

## A PUDDLE OF WATER

*("The book," I was told by a sage I sincerely respect, "contains a face which we wrinkle in writing.*

*"The older the book the purer the face."*

*And he added: "Do not believe that the book [which is not spared illness] disappears with the book. It dies only in its filigree. We know it is up to us to look for it beyond where it will give us back our written world."*

*He said further: "A lake is at the peak of power because it is a master over the reflections which haunt it. Likewise the book when it lets us hear and drink."*

Rain had left a puddle in the street, several inches deep, which the mud made into a lake buried in its misery.

However, the sun played there at inventing colors and getting them to correspond.

I was watching this unexpected concert of reflections when, suddenly, a car turned the corner, barreled across the puddle and splashed me.

Is the book, in its beginning, a puddle like this whose music enchanted me for a minute or, rather, the muck on my flannel pants like flakes of a wilted page where writing was tackled?

I was waiting for Yaël.—Why, in fact, was I waiting for her when she was dead?—Paris, moreover, had been basking in a radiant sun for a whole week.

This puddle is maybe Elya, a forbidden brew, Elya as you might imagine him, not knowing his life. But his life, threatened all the short while it lasted, had it not had the face of an eternal child bend over it so closely as to take on its features?

We have not done fighting when we die. The seasons bathe in rotting water as in the short-lived rainbow beginning to fade. They burn out in what was their reason to be.

When we met, Yaël, we had arrived, though still young, at the end of our wandering: you becoming a word, and I, parallel, a man of the Letter.

Nothing, however, let us know our time was so measured we could no longer retrace our steps.

Face to face, accomplices, hangmen, victims of a silence of dream and flesh which you had nourished in your soul and guts and which, little by little, had become our only resort, our only chance of liberation.

Cherished in his absence, this natural son of Nothing was going to take everything from us. He appropriated (without a fair fight) the book in the name of a truth which excluded us, you because of me, and me through you. A truth to which we would return with our regrets, our memories, and this need to survive which makes us insist insolently at the threshold.

Cursed in our consciousness of speaking and in our heedless pretention to succeed in it.

Our route is that of the great sinners for whom God is a dawn secret without ties and which bleeds.