The abstract intelligence produces a fatigue that's the worst of all fatigues. It doesn't weigh on us like bodily fatigue, nor disconcert like the fatigue of emotional experience. It's the weight of our consciousness of the world, a shortness of breath in our soul.

Then, as if they were wind-blown clouds, all of the ideas in which we've felt life and all the ambitions and plans on which we've based our hopes for the future tear apart and scatter like ashes of fog, tatters of what wasn't nor could ever be. And behind this disastrous rout, the black and implacable solitude of the desolate starry sky appears.

The mystery of life distresses and frightens us in many ways. Sometimes it comes upon us like a formless phantom, and the soul trembles with the worst of fears - that of the monstrous incarnation of non-being. At other times it's behind us, visible only as long as we don't turn around to look at it, and it's the truth in its profound horror of our never being able to know it.

But the horror that's destroying me today is less noble and more corrosive. It's a longing to be free of wanting to have thoughts, a desire to never have been anything, a conscious despair in every cell of my body and soul. It's the sudden feeling of being imprisoned in an infinite cell. Where can one think of fleeing, if the cell is everything?

And then I feel an overwhelming, absurd desire for a kind of Satanism before Satan, a desire that one day - a day without time or substance - an escape leading outside of God will be discovered, and our deepest selves will somehow cease participating in being and non-being.

_Translated from the Portuguese by Richard Zenith_