

12. THE ECSTATIC SELF

“You write these novels about characters who are caught up in their own sexual desire, and you think that they can have some kind of political message.”

“I am writing about people who are fighting to liberate themselves from repressive social environments.”

“You are an intellectual dinosaur. No one really believes anymore that sexual liberation is a form of emancipation.”

“You’re willing to argue that prudishness is not an impediment to progressive thought.”

“Not in and of itself. Puritanical attitudes originate in other forms of political oppression and economic deprivation. Sexual obsession only contributes to such backward perspectives.”

“How is that?”

“You’re willing to gratify people’s needs to dominate others for the sake of their own enjoyment.”

“Sex doesn’t have to be portrayed so negatively.”

“It’s not as if you’re that interested in other people. They’re just a convenient excuse to act out your fantasies.”

“People discover who they are in sex. There’s a give and take that help people realize who they are.”

“You offer no alternative to very aggressive behaviors. People who get off on the pain of others.”

“It’s not so clear cut. Even romantic feelings are often based on the desire to make others do what we want.”

“Seductive gestures are meant to affect how people think about us. Not force them to do what we want.”

“It’s all the same thing. Either you use force or trickery.”

“Even those practices are subject to political scrutiny.”

“You’re trying to have your way no matter what.”

“I’m writing fiction. It usually turns out like that.”

“I’m not going to let you off that easily. It comes down to your intent.”

“Which is not necessarily the same as my characters.”

“You’re living through a conspiracy of libertines.”

“So be it! I’ll stake my case with like-minded adventurers.”

“You’re blowing this way out of proportion and missing my initial argument against you.”

“It only proves that fun can be liberating.”

“Pleasure does not equate to anything beneficial. It only aggravates your existing propensity to self-indulgence.”

“So I laugh at such excesses.”

“You fiddle while Rome burns.”

“I wasn’t behind the mischief. I only report on the effects.”

“You’re not claiming the salutary effects of sexual pleasure.”

“Life throws you some strange curves.”

“So you have to learn how to duck when they come your way.”

“I’m pretty good at that.”

“Which pretty much proves my point.”

She would like to invite you along. But that would pretty much defeat her purpose. This is for herself. It is not meant to be shared. There is a purity to her pleasure. She does not perform it for someone else. She is working to stimulate something deep within herself. Deeper than anything physical, it is her way of according herself with the universe.

Her body is convulsive. She responds to the quaking to the cosmos. It is more than knowledge, it is a way of life.”

“This sounds pretty exciting.”

“I really have no intention of sharing any of this with anyone. This is private.”

“Really. By calling it ecstasy, you are suggesting that it is similar to things felt by the rest of us.”

“This is only my experience. I don’t want you to interfere.”

“But I feel the extremes of the universe. I want to relate to what is happening to you.”

“I don’t want you to be a part of it. You’re like an intruder. I like what is going on in my life precisely because it has nothing to do with you. It coincides in no way with your experience.”

“We both feel the expanse of time in the same way. We feel ourselves project into space. Our bodies travel in the same way.”

“I enter a space from which you are excluded. That is what excites me the most. There is no way that you can interrupt my feeling. We do not intersect. We are completely independent of each other. Nothing that you do in your world can have any effect on me.”

“That is cold!”

“I can’t have it any other way. Otherwise, I am doing it all just to excite you. I can’t answer for any of your feelings.”

“Just the way that you talk about it turns me on.”

“Shut up! I don’t want to hear about it. I’m not even making an argument against you. What I do offers me such delight that I never want to hear about your reaction. Never, never.”

“That is almost an invitation in its own way. You are describing an intensity that seems to exceed anything that I can do on my own.”

“Great. That is how things are, and you can’t do anything about it. You’re just not used to anything that exclusive.”

“But you’re closing yourself off from other people.”

“Exactly. I don’t need you. So don’t try to make yourself needed.”

“That’s not fair. It’s elitist.”

“It’s the only way that I can protect myself. Otherwise, you would try to take my ecstasy from me and claim that it is part of your experience. It doesn’t work like that!”

“Explain that to me!”

“No. It cannot be explained. You cannot solve the puzzle so that you can get closer to me. The only puzzle is the one that does everything not to be solved.”

“Why are you preventing me from being part of your experience.”

“You only want to be part of it because it has nothing to do with you. I refuse to open

you up to that experience.”

“I want to be part of it. Let me in!”

“I can’t. No amount of pleading will make you part of it. This is a mystery that you cannot penetrate. This never has and never will be about you. You can’t cajole me to change. I see things just like this. Period!”

“But you are reacting to my interest. Surely that has something to do with how you feel.”

“So what! I’m still not going to offer you the opportunity to make yourself part of my world.”

She lies back and lets the rush of time roll over her. She tries to control its flow, but it is moving too fast for her.

She knows the signs that will open up her body to her lover. There are traced with clarity. Her secret invitation. Her lover will kiss the body the way she wants to be kissed. The marks can be traced together. She is remaking her body for her lover.

Others can observe these messages. They are not meant for them. The signs are only there for her lover.

How can she be so specific about her intent? Surely, her observers will attempt to intrude on her story. But they will only see these marks as written on the body. It is the other way around. There is no body without these marks. The writing has proceeded in reverse.

How has she so deftly subtracted herself from commerce? Anyone could assume that his touch might awaken her to pleasure. He might work his way to the highlights of the journey. These are not highlights. They are the journey. Her lover understands the progression. Her lover knows how to subtract the body from its expectations. She will be touched in a way that tells her that he lover knows her. This is the lover’s body that she is offering to only one other person.

Her invitation is so precarious. If she loses the affection, she is isolated. She cannot return to the space of the body. All that has been separated from intent has been dissipated into the universe. She fears how she has been written in such a specific way. Her desire begins with this fear.

When her lover senses how these marks are joined together, they both breathe together in the rhythm of the time that she has created. The intersection of their desires is marked by the succession of caresses that have been awakened in these specific places on the body. Others might rush ahead in the hope of stimulating her ecstasy. They would all lose the trail. Her lover knows how to read the marks. Her lover can resist any other intention.

They both breathe at the same time. The flow rolls over them. The lover is not accustomed to this intensity and becomes entangled in her body. She has set this path in motion by confluence of her intention. She has been so clear in telling her lover what she wants.

She explodes in the ecstasy. This reinforces her opening invitation. There is nowhere to escape for the lover. No otherness of the body. Everything is a repetition of her desire. The other parts of the body tremble under the very weight of what she is saying.

She is not afraid to surrender herself. She knows that she is protected. Another might draw attention to how her body does not meet his expectations. He would try to remind her how he cannot twist its form to accord with his desires. His lover does not get distracted with those geometries.

Once her lover enters the cocoon that surrounds them together, both of them are able to satisfy each other. Her lover has nowhere to escape. Her lover finds wonder in their connection together. Every touch returns to her initial invitation. There is not distraction from the outside world.

Her lover becomes overwhelmed by the flows of passion. The world is redefined by the language that she has created. Any attempt to get away from this progression returns to lover to her lair. She welcomes their proximity. They do not backtrack. They do not question why they are together. Her lover does not compare her body with another's. There is no opportunity to make this mistake.

The words have created their articulation. The world has unfolded with their meaning. The physical realm has been wound around her intentions. They have been communicated to her lover. There are no misunderstandings. Neither is confused what is happening. They are both going along together in the same direction.

"This is too much for me."

"What are you saying?"

"I can't keep up with you. This is too much for me to understand."

"If you can't keep up with me, then you weren't invited."

"That's a little cruel. Why do things have to be your way?"

"They don't. But there has to be something that is my way. Otherwise I'm not part of this. You might as well be on your own."

"I can't make sense of what you're telling me."

"You have to do a little work."

"I've done that. I am feeling too closed in. I feel that you can't respond to the world."

"I don't have to answer to the world. I can only answer for myself."

"That's all part of it."

"I can do what I can for myself. I can invite you along."

"I need to invite you places that you haven't been."

"But I can only get there from where I am."

"Some things are new for you. You have to leap across barriers. You are only willing to do what you have already done before."

"I can't be someone that I'm not."

"I'm not asking you to change completely. But you can't expect to know another person if you think that they can survive by being only what you want them to be."

"I agree. But I know who I am. And I know my limits. You can't ask me to push myself in a way that threatens who I am."

"You can't see it as a threat. You have to take a risk. You have to move outside of your comfort zone."

"I am willing to do that. You have to work with me."

"You're not letting me do that. You have rules, and you won't break those rules."

"I am stretching myself. There is nowhere to go."

"You have to let go. You have to agree to let go."

"I don't have that kind of room."

"If you don't create space to be who you are, you are never going to reach that point."

"I already know who I am."

"You have defined yourself in such a narrow way. It's not even the you that I know. And it's not the you that you can be."

"I can't change direction in midstream. I am what I am."

"You need to share more of yourself."

"I am sharing everything that I have."

"You're still not reaching me. You remain cut off from where I am!"

"What do you propose?"

"You need to break your rules. Step outside the boundaries of how you have defined yourself."

"I need your help."

"I am trying to do that. But you keep pulling back."

"You want to take me to places that are too dangerous to my well-being."

"I'm not asking for too much."

"It could be too much for me."

She works to become part of his world. It is too much of an adjustment. She realizes how she needs to withdraw back into her shell.

"You could be trying to define your pleasure in terms of yourself. But you need to define yourself in terms of your pleasure."

"That sounds so limiting. As if I am some kind of hedonist."

"You don't like pleasure for its own sake."

"That's monstrous. I'm not just an animal."

"You can't ignore your physical side."

"If there's no humanity, it's not worth doing."

"Some joys take a while to sink in!"

"What are they before they take effect?"

"Drives, urges, revelations."

"If I let my drives take me over, then I'm nothing less than a madwoman!"

"Why are you so afraid to be yourself? You put these restrictions on yourself that prevent you from being free."

"That's just who I am. I can't be some kind of depraved fiend all the time."

"Give in to some of those desires. Enjoy life!"

"And what do I do after that. I don't want to spend my time living down my own embarrassment."

"Maybe you have to live up to the real power inside of you."

"That's not a real power; it's some kind of deficiency."

"You're denying your nature!"

"That makes me sound like a vampire!"

"If you ignore your needs, you are starving your soul."

"You're being overly dramatic."

"Life runs on emotion. You can't slow down that internal force. What are you afraid of?"

"I don't believe anything that you say."

“You’re stunting your own development. The poison is going to build inside you if you don’t let it get out.”

“It’s not as if I’m ready to explode. I like my peace and quiet.”

“It’s only temporary. You have to get your juices flow.”

“I’m more about creativity. Being constructive with my time. Not pursuing pleasure for its own sake.”

“There are extremes of pleasure that open you up to the highest form of revelation.”

“How is that?”

“You can’t imagine it. You have to experience it first hand.”

“That’s a crock.”

“Try it, and you’ll understand.”

“I’m not some kind of addict.”

“It’s not an addiction. It’s more of a realization.”

“How can you say that? Quit trying to brainwash me!”

The body is overwhelmed by the extremes of desire. In satisfaction, she loses her composure.

“I can keep doing this.”

“What are you saying? You’re not leaving me.”

“I don’t like what is happening to me. I feel scared.”

“I’m here for you.”

“You’re here for yourself.”

“You’re continuing to hold back. That is the source of your fear.”

“I can’t open myself anymore than this.”

“You have to let yourself be free.”

“No, I don’t. I’m going to drown if I keep letting this happen.”

“Take a deep breath. Don’t let it get to you.”

“Breathe? I’m short of breath.”

“That’s because you’re pulling up short. Let go.”

“Let go, let go! I can’t let go.”

“You’re missing the mark every time.”

“If that’s how it is, I have to live with it.”

“You can’t call that life.”

“I’m content. I can’t let my composure be disrupted.”

“You’re preventing yourself from enjoying life. What made you this way?”

“I think that’s it’s the only way to be. Otherwise, my body is making decisions for me.”

“We are our bodies!”

“I’ve tried to guide the progress. Things have got way out of control”

“Figure out a new way of making sense of it all.”

“I only lose myself.”

“Calm down. Relax.”

“I don’t know if I can relax.”

“If you can’t relax, you’re never going to get over your obstacle.”

“I don’t want to be part of this.”

“You can’t give up now. There’s a lot more to go before things bear results.”

“I’m at wit’s end. This is hardly the time.”

“It will help you quiet down!”

“I’m not good at this.”

“You’re too good at suffering. You’re trying to make it part of your repertoire. That is why you can’t loosen up.”

“You’re not asking me to surrender my integrity.”

“What do you want to know to reassure yourself?”

“That I’m not going to wake up in the morning with any regrets.”

“No one can micro-manage the future.”

“I can’t have a devil-make-care attitude.”

“You’re not being cooperative.”

”Tell me what to do then.”

“It’s not about me telling you. You’ve been trying to tell yourself what to do. That is why you’ve got derailed.”

“Am I supposed to start over?”

She is trying to protect herself by becoming as immaterial as possible.

“You’re quite attractive.”

“Thank you.”

“I feel that I know you. I don’t know what it is.”

“I don’t want to be rude. But I can’t acknowledge that what you see has anything to do with my world.”

“I can watch you walk. Your expressiveness when you talk to your friends. All these things are signs.”

“Signs for you about your world. Your perceptions. But keep them to yourself. They are no help to em. I’m not interested in you nor your signs.”

“How’s that? I’m offering you a real insight in how the world works. Where you fit.”

“That’s not really up to you.”

“Are you telling me that you can control all these things?”

“I can do what I can!”

“I’m only offering to help.”

“No matter what you say can change the simple fact that I have no interest in you.”

“You could become interested.”

“The world allows many things. But that kind of interest has nothing to do with whom I really am. And you have to let me be.”

“Why so harsh?”

“It’s called rejection. If you keep bothering me, it’s called harassment.”

“You’re not giving me a chance.”

“Look at yourself. Do we seem to share anything in common?”

“Loads. I know all these things about me.”

“About the external self. It’s not how I am inside.”

“You’re afraid to face who you really. You can be traced like a homing pigeon.”

“Wonderful. We can both end up at the same destination. Only, you’re not coming

inside.”

“It wouldn’t hurt to let me in.”

“Hurt is the word. It would be excruciating pain. I’m an artist. You just want to be entertained. You would be one roadblock after another to my progress. I don’t need this kind of shit.”

“Let me in!”

“You’re already out. So don’t even look at me.”

“What’s wrong with me looking?”

“You are creeping me out. You’re like a worm who is trying to work his way inside of me.”

“I’m not that horrible.”

“To you, I am not. But for me, you are reprehensible. You are the one who cannot see the external world. You are only a voyeur. And the mirror shows how you have been ravaged by your own desire. My affection can’t transform you into something loveable. You are way beyond that. I wish that I could help. The situation is definitely hopeless.”

“Give me a chance!”

“There are no chances. Go away!”

“I have something that I need to tell you.”

“I have my ears closed.”

She is squirming.

“It’s not so bad.”

“We share nothing in common. It’s like having a rash.”

“I can help you out.”

“Doing what?”

“Showing you what you’re made of!”

“What’s that?”

“An explorer.”

“Exploring what? Your selfish whims.”

“I’m just as much an artist as you.”

“What do you want?”

“I want you to appreciate that there are things that we share.”

“You’re trying to force yourself into my world. The only thing that we share is the oxygen that we breathe.”

“There’s got to be more to it.”

“The only to-it is my need not to have to answer for your problems.”

“You don’t know what you’re missing.”

“We already don’t get along. Do you think that is going to change if I’m nicer to you.”

“I’m not sure what is going to happen. I’m willing to give it a chance.”

“There must be some way to get you to go away.”

“Are you trying to trick me?”

“That’s how I feel about you. I can’t trust you.”

“I’ve made mistakes in my day. I’m not perfect.”

“I don’t like your begging.”

“I’m attempting not to say too much. But this is all about things that we tell each other.”

“I don’t want to hear any more about it.”

“Think about it. Think about the feeling. What you can’t do for yourself.”

“You’re willing to do what I tell you.”

“Yes!”

“No more than that.”

“I’m an eager listener. And I learn well.”

“I can’t be disappointed again.”

“You’re making me nervous.”

“You should be more than nervous. If this doesn’t work, I’m going to be pissed at you.”

“You’re really willing to work on it with me.”

“What are you talking about?”

“I said that I was willing to follow your instructions.”

“Great, but I’m trying to work things out in my mind.”

“You do that. But quit playing games with my heart.”

“Heart? You’re not even part of my life. I’m a willing listener. I’m trying to tell you things that might help you work through your problems.”

“I thought that we were past this.”

“We haven’t moved at all.”

“Don’t let me down!”

“Let’s just do what we have to do. It will all make sense to you.”

She has already reached the point of no return. She has exploited her concentration. She believes that her spiritual attainment has taken her way beyond physical pleasure.

“What I have discovered is way beyond any sense of physical enlightenment. It is the intersection of my personality and my spiritual longing.”

“What you describe is an abstraction of physical pleasure! It is the hope that the self can sustain that intensity.”

“How do you sustain it?”

“More physical stimulation.”

“That seems so empty.”

“A caring touch can awaken the body to a whole realm of new sensations. A world where the body seems to be propelled in an inner space.”

“How can any of that be real?”

“It’s just as real as the spiritual world.”

“You can’t say that. It has no foundation besides your personal satisfaction.”

“That is just as real as anything else. That lingering sensation. It’s the same thing as a headache. Or hitting your head against a brick wall. There’s some actual object that creates your feeling. And the feeling is a way to observe the contours of the object.”

“So what is the object that corresponds to sexual excitement?”

“The loving caress.”

“What about spiritual enlightenment?”

“A desire for a more lasting physical connection.”

“That sounds reductive. You’re ignoring a person’s character or how they communicate.”

“You’re afraid of the immense power of your desires. That they are going to obliterate your need for friendship.”

“Your view of sex is so destructive. It is based on for pleasure its own sake. The adventurer has no cares for anyone but the self.”

“Two people can share the same need for adventurer. The desire to push the body to its limits.”

“But if it’s all a contest, there’s really no chance to get away from it all. You feel that you always have to be at the top of your game, or you will end up on your own.”

“You’re holding out for something that is never going to exist.”

“You have no spiritual depth.”

“I don’t believe in ghosts.”

“What is that supposed to mean?”

“You’re seeing things that just aren’t there.”

“They are for some people, people of character.”

“That’s too twisted.”

“Touch is never going to give you the answer that you need. There are some things that have to be said. Touch only worsens the confusion.”

“I don’t want to be overwhelmed by some guy who gives with his touch, but holds back with his heart.”

“That sounds so abstract. How can you ever know?”

“I’m good at that.”

“How is it working?”

“I want to be alone!”

She has almost made it across the barrier. She feels that the only thing that is holding her back is her own limitations. She is now willing to let go.

“How well can you know me?”

“Are you asking me about your new perfume?”

“It is genetically programmed to communicate my personal essence.”

“What could that possibly be?”

She adjusts her perspective.

“I feel that I know you.”

“How could that possibly be?”

“I can smell your essence.”

“What is that supposed to mean?”

“Your perfume has the imprint of your personality. It’s like your genetic program.”

“You believe that kind of nonsense. Even if it was true, we can assume all kinds of other identities that are only remotely connected to our genetic programming.”

“Are you telling me that the world has been twisted out of shape?”

“You’ve just woken up to such a realization.”

“I still have my beliefs.”

“There is no purity!”

She wants to attain some kind of purity.

“You have to touch me the way that I tell you.”

“How can I know where?”
“Parts of my body are on fire.”
“That sounds like the symptom of a serious disease.”
“Act as if it’s true.”
She is sleepwalking.
“Why did you wake me up?”
“I thought that you wanted to have some fun.”
“Are you messing with me?”
“I’m letting you make the decision. Isn’t that the basis of freedom.”
“I may be free. But you are fucked up.”
“I am submitting to a higher power.”
“Can submission be the foundation of freedom?”
“It’s all a big mix. Like alphabet soup.”
“What is the word?”
“The spirit is in the word.”
“Touch me here!”
“Where?”
“Here!”
“I can’t tell!”
“Can’t you read the signs on the body.”
“They need to be clearer.”
“What if you need a revision?”
Her body prepares itself for a revision.
“This is the portal to the cosmos.”
“Can I touch you there?”