



Metropolis + Isosceles  
Nicholas Syrianus Katsafanas

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Adam Metropolis ... 4  
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ADAM METROPOLIS  
The Number 1.99999 Repeating

Mode: >.667  
8,809:11,704 .753

I

614:793 .774

We hadn't been there ninety seconds,  
because it was right as we walked  
in the backyard of the high school graduation party  
that her cousin approached us  
and, without the slightest hesitation,  
asked my girlfriend right to her face—  
'Did you bring my  
tupperware with you?'  
It took perhaps longer than I  
care to confess  
to fully recognize what exactly it was  
she was referencing.  
Oh, the oxtail, I reflected,  
a second or so later,  
as I recalled there being a beautiful,  
wood-covered, piece of glass of tupperware  
sitting in our refrigerator for over a week,  
incubating an oxtail dish  
that had, unfortunately, totally expired—  
it was so far gone  
I was hesitant to even open  
the top of the tupperware container,  
despite the fact  
the top of the container was a beautiful,  
wood finished piece.  
There was no doubt in my mind  
that this oxtail was, at that point,  
not just completely expired

but essentially a type of meat soup,  
a type of liquified corpse,  
which of course disgusted me severely.  
Cleaning it out struck me as a grotesque idea.  
I can't say for certain,  
but it's more likely than not  
that I threw it into the trash—  
tupperware, wood top, and oxtail.  
'Oh, so sorry,  
I'll definitely bring it back soon!' she said,  
and I glanced at her and attempted to decipher  
if she had any idea the tupperware  
and the oxtail were both long gone,  
that both now sat in a garbage heap,  
a pile of trash somewhere,  
at the bottom of a public dump,  
still filled with decayed, grotesque oxtail,  
and that her cousin would never again  
own the privilege of placing her leftovers  
into that piece of tupperware  
with the beautiful wood cover.  
That tupperware was finished.  
Having said that, even the finest piece of tupperware—  
how precious is it really?  
Couldn't we replace it for five dollars or less?  
My thinking at the time was yes,  
that the tupperware was entirely fungible,  
yet as soon as we stepped foot  
into this high school graduation party  
her cousin inquired about the tupperware—  
as if this tupperware perhaps belonged

to some sort of rare species of tupperware,  
perhaps a species of tupperware  
on the verge of extinction,  
perhaps this was some kind of  
one-of-a-kind tupperware  
I nonchalantly tossed into a pile of trash.  
Some people have massive amounts  
of respect for tupperware,  
but I've never been one of them,  
it always eluded me why anyone would  
invest more than one dollar  
into a piece of tupperware, personally.  
To my mind, if a piece of tupperware,  
no matter the level of craftsmanship,  
is priced above one dollar,  
then it's an overpriced piece of tupperware.  
It's just not an item I've personally  
ever viewed as an investment of any kind.  
In my mind, plates and bowls  
are relatively worthwhile investments,  
while tupperware is essentially  
a capitalist ploy to increase the profit margin  
on plastic bags—  
to convince people they shouldn't only  
invest in plates and bowls,  
but also invest in the highest quality plastic bags  
(tupperware),  
that in theory they'll use again and again,  
but in practice they'll lose incessantly  
and constantly have to replace.

## II

696:817 .852

'She's never getting that tupperware back,' I said.  
'You threw it in the trash?' she said.  
'You gave the okay?' I said,  
to which she shook her head,  
clearly misremembering  
the plethora of times we've thrown out tupperware in  
the past,  
the countless times I've  
seen a piece of well-worn tupperware  
taking up space in our refrigerator,  
asked her if I could throw said tupperware out,  
received approval to throw said tupperware out,  
and thrown out said tupperware.  
'It's not a problem,' I said,  
'we can probably just  
buy her a replacement or something.'  
She agreed but seemed dubious,  
and I felt the same,  
I found myself agreeing with both  
myself and my girlfriend,  
despite the fact we had  
diametrically opposed views on this tupperware.  
My girlfriend and I disagreed on our ability  
to replace this tupperware,  
and I agreed with both of us.  
I sat in a lawn chair a second or so later,  
drinking a glass of Soju,  
explicitly attempting to avoid any

unnecessary interaction  
at this high school graduation  
until I'd imbibed at least half  
this bottle of Soju,  
doubting my ability  
to come off appropriately cordial  
in a social setting  
sans a minimum of half of a bottle  
of this Soju ruthlessly percolating  
through my bloodstream.

I sat there, contemplating high school graduations,  
contemplating my own high school graduation,  
recalling nothing of my high school graduation,  
contemplating the pervasive idiocy  
of organized education,  
considering how more or less every unique thinker—  
from Socrates stoned by the Athenians  
to Giordano Bruno burnt alive by the Catholic church  
to Nietzsche unread and in an insane asylum  
as he rotted away—yes,  
every unique thinker over the course  
of human history was either intensely ostracized  
or simply assassinated by the systematic educators  
of his or her day. In short,  
I was vociferously drinking this glass of Soju  
when I thought to myself—Isn't it possible  
that we think of the theological philosophers  
as the conservatives, as the ones restrained  
by this so-called conception of God,  
yet it's actually the case that the theological  
philosophers,

over the course of human history,  
are the most audacious,  
the boldest philosophers we have  
and have ever had?  
How else can we explain Berkeley, I thought—  
easily the most radical skeptic the modern West  
has produced, yet also a Catholic priest?  
Dionysius, for example,  
was actually quite vigorous in his skepticism  
of our ability to know anything,  
his circumlocutions were actually quite radical.  
Whereas our typical secular atheist philosopher,  
while assured of our ability to know there are no Gods,  
is rather neutered in his philosophical speculations  
if the fact that God doesn't exist is left to the side.  
Isn't it possible that the so-called theological  
philosophers  
are the most audacious among us?  
The ones who are willing to take the properly radical  
leaps  
necessary when dealing with metaphysics,  
I thought while vociferously drinking this bottle of Soju,  
unwilling to speak to anyone  
at this high school graduation  
until I had thoroughly contemplated  
the true nature of the theological philosopher.

### III

889:1181 .753

How else can we explain Kierkegaard?  
The secular philosophers talk our ears off  
and more often than not say nothing  
beyond what their thesis advisors demand to be printed,  
    I thought,  
vociferously drinking this bottle of Soju,  
while the apex of the theological philosopher  
truly enacts the notion of philosophizing with a  
    hammer?  
Yet, in our era,  
it seems we more or less  
dismiss all philosophers who choose to believe in God,  
I thought. Is it then possible, I thought,  
drinking my Soju, vociferously,  
that because the theological philosophers  
have been essentially shunned from the modern  
    academy,  
that the mere mention of God is anathema  
to the modern academy,  
that because the theological philosopher  
has been holistically banned  
from partaking in the modern so-called academy,  
our modern organized educators,  
that they've therefore managed to maneuver  
outside of the stifling bureaucracy of the university—  
and actually engaged with original thought?  
Should we consider that possible?  
That they echo early Christian theologians,

persecuted by pagan Roman authorities,  
who created elaborate frameworks  
that formed the sui generis  
metaphysical foundation of early Christian thought,  
a sui generis synthesis  
of the canonical Gospels  
with Neoplatonic thought,  
that our modern theologians,  
almost regardless of denomination,  
prosecuted by the atheist university bureaucrats,  
are working within perhaps similarly radical  
frameworks?

After all, secular academic philosophers  
are loath to speculate on much of anything in our era.  
In their place we have theoretical physicists  
who employ complex mathematics  
to prove the susceptibility of complex mathematics  
to almost any type of sophistry.  
Frankly, I've never respected mathematicians,  
I should admit that much upfront.  
I suppose, in my own way,  
I've always viewed mathematicians  
as essentially charlatans.  
I view the art of mathematics  
as not only decadent,  
but I also view the concept of number  
as an essentially metaphysical domain.  
The mathematician's formulas  
are always derivative  
of the numerical axioms of metaphysics—  
it's always struck me as entirely possible

that numbers are an impossibility.  
That the introduction of the decimal point,  
of the fraction,  
essentially sank mathematics right in its place,  
in my eyes at least.  
Of course, I'm at bottom a disciple of Palamas,  
for certain, I was inadvertently baptized as a disciple of  
    Palamas,  
of course, I fundamentally disagree  
with this modern idea  
that we can comprehend everything  
in a purely intellectual fashion,  
this notion that there's,  
in practice, no limit to the human intellect.  
I find that idea to be one of the most absolutely absurd.  
Sure, of course, we can read, say,  
Parmenides and, while it's impressive,  
it's also entirely absurd, and I personally enjoy it  
    immensely,  
but on those merits. I'm not sure I'd base my scientific  
    thought on it.  
I'm at least less than certain it'd become  
the cornerstone of my secular intellectual pursuits.  
Parmenides is one of the perfect works of absurdist  
    fiction  
written in any language,  
and if we indeed made it a cornerstone of our secular  
    intellectual pursuits,  
then at least we'd need to recognize our absurdist  
    origins,  
as Dionysius rightfully does.

Yet we've employed Parmenides for centuries  
as a fundamental commentary on allegedly rationalist  
notions.

Allegedly rationalist notions—  
is this not what we find ourselves steeped in,  
more or less night and day?

When I comment on metaphysics  
I do so in a consciously absurd fashion,  
because I recognize the limits of language,  
the limits of language that at bottom are incapable  
of communicating metaphysics in linear and/or rational  
fashions.

It seems somewhat obvious  
that there's a nefarious literalism at play here,  
I think it's safe to say that.

Ever since grade school

I was positive that I stood in the presence  
of a nefarious literalism.

Even as a young boy, instinctively,  
I knew numbers were, in all likelihood,  
impossibilities, and that my systematic education  
was highly susceptible to,  
if not entirely complicit in, a nefarious literalism.

The education of my youth  
didn't exactly encourage audacious thought.

#### IV

805:1077 .747

In any case, we can't compose metaphysics  
in a rational sense, can we?

Isn't it always in a between-the-lines sense  
that we compose metaphysics,  
in winks and nods that we write metaphysics,  
because we can't write metaphysics  
in a linear and/or rational fashion?

We take far too much at face value.

Our literalism is intentionally or unintentionally  
nefarious.

Because the reality is nearly nothing  
can be taken at face value.

Do you really believe the greatest minds of Antiquity  
intended to be taken at face value?

The Byzantines read Plato  
the same way we read Dostoyevsky,  
whereas we read Plato the same way  
the Byzantines read the Gospels.

Perhaps both are absurd. Now, sure,

I'm without a doubt, from a certain vantage point at  
least,

a disciple of Palamas, I won't attempt to deny that,  
but we can't take everything

Palamas put to papyrus at face value either.

Although Palamas understood  
the shortcomings of Antiquity better than even  
the most progressive modern scholar,  
I'd be the last one to say I take

everything the saint wrote at face value,  
because I'm far from a literalist.  
The modern scholar, insofar as he keeps his faith in  
rationalism,  
will most likely never come to terms  
with the nature of Antiquity—is that fair to say?  
He'll read Parmenides and take everything literally,  
and in taking everything literally  
he'll inevitably take everything idiotically.  
Isn't it the case that the theologians  
are the greatest skeptics among us?  
We view faith as poison  
as we retain fanatical levels of faith  
in our sensory organs.  
We peruse a variety of empirical studies  
that vivisect the grotesque fictions  
of our sensory organs—  
did you know it's now speculated  
human beings didn't see the color blue  
until the latter BC centuries at earliest?  
All around us our sensory organs  
excrete evidence of their utter unreliability,  
yet we view faith as idiocy  
while retaining this fanatical notion  
that our sensory organs  
can and should and must be trusted—  
which is why we're not quite radical enough.  
The modern age retains radical faith  
in its sensory organs in a more fanatical fashion  
than any historical religion known to man.  
Nothing can be taken at face value,

that much we should agree on,  
which brings me to this,  
a true fly in the ointment, so to speak—  
how is it you arrive at a postulation  
of an essence you cannot know?  
This is the question, is it not?  
How does the mathematician reach  
the postulation numbers are actual and distinct?  
How is it possible, given human capabilities,  
to distinguish the number two  
from the number one point nine repeating  
(1.999999...) in practice?  
How is it possible to distinguish two  
from one point nine repeating?  
How does mathematics attempt to lay any claim  
to physical space—  
to attempt to claim the ability  
to leave the theoretical—  
when it's impossible for us  
to distinguish the number two  
from the number one point nine repeating  
(1.999999999999999999999999...), in practice?  
It seems impossible for us to know  
that the number two is in fact the number two,  
and not the number one point nine repeating  
(1.9999999999999999...),  
and if we're unable to know the number two  
is in fact the number two  
then how could it be possible  
to assert that mathematics  
has any value outside

of the purely theoretical?  
By instinct perhaps we feel as though  
the number two is the number two,  
and the number one is the number one, yes,  
the mathematical axioms may feel correct,  
yet the fact remains  
that we lack the perceptual faculties  
to distinguish two apples  
from one point nine repeating  
(1.9999999999...) apples.  
When we speak of  
the Essence of all things  
we don't speak any differently—  
with the exception that  
our philosophy of an unknowable Essence  
seeks to put a strict limit on knowledge  
based on instinctive assumptions,  
whereas the philosophy of mathematics  
attempts to indefinitely expand our knowledge  
based on nothing more  
than an instinctive assumption,  
the instinctive assumption  
that we can successfully distinguish two apples  
from one point nine repeating  
(1.9999999999...) apples.

V

363:468 .776

There's no doubt that we're  
in the midst of something essentially mysterious,  
that when we discuss the essence of life  
we think we can make sense of it all,  
that we're on the precipice  
of making sense of ourselves and our surroundings,  
yet there's still little doubt we remain  
in the midst of something  
essentially mysterious when we begin to think clearly.  
Thinking is perhaps  
the most mysterious act of all.  
Thinking, which we generally believe  
translates material and immaterial experience into  
    language—  
into modes that are communicable.  
Thinking, which attempts to take something  
such as consuming a juicy pear,  
an experience that ultimately  
is confined to personal experience,  
and extrapolate it in a communicable format  
to the general populace.  
Sans thinking, consuming a juicy pear  
would be something confined to the private sphere—  
with thinking it's then presumably allowed to enter the  
    public domain.  
There is, in fact,  
no remaining public domain sans thinking,  
and there's in essence

no thinking sans a public domain.  
Assuming we consume a juicy pear,  
thinking Wow, this pear is juicy,  
but refuse to write it down,  
to verbally express it to our peers,  
then the thought Wow, this pear is juicy  
remains in the purely immaterial realm,  
it's existence purely speculative,  
both the thought and the physical experience  
remain essentially purely speculative.  
It's only when the thought  
Wow, this pear is juicy enters the public domain  
that it becomes, perhaps not real,  
but at least apparent in a more material manner—  
it's verified as a real experience  
and subsequently verified as a real thought.  
I too consumed a pear,  
and wow it was also quite juicy!  
There's no doubt  
we're in the midst of something essentially mysterious  
here.

VI

546:775 .705

It was just a few months ago,  
I dreamt an older female  
engaged me in a liaison,  
perhaps a sexual liaison—  
at first she was an older black woman,  
but then she became an older white woman,  
and, as she was white,  
as we sat in an automobile,  
I entered a hotel room to pay  
ninety two dollars for our room for the night,  
then I returned to the car.  
I was wearing a business suit  
and she wore business casual attire,  
there were two small dark, indecipherable forms  
sitting in the backseat,  
and she told me she had to go  
south of the Missouri now,  
and I replied  
You mean south of the Mississippi, right?—  
yet, even setting aside our geographical concerns,  
her statement struck me as something  
I already knew, that I knew she was leaving for good,  
and that her leaving would mark  
a new start for me, so to speak.  
When I woke up I felt as though,  
in an intensely odd and impalpable way,  
my entire life had followed the path of Eastern  
Orthodoxy—

in a profound manner I felt this,  
I was wide awake in bed,  
gazing at a wall thinking my entire life  
has somehow tracked the tenets of the Eastern  
Orthodox,  
that this dream was equally corporeal  
to any waking experience I've had,  
and now, months later,  
I remain curious with regard to the identity  
of this multi-racial figure from my dream,  
who it seems engaged me in a sexual liaison?  
Despite affirming the mysterious nature  
of what we're in the midst of,  
I've never been a believer  
in angels and demons, so to speak—  
yet this figure from my dream, it seems to me,  
shared many characteristics  
with historical reports of so-called angels and demons.  
Of course, assuming it's one of the two,  
which one of the two is it?  
An angel or a demon?  
Who were the dark, nearly formless figures  
in the backseat of the car?  
A person engages me in a sexual liaison,  
but at first is black, but then becomes white,  
then tells me she now has to go quote-unquote  
south of the Missouri,  
I correct her, and then I wake up  
with an intense feeling my life's  
somehow followed the tenets of Eastern Orthodoxy—  
then, this dream's intensity sticking with me

for weeks and even months on end,  
I question if the figure from my dream  
was perhaps a being of some metaphysical sort,  
perhaps an angel or perhaps a demon.  
I question whether perhaps  
an angel or perhaps a demon entered my dream to,  
in a quite serpentine way,  
point me in the direction of something—  
perhaps Eastern Orthodoxy.  
And I question if this is in fact possible.  
At almost any other time in my life  
I would have considered it an impossibility,  
something totally ludicrous,  
I'd have considered it an embarrassing absurdity  
to even suggest it.  
Whereas previously I would have sat and said  
I considered it to be an embarrassing absurdity  
and utter impossibility, now, for one reason or another,  
I actually consider it an embarrassing absurdity  
to find it utterly impossible.

## VII

237:327 .725

Yet let me explain my thoughts on this issue  
just a little further, if I may?  
Because my thoughts on the topic expanded significantly  
just recently, as a matter of fact.  
It was just last Saturday,  
at a backyard cookout where I sat at a nice enough glass  
table  
next to a bottle of potato vodka imported from Poland,  
I was drinking the potato vodka from Poland  
in a small plastic glass with water and ice,  
and the potato vodka was smooth,  
quite smooth actually,  
when the person sitting across from me made a remark—  
he said that he just bought half a dozen  
pre-rolled blunts from a state-sanctioned dispensary,  
that he was planning to step on the sidewalk  
and light up one of these blunts,  
have a puff or two to relax,  
to which he offered me a puff too,  
if I wanted one.  
Well, as it so happened, at the time,  
despite my general ambivalence to marijuana,  
I considered it a decent idea.  
I figured I'd have one puff or two, tops,  
that maybe it would relax me.  
I figured, at the time, that a puff or two, tops,  
would have a minimal to moderate effect,  
yet when I went out to the sidewalk

with this person to take a puff or two  
from his state-sanctioned blunt  
I'd discover that this weed retained  
a potency that perhaps I'd never encountered before.

## VIII

396:505 .784

The blunts were exquisitely rolled and tasted delicious,  
the first hit went down fine—  
yet as the blunt passed for a final time,  
against my better judgment, deep down acknowledging  
that the one hit was the correct amount of hits,  
that any subsequent hit would be a wholly superfluous  
hit,  
I decided to take a second hit,  
where immediately following my exhale I coughed  
vociferously.  
I coughed vociferously then just moments later time  
began,  
much to my surprise,  
proceeding in a highly abnormal manner.  
I found myself at a family cookout,  
and time was proceeding in a manner  
that struck me as entirely abnormal.  
I was lounging in a nondescript lawn chair,  
except now I found myself unable to experience  
the procession of time in our rudimentary,  
temperate manner. I jumped between disjointed scenes.  
People began speaking  
and it was almost as though a person  
hit fast forward on their speech.  
Then the speech would slow just momentarily.  
Additionally, I seemed entirely restricted  
from perceiving how people were perceiving me,  
I felt like I was extremely high,

in fact I knew I was extremely high,  
and it wasn't exactly the most appropriate venue  
to be that high—at a family cookout—  
yet I was restricted from perceiving  
how high I seemed to the outside world.

At times it felt like I'd gained access to a cue  
that suggested everyone knew  
I was extremely high, yet this notion,  
that everyone knew I was extremely high,  
remained unproven, impossible to prove,  
it seemed.

Because people  
would at times seem to be treating me  
as if I was hardly high at all,  
despite the fact that I could  
no longer experience time in a purely linear fashion.  
Essentially my own actions became entirely foreign to  
me—

more than just being extremely high,  
I became disconcerted at the thought  
of what actions I could possibly be taking  
that caused the people around me to cease  
to view me as extremely high.

IX

404:534 ·757

The only actions of my own I was still aware of  
were actions that seemed to me to be  
of a person clearly extremely high,  
so how could these actions be seen by rational actors  
to be coming from a person  
who was still experiencing time linearly?  
This was, at the time, a question sans an answer.  
In short, it wasn't simply that I ceased to experience  
time in a normative fashion—  
it was the fact my exterior surroundings seemed  
to continue to recognize I passed through time  
in at least somewhat of a normative fashion.  
This was disconcerting, because one would assume,  
if you left the confines of normative time,  
that the people in your vicinity would  
recognize this fact—that you exited normative time.  
But in this case it was almost as if, yes—  
I was no longer present,  
I was experiencing time  
in an entirely asynchronous fashion,  
yet my surroundings still found me to be there,  
for the most part. I was,  
to the best of my perceptual faculties,  
existing in at least two places at once.  
At the family cookout,  
where most people were either slightly high  
or not high at all, and then also  
in a separate iteration of time,

where I was jumping from period to period,  
indiscriminately.

There's little doubt now that time,  
as we're exposed to it,  
is only one of several iterations,  
yet how many iterations are there?

It seems impossible for us to say—  
perhaps iterations is the wrong mode  
to discuss types of time.

It's entirely possible, in fact,  
that time perceives us  
inasmuch as we perceive it.

Yet once we acknowledge this fact,  
that time has many iterations of producing itself,  
that time may in fact  
perceive us rather than us perceive it,  
then we can no longer blindly state  
that our dreams are just dreams,  
because it would seem to me  
that if time, in fact, takes many,  
if not infinite, iterations,  
then our dreams could in fact be entirely real,  
that they may just exist in different  
iterations of time.

Our dreams could be  
entirely real experiences,  
just experienced in separate iterations of time.

Of course, rationally speaking,  
not that we should speak rationally,  
but rationally speaking we could  
question the merits of adhering  
to Eastern Orthodoxy generally.  
Of course we could reference the case  
of Chrysostomos Kalafatis,  
the Metropolitan of Smyrna,  
who unceremoniously had his  
beard ripped off by hand,  
his eyes gouged out,  
his nose and ears cut off  
and was subsequently masqueraded around  
the very city where he acted as a  
Metropolitan until he died from his injuries,  
from having his eyes, nose, and ears removed,  
all of this during  
the height of the Greco-Turkish war—  
as it seems safe to say that  
Eastern Orthodoxy, to some extent,  
didn't fare Chrysostomos well in the end,  
at least from a materialist point of view.  
It's a small sample size  
yet it's compelling to an extent,  
and of course the sample is substantially larger  
when we consider  
the plight of the Orthodox population  
of Anatolia as a whole.

The truth is the Orthodox haven't fared incredibly well  
in the Near East over the past,  
give or take, one thousand years or so,  
we could even say that following the path  
of Eastern Orthodoxy has perhaps  
been extremely fraught with peril  
in certain regions of the Eastern Mediterranean.  
We shouldn't speak rationally or logically,  
yet if we were to take the case of, say,  
for example, the concept of The One,  
the being that conceptually precedes being,  
that exists in all aspects of time,  
but also fundamentally must exist outside of time,  
to a certain extent  
we would almost need to entirely reconstruct  
our conception of time  
to even remotely be able to conceive  
of a Being of that nature.  
Not to say that we could ever conceive a Being  
of that nature in its essence,  
yet to even approach a conception—  
if logic leads us to a First Principle  
that exists within and outside of time,  
then our conception of time is essentially absurdist.  
We would need to reconstruct this conception  
of time as something we exist exclusively within,  
that contains us in a linear fashion,  
that perhaps perceives us  
in a so-called linear fashion,  
because if we are in fact extensions of this One  
who must by necessity exist both

within and outside of time,  
then there must exist a portion of us,  
as extensions of the One,  
that experiences time in this fashion,  
which is of course an essentially absurdist manner  
of conceiving of time.

XI

335:493 .679

I can't think of a thing more absurd  
than conceiving time in a solely linear fashion.  
It seems just—I don't know—  
totally ridiculous to assume time  
proceeds in a purely linear fashion,  
that time wouldn't proceed in whatever fashion  
it chooses,  
that time, eternal as it is,  
would need us to perceive it,  
as opposed to vice versa,  
or even to assume that time proceeds at all,  
that, if it chose to proceed,  
that it wouldn't proceed in the fashion of, say,  
adding percentages as opposed to integers.  
I engaged in a sexual liaison  
with an older female,  
who at first was black, then became white,  
then informed me that she had  
to go south of the Missouri,  
after I'd paid ninety two dollars for a hotel room  
for the two of us,  
as we sat in the medium-sized sedan,  
with two small and formless dark beings  
sitting in the back.  
I partook in the smoking of a sizable blunt  
that a friend of mine purchased from a local dispensary,  
and after taking a mere two hits  
from this blunt I found myself

inadvisably high at a family function,  
experiencing time in a spurious fashion,  
in a fashion where I was,  
on the one hand, apparently present at the party,  
yet simultaneously engaging passively  
in a form of time that wasn't present at the party—  
so I suppose it to be possible  
that at the time I existed at two places at once.  
Yet as foolish as this may sound,  
we should note that even Dionysius said,  
and I quote, 'it may be said to be praising God for his  
foolishness,  
which in itself seems absurd and strange,  
but this foolishness uplifts us to the ineffable truth  
which is there before all reasoning.'  
Because it would stand to reason  
that if reason itself is incapable of ascertaining  
these so-called divine notions,  
then perhaps it's only idiocy  
that remains capable of comprehending  
these historically divine notions,  
of time, of being,  
of placement, of First Causes.

## XII

418:523 .799

Perhaps what we need is a rigorous idiocy.  
It's entirely possible, as I'm now thinking about it,  
that with regard to these notions  
we should employ nothing except a rigorous idiocy,  
that reason and sound logic  
have absolutely no place here,  
in the realm of metaphysics.  
That in order to wrap our minds  
around these ideas,  
like being in two places at once,  
of being both within and outside of time,  
of time being essentially non-linear  
as much as it's essentially linear,  
of time perceiving us  
as much as we perceive it,  
that we must become more idiotic  
than we've ever been,  
that if we continue to attempt  
to pass ourselves off as intelligent—  
well, we'll continue to flounder in the stochastic breezes  
that ripple around these concepts.  
Sans idiocy, these concepts will continue  
to exist in a shroud of mystery,  
not that they can ever be known fully,  
that's unlikely, it's more or less impossible,  
but if we employ the proper amount of idiocy,  
of rigorous idiocy, it's possible  
that the mystery these concepts are shrouded in

could be ameliorated to a degree.  
We conceptualize a First Cause,  
a One, a concept that may, in fact,  
be necessary for our species to exist,  
at least socially,  
it very well could be the case  
that we can only exist logically  
with this idea of First Cause or One preceding us.  
Otherwise, sans First Cause,  
sans a Beginning,  
we hardly have an argument for linear time,  
and if we're deprived of a  
logical argument for linear time,  
then how can we make sense of anything?  
It's impossible to make sense of anything,  
in the traditional sense, sans linear time.  
If time fails to proceed linearly,  
at least for us,  
if we're hopping and skipping  
willy nilly in the fabric of time,  
in purely nonlinear manners,  
then nothing can make sense for us.  
We're literally senseless.  
Sans a First Cause, we're literally senseless.  
Time means nothing.  
Time, it seems to me,  
is something that one can only investigate idiotically.

### XIII

538:727 .740

Or am I just being silly?  
Am I simply succumbing  
to a specific type of silliness,  
as I'm apt to do from time to time?  
Most, it should be noted,  
who know me know me to be prone  
to succumbing to silliness from time to time?  
Am I being melodramatic  
by extrapolating my intense impression  
following my waking up from my dream,  
am I melodramatically extrapolating  
that impression just a little too far  
by implying this female,  
who engaged me in a sexual liaison,  
might have been an angel or a demon?  
Yet on the other hand I should note this,  
it was actually quite some time ago,  
so long ago in fact that I was practically,  
now that I think of it,  
more or less an adolescent,  
despite being a fully grown man.  
At the time I was looking for apartments with my  
father—  
the first apartment I'd lease on my own,  
and we were downtown, the two of us,  
looking at an apartment I didn't realize  
at the time was rent-controlled,  
meaning arbitrary caps

were placed on the income of the tenants  
in order to retain eligibility,  
which of course was the reason  
why the apartments were such a great deal.  
Luckily enough for me my salary  
at that time was insufficient and paltry,  
so I still managed to qualify for the apartment  
despite the rent control requirements,  
had I waited the time necessary  
for one to become available,  
but, while I did add my name to the waitlist,  
I didn't wait the time necessary,  
because I signed a lease  
on an apartment three miles north of downtown  
less than a week later.  
I was standing in a quarter-empty parking lot  
in an area of downtown  
where no less than half a dozen  
privately owned parking lots  
sat side by side by side,  
all with reasonable short-term rates.  
This particular area of downtown,  
at that point in time, was a fruitful area socially—  
there were a plethora of vibrant bars and restaurants,  
also side by side by side,  
that myself and others enjoyed frequenting,  
that were routinely packed  
from afternoon to evening.  
Now, by comparison,  
if you walk through that same area of downtown,  
by my count, more than half of those

bars and restaurants are shut down for good.  
Whereas I used to frequent that part of downtown,  
hopping between two or three or four venues,  
having a fruitful experience socially—  
now it's almost as if  
that area of downtown has aged right along with me.  
As my social activity has waned,  
at least with regard to hopping from bar to bar,  
the activity of this section of downtown  
has waned as well.  
As I've become less likely to pop out  
on a Wednesday afternoon to two or three or four places,  
this area of downtown has been  
unable to sustain businesses  
that used to thrive on people popping out  
on Wednesday afternoons,  
hopping from two or three or four places.

## XIV

535:727 .735

There are, in fact,  
hardly any bars or restaurants  
that are still open on the block.  
There's been a gargantuan  
For Lease sign on the largest venue for years now,  
and the places that should be open for business  
on a late weekday afternoon  
are no longer open for business  
on late weekday afternoons,  
whereas in previous years  
every bar and restaurant  
on the block would have been bustling  
with businessmen, eccentrics, and alcoholics, now  
these same venues don't even  
open their doors until later at night,  
if at all.  
I've walked through that block multiple times  
hoping to pop into just one old bar  
or one old restaurant for just one drink,  
and I've discovered every single bar  
that's stayed in business on that block  
closed to customers at that time.  
A bar in a business district  
really has no excuse for not being open  
by four pm on a weekday.  
It's absurd for a bar in a business district  
to be closed for business at that time,  
yet that's exactly what's happened

to this block, it's now a dead block,  
it's a block that's more or less  
officially deceased socially.  
In any case, years ago,  
when I was looking for my first apartment  
with my dad, standing  
in a quarter-empty parking lot  
on this very block,  
I sent a text message to a younger girl  
I used to flirt with—  
although we never engaged  
in a sexual liaison,  
but there was perhaps a shared interest  
for a short period,  
perhaps we both came to the conclusion  
engaging in a sexual liaison,  
although tempting, was ill-advised,  
that for once in the course of human history  
people should refrain from engaging  
in any sort of ill-advised liaison,  
so we developed a friendship of sorts.  
It was a shallow friendship,  
as most friendships that result from staved off  
sexual liaisons tend to be,  
these are of course the most shallow  
and insipid friendships imaginable,  
they're interminable and asinine,  
but this particular friendship was rewarding  
in its own way.  
So sure, around this time,  
in this parking lot, I sent her a text message to no reply,

and I knew then, somehow or another,  
instinctually I suppose I knew  
that I wouldn't get a reply,  
that the friendship had run its course,  
that it's purely shallow and insipid nature  
was abundantly evident to the two of us,  
and that the other party,  
this younger girl, had taken it upon herself  
to sever the friendship once and for all.  
I've ceased to communicate with her since,  
yet despite the ultimately shallow and insipid nature  
of this friendship, despite the fact  
we never crossed the line,  
so to speak, for some reason  
I felt a sort of nonsensical deep hurt,  
a painful longing of sorts,  
rooted in essentially nothing,  
standing in that parking lot,  
knowing I'd never hear from this person again,  
who I had no physical relationship  
with and who I had an entirely shallow and insipid  
emotional relationship with.

XV

337:449 ·75<sup>1</sup>

It wasn't that long ago  
that I was reminded of this text message randomly—  
I'd nearly entirely removed this person  
from my memory, just as years prior  
she'd similarly removed me from her memory,  
and I felt an odd pang in my stomach  
as I recalled this text message.  
Wasn't the entire point of turning away  
from engaging in these sexual liaisons  
to avoid such pangs?  
Don't we all just inveterately assume  
that pangs in our stomachs almost exclusively result  
from sexual liaisons?  
And don't we all then avoid sexual liaisons  
purely in attempts to avoid pangs  
in our stomachs?  
Yet in this case,  
a person I maturely  
avoided engaging with sexually, and vice versa,  
of course, who I instead developed  
a completely shallow and insipid friendship with,  
ended up causing me a pang in my stomach,  
all because I sent her a text message to no reply,  
knowing the ankle deep friendship  
we'd harbored had run its course  
and come to a conclusion.  
My point in all this is that the first objection  
the average person would raise

to identifying the being in my dream  
as an angel would be the fact  
the two of us engaged in a sexual liaison,  
yet what I've just described suggests  
that perhaps there's no difference in our relationships  
    with people,  
that we can't discriminate  
between relationships based on  
whether or not a sexual liaison occurred.  
That perhaps distinguishing relationships based on  
whether or not they feature a sexual exchange  
has been a gross error on our part.  
That perhaps we shouldn't a priori assert  
that angels don't engage in sexual liaisons with us.  
Because it's entirely possible they do,  
and that there's really nothing wrong  
with an angel engaging us in this type of liaison,  
sexually.

XVI

374:474 .789

So we can't rule out entirely  
the possibility that this being—  
despite engaging me in a sexual liaison,  
in a small plethora of racial forms—  
was still, in fact, an angel pointing me  
toward the fact my life, in large part,  
followed the path of Eastern Orthodoxy.  
The mathematician, attempting to infinitely extrapolate  
the massive assumptions that are real world integers, is,  
in essence, a complete charlatan.  
For eons we've assumed sexual relations taint  
relationships,  
that once a sexual line is crossed,  
then the relationship will be irrevocably tainted,  
yet we've never considered that tainting  
can and will occur even sans sex.  
Yet perhaps we're making too much of the alleged  
distinction  
between angels and demons as well.  
That just as perhaps  
we've made too much of the distinction  
between sexual and non-sexual relations,  
we're now making too much of the distinction  
between angels and demons.  
It should be noted that even Dionysius noted  
that pure evil, if it were to exist,  
would immediately cease to exist,  
because everything that exists is derivative of the One,

which is incapable of producing pure evil,  
and that even relative evil is simply  
a function of pursuing aims inappropriate  
to a being's proper function,  
that even demons are only demonic in their distance  
from the One,  
not in a sense of representing pure evil,  
because were they to be pure evil  
they would cease to exist.  
Essentially, this view purports  
that there's no fundamental distinction  
between an angel and a demon,  
just a difference in the appropriateness of their aims.  
Whereas an angel pursues the aims appropriate to it,  
in the proper proportion to its being,  
a demon pursues the aims  
more or less inappropriate to it,  
straying from its proper proportions.  
Now as it regards my dream,  
a being  
took multiple racial forms  
yet retained the same essence,  
much like our dual yet monist formulation,  
and then there were two dark  
and formless beings in the backseat—  
perhaps signifying the evil  
that's impossible to exist,  
that is stripped of being as soon  
as it becomes so-called pure evil.  
So perhaps these two dark formless beings  
were the non-existent iterations

of myself and my companion, possibly an angel.

XVII

449:620 .724

Now this being, perhaps an angel,  
or perhaps a demon,  
who took multiple racial forms,  
eventually informed me,  
in this car with the two small shapeless forms  
sitting in the backseat,  
that she had to go south of the Missouri,  
to which I corrected her:  
Don't you mean south  
of the Mississippi?  
Yet we should now consider  
that perhaps my correction was,  
in the context of the dream,  
entirely incorrect.  
By employing the phrase  
South of the Missouri  
this being was perhaps directly  
implying that there are no neat distinctions—  
that duality is an illusion,  
that this idea that a state  
can be neatly divided by  
a Mississippi is a misguided approach,  
that this being,  
whether an angel or demon,  
in fact wouldn't emerge on some other side  
precisely because there is no actual other side,  
there's only a separate relative place.  
And when I woke up,

I felt as though my life had always  
followed the path of Eastern Orthodoxy,  
but in this embrace I was accepting  
the non-dual nature of our existence  
inasmuch as I was accepting anything else.  
I embraced Eastern Orthodoxy  
after engaging in a sexual liaison  
with a being who took multiple racial forms,  
who left me to settle,  
not south of the Mississippi,  
but rather south of the Missouri—  
and opposite of the both of us  
were two small dark forms  
who completely lacked Being,  
signifying the impossibility of pure evil.  
My dream appropriately reproached  
this idea of true duality,  
of pure good and pure evil,  
replacing this absolute duality  
with a relative duality within the One,  
of which all Good and all Being originates,  
both in transcendence and immanence.  
I then reconciled myself  
with this being that went south of the Missouri—  
and perhaps this being  
wasn't leaving me  
as much as guiding me,  
giving me hints not on where to go,  
no, she wasn't saying  
where I should go or stay,  
she was instead guiding me

on how to read a map.

XVIII  
415:582 .713

Even Dionysius stated outright,  
‘One says of God,  
the cause of all good, that he is “inebriated”’—  
and with that in mind,  
against my better judgment,  
I poured myself a nice glass of vodka  
last Saturday before my girlfriend  
and I dined out,  
knowing all too well that we planned  
to go to the bar prior to our reservation,  
for a cocktail.  
My significant other agreed to act  
as our designated driver for the night,  
and I’d spent the entire week  
abstaining from every consumable item  
except water, coffee, hearty grains,  
and frozen vegetables, and I felt as though  
I deserved a nice, inebriated night.  
I said to myself You know what?—  
you’ve rigorously denied yourself pleasure this week,  
and you deserve a night  
where you go out and get white girl wasted.  
So I imbibed a cocktail before the cocktail,  
and when we arrived at the bar,  
waiting for our friends to meet us,  
we tried to prolong the cocktail  
and make a perfect segway into the dinner—  
unfortunately, I’d finished

my cocktail first,  
and incorrectly assuming I had another ten to fifteen  
minutes

before our friends arrived,  
so I ordered a second cocktail,  
yet as soon as the second cocktail arrived  
our friends also arrived,  
and then we were sat at the table where,  
needless to say, we immediately ordered  
a nice bottle of red wine.

So rather than savoring my second cocktail  
at the bar and then beginning our bottle of wine,  
I was concurrently finishing my second cocktail  
while also starting our bottle of wine.

Before I knew it I was thoroughly drunk,  
I became enthusiastically inebriated,  
and I felt as though I deserved it—  
I felt as though I deserved to be inebriated,  
to comment upon a small handful of topics  
that I probably should have remained silent about,  
to babble about and upon a potpourri of issues  
that perhaps would have  
been better left unaddressed.

But sometimes it's important to do things  
solely out of abundance,  
to become completely inebriated,  
to lose all touch with coherency and restraint,  
and to engage in a completely misguided conversation  
purely out of abundance.

The First Cause, no matter what form we give it,  
no matter how its extensions

may or may not communicate with us—  
is if nothing else superabundant.

LARRY ISOSCELES  
Theories of the Western World

Mode: >.667  
12,279:16,742 .733

I

523:741 .706

As a matter of fact,  
I was just telling Demo  
as we walked up to your flat,  
I've been just a tad preoccupied of late  
with a night I actually just remembered today,  
from years ago actually,  
completely non-descript,  
entirely inconsequential at face value,  
yet it was a night that nonetheless,  
now thinking it through,  
is essentially indicative of my true character.  
It was a night, via pure instinct,  
I allowed my true colors to show,  
and of course I was ashamed at first,  
who isn't disgusted  
at first sight of their true colors,  
but as the years have passed  
I've come to the conclusion that  
there's actually nothing a priori wrong  
with my true colors—  
actually, if anything,  
it's quite the contrary.  
My true colors,  
of course I can't change them,  
but even if I could I wouldn't.  
Because even though my true colors  
require a prerequisite,  
a perhaps unappetizing prerequisite,

a prerequisite that, yes,  
that I loathe certain people for no reason.  
But even though that may in fact be the case,  
I believe it's actually proper to loathe  
certain people for absolutely no reason,  
with no justification whatsoever,  
that hating people sans pretext  
is in fact entirely necessary,  
and I may even leap further  
and state outright that these certain people,  
whom we loathe sans pretext,  
may actually deserve this intense loathing  
and unprovoked hatred,  
but let me begin, please.  
Because to begin with,  
it was an era where I found myself  
spending an inordinate amount of time  
at social events that I loathed—  
I loathed both contemplating  
my future attendance of these events  
and then my actual attendance of these events.  
People, ultimately, have no couth—  
to this day, for example,  
I often find myself present  
at social gatherings where a quote-unquote vegetable  
plate,  
along with a vegetable dip,  
is presented as an hors d'oeuvre,  
and I'm almost always a little let down  
by the quality of the celery.  
At that particular stage in my life, in fact,

the era I'm speaking of, I'd reconciled myself  
to the fact that I had intrinsically higher standards  
than most when it came to celery,  
cucumbers as well—  
I analyzed produce with an acuity, frankly,  
most of my peers would never achieve.  
Having said that,  
to this day the majority of hosts  
in our country have next to no couth  
when it comes to serving celery or cucumbers.  
Forced to attend a so-called post wedding brunch  
just a few months  
prior to the events I'm about to relay,  
I was appalled at the quality of cucumbers served—  
a cucumber, above all else,  
should be refreshing.  
A piece of celery, ideally,  
is similar to sipping a fresh glass of ice water  
on a zesty summer day.  
The source of this regrettable degradation  
in the quality of our celery and cucumbers  
undoubtedly stems from  
America's overreliance on dip.

## II

570:752 .758

Dip, in our era,  
has literally and figuratively  
become the hors d'oeuvre,  
it's become culturally acceptable  
to utterly ignore  
the quality of the celery and cucumbers,  
two of the most refreshing yet delicate  
vegetables known to our species,  
at social gatherings  
because it's assumed consumers' attention  
will be focused almost solely on the dip.  
Yet it's precisely the dip  
that negates the nutritional benefits  
of the celery, as well as the cucumbers.  
Americans no longer consume vegetables—  
they consume vegetables  
with dips and sauces  
that obliterate all possible  
nutritional benefits of a vegetable.  
These dips and sauces  
annihilate the intrinsically  
refreshing essences of our vegetables.  
Guests attending these parties  
could relieve themselves  
all over these quote-unquote vegetable plates  
and not miss a beat nutritionally—  
they'd probably even fail  
to notice a difference in taste,

with the amount of sour cream currently  
found in the median American dip.  
During this era of my life,  
almost every week I would spend  
two to five minutes in the produce section  
arduously selecting only the finest celery  
stalks and most concrete cucumbers,  
touching all the cucumbers indiscriminately,  
with no regard for the customers  
who inevitably would touch these  
same cucumbers after I'd  
finally made my selection—  
because, to this day,  
there's nothing more deflating  
than a stalk of celery gone flat  
by mid-week,  
yet there's nothing more  
uplifting than a freshly chopped  
stalk of celery,  
and the same can be said  
for cucumbers.  
Yet, as so-called Greek-Americans,  
none of us should be surprised  
at this state of affairs,  
with a vegetable dip masking  
the refreshing essence  
of the genuine article, so to speak—  
and this brings me  
to a much larger point,  
a more grandiose issue,  
if you'll allow me

to digress just slightly  
before I begin my anecdote,  
the anecdote I've admittedly  
been obsessing over for weeks now,  
which will inevitably,  
I believe, become the crux  
of my argument here.  
Because there's endless discussion today  
with regard to our so-called world,  
our alleged Western world,  
but it's imperative  
we define our terms with rigor  
as opposed to carelessness—  
because it's too often  
that we throw terms into the ether willy-nilly.  
In short, it's entirely possible  
we're confusing extension  
with interpretation  
as it relates to our Western world.  
There's endless talk  
of this Western world,  
but let's be specific,  
this Western world is, in fact,  
little more than an Anglo world,  
it's not simply a nondescript Western world,  
it's also an actual Anglo world—  
our civilization, so to speak,  
is nominally considered Western,  
nominally considered Graeco-Roman,  
yet there's a barbarism at play here,  
there's a nefarious vegetable dip

burying the genuine article here.

III  
635:866 .733

In actuality,  
the Western world  
is little more than a misnomer  
for the Anglo world,  
which is essentially  
the American world,  
and the Anglo world,  
in actuality,  
is not an extension  
of Graeco-Roman Antiquity, no,  
it's simply an interpretation of that world—  
and even then that interpretation  
was a purely subsequent interpretation,  
an interpretation  
in response to an interpretation.  
Because the primary interpretation  
of Antiquity came from Constantinople  
and Antioch and Alexandria,  
in the so-called Byzantine world,  
and only then  
did this Anglo world indulge  
in a subsequent interpretation  
of the Graeco-Roman Antiquity,  
based on the Byzantine era's  
interpretation but also of course  
based on their interpretation  
of the so-called Byzantine world.  
This should be understood,

that the Anglo world,  
in a very tangible sense,  
is little more than  
an elaborate vegetable dip itself,  
a subsequent interpretation,  
and it's perhaps  
the most pervasive iteration  
of so-called vegetable dip  
our planet has yet to see—  
beneath it we discover the genuine article,  
the primary interpretation,  
so to speak.

As for us, within this Anglo world  
we remain more or less glossed over,  
a sub-optimal fit over here  
and sub-optimal fit over there,  
as Diamanda Galas aptly put it:  
America is fixated on multiculturalism  
yet remains remiss  
with regard to Middle Eastern cultures,  
which include Greek cultures—  
but how is this possible?  
Yet we should note,  
we should finally admit to ourselves  
that the modern center of the Anglo world,  
America, for all of its melting pot mythology,  
has never assimilated, not quite,  
because instead it's simply annihilated—  
in America we love discussing ethnicities,  
people wear hyphens like name-tags,  
but all of these ethnicities

are at bottom false ethnicities,  
just as the so-called modern Greek,  
the Hellenic baboon,  
is a fictional ethnicity,  
all of our other  
ethnicities are essentially fictional ethnicities,  
they're ethnicities  
at best as simulacra, and,  
subsequently, what's inevitably  
true but will remain perpetually untouched upon  
is that there is no real race  
or ethnicity within America with the exception of the  
Anglo.

Everyone is Anglo in America,  
this is obvious.

Every person in America,  
insofar as they've adopted American hyphenations,  
is essentially Anglo—  
as Catholicism washed over the third world,  
the third world became essentially Anglo,  
the Puritanism of North America  
mixed with the Catholicism  
of South America  
and resulted in a milieu  
where everyone is essentially Anglo.

Magic Johnson, at bottom,  
is essentially Anglo.

Endless ethnicities have been properly identified,  
systematically assimilated  
into this Anglo-American framework,  
and subsequently annihilated,

and we peruse their coming-of-age narratives,  
penned in the classic New Yorker style,  
and we think to ourselves,  
“Wow, that’s nice,  
what a nice little coming-of-age story,  
I never knew Vietnam was so nice in Autumn—”  
when the reality is  
these people have been essentially annihilated.

IV  
618:845 .731

The coming-of-age narrative  
of the Vietnamese immigrant tickles  
the recesses of our soul,  
yet it never occurs to us  
that this Vietnamese person,  
writing in the classic New Yorker style,  
has been essentially annihilated.  
We marvel at the ethnic traits  
of coming-of-age  
narratives penned in the classic  
New Yorker style,  
yet these ethnicities are entirely fictional,  
they've been essentially annihilated,  
just as we, the Hellenic baboons,  
have also been essentially annihilated.  
The Vietnamese-American  
who penned  
your favorite coming-of-age story is,  
in fact, entirely Anglo.  
The so-called Orthodox,  
the last of the so-called Byzantines,  
remain unassimilated  
and therefore unannihilated,  
perhaps only because they've clung  
to their metaphysical distinctions—  
through varying crusades and occupations,  
various capitalisms and communisms  
they've clung to their metaphysical distinctions,

to the metaphysical framework  
of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

In any case, this Anglo world  
is no extension of Antiquity,  
it's no New Rome,  
because its interpretations  
have inevitably been filtered  
through the so-called Byzantine,  
through the Second Rome  
of Constantine.

But for the Orthodox, Christ symbolized the true,  
verified immanence of God,  
to correspond with the transcendence of God—  
just as the so-called Socratic Idea  
was at once transcendent and immanent,  
just as Love as an Idea  
was out of reach in-itself  
(in its transcendence),  
yet interactive in a relative sense  
(in its immanence),  
God was now the same,  
not transcendent or immanent,  
but instead transcendent and immanent.  
God as an Essence was unknowable,  
unapproachable, and wholly transcendent,  
yet, through Christ,  
God was proven to be wholly immanent,  
in addition to being entirely transcendent,  
God's Energies were Energies  
we could approach and interact with,  
to become one with God,

even momentarily,  
was deemed a possibility.  
Christ was brilliantly grafted onto centuries  
of Greek thought in a system  
that found its expression  
from Alexandria to Antioch to Constantinople,  
yet the subsequent Anglo interpretation,  
by restricting God and Person to the intellect,  
the conceptual to the transcendent,  
essentially ushered in the secular atheism  
that's become our monoculture par excellence.  
This subsequent Anglo interpretation  
was markedly different—  
because now to be  
transcendent and immanent  
was now deemed decadent and oriental.  
The so-called Byzantine interpretation  
envisioned a God who,  
through His superabundance,  
was both wholly immanent and entirely transcendent,  
whereas the Anglo interpretation  
viewed that interpretation  
as both wholly decadent and entirely oriental,  
the Anglo interpretation,  
just as the Hebrew God  
banished Adam and Eve from the Kingdom of God,  
subsequently banished God from the Kingdom of Man,  
to His eternal transcendence.  
No, the so-called Greeks  
never killed their God  
because they never stopped

merging with their God.  
The Greek world never chose to kill their God,  
they never murdered their God  
in cold blood because,  
in this Greek world,  
within this silly Byzantine milieu,  
to kill their God would be akin  
to committing suicide.

V

522:715 .730

Whereas the Anglo world  
divorced itself from the Energies,  
became the transcendent world  
par excellence,  
and left itself  
no choice but to kill its God  
ruthlessly and expeditiously.  
The transcendent world par excellence  
almost ipso facto becomes  
the secular atheist world  
par excellence.  
Transcendence divorced  
from immanence  
is the primary formula of the secular.  
The Western world  
is the Anglo world  
which is nothing more than  
a subsequent interpretation  
rather than a primary interpretation.  
In America, everyone is Anglo,  
Vietnamese immigrants  
write coming of age stories  
that are nothing if not holistically Anglo,  
transcendently Anglo.  
And we sit,  
portrayed as absurdly Hellenic,  
as Athenian baboons,  
yet of course we have perhaps

that “Byzantine look,”  
our mask is perhaps Byzantine,  
yet the Byzantine, we’re told,  
was wholly decadent  
and entirely oriental  
and no longer exists.

The Afro-American Man  
is the Anglo Man,  
Larry Bird in addition to Magic Johnson  
are both essentially Anglo,  
the Italian-American Man  
is the Anglo Man,  
the Greek-American Man,  
despite playing the role of Athenian Baboon,  
is also essentially Anglo.  
The Greeks, ultimately, have sunk themselves,  
which is why they’re no longer even Greek,  
we can’t blame anyone more than ourselves,  
we were placed in an impossible position  
between East and West,  
and we acted in an impossible fashion,  
and now we’re no longer even ourselves.  
But how did we get onto us anyway,  
the Greeks—have I gone overboard here at all?  
Am I exaggerating at all?  
It’s definitely possible,  
yet I feel completely appropriate,  
I actually feel like, if anything,  
I’m being too reserved,  
that if anything I’m actually lacking  
in hyperbole at the moment!

I feel like, right now,  
I'm actually being too kind,  
that if anything I'm being a tad too reserved.  
I feel as though there's vitriol  
that I still owe,  
that I own considerable debt,  
and it's all vitriol,  
that there's no choice  
but to pay it back  
to the general populace of this country.  
It's possible that I'm filled to the brim with vitriol,  
it's possible that I owe all this vitriol  
to the general populace.  
It's almost as if I'm leaving loads of vitriol  
on the table.  
The Anglo world lectured us  
that the authentic Greeks  
made anal love to teenage boys,  
and then when Greeks moved past penetrating  
high school aged men in the rear-end,  
when they instead subscribed  
to the metaphysics of the Patriarch of Constantinople,  
it was only at that point  
that Greek culture  
became depraved and decadent.  
Wholly oriental.  
This is what I've been personally taught  
by the Anglo so-called scholastics—  
and that I can tell you is  
absolutely no exaggeration.

VI

528:719 .734

Only the Greeks  
would accept two sets of ancestors  
of this sort then shrug their shoulders  
and go get drunk at a saloon.  
That's what I did.  
It's just audacious,  
that's what it is.  
If nothing else I respect the audacity,  
because I actually have  
the highest respect for the audacity  
of the Anglo world.  
Our ancestors have spent  
hundreds of years in obscure mountains,  
forbidden to read or write,  
while the entire Anglo world  
has spread this misinformation about us,  
this slander, this character assassination,  
so it's no wonder  
pedophiles run rampant  
in every Western polity—  
look who comprise the idols of the West!  
The Athenian  
with the beautiful boyfriends  
traversing puberty,  
as if these were the only Greeks,  
as if there were no other Greek eras,  
as if the alphabet  
became obsolete after Antiquity!

But I digress.  
In any case, before I enter  
into this whole anecdote  
I should say this—  
namely, that I was at a restaurant  
across the street from my apartment  
for a small gathering  
just the other night,  
my good friend's cousin was in town,  
and she and her father invited me  
to an informal dinner  
across the road from my apartment,  
so I decided it would be a little rude  
for me not to go,  
considering I lived within spitting distance  
of this restaurant,  
within minimal walking distance,  
and had nothing else to do.  
I essentially had to go  
but also had no issue with attending.  
In addition, I was aware  
the meal would in all likelihood be paid for,  
and although I didn't particularly think highly  
of the restaurant across the street,  
I knew there was at least one decent meal,  
or maybe even two decent meals,  
that I could order and feel relatively satiated.  
Personally, I was a big fan of the Spicy Maki Platter,  
where you received eighteen pieces of tuna,  
salmon, and yellowtail sushi  
for just sixteen dollars.

It's a great meal,  
and because of the economical price-point  
you don't feel like a complete asshole  
ordering it on someone else's tab.  
In any case, we arrive,  
my friend and I,  
perhaps we're actually lovers,  
but I don't want to go into a great deal of detail  
about my private life here,  
we might even live with each other  
in my apartment,  
but I'm not going into that now,  
we're in love with each other in a way  
that just feels profound,  
that's possible, but in any case we're there,  
at the restaurant, when my friend's cousins  
from out of town arrive,  
and almost immediately the conversation turns  
to the much discussed COVID-Nineteen vaccine,  
and being wholly sober as well as extremely hungry  
I decide to have no part of it,  
I don't mention anything about nonlinear distributions,  
the inherent dishonesty of all large governments  
over the course of human history.

VII

546:721 .757

I choose to refrain from  
mentioning Elliot Abrams  
receiving a fifty dollar fine for trafficking  
crack cocaine into every black community  
in America in the Nineteen-Eighties,  
I choose to refrain from mentioning any of this,  
as it wasn't the right time to discuss  
nonlinearities and Elliot Abrams,  
this was my conclusion at the time.  
I wasn't going to get caught up  
in the nature of probability distributions  
and Elliot Abrams' fifty dollar fine  
for selling large swathes of crack cocaine  
at the behest of the first Bush administration  
at that time. It would have been uncouth,  
ill-advised, as well as completely inappropriate.  
But in keeping my mouth shut  
I felt just a momentary tinge of agitation,  
in hearing these opinions I inveterately disagreed with,  
in refraining from uttering the phrases  
nonlinearity distributions and Elliot Abrams  
I became slightly agitated,  
the only antidote to my agitation  
would be to say the word nonlinearity aloud,  
which I had no intention of doing.  
I couldn't bring myself to say the word nonlinearity,  
and I had absolutely no intention  
of uttering the phrase Elliot Abrams

at this restaurant,  
I couldn't do either without embarrassing myself,  
and I knew it.  
The fact of the matter is when an opinion  
I disagree with is expressed  
within my general proximity,  
and I act socially appropriately  
and refrain from sharing my true feelings  
on the matter, then I often  
feel this tinge of agitation,  
as if I was put on this Earth  
for the sole purpose  
of behaving inappropriately and expressing  
my honest opinions,  
no matter the cost socially.  
Instead I found myself  
glancing intermittently at my friend's older cousin,  
just shamelessly speculating  
on his racial makeup—which I hate.  
I've been on the receiving end of this despicable  
behavior,  
and I'm sure you've experienced similar,  
and I despise people  
who just shamelessly speculate  
as to my racial makeup,  
I'm sure you despise them just as much,  
yet sitting across from  
this distant cousin of my friend,  
my lover perhaps,  
I sat in this silent hypocrisy,  
I sat there and shamelessly,

continuously speculated on his racial makeup to myself,  
going so far as to take specific facial features  
into account and speculate  
on a geographic area of origin.  
It was grotesque.  
But that's unfortunately  
what I found myself doing in place of  
sharing my sincere opinions on nonlinear probability  
distributions  
and Elliot Abrams distributing crack cocaine  
to the black communities of the United States  
in the Nineteen Eighties—  
but of course no one can mention  
nonlinear distributions  
or Elliot Abrams selling crack anymore.

VIII  
501:685 .731

Governments have lied to us  
almost without pause  
since the invention of the nation-state,  
in just America alone  
we've seen the large-scale oppression  
of African-Americans  
over the course of centuries,  
the state-sanctioned poisonings  
of African-American communities  
with crack cocaine,  
of lower class Caucasian communities  
with prescription pills,  
we have pop stars  
named Little Xanax,  
millions of children  
in this country fantasize  
about abusing prescription narcotics  
before they go to sleep at night  
and the FDA,  
a regulatory body with ample funding  
for regulating just this sort of behavior,  
apparently thinks nothing of it.  
We have one pop star  
named Little Xanax  
and zero pharmaceutical executives  
who've been prosecuted for producing  
this lurid state of affairs,  
and that's just scratching the surface

in America,  
confining our inquiry to a single side  
of the Atlantic we haven't  
even mentioned the Turkish occupation,  
the genocides of Pol Pot,  
Hitler and the National Socialists,  
the Gulag, the famine of Mao,  
or the preponderance  
of other occupations,  
genocides, famines, and general debauchery  
which have occurred all across  
the globe more or less incessantly—  
yet now the United States government  
informs its citizens  
without a trace of irony  
that a fast-tracked vaccine  
is beyond reproach for any and everyone,  
with no long-term empirical evidence available,  
and if we question  
that then we're essentially  
excommunicated from decent society.  
We've become charlatans par excellence  
if we dare mention  
the nature of nonlinear probability distributions,  
if we mention the fact that  
Elliot Abrams was fined fifty dollars for selling crack,  
if we utter the phrases  
nonlinear probability distribution  
or Elliot Abrams was a crack cocaine dealer  
we've apparently become fascists in this country.  
So I had no inkling of the racial makeup

of this man sitting so innocently  
across from me,  
and eventually I just said to myself—  
you're disgusting, this is grotesque,  
take out your smartphone  
and dick around on that,  
for the sake of Christ Himself,  
just please remove your smartphone  
from your pocket this second.  
So we order our meals.  
My friend, who I may or may not  
be in love with,  
who orders right before me,  
orders the Spicy Maki Platter,  
so we both end up  
ordering the exact same meal,  
the Spicy Maki Platter,  
and I just shot her a look,  
I looked at her like  
Are you kidding me?  
We could have at least  
discussed this before the waitress  
asked for the orders,  
now we're ordering  
the same exact meal back to back.

IX

483:668 .723

But then I think to myself  
Well, if she doesn't eat all eighteen pieces,  
which she won't,  
then I'll at least have the option  
to snag a sushi piece or two  
if I'm not completely full after my eighteen.  
I guess I can be a bit gluttonous  
when it comes to sushi, but I also—  
in true Greek Orthodox fashion—  
tend to fast for  
significant portions of the day,  
so by the time dinner arrives I'm  
always prepared to stuff my face.  
I've read modern medicine  
is beginning  
to recognize value  
in this fast and feast  
regimen of eating,  
that the body perhaps  
functions more efficiently  
when it's deprived  
for a period of time.  
But in any case  
we both order the Spicy Maki Platter,  
and her dad,  
who's sat next to me,  
orders a shrimp noodle dish  
that has no appeal to me,

not that I care,  
because I had no plans  
on sharing the meal with him,  
and when this shrimp noodle dish  
is served his initial reaction is  
Wow, this is big—and it is, it's huge.  
The portion is immense.  
And the noodles, it should be noted, are thick—  
it would be nearly impossible  
for one person to finish a plate  
of that magnitude,  
save for the morbidly obese,  
in just one sitting.  
So immediately,  
and only with the best of intentions,  
because her dad  
is one of the most well-intentioned individuals  
you'll ever come across,  
her dad starts to offer me  
some of his dish, and initially  
I refuse not only because  
I find the dish unappealing  
but primarily because I'm eating my own meal.  
But this changes eventually.  
Famished as I found myself,  
I obviously finished my meal  
not only before anyone else  
at the table  
but considerably prior  
to anyone else  
at the table cleaning their plate—

I'm sitting there  
with a completely clean plate  
while everyone else  
is at most halfway through their meal.  
And my friend is hardly eating  
her Maki Platter at all,  
instead she's busy munching her cousin's  
General Tso Shrimp,  
yet her dad, of course  
meaning well and noticing my empty dish,  
for the second time asks  
if I want some?  
No, no thank you, I'm full,  
I say, not thinking at all.  
Without a single thought in my skull  
I reply that I'm full—  
yet in retrospect what else could I say?  
How can you refuse  
a bite of someone's meal,  
especially on a second offer,  
without saying you're full?  
It's probably  
the only acceptable excuse,  
feigning fullness,  
but now I've placed myself  
in a bit of an imbroglio,  
because her dad thinks I'm full,  
but I'm actually the furthest possible thing from full—  
because sushi never fills you.  
You finish a plate of sushi  
and the first thing you think is

I could go for a little more sushi.

X

44:639 .690

Eighteen pieces of fish-filled sushi  
and I'm not even remotely close  
to full.

All my thoughts revolve around  
consuming more sushi,  
of which I see plenty,  
because my companion,  
my lover,  
is barely even touching her  
Spicy Maki Platter.

So now I'm trying to devise  
a method of clandestinely sneaking a few pieces  
of said sushi into my mouth without  
my companion's dad noticing,  
not that he would care,  
but just on principle.

I already inhaled my meal,  
eighteen pieces of fish-filled sushi,  
and now I'm claiming,  
to my friend's father, that I'm full,  
but then remorselessly consuming  
the sushi sitting next to my plate?  
That just wasn't a palatable option  
in my mind at the time.

I wanted to avoid that scenario if possible.  
Yet as I'm concocting a plan  
to surreptitiously extract  
this foreign sushi into my mouth

my friend's cousin takes her fork  
and starts eating her sushi—  
potentially my sushi.  
I'm watching my friend's father  
struggle to finish his  
gargantuan shrimp lo mein on my left,  
then watching my friend's cousin  
methodically eat each leftover piece  
of this Spicy Maki Platter on my right.  
Then I look across the table  
and begin shamelessly racially speculating  
again, just to momentarily get  
my mind off this whole Spicy Maki-lo mein imbroglio.  
As the meal concluded there were  
two or three sushi pieces left,  
my companion says Have one,  
and I shake my head,  
realizing the entire endeavor,  
this mission to obtain more Spicy Maki,  
was doomed to failure.  
I considered asking her to take the pieces home, but no—  
this urge for more Maki is misguided,  
I thought, it's already doomed to failure,  
it's too late for that.  
The Spicy Maki Platter was delicious,  
but to take home the leftover sushi  
wasn't a palatable option to me at the time.  
And a funny thing occurred,  
I actually began to feel full  
as everyone else began  
to conclude their meals,

despite remaining hungry immediately  
after finishing my eighteen pieces of sushi,  
by the time everyone else concluded their dinner  
I, somehow, no longer felt hungry,  
despite eating nothing in the interim,  
for the above said reasons.  
But, in any case, onto this anecdote,  
so it was a few years ago  
at this point, Horatio  
was probably there,  
it was a more or less  
nondescript night,  
absolutely nothing of note  
was occurring,  
and I think all of us  
were at that point  
questioning why we were even out,  
why we weren't at home  
sleeping like young children.

XI

469:700 .670

We were at the Dean Hotel  
on Washington Street  
in a dark back bar  
called the Magdalena Room  
where nothing much of note  
was going on,  
nearly nothing of note  
was ever going on  
within the walls  
of this hotel bar,  
never mind in the back room,  
which was dimly lit  
in an almost abrasive way  
and usually at half capacity  
at best. But maybe  
that's what the venue intended,  
maybe the main goal  
of the venue was abrasive iterations  
of dim lighting  
and half capacities.  
In any case,  
I'm with a few friends,  
Horatio may have been there,  
and two well-to-do  
Anglo girls are there,  
and one of us—not me—  
attempts to co-mingle with  
the two Anglo girls,

and a conversation ensues.  
One of our friends  
is without a doubt aiming to engage  
in consensual sexual encounters  
with these girls in the near future,  
at least if the encounter  
goes according to his plan,  
however, his plan is about to go  
unexpectedly awry,  
things are in no way about to go  
according to his plan, and, inadvertently,  
I'm about to ensure his plan  
is foiled in an irreversible manner.  
Not in the slightest  
are things going according to his plan,  
and I'm inadvertently about to be  
the cause of the foiling.  
Inevitably both girls  
live in the plush part of the city,  
they don't have jobs,  
or they have jobs they clearly received  
due to statuses of being young and opulent,  
they inevitably begin to discuss  
the various properties their families' own,  
in San Francisco I believe,  
perhaps some other  
outrageously opulent areas of the US,  
maybe even overseas.  
I forget the specific locales,  
I actually paid little  
to no attention to anything

either of these Anglo girls said,  
there were a few locales  
where their fathers' owned this property  
or that property,  
they'd summer here  
or they'd summer there,  
but it was all opulent in any case,  
some area where only  
the most egregious dickheads live.  
It didn't particularly offend me,  
yet their tone was condescending  
in a way that almost made you believe  
they viewed you as an equal,  
which infuriated me.

When people inveterately believe  
themselves to be superior,  
yet still have the audacity  
to condescend as if you're almost equals,  
it's infuriating.

As it so happened,  
I'd been studying an extended documentary  
on the internet at work that afternoon,  
it was a slow afternoon that afternoon,  
regarding the mating habits of dolphins,  
in fact this video went into great detail  
regarding the specific mechanics  
of how dolphins perform sex,  
and I proceeded to share  
this information regarding the specific  
mechanics of dolphin sexual intercourse  
with the group.

## XII

520:719 .723

Apparently this was a bit of a faux pas on my part,

Demo—

it was clear these young females,  
although innocent enough,  
were just of a separate class,  
and they believed it,  
and they knew it,  
and they had no respect  
for the well verified intelligence of dolphins  
and their sexual mating mechanics.  
It was true to them that they were superior—  
their ancestors were having pebble wars  
and eating medium-rare squirrel,  
while our ancestors  
were writing extensive commentaries  
on metaphysics  
and enforcing complex systems of taxation,  
but in our current milieu  
they were both undoubtedly  
of superior stock  
to anyone else in the room,  
especially myself.  
That much could not be disputed,  
and I don't dispute it to this day.  
Yet to discuss  
the intricacies of dolphin intercourse  
was, in their eyes, something revolting,  
something for lack of a better word classless.

It was essentially a Marxist anecdote,  
noting specifically how dolphin penis penetrates  
dolphin vagina in the Magdalena Room that night.  
I grew up inundated with Anglo-Saxons, Demo,  
and I know when I'm being viewed  
as an Other, in fact  
I know it instinctively,  
it's something that essentially  
runs in my blood,  
and this was a particularly egregious case.  
And it became particularly egregious  
following my monologue  
illuminating the mechanics  
of dolphin intercourse.  
I may have made a few subsequent  
off-color comments once the conversation  
was clearly going completely downhill,  
once this discussion was clearly irreparable.  
I probably raised my voice  
to an inadvisable decibel level.  
But in any case  
I came to despise  
these two innocent young females.  
And in retrospect,  
if I'm holding myself  
to the highest standard of honesty,  
I despised them at first sight.  
The second our friend—  
Horatio may have been there—  
made the acquaintance  
of these two females

I immediately despised them.  
Instinctively I knew  
the three of us could never be cordial,  
that perhaps the sacking of Constantinople  
in Twelve Oh Four still divided us  
in an immutable manner.  
I believe in the perpetuating characteristics  
of blood, Demo, I don't  
care what the scientists say.  
Spirits are always among us  
and where better to bury  
themselves than within our bloodstreams?  
If the spirits of ancestors  
are buried anywhere  
it's without a doubt  
in our bloodstreams.  
If the tortured souls of our mutilated ancestors  
are buried anywhere in the world  
it's within our bloodstreams, Demo.  
From the second I saw  
these two innocent, decent-looking girls  
I despised them,  
and I never questioned it.  
Instinctively I knew  
discussing dolphin boners  
would be abhorrent  
to these innocent young females,  
and I relayed the anecdote  
without hesitation.

XIII  
448:606 .739

The second their faces filled with disgust  
at my anecdote I was satiated.  
If they walked into this room right now  
I'd immediately start to,  
yet again,  
discuss the mechanics  
of dolphin intercourse.  
Dolphins are highly intelligent mammals—  
why shouldn't we learn,  
in-depth, about their mating habits?  
It seems entirely logical to me,  
even now.  
Yet we should be honest with ourselves,  
we shouldn't mince words,  
we shouldn't cower to euphemism,  
because everyone is Anglo.  
Maybe I haven't made  
that abundantly clear yet,  
but we're all essentially Anglo,  
we contain residual  
amounts of the Hellenic,  
we're direct descendants  
of the so-called Byzantine,  
the ρωμισσύνη,  
but essentially  
everyone is Anglo,  
us included.  
You may sit here

and propose that,  
say, Puerto Ricans are somehow  
distinct from the median white,  
when in actuality  
Puerto Ricans are Anglo.  
But Dominicans are different, right?—  
no, Dominicans  
are actually Anglo as well.  
Afro-Americans  
are incredibly Anglo,  
in fact.  
The Portuguese are definitely Anglo,  
they're the apex of Anglo,  
the Spanish  
are also totally Anglo,  
and the Italians  
are as Anglo as anyone,  
Filipinos—we can't deny  
their essential Anglicism,  
because we're  
all essentially equally Anglo,  
wherever Catholicism  
and its metaphysics  
has spread,  
the Anglo world  
without a doubt has followed,  
wherever the sordid metaphysics  
of the Catholic church  
has planted its roots,  
Anglicism has proliferated  
unabridged.

Anglos, Franks,  
Venetians, Italians,  
the Germanic tribes,  
we shouldn't lose much sleep  
in distinguishing these terms,  
because they're all subsets  
of each other essentially,  
we shouldn't  
lie to ourselves about that.  
These terms encompass  
the entire world  
and for that reason  
subsequently mean  
essentially nothing.  
We all attempt to  
quarry groups of people  
off by the tint of their skin,  
the shapes of their eyes,  
the contours of their noses,  
the thickness of their lips,  
when the reality is  
everyone is essentially Anglo.  
Michael Jordan is incredibly Anglo.  
As are Larry Bird  
and Shaquille O'Neal.  
Caitlyn Jenner is nothing if not Anglo,  
and the Kardashians  
are the spitting image of Anglicism.

XIV  
448:651 .688

The world is incredibly complex,  
but at times  
it can be divided  
evenly into two—  
the Anglo world  
and the so-called Greek world,  
which no longer exists.  
The world is incredibly complex,  
but at certain times  
it can be easily  
split down the middle,  
at times the world  
reduces to essentially  
two dimensions,  
in some ways the world  
only exists two dimensionally,  
the schism between  
the Catholicism  
that overtook the world  
and the Orthodoxy  
that eventually  
became more or less extinguished,  
maybe that's one instance  
of binary simplicity,  
the idea of a God  
who wants to hear your petty sins,  
who wants to speak with you  
and have some type of relationship.

A personal relationship with God—  
it's the most absurd thing.  
It's essentially atheism.  
There's only one end-game  
to believing the alleged Creator  
of the Universe wants to hear  
about how you stole a bag of Lays chips  
from your University  
convenience store  
as an eighteen year old—  
the only end-game  
to that sort of metaphysics is atheism.  
It's ruthlessly dualist  
but also delightfully atheist.  
If you truly believe God  
wishes to speak with you  
about the young man  
you viciously threatened  
with violence when you were  
only nineteen years old  
then you're essentially an atheist.  
That's how we could best describe it.  
An idea that  
the experience of God is summarized verbally,  
and that all spiritual experience  
must defer to an intellectual understanding of it—  
we're all Anglo now.  
Of course I despised  
those two innocent Anglo girls,  
because I saw myself in them—  
in so many ways

I've become an innocent Anglo girl  
just by dint of living in the world  
in a continuous fashion.  
Why haven't I retired  
to an obscure mountain somewhere,  
to become ρωμιοσύνη again?  
But that's why I have no qualms  
about despising certain people  
for no particular reason—  
because, at bottom,  
we're all essentially Anglo.  
Yet, if we're being honest  
with ourselves,  
it's only the homeless  
who truly recognize  
the absurdity of our  
alleged individualism—  
a poor guy sleeps in the street,  
and we act as if he murdered a man.  
Someone falls on hard times,  
begins drinking heavily,  
probably does a decent amount of drugs,  
he loses his job, his home,  
his wife leaves him,  
he's reduced to begging people  
on street corners  
for dollar bills and sleeping  
in alleyways, and we act as if  
his hardship is an inconvenience for us—  
we're offended at his poverty.  
I've experienced more malice

directed at bums  
in the past decade  
than any previous decade  
I can recall,  
the malice toward bums  
seems to be increasing  
in this country  
at an almost exponential rate.

XV

553:720 .768

They view it  
as a severe affront  
to their liberty that a bum—  
who sleeps in alleys and  
remains parked essentially  
at death's door day and night—  
should ask them for spare change.  
Our society abjectly fails people,  
and people with alleged moral standing  
within our society can hardly  
be bothered to even witness a bum,  
to gaze at a bum for a brief period of time,  
if they're forced to even  
minimally interact with a bum  
they view it as a sort of sacrilege.  
Viewing a person sans a domicile  
is considered an affront to good taste.  
But who wouldn't toss a couple extra back  
if they no longer had  
a home?  
There's no doubt that to some extent we,  
all of us, have failed these people  
in some way that's probably material.  
It's one thing to be down and out,  
but to be on the street drinking  
a half-filled Coca-Cola bottle  
filled with illicit substances,  
asking strangers for money,

clearly only partially aware of where  
you are, that should, frankly,  
be shameful for all of us.  
Anyone can become a crack addict.  
If the history of crack in this country  
has taught us anything  
it's that anyone can become a crackhead.  
We're all capable of becoming crackheads,  
given the appropriate circumstances.  
The whites of America  
laughed at the blacks  
of America  
during the crack era,  
as the United States government  
pumped crack into black neighborhoods,  
only to, decades later,  
find entire lower-class white communities  
turned into junkies,  
backed by the United States government,  
backed by the pharmaceutical companies,  
who indiscriminately tossed heroin equivalents  
at any lower-class white  
with a sprained ankle  
that went to their physician.  
An entire generation of white junkies  
emerged seemingly overnight,  
the laughter of whites  
cackling at crack cocaine  
undoubtedly resounding in the background.  
Yet just as the black population of America  
essentially had no choice

but to become black crackheads,  
the white population of America  
has similarly involuntarily transformed  
into white junkies.  
Pharmaceutical companies  
have attained multi-billion dollar market caps  
almost exclusively  
by turning poor whites into white junkies.  
Yet no one wants to deal with white junkies  
while they're drinking wine  
and having appetizers.  
The servers and the customers converse  
about what steps the city  
should take to counteract  
the white junkies and the black crackheads  
who invade the lines of sight  
of people who've driven tens of miles  
to stuff their faces with calamari  
and mozzarella sticks and jalapeno poppers,  
to drink craft beers  
and suck down wine spritzers.  
These people just can't get enough trans fat,  
and they hate bums.  
These people spend hours a day  
examining the intricacies  
of craft beer  
but completely lack  
the temerity to even speak  
with a bum.

XVI  
516:676 .763

It never occurs to any of these people  
that their own latent malice  
is directly responsible for the dilapidated state  
of their fellow citizens,  
that their complicity,  
their myopic and enduring idiocy  
has directly resulted in a state  
that's shamelessly produced  
white junkies and black crackheads  
at alarming rates.

It's a shame that the city isn't  
doing more,  
these people  
say without a trace  
of irony,  
and then they discuss  
the tangerine aftertaste  
in an overpriced craft beer.  
Do you taste tangerine at all?—  
No, I was getting a bit of a Bartlett pear  
aftertaste!

The people who drink craft beer,  
it seems to me,  
despite their advantageous  
and calculated poses of liberalism,  
are the most unapologetically  
capitalist criminals we have in  
this country.

I've never heard a craft beer  
enthusiast apologize  
for the idiocy  
of his calculated liberal poses.  
The craft beer drinkers  
instead maintain a transparent pose  
of benign liberalism,  
yet spend all of their time trying to  
detect the slightest trace  
of Bartlett pear in a Coconut India Pale Ale—  
as opposed to even attempting to help  
any of their fellow human beings.  
These people who support craft beer choose  
to buy brands that allegedly donate  
to Good Causes,  
they post to social platforms  
to make people they don't know aware  
that they buy The Socially Responsible Beers,  
knowing entirely well that  
all of these donations are essentially criminal,  
that none of this money  
ever reaches the people  
it needs to reach,  
which is readily apparent,  
because when they sit down to order  
said craft beer all they see are bums.  
Only a craft beer drinker  
would conclude the most efficient way  
of helping his fellow human being  
is buying more craft beer.  
The reality is none of us know

what to do with bums,  
we're privy to no bum solutions,  
no solution to our bum problems,  
yet we know all of these bums  
are essentially Anglo.  
The white junkie and black crackhead  
are both at bottom entirely Anglo.  
We know how to produce bums,  
but we have no idea  
what to do with these bums  
once we've produced them.  
We produce bums shamelessly,  
and then even more shamelessly  
we shun these bums  
from acceptable society.  
You'll never meet a person  
at a restaurant downtown  
who used to be a bum.  
It's impossible for bums to re-enter into society,  
there's a wall,  
an insurmountable wall that's constructed around  
every bum in this country,  
between the streets of a downtown  
and the restaurants of a downtown.  
A restaurant-goer can become a bum,  
but a bum will never again become a restaurant-goer.

## XVII

500:689 .726

The harsh reality is that there's little we can do  
for our fellow citizens  
who've reached such dilapidated states  
more than simply talking to them,  
and this is something anyone who's been  
in a dilapidated state  
knows to be profoundly true.  
The entire industry of strippers  
and whores, in fact,  
should be rehabilitated based  
on this point alone,  
because no one in our society  
gives the dilapidated person  
more time of day than the exotic dancer.  
It's undoubtedly true that, this century,  
the exotic dancing community  
has done more for the dilapidated person community  
than the Catholic church community.  
Because strippers and whores  
innately give the dilapidated person  
the time of day,  
any stripper worth her salt  
instinctively knows how to speak to the dilapidated soul,  
the dilapidated person  
just needs someone to listen to a sob story  
for a second of time,  
for someone to care for a fraction  
of an iota of their day,

to pretend to care in a way  
that's not grossly condescending  
in the classic bureaucratic manner.  
Yet there's this misguided notion  
that the stripper only talks to customers,  
when in fact the stripper speaks  
to infinitely more potential customers  
than actual customers—  
the successful stripper, in fact,  
has no more than a small handful  
of customers that pay her bills,  
and, by contrast,  
it's these potential customers  
who are infinitely more likely to be dilapidated.  
The actual customer is more likely to be opulent and  
    jovial,  
unrestrained and decadent,  
while the potential customer  
is almost always entirely dilapidated.  
Giving this potential customer the time of day  
is almost a religious act on the parts of the strippers and  
    whores.  
And it's for precisely this reason  
I have so much more respect  
for strippers and whores than I do  
for the median craft beer drinker.  
We believe craft beer drinkers  
are laudable members of our society,  
while we denigrate strippers and whores,  
but I actually find strippers and whores  
to be laudable members of our society,

while I denigrate craft beer drinkers.  
There's only so much you can do  
for a guy who's become a bum on the street,  
one particular bum approached me  
on a second date in an alleyway  
and referred to the girl  
I was with as my wife,  
and I gave him ten dollars,  
but even that ten dollars wasn't sincere,  
that ten dollars was a disingenuous ten dollars,  
it was obviously for the benefit of the girl I was with.  
You need to speak to people  
in dilapidated states,  
largely because it's the only thing  
you can do that will, at bottom,  
have a palpable effect.

XVIII

506:657 .770

What happens to them  
will largely be fatalistic,  
it will be a matter of fate  
statistically speaking,  
but it's just utter cruelty to ignore them,  
to treat them as people  
who don't deserve the time of day,  
not even an iota of your afternoon,  
to complain to your waiter  
because a white junkie in your line of sight  
is ruining the Bartlett pear aftertaste  
of your ten dollar IPA.  
But this is what's happened  
to so many downtowns,  
these same downtowns  
I still go to,  
these downtowns that have my memories  
folded into them,  
maybe a decade or more folded into them—  
they've become inundated  
with craft beer drinkers.  
It's not the bums who offend me, no,  
it's the craft beer drinkers who offend me.  
It's the people who believe twelve dollars  
for a beer is an appropriate price to pay  
for a beverage.  
It's the people who think discussing  
the aftertaste of hops

is an appropriate conversation  
to have in public.  
It's the people who believe strippers  
and whores are people  
we should look down upon a priori—  
it's the people who maintain  
all the socially appropriate opinions  
but display all of the most cowardly tendencies.  
Our downtowns are being ruined by these people,  
who have the correct opinions  
on every issue—  
at bottom all these people care about  
is maintaining the correct opinion  
on any issue at hand.  
Our downtowns were once great places  
to grab a slice of pizza,  
filled with bums and strippers and whores,  
but now our downtowns are inundated  
with craft beer drinkers  
and fried calamari and mozzarella sticks  
and jalapeno poppers  
and people who have socially acceptable opinions  
on everything. It's disgusting  
really. But of course all rationalism  
is little more than absurdist propaganda.  
It's only via rationalism,  
an essentially Anglo concept,  
that we find ourselves within a prism  
where everything is Anglo,  
where every white junkie and black crackhead  
are equally Anglo.

It's only when we attend the funerals  
of close friends who die  
absurdly young that we realize this,  
that all rationalism  
is little more than lurid absurdist propaganda.  
Only people who attend these funerals  
understand this from experience.  
We realize not just the absurdity  
of these conversations  
but the absurdity of ourselves,  
and, even in my case,  
it was only a few years ago  
when a good friend of mine finally,  
after years of seemingly ceaseless suffering,  
gave in to late stage brain cancer.  
The entire ordeal was criminal,  
and to be clear I was probably  
one of the most criminal.

XIX

434:601 .722

My social criminality has perhaps  
never been more acute  
than during this period of my life.  
My friend was diagnosed  
with late stage brain cancer  
and moved back in with his parents where,  
not long after,  
he suffered a seizure while driving,  
totaled his car,  
and was from then on forbidden to drive.  
So naturally, being a good friend,  
being actually a better friend to him  
than even a few of the friends  
he'd had for decades,  
a better friend at least  
in terms of time spent,  
I took it upon myself to drive  
to his parents' house multiple times per week,  
after work, where I already had a decent commute,  
which wasn't an insignificant drive,  
to his parents' house,  
to hang out with him,  
to pick him up and then drive him  
to other places where we'd hang out  
for a reasonable amount of time,  
where afterward I'd drive him back  
to his parents' house.  
This was a difficult ordeal for my friend,

as you can imagine,  
and there were various series of ups and downs—  
had I been born into wealth  
I'd have done whatever he asked,  
but being a working stiff  
there was only so much that I could do,  
there were times he wanted to get  
an ice cream cone and I,  
unfortunately, had to do laundry.  
A young man with late stage brain cancer,  
essentially a death sentence,  
wanted to buy me a mint chocolate chip waffle cone,  
but I had to politely decline  
because I needed to wash my boxer briefs.  
In any case his girlfriend,  
who was younger than the two of us  
yet still young, dumped him not long after,  
and from this we concluded  
that apparently waiting for him  
to die was too much of a burden for her,  
which in retrospect I suppose is fair enough,  
not everyone has the patience to wait for someone to die,  
a terminal illness, for some people,  
can just be a bit too inconvenient,  
a tad too cumbersome.  
At the time, I didn't think much of it,  
my friend was fairly torn up about it,  
and who could blame him?—  
but, again, with the exception of consoling a person  
in a more or less generic way  
there's not much we can realistically do.

We can tell our dying friend  
that his ex-girlfriend is a terrible person,  
a tawdry whore,  
that he deserves better,  
but the reality is there's nearly nothing  
you can tell a young person who,  
in all likelihood, will die a slow death,  
there's next to nothing  
you can tell him that will comfort him  
when his attractive girlfriend ruthlessly leaves him.

XX

483:709 .681

It's great to say,  
it's an appealing idea to think  
that we can arrive at the door of a dying  
young man and alter his life  
for the better,  
but it's significantly more difficult  
than you might think,  
in practice it's more or less an impossibility.  
You imagine at the time  
that you're saying something uniquely enlightening  
when in reality you're just mindlessly spewing  
generic condolences—  
generic condolences that are hardly of any help at all.  
Having said that, during my day-to-day routine  
I thought almost nothing of his ex-girlfriend,  
I left it at that,  
I thought she was taking the easy way out,  
there's no doubt about that,  
but I didn't necessarily curse her name  
in my personal time,  
I felt like it was her decision,  
and ultimately if she felt as though  
my friend wasn't the person  
she wanted to wait for,  
in a terminal sense,  
then I respected that as her decision,  
that there was little any of us could do  
besides respect her decision

and speak poorly of her behind her back.  
I didn't think much of it at all actually  
until the following weekend when I was at a bar  
around closing time with a close friend,  
and I felt a tap on my shoulder,  
only to find this ex-girlfriend  
of my dying friend.  
She said  
she just wanted to say hi,  
and subsequently I said hello,  
yet only a few moments later  
I received yet a second tap on the shoulder.  
Now this ex-girlfriend's friend,  
who accompanied her to the locale,  
was standing in front of my person,  
and she proceeded to inform me  
that I was quote-unquote "kind of rude"  
to my dying friend's ex-girlfriend,  
that I could have said hello  
just a little more cordially,  
this friend of my dying friend's ex-girlfriend  
actually had the audacity  
to stand there and with in a state of sincerity  
speak these exact words to me,  
to proclaim that it was actually me,  
that I was the person who was committing  
the faux pas here,  
that I was the one just a little out of line,  
that my less than enthusiastic hello  
was the true affront to good taste here.  
Given the circumstances,

my tendency toward the intemperate  
took hold of me,  
and I informed them both  
of my feelings on the matter,  
that I perhaps informed them of my feelings  
in an acerbic manner,  
in perhaps the most acerbic manner  
I could imagine  
at the time.

I let them know in no uncertain terms  
who I believed was committing  
the true faux pas at this bar,  
late in the evening,  
where we were all inebriated.

In any case, just moments later  
I received an additional tap on my shoulder.  
The bouncer of the bar  
stood in front of me,  
rather apathetic,  
and informed me that I needed  
to leave  
the premises because  
“the girl over there,” quote-unquote,  
was claiming I physically hit her.

XXI

596:752 .793

A girl who just dumped my dying friend  
said hello to me then had her friend  
verbally assault me for allegedly  
not being enthusiastic enough  
when I returned her reprehensible hello,  
then I subsequently verbally assaulted  
both her and her friend  
for concerning themselves  
with enthusiastic greetings  
as opposed to people dying arduous deaths,  
then she falsely accused me  
of physically hitting her  
in a public place.  
Luckily enough for me,  
this notion that a person  
punched a female in a venue  
densely packed at that capacity,  
yet managed to land a punch  
so clandestinely no one in the venue noticed,  
that no eye witnesses emerged  
was absurd to all parties involved,  
yet I still vigorously plead my case,  
because I'd never plead guilty when innocent,  
so I vigorously defended  
my name against what I correctly  
interpreted to be a total defamation  
of my character,  
against this tasteless

character assassination,  
a legitimate assassination attempt,  
all, unbelievable as it may seem,  
as a subsequent result  
of me refusing to return  
an enthusiastic hello.  
An unenthusiastic hello  
nearly turned me into an alleged felon,  
and as I'm defending  
myself vigorously,  
perhaps even excessively vigorously,  
the ex-girlfriend ambles over  
with her degenerate friend  
and admits that her claim  
was entirely fabricated,  
that it had absolutely no basis in reality—  
and then the ex-girlfriend  
and her degenerate friend,  
the true Nazi of enthusiastic greetings,  
drive right off,  
admitting in so many words  
that they were in the business of assassinating  
the character of anyone who failed to say hello  
to them enthusiastically,  
that they equated a less than enthusiastic  
greeting with physical violence.  
The next morning I received  
a call from my sick friend,  
and as he addressed  
the situation from the previous night,  
it became relatively clear to me

that he was,  
for lack of a better phrase,  
taking her side.  
In my mind at the time this defense  
of this person  
was synonymous  
with taking her side,  
which, as you can imagine,  
led to a bit of a falling out between us,  
as he found himself  
attempting to work things out  
with a girl who now  
hated every aspect of my being  
and vice versa.

It was a bit of an imbroglio,  
because now I found myself  
essentially abandoning my dying friend  
as well.

I gave his ex-girlfriend  
an extended harangue  
regarding her ruthless abandonment  
of my dying friend,  
then just days later  
I found myself also ruthlessly abandoning him.  
Eventually we'd see each other again,  
my dying friend and I,  
we'd spend limited time together  
here and there, of course,  
our friendship didn't cease completely,  
and it was fine,  
there was no bitterness per se,

but our friendship,  
frankly, was obviously never the same.

XXII

522:679 .769

His ex-girlfriend abandoned him,  
then she felt as though  
I gave her an insincere hello  
at a bar, then I disclosed  
my true thoughts on her character,  
her despicable character,  
her ruthless abandonment  
of my dying friend,  
then just days later  
I also ruthlessly abandoned  
my dying friend.  
It took quite a long time for him to die—  
he lost his sight,  
and he was almost entirely blind,  
he was admitted to hospitals  
in a terminally intermittent fashion,  
visiting with high-priced specialists  
that brought nothing other than  
utter financial ruin to his family,  
and eventually he was enclosed  
in his bedroom from sunset to dawn to dinner,  
in his parents' house,  
an only child, abandoned by both  
his girlfriend and his good friend.  
Four years later I heard  
that he'd entered hospice,  
that he laid on his deathbed,  
and I arranged to pay him

a visit the subsequent morning  
with my cousin, but he died overnight.  
Days later, his mother noted  
to a mutual friend  
that she'd prefer his impending funeral  
to be a small ceremony,  
that she didn't want it to be a big crowd,  
and I considered not attending  
before being ultimately convinced  
by a mutual friend to attend.  
Against my better judgment  
I attended the funeral,  
yet the second I saw my dead friend's  
made-up corpse in the coffin,  
the second I stepped in sight of the coffin,  
a bout of intense regret came over me,  
and I realized I had no business attending this funeral,  
that I abandoned my dying friend,  
and then I had the audacity to attend his funeral,  
essentially against his own mother's wishes—  
not explicitly against his mother's wishes  
but implicitly against his mother's wishes.  
There was no doubt his mother most likely  
would have preferred I not attend.  
There was no doubt, if pressed,  
she would have at least been agnostic  
vis-a-vis my attendance, which,  
considering her preference  
was a small ceremony,  
is tantamount to preferring my absence.  
Via the procession line,

it was clear his parents clearly either  
didn't remember me or deliberately forgot me.  
In my seat I ceaselessly  
speculated whether they didn't remember me  
or deliberately forgot me.  
Me—the guy who used to always go pick up their son,  
what a great guy,  
I used to go pick their son up  
more frequently than even his childhood friends,  
I was such a nice guy,  
yet eventually of course  
I stopped coming around,  
I abandoned their dying son  
like we all eventually abandon the terminally ill,  
and subsequently his parents forgot about me,  
and rightfully so.  
It would have actually been  
distasteful for them to remember me.

XXIII

549:733 ·749

The moment I witnessed,  
in my dead friend's father's eyes,  
that he either intentionally  
or unintentionally forgot my identity  
I knew attending this funeral  
was a grave mistake.

I sat back down in my black  
fold out chair and said to myself  
This is the last funeral I'll attend,  
because attending a funeral  
is always a mistake,  
it's the most insipid mistake  
we can make.

Attending a wedding may be  
a faux pas but attending a funeral  
is always an inane mistake.

We all gather around,  
all friends and family,  
to gaze idiotically at a stiff corpse,  
then we go eat at a local restaurant—  
we all mindlessly stare at a dead body,  
then we have a nice meal.

There's nothing more disingenuous  
than a funeral, and the most disingenuous funerals  
are those held for the young.

An essentially interminable disease,  
but the medical professional made  
a significant fortune in the process.

A career's worth for the working class, no doubt.  
They extended his suffering,  
the suffering of his family,  
the suffering of everyone around him,  
then allowed him to die.  
How many hundreds of thousands of dollars,  
if not millions of dollars,  
were spent, only to extend  
a man's suffering and still allow him  
to perish prematurely?  
But of course they still accepted payment,  
because you never get  
an A for effort in this country,  
unless you're a medical professional.  
It's only doctors who have the audacity  
to extend a son's suffering,  
watch him die, and still ruin the family financially.  
We think so highly of doctors in this country,  
yet it seems to me that doctors are greater charlatans  
now than they've ever been.  
But of course I attended the reception as well,  
where the disingenuous nature  
of the entire event really came into focus.  
The disingenuous nature  
of the entire ordeal naturally reached  
its apex at the reception,  
as it became just another social event.  
It's impossible to have an iota of respect for yourself  
or the society you participate in  
after attending an event of that magnitude.  
Sitting in that black fold-out chair,

staring at my dead friend's heavily made up corpse,  
it failed to occur to me then—  
I was too consumed with disgust for myself—  
but in retrospect  
my only conclusion from that day is just that,  
that rationalism is nothing more  
than the most lurid form of absurdist propaganda.  
We've constructed a rationalist Anglo world  
that hasn't consumed everything,  
not quite yet, but that still remains essentially  
objectionable,  
just as the mystic Byzantine world,  
it's natural opposite, was,  
in its essence, also entirely objectionable.  
And the doctors who treat our dead friends,  
prolonging their suffering and buying homes  
in the Hamptons with the criminal proceeds,  
they're objectionable in every way.

XXIV

368:499 .737

And the people  
who assassinate our characters  
because they feel as though  
we're not enthusiastic enough  
when we say hello to them at bars,  
they're criminals of the highest magnitude.  
But we ourselves  
are just as objectionable  
as any of these actors,  
we're also criminals  
of the highest magnitude,  
we're perhaps the most objectionable.  
We astutely recognize  
our opposites as criminal  
because we exist as parts  
of the same criminal whole.  
We don't know how to deal  
with death anymore.  
We think our scientists  
and our doctors are progressing,  
that they'll eventually progress  
to a state where they'll once  
and for all understand death,  
once and for all  
when the sad reality  
is we remain at the apex  
of the primitive with regards  
to quote-unquote dealing with death.

We're essentially  
an indigenous population  
when it comes to interacting with death.  
We're zealots of progress,  
and as such we're  
ill-equipped to interact  
with any sort of profundity,  
because we're suspended in progress,  
we're stuck waiting for our scientists  
and doctors to give us the word,  
to give us the word  
that they've finally gotten  
to the so-called bottom of death.  
Previous generations spoke profoundly  
in the face of death,  
while our generation serves cole slaw  
and chicken parmigiana at funeral receptions,  
the images of corpses  
still fresh in our mind.  
Previous generations understood death  
in a profoundly general sense  
if hardly at all in a specific sense.  
We consume mozzarella sticks  
in the face of death,  
we eat jalapeno poppers  
in the face of death,  
we drink craft beer with idiotic tangerine aftertastes  
in the face of death.  
It's, frankly, only the homeless of our era  
who truly recognize the ills of the private sphere—  
'by examining the nature of sensible things,

these people have arrived at a certain concept of God,  
but not at a conception truly worthy of Him.’

## Diagrams

ADAM METROPOLIS  
The Number 1.99999 Repeating  
8,809:11,704 .753

01—614:793 .774

We hadn't [b]een there n[i]nety [s]econds, [b]ecause it [w]as ri[gh]t as [w]e [w]alked in the [b]la[ck]yard of the h[i]gh [s]chool [g]radu[at]ion [p]arty th[at] her [c]ousin a[pp]roached u[s] and, wi[th]out [th]e [s]l[i]ghte[s]t hesit[at]ion, a[s]ked my [g]irl[fr]iend r[i]ght to her [f]a[ce]—D[id] you br[i]ng my [t]u[p]per[w]are [w]i[th] you? It [t]ook [p]erha[p]s longer than I [c]are to [c]onf[er]e[s]s to [f]ully [r]ecognize [w]hat exa[ctl]y it [w]as sh[e] [w]as [r]ef[er]en[ci]ng. Oh, the oxt[ai]l, I [r]efl[e]c[t]ed, a [s]econd or [s]o [l]a[te]r, as I [r]ecall[ed] there [b]eing a [b]eauti[ful], [w]ood-[c]overed, [p]ie[ce] of gla[s]s of tu[p]per[w]are [s]itt[ing] [i]n ou[r] [r]efr[i]gerato[r] [f]o[r] ove[r] a [w]eek, i[n]cub[at]i[n]g a[n] oxt[ai]l dish th[at] h[a]d, u[n]f[or]tunate[l]y, [t]o[tal]l[y] exp[ir]ed—it was so [f]ar gone I was h[es]it[at]ant [t]o eve[n] o[p]e[n] the [t]o[p] of the [t]u[p]per[w]are [c]on[t]aine[r], [d]es[p]ite the [f]a[ct] the [t]o[p] of the [c]on[t]ainer was a bea[uti]ful, wood [f]i[n]i[sh]ed [p]iece. There was [n]o [d]oubt in [m]y [m]i[n]d [th]at [th]is oxtail was, [a]t th[at] [p]oint, [n]ot just [c]ompl[ete]l[y] exp[ir]ed but [e]ssentia[l]l[y] a ty[p]e of m[eat] sou[p], a ty[p]e of l[i]quidified [c]o[r]p[s]e, whi[ch] of [c]ou[r]s[e] di[s]gu[s]ted m[e] [s]ev[er]el[y]. [C]l[e]aning it out [s]tr[uc]k m[e] as a [g]rotes[que] idea. I [c]an't [s]ay for [c]ertain, but it'[s] more l[i]kely [th]an not [th]at I [th]r[ew] i[t] [i]n[t]o the

[t]r[ɪ]ʃ—[t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ], [w]u:d [t]o[p], and [o]x[t]aɪl. 'Oh, [s]o [s]orry, I'll [d]ef[ɪ]n[ɪ]tely [b]r[ɪ]ŋ [ɪ]t [b]ack [s]oon!' she [s]aɪd, [a]nd I gl[ɑ]n[c]ed [a]t her [a]nd a[t]t[ɛ]m[p]t[ɛ]d [t]o [d]e[c]i[ph]er [ɪ]f she had [a]ny [ɪ]d[e]a the [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] [a]nd the ox[t]aɪl [w]ɛr[ɪ] [b]oθ [l]oŋ g[o]n[e], th[at] [b]oθ n[ɔ]w [s]a[t] [ɪ]n a gar[b]ɑʒ h[ɛ]p, a [p]ɪl[e] of tr[ɪ]ʃ [s]om[ɛ]w[ɛ]r, at the [b]o[t]o[m] of a [p]u[b]lɪ[c] d[ʒ]m[p], [s]t[ɪ]ll fɪll[ɛ]d w[ɪ]th [d]e[c]aɪd, gr[ɔ]t[ɛ]s[qu]e ox[t]aɪl, [a]nd th[at] her [c]oʊsɪn w[ʊ]ld n[ɛ]v[ɚ] ɑɪn [o]wn the [p]r[ɪ]v[ɪ]l[e]ʒ of [p]l[ɑ]cɪŋ her [l]e[t]o[v]ɛr [ɪ]n [t]o th[at] [p]l[ɛ]c[e] of [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] [w]ɪθ the b[ɛ]u[tɪ]f[ʊ]l [w]u:d [c]o[v]ɛr. Th[at] [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] [w]ɑs [f]ɪn[ɪ]ʃ[ɪ]d. H[ɛ]v[ɪ]ng [s]aɪd th[at], [ɛ]v[ɛ]n the [f]ɪn[ɛ]s[t] [p]l[ɛ]c[e] of [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ]—h[ɔ]w [p]r[ɛ]cɪ[ɪ]ʊs [ɪ]s [ɪ]t [r]e[ɪ]l[ɪ]y? [C]oʊldn't w[ɛ] [r]e[p]l[ɑ]c[e] [ɪ]t [f]or [f]ɪv[ɪ] d[ɔ]ll[ɜ]r or [l]e[s]s? My thɪŋkɪŋ at the [t]ɪm[ɛ] w[ɑs] y[ɛ]s, [θ]at [θ]e [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] [w]ɑs [ɛ]n[tɪ]r[ɪ]ly [f]un[g]ɪb[ɪ]l, y[ɛ]t [ɑs] [s]o[ʊ]n [ɑs] w[ɛ] [s]t[ɛ]p[ɪ]d [f]o[t] [ɪ]n [t]o th[ɪ]s [h]ɪʒ [s]h[oo]l g[r]ɑd[ʊ]eɪt [p]ɑr[ti] [h]ɛr [c]oʊsɪn [ɪ]n [k]w[ɪ]r[ɪ]d [a]b[oʊ]t the [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ]—[ɪ]f th[ɪ]s [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] [p]l[ɛ]h[ɑ]p[s] [b]ɛl[ɔ]ŋd [t]o [s]om[e] [s]o[r]t of r[ɛ]r[e] [s]p[ɛ]cɪ[ɪ]l[e]s of [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ], [p]l[ɛ]h[ɑ]p[s] [ɑ] [s]p[ɛ]cɪ[ɪ]l[e]s of [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] on the v[ɛ]rʒ of [ɛ]x[t]ɪn[ɪ]tɪ[ɔ]n, [p]l[ɛ]h[ɑ]p[s] th[ɪ]s [w]ɑs [s]om[e] [k]ɪnd [ɔ]f [o]n[e]-[ɔ]f-[ɑ]-[k]ɪnd [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ] I n[ɔ]n[ç]ɑ[ɪ]nt[ɪ]ly [t]o[s]ɪd [ɪ]n [t]o a [p]ɪl[e] of [t]r[ɪ]ʃ. [S]o[m]e [p]l[ɛ]o[p]l[ɛ] h[ɑ]v[ɛ] [m]ɑ[s]sɪv[ɪ] [ɑ]m[oun]t[s] [ɔ]f r[ɛ]s[p]e[ɪ]t for [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ], [b]ut I've n[ɛ]v[ɚ] [b]ɛɪn [o]n[e] of th[ɛ]m, [ɪ]t [ɑ]l[w]ɑys [ɛ]l[ʊ]d[ɛ]d [m]e [w]h[ɪ] [ɑ]n[ɪ]o[n]e [w]oʊld [ɪ]n[ɛ]st [m]o[r]e th[ɑ]n [o]n[e] [d]o[l]l[ɜ]r [ɪ]n [t]o a [p]l[ɛ]c[e] of [t]u[pp]l[ɪ]w[ɛ], [p]l[ɛ]s[ɔ]n[ɪ]l[ɪ]. [T]o [m]ɪ [m]ɪnd, [ɪ]f [ɑ]

[p]iece of tu[pp]erware, no [m][a]tter the level of cr[a]fts[m][a]nshi[p], is [p]ri[c]ed ab[o]ve [o]ne dollar, then it'[s] an over[p]ri[c]ed [p]ie[c]le of tu[pp]erware. It'[s] ju[s]t not an [i]tem [I]'ve [p]er[s]onally e[v]er [v]iewed [a]s [a]n in[v]e[s]tment of [a]ny kind. In [m][y] [m]i[nd], [p]l[ates] and bowls are re[l]ati[v]e[l]y [w]orth[w]hile in[v]est[m]ents, [w]hile tu[pp]er[w]are is e[ss]entia[l]ly a [c]a[p]ita[l]i[s]t [p]l[oy] to in[c]rea[s]e the [p]rofit margin on [p]l[a]s[tic] [b]a[gs]—to [c]on[v]in[c]e [p]leo[p]le they shouldn't [o]n[ly] [i]n[v]e[s]t [i]n [p]l[ates] and b[ow]ls, [b]ut al[s]o [i]n[v]e[s]t [i]n the highe[s]t [q]ua[l]ity [p]l[a]s[tic] [b]a[gs] ((t[u]p)perware), [th]at in [th]eory [th]ey'll use [a]g[ai]n and [a]g[ai]n, [b]ut [i]n [p]ra[c]ti[c]le they'll [l]ose [i]n[c]e[ss]ant[l]y and [c]on[s]tant[l]y have to re[p]l[a]ce.

02-696:817.852

'She's n[e]v[e]r g[e]tting that [t]u[pp]erware b[ac]k,' I [s]aid. 'Y[ou] th[r]ew it in the [t][r]a[sh]?' she [s]aid. 'You g[a]ve the o[k]ay?' I [s]ai[d], to which [sh]e [sh]oo[k] [h]er [h]ea[d], [c]l[earl]y [m]i[s]r[e]m[e]mb[e]ring the [p]l[ath]o[r]a of [t]imes [w]e've thrown out [t]u[pp]er[w]are in the [p]a[s]t, the [c]oun[t][l]e[s]s [t]imes [I]'ve [s]een a [p]ie[c]le of [w]ell-[w]orn [t]u[pp]er[w]are [t]a[k]ing u[p] [s]p[a]ce [i]n our [r]e[f]ri[ge]rator, a[s]ked her i[f] I [c]ould th[r]ow [s]aid [t]u[pp]er[w]are out, [r]e[c]eived a [p]p[ro]val to th[r]ow [s]aid [t]u[pp]er[w]are [ou]t, and th[r]own [ou]t [s]aid [t]u[pp]er[w]are. It's n[o]t a [p]r[o]b[lem], I [s]aid, we can [p]r[o]b[ab]ly ju[s]t [b]uy her a [r]e[p]l[a]c[e]m[en]t or [s]o[m]e[th]ing. Sh[e] ag[r]e[e]d [b]ut [s]eem[ed] du[b]i[ou]s, and I [f]elt the [s]ame, I

[f]ound [m]y[s]el[f] a[g]r[ee]ing with [b]o[th] [m]y[s]el[f] and [m]y [g]i[r]l[f]r[ie]nd, [d]e[s]p[ite] the [f]a[ct] we had [d]ia[m]e[t]r[i]c[ally] o[pp]o[sed] views on this [t]u[pp]erware. My [g]i[r]l[f]r[ie]nd a[n]d I di[s]a[g]r[ee]d on our [a]b[il]it[y] to re[p]l[a]ce this tu[pp]er[w]are, and I [a]g[r]ee[d] [w]ith [b]o[th] of u[s]. I [s]at i[n] a [l]awn chair a [s]e[c]o[n]d or [s]o [l]ater, drin[k]ing a g[l]a[s]s of [S]oju, [e]x[p]l[i]c[it]l[y] [a]t[te]m[p]t[ing] [t]o [a]void a[n]y u[n]ne[c]e[s]s[ar]y i[n]te[r]a[c]ti[on] [a]t thi[s] [h]igh [s]chool g[r]adua[ti]on until [I]’d im[b]i[bed] at [l]ea[s]t [h]alf thi[s] [b]o[t]tle of [S]oju, doubt[i]ng my [a]b[il]it[y] to [c]ome off [a]pp[ro]p[riate]l[y] [c]ordi[al] in a [s]oci[al] [s]etting [s]an[s] a [m]i[n]i[m]u[m] [o]f half [o]f [a] [b]o[t]tle [o]f thi[s] [S]oju [r]u[th]l[e]ssl[y] [p]er[c]o[la]ting thr[ough] my [b]l[ood]s[t]r[eam]. I [s]at there, [c]o[n]t[em]p[li]a[ti]ng h[i]gh [s]c[h]ool [g]radu[at]ions, [c]o[n]t[em]p[li]a[ti]ng my own h[i]gh [s]c[h]ool [g]radu[at]ion, [r]e[c]allin[g] nothin[g] of m[y] h[i]gh [s]c[h]ool [g]radu[at]ion, [c]o[n]t[em]p[li]a[ti]ng the [p]erv[al]s[i]ve i[di]o[cr]y of or[g]anized edu[c]a[ti]on, [c]o[n]s[ider]ing how more or l[e]ss [e]ver[y] u[n]i[que] thin[k]er—from [S]oc[r]a[ti]es [s]t[on]ed by the [A]the[n]ians to Giorda[n]o [B]ru[n]o [b]urnt a[l]l[i]ve [b]y the [C]atho[lic] [ch]ur[ch] to [N]ietzs[che] un[r]ea[d a[n]d i[n] a[n] i[n]sane a[s]y[lu]m as he [r]o[tted] a[way]—y[es], [e]ve[r]y u[n]i[que] thin[k]er ove[r] the [c]our[s]e of [h]uman [h]i[s]to[r]y was either inten[s]e[ly] o[s]t[r]a[c]ized or [s]impl[y] a[ss]a[ss]in[ate]d by the [s]y[st]emati[c] edu[c]a[tors of [h]is or [h]er d[ay]. In short, I was vo[c]i[fer]o[us]ly dr[i]n[k]i[n]g th[i]s gla[s]s of [S]oju

when [I] thought to m[y][s]el[f]—[I]sn't [i]t po[ss][i]ble [th]at we [th]ink of [th]e [th]eo[logi][c]al [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph]ers as the [c]o[n]s[er]vatives, as the ones [r]e[s]t[r]ained by thi[s] [s]o-[c]alled [c]o[n]c[ep]tion of God, yet it's a[c]tually the [c]a[s]e [th]at [th]e [th]eo[logi][c]al [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph]ers, over the [c]our[s]e of [h]u[m]an [h]i[s]t[or]y, are the [m]o[s]t au[d]acious, the [b]o[d]est [ph]iloso[ph]ers we [h]ave and [h]a[v]e e[v]er [h]ad? How [e]l[se] can we [e]xp[lain] [B]er[k]e[ley], I thought—[ea]sil[y] the [m]o[s]t ra[d]i[c]al s[k]e[p]t[i]c the [m]o[d]ern [W]e[s]t h[as] p[r]oduc[ed], yet al[s]o a [C]atholi[c] [p]r[i]e[s]t? [D]ion[y]si[us], for ex[am]p[le], was a[ctually] [q]uite v[i]gor[ou]s [i]n h[is] s[ke]p[tic]i[s]m of our [a]b[il]i[t]y to k[n]ow a[n]ything, his [c]ir[c]umlocutions were a[c]tua[l]ly [q]uite r[adi]c[al]. [W]hereas our typi[c]al [s]e[c]ular athei[s]t [ph]i[lo]s[oph]er, [w]hile [a]ssured of our [a]b[il]i[t]y to k[n]ow the[r]e a[r]e [n]o Gods, is rather neutered [i]n h[is] [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph]i[c]al [s]p[ec]u[la]tions [i]f the [f]a[ct] th[at] God [d]oesn't ex[i]st [i]s le[f]t to the si[d]e. [I]sn't [i]t [p]o[ss][i]ble [th]at [th]e [s]o-[c]alled theo[logi][c]al [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph]ers are the m[ost] [a]udacious [a]mong [u]s? The [o]nes who are [w]illing [to] [t]a[k]e the [p]ro[ph]er[ic] [r]a[d]i[c]al [l]eap[s] ne[c]e[ss]ar[y] [w]hen [d]ea[l]ing [w]i[th] meta[ph]y[sic]s, I thought [w]hile vo[c]i[f]er[ou]s[ly] dr[i]n[k]ing th[is] bottle of [S]oju, un[w]i[l]ling to [s]p[ea]k to [a]nyone [a]t this high [s]c[h]ool gradu[at]ion un[t]il I had [th]orough[ly] [c]on[t]em[p]l[ate]d the [t]rue n[ature] of [th]e [th]eo[logi][c]al [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph]er.

"How [e]lse can we [e]xplain [K]i[e]r[k][e]lgaard? The [s]e[c]u[l]ar [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]ers tal[k] our ears [o][ff] a[n]d [m]ore [o][f]ten than [n][o]t [s]ay [n]othing [b]ey[o]nd what [th]eir [th]e[s]is a[d]visors [d]e[m]and [t]o [b]e [p]r[in]t[ed], I thought, vo[c][i]fero[u]sly d[r][i]nk[i]ng th[i][s] bottle of [S]oju, while [th]e a[p]ex of [th]e [th]eo[l]o[g]i[c]al [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]er tru[l]ly e[n][a]c[t]s the [n]otion of [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]izing with a h[a]mmer? Y[e]t, in ou[r] [e][r]a, it [s][e]ems w[e] more or [l]e[ss] di[s]mi[ss] all [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]ers wh[o] ch[oo]se t[o] be[l]i[e]ve in God, I thought. [I]s [i]t then po[ss]ible, [I] thought, dr[i]nk[i]ng m[y] [S]oju, vo[c][i]fero[u]sly, that [b]e[c]ause [th]e [th]eo[l]o[g]i[c]al [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]ers have [b]een e[ss]en[t]ia[l]ly [sh]unned from the [m]o[d]ern a[c]a[d]e[m]y, that the [m]ere [m]en[t]ion of God is a[n]a[th]e[m]a to the [m]o[d]ern a[c]a[d]e[m]y, that [b]e[c]ause [th]e [th]eo[l]o[g]i[c]al [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]er [h]as [b]een [h]o[l]i[st]i[c]a[l]ly [b]anned from parta[k]ing in the [m]o[d]ern [s]o-[c]alled a[c]a[d]e[m]y, our [m]o[d]ern organized e[d]ucators, [th]at [th]ey've [th]erefore [m]a[n]aged to [m]a[n]eu[v]er out[s]i[de] of the [s]t[i]fling bu[r]eaucr[a]c[y] of the uni[v]er[s]it[y]—[a]nd [a]c[t]uall[y] engaged with o[r]i[g]inal thought? Should we [c]o[n]s[i]der that po[ss]ible? [Th]at [th]ey [e]c[h]o [e]ar[l]y [C]h[r]istian [th]eo[l]ogia[n]s, [p]erse[c]uted by [p]aga[n] [R]oma[n] autho[r]it[ie]s, who [c]r[e]at[e]d e[l]aborate [f]r[am]ewor[k]s that [f]ormed the [s]ui gene[r]i[s] [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]al [f]ounda[t]io[n] of early Ch[r]istian thought, a [s]ui ge[n]eri[s] [s]ynthe[s]i[s] of the

[c]a[n][o]n[i]c]al G[o]s[pl]els with [N]eo[p]l[at]o[ni]c  
 [th][ou]ght, [th]at [o]ur [m]o[d]ern [th]eo[logi]a[n]s,  
 [a]l[m]ost [r]egardless of de[n]o[m]i[n]atio[n],  
 [p]r[o]s[e]cuted [b]y the athei[s]t univer[s]ity  
 [b]u[r]eau[c]r[ats], are [w]ork[i]ng [w]i[th]i[n]  
 [p]erh[a]p[s] [s]i[m]i[l]ar[l]y [r]a[di]c]al  
 [f]r[a]me[w]or[k]s? [A]f[ter] all, [s]e[c]u[l]ar [a]c[ademi]c  
 [ph]i[lo]s[oph]ers are [l]oath to [s]p[e]c[u]late on m[u]ch  
 [o]f [a]nything in ou[r] [e]r[a]. In their [p]l[a]c[e] we have  
 theoret[i]c]al [ph]y[s]i[c]i]sts who em[p]l[o]y  
 [c]om[p]l]ex [m]athe[m]ati]cs to [p]rove the  
 [s]u[s]c[e]p[t]i[b]i[l]i]ty of [c]om[p]l]ex [m]athe[m]atics to  
 al[m]ost an[y] ty[p]e of [s]o[ph]i[st]r[y]. [F]r[an]k[l]y,  
 I've n[e]v[er] [r]es[p]e[c]ted [m]athe[m]ati]cians, I  
 [sh]ould ad[m]it that [m]u[ch] [u]p[f]r[ont]. I  
 [s]u[p]p[ose], in my [o]wn [w]a[y], I've al[w]a[y]s viewed  
 [m]athe[m]ati]cians as e[s]sen[tia]lly [ch]ar[lat]ans. I  
 view the art of [m]athe[m]ati]cs as [n]ot only  
 [d]e[c]a[d]ent, but I al[s]o view the [c]on[c]e]pt of [n]umber  
 as a[n] e[ss]e[n]tia[l]ly [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]al [d]o[m]ain. The  
 [m]athe[m]at[i]c]ian's [f]or[m]ulas [a]re [a]lways  
 de[r]i[vat]i]ve of the nu[m]e[r]i[c]al axio[m]s of  
 [m]eta[ph]ysi]cs—it's always [s]t[r]u[c]k me as e[n]tirely  
 [p]o[ss]i[b]le that [n]um[b]ers are an [i]m[p]o[ss]i[b]ility.  
 [Th]at [th]e [i]ntro[d]u[ct]i[on] [o]f the [d]ecim]al [p]oint, of  
 the fra[cti]o[n], e[ss]entia[l]ly [s]a[n]k [m]athe[m]a]ti]cs  
 right [i]n [i]ts [p]l[a]c[e], in m[y] e[y]es at [l]ea[s]t. Of  
 [c]ourse, I'm at [b]ottom a [d]i[s]c[i]p]le of [P]a[la]mas, for  
 [c]er[tai]n, I was ina[d]ve[r]te[n]t[l]y [b]a[p]tiz]ed as a  
 [d]i[s]c[i]p]le of [P]a[la]m]as, of [c]our[s]e, I  
 [f]un[d]a[m]entally [d]i[s]agree w[i]th th[i]s [m]o[d]ern

i[d]lea th[a]t we [c][a]n [c]om[p]reh[e]nd [e]verything in a  
 [p]ure[l]y inte[l]l[e]ctual [f]ashion, [th]is [n][o]tion [th]at  
 [th]ere's, [i]n pra[c]t[i]ce, [n][o] [l][i][m][i]t to the hu[m]an  
 [i]nte[l]le[c]t. I f[i]nd that [i]dea to be [o]ne [o]f the mo[s]t  
 [a][b][s]o[l]ute[l]y [a][b][s]urd. Sure, of [c]our[s]e, we [c]an  
 r[e]a[d], [s]ay, [P]ar[m]e[n][i]d[e]s and, while [i]t's  
 [i]m[p]re[ss]ive, it's [a]lso entirel[y] [a]b[s]urd, and I  
 [p]er[s]o[n]a[l]l[y] enjoy [i]t [i][mm][e]nse[l]l[y], [b]ut on  
 those [m][e]rits. [I]'m not sure [I]'d [b]a[s]e my  
 [s]c[i]ent[i]f[i]c thought on it. I'm at [l]ea[s]t [l]e[ss] than  
 [c]ertain it'd [b]e[c]ome the [c]orner[s]tone of my  
 [s][e][c]u[l]ar inte[l]l[e]ctual [p]ur[s]uits. [P]ar[m]e[n]i[d]e[s]  
 is one of the [p]e[r]f[e]ct wo[r]k[s] of ab[s]u[r]d[i]st  
 [f][i][c]t[i]on wr[it]t[e]n [i]n any lang[u]age—and if w[e]  
 [i]nd[ee]d ma[d]e it a [c]orner[s]tone of our [s][e][c]u[l]ar  
 i[n]te[l]l[e]ctual pur[s]uits, then at [l]ea[s]t w[e]'d  
 [n][ee][d] to [r]e[c]ogn[i]ze our ab[s]u[r]d[i]st or[i]g[i]ns, as  
 [D]io[n]y[s]ius [r][i]ghtfull[y] [d]oes. Y[e]t we've  
 [e]m[p]loyed [P]ar[m]e[n]i[d]e[s] for [c]entur[ie]s as a  
 funda[m]e[n]tal co[m]m[un]itar[y] on a[l]l[e]g[e]d[l]y  
 ra[tio]n[a]l[i]st [n]o[tions]. A[l]l[e]g[e]dly ra[tio]n[a]l[i]st  
 [n]o[tions—[i]s th[i]s not [w]hat [w]e find our[s]elves  
 [s]teeped in, mo[r]e o[r] le[s]s [n]ight and [d]ay? When I  
 [c]o[m]ment on [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]s I [d]o [s]o in a  
 [c]o[n]s[c]iously ab[s]urd [f]a[sh]ion, be[c]ause I re[c]ognize  
 the [l][i][m][i]ts of [l]anguage, the [l][i][m][i]ts of  
 [l]anguage th[at] [a]t [b]ottom are in[c][a]p[ab]le of  
 [c]o[m]muni[c]a[ti]ng [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]s i[n] li[n]ear  
 [a]nd/or r[at]io[n]al [f][a]shio[n]s. It [s]ee[m]s  
 [s]o[m]ewhat obv[i]ou[s] [th]at [th]ere's a nef[ar]i[ou]s  
 [l]ite[r]a[l]ism at pl[ay] here, I th[i]nk [i]t's [s][a]f[e] to

[s][ay] that. Ever [s]in[c]e grade [s][c]hool I was [p]os[i]t[i]ve that I [s]tood in the [p][r]esen[c]e of a nefa[r]io[u][s] [l][i]tera[l][i]sm. Even as a young [b]oy, [i]nst[i]n[ct]i[ve][l][y], I k[n]ew [n]um[b]ers were, in all [l]i[k]e[l]ihood, im[p]o[s]s[i][b]i[l]i[t]i[e]s, and th[at] my [s]y[s]tem[a]ti[c] edu[c]ation was high[l][y] [s]u[s]ce[p][t]i[b]l[e] to, i[f] [n]ot e[n][t]ire[l][y] [c]om[p]l[i]c[it] i[n], a [n]e[f]a[r]ious [l]ite[r]a[l]ism. The [e]du[c]a[ti]on of my youth [d]i[d]n't [e]xa[c]tly [e]n[c]ourage aud[a][c]ious thought.

04-805:1077 .747

I[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, we [c]an't [c]om[p]ose [m]etaph[y]s[i]c[s] i[n] a rational [s]en[s]e, [c]an [w]e? [I]sn't [i]t al[w]ays in a bet[w]een-the-lines [s]en[s]e that [w]e [c]om[p]ose [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]s, [i]n [w]i[n]k[s] and nods that we write [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]s, be[c]ause we [c]an't w[r]ite [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]s [i]n a l[i]near [a]nd/or [r]a[ti]o[n]al [f]a[sh]io[n]? We [t]a[ke] [f]ar [t]oo much at [f]a[ce] value. Our [l]i[t]e[r]a[l]i[s]m [i]s [i]ntentio[n]a[l][y] or un[i]ntentio[n]a[l][y] [n]e[f]a[r]iou[s]. [B]e[c]ause the rea[l]it[y] is [n]ear[l][y] [n]othing [c]an [b]e t[a]k[en] at [f]a[ce] va[l]ue. [D]o you rea[l]ly [b]e[l]i[e]ve the gr[ea]test minds of An[t]i[q]u[ity] [i]n[t]en[d]ed [t]o [b]e [t]a[k]en at [f]a[ce] value? The [B]y[z]a[n]tines r[e]ad [P]l[a]to the [s]a[m]e [w]a[y] [w]e r[e]ad Do[s]toyev[s]k[y], [w]hereas [w]e r[e]ad [P]l[a]to the [s]a[m]e [w]a[y] the [B]y[z]a[n]t[i]nes r[e]ad the Go[s]p[els]. [P]erha[p]s [b]oth are a[b]su[r]d. Now, su[r]e, I'm with[ou]t a [d]ou[b]t, from a [c]ertain vantage [p]oint at lea[s]t, a [d]i[s]ci[p]le of [P]alama[s], I won't a[t]t[em]p[t] to d[e]n[y] that, but we

[c]an't [t]a[k]e eve[r]ything [P]a[l]amas [p]ut to  
 [p]a[p][y][r]u[s] at fa[c]e va[l]ue either. Although  
 [P]ala[m]a[s] under[s]tood the short[c]o[m]ings of  
 Ant[i][q]u[i]t[y] better than [e]ven the [m]o[s]t  
 [p]rogre[ss]ive [m]o[d]ern [s][c]holar, I'd [b]e the la[s]t one  
 to [s][ay] I t[a][k]e every[th]ing [th]e [s][ai]nt wrote at  
 [f][a][c]e va[l]ue, be[c]ause I'm [f]ar [f][r]om a  
 [l]ite[r]a[l]i[s]t. The m[o]de[r]n [s][c]h[ol]a[r], in[s][o][f]f[ar] as  
 [h]e [k]eeps [h]is [f]aith i[n] ratio[n]a[l]ism, will m[o]s[t  
 [l]i[k]e[l]y [n]eve[r] [c]ome [t]o [t]e[r]ms with the  
 [n]a[tu]r[e] of An[t][i][q]u[i]t[y]—is that fair to s[ay]? H[e]'ll  
 r[e]ad Parmen[i]d[e]s and ta[k]e eve[r]ything  
 [l]ite[r]a[l]l[y], a[n]d i[n] ta[k]in[g] eve[r]ythin[g]  
 [l]ite[r]a[l]l[y] he'll i[n]ev[i]tabl[y] ta[k]e everything  
 i[d]i[o]t[i]c[a]l[l]y. [I]sn't [i]t the [c][a]s[e] [th]at [th]e  
 [th]eologians are the gr[e]ate[s]t [s][k]e[p]t[i]c[s] am[o]ng  
 [u]s? We view [f][ai]th as [p]oison as we r[et]ain  
 [f]anatical levels of [f][ai]th in ou[r] [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r]ga[n]s.  
 We [p]e[r]use a [v]a[r]iety of em[p]i[r]i[c]al [s]tudies that  
 [v]i[v]i[s]e[c]t the [g]rote[s]q[ue] fi[c]tions of ou[r]  
 [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r]g[an]s—did you k[n]ow it's [n]ow  
 [s]p[e]c[u]l[ate]d human [b]e[ings] didn't s[ee] the [c]o[l]or  
 [b]lue until the [l]atter [B][C] [c]enturie[s] at ear[l]ie[s]t?  
 [A]ll [a]r[ound] u[s] ou[r] [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r]g[an]s [e]xcrete  
 [e]viden[c]e of their [u]tter [u]n[r]e[l]iab[i]l[i]ty, yet we  
 view [f][ai]th as idiocy while r[et]ain[ing] th[is]  
 [f]a[n]at[i]c[a]l [n]otio[n] that ou[r] [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r]ga[n]s  
 can and should and m[u]s[t be tr[u]s[t]ed—[w]h[i]ch [i]s  
 [w]hy [w]e're [n]ot [q]uite [r]adi[c]al e[n]ough. The  
 [m]o[d]ern [a]ge r[et]ains [r]a[d]i[c]al [f][ai]th i[n] i[ts]  
 [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r]g[an]s in a [m]o[r]e [f]an[at]i[c]a[l] [f]a[sh]ion



the [f][a][c]t re[m]ains that we l[a][ck] the [p]ler[c]e[p]tual [f]a[c]ulties to d[i][s][t][i]nguish [t]wo a[pp]les fr[o]m [o]ne [p]oint nine re[p]eating (1.9999999999...) a[pp]les. [W]hen [w]e [s][p]eak of the [E][ss]en[c]e of all things we [d]on't [s][p]eak an[y] [d]ifferent[l][y]—with the [e]x[c]e[p]tion that our [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]y of a[n] u[n]k[n]owa[b]le E[ss]en[c]e [s]ee[k]s to [p]ut a [s]tr[i]ct l[i]m[it] on k[n]owledge [b]a[s]ed on [i]n[s]tin[c]t[i]ve a[ss]um[p]t[i]ons, whereas the [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]y of [m]athe[m]atic[s] a[t]t[em]p[t]s [t]o ind[e]f[i]n[i]tely [e]x[p]and our k[n]owledge ba[s]ed on [n]othing more tha[n] a[n] i[n]s[t]i[n]ct[i]ve a[s]sum[p]t[i]on, the in[s]t[i]n[c]t[i]ve a[ss]umpt[i]on that we [c]an [s]u[cc]e[ss]fully di[s]t[i]n[gu]ish two a[pp]les fr[o]m [o]ne [p]oint nine re[p]eating (1.9999999999...) a[pp]les.

05—363:468 .776

There's no doubt that we're [i]n the [m][i]d[s]t of [s]omething e[ss]ent[i]a[l]ly [m]y[steriou[s], that [w]hen [w]e di[s]c[us]s the e[ss]en[c]e of [l]ife [w]e thin[k] [w]e [c]an [m]a[k]e [s]en[s]e [o]f it [a]ll, that we're on the [p]re[c]i[p]i[c]le of [m]a[k]ing [s]en[s]e of [o]ur[s]elves and [o]ur [s]u[r]roundings, yet there's [s]t[i]ll [l]i[t]tle doubt [w]e [r]e[m]ain [i]n the [m][i]d[s]t of [s]omething e[ss]ent[i]a[l]ly [m]y[steriou[s] [w]hen [w]e beg[i]n to th[i]n[k] [c]l[ear]ly. Th[i]n[k]i[n]g [i]s [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t [m]y[ster]ious a[c]t [o]f [a]ll. Th[i]n[k]i[n]g, [w]h[i]ch [w]e gene[r]al[ly] be[l]ie[ve] trans[lates] [m]ate[r]ial and i[m]mate[r]ial exp[er]ien[c]e i[n]to [l]anguage—i[n]to [m]odes that are [c]o[m]m[uni]c[able]. [Th]i[n]k[i]n[g, wh[i]ch a[t]t[em]p[t]s [t]o [t]a[k]e

[s]ome[th]ing [s]uch as [c]on[s][u]ming a j[ui][c]y [p]lear, an ex[p]erien[c]e that ult[i][m][a]tely [i]s [c]on[f]ined to [p]er[s]onal [e]x[p]erien[c]e, and [e]xt[r]a[p]olate [i]t [i]n a [c]o[m]mun[i]c[a]ble [f]ormat to the gene[r]al [p]o[p]ula[c]e. [S]ans thin[k]in[g], [c]o[n][s][u]min[g] a j[ui][c]y [p]lear would be [s]omething [c]o[n][f]ined to the [p]rivate [s][p]here—w[i]th th[i]n[k]i[n]g [i]t’s then [p]resuma[b]lly a[ll]owed to enter the [p]u[b]l[i]c [d]o[m]ain. [T]here [i]s, [i]n fa[c]t, no re[m][ai]n[ing] [p]u[b]l[i]c [d]o[m]ain sans [th]in[k]in[g]—and [th]ere’s [i]n e[ss]e[n]c[e] n[o] thin[k]ing [s]ans a [p]u[b]l[i]c [d]o[m]ain. A[ss][u]m[ing] [w]e [c]o[n][s][u]m[e] a j[ui][c]y [p]lear, thin[k]ing [W]ow, this [p]lear is j[ui][c]y, [b]ut [r]ef[er] to w[r]ite it down, to ver[b]ally ex[p]re[s]s it to our [p]eer[s], [th]en [th]e [th]ought Wow, th[i]s [p]lea[r] [i]s jui[c]y [r]e[m]ains in the [p]urely i[m]m[ater]ial [r]eal[m], [i]t’s ex[i]s[t]e[n]c[e] [p]urely [s]p[e]c[u]lative, both [th]e [th]ought and the physi[c]al [e]x[p]erien[c]e [r]e[m]ain e[ss]e[n]tiall[y] [p]urely [s]p[e]c[u]lative. It’s onl[y] [w]hen [th]e [th]ought [W]ow, th[i]s [p]lea[r] [i]s jui[c]y enters the [p]u[b]l[i]c do[m]ain that it [b]e[c]omes, [p]erha[p]s not real, [b]ut [a]t lea[s]t [a]ppare[n]t [i]n a [m]ore [m]ate[r]ial [m]anner—it’s [v]er[i]fied as a [r]eal ex[p]erien[c]e and [s]ub[s]e[qu]e[n]tly [v]er[i]fied as a [r]eal thought. I t[oo] [c]o[n][s][u]med a [p]lear, and [w]ow it [w]as al[s]o [q]uite jui[c]y! There’s n[o] doubt we’re [i]n the [m]i[d]st of [s]ometh[ing] e[ss]e[n]tially [m]y[steriou]s here.

06—546:775 .705

It was just [a] [f]ew [m]onths [a][g][o], I dreamt a[n] [o]lder [f]e[m][a]le e[n][g][a]ged [m]e i[n] a [l]i[a]ison, [p]erha[p]s a [s]exual [l]i[a]ison—at fir[s]t she [w]as an [o][d]er [b]la[ck] [w]o[m]an, [b]ut then she [b]e[c]ame an [o][d]er [w]hite [w]o[m]an, [a]nd, [a]s she [w]as [w]hite, [a]s [w]e s[at] i[n] a[n] auto[m]o[b]ile, I en[t]ered a ho[t]el room [t]o pay [n][i]ne[t]y [t]wo dollars [f]or our [r]oom [f]or the [n]i[gh]t, then I [r]e[t]urned [t]o the [c]ar. I [w]as [w]earing a [b]us[i]n[e]s[s] [s]uit and she [w]ore [b]us[i]n[e]s[s] [c]asu[a]l [a]t[t]ire, there were [t]wo [s]mall [d]ar[k], in[d]e[c]i[ph]era[b]le [f]orms [s]i[t]t[i]ng [i]n the [b]a[ck][s]eat, and [sh]e t[ol]d me [sh]e had to g[o] [s]outh of the [M]issou[r]i now, and [I] [r]e[p]l[i]ed You [m]ean [s]outh of the [M]i[ss]i[ss]i[pp]i, [r]ight?—yet, even [s]etting a[s]ide our geo[g]raphi[c]al [c]on[c]e[r]ns, he[r] [s]t[ate]ment [s]t[ru]c[k] me as [s]omething I already k[n]ew, [th]at I k[n]ew sh[e] was [l]eav[ing] for [g]ood, and [th]at her [l]eav[ing] would [m]a[r]k a [n]ew [s]ta[r]t for [m]e, [s]o to [s]p[ea]k. [W]hen I [w]o[k]e u[p] I [f]elt as th[ou]gh, i[n] a[n] i[n]te[n]sely odd and [i]m[p]al[p]able way, my [e]nti[re] l[i]f[e] had [f]ollowed the [p]ath of Ea[s]tern Orthodoxy—in a [p]ro[f]ound manner I [f]elt this, I [w]as [w]i[d]e a[w]a[k]e in be[d], g[a]zing at a [w]all thin[k]ing m[y] ent[i]re l[i]f[e] has [s]omehow [t]ra[ck]ed the [t]enets of the [E]a[s]tern Ortho[d]ox, [th]at [th]is [d]r[e]am was [e]q[ua]ll[y] [c]or[p]o[r]eal to any wa[k]ing ex[p]e[r]ienc[e] I’ve h[a]d, [a]nd now, [m]onths later, [I] [r]e[m]ain [c]u[r]iou[s] with [r]egar[d] to the [i]d[e]ntity of this [m]ulti-[r]a[c]ial [f]igure [f]r[om] m[y] [d]r[e]am, who it [s]eem[s] eng[a]ged [m]e in a [s]exual li[a]ison? De[s]pite affir[m]ing the [m]y[steriou]s nature

of [w]hat [w]e're [i]n the [m][i]d[s]t of, I've never [b]een a [b]el[ie]ver in a[n]gels a[n]d d[e]mons, [s]o to [s]p[ea]k—yet this [f]igure [f]rom [m]y dr[e]a[m], it s[ee][m]s to [m][e], shared [m]any [c]hara[c]te[r][i]st[i]c[s] w[i]th h[is]tor[i]c[al] [r]epo[r]t[s] of [s]o-[c]alled angels and d[e]mons. Of cou[r]s[e], a[ss][u]m[ing] it'[s] [o]ne [o]f the [t]wo, [w]hich [o]ne of the [t]wo [i]s [i]t? A[n] a[n]gel or a [d]emon? Who were the [d]ar[k], near[l]y [f]orm[1]es[s] [f]igures in the [b]a[ck][s]eat of the [c]ar? A per[s]o[n] e[n]g[a]ges me in a [s]exual [l]i[a]ison, [b]ut at [f]ir[s]t is [b]l[a]ck, [b]ut then [b]e[c]omes white, then tells [m]e she now has to g[o] [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote] south of the [M]issou[r]i, I [c]o[rr]e[c]t her, and then I [w]a[k]e up [w]ith a[n] i[n]t[er]n[ati]o[n]al [f]lee[ing] my [l]i[f]e's [s]omehow [f]o[ll]owed the [t]e[n]ets of Ea[s]tern Or[th]odoxy—[th]en, [th]i[s] dr[e]a[m]'s in[t]e[n]s[it]y [s][t]i[c]k[ing] [w]ith m[e] for [w][ee][k]s and [e]ve[n] [m]onths on e[n]d, I [q]uestio[n] if the [f]igure [f]rom [m]y d[r]e[a]m was [p]erha[p]s a b[e]i[n]g of [s]ome [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[cal] [s]ort, [p]erha[p]s a[n] a[n]gel or [p]erha[p]s a d[e]mon. I [q]u[est]ion wh[e]ther [p]erha[p]s a[n] a[n]gel or [p]erha[p]s a [d]e[m]on en[t]ered my [d]r[e]a[m] to, in a [q]uite [s]er[p]en[t]i[n]e way, [p]oint [m]e i[n] the [d]irectio[n] of [s]o[m]e[th]ing—[p]erha[p]s Ea[s]tern Or[th]o[d]oxy. And I [q]uestio[n] if th[is] [i]s i[n] [f]a[c]t [p]o[s]s[i]ble. [A]t almo[s]t [a]ny other [t]i[m]e in m[y] l[i]fe I would have [c]o[n]s[i]d[er]ed [i]t an [i]m[p]o[s]s[i]b[i]l[i]t[y], [s]o[m]ething [t]o[tal]l[y] lu[d]i[c]r[ous], I'd have [c]o[n]s[i]d[er]ed it [a]n [e]m[b]a[r]ra[s]sing a[b]s[ur]d[it]y to [e]ven [s]uggest it. [W]hereas [p]r[e]v[i]ou[s]l[y] I [w]ould have [s]at and [s]aid I con[s]i[d]er[ed] it to [b]e an

e[m][b]a[r]ra[ss]ing a[b][s]ur[d]i[t]y and utter  
i[m][p]oss[i][b][i]i[t]y, [n]ow, for [o]ne [r]eason or  
a[n]other, I [a][c]tua[l]l[y] [c]on[s]i[d]er it [a]n  
em[b]arra[ss]ing [a][b][s]ur[d]i[t]y to find [i]t utter[l]y  
[i]mpossi[b]le.

07-237:327 .725

Y[el]t l[e]t [m]e ex[p]l[ain] [m]y thoughts on th[is] [i]ssue  
just a [l]i[t]t[e] [f]urther, i[f] I [m]ay? Be[c]ause my  
th[ou]ghts [o]n the t[o]p[i]c ex[p]anded  
[s]i[gn]i[f]i[c]ant[l]y ju[s]t re[c]ent[l]y, [a]s a m[at]ter of  
[f]a[ct]. It was ju[s]t l[a]st [S]a[tur]day, [a]t a  
[b]a[ck]yard [c]oo[k]out where I [s]a[t] a t[ri]c[e]  
e[n]ou[gh] gl[a]ss ta[b]le n[ext] to a [b]ottle of [p]otato  
vod[k]a im[p]orted [f]rom [P]o[l]and, I was drin[k]ing the  
[p]otato vod[k]a [f]rom [P]o[l]and in a [s]mall  
[p]l[a]s[tic] gl[a]ss [w]ith [w]ater and i[c]e, and the  
[p]otato vod[k]a was [s]m[ooth], [q]uite [s]m[ooth]  
a[c]tually, when the [p]er[s]on [s]itting [a]c[ro]ss from  
[m]e [m]ade a [r]e[m]ar[k]—[h]e [s]aid that [h]e j[u]st  
[b]ought [h]alf a [d]ozen [p]r[e]-[r]olled [b]lunt[s] f[r]om  
a [s]tate-[s]anctioned [d]i[s]p[en]s[ar]y, that [h]e was  
[p]lanning to [s]tep on the [s]idewalk and [l]ight u[p]  
one of th[ese] b[l]unts, have a [p]uff or [t]wo [t]o  
re[l]ax, [t]o [w]hich [h]e o[ff]ered m[e] a [p]uff [t]oo,  
i[f] I [w]anted [o]ne. [W]ell, [a]s it so h[a]ppened, [a]t the  
time, [d]e[s]p[ite] my general [a]mbivalence to  
m[ari]juana, I con[s]i[d]ered [i]t a [d]e[c]ent [i]d[e]a. [I]  
[f]igured [I]’d have [o]ne [p]uff or [t]wo, [t]o[p], that  
[m]aybe it [w]ould relax [m]e. I [f]igured, at the [t]ime,  
that a [p]uff or [t]wo, [t]o[p], would have a [m]ini[m]al

to [m]odera[t]e e[ff]ect—yet [w]he[n] I [w]e[n]t out to the [s]ide[w]alk [w]ith thi[s] [p]er[s]on [t]o [t]a[k]e a [p]u[f]f or [t]wo [f]rom his [s][t][a]te-[s]an[c]tioned blunt I'd di[s][c]over [th]at [th]i[s] weed re[t][ai]ned a [p]o[t]en[c]y th[at] [p]erh[a]p[s] I'd n[e]ver [e]n[c]ountered before.

08—396:505 .784

The [b]lunts were exqu[i]s[i]te[l]ly rolle[d] and ta[s]ted [d]el[i]c[i]ou[s], the [f]ir[s]t hit went [d]own [f]ine—yet as the [b]lunt pa[s]sed [f]or a [f]i[n]al t[i]me, again[s]t my [b]etter jud[g]ment, [d]eep [d]own a[ck][n]owled[g]ing [th]at [th]e one [h]it was the [c]orre[c]t amount of [h]its, that a[n]y [s]ub[s]e[que]n[t] [h]it would [b]e a w[h]o[l]l[y] [s]uperf[il]luous [h]it, [I] [d]e[c]i[d]ed [t]o [t]a[k]e a [s]e[c]ond [h]it, where imme[d]iate[l]y [f]o[l]lowing my ex[h]ale I [c]ou[gh]ed vo[c]i[fe]rou[s]l[y]. I [c]ou[gh]ed vo[c]i[fe]rou[s]ly then ju[s]t [m]o[m]ents later time began, [m]uch to [m]y [s]urp[r]i[s]e, [p]ro[ce]ed[ing] i[n] a highly ab[n]or[m]al [m]a[n]ner. I [f]ound mysel[f] at a [f]amily [c]oo[k]out, and [t]ime was p[ro]ceedi[n]g in a [m]a[n]ner that [s][t]r[u]ck [m]e as en[t]ire[l]y ab[n]or[m]al. I was [l]ounging in a [n]on[d]e[s]crip[t] [l]aw[n] chair, ex[c]e[pt] n[ow] I [f]ound mysel[f] unable to ex[p]re[ss] the [p]ro[ce]ssion of [t]ime in our [r]u[d]i[m]ent[a]ry, [t]e[m]p[er]ate [m]anner. I [j]um[p]ed [b]e[t]w[ee]n di[s]joi[n]ted [s]cenes. [P]leo[p]le [b]egan s[p]ea[king] and [i]t was almo[s]t as though a [p]er[s]on h[it] [f]ast [f]orward on their [s]p[ee]ch. [Th]en [th]e [s]p[ee]ch would [s]l[ow] ju[s]t [m]o[m]en[t]ari[l]y. Add[i]t[i]o[n]al[l]y, I [s]eemed en[t]ire[l]y [r]e[s]t[r]i[ct]ed from [p]er[c]ei[ving] how

[p]leo[p]le were [p]er[c][ei]ving m[e], I [f]elt [l]ike [I] was [e]xtr[e]me[l]y h[i]gh, in [f]a[ct] [I] knew [I] was [e]xtr[e]me[l]y h[i]gh, and it wasn't [e]x[a]ct[l]y the m[ost] a[pp]r[op]r[i]ate ven[ue] to be th[at] h[i]gh—[a]t a [f]ami[l]y [c]oo[k]out—[y]et I was [r]e[s]t[r]i[ct]e[d] from per[c][ei]ving [h]ow [h]igh [I] [s]eem[ed] to the out[s]ide world. At t[i]mes it felt l[i]ke [I]'d gained a[cc]e[ss] to a [c]ue that [s]ugg[e]s[te]d [e]ve[r]yone kn[ew] [I] was [e]xt[r]e[m]e[l]y h[i]gh, yet thi[s] [n]otion, that [e]very[o]ne k[n]ew [I] [w]as [e]xt[r]e[m]e[l]y h[i]gh, [r]emained un[p]r[oven], [i]m[p]o[ss]i[ble] to [p]r[ove], it [s]eem[ed]. [B]ecause [p]leo[p]le would at [t]imes [s]eem to [b]e [t]r[e]ating m[e] as if [I] was [h]ardl[y] h[i]gh at all, de[s]p[ite] the [f]a[ct] that I [c]ould no [l]onger [e]x[p]erien[c]e time i[n] a [p]urel[y] l[inear] [f]a[sh]ion. [E]s[en]t[ia]ll[y] [m]y own a[c]ti[on]s [b]e[c]ame [e]ntirel[y] foreig[n] to [m]e—[m]ore than ju[st] [b]e[lie]ving [e]xtr[e]me[l]y high, I [b]e[c]ame di[s]c[on]c[er]ted at [th]e [th]ought of what a[c]ti[on]s I [c]ould [p]o[ss]i[b]l[y] [b]e ta[k]ing that [c]aused the [p]leo[p]le around m[e] to [c]ea[s]e to view [m]e as extr[e]me[l]y high.

09-404:534.757

The [o]nly a[c]ti[on]s of my [o]wn I was [s]till [a]w[are] of [w]ere a[c]ti[on]s that [s]eem[ed] [t]o m[e] [t]o [b]e of [a] per[s]on [c]l[e]arl[y] ext[r]e[m]e[l]y h[i]gh, [s]o [h]ow [c]ould th[ese] a[c]ti[on]s [b]e [s]een [b]y [r]a[ti]onal a[c]tors to [b]e [c]o[m]ing from a [p]er[s]on who was [s]till ex[p]erien[c]ing [t]ime l[inear]l[y]? Thi[s] was, [a]t the [t]ime, a que[s]tion [s]a[n]s [a]n [a]n[s]wer. [I]n [sh]ort, [i]t wasn't [s]im[p]ly that I [c]ea[s]ed to ex[p]erien[c]e time in

[a] norm[a]t[i]ve [f][a][sh][i]on—it was the [f][a][c]t my exte[r]ior [s]u[r]roundings [s]eemed [t]o [c]on[t]inue [t]o re[c]log[n]i[ze] [I] pa[s]sed through [t][i]me in at lea[s]t [s]o[m]ewhat of [a] [n]ormat[i]ve [f][a][sh][i]on. Thi[s] was di[s][c]o[n][c]erting, be[c]ause [o]ne [w]ould a[s]sume, if you le[f]t the [c]o[n][f]i[ne]s of [n]ormative t[i]me, [th]at [th]e [p]eo[p]le i[n] your v[i][c][i]n[i]ty would re[c]log[n]ize thi[s] [f]a[c]t—that you ex[i]t[ed] [n]ormat[i]ve time. But i[n] th[i]s [c]a[s]e i[t] was almo[s]t as [i]f, ye[s]—I was no longer [p]r[es]ent, I was [e]x[p]er[i]en[ci]ng [t][i]me i[n] a[n] [e]n[t]i[re]ly a[s]ynch[r]onou[s] [f]a[sh]ion, yet [m]y [s]u[r]roundings [s]till [f]ound [m]e to [b]e [th]ere, [f]or [th]e [m]o[s]t [p]art. I was, to the [b]e[st] of my [p]er[c]e[pt]ual [f]a[c]ulti[es], exi[s]t[ing] i[n] at [l]ea[s]t two [p]l[a]ces at on[ce]. At the [f]a[m]i[li]y [c]oo[k]out, where [m]o[s]t [p]eo[p]le were [e]i[th]er [s][l]i[gh]tly h[i]gh or not h[i]gh at [a]ll, and then [a]ll[s]o in a [s]e[p]a[r]ate i[te]r[ati]on of time, [w]here I [w]as j[u]m[p]ing f[r]o[m] [p]e[r]iod to [p]e[r]iod, i[n]d[i]scr[i]m[i]n[a]te[ly]. There's [l]ittle [d]o[ub]t [n]o[w] that time, as we're exp[os]ed to it, is [o]nly one of s[e]veral [i]te[r]a[tions], yet how many [i]te[r]a[tions] are there? It [s]eems [i]mpo[ss]i[ble] for u[s] to [s]ay—[p]erha[p]s [i]te[r]a[tions] i[s] the w[ro]ng mode [t]o di[s]cu[s]s [t]y[p]es of [t]i[m]e. [I]t's e[n]t[ire]ly [p]o[ss]i[ble], i[n] fact, that [t]i[m]e [p]er[ce]ives [u]s i[n]asm[u]ch as w[e] [p]er[ce]ive it. Yet [o]nce [w]e a[ck]nowledge [th]is [f][a][c]t, [th]at t[im]e has [m]any [i]te[r]ations of [p]r[odu]c[i]ng [i]t[s]e[l]f, that t[im]e [m]ay i[n] [f]act [p]er[ce]ive u[s] [r]ather than u[s] [p]er[ce]ive [i]t, then we can no [l]onger b[li]ndly [s]tate that our

[d][r][ea]ms are ju[s]t [d][r]eams—be[c]ause it would s[ee]m to [m][e] that [i][f] time, [i]n [f]a[c]t, ta[k]es [m]any, i[f] [n]ot [i]n[f]i[n]i[t]e, [i]t[e]r[at]ions, then our [d][r][ea]ms [c]ould in [f]a[c]t b[e] en[t]irel[y] [r][ea], [th]at [th]ey m[a]y ju[s]t ex[i]s[t] [i]n [d]i[ff]e[r]ent [i]t[e]r[at]ions of [t]ime. Our d[r][ea]ms could b[e] en[t]irel[y] [r][ea] [e]x[p]e[r]ien[c]es, ju[s]t [e]x[p]e[r]ien[c]ed in [s]e[p]a[r]ate [i]t[e]r[at]ions of [t]ime.

10—458:632 .725

Of [c]our[s]e, [r]a[t]ionall[y] [s]p[ea]k[ing], not that w[e] [sh]ould [s]p[ea]k [r]a[t]ional[l]y, but [r]a[t]ional[l]y [s]p[ea]k[ing] we [c]ould [q]u[est]i[on] the m[e]r[its] of ad[h]er[ing] to [Ea]s[te]rn Orthodox[y] gene[r]al[l]y. Of [c]our[s]e we [c]ould [r]e[f]e[r]en[c]e the [c]a[s]e of [C]hry[s]o[s]t[om]o[s] [K]a[l]l[a]f[a]tis, the [M]et[r]opo[l]itan of [S]myrna, who un[c]ere[m]oniou[s]ly [h]ad [h]is [b]eard [r]i[pp]ed off [b]y [h]and, [h]is eyes g[ou]ged [ou]t, his nose and ears [c]ut off and was [s]u[b]s[e]q[ue]ntly [m]a[s]q[ue]r[ad]ed a[r]ound the ve[r]y [c]ity where he a[c]ted as a [M]et[r]o[p]olitan until he [d]ied from h[is] [i]nju[r]ies, from [h]aving [h]is [e]yes, nose, and ears [r]emoved, all of this during the [h]ei[gh]t of the G[r]e[c]o-Tur[k]ish war—as it [s]eems [s]a[f]e to [s]ay that Ea[s]te]rn Ortho[d]ox[y], to [s]ome e[x]tent, [d]i[d]n't [f]are Chry[s]o[s]t[om]o[s] well in the [e]nd, at [l]eas[t] fro[m] a [m]at[er]ial[i]s[t] [p]oint of view. It's a [s]i[m]ple [s]ize yet it's [c]om[p]e[ll]ing to a[n] [e]xte[n]t, and of [c]ourse the [s]a[m]p[l]e is [s]ub[s]tantia[l]ly [l]arger [w]hen [w]e [c]on[s]i[d]er the [p]light of the Ortho[d]ox

[p][o][p]ulation of [A]nat[o]lia [a]s a wh[o]le. [Th]e tru[th] is the Or[th]o[d]ox haven't fared i[n][c]re[d]ibly [w]ell i[n] the N[ea]r [Ea][s]t [o]ver the pa[s]t, give or t[a]lk[e], [o]ne thousand y[ea]rs or [s]o, we could [e]ven [s]ay that [f]ollowing the [p]a[th] of [Ea][s]tern Ortho[d]ox[y] has [p]erh[a]p[s] been ext[r][e]mel[y] [f]r[au]ght with [p]eril in [c]ertain [r]e[gi]ons of the [Ea][s]tern Me[d]ite[r]ran[ea]n. W[e] [sh]ouldn't [s]p[ea]k [r]a[ti]ona[l]l[y] or [l]ogi[c]a[l]l[y], yet if [w]e [w]ere [t]o [t]a[k]e the [c]a[s]e of, [s]ay, for exam[p]le, the [c]on[c]e[pt] of The One, the [b]e[ing] that [c]on[c]e[pt]uall[y] [p]r[e]c[e]des [b]e[ing], that ex[i]s[ts] i[n] a[ll] a[s]pect[s] of [t]ime, but a[ll]s[o] fun[d]a[m]en[t]ally [m]u[s]t exi[s]t out[s]i[d]e of [t]ime, [t]o a [c]ertain ex[t]e[n]t [w]e [w]ould al[m]o[s]t n[ee]d to en[t]irel[y] [r]e[c]o[n]s[tru]ct our [c]o[n]c[e]ption of [t]ime to [e]ven [r]emotel[y] [b]e [a]b[le] to [c]o[n]c[e]i[ve] of a [B]e[ing] of that [n]a[t]ure. [N]ot to [s]ay that we [c]ould ever [c]onc[e]i[ve] a B[e]ing of that [n]a[t]ure i[n] i[t]s e[ss]en[ce], yet to [e]ven a[pp]roach a [c]on[c]e[pt]ion—if [l]ogi[c] [l]ea[ds] us to a Fir[s]t [P]rin[c]i[p]le that ex[i]s[ts] w[i]th[i]n and out[s]i[d]e of [t]ime, then our [c]on[c]e[pt]i[on] of [t]ime is e[ss]en[t]ially ab[s]urdi[s]t. [W]e [w]ould n[ee]d to r[e]c[o]n[stru]ct thi[s] [c]o[n]c[e]p[t]ion of time as [s]omething [w]e [e]xi[s]t [e]x[c]lu[s]ively [w]ithin, that [c]o[n]tains u[s] i[n] a li[n]ear f[a]shio[n], th[at] [p]erh[a]p[s] [p]er[c]eives u[s] i[n] a [s]o-c[al]led li[n]ear f[a]shio[n], [b]e[c]ause i[f] we are i[n] f[a]c[t] exte[n]sions of thi[s] [O]ne who m[u]s[t] [b]y ne[c]e[ss]ity exi[s]t [b]oth w[i]th[i]n and out[s]i[d]e of [t]ime, [th]en [th]ere mu[s]t [e]x[i]s[t] a [p]o[r]ti[on] of u[s],

as [e][x]ten[s]ions of the One, that [e][x][p]eriences time  
i[n] th[i]s fa[sh]ion, wh[i]ch [i]s of [c]our[s]e a[n]  
e[ss]e[n]tially ab[s]urdi[s]t manner of [c]on[c]eiving of  
time.

11-335:493 .679

I [c]an't [th][i]n[k] of a [th][i]ng more ab[s]urd [th]an  
[c]on[c]eiving time i[n] a [s]ole[ly] [l]i[n]ear fashio[n]. It  
[s]eems ju[s]t—I [d]on't kn[o]w—[t][o]t[a]ll[y] ri[d]icu[li]ou[s]  
to [a][ss]ume [t]ime [p]ro[c]eeds i[n] a [p]ure[ly] [l]i[n]ear  
[f]ashio[n], that time [w]ouldn't [p]roc[ee]d in [w]hatever  
[f]ashio[n] it chooses, that [t]ime, e[t]ernal as [i]t [i]s,  
would n[ee]d u[s] to [p]er[c]ei]ve it, as o[pp]osed to [v]i[c]e  
[v]er[s]a, or [e][v]en [t][o] a[ss][u]me that [t]ime  
[p]ro[c]eeds at all, that, [i]f [i]t ch[ose] to [p]ro[c]eed, that  
it wouldn't [p]ro[c]eed i[n] the fashio[n] of, [s]ay, [a]dding  
[p]er[c]en[t]a[ge]s [a]s o[pp]osed to i[n]t[er]e[st]s. I  
eng[a]ged in a [s]exual [l]i[a]ison with an older [f]emale,  
who at [f]ir[s]t [w]as [b]l[a]ck, the[n] [b]e[c]ame [w]hite,  
the[n] i[n]f[or]med [m]e th[at] she h[ad] to go south of the  
[M]issou[r]i, a[ft]er I'd paid ninety [t]wo dollars [f]or a  
ho[t]el [r]oom [f]or the [t]wo of u[s], [a]s we [s]a[t] in the  
[m]e[d]ium-[s]ized [s]e[d]an, with two [s]m[all] and  
formle[s]s [d]ar[k] [b]eings [s]itti[n]g i[n] the [b]a[ck]. I  
[p]artoo[k] in the [s]mo[k]ing of a [s]iza[b]le [b]lunt that a  
[f]r[i]end of mine [p]urchased [f]r[om] a lo[c]al  
di[s]p[en]s[ar]y, [a]nd [a]f[te]r [t]a[k]ing a [m]ere [t]wo  
h[its] from th[i]s [b]lunt I [f]ound [m]y[sel]f  
inadv[is]a[b]l[y] h[i]gh at a [f]ami[l]y [f]unc[t]io[n],  
ex[p]er[i]encing t[i]me in a [s]p[uriou]s [f]a[sh]io[n], in a  
[f]a[sh]ion [w]here I [w]as, on the one hand,

a[pp]a[r]ent[1][y] [p][r]esent at the [p]art[y], yet [s]imult[aneou[s]1][y] eng[a]ging [p]a[ss]ive[1][y] in a [f]orm of [t]ime that wasn't [p]resent at the [p]arty—[s]o I [s]u[pp]ose it to [b]e [p]o[ss]i[b]le th[at] a[t] the [t]ime I exi[s][t]ed at [t]wo [p]l[a]c[es] at on[c]e. Yet as foo[1][i]sh as th[i]s may [s]ound, we should n[o]te that [e]ven Dion[y][s][i]u[s] [s]aid, and I qu[o]te, 'it may [b]e [s]aid to [b]e praising God [f]or his [f]oolishne[ss], wh[ic]h [i]n [i]t[s]el[f] [s]eems a[b]surd and [s]trange, [b]ut thi[s] [f]oolishne[ss] [u]p[li]i[fts] [u]s to the inef[fa]b[le] truth wh[ic]h [i]s there [b]ef[or]e all [r]easoning.' [B]e[c]ause it would [st]and to [r]eason that i[f] [r]easo[n] [i]t[s]el[f] [i]s [i]n[c]a[p]a[b]le of a[s]certaining these [s]o[~~c~~]alled [d]ivine n[ot]ions, then [p]erha[p]s [i]t's onl[y] [i]d[i]o[c]y that remains [c]a[p]a[b]le of [c]om[p]r[e]h[en]d[ing] these [h]i[s]to[r]i[c]ally [d]iv[i]ne notions, [o]f t[i]me, [o]f [b]eing, [o]f [p]l[a]c[ement], [o]f Fir[s]t [C]auses.

12—418:523 .799

[P]erha[p]s [w]hat [w][e] n[eed] is a [r]i[go]r[ou][s] [i]d[i]o[c]y. [I]t's entirel[y] po[s]s[i]b[le], as I'm [n]ow thinking a[b]out it, that with [r]e[g]ard to th[ese] [n]otions w[e] should [e]m[p]loy [n]othing [e]x[ce]p[t a [r]i[go]r[ou][s] [i]d[i]o[c]y], that [r]eason and [s]ound [l]ogic [h]ave ab[s]olute[ly] no p[la]c[e] [h]ere, in the [r]ealm of [m]etaph[y]s[i]c[s]. That in or[d]er to w[r]a[p] our [m]i[n]ds a[r]ound these [i]deas, [l]i[ke] [b]eing in two [p]l[a]c[es] at on[c]e, of [b]eing [b]oth w[i]th[i]n and out[s]i[de] of [t]i[m]e, of [t]i[m]e [b]eing e[s]s[entia]l[ly] [n]on-[i]n[ear] [a]s much [a]s it's e[s]s[entia]l[ly] [l]i[n]ear, of time [p]er[c]e[i]v[ing] [u]s as [m]u[ch] as w[e]

[p]erc[e]ive it, that we [m][u][s]t [b]e[c]o[m]e [m]ore  
 [i]d[i]o[t]ic than we've e[ver] [b]een, that [i]f we  
 con[t]inue [t]o a[tt]e[m]p[t] [t]o [p]a[ss] our[s]elves o[ff] as  
 in[t]e[l]lig[e]nt—[w]ell, [w]e'll [c]on[t]inue to [f]l[ou]n[de]r  
 in the [s]to[ch]a[s]t[ic] b[r]e[ez]es that [r]i[pp]le a[r]ound  
 th[e]se [c]o[n]c[e]p[t]s. [S]ans [i]d[i]o[c]y, these [c]o[n]c[e]p[t]s  
 will [c]o[n]tinue to ex[i]s[t] in a shroud of m[y]s[t]ery, not  
 [th]at [th]ey [c]an ever [b]e known fu[ll]y, that's  
 un[i]k[e]l[y], [i]t's mo[r]e o[r] l[e]ss [i]m[p]o[s]s[i]b]le,  
 [b]ut if we em[p]l[oy] the [p]ro[p]er amount of [i]d[i]o[c]y,  
 of [r]i[go]r[o]u[s] [i]d[i]o[c]y, it's [p]o[s]s[i]b]le [th]at  
 [th]e m[y]s[t]e[r]y these [c]o[n]c[e]p[t]s are sh[ro]u[d]e[d] in  
 [c]ould b[e] am[e]l[i]o[r]ated to a [d]eg[r]ee. We  
 [c]o[n]c[e]p[t]ua[l]ize a [F]ir[s]t [C]ause, [a] One, [a]  
 [c]o[n]c[e]p[t] that may, in [f]a[ct], be ne[c]e[ss]ary [f]o[r]  
 ou[r] [s]p[e]c[ie]s to exi[s]t, at l[e]a[s]t [s]o[c]ia[l]l[y], it  
 very well [c]ould be [th]e [c]a[us]e [th]at we [c]an only  
 exi[s]t l[og]ic[a]lly w[i]th th[i]s i[d]ea of [F]ir[s]t  
 [C]ause or One pre[c]e[d]ing u[s]. Otherwise, [s]ans  
 [F]ir[s]t [C]ause, [s]a[ns] a Be[g]inning, we [h]ardly [h]ave  
 an ar[g]ument [f]or linear time, and i[f] we're deprived of  
 a l[og]ic[a]l argu[m]ent [f]or l[ine]ar time, then how [c]an  
 we [m]a[k]e [s]e[n]s[e] of a[n]ything? [I]t's [i]m[p]o[s]s[i]b]le  
 to [m]a[k]e [s]e[n]s[e] of a[n]ything, i[n] the [t]rad[i]t[i]o[n]al  
 [s]e[n]s[e], [s]a[ns] linear [t]ime. I[f] [t]ime [f]ails to  
 pro[c]e[e]d l[ine]arl[y], at l[e]a[s]t [f]o[r] u[s], i[f] we're  
 ho[pp]in[g] and [s]k[i]ppin[g] w[i]ll[y] n[i]ll[y] in the  
 [f]a[b]ric of time, i[n] [p]urel[y] [n]o[n]l[i]n[e]ar  
 [m]a[n]e[r]s, then [n]othing [c]an [m]a[k]e [s]e[n]s[e] [f]o[r]  
 u[s]. We're l[ite]rally [s]e[n]s[e]l[e]ss. [S]an[s] a [F]ir[s]t  
 Cause, we're l[ite]rally [s]e[n]s[e]l[e]ss. [T]i[m]e [m]ea[n]s

[n]othing. [T]ime, it [s][ee][m]s to [m][e], is [s]ome[th]ing [th]at one can on[ly] [i]nve[s]tigate [i]d[i]oti[c]al[ly].

13—538:727 .740

Or am I just b[e]ing [s][i][l][ly]? Am I [s][i]mp[ly] [s]u[cc]umb[ing] to a [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c] [t]y[p]e of [s]i[l]l[i]ne[ss], [a]s I'm [a]p[t] to do [f]rom [t]ime [t]o [t]ime? [M]o[st], it should b[e] [n]o[t]ed, who k[n]o[w [m][e] k[n]o[w [m][e] to b[e] pr[o]ne to [s]u[c]cumb[ing] to [s]i[l]l[i]ne[ss] from [t]ime [t]o [t]ime? Am I [b]eing [m][e]l[od]r[ati]c [b]y [e]xt[r]a[p]o[li]at[ing] [m]y [i]ntense [i]m[p]r[essi]o[n] [f]ollowing [m]y wakin[up] [f]r[om] [m]y [d]r[eam], am I [m][e]l[od]r[ati]c[ally] [e]xt[r]a[p]o[li]at[ing] th[at] [i]m[p]r[essi]o[n] just a [l]ittle too [f]ar [b]y [i]m[p]l[y]ing this [f]e[m]ale, who e[n]g[a]ged me i[n] a sexual [l]i[a]ison, [m]ight have bee[n] a[n] [a]ngel or a de[m]o[n]? Yet on [th]e [o]th[er] hand I should note [th]is, it was a[c]tually [q]u[i]te [s]ome t[i]me [a]g[o], [s][o] long [a]g[o] in [f]a[c]t th[at] I was [p]r[a]c[t]ic[ally], now [th]at I [th]i[n]k of it, [m]o[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] a[n] a[d]o[le]s[ce]n[t], [d]e[s]p[ite] being a [f]u[l]ly grown [m]an. At the t[i]m[e] [I] was looking [f]o[r] a[p]art[m]ents with [m]y [f]athe[r]—the [f]i[r]st a[p]art[m]ent I'd lea[s]e on [m]y own, and [w]e [w]ere [d]o[w]n[t]o[w]n, the [t]wo of us, [l]oo[k]ing [a]t [a]n [a]partme[n]t I [d]i[d]n't [r]ea[l]i[ze] at the t[i]me was [r]ent-[c]ont[r]olled, mea[n]ing ar[b]it[r]a[r]y [c]a[p]s were [p]l[a]ced on the i[n]c[ome] of the [t]e[n]ants in order to re[t]ai[n] e[l]i[g]i[b]i[l]i[t]y, [w]hi[ch] of [c]ou[r]se [w]as the [r]easo[n] [w]hy the [a]p[ar]tments [w]ere s[u]ch [a] g[r]eat deal. [L]ucki[l]y enou[gh] [f]or [m][e] [m]y

[s]a[l]a[r][y] [a]t th[a]t time was [i]n[s]u[ff][i]cient and  
[p]a[tr]y, [s]o I [s]till [m]anaged to [q]ua[l]i[f]y [f]or the  
a[p]art[m]e[n]t de[s]p[ite] the [r]e[n]t [c]o[n]tr[ol]  
[r]e[qu]ire[m]ents, had I waited the time ne[c]e[ss]ary for  
[o]ne to [b]e[c]o[m]e avai[a]b[le], [b]ut, wh[i]le I [d]id add  
my [n][a]me to the w[ai]tli[s]t, I [d]i[d]n't wait the time  
[n]e[c]e[ss]ary, [b]ecause I [s]igned a [l]e[as]e on an  
a[part]m[ent] thr[ee] [m]iles [n]orth of [d]o[w]nto[w]n  
[l]e[s]s than a w[ee]k [l]ater. I was [s]tand[ing] [i]n a  
[q]uarter-em[p]ty [p]ar[k]ing [l]ot i[n] a[n] area of  
[d]o[w]nto[w]n where n[o] [l]ess than half a [d]ozen  
[p]r[i]vate[l]y [o]wned [p]ar[k]ing [l]ots [s]at [s]i[de] [b]y  
[s]i[de] [b]y [s]i[de], all with [r]easona[b]le short-[t]erm  
[r]ates. This [p]ar[t]i[c]ular a[r]e[a] of do[w]nto[w]n, [a]t  
th[a]t [p]oint in [t]ime, was a [f]ruit[ful] [a]re[a]  
social[l]y—there were a [p]l[eth]o[r]a of vi[b]r[ant] [b]ars  
and [r]e[s]taur[ants], al[s]o [s]i[de] [b]y [s]i[de] [b]y  
[s]i[de], that m[y]s[e]l[f] a[n]d others e[n]joyed  
[f]r[e]q[ue]nting, that were [r]outi[n]el[y] [p]a[ck]ed  
[f]r[om] [a]l[tern]o[n] t[o] [e]ven[ing]. Now, [b]y  
[c]o[m]p[ar]i[s]on, i[f] you wal[k] [th]rough [th]at [s]ame  
a[r]e[a] of [d]o[w]nto[w]n, [b]y [m]y [c]o[un]t, [m]ore th[a]n  
h[a]l[f] of those [b]ars and [r]estaur[ants] are shut [d]o[w]n  
[f]or good. Whereas I [u]sed t[o] [f]reque[n]t that [p]art of  
[d]o[w]nto[w]n, ho[pp]ing be[t]w[ee]n [t]wo o[r] thr[ee]  
o[r] [f]o[u]r [v]enues, ha[v]ing a [f]ruit[ful] ex[p]erience  
[s]o[c]ially—now [i]t's [a]lmo[s]t [a]s i[f] th[a]t a[r]e[a] of  
do[w]nto[w]n has aged [r]ight [a]long with me. As my  
[s]o[c]ial [a]cti[v]i[ty] has waned, [a]t least with rega[r]d to  
hopping from [b]a[r] to [b]a[r], the a[cti]v[i]ty of th[i]s  
[s]e[c]tion of do[w]nto[w]n has [w]aned as [w]ell. As I've

become less likely to pop out on a Wednesday afternoon to three of our places, this area of downtown has been unable to sustain business that used to thrive on popple popping out on Wednesday afternoons, hopping from two of three of our places.

14-535:727-735

There are, in fact, hardly any bars or restaurants that are still open on the block. There's been a gargantuan For Lease sign on the large site for years now, and the places that should be open for business on late weekday afternoons are no longer open for business on late weekday afternoons, whereas in previous years every bar and restaurant on the block would have been bustling with businessmen, executives, and alcoholics, now these same venues don't even open their doors until later at night, if at all. I've walked through that block multiple times hoping to pop into just one old bar or one old restaurant for just one drink, and I've discovered every single bar that's stayed in business on that block closed to customers at that time. A bar in a business district really has no excuse for not being open by four pm on a weekday. It's absurd for a bar in a business district to be closed for business at that time, yet that's exactly what happened to this block, it's now a dead block,

it's a [b]l[o]c[k] that's more or [l]ess officia[l]y [d]e[c][ea]s[ed] [s]ocia[l]y. I[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, years ago, [w]hen I [w]as [l]o[ok]ing [f]or my [f]ir[s]t apart[m]ent with [m]y d[a]d, st[a]nding in a [q]uarter-em[p]ty [p]ar[k]ing [l]o[t] on this very b[l]o[ck], I [s]e[nt] a t[e]xt m[e]ssage to a younger g[i]r! I u[s]ed to fl[i]rt with—although we n[e]ver [e]ng[a]ged in a [s]e[xual] li[a]ison, but there was [p]e[r]ha[p]s a [sh]ared inte[r]e[s]t fo[r] a [sh]ort [p]e[r]iod, [p]e[r]ha[p]s we both [c]a[m]e to the [c]o[n]c[l]usio[n] e[n]g[a]g[i]n[g] i[n] a sexual li[a]ison, although [t]e[m]p[t]ing, was ill-advised, that for on[c]e in the [c]o[ur]s[e] of [h]uman [h]i[s]to[r]y [p]leo[p]le should [r]e[f]r[ai]n [f]r[om] e[n]g[a]g[i]n[g] in any [s]ort of ill-ad[v]ised li[a]ison, [s]o we de[v]e[lo]p[ed] a [f]r[iendshi]p of [s]orts. It was a [sh]a[l]ow [f]r[iendsh]ip, as mo[s]t [f]r[iendsh]ips that [r]e[s]ult [f]r[om] [s]t[ai]ved o[ff] [s]exual li[a]i[s]o[n]s [t]e[n]d to b[e], th[e]se are of cour[s]e the [m]o[s]t [sh]allow and in[s]i[p]id friend[sh]i[pp]s i[m]agi[n]a[b]l[e], they're inter[m]i[n]a[b]l[e] a[n]d a[s]i[n]e, but th[i]s part[i]cular f[r]iendsh[i]p [w]as [r]e[w]arding i[n] i[t]s own [w]ay. [S]o sure, a[r]ound [th]i[s] [t]ime, in [th]i[s] [p]arking [l]ot, I [s]e[nt] her a [t]e[x]t m[e]ssage [t]o no re[p]l[y], and I k[n]ew then, [s]omehow or a[n]other, in[s]ti[n]ctua[l]ly I [s]u[pp]ose [I] k[n]ew that [I] wouldn't get a [r]e[p]l[y], [th]at [th]e friend[sh]i[pp] had [r]u[n] i[t]s cour[s]e, that it's [p]urel[y] [sh]a[l]ow and i[n]s[i]p[i]d nature was [a]b[un]dantl[y] evi[d]ent [t]o the [t]w[o] of us, [a]nd [th]a[t] [th]e o[th]er [p]arty, [th]is younger girl, had taken it u[p]on her[s]e[lf] to [s]e[ver] the [f]r[iendshi]p on[c]e and [f]or all. I've [c]ea[s]ed to [c]o[m]muni[c]a[t]e with her

[s]in[c]e, yet de[s][p]lite the ulti[m]ate[l]y sha[l]low and  
[i]n[s][i]p[i]d [n]a[ture of th[i]s friendsh[i]p], [d]e[s][p]lite  
the [f]a[ct we never [c]ro[ss]ed the [l]ine, [s]o to  
[s][p]ea[k], [f]or [s]ome r[ea]son [I] [f]elt a [s]ort of  
[n]on[s]en[s]i[c]al [d][ee][p] hurt, a [p]ain[f]ul [l]onging of  
[s]orts, rooted i[n] e[ss]ential[l]y [n]othing, [s]tand[i]ng  
[i]n that [p]ar[k]ing [l]ot, k[n][o]wing I'd [n]ever hear  
[f]rom thi[s] [p]er[s]on again, who I had [n][o]  
[p]hys[i]c[al] rela[t]ion[sh]i[p] w[i]th and who I had a[n]  
[e]n[tire[l]y [sh]a[l]low a[n]d i[n]si[p]id [e]mo[t]ional  
re[l]a[t]ion[sh]i[p] w[i]th.

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It wasn't [th]at lon[g] a[g]o [th]at [I] was [r]e[m]i[n]d[ed] of  
thi[s] t[e]xt [m]e[ss]age [r]an[d]om[l]y, I'd n[ea]r[l]y  
entire[l]y [r]e[m]oved thi[s] [p]er[s]on f[r]om [m]y  
[m]e[m]o[r]y, ju[s]t as yea[r]s [p]r[i]or she'd  
[s]i[m]i[l]ar[l]y [r]e[m]oved [m]e from her [m]e[m]o[r]y,  
[a]nd I felt [a]n odd pang in [m]y [s]to[m]a[c]h as I  
re[c]alled thi[s] t[e]xt [m]e[ss]age. Wasn't the e[n]t[ire]  
[p]oint of [t]urning [a]w[ay] from [e]n[g]a[ging i]n these  
[s]exual li[a]iso[n]s to [a]void [s]uch [p]angs? Don't we [a]ll  
ju[s]t inveterat[e]ly [a]s[su]me that [p]angs in our  
[s]to[m]a[c]hs [a]ll[m]o[s]t ex[c]l[u]sive[l]y res[ult]  
fr[om] [s]exual [l]iaisons? And don't we [a]ll then [a]void  
[s]exual [l]iaisons [p]ure[l]y in [a]tt[em]p[t]s [t]o [a]void  
[p]angs in our [s]to[m]a[c]hs? Yet [i]n th[i]s ca[s]e, a  
[p]er[s]on I [m]atu[r]e[l]y avoi[d]ed engag[i]ng w[i]th  
[s]exual[l]y, and [v]ic[e] [v]er[s]a, of cour[s]e, who I  
in[s]t[ea]d dev[e]lo[p]ed a [c]om[p]l[e]te[l]y [sh]a[l]low  
and [i]ns[i]p[i]d frie[n]d[sh]i[p] with, e[n]ded u[p]

[c]ausing [m]e a [p]ang in [m]y [s]to[m]a[c]h, all be[c]ause I [s][e]nt her a [t][e]xt [m][e]s[s]age [t]o [n][o] re[p]ly, k[n][o]wing the an[k]le d[ee][p] f[r]iendship w[e]’d [h]arbored [h]ad [r]un its [c]ourse and [c]ome to a [c]on[c]lusion. My [p]oint [i]n all [th][i][s] [i]s [th]at [th]e [f]ir[s]t o[b][j]ection the ave[r]a[g]le [p]er[s]on would [r]aise to [i][d]enti[f]y[ing] the [b]e[ing] in my [d]r[e]a[m] [a]s [a]n an[g]el would [b]e the [f]act the two of u[s] e[n]g[a]g[ed] i[n] a [s]exual li[a]ison—yet what [I]’ve ju[s]t [d]e[s]c[r]i[bed] [s]u[g]ge[s]ts that [p]erha[p]s there’s no [d]ifferen[c]e in our [r]ela[ti]on[sh]i[p]s with [p]eo[p]le, that w[e] [c]an’t dis[c]rimin[a]te [b]etw[ee]n [r]el[ati]on[sh]i[p]s [b]a[s]ed o[n] whether or not a [s]exual li[a]iso[n] o[cc]urred. Th[at] [p]erh[a]l[p]s di[s]t[i]ngu[i][sh]i[ng] rel[ati]on[sh]i[p]s [b]a[s]ed on whether or not they feature a [s]e[x]ual [e]x[ch]a[n]ge has [b]een a g[r]o[s]s [e]r[r]or on our [p]art. Th[at] [p]erh[a]l[p]s we shoul[d]n’t [a] [p][r]io[r]i [a]ssert that [a]ngels [d]on’t [e]ng[a]ge in [s]exual [l]i[a]isons with u[s]. [B]ecause it’s [e]ntire[l]y [p]ossi[b]le they do, and [th]at [th]ere’s really nothing wrong with a[n] an[g]el e[n]g[a]g[ing] u[s] [i]n th[i]s ty[p]e of [l]i[a]ison, [s]exua[l]ly.

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[S]o we can’t rule out entire[l]y the [p]o[ss]i[b]i[l]i[t]y [th]at [th][i][s] [b]e[ing]—de[s]p[ite] e[n]g[a]g[ing] m[e] i[n] a [s]exual [l]i[a]ison, in a [s]mall [p]l[etho]r[a] of [r]a[ci]al [f]orms—was still, i[n] [f]a[ct], a[n] angel [p]ointing me toward the [f]a[ct] my [l]i[f]e, in [l]arge [p]art, [f]o[l]lowed the [p]a[th] of [Ea]stern Or[th]odox[y]. The [m]a[th]e[m]a[t]i[c]ian, [a]tt[em]p[t]ing [t]o

[i]nf[i]n[i]tely ext[r][a][p]olate the [m][a][ss]ive  
 a[ss]um[p][t]ions that are [r][ea]l world [i]ntegers, [i]s, [i]n  
 e[ss][e]n[c]e, a com[p][l]e[te] [ch]ar[1]atan. For [e]ons  
 w[e]’ve a[ss]umed [s]exual [r]e[1][a][t]ions t[ai]nt  
 [r]e[1][a][t]ion[sh]ips, that on[c]e a [s]exual [l]ine is  
 [c][r]o[ss]ed, [th]en [th]e [r]e[1]a[t]ion[sh]ip will [b][e]  
 i[rr]evo[c]a[b]l[y] [t]ainted, yet w[e]’ve never  
 [c]o[n]s[idered] that [t]ainting [c]a[n] a[n]d will o[cc]ur  
 [e]ven [s]a[n]s [s]ex. Yet [p]erha[p]s we’re [m]a[k]ing [t]oo  
 [m]uch of the all[e]ged [d]i[s]tin[c]tio[n] be[t]w[ee]n angels  
 and [d]e[m]ons as w[e]ll. Th[at] just [a]s [p]erh[a]l[p]s  
 we’ve [m]a[de] too [m]uch of the [d]i[s][t]inctio[n]  
 be[t]ween [s]e[x]ual and [n]on-[s]e[x]ual rel[a]tio[n]s, we’re  
 [n]ow [m]a[k]ing [t]oo [m]uch of the [d]i[s][t]in[c]tio[n]  
 be[t]w[ee]n angels and [d]e[m]ons. It should be  
 [n]o[t]e[d] that [e]ven [D]io[n]y[s]i[u]s [n]o[t]e[d] that  
 pure [e]vil, [i]f [i]t [w]ere to [e]xi[s]t, [w]ould  
 imm[e]d[i]atel[y] [c]e[as]e to [e]xi[s]t, because  
 [e]ve[r]y[th]ing [th]at [e]xi[s]ts is [d]e[r]i[v]ati[v]e of the  
 One, wh[i]ch [i]s [i]nca[p]able of [p]r[o]d[u]cing [p]ure  
 [e]vil, and that [e]ven relati[v]e [e]vil [i]s  
 [s]i[m]p[ly] a [f]un[c]tion of [p]ur[s]uing aims  
 ina[pp]r[op]r[i]ate to a b[e]ing’s [p]r[op]er [f]un[c]tion,  
 that [e]ven [d]e[m]ons are onl[y] [d]e[m]on[i]c [i]n their  
 [d]i[s]tan[c]e fr[om] the [O]ne, not in a [s]e[n]se of  
 re[p]resen[ti]ng [p]ure [e]vil, [b]e[ca]use were they to  
 [b]e [p]ure [e]vil they would [c]e[as]e to [e]xi[s]t.  
 E[ss]entially, this view [p]ur[p]orts [th]at [th]ere’s no  
 [f]un[d]a[m]e[n]tal [d]i[s][t]inction betw[ee]n a[n] angel  
 a[n]d a [d]e[m]on, ju[s]t a [d]i[ff]er[e]n[c]e in the  
 a[pp]r[op]r[i]a[te]n[e]ss of their [ai]ms. Whereas an

[a]ngel [p]ursues the [ai]ms a[pp]r[o][p]r[ia]t[e] to it, in the [p]r[o]p[er] [p]r[o]p[or]tion to its being, a de[m]on [p]ur[s]ues the [ai]ms [m]o[r]e o[r] le[s]s ina[pp]r[o][p]r[ia]t[e] to it, [s]t[r]ay[ing] from its [p]r[o]p[er] [p]r[o]p[or]tions.

17-449:620 .724

Now as it [r]egards [m]y d[r]ea[m], a b[e]ing [t]ook [m][u]l[t]iple r[ra]cial [f]o[r]ms yet [r]e[t]ai[n]ed the [s]a[m]e e[ss]e[n]c[e], [m][u]ch like our [d]ual yet [m]oni[s]t [f]o[r]mu[l]a[t]ion, and [t]hen [t]here were two [d]ar[k] and [f]o[r]mle[ss] [b]ei[n]gs i[n] the [b]a[ck]s[eat]-[p]erha[p]s [s]igni[f]y[ing] [t]he evil [t]hat's im[p]o[ss]i[b]le to exi[s]t, that [i]s [s]t[r]i[pp]ed of [b]e[ing] as [s]oon as it [b]e[c]omes [s]o-[c]alled [p]ure [e]vil. [S]o [p]erha[p]s these two dar[k] [f]o[r]mle[ss] [b]e[ings] were the non-exi[s]te[n]t iter[a]tions of [m][y][s]el[f] and [m][y] [c]o[m]p[an]ion, [p]o[s]si[b]l[y] an [a]ngel. Now thi[s] [b]e[ing], [p]erha[p]s an [a]nge[l], or [p]erha[p]s a de[m]on, who [t]ook [m]ul[t]i[p]le r[ra]cial [f]o[r]ms, eventuall[y] i[n]f[or]med [m][e], i[n] this [c]ar with the two [s]mall [sh]a[p]lele[ss] forms [s]i[t]t[ing] i[n] the ba[ck]s[eat], that [sh]e had to go [s]outh of the [M]issou[r]i, to which I [c]o[r]re[c]ted her: Don't you [m]ean [s]outh of the [M]i[ss]i[ss]i[pp]i? Yet we should now [c]o[n]si[d]er that [p]erha[p]s my [c]o[r]re[c]tion was, i[n] the [c]o[n]text of the [d]r[e]am, [e]n[tire]l[y] i[n] [c]o[r]re[c]t. By [e]m[p]l[oy]ing the ph[r]ase South of the Missou[r]i this b[e]ing was [p]erha[p]s [d]i[r]e[c]t[ly] im[p]l[y]ing [t]hat [t]here are [n]o [n]ea[t] [d]i[s]t[ri]c[t]ions—that [d]ua[l]ity is an i[l]l[us]ion, [t]hat

[th]i[s] i[d]ea that a [s]tate can [b]e n[ea]t[ly] [d]iv[i]d[ed] [b]y a [M][i][ss][i][ss][i][pp][i] [i]s a [m][i][s]gui[d]ed a[pp]roach, [th]at [th]is [b]e[i]n[g], whether an angel or [d]e[m]on, in f[a]c[t] wouldn't e[m]erge on [s]ome other [s]ide [p]re[c]i[s]ely be[c]ause there is n[o] a[ac]tual o[th]er [s]ide, there's o[n]ly a [s]e[p]a[r]ate r[e]l[ative] [p]l[a]ce. And [w]hen I [w]oke up, I [f]elt as th[ough] m[y] [l]i[f]e had always [f]o[l]lowed [th]e path of Ea[s]tern Or[th]o[d]oxy, but [i]n th[i]s [e]mbrac[e] I was a[cc]cepting the [n]on-[d]ual [n]ature of our [e]xi[st]en[c]e inasmuch as I was [a]c[c]e[pt]ing [a]nything [e]l[s]e. I [e]m[b]ra[c]ed Ea[s]tern Orthodoxy a[f]ter [e]ng[a]ging i[n] a [s]exual li[a]iso[n] with a [b]e[i]ng who [t]ook mul[t]iple r[a]cial [f]orms, who l[e]f[t] m[e] to [s]e[t]tle, not [s]outh of the [M][i][ss][i][ss][i]ppi, [b]ut [r]ather [s]outh of the [M]issou[r]i—and o[pp]osite of the [b]oth of u[s] were two [s]mall dar[k] [f]orms who [c]om[p]l[ete]l[y] [l]a[c]ked [B]e[i]ng, [s]igni[f]ying the im[p]o[s]s[i]b[i]l[i]t[y] of [p]ure [e]vil. My [d]ream a[pp]r[o]p[r]iatel[y] r[e]p[r]oached thi[s] i[d]ea of t[r]ue [d]ualit[y], of [p]ure good and [p]ure evil, r[e]p[r]e[s]enting this ab[s]o[lu]te [d]ualit[y] [w]ith a r[e]l[ative] [d]ualit[y] [w]i[th]in the One, of [w]hich [a]ll Good and [a]ll [B]e[i]ng o[r]i[g]i[n]ates, [b]oth [i]n t[r]an[s]cend[ence] and i[m]ma[n]en[c]e. I then r[e]con[c]i[li]ed m[y]s[e]lf w[i]th th[i]s [b]e[i]ng that went [s]outh of the [M]issouri—and [p]erha[p]s this [b]e[i]n[g] wasn't l[e]a[vin]g m[e] as m[uch] as [g]uiding m[e], [g]iving me hints [n]ot on where to g[o], [n]o, she wasn't [s]ay[ing] where I should [g]o or [s]t[ay], she was in[s]t[ead] [g]uiding m[e] on how to r[e]ad a [m]ap.

[E]ven Dion[y][s][i]us [s]t[a]ted outright, ‘One [s]ays of [G]od, the cause of all [g]ood, that h[e] [i]s “[i]n[e][b]r[i][a]ted”’—[a]nd with th[a]t in [m][i]nd, against [m][y] [b]etter judg[m]ent, I poured [m]y[s]el[f] a ni[c]e gla[ss] of vodka l[a]st [S][a]tur[d]ay be[f]ore [m][y] girl[f]riend and [I] [d][i]ned out, knowing all [t]oo [w]ell that [w]e [p]lanned [t]o go [t]o the bar [p]r[i]or [t]o our [r]eservation, for a [c]o[ck]tail. My [s][i]g[n][i]f[i]c[an]t other ag[r]eed to [a]ll[ot] [a]s our [d]esig[n]ated [d]r[i]ver for the [n]ight, and I’d [s]pent the [e]ntire wee[k] a[b]s[t]aining from [e]very [c]on[s]u[m]a[b]le item [e]x[cept] water, [c]o[ff]ee, heart[y] grains, and [f]roz[e]n v[e]geta[b]les, and [I] [f]elt as though [I] deserved a [n]i[c]e, i[n]e[b]riated [n]i[ght]. [I] [s]a[i]d to m[y]s[e]lf [Y]ou know what?—[y]ou’ve [r]i[go]r[ou]s[l]y [d]e[n]ied [y]our[s]elf p[le]asure thi[s] w[e]ek, and you [d]eserve a [n]i[ght] [w]here you [g]o out and [g]et [w]h[i]t[e] girl [w]a[s]ted. [S]o [I] im[b]ibed a [c]o[ck]tail [b]e[f]ore the [c]o[ck]tail, and [w]hen [w]e a[r]r[iv]ed at the [b]ar, [w]aiting [f]or our [f]r[i]ends to m[e]et us, w[e] t[r]ied to [p]r[ol]ong the [c]o[ck]t[ai]l and m[a]k[e] a [p]erf[e]c[t] s[e]gw[ay] i[n]to the di[n]er—un[f]o[r]tunatel[y], I’d [f]i[n]ish[ed] my [c]o[ck]tail [f]irst, and in[c]orre[ct]l[y] a[ssu]m[ing] I had [a]nother ten to [f]ifteen [m]inutes be[f]o[r]e ou[r] [f]r[i]e[n]ds a[r]rived, [s]o I ordered a [s]e[c]ond [c]o[ck]tail, y[e]t as [s]oon as the [s]e[c]ond [c]o[ck]tail a[r]rived our f[r]iends a[l]s[o] a[r]rived, and then [w]e [w]ere [s]a[t] [a]t the table [w]here, [n]e[e]d[l]e[s]s to [s]ay, w[e] imm[e]d[iate[l]y o[r]d[er]ed a

[n]i[c]le bottle of [r]ed wine. [S]o [r]ather than [s]avo[r]ing my [s]e[c]ond [c]o[ck]tail at the [b]ar a[n]d the[n] [b]eginning our [b]o[t]tle [o]f [w]ine, I [w]as [c]on[c]urre[n]tly f[i]n[i]sh[i]ng my [s]e[c]o[n]d [c]o[ck]tai[l] [w]h[i]le al[s]o [s]tarting our [b]ottle of [w]i[n]e. [B]efore [I] knew it [I] was tho[r]oughly [d]r[un]k, I [b]e[c]ame e[n]thusia[s]ti[c]all[y] in[e]b[r]i[ate]d, [a]nd [I] [f]elt [a]s though [I] [d]eserved it—I [f]elt as though I [d]eserved to [b]e in[e]b[r]i[ate]d, to [c]o[m]m[un]it[u]p on a [s]m[all] [h]and[f]ul of to[p]i[c]s that I [p]ro[b]a[b]ly should [h]ave [r]e[m]ained [s]ilent a[b]out, to [b]a[bb]le a[b]out and [u]p on [a] [p]o[t]pouri of issues th[at] [p]erh[a]p[s] would have [b]een [b]e[tt]er l[e]ft unaddr[e]ssed. [B]ut [s]ometimes [i]t’s [i]m[p]ortant to [d]o things [s]olely out of [a]b[un]d[an]c[e], to [b]e[c]o[m]p[re]te[l]y in[e]b[r]i[ate]d, [t]o lose all [t]ouch with [c]o[n]sc[i]ousness and [r]e[st]r[ai]nt, and to e[n]g[a]ge i[n] a [c]o[m]p[re]te[l]y mi[s]gui[d]ed [c]o[n]v[er]s[ati]o[n] [p]ure[l]y out of [a]b[un]d[an]c[e]. The [F]irst [C]ause, [n]o [m]atter what [f]orm we g[i]ve [i]t, [n]o [m]atter how it[s] extensions [m]ay or [m]ay [n]ot [c]o[m]m[un]i[c]ate with u[s]—[i]f [i]f [n]othing e[ls]e [s]u[p]e[r]a[b]u[n]dant.

LARRY ISOSCELES  
Theories of the Western World

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[A]s a [m][a]tter of [f][a][c]t, I was just te[l]ling De[m]o as [w]e [w]al[k]ed up to your [f][l][a]t, I've [b]een [j]u[s]t a [t]ad [p][r]eo[cc]u[p]ied of [l]ate with a night I a[c]tua[l]ly [j]u[s]t [r]e[m]em[b]ered [t]o[d]ay, [f][r]om years ago a[c]tuall[y], [c]omp[1][e]te[1][y] [n]on-de[s][c]ript, entire[1][y] in[c]lon[s]e[qu]ential at [f]a[c]le va[l]ue, yet it was a [n]ight [th]at [n]one[th]e[1]e[ss], [n]ow [th]in[k]ing it [th][r]ough, is e[ss]entially i[n]d[i]c[at]i[ve] of my t[r]ue [c]ha[r]a[c]ter. It was [a] n[i]ght, v[i]a pure instin[ct], [I] a[l]lowed my true [c]o[l]ors to [sh]ow, and of [c]ourse I was a[sh]amed at [f]ir[s]t, who isn't di[s]gu[s]t[ed] at [f]ir[s]t [s]ight of their [t]rue [c]olors, but as the years h[ave] [p]a[s]sed I've [c]ome to the [c]o[n]c[lusion [th]at [th]ere's a[c]tually no[th]ing a [p]r[i]o[r]i w[r]ong with my t[r]ue [c]o[l]ors—a[c]tua[l]ly, if anything, it's [q]uite the [c]o[n]t[r]a[r]y. My t[r]ue [c]o[l]ors, of [c]ourse I [c]an't change them, but [e]ven [i]f [I] [c]o[ul]d [I] w[ou]ldn't. Be[c]ause [e]ven though my t[r]ue [c]olors [r]e[qu]ire a [p]r[e]r[e]q[ui]s[i]te, a [p]erh[a]p[s] un[a]pp[et]izing [p]r[e]r[e]q[ui]s[i]te, a [p]r[e]r[e]q[ui]s[i]te that, ye[s], that I [l]oathe [c]ertain [p]e[o]p[le] for n[o] r[e]a[so]n. [B]ut [e]ve[n] [th]ough [th]at may in f[a]c[t] [b]e the [c]a[s]e, I [b]e[l]ieve it's a[c]tually [p]ro[p]er to [l]oathe [c]ertai[n] [p]e[o]p[le] for a[b]so[lu]te[1][y] [n]o r[e]a[so]n, [w]ith [n]o ju[s]tification [w]hat[s]o[ever], that h[ai]ng [p]e[o]p[le] [s]ans [p]r[e]text [i]s [i]n [f]act entire[1][y]

ne[c]e[ss]ar[y], and I may [e]ven [l][ea][p] [f]urther and  
 [s]t[a]te outright [th]at [th][e]se [c]ertain [p][e]o[p]le,  
 whom w[e] [l][oa]the s[a]ns [p]retext, may [a][c]tua[l]ly  
 deserve th[i][s] [i]nten[s]e [l][oa]thing and un[p]rov[o][k]ed  
 hatred, [b]ut let me [b]egin, [p]lease. [B][e]cause to  
 [b][e]g[i]n w[i]th, [i]t was an era where I [f]ound my[s]el[f]  
 [s]p[en]d[ing] a[n] i[n]or[d]inate amount of [t]ime at  
 [s]o[c]ial events that I [l][oa]th[ed]—I [l][oa]th[ed] b[o]th  
 [c]on[t]emplating my future a[t]tendan[c]e of these  
 [e]ve[n]t[s] a[n]d the[n] my a[c]tual a[t]t[en]da[n]c[e] of  
 these [e]ve[n]t[s]. [P]eo[p]le, ul[t]imatel[y], have no  
 [c]o[un]t—to this day, [f]or exam[p]le, I of[te]n [f]i[n]d  
 m[y]s[e]l[f] [p]r[es]ent at [s]o[c]ial gathe[r]ings where a  
 [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote] [v]egeta[b]le [p]l[ate], a[l]ong with a  
 [v]egeta[b]le [d]i[p], [i]s [p]resen[t]ed as an hors  
 [d]’oeuvre, and I’m [a]l[m]ost [a]l[w]ays a [l]ittle [l]et  
 [d]own by the qua[l]it[y] of the ce[l]ler[y]. [A]t th[at]  
 [p]arti[c]u[l]ar [s]tage in m[y] [l]i[f]e, in [f]a[c]t, the [e]ra  
 I’m [s]p[ea]k[ing] of, I’d [r]e[c]on[c]i[le]d m[y]s[e]l[f] to  
 the [f]a[c]t that [I] [h]ad [i]nt[r]i[n]s[i]cally [h]i[gher]  
 [s]tandard[s] than mo[s]t [w]hen it [c]ame to [c]e[l]lery,  
 [c]u[c]umbers as [w]ell—I a[n]a[l]yzed [p]r[odu]c[t]e with  
 a[n] [a]c[ui]t[y], f[r]an[k]l[y], [m]o[s]t of [m]y [p]eers  
 would never [a]chieve. Having [s]aid [th]at, to [th]i[s] day  
 the majo[r]it[y] of ho[s]ts in our [c]o[un]t[r]y have [n]ext  
 to [n]o [c]o[un]t when it [c]omes to [s]erv[ing] [c]e[l]er[y] or  
 [c]u[c]umbers. [F]or[c]e to [a]ttend a [s]o[c]ialled  
 [p]o[s]t wedding [b]runch ju[s]t a [f]ew months [p]r[i]or  
 to the events I’m [a]b[ou]t to re[l]ay, I was [a]pp[ea]red at  
 the [q]u[al]it[y] of [c]u[c]umbe[r]s [s]e[r]ved—a  
 [c]u[c]umbe[r], [a]b[ove] [a]ll else, [sh]ould be refre[sh]ing.

A [p]ie[c]e of [c]e[l]er[y], i[d]ea[l]l[y], [i]s [s][i]m[i]l[ar] to [s][i][pp]i[ng] a fresh g[l]a[ss] of i[c]e water on a ze[s]ty [s]ummer [d]ay. The [s]our[c]e of thi[s] [r]e[g]r[ettable] [d]e[g]r[ad]ation in the [q]ua[l]it[y] of our [c]e[l]er[y] and [c]u[c]umbers un[d]oubt[ed]l[y] [s]tems f[r]om Ame[r]i[c]a’s ove[r]re[l]ian[c]e on [d]ip.

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[D]i[p], [i]n ou[r] e[r]a, has [l]ite[r]a[l]l[y] and figu[r]ative[l]l[y] [b]e[c]ome the hors [d]’oeuvre, it’s [b]e[c]ome [c]ultu[r]a[l]l[y] a[cc]epta[b]le to utter[l]l[y] ig[n]ore the [q]ua[l]it[y] of the [c]e[l]e[r]y and [c]u[c]um[b]ers, [t]wo of the m[ost] [r]ef[r]eshing yet deli[c]ate vegeta[b]les k[n]o[wn] [t]o our [s]pe[c]ies, at [s]ocial gatherings [b]e[c]ause it’s [a][ss][u]med [c]on[s][u]m[er]s’ [a]ttention will [b]e fo[c]u[s]ed [a]l[m]o[s]t [s][o]lel[y] on the [d]i[p]. Yet it’s [p]re[c]i[s]e[l]l[y] the [d]i[p] that [n]egates the [n]ut[r]it[i]o[n]al [b]enefi[t]s of the [c]e[l]e[r]y, as well as the [c]u[c]um[b]ers. Ameri[c]ans [n]o [l]onger [c]on[s]ume [v]egeta[b]les—they [c]on[s]ume [v]egeta[b]les with di[p]s and [s]au[c]es that o[b]l[i]terate all [p]o[ss]i[b]le [n]ut[r]it[i]o[n]al [b]enefi[t]s of a ve[g]eta[b]le. These dip[s] and [s]au[c]es [a][n]nihi[ate] the [i]nt[r]i[n]s[i]ca[l]l[y] [r]ef[r]e[shing] [e]ss[e]n[c]e[s] of our v[e]getables. Gu[e]s[ts] att[e]nding th[e]se [p]arti[es] could rel[ie]ve themselves all over th[e]se [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote] vegeta[b]le [p]l[ates] and [n]ot miss a [b]eat [n]ut[r]it[i]o[n]a[l]l[y]—they’d pro[b]a[b]l[y] [e]ven [f]ail to [n]ot[i]c[e] a d[i]ff[er]en[c]e in ta[s]te, with the a[m]ou[n]t of sour [c]r[eam] [c]u[r]rentl[y] [f]ou[n]d in the

[m][e][d][i]an A[m]e[r]i[c]an [d]ip. [D]u[r]ing this e[r]a of [m][y] l[i]fe, al[m]o[s]t eve[r]y [w]eek I [w]ould [s][p]end [t]w[o] [t]o [f]ive m[i]n[u]tes [i]n the [p]rodu[c]e [s][e][c]tion arduou[s][l]y [s]e[l]e[c]ti[ng] on[l]y the [f]ine[s]t [c]e[l]ery [s]tal[k]s and mo[s]t [c]on[c]rete [c]u[c]umbers, touching all the [c]u[c]um[b]ers [i]nd[i]s[c]r[i]m[i]nate[l]y, with no [r]egard for the [c]u[s]tomers who [i]nev[i]ta[b]l[y] would touch these [s]ame [c]u[c]um[b]ers a[f]ter I'd [f]i[n]a[l]l[y] [m]ade [m]y [s]e[l]e[c]tion—[b]e[c]ause, to [t]his [d]a[y], [t]here's nothing more [d]e[f]i[n]g than a [s]tal[k] of [c]e[l]ery gone [f]l[at] by mid-wee[k], yet there's nothing more u[p]l[i]f[t]i[n]g than a [f]resh[l]y cho[pp]ed [s]tal[k] of [c]e[l]er[y], and the [s]ame [c]an [b]e [s]aid [f]or [c]u[c]um[b]ers. Yet, as [s]o-c[al]led G[r]ee[k]-[A]me[r]i[c]ans, none of u[s] should b[e] [s]ur[p]rised at thi[s] [s]tate of [a]ff[ai]rs, with a vegetable di[p] ma[s]k[ing] the [r]e[f]r[e]sh[ing] [e]ss[e]n[c]e of the g[e]nuine arti[c]le, [s]o to [s]p[ea]k—and th[i]s br[i]ngs [m]e to a [m]uch l[ar]ger point, a [m]ore [g]r[an]d[i]ose [i]ssue, [i]f you'll a[l]low me to [d]i[g]r[e]ss just [s]l[i]ghtl[y] [b]e[f]ore I [b]e[g]in my [a]nec[d]ote, the [a]nec[d]ote I've [a]dmitt[ed] [b]een o[b]s[e]ss[ing] [o]ver for [w]ee[k]s now, [w]hich [w]i[l]l [i]nevita[b]l[y], I [b]e[l]i[e]ve, [b]e[c]ome the [c]rux of [m]y argu[m]ent here. [B]e[c]ause there's [e]nd[l]e[s]s [d]i[s]cussion to[d]ay with regard to our [s]o-c[al]led world, our a[l]l[e]g[e]d [W]e[ste]r[n] [w]o[r]ld, but [i]t's [i]m[p]e[r]ative we define our terms w[i]th [r]i[g]or as o[pp]osed to [c]arele[s]sne[s]s—be[c]ause it's [t]oo often [t]hat we [t]row [t]erms in[t]o [t]he e[th]er

w[i]l[y]-n[i]l[y]. In short, it's [e]n[t]irel[y] [p]ossible we're confusing [e]x[t]en[s]io[n] with i[n]ter[p]r[e]t[at]io[n] as it [r]el[ates] to our [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld. There's [e]nd[le]ss talk of this [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld, [b]ut let's [b]e [s]p[e]c[i]f[i]c, thi[s] [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld [i]s, [i]n [f]a[ct], [l]i[t]tle more tha[n] a[n] Angl[o] [w]o[r]ld, it's [n]ot [s]imply a [n]on[d]e[s]c[ri]pt [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld, it's al[s]o an [a]c[tual [A]ngl[o] world—our [c]ivi[l]ization, [s]o to [s]p[e]a[k], is [n]omi[n]ally [c]on[s]id[er]ed We[s]te[r]n, [n]omi[n]ally [c]onsid[er]ed G[r]ae[c]o-[R]o[m]an, y[et] th[er]e's a [b]ar[b]arism at [p]lay here, th[er]e's a n[e]f[ar]ious v[e]geta[b]le di[p] [b]u[r]ying the [g]e[n]uine article here.

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In [a]ctu[al]ity, the [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld [i]s [l]i[t]tle [m]ore than a [m]isn[o]mer for the Angl[o] [w]o[r]ld, [w]h[i]ch [i]s [e]sse[n]tia[lly] the Am[e]rica[n] [w]o[r]ld, [a]nd the [A]ngl[o] [w]o[r]ld, in [a]c[tu[al]ity, is [n]ot [a]n ex[t]ension of G[r]ae[c]o-[R]o[m]an [A]n[t]i[q]uity, [n]o, [i]t's s[i]mply a[n] [i]n[t]er[p]r[e]t[ati]o[n] of that world—and even [th]en [th]at in[t]er[p]r[e]t[ati]o[n] was a [p]urely [s]ub[s]equent in[t]er[p]r[e]t[ati]o[n], a[n] i[n]t[er]p[re]t[ati]o[n] i[n] [r]e[s]p[on]se to a[n] i[n]t[er]p[re]t[ati]o[n]. [B]e[ca]use the [p]r[i]mary in[t]er[p]r[e]t[ati]o[n] of [A]n[t]i[q]uity [c]ame from [C]onst[an]tin[o]p[le] [a]nd [A]n[t]i[o]ch [a]nd [A]lexan[d]ria, in the s[o]-[c]alled [B]yzantine world, and only then [d]id this [A]ngl[o] world i[n]d[ul]ge i[n] a [s]ub[s]equent in[t]er[p]r[e]t[ati]o[n] of the G[r]ae[c]o-[R]o[m]an [A]n[t]i[q]uity, [b]ased on the

[B]yzan[t][i]ne era's in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation [b]ut al[s]o of [c]our[s]e [b]a[s]ed on their in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation of the [s]o-[c]alled [B]yzan[t]ine world. This sh[ou]ld be under[s]t[oo]d, [t]hat [t]he [A]ngl[o] world, in a very t[a]n[g]i[b]le [s]en[s]e, [i]s [l]i[t]tle more tha[n] a[n] e[l]a[b]orate ve[g]eta[b]le [d]i[p] [i]t[s]elf, a [s]u[b]s[e]quent [i]n[t]er[p]re[t]ation, and [i]t's [p]erha[p]s the m[ost] [p]erv[as]i[ve] [i]nter[act]i[on] of [s]o-called v[e]getable [d]i[p] our [p]lanet has y[e]t to [s]e—be[n]eath it w[e] [d]i[s]c[over] the genuine arti[c]le, the [p]r[ima]rily in[t]er[p]re[t]ation, [s]o to [s]p[ea]k. [A]s for us, w[ith] [t]he [i]n [t]h[i]s [A]nglo [w]orld [w]e re[m]ain [m]ore o[r] [l]e[s]s g[lo]ssed [o]ver, a [s]u[b]-o[pt]i[m]al [f]it [o]ver here and [s]u[b]-o[pt]i[m]al [f]it [o]ver there, as [D]i[a]m[and]a [G]al[as]a a[ptly] [p]ut it: A[m]er[i]ca [i]s f[i]xated on [m]ulti[c]ultu[r]alism yet [r]e[m]ains [r]e[m]iss with [r]e[g]ard to [M]i[dd]le [Ea]s[te]rn [c]ultures, wh[i]ch [i]n[c]lude [G]r[ee]k [c]ultures—[b]ut how [i]s th[i]s po[s]s[i]b]le? Yet [w]e [sh]ould note, [w]e [sh]ould final[ly] [a]d[m]it to our[s]elves [t]hat [t]he [m]odern [c]enter of the Angl[o] world, [A]m[er]i[c]a, for [a]ll of its [m]elting p[ot] [m]yth[ology], has [n]ever [a]ssi[m]ilated, [n]ot [q]uite, be[c]ause [i]n[s]tead [i]t's [s]i[m]ply [a]nnih[il]ated—in Ameri[c]a we [l]ove d[i]c[t]u[s]sing ethn[i]c[i]ties, [p]eo[p]le wear h[y]phens l[i]k[e] [n]ame-tags, [b]ut all of th[e]se ethn[i]c[i]ti[e]s are at [b]ottom fal[s]e ethn[i]c[i]ties, ju[s]t as the [s]o-[c]alled modern Gree[k], the Helle[n]i[c] [b]a[b]oon, [i]s a f[i]c[t]i[on]al ethn[i]c[i]ty, all [o]f [o]ur [o]ther ethn[i]c[i]ti[e]s are e[ss]ent[i]al[ly] f[i]c[t]i[on]al ethn[i]c[i]ti[e]s, they're

ethn[i]c[i]ties at [b]e[s]t as [s]i[m]u[l]a[c]ra, and, [s]u[b]s[e]q[ue]nt[ly], what's in[e]vita[b]l[ly] [t]rue [b]ut will [r]e[m]ain [p]er[p]etual[ly] [u]n[t]ouched [u]p[on] is [t]hat [t]here is no [r]eal [r]a[c]e or [e]thn[i]c[i]ty w[i]th[i]n [A]me[r]ic[a] with the [e]x[c]e[p]tion of the [A]ngl[o]. Eve[r]yone is [A]ngl[o] in [A]me[r]ic[a], th[i]s [i]s obviou[s]. Eve[r]y [p]er[s]o[n] i[n] [A]me[r]ic[a], i[n]s[of]ar as they've [a]do[p]ted [A]meri[c]an hy[ph]ena[tions], is e[ss]en[tial]ly Angl[o]—as [C]atho[l]i[c]i[s]m [w]ashed [o]ver [t]he [t]h[i]rd [w]o[r]ld, [t]he [t]h[i]rd wo[r]ld be[c]ame e[ss]entia[ly] [A]ngl[o], the Puritanism of North [A]m[er]ic[a] [m]i[x]ed w[i]th [t]he [C]atho[l]i[c]i[s]m of [S]ou[th] [A]m[er]ic[a] and [r]esulted in a [m]i[l]ieu where [e]ve[r]yone is [e]ss[e]ntially Angl[o]. M[a]gic [J]o[hn]s[on], [a]t [b]o[tt]om, is e[ss]entia[ly] Angl[o]. [E]nd[le]ss [e]thn[i]c[i]ties have [b]een [p]ro[p]er[ly] [i]denti[f]i[ed], [s]y[s]te[m]ati[c]al[ly] [a]ss[i]m[i]l[ate]d [i]nto th[i]s [A]ngl[o]-A[m]eric[an] [f]ramewor[k], and [s]ub[s]e[que]nt[ly] [a]nnih[i]l[ate]d, and we [p]e[r]use their [c]o[m]ing-of-age [n]a[r]ratives, [p]enned in the [c]la[s]s[i]c [N]ew Yor[k]er [s]tyle, and we thin[k] to our[s]elves, “[W]ow, that's [n]i[c]e, [w]hat a [n]i[c]e little [c]o[m]ing-of-age [s]tory, I [n]ever k[n]ew Viet[n]am was [s]o [n]i[c]e in Autumn—” when the rea[l]it[y] is th[e]se [p]e[o]p]le have b[e]e[n e[ss]e[n]tia[ly] annih[i]l[ate]d.

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The [c]o[m]ing-of-age [n]a[r]rative of the Viet[n]a[m]e[s]e [i]l[mm]i[g]r[an]t t[i]ck[les] the [r]e[c]e[ss]es of our [s]oul, yet it ne[v]e[r] occu[r]s to u[s] [t]hat [t]h[i]s [V]iet[n]ame[s]e

per[s]on, writing in the [c]la[ss]i[c] [N]ew Yor[k]er [s]tyle,
 [h]as bee[n] e[ss]enti[a]lly [a]n[n]i[h]i[l]ated. We [m]arvel
 at the eth[n]i[c] tr[ai]ts of [c]o[m]ing-of-age [n]arratives
 penned in the [c]la[ss]i[c] [N]ew Yor[k]er [s]tyle, yet th[e]se
 [e]th[n]i[c]i[t]i[e]s are [e]ntirel[y] fi[c]ti[ti]onal, they've
 [b]ee[n] e[ss]e[n]ti[a]lly [a]n[n]i[h]i[l]ated, just as we, the
 H[e]l[e]n[ic] [b]a[b]oons, have [a]l[s]o [b]ee[n]
 e[s]se[n]ti[a]lly [a]n[n]i[h]i[l]ated. The
 Viet[n]a[m]ese-A[m]eri[c]an who penned your [f]avorite
 [c]o[m]ing-of-age story [i]s, [i]n [f]a[ct], e[ntire]ly
 Angl[o]. The [s]o-[c]alled Or[th]odox, [th]e [l]a[s]t of [th]e
 [s]o-[c]alled [B]yzantines, re[m]ain [u]n[a]ss[i]m[i]l[a]ted
 and there[f]ore [u]n[a]nni[h]i[l]ated, [p]erha[p]s only
 [b]e[ca]use they've [c]l[un]g to their meta[ph]y[s]i[c]al
 d[i]stin[c]tions—through [v]a[r]ying [c]r[is]t[ia]n and
 o[ccu]p[ati]ons, [v]a[r]i[ati]o[n]s [c]a[p]italis[m]s and
 [c]o[m]munis[m]s they've [c]l[un]g to their
 [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]al d[i]stin[c]tions, to the
 [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]al [f]r[am]ewor[k] of the [P]a[tri]ar[ch] of
 [C]on[s]tan[t]i[n]o[p]le. In a[n]y [c]a[s]e, this Anglo world
 is [n]o extens[i]on of Ant[i]q[ui]ty, it's [n]o [N]ew
 [R]o[m]e, [b]e[ca]use [i]ts [i]n[t]erp[r]e[t]ations have
 [i]n[e]vita[b]ly [b]een filtered through the [s]o-[c]alled
 [B]yzan[t]i[n]e, th[ro]ugh the [S]e[c]ond [R]o[m]e of
 [C]on[s]tan[t]i[n]e, [B]ut for the Ortho[d]ox, [C]h[r]i[s]t
 [s]ym[b]oliz[ed] the [t]rue, ve[r]i[f]ied immanen[c]e of
 [G]od, to [c]o[r]re[s]pond with the t[r]an[s]cend[en]c[e] of
 [G]od—ju[s]t as the [s]o-[c]alled [S]o[c]rati[c] I[d]ea was
 at on[c]e tr[an]s[ce]n[d]e[n]t [a]nd immane[n]t, just [a]s
 Love [a]s [a]n I[d]ea was out of [r]each [i]n-[i]t[s]elf ([i]n
 [i]t[s] [t]r[an]s[ce]n[d]e[n]c[e]), yet [i]n[t]e[r]ac[t]ive [i]n a

[r]ela[t]ive [s]e[n][s]e (i[n] [i]ts [i]mma[n]e[n][c]le), God was [n]ow the [s]ame, [n]ot [t]ran[s]cen[d]e[n]t or i[m]mane[n]t, but i[n][s]tead [t]ran[s]cen[d]e[n]t and i[m]mane[n]t. God as a[n] E[ss]en[c]e was [u][n]kn[o]wa[b]le, [u][n]a[pp]r[oa]cha[b]le, and wh[o]lly t[r]an[s]cende[n]t, yet, th[r]ough Ch[r]i[s]t, God was [p]r[ov]en to [b]e wholl[y] [i]mmanent, [i]n a[dd]i[t]i[on] to [b]eing en[t]irely [t]ranscend[ent], [G]od's [E]nergi[e]s were [E]nergi[e]s w[e] [c]ould a[pp]r[oa]ch and [i]nte[r]a[ct] w[i]th, to [b]e[c]o[m]e [o]ne with [G]od, [e]ven [m]o[m]entari[l]ly, was d[e]em[ed] a [p]ossi[b]i[l]it[y]. Ch[r]i[s]t was b[r]illiantly [g]r[af]ted onto [c]entu[r]i[e]s of [G]r[ae]k thought in a [s]y[s]tem that [f]ound it[s] e[x]p[r]ession [f]r[om] [A]le[x]and[r]ia to [A]n[t]i[o]c[h] [t]o [C]on[s]t[an]t[in]o[ple], yet the [s]ub[s]e[qu]ent Angl[o] in[t]er[p]re[t]ation, by [r]e[s]t[r]i[c]ting God and [P]erson [t]o the in[t]elle[c]t, the [c]on[c]e[p]tual [t]o the [t]ran[s]cend[ent], [e]s[s]entia[l]ly ushered in the [s]e[c]u[l]ar a[th]eism [th]at's [b]e[c]ome our [m]ono[c]ulture [p]ar ex[c]e[l]len[c]e. This [s]u[b]s[e]q[ue]nt Angl[o] in[t]er[p]re[t]ation was [m]ar[k]ed[l]y [d]iffe[r]ent—[b]e[c]ause now to [b]e [t]r[an]scen[d]e[n]t and i[m]mane[n]t was now [d]eem[ed] [d]e[c]a[d]ent and o[r]ie[n]tal. The [s]o-called [B]yzan[t]ine in[t]er[p]re[t]ation e[n]v[i]s[i]oned a God wh[o], thr[ou]gh His [s]u[p]era[b]un[d]an[c]e, was [b]o[th] wh[o]lly immane[n]t a[n]d en[t]ire[l]ly [t]r[an]scen[d]e[n]t, whereas the Angl[o] in[t]er[p]re[t]ation viewed that in[t]er[p]re[t]ation as b[oth] wh[o]lly [d]e[c]a[d]e[n]t a[n]d e[n]t[ire]l[y] o[r]ie[n]tal, the Angl[o] in[t]er[p]re[t]ation, just as the

He[b]r[e]w [G]od [b]anished [A]dam [a]nd Eve from the [K]ing[d]om of [G]od, [s]u[b]s[e]q[ue]ntly [b]anished [G]od from the [K]ing[d]om of M[a]n, to His e[t]ernal [t]r[an]s[cen]d[en]c[e]. [N]o, the [s]o-[c]alled [G]r[ee]k[s] [n]ever [k]illed their [G]od be[c]ause they [n]ever [s]topped [m]e[r]ging with their [G]od. The [G]r[ee]k world [n]ever chose to [k]ill their [G]od, they [n]ever [m]u[r]dered their [G]od in [c]old [b]lood [b]e[c]ause, in this [G]r[ee]k [w]orld, [w]i[th]i[n] th[i]s [s]i[ll]y [B]y[zant]i[n]e [m]i[ll]ieu, to [k]ill their [G]od would [b]e a[k]in to [c]o[m]mitting [s]ui[c]ide.

05—522:715 .730

[W]hereas the Anglo [w]orld [d]i[vor]c[ed] [i]t[s]e[l]f [f]rom the Energies, became the tran[s]c[en]d[en]t world [p]ar ex[c]el[le]n[c]e, and [l]e[f]t it[s]e[l]f no choi[c]e but to [k]ill [i]t[s] God [r]uth[le]s[s]ly and ex[p]e[dit]i[ous]ly. The t[ran]s[c]e[n]d[en]t world [p]ar ex[c]el[le]n[c]e alm[o]st i[p]s[o] fa[ct]o be[c]omes the [s]e[c]u[lar] athei[s]t world [p]ar ex[c]el[le]n[c]e. T[ran]s[c]e[n]d[en]c[e] [d]i[vor]c[ed] [f]r[om] i[m]m[an]e[n]c[e] is the p[ri]m[ar]y [f]o[r]m[u]la of the [s]e[c]u[lar]. The [W]e[st]e[r]n [w]o[r]ld is the Angl[o] [w]orld [w]h[i]ch [i]s nothing more than a [s]ub[s]equent i[n]t[er]p[re]tation [r]a[th]er th[a]n a [p]r[im]a[r]y i[n]t[er]p[re]tation. In A[m]e[r]i[c]a, e[ve]ryone is Anglo, Viet[n]a[m]ese i[m]migrants w[ri]te [c]o[m]ing of age [s]to[r]ies that are [n]othing if [n]ot h[oli]s[t]ic[al]ly [A]ngl[o], tran[s]c[en]de[n]t[ly] [A]ngl[o]. [A]nd we [s]it, [p]o[r]trayed [a]s [a]b[s]urd[ly] He[l]le[n]i[c], [a]s Athenian [b]a[b]oons, yet of [c]ou[r]s[e] we have [p]erha[p]s that

“[B]yzantine loo[k],” our mu[s][k] is [p]lerha[p]s  
 [B]yzan[t]ine, yet the [B]yzan[t]ine, we’re [t][o]ld, was  
 wh[o]lly [d]e[c]a[d]e[n]t a[n]d e[n]tire[l]y o[r]ie[n]tal a[n]d  
 n[o] [l]onger exists. The [A]f[r][o]-A[m]eri[c]an [M]an is  
 the [A]ngl[o] [M]an, La[r]ry [B]ird [i]n add[i]t[i]on to  
 [M]a[g]i[c] [J]ohn[s]on are [b]oth e[ss]entia[l]ly Angl[o],  
 the Ita[l]ian-A[m]eri[c]an [M]an is the [A]ngl[o] [M]an,  
 the G[r]ee[k]-A[m]eri[c]an [M]an, des[p]ite [p]laying the  
 [r]ole of [A]thenian [B]a[b]oon, is [a]ll[s][o] e[ss]entia[l]ly  
 Angl[o]. The [G]ree[k]s, u[l]timate[l]y, have [s]un[k]  
 them[s]e[l]ves, [w]h[i]ch [i]s [w]hy they’re no [l]onger  
 [e]ven [G]r[ee][k], w[e] [c]an’t [b]lame anyone more than  
 our[s]elves, [w]e [w]ere [p]l[a]ced [i]n an [i]m[p]o[ss]i[b]le  
 [p]osition [b]etw[ee]n [Ea][s]t and [W]e[s]t, [a]nd [w]e  
 [a]cted [i]n [a]n [i]m[p]o[ss]i[b]le f[a]sh[i]on, [a]nd [n]ow  
 we’re [n]o longer even our[s]elves. [B]ut how did [w]e get  
 onto u[s] any[w]ay, the [G]reeks—[h]ave I [g]one  
 over[b]oard [h]ere at all? [A]m I ex[a]ggerating [a]t all?  
 [I]t’s de[f]i[n]ite[l]y [p]o[s]sible, yet I [f]eel  
 com[p]l[e]te[l]y a[pp]r[op]r[i]ate, I a[c]tua[l]ly [f]eel  
 [l]i[k]e, i[f] an[y]thing, I’m [b]eing too reserved, th[at  
 i[f] anything I’m [a]c[tua[l]ly [l]a[ck]ing in  
 h[y]per[b]o[l]e at the [m]o[m]ent. I feel [l]i[k]e, [r]i[gh]t  
 now, [I]’m a[c]tua[l]ly b[e]ing too [k]ind, [th]at if  
 any[th]ing I’m being a [t]ad [t]oo [r]eserved. I feel as  
 [th]o[ug]h [th]ere’s vi[t]ri[o]l that I [s]till [o]we, that I  
 [o]wn [c]on[s]i[d]era[b]le [d]ebt, and it’s all vit[r]i[o]l, [th]at  
 [th]ere’s n[o] choi[c]e [b]ut to [p]lay it [b]a[ck] to the  
 gene[r]al [p]o[p]ula[c]e of thi[s] [c]ountry. It’s [p]o[ss]i[b]le  
 that I’m f[i]lled to the [b]r[i]m w[i]th [v]i[t]ri[o]l, it’s  
 [p]o[ss]i[b]le that I [o]we all this [v]i[t]ri[o]l to the gene[r]al

[p]o[p]u[l]a[c]le. [I]t's alm[o]st as [i]f I'm [l]ea[ving] [l]oa[ds] of vitr[i]o[l] on the table. The Angl[o] world [l]e[c]tured us [th]at [th]e au[th]enti[c] Gree[k]s m[a]de [a]nal love [t]o [t]ee[n]a[ge] boys, and the[n] whe[n] G[r]ee[k]s [m]oved [p]a[s]t [p]le[n]et[r]a[ting] high [s]c[h]ool [a]ged [m]e[n] i[n] the [r]ear-e[n]d, when they i[n]stead [s]u[b]s[c]r[i]b[ed] to the metaphy[s]i[c]s of the [P]at[r]iar[c]h of [C]on[s]tantino[p]le, it was only [a]t th[at] [p]oint that G[r]ee[k] [c]ulture be[c]ame [d]e[p]r[a]ved and [d]e[c]adent. Wholl[y] o[r]i[ental]. Th[is] [i]s what I've [b]een per[s]onal[ly] taught [b]y the Angl[o] [s]o-[c]alled [s]c[h]ool[a]s[t]i[c]s—[a]nd th[at] I [c]an tell you is [a]b[s]o[lu]te[ly] no exaggeration.

06—528:719 .734

Only the Gree[k]s would a[cc]e[pt] two [s]ets of an[c]e[s]tors of [th]i[s] [s]ort [th]en [sh]r[u]g their [sh]oulders and [g]o [g]et d[r]u[n]k at a [s]aloon. That's what I [d]id. [I]t's ju[s]t au[d]aciou[s], that's what [i]t [i]s. [I]f no[th]ing el[s]e I re[s]pe[c]t [th]e au[d]a[c]it[y], be[c]ause I [a]c[tual[ly] [h]ave the [h]ighe[s]t re[s]pe[c]t for the au[d]a[c]it[y] of the Angl[o] world. Our an[c]e[s]tors have [s]pent hun[d]r[ed]s of years in o[b]s[c]ure mountains, for[b]i[dd]en to [r]ead or w[r]ite, [w]h[i]le the ent[i]re Angl[o] [w]orld has [s]pread th[i]s [m]i[s]in[f]or[m]a[tio]n about u[s], this [s]l[ander], this [c]hara[c]ter [a]ss[assin]a[tio]n, [s]o it's n[o] won[d]er [p]e[ri]ph[er]al [r]am[p]ant in [e]ve[r]y [W]e[s]tern [p]o[li]ty—loo[k] who [c]o[m]p[r]i[s]e the [i]d[ol]s of the [W]e[s]t! [Th]e A[th]enian with [th]e [b]eautif[ul] [b]o[y]f[r]iends t[r]aversing pu[b]erty, as [i]f [th]e[se] were

the onl[y] [G][r][ee][k]s, as if [th]ere were no o[th]er  
 [G][r][ee][k] e[r]as, as if the [a][l][p]h[a]b[et] [b]e[c]ame  
 o[b]sol[e]te [a][f]ter [A]nti[q]uit[y]! [B]ut [I] d[i][g][r]es[s].  
 [I]n a[n]y [c]a[s]e, [b]efore I e[n][t]er i[n][t]o thi[s] whole  
 a[n]e[c]dote I should [s][a]y thi[s]—n[a]mely, th[at] I was  
 [a]t [a] [r]e[s]tau[r]ant [a]c[r]o[s]s the [s]t[r]ee[t] [f]r[om] [m]y  
 [a]part[m]ent [f]or a [s][m]all [g]athe[r]ing ju[s]t the other  
 night, my [g]ood [f]r[i]end's [c]ousi[n] was i[n] town,  
 [a]nd she [a]nd her [f]ather [i]n[v]ited me to a[n]  
 [i]n[f]ormal dinner [a]c[r]oss the [r]oad [f]r[om] [m]y  
 [a]part[m]ent, [s]o [I] [d]e[c]i[d]ed it would be a [l]ittle  
 rude [f]or me not to go, con[s]i[d]ering I [l]i[v]ed  
 w[i]th[i]n [s]p[i]tt[i]ng [d]i[s]tan[c]e of th[i]s  
 [r]e[s]tau[r]ant, [w]i[th]i[n] [m]i[n]i[m]al [w]alking  
 [d]i[s]tan[c]e, and had [n]othing el[s]e to [d]o. I  
 e[ss]enti[al]ly [h]ad to g[o] but [a][l][s]o [h]ad [n]o issue  
 with [a]tten[d]ing. [I]n [a][d]d[i]t[i]on, I [w]as [a][w]are the  
 meal [w]ould in all [l]ike[l]ihood be [p]aid for, and  
 [a]lthough I [d]i[d]n't [p]arti[cu]larl[y] thin[k] highl[y] of  
 the [r]e[s]tau[r]ant [a]c[r]o[s]s the [s]t[r]ee[t], I knew there  
 was at [l]ea[s]t one [d]e[c]ent [m]eal, or [m]ayb[e]  
 [e]ve[n] two [d]e[ce]nt [m]eals, that I could or[d]er and  
 [f]ee[r]e[r]elative[l]y [s]at[i]ated. [P]er[s]o[n]al[l]y, I was  
 a big [f]an of the [S][p]i[c]y Mak[i] [P]latter, where you  
 re[c]eiv[e]d eigh[t][ee]n [p]ie[c]e[s] of [t]u[n]a, [s]almon,  
 and yel[l]ow[t]ail [s]ushi for ju[s]t [s]ix[t]ee[n] dol[l]ars. It's  
 a great [m]eal, and be[c]ause of the e[c]o[n]o[m]i[c]al  
 [p]ri[c]e-[p]oint you [d]on't feel [l]ike a [c]om[p]l[et]e  
 a[ss]hole or[d]er[ing] it on [s]omeone el[s]e's tab. [I]n a[n]y  
 [c]ase, we a[r]r[i]ve, [m]y [f]r[i]end and [I], [p]erh[a]p[s]  
 we're [a]c[tua]ll[y] [l]overs, but I [d]on't want to [g]o in[t]o

a [g]r[ea]t [d][ea]l of [d][e][t]ail about m[y] [p]r[i]vate  
 l[i]fe here, we [m]ight [e]ven l[i]ve w[i]th [ea]ch other in  
 [m]y a[p]art[m]ent, but I'[m] [n]ot going into that [n]ow,  
 [w]e're in l[ov]e [w]ith [ea]ch o[th]er in a [w]ay [th]at ju[s]t  
 [f][ee]ls [p]ro[f]ound, that's [p]o[ss]i[b]le, [b]ut i[n] a[n]y  
 [c]a[s]e we're [th]ere, at [th]e [r]e[s]tau[r]ant, whe[n] my  
 [f]r[ie]n[d]'s [c]ousins [f]r[om] out of town a[rr]ive, and  
 a[l]m[ost] i[m]m[e]d[i]atel[y] the [c]on[v]er[s]ation [t]urns  
 [t]o the m[u]ch [d]i[s]c[u]ssed [C]O[V]ID-Ninet[ee]n  
 va[cc]i[n]e, and [b]e[ing] wh[o]l[e]l[y] s[o]bber as well as  
 extr[em]e l[y] hung[r]y [I] de[c]ide to have [n]o part of  
 it, I [d]on't me[n]tion a[n]ything a[b]out [n]onli[n]ear  
 [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]utions, the i[n]he[r]e[n]t [d]i[s]hone[s]t[y] of  
 a[l]l l[a]rge govern[m]ents over the cour[s]e of [h]u[m]an  
 [h]i[s]t[or]y.

07-546:721.757

I ch[oo]se t[o] [r]e[f]r[ai]n [f]r[om] m[e]ntio[n]ing [E]l[li]ot  
 [A]b[ra]ms [r]ec[ei]ving a [f]i[f]t[y] dol[lar] [f]ine [f]or  
 t[r]a[ff]i[ck]i[n]g [c]r[ack] [c]o[c]ai[n]e into eve[r]y  
 [b]l[ack] [c]o[m]m[u]n[i]ty i[n] A[m]er[i]ca i[n] the  
 [N]ineteen-[Ei]ghties, I ch[oo]se t[o] [r]e[f]r[ai]n [f]r[om]  
 [m]entio[n]ing a[n]y of this, as it wasn't the [r]i[gh]t  
 [t]i[m]e [t]o di[s]c[u]ss [n]onli[n]e[ar]it[ie]s a[n]d  
 E[ll]i[ot] Ab[ra]ms, thi[s] was my [c]on[c]l[us]ion at the  
 time. I wasn't [g]oing to [g]et [c]aught u[p] in the  
 [n]a[t]ure of [p]r[o]b[ab]i[l]i[t]y [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]ut[i]ons  
 and E[ll]i[ot] Ab[ra]ms' [f]i[f]t[y] dol[lar] [f]ine [f]or  
 [s]ell[ing] l[ar]ge [s]wathes of [c]r[ack] [c]o[c]aine at the  
 [b]e[he]s[t] of the [f]i[r]s[t] [B]ush [a]dmini[s]tration [a]t  
 th[at] time. It would have [b]een un[c]outh, ill-[a]dvised,

[a]s well [a]s [c]om[p]l[ie]te[ly] ina[pp]r[op]r[i]ate.  
 But in [k]ee[p]ing [m]y [m]outh shut I felt just a  
 [m]o[m]en[t]ary [t]i[n]ge of ag[i]t[ation], in h[ea]ring  
 th[e]se o[p]i[n]ions I inve[t]e[r]atel[y] [d]i[s]ag[r]ee[d] with,  
 in [r]ef[r]ain[ing] [f]r[om] [u]tte[r]ing the [ph]r[ase]  
 [n]onli[n]ear[i]ty [d]i[s]t[r]i[bu]t[i]ons and E[li]ot  
 [A]b[ra]ms I [b]ec[a]me s[li]ghtl[y] [a]git[at]ed, the  
 [o]nli[y] [a]n[t]id[ote] t[o] my [a]gi[t]a[t]ion would [b]e to  
 s[ay] the [w]ord [n]onli[n]earity a[l]oud, [w]hich I had  
 [n]o in[t]ention of doing. I couldn't [b]ring my[s]elf to  
 [s]ay the word [n]onli[n]earit[y], [a]nd I h[ad]  
 [a]b[s]o[l]utel[y] no intention of utte[r]ing the ph[r]ase  
 E[li]ot [A]b[ra]ms at thi[s] r[e]s[tau]r[ant], [I] coul[d]n't  
 [d]o either without embar[r]a[ss]ing [m]y[s]elf, and [I]  
 kn[ew] it. The f[a]ct of the [m]at[ter] is whe[n] a[n]  
 o[p]i[n]ion I d[i]s[ag]r[ee] w[i]th [i]s exp[r]e[ss]ed  
 w[i]thi[n] [m]y gene[r]al [p]r[ox]i[m]i[ti]y, [a]nd I [a]ct  
 s[oc]iall[y] a[pp]r[op]r[i]ate[ly] and [r]ef[r]ain  
 [f]r[om] sha[r]in[g] my t[r]ue [f]eel[ing]s on the [m]atter,  
 then I of[te]n [f]eel th[is] [t]i[n]ge of [a]gi[t]a[t]ion, [a]s i[f] I  
 was [p]ut on thi[s] Ea[r]th for the [s]ole [p]u[r]p[os]e of  
 behaving ina[pp]r[op]r[i]atel[y] and exp[r]e[ss]ing my  
 hone[s]t o[p]i[n]ions, n[o] matter the co[s]t [s]oc[i]all[y].  
 In[s]tead I [f]ound my[s]elf g[lan]c[ing]  
 i[n]ter[m]ittentl[y] at [m]y [f]riend's older [c]ousin,  
 ju[s]t shame[l]e[ss]l[y] [s]p[e]cu[la]t[ing] on his [r]a[cial]  
 m[a]k[e]u[p]—which I h[ate]. I've [b]ee[n] on the  
 [r]e[c]eiv[ing] e[n]d of thi[s] de[s]p[ic]a[b]le [b]ehavior, and  
 I'm sure you've exp[r]e[r]i[e]nced [s]i[m]i[lar], and [I]  
 de[s]p[is]e [p]eo[p]le who ju[s]t shame[l]e[ss]l[y]  
 [s]p[e]cu[la]te as to [m]y r[acial] m[a]k[e]u[p], I'm sure

you [d]e[s]pise them j[u]st as m[u]ch, yet [s]itting a[c]ro[ss] [f]rom thi[s] [d]i[s]tant [c]ousin of [m]y [f]riend, [m]y [l]over [p]erh[a]p[s], I [s]at in thi[s] [s]ilent hy[p]oc[r]i[s]y, I [s]at there and shame[l]e[ss][l]y, [c]ontinuo[us][l]y [s]p[e]c[ul]ated on hi[s] r[a]cial [m]a[k]e[u]p to [m]y[s]elf, going [s]o [f]ar as [t]o [t]a[k]e [s]p[e]c[i]f[i]c [f]acial [f]eatures into a[cc]ount and [s]p[e]c[ul]ate on a [g]eo[g]r[a]phic a[r]ea of o[r]i[g]in. It was [g]r[ote]s[que]. But that's un[f]ortunately what I [f]ound my[s]elf doing in [p]lac[e] of sharing my [s]in[c]ere o[p]inions on [n]onli[n]ear [p]ro[b]a[b]i[l]i[t]y [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]utions and E[l]iot A[b]rams [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]uting [c]r[ack] [c]o[c]aine to the [b]l[a]ck [c]o[m]mu[n]iti[es] of the U[n]ited [S]t[a]tes in the [N]inet[ee]n [Ei]ghti[es]—but of [c]ourse [n]o one [c]an [m]ention [n]onli[n]ear di[s]t[r]i[b]utions or E[l]iot A[b]rams [s]e[l]ling [c]r[ack] anymore.

o8—501:685 .731

Govern[m]ents have lied to u[s] al[m]o[s]t without pause [s]i[n]c[e] the i[n]ventio[n] of the nation-[s]tate, in just [A][m]eri[c]a [a]llone w[e]’ve [s]een the [l]arge-[s]c[ale] o[pp]r[ession] of A[f]ri[c]an-A[m]er[i]cans over the [c]our[s]e of [c]enturies, the [s]tate-[s]an[c]tioned poiso[n]i[n]gs of A[f]ri[c]an-A[m]eri[c]an [c]o[m]m[un]ities with [c]r[ack] [c]o[c]aine, of [l]ower [c]l[ass] [C]au[c]asian [c]o[m]m[un]ities w[i]th [p]res[c]r[i]p[tion] [p]ills, we have [p]o[p] [s]tars named [L]ittle Xanax, m[i]llions of ch[i]ldr[e]n [i]n thi[s] [c]ountry [f]anta[s]ize [a]b[ou]t [a]b[us]ing [p]res[c]r[i]p[tion] nar[c]oti[c]s bef[ore] they go to

[s]l[e]e[p] at night and the [F][D][A], a [r]e[g]u[l]ator[y] [b]o[d]y with [a]m[p]le [f]un[d]ing [f]or [r]e[g]ul[ati]ng ju[s]t this [s]ort of [b]ehavior, [a]l[pp]arentl[y] thinks [n]othing of it. We have one [p]o[p] [s]tar [n]amed [L]ittle [X]anax and [z]ero [ph]arma[c][eu]ti[c]al e[x]e[c]utives wh[o]’ve been [p]ro[s]e[c]u[te]d [f]or [p]ro[u]d[uc]ing this lu[r]id [s]tate of a[ff]airs, and th[at]’s just [s]cra[tc]hing the [s]urf[a]ce in Ame[r]i[c]a, [c]onf]ining our inq[ui]ry to a [s]ingle [s]ide of the Atlanti[c] we ha[v]en’t e[v]en ment[i]oned the Tur[k][i][sh] o[cc]u[p]a[ti]on, the geno[c]ides of [P]ol [P]ot, Hitl[er] and the Na[t]ional [S]oci[al]i[s]ts, the Gu[l]ag, the [f]a[m]ine of [M]ao, or the [p]re[p]o[n]d[er]an[c]e of [o]ther [o]cc[up]ations, [g]e[n]o[c]ides, [f]amines, and [g]e[n]e[r]al [d]ebau[c]he[r]y which have o[cc]urred [a]ll [a]cro[ss] the g[lo]be mo[r]e o[r] l[e]ss in[c]e[ss]antl[y]—yet [n]ow the U[n]ited [S]t[ates] govern[m]ent [i]nfor[m]s [i]t[s] c[on]s[ci]ousl[y] without a t[r]a[c]e of i[r]ony that a [f]a[st]-t[r]a[ck]ed v[al]u[e] is beyond [r]e[p]roach [f]or a[n]y a[n]d eve[r]yone, with no [l]ong-term [e]m[p]i[r]i[c]al [e]vi[d]e[n]c[e] a[vai]l[ab]le, and i[f] we [q]ue[s]tion [th]at [th]en we’re e[ss]entiall[y] e[x]c[om]muni[c]ated [f]rom [d]e[c]ent [s]o[c]iety. We’ve [b]ecome [ch]a[r]l[at]ans [p]a[r] ex[c]el[le]n[c]e if we [d]are men[t]ion the [n]ature of [n]onl[i]n[e]ar [p]ro[b]a[b]i[l]ity [d]i[s]tri[bu]tions, if we m[en]tion the [f]a[ct] th[at] E[l]liot A[b]rams was [f]ined [f]i[f]ty do[l]lars [f]or se[l]ling [c]r[ack], if we utter the [ph]r[ases] [n]onl[i]n[e]ar [p]ro[b]a[b]i[l]ity [d]i[s]tri[bu]tion or E[l]liot A[b]rams was a [c]r[ack] [c]o[c]ai[n]e [d]eal[er] we’ve a[pp]a[r]entl[y] [b]e[c]ome [f]asci[s]ts in thi[s] [c]ount[r]y. [S]o I had [n]o

in[k][l]ing of the r[a]cial [m][a][k]eup of thi[s] [m]an  
[s]itting [s]o i[n]no[c]ent[l]y a[c]ro[ss] from m[e], and  
eventual[l]y [I] just [s]aid to m[y][s]elf—you're  
[d]i[s][g]u[s]ting, th[i]s [i]s [g]ro[t]e[s][q]ue, [t]a[k]e out  
your [s][m]art[ph]one and [d]i[ck] a[r][o]und [o]n that,  
[f]or the [s]a[k]e of [C]h[r]i[s]t Him[s]el[f], ju[s]t [p]lease  
re[m]ove your [s][m]art[ph]one [f]rom your [p]o[ck]et  
thi[s] [s]e[c]ond. [S]o we order our [m]eals. [M]y [f]r[ie]nd,  
who I [m]ay or [m]ay not [b]e in love with, who o[r]d[er]s  
[r]ight [b]e[f]o[r]e [m]e, or[d]ers the [S][p]i[c]y [M]a[k][i]  
[P]latter, [s]o we both [e]nd u[p] ordering the exa[ct]  
[s]ame [m]eal, the [S][p]i[c]y [M]a[k][i] [P]latter, and I  
ju[s]t shot her a [l]oo[k], I [l]oo[k]ed at her [l]i[k]e Are you  
[k]idding me? [W]e [c]ould h[a]ve [a]t [l]ea[s]t  
[d]i[s][c]u[ss]ed thi[s] [b]e[f]o[r]e the [w]aitre[ss] a[s]ked  
[f]o[r] the or[d]ers, now we're or[d]ering the [s]ame  
ex[a]ct meal [b][a][ck] to [b][a][ck].

09-483:668.723

But [th]en I [th]ink to my[s][e]l[f] W[e]ll, i[f] sh[e] doesn't  
[ea]t all eight[ee]n [p][ie][c]es, [w]hich sh[e] [w]on't, then  
I'll at [l]ea[s]t have the o[p]tion to [s]nag a [s]ush[i]  
[p][ie][c]e or two if I'm not com[p]l[ie]tely [f]ull a[f]ter  
my eighteen. I [g]uess I [c]an [b]e a [b]it [g][l]u[ttonou[s]  
when it [c]o[m]es to [s]ushi, [b]ut I al[s]o—in t[r]ue  
[G]r[ee]k Ortho[d]ox [f]a[sh]ion—[t]end [t]o [f][a]s[t] [f]or  
[s]i[gn]i[f]i[c]ant portions of the [d]ay, [s]o b[y] the  
t[i]me [d]inner [a][r]r[iv]es [I]'m al]ways [p]r[e]p[ar]ed to  
[s]tu[ff] my [f]a[c]e. I've [r][ea]d [m]o[d]ern  
[m]e[d]i[c]i[n]e [i]s [b]egi[n]ning to [r]e[c]og[n]ize value  
in thi[s] [f]a[s]t and [f]ea[s]t r[e]gi[m]en of [ea]ting,

[th]at [th]e [b]o[d]y [p]erha[p]s [f]unc[t]ions more e[ff]i[ci]entl[y] when it's [d]e[p]rived [f]or a [p]e[r]iod of time. [B]ut [i]n a[n]y [c]a[s]e we [b]oth or[d]er the [S]p[i]c[y] Ma[k]i [P]latter, and her [d]ad, who's [s]a[t] [n]ext to [m]e, orders a shrimp [n]oo[d]le [d]ish th[at] h[a]s [n]o a[pp]eal to [m]e, [n]ot that I [c]are, be[c]ause I h[a]d [n]o [p]l[an]s on [sh]aring the meal with him, and when th[i]s [sh]r[i]mp [n]oo[d]le [d]ish [i]s [s]erved h[i]s [i]n[i]tial [r]eac[t]ion is Wow, th[i]s [i]s b[i]g—and [i]t [i]s, [i]t's huge. The port[i]on [i]s [i]mmense. And the [n]oo[d]les, it shoul[d] [b]e [n]oted, are th[i]ck—[i]t would [b]e n[ea]rl[y] im[p]o[s]sible for one [p]e[r]son to finish a [p]late of th[at] [m]a[gnitu]de, [s]ave for the [m]or[b]id[ly] o[b]e[s]e, in ju[s]t one [s]itting. S[o] [i]m[m]ediate[ly], and [o]n[ly] with the [b]e[st] of int[e]ntions, [b]e[c]ause her [d]ad is one of the [m]o[s]t w[e]ll-i[n]t[e]ntioned i[n]d[i]viduals you'll ever [c]ome a[c]ros[s], her [d]ad [s]tarts to o[ff]er me [s]ome of h[i]s [d]ish, and [i]n[i]tial[ly] I re[f]use not on[ly] [b]e[c]ause I [f]ind the [d]ish una[pp]ea[li]ng but [p]r[ima]rily [b]e[c]ause I'm [ea]ting [m]y own [m]eal. But this [ch]anges even[tual]ly. [F]a[m]ished [a]s I [f]ound my[s]elf, I obviou[s]ly [f]inished [m]y [m]eal not on[ly] [b]e[f]ore [a]nyone [e]lse at the ta[b]le [b]ut [c]on[s]idera[b]ly [p]r[ior] to [a]nyone [e]lse at the ta[b]le [c]l[e]aning their [p]late—I'm [s]itting there with a [c]omp[li]ete[ly] [c]l[e]an [p]late while [e]veryone [e]lse is [a]t [m]ost h[a]lfway [th]rough [th]eir [m]eal. And my [f]r[i]end is [h]ardl[y] [ea]ting [h]er [M]a[k]i Pl[at]ter [a]t all, instead she's busy [m]u[n]ch[ing] her [c]ou[s]in's General [T]so Shrim[p], yet her dad, of

[c]ourse [m]eaning well and [n]oti[c]ing [m]y em[p]ty d[i]sh, for the [s]e[c]ond time a[s]ks i[f] I want [s]ome? [N][o], [n][o] [th]an[k] you, [I]'m [f]ull, [I] say, [n]ot [th]in[k]ing at all. Wi[th]out a [s]ingle [th]ought in my [s][k]u[ll] [I] [r]epl[y] that I'm full—y[e]t in [r][e]t[r]o[s]p[e]c[t] what [e]l[s]e [c]ould I [s]ay? How [c]an y[ou] [r]e[f][u]se a bite of [s]omeone's meal, e[s]peciall[y] on a [s]e[c]ond o[ff]er, without [s]aying you're [f]ull? It's [p]ro[b]a[b]l[y] the onl[y] a[cc]e[p]ta[b]le excu[s]e, [f]eigning [f]ull[n]ess, [b]ut [n]ow I've [p]l[ac]ed mysel[f] i[n] a [b]it of an [i]m[b]rogl[i]o, [b]e[c]ause her dad thin[k]s I'm [f]ull, [b]ut I'm a[c]tually the [f]ur[th]e[s]t [p]o[ss]i[b]le [th]ing [f]rom [f]ull—[b]e[c]ause [s]ush[i] never [f]i[ll]s [y]ou. [Y]ou [f]i[n]ish a [p]l[ate] of [s]ush[i] and the [f]ir[s]t [th]i[n]g you [th]i[n]k [i]s I [c]ould go [f]or a [l]ittle more [s]ush[i].

10-441:639 .690

"Eight[ee]n p[ie]c[es] of [f]i[sh]-[f]i[ll]ed [s]ushi and I'm not [e]ven rem[o]te[l]y [c]l[ose] to [f]ull. All my th[ou]ghts [r]ev[ol]ve a[r]ound [c]on[s]u[m]ing [m]ore [s]ush[i], of which I [s]ee [p]l[ent]y, [b]e[c]ause [m]y [c]om[p]anion, [m]y [l]over, is [b]are[l]y even touching her [S]p[ic]y [M]a[k]i [P]latter. [S]o now [I]'m [t]r[y]ing [t]o [d]ev[i]se a [m]etho[d] of [c]l[an]d[e]stine[l]y [s]n[e]aking a few [p]i[ec]es of [s]aid [s]ush[i] into [m]y [m]ou[th] with[ou]t [m]y [c]om[p]a[n]ion's d[a]d [n]oticing, [n]ot that he would [c]are, but ju[s]t on [p]rinc[i]ple. I already inh[a]lled [m]y [m]eal, [ei]ght[ee]n [p]i[ec]es of [f]i[sh]-[f]i[ll]ed [s]ushi, and now I'm [c]l[ai]ming, to my [f]r[i]end's [f]ather, that

I'm [f]ull, but then [r]e[m]or[s]e[le]ss[ly] [c]on[s]u[m]ing the [s]u[sh]i [s]itting next to my [p]late? That just wasn't a [p]alatable o[p]tion in [m]y [m]ind at the [t]ime. I wanted to [a]void that [s]cenario if [p]ossible. Yet as I'm [c]on[c]o[c]ting a [p]lan to [s]urre[p]titiou[s]ly extra[c]t this foreign [s]ush[i] into [m]y [m]outh [m]y [f]riend's [c]ousin [t]akes her [f]ork and [s]tarts eating her [s]ush[i]—po[tential]ly my [s]ush[i]. I'm watching my [f]riend's [f]ather struggle to [f]inish h[is] [g]ar[g]antuan shrimp [l]o [m]e in on [m]y [l]eft, then watching [m]y [f]riend's [c]ousin [m]ethodicall[y] [ea]t [ea]ch [l]eftover [p]ie[c]e of this [S]picy [M]aki [P]atter on [m]y r[i]ght. Then I [l]ook [a]cross the t[ab]le and [b]egin [sh]amelessl[y] [r]aciall[y] [s]pe[c]u[la]ting [a]gain, just [t]o [m]o[m]entari[l]y get [m]y [m]ind off this wh[ole] [S]picy [M]aki-[l]o [m]e in imb[r]og[l]i[o]. As the [m]eal [c]oncl[u]ded there were tw[o] or th[r]ee [s]ush[i] [p]ieces [l]eft, my [c]ompanion says [H]ave one, and I shake my [h]ead, realizing the e[n]tire e[n]deavor, th[is] m[i]ssion to obt[ain] [m]ore [S]picy [M]aki, was [d]oomed to f[ai]lure. I con[s]idered a[s]k[ing] her [t]o [t]ake the [p]ieces h[ome], but n[o]—th[is] urge for [m]ore [M]aki [is] [m]isgu[i]d[ed], [I] thought, it's already [d]oomed [t]o f[ai]lure, it's [t]oo [l]ate for that. The [S]picy Ma[k]i [P]atter was de[l]icious, but [t]o [t]ake h[ome] the [l]eftover sushi wasn't a [p]alatable o[p]tion [t]o me at the [t]ime. And a [f]unny thing o[cc]urred, I a[c]tua[l]ly [b]egan to [f]eel [f]ull as [e]veryone [e]lse [b]egan [t]o [c]oncl[u]de their [m]eals—[d]es[p]ite [r]e[m]aining

hung[r][y] i[mm][e][d][i]ate[l][y] a[f]ter [f]inishing [m]y  
 eight[ee]n [p][ie][c]es of [s]ush[i], b[y] the t[i]me [e]veryone  
 [e]lse [c]on[c]l[u][d]e[d] their [d]inner I, somehow, no  
 [l]onger felt hung[r]y, [d]e[s]pite eat[i]ng noth[i]ng [i][n]  
 the [i][n]terim, for the above [s]aid [r]easons. But, i[n]  
 a[ny] [c]a[s]e, onto thi[s] a[n]c[d]o[te]—[s][o] it was a few  
 years ag[o] at this [p]oint, Ho[r]atio was [p]ro[b]a[b]lly  
 there, it was a mo[r]e o[r] [l]es[s] [n]onde[s]c[r]i[p]t [n]ight,  
 abso[l]ute[l]y [n]othing of [n]ote was o[c]curring, and I  
 thin[k] all of us were [a]t th[at] [p]oint [q]uestioning [w]hy  
 [w]e [w]ere [e]ven out, [w]hy [w]e [w]eren't at home  
 s[l]eep[ing] [l]i[k]e young children.

11-469:700 .670

[W]e [w]ere at the [D][ea]n Hotel on [W]ashington  
 St[r][ee]t in a [d]ar[k] [b]a[ck] [b]ar [c]alled the  
 [M]ag[d]a[l]e[n]a [R]oom where [n]othing [m]uch of  
 [n]ote was going on, [n]ear[l]y [n]othing of [n][o]te was  
 ever g[o]ing on [w][i]th[i]n the [w]alls of this h[ot]el [b]ar,  
 [n]ever [m]ind in the [b]a[ck] room, [w]hich [w]as  
 d[i]m[l]y [l]i[t] i[n] a[n] a[l]l[m]ost a[l]b[r]a[s]ive w[a]y and  
 usual[l]y [a]t h[a]lf [c]ap[a]c[it]y at [b]e[s]t. [B]ut  
 [m]ay[b]e that's what the [v]enue i[n]te[n]d[ed], [m]a[y]b[e]  
 the [m]a[i]n goal of the [v]enue was a[b]r[ra]s[i]v[e]  
 [i]te[r]a[tions of [d]im lighting [a]nd h[a]lf [c]ap[a]c[it]ies.  
 I[n] a[ny] [c]a[s]e, I'm with a [f]ew [f]r[i]ends, Ho[r]a[ti]o  
 m[a]y have been there, and [t]w[o] well-[t][o]-d[o] An[g]lo  
 [g]irls are there, [a]nd one of us—not [m]e—a[tt]empts to  
 [c]o-[m]in[g]le with the [t]wo [A]n[g]lo [g]irls, [a]nd a  
 [c]onver[s]ation en[s]ues. One of our [f]r[i]ends is with[ou]t  
 a d[ou]bt [ai]ming to [e]n[g]a[ge] i[n] [c]on[s]e[n]sual

[s]e[x[u]al [e]n[c]ounters with these girls in the near  
[f]uture, at [l]east if the [e]n[c]ounter goes [a][cc]or[d]ing  
to his [p]l[an], [h]owever, [h]is [p]l[an] is [a][b]out to go  
un[e]x[p]e[c]te[d]l[y] [a]wry, things are in n[o] way  
[a][b]out to g[o] [a][cc]or[d]ing to his [p]l[an], [a]nd,  
in[a]dve[r]te[n]t[l]y, I'm a[b]out to ensu[r]e his [p]l[an] is  
foiled [i]n a[n] [i]rreve[r]si[b]le man[n]er. [N]ot in the  
[s]l[i]ghte[s]t are things goin[g] [a][cc]ordin[g] to his  
p[lan], a[n]d I'm inadvertent[l]y [a][b]out to [b]e the  
[c]ause of the foil[ing]. [I]nev[i]ta[b]lly [b]oth girls  
l[i]ve [i]n the [p]ush [p]art of the [c]ity, they don't  
[h]ave [j]obs, or they [h]ave [j]obs they c[l]ear[l]y  
re[c]eiv[ed] due to [s]tat[us]es of [b]eing young and  
opu[l]ent, they [i]nev[i]ta[b]lly [b]eg[i]n to d[i]scu[ss] the  
variou[s] [p]ro[p]erti[es] their fami[li]e[s]' own, in [S]a[n]  
F[r]a[n]c[i]sco I [b]el[ie]ve, [p]erha[p]s s[ome] o[ther]  
out[r]ageous[l]y [o]p[ul]ent are[a]s of the U[S],  
may[b]e [e]ven over[s]ea[s]. I [f]orget the [s]p[e]c[i]f[i]c  
l[oc]ales, I a[c]tual[l]y [p]aid [l]ittle to no atte[n]tio[n] to  
a[n]ything [ei]ther of th[e]se An[g]l[o] [g]irls said, there  
were a [f]ew [l]ocales whe[r]e thei[r] [f]athers' owned  
[th]is [p]ro[p]erty or [th]at [p]ro[p]erty, [th]ey'd  
[s]u[m]mer here or [th]ey'd [s]u[m]mer [th]ere, but it was  
[a]ll [o]p[ul]ent i[n] a[n]y [c]l[as]s, [s]ome a[r]ea where  
[o]nly the m[ost] eg[r]eg[i]ous d[i]ckheads [l]ive. [I]t  
[d]idn't par[t]ic[u]lar[l]y offend me, yet their [t]one  
was [c]onde[s]cend[i]ng i[n] a way that al[m]ost  
[m]ade you be[l]ieve they v[ie]wed y[ou] as an [e]qual,  
[w]hich [i]n[fi]uriated me. [W]hen [p]eop[le]  
[i]n[ve]te[r]ate[l]y [b]el[ie]ve them[s]elves to [b]e  
[s]u[p]e[r]ior, yet [s]till h[ave] the au[d]a[c]ity to

[c]on[d]e[s]cend as i[f] you're almo[s]t e[q]uals, [i]t'[s] [i]n[f]uriating. [A]s it [s]o h[a]ppened, I'[d] been [s]tu[d]ying a[n] exte[n]d[ed] [d]o[c]ume[n]tary on the inter[n]et at wor[k] th[at] [a][f]ter[n]oon, it was a slow [a][f]ter[n]oon th[at] [a][f]ter[n]oon, [r]egar[d]ing the m[a]ting habits of [d]ol[ph]ins, in [f]act this vi[d]eo went into g[r]eat [d]etail [r]egar[d]ing the [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c] [m]e[c]hani[c]s of how [d]ol[ph]ins [p]er[f]orm [s]ex, and I [p]r[o]c[ee]d[ed] to share thi[s] in[f]ormation [r]egar[d]ing the [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c] [m]e[c]hani[c]s of [d]ol[ph]in [s]exual inter[c]our[s]e with the g[r]oup.

12-520:719 .723

[A][pp]arently this was [a] bit of [a] faux [p]laus on my [p]art, D[e][m]o—it was [c][l]ear these young [f][e][m]ales, although i[n]n[o]c[en]t e[n]ou[gh], were ju[s]t of a [s]e[p]a[r]ate [c][l]a[ss], [a]nd [th]ey be[l]ieved [i]t, [a]nd [th]ey knew [i]t, [a]nd [th]ey had no [r]e[s][p]ect [f]or the w[el]l v[e][r]i[f]ied intell[i]gence of dol[ph]ins and their [s]exual [m]ating [m]echanic[s]. It was [t][r][u]e [t]o them [th]at [th]ey were [s]u[p]e[r]ior—their an[c]e[s]tors were having [p]ebble wars and [ea]t[ing] m[e]d[i]um-[r]are [s]qui[r]rel, [w]hile our an[c]e[s]tors [w]ere w[r]iting ext[en]sive [c]o[m]m[en]t[ar]ies on [m]eta[ph]y[s]i[c]s and en[f]or[cing] [c]o[m]p[l]e[x] [s]y[s]tems of [t]axation, [b]ut in our [c]u[r]rent mi[l]ieu they were [b]oth un[d]oubte[d]l[y] of [s]u[p]e[r]ior [s]to[ck] to [a]nyone [e]l[s]e in the [r]oom, e[s]p[eci]all[y] [m]y[s]elf. That [m]uch [c]ould not be [d]i[s]p[ut]ed, and I [d]on't [d]i[s]p[ut]e it t[o] thi[s] [d]ay. Yet to [d]i[s]c[us]s the i[n]t[er]i[c]a[c]ies of [d]ol[ph]i[n] i[n]ter[c]our[s]e was, in

their eyes, [s]omething [r]evoltin[g], [s]omething [f]or  
 [l]a[ck] of a better word [c][l]a[ss][l]e[ss]. It was  
 e[ss]ential[ly] a [M]arxi[s]t ane[c][d][o]te, [n][o]ting  
 [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c]a[l]ly how [d]ol[ph]in [p][e]n[i]s  
 [p]e[n]etrates [d]ol[ph]in vag[i]na in the [M]ag[d]a[l]e[n]a  
 [R]oom that [n]ight. I g[r]ew up i[n]un[d]ated with  
 Ang[l]o-Saxons, [D]e[m]o, and [I] k[n]ow when [I]’m  
 b[e]ing viewed [a]s [a]n Other, in fa[ct] I k[n]ow [i]t  
 [i]n[s]t[i]n[c]t[i]ve[ly], it’s [s]omething that e[ss]ential[ly]  
 [r]u[n]s in my [b][l]oo[d], and this was a  
 [p]arti[c]u[lar]ly eg[r]e[giou]s [c]a[s]e. And it  
 [b]e[ca]me [p]arti[c]u[lar]ly eg[r]e[giou]s [f]o[ll]owing  
 [m]y [m]o[n]o[log]ue i[n]u[m]i[n]ating the [m]e[c]ha[n]i[c]s  
 of dol[ph]i[n] i[n]ter[c]o[ur]s[e]. I [m]a[y] have [m]a[de] a  
 [f]ew [s]ub[s]e[qu]ent of[f]-[c]olor [c]o[m]m[en]ts on[c]e the  
 [c]onver[s]ation was [c][l]ea[r]ly going  
 [c]omp[l]e[t]e[ly] [d]ownhill, on[c]e thi[s] [d]i[s]c[us]sion  
 was [c][l]ea[r]ly i[r]re[p]a[r]a[b]le. I [p]ro[b]a[b]l[ly]  
 [r]aised my [v]oi[c]e to an ina[d]v[is]a[b]le [d]e[c]i[b]el  
 le[v]el. [B]ut i[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e I [c]a[me] to [d]e[s]pise these  
 two i[n]no[c]ent young fe[m]ales. And in  
 [r]et[r]o[s]p[ect], if I’m [h]o[ld]ing [m]y[s]el[f] to the  
 [h]ighe[s]t [s]tandard of hone[s]ty, I de[s]p[is]ed them at  
 [f]ir[s]t [s]ight. The [s]e[c]ond our [f][r]ie[n]d—Ho[r]a[tio  
 [m]a[y] have bee[n] there—[m]a[de] the a[c]q[ui]ntan[c]e  
 of the[s]e two [f]e[m]ales I i[m]m[e]d[i]ate[ly]  
 [d]e[s]pised them. In[s]tinctive[ly] I k[n]ew [th]e [th]r[ee]  
 of us [c]ould [n]ever b[e] [c]ordial, th[at] [p]erh[a]p[s] the  
 [s]a[ck]ling of [C]on[s]tan[t]i[n]o[p]le in [T]welve [O]h  
 Four [s]till [d]ivi[d]e[d] us i[n] a[n] i[m]m[ut]able [m]a[n]ner.  
 I [b]e[l]ieve in the [p]er[p]etuating [c]ha[r]a[c]te[r]i[s]ti[c]s

of [b]l[oo]d, [D]e[m]o, I [d]on't [c]a[r]e what the [s]cienti[s]ts [s]ay. [S]pi[r]its are [a]l[w]ays [a]mong us and [w]here [b]etter to [b]ury [th]em[s]elves [th]an [w]ithin our [b]lood[s]t[r]eams? If the [s]pi[r]its of an[c]e[s]tors are [b]u[r]ied any[w]here [i]t'[s] [w][i]th[ou]t a d[ou]bt in our [b]lood[s]t[r]eams. If the tortured [s]ouls of our muti[l]ated an[c]e[s]tors are [b]u[r]ied any[w]here in the [w]orld [i]t'[s] [w][i]thin our [b]l[oo]d[s]t[r]eams, D[e]mo. F[r]om the [s]eco[n]d I [s]aw these two in[n]o[c]ent, [d]e[c]ent-looking girls I [d]e[s]pised them, and I [n]e[ve]r qu[e]st[i]oned [i]t. [I]n[s]tin[c]tively I k[n]ew [d]i[s]c[u]ssing [d]ol[ph]in [b]o[n]ers would [b]e a[b]ho[r]rent t[o] these in[n]o[c]ent young [f]emales, and I [r]elayed the a[n]e[c]d[o]te without hesitation.

13—448:606 .739

The [s]e[c]ond their [f]a[c]es [f]i[l]led w[i]th [d]i[s]gust [a]t my [a]n[e]c[d]ote I was [s]a[ti]a[te]d. If they wal[k]ed [i]nto th[i]s [r]oom [r]ight [n]ow I'd imm[e]d[i]atel[y] start to, yet again, [d]i[s]c[u]ss the me[c]hani[c]s of [d]ol[ph]i[n] [i]n[te]r[c]o[ur]s[e]. [D]ol[ph]ins are high[l]y i[n]te[l]lige[n]t [m]a[m]mals—[w]hy shouldn't [w]e [l]earn, in-[d]e[pt]h, a[b]out their [m]ating ha[b]its? It s[ee]ms entire[l]y [l]ogical to me, [e]ven now. Yet [w]e should be hone[s]t [w]ith our[s]elves, [w]e shouldn't min[c]e [w]ords, [w]e shouldn't [c]o[w]er to euphe[m]ism, be[c]ause every[o]ne is Ang[l]o. [M]a[y]b[e] I haven't [m]a[de] that [a]b[un]dant[l]y c[l]ear yet, [b]ut we're [a]ll essentia[l]y Ang[l]o, we [c]ontain resi[d]ual amounts of the H[e]ll[e]ni[c], we're [d]i[r]e[c]t [d]e[s]ce[n]d[an]ts of the [s]o-[c]alled Byzantine, the [ρ]ωμο[σ]ύβ[η], but

[e][ss]ential[l][y] [e]ve[r]yone is Ang[l][o], u[s] in[c][l]uded.  
 You may [s]it here and [p][r][o][p][o]se that, [s]ay,  
 [P]uert[o] [R]i[c]ans are [s]omehow [d]i[s]tin[c]t from the  
 m[e][d][i]an [w]hite, [w]hen in a[c]tua[l]ity [P]uerto  
 [R]i[c]ans are Ang[l]o. But [D]o[m][i][n][i]c[ans] are  
 [d]i[ff]e[r]ent, [r]ight?—[n][o], [D]o[m][i][n][i]c[ans] are  
 [a]c[tua[l]ly [A]ng[l]o [a]s well.  
 [A][f][r][o]-[A][m]e[r]i[c]ans are in[c][r]e[d]ib[l]e  
 [A]ng[l]o, in [f]a[c]t. The [P]ortuguese are  
 [d]e[f]inite[l]y Ang[l]o, [t]hey're [t]he a[p]ex of Ang[l]o,  
 the [S]p[an]ish [a]re [a]l[s][o] [t]o[t]ally Ang[l]o, and the  
 [I]t[al]ians are [a]s [A]ng[l]o [a]s anyone, Fi[l]i[p]i[n]o[s]—we  
 [c]an't de[n]y their e[ss]ential Ang[l]i[c]ism, be[c]ause  
 we're all e[ss]ential[l]y [e]q[ua]l[l]y Ang[l]o, wherever  
 [C]atho[l]i[c]ism and [i]t[s] meta[ph]y[s]i[cs] has [s]p[r]ead,  
 the Ang[l]o [w]orld [w]ithou[t] a d[ou]bt has [f]o[l]lowed,  
 whe[r]ever the [s]ordid meta[ph]y[s]i[cs] of the  
 [C][a]tho[l]i[c] church h[as] [p]l[a]nted its [r]oots,  
 [A]ng[l]i[c]ism has [p]r[ol]i[fer]ated unab[r]idged.  
 [A]ng[l]os, [F]r[an]k[s], Ve[n]etia[n]s, Italians, the  
 Ger[m]a[n]i[c] [t]r[ib]es, we [sh]oul[d]n't [l]ose [m]uch  
 [s]l[e]ep in [d]i[s]tingu[i]sh[i]ng these [t]erms, [b]e[c]ause  
 they're all [s]u[b]s[e]c[t]s of each other [e]ss[en]tia[l]ly,  
 we [sh]ouldn't [l]ie to our[s]elves about [t]hat. [Th]ese  
 [t]erms [e][n][c]ompa[ss] the [e][n][t]ire world and for that  
 r[ea]son [s]ub[s]e[qu]ent[l]y m[ea]n e[ss]ential[l]y  
 nothing. We [a]ll [a]tt[em]pt [t]o quar[r]y g[r]ou[p]s of  
 [p]eo[p]le off by the [t]i[n]t of their s[k]i[n], the sha[p]es of  
 their eyes, the [c]on[t]ours of their [n]oses, [t]he  
 [t]h[i]ck[n]e[ss] of their [l]i[p]s, when the r[ea]l[it]y is  
 [e]ve[r]yone is [e]ssential[l]y [A]ng[l]o. Mi[c]hael

[J]or[d]an [i]s [i]n[c]re[d]i[b]l[y] [A]ngl[o]. As are [L]arry [B]ird and Sha[q][ui]l[e] O'N[ea]l. [C]aitl[y]n [J]e[n]ner is [n]oth[i]ng [i]f [n]ot [A]ngl[o], [a]nd the [K]ard[a]shians are the [s]p[i]tt[i]ng [i]m[a]ge of [A]ngl[i]c[i]sm. The world [i]s [i]n[c]re[d]i[b]l[y] [c]omp[l]ex, [b]ut at times it [c]an [b]e [d]ivi[d]ed [e]venl[y] in[t][o] [t]w[o]—the Angl[o] world and the [s]o-[c]alled Gree[k] [w]orld, [w]hich n[o] l[on]ger exi[s]ts.

14-448:651 .688

The world [i]s [i]n[c]redi[b]l[y] [c]om[p]l[ex], [b]ut at [c]ertain times it [c]an [b]e easi[l]y [s]p[ill]t [d]own the m[i]ddle, at [t]imes the world re[d]u[ces] [t]o e[ss]entiall[y] [t]w[o] [d]i[m]ensions, in [s]ome [w]ays the [w]orld onl[y] exi[s]ts [t]wo [d]i[m]ensional[y], the [s]c[h]i[s]m be[t]w[een] the [C]athol[i]c[i]sm that over[t]ook the [w]orld and the Orthodox[y] that [e]ventuall[y] [b]ecame [m]ore o[r] l[ess] [e]xtinguished, [m]ay[b]e that's one in[s]tan[c]e of [b]i[n]ar[y] [s]i[m]p[l]i[c]i[t]y, the [i]de[a] of [a] God who w[a]nts to hear your [p]ett[y] [s]ins, who [w]ants to [s]p[ea]k [w]ith you and have [s]ome ty[p]e of [r]el[ati]on[sh]i[p]. A [p]er[s]onal [r]el[ati]on[sh]i[p] w[i]th God—it's the mo[s]t ab[s]urd thing. It's e[ss]entiall[y] [a]th[e]ism. There's onl[y] one end-g[ame] to be[l]ieving the [a]lleged [C]re[ator] of the Univer[s]e wants to [h]ear [a]b[ou]t [h]ow you [s]tole a [b]ag of [L]ays chip[s] from your [U]ni[ver]sity [c]on[ve]nien[ce] [s]tore as an [ei]ghteen year old—the onl[y] end-g[ame] to that [s]ort of meta[ph]y[s]i[cs] [i]s [a]theism. It's r[uth]l[ess]l[y] [d]ua[l]i[s]t [b]ut al[s]o [d]e[l]ightfull[y]

atheist. If you truly believe God wishes to speak with you about the young man you viciously threatened with violence when you were only nine years old then you're essentially an atheist. That's how we could best describe it. An idea that the experience of God is summarized verbally, and that all spiritual experience must defer to an intellectual understanding of it—we're all Anglo now. Of course I despised those two innocent Anglo girls, because I saw myself in them—in so many ways I've become an innocent Anglo girl just by dint of living in the world in a continuous fashion. Why haven't I retired to an obscure mountain somewhere, to become *ρωμοσύν* again? But that's why I have no qualms about despising certain people for no particular reason—because, at bottom, we're all essentially Anglo. Yet, if we're being honest with ourselves, it's only the homeless who truly recognize the absurdity of our alleged individualism—a poor guy slips in the street, and we act as if he murdered a man. Someone falls on hard times, begins drinking heavily, probably abuses drugs, does a decent amount of drugs, he loses his job, his home, his wife leaves him, he's reduced to begging people on street corners for dollar bills and sleeping in alleyways, and we act as if his hardship is an inconvenience for us—we're offended at his poverty. I've experienced more malice

[d]i[r]e[c]ted at bums in the [p]a[s]t [d]e[c]ade tha[n] a[n]y  
[p]r[e]v[i]ous [d]e[c]ade I [c]an [r]e[c]all, the mali[c]e  
toward bums [s]eems to b[e] in[c]r[e]a[s]ing in this  
[c]ountry [a]t [a]n alm[o]st exp[o]nential [r]ate.

15—553:720 .768

They [v]iew it as a [s]e[v]ere aff[r]ont to [th]eir [l]i[b]erty  
[th]at a [b]um—who [s]l[ee]p[s] in a[l]l[ey]s and [r]emains  
[p]ar[k]ed e[ss]entiall[y] at [d]eath's [d]oor [d]ay and  
night—should a[s]k them for [s]p[are] change. Our  
[s]o[c]iet[y] ab[j]ectl[y] fails [p]leop[le], and [p]leop[le]  
[w]ith a[l]leged moral [s]tanding [w]ithin our [s]o[c]iet[y]  
can hardl[y] [b]e [b]othered to [e]ven [w]itne[ss] a  
[b]um, to gaze at a [b]um [f]or a [b]r[ief] pe[r]iod of  
time, if they're [f]or[c]ed to [e]ven [m]i[n]i[m]al[l]y  
i[n]te[r]a[c]t with a [b]um they [v]iew it [a]s a [s]ort of  
[s]a[c]r[i]l[e]ge. [V]iewing a [p]e[r]s[on] [s]ans a [d]omi[c]ile  
is [c]on[s]id[er]ed an aff[r]ont to good [t]a[s]te. [B]ut who  
wouldn't [t]os[s] a [c]ou[p]le ex[t]ra [b]a[ck] if they [n]o  
longer [h]ad a [h]o[m]e? There's [n]o doubt that [t]o  
[s]ome ex[t]ent we—all of u[s]—have failed th[e]se  
[p]leop[le] in [s]ome way that's [p]ro[b]a[b]l[y]  
mate[r]i[al]. It's one thing to [b]e [d]ow[n] and  
[ou]t—[b]ut to [b]e on the [s]t[r]eet [d]r[in]k[ing] a  
hal[f]-[f]illed [C]o[c]a-[C]o[l]l[a] [b]ottle [f]i[l]led [w]ith  
i[l]l[i]c[i]t [s]u[b]s[t]an[c]es, a[s]king [s]t[r]angers for  
mon[ey], [c]l[e]arl[y] onl[y] partia[l]l[y] a[w]a[r]e of  
[w]he[r]e you are, that [sh]ould, [f]r[an]k[l]y, be  
[sh]amef[ul] [f]or all of us. Any[o]ne [c]an be[c]o[m]e a  
[c]r[im]i[n]al [a]ddi[c]t. [I]f the h[i]sto[r]y of [c]r[im]i[n]al in  
this [c]ount[r]y has taught u[s] [a]nything it's that

[a]ny[o]ne [c]an be[c][o]me a [c][r]a[ck]head. We're all [c]a[p]a[b]le of [b]e[c]oming [c][r]a[ck]heads, given the a[p]p[r]o[p]r[i]ate [c]ir[c]um[s]tan[c]es. The whites of [A][m]e[r]i[c]a [l]l[a]ughed [a]t the b[l][a][ck]s of [A][m]e[r]i[c]a du[r]ing the [c][r]a[ck] e[r]a, as the U[n]ited States govern[m]ent [p]um[p]ed [c][r]a[ck] into [b]l[a][ck] [n]eigh[b]orhoods, on[l]y to, [d]e[c]a[d]es [l]ater, f[i]nd ent[i]re [l]ower-[c][l]a[s]s white [c]o[m]mu[n]it[ie]s [t]urned in[t]o jun[k]ie[s], [b]a[ck]ed [b]y the U[n]ited [S]tates govern[m]ent, [b]a[ck]ed [b]y the phar[m]a[c]euti[c]al [c]ompanies, who [i]nd[i]s[c]r[i]m[i]nate[l]y to[ss]ed he[r]oin e[qu]iva[l]ents at any [l]ower-[c][l]a[s]s [w]hite [w]ith a [s]p[r]ained an[k]le that [w]ent [t]o their ph[y]s[i]c[i]an. A[n] e[n]t[ire] ge[n]e[r]ation of white junkies e[m]erged s[ee][m]ing[l]y ovrn[i]gh[t], the [l]aughter of wh[i]tles [c][a][ck][l]ing at [c][r]a[ck] [c]o[c]aine un[d]oubted[l]y [r]esoun[d]i[n]g i[n] the [b]a[ck]g[r]ound. Yet just as the [b]l[a][ck] [p]o[p]u[l]ation of Ame[r]i[c]a e[ss]ential[l]y had no choi[c]e [b]ut to [b]e[c]ome [b]l[a][ck] [c][r]a[ck]heads, the white [p]o[p]u[l]ation of A[m]eri[c]a has si[m]i[l]ar[l]y invo[l]un[t]ari[l]y [t]ran[s]f[orm]ed in[t]o white jun[k]ies. [Ph]arma[c]euti[c]al [c]om[p]an[ie]s have a[t]tained [m]ul[t]i-billion dol[lar] [m]ar[k]et [c]a[p]s al[m]o[s]t ex[c]lusive[l]y by [t]urning [p]oor [w]h[i]tes in[t]o [w]h[i]te jun[k]ies. Yet no [o]ne [w]ants to [d]eal [w]ith [w]h[i]te jun[k]ies [w]h[i]le they're [d]rin[k]ing [w]i[n]e [a]nd h[a]ving [a]p[p]e[t]izers. The [s]e[r]ve[r]s and the [c]u[s]tome[r]s [c]onve[r]s[e] about what [s]te[p]s the [c]ity should [t]a[k]e [t]o [c]oun[t]e[r][a]c[t] the white jun[k]ies and the b[l][a][ck]

[c][r][a][ck]heads who invade the [l][i]nes of s[i]ght of [p]eo[p]le who've [d][r]iven tens of miles to [s][t]u[ff] their [f]a[c]es with [c]a[l]a[m]a[r]i and [m]ozza[r]e[l]a [s][t]i[ck]s and ja[l]a[p]eno [p]o[pp]ers, to [d][r]ink [c][r]aft beers and [s]u[ck] [d]own wine [s][p]r[it]zers. Th[e]se [p]eo[p]le just [c]an't get enou[gh] t[r][a]ns [f][a]t, and they hate [b]ums. Th[e]se [p]eo[p]le [s][p]end hours a day exam[i]n[i]ng the [i]nt[r]i[c]a[c]ies of [c][r]aft [b]eer [b]ut [c]om[p][l][i]te[l]y [l]a[ck] the teme[r]it[y] to [e]ven [s][p]ea[k] with a [b]um.

16—516:676 .763

It never occurs to any of th[e]se [p]eo[p]le [th]at [th]eir own [l]atent ma[l]i[c]ie [i]s [d]i[r]ectl[y] [r]es[pon]sible [f]or the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [s]t[a]te of their [f]el[l]ow [c]i[t]i[z]ens, [th]at [th]eir [c]om[p][l][i]c[i]t[y], their myo[p]i[c] and en[d]u[r]ing i[d]io[c]y has [d]ire[c]t[l]y [r]esulted in a [s]tate that's shame[l]e[ss][l]y [p]ro[d]u[ce]d white jun[k]ies [a]nd b[l]a[ck] [c][r][a][ck]heads at a[l]arming [r]ates. It's a shame [th]at [th]e ci[ty] [i]sn't [d]oing more, th[e]se [p]eo[p]le [s][ay] without a [t]r[a]c[e] of i[r]ony, and [th]en [th]ey [d]i[s]c[u]ss the [t]ange[r]ine a[f]ter[t]a[s]te in an over[p]r[i]c[ed] [c][r]aft [b]eer. Do you [t]aste [t]ange[r]ine at all?—No, I was getting [a] [b]it of [a] [B]artlett [p]ear a[f]ter[t]a[s]te! The [p]eo[p]le who [d]rink [c]raft [b]eer, it [s]ee[m]s to [m]e, [d]e[s]p[ite] their a[d]van[t]ageou[s] and [c]al[cu]l[ate]d [p]oses of [l]ibe[r]a[l]ism, are the [m]os[t] una[p]o[lo]geti[c]a[l]ly [c]a[p]ita[l]i[s]t [c][r]i[m]i[n]als we have [i]n th[i]s [c]ount[r]y. I've never heard a [c]ra[ft] [b]eer enthusia[s]t a[p]o[lo]gize [f]or the idio[c]y of his [c]al[cu]l[ate]

[l]i[b]eral [p]oses. The [c][r]aft [b]eer d[r]in[k]ers instead  
 m[ai]nt[ai]n a t[r]ans[p]a[r]ent [p]ose of [b]enign  
 [l]i[b]e[r]a[l]ism, y[e]t [s][p]e[n]d all of their [t]i[m]e  
 [t][r]y[ing] [t]o de[t]e[c]t the [s][l]ighte[s]t [t][r]a[c]e of  
 Bart[1]ett [p]ear [i]n [a] [C]o[c]onut [I]ndi[a] [P][a]lle  
 [A]le—as o[pp]osed [t]o [e]ve[n] a[t]tem[p]ting to [h]el[p]  
 any of their fellow [h]uman b[e]i[n]gs. Th[e]se [p][eo]p[le]  
 who su[pp]ort [c][r]aft [b]eer ch[oo]se [t]o [b]uy [b]r[an]ds  
 that a[l]l[e]g[e]d[l]y [d]o[n]ate to Good [C]auses, they  
 [p]ro[s]t to [s]o[c]ial [p]l[at]forms to make [p]eop[le] they  
 d[o]n't k[n]ow aware [th]at [th]ey [b]uy The [S]o[c]ially  
 Re[s]p[on]s[i]b[le] [B]eers, k[n]o[w]ing [e]ntire[l]y well  
 that all of these d[o]nations are e[ss]entiall[y]  
 cri[m]i[n]al, that [n]o[n]e of thi[s] [m]o[n]ey ever  
 [r]ea[che]s the [p]eop[le] it [n]eeds to [r]ea[ch, whi]ch  
 [i]s [r]eal[ly] a[p]pa[r]ent, [b]e[ca]use when they [s]it  
 [d]own to or[d]er [s]aid [c][r]aft [b]eer all they [s]ee are  
 [b]ums. [O]nly a [c][r]aft beer d[r]in[k]er would  
 [c]o[n]c[l]ude the [m]o[st] e[ff]icient way of [h]el[p]ing  
 [h]is [f]e[l]low [h]u[m]an [b]e[ing] is [b]uying [m]ore  
 [c][r]aft [b]eer. The [r]ea[l]ity is [n]o[n]e of us k[n]ow  
 [w]hat [t]o d[o] [w]ith [b]ums, [w]e're [p]rivy to [n]o  
 [b]um [s]o[l]utions, [n]o [s]o[l]ution to our [b]um  
 [p]ro[b]l[em]s, yet we k[n]ow all of these [b]ums are  
 e[ss]entiall[y] Ang[lo]. The white jun[k]ie and [b]l[a]ck  
 [c]r[a]ckhead are [b]o[th] at [b]ottom entire[l]y Ang[l]o.  
 We k[n]ow how to [p]ro[d]uce [b]ums, [b]ut we  
 have [n]o i[d]ea [w]hat [t]o d[o] [w]ith these [b]ums  
 o[n]ce [w]e've [p]ro[d]uced them. We [p]ro[d]uce  
 [b]ums shame[l]e[ss]l[y], and then even more  
 [sh]ame[l]e[ss]l[y] w[e] [sh]u[n] th[e]se [b]ums from

a[cc]epta[b]le [s]o[c]iety. Yo[u]'ll never meet [a] [p]er[s]on at [a] [r]estau[r]ant d[ow]nt[ow]n who [u]sed to [b]e a [b]um. It's im[p]o[ss]i[b]le for [b]ums to [r]e-en[t]er in[t]o [s]o[c]iety, there's a [w]all, an in[s]urmounta[b]le [w]all that's [c]on[s]t[r]u[c]ted a[r]ound eve[r][y] [b][u]m [i]n th[i]s [c][ou]nt[r][y], betw[ee]n the st[r][ee]ts of a [d][ow]nt[ow]n and the [r]estau[r]ants of a [d][ow]nt[ow]n. A [r]estau[r]ant-[g]oer [c]an [b]e[c]o[m]e a [b][u]m, [b][u]t a [b][u]m will never a[g]ain [b]e[c]o[m]e a [r]estau[r]ant-[g]oer.

17—500:689 .726

The harsh rea[l]ity is [th]at [th]ere's [l]ittle we can [d]o [f]or our [f]e[l]low [c][i]t[i]zens who've reached [s]uch [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [s]t[ate]s more [th]an [s]im[p]l[y] talking to [th]em, and th[i]s [i]s [s]omething anyone who's [b]een in a [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [s]t[ate] knows to [b]e [p]ro[f]oundl[y] [t]rue. The e[n]t[ire] i[n]du[s]t[r]y of [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and w[h]ores, in [f]act, should [b]e [r]e[h]a[b]i[l]it[ate]d [b]a[s]ed on this [p]oint a[l]l[o]ne, because n[o] one in our [s]o[c]iety gives the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [p]er[s]on more [t]ime of [d]ay [th]an [th]e exo[t]ic [d]an[c]er. It's un[d]oubte[d]l[y] true [th]at, [th]i[s] [c]e[n]tur[y], the exoti[c] [d]an[c]ing [c]o[m]m[un]it[y] has [d]one [m]ore for the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [p]er[s]on [c]o[m]m[un]it[y] than the [C]atho[l]ic [ch]ur[ch] [c]o[m]m[un]it[y]. Be[c]ause [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores [i]n[nate]l[y] g[i]ve the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [p]er[s]on the time of [d]ay, any [s]t[r]i[pp]er worth her [s]alt [i]n[s]t[i]n[c]t[i]ve[l]ly kn[ow]s how to [s]p[ea]k to the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [s]ou]l, the

[d]i[l]a[p]i[d]ated [p]er[s]on ju[s]t needs [s]omeone to  
 [l]i[s]ten to a [s]ob [s]tory for a [s]e[c]ond of time, [f]or  
 [s]omeone to [c]are [f]or [a] [f][r]a[c]tio[n] of a[n] iot[a] of  
 their day, to [p]re[t]end [t]o [c]are in a way that's not  
 g[r]oss[l]y [c]on[d]e[s]cen[d]ing in the [c][l][a][ss]i[c]  
 bu[r]eau[c][r][a]ti[c] [m][a]nner. Yet [t]here's [t]hi[s]  
 [m]i[s]guided n[ot]ion [t]hat [t]he [s]t[r]ipper [o]n[l]y  
 [t]al[k]s [t]o [c]u[s]to[m]ers, whe[n] i[n] [f]a[c]t the  
 [s]t[r]ipper [s]p[ea]ks to [i]n[f]i[n]ite[l]y [m]ore  
 [p]otential [c]u[s]to[m]ers th[a]n [a]c[t]ual  
 [c]u[s]to[m]ers—the [s]u[cc]e[s]s[f]ul [s]t[r]ipper, in [f]a[c]t,  
 has no [m]ore than a [s][m]all hand[f]ul of [c]u[s]tomers  
 that [p]ay her [b]ills—and, [b]y [c]ontra[s]t, it's th[e]se  
 [p]otential [c]u[s]to[m]ers who are [i]n[f]i[n]ite[l]y [m]ore  
 [l]i[k]e[l]y to be [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]ated. The a[c]tual  
 [c]u[s]to[m]er is [m]ore [l]i[k]e[l]y to be o[p]u[l]ent and  
 jovial, un[r]e[s]t[r]ained and [d]e[c]a[d]ent, while the  
 [p]otential [c]u[s]to[m]er is [a]ll[m]ost [a]llways entire[l]y  
 [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]ated. G[i]v[ing] th[i]s [p]o[t]ential cu[s]tomer  
 the [t]ime of day is [a]lmo[s]t [a] [r]e[l]i[g[i]ous act on  
 [t]he [p]arts of [t]he [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores. And it's for  
 [p]re[c]i[s]e[l]y thi[s] [r]ea[s]on I have [s]o [m]uch [m]ore  
 [r]e[s]p[ect] for [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores than I [d]o [f]or  
 the [m]e[d]i[an] [c]r[a]ft [b]eer [d]r[in]k[er]. W[e]  
 [b]e[l]i[e]ve [c]r[a]ft [b]eer [d]r[in]k[er]s are [l]au[d]a[b]le  
 mem[b]ers of our [s]o[c]iety, [w]hile [w]e [d]e[n]ig[r]ate  
 [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores, [b]ut I a[c]tual[l]y find  
 [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores to [b]e [l]au[d]a[b]le mem[b]ers  
 of our [s]o[c]iety, whi[le] I [d]e[n]ig[r]ate [c]r[a]ft beer  
 [d]r[in]k[er]s. There's [o]n[l]y [s]o much you [c]an do for  
 a guy who's [b]e[c]o[m]e a [b]u[m] on the [s]t[r]eet, one

[p]arti[cu]l[ar] [b]um a[pp]r[oa]ched me on a [s]e[c]o[n]d [d]a[te] i[n] a[n] a[l]leyw[ay] a[n]d [r]e[f]erred to the [g]irl I [w]as [w]ith as my [w]i[f]e, and I [g]ave him ten [d]o[l]lars, but even that [t]en [d]o[l]lars wasn't [s]in[c]ere, that [t]en [d]o[l]lars was a [d]i[s]ingenuou[s] [t]en [d]o[l]lars, it was obviou[s]l[y] [f]or the be[n]e[f]it of the girl I [w]as [w]ith. You [n]e[e]d to [s]p[ea]k to [p]eo[p]le in [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]a[te]d [s]t[ate]s, [l]arge[l]y [b]e[c]ause it's the onl[y] thing you [c]an [d]o that will, [a]t [b]ottom, h[a]ve a [p]a[l]p[a]b]le effe[c]t.

18-506:657-770

What hap[p]ens to them will [l]arge[l]y [b]e [f]ata[l]i[s]ti[c], it will [b]e a matter of [f]ate [s]tat[i]s[t]i[c]ally [s]p[ea]k[ing], [b]ut it's j[u]st [u]tter [c]rue[l]t[y] [t]o ignore them, [t]o [t]r[ea]t them as [p]eo[p]le who [d]on't [d]eserve the [t]ime of [d]ay, [n]ot eve[n] a[n] iota of your [a]fter[n]oon, to [c]om[p]l[ai]n to your [w]ai[te]r [b]e[c]ause a [w]hite jun[k]ie in your [l]i[n]e of s[i]ght is ruining the [B]artl[e]tt [p]ear after[t]a[ste] of your [t]en do[l]lar I[P][A]. [B]ut th[i]s [i]s what's happened to [s]o many [d]o[wn]t[ow]ns, these [s]ame [d]o[wn]t[ow]ns I [s]till g[o] to, these [d]o[wn]t[ow]ns th[at] h[a]ve [m]y [m]e[m]ories [f]o[l]d[ed] into them, [m]aybe a [d]e[c]a[d]e or [m]ore [f]o[l]d[ed] into [th]em—[th]ey've [b]e[c]ome i[n]un[d]ated with [c]r[af]t [b]eer [d]r[in]k[er]s. It's [n]ot [th]e [b]ums who o[ff]end me, [n]o, it's the [c]r[af]t [b]eer [d]r[in]k[er]s who o[ff]end me. It's the [p]eo[p]le who [b]e[l]i[e]ve twelve [d]o[l]lars for a [b]eer is an a[pp]r[oa]p[ri]ate [p]r[ic]e to [p]ay for a [b]eve[r]age. It's the [p]eo[p]le who thin[k]

[d]i[s][c]u[ss]ing the afterta[s]te of ho[p]s is an  
 a[pp][r]o[p][r]iate [c]onver[s]ation to have in [p]ub[li]c.  
 It's the [p]eo[p]le who be[l]ie[ve] [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and  
 whores are [p]eo[p]le we should [l]ook down u[p]on a  
 [p]r[i]o[r][i]—it's the [p]eo[p]le who [m]ai[n][t][ai]n all the  
 [s]o[ci]a[l]ly a[pp][r]o[p][r]iate o[p]inions but  
 [d]i[s]p[lay] all of the [m]o[s]t [c]o[ward]l[y]  
 [t]e[n][d]e[n]c[ies]. Our [d]ow[n]t[ow]ns are [b]eing  
 [r]uined [b]y th[e]se [p]eo[p]le, w[h]o [h]ave the  
 [c]o[r]re[ct] o[p]i[n]i[ons] on eve[r]y issue—at [b]o[t]tom all  
 th[e]se [p]eo[p]le [c]are a[b]out is m[ai]n[ai]ning the  
 [c]o[r]re[ct] o[p]i[n]i[on] on any issue [a]t h[a]nd. Our  
 d[ow]n[t]o[w]ns [w]ere [o]n[c]e [g]r[ea]t [p]l[a]c[es] to  
 [g]r[ab] a [s]l[i]c[e] of [p]izza—f[i]lled w[i]th bums and  
 [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores—[b]ut [n]ow our  
 [d]ow[n]t[ow]ns are i[n]u[n]d[ate]d with [c]r[af]t [b]eer  
 [d]r[i]n[k]ers and [f]r[i]ed [c]a[l]l[a]m[a]r[i] and  
 [m]ozza[r]e[ll]a [s]t[i]c[k]s and j[a]l[a]p[eno] [p]o[pp]ers  
 and [p]eo[p]le who have [s]o[ci]a[l]ly a[cc]e[p]table  
 o[p]i[n]i[ons] on [e]ve[r]ything. [I]t's d[i]s[gu]s[t]ing  
 [r]ea[l]ly. [B]u[t [o]f course a[l]l [r]a[t]iona[l]i[s]m [i]s  
 [l]ittle more than a [b]u[r]d[i]st [p]r[o]p[ag]a[n]d[a]. It's  
 o[n]l[y] via [r]a[t]iona[l]i[s]m, [a]n [e]ss[entia]l[y] Angl[o]  
 co[n]c[e]pt, that we find our[s]elves [w]i[th]i[n] a [p]r[i]sm  
 [w]here eve[r]y[th]i[n]g [i]s Angl[o], [w]h[e]re [e]ve[r]y  
 [w]hite ju[n]k[i]e and b[l]a[ck] [c]r[a]c[k]head are  
 [e]q[ua]l[y] Angl[o]. It's [o]n[l]y [w]he[n] [w]e atte[n]d  
 the [f]u[n]e[r]als of c[l]o[s]e [f]r[i]e[n]ds who die ab[s]u[r]dly  
 young that w[e] [r]eal[i]ze [th]i[s], [th]a[t] all  
 [r]a[t]iona[l]i[s]m [i]s [l]ittle more than [l]u[r]id  
 absu[r]d[i]st [p]r[o]p[ag]a[n]d[a]. O[n]l[y] [p]eo[p]le who

attend these [f]une[r]als under[s]tand thi[s] [f][r]om  
 ex[p]e[r]ien[ce]. We [r]ealize not ju[s]t the a[b][s]urdit[y] of  
 th[e]se [c]onver[s]ations [b]ut the a[b][s]urdit[y] of  
 our[s]elves—A[n]d eve[n] i[n] my [c]ase, it was on[l]y a  
 [f]ew years [a][g]o when [a] [g]ood [f]riend of m[i]ne  
 [f][i]nal[l]y, a[f]ter years of [s][ee]ming[l]y  
 [c][ea][s]e[l]e[ss] [s]u[ff]e[r]ing, g[a]ve in to [l]a[te] [s]t[age]  
 b[r][ai]n [c]an[ce]r. The entire ord[er] was [c][r]i[m]i[n]al,  
 and to [b]e [c]l[e]ar I was p[r]o[b]a[b]lly one of the  
 [m]ost [c][r]i[m]i[n]al.

19—434:601 .722

[M]y social [c][r]i[m]i[n]a[l]i[ty] h[a]s [p]erh[a]p[s]  
 [n]ever been [m]ore a[c]ute than [d]u[r]ing this [p]e[r]iod  
 of [m]y [l]i[f]e. [M]y [f]riend was [d]iag[n]o[s]ed with  
 [l]a[te] [s]t[age] b[r][ai]n [c]an[ce]r and moved [b]a[ck] in  
 [w]i[th] h[i]s pa[r]ents [w]here, [n]ot [l]ong a[f]ter, h[e]  
 [s]u[ff]ered a [s]eizure wh[i]le [d]r[i]ving, [t]otal[ed] his  
 car, and was [f]rom then on [f]orbi[dd]en [t]o [d]rive.  
 [S]o n[atu]rall[y], [b]eing a good [f]riend, [b]eing  
 [a]ctua[l]ly a [b]etter [f]riend to him than even a [f]ew  
 of the [f]riends [h]e'd [h]ad [f]or [d]e[ca]d[es], a [b]etter  
 [f]riend at lea[s]t in [t]erms of [t]ime [s]p[ent], I [t]ook it  
 u[p]on [m]y[s]el[f] to [d]r[i]ve [t]o his [p]a[r]ents' house  
 [m]ul[t]i[p]le [t]imes [p]er [w]eek, after [w]ork, [w]here  
 I alrea[d]y had a [d]e[ce]nt [c]om[m]ute, [w]hich [w]asn't  
 a[n] i[n]si[gn]i[f]i[ca]nt [d]rive, to his [p]a[r]ents'  
 [h]ouse, to [h]ang out w[i]th h[i]m, to [p]i[ck] h[i]m u[p]  
 and then d[ri]ve him to other [p]laces [w]here [w]e'd  
 hang [ou]t [f]or a [r]ea[sonable] am[ou]nt of time, [w]here  
 a[f]ter[w]ard [I]'d [d]r[i]ve [h]im back to [h]is pa[r]ents'

[h]ou[s]e. Th[i]s was a [d][i][ff][i][c]ult or[d]eal [f]or my [f][r]iend [a]s you [c]an im[a]gine, and there were va[r]ious [s]e[r]ies [o]f [u]p[s] and [d]owns—had I [b]een [b]orn into [w]ealth I'd have [d]one [w]hatever he a[s]ked, [b]ut [b]ein[g] a wor[k]in[g] [s]tiff there was [o]nly [s][o] much that I [c]ould do, there [w]ere [t]imes he [w]an[t]ed [t]o get an ice [c][r]eam [c]one and I, unfortunate[l]y, had to [d]o [l]aun[d]r[y]. A young man with [l]a[te] [s]t[a]ge [b]r[ai]n [c]an[cer, e]ss[ential]l[y] a [d]eath [s]enten[ce], [w]anted to [b]uy [m]e a [m]int [ch]o[co]l[ate] [ch]i[p] [w]affle [c]one, [b]ut I had to [p]ol[i]te[l]y [d]e[c]l[i]ne [b]e[c]ause [I] nee[d]ed to wash my [b]oxer [b]r[ie]f[s]. I[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e his girl[f]r[i]end, who was [y]ounger [th]an [th]e two of u[s] [y]et [s]till [y]oung, [d]u[m]ped him not long a[f]ter, and [f]rom this we [c]on[c]l[u]ded that ap[p]a[r]entl[y] [w]aiting [f]or him [t]o [d]ie [w]as [t]oo much of a bu[r]den [f]or her, wh[i]ch [i]n [r]et[r]o[s]p[ect] I [s]u[pp]ose is [f]air [e]n[ou]gh, [n]ot [e]ve[r]y[o]ne has the [p]a[ti]en[ce] to [w]ait [f]or [s]o[m]e[o]ne to die, a [t]erm[i]n[al] [i]ll[n]e[ss], for [s]ome [p]eop[le], [c]an just [b]e a [b]it [t]oo in[c]onvenient, a [t]ad [t]oo [c]um[b]er[s]ome. At the [t]ime, I d[i]dn't th[i]nk [m]uch of it, [m]y [f]riend was [f]airl[y] [t]orn [u]p [a]b[ou]t it, and who could [b]lame him?—[b]ut, again, with the ex[c]e[p]tion of [c]on[s]o[l]ing a [p]er[s]on in a mo[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] gene[r]ic [w]ay there's not much [w]e [c]an [r]ea[l]i[s]ti[c]a[l]l[y] do. We [c]an [t]ell our [d]ying [f]r[i]end that his ex-girl[f]r[i]end is a [t]e[r]ri[b]le person, a [t]aw[d]r[y] whore, that he [d]eserves [b]etter, [b]ut the [r]ea[l]i[t]y [i]s there's [n]earl[y] [n]othing [y]ou [c]an tell a [y]oung per[s]on who, in all [l]i[k]e[l]ihood, will [d]ie

a [s][l]ow [d]eath, there's [n]ext to [n]othing you [c]an tell [h]im that will [c]om[f]ort [h]im when [h]is att[r]a[c]tive girl[f][r]iend [r]uth[l]ess[l]y [l][e]aves him.

20-483:709 .681

It's [s] g[r][ea]t to [s][ay], it's an [a]ppealing i[d]e[a] to [th]in[k] [th]at we [c]an [a]r[r]i[ve] at the [d]oor of a [d]y[ing] young man and [a]lter his li[f]e [f]or the [b]etter, [b]ut [i]t's [s][i]gn[i]f[i]cantly [m]ore d[i]ff[i]cult [th]an you [m]ight [th]in[k], in [p]ra[c]ti[c]e it's [m]ore [l]e[ss] an [i][m]p[ro]s[s]i[b]i[l]i[t]y. You [i][m]a[gine] [a]t [th]e time [th]at you're [s]aying [s]omething un[i]que[l]y en[l]ighte[n]i[n]g whe[n] i[n] rea[l]it[y] you're ju[s]t mind[l]e[ss][l]y [s]pewing ge[n]e[r]i[c] [c]on[d]o[le]n[c]e[s]-ge[n]e[r]i[c] [c]on[d]o[le]n[c]e[s] that a[r]e [h]a[r]d[l]y of any [h]e[l]p at a[l]l. [H]aving [s]aid that, [d]u[r]ing my [d]ay-to-[d]ay [r]outi[n]e I [th]ought almo[s]t no[th]i[n]g of his ex-girl[f][r]iend, I le[f]t it [a]t [th]a[t], I [th]ought she was t[a]king the easy w[ay] out, there's [n]o [d]o[ub]t a[b]o[ut] that, [b]ut I [d]i[d]n't [n]e[c]e[s]sari[l]y cu[r][s]e her [n]ame in m[y] pe[r]s[on]al t[i]me, I [f]elt [l]ike it was her decision, and ulti[m]ate[l]y i[f] she [f]elt as though my [f]riend wasn't the pe[r]s[on] she [w]anted to [w]ait [f]or, in a te[r]m[in]al [s]e[n]s[e], then I re[s]p[ec]t[ed] th[at] [a]s her [d]e[c]ision, [th]at [th]ere was little any of u[s] [c]ould [d]o [b]es[i]d[es] re[s]p[ec]t her [d]e[c]ision and [s]p[ea]k [p]oorly of her [b]eh[i]nd her [b]a[ck]. I d[i]dn't th[i]n[k] m[u]ch [o]f it at all a[c]tua[l]l[y] un[t]il the [f]o[l]lo[w]ing [w]eek[en]d [w]hen I [w]as at [a] bar [a]r[ound] [c]l[os]ing [t]ime with a [c]l[os]e [f]r[i]end, and I [f]elt a tap on my sh[ou]l[d]er,

[o]n[ly] to [f][i][n]d this ex-girl[f][r]iend of my [d][y]i[n]g [f][r]iend. [Sh]e said [sh]e ju[s]t wanted to [s]ay hi, and [s]ub[s]e[qu]ent[ly] I [s]aid h[e][ll]o, y[e]t [o]n[ly] a few [m][o][m]ents [l]ater I [r]e[c]eived yet a [s]e[c]ond tap on the shoulder. Now this ex-girl[f][r]iend's [f][r]iend, who a[cc]om[p]anied her to the l[o]c[al]e, was [s]tanding in [f][r]ont of my [p]er[s]on, and she [p][r]o[c]eeded to in[f]orm me that I was [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote] “k[ind] of [r]ude” to m[y] d[y]ing [f][r]iend's ex-girl[f][r]iend, that I [c]ould [h]ave said [h]e[ll]o just a [l]ittle more [c]ordia[ly], this [f][r]iend of m[y] d[y]ing [f][r]iend's ex-girl[f][r]iend [a]ctua[ly] h[a]d the au[d]a[c]lit[y] to [s]t[a]nd there and with in a [s]tate of [s]in[cerity] [s]p[ea]k th[ese] exa[c]t words to m[e], to [p]ro[c]laim that it was a[c]tua[ly] m[e], [th]at I [w]as [th]e [p]erson w[h]o [w]as [c]ommitting the faux [p]as [h]ere, that I [w]as the [o]ne just a [l]ittle out of [l]i[n]e, that my [l]e[ss] than enthusia[s]tic [h]e[ll]o was the [t]rue a[f]f[r]ont to good [t]aste [h]ere. Given the [c]ir[c]um[s]t[an]c[es], [m]y [t]e[n]de[n]c[y] [t]oward the i[n]t[em]pe[r]ate [t]oo[k] hold of me, and I in[f]ormed them [b]oth of [m]y [f]eelings on the [m]a[tt]e[r], that I [p]erha[p]s in[f]ormed them of [m]y [f]eelings i[n] a[n] acer[b]ic [m]a[n]ner, in [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t a[c]erbi[c] [m]a[n]ner I [c]ould i[m]a[g]ine [a]t the time. I let them k[n]ow in [n]o unce[r]tain [t]e[r]ms who I [b]e[l]ieved was [c]o[m]mitting the [t]rue f[aux] p[as] at this [b]a[r], [l]ate [i]n the [e]vening, [w]here [w]e [w]ere all [i]n[e]b[r]i[ate]d. [I]n a[n]y [c]a[s]e, ju[s]t [m][o][m]ents later I [r]e[c]eived an a[dd]i[t]io[n]al ta[p] on my sh[ou]l[d]er. The [b]oun[c]er of the [b]ar [s]tood in [f][r]ont of me, [r][a]ther

[a][p]athetic, and in[f]ormed [m][e] th[at] I n[ee]ded to  
 [l]ea[ve] the [p]re[m]ises be[c]ause “the girl [o]ver there,”  
 [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote], was [c][l]aiming I ph[y]s[i][c]a[l]ly  
 [h]it [h]er.

21—596:752 .793

A girl who j[u][s]t [d][u]mped m[y] [d][y]ing [f]riend [s]aid  
 [h]e[l]lo to me then [h]ad [h]er [f]riend ver[b]a[l]l[y]  
 [a][s]sault m[e] for [a][l]leged[l]y not [b]eing  
 [e]nthusias[t]ic [e]nou[gh] when I [r]eturned [h]er  
 [r]ep[r]ehen[s]i[b]le [h]e[l]lo, then I [s]u[b][s]e[qu]ent[l]y  
 ver[b]a[l]l[y] a[ss]aulted [b]oth [h]er and [h]er [f][r]iend  
 [f]or [c]on[c]erning [th]em[s]elves with en[th]usia[s]ti[c]  
 g[r]eet[i]ngs as o[pp]osed to [p]leop[le] [d]y[i]ng arduou[s]  
 [d]eaths, then sh[e] [f]al[s]e[l]y a[cc]used m[e] of  
 [ph]y[s]i[c]a[l]l[y] [h]itting [h]er in a [p]ub[l]i[c] [p]l[a]ce.  
 [L][u][c]ki[l]y en[ou]gh [f]or m[e], [th]i[s] notion [th]at a  
 [p]er[s]on [p]unch[ed] a [f]emale in a venue [d]en[s]e[l]y  
 [p]a[ck]ed [a]t th[at] [c]a[p]a[c]ity, yet m[a]naged to  
 [l]a[nd] a [p]unch [s]o [c][l]an[d]e[s]tine[l]y [n]o one in  
 the venue [n]o[ti]c[ed], that [n]o eye [w]i[t]n[ess]es  
 [e]me[r]ged [w]as ab[s]u[r]d to all [p]arties in[v]olved, yet I  
 [s]till [v]igorou[s]l[y] [p]l[e]ad my [c]a[s]e, be[c]ause I’d  
 ne[v]er [p]l[e]ad guilty whe[n] i[n]no[c]ent, [s]o I  
 vigo[r]ou[s]l[y] [d]e[f]en[d]ed my [n]ame against what I  
 [c]o[r]re[ct]l[y] in[t]er[p]r[et]ed [t]o be a [t]otal  
 [d]e[f]a[m]ation of [m]y [c]hara[c]ter, [a]gainst thi[s]  
 t[ra]n[s]te[n]s [c]hara[c]ter a[ss]a[ss]in[a]tion, a  
 [l]eg[i]t[i]mate a[ss]a[ss]in[a]tion [a][tt]empt,  
 all—un[b]e[l]i[e]va[b]le as it may [s]eem—as a  
 [s]u[b]s[e]q[ue]nt [r]e[s]ult of me [r]efu[s]ing to [r]eturn

a[n] e[n]thu[s]ia[s]ti[c] he[l]lo. A[n] une[n]thusiastic he[l]lo  
near[l]y [t]urned m[e] in[t]o an [s]eriou[s]l[y] a[l]l[e]g[e]d  
[f]e[l]lo, and as I'm def[en]ding my[s]el[f]  
[v]igo[r]ou[s]l[y], [p]erha[p]s [e]ven [e]x[c]e[ss]ive[l]y  
[v]igo[r]ou[s]l[y], the [e]x-gir[l]f[r]ie[n]d [a]m[b]les over  
with her [d]ege[n]e[r]ate f[r]ie[n]d [a]nd [a]dmits that her  
c[l]ai[m] was entire[l]y [f]a[b]r[ic]a[te]d, th[at] it h[ad]  
[a]b[s]o[l]ute[l]y no [b]a[s]is in [r]ea[l]it[y]—a[n]d the[n]  
the [e]x-gir[l]f[r]ie[n]d a[n]d her [d]ege[n]e[r]ate  
f[r]ie[n]d, the t[r]ue [N]azi of [e]nthusiastic [g]r[ee]tings,  
[d]r[i]ve [r]igh[t] off, ad[m]itting in [s]o [m]any [w]ords  
[th]at [th]ey [w]ere in the busine[ss] of a[ss]a[ss]inating  
the [c]ha[r]a[c]ter of anyone who [f]ai[le]d to [s]ay he[l]lo  
to [th]em en[th]usia[s]ti[c]a[l]ly, [th]at [th]ey e[q]ua[te]d a  
[l]e[ss] [th]an en[th]usia[s]ti[c] g[r]e[et]ing w[i]th  
[ph]y[s]ic[al] vio[l]e[n]ce. The next morning I  
[r]e[c]e[iv]ed a [c]a[l]l [f]r[om] my [s]i[ck] [f]r[i]end, [a]nd  
[a]s he add[r]e[ss]ed the [s]ituation [f]rom the  
p[r]e[v]iou[s] night, it [b]e[c]ame [r]e[l]ative[l]y [c]lear  
to m[e] that h[e] was, [f]or [l]a[ck] of a [b]etter [ph]r[ase],  
t[a]k[ing] her [s]ide. In [m]y [m]i[n]d at the t[i]me thi[s]  
def[en]se of thi[s] per[s]on was [s]y[n]o[n]y[m]ou[s]  
w[i]th ta[k]ing her [s]ide, which, [a]s you [c]an  
i[m]a[g]ine, [l]e[d] to a [b]it of a [f]a[l]ling out [b]etween  
u[s], as [h]e [f]ound [h]im[s]e[l]f a[t]t[em]p[t]ing [t]o  
[w]or[k] [th]ings out [w]i[th] a girl w[h]o now [h]at[ed]  
[e]ve[r]y a[s]pe[c]t of my [b]eing and [v]i[ce] [v]er[s]a. It  
was [a] [b]it [o]f an im[b]r[og]li[o], [b]e[c]ause n[ow] I  
[f]ou[nd] my[s]el[f] e[ss]entially a [b]an[d]onin[g] m[y]  
[d]y[in]g [f]r[i]end as well. I [g]ave his  
[e]x-gir[l]f[r]ie[n]d [a]n [e]x[te]nd[ed] ha[r]angue

[r]e[g]ar[d]ing her [r]uth[l]ess aban[d]on[m]ent of [m]y  
 [d]y[ing] [f]r[i]end, then just [d]ay[s] [l]a[ter] I [f]ound  
 my[s]el[f] [a]l[s]o [r]uth[l]e[ss]l[y] [a]ban[d]on[i]ng h[i]m.  
 Eventual[l]y w[e]’d [s][ee] [ea]ch other again, [m]y  
 d[y]ing frie[n]d a[n]d [I], we’d [s][p]end [l]i[m]i[t]ed  
 [t]ime [t]ogether here and there, of [c]our[s]e, our  
 [f]riendshi[p] [d]i[d]n’t [c]ea[s]e [c]om[p]l[e]te[l]y, and  
 it was [f]ine, there was no [b]itter[n]e[ss] [p]er [s]e, [b]ut  
 our [f]r[i]endshi[p], [f]r[ank]l[y], was obviou[s]l[y]  
 [n]ever the [s]ame.

22–522:679 .769

His ex-[g]ir[l]f[ri]e[n]d [a]b[an]doned him, then she [f]elt as  
 th[ough] I [g]ave her an [i]n[s]i[n]c[er]e hel[l]o at [a]  
 [b]ar, then I [d]i[s]c[l]o[s]ed my t[r]ue thoughts on her  
 [c]ha[r]a[c]ter, her [d]e[s]pi[c]a[b]le [c]hara[c]ter, her  
 [r]uth[l]e[ss] a[b]an[d]on[m]ent of [m]y [d]y[ing] f[r]iend,  
 then ju[s]t [d]ay[s] [l]a[ter] I [a]l[s]o [r]uth[l]e[ss]l[y]  
 [a]ban[d]oned m[y] [d]y[ing] f[r]iend. It [t]oo[k] [q]u[i]te a  
 [l]ong [t]i[m]e for him to [d]ie—he [l]o[s]t [h]is [s]ight,  
 and [h]e was almo[s]t ent[i]rely b[l]i[n]d, [h]e was  
 admi[t]ted to [h]o[s]pitals i[n] a [t]er[m]i[n]a[l]ly  
 i[n]t[er]m[i]tte[n]t fashion, v[i]s[i]t[i]ng w[i]th  
 h[igh]-[p]r[i]c[ed] [s]p[ec]ia[l]i[s]ts that brought  
 [n]o[th]ing [o]th[er] [th]an [u]tte[r] [f]i[n]a[n]cial [r]uin  
 to his [f]a[m]ily, and [e]ventual[l]y [h]e was  
 [e]ncl[os]ed i[n] his bed[r]oom f[r]om [s]u[n]set [t]o  
 [d]awn [t]o [d]inner, in [h]is pa[r]e[n]t[s]’ [h]ouse, an only  
 child, a[b]an[d]oned [b]y [b]oth his [g]ir[l]f[ri]end and his  
 [g]ood [f]r[i]end. [F]our years [l]a[ter] I [h]eard that [h]e’d  
 entered [h]o[s]p[ic]e, that [h]e [l]i[ai]d on [h]is [d]eathbed,

and I arr[an]ged to p[ay] h[im] a v[is]it the [su]b[s]e[qu]ent [m]orning with [m]y [c]o[un]sin, [bu]t he [d]ied over[n]ight. [D]ay[s] l[ate]r, his [m]other [n]oted t[hat] a [m]u[t]ual [f]r[i]end that she'd [p]r[e]fer h[er] [i]m[p]en[d]ing [f]uneral to be a [s]m[all] [c]er[em]ony, that she [d]idn't want it to [be] a [b]ig [c]rowd, a[n]d I [c]o[n]sidered not atten[d]ing [b]efore [b]eing ultimately [c]o[n]vinced [b]y a [m]utual [f]r[i]end [t]o [a]ttend. [A]gai[n]st [m]y better judg[m]ent I [a]ttend[ed] the [f]uneral, yet the [s]econd I [s]aw my [d]ead [f]r[i]end's made-up [c]or[p]se in the [c]offin, the [s]econd I [s]tep[ped] in [s]ight of the [c]offin, a bout of i[n]te[n]se [r]eg[r]et [c]ame over me, and I [r]ealiz[ed] I had no [b]usines[s] [a]ttend[ing] thi[s] [f]uneral, that I [a]bandoned m[y] [d]y[ing] [f]r[i]end, a[n]d the[n] I h[ad] the au[d]acit[y] to [a]ttend his [f]uneral, [e]ss[e]ntia[lly] agai[n]st his own [m]other's [w]ish[es]—not exp[er]im[en]t[al] again[s]t his [m]other's [w]ish[es] but i[m]p[er]im[en]t[al] again[s]t his [m]other's [w]ish[es]. There was [n]o [d]oubt his [m]other [m]o[s]t l[i]kely would have [p]r[e]ferred I [n]ot attend. There was [n]o [d]oubt, if [p]r[e]ssed, she would have [a]t l[e]ast bee[n] [a]gnostic [v]is-a-v[is] my [a]ttend[an]ce, wh[ic]h, [c]o[n]sidering her [p]r[e]fere[n]ce was a [s]m[all] [c]er[em]ony, is [t]antamount to [p]r[e]ferring my ab[s]en[ce]. V[i]a the [p]r[o]c[ess]ion l[i]ne, it was [c]lear his [p]a[r]ents [c]learl[y] [ei]ther [d]idn't reme[m]ber [me] or [de]liberate[lly] forgot [me]. In my [s]ea[t] I [c]eas[e]l[e]ssl[y] [s]pecu[lat]ed whether they [d]idn't reme[m]ber me or [de]liberate[lly] for[g]ot [me].

Me—the [g]uy who used to always [g]o [p]i[c]k u[p] their son, what a [g]reat [g]uy, I u[s]ed to go [p]i[c]k their [s]on u[p] more [f][r]e[qu]entl[y] than [e]ven his childhood [f][r]iends, [I] was such a n[i]ce g[uy], yet eventually of [c]our[s]e I [s]to[p]ped [c]o[m]ing [a]round, I [a][b]an[d]oned their [d]ying son [l]i[k]e we [a]ll eventua[l]l[y] [a][b]an[d]on the ter[m]ina[l]l[y] ill, and [s]u[b][s]e[qu]entl[y] his pa[r]ents [f]orgot a[b]out m[e], and [r]ight[f]u[l]l[y] [s]o. It would h[a]ve [a][c]tua[l]l[y] [b]een di[s]ta[s]tef[ul] [f]or the[m] to [r]e[m]e[m]b[er] m[e].

23-549:733-749

The [m]o[m]ent I w[i]tn[ess]ed, [i]n [m][y] [d]ead [f]riend's [f]ather's e[y]es, that h[e] [ei]ther [i]n[t]e[n]t[i]ona[l]l[y] or un[i]n[t]e[n]t[i]ona[l]l[y] [f]or[g]ot m[y] [i]d[e]n[t]it[y] I k[n]ew a[t]te[n]d[ing] thi[s] [f]u[n]e[r]al was a [g]r[ave] mi[s]t[a]ke. I s[at] [b]a[ck] down in my [b]l[a]ck [f]old out chair and [s]aid to my[s]el[f] Th[i]s [i]s the [l]a[s]t [f]u[n]e[r]al I'll attend, because [a]ttending a [f]u[n]e[r]al is [a]lw[ay]s [a] [m]i[s]t[a]ke, it's the [m]o[s]t [i]n[s]p[i]d [m]i[s]t[a]ke we [c]an [m]a[k]e. [A]tten[d]ing a we[dd]ing [m]ay [b]e [a] [f]aux pas [b]ut [a]tten[d]ing a [f]u[n]e[r]al is [a]lw[ay]s a[n] i[n]a[n]e [m]ist[a]ke. We [a]ll [g]ather [a]r[ound], [a]ll [f]r[i]ends and [f]ami[l]y, to [g]aze [i]d[i]o[t]ic[al]l[y] at a [s]t[i]f [c]orps[e], then we [g]o eat at a [l]o[c]al [r]e[s]taur[ant]—we all [m]indl[e]ssl[y] [s]tare at a [d]ea[d] bo[d]y, then we have a [n]i[c]e [m]eal. There's [n]othing [m]ore [d]i[s]ingenuou[s] than a [f]u[n]e[r]al, and the [m]o[s]t [d]i[s]ingenuou[s] [f]u[n]e[r]als are th[o]se held [f]or the young. An esse[n]tially i[n]te[r]m[in]a[b]le [d]isease, [b]ut

the [m]e[d]i[c]al [p]ro[f]essional [m]ade a  
 [s]i[g]n[i]f[i]c[an]t [f]ortune in the [p]ro[c]e[s]s. A  
 [c]ar[ee]r's [w]o[r]th for the [w]o[r]k[ing] [c]lass, no  
 [d]oubt. They exten[d]ed his [s]u[ff]e[r]ing, the  
 [s]u[ff]e[r]ing of his [f]ami[ly], the [s]u[ff]e[r]ing of  
 eve[r]yone [a]round [h]im, then [a]ll[ow]ed [h]im to [d]ie.  
 [H]ow [m]a[n]y [h]un[d]re[d]s of thousands of [d]o[ll]ars,  
 [i]f [n]ot [m]i[l]lions of [d]o[ll]ars, were [s]p[e]nt, only to  
 exte[n]d a [m]an's [s]u[ff]e[r]ing and [s]till a[ll]ow him to  
 [p]e[r]ish [p]ro[m]ature[ly]? [B]ut of [c]our[s]e they [s]till  
 a[cc]e[p]ted [p]ay[m]ent, [b]e[ca]use you never get [a]n A  
 [f]or [e]ff[ort] in this [c]ount[r]y, un[l]e[ss] you're a  
 m[e]d[i]c[al] [p]ro[f]e[ss]ional. It's on[ly] [d]o[ct]ors who  
 h[ave] the au[d]a[c]ity to extend a [s]o[n]'s  
 [s]u[ff]e[r]ing, watch him [d]ie, and [s]till [r]uin the  
 [f]a[m]i[ly] [f]in[an]cia[l]l[y]. We think [s]o high[l]y of  
 [d]o[ct]ors in this [c]ount[r]y, yet it [s]eem[s] to [m]e  
 that [d]o[ct]ors are g[r]eater charlatans now [th]an  
 [th]ey've ever [b]een. [B]ut of [c]our[s]e I atten[d]ed the  
 [r]e[c]eption as [w]ell, [w]h[er]e the [d]i[s]i[n]genuo[us]  
 nature of the [e]n[tire] [e]ve[n]t [r]eal[ly] [c]ame into  
 fo[c]u[s]. The [d]i[s]i[n]genuo[us] [n]a[t]ure of the [e]n[tire]  
 or[d]eal [n]a[t]ural[ly] [r]e[ac]hed its [a]p[ex] at the  
 [r]e[c]eption, as it [b]e[ca]me ju[s]t a[n]other [s]o[ci]al  
 [e]vent. [I]t's [i]m[p]o[s]s[i]b[le] to have an iot[a] of  
 [r]e[s]p[ect] [f]or your[s]e[lf] or the [s]o[ci]ety you  
 [p]arti[c]i[p]ate in a[ft]er [a]tt[en]ding a[n] eve[n]t of th[at]  
 m[agn]i[t]ude. [S]i[t]t[ing] [i]n th[at] b[la]ck [f]old-out  
 chair, [s]ta[r]ing at my d[e]ad [f]rie[n]d's heavil[y]  
 [m]a[de] u[p] [c]or[p]s[e], it [f]ai[led] [t]o o[cc]ur [t]o [m]e  
 then—I was t[oo] [c]on[s]u[m]ed with di[s]gu[s]t [f]or

my[s]el[f]—but in [r]et[r]o[s]p[e]c[t] my on[l]y [c]on[c]l[u]sion [f]rom that [d]ay is ju[s]t th[at], th[at] [r][a]tiona[l]i[s]m [i]s no[th]ing [m]o[r]e [th]an [th]e [m]o[s]t [l]u[r]id [f]o[r]m of ab[s]ur[d]i[s]t [p]ro[p]agan[d]a. We've [c]o[n][s]t[r]u[c]ted a [r][a]tiona[l]i[s]t [A]ngl[o] world that h[a]sn't [c]o[n][s]umed everything—not [q]uite yet—[b]ut that [s]till [r]e[m]ains e[ss]e[n]tia[l]ly o[b]j[e]c[tiona[b]le, ju[s]t as the [m]y[s]t[i]c [B]y[z]a[n]tine world, it's natural oppos[i]te, was, [i]n [i]t[s] e[ss]e[n]c[e], al[s]o e[n]tire[l]y o[b]j[e]c[tiona[b]le. And the [d]o[c]tors who t[r]eat our [d]ea[d f]r[ie]nds, [p]ro[l]onging their [s]u[ff]e[r]ing and buying [h]omes in the [H]am[p]tons w[i]th the [c]r[i]m[in]al [p]ro[c]eeds, they're o[b]j[e]c[tiona[b]le in [e]v[e]ry way.

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And the [p]eo[p]le who [a]ss[a]ss[i]nate our [c]ha[r]a[c]ters [b]e[c]ause [th]ey [f]eel as [th]ough we're [n]ot [e]n[th]usia[s]t[i]c [e]nough [w]hen [w]e [s]ay hello to them at [b]ars, they're [c]r[i]m[in]als of the highest [m]agnitude. [B]ut we our[s]elves are ju[s]t as o[b]j[e]c[tio[n]a[b]le [a]s any of these [a]c[tors, we're al[s]o [c]r[i]m[in]als of the highe[s]t [m]ag[n]itude, we're [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t o[b]j[e]c[tio[n]a[b]le. We a[s]tutely [r]e[c]og[n]ize [o]ur [o]ppos[i]tes as [c]r[i]m[in]al b[e]c[au]se we exi[s]t as [p]arts of the [s]ame [c]r[i]m[in]al wh[o]le. We [d]o[n]'t k[n]o[w how to [d]eal with [d]eath any[m]ore. We thin[k] our [s]cien[t]s and our do[c]tors are p[ro]g[r]e[ss]ing, [th]at [th]ey'll eventually p[ro]g[r]e[ss] [t]o a [s]tate [w]here they'll

[o]n[c]le and [f]or all un[d]er[s]tand [d]eath, on[c]e and [f]or all when the [s]ad [r][e][a][l]ity is we [r][e][m][ai]n at the [a][p]ex of the [p][r][i][m][i]t[i]ve with [r]egards to [q]u[ote]-un[q]u[ote] [d]ea[th]ing with [d]eath. We're e[ss]e[n]tia[l]ly a[n] i[n]dige[n]ou[s] [p]o[p]u[la]tion when it [c]omes to in[t]e[r]a[c]t[ing] with [d]eath. We're z[e]alot[s] of [p][r]og[r]e[ss], and as [s]uch we're i]ll-e[qu]i[pp]ed to [i]nte[r]a[c]t w[i]th any [s]ort of [p]rofun[d]ity, be[c]ause we're [s]u[s]p[er]n[atu]ral in [p]rogr[ess], [w]e're [s]t[re]n[gh]t[en]ed [w]aiting for our [s]cien[t]i[s]ts and [d]o[ct]ors to give u[s] the [w]ord, to [g]ive u[s] the word [th]at [th]ey've finally [g]l[ori]f[i]ed to the [s]o-called b[ro]m of [d]eath. [P]rovi[de]d [g]ene[r]a[tions] [s]p[er]k [p]ro[fo]und[ly] in the [f]a[c]e of [d]eath, while our [g]ene[r]a[tion] [s]erves [c]ole [s]l[aw] and chi[ck]en [p]armig[ia]n[a] at [f]u[n]e[r]al [r]e[c]e[p]t[i]ons, the [i]m[a]g[e]s of [c]or[p]s[es] [s]t[ill] [f]r[esh] in our mind. [P]rovi[de]d [g]ene[r]a[tions] un[d]er[s]t[an]d [d]eath in a [p]ro[fo]und[ly] [g]ene[r]al [s]e[n]s[e] i[f] hard[ly] at all in a [s]p[e]c[i]f[i]c [s]e[n]s[e]. We [c]on[s]u[m]e [m]ozza[r]e[ll]a [s]t[ic]k[s] in the [f]a[c]e of [d]eath, we eat j[a]ll[a]p[er]o [p]o[pp]ers in the [f]a[c]e of [d]eath, we [d]r[in]k [c]r[a]f[t] beer with i[d]ioti[c] [t]ange[r]ine a[ft]e[r]t[ea]s in the [f]a[c]e of [d]eath. It's, [f]r[an]k[ly], [o]n[ly] the h[ome]l[e]s[s] of ou[r] e[r]a wh[ic]h [r]e[co]gnize the ill[s] of the p[ri]vate [s]phere—[b]y exami[n]ing the [n]ature of [s]e[n]s[i]b[le] [th]ings, [th]ese [p]eo[ple] have arrived at a [c]ertain [c]on[c]e[pt] of God, but not at a [c]on[c]e[pt]ion trul[y] worth[y] of Him.'