

One
Desire

1

He wanted it. He wanted her. He wanted a car. He wanted a house. He wanted a boat. He wanted to be rich.

He wanted her. He wanted to live forever. He wanted to kill them all.

She wanted a baby.

He didn't want a baby. Well, not yet. He wanted a divorce. He wanted to be alone.

"You don't love me anymore."

"I don't love you enough."

"What's the difference?"

"I would have left you if I didn't love you anymore."

"You're a bastard."

"We're all bastards of the world."

"You're a real bastard."

"I'll have to check my DNA against that of my father to be sure of that, but I'm confident enough that I'm my father's son. Are you?"

"Fuck you!"

"Not anymore. Not for a while now."

"And whose fault is it?"

"Mine. Yours. The world's."

"The world's?"

"So, it's your fault too."

"A morsel at most. The world's?"

"For holding marriage in such high regards."

"Go to hell!"

"I'm already there! We're all in hell. Can't you see the smoke? Can't you smell the char? Can't you taste the ash? Can't you hear the cries? Can't you hear the cries?"

2

On several occasions during his tender years, his wonder years, his lustful years, and even when he was much older, though lust hadn't lost its intensity, his mother had told him on more than one occasion that she should have had a miscarriage. She never used

the word abortion. How could she? Her vainly virtuous nature would never have allowed her to use it or go through with it. A seemingly accidental miscarriage, however, seemed forgivable. He would never have fallen in love, made love, or fallen out of love. Do we ever fall out of love? We grow older and become both discriminately and indiscriminately forgetful. She would have done him a favor. Life may not be worth living. We are brought into this world without any say, and as soon as we breathe the outside air and learn of our intrinsic transience, we are doomed to be miserable knowing that we are going to die no matter what we think, say or do. The lucky ones are trained to cope with the last train, and the unlucky ones don't need much guidance to wilt and die like the animals that we are. There are also those who invent and cultivate their immortality. Yet memories dim and ultimately disappear, and save our families and familiars, if any, it becomes as if we had never existed. We leave pieces of our pithy presence, but these are only vestiges of what we may have been. Our realness dissolves with our last breath and can no longer be grasped let alone gathered being smaller than a speck of dust. We turn out to be like Vitas' Autumn Leaf, "broken into thousands of fragments with only emptiness left in our eyes, and as if pricked by needles we wonder where all the beauty disappeared to, torn to shreds by melancholy, erased from memory like an autumn leaf in the wind."

3

Is beauty real? There's always something less than adequate: a swallow-the-world mouth, any-which-way-they-can teeth, down-on-their-luck designer breasts, toys-for-us nails, snuff-the-fire feet, and anything else we can easily come up with to dampen our blinded keenness. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Chubby chance! The beholder only sees the beauty. Same thing! Perhaps! *Vilain nez ne gâche pas beau visage* (ugly nose does not spoil beautiful face).

4

There are undisclosed numbers of females and males who suck cock. It must be reasonably nauseating for most cocksuckers, but pleasure rules and cock-sucking is clearly a must for most so-called individuals.

She held his cock with both hands, not because it was too big, far from it, but because she wanted to impart at least to herself that it was all hers, owing in part to its prettiness without the hideous prepuce. She put it in her mouth very slowly and began to suck it until he couldn't contain his pleasure any longer and was made to release a plentiful amount of his semen in her mouth. He didn't want to fill her mouth with it, but she insisted upon it as if it was a cure for cancer. She did, after all, go ahead and swallow it. A cocksucker is a cocksucker is a cocksucker. It's almost certain that someone, a physician perhaps, must have contemplated sperm as a cure for something. If only it could cure us from ourselves.

5

He had grown to love the culmination of sexual pleasure, and virtually lived for it.

He could fondly remember his first ejaculation, lying in bed rubbing his clothed erection against the softer pillow he had borrowed from the bed of one of his sisters, and recall an isolated event, seven years earlier, when he couldn't reach orgasm, but that was rather pleasurable nonetheless. One of his sisters' friends, Sarah, was staying overnight as she often did on Saturdays. He had just turned six years old, and she decided to be especially good to him, giving him a big wet kiss on his innocent cheek and promising to see him to bed later that night. He loved Sarah and often wished she'd been his sister as well. She also taught him the tongue game. He did as he was told, opening his mouth to show her his tongue, and she did the same, opening her mouth to show him hers. She then proceeded to touch the naive downy tip of his tongue with the ready-honeyed tip of hers. "Isn't it sweet?" she asked. "Yes," he replied, very surprised by the fact. "Two tongues touching each other often taste that way," she explained. Later that night, as promised, Sarah came to his bed to wish him good night. He took out his tongue and she seized it in her mouth, sucking it as if it was the best candy. He told her that he loved her and she kissed him on his eyes and nose. "Will you promise me to keep everything we do secret?" she asked. "I will," he replied. "And will you promise to wait for me until I grow up and become a man?" he asked. "I will," she said, smiling, and kissed him on his forehead and mouth. "I wish I could be a man in a blink of an eye," he said. "You will grow soon enough," she said, and put her hand on his tiny erection. He put his hand on hers and moved it up and down, perpetrating upon himself a new type of pleasure. Making sure that no one was nearby, she helped him lower his pajama shorts and then proceeded to caress his erection. She had moved her head close to it, but then moved it away. She helped him raise his shorts up, and then covered him and kissed him good night on the mouth, giving him her tongue to suck for a few seconds.

He felt awful during the days that followed that initial brush with orgasm. He knew that he had done something wrong. And when he couldn't stand the weight of his guilt any longer, he made his mother promise not to be mad before telling her the essence of his misbehavior, that is, that he loved Sarah. His mother seemed pleased and nothing more was said.

It's customary to measure the length of a cock in inches or centimeters, which seems quite sensible in many if not most cases. He, for one, measured it against the sole of a female's foot. If her foot was longer, then she had big feet that were often ugly as well, and the size of her shoes always confirmed the former.

His need to feel and sometimes see his sperm spew out of his penis into the outside world, onto towels and pillows, into socks and pillowcases, and over bathroom sinks and bathtubs offered but moments of momentary satiety. His desire to ejaculate was barely satisfied when a female was present. Her pussy was heavenly, but it was hard to come at it whenever he felt like it. He enjoyed foreplay, and was always a worthy player, but orgasm, the concrete climax, was such a brief affair that he longed for it again a short time after its culmination. Don't get me wrong! The road leading to this passionate apex was very pleasurable, but it's the end that stole the show, especially when both of them

peaked at the same time.

Those days were behind him now. He longed for them from time to time, but there were ideas worth fighting for even if the price appeared in the form of an obsession. A woman would most likely be unable to entertain such an obsession, so he had to go at it alone. She wouldn't trust her abilities to become an *overwoman*. Yet in the combat between orgasm and obsession, the former always triumphed, but it was a narrow win given that orgasm was often relegated to its primitive state.

7

A broken heart can't always be mended and a battered spirit can't always be patched, and they shouldn't be in one case in particular. Of course, there are other cases that should warrant such a stance, but luckily for their victims, they all pale in comparison. A great deal has been said, written and projected about the Holocaust, and rightly so, but it wasn't a sacrifice, and thus, a more befitting term is the Hebrew word for catastrophe and calamity, namely, Shoah. It seems that outside of Israel, only the French use the right term. Shoah! Is it because of Claude Lanzmann's nine-and-a-half-hour documentary, Shoah? Is it because at least half of the French were collaborators? Is it because Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir were two of the ugliest collaborators? *Un couple de collabos crasseux* (a couple of filthy collaborators)! "*Un homme, ça s'empêche,*" (A man, refrains) repeated Albert Camus. The Nazis, called Nasties from now on, have growled that the extermination of the Jews was a necessary sacrifice for the benefit of humanity despite the multiplicity of facts to the contrary. The Nasty propaganda had no bounds and was readily adopted and commonly espoused by the populace in Germany, called Genocitis from now on, and throughout the rest of Europe, called Eurats from now on. They all got off quite unscathed because most of the Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals and other less branded groups and individuals were annihilated, leaving so few emaciated survivors and so few worthy witnesses to call on the only tolerable demand; not justice, since there is no such yearning among animals; only vengeance in all its shades of red, only the sweeping destruction of Genocitis and the greater part of the rest of Eurats could have even begun to address the greatest crime ever committed. The rest of the world was as guilty whether their eyes were closed, preoccupied or gored. Certainly, some of them were fighting against the other Axis powers, some of them even against the same one, but the copious reports of the brutality being brewed and then brought against the Jews had begun in the early 30s; the nightmare materialized every night until it became the norm under the sun, the moon and the stars. Very little was raised except for their spirits. Naturally, almost everyone was happy to see the Jews rounded up as criminals, shot for any perceived resistance, gassed in moving trucks, and deported in cattle trains, thirsty for endless days, to their dire deaths in extermination camps.

8

How can such a colossal crime be forgotten? How can it be pardoned? Even extermination camp survivors don't have the right to forgive; not for what they endured, let alone for all those who perished. The only tolerable price for such atrocities is death.

While it doesn't need to be harsh, it does need to be absolute. There is no room for exceptions. Every Nasty should have been executed. Every Genocitean should have been killed. Every Euratean should have been slain. Every human being should have been put down.

"But who would have done it?"

"I would have done it."

"You couldn't have done it."

"Oh yes! I could have done it."

"It's too late now."

"Is it?"

9

"What remains bewildering about her is her partiality to using a mezuzah as her masturbatory instrument in both holes, and she's not even Jewish."

"Perhaps she knows what's in it and gives it her love. Remind me what's in it!"

"Commands to adore God."

"Is she fucking God, then?"

"Repeatedly."

"Anally?"

"That's the most bewildering part."

"You've seen her do it?"

"Naturally."

"From beginning to end?"

"Obviously."

"You must have liked it, then?"

"Not at all."

"So, why did you watch it?"

"Because I'm a Jew."

"So, you resented it?"

"Somewhat, yet not for what's in it, but for what it represents."

"For fucking a Jew?"

"Not a Jew; she was fucking me. For fucking the god of the Jews."

"But you don't believe in God."

“I don’t, but that’s not the point. Most Zionists didn’t believe in God yet ended up settling on the scriptural spread because of what it represented.”

“Would it be different had she been Jewish?”

“Naturally, because she would have been fucking a symbol of her god.”

“Are you still with her?”

“No.”

“She’s a beauty in all other respects, if you don’t mind me saying.”

“I don’t.”

She was lovely, but that’s the problem with everything. It may have been nice, but then something appalling was done that canceled everything that was good. How can one think of the notable Nietzsche and then of the nauseating Nasties and end up with a positive disposition? Yet, many a one, most a one, can and do emerge with an optimistic outlook. After all, isn’t it in the past, and didn’t it involve the loathed other? Can’t the same be said about the decimation of the Natives in both Americas by the Eurateans, and the Armenian genocide committed by the Turks, the latter even having been reflected upon by the leader of the Nasties as *carte blanche* for the Final Solution, since no *civilized* country or even recognized group had said or done anything about it? Yet Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, Pinochet and too many others have done it to their own people, and thus their crimes should seldom be considered in the same vein.

10

“What remains bewildering about him is his fondness for using phylacteries to hang them.”

“Isn’t he Jewish, after all?”

“So much stranger because of it.”

“But he’s also an atheist.”

“It’s a curious fact about some Jews and perhaps most of them, being atheist as well. While Judaism is a religion, it’s also a weighty belonging to that tradition and its people.”

“Weighty, indeed.”

“Surely more than a pound of flesh.”

“More like a ton.”

“More like six tons.”

“Still no one beats Louis Sasportas.”

“But he’s not real.”

“Not yet at any rate.”

“Do you agree with what he did? With what it’s written that he’d done?”

“It’s very hard to disagree with any of it.”

“So, should children pay for the crimes of their parents?”

“Children who wouldn’t exist had their parents been punished for their despicable crimes may have to.”

“These children remain innocent, nonetheless.”

“But it doesn’t in any way diminish the scope of these crimes, or their fundamental unremittingness.”

“The crimes still remain those of their parents.”

“All in the family? All in the culture? All in the country? All in the so-called continent? All in the world? And life goes on?”

“It has to.”

“Lest we perish of the truth’.”

“Yes.”

“We should have perished.”

“But we didn’t.”

“Only because no one was ready to claim the monster heap of pounds of flesh.”

“Will anyone ever be ready or willing to do so?”

“One at least can hope.”

“That a Louis Sasportas will rise?”

“Indeed.”

“Indeed.”

Where does the success of *Bayerische Motoren Werke*, or BMW as it’s known around the world, stem from? Where does the success of other Genocitean companies come from? Hard work? Luck? The Genocitean way? Genocitis annihilated six million Jews and so many others, and it’s as if in return the world had given them a prize, many a prize. Moreover, the remaining Jews and their progeny purchased, are purchasing, millions of Genocitean-made machines and products, from Adidas to ZF *Friedrichshafen* AG, including machines and products constructed on the same assembly lines that had been used to manufacture the engines for the gas chambers. Half of BMW is owned by Goebels’ offspring. And the same story repeats itself in other Genocitean companies. Is it tolerable? It looks like it. But looks can be deceiving, as they say. Is a day of reckoning at hand, and foot? Is a period of payback pending like passing away? Not likely in the scheme of things, but I can hope and do more to make it, reality.

“One would think that anti-Jewish comments, let alone sentiments and beliefs, would have and should have disappeared following the Shoah. Yet they remain rampant like most diseases.”

“Is anti-Jewishness an ailment?”

“A disease of the mind, most likely.”

“Can it be cured?”

“Not likely if it’s still thriving after close to three generations following the Shoah and since a few thousand years following the advent of *Hebrenness* and Jewishness.”

“What’s a Jew to do, then? Take it the same way as it was always taken. With a grain of salt? With humor? With gunpowder and all its cousins!”

“Not anymore! Never again!”

“What then?”

“Thrive against all odds.”

“Jews have been doing just that and what did it get them? Every kind of abuse, mass graves, gas chambers, and even crematoria to dispose of all the corpses. Paul Celan poignantly pointed it out in *Death Fugue*:

‘... more darkly now stroke your strings then as smoke you will rise into the air then a grave you will have in the clouds there one lies unconfined ...’”

13

“Run home to your family,” urged the police officer. “Death is coming,” she quickly added. Death? Since when do we know when death is coming? Isn’t it always a surprise? Of course, some of us know that they’re dying of a disease, or that they’re dying when they’re actually dying, but most of us are clueless. Death is coming? What’s that about? But the way in which she said it could only have meant that it was really close. But how? How soon? As I ran home to my family I noticed other people rushing to and fro. Everyone looked worried; some people were even crying. It was distressing, to say the least.

I lied. I knew that death was coming. Entire areas were disappearing along with all the people within those areas. Only the other animals were spared in their areas. And it all started in Genocitis.

14

“What about all the good things that happened after the Shoah?”

“Surely not the UN.”

“Surely not.”

“Chemotherapy? Fast food? Across-the-board pollution?”

“No.”

“The PC in all its forms? The Internet?”

“Yes, with some reservations.”

“But do these and other so-called good things outweigh or even equal the Shoah?”

“No, but they convey change and hope.”

“Like the wars and genocides around the world, Friday the 13th, or the omission of a 13th floor in most buildings with more than 12 floors, although the 14th floor is the 13th floor, or further stupidity in all its expressions?”

“No, but there are new countries, democracies with equal rights, and then there’s globalization.”

“New countries with undemocratic agendas, democracies with only the semblance of equal rights, and the jury is still out for a smoke on the issue of globalization.”

“So, nothing is good?”

“Carl Sagan, Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Lawrence Krauss, Michel Onfray, Martin Luther King, Philip Roth, Milan Kundera, Jean Améry, Imre Kertész, Primo Levi, Gérard Haddad, *The Hours*, *The Matrix*, *The Pianist*, *Les Invasions barbares*, *Amadeus*, Charlie Chaplin, Woody Allen, Steven Spielberg, Stanley Kubrick, Pink Floyd, Harmonium, John Lennon, Vitas, Arik Einstein, Ennio Morricone, Gregory House, George Costanza, Louie De Palma, all versions of *Star Trek*, Robin Williams, Bill Maher, Doctors Without Borders, Greenpeace, and quite many others are good. Much more than good in some cases!”

15

To All of Them

To all my failures, my misses,
The roads that traversed me downright,
The planes following the hisses,
All those who disciplined my might.

To all my silences, my lies,
The misunderstandings that stuck,
The book-Auschwitzes and their ties,
All words for which I gave a fuck.

To time wasted to be the same,
The Wall and every other wall,
The vistas unseen, with no name,
All things that coxswained to the fall.

To the world and its deserved pains,
The tots who never got to term,
The love that never sized the gains,
All those who should have remained sperm.

To all my demeanors, my fears,
The things that seem to be too late,
The guise needed to hide the tears,
All my overlooked acts to date.

16

I could not bear the unjust death of my Jews. Yes, my Jews. Though they could be yours as well. I'm willing to share. I had not survived the atrocities of a death camp, but I was, nonetheless, stricken by the disease suitably christened *Auschwitzitis*. I could only lay claim to the memory of their existence as countless clusters of kikes and the like, since there were no graves, unless, of course, many a one counted the clouds as their rhapsody in blue.

My Auschwitz-related ailment, disorder, illness, malady, sickness, syndrome couldn't lend itself to any effective treatment, let alone a cure. How could it? My suffering was insufferable, and I couldn't even imagine the agony, anguish, distress, grief, sorrow, torment of my Jews, and your Jews. How could I? How could you?

I often look at the carefree clouds and deliberate about the Jew smoke within them, and then feel the wafting wind and reflect about the Jew dust within it. Yet, even the smoke and the dust of our Jews have dissipated, and unlike Walt Whitman, they can't bequeath themselves to the dirt so they could grow from the grass that they love, and if we want them again, we can't look for them under the soles of our shoes.

How can Kübler-Ross' stages of grief be even considered in a loss of such a colossal scale? Denial? Impossible! Anger? Forever! Bargaining? Unbearable! Depression? Surely! Acceptance? Never!

17

The following is a story—surely not a true story—told by an Auschwitz survivor. It goes like this.

God and Satan have an impromptu meeting around the beginning of 1944, over 56 years before their usually scheduled meeting at the start of each century. Satan, flabbergasted by the sheer enormity of the carnage going on in the death camps and especially Auschwitz, requests the meeting.

Satan: How can you let it go on?

God: What do you mean?

Satan: What do I mean? You are losing them, but surely, you're not losing them to me.

God: I no longer meddle in their affairs.

Satan: Their affairs? They're annihilating your so-called chosen people.

God: Are they?

Satan: My goodness! They are and at an alarming rate. They've created a hell of their own; they've created Hell and are sending to it every Jew that they can get their claws on, as well as every Gypsy, below par, and freethinker.

God: They'll eventually stop.

Satan: I'm not sure that they will, and if they do, it may be too late for the Jews.

God: They'll be stopped sometime next year.

Satan: So, you don't mind it at all.

God: I do.

Satan: But not enough to save them.

God: Why do you care?

Satan: Even I recognize that they haven't done anything that warrants such barbarity.

God: You didn't mind all the other injustices that occurred in the past.

Satan: I did to some degree, but they all pale in comparison.

God: Do they, now?

Satan: That's it; you've lost it. There's no doubt about it.

God: Careful, there!

Satan: Even I wouldn't create or oversee an Auschwitz.

God: It can't be that bad.

Satan: Have you even taken a look? It must be stopped.

God: It can't be.

Satan: It must be.

God: I forbid it.

Satan: How about a bargain?

God: I won't be fooled again.

Satan: I'll let you have all their souls if you stop it right now.

God: No!

Satan: No?

God: No.

Satan: I'll let you have ten percent of all my souls as well.

God: No.

Satan: What do you want, then?

God: You're the one bargaining.

Satan: You have to give me something.

God: Do I? Very well. I'll stop it the moment that a whiff of smoke billowing from the Auschwitz crematoria reaches the nostril of a Maori infant.

Satan: In New Zealand?

God: Yes.

Satan: You'll stop it and purge it from history?

God: I won't do the latter.

Satan: You'll stop it the moment that a whiff of smoke billowing from the Auschwitz crematoria reaches the nostril of a Maori infant in New Zealand and then purge it from history.

God: No.

Satan: My goodness! Aren't you the devil?

God: Watch it, now!

Satan: So, you'll only stop it the moment that a whiff of smoke billowing from the Auschwitz crematoria reaches the nostril of a Maori infant in New Zealand.

God: Yes.

Satan: How lucky you are that most of them are oblivious.

God: I'm God, after all.

Satan: That you are.

God: Are you being facetious?

Satan: Not at all! I'm Satan, after all.

God: That, you are.

Satan: That, I am.

God: You are being facetious.

Satan: God only knows.

18

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Walter Benjamin

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Bruno Schulz

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Lea Deutsch

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Petr Ginz

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Lidia Zamenhof

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Hana Brady

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Victor Perez

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Anne Frank

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Victor Goldschmidt

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Paul Celan

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Jerzy Kosinski

Please, write your name! The service will commence shortly.

Primo Levi

They kept on coming, writing their names, and filling the place until it looked like a memorial incarnate.

Are we gathered here this nightfall to pay boundless tribute and most sincere respects to your mythical reappearance, or utter anguish and most persistent bereavement to your up-in-smoke disappearance? You'll have to select your group before the end of the service.

Those who were fortunate to know you were bound to love you, and those who never heard or cared about you, would have loved you as well had Judeopathy and its ilk not been imbibed by them like an immortality elixir.

Let us take a precious instant to gather our thoughts and reflect upon each and every one of you! Dig into your pasts and find an event, an occasion when you were content if not happy to be part of this world!

The gathering was silent like a graveyard at dawn, that is until a melody could be heard all around, bringing smiles and then tears to everyone present. A few of them even joined in:

You can't always be what you are.

You can't always be what you are.
You can't always be what you are.
If you try sometimes, you might find
That you are what you are, oh yeah.

The à-la-Bellagio-Las-Vegas buffet table was inviting to say the least, but most of them looked at it as if it was a pitiless mirage or a hypnotic painting. Jerzy Kosinski touched the table and then hid beneath it, Paul Celan wrote the words *Bei Wein und Verlorenheit* (over wine and lostness) on the tablecloth, Petr Ginz gazed at the moon through the enormous windows, and Victor Perez punched one of the cakes.

Very few of them attempted to taste the assortment of dishes, and it didn't matter if they were meat-grounded, vegetable-founded or fruit-based. The panoply of fare was even nauseating to some of them. Did they think that the fish looked fishy, that the meat had to be imported, that the vegetables seemed out of place, that the fruits were out of season?

As this get-together was quickly winding up—no one spoke to no one else—it looked devastatingly clear that everyone had chosen the up-in-smoke disappearance group, that is everyone except for Jerzy Kosinski who must have seen himself rightly belonging to the mythical reappearance group.

19

On my way to Touch, I drove through a little town by the name of Look, and as I expected, there was nothing to look at; in Hear, there was nothing to listen to; in Smell, even the smell of the new industrial revolution was lacking; and in Taste, tastelessness was quite evident. What had the world come to? Did we become madder? These questions and their vicissitudes ached in my mind, but answers were difficult to accommodate, and thus the pain lingered on like a pounding heart.

I stopped for supper at Meatless and decided to spend the night at a Respite motel. I was determined not to play their game. "I will not rest," I said to the man or the woman, I wasn't sure. "You don't have to," the man or the woman said. "I won't," I said though I knew that I would be sleeping soundly that night. Room B4 looked clean, so I took a long shower before going to bed. I slept well and felt rather content while the world remained insensible to my quest.

I resumed my way after a quick breakfast, feeling somewhat uneasy knowing that my destination was getting nearer. Touch had not changed; the dim atmosphere, the dimwit population, the dimmed houses remained the same, and you may have guessed that nothing was worth touching. At B2 Name Way, a diminutive middle-aged woman opened the door and let me in. "Mr. Dream is expecting you, Mr. Same," she said. Anxiety set in even before the appearance of Mr. Dream, but when he handed me what I had come for, I felt angst taking over like a moist cold. I held it close to my heart and wished it to be genuine. Mr. Dream used to be my uncle but following a bitter divorce from one of my aunts, it was as if he had lost the label. I left soon after, clinging to what my uncle had given me with the rest of my life.

The stars of David were bright and unbending in my heart, or I should say, my mind, when I reached home, relieved to close the door behind me. I showered, ate and went to bed, pressing what my uncle had given me against my grateful lips before putting it under my pillow and ordering the television to show me the last episode of *New*, the weekly listing of everything different, or I should say, renamed. There were 44 renamings of people and places during the previous week, but due to the lack of new names, Mr. Poll, the President of the New Naming Committee, declared yet again that this week would be much poorer with only 14 renamings. This so-called renaming process had been going on for the past 26 years. Renaming had become a necessity, a way of life, and a remunerating activity. A minority of so-called solons held that a new, civilized and humane society needed a new identity in order to forget its horrific past. Renamings appeared everywhere likely and unlikely, affecting everything in the world. Only words that lacked any historical context were readily adopted, bestowing simple meanings to the new names of people and places, and turning the world into a guileless amalgamation. I ordered the television off and enjoyed a few hours' sleep.

I knew what was ensuing as soon as I awoke. I felt rested and was ready to come to terms with what my dear uncle may have given me. He had the power to grant me my wish and rename me, but my new name was actually an old one. I was bringing back the past, and perhaps beginning a new future. I could see it in my mind: a neighbor called Dawkins, a friend called Hitchens, a daughter called Goldstein, a nephew called Harris, a Mozart, a Bach, a Beethoven, a Darwin, a Whitman, a Chaplin, a Dickinson, a Nietzsche, a Twain, a Freud, an Einstein, a Roth, a Kundera, a Levi, a Sagan, a Kertész, a Krauss, a Houellebecq, an Allen, a Spielberg, a Rodriguez. How exciting it was to contemplate all these names, and I was the first to start it all, I was Sasportas.

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Looking at them, an old Genocitean couple, I could easily perceive a glimmer of the Nasty within them. Although they weren't old enough during the Shoah to be of any consequence, they were the offspring of parents who contributed directly or indirectly to the butchery. Their fathers were surely members of the Nasty Party, or effusively uniformed Nasties. But unlike the doom that was awaiting most of their victims, their progenies were given life, and a long one at that.

The old Genocitean couple noticed that I was looking at them and asked if something was amiss. What could be wrong? I replied. You annihilated most of the Jews of Eurat and so many hapless others, and the world forgave you. We should have bombed you and all your collaborators out of existence. They didn't say anything, and I wasn't expecting them to. What could have they said? Sorry? When so much woe is brought upon others, apologies can never be uttered honorably, or considered to be as such.

I should have stabbed them there and then, but they would have represented but a drop in the ocean of blood that should have covered Genocitis and its cronies if not the entire world. A more far-reaching action was in order. We had the technology and the power that comes with it, but the will, the desire, the determination, the courage to retali-

ate against the most monstrous crime ever committed was lacking or is dormant. How many more years will have to pass before we awake and act?

Is it too late? Has the tide turned? Are we better than them? Have we forgiven them?

What have they done? Paid us off? Criminalized Shoah deniers? Built a concrete-pillars memorial?

Did we listen when their smoke cried out to us from the clouds, when their blood cried out to us from the ground? What have we done? Nearly nothing! Nothing at all!