

As a President Is Assassinated, There Is No 'Worst' in Haiti

by Theodore Dalrymple



My memory for poetry is poor, but half a line from the great innovative religious poet of the second half of the nineteenth century, Gerard Manley Hopkins, sticks in my mind:

No worst, there is none.

A fuller quote is as follows:

*No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.
Comforter, where is your comforting?*

Hopkins thought not only that there was always worse suffering possible than that which anybody actually suffered (that is to

say, there could always be worse, there was no worst), but that the greatest suffering anyone experienced was of purely psychological origin:

*O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no man-fathomed.*

Dying in 1889, he did not live to experience the historical horrors of the twentieth century, when sheer human malignity produced depths of suffering that could hardly be exceeded. It was the achievement of figures such as Lenin, Hitler, Mao and Pol Pot to demonstrate that there was indeed a worst. It was as if they had set out to prove Hopkins wrong: a curious ambition for dictators.

Whenever I think of [*Epoch Times*](#).