

## RECEPTION

(*Recollection*)

THERE IS no true language other than that of the heart. It is not another speech I envy, not some other than that which was given me, which I perceive is in myself, and in which I seek to acquit myself fittingly at all times. It is so little distorted by impurity, that surely you will not refuse me your welcome. I ask you to receive me and ask it without pride and without humility. Will it be permitted me to come close to you? I have come to you with no clever artifices nor fine gestures. I have come to you only with what belongs to me, that which is myself, and I know it is very slight, and you may well laugh at such unpretentious baggage. And yet I attempt the path that leads directly to you.

You must not think me too forward. I have no desire to be seductive and certainly none to educate. There are enough others to do that without me. Their role is excellent—although I desire none of it. It is not pride, I feel, it is by no means pride which directs my words, so much as the need of an indulgent presence. I am in need of you. I am writing you what I should never dare to say to you.

And perhaps after I have written it I shall be full of remorse and confusion. But for this once I am letting myself be guided by my weakness and by heaven knows what persistent hope of assuagement, of gentle warmth and human joy. I come toward you only as a man, and not one of the strongest, and very likely one of the most uncertain of men.

I should like you to receive me as the peasants do the people who knock at their door. What freshness in this dwelling place! The pump drips; the hornets are asleep on the ceiling.—“Would you mind giving me a glass of water? Outside the place is broiling like a Christmas turkey.—A glass of water? why, we are well enough off to give you a glass of wine.”

Yes, I should like to move you by these country scenes. They encourage me, and perhaps they may not displease you either. I wish you the same fortune among the groups that form in the summer evenings before the houses which are dead from heat. And then the air is become so pure that as it glides past your curtains it seems to come to appease you.—Let us go out, you say; and you drag your chairs out in front of the door. In the gathering night the leaves spread themselves and sigh feebly.