

Nothing proves more strongly that reality is a fragile illusion than the image we make of our own parents. No people in this world are closer nor more distant to us, none so impenetrable and yet familiar. When this more or less expected detachment from reality takes a pathological or bizarre form, it is equally common to find people idealizing and vilifying their parents beyond the grounds of reason. They either fail to apply to their parents the standards set for everyone else, or lack for them the compassion of which they may otherwise be capable of. And who has not found in life the tragic figure of a parent, of a human—this is, obscure and loving, contradictory and present—parent, whose children have deprived of all compassion and kindness? Who has not seen an otherwise loving parent pay the price of a sin committed once or twice, of mistakes committed under pressure or lack of character, for all his from that moment solitary and unjust life? Who has not seen children forgive themselves a thousand times excesses and mistakes they do not pardon their parents for committing once?