

THE ROAD

Cormac McCarthy

-Part Two-





MEMORY AND THE PAST



REMAINS OF THE PAST

The city was mostly burned. No sign of life. Cars in the streets caked with ash, everything covered with ash and dust. Fossil tracks in the dried sludge. A corpse in a doorway dried to leather. Grimacing at the day.

- Ruins of the old world
- Consumer society
- Memories of the past

DOUBLE EDGED MEMORY

- *Unreliable memory*
- *Memory as plague and Salvation*

The Man: Just remember that the things you put into your head are there forever, he said. You might want to think about that.

Boy: You forget some things, don't you?

The Man: Yes. You forget what you want to remember and you remember what you want to forget.

He felt with his thumb in the painted wood of the mantle the pinholes from tacks that had held stockings forty years ago. This is where we used to have Christmas when I was a boy. He turned and looked out at the waste of the yard. A tangle of dead lilac. The shape of a hedge. On cold winter nights when the electricity was out in a storm we would sit at the fire here, me and my sisters, doing our homework. **The boy watched him. Watched shapes claiming him he could not see.** We should go, Papa, he said. Yes, the man said. But he didn't.

-The Road

“

There were times when he sat watching the boy sleep that he would begin to sob uncontrollably but it wasn't about death. he wasn't sure what it was about but he thought it was about beauty or about goodness. Things that he'd no longer any way to think about at all.

-Johnny Appleseed



MORALITY AND GOD

“Within a year there were fires on the ridges and deranged chanting. The screams of the murdered. By day the dead impaled on spikes along the road. What had they

done? “This was the first human being other than the boy that he'd spoken to in more than a year. My brother at last.

The reptilian calculations in those cold and shifting eyes. The gray and rotting teeth. Claggy with human flesh.

Who has made of the world a lie every word.”

TRANSGRESSION OF MORAL CODES

.....

- Violence
- Cannibalism

“GOOD GUYS” VS. “BAD GUYS”

“Behind them came wagons drawn by slaves in harness and piled with goods of war and after that the women, perhaps a dozen in number, some of them pregnant, and lastly a supplementary consort of catamites illclothed against the cold and fitted in dogcollars and yoked each to each. All passed on. They lay listening.

[The Boy:] Are they gone, Papa?

[The Man:] Yes, they're gone.

[The Boy:] Did you see them?

[The Man:] Yes.

[The Boy:] Were they the bad guys?

[The Man:] Yes, they were the bad guys.”

“GOOD GUYS” VS. “BAD GUYS”

[The Boy:] We wouldnt ever eat anybody, would we?

[The Man:] No. Of course not.

[The Boy:] Even if we were starving?

[The Man:] We're starving now.

[The Boy:] You said we weren't.

[The Man:] I said we weren't dying. I didn't say we weren't starving.

[The Boy:] But we wouldn't.

[The Man:] No. We wouldn't.

[The Boy:] No matter what.

[The Man:] No. No matter what.

[The Boy:] Because we're the good guys.

There was a skylight about a third of the way down the roof and he made his way to it in a walking crouch. The cover was gone and the inside of the trailer smelled of wet plywood and that sour smell he'd come to know. He had a magazine in his hip pocket and he took it out and tore some pages from it and wadded them and got out his lighter and lit the papers and dropped them into the darkness. A faint whooshing. He wafted away the smoke and looked down into the trailer. The small fire burning in the floor seemed a long way down. He shielded the glare of it with his hand and when he did he could see almost to the rear of the box. Human bodies. Sprawled in every attitude. Dried and shrunken in their rotted clothes. The small wad of burning paper drew down to a wisp of flame and then died out leaving a faint pattern for just a moment in the incandescence like the shape of a flower, a molten rose. Then all was dark again"

*"He knew only that
the child was his
warrant. He said: if
he is not the word of
God God never
spoke"*

GOD AND THE CHILD

- The Divine
- Child as angel/instrument of God.

“The Boy: What if that little boy doesnt have anybody to take care of him? he said. What if he doesnt have a papa?

The Man: There are people out there. They were just hiding.

The Boy:I'm afraid for that little boy.

The Man: I know. But he'll be all right.

The Boy: We should go get him, Papa. We could get him and take him with us. We could take him and we could take the dog. The dog could catch something to eat.

The Man: We cant.

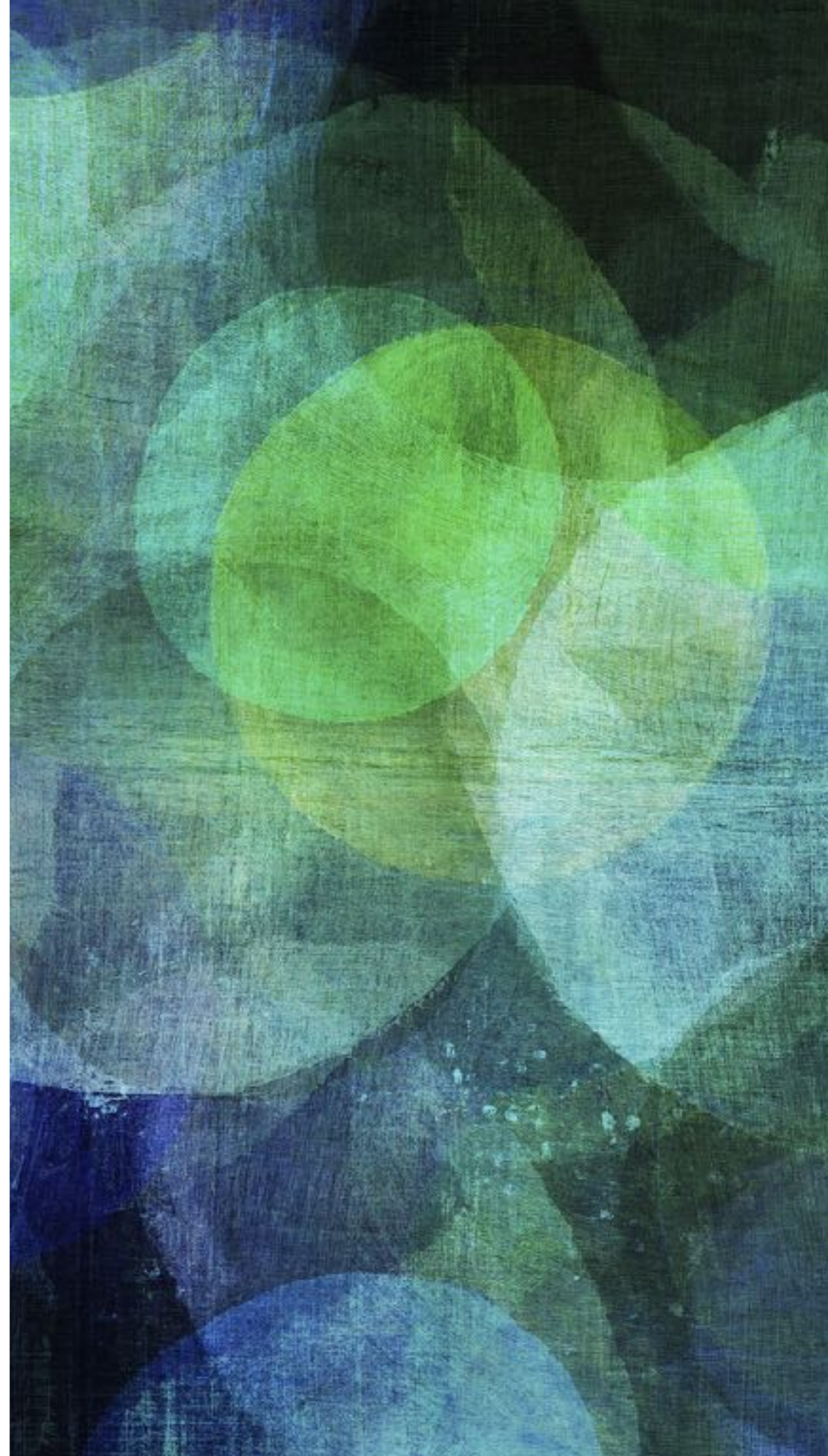
The Boy: And I'd give that little boy half of my food.

The Man: Stop it. We cant.

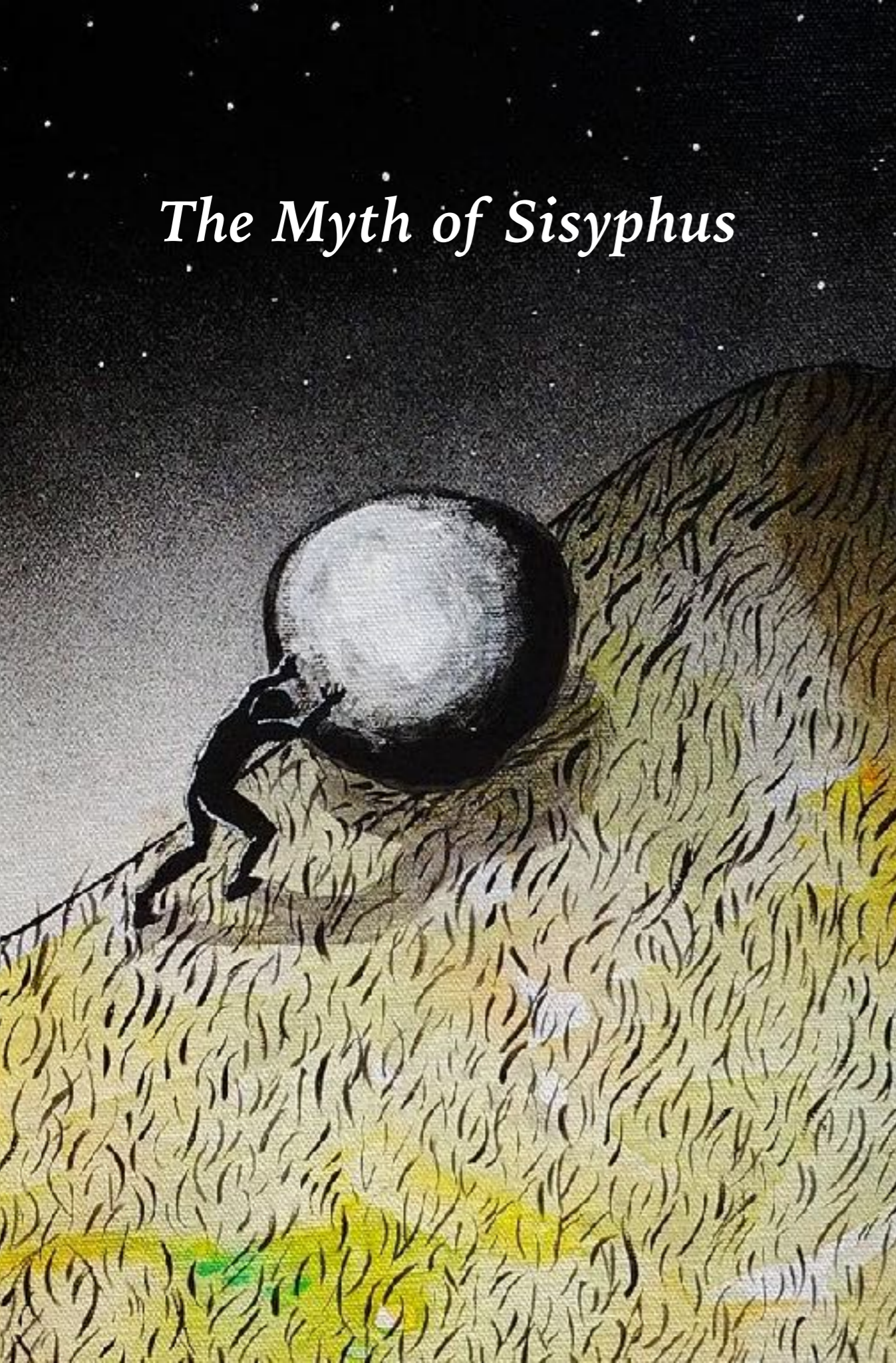
He [The Boy] was crying again. What about the little boy? he sobbed. What about the little boy?”

RELIGIOUS ALLUSIONS

- *Father and Son*
- *Ely/ Elijah*
- *Messiah*



The Myth of Sisyphus



SURVIVAL

.....

“Are we going to die now? No. What are we going to do? We’re going to drink some water. Then we’re going to keep going down the road”

[The Boy:] If we were going to die would you tell me?

[The Man:] I dont know. We're not going to die.”



LANGUAGE AND INTERTEXTUALITY



THE END OF THE WORLD IS

THE END OF THE WORD

- Logocentric civilization
- Language's unreferentiality
- Language and style
 - limited diction
 - narrative repetition
 - punctuation is irregular
 - proper names are rarely capitalized
 - clauses mostly linked by "and."
 - dialogue is trimmed and has no quotation marks.

The world shrinking down about a raw core of *possible entities*. The *names of things slowly following those things into oblivion*. Colors. The names of birds. Things to eat. Finally the *names of things one believed to be true*.

More fragile than he would have thought. How much was gone already?

The *sacred idiom shorn of its referents and so of its reality*.

Drawing down like something trying to preserve heat. *In time to wink out forever.*"

That's the best deal you're going to get.

Okay.



Okay means okay. It doesn't mean we negotiate another deal tomorrow.

What's negotiate?

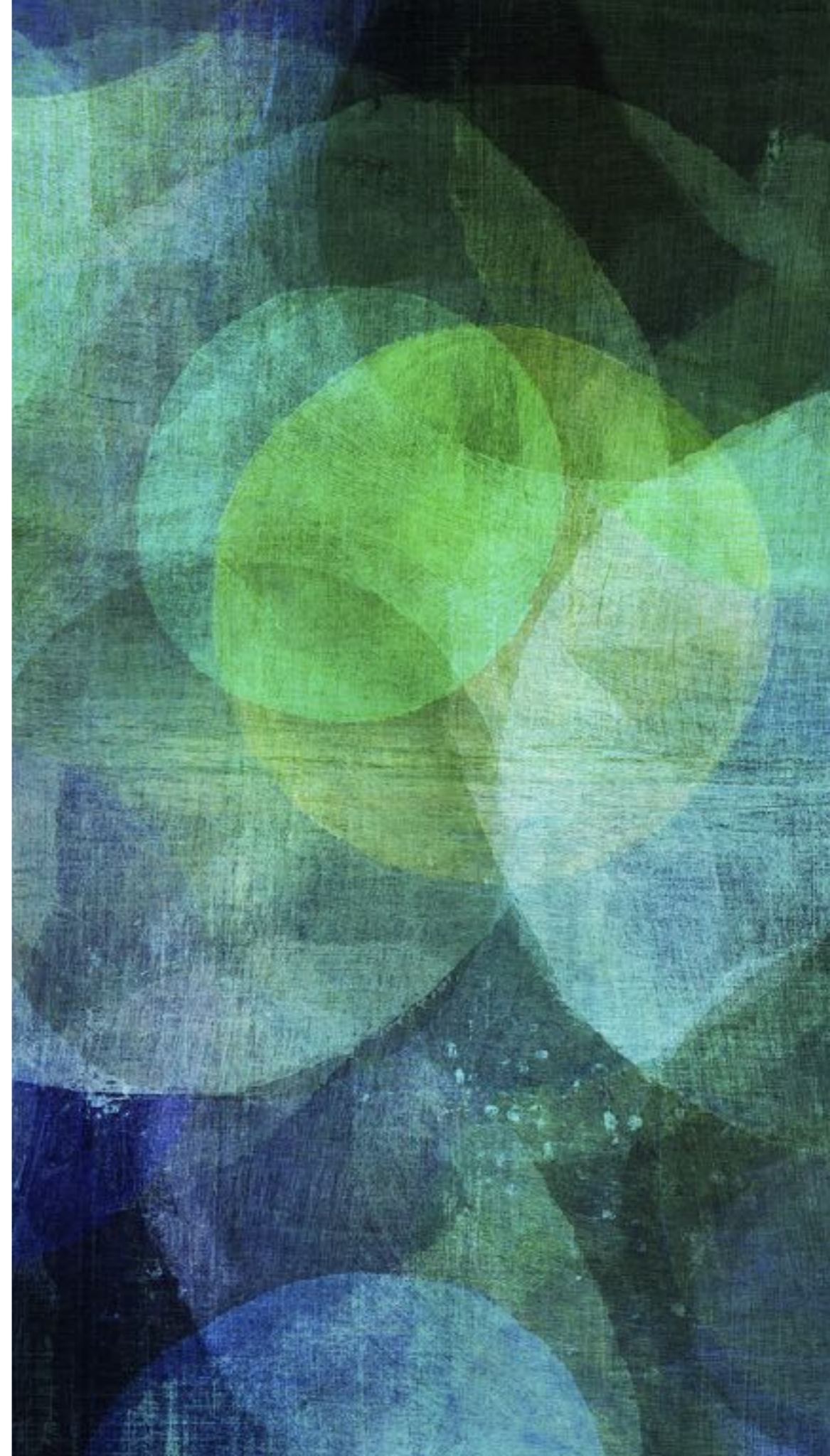
It means to talk about it some more and come up with some other deal. There is no other deal. This is it.

Okay.

Okay.

INTERTEXTUALITY

- Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, *The Brothers Karamazov*
- The Bible: The Book of Revelation



“Were mankind’s belief in its immortality to be destroyed, not only love but also any living power to continue the life of the world would at once dry up in it. Not only that, but then nothing would be immoral any longer, everything would be permitted, even anthropophagy [literally, the eating of humankind or cannibalism].”

Brothers Karamazov

“ Within a year there were fires on the ridges and deranged chanting. The screams of the murdered. By day the dead impaled on spikes along the road. What had they done? He thought that in the history of the world it might even be that there was more punishment than crime but he took small comfort from it.”

The Road

Because we're the good guys.

Yes.

And we're carrying the fire.

And we're carrying the fire. yes.

Okay.

Is it real? The fire?

Yes it is.

Where is it? I don't know where it is.

Yes you do. It's inside you. It was always there. I can see it.

SYMBOLS

.....

➤ The fire

The myth of Prometheus

➤ The shopping cart and coca cola can

➤ Trip towards The Ocean





PATTERNS OF SUBVERSION



SUBVERTING METANARRATIVES

- Biblical Apocalypse
- Romantic and
transcendental visions of
nature.
- The Journey Motif
- Form and narrative endings

