

Huis Clos (In Camera/No Exit) – Jean-Paul Sartre

To forget about the others? How utterly absurd! I feel you there, in every pore. Your silence clamours in my ears. You can nail up your mouth, cut your tongue out – but you can't prevent your being there. Can you stop your thoughts?

I hear them ticking away like a clock, tick-tock, tick-tock, and I'm certain you can hear mine. It's all very well skulking on your sofa, but you're everywhere, and every sound comes to me soiled, because you've intercepted it on its way. Why, you've even stolen my face; you know it and I don't! And what about her, about Estelle? You've stolen her from me too; if she and I were alone do you suppose she'd treat me as she does?

Even if I didn't see her I'd feel it in my bones – that she was making every sound, even the rustle of her dress, for your benefit, throwing you smiles you didn't see... Well, I won't stand for that, I prefer to choose my hell; I prefer to look you in the eyes and fight it out face to face.