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PREFACE

Engineered away from the body of the salesman, in a system of triggers and prompts, language is kicked into operation, by a private enterprise. Intimacy is sized up, used in the right amounts, at the exact right time. We could say, the salesman produced false tears because she contributed in an exchange that seems humanising but amounts to machinic protocol. Subjects that emerge from this utterance, both speakers and recipients, are prevented from engaging themselves personally. In this case, no radical transformation is possible at the level of the speaker or the listener because she is simply not there. She is not present. She is a fleshy vessel, in which protocol travels, and she is NOT happy.

Part 6: Themic Death
the tyranny of narrative
Part 7: Kevin. Who's your manager?

$$W_F = \int_{r_i}^{r_f} \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{r}$$

sweat

shame

2

"This isn't science fiction, OK?" Also tells his wife. "I'm not inventing a future. I'm a critic; so I can tell you what I think about the shelves, but I cannot tell you where else they could go. And as you have them now, is nice."

His wife turns her face to Aldo, wet eyed, very pretty. "Do you ever think we're just chasing our tails? All we have is this moment."

"Yes." Says Aldo. "For sure..." He picks up his phone.

"Be here with me now." She muses.

"Sure." Says Aldo. "I'm here. Just let me just finish this message to J, and i'll be with you now."

Right on cue he receives an SMS:

First let's look at the term's origins and correct usage: It all depends on whether it is followed by the preposition "from", as is the case in English, or the preposition "in" or "to". So renouncing oneself "from" or "to". Which do you think? BIG LOVE. J.X.

"...You're brighter than the northern lights." Says his wife from the other-side of bed. "They say one man's trash, is another man's treasure; the two of us together make everything glitter. Coz I understand you Aldo. We can see eye to eye. Like a double rainbow."

"Thanks," says Aldo, studying the cryptic message from J. "I love you too."

"Every step I take, I'm keeping you in mind." She switches out the bed lamp.

Aldo leans over and kisses the top of her soft hair. "Yes C. It's going to be great."

*"Nothing from nothing is nothing!
So I contend: you have 6.3 billion people,
who don't know who they are.
We've all got 24 hours in a day,
That's what makes us equal."*

CHAPTER XXXX

His phone rings.

"Look." Says Aldo's Editor at the other end of the line. "Where is it, Aldo."

"Ah!" Aldo drops his voice. "It's complicated, but close."

"Aldo!" Yells his Editor through the Samsung. "I am not some hostile power and you are not Karl fucking Marx. You're a magazine columnist. And you're late. You can build your own myths about me and the magazine and you can position yourself as estranged, or lost, turn yourself into your work, turn your work into you, whatever you want - I don't care. The modern condition is now. We are waiting for you to judge it." He drops his voice. "By the way, how's Cecilia? Has she finished her training?"

"Not yet." Sighs Aldo. "It's driving me crazy. She got all absent. Kind of distant. It's like, I don't know. Maybe she's having an affair."

"Hahaha." Says his Editor. "I don't think so. Speak later."

He hangs up.

Aldo's armpit drips.

CHAPTER XXXX

It's June, and Aldo receives email.

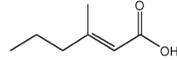
Aldo - we need you to interview the actor Kevin Spacey. It's urgent.

Aldo is delighted. He's a huge fan.

CHAPTER XXXX

You CAN'T do THAT HERE.

*Wrong
Wrong
Wrong
OK?*



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Dr Feldstone: The amygdala created the fear state. It's not controllable by your conscious mind. It's like you've got another Cally inside your head that does these things for you.

Cally: No way! It's like my unconscious subconscious or my what what what!?

Dr Feldstone: Uh. No. It's not even related to your conscious mind. It's another you inside you, which is different from you. It is much more primitive, and *faster!* It has connections to the cerebellum in the back of your brain, which is related to motion, and to the basal ganglia, which are parts of the brain that signal about motion or moderate it. Here's an example. I reach out and pick up this water. Again, my experience says: I've done that because I was thinking here's a great example, but I may not know *why* I picked up the water. It may be because I've been talking and I'm getting thirsty. There's ample evidence that when people claim they're ready to do something, they say *now!*. They push a button and do it. Before that happens, their blood is going to the muscles that are going to move. Parts of the brain that are going to activate those muscles are active for as long as half a second or more before they're aware that they're going to do anything. They're body is getting ready to do it. When we think we're doing something of our own volition, we have no idea what's causing it. It's not like some dark secret buried in your unconscious mind like a Freudian idea. It's more that this system works by itself. *It doesn't need you.* Your job – the conscious mind – is very specific. Mainly it's to make up narrative stories to explain why you're doing things. That's how everyone works. All humans work that way. Even with language, most of the time we're talking to people, we're *not* communicating. Primatologists tell us we're grooming. It's our version of grooming. Essentially we're talking in small talk. What we're communicating to the other person is, I'm okay. I won't hurt you. You're nice. We're part of this whole thing together, okay?

PART 4
Pragmatic Bengal Tigers

PREFACE

To quote Stanislavski, in *An Actor Prepares*...

Oh ok! So would you say that's one of your favourites, then?

So what is your favourite book then?

Such as your character in *House of Cards*?

That's a good tip. Thank you.

Any other favourites?

Is this the kind of book you'd like to get your teeth into?

... ah a one man show! You'd surely receive an Oscar. Only Tom Hanks has done that.

So what do you do it for?

Do you ever feel emotionally spent, and unable to act?

And what would you do in your playtime? Have a beer with the buddies?

Are you a lonely man, Kevin?

sweat

shame

3

CHAPTER XXXX 'Cecilia's demise'

Cecilia's training seemed to be sending her somewhat in the direction of, well, really odd. She kept speaking to Aldo in strange stanzas about triumphing over her nature and attempting to define, extend, then modify her life, whilst separating herself from Her Self. "I'm reaching for the sky", she confessed to Aldo, leading to a palpable disinterest in any maintenance of the grounded home or her actual day job, which she quit "I cannot afford this!" Aldo screamed at her. "I mean really, I know you're trying to find your 'I' but why do you need to 'distinguish yourself' from your environment this much? Cecilia! Here it's all good — *please*, Cecilia, come home." But his wife would not be told. Having seized her special language, she starts to crack new horizons, beating the earth on which she stood, until she loses herself entirely in her tools - leaving Aldo bruised and *OH so lonely*.

LATER.....!

I suppose I'm saying. I suppose i'm saying..

I suppose I'm saying...

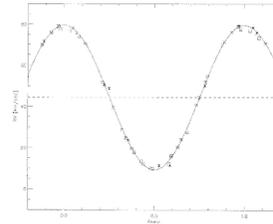
I suppose I'm saying....

I suppose i'm saying.

please! Would you STOP!

Aldo drops his arm.

"Here." Dr Stedman Graham passes Aldo a tissue. "You must remember, this IS the best of all possible worlds and having a perfect primary nature just isn't true. However, you can construct a new nature, it's called second nature, and if you train properly it will become so strong, that when the enemy attacks, you will be ready." The Doctor plumps Aldo's bicep. "Try again."



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Cally: So... That would be what dying of shock is?

Dr Feldstone: Well, they die because their blood pressure drops too low, and there's no one to resuscitate them. It's rare, but it does happen. The best thing for us obviously is either don't subject yourself to all these stressors, or learn how to cope with them. In a primitive society, as our ancestors probably lived in way back, there were limited ways of coping and everyone learned them. Everyone did the best they could. We've got all kinds of ways of coping. Most of us were not taught these things, usually. We have to observe them in our parents, siblings, and friends. A lot of people fail. They don't learn these things, but they're pretty obvious. They're common sense. One way to avoid all these stressors is to anticipate them. Don't want to deal with the wolf at the door? Move to a place where they don't have wolves, or set up a warning signal that automatically locks the door for you. Another type of standard coping mechanism – and it works but only temporarily, because eventually the predator might get you – is denial.

As you're subjected to a lot of stressors, if you don't cope with them effectively, then your body is getting turned on as you're getting ready for fight, flight, or freeze, or it's being turned off. It keeps going up and down. It's the oscillation going up and down that hurts you the most. Your immune system is complicated. There are a lot of things people don't know about it to this day. It involves production of cells. It involves all kinds of biochemistry where the cells recognize invaders and synthesize things that can help them destroy them – all kinds of stuff. It takes time. Your immune system is sort of like your brain: It has to learn how to do these things. You spend the early part of your life – where your body is learning how to protect itself. Things are pretty stable and fine. Then suddenly you have this fluctuation up and down, so it's like you never learned anything – or your immune system didn't. At least that's the theory.

PART 6
More marauding wolves. Hysteria.

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PREFACE

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