

**Zorro**

Pilar Corrias Gallery, London, 2019  
In collaboration with Sheila Heti



The sketchy sorrow of a life in which things must remain unfinished.

A person who is used to completing things, no longer can. It is as though nothing even begins anymore. Nothing begins and nothing ends, there must be some form in the whirl, there must be some moments to lay down marks.

When the marks come, isn't the head of some bright, shining, certain thing what lays them down like slashing someone with a finger, and this slashing of their body with your finger destroys them utterly so their blood comes out and they fall. What is better than collapsing the whole world with one's finger?

So many people have to die. Some people die in the midst of life. Are they the heroes? Is a woman who dies every time she gives birth but never speaks of it and goes on is she some sort of hero we should stop what we are doing to recognise? Who cares about anyone's individual rebirth? No one does. No one cares about your words. No one cares about your sword. No one cares that your life, which was once a fine object, is now muddy. No one cares that your life, which was once a fine object, is now too fine. A person suffers alone. What matters most to us cannot be shared. But we can share it with ourselves: our dreams. They are us sharing with ourselves, and receiving ourselves with all the emotion we wish other people received us with. Not only do we receive ourselves with emotion, but new worlds unfold as we hear our secretest feelings and thoughts, it's like we are in a brand new world with our weapons and our clothes. With our colours. With our loneliness. With our canvases and our boards.

Why is this life so hard, and why must a person always be doing something, making art, making love, making friendships, making babies, making sorrow, making cake, making anything at all? What is all this exhausting activity for? Or *who* is it for? It is for our own pleasure at ourselves, and it doesn't even work. Have you gotten any pleasure from all your activity? Have I?



A birth always means two deaths. A death always means two births. It just goes that way. No one can explain it. But everyone knows it is true. This is probably the only true thing anyone has ever said. Why do I bother to say it? Oh, just to impress myself.

A wave of irritation comes over anybody when they hear that someone else has made something. *What gives them the right?* No one. The right is taken. This is something artists know and no one else believes. Those who belong to that *everyone else who doesn't believe it*, actually believe that some authority gave them the right, the right to make paintings. No way. It is just stolen from the universe. Like a baby is also stolen from the universe. You don't have to ask anyone's permission. Those waiting for permission will never have a baby. Those waiting for permission from the universe will never make art. You give yourself the permission. This is adulthood, in the case of pregnancy. This is eternal childhood, in the case of making art. Yes, I give you permission to be an adult (in the case of having a child); yes, I give you permission to be a child (in the case of making art). How is one, in the same moment, a child and an adult, then? Oh, wouldn't you like to know!

The fact is, there are a great many colours available to both children and grown-ups, and the question is: do you choose the child-colours, like from a child's paint set, like from a crayon box, or the colours available to an adult, which include the colours of oil paints, hard work, strain, showing your work eventually, and hearing what people say?

I believe the most important thing is to choose the child's colours, if you have a child around. This is a kind of freedom from some kind of tyranny, though it may feel like a capitulation. Then, once it stops feeling like a capitulation but starts feeling like freedom, the thing is to flee, to take one's sword and cut up the person who made the art that way, and start again. All of art is starting over again. If you have come to a stop, then you must cut yourself up with your little finger, with your little sword. But don't we get tired? Doesn't it get exhausting? Yes and yes. A person is also allowed to be a little bit tired, and just do the same thing over and over again.

No one wants to admit that's them. Can a little disguise be put on the art, like a moustache, say, to make it seem like one is doing something different from last time?

Real effort takes real thought, but real thought takes time, and time takes silence.

There are too many equations in this life, all of them unknown to us.

Sometimes thought just happens, without time, without silence, without even the self. There it is, on your plate. What's *that* equation, then? The equation that made the feast, lying there on your plate all of a sudden, like a grand gesture from the heavens, like fish and wine where before there was none?

We may ask, *Can this—the art I'm making—be made from this—the life I'm living?*

If the answer is no, then start with the art, and let it make the life. Let the life unfold from the art, and not the reverse. Who cares about the life you're living? It should unfurl in the wake of the

art. *Don't worry* about the life you're living. Worry about the art you're making, like the life is the tail on the body of the art. There is no reason to be romantic about something as essentially romantic as art. Art doesn't need your beautiful life. It doesn't need anything at all.

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Okay, let's admit that there's some joy in making, there's some joy in everything, there's some new joy in life, all those suffering thoughts are behind us now, there's a simple, bouncing, springing sort of joy that it's our duty to never forget, because the thoughts that plagued us could plague us again if we're not careful.

But we *are* careful!!

We are careful, and rested, and free.

We are completely worn out, but we haven't lost the essential thing. What was always there is still there, it remains. Art is proof of that. It is as reliable as the temperature of our bodies which tells us no you're not ill, no you're not dead. There is something monstrous in being able to create no matter what is going on, and this tiny monstrous feeling will never go away. It is such a secret joy, such a secret pleasure. You always come back to it, eventually. You left it, but it never left you. Who is more faithful than art? Even mothers run away. Art has nowhere to run to. It is stuck inside.

