

**Søren Kierkegaard**

**The Foreword to  
*Either/Or***

**Translated by  
Paul Vincent Spade**



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# Either/Or A Life-Fragment

Edited by  
Victor Eremita<sup>1</sup>

First Part  
Containing A's papers

Copenhagen  
C.A. Reitzel  
1843

Is reason then alone baptized,  
are the passions pagans?  
Young<sup>2</sup>

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## Forward

Perhaps it has occurred to you at times, dear reader, to doubt a bit about the correctness of the well known philosophical proposition that the Outward is the Inward, the Inward the Outward.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps you yourself have kept a secret about which you felt, in its joy or in its pain, that it was too dear for you to be able to let anyone else in on it. Perhaps your life has brought you in touch with people of whom you suspected that something like this was the case, but without your power's or your cleverness's being able to bring [what was] secret out into the open. Perhaps none of [these] cases is true of you and your life, and yet you are not unfamiliar with that doubt; it has floated through your thought now and then like a passing shape. Such a doubt comes and goes, and no one knows where it comes from or where it goes.

For my part, I have always been a little heretically-minded on this point of philosophy, and therefore have accustomed myself as well as I could, from early on, to make observations and inquiries myself. I have sought guidance in the au-

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Eremita = "the victor hermit."

<sup>2</sup> Edward Young (1683–1785), *The Complaint: Or Night-Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality*, (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1777), "Fourth Night," verses 629–30.

<sup>3</sup> A prominent Hegelian claim.

thors whose opinion I shared in this respect. In short, I have done what stood in my power to remedy the need the philosophical writings left behind.

Gradually, then, hearing became for me the favorite sense. For just as the voice is the revealing of innerness incommensurable with the outer, so is the ear the tool whereby this innerness is perceived, hearing the sense whereby it is assimilated. Each time I found a contradiction, then, between what I saw and what I heard, I found my doubt confirmed and my desire for observation was increased.

A confessor<sup>4</sup> is separated by a grille from the confessant; he does not see but merely hears. As he hears, he gradually forms an Outward that answers to it<sup>5</sup>; so he arrives at no contradiction. On the other hand, it is different when one sees and hears at the same time, and yet sees a grille between oneself and the speaker.

My endeavors to make observations in this direction have been very diverse, as far as the result goes. Sometimes I have been lucky, sometimes not, and to gain any benefit along these roads it always takes luck. Still, I have never lost the appetite to continue my investigations. If I have ever at a particular time been close to regretting my holding to this path, so at a particular time an unexpected stroke of luck has crowned my endeavors. It was such an unexpected stroke of luck that, in a most peculiar manner, put me in possession of the papers I hereby have the honor of setting before the reading public.

In these papers I got the opportunity to take a look into two people's lives, which confirmed my doubt whether the Outward is not the Inward. This holds especially for the one of them. His Outward has been incomplete contradiction with his Inward. It holds too for the other to a certain degree, insofar as he has hidden a considerable Inner under an inconsiderable Outward.

But still, it is probably best, for order's sake, that I tell how I have come into possession of these papers. It is now about seven years since I noticed at a merchant's [shop] here in the city a desk<sup>6</sup> that at once, the first time I saw it, drew my attention to itself. It was not of modern workmanship, quite used, and yet it fascinated me. To explain the basis for this impression is an impossibility for me, but most people have experienced in their life something similar.

My daily route led me past the merchant's [shop] and his desk, and I never failed in passing by every day to feast my eye on it. Gradually that desk took on a history for me. It became a necessity for me to see it, and to that end I did not hesitate to make a detour for its sake when that was made necessary on rare occasion. The more I looked at it, there awoke also the desire to possess it.

I felt very well that this was a strange desire, since I had no use for this item of furniture, that it was an extravagance of me to buy it. But, as is well known, desire is very sophisticated. I made myself an excuse for going to the mer-

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<sup>4</sup> A "confessor" is a priest who hears a penitent's confession, not the one doing the confessing. The latter is the "confessant." Confessions were heard in a "confessional," a little closet divided into two compartments separated by a little window with a grillwork or screen to block the view but allow sound to pass between the two compartments. The idea was to ensure anonymity.

<sup>5</sup> That's really all the Danish says. The sense is that the priest forms a mental picture of the confessant's outward appearance, in conformity with what he hears.

<sup>6</sup> desk = "Secretair" = a writing desk.

chant's shop, asked about other items, and as I was about to go I nonchalantly made a very low bid on the desk. I thought that possibly the merchant would have accepted. It would then be a chance that had played it into my hands.

It was certainly not for the money's sake that I behaved like that, but for my conscience's sake. It failed; the merchant was extraordinarily determined. Again for a time, I went by every day and looked at the desk with amorous eyes. You have to make decision, I thought. What if it gets sold? Then it is all over. Even if you succeeded in getting hold of it again, still you would not get that impression<sup>7</sup> of it any more.

My heart was pounding when I went into the merchant's [shop].

It was bought and paid for.<sup>8</sup> This will be the last time, I thought, that you are so extravagant. Indeed it is really a piece of luck that you have bought it, since as often as you look at it you will think about how extravagant you were. With the desk, a new phase in your life must begin. Alas, desire is very well-spoken and good intentions are always at hand.

The desk was set up in my room, and just as in the first stage of my love affair [with it] I got my pleasure by viewing it from the street, so I walked by it now at home. Gradually I learned to know all its rich contents, its many drawers and hiding-places, and I was in all respects delighted with the desk.

But it was not to stay that way. In the summer of 1836 my business allowed me to take a little tour in the country for a week. The coach was ordered for 5 AM. What clothes I needed to have with me were packed in the evening; all was in order. I woke up as early as 4 o'clock, but the image of the lovely area I was going to visit worked so intoxicatingly on me that I fell asleep again, or into dreams. My servant, I suppose, wanted to give me all the sleep I could get, for he first called for me at 6:30. The coachman was honking the horn already, and although otherwise I am reluctant to obey someone else's order, still I have always made an exception for a coachman and his poetic motifs. I quickly got dressed; I was already standing in the doorway with it occurred to me: do you have enough money in your wallet? Not much was found there. I unlocked the desk to open the money-drawer and take with me what was there.

Lo and behold, the drawer was not going to move. Every means was a failure. It was as disastrous as could be. To run up against such difficulties just at this moment, with my ear still ringing with the coachman's tempting tones. The blood rose to my head; I became furious. As Xerxes had the sea flogged,<sup>9</sup> so I resolved to take an awful vengeance. A hatchet was brought. With it, I gave the desk a horrifying blow.

Whether my blow went amiss in my anger or the desk was just as obstinate as I [was], the effect was not the one intended. The drawer was closed and

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<sup>7</sup> I.e., the original impression.

<sup>8</sup> Not *already* bought and paid for. Rather, Victor Eremita bought and paid for it himself, as it clear from what follows.

<sup>9</sup> To punish it for blowing up a storm and destroying some bridges. See Herodotus, *History*, VII.34–35.

the drawer stayed closed. On the other hand, something else took place. Whether my blow hit just the right or the overall jolt to the desk's whole structure had been the cause, that I do not know. But I do know this, that a secret door sprang open that I had never noticed before. This closed off a cubbyhole that, naturally, I had never discovered either. Here, to my great astonishment, I found a mass of papers, the papers that make up the contents of the present work.

My decision<sup>10</sup> stayed unaltered. At the first stop I would take out a loan. In the greatest haste a mahogany case was emptied in which otherwise a pair of pistols usually lay. [I] put the papers in it. Delight had triumphed and gained an increase. In my heart I asked the desk for forgiveness for the rough handling, while my thought found its doubt strengthened, that the outward is not the inward, and my empirical proposition confirmed, that it takes luck to make discoveries like that.

I arrived at Hillerød in mid-morning, brought my finances into order, [and] let the splendid area make a general impression on me. Immediately the following morning I began my excursions, which now got an altogether other character than I had originally intended for them. My servant followed me with the mahogany case. I sought out a romantic place in the forest, where I was safeguarded as well as possible against surprise, and then took the documents out. My host,<sup>11</sup> who came to notice these frequent walks together with the mahogany box, expressed on his own the opinion that I must be practicing shooting pistols. I was much obliged to him for this observation, and let him continue in the belief.

A fleeting glance at the papers [I had] found easily showed me that they made up two groups the difference in which was marked even in the Outer.<sup>12</sup> The one of them was written on a kind of letter-vellum.<sup>13</sup> in quarto,<sup>14</sup> with divided columns, as legal documents and other such things are written. The handwriting was clear, a bit drawn out, uniform and regular; it seemed to belong to a businessman.

The contents at once showed themselves to be different as well. The one part contained a lot of longer or shorter aesthetic treatises; the other consisted of two long investigations and a shorter one, all of ethical content, so it seemed, and in letter-form. This difference was completely corroborated on closer examination. That is, the second group is letters that were written to the author of the first.

But it is still necessary to find a shorter expression that can indicate the two authors. To that end, I have gone through the papers quite carefully, but [have] found nothing or as good as nothing. As far as the first author is concerned, the aesthetic, no information at all about him is found there. As far as the other is concerned, the letter-writer, one learns that he was called William, has been a

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<sup>10</sup> I.e., to take his vacation.

<sup>11</sup> That is, the innkeeper.

<sup>12</sup> That is, they were different even in their external appearances. Victor Eremita is continuing to play on the notions of "inner" and "outer."

<sup>13</sup> Heavy letter-paper.

<sup>14</sup> A paper size.

judge, but it isn't stated in which court. If I were to stick precisely to the historical and call him William, I would lack a correspondent appellation for the first author. I would then have to give him an arbitrary name. I have preferred, therefore, to call the first author A, the second B.

Apart from the longer treatises, there were found among these papers a lot of scraps on which there were written aphorisms, lyrical outbursts, reflections. Even the handwriting showed that they belong to A; the contents confirmed it.

I tried then to arrange the papers in the best way. With B's papers, that was done fairly easily. The one letter presupposes the other. In the second letter one finds a quotation from the first; the third letter presupposes the preceding two.

It was not so easy to arrange A's papers. I have therefore let chance decide the arrangement. That is to say, I let them say in the order I found them in, of course without being able to make out whether that arrangement has chronological value or ideal meaning. The scraps of papers were lying loose in the cubby-hole; therefore, I have been forced to allocate them a place. I have let them come first, because I thought that they could best be looked on as provisional glimpses of what the larger essays develop more coherently. I have called them Διάψαλματα<sup>15</sup> and added as a kind of motto *ad se ipsum*.<sup>16</sup> This title and this motto are in a way by me, and yet not by me. They are by me, inasmuch as they get used for the whole collection; on the other hand they belong to A himself, for on one of the scraps of paper the word Διάψαλμα was written, on two of them the words *ad se ipsum*. Also, a little French verse that was found over one of these aphorisms I have printed on the inside of the title page, like what A has often done himself. Since the majority of the aphorisms have a lyrical form, I believed it was quite suitable to use the word Διάψαλμα as the main title. Should the reader find it badly chosen, I must confess the truth, that it is my idea and that the word was certainly used with good taste by A himself for the aphorism over which it was found.

In the arrangement of the individual aphorisms, I have let chance rule. That the individual utterances often contradict one another I found quite in order, for this just belongs essentially to the mood. I found it not worth the trouble to group them so that the contradictions were less striking. I followed chance, and it is also a chance that has brought to my attention that the first and last aphorisms in a way correspond to each other in that the one feels deeply, as it were, the pain that lies in being a poet, the other enjoys the gratification that lies in always having the laugh on its side.

As far as the aesthetic treatises go, I have nothing to emphasize about them. They were all found ready for printing, and insofar as they contain difficulties, I must let them speak for themselves. As for me, I must note that I have add-

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<sup>15</sup> Pronounced 'Diapsálmata', with the stress as marked. A Greek plural, formed by Kierkegaard from the singular διάψαλμα = *diápsalma*, the word used by the "Septuagint" Greek version of the Old Testament as a translation of the Hebrew *Selah*, which probably means a liturgical or musical pause.

<sup>16</sup> *ad se ipsum* = "to himself," from the Latin title of Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations*.

ed to the Greek quotations that are found here and there a translation, which is taken from one of the better German translations.

The last of A's papers is a tale entitled "Diary of the Seducer." Here there appear new difficulties, in that A does not declare himself to be the author, but only the editor. This is an old novelists' ploy I would not have much to object to, if it did not contribute to making my position so complicated because the one author comes to lie within the other like the boxes in a Chinese box puzzle. It is not the place here to explain further what confirms me in my opinion. I shall remark only that the mood that prevails in A's preface reveals, in a way, the poet. It is actually as if A himself had become afraid of his poem, which, like an uneasy dream, continued to make him anxious, even while it was being told. If it were an actual occasion to which he had become privy, then it seems strange to me that the preface bears no stamp of A's joy to see realized the idea that had often floated before him. The idea of the seducer is found hinted at both in the article on the "immediate erotic stages"<sup>17</sup> and in "Shadow Sketches,"<sup>18</sup> namely that the analogue of *Don Juan* must be a reflected seducer who lies in the category of the "interesting," where it is not a question of how many he seduces but of how. I find not a trace of such a joy in the preface, but rather, as noted, a trembling, a certain *horreur*<sup>19</sup> that probably has its ground in his poetical relation to this idea.

And it does not surprise me that things go that way with A.<sup>20</sup> For I too, who have nothing at all to do with this tale, [who] am myself two steps removed from the original author, I too have at times become quite peculiarly ill at ease when I have been busy with these papers in the night's stillness. To me it was as if the seducer went like a shadow across my floor, as if he cast his eye on the papers, as if he fixed his glance on me and said, "So you are going to publish my papers! That is irresponsible of you, you know; you are raising an anxiety in the dear little girls, you see. Yet in compensation, naturally, you are making me and my sort harmless. You are wrong there. For if I just change the method, my circumstances are more advantageous than [before]. What an influx of small girls run straight into one's arms when they hear that seductive name: a seducer! Give me a half year and I will provide a story that will be more interesting than all I have experienced so far. I imagine a young, brilliant girl's getting the unusual idea of wanting to avenge [her] sex on me. She thinks she will be able to force me, to let me taste the pains of unhappy love. See, that is the girl for me. If she does not think of it herself deeply enough, then I have to come to her aid. I will wriggle like the Molboers' Eel.<sup>21</sup> And when I have brought her to the point I want, she is mind."

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<sup>17</sup> "The Immediate Erotic Stages, or the Musical Erotic," one of the essays in the first part of *Either/Or*, containing a brilliant discussion of Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*.

<sup>18</sup> "Shadow Sketches," another essay in the first part of *Either/Or*.

<sup>19</sup> *horreur* = "horror" (French).

<sup>20</sup> That is, that A has such a reaction to the seducer's story.

<sup>21</sup> The Molboers are the residents of Mols, a peninsula in Jutland, northeast of Aarhus. The story is that they tried to drown an eel by plunging it into the water, and when it quite naturally wriggled and twisted, they interpreted that as its death throes.

But I have already perhaps abused my job as editor to burden the readers with my views. The situation must speak to excusing me. For it was on account of the dubiousness of my job, brought about by A's merely naming himself as editor, not as the author of this tale, that I let myself get carried away.

What more I have to add about this tale I can only do in my function as editor. For I believe I have found a determination of the time [of these events]. In the diary, here and there, a date is found; what is lacking, however, is the year. In a way, I seem to be able to get no further. But by looking more closely at the individual dates, I believe I have found a hint. It is true, namely, that every year has an April 7<sup>th</sup>, a July 3<sup>rd</sup>, an August 2<sup>nd</sup>, and so on, but by no means does it follow that the April 7<sup>th</sup> every year is a Monday. I have worked them out, and discovered that this determination matches the year 1834. I cannot tell whether W has thought of this; I should hardly think so. For then he surely would not have used as much caution as he uses otherwise.

Neither does the diary say "Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April," and so on; it just says "The 7<sup>th</sup> of April," and so on. Indeed, the entry itself begins as follows: "So on Monday" — thereby drawing [one's] attention away. But by reading through the entry found under this date, one sees that it has to have been a Monday. Concerning this tale, I now have a determination of the time. On the other hand, so far, every attempt I have made with the help of this to determine the time for the other essays has been unsuccessful. I could well have assigned it the 3<sup>rd</sup> place [in the series], but I have preferred, as said above, to let chance rule, and all remains in the order I found it in.

As far as concerns B's papers, they easily and naturally arrange themselves. With them, on the other hand, I have made a change, insofar as I have allowed myself to title them, since the letter format prevented the authors from giving these investigations a title. Therefore, should the reader, after making himself familiar with the content, find that the titles are not well chosen, I will always be willing to submit to the pain that lies in having done something wrong when one wanted to do something good.

In individual places a remark is found in the margins. I have made each such [remark] into a footnote, so that I would not disturbingly interfere with the text.

As far as concerns B's manuscript, there I have allowed myself no alteration, but have treated it precisely, as a document. Possibly I could easily have taken away one or another carelessness, which is explainable enough when one bears in mind that he is merely a letter writer. I have not wanted [to do] that, because I was afraid of going too far. When B says that of a hundred young men who lose their way in the world, the ninety-nine are saved by women, one by divine grace, one easily sees that he has not been rigorous in counting, since he makes no place at all to those who actually are lost. I could easily have made a little alteration in the numbers, but I think there lies something far lovelier in B's miscounting.

In another place, B tells of a Greek sage, Myson by name, and says of him that he enjoys the rare luck of being counted among the Seven Sages, when their

number is fixed at fourteen. I was puzzled for a moment over where B could have got this wisdom, and also which Greek author it could be he cites. My suspicion fell at once on Diogenes Laertius,<sup>22</sup> and by checking Jøcher<sup>23</sup> and Morèri<sup>24</sup> I did find a reference to him. B's information could well need a correction, for the case is not entirely as he says, albeit there is some unsureness among the ancients in deciding who the Seven Sages were. Still, I have not found it worth the effort; it seemed to me that his remark, even if not entirely historical, had another value.

I had already come five years ago as far as I have come now. I had arranged the papers as they are still arranged, had made the decision to publish them in print, but thought it was best to wait a while. I consider five years an appropriate interval. These five years have passed, and I begin where I left off. I do not need to reassure the reader that I have not left any means untried to get on the authors' track. The merchant<sup>25</sup> kept no accounts, which — as is well known — is seldom the case with merchants. He did not know from whom he had bought that item of furniture; it seemed to him that it was bought at an auction of miscellaneous goods. I will not be so bold as to tell the reader the multitude of fruitless attempts that have taken so much time — so much the less as the recollection of them is disagreeable to me. I can, however, let the reader in on the result with all brevity, for the result was nothing whatever.

As I was just about to carry out my decision to turn these papers over to the press, a single worry awoke in me. Perhaps the reader will allow me to speak with complete frankness. It occurred to me [to wonder] whether I would not be making myself guilty of an indiscretion against the unknown authors. Still, the more familiar I got with the papers, the more that worry subsided. The papers were of the nature that, despite my meticulous searches [for the authors], they yielded no illumination, much less than that a reader should find any. For I certainly dare to compare myself with any reader, not in taste, sympathy, and insight but surely in hard work and tirelessness. Supposing therefore that the unknown authors were still alive, that they lived here in town, and that they came to make the unexpected acquaintance with their own papers, yet if they themselves kept quiet, there would be nothing resulting from the publication. For what one otherwise usually says of all printed materials, that they are silent, holds in the strictest sense for these papers.

One other worry I have had was in and for itself of less significance, rather easy to surmount, and has been surmounted in an even easier way than I had

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<sup>22</sup> Diogenes Laertius was a Greek author who wrote a famous *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. His dates are known only very approximately, but is often put ca. 225–50 AD. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, R. D. Hicks, trans. ("The Loeb Classical Library"; New York: Putnam 1925), at I.13, 106–08 (pp. 15, 111–13).

<sup>23</sup> Christian Gottlieb Jøcher, ed., *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 4 vols. (Leipzig: J. F. Gleditsch, 1750–51), and Johann Christoph Adelung, *Fortsetzungen und allgemeinem Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 7 vols. (Leipzig: [?], 1784. Photoreprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1960–61).

<sup>24</sup> Louis Morèri, ed., *Le Grand Dictionnaire historique*, 18<sup>th</sup> ed., 8 vols. (Amsterdam: P. Brunel, 1740).

<sup>25</sup> That is, the one who sold him the desk.

thought. It came into my mind, namely, that these papers could become a monetary consideration. I found it quite in order that I receive a little honorarium for my trouble as editor; but an author's honorarium I had to regard as too much. As the upright Scottish peasants in *The White Lady*<sup>26</sup> resolved to buy the estate and till it, and then present it to the Earls of Evenel if they should ever come back, so I resolved to put the whole honorarium out at interest,<sup>27</sup> so that, once the unknown authors should turn themselves in, [I] could give them the whole [honorarium] with interest and interest on the interest.

If the reader has not already, because of my complete awkwardness, assured himself that I am no author, and not a literary [man] who makes [his] profession out of being an editor, then I think the naiveté of this reasoning sets it beyond all doubt. This worry, accordingly, got surmounted in a far easier way. For in Denmark, even an author's honorarium is no manor house, and the unknown [authors] would have to stay away for a long time, in order for their honorarium — even with interest and interest on the interest — to become a monetary consideration.

Now it remained only to give these papers a title. I could call them “Papers,” “Posthumous Papers,” “Found Papers,” “Lost Papers,” and so on. As you will be aware, there are a multitude of variants available. But none of these titles satisfies me. I have therefore permitted myself in determining the title a freedom, a deception, for which I shall try to give an account.

In my continual occupation with these papers, a light dawned on me, that one could see them from a new side by viewing them as belonging to one person. I know full well all that can be objected to this view, that it is unhistorical, that it is unlikely, since it is preposterous that one person should be the author of both parts, and this although the reader could easily be tempted to the word-play that if one says A one must accordingly say B. Yet I have not been able to give it up. There was, then, a man who in his life had gone through both movements, or considered both movements. A's papers contain a multitude of attempts at an aesthetic life-view. A coherent aesthetic life-view can hardly be presented. B's papers contain an ethical life-view. As I let my soul be influenced by this thought, it became clear to me that I could let it lead me to settle on the title.

The title I have picked expresses exactly this. What the reader may lose with this title cannot be great. For in the process of reading he can quite well forget the title. when he has then read the book, he may perhaps think of the title. This will free him from any finite question whether A actually became convinced and repented, whether B won, or whether perhaps it ended with B's going over to A's opinion.

In this respect these papers have no ending. If one finds this not to be in order, he is not therefore entitled to say it is a fault, for one must call it bad luck. As far as I am concerned, I view it as good luck. One sometimes encounters nov-

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<sup>26</sup> *The White Lady* = *La Dame blanche*, an opera by François Boieldieu. The libretto was by Eugène Scribe, and was based on Sir Walter Scott's *The Monastery*.

<sup>27</sup> That is, to invest it.

els in which opposing life-views are presented by certain persons. As a rule, they end with one's convincing the other. Instead of the view's being obliged to speak for itself, the reader is enriched with the historical result, that the other became convinced. I view it as good luck that these papers illuminate nothing in this respect. whether A was the author of his aesthetic treatises after having received B's letters, whether his soul after that time has continued to romp around in its wild unruliness, or it has calmed down — about [all] this I do not see myself able to communicate a single [ray of] illumination, since the papers contain nothing. Neither is there contained any sign how things have gone with B, whether he has had the strength to hold on to his view or not. when the book is read, A and B are forgotten. Only the views stand directly opposite one another, and expect no finite decision in definite personalities.

I have nothing further to remark, only it occurred that if the honored authors were aware of my project, they could possibly want to accompany their papers with a word to the reader. Therefore, I shall add a couple of words with their holding on to the pen. A would surely have nothing to object to the papers' publication. "Read them or read them not, you will be sorry either way." what B would say is harder to determine. Perhaps he would reproach me for one thing or another, particularly with respect to the publication of A's papers. He would get me to feel that he had no part in it, that he could wash his hands. When he had done that, he would perhaps address himself to the book with these words: "So go out into the world, evade if possible the critics' attention. Search out a single reader at a favorable hour. And should you come across a readeress,<sup>28</sup> then I would say: 'My kind readeress, you will find in this book something you perhaps ought not to know, something else, I suppose, that you could benefit from getting to know. So then read the something so that you who have read can be like one who has not read, [read] the something else so that you who have read can be like one who has not forgotten what was read.'"

I, as editor, shall only add the wish that the book may find the reader at a favorable hour, and that the kind readeress may succeed in exactly following B's well meant advice.

November 1, 1842

The Editor.

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<sup>28</sup> There's no good way to do this in English. 'Readeress' = "female reader." The Danish is 'Laeserinde', and is not a particularly remarkable word; it just ends in a standard feminine suffix. In present-day English, 'readeress' is seldom if ever seen, but — for what it's worth — it appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* with a citation from 1864. As you will see, the distinction between male and female readers is part of the point of these final lines.