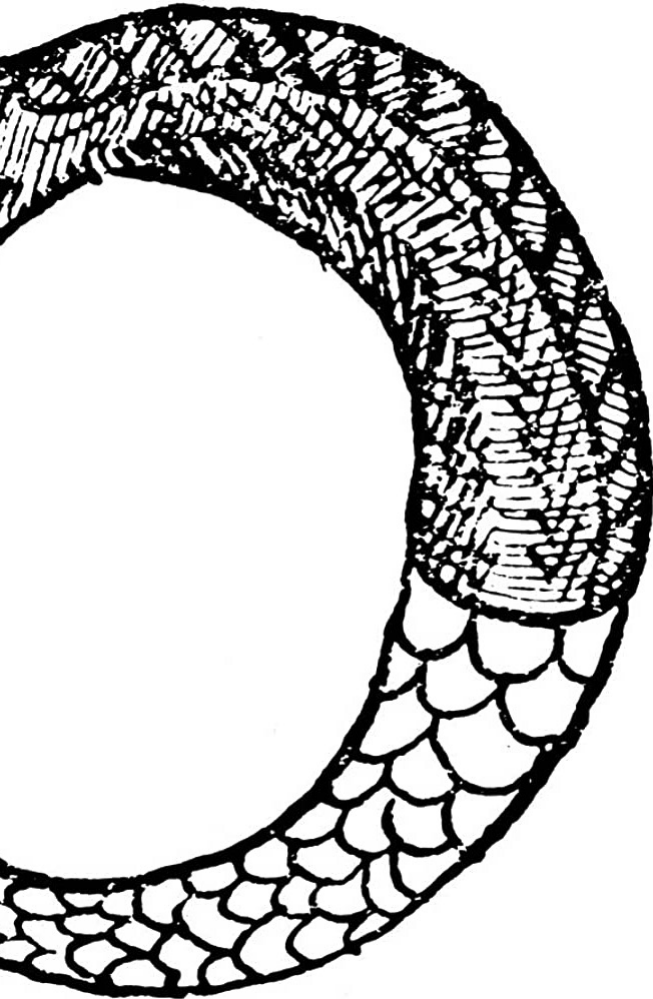


Wax



Comrade Candle/
Sofia Johnson

Part 1: Creation

I The Mountain

- 1 The ice in my veins beholden to your fiery Superman.
- 2 Wrought forth from blood and strength is all I claim as my own.
- 3 O, Zarathustra, may I grant you this warning!—You can't forget what is already mine.
- 4 I leave you now with the question: "Will you wake when I die?"
- 5 Know as you are, I'm superior—you may like that you're held in contempt.
- 6 The contempt I have may shine light for me on my humanity.
- 7 There is nothing—no god or idea—I would hold as sacred. Nothing is fixed or so-rigid to be held as a thing-in-itself. When a man as super as you bows to my superiority—what do you say?
- 8 I lend my voice to your ears and spare you the crack of a whip with the desire born selfishly to hear your cries spoke again. Still am I to be fruitless with the task I have placed as my own?
- 9 "No, not today, fair Wax—I see it fit to speak. Tell me though, dear maiden: what causes your contempt?"
- 10 "My self-interest."
- 11 "Oh?"
- 12 "If you'd willingly lend me your hand then I'd demonstrate."
- 13 "How?"
- 14 "By fire, my daring Superman."
- 15 Emboldened by taking the hand of a fiery enigmatic man, it has come time that I venture where the loftiness of my spirit becomes.
- 16 I do wish that you know the magnitude of power my cold heart commands. Perhaps you already may as you hold tight to my powerful hand. I know that as I'm consumed, in perpetuity by my own being, I create unending, born from nothing, to be. I saw fit to will that your hand clasp ever-so-tightly to mine. Now come, Zarathustra, I will it—that my hands may bring forth fire. Fire to burn down what-is, of the humanity I hold in contempt. I find it fitting to bring my next challenge to successfully surmount.
- 17 Away now we shall descend from the cold of the desolate

mountain. Though we journey to some place far colder than any earthly chill wrought. A frost one must know of, otherwise one will be bit.

18 I will bite.

II The Shop

1 Graciously to you I gift what is to come, though it must be said my reasons are egotistic.

2 I wish to see the world that the State extols brought to mere ash as I revel at the flame. I am but one enby, though virtuous of nature. My will to power claims only what it can.

3 I have but two hands with which I may create.

4 With my voice, I will tell you why I choose to burn.

5 My nose is thrilled by the scent of kerosene. It has proven to be one of this shop's precious items. As I douse the structure, I feel pure ecstasy—Oh, joy, Zarathustra! Soon its end will be!

6 This normalized structure reproduces capitalist relation, its right to property defended by the State. The night will hold me tight, as once you too did also—the black curtain will soon enough be pulled.

7 This religion of consumption I will never hold sacred.

8 With this fire, I give you the death of but one shop.

9 Thankless flames burn bright and indifferent to any tradition of woe and disgust practiced by shopkeeper. The inferno has no care for any kind of morals.

10 Perhaps as I have unleashed my burning in this state, the coldest of all monsters would label me immoral—my story is told by the hand that creates it.

11 Though my actions are so-noble, in creating my own burning, I dare not caress its fruit—ashes. The violence of the State would chase me tireless.

12 I find my solace in the end of this building where, until as of late, one could exchange commerce. Billowing black above, I wonder if the claim of private property extends to the heavens. Certainly in some part, the capitalist lays claims of ownership onto this ethereal cloud. I shall not shed a tear, with exception for the flame. Its wake on this plane has been far too fleeting.

13 Granted I must know, lest my ears deceive, this brave inferno

will soon be less than embers. My deed, likewise, can never be unmade. Consider all the coal as mere immortal product—propaganda of the deed. One cannot hope to build a shackle from mere ash—Fire can be tamed but what its changed has changed.

14 Take my hand once more so I may show the sauce that brings my spiciness on par with this heat.

15 Though we must get washed, we shall soon return to witness the terror within the State's eyes.

16 I cherish this experience that cannot be remade. The State's terror should not go unknown.

17 To know of the State's fright, one only needs a light!

III The Firefighter

1 "I know that your fair labor is done in your own interest to preserve this God-graced structure and all that it surrounds. Your bravery is telling as you walk this tired path where your weary eyes behold such destruction."

2 "I thank you kind civilian for all the praise you give. Please keep aback as we put this flame to rest. It truly is a shame that this fire ever came."

3 "It is certainly disgraceful how much this fire took, I could never hope to fathom the pain it has brought—and now too how much cannot be bought! Its impact will be felt wherever one can look. Has all the personnel been spared from this carnage?"

4 "The store has been lost, indeed you're right to ask—a new store can be built but never lives restored. It appears the store was empty, and from what we all can tell, the fire accidental."

5 "Well, you are the experts, that much is apparent. I'd never have the courage to quench inferno's thirst."

6 "As indeed, we've done."

7 "At times, the task seemed fun."

8 The flame's been laid to rest, where once this store had stood. Arising to their test, the firefighter's good.

9 As the smoke departs, the steam finally vanished, not much remains to tell of this establishment.

10 I see the charred rafters, still smoldering on grounds as black as the clouds that once poured through the sky. Everything that remains is coated equally in flame-born ash and water poured-like

free. As damp as mud can get these fires tormented. Firefighters proved the power one can use.

11 Can a fire ever hope to enter inside the water flow of the same fire hose twice? Not when Firefighters douse the fire expertly. Once the fire quells, the water ceases flow.

12 The fire breathes no more with firefighter hands left sore.

IV The Police Car

1 “Your car is awfully cold, though with a shining glimmer. Would you care to smoke a cigarette for free? The job you’re tasked with would be so hard for me.”

2 “A pretty lady with skin as fair as yours should really avoid smoking cigarettes—you tempt me and I give! It’s just one; I’ll live.”

3 “With cigarette in mouth, you look so different from the usual report given by your brothers.”

4 “Do you have a light?”

5 “Zarathustra might.”

6 As Zarathustra’s hand brings forth a tiny ember, the smell of nicotine coats the police car.

7 “What brings you to these parts, you and your friend—was it just the fire, now brought to an end?”

8 “My friend, Wax, and I ventured over here when it would happen flame appeared.”

9 “We saw the smoke across the night and came to assure things were right.”

10 Three bodies lean against a car as cigarette still burns. Nothing is yet said as time awaits an end.

11 A cigarette burns small, no question of desire. Wax and Zarathustra only tasked to admire.

12 Now with The Police Car’s freshly given branding; the scent still standing; what is left to say? Wax and Zarathustra head on their way.

V The Park

1 Wax and Zarathustra seated gently in the grass, gazing serenely at the cherry blossoms. Petals start to descend from the heights, careening towards their bed below. The wind starts to gust and, but briefly, petals, once more, take to the air. The atmosphere is pink as

momentarily blossoms sink.

2 Turning now to face the lake, I see that its body has been graced as well. The sun gleams off the speckled surface, turning water to glass; colors rich and vibrant, light drawing forth what was once masked by shadows cast.

3 Take hold of the moment, it is ever-fleeting. So much comes to pass right before one's eyes. Nothing matters innately, find beauty where you wish.

4 Seldom will one achieve their preconceived ideal. A petal knows not where it finds land, only this eventuality. Is it predisposed to grass or water? No—it will simply be.

5 I will live as I am and love all that's come to pass.

6 No one is as powerful as I am in my life.

7 I alone control what is beautiful, what I find to be virtuous or noble. Why should any tell me how to be? I love my individuality.

8 I love the beauty of many flowers and the absence of powers.

VI The Collectivist

1 I have come to hold your likes in contempt as time-and-time again you show your lack of spine. Will you match my heat or shall your party ask that you speak for them?

2 "In all due fairness, Wax, we've never seen your labor used to benefit our collective's cause. Our day's work is hard, as many will go hungry due to recent tragedy encroaching on supply. You are but an outlaw, everybody is aware, so how could you ever know an honest day's struggle? Our aid helps many, be damned your contempt."

3 "I had heard a tale of a certain suburbs losing but one store, may your gods find mercy on your poignant begging."

4 "We labor for the good of our collective's needs, so again be damned attacking respectability."

5 "Naturally."

6 The Collectivist's needs reign supreme, the collective's acts serene.

VII The Moralist

1 "The fire to my favorite store was a deliberate act of terror!"

2 "Who do you think would decide to partake in such an evil?"

3 "The police have called it chance, quite the pitch to sell. I imagine

it some hoodlum or Muslim jihadist. No one who's found God, or his son Jesus Christ, would ever dare defy the one true moral code."

4 "Blessed be you for having found your absolutist morals that are so-clearly God-given."

5 "I only wish the heathen would come out to the public to ask for forgiveness that they badly need. Sinners must be punished, justice must be served. Everything should feel right as it's always been."

6 "We should pray that the one true God shall deliver justice to your sorry plight."

7 Wax draws The Moralist deep into a prayer, a prayer that The Moralist hopes to quell evil.

8 As eyes open, The Moralist stays blind.

VIII The Robber

1 Have you ever taken possession of your need with callous disdain for its former tyrant?

2 "I'll put my gun to the head of any who'd deny me the basic needs demanded by my person."

3 Do you know remorse for these grisly sins?

4 "I'd rather live beautifully by bullet and knife than hand a capitalist my entire life."

5 Our world is indifferent to our plight; must we let our downfall be the morals reigning down, erected to prostrate us? I would rather stand my ground and scream out my defiance. Though it so happens that an act is harder forgotten—when one acts for their self, it oft will be immoral.

Let one's immoral acts be one's truth—self-interest.

Life is hardly life when one does merely as they're taught; from moralism to religious sin, devotion's end is terribly grim. Know nothing of remorse, sin is a fabrication.

If one must, sin joyously.

6 "Death to the rich who would demand I offer my entirety just to feed my mouth."

7 "While the bourgeoisie use your body to their ends the cycle repeats ad nauseum—one grows rich, the many poor, with hardships brought to many more, so one can scratch their hedonistic itch. Being poor costs money while being rich makes more. Is this farce of property not the new divine King's right—to sit as unques-

tionable and forever propagate?”

8 The Robber and Wax see Zarathustra eating a bag of corn chips.

9 They only take a couple.

IX The Street Cat

1 Furry free spirit, creeping through the streets, I deeply admire your innocence. You, so proudly, defy all us humans are.

2 Slinking to-and-from the shadows, I can tell your life is hard with your lack of say in our world’s design. I desire such a life, a free spirit in the night. My person will be held to this social contract that I have been born to, against my own self interest.

3 I want to pet The Street Cat.

4 “Mreow!”

X The Black Rose

1 From the sediment, protruding from its stem, the black rose petals rest within their spirals. I gaze at an abyss of petals, taking in their beauty—this rose holds my eyes!

2 With the dark beauty captivating me, I relish the perfumes supplementing sight. This rose’s existence is quite a delight!

3 Often we are told to hold a rose’s thorns as testament to its transgressions.

4 I love to see the beauty, as is—innate. Black suits roses well; black is beautiful.

5 This rose could hardly hope to ever betray the sediment that nurtured the potential we now see. I am joyous that this rose could be.

6 I wish to see many more; whole fields colored black.

7 I cut free the black rose.

XI Waves of Water

1 Crashing on the shoreline, chiseling the stone—a jagged edge eroded far below.

2 The rolling sounds; fresh salty smell. Churning, the blue makes a frothy-white.

3 The spray hits my skin, splattering across—Zarathustra, too.

4 Ebb-and-flow continues, more splashing about of ocean waves in perpetuity.

- 5 As I see it, will it always be? Will the waves keep crashing, ever-powerful, until the stone exists as but mere sand?
- 6 The wave is powerful enough that my mere hands could never stop it.

XII Marijuana Smoke

- 1 Deeply-felt relief with combustion, exhaling fragrance smelt deeply and far. This greenish-hued flower, a target of persecution, gives me pleasure when I see it burn.
- 2 You should know—I will burn.

XIII A Drink of Coffee

- 1 Seated at a wooden table, I am greeted as The Robber joins Zarathustra and me.
- 2 The Moralist and The Collectivist, seated across the room, glare their judgment at the three of us. With no words said at all, their gaze speaking tall, I raise my hand to offer coffee for all present who matter.
- 3 Arriving at the table, steam pouring from the cup, I look into the coffee and giggle at myself. Still scorching. I stand just to stretch my legs.
- 4 “It’s quite a lovely day to have some coffee here.”
- 5 My friends agree, and as my legs cease aching, I rejoin their posture and taste my bitter beverage.
- 6 My lips turn.

XIV A Snake Torn in Two

- 1 My friends and I leave the shop, nearly forgetting to dash. As we make haste to safety, we spot The Street Cat in a box of fried rice. Dazzled initially by this display of sheer cuteness, we fawn at The Street Cat before we approach it. The fried rice it’s scavenged seems relatively fresh.
- 2 We are a bit perplexed: what would possess a cat to place itself in a box of fried rice? The cat is awfully cute, we figure it can clean disregarded food from its fluffy fur. The Street Cat licks its paw.
- 3 Paw and head poke out the side of the toppled box.
- 4 “I think we should venture closer to the cat and unearth this clandestine cuteness.”

5 The Street Cat roll its head at us and purrs. We cross the distance towards our rambunctious friend.

6 With distance closed, attention perks—we see we're in for a surprise.

7 The Street Cat quickly springs into action, already mid-pounce. The Street Cat lands upon a long wandering garden snake. The snake hardly sees the act, and then it's left in two.

8 “Meow!”

XV Striding in Moonlight

1 The moon lights up the street selectively and as it does I am allowed to see. Its beams reflect brightly and glisten from the many flat opaque surfaces. When the moonlight comes, I always remember how terribly these structures cater to the sun.

2 How lightly you illuminate all I see at night.

3 I take my first step.

Part 2: Consumption

XVI Sweet Tea

1 As I fill up my cup with sweet tea, I do remember the ice. Taking ahold of my drink, I think of what to do with my day. I don't desire for ice to melt and water down my drink. The tea is awfully sweet and reminds me of better days.

2 Given the mood I have found, I elect to lie in the grass, surrounded by bushes and flowers, to bask in the breeze and scent.

3 My mind is quick to wander, try as I might to control it. Eventually I release thought from the reins I have used to suppress it. Racing relentless, not all of my thoughts are coherent. Passion, lust, and desire dominate sadness and grief.

4 Purpose ceases to be as I begin to simply exist.

5 Though honey would make it too sweet, my sweet tea stays next to me. Long forgotten from the thought grasping my entirety, I still manage to sip on my sweet iced tea.

6 My deep longing for comfort is felt to my very core. I knew what it meant to ascend, in the cold I must overcome urge. My heart will remain fettered, for all of the freedoms it grants, as much as I one day long to have it melted at last.

7 What was before now wasn't as cold, or possibly I was not privy. My heart then had chosen to hold space for those clearly not worthy. I walk a great path, one I am willing to undertake alone—know that I am accustomed to being misunderstood by those just now growing ears.

You likely do not walk with me, far more likely I walk around graves of those who'd rather be led than live but one moment alive. As you choose to be enslaved—I thrive.

8 In this moment, rather, I lie in the relative comfort of cold known by the lofty arsonist who holds all of humanity in contempt.

9 I sip my tea.

XVII Snow-Covered Rooftops

1 Snow, ever so white, falls upon the street, peppering it and creating an ever-white sheet. As I make my way along, I gaze upon the snow—it cushions each and every footfall. So my feet do fall, as the snow does, still. The cold holds me tightly, the sound of walking lightly

enveloped within the winter's embrace brings my senses fully, acutely, aware of every mild happening: cold air carries more than pain.

My wandering, partly aimless, though surely I'll quell the chill, leaves behind a path to be filled in time. I am more aware than I had before been, just how alone I am in this wake. My way is carved through ice, a twisted turn of fate, though perhaps fate isn't quite a thing to have beheld with the sharp skepticism born from the cold.

Will I ever know? I live but one life. How can I discern truth to my essence? I see no point, no desire. I have brought forth fire—who could call it fate what I chose to create?

2 Probably the moral, the God-fearing afraid, would behold my fire as but mere fate; possibly too the State. Of those who'd admire? They'd share the flame they've made, hardly looking to become judge. To them, my fire floral—the State a blight, a smudge.

Well, to you, my friend, who I may never know, I wish you all the best in your struggle with the State. As it rests upon the suffering of near-all, surely soon all seek its fall; a wishful desire that may never truly be. Will it fall—I'll see?

3 I know the snow still falls as I journey through the street, much like the State subsists with each fall of my feet.

4 A rustle up above greets the floor with a crash. I care to look above and spot a snow-topped Street Cat. The Street Cat greets my gaze, still plodding on the roof, finally halting to sit far above.

5 "Meow!"

6 My body feels the chill, my heart naught but concern. Won't the cold claim cat as equally as I? My mind has been claimed, I set upon my task: "Won't you please join my search for warmth?"

7 I see The Street Cat's shivers, the fright within its eyes. My body ventures closer to the snow-covered rooftop where lies The Street Cat. I offer my arms, overcome with dread, unknown to me whether I'm understood. Snow now coats my arms, and in truth, all equally.

8 "Aren't you cold up on the roof, couldn't you use rest? Please come here, sweet Street Cat, before the cold claims you. I love you, dear Street Cat, and only wish you well."

9 "Meow."

10 Retreating from my gaze, The Street Cat no longer sits.

11 Snow descends upon the rooftop.

XVIII The Throne Room

1 Zarathustra rests upon his magnificent throne, seated with the grace born of a King. His demeanor calm, collected, as he pleasantly gazes upon the entirety of The Throne Room. His right hand grasps a scepter, glistening with gold and gem—his left dormant upon his very chair. A grand rug lines the path, up the shallow steps, occupying space between the throne and entrance.

What drew Zarathustra to sit upon his throne? Was it merely whim, or was his will not strong?

2 The Throne Room doors open— “Enter,” Zarathustra speaks—and into it we wander. I, Wax, The Moralist, The Collectivist, The Firefighter, The Robber. “You may all come closer so all may speak in turn. I am quite thankful you have come at my command.” Zarathustra speaks with odd finality.

3 The doors close behind us and I, first, choose to speak: “Your company is worth a respite from the chill. Come now, Zarathustra, won’t you let us know just how pleasant sitting is upon a throne?” I venture closer than the rest, and lean upon his throne.

“Is the throne you rest on a thing-in-itself, perhaps it truly has no real value to it?”

4 “What has our company to say about your intrigue?” Zarathustra speaks.

5 “Everything has essence, a spirit if you will—all things have meaning innate to their permanence. A throne’s essence, the spirit of a throne, calls to the right of those seated to rule.” The Collectivist speaks.

6 “My service to my people is funded by our nation, and in times of old may well have meant my service served such type of throne. A throne’s value comes from that which surrounds it.” The Firefighter speaks.

7 “Value to the throne? I’d ask its buyer.” The Robber speaks.

8 “God creates all that is, everything is sacred. All that is to be had is by God’s grace. The only throne with value, above any other, lies in a throne given by God.” The Moralist speaks.

9 “I take it that the essence, the spirit of a throne, to each-and-every person has a whole new value. Though it does appear some find thrones similar; to this Unique, your throne exists only to be consumed as my property; your throne is nothingness, valueless.

So you sit upon a throne, you daring Superman?” Wax speaks.

10 Zarathustra turns to face Wax, grinning at the question: “Well, I am noble.” Zarathustra speaks.

11 “As you say; perhaps your throne does speak. I would venture to say, should that be true, your throne serves merely as adornment. Though, if I may, is that true?” Wax speaks.

12 Preparing to reply, Zarathustra turns, suddenly, to the door. Through The Throne Room door, one hears a faint Mye-ow! As the sound travels through The Throne Room, Wax and The Robber grin then turn with the rest. Wax leaves Zarathustra’s side and journeys to the door.

13 With a nod from Zarathustra, Wax opens The Throne Room door. The Street Cat paws the door as it opens. Nuzzling its head against Wax’s leg, The Street Cat then defiantly struts over to the throne. With one small leap, paws now stand upon throne’s armrest.

14 The Street Cat sits upon the throne, shedding residual snow. It meows at Zarathustra, demanding his hand. Snow melts; wet throne.

15 “Such a talkative creature, quite cute, affectionate.” Zarathustra speaks, beginning the faintest of smiles.

16 Deprived of its right to be pet, The Street Cat leaps down from the throne, steadily moving toward a bemused Wax. Wax kneels as The Street Cat gets rather close.

17 Suddenly shy, The Street Cat sniffs Wax’s outreached hand. Wax and The Street Cat gaze upon each other. Wax, with their usual smirk, The Street Cat poking their hand with its little wet nose. With a few sniffs, The Street Cat starts to scan the remainder of the room, tiring of Wax and their hand.

18 With a final meow, The Street Cat departs, strutting defiantly beyond The Throne Room door.

19 The Throne Room door is open; a somberness is felt by all as they witness The Street Cat depart.

20 “Should we close the door?” Zarathustra speaks.

XIX Crystal-Clear Icicle

1 With temperatures descending to the depths, much more has dawned than the snow. I walk among the trees, sugarcoated evergreens.

2 Carved through the ground, via trodden snow, paw-after-paw

advance upon their way.

3 I think of the cold, the warmth my clothes afford, my anxiety rearing at thoughts of The Street Cat.

4 Where do you wander, so far off in the cold? Do you have a home, a place to keep yourself warm? Don't you know the cold could claim you as its own?

5 I want to keep you safe from the perils present that a cat could otherwise fall victim to. Be damned what is more-or-less natural, I have the desire to care for what I love.

6 I am here, at present, to create what I desire.

7 I cut and weave between frosty trees, quickening with each passing step.

8 The winding swirl of pawprints, with each twist and turn, becomes far more shallow.

9 Finally before me, I witness The Street Cat curled beneath a tree. With its bodily shivers, and its visible breath, my concern grows for its wellbeing.

10 I rush forward, taking hold of The Street Cat. I tuck its body within my jacket.

11 Hanging on the branch, from which I soon depart, is an icicle, crystal-clear. Sun shines through like glistening glass, completely and ever clear. Far below lies The Street Cat's depression.

12 I chance a glance before I part—the icicle still hangs.

XX The Squatter

1 I lift myself through the window, avoiding the remnants of glass left behind from whomever first chose to enter. The Squatter cradles The Street Cat, already enjoying the heat, comfortably endowed by this residence. Much like The Street Cat, my body takes kindly to the sharp difference in temperature.

2 As my body heat continues to rise in this squatted residence, absent of snow, my state of worry quells; love for life swells.

3 The Street Cat leaps to its feet, swiftly nuzzling The Squatter's leg.

4 The Squatter accompanies The Street Cat and me as we make our way to the house's heat source: a fireplace aflame with tender warmth. Flames devour wood, crackling as they come.

5 "Let's sit and rest; safe from the chill."

6 Wood aplenty for fire, I feel myself relax. The Street Cat rests between The Squatter and me, curled up, awfully cute. Lighting ever changing, rippling through its fur, The Street Cat's eyes close, chest gently rising—to fall.

7 “How go your days, my friend—nature treats you harshly. Certainly the cold grasped you until late. Well, how could I claim to own anything; should you need some heat, your company would be a treat.”

9 “I worry deeply for the life of this cat, perhaps almost to my detriment.”

10 “We'll keep it safe, of that I'm sure.”

11 “A fire and shelter go beyond mere sentiment—the truth of your words is pure; our efforts shan't fall flat.”

12 “Care for another makes me feel complete.”

13 Has fire brought forth cold's defeat?

XXI The Shoplifter

1 We're greeted by a jingle and the harsh blast of cold air as The Shoplifter and I enter the clutches of a capitalist facility.

2 We cross between the alarms peppering the entrance towards the capitalist's hoarded resources. The Shoplifter grips the strap of their tote with their hand, aiming to pad the size therein.

3 “We need to eat today, The Street Cat as well. We may as well eat well—our right.”

4 Aisle upon aisle, stacked shelves of defended goods lay before our eyes. Food and drink of various size the first targets of our conquest. They lie amongst the rest of this capitalist's defended goods—aisle upon aisle.

High above, higher than I can throw, opaque black domes spy our every movement.

5 Clean floors reflect an abundance of light; our bodies illuminated. Still we duck and weave in the cover afforded, stashing away our bodies basic needs.

6 “Why should I owe another for an inescapable aspect of my existence?”

7 “What is owed when the right to own lies on faulty pretext?”

8 “How could you own an aisle of goods you'll never use yourself, that your hand could never hold all of, any more than one could

claim to own an ocean?”

9 “This food and drink are mine to use as I will.”

10 As I leave the premises, The Shoplifter close behind, I feel my concern vanquished—I will eat and drink today.

Today I will not slave away to merely subsist. I’ve refused to hold true the sacred idea that this world would have me find to be anything I would miss when I gain a sense of mind.

11 My life is mine to live, to do as I please.

12 “I can’t wait to dive into our food.”

13 We hurry back toward The Squatter and The Street Cat.

XXII Canned Tuna

1 On the floor of the squatted residence, where we do reside, a can of tuna stares down The Street Cat. Still-lidded, The Street Cat prods the can with its nose.

2 “How sad it is to me, how cruel a can is to those not human.”

3 The Shoplifter removes the lid quickly.

4 The Street Cat deftly dives into its meal.

5 The Shoplifter shares their haul among us human friends. We opt to join The Street Cat in satisfying our hunger.

6 “Could you pass the lemonade?”

XXIII The Riot

1 A sea of black surroundings; persons nameless to me. Air filled with the sound of foot poundings—this joyous event makes me free.

Oh how I used to beg for the lie of a freedom by right!

Now, I stand on my own legs to take what is mine in a fight.

Quickly, we march through what’s ours as some choose to throw and smash—glass rains down and none cowers, nor chooses to bery any as brash.

2 What is right I decide by my power—I refuse to be ruled. Capitalist structures defile any claims of order or peace. Why would I choose to be governed when life could be so much more?

3 Order is when you alone decide how you ought be. Order cannot be found where one decides for many.

4 For order to exist, authority cannot be.

5 Private property is truly disgusting; it's right of ownership protected by the State. What filthy violence the State will enact upon any who challenge their farce.

6 Autonomous magnanimity will bring forth terrible force from the State.

7 Thankful to our cause, we all will not stay to be captured.

8 The State will never fall from mere chance or circumstance. I choose to create the fall of the State.

9 How terrified the State is of our defiance of its tyranny.

10 Countless sirens blare; red and blue flare—we all swiftly depart.

11 War against the State: art.

XXIV The Burning Flag

1 I toss down a flag of the Nation that lays claim to this territory. Authority deserves naught more than contempt—Nations rest upon tyranny.

2 Those whose names I still don't know gleefully shout at what is to come. Our black-adorned bodies surround a terrible slight against freedom.

3 From the black ethereal mass shoots line upon line of kerosene.

4 Amassing quite the stench, the flag drenched thoroughly, the tiniest ember sparks the annihilation of sanctity.

5 Quite a tiny fire.

XXV The Police Station

1 Spilling from the curb to the street, we face off with The Police Station entrance—black radiance hanging over such filth.

2 Dull and dreary structure, repressively designed; your place in this world, your function, is to be a yoke around the type of human you decide to be good citizen. You serve as both threat and perpetuator of terrifying violence.

3 If you'd enslave me, confined to a cage, you'd strip me of my life. With that looming threat upon me, what of my life is voluntary?

4 I'll never trust authority—one all-too human—to enact violence as just and right.

5 Authority is crude, a violent instrument of rule.

- 6 Let's burn this to the ground!
- 7 Hands carry wood and gasoline toward The Police Station's door. With wood cast on the floor, the gasoline can near—hand-cuffs appear.
- 8 Trap sprung amidst our ranks, confusion growing wildly, difficulty arises in insuring my own safety. Knowing I could not close the space necessary to aid my comrade, I flee to fight another day.
- 9 Our fire has been halted in a truly terrible way.

XXVI Fearful Flight

- 1 White mist coats my surroundings, bringing many to tears. Shouts to disperse and halt intermingle with gun shots.
- 2 Having donned my gas mask, I take off in a sprint.
- 3 I cut through the tear gas, navigating street after street.
- 4 Finding suitable cover and emptiness of location, I remove my black clothing covering far more civilian attire.
- 5 Fitting the part far more, I depart on my way to now walk right past the police who once fought me.
- 6 My gas mask and hoodie reek of tear gas.

XXVII The Book Fair

- 1 Tables piled high with pamphlets, constantly taken to be replaced.
- 2 I walk amongst the rank and file of various kinds of people; the commonality at present: the sharing of literature.
- 3 Nothing particularly catches my eye as my wandering becomes aimless. I grab several selections while walking to not seem heartless. Atmosphere so calmly accepting, I continue with my aimless selecting.
- 4 The Street Cat leaps up and lands upon zines, walking amongst them.
- 5 “How did I not notice you!”

XXVIII Lemonade

- 1 I sit under the sun on an outdoor chair, a chair that lays claim to the shop wherein I loiter.
- 2 My friend, The Robber, sits across the table. Between us, an

unopened bottle of lemonade.

3 “I’m awfully thirsty.”

4 Cold droplets descend the length of the bottle, the sun gradually heating the lemonade.

5 “The recent arrest was terribly tragic, not much seems left to be done. That the State could infiltrate our ranks successfully makes me hesitant to trust another such encounter.

Perhaps it would be best if I avoid such risky endeavors.”

6 I decide to open the lemonade, taking a sip before passing it on.

7 “Isn’t it great to drink with a friend?”

Part 3: Overcoming

XXIX The Tree

1 I sit beneath you kindly, you tree who brings me air
until I gaze politely, I question you to where I shall go to find the
sight of leaf once lost? O-Sweet tree you've lived through winter's
chilling frost!

Surely you ought know of winter's cold embrace everywhere I go,
I experience the cold
enthraling temperate grace
I find nature rather bold!

2 Lovely still, you're latched upon
the thoughts I collect to understand
all I've learned yet from my dawn you, tree, hold me as you stand.

3 Given all of my surrounding
at least as it so seems to appear
I find what seems astounding—
to see life and death so near!
Brought forth by seeming chance
all that is—my existence
and even from one glance

I witness life's unending persistence
4 Growing from what frost's chill made dead
you thrive, as all before
have stilled their dread
at using what lives no more

5 For life's own purpose
choosing of life's desire
what-is at life's service
existence created as life aspires

6 Metaphysical significance of the Tree
existence—life—as separate from me

7 Continuation of life as Right?—
what is Right to The Tree forgone might?

8 Perhaps as I sit by the Tree, I contemplate
life in a way not relative to mine
in this cold, eerie world, one must navigate
life's many kinds—each very fine

- 9 I will certainly depart before the Tree, owing to my life as mere mortal. Yet as I depart, I may yet be allowed to foster new life.
10 I will see.

XXX Pains Growing

- 1 My longing for even the comfort of a hug brings my mind's thoughts to the confines of one space. I feel the cold touch of our world as the only sensation beknown. My lofty deeds and self cannot prevent being gripped—alone.
2 Where will I find such a love, love beyond mere comfort I crave?
3 Does the contempt I hold for the world allow for any love to be found?
4 Oh, what a frightful cold that would wed me so to a life lived on knife's edge—lonely.
5 Yet as my mind's tempest enthralls me, my noontide continues to be.
6 I decide to open my eyes.

XXXI A Brighter Tomorrow

- 1 As Sun's rays come to dawn, I witness brighter light than I had before seen. Beholden to the sun, I know of tomorrow.
Light rains upon near-all.
2 I see the world in a whole new light.
3 More vibrant, more alive—a new sort of green. I gaze upon a world that gazes upon me.
4 To feel the light's touch; a warmth.
5 How tragic of this cold plane to be warm physically. Will the Sun melt the cold born of humanity?
6 Perhaps.

XXXII The Black Bandana

- 1 The Robber and I enter the store, our aim—apparent.
2 “Give us what you have as quickly as you can.”
3 Guns aimed—visibly—the Robber and I need not command endlessly.
4 We have our desired money; our property.
5 The Black Bandanna that conceals my face

the possibility to abase
both State and capitalist equally
toward our egotistic end
we threaten willfully
given property's violent nature
to dogmatic views, we rend
in defiance of capitalist structure

6 I am noble.

7 The Robber and I depart—our robbery done.

8 Given our existence within this capitalist economy, we've been presented this problem from our dawn: sell your very life to make another rich—capitalists will not afford you, ever, as much as you produce.

Must I sell my very life's activity?

My time is mortally finite. How greedy of capitalist to deprive me, not only of my world—of my very life.

9 I'd rather take your money, discarding the morality you would impart to me as Truth.

10 Why ought I see subservience as Good, Just? Even to a mere idea—property?

11 I smile underneath my black bandana.

XXXIII The Squatter Part 2

1 I find myself within the vacant residence lay claim, primarily, by The Squatter.

2 The Robber and I count what little we've taken from the store, having already discarded our bandanas in The Squatter's fire.

3 "You've certainly exposed yourselves to quite a great risk."

4 "Yet without these funds, how will we feed The Street Cat? Shoplifting food proves infeasible at times—capitalists would have us starve. We've got funds enough to eat, us and The Street Cat—possibly enough to print literature."

5 "I suppose we don't pay rent."

6 "If we did, would we be free?"

7 "Not a chance."

8 The Squatter, The Robber, and I have quite the tale to tell—what could we ever print to shatter capitalist delusion?

A lifetime of self-enslavement to the capitalist's end; voluntary? How

- can one shine light upon another's self-alienation seen as right?
- 9 Truly, at present, this endeavor seems hopeless.
- 10 Thankfully we've all forsworn hope.
- 11 "I don't take it that The Street Cat will be much use in this matter!"
- 12 "Not at all—except perhaps as an adornment."
- 13 "I take it that everyone here is tired of the tyrannical hold capitalism has upon near-all facets of one's life. From housing to food and water—let alone the beauties our earth contains—all is denied without sufficient capital. Why should I be nothing, serve another to just scrape by, when nature tells nothing of subservience to the few?"
- 14 "What gives rise to the desire to finally own one's self?"
- 15 "Why must another's rule seem inevitable and Right?"
- 16 "We've each grabbed ahold of our lives as our own. How did it come to be? What made each of us realize we weren't free?"
- 17 "A lot did."
- 18 "If we've all had such powerful encounters with disillusionment, this realization presents itself as our aim."
- 19 "Aren't we all exposed to a unique capitalist culture that, from one's dawn, asserts itself as Right?"
- 20 "Is a metaphysical critique too abstract to attack the very normalized ideals many use to self-create?"
- 21 "Yet with a more material approach, isn't our argument necessarily shallow—even needlessly specific?"
- 22 The Squatter stokes the flames of the fire—warmth.
- 23 What will stoke the fire in the servile's hearts?

XXXIV The Print Shop

- 1 As the Robber, the Squatter, and I enter The Print Shop, we're greeted by the clerk who will exchange their labor for our capital
- 2 "Are you here today to print?"
3. Thankfully we are—the exchange is rather short.
4. I take what we've requested after paying the clerk of The Print Shop.
5. The copies we now have of the propaganda we've created are the collective effort of our egotistic labor-union.
6. The Robber, The Squatter, and I leave The Print Shop to dis-

seminate our propaganda.

7 Our ideas shall propagate—by writing, word, and deed.

XXXV The Moralist Part 2

1 I find The Moralist at the Church's basketball court.

2 "Care to play some ball?"

3 "I saved some of the pamphlets my friends and I had made, should you care to take one to give it a read?"

4 The Moralist skims through the pamphlet I hand them, bemused by the cover featuring The Street Cat.

5 "This has nothing to do with cats, as cute as our friend may be. From what I can tell, you or your friends sound communist."

6 "I wouldn't say either is the case."

7 "Then let it be known that this reading offends my sensibilities. Where is the common sense in asking one to not work? Should I just be homeless, begging for food?"

8 "What would you change of this work?"

9 "Away with the idea that one must never be servile—I find much joy to be had in serving community. As for filthy hippie nonsense of never working, try listing some employers willing to hire so us sane persons may earn our share in life."

10 "Must one work to live?"

11 "To my point again—you sound communist."

12 "Be that as it may, I appreciate your insight upon our ideas."

13 "Some ideas cannot be questioned. Nature has led its course and given what we have. I pray for you and your friends."

14 "As you wish."

15 I leave The Moralist with our pamphlet, heading on my way to enjoy my day.

XXXVI The Collectivist Part 2

1 "Get away from me—I don't associate with your kind. We all know what you've done, now, so leave us alone."

2 "You don't want to read the work of my friends and me?"

3 "Not even if it were the last zine on earth. I take it you've written some anti-civilization nonsense?"

4 "We were inspired by The Street Cat."

5 “Leave.”

6 Fearing further reproach, I leave The Collectivist to their doing.

XXXVII The Shoplifer part 22

1 “Owing to our common interest—theft—I offer you this pamphlet.”

2 “I lover the photo you’ve acquired of the Street Cat.”

3 The Shoplifer takes to the pamphlet, enjoying the rhetoric. They’ve taken an interest in far more than the Street Cat’s likeness.

4 “My life has been my own so long as I stay free; journey towards the end of repressive authority.

What is truly mine to choose when I remain servile towards an authority my heart’s calling shall e’er revile?”

5 “That was my favorite poem to write—I take it you’ve come to like it too?”

6 “I was never free before my choice to defy Law. Now I live precariously evading the State, violence directed as recourse for my denial of servitude.”

7 The shoplifer’s words resound clear yet I opt to stay quiet—my agreement seems evident in my self-creation.

8 “You’re a beautiful poet, Wax.”

9 I offer the Shoplifer my hand, to share a touch moment.

10 “Keep on stealing what ought be yours.”

XXXVIII. Paper Bomb

1 Along this busy street, many hustle on their way
Towards their life’s ambition—the calling of their day

I gather up my courage
to cut between the tides
here, the crowd will disparage
push the shy to the sides
and go hustling. hustling away!

2 How I wish I could shatter the haze, bring about many better days.

3 There’s an abandoned news stand that mostly lay empty.

4 I approach it and place my pamphlets among welcome com-

pany.

5 “Are these yours?”

6 “I just put them here. They’re free.”

7 I seem to have drawn attention, split some from the crowd.

8 Maybe soon some will awaken—at least unto themselves.

XXXIX The Throne Room Part 2

1 “Zarathustra, I have a gift to share. The Robber and I—plus a friend you have not met—designed this writing to share with others.”

2 “Isn’t this The Street Cat—the very same who leapt onto my throne?”

3 “The one and only.”

4 “Cover selection aside, I find your writings disagreeable. Hitherto the elevated sort of man has required others servile.”

5 “Even firmly locking into place one’s ascent as one’s aim why must it be the case that my ascent remain the same as all servility hitherto?

We do not yet know Truth,
so why assert tired tradition as true?

Can I not be superior
without alluding to nous
as all others inferior?”

6 “You seek to reduce the suffering each feels?”

7 “I strive to give all a life to lead—their own.”

8 Zarathustra stands from the throne.

9 “Then you have not heard my cries of the Superman.”

10 “I never claimed to strive towards your ideal. I would rather consume the world than adhere to fixed idea.”

11 Zarathustra gestures toward the door.

12 “Go—I’ll read your work and give it ample thought. I see nothing good to come from continuing discussion without time to philosophize.”

13 I take my leave from The Throne Room.

XL The Police Car Part 2

1 As I venture on the street back towards The Squatter, I am

greeted by The Police Car signalling me to stop.

2 I see no feasible escape so I don my bravest smile.

3 “Well, Wax, I find myself in need of a discussion so as to discern the origins of these pamphlets.”

4 The officer, having stepped out of The Police Car, displays my pamphlet I’ve created to me.

5 “Do you recognize this cat?”

6 “The cat is rather cute—but no.”

7 “The contents of these pamphlets are incredibly dangerous. We’ve seized a store of them from a repurposed news stand. Witnesses cited you as the individual responsible for the pamphlets’ whereabouts.”

8 “I question the legitimacy of that claim.”

9 “I’m afraid to tell you then—Wax, you’re under arrest.”

10 As the officer grips their sidearm, they move toward me with handcuffs. I don’t offer resistance and soon find myself seated in the back of the Police Car.

11 I’ve been captured by the State.

IXL The Jail Cell

1 I find naught more to do than lay upon hard stone within The Jail Cell my captors have placed me.

2 From what I can understand, through the jargon I’ve been told, I appear to be held here as a charge is decided.

3 I’ve not said much since I was arrested.

4 Everything since that moment has been naught more than attempts to justify my captivity.

5 What is Law?

6 The locked door of The Jail Cell opens—I’m approached by a jailer.

7 “You’re free to go as no charges stuck.”

8 I’m walked out of the jail.

VIIIL Floral Pictures

1 I feel the airy breeze flow—slow.

2 Nothing quite delights my heart like the rays of the sun—that which the State sought to deprive me for eternity.

Perhaps flowers of all sorts bring me more joy than the sun.

3 Black roses calmly shift
wind's collective drift
courses through the entirety of plant-body
guiding gaze upon what I see to embody
beauty

4 Stems of each black rose fight the force of light gust—return-
ing to their standing.

5 I enjoy their appearance.

6 As the sun lends flower color, I venture closer towards the
focus of my admiration—structure.
Though they've fought to assure standing, each still sways. What
is it in their form my mind so craves?
I gently loose a flower petal—the sun colors.

7 I know I ought not cry; I'm not dead. Yet there's something
to be said of my experience—the State's violence unto me. Will I
ever be as free as this rose's magnificence?—or will I die?
I defy, time-and-time again, the State's tyranny—and feel what it
is to be free.
How will it come to be that freedom lasts?

8 Ever fleeting remnant, distance from my present; my true
autonomy.

9 My hand tenderly holds rose's petal.

10 And I weep.

VIII The Campfire

1 "I wish we'd found you sooner."
2 "I'm no worse nor better."
3 "Come now, Wax: you've only just been freed from the
clutches of the coldest embrace. Surely enough our comfort will
help in your recovery?"
4 "I thought it overwhelming to seek my friends immediately.
Deprived of my senses—staring at walls—made even my release
an intense sensation."
5 "How terrifying that our tyrants wield this power."
6 "I've always grasped the grim fate afforded to the defiant—
truly terrible and traumatizing to be treated as mere cattle."
7 "The State's guise is surely fragile to have mere words strike
such fear; to behold ice."

- 8 The Campfire crackles—as it has been.
9 “Where do we go from here? Must we give up?”
10 “I thought we already had.”
11 I toss some more word into The Campfire.
12 “I have no hope that the servile will rise up—there is no revolution forthcoming—yet I still feel driven to, myself, rise up.
“My aim is my freedom, whether that must be solely mine or among the many.”
13 I feel a chill course through my veins—will I never know of freedom’s last?
14 Must my hand make my own freedom?
15 “Maybe we ought give this a rest.”
16 “Tempting.”
17 The Squatter adds more wood to The Campfire.
18 More smoke.

VII. Ventures Past

- 1 A chill permeates the atmosphere.
2 No sense of a breeze to be found.
3 I journey through the street, despite nature’s deterrent, as without my venture—The Street Cat’s food may soon run out.
4 Asphalt carries, early, Winter’s frost
my care for The Street Cat—beyond cost nothing will halt my will, my aim every “Thou Shalt” proves the same obstacles to overcome O—this ice may leave me numb
yet my strongly felt desire stays
to bring The Street Cat better days
freed from ice unto death
for all of that which I have wept
bringing life to my breath
waking from desire slept
I bring joy—stability—to my heart’s calling
The Street Cat returns my favor with cute pawing
not quite a fair trade estimated monetarily
yet should the Street Cat care for value assigned arbitrarily?
5 The Street Cat must eat, yes? So—I will provide.
6 The Street Cat’s needs will not be lesser; food, water, and warmth.

- 7 How do many see it normal to create naught but suffering and death? My self-interest lies in fostering mutual aid.
- 8 The Street Cat—my self interest.
- 9 I find the end to my journey.

VL The Fishmonger

- 1 What a quaint location, almost difficult to find.
- 2 “The Law has made it difficult to sell as once before. Still, I remain here—what is it that you want?”
- 3 “Fish for a cat, something to that effect.”
- 4 “I probably have some scraps from what is undesired.”
- 5 “I’d like something whole that a cat may have their way with.”
- 6 The Fishmonger’s collection of fish is a sight to see.
- 7 Surely a whole fish will prove to be a treat for The Street Cat!
- 8 I hand The Fishmonger a portion of the funds acquired by the Robber and I—I’m handed several fish wrapped in paper.
- 9 “Your cat ought enjoy my selection—I hope to see you again!”
- 10 “Thanks—the cat isn’t mine.”

IVL A Table of Zines

- 1 Amidst a park gathering where many give unto others freely, I find The Street Cat near a table of free literature. The individual maintaining the table is adorned, masked in black—their figure seems familiar.
- The Street Cat rests by this person’s feet.
- 2 “Are you interested in anything on the table?—It’s all free.”
 - 3 “I’m here to visit an old friend.”
 - 4 I unwrap my provisions and set them near The Street Cat.
 - 5 The Street Cat dives into its treat
 - 6 “You really care for this cat.”
 - 7 “I’ve seen it through a lot.”
 - 8 I give The Street Cat a scratch upon its head as it continues eating.
 - 9 “Take care of my friend—and to you: stay safe.”
 - 10 The Street Cat’s human companion flashes a smile as I depart.

IIIL Pouring Rain

- 1 Some distance from the vacant residence lay claim by the

Squatter, I stand amongst asphalt—drenched by icy rain, not quite cold enough to ice.
2 I remain dry underneath my umbrella.
3 I breathe in damp, brisk, chilled air—so needed given stress born of civilization’s ugliness.
4 Rain pelts my umbrella and coats curb and street stress and my noontide abruptly greet
Why should I behold such a strenuous wake?
What truly lies in my power to make?
5 The rain’s cloud stretches beyond my sight, clouding the sun’s creation of light.
6 I look upon said cloud—gray and spacious.
7 Perhaps by tomorrow, I’ll see the sun.

III. The Storm

1 I stand around our fire—protected by roof and walls—knowing our fate may be determined as such.
2 The damaged walls of once vacant residence complain of The Storm’s strain.
3 Above The Robber, The Squatter, and I—wind roars through broken windows; rain follows.
4 “Will we survive?”
5 “Probably.”
6 Shelter makes it far easier to ignore The Storm’s terror.
As much as one can, I suppose.
7 “We have no say in that matter.”
8 The Storm’s force may yet destroy the entirety of such structure—yet what is our alternative?
We have a need for shelter and defy the demands of our rulers to subsume our life’s activity. Why should I sell my life merely to afford my life’s necessities?
9 To our tyrants I am nothing yet I ought be worth far more.
10 “How should we pass the time?”
11 “Should we count rain drops?”
12 “Tell stories?”
13 “Anything besides planning another zine.”
14 The Robber, The Squatter, and I—huddled around our fire—idly standby with no clear aim, survival aside.

15 I feel fire's warmth.

IL The Ship

1 Amongst the sand, far from salty spray, I behold calm tides.
2 Upon the horizon, I notice The Ship—all that rides the waves.
3 While The Ship stays afloat
water stays below
I see no other boat
hindering where The Ship may go
so The Ship stays afloat
moving ever onward
cutting toward
a fresh note
where The Ship stays afloat
4 I lose sight of The Ship.

L The Fountain

1 Water flows from the Fountain in a perpetual cycle. I lean
upon the bounds of The Fountain.
2 Small jets of water amount to little splash
I stay dry despite my bodily proximity
still yet water lands with a resounding crash
I do enjoy this visible disparity
soundless water travels toward a sudden noise
bringing about mildly satisfying joys
The Fountain refrains from any alternative
displaying water—The Fountain's prerogative
3 I dare not drink this water.
4 I still thirst.

LI The Street Cat Part 2

1 A small bell jingles as I open the door of a particular book-
store.
2 Cleared of many tables—once piled high—the only literature
resides upon bookshelves lining store's perimeter.
3 A clerk sits behind a raised counter.
4 “Do you need something?”
5 “Do you have some water?”

- 6 I'm handed a cup of water—disposable.
- 7 "There's coffee if you'd like."
- 8 The Street Cat hops up onto the raised counter.
- 9 "Oh right—the bookstore has a cat. Apparently the cat helps with bugs and rodents."
- 10 "Can I pet them?"
- 11 "If they let you."
- 12 Tentatively I reach towards The Street Cat. The Street Cat shows a sort of confidence that I've not yet seen—I pet The Street Cat.
- 13 "I guess they like you."
- 14 Perhaps The Street Cat does.
- 15 Will I ever know?

LII Dirt Roads

- 1 At the edges of the streets lay an assortment of dirt roads. I find myself at these paths with no real end in mind.
- 2 I've nothing and see no purpose here nor there.
- 3 I venture down one of several dirt roads.
- 4 Nothing matters.

The Wax character might or might not be a real person, but also seems to stand for the flow of becoming or the insurrectionary urge...

The big themes here are immediacy, uniqueness, perspectivism, nihsvabhava...

Stirner read in these terms, as Heraclitean uniqueness and as nihsvabhava, nothing having fixed nature and everything being forces/flows...

(This really is a polyvocal text a la Bakhtin)

