

The Hermit
Lucy Ives

The Song Cave

Published by The Song Cave

www.the-song-cave.com

© 2016 Lucy Ives

Design and layout by Mary Austin Speaker

Cover image © Iwajla Klinke, Untitled, from the series
Bescherkinder, 2010

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. Members of educational institutions and organizations wishing to photocopy any of the work for classroom use, or authors and publishers who would like to obtain permission for any material in the work, should contact the publisher.

ISBN 978-0-9967786-3-3

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016938905

FIRST EDITION

The Hermit

This is the etymological situation of Alice, who learns from the White Knight that the name of a song is called "Haddock's Eyes," the name is really "The Aged Aged Man," the song is called "Ways and Means," and the song really is "A-Sitting on a Gate."

SUSAN STEWART, NONSENSE

1.

A man claims he makes a choice to be unhappy, since it allows him vigilance. "I am vigilant and suffering," he tells us. And perhaps this is the very anatomy of unhappiness: a choice to engage in a certain perception, which is to say, *experience*.

2.

In a notebook, in a strange list of place names: “Mushroom
Town”

Mallarmé appears to me in a dream as two women. Clutching
the back of a nearby chair, a blue pigeon chortles, bows.

3.

Desire counterfeits time, is the voice of narration, of narrative (= promised emancipation). I write, inconclusively, “All culminating in the image of a dwelling: It indicates a secret life. Since all of writing is devoted to the question of unremembered pleasure...”

4.

Because the question is, generally, what it may mean that this is happening (to someone)—while, for a certain woman I know, it remains, peculiarly, a question of *what* is happening, by which I mean, what or which thing (indeed, which life) “it” is.

5.

Title as autobiography: Hazlitt, *My First Acquaintance with Poetry*

Title as autobiography: Coleridge, *The Friend*

6.

The relationship of plot to text is productive but not direct. This suggests an additional reason for the intactness of the novel through modernism, its formal evasion.

I stopped writing for years and instead had ideas. I talked with people. How to make an idea small or large enough that it not become an interruption or intrusion, I asked. (Within a novel, for example.)

A strange point, yet possibly true: America, lacking a great urban novelist, had been too influenced by philosophy.

7.

I depend on others to provide me with material. *As when Nietzsche*, etc. What if we, like Bacon (“wonder is broken knowledge”), think of the aphorism as a sympathetic form? Yet I’m unable to separate sympathy from commiseration, i.e., improved despair.

8.

A man, still young at this point in the story, considers how he senses desire in others. He has thought of it as his own possession, their desire, and this has led him to behave stupidly. One is implicated but not automatically, not without one's own permission, for there is no good in love. One loves actively, on principle—or one attempts, erroneously, to possess desire, as he has done. And yet, the young man thinks, it is no better not to love. It seems like truth to him; it takes the form of a command. He grows old. He is old. He is old and alone, but still thinking. He wants to know what would constitute a true command. Is love a command? The man may even be dying now, is about to die, is dying, when he begins to ask himself, Is it not my own permission that lends love this form?

9.

On a country road, I pass an abandoned sign:

THO AS TRY CLUB

Rebecca says, “This is a poem about trying to write a novel.”

10.

Publication is a fiction. It contributes to the reality of sentences that otherwise have no real being. The act of publishing establishes as a reality, too, the fiction of a reader, whether or not anyone reads.