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SEVENTEEN The Process of Writing I have known very few writers, but those I have known, and whom I respected, confess at once that they have little idea where they are going when they first set pen to paper. They have a character, perhaps two, they are in that condition of eager discomfort which passes for inspiration, all admit radical changes of destination once the journey has begun. One, to my certain knowledge, spent nine months on a novel about Kashmir, then reset the whole thing in the Scottish Highlands. I never heard of anyone making a skeleton, as we were taught at school. In the breaking and remaking, in the timing, interweaving, beginning afresh, the writer comes to discern things in his material which were not consciously in his mind when he began. This organic process, often leading to moments of extraordinary self-discovery, is of an indescribable fascination. A blurred image appears, he adds a brushstroke and another, and it is gone. But something was there, and he will not rest till he has captured it. Sometimes the yeast within a writer outlives a book he has written. I have heard of writers who read nothing but their own books, like adolescents they stand before the mirror, and still cannot fathom the exact outline of the vision before them. For the same reason, writers talk interminably about their own books, winking out hidden meanings, super-imposing new ones, begging response from those around them. Of course a

writer doing this is misunderstood: he might as well try to explain a crime or a love affair. He is also, incidentally, an unforgivable bore. This temptation to cover the distance between himself and the reader, to study his image in the sight of those who do not know him, can be his undoing: he has begun to write to please. A young English writer made the pertinent observation a year or two back that the talent goes into the first draft, and the art into the drafts that follow. For this reason also the writer, like any other artist, has no resting place, no crowd or movement in which he may take comfort, no judgment from outside which can replace the judgment from within. A writer makes order out of the anarchy of his heart. he submits himself to a more ruthless discipline than any critic dreamed of, and when he flirts with fame, he is taking time off from living with himself, from the search for what his world contains at its inmost point.

inspiration n. 1.灵感 2.鼓舞人心的人或事物[联想词]

incentive n.刺激,鼓励 stimulus n.1.促进(因素) 2.刺激(物)

skeleton n.1.骨骼 2.框架,骨干 3.梗概,提要 discern vt.1.看出,察觉出 2.识别,认出[联想词]

ascertain vt.查明,弄清,确定 fascinate vt.强烈地吸引,迷住

fascination n.1.令人着迷的事物,魅力 2.迷恋,入迷

blur n.模糊 v.(blurred, blurring) (使)变模糊[联想词]

obscure a.1.不著名的,不重要的 2.费解的,模糊不清的 vt.使变模糊,掩盖

yeast n. 1. 酵母 2.酒母 3.骚动,激动 [联想词]

brew 人 vt.1.酿造 2.冲泡 vi.1. 冲泡 2.酝酿,行将发生

n.冲泡的饮料 adolescent n. 青少年 a.青少年的[联想词]

juvenile a. 1.少年的 2.幼稚的,不成熟的 n.未成年人,少年

fathom vt. 1.测量...的深度 2.理解,透彻了解[联想词]

probe v. 1.探索,调查 2.用(探测器等)探测 n.1.探测器 2.探索,调

查incidentally ad. 顺便说及地,顺便提一句tempt vt.诱惑,引  
诱pertinent a.有关系的,相关的ruthless a.1.无情的,冷酷的,残忍的  
2.坚决的,彻底的[联想词] vicious a. 1.恶毒的,凶残的 2.剧烈的,  
严重的savage a. 1.残暴的,凶猛的 2.未开化的,野蛮的 flirt v.1.调  
情 2.不认真地考虑[联想词] tease vt. 1.戏弄,取笑 2.挑逗 n.戏弄  
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