

An Excerpt from
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
of a **CHAR-**
ACTER
from
FICTION

ALAIN ARIAS-MISSON

*Copyright © 2016 by Alain Arias-Misson
All Rights Reserved*



Black Scat Books
2016

Origin I: Departure

Gate. Garden. House. Memories?

The gate. Its iron bars. Little Augustin's fingers clutched about them. The grain of their rust impregnates my fingers seventy years later.

Garden: A splendid garden could be seen behind it, which was full of the most beautiful flowers and herbs. It was, however, surrounded by a high wall, and no one dared to go into it because it belonged to an enchantress. It must be so, for his Mother will not go back into it! Perhaps she is afraid she will lose her child if she does? Like Rapunzel? Or that little Augustin be blinded for his impetuous desire, his eyes cut out by the enchantress' claws? Nonetheless this garden would become the scene many years later where his emotions for his mother and their essential relationship would appear to bloom. Until his lover's claws sank in.

House: I am travelling fast, I think too fast. Mind, body are balled into a howling void, the words a scripture of floating ribbons of blood which Augustin cannot yet read at three years old: "I want Teddy!"—his teddy bear abandoned in the house he was born in! His first and only memory of his "origin"! His mother is pulling desperately at his cramped fingers, for the answering scream and whine of planes already fill the Brussels sky; sister struck dumb waiting in the idling

growl of the car; while he alone, in a fit of compulsive tremors, dimly makes out one, three, six: creatures moving in the garden, they moved in slow circles, circling closer and closer to enclose, to enclose, soft language issuing from their lips. They were chattering among themselves— he wondered if it was about him. He would only discover a decade later from his friend, Stephen D., how well they already knew him...

He also learned later that a bomb struck the colonnaded glass-walled dining room shortly after their departure: a thousand lovely, sparkling crystals suspended in the air. These would have been tinted rose with their blood, if he had succeeded in convincing his mother to go back in.

War had exploded all known places and habits and faces—and memories. June 1940. An officer of the capitulated Belgian army escaped in his plane toward southern Europe in the hope of meeting up somehow with his wife and children in the refugee lines winding their way across the map of Europe toward Portugal, the gateway out of the war zone and back to England, or so Augustin's mother hoped. An indispensable biographical moment, she thought, that map..

“Until I had this accident with my plane,” said Augustin's father later, attempting to explain the strangeness of the incident to his son, “something was broken in my engine. And as I had with me neither a mechanic nor any passengers, I set myself to attempt the difficult repairs all alone. It was a question of life or death for me. The first night, then, I went to

sleep on the sand, a thousand miles from any human habitation. I was more isolated than a shipwrecked sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean. Thus you can imagine my amazement, at sunrise, when I was awakened by an odd little voice. It said: "If you please—draw me a sheep!" Well, although I was desperately occupied at that moment—this was the war—I did my best to do what the little fellow asked. Three times he rejected my drawings of a sheep (I can barely draw a straight line and my sheep drawings are certainly defective), so I finally tossed off a drawing of a box and threw out an explanation with it-

"This is only his box. The sheep you asked for is inside." I was very surprised to see a light break over the face of my young judge: "That is exactly the way I wanted it! Do you think that this sheep will have to have a great deal of grass?"

When his father told Augustin about his resolution of the matter, the latter realized that he too could take away Teddy in a cardboard box drawn in his head. And not only Teddy but his home and his friends, his family and his loves. In fact, in that box is the story of his life!

And their mother fled with the children into the churning human torrent of refugees across the Ardennes and down into France. She felt that she was floating among a thousand characters from all the eras and regions of the novels she had loved, as if these were emptying out their tables of content in the general panic. She drove the old Peugeot as

quickly as she could in the massive caravan of every sort of vehicle, busses, delivery trucks, tractors, at one moment even passing a wagonette, a sort of open coach: it was Lady Pedal perched up on the box with the coachman, a huge, fat, red-faced woman with a straw hat covered with artificial daisies, taking Lemuel's mad crew of the Johnny Goddams, inmates from St. John of God's, on a once-a-year holiday excursion, their ankles all tethered by cords together: Lemuel, the jailor, with his hatchet; a young man who seemed dead if it hadn't been for his wide-open eyes; an ageless man known as the Saxon; a thin man with "his head of fine flossy white hair"; a misshapen bearded giant,—and Macmann with his huge head and decomposing hat. Augustin waved wildy at the latter, his nose pressed against the back window. And the latter, he was sure, winked at him as they drew away. He told his mother, but she said that was nonsense, although she had a strange, frightened look in her eyes.

###

**Available worldwide on
Amazon**

**Visit
BlackScatBooks.com
for more information**