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CRISIS OF REPRESENTATION

companion text to *THE JOYS*

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- 1 edited excerpt from St. Augustine's *Confessions*, in the translation of Sarah Ruden for Penguin Random House, 2018. All instances of words 'God' and 'Master' and dependent particles removed; 'sin' replaced by 'wrong'.
- 2 edited excerpt from the Editorial of Arts of the Working Class' ISSUE 36: EXPERIENCE, Spring 2025. All instances of 'we' and connected pronouns replaced by 'I' and connected pronouns.
- 3 edited excerpt from BAE Systems' website 'Who We Are' section as available at www.baesystems.com/en/our-company as of June 2025. All instances of 'we' and connected pronouns replaced by 'I' and connected pronouns; 'company' replaced by 'entity'; 'defense' replaced by 'protection'; 'customers' replaced by 'those who need me'; 'business' replaced by 'activity'; 'markets' replaced by 'contexts'; 'stakeholders' replaced by 'dear ones'; 'aerospace' replace by 'air'.

Which of the following is first,
To know you, or to call on you? ¹

So how will I call on you, since inevitably calling on you is calling you within myself? ¹

Why do I beg that you come onto me, when I would not exist in the first place unless you were in me? ¹

I would not exist, I would not exist at all, unless you existed in me. ¹

Then what are you? ¹

What are you, I ask?

Making me forget the evils that are mine and embrace the single good that belongs to me, and that good, the you in me. ¹

What am I to you, in myself, that you command love for yourself from me? ¹

I provide some of the world's most advanced protection and security solutions, helping those who need me stay ahead of evolving threats. Working with those who need me and local partners, I develop products and systems to deliver capability, protection, and keep critical information and infrastructure safe. ³

And unless I give it to you, you hold it against me, and threaten me with immense pain.

Is my misery a petty thing if I don't love you? ¹

Tell me, you, what are you to me? And say to my soul: I myself am your rescue. ¹

Say it in such a way that I hear it. ¹

Here before you are the ears with which my heart hears.

Open them, and say to my soul: I myself am your rescue. ¹

I will run after the sound of your voice and lay hold of you. ¹

Do not hide your face from me. Let me die to keep me from dying. Let me see your face. ¹

I believe, and because I believe, I speak. Here is your sense to which I am speaking. Where do I come from to this place, deathly life, or living death?

I do not know. ¹

The more I attempt to shape my experiences one by one, the more I realize this process relies not only on my will but on factors beyond the reach of my aspirations. ²

Experience is a condition of being, and the more intentional I can be about it, the more it reveals its potential to reshape me and my surroundings. ²

Just a boy, then, I began to pray to you, my help and my refuge, and in invoking you I broke the knots around my tongue. ¹

And from my love is my full deliverance. ¹

Everything I do is steered by my three core values: trusted; innovative; and bold. ³

You hear this now, yet stay silent. ¹

Long-suffering and with so much sense in your heart, and always speaking the truth yourself. ¹

I didn't love you, you suddenly were nothing to me, and I cheated on you. And as I cheated, there rang around me your words. ¹

You won't always be silent, will you? ¹

For Marx, class consciousness emerges when workers recognize their shared position within the structure of labor relations. This collective awareness is not just descriptive, but transformative, it enables the possibility of proletarian revolution and the reappropriation of the means of production. Similarly, situating my own experiences in connection to other people's is a necessary first step toward understanding how my identities are shaped by – and, in turn, shape – the conditions I live under. ²

In light of this, I ask you: what does it mean to undergo the all-encompassing, turbulent experience of being human in the late stages of capitalism? What does it do to my sense of self, community, and possibility?²

My strategy is comprised of six long-term areas of focus that help me deliver my vision and mission. All are centered on maintaining and growing my core franchises and securing growth opportunities through advancing my three strategic priorities, whilst demonstrating my behaviors in all that I do.³

My wrong was that I sought not in my love itself but in things it had created those delights, heights, and perceptions of what was true and right, and in this way I collapsed into sufferings, embarrassments, and errors. Praise and thanks be to you, who are my softness, my opening, my pride, my conviction, and my faithfulness, thanks be to you for your gifts; preserve them for me, and by doing this you will preserve me, and what you have given me will grow and come to fulfillment, and I will be with you, because it is your gift that I exist at all.¹

I marveled that now I loved you, and not an apparition in place of you.¹

But I didn't stay to enjoy you. I was ravished into your presence, by your beauty, yet soon torn away from you by the weight of myself.¹

But the memory of you remained with me, and in no way did I doubt that you were the one I should cling to.¹

Let your love wash through my bones, and let them say: Who is like you?¹

And within my secret self you stood over me, with your cruel sense, stepping up the lashing of terror and shame, so that I wouldn't stop trying.¹

I was saying to myself inwardly: Okay, right now, I'm letting it happen, right now I'm letting it happen¹

Even as I spoke I was already starting to enter into the resolve. I was already—almost—acting, and yet I wasn't acting. However, I didn't fall back into my former state, but was standing firm, right on the edge, and catching my breath. And once again I tried, and I was a little closer to being there, and then a little closer still, and I was almost—almost—touching and grasping you; but I wasn't there, and I wasn't touching and grasping you. ¹

I was hanging back from dying to death and living for life. ¹

The nearer to me that moment moved at which I was to become something different, the more it struck terror into my heart. But it didn't strike me back or turn me to the side; it just left me dangling there. ¹

Let my heart and my tongue praise you, and let all my bones say: Who is like you? ¹

Let them say it, and you, answer me, and say to my soul: I am your rescue ¹

But who am I, and what sort of person? ¹

I sustain and grow my protection activity. ³

I continue to grow my activity in adjacent contexts. ³

I develop and expand my international activity. ³

I enhance financial performance and deliver enduring growth in value. ³

I advance and integrate my sustainability agenda. ³

For me, it means navigating a world where even my most intimate emotions – grief, joy, longing, rage – are intercepted and repackaged as content, metrics, or market data. It means witnessing the erosion of boundaries between self and system as my identities become entangled with the platforms on which I perform, the jobs I endure, and the crises I cannot ignore. Community, once rooted in physical proximity and shared survival, is now fragmented, outsourced, geographically distributed, and algorithmically sorted. Possibilities narrow to a menu of preselected outcomes: brand affiliations, productivity hacks, and fleeting visibility.

In such a landscape, to truly feel what I experience – and to truly relate to it – becomes both an act of resistance and a form of remembering: a memory of what I am still capable of. ²

But what does it mean, to truly relate? What does it mean, to truly feel? ²

The whole of what brought this about was that I stopped wanting what I had been wanting, and instead started wanting what you wanted. ¹

Let me know you, you whose affect is to know me, to vouch for me and plead for me—let me know you the way I am known. ¹

You yourself are everything good that belongs to me; and you are with me before I am with you. ¹

To be sure, now we see in a riddling mirror, and not yet-face-to-face; and so while I'm traveling in a country foreign to yours, I am closer to myself than to you; and yet I know that it is impossible to disturb your perfect idea. I, on the other hand, don't know which temptations I have the strength to resist, and which not. But there is hope, because you are faithful. ¹

But who am I, and what sort of person? ¹

It isn't with a wavering but with a sure awareness that I love you. You struck my heart to the core with your Word, and I fell in love with you. ¹

But what do I love, in loving you? ¹

It's not the beauty of material things, or any attractiveness of this time-bound city, not the pale gleam of the light, this light here which is so friendly to these physical eyes of mine; [...] and not manna or honey on the tongue, and not a body welcome in a physical embrace. I don't love these things in loving you, but I do love a certain light, and a certain voice, and a certain fragrance, and a certain taste, and a certain embrace in loving you: this is the light, the voice, the fragrance, the food, the embrace of the person I am within, where something sounds that time doesn't snatch away, and something sheds a fragrance that the wind doesn't scatter, and something has a flavor that gluttony doesn't diminish, and something clings that the full indulgence of desire doesn't sunder. This is what I love in loving you. ¹

But what is it that I love? ¹

But people are in submission to their love for creation. ¹

So what do I love, in loving you? Who are you, who is so, in my soul's head? ¹

I'll climb up to you by way of my soul just the same. I'll pass beyond my own vitality. ¹

Through careful long-term management and governance of my activity, I will continue to create value for my dear ones. ³

By self-restraint we are tied tightly together, restricted and reduced to the oneness from which we flowed out into multiplicity. A person loves you less if they love, along with you, something they don't love because of you. You who are always burning and never quenched. You, tender love, you, set me on fire. You command me to be self-restrained: give what you command, and command what you wish. ¹

The whole of my hope is only in your great sense. Grant what you command, and command what you wish. ¹

What is that light of beauty which will appear, when we'll see him as she is, and the tears will pass away that have become my daily and nightly bread, while people say to me every day: Where is your lover? ¹

And I also say: Where is my lover? ¹

Right here, is where you are. ¹

I find you in the little breath of rest when I pour out my soul over myself in words of rejoicing and confession. The sounds of someone celebrating a feast day. ¹

I take pride in my heritage. From the first gunpowder mills of the 16th century, through the industrial revolution, the exploration of space and the secure navigation of my cyber and online worlds, I have been at the forefront of technical innovation for the past 450 years. ³

I give thanks to you. ¹

Your works praise you, to make us love you, and we love you, making your works praise you. They have a beginning and an end in time, a rising and a setting, they make headway and they decay, they have a shape, shapeliness, beauty, and they lose it. ¹

But you are goodness that needs no goodness, and so are always at rest, since your rest is your very self. ¹

And who among us can offer to another being a way to understand this? What angel to another angel? ¹

Thus I see the things you made. ¹

The world I grew up in no longer exists. ²

My heritage products have helped shape the world I live in today, and continue to resonate with the public and inspire you. ³

