30.03.17 12.06, Athens

"Each failure is a masterpiece."
]]]]]]]
I am not so sure.
]]]]]]]
"We meet here, in the oldest of all parliaments, because we know that democracy, and the values it entails, will always prevail."
]]]]]]]
I am not so sure.

[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

Cally: So! Baboons.

Dr Feldstone: You have a baboon troop. There's the alpha males. Everybody's there. Two of these two guys start facing off. Immediately everyone in the troop, including the alpha male, gets anxious. The cortisol levels in their bloodstreams goes up. It's a stress hormone that's released. They're nervous. These two guys face off. They go through the whole ritual. Finally one wins; the other loses. The loser turns around and presents his rump. This is the standard thing for baboons. The winner grabs him, mounts him, and maybe even humps him a bit, but it's not sex. This is domination. He may nip him a little bit. It doesn't hurt him. That's it. Now he knows he's in charge. And the other one knows he's not in charge. If they ever run across together the same food, he gets first shot at it and so on. Everybody in the troop calms down. That's the way it normally works. It's a pretty sensible thing to evolve, because a baboon is a really ferocious, large animal. If two of them actually fight, they'll kill each other. One will kill the other, and the other one will eventually be wounded enough that he won't survive. Well, baboons who did that aren't with us anymore. They're gone.

Every once in a while you'll get a defective baboon – a baboon who doesn't give up . He loses one day. Then the next day he starts up again. It's like he's not playing by the rules. When that happens in a baboon troupe, the alpha males will come down and kick him out. They won't kill him. They'll just kick him out of the troupe. Because he's messing up the system. Making everyone too nervous. Of course, if you're a baboon living in Kenya someplace and you're kicked out of the troupe, that's it. You're dead. Some predator will get you. Lions will not come in and attack a baboon troupe, but they'll certainly be happy to eat a stray baboon. Anyway, the theory is that depression is a feeling state that we get into which is a way of telling ourselves, hey, Cally, you're doing something wrong. You're in trouble. You're in trouble because you're not fitting in.

[End of recorded material 02:35:48]

United in stomach flu, London weeps.

(ASSORTED PREFACES)

1.
Dear Kevin Spacey,

Telling stories takes time. Immediately there is nothing good to say. Something affirmative needed constructing. Building is not fast. Mental laziness is surprisingly rash. We are sick from low rates of construction over here in fact, maybe you know. I gather you lived in Elephant and Castle?

The Pacific trade deal is cancelled.

Yours,

2.
Dear Kev,

A frustrated subject sits in the digital age, losing sovereignty, lowering attentions, raising faculties, accelerating!
His knowledge is paranoid, complex experience turns to information.
Etc.

~~Whilst The Winning Candidate lied and tweeted over the codes of decency, On Air India 723 Transatlantic to NYC, I watch Avatar. With weak headphones, dialogue is obscured as bulldozers mow down the blue Na'vi's entire inter-connective hometown. All is torched. Leading lady inconsolable. Packed tightly into middle-of-the-middle, 31E, nonchalance is not easy. Can't even toss my head! Affixed to the small screen, wondering: would I cry, as hard as she cries, for London. No, I think. Without a flutter of tear ducts, without pulse of sadness,~~ let it burn, James Cameron, let it burn.

~~Back on land my Grandma talks about garden fences and Jews, rhythm thick with Italian, seventy years since landing in Surrey. We eat her ravioli. On Channel 5, the President shifts from Elect to @POTUS; hand on bible, held by his wife. She is pretty pissed off. The eye of my laptop camera, covered with an orange post-it-note, probably does not watch. That dark orifice, that nasty hole,~~ spying on Granny's kitchen.

Compositions take their time, carry thought, keep us going. That interconnected network, *at all costs*, must be saved.

Kevin, I want to talk about ~~retribution~~.

~~And~~ House of Cards. Season 4 - WOW!

Yours,

3.
Dear Kev,

A hysterical DIY voice. Ah. Sigh. ~~Whilst ruptured narrative and text fragments recorded my mood, they equally fast-tracked a country to crazy. He stole my first-wave hysterical first-person! So I'm turning to toil, keeping idle hands busy. I mean, whilst I push this stuff around, there's no time for anything.~~ Not even a glass of water.

~~Language is construction. A knot of complimentary possibilities, or less complimentary. We see. I can no longer speak of this world in the same formal terms used to speak of an orderly cosmos I mean, Jeeez!~~ This is NUTS!

The Oracle is exhausted.
She looks into the sky. "I *told* you."

~~It's 1660-something, and the self-governing self-crafting subject arrives, centre stage. Today, keeping the subject managed means that, almost at every moment, everywhere, it is necessary to CUT A DEAL.~~ Yah yah yah. I want to build something great! ~~Whilst my skeleton thins a little more, jaw gets crooked from over-excitement in the age of endless movement without changing position, unity is classified 'as endangered as blue fin tuna'.~~

~~As you know I have been watching a pregnant celebrity, who is owned by the public, because they voted for her on *Pop Stars The Rivals*.~~ 090 11 980/ 702 gives citizens an art practice. 'Babe', we drawl, 'where u hiding? Show me ur bump!! I *CREATED* YOU'. ~~"Democracy needs you." He told an estimated audience of 18,000. "Not just when there's an election, not just when your own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime. If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the internet, try to talk with one in real life. If something needs fixing, lace up your shoes and do some organising. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office yourself. Show up. Dive in. Persevere. Sometimes you'll win. Sometimes you'll lose … More often than not your faith in America – and in Americans – will be confirmed."~~

Let's have a baby!

No, wait.

~~Let's grab a clipboard.~~

Love,

4.
Dear,

I miss you. I saw you on your instagram feed with your pink sign. I promised you an email. I can't quite remember what I was to say, but it began with critics and the critic in the ratings/ ranking/ popularity era, aka *The Financialized Ages.biz*, and what that means for you and me.

Oh, and this:

~~If it's conceptually convenient to add to the landscape with something I feel is bad without finding stance in that then it's a poison. If I am a mirror and I respond to the mirror … Well… You know… For later…~~

~~I am a critic and I like to criticise. You're kind of endangered now. Must we go back to Kant ? It's tricky but increasingly I've noticed I've been pretty fucking negative. Being constructive, affirmative, it takes so long!… I mean… It's not what I meant. Give me a moment; maybe phone could work better…~~

Kev! I need to talk about

~~shame.~~

5.
Dear Kevin,

Weariness abounds. All else: changed.
Go away, we sigh.
Leave us with our dreams of John Berger. Our notebooks. Our tiny, careful details; time-rich counter moves.

Yours -

12
Executive orders

13
Escape chutes

scorched
earth

y-ouch!

CHAPTER XXX

This, says Dr XXXX [not verbatim], *is a human who has been financialized then MANAGED across all aspects of their life. I am afraid the cure is… well … it's incurable. You will need to be put down. Fired like a dog* . A shuts the book, hangs his head. He knew it.

CHAPTER XXX

A is in bed.
Things are average.
He cannot sleep.
As he sweats on the pillows, beside him sleeps C, her breath heavy as a yogi's.
"Shhhhhhh..."
His phone beeps an update.

Today

05:57

CNN
Send in the feds
Horrible carnage
2h ago.

17.11.16 18.15, London

[redacted]

~~PREFACE~~

VERY SHORT PREFACE

~~Dear Kevin Spacey~~

~~As you grow more professional do you feel increasingly divorced from your professional body?~~
Kevin, are you a human vessel, for other people's things?

Best wishes,

Part 3. A Sooth. A Truth
Part 4. Battling air con
Part 5. Finding empathy
Part 6. ROAD TRIP!

PREFACE

Dear (TBC)

This is not a sustainable city; it doesn't care about the future much. It can't build bones. When the apocalypse comes, the first thing to crumble, into shitty little bits, is language.

~~In London, which is where I live, when you peacefully protest, or sometimes simply exist, you may be Kettled. This is a confinement. It robs your time, and stalls your movement for up to nine hours, but after a six week break on a Med island, I found myself feeling somewhat loose! Returning home, the city punched me in the head and lumbar for five days, till I hopped back onto its hostile clock, for fear of my life!~~ Then, everything I measured. ~~Elsewhere, across the Atlantic, language plasticates, like a disaster movie.~~

~~I'm trying to arrange an archaeological dig - into the marrow of my home. It's got low density, bone-madness, gappy. Glass apartments go up, the pound goes down, we ran short on London bricks. The structure of language affects its speaker's condition, or world view. Viscera Versa too. THIS I KNOW. As usual, it's too easy to tell you, it's not easy to know where to start, but borders will close. What would it mean to organize with you, or you, or you, for, say, three thousand years? Let's think wide! This is a masterpiece! of underused forms, overused technologies, false tears and surplus - flowing in, draining out, but I am not here. I'm in London (writing my novel), sweating (a lot), financialising my future, wrapping my reproduction up with futurity while I suppose i'm saying… I suppose i'm saying I suppose i'm saying.~~ I'm hoping for the best.

Yours,

Part 7. Island life metabolism

Part 8. Magic

CHAPTER XXX 'C's demise' (2015)

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

Chapter XXX (in great spasms of confinement)

sweat

s

h

a

m

e

Chapter XXX C loses her long-term mind (2017)

C was not losing her long-term mind. She was losing her long-term memory.
"That isn't entirely different." A's editor said, when A raised the issue at work.
A had replied that it was entirely different, yet he could say why.
"Well she's your wife." Shrugged his editor. "You know better than anyone what's what."

As A saw it, the problem was twofold. C's short term recall was performing outstandingly. Insignificant contemporary events decorated her brain like stucco. Sharp and awkward, minor hostilities be that on line, on train, on foot, stayed with her for months, whereas historical memories, particularly the most joyful were mostly forgotten.
One humid day in June, C cried hot grief. She could not, she sobbed, remember who she loved enough to grieve for "soooooh....verrhhry... muuuuuuch."
Aldo had not understood.
"C." He'd said, touching her soft hair. "It will pass…"

Now she's jumping up from a chair. Slamming doors. Unmaking their bed on purpose.
He waits in the kitchen, head in hands, with plates of cooling spaghetti.

Chapter XXX

It's June, and A receives email.

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

A is delighted. He's a huge fan.

ELSEWHERE

The beach was not a beach, it was a catastrophe. In 2010, during a violent winter of rain, boulders, soil, entire trees cascaded through the valley from the mountain summit. Houses and restaurants in the onslaught's passage were blasted; knocked down, pulled into the Aegean, creating a flattened pile-up of residential and business debris along the usually beach-free shoreline polished-off with a sprinkling of mysterious bright dust. Once settled, the dust Instagrammed like Caribbean sand. Sunbathers and volley-ballers flocked from central Europe to leisure on this new exoticism. Locals, those who's tavernas had not been dragged into the sea, made great money, but six years later the beach was gone, washed away, little by little. With its decline, the new tourists trailed off too.

The catastrophe, recounted by a shop-keeper whilst A and C bought eggs, worried C. In addition to unexpected beaches, falling from the mountains, she'd count other dangers that awaited her on this quiet, undeveloped island: global warming, flooding, Turkish invasions, tanned bare legs on motorbikes, food poisoning from tap water, whole hills of cacti, where a lapse in concentration could cause her to slip, and impale on the plants. No amount of assurance from anyone, neither the locals, nor her husband, could convince her of this unlikelihood and, sure enough, she proved them all wrong.

Now C and A are back at the apartment. Mico-cacti needles are buried deep in her bruised, cut hands and face demanding 46 hours of tweezering attention. Retreated in the bathroom, she is setting to work on the damage between sobs, concentrating hard. The locals are shaking their heads. Muttering under their breath. It is unclear how the nice American lady ended up 'all the way down there', in the bushes.

On the terrace, A waits for C to finish with the tweezers. Drinks a beer. Wonders what the fuck to do with his wife.

[redacted]

[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

Cally: Feed AND Breed? No way!?!

Dr. Valli: In the body, there are different nervous systems; Sympathetic and Parasympathetic. Sympathetic would be activated in a situation of extreme stress. In doing so, this reduces all things that are, at that moment, irrelevant to fighting, or fleeing. For instance, you're not going to be digesting if you have to first run away from a wolf, or fight a crocodile. The Parasympathetic system is slower. It makes you sleepy. It starts the processes of building and repairing the body. It's those reparative process which you do when you're relaxed, and there isn't any need to do anything else. The Parasympathetic is the chilled one. Both together are like brake and accelerator of the autonomic nervous system, which regulates bodily functions. Autonomic is all the involuntary stuff that happens in your body, like sweating. Sweating just happens. While sympathetic and parasympathetic are combined to maintain an equilibrium, a homeostasis, bits of the system can be damaged. You can, for instance, have a hyper-activation of certain areas; certain glands, disorders at various different levels. Let's say a thyroid function. If it starts going wrong, say, fast, and it's putting you in a hyper-metabolic state, then you're consuming loads, you're faster, it's a state of hyper-activation. In order to feed and breed, the sympathetic nervous system must be working. The ultimate stressor is a predator, and your body still reacts in a way that is built to face a crocodile but today that might be getting a mean email, and if you get a lot of emails, that crocodile becomes a constant. If something societal or social is demanded of you, your body still functions in very animal ways: It feels the presence of a predator. If the Sympathetic system is activated our body understands that one of the things that, of course, can be spared whilst we direct energy towards tackling that predator is the energy of reproducing. It's a very demanding process reproduction, plus it's not immediately productive and useful to survival. Reproduction is expensive for your body to maintain. So your system will say: okay, let's put this function on hold; I have to fight a crocodile. Is my uterus a welcoming place for a child? Not now! Shall I build bone? Not now - build the bone later. Acceleration is a short term state but if a state in which you need to accelerate becomes chronic, your Parasympathetic system may not get a look in.

Kettling
Conversion Disorder
Invisible wolves at the door

[End of recorded material 01:22:05]

XXX

tbc.

[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

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

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

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

More marauding wolves.
Hysteria.

[End of recorded material 02:35:48]

LATER... !

"I suppose I'm saying. I suppose I'm saying. I suppose I'm saying. I suppose I'm saying. I suppose I'm saying..."
"Please!" Says the Doctor, Stedman Graham. "Would you STOP!?!"
Hands above head, stretched full length on the couch, A slams his arms down by his sides. "Arghhhhhh."
"Here." Doctor Stedman Graham hurriedly passes a tissue. "You must remember, this IS the best of all possible worlds. Having a perfect primary nature, in your case, just isn't the case. However, we can help you construct a 'second nature' and if you train properly, it will become so strong, that when the enemy attacks you will be ready. Now," he plumps A's biceps,"try again."

sweat

shame

SPACEY

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

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

So what is your favourite book?

Such as your character in *House of Cards*?

That's a good tip. Thank you.

Any other favourites?

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

... ah a one man show! You'd surely receive an Oscar. Only Tom Hanks has done that. So what do you do it for?

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

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

Are you a lonely man, Kevin?

[Start of recorded material 00:00:00]

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

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

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

Pragmatic Bengal Tigers

[End of recorded material 02:35:48]

CHAPTER XXX

(Offstage voice, annoyed) Where IS IT!?
Ah! *(Takes a moment to think)* It's complicated. Yet, close.
You're SO LATE!
(Silent)
Whatever, whatever. The Thomas Schütte show is NOW. We are waiting for you to judge Thomas Schütte, in 4000 characters, including spaces, and you are late. I gotta go and now I'm all fucking hot and ughhh. Don't fuck up. *(Ends phone call.)*
(Left armpit drips twice)

sweat

shame

shelves

"This isn't science fiction, OK?" A tells his wife. "I'm not inventing a future. I am a critic. I can tell you what I think about the shelves as they are right now, but I cannot imagine a future place where they might otherwise go, and as you have them right now is nice." He picks up his phone.
C stares at her husband, wet eyed, hand on shelf. "Be here now."
"Sure." Says A. "I'm here."

CHAPTER XXXX

You CAN'T do THAT here.

CHAPTER XXXX THREE WEEKS EARLIER (2015)
HOW THE UNIVERSE WORKS

"The. EARTH. IS. IN. DANGER."
~~A shuffles to top of the bed, and a comfier place in the pillows.~~
"Future cosmic events are going to blast, burn, or RIP US TO SHREDS."
~~A drifts into sleep.~~
"One day, life on earth will become IMPOSSIBLE!"

Season 3, Episode 8

CHAPTER XXX

C learns to Shitpost

CHAPTER XXX

A battles private demons and rush hour traffic

PREFACE

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

Part 9. Kevin. Who's your manager?