\$14.28 is More Attractive than \$14.00



(An American Epic Poem)

Nicholas Syrianus Katsafanas

Well Mr Kazantzakis
if I'm being honest with you
completely honest with you
if I'm holding back next to no honesty whatsoever
I should note that
yes

it's indubitably true that of late I've found myself gluttonously chewing four to seven slices of gum in simultaneity

for a variety of reasons—in fact it was just yesterday afternoon

prior to leaving our apartment to go grab a coffee that I indiscriminately shoved an entire pack of gum into my mouth and exuberantly chewed this large ball of gum

wondered if chewing gum was actually good for your teeth

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ISBN: 979-8-9987102-6-1

This title was set in Arial 10 pt font for maximum online readability.

Mode: >.667

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Preparing to Peruse a Historical Monograph

.748 - .762 - .742

Prelude: With a fair amount of ambivalence, knowing as well as anyone that Nikos typically spends the hours of 3PM through 7PM, Monday through Friday, verifying the European origin of his dietary tract, I approached Mr Kazantzakis at 6:59 PM, ambling toward the screened-in patio of his modest row house located spitting distance from Garden City, and began as such:

(.748)

Well Mr Kazantzakis
if I'm being honest with you
completely honest with you
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I should note that

yes

it's indubitably true that of late I've found myself gluttonously chewing four to seven slices of gum in simultaneity

for a variety of reasons—in fact it was just yesterday afternoon

prior to leaving our apartment to go grab a coffee that I indiscriminately shoved an entire pack of gum into my mouth and exuberantly chewed this large ball of gum

wondered if chewing gum was actually good for your teeth

when the thought occurred to me: Is emo the highest form of classical music America is historically responsible for? When discussing American music I thought while chewing an entire pack of gum a litany of genres

from nost bon jazz

from post-bop jazz

to experimental rock

to avant-metal to the so-called classically trained composers of American descent

are discussed as 'the truly classical music of America.' 'But what if emo is the truly classical American music?' I thought to myself

chewing an entire pack of gum

preparing myself to pay full-price for a coffee out somewhere

despite the fact I had an entire pot of coffee at my apartment

waiting to be imbibed for free. The primary conceit of emo music is that its creators are young and white and male

and that they originate from neighborhoods that are safe if not opulent and utterly hate their lives. Nothing

it should be noted

is ever proceeding well for the emo band

as the slightest deviation from the emo band's best case scenario is always apocalyptic

despite the fact that

sociopolitically at least

they have everything going for them. The emo participant exists at the apex of the American totem pole

and despite this fact everything remains essentially objectionable to them. Nothing is going well! The emo song is

in practice

the antithesis of the virtue signal. And it occurred to me as I left my apartment to pay four dollars for a coffee that would inevitably be co-opted by an art school professor

with no regard to socially acceptable decibel levels. pontificating about people as brands to a foreign exchange student

that this type of wide-eyed narcissism that this unironic ignorance of sociopolitical totem poles

this obsession with direct

is perhaps the apex of what should comprise
 American classical music? And I nodded my head at
 this notion as we entered the Honda asking Tina if
 she'd be willing to play 'One-Eighty by Summer' on
 our way to the coffee shop.

(.762)

I suppose you could say it was fortuitous if not a direct product of fate itself that with these thoughts in mind while browsing my Shopping List on Amazon dot com while considering the merits of the so-called university professor after my encounter with this pea-brained art professor from Yoleni's

I noticed that the Constantine Eleven monograph by my old college professor

Marios Philippides

was now on sale—reduced from the borderline-insulting price of ninety dollars for the hardcover

to the increasingly palatable price of nine dollars for the Kindle edition. I'd had no communication with Philippides since my time at Massachusetts

which is unsurprising

as I doubt strongly Philippides recalls me in the least

as almost the entirety of my late adolescence was marked by my dedication to my dissipation-process

which I'd extended into an era some may choose to characterize as a post-youth era

so the two of us had no need

no reason to communicate with one another

primarily because Philippides had no idea who I was.

Just because two persons ostensibly share a
modicum of so-called 'Greek blood' in no way means
they should communicate with one another. For
Philippides's part

he has no idea who I am

and for my part

- my only interaction with Philippides took place in the midst of my dissipation-process
- of which I was dedicated to—yet being that I'd been looking for a monograph on the so-called 'last emperor of the Greeks'
- and being that Philippides was the only author with a recent monograph published on the final so-called Constantine of Helen
- it just so happened that our paths would once again cross
- this time on the Kindle app of my iPhone. Perhaps it was fate

just as it was fate that I'd sit through an ebullient bloviation session from a pea-brained art school professor on one day

then on the next day find my own old professor's monograph fortuitously on sale

reduced to a price more appropriate for the proletariat as such.

(.742)

After confirming the price reduction multiple days in a row I finally pulled the trigger and bought the book

only downloading said book during a solitary circular sojourn around Foxwoods

Ike busy attempting to continue his luck on the slot machines—having won two hundred dollars on one roll prior to our high class Chinese dinner

which he magnanimously comped

and Tina passed out in the car

tired and hungover after an ill-advised decision to daydrink prior to our venturing to the casino for the night. At first

in preparation of my reading

I sat in line at Dunkin Donuts

surprisingly the only coffee shop open at the expansive casino

and bought a medium iced coffee for myself with almond milk. Three men stood in front of me and struck me as abutting old men until I began to consider they very well could be the same age as I

clinging

it struck me

to perhaps some fading beacon of youth

one of them adorned in deluxe Michael Jordan sneakers the other making a long speech to the Dunkin Donuts barista about how much he likes his Caramel coffee yet curiously punctuating the note by repeatedly saying he's not that picky. In the rainforest casino

sipping my iced coffee

with water audibly falling all around me

I got my five dollar double poker game out of the way

realizing slowly that the first two machines didn't work

then slowly realizing I completely forgot how to play double poker

- despite being so exuberant at the thought of finally finding a double poker machine to play. I googled 'How to play double poker' but couldn't seem to find a concise explanation
- an explanation that would allow me to play double poker immediately
- which was the extent of everything I wanted at the time. Leaving the double poker machines after immediately losing five dollars
- I decided to spend the last of my cash on an ice cream cone
- then begin reading Philippides' monograph. The ice cream barista informed me there were no cones left
- which was disappointing in the extreme. Feigning no disappointment
- I ordered two scoops of the cappuccino gelato and was subsequently given a spoon half the size of my own pinky finger

which isn't a particularly large pinky finger

I've never had my pinky finger described as abnormally large by anyone

- to the best of my knowledge
- to scoop out both scoops of ice cream from the surprisingly deep cup. I didn't object
- instead feeling curiously lucky to pay seven dollars for this ice cream cup
- then walking around to find myself quite enjoying said ice cream
- the end-game of said ice cream of course being that I ate the last half scoop essentially with my bare hands
- walking around by myself
- enjoying nothing more than eating this ice cream with both an absurdly tiny spoon and also with my bare hands. Finally
- after washing the cappuccino gelato off my hands in the Foxwoods rest area
- I sat on a park bench and opened up my Kindle app to open up Philippides' monograph on the final so-called emperor of the Greeks.

Contemporary Shootings

.766 - .724 - .787 - .729

.692 - .714 - .752 - .764

.755 - .723 - .726 - .764

(.766)

Well

- I guess it's been give or take seven years since I first experienced the sublime delight of smoking the hookah at Pasha on Allens Avenue
- and nearly three and half since I was introduced to the venerated ice hose
- so I suppose I'm now at the point in my life where an equidistant amount of time has elapsed since I experienced the regular hose as well as the ice hose both hoses that I'd of course recommend
- although our country's rapid rate of inflation has impacted the price of each substantially
- while the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus has turned smoking hookah into an increasingly frowned upon practice.

(.724)

- It was an era of lingering socio-economic commotion when my friend Curtis and I experienced somewhat of a dual rough patch romantically—Curtis recklessly divorced
- after an eight year relationship and nine month marriage while I remained in less than infrequent communication with a person I'd inadvisably become involved with in a variety of ways

while at the same time I'd inadvisably entered a subsequent relationship with a person I'd perhaps unsurprisingly eventually have a dramatic falling out with.

(.787)

More often than not it seems our lives are little more than a series of ill-advised relationships

that whenever we escape from one ill-advised relation we find a subsequent ill-advised relation waiting for us patiently—for my part I'd acquired a custom of chasing the ill-advised in an almost mechanical manner

as if the ill-advised had some sort of direct line into my very being

and in retrospect it feels as if circumstance in the case of my life has played an outsized role

that my approach to my life has been a simple sculpting of inescapable circumstances.

(.729)

I still hold both owners—Jack and Sal—in the highest esteem

and

in fact it was just this past Christmas that I stopped in Pasha with Tina and said a jovial hello to Jack indulging in my first ice hookah in what seemed like eons Tina and I sitting at the counter

having exactly one beer a piece

already somewhat inebriated

watching a Mavericks game that was curiously void of Luka Doncic.

(.692)

It's never necessarily advisable to admit that an exotic dancer quote-unquote 'fell in love with you'

yet in my particular case it was an irrefutable burden I was forced to bear. Although at the time I attempted with some degree of success

to deny that my charismatic character was capable of making said set of events possible

if not inevitable

yet it was appropriately catastrophic for my mental well-being

as I took full responsibility for both my charisma as well as my inability to resemble a father-figure.

(.714)

These precise circumstances led both myself and my friend Curtis into the ready-made arms of the Pasha hookah hose at least once a week for years on end

as there exist times in someone's life where there's no choice but to disassemble themselves in the most reckless of fashions

smoking and drinking excessively and engaging in ill-advised long-term relationships excessively—the quality of the hookah at Pasha was of a height that was hard to fathom at the time.

(.752)

We unravel ourselves

attempting to reach a core that's always unapproachable being told by Byzantine monks that our center remains as ineffable as God's Essence

- sending ill-advised messages to love interests that no longer have any interest in us. An innocent exotic dancer falls in love with us
- and we choose to use the full extent of our critical faculties to disassemble this person over and over again. Continually drawn to this person
- we ruthlessly destroy them critically until the situation itself becomes intoxicated in the worst of ways.

(.764)

And after all of this is over we go to Pasha on Allens Avenue

and we enjoy the highest quality hookahs at least every Wednesday

unraveling becomes just another hobby of our's and we drink vodka with just a splash of water

and the bartender liberally indulges us with a tall glass of this vodka

and then we drive up the street

and we laugh hysterically with Curtis as we mindlessly toss currency at a dark stage comprised of nudity

then we drive downtown to order a meatless burrito at a highly regarded Tex Mex establishment.

(.755)

One common mistake to eschew both at Pasha and other establishments offering so-called hookah is the conflation of 'more' with 'better' with regard to flavors. Waitstaff will invariably highlight the fact that a patron can order a litany of flavors at no extra cost implying that receiving more flavors for the same price is a 'good deal'

that ordering a blueberry-peach-mint-creamsicle flavor hookah will be enjoyable when a sensible hookah should be restricted to at most two flavors—I personally recommend blueberry mint.

(.723)

Sitting at the bar at Pasha smoking a scrumptious hookah with my friend Curtis

watching an exciting Celtics contest

I had the misfortune of assiduously studying my surroundings with the intent of recording them

so to speak. In short

I believed events could be recorded via recollection and recreated through creative faculties

when it's now clear that nothing was further from the truth

at Pasha smoking hookah I believed I could create a nonfictional account

an autobiographical element

when autobiography and history are only the most elevated forms of fiction!

(.726)

Our memories are by far the most specious things about us

have you ever wondered why our official histories are almost immediately checkered

biased before the first drafts are completed

why human beings are believed to have existed for tens of thousands of years

yet if we even glance a paltry millennium into our past we witness nothing but foggy notions and bitterly conflicting opinions? At times it seems I'm made up of nothing but memories

yet all of these memories seem to have minds of their own!

(.764)

Ultimately

- while the relative risk of loitering at Pasha on Allens Avenue is at this point well-established
- and while the prices of the median hookah have inflated exponentially
- I'd still be hard-pressed to sit here and recommend a better place to smoke hookah in the Greater Boston metropolitan region. Frankly
- I've always considered it a bit of a bourgeois cowardice to avoid places solely because of a low probability chance you'll get shot
- even as we age it can still be beneficial to embrace the ill-advised once in a while.

An Aborted Anime Opera

.783 - .816 - .692 - .847 - .888 - .711

.707 - .753 - .695 - .844 - .759 - .881

.691 - .765 - .740 - .834 - .760 - .707

.804 - .742 - .672 - .709 - .703

(01)

Flipping myself ass up at the colonoscopy before it was appropos,

there's no longer a notion of sanctity in abstract expressionism,

quantum mechanics and nonlocal relations or something—

John Bell was correct about the physical universe.

Writing "muttering my constant curiosity got in the way of my suicide" to myself

in a somewhat ironic tone

but muttering nothing at all.

The older woman had no interest in geriatric footwear yet wouldn't stop speaking to me of my destiny after eight o'clock at the Wrentham outlets,

aged thirty six Portuguese dancers

inform you in minute detail of your own acute misery then walk away unconcerned—this is why Christ had his feet rubbed.

(02)

Dip down
like a quick bath
into the DMT-like essence
of what seems poetic,
breakfast and coffee spots close so quickly
yet I find myself yearning
for an Americano and omelet a little after four.
The clouds over one forty six south
consistently look like oil paint,
prior to the mental health revolution
adolescents were forced to internalize trauma
many of them becoming complete assholes
in the process. I've soured on the beach—
skin care I suppose has become a bit of a priority—
sand is somewhat of an annoyance.

(03)

Two midgets eating delicious looking rice bowls at Xaco Taco, repeating the phrases "There is no image." "There is no memory."

There's no image and there's no memory.

Sans image and memory we can start to approach the fundamental nature of the universe as such.

Triple egg omelet with the kalamata olives, a chest crevice stained in a permanent ink of sorts.

Cuddly beavers eat vegetables from the hands of well intentioned human beings, the small bottles of soju were only eight bucks a piece.

(04)

The saki at Somo was possibly the worst alcoholic beverage I've ever sipped, the can looked like an anime juicebox, it appealed to me.

It struck me Tiny Bar had a pretense about it that just struck me as completely out of line.

People from various backgrounds making fast friends as I ate breakfast out on the patio at Domenic's, considering going to Chilango's, once again deciding against it, the condo complex looked like total shit, real estate as an investment has always struck me as less than a no brainer.

(05)

Blue light eyeglasses with the black wire rims I look like a complete douchebag, there's a document titled password is password with the dollar signs after the A. Proust was a renowned fan of male prostitutes, they think Nietzsche died of syphilis. In my mind I'm the last of a long line, made American English into Ancient Greek, consider me the twelfth Constantine, genocides are just a matter of taste, "anatoli" just means East.

Gregory of Nazianzus implicitly understood the nature of quantum physics,

of nonlocal relations, it's possible the Occident has clung to an initial linguistic reversal,

a reversal creating an illusion of perspective.

It's possible the perspectivism discovered by people like Nietzsche was in fact

a simple byproduct of this initial reversal of the Occident, this idea of a perspective,

it seems totally illogical to me.

No pun intended, ice hookah with the tzatziki I wasn't quite in my right mind at the time. Samurai sword in Washington Park the car seat saw too much, videography is archaic in retrospect, the science of phonetics is still ambiguous,

the conversation faded of its own accord.

(07)

Siberia is beautiful this time of year,

all art is not necessarily ipso facto for everyone,

the flesh of the human being wasn't universally appealing

believe it or not.

Emotional baggage lost in transit after I woke from a strange dream,

my yiayia informing me she's out of sorts with smudged lipstick

as I clutch a nephew that isn't mine.

There are many regional differences to take into account,

we construct linear states in retrospect

then spit on a street in Izmir.

The rolled down window was like a picture frame,

memory was juvenile delinquents spraying graffiti,

the Providence cop was satisfied with the answer we're just conversing.

(80)

The unspecified bug trapped in the spider web on the railing of the employer's entrance made me consider metaphors or something. The cashier at Job Lot of ambiguous ethnicity needs to employ social media

to assist her pursuit of establishing herself as a photographer,

her favorite food is pizza.

The colonoscopy was unsuccessfully rescheduled on two occasions.

it struck me that "Russian whore" is one of the few misogynist phrases

still acceptable to say aloud in so-called mixed company. Sure it was nice enough to have the assistance of Giovanni Guistinianibut

but not if he insisted on retreating the first time his chest caved in.

(09)

I found Marios Philippides' monograph on the last Constantine to be

so pro-Latin to be nearly unreadable

which was unsurprising

because it seems as though there are almost no true Greek intellectuals in the West,

only faux-Greek intellectuals

that shamelessly sell out their own history,

who rubber stamp Anglo assertions that the Hellenic era ended

after Socrates fondled Alcibiades.

I often have an urge to spit on these so-called intellectuals,

these scholastic imbeciles,

these Levantine Benedict Arnolds.

these cowards of the spirit,

while I painstakingly transform American English into Koine Greek

I have to deal with people of my own ancestry obfuscating in the service of secular popes.

When there's nothing below a secular pope,

it's why at times I feel like retiring to a monastery or something,

sometimes you have to ask yourself what's the point.

(10)

A bit depressed without palpable cause, slowly noticing a variety of polka dots on a pristine two thousand sixteen Honda Civic clearly due to the douchebag incessantly moving his white pickup in the parking lot. Inebriated and peeing on Enzo's door handle in two thousand and fourteen two years prior to the Civic being issued, the scallops at Maria Cucina were succulent yet ridiculously overpriced. Curt alleged the pork was kind of dry. Slowly noticing Milagro is a halfway decent tequila at Vino Veritas.

(11)

Black eyebrows plucked with a muted sense of glee, the center of gravity is ultimately elusive, there's a πρόσωπο that becomes an ουσία but not quite vice versa, we begin with the individual and think this is freedom. There is no individual. The individual is no organism. The organism is the first fallacy, I've never been a big fan of sense perception, prose is some form of telepathy. This is perilous. I've only intermittently believed this is good, my beliefs are purely theatrical, there's no better opera house than belief. She asked me an asinine question and laughed. I chuckled nervously. It marked the beginning of a horrendous era for each of us.

(12)

Leaving the apartment for the first time all Friday the fresh air was a revelation.

Liberian with the mask on at the Greek pizza spot, rub and tug with the open sign across the street, might get my VCR repaired at Cho's Electronics.

Speedway stuck up by the black dude with balloons tucked under his shirt.

he picked my key up for me on a random Sunday afternoon,

I always found him a nice guy personally. Take a right onto Alexander

and pass the basketball courts

two thousand eighteen flashbacks.

Taken aback

by my note but as much of an asshole

as you can be it's essential to remain a man of your word.

otherwise there's no redemption arc.

(13)

It became gradually apparent as I made incidental eye contact

with a girl with a gargantuan fake ass that I'd slowly lost the ability to type words coherently into my iPhone.

Memory is perhaps as a concept slightly ill-advised, I considered while eating an entire rotisserie chicken at a later date.

Yes it was inadvisable in retrospect

to give an overarching historical recap of the late Ottoman Empire

to two seventy somethings I'd never met, senses get muted with age,
I failed to notice the effervescent backside

ambling across India Point until Katreena accused me of looking at it.

Orifices are ultimately negligible phenomena,

Jesus didn't give much credence to bank accounts I considered eating an entire rotisserie chicken

at a later date.

Chanting the words "turn my bitch up" in a soft whisper as I strenuously edit the HTML

of a bootleg Tumblr page

I feel at peace with the world.

Ten calendars on females with two kids

I feel at peace with myself.

Ten mezcals enter an eleventh dimension

I feel at peace with the world,

with the charlatan nature of mathematics.

My mother ditched me at Nick-A-Nee's

but truthfully I didn't want to reveal my new Audrey Horne tattoo anyway.

(14)

On Mineral Spring getting my eyebrows threaded by Cheryl

a self-identifying Spanish lady

with a curiously Arabic accent attempts to sell off a pair of air pods

to help support her alleged four children

and I was a little dubious to say the least.

Defecating at the gentlemen's venue,

off-brand dude wipes from The Christmas Tree Shop.

Writing essays is reprehensible,

having sincere opinions is basically worse than climate change in my mind.

Boycotting semicolons,

the irony of my New York Knicks fandom has slowly fallen by the wayside with age.

Pulling my penis out with a child-like sense of jubilation,

I require more podcasts is the only conclusion I've come to of late.

It's the only logical conclusion.

There's simply a severe lack of podcasts in the current era.

We've ruthlessly deprived ourselves of others' opinions. Reading a Robert Ashley libretto while stroking my beard in a fashion that evinces a solemn contemplation.

(16)

Honduran medium roast in the Mister Coffee. Brown basmati with two teaspoons from the za'atar bag, only extra virgin olive oil from the cold press. At this point I think we need to admit we've made some mistakes in an adult and calculating manner of speaking, I'm even-tempered by nature. Office space two feet by four feet with the stapled carpet made from recycled styrofoam or something, reading impassioned reddit posts about the heterosexuality of male masturbation dildos. Toss two cubes in the ice hose and try to see dead people, one of the most profound friends I've ever had was a floor fan.

(17)

Tyranny of the four-four,
meaning is negotiable,
the doppelganger appeared only intermittently to me
on a mild Sunday afternoon,
reminded me of a missed call
I received five or so years ago.
But I discarded the memory
to the possibility of eating a self-salted french fry,
the dude who stuffed the young corpse into his trunk
lived in an upscale apartment complex
and didn't resemble your typical pervert murderer,
eye contact is quantum computing.

(18)

Four walls encapsulate horrendously repetitive phenomena right around decade anniversaries, at the Italian-American club I engaged in an emo conversation regarding geographical tendencies for no particular reason. Turquoise crystal covers the stab wound between the collarbones, parts and wholes are necessary, didn't need to inform myself it was slightly ill-advised. Gazing mindlessly at your own history a little aloof, succumbing to nefarious literalism with friends. To be frank I couldn't comprehend how anyone would come to think political opinions are anything but art, it never occurred to me that my passion could be misconstrued as sincerity.

(19)

The deceased raccoon looked serene
like it was sleeping on the side of one forty six,
I saw Curtis texted there wasn't a cunt hair of a chance
the Italian ass was authentic
and I agreed,
I thought about the raccoon corpse again,
about the nonsensical nature of biology,
about the big bottle of Soju I'd bought at the so-called
discount liquor store
which seemed to price items higher than MSRP.
Thoughts may be physical phenomena
that haunt us no different than poltergeist,
I can't honestly say I always select my phrasing
in the most careful of manners,
some names you shouldn't say.

(20)

Discussing espressos blackout drunk with Emilio at Amedeo. Half pound of the pulled pork but only if it's completely unseasoned, succulent (pause), being the only car on Memorial brought on а somewhat nonsensical sense of foreboding. I felt an intense foreboding. Could it have been the Casamigos Blanco, this continual disrespect of the agave. an ad claims to unravel the meaning of agape. The Big Fat Greek Wedding franchise does nothing but perpetuate a generic sense of ethnicity that's as inane as it is counterproductive, something especially ironic coming from the so-called Greek east, the relational essence par excellence. Nia Vardalos it should be noted is simply no Cappadocian, this conception of essence

is embarrassingly faux-Hellenic, back to Manuel at Manzikert.

(21)

Half Greek vacuum cleaner in a mid-August malaise, fortune read unsolicited at two pm on a Sunday smoking a ten dollar cigar

drinking a vodka on the rocks.

Half barbarian eleventh Constantines,

eleven Constantines is sufficient,

half Nikola Jokic, typing the word "kindly" in emails,

I was flummoxed at the amount of redskin on the redskin peanuts,

middle aged podcast host

repeatedly using the phrase "sphincter clenching."

(22)

Ingest the special star shapes there's a club above an arcade, there's a seven am showing of an uneven Netflix anime. two homosexuals dance sans irony and there's an album that will preferably be disavowed at a later date. A man my age is now dying a slow death, incoherent epidermis, Lused to hit the bottle hard too. Indeed I painted six hours at a time with the Sobieski by my side, screwed and chopped Bjork, a sense of adolescence existed. Markos Vamvakaris wrote about the water pipes and call girls of turn of the century Piraeus, shirt unbuttoned all the way down with profound hiccups to drown out D'Andrea's dead body. but can we confirm the Puerto Rican girl behind the bar is aware.

Does the butt wipe at the bar bathroom realize Ryan's died?

I don't discriminate between organic entities and otherwise,

another man our age is dying,
second cousins we never see drop dead in Florida
yet dude was always an asshole anyway.
Ingest the special star shapes
there's a club above an arcade,
I used to paint six hours at a time
with the Sobieski by my side.

I found it enjoyable for the era, cigar bar with Lams, I'm well aware my charisma is unorthodox in character. (23)

I can no longer consume spaghetti alio yet I've gradually come to terms with this trying state of existence.

Surgically inserting substances into the very essence of one's buttocks is a pure roll of the die in my humble opinion, yet a female's sexual history is frankly none of our business.

We tend to view the vagina as a tissue or a kleenex when it's essentially reflexive in character, like a unique phrase or laconic collection of lexicon, that's more or less how I view the contemporary vagina at least.

I was a little taken aback at the fact the wing spot only offered curly fries, that regular fries

were nowhere to be found on the menu.

Postmodern Novelists

(.771)

(.785)

Approaching the automatic entrance of Fresh Shore's on Mineral Spring Avenue

hoping with all of my heart that their prepared foods were in the ballpark of what my mom generally discovers at Dave's Supermarket

I glanced across the street and saw the old building of Ken Wok Chinese Cuisine halfway torn down

and I took out my phone and made a brief note on the indefatigable impermanence that remains so pervasive all around us

as I do each time a building I felt some sort of nonsensical connection with on Mineral Spring Avenue gets knocked down.

(.822)

In any case

it was August first of this year that I felt as though I was rapidly approaching the end of my so-called rope in an over decade-long plus dissipation process

the fact of the matter was my dissipation had extended its prime in a way that was at once mildly impressive yet simultaneously severely depressing. Perhaps with that being the case

it was on the night of August first

the second to last night of my thirty-fifth year

that I experienced a dream sequence where I was suspended in air above a desolate plain where a

skyscraper-like tall building comprised solely of mirrors sat in the bright sunlight

where a portion of said top corner reflected said sunlight in a violent fashion

and I found myself lifted to said section where a voice I identified with Gregory of Nazianzus spoke to me mellifluously of the futility of ephemeral things.

(.851)

But perhaps we should pose a subsequent question: while there are a litany of instances of novelists attempting to ape the stylistic idiosyncrasies of Homer's Odyssey

while there's seemingly an endless line of English-speakers and Euro-adjacent folks who've shamelessly aped the Athenian baboons of the Antique era without pause!—are there any that we can think of that have mimicked the mannerist quirks of The Divine Eros? Because it recently struck me in re-reading Symeon's central work that in many ways it reads like an epic poem cum postmodern novel?

(808.)

After all

it was none other than the notable postmodern novelist John Hawkes who said so sternly

'I began to write fiction on the assumption that the true enemies of the novel were plot

character

setting

and theme.' And in this way the sprawling politically-metered

- spiraled verses of Symeon track the conceptual Hawkian novel to the Nth degree
- or perhaps vice versa! Should we perhaps even pose the question: How acquainted was Hawkes' with the Byzantine monk in the era of said quote? We should perhaps note Hawkes was to an extent a disciple of Nabokov

who

in addition to penning a few novels postmodernly prodding into the do's and don't's of seducing underage females

was raised in a Russian milieu still pre-Soviet so to say an essentially Orthodox milieu.

(.833)

The modern novel

which in our era is essentially the postmodern novel because it seems serious modern novels no longer exist only spurious commercial novels that perhaps ape old modern novels (poorly)—no

today

to the extent the serious novel still exists outside of say

thesis advisory boards

all serious novels are now essentially postmodern novels and with that being the reality I suppose I'll refer to the postmodern novel as just the modern novel

as there are no modern novels anymore just postmodern

so the postmodern

for myself and my peers

is ipso facto the modern. The modern novel

to Hawkes' credit

no longer requires anything of narrative

of character

of setting

of theme-in fact

even indulging in such antiquated attributes is typically a sign of poor taste! For myself

when and if

which is hardly ever

I begin a novel with a fervent urge to tell me a story I'll place the item back down immediately

at least somewhat disgusted at its brazen narrative inclinations.

(.737)

Symeon's Eros

on the other hand

while indulging in bombastic dialogues

while tearing itself apart in a perpetually appropriate fashion—perhaps the so-called refrain of Symeon's work is this very tearing apart

is essentially a postmodern epic poem

which if we consider the many attempts to turn the epic poems of Homer into the modern novels of

say

Gogol or Joyce

then it almost goes without saying that Symeon's epic poem is already a postmodern novel in many ways

as the addiction to pure prose of the novel

the addiction to the non-metrical methods of placing words in conceptual order

is perhaps another lurid quirk of the novel that would be better off set to the side!

(.761)

Of course the beauty of the Divine Eros

of the so-called kontakion form (of which both Symeon and Nazianzus are essentially book-ends to

if not entirely indulgent in) is that it mimics the metaphysics of these Byzantines

itself of course being a poem and an essay and a story!

The digressive hymns of the Divine Eros must be all three in simultaneity

verses and stories and essays

because if they're just verses or just essays or just stories—no

that simply won't work at all! To describe a select hymn as a verse

or as a story

or as an essay

instead of all three simultaneously

yet not as an amalgam but instead as an individual essay

an individual verse

an individual story in the same breath

to do that would almost be heretical in itself.

(.738)

Whereas Descartes noted

'I think therefore I am' Athanasius said

'Has the Father ever existed without His Son?' The most important aspect of the Divine Eros

what makes them essentially novelistic in perhaps the postmodern sense of the word

is that they're at once essays and verses and stories individually

but they're non-amalgamous! The Eros is all of them at the same time

but also each one of them individually as well; whereas Descartes noted

'I think therefore I am' the kontakion is only an essay because it's a poem

but it's only a poem because it's a story and so on and so on—

(.718)

Hawkes said

'I began to write fiction on the assumption that the true enemies of the novel were plot

character

setting

and theme' while Athanasius said

Has the Father ever existed without His Son?' Is The Divine Eros of Symeon the New Theologian a postmodern epic poem and as such also the postmodern novel par excellence? Perhaps we should inquire further into this term 'postmodern' however

namely as to how exactly it's said to differ from the term 'modern'? One of the more modern notions of our era

in this instance I'm speaking of modern as non-postmodern

whereas previously (perhaps foolishly) I used modern as a synonym for postmodern

is this conception of The Big Bang

which has achieved jihad-like popularity in our era.

Perhaps the most modern notion of all

if we're attempting to inquire about the modern-postmodern divide

is this notion

which has achieved a jihad-like belief system around it of the Big Bang.

(.709)

Now personally

I'm not exactly a proponent of this notion primarily because it strikes me as idiotic

with all due respect to the scientists who developed it

it strikes me as an idea that's attempting to improve upon a previous notion (God)

but in practice is taking the idiocy of said previous notion blindly believing in God

and making it somehow more idiotic. There's an idea that there was nothing

then something occurred

and now things are occurring in an outward fashion at increasing speeds. There's an idea that our sensory faculties

which are unable to accurately officiate feelings at a bar after three beers

are somehow capable of taking clues from billions of years ago and somehow empirically postulating what occurred billions of years ago

trillions of miles away. But this idea of the Big Bang is more in line with

say

Descartes

than

say

Athanasius. It's an idea that's essentially antithetical to the idea that a father only achieves being through his son

that the father and son
while existing independently of one another
only achieve being because of one another
that without one another they
in many ways
cease to exist.

(.810)

It's only been of late that I've found myself craving the classic cookies and cream flavor

and it's been ice cream in particular that has struck my cravings acutely. In our era

now I need more or less at least one night of indulging in ice cream per week. Yet at the same time

alongside this peculiar craving for cookies and cream

I've found myself bending to an equally acute urge to try something new

hardly satisfied with this cookies and cream craving despite the fact this cookies and cream craving more or less just came over me

I often find myself saying things like

'I don't know

maybe that chocolate chip cookie dough is good?' or

'What if I had a milkshake? I feel like I don't know

maybe a milkshake would really hit the spot right now?'

Of course the only result of such prevarication

of such mindless deviations is the indulgence in non-cookies and cream items and the inevitable remorse of the initial craving remaining unquenched!

(.741)

There's an idea that there was nothing then something occurred and is still occurring—the postmodern novel as well as Symeon's Divine Eros do away with the first portion of this formula disassociating themselves from this idea that the

disassociating themselves from this idea that there was nothing and also from the idea that then something occurred

instead restricting themselves to the is still occurring. For both Symeon and the postmodern novel something is still occurring

however

we're not quite as concerned with the idea that there was at one time nothing

or with this idea that then something occurred.

(.781)

If we were bold and I'm feeling decently bold at the moment having indulged in a long day

all of my days these days seem exceedingly long!—but also feeling as though all autobiography is absurdist fiction

- we might say that while the modern novel says something adjacent to
- 'I think therefore I am' the postmodern novel states something akin to
- 'He is the Father because he eternally has a Son through whom he affirms Himself as Father.' But this is perhaps even too speculative for our tastes; it's in all likelihood beyond the scope of this inquiry!

(.738)

Yet of course this could be considered controversial

as the median postmodernist ostensibly loves nothing more than flaunting his reckless atheism—what the postmodernist adores more than anything is to flaunt his atheism—if the postmodernist becomes peacock-like about anything it's without a doubt his fervent disbelief in God. Yet is it possible that a Byzantine monk penned the first truly monumental postmodern novel? It's an interesting query

although I have a feeling it would disgust Hawkes if not Nabokov

but most likely Nabokov as much as Hawkes. Nabokov and I'm basing this on little to nothing

strikes me as someone who would be loath to be grouped together with Symeon the New Theologian.

(.790)

In his fiftieth hymn Symeon sensually notes 'she reached out to me like a breast for me to suckle imperishable milk' - we should inquire into this note further as perhaps curiously our author even refers to the Father (or the Son) in this quote as αυτή the feminine pronoun

hence the quote was rendered in English as She rather than He

yet another postmodern element to be found in the Eros referring to the Father in the feminine conjunctive in the Eleventh Century! (Perhaps even the late Tenth!) So many of us to this day still blindly refer to the Father employing primarily the male conjunctive

yet I've never personally subscribed to this conjunctive conditioning myself

although I usually refrain from engaging in public statements regarding conjunctive matters.

(.756)

Ultimately

both the postmodernists as well as Symeon the New Theologian recognize the for lack of a better phrase quantum character of our material existence—while the postmodernists

in many if not all cases

tend to either form or support various crusades due to this characteristic

Symeon did the opposite

instead rescinding completely and making no explicit political statement on the conjunctive character(s) of his world. (Yet of course there is the speculation that Symeon himself was of a conjunctive deviation

so to speak
unique to his milieu
that of the eunuch
although we don't know this for certain.) The world

its quantum character

was no call to reform to Symeon; no it was a sign to rescind!

(.734)

For my part

I certainly can't deny that my personal predilections fall closer to rescinding—not a week goes by that the thought of entering a monastery doesn't become at least momentarily appealing! The monastery

to me

at times

seems like a second home

despite the fact

to the best of my knowledge

I've never stepped foot into a monastery of any sort. Yet where could I possibly belong more than a monastery

with few to no possessions and nothing pressing to do besides monitor my own fleeting thoughts

isn't the assessment of one's own waves of fleeting thought a full-time job in and of itself? How could we possibly have time for anything else

if we're attempting to maintain a modicum of honesty with ourselves?

(.785)

Approaching the automatic entrance of Fresh Shore's on Mineral Spring Avenue

hoping with all of my heart that their prepared foods were in the ballpark of what my mom generally discovers at Dave's Supermarket

- I glanced across the street and saw the old building of Ken Wok Chinese Cuisine halfway torn down
- and I took out my phone and made a brief note on the indefatigable impermanence that remains so pervasive all around us
- as I do each time a building I felt some sort of nonsensical connection with on Mineral Spring Avenue gets knocked down.

The Plane of an Ottoman NYC

(.682)

- "So anyway we were at the Hot Club for the first time in ages, a bartender I hadn't seen in at least four to five years was still behind the bar, she recognized me immediately,
- with a new purple dyed haircut that, although probably a smidgeon young for her age, suited her nicely, I thought. She poured me a healthy amount of Mezcal into a short glass,
- and only minutes later I'd notice her carrying a bottle of Del Maguey Vida, my favorite brand of Mezcal, back to the bar, and right then I surmised that I was drinking my favorite type of Mezcal.
- Of course healthy pours are double edged swords when you have a tendency to chug whatever's in front of you, which for better or worse is a tendency I've never entirely managed to discard,
- especially when in social settings. Socially, historically, I've always found myself sprinting toward liquor, with reckless abandon almost I perform fifty yard dashes toward
- whatever my spirit of choice is that month, and even though on balance I've reduced these excessive tendencies with age, I'd be lying to both myself and you if I said I'd discarded them completely.
- And to be honest I'm unsure if I'd wish to discard them in totality, to extinguish my child-like idiocy once and for all, because sure from a certain vantage point I suppose I remain a

- man-child of sorts, but on the other hand man-children are necessary, no? It's man-children who make the greatest philosophical strides. To think like an adult is to take on the guise of utter rationalism,
- which hardly ever if not never innovates, which refuses to become idiotic enough to alter fundamental axioms, as axioms are inevitably created by the child-like thinkers,
- by idiots of the spirit. Even God Himself allegedly said Let there be light, which is a man-child like statement in my opinion. Personally I still refuse to sleep in the dark."
- "The dark is contemptible in my mind." "There's something inherent in being itself that's synonymous with light in my opinion." "But how was Hot Club?"
- "It was interesting, intriguing, better than I anticipated, given the last couple times I'd been I felt the atmosphere to be a bit too clubby for my tastes,
- a tad too adolescent for even my man-child palette. I saw the doorman from The Parlour there, because apparently he works security at Hot Club as well?
- In any case as the party increased in size Katreena and I ended up engaged in an extended conversation with a petite fair-skinned female who adamantly claimed to be
- of New York origin, yet when an appropriate opening emerged for me to ask her what part of New York she was from specifically she prevaricated, saying she was quote-unquote from all over,
- but then saying The Bronx. She was from The Bronx? She didn't strike me as someone from The Bronx,

- and for someone whose identity seemed to be so tied with being from New York,
- a New Yorker, which is the case with so many people from New York, it's actually kind of sad to me, this violent melding that seems to occur with people who identify themselves with New York City,
- yet this female, who for the record I found pleasant, oddly enough refused to explicitly claim a borough, until she reluctantly said The Bronx, which I think struck everyone as totally misguided.
- She wasn't from The Bronx, that much was clear. She could be from anywhere in the world except The Bronx. This idea that this female's origin story began in The Bronx was completely absurd.
- Which borough she was from, assuming she was from a particular borough, now that was still ambiguous, but it was clear she wasn't from the Bronx. Queens,
- that I could give some credence to I suppose. It might be a reasonable speculation to suggest she was from Queens. Perhaps from an opulent family in Upper Manhattan,
- now that was even more likely-because she certainly struck me as someone who came from money, there was no trace of a New York accent in her speech, or of any accent in her speech,
- and the geography of Upper Manhattan is close enough to The Bronx that she could, in her mind at least, perhaps justify claiming The Bronx as a borough, even though I find that
- to be a bit ridiculous, to conflate Upper Manhattan with The Bronx, to think any thinking person would buy

- the idea that Upper Manhattan is in any way synonymous with The Bronx.
- Staten Island and Brooklyn strike me as more remote possibilities of her origin, and then we could also speculate on outer-areas as well, because while Yonkers strikes me as a stretch.
- I think Westchester County or Long Island are both certainly in play." "Do you think it possible that she could have been from, say, Westchester County, which would explain her moneyed demeanor,
- yet moved to The Bronx for work later in life, and now, and I agree that this is misguided, feels as though that working experience justifies her claim that The Bronx is a place she's actually from?"
- "Giorgios, that actually strikes me as perhaps the most sensible explanation of all. I also noticed, and I think it's worth noting, that when she sat her posterior was a tad more ample
- than I'd imagined, that this posterior along with the ambiguity of her origin began to strike me as almost ominously out of place, as if another plane of existence was forming."
- "That happens at times-posteriors and their relative amplitude can vary widely from expectations, the posterior is almost impossible to estimate based on face alone."
- "I guess it's reasonable to assert that we often look at a person's face and almost algorithmically create a simulation of their body from this face, that our mind works
- essentially algorithmically, we should admit that, that our minds are probably just composed of algorithms,

- and that we perform a similar process with voice, which actually happened
- to me just recently as well, where I spoke to a person on the phone and inevitably created an algorithmic simulation of her face in my mind. When I saw her face at last online I was struck
- by how much this picture differed from the simulation I'd made in my mind-who was it I believed I was speaking to? I look at someone's face and then I ruthlessly algorithmically
- simulate their body without consent, whereas I hear someone's voice and then I ruthlessly algorithmically simulate their face without consent, but in both cases my accuracy is
- totally stochastic, and by stochastic I mean terrible."

 "From voice to face and from face to body, we make ill-advised, ruthless speculations regarding everyone who enters our periphery!"
- "In this sense the simulation of the human begins with voice. From voice alone we algorithmically simulate both face and body, because from face we simulate body, as you said.
- In any case as the conversation progressed we myself, Katreena, and this female - began to touch on the topic of what exactly this female had been doing since leaving New York,
- and in the midst of this it came up that it just so happened that her and I were actually the same age, that she'd been finding locales she liked at our age, although she noted how
- difficult it was, compared to New York, where she knew the ins and outs of where to patronize and when,

- what establishments she enjoyed and which ones she despised.
- I agreed immediately, noting that at my age, at our age, it was one of the main deterrents to moving to another city, particularly New York, which I'd strongly considered moving to more than
- once, but as I said explicitly to her to have to relearn every single place that I like to go, and how to get there, to relearn which places offend my palate, at my age,
- it just struck me as way too daunting of a task to take on.
 It struck me as a task that would consume so much
 of my energy that it would essentially mute all of my
 philosophical energies
- for at least five years. She mentioned a Lebanese bar where "you walk downstairs" that she liked a lot. I said the entire city of Providence has become essentially one extended
- hookah lounge, which I admitted to her, full disclosure, appeals to me deeply, which, full disclosure, seemed to genuinely surprise her, that the entire city of Providence was
- an extended hookah lounge. I said the city is littered with Greek and Lebanese places like that, which of course Giorgos we know isn't true in the least, that there are only a
- fraction of Greek locations compared to Lebanese locations, yet I stated it with so much aplomb she didn't question it at all, although she did immediately question whether Greeks
- smoked hookah, to which I simply said Ottoman Empire, to which she said of course, immediately connecting

- the dots." "My goodness Markos, I have to say that's fairly impressive, that a fair-skinned female
- from New York would connect those dots that quickly. The Ottoman Empire, I mean at this point it's basically a piece of arcana. No one knows anything about the Ottoman Empire anymore."
- "Oh I completely agree! I totally feel like there are just very few people in our general age range who know anything about the Ottoman Empire, and I'd one hundred percent wager that not one
- other person at Hot Club that night who knew anything about the Ottoman Empire, never mind its very specific ethnic components, who could put the pieces of Greeks ancestrally smoking hookah
- together by the utterance of two words: Ottoman Empire.

 In fact it seems to me that the Ottoman Empire is maybe the most neglected empire of the past half millennium, that it
- inherited its Byzantine predecessor's characteristic of being completely discarded by modern scholarship. No one knows what you speak of when you so much as mention the Ottoman Empire,
- people are flummoxed, except apparently this female who may or may not be from New York, but certainly isn't from The Bronx. In short I quickly found that the ambiguity of what
- New York City borough characteristic was inherent in this female became reflected right into the ambiguity of the ethnic blocks of the Ottoman Empire, in a post-Ottoman
- American diaspora, in an America that is itself multi-ethnic, and not entirely differently than the

- Ottomans, Ottomans who were only trumped in their importation of African slaves
- by America's out of control love affair with the African slave. No one imported more African slaves than the Ottoman Empire, except of course the United States of America.
- The ambiguity of the traits displayed by a Greek versus a Turk versus a Lebanese versus a Kurd versus an Armenian in the seemingly limitless Providence Hookah Network
- was suddenly a direct analog to the ambiguity of the New York City borough characteristics inherent in a person who perhaps dubiously claims to be from New York City.
- In one instance we're unsure if we're witnessing a Greek, a Turk, a Lebanese, a Kurd, an Armenian; in the other instance we're unsure if we're witnessing a person from The Bronx,
- from Manhattan, from Staten Island, from Brooklyn, from Queens; in both cases the overlapping characteristics, outside of their original context (of the Ottoman Empire and
- New York City, respectively), become vague enough in their nuance that the identity of each bleeds into the other, until the individual identities are erased completely.
- The New York City diaspora in Providence can reflect characteristics associated with Staten Island, with Manhattan, with The Bronx, with Brooklyn, with Queens, while the median
- hookah smoker this New York City transplant may encounter in the extended Providence Hookah

- Network may display characteristics of the Greek, of the Turk, of the Lebanese,
- of the Kurd, of the Armenian. In both cases what's Staten Island, what's Queens, what's Kurd, what's Greek, what's Brooklyn, what's Manhattan, what's Lebanese, what's Turk,
- what's The Bronx, what's Armenian all bleed into one another until they're essentially indistinguishable from each other, until they're essentially extinguished,
- until we reach a fundamental oneness of an Ottoman New York City, a legitimate plane of existence that came into being only at the Hot Club via conversation this past Friday night."
- "This is a physical plane of existence now, the Ottoman New York City of Oneness." "It can no longer be denied, an Ottoman New York City where all identity has been extinguished into
- a monadic Oneness came into existence on a Friday night at the Hot Club." "Yet that girl could she have actually been from The Bronx?"
- "With one hundred percent certainty I will assure you Giorgos, that the girl I spoke with Friday night was absolutely not from The Bronx."

A Modest Parallel Universe

(.708)

- "Initially a thin hipster with a full red beard was in the bathroom at Nick-A-Nee's, peeing at the tall urinal, but when I went in, after he walked out, I made a point to pee at the kiddie urinal,
- a trademark of mine, for whatever reason I find myself more at ease at the kiddie urinals, as I'm long-torsoed in addition to being of only average height; yes,
- the kiddie urinals are essentially made for me, and peeing at the kiddie urinal I took note of what looked like a piece of asscrack lint connected inextricably to a long piece of ass hair.
- This is what it struck me as at least. I thought back to parking on the street fifty feet from Nick-A-Nee's, to my consternation with the driver wearing a snowcap in his maroon pickup truck
- cursing me through his windshield as I slowly scoped the one open spot on the street. At that time, with his perturbed expression and prehistoric facial features, he struck me as
- the worst person in the world and frankly still does. I wished nothing but the worst things on this person as I pulled over to let him pass, haranguing him through my windshield
- as he simultaneously screamed at me through his windshield, then calmly hit reverse to move back into the middle of the street, to parallel park in the only open spot,

- just momentarily lodging the right rear wheel ever so slightly onto the attenuated curb. In my mind this man in the pickup truck was a grotesque stain on the face of our planet.
- His face, in both its structure and expression, sticking with me at the bar in Nick-A-Nee's, more or less revolted me in the most extreme of ways. The man to my left ordered
- an impressively grotesque smelling soup from the bar-it was all I could smell at the time, and the stench was such that it struck me as frankly a little unbelievable it wafted from a bowl
- a man was actually eating from, yet if anything this made me enjoy Nick-A-Nee's even more. The band playing the bar employed a white saxophone player, and each
- respective instrumentalist was drinking a separate, distinct variety of alcohol-one whiskey, one craft beer, one some type of mixed drink, one nothing at all, all four frankly looking
- little like typical musicians, and I found it notable how easily the saxophone, I presumed tenor, sat in the mix with just a microphone next to it, given the accompaniment of
- electric guitar, electric bass, and acoustic drums that were played in a thoroughly rock, as opposed to jazz, style. I guess I never knew that about tenor saxophone.
- Rock drums have increasingly distressed me of late. When I think of a style of drumming that offends my taste, rock drumming immediately vaults to the top of the list-in my opinion

- Stratos most rock music would be immeasurably improved with the simple removal of percussion, or at least with a more muted substitute of percussion. Maybe a tongue drum?
- Amplified tongue drum? Distorted tambourine? But honestly that's just me, because I fully realize most people love percussion, that percussion is viewed as the so-called backbone
- of modern composition, that tons of listeners still venerate rock music. In any case I guess I should start to explain how I got here, shouldn't I?" "From your parallel universe you mean?"
- "Exactly Stratos. It now seems to me that I crossed over into this universe, or I should say I became aware that it had happened, precisely at the point where the bozo in the snowcap
- in his dark red pickup truck began yelling at me through his windshield, as I attempted to parallel park up the street from Nick-A-Nee's, where a man would then order
- one of the most disgusting smelling soups I've ever encountered from its bar. It was obvious as the man, who I despised, looked exactly like someone from Alabama,
- he was wearing a snowcap despite it being a moderately temperate day in early April, and given these facts it was obvious something had shifted significantly,
- but I couldn't draw any conclusions quite at that point. But these are the types of cues you have to take into account with regard to things such as these Stratos,
- parallel universe conundrums so to speak. How exactly it happens I'm not at liberty to detail at this time, as it's

- possible I'm ignorant of the mechanics of the process, or I'm aware of
- the process in a way I can only communicate in indirect ways." "This makes sense, Markos. There's obviously only so much we can put into words when it comes to parallel universes."
- "For example it was precisely at Nick-A-Nee's that I happened to log onto the basketball-reference dot com webpage Stratos, which only confirmed my suspicions,
- which had been steadily rising, which only acted as another clue as I delved deeper into the statlines I'll detail right now. Specifically, as I recalled it, beyond a shadow of a doubt it sat
- in my memories, the Boston Celtic Jayson Tatum owned a statistical profile that exceeded that of Dallas Maverick Luka Doncic, whereas Luka Doncic had a statistical summation
- that lagged that of Jayson Tatum. And yet on basketball-reference dot com at Nick-A-Nee's, only moments after said bozo in snowcap in the Alabama-esque maroon pickup truck
- berated me through his windshield, it occurred to me that Luka Doncic had by far the more complete statistical profile compared to Jayson Tatum, despite both Luka and Tatum
- averaging above thirty points per game this NBA season. Specifically, on this side Stratos, it seemed that Luka differentiated himself from Tatum by getting to the free throw stripe
- at a much greater clip, by making plays for others at a clip that more than doubled Tatum's rate. Where

- Jayson Tatum assisted on just twenty percent of his possessions,
- while turning the ball over on ten percent, Luka Doncic assisted on forty three percent of his possessions while turning the ball over on only twelve percent, while
- both rebounded just about thirteen percent of their possible possessions and shot an aggregate percentage of sixty (true shooting percentage) on their thirty points per game.
- Yet I explicitly recalled Jayson Tatum being the far superior playmaker, by more than double, when compared to Luka Doncic, in those exact terms
- of assist percentage and free throw rate, yet when I logged onto basketball-reference at Nick-A-Nee's, to my great surprise, Luka Doncic
- separated himself from Jayson Tatum by his higher propensity of getting to the free throw stripe and by his stark contrast in setting his teammates up
- for made shots (especially when compared to his propensity to turn the ball over). It's only in the most minute of ways that we can detect
- these transitions Stratos, if that makes sense, that we can conclude we've traversed across potential dimensions, if that makes sense?" "Oh, absolutely!"
- "And to add to the confusion it was only a night later, in a vivid dream, that I found myself in a desolate house covered with orange wallpaper, curiously preoccupied with bathing myself,
- apparently getting ready for something I couldn't quite put my finger on-it was in this home with the orange

- interior that I felt again this psychic energy with near strangers,
- near strangers who seem to pop into my mental space unannounced, that has increasingly struck me as an actual physical phenomenon. That I can actually think back toward
- these near strangers in a physical fashion. Yet this was before a particular shadow from my past appeared to me yet again in dream, in the most vivid of manners.
- and I began to run from something, something I couldn't identify, while simultaneously reconnecting with this shadow without either of us saying a word to each other.
- until I stumbled upon what looked like a locker room in an open field. I entered the building, a so-called locker room in an open field, and realized all of its memorabilia was from
- nineteen ninety eight-and I realized I'd traveled back to nineteen ninety eight, that everything I touched was totally nineteen ninety eight, that my own so-called identity was
- just a clumsy block across something that could be traversed if approached properly, and then suddenly the thought occurred to me: Time starts in the middle and winds around,
- always in the middle, I thought, that this notion of time beginning at the beginning is entirely false, perhaps even nonsensical. When awake I frantically wrote a note that simply said:
- Time starts in the middle and winds around. And as I encountered this idea streams of green for lack of a

- better word time shot out, like Nickelodeon Gack or something,
- various streams of time overlapping each other in joyous bursts of green, like the word Go, and it was a sort of joyous event even in its ambiguity. I was a little disappointed to wake up."
- "Did you do shrooms at all?" "No sadly Stratos I was completely free from hallucinogens when I went to sleep, when I went to Nick-A-Nee's, when the red-bearded hipster peed
- at the adult urinal, when the man next to me ordered the disgusting soup, when the bozo with the snowcap screamed at me, when the saxophone was surprisingly high in the mix.
- No we don't necessarily need to travel in the traditional sense in order to travel great distances, that much we can be sure of." "That makes complete sense to me, Markos!"

Diagrams

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(echoes):(syllables) .(approximate self-similarity)

Inscrutable Myths

---01 539:721 .748

Well Mr [K][a]zantz[a][k][i][s], [i]f I'm [b][e]ing hone[s]t with [y]ou, [c]omp[l][e]te[l][y] hone[s]t with [y]ou, if I'm h[o]lding [b]a[c]k [n]ext to [n][o] hone[s]ty what[s][o]ever, I should [n][o]te that, ye[s], [i]t'[s] [i]nd[u][b]ita[b][l]y tr[ue] that of [l]ate [l]'ve [f]ound m[y][s]el[f] [g]l[u]ttonou[s][l]y ch[ew]ing [f]our to [s]even [s][l][i][c]es of [g][u]m in [s][i]multaneit[y], [f]or a va[r][i]et[y] of [r][e]asons---[i]n [f][a][c]t, [i]t was ju[s]t ye[s]terday [a][f]ternoon, [p]rior to I[e]aving ou[r] a[p]a[r]tment to [g]o [g]rab a [c]o[ff][e]e that I i[n]d[i]s[c]r[i]m[i]nately shoved a[n] e[n][t]ire [p]a[ck] of [g]um i[n][t]o [m]y [m]outh and ex[u][b]erant[l]y ch[ew]ed this [l]arge [b]all of [g]um, [w]ondered i[f] che[w]ing [g]um [w]as actually [g]ood [f]or your teeth, when [th]e [th]ought o[cc]urred to [m][e]: Is [e][m]o the [h]ighe[s]t [f]orm of [c]la[ss]i[c]al [m]usi[c] A[m]e[r][i][c]a [i]s [h]i[s]to[r]i[c]ally [r]e[s][p]on[s]ible [f]or? When di[s][c]u[ss]ing A[m]eri[c]an [m]usi[c], I thought [w]hile che[w]ing a[n] e[n]tire [p]a[ck] [o]f g[u]m, a litany of [g]en[r]es, f[r]om [p]ost-bo[p] [j]azz, to ex[p]eri[m]ental ro[c]k, to [a]v[a]nt-[m]etal to the [s][o]-[c]a[l]]ed [c][l]a[ss]i[c]a[ll]y trained [c]om[p][o]sers of [A][m]eri[c]an [d]e[s]cent, are [d]i[s][c]u[ss]ed 'the as [c][l]a[ss]i[c]al [m]usi[c] of A[m]eri[c]a.' 'B[u]t wh[a]t if the t[r]u[l]y [c][l]a[ss]i[c]al A[m]e[r]i[c]an e[m]o is [m]usi[c]?' I thought to [m]y[s]elf, che[w]ing a[n] e[n]tire [p]a[ck] [o]f g[u]m, [p]re[p]a[r]ing my[s]el[f] to [p]ay

[f]ull-[p][r]i[c]e [f]or a [c]o[ff]ee out [s]ome[w]here, des[p][i]te the [f][a][c]t [I] h[a]d a[n] e[n]t[i]re [p]ot of [c]o[ff]ee at [m]y a[p]art[m]ent, waiting to [b]e im[b]ibed [f]or [f]r[e]e. The [p]ri[m]ar[y] [c]onc[ei]t of [e][m]o [m]us[i][c] [i]s that [i]ts [c]re[a]tors are young a[n]d white a[n]d [m][a]le, and [th]at [th]ey or[i]g[i][n][a]te [f]rom [n][ei]ghborhoods that are sa[f]e i[f] n[o]t [o]pule[n]t a[n]d utter[l]y h[a]te their [l]ives. [N]othing, it should be [n]oted, is [e]ver [p]ro[c][ee][d]ing w[e]|| for the [e]mo band, as the [s]lighte[s]t [d][e]v[i]ation from the [e]mo [b]and's [b]e[s]t [c]a[s]e [s]cenario is [a]lways [a][p]o[c][a]l[y][p]t[i][c], de[s][p]ite the f[a][c]t th[a]t, [s]o[c]io[p]o[l]iti[c]a[ll][y] at [l][ea][s]t, [th]ey have [e]very[th]ing going for [th]em. The e[m]o [p]ar[t][i][c][i][p]ant [e]x[i][s]ts at the a[p]ex of the A[m]eri[c]an [t][o]tem [p][o]le, and des[p]ite thi[s] fa[c]t [e]verything re[m]ains [e][ss]entially o[b]je[c]tiona[b]le to them. Noth[i]ng [i]s going well! The emo [s]ong [i]s, [i]n pract[i][c]e, [th]e [a]nti[th]e[s]i[s] of the virtue [s]ignal. [A]nd it o[cc]urred to [m]e, as I le[f]t [m]y a[p]art[m]ent to [p]ay [f]ou[r] dollars [f]o[r] a [c]o[ff][ee] that would i[n]evita[b]l[y] [b][e] [c]o-o[p]ted [b]y a[n] art [s][c]hool [p]ro[f]e[ss]or, with n[o] regard to [s][o]cia[l]ly a[cc][e][p]ta[b][l]e d[e][c]i[b]e[l] [l]evels. [p]ont[i][f][i]c[a]ting [a][b]out [p]eo[p]le as [b][r]ands to [a] [f]o[r]eign exch[a]nge [s]tudent, [th]at [th]i[s] t[y][p]e of w[i][d]e-[ey]e[d] [n]ar[c]i[ss]ism, [th]at [th]i[s] un[i]ron[i][c] [i]g[n]oran[c]e of [s]ocio[p]ol[i]t[i][c]al t[o]tem [p][o]les, thi[s] ob[s][e]ss[i]on w[i]th di[r][e][c]t, [e]x[p][e][r][i]en[c]e at the [e]x[p]en[s]e of [e]verything [c]on[c][e][p]tual---is [p]erha[p]s the a[p]ex of what should [c]om[p]rise A[m]er[i][c]an [c]la[s]s[i][c]al [m]usi[c]? [A]nd I [n]o[dd]ed my [h]ead [a]t this [n]otion [a]s we en[t]ered

the [H]on[d]a [a][s]king [K][a]t i[f] sh[e]'d b[e] [w]i[l]ling to [p][l][ay] '[O]ne-[Ei]ghty by [S]ummer' on our [w][ay] to the [c]o[ff]ee sho[p].

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I [s]u[pp]ose you [c]ould [s]ay it was [f]ortuitou[s], i[f] not a [d]ire[c]t [p]ro[d]u[c]t of [f]ate it[s]el[f], that with [th]ese [th]oughts in m[i]nd, wh[i]le browsing my Sho[pp]ing L[i][s]t on A[m]az[o]n d[o]t [c][o]m, while [c]on[s][i]dering the [m]erits of the [s]o-[c]alled univer[s]it[y] [p]ro[f]e[ss]or affiter my en[c]ounter w[i]th th[i][s] [p]ea-brained art [p]ro[f]e[ss]or [f]rom Yo[l]en[i]'s, I [n][o]ti[c]ed [th]at [th]e [C]on[s]tantine E[l]even [m]o[n][o]gra[ph] b[y] [m][y] old [c]ollege [p]ro[f]e[ss]or, [M]ari[o][s] [Ph][i]l[i][pp]ides, was [n]ow on [s]ale---re[d]u[c]ed from the [b]or[d]er[l]ine-[i]n[s]ulting [p]r[i][c]e of [n][i]nety [d]ollars for the hard[c]over, to the [i]n[c]rea[s]ing[l]y [p]a[l]ata[b]le [p]r[i][c]e of [n][i]ne [d]o[l]lars for the [K]in[d]le e[d]ition. I'd had [n]o [c]o[m]muni[c]ation w[i]th [Ph][i]l[i][pp]ides [s]in[c]e [m][y] t[i]me at [M]a[ss]achu[s]etts, wh[i]ch [i]s un[s]ur[p]rising, as ı doubt [s]trong[l][y] [Ph][i][l][i][pp]id[e]s re[c]alls [m][e] in the [l][ea]st, as a[l][m]o[s]t the entirety of my [l]ate a[d]o[l]e[s]cen[c]e was [m]ar[k]ed [d]e[d]i[c][a]tio[n] b[y] [m][y] to [m]v[d]i[ss]i[p][a]tio[n]-[p]ro[c]e[ss], which I'd [e]xte[n][d]e[d] i[n]to a[n] [e][r]a [s]ome m[a]v [ch]oose [ch]a[r]a[c]terize as a [p]o[s]t-youth [e][r]a, [s][o] the two [n][ee]d, us had [n][o] [n][o] r[ea]son [c]o[m]muni[c]ate [w]ith [o]ne a[n]other, [p]ri[m]ari[l]y [b]e[c]ause Ph[i][l][i][pp]i[d]es had [n]o [i][d]ea who [l] was. Ju[s]t [b]e[c]ause [t]wo per[s]ons o[s][t]en[s]i[b]ly share a [m]odi[c]um of [s]o-[c]alled 'Gree[k] [b]lood' in no way [m]eans they [sh]ould [c]o[mm]u[n]i[c]ate [w]ith [o]ne a[n]other. [F]or [Ph][i]l[i][pp]i[d]es's [p]art, [h]e [h]as no [i][d]ea who [l] am, and [f]or [m]y [p]art, [m]y on[l]y [i]n[t]eraction with [Ph][i][l][i][pp]i[d]es [t]ook [p]la[c]e [i]n the [m][i]d[s]t of [m]y [d][i][ss][i][p][a]tion-[p]ro[c]e[ss], of [w]hich I [w]as [d]e[d]i[c][a]ted to---yet [b]eing that I'd [b]een [l]oo[k]ing [f]or a mono[g][r]a[ph] on [s][o]-[c]alled '[l]a[s]t em[p]eror of the [G][r]ee[k]s', and [b][e]ing that [Ph]i[l]i[pp][i]d[e]s was the [o]n[l][y] [a]uthor with [a] r[e][c]ent monogra[ph] [p]u[b][l]ished on the [f]inal [s]o-[c]alled [C]on[s]tantine of [H]e[l]en, it ju[s]t [s]o [h][a][pp]ened that our [p][a]ths [w]ould [o]n[c]e again [c]ro[ss], thi[s] t[i]me on the [K]indle [a][pp] of m[y] [i]Phone. [P]erh[a][p]s it was [f]ate, just [a]s it was [f]ate th[a]t I'd [s]it through an e[b]u[ll]ient [b][l]ovi[a]tion [s]ession [f]rom а [p]ea-[b]r[ai]ned art [s]chool [p]ro[f]e[ss]or on one [d]ay, [th]en on [th]e n[e]xt [d]ay [flind [m]y [ow]n [o]ld [p][r]o[f][e][ss]or's [m]onog[r]a[ph] [f]ortuitou[s]ly on [s]ale, [r]e[d][u][c]ed t[o] a [p][r]i[c]e [m]ore a[pp][r][o][p][r]iate [f]or the [p][r][o]leta[r]iat as [s]uch.

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A[f]ter [c]on[f]ir[m]ing the [p][r]ice [r]e[d]u[c]tion [m]ulti[p]le [d]ays in a [r]ow I [f]inally [p]ulled the t[r]igger and [b]ought the [b]oo[k], [o]n[l]y [d]own[l][o]a[d]ing said $\label{eq:continuous} \begin{tabular}{ll} $[b]oo[k] & [d]u[r]ing & a & [s]o[l]ita[r]y & [c]ir[c]u[l]ar & [s][o]journ \\ \end{tabular}$ a[r]ound [F]oxwoods, I[k]e busy a[tt]emp[t]ing [t]o [c]on[t]inue his [l]u[ck] [o]n the s[l][o]t machines---[h]aving wo[n] two [h]u[n][d]red [d]o[l]lars on o[n]e [r]oll [p][r][i]or to our [h][i]gh [c][l]a[s]s Chin[e]se [m][a]gn[a]ni[m]ou[s]l[y] [d][i]nner, wh[i]ch he

[c]om[p]ed---[a]nd [K][a]t [p][a]ssed out in the [c]ar, [t]ired a[n]d hungover [a]fter a[n] ill-[a][d][v][i]sed [d]e[c]ision to [d]ay[d][r]in[k] [p][r][i]or to our [v]entu[r]ing to the [c]a[s]i[n]o for the [n]ight. At fir[s]t, in [p]re[p]a[r]ation of my [r]ea[d]ing, [l] [s]at in l[i]ne at [D]un[k]in [D]onuts, [s]ur[p]rising[l][y] the on[l][y] [c]o[ff]ee sho[p] o[p]en at the ex[p][a]n[s]ive [c]a[s]ino, [a]nd bought a [m][e]d[i]um i[c]ed [c]o[ff]ee [f]or [m]y[s]el[f] with al[m]ond [m]il[k]. Three [m]en [s][t]ood in [f]r[o]nt of [m]e and [s][t]r[u][ck] [m]e as a[b][u]tting old [m]en un[t]il I [b]egan [t]o [c]on[s]ider they very well [c]ould [b]e the [s][a]me [a]ge as I, [c]l[i]ng[i]ng, [i]t [s]tru[ck] me, to [p]erha[p][s] [s]ome fa[d]ing b[ea][c]on of youth, one of them a[d]orned in [d]eluxe [M]i[ch]ael Jor[d]an [s]n[ea][k]ers, the other [m]a[k]ing a long [s][p][ee]ch to the [D]un[k]in [D]onuts bar[i][s]ta about [h]ow [m]uch [h]e li[k]es his [C]ara[m]el [c]off[ee] yet [c]uriou[s]l[y] [p]un[c]tu[a]ting the [n]ote by [r]e[p]eated[y] [s][a]ying he's [n]ot that [p]i[ck]y. In the [r]ain[f]ore[s]t [c]a[s]i[n]o, [s]i[pp]ing my i[c]ed [c]o[ff]ee, [w]ith [w]ater [au][d]i[b]l[y] [f][a]lling [a]ll [a]round m[e], I got my [flive [d]ollar [d]ou[b]le [p]o[k]er g[a]me out of the w[ay], rea[l]izing [s][l]ow[l]y [th]at [th]e [f]i[r][s]t two machines [d]i[d]n't wo[r]k, then [s][l]ow[l]y rea[l][i]zing [l] [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] [f]orgot how to [p][l]ay double [p]o[k]er, [d]e[s][p]ite [b]eing [s]o exu[b]erant at [th]e [th]ought of [f][i]nally [f][i]n[d]ing a [d]ou[b]le [p]oker machine to [p]lay. I [g]oo[g]led 'How to [p]lay [d]ou[b]le [p]o[k]er' [b]ut [c]oul[d]n't [s]eem to f[i]nd a [c]on[c][i][s]e ex[p]lan[a]tion, an ex[p]lan[a]tion that would a[ll]ow me to [p][l][a]y [d]ou[b]le [p]o[k]er imm[e][d][i]atel[y], [w]hich [w]as the [e]xtent of [e]verything [I] [w]an[t]ed at the [t][i]me. [L][e]aving the [d]ouble [p]oker [m]ach[i]nes

a[f]ter i[mm][e][d][i]ate[l][y] [l]osing [f]ive [d]o[ll]ars, I [d]e[c]i[d]ed to [s][p]end the [l][a]st of my [c][a]sh o[n] a[n] i[c]e [c]ream [c]one, then begin [r][ea][d]ing [Ph][i][i][pp][i][d][e]s' monog[r]a[ph]. The i[c]e [c]r[ea][m] ba[r][i][s]ta in[f]ormed me there were n[o] [c][o]nes le[f]t, [w]hich [w]as di[s]a[p]pointing in the extr[e][m]e. [F]eig[n]ing [n]o [d]i[s]a[pp]ointment, I or[d]ered t[wo] [s][c][oo][p]s of the [c]a[pp]uccin[o] ge[l]at[o] and was [s]ub[s]e[q]uent[l]y given a [s][p]oon hal[f] the [s]ize of my own [p][i]n[k]y [f][i]nger, wh[i]ch [i]sn't a [p]arti[c]u[l]ar[l]y [l]arge [p][i]n[k]y [f][i]nger, l'[v]e ne[v]er had my [p]in[k]y [flinger de[s][c]ribed [a]s [a][b][n]orma[ll]y [l]arge [b]y anyone, to the [b]e[s]t of my k[n]owledge, to [s][c]oo[p] out [b]oth [s][c]oo[p]s of i[c]e [c]ream from the [s]ur[p]risingl[y] [d][e]e[p] [c]u[p]. I [d]i[d]n't obj[e][c]t, in[s]t[e]ad fee[l]ing [c]urious[l][y] [l]u[ck][y] to [p]ay [s]even [d]o[l]lars for thi[s] i[c]e [c]ream [c]u[p], then wal[k]ing around to [f][i]nd m[y][s]el[f] [q]uite [e]njoying [s]aid i[c]e [c]ream, the [e]nd-game of [s]aid i[c]e [c]ream of [c]our[s]e [b]eing that I ate the [I][a][s]t [h][a]If [s][c]oop e[ss]entia[l]ly [w]ith my [b]are [h][a]nds, [w]al[k]ing around [b][y] m[y][s]elf, enjoying nothing more than [ea]ting thi[s] i[c]e [c]r[ea]m with [b]oth [a]n [a][b][s]urdl[y] tin[y] [s][p]oon and al[s]o with my [b][a]re h[a]nds. [F]ina[l]ly, [a][f]ter washing the c[a][p]puccin[o] ge[l]at[o] offf my hands in the Floxwoods frest afrea, I sat on a [p]ar[k] bench and o[p]ened u[p] my [K]in[d]le a[pp] to o[p]en u[p] [Ph]ili[pp][i][d][e]s' mo[n]o[g][r]a[ph] on the [fli[n]al [s]o-[c]alled em[p]e[r]or of the [G][r]ee[k][s].

Contemporary Shootings

1296:1746 .742

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W[e]II, I [g]u[e][ss] [i]t's been [g][i]ve or ta[k]e [s]even years [s]in[c]e I [f]ir[s]t ex[p]erien[c]ed the [s]ubl[i]me del[i]ght of [s]mo[k]ing the hoo[k][a]h at [P][a]sh[a] on [A][I]lens [A][v]enue, [a]nd n[ea]r[I][y] thr[e]e and hal[f] [s]in[c]e [I] was in[t]rodu[c]ed [t]o the [v][e]n[e]rated [i][c]e hose, [s][o] I [s]u[pp][o]se I'm now at the [p]oint in m[y] [I][i]fe where an [e]qu[i]d[i][s]tant amount of t[i]me h[a]s [e][I][a][p][s]ed [s]in[c]e I [e]x[p]e[r]ien[c]ed the [r]egu[l]ar [h]ose [a]s well [a]s the i[c]e [h]ose, b[o]th h[o]ses that I'd of [c]ourse [r]e[c]ommend, alth[o]ugh our [c]ountry's [r]a[p]id [r][a]te of [i]nfl[a]tion h[a]s [i]m[p][a][c]ted the [p]ri[c]e of [ea]ch [s]ub[s]tantiall[y], while the [r]a[p]id [s][p][r]ead of the [C]O[V]ID-Ninet[e]en [v]iru[s] has [t]urned [s]mo[k]ing hoo[k]ah i[n][t]o a[n] i[n][c]rea[s]ingl[y] frowned u[p]on [p]ra[c]ti[c]e.

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[l]t was [a]n [e][r]a of l[i]nge[r]ing [s]oci[o]e[c]ono[m]i[c] [c]o[mm][o]tion when my [f][r]iend [C]urti[s] and I ex[p]e[r]ien[c]ed [s]omewhat of a [d]ual [r]ou[gh] [p]atch [r]o[m]anti[c]ally---[C]urti[s] [r]e[ck][l]e[ss][l]y [d]ivor[c]ed, [a]fter [a]n [ei]ght year [r]e[l][a][ti]on[sh]ip a[n]d [n]ine [m]onth [m]a[r]riage, wh[i]le [l] [r]e[m]ained i[n] le[ss] than i[n]f[r]e[q]uent [c]o[m]muni[c]ation with a per[s]on [l]'d i[n]ad[v][i]sa[b]ly [b]e[c]ome i[n][v]olved [w]ith i[n] a [v]ariety of [w]ays, wh[i]le at the [s]ame [t]ime [l]'d inad[v][i]sa[b][l]y [e]n[t]ered [s]u[b][s]e[q]uent а re[l]a[ti]on[sh]i[p] with a [p]er[s]on I'd, [p]erha[p]s un[s]ur[p][r][i]sing[i][y], [e]ventua[li][y] have a d[r]amati[c] falling out with.

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[M]ore [o]ften [th]an n[o]t it [s]eems our [l][i]ves are [l][i]ttle [m]ore [th]an a [s]eries of [i]ll-adv[i]sed re[l]a[ti]on[sh]i[p]s, that [w]hen[e]ver [w]e [e][s][c]a[p]e [f]rom [o]ne [i]ll-adv[i]sed [r]e[l][a]tion [w]e [f]ind a [s]ub[s]e[q]uent [i]ll-adv[i]sed re[l][a][ti]on [w][ai]ting [f]or us [p][a][ti]ent[l]y---for my [p]art [l]'d [a][c]qu[i]red [a] [c]u[s]tom of cha[s]ing the [i]ll-advised [i]n [a]n al[m]ost [m]e[c]h[a][n]i[c]al [m][a][nn]er, as [i]f the [i]ll-adv[i]sed had [s]ome [s]ort of di[r]e[c]t I[i]ne into m[y] ver[y] b[e]ing, [r]et[r]o[s][p]e[c]t a[n]d i[n] it [f]eels as i[f] [c]ir[c]um[s]tan[c]e in the [c]a[s]e of m[y] [l][i][f]e has [p][l]ayed an out[s]ized role, that my a[pp]roach to m[y] [l][i][f]e has been а [s][i]m[p]le [s][c]ul[p]ting [i]ne[s][c]a[p]able [c]ir[c]um[s]tan[c]es.

---04 78:107 .729

I [s]till h[o]ld b[o]th [o]wners---J[a][ck] [a]nd [S][a]I---in the high[e][s]t [e][s]teem, and, [i]n [f][a][c]t it was ju[s]t thi[s] [p][a][s]t [C]h[r]i[s]tma[s] that I [s]to[pp]ed in [P]ash[a] with Tin[a] and said [a] [j][o]vial [h]ell[o] to [J]a[ck], i[n]dulging i[n] my fir[s]t [i][c]e [h]oo[k]ah in what [s][ee]med I[i][k]e [e][o]ns, T[i]n[a] and I [s]itting at the counter, h[a]ving ex[a][c]tly one [b][e]er a p[ie][c]e, already [s]ome[w]hat in[e][b]ri[a]ted, [w]atching a Ma[v]eri[ck][s] g[a]me that was [c]uriou[s][l]y [v]oid of [L]u[k]a Don[c]ic.

---05 108:156 .692

It'[s] [n][e][v]er [n][e][c]e[ss]arily a[d][v]isable to a[d]mit that an exoti[c] [d]an[c]er [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te '[f]ell in [l]ove with [y]ou'---[y]et in my parti[c]u[l]ar [c]a[s]e [i]t was an [i]rre[f]uta[b]le [b]urden I was [f]or[c]ed to [b]ear. [A]Ithough at the [t]ime I [a][tt]emp[t]ed, with [s]ome of [d]egree [s]u[cc]e[ss], to [d]en[y] that m[v][c]haris[m][a]ti[c] [c]h[a]ra[c]ter was [c]a[p]able [m]a[k]ing [s][ai]d [s][e]t of [e][v]ents [p]o[ss]i[b]le, [i]f not [i]ne[v]ita[b]le, yet it was a[pp]ro[p]riatel[y] [c]ata[s]tro[ph]i[c] [f]or [m]y [m]en[t]al well-[b][e]ing, as I [t]oo[k] [f]ull [r]e[s][p]onsi[b]i[l]it[y] for [b]oth [ch]a[r]is[m]a as well as [m]y ina[b]i[l]it[y] to [r]esem[b]le a [f]athe[r]-[f]igu[r]e.

---06 85:119 .714

These [p]re[c]i[s]e [c]ir[c]um[s]tan[c]es led both [m]y[s]el[f] and [m]y [f][r]iend [C]urti[s] into the [r]eady-[m]ade arms of the [P]asha [h]oo[k]ah [h]ose at [l][ea][s]t [o]n[c]e a [w][ee][k] for years on end---as there exi[s]t t[i]mes in [s][o]me[o]ne's [l][i][f]e whe[r]e the[r]e's no choi[c]e [b]ut to [d]i[s]a[ss]em[b]le them[s]elves in the [m][o][s]t reckle[ss] of [f]ashions, [s][m][o][k]ing and [e]x[c]e[ss]ively a[n]d [e][n]gaging [d]rin[k]ing [i]n [l]ong-term re[l]a[ti]on[sh]ips [i]ll-advised [e]x[c]e[ss]ive[l]y; the [q]ua[l]ity of the [h]oo[k][a]h at P[a]sh[a] was of [a] [h]eight that was [h]ard to f[a]thom [a]t the time.

---07 118:157 .752

We un[r]ave[l] ourse[l]ves, a[tt]emp[t]ing [t]o [r]each a [c]ore that's [a]lways un[a]pp[r][o]acha[b]le, [b]eing t[o]ld [b]y [B]yzan[t]ine [m]on[k]s that our [c][e]n[t]er [r]e[m]ains

as i[n][e]ffa[b]le as God's [E][ss][e][n][c]e---[s]e[n]ding ill-advised m[e][ss]ages to [l]ove i[n]te[r]e[s]ts that no [l]onger have a[n]y i[n]te[r]e[s]t i[n] u[s]. A[n] i[nn]o[c]ent e[x]otic [d]an[c]er [f]alls in l[o]ve [w]ith [u]s, and [w]e ch[oo]se to [u]se the [f]ull e[x]tent of our [c]r[i]t[i][c]al [f]a[c]ulties to [d]i[s]a[ss]emble thi[s] [p]er[s]on [o]ver a[n]d [o]ver agai[n]. [C]on[t]inua[ll][y] [d]rawn [t]o [th]i[s] [p]er[s]on, we [r]u[th][i]e[ss][i][y] [d]e[s]t[r]oy them [c][r][i]t[i][c]a[ll][y] unt[i]l the [s][i]tu[a]tion [i]t[s]elf be[c]omes [i]ntoxi[c][a]ted in the [w]or[s]t of [w]ays.

---08 113:148 .764

[A]nd [a]fter [a]ll [o]f th[i]s [i]s [o][v]er we g[o] to P[a]sh[a] on [A][I]lens [A][v]enue, a[n]d we e[n]joy the [h]ighe[s]t [q]ua[l]ity [h]oo[k]ahs at [l]ea[s]t eve[r]y We[d]nes[d]ay, un[r]aveling [b]e[c]omes i[u]st an[o]ther ho[bb]y [o]f [o]ur's, and we d[r]in[k] [v]od[k]a [w]ith i[u][s]t [a] [s]plash of [w]ater, and the [b]ar[t]en[d]er [l]i[b]era[ll]y in[d][u]lges [u]s with [a] [t][a]ll gla[ss] of thi[s] [v]od[k]a, a[n]d the[n] we drive up the [s]tr[ee]t, and w[e] hy[s]teri[c]a[ll][y] [w]ith [C]urti[s] as [w]e mind[l]e[ss][l]y to[ss] [c]u[r]ren[c]y at a [d]ar[k] [s]tage [c]omp[r]ised of nu[d]it[y], then we [d][r]ive [d]o[w]n[t]o[w]n [t]o or[d]er a [m][ea]t[l]e[ss] [b]urr[i]to at a high[l]y [r]egar[d]ed T[e]x [M][e]x e[s]ta[b]lish[m]ent.

---09 108:143 .755

One [c]o[mm]on [m]i[s]ta[k]e to e[s][ch]ew [b]oth at P[a][sh][a] and other e[s]ta[b]li[sh][m]ents o[ff]ering [s]o-[c]alled hoo[k]ah is the [c]on[f]lation of '[m]ore' [w]ith '[b]ette[r]' [w]ith regard to [f][l]avo[r]s. [W]ait[s]ta[ff] [w][i]ll [i]nvariab[l]y h[i]gh[l][i]ght [th]e [f][a][c]t [th][a]t a [p]atron

[c]an order a [l]ita[n]y of [f][l]avors at [n]o ext[r]a [c]o[s]t, im[p][l]ying that [r]e[c]eiving more [f][l][a]vors [f]or the [s][a]me [p]ri[c]e is a 'good [d]eal', that or[d]e[r]ing a [b]lue[b]e[rr]y-[p][ea]ch-mint-[c]r[ea]m[s]i[c]le flavor hoo[k]ah will [b]e enjoya[b]le whe[n] a [s]e[n][s]i[b]le hoo[k]ah should [b]e [r]e[s]tri[c]ted [t][o] at [m]o[s]t [t]w[o] f[l]avors---l per[s]ona[l]ly [r]e[c]o[mm]end [b][l]ue[b]erry [m]int.

---10 115:159 .723

[S][i]tt[i]ng at the bar at [P][a][sh][a] [s]mo[k]ing [a] [s][c]rum[p][ti]ou[s] hoo[k]ah with my [f]riend [C]urti[s], watching an ex[c]iting [C]el[t]ic[s] [c]on[t]e[s]t, I had the [m]i[s][f]ortune [o]f [a][ss]i[d]uou[s]ly [s]tu[d]ying [m]y [s]u[r]roun[d]ings w[i]th the [i]ntent of [r]e[c]or[d]ing them, [s]o to [s]pea[k]. In short, I [b]e[l]ieved e[v]ents [c]ould [b]e [r]e[c]or[d]ed [v]ia [r]e[c]o[l]le[c]tion [r]e[c][r]e[a]ted through [c][r]e[a]tive [f]a[c]ulties, [w]hen it's [n]ow [c]lear that [n]othing [w]as [f]urther [f]rom the truth---at P[a]sh[a] smo[k]ing hoo[k]ah [I] [b]elieved [I] [c]ould [c]reate [a] non[f]i[c]tional [a][cc]ount, an [au]to[b]iog[r]a[ph]i[c]al e[l]e[m]ent, when [au]to[b]iog[r]a[ph][y] and hi[s]to[r][y] are [o]n[l]y the [m][o][s]t e[l]evated [f]orms of [f]i[c]tion!

---11 98:135 .726

Our [m]e[m]ories are [b]y [f]ar the [m]o[s]t [s]peciou[s] things a[b]out u[s]---[h]ave you ever [w]ondered [w]hy our o[ff][i]c[i]al [h][i][s]tories are al[m]o[s]t i[mm][e]d[i]atel[y] che[ck]ered, [b]ia[s]ed [b]e[f]ore the [f]ir[s]t dra[f]ts are [c]omp[i][e]ted, why human [b][e]ings are [b]e[i][ie]ved [t]o have exi[s][t]ed for [t]ens of

thousands of [y]ears, [y]et if w[e] [e]ven g[l]an[c]e a [p]al[t]ry mi[l]lennium in[t]o our [p]a[s]t [w]e [w]it[n]e[ss] [n][o]thing [b][u]t [f]oggy [n]otions and [b][i]tter[l]y [c]on[f][l][i][c]ting op[i]n[i]ons? At t[i][m]es it seems [l]'[m] [m]ade [u]p [o]f [n][o]thing [b][u]t [m]e[m]o[r]ies, yet all of th[e]se [m]e[m]o[r]i[e]s s[ee]m to have [m]inds of their own!

---12 113:148 .764

Ul[t]imate[l]y, while the [r]e[l]a[t]ive [r]i[s]k of [l]oitering at [P][a]sh[a] on [A][II]ens [A]venue is [a]t thi[s] [p]oint [w]ell-[e][s]t[a]blished, and [w]h[i]le the [p]r[i][c]es of the [m][e]d[i]an [h]oo[k]ah [h]ave infl[a]ted [e]x[p]onentially, I'd [s]till [b]e [h]ard-[p]re[ss]ed to [s]it [h]ere and [r]e[c]o[m]mend a [b]etter [p]la[c]e to [s][m]o[k]e [h]oo[k]ah in the G[r][ea]ter [B][o][s]ton [m]etro[p][o][l]itan [r]egion. Fran[k][l]y, I've always [c]on[s][i][d]ered [i]t [a] [b][i]t of [a] [b]our[ge]ois [c]o[w]ar[d]i[c]e to [a]void [p][l]a[c]es [s]ole[l]y [b]e[c]ause of [I]ow а [p]ro[b]a[b][i][l][i]ty chan[c]e you'll get shot---[e]ven as w[e] [a]ge it [c]an [s]till [b]e [b][e]neficial to [e]m[b]r[a][c]e the [i]ll-adv[i]sed on[c]e [i]n a wh[i]le.

An Aborted Anime Opera

(#)	(s)	(e)	(w)	(p)
1	189	148	112	0.7831
2	141	115	89	0.8156
3	130	90	85	0.6923
4	137	116	91	0.8467
5	107	95	74	0.8879

6	204	145	112	0.7108
7	174	123	108	0.7069
8	178	134	105	0.7528
9	236	164	137	0.6949
10	147	124	84	0.8435
11	183	139	113	0.7596
12	168	148	119	0.8810
13	340	235	203	0.6912
14	149	114	91	0.7651
15	104	77	63	0.7404
16	157	131	104	0.8344
17	125	95	74	0.7600
18	188	133	96	0.7074
19	153	123	103	0.8039
20	221	164	122	0.7421
21	116	78	67	0.6724
22	324	230	213	0.7099
23	182	128	116	0.7033
Total	4053	3049	2481	0.7523

01

[f][l]i[p]ping my[s]el[f] [a][s]s u[p] [a]t the [c][o][l]ono[s][c]o[p]y be[f]ore it was [a]p[p]r[o][p][o], there's [n][o] [l]onger a [n][o]tion of [s][a]n[c]t[i]ty [i]n [a]b[s]tra[c]t [e][x]pr[e]ssionism, [q]uantum me[c]h[a]ni[c][s] [a]nd non[l]o[c]al [r]e[l]ations [s]omething, john [b]ell was [c]o[r]re[c]t a[b]out the ph[y]s[i][c]al un[i]ver[s]e, w[r]iting "[m]utte[r]ing [m]y [c]on[s]tant [c]u[r]io[s]ity got in the way of [m][y] [s]ui[c][i]de to [m][y][s]elf in a [s]omewhat [i][r]o[n]ic tone" b[u]t [m][u]tte[r]in[g] [n]othin[g] at all, the older [w]o[m]an had no [i]nte[r]e[s]t [i]n ge[r]ia[t]ri[c] foot[w]ear yet [w]ouldn't [s][t]o[p] [s][p][e]a[k]ing to [m][e] of [m]y de[s]tin[y] [a]fter [ei]ght o'[c]lo[c]k [a]t [th]e wren[th]am outlets, [a]ged [th]irty [s]ix portuguese [d]an[c]ers i[n]form [y]o[u] i[n] [m]in[u]te [d]etail of [y]our own a[c][u]te [m]isery then [w]al[k] a[w]ay u[n][c]o[n][c]erned, th[i]s [i]s [w]hy [c]h[r]i[s]t [h]ad [h]is feet [r]ubbed-

02

[d][i]p [d]own li[k]e a [q]u[i][c]k bath in[t]o the [d]m[t]-li[k]e [e][s]sen[c]e of what [s][e]ems po[e]ti[c], br[e]a[k][f]a[s]t and [c]o[f]fee [s]pots [c]l[o]se [s][o] [q]u[i][c]kly, [y]et [i] [f][i]nd [m][y][s]el[f] [y]earning [f]or [a]n a[m]eri[c]ano [a]nd ome[l]et a [l]ittle [a][f]ter [f]our, the [c]louds [o]ver one [f]orty [s]ix [s]outh [c]on[s]i[s]tent[l]y [l]oo[k] [l]i[k]e [o]il [p]aint, [p]rior [t]o the m[e]n[t]al h[e]alth r[e]vo[l]ution ado[l]e[s]cents were for[c]ed [t]o in[t]erna[l]ize [t]rau[m]a, [m]any of them [b][e][c]o[m]ing [c]om[p]lete a[s]sholes in the [p]ro[c]e[s]s, i've [s]oured on the [b][e]ach, [s][k]in [c]are, i [s]u[p]pose, has [b]e[c]ome a [b]it of [a] [p][r][i]o[r]ity, [s]and [i]s [s]omewhat of a[n] [a][n]noyan[c]e-

03

two m[i]dg[e]ts [e]at[i]ng d[e][i][i]c[i]ou[s] [l]oo[k]ing ri[c]e bowls at xa[c][o] ta[c][o], [r]ep[e]at[i]ng the ph[r]ases there [i]s n[o] [i][m]age there is n[o] [m]e[m]o[r]y, there's no i[m]age and there's no [m]e[m]ory, s[a]ns i[m]age [a]nd [m]e[m]ory we c[a]n s[t]art [t]o a[p]proach the funda[m]ental [n]ature of the u[n]iver[s]e as [s]uch, tri[p]le egg [o]me[l]et with the [k]al[a][m][a]t[a] [o][l]ives, a ch[e][s]t [c]r[e]vi[c]e [s]tained in a per[m]ane[n]t i[n][k] of

[s]orts, [c]uddl[y] [b][e]a[v]ers [e]at [v]ege[t]a[b]les from the [h]ands of well i[n][t]e[n]tioned [h]u[m]an [b]eings, the [s][m]all [b]ottles of [s][o]ju were [o]nly eight [b]ucks a pie[c]e

04

the [s]a[k]i at [s][o]m[o] was [p]o[s]si[b][l]y the wor[s]t al[c]oho[l]i[c] [b]e[v]erage i'[v]e e[v]er [s]i[p]ped, the [c]an [I]oo[k]ed [I]i[k]e [a]n [a]nime jui[c]e[b]ox, it a[p]p[e]aled [t]o m[e], it [s][t]ru[c]k me [t]iny [b]ar had a [p]re[t]ense i[u][s]t [s]tr[u][c]k a[b]out it that m[e] [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] out of [l]ine, [p][e]o[p]le from var[i]ou[s] [b][a][c]kgrounds ma[k]ing [f][a][s]t [f]riends [a]s i ate [b]rea[k][f]a[s]t [o]ut [o]n the patio at [d]omeni[c]'s, [c]on[s]i[d]ering [g][o]ing to chilan[g][o]'s, on[c]e a[g]ain [d]e[c]i[d]ing a[g]ain[s]t it, the [c][o]n[d]o [c][o]mp[l]ex [l]oo[k]ed [l][i][k]e [t]otal shit, real e[s][t][a]te as a[n] i[n]ve[s]tment has alw[a]ys [s]t[r]uck me [a]s le[s]s th[a]n a [n]o b[r]ai[n]er-

05

[B][I]ue [I][i]ght e[y]eg[I]asses [w]ith the [b][I]ac[k] [w]ire rims [I] [I]ook [I][i][k]e a [c]om[p][I]ete [d]ouche[b]ag, there's [d]o[c]ument t[i]tled [p]a[s]s[w]ord а [p][a][s]swo[r]d with the [d]ollar [s][i]gns [a][f]ter the A, [P]rou[s]t was а re[n]owned [f]an of [m]ale [p]ro[s]t[i]tutes-[t]hey [th]in[k] [N]ietzsche dſiled [s]y[ph][i][i]s, in [m][y] [m][i][n]d [l]'m the [l]a[s]t of a [l]ong [l][i][n]e, [m]ade A[m]eri[c]an Engl[i]sh [i]nto [A]ncient Gr[ee][k]-[c]on[s]ider m[e] the twelfth [C]on[s][t]ant[i]ne, [g]eno[c]ides are [j]u[s]t a [m]atter of [t]a[s]te, Ana[t]ol[i] [j]u[s]t [m][e]ans [E]a[s]t06

[i]mpl[i][c][i]tly [g][r]e[g]o[r]y of [n][a]zi[a]nzus under[s]tood the [n]ature of [g]uantum ph[y]s[i][c]s, of [n]on[l]o[c]al re[l]ations, it's p[o][s]sible the [o][c]cident has [c][l]ung to a[n] i[n][i]t[i]al [l][i]ngu[i][s]tic [r]e[v]ersal, a [r]e[v]er[s]al [c]reating a[n] i[l]lusio[n] of [p]er[s][p]e[c]tive, it'[s] [p]o[s]sible the [p]er[s][p]e[c]tiv[i]sm d[i][s]covered [b]y [p][e]o[p]le li[k]e [N]i[e]tzsche was, [i]n fa[c]t, a [s][i]m[p]le [b]y[p]rodu[c]t of this [i]n[i]tial rever[s]al [o]f the [O][c]ci[d]ent, thi[s] i[d]ea of a [p]er[s][p]e[c]tive, it [s][e]ems [t]ota[l]l[y] i[l]logi[c]al to m[e], no [p]un in[t]ended, i[c]e hoo[k]ah with the [t]zatz[i]k[i] [i] wasn't [q]u[i]te in [m][y] r[i]ght [m][i]nd at the t[i]me, [s]amura[i] [s]word in washing[t]on pa[r][k], the [c]a[r] [s]eat [s]aw [t]00 much, videogra[ph]y is ar[c]ha[i]c [i]n [r]et[r]o[s]pe[c]t, the [s]cien[c]e of [ph]onet[i][c]s [i]s [s]t[i]|l amb[i]guou[s], the [c]onver[s][a]tion [f][a]ded of its own a[c]cord

07

[s]i[b]eria is [b][ea]utiful thi[s] time of [y]ear, [a]ll [a]rt is [n]ot [n]e[c]e[s]sa[r]ily ip[s][o] [f]act[o] [f]or e[v]e[r]yone, the [f]lesh of the hu[m]an [b][e]ing wasn't u[n]i[v]ersall[y] a[p]p[e]aling, [b]eli[e]ve it or [n]ot, e[m]otional [b]aggage lo[s]t [i]n tr[a]ns[i]t [a][f]ter i [a]woke [f][r]om [a] [s]t[r]ange d[r][e]am, my [y]ia[y]ia in[f]o[r]ming m[e] she's out of [s]o[r]ts with [s]mudged l[i]p[s]t[i][c]k as [i] [c]lutch a ne[ph]ew that isn't m[i]ne, the[r]e a[r]e man[y] r[e]gional differen[c]es [t]o [t]a[k]e in[t]o a[c]count, we [c]on[s]t[r]u[c]t l[i]near [s]tates [i]n [r]etro[s][p]e[c]t then [s][p]it on a [s]treet [i]n [i]zmir, the [r]olled [d]own

[w]in[d]ow [w]as li[k]e a [p]i[c]ture [f]rame, [m]e[m]ory was juvenile delin[q]uents [s][p][r]aying g[r]a[f]fiti, the [p][r]oviden[c]e [c]o[p] [w]as [s]ati[s]fied [w]ith the an[s]we[r] [w]e're ju[s]t [c]onve[r][s]ing

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the un[s][p]e[c]if[i]ed [b]ug [t][r]a[p]ped in the [s][p][i]der we[b] on the [r]ailing of the [e]m[p]loyer's [e]n[t][r]an[c]e [m]ade [m]e [c]on[s]ider [m]etapho[r]s o[r] [s]omething, the [c]ashier at i[o]b I[o]t of am[b][i]guous eth[n][i][c][i]ty [n]eeds to [e]m[p]loy [s]ocial m[e]d[i][a] to [a][s]si[s]t her [p]ur[s]uit of [e][s]ta[b]l[i]shing her[s]el[f] [ph]otog[r]a[ph]er, her [f]avo[r]ite [f]ood is [p]izza, the un[s]u[c]ce[s]s[f]u[l]l[y] [c]o[l]ono[s][c]o[p][y] was re[s][c]hed[u]led on t[wo] o[c]casions, it [s]t[r][u][c]k [m]e that [r][u]ss[i]an whore [i]s one of the [m]i[s]og[y]n[i][s]t [ph]rases [s]t[i]|| a[c]ce[p]table to [s]ay aloud in [s]o-[c]alled [m][i]xed [c]om[p]a[n]y, sure it was [n]i[c]e e[n]ou[gh] to have the a[s]si[s]tan[c]e of [g]iov[a][n]n[i] [g]u[i][s]t[i]n[i][a][n][i] but [n]ot if h[e] in[s][i][s]ted on re[t]reating the [f]ir[s]t time his che[s]t caved in-

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i [f]ound [m]a[r]i[o]s [ph]ili[p]p[i][d][e]s mon[o]gra[ph] on the la[s]t [c]on[s]tant[i]ne to [b][e] [s][o] [p]r[o]-latin to [b][e] n[e]arly unr[e]ada[b]le, [w]hich [w]as un[s]ur[p]rising [b]ecause it [s]eems as [th][o]ugh [th]e[r]e a[r]e alm[o]st n[o] [t][r]ue g[r]eek in[t]ell[e]ctuals in the w[e][s]t, [o]nly f[au]x-g[r]eek in[t]e[l]l[e]ctuals that shame[i][e][s]s[i]y [s][e]ll out their own hi[s][t]o[r]y, who [r]ubber [s][t][a]mp [a]nglo a[s]sertions [th]at [th]e

h[e]ll[e]nic [e]ra [e]nded [a][f]ter [s]o[c]rat[e]s [f][o]ndled al[c]ibiad[e]s, i [o][f]ten have an urge to [s]pit on th[e]se [s]o-[c]alled inte[l]lectuals, th[e]se [s][c]ho[l]a[s]ti[c] im[b]e[c]iles, th[e]se [l]evant[i]ne [b]enedict arnolds, of these [c]owa[r]ds the [s][p]i[r]it, wh[i]le [i] [p][a]in[s]t[a][k]ingly transform ameri[c]an engl[i]sh [i]nto [k]oin[e] gr[e]e[k] i have to d[e]al with [p][e]o[p]le of my own an[c]e[s]try obfu[s][c]ating [i]n the [s]erv[i][c]e of [s]e[c]ular [p]o[p]es, when there's [n]othing be[l][o]w a [s]e[c]u[l]ar [p][o][p]e, it'[s] wh[y] at t[i]mes [i] feel l[i]ke [t]o a mo[n]a[s]tery or [s]o[m]ething, re[t][i]ring [s]o[m]etimes you h[a]ve to [a][s]k your[s]elf what'[s] the point-

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A [b][i]t [d]e[p]re[s]sed w[i]thout [p]al[p]a[b]le [c]ause, [s][l][o]w[l][y] n[o]ti[c]ing a variet[y] of [p][o]l[k]a [d]ots on a [p]r[i][s][t][i]ne [t]wo thousand [s][i]x[t][e]en hon[d]a [c][i]v[i][c] [c][l][e]ar[l][y] [d][u]e t[o] the [d]o[u]chebag i[n][c]e[s]santly m[o]ving his white [p]i[c]ku[p] in the [p]ar[k]ing lot, i[n][e]br[i]ated a[n]d [p][e]eing on e[n]zo's door handle in [t]wo thousand and four[t][e]en, [t]w[o] y[e]ars [p]rior [t]o the [c][i]v[i][c] b[e]ing [i]ssued, the [s][c]allops at mar[i][a] [c]u[c][i]n[a] were [s]u[c]cu[l]ent yet [r]i[d]i[c]u[l]ou[s][l]y over[p][r]i[c]ed, [c]urt a[l]leged the [p]ork was [k][i]nd of [d]r[y], [s][l][o]w[l]y [n][o]ti[c]ing mi[l]agr[o] is a halfway [d][e][c]ent t[e][q]u[i]la at [v][i][n][o] [v]eritas-

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[B]la[c]k eye[br]ows plu[c]ked with a [m]uted [s]e[n][s]e of [g]le[e], the [c]e[n][t]er of [g]ravit[y] is ul[t]i[m]ate[l][y]

e[l]u[s]ive, there's a [p]r[o][s][o][p][o] that [b]e[c]omes an ou[s]i[a] [b]ut not [q]u[i]te [v][i][c]e [v]er[s][a], we [b]eg[i]n w[i]th the [i]n[d][i]v[i]dual and [th][i]nk [th][i]s [i]s free[d]om, there is no [i]nd[i]v[i]dual, the [i]nd[i]v[i]dual [i]s [n]o o[r]ga[n]ism, [th]e o[r]ga[n][i]sm [i]s [th]e [f]ir[s]t [f]alla[c][y], i'[v]e ne[v]er [b]een a [b]ig [f]an of [s]en[s]e [p]er[c]e[p]tion, [p]rose is [s]ome [f]orm of [t]ele[p]ath[y], th[i][s] [i]s [p]eri[l]ou[s], i've on[l][y] in[t]ermittent[l][y] [b]e[l]i[e]ved th[i]s [i]s good, my [b]e[l]i[e]fs are [p]ure[l][y] [th]eatrical, [th]ere's no [b]etter o[p]era house than [b]eli[e]f, sh[e] [a][s][k]ed m[e] a[n] [a][s]inine [q]uestion a[n]d l[a]ughed, i chu[c]kled [n]ervou[s]l[y], it mar[k]ed the begi[n]ning of a ho[r]rendou[s] e[r]a for each of u[s]-

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lea[v]ing the [a]partment [f]or the [f]irst t[i]me [a]ll [f][r][i]d[a]y the [f]resh air was [a] [r]e[v]e[l][a]tion, I[i][b]e[r]ian with the m[a][s][k] on [a]t the g[r][e]e[k] [p][i]zza [s][p]ot, [r][u][b] and t[u]g with the o[p]en [s]ign a[c]ro[s]s the [s]t[r]e[e]t, [m][i]ght get [m][y] [v][c]r [r]e[p]aired at cho's [e]|[e]|[c]tronics, [s]|[p]eedway [u][p] [b]y the [b][l]a[c]k [d][u]de with [s]t[u][c]k [b]a[l]l[oo]ns t[u][c]ked [u]n[d]er [h]is shirt, [h]e [p]i[c]ked [m]y [k][e]y u[p] for [m][e] on a r[a]n[d]om [s]un[d][a]y [a][f]ter[n]oon, i alw[a]ys [f]ound him a [n][i][c]e g[uy] [p]er[s]o[n]a[l]ly, [t]a[k]e a right on[t]o [a][l]ex[a]nder [a]nd [p][a][s]s the [b][a][s][k]et[b]all [c]ourts, [t]wo thousand eigh[t]een fl[a]sh[b][a][c]ks, [t]a[k]en a[b][a][c]k [b][y] m[y] note [b]ut [a]s much of an [a][s]shole [a]s you [c]an [b]e it's e[s]s[e]ntial to [r]e[m]ain a [m]an of your [w]ord, o[th]er[w]ise [th]ere's no [r]ed[e]mption arc

It be[c][a]me [g]r[a]dually app[a]rent [a]s I m[a]de [i]nc[i]dental eye [c]onta[c]t [w]ith [a] [g]irl [w]ith [a] [g]ar[g]antuan [f]a[k]e a[s]s that I'd [s][l]ow[l]y [l]ost the abi[l]ity [t]o [t]y[p]e words [c]oherent[l]y in[t]o m[y] [i][Ph]one-[m]e[m]ory is [p]erh[a]ps [a]s a [c]on[c]ept [s]|[i]ghtly ill-adv[i]sed, [l] [c]on[s][i]dered while eati[n]g a[n] e[n]tire [r]o[t][i][s]serie ch[i][c]ken at a l[a]ter d[a]te, ye[s], [i]t was [i]nad[v]isable [i]n [r]e[t]ro[s][p]e[c]t to gi[v]e an o[v]erar[c]hing histo[r]i[c]al [r]e[c]a[p] of the late Otto[m]an Em[p]ire [t][o] [t]w[o] [s]e[v]enty [s]omethings I'd ne[v]er [m]et, [s]en[s]es get [m]uted with [a]ge-I [f][a]iled to noti[c]e the e[f]ferve[s]cent [b][a][c]k[s]ide [a]m[b]ling [a][c]ros[s] Ind[i]a Point un[t]il [K]a[t]r[e]ena [a][c]cused me of loo[k]ing at it, or[i][f][i][c]es are u[l]timate[l]y [n]eg[l]igible [ph]e[n]o[m]e[n]a, J[e]su[s] didn't give [m]uch [c]r[e][d]en[c]e to ban[k] a[c]counts, I [c]on[s]i[d]ered, [e]ati[n]g a[n] e[n][t]ire ro[t][i][s]serie ch[i][c]ken at a l[a]ter [d][a]te-chanting the wo[r]ds "tu[r]n b[i]tch u[p]" in a [s]oft wh[i][s][p]er as I [s]tr[e]nuou[s]ly [e]dit the H[T]ML of a [b]oot[l]eg [T]um[b][I]r [p]age I f[e]el at [p][e]a[c]e [w]ith the [w]orld, [t]en [c]alendars on [f][e][m]ales with [t]wo [k]ids I [f][e]el at p[e]a[c]e with [m]y[s]el[f], [t][e]n [m][e]z[c]als [e][n]ter a[n] [e]leventh di[m]ension I [f][e]el at p[e]ace [w]ith the [w]orld, [w]ith the charlatan [n]ature of [m]athe[m]ati[c]s, [m]y [m]other [d][i]tched [m][e] at [N][i][c]ka[n][e]e's, but [t]r[u]thfully, I [d][i]dn't [w]ant to rev[e]al my [n][ew] Au[d]r[e]y Horne [t]att[oo] any[w]ay-

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on [m]ineral spring getting [m][y] e[y]e[b]rows th[r][e]aded [b]y Ch[e][r]yl a [s][e]l[f]-[i]denti[f][y]ing [s][p]anish [l]ad[y] with a [c]uriou[s][l]y [a]rabi[c] [a][c]cent a[t]tem[p]ts [t]o [s]ell of[f] a [p]air of air [p]ods to [h]el[p] [s]up[p]o[r]t [h]er alleged [f]ou[r] chil[d]ren and I was a [l]ittle [d]ubiou[s] to [s]ay the [l]ea[s]t, [d][e][f]e[c]ating at the g[e]ntleme[n]'s ve[n]ue, o[f]f-brand [d]ude wi[p]es [f]rom the chri[s]tma[s] t[r]ee sho[p], w[r]iting e[s]says is [r]e[p]rehen[s]i[b]le, having [s]in[c]ere o[p]i[n]io[n]s is [b][a][s]i[c]a[l]ly wor[s]e than [c]l[i][m]ate ch[a]nge in [m][y] [m][i]nd, [b]oy[c]otting [s]emi[c]olons, the [i]ro[n]y of m[y] [n]ew yor[k] k[n]i[c]ks [f][a]ndom h[a]s [s][l]ow[l]y [f]a[l]len b[y] the w[a]y[s][i]de [w]ith [a]ge

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[p]u[l]ling my [p]eni[s] out with a ch[i]ld-[l][i][k]e [s]en[s]e of jubi[l]ation, [i] re[q]u[i]re more [p]od[c]asts is the [o]n[l]y [c]on[c][l]usion ive [c]ome to of [l]ate, [i]t's the [o]n[l]y [l]og[i][c]al [c]on[c][l]usion, there's [s]im[p][l]y a [s]evere [l][a][c]k of [p]od[c][a]sts in the [c]u[r]rent e[r]a, we've [r]uth[l]e[s]s[l]y de[p]rived [o]ur[s]elves of [o]thers' [o][p]inions, [r]eading a [r]o[b]ert ash[l]ey [l]i[b][r]ett[o] while [s][t][r][o][k]ing my [b]eard in a f[a]shion th[a]t evin[c]es a [s]ol[e]mn [c]ont[e]m[p]lation-

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Hon[d]u[r]an [m][e][d][i]um [r]oa[s]t [i]n the [M][i][s]ter Coff[e]e-[b]rown [b]a[s][m][a]t[i] with [t]wo [t]ea[s][p]oons [f]rom the [z][a][t]aar [b]ag, [o]n[l]y extra virg[i]n o[l][i]ve [o]il [f]rom the c[o]Id [p]re[s]s, at thi[s] [p]oint I thin[k] w[e] n[e]ed to ad[m]it w[e]'ve [m]ade [s]ome [m]i[s]ta[k]es i[n] a[n] adult [a]nd [c][a]l[c]ulating [m][a][n]ner of

[s][p][e]a[k]ing, I'm [e]ven-tem[p]ered by [n]ature, offfice [s][p][a][c]e two [f][e]et by [f]our [f][e]et with the [s]t[a][p]led [c]ar[p]et m[a]de from [r]e[c]y[c]led [s]ty[r]o[f]oam or [s]omething-[r]ea[d]ing [i]m[p]ass[i]oned [r]e[d]dit [p]o[s]ts a[b]out the hetero[s]exuality of [m][a]le [m]a[s]tur[b][a]tion [d]il[d][o]s, [t]o[s]s t[wo] c[u]bes in the i[c]e h[o]se and [t]ry [t]o [s][e]e [d]ead [p][e]o[p]le, one of the most [p]ro[f]ound [f]riends I'[v]e e[v]er had was a [f]loor [f]an

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Tyra[n]n[y] of the [flour-[flour, m[e]a[n]ing is [n]eg[o]tiable, the do[p]pelganger a[p]peared [o]n[l][y] i[n]ter[m]itte[n]t[l][y] to [m][e] on a [m]ild [S]un[d]ay a[f]ternoon, [r]e[m]in[d]ed [m][e] of a [m]i[s]sed [c]all I [r]e[c][e]ived [flive or [s][o] years ag[o], [b]ut I di[s][c]ar[d]ed the [m]e[m]or[y] to the po[s]si[b]ilit[y] of [e]ating a [s]el[f]-[s]alted [f][r]ench [f][r]y-the d[u]de wh[o] [s]t[u][ff]ed the yo[u]ng [c]or[p][s]e in[t]o his [t]run[k] I[i]ved [i]n an [u][p][s][c]ale [a][p]artment [c]om[p]lex and [d]idn't resemble your [t]y[p]i[c]al pe[r]ve[r]t mu[r][d]e[r]e[r], [c]onta[c]t is [q]uan[t]um eye [c]om[p]uting-

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[f]our walls e[n][c]a[p][s]ulate ho[r]re[n][d]ou[s]ly [r]e[p]etitive [ph]e[n]o[m]en[a] [r]ight [a][r]ound [d]e[c]ade [a]n[n]iversaries, [a]t the it[a]lian-a[m]eri[c]an [c]lub I e[n]g[a]ged i[n] a[n] e[m]o [c]onver[s][a]tion [r]e[g]ar[d]ing geo[g][r]a[ph]i[c]al [t]e[n][d]e[n]cies [f]or no [p]ar[t]i[c]ular [r]eason, [t]ur[q]uoise [c][r]y[s][t]al [c]overs the [s][t]a[b] [w]ound [b]et[w]een the [c]ollar[b][o]nes, [p]arts and

wh[o]les are [n]e[c]e[s]sary, didn't [n]eed to [i]n[f]orm my[s]el[f] [i]t was [s][l][i]ght[l]y ill-adv[i]sed, gazing mind[l]e[s]s[l][y] at your own hi[s]tor[y] a [l][i]ttle a[l]oo[f], ne[f]arious [s]u[c]cumbing to [l][i]tera[l][i]sm [f][r]iends, to be [f]rank I [c]ouldn't [c]om[p]rehend how any[o]ne [w]ould [c]ome to thin[k] [p]ol[i]t[i][c]al o[p][i]nions a[r]e anything [b]ut a[r]t, it never o[c]curred to m[e] th[a]t my [p][a]ssion [c]ould [b][e] mi[s][c]on[s]trued as [s]in[c]erity-

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The de[c][e]ased ra[c]c[oo]n [l][oo][k]ed [s]er[e]ne [l]i[k]e it was [s][I][e]eping on the [s][i]de of one forty [s]i[x], [I] [s]aw [C]urti[s] [t]e[x][t]ed there w[a]sn't a [c][u]nt hair of a ch[a]n[c]e the I[t][a]lia[n] [a][s]s was authe[n][t]ic a[n]d [1] [a][g]reed, [l] [th]ought [a][b]out [th]e ra[c]coon [c]orp[s]e [a][g]ain, [a][b]out the [n]on[s]en[s]i[c]al [n]ature of [b]i[o]logy, [a][b]out the [b]ig [b][o]ttle of [S][o]ju I'd [b]ought at the [s][o]-[c]alled di[s][c]ount l[i][q]uor [s]tore wh[i]ch [s]eemed to [p]r[i][c]e [i]tems h[i]gher than M[S]R[P], thoughts may b[e] [ph][y]s[i][c]al [ph]e[n][o]mena that h[au]nt u[s] [n]o d[i]fferent than [p]olterge[i][s]t, [l] [c]an't hone[s]t[l]y [s][a]y l alw[a]ys [s]e[l]e[c]t my [ph]r[a]sing in the [m]o[s]t [c]are[f]ul of [m]a[n]ners, [s]ome [n][a]mes you shouldn't [s][a]y-

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[d]i[s][c]u[s]sing [e][s][p]re[s]sos bla[c]kout [d]run[k] w[i]th [e][m][i]li[o] at a[m]ede[o], half [p]ound of the [p]ulled [p]or[k] [b]ut [o]nly [i]f [i]t's [c]om[p]l[e]tel[y] un[s][e]asoned, [s]u[c]culent ([p]ause), [b][e]ing the onl[y] [c]ar on [m]e[m]orial [b]rought [o]n a [s]omewhat

n[o]n[s]e[n][s]i[c]al [s]e[n][s]e of [f]ore[b]oding, i [f]elt a[n] i[n]te[n][s]e [f]ore[b]oding, [c]ould it have [b]een the [c]a[s]amig[o]s [b]lan[c][o], this [c]ontinual di[s][r]e[s][p]e[c]t [o]f the [a]g[a][v][e], [a]n [a]d [c]laims to un[r]a[v]el the meaning of [a][g][a][p][e], the [b]ig [f]at [g]reek wedding [f]ranchise does [n]othing [b]ut [p]er[p]etuate a ge[n]eric [s]en[s]e of eth[n]i[c]ity th[a]t's [a]s inane [a]s [i]t [i]s [c]ounter[p]rodu[c]tive, [s]omething e[s][p]eciall[y] i[r]oni[c] [c]oming from the [s]o-[c]alled gr[e]e[k] [e]a[s]t, the [r]e[l]ational [e][s]sen[c]e par [e]x[c]el[l]en[c]e, [n]ia varda[l][o]s, it should be [n][o]ted, is [s]im[p]ly [n]o [C]a[p]pad[o]cian, this [c]on[c][e][p]tion of [e][s]sen[c]e is [e]m[b]arra[s]singly faux H[e]lleni[c], [b][a][c]k to [M][a]nuel at [M][a]nzi[k]ert

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hal[f] Gree[k] va[c]uum [c]leaner in a [m]id-Augu[s]t [m]alaise, [f]ortune read un[s]ol[i][c][i]ted at [t]wo pm on a [S]unday [s]moking a [t]en [d]ollar [c]igar [d][r]in[k]ing a [b]ar[b]arian [v][o]d[k]a [o]n the [r]o[c]ks. hal[f] e[l]e[v]enth [C]ons[t]an[t]ines, e[l]e[v]en [C]on[s][t]an[t]ines is [s]u[f]ficient, hal[f] Ni[k]o[l]a Jo[k]ic, [t][y]ping the word [k][i]nd[l]y in e[m]ails, I was [f][l]u[m]moxed at the a[m]ount of [r]ed[s]kin on the [r]ed[s]kin [p]eanuts, [m]iddle aged [p]od[c]a[s]t ho[s]t [r]e[p][e]ated[l][y] using the [ph]rase [s][ph]in[c]ter [c][l]enching

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Ing[e][s]t the [s][p][e][ci]al [s]ta[r] [sh][a][p]es there's [a] [c]l[u][b] [a][b]ove an a[r][c][a]de, there's a [s]even [a]m sh[o]wing of a[n] uneve[n] [N]etflix a[n]ime, two

h[o]m[o][s]exuals da[n][c]e [s]a[n]s irony a[n]d there's a[n] [a]l[b]um th[a]t will [p]refera[b]l[y] [b]e [d]i[s]avo[w]ed at a l[a]ter [d][a]te, a [m]an [m][y] [a]ge is no[w] [d][y]ing a [s]low [d]eath, i[n]co[h]erent e[p]i[d]er[m]i[s], I [u]sed t[o] [h]it the [b]ottle [h]ard too-i[n][d]eed, I [p]ainted [s]ix hours at a t[i]me with the [S]o[b]ie[s][k]i [b][y] m[y] [s][i]de, [s][c]rewed and cho[p]ped [B]jork, a [s]en[s]e of adole[s]cen[c]e exi[s]ted, Mar[k]o[s] [V]am[v]a[k]a[r]i[s] w[r]ote [a][b]out the w[a]ter [p]i[p]es and [c]all gi[r]ls of tu[r]n of the [c]entu[r]y [P]iraeus, shi[r]t un[b]uttoned all the [w]ay [d]o[w]n [w]ith [p]ro[f]o[u]nd hi[c]cu[p]s to [d]ro[w]n out [D]'An[d]rea's [d]ead [b]o[d]y, [b]ut [c]an we [c]on[f]i[r]m the [P]uerto Ri[c]an gi[r]l [b]ehind the [b]ar is a[w]are, [d]oes the [b]utt [w]i[p]e at the [b]ar [b]ath[r]oom [r]eal[i]ze [R][y]an's [d][i]ed, [l] [d]on't [d]i[s][c]ri[m]i[n]ate [b]e[t][w]een [o]rga[n][i]c en[t][i]ties and [o]ther[w]ise, a[n]other [m]an our age is [d]ying, [s][e][c]ond [c]ousins we n[e]ver [s]ee [d]rop [d]ead in Flori[d]a vet [d]ude [w]as al[w]ays [a]n [a]sshole [a]ny[w]ay, ing[e][s]t the [s]p[e]cial [s]ta[r] sh[a]pes there's [a] cl[u][b] [a][b]ove a[r][c][a]de, I used to [p]aint [s]ix hours at a t[i]me with the [S]o[b]ie[s][k]i b[y] m[y] [s][i]de, [I] found it enjoya[b]le fo[r] the e[r]a-[c]igar [b]ar with Lams, I'm [w]ell a[w]are [m]y [c]ha[r]is[m]a is unorthodox in [c]ha[r]a[c]ter-

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i [c]an n[o] [l]onger [c]on[s]ume [s]pagh[e]tt[i] ali[o] y[e]t i've [g]raduall[y] [c]ome [t]o [t]erms w[i]th th[i]s [t]rying [s][t]ate of exi[s][t]en[c]e, [s]u[r]gi[c]all[y] i[n][s]e[r]ting [s]u[b][s]tan[c]es i[n]to the ver[y] e[s]sen[c]e of [o]ne's [b][u]tto[c]ks is a [p]ure roll of the d[i]e in [m][y] hum[b]le o[p][i]n[i]on, yet a [f][e][m]ale's [s]exual hi[s]tor[y] is

[f]rankl[y] [n]one of our [b]usi[n]es[s], we [t]end [t][o] [v]ie[w] the [v]agina as [a] [t]issue or [a] [k]leene[x] whe[n] it'[s] e[s]se[n]tia[l]ly [r]e[f][l]e[x]ive in [c]hara[c]ter, [l]i[k]e a uni[q]ue [ph][r]ase or [l]a[c]oni[c] [c]o[l]le[c]tion of [l]e[x]i[c]on, that's more or [l]e[s]s how i [v]iew the [c]on[t]emporary [v]ag[i]na at [l]ea[s]t, [i] was [a] [l]ittle [t]a[k]en [a]b[a][c]k [a]t the [f][a][c]t the wing sp[o]t only [o][f]fered [c]urly [f][r]ies, that [r]egular [f]ries were nowhere to be [f]ound on the menu

Postmodern Novelists

2801:3634 .771 ---01 113:144 .785

[A][pp][r]oaching the [a]uto[m]atic ent[r]an[c]e [F][r]e[sh] [Sh]ore's on [M]i[n]e[r]al [S][p][r]ing Ave[n]ue, [h]o[p]ing with all of my [h]ea[r]t [th]at [th]eir [p]re[p]ared [f]oods were in the ball[p]a[r][k] of what [m]y [m]om gene[r]all[y] [d]i[s][c]overs at [D]ave's [S]u[p]er[m]ar[k]et, I gl[a]n[c]ed a[c]ro[ss] the [s]t[r][e]et [a]nd [s]aw the old buil[d]ing of [K]en Wo[k] Chin[e][s]e [C]ui[s][i]ne hal[f]way [t]orn [d]ow[n], and I [t]ook out my [ph][o]ne and [m]ade a [b]rie[f] [n][o]te the [i]nde[f]atiqa[b]le o[n] [i]m[p]er[m]a[n]en[c]e that re[m][ai]ns [s]o [p]erv[a][s]ive [a]|| [a]round u[s], as [l] [d]o each t[i]me a buil[d]ing [l] felt [s]ome [s]ort of [n]on[s]en[s]i[c]al [c]o[nn]e[c]t[i]on w[i]th on Mi[n]e[r]al [S]p[r]ing Ave[n]ue gets k[n]o[ck]ed [d]own.

---02 194:236 .822

I[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, it was [A]ugu[s]t [f]ir[s]t of thi[s] year that [I] [f]elt as though [I] was [r]a[p]id[l]y

[a][pp][r][o]aching the end of my [s][o]-[c]alled [r][o][p]e i[n] a[n] [o]ver [d]e[c]ade-[l]ong [p][l]u[s] [d][i][ss][i][p]ation [p]ro[c]e[ss], the f[a][c]t of the [m][a]tter was my [d][i][s]s[i][p]ation had exten[d]ed [i]ts [p]rime in a [w]ay that [w]as at on[c]e [m]il[d][l][y] im[p][r]e[ss]ive, yet [s]i[m]ultaneou[s][l][y] [s]evere[l][y] [d]e[p][r]e[ss]ing. [P]erh[a][p]s with th[a]t b[e]ing the [c]a[s]e, it was on the [n]ight of Augu[s]t [f]ir[s]t, the [s]e[c]ond to la[s]t [n][i]ght of m[y] thirty-[f]i[f]th year, that I ex[p]e[r][i]en[c]ed a [s][e][q]uen[c]e [w]here [d][r][e]am [s]u[s][p]en[d]ed in air [a]bove [a] [d]e[s]o[l]ate [p][l]ain [s][k][y][s][c][r]a[p]er-l[i][k]e tall [b]uilding [c]om[p][r][i]sed [s]ole[l]y of mirrors [s]at in the [b][r][i]gh[t] [s]un[l][i]gh[t], where a [p]ortion of [s]aid to[p] [c]orner [r]e[f]le[c]ted [s]aid [s]un[l]ight in a vio[l]e[n]t [f]ashio[n], and I [f]ound my[s]el[f] [l]i[f]ted to [s][ai]d [s][e]ction where a voice [I] [i]denti[f][i]ed with [G][r]e[g]o[r]y of Na[z]ian[z]us [s]poke to [m][e] [m]e[ll]i[f][l]uou[s][l][y] of the [f]ut[i][l][i]t[y] of e[ph]e[m]eral things.

---03 126:148 .851

[B][u]t [p]erha[p]s we should [p]ose a [s][u][b][s]e[q]u[e]nt [q]u[e][s]tion: while there are a l[i]ta[n]y of [i]n[s]tan[c]es of [n]ove[l]i[s]ts a[tt]em[p][t]ing to alple the [s]ty[l][i][s][t][i][c] [i][d]io[s]yn[c]ra[s]i[e]s of Homer's O[d]y[ss]e[y], while there's [s]eeming[l]y a[n] e[n]d[l]e[ss] [l]ine of E[n]g[l]ish-[s][p]ea[k]ers a[n]d Eur[o]-adja[c]ent f[o]l[k]s who've sh[a]me[l]e[ss][l]y [a][p]ed the [A]thenian [b]a[b]oons [o]f the Anti[q]ue er[a] without [p]ause!---are [th]ere any [th]at we [c][a]n [th]in[k] of [th][a]t h[a]ve [m]i[m]i[ck]ed the [m][a]nne[r]i[s]t [q]uir[k]s of The Divine E[r]os? Be[c]ause it [r]e[c]entl[y] [s]t[r]u[ck] m[e] in

[r][e]-[r][ea]ding [S]y[m][e]on's [c]ent[r]al [w]or[k] that in [m]a[n]y [w]ays it [r][e]ads li[k]e an e[p]i[c] [p]oem [c]um [p]o[s]t[m][o]dern [n][o]vel?

---04 168:208 .808

After all, it was [n][o]ne [o][th]er [th]an [th]e [n][o]table p[o][s]tm[o]dern [n][o]ve[l]i[s]t J[o]hn H[a]w[k]es who [s]aid [s]o [s]tern[l]y, 'I began to w[r]ite fi[c][ti]o[n] on the a[ss]um[p][ti]o[n] [th]at [th]e t[r]ue e[n]em[ie]s of the [n]ovel were plot, [c]hara[c]ter, [s]etting, and th[e]me.' the And [i]n th[i][s] way [s][p][r]aw[l]ing, [p]o[l][i]t[i][c]a[ll][y]-[m][e]tered, [s][p]i[r]a[l]ed [v]er[s]es of [S]y[m][e]on t[r]a[ck] the [c]on[c]e[p]tual Haw[k]ian [n]o[v]el to the [N]th deg[r]ee, or [p]erha[p][s] [v]i[c]e [v]er[s]a! Should w[e] [p]erha[p][s] [e][v]en [p]ose the [q]ue[s]tion: [H]ow a[c]quainted was [H]aw[k]e[s]' w[i]th the [B][y]zantine mon[k] in the [e]ra of [s][ai]d [q]uote? We should [p]erha[p]s [n]ote [H]aw[k]e[s] was [t]o a[n] ex[t]e[n]t а di[s]ci[p]le of [N]a[b]o[k]ov, who, [i]n a[dd][i]t[i]on to [p]e[n]ning а [flew [n]ovels [p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ernly [p]ro[dd]ing int[o] the [d][o]'s and [d]on'ts of [s]e[d]u[c]ing un[d]er[a]ge [f]e[m][a]les, was [r][ai]sed [i]n [R]uss[i]an [m][i][l]ieu а [s]t[i][ll] pr[e]-[S]oviet, [s]o to [s][ay] a[n] e[ss]e[n]tia[l]l[y] Orthodox [m]i[l]ieu.

---05 234:281 .833

The [m][o]dern n[o]vel, wh[i]ch [i]n ou[r] [e][r]a is [e][ss]ential[i][y] the po[s]t[m][o]dern n[o]vel, be[c]ause it [s][ee]ms [s]e[r][i]ous [m][o]dern [n][o]vels [n]o [i]onger exi[s]t, [o]n[i]y [s][p]u[r][i]ou[s] [c]o[m]mercial [n]ovels th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s a[p]e [o]ld [m][o][d]ern [n][o]vels

([p]oorly); [n]o, [t]o[d]ay, [t]o [th]e [e]x[t]ent [th]e [s]e[r]iou[s] [n]o[v]el [s]t[i]ll [e]x[i][s]ts out[s]ide of, [s]ay, the[s]i[s] ad[v]iso[r]y [b]oards, all [s]e[r]iou[s] [n]o[v]els are [n]ow e[ss]entia[l][[y] [p]o[s]tm[o]dern [n][o]vels, and with that [b][e]ing the [r][e]a[l]it[y] [l] [s]u[pp]ose [l]'ll [r]efer to the [p]o[s]t[m][o]dern [n][o]vel as ju[s]t the [m][o]dern [n][o]vel---as there are [n]o [m][o][d]ern [n][o]vels any[m]ore, ju[s]t [p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ern, [s]o the [p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ern, [f]or [m]y[s]el[f] and [m]y [p]eers, [i]s [i][p][s][o] [f]act[o] the [m]o[d]ern. The [m][o][d]ern [n][o]vel, to Haw[k]es' [c]re[d]it, [n]o longer re[q]uires any[th]ing of [n][a][rr]ative, of [ch][a][r]a[c]ter, of [s]etting, of [th]eme; i[n] [f]a[c]t, eve[n] i[n]dulging i[n] [s]uch [a]n[t]i[q]uated [a][tt]ri[b]utes is [t]y[p]i[c]ally a [s]ign of [p]oor [t]a[s]te! [F]or my[s]el[f], whe[n] a[n]d [i][f], wh[i]ch [i]s hardly ever, I [b]egin a no[v]el with a [f]e[r][v]ent u[r]ge [t]o [t]ell me a [s]tory [l]'ll p[l]a[c]e the [i]tem imm[e][d][i]ate[l][y], [b]a[ck] [d]own at [l][ea][s]t [s]omewhat [d][i][s]gu[s]ted [a]t ſi]ts [b][r][a]zen [n][a][r]rat[i]ve [i]n[c]li[n]ations.

---06 143:194 .737

[S]yme[o]n's E[r][o]s, [o]n the [o]ther hand, while i[n][d]ulgi[n]g i[n] [b]om[b]a[s]tic [d]ia[l]ogues, while tea[r]ing it[s]elf [a][p]art in [a] [p]er[p]etua[l]ly [a][pp][r]o[p][r]iate [f][a]shion---[p]erh[a][p]s the [s]o-[c]alled [r]e[f][r]ain of [S]y[m]eon's wor[k] is this [a][p]art---is v[e][r]y t[e]a[r]ing [e][ss]entially [p][o][s]t[m]o[d]ern [e][p]i[c] [p]oem, wh[i]ch [i]f we [c]on[s]i[d]er the [m]any a[tt]em[p]ts [t]o [t]urn the e[p]ic [p][o]ems of H[o][m]er into the [m][o]dern n[o]vels of, [s]ay, [G]o[g]ol or Joy[c]e, then it al[m][o][s]t g[o]es without [s][ay]ing that [S]y[m]e[o]n's e[p]ic [p][o]em is alrea[d][y] a [p][o][s]t[m][o][d]ern [n][o]vel in [m]a[n][y] w[ay]s, as the a[dd]i[c]tion to [p]ure [p][r]ose of the [n][o]vel, the a[dd]i[c]tion [t]o the [n][o]n-[m][e][t][r]i[c]al [m][e]thods of [p]la[c]ing words in [c]on[c]e[p]tual or[d]er, is [p]erha[p]s a[n]other lu[r]id [q]ui[r][k] of the [n]ovel that would [b]e [b]etter off [s]et to the [s]ide!

---07 162:213 .761

Of [c]ourse the [b]eauty of the [D]ivine Er[o]s, of the [s][o]-[c]alled [k]onta[k]ion [f]orm (of which [b][o]th [S]vme[o]n and Na[z]ian[z]us are e[ss]ential[l][v] [b]oo[k]-e[n]ds [t]o, i[f] not e[n][t]ire[l][y] i[n][d]ulgent i[n]) [i]s that [i]t [m][i][m][i][c]s the [m]etaph[y]s[i][c]s of th[e]se [B][y]zant[i]nes, it[s]elf of [c]ourse [b][e]ing a poem a[n]d a[n] e[ss]ay and a [s]tory! The [d][i]gre[ss][i]ve h[y]mns of the [D]i[v][i]ne E[r]os [m]u[s]t [b][e] all th[r][ee] in [s][i][m]ul[t]aneit[y], [v]er[s]e[s] and [s][t]o[r]ies and e[ss]ays, [b]e[c]ause if they're ju[s]t [v]er[s]e[s] or ju[s]t e[ss]ays or ju[s]t [s]to[r]ies---n[o], that [s]imp[l]y [w][o]n't [w]or[k] at all! To de[s]c[r]ibe a [s]e[l]e[c]t hymn as [a] [v]er[s]e, or as [a] [s]to[r]v, o[r] as [a][n] [e][s]say, i[n][s]tead of all th[r][ee] [s]i[m]ultaneou[s]l[y], yet not [a]s [a]n a[m][a]lgam but i[n][s]tead as a[n] i[n][d]i[v]idual e[ss]ay, a[n] i[n][d]i[v]idual [v]er[s]e, a[n] i[n][d]i[v]idual [s]to[r]y i[n] the [s]ame [b][r][ea]th, t[o] [d][o] that would almo[s]t [b]e he[r][e]tical [i]n [i]t[s][e]lf.

---08 121:164 .738

Wh[e]reas D[e][s][c]artes noted, 'I [th]in[k] [th]ere[f]ore I am,' [A]th[a]n[a][s]iu[s] [s]aid, 'Has the [F]ather [e]ver [e]xi[s]ted w[i]thout H[i]s [S]on?' The [m]o[s]t i[m][p]ortant

a[s][p]ect of the [D]ivine Ero[s], what [m]a[k]es them [e][ss]entia[II]y nove[I]i[s]ti[c] in [p]erha[p]s the [p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ern [s]en[s]e of the word, is [th]at [th]ey're at on[c]e e[ss]ays a[n]d [v]er[s]es a[n]d [s]tories [i]nd[i][v][i]dually, but they're [n]on-[a][m]alg[a][m]ou[s]! The Ero[s] is [a][i]I of them at the [s]ame time, but [a][i][s]o each [o]ne of them [i]n[d][i]v[i]dua[II][y] as [w][e]II; [w]h[e]reas [D][e]s[c]artes [n]oted, 'I [th]in[k] [th]erefore I am,' the [k][o]nta[k]i[o][n] is [o][n][i][y] [a]n [e][ss]ay [b]e[c]ause it'[s] a [p][o]em, but it's [o]n[i][y] a [p][o]em [b]e[c]ause it'[s] a [s]tory, and [s][o] o[n] and [s][o] o[n]---

---09 183:255 .718

Haw[k]es [s]aid, 'I began to write fi[c][ti]on on the a[ss]ump[ti]on [th]at [th]e true e[n]emies of the [n]ovel were plot, [c]hara[c]ter, [s]etting, and theme,' while [A]th[a]n[a][s]iu[s] [s]aid, '[H]as the Father [e]ver [e]x[i][s]ted w[i]thout [H]is [S]on?' Is The Divine Er[o]s of [S]y[m]e[o]n the [N]ew Theo[l][o]gian a [p][o][s]t[m]odern e[p]ic [p][o]em [a]nd [a]s [s]uch al[s][o] the [p][o][s]tm[o]dern [n][o]vel [p]ar ex[c]e[l]len[c]e? [P]erha[p]s we should i[n][q]uire [f]u[r]ther i[n][t]o thi[s] [t]e[r]m '[p]o[s]t[m]odern,' [h]owever, name[l][y] as to [h]ow exa[c]t[l][y] it's [s]aid to [d]i[ff]er [f]rom the te[r]m 'mo[d]e[r]n'? One of the [m]ore [m]o[d]ern [n]otions of ou[r] e[r]a, [i]n th[i][s] [i]n[s]tan[c]e I'm [s]peaking of [n][o]n-[p]o[s]tm[o]dern, [m]o[d]ern as whereas [p][r][e]v[i]ou[s][l][y] ([p]erha[p]s [f]oo[l]ish[l][y]) I used [m]o[d]ern as a [s][y][n]o[n][y]m [f]or [p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ern, [i]s th[i][s] [c]on[c]e[p]tion of The [B]ig [B]ang, which has ach[ie]ved j[i]had-li[k]e [p]o[p]u[l]a[r][i]ty [i]n ou[r] e[r]a.

[P]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t [m]odern [n]otion [o]f [a]ll, if we're [a][t]tem[p]ting [t]o inqu[i]re about the [m]o[d]ern-[p]o[s]t[m]o[d]ern [d]iv[i]de, [i]s th[i]s [n]otion, which has [a]ch[ie]ved a j[i]had-[l]ike be[l][ie]f [s]y[s]tem [a]round it, of the [B]ig [B]ang.

---10 231:326 .709

[N]ow, [p]er[s]o[n]a[ll][y], ľm [n]ot exact[l][y] [p][r][o][p][o][n]ent of this [n][o]tion, [p][r]i[m]a[r]i[l][y] be[c]ause it [s]tri[k]es [m][e] as id[i]oti[c], with all [d]ue [r]e[s][p]ect [t]o the [s]cien[t]i[s]ts who [d]evelo[p]ed [i]t, [i]t [s]tr[i]kes me as an i[d]ea that's [a][t]tem[p]ting [t]o im[p][r]ove [u][p]on [a] [p][r][e]v[i]ou[s] notion (God), [b]ut in [p]ra[c]t[i][c]e [i]s [t]a[k]ing the [i]d[i]o[c]y of [s]aid [p]r[e]v[i]ou[s] notion, [b][l]ind[l][y] [b]e[l][ie]ving in God, and [m]a[k]ing [i]t [s]omehow [m]ore [i][d]ioti[c]. [Th]ere's an i[d]ea [th]at [th]ere was no[th]i[ng], [th]en [s]ome[th]i[ng] o[cc]urred. and now [th]ings are o[cc]u[rr]ing i[n] a[n] outwa[r]d f[a]shion [a]t i[n][c]rea[s]ing [s]peeds. [Th]ere's an idea [th]at our [s]en[s]or[y] [f][a][c]ult[ie]s, which are una[b]le [a][cc]u[r]ate[l][y] o[ff]iciate [f]ee[l]ings at a [b]ar a[f]ter th[r][ee] [b][ee]rs, are somehow [c]apa[b]le of ta[k]ing [c]lues [f][r]om [b]ill[i]ons of [y]ears ago and [s]omehow em[p]i[r]i[c]a[ll]y [p]o[s]tu[l]ating what occlurred [b][i]ll[i]ons of [y]ears [a]go, tr[i]ll[i]ons of miles [a]way. [B]ut thi[s] i[d]ea of the [B][i]g [B]ang [i]s more [i]n line with, [s]ay, [D]e[s]cartes, than, [s]ay, [A]th[a]n[a][s]iu[s]. It'[s] a[n] i[d]ea [th]at'[s] [e][ss]ential[l][y] a[n][t]i[th][e]tical [t]o the i[d]ea that [a] [f]ather on[l][y] [a]ch[ie]ves b[e]ing through his [s]on, [th]at [th]e [f]ather and [s]on, while ex[i][s]ting [i]n[d]epen[d]ently of one [a][n]other, onl[y] [a]ch[ie]ve [b][e]ing [b]ecause of one a[n]other, [th]at [w]i[th]out [o]ne a[n]other th[ey], in many w[ay]s, [c]ea[s]e to exi[s]t.

---11 196:242 .810

It's on[i]y [b]een of [i]ate that [i]'ve [f]ound m[y][s]el[f] [c][r][a]ving the [c][l]a[ss]i[c] [c]oo[k]ies and [c][r]eam [f][l][a]vor, and it's [b]een i[c]e [c]ream in parti[c]u[l]ar th[a]t h[a]s [s]t[r]u[ck] my [c][r]avings a[c]ute[l]y. In ou[r] e[r]a, [n]ow I [n]eed mo[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] at [l]ea[s]t one [n]ight of i[n]dulging i[n] i[c]e [c]ream per [w]ee[k]. Yet at the [s]ame t[i]me, a[l]ong[s][i]de thi[s] pe[c]u[l]iar [c][r]aving for [c]oo[k]ies and [c][r]eam, [l]'ve [f]ound m[y][s]el[f] be[n]ding to a[n] e[q]ua[l]l[y] a[c]ute urge to try [s]omething new---hard[l][y] [s]ati[s][flied with this [c]oo[k]ies and [c][r]eam [c][r]aving, de[s]pite the [f]a[c]t thi[s] [c]oo[k]ies and [c][r]eam [c][r]a[v]ing mo[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] iu[s]t [c]ame o[v]er me, [l] o[f]ten [f][i]nd m[v][s]el[f] [s]aying things [l][i]ke, ʻ[I] [d]on't [ch]o[c]olate kn[o]w---maybe that [ch]ip [cloo[klie [d][o]ugh is good?' or, 'What [i]f I had a m[i]l[k]sha[k]e? [I] feel I[i][k]e, [I] [d][o]n't kn[o]w, [m][a]ybe a [m]il[k]sh[a]ke would [r]eally hit the [s][p]ot [r]ight now?' Of [c]our[s]e the only [r]esult [o]f [s][u]ch [p]re[v]a[r]i[c][a][ti]o[n], [o]f [s][u]ch mindle[ss] [d]e[v]i[a][ti]o[n]s [i]s the [i][n][d]ulgen[c]e [i][n] non-[c]oo[k]ies and [c]ream items and the [i][n]evitable [r]e[m]or[s]e of the [i][n]itial [c][r][a]v[ing] [r]e[m][ai]n[ing] un[g]uenched!

---12 109:147 .741

There's an idea [th]at [th]ere was no[th]i[ng], [th]en some[th]i[ng] o[cc]urred, and [i]s [s]t[i]ll o[cc]urring; the

po[s]t[m][o][d]ern n[o][v]el, [a]s well [a]s [S]y[m]e[o]n's [D]i[v]ine Er[o][s], [d]o away with the [f]ir[s]t po[r]tion of thi[s] [f]o[r][m]ula, [d]i[s]a[ss]ociating them[s]elves [f]rom thiss is is is the thing and also from the idea [th]at [th]en [s]ome[th]ing o[cc]u[rr]ed, [i]n[s]tead [r]e[s]tr[i][c]ting [th]em[s]elves to [th]e [i]s [s]t[i]ll o[cc]u[rr]ing. For b[o]th [S]y[m]e[o]n and the [p][o][s]t[m][o]dern [n][o]vel [s]omething [i]s [s]t[i]ll o[c]curring, however, we're [n]ot [q]u[i]te [c]on[c]e[r]ned [w]ith the [i]dea [th]at [th]ere [w]as at [o]ne t[i]me [n]o[th]i[ng], or w[i]th th[i][s] [i]dea [th]at [th]en [s]ome[th]i[nq] o[c]cu[r]red.

---13 114:146 .781

If [w]e [w]ere [b]old, and I'm f[ee][i]ing [d][e]cent[i]y [b][o]Id at the [m][o][m]ent, having [i][n][d]ulged [i][n] a [i]ong [d]ay, all of my [d]ays th[e]se [d]ays [s][ee]m ex[c][ee][d]ing[i][y] [i]ong!---[b]ut [a][i][s][o] [f][e]eling as th[ough] [a][ii] [a]uto[b]iogra[ph]y is a[b][s]urd[i][s][t [f][i]ction, [w]e [m]ight [s][ay] that [w]hile the [m][o]dern n[o]vel [s]ays [s]omething adj[a][c]ent to, '[i] [th]ink [th]ere[f]ore [i] am,' the po[s]tm[o]dern [n][o]vel [s]tates [s]omething [a][k]in to, 'He is the [F]ather be[c]ause [h]e eter[n]ally [h]as a [S]on thr[ou]gh wh[o]m [h]e [a][ff]irms [H]im[s]el[f] as [F]ather.' [B]ut th[i][s] [i]s [p]erha[p][s] even too [s][p]e[c]u[i]ative for our ta[s]tes; it's i[n] all [l]i[k]e[l]ihood [b]eyond the [s][c]o[p]e of th[i]s [i][n][q]uiry!

---14 141:191 .738

Yet of [c]our[s]e thi[s] [c]ould [b]e [c]o[n][s]i[d]ered [c]o[n]troversial, as the [m][e][d][i]an po[s]t[m]o[d]erni[s]t o[s]ten[s]i[b][i]y [i][o]ves n[o]thing [m]ore than [f][i]aunting

his reck[l]e[ss] atheism; what the po[s]t[m]o[d]erni[s]t a[d]o[r]es [m]o[r]e than anything is to [f][l]aunt his a[th]eism; i[f] [th]e [p]o[s]tmo[d]erni[s]t [b]e[c]omes [p]ea[c]o[ck]-[l]i[k]e a[b][ou]t any[th]ing [i]t's w[i][th][ou]t a [d][ou]bt his [f]ervent [d]i[s][b]e[l]ie[f] in God. Yet [i]s [i]t [p]o[ss]i[b]le that a [B]yzan[t]ine [m]onk [p]enned the fir[s]t [t]ruly [m]onu[m]en[t]al [p]o[s]t[m][o]dern n[o]vel? [l]t'[s] a[n] [i][n]te[r]e[s]ting [q]ue[r]y, although I have a [f]eeling it would di[s]gu[s]t H[aw][k]es i[f] [n][o]t [N]a[b]o[k]ov, [b]ut most [l]i[k]e[l]y [N]a[b]o[k]ov [a]s much [a]s Haw[k]es. [N]a[b]o[k]ov, and I'm [b]a[s]ing thi[s] on [l]ittle to [n]othing, [s]trikes [m]e as [s]ome[o]ne who [w]ould [b]e l[oa]th to [b]e [g]rouped to[g]ether with [S]y[m]e[o]n the New Theol[o]gian.

---15 166:210 .790

[I]n [h][i]s [f]i[f]tieth [h][y][m]n [S][y][m]e[o]n [s]ensually n[o]tes, 'sh[e] [r][e]ached out to me li[k]e a [b][r]ea[s]t, [f]or [m]e to [s]u[ck]le imperisha[b]le [m]il[k]'---we should [i][n][q]uire [i][n]to th[i]s note [f]urther, as [p]erha[p]s [c]u[r]iou[s]l[y], our [a]uthor even [r]e[f]ers to the [F]ather (or the [S]on) [i]n th[i][s] [q]uote as [α][u]τή the [f]em[i][n][i]ne p[r][o][n]oun, he[n][c]e the qu[o]te was [r]e[n]dered i[n] E[n]glish as Sh[e] [r]ather than H[e], yet a[n]other [p]ost[m]odern ele[m]ent to be [f]ound in the [E][r][o]s, [r]e[f]e[r]ring to the [F]ather in the [f]em[i]n[i]ne [c]o[n]iu[n][c][t][i]ve [i]n the [E][l]e[v]enth [C]entury! ([P]erha[p]s e[v]en the [l]ate [T]enth!) [S]o [m]an[y] of u[s] to thi[s] day [s]ti[ll] b[l]ind[l][y] [r]e[f]er to the [F]ather em[p]loying [p][r]i[m]a[r]i[l][y] the [m]ale [c]o[n]ju[n][c]tive, y[e]t I've n[e]ver [p]er[s]ona[l]l[y] [s]ub[s][c]ri[b]ed to thi[s] [c]o[n]iu[n][c]tive [c]o[n]d[i]t[i]oning my[s]el[f], although I

usual[l][y] [r]e[f][r]ain [f][r]om en[g][a]ging in pub[l]i[c] st[a]te[m]ents [r]e[g]arding [c]o[n]ju[n][c]tive [m]atters.

---16 146:193 .756

Ulti[m]ate[l]y, [b][o]th the p[o][s]t[m]oderni[s]ts [a]s well [a]s Sy[m]e[o]n the [N]ew Theol[o]gian re[c]og[n]ize the la[ck] of a [b]etter [ph][r]ase [q]uan[t]um [c]ha[r]a[c]ter of our [m]a[t]e[r]ial exi[s]ten[c]e; while the po[s]t[m]odern[i][s]ts, [i]n [m]a[n]y if [n]ot all [c]a[s]es, [t]end [t]o either fo[r]m or [s]uppo[r]t va[r]iou[s] [c][r]u[s]ades [d][ue] [t][o] thi[s] [c]ha[r]a[c][t]e[r]i[s][t]i[c], [S]v[m]eon [d]id the o[pp]os[i]te---[i]n[s]tead [r]e[s]c[i]n[d][i]ng [c]om[p]l[e]te[l][y] and [m]a[k]ing no ex[p][l][i][c][i]t [p]o[l][i]t[i][c]al [s]tatement on the [c]o[n]iu[n][c]tive [c]hara[c]ter(s) of his world. (Yet of [c]our[s]e there is the [s][p]e[c]ulation that [S]y[m]eon hi[m][s]elf was of a [c]o[n]ju[n][c]tive deviation, [s]o to [s][p]ea[k], [u][n]i[q]ue to his mil[ieu], [th]at of [th]e [eu][n]u[ch], alth[o]ugh we d[o]n't kn[o]w thi[s] for [c]ertain.) The [w]orld, its [q][u]antum [c]ha[r]a[c]ter, was n[o] [c]all to [r]eform to [S]yme[o]n; n[o] it was a [s]ign to [r]e[s]cind!

---17 141:192 .734

[F]or my [p]art, I [c]ertain[l]y [c]an't [d]e[n][y] that m[y] [p]er[s]o[n]al [p][r]e[d]i[l]e[c]tions [f]all [c][l]o[s]er to [r]e[s]cin[d]ing; [n]ot a wee[k] goes [b]y [th]at [th]e [th]ought of en[t]e[r]ing [a] [m]on[a][s][t]e[r]y doesn't [b]e[c]ome at [l]ea[s]t [m]o[m]en[t]ari[l]y [a]ppea[l]ing! The [m]ona[s][t]er[y], [t]o [m]e, at [t]imes, [s]eems [l]i[k]e a [s]e[c]ond home, de[s][p]ite the [f]a[c]t, to the be[s]t of [m]y k[n]owledge, I've [n]ever [s]te[pp]ed [f]oot in[t]o a

[m]o[n]a[s][t]er[y] of an[y] [s]ort. Yet where could I [p]o[ss]i[b][l]y [b]e[l]ong [m]ore than [a] [m]o[n][a][s]tery, [flew to [n]o [p]oss[e]ss[i]ons and [n]othing with [p]r[e][ss][i]ng to do [b]e[s]ides [m]o[n]itor [m]y own [f]leeting thoughts---isn't the a[ss]e[ss][m]ent of [o]ne's own [w]aves of [f]leeting thought a [f]ull-time job [i]n and of [i]t[s]el[f]? [H]ow [c]ould we [p]o[ss]ibly [h]ave [t]ime anything e[l][s]e, if we're a[tt]em[p][t]ing [t]o [m][ai]nt[ai]n а [m][o]di[c]um of h[o]ne[s]ty with our[s]e[l]ves?

---18 113:144 .785

[A][pp][r]oaching the [a]uto[m]atic ent[r]an[c]e [F][r]e[sh] [Sh]ore's on [M]i[n]e[r]al [S][p][r]ing Ave[n]ue, [h]o[p]ing with all of my [h]ea[r]t [th]at [th]eir [p]re[p]ared [f]oods were in the ball[p]a[r][k] of what [m]y [m]om gene[r]all[y] [d]i[s][c]overs at [D]ave's [S]u[p]er[m]ar[k]et, I gl[a]n[c]ed a[c]ro[ss] the [s]t[r][e]et [a]nd [s]aw the old buil[d]ing of [K]en Wo[k] Chin[e][s]e [C]ui[s][i]ne hal[f]way [t]orn [d]ow[n], and I [t]ook out my [ph][o]ne and [m]ade a [b]rie[f] [n][o]te o[n] the [i]nde[f]atiga[b]le [i]m[p]er[m]a[n]en[c]e that re[m][ai]ns [s]o [p]erv[a][s]ive [a]|| [a]round u[s], as [l] [d]o each t[i]me a buil[d]ing [l] felt [s]ome [s]ort of [n]on[s]en[s]i[c]al [c]o[nn]e[c]t[i]on w[i]th on Mi[n]e[r]al [S]p[r]ing Ave[n]ue gets k[n]o[ck]ed [d]own.

The Plane of an Ottoman NYC

Echoes: 2289 Syllables: 3358 Self-Similarity: .682

So any[w]ay [w]e [w]ere at the [H]ot Club [f]or the [f]ir[s]t [t][i]me in ages, a [b]ar[t]ender I [h]adn't [s][ee]n in at I[ea][s]t [f]our to [f]ive y[ea]rs was [s]till [b]eh[i]nd the [b]ar, sh[e] re[c]og[n][i]zed [m][e] i[mm][e][d][i]atel[y], with a [n]ew [p]ur[p]le [d]yed [h]air[c]ut [th]at, al[th]ough [p]ro[b]a[b]ly a [s]midgeon young for [h]er age, [s]uited [h]er ni[c]ely, I thought. [Sh]e poured [m]e [a] [h][e]althy [a][m]ount of [M][e]z[c]al into a [sh]ort gl[a]ss, [a]nd on[l]y [m]i[n]ute[s] [l]ater I'd [n]oti[c]e her [c]arrying a [b]ottle of [D]el [M]agu[ey] [V]i[d]a, [m]y f[a][v]o[r]ite [b]rand of [M]ez[c]al, [b]a[ck] to the [b]ar, and [r]ight then [l] surm[i]sed that [I] was [d]rin[k]ing [m][y] favorite t[y][p]e of [M]ez[c]al. Of [c]ourse, [h]ealthy [p]ou[r]s a[r]e [d]ouble edged [s][w]o[r]ds [w]hen you [h]ave a ten[d]en[c]y to ch[u]g [w]hatever's in [f]r[o]nt of you, [w]hich, [f]or better or [w]orse, is a [t]en[d]en[c][y] l'[v]e ne[v]er [e]n[t]irel[y] managed to [d]i[s][c]ard, [e]speciall[y] [w]he[n] i[n] [s]ocial [s]ettings. [S]ociall[v]. hi[s]tori[c]all[v]. al[w]ays [f]ound my[s]el[f] [s]prin[t]ing [t]o[w]ard [[i][q]uor, [w][i]th re[ck]le[ss] [a]ban[d]on [a]lmo[s]t I per[f]orm [f][f][f]y yard [d]ashes [t]o[w]ard [w]hatever [m]y [s]pirit of choi[c]e is that [m]onth, a[n]d eve[n] though on [b]a[l]an[c]e l've re[d]u[c]ed th[e]se ex[c]e[s]sive ten[d]en[c]i[e]s with age, I'd [b]e [l][y]ing to [b]oth m[y][s]el[f] and you i[f] I [s]aid I'd [d]i[s]car[d]ed them [c]ompl[e]tel[y]. And, [t]o b[e] honest, I'm unsure [i]f I'd [t]o [d][i][s][c]ard them in [t]o[t]ality, w[i]sh ex[t]ingu[i]sh m[y] ch[i]ld-l[i][k]e i[d]io[c]y on[c]e and [f]or all, be[c]ause, su[r]e, [f]rom a [c]e[r]tain v[a]ntage [p]oint I [s]u[pp]ose I re[m]ain a [m][a]n-child of [s]orts, but on [th]e o[th]er h[a]nd m[a]n-children are [n]e[c]e[ss]ary, [n]o? It's [m]an-children who [m][a]ke the gr[ea]test

[ph]ilo[s]o[ph]ical [s]tr[i]des. [T]o thin[k] li[k]e an adult is [t]o [t]a[k]e on the gu[i]se [o]f [u]tter [r]ationa[l]ism, wh[i]ch hard[l]y e[v]er [i]f [n]ot [n]e[v]er i[n]no[v]ates, wh[i]ch [r]e[f]uses to be[c]ome [i]di[o]t[i][c] e[n]ou[gh] [t]o [f]undamental [a]xioms, [a]s [a]l[t]er [a]xioms inevita[b]ly [c]reated [b]y the ch[i]ld-l[i][k]e thin[k]ers, [b]y [i]di[o]ts of the [s]pir[i]t. Even God Him[s][e]lf all[e]g[e]dly [s][ai]d, [L][e]t there be [l]ight, wh[i]ch [i]s a [m]an-ch[i]ld I[i]ke [s]tate[m]ent i[n] [m][y] o[p]i[n]io[n]. [P]er[s]onall[y], I [s]till refuse to [s]l[ee][p] in the dark. The dar[k] is [c]ontemptible in [m][y] [m][i]nd. [Th]ere's [s]ome[th]ing [i]nherent [i]n being [i]t[s]elf that's [s]y[n]o[n]y[m]ou[s] with light i[n] [m]y opi[n]io[n]. But [h]ow was [H]ot Club? [I]t was [i]n[t]e[r]e[s]ting, [i]n[t][r]iguing, [b]etter tha[n] I a[n][t]i[c][i][p]ated, g[i]ven the la[s]t [c]ou[p]le [t]][i]mes [I]'d [b]een I [f]elt the atmos[ph]ere to [b]e a [b]it too [c]lu[bb]y [f]or my [t]a[s]tes, a [t]a[d] [t]oo a[d]ole[s]cent for even [m]y [m]an-child [p]a[l]ette. I [s]aw the doo[r][m]an from [Th]e [P]ar[l]ou[r] [th]ere, be[c]ause a[pp]arently [h]e [w]orks [s]e[c]urity at [H]ot [C]lub as [w]ell? I[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, as the [p]arty i[n][c]r[ea][s]ed i[n] [s][i]ze [K]a[t]r[ee]na a[n]d [l] e[n]ded u[p] e[n]g[a]ged i[n] a[n] exte[n]ded [c]onver[s][a]tio[n] with a [p]etite, [f]air-[s][k]inned [f]e[m][a]le who ada[m]antl[y] [c]l[ai]med to b[e] of New Yo[r]k o[r]igin, y[e]t wh[e][n] a[n] a[pp]r[o][p]riate [o][p]e[n]ing e[m]erged for [m]e to a[s][k] her [w]hat [p]art of [N]ew York she [w]as [f]rom [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c]all[y] sh[e] [p]revari[c][a]ted, [s][a]ying she was [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te [f]rom all [o]ver, [b]ut [th]en [s]aying [Th]e [B]ronx. She was from The [B]ronx? She didn't [s]trike me as [s][o]me[o]ne [f]r[o]m The [B]ronx, and [f]or [s][o]me[o]ne whose [i]dentit[y] [s][ee]med to

[b][e] [s]o t[i]ed with [b][e]ing from [N]ew [Y]ork, a [N]ew [Y]or[k]er, wh[i]ch [i]s the [c]a[s]e with [s]o many [p]eo[p]le from New York, it'[s] [a][c]tually [k]ind of [s]ad to me, this violent melding that seems to occlur with [p]eo[p]le who [i]denti[f][y] them[s]elves with New York [C]ity, yet thi[s] [f]emale, who [f]or the [r]e[c]ord I [f]ound [p][l]easant, oddly enough [r]e[f]used ex[p][l]i[c]it[l]y [c][l]aim а [b]orough, un[t]il she [r]e[l]u[c][t]antly [s]aid The [B]ronx, [w]h[i]ch I th[i]n[k] [s][t]ru[ck] every[o]ne as [t]otally [m]isguided. [w]asn't from The [B]ronx, that [m]uch [w]as [c]lear. She [c]ould [b]e from any[w]he[r]e in the [w]o[r]ld ex[c]ept [Th]e [B]ronx. [Th]i[s] idea [th]at [th]i[s] female's o[r]igi[n] [s]to[r]y [b]egan i[n] The [B][r]onx [w]as [c]om[p]l[e]tel[y] a[b][s]urd. [W]hich [b]orough she was [f]rom, a[ss]uming she was [f]rom a [p]art[i][c]ular [b]orough, now that was [s]till am[b][i]guous, [b]ut [i]t was [c]lear she w[a]sn't fr[o]m the [B]ronx. [Q]u[ee]ns, that I [c]ould give [s]ome [c]r[e]den[c]e to I [s]u[pp]ose. It might r[ea]sona[b]le [s][p]e[c]ulation to [s]ugge[s]t she was from Qu[ee]ns. [P]erha[p]s [f]rom a[n] o[p]ule[n]t [f]a[m]ily i[n] U[pp]er [M]anh[a]ttan, now th[a]t was even [m]ore [l]i[k]el[y]-be[c]ause she [c]ertainl[y] [s]tru[c]k [m]e as [s][o]me[o]ne who [c]ame fr[o]m [m]oney, there was [n]o tra[c]e of a [N]ew York [a][cc]e[n]t i[n] her [s]peech, or of a[n]v [a][cc]e[n]t i[n] her [s][p][ee]ch, and geogra[ph][y] [o]f [U][pp]er [M][a]nh[a]ttan is [c]lo[s]e enou[gh] to The Bronx that she [c]ould, in her [m]ind at [l]ea[s]t, perhaps jus[t]i[f]y [c][l][ai]ming The [B][r]onx as a [b]o[r][ou]gh, even th[ou]gh [I] f[i]nd that to [b]e a [b]it ridi[c]u[l]ou[s], to [c]on[f][l][a]te U[pp]er M[a]nh[a]ttan with The [B]ronx, to [th]i[n]k a[n]y [th]i[n]king [p]erson would

[b][uy] the [i]dea that U[pp]er [M][a]nh[a]ttan [i]s [i][n] a[n]y [w]ay [s]y[n]o[n]y[m]ou[s] [w]ith The [B]ronx. [S][t]aten Island and [B]roo[k]lyn [s][t]ri[k]e [m]e as [m]ore [r]e[m]ote [p]o[ss]i[b]i[l]ities of her o[r]igin, and then we [c]ould al[s]o [s][p]e[c]u[l]ate on outer-[a]reas [a]s [w]ell, be[c]ause [w]h[i]le Yon[k]ers [s][t]ri[k]es me as a [s][t]r[e]tch, I thin[k] [W][e][s]tch[e][s]ter [C]ounty or [L]ong [I]sland are both [c]ertain[l]y in p[l]ay. Do you th[i]n[k] [i]t po[ss][i][b]le that she [c]ould have [b]een from, [s]ay, [W]e[s]t[ch]e[s]ter [C]ounty, [w]hi[ch] [w]ould exp[l][ai]n her [m]on[e]yed de[m][ea]nor, yet [m]oved to The Bronx for work [I][a]ter in [I]i[f]e, and now, and [I] a[g]ree [th]at [th][i]s [i]s m[i]s[g]u[i]ded, [f]eels as [th]ough [th]at working ex[p]erien[c]e ju[s]ti[f]ies her [c]l[ai]m [th]at [Th]e Bronx is a [p][l][a]ce sh[e]'s a[c]tua[l][y] [f]rom? Giorgio[s], that a[c]tuall[y] [s]tri[k]es [m][e] [p]erh[a][p]s the [m]o[s]t [s]en[s]ible ex[p]l[a][n]ation of [a][I]I. [I] [a][I][s]o [n][o]ti[c]ed, and [I] th[i]nk [i]t's [w]orth [n][o]ting, that [w]hen she [s]at her [p]o[s][t]e[r]io[r] was a [t][a]d [m]ore [a]m[p]le th[a]n I'd i[m][a]gined, [th]at [th]i[s] po[s]terior along with the am[b][i][g]u[i]ty [o]f her [o]r[i]g[i]n [b]e[g]an to [s]trike [m]e as al[m]o[s]t [o][m]inou[s][l]y [o]ut of [p][l]a[c]e, as i[f] another [p][l]ane of exi[s]ten[c]e was [f]orming. Th[a]t h[a][pp]ens [a]t [t]imes-[p]osteriors [a]nd their [r]ela[t]ive [a]m[p]li[t]ude [c]an va[r]y widely from ex[p]e[c][t]ations, the [p]o[s]terior is [a]l[m]o[s]t im[p]o[ss]i[b]le to e[s]ti[m]ate [b][a][s]ed on f[a][c]e [a]lone. I gue[ss] it'[s] reason[a]ble to [a][ss]e[r]t that we offer look at [a] pe[r][s]on's [f]a[c]e [a]nd [a]lgo[r]ithmi[c]a[ll]y [c][r]e[a]te [a]lmo[s]t [a] [s]i[m]u[l][a]tion of their body [f]rom thi[s] [f]a[c]e, that our [m]ind wor[k]s e[ss]entia[ll][y] algorith[m]i[c]a[ll][y], we

should ad[m]it [th]at, [th]at ou[r] [m]inds [p]ro[b]a[b]ly ju[s]t com[p]osed of [a]lgori[th]ms, [a]nd [th][a]t we [p]erform a [s]imilar [p]ro[c]e[ss] [w]ith voi[c]e, [w]hich [a]ctually h[a][pp]ened to m[e] ju[s]t re[c]entl[y] as [w]ell, [w]here I [s][p]o[k]e to a [p]er[s]on on the [ph]one a[n]d i[n]evitably [c]re[a]ted [a]n [a]lgorithmi[c] [s]imul[a]tion of her [f][a][c]e in [m][y] [m][i]nd. When [l] [s]aw her [f]a[c]e [a]t I[a][s]t onl[i]ne [I] was [s]tr[u][ck] by how m[u]ch th[i][s] p[i][c]ture d[i][ff]e[r]ed [f]rom the [s]i[m]ulation I'd [m]ade in [m][y] [m][i]nd-who was it [l] be[l][ie]ved [l] was [s]p[ea][k]ing to? I [l]oo[k] at [s][o]me[o]ne's fa[c]e and [th]en I [r]u[th][l]e[ss][l][v] algo[r]ithmi[c]a[ll][y] [s]imu[l]ate their body [w]ithout [c]on[s]ent, [w]hereas I hear [s][o]me[o]ne's voi[c]e a[n]d the[n] I [r]uth[l]e[ss][l][y] algo[r]ith[m]i[c]a[ll][y] [s]imu[l][a]te their f[a][c]e without [c]on[s]ent, [b]ut in [b]oth [c]a[s]es my a[cc]ura[c]y is [t]otally [s]to[ch]a[s][t]i[c], and [b]y [s]to[ch]a[s][t]i[c] I mean [t]erri[b]le. [F]rom voi[c]e to [f]a[c]e and [f]rom [f][a][c]e to body. we m[a][k]e ill-advised. [r]uth[l]e[ss] [s][p]e[c]u[l][a]tions [r]egarding [e]ve[r]yone who [e]nte[r]s ou[r] [p]eri[ph]ery! [l]n th[i][s] [s]en[s]e the [s]im[u]lation of the h[u]man [b]eg[i]ns w[i]th [v]oi[c]e. From [v]oi[c]e a[l]one we algorith[m]i[c]a[ll]y [s]i[m]u[l]ate [b]oth [f]a[c]e and [b]ody, [b]e[c]ause [f]rom [f]a[c]e we [s]imulate [b]ody, as you [s]aid. I[n] a[n]y [c][a][s]e, as the [c]onver[s][a]tion [p]rogr[e][ss]ed w[e]-[m]y[s][e][f], [K]atr[ee]na, and thi[s] [f][e][m]ale-began [t]o [t]ouch on the [t]o[p]i[c] of what ex[a][c]tly this [f][e]male h[a]d been doin[g] [s][i]n[c]e I[ea]vin[g] New York, and [i]n the m[i]d[s]t of th[i][s] [i]t [c]ame up th[a]t it ju[s]t [s]o [h][a]ppened th[a]t [h]er and I were [a][c]tually the

[s][a]me [a]ge, that she'd been [f]inding [l]o[c]ales she [l]i[k]ed at our age, although she noted how d[i][ff][i][c]ult [i]t was, [c]ompared to [N]ew Yor[k], where she k[n]ew the i[n]s a[n]d [o]uts [o]f [w]here to [p]atron[i][z]e and [w]hen, [w]hat [e][s]tabli[sh]ments [sh]e [e]njoyed and [w]hich [o]nes she d[e][s][p][i][s]ed. agr[ee]d i[mm][e]d[i]atel[y], noting th[a]t [a]t [m]y [a]ge, at our [a]ge, it [w]as [o]ne of the [m]ain de[t]errents [t]o [m][o]ving t[o] a[n]other [c]ity, parti[c]u[l]ar[l]y [N]ew Yor[k], which I'd [s]trong[l]y [c]on[s]idered [m][o]ving t[o] [m]ore than on[c]e, but, as I [s]aid ex[p][I][i][c][i]t[I]y to [h]er, to [h]ave to re[l]earn every [s]ingle [p][l]a[c]e that [l] [l][i]ke to [g]o, and how to [g]et there, to re[l]earn which [p][l]aces offend my [p]a[l][a]te, [a]t my age, it ju[s]t [s]tru[ck] me [a]s w[a]y [t]oo daunting of a [t][a][s][k] [t]o [t][a][k]e on. It [s]tru[ck] me [a]s a t[a][s][k] th[a]t would [c]on[s]ume [s]o [m]uch of [m]y e[n]erg[y] that it would e[ss]e[n]tia[ll][y] [m]ute all of [m]y [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]ical energ[ie]s [f]or at [l][ea][s]t [f]ive years. She m[e]ntioned a [L][e][b]anese [b]ar [w]here "you [w]al[k] [d]own[s]tairs" that she [l]i[k]ed a [l]ot. I [s]aid the [e]ntire [c]ity of Provi[d]en[c]e has be[c]ome [e][ss]e[n]tia[ll]y one [e]xte[n][d]ed hoo[k]ah [l]ounge, which, I admitted to [d]i[s][c][l]osu[r]e, a[pp][ea]ls he[r]. [f]ull to m[e] [d][ee][p]l[y], which, [f]ull [d]i[s]closure, [s][ee]med to genuinel[y] [s]ur[p][r]ise her, [th]at [th]e [e][n][t]ire [c]ity of [P][r]ovi[d]en[c]e was a[n] [e]x[t]e[n][d]ed [l]ounge. I [s]aid the [c][i]ty is [l][i]ttered w[i]th Gr[ee][k] and [L]eban[e]se [p]la[c]es [l]i[k]e that, which, of [c]our[s]e Giorgo[s], we kn[o]w is[n]'t true i[n] the [l][ea][s]t, [th]at [th]ere are [o]n[l]y a fra[c]tion of Gr[ee][k] [I]o[c]ations [c]om[p]ared to [L]eban[e]se [I][o][c][a]tions,

yet I [s]t[a]ted [i]t w[i]th [s][o] much [a][p]lomb she [d]i[d]n't [q]uestion it at [a][ll], [a][l]though she [d]id imm[e]d][i]atel[y] [q]u[e]stion wh[e]ther Gr[ee][k]s s[m]o[k]ed hoo[k]ah, to which I [s]im[p]ly [s][ai]d Otto[m]an [E]m[p]ire, to which she [s]aid of [c]our[s]e, i[mm][e][d][i]atel[y] [c]onne[c]ting the [d]ots. goodne[ss], [M]ar[k]o[s], I have to [s]ay that's [f]ai[r]ly impre[ss]ive, that a [f]ai[r]-s[k]inned [f]e[m]ale [f]rom [N]ew York would [c]o[nn]e[c]t [th]ose dots [th]at [q]ui[ck]ly. The Otto[m]an Em[p]ire, I [m]ean, at thi[s] [p]oint it'[s] ba[s]i[c]all[y] [a] [p][ie][c]e of [a]r[c]ana. [N][o] one k[n][o]ws [a]n[y]thing [a]bout the [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire [a]n[y][m]ore. Oh, I [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] agr[ee]! I tota[II][y] [f]eel [I]i[k]e the[r]e a[r]e just ve[r]y [f]ew [p][eo][p]le in our [g]e[n]eral [a][g]e r[a]n[g]e who k[n]ow a[n]ything [a]bout the [O]ttoman Em[p][i]re, and [l]'d [o][n]e hu[n]dred [p]e[r][c]ent [w]ager that [n]ot [o]ne other [p]e[r][s]on at Hot Clu[b] that [n]ight who k[n]ew a[n]vthing [a][b]out the [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire, [n]ever [m]ind its very [s][p]e[c]if[i][c] eth[n][i][c] [c]om[p]o[n]ents, who [c]ould [p]ut the [p][ie][c]es of [G]r[ee][k]s an[c]e[s]trally [s]mo[k]ing hoo[k]ah [t][o][g]ether by the utteran[c]e of [t]w[o] words: Ottoman Em[p]ire. In fact, it s[ee]ms to [m][e] [th]at [th]e Otto[m]an Em[p]ire is [m]aybe the [m]o[s]t neg[l][e][c]t[e]d [e]m[p]ire of the [p][a][s]t h[a]lf [m]i[ll]ennium, that [i]t [i]]nher[i]ted [i]ts [B]yzant[i]ne [p]rede[c]e[ss]or's [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c] of [b][e]ing [c]om[p]l[e]te[l][y] [d]i[s][c]ar[d]ed [b]y mo[d]ern [s][c]ho[l]arshi[p]. [N]o one k[n]ows what you [s][p]ea[k] of when you [s]o [m]uch as [m]e[n]tion the Otto[m]a[n] Em[p]ire, [pleo[plle are [f]lu[mm]oxed, ex[c]e[p]t a[pp]arentl[y] this [f]e[m]ale who [m][ay] or [m][ay] not

[b][e] [f]rom New York, [b]ut [c]ertainl[y] isn't [f]rom The [B]ronx. In short, I quickly [f]ound [th]at [th]e am[b]iguity of what New York [C][i]ty [b]orough [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c] was i[n]here[n]t i[n] this [f]emale [b]e[c]ame [r]e[f]le[c]ted [r]ight into the am[b]iguity of the ethni[c] [b]lo[ck]s [o]f the [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire, in a [p]o[s]t-Otto[m]an A[m]eri[c]an [d]ia[s][p]ora, i[n] a[n] A[m]eri[c]a that [i]s [i]t[s]elf [m]ul[t]i-eth[n]i[c], a[n]d [n]ot e[n][t]irel[y] [d]ifferentl[y] [th]an [th]e Otto[m]ans, Otto[m]ans who were only [t]rum[p]ed [i]n their [i]m[p]or[t]ation of [A][f]ri[c]an [s][l]aves by Ameri[c]a's [o]ut [o]f [c]ontrol [l]ove [a][ff]air with the [A][f]ri[c]an [s]lave. No one im[p]o[r]ted [m]o[r]e [A][f]rican [s]laves [th]an [th]e Otto[m]an [E]m[p]ire, [e]x[c]e[p]t of [c]our[s]e the United [S]tates of A[m]eri[c]a. The am[b]iguity of the tr[ai]ts di[s]pl[a]yed [b]y a Gr[ee][k] [v]e[r][s]us a Tu[r]k [v]e[r][s]us a Le[b]an[e]se [v]e[r][s]us a [K]u[r]d [v]er[s]us an Ar[m][e]n[i]an in the [s][ee][m]ingly [l]i[m]it[l]e[ss] Provi[d]en[c]e Hoo[k]ah Net[w]or[k] [w]as [s]u[dd]en[l]y a [d]ire[c]t [a]na[l]og to the [a]m[b]iguity of the New York [C][i]ty [b]o[r]ough [c]hara[c]te[r][i][s]t[i][c]s [i]nherent [i]n a [p]er[s]on who [p]e[r]ha[p]s du[b]iou[s][l]y [c][l]aims to [b][e] from New York [C]it[y]. I[n] one i[n][s]tan[c]e [w]e're unsu[r]e if [w]e're [w]itne[ss]ing a Gr[ee][k], a Tu[r][k], a Leban[e]se, a [K]u[r]d, an Armenia[n]; [i]n the other i[n][s]tan[c]e, we're unsu[r]e if [w]e're [w]itne[ss]ing a pe[r][s]on from The [B]ronx, from M[a]nh[a]ttan, from [S]t[a]ten Island, from [B]roo[k]lyn, from [Q]ueens; in [b]oth [c]a[s]es the overl[a][pp]ing [c]har[a][c]ter[i][s]t[i][c]s, out[s]ide [o]f their [o]r[i]g[i]nal [c]ontext ([o]f the [O]ttoman Em[p]ire and [N]ew York [C]it[y], re[s][p]e[c]tivel[y]), [b]e[c]ome vague e[n]ough in their [n]uan[c]e [th]at [th]e i[d]entity of [ea]ch [b]l[ee]ds

in[t]o [th]e o[th]er, un[t][i]l the [i]n[d]iv[i]dual i[d]entit[ie]s a[r]e e[r]a[s]ed compl[e]tel[y]. The New York [C]ity [d]ia[s][p]ora in [P]rovi[d]en[c]e [c]an refle[c]t [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c]s a[ss]o[c]iated with [S]taten Island, with M[a]nh[a]ttan, with The [B][r]onx, with [B][r]oo[k]lyn, with [Q]u[ee]ns, while the [m][e]d[i]an hoo[k]ah [s]mo[k]er thi[s] New York [C]ity transplant [m]ay [e]n[c]ounter i[n] the [e]xte[n][d]ed [P]rovi[d]en[c]e Hoo[k]ah Network [m]ay [d]i[s][p]lay [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c]s of the Gr[ee][k], of the Tur[k], of the Leban[e]se, of the [K]u[r]d, of the Armenia[n]. I[n] both [c]a[s]es what's [S]taten Island, what's [Q]u[ee]ns, what's [K]urd, what's Gr[ee][k], what's [B]roo[k]lyn, what's M[a]nh[a]ttan, what's Le[b]an[e]se, what's Tu[r]k, what's The [B]ronx, what's Arm[e][n]ia[n] all [b]l[ee]d i[n]to one a[n]other until they're esse[n]tially [i][n]di[s]tingu[i]sha[b]le from [ea]ch other, until they're [e][ss]e[n]tiall[y] [e]xti[n]guished, until we r[ea]ch a funda[me]ntal one[n]ess of a[n] Otto[m]a[n] [N]ew York [C]ity, a [l]egiti[m]ate [p][l][a]ne of exi[s][t]en[c]e that [c][a]me in[t]o [b][e]ing onl[y] at the Hot [C]lu[b] [v]ia [c]on[v]er[s][a]tion thi[s] [p]a[s]t Frid[a]y night. Th[i]s [i][s] a ph[y]s[i]cal plane of ex[i][s]ten[c]e [n]ow, the Ottoman [N]ew York [C][i]ty of One[n]e[ss]. It can [n]o longer [b]e [d]e[n]ied, a[n] Otto[m]a[n] [N]ew York Cit[y] where all i[d]entit[v] has [b]een [e]x[t][i]nguished [i]n[t]o [m]o[n]a[d]i[c] One[n]e[ss] [c]ame in[t]o [e]xi[s]ten[c]e on a Fri[d]ay [n]ight at the Hot [C]lub. Yet that girl-[c]ould she h[a]ve [a][c]tually [b]een f[r]om The [B][r]onx? [W]ith [o][n]e hu[n]dred [p]e[r][c]ent [c]e[r]tainty I [w]ill assu[r]e you, Gior[g]o[s], [th]at [th]e [g]irl I [s][p]oke with [F][r]iday [n]ight was ab[s]o[l]ute[l]y [n]ot [f][r]om The Bronx.

A Modest Parallel Universe

Echoes: 1716 Syllables: 2423 Self-Similarity: .708

[I]n[i]tially a th[i]n h[i][p]ster with a full [r]ed [b]eard was in the [b][a]th[r]oom [a]t [N]ick-A-[N][ee]'s, [p][ee]ing at the t[a]ll u[r]i[n]al, [b]ut [w]he[n] I [w]e[n]t i[n], after he [w][a]l[k]ed out, I [m]ade a [p]oint to [p][ee] at the [k]idd[ie] u[r]inal, a t[r]ade[m]ar[k] of [m]ine, for whatever [r][ea]son [l] [f][i]nd [m][y]sel[f] [m]ore [a]t [ea]se [a]t the kidd[ie] u[r]inals, [a]s I'm long-tors[o]ed [i]n [a][dd][i]tion to being of [o]nly [a]verage height; ye[s], the ki[dd]ie urinals are e[ss]entiall[y] [m]ade for [m][e], and [p][ee]ing at the [k]idd[ie] urinal I too[k] [n]ote of what [l]oo[k]ed [l]i[k]e [p][ie][c]e of [a][ss][c]r[a][ck] [c]o[nn][e][c]ted i[n][e]xtri[c]ab[l]y to a [l]ong [p][ie][c]e of a[ss] hair. Th[i][s[[i]s what it [s]tru[ck] me [a]s [a]t I[ea][s]t. I thought ba[ck] to par[k]ing on the [s]tr[ee]t [f]i[f]ty [f][ee]t [f]rom [N]i[ck]-A-[N][ee]'s, to [m]y [c]on[s]ternation [w]ith the driver [w]earing his [m]aroon [p]i[ck][u][p] tr[u][ck] [s]now[c]a[p] in [c]ur[s]ing me through h[i]s w[i]ndshield as I [s]l[o]wly [s][c][o][p]ed the one [o][p]en [s][p]ot on the [s]treet. [A]t th[a]t time, with his [p]e[r]tu[r]bed ex[p][r]ession and [p][r]ehi[s]tori[c] [f]acial [f]eatures, he [s]tru[ck] me as the [w]o[r][s]t [p]e[r][s]on in the [w]o[r]ld and fran[k]ly [s]till does. I [w]ished nothing but the [w]o[r][s]t [th][i]ngs on [th][i][s] [p]e[r][s]on as I [p]ulled over to let him [p]a[ss], [h]arangu[i]ng [h][i]m through my [w][i]ndshield as he

[s]i[m]ultaneou[s]l[y] [s][c]r[ea]med at [m]e through h[i]s [w][i]ndsh[ie]ld, then [c]almly hit rever[s]e to [m]ove ba[ck] into the [m]iddle of the [s]treet, to [p]ara[ll]el [o]n[l]y [o][p]en [s][p]ot, [p]ar[k] in the ju[s]t [m]o[m]entari[l]y [l]odging the [r]ight [r][ea]r wh[ee]l ever [s]o [s][l]ight[l]y on[t]o the a[tt]enuated curb. In [m][y] [m][i]nd thi[s] [m]an [i]n the p[i][ck][u]p tr[u][ck] was a grote[s][q]]ue [s]t[ai]n on the f[a][c]e of our [p]lanet. His [f]a[c]e, in both its [s][t][r]u[c]ture and exp[r]ession, [s][t][i][ck]ing with m[e] at the bar in [N][i][c]k-A-[N][ee]'s, [m]o[r]e or le[ss] [r]evolted [m]e in the [m]o[s]t extreme of ways. The [m]an to [m]y l[e]ft ordered imp[r][e][ss]ively g[r]ot[e][s]que [s]melling [s]oup from the bar-it was all I could [s]m[e]ll at the time, and the [s]t[e]nch was [s][u]ch that it [s]tr[u][ck] me as [f]rank[l]y a [l][i]ttle un[b]e[l]ieva[b]le [i]t w[a][f]ted [f]rom a [b]owl a m[a]n was [a]ctua[ll]y eating [f]rom, y[e]t i[f] any[th][i]ng [th][i]s [m]ade [m]e [e]njoy [N]ick-A-[N][ee]'s [e]ven [m]ore. The [b]and [p][l]aying the [b]ar em[p][l]oyed a white [s]axophone [p][l]ayer, and each [r]e[s][p]e[c]t[i]ve [i]n[s]t[r]umentali[s]t was [d]rin[k]ing a [s]e[p]arate, [d]i[s]tin[c]t variety of al[c]ohol-[o]ne [w]hi[s][k]ey, [o]ne [c]raft beer, one [s]ome type of m[i]xed dr[i]nk, one nothing at [a]II, [a]II [f]our [f]ran[k][I]y [I]oo[k]ing [I][i]ttle [l]i[k]e t[y]p[i][c]al mus[i]cians, and I [f]ound it n[o]table how ea[s]ily the [s][a]xo[ph][o]ne, I pre[s]umed tenor, [s][a]t in the [m]i[x] with ju[s]t a [m]i[c]ro[ph]one ne[x]t to it, [g][i]ven the [a][cc]ompanim[e]nt of [e]le[c]tri[c] [g]u[i]tar, ele[c]tri[c] ba[ss], and [a][c]ou[s]ti[c] drums [th]at were [p][l]ayed in a [th]o[r]ough[l]y [r]ock, as o[pp]osed to jazz, [s]tyle. [l] gu[e][ss] [l] [n][e]ver k[n]ew that about tenor [s]axophone. [R]o[ck] [d]rums have

in[c][r]ea[s]ing[l]y di[s]tre[ss]ed me of [l]ate. When I think of a style of drumming that offends my taste rock dru[mm]ing i[mm][e]d[i]atel[y] vaults [t]o the [t]o[p] of the list-i[n] [m]y o[p]i[n]ion, [S]trat[o][s], [m][o][s]t ro[ck] [m]usi[c] would [b][e] [i][mm]easura[b]l[y] [i][m][p]roved w[i]th the s[i]m[p]le re[m]oval [o]f [p]erc[u]ssion, or at lea[s]t with а [m]ore [m][u]ted [s]ub[s]tit[u]te [p]ercussion. [M]ay[b]e a [t][o]ngue dr[u]m? Amplified [t][o]ngue [d][r][u]m? [D]is[t]orted [t]am[b]ou[r]ine? [B]ut hone[s]tl[y] that'[s] ju[s]t m[e], [b]e[c][au]se I fu[ll]y rea[l]ize mo[s]t [p]eo[p]le l[o]ve [p]er[c][u]ssion, that [i]s viewed [p]er[c]uss[i]on as the [s]o-[c]alled [b]a[ck][b]one of m[o]dern [c][o]mpos[i]tion, that tons of I[i][s]teners [s]t[i]II vene[r][a]te [r]o[ck] musi[c]. I[n] a[n]y [c][a]se, [l] [g]ue[ss] [l] should [s]tart to ex[p]l[ai]n [h]ow l [g]ot [h]ere, shouldn't I? From [y]our [p]arallel universe [y]ou mean? Ex[a][c]tly, [S]tr[a]to[s]. It now [s][ee]ms to m[e] that I [c]ro[ss]ed o[v]er [i]nto th[i]s uni[v]er[s]e, or I should [s][a]y I be[c][a]me a[w]a[r]e th[a]t it [h[a]d [h][a][pp]ened, [p]re[c]i[s]ely [a]t the [p]oint [w]he[r]e [th]e b[o]zo in [th]e sn[o]w[c]a[p] in his dar[k] [r]ed [p]i[ck]u[p] t[r]u[ck] beg[a]n yelling [a]t me through h[i]s w[i]ndshield, as I a[tt]em[p][t]ed to [p]arallel [p]ar[k] u[p] the [s]tr[ee]t from [N]i[ck]-A-[N][ee]'s, [w]here a man [w]ould then or[d]er [o]ne of the mo[s]t [d]i[s]gu[s]tin[g] [s]mellin[g] [s]ou[p]s I'[v]e [e][v]er [e]ncountered from its [b]ar. It was o[b]viou[s] [a]s the m[a]n, who [I] [d]e[s][p][i]sed, [l]oo[k]ed ex[a][c]tly [l]i[k]e [s]ome[o]ne [A][l][a][b]am[a]-he [w]as [w]earing [s]nowca[p] а [d]e[s][p]ite it b[e]ing a mo[d]e[r]atel[y] tem[p]e[r]ate [d]ay in earl[y] A[p][r]il, and given th[e]se [f]a[c]ts it was [s]omething obv[i]ou[s] had sh[i][f]ted

[s][i]gn[i][f][i][c]antly, but I [c]oul[d][n]'t [d]raw [c]on[c]l[u]sions [q]uite [a]t th[a]t [p]oint. But these are the [t]y[p]es of [c][u]es y[ou] have [t]o [t]ake in[t]o a[cc]ount with regard to [th]ings [s]uch as [th][e]se, [S]trato[s], [p]arallel u[n]iver[s]e [c]o[n][u]ndr[u]ms, [s]o to [s][p][ea][k]. [H]ow ex[a]ctly it [h][a][pp]ens I'm not [a]t li[b]erty [t]o de[t]ail [a]t this [t]ime, [a]s it's [p]o[ss]i[b]le I'm ig[n]orant of the me[c]ha[n]i[c]s of the [p]ro[c]e[ss], or I'm a[w]are of the [p][r]o[c]e[ss] in a [w][a]y I [c]an only [c]ommun[i][c][a]te [i]n [i]ndi[r]e[c]t [w][a]ys. [m]a[k]e[s] [s]ense, [M]ar[k]o[s]. There's obviou[s][l][y] [o]n[l][y] [s][o] [m]uch we [c]an [p]ut into [w]ords [w]hen it [c]omes to [p]arallel univer[s]es. For exam[p]le, it was [p]re[c]i[s]e[l][y] at [N]ick-A-[N][ee]'s that I h[a][p]pened to [l]og onto the [b][a][s][k]et[b]all-[r][e][f]e[r]en[c]e dot [c]om [w][e][b][p]age, [S]t[r]ato[s], [w]hich only [c]on[f]irmed my [s]u[s][p][i]c[i]ons, [w]h[i]ch had been stea[d]i[l][y] rising, which on[I][y] [a][c]ted [a]s a[n]other [c][I]ue [a]s I [d]elved [d][ee]per in[t]o the s[t]at[l][i]nes [l]'ll [d][e]tail right [n]ow. [S][p]e[c]ifi[c]ally, as I re[c]alled it, [b]eyond a sh[a][d]ow of a [d]oubt [i]t [s][a]t [i]n [m]y [m]e[m]ories, the [B]o[s]ton [C]el[t]ic J[a]ys[o]n [T][a]tum [o]wned a [s]ta[t][i][s]t[i][c]al pr[o]file that ex[c]ee[d]ed th[a]t of [D][a]llas [M][a]veri[ck] Lu[k]a [D]onci[c], whereas [L]u[k]a [D]onci[c] h[a]d a [s]ta[t][i][s]t[i][c]al [s]u[mm][a]tion th[a]t I[a]gged th[a]t of J[a]y[s]on [T][a]tum. And vet on [b][a][s][k]et[b]all-re[f]eren[c]e dot [c]om at [N]i[ck]-A-[N][ee]'s, onl[y] [m]o[m]ents a[f]ter][s]aid [b][o]zo in [s]n[o]w[c]a[p] in the [A]la[b][a][m]a-e[s]que[m]aroon [p]i[ck][u][p] t[r][u][c]k [b]e[r]ated [m]e through h[i]s w[i]ndshield, it o[cc]urred to [m]e that Lu[k]a Donci[c] [f]ar [m]ore had by the [c]om[p]lete

[s]tat[i][s]t[i][c]al [p]ro[f]ile [c]om[p]ared to J[a]y[s]on T[a]tum, de[s][p]ite [b]oth Lu[k]a [a]nd Tatum [a]veraging a[b]ove thirty [p]oints [p]er g[a]me thi[s] NB[A] [s]eason. [S][p]e[c]ifi[c]all[v], on thi[s] [s]ide, [S]tratos, it [s][ee]med that Lu[k]a di[ff]e[r]enti[a]ted himsel[f] [f][r]om T[a]tum by [g]etting to the [f]ree th[r]ow [s]t[r]i[p]e at a [m]uch [g][r]eater [c]li[p], by [m]aking [p]lays [f]or [o]thers at a [c]lip [th][a]t more [th][a]n d[o]ubled T[a]tum's r[a]te. Where J[a]yson T[a]tum a[ss][i][s]t[e]d on ju[s]t twe[n]ty [p]er[c]e[n]t of his [p]ossessions, while [t]urning the ball over on [t]en [p]er[c]ent, Luka Doncic a[ss][i][s]t[e]d on forty three [p]er[c]ent of his [p]ossessions [w]hile [t]urning the [b]all [o]ver on [o]nly [t][w]elve [p]er[c]ent, [w]hile [b]oth re[b]ounded ju[s]t a[b]out [th]irteen [p]er[c]ent of [th]eir [p][o][ss]i[b]le [p][o]sse[ss]io[n]s and [sh]ot a[n] a[gg]re[g]ate [p]er[c]en[t]age of [s]ix[t]y ([t]r[u]e sh[oo]ting [p]er[c]entage) on [th]eir [th]irty [p]oints [p]er game. Yet I ex[p][l][i][c][i]t[l]y [r]e[c]alled J[a]y[s]on T[a]tum b[e]ing the far [s]u[p][e][r]ior [p]l[a]ym[a][k]er, by more than [d]ouble, when [c]om[p]ared t[o] L[u]ka [D]onci[c], in those exa[c]t [t]erms of a[ss]i[s]t [p]er[c]en[t]age and [f]ree throw rate, y[e]t wh[e]n I [b]a[s]ket[b]all-[r]e[f]e[r]en[c]e l[o]gged [o]nto [N]i[ck]-A-[N]ee's, to my great [s]ur[p][r][i]se, Lu[k]a Donci[c] [s]e[p]a[r][a]ted him[s]el[f] [f]rom J[a]y[s]on T[a]tum b[y] [h]is [h]igher [p]ro[p][e]n[s]ity of g[e]tting to the [f][r]ee throw [s]t[r][i][p]e and [b]y his [s]tar[k] [c]ont[r]a[s]t in [s]etting his team[m][a]tes up for [m][a]de shots (e[s][p][e]ciall[y] wh[e]n [c]om[p]ared to his [p]ro[p]en[s]it[y] [t]o the [t]urn the ball [o]ver). It's [o]nly in the [m]ost [m]inute of ways that we [c]an de[t]e[c]t these [t]rans[i]t[i]ons, [S]trato[s], if that ma[k]e[s] [s]en[s]e, that we [c]an [c]on[c]lude we'[v]e tra[v]er[s]ed a[c]ro[ss] pote[n]tial di[m]e[n]sions, if that [m]a[k]es [s]e[n][s]e? Oh, abso[l]ute[l]y! [A]nd to [a]dd t[o] the con[f][u]sion it was on[l]y a night [l]ater, in a [v]i[v]id [d]ream, that [l] [f]ound m[y][s]el[f] in a [d]e[s]o[l]ate house [c]o[v]ered [w]ith o[r]ange [w]all[p][a][p]er, [c]u[r]iou[s]l[y] [p]r[e]o[cc]u[p]ied [w]ith b[a]thing my[s]elf, a[pp]a[r]ently g[e]tting [r][ea]dy [f]or [s]omething I [c]ouldn't [q]uite [p]ut my [f]inger on-[i]t was [i][n] th[i][s] home w[i]th the o[r]a[n]ge i[n]te[r]ior that I felt agai[n] thi[s] p[s]y[c]hi[c] e[n]ergy with [n]ear [s]tr[a]ngers, [n]ear [s]tr[a]ngers who [s]eem to [p]op in[t]o [m]y [m]en[t]al [s][p][a][c]e unannoun[c]ed, th[a]t h[a]s in[c]rea[s]ingly [s]tru[c]k me [a]s an [a][c]tual [ph][y]s[i][c]al [ph]e[n]ome[n]on. That I [c][a]n [a][c]tually [th]in[k] b[a][c]k toward [th][e]se n[ea]r strangers in a [ph][y]s[i][c]al [f][a][sh][i]on. Yet this was be[f]ore a [p]arti[c]ular [sh][a][d]ow [f]rom my [p][a][s]t a[pp][ea]red to [m][e] yet agai[n] [i]n [d]r[ea]m, [i]n the [m]o[s]t [v]i[v]id of [m][a]nners, [a]nd I beg[a]n to r[u]n [f]r[o]m [s]ome[th]ing, [s]ome[th]ing [l] [c]oul[d]n't [i][d]enti[f][y], wh[i]le [s]imulta[n]eou[s]ly re[c]o[nn]e[c]ting w[i]th th[i][s] shad[o]w [w][i]thout [ei]ther [o]f u[s] [s]aying a [w]ord to [ea]ch [o]ther, un[t]il I [s][t]umbled u[p][o]n [w]hat [l]oo[k]ed [l]i[k]e a [l]o[ck]er room i[n] a[n] o[p]en field. I entered the [b]ui[l]ding, a s[o]-[c]alled [l]o[ck]er [r]oom i[n] all a[n] [o]pe[n] field. a[n]d [r]ea[l]ized [m]e[m]o[r]a[b]i[l]ia w[a]s fr[o]m [n][i]net[ee]n [n][i]net[y] eight-and [I] real[i]zed [I]'d tr[a][v]eled b[a]ck to [n][i]net[ee]n [n][i]net[y] eight, that e[v]erything I [t]ouched was [t]otall[y] [n][i]net[ee]n [n][i]net[y] eight, that my [o]wn [s][o]-[c]alled identit[y] was ju[s]t a [c]lums[y] [b]l[o][ck] [a][c]ro[ss] [s]omething that [c]ould [b]e tr[a]ver[s]ed if

[a][pp][r]oached [p][r]o[p]erl[y], a[n]d the[n] [s]uddenl[y] [th]e [th]ought occurred to m[e]: T[i]me [s]tarts [i]n the m[i]ddle and w[i]nds [a]round, [a]lways [i]n the m[i]ddle, I [th]ought, [th]at [th]is notion of [t][i]me [b]eg[i]nn[i]ng at the [b]eg[i]nn[i]ng [i]s en[t][i]rely fal[s]e, perhap[s] even non[s]en[s]ical. [W]hen a[w]a[k]e I franti[c]all[y] wr[o]te a n[o]te that [s][i]mpl[y] [s]aid: T[i]me [s]tarts [i]n the m[i]ddle and w[i]nds around. [A]nd, [a]s [l] en[c]ountered this lidea, strien of grieen, for inalication better word, time sh[o]t [o]ut, [l]i[k]e Ni[ck]e[l]odeon G[a][ck] or [s]omething, variou[s] [s]treams of time [o]ver[l]apping each other in i[o]you[s] [b]u[r][s]ts of [g]reen, like the wo[r]d [G][o], and it was a [s]ort of i[o]you[s] e[v]e[n]t e[v]e[n] [i][n] [i]ts am[b][i]guity. I was a If it the disappoint of the list of the li shr[oo]ms at all? N[o], [s][a]dly, [S]tr[a]t[o]s, I was compl[e]tel[y] [f][r][ee] [f][r]om hallu[c]inoge[n]s [w]he[n] I [w]e[n]t to sl[ee]p, [w]he[n] I [w]e[n]t to [N]ick-A-[N][ee]'s, when the red-bear[d]ed hi[p][s]ter [p]eed at the a[d]ult urinal, when the [m]an next to [m]e or[d]ered the [d]i[s]gu[s]ting [s]ou[p], [w]hen the b[o]z[o] [w]ith the [s]n[o]w[c]a[p] [s][c]r[ea]med at m[e], when the [s]axophone was [s]ur[p]r[i]singly h[i]gh [i]n the m[i]x. N[o], we [d][o]n't [n]e[c]e[ss]arily [n]eed [t]o [t][r]avel in the [t][r]a[d][i]t[i]onal [s]en[s]e [i]n or[d]er [t]o [t][r]avel g[r]eat [d]i[s]tan[c]es, that much we can be sure of. That [m]akes [c]omplete sense to [m]e, [M]ar[k]os!

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