist for a son-in-law. Son-in-law! How thick as thieves we all become when we venture into this domain! I shall not actually become her son-in-law, but only her nephew or, more correctly, *volente deo* [God willing], none of these.

The twenty-third

Today I harvested the fruit of a rumor I had started going around—that I was in love with a young girl. With Edward's help, it also reached Cordelia's ears. She is curious; she watches me, but she does not dare to inquire. And yet it is not unimportant for her to

find out definitely, partly because it seems unbelievable to her, and partly because she almost sees in it a precedent for herself, because if such a cold scoffer as I can fall in love, then presumably she can also, without needing to be ashamed. Today I broached the subject. To tell a story in such a way that the point is not lost is, I believe, right up my alley—also, in such a way that it is not divulged prematurely. It is my delight to keep the listeners to my story *in suspenso* by means of minor actions of an episodic nature to ascertain how they want it to turn out, and then in the course of the telling to fool them. My art is to use amphibolies so that the listeners understand one thing from what is said and then suddenly perceive that the words can be interpreted another way. If one really wants to have a chance to make investigations of a particular kind, one must always deliver a speech. In a conversation, the person in question can be more evasive, can, through questions and answers, better conceal the impression the words are making.

With ceremonial earnestness, I began my speech to the aunt. "Shall I attribute this to the kindness of my friends or to the malice of my enemies, and who does not have too many of both the one and the other?" Here the aunt made a comment that I did everything in my power to spin out in order to keep Cordelia, who was listening, in suspense, a suspense she could not dispel since it was the aunt with whom I was talking, and my mood was very ceremonial. I continued: "Or shall I attribute it to chance, the *generatio aequivoca* [spontaneous generation]" (Cordelia obviously did not understand this phrase; it merely con-

fused her, all the more since I gave it a false emphasis, saying it with a sly look as if the point lay there) of a rumor "that I who am accustomed to live hidden from the world have become the subject of discussion inasmuch as they claim I am engaged." Cordelia obviously still lacked my interpretation. I continued, "Shall I attribute it to my friends, since it is always regarded as a great good fortune to have fallen in love" (she was startled); "to my enemies, since it must always be regarded as extremely ludicrous if this good fortune fell to my lot" (a countermove); "or to chance, since there is no foundation to it at all; or to the *generatio aequivoca* of the rumor, since the whole thing must have originated in an empty mind's thoughtless association with itself." With feminine curiosity, the aunt hastened to find out the identity of this woman to whom rumor had been pleased to engage me. I parried every question along that line. The whole story made an impression on Cordelia; I almost believe that Edward's stock went up a few points.

The crucial moment is approaching. I could communicate with the aunt in writing and ask for Cordelia's hand. After all, that is the usual procedure in affairs of the heart, as if it were more natural for the heart to write than to speak. The very philistinism of such a move just might make me decide to do it. If I choose it, I lose the real surprise, and that I cannot relinquish. —If I had a friend, he would perhaps say to me: Have you pondered well this very serious step you are taking, a step that is crucial to all the rest of

your life and to another creature's happiness. This is the advantage of having a friend. I have no friend; whether this is an advantage I shall leave undecided, but I regard being free from his advice as an absolute advantage. As for the rest, I have certainly thought through the whole matter in the strictest sense of the word.

On my side there is nothing to hinder the engagement now. So I go a'courting; who would think it to look at me? Soon my insignificant person will be seen from a higher point of view. I shall cease to be a person and become—a match—yes, a good match, the aunt will say. The one I almost feel most sorry for is the aunt, for she loves me with such a pure and upright agronomical love; she almost worships me as her ideal.

Now, I have made many declarations of love in my life, and yet here all my experience is of no help at all, for this declaration must be made in an altogether distinctive way. Primarily what I must drum into myself is that the whole thing is merely a simulated move. I have practiced various steps to see what the best approach might be. To make the moment erotic would be dubious, since this might easily anticipate what should come later and sequentially unfold. To make it very earnest is dangerous—for a young girl, such a moment is of such great significance that her whole soul can be concentrated in it, just as a dying person is concentrated in his last wish. To make it hearty, low comedy would not be in harmony with the mask I have used up to now or with the new one

I intend to put on and wear. To make it witty and ironic is too great a risk. If my principal concern, as it commonly is for most people in such a situation, were to lure forth the little "Yes," then it would be as easy as falling off a log. To be sure, this is of importance to me, but not of absolute importance, for even though I reserved this girl for myself, even though I have devoted considerable attention, indeed, all my interest, to her, there nevertheless are conditions under which I would not accept her "Yes." I do not care at all to possess the girl in the external sense but wish to enjoy her artistically. Therefore the beginning must be as artistic as possible. The beginning must be as nebulous as possible; it must be an omnipossibility. If she promptly sees a deceiver in me, then she misunderstands me, for I am no deceiver in the ordinary sense; if she sees a faithful lover in me, then she also misunderstands me. It is a matter of having her soul be determined as little as possible by this episode. At such a moment, a girl's soul is as prophetic as a dying person's.[49] This must be prevented. My dear Cordelia! I am defrauding you of something beautiful, but it cannot be otherwise, and I shall give you all the compensation I can. The whole episode must be kept as insignificant as possible, so that when she has given her consent she will be unable to throw any light whatever on what may be concealed in this situation. It is precisely this infinite possibility that is the interesting. If she is able to predict anything, then I have gone about it the wrong way and the whole relationship loses significance. That she would give her consent because she loves me is unthinkable, for she

does not love me at all. The best thing to do is to transform the engagement from an act to an event, from something she does to something that happens to her, something about which she is compelled to say: God alone knows how it really came about.

The thirty-first

Today I wrote a love letter for a third party. For me that is always a great pleasure. In the first place, it is always very interesting to place myself so vividly into the situation, and yet in complete comfort. I fill my pipe and hear about the relationship; the letters from the other party are submitted. How a young girl writes is always a very important subject to me! He sits there head over heels in love like a rat in cheese; he reads her letters aloud, interrupted by my laconic comments: She writes very well; she has feeling, taste, prudence; she has certainly been in love before etc. In the second place, what I am doing is a good deed. I am helping a couple of young people to come together; now I am settling the account. For every happy couple, I select a victim for myself; I make two people happy, at most only one unhappy. I am honest and reliable, have never deceived anyone who has confided in me. It goes without saying that there is always a little joking, but that, after all, is a legitimate perquisite. And why do I enjoy this confidence? Because I know Latin and do my homework, and because I always keep my little stories to myself. And do I not deserve this confidence? After all, I never abuse it.

August 2

The moment had arrived. I caught a glimpse of the aunt on the street and thus knew that she was not at home. Edward was at the customhouse. In all likelihood, Cordelia was home alone. And so she was. She was sitting at the sewing table busy with some handiwork. Rarely did I visit the family in the morning; therefore, she was a little flustered at seeing me. The situation became almost too emotional. She was not to blame for that, for she regained her composure rather easily, but I myself was at fault, for despite my armor plating, she made an unusually powerful impression upon me. How lovely she was in her plain, blue-striped calico housedress, with a freshly picked rose on her bosom. A freshly picked rose—no, the girl herself was like a freshly picked blossom, so fresh was she, so recently arrived! Indeed, who knows where a young girl spends the night—in the land of illusions, I believe—but every morning she returns, and this explains her youthful freshness. She looked so young and yet so fully developed, as if nature, like a tender and luxuriant mother, had this very moment released her from her hand. To me it was as if I were a witness to this farewell scene; I saw how that fond mother embraced her once again in farewell, and I heard her say, "Go out into the world now, my child; I have done everything for you. Take now this kiss as a seal upon your lips. It is a seal that guards the sanctuary; it cannot be broken by anyone if you yourself do not want it to be, but when the right one comes you will know him." And she pressed a kiss upon her lips, a kiss, unlike a human kiss, which subtracts

something, but rather a divine kiss, which gives everything, which gives the girl the power of the kiss. Wonderful nature, how profound and enigmatic you are! To man you give words, and to the girl the eloquence of the kiss! This kiss was upon her lips, and the farewell upon her brow, and the joyous greeting in her eyes—therefore she simultaneously looked so much at home, for she was the child of the house, and so much the stranger, for she did not know the world but only the fond mother who invisibly watched over her. She was truly lovely, young as a child, and yet adorned with the noble-minded virginal dignity that inspires respect.

Soon, however, I was dispassionate again and solemnly obtuse, as is befitting when one is about to cause something full of meaning to happen in such a way as to make it mean nothing. After a few general remarks, I drew a bit closer to her and came out with my petition. A person who talks like a book is extremely boring to listen to, but sometimes it is rather expedient to talk that way. That is, a book has the remarkable characteristic that it can be interpreted as one pleases. If a person talks like a book, his talking also has the same characteristic. I kept very strictly to the usual formulas. She was surprised, as I had expected; that is undeniable. It is difficult for me to give an account of how she looked. Her expression was multifarious—indeed, just about like the still unpublished but announced commentary on my book, a commentary that contains the possibility of any and every interpretation. One word, and she would have laughed at me; one word, she would have been moved;

one word, she would have escaped me—but no word passed my lips; I remained solemnly obtuse and kept precisely to the ritual. —"She had known me for such a short time." Good lord, such difficulties are encountered only on the narrow path of an engagement, not on the flowery path of love.

Very strange. When I was deliberating on the matter during the preceding days, I was resolute enough about it and sure that in her surprise she would say "Yes." There one sees how much all the preparations help; the matter did not turn out that way, for she said neither "Yes" nor "No" but referred me to her aunt. I should have foreseen that. But luck was actually with me, for this result was even better.

The aunt gives her consent; of that I have never entertained the remotest doubt. Cordelia follows her advice. As for my engagement, I shall not boast that it is poetic, for in every way it is utterly philistine and bourgeois. The girl does not know whether she should say "Yes" or "No"; the aunt says "Yes," the girl also says "Yes," I take the girl, she takes me—and now the story begins.

The third

So now I am engaged; so is Cordelia, and that is just about all she knows concerning the whole affair. If she had a girl friend to whom she would talk honestly, she would very likely say, "What it all means, I really do not understand. There is something about him that draws me to him, but I cannot make out what it is. He has a strange power over me, but love

him, that I do not and perhaps never shall, but I shall surely be able to endure living with him and thus also be quite happy with him, for he will probably not demand too much if one only sticks it out with him." My dear Cordelia! Perhaps he will require something more, and in return less endurance. —Of all ludicrous things an engagement is still the most ludicrous. There is at least meaning in a marriage, even if this meaning does not suit me. An engagement is a purely human invention and is no credit whatsoever to its inventor. It is neither one thing nor the other and has as much to do with love as the ribbon the beadle wears down his back has to do with a professor's academic gown. Now I am a member of this respectable society. It is not without significance, for as Trop says: Not until you become an artist yourself do you earn the right to judge other artists.[50] And is not an engaged man also a Dyrehaug artist?[51]

Edward is beside himself with indignation. He is letting his beard grow, has hung up his black suit—which tells much. He wants to speak with Cordelia, wants to describe for her all my cunning. It will be a shocking scene: Edward unshaven, disheveled, and speaking loudly with Cordelia. If he will only not dislodge me with his long beard. I try futilely to bring him to reason; I explain that it is the aunt who arranged the match, that Cordelia perhaps still entertains feelings for him, that I shall be willing to bow out if he can win her. For a moment, he hesitates about whether he should have his beard trimmed a new way, buy a new black suit—the next moment, he

heaps abuse upon me. I do everything to keep up appearances with him. However angry he is with me, I am sure he will take no step without consulting me; he does not forget what benefit he has had from me as his mentor. And why should I tear his last hope from him, why break with him? He is a good man; who knows what may happen in time.

What I have to do now is, on the one hand, to organize everything so that the engagement is broken in such a way that I thereby secure a more beautiful and significant relationship to Cordelia; on the other hand, I must utilize the time to the best of my ability to delight in the loveliness, all the lovableness, with which nature has so abundantly equipped her, delight in it, but nevertheless with the restraint and circumspection that forestall the anticipation of anything. When I have brought her to the point where she has learned what it is to love and what it is to love me, then the engagement will break like a defective mold and she will belong to me. Others become engaged when they have arrived at this point and have the good prospect of a boring marriage for all eternity. That is their business.

Everything is still *in statu quo*, but scarcely any engaged person can be happier than I; no miser who has found a gold coin is happier than I. I am intoxicated with the thought that she is in my power. Pure, innocent womanliness, as transparent as the sea, and yet just as deep, with no idea of love [*Kjærlighed*]! But now she is going to learn what a powerful force erotic love [*Elskov*] is. Just like a king's daughter who

has been elevated from the dust to the throne of her forefathers, so she will be enthroned in the kingdom to which she belongs. And this will take place through me; and in learning to love, she will learn to love me; as she develops the rule, the paradigm will sequentially unfold, and this I am. As she in love becomes alive to her entire meaning, she will apply this to loving me, and when she suspects that she has learned it from me, she will love me two-fold. The thought of my joy overwhelms me to such a degree that I am almost losing my senses.

Her soul is not diffused or slackened by the vague emotions of erotic love, something that keeps many young girls from ever learning to love, that is, definitely, energetically, totally. In their minds they have a vague, foggy image that is supposed to be an ideal by which the actual object is to be tested. From such incompleteness emerges a something whereby one may help oneself properly through the world. —As erotic love now awakens in her soul, I see into it, I learn to know it by listening to all the voices of erotic love in her. I make sure of the shape it has taken in her and form myself in likeness to it; and just as I already am spontaneously included in the story that love is running through in her heart, so I come again to her from the outside as deceptively as possible. After all, a girl loves only once.

Now, then, I am in legitimate possession of Cordelia and have the aunt's consent and blessing, the congratulations of friends and relatives; surely it will last. So now the troubles of war are over and the

blessings of peace begin. What foolishness! As if the aunt's blessing and the friends' congratulations were able to give me possession of Cordelia in the more profound sense; as if love made such a distinction between times of war and times of peace and did not instead—as long as it exists—announce itself in conflict, even though the weapons are different. The difference is actually in whether the conflict is *cominus* [close at hand] or *eminus* [at a distance]. The more the conflict in a love relationship has been *eminus*, the more distressing it is, for the hand-to-hand combat becomes all the more trifling. Hand-to-hand combat involves a handshake, a touching with the foot—something that Ovid,[52] as is known, recommends just as much as he most jealously rants against it, to say nothing of a kiss, an embrace. The person who fights *eminus* usually has only the eyes on which to depend, and yet, if he is an artist, he knows how to use this weapon with such virtuosity that he achieves almost the same result. He can let his eyes rest on a girl with a desultory tenderness that has the same effect as if he casually touched her; he can grasp her just as firmly with his eyes as if he held her locked in his arms. But it is always a mistake or a disaster if one fights *eminus* too long, for such fighting is always only a symbol, not the enjoyment. Not until one fights *cominus* does everything acquire its true meaning. If there is no combat in love, then it has ceased. I have almost never fought *eminus*, and this is why I am now not at the end but at the beginning; I am taking out my weapons. I am in possession of her, that is true, that is, in the legal and bourgeois sense,

but that means nothing at all to me—I have much purer concepts. She is engaged to me, that is true, but if from that I were to draw the conclusion that she loves me, it would be an illusion, for she does not love at all. I am in legitimate possession of her, and yet I am not in possession of her, just as I can very well be in possession of a girl without being in legitimate possession of her.

Auf heimlich erröthender Wange
Leuchtet des Herzens Glühen

[On a secretly blushing cheek
Shines the glow of the heart].[53]

She is sitting on the sofa by the tea table, I on a chair at her side. This position has a confidentiality and yet a dignity that distances. A great deal depends upon the position, that is, for one who has an eye for it. Love has many positions—this is the first. How royally nature has equipped this girl: her clean soft figure, her profoundly feminine innocence, her clear eyes—all this intoxicates me. —I have greeted her. She approached me, happy as usual, yet a little embarrassed, a little uncertain—after all, the engagement must make our relationship somewhat different, but how, she does not know; she took my hand, but not with the usual smile. I responded to the greeting with a slight, almost unnoticeable pressure of the hand; I was gentle and friendly, yet without being erotic. —She is sitting on the sofa by the tea table, I on a chair at her side. A transfiguring ceremoniousness sweeps over the scene, a soft morning light. She

is silent; nothing breaks in upon the stillness. My eyes glide softly over her, not desiringly—that would truly be brazen. A delicate fleeting blush, like a cloud over the meadow, fades away, heightening and fading. What does this blush signify? Is it love, is it longing, hope, fear, for is not red the color of the heart? By no means. She wonders, she really wonders—not at me, for that would be too little to offer her; she is amazed—not at herself but within herself. She is being transformed within herself. This moment craves stillness; therefore no reflection is to disturb it, no noise of passion is to disrupt it. It is as if I were not present, and yet it is my very presence that is the condition for this contemplative wonder of hers. My being is in harmony with hers. In a state such as this, a girl is adored and worshiped, just as some deities are, by silence.

It is fortunate that I have my uncle's house. If I wanted to impart to a young man a distaste for tobacco, I would take him into some smoking room or other in Regensen;[54] if I want to impart to a young girl a distaste for being engaged, I need only to introduce her here. Just as no one but tailors frequents the tailors' guildhall, so here only engaged couples come. It is an appalling company in which to become involved, and I cannot blame Cordelia for becoming impatient. When we are gathered *en masse*, I think we put ten couples on the field, besides the annexed battalions that come to the capital for the great festivals. Then we engaged ones really enjoy the delights of being engaged. I report with Cordelia at the assembly ground in order to give her a distaste for these amo-

rous tangibilities, these bunglings of lovesick workmen. Incessantly, all night through, one hears a sound as if someone were going around with a fly swatter—it is the lovers' kissing. In this house, one has an amiable absence of embarrassment; one does not even seek the nooks and corners—no, people sit around a large round table. I, too, make a move to treat Cordelia in the same way. To that end, I really have to force myself. It would really be shocking if I allowed myself to insult her deep womanliness in this way. I would reproach myself even more for this than when I deceive her. On the whole, I can guarantee perfect esthetic treatment to any girl who entrusts herself to me—it only ends with her being deceived, but this, too, is part of my esthetics, for either the girl deceives the man or the man deceives the girl. It would certainly be interesting if some literary drudge could be found to count up in fairy tales, legends, folk ballads, and myths whether a girl is more often faithless or a man.

Repent of the time Cordelia is costing me, I do not, even though she is costing me a great deal. Each meeting often requires long preparations. I am experiencing with her the emergence of her love. I myself am almost invisibly present when I am sitting visible at her side. My relationship to her is like a dance that is supposed to be danced by two people but is danced by only one. That is, I am the other dancer, but invisible. She moves as in a dream, and yet she is dancing with another, and I am that other one who, insofar as I am visibly present, is invisible, and insofar as I am invisible, is visible. The movements require another.

She bows to him; she stretches out her hand to him. She recedes; she approaches again. I take her hand; I complete her thought, which nevertheless is completed within itself. She moves to the melody in her own soul; I am merely the occasion for her moving. I am not erotic; that would only arouse her; I am flexible, supple, impersonal, almost like a mood.

What do engaged people ordinarily talk about? As far as I know, they are very busy mutually weaving each other into the boring context of the respective families. No wonder the erotic vanishes. If a person does not know how to make erotic love the absolute, in comparison with which all other events vanish, then he should never let himself become involved in loving, even if he marries ten times. Whether I have an aunt named Marianne, an uncle named Christopher, a father who is a major, etc. etc., all such public information is irrelevant to the mysteries of love. Yes, even one's own past life is nothing. Ordinarily a young girl does not have much to tell in this regard; if she does, it may very well be worth the trouble to listen to her—but, as a rule, not to love her. I for my part am not looking for stories—I certainly have enough of them; I am seeking immediacy. The eternal in erotic love is that in its moment individuals first come into existence for each other.

A little confidence must be awakened in her, or, more correctly, a doubt must be removed. I do not exactly belong to the aggregate of lovers who out of respect love each other, out of respect marry each other, out of respect have children together, but nev-

ertheless I am well aware that erotic love, especially as long as passion is not set in motion, demands of the one who is its object that he not esthetically offend against morality. In this regard, erotic love has its own dialectic. For example, while my relationship with Edward is far more censurable from the moral standpoint than my conduct toward the aunt, it will be much easier to justify the former to Cordelia than the latter. It is true that she has not said anything about it, but nevertheless I found it best to explain the necessity of my acting in that way. The cautiousness I have used flatters her pride; the secretiveness with which I handled everything captures her attention. Surely it might seem that here I have already betrayed too much erotic polish, so that when I am obliged later to insinuate that I have never been in love before I shall be contradicting myself, but that makes no difference. I am not afraid of contradicting myself if only she does not detect it and I achieve what I wish. Let it be the ambition of learned doctoral candidates to avoid every contradiction; a young girl's life is too abundant to have no contradictions and consequently makes contradictions inevitable.

She is proud and also has no real conception of the erotic. Although now she probably submits to me intellectually to some degree, it is conceivable that when the erotic begins to assert itself she might take it into her head to turn her pride against me. From all that I can observe, she is perplexed about woman's real significance. Therefore it was easy to arouse her pride against Edward. But this pride was completely eccentric, because she had no conception of erotic

love. If she acquires it, then she will acquire her true pride, but a remnant of that eccentric pride might easily supervene. It is then conceivable that she would turn against me. Although she will not repent of having consented to the engagement, she will nevertheless readily perceive that I obtained it at a rather good price; she will see that the beginning was not made correctly from her side. If this dawns on her, she will dare to stand up to me. Good! Then I shall be convinced of how profoundly she is stirred.

Sure enough. Even from far down the street, I see this lovely little curly head leaning out of the window as far as possible. It is the third day I have noticed it. —A young girl certainly does not stand at the window for nothing; presumably she has her good reasons. —But I beg you for heaven's sake not to lean so far out of the window; I wager that you are standing on the rung of a chair—I can tell from your posture. Think how terrible it would be if you fell down, not on my head, because I am keeping out of this affair until later, but on his, his, because there certainly must be a he. —No! What do I see! Way off there, my friend Hansen, the licentiate, is coming down the middle of the street. There is something unusual about his behavior. It is a rather uncustomary conveyance; if I judge rightly, it is on the wings of longing that he is coming. Could it be that he is a regular visitor to the house and I do not know it? —My pretty little miss, you disappear; I suppose you have gone to open the door to receive him. —You can just as well come back; he is not coming into the house at

all. —How can it be that you know better? Well, I can assure you—he said it himself. If the carriage that passed had not made so much noise, you yourself could have heard it. I said, just *en passant*: Are you going in here? To which he answered with a clear word: No. —So you may as well say good-bye, for the licentiate and I are going out for a walk. He is embarrassed, and embarrassed people generally are talkative. I am going to talk with him about the pastoral appointment he is seeking. —Good-bye, my pretty miss, we are on our way to the customhouse. When we arrive there, I shall say to him: What a damned nuisance—you have taken me out of my way. I am supposed to go to Vestergade.

Look, here we are again. —What constancy! She is still standing at the window. A girl like that is sure to make a man happy. —And why am I doing all this, you ask. Because I am a vile fellow who has his fun by teasing others? By no means. I am doing it out of consideration for you, my charming girl. In the first place, you have been waiting for this licentiate, longing for him, and thus he is doubly handsome when he comes. In the second place, when he comes through the door now, he will say, "We damned near let the cat out of the bag when that confounded fellow was at the door as I was about to visit you. But I was smart; I inveigled him into a long chat about the appointment I am seeking; I walked him here and there and finally way out to the customhouse. I assure you that he did not notice a thing." And what then? So you are fonder of your licentiate than ever, for you have always thought that he had an excellent way of

thinking, but that he was clever—well, now you see it for yourself. And you have me to thank for that. —But something occurs to me. Their engagement must not have been announced yet—otherwise I would know about it. The girl is lovely and delightful to look at, but she is young. Perhaps her discernment is not mature yet. Was it not conceivable that she would go and rashly take a most serious step? That must be prevented; I must speak with her. I owe it to her, for she certainly is a very charming girl. I owe it to the licentiate, for he is my friend; as far as that goes, I owe it to her because she is my friend's intended. I owe it to the family, for certainly it is a very respectable family. I owe it to the whole human race, for it is a good deed. The whole human race! What a tremendous thought, what uplifting sport—to act in the name of the whole human race, to be in possession of a general power of attorney. —But now to Cordelia. I can always make use of mood, and the girl's beautiful longing has really stirred me.

So now begins the first war with Cordelia, in which I retreat and thereby teach her to be victorious as she pursues me. I continually fall back, and in this backward movement I teach her to know through me all the powers of erotic love, its turbulent thoughts, its passion, what longing is, and hope, and impatient expectancy. As I perform this set of steps before her, all this will develop correspondingly in her. It is a triumphal procession in which I am leading her, and I myself am just as much the one who dithyrambically sings praises to her victory as I am the one who

shows the way. She will gain courage to believe in erotic love, to believe it is an eternal force, when she sees its dominion over me, sees my movements. She will believe me, partly because I rely on my artistry, and partly because at the bottom of what I am doing there is truth. If that were not the case, she would not believe me. With my every move, she becomes stronger and stronger; love is awakening in her soul; she is being enthroned in her meaning as a woman.

Until now I have not proposed [*friet*] to her, as it is called in the bourgeois sense; now I shall do it. I shall make her free [*fri*]; only in that way shall I love her. That she owes this to me, she must never suspect, for then she will lose her confidence in herself. Then when she feels free, so free that she is almost tempted to want to break with me, the second struggle will begin. Now she has power and passion, and the struggle has significance for me—let the momentary consequences be what they may. Suppose that in her pride she becomes giddy, suppose that she does break with me—all right! —she has her freedom, but she will still belong to me. That the engagement should bind her is silly—I want to possess her only in her freedom. Let her leave me—the second struggle is nevertheless beginning, and in this second struggle I shall be victorious as surely as it was an illusion that she was victorious in the first one. The greater the abundance of strength she has, the more interesting for me. The first war is a war of liberation; it is a game. The second is a war of conquest; it is a life-and-death struggle.

Do I love Cordelia? Yes! Sincerely? Yes! Faithfully? Yes—in the esthetic sense, and surely this should mean something. What good would it have been if this girl had fallen into the hands of a clumsy oaf of a faithful husband? What would have become of her? Nothing. They say that it takes a bit more than honesty to make one's way through the world. I would say that it takes a bit more than honesty to love such a girl. That more I do have—it is deceitfulness. And yet I do love her faithfully. Strictly and abstinently, I keep watch on myself so that everything in her, the divinely rich nature in her may come to full development. I am one of the few who can do this, and she is one of the few qualified for it; so are we not suited to each other?

Is it sinful of me not to look at the pastor but instead fasten my eyes on the beautiful embroidered handkerchief you are holding in your hand? Is it sinful of you to hold it in just that way. —There is a name in the corner. Your name is Charlotte Hahn? It is so seductive to come to know a woman's name in such an accidental way. It is as if there were an obliging spirit who secretly introduced me to you. Or perhaps it is not accidental that the handkerchief is folded in such a way that I am able to see the name? —You are moved, you wipe a tear from your eye. —The handkerchief is hanging loosely once again. —It seems strange to you that I am looking at you and not at the pastor. You look at the handkerchief and notice that it has betrayed your name. It is indeed a

most innocent thing; one can easily find out a girl's name. —Why must the handkerchief suffer? Why must it be crumpled up? Why become angry with it? Why become angry with me? What is that the pastor is saying: "Let no one lead a person into temptation. Even the person who does it unknowingly bears a responsibility; he, too, has a debt to the other that he can pay off only by increased kindness." —Now he says Amen. Outside the door of the church, you will probably let the handkerchief fly loosely in the wind. —Or have you become afraid of me? What have I done? —Have I done more than you can forgive, than what you dare to remember—in order to forgive?

A double-movement is necessary in relation to Cordelia. If I just keep on retreating before her superior force, it would be very possible that the erotic in her would become too dissolute and lax for the deeper womanliness to be able to hypostatize itself. Then, when the second struggle begins, she would be unable to offer resistance. To be sure, she sleeps her way to victory, but she is supposed to do that; on the other hand she must continually be awakened. If for one moment she thinks her victory would in turn be wrested from her, she must learn to will to hold onto it tightly. Her womanliness will be matured in this conflict. I could use either conversation to inflame her or letters to cool her off, or vice versa. The latter is preferable in every way. I then enjoy her most extreme moments. When she has received a letter, when its sweet poison has entered her blood, then a word is sufficient to make her love burst forth. At the next

moment, irony and hoarfrost make her doubtful, but not so much that she nevertheless does not continually feel her victory, feel it augmented by the receipt of the next letter. Nor can irony be used very well in a letter without running the risk that she would not understand it. Only traces of ardor can be used in a conversation. My personal presence will prevent ecstasy. If I am present only in a letter, then she can easily cope with me; to some extent, she mistakes me for a more universal creature who dwells in her love. Then, too, in a letter one can more readily have free rein; in a letter I can throw myself at her feet in superb fashion etc.—something that would easily seem like nonsense if I did it in person, and the illusion would be lost. The contradiction in these movements will evoke and develop, strengthen and consolidate, the erotic love in her—in one word: tempt it.

These letters, however, must not take on a strongly erotic color too soon. In the beginning, it is best that they bear a more universal stamp, contain a single clue, remove a single doubt. Occasionally they may suggest the advantage an engagement has, insofar as people can be deflected by mystifications. Whatever drawbacks it has otherwise, she will not lack opportunities to become aware of them. In my uncle's house I have a caricature that I can always place alongside. Without my help, she cannot produce the erotic inwardness. If I deny her this and let this burlesque image plague her, then she will surely become bored with being engaged, yet without really being aware that it is I who have made her bored with it.

A little epistle today describing the state of my soul

will give her a clue to her own inner state. It is the correct method, and method I do have. I have you to thank for that, you dear girls I have loved in the past. I owe it to you that my soul is so in tune that I can be what I wish for Cordelia. I recall you with thanks; the honor belongs to you. I shall always admit that a young girl is a born teacher from whom one can always learn—if nothing else, then to deceive her—for one learns that best from the girls themselves. No matter how old I become, I shall still never forget that it is all over for a man only when he has grown so old that he can learn nothing from a young girl.

My Cordelia,

You say that you had not imagined me like this, but neither did I imagine that I could become like this. Is not the change in you? For it is conceivable that I have not actually changed but that the eyes with which you look at me have changed. Or is the change in me? It is in me, for I love you; it is in you, for it is you I love. In the calm, cold light of the understanding, I considered everything. Proud and unmoved, I was terrified by nothing. Nothing surprised me; even if a ghost had knocked at the door, I would have calmly picked up the candelabrum[55] and opened it. But see, it was not ghosts for whom I unlocked the door, not pale, feeble shapes—it was for you, my Cordelia; it was life and youth and health and beauty that approached me. My arm shakes; I cannot hold the light steady. I fall back from you, and yet I

cannot keep from looking at you, cannot keep from wishing I could hold the light steady. I am changed, but why, how, what is the nature of this change? I do not know; I know of no more explicit definition to add, no richer predicate to use than this when I altogether enigmatically say of myself: I have changed.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

Erotic love loves secrecy—an engagement is a disclosure; it loves silence—an engagement is a public announcement; it loves whispering—an engagement is a loud proclamation, and yet, with my Cordelia's help, an engagement will be a superb way to deceive the enemies. On a dark night, there is nothing more dangerous for other ships than to hang out a lantern, which is more deceptive than the darkness.

Your Johannes

She is sitting on the sofa by the tea table; I am sitting at her side. She is holding my arm; her head, heavy with many thoughts, is resting on my shoulder. She is so near and yet still so far; she is devoted to me, and yet she does not belong to me. There is still some resistance, but it is not subjectively reflected; it is the common resistance of womanliness, for woman's essence is a devotedness that takes the form of resistance. —She is sitting on the sofa by the tea table; I am sitting at her side. Her heart is beating, but without passion; her bosom rises and falls, but not in agitation; at times her color changes, but with soft

shading. Is it love? By no means. She listens; she understands. She listens to the familiar saying; she understands it. She listens to another person's talking; she understands it as her own. She listens to another person's voice as it resonates within her; she understands this resonance as if it were her own voice that discloses to her and to another.

What am I doing? Am I beguiling her? By no means—that would be of no avail to me. Am I stealing her heart? By no means—in fact, I prefer that the girl I am going to love should keep her heart. What am I doing, then? I am shaping for myself a heart like unto hers. An artist paints his beloved; that is now his joy; a sculptor shapes her. This I, too, am doing, but in an intellectual sense. She does not know that I possess this image and therein really lies my falsification. I obtained it secretively, and in that sense I have stolen her heart, just as it is told of Rebecca that she stole Laban's heart when she took his household gods away from him in a cunning manner.[56]

Surroundings and setting do have a great influence upon a person and are part of that which makes a firm and deep impression on the memory [*Hukommelse*] or, more correctly, on the whole soul, and for this reason cannot be forgotten either. No matter how old I may become, it will nevertheless always be impossible for me to think of Cordelia in surroundings other than this little room. When I come to visit her, the maid usually lets me in by the door to the large drawing room; Cordelia herself enters from her room, and as I open the door to enter the small drawing

room, she opens the other door, so that our eyes meet in the doorway. This drawing room is small, cozy, is almost the size of a private room. Although I have now seen it from many different angles, I am most fond of seeing it from the sofa. She sits there at my side; before us stands a round tea table, over which a tablecloth is spread in rich folds. On the table stands a lamp shaped in the form of a flower, which rises up vigorously and copiously to bear its crown, over which in turn hangs a delicately cut veil of paper, so light that it cannot remain still. The form of the lamp is reminiscent of the Orient, the movement of the veil reminiscent of the gentle breezes in that region. The floor is covered by matting woven of a special kind of willow, a work that immediately betrays its foreign origin.

At moments, I let the lamp be the motif in my landscape. I sit with her then, stretched out on the ground under the flower of the lamp. At other times, I let the willow matting call up the image of a ship, of an officer's stateroom—we are sailing out in the middle of the great ocean. When we are sitting far from the window, we look directly into the sweeping horizon of the sky. This, too, augments the illusion. When I am sitting at her side, I let such things appear like an image that hastens as elusively over actuality as death crosses a person's grave.

The surroundings are always of great importance, especially for the sake of recollection [*Erindring*].[57] Every erotic relationship must always be lived through in such a way that it is easy for one to produce an image that conveys all the beauty of it. To be able to

do this successfully, one must be attentive to the surroundings. If they are not found to be as desired, then they must be made so. For Cordelia and her love, the surroundings are entirely appropriate. But what a different image presents itself to me when I think of my little Emily, and yet, again, were not the surroundings appropriate? I cannot imagine her or, more correctly, I want to recall her only in the little room opening onto the garden. The doors stood open; a little garden in front of the house cut off the view, compelled the eyes to be arrested there, to stop before boldly following the road that vanished into the distance. Emily was lovely but of less significance than Cordelia. The surroundings were also designed for that. The eyes remained earthbound, did not rush boldly and impatiently ahead, rested on that little foreground. The road itself, even though it romantically wandered off into the distance, had no other effect than that the eyes glanced over the stretch before it and then returned home in order to glance over the same stretch again. The room was earthbound. Cordelia's surroundings must have no foreground but rather the infinite boldness of the horizon. She must not be earthbound but must float, not walk but fly, not back and forth but eternally forward.

When a person himself becomes engaged, he is at once effectually initiated into the antics of the engaged. Some days ago, licentiate Hansen showed up with the charming young girl to whom he has become engaged. He confided to me that she was lovely, which I knew before, that she was very young, which

I also knew; he finally confided to me that he had chosen her precisely so that he himself could form her into the ideal that had always vaguely hovered before him. Good lord, what a silly licentiate—and a healthy, blooming, cheerful girl. Now, I am a fairly old hand at the game, and yet I never approach a young girl other than as nature's *Venerabile* [something worthy of veneration] and first learn from her. Then insofar as I may have any formative influence upon her, it is by teaching her again and again what I have learned from her.

Her soul must be stirred, agitated in every possible direction—not piecemeal and by spurts, but totally. She must discover the infinite, must experience that this is what lies closest to a person. This she must discover not along the path of thought, which for her is a wrong way, but in the imagination, which is the real line of communication between her and me, for that which is a component for the man is the whole for the woman. She must not labor her way forward to the infinite along the irksome path of thought, for woman is not born to labor, but she will reach it along the easy path of the imagination and the heart. For a young girl, the infinite is just as natural as the idea that all love must be happy. Everywhere, wherever she turns, a young girl has the infinite around her, and the transition is a leap,[58] but, please note, a feminine, not a masculine, leap. Why are men ordinarily so clumsy? When they are going to leap, they have to take a running start, make many preparations, measure the distance with the eyes, make sev-

eral runs—shy away and turn back. Finally they leap and fall in. A young girl leaps in a different way. In mountainous country, one often comes upon two towering mountain peaks. A chasmic abyss separates them, terrible to look down into. No man dares to risk this leap. But a young girl, so say the natives in the region, did dare to do it, and it is called the Maiden's Leap. I am fully prepared to believe it, just as I believe everything remarkable about a young girl, and it is intoxicating to me to hear the simple natives talk about it. I believe it all, believe the marvelous, am amazed by it only in order to believe; as the only thing that has amazed me in the world, a young girl is the first and will be the last. And yet for a young girl such a leap is only a hop, whereas a man's leap always becomes ludicrous because no matter how far he stretches out, his exertion at the same time becomes minuscule compared with the distance between the peaks and nevertheless provides a kind of yardstick. But who would be so foolish as to imagine a young girl taking a running start? One can certainly imagine her running, but this running is itself a game, an enjoyment, a display of her loveliness, whereas the idea of a running start separates what in woman belongs together; that is, a running start has in itself the dialectical, which is contrary to woman's nature. And now the leap—who again would be graceless enough here to dare to separate what belongs together! Her leap is a gliding. And once she has reached the other side, she stands there again, not exhausted by the effort, but more beautiful, more soulful than ever; she throws a kiss

over to us who stand on this side. Young, newborn, like a flower that has shot up from the root of the mountain, she swings out over the abyss so that everything almost goes black before our eyes. —What she must learn is to make all the motions of infinity, to swing herself, to rock herself in moods, to confuse poetry and actuality, truth and fiction, to frolic in infinity. Then when she is familiar with this tumult, I shall add the erotic; then she will be what I want and desire. Then my duties will be over, my work; then I shall haul in all my sails; then I shall sit at her side, and under her sails we shall journey forward. In fact, as soon as this girl is erotically intoxicated, I shall have enough to do sitting at the helm in order to moderate the speed so that nothing happens too soon or in an unbecoming manner. Once in a while one punctures a little hole in the sail, and the next moment we rush along again.

In my uncle's house, Cordelia becomes more and more indignant. She has requested several times that we do not go there anymore, but it is to no avail; I always know how to think up evasions. When we were leaving there last night, she shook my hand with an unusual passion. She probably has really felt very distressed there, and no wonder. If I did not always find amusement in observing these unnatural affectations, I could not possibly hold out. This morning, I received a letter from her in which she makes fun of engagements with more wit than I had given her credit for. I kissed the letter; it is the most cherished one I have received from her. Just right, my Cordelia! That is the way I want it.

It so happens, rather oddly, that on Østergade there are two coffee shops directly opposite each other. On the second floor, left side, lives a young miss or a young lady. Usually, she is concealed behind a vertical venetian blind covering the window by which she sits. The blind is made of very thin material, and anyone, if he has good eyes, who knows the girl or has seen her frequently will easily be able to identify every feature, whereas to the person who does not know her and does not have good eyes she will appear as a dark figure. In some measure, the latter is the case with me; the former with a young officer who every day, precisely at twelve o'clock, shows up in the offing and turns his gaze up toward that venetian blind. Actually it was the venetian blind that first directed my attention to that fine telegraphic connection. There are no blinds on the other windows, and a solitary blind such as that, covering only one window, is usually a sign that someone sits behind it regularly.

One morning, I stood in the window of the pastry shop on the other side. It was exactly twelve o'clock. Paying no attention to the people passing by, I kept my eyes on that venetian blind, when suddenly the dark figure behind it began to move. The profile of a woman's head appeared in the next window in such a way that it turned in a strange manner in the same direction as the venetian blind. Thereupon the owner of the head nodded in a very friendly way and again hid behind the venetian blind. I concluded first and foremost that the person she greeted was a man, for her gesture was too passionate to be prompted by the

sight of a girl friend; second, I concluded that the one to whom the greeting applied ordinarily came from the other side. She had placed herself just right in order to be able to see him some distance away, in fact, hidden by the venetian blind, she could even greet him. —Quite so! At precisely twelve o'clock, the hero in this little love episode, our dear lieutenant, comes along. I am sitting in the coffee shop on the ground floor of the building in which the young lady lives on the second floor. The lieutenant has already spied her. Be careful, my good friend; it is not such an easy matter to pay one's respects gracefully to the second floor. Incidentally, he is not bad—slender, well built, a handsome figure, a curved nose, black hair—the cocked hat is very becoming. Now the pinch. His legs begin to knock a little, to become too long. This makes a visual impression comparable to the feeling a person has when he has a toothache and the teeth become too long for the mouth. If one is going to concentrate all the energy in the eyes and direct them toward the second floor, one is likely to draw too much strength from the legs. Pardon me, Mr. Lieutenant, for halting this gaze in its ascension. It is a piece of impertinence, I know very well. This gaze cannot be said to say very much; rather, it says nothing at all, and yet it promises very much. But obviously these many promises are mounting too powerfully to his head; he is reeling, or to use the poet's words about Agnes: he staggered, he fell.[59]

It is too bad, and if the matter had been left to me, it would never have happened. He is too good for that. It is really unfortunate, for if one is going to im-

press the ladies as a gallant, one must never fall. Anyone wishing to be a gallant must be alert to such things. But if someone appears merely as an intelligent being, all such things are of no importance; one is deeply absorbed in oneself, one droops, and if one actually does fall down, there is nothing striking about it. —What impression did this incident probably make on my little miss? It is too bad that I cannot be simultaneously on both sides of this Dardanelles street. I could, it is true, have an acquaintance posted on the other side, but for one thing I always prefer to make the observations myself, and for another, one can never know what may come out of this affair for me. In such a case, it is never good to have someone in on the secret, for then one must waste a good deal of time wresting from him what he knows and making him puzzled.

I am really becoming bored with my good lieutenant. Day in and day out, he marches past in full uniform. It is indeed a terrible kind of steadfastness. Is this befitting for a soldier? Good sir, do you not carry side arms? Should you not take the house by storm and the girl by force? Of course, if you were a student, a licentiate, a curate, who keeps himself alive by hope,[60] that would be another matter. But I forgive you, for the girl pleases me the more I see her. She is beautiful; her brown eyes are full of roguishness. When she is awaiting your arrival, her countenance is transfigured by a higher beauty that is indescribably becoming to her. Therefore, I conclude that she must have great imagination, and imagination is the natural cosmetic of the fair sex.

My Cordelia,

What is longing [*Længsel*]? Language and poets rhyme [*rime*] it with the word "prison [*Fængsel*]". How unreasonable [*urimelig*]! As if only the person sitting in prison could long. As if one could not long if one is free. Suppose that I were free—how I would long! And on the other hand, I am certainly free, free as a bird, and yet how I do long! I long when I am going to you; I long when I leave you; even when I am sitting at your side, I long for you. Can one, then, long for what one has? Indeed, if one considers that the next moment one may not have it. My longing is an eternal impatience. Only if I had lived through all eternities and assured myself that you belonged to me every moment, only then would I return to you and live through all eternities with you and certainly not have enough patience to be separated from you for one moment without longing but have enough assurance to sit calmly at your side.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

Outside the door there stands a little cabriolet, to me larger than the whole world, since it is large enough for two, hitched to a pair of horses, wild and unruly like the forces of nature, impatient like my passions, bold like your thoughts. If you wish, I shall carry you off—my Cordelia! Do you command it? Your command is the password [*Løsen*] that lets loose [*løsne*] the

reins and the pleasure of flight. I am carrying you away, not from some people to others, but out of the world. —The horses rear; the carriage rises up; the horses are standing upright almost over our heads. We are driving through the clouds up into the heavens; the wind whistles about us; is it we who are sitting still and the whole world is moving, or is it our reckless flight? Are you dizzy, my Cordelia? Then hold fast to me; I do not become dizzy. Intellectually one never becomes dizzy if one thinks of only one thing, and I think only of you. Physically one never becomes dizzy if one looks fixedly at only one object, and I look only at you. Hold tight; if the world passed away, if our light carriage disappeared beneath us, we would still cling to each other, floating in the harmony of the spheres.[61]

Your Johannes

It is almost too much. My servant has waited six hours, I myself two in the wind and rain, just to waylay that dear child Charlotte Hahn. She usually visits an old aunt of hers every Wednesday between two and five. Precisely today would have to be the day she did not come, precisely today when I did so much want to meet her. Why? Because she puts me in a very particular mood. I greet her; she curtseys in a way that simultaneously is indescribably terrestrial and yet so heavenly. She almost stops; it is as if she were about to sink into the earth, and yet she has a look as if she were about to be elevated into the heavens. When I look at her, my mind simultaneously

becomes solemn and yet desiring. Otherwise, the girl means nothing to me; all I ask is this greeting, nothing more, even if she were willing to give it. Her greeting puts me in a mood, and in turn I squander this mood on Cordelia. —And yet I wager that she has slipped past us in one way or another. Not only in comedies but also in actual life is it difficult to keep watch on a young girl; one must have an eye on each finger. There was a nymph, Cardea,[62] who spent her time fooling the menfolk. She lived in a wooded area, lured her lovers into the thicket, and vanished. She was going to fool Janus, too, but he fooled her, because he had eyes in the back of his head.

My letters are not failing of their intention. They are developing her mentally, even though not erotically. For that purpose, letters cannot be used, but notes. The more the erotic emerges, the shorter they become, but all the more unerringly they seize the erotic point. For in order not to make her sentimental or soft, irony stiffens the feelings again but also makes her crave the sustenance of which she is most fond. Distantly and indefinitely, the notes give a presentiment of the highest. The moment this presentiment begins to dawn in her soul, the connection is broken. Through my resistance, the presentiment will take form within her soul as if it were her own thought, the impulse of her own heart. This is just what I want.

My Cordelia,

Somewhere in the city there lives a little family consisting of a widow and three daughters. Two of them go to the royal kitchen to learn

how to cook. One afternoon in early summer, about five o'clock, the door to the drawing room opens softly, and a reconnoitering glance surveys the room. No one is there except a young girl sitting at the piano. The door is slightly ajar, so one can listen without being observed. The one playing is no great artist, for then the door would surely have been entirely closed. She is playing a Swedish melody; it is about the brief duration of youth and beauty. The words mock the girl's youth and beauty; the girl's youth and beauty mock the words. Which is right—the girl or the words? The music sounds so hushed and melancholy, as if sadness were the arbitrator that would settle the controversy. —But it is in the wrong, this sadness! What communion is there between youth and these reflections! What fellowship between morning and evening! The piano keys quiver and quake; the spirits of the soundboard spring up in confusion and do not understand one another. —My Cordelia, why so vehement! Why this passion!

How distant must an event be from us in time in order for us to recollect it; how distant so that recollection's longing can no longer grasp it? In this respect, most people have a limit; they cannot recollect what is too close in time, nor can they recollect what is too distant. I know no limit. Yesterday's experience I push back a thousand years in time and recollect it as if it were experienced yesterday. *Your Johannes*

My Cordelia,

I have a secret to confide to you, my confidante. To whom should I confide it? To echo? It would betray it. To the stars? They are cold. To human beings? They do not understand it. Only to you do I dare to confide it, for you know how to keep it. There is a girl, more beautiful than the dream of my soul, purer than the light of the sun, deeper than the springs of the sea, prouder than the flight of the eagle—there is a girl—O incline your head to my ear and to my words so that my secret can steal into it. —This girl I love more than my life, for she is my life; more than all my desires, for she is my only desire; more than all my thoughts, for she is my only thought; more warmly than the sun loves the flower, more intimately than grief loves the privacy of the troubled mind, more longingly than the burning sand of the desert loves the rain. I cling to her more tenderly than the mother's eye to her child, more confidently than the entreating soul to God, more inseparably than the plant to its root. —Your head grows heavy and full of thoughts; it sinks down upon your breast; your bosom rises to come to its aid—my Cordelia! You have understood me, you have understood me correctly, literally; not one jot or tittle has escaped you! Shall I strain every nerve of my ears and let your voice convince me of it? Would I be able to doubt? Will you keep this secret? Dare I depend upon you? Tales are told of people who by dreadful crimes

initiated each other into mutual silence.[63] To you I have confided a secret that is my life and the content of my life—have you nothing to confide to me that is so significant, so beautiful, so chaste that supranatural forces would be set in motion if it were betrayed? *Your Johannes*

My Cordelia,

The sky is cloudy—dark rain clouds scowl like black eyebrows above its passionate countenance; the trees of the forest are in motion, tossed about by troubled dreams. You have disappeared from me into the forest. Behind every tree I see a feminine creature that resembles you; if I come closer, it hides behind the next tree. Do you not wish to show yourself to me, collect yourself? Everything is confused to me; the various parts of the forest lose their distinctive contours; I see everything as a sea of fog, where feminine creatures resembling you appear and disappear everywhere. I do not see you; you are continually moving in a wave of perception, and yet I am already happy over every single resemblance to you. What is the reason—is it the copious unity of your nature or the scanty multiplicity of my nature? —To love you, is it not to love a world? *Your Johannes*

It would be of real interest to me if it were possible to reproduce very accurately the conversations I have with Cordelia. But I easily perceive that it is an im-

possibility, for even if I managed to recollect every single word exchanged between us, it nevertheless is out of the question to reproduce the element of contemporaneity, which actually is the nerve in conversation, the surprise in the outburst, the passionateness, which is the life principle in conversation. Ordinarily, I am not prepared in advance, of course, for this is at variance with the essential nature of conversation, especially erotic conversation. But I continually bear *in mente* [in mind] the content of my letters, always keep my eye on the mood they may have evoked in her. Of course, it could never occur to me to ask whether she has read my letter. It is easy to ascertain that she has read it. Nor do I ever speak directly with her about it, but I maintain secret communication with them in my conversations, partly in order to fix more firmly in her soul some impression or other, partly in order to wrest it from her and make her perplexed. Then she can read the letter again and gain a new impression from it and so forth.

A change has taken place and is taking place in her. If I were to designate the state of her soul at this moment, I would say that it is pantheistic boldness. The expression in her eyes betrays it at once. It is bold, almost reckless, in expectations, as if it asked for the extraordinary at every moment and was prepared to see it. Like the eye that gazes in the distance, this look sees beyond what immediately appears to it and sees the marvelous. It is bold, almost reckless, in its expectancy—but not in self-confidence, and therefore it is rather dreaming and imploring, not proud and commanding. She is seeking the marvelous outside her-

self; she will pray that it might make its appearance, as if it were not in her power to call it forth. This must be prevented; otherwise I shall gain the upper hand too soon. Yesterday she told me there was something royal in my nature. Perhaps she wants to defer to me, but that absolutely will not do. To be sure, dear Cordelia, there is something royal in my nature, but you have no inkling of the kind of kingdom I have dominion over. It is over the tempests of moods. Like Aeolus,[64] I keep them shut up in the mountain of my personality and allow one and now another to go out. Flattery will give her self-esteem; the distinction between what is mine and what is yours will be affirmed; everything will be placed upon her. Flattery requires great care. Sometimes one must place oneself very high, yet in such a way that there remains a place still higher; sometimes one must place oneself very low. The former is more proper when one is moving in the direction of the intellectual; the latter is more proper when one is moving in the direction of the erotic.

Does she owe me anything? Not at all. Could I wish that she did? Not at all. I am too much a connoisseur, understand the erotic too well, for such foolishness. If this actually were the case, I would try with all my might to make her forget it and to lull to sleep my own thoughts about it. When it comes to the labyrinth of her heart, every young girl is an Ariadne;[65] she holds the thread by which one can find the way through—but she possesses it in such a way that she herself does not know how to use it.

My Cordelia

Speak—I obey. Your desire is a command; your entreaty is an omnipotent adjuration; your every most evanescent wish is a boon to me, for I do not obey you as a ministering spirit, as if I stood outside you. When you command, your will comes into existence, and I along with it, for I am a disarray of soul that simply awaits a word from you. *Your Johannes*

My Cordelia,

You know that I very much like to talk with myself. I have found in myself the most interesting person among my acquaintances. At times, I have feared that I would come to lack material for these conversations; now I have no fear, for now I have you. I shall talk with myself about you now and for all eternity, about the most interesting subject with the most interesting person—ah, I am only an interesting person, you the most interesting subject.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

You find the time I have loved you to be so short; you almost seem to fear that I could have loved before. There are manuscripts in which the fortunate eye quickly sees faintly an older writing that in the course of time has been supplanted by trivial inanities. With caustic substances, the later writing is erased, and now

the older writing is distinct and clear. In the same way, your eye has taught me to find myself in myself. I allow forgetfulness to consume everything that does not touch on you, and then I discover a pristine, a divinely young, primitive text; then I discover that my love for you is just as old as I myself.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

How can a kingdom survive that is in conflict with itself;[66] how can I survive if I am in conflict with myself? About what? About you—in order if possible to find repose in the thought that I am in love with you. But how am I to find this repose? One of the conflicting forces will continually convince the other that it is indeed the one most deeply and fervently in love; at the next moment, the other will. It would not concern me so much if the conflict were outside myself, if there were someone who dared to be in love with you or dared to desist—the crime is equally great—but this conflict within me consumes me, this one passion in its duplexity.

Your Johannes

Just vanish, my little fisherman's daughter; just hide among the trees; just pick up your load, for bending over is so becoming to you—yes, this very minute you are bending over with a natural grace under the bundle of brushwood you have gathered. How is it that such a creature should have to carry such loads! Like a dancer, you betray the beauty of

your form—small of waist, full of bosom, burgeoning in development—any recruiting officer must admit that. You perhaps think these are trifles; you believe that society women are far more beautiful. Alas, my child, you do not know how much falseness there is in the world! Just set out upon your walk with your bundle into the enormous woods that presumably stretch many, many miles into the country to the border of the blue mountains. Perhaps you are not actually a fisherman's daughter but an enchanted princess; you are a troll's domestic servant, and he is cruel enough to make you pick up firewood in the woods. So it always goes in the fairy tale. Otherwise, why do you walk deeper into the forest? If you are really a fisherman's daughter, you will walk past me with your firewood down to the fishing village that lies on the other side of the road.

Just take the footpath that winds easily among the trees; my eyes will find you. Just turn around and look at me; my eyes will follow you. You cannot make me move; longing does not carry me away; I am sitting calmly on the railing and smoking my cigar. —Some other time, perhaps. —Yes, when you turn back your head halfway in that manner, the expression in your eyes is roguish; your light step is beckoning. Yes, I know, I understand where this path leads—to the solitude of the forest, to the whispering of the trees, to the abundant stillness. Look, the sky itself favors you. It hides itself in the clouds; it darkens the background of the forest, as if drawing the curtains for us. —Farewell, my beautiful fisherman's daughter, take care of yourself! Thanks for your favor.

It was a beautiful moment, a mood, not strong enough to move me from my firm seat on the railing but still abundant in inner motion.

When Jacob had bargained with Laban about the payment for his service, when they agreed that Jacob should tend the white sheep and as reward for his work have all the motley-colored lambs born in his flock, he set rods in the watering troughs and had the sheep look at them[67]—in the same way I place myself before Cordelia everywhere; her eyes see me continually. To her it seems like sheer attentiveness from my part, but on my side I know that her soul thereby loses interest for everything else, that there is being developed within her a mental concupiscence that sees me everywhere.

My Cordelia,

As if I could forget you! Is my love, then, a work of memory [*Hukommelse*]? Even if time erased everything from its blackboards, even if it erased memory itself, my relationship with you would remain just as alive, you would still not be forgotten. As if I could forget you! What, then, should I recollect [*erindre*]? After all, I have forgotten myself in order to recollect you, so if I forgot you, I would then recollect myself, but the moment I remembered myself I would have to recollect you again. As if I could forget you! What would happen then? There is a painting from ancient times that shows Ariadne leaping up from her couch and anxiously watching a ship speeding away under full sail.[68] At her side

stands Cupid with an unstrung bow and dries his eyes. Behind her stands a winged female figure with a helmet on her head. The figure is usually assumed to be Nemesis.[69] Imagine this picture; imagine it slightly changed. Cupid is not weeping and his bow is not unstrung, or would you then have become less beautiful, less triumphant, because I had gone out of my mind. Cupid smiles and draws the bow. Nemesis does not stand idle at your side; she, too, draws her bow. In that old painting, we see on the ship a manly figure busy at his work. Presumably it is Theseus. Not so in my picture. He is standing in the stern; he is looking back longingly. He is stretching out his arms; he has repented of it or, more correctly, his madness has left him, but the ship is carrying him away. Cupid and Nemesis both aim, an arrow flies from each bow, they accurately hit the mark; we see and we understand that both have hit one spot in his heart to symbolize that his love was the Nemesis that avenged.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

I am in love with myself, people say of me. That does not surprise me, for how would it be possible for them to see that I can love, since I love only you? How could anyone else suspect it, since I love only you? I am in love with myself. And why? Because I am in love with you; for you I love and you alone and everything

that truly belongs to you, and thus I love myself because this self of mine belongs to you, so that if I stopped loving you, I would stop loving myself. Therefore, what is an expression of the utmost egotism in the world's profane eyes is in your initiated eyes an expression of the purest sympathy; what is an expression of the most prosaic self-preservation in the world's profane eyes is in your sanctified sight an expression of most inspired self-annihilation.

Your Johannes

What I feared most was that the whole process would take me too long a time. I see, however, that Cordelia is making great progress, yes, that it will be necessary, in order to keep her inspired, to set everything in motion. She must not for all the world become listless ahead of time, that is, before that time when her time is up.

When in love, one does not take the highway. It is only marriage that is right in the middle of the king's highway. If one is in love and walks from Nøddebo, one does not go along Esrom Lake, even though the path is really only a hunting path, but it is a beaten path, and love prefers to beat its own path. One proceeds deeper into Gribs forest.[70] And when a couple wanders arm in arm in this way, each understands the other; that which obscurely delighted and pained before becomes clear now. There is no hint of anyone's presence. —So this lovely beech tree becomes a witness to your love; under its crown you two confessed it for the first time. You recollected everything

so clearly—the first time you saw each other, the first time you took each other's hands in the dance, when you parted toward morning, when you would not admit anything to yourselves, let alone to each other. —It really is beautiful to listen to these love rehearsals. —They fell on their knees under the tree; they swore unbreakable love to each other; they sealed the pact with the first kiss. —These are productive moods that must be squandered on Cordelia. —So this beech tree became a witness. Oh, well, a tree is a quite suitable witness, but nevertheless it is too little. Presumably you two are thinking that heaven, too, was a witness, but heaven as such is a very abstract idea. Therefore, you see, there was still another witness. —Should I stand up and let them see that I am here? No, they may know me, and then the game is over. When they are some distance away, should I stand up and let them know someone was present? No, that is pointless. Silence must rest over their secret—as long as I want it to. They are in my power; I can separate them when I want to. I know their secret; only from him or from her can I have found it out—from her personally, that is impossible; consequently from him, it is detestable—bravo! And yet it is indeed almost malice. Well, I shall see. If I can gain a definite impression of her that I otherwise cannot obtain in the ordinary way, which I prefer, then there is nothing else to do.

My Cordelia,

Poor am I—you are my wealth; dark—you are my light; I own nothing, need nothing. In-

deed, how should I be able to own anything; it is indeed a contradiction that a person who does not own himself can own something. I am happy like a child who cannot and must not own anything. I own nothing, for I belong only to you. I am not; I have ceased to be, in order to be yours.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

"My"—what does the word designate? Not what belongs to me, but what I belong to, what contains my whole being, which is mine insofar as I belong to it. After all, my God is not the God who belongs to me, but the God to whom I belong, and the same when I say my native land, my home, my calling, my longing, my hope. If there had been no immortality before, then the thought that I am yours would break through nature's usual course.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

What am I? The humble narrator who follows your triumphs, the dancer who bows under you as you soar in lovely buoyancy, the branch upon which you momentarily rest when you are tired of flying, the bass voice that interjects itself under the soprano's ebullience to make it ascend even higher—what am I? I am the earthly force of gravity that keeps you captive to the earth. What am I, then? Body, substance, earth, dust,

and ashes. —You, my Cordelia, you are soul and spirit. *Your Johannes*

My Cordelia,

Love is everything; therefore, for one who loves everything ceases to have intrinsic meaning and has meaning only through the interpretation love gives to it. Thus, if some other engaged man became convinced that there was another girl he cared for, he probably would stand there like a criminal, and she would be outraged. But you, I know, you would see esteem in such a confession, for you know that it is impossible for me to love another—it is my love for you that casts a luster over all of life. So if I care for another, it is not to convince myself that I do not love her but only you—that would be presumptuous—but since my whole soul is full of you, life acquires another meaning for me—it becomes a myth about you.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

My love consumes me; only my voice remains,[71] a voice that has fallen in love with you, that whispers everywhere to you that I love you. Oh! Does it weary you to hear this voice? It surrounds you everywhere; I wrap my thoroughly reflective soul, like a manifold mobile frame, around your pure, deep being.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

We read in old stories that a river fell in love with a maiden.[72] Just so is my soul like a river that loves you. It is still at times and reflects your image deeply and calmly. At times it fancies that it has taken your image captive and tosses up its waves to prevent you from escaping again; then it ripples its surface gently and plays with your image. At times it has lost it, and then its waves become dark and despairing. —Just so is my soul—like a river that has fallen in love with you. *Your Johannes*

To be honest, it does not take unusually vivid imaginative power to conceive of a conveyance that is more convenient, comfortable, and, above all, more consistent with one's station in life. To ride with a peat cutter—that attracts attention but not in the desirable sense. But in an emergency, one accepts it with thanks. You walk some distance out in the country. You climb up, ride a mile, and encounter nothing; two miles, and everything goes well. You begin to feel safe and secure; the scenery actually is better than usual from this level. Almost three miles have gone by—who would ever have expected to meet a Copenhagener way out on a country road? And he is a Copenhagener, that you can see well enough. He is not from the country; he has an altogether singular way of looking at things—so definite, so observant, so appraising, and so little given to derision. Well, my dear girl, your position is by no means comfortable;

you look as if you were sitting on a tray. The cart is so flat that it has no recess for the feet. —But it is, of course, your own fault. My carriage is entirely at your service; I take the liberty of offering you a much more comfortable seat, if it will not be too uncomfortable for you to sit beside me. In that case, I shall place the whole carriage at your disposal and sit in the driver's box myself, happy to be allowed to drive you to your destination. —The straw hat does not even shield you sufficiently from a sidelong glance. It is futile for you to bow your head; I still admire your beautiful profile. —Is it not annoying that the peasant bows to me? But, after all, it is proper for a peasant to bow to a distinguished man. —You are not getting off so lightly. Well, here is a tavern, a post house, and a peat cutter is much too pious in his way to neglect his devotions. Now I shall take care of him. I have an extraordinary talent for fascinating peat cutters. Oh, would that I might also succeed in pleasing you! He cannot resist my invitation, and once he has accepted it, he cannot resist the effects of it. If I cannot, then my servant can. —He is going to the barroom now; you are alone in the wagon in the shed. —God knows what kind of girl this is! Could this be a little middle-class miss, perhaps the daughter of a parish clerk? If so, she is unusually pretty and unusually well dressed for a parish clerk's daughter. The parish clerk must have a good salary. It occurs to me: Could she perhaps be a little blueblood miss who is tired of driving in a fine carriage, who perhaps is taking a little hike out to the country house and now also wants to try her hand at a little adventure? Quite pos-

sibly, such things are not unheard of. —The peasant does not know anything; he is a clod who only knows how to drink. Yes, yes, go on drinking, my good man; you are welcome to it.

But what do I see—it is none other than Miss Jespersen, Hansine Jespersen, daughter of the wholesaler. Good heavens, we two know each other. It was she I once met on Bredgade. She was riding backwards; she could not raise the window. I put on my glasses and had the enjoyment of following her with my eyes. It was a very awkward situation; there were so many in the carriage that she could not move and presumably did not dare to make any outcry. The present situation is even more awkward. We two are destined for each other; that is obvious. She must be a romantic little miss; she is definitely out on her own initiative. —There comes my servant with the peat cutter. He is dead drunk. It is disgusting. They are a depraved lot, these peat cutters. Alas, yes! And yet there are even worse people than peat cutters. —See, now you are in a pretty mess. Now you yourself will have to drive the horses—how romantic! —You refuse my offer; you insist that you are a good driver. You do not deceive me; I perceive very well how crafty you are. When you have gone a little way you are going to jump out; in the woods one can easily find a hiding place. —My horse will be saddled; I shall follow on horseback. —You see, now I am ready, now you can be safe against any attack. —Please do not be so terribly afraid; then I shall turn back at once. I merely wanted to make you a little uneasy and give you an occasion for the heightening of your

natural beauty. After all, you do not know that it is I who caused the peasant to get drunk, and I certainly have not taken the liberty of one offensive word to you. Everything can still be all right; I daresay that I shall give the affair such a turn that you can laugh at the whole episode. I just want a little unsettled account with you. Never think that I take any girl by surprise. I am a friend of freedom, and I do not care for anything I do not receive freely. —"You will certainly see for yourself that it will not do to continue the journey this way. I myself am going hunting; therefore I am on horseback. But my carriage is harnessed at the tavern. If you give the order, it will catch up with you at once and take you wherever you wish. I myself, I regret, cannot have the pleasure of escorting you; I am committed to a hunting engagement, and they are sacred." —But you accept. —Everything will promptly be in order. —See, you have no need at all to be embarrassed by seeing me again, or in any case no more embarrassed than is very becoming to you. You can be amused by the whole affair, laugh a little, and think about me a little. I ask no more. It might seem to be very little, but for me that is enough. It is a beginning, and I am especially good at the principles of beginnings.

Yesterday evening there was a little party at the aunt's. I knew Cordelia would take out her knitting. I had hidden a little note in it. She dropped it, picked it up, was stirred, wistful. One should always make use of the situation in this way. It is unbelievable what advantage can be derived from it. An intrinsically in-

significant little note, read under such circumstances, becomes enormously significant for her. She had no chance to talk to me, for I had arranged things so that I had to escort a lady home. She was obliged to wait, therefore, until today. This is always a good way to drill the impression all the deeper into her soul. It always seems as if I were the one who paid attention to her; the advantage I have is that I am placed in her thoughts everywhere, that I surprise her everywhere.

Erotic love does have its distinctive dialectic. There was a young girl with whom I was once in love. At the theater in Dresden last summer, I saw an actress who bore a remarkable resemblance to her. Because of that, I wanted to make her acquaintance, and did succeed, and then realized that the dissimilarity was rather great. Today on the street I meet a lady who reminds me of that actress. This story can be continued as long as you wish.

My thoughts surround Cordelia everywhere. I send them like angels around her. Just as Venus in her chariot is drawn by doves, so she sits in her triumphal chariot, and I harness my thoughts in front like winged creatures. She herself sits there happy, exuberant like a child, omnipotent like a goddess; I walk along at her side. Truly, a young girl is and remains the *Venerabile* [something worthy of veneration] of nature and of all existence! No one knows that better than I. But what a pity that this glory lasts such a short time. She smiles at me, she greets me, she beckons to me—as if she were my sister. A glance reminds her that she is my beloved.

Erotic love has many gradations. Cordelia is making good progress. She is sitting on my lap; her arm, soft and warm, winds around my neck. Light, without physical weight, she rests against my chest; her soft curves scarcely brush against me. Like a flower, this lovely creature entwines me, free as a bow. Her eyes hide behind her lashes; her bosom is as dazzling white as snow, so smooth that my eyes cannot rest; they would slide off if her bosom did not move. What does this stirring mean? Is it love? Perhaps. It is the presentiment of love, the dream of love. As yet it lacks energy. She embraces me encompassingly, as the cloud embraces the transfigured one, lightly as a breeze, softly as one cups a flower; she kisses me as vaguely as the sky kisses the sea, as gently and quietly as the dew kisses the flower, as solemnly as the sea kisses the image of the moon.

At this moment, I would call her passion a naïve passion. When the turn is made and I begin to pull back in earnest, then she will summon up everything in order really to take me captive. She has no other means for that than the erotic itself, except that this will now manifest itself on an entirely different scale. Then it will be a weapon in her hand that she swings against me. Then I will have reflected passion. She will struggle for her own sake, because [redacted] have the erotic in my possession; she will fight for her own sake in order to vanquish me. She herself needs a higher form of the erotic. What I taught her to sense by inciting her, my coldness will now teach her to comprehend, but in such a way that she will believe that she herself discovers it. She will take me by sur-

prise with it; she will think that she has outdone me in boldness and thereby has taken me captive. Then her passion will be definite, energetic, determined, dialectical; her kissing will be consummate, her embrace not hiatic. —In me she is seeking her freedom, and the more firmly I encircle her, the better she will find it. The engagement will break. When this has happened, she will need a little rest, lest something unlovely come out in this wild turmoil. Her passion will rally once again, and she will be mine.

Just as even in poor Edward's time I indirectly looked after her reading, now I do so directly. What I am offering is what I regard as the best nourishment: mythology and fairy tales. Yet here as everywhere she has her freedom; I learn everything about her by listening to her. If it is not there already, then I put it there first.

When the servant girls go to Deer Park in the summer, it usually affords scant pleasure. They go there only once a year, and therefore they expect to have as much as possible from it. So they must wear a hat and shawl and disfigure themselves in every way. The merriment is wild, graceless, lascivious. No, then I prefer Frederiksberg Gardens. Sunday afternoons they go there, and I also. Here everything is seemly and decent; the merriment itself more quiet and refined. On the whole, the man who has no sense for servant girls loses more by it than they lose. The great host of servant girls is actually the most beautiful militia we have in Denmark. If I were king, I know what I would do—I would not review the regular troops. If

I were one of the city's thirty-two men,[73]—I would promptly petition for the establishment of a committee of public safety that would try by every means —by insight, counsel, admonition, appropriate rewards—to encourage servant girls to dress with care and taste. Why should their beauty go to waste? Why should it go through life unnoticed? Let it at least be seen once a week in the light under which it appears at its best! But above all, good taste, restraint. A servant girl should not look like a lady—there *Politivennen*[74] is right, but the reasons this respected newspaper gives are entirely fallacious. If we then may dare to anticipate such a desirable flowering of the maidservant class, would not this in turn have a beneficial effect on the daughters in our homes? Or is it rash of me to catch a glimpse along this particular road of a future for Denmark that truly can be called matchless? If only I myself might be allowed to be contemporary with this golden age,[75] then with good conscience I could spend the whole day walking around the streets and lanes and delight in the pleasures of the eyes! —How bold and spacious are my teeming thoughts, how patriotic! But here I am, of course, out in Frederiksberg where the servant girls come on Sunday afternoon and I, too.

First come the peasant girls holding hands with their sweethearts, or in another pattern, all the girls in front holding hands and the fellows behind, or in another pattern, two girls and one fellow. This flock forms the frame; they usually stand or sit under the trees in the great square in front of the pavillion. They are healthy and lively; the color contrasts are a bit too

strong—their clothing as well as their complexions. Inside come the girls from Jylland and Fyn—tall, straight, a little too powerfully built, their clothing somewhat mixed. Here there would be much for the committee to do. Nor is a representative of the Bornholm division lacking here either: clever kitchen girls but rough customers both in the kitchen and here in Frederiksberg—there is something proudly repelling in their nature. Thus by contrast their presence here is not without effect, and I would be loath to do without them, but I seldom become involved with them.

Now come the select troops—the Nyboder girls, less tall, well rounded and filled out, delicate in complexion, merry, happy, quick, talkative, a bit coquettish, and, above all, bareheaded. Their attire may often approximate a lady's except for two things: they wear scarves and not shawls, and no hats—at most a little fluttering cap, but preferably they should be bareheaded. —Well, good day, Marie! So we meet out here. It is a long time since I saw you. Are you still at the councilor's? "Yes." It is a very good place, I imagine. "Yes." But you are so alone out here, have no one to go with—no sweetheart—or perhaps he has no time today, or you are waiting for him. —What, you are not engaged? Impossible! The prettiest girl in Copenhagen, a girl who works at the councilor's, a girl who is an ornament and a model for all servant girls, a girl who knows how to dress so neatly and—so sumptuously. That is indeed a pretty handkerchief you are holding in your hand, made of the finest linen. And what do I see, edged with embroidery? I wager it cost ten marks. There is many a fine lady

who does not own its equal. French gloves, a silk umbrella—and such a girl is not engaged. It is indeed preposterous. If I remember correctly, Jens thought a good deal of you—you know whom I mean—Jens, the wholesaler's Jens, the one up there on the third floor. —You see, I hit it on the head. Why didn't you become engaged? After all, Jens was a handsome fellow, had a good job; perhaps with a little pull on the part of the wholesaler, in time he could have become a policeman or a fireman; it wouldn't have been such a bad match. —You must be to blame yourself; you must have been too hard on him. "No! But I found out that Jens had been engaged once before to a girl he did not treat very well at all." —What am I hearing? Who would have thought that Jens was such a bad fellow? —Yes, those guardsmen, those guardsmen, they are not to be trusted. —You did absolutely right; a girl like you is much too good to be thrown to just anybody. —You will surely make a better match, I can vouch for that. —How is Miss Juliane? I have not seen her for a long time. Would my pretty Marie be so kind as to enlighten me about a few things. —Because one has been unhappy in love, one should not therefore be unsympathetic toward others. —There are so many people here. —I dare not speak with you about it; I am afraid someone might spy on me. —Please listen for a moment, my pretty Marie. Look, here is a place on this shaded path where the trees are entwined together to hide us from others, where we see no one, hear no human voices, only the soft echo of the music. Here I dare speak about my secret. Is it not true, if Jens had not been a bad fellow you

would have walked with him here, arm in arm, listened to the jolly music, even enjoyed a still more. . . . Why are you so agitated—forget Jens. —Do you want to be unfair to me? It was to meet you that I came out here. It was to see you that I visited the councilor's. You must have noticed—every time I had a chance I always went to the kitchen door. You are going to be mine. The banns will be read from the pulpit. Tomorrow evening I will explain everything to you—up the kitchen stairway, the door to the left, directly opposite the kitchen door. —Good-bye, my pretty Marie. Do not mention to anyone that you have seen me out here or spoken with me. Now you know my secret. She is very lovely; something could be done with her. Once I get a foothold in her room, I can read the banns from the pulpit myself. I have always tried to develop the beautiful Greek αὐτήώξεια [self-sufficiency] and in particular to make a pastor superfluous.

If I could manage to stand behind Cordelia when she receives a letter from me, it would be of great interest to me. Then it would be easy for me to find out to what extent she has in the most proper sense appropriated them erotically. On the whole, letters are and will continue to be a priceless means of making an impression on a young girl; the dead letter of writing often has much more influence than the living word.[76] A letter is a secretive communication; one is master of the situation, feels no pressure from anyone's actual presence, and I do believe a young girl would prefer to be all alone with her ideal, that is, at

certain moments, and precisely at those moments when it has the strongest effect on her mind. Even if her ideal has found an ever so perfect expression in a particular beloved object, there nevertheless are moments when she feels that in the ideal there is a vastness that the actuality does not have. These great festivals of atonement must be permitted her, except that one must be careful to use them properly so that she comes back to the actuality not fatigued but strengthened. In this, letters are an aid; they help one to be invisibly and mentally present in these moments of sacred dedication, while the idea that the actual person is the author of the letter forms a natural and easy transition to the actuality.

Could I become jealous of Cordelia? Damn it, yes! And yet in another sense, no! That is, if I saw that her nature would be disordered and not be what I want it to be—even though I won in the clash with another—then I would give her up.

An ancient philosopher has said that if a person carefully chronicles all his experiences, he is, before he knows where he is, a philosopher.[77] For a long time now, I have lived in association with the fellowship of the engaged. Such a connection certainly ought to yield some harvest. I have thought of gathering material for a book titled: *A Contribution to a Theory of the Kiss*, dedicated to all doting lovers. Incidentally, it is curious that there is no book on this topic. If I manage to finish it, I shall also fill a long-felt need. Can the reason for this deficiency in the literature be that philosophers do not think about such things or that

they do not understand them? —I am already in a position to offer some hints. A perfect kiss requires that the agents be a girl and a man. A man-to-man kiss is in bad taste, or, worse yet, it tastes bad. —In the next place, it is my opinion that a kiss comes closer to the idea when a man kisses a girl than when a girl kisses a man. When over the years the distinction has been lost in this relationship, the kiss has lost its meaning. That is the case with the conjugal domestic kiss, by which husband and wife, for want of a napkin, wipe each other's mouth while saying "May it do us good [*Velbekom's*]."

If the age gap is very great, the kiss lies outside the idea. I recall a special expression used by the senior class of an outlying girls' school—"to kiss the councilor"—an expression with anything but agreeable connotations. It began this way. The teacher had a brother-in-law living in the house. He was an elderly man, formerly a councilor, and because of his age he took the liberty of kissing the young girls.

The kiss must be the expression of a particular passion. When a brother and sister who are twins kiss each other, it is not an authentic kiss. The same holds for a kiss paid in Christmas games, also for a stolen kiss. A kiss is a symbolic act that is meaningless if devoid of the feeling it is supposed to signify, and this feeling can be present only under specific conditions.

If one wants to try to classify kisses, numerous possible principles of classification come to mind. The kiss can be classified according to sound. Unfortunately, language does not have an adequate range

for my observations. I do not believe all the languages of the world have the stock of onomatopoeia necessary to designate the variations I have come across just in my uncle's house. Sometimes it is a smacking sound, sometimes whistling, sometimes slushy, sometimes explosive, sometimes booming, sometimes full, sometimes hollow, sometimes like calico, etc. etc.

The kiss can be classified according to touch—the tangential kiss, the kiss *en passant*, and the clinging kiss.

The kiss can be classified according to time as short or long. In the category of time, there is another classification, really the only one I like. A distinction is made between the first kiss and all the others. What is under consideration here cannot be used as the measure of what appears in the other classifications—it has nothing to do with sound, touch, time in general. The first kiss is qualitatively different from all others. Very few people think about this. It would be a shame if there were not even one who thinks about it.

My Cordelia,

A good answer is like a sweet kiss, says Solomon.[78] As you know, I have a weakness for asking questions; I may almost be censured for it. This happens because people do not understand what I am asking about, for you and you alone understand what I am asking about, and you and you alone know how to answer, and you and you alone know how to give a good

answer, for, as Solomon says, a good answer is like a sweet kiss. *Your Johannes*

There is a difference between the mental erotic and the earthly erotic. Until now, I have tried mainly to develop the mental kind in Cordelia. My personal presence must be different now, not just the accompanying mood; it must be tempting. These days, I have been continually preparing myself by reading the well-known passage in the *Phaedrus*[79] about erotic love. It electrifies my whole being and is an excellent prelude. Plato really had knowledge of the erotic.

My Cordelia,

The Latinist says of an attentive pupil that he hangs on his teacher's lips. For love, everything is a symbol; in recompense, the symbol in turn is actuality. Am I not a diligent, attentive pupil? But you do not say a word. *Your Johannes*

If anyone other than I were directing this development, he presumably would be too sagacious to let himself direct. If I were to consult an initiate among those who are engaged, he would no doubt say with a great flourish of erotic audacity: In these gradations of love, I seek in vain for the Chladni figure[80] in which the lovers converse about their love. I would answer: I am pleased that you look in vain, for the figure does not belong within the scope of the essentially erotic, not even when the interesting is drawn into it. Erotic love is much too substantial to be satis-

fied with chatter, the erotic situations much too significant to be filled with chatter. They are silent, still, definitely outlined, and yet eloquent, like the music of Memnon's statue.[81] Eros gesticulates, does not speak; or if he does, it is an enigmatic intimation, symbolic music. The erotic situations are always either sculptural or pictorial, but two people speaking together about their love is neither sculptural nor pictorial. But the solid engaged couple always begin with such chitchat, which goes on to become the thread that holds their loquacious marriage together. This chitchat is also the beginning of the dowry Ovid mentions: *dos est uxoria lites* [the dowry of a wife is quarreling][82] and the guarantee that their marriage will not lack it. —If there must be speaking, it is sufficient that one person does it. The man should do the speaking and therefore ought to possess some of the powers in the girdle of Venus[83] with which she beguiled: conversation and sweet flattery, that is, the power to ingratiate. —It by no means follows that Eros is mute, or that it would be erotically improper to converse, provided that the conversation itself is erotic and does not wander off into edifying observations on life's prospects etc. and that the conversation is actually regarded as a respite from the erotic action, a diversion, not as the ultimate. Such a conversation, such a *confabulatio* [fantasizing together], is entirely divine by nature, and I can never become bored conversing with a young girl. That is, I can become weary of a particular young girl, but never of conversing with a young girl. That is just as impossible for me as it is to become weary of breathing. What is really the distinc-

tive characteristic of such speaking together is the vegetative flowering of conversation. The conversation keeps contact with the earth, has no actual subject; the accidental is the law of its movements—but daisy [*Tusindfryd*, thousand delights] is its name and the name of what it produces.

My Cordelia,

"My—Your"—those words, like parentheses, enclose the paltry content of my letters. Have you noticed that the distance between its arms is becoming shorter? O my Cordelia! It is nevertheless beautiful that the emptier the parenthesis becomes the more momentous it is.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

Is an embrace a struggle?

Your Johannes

Usually Cordelia keeps silent. This has always made me happy. She has too deep a womanly nature to pester one with hiatuses, a mode of speaking especially characteristic of women and unavoidable when the man who should supply the preceding or succeeding circumscribing consonant is just as feminine. But at times a single brief remark betrays how much dwells within her [redacted]her. It is as if behind a person, who with an unsure hand hastily made a few strokes in a drawing, there stood another person who every time made something vivid and finished out of it. She herself is surprised, and yet it is as if it belonged to her. This is why I watch over her, over

every chance remark, every casual word, and as I give it back to her it always becomes something more significant, which she both recognizes and does not recognize.

Today we were at a party. We had not exchanged a word with each other. We rose from the table; then a servant came in and told Cordelia that there was a messenger who wished to speak with her. This messenger was from me, bringing a letter alluding to a remark I had made at the table. I had managed to introduce it into the general dinner conversation in such a way that Cordelia, although she sat some distance from me, was bound to hear it and misunderstand it. The letter was composed with this in mind. If I had been unable to turn the dinner conversation in that direction, I would have been present at the designated time to confiscate the letter. She came in again and had to tell a little white lie. Such things consolidate the erotic secretiveness without which she cannot walk the path assigned to her.

My Cordelia,

Do you believe that the person who pillows his head on an elf-hillock sees the image of an elf-girl in his dreams? I do not know, but this I do know—when I rest my head upon your breast and then do not close my eyes but look up, I see an angel's face. Do you believe that the person who leans his head against an elf-hillock cannot lie quietly? I do not think so, but this I do know—that when my head inclines upon

your bosom it is too deeply stirred for sleep to alight upon my eyes. *Your Johannes*

Jacta est alea [The die is cast].[84] Now the turn must be made. I was with her today but was completely engrossed in thinking about an idea that totally occupied me. I had neither eyes nor ears for her. The idea itself was interesting and captivated her. Furthermore, it would have been incorrect to begin the new operation by being cold in her presence. After I have gone and the thought no longer occupies her, she will easily discover that I was different from what I have usually been. Because she discovers this change in her solitude, the discovery will be much more painful for her, will work its effect more slowly but all the more penetratingly. She cannot promptly flare up, and when she does have a chance she will already have thought out so much to say that she cannot say it all at once but will always retain a remnant of doubt. The disquietude mounts, the letters stop coming, the erotic rations are diminished, erotic love is mocked as something ludicrous. Perhaps she goes along with it for a time, but in the long run she cannot endure it. Then she will want to make me captive with the same means I have employed against her—with the erotic.

On the subject of breaking an engagement, every little miss is a great casuist, and although in the schools there is no course on the subject, every little slip of a girl is superbly informed when the question is under what circumstances an engagement should

be broken. This really ought to be the standing question in the senior examination, and although I know that generally the papers written in girls' schools are very much the same, I am sure that there would be no lack of variety here, since the issue itself opens a wide field to a girl's acuteness. And why should a young girl not be given the opportunity to use her acuteness in the most brilliant manner? Or will she not precisely thereby have the opportunity to show that she is mature enough—to become engaged? I once witnessed a situation that interested me very much. One day, the parents in a family I sometimes visited were absent; however, the two daughters of the household had invited a circle of girl friends for morning coffee. There were eight in all, between the ages of sixteen and twenty. Very likely they had not expected a visit—in fact, the maid even had orders to say they were not at home. But I went in and clearly perceived that they were somewhat surprised. God knows what eight young girls like that discuss in such a solemn synodical meeting. At times, married women also convene in similar meetings. Then they discourse on pastoral theology, discussing in particular such important questions as: under what circumstances it is all right to allow a maidservant to go to market alone; whether it is better to have a charge account at the butcher's or to pay cash; the likelihood that the kitchenmaid has a sweetheart; how to eliminate all this sweetheart traffic that delays the cooking.

I found my place in this beautiful cluster. It was very early in the spring. The sun sent out a few odd shafts of light as express messengers of its arrival. In-

side the apartment, everything was wintry, and for that very reason the sun's rays were so portentous. The coffee shed fragrance at the table, and the young girls themselves were happy, healthy, blooming—and hilarious, for their anxiety had quickly subsided. What was there to be afraid of, after all; in a way they were strong in manpower. I managed to direct their attention and conversation to the question: under what circumstances should an engagement be broken. While my eyes delighted in flitting from one flower to the next in this circle of girls, delighted in resting now on this beauty, now on that one, my outer ears delighted in reveling in the enjoyment of the music of their voices, and my inner ears delighted in listening closely to what was said. A single word was frequently enough for me to gain a deep insight into such a girl's heart and its history. How seductive are the ways of love, and how interesting to explore how far along the way the individual is. I continually fanned the flames; brilliance, wit, esthetic objectivity contributed to making the situation more relaxed, and yet everything remained within the bounds of the strictest propriety. While we jested this way in the regions of light conversation, there slumbered the possibility of putting the good maidens into a disastrously awkward situation with a single word. This possibility was in my power. The girls did not comprehend this, had scarcely an inkling of this. It was kept submerged at all times by the easy play of conversation, just as Scheherazade[85] held off the death sentence by telling stories.

Sometimes I led the conversation to the edge of

sadness; sometimes I let flippancy break loose; sometimes I tempted them out into a dialectical game. Indeed, what subject contains greater multiplicity, all according to how one looks at it. I continually introduced new themes. —I told of a girl whom the parents' cruelty had forced to break an engagement. The unhappy collision almost brought tears to their eyes. —I told of a man who had broken an engagement and had given two grounds: that the girl was too big and that he had not knelt before her when he confessed his love. When I protested to him that they could not possibly be regarded as adequate grounds, he replied, "Well, they are quite adequate to achieve what I want, for no one can give a reasonable reply to them." —I submitted a very difficult case for the assembly's consideration. A young girl broke her engagement because she felt sure that she and her sweetheart were not compatible. The lover sought to bring her to her senses by assuring her how much he loved her; whereupon she answered: Either we are compatible and there is a real sympathy, and in that case you will perceive that we are not compatible, or we are not compatible, and in that case you will perceive that we are not compatible. It was amusing to see how the girls cudgeled their brains to grasp this enigmatic talk, and yet I clearly noticed that there were a couple of them who understood it superbly, for on the subject of breaking an engagement every young miss is a born casuist. —Yes, I really do believe it would be easier for me to argue with the devil himself than with a young girl when the topic is: under what circumstances should an engagement be broken.

Today I was with her. Precipitously, with the speed of thought, I immediately turned the conversation to the same subject with which I had occupied her yesterday, once again trying to make her enraptured. "Yesterday, after I had gone, I thought of something I would have said." It worked. As long as I am with her, she enjoys listening to me; after I am gone, she perceives very well that she is being deceived, that I am different. In this way one withdraws one's shares of stock. It is a disingenuous method but very expedient, as are all indirect methods. She can very well understand that something such as we are discussing can occupy me; indeed, she herself finds it interesting at the moment, and yet I am cheating her of the essentially erotic.

Oderint, dum metuant [Let them hate me, so they but fear me],[86] as if only fear and hate belong together, whereas fear and love have nothing to do with each other, as if it were not fear that makes love interesting. With what kind of love do we embrace nature? Is there not a secretive anxiety and horror in it, because its beautiful harmony works its way out of lawlessness and wild confusion, its security out of perfidy? But precisely this anxiety captivates the most. So also with love, if it is to be interesting. Behind it ought to brood the deep, anxious night from which springs the flower of love. Thus the *nymphaea alba* [white water lily] rests with its calyx on the surface of the water, while thought is anxious about plunging down into the deep darkness where it has its root. —I have noticed that she always calls me "my" when she

writes to me but does not have the courage to say it to me. Today, with as much insinuating and erotic warmth as possible, I beseeched her to do so. She began to do so; an ironic look, briefer and swifter than it takes to say it, was enough to make it impossible for her, although my lips did their utmost to encourage her. This mood is normal.

She is mine. This I do not confide to the stars, according to custom; I really do not see of what concern this information can be to those remote globes. Neither do I confide it to any human being, not even to Cordelia. This secret I keep to myself alone, whisper it, as it were, into myself in the most secretive conversations with myself. Her attempted resistance to me was not particularly great, but the erotic power she displays is admirable. How interesting she is in this profound passionateness, how great she is—almost larger than life! How agile she is in escaping, how adroit in insinuating herself wherever she discovers a weak point! Everything is set in motion, but I find myself right in my element in this rioting of the elements. And yet even in this agitation she is by no means unbeautiful, not torn to pieces in moods, not split up into fragments. She is always an Aphrodite, except that she does not rise up in naïve loveliness or in *unbefangen* [disinterested] tranquillity but is stirred by the strong pulsebeat of erotic love, although she nevertheless is unity and balance. Erotically, she is fully equipped for battle; she fights with the arrows of her eyes, with the command of her brow, with the secretiveness of her forehead, with the eloquence of

her bosom, with the dangerous enticements of her embrace, with the appeal of her lips, with the smile of her cheeks, with the sweet longing of her whole being. There is a power in her, an energy, as if she were a Valkyrie, but this erotic plenitude of power is tempered in turn by a certain pining languor that suffuses her. —She must not be kept too long at this pinnacle where only anxiety and uneasiness support her and keep her from plunging down. Emotions such as these will soon make her feel that the engagement is too constricted, too hampering. She will herself become the temptress who seduces me into going beyond the boundary of the universal; in this way she will become conscious of it herself, and for me that is primary.

Quite a few remarks dropped from her side to indicate that she is tired of the engagement. They do not pass my ear unnoticed; they are the reconnoiterers of my enterprise in her soul that give me informative clues; they are the ends of the threads by which I am spinning her into my plan.

My Cordelia,

You complain about the engagement; you think that our love does not need an external bond, which is only a hindrance. I thereby recognize at once my excellent Cordelia! I truly do admire you. Our outward union is still only a separation. There is still a partition that keeps us apart like Pyramus and Thisbe.[87] There is still the disturbance of having others share our

secret. Only in contrast is there freedom. Only when no alien suspects our love, only then does it have meaning; only when all outsiders think that the lovers hate each other, only then is love happy. *Your Johannes*

Soon the bond of the engagement will be broken. She herself will be the one who dissolves it, in order by this dissolution to captivate me even more, if possible, just as flowing locks captivate more than those that are bound up. If I broke the engagement, I would miss out on this erotic somersault, which is so seductive to look at and such a sure sign of the audacity of her soul. For me, that is primary. Moreover, the whole incident would create for me some unpleasant consequences in connection with other people. I shall become unpopular, detested, loathed, although unjustly so, for would not many people derive some advantage from it? There is many a little miss who, failing to become engaged, would still be quite content to have been close to it. After all, it is something, even though, to tell the truth, exceedingly little, for just when one has elbowed forward this way in order to obtain a place on the waiting list [*Exspectance-List*], the prospects [*Exspectance*] are dim; the higher one moves up, the further one advances, the dimmer the prospects. In the world of love, the principle of seniority does not hold with respect to advancement and promotion. In addition, such a little miss is bored by holding undivided possession of the property; she wants her life to be stirred by some event. But what can compare with an unhappy love affair, especially

when, in addition, one can take the whole thing so lightly. So one makes oneself and the neighbors believe that one is among the victimized, and, not qualified to be accepted into a home for fallen women, one takes lodging next door as a wailer. People are duty-bound to hate me.

In addition, there is still a class of those whom someone has deceived totally, one-half, or three-quarters. There are many gradations here, from those who have a ring as evidence to those who hang their hats on a handclasp in a square dance. Their wound is torn open again by the new pain. I accept their hate as a bonus. But, of course, all these haters are the same as crypto-lovers to my poor heart. A king without any territory is a ludicrous character, but a war of succession among a mob of pretenders to a kingdom without any territory goes beyond even the most ludicrous. Thus I really ought to be loved and cared for by the fair sex as a pawnshop is. A person who is actually engaged can take care of only one, but such an extensive potentiality can take care of, that is, up to a point take care of, as many as you please. I escape all this finite nonsense and also have the advantage of being able to appear to others in a totally new role. The young girls will feel sorry for me, pity me, sigh for me. I play in the very same key, and in this way one can also make a catch.

Strangely enough, right now I note with distress that I am getting the sign of denunciation Horace wished upon every faithless girl—a black tooth,[88] moreover, a front one. How superstitious one can be!

The tooth really disturbs me; I dislike any reference to it—it is a weak point I have. Although I am fully armed everywhere else, here even the biggest lout can give me a jolt that goes far deeper than he thinks when he refers to the tooth. I do everything to whiten it, but in vain. I say with Palnatoke:

> I am rubbing it by day, by night,
> But cannot wipe out that black shadow.[89]

Life does indeed have extraordinarily much that is enigmatic. Such a little circumstance can disturb me more than the most dangerous attack, the most painful situation. I would have it pulled out, but that would affect my speaking and the power of my voice. But if I do have it pulled out, I will have a false one put in—that is, it will be false to the world; the black one was false to me.

It is superb that Cordelia takes exception to an engagement. Marriage still is and will continue to be an honorable institution, even though it does have the wearisome aspect of enjoying already in its youth a share of the honor that age provides. An engagement, however, is a strictly human invention and as such is so significant and so ludicrous that on the one hand it is entirely appropriate that a young girl in the tumult of passion overrides it, and yet on the other hand she feels its significance, perceives the energy of her soul as a higher blood system everywhere present in herself. The point now is to guide her in such a way that in her bold flight she entirely loses sight of marriage and the continent of actuality, so that her soul, as

much in pride as in her anxiety about losing me, will destroy an imperfect human form in order to hurry on to something that is superior to the ordinarily human. But in this regard, I need have no fear, for her movement across life is already so light and buoyant that actuality has already been lost sight of to a large extent. Moreover, I am indeed continually on board and can always stretch out the sails.

Woman still is and will continue to be an inexhaustible subject for contemplation for me, an everlasting overabundance for observations. The person who feels no need for this study can be whatever he wants to be in the world as far as I am concerned, but one thing he is not, he is no esthetician. What is glorious and divine about esthetics is that it is associated only with the beautiful; essentially it deals only with belles lettres and the fair sex. It can give me joy, it can joy my heart, to imagine the sun of womanhood sending out its rays in an infinite multiplicity, radiating into a confusion of languages, where each woman has a little share of the whole kingdom of womanhood, yet in such a way that the remainder found in her harmoniously forms around this point. In this sense, womanly beauty is infinitely divisible. But the specific share of beauty must be harmoniously controlled, for otherwise it has a disturbing effect, and one comes to think that nature intended something with this girl, but that nothing ever came of it.

My eyes can never grow weary of quickly passing over this peripheral multiplicity, these radiating emanations of womanly beauty. Every particular point

has its little share and yet is complete in itself, happy, joyous, beautiful. Each one has her own: the cheerful smile, the roguish glance, the yearning eye, the tilted head, the frolicsome disposition, the quiet sadness, the profound presentiment, the ominous depression, the earthly homesickness, the unshriven emotions, the beckoning brow, the questioning lips, the secretive forehead, the alluring curls, the concealing eyelashes, the heavenly pride, the earthly modesty, the angelic purity, the secret blush, the light step, the lovely buoyancy, the languorous posture, the longing dreaminess, the unaccountable sighing, the slender figure, the soft curves, the opulent bosom, the curving hips, the tiny feet, the elegant hands.

Each one has her own, and the one does not have what the other has. When I have seen and seen again, observed and observed again, the multiplicity of this world, when I have smiled, sighed, flattered, threatened, desired, tempted, laughed, cried, hoped, feared, won, lost—then I fold up the fan, then what is scattered gathers itself together into a unity, the parts into a whole. Then my soul rejoices, my heart pounds, passion is aroused. This one girl, the one and only in all the world, she must belong to me; she must be mine. Let God keep his heaven if I may keep her.[90] I know very well what I am choosing; it is something so great that heaven itself cannot be served by sharing in this way, for what would be left in heaven if I kept her? The hopes of believing Mohammedans would be disappointed if in their paradise they embraced pale, feeble shadows, because they would not be able to find warm hearts, since all the warmth of

the heart would be concentrated in her breast; they would despair inconsolably when they found pale lips, lusterless eyes, an inert bosom, a weak handclasp, for all the redness of the lips and fire of the eye and restlessness of the bosom and promise of the handclasp and intimation of the sighing and seal of the lips and quivering of the touch and passion of the embrace—all—all would be united in her, who squandered on me what would be sufficient for a world both here and to come.

I have often thought on the matter in this way, but every time I think thus I always become warm because I imagine her as warm. Although warmth is generally considered a good sign, it does not follow from this that my mode of thinking will be conceded the honorable predicate that it is sound. Therefore, for variety, I, myself cold, shall imagine her as cold. I shall attempt to consider woman categorically. In which category is she to be placed? In the category of being-for-other.[91] But this is not to be taken in the bad sense, as if one who is for me is also for an other. Here one must, as always in abstract thinking, abstain from every consideration of experience, for otherwise in the present instance I would in a curious way have experience both for and against me. Here as everywhere, experience is a curious character, for its nature is always to be both for and against. So she is being-for-other. Here in turn, from a different angle, we must not let ourselves be disturbed by experience, which teaches us that very seldom do we meet a woman who is truly being-for-other, since the great majority usually are not entities at all, either for them-

selves or for others. She shares this qualification with all nature, with all femininity in general. All nature is only for-other in this way, not in the teleological sense, in such a way that one specific segment of nature is for a different specific segment, but the whole of nature is for-other—is for spirit. It is the same again with the particular. Plant life, for example, in all naïveté unfolds its hidden charms and is only for-other. Likewise, an enigma, a charade, a secret, a vowel, etc. are merely being-for-other. This explains why God, when he created Eve, had a deep sleep fall upon Adam, for woman is man's dream. The story teaches us in another way that woman is being-for-other. That is, it says that Jehovah took one of man's ribs. If he had, for example, taken from man's brain, woman would certainly have continued to be being-for-other, but the purpose was not that she should be a figment of the brain but something quite different. She became flesh and blood, but precisely thereby she falls within the category of nature, which essentially is being-for-other. Not until she is touched by erotic love does she awaken; before that time she is a dream. But in this dream existence two stages can be distinguished: in the first, love dreams about her; in the second, she dreams about love.

As being-for-other, woman is characterized by pure virginity. That is, virginity is a being that, insofar as it is being-for-itself, is actually an abstraction and manifests itself only for-other. Feminine innocence has the same characteristic. Therefore, it can be said that woman in this state is invisible. It is well known that there was no image of Vesta,[92] the goddess who most

closely represented true virginity. In other words, this form of existence is esthetically jealous of itself, just as Jehovah is ethically jealous,[93] and does not want any image to exist or even any idea of one. This is the contradiction—that which is for-other *is* not and, so to speak, first becomes visible through the other. Logically, this contradiction is entirely in order, and one who knows how to think logically will not be disturbed by it but will rejoice over it. But one who thinks illogically will imagine that whatever is being-for-other *is* in the same finite sense as one can say of a particular thing: That is something for me.

Woman's being (the word "existence"[94] already says too much, for she does not subsist out of herself) is correctly designated as gracefulness, an expression that is reminiscent of vegetative life; she is like a flower, as the poets are fond of saying,[95] and even the intellectual [*aandelige*] is present in her in a vegetative way. She belongs altogether to the category of nature and for this reason is free only esthetically. In the deeper sense, she first becomes free [*fri*] through man, and therefore we say "to propose [*at frie*]," and therefore man proposes. If he proposes properly, there can be no question of any choice. To be sure, woman chooses, but if this choice is thought of as the result of a long deliberation, then that kind of choosing is unwomanly. Therefore, it is a disgrace to be rejected, because the individual involved has overrated himself, has wanted to make another free without having the capacity to do so.

In this relation there is profound irony. That which is for-other has the appearance of being dominant;

man proposes, woman chooses. According to her concept, woman is the vanquished and man, according to his concept, the victor, and yet the victor submits to the defeated one; nevertheless this is altogether natural, and it is sheer boorishness, stupidity, and lack of erotic sensitivity to disregard that which follows directly as a matter of course. This also has a deeper basis, namely, that woman is substance, man is reflection. Therefore, she does not choose without further ado; rather, man proposes, she chooses. But man's proposal is a questioning; her choosing is actually an answer to a question. In a certain sense, man is more than woman, in another sense infinitely much less.

This being-for-other is the pure virginity. If it makes an attempt itself to be in relation to another being that is being-for-it, then the opposite manifests itself in an absolute coyness, but this opposite also shows that woman's true being is being-for-other. The diametrical opposite of absolute devotedness is absolute coyness, which conversely is invisible as the abstraction against which everything breaks, although the abstraction does not therefore come to life. Womanliness now assumes the quality of abstract cruelty, which is the caricaturing extreme of essential virginal *Sprödigkeit* [coyness]. A man can never be as cruel as a woman. A search of mythology, folktales, legends will confirm this. If a representation is to be given of a principle of nature that in its ruthlessness knows no limits, then it is a feminine creature. Or one is terrified to read about a young girl who callously has her suitors liquidated, as one so frequently reads in the

fairy tales of all peoples. On the wedding night, a Bluebeard kills all the girls he has loved, but he does not enjoy the killing of them; on the contrary, the enjoyment was antecedent, and therein lies the concretion—it is not cruelty for the sake of cruelty alone. A Don Juan seduces them and abandons them, but he has enjoyment not in abandoning them but rather in seducing them; therefore, it is in no way this abstract cruelty.

The more I deliberate on the matter, the more I see that my practice is in complete harmony with my theory. My practice, namely, has always been imbued with the conviction that woman is essentially being-for-other. The moment is so very significant here because being-for-other is always a matter of the moment. A longer or shorter time may pass before the moment arrives, but as soon as it has arrived, then that which originally was being-for-other assumes a relative being, and with that everything is finished. I am well aware that husbands sometimes say that woman is being-for-other in a quite different sense, that she is everything for them for the whole of life. Allowances must be made for husbands. I do believe that this is something that they make each other believe. Every class in life ordinarily has certain conventional ways and especially certain conventional lies. This traveler's tale must be reckoned as one of those. To have an understanding of the moment is not such an easy matter, and the one who misunderstands it is doomed to boredom for life. The moment is everything, and in the moment woman is everything; the consequences I do not understand. One such conse-

quence is having a child. Now, I fancy myself to be a fairly consistent thinker, but even if I were to go mad, I am not the man to think that consequence. I do not understand it at all—it takes a married man for such things.

Yesterday, Cordelia and I visited a family at their summer home. The people spent most of the time in the garden, where we amused ourselves with all kinds of physical exercise. One of the games we played was quoits [*Ring*]. When another gentleman who had been playing with Cordelia left, I seized the opportunity to take his place. What a wealth of loveliness she displayed, even more seductive in the graceful exertions of the game! What lovely harmony in the self-contradictions of her movements! How light she was, like a dance across the meadow! How vigorous, yet without needing resistance; how deceptive until her balance accounted for everything! How dithyrambic her demeanor, how provocative her glance! Naturally, the game itself had a special interest for me. Cordelia did not seem to notice it. An allusion I made to one of those present about the beautiful custom of exchanging rings struck her soul like a lightning bolt. From that moment, a higher explanation pervaded the whole situation, a deeper significance permeated it, a heightened energy inflamed her. I had both rings on my stick; I paused for a moment, exchanged a few words with those standing around us. She understood this pause. I tossed the rings to her again. A moment later, she caught both of them on her stick. She tossed both of them straight up into the air simultaneously, as if inadvertently, so that it was

impossible for me to catch them. This toss was accompanied by a look filled with unbounded daredeviltry. There is a story of a French soldier who had been in the Russian campaign and had to have his leg amputated because of gangrene. The very moment the agonizing operation was over, he seized the leg by the sole of the foot, tossed it up into the air, and shouted: *Vive l'empereur* [Long live the emperor]. With a look such as that, she, even more beautiful than ever before, tossed both rings up into the air and said to herself: Long live erotic love. I deemed it inadvisable, however, to let her run riot in this mood or to leave her alone with it, out of fear of the letdown that often comes on its heels. Therefore, I remained very cool, as if I had noticed nothing, and with the help of those present constrained her to keep on playing. Such behavior only gives her more elasticity.

If any sympathy with explorations of this kind could be expected in our age, I would pose this question for a prize essay: From the esthetic point of view, who is more modest, a young girl or a young wife, the inexperienced or the experienced; to whom does one dare to grant more freedom? But such things do not concern our earnest age. In Greece, such an investigation would have prompted universal attention; the whole state would have been set in motion, especially the young girls and the young wives. Our age would not believe this, but neither would our age believe it if it were told of the celebrated contest held between two Greek maidens[96] and the very painstaking investigation it occasioned, for in Greece such

problems were not treated casually and light-mindedly, and yet everyone knows that Venus has an extra name on account of this contest and that everyone admires the statue of Venus that has immortalized her.

A married woman has two periods of her life in which she is interesting: her very earliest youth and again at long last when she has become very much older. But she also has a moment, and this must not be denied her, when she is even lovelier than a young girl, inspires even more honor. But this is a moment that seldom occurs in life; it is a picture for the imagination that does not need to be seen in life and perhaps is never seen. I imagine her as healthy, blooming, amply developed; in her arms she is holding a child, to whom all her attention is given, in the contemplation of whom she is absorbed. It is a picture that must be called the loveliest that human life has to display; it is a nature myth, which therefore may be seen only in artistic portrayal, not in actuality. There must be no more figures in the picture either, no setting, which only interferes. If one goes to our churches, one will often have occasion to see a mother appear with a child in her arms. Apart from the disquieting crying of the child, apart from the uneasy thought about the parents' expectations for the little one's future based upon this crying of the infant, the surroundings in themselves interfere so much that even if everything else were perfect the effect would nevertheless be lost. The father is visible—a huge defect, since that cancels the myth, the charm. The earnest chorus of sponsors is visible—*horrenda refero* [I

report dreadful things][97]—and one sees nothing at all. Presented as a picture for the imagination, it is the loveliest of all. I do not lack the boldness and dash, or the brashness, to venture an assault—but if I were to see such a picture in actuality, I would be disarmed.

How Cordelia preoccupies me! And yet the time will soon be over; my soul always requires rejuvenation. I already hear, as it were, the rooster crowing in the distance. Perhaps she hears it, too, but she believes it is heralding the morning. —Why does a young girl have such beauty, and why does it last such a short time? That thought could make me very melancholy, and yet it is really none of my business. Enjoy—do not chatter. Ordinarily, people who make a profession of such deliberations do not enjoy at all. But it does no harm to think about it, because this sadness—not for oneself but for others—usually makes one a bit more handsome in a masculine way. A sadness that like a veil of mist deceptively obscures manly strength is part of the masculine erotic. A certain depression in woman corresponds to this.

As soon as a girl has devoted herself completely, the whole thing is finished. I still always approach a young girl with a certain anxiety; my heart pounds, for I sense the eternal power that is in her nature. It has never occurred to me face to face with a married woman. The little bit of resistance she artfully seeks to make is nothing. It is like saying that the married woman's housecap is more impressive than the young girl's uncovered head. That is why Diana[98] has always been my ideal. This pure virginity, this absolute coy-

ness, has always occupied me very much. But although she has always held my attention, I have also always kept a suspicious eye on her. That is, I assume that she actually has not deserved all the eulogies upon her virginity that she has reaped. She knew, namely, that her game in life is bound up with her virginity; therefore it is preserved. To this is added that in a philological nook of the world I have heard murmurings that she had some idea of the terrible birth pangs her mother had experienced. This had frightened her, and for that I cannot blame Diana. I say with Euripides: I would rather go into battle three times than give birth once.[9] I really could not fall in love with Diana, but I do not deny that I would give a lot for a talk with her, for what I would call a candid conversation. She must have a bag full of all kinds of tricks. Obviously my good Diana in one way or another has knowledge that makes her far less naïve than even Venus. I would not bother to spy on her in her bath, by no means, but I would like to spy on her with my questions. If I were sneaking off to a rendezvous where I had fears for my victory, I would prepare myself and arm myself, activate the spirits of the erotic by conversing with her.

A question that has frequently been the subject of my consideration is: which situation, which moment, may be regarded as the most seductive? The answer, of course, depends upon what and how one desires and how one is developed. I claim that it is the wedding day, and especially a particular moment. When she is standing there adorned as a bride, and all her

splendor nevertheless pales before her beauty, and she herself in turn grows pale, when the blood stops, when the bosom is motionless, when the glance falters, when the foot hesitates, when the maiden trembles, when the fruit matures; when the heavens lift her up, when the solemnity strengthens her, when the promise carries her, when the prayer blesses her, when the myrtle crowns her; when the heart trembles, when the eyes drop, when she hides within herself, when she does not belong to the world in order to belong to it entirely; when the bosom swells, when the creation sighs, when the voice fails, when the tear quivers before the riddle is explained, when the torch is lit, when the bridegroom awaits—then the moment is present. Soon it is too late. There is only one step left, but this is just enough for a stumble. This moment makes even an insignificant girl significant; even a little Zerlina[100] becomes something. Everything must be gathered together, the greatest contrasts united in the moment; if something is lacking, especially one of the primary opposites, the situation promptly loses part of its seductiveness. There is a well-known etching that portrays a penitent.[101] She looks so young and so innocent that one is almost embarrassed for her and the father confessor—what can she really have to confess? She lifts her veil slightly and looks out at the world as if she were seeking something that she perhaps could have the opportunity of confessing on a later occasion, and obviously it is nothing more than an obligation out of solicitude for—the father confessor. The situation is very seductive, and since she is the only figure in the picture there is nothing to pre-

vent imagining the church in which all this takes place as being so spacious that several and very dissimilar preachers could preach there simultaneously. The situation is very seductive, and I have no objection to introducing myself into the background, especially if this slip of a girl has nothing against it. But it nevertheless remains a very minor situation, for the girl seems to be but a child in both respects, and consequently it will take time for the moment to arrive.

In my relation to Cordelia, have I been continually faithful to my pact? That is, my pact with the esthetic, for it is that which makes me strong—that I continually have the idea on my side. It is a secret like Samson's hair, one that no Delilah can wrest from me.[102] Plainly and simply to deceive a girl, for that I certainly would not have the stamina; but the fact that the idea is present in motion, that I am acting in its service, that I dedicate myself to its service—this gives me rigorousness toward myself, abstinence from every forbidden pleasure. Has the interesting been preserved at all times? Yes—I dare to say that freely and openly in this secret conversation. The engagement itself was the interesting precisely because it did not yield that which is commonly understood as the interesting. It preserved the interesting precisely through the contradiction between the outward appearance and the inner life. If I had had a secret connection with her, it would have been interesting only to the first power. But this is the interesting raised to the second power, and therefore only then is it the interesting for her. The engagement is broken,

but she herself breaks it in order to soar into a higher sphere. So it should be; this is precisely the form of the interesting that will occupy her the most.

September 16

The bond has broken—full of longing, strong, bold, divine, she flies like a bird that now for the first time is allowed to spread its wings. Fly, bird, fly![103] Truly, if this regal flight were a retreat from me, it would pain me very deeply. For me it would be the same as if Pygmalion's beloved were changed to stone again.[104] Light have I made her, light as a thought, and should then this thought of mine not belong to me! It would be enough to despair over. A moment before, it would not have occupied me; a moment later, it will not concern me, but now—now—this now that is an eternity for me. But she is not flying away from me. Fly, then, bird, fly, rise proudly on your wings, glide through the delicate aerial kingdom; soon I shall be with you, soon I shall hide myself with you in deep solitude.

The aunt was rather astonished at this news. But she is too broad-minded to want to coerce Cordelia, even though I have made some attempt to engage her interest on my behalf—partly to lull her into a deeper sleep and partly to tease Cordelia a little. She is, however, very sympathetic toward me; she does not suspect how much reason I have to decline all sympathy.

She has received permission from her aunt to spend some time out in the country; she will visit a family. Fortunately, it so happens that she cannot immediately surrender to a glut of moods. For some time

yet, she will be kept in tension by all kinds of resistance from without. I keep up a slight communication with her through letters; in that way our relationship is coming to life again. She must now be made strong in every way; in particular it is best to let her make a couple of flourishes of eccentric contempt for men and for the universal. Then when the day for her departure arrives, a trustworthy fellow will show up as the driver. Outside the city gate, my highly trusted servant will join them. He will accompany them to their destination and remain with her to wait on her and help her in case of need. Next to myself, I know of no one better suited for that than Johan. I have personally arranged everything out there as tastefully as possible. Nothing is lacking that in any way can serve to beguile her soul and pacify it in luxuriant well-being.

My Cordelia,

Yet the cries of "Fire!" in individual families have not joined in a universal Capitolinian confusion of citywide shrieking.[105] Probably you have already had to put up with a few solos. Imagine the whole gaggle of teatime talebearers and coffee gossips; imagine a presiding chairwoman, a worthy counterpart to that immortal President Lars in Claudius,[106] and you have a picture of and a notion of and a measure of what you have lost and with whom: the opinion of good people.

Enclosed is the celebrated engraving that depicts President Lars.[107] I was unable to purchase

it separately, so I bought the complete Claudius, tore it out, and threw the rest away—for why should I venture to inconvenience you with a gift that means nothing to you at this moment; why should I not summon everything to provide what could please you for just one moment; why should I permit more to be mixed up in a situation than belongs to it? Nature has such a complexity, as does the person who is a slave to life's finite relations, but you, my Cordelia, you will in your freedom hate it.

Your Johannes

Spring is indeed the most beautiful time to fall in love, autumn the most beautiful to attain the object of one's desire. Autumn has a sadness that corresponds exactly to the movement whereby the thought of the fulfillment of a desire flows through a person. Today I myself have been out at the country house where in a few days Cordelia will find a setting that harmonizes with her soul. I myself do not wish to participate in her surprise and in her joy over it; such erotic episodes would only weaken her soul. But if she is alone in it, she will dream away; she will see hints everywhere, clues, an enchanted world. But all this would lose its significance if I were at her side; it would make her forget that for us the time is past when something like this enjoyed together had significance. This setting must not narcotically entrap her soul but continually allow it to soar aloft as she views it all as a game that means nothing compared with what is to come. During the days still remaining, I myself plan

to visit this place more often in order to keep myself in the mood.

My Cordelia,

Now I truly call you *my*; no external sign reminds me of my possession. —Soon I shall truly call you *my*. And when I hold you clasped tightly in my arms, when you enfold me in your embrace, then we shall need no ring to remind us that we belong to each other, for is not this embrace a ring that is more than a symbol? And the more tightly this ring encircles us, the more inseparably it knits us together, the greater the freedom, for your freedom consists in being mine, as my freedom consists in being yours.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

While he was hunting, Alpheus[108] fell in love with the nymph Arethusa. She would not grant his request but continually fled before him until on the island of Ortygia she was transformed into a spring. Alpheus grieved so much over this that he was transformed into a river in Elis in the Peloponnesus. He did not, however, forget his love but under the sea united with that spring. Is the time of transformations past? Answer: Is the time of love past? To what can I compare your pure, deep soul, which has no connection with the world, except to a spring? And have I not told you that I am like a river that has fallen in love? And now when we are separated, do I not plunge under the sea in or-

der to be united with you? There under the sea we shall meet again, for only in the deeps of the sea shall we really belong together.

Your Johannes

My Cordelia,

Soon, soon you will be mine. When the sun shuts its vigilant eye, when history is over and the myths begin, I will not only throw my cloak around me but I will throw the night around me like a cloak and hurry to you and listen in order to find you—listen not for your footsteps but for the beating of your heart.

Your Johannes

During these days when I cannot be with her personally when I want to be, the thought has troubled me that it may occur to her at some moment to think about the future. It has never occurred to her before, because I have known too well how to anesthetize her esthetically. There is nothing more unerotic imaginable than this chattering about the future, which is due mainly to having nothing with which to fill up present time. If only I am with her, I have no fear about such things; no doubt I shall make her forget both time and eternity. If a man does not know how to establish rapport with a girl's soul to that extent, he should never become involved in trying to beguile, for then it will be impossible to avoid the two reefs, questions about the future and catechizing about faith. Therefore, it is entirely appropriate for Gretchen in *Faust*[109] to conduct a little examination of him, since Faust had been injudicious enough to dis-

close the knight in him, and against such an assault a girl is always armed.

Now I believe that everything is arranged for her reception; she will not lack opportunity to admire my memory, or, more correctly, she will not have time to admire it. Nothing has been forgotten that could have any significance for her; on the other hand, nothing has been introduced that could directly remind her of me, although I am nevertheless invisibly present everywhere. But in large part the effect will depend upon how she happens to see it the first time. In that regard, my servant has received the most precise instructions, and in his way he is a perfect virtuoso. He knows how to drop a remark casually and nonchalantly if directed to do so; he knows how to be ignorant—in short, he is invaluable to me.

The location is just as she would like it. Sitting in the center of the room, one can look out on two sides beyond everything in the foreground; there is the limitless horizon on both sides; one is alone in the vast ocean of the atmosphere. If one moves nearer to a row of windows, a forest [*Skov*] looms far off on the horizon like a garland, bounding and inclosing. So it should be. What does erotic love [*Elskov*] love? —An enclosure. Was not paradise itself an enclosed place, a garden facing east?[110] —But it hedges one in too closely, this ring. One moves closer to the window—a calm lake hides humbly within the higher surroundings. At the edge there is a boat. A sigh out of the heart's fullness, a breath from the mind's unrest. It works loose from its mooring, glides over the surface of the lake, gently moved by the soft breeze of inef-

fable longing. Rocked on the surface of the lake, which is dreaming about the deep darkness of the forest, one vanishes in the mysterious solitude of the forest. —One turns to the other side, where the sea spreads out before one's eyes, which are stopped by nothing and are pursued by thoughts that nothing detains. What does erotic love love? Infinity. —What does erotic love fear? Boundaries.

Beyond this large room lies a smaller room or, more correctly, a private room, for this was what the drawing room in the Wahl house approximated. The resemblance is striking. Matting woven of a special kind of willow covers the floor; in front of the sofa stands a small tea table with a lamp upon it, the mate to the one there at home. Everything is the same, only more sumptuous. This change I think I can permit myself to make in the room. In the large room there is a piano, a very plain one, but it brings to mind the piano at the Jansens. It is open. On the music holder, the little Swedish melody lies open. The door to the hall is slightly ajar. She comes in through the door in the back—Johan has been instructed about that. Then her eyes simultaneously take in the private room and the piano; recollection is aroused in her soul, and at the same moment Johan opens the door. —The illusion is perfect. She enters the private room. She is pleased; of that I am convinced. As her glance falls on the table, she sees a book; at that very instant, Johan picks it up as if to put it aside as he casually remarks: The gentleman must have forgotten it when he was out here this morning. From this she learns for the

first time that I had already been there the day before, and then she wants to see the book. It is a German translation of the well-known work by Apuleius: *Amor and Psyche.* It is not a poetic work but it should not be that either, for it is always an affront to a young girl to offer her a book of real poetry, as if she at such a moment were not herself sufficiently poetic to imbibe the poetry that is immediately concealed in the factually given and that has not first gone through someone else's thought. Usually one does not think of this, and yet it is so. —She wants to read this book, and with that the goal is reached. —When she opens it to the place where it was last read, she will find a little sprig of myrtle, and she will also find that this means a little more than to be a bookmark.

My Cordelia,

What, fear? When we stay together, we are strong, stronger than the world, even stronger than the gods themselves. As you know, there once lived a race upon the earth who were human beings, to be sure, but who were self-sufficient and did not know the intensely fervent union of erotic love [*Elskov*]. Yet they were powerful, so powerful that they wanted to assault heaven. Jupiter feared them and divided them in such a way that one became two, a man and a woman.[111] If it sometimes happens that what was once united is again joined in love [*Kjærlighed*], then such a union is stronger than Jupiter; they are then not merely as strong as

the single individual was, but even stronger, for the union of love [*Kjærlighed*] is an even higher union. *Your Johannes*

September 24

The night is still—the clock strikes a quarter to twelve—the hunter at the city gate blows his benediction out across the countryside, and it echoes from Blegdam; he enters the gate—he blows again, and it echoes from still farther away. —Everything sleeps in peace, but not erotic love [*Elskov*]. Arise, then, you mysterious powers of erotic love, concentrate yourselves in this breast! The night is silent—a solitary bird breaks this silence with its cry and the beat of its wings as it sweeps over the misty field toward the slope of the embankment; no doubt it, too, is hastening to a rendezvous—*accipio omen* [I accept the omen]![112] —How ominous all nature is! I take auguries from the flight of the birds, from their cries, from the frolicsome slap of the fish on the surface of the water, from their vanishing into the depths, from the faraway baying of a dog, from the rattling of a carriage in the distance, from footsteps echoing far off. At this hour of the night, I do not see ghosts; in the bosom of the lake, in the kiss of the dew, in the fog that spreads out over the earth and hides its fertile embrace, I do not see what has been but what is to come. Everything is a metaphor; I myself am a myth about myself, for is it not as a myth that I hasten to this tryst? Who I am is irrelevant; everything finite and temporal is forgotten;

only the eternal remains, the power of erotic love, its longing, its bliss. How responsive is my soul, like a taut bow, how ready are my thoughts, like arrows in my quiver, not poisoned, and yet able to blend with blood. How vigorous, sound, and happy is my soul, as present as a god.

She was beautiful by nature. I thank you, marvelous nature! Like a mother, you have watched over her. Thank you for your solicitude. Unspoiled she was. I thank you, you human beings to whom she owed this. Her development—that was my work—soon I shall enjoy my reward. —How much I have gathered into this one moment that is now at hand! Damned if I should fail now!

As yet I do not see my carriage. —I hear the crack of the whip; it is my driver. —Drive on for dear life, even if the horses collapse, but not one second before we reach the place.

September 25

Why cannot such a night last longer? If Alectryon[113] could forget himself, why cannot the sun be sympathetic enough to do so? But now it is finished, and I never want to see her again. When a girl has given away everything, she is weak, she has lost everything, for in a man innocence is a negative element, but in woman it is the substance of her being. Now all resistance is impossible, and to love is beautiful only as long as resistance is present; as soon as it ceases, to love is weakness and habit. I do not want to

be reminded of my relationship with her; she has lost her fragrance, and the times are past when a girl agonizing over her faithless lover is changed into a heliotrope.[114] I shall not bid her farewell; nothing is more revolting than the feminine tears and pleas that alter everything and yet are essentially meaningless. I did love her, but from now on she can no longer occupy my soul. If I were a god, I would do for her what Neptune did for a nymph: transform her into a man.[115]

Yet it would really be worth knowing whether or not one could poetize oneself out of a girl in such a way as to make her so proud that she imagined it was she who was bored with the relationship. It could be a very interesting epilogue, which in and by itself could have psychological interest and besides that furnish one with many erotic observations.

Notes

1. When Ixion, king of Thessaly, who had been given refuge on Olympus by Zeus, sought to embrace Hera (Roman Juno), Zeus substituted a cloud in her shape. A monster, Centaur, was born from this union. Ixion was chained to a fiery wheel in Hades as punishment for his act.

2. See, for example, Aristotle's denial of action at a distance, *Physics*, 244 b–245 b; *The Works of Aristotle*, I–XII, ed. J. A. Smith and W. D. Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908–52), II:

> Now it is impossible to move anything either from oneself to something else or from something else to oneself without being in contact with it: it is evident, therefore, that in all locomotion there is nothing intermediate between moved and movent.
>
> Nor again is there anything intermediate between that which undergoes and that which causes alteration: this can be proved by induction: for in every case we find that the respective extremities of that which causes and that which undergoes alteration are adjacent. . . .
>
> Nor, again, can there be anything intermediate between that which suffers and that which causes increase: for the part of the latter that starts the increase does so by becoming attached in such a way to the former that the whole becomes one. Again, the decrease of that which suffers decrease is caused by a part of the thing becoming detached. So that which causes increase and that which causes decrease must be continuous with that which suffers increase and that which suffers decrease respectively: and if two things are continuous with one another there can be nothing intermediate between them.
>
> It is evident, therefore, that between the extremities of the moved and the movement that are respectively first and last in reference to the moved there is nothing intermediate.

3. *Jery und Bätely, Goethe's Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand*, I–LX (Stuttgart, Tübingen: 1828–42, XI, p. 10 (ed. tr.).

4. Cf. Psalm 139:7–9.

5. See II Samuel 12:1–9.

6. Johann Ludwig Tieck, "*Die wilde Engländerin*," in *Das Zauberschloss, Ludwiy Tieck's gesammelte Novellen*, I–X (Breslau: 1835), II, pp. 144–69.

7. The French paleontologist Georges Léopold Cuvier (1769–1832), in his *Recherches sur les ossements fossiles des quadrupèdes*, I–V (Paris: 1821–24), I, p. III, states that his aim is to show that an entire species can be reconstructed from a single bone.

8. According to Danish custom, the engagement ring is ordinarily worn on the fourth finger of the right hand.

9. Cf. G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe*, I–XVIII, ed. Philipp Marheineke et al. (Berlin: 1832–45), VIII, p. 17; *Sämtliche Werke. Jubiläum-sausgabe* [*J.A.*], I–XXVI, ed. Hermann Glockner (Stuttgart: 1927–40), VII, p. 33; *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 10: "*What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational.*"

10. See Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Don Juan*, tr. Laurids Kruse (Copenhagen: 1807), I, 16, p. 52; *Don Giovanni*, tr. Ellen H. Bleiler (New York: Dover, 1964), I, 3, p. 104.

11. Ludvig Holberg, *Erasmus Montanus*, V, 5; *Den Danske Skue-Plads*, I–VII (Copenhagen: 1788), V, no pagination; *Comedies by Holberg*, tr. Oscar James Campbell and Frederic Schenck (New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1914), p. 178.

12. A long promenade running along the harbor northward from the center of Copenhagen.

13. See note 1 above.

14. See Genesis 39:12.

15. Cf, for example, Johan Ludvig Heiberg, *Elverhøi*, I, 5; *Skuespil*, I–VII (Copenhagen: 1853–41), III, p. 313.

16. At one time, the *alcedo ispida* (European kingfisher) was thought to build its nest on the water. The *alcedinae* comprise ninety species. The alcidae (auks, murres, puffins, 22 species) spend their winter at sea, where they dive for their food.

17. In Greek mythology, Orpheus went to Hades in search of Eurydice, his wife. She was restored to him on the condition

that he would not look at her before they returned to earth. He disobeyed, and she vanished.

18. See John 5:2.

19. Ovid, *The Art of Love*, II, 235–36; P. *Ovidii Nasonis opera quae supersunt*, I–III, ed. Antonius Richter (Leipzig: 1828), I, p. 237; *Ovid The Art of Love and Other Poems*, tr. J. H. Mozley (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 83.

20. See Pius Alexander Wolff, *Preciosa* (music by Carl Maria von Weber), tr. Caspar Johan Boye (Copenhagen: 1822), I, p. 15.

21. The northern and eastern gates of the Copenhagen wall, now the names of city railway stations.

22. An area on the far side of Sortedams Lake, one of a string of three small lakes to the northwest of the city wall of Copenhagen.

23. In Greek mythology, Pallas Athena (Roman Minerva) sprang full-grown, and fully armed, from the head of Zeus (Roman Jupiter) after Zeus had swallowed her mother, Metis.

24. In Greek mythology, Aphrodite (Roman Venus), daughter of Zeus and Dione, sprang, according to some accounts, from the sea into which the blood of Uranus was shed when he was wounded by Cronus.

25. In Greek mythology, the parents of Psyche were ordered to take her and her two sisters in bridal attire to a crag and leave them there alone. Zephyr, the west wind, softly wafted them to a castle on the far side of the mountain. Raphael's painting has Psyche carried away by cupids.

26. See Genesis 41:32.

27. A street on the canal alongside Christiansborg, the parliament building.

28. See Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I, 1, 78–80; *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston: Ginn, 1936), p. 1198 (Cordelia speaking):

> Then poor Cordelia!
> And yet not so; since I am sure my love's
> More richer than my tongue.

29. A large woods and park west of Copenhagen containing a royal residence. King Frederik VI (1768–1839) opened the gardens to the public.

30. Cf. Genesis 2:18–23.

31. A reference to an earlier, especially medieval, family practice according to which the unmarried women had a separate room or building in which they worked and lived.

32. See Mozart, *Figaros Givtermaal*, tr. Niels Thoroup Bruun (Copenhagen: 1817), II, 2, p. 41; *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*), tr. Ruth and Thomas Martin (New York: G. Schirmer, 1951), II, 10, p, 136. The lines are at variance with the Danish version.

33. See note 9.

34. Perhaps an allusion to Sidsellille and her loom in the medieval Danish ballad "*Herr Medelvold.*"

35. See Psalm 90:4.

36. Ovid, *The Remedies of Love*, 10; *Opera*, I, p. 321; Loeb, p. 179.

37. See, for example, Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, I, *Werke*, IV, pp. 156–58; *J.A.*, IV, pp. 634–36; *Hegel's Science of Logic*, tr. A. V. Miller (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), pp. 507–09:

> The world in and for itself is the totality of Existence; outside it there is nothing. But since it is in its own self absolute negativity or form, its reflection-into-self is a *negative relation* to itself. It contains opposition and repels itself within itself into the essential world and into the world of otherness or the world of Appearance. Thus, because it is totality, it is also only *one side* of it, and in this determination constitutes a self-subsistence distinct from the world of Appearance. The world of Appearance has in the essential world its negative unity in which it falls to the ground and into which it withdraws as into its ground. Further, the essential world is also the positing ground of the world of Appearance; for, containing the absolute form in its essentiality, its identity sublates itself, makes itself into positedness and as this posited immediacy is the world of Appearance. . . . Now since the realm of Laws contains within it this negative moment and opposition, and hence as totality repels itself from itself into a world in and for itself and a world of Appearance, the identity of both is thus the *essential relation of opposition*. The ground relation as such is the opposition which, in its contradiction, has fallen to the ground; and Existence is the ground that has united *with itself*. But Existence becomes Appearance; ground is sub-

lated in Existence; it reinstates itself as the return of Appearance into itself, but at the same time as sublated ground, namely, as ground relation of opposed determinations; but the identity of such determinations is essentially a becoming and a transition, no longer the ground relation as such.

38. Augustin Eugène Scribe, *Bruden,* tr. Johan Ludvig Heiberg, first presented at the Royal Theater in Copenhagen in 1831; *Det Kongelige Theaters Repertoire,* I–VI (Copenhagen: 1830–42), II, no. 11. Fritz, a corporal, loses a bride through his own fault; she marries a count instead.

39. Joseph Freiherr v. Eichendorff, "*Vor der Stadt,*" *Gedichte* (Berlin: 1837), p. 24 (ed. tr.).

40. See I Peter 4:8.

41. From a Norwegian peasant ballad. See *Brage og Idun, et nordisk Fjærdingsaarsskrift,* ed. Povl Frederik Barfod, II, 1839, p. 445.

42. See, for example, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Monadology,* para. 78–79; *Guil. Leibnitii opera philosophica,* I–II, ed. Johann Eduard Erdmann (Berlin: 1840), II, p. 711; *The Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings,* tr. Robert Latta (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 262–63:

> 78. These principles have given me a way of explaining naturally the union or rather the mutual agreement [*conformité*] of the soul and the organic body. The soul follows its own laws, and the body likewise follows its own laws; and they agree with each other in virtue of the pre-established harmony between all substances, since they are all representations of one and the same universe.
>
> 79. Souls act according to the laws of final causes through appetitions, ends, and means. Bodies act according to the laws of efficient causes or motions. And the two realms, that of efficient causes and that of final causes, are in harmony with one another.

43. Ovid, *The Art of Love,* II, 123–24; *Opera,* I, p. 233; Loeb, p. 75.

44. Perhaps a blending of two orally perpetuated children's rhymes, "*Munken gaaer i Enge*" and "*Skjøn Ridder han drager sit røde Guldbaand.*" See *Börnerim, Remser og Lege, Samlede og tildels*

optegnede af Ewald Tang Christensen, ed. Jens Sigsgaard (Copenhagen: [1981]), pp. 67–68, 74.

45. See I Samuel 3:1–18.

46. See Johann Christoph Friedrich v. Schiller, *Die Piccolomini*, III, 7; *Schillers sämmtliche Werke*, I–XII (Stuttgart, Tübingen: 1838), IV, p. 145.

47. Gottfried August Bürger, *Lenore* (1773), *Bürgers Gedichte* (Gotha, New York, 1828). Vilhelm is the dead lover in the poem.

48. A German word with a Danish ending.

49. See, for example, Plato, *Apology*, 39 c; *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 24 (Socrates speaking):

> Having said so much, I feel moved to prophesy to you who have given your vote against me, for I am now at that point where the gift of prophecy comes most readily to men—at the point of death. I tell you, my executioners, that as soon as I am dead, vengeance shall fall upon you with a punishment far more painful than your killing of me. You have brought about my death in the belief that through it you will be delivered from submitting your conduct to criticism, but I say that the result will be just the opposite. You will have more critics, whom up till now I have restrained without your knowing it, and being younger they will be harsher to you and will cause you more annoyance. If you expect to stop denunciation of your wrong way of life by putting people to death, there is something amiss with your reasoning. This way of escape is neither possible nor creditable. The best and easiest way is not to stop the mouths of others, but to make yourselves as good men as you can. This is my last message to you who voted for my condemnation.

50. See J. L. Heiberg, *Recensenten og Dyret*, V, *Skuespil*, III, p. 210.

51. A performer at Bakken summer amusement park in Deer Park north of Copenhagen.

52. See Ovid, *Loves*, I, iv, 16, 35–46; *Opera*, I, p. 148; *Ovid Heroides and Amores*, tr. Grant Showerman (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 331.

53. The source has not been located.

54. The oldest student dormitory of the University of Copenhagen. It is located on Købmagergade, near the Round Tower.

55. An allusion to Don Giovanni's response to the knocking on the door by the Commendatore's statue. See Kruse, *Don Juan*, II, 19, pp. 122–23; Bleiler, *Don Giovanni*, II, 6, pp. 195–96.

56. See Genesis 31:34.

57. On memory [*Hukommelse*] and recollection [*Erindring*], see, for example, Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Writings*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong. Vol. XI, *Stages on Life's Way* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

58. On this important category, see, for example, *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, I–VII, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, assisted by Gregor Malantschuk (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967–1978) III 2338–59 and p. 794; VII, p. 56.

59. Jens Immanuel Baggesen, "*Agnete fra Holmegaard*," *Jens Baggesens danske Værker*, I–XII (Copenhagen: 1827–32), II, p. 358 (ed. tr.): "Agnes, she staggered, she drooped, she fell."

60. See J. L. Heiberg, "*Moralsk Læseøvelse i Vers*," *Ny A-B-C-Bog . . . for den unge Grundtvig* (Copenhagen: 1817), p. 21; *Johan Ludvig Heibergs Prosaiske Skrifter*, I–XI (Copenhagen: 1861–62), X, p. 25.

61. A Pythagorean concept (sometimes rendered as "the music of the spheres") based on the coincidence of the musical octave and the number (8) of planets.

62. In Roman mythology, Cardea was a goddess who watched over door hinges (Latin *cardo*). See Ovid, *Calendar*, VI, 101–30; *Opera*, III, pp. 157–58; *Ovid's Fasti*, tr. James George Frazer (Loeb, New York: Putnam, 1931), pp. 324–27.

63. See, for example, Sallust, *The War with Cataline*, 22; *Sallusts Catalinariske Krig*, tr. Rasmus Møller (Copenhagen: 1811), pp. 27–28; *Sallust*, tr. J. C. Rolfe (Loeb, New York: Putnam, 1921), pp. 38–41.

64. In Greek and Roman mythology, Aeolus was the wind god, who kept the winds (his sons) in a cave on the island of Aeolia.

65. In Greek legend, Ariadne, the daughter of Minos and Pasiphaë, loved Theseus and helped him slay the monster Minotaur, imprisoned in the labyrinth on the isle of Crete. Ariadne gave Theseus a thread to guide him out of the labyrinth.

66. See Mark 3:24.

67. See Genesis 30:31–43.

68. See note 65 above. Theseus carried Ariadne off to Naxos, where he left her. See Nitsch, I, p. 310. The painting, in the Naples museum, is a mural from Herculaneum.

69. In Greek mythology, Nemesis was the goddess of retributive justice.

70. *Gribs-Skov* (*Gribskov*), Denmark's largest forest, which lies northwest of Copenhagen.

71. In Greek legend, this was the fate of the nymph Echo, who fell in love with Narcissus.

72. 192–94.

73. The Copenhagen city council members.

74. *Politivennen*, 86, 1837, pp. 219–21, 235–38, carried a satirical piece on the extravagant dress of "the modern servant girl."

75. "Matchless" and "golden age" were favorite expressions of Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872), Danish historian, poet, preacher, and politician. See p. 158 and note 76 below.

76. Probably an allusion to N.F.S. Grundtvig and his emphasis on the spoken word, a "matchless discovery."

77. The specific source has not been located.

78. See Proverbs 24:26. The text is closest to Luther's German translation: "*Eine richtige Antwort ist wie ein lieblicher Kusz*," *Die Bibel* (Carlsruhe, Leipzig: 1836).

79. Socrates' analogy of the soul with two steeds and a charioteer. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, 253 c–256 e; *Opera*, I, pp. 186–95; *Dialogues*, pp. 499–502.

80. A design produced in sand on a vibrating plate. Named after Ernst Florens Friedrich Chladni (1756–1827), German physicist.

81. An Egyptian statue that the Greeks assumed to be a representation of Memnon, a king of Ethiopia and son of Eos, the goddess of dawn. It was said to make a musical sound when the rays of the morning sun fell upon it.

82. Ovid, *Art of Love*, II, 155; *Opera*, I, p. 269; Loeb, p. 77.

83. In Roman mythology, Venus (Greek Aphrodite), goddess of vegetation and protector of feminine chastity, has a girdle of beauty, into which were worked longing and deceptive speech and flattering entreaty that beguiled even the wise. See Homer, *Iliad*, XIV, 214–27; *Homers Iliade*, I–II, tr. Christian Frederik Emil

Wilster (Copenhagen: 1836), II, p. 34; *Homer The Iliad*, I–II, tr. A. T. Murray (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939–42), II, p. 83.

84. Said by Caesar in 49 B.C. when he crossed the river Rubicon (dividing ancient Italy and Gaul) to attack Pompey in defiance of the senate's orders. See Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, 32; *Caji Suetonii Tranquilli Tolv første Romerske Keiseres Levnetsbeskrivelse*, I–II, tr. Jacob Baden (Copenhagen: 1802–03), I, p. 31; *Suetonius*, I–II, tr. J. C. Rolfe (Loeb, New York: Macmillan, 1914), I, p. 45.

85. In *Arabian Nights* or *Thousand and One Nights*, Queen Scheherazade, by telling stories for 1,001 nights, keeps in suspense the Sultan's resolve to take a new bride each night and to have her beheaded in the morning. He finally relents and abandons his plan. See *Tausend und eine Nacht*, I–IV, tr. Gustav Weil (Stuttgart, Pforzheim: 1838–41), I, p. 12; *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, tr. Richard F. Burton (New York: Random House, 1959), pp. 21–23.

86. Caligula (Caius Caesar Germanicus, 12–41) was known for his cruel and ruthless tyranny. See Suetonius, *Caligula*, 30, 3; Baden, I, p. 312; Loeb, I, p. 453.

87. In classical legend, Pyramus and Thisbe, whose parents opposed their marriage, conversed through a crevice in the wall separating the two parental properties. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55–166; *Opera*, II, pp. 99–102; *Ovid Metamorphoses*, I–II, tr. Frank Justus Miller (Loeb, New York: Putnam, 1916), I, pp. 183–91.

88. Horace, *Odes*, II, 8, 3; *Q. Horatii Flacci opera* (Leipzig: 1828); *Horace The Odes and Epodes*, tr. C. F. Bennett (Loeb, New York: Putnam, 1930), p. 127.

89. Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger, *Palnatoke*, V, 2 ("*Jeg gnider den ved Dag ved Nat—og kan / ei faae den ud!*"); *Oehlenschlägers Tragødier*, I–IX (Copenhagen: 1841–44), II, p. 298.

90. An expression attributed to Valdemar IV concerning his castle Gurre near a lake of the same name in north Sjælland.

91. See, for example, Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, I, *Werke*, III, pp. 124–25; *J.A.*, IV, pp. 134–35; *Science of Logic*, p. 119:

> Something *preserves* itself in the negative of its determinate being [*Nichtdasein*]; it is essentially *one* with it and essentially *not one* with it. It stands, therefore, in a *relation* to its otherness and is not simply its otherness. The other-

ness is at once contained in it and also still *separate* from it; it is a *being-for-other*.

Determinate being as such is immediate, without relation to an other; or, it is in the determination of *being*; but as including within itself non-being; it is *determinate* being, being negated within itself, and then in the first instance an other—but since at the same time it also preserves itself in its negation, it is only a *being-for-other*.

It preserves itself in the negative of its determinate being and is being, but not being in general, but as self-related in *opposition* to its relation to other, as self-equal in opposition to its inequality. Such a being is *being-in-itself*.

Being-for-other and being-in-itself constitute the two moments of the something. There are here present *two pairs* of determinations: 1. Something and other, 2. Being-for-other and being-in-itself. The former contain the unrelatedness of their determinateness; something and other fall apart. But their truth is their relation; being-for-other and being-in-itself are, therefore, the above determinations posited as *moments* of one and the same something, as determinations which are relations and which remain in their unity, in the unity of determinate being. Each, therefore, at the same time, also contains within itself its other moment which is distinguished from it.

92. See Ovid, *Calendar*, VI, 295–98; *Opera*, III, p. 143; *Fasti*, Loeb, p. 341.

93. See, for example, Exodus 20:5; Deuteronomy 4:24.

94. The elemental meaning of "existence" is apparent in the etymology: *exsisto* (stand forth), *ex* (out) + *sto* (stand), understood here in the sense of having continuance in and through itself. In *Either/Or*, II, and in other Kierkegaard works, "to exist" has a qualitative meaning related to the ethical and religious levels of becoming, "to stand out" beyond immediacy, beyond the givenness of subsistence.

95. See, for example, Heinrich Heine, "*Du bist wie eine Blume*," *Buch der Lieder* (Hamburg: 1837), p. 217; *The Complete Poems of Heinrich Heine*, tr. Suhr Draper (Boston: Suhrkamp/Insul, 1982), p. 96.

96. Two beautiful peasant girls argued on the road about which one had the more beautiful posterior. A passerby was

impressed as judge, and he declared in favor of the elder sister and also promptly declared his love for her. Upon returning home, he told of the episode, and his younger brother sought out the younger sister. The father of the girls finally agreed. The citizens of Syracuse called the two Kallipygos (with beautiful posterior) and built a temple to Venus (Greek Aphrodite) with a statue of the goddess. The statue Venus Callipygus (Kallipygos) is in the National Museum in Naples.

97. Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, II, 204 (*horresco referens*); *Virgils Æneid*, I–II, tr. Johan H. Schønheyder (Copenhagen: 1812), I, p. 63; *Virgil*, I–II, tr. H. Rushton Fairclough (Loeb, New York: Putnam, 1918–20), I, pp. 308–09.

98. In Roman mythology, Diana (Greek Artemis), the twin sister of Apollo, was a virgin huntress, the guardian of forests, and the protector of woman, especially in childbirth.

99. See Euripides, *Medea*, 250–51; *Euripides*, tr. Christian Frederik Wilster (Copenhagen: 1840), p. 58; *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, I–IV, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958–60), III, p. 67 (Medea speaking):

> A man, when he's tired of the company in his home,
> Goes out of the house and puts an end to his boredom
> And turns to a friend or companion of his own age.
> But we are forced to keep our eyes on one alone.
> What they say of us is that we have a peaceful time
> Living at home, while they do the fighting in war.
> How wrong they are! I would very much rather stand
> Three times in the front of battle than bear one child.

100. A character in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. See pp. 96–98, 124–25.

101. The etching has not been identified.

102. See Judges 16:13–19.

103. "*Flyv, Fugl, flyv!*" the title of a poem by Christian Frederik Winther, *Digte* (Copenhagen: 1828), pp. 40–41.

104. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X, 243–97; *Opera*, II, pp. 220–23; Loeb, II, pp. 81–85.

105. An allusion to the geese whose noise awakened the garrison on Capitoline Hill in Rome when the Gauls were about to overrun it.

106. See Matthias Claudius, *ASMUS omnia sua SECUM portans oder Sämmtliche Werke des Wandsbecker Bothen, Werke*, I–IV (1–8) (Hamburg: 1838), I, pp. 68–80.

107. Ibid., p. 69, a long-nosed caricature by Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki (1726–1801).

108. In Greek mythology, Alpheus, son of Oceanus, was the personification of the river Alpheus (now Rouphia). The island Ortygia, off the southeast coast of Sicily, was the site of ancient Syracuse.

109. See Goethe, *Faust*, I, 3058–3173; *Werke*, XII, pp. 178–84; *Faust*, tr. Bayard Taylor (New York: Modern Library, 1950), pp. 130–35.

110. See Genesis 2:8.

111. In Roman mythology, Jupiter was identified with Zeus, the ruler of gods and men. The best known version of the gods' rebuff to the arrogance of men is in Plato. See *Symposium*, 189 d–191 a; *Opera*, III, pp. 468–73; *Udvalgte Dialoger af Platon*, I–VIII, tr. Carl Johan Heise (Copenhagen: 1830–59), IV, pp. 37–43; *Collected Dialogues*, pp. 542–43 (Aristophanes speaking):

> First of all I must explain the real nature of man, and the change which it has undergone—for in the beginning we were nothing like we are now. For one thing, the race was divided into three; that is to say, besides the two sexes, male and female, which we have at present, there was a third which partook of the nature of both, and for which we still have a name, though the creature itself is forgotten. For though 'hermaphrodite' is only used nowadays as a term of contempt, there really was a man-woman in those days, a being which was half male and half female.
>
> And secondly, gentlemen, each of these beings was globular in shape, with rounded back and sides, four arms and four legs, and two faces, both the same, on a cylindrical neck, and one head, with one face one side and one the other, and four ears, and two lots of privates, and all the other parts to match. They walked erect, as we do ourselves, backward or forward, whichever they pleased, but when they broke into a run they simply stuck their legs straight out and went whirling round and round like a clown turning cartwheels. And since they had eight legs, if

you count their arms as well, you can imagine that they went bowling along at a pretty good speed.

The three sexes, I may say, arose as follows. The males were descended from the Sun, the females from the Earth, and the hermaphrodites from the Moon, which partakes of either sex, and they were round and they *went* round, because they took after their parents. And such, gentlemen, were their strength and energy, and such their arrogance, that they actually tried—like Ephialtes and Otus in Homer—to scale the heights of heaven and set upon the gods.

At this Zeus took counsel with the other gods as to what was to be done. They found themselves in rather an awkward position; they didn't want to blast them out of existence with thunderbolts as they did the giants, because that would be saying good-by to all their offerings and devotions, but at the same time they couldn't let them get altogether out of hand. At last, however, after racking his brains, Zeus offered a solution.

I think I can see my way, he said, to put an end to this disturbance by weakening these people without destroying them. What I propose to do is to cut them all in half, thus killing two birds with one stone, for each one will be only half as strong, and there'll be twice as many of them, which will suit us very nicely. They can walk about, upright, on their two legs, and if, said Zeus, I have any more trouble with them, I shall split them up again, and they'll have to hop about on one.

So saying, he cut them all in half just as you or I might chop up sorb apples for pickling, or slice an egg with a hair. And as each half was ready he told Apollo to turn its face, with the half-neck that was left, toward the side that was cut away—thinking that the sight of such a gash might frighten it into keeping quiet—and then to heal the whole thing up. So Apollo turned their faces back to front, and, pulling in the skin all the way round, he stretched it over what we now call the belly—like those bags you pull together with a string—and tied up the one remaining opening so as to form what we call the navel. As for the creases that were left, he smoothed most of them away, finishing off the chest with the sort of tool a cobbler uses to smooth down the leather on the last, but he left a few

puckers round about the belly and the navel, to remind us of what we suffered long ago.

Now, when the work of bisection was complete it left each half with a desperate yearning for the other, and they ran together and flung their arms around each other's necks, and asked for nothing better than to be rolled into one.

112. Cicero, *On Divination*, I, xlv, 103; *M. Tullii Ciceronis opera omnia*, I–IV and index, ed. Johann August Ernesti (Halle: 1756–57), IV, p. 644; *Cicero De senectute, De amicitia, De divinatione*, tr. William Armistead Falconer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 334–35.

113. In Greek mythology, Alectryon, a friend of Ares, went to sleep while on watch at the tryst of Ares and Aphrodite (Roman Mars and Venus) and was surprised by Apollo (the sun god) and Hephaestus (Roman Vulcan).

114. In Greek mythology, Clytie was a nymph who fell in love with Apollo and was changed into a sunflower.

115. In Greek mythology, Kainis was changed by her lover, Poseidon (Roman Neptune), into a man (Kaineus).