



Exploring the Depth of the Human Mind: An Analytical Study of the Neurotic Psyche in Robert Browning's Selected Poetry

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Abstract

This study examines Robert Browning's selected dramatic monologues: 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto', as a lens to explore the depth of the human mind. By analysing the psychological and emotional processes revealed through the speakers' voices, the paper investigates how neurosis manifests in both individual and social contexts. Browning's monologues function as a literary "psychological laboratory," where repression, projection, obsessive desire, aggressive impulses and existential anxiety are dramatized through language, narrative structure and address. The study draws on psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Jung, social-psychological insights from Karen Horney, Lacanian language theory, the philosophical ideas of Santayana, and existential perspectives from Viktor Frankl and Rollo May to interpret the intricate workings of the neurotic psyche. It also explores how Browning connects earthly experience with spiritual continuity. Findings reveal that Browning's characters simultaneously conceal and disclose their unconscious conflicts, negotiating inner desires and social expectations through their speech. The poems highlight the tension between conscious self-presentation and hidden impulses, demonstrating how literature can map mental processes with remarkable depth. Overall, Browning's dramatic monologues offer a multi-layered, nuanced representation of human psychology, showing how internal conflicts, interpersonal pressures, and existential concerns shape thought, feeling and behaviour. The study confirms that these literary works serve not only as artistic expressions but also as analytical tools for understanding the neurotic mind, bridging literature and psychology in a meaningful way and presenting the human soul as an evolving consciousness striving for meaning within the limits of earthly life.

Keywords: *Browning, Dramatic Monologue, Neurotic Psyche, Psychoanalysis, Existential Psychology, Obsession*

Introduction

Robert Browning (1812–1889) stands as one of the most remarkable poets of the Victorian age, remembered for his deep understanding of the human mind and his ability to turn psychological complexity into art. Born in Camberwell, London, Browning grew up in an educated family that encouraged his interest in literature, music, and philosophy. His early poems, such as 'Pauline' (1833) and 'Paracelsus' (1835), already show his fascination with self-reflection and moral struggle. Over the years, Browning moved away from the romantic style of his youth and developed a new poetic form, i.e., the dramatic monologue, which allowed him to explore how people think, feel, and justify their actions.

The dramatic monologue became Browning's signature form. In it, a single speaker talks to an unseen listener, revealing much more about their inner life than they intend to. This form gave Browning the chance to

present characters who are not perfect or heroic but real driven by emotions, contradictions, and hidden motives. As Woolford (1991) explains, Browning created “a theatre of consciousness” (p. 112), a stage where the human mind itself performs. Later critics such as Damjanoski (2019) and Tate (2012) have also shown how Browning’s monologues combine traditional poetic structure with new ways of understanding psychology and emotion.

In almost all his major works, Browning showed a lasting interest in how the mind works under stress, how passion, guilt, ambition, and self-deception shape people’s actions. These traits are most visible in what can be called his neurotic poems. Although the word neurosis belongs to later psychology, Browning’s speakers often act in ways that suggest obsession, inner conflict, or emotional imbalance. They try to appear calm and rational, but their words slowly uncover the instability underneath.

The poems selected for this study are ‘My Last Duchess’, ‘Porphyria’s Lover’, ‘The Laboratory: Ancien Régime’, and ‘Andrea del Sarto’, each reveal different faces of the disturbed or divided mind. In ‘My Last Duchess’, the Duke’s smooth storytelling hides jealousy and cruelty; in ‘Porphyria’s Lover’, the speaker kills his beloved to preserve a moment of perfect love; in ‘The Laboratory: Ancien Régime’, a woman’s longing for revenge turns into fascination with poison and power; and in ‘Andrea del Sarto’, an artist’s self-doubt and creative failure become forms of quiet suffering. Though brief in plot, each poem is rich in psychological meaning, showing how Browning uses the monologue to turn private thoughts into public confession.

Modern critics have paid close attention to these inner conflicts. Jose (2023) describes ‘My Last Duchess’ as a study of narcissism, where the Duke’s story reveals more about his own ego than his wife’s supposed faults. Sulaiman (2021) examines Browning’s crime-based monologues and argues that they portray “morbid psychologies” (p. 201) that expose how easily moral reasoning can turn into madness. Tate (2012) connects Browning’s ‘The Ring and the Book’ with the growth of psychological thinking in the nineteenth century, calling it “epic psychology.” Together, these studies show that Browning was not simply a moral teacher but a careful observer of the human mind.

This connection between poetry and psychology has led many scholars to see Browning as a poet ahead of his time. Kut Belenli (2021) notes that Browning’s use of introspection in ‘Pauline’ already anticipates the modern psychological novel. Damjanoski (2019) calls Browning’s dramatic monologues a “bridge between experiment and tradition,” meaning that his poetry connects classical structure with a modern sense of mental realism. These views highlight Browning’s unique role in English literature: he used poetry not only to express emotion but to analyse it, making readers aware of how people deceive others, and themselves.

The study of the neurotic psyche in Browning’s poetry links his work to a wider literary interest in disturbed or divided minds. Later writers such as T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound would also explore psychological fragmentation, but Browning was among the first to do so in verse. His characters show that madness and normality are not far apart; both grow from the same human need for control, love, and meaning. This paper builds on that idea by analysing how Browning’s monologues reveal the fine line between sanity and obsession.

In focusing on the four selected poems, this research aims to show how Browning uses language, tone, and form to give readers access to the hidden layers of consciousness. The goal is not to judge his characters but to understand them, to see how Browning turns internal struggle into art. His work demonstrates that poetry can be both emotional and analytical, both artistic and psychological.

Ultimately, Browning’s achievement lies in his vision of the human mind as endlessly complex. His dramatic monologues do not simply tell stories; they stage the mind in action. By examining the neurotic psyche in these poems, this study argues that Browning brought the psychological depth of modern literature into Victorian verse. He made the inner life: its fears, contradictions, and desires, the true subject of poetry.

Review of Related Literature

Robert Browning's poetry has long drawn scholarly attention for its innovative portrayal of the human mind and the psychological depth of its speakers. His use of the dramatic monologue allows readers to access characters' inner thoughts, revealing obsession, jealousy, ambition, and moral conflict. Research has examined Browning's work from various perspectives, including psychoanalytic approaches, Victorian psychological frameworks, and literary studies focusing on character and narrative structure.

Hawlin (2012) re-evaluates 'My Last Duchess', emphasizing how the Duke's narration conceals deeper psychological and historical complexity. The study demonstrates how Browning uses controlled speech to reveal obsessive and possessive tendencies, making the poem an effective study of a neurotic mind. Jose (2023) similarly investigates the Duke's self-presentation, highlighting the tension between intention and reality, showing that the dramatic monologue can reveal both conscious and unconscious aspects of character. These analyses underscore the significance of Browning's form in conveying psychological depth.

Tate (2012) situates Browning's poetry within the context of Victorian psychology, arguing that his monologues reflect contemporary understandings of the mind and behaviour. The work emphasizes that Browning anticipated later psychological insights by presenting characters whose internal conflicts drive their actions. Complementing this perspective, Kut Belenli (2021) examines introspection in Browning's early work 'Pauline', showing how self-analysis and reflection anticipate the complex depictions of the neurotic psyche in poems such as 'Porphyria's Lover' and 'Andrea del Sarto'. Together, these studies reveal Browning's consistent interest in the workings of consciousness across his career.

Damjanoski (2019) highlights the dramatic monologue as a bridge between tradition and innovation, emphasizing how form itself contributes to the psychological effect. The monologue allows Browning to reveal internal contradictions and obsessive thought patterns, a view supported by Moulavi Nafchi (2015), who demonstrates that the structure and voice of Browning's monologues evoke strong psychological responses from readers. These studies reinforce the idea that Browning's poetry stages the mind, making form and content inseparable in the depiction of neurotic consciousness.

Several scholars have focused on specific poems and their depiction of extreme psychological states. Arafat (2021) treats 'Porphyria's Lover' as narrative-driven psychological fiction, showing how the speaker's rationalization of murder exposes underlying obsession and instability. Atasoy (2020) offers a deconstructive reading of 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'One Way of Love', demonstrating how Browning's language unsettles binary oppositions such as reason versus insanity and love versus violence. Sulaiman (2021) provides a comparative analysis of Browning and Robert Lowell, situating crime and mental disturbance as tools for exploring human psychology in poetry. These studies provide crucial frameworks for examining the neurotic and obsessive dimensions of Browning's monologues.

Hossain (2025) offers a contemporary synthesis, exploring how Browning dramatizes the interplay between emotion, desire, and moral conflict. The work underscores the ongoing relevance of Browning's poetry for psychological literary studies, framing his monologues as examinations of human attempts to control internal impulses. Similarly, Damjanoski (2019) and Tate (2012) show that Browning's depiction of obsession, self-delusion, and moral instability can be understood as early literary treatments of what modern psychology terms "neurotic" thought processes.

Browning's selected poems 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto' have all been the focus of scholarly study, particularly for their exploration of obsessive behaviour, moral tension, and the inner workings of the mind. Hawlin (2012), Jose (2023), and Arafat (2021) emphasize that these works use dramatic monologue to reveal characters' hidden motivations and psychological complexity. Atasoy (2020) and Sulaiman (2021) highlight the interplay of violence, desire, and reasoning in Browning's characters, illustrating how the poems construct neurotic patterns of thought and behaviour. Moulavi

Nafchi (2015) and Hossain (2025) show that Browning's formal techniques such as voice, tone, and perspective, allow readers to witness these mental processes as they unfold.

Collectively, this body of research demonstrates that Browning's work is a rich site for exploring psychological and literary intersections. Critics have approached his poetry from multiple angles, including psychoanalysis, narrative theory, and historical psychology, consistently noting the dramatic monologue's capacity to convey obsession, inner conflict, and moral ambiguity. Browning's poems function not only as artistic expressions but also as studies of the human mind, revealing the tensions, contradictions, and anxieties that define neurotic consciousness.

Research Gap

After going through several studies and articles on Browning's poetry, I did not find any work that studies the idea of the neurotic psyche in his poems 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto' together. Most research focuses on the psychological aspects of each poem separately. But they do not examine how these poems collectively reflect the disturbed or neurotic state of mind of their speakers. This lack of an overall comparative study forms the main research gap that this work aims to fill.

Objectives of the Study

To explore the depth of the human mind: An analytical study of the neurotic psyche in Robert Browning's selected poetry.

This study aims to investigate how Browning's selected poems: 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto' depict the neurotic psyche. It focuses on understanding obsessive thought patterns, emotional instability, and moral tension as presented through the dramatic monologues. The study also examines the literary techniques Browning employs, including voice, narrative perspective, and structure, to reveal the complex workings of his characters' minds.

Research Questions

How does Robert Browning represent the neurotic and introspective psyche in his selected poems, and in what ways do his literary techniques: such as the dramatic monologue, perspective, and voice, reveal deeper psychological, moral, and metaphysical dimensions of human consciousness?

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical approach to explore the depth of the human mind through an examination of Robert Browning's selected poetry. The research is based on primary data drawn from Browning's poems: 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto', and on secondary data from scholarly journals, academic articles, and critical studies discussing Browning's dramatic monologues and the psychological dimensions of his work.

Using content analysis as its main methodological tool, the study focuses on the textual and structural examination of the poems to identify recurring patterns of obsession, repression, emotional instability, and moral conflict. Through a balanced combination of descriptive interpretation and analytical reasoning, the research seeks to uncover how Browning's poetic techniques articulate the hidden layers of the human psyche and engage with broader philosophical and psychological concerns. Ultimately, by integrating descriptive and analytical methods, this study aspires to offer a nuanced understanding of how Browning's literary strategies illuminate the complex workings of the human mind in his selected poems.

Result and Discussion

Robert Browning's dramatic monologues present language itself as the theatre of the mind. 'In My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto', the voice of the speaker does more than recount events: it reveals hidden motives, buried anxieties, and the restless architecture of thought. When viewed together, these poems map a territory of neurotic consciousness: obsession, emotional instability, moral paralysis, the quest for control, and the desire for permanence. Browning uses tone, imagery, structure and the single speaker form to make the mind speak. This study aligns those poetic elements with concepts from Freud, Jung, Horney, Lacan, the philosophy of Santayana and existential psychology. It shows that Browning does not merely portray personal disorder but reflects a broader cultural and metaphysical condition. The human soul remains the same since the days of Adam: Browning studies the sentiments that so severely sway these characters towards the personal providence.

The dramatic monologue is central to how Browning stages the neurotic mind. Each poem features one speaker addressing a silent listener. That listener never speaks but in effect acts as a mirror. This structure does two things. First, it resembles a therapeutic session: the speaker tries to explain, justify, perform, but in the very act of speaking reveals deeper motives, guilt, fear. Second, the silent listener functions as the Other, in Lacan's sense: the speaker attempts to define himself in relation to the gaze of the Other, yet the language betrays the fissures of his self-presentation. Browning anticipates psychoanalytic insight by turning speech into acts of self-betrayal.

Freud's psychoanalytic perspective helps us hear the cracks beneath the speakers' polished words. In 'My Last Duchess', the Duke's composed diction masks a mind racked by jealousy and possessiveness. His insistence on referring to "my last Duchess" reduces the woman to a possession, a trophy. The act of turning his wife into a painting illustrates sublimation. What he cannot live through emotionally he re-casts into aesthetic dominance. His command that ends her smiles becomes symbolic of aggression disguised as polite action. His measured tone and self-corrections show the defensive ego at work. In 'Porphyria's Lover' the tension appears in a raw and unrefined form. The lover kills Porphyria at the height of passion, declaring "That moment she was mine, mine, fair, perfectly pure and good" so that the perfection of the moment might endure beyond death. Freud's notion of the death drive clarifies the impulse: the speaker seeks to preserve love by obliterating change. He reasons that divine silence means approval, rationalising murder as fulfilment. Browning shows us how rational speech becomes the mask of neurosis.

Jung's ideas of projection and the shadow deepen the reading. In 'Porphyria's Lover', Porphyria becomes the lover's projected anima: his rejected emotional world, his feminine side. By destroying her he symbolically rejects that side of himself. In 'Andrea del Sarto' the conflict turns inward: Andrea the painter suffers because his art is technically refined but lifeless; his soul muted by the refusal to embrace the imperfect, the spontaneous. His art becomes "silver-grey" and his existence a static half-life. He is caught between persona and shadow. His longing, his fear of failure, his narcissism makes him unable to act. He inhabits the "one life" but only half of it is lived. Browning thus echoes the idea that "youth shows but half" and the rest lies beyond, in the spiritual or eternal realm, as in 'Rabbi Ben Ezra'. The concept of continuity between earth and heaven informs the monologues: the act on earth becomes the lasting act in eternity.

Santayana's philosophy offers a useful lens for this reading. His work in 'The Life of Reason' argues that human life is not a series of isolated moments but a unity in which reflection, impulse, art and morality merge. Although Santayana did not develop exactly the "one life" theology Browning uses, his emphasis on the continuity of life, the fusion of impulse and intellect, and the natural transfiguration of human experience suggests that Browning is participating in a longer tradition. The speaker in 'Porphyria's Lover' seeks not simply to live but to make his act eternal. Browning's dramatized neurotic mind is thus not only personal but metaphysical: the last act on earth becomes the perpetual act beyond. In 'The Last Ride Together', Browning suggests that the ride might

last beyond the moment, revealing how the desire for continuity turns into a narcissistic assertion of the self. His portrayal of neurotic and psychotic characters is not merely about madness but reflects a universal moral and spiritual illness that has haunted humanity since its origin. In 'Porphyria's Lover', this illness manifests in the lover's violent act of killing Porphyria, followed by his chilling calmness when he declares, "And yet God has not said a word!" Through such characters, Browning explores how intense emotional drives can distort moral reasoning, leading individuals to justify their desires as if they were sanctioned by divine will.

Karen Horney brings the social dimension into view. Browning's speakers do not struggle in a vacuum. They are shaped by power, gender, class, society. Horney described three neurotic strategies: moving toward, moving against, moving away from others. The Duke in 'My Last Duchess' moves against: he dominates to hide his insecurity. The lover in 'Porphyria's Lover' moves toward: he merges completely with his beloved, erasing the self in the other so that love becomes destruction. The woman speaker in 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime' moves against: she transforms sexual frustration and social invisibility into a tight plan of revenge. Her act of poisoning becomes a ritual of control when control has been denied. Browning integrates the personal psyche and the pressure of Victorian norms. The mind's control strategies become cultural symptoms.

Language itself becomes the site of neurosis. Lacan's famous dictum that the unconscious is structured like a language helps unpack Browning's technique. The speakers attempt to speak coherently, rationally, yet every hesitation, repetition, self-correction betrays what they seek to hide. The Duke's smooth narrative, Andrea's self-correcting tone, the lover's circular reasoning all show how language both constructs the self and reveals its fracture. Browning turns speech into an instrument of psychoanalysis: the more the speaker tries to maintain control, the more his words reveal internal conflict. It is through slips, pauses, repeated phrases, rhetorical evasions that the unconscious speaks.

Existential psychology adds yet another layer. For the and Rollo May neurosis often arises not simply from repressed drives but from the lack of meaning. In 'Andrea del Sarto' the painter's despair is existential: he has reached technical mastery yet finds no purpose. His "silver-grey" art is the image of a life half-lived. He knows the rest lies elsewhere, in that "one life" notion where earth and heaven meet, yet that rest remains unreachable. The self that cannot act suffers noogenic neurosis—suffering from meaninglessness. Browning's portrayal of Andrea shows that the mind's disorder is also spiritual exhaustion.

When all four poems are read together a pattern emerges of neurotic desire for permanence and control. The Duke seeks to freeze his wife in a painting. The lover murders to freeze the perfect moment of love. The woman in 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime' plans to freeze vengeance and control. Andrea seeks to freeze art in perfection and thereby freeze life. Each quest illustrates a mind that cannot accept change and time, seeks closure and eternity. Through them Browning explores the idea that the last becomes the lasting; a concept familiar in the philosophy of Santayana and the metaphysics of 'Rabbi Ben Ezra'. The act of killing, the ride that lasts beyond, the painting, the perfect art: all are attempts to transcend the temporal and claim the eternal.

Cultural and gendered pressures also haunt these voices. The Duke's tyranny echoes Victorian patriarchy. The woman in 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime' channels suppressed female agency into planned destruction. Browning thus shows how societal norms create modes of neurosis. The mind is not isolated but socially conditioned. Ego strategies become responses to relational and structural anxiety. The quiet tyranny of propriety, reputation, gender roles all feed the neurotic architecture of the mind.

Across the poems, obsession manifests in varied shades. In 'My Last Duchess' it is the hunger for dominance and ownership. In 'Porphyria's Lover' it is the pathological wish to preserve love forever. In 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime' it is the vindictive fixation transformed into ritual. In 'Andrea del Sarto' it is the inward compulsion to perfect art that becomes self-annihilation. Browning thus offers a typology of neurotic strategies: control through art, control through possession, control through revenge, control through forsaking the self.

Throughout the monologues Browning never offers simple condemnation. He allows the speaker full voice so that we witness the logic of their reasons and the collapse of their control. The result is not a caricature of madness but a portrait of the human mind striving, stumbling, rationalising, betraying itself. Speech becomes the agent of self-exposure.

Thus, Browning's dramatic monologues offer a psychological landscape marked by repression, projection, obsession, control and existential despair. The speakers attempt to narrate control but reveal disorder. Their acts on earth become symbolic bids for the eternal. The "one life" that Santayana intimated, the earthly half and the heavenly half, the lasting act beyond the temporal, all are woven into Browning's dramaturgy of mind. His poems uncover the timeless nature of human emotion and thought. His characters reveal the ceaseless struggle between desire, faith, morality, and the search for meaning that defines human existence. His greatest achievement lies in transforming poetry into a medium of psychological and metaphysical inquiry, where the inner workings of the mind become as significant as the external world.

Major Findings

First, the study demonstrates that dramatic monologue serves as a powerful medium for revealing the neurotic mind. The single speaker, silent listener structure allows Browning to depict the mind at work: pausing, correcting, justifying. The speech acts become self-exposure rather than pure narrative.

Second, the analysis identifies distinct neurotic strategies across the four poems. In 'My Last Duchess' control through ownership and sublimation of aggression. In 'Porphyria's Lover' love turned destructive in the attempt to preserve a perfect moment. In 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime' obsessive revenge as a means of regaining agency. In 'Andrea del Sarto' perfectionism and existential stasis as signs of spiritual neurosis. Together these strategies form a typology of the neurotic psyche.

Third, the research finds that Browning's poetry synthesises multiple psychological and philosophical frameworks. Freudian drives and defences, Jungian shadow and anima, Horney's social strategies, Lacanian language theory, and existential ideas about meaninglessness all intersect in Browning's work. He anticipates later psychology while remaining rooted in nineteenth-century culture.

Fourth, the quest for control and permanence runs like a thread through the poems. The speakers seek to freeze time, to dominate objects or people, to bind art and love into eternity. This reflects the idea of one life where the last moment becomes the lasting moment. The cultural and metaphysical desire to make the temporal eternal exposes the neurosis beneath.

Finally, the study concludes that neurosis in Browning's poetry is both personal and cultural. The mind's struggle is shaped by social norms, gender roles, power relations alongside internal drives. Browning's speakers are not isolated minds but products of their age and society. His monologues show that human reason and passion, appearance and crisis, speech and silence are intertwined.

Conclusion

Robert Browning's poetry stands as a meeting ground of art, psychology, and philosophy. Through his dramatic monologues, he transformed the Victorian lyric into a living study of the human mind. The speakers in 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The Laboratory: Ancien Régime', and 'Andrea del Sarto' are not simply characters; they are minds in motion. Each reveal through speech the struggle between reason and passion, faith and doubt, control and surrender. Their confessions are not to a listener but to their own conscience, which Browning turns outward in language.

This study has shown that beneath the surface of these monologues lies a pattern of neurotic conflict. The need for possession, perfection, and permanence becomes a reflection of deeper anxiety about time, mortality, and moral uncertainty. Browning's genius lies in allowing these emotions to speak for themselves without overt

judgment. The reader becomes both witness and analyst, uncovering the shifting layers of self-deception and revelation that mark each voice.

The philosophical undertone of Browning's work connects the human struggle on earth with a sense of spiritual continuation. Drawing on the idea of one life as found in 'Rabbi Ben Ezra'; Browning portrays existence as a single current flowing from the temporal to the eternal. The final act, however flawed, becomes the lasting act beyond this world. In 'Porphyria's Lover' and 'The Last Ride Together', this longing for continuity turns into a desperate attempt to preserve happiness forever, even, through destructive means. Such moments reveal the paradox of the neurotic psyche, a desire to stop time by any means possible.

Through this union of poetic art and psychological insight, Browning anticipated later developments in psychoanalytic thought. His exploration of repression, projection, and narcissism prefigures Freud and Jung, while his attention to speech as self-betrayal anticipates Lacan's insight that the unconscious speaks through language. The result is not a catalogue of madness but a compassionate portrait of humanity's inner unrest.

Browning's speakers show that the boundaries between sanity and neurosis are fluid. In their efforts to control life, they end up exposing their fears of loss and meaninglessness. Yet Browning never presents them as monsters. He shows them as human beings caught in the contradictions of love, art, faith, and identity. His poetry teaches that the human soul, unchanged since the days of Adam, still wrestles with the same questions of purpose and divine order.

In conclusion, Browning's dramatic monologues stand as timeless explorations of the neurotic psyche. They reveal how art becomes confession, how passion becomes obsession, and how the search for perfection becomes the root of suffering. By blending psychological depth with moral and spiritual reflection, Browning gives his readers not only portraits of individual minds but also a mirror for their own. His poetry reminds us that within every voice, beneath every calm word, lies the restless current of the human soul striving to find meaning, continuity, and grace amid the chaos of life.

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