

Dans la Solitude des Champs de Coton

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The Dealer

If you walk outside, at this hour and in this place, it's because you desire something which you do not have, and this thing, me, I can provide it for you; because if I was at this place long before you and will be here long after you, and if at this very hour the savage relationship between men and animals doesn't chase me away, it's because I have what's necessary to satisfy the desire which passes in front of me; it's like a weight which I need to get rid of on whomever, man or animal, who passes in front of me.

This is why I'm approaching you, despite it being the hour when ordinarily man and animal savagely attack each another, I'm approaching you, me, with open hands and palms turned towards you, with the humility that one who offers shows toward one who buys, with the humility of one who possesses shows toward one who desires; and I see your desire as one sees a light which ignites, in a window at the top of a building, at dusk; I'm approaching you as the dusk approaches that first light, gently, respectfully, almost affectionately, leaving all, animal and man, below in the street to pull at their leashes and wildly bare their teeth.

Not that I have guessed what you might want, nor am I hurried to know; because the desire of a customer is the most melancholic thing, that one contemplates like a little

secret which asks to be penetrated yet one takes his time before penetrating; or as a gift that arrives all wrapped up, yet one takes his time as he unties the string. But I myself have desired since I've been in this place, all that any man or animal can desire in this hour of darkness, and which makes them leave out of their homes in spite of the wild growls of unsatisfied animals and unsatisfied men: for this reason I know, better than the anxious buyer who still keeps, for a time, his mystery, like a young virgin raised to be a whore, that what you'll ask of me, I have it already, and that all you need to do, you – without you feeling the wounds of apparent injustice that the plaintiff feels of he who asks – is to ask it of me.

Since there is no true injustice on this earth other than the injustice of the earth itself, which is sterile by cold or sterile by heat and seldom fertile by the soft mixture of heat and cold; then there is no injustice in walking on the same portion of earth, subjected to the same cold or the same heat or the same soft mixture, and any man or animal which can look another man or animal in the eyes is its equal because they're walking on the same fine line and level of latitude, slaves of the same cold and same heat, equally rich, equally poor; and the only border which exists is that between buyer and merchant, but dubious, both having desire and the object of desire, at the same time hollow and full, with less injustice still than there is in being male or female among men or animals. This is why I temporarily borrow humility and I lend you arrogance, so that one distinguishes us, one from the other, at this hour which is inevitably the same for you and for me.