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Document A

Tim Pears, *Landed* (2010), London: Windmill, 2011 (153-156)

1 The sky is grey, and brown. Colours appear to have been drained from the earth. The one vibrant plant is holly. Its red berries are gone now but the deep rich green is visible from a distance—in a hedge, across a field—it renders all the hibernating plants around it pallid by comparison, feeble. Other conifers are dull. All else is dormant. But
5 as they walk Owen begins to see snowdrops, then yellow and pink primroses, and yellow flowers in a ground-spreading plant. Aconites. It's far too late for them. He looks closer at the trees they pass, sees on the branches of hazel, elder, sycamore, leaves emerging from the wood of branches wrapped up in tight little bunches, like sushi. The new buds. It's as if the whole of spring is showing itself in a moment.

10 From a large white house in a wood full of daffodils comes an anxious, imperious cry. When Holly asks what the sound is, Josh says, 'A peacock, of course.' Owen wonders how he knows, when or where he might have seen one. On TV probably.

The path passes through a grove of slender beech. Every trunk is wrapped around by ivy. Owen feels sorry for the trees, knowing what is happening to them. A creeping
15 strangulation.

At times the path becomes pure sand. 'It's like being at the seaside,' Holly says. A long narrow beach threading its way through a wood.

Another time the path widens, on the ground are large pebbles, rounded stones, as if they're walking along a dry riverbed. On either side are the straggly remnants of last
20 year's bracken and brambles.

The children walk in silence. Holly seems lost in her own thoughts. Josh is more watchful.

Sometimes the path is cut deep between banks, it's old, much older than the houses and roads, the pastures and arable fields around it. Old paths through the forest. At
25 times they leave the path and walk along a lane a while before finding a new path westward, reconnecting to a network that Owen begins to visualise criss-crossing this island, behind, underneath, intersecting yet apart from all the monuments and machinery of civilisation. He wonders whether his brain, in constructing the image, does so with a similar network of pathways and connections. The image is a liberating
30 one. A person might choose to be a wandering soul and be able to manage it, here, on these ancient paths. Kept open by whom? Owen wonders. An army of council workers and volunteers placing bridges over streams and stiles over fences, replacing gates and putting up signposts pointing the way here, and there. What a job, he thinks. That's what he should have done if only he could have taken orders; surely he'd have been
35 happy to, directed to a stretch of path with a map, and a trailer full of fence posts and wooden planks, wire and tools.

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'I'm hungry,' Holly says, and Owen is surprised to see from his watch that it's after noon already. They sit on a fallen tree trunk looking out and up across a steeply rising field. The children drink orange juice, eat apples. It must have been the perfect
40 temperature for walking: now that they've stopped Owen sees goose pimples appear on Holly's bared arms; Josh shivers. They pull on their jackets. In the field in front of them a large brown horse appears. It raises its head and lifts its tail and there, right ahead and above them, prances along the high ridge. It wishes to show them that this is precisely how a thoroughbred trots, with just this much dignity and poise.

45 They cross the River Severn, waiting till there's no traffic on the bridge. The wide river flows silent below them. The children jog ahead.

A little further on there is a phone box at the side of the road, beside an empty lay-by. The three of them crowd inside. A smell like old machinery. Owen finds coins. Josh knows his home phone number, and presses the buttons, while Holly holds the receiver,
50 ready to speak first. But there's no one there, only the answer-phone. The children leave messages: Owen is relieved to hear their enthusiasm for the journey they're being taken on, even as they tell their mother they miss her, and love her. He wishes he could add his voice to theirs. When Josh holds the receiver to him, Owen shakes his head, and Josh places it back in its cradle.

55 During the early part of the afternoon the landscape is more open. They are rarely out of sight of some farm or other dwelling. Owen imagines people looking up from pictures in a newspaper of this man and the children he's abducted, or listening to the news on the radio as they do the washing-up and seeing through a window the trio of distinctive figures cross the rolling vista, plus an unexplained dog.

60 Is it possible to hide? Everywhere in England is known. Hasn't every pat of soil been trodden on, turned over? But this pessimistic appraisal is followed by another: actually, nobody sees them. They move like ghosts across the open country, this tamed land.

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Document B

Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (1974), London: Penguin, 2002 (3-5)

1 Modern times are often compared to the years the Roman Empire went into decline:
just as moral rottenness is supposed to have sapped Rome's power to rule the West, it is
said to have sapped the modern West's power to rule the globe. For all the silliness of
this notion, it contains an element of truth. There is a rough parallel between the crisis
5 of Roman society after the death of Augustus and present-day life; it concerns the
balance between public and private life.

As the Augustan Age faded, Romans began to treat their public lives as a matter of
formal obligation. The public ceremonies, the military necessities of imperialism, the
ritual contacts with other Romans outside the family circle, all became duties—duties
10 in which the Roman participated more and more in a passive spirit, conforming to the
rules of the *res publica*, but investing less and less passion in his acts of conformity. As
the Roman's public life became bloodless, he sought in private a new focus for his
emotional energies, a new principle of commitment and belief. This private
commitment was mystic, concerned with escaping the world at large and the formalities
15 of the *res publica* as part of that world. This commitment was to various Near Eastern
sects, of which Christianity gradually became dominant; eventually Christianity ceased
to be a spiritual commitment practiced in secret, burst into the world, and became itself
a new principle of public order.

Today, public life has also become a matter of formal obligation. Most citizens
20 approach their dealings with the state in a spirit of resigned acquiescence, but this
public enervation is in its scope much broader than political affairs. Manners and ritual
interchanges with strangers are looked on as at best formal and dry, at worst as phony.
The stranger himself is a threatening figure, and few people can take great pleasure in
that world of strangers, the cosmopolitan city. A *res publica* stands in general for those
25 bonds of association and mutual commitment which exist between people who are not
joined together by ties of family or intimate association; it is the bond of a crowd, of a
“people,” of a polity, rather than the bonds of family or friends. As in Roman times,
participation in the *res publica* today is most often a matter of going along, and the
forums for this public life, like the city, are in a state of decay.

30 The difference between the Roman past and the modern present lies in the
alternative, in what privacy means. The Roman in private sought another principle to
set against the public, a principle based on religious transcendence of the world. In
private we seek out not a principle but a reflection, that of what our psyches are, what is
authentic in our feelings. We have tried to make the fact of being in private, alone with
35 ourselves and with family and intimate friends, an end in itself.

Modern ideas about the psychology of this private life are confused. Few people
today would claim that their psychic life arises by spontaneous generation, independent
of social conditions and environmental influences. Nevertheless, the psyche is treated
as though it has an inner life of its own. This psychic life is seen as so precious and so
40 delicate that it will wither if exposed to the harsh realities of the social world, and will
flower only to the extent that it is protected and isolated. Each person's self has become
his principal burden; to know oneself has become an end, instead of a means through

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which one knows the world. And precisely because we are so self-absorbed, it is extremely difficult for us to arrive at a private principle, to give any clear account to ourselves or to others of what our personalities are. The reason is that, the more privatized the psyche, the less it is stimulated, and the more difficult it is for us to feel or to express feeling.

The post-Augustan Roman's pursuit of his private, Oriental gods was separated in his mind from the public world. He finally imposed those gods upon the public world, by subjugating military law and social custom to a higher, clearly different principle. Under the modern code of private meaning, the relations between impersonal and intimate experience have no such clarity. We see society itself as "meaningful" only by converting it into a grand psychic system. We may understand that a politician's job is to draft or execute legislation, but that work does not interest us until we perceive the play of personality in political struggle. A political leader running for office is spoken of as "credible" or "legitimate" in terms of what kind of man he is, rather than in terms of the actions or programs he espouses. The obsession with persons at the expense of more impersonal social relations is like a filter which discolors our rational understanding of society; it obscures the continuing importance of class in advanced industrial society; it leads us to believe community is an act of mutual self-disclosure and to undervalue the community relations of strangers, particularly those which occur in cities. Ironically, this psychological vision also inhibits the development of basic personality strengths, like respect for the privacy of others, or the comprehension that, because every self is in some measure a cabinet of horrors, civilized relations between selves can only proceed to the extent that nasty little secrets of desire, greed, or envy are kept locked up.

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Document C

Lucian Freud, *Interior in Paddington* (1951), oil on canvas, 152.4 x 114.3 cm

