

I shall not seek to appear stronger than I am. For I know well, and man has never been really strong. Shall I make myself weaker than I am? It would need too great patience. How malleable I have felt myself, at certain moments, between my two hands. And a suppleness that did not arouse any fear in me at all. I should have preferred myself harder, and my permeability to other things less subtle.

The play of imponderables. A smile causes a great hate to be born, as a word incites a crime. No matter what the effort, I can never seize exactly the moment which determines a sentiment. Or perhaps that is because it is so slight and so dependent upon the sacrifice (more or less complete) that one makes of oneself to the world.

And for that matter can we choose from the gamut of possible emotions (a man encountered). I oscillate a whole friendship between love and hatred. Not that I amuse myself by clever artifices, but by the most natural currents of our passions . . . One may love without esteem and this love is colored by the scorn that kills. If love assumes more and more esteem, it is not long before some jealousy still more certainly diverts it into hatred.

(If you take Dostoyeffski for instance, I feel that for me Svidrigailof is far more human than Sonia, his exasperating daughter.)

At the whim of fevers. Must there not be some unexpected vision for these rhythms which one would have preferred masked? And yet: I see nothing arbitrary or precious in that. Shall I admit having no fear of apparitions at night? I am terror-stricken by no curiosity, little as its gratuitousness leaves unsatisfied, and of this most beautiful gem which I should rather lose at the bottom of the sea than have my life determined by.

## II

—"Is it really a new faith," asked Tertullian, "that we need?"

ARIEL—It is so easy to have a new faith.

I may have faith in yesterday

(in the night I pass tomorrow).

And nothing limits my faith which I create in my own measure.

I may have new faiths for every moment that I live.

TERTULLIAN—I have seen certain illuminations and renounced them.

ARIEL—In itself renunciation is measureless, since there is no resonance in us.

(Febrile resonance and the veins we tear from a leaf. What does renunciation mean?)