



TOMBES

Tombes
David James Grinly
2017

“Toute premier changement enfin un fragment détache et tombe.”

Samuel Beckett
Fizzles

I wrote a story about making a failed funding application to Creative Scotland (a bureaucratic bridge between the Ministry for the Disenfranchisement of Meaning, the recently weaponised Status-Quo Enforcement Panel and the Advisory Committee for Continued Cultural Wind Down) in which I had asked for money to buy Coca Cola.

I asked for money to buy one can of Coca Cola per day (at an agreed rate with the fellow in the “Mama Said” shop in Cockburn Street) for as long as it took to complete the project. The proposal was that I would drink the Coca Cola, wait, then when I needed a wee wee I’d run up the street and pish it out onto the sandstone plinth that supports the statue of Adam Smith on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. I gave away copies of the little pamphlet containing this story (and other predominantly psychosexual stories, most, but not all, containing some reference to pish or Adam Smith, I think, maybe mostly just Adam Smith, maybe all the pish came later, I don’t know and can’t remember and it doesn’t, really, matter, this story is not about pish) away for free. The cover was pink and had an Orson Welles quote on the front. It didn’t, it had an Oscar Wilde quote on the front but that doesn’t really matter either. I don’t really remember names. Or dates. Or numbers. But that also doesn’t matter.

So I didn’t get the money to pish away the sandstone plinth at the bottom of Adam Smith. I didn’t apply for the money, either. But it was a splendid ruse for the one or two people who actually read the pink pamphlet. Maybe they didn’t ever read it, any of them, I don’t know that either. And maybe it wasn’t a splendid ruse at all. But it was a story. Read it or not as you wish, you are probably too busy, I know I am.

Then I moved to the Canongate. Number 123 flat 6. One day at 123/6 Canongate I heard a tour guide, an American tour guide telling his gaggle of eager little googles that the house directly behind mine was once the home of the GREAT SCOTCH ECONOMIST ADAM SMITH. He was pointing to the big house, directly behind the block I live in. (I was standing on the shitter at this point, having

just pissed, to get a better view from the top unfrosted bit of the bathroom window. Maybe it is frosted? Maybe none of it is frosted? Oh, it was open, that's it, at the top, it was open, that is why I could hear him, and it seemed easier, and faster, to climb on top of the shutter than to try and struggle leaning or kneeling in the buff on the shutter and opening the bottom pane of the window, so I just leaned out of the top already-open pane, while standing on the shutter, after having pissed, in the buff.) The house, the one he was pointing at is a miserable, windowless, grey, piss-stinking, green-doored, dour faced shithole. "How odd", thought I "that such a venerable chap would live in such a shithole, it looks like my house. It can't be possible!". "Maybe he was just dead scared about the window tax?" I thought "maybe he was one of them misers who owns great giant houses with no glass in them?" "But then when was window tax?" "And when was Adam Smith?" "And did they overlap?" "And was that" the first conclusion my mind leapt to "possible?". No, it was not possible, it was not Adam Smith's house.

The Americans in the tour group "ummed" and "awwwwwed" anyway. ((My father told me a story about a Cecil B DeMille (it wasn't) film starring (...the actor, the great american one, a man, Clint Eastwood's totem animal, MANMAN, bandy legs, sorry I have to piss I can't think...){I read a story in W Magazine, no, Q Magazine? I don't know I can't remember, I am not good with letters, about the guitar player from The Smiths, Johnny Greenwood, doing a piss next to the man from WQ Magazine and saying something like "Having a piss when you really need one is like winning the fucking lottery!". I wouldn't know anything about winning the lottery, not very good with numbers, as I said—did I say that? No, dates, well, also, numbers. I don't know. I may not have a good memory for anything? Although I suppose I wouldn't need a good memory for the lottery, I would need the opposite, sort of? I don't know. Anyway, I did art, but I graduated out of that into being a curator. Although, I suppose if I really was a curator the dates and things would probably be more important to me wouldn't they? I would maybe take them more seriously? I don't know. I will maybe ask to be sacked. But, not for a while, because being a curator

makes me really appreciate going for a piss, too. Because it helps me remember things, like John Wayne Gacy's name. It doesn't help with the numbers, remembering or predicting, unfortunately. I wonder if Johnny Marr won the lottery? I don't think he did, you would have heard more about it, he would have had to give it all away to charity, of course. Degrading isn't it, to be a celebrity lottery winner, I suppose? Is it? I don't know, I suppose he doesn't play the lotto, doesn't need to. But the man appreciates a good piss. Appreciated? Is he dead? Don't know. He liked pissing anyway. So he was alright with me. Is. Well, sort of alright, piss wise.} John Wayne. John Wayne was in this film my dad liked. Or, no, he didn't like, I don't know, it was about Jesus so probably not. Dad was never a great fan of Jesus. So maybe he didn't like Jesus but did like the film? I don't know. I am not very good with fathers. My father, perhaps like Johnny Marr, is dead. Like John Wayne. In death, or rather, in that they are dead my father and John Wayne are similar, so perhaps neither of them are like Johnny Marr? Or Greenwood? What? I have no idea how my father felt about the relative pleasure of pissing compared to lottery wins. Although I do know that he did piss and didn't win the lottery. Also, Jesus is definitely dead. So my father is more like Jesus than maybe Johnny Marr. Thank Christ. Cecil B DeMille is dead, I assume that Cecil B DeMille is dead? I don't really know what he was like. I assume not like my father. I never saw the film so I can't be sure. Maybe more like Johnny Greenwood, money wise, and lack of desire to play the lottery wise. Everyone pisses though don't they? And only certain people play the lottery. But even people who play the lottery and then win the lottery, piss. I wonder if they still enjoy it in the same way? And Cassius? Was it Cassius? I don't even remember his name, maybe it wasn't mentioned. I mean Cassius the man, not the band. They definitely piss and are definitely real and at least were once definitely called Cassius and seem unlikely to be dead. But the man in the bible, or not in the bible, he may or may not have been called Cassius and then may or may not, therefore, have pissed? But he did stick the spear in Christ, in the story, if that is his name. And then, after he did it, he realised the error of his Roman spearing ways and repented and converted. Or maybe he was the vinegar on the reed one? Or the clothes renting one? Rending. Like, tearing, not renting,

not Radio Rentals. Not like radio rentals. Rent. Not rented. Renting? Is that the right word then? Renter? Clothes renter? Nope. Not good with words either, sorry. Sorry. Well, anyway, whoever it was, Cassius or whoever whatever, it was John Wayne (I think) that converted. In the film, at least, he converted. Or, at least, saw the error of his ways. Or, rather, saw the not-error of Jesus Christ's ways. They are all dead anyway so I can't ask them. I couldn't have called them anyway, they were likely ex-directory I suppose, most celebrities are aren't they? Otherwise all sorts of boring idiots would call them asking all sorts of boring questions. And they probably all died before email? Well, Cecil and John did, John Wayne, and John Wayne Gacy, I think. I don't know. I could go on the internet or I could ask the American Tour Guide? He is unlikely to be dead. Looked about fifty, pale straw coloured hair, beige jersey, chino coloured chinos and dark brown leather shoes. And a bum bag (that is made up, make up the colour yourself, to suit). But it would be hard to trace him, and, even if I did trace him he might not want to talk to me. Just out of basic fear of the other, or because I suppose I would have to tell him why I was making this story in the first place? Why I was writing it. And if I did tell him, why I was writing it, and had to admit in the midst of this that he was wrong about Adam Smith's house, he might, in a paroxysm of embarrassment, die of a stress induced heart attack? They are linked, they say, your body and your mind, even though they also say that your heart has nothing to do with your feelings. But they also say an army fights on its belly or something? But that's a whole army? But maybe, instead of love, like we all thought was in the love heart it was shame? Maybe shame, and embarrassment, and guilt—at having told all those people a lie, those who had paid him and trusted him? Maybe having taught them a wrong fact he would have had a heart (seat of guilt and shame) attack? And, or rather, or, maybe he would have met his wife on that very tour, and maybe after a few months of whirlwind piss sex they got married? And (or Or) when I found him and told him, and her, inseparable as they are now, that he was wrong, he would have died of a heart (guilt and shame)(exacerbated also by love heart) attack? I don't know. Anatomy was never my strong suite. Suit. Soot. Cheroot. I don't know. He may also have merely committed suicide. It's painless, they say. But the body

is very much linked to the mind, they also also say, one assumes in very much the opposite direction, of travel, gravitationally speaking, or not. So maybe telling his mind a thing would make his body do a thing? Both, if they are linked? Maybe it goes both ways. Maybe he would stab himself in the heart? Either way you are dead. Or rather, he would be dead. If, that is, I could find him, and if he then died. And if he then died she would surely die also? His wife. New wife. Met on the tour wife? Of shock, probably. They say the environment is related to the body and the mind. That your environment has an impact on your body and your mind. Dust and things. And the other environment, the bigger one, the CO₂ emissions, and the hole in the ozone layer. And bovine spongiform encephalopathy, although that was never airborne, I don't think, you had to eat a burger, from Wimpy. Which in Stirling was part of the environment, in the broadest sense of the term. Or narrowest. Shallowest. Broadest. Deepest. Or, another burger place. But in the Stirling broadest shallowest deepest environmental sense it was Wimpy that we were therefore banned from going to because of bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Creutzfeldt Jacobs Disease. CJD. CBD. Cecil B DeMille. CBD did not die of CJD. CBD ≠ CJD. I don't think. I am not very good with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. But she would die of shock, probably, the wife, maybe. Or of a broken heart like Maria Callas. And, then, what if he wasn't only a tour guide and she wasn't only his wife but they were the king and queen of a newly established but rapidly growing cult founded on the basic beliefs of Adam Smith in the Wealth of Nations. Or indeed the other one, about Morals, which I haven't read either. Maybe then the whole fucking lot of them would die of shock? Or suicide, cults love a suicide in America don't they? Or, maybe, of CJD. Maybe all the love of Adam Smith, or the special rituals to Adam Smith, like my own ritual that I wanted to do involving Coca Cola, for them involved McDonald's burgers? Or another type of burger (but probably McDonald's). And that those burgers contained CJD in a freak and totally unpredictable recurrence? Or, maybe they found and stole and poured into a particular local (to them) branch of McDonald's a particularly nasty strain of CJD and that it had been sitting more or less dormant in their brains until they heard of the untimely shock-heart-attack-love-shame-guilt-

death of the guide/king and his wife/queen and that this shock would then in turn activate the new strain, weaponised, maybe, CJD that they had all ingested. The other folk who had ingested it at McDonald's would probably all be ok though because the police (CSI Miami) would come and do a test and find the CJD and then trace it back to the branch of McDonald's and shut it the shit right down right shitting away and then find all the people on the CCTV camera who had eaten a CJD Adam Smith Burger and take them straight to a quarantine place in case anyone ate them, the CJD people, and then, because it was a special only-reactive-to-shock strain they would do really calming things to them forever until they could find a cure. Such as Enya CDs. Like in Guantanamo bay, but at a much much lower volume so that it was calming and not soul destroying and mind altering. Or, maybe, if they could find the right volume they could CURE the CJD with the Enya CD at exactly precisely specifically the right volume, like the Throb N Gristle song that makes you shit yourself, the special job-by frequency? A messy few days trial would happen, and they would have to do it on one person at a time really in case it went the wrong way but it would be worth a try I think? They say that music can have a very big impact on the mind and stress and things. Like whale music, they always play that don't they, when you are supposed to be relaxing and "feeling at one with your body". Anyway maybe none of that would happen. Maybe the fad for mass suicides is over. The last one I heard about was only on television and even then I think it was a film on television. A movie, as the now thankfully safe Americans would have called it. A movie about a mass suicide. No, maybe not, maybe it just had a mass suicide reported in it, I wouldn't have watched a whole film about it I don't think? I don't know. I don't think it was on television anyway, I haven't seen a television switched on and being a television recently. Televisions died. They died to me anyway, they are dead to me. You are dead to me. I am dead to me. No no, but maybe that was the name of the film? Was it? The one I saw with the suicide in it? The mass one. I think I saw it twice, I remember hearing the words "Mass Suicide" twice. Maybe it was an episode of CSI Miami? Well, anyway, I saw it twice so it wasn't news. I only saw the Jesus film once. Oh, no no, none times I saw it. The Americans love a nonce don't

they? Oh, no, they don't. No one loves a nonce do they? Anymore. We used to really love a nonce though. But anyway I saw the mass suicide film twice. No, I didn't. I watched the beginning, when it was mentioned, twice. Or, rather I started to watch it once, couldn't be bothered to finish watching it, turned it off and went to bed then couldn't sleep so got up and watched it again from the beginning but I didn't actually watch the beginning again I just HEARD it say 'Mass Suicide' again, twice. No, once, twice. No, once the second time, I heard it. The second time I only heard it, the first time I saw it and heard it, so I heard it twice but only saw it once but I didn't see it as such I just saw the screen when the screen said it, there wasn't a mass suicide picture to go with the words, so I saw it nonce but heard it twice, once while physically watching the television. I wasn't watching the computer, not television screen, the second time around. It is funny what you remember isn't it? Like the theme tune to MASH. I can always remember that. But it is funny how you remember certain things, although unrelated, really, to the story about Christ dying on the hill at Calvary. Golgotha. Calvary. Whichever it was. John Wayne was there, then, in the film, when Christ died, on the cross, there at Calvary or Golgotha. And he was converted. But not enough. So Cecil said to him "Put a bit mair welly intae it will ye Wayne?" and John Wayne said "What?" and Cecil said "More awe my boy, more awe! This man truly is the son of God for God's fucks sake!" so they reset all the cameras (autocorrect turned reset into resent haha) and then John Wayne walks up and says (he doesn't walk actually he just stands there and the camera is behind him so you can't even see if it's actually him but it really sounds just like him so even if it isn't really him they really did a really good job of totally ruining the really important bit of the film about Jesus by putting the really king of the really cowboys in it) {You can tell though in the thing, in the pretty much still, photo scene of maybe John Wayne maybe standing on maybe Calvary that he is a Roman because he is wearing a special skirt with all the pointed end bits and he is carrying a spear} "Aw, this man truly is the son of God!" ... That's it, that's the joke. John Wayne said 'Aw'. Not Awe. I mean, he wasn't, one assumes, supposed to say Awe either. He was supposed to act awe. Not act aw. Or awww-www. Or anything. I mean this was a sea change moment in the histo-

ry of the world. This was one man's message of love reaching out and touching another man. And it was one totalitarian world order realising it could hijack a new idea and keep on totalitarianising things because now it had a kind of monotheistic absolutist LOVE "truth" on which to convince dum dums to keep being dumb and believing whatever old shite that they said? (I do not wonder why Cecil was so into making the dum dums believe all this?) I mean surely however John Wayne said it it would be John Wayne enough? And, having made all the fuss about the awe and then receiving instead aw he would probably have just had to go back and use the first one anyway incase explaining to John Wayne would have caused a paroxysm of shame and therefore a heart attack? Maybe that is how John Wayne died? I don't think so though. It was important anyway, this moment of aw awe. It changed the whole west, or the whole world, or the whole of christendom, or it made it, or maybe catholicism. Or protestantism? Not yet though obvs. And muslims? Oh, no, maybe not, although maybe John or Cecil or Jesus or someone along the line did plan it that way? To have everyone in the same gang? The Awe Gang not the Aw Gang. Mostly we are in the Aw Gang though aren't we? I am, I think. I don't know. I don't know very much about politics and history and things. Everything is all so complicated now isn't it that you don't ever really know anything about anything at all. No one does. But we feel aw a lot. Awe a little. Aw lot Awe a little. Aw lot little awe. Easy mistake to make I suppose. But I do know (I don't know at all my dad just told me to make me laugh when I was little) that Cecil (also now dead) said to John (Wayne not Baptist/Revelator) "More awe" and that John heard instead "More aw" and then said "Aw...". In the film it sounds like he is not actually at Golgotha though. It sounds really fake, like they just stuck the voice on. Or in. And in. Is the sound stuck into the film? Is it on the film? The same piece of film? They do always say "SILENCE ON SET" don't they? Or is that court? Do they say "SILENCE IN COURT"? I don't know about films or court or silence. Although that isn't strictly true, I was in court once for a piss related offence, but this isn't really the time for that sort of digression, I could manage one now though I think, if I squeezed it, a piss I mean, not a digression.)) but the truth of the matter was it wasn't Adam Smith's house. It was the house

in front of Adam Smith's house. Panmure house is Adam Smith's house. Was Adam Smith's house. The pointed-at-house was not a house at all it was a block of flats like I live in, but not because I can see them, see it, you see. I didn't know this at first of course, I was still in awe that Adam Smith had lived in that very ordinary looking building. It was, is, really ordinary looking. So I went down to take pictures in the garden. The garden of not-Adam-Smith's-house consists of a large tarmac area inside a broken brick wall with a clothing line in it and a lot of weeds growing up through the tarmac. Weeds with flowers on them. So I took a lot of really shallow focus pictures of the flowers (like on Instagram when people cheat with a proper camera. DSLR. CBD-JSLRDM people) (Is tarmac sometimes called tarmacadam? I should have made a joke, then, about tarmacadamsmith?) which all of my clever and arty friends hated. The pictures were in a folder on my website called "Adam Smith's Flowers". My botanist friend Henry did not hate these pictures. Henry does not like the ghastly super coloured flowers in Tesco that look as though they might have been fed on the Monster Energy drink that my students drink one pint cans of several times a day. Although, frankly, they don't look very colourful at all having consumed the Monster Energy Juice. They look grey. Sad and grey and tired and lonely and unwell. Mostly.

Anyway, while I was taking these photographs of the weeds in not-Adam-Smith's-garden I noticed a very fancy house behind with lots of ghastly brightly coloured Edinburgh looking tesco flowers in an over-tended garden. Strange I thought, that a period house like this would be so close to where Adam Smith had lived and that he had lived in this ghastly little shithole instead. The sign in the lush and luxurious and vulgar garden said "Panmure House restoration by the University of Edinburgh School for Business—Former home of Adam Smith. " "Oh", I thought. Aw. Oh. Aw Oh.

I had actually seen the sign before this, but for the sake of that part of the narrative I waited until now. That is why I found it so funny, naked, having pissed, standing on the shitter, listening out the win-

dow, to the man telling people that it was Adam Smith's house. I liked it that he was really really close but not quite. If he had gone down the close on the other side of my house he would have seen the big sign and not made such a horse's cock out of his story, as men in Alva would have said, in the pub. He was close though. A close close, but not close enough. It was funny to think about these poor people so far from home (their home, not my home, pissing distance from my home all this was) getting told a lie. Or, rather, a misunderstanding. Like when Heidegger went to Greece to see the Golden Age for himself and then got there and realised he was several thousand years too late and then went home and was a Nazi instead.

So Adam Smith's house was the house behind the house the American Tour Guide pointed to. It is called Panmure house. The next part of the story I am not entirely sure about either but is a good story. Perhaps, like the ruse was, before, perhaps.

The Edinburgh University Business School Cowboys had started the renovation of the house all gung ho hilti nail guns blazing. Later, maybe a year or so into the not inexpensive restoration project the archeology (Indiana Jones) department at the university asked the cowboy "project managers" if they had done a full survey of the site. Obviously the cowboys had not, they wanted it smashed and turned into a centre for teaching of the theft of money as **SOON AS FUCKING POSSIBLE**. So they bashed on. Indiana Jones, however, insisted, and came along with his metal detector (small wall detector) and zapped about under the house and **LO AND BEHOLD** there was a basement level, which, being a Grade A listed building they were obliged also to renovate, not inexpensively, even more not inexpensively, even more expensively. So the cowboys lost their shit. Or, rather, had to find a great great deal more of their shitty shit to keep doing their shit renovation/restoration. Which, after a sleepy and dreamy (for me as the building noises at 8am every morning stopped briefly) hiatus started again in (although you would hope humbled and genuinely earnest, you could smell the ball-sacky smell of wounded golf player ego a mile off) all earnest.

During this new stage of development, when it seemed things were all happening rather quickly, the workmen tore down (carefully removed) a piece of the wall at the side of Adam's house. The stones from this were left in a little heap by the side of the road. The side of the road was, by this point, for security reasons, fenced in. So I broke in at night time, behind the little fence, and stole two pieces of this rock. Stone. Stuff. It was sandstone. One of them was. The other looked like dolerite or something only covered in sandstone. And some mortar. I stole two pieces of stone from the wall above Adam Smith's recently discovered Christian Grey sex dungeon. So to be clear I stole, criminally, two pieces of stone from the restoration of Adam Smith's house. The real Adam Smith's house. #therealadamsmith 's house.

I packed these two stones into a light-safe darkroom paper bag. The colour was a pretty faded pale blue. There was no need for it to be light safe, or pretty, but it was to hand in my house when I got home after the criminal act. I took this bag with me, or rather, I shipped this bag inside a box full of things to Paris. I followed the box and stayed in Paris for a little while. During the time I was there I bought a crystal (glass €9.90) champagne bucket and placed the two stones inside it. I then poured two litres of full strength (red) Coca Cola into the bucket with the stones.

I left the mixture for some time, poked about a bit, smelled it as it cooked in the sun on the balcony outside my bedroom and then drained the gloopy brew through some coffee filter papers. (I can't drink coffee or Coca Cola so there really was very little waste involved, don't worry). I had imagined that the Coca Cola might rot the stones entirely, as when you have fossilised, encrusted shite stains down the back of your lavvy but by simply popping a can of Coca Cola down there they completely disappear overnight leaving a glowing avocado porcelain (youtube), or indeed, as per the original application to Creative Scotland I mentioned, but perhaps should have been clearer about, the Coca Cola, having made its way through my body would have been pushed out onto, thus eventually rotting, the

plinth supporting the state of Adam Smith on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, leaving the statue lying in the gutter but looking at the star, named after Adam Smith in some way, the name of which I have forgotten—but this was not the case. It did however significantly shrink the stones, and did leave a fair amount of residue in the bottom of the crystal (glass €9.90) bucket. The sandstone of course degraded far more than the dolerite which, visually at least, did not change at all.

I now had two smaller stones, one sandstone and one dolerite (maybe), I had a great deal of paste (sandstone grit mixed with Coca Cola in the filter papers) and then several little (but larger than dust) bits of stone which had become detached in the process.

The sandstone stone, which was quite round, revealed itself to me as the lost heart of Jean-Paul Marat. I took it to the catacombs thinking that the rest of Marat's body was there. I had, of course, confused him with his friends St Just and Robespierre who really are there, Marat is not. Which is handy, as it turned out because by the time I got to the catacombs in the afternoon the queue was so long that I couldn't get in. I was also dying on a piss and couldn't bear to stand in the piss-stinking Parisian heat, especially having realised it was a lost enterprise altogether, Marat not being there. Perhaps it would have been nice to go back the next day, or book an appointment perhaps, to sneak in and leave the heart of their friend with the skulls and bones of the other two great terrible leaders of the Revolution? But I didn't. I threw it into the Seine. I was as I said really dying on a piss.

The second stone, the dolerite, I returned to Adam Smith's house on a trip back to ghastly old Edinburgh. Security had been tightened further in the interim period (perhaps due to my theft, I thought, criminally piss-art-transgressively, phallocentrically but impotently excitedly), the chicken wire fences having been replaced by wooden boards with plastic windows allowing the plebs to sate their idiotic nosinesses. I could still see the area I stole the stone from but wanted it to be really clear that it had been returned, half the original quanti-

ty at least as it was, so I threw it right behind the big padlocked gates. This stone was totally meaningless, it was never a heart or anything else. It had no vestige of a beginning and no prospect of an end. It was just a stone in the road. (Unlike poor Marat's heart which by now I deeply regretted having thrown so unceremoniously, other than the ceremony, into the Seine. No one knew where it was, not now not then not ever. No one at the Pantheon. Not even the lady (THE lady not OUR lady, I didn't ask OUR lady, perhaps I should have? The definite article for the church working lady makes it seem like they, OUR and THE lady, might be the same thing so let's just say A lady, although she did work at the church, and did send me a lovely email later, about the whole thing, she couldn't find the heart anywhere, and now I had thrown it in the Seine, I couldn't bear to tell her incase she had a sacred heart attack), at L'eglise Saint Etienne du Mont had any idea. At least, I thought, I had thrown my father's watch into the river along with it, to mark the occasion "in time". (I studied "Time Based Art". I think I get it now). It was near the Louvre somewhere. Maybe one day I will go back with my snorkel and try to find it, best not leave it too long I suppose. The swollen rats put me off a bit, and the sick-piss-green-lethe colour. I may well catch a bad dose, but it will be worth it to bring the heart back to A lady and a Paris that needs it more than ever. Awe what a fool I have been!

And now the dust. The dust. Ah the dust. Aw the dust. From an old man's sleeve. That's ash though isn't it? Ashen faced students drinking monster energy drink and the ash on an old man's sleeve, is all the ash that the dead revolutionaries leave, apparently. Reverie over for ever.

The now quite tatty looking blue light safe bag, closed over with black gaffer tape, filled with brown powder, inside coffee filter papers rang some kind of alarm bells with the increased security staff at the increased in the light of the recent increase in terrorism, or in dark of recent decrease in non terrorism, or under the auspices of terrorism or whatever, security at Charles de Gaulle airport. This "necessitated" the total unpacking of all my luggage entirely and the drugs and ex-

plosives testing of all the items that I was attempting to smuggle back into the UK. It turned out, some forty eight minutes later, that it was, of course, fine, it was just stone dust and Coca Cola. I had missed my easyjet flight home by this stage of course so I got one the next day. For three hundred euros. Lucky it was my great aunt's funeral, I thought. I didn't think, but I did go.

On the way back to France having finally snuck through the following day with all my filth I took the dust to Highgate Cemetery in London, paid the eight quid entrance fee and sprinkled the dust onto the grave of Karl Marx. Well, not actually the grave, rather the obscene monument with his gigantic head on the top of it. Along with all the red roses at the bottom, now covered in my dust. The dead roses and the ash. With Adam's ash. With the ash from the auld man's sleeve. With the ash from the auld man's house, the walls, the wainscot and the mouse.

I gave the little pieces of stone to Roger, the only friend I made in Paris. He used to work in the Centre Pompidou and I thought the story would make him laugh. I bought a little cardboard box and lined the inside with gold leaf, then folded in a piece of blood red felt and put a little Duralex ketchup dish inside with the remaining pieces of Adam's home. Roger laughed and I left Paris forever.

I wasn't only in Paris for this. I wasn't in Paris for this. I was in Paris because I am sick. Very sick. Sick sick. Twice sick, perhaps, that is what her husband said, anyway. The really very last French doctor I saw prescribed me Chlorophyll. She said I couldn't see the light, I think, I don't know. I am not very good with French, or doctors. Or light. But I had never seen the light. Now I eat the light. I have seen the light. I saw the light, briefly, then, I think. I don't know.

“The source of man’s moral energy is outside him, like that of his physical energy (food, air etc). He generally finds it, and that is why he has the illusion—as on the physical plane—that his being carries the principle of its preservation within itself. Privation alone makes him feel his need. And, in the event of privation, he cannot help turning to anything whatever which is edible. There is only one remedy for that: a chlorophyll conferring the faculty of feeding on light.

Not to judge. All faults are the same. There is only one fault: incapacity to feed on light, for where the capacity to do this has been lost all faults are possible.”

Simone Weil

Gravity and Grace







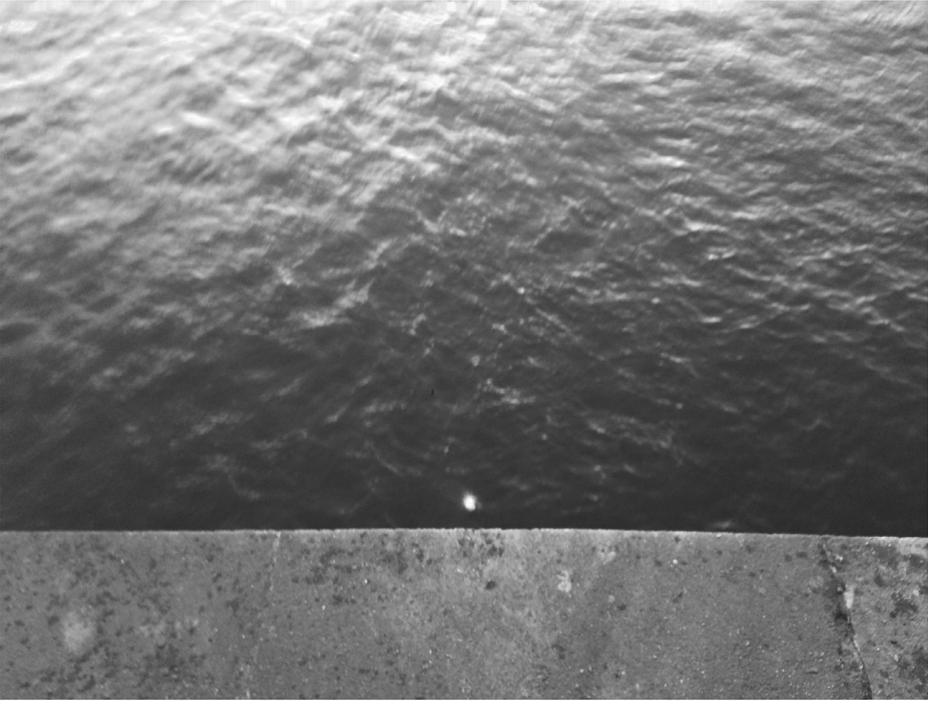














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