

# Dingo Dogs

*(Essay on a sinner's skin)*

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## Characters:

**Jeremy** - 45, a catholic priest

**Alexis** - 25, a painter

"/" - overlapping dialogue

## Motto:

*Life - that is: continually shedding something that wants to die.*

*Life - that is: being cruel and inexorable against everything about us that is growing old and weak -and not only about us.*

*Life - that is, then: being without reverence for those who are dying, who are wretched, who are ancient?*

*Constantly being a murderer? - And yet old Moses said: "Thou shalt not kill."  
- Nietzsche (The Gay Science)*



Francisco Ribalta,  
*Christ Embracing St Bernard*  
1625-27. Oil on canvas, 158 x 113 cm  
Museo del Prado, Madrid



Andres Serrano,  
*Immersion (Piss Christ)* 1987, 150 x 100 cm  
-The photograph of a small crucifix  
submerged in the artist's urine

*Thursday morning. A room upstairs in a monastery. Upstage right - a large stained glass window with purple curtains. The bed is in the middle of the room, and behind it there is a metal scaffold. On the back wall there is a mural rendering of "The Last Supper"; only the upper half is painted. On the left there is a bathroom door and lots of icons hanging on the wall, and downstage left there is a desk on which there are lots of statues of saints and stacks of documents. Jeremy is in the shower. Alexis, on the bed, is playing with the lamp, lighting different parts of his mural. Very loud music (Blondie - "Heart of Glass"). Jeremy walks in, naked, trembling, visibly irritated.*

**Jeremy:** Alex! Alex, stop that music! The dogs are going mad. *(Dogs are barking.)*

**Alexis:** OK. Stop yelling! It's the heat. *(Pause)* I'm going mad too.

*(Alexis closes the lid of the laptop on the desk and draws the curtains with one movement, letting the light flood the room, which now looks messier. The dogs bark, filling the sudden silence. Jeremy gets dressed quickly, embarrassed by the change of mood.)*

**Jeremy:** Shut them!

**Alexis** *(looking at Jeremy's penis):* When I the size of it, I just give in.

**Jeremy:** I really don't like the way we began the day. Please, stop talking / like that...

**Alexis:** Oh, stop it, Big J., I'm gonna barf. You have no idea what you're missing out on! Two dogs are having sex under the oleander shrubs in the yard and the kids are trying to separate them. *(Laughs.)* Silly boys! Don't they know dogs get caught like that after doing it?

**Jeremy:** Get away from there! / Please...

**Alexis:** You're making more noise yelling like that.

**Jeremy:** I'm not yelling. This heat...

**Alexis:** Did you just agree with me? *(Laughs)* Think of *us* getting caught like that, Big J. Stuck together / like two...

**Jeremy:** Help me with my collar. *(Jeremy looks at Alexis and puts his arms around him, groping his butt.)* I love the way you tie your sash around your waist. Makes your arse look like a present. *(Pause.)* Just like my dream last night. A large plate of delicious meat, but the closer I got to it, it got more and more rotten.

*(Pause.)*

**Alexis:** Mom used to say, one gets dressed to defend oneself... We're not doing much, you know. *(Finishes adjusting the collar.)* There, done. *(Touches Jeremy's lips with his index finger).*

**Jeremy:** We are doing things.

**Alexis:** We're not doing anything I couldn't do by myself. Dry yourself! You'll catch a cold!

*(Pause. Returns to the window. Jeremy dries his hair.)*

**Alexis:** They definitely like those dogs.

**Jeremy:** Who?

**Alexis:** The kids.

**Jeremy:** They're the same. Wild.

**Alexis:** You think? That's a type of voyeurism.

*(Pause)*

**Alexis:** You confess them, right?

**Jeremy:** Yes.

**Alexis:** Do they jerk off a lot? Sometimes together?

**Jeremy:** Shut up and get to work.

**Alexis** *(allusive)*: I could work on something else.

**Jeremy:** When are you going to finish this shitty painting?

**Alexis:** You talk like that about an icon?

**Jeremy:** Alex, this's not an icon. It needs to be sanctified. Until then, it's just an experiment.

**Alexis:** If that's how you feel about it, I'll leave it unfinished. Or...

*(Alexis draws Jesus' sex organ on the mural)*

**Jeremy:** Wipe that off! Right now!

**Alexis:** Only if you fuck my brains out.

*(Pause)*

**Jeremy:** Now is not a good time.

**Alexis:** It's never a good time for you, Big J. And yet, you're always behind me, analyzing me, just waiting for the *right* "time".

*(Alexis is swinging on the scaffold, upside down. Pause.)*

**Alexis:** Your God is so small, small and erect.

**Jeremy:** You're awful, Alex.

**Alexis** *(jumps on the bed, bored)*: Fine. I'm awful. You feel better now?

*(Pause)*

**Jeremy:** Will you pick up your clothes?

**Alexis:** Leave them... Later.

**Jeremy:** Do what I say!

**Alexis:** I always do what you say. Almost always.

**Jeremy:** Do you see me laughing?

**Alexis:** Alright, rarely...

**Jeremy** *(adamant)*: Never.

*(Pause)*

**Alexis** *(bored)*: I'm really in the mood this morning! Can I at least fuck your Jesus bed sheet? The one you dreamt was being torn apart by your puppies? Big J., I could be your puppy. Can I?

**Jeremy:** Alex!

**Alexis:** Can I?

**Jeremy:** That's enough! I don't want to insult you!

**Alexis:** I'm kidding, father! I'm kidding! You insult me all the time, anyway. *(Pause.)*  
You do know you hug it with your legs when you sleep and /...

**Jeremy:** Do we have to go through this every morning?

**Alexis:** I didn't do anything yesterday.

**Jeremy:** Not until noon, / when you...

**Alexis:** I made an effort. It's not that easy with you...

**Jeremy:** Grow up! It would be good for you.

**Alexis:** *This* would be good for me, Big J. *(He pulls Jeremy on the bed)*

**Jeremy:** I have to...

**Alexis:** No you don't "have to". *You're* my "good", my new found paradise, my religion with a single follower. Here, I'll tell you a story. A good one. A beautiful one.  
*(Alexis kneels in front of him, kissed his hand. Jeremy blesses him. Alexis starts licking his fingers.)*

**Jeremy:** You drive me crazy with your lies. Open your mouth.

*(He sticks his fingers inside Alexis' mouth and pulls his jaw.)*

**Alexis:** And you drive me crazy with your dreams, so we're even. But, well, you are a freshman. I had the same boyfriend for 6 years. Can you imagine? Giorgios / was something...

**Jeremy:** You've already told me / how well-endowed he was.

**Alexis:** When I was in Pathmos, I lived with him and Mom. Giorgios was a champion, an actual champion. I mean really, he was an enduro world champion.

**Jeremy:** What's that?

**Alexis:** Motorcycles, I told you. But we fought a lot. I was jealous.

**Jeremy:** And now you're not?

**Alexis** (*elusive*): I was watching the Sidney competition on TV, with Mom. We watched it every time! I went in the kitchen to get a glass of water, and when I got back Mom was standing by the window, crying. But Mom was always crying. (*Pause.*) There were sirens on TV. My eardrums hurt like hell. I drank the entire glass, but no tears came out...

**Jeremy:** You never told me.

**Alexis:** Why would I? (*Pause.*) All Mom could say was "He was cheating on you. Forget him!". Yeah, he was cheating on me, but he loved me. She couldn't understand that. (*Pause.*) I couldn't stay with her anymore. But where the hell was I supposed to go? "Australia". A clean start! A perfect start! Cling on to the place where he died. (*Looking Jeremy in the eyes.*) Giorgios is probably rotten by now, but you see, Big J., love rots much slower than flesh. He died because a dingo got on the track. Like the ones you keep here at the monastery. Haha! (*Pause.*) I can't stand this heat. (*Pause.*) I was headed to Perth and I stopped to take some photos of your yard. It was midday. My heels were melting. My temples were sore from not crying. The dogs were lying on the pavement, around the statue of the Madonna, their tongues dry, in the shade, under the pines. I passed through them and got to the chapel door. The kids were coming out. They were so quiet and peaceful. They let me come in. And then I heard your voice.

**Jeremy:** Stop, please!

**Alexis:** It was unearthly. Haha! (*Pause.*) At that moment I was able to cry for him for the first time. And that's when I began to ebb away, like your Southern sun. (*Tears.*)

**Jeremy:** There's no need. (*He strokes Alexis' head.*)

**Alexis:** You won me over because I'd already lost everything. (*An attack.*) I knew you were gay right away. (*Jeremy pulls back.*) First time you saw me, for a second there you glanced below my waist. That was enough. When you touched my chin to give me Communion, you didn't know if I was a Catholic, but God was the last thing on your mind. You were clutching at my jaw with your big strong hands. It hurt, but I

didn't want it to end. I wanted you to drain the last drop of life out of me. That night we howled with the dogs. I was your bitch for the first time, Big J.

**Jeremy** (*gets up*): Can we step out on the balcony? Please...

**Alexis**: I don't like it in the heat. But in here, you're free to...

**Jeremy**: That's why you sleep all day and paint during the night. You look tired all the time.

**Alexis** (*wiping his tears*): I like painting at night. Mom walks around at night in her oleander garden, thinking of me. Yeah. That's what she does, every night. Well, it's daytime over there. It's always tomorrow there. Actually, it's always never.

**Jeremy**: I don't think I've ever heard you speak to her on the phone...

**Alexis**: Mom was a prostitute. In a good way, in a beautiful way, if there is such a thing. This is something else I haven't told you. I love her very much. Too much to share her. You'll think it's funny, but the first memory I have is of me suckling milk from her breast. I remember it clearly, how I put my lips against her left breast, the one with the warts. That morning, my mother's song was louder than any cry of pain. Just like now. This is no ordinary morning. There's a silence that foreshadows death. But maybe I'm just tired. (*Pause. The dogs bark like they are biting each other.*) I was the child of the port. When I got older, a woman, a drunk colleague of my Mom's, told me she wouldn't even touch me. She'd breastfeed me without making contact. She'd milk herself and sprinkle it in my mouth. I'd nestle in the arms of some cheap whore and Mom wouldn't touch me. Mom looks exactly like the woman in "Never on Sunday". I'm sure you've seen it. It won an Oscar, / or something...

**Jeremy**: No, I haven't seen it, but... To be honest, I don't understand a thing.

**Alexis**: That Greek film starring Melina Mercouri. About a hooker in a port near Athens. An American kept trying to change her. The way you do with me. It's exactly the same!

**Jeremy** (*moves away*): What do I have to do / with this?

**Alexis** (*moves towards him abruptly*): He wanted her to follow the norms, Big J., and that's impossible. Don't you get it?

**Jeremy**: I'm not like that, and I don't understand the comparison. I just tell you do keep your things in order, sometimes, but... Please, come, let's go out on the balcony!

**Alexis**: Big J., how long have I been here?

**Jeremy**: Three weeks.

**Alexis:** You can't change a person in three weeks. Just like you can't train those dogs outside. They bark whenever they want to and when they have to.

**Jeremy** (*changing the subject*): They're not dogs. They are a type of wild wolves / that...

**Alexis:** Exactly, you can't fight nature. (*Pause*) And you know what? The American failed.

**Jeremy:** Why?

**Alexis:** Because Ilya, that was her name, she was the soul of the port. People weren't the same without her. That's Mom's name, too. She's obsessed with this film. She always thought it was her story. I grew up among shirtless men and prostitutes. I'd sneak up and watch them for hours, bathing or having sex on the beach. (*Pause*) Later on, when I got a taste for it, I used to love competing with Mom, stealing her clients. I would drive them crazy. I don't know about the men around here, but Greeks never say no to a young piece of ass. Don't tell me you haven't noticed how cheery all the boys have become since I've started walking around the yard. How they all shine their shoes by the fountain, to be around when I'm bathing. They line up to sit beside me when we eat.

**Jeremy:** You walk around half naked. Maybe that's why.

**Alexis:** Irrelevant! These kids are sick, Big J.

**Jeremy:** Sick? You're the one who's taking baths all day long / and exposing your...

**Alexis:** Think of it this way: they're locked up here with some other perverted boys and a pack of dogs. There's bound to be some weird stuff bubbling up between them. (*Touches Jeremy's underwear.*)

**Jeremy** (*gets up*): Please, that's enough! I don't even want to think about it.

**Alexis:** They've got the prisoner's syndrome. They become animals!

**Jeremy:** You defend them when I try to reprimand them. I never...

**Alexis:** Maybe I have *my name* to blame for that. (*Laughs*) Mom baptised me Alexis after Anthony Perkins' character from Phaedra. He was a gay actor who died of AIDS. In Greek it means "defender". She gave me this name so I'd protect her when she got old, and now look at me... Haha!

**Jeremy:** Never mind that! Forget the films! (*Grabbing his arm.*) What are you really defending, huh?

**Alexis:** What do you mean, "what am I defending?"

**Jeremy:** You keep telling me, this isn't right, that is that, but what do you want?

**Alexis:** I have no idea. But, the way I am right now is not OK at all.

*(Pause.)*

**Jeremy** *(kisses him)*: Is this OK?

**Alexis:** Father, what happened to you? Give me more!

**Jeremy** *(hits him in the stomach, pushing him on the bed)*: Shut up!

**Alexis:** I will! You get all this energy from some wine and wafer?

**Jeremy:** Shhh...

**Alexis** *(pointing towards the mural)*: You have to admit these saints look better upside down!

*(Children are singing Ave Maris Stella in the yard).*

**Alexis:** What's wrong, Big J.? Don't you like me anymore? You want me to shut up? Are you thinking about your soul burning in a cauldron of pitch, or the demon fucking your ass a thousand times a minute? What's so bad about that?

**Jeremy:** Ever since you came here, I have nothing but nightmares. Lots of them.

**Alexis:** If that's a compliment...

**Jeremy:** We share a common fate now. We must! I don't know how, but it's true. The first night with you here, I dreamt I tossed the Bible in the middle of the road, and it melted. It got caught in the pavement and trucks drove over, it was sinking in because of the heat.

**Alexis** *(standing on the bed, jumping)*: Told you! This fucking Australian sun!

**Jeremy:** I kept trying to pull it out, until all the blood drained from my hands.

**Alexis:** Enough. Forget it! My balls hurt. I want you!

**Jeremy:** The Bible was hiding from me. I had this dream for a whole week, every night, and then all the other dreams you won't let me talk about. You don't listen to me. You *never* listen.

**Alexis:** Some crappy dream. It has nothing to do with us.

**Jeremy** *(distant)*: Us? Wait a minute... What *us*?

**Alexis:** The fact that you've been fucking my ass for the past three weeks doesn't count? Or me sucking you 24-7?

**Jeremy:** Keep your voice down! *(Pause.)* I don't know. We, Australians, we've always been queer. Even the toilet water flushes backwards.

**Alexis:** Haha! You know your way with words, but you *really are* "queer". Sucker! *(Pause.)* You don't have to worry so much. This is new to you, that's all.



*(Alexis climbs on top of the scaffold. He urinates on the mural, unseen by Jeremy. Jeremy moves toward the desk.)*

**Alexis:** Mom was in an asylum, 4 years ago. She tried to kill herself. She's been trying ever since. I always found her just in time and slapped her. I had to avenge my childhood, right? *(smiles)*

**Jeremy:** I had no idea she...

**Alexis:** She's crazy, you don't have to be afraid to say it! She's crazy, there, I can say it! Maybe that's where I get it from. When I was little she used to say she'd been "clouded" by the Holy Ghost, that kind of shit, and I was Christ reborn. Look at me! I paint doves on icons, but I don't look like any of them. *(Pause)* I was the child of the port, I'm sure of that. Of some god who refused to recognize me. But I'd also heard Dad was a client to those whores in the port. He did leave Mom with a more substantial present, though. Dad was... *(Dogs are barking.)* I think, after she had me, the life just drained out of her. *(Pause)* My toys were always dirty. The first time I got wet, my Mom was lying on the floor, by the bed, watching TV, she'd just been fucked, and I pretended to sleep in the arms of my new Dad while my little hands were filled with the joy of his exhausted cock. Mom was looking the other way, as usual, dreaming of her oleander garden. *(Pause)* Women are cowards. That's all they are.

**Jeremy:** But this woman must have done something good for you.

*(Jeremy picks up the phone. Gives it to Alexis. He puts it down.)*

**Alexis:** Oh, darling, don't be pathetic! She loved men. She still does. She can't really handle them anymore, she doesn't look the way she used to and her mind has softened. But she likes them, she likes them soooo much!

**Jeremy:** You should finish as soon as you can and leave. Alexis!

**Alexis** *(singing):* When you call my name / It's like a little prayer...

**Jeremy:** Alexis! Shut up already!

**Alexis** *(singing):* I wanna take you theeeere!

**Jeremy** *(hits him):* I said shut up!

**Alexis:** What? You don't like me upside down?

**Jeremy:** You need to finish the mural and go!

**Alexis** *(fooling around):* I thought you wanted me to stay. I was sure of it a moment ago.

**Jeremy:** The monsignor will be here in three days. You can't stay, you have to understand.

**Alexis:** I understand. I understand you're full of shit. You don't want me here anymore? Fine.

**Jeremy:** Alex, it's not like that! I can't give up on my calling.

**Alexis:** But you can suck my cock? "Alexis, get your crap and get out!" - It's that simple to you, isn't it?

**Jeremy:** Alex, this situation is rather embarrassing. Don't make it even more difficult.

**Alexis:** And what if I don't go? What if I just walk around naked when *your monsignor* shows up?

**Jeremy:** You know you wouldn't...

**Alexis:** You don't know anything about me, father.

**Jeremy:** That's true. Sometimes, when we make love, you're doing exactly what I want. What I need. But more often, it's what someone else got.

**Alexis:** You asshole. *That's* what you really wanted to say. I gave myself to you piece by piece, and you stole it all. You're insatiable. I wonder how many builders and workers you've fucked. And this monsignor thing is fucking bullshit. A pathetic lie! You're lying! That's all you're good at. You're even better than me!

**Jeremy:** Don't play with these things.

**Alexis:** I'm not playing. Oooh, trust me, I'm not playing at all.

**Jeremy:** We had a good time, I admit it. You know very well I don't normally do this sort of thing.

**Alexis:** I don't know anything. You said we didn't know each other.

**Jeremy:** You'll finish and then you'll leave. After that, we'll see...

**Alexis:** After that? You think there will be an "*after that*"? You're kicking my ass out of here and then what? What do you want, Jeremy?

**Jeremy:** Alex, it's not like that at all. This is an institution. It may sound strange, but that's what this is. An institution, with rules.

**Alexis:** Hah! And these rules imply banging your fellow workers?

**Jeremy:** Alex, you're gay.

**Alexis:** Yeah. Super gay. And proud.

**Jeremy:** See?

**Alexis:** I'm free to say it.

**Jeremy:** Alex, can we talk like adults?

**Alexis** (*humming, angry*): "Alex, can we talk like adults" - you sound like Mom trying to convince me I'm Jesus Christ. I'm so good at fucking, she obviously failed. (*Pause*) I grew up among half naked older men. So did the boys you've got here. I know what it's like to drool over someone. Trust me! When you were twenty, I was coming out of Mom's desolate cunt. Let's do the math here, shall we? When you were studying theology at twenty-five, I was behind some dirty curtain, watching Mom have anal sex. Most likely, when you were thirty and entering priesthood, like a coward, I was taking it up the ass for the first time, from the guy who'd just beaten up Mom. She would turn the TV all the way up and claw to her kneecaps, until she bled. Idiot. Stupid. Fool. Hits from the 90's covering my screams. When you were about thirty-five, I was already the port "bitch". Five years later, Mom's new rich lover put me in the Arts School and put her in the madhouse. And here I am, five years *after* that. With you. Yeah. Today is no ordinary day. We both know that. And if it ends, it will end badly! Come on, say something, "Mr. Adult", talk!

**Jeremy**: Why do you feel the need to tell me all these things?

**Alexis**: Because you don't feel the need to tell me anything, beside your stupid dreams. Nothing real.

**Jeremy**: They're not stupid and / it's not easy for me....

**Alexis**: I've had it. I'm leaving. Right now.

**Jeremy**: Then leave!

**Alexis**: I will!

(*Pause*)

**Jeremy**: You can't leave. You haven't finished your job.

**Alexis**: In the end, that's all you care about. I guess you shouldn't have showed me your Jesus bed sheet.

**Jeremy**: Alex, if you don't finish, you won't get any money.

**Alexis**: You think that's what's keeping me here? The money? Asshole! I can fuck for money, I can paint landscapes down in the port for five bucks and still make more money than you make by translating revelations farted out by boys with wings.

**Jeremy**: Forgive me! (*He cries.*)

**Alexis**: Are you crying? Just like that? You should have been an actor! You're crying without tears.

**Jeremy**: I got carried away.

**Alexis**: Sure. Fuck off!

**Jeremy:** Forgive me. Please.

**Alexis** (*serious*): Sure! If you blow me.

**Jeremy:** Really?

(*Jeremy leans.*)

**Alexis:** Come on, "Mr. Adult", I was kidding. But, if you wanna do it, sure! Are you suffering because you can't control everything? You think that you, with all your experience, are the only one who can fuck with people's minds. You're so wrong. This is my battlefield and I always win. I learned that in the port, where you can buy anything.

**Jeremy:** Yesterday you said you wanted to paint Judas as a drag queen and I believed you.

**Alexis:** I still do! (*Pause.*) You know what? I want to see your face when you show your monsignor the postmodern version of *The Last Supper*. That is, if this monsignor does show up and it's not just one of your dreams again. Dream number... who knows anymore.

(*Alexis puts his fingers in Jeremy's mouth. Jeremy mumbles the following line.*)

**Jeremy:** "People kneel to awaken themselves into holiness".

**Alexis:** You're so weak. Beautifully weak, really, and I'm a fool to adore you for your weaknesses. My short life has been cursed, through you. I like you so much I could kill you. I could do it every morning, when you wash me off and open the door to let out the odor, and these damned dogs start barking. Open your lips! Taste!

(*Jeremy kisses him and performs oral sex on Alexis. After the orgasm, Jeremy laughs and rises.*)

**Jeremy:** Alexis, you lure me in with your powerful madness, and I defend myself with my clumsy perversion. Hug me! (*Pause*)

**Alexis:** Do I have to?

**Jeremy** (*Hyperventilating*): Am I crazy? Probably, because this is biting really hard at my heart.

**Alexis:** If this was one of your idiotic declarations, thanks!

**Jeremy:** Hold me tight!

**Alexis:** I could grab you and throw you out the window. Just so you know...

**Jeremy:** You wouldn't do that.

**Alexis:** Wouldn't I? (*Pause*) You know, if in the beginning God had created two Adams, heaven would have remained heaven and no one would have missed a rib.

But your god likes to play around like a mental person. These games he's been playing, with me, with you, they're not funny at all, my dear father Jeremy, Daddy Big J. *(Pause)* Won't you go bless those shitty little suckers?

**Jeremy:** Don't be mean! Just stop it with all of this, let's go eat.

**Alexis:** I thought you wanted me to "finish" in three days...

**Jeremy** *(like a teacher):* You're a good boy, you'll finish. Come!

**Alexis:** OK, but I can't promise I won't grope any of them. *(Alexis laughs. Jeremy cleans his shoes.)* It's awfully hot. *(Pause.)* There's a dog on the balcony. He's staring at us.

*(Jeremy moves to exit, he returns, kisses the Bible, goes and hugs Alexis from behind.)*

**Jeremy:** This arse, like a present! *(Pause.)* Before we go... Sit down, please. I have to tell you something.

**Alexis:** Now? I can't wait to hear some more nonsense. Go ahead, blow me away!

**Jeremy:** Solitude was one of the first conditions I've known, and, until recently, the only one I'd been able to tame. Your coming here has taught me the antidote. Sex! I don't even know how to begin...

**Alexis:** From the beginning! What's this, dream number *what?* I should start taking notes...

**Jeremy** *(Bible in his hand):* I've been here for fifteen years, and, you know, all these beautiful boys... There were two in the choir, Adam and Clint. This was three years ago, it was an unusually hot night. They were both in the altar, helping me remove my clothes after Mass. Clint touched me in that place, by mistake. He apologized. I told him it was alright, and something made me take his hand and put it there. I told the other boy he could go. After Adam left, I kneeled and kissed him. I think I held him like that for a minute or two. The poor boy couldn't understand what was happening. I told him it was OK, that it was a coming of age ritual and that I'd done it with Adam as well. I told him to undress. He was trembling. He was ashamed, but he undressed. It was big for his age, and he had no hair. He was like a "putto" in an icon. I told him to undress me as well. He did it, carefully folding every piece of clothing, and I just stood there, aroused, and his care made me even more aroused. After he got me naked, he asked if he could leave. He couldn't look up at me. He was shaking horribly. I asked him to look at me, to relax and come sit on my lap. *(Pause.)* After all of that, I asked him to lick all the filth off me, I even made him drink

all the wine that was left from the communion, and took him to his room. In the morning, I sent Adam to wake him up and tell him that he got drunk and that I was very upset with him. I had the strength to confess him that day and to make him believe he had dreamt all of it, that he got drunk and that it was all the devil's doing.

**Alexis:** You monster! This can't be! You're lying! You can't...

**Jeremy:** I'm filled with remorse, Alex. It wasn't easy for me to get past this.

**Alexis:** So you got *past* it? And the boy? Did *he* get past it? Are you seeing a therapist together?

**Jeremy:** He graduated two years ago. (*whispering*) "Pedagogus ergo sodomiticus", as some would say...

**Alexis:** More nonsense! Did he figure it out?

**Jeremy:** I don't know. I wish he came and... but I couldn't look him in the eyes.

**Alexis** (*irony*): You could fuck him!

**Jeremy:** You're being cynical.

**Alexis:** Realistic! You fucked a seven-eight year old up his ass, you got him drunk and made him think he dreamt everything, and then you had the nerve to tell him he committed a sin. Did I forget something?

Jeremy (*praying out loud*): „Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te”. I couldn't /...

**Alexis:** You couldn't what? You couldn't call his parents and tell them your cock accidentally went up their kid's ass?

**Jeremy:** „Vestimentum tuum candidum quasi nix, et facies tua sicut sol. Tota pulchra es, Maria.”

**Alexis:** And I thought I was sick, but raping a 7 year-old? God...

**Jeremy:** I didn't rape him... "God"... „Et macula originalis non est in te.”

**Alexis:** Oh, I'm sorry, father, you just tricked him into fucking him?

**Jeremy:** I'm sorry, and I told you all of this because I trust you. „Tu Gloria Jerusalem, Tu laetitia Israel, tu honorificentia populi nostri.”

**Alexis:** Now I really feel like drawing cocks on all of these saints. I have a terrible headache.

**Jeremy:** Forgive me! Please, forgive me! „Tota pulchra es, Maria.”

**Alexis:** Me, forgive you? Your Virgin needs to forgive you!

**Jeremy:** She won't. „Tota pulchra es, Maria.” She won't.

(*Pause.*)

**Alexis:** No? Good! Then, let's get naked and step out on the balcony! Let's flap our cocks over these boys' heads! Convince them it's a good thing and then / maybe confess them, too.

**Jeremy:** Shut up! Please, shut up!

**Alexis:** Beg me to forget everything you've said.

*(Alexis puts his headphones on and dances around the room. Jeremy chases him, but Alexis won't let himself get caught. It becomes an erotic game. Objects fall over. Alexis laughs.)*

**Jeremy** *(grabs his hand. Smiles.):* Come have breakfast with me!

**Alexis:** If you think I can eat there, with all those kids. God knows who else you've...

**Jeremy:** No. I told you. It only happened once and I am sorry.

**Alexis:** Yeah, sure, but you came, right? You didn't just go in and out? You fucked his little ass till you gave him a nosebleed? *(grabs him by the collar)* Tell me, am I right? Say it!

**Jeremy:** Alex! Shut up! *(slaps him)*

**Alexis:** You've got some nerve. Playing the believer.

**Jeremy:** It has nothing to do with my job. I made a mistake as a man. I am like you.

**Alexis:** Ooh, no! Not like me. Your mind dreams up excuses to whatever you think needs to be forgiven.

**Jeremy:** It's not like that. It happened once. I was tempted.

**Alexis:** So now it the kid's fault? You could have stopped.

**Jeremy:** I'm going to eat.

**Alexis:** Sure. Go and give them your blessing! And maybe something else on the side.

*(Jeremy goes in the bathroom. The sound of him urinating. Alexis watches from the doorway.)*

**Jeremy:** What are you doing? Get out!

**Alexis:** I'd recognize the sound of you peeing from a thousand.

*(Jeremy comes out, Alexis goes in. He urinates.)*

**Jeremy:** I never could urinate in a public toilet. I just can't. Can't do it with another man standing there. I wait for everyone to leave and then go in, but I flush first, so no one hears. I never use the urinal. *(Pause.)* But I can do it with you.

**Alexis:** I call this "love", Big. J.

*(Jeremy smiles. Goes to the window. Alexis starts singing in the bathroom.)*

**Alexis** (*sings idly*): *It's like a prayer/ I wanna take you there!*

**Jeremy** (*looking out the window*): They are marking their territory... The males only lift their leg to pee when they're one year old. Until then, all pups urinate the exact same way. (*Pause*) This statue of the Madonna...

**Alexis** (*smiling*): You like it too?

**Jeremy**: How could I not like "the Madonna"? I'm a priest.

**Alexis**: I'm talking about *the* Madonna!

**Jeremy**: Well, she *is* "the Madonna"!

**Alexis**: The singer, Big. J., the singer. "Like a virgin".

(*Alexis comes out of the bathroom with his hand in his underwear.*)

**Jeremy** (*laughs*): You're insane.

**Alexis**: There, by the statue, that's where you looked at me differently for the first time...

**Jeremy**: It was your imagination. The statue lures the dogs. From all over the courtyard. They choose to sleep there, cramped by the pedestal. Sometimes, I think they're speaking.

**Alexis**: Last night, two of them were fucking super hardcore in front of your Madonna.

**Jeremy** (*laughs*): Can't you think of nothing else? You're a lost cause. (*Pause*) But you're also my strength, the witness of my journey, you *are* my journey. Thank you, Alex!

**Alexis**: For what? (*Jeremy smiles.*) I should give up this mural and do something else, maybe with the virgin... "Madonna among dogs" or "Madonna Australis" or "Virgin of the Dingoes", like Leo's "Virgin of the Rocks". What do you think?

**Jeremy**: Leo?

**Alexis**: Leonardo da Vinci. Another gay guy!

(*Alexis kisses his eyes.*)

**Jeremy** (*laughs out loud*): "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man." (*The sound of children signing. Dogs howling. Alexis brings Jeremy before the mural.*)

**Alexis**: Look, Big J., Saint Andrew looks like Giorgios. Jesus looks like me, of course. (*Smiles*). Peter... looks like an old boyfriend. Not Giorgios, someone else. I made him uglier because he deserves it. John looks like you, Big J. He couldn't have looked like anyone else, Big J.



**Jeremy:** Stop calling me that. It's annoying. "Big J, Small J".

**Alex:** You like it when we fuck. You say/...

**Jeremy:** That's different. Do your job and spare me the details.

**Alexis:** Wow, jumpy.

**Jeremy:** Well, if you're making / me...

**Alexis:** Hey. I want us to do something crazy. Will you pray with me?

**Jeremy:** If this is your idea of "crazy", sure.

**Alexis:** Promise you'll say the whole prayer!

**Jeremy:** I promise!

**Alexis:** Till the end!

**Jeremy:** Till the end!

*(Alexis plays the music. Madonna - Like a Prayer. They start to dance; though shy at first, Jeremy engages in Alexis' choreography.)*

**Jeremy** *(panting, smiling)*: Now I'm sure they heard us. I'll tell them the radio broke and got stuck on this song and I'll make them pray, a lot, so the Virgin forgives us.

**Alexis:** You do that, you rascal. You're just like me.

**Jeremy:** Worse.

*(They both laugh.)*

**Jeremy:** I'll have to shower again.

**Alexis:** We'll shower together.

**Jeremy:** I'll just freshen up a little. No shower.

**Alexis:** You're too shy. I'm impudent from birth. The one good thing I got from my Mom, besides my looks.

**Jeremy:** How would you like me to be? Tell me!

**Alexis:** I want you to stop overthinking everything you do. Really. Come on, do something! Surprise me!

*(Jeremy picks up the speech microphone in the balcony. He puts it on the sheet and moves it around.)*

**Jeremy:** Close your eyes! Do you hear the ocean? *(He makes Alexis continue with the microphone. Gets dressed.)* We are two waves, crashing. Two waves crashing against each other. We merge into each other. The same matter. The same present. Same past. Do you remember last week, when the storm caught us on the beach, with the dogs? You ran into the sea like a mad man, and I jumped after you. I was mad, too.

**Alexis:** Yeah, your robe was stuck to your body. Your abs were showing, and... You wanted to save me, but *you* were the one going down. The dogs' mouths were steaming with satanic vapors, and you, with your bogged down aura... *(laughs)* You were adorable. I felt that you were aroused by this savior quality that you have. You pressed your hand against that area. You were horny, Big J, I saw it. There, beyond the waves, the masks had fallen. After I emerged from the foam, like Aphrodite, I pulled you out, you got out of your robe and we did it, there, under the gasping mouths of those murderous dogs. Aphrodite had been taken to Olympus. And some Olympus that was!

**Jeremy** *(pause)*: Aphrodite... Do you wish you were someone else? That you'd been born different...

**Alexis:** A woman? Is that what you mean? No I don't, women are rough. *(Laughs)*. Men are cowards. I like that. It's a kind of vulnerability that makes them feel alive. Women make me sad.

**Jeremy:** Why?

**Alexis:** My Mom suffered a lot on account of men. So did a lot of women, I suppose.

**Jeremy:** Well, then, aren't men to blame?

**Alexis:** I don't know.

*(Pause.)*

**Jeremy:** Don't you want an orange?

**Alexis:** Why do you say "*don't* you"? You should say "Do you want an orange, handsome?" or "Do you want us to share a juicy orange, like two gorgeous guys, and then fuck like rabbits?" / or...

**Jeremy:** Open your eyes and shut up.

**Alexis:** I forgot to open them. You got dressed. / Is that the surprise?

**Jeremy:** I have to. You want some? *(He gives him the orange and a knife.)*

**Alexis:** Yep!

**Jeremy** *(put his shoes on)*: Maybe you can work on your mural until I get back. This isn't a breakup. You'll just have to leave for a few days. That's it. I promise.

**Alexis:** Our oranges are more 'real'.

**Jeremy:** I love you, Alexis! I love you more than I've ever loved these icons. I love you more than any choir boy or filthy dog or all of them together. But, as good as you are for me, you're bad.

**Alexis:** Honest people / don't talk so much.

**Jeremy:** “Tu autem eras interior intimo meo et superius summo meo”. You've been sent here. It sounds pathetic, but you're like an angel sent to change my path, to open my eyes. I don't know.

**Alexis:** It's so hard to have an orange these days! Everything's upside down in this goddamn Australia of yours. Only *you* can fuck and talk about God.

**Jeremy:** Yeah. Let it go! *(Moves to stand up.)*

**Alexis** *(direct, surprisingly firm)*: Wait, Big J.! It's not that easy for me either, you know. I'm afraid of all of this. I feel terrible. All these icons looking down at us, these statues gazing at me every time I move, looking more and more dejected every day. Can't you see it? You're getting sad too. Only this fucking courtyard is cheery. The dogs are happy there. Always staring at us. There's just not enough room for both of us in this cage.

**Jeremy:** I feel quite the opposite. The world around is getting smaller and I'm opening up.

**Alexis:** Believe me! We're both afraid. We're caught down here. But I don't want to get out. I don't need to. I can't, unless we're getting out together, hand in hand. Promise me we'll go for a walk tonight? A short walk, at least. / We'll go to the woods.

**Jeremy:** You keep making me promise you things.

**Alexis** *(looking at the orange peels he's holding)*: Would you throw these away?

**Jeremy:** You cut yourself. *(leans and licks the blood off Alexis' fingers)*

**Alexis:** Please, go!

**Jeremy** *(goes towards the mural and paints the robe of Jesus with the blood)*:  
Here...

**Alexis:** What are you doing?

**Jeremy:** It belongs here. We mustn't waste it. Blood of an angel.

**Alexis:** I put your cum there yesterday, you know, right?

**Jeremy:** I know.

**Alexis:** Is that OK?

**Jeremy:** It's good to have them mixed together on an icon. As though they were inside our mad mothers.

*(He puts his shoes on. Alexis watches him.)*

**Alexis:** I love you! I'd like to sing for you. Now, before you go downstairs.

**Jeremy:** We don't have time for this.

**Alexis:** This is what Mom used to sing when I was a child. *(Pause.)* You never have time for this. Here, Mom used to hold me like this and sing. *(Picks up the microphone and sings "Fidaki" - a Greek folk song about a mother snake and her son.)* She would have sung it the way it's meant to be sung. To comfort me.

**Jeremy:** It's affecting. Your Mother certainly was a strong woman.

**Alexis:** No. Not at all. *(Smiles, winks and puts his finger on Jeremy's lips.)* Most of the time she'd sing it because she couldn't feed me. We'd stuff ourselves with bread and water and we'd go in the port to look for clients. *(Pause.)* Mom didn't really have any reasons to go on living. Alright, go! You're already...

**Jeremy:** I don't want to! I'll ring Father Peter and ask him to perform the blessing. I'll tell him I'm not feeling well.

**Alexis:** Everyone knows you're up here with me...

**Jeremy:** You're just an artist, as far as they're concerned...

**Alexis:** Do you really want to break *all* Ten Commandments today? Some of them would be definitive.

*(Pause.)*

**Jeremy:** Hello, Peter? I'm not coming down today. I'm not feeling well, I need to pray. Oh, the noise... yes, it's the radio, it's broken. Of course. You can take them out in the woods. I'll go feed the dogs. Yes, later. Don't worry. *(Pause.)* The other priests will be back in three days with the Monsignor. *(Pause.)* It will be finished. I'll talk to Mr. Dimitriou. Of course. Thank you, Peter. Have fun!

**Alexis:** You just sing and Father Peter dances? "Mister Dimitriou"! You should call me that more often, Big J.! So, we have the afternoon all to ourselves?

**Jeremy:** I want to tell you all about my dream today.

**Alexis** *(ironic)*: Pfff! All of it? I'd rather go out with them...

*(Alexis walks on the scaffold, takes all his clothes off. Dogs bark.)*

**Jeremy:** The heat is driving them mad. Drives people mad, too. Listen! *(While Jeremy talks, Alexis receives a phone call, rejects it, then he gets a message. After the message, tears flood his eyes and he can no longer pay attention to Jeremy's story.)* I was in the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore. In Rome. It was overcrowded. I was in the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore. In Rome. It wasn't Saint Peter's. I was standing in front of the altar in papal vestments. I looked much older. It was the strangest dream. I was holding a red radio in my hand. *(He looks outside to see if the children are gone and goes to the microphone.)* I could hear: „Annuntio vobis

*gaudium magnum: Habemus Papam! Eminentissimum ac reverendissimum Dominum, Dominum Ieremias, Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ Cardinalem Blacksmith, Qui sibi nomen imposuit Alexis Primi.*" How about that? I took your name as my papal name. And then this really chaotic mass began. I climbed on top of the altar, and I took my clothes off, I had cardinal clothing underneath, then I took that off. Underneath I had my priest robe, and then I was naked, in front of all the cardinals of our holy church. I was screaming. "Alexis! Alexis!" They thought I wanted them to cheer my name. And they yelled. "Alexis". But I kept yelling for you. What am I to make of this madness? *(Alexis sticks his fingers down his throat and throws up next to the bed. Jeremy is so caught up in his story that he doesn't notice this.)*

**Alexis** *(dizzy)*: I don't understand how I fit into all of this.

**Jeremy**: You're here so I don't have to talk endlessly. Our life stories need to be told. Otherwise there is nothing.

**Alexis** *(confused)*: I wish I understood. I wish I knew how to control the chaos.

**Jeremy**: You're talking about me?

**Alexis**: No. My Mom/...

**Jeremy** *(irritated)*: What does your mother have to do with us?  
*(Pause. Alexis' attitude changes.)*

**Alexis** *(sits next to Jeremy)*: What, indeed.

**Jeremy**: You want to talk?

**Alexis**: No! Then, we'd fuck less and badly. We do that enough.

**Jeremy**: We...

**Alexis**: If you're about to say something couple-related, forget it!

**Jeremy**: I feel that...

**Alexis**: You *feel* so much, there's no room for anyone around you to feel anything.

**Jeremy**: We've known each other since the beginning of time, haven't we?

**Alexis**: Not really.

**Jeremy**: It's not worth going through all of this by yourself.

**Alexis**: Wait! What "all of this"?

**Jeremy**: Life. I'd give it all up today. If I were certain / of your...

**Alexis**: We can't be certain of anything. Not even your God. You want to change your life? Who doesn't? You wonder what your life would be like if I got you out of here? Who wouldn't? I / can...

**Jeremy**: You? Why you?

**Alexis:** Big J., why do you think I'm still hanging around?

**Jeremy:** Your mural is still...

**Alexis:** Forget the mural! I'm talking to you. Do you think I'm in your dreams for no reason? Your fucking papal dreams. Here, my hands smell of you, your cum, your saliva... *(Pause.)* You really wound me up. I hate the way you wash every time we have sex. Your cock is still hard and you turn on the lights. You run and wash everything off. I watch you standing in front of the sink, washing, compulsively. Antibacterial soap. Three times. You brush your teeth, you use mouthwash, three times in a row. You wash me off you. When you turn on the lights, I feel like a thief in your house, in your room, in your bed, / in you...

**Jeremy** *(carried away, then withdraws):* Like Pilate in front of Jesus, but it's not like that at all...

**Alexis:** Yes it is. Well done! It's exactly like that.

**Jeremy:** I don't like the sweat getting dry all over me. / That's all.

**Alexis:** So what if it gets dry? There's nothing obscene about that. When you tell me to "swallow", isn't that the same thing? You know, Big J., Mom said something to me, and now I understand what she meant. "Never put bananas in the fridge!" I wish you let me get under your skin, beneath your ribs, hold your heart in my hand and feel it beating. Now. Here. No morals. No thought. Nothing more. Nothing less. But you don't have the balls. *(Alexis' phone beeps multiple times.)* Listen to me! I am the only one who's allowed to be sick of myself. The others can suck my dick! Giorgios would call me, two or three days before we got together, and he'd tell me not to wash. He liked my smell, my real smell. *(He gets very close to Jeremy, their bodies touching)* Like this! People are different, cleanly different, different and clean. They're never dirty. Get that into your head!

**Jeremy:** My flesh feels dirty, rotten even. I don't believe that. I'm sorry, but I can't...

**Alexis:** You should. I love it when your lips taste of communion wine, when your fingers smell of wafer and sweat. It's like your god touches me, too, he touches me inside, the way I like it.

**Jeremy:** You have a decadent spirit. I cannot...

**Alexis:** Are you here with me? We're not even talking to each other, not really. We wallow in routine. You're constantly obsessed with the idea that we're doing something filthy. I just can't understand how we can be so bad to those who love us.

**Jeremy:** Now I'm certain that only death can rid me of the repugnance I feel for myself, and even more for you. For what you're doing to me, Alex. My mind, my soul want the same things my body wants, but...

**Alexis:** You're full of crap. Lots of crap. And *you're* the one fondling your crotch all day long. To drive me crazy. Yes, yes, Big J.! You entice me to create this impossible world that gives your mind some comfort. You make me turn two saints into sinners. And then you don't let me paint our failures. You are weak. You're beautifully weak, and I love you for your weaknesses. My short life has been cursed by you. I love you so much, I could kill you. I could do that every morning, when you wash me off you.

**Jeremy:** After everything I've done, the fact that I'm still here...

**Alexis:** What you did is part of your past. Yes. You're stronger now.

**Jeremy:** I'm not. *(Pause)* Your nature is killing me.

**Alexis:** My nature is your nature, too, in a way...

**Jeremy** *(violently)*: Shut up! Don't ever say that!

**Alexis:** You know what? I'm not your slave! Paying me to paint your walls is one thing, but fucking me and then criticising me is another. There's a difference!

**Jeremy:** There is no difference, can't you see?

**Alexis:** You're a fool. There's a big difference. You sound like a stupid kid.

**Jeremy:** I know better /...

**Alexis:** You don't know anything. You just know how to see the bad side in others. And *I'm* the kid here? I don't draw the curtains like a coward, so I can fuck in a dark room. Fuck you!

**Jeremy:** It's your fault I'm like this. You keep comparing me to your ex-lovers. You forget I've no experience.

**Alexis:** I'm sorry! I don't have all the dreams and revelations you have. I don't *want* to.

**Jeremy:** See? You're terrible. You're awful.

**Alexis:** No, darling, *you* are. And maybe I ought to shame you in front of all these kids. You deserve it. How about that?

*(Alexis notices an ant. He deviates its direction and makes it climb his foot. Jeremy watches him, and, when the ant reaches Alexis' knee, he crushes it.)*

**Jeremy:** Don't you dare do something like that, or I could / really...

**Alexis:** You'd what? Kill me? Come on, father...

**Jeremy:** You know I didn't mean to say that...

**Alexis:** I don't know. We don't know each other. We should be afraid of one other.

**Jeremy:** I'm not afraid of you. Why would I?

**Alexis:** Maybe you should.

**Jeremy:** I couldn't be like you, I realised that from the very beginning, so I decided to be cruel. But I have faith.

**Alexis:** You do? Then let me wash you. Here. Let me clean every inch of your skin, let me wash off the filth you feel when you're with me.

**Jeremy:** You don't understand...

**Alexis** *(his finger on Jeremy's lips):* Shhh! Let me wash you, as if you were *(wants to say dead)* a new born.

**Jeremy:** I'll shut up!

**Alexis:** You don't have to say it. Do it! Shut up!

**Jeremy:** All right. *(Frightened)* "Monstra te esse matrem, Sumat per te precem, qui pro nobis natus, tulit esse tuus".

*(Alexis bring in a basin filled with water, as Jeremy removes his clothes and places them carefully on the desk. They both sit on the edge of the bed. Alexis takes the Jesus sheet and dips it in the water. He starts washing Jeremy's neck, then his joints, sex organ, ankles, kissing each part of his body after cleaning it. Dips the sheet in the water again and spreads it on Jeremy's body. The image resembles a crucified Jesus, wet, over Jeremy's body.)*

**Alexis:** It was good.

**Jeremy:** Alex, you're beautiful and I love you immensely. We're two naked children in front of a new world.

**Alexis:** Naked and clean, as you like it. *(Pause)* I love you.

**Jeremy:** You love me?

**Alexis:** Let me do one more thing. I want to tie you up, the way I like it.  
*(Alexis ties his hands.)*

**Jeremy:** I'm going to enjoy this. I'm sure I will.

**Alexis:** You can't be sure of that. Maybe I lied. I don't admit it when I do.

**Jeremy:** What? You, lie? Well, yes, you do. *(smiles)* Go on, lie to me! You've done it once, you can do it a hundred times over.

**Alexis:** That's great, father Jeremy. Well done!



**Jeremy:** Wasn't this your point all along? I'm tied to you like a snowball. I caught more than I wished for. You are the sinner. I never had a chance...

**Alexis:** I didn't have a point. Not really. You're the one who insisted...

**Jeremy:** When the world turns its back on you, everything comes tumbling.

*(Alexis ties one of his legs.)*

**Jeremy** *(in tears, gives in):* Do you think about death?

**Alexis:** Never. Suicide, maybe... If I were to do it, I wish these dogs would devour my body. It wouldn't hurt. I don't have the slightest respect for my body. It's just a stinking corpse, after all. *(Pause.)* You could have taught me so much about life, but you...

**Jeremy:** It's good to break up right in the middle of a relationship.

**Alexis:** To leave something behind... But the way you do it matters as well. Actually, that's all that matters. Why are you saying this to me now?

**Jeremy:** Because we're in the middle of our relationship.

**Alexis:** And you think we'll break up?

*(Alexis picks up the crucifix on the desk.)*

**Jeremy:** There is no worse cruelty than killing a soul...

*(Alexis inserts the crucifix in Jeremy's mouth. Jeremy mutters.)*

**Alexis:** A gun would be too obscene for this. You like it in your mouth. It turns you on. Is this how you lured those poor kids? This morning my Mom tied a rock to her neck and drowned herself in the port. While you were telling me about your papal dreams. Mom is gone. Along with her scent of Nivea. She doesn't walk in her oleander garden anymore. *(Hits him with the crucifix.)* Fuck you, Big J!! Fuck you! *(A dog barks outside.)* He showed up like a messenger of death. I will give him raw meat. You give the dog meat, he'll just want more. *(Shoves a pair of underwear in Jeremy's mouth).* There's something I learned from my fellas in the port. Always wait till it gets dark to beat up your whore. And darkness came for you a long time ago. Night comes in the middle of the day here! *(Alexis removes the underwear from Jeremy's mouth and kisses him all over.)*

**Jeremy:** "Ecce Ancilla Domini! Taste and see that the Lord is good." *(His face shows fear and pleasure. He urinates on the bed.)*

**Alexis:** Shhh. Now *you* shut up. I dreamt about something too yesterday. That's why I was so agitated last night. Anubis. The Egyptian god with a dog's head. Anubis is all about death. You know? The barker. Or, what was it? Ooh. The city of dogs. The

weighing of the heart. Fuck! You know all this, don't you? You do. If the body was heavier than the ostrich feather, death would devour it. (*Laughs hysterically.*) I'm messing with you. And you deserve it. (*Jeremy tries to move, he struggles.*) Come on, Big J. (*Smiles, then he gets sad.*) Be happy! You've been like a teacher to me, but so have I, to you. It's a beautiful ending. You never understood that we were living on an imaginary island the world doesn't care about. They couldn't give a fuck about it. Yeah. But we make our own islands. We're too preoccupied with continents and big universal ideas. You know what I think? Everyone should live out their own island as hard as they can. This is the only universal truth. (*Goes to the mural and paints Jesus' robe red. Jeremy's struggle becomes more violent.*) Australia. Everything about this place makes me feel like we can't be together. You've only been here a few generations, your feet are still stuck in our ground. There, where water flushes backwards. The "rrrrright" way. Here, we're caught in an infinite array of islands. An island that believes itself to be a continent. A monastery island. This room. This bed we're strangers in. Even now. (*Pause*) The island calls for death. The earth and the water surrounding it ask for blood. I know what your dreams were all about. (*Whisper*) The Apocalypse of Patmos. That's me. (*Returns with a metallic spatula.*) Shh! If you want to say something, keep it to yourself! Please! In this moment, there are millions of decisions that are being made, and I'm struggling to make one myself. Just one. The good one! I'm scared it may be someone else's thought, though. I'm a comet and you've changed my trajectory. You shouldn't have done that. (*Increasingly aggressive.*) Dingoes may have devolved from dogs. Who cares? They're all just filthy animals. (*Starts cutting Jeremy's skin.*) Just like us. We devolve. We become murderers. Some of us kill with words, with lies, we cheat, others just kill. When I first stepped into this church, I saw Saint Sebastian, right above you. Naked. The arrows piercing his skin aroused me. The human skin needs to be cut, needs to be cleaned, because it's filthy. You said it. Fear comes with sex. The fear of blood. (*Makes cuts on Jeremy's chest.*) Shh! Shut up! The blood cleanses. Blood isn't evil. We keep hurting each other and then we abandon each other in some corner to lick our wounds. Like the damned dogs that we are. Don't worry, I won't touch your face, it's too beautiful. (*Kisses him.*) I feel like a dog that's been chained by the neck its entire life and the chain got rusty and snapped. Should I run? Should I stay? I don't have the strength to run. (*Pause.*) You've become the rust on my neck. You went deep beneath my skin and bones. You're hurting me. I

need to spit you out, Big J. I have to. Because you're a cowardly animal. A poor frightened dog. You play dead, when the other dogs are standing. You forgot your powers. Don't forget! Dingoes are miraculous. They walk on two legs. They're special. Silent killers. You all have killer blood here in Australia. And it's contagious. We become like you, two-legged animals. *(Dips the brush in Jeremy's blood and paints.)* You're monogamous and a monotheist. One god. One path. One lover. One ass to fuck. Your vision is monochromatic. You can't leave now and you never will. And I can't leave you. I can't. *(In tears.)* You know? My crazy Mom... When I was 20, she told me she was raped by a priest and then she had me. I'm sure you look just like him. Like my "father". I knew it the moment I saw you. You're a murderer. But we've had some good lies together, haven't we, Big J.? And now, my mural and your blood will be together forever. *(Paints with Jeremy's blood.)* Last night, the dogs were restless, down there, by the statue. They were chasing flies. Actually, the flies were buzzing around in circles and then flinging into their mouths. Yeah, brave flies, suicidal, just like you were when you opened the door to your room for me. After the flies dropped in their mouths, the dingoes rose up on two legs and walked around like people. They were dancing, they knew I was watching. Damned murderous dogs. I'll just open the door for them, let them have it all. *(Opens the balcony door, puts on "Father Figure" by George Michael. Kisses Jeremy.)* I only kiss when I'm in love. *(Pause.)* You asked me what I was defending. How could you not see it? I am defending myself! *(Cuts Jeremy's chest once again, then suddenly gets up to stab himself in the chest, hesitates, throws the knife in the middle of the room. Embraces Jeremy tightly. Jeremy unties his hand and comforts him. The dogs enter the room.)*

**THE END**