

VALENTINE

But I feel a purpose, sometimes. In myself. Something I feel I must do. Some place I feel I must be.

JOHANNES

That's the trick of your hungers; they pretend to be something more. If they showed themselves for what they are... well, then you might deny them. You might say to yourself, "This yearning I feel -- it's mine, and I can control it." And not doing so would be an act of weakness. But if you call it a "purpose," it becomes a noble thing. Maybe even part of a "higher cause." Religious zeal is in that realm -- and hardly dying of loneliness. "Purpose" is the camouflage of hunger. You're not taking notes.

VALENTINE

(scrambling to make amends)

Sorry.

JOHANNES

This is why for a man to know himself, he must see through the mask of "purpose." He must stand before that clearest of mirrors and not let himself look away. This is the brave man... the one who has seen his core.

(a distant, personal reflection)

You gaze into that mirror until you feel yourself reborn. Your convictions become purer, your actions more potent. Humility and pride are stripped away. From that moment on, you do what you do and nothing more. And you see the whole world for what it is...

VALENTINE

Will you never be satisfied?

JOHANNES

(after a moment)

I ask myself that. The answer keeps coming back, "no." There are times, yes, when I think I'd like to find that blissful moment at hunger's end. The one I would like to see linger. Over time, a man wonders what he's missing. A type of slow-growing longing sets in, like arthritis... But I told myself a long time ago -- that's not what my life is about. Satisfaction is my target, nothing more. Something to aim at. And when my arrows near the mark, it's off again, forcing me to aim in another direction.

VALENTINE

Hence your output.

JOHANNES

And my life of sleepless nights.