

QUARTERLY PRESS REVIEW

FOR ADVANCED EFL LEARNERS

WINTER 2014



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QUARTERLY PRESS REVIEW

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The Soane Museum

by *Richard Warburton*

London is full of nice places spoilt by too many people. Covent Garden, Richmond and Tate Modern would be delightful if you could halve the number of visitors. It was with some relief therefore, that I turned off the grim artery that is the Kingsway, and entered Lincoln's Inn Fields to see the usual modest queue in front of The Soane Museum. Thankfully this gem of a house is still some way off the tourist trail, the lucky few waiting outside dutifully switch off their mobiles and wait to be ushered in at irregular intervals to maintain the atmosphere inside.

Sir John Soane is chiefly remembered for designing The Bank of England, however his more resonant legacy is his house, half of which he converted into a museum during his lifetime. Visitors were welcome by appointment but not in 'wet or dirty weather.' His aim was to inspire and educate fledgling artists and

architects. What remains today is a fascinating cornucopia housed in a technical marvel of a building.

The living quarters are cosy and comfortable but the place really comes alive in the rooms designed for his collection. The Picture Room is a small box that contains over a hundred paintings, all on display thanks to an ingenious hinged wall system that allows you to see Hogarth's sequence of morality pictures, *The Rake's Progress*, in its entirety. Three Venetian scenes by Canaletto and a Turner are also among the collection.

The Colonnade is packed with antiquities, such as classical busts and statues, urns and fragments of architecture. The glass dome floods the space with light yet mysterious objects still manage to hide in shadow, encouraging you to pause and peep into recesses. You can even look down into the crypt below where the sarcophagus of King Seti I awaits your inspection.

Adjoining the crypt is the Monk's Parlour, Soane's send-up of the contemporary passion for all things gothic. The low ceiling and constricted space coupled with casts of grotesque faces provoke an uneasy feel to the room. Whenever I am here, I imagine reading an

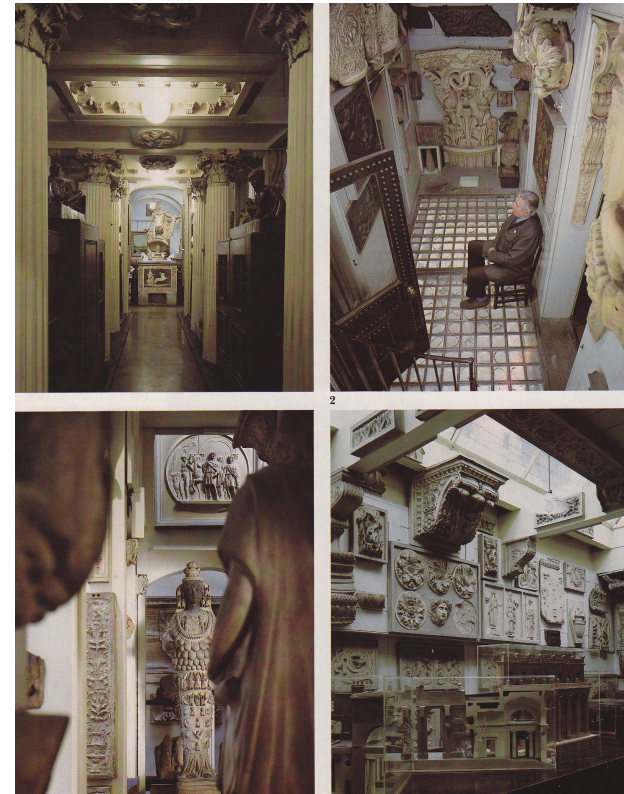
M. R. James ghost story by candle light to a small group of nervous friends.

Three stops east on the Central Line is the Bank of England itself. Before I worked in the city, I had mistaken the Royal Exchange for our national bank. The actual edifice was demolished in the early twentieth century. What replaced it is fairly uninspiring, although the loss of Soane's original interior being perhaps the greatest crime. In Bartholomew Lane you can visit the Bank of England Museum where, if you are an economics dunderhead like me, you can get to grips with inflation and quantitative easing. There is also the opportunity to feel the weight of a genuine gold bar, (very heavy), and examine one of your banknotes under ultraviolet light to see the anti-forgery techniques used.

The Soane Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10am with last entry at 4.30pm and it is free.

The Bank of England Museum, Bartholomew Lane is open Monday to Friday from 10am with last entry at 4.45pm and it is also free. ♦

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A Question of Desire

by *Michael Humfrey*

A long time ago when I was young and when much of the world was still coloured red on the map, I chose to join the British Colonial Police Service. Today, for many people, the whole concept of empire is redolent of theft and exploitation. I will say only that it did not seem that way to me at the time – and has never seemed so since.

For the first seven years of my service I worked in East Africa; then I was transferred to Jamaica and a very different kind of life.

It was during my fifth year in Kingston that Petersen arrived from New York. He was an American architect and he came to take up a post with a local firm which had won contracts for two new hotels on the outskirts of the city. He was a tall, good-looking man, about thirty years old, with a mane of fair hair which fell over his forehead. I remember hearing that he could have played professional tennis in the States if he had cared to. He carried himself with an athlete's

assurance and he looked as if life had been good to him. Socially, he was one of those people who seem to succeed without effort. For instance, he was invited to join the Racquet Club before he had been on the island a month. Someone there, watching him in action on the courts, referred to him as the Golden Boy and the name stuck. I had never been invited to join the Club.

The road which I took back to my bungalow from work each evening passed by the Racquet Club. Among the players I could be sure of seeing most evenings was Anthea Palmer. She was the Colonial Secretary's daughter, and she had very long suntanned legs and chestnut hair coiled in a single braid on top of her head. She wore brief white shorts and a white blouse with the top button undone. If I had been a member of the Club, I could have met her on equal terms. As it was, she always seemed to me as remote and inaccessible as the summit of the Blue Mountains which overhung the city.

Apart from the occasional brief greeting when our paths crossed at some official cocktail party, I had found an opportunity to speak to her alone only once. She had been a witness to an accidental drowning at Port Royal and I had arranged to take a statement from her myself. In my office she had been helpful and not unfriendly, and that night I lay awake on my bed and read too much into her smile when I had seen her

to her car. Next morning I telephoned to ask her to the races on Saturday and she said briskly: 'I'm sorry, but I'm always booked up these days ...' and I knew that I had been foolish to hope for more than that.

The Golden Boy had no such difficulty. On Sunday mornings, I would see him in his open Jaguar on the road out to Port Royal with Anthea seated beside him. I can remember her long chestnut hair released from its braid and streaming out in the wind as they went past me.

Everyone thought that Petersen would settle for Anthea, but after the first two or three months I got used to seeing him with a succession of other girls from the Racquet Club. He rented a house on the slopes of the Blue Mountains and bought a sailing dinghy which he moored at the Yacht Club. I heard that Anthea had broken her heart over him and was returning to England. I found myself disliking him more and more.

Then one day I met him. He had come into the CID offices to extend his permit of residence and we walked into each other in the corridor outside my office. He apologized for not looking where he was going – though the fault was mine – and explained what he wanted. I took him into my office, rang for one of the Immigration Officers on the floor below and had them renew his permit while he waited.

It was clear that he had never heard of me before,

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but we talked for ten minutes until his permit was ready for signature. Then he thanked me and returned to his own office downtown.

The strange thing was that I found I liked him. He had none of the self-regard I had expected and he seemed genuinely grateful for my help. He

was quietly spoken and he had some interesting things to say about his work and about the new trends in tropical hotel design. I could understand why he was well liked by everyone who knew him.

About a month after that meeting, I was woken up at half past two one morning by the duty officer at the Central Police Station. There was a body outside Madame Tanya's establishment on the waterfront. I knew the place well: it was one of the joyless brothels that catered for sailors from the ships which docked close by. Trouble there was not unusual – generally, drunken brawls which stopped as quickly as they began and left only a few cracked skulls and broken noses in their wake. Murder in Jamaica was uncommon in those days, and a body meant that I had to visit the scene in person.

I arrived twenty minutes later. I do not wake easily from sleep, and I was red-eyed and irritable. The first thing I saw as I approached the building was Petersen's Jaguar. It was parked at the front of the brothel and the top was up.

A uniformed sergeant met me as I got out of my car. He saluted and reported the situation in the prescribed way. I nodded and walked over to the Jaguar. The acrid smell of exhaust fumes hung on the still air. The windows of the car, with one exception, were tightly closed. A length of black rubber tubing ran from the exhaust pipe through the narrow ventilation window on the passenger's side. The sergeant had opened the driver's door to switch off the engine. When it was clear that the man inside was dead, he had left the body where it lay slumped against the steering wheel and telephoned the duty officer. Apart from another constable on beat duty, the waterfront was deserted.

I shone the beam of my torch on the body and saw at once that it was Petersen. His face was relaxed; his thick fair hair had fallen over his forehead and his mouth was open. I put my hand on his wrist: it was not yet cold.

I sent the sergeant to get a pick-up to take the body away, and then I had a closer look at the car. I detached the rubber tubing from the exhaust pipe with some care but I was already sure that the only fingerprints I might find there would be those of Petersen himself.

On the passenger seat there was a letter. The envelope was addressed simply to: Marie at Madame

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Tanya's. I slit it open with my pocket knife and, in the light of my torch, I read:

Marie –

Spend the money and be happy.

He had signed it 'Ronny' and the cheque was in the same envelope.

It was not the first note of its kind I had seen and in my experience suicide notes tend to say much the same banal things. But the cheque in this case – made out in the name of Marie Robinson – was for \$50,000. I knew that any of Madame Tanya's girls would think herself lucky to clear fifty dollars a week. I could recognize a few of the girls on sight, but I did not know which of them was Marie Robinson.

The sergeant had returned by this time and I told him to get Madame out of bed. He hammered on the front door of the brothel with his truncheon, a light came on inside and Madame herself appeared in the doorway. She was a stout woman with dirty feet dressed in a stained silk negligee, and she evidently hoped that we were late night customers. Then she saw me and assumed at once that we had come to raid her place again. She opened her mouth to essay the customary howl of protest, but I told her to shut up and take us to Marie. She pointed to a door at the end of the passage which ran from the bar to the rear of the building. The brothel stank of dirty mattresses and

marijuana, and there was that pungent smell peculiar to brothels everywhere and which can only be described as the odour of stale sex. Doors opened cautiously on either side of the passage and then shut quickly again as the sergeant and I passed by. It was a Monday and business was slow on Mondays. Most of the prostitutes were sleeping alone.

I pushed open the door at the end of the passage and switched on the light. The weak bulb had been painted blue and at first I did not recognize the girl on the narrow bed. She was wearing only a pair of soiled panties; her breasts were pendulous and her belly was lined with the marks of child-bearing. Her skin was light brown and her hair had been ironed straight. You could see that she had once been pretty – but that must have been a long while ago.

She woke up as the light went on and turned towards the door. As soon as I saw her face I knew who she was. A thin, semi-circular scar ran from the hairline at her right temple under the eye and across the bridge of her nose. A few years earlier, a drunken Venezuelan seaman had pushed a broken rum bottle into her face. I remembered the case quite well only because, immediately afterwards, the man had done the same thing to another prostitute he had met in the passage on his way out. This time, a shard of glass had punctured the girl's jugular vein. We had charged

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him with murder and he had hanged for it. Marie's evidence had helped convict him.

Prostitutes are an unpredictable lot: you can't type-cast them any more than the rest of us. Some, in a curious way, retain a child-like innocence all their lives no matter how many men degrade their bodies. A few are compassionate and moral souls who will receive their reward in another place. It is not incredible that, just occasionally, ordinary men can love them in spite of what they do. But Marie Robinson was not one of these. She had always been a coarse and bitter virago, and her disfigurement had only made her worse. Nevertheless, there could be no doubt about it: Petersen, the Golden Boy, had loved her. In fact, he had loved her so much he had preferred death to the prospect of living without her.

I told Marie to get some clothes on and the sergeant took her to my office.

Before daylight, we had fitted together the pieces of the case and the picture was clear. Anthea and all the other girls, it seemed, had meant nothing to Petersen. Their idle lives and predictable chatter had come to bore him: he wearied of their company. After a while, he had stopped going to the Club in order to avoid them.

One night, he had paid a visit to Madame Tanya's and met Marie. What strange, unlikely chemistry of

the heart caused him to fall in love with her in the weeks that followed only God knows. Nothing in my experience throws up the slightest clue. In any event, his feelings were not returned. Perhaps it was because Marie could never bring herself to believe that he meant it when he said he wanted no one else; perhaps, in spite of every- thing, she enjoyed the life she led; or perhaps Petersen was just an incom- petent lover. Whatever the reason, when he tried to persuade her to leave the brothel and live with him, she refused. When he brought her gifts, she took them from his hands without a word of gratitude. In the stinking, blue- lit cubicle where she sold her body to anyone with the modest price, she turned her back on him when he said he loved her.

Finally one night he asked her to marry him. They would go back together to New York: she would live the comfortable, respected life of a success- ful architect's wife. The past would be buried forever. Without a word, she turned him out of her room and locked the door. She would no longer let him touch her.

So every evening after that, when he had finished at his office, he came to sit at the bar of the brothel, watching in hopeless silence as other men went with Marie to her room. Because of the scar, only the poorer clients sought her services now.

After three weeks, he could no longer bear it. So he

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waited one Sunday night until the waterfront became deserted, drove the red Jaguar to the place where he could be nearest her and slipped the end of the rubber tube over the exhaust pipe. Then he closed the windows, started the engine and killed himself.

The inquest was a routine affair. The cause of death was quickly established: Petersen took his own life while the balance of his mind was disturbed. The matter was closed. His body was released to his family who had come from New York to attend the proceedings. The cheque was destroyed.

As I was leaving the court, the Coroner's orderly ran up to say that his mas- ter would like to have a word with me in chambers. It was the lunchtime recess. The Coroner poured us each a drink and despatched the orderly to find more ice.

We talked about the case for a few minutes and then the Coroner said: 'I just wanted to ask you why a man like that could have preferred a bitter little whore to all the girls of his own kind in Kingston. I can't make any sense of it and I've been doing this job for twenty-five years.'

I knew the Coroner was a member of the Racquet Club and would have known Anthea.

The orderly returned with a bowl of ice and the Coroner poured himself another drink. 'I suppose the man went mad,' he said quietly. 'Let's thank God it

doesn't happen more often. He might have handed her the cheque before he killed himself ...'

I nodded politely, but I didn't agree. I didn't believe that Petersen was out of his mind. His taste in women might seem bizarre, but he had not been mad.

I worked late in my office that night. A three-quarter moon laid tall shadows across the courts of the Racquet Club as I drove past. The windows of the clubhouse blazed with light and I could hear music, but I knew Anthea would not be there.

My own bungalow sat in a little pool of darkness just off the main road. I left my car in the driveway, opened the door and switched on the light in the hall. The house was empty and unwelcoming. I sat down and poured myself the first brandy of the evening.

Outside in the darkness, a potoo called once and was silent. The brandy scored my throat. I thought of the unfairness of it – how so many of us seemed always to want what we could not have. Life had cheated Petersen and, just then, I felt that it had cheated me. Perhaps I was already a little drunk: with an effort, I pulled myself together. The Coroner's question still deserved an answer – but I knew that a man's infatuation with a woman was a rash and mysterious thing and in the case of the Golden Boy, whatever the answer, he had taken it with him in his ruin and despair. ♦

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Two Poems

by Anthony Gardner

Unexpected

*I drove north that December without expectations;
behind me the old year narrowed into dark lanes of
disappointment.*

*At Penrith the night sky threw a constellation of snow
against my windscreen;*

the Whinlatter Pass was closed because of ice.

*When I stepped into the brightness of a panelled hall,
you – my friend's sister – greeted me like a hero.*

Three years later we married.

*The windowsills of the ancient, scarcely used church
standing solitary in its field*

brimmed with flowers.

*And I sometimes think of those who came later that
afternoon –*

*unlatching the door, expecting
bare stone and dampness,
and stepping instead into a dream
of scent and white blossom.*

Driving

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*The coming generations will think us mad:
our primitive vehicles drunk on fossil fuel
clogging up the landscape,
clogging up the sky.*

‘Surely they knew better?’ they will sigh.

*I can offer nothing in defence
except a definition of happiness:*

*driving along an empty road with you –
through Orkney meadows tapestried with flowers;
past Wicklow hills all prickly-bright with gorse;
among the sunflower fields of southern France.*

*The ranks of tournesols like epaulettes
seemed to shoulder that moment against time,
raising their heads to call, ‘Drive on, drive on!*

*Into the next valley, where the sun
gathers all lovers’ love into its light
till all that is not love is lost from sight,
and every road is flower-lined, and every flower
sublime.’*

*Only a madman would listen to a sunflower;
but on your birthday morning, at this pristine hour,
let us show the sensible ones what it is to be alive –
turn the key, plot a course by the sun,
and drive. ♦*

A Brief History of Scent

by *Beau Friedlander*

In early 2012, a woman walking her dog in the woods adjacent to Tri-State Crematory in the Appalachian town of Noble, Georgia, found a human skull. Arriving investigators discovered body parts scattered all over the woods, and when they entered the crematory compound, they immediately called in FEMA.

What they encountered on the premises was a confusion of cadavers rotting in various holding crypts and earthen pits. A coffin left in the crematory yard contained a green-black stew of human bones. The scene was beyond grim: corpses jellying into dreadlocks of waxen gray material, fermented fat and muscle twisted around moldy bones. A skull and torso were found floating in the compound’s lake. In all, 334 sets of remains were found, some of which still bore toe tags.

The incinerator at Tri-State was in working order, and the manager, Ray Brent Marsh, couldn’t say why he had stockpiled the bodies. (“Not for lack of a desire to give those answers,” he said at his plea hearing, “but

the lack of the answer.”) But where Marsh’s mess was a tragedy for the families of the dead, the United States Armed Forces saw an opportunity. There was a practical application for all that decay – specifically for the compounds known as putrescine and cadaverine, both of which smell like their names suggest.

Soldiers are exposed to death in its many stages – from the just-before wound, when an exploded abdomen leaks the odors of digestion, to the weeks-later smell of advanced decomposition. Many of the men and women thrust into these experiences were coming home unhinged, so the U.S. military was prompted to deploy, for the first time, scent as a training tool.

Pamela Dalton, of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia, remotely coordinated the odor-gathering effort at Tri-State as part of a program funded by the Department of Defense. “Volunteers collected samples of the air,” she explains. “I don’t think I’ve ever smelled anything more disturbing in my entire life.” Dalton works on olfactory strategies to treat (or preempt) post-traumatic stress disorder, her goal being to hinder the associative power of common war-zone odorants by inuring soldiers to them. Diesel fuel is one of the smells that can send a veteran around the bend. The same goes for cordite. And the smell of death, of course, is a reliable trigger.

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“It’s a lot easier to associate a negative emotion with an odor,” Dalton told me. “That happens almost with one trial, where positive associations take a lot longer, sometimes two to three pairings.” If you smell a corpse in a well-lit room while watching war imagery with virtual-reality glasses, you may be less vulnerable to those sensory stimuli when you experience them in a war zone. The military wanted to create soldiers who wouldn’t come apart when an I.E.D. ripped off the leg or pierced the skull of someone nearby.

But there was another battlefield use for the samples collected at Tri-State. “I did some work around 1997,” Dalton told me, “to see if there was a ‘universal malodor’ that caused people from any culture to leave an area.” She explained that a certain branch of the military had “wanted to know if there was a single odor or set of odorants that would produce this effect.” The answer, Dalton said, was a nonlethal biological agent – she called it “a chemical, but not a chemical weapon” – known as Stench Soup. In one test trial, volunteers fitted with heart-rate and gastric-motility monitors were seated in a room into which Dalton pumped the odorant. They were told to turn down a dial when the stench became unbearable. In another test trial, volunteers were asked to drink a milkshake while smelling Stench Soup. Most couldn’t.

“What we realized rather quickly,” Dalton told me,

“was that if [the odor] was going to transcend culture, it had to be something that had biological significance, and that’s why we focused on things like vomit... We worked on our own formula for human feces. We did a rotting-sewage odor, rotting meat.” Stench Soup works on the principle that something truly repulsive needs to have something nice in it to make the olfactory mucosa want more. Said Dalton, “Combining these unpleasant formulas with... a floral or a fruity odor was what made the thing so disgusting none of us could stand it.”

Dalton sent me a sample. It arrived in a cloudy vial covered with some sort of sticky plastic wrap, which was suspended inside a glass specimen jar filled with Styrofoam peanuts, which in turn was sealed in a Ziploc bag. There was a little beige stir bar inside the vial. I recruited my downstairs neighbor and we went out to the alley behind the house. I closed the vial as soon as I opened it. The alley reeked all the way out to the street, at least twenty feet from where we stood. A passerby stopped and peered in. The vial had been open for fewer than three seconds.

Historically speaking, science has been charged not with intentionally producing bad odors but with eliminating them. The traditional approach to dealing with the ambient smells of a city has been to mask its odors – of sewage and waste, or death and contagion –

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with some more agreeable scent. Alain Corbin’s history of France’s relationship to scent, *The Foul and the Fragrant*, describes the events of March 23, 1782, when a group of experts in chemistry and hygiene were summoned to Paris’s Hôtel de la Grenade, a hospital on Rue de la Parcheminerie. Medical students were said to have been discarding body parts in the cesspool. The smell was legendary. That day, Antoine Lavoisier, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, and others came to test a new antimephitic, a substance meant to neutralize miasmas. (For centuries, physicians believed that miasmas – vapors carrying noxious particles – were the cause of communicable diseases, from bubonic plague to cholera to malaria. The theory held till the middle of the nineteenth century, when germs began to be better understood by science.) At some point during the test of the stench neutralizer, a cesspool cleaner was overcome by the fumes and fell in. He was soon pulled out but did not survive. A ventilation inspector who inhaled the dying man’s breath while trying to administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation shouted, “I am a dead man!” and fell into a fit, foaming at the lips. He survived, but not, Corbin notes, without suffering “after-effects.”

Ancient Rome, to take another example, was filthy, despite (or perhaps because of) its grandeur. A main artery of the Eternal City was the Cloaca Maxima, an

open sewer that carried waste into the Tiber River. As Europe grew, many cities had open sewers running through their streets. Well into the nineteenth century, horrific bouts of cholera spread via the presence of fecal matter in both the air (dried and pulverized and lofted upward as dust) and the water.

In early modern cities, malodors migrated from sewers to a sociocultural equivalent: poor people – the pongy masses who couldn't afford to mask the odors of the body with perfume or neutralize the stench of the neighborhoods where they lived. Ragpickers were particularly shunned, because their work took them to the city dumps. Prostitutes were considered repugnant for the obvious reason that they were more exposed to infection than most people, and specifically because they were exposed to a lot of semen – the *aura seminalis* being a powerful odorant when put in contact with the female sexual orifice. Homosexuals, too, were tainted by their association with excessive amounts of semen, as well as by the perception of anal sex as unclean. Nasty smells were like grave sins; they were associated with the dire consequences of bad behavior.

The perfume of certain flowers brought by the living to a wake for the dead provided a respite from the smell of putrefaction. The smell of corruption was an aspect of the nightmare set in motion by Eve's conversation with the serpent. No wonder some of the

earliest attempts to produce pleasant smells came straight out of religious practice. The presence of incense indicated class and power, and it also suggested cleanliness – all of which were evidence of the holy. The word “perfume” is derived from the French *parfumer* (“to scent”), which comes from the Latin *per fumare* (“to perfuse with smoke”). For Buddhists, the smoke of a censer purified the place of worship and summoned buddhas and *jikikoki*, the souls of dishonest incense dealers condemned after death to subsist on incense smoke. In Christianity, prayers were commixed with the smoke of frankincense and myrrh. For a brief moment, the smells of dirty transient life could be supplanted by something sweeter.

All of which is to say that good smells do often signal good things. A strong antiseptic odor likely attracted the Aborigines of Australia to eucalyptus. Its derivative, eucalyptol, was used as a remedy for congested airways, intestinal disorders, and topical infection, and has been observed, in at least one controlled environment, to kill leukemic cells. The Bundjalung of what is now New South Wales found tea-tree oil to be effective in fighting coughs and colds as well as fungal invasions, hemorrhoids, and urinary-tract infections. Native to Asian tropical forests, “green leaf,” or patchouli, has long been taken to ease anxiety and treat snakebite. The oil of the cedars of Lebanon is

reported to slow male-pattern balding. Rosemary quiets rheumatism. Cannabis relieves pain.

One of the most popular cure-alls in premodern Europe was also the continent's first alcohol-based perfume. It was called Hungary water. Most likely developed by a court alchemist during the late 1300s, it supposedly cured gout, epilepsy, headache, lethargy, memory loss, toothache, deafness, and a host of other maladies. According to an unsigned nineteenth-century article in London's *Saturday Review*, the recipe was fairly simple:

Take of aqua vitae, four times distilled, three parts, and of the tops and flowers of rosemary two parts: put these together in a close vessel: let them stand in a gentle heat fifty hours and then distill them. Take one dram of this in the morning, either with your food or drink, and let your face and the diseased limb be washed with it every morning.

The remedy, according to another medical writer, included this important step: "Breathe in with your nose." Hungary water, in other words, would do double duty as a medication and a scent, and it remained the most popular perfume among European aristocrats for the next 400 years.

What eventually supplanted Hungary water was the introduction, in Germany, of eau de cologne, adapted from an old monk's recipe by Giovanni Paolo Feminis,

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an Italian merchant, in the early years of the eighteenth century. Eau de cologne was composed of neroli oil, bergamot, lavender, and rosemary. It could be splashed on the face to freshen up or taken internally for swollen gums and indigestion – and it also eased early-morning jitters. French soldiers used this *aqua admirabilis* because the smell of something nice covered the odors of war and overpopulation resulting from the march of empire. The recipe's path through Europe is a matter of debate among historians of perfumery. By some accounts, the heirless Feminis, before dying in 1736, passed his recipe to his great-nephew Giovanni Maria Farina, who sold it to a German banker named Wilhelm Mühlens. By other accounts, Mühlens acquired the recipe more or less the way Feminis had: as a gift from a monk. In either case, Mühlens opened in 1792 a shop called 4711, named for its address, where he sold "*la véritable Eau de Cologne*." The scent's popularity grew, enhanced by the French troops who had brought it back to Paris after occupying Cologne during the Seven Years' War. (Napoleon is said to have used as many as sixty bottles a day.) Many were encouraged to enter the business and trade in eau de cologne under the name Farina. 4711 is still available, and to this day is quite inexpensive, although now it's touted in advertisements as *Das Wunderwasser*.

Concurrently with the opening of Mühlens's first shop, the French town of Grasse was emerging as the birthplace of modern perfume. This development was the product of a strange symbiosis. Grasse was originally famed for its tanneries; tanneries famously stink. But since the village was also blessed with the ideal climate in which to grow many types of sweet-smelling flowers and herbs, the local jasmine, rose, and lavender were deployed to help cover the animal odors of the tannery. Taking this symbiosis one step further, Grasse began manufacturing scented gloves, which were already in use throughout Europe. When an onerous leather tax made the glove trade unprofitable, Grasse remade itself as a town of perfumers. The smells of Hungary water and eau de cologne persist, but they are now re-created synthetically in a laboratory.

The processing of smells begins in the olfactory bulb. Humans have two of these bulbs above the sinuses, peninsular areas of whitish-gray tissue about the size of a raindrop, one per nostril. They run above the skull's cribriform plate, a thin piece of bone that separates the nasal cavity from the brain, and they receive information from the olfactory epithelium, a group of 15 to 20 million sensory neurons in the upper regions of the nose, each of which sends an axon through the cribriform plate to one of the olfactory

bulbs. Here is one of the few spots where the sensory structures of the human central nervous system come directly into contact with the outside world.

Beyond these anatomical nuts and bolts, however, our knowledge of the mechanisms of smell is extremely fuzzy, riddled with indeterminacy because it is based on someone's say-so, and the caprices of subjectivity make the sense of smell particularly hard to analyze. Some humans are more gifted in this area than others, and some people learn to use what is native to them with astonishing results. Helen Keller, for example, could tell what a person did for a living by the smell of his or her clothes.

Nonhumans are better equipped. Houseflies can detect odor with their antennae. Salmon are able to sniff out their ancestral spawning streams from thousands of miles away. Physiology is a limiting factor for humans, with our mere 15 to 20 million sensory neurons (some breeds of dog have as many as 200 million), but the limitation is not merely physiological. Unlike animals for whom smell is a crucial means of figuring out what's what, for us the sense is peripheral, almost frivolous. Odor pertains to the uncontrollable and the contagious, to kitsch and camp. It is the profane; the animal, base nature, the fart – all of these intermingled with what W. H. Auden called “the unmentionable odor of death.”

In the modern science of smell, fragrance molecules are routinely engineered to make something that smells bad (many lotions and detergents reek in their untreated state) smell like nothing at all. In the federally regulated world of marketing-speak in the United States, this manipulation is expressed as the difference between “fragrance free” (meaning no scent has been added) and “scent free” (meaning a scent has been added to neutralize the original scent of the product). Other molecules are designed to make you think of sex, or to get you relaxed enough to forget you can’t afford a new car.

ScentAir is one of a handful of companies catering to the unwitting consumer’s easily manipulated sense of smell. ScentAir sells the smell of a place, and “it” can smell like anything you want. The company’s promotional material trots out a plate piled high with some idiot Proctor & Gamble alum’s notion of the Proustian madeleine. “Nobody has ever asked you to stop and hear the roses,” the company’s website reminds visitors. “Think about one of your favorite memories and there’s an excellent chance there’s a smell attached to it.” The idea is to create a signature scent for a business, so that people will come to associate that smell with a predictable, repeatable, deliverable experience. Brand recognition becomes synesthetic reality. (Less subtle, perhaps, was the

introduction back in 2008 of Flame, a discontinued men’s fragrance marketed by Burger King that made the wearer smell like a flame-broiled Whopper.)

In marketing circles, this is scent’s golden moment. The smells of everyday life, once dominated by butchered meat and offal, manure and unwashed people, have been transformed into something like elevator music. Coincidentally, Muzak (the elevator-music company) has been the exclusive distributor of ScentAir since 2004. As a result, Westin hotels now smell and sound the same wherever you go. In theory, your brain finds this pleasing, because – like an incense-infused hall of worship – its scent requires none of the vigilance necessary for sussing out a new environment. Omni Hotels and a variety of big-name retailers (Samsung, Sony, Victoria’s Secret) have also discovered the advantages of scent branding, which is now used to invigorate workouts at gyms and to prevent bad behavior in parking garages.

Alex Moskvin of BrandEmotions, a division of International Flavors & Fragrances, describes what he calls “the DNA” of a brand. “It’s important for companies like ours to understand the emotional communication of the fragrance and to have a point of view on that,” he said in a 2005 interview with *Fast Company*. “We want to capture a smell that makes people feel part of the club.” Most people want to

belong to this club. After all, Napoleon belonged to it.

It's one thing to synthesize the smell of a hamburger, a shopping mall, even rotting flesh, but the smell of a place is more complex, and a thousand times more elusive. Still, there are certain constants. The smell of rain is one of them. It is associated with the calm of nature, a cleansing force, even a kind of sanctity. The smell of soil is another – though it is hard to separate that scent from the water that unlocks it. In 1964, I. J. Bear and R. G. Thomas, two Australian chemists, published a paper in *Nature* about the smell of rain on parched clay. They called this odor petrichor, from the Greek *petra* (stone) and *ichor*, the bloodlike fluid that courses through the veins of the gods of Greek mythology. According to Bear and Thomas, the substance they identified was universal, and it was responsible for the pleasant odor that rises from the ground just after the first raindrops touch desert clay following a dry spell.

Since the time of ancient Egypt, doctors, alchemists, and perfumers have captured scents through enfleurage – trapping odorant in a prepared substrate, usually animal fat – for use in unguents, salves, and perfume. In the case of petrichor, the substrate is mineralogical rather than lipid – mostly clay and rock and hardpan – which makes the collection of petrichor extremely complicated and expensive.

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Although the smell of rain is intensely desirable (many people list it among their favorites), attempts to create synthetic petrichor – sometimes called *petite pluie* in the perfume industry – are fairly rare, and always failures. That is because petrichor, as described by Bear and Thomas, tells a terrestrial ghost story. Like the smell of death and disease in the plaster walls of a nineteenth-century morgue (that's why they're tiled or coated with semi-gloss paint today) or the fish stink in an open container of spoiled milk, the ambient odors of any given environment are absorbed from the air by anything porous and stored there. The matrix we call air is filled with an ever-changing bouquet of terpenes and volatile lipid- and carotenoid-derived compounds released during processes of decomposition, metabolism, and growth. A balanced ecosystem has a more delicate bouquet than the overcrowded streets of eighteenth-century Paris, but petrichor and the malodor of premodern Europe are close olfactory cousins. They both describe the world encountered there; they tell an olfactory story of place.

To produce other coveted scents, the easiest route recently has been laboratory synthesis. Natural oud, or *gaharu*, is a resin common to several species of agarwood tree. It is the tree's immune response to a particular kind of fungus, and it is in great demand, typically exceeding \$50,000 a kilogram. A decent

approximation of the same scent has been produced in a laboratory for a fraction of the cost. Likewise, the compounds 5,7,7-trimethyloctanenitrile and 2-nonenenitrile (“iris nitrile”) smell like iris butter, but they don’t cost tens of thousands of dollars per kilogram, like the sweetly violetlike note that develops when the oil in iris rhizomes has been aged five years and then recovered through steam distillation.

The smell of a place at a particular moment could be said to follow the same rules as any perfume, but with a far greater degree of complexity. Typically, a perfume is composed of some head notes (bright smells that dissipate quickly), heart notes (heavier molecules that define the overall smell), and a bottom note (a smell such as sandalwood, which doesn’t dominate a fragrance but may stay on your clothes for days). On a midsummer afternoon after a light rain, the smell of my block in Brooklyn might include petrichor as a heart note. But that would only be the simplest part: there would be head and heart notes of gasoline, rotting food, fallen leaves, pollen, flowers, car exhaust, a great variety of feces from organisms sharing the space, and perhaps bottom notes from the soil, grime, and soot ground into pavement, with an occasional contribution from the East River when the wind is right. My own Wythe Avenue smell-of-rain moment would compare to an isolated attempt at synthetic

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petrichor about as well as a Big Ten marching band to a tin whistle.

If we were to succeed in creating a generic after-rain scent, it would be an olfactory representation of cycles of regeneration – in other words, it would be the smell of life and death and everything in between. But because it would be a perfume, it would be bound to miss the mark. In the end, perfume is all about masking the smells of nature with the smell of something above and beyond nature, where nothing bad happens.

The duplication of an odor, however, is extremely complicated. For example, Forest Fresh Little Tree air freshener doesn’t smell very much like the resin on bark, much less the smell of sunlight hitting that resin (heat and humidity speed molecular activity, thereby intensifying odors). There are no duff or humus smells from the forest floor, and no vanillin from rotting wood. Your brain says “pine forest” because it has been lulled into a stupor by the fake smells of the marketplace. It recognizes the evergreen note, but it doesn’t worry too much about the imposter odor.

Fragrance manufacturers are in the smell-décor business. Everything is a caricature, designed for the lowest common denominator. When you smell peach gummy candy, it is an idealized cartoon peach. If you want pine, you get Little Tree. Jennifer Lopez’s Glow

by JLo is a sort of anime version of freshly washed skin. The lobby at Macy's will feature a few vials of liquid that are the smell equivalent of a bodice-ripper. Specificity and nuance raise the common denominator and diminish marketability.

The kings and queens of popular culture – whether Ralph Lauren or the Olsen twins – leave their mark on the olfactory mucosa of the unwary consumer. The descriptive briefs that serve as a road map for a new scent are studies in nonsense. Tom Ford wants “fresh cherry wood licked by a green-hot oxygen fire in a Balinese temple.” Marc Jacobs imagines “a blossoming daffodil floating on an ocean of smoky Siberian snows.”

With its purchase of Quest International, a fragrance and flavor company, in 2006, Givaudan cemented its position as the world's largest producer of flavors and fragrances, with a valuation of about \$4 billion. Roman Kaiser, a chemist, was the director of natural scents and a distinguished research fellow at Givaudan for three decades, until he retired in 2011. His improbable name came up again and again while I was searching for someone to explain the odor of place.

Kaiser's work took him all over the world. He flew above the canopies of rainforests in a dirigible, collecting samples in glass bulbs designed to create a vacuum around the scent source. He then reconstituted the natural scents he found on those expeditions. He

was not seeking ways to re-create such rare odors as agarwood or oud – that work was already being done by his lab. Kaiser was being paid to find new scent molecules, not better examples of known ones.

One of the many natural wonders Kaiser, who has published two books, writes about is *Chlamydomonas nivalis*, or watermelon snow, a pinkish-green algae that grows on glaciers. The pink color comes from a package of carotenoid in each cell – the pigment is needed to capture sunshine and for UV protection. *C. nivalis* grows on snow in the summer months at the two-mile-high range in the Alps, the Sierra Nevada, and the Andes (where Darwin saw it and called it “red snow”). When stepped on, the compressed snow turns the color of watermelon pulp and emits a faint odor that more or less matches the smell of that fruit. In Scandinavia, they call it “blood snow.” Kaiser sent me a sample of his synthetic version. The smell was as advertised.

Another curiosity Kaiser likes to talk about is a common plant whose vinelike aerial roots are recognizable throughout lower Amazonia. *Philodendron solimoesense* is about the thickness of a thumb and can grow to a length of sixty feet. Kaiser first encountered it when, dead-ended in heavy growth, he was forced to cut a couple of the vines. For the first few seconds, a flood of water poured from the severed

vines. “But then, I could hardly believe,” Kaiser wrote in *Meaningful Scents Around the World*, an account of his travels and discoveries, “the most transparent and crispest grapefruit scent, embedded in woody notes, entered my nostrils.”

He made a perfume based on this odor, Air de Philodendron, which is the fragrance he generally wears. Its head note is derived chemically from the smell of the severed vines in the Amazon basin, shot through with other citrus notes and a hint of cassis. From there, it bounces through a space filled with what smells to me like lily of the valley (very difficult to reproduce) and jasmine, and then it settles into a woody bottom composed of darker musk notes wrapped around *wacapou* (a tree native to French Guiana), sandalwood, Virginia cedar, and a touch of frankincense.

Kaiser’s role was to find new notes for professional noses to use in the service of those wizards of place – whether Tom Ford and Marc Jacobs or the anonymous overseer of the Westin hotel empire. Kaiser’s distinction is that he re-created things found in nature that fall on the dirty side – stuff that is decidedly antiperfume, like dirt and fungus and mold – not to mask the real but to mimic it.

When I asked Kaiser whether he could truly manufacture the smell of an entire place with all its

constituent elements, from the pretty to the profane to the mundane, he paused. Then he quickly walked me through an olfactory analysis of place, a biome he had studied on the Mediterranean coast. It was June, he began, and the location was Liguria, in northern Italy.

There are two main *Pinus* species in Liguria, *Pinus pinaster* and *Pinus maritime*, and both contribute resinous, musky, woody notes to the olfactory environment. “This is very basic,” he said. “And these notes are from resin that has been exposed to the sun – very typical for this environment.”

“That takes care of the pine species,” he continued, “and now it depends really very much on where we are. On the Ligurian coast, you will also find a lot of two *Pistacia* species: *Pistacia terebinthus* and *Pistacia lentiscus*. Both give off a very characteristic, green, slightly citrus note, reminiscent of galbanum – think of cut bell pepper. And now two important floral notes in June. There is broom, *Spartium junceum*, a very rich aromatic floral scent a little bit related to orange blossom; and a honeysuckle species, *Lonicera implexa*, which emits, especially between six and ten in the evening, a strong, very tender, rather white floral scent that would harmonize all these notes into something very attractive.

“The dynamics change over the span of a day, and according to the time of year. If you would like to study

a place, you can't just trap the scent that is in the air close to your nose," he explained. "Instead, you have to divide this entire olfactive environment into different building blocks. You have to establish an inventory, make a ranking: most important, less important, and medium important scent sources. Trap them individually. Investigate the most important ones, and afterward reconstitute the whole thing."

I couldn't help but wonder what this place-in-a-bottle would cost. The kings of yore were able to smell sweet and look great because they had enormous wealth, but their notion of smelling nice was to wrap themselves in a cloud of expensive scent. That ability to banish the odors of early Europe was valuable. Now the smell of rotting cadavers is valuable, because the average deployed soldier costs the government \$531,427 annually. The smell of a random place along the Ligurian coast is not worth very much, and it has no health benefits (unless there is some boost in mental health spurred by wonder). You would need to capture and analyze the air at least 3,000 times to replicate the smell of a full day, I speculated to Kaiser. He considered my proposed methodology excessive, but said that the samples would cost about \$800 a pop. The total would come to \$2.5 million. And it would still be a sketch, an approximation.

All this made me think that it is enough to take in

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my *genius loci* in real time: the dry garbage smells mixed with the pee of drunkards and the dog shit and the toxic soil packed between the knuckled roots of the Callery pear trees – everything that contributes to the smell of my here and now. Neither Roman Kaiser's dirigible nor Pamela Dalton's nonlethal bioweapon can top the smell of noon on July 1, 2014, on a stoop on Wythe Avenue on the south side of the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. I don't need \$2.5 million to have the experience, and if a modern-day king came strolling by holding hands with the Pope, well, I'm afraid my block would still smell like shit. ♦

Side by...

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...by side

Dines with Professor Kant

by *James Boswell*

TUESDAY 13 April.

My companions in the post-waggon were a genteel young woman, & two boys. I spoke an innocent gallantry to her. She responded only with a timid & insipid smile. Later I asked her a dullish question, & got a like reply. She had no pliant ease of manner, and it was discovered to me that she was deaf. I pity'd her pathetick Infirmary, but as she was well looked & had a comely figure, during several hours, with great Complacency, I entertained lascivious revery upon her person. As we neared the City, this was interrupted by the lads, till then almost as silent as the pretty mute, who fell a-disputing a curious question, to wit, whether it be possible to cross all the bridges of the city but not go over any one of them more than one time? They disputed with unseemly Agitation. They asked me to

Ebéd Kant professzornál

fordította *Tárnok Attila*

ÁPRILIS 13, kedd¹

Útitársaim a postakocsiban egy tisztos úrilány és két ifjanc. A hölgyel gálánsan viselkedtem, de ő csak erőtlenséggel, bárgyúsággal viszonzta udvariasságomat. Később valami ostoba kérdésemre ímmel-ámmal felelt. A modora egyáltalán nem volt simulékonynak mondható; később rájöttem, hogy süket. Sajnáltam szálnalmas fogyatékoságát, de mivel csinosan öltözött és szép alakkal bírt, nagy meglepésemre, órákig buján legeltethettem rajta a szemem. A városhoz közeledve e foglalatosságomban megzavart a két ifiúr, akik egészen eddig olyan csöndben utaztak akár a süketnéma: most izgatottan azon kezdtek vitatkozni, lehetséges-e a város összes hídján átkelni úgy, hogy közben egyiken sem kelünk át kétszer. A kérdést indokolatlan heveséggel tárgyalták. Engem kértek

¹ *Boswellnek nem volt szokása rögzíteni az évszámot, ám a napok és dátumok, valamint a Doktor Johnson betegségére történő utalás okán, az év minden bizonnyal 1784; húsz évvel a Rousseau-val és Voltaire-rel megejtett találkozás után járunk. Boswell ekkor 44, Kant 60 éves. A Boswell-összkiadásban megjelent Naplóból az 1784. április 10. és június 13. közötti időszakhoz fűződő bejegyzések hiányoztak. A hiányzó részből két napi feljegyzés (április 13. és 14.) a Belső-Hebridákhoz tartozó Muck szigetén álló Balmeanach-kastély pincéjéből került elő 1979-ben, s egy névtelenségbe burkolózó úriember - vélhetőleg a kastély ura, a kézirat tulajdonosa - adta közre kézzel nyomott, számozott kiadásban Edinburgh-ban. 1995-ben Bristolban jelent meg a füzet hasonmás kiadása, melyből a jelen fordítás készült.*

decide the Cause, and put into my hands a sketch, we they had drawn in the course of their debate. I put on the Gravity of countenance of my judicious father, as I sat in Judgement upon them. I quickly descry'd a route, by we it could be done, and decided the question in favour of the younger of the lads, who had pleaded this side of the Cause. This pleased neither of the litigant partys, who now ally'd themselves against me & said, that I had what my finger crosst one of the bridges twice. Upon their repeated asseverations, made with increasing Insistence, I had to allow, that I had been careless of Exactitude. I reversed my verdict, & we enterd the City in Silence – the fraulein out of muteness, the boys out of contempt, & I out of Shame.

Dr Smiths had told me of an english merchant here resident, a Mr Green, a man of Prudence & Virtue. He had desired me to make his compliments to Mr Green. I had writ Mr Green a note, one little apt to encourage him to puff himself with Pretensions, as I had spoke of having freindship with the Duke of Brunswic & other notable Personages, with whom he could not claim Acquaintance. Upon my arrivall, I found a modest reply, inviting me to breakfast tomorrow, after we are to go to dinner chez Professour Emanuel Kant, a metaphysicall philosopher & scavant of the college.

I determined to gratify my Vanity, we had been

meg, hogy tegyek igazságot, és a kezembe nyomtak egy durva rajzot, amit a vita hevében vetettek papírra. Apám ítélkező arckifejezését öltöttem magamra, és gyorsan vázoltam egy útvonalat, amelyet követve lehetséges minden hidat bejárni, s ezzel a fiatalabb legény javára döntöttem. Ám hirtelen a vitázó felek egyesülve mindketten ellenem fordultak, mondván, az egyik hídon kétszer futtattam végig az ujjam. Engedve az egyre hevesebb győzködésnek, kénytelen voltam beismerni, hogy a precizitásom cserbenhagyott. Így végül eredeti döntésem ellenkezőjét állítottam. Hallgatagon gördültünk be a városba: a fraulein fogyatékosága folytán, a fiúk megvetésből, én pedig szégyenemben maradtam szótlán.

Dr. Smith említést tett egy Königsbergben élő angol kereskedőről: Mr. Green állítólag körültekintő, értékes ember.² Dr. Smith megkért, adjam át neki üdvözlétét. Írtam is a kereskedőnek egy kissé nagyzó levelet, hadd hízzon a mája, amelyben beszéltem a brunswicki herceghez és egyéb méltóságokhoz fűződő barátságomról, gondoltam, nincsenek hasonló az ismerősei között. A városba érkezve egyszerű válasz várt. Reggelire invitál holnapra, ami után ebédre vagyunk hivatalosak a metafizikus filozófushoz, chez Immanuel Kant professzor.

Elhatároztam, hogy – hiúságomat kielégítendő, me-

² *Joseph Green (1727-1786) Kant legjobb barátja és valószínűleg az egyetlen, akivel a filozófus tegező viszonyban állt.*

wounded by the scholar boys, by really crossing each of the many bridges once & only once. I fortify'd myself with hock, and set out, fresh as roe on the braes of the Water of Milk. I tired myself with repeated, vain sallies. After several inconclusive circumambulations, I finally, in one circuit, crossed the nine bridges, having this time met the Conditions of the problem, & triumphed over them. But I was mightily weakened by my long walk. On the last bridge, a wench caught my eye, whom I teased & fondled & gave a penny to. But I was too much weary'd to be moved to more earnest Exertions, as my legs now lacked the requisite Elasticity. Later I was distressed by the Ruminations, we grew into the inescapable Recollection, that in my last essay around the City, I had indeed crossed one of the bridges twice. I was dissatisfied with myself. I slunk into bed with a pitiful, lowspirited Sluggishness. I took Resolution, to be manly, to embroil my mind no more in the perplexities of the Higher Geometry, & to practice a decent System of mild Christianity. Only then did I fall into Insensibility.

WEDNESDAY 14 April.

Rose much better than I could have expected to be, placid & cheerful. I waited upon Mr Green. He is a

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lyet az okoskodó fiatalok megtépták – megkísérlem bejárni a számos híd mindegyikét úgy, hogy egyiket sem érintem kétszer. Rajnai fehér borral felszerelve indultam útnak, frissen mint egy őz a domboldalon, de az ismételt hiábavaló nekirugaszkodásban elfáradtam. Jónéhány sikertelen próbálkozás után végül egyetlen körben áthaladtam mind a kilenc³ hídon, így dicső módon teljesítettem a problémában felvázolt akadályt. Elcsigázott a hosszú gyaloglás. Az utolsó hídon egy fehérchseléd elkapta a tekintetemet; incselkedtem vele, megsimogattam és adtam neki egy pennyt. Túlzottan kimerült voltam ahhoz, hogysem mohóbb vágyak ébredjenek bennem, a lábaimból hiányzott a kellő ruganyosság. Később azon rágódtam, nem mentem-e kétszer át az egyik hídon az utolsó próbálkozás alkalmával. Elégedetlen voltam magammal. Szánalmas állapotban, tunyán, rosszkedvűen estem be az ágyba, és megfogadtam, hogy férfihoz illően, nem gabalyodok máskor a magasabb geometriát érintő kérdésekbe, és hogy jámbor keresztény módjára fogok viselkedni. Csak ezután zuhantam ajult álomba.

ÁPRILIS 14, szerda

Sokkal jobb hangulatban ébredtem, mint amire számítottam; békés, nyugodt kedélyállapotban. Meglátó-

³ *Boswell a kéziratban áthúzta a 7-es számot, majd a 11-et, és utoljára 9 hidat említ, pedig a valóságban hét hídja volt Königsbergnek.*

man of Substance, large in high, dour in countenance, & reserved in demeanour. He addrest me as Mr Boswell, instead of as Lord Auchinleck, as my letter had given him Reason to. This made me fret. He had a large watch, Wc he repeatedly looked at. Exactly at eleven o'clock a collation was brought to us. "Sir", he said, "you was invited to breakfast at 11. It is 11. Here is breakfast." He told me of his curious whim. He regulates his intire life, & that of his freinds (so far as they submit to his Tutelage & Governance) by his watch. I said, in a jocular manner, "Tempus anima rei." As I then perceived, that he did not understand the latin language, I regretted my innocent Pedantry, we had caused him a moments pain, & resolved to be complaisant, and did not mention Melanchthon, about whom he might not know. He braggd, that the mayour, who would be at dinner, had wrote a Comedy about him, called The Man Who Lived by the Clock. He has no english juiciness of Mind, having layn too long abroad.

Honest Green told me of his life. He came here, as a young man, from Hull. His business prosper'd, even whilst the muscovites were in occupancy of the City. He is engaged in trade between england, the Indies, prussia, & the Courland. Timber and fruits & spices are the principal goods, we he buys & sells. His partner is his nephew, Mr Motherby. He beleives that he

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gattam Mr. Greent. Jómódban él; magas termetű, savanyú képű, zárkózott modorú ember. Mr. Boswellnek szólított, az előkelő Lord Auchinleck cím helyett, amiről pedig levelemben tájékozódhatott. Ez egy kissé bosszantott. Folyamatosan a nagyórát nézte. Pontban tizenegykor könnyű hideg sülteket hoztak. „Uram – szólt. – Tizenegyre hívtam reggelire. Tizenegy óra van. Íme a reggeli.” Elmondta, vesszőparipája, hogy a saját és barátai életét, már amennyiben azok elfogadják gyámkodását és irányítását, a pontos időbeosztáshoz igazítsa. Tréfálkozva megjegyeztem: Tempus anima rei. Mivel látszott rajta, hogy nem érti a latin közmondást, megbántam ártatlan tudálékosságomat, amivel néhány pillanatig kellemetlen érzéseket kel tettem benne, és elhatároztam, figyelmességből nem hozom szóba a pedáns Melanchthont, akiről valószínűleg szintén nincs tudomása. Eldicsekedett vele, hogy a polgármester – ő is ott lesz az ebéden – írt róla egy vígjátékot, Az ember, aki az órájának él címmel. Vendéglátóm oly régen él már külföldön, hogy elvesztette angol humorérzékét.

Az őszinte Green elmesélte az életét. Hullból származik, fiatalemberként érkezett Königsbergbe. A vállalkozása még a muszka időkben is virágzott. Anglia, az indiák, Poroszország és Kurzeme közötti kereskedelemmel foglalkozik. Főként fűrészárut, gyümölcsöt és fűszereket ad-vesz. Az unokaöccse, Mr. Motherby a

will remain here. He said, that he has no homesickness for England. I said, that I thought that homesickness is a false Association of Ideas. A desire for home, Nostalgia, is associated with the desire for that time of Life, when a man was at home, videlicet Childhood. A desire for Home, we in the common run of Life is not hard to gratify, is associated with the desire for the Dependency and Innocency of bairntime, We can not be satisfy'd. A man might return to his home in successful Maturity, & filled with Honours, yet still be unhappy, because he is not a tender child any more. I recalled, that Lord Earn told me, last winter, before he withdrew from Edinburgh, that he could not be happy, away from his castle at Pitcaithly; but he died two weeks after he returned to it, out of a Gloomy Despondency. So it is, that a man may be homesick, 'tho' already at home. This is a distemper of minds refined, like Lord Earn's, but not much disposed to draw nice Distinctions between Passions habitually associated. I ventured to think, that this Incurable Homesickness might be a cause of Melancholia. Mr Green owned, that I might be right, but bragged, that he had never suffered from the hyp, and so could not estimate my pneumatical Speculations. Altho' Dr Johnson has often charged me, not to reveal to strangers my Diseases of Mind, I told Mr Green of my grievous clouds of Spleen. He said, that Prof Kant in early manhood had been a Hy-

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társa. Azt mondja, végleg letelepszik itt, nem érez honvágyat Anglia iránt. A honvágy hamis képzeteken nyugszik, vélekedek. A haza utáni nosztalgikus vágy egy olyan életszakaszhoz kötődik, amikor jól éreztük magunkat a bőrünkben, azaz a gyerekkorhoz. Az otthon utáni vágy, amit a mindennapi életben nem nehéz kielégíteni, mindig vágyakozás a gyermekkor ártatlansága után, a függő viszonyok után, ami viszont nem kielégíthető. Az ember visszatérhet a szülőházába sikeres felnőttként, dicsőségben, mégis boldogtalanná teszi a felismerés, hogy nem ártatlan gyermek többé. A múlt télen mesélte nekem Lord Earn, mielőtt elhagyta Edinburgh-t, hogy nem lehet máshol boldog, csak pitcaithlyi kastélyában, de két hétre rá, hogy a kastélyba visszatért, csüggedt levertségben hunyt el. Könnyen előfordulhat, hogy az ember honvágyat érez, holott otthon van. Ez a betegség csak a Lord Earnhöz hasonló kifinomult lelkeket érinti, de nem tudnánk egykönnyen megkülönböztetni egyéb általános bánalmaktól. Hajlamos vagyok azt hinni, hogy a gyógyíthatatlan honvágy a depresszió egyik okozója. Mr. Green rámhagyta a dolgot, de azzal kérkedett, hogy aligha ítélné meg állításom igazságértékét, mert ő maga soha nem szenvedett melankóliától. Ugyan Doktor Johnson gyakran óvott tőle, hogy lelki bajaimat idegenek előtt eláruljam, meséltem Mr. Greennek világfájdalmam ködeiről. Azt mondta, fiatal korá-

pochondriack. He had master'd it by Strength of Will, & had wrote a book, On the Power of the Mind, by it's mere Resolution, to Conquer it's Sickly Feelings. I much desired to have this book, but Mr Green said, that it had not been publishd, because of Objections from the side of the Faculty of Physick. He thought, that Kant's philosophick Regimen might help me master the Distemper.

After we had eat & drank, Mr Green carry'd me to Prof Kant's. My Admiration for this estimable man, & my Impatience to know him & to learn from him, grew mightyly, as Mr Green told me of the excellency of the books, Wc he has wrote, & of the elegant entertainment, Wc his praelections bring to the gentry and the military gentlemen, who attend them like students. He was scarce inclined to beleive, that I had not heard of his Fame. And then I did reccolect, that M Formey, in Potzdam, had mentiond, that he was a member of the Royal Academy, & had some singular fancys (I forget what) about the Stars. Kant, Mr Green said, was gentleborn, tho' of humble parents, and is a gallant Gentleman, & recieved by the noblest familys in prussia. His sisters became servants, but he dines in the politest Companys, & has guests of Quality at his own Table. When he was young, he was mighty poor, & had

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ban Kant professzor is szenvedett a hipochondriától. Ám akaraterejével felülkerekedett rajta, és tanulmányt is írt a témában, A tudat ereje, mellyel legyőzhetjük a beteges érzéseket címmel.⁴ Nagyon szerettem volna bepillantani ebbe az írásba, de Mr. Green azt mondta, a Természettudományi Kar ellenvetései miatt nem adták ki a könyvet. Ám úgy véli, Kant filozófusi életrendje segíthet nekem is legyőznöm a kórt.

Miután ettünk-ittunk, Mr. Green elvitt Kant professzorhoz. Csodálatom e tiszteletben álló ember iránt és a vágyakozás, hogy mielőbb megismerhessem, útközben csak nőttön-nőtt, mivel Mr. Green részletesen beszámolt eddig kiadott könyveiről és a kimagasló megbecsülésről, melyet a köznemesség és a katonaságnál szolgáló úriemberek körében kivívott magának katedrai előadásaival. Alig akarta elhinni, hogy híre nem járta be a szigetországot. Emlékezetem szerint Samuel Formey említést tett róla Potsdamban, hogy Kant a Királyi Akadémia tagja és hogy sajtóságos elképzeléseket dédelget – hogy egész pontosan milyeneket, nem tudom – a csillagokat illetően.⁵ Mr. Green meséli, hogy Kant nemesi származású, és bár szülei nem vitték sokra, finom úriember vált belőle, bejárása van Poroszország legelőkelőbb családjaihoz. A lánytestvérei cselédek lettek, de ő úri társaságban

⁴ *Kant utolsó valláselméleti munkájának (Der Streit der Facultäten, 1798) harmadik részéről van szó.*

⁵ *Boswellt cserbenhagyja az emlékezete. Kantot csak 1786-ban választották az Akadémia tagjává.*

to supplement his scanty salary with winnings at billiards, in w^c he was a virtuoso, and with fees, W^c he recieved from ministers, for whom he writ sermons. But now he has a Competency, & lives commodiously, without any Land from his family at all. Like Mr Green, he has never marry'd.

Mr Green regulated the Velocity of our Progress, so that we came to Kant's house at exactly 1/2 past 12. We went up to his withdrawing room, where Mr Green (at last calling me Ld A, w^c mollify'd me) brought me acquainted with Herr von Hippel, the burgomaster, a mercuriall, cynicall looking man, who has a Fidget. With Kant's famulus, Dr Beck. He is aukward, phlegmatick, & insignificant, & has no Vivacity of Address. At 20 min. before 1 (Mr Green held up his watch, for the Company to see Herr Kant's scrupulous Promptitude), Professour Kant came into the room. He bow'd, & adrest me in latin: "Corsicorum libertatis amicus, said He, is allways wellcome at my Table." He apologised, that he could not speak english. He said, that we might speak french, if we were willing to leave Dr Beck out of our conversation, or continue in latin, if we deny'd ourselves the Pleasure of Mr Green's talk. He paused, for me to chuse the language. He was astonishd, when I ingratiatingly reply'd in german. I said, that I hoped his Hochwohlgebohrenheit would ex-

ebédel és magas vendégeket fogad. Fialat korában szegényen tengődött, szűkös jövedelmét biliárdozásból egészítette ki, kiválóan játszott, és lelkipásztoroknak írt prédikációt pénzért. Mára rendezett anyagi körülmények közt él, tágas lakásban, de a családjától nem örökölt földet. Soha nem nősült meg, ahogy Mr. Green sem.

Mr. Green az órájához igazította lépteinket akképpen, hogy Kant házához pontban félegykor érkezünk. Felmentünk a fogadószobába, itt Mr. Green, Lord Auchenlickként mutatott be von Hippel úrnak – ezzel végre némileg kiengesztelt –, a város polgármesterének, egy szeszélyes, cinikus, nyughatatlan, izgőmozgó embernek. Kant famulusa, Dr. Beck, kellemetlen, jelentéktelen, flegmatikus figura, viselkedése tompa. Húsz perccel egy óra előtt – Mr. Green magasra emelte az óráját, hogy mindenki figyelmét felhívja a professzor lelkiismeretes pontosságára – Kant belépett a szobába. Meghajolt, majd latinul szólt hozzám: 'Corsicorum libertatis amicus', mondta, szívesen látott vendég asztalomnál.⁶ Mentegetőzött, hogy nem tud angolul, de beszélhetünk franciául, ha ki szeretnénk hagyni Dr. Becket a társalgásból, vagy folytathatjuk latinul, bár ez esetben megfosztjuk magunkat Mr. Green megjegyzéseinek örömétől. Rám bízta a nyelv megválasztását. Elámult azon, hogy megnyerő

⁶ Kant ismerte Boswell Lipcsében 1768-ban németül megjelent könyvét *Korzika történelméről és földrajzáról*, idéz is belőle egyik *antropológiai tárgyú írásában*. A latin megszólítás erre utal.

cuse my errours, as it has been many years, since I have spoke german, in an educated Company. Herr Kant was complimentitive of my Ease in what, he said, all the world regards as an uncouth language, not meet for elevated conversation, & Polite Learning. I enjoy'd that sudden Glory, we comes to me, when I am superiour to a company in knowing their tongues, they not knowing mine. But we might as well have spoke french (We I would have preferd), as poor Beck took no part in the Conversation, we was in the language, we I had chose on his behalf. For it is not true, that I had chose german only to show my Superiority to those in the Company, who could not speak latin & french & english. I did it out of a kindly Condescension to young Beck. (Also because I do not speak latin with the Elegancy of my Host. I am scrupulous to a nicety about Truth.)

Herr Kant said, that his grandfather had come from Scotland above a hundred years ago, & that he owed his dispassionate temperament to his scottish Ancestors. Scotsmen, he said, are marked above men of all other Nations, by their Prudence, Perseverence, & Coolness. His words ravishd me. I told Herr Kant, that I had Acquaintance with the branch of his Family, we had remaind in Edinburgh. This was heedless of me, & to evade inquiry into their Circumstances, I hurry'd

modorban németül válaszoltam. Arra kértem, 'Hochwohlgebohrenheit', bocsássa meg esetleges nyelvtani hibáimat, sok éve nem használom már a németet művelt társaságban. Herr Kant dicsérte, úgymond, a könnyedséget, mellyel ezt az egész világ számára otromba, emelkedett és udvarias társalgásra alkalmatlan nyelvet kezelem. Ha egy idegen ajkú társaság nem beszél az anyanyelvemet, de én az övékét tűrhetően bírom, mindig lubickolok a váratlan dicsfényben. De ennyi erővel a franciát is használhattuk volna, legalábbis nekem az jobban megy, hisz szegény Beck, így is, úgy is kimaradt a beszélgetésből, pedig miatta választottam a németet. Mert nem igaz, hogy pusztán azért döntöttem a német mellett, hogy csillogtassam nyelvtudásomat azok előtt, akik nem értik se a latint, se a franciát, se az angolt. A fiatal Beck úr iránti figyelmesség is vezetett. A latint egyébként sem beszélem olyan tökélyel, ahogy vendéglátóm. (Az igazságot illetően rettentő pedáns tudok lenni!)

Herr Kant megemlítette, hogy nagyapja több mint száz éve Skóciából származott el, és valószínűleg saját hirtelen vérmérsékletét a skót ősöknek köszönheti.⁷ A skótok szerint, minden más nemzet fiainál inkább, körültekintőek, kitartóak és hidegvérűek. Szavai lenyűgöztek. Elárultam, hogy rokonsága Edinburgh-ban maradt tagjaival ismeretséget ápolok. Ez

⁷ Kant dédapja származott Skóciából, és Boswell őséhez hasonlóan, II. Gusztáv Adolf svéd király seregében szolgált.

on, to tell him, that I had as cousins the von Boswell family in Tilsit, whose Founder had gone from Auchinleck to Sweden, & had come down into Germany with the Lion of the North. Mr Kant's Pride in his Scottish Blood, & my connexion with the noble German Family, we bears my Name, made him and me "hale fellows well met." You sure was mighty comfortable.

Mr Kant is small in stature, extremely thin, & has one shoulder higher than t'other. He has a lofty forehead, & large blue eyes, in w there is a look of Melancholy, tho' his Manner is chearfull, and not that of a pensive & gloomy Metaphysician. His wig did not fit well, and from time to time his manservant put it right. His nose is red. His fingers are stained with tobacco. His linnen is of purest white. He was drest in a yellow velvet cloak, black silk breeches, & blue stockings with silver buckles. His voice is low, but I think that he can speak to a large auditory.

Whilst his servant brought us a ragout of cod, turnips, barley pudding, dry'd fruits, & old canary, Herr Kant used a pestle to grind mustard, we he put on all his food. Herr von Hippel asked: "Sir, what has become of Plessing?" K: "Plessing, Sir, has left, & has left me with the Responsibility." H: "Sir, Lord A would know how your students impose upon their Doktorvater. I'll wager, that a scandal like this would not be

elég meggondolatlan kijelentés volt részemről, és hogy elkerüljem a kérdezősködést,⁸ gyorsan hozzátettem, hogy a tilsiti von Boswellek unokatestvéreim, és hogy Auchinleckből Svédországon keresztül jöttek Németországba Észak Oroszlánja, Gusztáv Adolf oldalán. Kant büszkén vállalt skót származása, valamint a nevémet viselő német nemesi család okán úgy érezhettük, két rokon szív találkozott. Elememben voltál, igaz?

Kant termetre alacsony, rendkívül sovány, az egyik vállát magasabban tartja. Magas homlok, nagy kék szemek, tekintetében melankólia, bár a modora vidám, egyáltalán nem komor, töprengő metafizikusra vall. A parókája időről időre félrecsúszik, az inasa ilyenkor mindig megigazítja. Az orra vörös. Az ujjai dohánytól sárgák. Az inge ragyogó fehér. Sárga bársonykabátot visel, fekete selyembricseszt és ezüst csatos kék harisnyát. Mély tónusban beszél, és erős hangja nyilván egy előadóteremben is jól hallható.

Mialatt a személyzet felszolgált a tőkehalból, petrezselyemgyökérből, gersliből, szárított gyümölcsökből összeállított és a Kanári-szigetéről származó édes fehér borral megöntözött ragut, Herr Kant egy mozsárban mustármagot tört, amivel minden fogást megszórt. Herr von Hippel megkérdezte: Uram, mi lett Plessinggel?

⁸ *Boswell a gonosztevő James Cant ügyvédje volt, akit 1772-ben gyűjtogatásért száműztek Skóciából.*

found in Edinburgh. It is your Duty, Sir, to tell him of this outrage.” (Hippel spoke with Excitement. I thought, that he found the matter diverting.) K: “My Lord, it is painfull. But the Herr Polizeiprasident says, that it is my duty to inform your Excellency; and inasmuch as he has heard me say, ex cathedra, that one should obey the Magistracy in all things, we are not to be decided in the forum internum of Conscience, to keep the Herr Polizeiprasident from having Reason to bring against me a charge of Hypochrisy, of not practicing what I teach others, that they ought to do, I must execute the Duty, w^c the Herr Polizeiprasident exacts of me, even tho’ he did it not ex officio, but informally, as is wont, & in jest.” (At the end of this long period, Herr Kant bow’d formally to Herr von Hippel, & everyone laughd. After hesitating a moment, Herr Kant also laughd, but not heartily, and quickly resumed Earnest Seriousness.) “Fritz Plessing, he continued, one of my most promising Doktoranden, has got a gemeines stuck frauenzimmer in this neighbourhood big with child, has had to fly from Koningsburgh, to evade arrest by Herr von Hippel’s minions, & has writ me, to ask me to take Responsibility, legal financial & moral, for the wanton woman, & for the unfortunate supposititious bairn that is to be. I do not know how to do,

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KANT: Plessing, Uram, elment, és rámhagyta a felelősséget.

HIPPEL: Uram, Lord Auchinleck bizonyára tudni szeretné, miként bánnak a diákok a Doktorvaterrel. Lefogadom, hogy Edinburgh-ban nem esnek meg hasonló csúfságok. Önnek, Uram, kötelessége elmesélni ezt a gyalázatos esetet.

Hippel hangja izgatottan csengett, nyilván mulattatta az ügy.

KANT: Drága Uram, fájdalom, a Polizeipräsident azt mondja, kötelességem beszámolni Méltóságodnak, és minthogy ismeri, ex cathedra, a nézetemet, miszerint mindenben, ami nem kizárólag a lelkiismeretünkre van bízva, engedelmeskednünk kell az előjárásnak, hogy elkerüljük a lehetőségét annak, hogy a Polizeipräsident a képmutatás vádját hozhassa fel ellenünk, mondván, hogy a gyakorlatban nem követem, amit másoknak tanítok, úgy teljesítenem kell a kötelességem, amit a Polizeipräsident, még ha nem is ex officio, sokkal inkább pusztán a szokásos tréfa kedvéért, de informálisan reám hárított.

Azzal Herr Kant mélyen meghajolt Herr von Hippel felé, amit mindenki derűsen fogadott. Némi késéssel Herr Kant is elmosolyodott szelíden, de rögtön komoly hangon folytatta: Fritz Plessing egyike legígére-

what I shall have to do.” B. (desireous to be of help to this great, but helpless Sage):

“Eure Spectabilitat, I have had some experiences in these matters, & will be able to give you some advices. I once asked Dr Johnson what he would do, if he were left alone in a castle with a baby, & he said, that he would not coddle it.” K: “No, Sir, a man ought not to coddle a baby. Coddling makes children self-willed, insolent, & deceitfull. There is less Love in the World than children are wont to beleive, and it is not right, that a man should augment their Delusion. Children must learn, Sir, to rely upon their own Talents & Industry, to get them the little Comfort, we is to be got in the World. Coddling corrupts not only children, Sir, but I venture to say, that it corrupts their parents, too. A feeling of maudlin Sympathy and sentimental Compassion is irksome to all right-thinking men, because it may tempt them into actions, we their Conscience wd condemn. Such feelings are natural to the ladies, & perhaps, we wd not even wish, that they be intirely free of these softer Dispositions. But that is the Reason, Sir, why they shd not be entrusted, with the Education of Children. But let us not talk of these disagreeable things. Talking of Corruption, Sir, corrupts the Digestion.”

At this moment, Herr von Hippel suddenly withdrew. He starttled me by his Precipitateness, & I

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tesebb doktorandusaimnak, ám egy gemeines stück Frauenzimmer, egy mások által is bírt nözemény miatt, aki terhes lett, menekülnie kellett Königsbergből, nehogy Herr von Hippel poroszlói letartóztassák, és engem kért meg, hogy jogilag, anyagilag, erkölcsileg képviseljem a könnyelmű asszonyt, valamint a szerencsétlen, csalárdul elcserélt, születendő fiúcskát. Nem tudom, miként járjak el az ügyben.

BOSWELL (égve a vágtyól, hogy segítse e nagyszerű, tehetetlen bölcset): Eure Spectabilität, Méltóságos Uram! Találkoztam hasonló ügyekkel, és tudok jó tanáccsal szolgálni. Egyszer megkérdeztem Doktor Johnsonot, mit tenne, ha egy kastélyban egyedül találná magát egy csecsemővel. Azt mondta, nem dédelgetné.

KANT: Nagyon helyes. Egy férfi ne dédelgesse a csecsemőt. A babusgatás önféjűvé, pimasszá és csalafintává teszi a gyereket. Kevesebb szeretet van a világban, mint amennyit hajlamosak vagyunk beleképzelni, és nem helyénvaló, hogy a gyermekben megerősítsük ezt a téves illúziót. A gyerek, Uram, tanulja meg, hogy csupán a saját tehetségére és szorgalmára támaszkodhat, ha el akarja érni azt a kevés kényelmet, amit a világ nyújthat számára. Uram, a dédelgetés nemcsak a gyermeket rontja el, hanem, merem állítani, a szülőket is. A könyörület érzelgős és szentimentális érzései visszatetszőek minden tisztán gon-

thought, that he must have been seised of a Fit. Whilst the other gentlemen talked of something indifferent, Mr Green whisper'd to me, that it was the burgomaster's wont, from time to time, to leave a company, in order to mark down their conversation. Mr Green said with assurance, that I would find what I had said, repeated in Mr Hippel's next Comedy or Romance. Upon my Soul, I found this very vexing, as if he had slippt a steletto into my back. He soon returned, without Shame.

I had discovered to Prof Kant my Intimacy with Dr Johnson, & this gave a new turn to our Conversation. He said, that when his guests are much younger than He, as today, he allways recalls, for his guidance in curbing the Imbecilitys of Age, the admonition contained in The Vanity of Human Wishes. As I did not know exactly what he referr'd to, he quoted (in french translation) the lines

*“The still returning talc, and ling’ring jest, “Perplex
the fawning niece, and pamper’d guest, “Whilst
growing hopes scarce awe the gath’ring sneer,
“And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear.”*

I own'd, that this was well said, but could not beleive, that so clubbable hosts as Dr Johnson & Prof Kant needed warnings against Antiquated Garrulity.

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dolkodó ember szemében, mert olyan cselekedetre sarkallnak, amit az öntudatunk rendesen elutasít. Az ilyen érzések az asszonyokban természetesek, és meglehet, nem is kívánhatjuk, hogy teljességgel mentesek legyenek tőle, de Uram, éppen emiatt nem bízhatjuk rájuk a gyermekek nevelését. Ám ne beszéljünk ilyen kellemetlen dolgokról! A romlottságról folytatott eszmecsere, Uram, elrontja az étvágyat.

Ekkor Herr von Hippel váratlanul visszavonult. Kapkodó sietsége meghökkentett, azt hittem, dührohámot kapott. Míg az urak közömbös témákról csevevésztek, Mr. Green megsúgta nekem, hogy a burgmeisternek szokása időnként magára hagyni a társaságot, hogy az elhangzott párbeszédéről feljegyzést készítsen. Biztos benne, hogy iménti szavaim majd Mr. Hippel egyik jövőbeni vígjátékában vagy románcában újra előfordulnak. Istenemre, ezt ugyancsak bosszantónak találtam. Úgy éreztem, tört döftek a hátamba. Hippel kisvártatva, minden szégyenérzet nélkül viszsztatért.

Felfedtem Kant professzor előtt Doktor Johnsonnal ápolt barátságomat, s ez új fordulatot adott a beszélgetésnek. Kant kijelentette, hogy amikor – miként ma is – vendégei sokkal fiatalabbak nála, mindig emlékezetébe idézi az intelmet az Emberi Kívánságok Hiábavalóságáról, hogy elejét vegye a számár gondolatoknak az életkorból fakadó korlátokat illetően. Mivel

“No, Sir,” he said, “growing old is a Sin, & the wages of this sin is Death.” He laughd immoderately over his bon mot. He asked my portrait of Dr Johnson, whose works he knows well. I spoke with warmth of that illustrious Philosopher, who permits me to have his Freindship, & who has shewed, that he cordially loves me. Herr Kant charged [me] with compliments to Dr Johnson.

I told Herr Kant of my acquaintance with Mr Hume. He requested to have my character of him. I said, that alltho’ Mr Hume was posest of virtous [sic] Sentiments & Dispositions of exceeding Amiability, I could not give him my intire Approbation, because of his notorious Infidelity. The Burgomaster said, “But, My Lord, you must allow, that Herr Hume was GOD’S instrument, chose to save the soul of our neighbour Hamman.” I did not know what he alluded to, and Herr Kant impatiently ignored his bustling Interruption. In the afternoon, when Herr von Hippel carry’d fie to the Castle, to shew me some antient muniments, we pleased my elegant Curiosity, he reply’d to my queries, & told me a tale so extraordinary, that I must mark it here, tho’ out of it’s proper Place & Order.

– A gentleman of this City, named Hamman, was sent to London to negociate some Business, but fell into dissipation, debt, & Infidelity, and could not execute his Commission. He was upon his shifts, & in

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nem tudtam, mire utal, a következő sorokat idézte (franciául):

*A hízelkedő unokahúg és a körülrajongott vendég
Nem érti az örökös-mesét és a befejezetlen tréfát.
Aligha ellensúlyoz keserű gúnyt bármily remény
Miként az örökség sem kényszerít ránk hallgatást.*

Elismertem, hogy ügyes bűvészkedés ez a szavakkal, de megjegyeztem, remélem, szívélyes vendéglátómat, akár Doktor Johnson akár Kant professzor, nem kell óvnom a szószátyárság ellen.

– Uram, szavamra, semmiképpen. Az öregedés vétek és büntetése a halál.

Saját szellemességén féktelen kacajra fakadt. Arra kért, rajzoljam meg előtte Doktor Johnson alakját; a műveit jól ismeri. Meleg szívvel beszéltem a kiváló filozófusról, szívélyes, őszintén szerető barátomról. Herr Kant megkért, adjam át üdvözetét Doktor Johnsonnak.

Megemlítettem, hogy Mr. Hume-mal is kapcsolatban állok. Kant róla is jellemrajzot követelt. Elmondtam, hogy hiába bír értékes és rendkívül nyájas gondolatokkal, közismert hitetlensége miatt nem alkotok róla kedvező véleményt. A Burgmeister közbeszólt: De milord, engedje meg, Herr Hume Isten segítségével megmentette Hamman szomszédunk lelkét.

despair he contemplated Destroying himself, when, by Special Providence, there came into his hands Mr Hume's Philosophical Essays upon the Human Understanding, wherein the Authour narrowly confined the powers of the Reason & asserted, that instinctive Beleif is necessary, even to maintain the Opinion, that the Sun will rise on the morrow, and that fire will burn. Hamman inferrd, that as Beleif is necessary to our dayly life, & is vindicated by it's exigencies, so Beleif in GOD is necessary, & is justify'd to a superiour degree, e'en as our needs in Eternity surpass those of this earthly Life. This pretty Apology for our Most Holy Religion, wc I do not remember having heard before, pleased me mightly. But, said M d' Hippel, Hamman was perswaded, that this was Mr Hume's own Conviction, & that Mr Hume was a sound, beleiving Christian, & an invincible opponent of Scepticism, Free Thinking, and Infidelity. Out of Zeal for the Salvation of his freind Kant, Hamman translated some of Mr Hume's Pyrrhonian tracts, so that M Kant could read 'em & be saved by Mr Hume, e'en as he had been saved. M d'Hippel was mighty amused, that Kant, upon reading Hamman's translation of Mr Hume's horrid Dialogues, had surrender'd before Mr Hume's attacks on Divinity, & had spurn'd Hamman's defense of it. It seems, said he, that nothing that Hamman undertakes, turns out as he expects it to. Ham-

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Fogalmam sem volt, mire utal, és Herr Kant is türelmetlenül fogadta a közbevetést. Délután, amikor Herr von Hippel elkísért a várhoz, hogy megmutasson néhány ősi emléket, melyek minden esztétikai igényemet kielégítették, magyarázatot kaptam fel sem tett kérdéseimre. A valóban különleges történetet kénytelen vagyok itt, az ebéd eseményeit megszakítva, elmesélni.

Egy Hamman nevű úriembert Königsbergből azzal küldtek Londonba, hogy nyélbe üssön valami ügyletet, de belefeledkezett a vallástalan kicsapongásba, adósságba keveredett, és a megbízatását nem sikerült teljesítse. Máról holnapra élt és elkeseredésében az öngyilkosság gondolatával foglalkozott, amikor a sors különös intézkedése folytán, kezébe került Mr. Hume filozófiai esszéje, Az emberi értelemről, amiben a szerző erősen bekorlátozza az elme erejét és megállapítja, hogy még olyan kézenfekvő tényeket is, mint hogy másnap felkel a Nap, vagy hogy a tűz éget, csak ösztönös hittel támaszthatunk alá. Hamman arra a következtetésre jutott, hogy amennyiben hit szükséges a mindennapi életben és ezt a válságos helyzetek igazolják, úgy az Istenben való hit is szükségszerű, sőt sokkal nagyobb mértékben az, miként az örökkévalóság is meghaladja földi életünk kereteit. Legszentebb vallásunk eme csinos kis apológiája, mellyel, emlékeim szerint, soha ezelőtt nem találkoztam, igen

man is an Enthusiast, who does much to vex M Kant. But M Kant has been stedfast in his Affection for poor Hamman, & has covertly succour'd him, in his poverty. M d'Hippel ventured the opinion, that M Kant is a better Christian than Hamman is. I stickled for Mr Hume, & said, that M Kant is not a better Christian than Mr Hume was. The excellent Hippel was shocked, that I she seem to agree with Hamman. But I reminded him, that David had been tortured on the rack of vile Metaphysicall Perplexity, & told him of my dream, that I read in David's Journal a confession, that he had only feign'd Infidelity, for the sake of Literary Fame, & that he was truly a Beleiving, Pious brother Christian. "Pooh, Sir, said d'Hippel; do not buble yourself, Sir! That was only a dream. You dreamt this, because you was not inclined to beleive, that le bon David was at that very moment horribly burning in the Fires of Eternall Torment." You was verry pensive in contemplating the awefull Principle of Eternall Punishment, and wd have slunk away. But M d'Hippel diverted you with amusive anecdotes. Soon we was exhilarated with Sociality & sung prodigiously & pushd the bottle too much. –

Herr Kant knows Mr Hume's books well, with the exception of the Treatise of Hum. Nat., wc he said, that he had not read. He said, that Mr Hume's other books had given his thinking quite a new turn, when

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kellemes érzésekkel töltött el. Ekképpen Hamman úr meggyőződésévé vált, mondta a jó Hippel, hogy a gondolat Mr. Hume sajátja, és hogy Hume mélyen vallásos keresztény, a szkepticizmus, a szabad gondolkodás és a hitetlenség rendíthetetlen ellensége. Sőt, hogy barátját, Kantot az Üdvösség útjára terelje, Hamman lefordított Hume-tól néhány pyrrhonista traktátust abban a reményben, hogy Hume olvasása a professzort is a megváltás irányába vezeti majd, ahogy Hammant magát. A drága jó Hippel rendkívül jót mulatott, mikor felidézte, hogy Kant, Hume szörnyű dialógusainak fordítását olvasva, teljesen Hume hatása alá került, mert az kikel a teológusok ellen, és nyersen elutasította az angol filozófus vallásossága mellett kardoskodó Hammant. Úgy tűnik, jegyezte meg Hippel, bármihez kezd is Hamman, az balul üt ki. Hamman túlzott lelkesedése aggasztja Mr. Kantot. De Kant kitart szegény Hamman mellett, sőt titokban anyagilag támogatja. Mr. Hippel megkockáztatta, hogy Kant közelebb áll a kereszténységhez, mint Hamman. Fontoskodva hozzátettem, hogy Kant semmivel sem különb keresztény, mint Mr. Hume volt. A kitűnő Hippelt megbotránkoztattam azzal, hogy látólag Hamman oldalán állok, de rámutattam, hogy David [Hume] a metafizikai talány hitvány kánpadján vergődött, és elmeséltem neki egy álmomat David naplóját illetően, amiben megvallja, hogy csupán az

he was a young man, and woken him, from what he called his Dogmaticall Slumber. But that he had since wrote a book, we he fancy'd, had controverted some of Mr Hume's hro'poi. I was glad to have new Assurances, that a subtile metaphysicall philosopher can nullify Mr Hume's Dubitations. In spite of my freindship with Prof Reid & Dr Beattie, who, I sometimes think, have drove to pieces the scepticall cobweb spun by Mr Hume, I often still have a fascinated Uneasiness about Mr Hume's doubts, & my Inability to remove them, by Logick and Metaphysicks. I desired Prof Kant to tell me, how he had confuted Mr Hume? "Sir, said he, the True Metaphysicks of Life is Good Eating and Drinking. School Philosophy, on the contrary, interferes with the Digestion, by drawing the blood to the Brain, at a time when it is needed in the belly, and so it is his Maxim, not to take up speculative Topicks whilst dining." He had not heard of Mr Hume's death, & was distrest, when I told him, that poor David had died of a flux, scoffing at Religion. I try'd in vain to entice him into Liberty & Necessity, Immateriality of the Soul, also specters & second sight, but he shunned it. Digestion.

As there was a likeness [of] Rousseau on the sideboard, I told him of my intimate Acquaintance with M Rousseau, so that Prof Kant was moved to Envy, He

irodalmi hírnév kedvéért játszotta meg a hitetlenséget és hogy valójában ájtatos hívő keresztény volt.

– Ugyan, Uram, ne áltassa magát – mondta Hippel.
– Ez csak álom. És Ön azért álmodta így, mert nem kívánta elfogadni a tényt, hogy le bon Davidet abban a pillanatban az örök kárhozat szörnyű tüze perzseli.

Csakugyan elgondolkodtál az örökké tartó kárhozat borzalmas látomásán, és valószínűleg menekültél előle. Ám a jó Mr. Hippel szórakoztató anekdotáival elterelte a figyelmed, majd a társas élet örömeibe feledkezve csodásan dalra fakadtunk és sűrűn emelgettük a poharat.

Herr Kant jól ismeri Mr. Hume könyveit, kivéve az emberi természetről szólót, melyről állítja, hogy nem olvasta.⁹ Azt mondja, Hume egyéb munkái egészen új fordulatot jelentettek saját gondolkodásában, és fiatalabb korában felébresztették, saját szavaival, a dogmatikai szendergésből, de hogy azóta írt egy könyvet, amely, úgy hiszi, ellentmond Hume nézeteinek. Örömmel láttam újabb bizonyítékát, hogy egy éles eszű metafizikus filozófus képes felülkerekedni Hume bizonytalankodásain. Reid professzorral és Dr. Beattie-vel ápolt barátságom ellenére, akiknek, néha úgy képzelem, sikerült örökre szétzúzniuk a Mr. Hume által szőtt szkeptikus pókhálót, gyakorta meglep a különös kényelmetlenség-érzés, hogy Hume kétségeit

⁹ Ez az állítás egy több mint száz éven át tartó kritikai vitára ad választ. Ld. Karl Groos „Hat Kant Humes Treatise gelesen?” in *Kant-Studien*, vol. v. (1901), pp. 177-81, és az ezt követő polémiát.

said, that I was united in Freindship with so many great men, whom he knew only in their Books. He jested, "I suppose, Sir, that you knew Voltaire!" When I modestly told him, that I had spent an intire night in Philosophicall Conversation with M de Voltaire, he had a childish Delight, that what he had said in Jest, had been literally true. He said, that he admired Voltaire's Wit & Fancy, and that he had ally'd himself Wt Voltaire as an ennemy of Enthusiasm, Superstition & Tyranny; but that he was not drawn to Voltaire's person, by any Bonds of Affinity. He animadverted upon the Indignitys, w' the great King Frederic had suffer'd from the pen of this Ingrate (I beleive he called him so). My Monarchicall Enthusiasm made me aequally oblivious of favours from M de Voltaire and of slights from his Majesty, and I spoke with Vehemency of the Grand Scheme of Feudall Subordination. Mr Kant remarked coolly, that my sentiments were not in Accord with the justest Ideas of my good freind Jean-Jacques.

He desired me to give very fully the Character of M [Rousseau]. I had scarce begun my extensive reply, when the watchfull Green said, "It is time for your walk, Manny." Mr Kant obediently rose, as his servant was allready there, with his three-cornered hat & gold-headed Stick. As he bade me farewell, I [was] overcome with an awefull Reverence for this great Precep-

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nem tudom logikus, metafizikai úton cáfolni. Arra kértem Kant professzort, vázolja fel nekem, miképpen száll szembe Hume nézeteivel.

– Uram – mondta ő, – az élet igazán metafizikai oldala az evés és az ivás. Az iskolás filozofálgatás, éppen ellenkezőleg, megnehezíti az emésztést, mivel a vért az agyba áramoltatja, amikor pedig éppen a gyomorban lenne rá a legnagyobb szükség, ezért elvem, hogy evés közben nem társalgok elméleti kérdésekről.

Mr. Hume haláláról nem értesült, és sajnálkozva hallotta, hogy szegény David elvérzett, miközben a vallást ostorozta. Hiába próbáltam a szabadságról, a szükségszerűről és az anyagtalan lélekről prédikálni neki; fantomok, kísértetek: minden elől kitért. Emésztés.

Mivel a pohárszéken egy Rousseau-ra hasonlító portré állt, elárultam, milyen közeli kapcsolatba kerültem Monsieur Rousseau-val. Kant professzor őszintén irigyelt, hogy oly sok nagyszerű ember barátságát élvezem, akiket ő csak könyvekből ismer. Élcelődve hozzáfűzte: Felteszem, Uram, Ön Voltaire-t is ismeri. Szerényen megemlítettem, hogy egyszer egész álló éjszaka filozófiai eszmecserét folytattam Monsieur Voltaire-rel; ez Kantból gyermeki derűtséget váltott ki: amit ő csupán tréfából hozott fel, teljességgel igaz. Azt mondta, Voltaire elméjét és képzelőerejét csodálja, és szívesen társául szegődne a lelkesedés, a

tour, whom I wanted to emulate. An Ardour seised me, as it did when I first met General Paoli, for I have an enthusiastick Love of Great Men. I beseeched him, to permit me to walk with him. I said, that he cd tell me how to attain the Felicity of a Sound Mind, & that I wd tell him how to manage Plessing's whore & bastard. Mr Kant demurr'd, saying that he walks in Silence, so to keep the Blood, w^c is needed in the legs, from rising to the Brain, where it would be requisite for Intellectual Commerce. But to cool my fever'd Humours, he took two roses from a vase, & gave them to me, & rejoiced me, by bidding me to come to dinner again on the morrow. During this colloquy, the worthy Green was havoring on, about Mr Kant's being late upon his walk. Like a large motherhen, Wt a very little chick, he gently pushd Mr Kant from the room. Likening the great Philosopher to a chicken diverted you. You was in a fantastical Frame of mind, & this ludicrous conceit chear'd you all the day. ♦

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babona és a zsarnokság kifigurázásában, jóllehet Voltaire személyiségét egyáltalán nem találja vonzónak. Méltatlankodott az aljasság miatt, mellyel ez a hálátlan ember Nagy Frigyet támadta. Saját monarchikus beállítottságom feledhetővé tette számomra Voltaire egykori szívélyességét, miként arra is fátylat borítottam már, hogy Őfelsége mellőzött. Lelkesedem a feudális hűbéri rendszerért. Mr. Kant hűvösen megjegyezte, hogy hangoztatott nézeteim nincsenek összhangban jó barátom, Jean-Jacques legigazabb elképzeléseivel.

Arra kért, rajzoljak számára teljesebb képet Monsieur Rousseau-ról. Ám alig kezdtem részletes beszámolómba, a mindenre ügyelő Green felkiáltott: Manny, itt a délutáni séta ideje! Mr. Kant engedelmesen felállt; az inasa egy szempillantás alatt előkerítette háromszögletű kalapját és az arany markolatú sétabotot. Ahogy elbúcsúzott tőlem, erőt vett rajtam a tiszteletadás áhítata e kiváló nevelő iránt, akihez igyekeztem felnőni. Olyasfajta buzgalom ragadott magával, amelyet akkor éreztem, amikor először találkoztam Paoli tábornokkal. Lelkesülten szeretem a nagy embereket. Könyörögve kértem, engedje meg, hogy egy darabon elkísérhessem sétáján. Elmesélhetné, miképpen szerezhető meg az elmebeli kiválóság öröme, én pedig tanácsot adhatok neki, hogyan kezelje Plessing ágyasát és a megfogant



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gyermeket. Mr. Kant aggályoskodott; szótlánul szeret sétálni, mondta, hogy a véráramlást a lábaiba irányítsa, ne a fejébe, ahol a szellemi tevékenység során van feltétlenül szükség rá. De hogy lázas lelkesedésem lehűtse, két rózsát húzott ki egy vázából és azzal nyújtotta át, szívesen lát holnap is ebédre. Eme társalgás alatt a derék Green végig azon füstölgött, hogy Mr. Kant késve kezdi meg a sétát. Akár egy kövér tyúk a csibéjét, úgy tessékelt ki Mr. Kantot a szobából. Csibéhez hasonlítani a kiváló filozófust! Ez igazán mulatságos. Önfelelt lelkiállapotnak örvendtél, és a búcsúzás mókás jelenete egész nap elkísért. ♦