

My Love Of thee year 2000

A Novel of love and Philosophy

by Georges Réveillac

4- Alleluia

I am still a little nostalgic while reliving those happy days when I fancied myself as Alexander the Conqueror, even greater surely, since I was not afflicted, myself, with his incredible vanity. In the morning she had easily persuaded me that if I was not at all a god carried on the wings of love, it would not take me long to become one. Ah! That was good! If the same compliment had been made to me by a poor blood sausage of human nature and feminine sex, wrapped up in a gift package and all coloured by carnivalesque ribbons, all fixed up beneath a funny hat, however glad, besides its author, I would have sought only a strict human relationship of the type that one can have with a woman of the category «not screwable». And then I would have had some doubts on the reliability of those praises.

In what conditions can man take his wishes for realities?

And so dear reader? It never happens to you, to take for realities the wish to render concrete certain wishes of yours, especially if they are too strong. Yes, surely, because we are kneaded of the same paste. It is one of the misfortunes of the appetite for existence.

We question our environment in a way as to be able to use it in the factory of our existence. Never obtaining an absolutely certain answer, we must content ourselves with approximations more or less reliable and put an end to our doubts to act.

« - But so, if we take our desires for realities, we risk a failure.

- It is true. Other factors intervene. If the pursued goal is abstract, that is, to say distant from our senses, if the risks of failure are feeble, it is very tempting to take those wishes for solid. Think of the dangers of the road: as long as you have not seen a serious accident, you hardly believe, isn't that so? It is because the television must show us the dead and injured by way of a precaution.

- The Soviets' paradise has lasted less than a century whereas the Christian one holds on after 2000 years. Now, one was on earth, concrete therefore, whereas Christian paradise is sheltered from the curious in an inaccessible, unverifiable and totally abstract heaven? After 60 years of efforts, sometimes excessive, the Soviets saw with their own eyes that their paradise in the making was only a bi-prison badly kept which smelt of cabbage, whereas the Christians themselves, after 2000 years, can often dream of their strictly forbidden Eden.

- You are right. And there is still the force of desire in the offing.

If she is big without however reaching the summit which constitutes this high expectation, the desire will find a reasonable way to satisfy itself. Like this the ordinary Christian will not rely on a hypothetical paradise to ensure his survival. Above all he will entrust to the concrete world which he knows: his children, his heritage, his friends, his country..

But if power of the desire reached the level of the high expectation, every time that it would be impossible to satisfy it, our man will have only the

choice between madness and death. Thus, irrespective of the heavy losses, the inveterate gambler always believes that he will make up for it, in other words he takes his desire for a reality.»

And this is how, all dressed up, without a lifebelt, I set sail with my boat with my entire luggage on an opulent river. Any swirls? Rapids? Let's go then!...

Venus herself, in flesh and bones – I am not interested in the bones, but it seemed that even the goddesses need them -, Aphrodite thus was inviting me to the banquet of the gods. The harder would be the fall precisely without a parachute, when she would afterwards hurl me down the lower regions of the mortals. Groaning, moaning, handicapped by the multiple bruises, my eyes which the bright light high up had upset, incapable from now on to lead me in the half-light where the human world lived, I begged for death which luckily, was rather too busy elsewhere on our small planet to be interested in me.

Ah! The bitch! ... Ah yes, it was about my love. And this is only the beginning. The bitch! I cannot find again the real taste of life with in spite of everything a good zest of bitterness, which by climbing on all fours the steep mountain to find again at the peak my idol moved with pity, condescending, and kiss her feet, like a dog squatting before its master, until she tells me: «George, are you sick? Come on! Come to my arms!»

I was her man. I continued to be so after we tried it out. Pardon me for having used that indecent term. To make love, it is necessary to be in love, but that is not enough.

The second important condition, I was to discover it only later, since Jeanne was careful not to reveal it to me: you must understand each other well. The souls of the lovers must be in symbiosis so that the two bodies will have the possibilities to fuse.

It is necessary that the two bodies be made for one another: you know well that the love of the elephant for the white mouse will always be platonic, that the frigid woman and the impotent man are far from the flash of orgasm...

The sexual fantasies stemming from the way in which one's mind has discovered carnal love must be in harmony. How can they unite themselves, the man who can enjoy himself only in an express train and the woman for whom the scenery of a Norman breeding stud is indispensable? How can they manage, he whose indispensable accessory is the knight's armour and the woman who can't reach her ecstasy if she is not wearing a crinoline dress? Take pity on their misfortune instead of mocking them!

Part of the technique in the art of making love.

And last, even if Mômmanh has turned the lovers' bodies into instruments able to vibrate in unison like a celestial symphony, still one has to learn music first. This apprenticeship is served easily as Mômmanh has endowed us with all necessary gifts. I was initiated into this art quickly, guided by both instinct and the advices of Jeanne whose impetuous curiosity had set her on this road long before me.

When all these conditions were met and only then, we had our first journey to the stars. I felt like saying "Thank you." But to who? Certainly not to Jeanne as the present was mutual. Therefore, "Thank You, Mômmanh, for having conceived us so well."

I was her man. But the other Jeanne who was hiding behind mine and who had not made herself evident, that one was still not convinced of it. From her point of view, I had only bitten the bait. I had to strike without delay because, as you know, the time of the holidays which is nearly always the time of illusions or each can do what he likes as long as he does not want the moon and if one fancies himself an eagle, before finding oneself grazed again and sometimes humiliated in the hard chores of the daily necessities, that respite of the holidays in the hand of the one thousand and one nights is rather short. Don't be surprised if I speak of the holidays when both of us had a job: first of all, we had chosen that job; then it was responsible for our meeting; finally we still a month of real holidays.

There was therefore well concealed in Jeanne's head the imperative: it was necessary that I was solidly hooked before the two of us got back into harness in our respective and too distant territories.

This is how she went about it. And in spite of everything that happened afterwards. I say it to you: «If that way has to be done again, I will go the same way.»

She tells me: «Do you know you are handsome, George? If you dress up well, all the women will chase you...». A swarm of pretty women running after me: a magnificent royal train hooked to the steps of «His Majesty-Myself», brunettes, blondes, red-haired, languorous ones, malicious ones, artists, sportswomen, the right marriageable ones still virgins, to whom I will be teaching everything, beautiful mature women, experts who will show me new pleasures... my mouth was watering. But I had to stop drooling for fear of dribbling; because Jeanne did not leave me a moment's respite.

«Yes, George, you are handsome. But one would say that you do not know. Hasn't anybody ever told you?»

In fact, although knowing that Quasimodo had very slim chances of making love to Esmeralda, I never cultivated beauty as a means of seduction. One mistrusted it like a plague, in the surrounding countryside where I was brought up.

Every third or fourth summer at the grand communal feast they elected a Miss Saint-Hilary-of-the-Désert. The queens of my village had a touching beauty, approximate certainly but natural and sufficiently strong to triumph over the ugliness brought over by the hairdressers and fashion designers of the village, beauties who escaped miraculously the massacre which the tough life of the fields inflicted on them. Those beauty queens of the village never found a husband .

But you, my young contemporary, you belong to an age so distant from that of my youth that you risk understanding nothing from the habits of that era. Behold about fifty years ago, if we were not more than halfway between prehistory and the year 2000, we were not even far away from it. Whereas the average Frenchman of today lives nearly in opulence, the average Frenchman of those days was poor. The peasants of my village lived in clogs, on the

over-exploited land, without heating or running water or electricity. Many of the adults, especially the old, were toothless. For those country people, without social protection, the medical care was often still considered as a luxury.

The ephemeral beauties of my village were not short of lovers, but they were cautious in trying their luck. All those secret wooers shrank from the thought of sending their beautiful one to dirty herself at the cows' rear and to see her exquisite grace mutilated beneath the red faced callosity of the hard work of the land. They also feared that too beautiful a wife squandered a lot of money and time on futile appearances rather than dedicate herself to feed the family in the first place, and then, earn a certain «well-being» that is to say from the property above all. Beauty was then a luxury. My fellows were too poor to dream to afford it.

My mother, that cunning peasant, half redeemed from the slavery of the fields, had carefully avoided letting me know that I was handsome. Beside others induced by the peasant tradition, she certainly had other good reasons for that.

Once, however, once, she made an exception to the rule. I was then about twenty years old and, from her point of view, I had brilliantly succeeded in my studies since I had escaped from the world of the little peasants who bogged it down. I had become a «Mister», and so she saw clearly that I was not attracting the girls. Thinking that it hurt me and also that I risked not bringing her any grandchildren which she was waiting for, she decided in spite of everything to encourage me to seduce with my good looks: «George, don't you have a lover?... A young handsome lad like you?... I am sure that there are about a dozen around you who are waiting only for you. But if you do not say anything to them, how can you succeed?»

Beauty? The fairies whom I did not know how to seduce had an abundance of it: they must, therefore, ask for other qualities. Proof: despite my angelic face, nobody had made eyes at me yet.

Why do women know how to distinguish the men of merit?
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In fact, I was not far from the truth. If the majority of women appreciate the good looks of men, most often, they find that the beauty of souls counts as well.

And one can see a beautiful woman love a brilliant and generous hunchback. The probability is the sense of the myth «Beauty and the Beast».

Because Mômmanh has endowed them with an amazing faculty: they are capable of feeling and measuring men's merit.

That is done by intuition: like this they know how to recognize the artist although they are not necessarily capable of appreciating his works. After all - or rather, above all - it is they who choose the father of their children and it is quite necessary that Mômmanh in her millenary memory chose a means to help them.

Instinctively, they can recognize beneath the tatters, the errant knight, the cursed poet, the wise outlaw... There were the eminent experts, blinded by their prejudiced scholars, discard the revolutionary genius, be it Socrates or Galileo, the most subtle detail.

I was right when I said to myself «Become a good man and love will come as well». I had undertaken to eradicate resolutely the evil which was «blocking» me. As I went along I had progressed that way, I could read in the eyes and on the lips of some fairy the outlines of encouraging smiles.

<p>Spoiling a child is causing his unhappiness. Why?</p>
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*What was the evil which had deprived me from love?
Yet another gift from Mômmanh, this time poisoned!...*

Yes, remember: in the human existence, the preference given to the merry troika "Myself, Here, Now" would have a difficulty bowing in front of a priority due to the severe trinity "Other, Universe, Continuity." Why

should Mômmanh have to be predestine to unhappiness the spoilt children?

The first born and only child of the eldest of a big united family, my father went to war for an undetermined time which was over six years, my mother taken up by all the work of the farm, my grandparents right next door were in permanent adoration in front of the child-king, I was extremely spoilt. When I had a wish, it was enough - in the order - to give a winning smile, or to start crying, or to stamp my feet, and I obtained nearly always what I wanted. Little man, I was master of my small world.

How good it was!

Consequently, I could never renounce to it truly, while my universe little by little broadened itself in the direction of all the infinities. And then, something which resembled a miracle happened. At my village school, I was right away the best student, he who was pointed to as an example for those around. This glory lasted sufficiently enough for me to catch the illness.

Yes: the «Illness» which kept the beauties at bay, that from which I suffered to such a point to call sometimes death, that which caused me so much disappointment and which, in spite of everything, revealed itself beneficial since she permitted me to conceive the present work, the message which I would like to give you.

After having been praised for a long time as the best student of my country school, I ended up by

realizing that I owed those compliments to a particular aptitude: I understood more quickly and better than the others. I then had the idea that the intelligence well directed could bring me much more than the praising of my surrounding. Yes, it would give me the power to satisfy all my desires: cure the sick, gain a fortune, seduce the girls, overcome death, conquer the world... and why not the universe? My frustrated high expectations of a spoilt child resurfaced with a happy and an irrepressible violence. Yes! Yes! Yes! I was going to be again the master of everything. It was enough for me to understand everything: It was as simple as that. And it was like this that I put myself to the insane task of understanding, EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING. I wanted - what am I saying? -, I insisted on being a God.

You are telling me that to have such a stupid behaviour, I must have been short of intelligence. And the gambler then? He whose sick soul demands a luxurious lifestyle and who, to satisfy that tyrant, resorts to gambling till he is completely ruined, the latter is he deprived of intelligence as well?

Thus, like many insane passions, mine was formed in two stages. First of all, the spoilt child who I was, had acquired the need to be always master of everything. Secondly, with the discovery of my intelligence, I believed that I kept the means to satisfy that demand, which from now on knew no limits.

I was victim of the process which I evoke soon. We are sometimes condemned to take for realities some of our desires: those which have become imperious and destructive passions, high expectations.

The passion of being God blinded me so much more than its origin, those high expectations of a spoilt child, found themselves locked in the subconscious. In fact, since all those who had been leaning on me had instilled in me generous morals of equality, of solidarity, of a struggle for the prosperity of everybody, my monstrous selfishness could only express itself under disguise. I had no problem finding it: it appeared under the evidence, that the need to understand everything had to be of service to humanity.

I must explain to you now how that drawback could render me unfit to live.

<p>What is stress? How can stress release the existential reactions? How is stress indispensable to existence?</p>
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Stress commands our existence. I use it in a general sense given by the Canadian researcher Hans Seyle, inventor of the concept. He said it many a time that the stress general syndrome of adaptation, is indispensable for life and that its total absence, is death. Therefore, the elements which release it are not always seriously traumatizing neither frustrating. Joy can cause it as much as sorrow.

Stress shows itself when we perceive the taste or the foretaste whether of deprivation or of satisfaction: a burn as well as the fear of being burnt; the taste of the first kiss as well as the hope of tasting more of them are all stress. That arouses the desire which is the voice of Mômmanh in each of us. She makes herself heard throughout the day, and even at night during the dreams.

To fight stress man resorts to the tools which Mōmmanh has bequeathed him: the senses to perceive the environment, an intelligence to understand it and find the means to avail himself of them, the tools such as the hands to act accordingly.

As soon as he concludes that he as a worthy answer to stress, the human mind orders to pass to action. If he recognizes a pleasure, he orders to welcome it and to prolong it, if he sees a perspective of pleasure he orders to try and fulfil it.

<p><i>To obtain a better response possible to stress, what qualities must man develop?</i></p>
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Let us look for the best process of an answer to stress!

One must develop knowledge to know how to act on nature. One must develop the skill and its extensions which are our tools to subject nature to what one wants. At the moment of stress, we must resort to those aptitudes.

It is necessary to be capable to see if the means which we dispose of allow us to answer conveniently to stress. I insist: it is necessary to know how to appreciate correctly those means.

At the moment of action, those who have developed an excessive confidence in themselves will experience some failures. Those who have developed the opposite

shortcomings, the lack of assurance, will very frequently fail because their actions are clumsy.

And those who are slaves of high expectations impossible to satisfy? Unless, on top of that, they are afflicted with an excess of assurance, what one calls conceited, they cannot have confidence in their capabilities; they will fail because of clumsiness or indecision.

After that preparation, if the decision to act is taken, it is necessary to mobilise as much attention and will as is required by the difficulty.

How does the requirement of happiness transform life into hell?

Ah well! my sick mind was never satisfied with the answers, since he demanded the impossible: the absolute intelligence of everything, including, therefore, the most insignificant problem. None of the answers sketched inspired me with confidence, but it was necessary for me to act: before opening my flies to satisfy an urgent need, I could not wait to know with absolute certainty if it had to start being opened from the top, from the middle or from the bottom. Then my actions were so hesitant that I happened to dirty myself.

And that lack of confidence in the slightest of my gestures revealed itself every day, over and over again. It happened often that I could not speak, my language having become an incomprehensible mess. It happened to me that I had difficulty in driving a car, and forgetting how to swim.

My natural state had become that of a zombie constantly absorbed by painful problems, I was incapable of interesting myself in whatever happened. In spite of everything one invited me to play, to dance, to discuss, even to eat, I did it in a mechanical and clumsy way.

It was because as long as I had not succeeded in pushing my demon, I had not been allowed to make love. It happened that if an attempt of a committing smile appeared on the lips of the girls attracted by my good looks: but then I found myself quite too far away from the other side of an invisible barrier, and above all, I was incapable of communicating the least information about myself.

However, that was not the last fault which repelled them; the most patient would have in spite of everything attempted to penetrate my secrets, by hoping that their curiosity will be well rewarded. No, my condemnation without appeal came from what they had read in my eyes: a desperate and tenacious aberration, the reflection of a sick soul, gnawed at by cancer, closed to life, doomed to disappear in the limbo of forgetfulness, a limbo which had already started to swallow its living victim. So, seeing that there was nothing to love behind my angelic face, the beauties kept on going.

Once I had constrained my vice to withdraw itself into forgetfulness, I could practice the habit of seduction of my era. I was convinced that, in a couple of lovers, beauty must be the privilege of the woman. To each his role. While playing the symphony of her body, the woman showed each moment the way to earthly paradise: while studying, reflecting, working, and struggling... the man derived from nature the elements which would make a reality of that divine promise. The feminine beauty was the revelation of the primordial aspirations to

which the power of the masculine creation had to give body. Venus can only be the Muse which inspires the creator: man

I was a man of my time: that era in which one idolised Brigitte Bardot in the role of the «ravishing idiot».

How did I want to seduce? With my intelligence, above all. I believed to have set myself free from the hole in the countryside which had been my nest, muddy and full of dung, thanks to my superior intelligence. From now on I saw myself actor of a marvellous world of cities, that world without hindrance which was advancing at great steps towards the opulence, freedom, conquest of the stars. At least, this is how I saw it. But if you believe that I scorned my fellow peasants, my brethren, you are wrong: I was sorry for them and wanted them to be free in due course.

So? Why did I feel my body dissolve itself in happiness when she told me: «Do you know that you are handsome George!»? But surely, I remember it now. It is because at the same time, she wrapped me up in a long loving look, like the fisherman imprisons his fish in his tender shrimping net.

She loved me!... Hallelulia!...

Besides that meant: that my mind is finally free from that cursed concrete wall, since she reads it on my face which has become again intelligent, curious, open, and so on and so forth...» I concluded equally that she appreciated what I believed that my essential qualities were, my qualities of a man: a well-formed intelligence, open, capable of beautiful performances and a knowledge already well understood which asked only to develop. She told me yes, surely, she appreciated those qualities which she had looked for in vain in other men. Why had it taken me so long to come?

Together, we were going to put that into practice and work out feats. She made me her oracle. God! That was good! Finally a fairy appreciated my merit. At last a divine accepted to weave her existence with mine! SHE had come down from the skies to look for me! From now on I would be her master and her slave because it was like this, that paradoxically I conceived love.

She asked me if I wanted to have children.

«How? If I wished for it? But I wanted it.

- Because you believe that everybody wants to have children? Some don't want any of them absolutely.
- I do not understand the latter. But how can they deprive themselves of such happiness?
- Some children, they are not always the joy, you know. And then, one can have other goals, in his existence.
- It is true. I have not thought of that. But you?...
- Rest assured, I want to have children, also. We are lucky.

At that time, I still found it absolutely normal to be lucky. It was another consequence of the little treats which had filled my childhood. Much later, in our house in the countryside, there was a period when we ate a cat each year. No, not stew. In Autumn we used to take in a kitten; he spent a comfortable winter in the warmth, pampered by all; in spring, he was overtaken by the eagerness to see the world: he left to explore and disappeared, killed by an environment whose dangers he did not suspect of. Ah well, when I found it normal to be lucky, I was similar to those kittens. Fortunately, Jeanne's education did not have that serious fault to have given her an excessive confidence in life.

«George, how many do you want?

- Three.
- But how did you guess? Even I want three.
- It was luck once again. But tell me, why three?
- I have been an only child. One gets bored and risks being spoiled. Two are always bickering all the time, and then it is not a real family; and then I like better the number three. There you are.
- And you, George?
- They can play together and help each other. In a case of a fight, they can call their brothers. And then that would give us a big family when we are old. Finally, it will increase our chances of having grandchildren.
- Don't count too much on that. But tell me, you want only boys: and the girls, what will you do with the girls?

- Oh! The girls...
- Yes, the girls, like me. Do you know what I want to say?
- One must...
- I know what one must! But do you want any?
- One does not have a choice. If we have a girl, we must take her.
- We will bring her up to do the housework and the kitchen. She can also iron her brothers' shirts...
- Stop there, my dear, where are you heading? You know well that I am in favour of progress. I defend the equality of sexes.
- The equality for the others, surely. But for you, hey? Can one make a small exception?
- The girls, when they are pretty and gentle are pleasant. But I think of their future: they do not have the qualities it takes to make a man at all.
- Ah George, tell me that I am dreaming! If they come home pregnant, the only chance would be to find them a good husband. Tell me if I am wrong.
- Hey...»

I lifted my head. She had gone out to do a stroll round the camp. She walked with quick steps and it seemed to me that her breathing was halting. She did not take long to come back, wearing a smile which attracted me irresistibly in her arms. Her tense body was rather cold.

« - Dear, are you alright ?

- Yes, yes... Tell me, have you related to me that you have prepared your higher education in a mixed school?
- Yes.
- Were the girls less successful than the boys?
- No, I have not seen the difference? Ah yes. I see where you are heading. You know the equality of the sexes, it is all new. So, like everyone else, I drag with me the remains of the old habits.
- Yes, yes!... It does not matter what remains. So what are we going to do with the girls, if we have any?
- We shall accept whoever comes. If unfortunately.....
- Excuse me! If we have only girls, well, well... I will love them as boys.
- That is not bad for a start... Oh my, my!

- What happened? Are you hurt?
- Oh my my!... I am afraid!... Granted that they are normal!...
- Ah! It is only that... Certainly they will be normal! There you are. Is that a funny idea?
- That idea gives me nightmares. When I wake up, I no longer want any children. But what can one do about it? Hey, George?...,»

The tone was full of hope. Alas, the knowledge of which I was so proud did not bring me any solutions to those painful problems.

« - I never asked myself the question...It seems to me that no, we cannot do anything about it. But there are no abnormalities in the family, at least among two or three generations which I know of and which I have been told of. And in yours?

- As far as I know there is none to my knowledge.
- So you are not sure?
- Not completely. You know, that, that type of accident could happen to anyone. I have seen some in hospitals. Oh! It is horrible!
- Come on, Jeanne, the risks are minimal. Each time we take the car we can have a serious accident. Do you think of it?
- No.
- Yet the risks are bigger
- A fat lot of good that does me! Good! Let us talk of other things. Our children will study for a long time. Do you agree?
- Surely.
- Estelle will become a lawyer. At least if she is not a scientist, a researcher.
- Who is Estelle?
- It is my daughter.
- Ah good. She is mine equally. Our sons also could become engineers, doctors, researchers, renowned artists. Perhaps I am dreaming.
- So, I dream with you. Since you are a teacher, you will be of great help so that our children will succeed in their studies.
- I will try. But you have not forgotten that we want equality.
- Yes and so?

- We therefore want all the young ones to be successful in their studies. And we shall do our very best to succeed!...or rather. At that moment – there, our children will have the same chances as the others to be plumbers, architects, cowherds, swineherds...
- Ah no! not a cowherd or a swineherd! My children will not smell of manure, not any more of cow pot, besides, not even fish or grub. And they will not have big podgy hands filthy with dirty oil all callous like the skin of a crocodile. No, my children will be «well to do».
- Ah ! Comrade! Tell me that I am dreaming.
- I know! All you are going to tell me, I know it. It is not worthwhile starting it...»

We were, at that time, communists both of us. Still another stroke of luck , no?

« - Jeanne, you know the meaning of «freeing humanity»: in the communist world all men can develop the gifts which, today be dormant in it. Everyone will be sufficiently educated to understand what is happening on earth. Anybody can be president, Member of Parliament, mayor, general...

- There will be no wars...
- Ah! That is true... Good... In any case it will no longer be like in our foolish epoch, where we spoilt millions and millions of talents...
- Mother Lopin will no longer use her spine to do the housework, since she will be a dancing star. Father Magloire will no longer earn his living gathering up old rags when he will be the pilot of a spaceship...
- It is easy to caricature. Perhaps their children will know that life.
- And ours? They will do the housework and gather up old rags. Fortunately, it is not for tomorrow.
- If I understand well, you want all men to be equal below us. Here is a problem... Besides, even if the Grand Evening does not come soon, the ideal of secular schooling, is that all the children succeed in their studies, and we will end by getting there. Don't you wish so?
- Yes. In the meantime, I shall strive so that our children will have a good education. You also, surely ?
- Yes, obviously...
- As for the others they only have to do likewise. If they expect to find it readily cooked in their plate, so much the worse for them.
- Nevertheless it is necessary to help them.
- Surely.

- At last, we agreed. Kiss me, dear.
- George! There is something else which is worrying me. You know that my father died in a concentration camp. Other relatives, also died in the same way, and even friends of the family. When I was young, I believed that it was normal to live in fear.
- And, before, there had been the carnage of 14/18.
- Yes. I would not want my children to die in a war, I cannot take it.
- And if you fear car accidents, what will you do?... You will compel our children to go about in an ox cart? Life is full of risks: you accept it or die.
- Words, that's all. Hold on, imagine... Oh! It is too hard!... If one comes to tell me that my 20 year old son has died you cannot know! It is impossible to think of that horror. There are no words. If I must imagine that?... I will vomit the whole world. Oh no! I don't want any children!...
- Let us see, my dear... As you said, they are only words... Have you surely already chosen plenty of names?...
- Wait a little, please... Let me get back to myself.
- Excuse me, dear. Let's go for a stroll in the mountains if you want.
- It is too late. Besides, I feel better... George dear, there is still another thing.
- Yes?
- Sometimes it seems to me that I cannot have children...
- Have you seen a doctor?
- No! I am not talking of that inability. I am thinking of my character. It happens to me often that I do things I do not understand. Afterwards I reproach myself, but it is too late.
- Often the subconscious commands you: it is normal. Or rather your will is perhaps weak: everybody knows that.
- No, it is about more serious things.
- I will understand it if you tell me what it is all about.
- I am going to try. You see, it is not weakness, much less in the ordinary way because, I have a surplus of will: so when the normal people have one, I have many.
- Is it a split personality?
- But no! let me continue, if you please. You see in this moment I want children, I want them very badly; ah well, it is possible that tomorrow, I will not want them, with the same strength.
- Do you keep changing, inconstant?

- Oh?... Something similar. For example, I always agree with the last person who has spoken. I never manage to keep my promises. But I feel bad about it, you know... Oh! I fear for our children... You will help me, George? Hey? Will you help me, say?
- Certainly, Jeanne. We will find a way to get to the bottom of it.»

Do I have to tell you that I took advantage of it, rather cowardly, to hug her in my arms? What happened next is none of your business: let us draw the curtains...

The sky has become clear again. Jeanne told me again.

«- Will you give me beautiful children, say?

- Yes, they will be beautiful like you.
- Beautiful like us. And intelligent, no?
- Intelligent also, and everything and all... Oh! I adore the babies. They are so cute, with their rose bottoms, I could devour them with kisses.
- I prefer them grown up... And kiss their face! It is very good like that: we will take it in turns.
- Oh my God!
- What else? What are you scheming with that God in whom you never believed?
- Shall we hope that you won't spoil them ?
- Spoil out children? With the means that we have, that surprises me.
- So much the better George! Don't you think that you would be a little too overconfident?
- I don't believe. Each time that one of our children will seem to take a bad turn, we will find the means to set him right.»

If you judge me, I will plead not guilty: in that which remained of my folly as a spoilt child, I truly believed that my intelligence would bring me the solution to Jeanne's suffering as well as our pains.

In fact, she had gone into depth much further than my essential question: «How to make children succeed?». I loved her even more for it. For me, in spite of everything, they

were only ideas: for her they were nearly real, nourished by her body, her little loved ones already curled down in her flesh. Don't be surprised: when we were bent on this problem, Jeanne abandoned all the loving strategy. Besides she never lied to me on that subject.

Another vital question for our love: the ideology. Just as one can mate with all his might a parrot and a salamander, one cannot marry a fundamentalist Muslim and an atheist feminist.

What is an ideology?

Mômmanh has created us to fulfil her project, which is also ours: it is necessary to develop the existence as distant as possible in space and time. In that goal, we must follow a plan: an ideology. All the men who are associated to that plan will increase our chances of success, and the contrary. Those who do are our brethren; the others, if they do not do it already, one day or another risk opposing our ideology: they are, at the very least, our potential enemies.

The fundamental principles of this plan must be quite solid and stable: it is because we make dogmas of them. In order that at any moment we have the courage to put them into practice, it is better if we believe them to be very strong: that will help us a lot when we say that they are the truth. Being like this attached to dogmas which we claim to be sacred, that is called faith. It is probably Mômmanh who predisposed us to it.

Can we live without ideology? Live, perhaps, exist, surely not.

*The prevailing ideology of France is that of the
«Human Rights».*

In a family the beliefs are as important as children, sometimes even more. The gods of the past, from time to time, sold their assistance to men in exchange for the sacrifice of their beloved daughters and sons. On nearly all over the world, we have stopped that atrocious deal concluded with fantasies and we have transformed most of the gods in myths which haunt our museums, but modern ideologies often demand that sometimes one sacrifices his children, to war for example, or denounce his son who has become a dangerous criminal.

To look for love for those whose majority of beliefs are conflicting? Impossible. Hold on, here is the story on this subject.

A young woman had decided to make love to a Nazi admirer: because he was handsome, because he was intelligent, because he was an artist... because she liked every aspect of his character except his execrable ideology. She realised that she could not come when he was well on the way of reaching an orgasm. Outraged at the idea of giving him such a present, she told him: « - Do you know that I am a Jew?». He broke off. « - Yes, I am a filthy Jew. The Nazis gassed my parents and burnt their bodies in the flesh fired boiler? And then, do you know that I am a communist? When the time comes, we shall kill the hideous beast. You as well, like a cockroach, we shall crush». He smiled: « - I met your mother this morning.», then he took his pleasure all alone in an inert frigid body. Because Mômmanh has made the woman like this: she will not reach orgasm if there is no love.

Ah well, on this mined ground of beliefs, once again fortune smiles at us. I did not have to undertake the arduous task to convert Jeanne. How lucky I was!... Ah but!... Like myself, that magnificent flower of the suburb was «fighting» to render the world better and make out of the world the «paradise of workers». She knew how to proceed just as much as I did: one only had to follow the «Party» directives protesting from time to time. The rebellious French spirit obliges! – against such or such an error which will take some time to be corrected thanks to the «Democratic Centrism» and the vigilance of the «Comrades». Ah! The good times, the marvellous era when our spirits, up till then blind, opened themselves dumbfounded, on the «Radiant Future».

To exploit us better, to make us kill one another in their wars «to crunch us better, my child!», the dominant classes had always known how to conceal the truth, but this was all over. Like me, surely, Jeanne read «Humanity: the Newspaper which said the Truth». It is true that we did not read the same pages: I studied the articles concerning the situation on the «front for the struggles of classes» and the strategy to adapt; most frequently Jeanne contented herself with the crosswords. In any case, we were both well informed and it was useless trying to deceive us.

Although our own standard of living has noticeably improved and there was no unemployment, France was the country on the way to impoverishment. – Yes, yes! It was written in the «Human», for those who could read.

So our looks moved to pity looked towards the happy «Soviet Countries», the paradise that was being built where thanks to the enlightened government of the communist party, everything was more successful than elsewhere: the kolkhoz, the tractors, the lorries, the dams, the industrial complexes...were gigantic, the cows were fatter and gave more good milk so that the happy children of paradise could be more beautiful still, the athletes well formed perfectly were the best in the world, the glorious Red Army was invincible...

The summer evening after the opulent harvests of the blond ears of corn, the young and beautiful kolkhoziene labourers in good shape at the end of their working day put on their traditional costumes so rich in colours, then they danced and sang till the late hours of the sleepless night, their music sometimes devilish, sometimes tender and languorous, the popular music, surely the most beautiful in the world.

The U.S.A. remained the principal «reactionary» force which was delaying the triumph of communism and the happiness of humanity all over the world. But the hot-headed Khrouchtchev had just launched a challenge to the grand Yankee puppet: in some year – ten or twenty, I do not know how much -, the paradise of the workers would have surpassed the American giant in every field.

The «Dictator of the Proletariat» was opening the doors to freedom: it was the real democracy while that of the liberal countries, ours, was false. There, I found it hard to believe: that resembled too much to the «Mystery of the Holy Trinity» of the Christians: one

had to accept the absurd. He who followed scrupulously the directives of the Central Committee was a free man whereas an individual of my type wasn't: I had the tendency to think only with my head, then, try to share my convictions, which were too frequently out of the «Party Line».

A section secretary, irritated, once told me: «It is necessary to shoot all the intellectuals!...» It was precisely during a little trip to the soviet paradise. It is true that the comrade was upset by the general mediocrity which we discovered, similar to a great upsurge of inedible mushrooms; it is true that he was dumbfounded because a young and beautiful soviet comrade, our guide at Bakou, in Azerbaidjan, was wooing him in the hope of gaining a ticket for the capitalist French hell; it is true that in the group we were two or three intellectuals who asked un reasonable questions, going as far as to call into question the dogmas; it is true at last that we had drank a lot.

Nevertheless, an acid idea wedged itself in the corner of my mind: «In the marvellous Country of the Soviets, would my place be at the goulag?

But when I had met Jeanne, fifteen years earlier, our faith was still roughly intact. Should total freedom follow the advent of the communist society, the ultimate stage in humanity's painful history, after that period of purgatory where the «shock workers» were building the socialist economy, protected by the «dictatorship of the proletariat». That was the earthly paradise to conquer. There would no longer be even the state! You will realise! Even though there still, I had my doubts, my faith had its roots hooked to the three matrix of the future, to the three hopes that swelled my heart: equality for all men, the universal peace, and the fortune for all the world.

One day, I saw my father, a small peasant, grovel himself in front of «Our Master», Mr. Proprietor of the farm; he even gave him the most beautiful pears of the garden, those which I hoped to treat myself with. In the world which the comrades were going to build; that did not happen: the land belonged to those who worked it, the equality would no longer be but a word; none would have to kneel down, each one would have his seat at the banquet of existence.

You have noticed those people, our fellow creatures in spite of everything, settled down on the front box seats of the grand theatre, those people, who even when there are free seats, trample on our fingers when they try to climb the social ladder. In communist language, this cohort of enemies of the people, have a name: they are the dominating classes, the responsible for human destitution. Ah well, in the new world, there would be no more talents, even geniuses, still-born, stopped at the bud, as much by the will of the dominant classes as by the lack of teaching, of money, of time... Above all on earth millions of creatures would arise who, from their audacity, would transport the entire humanity in a marvellous dream: the dream which she followed after the first stumbling steps in the hostile obscurity and which so often had taken a nightmarish turn, that old dream finally became a triumphant march.

We live a transitory period, but the end of History was near. Because, according to the prophet Karl Marx, History was only the Struggle of the Classes with all its sudden new developments: the free men against the slaves, lords against churls, capitalists against proletariats... But the dominant classes knew their last misfortune: capitalism. Soon, thanks to communists, the whole world would be delivered from the yoke of capitalism; then, one after the other, the liberated countries would build a socialist economy, this thanks to the dictatorship of the proletariat which will be merciless towards the saboteurs, those vile flunkies of the nasty capitalists. Those true democracies, not the false ones like ours, the popular democracies subjected to the enlightened dictatorship of the proletariat would give birth to the communist society. Then, the «Struggle of the Classes» known also as History would come to an end like a car which breaks down when there is no petrol, because there will not be any more classes. In that world from now on without «History» a new man would rule definitely wise and good.

My friend, you know that the happy people don't have any history».

No more brigands no more crooks; the rare conflicts will be settled by means of wisdom: the howling pains of the tortured bodies, the incurable pains of the dead who parted prematurely, the despair of those who look to start a new life amid the fields of ruins, all those horrors will be only terrible memories of a past history. There will be no state again longer, imagine! Ah yes, since the state serves only to assure the domination of a class, one would no longer need it. The sky will be often blue, the earth will be our garden, all the world will be beautiful and will remain young for a long time, all the world will be entitled to a refined

cuisine, to the emotion of arts, to the pleasure of the mountains and the sea, to horse-riding, and yachting... Everybody will be rich! And what else still?

What remains of these loves?

Why does ideology rest on the explanation of the universe?

We have seen that, to try to fulfil better the existence, the great struggle of Mômmanh, we have to conceive and practise an ideology. To be quite solid, she must rest on a reliable enough explanation of the universe.

To understand our environment, the natural explanations and the experimental method have always given us the most reliable answers. But these answers were far from being able to satisfy the first man who did not have any of the monumental modern science. So the imagined spirits, the most rational among the explanations possible of the universe in those prehistoric years which are lost in the past. They created animism. What else could they do better? When the advance of natural explanation rendered animism irrational, men invented polytheism. The latter had soon to give way to monotheism, however with difficulty. And now, the latter tries hard to resist the onslaught of materialism, that is to say the explanation of the world by way of the natural laws only.

This materialism together with the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man constitutes the dominant ideology on a worldwide scale. It is not free from beliefs. What ideology could be so? Here is for example the one my theory challenges: «Matter only has given

birth to life then to the spirit. Our soul is strictly of material origin». When he believes to be holding the proof of long distance communications between the molecules, Doctor Jacques Benveniste clashes against this same dogma.

What has caused the fall of communism in the Soviet bloc?

Therefore, an ideology rests on the explanation of the universe. And this is always false, given the insufficiency of our knowledge. She is always wrong and however its articles of faith must be unchangeable. How the heck break the deadlock?

Quite simple: through freedom. When free, men can search for other ways. Some won't fail to use that permission and from time to time, one of them will find a way to improve the ideology.

Now, the communists did not want this «bourgeois freedom» because, like many others before them, they believed to hold the definite «truth». In fact, they believed to hold the scientific explanation of history, what they called «historic materialism». That science was not debatable, but to be put into practice. It was the good medicine for the pains of the people and one had to leave the good doctors do their work. That was what led to the dictatorship of the communist party.

To make things worse, the orthodox historic materialism teaches that the socialist economy is the best when it has produced only general mediocrity, if not poverty.

The liberal economy rests heavily on the selfishness and the socialist economy claims to be altruistic. Knowing the big love of man for his ego, you know why capitalism triumphs. In a capitalist country, a company owner, normally makes his fortune by making his employees produce maximum wealth. Like this, by working for his dear «Myself», he contributes to the enrichment of the country. In a communist country, a company owner, usually makes his fortune by pleasing the rulers, by not vexing his employees and by embezzling the wealth of the state. Thus even he working for his dear «Myself», he contributed too often to the impoverishment of his country.

Still on account of his foul preference for the «Myself-Here-Now», the men in power ended up by giving way to the temptation of attributing to themselves all sorts of privileges. It is because it is necessary to establish an opposition.

Absence of freedom, absence of opposition, absence of liberalism in economy: here are the three principal causes of communist failures.

So much needless suffering for some errors!

«- This is rather abstract, practically unreal, you are saying. - well, rack one's brains, now that you know the price of the error. When one governs the men irrespective of how he does it, one obviously obtains nothing. What happened to the people that our generous actions helped to liberate? All those people of the Soviet Empire? And the Afghans? And those of ex-Yugoslavia? Are those happier than those of the Chinese

empire who still «groan» under the communist yoke? What is your share of responsibility in their hardship?»

Isn't it high time to make an effort to understand history in order to try perhaps to control that dangerous wild horse?

Today it is evident: the framework of the big Moscow circus was shoddy. The top has collapsed, a sorry shroud for the dead ones of the Goulag and the tortures, awaiting the judgement of history. And now that the country of the Soviets had fallen apart on its own, without anybody touching it, like a gigantic cheese soufflé, what remains of the marvellous project that has become a monstrous enterprise?...

And those comrades whom (Jeanne and I) have loved so much, those who have found themselves unsuspected resources, who have given all their time, their energy, their love, as well as their life? In the communist epic, those brave men will they become damned in History?

Certainly not! They will carry the burden of their errors, but they will carry also the merit for having tried. In wanting to construct a world for the future, they have set the house on fire. During that time, some of their brothers devoted themselves exclusively to making their wealth work for them.

Do those who at the battle of Stalingrad have saved us from the Nazi hell, deserve to be condemned to hell in our memories?

Honour those who rose up to save us from the quicksand. By virtue of trying we will certainly succeed.

Let's go back to that epoch bursting with hope. I was a communist and so was Jeanne, my radiant flower of the red suburbs. Wasn't it marvellous?

We were for so different reasons, but Jeanne, subtle fly, was careful not to let me know. She did not want to sacrifice her whole life to the «Party» anymore than I did. Both of

us, while waiting for the workers' kingdom to come, wanted to share the pleasure which our capitalist society was offering already and fit into its promises which seemed within arm's reach: earn money, travel, build our house... Besides, Jeanne had heard, well beneath my words of a fanatic activist, that I was a potential turncoat and she accepted it. Didn't we agree on the essentials, that is, on the equality of men, the need to keep wide open the mind, the research of natural explanations for everything. It was enough. Finally, nearly.

I was a flying seed, swept off the compost that had nourished it, in search of new soil in which to plant its life. Born in the heart of a small Catholic peasant family, educated by the school of the Republic, I was deeply attached to the ideal of equality. I had arrived at the Communist Party because the explanation of the world according to Marx had fascinated me. In particular, he believed to have made a science of history reliable enough to draw practical applications out of it: guiding towards a definite goal humanity towards a radiant future and I liked that a lot.

«Understand the world to transform it», had said Marx. See how it complied with my obsessive desire: «Understand the world to master it».

The will to understand: when she hasn't got like me a neurotic character, here is what characterises the intellectuals. Nothing surprising so if, the following day of the Second World War, there were thousands like me, the historians in front, who became more or less communists. After, the former after the others, nearly all withdrew, often on tiptoes, like me.

But I was still far from this disruption.

Jeanne, she was still living on her native soil and it continued to nourish her: I have already told you, she was a flower of the «Red Suburb».

The alleged scientific history, materialism at times dialectic and historic, did not interest her. She had been breast-fed on communism. Besides, she had become attached to it through all the martyrs of the family, the heroes of the Résistance, her father above all, a victim of the decree «Night and Fog», whose body as well as the memory of the painful day which followed his arrest, had deliberately been lost in the Nazi hell. «Nacht und Nebel»: that sounds very nicely for those who do not know.

So, she came from the «working class», and I, from that of the poor peasants. We were genuine children of the proletariat, we did not belong to the capitalist class and its flunkies. Well-born, free from stubborn vices which the bourgeoisie education instils in their own children rendering their souls black in the new world which we help to build up, we belonged to the new nobility, the ones which, in principle, should exercise the «dictatorship of the proletariat». We were the incarnation of a grand monument in Moscow which we revered, at the time, as one of the most beautiful in the world: «The Worker and the Kolkhozeau». We fulfilled the union of the sickle and the hammer.

However, our capital of nobility was already seriously chipped off: of good birth, certainly, we had just entered into the bastard category of civil servants, and among the least honourable, too, those who did not work with their hands. We did no longer have the right to be called workers. To aggravate our case, we had chosen to be intellectuals, suspects prone to heresy. But we were not conscious of that discrimination, that had just been sketched, and we were singing at the top of our lungs:

« Stand up my blonde, let's sing in the wind,
Stand up my friends!
It is going towards the rising sun,
Our country.»

The worker and the Kolkhozian, the sickle and the hammer: the hammer can serve to forge the sickle. I hadn't thought about it yet. Ah well, I did not take long to discover it.

I have already told you: at that period of casting off of our love, our two experiences appeared made to compliment one another like two halves of an extremely complicated puzzle. Our harmony seemed so perfect that I was nearly certain of having found the only woman I could love in the whole world, the one I had been looking for a long time. The «Unique» one amidst two billion others, the «Woman of my Life». Ah but! How lucky!...

What are the conditions of a great love?
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There are plenty of us who feel the illusory certainty of having finally met the «Unique». It is probably a trick, another one, which Mômmanh plays on us. She must have inscribed this in our genetic code: «If you meet a being of the opposite sex which you like immensely, you will feel for him from now on an attachment as strong as for your father and mother.» Now, aren't father and mother quite unique in this world? No?...

A long time ago, in her memory, Mômmanh discovered the benefits of sexual reproduction. She let it have a place of honour, very near to her, endowing it plentifully with both desire and pleasure at the same time.

Recently, in her human memory, Mômmanh realised that even when it has nothing to do with reproduction, love is beneficial. So, she installed it in an ideal position and endowed it as if it were the dearest of her children. She gives the most beautiful gifts to those lovers whose existential qualities complement each other.

First, they should have the same values, that is to say the same objectives pulling their life forward. The moral values come first, but there are also the others. In this way one couple would contribute to culture and another one to horse breeding. Assuming this is to be the case, it is not necessary that they have the same tastes. If two lovers adore arts, for example, one can love the baroque and the other the classical style, one painting and the other music, the important thing being to help and complement each other as best as they can. If they

both appreciate the good cuisine, one can like preparing the dishes and the other washing the dishes, one can love jam and the other cheese. It is necessary therefore that both of them have the best aptitudes and that their preferred roles should complement each other harmoniously, the way Mômmanh has conceived them: one nourishes the future baby in her womb, the other protects them.

Love is like a trade. No! Not of the type «I am selling my behind». A sort of exchange where, rather than swap, one shares essential assets. Each shows to the other what they have brought and the two candidates negotiate for a long time: « - It is not enough. - I don't like this at all. - Add this and that thing...». When each one is satisfied of the deal, love, which by then has gone to their heads to the point of overwhelming them, begins to strengthen the ties forged between the two. Soon enough these ties will become too strong that it will be very difficult and painful to break them.

So, the time has come to proceed to the first signature of the contract. For practical purposes, it is better to do that in a good bed. It is there where Mômmanh gives her present, when the lovers feel an outburst of joy. A spray of joyous sparks is produced inside them! It goes reaching for the stars. They are under the impression that they are delivered from their wretched «Myself», melted one into the other at first, then together into the moving universe. Can they have joined Mômmanh? Perhaps have they found a window one which Buddhists call «the nirvana»?

What chances has he of establishing a love contract, he who has nothing to swap? And in what one offers the beloved, it is necessary that the concern to please the other outshines the concern of himself. This is how love elevates men.

Why is the pleasure of love inscribed in our heredity?

Increase my strength thanks to my other half, elevate myself through desire: here are the two perfect ways of enriching my existence. Mômmanh knows it well, she who grants sublime reward to sincere lovers.

What probability is there for two hearts in search of love to discover right away that they complement each other best. None. Even you are right in thinking that the negotiations of love will inevitably be prolonged and punctuated with crisis. Besides, very often, they are broken off prematurely. How could I believe that we were a chosen couple on the verge of joyfully climbing the heavens without even stopping to take our breath?

Ah well, can you bear to hear for a short while this symphony of the happy idiot?

I wanted to leave for Black Africa. Discover there another world, mysterious, new, simple, amidst an exotic and intact nature, an admiring grateful, friendly... world where I would bring progress in return for a very comfortable salary. Thanks to what I learned about the benefits of education and the equality of men, we were going to achieve remarkable feats in Africa. Ah but!

Ah well, Jeanne had the same intentions. She had waited to meet me to fulfil them. Many years later, I learned that she had never thought of expatriating before I talked to her about it.

We kept on knitting together our two existences: the agreement was perfect, the more delightful the more our beings melted into a happy couple.

I had been thinking of the big rustic house we were to buy later on, in the country, in the middle of a large park, not too far from the sea and close to a town steeped in history, a town of reasonable size so long as its centre of culture was well equipped with necessary facilities. There, our children would grow up harmoniously, nurtured by nature, culture and freedom. There, at our home, our friends would be warmly welcome thanks to my charming wife who would do the housework, shopping, and cooking. Our material comfort being thus assured, I would devote myself to filling the leisure of our guests generously: I would offer them games and excursions, I would start gripping discussions on the dialectic materialism, for example. I would direct the experience and together we would weave some unforgettable moments. The big house in the countryside will be the estate where our group, like the club of the Jacobins, would apply itself to rebuild a world of our liking.

Perhaps I would also do the washing, at times.

Ah well! You have guessed; of course Jeanne had been dreaming of such a country-house life without servants. It was marvellous!

Each stage of our mutual exploration this brought an unexpected revelation and the fusion of our beings went on, sparkling like a diamond, a delight, subtle, delicate, elegant, strong, perfumed, tonic,....exquisite! in a word. Ah! The good times!...

I am greedy. And I was hoping to become by dint of practice a refined and happy gourmet. The method was simple: for years on end, I would taste and compare the exquisite savours that I had not been able to treat myself to so far. By sheer determination, as time went by, the sensitivity of my taste buds grew sharper. And the moment would come when a beautiful culinary orchestration would carry me with emotion as far as the paradise of gourmets. Thus, when your soul has finally opened up to the music, a symphony of Mozart brings tears of joy to your eyes. Thus you will find yourself drifting in the starlit infinite ocean like the blue seaweed. Won't you?...

That put in current language: «To have one's head in the clouds».

However, I did not envisage at all learning to cook, which, in my mind nowadays, has been improper: to each his role! Heaven had just sent me the cook. Therefore I was expecting

my love to prepare tasty dishes; surely, because of her diets she could hardly taste them, but I would tenderly praise them, and even in public. Hold on! As regards this, a childhood memory has come back to me.

My grandfather was angry at my kind grandmother and, out of the window, he threw her evening meal into the mud of the yard: a bowlful of soup. Bread soaked into a lard stock served with garden vegetables: it was this same peasant soup which he used to eat twice a day; but, that evening, according to what he was saying was certainly an exaggeration, it was revolting. Well, that would not take place in my house.

That my loved cooked for me seemed as natural as breathing and, besides, Jeanne showed a lot of enthusiasm at this idea. Hold on! She even knew how to make my mouth water when describing her specialities, certainly delicious, but whose name I have forgotten, even though its mere mention makes my mouth water. Whereas I did not ask her for anything, she had promised to treat me to that dish which had to be doubly delicious, because prepared with love and on wood fire.

I hope to have the opportunity one day to taste it.

She shared all my tastes, approved all my plans. I loved her more and more until the moment when she told me: «But so, I'll have him always breathing down my neck!» I don't know why, despite all my love, that perspective gave me fits of anguish. I told Jeanne about it, and it made her laugh.

« - Locked up for life, the two of us alone, in a bubble, warming ourselves by the fire of our love? But soon there would be no more fire to burn!

- Closely knit one to the other like Siamese twins? No, love must not be a disability.

- Oh! What horror!... Tell me, George dear, you will never be far away from me will you?... that I can call you if I need you.

- I will do anything possible, Jeanne dear.

- Tell me, George, you will not take advantage to go and chase girls, hey? You promise me that, George? Besides, if one of those silly geese tries to pick on my man, I will skin her!...

- Then I shall have to bring you oranges in prison, my dear...»

Petanque ranked first among the activities which I wanted to practise without Jeanne. At the time, that game was part of a series of leisure activities where the presence of a woman was inconvenient: the bar, the sports events, the tierce well sprayed, hunting and fishing... A «good» woman wasn't supposed to drag in male company, and then she had quite enough to do at home. Therefore, from time to time, I would go for a game of petanque with friends as keen as I am. I would not fail to report to Jeanne honestly, the good throws which I would have succeeded or missed, as a marksman, as a checker or as a strategist: she would know how to appreciate.

I also contemplated going fishing. Like the intrepid hunter of the prehistoric time, I would brave the dangers of wild nature while, in the warm hut, my staunch companion would watch over our little ones. And I would bring home triumphantly a basketful of wriggling fish and throw it at her feet. – On second thoughts, it seemed to me I had better not throw it. And I would be happy therefore to just put it down. - and while my Jeanne would be busy gutting, washing, cooking the product of my fishing, our laboriously earned food, I would be gladdening her heart with the exploits worthy of Ulysses, letting her know how I, «Sly Fox», thanks to an intimate knowledge of nature combined with a lot of slyness, I could have succeeded in bringing back big catches. And there once again, she would know how to appreciate it. Certainly she would not wear a collier of the teeth of my most beautiful pike, but she would at least recognise in me a fine fisherman and a friend of nature.

I also wanted to reserve a lot of time for my intellectual research as well as, every now and then, hours on end to walk cogitating reciprocally. You cannot have forgotten that I had made it my mission to do the world all over again?

While I would be occupied with my personal activities, Jeanne would be able to devote herself to hers. In the first place she would take care of her body and of her beauty, and I approved of it unconditionally. She would like this attend various places: the gym, the swimming pool, the hairdresser and the beauty salons, boutiques and shops.... I discovered that that daily artistic creation is time-consuming and requires a lot of money: it is the price to pay for the evening star to go on shining and I accepted it with all my heart, on condition that she did not encroach on the time devoted to priority activities.

As for the rest, except, of course, for the occasional visit to a painting exhibition, Jeanne did not have other personal passions to satisfy. While I would be away, she would be watching over the brood and preparing a welcoming nest for my return.

At the holiday camp, remember, she was the administrator and I the driver. We spent a lot of time together, in the delivery van, on the mountain roads. Did the grand scenery inspire us? It seems so. We talked a lot, making our existences flow one towards the other like two streams.

It is like this that some of the fields where our common tastes lay, were explored: the trips, the cinema, reading, music, lectures, life sciences, gardening.... We did not risk boring each other! Ah yes, even gardening! If she did not like ruining her beautiful hands by working the land, at least she would appreciate the pretty flowers that I would be growing, and she would be delighted to peel the vegetables of the garden.

I told her about my family, my friends and she did the same: there still, our understanding was perfect. Our two existences fitted exactly, like two parts of a torn portrait. It is impossible: I should have known better and be suspicious. What do you think?... I was literally ravished.

Yes. This is exactly how, from the top of my twenty five immature years, I was living Love. And now when the excess of maturity drags me to the grave, our love is no longer the awakening from a dream. Alas, time and again it had been threatened, scratched, brutally hurt, but it is still alive, standing firmly on its roots like a garden which one revived on the rubble of a battle field. There is a tomb in this garden. The price of our mistakes is heavy: we shall never finish paying it.

You know one must not go waging war without a good preparation: ah well, the same goes for love, especially when one must have children.

During those long breaks of those summer days we used to love climbing up to some high mountain pasture, on the edge of a forest, along a small mountain torrent where it formed a sparkling cascade. Here I took an icy shower that irritated all my muscles and compelled me to run a little on the slope: thus I satisfied the desire which overcame me and my boundless

energy. Calmed down, in great shape, I had just stretched out in the sun, in the thick grass of the pasture, close to the marvellous peak of the flesh.

I learned from her pretty mouth from where only pearls and kisses could come out – Not lies in any case! – I learned that which I had been doubting a little but which nobody, besides my mother, went in to the trouble of telling me. I can well repeat it here where false modesty is out of place: I am very intelligent!

That is not evident and only a subtle mind can notice it. In fact, before speaking, I look for a long time for my words, so long that my interlocutors, run out of patience, express themselves instead of me or change the subject. You have understood that one rarely lets me speak. Under that deceitful guise, Jeanne had immediately been able to perceive my immense intellectual qualities and told me so straight forward, taking spontaneously in our couple the place which I judged as naturally hers: she would ask for my advice as if I were a benevolent teacher and she would wisely put into practice my enlightened opinion. Ah! A sly minx. She had known how to discover the best in myself. How I loved her!

At the touch of her tender skin, I felt warm waves of happiness which radiated all over my body. Some parts were more sensitive than others. She told me that she felt the same thing and I asked her:

« - Does an electric heater have the same feeling when the current is switched on?
- To know it, it is necessary to teach it to speak.» she answered smilingly.

Ah but! What a wonder? What have I done to deserve this?

She revealed yet another thing, this time, I ignored completely. Ah yes: I am brave. I could hardly believe it. There still, it is not evident. It is a quality that one shows in the face of danger. I was not even convinced that she was right: so much worse, I accepted the compliment wishing never to be put to the test or, at least, not in the presence of my queen. Alas! It is a dog's life! I was going to be given notice to honour uncovered cheques.

One evening at the holiday centre, one of our guests had broken a leg and it was necessary to call an ambulance. The telephone box, amidst the chalets of the peasants, was watched over by two sheep dogs who were growling and baring their frightening teeth. If I had been alone I would have jumped at the steering wheel of the van to go down as far as the valley along the winding road which you are already familiar with; there, in the big village of Bellua, I could have phoned in complete safety.

But «She» was there.

So, I took a deep breath and took a step towards the threatening fate. I put on a determined air which, however, revealed itself to be a little stumbling and I compelled my mind to concentrate on that blasted telephone conversation. I refrained from talking: for if the semi-darkness concealed my trembling, she could not muffle my quavering voice. And «She» was there! «She» would draw near, «She» would have discovered everything! A stumbling walk, trembling hands and a quivering voice: my count had been correct! «Farewell, my beautiful one! And you, pathetic! Go and join that herd of creeps!»

Had that been a miracle, that evening, to help the scoundrel I was? In any case, it is certain that, like the lions of Daniel, the two Cerberuses that had appointed themselves guardians in the telephone box of Montchauvin lay at my feet. And the great adventure continued. I still tremble about it.

So do I say: « Thanks my God? Perhaps.... led by an old habit. Maurice, one of my favourite uncles likes to quote. «A smile from you and I can do the impossible!....» Rather, I should have said: «Thanks, love, you who makes us perform astonishing feats.»

With the same insight Jeanne discovered again that I was a born artist, that my taste was most reliable, and that I possessed many other treasures that I was not aware of: gentleness, patience, endurance, generosity, tenacity,... All delivered in bulk because we do not have the time to do a complete and detailed inventory.

But how could I stomach such a cramming of compliments? And in raptures, too! You find me stinking of pretensions: ah well no, rest assured. I knew well that I had not acquired in my short experience of a young man, all the qualities Jeanne attributed to me. But I

believed, and I believe even more firmly, that man has superior possibilities to what one commonly admits. I was far from having embellished those talents to embellish our existence: but, to get there, couldn't I see life ahead of me and the strength which Jeanne's encouragement would give me?

In my exciting plans, I had neglected at least an important factor: time, the short time of which we dispose. But, aren't you there to continue your conquests?

My immense knowledge grafted on a great intelligence, my methodical, rigorous and open mind, my moral sense enhanced by generosity, my energy and my strong will: these treasures of my personality made of me only a guide. I would be revered as well as a beloved leader. We shall discuss everything, of course, but the decision would always be up to me as well, as control of its execution. I found this constitution of our future family empire very wise indeed. But yes! it was still like this at that time!

However, I had studied at the Teacher's Training College and practised Marxism: those two schools held as natural the equality of man and woman, but it is necessary to believe that I had not understood everything. perhaps I have already said to you, at the Teacher's Training College, in the final year, I had studied in a mixed class, which was then an exception. Competing with girls, I could notice that they were as intelligent as boys. I still recall the conversation that seemed to me scholarly and being all enriched in imagination, in poetry and humour. The world which took scope beneath a new day was rich in promises. These conversations are delightful moments.

In spite of everything, like most men up till then, I believed that a woman should never «wear pants». I was convinced that despite their intelligence, the girls had a capricious character, certainly charming, but that barred them the access to high responsibility. Therefore Jeanne would be the wise wife I have been waiting for. Although untidy, absent minded, impulsive, often clumsy, she committed herself whole-heartedly not to let down her beloved husband: my sensible advises together with the strength of our love must bring this too human a part of her being to become worthy of me.

«And I saw that that was good.» (These words, in the Bible, are attributed to God when he contemplates the fruits of his creation.)

Yes, you are right to laugh.

Besides, Jeanne did not take long to give me the proof of her good will. I had an old Deudeuch which reached 85 km/h on that stretch, and even 90 or 95 with a back strong wind blowing in the sails. I was proud and I was keen on it., I had had the intention of turning it into a pick-up car luckily, because I did not have the means to treat myself to another – and I was well convinced that the beauties who did not know how to appreciate it would be immediately discarded.

I used to find that her swaying sometimes surprising were a game in full harmony with the beautiful curves of our planet, surges of tenderness towards the landscape of some sort. Likewise, her figure of a peasant without pretensions who goes to the market and her modest behaviour were well designed, in my opinion, not to offend nature. As to her nonchalance, it allowed me all the leisure to observe the landscape without being hindered by the effort to pedal imposed by my preceding vehicle or the extreme attention which the racing cars of today demand.

The Deudeuch took us out for a ride on holidays. But why on earth did I want to persuade myself and convince my beauty that it was the best car of the world? Why did I go so far as to want to ride it up the mountains?

Here we are: having gone down a jeep path into the pastures, a really very straight path, we had flaunted our love in the mountain. The sun, the sharp air, and the tenderness of nature had done her good: it had continued blooming. It was time to go back. Deudeuch, in spite of all her courage, couldn't go back up the slope. Thanks to Jeanne, I didn't have any complexes. The car was an automatic clutch model: the engine running I went into the first gear, put on the hand brake, and I told Jeanne to sit at the wheel while I pushed behind. She did not know how to drive, but I could carry out a few simple gestures which I showed her: accelerate all the way, release the hand brake, hold the wheel.

The operation began well and I believed that it was going to succeed: Jeanne accelerated thoroughly, I pushed with all my strength, and the car advanced metre by metre, slowly up the hill. It is then that my love had an inspiration! It is necessary that you know it:

when she is overcome by it, she acts immediately. – She suddenly went down from the car to help me push her! Deudeuch moved back quickly knocking me over without much attention; she managed on its own a superb half-turn, then it slalomed breathtakingly in the pasture and, without hesitating any longer, resolutely headed for the invisible valley faster and faster before planting itself far from us in a majestic fir tree that nodded its head as a sign of astonishment.

Then a great silence followed.

It was at that moment, in that sunlit nature which had regained its peace, that irresistible sobs burst out watered by a torrent of tears. Some cows taken aback came to see, then having given up understanding, went on grazing, an occupation whose importance left no doubt.

Now that I understand how much I was lured, stricken, picked up, tied and dragged by my Love in her lair, I know that those sobs were not part of a stratagem: they were true!

Jeanne doubled up in the grass, careless of her beauty. Through the sobs, the tears and the stray hairs which fell on her mouth, she belched out noisily a stream of words which I listened to piously, like a priest of Delphi listening to Pythia. Here is an approximately faithful translation: « It is always the same. I mess up whatever I undertake to do, George! I will never have children. I will kill them, clumsy as I am! Oh I want to die! No. don't touch me. You do not know anything. Leave me. I want to die....»

Oh dear! Jeanne's distress was too strong to penetrate my thick skinned vanity. I who believed myself capable of controlling everything thanks to my enlightened mind, there I did not understand anything of that apparently serious crises. I was distraught...

Now, I think I know what scared Jeanne to such an extent. But the moment has not yet come, I shall explain it later on.

So, my beloved one was overcome by a crisis of self-confidence, and as she did not want to leave it up to anyone, not even myself, to manage her own affairs, it was a tragedy. All the more so since, in order to carry out certain sinister plans cleverly concealed in her

disguise of a submissive woman, she must have the qualities of a leader. Fortunately, with her, if the tragedies are severe, they never last long: they are swept away by anger like wrecks by the raging waves of a tempest. This is her natural defence to pull herself out from the dizziness of anxiety.

Is the anger in a character hereditary?

Ah yes, whatever the demon to fight against, Jeanne received in her biological heritage, a double edged weapon to defend herself. On one hand it is a quality, on the other hand it is a fault which Mômmanh pours into each one of us, but in variable doses. It is an extraordinary resource to face up discouraging situations.

Ah yes, you have guessed it, it is anger which gives us a tenfold strength but risks being dangerous.

Jeanne has had to receive a big ladleful of this irascible elixir and pass again in front of the water to have a second helping of it.

But at that time, I ignored all that. As for Jeanne, she knew that the time of anger had not yet come. Her «Man» was not sufficiently hooked for her to risk losing him by frightening him.

What did she do that day to contain her anger? I don't know anything, but in any case she managed. Later on, I would regard this event as evidence of her aptitude to control herself in case of necessity, which would be of use to us several times.

I believe she channelled that suppressed anger simply towards an increase of tears which I had the pleasure to wipe away, all the while shamelessly displaying hypocrite compassion. My beloved had her shortcomings («so much the better!») but firmly guided by her adored master, she would from now on succeed in her life.

Willingly, Jeanne promised me that from now on, rather than yield to an impulse like the one which had just killed Deudeuch, she would follow to the letter my instructions. She could not forgive herself for having acted like a child. She even promised to offer us a new car, more beautiful, so as to be forgiven. On one hand, I refused her offer, on the other hand that the broken one could have been for us the ideal car, and that above all I did not want one which was «more beautiful». She agreed.

Ah! The happy times when she always agreed!

Deudeuch had perished on the altar of our love: I accepted willingly the sacrifice. When Jeanne's beauty emerged from the mess and started to shine, we went down hand in hand towards the wreck, towards the big fir which had found again its serenity.

Deudeuch had hugged tightly the trunk, its front wheels apart, its bonnet blown off, its cloth torn; broken down as far as the intact steering wheel, she embraced without modesty that majestic tranquil father. The scrap iron warm from the mechanical effort which we had asked of her was still vibrating, doubtlessly excited after that crazy escapade, or else terrified after our cowardly desertion.

We spent a lot of time looking for the little belongings which were hidden in the wood, beneath the pine needles. We found some chanterelles, but these did not make up for the loss of a pair of glasses, a bunch of keys, and a camera and other trinkets. Then, without any regrets, we simply abandoned the shell of the Deudeuch, dumped in its private cemetery, from now on doomed to nourish the great firs while decomposing a mixture of oil, of plastic, of broken glass and other varying food, whether that modern alimentation was to their liking or not.

Damaging the landscape and environmental pollution? These ideas did not occur to our minds, and yet we were not irresponsible. The harnessing of dragons without a coachman that is the world open market has not been yet launched in full gallop. It was gathering speed. It was not poisoning the atmosphere with its burning sulphurous breath; it was not tearing the earth with its claws yet; it wasn't defecating its mountains of poisonous waste over the children of Mômmanh, guests of the living earth. No, it contented itself with bringing us

presents which we accepted without worrying our minds. Our tiny wreck lost in the wild immensity which the Alps were at the time seemed to us to be no more than a fly's dropping on the palace of Versailles.

Deudeuch was dead: long live Deudeuch! We decided to pool our resources and buy another one, second hand, of course. Jeanne had difficulty to make her contribution. My love managed her budget in a funny way: while I counted my savings she counted her debts. I wanted to play the part of the grand prince, but she was keen to pay her part in full. In order to do this, she borrowed once more from her good grandmother.

The new Deudeuch was well on the way to being spoiled but like the majority of the French at that time we were not rich. Irrespective of the fact that it was scrawny, that didn't prevent us from taking walks in the mountain, sometimes on the French side, sometimes on the Swiss side, and even on the Italian slopes. With the exception of people, everything spoke the same language, even the cows. We had to lose the Deudeuch at Geneva, having out of negligence both of us forgotten to notice the name of the street where we had parked it: it took us three hours of searching, on foot of course, before we finally found it. Fortunately, it was in the middle of summer and there was no snow to camouflage it.

It is true that we had otherwise important and exciting occupations. There was no end to the exploration of the extent of our love. Thanks to Jeanne's clever lies and to my naïve inexperience, it kept growing stronger and assumed an insolent vigour: we felt a certain pity for the poor ordinary humans, pitiful disabled who had remained on earth.

Certainly I found it marvellous, but absolutely normal that such a love should light up my life. I had prepared it, looked for it, waited for it. No, I was not at all afraid of melting in that fire. In the contact with nature and men, along the routes and mountain paths, along the edge of the torrents, at the foot of glaciers, in boutiques and even when clearing customs, at leisure as well as at work. «SHE» was there! After each new and welcome little secret, I could even touch her, kiss her, feel our bodies enter into ecstatic communion. With rapture, we could go on for ever revealing ourselves to each other. That was good: each piece added to the understanding of each other was a note in the divine symphony which was being composed.

« This does not exist! » you are telling me? But yes! I am not exaggerating.

With our two beings, with our two faces mirrored in each other, we formed a new invulnerable creature, delighted to have been born, delighted to be living and shouting it from the rooftops. There are always strangers moved by the happiness of the young lovers who would bless them by a benign smile: that did not fail. They were good people, those who were gladdened by the joy of others. Hail to them.

How could I guess that that new double faced creature into which I had melted concealed, beneath skilful make-up, incompatibilities, unbearable malformations that later on would cause a lot of suffering. I can see now that Jeanne was right: it was worthwhile that I ignore them, before being bound by passion, I would perhaps have run away and would have had no story to tell you. Ah yes! if that story is not really exemplary, I believe that it could be useful to you.

When, so bouncing across the Alps the tender jerks of our peaceful Deudeuch, our motor donkey, we had finished the inventory of our agreements, since surely there were no discords, when we arrived at the frontiers of that exciting exploration and we had penetrated as far as the sources of the soul the certainty that we were made for each other, when we had understood that love had made us grow and that it would always rescue us from the mire towards the celestial gardens, so naturally our bodies looked out for each other to initial the contract.

It was much better than at the notary....

Besides you had already made love.», you might say. It is true, but up till then, we had been trying to establish an agreement. This time, it was a matter of nuptials.

Difference between love and sexuality

When a couple of lovers have carefully matched their bodies and their souls, when they imprint in their flesh the fusion of their existences, Mômmanh gives them the present of love: an unheard of pleasure. «Yes, I have

already said it to you, but believe me, it is worth stressing it.»

Between having it off and that pleasure, there is the same difference as relieving one's bladder and discovering America.

And yet, if she had achieved its ends, the Christian education of my childhood would have prevented me from enjoying this gift fully. I don't know for which reason the Church considered the act of love as filth capable of sending us burning in hell. She did not have a word to refer to it, except when she wanted to spit its disgust on that unspeakable act: « lust, fornication, sin of the flesh » were still common words. Since the Church had not found another means of conceiving children and as it had to follow the instruction « Increase and multiply », the odious act became a duty within the framework of marriage, but only in that framework, and surely when one wanted to give life.

Since the priests had covered with despicable dirt the taboo act and since a powerful instinct, far more ancient than « Our Holy Mother the Church », called them to « sin », the peasants of my village had grown to love the « dirtiness » : at threshing feasts or at wedding parties, the salacious stories those which now you call « dirty jokes » and which go with the dessert were quite frequently repulsive, yet everyone revelled in them, even the women. As for the children, they organised themselves to translate clearly the filth.

The poets had started to wash this stain off my soul. Jeanne finished the cleaning. She managed to teach me that the act of love is beautiful, that it must be beautiful, that it couldn't be love when it's filthy.

Therefore you who are looking for a big love, remember: the « big bang» is only granted to true lovers.

If you want, go over a childhood memory: in the family car, you have slipped in the driver's seat. You stretch your too short legs in vain and your head too low: your legs can hardly brush against the pedals and if your look can see a patch of sky over the dashboard. Turning the wheel, handling the gear roughly, you reproduce with skill dad's (or mum's)

gesture. You do « Vroum! Vroumm!...» and « Tuutt! Tuutt », you insult a stranger who does not know that the road belongs to you, you talk to your passenger: « - 85 average on a national most winding road: not bad, no?... – Not so fast, my dear, look at the sunset on the blue mountains. Aaah! Watch out!...» So proceed your imaginary journey and you are in a hurry to be big enough to drive « for real ».

Ah well, you would find a similar experience if you try to make love without love, except that you will be ashamed as you are no longer a child. As for the moaning of pleasure, one must content himself with the sound effects.

It is because we have often been deprived of fireworks, when we were torn apart by conflicting ideas. In that case, each time we tried to cheat the Apple of the Garden of Eden, our distress socket takes off; our bodies were only cold and clammy flesh, matter without soul, rather revolting.

Contrarily, it happened that a quarrel which appeared real was only purely formal: in that case the miracle took place and we knew like this that our love was in good health.

The best moment took place in the middle of nature, in a beautiful summer in our mountains, on a grass carpet with small vivid flowers. Mômmanh had sent her witnesses over: the big trees, the birds, the animals hidden, the flowers, the cascading stream whose diamonds launched flowers of sparks, as well as the snowy tops of the Alps from where it seemed to us that a kindly eye was observing us.