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I .

A CHAPTER ABOUT WEEDS

The time has come for you to walk through the village. All vacation long you haven't walked through it in as big a way as you do today. It's not your native village—where you'd never permit yourself this kind of presumption—but the one located between the railway station and your family's house, and that doesn't mean much, barely more than that you've consented to its being there, even though it's in your way when you walk to the station. When you pass through it from one direction or the other—it doesn't matter which—you whistle, you make a point of puckering your lips and whistling in every direction, it's your password to the locals, it's how you recognize your village and distinguish it from other villages, it's how it glints in your memory. You learned to whistle precisely on account of your village, this random jumble of musty buildings, even though there are thousands like it, you whistle your way through your village alone, it's nothing less than it deserves for being responsible for your even learning to whistle at all, you didn't used to show any predilection for it, that's all its doing, it's given you plenty of time and space to practice, you've had limitless opportunities to whistle and pucker your lips till they produced sound, here whistling lifts you up and makes some sense, here one whistle finds support in another, your particular whistle practically buries the villagers, clobbers them with its clots of sound, you've become a good whistler and they've pricked up their ears, you've whistled up a name for yourself. When you walk through the village you split it in two, producing a left piece and a right piece, you pick up the

sound of the villagers in the left piece and the villagers in the right piece, you sort out your villagers to the left and the right and you glance first in one direction, then in the other, you pick out your people to the right and the left and give them a chance to greet you, enabling, in other words, their first sentence of the day, the chance to put their first subject and predicate into play, which almost always has to do with the weather, thanks to you they notice the state of the weather on still empty stomachs, they force you to join them in fretting over fair or rainy weather, you've acquired some real weather smarts, constant experience and practice have honed your ear, regular skirmishes with the villagers have formed you into a formidable forecaster. Along the way hens cluck, cows low, or a dog yips, you rely on dogs, they've always been on your side. The first task awaiting the village after you board the train is to reunite the dismembered village, they tend to this as soon as you're gone, the village comes to life, they converge from all sides wherever they can, they're not picky when it comes to that, and it's urgent, besides, because the village has been dismembered and laid to waste, they gather in doorways, midway between neighbors, at crossroads, on this or that side of wooden slab fences or wherever, in matters like these they're really not picky or petty, they never have been and there's no need, anyplace is fine to exchange a few words, any old place will do for them to put heads together and confirm the time of your departure, because that's where you're headed, you're off to the station, so it's your own fault, they've got something up their sleeves, one thing today and something else the next, they're damn precise when it suits them, they count up how many times you've used the word ass instead of rear or bottom, they're convinced that ass is ugly but rear and bottom are all right, they divide the villagers into two social classes, one class with rears and bottoms and the other with asses, and you can guess which class they've put you in as you head for the train, it's come to light, it's coming to light, then disappears in the night, runs through the night, and then, on the other side, comes to light once again, one bit of news collides with another, they wring them out and pair up while wringing them out,

their heads come together for one last squeeze, their hands can't squeeze any tighter, their heads can't come any closer, the couplings last until they're exhausted. In this sense you aren't actually sitting on the train, even though you've boarded it in the meantime, instead you're stuck in your villagers' maws, become the cause of these couplings. Even though they're not yours and you're not theirs, they are yours and you are theirs, because they've adopted you as their own, they don't have any other, they've taken pity on you, you'll do in a pinch, you're fine and you've proven to be useful, it's enough that you go whistling through their village, you've repeated your route so many times and diced their village to bits, so minutely have you scuffed your way down their asphalt roads and their dusty paths that they've taken you for their own. Now you're theirs, they worry about you and you're in their hearts, they haven't yet settled on what you'll become, definitely something, but exactly what still isn't quite clear, you'll become what you can, whenever you can, this perhaps, for sure not that, maybe this, and that if things work out, a boss if nothing gets in the way, some sort of boss and it's not clear what kind, but that doesn't matter, the main thing is you won't have to grind away like the villagers do, they've marked you for bosshood and that sticks to you now, it won't ever leave you, you owe it to them, this much you know, you're the chosen one and they've opened the whole world to you because you walk through their village on the way to vacation and then back from vacation to catch the train. You've grazed past the yellowed corners of houses, shacks, and barns that dogs have sprayed with their juice, you've walked past their houses and cut through many a yard, many a crack in a door has secretly squeaked open, many a curtain has silently come to life as you've passed by, you've had power over the cracks and the curtains and the lurking eyes, it's felt like an honor, so you haven't walked through the village in a big way without a good reason. The train chugs its way here, assaults the station, and marks the end of a period of your boarding school days, you've never come so much to life as you have this year, something is brewing inside you, unsuspected things are hatching their plots, this vacation is behind you,

you expanded your lungs in its air, its sun crashed into your face, you rowed your way into your first loves, you uprooted your senses and submerged them in moments now unforgettable. You brought certain vacation instructions with you from the boarding school, you'd been brought together in the assembly hall in your Sunday suits and your holiday shoes, there you were showered with precepts and don'ts, advice, warnings, recommendations, do this, don't do that, you must, you must not, on account of these or those reasons, your heads swarmed with prophylaxis, your chests grew heavy and dark. You weren't there, you fended off the wave of poison-tipped arrows, at the right moment you tucked in your tail and shook off the leash, sneaking into the room upstairs where the typewriter welcomed you, that flickering rattle of letters, you often retreated to it, it helped you out of more than one fix. What sort of texts Tjaž first entrusted to the typewriter and how he found his way into that world in the first place is no longer knowable, only a handful of letters from that time attesting to the typewriter exist. He managed to conceal this activity all those years without ever being found out, there were times when he regularly wrote with it, more or less following a set schedule, on Sundays for instance during the time set for group walks, on Saturdays during afternoon devotions, during catechism or confession or other occasions. Whether or not the use of typewriters was forbidden and punishable Tjaž didn't really even know, the house rules were mysteriously silent about it. When for instance they prayed aloud in church for the nations of the world to shake off the communist yoke and for success in shoving some deliciously wrapped Christian candy through some hole in the iron curtain, Tjaž would be hunting letters on his keyboard, candy like that leaves a taste behind that even you haven't got rid of yet, it still creeps through your mouth, even though you long since swallowed, digested, and shat it out. Once you infringed on this or that house rule and the prefect called you into his office so the two of you could discuss it alone and at length, complete with all the commas and periods, so to speak, but you didn't show up at the appointed time, you declined the invitation, you wouldn't give them a chance

to show you their kindness and shine their magnanimity on you: this time you're forgiven, we'll forget all about it, you'll be spared any punishment, but next time watch yourself, make sure you resist temptation and stay out of mischief. You were nowhere near them, they couldn't bestow upon you what they'd prepared, what they had ready at hand and only needed to reach out and secretly pinch off a bit of, just for you, and daub into your lap, the others don't need to know, the whole business could have been put to rest, everyone could have felt good about it, the whole house would have learned of the nobility of the good fathers in letting Tjaž off without any punishment, this time, but next time probably not, everyone would be satisfied and everyone would have found succor, everyone would be able to glow in Christian fulfillment and sweat in self-satisfaction, if only Tjaž had accepted the offer, but Tjaž didn't accept, he didn't let them take him by the arm and drag him by a leash at the same time. While the nations of the world were trying to shake off the yoke of communism and examining options for getting candies over to the other side, while something was already beginning to move behind the iron curtain thanks to the candy-smell drifting across, Tjaž was serenely banging the keys, and on another occasion communism gave way to more immediate household concerns, and for that purpose litanies, of the Loreto sort, I believe, started to bloom throughout the church, and it started to rain virgins and queens so heavily it was a joy to behold, and that's when the keys would thrash at the ark of the covenant and the cup of the eucharist, that's when they banged at the house of gold and the gates of heaven, and the ivory tower collapsed on the tower of David, and the keys gushed at the flower of mystery and the morning star, in short, it was the dawning of our moment of glee but of hard times for the saints and apostles whenever Tjaž would harness his typewriter, no wonder then if they preferred not to poke into any private affairs and listen to this and listen to that or spread god knows what around, they didn't go getting tangled up in the grouching of god's own people, so the treasures of paradise were left untouched, but to make up for this they squandered that many more words in the fes-

tive, pre-vacation assembly hall, lavishing so much advice and so many detailed warnings on the students that it really got their juices going. The director was in a bad mood that day, the vacation had him worried, he measured leisure out to his wards with such caution, drizzling vacation on them only gradually, hesitant to accede to this demand for a break and fighting a mental battle with himself, because in each of his wards both evil and good longed for a change and demanded fresh air, that much was palpable, they could realize themselves in such conditions that much more easily. At their homes everything still remained in its place, as before, they would never, let's say, change an office into a cupboard or a library into a bedroom, but they wouldn't have had to go that far, it would have sufficed for them just to rearrange the furniture a bit, move something here, adjust something there, turn something around, channel life into some other space, water onto some other mill, a little change like that would have softened many a fall and balanced out many a blinkered view. Tjaž's own people back home were no different in that respect, nothing changed, the kitchen kept being a kitchen, the bedroom stayed the old bedroom, the shed was unremittingly a shed, the cellar a cellar, the closet a closet, they were no different from the bedroom, kitchen, shed, and cellar of, say, fifty years ago, everything had its fixed place like the words in the our father, you couldn't switch them with others, turn them around or leave them out if you wanted, or they'd accuse you of heresy. Only Tjaž switched his room around to his heart's content, the wardrobe and the desk and the bed got no peace from him, one day he'd exile the desk to the window and the bed to the door, the next day he'd burden the long wall with the wardrobe, and on the day after that he'd draw all of the furniture into a circle along the next wall, and so forth, in short, he'd give his room a good shuffling and dusting. That's not the only thing you take back to school from vacation, your dowry is much bigger than that, you're full of experiences, standing upright like a sack of potatoes, you've grazed your fill on vacation goodies and lowered your head into unaccustomedly fresh fodder, now you're heading back to account for how you invested all

the advice, the instructions and precepts, how they bore fruit and even now you can hear the stool pigeons whistle their disapproval, some of which has found its way into the priest's report on your vacation comportment, that's nothing to worry about, the priest likes you and takes your side, no, the worst is what you nurture inside you, or, rather, more wicked than worst. Your visit to the priest and his flock of benefactresses comes off well, you showed them your report card and explained your marks, you put on a show and lamented your mistakes and behold, all were relieved, it helped, it'll come in handy and you already know what you're going to buy, you honestly think when you thank him for it it comes from the heart, this is all the currency you have left that counts for anything. You blew the bulk of your vacation on everyday things, but they couldn't persuade you to fritter your old nag of a life away on holy minutiae, it's not some old rope, you lived and allowed life to live inside you and out of you, you were there so to speak at the birth of a philodendron leaf, you were attentively there with your bow stretched taut, still you didn't pull its individual fibers by the ears, the tongs, let's say, relaxing, the plucking and unrolling, the work, what work, the convulsions of its birthing muscles sailed right past you, you didn't waste the tiniest thought on such things, you lived the philodendron leaf, you live it even now, until some day you die it, you've taken life as it's come, and that's all. It hasn't been much, what you've lived, but it's been, you've left a piece here, a piece there, it's dried up on you and blown to bits, even that has happened, and you've struggled to assemble the remaining staves into a usable vessel. Once you approached the village church, which you'd pass on the way to the train station. It strutted atop the hillside, deliberately at the highest point if not an inch higher, there was no getting it higher than that, the village houses jostled humbly at its foot, they turned on their chimneys and sent clots of black cream billowing up under its nose, crops arrayed themselves over the distant fields, the pastures and cabbage patches rushed with their tithe. He shot it from two or three sides, studied its style, and let its churchly pressure work on his stomach's digestive acids. A girl was weeding in the

cemetery, probably the sexton's daughter or ward—judging from her clothes more ward than daughter, or from her face more daughter than ward—she crouched by the wall in a genuine weeder's crouch, her knees under her chin, her hands thrust in the dirt, her eyes following her hands. She weeded, distinguishing one weed from another, separating the weeds from the mounds, the stones from the sand, crosses from tares, markers from lanterns, plantings from paths. Tjaž was transfixed by her full, powerful movements, defined cheeks, ponytail, first budding of breasts, darting hands, and busy fingers, a girl of tall, Gothic stature. Whether it was god's will or wasn't god's will, god only knows, Tjaž began to look at her from the bottom instead of the top, and in doing this he was already aware of his error. A boarding school student categorically looks at a woman from the top, and only if his eyes lead him astray and a woman's other regions unavoidably offer themselves, for instance the mid-, lower, or, god only forbid, bottom parts, then he is not to force his eyes away, but to look at all regions in equal measure and with equal intensity, and if it is possible, he is to focus his eyes on a safe, reliable area, he is to seek out the calm eye of the storm, so to speak, and hold out there for as long as the vision lasts, and from there he is to work his eyes centrifugally out and look for an exit, he is to dip systematically askance, down and across until he takes in all of the parts, taking care to do justice to each separate part, devoting equal attention to each, his looks are all to be equal regardless of where they linger, for all parts of the human body are equal and this is particularly true of the female body. Tjaž gave his eyes free rein, and too much freedom is never a good thing, they chose at their will, excluding too much here, focusing too much there, they wouldn't make do with the global, collective impression that the weeder's body imparted, they permitted themselves too much of certain individual parts, too much detail, they splintered too selectively, they marked trunks for removal, they shouldn't have circled and lingered on each petty thing, that's what they shouldn't have done, eyes grow petty if you don't rein them in. Tjaž changed the purpose of his appearance here, he dismissed his interest in the

church and instead of the church began collecting details about the girl, shooting her from a distance, then closer up, from this or that side, he wound ahead on the roll in order to separate these, the girl from the churchyard walls of his earlier photos, the film crackled as it captured its prey, the crunching of the camera roused the weeder from her work, she raised her shapely body and at that point Tjaž sinned once again, he crouched down beside her in the midst of the weeds, not too close, but also not so far that she couldn't hear him, this was enough for a start, it was still too soon for anything physical. He started pulling up weeds by the roots, they didn't talk much, he asked questions more than spoke, she was silent more than she answered, they weeded the graves, her sickle cut the weeds to the quick, their fingers strangled their tiny stalks, the little roots writhing in revolt and spraying his and her fingers with their vile sap, but none of that was of any avail, they rooted them all up one after the other nonetheless and tossed them onto the compost, refusing them earth, denying them water, nutrients, and earth, banishing their verdant desire, sapping, so to speak, the last bit of their will to live. The work was finished, bits of dirt clung to his and her fingers, he could feel its curative, clinging touch, the rancid scents of the weed roots wrinkled the skin and dirt dug into the furrows, he lifted his fingers to his nose and sniffed, so that's how it smells, slightly different from the dirt back home, it smells of vinegar, the dirt from the field at home tended toward bitter, and he also sniffed at the grass. The dirt dried quickly on his warm hands, he scraped it out of the furrows and picked his fingers clean as whole layers dropped off, he also felt his scab, while trying to harness the horse he had injured his hand, the blood had dried and since then the scab never occurred to him, but now he had scraped it again and blood seeped from the wound, though it caused him no pain, the drops of blood only tickled a bit and their lazy slide did his skin good, the blood mixed in with the dirt, he wasn't paying attention to this, he was heading home with his mind on the girl weeding, he hadn't studied the church, he would next time, and anyway he had caught it on film and could study it at home, he thought about how much time

would have to pass before the weeds grew back and would have to be pulled out again, that's when the village church that he passed on the way to the station would awaken in him again, its frescoes, inscriptions on tombstones, the ossuary and saints, and that would be another chance, and a lucky coincidence would allow him to repeat that fateful afternoon and, what's more, to escalate the encounter and go one step further, the weeding would make it that much easier. You won't have to wait for the weeds to grow back, you can go there anytime, fortunately you're not dependent on the growth of the weeds, you've sniffed honey, you're onto its track, and you haven't let it out of your sight, you got to the bottom of things, you investigated and found out that your chosen one didn't just weed graves but tended cows too, this saves you and relieves your pain. She was tending cows by the river, the sexton's three dappled calves, just a shade scrawnier than the priest's, but otherwise bright-horned and dark-scowled, they knew him already and that's why, as he approached, they only lifted their heads and sank them right back down into the grass, yielding out of their own instincts and relinquishing the field of battle to him, they let him go about his affairs without any witnesses and, indeed, indulge himself. He sat down beside her, this time much closer. When he began to kiss her on the neck, along the edge of her hairline, and, to the extent it was possible, under the collar of her dress, it was clear that the boarding school's quota had once again been overstepped, and this time far overstepped, so far that there was no going back, but it had been overstepped long ago, at least when together they had taken up arms against the weeds, wreaking such devastation on them, far more than had been planned for that afternoon, but at this point that was no longer decisive. When his fingers lingered someplace a little farther and carried out a small experiment, the tiniest, most innocent little experiment, experimenting with this and experimenting with that, as befits this sort of thing, and finally managed to introduce some method into the whole business, for instance by starting to stroke systematically, one thing at a time, but each thing from its extremity, as is the general practice in these cases, and then, as is

only fitting if a person is healthy, it wasn't long till the norm burst with a loud twang and in wide arcs its last parts went flying, he was on the verge of pursuing this thing to the end, but at that point certain reservations appeared, this far and no farther, not a pinch more, a good boarding school student knows his boundaries and doesn't just let caution fly to the wind. When it gushed out, he was afraid she might feel the dampness through her dress and he didn't want her to notice he was soggy. A week later they would meet up again and that time it would be different, that time he would be bold and do it properly. The voices of shepherds, those resentful roosters, stretched all along the far side of the river, and their whooping suggested the pair had been noticed, but that was no problem. They baked apples and roasted potatoes and they craned their necks in the process, sure, but the seed of the ferns didn't slide into their pockets, if you know what I mean, midsummer night hadn't dawned for them, they were no match for Peter Klepec, they couldn't even see him, midsummer night belonged to Tjaž. The moon pauses in the sky on its way to far-off lands, you can see it at every step, first it goes backward, then it goes forward, whichever is easier and wherever the path is clear, and you don't even notice it's in a hurry to get, say, to Australia or South Tyrol, you've left it in peace where it was, it traversed half the globe and you didn't grimace, it traverses the whole globe and you don't grimace, you're busy with love, you're tending your needs, curing your aches as best you can, one way today, another tomorrow, less well one day, better the next. The vacation races to its end, the last days bunch up in front of you, you say good-bye, drinking late into the night, normally you don't drink, but today you drink by way of exception, and you do it up right, but normally you really aren't like this, today you drink enough for you to send a stone flying through space, you come by this thanks to your father, it clings to you from your father, you've inherited his traits, you're becoming like him, you don't know what to do with your strength so you vest it in this stone, your stone falters as it makes its way over the little heads and fat asses worshipping at the tavern, you serve them up your stone, they can see from its course

that a drunken hand threw it, and that's why the diners and drinkers retract their heads into their shoulders, little heads colliding with fat asses and fat asses colliding with little heads, a stone is a stone and there's never any knowing what its intentions might be, the diners and drinkers retract their ass-like heads from its flight path, just to be safe, because you never know, they have to be ready and reckon with any eventuality, a stone isn't just straw or a word, you're never safe from it, it passes a hair's breadth over their heads, indeed ruffling the few fine hairs on their skulls, where you can see the hooklike seams of their skull bones, it cleaves the air with its hatchets, a little hatchet like this does a nice little job of sniffing out human blood, of disrupting the columns of cigarette smoke, it races past the arc lights that hang over outspread newspapers and illuminate little scandals, that hung over outspread newspapers and illuminated little scandals, that will no longer hang over outspread newspapers and illuminate little scandals, there won't be any more need, the stone creeps along over there, nice and slow, it's in no hurry, inch by inch, it undertakes its mission with a great deal of care, these are precious moments that you sip down into the depths of your belly, because you're this stone's author, you'll live off these rations for a number of years, your stone has seen everything and there's no job it wouldn't be up to, that's your stone for you, any instant it's going to hit its target toward the front, way toward the front, where there's maybe a wall made of bamboo or plywood, that kind is cheaper, or maybe it's just a plain wall without any bamboo or plywood, even that kind will do in a pinch, in winter this part of the tavern is closed, maybe an aquarium, better not an aquarium, better a bull or a tree, those are your specialty, everybody pick out a bull and everybody pick out a tree, whichever you prefer, or if you'd rather go for the back of some guest and the head of the pretty barmaid who serves up whatever her customers order, then them, let's go for those two, that would be best, there it would hit and drill a hole or create a dent, in other words accomplish its task, what a shame, a dent or a hole in the customer's back or the pretty barmaid's head, she doesn't have to be your sweetheart, who says so,

you shower your joy on each one alike. You wasted quite enough time finding a girl, and not just any kind, but the kind suited to you, but of these any will do, you start trailing her, you follow behind her, stay on her trail, you have the same path ahead of you as she does, even though you don't know it, her path and yours, you lift your feet high so you don't shuffle and give yourself away, you can never step too high, but too low is a constant risk, you don't like for them to notice you too soon, you're on her heels or you pass her and approach her head on, you need a certain distance and a certain angle of vision to masturbate, some boys masturbate as they walk, others stop and masturbate standing or hide behind a chestnut tree, it varies from one student to the next, you have to understand, not all boarding school students are created alike or are equally demanding, one is like this, the other's like that, and even where it comes to a particular individual, he isn't always in the same mood, one day he'll prefer one method and another the next. But to hell with their alleyway methods, if that from-a-distance method satisfies them, they're welcome to it, their scrotums will all go sour and there'll be no sap running there. You've skewered your hen, that sets you apart from them, even if you did pick her out in the weeds, you tend to her at night, you squander the whole night in her nest, warming your bones, you take your time, you've just about run the month out, traveling a long time till finally arriving, you've knocked and the door has opened. On your way back, the grass bows down to you, the weeds flutter from the furrows and borders, a tree has planted its outstretched legs, it smells of dew, flowers blossom, the chirping of birds fills the crotches of trees, sap flows through them, the first sunlight searing their crowns. You proudly make your way through the village and past homesteads where well-rested people are retreating from night, barely has the sun twitched its rabbit muzzle over the horizon, and barely has dawn started draping the trees with bugs and birds and squirrels and splashed dew out onto the meadows, your villagers are Mary's own people, they're so good and hardworking. You're a witness to how they tame the morning light, their lungs pecking at the fresh air. Field and garden call and

the meadow can't stand without them, the tools come to life, cattle stretch in the barn, fences straighten out of the glens and send shoots through the pastures, grain outgrows itself, the borders between fields come to life, field gates go into action, the first vehicles rumble down the paths, from the far side of the forest a windstorm sets out to butt into the hay-laden ricks, calluses get ground down off of hands. You know what it means when first thing in the morning all through the village fathers appear at their children's bedsides, gruesome scenes. The earth demands its share and the people measure it out, some in a miserly way, others with abandon, but one way or the other all of them measure it out, what good is resisting, for the sake of his daily bread each one of them submits to the pressure and contributes his share, the earth is the earth and only gives if it gets. This is when you make your way through the village and while walking you think about one thing and another, a few things you work out, your eyes are still dreaming, you leave them to their fun and depend on your feet, which know the way by heart, you grind through experiences of the night barely past, while morning rises beneath your feet and the early crows squawk you up into the sky, taking your weight, so you walk lightly. In all of the faces you make out a bit of her face, behind every body there hides a bit of her body, and every puddle reflects a bit of her stream. Then you veer off of the road, you push uphill toward the family house, because the sun is making quick progress and already shining on all the mountains and peaks, it's time for you to speed up. The vacation inclines toward its close, you can't hold back its sunset, you manage to knock a few last morsels off of it and no more, you buzz around for the last several days, several nights you go to say good-bye, one night more thoroughly, the next just in passing, the first is exhausting, the other exhilarating, you put body and soul together, you're getting ready for school, because you know it's ready for you, they've warned it about you, it's keeping track of you, informed and expectant, but this union of body and soul isn't something you can keep up. Once, when you were little, you took food out to your father where he was staying in a woodsman's hut, using words and hand

gestures your father described the route, where you would have to veer off and when you would have turn this way and when that way. Your father was never exactly a master storyteller, it was hard for him to explain things to you, and you never knew how to bridge the empty spaces and fill in the gaps in what your father said. No wonder you took a wrong turn and couldn't find your father or the hut, you got lost in the forest, you ran out of path, and you couldn't hear the woodsmen at work anymore, lynx-eyed you looked for a way out, you rooted around, wandered blindly this way and that, cried and cursed and pleaded until the mountaintops spun, you got dizzy and the ground slipped away under your feet, you ran out of curse words, got sick of pleading, and the food in your backpack intended for your father got heavier and heavier and finally pushed you to the ground. In utter distress you headed back downhill with the conviction that you would get revenge, even if you didn't know how or when, perhaps in the far distant future, curdling in your heart. You ran in the direction of the ridges that were only slowly bending toward the valley when you suddenly stopped, shocked. An abyss yawned into you, its emptiness touching you to your core, and it rocked in front of you, almost as if it were dancing. You've grown since then and still before your eyes is that abyss as it rocks, knowing of nothing down below but sea, shore, harbors, tempests, islands, tempests, harbors, shore, and sea, rocking and swaying, swaying and rocking, rocking, rocking, swaying, swaying. Some trees shoot past, the train has scratched its way through the countryside, the engine searching out stations, wagging its way in kangaroo leaps past the mountains and into the vast plain.