

be a work of art, at least in my soul, since I can't be one in my body. That's why I've sculpted myself in quiet isolation and placed myself in a hothouse, cut off from fresh air and direct light – where the absurd flower of my artificiality can blossom in secluded beauty.

Sometimes I muse about how wonderful it would be if I could string all my dreams together into one continuous life, a life consisting of entire days full of imaginary encounters with created people, a false life which I could live and suffer and enjoy. Misfortune would sometimes strike me there, and there I would also experience great joys. And nothing about that life would be real. But everything would have a sublime logic; it would all pulse to a rhythm of sensual falsehood, taking place in a city built out of my soul and extending all the way to the pier of a quiet bay, far away inside me, far away . . . And it would all be vivid and inevitable, as in the outer life, but aesthetically distant from the sun.

II4.

### Aesthetics of Artificiality

Life hinders the expression of life. If I actually lived a great love, I would never be able to describe it.

Not even I know if this I that I'm disclosing to you, in these meandering pages, actually exists or is but a fictitious, aesthetic concept I've made of myself. Yes, that's right. I live aesthetically as someone else. I've sculpted my life like a statue made of matter that's foreign to my being. Having employed my self-awareness in such a purely artistic way, and having become so completely external to myself, I sometimes no longer recognize myself. Who am I behind this unreality? I don't know. I must be someone. And if I avoid living, acting and feeling, then believe me, it's so as not to tamper with the contours of my invented personality. I want to be exactly like what I wanted to be and am not. If I were to live, I'd be destroyed. I want to