

NEO-GOTHIC

Dark, swamped with shadows and mysteries; at times, perhaps, even suddenly sublime: the quarters and wards that Karma has assigned to us as our lot.

This is my domain.

Edifice past modern, the present incarnation of an ancient castle from the days of yore; black, sinister, high up, half-hidden amid the fogs of grey, ominous skies resounding with echoes of ravens's croaks, towering above the dismal, chaotic urban sprawl; soul-making vale, like a lake of fire and brim-stone where bathers soak perpetually in deepest melancholy.

Beyond bleak clouds, stars look down on us impassibly.

It is a pirate ship adrift in the gloomy ocean of a colourless city; outlaws and renegades, all hands on deck, loafing among the paraphernalia of their miseries, fiddling with their thumbs hourless time, as limitless as the seas of ever-receding horizons, trapped in a directionless course as static as their dejections.

Boredom sits at the stern on her throne, imperious over this skeletal existence, for no-one here actually lives, they all merely exist, precariously.

We might not have arches, towers, gargoyles, and the gothic aesthetics so masterfully elucidated by John Ruskin; but we do feel spiritual aspirations, thirst for knowledge of heavenly arcana. They are constantly frustrated by the material petti-ness of the empty days in which we wander as lost souls unable to read the compass in the void.

Along the landings, passageways, secret places, stairs, towers, corridors and hideaways, when the moon is full and the wind blows curses, I suffer visions of the ghostly shade of a poor old friend who finally collapsed on this estate two years ago; loitering, roaming endlessly: the last one

of a long series of friends depar-ted, spectres who file before me in the sombre icy mists of winter, or in the sultriness of scorching summers, whom I sense crowding my mind and the surrounding blackness, obsessively, like malignant spirits in spite of themselves.

The city is strangely silent.

Here nights are long and eventful.

Distant motor traffic noise and the creaking of nocturnal birds sing the arrival of dawn in the frozen daybreak.

Since midnight, I have been lost in my reveries of you: my soul finally drained by the endless, mournful beat of this life; a pendulum dreadfully oscillating between the twin enigmas of love and death.