**Arthur Rimbaud’s Preface to *A Season in Hell* (1873)**

* + Once, if my memory serves me well, my life was a banquet where every heart revealed itself, where every wine flowed.
  + One evening I took Beauty in my arms - and I thought her bitter - and I insulted her.
  + I steeled myself against justice.
  + I fled. O witches, O misery, O hate, my treasure was left in your care!
  + I have withered within me all human hope. With the silent leap of a sullen beast, I have downed and strangled every joy.
  + I have called for executioners; I want to perish chewing on their gun butts. I have called for plagues, to suffocate in sand and blood. Unhappiness has been my god. I have lain down in the mud, and dried myself off in the crime-infested air. I have played the fool to the point of madness.
  + And springtime brought me the frightful laugh of an idiot.
  + Now recently, when I found myself ready to croak! I thought to seek the key to the banquet of old, where I might find an appetite again.
  + That key is Charity. - This idea proves I was dreaming!
  + "You will stay a hyena, etc...," shouts the demon who once crowned me with such pretty poppies. "Seek death with all your desires, and all selfishness, and all the Seven Deadly Sins."
  + Ah! I've taken too much of that: - still, dear Satan, don't look so annoyed, I beg you! And while waiting for a few belated cowardices, since you value in a writer all lack of descriptive or didactic flair, I pass you these few foul pages from the diary of a Damned Soul.