

Ways of Taking Leave

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1.

When he contacted me in spring 2017, Till Velten was aiming to follow out the flight trajectory of the refugees in the news through Ludwig van Beethoven's Fourth Symphony. He aimed to conduct in concert with musicians uniquely cast in the shadow of exile a performance of escape in all its senses or directions. He singled out this Beethoven symphony as composed under the duress of flight from the encroachment of Napoleon's armies. I can add a few moments to this line-up. First, Velten is rescuing the Beethoven symphony that Theodor W. Adorno identified as most overlooked and underrated – indeed, dumped onto the cutting room floor in the course of assembling a classical-music hits list.¹ And second, Adorno argued that there is a structure of integration in the symphony genre that always has implications for the society of its auditors.² Symphonies skip, then, what Adorno attributed to the background music of the culture industry, the compromise between aesthetic sublimation and social adaptation.³ The integration Adorno hears in a symphony is syntonic with Melanie Klein's introduction of the term in 1940 into the theoretical lexicon of psychoanalysis.⁴ Like reparation, which cannot undo the historical trauma, integration also remains incomplete, trailing the untenable juxtapositions that

¹ Theodor W. Adorno, "Über den Fetischcharakter in der Musik," *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 14, ed. Rolf Tiedemann et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003): 22.

² Adorno, *Beethoven. Philosophie der Musik*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2015): 175.

³ Adorno, „Zeitlose Mode: zum Jazz,“ *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 10, ed. Rolf Tiedemann et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003): 135. See my *The Case of California* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) for an extensive excavation of the backgroundization of music for which Adorno chose the signifier "jazz."

⁴ Melanie Klein, "Mourning and its Relation to Manic-Depressive States," *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1984). In my study of James Bond, *SPECTRE* (Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2013), I follow out the course of Klein's theorization of integration in her complete oeuvre.

inevitably arise in the wake and shakeup of mourning. The mix of media and genres that Velten summons and cites in and around the Fourth Symphony is the artistic correlative to the in-tandem operation of reparation and integration.

Till Velten invited me to contribute reflections on the flight of fantasy in the genre-specific situation of wish fulfilment and daydreaming. To start, I would locate Beethoven's flight trajectory not exclusively in the Fourth Symphony but within a larger alternation between heroism and recovery. The "Eroica" (or Third Symphony) was famously intended to honor Napoleon as heir incarnate of the French Revolution. But then Napoleon crowned himself Emperor (on December 2, my birthday) and Beethoven withdrew the identification. Allow me to sidestep my historical materials to think big on this score. Alfred Hitchcock's psychoanalytic cinema, which excelled in picking up symptomatic MacGuffins overflowing what history shows and stows, included at a crucial juncture in *Psycho* the recording of the "Eroica" with its label showing on the turntable – wide-open like Lila's stare of horror at Norman's private library. A constitutive slip spells or spills out "Erotica" as the subliminal consequence of Beethoven's failed assignation. As Freud showed in the case of Leonardo da Vinci,⁵ for Beethoven, too, sublimation had to enter the ring, running neck and neck with repression in the course of their speed race, sustaining the course of Beethoven's composition via an alternation with the flight that gives respite, which proved binding for the overstimulation of heroism.

By the process of alternation, the Sixth Symphony, the "Pastorale," is related to the Fourth Symphony. That the Fifth and the Sixth Symphonies were composed side by side draws the line between the distinguishing modalities of heroism and respite internally and indelibly. The fantasizing setting of the "Pastorale," which was influenced by Jean-Jacques

⁵ For a full elaboration of Freud's model reading of da Vinci, see my *Aberrations of Mourning: Writing on German Crypts* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988): 264 ff.

Rousseau's *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, was projected large in *Fantasia* in 1940. Thus, the "Pastorale" entered Walt Disney's art of animation prior to Wagner's endless melodies (the "Ride of the Valkyries" was scheduled to be part of the first sequel, which was indefinitely postponed).

As illuminated by *Fantasia*, the "Pastorale," the precursor of Romantic program music's illustration of narratives, inherits the age-old conception of a "music of the spheres." The interrelation of music, mathematics, and astronomy meant that when music played we were given to wish upon the stars. "Fantasia" is moreover the name of a form of musical composition derived from improvisation. Beethoven, who excelled at improvisation on the piano, was said to surpass even Mozart in the performance called in German *Phantasieren*. In order that such legends might also be mapped machines were invented for turning an improvised performance into a repeatable score. Film settled another score with music. Because music stimulates the association and reception of images, Disney conducted extensive experiments in animation (color, special effects, storytelling) in the series of short films known as the *Silly Symphonies* (1929-1939), which counted as staging area for *Fantasia*.

Disney excluded abstraction from *Fantasia* to promote his animism-animation cinema of daydream wish fulfillment. The pop alternatives to dominant trends in high culture caught up with the intervention of *Fantasia*, which had promptly been consigned to the Disney Vault. The innovations of *Fantasia* entered A-culture, resonating, for example, in those paintings that Philip Guston wrenched free from his former abstract expressionism. *Fantasia*, the third Disney animation feature, followed *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Pinocchio* into a new fantasy genre. It also represented the first attempt by Disney to transport the childhood of fantasy beyond even the adolescent setting of group psychology all the way to such adult venues as high culture.

2.

What is essential to the new or renewed genre that J. R. R. Tolkien christened “Fantasy” is “the power of making immediately effective by the will the visions of ‘fantasy.’”⁶ What he adds next shows that we are in the environs of waking wish fantasy: “Not all are beautiful or even wholesome, not at any rate the fantasies of fallen Man.”⁷ Fallen man is the teenager, the pioneer of private fantasizing. In the other essay on fantasizing, Sigmund Freud argues that unlike child’s play, which is out in the open because it pursues one acceptable wish, the wish to be grown-up, fantasizing, beginning in adolescence, is at once one of our “most intimate possessions” (because it flexes omnipotence, our right to narcissism so basic to psychic reality) and a hideout we would be ashamed to share: “as a rule” the grownup “would rather confess his misdeeds than tell anyone his fantasies.”⁸ He is ashamed of fantasizing because it is childish and because “some of the wishes which give rise to his fantasies are of a kind which it is essential to conceal.”⁹ It was for this reason that prior to the talking cure and its published documentation via case examples the daydreamer believed himself to be “the only person who invents such fantasies.”¹⁰

Tolkien dared give the name “Fantasy” to the genre he hoped to lead out of the children’s section in the bookstore to the grownup stacks (right next to science fiction). By his valuation of Christianity as the fantasy that is true, Tolkien drew the line between “mere” fantasizing or daydreaming and the literary works belonging to a new and true genre. Around the time of the composition of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien and C. S. Lewis exchanged their views on

⁶ J. R. R. Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories,” *Tree and Leaf/Smith of Wooton Major/The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm’s Son* (London: Unwin Books, 1975): 28.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “Creative Writers and Daydreaming,” *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey, vol. 9 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1959): 145.

⁹ Ibid., 146.

¹⁰ Ibid., 145.

the shortcomings of science fiction and how they might remedy them. Tolkien would write a time travel tale and Lewis a fable set in Outer Space, thus recovering between them the two trajectories of H. G. Wells's entry upon the new genre of science fiction that he helped establish. Tolkien's effort left behind only a fragment, in which the desire is fulfilled to dwell in the prehistory of *The Lord of the Rings*, which Tolkien was working to complete at that time. Unable to carry out his end of their mission, Tolkien deputized Lewis as their fantasy author on rival turf. Lewis in turn rendered Ransom, the protagonist of his Space Trilogy, recognizable as a portrait of Tolkien. Tolkien did, however, write "On Fairy-Stories," which was the manifesto of the contest Lewis alone waged in fiction.

In his manifesto, Tolkien revalorized the escape in escapism (ultimately in the light of the Great Escape, the Death of Death). Tolkien aims the flight of his fantasy genre away from the fantastic adaptation of our machine age to outer space, which he attributes to science fiction. But the conceit whereby one genre can be seen to subsume all that the other genre would escape begins to fall apart when he begins reasoning on the turf and terms of datable events. "I have claimed that Escape is one of the main functions of fairy-stories, and since I do not disapprove of them, it is plain that I do not accept the tone of scorn or pity with which 'Escape' is now so often used: a tone for which the uses of the word outside literary criticism give no warrant at all. In what the misusers are fond of calling Real Life, Escape is evidently as a rule very practical, and may even be heroic."¹¹ Unique in a discourse that shies away from taking responsibility for the topical onset of literary allegory in current events, Tolkien judged the denunciation of escape as adjustment disorder worthy of a totalitarian functionary: "Just so a Party-spokesman might have labelled departure from the misery of

¹¹ Ibid., 60-61.

the Führer's or any other Reich and even criticism of it as treachery."¹² Here Tolkien lets slip between the lines of battling genres what Freud in his essay on fantasizing calls a *Zeitmarke*, date-mark or time-stamp, which indicates the expiration date or half-life of every wish fantasy.¹³ The fantasy-escape takes a running start in a happy past, really an idealized past, on which the wish is based, and makes a leap into the future of wish fulfillment, out-flying the present in which the wish was prompted and tagged. The indelible date-mark belongs to the trigger-unhappy moment in the circumvented present, which, however, openly lies waiting for historicization, the backfire of fantasy, its mortal recoil.

Inspired by the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk* aspirations of *Fantasia*, Disney founded CalArts in 1961 and thus guaranteed that there would be a stock of artists in the vicinity on call to engage in the labor-intensive work of his animation cinema. Animation cel by animation cel, the forest sequences in the early Disney fantasy films could fit back inside their frames on the walls inside Neuschwanstein Castle, which stood model for the castle in Disneyland park. At the core of the Bavarian decoration we can recognize the recycling of stage sets from Wagner opera productions. The animation replicas of the Bavarian replicas modeled the look of Disneyland, which opened in marketing sync with the Disney TV show.

Fantasia's Zeitmarke, the eve of U.S. involvement in World War Two, placed the industry of Disney animation on hold, a delay that allowed the Wagnerian legacy to find another footing on Germany's other coast. In his eulogy for Mike Kelley, John Miller counted *Day is Done* (2005) as the belated and transvalued realization of the inheritance of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (both Kelley and Miller were graduates of CalArts).¹⁴ Fantasy harbors a

¹² Ibid., 61.

¹³ Freud, "Creative Writers and Daydreaming," 147.

¹⁴ Unable to re-locate the obituary in the Internet's lost and found department, I recommend instead John Miller's more comprehensive reading of Kelley's legacy: *Mike Kelley. Educational Complex* (London: Afterall Books, 2015).

unique relationship to the “done” of conclusion, which is analogous to the nuances and transitions of its palette of wet color. Early in his career, Benjamin formulated and reformulated a brief theory of color that was specific to fantasy, that of German Romanticism to be sure, but which already indicated the predilection he would realize in his outright appreciation of Disney’s art of animation. “The rainbow is a purely childlike image. ... The color is ... moist in nature, the medium of changes and not symptom.”¹⁵ Like in a rainbow and the *laterna magica*, too, in fantasy “the color is completely contour.”¹⁶ What is typical of fantasy (in contradistinction to the “fantastic”) is an intrinsic *Entstaltung*, de- or un-formation. “All fantastic forms have in common a constructive moment – or (from the perspective of the subject) a moment of spontaneity. True fantasy in contrast is unconstructive, purely un-forming – or (from the subject’s vantage point) purely negative.”¹⁷ This un-forming tendency upends the sense of an ending in fantasy, which “never leads into death, but rather renders the decline it summons eternal by an endless relay of transitions.”¹⁸

The rapport with color, in Benjamin’s reflections on fantasy, is a container for the antisocial tendencies in post-childhood fantasizing: “Fantasy can be kept under control only through such contemplation of colors and fully developed and satiated in relation to them.”¹⁹ Daydream fantasy not only underlies every making that makes a wish, or rather makes a wish presentable, but, and this Disney pursued as its saving trace, it also lights up the test pattern of development, the earliest grid of good, bad, evil, and good-enough (explored by Friedrich Nietzsche, Melanie Klein, and D. W. Winnicott). Tolkien writes in “On

¹⁵ Walter Benjamin, “Die Farbe vom Kinde aus Betrachtet,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 6, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991): 110.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Benjamin, “Phantasie,” *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Fairy-Stories:" "it is one of the lessons of fairy-stories ... that on callow, lumpish, and selfish youth peril, sorrow, and the shadow of death can bestow dignity, and even sometimes wisdom."²⁰ Early on in Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* when the princess sings about wish fulfilment at the wishing well, it is the prop that spells out the imperative of philosophical ethics, namely, that by our private nature as daydreamers it is incumbent upon us, ultimately, to learn to wish well. Snow White reclaims the projections of good and evil for a new relationship to her self-loving daydream. However, in the episode of *Fantasia* that was Mickey Mouse's vehicle, we witness how a curse often indwells wish fulfilment.

Johann Peter Hebel, who went to Karlsruhe to go to school and then got stuck there, composed "Drei Wünsche" ("Three Wishes"), his remake of fairytale material as a comedy of perils attending wish fulfillment.²¹ The mountain fairy presents a couple a gift: guaranteed fulfillment of three wishes, which will commence at the end of the week. Until Friday, then, they rehearse wishing. But once the free offer takes effect, each wish counts in real time, for which the couple was not prepared. It crosses the mind of the hungry wife that she'd like a sausage: she says so, too, and there it is. Her husband, angered over the waste of a good wish, wishes out loud that the sausage hang from her nose. When Freud refers to this punitive wish fulfillment in "The Uncanny" he judges that it is "very striking but not in the least uncanny."²² it is another example of how a fairy-tale that otherwise "recalls repressed desires and surmounted modes of thinking belonging to the prehistory of the individual and of the race,"²³ thereby fulfilling one of the conditions of the uncanny, falls outside the horror

²⁰ Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," 47.

²¹ Johann Peter Hebel, "Drei Wünsche," *Schatzkästlein*, ed. Richard Müller-Schmidt (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2012). Special edition of the Deutsche Bahn circulated among the first-class passengers to make amends for the long delays en route from Berlin to Karlsruhe.

²² Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," *The Standard Edition*, vol. 17: 246. Freud doesn't mention his fairy-tale source for this wish scenario.

²³ *Ibid.*, 245.

genre Freud was demarcating. The fairy tale of wish fantasy enters Freud's science in tandem with its visualization in the first shorts in the history of cinema that showed wish fulfillment, often the brief superimposition of some dream babe upon the wife. The wife returns within her husband's POV angry at the wish that crossed his mind, which brings the projection back home to the moviegoers in the audience.

Wish number three in Hebel's "Three Wishes," the husband's second wish, delivers his wife of the growth. Story over and the couple is back at the starting gate without gain or pain for their wishes. The narrator suggests that husband and wife should have prepared themselves better for optimal wishing. The first wish might have been for *Verstand*, a more rational understanding. But all of that is just another fantasy. It's hard to keep back the wishes crossing one's mind at the speed of thought. Nevertheless "Drei Wünsche" shows a self-correcting momentum in the course of the couple's wishes: the first is a self-serving appetitive wish; the second lies in the vicinity of the death wish, which brings up the arrears of wishing, the good and evil consequences; the third wish is the good one, which realizes the hope that reparation can still be made. Wishing undergoes development from selfishness to responsibility.

3.

In *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* Rousseau reflects on the fantasizing lost in transposition to his reflections on moral philosophy. "As I tried to recall so many sweet reveries, I relived them instead of describing them. The memory of this state is enough to bring it back to life; if we completely ceased to experience it, we should soon lose all knowledge of it."²⁴ The recorded and published reveries adulterate the treasures of fantasizing which are ephemeral but also throwaway, which means they are stamped with a certain fixity. No matter how

²⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Peter France (London: Penguin Books, 2004): 36.

antisocial the private daydream it is not repressed; if it is dropped or discarded it still counts as “to be continued.”

Rousseau demarcates the condemned site of fantasizing: “If I had possessed the ring of Gyges, it would have made me independent of men and made them dependent on me. I have often wondered, in my castles in the air, how I should have used this ring for in such a case power must indeed be closely followed by temptation to abuse it. Able to satisfy my desires, capable of doing anything without being deceived by anyone, what might I have desired at all consistently?” But just when you thought this was the Invisible Man’s rhetorical question leading him to crime, Rousseau does an about-face: “the sight of general happiness is the only thing that could have given me lasting satisfaction.”²⁵

When Rousseau composed his *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* in the last two years of his life, he saw himself as exiled from a hostile society. If the sense of persecution to which we owe his escape-philosophizing was at the time of this work’s composition out of context, out of time, it still fits a post-traumatic schedule of response to earlier wounds. He chooses isolation to forgo external and internal contact with his enemies; in fact, he owes to them his discovery of a new resource for reflection and writing. “The moments of rapture and ecstasy which I sometimes experienced during these solitary walks were joys I owed to my persecutors; without them I should never have known or discovered the treasures that lay within me.”²⁶

Preliminary to his walking cure unto reverie Rousseau suffered a street accident, which shook loose the souvenirs of other bloody mishaps in youth and childhood he confronts in the course of the book. This time around, however, the accident exposed him to

²⁵ Ibid., 102.

²⁶ Ibid., 36.

the rumor of his demise.²⁷ Setting the stage for this examination of the expansion and intensification of his inner moral life following upon his alienation and isolation, Rousseau projects his arrival on another planet. “I live here as in some strange planet on to which I have fallen from the one I knew.”²⁸ Beginning in the Enlightenment (and culminating in Daniel Paul Schreber’s delusion of “tested souls”), the afterlife came to be secularized and syndicated as continued existence on foreign planets, which afforded more than just one lifetime’s worth of education.²⁹ Is that why lifetime is relative in science fiction? Whether by some kind of time paradox or the advancements in medical science, the protagonists tend to attain biblical ages. Where death seems to hold no dominion, it may have already happened.

The transfer to the afterlife is Rousseau’s allegory of making over fantasizing as the publishable record of his reveries. “Set free from all the earthly passions that are born of the tumult of social life, my soul would often soar out of this atmosphere and would converse before its time with the celestial spirits.”³⁰ But visits there before his appointed time of departure are not enough to establish the continuity shot that moral philosophy alone can afford: the Before and After of a truly continued existence. And so, Rousseau turns his fantasizing into a school of wishing well to amass for his soul the sole “goods it can carry with it:” “patience, kindness, resignation, integrity, and impartial justice are goods that we can

²⁷ Ibid., 43.

²⁸ Ibid., 31-32.

²⁹ See the opening chapter of Diethard Sawicki’s *Leben mit den Toten. Geisterglauben und die Entstehung des Spiritismus in Deutschland* (Paderborn and Munich: Schöningh, 2002). Although Sawicki doesn’t include Schreber in his genealogy, the date stamp of the Enlightenment (and its view of the enrollment of the dead in Outer Space) in Schreber’s *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken, nebst Nachträgen und einem Anhang über die Frage: “Unter welchen Voraussetzungen darf eine für geisteskrank erachtete Person gegen ihren erklärten Willen in einer Heilanstalt festgehalten werden?”* (Leipzig: Mutze, 1903) is the book’s affinity with modern Spiritualism.

³⁰ Rousseau, 91.

take with us and that we can accumulate continually without fear that death itself can rob us of their value.”³¹

4.

The basic rule Rousseau applies in pursuit of a happiness morally secured for transport to the other side rules out the majority fare of our second nature as daydreamers: “Whatever our situation, it is only self-love that can make us constantly unhappy.”³² It is getting late in *The Creative Unconscious*, Hanns Sachs’s psycho-aesthetic treatise, which continues and completes Freud’s essay “Creative Writers and Daydreaming,” when we learn that music is “the art-form which comes nearest to being the pure embodiment of beauty.”³³ Up to this point Sachs drew on an eclectic spread of linguistic and visual works from Ancient Greek sculpture and drama to Mickey Mouse cartoons to test Freud’s thesis that art rescues the omnipotence of thoughts from the off-limits underworld of daydreaming, but must never look back at, never reveal its source. Wish-fulfilment fantasies are embarrassingly, boringly narcissistic, asocial, even anti-social, certainly inartistic. The artist begins by renouncing the drippy primary narcissism of his wish fantasizing. In exchange for the renunciation, then, beauty is the prize, conceived in accordance with secondary narcissism as the goal of perfectibility that, always just out of reach, draws the artist onward.

The beauty of Sachs’s argument is that art leads in the eyes or ears of the receiver to an “experience of an emotional situation which has been his potentially, but which he never can hope to attain in such unmixed purity and fullness.”³⁴ “Music gives an emotional situation, or the change or sequence of emotional situations, in a more direct, immediate,

³¹ Ibid., 61.

³² Ibid., 130.

³³ Hanns Sachs. *The Creative Unconscious: Studies in the Psychoanalysis of Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Sci-Art Publishers, 1942): 208.

³⁴ Ibid., 209-10.

and precise way than can be done by anything else in the world. Unhampered by contents, it can embody and convey emotion with a nicety and accuracy of nuance that is quite unattainable by any intellectual process or by any intrinsic connection with objective facts, be they real or imaginary.”³⁵ Just the same, when Sachs gives the example of one of Beethoven’s listeners we are in *Fantasia*: “The listener ... may, if the spirit moves him, be carried away to the fantasy of a gliding stream between mossy banks or a field of wheat undulating in the wind, or a deserted street in moonlight, or to nothing at all. It does not matter, since all and none of these are present in the music.”³⁶

Wish fantasizing can be an embodied thought process: “The reactions of the body (expression of the face, sound, gesticulation) can be observed by others, which gives them a direct social importance lacking to the mere mental processes.”³⁷ The primal rehearsal of the musical performance is wishful acting-out in groups, the embodied outlet of wishful thinking that gets around the impasse of private daydreaming: “Doing things together, in a social way, instead of staying in isolation, is some help. ... This help becomes more consequential when some deprivation, imposed by unfriendly reality, can be denied by a collective wish-fulfilment fantasy. When all act in concert, it fosters belief in the truth of the desired illusion or the hope that it may become real, and produces what we call a mass-suggestion.”³⁸

The name for this basic performance of wishing is playing. It means that the actions “can never be mistaken for the real thing, neither by the performer nor by the audience.”³⁹

³⁵ Ibid., 209.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 212.

³⁸ Ibid., 212-13.

³⁹ Ibid., 214.

If what is being played belongs exclusively to the psychic process of fantasy, “insistence on unreality is superfluous.”⁴⁰

The “airy nothings” of fantasy can be handled more deftly under the form of a play than the play-actions which have some of the clumsiness of reality. But then, a mere fantasy could never be transmitted to others, would always be condemned to remain in social isolation if it is not combined with a bit of playing – at least the playing with words.⁴¹

Embodied wishing or playing makes collective action possible. The excuse that is as valid as what’s only a dream is that all’s fair that’s done in play. We need the label warning with playing, which is not only a mental process but triggers actions of the body that threaten trespass upon the turf of reality.

Play, for Sachs, gives unreality to the act, transforming “it from an irregular emotional response into a collective and standardized action – in short it gives it ‘style.’”⁴² At the same time play expunges the “experience of an unwelcome passivity by repeating the situation in the form of activity.”⁴³ That’s why repetition is so key to playing. Repetition makes any pursuit unreal without depriving it of activity and separates it from practical purpose by lending to it the character of a ritual.⁴⁴ The driving force of emotion behind practical action is significantly altered upon repetition. The illusion of free activity is in the ascendant when it appears that we repeat acts at will. Otherwise “emotions have a way of their own.”⁴⁵ Every physical act, however playful, is a piece of reality. The activity away from the mere mental act of fantasy also summons erotic pleasure, but plays at this pleasure,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 218-19.

⁴² Ibid., 215.

⁴³ Ibid., 216.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 217.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 217.

keeping it an unrealized aesthetic pleasure of its own. In order that pre-pleasure continue we need pure beauty as delegate of the death drive delivered of aggression. Respite is afforded from “the eternal necessity to choose between sensual gratification and peace of mind.”⁴⁶

That “music produces the highest emotional reality”⁴⁷ reflects both the medium’s unparalleled application of the static principle (“forms of retardation, repetition, and other restrictions and regulations of the emotional outflow”)⁴⁸ and its “highest degree of unreality,” the play aspect by which music makes direct contact.⁴⁹ While action and interest (and anxiety) dominate the majority of cultural production, doses of beauty are also administered throughout. At the high point that music occupies or cathects, however, there is pure beauty, which isolates and makes sad. The “static” setting of music brings back an emotional experience under the auspices of sadness. “In this manner the motions which originally expressed affects and relieved emotional tensions, after being regulated by the influence of collectivization, stylization, and rhythm were finally transferred to the production which still served ... for the same purpose. A tenuous, but uninterrupted, line connects the highest results of creative endeavour with the play manifestations of the Id and its drives. In music and poetry ... the main character of rhythmic motion is best preserved.”⁵⁰ We keep coming back to the main character of the specific emotion tinged with tristesse that has been preserved in its isolation.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 239.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 210.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 208.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 210.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 221.

Relating to beauty, “the highest form of psychic life,”⁵¹ brings us “nearer to essentials:” “a thing of beauty ... represents and brings home a precise nuance of an emotional situation.”⁵² Beauty, in which “the presence of death makes itself felt in ... sadness,”⁵³ realizes in the palette of fantasy-nuance “the aim of every work of art:” “the representation – not the description – of a specific emotional situation.”⁵⁴ That the emotional situation isn’t a description means that it has been isolated and preserved, like the princess in her glass coffin, and awaits the kiss of reanimation.

The artwork is a kind of dream catcher with beauty as bait. It isn’t any old oceanic feeling from prehistory, however, but a specific situation, which bears the time stamp not so much of fantasy incentive as of lapse in the timing of affective response. Rousseau, we saw, associated the goods of morals with an extra-terrestrial perspective on the afterlife. In his “Fourth Walk” he addresses lying, the defective cornerstone of the moral philosophy in which he trusts. There is the lie to which he confessed in print ten years earlier. While a servant he was caught with dead mistress’s missing ribbon. He charged his colleague Marion with stealing the ribbon to make him a present. To get rid of the shame he reversed the scenario of his own wishful acting out. This scene packs, according to Paul de Man, “particular affective significance.”⁵⁵ Rousseau claims that the ribbon episode is his method for never again telling a lie. But when he scours the impress of his conversations he finds a mess of minor-league lying. “The profound impression made on me by the memory of poor Marion may be capable of preventing any lies which might harm other people, but not the

⁵¹ Ibid., 239.

⁵² Ibid., 234.

⁵³ Ibid., 240.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 229.

⁵⁵ Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading. Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979): 278.

lies which can help me to save face when I alone am involved.”⁵⁶ Isn’t only that which is useful true and therefore a grievous lie if withheld? “I have often made up stories, but very rarely told lies. In following these principles ... I have injured no one and I have not laid claim to more than was owing to me. In my opinion this is the only sort of truth that can be called a virtue. In all other respects it is no more than a metaphysical entity for us, and produces neither good nor evil.”⁵⁷ But there is no excuse in morals if lies happen because of out-of-timing.⁵⁸ A conversation can run on ahead of Rousseau such that he is forced to speak before thinking. Or if taken by surprise, shame and his basic timidity can impel him to tell lies independent of his will.⁵⁹

The utilitarian adjustments to the moral judgment of lying might make room for fiction. But more importantly it is the sliding scale of lying, which is unstoppable by the time-saving that the run of time in language requires, that extends the scenario of out-of-timing to fiction. What lags behind in sadness is the missed opportunity to tell the truth of what you felt in the emotional situation. The demand for such completion is inexhaustible. Instead benign lying or fiction gives to grievous lying a topography in which reparation and integration are possible. The beauty of *Dichtung*, Freud’s summary term for art, is that it allows us to mourn the missingness of the affective response in the lost emotional situation.

Affection deficit is suffered over the time of our own response. As grievous as the circumstances of departure is the scene of parting: if it was a loss, it counted a failure to get one’s farewell across. We “feel” fiction as though we could catch up with the lapse. Is the specific emotional situation the place for the absence of what we wanted to say or show?

⁵⁶ Rousseau, 74.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁸ “No excuse can ever hope to catch up with such a proliferation of guilt” (Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 299).

⁵⁹ Rousseau, 73-74.

Affect isn't repressed but the out-of-timing of its response haunts us. This is the import of mourning: to catch up with emotions unsaid, undead in the specific situations of their stirring.