Kafka in the Woods

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"I suspect writers are more likely than, say firefighters or doctors or accountants to seek professional advice from those they admire," writes Amitava Kumar in *The Blue Book: A Writer's Journal*[1], which features writing and drawings produced during the Covid-19 pandemic. There's much to say about the form of this journal or 'painted diary'[2], but let's first address the quote.

It might be tempting to dismiss Kumar's observation as mere generalisation. Who are we — the non-firefighters, non-doctors, and non-accountants of the world — to speculate about mentorship practices in other fields? Especially those fields which offer, in the form of fire academies and accountancy apprenticeships and medical schools, highly professionalised spaces for the seeking and giving of advice. Yet I share Kumar's suspicion that creative writers are likely to seek advice from their masters, and this has something to do with — going back to Kumar's words — the idea that writing is often "regarded as a magical act."[3] Magical, and also mysterious.

In his profile of Zadie Smith for *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, Jeffrey Eugenides describes the writing process in the following manner: "Novelists are like fur trappers. They disappear into the north woods for months or years at a time, sometimes never to re-emerge, giving in to despair out there, or going native (taking a real job, in other words), or catching their legs in their own traps and bleeding out, silently, into the snow. The lucky ones return, laden with pelts."[4] But what exactly happens in those woods? That's what the emerging, aspiring writer desperately seeks to learn from their master.

In Kumar's case, he asks fellow novelists — his peers more so than his potential mentors — to share advice when inscribing their books for him. He points out in *The Blue Book* that the motivation for doing so is related more to gaining insight into the inner world of other authors than in seeking self-help. He then goes on to list some of the advice he has received from authors, which ranges from the practical ("Read aloud!" exhorts Tommy Orange) to the more self-reflective ("Learn what advice to refuse", writes Mark Doty)[5]. But few of us have the luxury of meeting the authors we admire and have to find other ways to discover what happens in the metaphorical north woods. We make do with reading *The Paris Review* interviews, or *The Guardian's* 'Ten Rules for Writing Fiction' series. Here we find that while some authors lay bare their motivations and writing routines, others are glib, evasive or even — as was the case with V.S. Naipaul's *Paris Review* interview — rather antagonistic when asked about their craft. Few, it

seems, are willing to publicly share the grisly details of how they trap the animal for its fur. For such details, it might be better to turn to the more private world of the author's diary.

Franz Kafka's diaries, written between 1910-1923, were published posthumously against the author's wishes. He had requested Max Brod, his friend and literary executor, to burn all his unpublished work after his death, but Brod defied him.[6] The dead have no right to privacy and Kafka's diaries are among the most famous literary diaries in the world today. In these diary entries there is, of course, no dispensing of pithy advice for the aspiring author. No rules for writing fiction are presented in bullet points. Instead, what the diaries offer are insights into the anguished state of a writer's mind.

Kafka didn't gain literary recognition until long after his death in 1924. Today his works are considered canonical and his name has inspired an adjective, but the diaries belong to a time when he was an unknown author with wavering faith in his writing abilities. In these diaries, Kafka takes us deep into the woods; he writes about everything from his constipation to his writing life, and we see the author less as a genius and more as a human being. Do we read literary diaries in pursuit of the same kind of professional advice Kumar mentioned in *The Blue Book*? I believe so, especially if the reader is also an aspiring writer. And Kafka's diaries, never intended to be read by others, provide rare insight into the world of writing.

The first page provides little context to the reader. There's no 'Dear Diary' salutation, nor is there any confession of feelings or summary of the day typically associated with the diary as a genre. Instead, the diary begins with fragments — isolated sentences or short scenes — which suggest the act of the writer sharpening his prose on the page. Kafka writes about a man's way of pronouncing 'ask' as 'ahsk' (at least that's the version we get in the English translation), a visit to the woods, and a dream featuring a famous Russian ballerina. It's not until a few pages into the published diaries that we gain some insight into his inner state of mind: "I write this very decidedly out of despair over my body and over a future with this body. When despair shows itself so definitely, is so tied to its object, so pent up, as in a soldier who covers a retreat and thus lets himself be torn to pieces, then it is not true despair. True despair overreaches its goal immediately and always, (at this comma it became clear that only the first sentence was correct). Do you despair? Yes? You despair?"[7]

I'm less interested in this particular simile likening despair to a soldier than in the parenthetical remark that reveals the author self-correcting as he writes. The discovery of the writer's thought process preserved in the writing is one of the many pleasures of reading these diaries. And this self-correction, this struggle to write exactly what he wants to write, is frequently evident in Kafka's diaries.

In an entry dated 19 July 1910, for instance, Kafka introduces this observation: "When I think about it, I must say that my education has done me great harm in some respects." Following this matter-of-fact statement, the paragraph dissolves into more poetic musings about living in nature, and he wonders how childhood exposure to the extremities may have encouraged "good qualities" to grow within him like weeds. Perhaps dissatisfied with the abstract turn he took in this paragraph, Kafka then writes a new paragraph with the same opening sentence about his aforementioned harmful education. In this second attempt, he does not turn to the optative mood; instead, he provides a list of people he holds accountable for his childhood years. Subsequently, in his third attempt at articulating the harmful effects of his education, Kafka writes more than one paragraph and finds a way to connect it with his earlier musings on living in nature. He ends this attempt with the image of his good qualities growing like weeds, only to start all over again, and again, and again.[8]

What these consecutive drafts do is that they negate for the reader the idea of effortless writing. Good writing doesn't simply flow from the writer's mind onto the page; it is coaxed and finessed. Writing is a form of thinking, rather than its end-product, and the private pages of the diary provide the space to wrestle ideas and feelings into (usually) decipherable combinations of words. Therefore, reading such diaries reminds us of the labour of writing, and not its magic. And for Kafka, this labour brings the above-mentioned despair as well as self-loathing, shame, and depression.

It feels cruel to write this, but the more Kafka suffers, the more comforted I am about my own writing life. When in July 1910 he sums up his day with six words: "Slept, awoke, slept, awoke, miserable life", or in the summer of 1912, there appear many brief entries in which Kafka mentions he has written nothing all day, it makes me more forgiving of my struggle to maintain a daily writing routine.

This cheap comfort is thankfully not the sole motivation for reading the diaries. While the self-flagellating comments humanise Kafka, there are many other passages which have the capacity to overawe the reader. Whether it's a description of the mess on his desk or of portraits of his acquaintances, we see how Kafka pounces on each detail and commits it to the page. Of the Yiddish actress Mania Tschissik, for instance, he writes: "Mrs. Tschissik has protuberances on her cheeks near her mouth. Caused in part by hollow cheeks as a result of the pains of hunger, childbed, journeys, and acting, in part by the relaxed unusual muscles she had to develop for the actor's movements of her large, what originally must have been a heavy mouth."[9] Elsewhere, he delivers an incisive aphorism: "Parents who expect gratitude from their children (there are even some who insist on it) are like usurers who gladly risk their capital if only they receive interest."[10] In these diary entries we see the stark prose and acuity of detail that are commonly associated

with Kafka's novels. These passages inspire the reader, but also intimidate. In other words, the aspiring writer can recognise herself in Kafka's torment or his laziness, but not as readily in his moments of mastery.

I experienced something similar while reading a passage from John Cheever's journals quoted in Kumar's book. It's a description of a baseball game in which Cheever, who is much more of a prose stylist than Kafka, writes this astounding sentence: "The umpires in clericals, sifting out the souls of players; the faint thunder as ten thousand people, at the bottom of the eighth, head for the exits."[11]

In an email interview, I asked Kumar about how reading diaries can be both intimidating and inspiring and if he, like me, had been left overawed by Cheever's private writings. Kumar wrote back: "Cheever's diaries do leave me overawed. I think they represent his best writing. But your question is about a reader's response to such art. You know, it is okay to feel overwhelmed. But it is also okay to want to be in conversation with those people. Or to build up a body of work that appears to be in conversation with those who have inspired you. I was very much influenced by V.S. Naipaul's accounts of his making as a writer (as in his autobiographical essay 'Finding the Centre') and I wrote more than one book believing myself to be in conversation with that book and its author."

This idea of books being in conversation with each other is illustrated in Kumar's *The Blue Book* when he includes an anecdote about discovering a copy of *Bento's Sketchbook* by John Berger, the Booker Prize-winning author and art critic. The 'Bento' in the title refers to the seventeenth century philosopher Baruch Spinoza, whose drawings are now lost to the world. What Berger has done in this brief book is intersperse quotes by the philosopher with his own artwork and musings on various topics. Take out the Spinoza quotes, and the form is not too dissimilar from Kumar's book. In fact, when writing about his discovery of Berger's *Sketchbook*, Kumar shares that he was immediately drawn to it and likened the experience to "blood calling out to blood." He concludes this anecdote with the idea that books can serve as ancestors and "give us permission to carry on doing the same."[12]

The vignettes and watercolour sketches in Kumar's journal were written and drawn during the time he was working on his novel *A Time Outside This Time* at various residencies in America. The novel was published in 2021, the journal the following year. There are thematic overlaps in the two works and Satya, the narrator of *A Time Outside This Time*, is a writer of Indian origin who is working on his novel at a prestigious retreat. There are many other similarities between Satya and Kumar, and some reviewers have even suggested that this novel falls in the genre of autofiction.

Let's pause here for a moment. Autofiction blends autobiography with fiction. Many contemporary novelists write in this mode, but it is by no means a new phenomenon. Marcel Proust's seven-volume *In Search of Lost Time* could be considered an early example of this genre. Autobiography is, of course, when someone writes the story of their life. A diary, or a journal, is also when someone writes about their life. However, unlike with autofiction or autobiography, the diary operates in some ways as a logbook of everyday experience. There is no audience in mind, therefore there is less pressure to justify the inclusion of seemingly mundane details or to make the various entries cohere as a whole. In one of his diary entries, for example, Kafka provides a lengthy, almost academic study of theatre as an art form and then the following entry begins: "I dreamed today of a donkey …" As readers, we cannot criticise the bathetic effect of such entries and, looking at the genre as a whole, can appreciate the diary for its democratising effect. Anything is worthy of being included in a diary, because its author must have found it worthy at the time of writing it.

Returning to Kumar, *The Blue Book* also covers an eclectic range of observations. One part of the journal provides an anecdote about a Rajasthani Uber driver in Colorado who gifted Kumar a bottle of *ittar* [essential oil]. Elsewhere, Kumar explains how a newspaper photograph of a lynching victim in India compelled him to make a painting. These disparate musings presented in *The Blue Book* can be viewed as more concrete articulations of the thoughts and images that linger in his mind. The fragmentary nature of the work is not only accepted, but expected, because the word 'journal' in the full title instructs the reader on what lies within.

The narrator of *A Time Outside This Time* also moves from one topic to another and the narrative doesn't offer much of a plot. In the conventional understandings of the novel though, there is more pressure for the various anecdotes and observations to come together; the reader expects the sum to be greater than its parts. It is in this regard that Kumar's novel has received some mixed reviews, such as the one in *The New York Times* which critiques it for lacking bite. It would be difficult to make a similar complaint of Kumar's journal despite the thematic and stylistic similarities between the two works.

In his review of the journal, Gulzar comments: "It's not good to read another person's diary. But Amitava Kumar makes the experience so intimate in *The Blue Book* that you don't feel guilty. You feel like it is your own." I stumble on this blurb each time I read it. *The Blue Book* isn't a conventional, private diary. Kumar wrote it with an audience in mind. He intended to publish it and it was curated and edited with his supervision. The guilt Gulzar mentions would be more appropriate for reading the private diary entries of someone like Kafka, who did not want them to be shared publicly. The slippery nature of *The Blue Book* and the equally slippery overlap of the words 'journal' and 'diary' call to attention the role of the audience in determining the

nature of the work. To better illustrate my point, I'll use the example of a theatrical device: the soliloquy.

The soliloquy is meant to be heard. When the character remains alone on stage and thinks aloud, he or she doesn't ramble about the weather or summarise action that the audience has already observed in earlier scenes. The soliloquy is not free-flowing speech — at least not in a traditional play — and its purpose is to provide insight into the characters' inner thoughts and machinations, which would otherwise be opaque to the audience. The soliloquist's sense of privacy in the scene is an artifice and, therefore, the people sitting in the audience listen guilt-free. In this regard, *The Blue Book* is more of a soliloquy than Kafka's diaries. Kumar captures the flitful nature of inner thought, but the transitions from one topic to another are less abrupt and bathetic than the ones found in a 'real' diary. *The Blue Book* is reflective and mosaic-like, but not disjointed. It has been compiled with the reader in mind.

The other aspect of the traditional soliloquy is that it often appears in the play when an important character is under great duress (think of Hamlet's existential crisis or Iago's spiteful jealousy). In this regard, Kumar's journal — which was written with publication in mind — draws up short. There are grave topics, but no anguish in its pages. So if the audience's pleasure of watching a soliloquy in a play is derived from the knowledge it offers about the deep, unknown workings of the human mind, then it is the private, intimate, even secretive diary that offers us a similar pleasure.

However, if a diary is never meant to be read, then why write one at all? There are varying impulses for keeping a diary, and the desire to be read is, in fact, one of them.

In Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, we meet young Cecily who writes down "the wonderful secrets of [her] life" in her diary. When a potential love interest expresses his desire to read her diary, she declines his request and says: "You see, it is simply a very young girl's record of her own thoughts and impressions, and consequently meant for publication. When it appears in volume form I hope you will order a copy." Most diarists will not promote the future publication of their diaries as openly as Cecily does, but this dream of having people read her diaries is not as absurd as it may appear to be initially.

In Italy, the municipality of Pieve Santo Stefano is now known as the Town of the Diary. This archive is a democratic space where anybody can submit their diaries, letters or memoirs. In fact, most of the work is submitted by everyday, private people. In this archive, interested readers can find the raw, ungrammatical writings of a farmer and the accounts of an architect who survived a terrorist attack in the 1970s.[13] Some of these texts have even been published by small literary presses. If the diary feeds the desire to record the world one sees, then perhaps the desire to make one's diaries public is rooted in the desire to be seen.

It's also worth thinking of the more modern offshoots of the diary that can today be found on the internet. Think of all the blogs on daily life, some anonymously written and others not. Think of all the people who share photographs, videos, posts, and tweets about their 'Outfit of the Day' (OoTD in common parlance), and their breakfasts, and their woes with parenting, and their struggles with mental health, and the books they read, and the places they visit. This online content is in many ways antithetical to the more traditional diary. There are countless people sharing their everyday lives on the internet and, unlike social media influencers, most aren't making any money out of it. It's worth noting how social media users who meticulously chronicle their lives online often attract derision ("Nobody wants to know what you ate for breakfast!"), whereas readers of published diaries are often more sympathetic to the banalities of everyday life recorded on the page. The difference in reception might be that the internet chronicler is more aware of potential readers when he or she shares material on a blog or social media account. This awareness of the audience suggests vanity or lack of authenticity, but this notion becomes complicated when we realise that historically, diaries were not always meant to be fiercely guarded private books and at least in nineteenth century England, it was quite common for them to be read by family and friends. The relationship between the diary and the reader is, therefore, a complicated one.

Kafka did not want his diaries to be read, but he didn't have any misgivings about reading the private words of others. Frequently, as chronicled in his diaries, he turned to the private writings of those he admired. For instance, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's works, including his diaries, strongly influenced Kafka. Gustave Flaubert is also mentioned several times in Kafka's diaries and, during a particularly difficult period when Kafka was struggling to write, he noted: "I have just read in Flaubert's letters: 'My novel is the cliff on which I am hanging, and I know nothing of what is going on in the world' — Like what I noted down about myself on 9 May."[14]

Kafka finds Flaubert's letters to be affirming of his own experiences, but diaries can also disappoint. Kumar, for instance, has written about the experience of reading a diary and finding it insufficiently revealing about the author. Except in his case, the author in question is his own teenage self who, rather than relating observations of his surroundings, focused more on copying passages from books he had admired.[15]

"I would have been in my late teens when I was making those entries," Kumar explained in his email to me. "I'll be honest with you: I didn't linger long enough to check the entries. When I saw the passages, I was reminded that I had read those writers whose words I had noted. But the

general feeling I got from my brief foray into those pages — of unfulfilled longing, of boredom, of failure, of sentimentalism, of stupidity — was just too depressing. Youth is a wasteland. I'd rather not return there. I shut the diaries and put them away."

Perhaps that's par for the course when rereading one's private writings. Virginia Woolf, who maintained her diary writing habit for around two decades, wrote about the experience of reading her previous diary entries and finding them clumsily written and ungrammatical. We can accept this aversion to one's own writing as a sign of healthy humility, and though Kumar couldn't stand to read the entries written by his younger self, he still has faith in the ritual of daily writing and believes it is as valuable to the creative writer as to the academic.

In 2020, Kumar, a professor in the English department at Vassar College, published a book on academic writing. Taking its title from an Elvis Costello song, *Every Day I Write the Book: Notes on Style* consists of vignettes and short chapters. One such chapter is an ode of sorts to naps and how well they fit the schedule of the academic whereas another chapter, only a paragraph in length, offers a critique of the topic sentence. The briefness of the chapters, the lack of transitions between topics, and the personal, intimate voice found in this book distance it from more traditional books on academic writing.

"I experimented at first with long essays but it felt too academic," Kumar said in his email to me. "I wanted to preach the logic of breaking convention. The idea of writing short entries, fragments and nearly-diaristic pieces, allowed me to be more flexible. I felt I could cover more ground that way and also avoid being tedious."

Kumar went on to elaborate how the diary can be of value to the academic writer: "Tediousness is the great bane of academic writing. So is its pretence to objectivity and the complete lack of a personal voice. Writing a diary and letting its voice infuse academic writing could work in fine ways, allowing you to feel less blocked as a writer. It would also allow your writing to show the traces that the day had left on you and on your writing. You could be writing a sociological treatise on the lives of widows in Karachi, for example, but let the writing reveal that on the day you were writing a particular chapter there were opposing armies lined up at your country's border."

Kumar ends some of his vignettes and chapters quite abruptly — an effect that occasionally left me dissatisfied. Kafka's diaries, where drafts of creative work and more personal observations occasionally bleed into each other, are not frustrating, but they don't allow for that seamless immersion in the text for the reader. Fragmentation encourages attention. To understand this, it might be useful to think about the film montage and what is known as the Kuleshov effect. Lev Kuleshov edited film shorts in which he paired images together to show how audiences draw connections between two shots (which may be understood as fragments). The most famous short feature has a close-up of an expressionless man, a close-up of a bowl of soup, a close-up of the same expressionless man, a shot of a girl in a coffin, the same expressionless man, and a woman wearing only a dressing gown. The man's expression doesn't change, but the pairing of his face with another image or fragment (soup bowl, dead girl, attractive woman) allows us as viewers to fill in the gaps and associate the man with states of hunger, grief, and desire. Kafka's diary is not as neatly composed as a Kuleshov film, but it offers through the 'jump cuts' and 'cross dissolves' of the written word a montage made up of fragments. As readers, we can't help but try to draw connections between the various parts, and this desire to make the entries cohere elevates the reading experience beyond pure voyeurism.

I began this essay with Kumar's quote about the aspiring writer's eager seeking of advice. In *The Guardian's 'Ten Rules for Writing Fiction'* series, Margaret Atwood advises using pencils because pens can leak ink, and Richard Ford cautions against having children. There is a lot of cheeky counselling in this series, but occasionally some sincere advice slips through. For instance, Michael Morpurgo, the famed author of children's novels, shares: "Ted Hughes gave me this advice and it works wonders: record moments, fleeting impressions, overheard dialogue, your own sadnesses and bewilderments and joys." In other words, keep a diary. And it's worth noting that even as Kafka was grousing about not writing anything, he was still writing in his diary.

In an essay on the diaries of the Nobel Prize-winning author Samuel Beckett, Mark Nixon alluded to Kafka as well. He writes, "Like a shipwreck victim adrift in a sea of conflicting desires, Kafka clings to his diary as if his existence depended upon it …", before going on to say that both Beckett and Kafka's diaries offered the writers space to contain and organise their everyday, fragmentary experiences.[16] Nixon's suggestion is corroborated by Kafka when he avows not to abandon the diary and writes, "I must hold on here, it is the only place I can."[17]

Record-keeping is perhaps the most obvious function of the diary. The minutiae of everyday life find a comfortable home in its private pages, but the diary as mere logbook doesn't fully explain the impulse to keep one. When I read *The Blue Book*, I was struck by some of the quick sketches of landscapes Kumar included in it. The sweeping rough-edged strokes of paint and the confident and hurried lines of the drawing suggested an eagerness to record the images *quickly*. In my eyes, it's as if there's a fear that if the scene — this could be two figures sleeping in a motel room or the shadows of tree trunks on a field of snow — isn't put on paper immediately, then it would be lost forever. How does a scene, an impression, our feelings of "sadnessness and bewilderments and joys" get lost? There's the fallibility of memory, of course, but also the deeper fear of death. And it was particularly in relation to Kumar's sketches that I asked him about how the diary can be a form of memorialisation.

He wrote back saying: "It has occurred to me, in recent years in particular, that when the sun goes down on New Year's Eve, I feel a little bit melancholic. I'm aware that I'm watching the last sunset of the year, the year is ending. But that is not what I feel every day when I'm making notes in my diary. My impulse there isn't the least melancholic. Instead, my senses are on alert, archiving the moment, putting down a record. I feel hollow without memories. And there are far too many things in the world today that rob us of our memories. Devices and distractions of all sorts that steal our attention. My diary-writing is a way of inhabiting, and indeed preserving, the moment. I believe that is what drives most people who keep written or visual diaries."

Kumar's measured response emphasises that the impulse to keep a diary, at least for him, is rooted in the impulse to 'be' — he acknowledges the diary's function in preserving a moment, but in order to preserve a moment one first has to live it. But the diary can be as rooted in life as it can be in death, which is what Maurice Blanchot, the influential French literary theorist and novelist, argued in his essays on the diaries of Kafka and other writers.

Death was a favourite topic for Blanchot and in *The Space of Literature* he describes the relationship between death and the diary (*'journal intime'* in the original French). He writes:

> The journal is not essentially confessional; it is not one's own story. It is a memorial. What must the writer remember? Himself: who he is when he isn't writing, when he lives daily life, when he is alive and true, not dying and bereft of truth. But the tool he uses in order to recollect himself is, strangely, the very element of forgetfulness: writing. That is why, however, the truth of the journal lies not in the interesting, literary remarks to be found there, but in the insignificant details which attach it to daily reality. The journal represents the series of reference points which a writer establishes in order to keep track of himself when he begins to suspect the dangerous metamorphosis to which he is exposed … The journal — this book which is apparently altogether solitary — is often written out of fear and anguish at the solitude which comes to the writer on account of the work.[18]

What Blanchot is suggesting is that while one is writing (this could be a novel or an academic work), 'living' is in a state of abeyance. Paradoxically, by writing about their daily life in a journal the writer can find a way to stay connected with their everyday life. Blanchot's idea of the spectre of death hanging over the diary seems especially apt for Kafka, who died at the age of forty and whose diary entries often betray the "fear and anguish" which Blanchot mentioned in the quote above. But the diary is not the only avenue for memorialisation. Brod, the friend who ignored Kafka's wishes and had the diaries published, wrote a novel in which he presents a fictionalised account of his friendship with Kafka. A kind of autofiction, you might say.

Of course, Kafka's diaries are not filled with just the above-mentioned "fear and anguish." Some of the detailed descriptions of everyday life suggest a sense of wonder and an eye for beauty. Many of the entries also suggest the author using the diary to address his worries — as opposed to simply worrying — as he develops his stories.

In 1914, for instance, Kafka described in his diary a sketch in which a white horse mysteriously appears in a busy town. It's a kind of a non-story in which he is gradually developing the setting and the atmosphere, but little happens in terms of plot. The sketch ends anticlimactically with a police officer getting hold of the horse and immediately, in the next paragraph, Kafka dismisses his writing: "It has meaning, but is weak." Despite his frustration, he doesn't abandon the idea and instead seems to console himself. He writes: "If I am not very much mistaken, I am coming closer. It is as though the spiritual battle were taking place in a clearing somewhere in the woods. I make my way into the woods, find nothing, and out of weakness immediately hasten out again; often as I leave the woods I hear, or I think I hear, the clashing weapons of that battle. Perhaps the eyes of the warriors are seeking me through the darkness of the woods, but I know so little of them, and that little is deceptive."[19]

Like us lesser writers, Kafka wants to know how the fur is trapped in the woods. And he himself shows how it's done in his diaries.

Notes

1. Kumar, *The Blue Book: A Writer's Journal*, 85.
2. This phrase is used by author Kiran Desai in her blurb for Kumar's book.
3. Kumar, *The Blue Book*, 85.
4. Eugenides, "The Pieces of Zadie Smith."
5. Kumar, *The Blue Book*, 85-87.
6. Batuman, "Kafka's Last Trial."
7. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 10.
8. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 15-20.
9. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 84.
10. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 317.
11. Kumar, *The Blue Book*, 23.
12. Kumar, *The Blue Book*, 73.
13. Fondazione Archivio Diaristic Nazionale, "The Archives of Pieve Santo Stefano."
14. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 205.
15. Kumar, *The Blue Book*, 81.
16. Nixon, "Writing 'I': Samuel Beckett's German Diaries", 10–23.
17. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 29.
18. Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, 28.
19. Brod, *Franz Kafka: The Diaries 1910-1923*, 271.

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