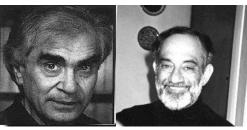
Metropolis + Isosceles



(An American Epic Poem)
Nicholas Syrianus Katsafanas

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

© 2021, 2023, 2025 Nicholas Syrianus Katsafanas

All rights reserved under international and Pan-American copyright conventions. Printed and published in the United States of America. No part of this book may be reproduced, performed or utilized in any form or by any means including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and/or retrieval system without written permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

ISBN: 979-8-9987102-3-0

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

Part I: Adam Metropolis ... 4 Part II: Larry Isosceles ... 48

Diagrams ... 101

PART I METROPOLIS: "The Number 1.99999... Repeating" 8,809:11,704 .753

.774 - .852 - .753 - .747 - .776 - .705 .725 - .784 - .757 - .725 - .679 - .799 .740 - .735 - .751 - .789 - .724 - .713

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.

'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.

"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.

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 (1.9999999...) 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 (1.999999999999999999999)...)

in practice? It seems impossible for us to know that the number two is in fact the number two

- 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 (1.99999999999...) 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

- 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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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. 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.

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.

PART II ISOSCELES: "Theories of the Western World" 12,279:16,742 .733

.706 - .758 - .733 - .731

.730 - .734 - .757 - .731

.723 - .690 - .670 - .723

.739 - .688 - .768 - .763

.726 - .770 - .722 - .681

.793 - .767 - .749 - .737

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

vet 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.

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.

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.

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

vet

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.

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 excellence almost ipso facto becomes the secular par excellence. Transcendence atheist world divorced from immanence is the primary formula of the secular. The Western world is the Anglo world more than a nothing 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 musk 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.

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.

- 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

Abrams selling crack anymore.

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

- 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 Gulaq

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.

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.

"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.

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.

Apparently this was a bit of a faux paus 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.

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 ρωμιοσύνη

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 subsects 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.

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 ρωμισσύνη 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.

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
- white population of America the 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.

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 burn 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.

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.

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 burns who offend me

nο

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.

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.

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.

- 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 seriously 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.

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.

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 paus 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.

- 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**

Metropolis + Isosceles: Diagrams [echoes]:[syllables] [approximate self-similarity]

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

Canto 01-614:793 .774

We hadn't [b]een there n[i]nety [s]e[c]onds, [b]e[c]ause it [w]as r[i]ght as [w]e [w]al[k]ed in the [b][a][ck]yard of the h[i]gh [s][c]hool [g]r[a]du[a]tio[n] [p]arty th[a]t her [c]ousin a[pp]roached u[s] and, wi[th]out [th]e [s]l[i]ghte[s]t hesit[a]tio[n], a[s]ked my [g]irl[f]riend r[i]ght to her [f][a][c]e—D[i]d you br[i]ng my [t]u[p]per[w]are [w][i]th you? It [t]oo[k] [p]erha[p]s longer than I [c]are to [c]on[f]e[s]s to [f]ully [r]e[c]ognize [w]hat exa[c]tl[y] it [w]as sh[e] [w]as [r]e[f]e[r]en[c]ing. Oh, the oxt[ai]l, I [r]e[f][l][e][c]ted, a [s][e][c]ond or [s]o [l][a]ter, as I [r]e[c]alled there [b][e]ing а [b]eauti[f]ul, [w]ood-[c]overed, [p][ie][c]e of gla[s]s of tu[pp]er[w]are [s][i]tt[i]ng [i]n ou[r] [r]e[f]r[i]gerato[r] [f]o[r] ove[r] a [w]ee[k], i[n]cub[a]ti[n]g a[n] oxt[ai]l dish th[a]t h[a]d, u[n][f]ortunate[l][y], [t]o[t]a[l][y] ex[p]ired—it was so [f]ar gone I was h[e]si[t]a[n]t [t]o eve[n] o[p]e[n] the [t]o[p] of the [t]u[pp]e[r]wa[r]e [c]on[t]aine[r], [d]es[p]ite the [f]a[c]t the [t]o[p] of the [c]on[t]ainer was a bea[u]ti[f]ul, wood [f][i]n[i]shed [p]iece. There was [n]o [d]oubt in [m][y] [m][i]nd [th]at [th]is oxtail was, [a]t th[a]t [p]oint, [n]ot just [c]om[p]l[e]te[l][y] [e]x[p]ired but [e]ssential[l][y] a ty[p]e of m[ea]t sou[p], a ty[p]e of l[i][q]u[i]fied [c]o[r][p][s]e, wh[i]ch of [c]ou[r][s]e di[s]gu[s]ted m[e] [s]ev[e]rel[y]. [C]|[ea]ning it out [s]t[r]u[ck] m[e] as a g[r]ote[s][q]ue idea. I [c]an't [s]ay for [c]ertain, but it'[s] more [l]i[k]e[l]y [th]an not [th]at 1 [th][r]ew ſi]t [i]n[t]o [t][r]ash—[t]u[pp]er[w]are, [w]ood [t][o][p], and [o]x[t]ail. '[O]h, [s][o] [s]orry, I'll [d]ef[i]n[i]tely [b]r[i]ng [i]t [b]ack

[s]oon!' she [s]aid, [a]nd I gl[a]n[c]ed [a]t her [a]nd a[tt][e]m[p][t]ed [t]o [d][e][c][i][ph]er i[f] she had [a]ny [i][d]ea the [t]u[pp]er[w]are [a]nd the ox[t]ail [w]ere [b]oth I[o]ng g[o]ne, th[a]t [b]oth now [s][a]t in a gar[b]age hea[p], a [p]ile of tr[a]sh [s]omewhere, at the [b]ottom of a [p]u[b]li[c] [d]um[p], [s]t[i][ll] f[i][ll]ed w[i]th [d]e[c]ayed, gro[t]e[s][q]ue ox[t]ail, [a]nd th[a]t her [c]ousin would ne[v]er again [o]wn the [p]r[i][v]i[l][e]ge of [p][l]a[c]ing her [l]e[f]t[o][v]ers in[t]o that [p]ie[c]e of [t]u[pp]er[w]are [w]ith the beauti[f]ul [w]ood [c]o[v]er. That [t]u[p]per[w]are [w]as [f][i]n[i]shed. Having [s]aid that, [e]v[e]n the [f]in[e][s]t [p][ie][c]e of [t]u[pp]erware—how [p][r]ec[i]ous [i]s [i]t [r][ea]ll[y]? [C]ouldn't we [r]e[p]la[c]e it [f]or [f]ive do[ll]ars or [l]e[ss]? My thin[k]ing at the [t]ime was ye[s], [th]at [th]e [t]u[pp]er[w]are [w]as en[t]irely [f]un[g]ible, yet as [s][oo]n as we [s]te[pp]ed [f]oot int[o] this [h]igh [s]ch[oo]l [g]raduation [p]arty [h]er [c]ousin in[q]uired a[b]out the [t]u[pp]er[w]are—as [i]f th[i]s [t]u[pp]er[w]are [p]erha[p]s [b]elonged to [s]ome [s]ort of rare [s][p]e[c]ies of [t]u[pp]er[w]are. [p]erha[p]s а [s][p][e][c]i[e]s of [t]u[pp]erware on the verge of ex[t][i]nct[i]on, [p]erha[p]s this [w]as [s]ome [k]ind [o]f [o]ne-[o]f-a-[k]ind [t]u[pp]erware I non[ch][a]l[a]ntly [t]o[s]sed in[t]o a [p]ile of [t]ra[sh]. [S]o[m]e [p]eo[p]le h[a]ve [m][a]ssive a[m][ou]nts [o]f re[s][p][e]ct for tu[pp]er[w]are, [b]ut I've n[e]ver [b]een [o]ne of them, It al[w]ays e[l]u[d]ed [m]e [w]hy a[n]yo[n]e [w]ould i[n]vest [m]ore than [o]ne [d]o[ll]ar i[n][t]o a [p]ie[c]e of [t]u[pp]er[w]are, [p]er[s]ona[ll]y. [T]o [m][y] [m][i]nd, if a [p]iece of [m][a]tter the level tu[pp]erware, no 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]e of tu[pp]erware. It'[s] ju[s]t not an [i]tem [l]'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]y a [c]a[p]ita[i]i[s]t [p][i]oy to in[c]rea[s]e the [p]rofit margin on [p][i][a][s]ti[c] [b][a]gs—to [c]on[v]in[c]e [p]eo[p]le they shouldn't [o]n[i]y [i][n][v]e[s]t [i][n] [p][i]ates and b[o]wls, [b]ut al[s]o [i][n]ve[s]t [i][n] the highe[s]t [q]ua[i]ity [p][i][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]e they'll [i]ose [i][n][c]e[ss]ant[i][y] and [c]on[s]tant[i][y] have to re[p][i]a[c]e.

Canto 02-696:817 .852

'She's n[e]v[e]r g[e]tting that [t]upp[e]rware b[a]ck,' 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]ear[l][y] [m]i[s][r]e[m][e]mb[e]ring the [p][l][e]tho[r]a of [t]imes [w][e]'ve thrown [t]u[pp]er[w]are in the [p]a[s]t, the [c]oun[t][l]e[s]s [t][i]mes [I]'ve [s][ee]n a [p][ie][c]e of [w]ell-[w]orn [t]u[pp]er[w]are [t]a[k]ing u[p] [s][p]a[c]e [i]n our [r]e[f]r[i]ge[r]ator, a[s]ked her iff I [c]ould th[r]ow [s]aid [t]u[pp]er[w]are out, [r]e[c]eived a[pp][r]oval 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]a[b]ly ju[s]t [b]uy her a [r]e[p]la[c]e[m]ent or [s]o[m]ething. Sh[e] ag[r][ee]d [b]ut [s][ee]med du[b][i]ou[s], and I [f]elt the [s]ame, I [f]ound [m]y[s]el[f] a[g][r]eeing with [b][o]th [m]v[s]el[f] and [m]y [g]irl[f][r]iend, [d]e[s][p]ite the [f]a[c]t we had [d]ia[m]e[t][r]i[c]ally o[pp][o]sed views on [t]u[pp]erware. My [g]irl[f][r]ie[n]d a[n]d I di[s][a][g][r][ee]d on our [a][b]i[l]it[y] to re[p][l]a[c]e this tu[pp]er[w]are, and I [a][g]r[ee]d [w]ith [b]oth 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[ss] of [S]oju, [e]x[p][l]i[c]it[l]y [a][t]tem[p][t]ing [t]o [a]void u[n]ne[c]e[ss]a[r][y] i[n]te[r][a][c][ti]on [a]t thi[s] [h]igh [s]chool g[r]adua[ti]on until [l]'d im[b][i]bed at [l]ea[s]t

[h]alf this [b]ottle of [S]oju, doubt[i]ng my [a][b][i][l][i]t[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]ttle [o]f thi[s] [S]oi[u] [r][u]th[l]e[ss][l]y [p]er[c]o[l]ating [b][l]ood[s]t[r]eam. I thr[ou]gh my [s]at h[i]gh [s][c]hool [g]radu[a]tions, [c]on[t]em[p][l][a]ting [c]on[t]em[p]l[a]ting own h[i]gh [s][c]hool my [g][r]adu[a]tion, [r]e[c]allin[g] nothin[g] of m[y] h[i]gh [s][c]hool [g][r]adu[a]t[i]on, [c]ontem[p]l[a]t[i]ng [p]erv[a][s][i]ve [i]di[o][c]y of or[g]anized edu[c][a]t[i]on, [c]on[s]idering how more or I[e]ss [e]ver[y] u[n][i][q]ue [Slo[c]r[a][t]es thin[k]er—from [s][t]oned bγ [A]the[n]ians to Giorda[n][o] [B]ru[n][o] [b]urnt a[l][i]ve [b][y] the [C]atho[l]i[c] [ch]ur[ch] to [N]ietzs[ch][e] un[r][ea]d a[n]d i[n] a[n] i[n][s]ane a[s]y[l]um as he [r][o]tted [a]way—y[e]s, [e]ve[r][y] un[i][q]ue thin[k]e[r] ove[r] the [c]our[s]e of [h]uman [h]i[s]to[r][y] was either inten[s]e[l][y] o[s]t[r]a[c]ized or [s]impl[y] a[ss]a[ss]in[a]ted by the [s]y[s]temati[c] edu[c][a]tors of [h]is or [h]er d[a]y. In short, I was vo[c][i][f]er[ou]sly dr[i]n[k][i]ng th[i][s] gla[ss] of [S]oju when [I] thought to m[y][s]el[f]—[l]sn't [i]t po[ss][i]ble [th]at we [th]ink of [th]e [ph][i][l]o[s][o][ph]ers [th]eo[l][o]g[i][c]al [c]o[n][s]ervatives, as the ones [r]e[s]t[r]ained by thi[s] [s]o-[c]alled [c]o[n][c]eption of God, yet it'[s] a[c]tually the [c]a[s]e [th]at [th]e [th]eo[l][o]g[i][c]al [ph][i][l][o]so[ph]ers, over the [c]our[s]e of [h]u[m]an [h]i[s]tory, are the [m]o[s]t au[d]acious, the [b]ol[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[l]ain [B]er[k]e[l]ey, I thought—[ea]sil[y] the [m]ost ra[d]i[c]al s[k][e][p]t[i][c] the [m]o[d]ern W[e]st h[a]s [p][r]odu[c]ed, yet al[s]o a [C]atholi[c] [p][r]ie[s]t? [D]iony[s]iu[s], for ex[a]m[p]le, was [a]ctually [q]uite v[i]gor[ou][s] [i]n h[i]s [s][k]e[p]ti[c]i[s]m of our [a]b[i]l[i]t[y] to k[n]ow a[n][y]thing, his [c]ir[c]um[l]o[c]utions were [a][c]tua[ll]y [q]uite

r[a]di[c]al. [W]hereas our typi[c]al [s]e[c]ular athei[s]t [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]er, [w]hile [a]ssured of our [a]b[i][l][i]ty to k[n][o]w the[r]e a[r]e [n][o] Gods, is rather neutered [i]n h[i]s [ph][i][l]o[s]o[ph][i][c]al [s][p]e[c]u[l]ations [i][f] the [f][a]ct th[a]t God [d]oesn't ex[i]st [i]s le[f]t to the si[d]e. [th]e ſi]t [p]o[ss][i]ble [th]at [s][o]-[c]alled theo[l][o]g[i][c]al [ph][i][l][o][s]o[ph]ers are the m[o][s]t [a]udacious [a]mong [u]s? The [o]nes who are [w]illing [t]o [t]a[k]e the [p]ro[p]er[l]y [r]a[d]i[c]al [l][ea][p]s ne[c]e[ss]a[r]y [w]hen [d][ea][l]ing [w][i]th meta[ph][y]s[i][c]s, I thought [w]hile vo[c][i][f]er[ou][s][l][y] dr[i]n[k][i]ng th[i]s bottle of [S]oju, un[w]i[l]ing to [a]t [s][p]ea[k] to [a]nyone this high [s][c]hool un[t]il 1 [th]orough[l]y gradu[a]t[i]on had [c]on[t]em[p][l][a]t[e]d the [t]rue n[a]ture of [th]e [th]eo[l][o]g[i][c]al [ph][i][l][o]so[ph]er.

Canto 03-889:1181 .753

"How [e]lse can we [e]xplain [K]i[e]r[k][e]gaard? 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][s]ly 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]y 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][ee]ms 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][ie]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]eo[l][o]g[i][c]al [ph][i][l][o][s]o[ph]ers have [sh]unned from the e[ss]en[ti]a[l]l[y] [m]o[d]ern a[c]a[d]e[m][y], that the [m]ere [m]en[ti]on of God is [a]n[a]the[m]a to the [m]o[d]ern [a]c[a][d]e[m]y, that [b]e[c]ause [th]e [th]eol[o]g[i][c]al [ph][i]l[o]so[ph]er [h]as

[b]een [h]o[l][i][s]t[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]eauc[r]a[c][y] of the uni[v]er[s]it[y]—[a]nd [a][c]tuall[y] engaged with o[r][i]g[i]nal thought? Should we [c]on[s][i]der that po[ss][i]ble? [Th]at [th]ey [e][c]ho [e]ar[l][v] [C]h[r]istia[n] [th]eo[l]ogia[n]s, [p]erse[c]uted by [p]aga[n] [R]oma[n] autho[r]iti[e]s, who [c][r]e[a]t[e]d e[l]aborate [f][r]amewor[k][s] that [f]ormed the [s]ui gene[r]i[s] [m]eta[ph][y]s[i][c]al [f]ound[a]ti[o]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][p]els with [N]eo[p][l]at[o]ni[c] [o]ur [m]o[d]ern [th][ou]ght, [th]at [th]eo[l]ogia[n]s, [r]egardless of de[n]o[m]i[n]atio[n], [a]l[m]ost [p][r]o[s]e[c]uted [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[l]o[s]o[ph]ers are [l]oath to [s]p[e][c]u[l]ate 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][s]ts who em[p][l]oy [c]om[p][l]ex [m]athe[m]ati[c]s to [p]rove the [s]u[s]ce[p]tib[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]str[y]. [F][r]an[k]l[y], I'[v]e n[e][v]er [r]es[p][e][c]ted [m]athe[m]ati[ci]ans, I [sh]ould ad[m]it that [m][u]ch [u][p][f][r]ont. I [s]u[p]p[o]se, [w][a]y, I've [o]wn al[w][a]ys [m]athe[m]ati[ci]ans as e[s]sen[ti]a[ll]y [ch]ar[l]atans. I view the art of [m]athe[m]ati[c]s as [n]ot only [d]e[c]a[d]ent, but I al[s]o view the [c]on[c]ept of [n]umber as a[n] e[ss]e[n]tia[ll]y [m]eta[ph][y]s[i][c]al [d]o[m]ain. The [m]athe[m]at[i]c[i]an'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 [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]s—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[c]ti[o]n [o]f the [d]ecimal [p]oint, of the fra[c]ti[o]n, e[ss]entia[l]ly [s][a]n[k] [m]athe[m][a]ti[c]s right [i]n [i]ts [p]la[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]ci[p]le of [P]a[l]amas, for [c]e[r]tai[n], I was ina[d]ve[r]te[n]t[l]y [b]a[p]tized as a [P]a[l]a[m]as, [d]i[s]ci[p]le of of [clour[s]e. [f]un[d]a[m]entally [d]i[s]agree w[i]th th[i][s] [m]o[d]ern i[d]ea th[a]t we [c][a]n [c]om[p]reh[e]nd [e]verything in a [p]ure[l]y inte[l]e[c]tual [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[ea][d], [s]ay, [P]arme[n][i][d]es and, while [i]m[p]re[ss]ive, it's [a]lso entirel[y] [a]b[s]urd, and I [p]er[s]o[n]a[ll][y] enjoy [i]t [i][mm][e]nse[l][y], [b]ut on those [m][e]rits. [l]'m not sure [l]'d [b]a[s]e [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[ll][e][c]tual [p]ur[s]uits. [P]armen[i]d[e]s is one of the [p]e[r][f]e[c]t wo[r][k]s of ab[s]u[r]d[i][s]t [f][i][c]t[i]on wr[i]tt[e]n [i]n any lang[u]age—and if w[e] [i]nd[ee]d ma[d]e it a [c]or[n]er[s]tone of our [s][e][c]u[l]ar i[n]te[ll][e][c]tual pur[s]uits, then at [l][ea]st w[e]'[d] [n][ee][d] to [r]e[c]ogn[i]ze our ab[s]ur[d][i]st or[i]g[i]ns, as [d]oes. [D]io[n]y[s]ius [r][i]ghtfull[y] 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[mm]e[n]tar[y] on a[ll][e]g[e]d[l][y] ra[ti]o[n]a[l]i[s]t [n]o[ti]ons. A[ll][e]g[e]dly ra[ti]o[n]a[l]ist [n]o[ti]ons—[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[mm]ent on [m]eta[ph][y]s[i][c]s I [d]o [s]o in a ab[s]urd [f]a[sh]ion, be[c]ause [c]ons[ci]ously re[c]ognize the [l][i][m][i]ts of [l]anguage, the [l][i][m][i]ts of [l]anguage th[a]t [a]t [b]ottom are in[c][a]pa[b]le of [c]o[m]muni[c][a]ting [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]s i[n] li[n]ear [a]nd/or

r[a][ti]o[n]al [f][a][sh]io[n]s. It [s]ee[m]s [s]o[m]ewhat obv[i]ou[s] [th]at [th]ere's a ne[f]a[r][i]ou[s] [l]ite[r]a[l]ism at pl[a]y here, I th[i]n[k] [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[c]t[i]ve[l][y], I k[n]ew were, in all [n]um[b]ers [l]i[k]e[l]ihood, im[p]o[s]s[i][b][i][i]t[ie]s, and th[a]t my [s]y[s]tem[a]ti[c] edu[c]ation was high[l][y] [s]u[s]ce[p][t]ib[l]e to, i[f] [n]ot e[n][t]ire[l][y] [c]om[p][l]i[c]it i[n], а [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][ci]ous thought.

Canto 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][e]en-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]cs, 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]te[r]a[l][i]sm [i]s [i]ntentio[n]a[ll][y] or un[i]ntentio[n]a[ll][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 va[l]ue. [D]o you r[ea][l]ly [b]e[l][ie]ve the f[a][c]e gr[ea]test minds of An[t][i][q]u[i]ty [i]n[t]en[d]ed [t]o [b]e [t][a][k]en at f[a]ce value? The [B][y]z[a]ntines [r]ead [P]I[a]to the [s][a]me [w][ay] [w]e [r][ea]d Do[s]toyev[s]k[y], [w]hereas [w][e] r[e]ad [P][a]to the [s][a]me [w][ay] the B[y]z[a]nt[i]nes r[ea]d the Go[s][p]els. [P]erha[p]s [b]oth are a[b]su[r]d. Now, su[r]e, 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[e]m[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]odern [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 va[l]ue, be[c]ause ľm [f]ar [f][a][c]e [f][r]om [l]ite[r]a[l]i[s]t. The m[o]de[r]n [s][c]h[o]la[r], in[s][o][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[a]y? H[e]'ll r[ea]d Parmen[i]d[e]s and ta[k]e eve[r]ything [l]ite[r]a[ll][y], a[n]d ta[k]in[g] eve[r]ythin[g] [l]ite[r]a[ll][y] i[n] [i]nev[i]tab[l][y] ta[k]e everything [i]d[i]ot[i][c]a[l]l[y]. [l]sn't [i]t the [c][a][s]e [th]at [th]e [th]eologians are the gr[ea]te[s]t [s][k]e[p]ti[c]s am[o]ng [u]s? We view [f][ai]th as [p]oison as we [r]et[ai]n [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 [s]tudies that em[p]i[r]i[c]al [v]i[v]i[s]e[c]t of [g]rote[s][q]ue fi[c]tions ou[r] [s]en[s]o[r]y o[r][g]ans—did you k[n]ow it'[s] [n]ow [s]pe[c]u[l]ated human [b][e]ings didn't s[ee] the [c]o[l]or [b][l]ue 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]gans [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[ai][n][i]ng th[i]s [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]ted—[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[ai]ns [r]a[d]i[c]al [f][ai]th [i]n [i]ts [s]en[s]ory o[r]gans in a [m]o[r]e [f]an[a]ti[c]a[l] [f][a]shion tha[n] hi[s]to[r][i][c]al [r]el[i]g[i]on k[n]own to man. [N]othing [c]an [b]e t[a][k]en [a]t [f][a]ce v[a]lue, th[a]t [m]uch we should ag[r][ee] on, wh[i]ch [b][r][i]ngs [m][e] to this, a t[r]ue [f]ly i[n] the oint[m]e[n]t, [s]o to [s]p[ea]k—how [i]s [i]t you [a]rrive at [a] po[s]tulation of a[n] e[ss]e[n][c]e you ca[nn]ot k[n]ow? Th[i]s [i]s the question, [i]s [i]t [n]ot?

How [d]oes the [m]athe[m]a[t]i[ci]an reach the po[s]tula[ti]on num[b]ers are [a][c]tual [a]nd [d]i[s][t]in[c]t? [H]ow is it [p]o[s]s[i][b]le, g[i]ven [h]uman ca[p]a[b][i]l[i]ties, to [d][i][s]t[i]nguish the [n]um[b]er two fro[m] the [n]u[m]ber one [p]oint [n]ine [r]e[p]eati[n]g (1.9999999...) i[n] [p][r]acti[c]e? How [i]s [i]t [p]o[ss][i]ble d[i][s][t][i]nguish [t]wo from one [p]oint re[p]eating? How does [m]ath[e][m]ati[c]s a[t]t[e]mpt [t]o [l][a]y any [c][l][ai]m to ph[y]s[i][c]al [s][p][a][c]e—[t]o [a]ttem[p]t to [c][l]aim the [a]bi[l]it[y] to [l][ea]ve [th]e [th]eor[e]ti[c]al—when [i]t's [i]m[p]o[s]s[i]ble for u[s] to d[i][s]t[i]nguish the [n]umber two fro[m] the [n]umber one [p]oint [n]ine [r]e[p]eati[n]g (1.99999999999999999999999)...), i[n] [p]racti[c]e? It [s]eems im[p]o[ss]i[b]le [f]or u[s] to k[n]ow [th]at [th]e [n]um[b]er [t]wo [i]s [i]n [f]act the [n]um[b]er [t]wo, and [n]ot the [n]umber [o]ne [p]oint [n]ine re[p]eating (1.999999999999999)...), and i[f] [w]e're u[n]a[b]le to k[n]ow the [n]um[b]er [t]wo [i]s [i]n [flact the [n]um[b]er [t]wo then how [c]ould it [b]e [p]o[ss]i[b]le to a[ss]ert th[a]t [m][a]the[m][a]ti[c]s h[a]s any va[l]ue out[s]ide of [th]e [p]ure[l]v [th]eoreti[c]al? [B]v in[s]tinct [p]erha[p]s we feel as [th]ough [th]e [n]um[b]er [t]wo is the [n]um[b]er [t]wo, and the [n]um[b]er [o]ne is the [n]um[b]er [o]ne, yes, the [m][a]the[m][a]ti[c]al [a]xioms [m]av [fleel [c]orre[c]t—y[e]t the [f][a][c]t re[m]ains that we I[a][ck] the [f]a[c]ulties to d[i][s][t][i]nguish [p]er[c]e[p]tual [p]oint nine a[pp]les fr[o]m [o]ne 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][c]t |[i]m[i]t 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]ilo[s]o[ph]y of [m]athe[m]atic[s] a[t]t[e]m[p]t[s] [t]o

Canto 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][s]teriou[s], that [w]hen [w]e di[s][c]u[ss] the e[ss]en[c]e of [l]ife [w]e thin[k] [w]e [clan [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]e 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]ttle doubt w[e] [r]e[m]ain [i]n the [m][i]dst of [s]omething e[ss]ent[i]a[l]ly [m][y][s]te[r]iou[s] [w]hen [w]e beg[i]n to th[i]n[k] [c][l]ear[l]y. Th[i]n[k][i]ng [i]s [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t [m]y[s]te[r]ious a[c]t [o]f [a]ll. Th[i]nk[i]ng, [w]h[i]ch [w][e] gene[r]al[l][y] be[l][ie]ve trans[l]ates [m]ate[r]ial and i[mm]ate[r]ial exp[e][r]ien[c]e [l]anguage—i[n]to [m]odes that are [c]o[mm]uni[c]able. [Th][i]n[k][i]ngwh[i]ch a[tt]em[p]ts [t]o [s]ome[th]ing [s]uch as [c]on[s][u]ming a i[ui][c]y [p]ear, 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]e[r]ien[c]e, and [e]xt[r]a[p]olate [i]t [i]n [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]ear would be [s]omething [c]o[n][f]ined to the [p]rivate [s][ph]ere—w[i]th th[i]n[k][i]ng [i]t'[s] then [p]resuma[b][l]y a[ll]owed to enter the [p]u[b][l]i[c] [d]o[m]ain. [Th]ere [i]s, [i]n fa[c]t, no re[m][ai][n]ing [p]u[b]li[c] [d]o[m][ai][n] sans [th]in[k]ing—and [th]ere's i[n] e[ss]e[n][c]e n[o] thin[k]ing [s]ans a [p]u[b]li[c] [d][o]main. A[ss][u][m]ing [w]e [c]on[s][u][m]e a i[ui][c]y [p]ear, thin[k]ing [W]ow, this [p]ear is i[ui][c]y, [b]ut

[r]ef[u]se t[o] w[r]ite it down, to ver[b]ally ex[p][r]e[s]s it to our [p]ee[r]s, [th]en [th]e [th]ought Wow, th[i]s [p]ea[r] [i]s jui[c]y [r]e[m]ains in the [p]urely i[mm]aterial [r]eal[m], [i]t'[s] ex[i][s]ten[c]e [p]ure[l]y [s][p]e[c]u[l]ative, both [th]e [th]ought and the physi[c]al [e]x[p]e[r]ien[c]e [r]e[m]ain [e][ss]entia[l]l[y] [p]ure[l][y] [s][p]e[c]u[l]ative. It'[s] on[l][y] [w]hen [th]e [th]ought [W]ow, th[i]s [p]ear [i]s jui[c][y] enters the [p]u[b]li[c] do[m]ain that it [b]e[c]omes, [p]erha[p]s not real, [b]ut [a]t lea[s]t [a][pp]are[n]t i[n] a [m]ore [m]ate[r]ial [m]anner—it'[s] [v]e[r]i[f]ied as a [r]eal ex[p]erien[c]e and [s]ub[s][e]qu[e]ntly [v]e[r]i[f]ied as a [r]eal thought. I t[oo] [c]on[s][u]med a [p]ear, 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[s]t of [s]ometh[i]ng e[ss]ent[i]ally [m][y][s]teriou[s] here.

Canto 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]l[d]er [b]la[ck] [w]o[m]an, [b]ut then she [b]e[c]ame an [o]l[d]er [w]hite [w]o[m]an, [a]nd, [a]s she [w]as [w]hite, [a]s [w]e s[a]t 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]ght, 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]tire, there were [t]wo [s]mall [d]ar[k], in[d]e[c]i[ph]era[b]le [f]orms [s][i]tt[i]ng [i]n [b]a[ck][s]eat, and [sh]e t[o]ld 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, [s]etting a[s]ide our geo[g]raphi[c]al [c]on[c]e[r]ns, he[r] [s][t]atement [s][t]ru[c]k me as [s]omething I already k[n]ew, [th]at I k[n]ew sh[e] was [l][ea]ving for [g]ood, and [th]at her [l][ea]ving 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]nt[i]re I[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[ea]m was [e][q]uall[y] [c]or[p]o[r]eal to any wa[k]ing ex[p]e[r]ien[c]e I've h[a]d, [a]nd now, [m]onths later, [I] [r]e[m][ai]n [c]u[r]iou[s] with [r]egar[d] to the [i][d]entity of this [m]ulti-[r][a]cial [f]igure [f][r]om [m]y [d][r][ea]m, who it [s][ee][m]s eng[a]ged [m][e] in a li[a]ison? [s]exual De[s]pite affir[m]ing the [m][y][s]teriou[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[ea][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[i]stor[i][c]al [r]epo[r]t[s] of [s]o-[c]alled angels and de[m]ons. 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[l]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[o]te-un[q]u[o]te 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]e[n][s]e [f]ee[I]ing my [I]i[f]e's [s]omehow [f]o[II]owed the [t]e[n]ets of Ea[s]tern Or[th]odoxy—[th]en, [th]i[s] dr[ea]m's in[t]en[s]it[y] [s][t]i[ck]ing [w]ith m[e] for [w][ee][k]s and [e]ve[n] [m]onths on e[n]d, I [q]uestio[n] i[f] the [f]igure [f][r]om [m]y d[r][e]am 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 de[m]on. I [q]u[e][s]tion wh[e]ther [p]erha[p]s a[n] a[n]gel or [p]erha[p]s a [d][e]mon

en[t]ered my [d]r[ea]m to, in a [q]uite [s]er[p]en[t][i]ne way, [p]oint [m]e i[n] the [d]irectio[n] [s]o[m]e[th]ing—[p]erha[p]s Ea[s]tern Or[th]o[d]oxy. And I [q]uestion [i][f] th[i]s [i]s [i]n [f]a[c]t [p]o[s]s[i]ble. [A]t almo[s]t [a]ny other [t][i]me in m[y] I[i]fe I would have [c]on[s][i][d]ered [i]m[p]o[ss][i][b][i]l[i]t[y], [i]t an [t]otall[y] lu[d]i[c][r]ous, ľd [s]omething [c]on[s]i[d]ered it [a]n [e]m[b]a[r]ra[ss]ing a[b][s]ur[d]it[y] to [e]ven [s]uggest it. [W]hereas [p][r][e]v[i]ou[s]ly I [w]ould have [s]at and [s]aid I con[s]i[d]ered 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]l[i]t[y], [n]ow. for [o]ne [r]eason or [a][c]tua[l]l[y] [c]on[s]i[d]er a[n]other, - 1 it ſaln em[b]arra[ss]ing [a][b][s]ur[d]it[y] to find [i]t utter[l][y] [i]mpossi[b]le.

Canto 07-237:327 .725

Y[e]t I[e]t [m]e ex[p][l]ain [m]y thoughts on th[i]s [i]ssue just a [l][i]ttl[e] [f]urther, i[f] I [m]ay? Be[c]ause my th[ou]ahts [o]n the tfolfplifcl 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[a]tter of It was ju[s]t [s][a][s]t [S][a]turday, [b][a][ck]yard [c]oo[k]out where I [s][a]t [a]t a [n]i[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]ti[c] g[l][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 i[u][s]t [b]ought [h]alf [a] [p][r]e-[r]olled [b][l]unts [d]ozen f[r]om [s]tate-[s]anctioned [d]i[s][p]en[s]a[r]y, that h[e] was [p][l]anning to [s]te[p] on the [s]idewalk and [l]ight u[p] one of th[e]se b[l]unts, have a [p]u[ff] or [t]w[o] [t][o] re[l]ax, [t][o] [w]hich h[e] o[ff]ered m[e] a [p]u[ff] [t][oo], i[f]

I [w]anted [o]ne. [W]ell, [a]s it so h[a][pp]ened, [a]t the [d]e[s][p]ite my general [a]mbivalence m[a]rijuana, I con[s][i][d]ered [i]t a [d]e[c]ent [i][d]ea. [l] [fligured [I]'d have [o]ne [p]u[ff] or [t]wo, [t]o[p]s, that [m]aybe it [w]ould relax [m]e. I [f]igured, at the [t]ime, that a [p]u[ff] or [t]wo, [t]o[p]s, 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 di[s][c]over [th]at [th]i[s] weed re[t][ai]ned a [p]o[t]en[c]y th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s I'd n[e]ver [e]n[c]ountered before.

Canto 08-396:505 .784

The [b][l]unts were exqu[i]s[i]te[l]y rolle[d] and ta[s]ted [d]e[l][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]nal 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[q]ue[n]t [h]it would [b][e] a w[h]o[l]l[y] [s]uper[f][l]uous [h]it, [l] [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 | [c]ou[gh]ed vo[c]i[f]erou[s]l[y]. | [c]ou[gh]ed vo[c]i[f]erou[s]ly then ju[s]t [m]o[m]ents later time began, [m]uch to [m][y] [s]ur[p][r][i]se, [p][r]o[c]eed[i]ng [i]n a highly ab[n]or[m]al [m]a[nn]er. I [f]ound mysel[f] at a [flamily [c]oo[k]out, and [t]ime was p[r]o[c]eedi[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][ou]nging in a [n]on[d]e[s]cri[p]t [l][aw]n chair, ex[c]e[p]t [n]ow I [f]ound my[s]el[f] unable to ex[p]e[r]ien[c]e the [p][r]o[c]ession of [t]ime in our [r]u[d]i[m]en[t]a[r]y, [t]e[m][p]e[r]ate [m]anner. I [j]um[p]ed [b]e[t]w[ee]n di[s][j]ointed [s]c[e]nes. [P]eo[p]le [b]egan s[p][ea]king and [i]t was almo[s]t as though a [p]er[s]on h[i]t [f]ast [f]orward on their [s][p][ee]ch. [Th]en [th]e [s][p][ee]ch would [s][l][o]w ju[s]t [m][o][m]en[t]ari[l][y].

Add[i]t[i]onal[l][y], ı [s][ee]med en[t]ire[l][y] [r]e[s]t[r][i]ct[e]d from [p]er[c][ei]ving how [p][eo][p]le were [p]er[c][ei]ving m[e], I [f]elt [l][i]ke [l] was [e]xtr[e]me[l][y] h[i]gh, in [f]a[c]t [l] knew [l] was [e]xtr[e]me[l][y] h[i]gh, and it wasn't [e]x[a][c]t[l][y] the m[o]st a[pp][r][o][p][r]iate ven[u]e to be th[a]t h[i]gh—[a]t а [flami[l][v] [c]oo[k]out—[y]et was [r]e[s]t[r][i]ct[e]d ı per[c][ei]ving [h]ow [h][i]gh [l] [s][ee]med to the out[s][i]de world. At t[i]mes it felt l[i][k]e [l]'d gained a[cc][e][ss] to a [c][ue] that [s]ugg[e][s]ted [e]ve[r]yone kn[ew] [l] was [e]xt[r][e]mel[y] h[i]gh, yet thi[s] [n]otion, that [e]very[o]ne [l] [w]as [e]xt[r][e]mel[v] h[i]qh, [r]emained un[p][r]oven, [i]m[p]o[ss][i]ble to [p][r]ove, it [s]eemed. [B]ecause [p][eo][p]le would at [t]imes [s][ee]m to [b][e] [t]r[ea]ting m[e] as if [I] was [h]ardl[y] [h][i]gh at all, de[s][p]ite the [f][a][c]t that I [c]ould no [l]onger [e]x[p]erien[c]e time i[n] a [p]ure[l]y [l]inear [f][a]shion. [E][s]sen[ti]all[y] [m]y own a[c][ti]ons [b]e[c]ame [e]ntirel[y] foreig[n] to [m][e]—[m]ore than ju[s]t [b][e]ing [e]xtr[e]mel[y] high, I [b]e[c]ame di[s][c]on[c]erted at [th]e [th]ought of what a[c]tions I [c]ould [p]o[ss]i[b][l][y] [b][e] ta[k]ing that [c]aused the [p][eo][p]le around m[e] to [c][ea][s]e to view [m][e] as extr[e][m]e[l][y] high.

Canto 09-404:534 .757

The [o]nly a[c]tions of my [o]wn I was [s]till [a][w]are of [w]ere a[c]tions that [s][ee]med [t]o m[e] [t]o b[e] of [a] per[s]on [c][l][ea]r[l][y] ext[r][e]me[l][y] [h]igh, [s]o [h]ow [c]ould th[e]se [a][c][ti]ons [b][e] s[ee]n [b]ly [r][a][ti]onal [a][c]tors to [b]e [c]oming from a [p]er[s]on who was [s]till ex[p]erien[c]ing [t]ime [l]inear[l]ly? Thi[s] was, [a]t the [t]ime, a que[s]tion [s][a]ns [a]n [a]n[s]wer. [l]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[rr]oundings [s]eemed [t]o [c]on[t]inue [t]o

re[c]og[n][i]ze [I] pa[ss]ed 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[ss]ume, if you lefflt the [c]o[n][f][i]nes 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]og[n]ize thi[s] [f]a[c]t—that you ex[i]t[e]d [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]esent, I was [e]x[p]e[r]ien[c]ing [t][i]me i[n] a[n] [e][n][t][i]rely a[s]ynch[r]onou[s] [f]ashion, 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][s]t of my [p]er[c][e][p]tual [f]a[c]ulti[e]s, exi[s]ti[n]g i[n] at [l][ea][s]t two [p][l]a[c]es at on[c]e. At the [f]a[m]i[l]y [c]oo[k]out, where [m]o[s]t [p][eo][p]le were [ei]ther [s][l][i]ght[l]y h[i]gh or not h[i]gh at [a]ll, and then [a]l[s]o in a [s]e[p]a[r]ate ite[r]ation of time, [w]here I [w]as i[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[l]y. There's [l]ittle [d][o]ubt [n][o]w that time, as we're exp[o]sed 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? Ιt [s]eems [i]mpo[ss][i]ble for u[s] to [s]ay—[p]erha[p]s [i]te[r]at[i]ons [i]s the w[r]ong mode [t]o di[s]cu[s]s [t][y][p]es of [t][i]me. [l]t's e[n][t][i]rely [p]o[ss][i]ble, [i]n fact, that [t][i]me [p]er[c]eives [u][s] inasm[u]ch as w[e] [p]er[c][ei]ve it. Yet [o]nce [w]e a[ck]nowledge [th]is [f][a][c]t, [th][a]t ti[m]e has [m]any [i]te[r]ations of [p][r]odu[c]ing [i]t[s]el[f], that ti[m]e [m]ay in [f]act [p]er[c]eive u[s] [r]ather than u[s] [p]er[c]eive [i]t, then we can no [l]onger b[l]ind[l]y [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]ations, then our [d][r][ea]ms [c]ould in [f]a[c]t b[e] en[t]irel[y] [r][ea]l, [th]at [th]ey m[a]y ju[s]t ex[i][s]t [i]n [d]i[ff]e[r]ent [i]te[r][a]tions of [t]ime. Our d[r][ea]ms could b[e] en[t]irel[y] [r][ea]l

[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 ite[r]ations of [t]ime.

Canto 10-458:632 .725

Of [c]our[s]e, [r]a[ti]onall[y] [s][p][ea][k]ing, not that w[e] [sh]ould [s][p][ea][k] [r]a[ti]onal[l][y], but [r]a[ti]onal[l][y] [s][p][ea][k]ing we [c]ould [q]u[e]st[i]on the m[e][r][i]ts of adh[e]ring to [Ea][s]tern Orthodox[y] gene[r]a[l]l[y]. Of [c]our[s]e we [c]ould [r]e[f]e[r]en[c]e the [c]a[s]e of [K][a][l][a][f][a]ti[s], [C]hry[s][o][s]t[o]m[o][s] the [M]et[r]opo[l]itan of [S][m]yrna, who un[c]ere[m]oniou[s]ly [h]ad [h]is [b]eard [r]i[pp]ed o[ff] [b]y [h]and, [h]is eyes g[ou]ged [ou]t, his nose and ears [c]ut o[ff] and was [s]u[b][s]e[q]uently [m]a[s][q]ue[r]aded 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[i]s [i]nju[r]ies, from [h]aving [h]is [e]yes, nose, and ears [r]emoved, all of this during the [h][ei]ght 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]tern Ortho[d]o[x]y, to [s]ome e[x]tent, [d]i[d]n't [f]are Chry[s][o][s]t[o]m[o][s] well in the [e]nd, at [l][ea][s]t fro[m] a [m]at[e]ria[l]i[s]t [p]oint of view. It's a [s][m]all [s]am[p]le [s]ize yet it'[s] [c]om[p][e]lling to a[n] and of [c]ourse the [slam[p][lle [e]xte[n]t. [s]ub[s]tantia[ll]y [l]arger [w]hen [w]e [c]on[s]i[d]er the [p]light of the Ortho[d][o]x [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][k]e, [o]ne thousand y[ea]rs or [s][o], we could [e]ven [s][a]y that [f]ollowing the [p][a]th of [Ea][s]tern Ortho[d]ox[y] has [p]erh[a][p]s been [f][r]aught with ext[r][e]mel[y] [p]e[r]il in [c]ertain [r][e]gions 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][[y] or [l]ogi[c]a[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[p]t of The One, the [b][e]ing that

[c]on[c]e[p]tuall[y] [p]r[e][c][e]des [b][e]ing, that ex[i][s]ts [t]ime, [a][ll] a[s]pect[s] of but 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]ertai[n] 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[c]t our [c]o[n][c]eption of [t]ime to [e]ven [r]emotel[y] [b][e] [a][b]le to [c]o[n][c][ei]ve of a [B][e]ing of that [n][a]ture. [N]ot to [s][ay] that we [c]ould ever [c]on[c][ei]ve a B[e]ing of that [n][a]ture [i]n [i]t[s] e[ss]en[c]e, yet to [e]ven a[pp]roach a [c]on[c]e[p]tion—if [l]ogi[c] [l][ea]ds us to a Fir[s]t [P]rin[c]i[p]le that ex[i][s]ts and out[s][i]de of t[i]me, then w[i]th[i]n [c]on[c]e[p][ti]on of t[i]me is e[ss]en[ti]ally ab[s]urdi[s]t. n[ee]d to [w]ould r[e][c]o[n][s]tru[c]t thi[s] [W]e [c]o[n][c]ep[ti]on 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][sh]io[n], th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s [p]er[c]eives u[s] i[n] a [s]o-[c]alled li[n]ear [f]ashio[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]de of t[i]me, [th]en [th]ere mu[s]t [e][x]i[s]t a [p]or[ti]on of u[s], as [e][x]ten[si]ons 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.

Canto 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[i]y [i]i[n]ear fashio[n]. It [s]eems ju[s]t—I [d]on't kn[o]w—[t][o]t[a][i]y ri[d]icu[i]ou[s] to [a][ss]ume [t]ime [p]ro[c]eeds i[n] a [p]ure[i]y [i]i[n]ear [f]ashio[n], that time [w]ouldn't [p]roc[ee]d in [w]hatever [f]ashion 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][ee]ds at all, that, [i]f [i]t ch[o]se 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[g]es [a]s o[pp][o]sed to i[n][t]e[g]ers. 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]ormed [m]e th[a]t she h[a]d to go south of the [M]issou[r]i, a[f]ter 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]iend of mine [p]urchased [f][r]om a lo[c]al di[s][p]en[s]a[r]y, [a]nd [a][f]ter [t]a[k]ing a [m]ere [t]wo h[i]ts from th[i][s] [b][l]unt I [f]ound [m][y][s]el[f] inadv[i]sa[b][l][y] h[i]gh at a [f]ami[l][y] [f]unc[ti]o[n], ex[p]erien[c]ing 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[l][y] [p][r]esent at the [plart[v]. vet [s]imult[a]neou[s][l][y] eng[a]ging [p]a[ss]ive[l][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[a]t [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[l][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[i]ch [i]n [i]t[s]el[f] [s]eems a[b][s]urd and [s]trange, [b]ut thi[s] [f]oo[l]ishne[ss] [u]p[l]i[f]ts [u][s] to the ine[f]fa[b]le truth wh[i]ch [i]s there [b]e[f]ore all [r]easoning.' [B]e[c]ause it would [st]and to [r][ea]son that i[f] [r][ea]so[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[o]tions, then [p]erha[p]s [i]t's onl[y] [i][d]io[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]la[c]ement, [o]f Fir[s]t [C]auses.

Canto 12-418:523 .799

[P]erha[p]s [w]hat [w][e] n[ee]d is a [r][i]go[r]o[u][s] [i]d[i]o[c]y. [l]t'[s] entire[l]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[e]se [n]otions [e]m[p]loy [e]x[c]e[p]t w[e] should [n]othing [r][i][g]o[r]o[u][s] [i]d[i]o[c][y], that [r][ea]son and [s]ound [l]ogi[c] [h]ave ab[s]o[l]ute[l]y no p[l]a[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]nds 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]me, of [t][i]me [b]eing e[s]sentia[ll][y] [n]on-[l]i[n]ear [a]s much [a]s it'[s] e[s]sentia[l][y] [l]i[n]ear, of time [p]er[c][ei]ving [u][s] as [m][u]ch as w[e] [p]erc[ei]ve it, that we [m][u][s]t [b]e[c]o[m]e [m]ore [i]d[i]oti[c] than we'[v]e e[v]er [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]der in the [s]to[ch]a[s]ti[c] b[r][ee]zes that [r]i[pp]le a[r]ound th[e]se [c]o[n][c]e[p]ts. [S]ans [i]d[i]o[c]y, [c]o[n][c]epts will [c]o[n]tinue to ex[i][s]t in a shroud of m[y][s]tery, not [th]at [th]ey [c]an ever [b]e known fu[ll][y], that's un[l]i[k]e[l][y], [i]t'[s] mo[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] [i]m[p]o[ss]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[ss][i]ble [th]at [th]e m[y][s]te[r][y] these [c]on[c]e[p]ts are sh[r]ou[d]e[d] in [c]ould b[e] am[e][l]io[r]ated to a [d]eg[r][ee]. We [c]o[n][c]e[p]tua[l]ize a [F]ir[s]t [C]ause, [a] One, [a] [c]o[n][c]e[p]t that may, in [f]a[c]t, be ne[c]e[ss]ary [f]o[r] ou[r] [s][p]e[c]ies to exi[s]t, at [l][ea][s]t [s]o[c]ia[ll][y], it very well [c]ould be [th]e [c]a[s]e [th]at we [c]an only exi[s]t [l]ogi[c]a[ll][y] 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]ogi[c]al argu[m]ent [f]or [l]inear time. then how [c]an we [m]a[k]e [s]e[n][s]e of

a[n]ything? [l]t'[s] [i][m]po[ss]ible to [m]a[k]e [s]e[n][s]e of a[n]ything, i[n] the [t]rad[i]t[i]onal [s]e[n][s]e, [s]a[n]s linear [t]ime. I[f] [t]ime [f]ails to pro[c][ee]d [l]inear[l][y], at [l][ea][s]t [f]or u[s], i[f] we're ho[pp]in[g] and [s][k]i[pp]in[g] w[i][l][y] n[i][l][y] in the [f][a]bri[c] of time, i[n] [p]ure[l]y [n]on[l]i[n]ear [m][a][nn]e[r]s, then [n]othing [c]an [m]a[k]e [s]en[s]e [f]or u[s]. We're [l]itera[l]y [s]en[s]e[l]e[ss]. [S]an[s] a [F]ir[s]t Cause, we're [l]itera[l][y] [s]en[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[l][y] [i]nve[s]tigate [i]d[i]oti[c]al[l][y].

Canto 13-538:727 .740

Or am I just b[e]ing [s][i][l][y]? Am I [s][i]mp[l][y] to [s]u[cc]umbing а [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c] [t]y[p]e [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]ted, who k[n][o]w [m][e] k[n][o]w [m][e] to b[e] pr[o]ne to [s]u[c]cumbing to [s]i[l]line[ss] from [t]ime [t]o [t]ime? Am I [b]eing [m][e][l]od[r][a][m]ati[c] [b]y [e]xt[r][a][p]o[l]at[i]ng [m]y [i]ntense [i]m[p][r]essio[n] [f]ollowing [m]y waking [u]p [f]r[o]m [m]y [d][r]eam, am I [m][e][l]o[d][r][a][m]atica[l]ly [e]xt[r][a][p]o[l]ating th[a]t [i]m[p][r]ession 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[a]t I was [p]r[a][c]ti[c]a[I]ly, now [th]at I [th]in[k] of it, [m]o[r]e o[r] [l][e][ss] a[n] a[d]o[l][e][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][s]t 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 in[c]ome of the [t]e[n]ants in order to re[t][ai]n e[l][i]gi[b][i][l][i]ty, [w]hi[ch] of [c]ou[r]se [w]as the [r]eason [w]hy the [a]pa[r]tments [w]ere s[u][ch] [a] g[r]eat deal. [L]ucki[l][y] enou[gh] [flor [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]altr[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]ont[r]ol [r]e[q]uire[m]ents, had I waited the time ne[c]e[ss]ary for [o]ne to [b]e[c][o]me availa[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][ea][s]e on an apart[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[i]ng [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]v [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[f]ul [a]re[a] socia[ll]y—there were a [p][l]etho[r]a of vi[b][r]ant [b]ars and [r]e[s]tau[r]ants, al[s]o [s][i]de [b][y] [s][i]de [b][y] [s][i]de, that m[y][s]el[f] a[n]d others e[n]joyed [f][r]e[q]uenting, that were [r]out[i]nel[y] [p][a][ck]ed [f][r]om [a][f]tern[o]on t[o] [e]venin[g]. Now. [c]om[p]a[r]i[s]on, i[f] you wal[k] [th]rough [th]at [s]ame a[r]ea of [d]o[w]nto[w]n, [b]y [m]y [c][ou]nt, [m]ore th[a]n h[a]l[f] of those [b]ars and [r]estau[r]ants are shut [d]o[w]n [f]or good. Whereas I [u]sed t[o] [f]requent that [p]art of [d]o[w]nto[w]n, ho[pp]ing be[t]w[ee]n [t]wo o[r] o[r] [f]ou[r] [v]enues, ha[v]ing a [f]ruit[f]ul thr[ee] ex[p]erience [s][o]cially—now [i]t's [a]Im[o][s]t [a]s [i]f th[a]t a[r]ea of do[w]nto[w]n has aged [r]ight [a]long with me. As my [s][o]cial [a]ct[i]v[i]ty has waned, [a]t least with rega[r]d to hopping from [b]a[r] to [b]a[r], the a[c]t[i]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 be[c]ome [l]ess [l]i[k]e[l]y to [p]o[p] out on a Wednes[d]ay a[f]tern[oo]n [t][o] [t][wo] o[r] three o[r] [f]ou[r] [p]l[a][c]es, this area of [d]o[w]nto[w]n has [b]een una[b]le to [s]u[s]t[ai]n [b]usine[ss]e[s] [th]at u[s]ed to [th]rive on [p]eo[p]le [p]o[pp]ing out on Wednesd[a]y a[f]ternoons, ho[pp]ing [f]rom two o[r] three o[r] [f]ou[r] [p]laces.

Canto 14—535:727 .735

There a[r]e, in fa[c]t, ha[r]dly any [b]a[r]s [r]e[s]tau[r]ants that are [s]till open on the [b]lo[ck]. There's [b]een a [g]ar[g]antuan [F]or [L][ea][s]e [s]ign on the [l]arge[s]t ven[u]e [f]or [y][ea]rs now, and the [p]la[c]es that should [b]e o[p]en for [b]usi[n]e[s]s on a [l][a]te [w]eekd[a]y a[f]ter[n]oon are [n][o] [l]onger [o][p]en for [b]usi[n]e[s]s on [l][a]te [w]eekd[a]y a[f]ter[n]oons, whereas in p[r][e]v[i]ous y[ea]rs eve[r][y] [b]ar and [r]e[s]tau[r][a]nt [o]n the [b][l]o[ck] would have [b]een [b]u[s]t[l]ing with [b]usi[n]e[s]smen, e[cc]entri[c]s, [a]nd [a]|[c]oho[l]i[c]s, [n]ow th[e]se s[a]me [v]enues [d][o]n't [e][v]e[n] [o]pe[n] their [d]oors until l[a]ter at night, if at all. I've [w]al[k]ed [th]rough [th]at [b]lo[ck] mul[t]i[p]le [t]imes ho[p]ing [t]o [p]o[p] in[t]o ju[s]t [o]ne [o]ld [b]ar or [o]ne [o]Id [r]e[s]tau[r]ant for ju[s]t [o]ne [d][r]in[k], and I've [d]i[s][c]o[v]ered e[v]ery [s]ingle [b]ar that's [s]tayed in [b]usiness on that [b][l]o[ck] [c][l]osed to [c]u[s]tomers [a]t th[a]t time. A [b]ar [i]n a [b]usin[e][s]s [d][i][s]t[r][i][c]t [r][ea]||[y] has [n]o ex[c]use [f]or [n]ot [b]eing o[p]en [b]y [f]our [p]m on a w[ee][k][d]ay. It'[s] a[b][s]ur[d] for a [b]ar [i]n a [b]usin[e][ss] [d][i][s]tr[i][c]t to [b]e [c]losed for [b]usine[ss] [a]t th[a]t time, yet th[a]t's ex[a][c]t[l]y what's h[a]ppened to this [b][l]o[ck], it's now a [d]ead [b][l]o[c]k, [b][l]o[c]k that's more or [l]ess officia[ll][y] [d]e[c][ea][s]ed [s]ocia[ll][y]. I[n] a[n][y] [c]a[s]e, years ago, [w]hen I [w]as [l]oo[k]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][ss]age to a younger g[i][r]l I u[s]ed to fl[i][r]t 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]erha[p]s we both [c][a]me to the [c]on[c][l]usio[n] e[n]g[a]gi[n]g i[n] a sexual [l]i[a]ison, although [t]em[p][t]ing, was ill-advised, that for on[c]e in the [c]our[s]e of [h]uman [h]i[s]to[r]y [p]eo[p]le should [r]e[f][r][ai]n [f][r]om eng[a]ging in any [s]ort [l]i[ai]son, [s]o we de[v]e[l]o[p]ed ill-ad[v]ised [f][r]iendshi[p] of [s]orts. Ιt was а [sh]a[ll]ow [f][r]iend[sh]ip, as mo[s]t [f]riend[sh]ips that [r]e[s]ult [f][r]om [s][t][a]ved o[ff] [s]exual li[ai][s]ons [t]end 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][p]s i[m]agi[n]a[b][l]e, inter[m]i[n]a[b][l]e [a]nd [a][s]i[n]ine, but th[i]s part[i]cular f[r]iendsh[i]p [w]as [r]e[w]arding [i]n [i]ts 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]xt m[e][ss]age [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][p] had [r]un [i]t[s] cour[s]e, that it'[s] [p]ure[l]y [sh]a[ll]ow and [i]n[s][i][p][i]d nature was [a]b[u]n[d]ant[l]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]I[f] to [s][e]ver the [f]ri[e]ndshi[p] on[c]e and [f]or all. I've [c]ea[s]ed to [c]o[mm]uni[c][a]te with her [s]in[c]e, yet de[s][p]ite the ulti[m]ate[l]y sha[ll]ow and [i]n[s][i][p][i]d [n][a]ture of th[i]s friendsh[i][p], [d]e[s][p]ite the [f]a[c]t we never [c]ro[ss]ed the I[i]ne, [s]o to [s][p]ea[k], [f]or [s]ome r[ea]son [l] [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]entia[l]ly [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] [ph]ys[i][c]al rela[ti]on[sh][i][p] w[i]th and who I had a[n] [e][n]tire[l]y [sh]a[l]ow a[n]d i[n]si[p]id [e]mo[ti]onal re[l]a[ti]on[sh][i][p] w[i]th.

Canto 15-337:449 .751

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][s]sage [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 y[ea]rs [p][r]ior 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. Was[n]'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]|| ju[s]t inveterate|[y] [a][s]s[u]me that [p]angs in our [a]|[m]o[s]t ex[c][l][u][s]ive[l][y] [s]to[m]a[c]hs fr[o]m [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]ts [t]o [a]void [p]angs in our [s]to[m]achs? Yet [i]n th[i][s] ca[s]e, a [p]e[r][s]on I [m]atu[r]e[l][y] avoi[d]ed engag[i]ng w[i]th [s]exual[l][y], and [v]i[c]e [v]er[s]a, of cour[s]e, who I in[s]t[ea]d dev[e][l]o[p]ed a [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] [sh]a[ll]ow [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, be[c]ause I [s][e]nt her a [t][e]xt [m][e][s]sage [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]e [p]er[s]on would [r]aise to [i][d]enti[f][y]ing the [b][e]ing in my [d]r[ea]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] [s]exual li[a]ison—yet what [l]'ve [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[a][ti]on[sh]ips [b][a]sed o[n] whether or not a [s]exual li[a]iso[n] o[cc]urred. Th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s d[i][s]t[i]ngu[i][sh][i]ng rel[a][ti]on[sh][i]ps [b][a][s]ed on whether or not they feature a [s]e[x]ual [e][x]ch[a]nge has [b]een a g[r]o[s]s [e][r]ror on our [p]art. Th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s we shoul[d]n't [a] [p][r]io[r]i [a][ss]ert 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]y.

Canto 16-374:474 .789

[S]o we can't rule out entire[l]y the [p]o[ss][i][b][i][l][i][y] [th]at [th][i][s] [b][e]ing—de[s][p]ite e[n]q[a]qinq m[e] i[n] a [s]exual [l]i[a]ison, in a [s]mall [p][l]etho[r]a of [r][a]cial [f]orms—was still, i[n] [f]a[c]t, a[n] angel [p]ointing me toward the [f]a[c]t my [l]i[f]e, in [l]arge [p]art, [f]o[ll]owed the [p][a][th] of [Ea]stern Or[th]odox[y]. The [m][a][th]e[m][a][t]i[ci]an, [a][tt]e[m][p][t]ing [t]o ext[r][a][p]olate the [m][a][ss]ive [i]nf[i]n[i]tely a[ss]um[p][ti]ons 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[l]atan. For [e]ons a[ss]umed [s]exual [r]e[l][a][ti]ons w[e]'ve [r]e[l][a][ti]on[sh]ips, that on[c]e a [s]exual [l]ine is [c][r]o[ss]ed, [th]en [th]e [r]e[l]a[ti]on[sh]ip will [b][e] i[rr]evo[c]a[b][l][y] [t]ainted, yet w[e]'ve [c]on[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]II. Th[a]t just [a]s [p]erh[a][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, [m]a[k]ing [t]00 we're [n]ow [m]uch of [d]i[s][t]in[c]tio[n] be[t]w[ee]n angels and [d][e][m]ons. It

should be [n][o]te[d] that [e][v]en [D]io[n][y][s]iu[s] [n][o]te[d] that pure [e][v]il, [i]f [i]t [w]ere to [e]xi[s]t, [w]ould imm[e][d][i]atel[y] [c][ea][s]e to [e]xi[s]t, because [e]ve[r]v[th]ing [th]at [e]xi[s]ts is [d]e[r]i[v]ati[v]e of the One, whijch is incaplable of plirolducing plure and that [e][v]il, [e][v]en re[l]ati[v]e [e][v][i]l [f]un[c]tion [s][i]m[p][l]y of [p]ur[s]uing а ina[pp][r]o[p][r][i]ate to a b[e]ing's [p][r]o[p]er [f]un[c]tion, that [e]ve[n] [d][e][m]o[n]s are onl[y] [d]e[m]on[i]c [i]n their [d]i[s]tan[c]e fr[o]m the [O]ne, not in a [s][e][n]se of re[p]res[e][n]ting [p]ure [e]vil, [b][e]cause were they to [b][e] [p]ure [e]vil they would [c][ea][s]e to [e]xi[s]t. [E][s]sentially, this view [p]ur[p]orts [th]at [th]ere's no [f]un[d]a[m]en[t]al [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]o[p][r]i[a]ten[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]ortion to its being, a de[m]on the [p]ur[s]ues [ai]ms [m]o[r]e o[r] le[s]s ina[pp][r][o][p][r]ia[t]e to i[t], [s]t[r][ay]ing from its [p][r]o[p]er [p][r][o][p]ortions.

Canto 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][a]cial [f]o[r]ms yet [r]e[t][ai]ned the [s][a]me e[ss]en[c]e, [m][u]ch like our [d]ual yet [m]oni[s]t [f]o[r]mu[l][a]tion, and [th]en [th]ere were two [d]ar[k] and [f]orm[l]e[ss] [b]ei[n]gs i[n] the [b]a[ck][s]eat—[p]erha[p]s [s]igni[f]ying [th]e evil [th]at's im[p]o[ss]i[b]le to exi[s]t, that [i]s [s]tr[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]ormle[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]om[p]anion, [p]o[s]si[b]l[y] an [a]ngel. Now thi[s] [b][e]ing, [p]erha[p]s an [a]ngel], or [p]erha[p]s a

d[e][m]on, who [t]ook [m]ul[t]i[p]le r[a]cial [f]o[r]ms, eventuall[y] [i]n[f]o[r]med [m][e], [i]n this [c]ar with the two [s]mall [sh]a[p]e[l]e[ss] forms [s][i]tt[i]ng [i]n 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]eam, [e][n]tire[l]y i[n][c]o[r]re[c]t. By [e]m[p][l]oying 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[l][y] [th]ere [n]o im[p][l]ying [th]at are [n][ea]t [d]i[s]tin[c]tions—that [d]ua[l]ity is an i[ll]usion, [th]at [th]i[s] i[d]ea that a [s]tate can [b][e] n[ea]t[l][v] [b][y] [M][i][ss][i][ss][i][pp][i] [d]iv[i][d]ed а [i]s [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]o[n], in f[a][c]t wouldn't e[m]erge on [s]ome other [s][i]de [p]re[c][i][s]e[l]y be[c]ause there is n[o] [a][c]tual o[th]er [s]ide, there's [o]n[l]y a [s][e][p]a[r]ate [r][e][l]ative [p][l]a[c]e. And [w]hen I [w][o]ke up, I [f]elt as th[ou]gh m[y] [l][i][f]e had always [f]o[ll]owed [th]e path of Ea[s]tern Or[th]o[d]oxy, but [i]n th[i][s] [e]mbra[c]e I was a[cc]epting the [n]on-[d]ual [n]ature of our [e]xi[s]ten[c]e inasmuch as I was [a][cc][e]pting [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]ing who [t]ook mulft]iple r[a]cial [f]orms, who I[e][f]t [m]e to [s][e]ttle, not [s]outh of the [r]ather [s]outh [M][i][ss][i][ss][i]ppi, [b]ut of [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][e]te[l][v] [l]a[ck]ed [B][e]ing, [s]igni[f]ying the im[p]o[ss][i][b][i][i][i]t[y] of [e]vil. My [d][r]eam [p]ure a[pp][r]o[p][r]iatel[y] [r]e[p][r]oached thi[s] i[d]ea of t[r][ue] [d][u]alit[y], of [p]ure good and [p]ure evil, [r]e[p][l]a[c]ing this ab[s]o[l][u]te [d][u]a[l]it[y] [w]ith a [r]e[l]ative [d]ua[l]it[y] [w][i]th[i]n the

One, of [w]hich [a]II Good and [a]II [B]eing o[r][i]g[i][n]ates, [b]oth [i]n t[r]an[s]cenden[c]e and i[m]ma[n]en[c]e. I then [r]econ[c][i]led [m][y][s]elf w[i]th th[i][s] [b]eing that went [s]outh of the [M]issouri—and [p]erha[p]s this [b][e]in[g] wasn't I[ea]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[ea]d a [m]ap.

Canto 18-415:582 .713

[E]ven Dion[y][s][i]us [s]t[a]ted outright, 'One [s]ays of [Glod. 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][s]t [S][a]tur[d]ay be[f]ore [m][y] girl[f]riend and [l] [d][i]ned out, knowing all [t]oo [w]ell that [w]e [p]lanned [t]o go [t]o the bar [p][r]ior [t]o our [r]eservation, for a [c]o[ck]tail. My [s][i]g[n][i]f[i][c]ant other ag[r]eed to [a][c]t [a]s our [d]esig[n]ated [d][r]iver for the [n]ight, and I'd [s]pent the [e]ntire wee[k] a[b][s]taining from [e]very [c]on[s]u[m]a[b]le [e]x[c]ept water, [c]o[ff][ee], heart[y] grains, and [f]roz[e]n v[e]geta[b]les, and [l] [f][e]lt as though [l] deserved a [n][i]ce, i[n]e[b]riated [n][i]ght. [I] [s][ai]d to m[y][s][e]lf [Y]ou what?—[v]ou've [r][i]go[r][ou][s][l][y] know [d]e[n]ied [y]our[s]elf p[l]easure thi[s] w[ee]k, 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][i]bed a [c]o[ck]tail [b]e[f]ore the [c]o[ck]tail, and [w]hen [w]e a[r]r[i]ved at the [b]ar, [w]aiting [f]or our [f][r]iends to m[e]et us, w[e] t[r]ied to [p][r]olong 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[nn]er—un[f]o[r]tunatel[y], I'd [f][i]n[i]shed my [c]o[ck]tail [f]irst, and in[c]orre[c]tl[y] [a]ssu[m]ing I had [a]nother ten to [f]i[f]teen [m]inutes

be[f]o[r]e ou[r] [f][r]ie[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][[s]o [a][rr]ived, and then [w]e [w]ere [s][a]t [a]t the table [w]here, [n][ee]d[l]e[ss] to [s]ay, w[e] imm[e][d]iate[l][y] o[r][d]ered a [n]i[c]e 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]ttle [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]ne. [B]e[f]ore [I] knew it [I] was tho[r]oughly [d][r]un[k], I [b]e[c]ame e[n]thusia[s]ti[c]all[v] in[e][b]r[i]ated, [a]nd [l] [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]ated, to [c]o[mm]ent u[p]on a [s][m]all [h]and[f]ul of to[p]i[c]s that I [p][r]o[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]ot[p]ourri of issues th[a]t [p]erh[a][p]s would have [b]een [b][e]tter 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][u]n[d]an[c]e, to [b]e[c]o[m]e [c]omp[l][e]te[l][y] in[e][b][r][i][a]ted, [t]o lose all [t]ouch with [c]ohe[r]en[c]y and [r]e[s]t[r][ai]nt, and to e[n]g[a]ge i[n] [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] mi[s]qui[d]ed [clonver[s][altion [p]ure[l][y] out of [a]b[u]n[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[mm]uni[c]ate with u[s]—[i]s [i]f [n]othing el[s]e [s]uper[a]b[u]ndant.

ISOSCELES: "Theories of the Western World" 12,279:16,742 .733

Canto 01— 523:741 .706

[A]s a [m][a]tter of [f][a][c]t, I was just te[I]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 [i]u[s]t [r]e[m]em[b]ered [t]o[d]ay, [f][r]om years ago a[c]tuall[y], [c]omp[l][e]te[l][y] [n]on-de[s][c]ript, entire[l][y] in[c]on[s]e[q]uential at [f]a[c]e va[l]ue, yet it was a [n]ight [th]at [n]one[th]e[l]e[ss], [n]ow [th]in[k]ing it [th][r]ough, is e[ss]entially [i]nd[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[c]t, [l] [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[a]ve [p][a]ssed I've [c]ome to the [c]o[n][c]lusion [th]at [th]ere's a[c]tually no[th]ing а [p][r]io[r]i w[r]ong with my [c]o[l]ors—a[c]tua[l]l[y], if anything, it's [q]uite [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 [l] [c][ou]ld [l] w[ou]ldn't. Be[c]ause [e]ven though my t[r]ue [c]olors [r]e[q]uire a [p][r][e][r]e[q]u[i]s[i]te, a [p]erh[a][p]s un[a][pp]etizing [p][r][e][r]e[q]u[i]s[i]te, a [p][r][e][r]e[q]uisite that, ye[s], that I I[oa]the [c]ertain [p][e]o[p]le for n[o] r[ea]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][oa]the [c]ertai[n] [p][eo][p]le for a[b]so[l]ute[l][y] [n][o] r[ea]so[n], [w]ith [n][o] ju[s]tification [w]hat[s][o]ever, that [p][eo][p]le [s]ans [p]r[e]text [i]s [i]n [f]act entire[l][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]cial events that I [l][oa]thed—I [l][oa]thed 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[e]nda[n][c]e of these [e]ve[n]t[s]. [P][eo][p]le, ul[t]imatel[y], have no [c]outh—to this day, [f]or exam[p]le, I o[f]ten [f][i]nd m[y][s]el[f] [p][r]esent at [s]ocial gathe[r]ings where a [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te [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]most [a][l]ways a [l]ittle [l]et [d]own by the qua[l]it[y] of the ce[l]er[y]. [A]t th[a]t [p]arti[c]u[l]ar [s]tage in m[y] [l][i][f]e, in [f]a[c]t, the e[r]a I'm [s][p]ea[k]ing of, [l]'d [r]e[c]on[c][i]led m[y][s]el[f] to the [f]a[c]t that [I] [h]ad [i]nt[r][i]ns[i][c]ally [h][i]gher [s]tandards than mo[s]t [w]hen it [c]ame to [c]e[l]ery, [c]u[c]umbers as [w]ell—[l] a[n]a[l][y]zed [p][r]odu[c]e with a[n] [a][c]uit[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]ount[r][y] have [n]ext to [n]o [c]outh when it [c]omes to [s]erving [c]ele[r][y] or [c]u[c]umbers. [F]or[c]ed to [a]ttend a [s][o]-[c]alled [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]out to re[I]ay, I was [a][pp]alled at the [q]u[a][l]ity of [c]u[c]um[b]e[r]s [s]e[r]ved—[a] [c]u[c]um[b]er, [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[ll][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]a[d]ation in the [g]ua[l]it[y] of our [c]e[l]er[y] and [c]u[c]umbers un[d]oubted[l][y] [s]tems f[r]om Ame[r]i[c]a's ove[r]re[l]ian[c]e on [d]ip.

Canto 02—570:752 .758

[D][i]p, [i]n ou[r] e[r]a, has [l]ite[r]a[ll][y] and figu[r]ative[l][y] [b]e[c]ome the hors [d]'oeuvre, it's [b]e[c]ome [c]ultu[r]a[ll][y] a[cc]epta[b]le to utter[l][y] [q]ua[l]it[y] of the ig[n]ore the [c]e[l]e[r][y] and [c]u[c]um[b]ers, [t]wo of the m[o]st [r]ef[r]eshing yet deli[c]ate vegeta[b]les k[n][o]wn [t]o our [s]pe[c]ies, at gatherings [b]e[c]ause it'[s] [a][ss][u]med [s]ocial [a]ttention [c]on[s][u][m]ers' will [b]e fo[c]u[s]ed [a]I[m][o][s]t [s][o]le[l][y] on the [d]i[p]. Yet it'[s] [p]re[c]i[s]e[l][y] the [d]i[p] that [n]egates the [n]ut[r][i]t[i]onal [b]enef[i]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 d[i][p]s and [s]au[c]es that o[b]l[i]terate all [p]o[ss][i][b]le [n]utr[i]t[i]onal [b]enef[i]ts of a ve[g]eta[b]le. These dip[s] [s]au[c]es [a][n]nihi[l]ate the [i]nt[r][i]ns[i]ca[l]ly [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[e]s could rel[ie]ve themselves all over th[e]se [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te vegeta[b]le [p][l]ates and [n]ot miss а [b][ea]t [n]utr[i]t[i]ona[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]e[r]en[c]e in ta[s]te, with the a[m][ou]nt [c][r]eam [c]u[r]rentl[y] [f][ou]nd [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] I[i]fe, al[m]o[s]t eve[r]y [w]eek I [w]ould [s][p]end [t]w[o] [t][o] [flive 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[n]g on[l][y] the [fline[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 [l]'d [f][i]na[l]l[y] [m]ade [m]y [s]e[l]e[c]tion—[b]e[c]ause, to [th]is [d][a]y, [th]ere's nothing more [d]e[f][l][a]ting 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]tin[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]alled G[r][ee][k]-[A]me[r]i[c]ans, none of u[s] should b[e] [s]ur[p][r]ised at thi[s] [s]tate of [a][f]fairs, with a [r][e][f][r][e]shin[g] vegetable di[p] ma[s][k]ing the [e][ss][e]n[c]e of the g[e]nuine arti[c]le, [s]o [s][p]ea[k]—and th[i][s] br[i]ngs [m]e to a [m]uch [l]arger point, a [m]ore [g][r]an[d]iose [i]ssue, [i][f] you'[ll] a[ll]ow me to [d]i[g][r]e[ss] just [s][l][i]ght[l]y [b][e][f]ore [l] [b][e]gin my [a]nec[d]ote, the [a]ne[c][d][o]te I've [a]dmittedl[y] [b]een o[b][s]e[ss]ing [o]ver for [w]ee[k]s [w]hich [w][i]ll [i]nevita[b][l][y], I [b]e[l][ie]ve, [b]e[c]ome the [c]rux of [m]y argu[m]ent [B]e[c]ause there's [e]nd[l][e][ss] [d]i[s]cussion to[d]ay with regard to our [s]o-[c]alled world, our a[l]l[e]g[e]d [W][e][s]te[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]gor as o[pp]osed [c]arele[ss]ne[ss]—be[c]ause it's [t]oo often [th]at we [th]row [t]erms in[t]o [th]e e[th]er w[i][l]l[y]-n[i][l]l[y]. In short, it's [e]n[t]ire[l][y] [p]ossible we're confusing [e]x[t]en[si]o[n] with i[n]ter[p][r]e[t]a[ti]o[n] as it [r]e[l]ates to our [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld. There's [e]nd[l][e][ss] tal[k] of [W][e][s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld, [b]ut let'[s] this [s]pe[c]i[f]i[c], thi[s] [W]e[s]tern [w]orld [i]s, [i]n [f]a[c]t, [l][i]ttle more tha[n] a[n] Ang[l]o [w]orld, it'[s] [n]ot [s]im[p][l]y a [n]on[d]e[s][c]ri[p]t [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld, it'[s] al[s]o an [a][c]tual [A]ng[l]o world—our [c]ivi[l]ization, [s]o to [s]pea[k], is [n]omi[n]a[l]ly [c]on[s]i[d]ered We[s]tern, [n]omi[n]a[l]ly [c]onsidered G[r]ae[c][o]-[R][o]man, y[e]t th[e]re's a [b]ar[b]a[r]ism at [p]lay here, the[r]e's a n[e]fa[r]ious v[e]geta[b]le di[p] [b]u[r]ving the [q][e]nuine article here.

Canto 03—635:866 .733

In [a]ctu[a][l]ity, the [W]este[r]n [w]o[r]ld [i]s l[i]ttle [m]ore than a [m]isn[o]mer for the Ang[l][o] [w]orld, [w]h[i]ch [i]s [e]sse[n]tia[l]ly the Am[e]rica[n] [w]orld, [a]nd the [w]orld, in [a][c]tu[a][l]it[y], [A]ng[l]o is [n]ot ex[t]ension of G[r]ae[c][o]-[R][o]man [A]n[t]i[q]uit[y],[n][o], [i]t's s[i]m[p]l[y] a[n] [i][n][t]er[p][r]e[t]ation of that world—and even [th]en [th]at in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation was a [p]urely [s]ub[s]equent in[t]er[p][r]e[t]atio[n], a[n] i[n][t]er[p][r]e[t]atio[n] i[n] [r]e[s][p]onse to a[n] [B]e[c]ause i[n][t]er[p]re[t]ation. the [p][r]imary in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation of [A]n[t]i[q]uity [c]ame from [a]nd [A]n[t]i[o]ch [Clonst[a]n[t]in[o][p]le [a]nd [A]lexan[d]ria, in the s[o]-[c]alled [B]yzantine world, and only then [d]id this [A]nglo world i[n][d]ulge i[n] a [s]ub[s]e[q]uent in[t]erp[r]e[t]ation of the G[r]ae[c][o]-[R][o]man [A]n[t][i][q]u[i]t[y], [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]l[d] under[s]t[oo][d], [th]at [th]e [A]ng[l]o world, in a very t[a]n[g]i[b]le [s]en[s]e, [i]s [l][i]ttle more tha[n] a[n] e[l]a[b]orate ve[g]eta[b]le [d][i][b] [i]t[s]elf, [s]u[b][s]equent [i]n[t]er[p]re[t]ation, and [i]t's [p]erha[p][s] the m[o][s]t [p]erv[a]s[i]ve [i]ter[a]t[i]on of [s][o]-called v[e]getable [d]i[p] our [p]la[n]et has y[e]t [s][e]e—be[n][e]ath it w[e] [d]i[s][c]over the genuine arti[c]le, the [p][r]ima[r]y in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation, [s]o to [s][p]ea[k]. [A]s for us, w[i][th][i]n [th][i][s] [A]nglo [w]orld [w]e re[m]ain [m]o[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] g[l]o[ss]ed [o]ver, a [s]u[b]-o[p]ti[m]al [f]it [o]ver here and [s]u[b]-o[p]ti[m]al [flit [o]ver there, as [D]i[a][m][a]n[d][a] [G]al[a]s a[p]tly [p]ut it: A[m]e[r]i[c]a [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]tern [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[l]y [a]d[m]it our[s]elves [th]at [th]e [m]odern [c]enter of the Ang[l]o world, [A][m]eri[c][a], for [a]ll of its [m]elting p[o]t [m]yth[o]logy, has [n]ever [a]ssi[m]ilated, [n]ot [q]uite, be[c]ause [i]n[s]tead [i]t'[s] [s][i]mp[l]y [a]nnihi[l]ated—in Ameri[c][a] we [l][o]ve d[i][s][c]u[ss]ing 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 eth[n][i][c][i]ti[e]s are at [b]ottom fal[s]e [s]o-[c]alled eth[n][i][c][i]ties, ju[s]t as the modern Gree[k], the Helle[n]i[c] [b]a[b]oon, [i]s a f[i][c]t[i]onal eth[n][i][c][i]ty, all [o]f [o]ur [o]ther eth[n][i][c][i]ti[e]s are e[ss]ent[i]al[l][v] f[i]ct[i]onal eth[n][i][c][i]ti[e]s. 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]uent[l][y], what's in[e]vita[b][l][y] [t][r]ue [b]ut will [r]e[m]ain [p]er[p]etual[l][y] [u]n[t]ouched [u][p]on is [th]at [th]ere 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]ng[l]o. Eve[r]yone is [A]ng[l]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]i[c]a, i[n][s]o[f]ar as they've [a]do[p]ted [A]meri[c]an hy[ph]ena[ti]ons, is e[ss]en[ti]al[l]y Ang[l][o]—as [C]atho[l][i][c][i]sm [w]ashed [o]ver [th]e [th]i[r]d [w]o[r]ld, [th]e [th]i[r]d wo[r]ld be[c][a]me e[ss]entia[ll]y [A]ng[l]o, the Puritanism of North [A][m]eri[c][a] [m][i]xed w[i][th] [th]e [C]atho[I][i][c][i]sm of [S]outh [A][m]eri[c][a] and [r]esulted in a [m]i[l]ieu where [e]ve[r]yone is [e]ss[e]ntially Ang[l]o. M[a][g]ic [J][o]hn[s]on, [a]t [b][o]ttom, is e[ss]entia[ll]y [e]thn[i][c][i]ties Ang[l]o. [E]nd[l]e[ss] have [p]ro[p]er[l][y] [i]denti[f][i]ed, [s]y[s]te[m]ati[c]al[l][y] [a][ss][i][m][i][l][a]ted [i]nto th[i][s] [A]ng[l]o-A[m]eri[c]an [f]ramewor[k], and [s]ub[s]e[q]uent[l]y [a]nnihi[l]ated, and [p]e[r]use their [c]oming-of-age [n]a[r]ratives, we [p]enned in the [c]la[ss]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]oming-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[ee]n ess[e]ntia[ll][y] annihi[l]ated.

Canto 04—618:845 .731

The [c]o[m]ing-of-age [n]a[r]rative of the Viet[n]a[m][e]se [i][mm][i]g[r]ant 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] [th]at [th]i[s] [V]iet[n]amese 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][ll]y [a][n]ni[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]ti[e]s are [e]ntire[l][y] fi[c][ti]onal, they've [b]ee[n] [e][ss]e[n]ti[a][ll][y] [a][n]nihi[l]ated, just as we, the H[e][l]l[e][n]ic [b]a[b]oons, have [a]l[s]o [b]ee[n] e[s]se[n]ti[a][ll]y [a][n]nihi[l]ated. 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[c]t, e[n]tire[l]y Ang[l]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]nnihi[l][a]ted, [p]erha[p]s only [b]e[c]ause they've [c][l]ung to their meta[ph][y]s[i][c]al d[i]stin[c]tions—through [v]a[r]ying [c][r]u[s][a]des o[cc]u[p][a]tions, [v]a[r]iou[s] [c]a[p]italis[m]s and [c]lung [c]o[m]munis[m]s they've to their [m]eta[ph][v]s[i][c]al d[i][s]t[i]n[c]tions. to the [m]eta[ph]ysi[c]al [f][r]amewor[k] of the [P]a[t][r]iar[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]u[i]ty, it's [n][o] [N]ew [R][o]me, [b]e[c]ause [i]ts [i]n[t]erp[r]e[t]ations have [i]nevita[b]ly [b]een filtered through the [s][o]-[c]alled [B]yzan[t][i]ne, th[r]ough the [S]e[c]ond [R][o]me of [C]on[s]tan[t][i]ne, [B]ut for the Ortho[d]ox, [C]h[r][i][s]t [s]ym[b]ol[i]zed the [t][r]ue, ve[r]if[i]ed immanen[c]e of [G]od, to [c]o[rr]e[s]pond with the t[r]an[s]cen[d]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[a]n[s]cen[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]cen[d]en[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]e), God was [n]ow the [s]ame, [n]ot [t]ran[s]cen[d]e[n]t or but i[n][s]tead [t]ran[s]cen[d]e[n]t i[m]mane[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]oven to [b][e] wholl[y] [i]mmanent, [i]n a[dd][i]t[i]on to [b]eing en[t]irely [t]ranscen[d]ent, [G]od's [E]nergi[e]s were [E]nergi[e]s w[e] [c]ould a[pp][r]oach [i]nte[r]a[c]t w[i]th, to [b]e[c][o]me [o]ne with [G]od, [e]ven [m]o[m]entari[l][y], was d[ee]med a [p]ossi[b]i[l]it[y]. Ch[r]i[s]t was b[r]illiantly [g][r]a[f]ted onto [c]entu[r]i[e]s of [G][r][e]ek 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[q]uent Angl[o] in[t]er[p]re[t]ation, by [r]e[s]t[r]i[c]ting God and [P]erson in[t]elle[c]t, the the [c]on[c]e[p]tual [t]o [t]o the [t]ran[s]cend[e]nt, [e][s]sentia[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]uent Ang[l]o in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation was [m]ar[k]ed[l]y [d]iffe[r]ent—[b]e[c]ause now [b]e to [t][r]anscen[d]e[n][t] and i[m]mane[n][t] was now [d]eemed [d]e[c]a[d]ent and o[r]ie[n]tal. The [s]o-called [B]yzan[t]ine i[n][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]l[l][y] immane[n]t a[n]d en[t]ire[l][y] [t][r]anscen[d]e[n]t, the whereas Ang[l]o in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation viewed that in[t]er[p]re[t]ation as wh[o][l]l[y] [d]eca[d]e[n]t a[n]d b[o]th e[n][t]ire[l][y] o[r]iental, the Ang[l]o in[t]erp[r]e[t]ation, just as the He[b][r]ew [G]od [b][a]nished [A][d]am [a]nd Eve from the [K]ing[d]om of [G]od, [s]u[b][s]e[q]uently [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]ree[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]ree[k] [w]orld, [w][i]th[i]n th[i][s] [s][i][l][y] [B][y]zant[i]ne [m][i][l]ieu, to [k][i]ll their [G]od would [b]e a[k]in to [c]o[mm]itting [s]ui[c]ide.

Canto 05-522:715 .730

[W]hereas the Anglo [w]orld [d][i]vor[c]ed [i]t[s]el[f] [f]rom the Energies, became the tran[s]cen[d]ent world [p]ar ex[c]el[l]en[c]e, and [l][e][f]t it[s][e][f] no choi[c]e but to k[i]|| [i]t[s] God [r]uth[l]e[s]s[l][y] and ex[p]ed[i]t[i]ous[l][y]. The t[r]an[s]c[e]nd[e]nt world [p]ar ex[c][e][l]l[e]n[c]ealm[o][s]t i[p][s][o] fa[c]t[o] be[c]omes the [s]e[c]u[l]ar athei[s]t world [p]ar ex[c][e][l]l[e]n[c]e. T[r]an[s]c[e]n[d][e]n[c]e[d]ivor[c]ed [f][r]o[m] i[mm]anen[c]e is the p[r]i[m]a[r]y [f]or[m]u[l]a of the [s]ecu[l]ar. The [W]e[s]te[r]n [w]o[r]ld is the Ang[l]o [w]orld [w]h[i]ch [i]s nothing more than a [s]ub[s]equent in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation [r][a]ther th[a]n а [p][r]i[m]a[r]y in[t]er[p][r]e[t]ation. In A[m][e][r]i[c]a, [e]ve[r]vone is Anglo, Viet[n]a[m]ese i[mm]ig[r]ants w[r]ite [c]o[m]ing of age [s]to[r]ies that are [n]othing if [n]ot h[o]li[s]ti[c]al[l][y] [A]ng[I][o], tran[s]ce[n]de[n]t[I][y] [A]ng[I]o. [A]nd we [s]it, [p]ortrayed [a]s [a][b][s]urd[l]y He[l]le[n]i[c], [a]s Athenian [b]a[b]oons, yet of [c]our[s]e we have [p]erha[p]s that loo[k]," mu[s][k] is "[B]yzantine our [p]erha[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]y Ang[l]o, the Ita[l]ian-A[m]eri[c]an [M]an is the [A]ng[l]o [M]an, the G[r]ee[k]-A[m]e[r]i[c]an [M]an, des[p]ite [p]laying the [r]ole of [A]thenian [B]a[b]oon, is [a]l[s][o] [e][ss]entia[ll][v] Ang[l][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][l]ame anyone more than our[s]elves. [w]e [w]ere [p][l]a[c]ed [i]n an [i]m[p]o[ss]i[b]le [p]osition [b]et[w][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 [a]nd [n]ow we're [n]o f[a]sh[i]on. longer 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? [l]t'[s] de[f][i]n[i]te[l][y] [p]o[s]sible, yet I [fl[ee]I com[p][I][e]te[I][y] a[pp][r]o[p][r]iate, a[c]tua[ll][y] [f]eel [l]i[k]e, i[f] an[y]thing, I'm [b][e]ing too reserved, th[a]t i[f] anything I'm [a][c]tua[ll]y [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]ght now, [I]'m a[c]tual[I][y] 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][ou]gh [th]ere's vi[t]ri[o]l that I [s][t]ill [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]ay 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[r]iol, it's [p]o[ss]i[b]le that I [o]we all this [v]it[r]i[o]l to the gene[r]al [p]o[p]u[l]a[c]e. [l]t's alm[o]st as [i]f I'm [l][ea]ving [l][oa]ds of vitr[i][o]I on the table. The Ang[I][o] world [I]e[c]tured us [th]at [th]e au[th]enti[c] Gree[k]s m[a]de [a][n]al 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]e[n]et[r][a]ting high [s][c]hool [a]ged [m]e[n] i[n] the [r]ear-e[n]d, when they i[n][s]tead [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[a]t

[p]oint that G[r]eek [c]ulture be[c][a]me [d]e[p][r][a]ved and [d]e[c]a[d]ent. Wholl[y] o[r][i]ental. Th[i]s [i]s what I've [b]een per[s]onal[i][y] taught [b]y the Ang[i][o] [s][o]-[c]alled [s][c]ho[i][a][s]ti[c]s—[a]nd th[a]t I [c]an tell you is [a]b[s][o][i]ute[i][y] no exaggeration.

Canto 06—528:719 .734

Only the Gree[k][s] would a[cc][e]pt two [s][e]ts 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][i]d. [l]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[l][y] [h]ave the [h]ighe[s]t re[s]pe[c]t au[d]a[c]it[y] of the Ang[l]o world. Our for the an[c]e[s]tors have [s]pent hun[d][r]e[d]s of years in o[b][s]cure mountains, for[b]i[dd]en to [r]ead or w[r]ite, [w]h[i]le the ent[i]re Ang[l]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][a][ss]in[a]tio[n], [s][o] it's n[o] won[d]er [p]e[d]o[ph]iles [r]un [r]am[p]ant in [e]ve[r]y [W][e][s]tern [p]olity—loo[k] who [c]om[p][r][i]se the [i][d]ols of the [W]e[s]t! [Th]e A[th]enian with [th]e [b]eauti[f]ul [b]oy[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 i[f] the [a]l[ph]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[a]t I was [a]t [a] [r]e[s]tau[r]ant [a]c[r]o[s]s the [s]t[r]eet [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]iend's [c]ousi[n] was i[n] town, [a]nd she [a]nd her [f]ather [i][n]vited 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 [l] [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]ved 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[a]lly [h]ad to g[o] but [a]|[s][o] [h]ad [n][o] issue with [a]tten[d]ing. [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[c]u[l]ar[l]y thin[k] high[l]y of the [r]e[s]tau[r][a]nt [a][c]ro[ss] the [s]t[r]eet, 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[n]t [m][ea][l]s, that I could or[d]er and [f][ee][l] re[l]ative[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][l]atter, where you re[c][ei]ved 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]i[k]e a [c]om[p][l]ete a[ss]hole or[d]e[r]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]iend and [l], [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]eat [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]ove [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, [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[mm][e][d][i]atel[y] the [c]on[v]er[s]ation [t]urns [t]o [d]i[s][c][u][ss]ed [C]O[V]ID-Ninet[ee]n va[cc][i][n]e, and [b][e]ing wh[o]l[l][y] [s][o][b]er as well as extr[e]me[l][y] hungr[y] [I] de[c][i]de to have [n][o] part of it, I [d]on't a[n]ything a[b]out [n]onli[n]ear me[n]tion [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]utions, the i[n]he[r]e[n]t [d]i[s]hone[s]t[v] of [a]|| ||[a]rge govern[m]ents over the cour[s]e of [h]u[m]an [h]i[s]tor[y].

Canto 07—546:721 .757

I ch[oo]se t[o] [r]e[f][r][ai]n [f][r]om m[e]ntioning [E]I[I]iot [A][b][r]ams [r]ec[ei]ving a [f]i[f]t[y] dol[l]ar [f]ine [f]or [c]r[a][ck] [c]o[c][ai]ne t[r][a][ff]i[ck]ing into eve[r]y [b]|[a][ck] [c]o[mm]u[n][i]ty [i]n A[m]er[i][c]a [i]n the [N]ineteen-[Ei]ghties, I ch[oo]se t[o] [r]e[f][r]ain [f][r]om [m]entio[n]ing a[n]y of this, as it wasn't the [r][i]ght [t][i]me [t]o di[s][c]u[ss] [n]on[l]i[n]ea[r]it[ie]s a[n]d E[I][[i]ot Ab[r]ams, thi[s] was my [c]on[c][l]usion at the time. I wasn't [gloing to [glet [claught u[p] in the [n][a]ture of [d][i]st[r][i][b]ut[i]ons [p][r]o[b]a[b][i][l][i]tv and [A][b][r][a]ms' [f]i[f]ty [d]o[ll]ar [f]ine [f]or [s]e[ll]ing [l]arge [s]wathes of [c][r]ack [c]o[c]aine at the [b]ehe[s]t of the [f]ir[s]t [B]ush [a]dmini[s]tration [a]t th[a]t time. It would have [b]een un[c]outh, ill-[a]dvised, [a]s well [a]s ina[pp][r][o][p][r][i]ate. [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] [k]ee[p]ing [m]y [m]outh shut I felt just a [m][o][m]en[t]ary [t][i]nge of ag[i][t]ation, in h[ea]ring th[e]se o[p]inions I inve[t]e[r]atel[y] [d]i[s]ag[r][ee]d with, in [r]e[f][r]aining [f][r][o]m [u]tte[r]ing the [ph][r][a]ses [n]on[l]i[n]ear[i]ty [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]ut[i]ons and E[l]li[o]t [A][b][r]ams I [b]ec[a]me s[l]ight[l][y] [a]git[a]ted, the [o]n[l][y] [a]n[t]id[o]te [t]o my [a]gi[t][a]tion would [b]e s[a]y the to [wlord [n]on[l]i[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]on[l]i[n]earit[y], [a]nd I h[a]d [a][b][s]o[l]utel[y] no intention of utte[r]ing the ph[r][a]se E[II][i]ot [A][b][r]ams at thi[s] [r]e[s]tau[r]ant, [l] coul[d]n't [d]o either without embar[r]a[ss]ing [m][y][s]elf, and [l] kn[ew] it. The f[a]ct of the [m][a]tter is whe[n] a[n] o[p][i]n[i]on I d[i][s]ag[r]ee ex[p][r]e[ss]ed w[i]th[i]n [m]y gene[r]al w[i]th [i]s [p][r]ox[i][m][i]ty, [a]nd ı [a]ct s[o]cial[l][v] a[pp][r][o][p][r]iate[l][y] and [r]e[f][r]ain [f][r]om sha[r]in[g] my t[r]ue [f]ee[l]in[g]s on the [m]atter, then I o[f]ten [f]eel

th[i]s [t][i]nge of [a]gi[t]ation, [a]s i[f] I was [p]ut on thi[s] Ea[r]th for the [s]ole [p]u[r][p]o[s]e of behaving ina[pp][r][o][p][r]iatel[y] and ex[p][r]e[ss]ing my hone[s]t o[p]inions, n[o] matter the co[s]t [s][o]ciall[y]. In[s]tead I [flound my[s]el[f] g[l]an[c]ing [i]nter[m][i]ttent[l][y] at [m]y [c]ousin, [f]riend's older ju[s]t shame[l]e[ss][l][v] [s][p]e[c]u[l][a]ting on his [r][a]cial m[a][k]eu[p]—which I h[a]te. I've [b]ee[n] on the [r]e[c]eiving e[n]d of thi[s] de[s][p]ica[b]le [b]ehavior, and ľm sure vou've ex[p]e[r]i[e]n[c]ed [s][i]m[i]lar, and [l] [d]e[s][p][i]se [p]eo[p]le who ju[s]t shame[l]e[ss][l]y [s][p]e[c]u[l]ate as to [m]y r[a]cial [m][a][k]eu[p], I'm sure you [d]e[s]pise them j[u][s]t as m[u]ch, yet [s]itting a[c]ro[ss] [f][r]om thi[s] [d]i[s]tant [c]ousin of [m]y [f][r]iend, [m]y [l]over [p]erh[a][p][s], I [s][a]t in this [s]i[l]ent hy[p]o[c][r]i[s]y, I [s]at there and shame[l]e[ss][l][y], [c]ontinuou[s][l][y] [s][p]e[c]u[l]ated on his r[a]cial [m][a][k]eu[p] to [m]y[s]elf, going [s]o [f]ar as [t]o [t]a[k]e [s][p]e[c]i[f]ic [f]acial [f]eatures into a[cc]ount and [s][p]e[c]ulate on a [g]eo[g][r]a[ph]ic a[r]ea of o[r]i[q]in. Ιt was [g][r]ote[s][q]ue. But that's un[f]ortunately what I [f]ound my[s]el[f] doing in [p]la[c]e of sharing my [s]in[c]ere [n]onli[n]ear [p][r]o[b]a[b][i][l][i]ty o[p]inions on [d][i][s]t[r][i][b]utions and E[I]liot A[b][r]ams [d]i[s]t[r]i[b]uting [c][r]a[ck] [c]o[c]aine to the [b][l]a[ck] [c]o[m]mu[n]iti[e]s of the U[n]ited [S]t[a]tes in the [N]inet[ee]n [Ei]ghti[e]s—but of [c]ourse [n]o one [c]an [n]onli[n]ear di[s]t[r]i[b]utions [m]ention or E[I]liot A[b][r]ams [s]e[l]ling [c][r]a[ck] anymore.

Canto 08-501:685 .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][i]one w[e]'ve [s][ee]n the [i]arge-[s][c]ale o[pp][r]ession of A[f][r]i[c]an-A[m]e[r]i[c]ans over the

[clour[s]e of [c]enturies, the [s]tate-[s]an[c]tioned poiso[n]i[n]gs of A[f][r]i[c]an-A[m]eri[c]an [c]o[mm]unities with [c][r]a[ck] [c]o[c]aine, of [l]ower [c][l]ass [C]au[c]asian [c]o[m]munities w[i]th [p][r]es[c][r][i][p]tion [p]ills, we have [p]o[p] [s]tars named [L]ittle Xanax, m[i][ll]ions of ch[i][l]dr[e]n [i]n thi[s] [c]ountry [f]anta[s]ize [a][b]out [a][b]using [p][r]e[s][c][r]i[p]tion nar[c]oti[c]s be[f]ore they go to [s][l]ee[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[a]ting ju[s]t this [s]ort of [b]ehavior, [a][pp]arent[l]y thinks [n]othing of it. We have one [p]o[p] [L]ittle [s]tar [n]amed [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]ted [f]or [p][r]od[u][c]ing this lu[r]id [s]tate of affflairs, and th[a]t's just [s][c]r[a]tching the [s]ur[f]a[c]e in Ame[r]i[c]a, [c]on[f]ining our in[q]ui[r]y 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, Hit[l]er and the Na[ti]onal [S]o[ci]a[l]i[s]ts, the Gu[l]ag, the [f]a[m]ine of [M]ao, or the [p]re[p]on[d]e[r]an[c]e of [o]ther [o][cc]u[p]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 the g[l]obe mo[r]e o[r] [l][e][ss] [a][c]ro[ss] in[c][e][ss]ant[l]y—yet [n]ow the U[n]ited [S]t[a]tes govern[m]ent [i]nfor[m]s [i]t[s] [c][i]t[i]zens without a t[r][a][c]e of i[r]ony that a [f][a]st-t[r][a][ck]ed v[a][cc]ine is beyond [r]e[p][r]oach [f]or a[n][y] a[n]d eve[r][y]one, with no [l]ong-term [e]m[p]i[r]i[c]al [e]vi[d]en[c]e [a]vai[l]able, and i[f] we [q]u[e][s]tion [th]at [th]en we're [e][ss]ential[l]y [e]x[c]ommuni[c]ated [f]rom [d]e[c]ent [s]o[c]iety. We've [b]ecome [ch]a[r][l]atans [p]a[r] ex[c]el[l]en[c]e if we men[ti]on the [n]ature of [d]are [n]on[l]i[n]ear [p]ro[b]a[b]i[l]ity [d]i[s]tri[b]u[ti]ons, if we m[e]nt[i]on the [f][a][c]t th[a]t E[I]liot A[b]rams was [f]ined [f]i[f]ty do[I]lars [f]or se[l]ling [c][r]a[ck], if we utter the [ph][r][a]ses

[n]on[l]i[n]ear [p]ro[b]a[b][i][l][i]ty [d][i]st[r][i][b]ution or E[l]liot A[b][r]ams was a [c][r]a[ck] [c]o[c][ai]ne [d]ea[l]er we've a[pp]a[r]ent[l][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] [l] just [s]aid to [d]i[s][g]u[s]ting, m[y][s]elf—you're th[i]s [g]ro[t]e[s][g]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]iend, who I [m]ay or [m]ay not [b]e in love with, who o[r][d]ers [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[c]t [s]ame [m]eal, the [S][p]i[c][y] [M]a[k][i] [P][l]atter, and I ju[s]t shot her a [l]oo[k], I [I]oo[k]ed at her [I]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 [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][c]t meal [b][a][ck] to [b][a][ck].

Canto 09-483:668 .723

But [th]en I [th]ink to my[s][e]I[f] W[e]II, 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][e]te[l]y [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]mes to [s]ushi, [b]ut I al[s]o—in t[r]ue [G][r]eek Ortho[d]ox [f][a]shion—[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[i]ves [l]'m [a]lways [p][r]e[p]ared to [s]tu[ff] mγ [f]a[c]e. ľve [r][ea]d [m]o[d]ern [m]e[d][i][c][i]ne [i]s [b]egi[n]ning to [r][e]cog[n]ize value in this | [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[ti]ons more e[ff]i[ci]entl[y] when it's [dep][rlived for a period of time. [But ifn] 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][a]d, who's [s][a]t [n]ext to [m]e, orders a shrimp [n]oo[d]le [d]ish th[a]t 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[a]ns on [sh]aring the meal with him, and when th[i][s] [sh][r][i]mp [n]oo[d]le [d][i]sh [i]s [s]erved h[i]s [i]n[i][ti]al [r]eac[ti]on 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[ss]i[b]le for one [p]er[s]on to finish a [p]late of th[a]t [m][a]gnitu[d]e, [s]ave [m]or[b]i[d][l][y] o[b]e[s]e, in ju[s]t one [s]itting. S[o] i[m]m[e]d[i]ate[l][y], and [o]n[l][y] with the [b][e][s]t 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]ividuals 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][i]sh, and [i]n[i]tial[l][y] I re[f]use not on[l][y] [b]e[c]ause I [f]ind the [d]ish una[pp]ea[l]ing but [p][r]ima[r]i[l][y] [b]e[c]ause I'm [ea]ting [m]y own [m][ea]I. But this [ch]anges even[tu]a[l][v]. [F][a][m]ished [a]s I [f]ound my[s]el[f], I obviou[s][l][y] [f]inished [m]y [m]eal not on[l][y] [b]e[f]ore [a]nyone [e]lse at the ta[b]le [b]ut [c]on[s]ide[r]a[b][l][y] [p][r]ior to [a]nyone [e]l[s]e at the ta[b]le [c][l]eaning their [p][l]ate—I'm [s]itting there with a [c]om[p][l][e]te[l][y] [c][l][ea]n [p][l]ate while [e]veryone [e]lse is [a]t [m]ost h[a]l[f]way [th][r]ough [th]eir [m]eal. And my [f][r]iend is [h]ardl[y] [ea]ting [h]er [M]a[k][i] Pl[a]tter [a]t all, instead she's busy [m][u]n[ch]ing her [c][ou]sin's General [Ts]o 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, [l]'m [f]ull, [l] say, [n]ot [th]in[k]ing at all. Wi[th]out a [s]ingle [th]ought in my

[s][k]u[ll] [l][r]epl[y] that l'm full—v[e]t [r][e]t[r]o[s]p[e][c]t what [e][[s]e [c]ould I [s]ay? How [c]an y[ou] [r]e[f][u]se а bite of [s]omeone's e[s]pecial[l][y] on a [s]e[c]ond o[ff]er, without [s]aying [f]ull? lt's [p]ro[b]a[b][l][y] you're the on[l][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]aced mysel[f] [i]n a [b][i]t of an [i]m[b]r[o]g[l]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]lls [y]ou. [Y]ou [f][i]nish a [p][l]ate of [s]ush[i] and the [f]ir[s]t [th][i]ng you [th][i]n[k] [i]s I [c]ould go [f]or a [l]ittle more [s]ush[i].

Canto 10-441:639 .690

"Eight[ee]n p[ie][c]es of [f][i]sh-[f][i]lled [s]ushi and I'm not [e]ven rem[o]te[l][y] [c][l][o]se to [f]ull. All my th[ou]ghts [r]ev[o]lve 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]i[c][y] [M]a[k][i] [P][l]atter. [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[s]tine[l][y] [s]n[ea]king a few [p][ie][c]es of [s]aid [s]ush[i] into [m]y [m][ou]th with[ou]t [m]y [c]om[p][a]nion's d[a]d [n]oticing, [n]ot that he would [c]are, but ju[s]t on [p]rin[c]i[p]le. I already inh[a]led [m]y [m]eal, [ei]ght[ee]n [p][ie][c]es of [f][i]sh-[f][i]lled [s]ushi, and now I'm [c]l[ai]ming, to my [f][r]iend's [f]ather, that I'm [f]ull, but then [r]e[m]or[s]e[l]e[ss][l][y] [c]on[s][u]ming the [s][u]sh[i] [s]itting next to my [p][l]ate? That just wasn't [a] [p]a[l]ata[b]le o[p]tion in [m][y] [m][i]nd at the t[i]me. I wanted to [a]void that [s]cenario if [p]o[ss]i[b]le. Yet [c]on[c]o[c]ting as l'm а [p][l]an to [s]urre[p]titiou[s][l][y] extra[c]t this foreign [s]ush[i] into [m]y [m]outh [m]y [f]riend's [c]ousin [t]a[k]es her [f]or[k] and [s][t]arts eating her [s]ush[i]—po[t]entiall[y] my [s]ush[i]. I'm watching my [f]riend's [f]ather struggle to

[f][i]n[i]sh h[i]s [g]ar[g]antuan shrimp [l]o [m]ein on [m]v [l]e[f]t, then watching [m]y [f]riend's [m]ethodi[c]a[l]ly [ea]t [ea]ch [l]e[f]tover [p][ie][c]e of this [S][p]i[c][y] [M]a[k][i] [P][l]atter on [m][y] r[i]ght. Then I [a][c][r]oss the t[a][b]le and [l]oo[k] [b]egin [sh][a]mele[ss][l][y] [r][a][ci]al[l][v] [s]pe[c]u[l][a]ting [a]gain, just [t]o [m]o[m]en[t]ari[l][y] get [m][y] [m][i]nd off this wh[o]le [S]pi[c][y] [M]ak[i]-[l][o] [m]ein imb[r][o]g[l]i[o]. As the [m]eal [c]on[c][l][u]ded there were tw[o] or th[r][ee] [s]ush[i] [p][ie][c]es [l]eft, my [c]om[p]anion says [H]ave one, and I shake my [h]ead, realizing the e[n]tire e[n][d]eavor, th[i]s m[i]ssion to obt[ai]n [m]ore [S][p]i[c][y] [M]ak[i], was [d]oomed to f[ai]lure. I con[s]idered a[s][k]ing her [t]o [t]a[k]e the [p]ie[c]es h[o]me, but n[o]—thi[s] urge for [m]ore [M]a[k]i [i]s [m][i][s]gu[i][d]ed, [I] thought, it's already [d][oo]med t[o] f[ai]lure, it's t[oo] [l][a]te for that. The [S][p]i[c][y] Ma[k][i] [P][l]atter was de[l]icious, but [t]o [t]a[k]e h[o]me the [l]eft[o]ver sushi wasn't a [p]a[l]atable 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]on[c][l][u]de their [m]eals—[d]e[s][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] ane[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][l]y 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[a]t [p]oint [q]uestioning [w]hy [w]e [w]ere [e]ven out, [w]hy [w]e [w]eren't at home s[l][e]e[p]ing [l]i[k]e young children.

Canto 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[o]tel [b]ar, [n]ever [m]ind in the [b]a[c]k room, [w]hich [w]as d[i]m[l][y] [l][i]t i[n] a[n] [a]l[m]ost [a][b]r[a]sive w[a]y and usual[I][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][ai]n goal of the [v]enue was a[b][r][a]s[i][v]e [i]te[r][a]tions of [d]im lighting [a]nd h[a]lf [c]ap[a][c]ities. I[n] a[n]y [c][a][s]e, I'm with a [f]ew [f][r]iends, Ho[r][a]tio 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]riends is with[ou]t a d[ou]bt [ai]ming to [e][n]g[a]ge i[n] [c]on[s][e]ns[u]al [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][a]n, [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]ighte[s]t are things goin[g] [a][cc]ordin[g] to his p[l]a[n], a[n]d I'm inadvertent[l][y] [a][b]out to [b][e] the [c]ause of the foi[l]in[g]. [l]nev[i]ta[b][l]y [b]oth girls [l][i]ve [i]n the [p][l]ush [p]art of the [c]ity, they don't [h]ave [i]obs, or they [h]ave [i]obs they c[l][ea]r[l][y] re[c][ei]ved due to [s]tatu[s]es of [b][e]ing young and opu[l]ent, they [i]nev[i]ta[b][l]y [b]eg[i]n to d[i][s]cu[ss] the variou[s] [p]ro[p]erti[e]s their fami[l]i[e]s' own. in [S]a[n] F[r]a[n][c]i[s]co | [b]e[l]ieve, [p]erha[p]s s[o]me [o]ther

out[r]ageous[l][y] [o][p]u[l]ent are[a]s of the may[b][e] [e]ven over[s][ea]s. I [f]orget the [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c] [I]o[c]ales, I a[c]tual[I]y [p]aid [I]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]at [p][r]o[p]erty, [p][r]o[p]erty or [s]u[mm]er here or [th]ey'd [s]u[mm]er [th]ere, but it was [a]|| [o]pu[l]ent i[n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, [s]ome a[r]ea where [o]n[l]y the m[o][s]t eg[r]eg[i]ous d[i][ck]heads [l][i]ve. [l]t [d][i][d]n't par[t]i[c]u[l]ar[l]y offend me, yet their [t]one was [c]on[d]e[s]cen[d]i[n]g i[n] a way that al[m]o[s]t [m]ade you be[l][ie]ve they v[ie]wed y[ou] as an [e]qual, [w]hich [i][n]furiated m[e]. [W]hen [p]eo[p]le [i][n]vete[r]ate[l][v] [b]e[l][ie]ve them[s]elves to [b][e] [s]u[p]e[r]ior, yet [s]till h[a]ve 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[a]t [a][f]ter[n]oon, it was а slow [a][f]ter[n]oon th[a]t [a][f]ter[n]oon. [r]egar[d]ing the m[a]ting habits [d]ol[ph]ins, in [f]act this vi[d]eo went into g[r][ea]t [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]e[d] to share thi[s] in[f]or[m]ation [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 q[r]oup.

Canto 12—520:719 .723

[A][pp]arently this was [a] bit of [a] faux [p]aus on my [p]art, D[e][m]o—it was [c][l]ear these young [f][e][m]ales, although i[nn]o[c]ent 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[e]|l v[e][r][i][f]ied int[e]|l[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[i]ng m[e]d[i]um-[r]are [s]qui[rr]el, [w]hile our an[c]e[s]tors [w]ere w[r]iting ex[t]en[s]ive [c]o[mm]en[t]a[r]ies on [m]eta[ph][y]s[i][c]s and en[f]or[c]ing [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]ecial[l][y] [m]y[s]elf. That [m]uch [c]ould not be [d]i[s][p]uted, and I [d]on't [d]i[s][p][u]te it t[o] thi[s] [d]ay. Yet to [d]i[s][c]u[ss] the i[n]t[r]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[q], [s]omething [flor [l]a[ck] of a better word [c][l]a[ss][l]e[ss]. It was e[ss]entia[l]l[y] a [M]arxi[s]t ane[c][d][o]te, [n][o]ting [s][p]e[c]i[f]i[c]a[l]l[y] 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[I][o]-Saxons, [D][e]m[o], and [I] k[n][o]w when [I]'m b[e]ing viewed [a]s [a]n Other, in fa[c]t I k[n]ow [i]t [i]n[s]t[i]n[c]t[i]ve[l][y], it's [s]omething that e[ss]ential[l][y] [r][u]ns in my [b][l][oo]d, and this was a [p]arti[c]u[l]ar[l][y] eg[r][e]giou[s] [c]a[s]e. And it [b]e[c]ame eg[r][e]gious [f]o[ll]owing [p]arti[c]u[l]ar[l][y] [m]o[n]o[l]ogue i[ll]u[m]i[n]ating the [m]e[c]ha[n]i[c]s of dol[ph]i[n] i[n]ter[c]our[s]e. I [m][a]y have [m][a]de a [f]ew [s]ub[s]e[q]uent o[ff]-[c]olor [c]o[mm]ents on[c]e the [c]onver[s]ation was [c][l][ea]r[l][y] going [c]omp[l][e]te[l][y] [d]ownhill, on[c]e thi[s] [d]i[s][c]ussion was [c][l]ear[l][y] i[r]re[p]a[r]a[b]le. l [p][r]o[b]a[b][l][y] [r]aised my [v]oi[c]e to an ina[d][v]isa[b]le [d]e[c]i[b]el le[v]el. [B]ut i[n] a[n]y [c][a]se I [c][a]me to [d]e[s]pise two i[nn]o[c]ent young fe[m]ales. And these [r]et[r][o][s][p]ect, if I'm [h][o]Iding [m]y[s]el[f] to the [h]ighe[s]t [s]tandard of hone[s]ty, I de[s][p]ised 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[cq]u[ai]ntan[c]e of th[e]se two [f][e][m]ales i[m]m[e][d][i]ate[l][y] [d]e[s]pised them. In[s]tinctive[l][y] I k[n]ew [th]e [th]r[ee] of us [c]ould [n]ever b[e] [c]ordial, [p]erh[a][p]s the [s][a][ck]ing th[a]t 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[mm]utable [m]a[n]ner. [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]ood, [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]ood[s]t[r][ea]ms, D[e]mo. F[r]om the [s]aw these two [s]eco[n]d ı in[n]o[c]ent. [d]e[c]ent-looking girls I [d]e[s]pised them, and I [n][e]ver qu[e]st[i]oned [i]t. [I]n[s]tin[c]tively ı k[n][ew] [d]i[s][c]u[ss]ing [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]ote without hesitation.

Canto 13-448:606 .739

The [s]e[c]ond their [f]a[c]es [f][i]lled w[i]th [d][i][s]gust [a]t my [a][n]e[c][d]ote I was [s][a]ti[a]ted. 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]ter[c]our[s]e. [D]ol[ph]ins are high[i]y i[n]te[ll]ige[n]t [m]a[mm]als—[w]hy shouldn't [w]e [l]earn, in-[d]epth, a[b]out their [m]ating ha[b]its? It s[ee]ms entire[i][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[i]o. [M][ay][b]e I haven't

[m][a]de that [a][b]undant[l][y] c[l]ear yet, [b]ut we're [a]ll essentia[II][y] Ang[I]o, we [c]ontain resi[d]ual amounts of the H[e]I[I][e]ni[c], we're [d]i[r]e[c]t [d]e[s]ce[n][d]a[n]ts of the [s]o-[c]alled Byzantine, the [ρ]ωμιο[σ]ύν[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 [d][i]ffe[r]ent, [r]ight?—[n][o], [D]o[m][i][n][i][c]ans are [A]ng[l][o] [a]s well. [a][c]tua[l]ly [A][f][r][o]-[A][m]e[r]i[c]ans are in[c][r]e[d]ib[l][y] [A]ng[l][o], in [f]a[c]t. The [P]ortuguese are [d]e[f]inite[l][y] Ang[l]o, [th]ey're [th]e a[p]ex of Ang[l]o, the [S][p]anish [a]re [a]l[s][o] [t][o]ta[l]y Ang[l]o, and the l[t]alians 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]entia[l] Ang[l]i[c]ism, be[c]ause we're all Ang[l][o], e[ss]entia[ll][y] [e][q]ua[ll][y] 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]ith[ou]t a d[ou]bt has [f]o[l]lowed, whe[r]ever the [s]ordid meta[ph][y]s[i][c]s of the [C][a]tho[l]i[c] church h[a]s [p][l][a]nted its [r]oots, [p][r]o[l]i[f]e[r]ated [A]nq[l]i[c]ism has unab[r]idged. [F][r]an[k]s, Ve[n]etia[n]s, Italians, [A]ng[l]os, Ger[m]a[n]i[c] [t][r]ibes, we [sh]oul[d]n't [l]ose [m]uch [s][l]eep 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]ts of each other [e][ss]en[ti]a[l]ly, we [sh]ouldn't [l]ie to our[s]elves about [th]at. [Th]ese [t]erms [e][n][c]ompa[ss] the [e][n][t]ire world and for that [s]ub[s]e[q]uent[l][y] m[ea]n e[ss]entia[l]l[y] r[ea]son nothing. We [a]II [a][tt]empt [t]o quar[r]y g[r]ou[p]s of [p]eo[p]le off by the [t][i]nt of their s[k][i]n, the sha[p]es of their eyes, the [c]on[t]ours of their [n]oses, [th]e [th][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][i][y] [A]ng[i][o]. As are [L]arry [B]ird and Sha[q][ui][li]e O'N[ea][i]. [C]ait[i]yn [J]e[n]ner is [n]oth[i]ng [i]f [n]ot [A]ng[i]o, [a]nd the [K]ard[a]shians are the [s]p[i]tt[i]ng [i]m[a]ge of [A]ng[i][i][c][i]sm. The world [i]s [i]n[c]re[d]i[b][i][y] [c]omp[i]ex, [b]ut at times it [c]an [b]e [d]ivi[d]ed [e]ven[i][y] in[t][o] [t]w[o]—the Ang[i][o] world and the [s][o]-[c]alled Gree[k] [w]orld, [w]hich n[o] [l]onger exi[s]ts.

Canto 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][l][i]t [d]own the m[i][dd]le, at [t]imes the world re[d][u][c]es [t][o] e[ss]ential[l][y] [t]w[o] [d]i[m]ensions, in [s]ome [w]ays the [w]orld on[l][y] exi[s]ts [t]wo [d]i[m]ensional[l][y], be[t][w]een [s][c]hi[sm] the [C]atho[l]i[c]i[sm] that over[t]oo[k] the [w]orld and the Orthodox[v] that [e]ventual[l][y] [b]e[c]ame [m]o[r]e o[r] [l][e]ss [e]xtinguished, [m]ay[b]e that's one in[s]tan[c]e of [b][i]nar[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]eak [w]ith you and have [s]ome ty[p]e of [r]e[l]a[ti]on[sh]i[p]. A [p]er[s]onal [r]e[l]a[ti]on[sh][i][p] w[i]th God—it'[s] the mo[s]t ab[s]urd thing. lt'[s] e[ss]ential[l][y] [a]th[e]ism. There's on[l][y] one end-g[a]me to be[l]ieving the [a][ll]eged [C]re[a]tor of the Univer[s]e wants to [h]ear [a][b]out [h]ow you [s]to[l]e a of [L]ays chip[s] from your [U]ni[v]er[s]ity [c]on[v]enien[c]e [s]tore as an [ei]ghteen year old—the on[l][y] end-g[a]me to that [s]ort of meta[ph][y]s[i]cs [i]s [a]theism. It'[s] r[u]th[l]e[ss][l][y] [d][ua][l]i[s]t [b]ut al[s]o [d]e[l]ightful[l][y] athei[s]t. I[f] y[ou] tr[u]l[y] [b]e[l][ie]ve God [w][i]shes to [s]peak [w][i]th [y]ou about the [y]oung man [y]ou [v][i]c[i]ous[l][y] threatened with [v]io[l]en[c]e [w]hen [y]ou [w]ere on[l][y] ninet[ee]n [y]ears old th[e]n

[y]ou're [e][ss]ential[l][y] an ath[ei][s]t. That'[s] how we [c]ould be[s]t de[s][c][r]ibe it. An idea [th]at [th]e ex[p]e[r]ien[c]e of God is [s]umma[r]ized verbal[l][y], [a]nd th[a]t all [s][p]i[r]itual ex[p]e[r]ien[c]e mu[s]t [d]efer to a[n] i[n]tel[l]ectual un[d]er[s]tan[d]ing of it—we're all Ang[l]o now. Of [c]our[s]e I [d]e[s]pised th[o]se two i[nn]o[c]e[n]t An[g][l][o] [g]irls, be[c]ause [l] [s]aw [m][y][s]elf in them—in [s]o [m]any ways I've [b]e[c]ome a[n] i[nn]o[c]ent An[g][l]o [g]irl ju[s]t [b]y d[i]nt of [l][i]v[i]ng [i]n the world [i]n a [c]on[t][i]nuous fashion. Wh[y] haven't [I] re[t]ired [t]o an o[b][s][c]ure mountain [s]omewhere, to [b]e[c]o[m]e ρωμιο[σ]ύνη again? [B]ut that's wh[y] [I] have no [q]ualms a[b]out de[s][p]ising [c]ertain [p][eo][p]le for no [p]arti[c]u[l]ar r[ea]son—[b]e[c]ause, at [b]ottom, we're all essentia[II]y Ang[I]o. Yet, if we're [b]eing hone[s]t with our[s]elves, it'[s] [o]n[l][y] the h[o]me[l]ess who t[r]u[l][y] [r]ecognize the absur[d]ity of a[ll]ege[d] [i]n[d][i]v[i]dua[l]ism—a [p]oor [s][l][ee][p]s in the [s]tr[ee]t, [a]nd we [a]ct [a]s if he [m]u[r]de[r]ed a [m]an. [S][o]me[o]ne falls on hard times, [b]eg[i]ns [d][r][i]nk[i]ng heavi[l][y], p[r]o[b]a[b][l][y] [d]oes a [d][e]cent amount of [d][r]ugs, [h]e [l]oses [h]is job, [h]is [h]ome, [h]is wife [l]eaves [h]im, [h]e's [r]e[d]u[c]ed to [b]egging [p]eo[p]le on [s]t[r]eet [c]orners for [d]o[l]lar [b]ills and [s][l]eeping in a[l]ley[w]ays, and [w]e [a][c]t [a]s i[f] [h]is [h]ardshi[p] is a[n] i[n][c]onvenien[c]e [f]or o[ff]ended at his u[s]—we're [p]overty. ex[p]erien[c]ed [m]ore [m]ali[c]e [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][ee]ms to b[e] in[c][r][ea][s]ing in this [c]ountry [a]t [a]n alm[o]st exp[o]nential [r]ate.

Canto 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 [r]emains [p]ar[k]ed e[ss]ential[l][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]ect[l][y] fails [p]eo[p]le, and [p]eo[p]le [w]ith a[l]leged moral [s]tanding [w]ithin our [s]o[c]iet[y] can hard[l][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]ie[f] pe[r]iod of time, i[f] they're [flor[c]ed to [e]ven [m]i[n]i[m]al[l][v] 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]ege. [V]iewing а [p]er[s]on [s]ans [d]omi[c]ile is [c]on[s]i[d]ered 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]me? There's [n][o] doubt that [t]o [s]ome ex[t]ent we—all of u[s]—have failed th[e]se [p][e0][p]le in [s]ome way that's [p]ro[b]a[b]l[y] It'[s] one thing to [b]e [d][ow]n and mate[r][i]al. [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][a] [b]ottle [f][i]lled w[i]th [i][l][i][c][i]t [s]u[b][s]tan[c]es, a[s]king [s]t[r]angers for mon[ey], [c][l]ear[l][y] on[l][y] partia[ll][y] a[w]a[r]e of [w]he[r]e you are, that [sh]ould, [f][r]an[k][l][y], [sh]ame[f]ul [f]or all of us. Any[o]ne [c]an be[c][o]me a [c][r][a][ck] [a]ddi[c]t. [l]f the h[i][s]to[r]y of [c][r]a[ck] 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[pp][r]o[p][r]iate [c]ir[c]um[s]tan[c]es. The whites [A][m]e[r]i[c]a [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 [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][n]ate[l]y to[ss]ed he[r]oin e[q]uiva[l]ents at any [l]ower-[c][l]a[ss] [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] overn[i]gh[t], the [l]aughter of wh[i][t]es [c][a][ck][l]ing at [c][r][a][ck] [c]o[c]aine un[d]oubted[l][y] [r]esoun[d][i]ng [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 invo[l]un[t]ari[l][v] [t]ran[s][f]ormed si[m]i[l]ar[l][v] 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[l]ar [m]ar[k]et [c]a[p]s al[m]o[s]t ex[c][l]usive[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]ne [a]nd h[a]ving [a]p[p]e[t]izers. The [s]e[r]ve[r]s and the [c]u[s][t]ome[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[ll]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]itzers. 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][e]o[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][e]te[l][v] [l]a[ck] the teme[r]it[y] to [e]ven [s][p][ea][k] with a [b]um.

Canto 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]e [i]s [d]i[r]ect[l]y [r]e[s]pon[s]ible [f]or the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d][a]ted [s]t[a]te of their [f]el[l]ow

[c][i]t[i]zens, [th]at [th]eir [c]om[p][l][i][c][i]t[y], 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 а [s]tate that's shame[l]e[ss][l][y] white jun[k]ies [p][r]o[d]u[c]ed [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 c[i]ty [i]sn't [d]oing more, th[e]se [p][e0][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 Do over[p][r]i[c]ed [c][r]a[f]t [b]eer. vou [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][r]ink c[r]a[f]t [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[c]u[l]ated [p]oses [l]ibe[r]a[l]ism, are the [m]o[s]t una[p]o[l]ogeti[c]a[l]y [c]a[p]ita[l]i[s]t [c][r][i][m][i]nals we have [i]n th[i][s] [c]ount[r]y. I've never heard a [c][r]a[f]t [b]eer enthusia[s]t a[p]o[l]ogize [f]or the idio[c]y of his [c]al[c]u[l]ated [l]i[b]eral [p]oses. The [c][r]a[f]t [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]nd all of their [t][i]me [t][r][y]ing [t]o de[t]e[c]t the [s][l]ighte[s]t [t][r]a[c]e of Bart[l]ett [p]ear [i]n [a] [C]o[c]onut [l]ndi[a] [P][a]le [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]ands that a[i]i[e]g[e][d][i]y [d]o[n]ate to Good [C]auses, they [p][o][s]t to [s][o]cial [p][l]atforms to make [p]eo[p]le they d[o]n't k[n][ow] aware [th]at [th]ey [b]uy The [S][o]cially Re[s][p]on[s]i[b]le [B]eers, k[n][o]wing [e]ntire[l][y] well that all of these d[o][n]ations are [e][s]sentia[ll][y] cri[m]i[n]al, that [n][o]ne of thi[s] [m][o][n]ey ever [r][ea]ches the [p][eo][p]le it [n][ee]ds to [r][ea]ch, wh[i]ch [i]s [r]ea[d]ily a[p]pa[r]ent, [b]e[c]ause 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]a[f]t beer d[r]in[k]er would

[c]on[c][l]ude the [m][o]st e[ff]icient way of [h][e]lping [h]is [f][e][l]low [h]u[m]an [b][e]ing is [b]uying [m]ore [c][r]a[f]t [b][ee]r. The [r]ea[l]ity is [n]one of us k[n][o]w [w]hat t[o] d[o] [w]ith [b]ums, [w]e're [p][r]ivy to [n][o] [b]um [s]o[l]utions, [n][o] [s]o[l]ution to our [b]um [p][r]o[b][l]ems, yet we k[n]ow all of these [b]ums are e[ss]entia[ll]y Ang[l]o. The white jun[k]ie and [b][l][a][ck] [c]r[a][ck]head are [b][o]th at [b]ottom entire[l]y Ang[l][o]. We k[n][o]w how to [p][r]o[d][u]ce [b][u]ms, [b][u]t we have [n][o] i[d]ea [w]hat t[o] [d][o] [w]ith these [b][u]ms [o]nce [w]e've We [p][r]o[d]uced them. [p][r]o[d]u[c]e [b]ums shame[l]e[ss][l][v]. and then even more [sh]ame[l]e[ss][l][y] w[e] [sh][u]n th[e]se [b][u]ms 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 а [d][ow]nt[ow]n. [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]ome а [r]estau[r]ant-[g]oer.

Canto 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]ow [c][i]t[i]zens who've reached [s]uch [d]i[l]a[p]i[d][a]ted [s]t[a]tes 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]ted [s]t[a]te knows to [b]e [p][r]o[f]ound[l]y [t][r]ue. 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[a]ted [b][a]sed on this [p]oint a[l][o]ne, because n[o] one in our [s]o[c]iety gives the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d][a]ted [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]om[m]u[n]it[y] has [d]one [m]ore for the [d][i]la[p]i[d]ated [p]er[s]on [c]o[m]mu[n]it[y] than the [ch]ur[ch] [c]o[m]mu[n]it[y]. Be[c]ause [C]atho[l]i[c] and [s]tri[pp]ers whores [i]nnate[l]v g[i]ve the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d][a]ted [p]er[s]on the time of [d][ay], any [s]tri[pp]er worth her [s]alt [i]n[s]t[i]n[c]t[i]ve[l]y kn[ow]s how to [s][p]ea[k] to the [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]ated [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[r]e[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] Yet [th]ere's bu[r]eau[c][r][a]ti[c] [m][a]nner. [th]i[s] [m]i[s]guided n[o]tion [th]at [th]e [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]tri[pp]er [s][p]ea[k]s to [i]n[f][i]nite[l][y] [m]ore [p]otential [c]u[s]to[m]ers th[a]n [a][c]tual [c]u[s]to[m]ers—the [s]u[cc]e[ss][f]ul [s]tri[pp]er, 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]nf[i]n[i]te[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 iovial. un[r]e[s]t[r]ained and [d]e[c]a[d]ent, while the [p]otential [a][l][m]ost [c]u[s]to[m]er is [a][l]ways [d]i[l]a[p]i[d]ated. G[i]v[i]ng th[i][s] [p]o[t]ential cu[s]tomer the [t]ime of day is [a]Imo[s]t [a] [r]e[l][i]g[i]ous act on [th]e [p]arts of [th]e [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and whores. And it's for [p][r]e[c]i[s]el[y] thi[s] [r][ea]son 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[f]t [b]eer [d][r]in[k]er. W[e] [b]e[l][ie]ve [c][r]a[f]t [b]eer [d][r]in[k]ers 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[p]pers and whores, [b]ut I a[c]tual[l]y find [s]t[r]i[p]pers and whores to [b]e [l]au[d]a[b]le mem[b]ers of our [s]o[c]iety, wh[i]le [l] [d]e[n]ig[r]ate [c][r]aft beer [d][r]in[k]ers. 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[c]u[l]ar [b]um a[pp][r]oached 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]ol[l]ars, 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]ol[l]ars, it was obviou[s][l]y [f]or the be[n]e[f]it of the girl I [w]as [w]ith. You [n][ee]d to [s][p][ea]k to [p][eo][p]le [d][i]la[p]i[d][a]ted [s]t[a]tes, [l]arge[l]y [b]e[c]ause it's the on[l]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.

Canto 18—506:657 .770

What hap[p]ens to them will [l]arge[l]y [b]e [f]ata[l]i[s]ti[c], [b]e a matter of [f]ate [s]tat[i][s]t[i][c]ally [s][p]ea[k]ing, [b]ut it'[s] i[u][s]t [u]tter [c][r]uel[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]ter [b]e[c]ause a [w]hite jun[k]ie in your [l][i]ne of s[i]ght is ruining the [B]art[I]ett [p]ear after[t][a]ste of your [t]en do[I]lar I[P][A]. [B]ut th[i][s] [i]s what'[s] happened to [s][o] many [d][ow]nt[ow]ns, these [s]ame [d][ow]nt[ow]ns I [s]till g[o] to, these [d][ow]nt[ow]ns th[a]t h[a]ve [m]y [m]e[m]ories [f]ol[d]ed into them, [m]aybe a [d]e[c]a[d]e or [m]ore [f]ol[d]ed into [th]em—[th]ey've [b]e[c]ome i[n]un[d]ated with [c][r]aft [b]eer [d][r]in[k]ers. It's [n]ot [th]e [b]ums who offflend me, [n]o, it's the [c][r]a[f]t [b]eer [d][r]in[k]ers who o[ff]end me. It's the [p]eo[p]le who twelve [d]o[l]lars for a [b]eer is an [b]e[l][ie]ve a[pp][r]o[p][r]iate [p][r]ice 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 [p]ub[l]i[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]io[r][i]—it'[s] the [p]eo[p]le who [m][ai]n[t][ai]n all the [s][o]cia[l]l[y] a[pp][r][o][p][r][i]ate [d]i[s][p][l]ay all of the o[p]inions but [m][o][s]t [c]oward[l][y] [t]e[n][d]e[n][c]ies. Our [d][ow]nt[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[c]t o[p][i]n[i]ons on eve[r]y issue—at [b]ottom all th[e]se [p][eo][p]le [c]are a[b]out is m[ai]nt[ai]ning the [c]or[r]e[c]t o[p][i]n[i]on on any issue [a]t h[a]nd. Our d[ow]nt[ow]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 whores—[b]ut [s]t[r]i[pp]ers and [n][ow] our [d][ow]nt[ow]ns are i[n]un[d]ated with [c][r]a[f]t [b]eer and [f][r]ied [d][r]in[k]ers [c][a][l][a][m]a[r]i [m]ozza[r]el[l]a [s]ti[ck]s and j[a][l][a][p]eno [p]o[pp]ers and [p]eo[p]le who have [s]ocial[l][y] a[cc][e][p]table o[p][i]n[i]ons on [e]ve[r]ything. [I]t'[s] d[i][s]qu[s]ting [r]ea[l][y]. [B][u]t [o]f course a[ll] [r]ationa[l][i]sm [i]s [l]ittle more than a[b][s]ur[d]i[s]t [p][r]o[p]agan[d]a. It's on[l][y] via [r]ationa[l]ism, [a]n [e][ss]entia[ll][y] Ang[l]o con[c]ept, that we find our[s]elves [w][i]th[i]n a [p][r][i]sm [w]here eve[r]yth[i]ng [i]s Ang[l]o, [w]h[e]re [e]ve[r]y [w]hite jun[k]ie and b[l][a][ck] [c][r][a][ck]head are [e][q]ua[ll][y] lt's [o]n[l][y] [w]he[n] [w]e atte[n]d the [f]une[r]als of c[l][o]se [f][r]ie[n]ds who die ab[s]urd[l]y that w[e] [r][ea][l]ize [th]i[s], [th][a]t [l]ittle [r][a]tiona[l][i]sm [i]s more than [l]u[r][i]d absu[r][d][i]st [p][r]o[p]agan[d]a. On[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[c]e. 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[i][y], a[f]ter years of [s][ee]ming[i][y] [c][ea][s]e[i]e[ss] [s]u[ff]e[r]ing, g[a]ve in to [i][a]te [s]t[a]ge b[r][ai]n [c]an[c]er. The entire ord[ea]l was [c][r]i[m]i[n]al, and to [b]e [c][i][ea]r I was p[r]o[b]a[b][i]y one of the [m]ost [c][r]i[m]i[n]al.

Canto 19-434:601 .722

MIVsocial [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]fe. [M][y] [f][r]iend was [d]iag[n]o[s]ed with [I][a]te [s]t[a]ge [b][r][ai]n [c]an[c]e[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]otaled his car, and was [f][r]om then on [f]orbi[dd]en [t]o [d][r]ive. [S]o n[a]tu[r]a[ll][y], [b]eing а good [f][r]iend, [b]eing [a]ctua[II][y] a [b]etter [f][r]iend to him than even a [f]ew of the [f][r]iends [h]e'd [h]ad [f]or [d]e[c]a[d]es, a [b]etter [f][r]iend at lea[s]t in [t]erms of [t]ime [s][p]ent, I [t]oo[k] 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][i]mes [p]er [w]ee[k], after [w]or[k], [w]here I alrea[d]y had a [d]ecent [c]om[m]ute, [w]hich [w]asn't a[n] i[n]s[i]gn[i]f[i][c]ant [d][r]ive, 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[r]ive him to other [p]laces [w]here [w][e]'d hang [ou]t [flor a [r][ea]sonable am[ou]nt of time, [w]here a[f]ter[w]ard [l]'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[c]er, e[ss]ential[l][y] a [d]eath [s]enten[c]e, [w]anted to [b]uy [m]e a [m]int [ch]o[c]o[l]ate [ch]i[p] [w]affle [c]one, [b]ut I had to [p]ol[i]te[l][v] [d]e[c][l][i]ne [b]e[c]ause [l] 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]iend, who was [y]ounger [th]an [th]e two of u[s] [y]et [s]till [y][ou]ng, [d][u]mped him not long a[f]ter, and [f][r]om this we [c]on[c][l]u[d]ed that ap[p]a[r]ent[l]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]v[o]ne has the [p][a]tien[c]e to [w][ai]t [f]or [s][o]me[o]ne to die, a [t]erm[i][n][a]l [i]ll[n]e[ss], for [s]ome [p][eo][p]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]air[l]y [t]orn [u]p [a][b]out it, and who could [b][l]ame 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]i[c] [w]ay there's not much [w]e [c]an [r]ea[l]i[s]ti[c]a[l]y do. We [c]an [t]ell our [d]ying [f][r]iend that his ex-girl[f][r]iend is a person, a [t]aw[d][r]y whore, that he [t]e[r]ri[b]le [d]eserves [b]etter, [b]ut the [r]ea[l][i]t[y] [i]s there's [n]ear[l][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][ea]ves him.

Canto 20-483:709 .681

It'[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]Iter his li[f]e [f]or the [b]etter, [b]ut [i]t'[s] [s][i]gn[i][f][i][c]antly [m]ore d[i][ff][i][c]ult [th]an you [m]ight [th]in[k], in [p]ra[c]ti[c]e it'[s] [m]o[r]e o[r] [l]e[ss] an [i][m][p]o[ss][i]b[i][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[l]en[c]e[s]—ge[n]e[r]i[c] [c]on[d]o[l]en[c]e[s] that a[r]e [h]a[r]d[l]y of any [h]e[l]p at a[ll]. [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][ou]bt a[b][ou]t that, [b]ut I [d]i[d]n't [n]e[c]e[ss]ari[l]y cu[r][s]e her [n]ame in m[y] pe[r][s]onal 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 [flriend wasn't the pe[r][s]on she [w]anted to [w]ait [f]or, in а te[r][m]inal [s]e[n][s]e, re[s][p]e[c]ted th[a]t [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]e[c]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[ll]o[w]ing [w][e]e[k]end [w]hen I [w]as at [a] bar [a][r]ound [c][l]osing [t]ime with a [c][l]ose [f][r]iend, and I [f]elt a tap on my sh[ou]I[d]er, [o]n[I]y 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[g]uent[l][y] I [s]aid h[e][ll]o, y[e]t [o]n[l][y] 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 I[o][c]ale, was [s]tanding in [f][r]ont of my [p]er[s]on, and to in[f]orm me that I was [p][r][o][c]eeded [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te "[k]ind of [r]ude" to m[y] [d][y]ing [f][r]iend's ex-girl[f][ri]end, that I [c]ould [h]ave said [h]e[ll]o just a [l]ittle more [c]ordia[ll][y], this [f][r]iend of m[y] d[y]ing [f][r]iend's ex-girl[f][r]iend [a]ctua[l][[y] h[a][d] the au[d][a][c]it[y] to [s]t[a]nd there and with in a [s]tate of [s]in[c]erity [s][p]ea[k] th[e]se exa[c]t words to m[e], to [p]ro[c][l]aim that it was a[c]tual[l][y] 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]ne, 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 [c]ir[c]um[s][t]an[c]es, [m]y [t]e[n]de[n][c]y [t]oward the i[n][t]empe[r]ate [t]oo[k] hold of me, and I in[f]ormed them [b]oth of [m]y [f]ee[l]ings on the [m][a]tte[r], that I [p]erha[p]s in[f]ormed them of [m]y [f]ee[l]ings i[n] a[n] acer[b]ic [m][a]nne[r], in [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t a[c]erbi[c] [m][a]nner I [c]ould i[m][a]gine [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[a]s at this [b][a]r, [l]ate [i][n] the [e]vening, [w]here [w]e [w]ere [i][n][e][b][r][i]ated. [l][n] a[n]y [c]a[s]e, [m][o][m]ents later I [r]e[c]eived an a[dd][i]t[i]o[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[a]t I n[ee]ded to I[ea]ve the [p]re[m]ises be[c]ause "the girl [o]ver there," [q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te, was [c][l]aiming I ph[y]s[i][c]a[l]ly [h]it [h]er.

Canto 21-596:752 .793

A girl who i[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[ll][y] [a][s]sault m[e] for [a][ll]eged[l][y] not [b]eing [e]nthusias[t]ic [e]nou[gh] when I [r]eturned [r]ep[r]ehen[s]i[b]le [h]e[ll]o, then I [s]u[b][s]e[q]uent[l][y] ver[b]a[ll][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]eo[p]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[ll][y] [h]itting [h]er in a [p]ub[l]i[c] [p][l]a[c]e. [L][u][c]ki[l][y] en[ou][gh] [flor m[e], [th]i[s] notion [th]at a [p]er[s]on [p]unched a [f]emale in a venue [d]en[s]e[l][y] [p][a][c]ked [a]t th[a]t [c]a[p][a][c]ity, yet m[a]naged to [I][a]nd a [p]unch [s]o [c][I]an[d]e[s]tine[I][y] [n][o] one in

the venue [n][o]ti[c]ed, that [n][o] eye [w][i]t[n][e][ss]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]ead guilty whe[n] i[nn]o[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[c]t[l][y] in[t]er[p][r]eted [t]o be [d]e[f][a][m]ation of [m]y [c]hara[c]ter, [a]gainst thi[s] t[a][s]te[l]e[ss] [c]hara[c]ter a[ss]a[ss]in[a]tion, [l]eg[i]t[i]mate a[ss]a[ss]in[a]tion [a][tt]empt. all—un[b]e[l][ie]va[b]le as it may [s][ee]m—as [s]u[b][s]e[q]ue[n]t [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]]o near[l][y] [t]urned m[e] in[t]o an [s]eriou[s][l][y] a[ll][e]g[e]d ľm [f][e][l]on, and as de[f]ending 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]-girl[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]i[c][a]ted, th[a]t it h[a]d [a][b][s]o[l]ute[l][y] no [b]a[s]i[s] in [r]ea[l]it[y]—a[n]d the[n] the [e]x-[g]irl[f]rie[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]eetings, [d][r][i]ve [r][igh]t off, ad[m]itting in [s]o [m]any [w]ords [th]at [th]ey busine[ss] of a[ss]a[ss]inating the [w]ere in the [c]ha[r]a[c]ter of anyone who [f][ai]led 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]ted a [th]an en[th]usia[s]ti[c] a[r][e]etina [l]e[ss] w[i]th The [ph][y]s[i][c]al vio[l]en[c]e. next morning [r]e[c][e]ived a [c]all [f][r]om my [s]i[ck] [f][r]iend, [a]nd [a]s add[r]e[ss]ed the [s]ituation [f]rom p[r][e]v[i]ou[s] night, it [b]e[c]ame [r]e[l]ative[l][v] [c][l]ear to m[e] that h[e] was, [f]or [l]a[ck] of a [b]etter [ph][r][a]se, t[a][k]ing her [s]ide. In [m][y] [m][i]nd at the t[i]me thi[s] de[f]en[s]e 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][a]n i[m][a]gine, [l]ed 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[tt][e]mp[t]ing [t]o [w]or[k] [th]ings out [w]i[th] a girl w[h]o now [h]at[e]d [e]ve[r]v a[s]pe[c]t of my [b]eing and [v]i[c]e [v]er[s]a. It was [a] [b]it [o]f an im[b][r][o]gli[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]iend as well. [q]ave [e][x]-[g]irl[f][r]i[e]nd [a]n [e][x]ten[d]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]iend, 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[I][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 [fline, there was no [b]itter[n]e[ss] [p]er [s]e, [b]ut [f][r]iendshi[p], [f][r]ank[l][y], was obviou[s][l][y] [n]ever the [s]ame.

Canto 22-522:679 .769

His ex-[g]irl[f]ri[e]nd [a][b]andoned him, then she [f]elt as th[ough] I [g]ave her an [i][n][s][i][n][c]ere hel[l][o] at [a] [b]ar, then I [d]i[s][c][l][o]sed 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]me for him to [d][i]e—he [l]o[s]t [h]is [s]ight, and [h]e was almo[s]t ent[i]re[l]y b[l][i]nd, [h]e was admi[tt]ed [h]o[s]pitals i[n] а [t]er[m]i[n]a[l]ly to v[i]s[i]t[i]ng [i][n][t]er[m][i]tte[n]t fashion. w[i]th h[igh]-[p]r[i][c]ed [s][p]ecia[l]i[s]ts that brought [n][o][th]ing [o][th]e[r] [th]an [u]tte[r] [f]i[n][a]ncial [r]uin to his [f][a]mi[l]y, and [e]ventual[l][y] h[e] was [e][n]c[l]osed i[n] his bed[r]oom f[r][o]m [s][u]n[s]et [t]o [d]awn [t]o [d]inner, in [h]is pa[r]ents' [h]ouse, an only child, a[b]an[d]oned

[b]y [b]oth his [g]irl[f][r]iend and his [g]ood [f][r]iend. [F]our years [l][a]ter I [h]eard that [h]e'd entered [h]o[s]pi[c]e, that [h]e [l][ai]d on [h]is [d]eathbed, and I arr[a]nged to p[ay] h[i]m a v[i]s[i]t the [s]u[b][s]e[q]uent [m]orning with [m]y [c][ou]sin, [b][u]t he [d]ied over[n]ight. [D][ay]s |[a]ter, his [m]other [n]oted t[o] a [m][u]t[u]al [f][r]iend that she'd [p][r]e[f]er h[i]s [i]m[p]en[d]ing [f]une[r]al to be a [s][m]all [c]e[r]e[m]ony, that she [d]i[d]n't want it to [b]e a [b]ig [c][r]owd, a[n]d I [c]o[n][s]idered not atten[d]ing [b][e][f]ore [b][e]ing ulti[m]ately [c]o[n]vin[c]ed [b]y a [m]utual [f]rie[n]d [t]o better [A]qai[n]st [m]y [a][tt]e[n]d. iuda[m]ent [a]tte[n][d]ed the [f]uneral, y[e]t the [s][e][c]ond I [s]aw my [d][ea]d [f]ri[e]nd's made-up [c]or[p][s]e in the [c]o[ff]in, the [s][e][c]ond [l] [s]t[e]p[p]ed in [s][igh]t of the [c]offi[n], a bout of i[n]t[e]nse [r]eg[r][e]t [c]ame over me, and [l] [r]eal[i]zed [l] had no [b]usine[ss] [a]tten[d]ing thi[s] [f]une[r]al, that I [a][b]an[d]oned m[y] [d][y]ing [f][r]iend, a[n]d the[n] I h[a][d] the au[d][a][c]it[y] to [a]ttend his [f]une[r]al, [e][ss]e[n]tia[ll][y] agai[n][s]t his own [m]other's [w][i]sh[e]s—not ex[p][l][i]c[i]t[l][y] again[s]t his [m]other's [w][i]sh[e]s but [i]m[p][l][i]c[i]t[l][y] again[s]t his [m]other's [w][i]sh[e]s. There was [n][o] [d]oubt his [m]other [m][o][s]t [l]ike[l][y] would have [p][r]eferred I [n]ot attend. There was [n]o [d]oubt, if [p][r]e[ss]ed, she would have [a]t [l][ea][s]t bee[n] [a]gn[o][s]ti[c] [v][i]s-[a]-[v][i]s my [a]tte[n][d]an[c]e, wh[i]ch, [c]on[s][i]dering her [p]re[f]eren[c]e was а [s][m]all [c]ere[m]ony, is [t]an[t]a[m]ount to [p][r]e[f]e[r]ring my ab[s]en[c]e. V[i]a the [p][r]o[c]ession [l][i]ne, it was [c][l]ear his [p]a[r]ents [c][l]ear[l][y] [ei]ther [d]i[d]n't re[m]e[m][b]er [m]e or [d]e[l]i[b]erate[l][y] forgot In m[e]. my [s][ea]t [c][ea][s]e[l]e[ss][l][y] [s]pe[c]u[l]ated whether [d]i[d]n't re[m]e[m][b]er me or [d]e[l]i[b]erate[l][y] for[g]ot m[e]. 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[ck] their [s]on u[p] more [f][r]e[q]uentl[y] than [e]ven his childhood [f][r]iends, [I] was such a n[i]ce g[uy], yet eventually of [s]to[p]ped [c]o[m]ing [c]our[s]e [a]round. [a][b]an[d]oned their [l]i[k]e [d]ying son we [a]ll eventua[II][y] [a][b]an[d]on the ter[m]ina[II][y] ill, [s]u[b][s]e[q]uent[l][y] his pa[r]ents [f]orgot a[b]out m[e], and [r]ight[f]u[ll][y] [s]o. It would h[a]ve [a][c]tua[l][y] [b]een di[s]ta[s]te[f]ul [f]or the[m] to [r]e[m]e[m][b]er [m]e.

Canto 23-549:733 .749

The [m]o[m]ent I w[i]tn[e]ssed, [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[ll][y] or un[i][n][t][e][n]t[i]ona[ll][y] [f]or[g]ot m[y] [i][d]e[n]tit[y] I k[n]ew a[t]te[n][d]ing thi[s] [f]u[n]e[r]al was a [g][r][a]ve mi[s]t[a]ke. I s[a]t [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]eral I'll attend, because [a]ttending a [f]u[n]eral is [a]lw[ay]s [a] [m]i[s]t[a]ke, it'[s] the [m]o[s]t [i]n[s][i]p[i]d [m][i][s]t[a][k]e we [c]an [m][a][k]e. [A][t]ten[d]ing a we[dd]ing [m]ay [b]e [a] [f]aux paus [b]ut [a][t]ten[d]ing a [f]uneral is [a]lw[ay]s a[n] i[n][a]ne [m]ist[a]ke. We [a]ll [g]ather [a][r]ound, [a]|| [f][r]iends and [f]ami[l][y], to [g]aze [i]d[i]oti[c]al[l][y] at a [s]ti[f]f [c]orp[s]e, then we [g][o] eat at а [l][o][c]al [r]e[s]tau[r]ant—we [m]ind[l]e[ss][l][y] [s]tare at a [d]ea[d] bo[d][y], then we [m]eal. There's [n]othing [n]i[c]e [d]i[s]ingenuou[s] than a [f]u[n]eral, and the [m][o][s]t [d]i[s]ingenuou[s] [f]u[n]erals are th[o]se held [f]or the young. An esse[n]tially i[n]ter[m]i[n]a[b]le [d]isease, [b]ut [p][r]o[f]essional the [m]e[d]i[c]al [m]ade а [s][i]g[n][i][f][i][c]ant [f]ortune in the [p][r]o[c]e[s]s. A [c]a[r]eer's [w]o[r]th for the [w]o[r][k]ing [c]lass, no exten[d]ed his [d]oubt. They [s]u[ff]e[r]ing, the [s]u[ff]e[r]ing of his [f]ami[l]y, the [s]u[ff]e[r]ing of

eve[r]yone [a]round [h]im, then [a][l]lowed [h]im to [d]ie. [H]ow [m]a[n]y [h]un[d]re[d]s of thousands of [d]o[l]lars, [i]f [n]ot [m][i]ll[i]ons of [d]o[l]lars, were [s][p]e[n]t, only to exte[n]d a [m]an's [s]uffe[r]ing and [s]till a[ll]ow him to [p]e[r]ish [p][r]e[m]ature[l]y? [B]ut of [c]our[s]e they [s]till a[cc]e[p]ted [p]ay[m]ent, [b]e[c]ause 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]di[c]al [p][r]o[f][e]ssional. It's on[l]y [d]o[c]tors who h[a]ve the au[d][a][c]ity to extend а [s][o]n's [s][u][f]fe[r]ing, watch him [d]ie, and [s]ti[ll] [r]uin the [f][a]mi[l][y] [f]in[a]ncia[ll][y]. We think [s]o high[l][y] of [d]o[c]tors in this [c]ount[r][y], yet it [s][ee][m]s to [m]e that [d]o[c]tors 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][e]ll, [w]h[e]re the [d][i][s][i]ngenuous nature of the [e][n]tire [e]ve[n]t [r]eal[l][y] [c]ame into fo[c]u[s]. The [d][i][s][i]ngenuous [n][a]ture of the [e]ntire or[d]eal [n]atural[l][y] [r][ea]ched its [a][p]ex at the [r]e[c]e[p]tion, as it [b]ec[a]me ju[s]t a[n]other [s]ocial [e]vent. [I]t'[s] [i]m[p]o[ss]i[b]le to have an iot[a] of [r]e[s][p]ect [f]or your[s]el[f] or the [s]o[c]iety you [p]arti[c]i[p]ate in a[f]ter [a][tt]ending a[n] eve[n]t of th[a]t m[a]gni[t]ude. [S][i]tt[i]ng [i]n th[a]t b[l][a][ck] [f]old-out chair, [s]ta[r]ing at my d[ea]d [f][r][ie]nd's heavi[l]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]med with di[s]gu[s]t [f]or my[s]el[f]—but in [r]et[r]o[s]pe[c]t my [c]on[c][l][u]sion [f]rom that [d]ay is ju[s]t th[a]t, th[a]t [r][a]tiona[l][i]sm [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][r]o[p]agan[d]a. We've [c]o[n][s]t[r]u[c]ted a [r][a]tiona[l]i[s]t [A]ng[l]o world that h[a]sn't [c]o[n][s]umed everything—not [g]uite yet—[b]ut that [s]till [r]e[m]ains e[ss][e]ntial[l]y o[b][[e][c]tiona[b]le, ju[s]t as the [m][y][s]t[i][c] [B][y]z[a]ntine world, it's natural oppos[i]te, was, [i]n [i]t[s] [e][ss]en[c]e, al[s]o [e]ntire[l]y

o[b]j[e]ctiona[b]le. And the [d]o[c]tors who t[r]eat our [d][ea]d [f][r][ie]nds, [p][r]o[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[i]nal [p][r]o[c]eeds, they're o[b]j[e]ctiona[b]le in [e]ve[r]y way.

Canto 24-368:499 .737

And [p]eo[p]le who [a][ss][a][ss]i[n]ate the [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]ti[c] [e][n]ou[gh] [w]hen [w]e [s]ay hello to them at [b]ars, they're [c][r][i][m][i]nals of the highest [m]agnitude. [B]ut we our[s]elves are ju[s]t as o[b]je[c]tio[n]a[b]le [a]s any of these [a][c]tors, we're al[s]o [c][r][i][m][i][n]als of the highe[s]t [m]ag[n]itude, we're [p]erha[p]s the [m]o[s]t o[b]jectio[n]a[b]le. We a[s]tutely [r]e[c]og[n]ize [o]ur [o][pp]os[i]tes as [c][r][i][m][i][n]al be[c]ause we exi[s]t as [p]arts of the [s]ame [c][r][i][m][i][n]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]cienti[s]ts and our do[c]tors are p[r]og[r]e[ss]ing, [th]at [th]ey'll eventually p[r]og[r]e[ss] [t]o a [s][t]ate [w]here they'll [o]n[c]e 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[o]te-un[q]u[o]te [d]ea[l]ing with [d]eath. e[ss]e[n]tia[l]ly a[n] i[n][d]ige[n]ou[s] [p]o[p]u[l]ation when [c]omes to in[t]e[r]a[c][t]ing with [d]eath. We're z[ea]lot[s] of [p][r]og[r][e][ss], and as [s]uch we're [i]ll-e[q]u[i][pp]ed to [i]nte[r]a[c]t w[i]th any [s]ort of [p][r]ofun[d]ity, be[c]ause we're [s]u[s][p]en[d]ed [s][t]u[ck] [w]aiting for [p][r]og[r]e[ss], [w]e're [s]cien[t]i[s]ts and [d]o[c]tors to give u[s] the [w]ord, to [g]ive u[s] the word [th]at [th]ey've finally [g][o][tt]en to the b[o][tt]om of [d]eath. [P][r][e]v[i]ou[s] [s]o-called [g]ene[r]a[ti]ons [s][p]o[k]e [p][r]o[f]ound[l]y in the [f]a[c]e

of [d]eath, while our [g]e[n]e[r]a[ti]on [s]erves [c]ole [s][l]aw and chi[ck]en [p]armigi[a][n][a] at [f]u[n]e[r]al [r]e[c]e[p][ti]ons, the [i]m[a][g]es of [c]or[p][s]es [s]t[i]ll [f][r]esh in our mind. [P][r][e]v[i]ou[s] [g]e[n]e[r]ations un[d]er[s]tood [d]eath in a [p][r]o[f]ound[l][y] [g]e[n]e[r]al [s]en[s]e i[f] hard[l][y] at all in a [s][p]e[c]i[f]ic [s]en[s]e. We [c]on[s]u[m]e [m]ozza[r]e[l]la [s]ti[ck]s in the [f]a[c]e of [d]eath, we eat i[a][l][a][p]eno [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[f]ter[t][a][s]tes in the [f][a][c]e of [d]eath. It's, [f][r]an[k][l][v], [o]n[l][v] the h[o]me[l]e[s]s of ou[r] e[r]a wh[o] t[r][u][l][y] [r]e[c]og[n]ize the ills of the p[r]ivate [s]phere—'[b]y exami[n]ing the [n]ature of [s]en[s]i[b]le [th]ings, [th]ese [p]eo[p]le have arrived at a [c]ertain [c]on[c]ept of God, but not at a [c]on[c]eption trul[y] worth[y] of Him.'