

# THE PLANE OF AN OTTOMAN NYC

## NICHOLAS KATSAFANAS

Triadic Mode: > 66.7%

2289:3358 68.2%

2289:3358 .682 So anyway we were at the Hot Club for the first time in ages, a bartender I hadn't seen in at least four to five years was still behind the bar, she recognized me immediately, with a new purple dyed haircut that, although probably a smidgeon young for her age, suited her nicely, I thought. She poured me a healthy amount of Mezcal into a short glass, and only minutes later I'd notice her carrying a bottle of Del Maguey Vida, my favorite brand of Mezcal, back to the bar, and right then I surmised that I was drinking my favorite type of Mezcal. Of course, healthy pours are double edged swords when you have a tendency to chug whatever's in front of you, which, for better or worse, is a tendency I've never entirely managed to discard, especially when in social settings. Socially, historically, I've always found myself sprinting toward liquor, with reckless abandon almost I perform fifty yard dashes toward whatever my

spirit of choice is that month, and even though on balance I've reduced these excessive tendencies with age, I'd be lying to both myself and you if I said I'd discarded them completely. And, to be honest, I'm unsure if I'd wish to discard them in totality, to extinguish my child-like idiocy once and for all, because, sure, from a certain vantage point I suppose I remain a man-child of sorts, but on the other hand man-children are necessary, no? It's man-children who make the greatest philosophical strides. To think like an adult is to take on the guise of utter rationalism, which hardly ever if not never innovates, which refuses to become idiotic enough to alter fundamental axioms, as axioms are inevitably created by the child-like thinkers, by idiots of the spirit. Even God Himself allegedly said, Let there be light, which is a man-child like statement in my opinion. Personally, I still refuse to sleep in the dark. The dark is contemptible in my mind. There's something inherent in being itself that's synonymous with light in my opinion. But how was Hot Club? It was interesting, intriguing, better than I anticipated, given the last couple times I'd been I felt the atmosphere to be a bit too clubby for my tastes, a tad too adolescent

for even my man-child palette. I saw the doorman from The Parlour there, because apparently he works security at Hot Club as well? In any case, as the party increased in size Katreena and I ended up engaged in an extended conversation with a petite, fair-skinned female who adamantly claimed to be of New York origin, yet when an appropriate opening emerged for me to ask her what part of New York she was from specifically she prevaricated, saying she was quote-unquote from all over, but then saying The Bronx. She was from The Bronx? She didn't strike me as someone from The Bronx, and for someone whose identity seemed to be so tied with being from New York, a New Yorker, which is the case with so many people from New York, it's actually kind of sad to me, this violent melding that seems to occur with people who identify themselves with New York City, yet this female, who for the record I found pleasant, oddly enough refused to explicitly claim a borough, until she reluctantly said The Bronx, which I think struck everyone as totally misguided. She wasn't from The Bronx, that much was clear. She could be from anywhere in the world except The Bronx. This idea that this female's origin story

began in The Bronx was completely absurd. Which borough she was from, assuming she was from a particular borough, now that was still ambiguous, but it was clear she wasn't from the Bronx. Queens, that I could give some credence to I suppose. It might be a reasonable speculation to suggest she was from Queens. Perhaps from an opulent family in Upper Manhattan, now that was even more likely-because she certainly struck me as someone who came from money, there was no trace of a New York accent in her speech, or of any accent in her speech, and the geography of Upper Manhattan is close enough to The Bronx that she could, in her mind at least, perhaps justify claiming The Bronx as a borough, even though I find that to be a bit ridiculous, to conflate Upper Manhattan with The Bronx, to think any thinking person would buy the idea that Upper Manhattan is in any way synonymous with The Bronx. Staten Island and Brooklyn strike me as more remote possibilities of her origin, and then we could also speculate on outer-areas as well, because while Yonkers strikes me as a stretch, I think Westchester County or Long Island are both certainly in play. Do you think it possible that she could have been

from, say, Westchester County, which would explain her moneyed demeanor, yet moved to The Bronx for work later in life, and now, and I agree that this is misguided, feels as though that working experience justifies her claim that The Bronx is a place she's actually from? Giorgios, that actually strikes me as perhaps the most sensible explanation of all. I also noticed, and I think it's worth noting, that when she sat her posterior was a tad more ample than I'd imagined, that this posterior along with the ambiguity of her origin began to strike me as almost ominously out of place, as if another plane of existence was forming. That happens at times-posteriors and their relative amplitude can vary widely from expectations, the posterior is almost impossible to estimate based on face alone. I guess it's reasonable to assert that we often look at a person's face and almost algorithmically create a simulation of their body from this face, that our mind works essentially algorithmically, we should admit that, that our minds are probably just composed of algorithms, and that we perform a similar process with voice, which actually happened to me just recently as well, where I spoke to a person on the phone and

inevitably created an algorithmic simulation of her face in my mind. When I saw her face at last online I was struck by how much this picture differed from the simulation I'd made in my mind—who was it I believed I was speaking to? I look at someone's face and then I ruthlessly algorithmically simulate their body without consent, whereas I hear someone's voice and then I ruthlessly algorithmically simulate their face without consent, but in both cases my accuracy is totally stochastic, and by stochastic I mean terrible. From voice to face and from face to body, we make ill-advised, ruthless speculations regarding everyone who enters our periphery! In this sense the simulation of the human begins with voice. From voice alone we algorithmically simulate both face and body, because from face we simulate body, as you said. In any case, as the conversation progressed we-myself, Katreena, and this female-began to touch on the topic of what exactly this female had been doing since leaving New York, and in the midst of this it came up that it just so happened that her and I were actually the same age, that she'd been finding locales she liked at our age, although she noted how difficult it was,

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

fraction of Greek locations compared to Lebanese locations, yet I stated it with so much aplomb she didn't question it at all, although she did immediately question whether Greeks smoked hookah, to which I simply said Ottoman Empire, to which she said of course, immediately connecting the dots. My goodness, Markos, I have to say that's fairly impressive, that a fair-skinned female from New York would connect those dots that quickly. The Ottoman Empire, I mean, at this point it's basically a piece of arcana. No one knows anything about the Ottoman Empire anymore. Oh, I completely agree! I totally feel like there are just very few people in our general age range who know anything about the Ottoman Empire, and I'd one hundred percent wager that not one other person at Hot Club that night who knew anything about the Ottoman Empire, never mind its very specific ethnic components, who could put the pieces of Greeks ancestrally smoking hookah together by the utterance of two words: Ottoman Empire. In fact, it seems to me that the Ottoman Empire is maybe the most neglected empire of the past half millennium, that it inherited its Byzantine predecessor's characteristic of being

completely discarded by modern scholarship. No one knows what you speak of when you so much as mention the Ottoman Empire, people are flummoxed, except apparently this female who may or may not be from New York, but certainly isn't from The Bronx. In short, I quickly found that the ambiguity of what New York City borough characteristic was inherent in this female became reflected right into the ambiguity of the ethnic blocks of the Ottoman Empire, in a post-Ottoman American diaspora, in an America that is itself multi-ethnic, and not entirely differently than the Ottomans, Ottomans who were only trumped in their importation of African slaves by America's out of control love affair with the African slave. No one imported more African slaves than the Ottoman Empire, except of course the United States of America. The ambiguity of the traits displayed by a Greek versus a Turk versus a Lebanese versus a Kurd versus an Armenian in the seemingly limitless Providence Hookah Network was suddenly a direct analog to the ambiguity of the New York City borough characteristics inherent in a person who perhaps dubiously claims to be from New York City. In one instance we're

unsure if we're witnessing a Greek, a Turk, a Lebanese, a Kurd, an Armenian; in the other instance, we're unsure if we're witnessing a person from The Bronx, from Manhattan, from Staten Island, from Brooklyn, from Queens; in both cases the overlapping characteristics, outside of their original context (of the Ottoman Empire and New York City, respectively), become vague enough in their nuance that the identity of each bleeds into the other, until the individual identities are erased completely. The New York City diaspora in Providence can reflect characteristics associated with Staten Island, with Manhattan, with The Bronx, with Brooklyn, with Queens, while the median hookah smoker this New York City transplant may encounter in the extended Providence Hookah Network may display characteristics of the Greek, of the Turk, of the Lebanese, of the Kurd, of the Armenian. In both cases what's Staten Island, what's Queens, what's Kurd, what's Greek, what's Brooklyn, what's Manhattan, what's Lebanese, what's Turk, what's The Bronx, what's Armenian all bleed into one another until they're essentially indistinguishable from each other, until they're essentially

extinguished, until we reach a fundamental oneness of an Ottoman New York City, a legitimate plane of existence that came into being only at the Hot Club via conversation this past Friday night. This is a physical plane of existence now, the Ottoman New York City of Oneness. It can no longer be denied, an Ottoman New York City where all identity has been extinguished into a monadic Oneness came into existence on a Friday night at the Hot Club. Yet that girl-could she have actually been from The Bronx? With one hundred percent certainty I will assure you, Giorgos, that the girl I spoke with Friday night was absolutely not from The Bronx.

## Footnotes

Triadic Mode: >.667

Echoes: 2289

Syllables: 3358

Self-Similarity: .682

So any[w]ay [w]e [w]ere at the [H]ot Club [f]or the  
[f]ir[s]t [t][i]me in ages, a [b]ar[t]ender I [h]adn't  
[s][ee]n in at l[ea][s]t [f]our to [f]ive y[ea]rs was [s]till  
[b]eh[i]nd the [b]ar, sh[e] re[c]og[n][i]zed [m][e]  
i[mm][e][d][i]atel[y], with a [n]ew [p]ur[p]le [d]yed  
[h]air[c]ut [th]at, al[th]ough [p]ro[b]a[b]ly a  
[s]midgeon young for [h]er age, [s]uited [h]er  
ni[c]ely, I thought. [Sh]e poured [m]e [a] [h][e]althy  
[a][m]ount of [M][e]z[c]al into a [sh]ort gl[a]ss, [a]nd  
on[l]y [m]i[n]ute[s] [l]ater I'd [n]oti[c]e her [c]arrying  
a [b]ottle of [D]el [M]agu[ey] [V]i[d]a, [m]y  
f[a][v]o[r]ite [b]rand of [M]ez[c]al, [b]a[ck] to the  
[b]ar, and [r]ight then [I] surm[i]sed that [I] was  
[d]rin[k]ing [m]y favorite t[y][p]e of [M]ez[c]al. Of  
[c]ourse, [h]ealthy [p]ou[r]s a[r]e [d]ouble edged  
[s][w]o[r]ds [w]hen you [h]ave a ten[d]en[c]y to  
ch[u]g [w]hatever's in [f]r[on]t of you, [w]hich, [f]or  
better or [w]orse, is a [t]en[d]en[c]y I[v]e ne[v]er

[e]n[t]irel[y] managed to [d]i[s][c]ard, [e]speciall[y]  
 [w]he[n] i[n] [s]ocial [s]ettings. [S]ociall[y],  
 hi[s]tori[c]all[y], I've al[w]ays [f]ound my[s]el[f]  
 [s]prin[t]ing [t]o[w]ard l[i][q]uor, [w][i]th re[ck]le[ss]  
 [a]ban[d]on [a]lmo[s]t I per[f]orm [f]i[f][t]y yard  
 [d]ashes [t]o[w]ard [w]hatever [m]y [s]pirit of  
 choi[c]e is that [m]onth, a[n]d eve[n] though on  
 [b]a[l]an[c]e I've re[d]u[c]ed th[e]se ex[c]e[s]sive  
 ten[d]en[c]i[e]s with age, I'd [b]e [l]y[ing] to [b]oth  
 m[y][s]el[f] and you i[f] I [s]aid I'd [d]i[s]car[d]ed  
 them [c]ompl[e]tel[y]. And, [t]o b[e] honest, I'm  
 unsure i[f] I'd w[i]sh [t]o [d]i[s][c]ard them in  
 [t]o[t]ality, [t]o ex[t]ingu[i]sh m[y] ch[i]ld-l[i]k[e]  
 i[d]io[c]y on[c]e and [f]or all, be[c]ause, su[r]e, [f]rom  
 a [c]e[r]tain v[a]ntage [p]oint I [s]u[p]pose I re[m]ain  
 a [m][a]n-child of [s]orts, but on [th]e o[th]er h[a]nd  
 m[a]n-children are [n]e[c]e[ss]ary, [n]o? It's  
 [m]an-children who [m][a]ke the gr[ea]test  
 [ph]ilo[s]o[ph]ical [s]tr[i]des. [T]o thin[k] li[k]e an  
 adult is [t]o [t]a[k]e on the gu[i]se [o]f [u]tter  
 [r]ationalism, wh[i]ch hardl[y] e[v]er i[f] [n]ot  
 [n]e[v]er i[n]no[v]ates, wh[i]ch [r]e[f]uses to be[c]ome  
 i[di]o[t]i[c] e[n]ou[gh] [t]o [a]ll[t]er [f]undamental  
 [a]xioms, [a]s [a]xioms are inevita[b]ly [c]reated [b]y  
 the ch[i]ld-l[i]k[e] thin[k]ers, [b]y i[di]o[t]s of the

[s]pir[i]t. Even God Him[s][e]lf all[e]g[e]dly [s][ai]d,  
[L][e]t there be [l]ight, wh[i]ch [i]s a [m]an-ch[i]ld  
l[i]ke [s]tate[m]ent i[n] [m][y] o[p]i[n]io[n].  
[P]er[s]onall[y], I [s]till refuse to [s]l[ee][p] in the  
dark. The dar[k] is [c]ontemptible in [m][y] [m]i[n]d.  
[Th]ere's [s]ome[th]ing [i]nherent [i]n being [i]t[s]elf  
that's [s]y[n]o[n]y[m]ou[s] with light i[n] [m]y  
opi[n]io[n]. But [h]ow was [H]ot Club? [I]t was  
[i]n[t]e[r]e[s]ting, [i]n[t]r[ig]uing, [b]etter tha[n] I  
a[n][t]i[c]i[p]ated, g[i]ven the la[s]t [c]lou[p]le  
[t]i[m]es [I]'d [b]een I [f]elt the atmos[ph]ere to [b]e  
a [b]it too [c]lu[b]bby [f]or my [t]a[s]tes, a [t]a[d] [t]oo  
a[d]ole[s]cent for even [m]y [m]an-child [p]a[l]ette. I  
[s]aw the doo[r][m]an from [Th]e [P]ar[l]ou[r]  
[th]ere, be[c]ause a[p]parently [h]e [w]orks  
[s]e[c]urity at [H]ot [C]lub as [w]ell? I[n] a[n]y  
[c]a[s]e, as the [p]arty i[n][c]r[e]a[s]ed i[n] [s]i[ze]  
[K]a[t]r[ee]na a[n]d [I] e[n]ded u[p] e[n]g[a]ged i[n]  
a[n] exte[n]ded [c]onver[s]a[tio]n with a [p]etite,  
[f]air-[s]kinned [f]e[m]a[le] who ada[m]antl[y]  
[c]l[ai]med to b[e] of New Yo[r]k o[r]igin, y[et]  
wh[e]n a[n] a[p]pr[o]p[ri]ate o[p]e[n]ing e[m]erged  
for [m]e to a[s]k her [w]hat [p]art of [N]ew York  
she [w]as [f]rom [s]p[e]c[i]f[i]cally sh[e]  
[p]revari[c]a[te]d, [s]l[a]ying she was

[q]u[o]te-un[q]u[o]te [f]rom all [o]ver, [b]ut [th]en  
 [s]aying [Th]e [B]ronx. She was from The [B]ronx?  
 She didn't [s]trike me as [s][o]me[o]ne [f]r[o]m The  
 [B]ronx, and [f]or [s][o]me[o]ne whose [i]dentit[y]  
 [s][ee]med to [b][e] [s]o t[i]ed with [b][e]ing from  
 [N]ew [Y]ork, a [N]ew [Y]or[k]er, wh[i]ch [i]s the  
 [c]a[s]e with [s]o many [p]eo[p]le from New York,  
 it's [a][c]tually [k]ind of [s]ad to me, thi[s] viol[e]nt  
 m[e]lding that [s]eems to o[cc]ur with [p]eo[p]le who  
 [i]dentif[y] them[s]elves with New York [C]ity, yet  
 thi[s] [f]emale, who [f]or the [r]e[c]ord I [f]ound  
 [p]l[e]asant, oddly enough [r]e[f]used to  
 ex[p]l[i]citly [c]laim a [b]orough, un[t]il she  
 [r]e[u]c[t]antly [s]aid The [B]ronx, [w]h[i]ch I  
 th[i]nk [s][t]ru[ck] every[o]ne as [t]otally  
 [m]isguided. She [w]asn't from The [B]ronx, that  
 [m]uch [w]as [c]lear. She [c]ould [b]e from  
 any[w]he[r]e in the [w]o[r]ld ex[c]ept [Th]e [B]ronx.  
 [Th]i[s] idea [th]at [th]i[s] female's o[r]igi[n] [s]to[r]y  
 [b]egan i[n] The [B]ronx [w]as [c]om[p]l[e]tel[y]  
 a[b]s[ur]d. [W]hich [b]orough she was [f]rom,  
 a[ss]uming she was [f]rom a [p]art[i]c[ul]ar  
 [b]orough, now that was [s]till am[b]i[gu]ous, [b]ut  
 [i]t was [c]lear she w[as]n't fr[o]m the [B]ronx.  
 [Q]ue[es]ts, that I [c]ould give [s]ome [c]r[e]den[c]e to

I [s]u[pp]ose. It might b[e] a r[ea]sona[b]le [s]p[e]culation to [s]ugge[s]t she was from Qu[ee]ns. [P]erha[p]s [f]rom a[n] o[p]ule[n]t [f]a[m]ily i[n] U[pp]er [M]anh[a]ttan, now th[at] was even [m]ore [l]i[k]e[ly]-be[c]ause she [c]ertain[ly] [s]tru[c]k [m]e as [s][o]me[o]ne who [c]ame fr[o]m [m]oney, there was [n]o tra[c]e of a [N]ew York [a]cc[e]n[t] i[n] her [s]p[ee]ch, or of a[n]y [a]cc[e]n[t] i[n] her [s]p[ee]ch, and the geogra[ph]y [o]f [U]pp[er] [M]anh[a]ttan is [c]lo[s]e enou[gh] to The Bronx that she [c]ould, in her [m]ind at [l]ea[s]t, perhaps ju[s]t[i]f[y] [c]l[ai]ming The [B]ronx as a [b]o[r]ou[gh], even th[ou]gh [I] f[i]nd that to [b]e a [b]it ridi[cu]lou[s], to [c]onf[i]l[ate] U[pp]er [M]anh[a]ttan with The [B]ronx, to [th]i[n]k a[n]y [th]i[n]king p[er]son would [b]uy the [i]dea that U[pp]er [M]anh[a]ttan [i]s [i]n a[n]y [w]ay [s]y[n]o[n]y[m]ou[s] [w]ith The [B]ronx. [S]taten Island and [B]rooklyn [s]t[ri]k[e] [m]e as [m]ore [r]e[m]ote p[ro]p[er]ties of her o[r]igin, and then we [c]ould al[s]o [s]p[e]c[u]late on outer-[a]reas [a]s [w]ell, be[c]ause [w]h[i]le Yon[k]ers [s]t[ri]k[e]s me as a [s]t[re]tch, I thin[k] [W]e[s]tche[ster] [C]ounty or [L]ong [I]sland are both [c]ertain[ly] in p[la]y. Do you th[i]n[k] [i]t po[s]si[b]le that she [c]ould have

[b]een from, [s]ay, [W]e[s]t[ch]e[s]ter [C]ounty,  
 [w]hi[ch] [w]ould exp[ɪ]l[ai]n her [m]on[e]yed  
 de[m]e[n]or, yet [m]oved to The Bronx for work  
 [l]a[ter] in [l]i[f], and now, and [I] a[g]ree [th]at  
 [th]i[s] i[s] m[i]s[g]u[i]ded, [f]eels as [th]ough [th]at  
 working ex[p]erien[c]e ju[s]ti[f]ies her [c]l[ai]m [th]at  
 [Th]e Bronx is a [p]l[a]ce sh[e]'s a[c]tua[lly]  
 [f]rom? Giorgio[s], that a[c]tua[lly] [s]tri[k]es [m]e  
 [a]s [p]erh[a]p[s] the [m]o[s]t [s]en[s]ible  
 ex[p]l[an]ation of [a]ll. [I] [a]ll[s]o [n]o[t]ic[ed],  
 and [I] th[i]nk i[t]'s [w]orth [n]o[t]ing, that [w]hen  
 she [s]at her [p]o[s]t[er]io[r] was a [t]a[d [m]ore  
 a[m]p[le] th[a]n I'd i[m]a[g]ined, [th]at [th]i[s]  
 po[s]terior along with the am[b]i[g]u[i]ty [o]f her  
 [o]ri[g]i[n] b[e]g[an] to [s]trike [m]e as al[m]o[s]t  
 o[m]i[n]ou[sly] [o]ut of [p]l[a]ce, as i[f] another  
 [p]l[ane] of exi[s]ten[c]e was [f]orming. Th[at]  
 h[a]ppens [a]t [t]imes-[p]osteriors [a]nd their  
 [r]ela[t]ive a[m]p[li]tude [c]an va[r]y widely from  
 ex[p]e[c]tations, the [p]o[s]terior is al[m]o[s]t  
 i[m]p[os]sible to e[s]ti[m]ate [b]a[s]ed on f[a]ll[c]e  
 a[l]lone. I gue[s]s i[t]'s reason[a]ble to a[ss]e[r]t that  
 we o[f]ten look at [a] pe[r]s[on]'s [f]a[c]e [a]nd  
 al[m]o[s]t a[lgo]rithmi[c]a[lly] c[r]eate [a]  
 s[i]m[u]l[a]tion of their body [f]rom thi[s] [f]a[c]e,

that our [m]ind wor[k]s e[ss]entia[lly] algorithm[ic]a[lly], we should ad[m]it [th]at, [th]at ou[r] [m]inds a[r]e [p]ro[b]a[bly] ju[s]t com[p]osed of [a]lgori[th]ms, [a]nd [th]at we [p]erform a [s]imilar [p]ro[c]e[ss] [w]ith voi[c]e, [w]hich [a]ctually h[a]ppened to m[e] ju[s]t re[c]entl[y] as [w]ell, [w]here I [s]p[o]ke to a [p]er[s]on on the [p]hone a[n]d i[n]evitably [c]re[at]ed a[n] a[l]gorithmi[c] [s]imul[a]tion of her [f]a[c]e in [m]y [m]i[n]d. When [I] [s]aw her [f]a[c]e a[t] l[a]st onl[i]ne [I] was [s]tr[u]ck by how m[u]ch th[i]s p[i]c[t]ure d[i]ffere[r]ed [f]rom the [s]i[m]ulation I'd [m]ade in [m]y [m]i[n]d—who was it [I] be[l]ie[v]ed [I] was [s]p[ea]k[ing] to? I l[oo]k at [s]ome[o]ne's fa[c]e and [th]en I [r]uthl[e]ssl[y] algo[r]ithmi[c]a[lly] [s]imu[l]ate their body [w]ithout [c]on[s]ent, [w]hereas I hear [s]ome[o]ne's voi[c]e a[n]d the[n] I [r]uthl[e]ssl[y] algo[r]ithmi[c]a[lly] [s]imu[l]ate their f[a]c[e] without [c]on[s]ent, [b]ut in [b]oth [c]a[s]es my a[cc]ura[cy] is [t]otally [s]to[ch]a[s]ti[c], and [b]y [s]to[ch]a[s]ti[c] I mean [t]erri[b]le. [F]rom voi[c]e to [f]a[c]e and [f]rom [f]a[c]e to body, we m[a]ke ill-advised, [r]uthl[e]ss [s]p[e]c[u]l[a]tions [r]egarding [e]ve[r]yone who [e]nte[r]s ou[r]

[p]eri[p]hery! [I]n th[i][s] [s]en[s]e the [s]im[u]lation of the h[u]man [b]eg[i]ns w[i]th [v]oi[c]e. From [v]oi[c]e a[l]one we algorith[m]i[c]a[lly] [s]i[m]u[late] [b]oth [f]a[c]e and [b]ody, [b]e[c]ause [f]rom [f]a[c]e we [s]imulate [b]ody, as you [s]aid. I[n] a[n]y [c][a]s[e], as the [c]onver[s][a]tion [p]rogr[ess]ed w[e]-[m]y[s][ell]f, [K]atr[ee]na, and thi[s] [f][ell]m[ale]-began [t]o [t]ouch on the [t]o[p]i[c] of what ex[a]c[tly this [f][ell]male h[a]d been doin[g] [s]i[n]c[e] l[e]a[vin]g New York, and [i]n the m[i]d[s]t of th[i][s] [i]t [c]ame up th[at] it ju[s]t [s]o [h][a]ppened th[at] [h]er and I were [a][c]tually the [s]a[m]e [a]ge, that she'd been [f]inding [l]o[c]ales she [l]i[k]ed at our age, although she noted how d[i][ff][i]c[ult] [i]t was, [c]ompared to [N]ew Yor[k], where she k[n]ew the i[n]s a[n]d [o]uts [o]f [w]here to [p]atron[i]z[e] and [w]hen, [w]hat [e]s[t]abli[s]hments [sh]e [e]njoyed and [w]hich [o]nes she d[e]s[p]i[s]ed. I agr[ee]d i[m]m[e]diatelly, noting th[at] [a]t [m]y [a]ge, at our [a]ge, it [w]as [o]ne of the [m]ain de[t]errents [t]o [m]o[v]ing t[o] a[n]other [c]ity, parti[cu]larlly [N]ew Yor[k], which I'd [s]tronglly [c]on[s]idered [m]o[v]ing t[o] [m]ore than on[c]e, but, as I [s]aid exp[er]i[en]c[i]tly to [h]er, to [h]ave to re[l]earn

every [s]ingle [p]l[a]ce that [I] [l]ike to [g]o, and  
 how to [g]et there, to re[l]earn which [p]l[ac]es  
 offend my [p]a[l]a[te], [a]t my age, it ju[s]t [s]tru[ck]  
 me [a]s w[a]y [t]oo daunting of a [t][a][s][k] [t]o  
 [t][a]k[e] on. It [s]tru[ck] me [a]s a t[a][s][k] th[at]  
 would [c]on[s]ume [s]o [m]uch of [m]y e[n]erg[y]  
 that it would e[ss]e[n]tia[lly] [m]ute all of [m]y  
 [ph]i[l]o[s]o[ph]ical energ[ie]s [f]or at [l][ea]s[t] [f]ive  
 years. She m[e]ntioned a [L][e][b]anese [b]ar [w]here  
 “you [w]al[k] [d]own[s]tairs” that she [l]i[k]ed a [l]ot.  
 I [s]aid the [e]ntire [c]ity of Provi[d]en[c]e has  
 be[c]ome e[ss]e[n]tia[lly] one [e]xte[n][d]ed hookah  
 [l]ounge, which, I admitted to he[r], [f]ull  
 [d]i[s][c]l[os]u[r]e, a[pp]eals to m[e] [d][ee]p[ly],  
 which, [f]ull [d]i[s]closure, [s]eem[ed] to genuinel[y]  
 [s]urp[r]ise her, [th]at [th]e [e]n[tire] [c]ity of  
 [P]rovi[d]en[c]e was a[n] [e]xte[n][d]ed hookah  
 [l]ounge. I [s]aid the [c]i[ti]ty is [l]i[t]tered w[i]th  
 Gr[ee][k] and [L]eban[ese] [p]l[ac]es [l]i[k]e that,  
 which, of [c]our[s]e Giorgio[s], we kn[o]w is[n]’t true  
 i[n] the [l][ea]s[t], [th]at [th]ere are [o]nly a  
 fra[c]tion of Gr[ee][k] [l]o[c]ations [c]om[p]ared to  
 [L]eban[ese] [l]o[c]a[tions], yet I [s]t[ate]d [i]t w[i]th  
 [s]o much a[p]p[ro]p[ri]ate she [d]i[d]n’t [q]uestion it at  
 a[l]l, a[l]thoug[h] she [d]id imm[e]diatel[y]

[q]u[ɛ]stion wh[ɛ]ther Gr[ee]k[s] s[m]o[k]ed  
 hoo[k]ah, to which I [s]im[p]ly [s]aɪd Otto[m]an  
 [E]m[p]ire, to which she [s]aid of [c]our[s]e,  
 i[m]m[e][d]i[at]ely [c]onne[ct]ing the [d]ots. [M]y  
 goodne[ss], [M]ar[k]o[s], I have to [s]ay that's  
 [f]ai[r]ly impre[ss]ive, that a [f]ai[r]-s[k]inned  
 [f]e[m]ale [f]rom [N]ew York would [c]o[n]n[e]ct  
 [th]ose dots [th]at [q]ui[ck]ly. The Otto[m]an  
 Em[p]ire, I [m]ean, at thi[s] [p]oint it's ba[s]i[c]all[y]  
 [a] [p]l[i]c[e] of [a]r[c]ana. [N][o] one k[n]o[ws]  
 a[n]ything a[bout] the [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire  
 a[n]y[m]ore. Oh, I [c]om[p]l[i]te[l]y agr[ee]! I  
 tota[l]l[y] [f]eel l[i]k[e] the[r]e a[r]e just ve[r]y [f]ew  
 p[ro]p[er] in our [g]e[n]eral a[l]g[e] r[a]n[g]e who  
 k[n]ow a[n]ything a[bout] the [O]ttoman Em[p]ire,  
 and I'd [o]n[e] hu[n]dred p[er]c[en]t [w]ager that  
 [n]ot [o]ne other p[er]s[on] at Hot Clu[b] that  
 [n]ight who k[n]ew a[n]ything a[bout] the  
 [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire, [n]ever [m]ind its very  
 s[p]e[c]i[f]i[c] eth[n]i[c] c[om]p[on]ents, who  
 c[ould] p[ut] the p[ro]p[er]ties of [G]r[ee]k[s]  
 an[c]e[s]trally s[m]o[k]ing hoo[k]ah [t]o[g]e[th]er by  
 the utteran[c]e of [t]w[o] words: Ottoman Em[p]ire.  
 In fact, it s[ee]ms to [m]e [th]at [th]e Otto[m]an  
 Em[p]ire is [m]aybe the [m]o[s]t negl[e]c[t]ed

[e]m[p]ire of the [p][a][s]t h[a]lf [m]i[ll]ennium, that  
 [i]t [i]nher[i]ted [i]ts [B]yzant[i]ne [p]rede[c]e[ss]or's  
 [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c] of [b]e[ing] [c]om[p]l[e]t[e]l[y]  
 [d]i[s][c]ar[d]ed [b]y mo[d]ern [s][c]ho[l]arshi[p]. [N]o  
 one k[n]ows what you [s][p]ea[k] of when you [s]o  
 [m]uch as [m]e[n]tion the Otto[m]a[n] Em[p]ire,  
 [p]eo[p]le are [f]lu[m]moxed, ex[c]e[p]t a[pp]arentl[y]  
 this [f]e[m]ale who [m][ay] or [m][ay] not [b]e  
 [f]rom New York, [b]ut [c]ertainl[y] isn't [f]rom The  
 [B]ronx. In short, I quickly [f]ound [th]at [th]e  
 am[b]iguity of what New York [C][i]ty [b]orough  
 [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c] was i[n]here[n]t i[n] this  
 [f]emale [b]e[c]ame [r]e[f]le[c]ted [r]ight into the  
 am[b]iguity of the ethni[c] [b]lo[ck]s [o]f the  
 [O]tto[m]an Em[p]ire, in a [p]o[s]t-Otto[m]an  
 A[m]eri[c]an [d]ia[s]p[ora], i[n] a[n] A[m]eri[c]a that  
 [i]s [i]t[s]elf [m]ul[t]i-eth[n]i[c], a[n]d [n]ot  
 e[n][t]irel[y] [d]ifferentl[y] [th]an [th]e Otto[m]ans,  
 Otto[m]ans who were only [t]rum[p]ed [i]n their  
 [i]m[p]or[t]ation of [A][f]ri[c]an [s]laves by  
 Ameri[c]a's [o]ut [o]f [c]ontrol [l]ove a[ff]air with  
 the [A][f]ri[c]an [s]lave. No one im[p]or[t]ed [m]o[r]e  
 [A][f]rican [s]laves [th]an [th]e Otto[m]an [E]m[p]ire,  
 ex[c]e[p]t of [c]ours[e] the United [S]tates of  
 A[m]eri[c]a. The am[b]iguity of the tr[ai]ts

di[s]pl[a]yed [b]y a Gr[ee][k] [v]e[r][s]us a Tu[r]k  
 [v]e[r][s]us a Le[b]an[e]se [v]e[r][s]us a [K]u[r]d  
 [v]e[r][s]us an Ar[m]e[n]i[an] in the [s]e[e]m[ingly]  
 [l]i[m]it[l]e[ss] Provi[d]en[c]e Hoo[k]ah Net[w]or[k]  
 [w]as [s]u[dd]en[l]y a [d]ire[c]t [a]na[l]og to the  
 [a]m[b]iguity of the New York [C]i[ty] [b]o[r]ough  
 [c]hara[c]te[r][i]s[t]i[c]s i[n]herent i[n] a [p]e[r]s[on]  
 who [p]e[r]ha[p]s du[b]i[ous]l[y] c[la]ims to [b]e  
 from New York [C]i[ty]. I[n] one i[n]s[t]an[c]e [w]e're  
 unsu[r]e if [w]e're [w]itne[ss]ing a Gr[ee][k], a  
 Tu[r]k, a Leban[e]se, a [K]u[r]d, an Armenia[n];  
 i[n] the other i[n]s[t]an[c]e, we're unsu[r]e if [w]e're  
 [w]itne[ss]ing a pe[r]s[on] from The [B]ronx, from  
 M[a]nh[at]tan, from [S]t[at]en Island, from  
 [B]roo[k]lyn, from [Q]ueens; in [b]oth [c]a[s]es the  
 overl[a]pping [c]har[a]c[t]e[r][i]s[t]i[c]s, out[s]ide  
 [o]f their [o]r[i]g[i]nal [c]ontext ([o]f the [O]ttoman  
 Em[p]ire and [N]ew York [C]i[ty], re[s]p[e]c[tivel[y]),  
 [b]e[c]ome vague e[n]ough in their [n]uan[c]e [th]at  
 [th]e i[d]entity of [ea]ch [b]l[ee]ds in[t]o [th]e o[th]er,  
 un[t]il the [i]n[d]iv[i]dual i[d]entit[ies] a[r]e  
 e[r]a[s]ed compl[e]tel[y]. The New York [C]i[ty]  
 [d]ia[s]p[ora] in [P]rovi[d]en[c]e [c]an refle[c]t  
 [c]hara[c]te[r][i]s[t]i[c]s a[s]so[c]iated with [S]taten  
 Island, with M[a]nh[at]tan, with The [B]ro[n]x,

with [B][r]oo[k]lyn, with [Q]u[ee]ns, while the  
 [m][e]d[i]an hoo[k]ah [s]mo[k]er thi[s] New York  
 [C]ity transplant [m]ay [e]n[c]ounter i[n] the  
 [e]xte[n][d]ed [P]rovi[d]en[c]e Hoo[k]ah Network  
 [m]ay [d]i[s][p]lay [c]hara[c]ter[i][s]t[i][c]s of the  
 Gr[ee][k], of the Tur[k], of the Leban[e]se, of the  
 [K]u[r]d, of the Armenia[n]. I[n] both [c]a[s]es  
 what's [S]taten Island, what's [Q]u[ee]ns, what's  
 [K]urd, what's Gr[ee][k], what's [B]roo[k]lyn,  
 what's M[a]nh[a]ttan, what's Le[b]an[e]se, what's  
 Tu[r]k, what's The [B]ronx, what's Arm[e][n]ia[n]  
 all [b]l[ee]d i[n]to one a[n]other until they're  
 esse[n]tially i[n]di[s]tingu[i]sha[b]le from [ea]ch  
 other, until they're [e][ss]e[n]tiall[y] [e]xti[n]guished,  
 until we r[ea]ch a funda[me]ntal one[n]ess of a[n]  
 Otto[m]a[n] [N]ew York [C]ity, a [l]egiti[m]ate  
 [p]l[a]ne of exi[s][t]en[c]e that [c]ame in[t]o  
 [b]eing onl[y] at the Hot [C]lu[b] [v]ia  
 [c]on[v]er[s]a[t]ion thi[s] [p]a[s]t Frid[a]y night.  
 Th[i]s i[s] a ph[y]s[i]cal plane of ex[i][s]ten[c]e  
 [n]ow, the Ottoman [N]ew York [C]i[t]y of  
 One[n]e[ss]. It can [n]o longer [b]e [d]e[n]ied, a[n]  
 Otto[m]a[n] [N]ew York Cit[y] where all i[d]entit[y]  
 has [b]een [e]x[t]i[n]guished i[n]t[o] a [m]o[n]a[d]i[c]  
 One[n]e[ss] [c]ame in[t]o [e]xi[s]ten[c]e on a Fri[d]ay

[n]ight at the Hot [C]lub. Yet that girl-[c]ould she  
h[a]ve [a][c]tually [b]een f[r]om The [B][r]onx?  
[W]ith [o][n]e hu[n]dred [p]e[r][c]ent [c]e[r]tainty I  
[w]ill assu[r]e you, Gior[g]o[s], [th]at [th]e [g]irl I  
[s][p]oke with [F][r]iday [n]ight was ab[s]o[l]ute[l]y  
[n]ot [f][r]om The Bronx.