

AL-QA'EDA MOTH

Jonathan Bowden



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St. George and the Dragon by Paolo Uccello (1397-1475)

Here he rides before us
graven to futurist rocks
against a sky of emerald
he spears a dragon down

+

But isn't the saurian on milady's lead?

Dedicated to Dorothy Bowden (1931-1978)



Jonathan Bowden

Photo by Daniel Smalley

Al-Qa'eda MOTH
A Western without horizons...

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Harlequin Thoomey
Toblerone Harpie
Old Man Smithers
Blackbird Leys Dingo
Axon Tree
Lift Spenser Wingate
Pond Granite
Egghead Morgan
Rapacious Quicksilver
Low Termagant
Porcupine Jones
Sheriff Eugene
Geronimo, a Red Indian
+
Various Old Western archetypes or placebos...
Dingo, a child

PROLOGUE: <<<This work consists of three interconnected narratives. Parts One, Four and Seven et cetera take place in the nineteenth century. Parts Two, Five + Eight *et al* subsist a hundred years further on. Whereas Parts Three, Six & Nine and so on exist in dream-time. It has to be these Dramatis Personae's unconscious. Not even Roy Rogers – in Westerns like *Colorado*, *Robin Hood of the Pecos* and *Cowboy & the Senorita* – can outface this. All's clear now, yes?>>>

‘Everything has a remedy save Death’. – old Proverb

ONE: (1)

Didn't a distinct poster motivate the breeze? It doubled up its tragic absence – as if straining 'it' against the wooden post's adornment. In substance, then, this rough brown-paper was hewn from many leaves – what with a single anvil beckoning to the stars. On this template a Colt 45. waxed visible or evident; and it happens to be the world's most powerful hand-gun, after all! Nicely put, it could blow a fellow's head clean *off* at a hundred paces! In summation – therefore – our print depicted a cold-eyed wanderer; together with a slouch hat which neatly spliced a face in two. Behind it a turquoise sky limited some reindeer, but it also let out vultures from their keep. They circled a white sun while moving in tandem. Definitely so, our figure now held a right-angles pistol; at once merely aft to a face or perpendicular to its future. No teleology then inhibited this regard, particularly given a steel-barrel's glimmer... resultantly so. We also find that an orange beard mantles a face in terms of its scrub. It took no-one really by surprise; at least when it occurred underneath those ice-blue marbles. A serge jacket gifted a tailor's way or task – especially when out of Wichita's haberdashery: and the latter was surmounted by a red neckerchief. Violently so, because it claimed its offerant if only presumably to die. For Louis L'Amour has left a vacant star here by a hillside – and this was not even to speak of Clark Gable's performance in *High Noon*. While our Avenger's hand held a six-gun within it – a gesture which presumed to come on blind, foursquare, undelivered, Rodin-like and super-masculine. It remained steady if devoid of four pins; and each of them derived from a chaste metal or held a vista up. The name or signature at a poster's bottom reads: Harlequin Thoomey.

TWO: (2)

In one rival dimension to our own a Harlequin stood aghast. Moreover, his form came green-garbed or russet, if set against a skeletal face's effrontery. A large machine-gun stuck out laterally from his belt, in terms of a bluish hint it was possibly an Uzi.

Various threads of snow and ice tumbled around him; being fit to be thrown over or themselves reddish specks. Yes... didn't a steaming barrel add to these woes' peregrinations? Furthermore, what arrests our attention has to be a skull... one which howls or is fit to curdle a cranium --- presumably after Gray's *Anatomy*. It bewails a wound and screeches to a Banshee's status – or it chooses to mulct a severed head's revenge. Might it combine Elisabethan tragedy and an early Iris Murdoch novel? Similarly, this death's-head cries dolefully – what with brazen sockets carrying an orb: when taken together with flaring nostrils that were chiselled out of bone. Alack(!), the mouth fell open bitterly – as a Head caromed and skimmed within a moon-beam. You see, it's alerted to its task... while blood-red light hurtles about after Rothko's intervention. It comes laced with snowy storm; at least when traversing a gambit from cadmium to violet *via* alizarin. Now none but Thoomey really knows this film-poster's violence!

THREE: (3)

In Harlequin Thoomey's unconscious a vision swirls about. It transposes on nought save immaterialism... even though the first, second and third story segments represent a thrice-storeyed mind. Perhaps it embodies a multiple play by Samuel Beckett – like his early work *Eleutheria*? Regardless of this – one character with a clown-nose stood in a grey-tinted space; albeit abreast of a blanched face. He mouthed words which were presently misheard even amid these lambs' silences. Furthermore, another mountebank was dressed in harlequinade or as Punch's Clown Joey, and he came forward merely to lop off a nose's frustrations. These puppets outface one another after silent cinema's fashion or in mime. What better, therefore, than a nightmare to examine Oswald Spengler's thesis *The Decline of the West*? Especially when it is set within a Western's architecture, even a spaghetti one...

FOUR: (4)

To be true to our tale, though, our vigilante (who basically went under the name of Harlequin Thoomey) pursued a gang of bank-robbers up into some northern hills. This troupe was led by a father-‘n’-son team called Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo... why, they’ve confiscated the assets of Standard High in Eugene, Oregon. After which they all moved up into the mountains. As insurance they took a kidnapped bank teller with them. Her name’s Toblerone Harpie. What they hadn’t reckoned on is a small family detail – namely, she happened to be Thoomey’s wife. By purloining one; they’d outraged the other!

FIVE: (5)

Whereupon – in another direction or dimension – Eugene’s Oregon spreads out before us in the nineteenth century. It existed as a small town of hopeless assurance. Surely now, a dull green-light affected its listlessness – what with several oil-lamps flickering in niches? They’d abandoned glory over an emerald head – at least when seen from the side and with a cheroot sticking out aslant. Wooden boards lay up between twin gamblers who were playing poker’s dance – albeit with one trusting to a short trilby; the other relying on conical ware. This came fluted off to a grave; together with a bow-tie situated underneath... and neither of these grappled *avec* skeletons. A sequined enclosure lay off sideways-on and it belaboured a card-back’s design. It tapered away to a left-end in view. Similarly, a youth or stripling in a buck-skin jacket made his way over to one offerant; and it was reddish in its bloody hue. He faced Harlequin Thoomey’s face full on; the latter being sequestered in a booth near the saloon’s door. The lawman wore a brown slouch hat – of padded felt – high up on his crown.

SIX: (6)

The robbers had infiltrated the bank at three-thirty p.m., and this took place just before a cash reckoning up. The stained-glass floor reflected indebtedness – if only to usury’s bounty. Needless

to say, all of them wore stockings over mug-shots, and these barely half-covered the face after Colin Wilson's & Patricia Pitman's 'True Crime' lexicons. Weren't encyclopaedias a staple "Enlightenment" foil? Nonetheless, a machine-pistol's bullets ricocheted into the roof – primarily by way of a warning which opened Loki's hand. Also, each scavenger carried a large grip-bag in either fist... so as to slake up the green inky dye. Whilst one bank employee in particular came to notice, at once apprised by a masculine vision. Her hair announced a flaming tincture – itself midway to an orange blonde. Whereas her lips and eyebrows were perfect, or symmetrical to Tamara de Lempicka's vista. A close-fitting purple dress rose up over a heavy bosom. Its skirt waxed exceedingly short beneath a tight belt. It limbered up so as to reveal a muscular and tanned pair of legs... no matter how perpendicularly. This curvaceousness belonged to Toblerone Harpie... married name: Thoomey.

SEVEN: (7)

A spectral dawn of our vision drew on H.J. Eysenck's estrangement. Most effectively, our clown-nose examined another's chin – basically so as to weep over redundant fissures. The middle-aged man stood his ground and looked mildly affronted. Did he happen to be bare-foot or also sporting an open-neck shirt? Gesturing theatrically, our variant on Trevor Griffiths' *Comedians* made so as to pull a neighbour over to his chest. He resisted – rather after the playfulness of silent cinema, together with an electric organ coming up through the floor. In this it betokened the aftermath of a movie house like the 'Regal' in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. No sound was heard, but such a marionette mimed his avoidance of subordination in dumb-show. Undoubtedly... could our legatee to von Laban be the bank-manager who'd been threatened by the raiders... somewhat spasmodically? Let's wait to find out...

EIGHT: (8)

One figure stood afore another in a hushed silence. Altogether now, a dim silhouette sought solace – essentially by virtue of a recess in this bar’s dwindling astral. A post – of a brackish purple if lit – divided the two participants. One came seated behind a horizontal plane made of brownish wood. Isn’t this the ‘good, clean’ timber of which Aston was oft to speak in Pinter’s *The Caretaker*? Light streamed in through a sequined avenue... it flooded in over both champions. But its impact resiled to an optical illusion which was possibly kept out of sight... in that the window frontage had been taped over by a design. Primarily, it resembles the back of a sequence of Waddington’s playing cards. You know, these are those squares on which a man’s shirt can be lost... whether it be over stud poker, whist, cribbage, gin rummy, bridge or whatever? While our other protagonist stood – with his legs apart – and *avec* his booted heels braced on running boards. Each foot carried a spur at its rear. His hat – on a brief net of twine – lay halfway down his back. Yet – by the light’s trickery – he seems to be inundated with claret, Ribena, rubicund flow and all such glows. They sprouted up – when lit by imaginary pulsars – and came to surround him with a roseate effulgence. This blood epiphany happened to be a pink portrait melding into cadmium – as limned in naphthol. It also stood out with quinacridone by way of crimson; at least before sprouting as permanent rose. All of this refused to permit alizarin from becoming violet’s Quin... especially when limiting its permutations... What about magenta’s fate, I hear you cry?

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“You Harlequin Thoomey?”, spat out yesterday’s youth. (He clearly remained unapprised of Tony Blair’s ‘respect agenda’). “Who wants to know?”, replied our stalker. He was looking – if he but knew it – at Blackbird Leys Dingo.

NINE: (9)

The vigilante filled our screen in a world which had become devoid of aught save snow. Its icy fondue unhinged one bracket

with various twigs (or broken bracken) festooning a grave. ‘Jet’ white it was; within a grievance’s towering edifice... For an Ice Giant’s daughter has slain those who might come after her – particularly when travelling across these wastes on an iron sledge. The terrain of Fennimore Cooper had given way to Jack London, even though Harlequin has read neither party. Still, his breath froze in those puffs of ice-spleen as were carried forwards on the air... while his face remained chiselled amid frost’s impermanence. The jaw – for its part – came up granite-like; at once transfixed, though it was, by an icicle beard. Meanwhile, a cheroot refused to light --- match-wise --- on the implacable air. But, in this respect, his wide-brimmed hat seemed to breed watery spears; they encrusted its rim whilst falling down a’pieces.

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Didn’t Thoomey transfigure a living sculpture, here? Essentially, it recalled Cesar’s blank edifice with the former ‘rusting’ to black ice... as was suggested by some welded iron. Executed in 1958, it rose up by twenty inches and underwent the title *Personage*. Yet it re-interpreted a miniature menhir; at once dolorous of a new monstrosity or hinting at a castrated dinosaur. Who’s the American scientist that decrypted their ‘hot-bloodedness’ (?) ... why, it’s Adrian J. Desmond.

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Harlequin Thoomey merely continued to breathe out ice-fire!

TEN: (10)

But what of our desperadoes’ dreams? For hadn’t our Harlequin moved closer to his prey – albeit primarily by placing his mask next to another’s visage? In this regard, it betokened a spectral intent’s silhouette --- no matter how emboldened by a German wood-cut. Certainly, the red nose is off and waxing shiny in its dawn... whereas his human rejoinder looked shocked or vaguely put off a stroke. The prior visage definitely re-invigorates the bank manager, Porcupine Jones, amid a grey dry-ice swirl. Above all, one of Asger Jorn’s original statues comes to mind in

this interaction. It illustrates a *Second Horizon* – by dint of Punch and Judy’s expressive semantics. Moreover, this misshapen Ricardo’s circus wails to punish... whilst forgetting Fred Tickner’s residual animism.

ELEVEN: (11)

The date had become eighteen eighty-nine in Eugene, Oregon. A light blue sky has trespassed on this ceiling or roof, and it occurred outside a saloon which lay open to the street. By evidence of virtue, several wagons trundle by in contrary directions. One of them appears to be a covered cart; the other a stage-coach drawn by two teams and passing a rival way. A clap-boarded hotel rises up on the main-street’s twin side; it is suffused with dust and liable to pass unnoticed. Its teak balustrade hints at purple or a magenta-dyed wood. Whereupon two American voices percolate up out of a bar or over its swing-doors... especially when they’re confounded from cantilevered balsa. Yes... a yellow glow intrudes farther inside this den. “Praise tell, I’ve heard crows’ whisper”, intoned Dingo in a Sauk City drawl, “that you’re huntin(’) two soldiers out ways and beyond a prairie. This the truth?” “Your blackbirds construe a correct call, but not a mating, youngster. Holbein once painted a falconer – yet given your purview the collective noun for crows is MURDER!”, replied Thoomey.

TWELVE: (12)

Within a rhythmic gun-sight our vigilante moved along. Whilst – like a vampire – he cast no silhouette snow-wards... if only to encumber the ground’s specks. On a level he strode on – albeit with glacial ice-sheets superintending or passing by from side-to-side. Oblivion didn’t open his gate for him, no, since a frozen lake lay distant and it pretended to die under a giant’s breath. It encoded a rink for skaters on which was fastened some apparel’s livery... primarily by dipping down to a Kelvin’s fondue. Necessarily... because Jack Frost’s measure is painted in spleen or it lay out across *lapis lazuli*’s temples. Wasn’t Ezra Pound

fond of those words? Anyway, they certainly drove a sheen from pearlescent to cerulean... when taken together with purple mountains rising up rearwards. These appeared to be frozen, congealed or dancing like plastic before a dawn's sprite. Christmas trees --- amongst other bushes --- festooned the slopes... often nestling into inundations halfway up. Whilst topping these ranges came some blue ice; whereby Prussian met cobalt and it occasionally took place in pthalo's absence. Above beckoned a sky – merely Frenchified to its essence – upon which white specks mooned aloft. Down below, though, heavy drifts caked the trees so as to leave them to rear up like tendrils or fingers. Weren't these the digits of fallen juggernauts (?); at once wilting to silence or poking through things like a palaeontologist's ribs. Such gulfs of stillness reigned sheer – although Harlequin Thoomey just walked across them.

THIRTEEN: (13)

But in circling our vultures' dreams a landscape comes out mint. Within which – to be fair – our Harlequin slumps down with a 'divine' shrug! He stands at a stage's imagined corner – when abreast of new developments and with one shoulder higher than the next. Some sort of mackintosh covers his body with its brown outer-pelt milking a grey tincture. Like a marionette cast aside, he remains still throughout this ordeal... with one hand in another's pocket. Isn't his face blanched in its longevity (?); plus a mop of untangled hair thereby contradicting grease-paint close to the scalp. Yesss... For – deep in this imbroglio – he stands at one vertice of a lit-up stage: together with a cauldron of loose-light passing around. Behind him the banker, Porcupine Jones, virtually keels over in an ergonomic chair. It's made from plastic resin with steel struts; the latter being suffused by dry-ice's mists. These swirl around its extremities; both uninvitingly as well as in a serpentine fashion.

FOURTEEN: (14)

Our Western vintage has returned... in no matter how limited a way. Deep inside it, *ceteris paribus*, two characters drawn from folklore face off against each other. One sits far from torpor; the other stands with a glinting gaze. Resultantly then, a sequence of squares *in lieu* of windows balk clear --- they also transpose playing cards onto a widow's face! In comparison to this, Harlequin Thoomey's features wax dark-blue in a bushy tumult – while his companion flexes both gun-arms further out. Blackbird Leys Dingo still wears his tasselled jacket, though. “I don't reckon much to bounty hunters, mister. ‘Specially those who are pursuin(’) the Republic's war heroes, you get me? The freedom of Jackson Pollack's canvases way back in Wyoming; why, they entreat fear's semblance or ghost. Do you recall his early vehicle in the Tate, *Naked Man with Knife*? Yessum...” “Your broadsheet – or abstract expressionist ditty – avoids me, stripling. Yet our thoughts concurr through deviance, since tracking a man's illegal in Oregon. It's a statute of state law, gubernatorially enforced. If you run into any Union troopers or bailiffs doing so, immediately report them to the governor. For my part, I seek no reward.” Harlequin Thoomey's *doppelganger* has been speaking way back in the nineteenth century. “You're looking into the wrong mirror, brother! Why propose a joke glass – whereby the body comes to be distorted like in yesterday's fun-fair? I'm calling yuz OUT!”

FIFTEEN: (15)

Our snow pursuit continued apace... but an avenging asteroid has touched the earth only to leave a trace. Perhaps it intoned a momentary thawing of these banks? Nevertheless, young Dingo had seen this persuader through a rifle's scope. “Daddy o' mine”, he yelled, “some sort of lawman keeps on our corns' trail. Yeah... You can spy him over an ice-rise; thence blowing aside vengeance's spume. He harrows our course without respite. You ask about his rig? Why, he's gutted about the gills. Do you see that long coat of azure (?); it hangs down from the shoulders to

the calves. Whereas his thickened trousers are serge; at once likened to music-hall pantaloons (though they be). Each boot trespasses on a spur or toe, and it looks to a grim holster in a belt upstairs. His neck, however, finds adornment with a scarlet 'kerchief... the former under a wide-brimmed fedora. It's patched up in the form of some snow; especially given icicles which peer out around its brow. Yessir: a black cigar burns in one's fire-slit – despite the ice that circles amid reddish flecks. It dies before a lost skull's portent; itself merely screaming prior to birth... somewhat headlessly. All the time, though, frozen petals whip around in a whirligig and his breath staggers to a halt in a fashion which ventriloquism has discarded. How fatiguing!"

SIXTEEN: (16)

Lest we forget a tableau of dream: one darkened mass looms up behind Joey's Clown. Who does it resemble in unforgiving silhouette (?); why, none other than Harlequin Thoomey's *alter ego* in future centuries. He strikes both poses – while speaking to a silent camera. Furthermore – and under a lowering dreamscape – a woman walks towards the arrayed troupe. She wears a short black-dress, together with an ebon top and matching boots. Even from a far curtain – or when observed with opera glasses – she has to be Toblerone Harpie.

SEVENTEEN: (17)

The youngster, Dingo, is already halfway out of his holster's upkeep. Doesn't the leather flash greedily within the bar... or its entrails? Simultaneously with this gesture, though, the drinking-den's backdrop looms into view: and it recalls a vista of sequins and crescent moons... albeit diagonally placed. All of which intones a stereotype or pantomime: whether one speaks of Merlin the Mage, Morgan la Fey, Mordred and even a bedizened python. Oh yes, Blackbird Leys Dingo was now observed from the side with a right-hand motion, and a Colt 45. emerged from an imagined sabretache. A trill or whistle's heard from beneath his upper-lip... while the tassels on his jacket flow roundabout, thus

embodying the pullulations of a jelly-fish. (Fennimore Cooper would have been proud. Do you also remember Conan Doyle's story, *The Lion's Mane*?) Pursuant to such a fiat, then, the youngster mouths words throughout his assault. Let's listen to them now: "I'll cut you in half, reprobate of a law man. Don't you think a beetle's entreaty'll slice any ice with me! No sir – never mind: a moth hunter doesn't have compassion for the lepidoptera about to be netted. He just stalks his prey from tuft to tuft – rather like the naturalist Stapleton in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Morality's merely the price on a head about to be severed! Meet here for the slug... soon to issue from this tube." He makes leave to fire his weapon.

EIGHTEEN: (18)

A century ahead, however, two recusants hold onto an AK-47 assault rifle. Its barrel simpers willingly and starkly amid iced-tones. Their names are Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo – being a provider of jism and an off-cut respectively. "Try to grow some brains, my boy. What ya see above you is compacted snow and its ferment. It's loose – by way of existence's cycle; you get me? One shot will bring it down on us a millionfold; like an avalanche in a 'twenties Weimar film. Have you forgotten *The White Hell of Piz Palu* starring Leni Riefenstahl?"

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Remembering this, his son retreats into a tribal sullenness. "T'ain't fair, Pah!", he whines. "'S only doin' my duty to the clan. He was up there; I tell ya – our pursuer reckons on patience. Couldn't I detect his shade looming up or pursuing us across iced tundra... after the manner of Frankenstein's burst? Do we reminisce about Mary Shelley's novel – with the monster and his creator together again on frozen water? Any road up, 'tis unfair to burden me... especially when the family's interest revolves around this sword." (He waves his tommy-gun amid snowy air). Can't we really see a sculpture here – enacted by Niki de St. Phalle – and depicting a strong man who conjures with his muse?

It's entitled *Le Poete et sa Muse*; and it vaguely assesses Aleister Crowley's tarot showing a circus He-man. This Man-mountain's soberly dressed, but also hurtles his erotic spirit in the air. She's diced up to the feminine in gaudy colours... and isn't this an example of the *anima* at work?" "Which spectre lampoons whatever beast?", leers his sire.

NINETEEN: (19)

In a rival vortex (then) Harlequin's nose and lips encastellate Mister Punch's; in that he stands to one side throughout. (Although he doesn't have the gall to finish off a nineteenth century silhouette). Toblerone Harpie – meanwhile – has emerged from these mists so as to light a cigarette at dead-centre. The flickering carbon illuminates a face – one which distills an absent suffering. Could she be a more svelte entreaty; after the fashion of Jane and her dachshund Fritz in the *Daily Mirror* during the war? Maybe, but then she'd have to support tattoos in various places, together with lingerie or split-skirts. Might this armature frighten Ann Summers – or otherwise lead to thongs, lace, suspenders and stocking-tops? Certainly, a refutation of *The Decline and Fall of the Freudian Empire* seems visible now.

TWENTY: (20)

Before Dingo can move independently a gloved fist hits him right in the face. The calf-skin glances from his chin and falls sheer. It leaves a pink star upon a circumference of yellow light... as the desperado's head lurches back. Virtually so, this blow has taken him unawares or sideways-on, and he catapults to the floor under its influence. Most definitely... By response, though, Harlequin Thoomey bursts into song or speech. "Ingrate, you befoul breathing air --- by virtue of a fist. Nor can you seek out freedom within this gauntlet's remit. Begone... you are without worth."

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As an additional gesture, the swinging doors of this saloon open outwards so as to deposit our vagabond upon the soil. More

pertinently, he's been thrown out head-first into a dirt-track --- his hat becoming dislodged from a hooligan's head in the process. Doesn't his body hazard to a blizzard; at least in terms of a magenta's dye? Furthermore, the doors' wooden-boards clatter as he passes through them... only for Blackbird Leys Dingo to lie in the street! Again, Harlequin's fully-hatted figure casts the miscreant aloft with a hand gesture; at once held in a shadow's panoply. He's dismissive in the extreme. "Feckless rabble", are his scant words. Perhaps Harlequin Thoomey has perused Gustav le Bon over items as contagious as socialism – not to mention crowd or mass psychology? Behind him ochre glows tightly in order to be fit for purpose.

TWENTY-ONE: (21)

Old Man Smithers then becomes a zig-zagging visage. His face – as he regards his son – looks menacing or given over to finality. The nose looms bulbous amid pallid cheeks; whereas each eye squints like a false marble on either side of a revolving trap-door. In black-and-white light (so to say) every iris aligns to a distinct colour by way of misprisionment... or is it a parallax view? Indubitably, the forehead tilts sheer and this was less with brains than H.J. Eysenck's foreboding over criminality. Yes, Cesare Lombroso was right over villainy's gallery in *Criminal Man* – the latter photogravures are on loan in New Scotland Yard's Black Museum (as the case maybe). Ask William Roughead for an entrance key, why don't you? Yet Smithers' parting lies to the left or possibly perpendicularly... as befits a slice through the hirsute which levers itself up. His hair-strands, though, were stingy, dormant, rat-like or otherwise miserable. Each one necessitated a disused brush... although primarily by way of its minstrel.

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The Old Man's ears stuck up like mud guards, each one tail-gating to a silhouette further off. An ear-ring looks forward brightly to such a resolution. Whereas the mouth sags down imponderably, so as to draw the face towards nemesis or a

stringy plastinate. Certainly, Smithers' teeth are misshapen, some are missing and others slope like Stonehenge's blocks. Do you get the picture? A brief circumference of stubble – hewn to its best – surrounds a lower jaw. No-one can afford to miss it...

TWENTY-TWO: (22)

A visage nearly always dreams on beyond its own sand castle. Most definitely, it was time for the banker to reappear and possibly as a leading alienist. Porcupine Jones looked doleful now – what with a tone of misery stamped on his mask. Both lips were curled down; (you see); and for some reason he was lacking a tie. A silk number, it had passed into oblivion over a neighbouring chair. Each hand is clasped before him --- somewhat defensively. While Harlequin – who masqueraded as a circus clown – leered around him. Didn't the rectangular face come within a scintilla of his scalp? *Whisper...whisper*: in our silent movie, here and now, our mage continued to give Porcupine advice. Undeniably so, and even though a grey cloud billowed in the background... Thoomey's lips opened and closed. Don't we detect a whisker of Malcolm Bradbury's *The History Man* – almost by default? Anyway, our malevolent pixie leaned on – if only to dive down into existence's marsh. Might it be salty or like vinegar to the taste?

TWENTY-THREE: (23)

The town's trouble-shooter lay in its own dirt. He had been readily despatched – primarily by dint of a blow to the chin that had been delivered by a gloved hand. In the face of which – Blackbird Leys Dingo's skull stood dormant. The light purple saloon doors lie motionless now; when next to the sequined alabaster that conceals a window. This intones, if you recall, the backs of some playing-cards which range over a whole set. Regardless of such shenanigans, Dingo's corse traversed an X-axis. It remained waiting for a lift off, even though coloured by an opal and pearlescent hue. Occasionally some yellow intruded. At this moment in time, though, boots with two spurs attached

came to a standstill. Their owner's leather hinted at a sapphire dawn – while the cowboy concerned moved towards this bar. He staggered his gait suddenly... so as to look in. Slowly he pushed aside the swinging traps, thence to purposefully gain admittance to a drinking den or shebeen. Eugene's sheriff has decided to take charge.

TWENTY-FOUR: (24)

A MODERN WESTERN... Having accurately described Old Man Smithers, we must name his errant son's tattoo. He – for the truth's part – betokened a gargoyle on a Yorkshire church or chapel; and of a sort which influenced the young Henry Moore career-wise. Above all, his snout embodies a corbel's dexterity – if we are to make use of a term for a northern 'groyen' (sic). These were primitive or archaic images --- possibly Romanesque --- that litter churchyards and mausoleums. Many of them are provincial stayers or boundary markers, such as those in Castleford. In a scenario where traditional craftsmen show off a form's dexterity through truth to materials. Let's examine his apex fruitfully – after Roger Berthoud's fashion.

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Resultantly though, Blackbird Leys Dingo's snout illustrated a crane's stalk... at least when projected at an angle. Above his eyes a fringe of hair appeared --- at once dirty and dishevelled. A bowler hat sat atop it; one which was reminiscent (in its way) of many of Beckett's tramps: whether Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo or Lucky. Meanwhile, his eyes seemed to be glassy and watery; as if over-flowing with cruelty. You see, sentimentality and self-pity are sadism's elixir. They feed the basic instinct of Abraham Maslow's needs... albeit pertaining to a lost hierarchy of bone. Any road up: this face curved down longitudinally like an anteater – when given to snuffling for grubs close to the ground. Even an occasional snivelling noise can be heard... whilst the lips were gumless, rimmed, lacking in salience and oracular. His teeth came on irregularly; they bit on a hollow reed and drooped with portentous saliva. All around them – and by way of

protecting stalks *circa*. an orifice – stubble sprouted. It refused to be ironed down... To sum up: isn't Blackbird Leys Dingo's physiognomy worth hanging?

TWENTY FIVE: (25)

Our dream-scape, however, continued as regular as clockwork. Could it be a way of predicting the future? For we're left now with a depiction of an itinerant banker, Porcupine Jones. In close-up his face looks pasty; together with a seriousness about the brows. He talks in accordance with our silent visuals, even though none can respond. His hair loops over the scalp or tonsure, and the remainder of it swoops down towards one's eyes. In this mute realm Porcupine's mouth moves convulsively. He's obviously making a point of some heaviness, but it's vitiated by his clown-lips. Or – more accurately – this has to be down to grease-paint's effects; especially when the latter's applied by Harlequin's ghost. Most translucently, Jones continues to mouth on without words... but surely John Cage is dead?"

TWENTY-SIX: (26)

"Well, stranger", whispered the sheriff, "perhaps ya ought to have introduced yourself before dealing with riff-raff... speaking locally." As he intoned this, however, the lawman's elbow lay adjacent to a door-post. One arm proved to be going upwards or was held in the door's crook; while the other nestled against his thigh. A few digits certainly lay in striking distance of a six-shooter. His basic dress resiled to brown – what with a hint of journeyman's orange about his shirt and hat. A tin-star glinted amid some appurtenances. Way behind him the saloon's wooden frame hurtles away --- it comes to resemble a purple balloon. Or has one of Rothko's meditations intruded here?

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"Hello sheriff", replies Harlequin Thoomey. A silence exists momentarily between them. "I motioned round to the shack you call an office, only to find you out. But I bethought me that you'd

turn up here. Yonder hot-head lies motionless in the dust, yet I stretched him out to kick his heels. Don't you recognise those spurs which no longer spin... by virtue of reflecting the light?" To link actions to words, Thoomey then snapped a match into life. It flared briefly in the bar's glow and thence spangled Harlequin in motley. Truly, in this instant, his frame became convulsed with a blue-to-yellow mix. A black cigarette jerked into life and smouldered at one end. "As to my business in Oregon, I'm with the Pinkerton agency. A detective, you see?"

TWENTY-SEVEN: (27)

A century or so further forward we notice that a father and son stood in a blizzard landscape. "Nothin(') approaches some vegetable existence, son o' mine. The place revealed by this gun-scope shows no trail. It reconnoitres silent snow over forgotten pathways. Doubtless then, this hillock lies empty upon Hyrakanian ice. Look you, boy: our sighting-rod sighs naked before us. It daunts a vigilante's prospect, even at this distance. A bare breeze accounts for such a blasting – rather like in a Thomas Hardy novel. Shouldn't that really be one by Jack London?" To which his toothsome offspring retorts: "Pappy, pappy, pappy... I saw him; I dun huh. He was tall and nasty, I swear to you. Like a gaunt scarecrow, his frame waxes impervious to iciness. Vengeance lay in every pelt or creature's fold, and it was just liable to crease its gun-leather. Our nemesis has no face whatsoever, you can reckon on't: it merely entertained a sphere without features. It rested under a ten-gallon hat... but still John Wayne's withered arm held a hunting rifle and pursued us." Old Man Smithers rubbed a chin pensively. "Maybe we oughta check it out?", he mused.

TWENTY-EIGHT: (28)

Multi-dimensionally, our capering Harlequin holds his temple theatrically. He seems to be gesturing oratorically on this windswept stage. But don't forget that we're dealing with an opera here – minus its assemblage or *bric-a-brac*. Could it be in

black-and-white (?); rather like an old Rediffusion cube from the 'seventies. No way: since the colours of a cathode ray oscilloscope assault our senses, if only momentarily. It's only now that we notice a mackintosh over Thoomey's shoulders... a covering which sweeps down to his feet. Does our instinct betray us, *mon ami*, or must one's Clown burst into song? Possibly captions could be arranged:

*Oh, look, look
he's reading a book
by hook or by crook
we'll silence that rook.*

TWENTY-NINE: (29)

The lawman's slender form moved forward gingerly amid the longitudinal stretches of a green room. Might they intone those white backgrounds on which L.S. Lowry painted – despite being a tad reversed? Certainly, the wooden panelling recalls a portmanteau offering that flits around this zone from three available sides. An oil-lamp hung down the centre of the apartment; especially given the breeze of its contempt, but without flickering in undisguised gusts. Remember this: a flagon of liquor which was tinted blue traversed a barrel's side in one corner. While the gloved hand of our apostate law-giver held up a badge: it read Pinkerton Agent, Harlequin Thoomey. (The card limbered up to yellow – by way of a red surround). Our sheriff eyed him disobligingly over a droopy moustache. "Shoot mister, you don't come with a Pinkerton's labelling... do ya take my meaning? It is earnestly meant and without a dog's intent." "I appreciate such disregard as that", mouthed Thoomey. "Do you notice my tarot? Regardless of which – I've been tracking two men with a company of wolves. Their names are Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo, *pere et fils*. Have their surnames become synonymous with Raymond Tong's *Necessary Words* (?); or does such a passage accord with Roault's passion? Know you aught of either of them – depending on poison ivy's

ability to spring up from the ground? Even bind weed constricts life so as to unburden it of pain...” In the manner of the Know Nothing movement that existed prior to the Confederacy in the eighteen forties... our sheriff waxes mute. After several moments he rejoinders: “Who should mark them when they’re adrift of a fire’s hinterland?”

THIRTY: (30)

The rest of this criminal clan had surrounded Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo. They went under many descriptions or multiple heads – rather like a Hydra. Their significations were Axon Tree, Lift Spenser Wingate, Egghead Morgan, Low Termagant, Pond Granite and Rapacious Quicksilver... What visages can match the emptiness of their shaven skulls – particularly under those turbans? Why, the one known as Axon Tree looked up at falling snow and this was irrespective of a beard dripping roundabouts. On his upper pelt he wore a red baseball cap – of a *lumpen* proletarian or trailer-park vintage. Both eyes happened to be made of glass or resin – yet he could evidently be seen through Plastic’s remains. Do you remember the cover of Guy Debord’s *The Society of the Spectacle* in the black-‘n’-red edition – and replete with a century of goggle-wearers or voyeurs? Anyway, his neighbour or comrade in this Comus Rout consisted of Lift Spenser Wingate. He rode on Charon’s boat across the Styx with a full head of mutton. On it can be seen a strange dial that’s rather reminiscent of a ‘speak your weight’ machine. It came to be positioned between the eyes and above the nose. Whereas one orb resiled to falseness and found itself replaced by a calibration or metal filter (thereby). In his frame this character waxed tall and he was well over seven feet – plus a piece of zirconium dangled from one ear! Don’t people call it white gold? Egghead Morgan – on the other hand – stared straight ahead with a fixed expression on his face. He wore an exaggerated or populist hat on his cranium; together with a coat-of-many colours which stretched down to his knees. Both of them were tattered and beaten about... Whilst his face slanted off

to a hirsute sluice; the latter doubling back on itself with angularity or vulturedom. For his part, though, Low Termagant stood out with a prominent skull instead of a normal pan or dip. A large straw – of the sort used with fizzy drinks – poked up through a crack in this Gray’s *Anatomy*. Likewise, unfriendly sockets couldn’t take away from those sabre-teeth or molars; and they grinned on next to forgotten mouse-traps! Various straps cascaded off his body --- also --- so as to indicate imprisonment and even misplacement. Whereas our two remaining freaks, Pond Granite and Rapacious Quicksilver; why, they possess a three-sprigged beard and a punk rock look, respectively. You see, Granite reposed towards a patriarch who was naked from the waist; whilst Rapacious Quicksilver had about him a clown’s livery. Could he be a performance *artiste* who trawled for the Russian state circus? Against this prospect, however, he recalled a malevolent Boy George – what with reinforced eye-brows, blackened eye-liners, magenta hair, green lips and a baby’s safety-pin through one ear. They all stood in a posse around their captured woman, Toblerone Harpie. Were they in conclave?

THIRTY ONE: (31)

Yet our dreams continue to one side of this cleft – even though Harlequin Thoomey leant over a table in order to peer beneath. He was delineated as a Glock – somewhat resultantly. While he did this a great mass of dry-ice mist wafted about in the background. Under the table a half-naked Old Man Smithers gathered himself together. He seemed to be painting an abstract doodle or daub, and it smeared away across the floor like a worm ouroborous. Might it have been a Jackson Pollack; at least when judging by immediacy or impact? Behind both denizens – and in subdued sepia – a shadowy bulwark loomed up. Surely it had to be Harlequin Thoomey’s *alter ego* (?); when enacted after the fashion of a million braves... even phantasies. Yes, this numinescence happens to be our troubadour who doubles back after a festival of worms. Let’s listen... for haven’t any other bravos burst into song?

Smithers, O Smithers
what do you do?
there are so few
<unlike you>
who smash up a pew.

THIRTY-TWO: (32)

The nameless lawman's question still reverberates about the bar. "Should I know these two miscreants?", he sneered. To which – and by way of response – Harlequin Thoomey adopted a stoical mien. "I imagine so, constable, since they left a trail across snow-bitten wastes... all of which led me here. Eugene in Oregon's the place, you infer? For, when on a journey hereabouts I interred one of them in an icy tundra or barrow; and it peeled away with Kelvin temperatures for all the world to see. Even as I buried him pelt-deep some specks of drying ice flecked about me. Wasn't it freakish? Because the one known as Egghead Morgan is left beneath the loam or moss, and he was frozen to the touch of a blizzard's ice-queen. I had to place two copper coins – whether cents or bits – over his deluded orbs and these were outstretched in the sunlight's direction (as they are wont to do). I closed those lids myself – what with two brown gloves that were taken from a distracted hand. Nor did my Christian conscience and puritanism forsake me... for you know that I'm a Mormon, sheriff?" "Uh-huh", murmured his 'colleague'. "Well, I did my duty to a cadaver about to be devoured by eagles." "How'd he perish?", rumbled the tin-star. "I stabbed him through the skull and into the brain with an ice-pick. On an occasion where he'd attacked me with a Columbus Marine fighting knife, do you take my drift? Like a revolting Jew or Trotsky of future years – and with or without Isaac Deutscher's exemplification – I played Louis Mercador's role. A finality of history has to be its causation... and one needn't consult leftwing revisionists like Eric Hobsbawn or E.P. Thompson to realise that. Indeed, I walked away from the graveside which was effectively stuck on an incline... albeit with a wooden cross attached to its meat. Those who don't walk with

the Lord – or in accord with antinomianism – shall perish by his knife.” In so saying he looked directly into the sheriff’s eyes or discs, and, by contravention of this, our small-town lawman glanced away. Whereupon – or in a state of reprise – Harlequin Thoomey re-interprets one of Elisabeth Frink’s MEN: whether they be bearded, clean-eyed, grizzled, trailing a red neck-scarf, cheroot puffing or hat-slanted. May he encapsulate her sculpture *First Man* in 1963?

THIRTY-THREE: (33)

The gaggle of Old Man Smithers’ clan has already collected on a snowy embankment. For their lord and master had given orders over the hunting down of a possible pursuer. Might he represent a vigilante of the near future? Still, two mugwumps tramp off into the frigid distance or its cellophane... and they proved to be Axon Tree or Lift Spenser Wingate. Meanwhile, their ghoul’s whisper – or Old Man Smithers’ words – echo in their skulls. “Check out that humdinger, my children, ‘n’ make sure... if necessary, uncork those blades so’s any blood runs sweet. Is it black or red?”, runs his stentorian ode.

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Toblerone Harpie – at once oft-mentioned – stands halfway within this group’s circle. Metaphorically speaking, she’s up to her knees in snow... but actually, her near-nakedness greets a dawn of blazing blue. May the woman be wearing an all-over leotard and clout, or one just destined to encompass so much wrap? Perhaps though – under a rival dispensation – could it betoken a sequined bikini which reveals a heroine’s flesh (plus boots)? Throughout all of this... our vamp teases like a calendar girl, while lying down *avec* a claw on one thigh. Alternatively, she gestures triumphantly and wrestles with a mannequin, or glares after a Medusa and pivots as an *artiste* devoted to eros... whilst looking for a sleeper’s neck & kissing a youngster’s lips. Amid such heterosexualist discourse – he comes over as stunned! Can it recall Josef Thorak’s sculptural relief, *The Judgement of Paris*, in 1941... albeit reversed out aways? For who can catch

Nietzsche out, though, when he talked about a beautiful woman never feeling the cold in *Beyond Good and Evil*?

THIRTY-FOUR: (34)

Our clown, Harlequin Thoomey, had doubtlessly waved to an absent audience from afar. Whereupon – in this vernacular – his hand springs unnaturally from the shoulder... almost after the fashion of a Roman salute. Do you remember the hard Praetorian flashes of Crassus – as was delineated by Lewis Grassie Gibbon in his novel *Spartacus*? Similarly, Thoomey's mack reared up spasmodically: while the eyes gleamed on in their sockets... rather preternaturally. The darkness then closed in around our minstrel; with the latter shrilling towards a day's birth. Let's be clear about all this: Harlequin is commenting on Old Man Smithers' effusions... with each one careering across the floor in oil-paint, as they were. Could they be described as Jackson Pollack's brillo (?); albeit merely cascading to a lighthouse of red torment. Or perhaps we have the following in mind: a Lego collage by Maurice Esteve, or nausea's reworking by Bram van Velde, and a swirl before dying by Andre Lanskoj... let alone Jean-Paul Riopelle's vertebrae.

Paint, glorious paint
don't you feel faint?
nothing but feint
disclosure...
or taint.

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"Paint, paint", reels off our songster.

THIRTY-FIVE: (35)

Our characterless sheriff has come to view Pinkerton Thoomey with respect, yet not real *gravitas*. No; that psychological depth-charge is too much. "Okay, alright... positive lawgiver", he trilled. "These two Belial spawn, Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo, they've passed through Eugene like a

grain of sand in the stomach of a bear. Both are long gone into the woods with red coats – as accompanied by Charon the ferryman in accord with Caspar David Friedrich’s example. Yes sir: their faces were mirrored by gigantic teeth like ‘raptors, with each molar pulled back from the gums in apoplexy. The sinews around the neck also held fast --- being muscular in terms of a prior pulsation. Whereby each eye maximised a scintilla of scarlet; especially in its detached livery of orbs. What of the hair, though (?) – particularly when viewed as one entity, and it creamed to rat’s-tails... while slanting from the head in a Mohican’s drift.” “Neither of them remain in this vicinity?”, enquired Thoomey almost casually. As he essayed these words, however, his visage looked craggy, grim, crenellated and silhouetted via paste. His hat slanted down right-to-left from 45 degrees – with his half mask penumbral or otherwise bleeding to perfume in an outraged garden. May a text like *The Garden of the Supplicants* --- by Octave Mirbeau --- come to mind? By means of which sapphire collides with ruby; so as to contrast hot and cold, even a dance of the brave, and a Stonehenge’s configuration made from old cars. A trail of black cigarette smoke wafts upwards throughout this ordeal. “No”, replied Eugene’s tepid saviour, “these siamese twins have left Doctor Caligari’s cabinet. What are their infractions, Pinkerton? List each crime... an invisible audience begs you to!”

THIRTY-SIX: (36)

Out in the arctic wastes a gang stands about listlessly. A thick mushroom of snow pelts down; with each and every snowflake coming to resemble a grenade. This Murder of Crows continues to await its orders, primarily because Old Man Smithers barks like a drum major. “You now, listen up: I’ll skin a votary who doesn’t abide by my concept of leisure. What to do if we find some braggart who’s skulking on the ice out there...? I’ll tell ye, my family and its familiars. Why, I’m going to remove his flesh from its hide and this was basically by severing spleen from fondue... in order to cake a name-plate with blood. *Comprehenez*

vous? It works like this: I'll cut this hydra's multiple heads off... so as to mount them like plaques upon a wall. Might they embody moose-heads, a bear's maw or the coverlets of foxes so adorned? I see it all now: each and every one of their skulls is essentially clothed in its pericarp, and bids up masonry thereby! But when merely registered – what will I put under a trophy? The answer comes to me: an ormolu template with the wording – ‘Here lies a Droog(!); Old Man Smithers’. Yet never forget the final scene: it depicts me hammering away at a work-bench or drenched in gore, and covered by an apron & with a hatchet. Above me the torsos of those slain sway on pulleys – rather like a butchery store or an abattoir containing much meat. Yesssss... it evinces zoology's Kolyma. A scenario wherein bloodied six packs oscillate on wires, and are thus winched to safety or oblivion. Each one being eventually pulled down to the surgeon beneath... haven't I gone beyond even von Hagens in this *grand guignol*?

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“YEEEEHHH! Pappy, *ne plus ultra*, the way you talk I want to play with myself...”, snickered Blackbird Leys Dingo. To which his father replied by grabbing hold of a son's throat. “There's no dirty-mindedness allowed here, boy, mark it! At the first sign of onanism I reach for castration's steel. You see, masturbation is weakness and degeneracy in a man. Avoid the eunuch, I beg you – for how else do you think they reached Mozart's top notes?”

THIRTY-SEVEN: (37)

In phantasm's last sequence our supreme leader's *alter ego* approaches this wooden trestle. It illustrates a shadow kingdom or an exercise in puppeteering... wherein Thoomey's actual incarnation stands revealed in life. (All of which contrasts with his fictive mask and goes under the title of Harlequin). Can this tarot indicate number one or the Fool's reign? Yes or no? Whereas – underneath a Victorian work-bench – Old Man Smithers briefly draws a playing card from Solitaire's pack. Moreover, the template picked recalls a Seven of Diamonds and

its back bears upon it lime-green sequins, etc... In exasperation with the above Harlequin Thoomey breaks into song:

*First painting
Now cards of fortune
What have you done?
He's wilting –
Will you importune?
Or munch on a bun?*

THIRTY-EIGHT: (38)

Our eldritch Western continues to gather pace nonetheless. “I ask you, Mister Pinkerton, what constitutes their infractions... or by what means do these tombs meet the sun? May we speak of layered battlements – purposefully cantilevered as to skulls – and picking out Minoan culture’s dexterity (albeit reversed?) A gigantic cranium when tessellated in rare mosaics now limbers up across the sky-line. Each dexterity wore thin to its eyes or it looped around cavernous sockets... at least in terms of its relief. The mouth, however, depicted a gate and it led into Assyrian munificence with ant-like mortals picked out as motes.” “I agree with your remembrance”, Harlequin Thoomey replied to Sheriff Eugene, “yet forgetfulness forges a barrier between us. It recalls those images and reptilian birds on poles. Every one of them screams at the day or it hints at Palaeolithic death’s-heads. Don’t we register the slow emergence of quills from a saurian state?” “Assuredly”, whispers Eugene, “but list Old Man Smithers’ and Blackbird Leys Dingo’s infractions; when these were themselves reminiscent, in their way, of Savonarola’s *auto-da-fe*.” “Where to begin, my High Noon refusenik? For these Union troopers hunted down the Red Skin. They took part in anti-Indian campaigns; the latter just correlated to the Civil Wars’ end. Our brood up-ended Washington Irving’s biography of President George Washington thereby... primarily by denying First Nation rights! Yessir. Smithers’ clan was involved in Geronimo’s capture – in a dramaturgy where they’re all pursuant to the

Republic's battle hymn. Whilst the native put up his hands in mute surrender – with a feather quivering in his black hair and a purple cliff lying behind him throughout. Old Man, Blackbird, Axon Tree, Spenser Wingate, Egghead, Low, Granite & Quickrape were all then decorated by the Grand Army --- pending discharge."

THIRTY-NINE: (39)

Two monstrosities now tramp off into snowy ridges roundabout. Needless to say, each one of them possessed a forgotten name – whether Axon Tree or Lift Spenser Wingate. They both carried large blades with them on account of an inability to shoot, and due to the danger of an avalanche. A massive branch which was itself laden with frozen water topped and tailed its filmic image: only straining to release its potentiality thereby. It slanted laterally or diagonally across the scene, rather like a bishop moving in Slavic chess. Might it be similarly august or otherwise austere? Behind them the wind screeched in hollows and crevasses. A white tide or blizzard superimposed itself, and thence blinded all to its imponderable results. Again, a woman's voice came loughing across the frigid air. "Let me go, I beg you. Your need for me becomes improvident in these wastes. It entreats pity's absence or solace --- basically by way of a stony law. Could it be Doric after Homer's manner? In saying this Toblerone bent over... with her posterior captured in a skin-tight suit. Did it blend *avec* her golden hair's dome and thus interpret a model's pudding-basin look? (Possibly so, since Dominique Francon has intimations of Tamara de Lempicka's queens in Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*). Admittedly though, Old Man Smithers had passed the male menopause and he evinces no interest in foxy wiles. "Still your mouth, girl!", he bellows.

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The terrain unfreezes its windy cascade and moans towards Bedlam. It recalls those hooters or tannoys – even a belated cacophony – which opens Gyorgy Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*. A

score that attempted Punch and Judy's honesty *a la* George Speaight's authenticity. It whistles with spite...

FORTY: (40)

For – when one thinks about it – could such a clarion or tocsin reach into this dream's territory? Regardless of which, Toblerone's hand caresses a Seven of Diamonds, and this was primarily by turning it over and presenting it upright. Her husband's – Thoomey's – shadowy form envelops her... albeit in a playlet where she looks up at him earnestly. "We use these cards as a rejoinder to phantasy", she stimulates the ether with abruptly. Isn't this the first time that a character's spoken or let rip within oneiric lore? Certainly – yet it merely serves to add to the other's displacement, essentially by reckoning on such smoke as curls between them. Surely a cigarette teems visibly in her outstretched palm? Perhaps the correct image to adopt here, *inter alia*, is over whether Felix Labisse went to paint in abattoirs or not. Wherein Toblerone's face comes out etched or mock-silhouetted; at once firmly boned to its source and black eyelined. Her husband broods beyond within some situational light. "This happens to be a Western, yes?", she drawls in expectation or expectoration. "So why not allow the text to dwell on Western art?" "In accord with Spenglerian notions of decay?", opines her spouse's hat. "Yes and no", our *femme fatale* teases amidships.

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In a delineated, cinema-streak of Lux we found our clown. He holds up a calendar of salt *in lieu* of a garden's sun-dial. Aren't his features scored in primary colours and rather like a German wood-cut? He begins to sing:

*Western decline's a perpetual quest
we give it our best
but won't let it rest.*

FORTY-ONE: (41)

“So what price on their head, Pinkerton? What did they do?” Having said this, then, the sheriff’s voice trailed away like sand through a shoot or an aperture. “On the basis of their war-record town after town opened its arms. Yet they were to be sorely disabused. Medals are just tin simulacra, after all.” A moment’s quiet then follows this peroration. “You ask after their criminal follies, officer. Well”, inscribed Harlequin Thoomey, “they proffer an exponential ease. The growing of monstrous heads, Hydra achievement, a riot of Comus, cannibalism, poisoning wakes, guillotining without Thermidor, involuntary euthanasia and homunculus cultivation: these were among their sins.” Harlequin fell silent after this, so as to punctuate his grammar’s imprecision. Meanwhile, Eugene merely looks on. Perhaps he realises that vermilion horses ride dawn-wards and they nearly always do so amid a shoal of coins. These latter cisterci fall from above or they meld into the dust. While a third horseman (whose Apocalypse is blue) turns within some smoke. But superintending all of this – a ‘Wanted Poster’ for Old Man Smithers wafts up and its dexterity is yellow... whilst passing to silver. When – all the time – Smithers’ wears a battered Grand Army hat plus a tiger neckerchief ‘n’ braces. He fires a six-shooter repeatedly at a pylon on which this promotion has been affixed. Do you see? Maybe, possibly not: since this conscious stream passes through Thoomey’s brain-pan... no matter how surreally.

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In contrast to the above, though, Eugene’s rolled cigarette caracoles in its breeziness.

FORTY-TWO: (42)

“Silence bids golden in its completion”, luxuriates the Old’un after the woman’s plaint. In this regard – however – his finger points in a broken canal’s direction or course. Despite the reality of continuing snowfall... a sunken anger begins to rise. Does it convulse such a wrecking crew? After all, who can read such

non-humanist minds? Especially when one is speaking of fire-flies who gather over a disused marsh or mossy stream. Each now stands around the girl with a Head-in-one's hands... after the fashion of a decapitated rind. Is it aslant the vision of Maximilien Robespierre? No doubt: but surely creatures with stroboscopic eyes which exist on lively stalks lie abreast of this moon. An ochre disc it is or happens to be: one that rises within a sky that represents grey mixed with green! In this mental dungeon or esplanade, then, Old Man Smithers has a toad throne... while a suppurating liquid mass lay before him. It bubbles, hisses, pops and crackles within a vat. To one side, however, there forms up a cavernous interlude and it's made up of skulls... no matter how compacted. These are base about apex to the nineteenth century Anatomy Act – whereupon Axon Tree's jaws fall open continuously. Adjacent to such a ruler, *per se*, Lift Spenser Wingate slides up and he's merely replete with a conical nose, golden streaks, bright *lapis lazuli* orbs and Tyrannosaurus Rex teeth. The molars of which are nothing but incisors... with all of them fondly looking at the saurian tail beneath. Moreover, none of this even goes on to mention his cap, feather, nose-band and cranial bone-arch. In a family like this (so to say) such crepitations amount to indifference's sweat.

FORTY-THREE: (43)

Toblerone Harpie now talks on progressively... for any who wish to hear. “Do you detect a deliquescence in Western art, my husband?” For Old Man Smithers' face was half-cadenced and brimming; or it happened to be flattened out mask-wise. One quadrant reveals a daemonic Punch... at least when set ahead of its embrasure. White-washed it is or can be construed to be – especially if redolent of a vicar's surplice that's been turned to ice. Possibly one of Wyndham Lewis' lithographs comes to mind herein... minus Michel Leiris' taxonomy. These clown lips find themselves curled from behind a card which was sequined to oblivion's diving. Must one's expenditure suit its seven curses – over the implementation of a deliberative Whist? Yet a Guardian

angel stands over the other side and he wears a mask – together with a sword between its upraised palms. Further to any of this (however) our mannequin hints at Brancusi's ellipses and does so by dint of some white chalk. "But where comes formal desecration within modernism?", intones our Harlequin. "It savours of an internal relapse", encodes our moderator, "primarily towards the primeval or quite possibly the maniacal, dreamy, onanistic and solipsist. Take Max Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*, cross with Wyndham Lewis' *The Demon of Progress in the Arts*... and give a stir. Hey presto(!), you've arrived."

FORTY-FOUR: (44)

Oregon's Eugene sits beholden to two Men of Iron and this was irrespective of Andre Wadja's film. Because Harlequin Thoomey's head is seen in profile by way of some balsa and saw-dust, and with a cheroot clenched between his teeth. The full hair, beard and moustache are still discernible – what with a sombrero which has been dyed to a sapphire's elixir and points to the right. A thin corduroy of smoky ash moves perpendicularly... thereby seeking the ceiling's boards or uppermost casements. Our sheriff begins a forgotten conversational *aporia* in the following way. "You may be correct in your diction, Mister Pinkerton! For your information, though, the Smithers' coterie did pass through or down main street. But shoot... to a gang like that, sir, Eugene's a mere chicken bone and not even Mario Puzo could pluck up the interest. We don't possess a bank or a credit union, and Wells Fargo's intermittent in its stay. Too few crumbs from a Giant's table or by dint of Jack's Beanstalk, I guess." Harlequin Thoomey's reply then came after a lugubrious glottalstop. "Where did their fancy take them to roaming?", he asked. "Up yonder", the semi-marshal eagerly enjoined, "cross-ways like, and by treading down the valley, possibly with plunging feet."

FORTY-FIVE: (45)

Our heroine-victim seems to be surrounded now by snow or slush. May its ice-sheets render a coming nemesis redundant? Truly, we need an ice-queen to complete the picture... but wait a moment: could she be among her kindred already? For Toblerone Harpie rears up now --- at once all-reigning and naked save for a shaven intrigue. A loin-clout covers her vagina – while its satin radiance dazzles the dust. Above this, though, a *brassiere* marks time by way of a shoulder-pad; with each one covering a delicate teat. It – in turn – goes on to sub-contract a collar which lies about the throat and behind this a great foam of black-hair spills down her back. Her head, however, has altered its aspect under a peaty light: with the former being little more than a subterranean and transparent blue. Next to this harpy – and around such a vixen – a monstrous retinue gathers itself together and each one is a refugee from Milton's lost paradise. For example, Egghead Morgan stands out with a mediaeval helmet on his crown; albeit when rescuing his latticed skulldom from grief. He's adorned with a tattered cloak, a broadsword and a Hospitaller's shield. Likewise, Axon Tree howls at the moon; an orb that was brushed, as it is, *avec* a lion's-mane's teeth. Each eye stares out preternaturally within some reddish coals. Whilst alternatively – and on the other side of this gathering – these offerants from Tobe Hooper's *Texas Chain-Saw Massacre* make sport. Here's Lift Spenser Wingate carrying an axe – the blade of which curves down supernaturally towards a slice. His format resembles a Church's corbel or demonic gargoyle – what with bat's-wings, slanted eyes, horns and heavy rib-vapours. Wherein we can see that Old Man Smithers' other creatures – as measured by darkened amoebae – are joined together hip-to-hip. These consist of Low Termagant, Pond Granite and Rapacious Quicksilver. Each of them measures a new bestial consciousness (somewhat residually): whether it proved to be ursine or wolverine... and by a canine's turn. Quicksilver – who bears up last – recoils to a miniature item or bonsai's cabinet, plus a wizened micro-head spoiling towards ichor. It happens to be black in colour.

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Toblerone had wanted to say: “Help, let me go, no-one needs me... it’s so cold!” But it came out garbled or encrypted differently. “It is hot where we’re going”, she intones.

FORTY-SIX: (46)

Our dreamy sequence then returns outside of all progressive or linear notions of time. A period during which Toblerone Harpie pushes out her lower lip – rather lugubriously – in order to give a truculent air. Are we to comment on Old Man Smithers’ movements (?) – whereby he lies askew of his target and with a cards’ castle erected before him. Harlequin Thoomey and Toblerone Harpie (a husband and wife team) look on distantly. What playing-drives does Smithers’ drool over now? Why, they could be cards which are devoted to his erstwhile ‘Family’! By this vernacular, then, they were alternative birthday tokens or McGill postcards with any ‘what the butler saw’ obscenity removed. First up, Pond Granite’s calling card goes a’begging and it revolves around an ebon flask (perpendicularly). Wasn’t there a ‘thirties *noir* magazine called *Blackmask*? In this Damien Hirst effort we notice that a scrawl of chinese white paint intrudes. It has been appended with a brush’s fattened end... rather after William de Kooning’s example. “Behold my crucifixion”, it smears. “My creed is goodness’ destruction. I became an enemy of society from an early age. My mind can be described as a creative nothingness. Nought really eventuates from Stirner’s pit (you see). Like science’s confabulist – A. E. van Vogt – in his criminological essay... I’m always right. (A large blot of white lead obscures some graffiti here). Rape always makes way for bind-weed’s intercourse. We live in a pestilential age... do we not?” This cardboard’s backing – once formulated as a square now – shows a poniard on a green ground. Through it all our clown-chorus has been singing... albeit internally.

Crime’s a state of mind
we know our own kind

*we're society's rind.
Give us some hope
we cannot cope
let us choke on a rope
like any old dope!*

FORTY-SEVEN: (47)

“The valley has taken on a pond life’s foray or cusp”, rumoured Sheriff Eugene. (Did he already have this name or might he have acquired it, somewhat retrospectively?) For his part, though, Harlequin Thoomey – a bounty hunter extraordinaire – remained non-committal. “You reckon”, our James Stewart continued, “that these outlaws canvassed quite a blow? ‘Specially when they learned of their isolation. For every farm out there had been evacuated.” “Why so?” “The railroads bought them out without a silver dollar to spin upon a tombstone... rather expectantly. For once they ram an iron-horse through these timbers they’ll be nought else. It’s a *fait accompli*, you understand? Those displaced will rejoin their family groups, but now... why, it’s a Golgotha: a deserted skull-like entity... just set aside for a negative fate’s edification. Tendrils and branches grow up through the barren soil and each cloaks the ground with silence’s weeds. Such tares --- on occasion --- grow up via lost eye-sockets that litter the floor. They happen to be dirty green in this threshing arena. The entire Smithers’ clan have ridden into such a desert, morally speaking. Don’t they illustrate Giacometti’s sculptures – when carrying staves – and with elongated eyes on pods or stalks? Under a dirty yellow-moon their horses roam about; themselves basically smeared to cadmium *in lieu* of light. If you want to earn your commission, Mister Pinkerton, then the trail leads out into a malign fiesta. (He points yonder). Ever read B. Traven, huh? How about a whiskey ‘n’ soda?”

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Fundamentally – by suiting his deliberations to the task – Eugene uncorks a bottle and begins to pour.

FORTY-EIGHT: (48)

“Female mouths remain silent!”, snorted Old Man amid a flurry of snow flakes. Truly, the wind whistles around him like a hacksaw blade or its spore. At this point – however – Rapacious Quicksilver starts up. He musses Toblerone’s hair with a thickly mittened hand; while Egghead Morgan holds a sabretache to her throat. Heavy lumps of ice-water continue to cascade around them throughout. “Plenty of ways to extract one’s chill, girly”, he rumbles... To which Blackbird Leys Dingo’s response epitomises an Icelandic geyser... “YEEEEHH, Pa!”, he yodels. “How’s about a moment which is devoted to gang-rape – albeit by way of a ceremony? A carousal with the wench is a rite of Thongor, surely? For her form’s stripped naked from beach ware – together with a cylindrical gold-ring on every limb. Aren’t we just a spider that pursues these palisades; thereby swinging from our web? Oh so delicately... because, in this instance, the brown male tarantula has its master class; primarily so as to fall from the heavens with a blanched arachnid. It then has to labour in some shadowy pitches...” Whilst saying all of this – and in expectation of more – Blackbird Leys’ brow coruscates with passion. All of the above occurs (however) under his battered bowler hat – itself rather like a variant on Samuel Beckett’s Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot*. Do you remember such an elusive diction? ‘This is Lucky. He’s my slave.’ ‘That’s not lucky.’ ‘He’s lucky to have no illusions’, et cetera...

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But still, Leys’ Blackbird gibbers on after the fashion of an Australian wild dog. His eyes glow exultantly or almost exorbitantly, and with a preternatural touch... In that instant, therefore, he’s more infamous than Denis Nielson! His coarse fibres – when aided by some spittle’s rat-tails – squelch lividly. Indeed, the youth effloresces like a tumour... while his cheeks adopt a pale tallow. To follow on from which... his gob-slit opens tumescently and like a poisonous snail he devours a fish. It hangs open on a latch whilst dribbling rheum or spray, and such a process reveals wisdom teeth which chatter on their own. Has

he actually been renting *Caligula* by Albert Camus from a local library?

FORTY-NINE: (49)

Yet our phantasm's sequence still presses on and it's rather like the caves under Medmenham abbey... themselves a repository of the Hell-Fire Club. Here and all, a new card stands revealed under an arching or orange light. Old Man Smithers – now somewhat Adamite and youthful in appearance – turns it over on its dewy back. Do we fear some compound interest over the matter? Because an adjacent cowl seems to be still-born – what with a leprous or insecure instinct under a Dominican's hood. Moreover, such a mouth appears to be succulent or roasted; and it merely gives a simian's gesture towards these unfolding twins. A brief scoring – using a compass or a scissor's blade – surrounds this dark cube. It indicates a dream-like fecundity... For in slumber the card's chattel – Lift Spenser Wingate – walks with you horizontally. He moves between dimensions rather like a trigonometrical feat; primarily so as to bypass the Hell-Fire Club's steward known as Paul Whitehead. Isn't the latter contained within a prison that's replete with a Grecian urn, a boxed skeleton and a flickering blue-light? Wingate's card also has some scrawl across it: it deliberates over whether criminality involves a left turn. (A progression into *The Bishop of Hell and other stories* by Marjorie Bowen which feeds on destruction's path, primarily by opening some sluice-gates). Presumably they come to impinge on identity... irrespective of how they came to be under Oxfordshire's soil or no. Resultantly then, Toblerone Harpie sings in the background...

Benjamin Franklin's house has children's bones
children's bones
children's bones...
Hail and Hose thereafter.

FIFTY: (50)

In this third gift of plenty, however, Harlequin Thoomey and Sheriff Eugene stand looking at one another. But already Eugene is pouring himself a stiffener; a factor which is itself pursuant to a golden whiskey's slice of glass. His shadow creases the table afore he raises the tumbler to his lips. Viewed aslant ways now, the lawman's profile seems guttural in its moustachio'd longing. A red glow suffuses the whole shebang or bereavement... especially when set against the bar's surrounding green wood. "Can I tempt you to a draught's tincture, my friend? May this Hell-Fire Club's steward lead you astray? For truly, our cremation's urn has a fine medallion on it which is named after the Greek physician Aesculepius. Should one mix it with pitch and water – so as to suffuse it with wine's fumes? Yes and no; *odi et amo*?" "I thank you kindly, but the result has to be negative", responded the Pinkerton. "Such liquor heats a carcass, to be sure – yet what about the truly spiritual?"

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Declaring the facts to be thus, our man-hunter bursts through some swinging doors that capture sunlight.

FIFTY-ONE: (51)

"We were hopin' to rake you home like a nightmare passage... and all of it occurring before attending to our task. But we wouldn't want you freezing to death, imponderably so! Or otherwise we'd have to unthaw those thews... albeit unbidden towards midnight." Whilst announcing or essaying this --- by the by --- Pond Granite held a scimitar up to Toblerone's throat. "What do you... intend?", she sobbed. For, and as steady as she goes, Harpie no longer waxed quiet so eloquent as a child of desire. Evidently then, her body was no longer wrapped in a red brassiere and clout; nor does it exhibit a tanned flesh to the wrists. Neither were her hands hurled provocatively behind her nape – thereby fingering a flowing mass of hair. No: this young woman just appears to be afraid now.

FIFTY-TWO: (52)

Resultantly heretofore, the third card in our predictive reading has been turned over and it reveals pitilessness' trope... at least in terms of Axon Tree's lucklessness. This encounters evolution's blade in consequence, if only to inspect a square circuit out of an old physics text-book. Do you detect such a source? It revolves around a rare plenitude of condensers... all of them attached by hooks and sprockets to a trip-wire. The device illuminates enslavement by being driven from its den or isolation cube, and it gnashes one's teeth in the night-time. But what does Axon himself say about the matter? He ruminates thus: "a cosmos sickens and perishes. I alone reign supreme in my punishment of worms. 'Look behind you!', the children shout – particularly when experiencing an absent force. For bullying is essentially a bladder's breathing! It means that such hop-sotch will be played with severed heads or beads. Lo! My dung-hill in West Wycombe reeks of Jenny – the pirate's moll – in Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. She screeches about class war or vengeance; and isn't this what Howard Brenton called practical communism?"

To the accompaniment of which... our clown spreads his arms out wide. Could he possibly be caterwauling into an invisible mirror?

*Behold revenge's electrolysis
leading to abundant paralysis
out of every sort
only to be bought
or customarily wrought
in front of any court
and by all means fought!*

FIFTY-THREE: (53)

In our nineteenth century vintage, however, Harlequin Thoomey set his horse towards galloping straight up the valley. It was

transparent really... since darkened mountains crept round to the north. They proved to be powerful, brutal, hulking and distant. Moreover, each one testified to a sugar loaf before a brazen dawn... and, in lieu of this, the ground screwed off when addicted to some green turf. Its hue limbered up always – primarily by acclimatising to a higher incline and becoming studded with a tree’s candelabra. Some russet brown fitted into one’s picture or sunset... and in the foreground a severed log lay up-ended. It appeared merely diffident as regards some idle boughs and contrasted with Oregon’s sky-line. Didn’t it swoon down with blue velvet (?); at once studded with cumulus and becoming proportioned to magenta’s streaks.

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What’s that (?), Thoomey thought. Am I being followed? For – sure enough – the loam reverberated to some rival hooves. These pounded on the sward and they caused Harlequin to twist about in his saddle.

FIFTY-FOUR: (54)

Old Man Smithers acted now with decisive venom and aplomb. Purposively – by sweeping his rifle butt in a circular arc – he knocked over two of his sons by striking them full in the face. As a result, apple-juice and citric gore littered the snow; and it took the form of blood and rheum. It pelted or splattered the available habitat; thereby crushing all around it like broken pineapple pieces. Now the two offspring so challenged or brutalised were Rapacious Quicksilver and Egghead Morgan. Both of them subsequently ploughed a lonely furrow on this tundra’s ice. Yes... while Blackbird Leys Dingo spied on agape before his daddy’s wrath. Surrounding all of them a turquoise sky swept downwards or waxed tellurian, and each heavy snow flake sank like a wraith. The wind circled around and sucked up like a banshee in ulster-scots’ myth.

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“I’ve told you boys afore, Rape and Pond, you must have a mind to keep your thoughts PURE. Otherwise I’ll disembowel both of

ye out in these arctic climes – if only to leave your bleeding torsos in the snow. You’ll then betoken one of von Hagens’ plastinates at the finish-line... at least in terms of a creature who’s been skinned to the teeth. My, my: if you treat a wild flower like dirt she’ll spawn refuse... do you acknowledge it? A father’s wrath has to reminisce about Odin in its vexation – what with a disembodied eye that floats above the spume. Yellow it is – particularly when taken together with an embroidered sack of such a pedigree. Cannot it move like lace or on a twisting course; so as to observe reality through an enlarged pupil? Hear me! For Galton’s eugenics must be fit for exposure in order to annul criminal genes. We shall harness Boas, Mead and Levi-Strauss to our chariot, and this is basically by vanquishing Lombroso forever. My clan will then prove social anthropology’s efficacy in a single-handed vista. Why so? Because crime has to be environmental or civic, irrespective of a society’s babe. *Grundrisse* or foundation marxism comes at us with a price tag attached – namely, lumpen proletarian justification. For – in accordance with Sartre’s *Saint Genet* or Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* – criminality wishes to be a form of anti-bourgeois rebellion. But my family shall testify that environment remains paramount through planned breeding. Criminals are made and not born! Mark it down – and even in the Sabine Women’s rape we can create new Cains out of Abel’s loins. Do you remember Durer’s sketch? Our kind, Axon, must find a way to affix an addendum to Alexander Trocchi’s decadent *Cain’s Book*. We reject palaeo-conservative ‘judges’ like E.O. Wilson, Carleton Coon, late Koestler, Alain de Benoist and H.J. Eysenck. Do you see? Our relatives or kindred understand that the planned ravishment of Toblerone Harpie can only deliver Joan Crawford’s *Trog*. Comprehend this, my brethren, in the orgies of *Kaos* magic decent scum may emerge!”

FIFTY-FIVE: (55)

We find that our dreams thrive on emptiness like those caves in West Wycombe which we discussed previously. In this scenario

another of Old Man Smithers' cards has been turned over in order to reveal a new dawn's infinity. Look on now: this redundant fondue leaves a large space on the back of a pack made by Waddingtons. It squares off to a hop-scotch pattern which is marked out in chalk and written over by Tipp-ex (just). Since each hemispherical circle – as is held on the card's reverse – patterns away to a rectangle's semblance by delimiting blue dye. Rapacious Quicksilver (one moral cretin amongst many) drools thus: "Intellect was merely a matter of refined rain or mercury... even if it happens to occur on the skull's inside. Let's see now: my particular debility lies in a paedophile direction. Could it be characterised by Lewis Carroll's Queen of Hearts? It's hard wired, you know? Nothing can be done... save to castrate us from the very beginning. Because we suffer from a lesion on the frontal lobe which prevents us from full adulthood and it's aft of the brain-pan. We're grotesquely immature and pre-matured, you see. Hence you are free to observe our itinerant infantilism and childishness... for we remain incapable of mature or erotic correspondence thereby. All of the ideologues who emit these mephitic fumes, like Raoul Vaneigem or Tom O'Carrol, miss their target as a consequence. Since immaturity has to be the key here... Didn't the bi-racial freak, Michael Jackson, store over five hundred dollies in his bedroom? Yes, a house of dolls – that's the fashion! (Although surely not with the trespass which M.R. James meant in his story, *The Haunted Doll's House*?) No: all of those drugs I've smoked coalesce in one Denton Welch extravaganza – where small arms and legs pile up in a higgledy-piggledy fashion. Now it embodies a doll's hospital above a toy-shop or booth, and this bounty emerges from one of Angela Carter's basements."

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Adjacent to our reclining panorama one's clown chorus begins to sing. Might he be considered to be a male version of Liza Minelli in *Cabaret*? Certainly he impinges on an Aristophanic idiolect. For his coiffure reigns in orange dust – while his nose and lips

recall a mummers' Bessy, and his lips are choreographed by
rouge. Let's listen to our circus' verse:

*No paedophile's absent
seen other than solvent
or predictably dormant
can summon up Stormant.*

*Mac, unsheathe your knife
Rule 42's not a life!*

FIFTY-SIX: (56)

A horse thundered into the foreground against an orange hint below. Whereas – in the sky beyond our ken – inter-connected pink streaks mulct into some yellow above the trees. The stallion – for its part – appeared to be a darksome blue... as some dust moved around its hooves' travel or travail. A green sward crept around its stem – whilst various conifers mushroomed amid purple granite. "Hold it up there!", hollered a pursuing shade or jade. Can we take it forward from this? Because all art *aficionados* will know that a German movement – as defined by Kurt Schwitters – took its name from such blue horses. Surely no-one can feed on Wyndham Lewis' essays *Men without Art* with impunity? "I've come abreast of you, varmint! No man humiliates me like Gloucester under Cornwall's boot", snarled Blackbird Leys. Yet, during this interstice, another image comes into Harlequin Thoomey's mind. It has to do with a black-garbed version of himself; at once younger and moving across an abandoned tundra. A landscape swirls in a white recollection of it – rather after a blanched Rothko with anthropomorphic shapes hindering tonality. Yes indeed: even naked limbs become discernible in a frieze such as this. Whereas Thoomey, the Mormon, strides forward blade-in-hand and over his shoulder is slung one pale-putty's body. A mask seems to be worn aslant our Ensor's double --- it effectively covers his captive's face. Who might his burden be other than Blackbird Leys Dingo?

FIFTY-SEVEN: (57)

The scene had calmed somewhat, but only by virtue of a victoriously achieved peace. Several of Old Man Smithers' sons lie sprawled about on this snow-scape. One of them, in particular, has a redoubt of white water covering his wrist*. (*The individual in question happened to be Pond Granite). It streaked onto the impermanence of an icy gesture; together with a woolly mitten gesturing beneath. Now Rapacious Quicksilver continuously rubbed his head's soreness, if only to search under a capacious balaclava. While Blackbird Leys Dingo gazed on sullenly from afar – and his demeanour mixed belly-aching with subdued lust or *ennui*. Wasn't he about to start whining like a hyena? From all of these miscreants, though, a thin spiral of breath rose up into the ether. It turned into a twister only then to die or evaporate, in turn, like some ne'er-do-well smoke. For her part, Toblerone Harpie stood at a league's distance from these malcontents... albeit in the guise of a creature of phantasy. Moreover – and somewhat instantaneously – the eroticism and vampirella sheen seems to have left her bereft. She no longer affects any bravado or haughtiness, but rather a sense of diffidence, shyness, insouciance and a momentum towards pluck's absence. A dull grey blanket surrounds her lissom form at this time, primarily in order to keep out Jack Frost.

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Whereas the major figurine in this Brechtian tableau, Old Man Smithers *excelsior*, stood to one side of a carousal's past. His arms were folded crossways in a patriarchal mien or cast, and the oldster's *capo di tutti capi* aspect looked augustly at the snow. (But surely we are speaking seasonally rather than imperially or religiously?) A potent brew of Capstan full strength occasionally twirls to a spiral or mezzanine, and it wove smoke up between his fingers. Soon he would address his klavern or extended brood.

FIFTY-EIGHT: (58)

But – on another plane altogether – a further playing card has been turned upwards for our edification. For – let’s not forget – that Old Man Smithers’ lies on the ground or a floor made from lino... albeit when manufacturing a card out of Mies van der Rohe’s architecture. One of those items produced belongs to Low Termagant. Whereupon we find that its back details his psychoanalysis... all of it in red felt-tip or a violet’s shading. Could it embroider on Thomas Szasz’s or R.D. Laing’s denial of mental illness? Anyway, our collective clown-face chooses to deal with a ‘Uranian’ necklace; at least when next door to an inebriate square or carding. It (the image on the back of the card) comes fixed like a tattoo... something which has been impregnated by glaucous wires and depicts the Tower. This resonates as a tarot card that delineates chaos, defeat, nihilism, annihilation and what St. John called the Last Judgement in *Revelations*. Yet this red gossamer or smoke screen also describes Low’s homosexuality. “Inversion”, he daubs by way of a preface, “relates to a biological premise. Forget social or cultural theories of causation *a la* Otto Weininger... as outlined in his book *Sex and Character*. My debility has to do with a female hypothalamus in the under-brain... itself a downward tending or spiralling parabola which occasions adolescence *viz.* Freud. Yet underneath it lies paedophilia or the effeminacy of one’s dour youth. Didn’t Alec Waugh call his autobiography *The Loom of Youth*? Let’s leave it to William S. Burroughs’ molester aesthetic in *Wild Boys*... or, somewhat alternatively, a trajectory which begins with *Queer* on its way to *Cities of the Red Night*!”

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Termagant has ceased speaking now – even though we’re left with The Tower’s munificence. It breaks through at dawn... plus we detect a turquoise colour that’s all lit up by a blue shimmer; and it also involves linseed oil and orange. A pineal eye superintends every available rainbow’s destruction. Didn’t Henry Miller and Goethe call it the cosmological eye? Our clown too – provoked by this Glock’s alternative rendition – starts to croon.

*One pansy, one pansy, one pansy too many
'll unplug a gun
what fun, fun, fun
to see them run!*

FIFTY-NINE: (59)

The outrider had already caught up with him – leastwise afore an involuntary turn. His pursuer's features flashed up before him... weren't they Blackbird Leys Dingo's? Yes sir. For Leys' look reared up against an azure background – what with a saffron neckerchief around his neck and a sombrero behind. The youngster's hair – now that we mention it – comes stringy and light brown in tone; itself being adjacent to a jacket's mauve. Observe its course now... since, in Thoomey's mind's-eye, his assailant has been reduced to a mouth. In this version of the television series *Bonanza*, Dingo's orifice jabbers on. First we take cognisance of it from the left, then below, now as a singular abstract or fluting like a diva... before disappearing altogether. Its final release occurs with a loud POP! Even more, and aslant of this dissolution, Blackbird Ley's face morphs into a union trooper's... that is: one drawn from President Lincoln's army. In which, *mutatis mutandis*, and under a blue-peaked cap, Dingo's mask splurges like a Bacon portrait in a polymorphous fashion. "I'm calling you out, Pinkerton!", he cries. "Only the fittest evasion curdles any steel. All prevarication falls sheer at once. Refuse to disoblige my necessity, why don't you? Fill your hand, you son of a bitch... slap leather!"

SIXTY: (60)

Old Man Smithers has begun orating by this time. Like Edward Bond's marxian *Lear*, he extracts eye-balls mechanically and with a measured tread. Lend him your eyes and ears I beg you... if only briefly. "Listen up, poltroons! A day of reckoning is upon your cranial lurch. We may be out in nowhere's middle, but this visitation frees us to cut to identity's quick. It's transparent really, since, in the mind's eye, one dwells on the viscosity of

blood. Assuredly, I open a shelf behind me in order to release an unborn baby. It happens to be fixed in aspic or in suspended animation; whereupon a mutant emerges silently on a dais. (Note: Saddam Hussein's secret police – the instrument of yearning – were alleged to keep prisoners in this manner.) Nonetheless, our babe comes fully formed or otherwise he's concertina'd in a covenant of rags. It resembles, *inter alia*, the gigantic foetus which floats in space and that ends Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Most definitely... because an embrasure's spectrum or its raised skin lies over the child's forehead. Otherwise he's as bald as a coot or some such; and he possesses a diamond studded ear-ring on the left-side. When one considers it, though, even his smile has a sinister ambit. NOW HE'S THIS FAMILY'S FUTURE! Make no mistake about it... my children. For a circle or community like our own shares every meaty dollop. We require some newish blood or a red-herring at its source. Furthermore, whether our rutting results in a son or a grand-son makes no difference to me! Like all criminals – philosophically speaking – we're consequentialists... do you take my drift? For us, then, intent means nought in today's broth. All that matters involves getting what you want, here and now! Yes...? By all that's unholy in Bosch's proboscis, what's keepin'() those boys?"

+

Toblerone Harpie merely looks away with veiled worry and disgust now. A part of one curtain has certainly been raised... could it be her future? She must act against its resource at every turn.

SIXTY-ONE: (61)

Still – multi-dimensionally – a playing card has been turned over in order to lament its backward design. May it be a keepsake in velvet; if only to primarily draw out its diagonal parquet? This one treats of a leper's domain – namely, it concerns Egghead Morgan. On his primus or stove you can detect a naked scalpel... it essentially depicts Louis Ferdinand Celine's surgery or

haemoglobin. Moreover, such spume finds itself outmanoeuvred or contained on a black square in relation to Modernity's affliction. Yet Egghead speaks for himself across vistas of sound and fury, or pertaining to invisible ink's usage. "My drug addiction leads to no moral consequences whatsoever," he says. "All lies silent before these ethical graves, you see? Having one's veins open to the sluice warrants nullity or nothingness. Furthermore, in William S. Burroughs' *Junky* the terminal addict grows purple skin like a reptile's hide... Because all junkies are weak and amoral enough for aught else. Isn't it then a case of Bad Sukie? Yeeeeesssss... never trust us, since lying stares up at opium eaters as a motif. We take drugs out of boredom, but repent at leisure. Crystalline sheaths develop around our hands and mouths now; yet only later on or by 'cold turkey's' dint."

*A crocodile moves underground:
it won't be found
or rendered unsound
never mind being bound
by letters...*

"Have you even registered Bram Stoker's *Lair of the White Worm?*", yodels a clown.

SIXTY-TWO: (62)

In the nineteenth century we find that two cowboys – Harlequin Thoomey and Blackbird Leys Dingo – are squaring off against either's twin. A merest freeze-frame before this their two respective horses – one a white mare and the other an orange stallion – halt near one another. The sky behind them bifurcates -- one half is tinted blue while the rest proves to be starkly pale. Next to either warrior – and passing left of oblivion – a grey-granite suspension rears up amidships. Truly, Dingo's not alone when he bellows or ejaculates: "Behold, unofficial lawman, I'm the Angel of this North! Do you recall --- as a dare --- the outstretched arms belonging to Anthony Gormley's statue? Any

road up, no escape from this iron maiden seems to be probable... especially when one appreciates a flight of steps which leads nowhere. It cuts off in mid-space or air only to rig its own defeat." Momentarily though, our Pinkerton fails to reply.

SIXTY-THREE: (63)

Back in the late twentieth century – however – two myrmidons trudge out into our snow's distant breaks. They pass equidistant from a gigantic oak – itself adorned with icicles, the amplitude of which cascades down restlessly and even without shelter. It also casts a large silhouette on white icing or fondue; and this has to measure the shading of Tyburn's tree. Most definitely – since the two brothers take exaggerated steps that are aided and abetted by the natural slush below. At a far distance – and to the side of its remit – a forest's interior sticks in the memory. It consists of some magenta trunks and boughs that trail away towards one's allegory. Could you come across Snorri Sturluson's *Poetic Edda* here? In regards to which – does either brother detect a gathering of nerds or vassals; or could it be the sunlight's trick? Whereupon – in either Sibelius' tone-lands or Strindberg's paintings – one glimpses the North's lightless vistas... together with darkness' coagulation or the mystic bronze of melting ice. Our twin desperadoes happen to be dressed in wind-breakers, boots, knives and winter-hats. They are treading out the perimeter of a Frost Giant's daughter; i.e., one who was merely held up in the snow-mists' roundabout. Doesn't she tempt men beyond a battle-field and Flanders' pasture (?); or even to their veriest doom at the world's rim. A template wherein our sun lights up a cosmos most sheer – so low is it and coming in on top of those very drifts! Polar bears meander a tad further out and the *aurora borealis* (or Northern lights) come a'twinkling. Do these followers of a white Kali pause to understand their mission? Hadn't their chieftain – Old Man Smithers – asked them to scout abroad so as to uncover a possible pursuer? Axon Tree and Lift Spenser Wingate stop to converse in their task... whilst blinding snow swirls aplenty.

SIXTY-FOUR: (64)

Can you disclose its breed time or moment of reclamation? Because Toblerone Harpie – in a dream festival – stooped to pick up a card from a thronging pack. Might it be Death or the number thirteen which indicates absolute transformation? Anyway, what's written on the reverse is what animates her. For it codifies Blackbird Leys Dingo's hermetic. In this respect, then, Dingo wheels his chair along the ground in a manner that's forlorn of all mist. It squeaks as it traverses some concrete, but also remains silent at an alleviation's turn. Suddenly he rears up in a doorway – the likelihood of which corresponds to a dark tunnel. Each noise-plug repeats itself and becomes increasingly irritating, rather like the tannoy at the beginning of Ligeti's *Dance of Death*. Certainly Dingo's whine echoes in these chambers... yes, even at a time when the language licks at zero and comes to be delicately etched on his card's back. Ahead of him – or abreast of these sepulchral tints – several mannequins glow in the shadows. Each one of these figures waxes flesh-toned or pulchritudinous in a witness' terms. Evidently then, the angularity of these modelled heads – when carved into rectilinear planes – recalls Marc Quinn's efforts. Can you tell that these are part store-dummies; whilst they hint at a return of Flaxman's putty... somewhat restoratively. But like all cripples – even speculatively – Blackbird Leys Dingo starts lashing out. His words are as follows: “Shut off the ‘disabilist’ discharge, my language clears it away apace! It's not for me a position or a piece of white ticker-tape – albeit at the starting-line in the para-Olympics circa. 2012. Aren't they supposed to be in London's East End... a territory which finds itself choc-a-bloc, as it is, with ingrate immigrants and doleites? No. I claim such privileges by rite of ugliness or deformity, and this is whether they are suggestive of Quasimodo or not in my own branding. Leaven my bread's flour with some spittle, I ask you! Because – in accord with Erich Fromm's *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* – one only assesses beauty through its opposite: namely decrepitude. Beauteous starvation assists a criminal urge (therefore). Reject

body fascism, embrace a spas(.), exalt a crip(.) and risk the day! I demand my Francis Bacon portrait that has been cut up in slices and still gesticulates over Isabel Rawsthorne's reserve. To repudiate able-bodied tyranny loosens a thousand stays – like with Queen Caroline. Corsetless, didn't her belly flop around her knees? Oh yes, an unheroic or dog-in-the-manger attitude suits us. We're Thalidomide's toasties --- always fit for purpose!"

*Cripples, free-loaders, runts to boot
get out on foot
by any possible root
irrespective of soot.*

Toot, toot!

SIXTY-FIVE: (65)

Our invisible camera pans across now onto Harlequin Thoomey's face. He's parked his horse to one side momentarily; at once pursuant to conflict... or, at the very least, his own O.K. corral shoot-out. A hat lies aslant his head, the brim of which comes down to a shadow over the lawman's visage. It suffuses a grey penumbra – together with a texture that leads onto a beard's template, if only then to point towards magnetic south. A brilliant purple such as this – when embroidered with whiteness – lays itself open to affected cumulus. Nor can we avoid those streaks of French blue which tilt like Hockney's lines or dints... at least when contrasted with Thoomey's dot pattern. Can you dismiss printing's pointillism – especially when drawn from Lichtenstein's example? Resultantly though, their horses whinnied and circled behind them as if sensing ensuing conflict. A lightish sapphire-cluster fell as either man gained control of refractory mounts... when this proves to be pursuant to various rocks carved like a grey gargoyle. Each cowboy stood occluded before the other's rage; whereupon two six-guns reared out of Dingo's holsters. Behind his assailant a conifer moved slowly in the breeze. Mesmerically speaking, Harlequin stood gauntly like

the pulp character *The Shadow* or a figurine who advertises Sandeman port. Yes sir – but in the batting of an eye a long-barrelled weapon left his great-coat in order to cleave a bullet through Blackbird’s shoulder (necessarily so). He screamed, fell backwards and dropped both pistols.

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Whilst – correspondingly or in an Enochian transcript – Leys’ wheel-chair clattered down a stair-well. (Don’t we understand that the mind has many mansions?) A blood-curdling cry accompanied this digital drop. When above him two spectral overlays – a young curate and the Devil – swirled in etheric mist.

SIXTY-SIX: (66)

Two brothers had fed themselves livid with the snow which surrounds them. “Oik of ours, there’s no soul roundabout. Do you reckon that we’ve searched enough in this requisite pit?”, came Axon’s trill across the slush. “Keep at it”, hazarded Lift Spenser Wingate, “daddy’s liable to cut out our livers ‘n’ fry them – leastwise if we disobey orders.” What they didn’t realise was that their quarry, Harlequin Thoomey, watched them from above. In this integer, then, may it come about in an undated way? At least within the format of unchartered minds... because it has a reminiscence to Josef Thorak’s *Judgement of Paris*, executed in 1941. Wherein a naked God looks on; at once spoilt for heterosexual choice and adoring his muse. Could each gesture of these *belle dames* supplement his prey – especially in terms of an untenanted entourage? Quite possibly... since a woman’s décor, prior to penetration, is to facilitate the deed. Aesthetically though, our blood brothers have other shapes about them or in their frontal lobes. These were Bram van Velde’s loose ditties or swirls, and each one was comparable to the artist’s friendship with Samuel Beckett. Yet in this *Aesthetic Theory* we cannot help but notice Maurice Esteve’s pyjama daubs, Serge Poliakoff’s potato shapes, Alberto Magnelli’s cartoons without the strip, Jean Michel-Atlan’s bicycle tyres, Hans Hartung’s juice acrylic or Henri Michaux’s looming tumours. Hadn’t Beckett

argued in his *Conversations with Georges Duthuit* that this transition portended nihilism? Certainly our protagonists – in this post-modern Western – betray distinct notions. Each to his own thereafter... yet may it strain credibility? For would village idiots like Axon Tree or Lift Spenser Wingate (both) entertain artistic roads? Isn't their level more likely to be John Boorman's *Deliverance* – as scripted by Jim Dewey? Indescribably so... since abstraction indicates either the brain's helixes or a dog's breakfast. You decide.

SIXTY-SEVEN: (67)

Our last card has fallen now or finds itself reflected in one of Riopelle's blood noodles. Initially speaking, Old Man Smithers had attempted to build a castle with them under the table. Lo and behold, though, this final Ace of Clubs happens to be his! Would that such a scenario wasn't the Adams Family's buccaneering, unconsciously speaking. It combines various semblances to order in its diktat or spleen. First off, a gossamer element or thread trills across the imagination. It looks diaphanous, see-through and lacking a doily's absent humour... nor can our clown be referring to the rival D'Oyle Carte company, even in jest. Precisely at a moment when – behind this darkened square – a threatening beating of wings is heard. It registers a raven's cry; at once merely keening, pounding its wing-span or waiting to consume flesh... after Edgar Allan Poe's poem. Yet also – and next to a leathery hide – a horse-dragon thrashes across this available space. Might it be a hippogriff of yore; as occasioned by a stray mouth with teeth which trails a perpendicular spine in its wake? Above this resolve, then, a pound coin circles in the sun. Its sterling adventures capture and reflect each light-beam in a picturesque manner. But, on the other half of this calling card, one finds a signal for a guillotine or scaffold. Possibly it happens to be a Bic. snapshot or a 'what the butler saw device': one that's reminiscent of Robespierre, Couthon, Saint-Just, Hebert, Roux *et al*... Do you detect it? Because – in light of this

disacknowledgement – Old Man Smithers just opens his arms to treble:

Bling, Bling...

I'm falling, calling, caterwauling:

as ready as a mouse

or caught like a louse

behind your house

in order to deflect one's nouse ... Raus, Raus!

SIXTY-EIGHT: (68)

In nineteenth century Ameri[k]a one notices that Blackbird Leys Dingo has hit the ground screaming. A bullet – itself reminiscent of the Jezail one that had gone through Doctor Watson's shoulder – had passed out of his. He lay upon the ground and moaned plaintively. Both of Dingo's orbs were streaming lachrymosely at this time. His body sprawled prone on the sand – what with one fore-leg higher than the other and his free arm nursing a brutalised jamb. A yellow pitch hovered around these two figures; a glow which resultantly engulfed both figurines and gave to them something of a Greek tragedy. What betokens Harlequin Thoomey's lustre, then? He buzzed over his beaten rival rather menacingly now. His form also silhouetted towards a blue halo... albeit in a manner which revealed the latter's wide-brimmed hat. In his fists he continued to carry Blackbird's revolvers. He held both weapons by the barrels, having denuded them of bullets. No slugs then remained in these pistol's chambers. Moreover, as he looked down on this flogged cur, various words from the Ancient world flooded into his mind. For hadn't Heraclitus, the pre-socratic or sophist thinker, declared the following to be true? 'War is the father and monarch of all; some it makes gods, others it sets free, still more it enslaves.' But such a semiotic was wasted on a braggart or a stripling like this, he mused. "What are you going to do, man?", whimpered Blackbird Leys. "Do?", reflected the victor. Unhesitatingly now, he became aware of a line in Goethe's *Faust* to the effect that in the

beginning there was an action. Stimulated by such dialectics our hero snapped the cylinder out of each fire-arm. They were unsoldered with a violent snap... much like a twig breaking suddenly amid a forest's silence. Could it recall an incident in an Algernon Blackwood story such as *The Man Who Loved Trees*? At this blatant catharsis, Blackbird Leys Dingo started to scream. "NNNNOOOO!", he bellowed.

SIXTY-NINE: (69)

If we fast forward a century or so then our narrative finds itself in a driving snow-storm. Out of which a booted detective or bounty-hunter stares down on a passing brigand. He moves to one side of a negative ice-flow --- almost out of range --- or casts a spectral ballot like one of Poliakov's pieces. Down there – and dressed like pygmies or dwarves in Wagner's *Ring* – the twinned plastinates known as Lift Spenser Wingate and Axon Tree zig-zag about. They carom or ricochet rather like pin-balls in a slot-machine under Plexi-glass. Adjacent to such hardened flurries, then, these ice-worms call out to each other given the season's debris. "Can ya catch sight o' the Lawman?", crackles Axon. "No glow here, womb monger. I reckon he's flown from this particular igloo. For – like the main character in Spielberg's *Duel* – he doesn't know when to stand and fight." Likewise, this giant tree casts a shadow on the men who pirouette beneath it. Whereas each of our lone wolves summons assistance or booty, and this is relative to the poniards they carry in their gloved hands. What they don't realise – when pursuant to Norse sagas like *Njal's* – was that each shout pin-points their position. As unerringly as radar or sonar – in other words – they sacrifice various diagonals on Death's chess board. Will Albericht, in Arthur Rackham's draughtsmanship, draw away his hand from Hagen's knee in time? 'You did promise me the Ring of Power, son', he wheedles.

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For now – upon crossing their co-ordinates in his periscope – Harlequin Thoomey leapt down on Axon. The tree comes

between them and a rope flails around his plummeting form. Wasn't it an eel in the first garden which solicited Man for free will?

SEVENTY: (70)

Still a question time over cards continues to subsist amid our dream characters. Despite the fact that this exercise in poker, whist, snap, solitaire, gin rummy, bridge, cribbage, etc... falls sheer. All such lacquered story-boards – when architecturally arranged by Old Man – are blown to the ground. Possibly he didn't build them up correctly (?); or more pertinently a windy gust collapsed this castle. Harlequin looked at his wife who now savoured a vista of shattered cardings. Let's enquire further: since such outraged words will necessarily illumine our puppets. "One's battlements have collapsed --- no matter how encoded", breezed Oregon's lawman. "No fear – because all of these suits are subsumed into the Tower which happens to be a precise alchemical sigil (this). It agglomerates all other fractions – irrespective of whether they be a five of Clubs, an eight of Diamonds, a Heart's Three or Colin McInnes' blackest of Spades. A number 2 (this is): a treacly or feminine numerology that's definitely not an Ace." A finger then massages a Tarot's corner. It shows up a Masonic illumination or curiosa; the fall of which indicates a nature that's at once resultant, possibly unwilling. This dramaturgy falls – as in Camus – towards a waked river: when the latter happens to be streaked with Cruikshank's lines. Abreast of all else, a Pineal eye supervenes by casting its halo or rainbow: a notification in which every available tint smoulders inside a spectrum. Do we adjudicate over Crowley's efforts that were drawn for him by a Lady of the manor? It suffices... in a presentation where gold, effluvium, onyx, cornelian, ambrosia, nacreous pearl and ormolu all approximately yield.

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Whereas on this staging's side – or held in Shakespeare's brazier – a lonely mountebank struts his stuff. He refutes the hanging

accorded to Lear's Fool in Act Five of one particular play. Suddenly – and with arms wide open – he bursts into a woodpecker's chant:

*A Tower or citadel
indicates destruction
abstraction
Apollyon
inanition
masturbation
and reverse cognition.*

It transforms Wyndham Lewis' painting, *The Siege of Barcelona*, into chalk!

SEVENTY-ONE: (71)

Before silent cinema emerged Blackbird Leys Dingo was to be found writhing on the ground in nineteenth century Oregon. An enormous dum-dum bullet had perforated his shoulder (you see). He yelled, cringed and shrieked – all of it being pursuant to a larcenous heart. Can't you tell? "Blast you, Pinkerton!", he sibilated. "I'm all shook up and done in... yeah. How can you break up steel with your bare hands – in a manner that's like Zeus' or Wotan's grasp...? T'ain't natural, do ya hear? Any road up: a mouth exists in a grim fashion and at a wall's base; together with some mural etchings or tracery roundabout. It calls out when riven hoarse and susurrating, or prior to its dissolution from sight. While understandably either you or I would have to bend down... especially when close to some expectant brick now. But spent orifice or no --- listen to me --- my Man of Iron. For such an oral valve screeches to a pop – albeit when pursuant to resistant agonies or resulting from a prior fear. First it trills in Adler's maw; then it yodels before stretching into a smirk or a beacon... all of it coming abreast of one particular countdown. No mortal shreds such weaponry without mittens – it's contrary to nature." "You've obviously failed to read Huysmans' *Against*

Nature”, responded Harlequin Thoomey in a bass tone. “Bluntly speaking, your speech-hole lies sideways on and it can’t fathom existence otherwise. No pulsar can really leaven such foundlings, since I wore gloves in order to mishandle a Colt 45. Look yonder: you kneel silently before my entreaty – rather like a votary in church or a northern chapel. While my silhouette --- at least presently on horseback --- cleaves to a known edge. It presumes to manage a sky’s new spark; given all of the abstract foliage which exists at a distance. Most pertinently... this occurs where claret mountains level off horizontally or are articulated like South Africa’s table complex. They measure the future in terms of orange or yellow streaks (just so); and these were limned towards sapphire or filtered via white.”

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In saying this, however, our hero turned his mount around and headed on out. A valley lay before his gaze and its gaunt aspect startled each retina... drenched, as it was, in sunlight. By contrast and herein, Blackbird Leys Dingo can only howl like a hyena. Does he at all represent Grendel after Beowulf has wrenched off his arm?

SEVENTY-TWO: (72)

In a repeat of such a filigree (sic) our sheriff has hurled himself from a tree’s enablement or shift. Down he plunges in a scenario where his body is sequestered to a dull grey or a rectangular brown. Amid all of this, then, a thick twine circles a lawman’s navel and it unravels its own circular concourse (thereby). Could it lash like a whip and thence afford one Pythonesque entry – or do its uncoiled motions indicate defeat? Verily, my friend, an answer lies below or in the shadows of upended Time. Axon Tree passes beneath and happens to be oblivious to the hurtling object about to hit him from above (just so). For – obviously – he cannot recognise its entreaty... and even before such an impact Axon Tree shouts out to his brethren across the blinding snow. “Ain’t nothin(’) here, Wingate! Loneliness breeds at *Dasein*’s core and spreads disease roundabout. Look you: these wasteful

silences mask funk and they chatter inanely like anatomical skulls in Gray's design. Didn't H.V. Carter actually do those draughtsmanship cores or a lithograph's apples?" All of a moment, however, this Tarantino screen goes blank --- primarily by indicating a nexus or onwards movement. Hasn't Axon T. really discovered that words are traps or snares? They pin-point a target's aperture above Snowdonia's mount. Also – as Paul de Mann discovered in his text *Blindness and Insight* – it's treachery against oneself to attempt their defeat.

SEVENTY-THREE: (73)

In another dimension, tilt or spectrometer of dream Harlequin finds himself talking aloud. Isn't it what Samuel Beckett – in his post-modernity – called staining the silence? Surely now, none of John Cage's concern with vedic *aporia* needs to intervene here? "Adumbrate this", he begins, "an aleatory aspect in Western art has proved to be its desecration. We merely need to canvas Cornelius Cardew's or John Tomlinson's improvisations to realise this. Both end in defeat – and through pre-scripting's absence – they indicate a tonal graffiti. Consider, my wife, a visual synonym for it... and shouldn't we look at Arnulf Rainer's *Kopf Gesicht* which was executed in and around 1966?" "It's not a beneficent interest", she interrupted. "Maybe", he ploughed on, "but observe its inarticulate symmetry, why don't you? It commences planless, obviates nothing and ends in defeat. It also trills out an uncomprehending exchange or bite, and Tracey Emin's conceptualism radiates its own poverty in comparison to Memling." "Yet let's consider a work like Karel Appel's *Untitled* from 1921", she mewed by way of a response. "Equally abstract, its planned absence leads to a balance or serenity out of which peers a vacant need. Or – at the very least – there's a semblance of representationality that seems pursuant to a visual addenda." "Possibly", he rejoined, "but the mere subjectivism of looking obviates such an intent. It precludes --- almost by definition --- a heroic imprimatur. These art-works return to Bakhtin's Formalist tunnel or green-house. They do not hate, because they cannot

love. Moreover, their partial hegemony encodes a civilisational paralysis or trauma in our artistic life. Almost literally now – no-one can paint or sculpt beyond this cul-de-sac.” “You insist on pointing out that it’s consequentialist art?”, she asked in a low voice. “Without any concourse or doubt”, he inflected.

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Whilst intoning this, however, a spiral of demi-urges scrolled above him. It thereby delineated some conic heads, music-hall craniums or sundry *artistes* of yesteryear. They were piled on top of one another in a manner that was vaguely reminiscent of Burra. Isn’t it obvious (?); since time’s carnival comes close to enclosing his dreams. For – pursuant to de Chirico’s *Commedia delle arte* or Picasso’s *madi gras* – our Punch and Judy start hitting one another. They use batons or staves in order to do so. By contrast to the above, our clown engages in comic operetta rather like Gilbert & Sullivan.

Don’t look at Modern art
modern art, my friend...
it’s a steal
what can it reveal?
or conceal
by Taubman’s deal.

Basquiat, Baselitz, Ruscha, Copley, Jaar, Spoerri, Bill, Bury, Long, Danziger, Tinguely, LeWitt, Christo: what a bisto!

SEVENTY-FOUR: (74)

Slowly – and with an aching parsimony – Harlequin Thoomey’s horse moves effortlessly across the sands. It lies out in front of him – albeit rather after the affection of such dirt as these. In Jack London’s prose we note that such fried mud stirs in the wind with a violet livery. While overhead the sky lemons into a deep blue as he rides in nonchalantly. A range of mountain peaks pile up at a distance and each one is snowy capped. Whereas – in the foreground – the crooked fencing of a rodeo or a rancher’s

enclosure closes up. Every strut lalts away towards a trellis' indifference; whereupon even a cross-beam takes its place on yonder matrix. Moreover, a stallion and its rider then catches the sun, *en passant*, in a way which emboldens Helios' design. Isn't he camouflaged in mauve thereby (?) – even though emerald or beryl grants its tissue: given such solar luminance.

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Surely Pinkerton Thoomey has strolled into a valley farm?

SEVENTY-FIVE: (75)

When Marshal Thoomey's assailant hit the ice a century hence one sludge-like intonation reverberated around. Perhaps it embodied one of Berio's or Stockhausen's pieces? Nonetheless, a musically concrete 'crunch' ensued --- onomatopoeically. This was followed up by a sickening 'thwok' that sounded like when a neck's been broken. It hangs by a thread – at once bobbing and grinning – over a spinal tap's residue. May the victim's head be skewed back so as to lie behind the left shoulder? Adjacent to which (though) Grendel's brother rather than mother listens up. His ears are pricking. "That you, Axon? What goes on now amid a murder of crows? I feel vaguely worried by your absence... and into my mind comes a dream-scape or phantasm. It depicts a man-beast or a troglodytic simian who's breaking an apostate's back. Can it be a cosmic joke or not? If so, it would be the sort of jape which Caligula enjoyed --- at least prior to assassination by his own Praetorians. To be sure: this miscreant's skull lies behind his shoulder – as already inferred. His orbs were glassy or inhumanly dull, and within moroseness' grip. Yes: a ghastly grin or a pregnant leer delineates his visage. A numbing --- this --- that has been picked out from one of Sheridan le Fanu's short stories. Whereupon the spine flops about like used elastic or putty, and it falls in on itself after cantilevered fish-bone. I am vexed. How shall one mark it? For his torture chamber resembles the Clink Museum which was set up by a kinky Bishop of Winchester in order to build swag. Various shields glint from tarred walls; themselves being cylindrical and granite porous.

While burgundy curtains billow from recesses amid diaphanous partitions, and with torches guttering in niches. *Cui bono?* Sibling, come in!”

SEVENTY-SIX: (76)

Harlequin Thoomey and Toblerone Harpie – man and wife – continue talking in this sepulchral gloom. They are hidden by multi-dimensional clouds throughout. These blossom around them like confetti – while becoming attuned to Stygia’s fondue. Let us see this clearly... for she stands to one side of him with a nonchalant and ironic look. Her head veers to the side in terms of some Vorticist license or cusp, and is redolent of Froanna in a Lewis portrait. A long white cigarette or a King Size exhibit effloresces like magnesium oxide between her fingers. “So do you insist”, she remarks, “that modernism delouses tradition and leaves it null and void?” “Essentially”, he rejoinders in a voice both hollow and resigned. “It incarnates a *Shoah* or a disparaged testament by fire. Let us take – by reason’s postulate – a painting like *Silves*. Its paint has been controlled by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. A partially representational work – it smears a cityscape as seen through water’s reflection and in terms which demonstrate awe. Do you follow? It emboldens Ayn Rand’s *Fountainhead* – at least when visually encoded by Frank O’Connor. For its steel architecture comes at a price; especially when inside Mies van der Rohe’s casing.” “How so?” “Well! it delimits abstraction’s possibility via obvious inaction... dialectically speaking. Because even a semi-abstract canvas – such as the one outlined – affirms hermetic estrangement: it basically carries forward an autophagous image.” “Meaning?” “Da Silva’s work nullifies abstraction by virtue of a partial statement.” “So – by this token – you would prefer abstracts *tout court* after the fashion of Fred Thieler in *Untitled (W.10.57)*.” “Not necessarily, sweetheart, since total opaqueness engenders indeterminacy. It humiliates assertion – it renders subjective the objective rather than the other way round.” “Can it obtrude the curator’s role too much – thereby making him into a shaman?”

“Evidently, bourgeois formalism exalts both the critic and the dealer, but not necessarily at an artist’s expense.” “Yet on occasion, so?” “Percussively: but a latent threat subsists alternately.” “Where art thou?” “Here: one doesn’t have to subscribe to Jean Gimpel’s thesis in *The Cult of Art*, even though modernism encourages siamese twins.” “Name them...” “Why, they happen to be madness and nihilism.”

Our clown’s eyes roll in his head – intellectually speaking – and they move from one protagonist to the other. Cast in such a light, therefore, he embodies a Glock’s turn in Trevor Griffiths’ play *The Comedians*. Enter stage left...

*Abstraction’s a cat
not a rat
nor a ferret
or a stoat
but a goat:
twinkle its toes!*

SEVENTY-SEVEN: (77)

Thoomey’s stallion continued its canter or delivery, and it bypassed the stanchions put up roundabout. They were woodtimbered or cast abroad as struts, and proved to be waspish over these unbroken sands. Furthermore, various shrubs surfaced at their bottoms – presumably they are of a hardy or perennial breed. One cross-beam or pole – in particular – registered upon Golgotha’s ashen limbs... in that it betokened a crucified armature. Needless to say, the ochre tints of Giotto, Cimabue, Fra Angelico, Mantegna, *et al*, paled before this Western starkness. Harlequin sauntered on between-times; albeit moving across these frames at a slow pace. Whilst – with a background’s effrontery – a sapphire or a limned farmhouse baulked at an adjacent compass. Beyond its blockhouse rhetoric a fleet of magenta mountains rose up sheer or fast, and their snowy caps glistened in the sun. A star (this) which peeped out from above

them; the latter being lowly cast in its proximity and streaked with cerulean. Fatally – any dye has been strewn about – since the desperadoes’ trail led here.

SEVENTY-EIGHT: (78)

Wasn’t the blood pounding in Lift Spenser Wingate’s ears? He certainly looked about him without somnolence now. For his head found itself arched against blue’s brightness --- throughout which large snow clumps continually fell. An orange pylon covered this haze, but it lay higher up in the atmosphere or its compromised mist. Seemingly then, all of the trees around him were wintry and ashen... together with slush surrounding their lower perimeters. Wingate’s mitten clenched around a blade – whether independently of all else – and his features looked to be frozen. Momentarily, they stood outside time. His lower face came grizzled and stubbly, as well as accentuating its planes from below or underneath a cap. All in all, such a physiognomy wintered on its discontent... primarily by remembering Elisabeth Frink’s *Goggle-heads* from the ‘sixties. Weren’t these the apotheosis of male brutality; at once celebrated to a fault and crying out against feminism? No matter... for Spenser’s bent lies captured in a triangular dimension or causeway of thought. How does it materialise, then? Why, it relates to one peregrination alone or above, and this adopts an alien’s mantle. Whereby a heavily armoured trunk + gauntlets – together with a green face – lilts towards the Iron Cross at its centre. Instantaneously though, Lift Spenser Wingate spies his brother in the snow – albeit off to one side and *in lieu* of any explanation. His trajectory has taken a leftwards tilt... but whereof doesn’t he move? “Axon, what ails thee, bro?”, he stammers. He soon discovers that no answer boomerangs back in Oregon’s sleet.

SEVENTY-NINE: (79)

Our couple’s Socratic dialogue about modernism unfurls further... In all honesty, neither of them can have scanned Tomislav Sunic’s article, *Art in the Third Empire*. But no

matter... since Harlequin Thoomey's visage limns a penumbra: one which is at once dark, swirling, Baroque, even princely. Amid this eldritch stretch – however – he summarises a point: “Why don't we consider Henri Michaux's splay, *Untitled*, that dates from 1975? It configures some gouache on paper – even if it's like fractured bone in terms of a multiple enquiry. Moreover, this counter-blast – to egg on Marshall McLuhan – finds a felt-tip script which was formally designed for blotting-paper and liable to a wasting disease. (When out of nowhere, perchance, Jockey Wilson's arithmetic in biro fed its way to the shredder.) It preconfigures an absent notification and portends a semiotic nullity. Didn't the marxist anthropologist Levi-Strauss deprecate *avant-garde* art? For him, the effusions of anthropological sculpture were a primitive idiolect... whereas their post-industrial counter-part, as in *art brut* for instance, recalls a gutter savagery lacking in true primitivism.” Toblerone interjected here: “So, by this codex, a Hans Hartung pastel once owned by the French ambassador to Cairo – J.L. Simon – embodies a misstatement. Could it be an ejaculation? Or, in an alternative rendition, it incarnates psychic vomit from the underclass.” Harlequin coughed quietly as he glanced away. “Few bohemians register as lumpen-proletarians, except when it comes to cashing in their state benefits. Yet again, the real point has to be suicidal mania or a visualisation of Henri Barbusse's *Hell*.” “The first existential novel of the twentieth century in 1906, you mean?” “Naturally...”

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Our marionette pirouettes to the accompaniment of some hurdy-gurdy music. Was he an *alter ego* for either Harlequin Thoomey or Blackbird Leys Dingo? Who can bureaucratically list it – especially when one becomes exasperated by Max Weber's ‘iron cage’? Still and all, our clown continually blinks amid his grease-paint. Whomsoever shall positively miss it – at least when an eye-ball extraction device exists in Edward Bond's play, *Lear*? (He's a harlequin – that's right: an alternative to Bestre... when

the latter was a *farouche* in Wyndham Lewis' *The Wild Body*). Unlike George Barker's *The Dead Sea-gull*, he begins to sing:~

*Nihilism
a quandary
or want of spice
in a trice
please be nice:
and if you can't – be horrid!*

EIGHTY: (80)

Harlequin Thoomey had found this farmhouse to be completely deserted. Its recesses were darksome and subdued – primarily by way of some comparison or other. Internally – or within a fastness' leap – a door stood brazenly open with a yellow reflex down towards one plane. Isn't it obvious? Because signs of hurried departure lay all about... A window was broken adjacent to a right-angle – plus an astute eye amidst dimness discerns various benches, bottles, ampoules and rags thrown around. Above all else, a thick wooden table – made of hewn or crossed beams – looms out of this museum's clink. Could it be considered as an interconnected series of cells, perforce? Regardless of which – a knife sticks into these timbers abreast of some wine jugs and cloths (whether symmetrically arranged or not). These artefacts bring forward one of Matthew Smith's still-lives on an ouija board. Given this... Harlequin Thoomey thinks to himself: "A struggle's sign ricochets from right reason. For whatever family subsisted herein – no railroad bought them out... since every scintilla of evidence indicates their abduction, and not sheepishly either. They certainly fought back. Truly, my prey seeks a false note in a grave's security."

EIGHTY-ONE: (81)

Lift Spenser Wingate has seen his brother's corse now --- it is spread-eagled on some black-ice further on. It lifts a fixity towards an exercise in forgetting... only then to peel away from

its carrion by dint of a snowy owl's beak. Do you recognise that this fluffy bird (a symbol of wisdom and heresy) regurgitates its food? Incomparably so... and such insights remind us of a Robinson Jeffers poem. His brethren travels quickly across marshy tundra now – what with a mere outcropping of dead pines staring into the distance. For Axon Tree – on closer inspection – seems pinned to the earth via gravity... so strapped is his particular sacrifice. A thick, treacly, Baroque gulf surrounds him --- it subsumes a core's silence at the heart of Euripides' rewritten *Medea*. Let it be so... because Axon waxes cruciform after Mel Gibson's vintage or performance. But – at this aorta's kernel – a logarithm of inexactness mounts apace. It hints at hidden slaughters like a man-shadow – a kindred of which disclaims its own insignificance. Can liberal modernity hear us aright? Not precisely: since political correctness --- in its filth --- can never kowtow to the eagle in man. It fears heroic cruelty and remorselessness (you see). *Ceteris paribus*, Wingate springs forth from quietness' trap at this time. He bivouacs on – somewhat boundlessly – when interpreting grief or refusing to. He approaches his prone brethren on ebon's slush (thereby). Vaguely, and with a low G-factor I.Q., he notices a blade, spike or poniard sticking up perpendicularly from the snow. Might it be one of Chris Bonnington's tulwars? No matter: *quod* 'Lift' has forgotten various lines that were learnt by rote at reform school. They came from D.H. Lawrence's poem *St. Mawr*. 'Before and after the God of Love', the text-book said. 'Reject Christ; embrace Nature' – it intoned.

"Aw, Axon, get you up now... for remember that no marionette's a fallen puppet in our tribe", he cried. Soon Lift Spenser Wingate had caught up with a relative's scarecrow which lay pitch downwards.

EIGHTY-TWO: (82)

Our conversation proceeds apace between two amateur dons, Toblerone Harpie and Harlequin Thoomey, in another

dimension. She distills a cigarette end into a rounded ash-tray... rather nakedly. Its embers melt, susurrate, rupture and twist --- all of this occurring within a folding or envelope that consists of tobacco and its paper. One arm briefly crosses over the other in a slightly defensive mode; while she stubs out the rest into some glass. Residually though, her discourse begins thus: "Take Nicholas de Stael's *Composition* which was put down on canvas sometime between 1914 and 1955. Most quixotically, it alienates its abstract bias by performing measured interludes of tone. Whereby each shard indicates a nihilist's *summa*, in that it refracts inconstancy through a dark glass. Every dialectical awakening – as in Raymond Aron's *Dialectic of Violence* – mitigates against viduity. It tempts the void to adopt a balmy oblivion." "So, you agree with Samuel Beckett in his *Dialogues with Georges Duthuit*, that de Stael, Bram van Velde, *et al*, all tempt nullity? They cross over into nothingness --- beyond even Sartre's net." "Obviously so... since an opposite valuation to Rauschnig's *Revolution in Nihilism* awaits." "Beckett trumpets it, however – for him, Fay Wray's scream in the original *King Kong* is altogether too narrative driven. He exults only in despair – that is, of a sort to be found in abstract expressionism." "But these are the European school..." "Too true: Michaux, Poliakov, de Stael, van Velde: they recognise Stavrogin's vision in *The Possessed*, albeit subtly reversed." "Why so?" "Because 'satanism' results from formal desecration or the vile, and they lack the stamina for true transgression." "T. S. Eliot once stated a similar quandary. Let's remember that ugliness involves two prior mesmerisms – the first lacks power; the second revels in it." "What about racial inequality?" "Well! After Count Arthur Gobineau's example, primitive art maximises savagery's due and yet it invariably repeats its course... thereby tempting bathos."

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While Harlequin Thoomey and Toblerone Harpie, our couple, continue to talk on... H.'s look-alike prances and capers about. Has he ever read George Speaight's volume on Punch and Judy, or is he incorporating a Cindy Sherman photograph? Like Lucky,

in Godot's waiting, his coin-in-the-slot machine starts up. Surely it's an example of mono rather than stereo sound?

The devil's in the detail

retail

tell-tale

pigtail

or cocktail.

Huzza, Huzza!

EIGHTY-THREE: (83)

A slouch-hatted form now turned his attention to a barn. It lay aslant of the main buildings with a blue-rinsed décor of fine wood – itself somewhat reminiscent of Aston's dreams in *The Caretaker*. Without good habits, then, its vista looked back to the farmhouse... in a situation where the latter spread out towards some yellow bliss. Above it an azure sky fell sheer – if only to rendezvous with yesterday's diagonal of cloud. While roundabout his reddened tread, perchance, a brown sandy plain swept away. It rose to a hillock due east of here... at least when taken against a gate's lost enclosure. Nonetheless, Harlequin Thoomey has been thinking throughout all of these moments: "Numerous signs of an unsteady or speedy departure rise uppermost. Like castanets, they clack their presence from the ground. Since – as the Red Indians designate – a thousand-and-one dirt hints at such a silence. Each voice then knows its serpent's tread... irrespective of Roland Barthes' semiotic. Clearly, our kidnapped family left in a hurry – and by dint of their horses' noise and snorts. Warily, this tale's Pinkerton invigilator peers into the stable. Minutes pass by greedily, but he takes his time.

EIGHTY-FOUR: (84)

Lift Spenser Wingate had already run across this Freeze in order to reach his brethren on the snow. Can you foretell the outcome,

O astrologer? Because he lay prone upon a snowdrift *avec* a spindle or a trail of mist rising from his snout. Nor did this come at all unbidden – especially given the absence of eyelets in his sockets (discernibly so). Upside-down he sprawled (now) and this was plus a tooth-pick in his guillotined fist. A strand of ice-crystals which were merely heralded thereby (sic) then separated a horizontal zig-zag or a distinction between planes. Whereas – above Axon Tree – his brother’s hand patted consolingly at the body. “Who’s cut at that tree’s roots?”, he buzzed. No answer came back from such retreating turf as this. Meanwhile, the sky which levelled off at a Kelvin horizon (*per se*) came to screen a magenta deluge that was pin-pointed with white. Possibly... if we took this information sideways-on then Axon Tree wore a mask. It moved momentarily from an alternate dimension --- self-reflexively --- and this manifested itself by two enormous eyes. They gleamed like bronze discs or pewter plates; when taken together with misshapen teeth, a saurian muzzle and straw-like hair. This vision laughed uncontrollably. “Heed Lombroso’s warning”, it whinnied or peeled, “crime does not pay. When you consider it, look what happened to me...”

EIGHTY-FIVE: (85)

A smidgeon of smoke cadenced in one zone’s alternative... For – even when Toblerone moved down to its holder – we can see a fivefold extension. This was an example of Lambert and Butler... rather understandably. When we consider that each cigarette came to be stubbed out on glass; a process which was itself laden with duty if it comes to heavy ware. Up and down her fingers went – while depositing a fresh stub or ash-end in the receptacle. An ebon screech also accompanied such a descent... whilst her lips moved convulsively throughout. “My husband, let’s comment upon an Oeuvre’s *nihilism*. Why don’t we choose to look at Antonia Saura’s *Crucifixion* (?) – at least when rendered in oil and gouache on paper, and commenting on a crucial Western pictograph. It indicates a meaningless retrospective; in that it posits nothing but existential *angst*. But

that's not in an obvious way like the 'fifties artist Buffet, no... Because Saura's marking continues an inconstancy; it denies narrative; it rejects preconfiguration or the cartoon. Each daub then leads to indeterminacy's constellation – especially given modernism's fear of affirmation. It twists and turns on a knife's direct statement (thereby). Such solipsism loathes directness and it reeks of bourgeois evasion. What began – somewhat inevitably – as a social protest in paint against representation has ended up as corporate wall-paper. All of which is due to cowardice, funk, cultural deterioration, *ennui* and exhaustion. Occidental high culture has lost its nerve – hence its capacity for aleatory improvisation.” “But surely it's without a theme or is otherwise lacking a narrative: i.e., an arabesque on which meaning can recur.” “Abundantly so, a thought precedes its marking and not the reverse. If you insist on an improvised crucifixion --- triadically after Cimabue --- you won't achieve it.” “Yet what about Francis Bacon, say?” “Ah, there you have a prognosis that veers into mendacity.” “Explain...” “A modernist imprecation in the working returns to an Object regardless. He paints from the mark – yet rejects abstraction in order to recompose an image.” “In other words, he reaches through non-determinacy to meaning – primarily by a skull's efflorescence.” “Are you saying that he had an icon in mind... no matter how dimly?” “That's right: since his duologues with David Sylvester conceal a point.” “Which is?” “It's the extent of his use of drawing --- or mimesis --- prior to modernist technique. He betrayed ultra-modernism, even at its apogee, by prefigurement. In this context, then, the utilisation of Velasquez's portrait of Pope Innocent X or Blake's death mask were *canards*. They hinted at a recognised intent.” “Being?” “He understood graphic art's limitations... somewhat necessarily. By rejecting abstraction's inner logic – he notated a cautionary realism. Thus, as Lord 'Grey' Gowrie intimated, his was a conservative revolutionary art. Beyond it stands the silent film and graphic novel; and he probes farther forwards so as to return.” “Why?” “Because – in Suzie Gablik's words – modernism has failed.”

Momentarily then, our mountebank bursts through one of Fontana's canvases or dead screens. He embodies the spirit of Carter's of Maidenhead. They are a steam-fair assemblage or mechano company. 'BANG!', he successfully breaks this palimpsest.

Buggery

sodomy

paederasty

dung:

Bacon's had a run

what fun

to fire Zoophilia from a gun!

EIGHTY-SIX: (86)

Our hero's sombrero'd head peers round a door – now that he's become aware of what creeps amid boulders. His hand is convulsed towards ochre under a midday sun – what with a sapphire brilliance overhead. "A possibility may have escaped me, though", Harlequin mused. "This family's capture – rather like an Attic bull, could be close at hand. Supposing they haven't left at all... what then? Similarly, I have to be alert for traps or snares – like pregnant wires laid across entrances or linked to dynamite some paces beyond." Suddenly – atop some brownish dirt – his spurred boots come up against a trip-wire. It seems to be made from sullen grey cloth, plus a sweeping naples yellow at distant points. All in a moment – his boots are gleaming in the haze, Thoomey's shadow zig-zags and the booby-trap snaps. Didn't the U.S. defence department in Vietnam dub them anti-personnel devices? (They even published manuals about them which were laminated in bleached titanium and called *Unconventional Warfare*).

EIGHTY-SEVEN: (87)

A hundred years further on and in the late twentieth century, perforce, a white-gloved hand squeezes around Lift Spenser

Wingate's throat. AARG! Seemingly, it has come from nowhere – but, in actuality, this disembodied mitten had lain underneath Axon Tree's body. Hurrah! It struck like a cobra or a rattle-snake – thereby uncoiling *a la* Vishnu in one of his incarnations. Immediately then, a pressure-point was located underneath Wingate's ruff and adjacent to his neck's tendons. A loud 'snick' is heard – itself pursuant to a snapping armature... while Spenser's arm sticks out perpendicularly. It enjoins one of Anthony Gormley's sculptures in its frozen grace. Aren't they cast from his own anatomy – albeit after the Angel of the North's exemplum? Again, Lift Wingate's mouth dropped like a portcullis or a mediaeval gateway... whilst trailing rheum. (This latter froths to a close once the bell sounds for last orders). Both his eyes – though – stare maniacally into the distance or its twilight: and each orb looks dead, mesmerised, seized upon or hermetic. They illustrate fish-eyes in a taxidermic specimen like a bloater or a carp, roe, pike, skate and electric eel. Nor does a meta-sculpture by Damien Hirst come to mind... Whereupon – and above Lift Spenser Wingate's tonsure – an ultra-marine sky rises aslant. It happens to be dotted with frozen ice-crystals which festoon the day. Also, a lone tree cries out adrift of plumage and its trunk seems to be half-buried in drifts.

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Adrift or throughout all of this Axon Tree's corse lies vacantly in space. Lumps of snow cover it over now and our zombie's eyes lack retinas. They plague any Whiteness with themselves. For all the world they embody those sluice gates that characterise a doll; i.e., a Victorian effigy with marbles. These are its eyed sockets (mechanically speaking). Perhaps a profound silence characterises this vista. It hangs over Tiresius' wasteland.

EIGHTY-EIGHT: (88)

In our personnel's unconscious, however, Toblerone Harpie and Harlequin Thoomey debate like two ol' Cogers from the eighteenth century. Isn't this the inner meaning of our *Dramatis Personae*? Above all else, Toblerone looks down towards the

floor or its tiles... whereon she spies those cards thrown by Old Man Smithers. Each one has to be a personality index that's devoted to itinerant clan members. Moreover, her cheeks are slightly flushed with a dulcet or Burne Jones tone when assessing these plates. Could their resources amount to story-boards which were painted on bamboo by Kurosawa in Japanese cinema? Still, mascara streams down a maiden's flushing cheeks – with each line radiating a constellation or a New Wave gyroscope. She holds her hands in front of one bodice too far. "Listen, if we take Mario Merz's *Untitled* as at all relevant... then its reverse adds nothing to our graffiti even if signed. Mark it – the painting of this void becomes more evident than ever (though)." "Do you register Samuel Beckett's codex – in his *Dialogue with Georges Duthuit* – where he talks about colouring nothingness? He relates it quite insistently to Bram van Velde's *Oeuvre*; but it applies more generally." "Yes, a viduity or a commingling with nullity... that's what he requires. Certain fellow travellers at *Transition*, the avant-garde magazine, thought his rants might damage van Velde." "How so?" "Oh, merely over whether it could harm his painterly desires --- van Velde being an innocent or naïf, turpentine excepted." "But Beckett's *Not I* lacks the viscera of Wyndham Lewis' *Physics of the Not Self*... it just advocates nihilism tout court." "Possibly – yet one has to side with Stirner here: since the true nihilist might have to reject his views as an affirmation." "He could still approach it in stages (though) after Beckett's affidavit in *Comment C'est*." "How it is, in English, as an attempt at a positive statement, you mean...?" "Verily, thou hast said it: where sub-human creatures move forwards agonisingly in mud's plenitude... like Bim and Bom. They are situated on a plenitude of melting earth, you see. It must be a version of Dante's fifth Circle of Hell, and by the lights, no love!" "Beckett dredged it up from his unconscious or reserve – primarily in terms of an artistic stream of consciousness." "To prove what?" "Why, just the fact which says that writing was totally autonomous – if not automatic." "Again, to what end?" "I don't know... possibly so we can say that silence is marginalised

or excluded, or even a note's left like 'Kilroy's been here'." "It makes a difference?" "Indisputably, certainly to a theorist like Theodore W. Adorno who dedicated his marxist *Aesthetic Theory* to Beckett. He rallied around a sub-utopian deconstruction in a situation whereby modernism, in its hermeticism, resisted absorption." "Into whatever else?" "The bourgeois spectacle – one presumes. Because all of these figures – when using their artistic antennae in Ezra Pound's phrase – despair at Western civilisation. They are its culture's after-echo, embers, false rage, misplaced anxiety or turds. Each one of these writers – Beckett, Pinger, Trocchi, Rechy, Bayer, Hubert Selby Junior, Kerouac, B.S. Johnson, Burroughs, Leonard Cohen and Acker – believe it's all over." "It is now... with them. What they misunderstood was that radical experimentation is Art's research and development... or R&D. We have basically chosen to reach modernism's *minima moralia* or nadir; it's in eclipse." "When you can go no farther forwards, where shall we go?" "Back..."

Meantime, our clown rocked one way and then another on an available hobby-horse. HEE-YAH!, he panted – if only to himself. May his rocking-horse be a trojan mare on stilts and beholden to some tensile wood? His lord-'n'-master besported a Ricardo's mask – plus a red nose, rubbery lips and roseate cheeks. A curl or twirl of black wig circled this blanched pate.

*Nothing's a bore, a store, a four, a core, a pore: even a Law.
Nowt'll come of it: speak again.
Even Lear's Fool knew as much...*

EIGHTY-NINE: (89)

The barn exploded in a sound's cornucopia or the colours of many rainbows as yet unlit. Its roof – inverted to a V's constellation – burst off; primarily so as to inundate Greek Fire with incandescent pitch. Given to boiling it was: especially when we recall that this molten ichor was used in mediaeval sieges. Hurrah!, bolts or flaming tropes lift off like crazed fire-works

zig-zagging to the heights... somewhat inebriately. An enormous “BLAAM!” is then heard; thence registering a prairie’s after-shock or an earthquake roundabout. The whole barn shuddered as a consequence – together with subsidiary walls giving way pursuant to a version of Memling’s ‘Hell’. Or its transcription leavens to a baked offering... with each inferno reaching down to a pastel’s boiling and tumult. All considered, then, a colourful medley interchanged every which way: plus a tincture of lemon’s yellow meeting azo in terms of cadmium or brilliant crome. Truthfully, what are we to make of indo orange when it morphs into pink’s portrait? Alternately, red’s cadmium enters quinacridone by means of naphthol. Can you see? Whilst permanent rose adjusts to alizarin’s crimson. Will it permeate or violate magenta as well?

NINETY: (90)

A century’s proceeds continue to adorn us, however, now that vengeance leaps apace with a fistful of dollars. (Most remarkably, when we consider Alan Moore’s graphic novel and film, *V for Vendetta*). Alienated from this, though, Harlequin Thoomey fastens Lift Spenser Wingate in a death-grip. They compulsively hit permafrost together amid the reigning dye of such a brilliant White! Our avenging angel, the Pinkerton, had hidden under one scragged corse – if only to tempt another moth towards its flame! Yessir: both of our emblematic villains have fallen and their eye-sockets are without retinas in Gaza. Moreover, these two rag-dolls have aberrant knives... each one of which stands still as poniards in the haze. Beneath this tide lurks some French Blue; whereas a sarcophagus really comes out to meet our speed merchants. It consists of a zig-zagging course *vis-à-vis* various polar regions... almost like a grave looming beneath them and this is no matter how outside Time. Peace be unto you... For the snowy scalp which exists above this frigid earth has been opened up so as to refute Turgenev’s centrism. A wilful silence supervenes over everything again, since in such

quietude there lies a pitiless justice. Isn't Harlequin Thoomey – by way of another incarnation – an angel of righteous wrath?

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Behind him a great oak spreads its icy boughs... no matter what esplanade continues to be ploughed on beneath the surface. There's no route out of here, my friend! Because with those fallen skewers or blades, Harlequin cuts out their hearts and holds them aloft. Blood then showers or sprays a redundant mountain nearby. He laughs heartily or uproariously, and his cachinnation reverberates on the frosty air. Whereupon – through much ice-mist like this – he displays two aortic jellies to a Grey Eminence beyond. Wotan would have approved. What does Odin declare in an imaginary *Edda* as yet unwritten (?): if a man comes against thee, cut off his head, and place it on a stockade adjacent to your blood clan!

NINETY-ONE: (91)

Still, the brazen unconsciousness of our characters continues apace. For beneath Toblerone's feet a spread of art-cards litters a carpet's surface – itself dense with imagined almonds. Do you detect their light? Anyway, her toes, under a taut black skirt, rest naked on this pile or its accustomed weave. It began here – somewhat necessarily – even though her demeanour rejects a hippy's charge. Nor do the names bohemian, yuppie, alternative society monger *et al*, account for this change-sheet. Possibly a follower of R. D. Laing would be more accurate a toast – viz. in a designation's terms has she tied herself in *Knots*? “*Ecoutez moi*, if we take one of Albert Loudén's works sold by Sotheby's in July 1998 as a bench-mark... then it feeds directly into Jean Dubuffet's topic of *Art Brut* or raw art: the nature of which impacts directly on insanity.” “You're intimating that *Appealing Nude*, for instance, is the product of a diseased mind?” “Not necessarily: it's merely a converse dialectic or lesion, since modernism affects or introduces interiority.” “But without Bosch's instantiation or insight, because his *genius maudit* or phantasia has more to do with High Catholicism than the

Maudsley hospital.” “Evidently, if one tacks against representation then one has to go inwards – thereby penetrating farther into a twilight zone. Do you recall those phrenological head-pieces cast in china clay or tough resin, and indicating one’s moods? Well! in Louden’s case the nude is tremulous, buttock-clenching, roundabout, elongated and serpentine. It moves abreast of transverse planes – the latter indicated by lines of flood and bar.” “Do you readily articulate it thus?” “So-so, yet our basic point has to be its insistence. For one of modernism’s secrets was that it originated from mania, alienation, *anomie*, catatonia and instability. Emotional bipolarity necessitates the creation of new images (you see).” “Could they have been seen before?” “Not once but twice: since psycho-art has made a cult of Antonin Artaud. It crucifies the surreal --- primarily into the more surrealistic. It becomes a matter of David rather than Paul Gascoyne. Furthermore, in Anais Nin’s *Diaries* Artaud’s eating habits are digested, but this need not concern us. What convinces us has to be modernity’s magic camera – i.e., its introversion or dream-time.”

Toblerone Harpie puts on a Harlequin’s mask and sings:~

*Louden’s in the dock
what luck
heedless of Spock
frig a duck!*

*Obese women abound
or run aground
as items found
on castration’s sound.*

NINETY-TWO: (92)

Amidst an all-consuming flame a distant curlicue or figurine shifts across our vision. He emerges from a holocaust of dots – only then to smooth his passage through Fate’s wilderness.

Mayhap, this *Shoah* evinces a horse's bewilderment or distress, but any confusion suffices under a collapsing roof. Similarly, to adapt those lines from Tennyson, flame existed to his left, fire to his right, pitch *avaunt* and bellowing flames before... and yet into death's valley rode the six hundred. Still more ardently, then, a blue-dappled stallion emerges at pace with a dust-cloud cleaving to its hind quarters. Whilst another horse steals the show and it's limned in dun ochre. It succeeds in cannoning into a wooden bulwark before driving off in Farmer Jones' direction. Do you remember skimming the pages of *Animal Farm*? Needless to say, a flame-sheet boosts its own Glory --- primarily by roaring and bellowing prior to extinguishment. Past all sense of muster, though, Harlequin Thoomey broke cover from this furnace with a torrent of ingots caroming around him... somewhat incandescently. His physiology then blurs or finds itself shot through with orange... all of it seemingly abreast of Dante's fifth circle. Whereupon – and amid caracoling sparks – he emerges carrying a foal. The young animal is shaking with terror. Perturbation quivers in every one of its limbs, but Harlequin doesn't share it.

NINETY-THREE: (93)

Our twentieth century Thoomey has become aware of certain facts now. One of which happens to be the inner mind-set or delirium of two despatched criminals: namely Axon Tree and Lift Spenser Wingate. They both dreamt similar purgations by way of appearance. For – when he slew them – a joint reel passed through their brain-pans... respectively speaking. It consisted of a giant or malignant toad which was reminiscent of Hans Christian Anderson's fables. This amphibian or flip-flop lay atop their chests... whilst everything else became elongated and spectral. Occasionally the scaly opened its mouth in order to reveal Old Man Smithers held by a circular tongue. He cried out in bewilderment and fear: "AIIIEE!" But suddenly the frog's ambit alters significantly and Axon sees his image reflected in its face instead of a crazy kermit. To either catatonia's left or right

he notices a graveyard's perch – what with the necessary appurtenances, crosses and gates. Who is to say that it doesn't register Stoke Newington's exercise in the Gothic... at least by way of an abandoned ossuary? Look up, look up Spenser Wingate and play the game! Miraculously though, our web-foot climbed aboard Wingate's chest and its orbs stared blankly, retinaless or without a flicker of emotion. There seemed to be no front or back-brain activism whatsoever here. Yet it started to speak up instantaneously. "Axon and Lift, my errant children, you're surplus to requirements", gurgled the frog. "This storyboard no longer enjoins you.

*Dead, dead, dead
in the head
no need to wed
or smartly bed
+
Kiss, kiss, kiss
be sure to miss
a princess
all's amiss
what bliss!"*

Could our toad of Toad Hall – in no matter how thin-lipped a way – be waiting on Toblerone Harpie? So that one peck on the cheek might transform him into Harlequin Thoomey. Isn't it a matter of glandular transference, thereby?

NINETY-FOUR: (94)

Our two personifications – who reckon on the rubric of Toblerone Harpie and Harlequin Thoomey – continue their Platonic dialogue about the nature of Western art. Partly to fill in the time, my friends, the Pinkerton's wife gets down on her knees. She folds both legs beneath a short black-skirt and starts to collect some art cards. Previously they had been strewn about across a carpet rare... or were these plates really ink-spot tests

from psychoanalysis? May such a rebus mimic a display of mania? “To confirm this prognosis, however, we notice that modernist art refutes film’s trajectory”, our female counterpart wondered aloud. “All of which relates to Cindy Sherman’s photographs”, he replied. “Don’t they stimulate a needle-point; primarily in order to hint at unmade flicks?” “Possibly, but cinema has taken fine art’s narrative role – why deny it? This, in turn, created a crisis for intellectual representation which forced it inside the mind. Various interior monologues then grew up --- themselves the equivalent of Beckett’s oldsters in bins.” “You refer to the Irish nihilist’s *End Game*, where, as in Behan’s *Queer Fellow*, a sensory deprivation chamber waxes dumb and blind. Surely it’s a pre-emptive strike at super-realism? A playlet within which these characters masquerade as a freak-show – as contained in a black box after a nuclear exchange... mutually assured destruction and all that.” “The dark livery of its cube, you mean? For this pin-hole camera lacks an aperture to reverse the plate through. But nonetheless, it tracks a sadistic short-cut to Horst Bienek’s *The Cell* or Hubert Selby Junior’s *The Room*.” “Look at it this way: stop or freeze any frame in a von Stroheim film – irrespective of its black-and-white status and a mono soundtrack after digital remastering. Doesn’t it then look like an Old Master? Let’s consider the scene in *Queen Kelly* – where a Ruritanian maiden is whipped downstairs by a Queen of Hearts. Or alternatively, what about the degenerate depiction of Tully Marshall in the unfilmed *Poto-Poto*... when he plays Yan Vrenen? Examine also – my friends – the mock-crucifixion with Nicki and Mitzi in bed on either side of Cecilia’s corpse. This occurs in Part II of *The Wedding March* known as ‘The Honeymoon’. A large, fleshy, Tridentine crucifix lolls between them – it outdoes even Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*. Finally, we ought to look at Mae Murray in *The Merry Widow*... whereupon, in a wedding gown, she passes across a pellucid floor on which has been traced a zodiac. Her virginal status is soon contrasted with the polar bear-skin beneath her feet.

On either side of Toblerone's head, though, two reflective clown faces gather their chins. As time marches on their resemblance to wood-cuts becomes more and more pronounced.

*Film's no restraint
it's taken away paint
by heedless complaint
but no real constraint*

+

T'ain't it so, boss?

NINETY-FIVE: (95)

Back in an exploding stable during the nineteenth century Harlequin charges forth horse-in-hand. He has rescued a miniature horsy from a fiery oblivion or limbo... and do you recognise what's afoot? Since his figure comes wrapped up in a flaming rapture – together with a foal who's slung across either shoulder. Even the very ground rises around him in pitch – as liquid fire embraces its make-belief! Only its earthen quality retrieves it from utter chaos... whereby a horse's blue hooves cascade in the foreground. Does it speak to that German art movement, *Die Blaue Reiter*, which once dwelt on sapphire yearlings? Or may they wallow in the shallows with each passing facet: whether this be cerulean, ultramarine, cobalt or French? It proved to be the sea-green quality that suffices or over-reaches itself. Anyway, Harlequin Thoomey emerges from this steaming bubble... particularly when abreast of a door-frame's kaleidoscope that tilts to the side. A young horse --- still alive --- quivers around his head --- whilst yellow and red tracery licks at a nearby pyre. It continues to soar above all other offerings.

+

One factor becomes obvious now – at least in Pinkerton Thoomey's refraction of the real. It betrays no other anxiety than this; especially in features which are pink going on purple and founded on red. Let's see: it definitely intimates that Smithers' gang care nought for animals; and their welfare leaves them cold

amidst such blazes or scorch. Have they read Savitri Devi's *Impeachment of Man*, perchance?

NINETY-SIX: (96)

A century further on we notice that various icicles fill the sky... many of them re-interpreting H.P.Lovecraft's anti-god Nyarlathotep. It (the heavens) lie haphazardly across certain myths which pertain to a Frost Giant's daughter. She hasn't consulted these rivulets running down the rock or pursuant to likely runes. Rather... all of the available Smithers' gang – Old Man, Blackbird Leys, Pond Granite, Rapacious Quicksilver, Egghead Morgan and Low Termagant – have adopted an Indian file. They are strung out like penicillin in darkness... albeit when moving towards iced-water's transparency. Old Man Smithers went ahead – merely attached to his brethren by an invisible rope – and masking the drifts or proving insufficient to a day! In this uncertain way, then, one ounce of anti-freeze mushroomed a conscience or its duty: when refusing anxiety and not embracing what Emile Durkheim called *anomie*. Surely none of these gangsters can be aware that sociology began with his study on suicide in the nineteenth century? Similarly, these heavy drifts mantled towards blueness – while leering at a waste's expectancy. For a moment Toblerone Harpie is thrust ahead of them and comes attached by a halter to Blackbird Leys. Thus, each pillar in an interconnected column feels a need of some support. Because – like Doric pediments – they move to substantiate Indigo Jones', Christopher Wrens' and Nicholas Hawksmoor's architecture... it always bleeds out to a lost beginning (no matter how resultantly). Even though – and igloo-like – it can only exhibit a degree of salience through upturned snow. Will one see its devastation overturned... leastways in our lifetime? Regardless of any of this, however, the odd sapling sprouted from frost-bite or levelled off against tundra under mercurial locks like these. Meanwhile, a magenta horizon brooded over sleet's form or its ready impact. Yesssss... no icy sludge can really stop a slippage towards burning in an aftermath

of books. (At least if we want to understand Ray Bradbury's inner logic in his s.f. novel *Fahrenheit 451*: the temperature at which pages light. Incidentally the film of this work – directed by Truffaut and possibly occurring under Lucien Rebatet's eyes – has a fascist aesthetic. Understandably then, elitism must take a pride in its forms...)

NINETY-SEVEN: (97)

Our Punch and Judy confab or dialectic continues apace in another dimension. Most particularly... when the two protagonists who visit silently happen to be Toblerone Harpie and her husband, Harlequin Thoomey. But where is the baby? Any road up, Toblerone has collected the cards or brochures, and she holds them to her stomach in a prim fashion. "But what of primitivism's connexion to modernism", she avers, "as concerns a savage teleology or mirror?" "Rather than a necessarily primaeval mind, you follow? Well! it all relates to the pace of an outsider's onrush or speed. Because Dubuffet's concept of *Art Brut* – somewhat imponderably – demarcates possibilities from the outside in. It happens to be elemental. It also indicates a provender of alienation, mania, mysticism, drug usage, perversion, desperation and lycanthropy. Let's consider, for example, Antonio Saura's *Madonna* in its bleary paint. May it articulate uncleanness' role (?); and this was possibly within a dithyramb that pursues no sound." "Most particularly, the articulation of freakishness hints at its observance... hence one registers modernism's obsession with low, carnie and mass culture. A hint of Grand Guignol, *en passant*, has much to do with an itinerant modernity... do you see? One only had to think of Picasso's harlequins, de Chirico's *commedia della' arte*, Lewis' Bestre amid Flemish *Wild Bodies*, Ensor's masks, Walton and the Sitwell's *Façade*, Jim Dine's 'car crash', 'sixties and 'seventies happenings, Schwarzkogler's mummy swathed in bandages, morph sculptures like *Death of a Hippie*, Actionism, La Fura dels Baus' negative circus, Arnulf Rainer's *Kopf* or Niki de St. Phalle's *Le Poete et sa Muse*. An endless scroll can unfold –

quite easily – before one’s gaze.” “Didn’t B.S. Johnson, an English post-modernist, speak of a list’s sanctity?” “Thou hast said it...”

Talking of a clown’s *desiderata*, my friends, our death-mask limps before us in some subdued light. Its coils form a comedian’s architrave when seen from the side... wherein a red nose remains bulbous throughout. He warbles the following:

Hippy
yippy
happy
choppy
dippy, weepie, zippy: pip, pip!

Our roisterer opens his arms wide to impart the following. “According to Doctor Berg in his two volume work *The Sadist*, a loon provokes an erection by hanging himself! His case study was Kurten, you know, the murderer upon whom Fritz Lang modelled *M*.”

NINETY-EIGHT: (98)

Harlequin’s Pinkerton noticed a speck in the distance when he turned from a flaming affray. It reflected askance or in terms of entrapment – after those holes in shutters which Sir Isaac Newton used. Do you recall this? He initiated optics all on his lonesome – basically by refracting light-beams through prisms in his Cambridge set. Thoomey mused about this for a second before dismissing it from his mind. But what he spied intrigued him... since the barn burnt like a lofty pyre: especially when reminiscent of a viking’s cremation or the penultimate scene in *Beowulf*. To whit: the decaying shed spat forth its juices and spurts – much after the frequency of Domenico Gnoli’s painting *Desk*. A roseate glow surrounded its timbers and caused them to rear up, pulsate, froth, rise, swell and scrawl. In comparison to this, however, Harlequin Thoomey’s features were limned in

light blue... but some mortal origami sufficed, since his nethermost portals waxed rather ebon. Let's be clear about this: looking up and spying a light under a gibbous moon an optical spasm shot across the valley. It passed straight through a Pinkerton's iris... only then to invert off the eye-ball's back prior to jiggling itself aright. In this incident, then, our vigilante knew that this incendiary handiwork was overseen – probably by a pair of military field-glasses. After all, weren't the men he pursued ex-soldiers from Lincoln's Grand Army? One doesn't really need to peruse William R. Brock's *Conflict and Transformation* to ascertain it. No – because an outcrop at the valley's head or cusp reflects a glass (instantaneously). At last... he has detected the Smithers' gang! They are all up there – merely shrouded in violet and distant from the moon's effulgence.

+

Furthermore, abstractly tall pines kept still continuously... each one as straight as a pikestaff or a toy soldier. While a granite or pumice cliff lies over to the right-hand side. The essential zodiac, though, happens to be this: Old Man Smithers' *cosa nostra* --- plus any hostages they have seized --- are holed up in a pine cabin. It was situated on a stony bluff way up in Oregon's sky and at a cleft's summit. Why, back in Eugene they'd called it Scaramouch's Fort... presumably after the character with the elongated neck in Punch and Judy. Isn't he an extension of this puppet theatre's clown, Joey?

NINETY-NINE: (99)

All of our fleeing desperadoes – as well as a trapped female spider – adopt a single file. They walk into an oncoming blizzard or its hail storm. Necessarily then, conversation between members of our Comus' Rout dribbles on inconsequentially. Despite all of this, Toblerone Harpie and Blackbird Leys Dingo strike up the band. Don't you know that it's good to talk? "Why are we continuing this furlough... if only to progress into sundry griefs later on? Your brethren or comrades, Axon Tree and Lift Spenser Wingate, have yet to return to us. But still our march

into desperation and across a skull's vista tempts various slaughters. Do you wish no other life than this, Leys? It vexes fate and avails you nought from these runes at sunset. Can you be anything other than carrion, my boy? Look at this now – for it helps to foreshorten a nightmare. Let's imagine you're contained in a toga which is died orange and that exists inside a metal drawer or its envelope. Yes, it acts upon a sheath or one of its torpedoes is found to be enclosed in a medical thriller by Robin Cook. Is this aught your utility marches towards – only then to be trundled forth on castors like a truckle-bed so as to serve Loki's patriarchy?" "Enough wench, your tongue moves like a metronome in the head. Learn to curb its excesses... To facilitate which – why don't you look upon Old Man Smithers' or Pa's face? In repose it stifles debate through self-congratulation – while its inner nature chooses to recoil when more actively engaged. A critical Guardian Angel, then, when weighing perdition's souls would see his miscued eyes, rank breath, toothlessness and didicoi status. We wish ta rape 'n' kill, see? For in our hatred we depict ugliness and a wolverine's perfume. Indeed – amongst ourselves – debility cautions against unborn cancers!"

+

"Any path... Axon and Wingate must take a chance on their future course. If they don't make it then one will slay and cook the other! Didn't divinity once hear Abel's blood calling to him from the earth – especially when pursuant to Durer's *Cain*? Make amends for it now: either they catch us up or we die here --- including you."

ONE HUNDRED: (100)

A fog of unknowing curls around dreams and it poisons the loftiness of hitherto mentioned conceits. Toblerone gazes sharply at her spouse – while a Bishop moves diagonally across their aesthetic lustre or chess board. "To be true, we must return to a prior dialectic in order to dislodge its facts. Remember when we compared silent cinema to Old Masters in particular? What

gestures do you stylistically encode?” “Well! the venus in furs deportment in *Queen Kelly* speaks of some former tropes... Let us first consider the dead Christ supported by angels which eventuates from the Lombard School in the fifteenth century. (Whereas Max Nordau’s degeneration theory might then cut across three correspondences at once). The first is Pedrini’s *Salome with the Head of St. John the Baptist*... wherein a tough-minded nymph besports decapitation and it happens to be reminiscent of a medusa in Bram Stoker’s *Lair of the White Worm*. Similar echoes can be seen in the brassy *Herodias’ Daughter* by Piombo or they reappear – when redoubled with lightness’ macabre – in Cesare de Sesto’s *Salome*. In it a dulcet Kate Moss steals immodesty’s show and this is without heroin’s touch... whereas an obedient servant holds up a rind whether it’s headless or baptismal. Needless to say, a classic touch reinvigorates Christianity by fusing pagan truth to it (primarily).” “May we denote a sacrifice, though, in terms of von Stroheim’s Calvary?” “Most persuasively, since numerous cavalcades indicate a Golgotha or an unhindered ossuary. Let us also examine Dali’s *Passion* in its prior or reverse perspective. For – in Pollaiuolo’s template – we will be able to detect St. Sebastian’s martyrdom... but over a naked Christology we shall have to look at Castagno’s *Crucifixion* (or possibly Giovanni Bellini’s *Pieta* and Mansueti’s *Symbolic Representation of the Crucifixion* suffice). Yet again, Matteo Di Giovanni’s *St. Sebastian* stirs a blood-pot... whilst Pesellino’s crux, Raphael’s version and Niccolo da Foligno’s triptych avoid any gore whatsoever. They indicate a sacrificial serenity.” “Innocence, my husband, what of that?” “Take your pick: we can have numerous examples of the Madonna and child by Pintoricchio, Romanino, Signorelli, Tura, Previtali *et al*... and even Reni’s *Magdalene* achieves double-top in this darts game!” “Who can fathom a clown to sing it – particularly after Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Topsy Turvy*? No way: because Longhi’s *Rhinoceros* won’t exhibit at Ricardo’s big top.”

*Weave some rope, let's hope,
don't mope, we'll cope...*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-ONE: (101)

“HOOO-EEE-YAAH! Will you look at that burning out-house”, cooed Old Man Smithers. A pair of military-issue binoculars lay before his slits and they reflected mayhem in their discs. For the barn stood out twice-over on the glass – primarily so as to reposition a holocaust which came astride of infinity. All of this occurred in a scenario where fire lifted from its roof – thence going straight up in a line. Looking out, though, Smithers’ hands were entwined with felt gloves... and their colour was fawn or light brown, and they steadied each lens. Whereas a pale green effulgence – whether pearlescent or emerald in hue – limned his background. But our gang-leader has already started to speak: “A grave salutation meets such a fate, my children! Our pursuing Pinkerton – hired by destructive agents – is now kaput. Obviously, he’s gone down beneath our blades or poniards. Aye, so must all perish who brook dissent like this. Truly, no-one may challenge one’s propinquity or gene line; and pity’s answer breeds a new enslavement. Remember – in accordance with Cocteau’s novella *Les Enfants Terribles* – that cruelty enhances respect.”

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWO: (102)

Amidst an all-encompassing blizzard our two protagonists, Toblerone Harpie and Blackbird Leys Dingo, continue to converse. Initially, he’d viewed her solely in erotic terms... whether either as a vamp or a corrupta (sic). Hadn’t she pranced before them in a provocative smooch – albeit irrespective of any Kelvin temperatures roundabout? Maybe it’s got to do with a Devilina’s gesture or timing (?)... whereby she resiles aslant his gestures (alternately speaking). Wasn’t she naked, momentarily, save for calf boots, a G-string and brassiere? While a purple cloak which was itself edging into a silvery lining stretches away like a mantle behind her. Further, her limbs were sheer, brazen,

honey-tanned, athletic and yet aesthetically pleasing. Perhaps – like a von Laban dancer such as Claudia Minne Boyle-Vercryse – she represents a gymnast in light training? (This happens to be artistically speaking, you understand...?) Around her various steps occur and their marbling was characterised by serpents, salamanders, pythons, cobras, side-winders, hippogriffs, copperheads and the like. All that proves to be missing, however, is Mephistopheles or ol' Nick, and he stands to the rear in a manner more reminiscent of LaVey than Goethe. In this vision, then, his conspectus looks crimson, muscular, cross-armed, grinning, George V bearded and Satyriasis-laden. Simultaneously, he also encodes a centaur such as Nessus whom Hercules stuffed with a shirt! Beneath the waist he's a horse, you'll wager or register... and come to think of it: wasn't Anton LaVey Roman Polanski's spiritual advisor on *Rosemary's Baby*? Various skull-heads – or the craniums of forgotten prisoners – surround a Goat of Mendes' hooves. Certainly, it's a far cry from a-madding crowd – let alone Madame Blavatsky's Prometheus or a light-bringer to man. In an eye's flicker – therefore – such female-filled fantasy has gone... whilst Blackbird Leys Dingo recovers the fact that Toblerone Harpie remains now.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THREE: (103)

Heraclitus' notional dialectic continues vigorously in a third dimension. Might it involve a multiple compartment TV; or a screen filled with diverse images like an astronaut and Mickey Mouse? Notwithstanding this, Toblerone Harpie turns towards her husband, Harlequin Thoomey, who exists in the shadows. "Does primitivism enfold modernism's intent?" "Most definitely, beloved, since modernity wished to confront the *fin de siecle's* effeteness with angularity. Hence we are able to detect a needful brutality or a savage effrontery... and surely a *farouche's* wiles confound an overly refined drawing-room? Do we remember Jackson Pollack urinating in Peggy Guggenheim's fire-place? Or, more dexterously, how about Jean Gimpel --- of the gallery-owning family --- writing a tome called *The Cult of Art: Against*

Art and Artists. Yes indeed, primitivism certainly recounts a ‘Blast’ – itself the title of a Vorticist magazine, if you recall. Can Wyndham Lewis, William Roberts, Helen Saunders, Jane Dismorr, Ezra Pound, Eric Wadsworth, *et al*, really manage a robotic furnace by themselves?” “One supposes that they projected a thesis before the advent of Lewis’ antithesis – namely, *The Demon of Progress in the Arts*? By any redoubt, then, Nicholas de Stael hints at a ferocity’s misstatement... if only through a formula’s derangement or ambient void. Undoubtedly, a desire to paint such an impasse tempts viduity above all. It ends up with those Anglo-Irish longueurs which were primarily captivated in Beckett’s *Proust*... a work that double-headed over *Three Dialogues with Georges Duthuit*.” “Yet does de Stael’s deconstruction tempt form away from itself; especially by creating against the piece?” “Maybe – but to what end? A statement’s finality clears it of misprisionment’s charge. If – perforce – art speaks of its purposes in a whispering hermeneutic, then what about life? It betokens formalism not any reduction in content. In this regard, wifelet, Henri Michaux, Serge Poliakoff, Jean-Michel Atlan, Hans Hartung and Nicholas de Stael (just mentioned) are all absence’s barbarians!” “But isn’t that a purely conservative thesis which accords with the *Trousered Ape* by Duncan Williams?” “Of course, yet restoration always misplaces its format or moral croquet, and under such criteria even Monsieur Blot’s neo-baroque harpings won’t provide an answer.” “What shall?” “Very simply, it would have to be an architecture capable of transmitting meaning or philosophy. Let’s end a heuristic motif throughout culture – and in future creativity must escape from a mirror’s semiotic or stopped reproduction.” “By?” “I’ll instruct you: it should further narrative, representation, history, the cartoon, prior intent, illustration and gradually work towards a mark not from it.” “I see.” She shuffled the art-cards in her hands... while refusing to notice a clown’s approach.

Pitter, patter, splash and blather; I’ll throw some paint,

To mark a feint, or make a complaint, by Tapies' taint.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FOUR: (104)

Low Termagant turned away from a night sky before him in the nineteenth century. Like Odin's vacant socket or eye-ball – his vision scanned a horizon without stars. Black indeed was such a trough, but 'Low' grasped these binoculars in either fist. "What if he ain't defunct, Pa?", he whined. (To be truthful, his conversational manner lacked delicacy or finesse, and it trod on a laughing hyena's heels). "Won't that vigilante, the Pinkerton, come a'running with six-guns ablaze or firing at each mouth?" Whilst adjacent to him an oil-lamp illumined bare boards – plus an orange barrel off to the side. Meanwhile, his sire – Old Man Smithers – lay on a bunk with a Bulgarian cigarette wedged between his teeth. Certainly, our *eminence grise's* deportment has altered in the direction of a carpet bagger's delight. Hasn't the cause of Northern Union or reconstruction suffered a reverse in consequence? Because Old Man Smithers was dressed in a cutaway jerkin or cast-off – as afforded by his membership of the Grand Army. Didn't General Sherman once march to a drumming beat through many burning plantations in the deep south? In a cavalcade where amidst flame and rising dust negroes hollered in the night... to make use of Henry Miller's *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*. (Much of this also revives D.W. Griffith's classic film, *Birth of a Nation*). Needless to say, Smithers' tunic wore a light-blue sheen or talc... and upon it a corporal's single stripe appears. A slouch hat then leans forwards on his brow – primarily in order to furnish an apparition. In his hands a pack of playing cards does some business... but what games will he play? Solitaire, snap, whist, bridge, stud poker, blackjack, cribbage, gin rummy etc... all of these can acknowledge a token of pleasure. An Ace of Spades rears prominently – flicked up now by a thumb – while he cuts these lacquered backs. However, Old Man Smithers' torso is limned in red: whether it proves to be scarlet, wine-coloured, roseate, poppy dusted or lotus chomping.

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Suddenly Old Man addresses his errant son in these terms: “Listen up, boy! Maybe that lawman, Harlequin Thoomey, frazzled and fried in our trap... i.e., the one lain with dynamite in a barn down yonder. No-one’s read Papillon’s *Banco* around here, I take it? But, even if we didn’t finish such a manikin, there’s no need to fret, drear one. For we’re well stocked up with vitals like turnips, potatoes, onions, eggs, chicken, beans, coffee and biscuits. Why, it’s over-flowing in its abundance... As to weaponry, *mon ami*, cast your mind back to a video called *Sexy guns & sexy girls*... within which we’ve got long-distance rifles, lugers, a sten and even various automatics. To finish – all I can say is: ‘Mister Pinkerton, come on down!’ Haw!”

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIVE: (105)

Like in either Pirandello’s or de Chirico’s *oeuvre* we find that two manikins are addressing each other. One happens to be female and the other male. Could it be some pretence – no matter how absurd – at Puccini’s Punch and Judy (?) ... you know, he was the character whom English culture once called Porsini. Didn’t he drift across or between dimensions in those dawn days? Even though the notion of Judy’s nagging – except in Cruikshank’s lines – escapes from any conduct’s appraisal. “Take that, you old trout...”, he squeaks via a professor’s swazzle! (Ask a veteran Punchman such as Geoff Felix if you want any more information). “Do you wish to live like a specimen in Gray’s *Anatomy* or jar?”, Toblerone asked. “You’re young and still relatively free. You may have a larcenous and treacherous heart, but so far you’ve only convictions for homicide, rapacity, mendacity, theft, digging up skeletons and playing marbles with their eye-balls, blasphemy, obscenity, tax evasion and narcotics... Why add to it?” “I’m no longer an adolescent...”, Dingo drawled in reply. His face looked vaguely indignant throughout. What was their captive suggesting? While – during this procedure – his features waxed youthful, dewy-eyed, switch-bladed, insolent, truculent and psychopathic

(withal). Little has really changed from before --- by Lombroso's bladder --- and despite phrenology's error a criminal physiognomy exists. Do you recall the adage? Namely, if you place a mirror down a lag's visage or half way across then the left-side stands out. *Touché!* Yet Blackbird Leys Dingo's mange was or remained full-on. It inspected a glass which happened to be grinning, bowler-hatted, toothsome, rat's-tailed, inebriate, jugged, all aglow, sweaty, covered in stubble and sadistically inane. You see, criminality is biological. Like the dissident commissioner's analysis in Julian Barnes' novel about Conan Doyle – it results from alienage or a genetic predisposition to asociality and anger. It runs in families; and it often stems from miscegenation or blood impurity. Late Koestler, Lombroso, Eysenck, Yochelson and Samenow, Wilson and Shockley are much closer to its source than Michel Foucault – an environmentalist. No way: reprobates of this sort were born and not made. Reclamation can occasionally suffice – as the world witnessed in Joseph Beuys' salvation of Jimmy Boyle who later went on to sculpt and write an autobiography. But it's momentary and occasional gravy. For punishment always fits the offence --- it solves all our problems.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SIX: (106)

A debate ensues between our peaceful minions in the fourth dimension outside time – namely Harlequin Thoomey and Toblerone Harpie. She looks back at his graven image; even as a clown's hand looms behind her. “But how can primitivism in the arts be prevented, if your analysis be aright?” “Look at one of Cy Twombly's effusions, for instance. It mulcts out to black and red's impermanence – while summoning up one's headstone. A child would be embarrassed to festoon its necessary gloss! Yet it's not involuntarily primitive or a case of talent's absence... save with an individual like Basquiat. No; it presages exhaustion or a post-industrial repletion: whilst every other insight looms up in a half-formed manner. In this regard, then, a chthonic turn looked for a species of adventure, but it ended up milking its own

silence. It also had to do with undue specialisation at the end of the nineteenth century (primarily speaking). Undue taxonomy appears effete – particularly to insecure minds! Furthermore, in a revolt against late Romanticism a *fin de siecle* decadence finds itself speared.” “By what?” “Bluntly, it has to be a form of classicism come round again in modern guise.” “Does it at all relate to mania or psychopathic art?” “Most assertively, every element of modernism is fuelled by insane aesthetics or the custodianship of outsiders. A phrase which uses the French-language term *Art Brut* – or raw creation – unmediated by culture.” “Outsider art, isn’t it sometimes called?” “Immeasurably so... and it relates to Jean Dubuffet’s theories that emerged from surrealism, Andre Breton’s movement. Yet this theory winds even further back: and it has to do with mystical, Romanesque, cave and other arts... even the example of children’s painting.” “Didn’t Dubuffet daub himself asunder in terms of a Sotheby’s catalogue?” “Rather assuredly, his graffiti has modulated many an auctioneer’s shelving in recent years. Take, *en passant*, a work like *Arena with four People* – it, minus day-glow potato prints, would flatter a four year olds attempt in poster paint. For the whole assemblage relies on a trick... in that it’s knowing in its uncreativity. A half-competent painter wouldn’t have the courage, you see?” “To shame the devil, you mean?” “Infinitely so, although one’s tempted to say – what about Aleister Crowley’s paintings, then?” “Certainly, but we’re talking about serious art-works here... and we allow Augustus John’s pencil-wash of the Great Beast, elderly and in decline, to pass by on the other side.”

Our clown’s grease-paint reflects in Harlequin’s eyes or retinae, and this is despite a shadowy realm lying aft. Has he – perchance – come to terms with himself? Great dollops of chiaroscuro dance on White several leagues away...

*Madness, sadness, catalepsy all around;
Fry some bacon, I’ll be bound!*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SEVEN: (107)

Scaramouch's perch stood vacant in its possession, even though a pale moon raised its disc in effrontery behind it. Moreover, this Oregon sky adopted a deep umbra that waxed towards ultramarine... but was otherwise known as dark blue. How can we describe the rocky outcrop on which the cabin rested? It lay concertina'd over with stratum upon stratum given over to geological tiers; while the granite appears to be post-molten, condensed or even frigidly cool. Could it accord with a title allotted to conservative thought such as *Saturn's Children*? Remember now: this planet's identification with Kronos leads to a self-devouring, a dehiscence or even a cycle of time. Hence the desire to conserve everything in comparison to Goya's autophagy: wherein an all-father eats his brood. (Presumably this is why centre-right thought tends to be pessimistic *a la* Cowling or Scruton).

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But we've interrupted Old Man Smithers' address to his gaggle amidships. "Attend to me: soldiers of love... yeah! No-one can touch us in our redoubt. Why so? Is it because of linguistic harshness... in a manner reminiscent of Robinson Jeffers' *Medea* when freely adapted from Euripides? No sir: it has to do with one's hostages... all of them driven into this corral by Fate! Ain't that so, Pond?" He gestures widely and freely with an open hand – it happened to be coloured French Blue, emotionally speaking. His son replied: "'Tis gospel truth, daddy!"

ONE HUNDRED-AND-EIGHT: (108)

Her face found itself lit up within the warmth created by its glow. Didn't her hand then lead off with a supplicant's gesture? It beckoned upwards and beyond – somewhat after a Renaissance image like Francia's *Madonna and Child with an Angel*. A green sward or wrap surrounded her shoulders... while her reddened mouth, taut cheeks, bottomless eyes and fiery hair... why, doesn't it recall Duccio's school vis-à-vis *The Annunciation*? Or alternatively, may Dosso Dossi's Female Saint come to mind?

Yet also, a contrary image announces its presence: and this has to do with Piombo's version of *Herodias' Daughter*, at once nursing a Baptist's head! Let's examine her semiotic... for wouldn't Jonathan Dollimore consider it to be a power-play which was redolent of revenge tragedy? "Do you want to live like this in the future... always hiding or on the run, eh? Look what your life amounts to – it's just robbing banks and an endless brush with the law... is that it? Think man, a cosmos awaits you – including many beautiful women." (She allows this thought to fly; whereby invention serves as a mother's desire. Or might she have Josef Thorak's sculpture *The Judgement of Paris* in mind? It happens to draw on a prior example by Niklas Manuel Deutsch. An example within which a stern Paris, naked and pre-eminently male, makes his choice from three muses. All of them are nymphets who play with their hands).

ONE HUNDRED-AND-NINE: (109)

All of a sudden our clown seizes an art-card from Toblerone's grasp. "May I presume, dear lady? Surely one of Miss Jean Brodie's class peruses multiple panels – especially as regards Rinaldo Mantovano's *Rape of the Sabine Women*?" (She gasps 'AAHHH!', but this Raffles has already purloined a silver plate). "I fear", he lisps hysterically, "that your analysis lacks a racial dimension. If I may be so bold, dearie, it refuses to pin a tail on the donkey! Like divers hands – such as Evola, Brown, Yockey, Oliver, Celine, Shaw, Belloc, Eliot, Chesterton, Pound, Barres, Wagner, Devi, Maurras, Rassinier and Shahak – I reject philo-semitism. In the words of Hans Jurgen Syberberg – replete from his epic seven hour movie *Hitler; a German film* – modern Western culture wears a Khazar mask. Unlike the portmanteau covers to Eugene O'Neill's plays, ancient Greek faces have been replaced by something else. No longer Cycladic or blank in their manner, they similarly refuse Doric encryption. Dare one see it? For these coverings or facial screens are no more likely to be oval, lascivious, ormolu, brazen and uncomparisond... now that they have altered themselves from masques of comedy or tragedy

over an Attic gate. Instead, each resembles an Ashkenazic kabuki wherein slit-eyed visages, plus strong nasal projections, hide beneath rabbinical hats.” “But, my lecherous clown, how can you justify your credo?” “Easy, easy”, he jabbers, “all cosmopolitanism engenders formalist dissolution. It melts, deliquesces, deconstructs and breaks down simultaneously. Didn’t Jacques Derrida choose to call it *Prisms*? In any event... to be aesthetically inside and outside a culture (reverse-ways) is to deliver up a worm ouroborous. Do you recognise my image? It involves a serpent being directly cast from a Titaness’ womb or devouring its own tail. Dare we even mention Thetis?” “A miraculous theorem, Glock, yet where be the evidence?”, pondered Thoomey. “I shall instruct you”, cachinnated our prat-faller... who was now raised up to a Ring-master’s heights.

*A painted surd, turd, bird or axial curd
acknowledges nought save Clement Greenberg’s WORD.*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TEN: (110)

Back in nineteenth century Oregon a couple grab hold of one another within a stove’s relevance or hold. It relates to a stone flue which passes across a range of wooden boards – themselves vertically empanelled. Hadn’t they been cut down or presented to the elements? To finish this touch... some tins lie across adjacent shelving or lintel – all of which have been levelled or planed down to one’s earth. A few items of a residual toilet or crockery sprawl on a neighbouring table... while Pond Granite sits across it with a loaded rifle in his lap. Remember now – in this dramaturgy – Old Man Smithers’ off-cut, Blackbird Leys Dingo, has been despatched by a dum-dum or a perforated bullet. Whereas the other retinue are halved or twice devised in their kindred. Each one of these six, *mutatis mutandis*, possesses kin elsewhere or even at a nose’s turn. To make it clear, then, Granite wears Lift Spenser Wingate’s face lifted off his own by way of a mask! Whilst Low Termagant and Egghead Morgan betray a Cycladic covering – what with Rapacious Quicksilver and Axon

Tree looking on amidships. Our Patriarch though, Old Man, remains unchanged from one century to the next. Their captives *are* subtly altered, however. For these glove-puppets come to us as nineteenth century farmers... whether they happen to be male or female. The woman doubles up as Toblerone Harpie – if only by way of a Pre-Raphaelite virgin. Likewise, her man re-interprets a gaunt prairie dweller or hill-billy... despite whatever spin one may put on Biblical ken. Yet his earnest frame is belied by a clown's mask; itself redolent of Chipperfield's or the Russian state circus. He occasionally removes it so as to reveal Harlequin Thoomey's younger version... whereupon, and huddled next to both parents, a young boy peeps out. Periodically, he wears a mini-circus face mask – albeit one that's pulled down for his usage. Could he be Punch and Judy's baby... although suitably tempered by a stick-figure's license? All in all, our tableau invites comparison with a wood-cut or block by the illustrator Clifford Harper. The infant concerned has to be the land-tiller's son --- by the name of Dingo.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-ELEVEN: (111)

In response to Toblerone's 'seduction' or svelte intrigue – Blackbird Leys attempts to ward her off with a blow. He throws out his arm in a perpendicular arch... somewhat after baseball's or cricket's fashion. (Even though we might be talking about French cricket, really). In relation to this negative ballet Harpie stumbles rather... whilst her foot plunges down into the snow's relief or defile. All of these milliseconds we notice that sleet continues to fall during this contretemps. "Temptress – Xenobia, Lilith, Hecate, Tanith, Jezebel, Herodias' daughter, Lulu, Semiramis, Pabst's *Blue Angel*, Devilina, Circe, Aphrodite, the Nereids, Sirens and Echidna. Begone from behind my left-side, you're trying to inveigle me away from my family!" (A bizarre echo here – a factor which is more redolent of Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers' and Listeners' Association than a banned film like *Scum*).

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But one factor remains dissociative – above all else – and this has to do with our Harpie’s motivations. For she has seen her husband busily creeping from the forest and intent on revenge. The trunks – accustomed to a dark firmament recalling Algernon Blackwood’s *The Man Who Loved Trees* – screen his approach. Moreover, his forelimbs are outstretched – plus the reality of blanched hands like a music-hall *artiste* or a magician’s assistant. These reach out --- in reverse --- for his victim’s throat. Whereas a gully of blue snow lies between them and it descends on an imaginary screen only to filter the light’s attack... irrespective of a skeleton whose fall was sheer. Didn’t such a medical exhibit haunt Mister Punch? Although rumours of a bad conscience akin to traditional morality proved to be premature.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWELVE: (112)

Our clown has an art-card in ‘its’ taloned grip which exists independently of Sade in the Vincennes fortress. Doesn’t the latter show him bloated out and gargantuan, or rearing and effete in terms of some criss-crossed brick? Wherein his scorbutic features take on a prison’s shade or shift, and this was no matter how realistic Ed Tudorpole’s survey of madness. Might he be thinking about Peter Weiss’ play during this perusal? (Editorial note: he means *Marat/Sade*). To whit: “What do you note when looking on deranged blobs, eh? Could it be an ape’s mislocation or a scenario where simians’ daub abstractions in their cells? In this instance, then, it combines Will Self’s *The Great Apes*, Angus Wilson’s *The Old Men at the Zoo* and Brigid Brophy’s *Hackenfeller’s Ape* in one helix. None of these even comes near Wyndham Lewis’ *The Apes of God*, however.” “Too true; yet abstract expressionism enables one to dream. For – like aleatory music – it is purely existential, heuristic and consequential. Nothing exists prior to it (in other words). It may originate with Tom Wolfe’s *The Painted Word*, but it ends on a masturbation phantasy.” “Do you really think so?” “Most assuredly...” “I bow to your greater wisdom in the matter.” “Nonetheless, wheretofores can such stimulus lead?” He holds up one precise image or art

postcard. It records not Baselitz's inversion, but rather Bram van Velde's gentle confusion. This canvas radiates chaos magic which scrawls across a match-box top. In it vague emanations striate as pulsars or quarks. It luxuriates upon an intoxicant dysentery or a brown radius withal. Truly, toilet-training needs to begin before one reads Petronius' *Satyricon* in the original Latin. Is it open to any doubt?

*Sludge, mudge, fudge,
we all begrudge
a million dollars
for Barnaby Rudge.*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTEEN: (113)

What do we make of the four gangsters who are holed up in their chalet? Was each of their faces elongated or psychedelic in their visual aspect? Moreover, can such a menagerie deal with the trope that lies before us or them? If we configure these scarecrows as a House of Cards then let's take a look at their patriarch, Old Man. For Smithers' seems to be playing checkers or draughts with himself... and this is irrespective of a board's absence. In accordance with Willie Ryan's book *Scientific Draughts* then Floyd Payne's strategy lay adjacent to these squares. Apparently the white pieces were to play and draw, or even win within a distinct zone. What arrests our attention – though – is that Old Man Smithers morphs suddenly into a dinosaur with a furry coat, long clippers and a studded jewel beneath his neck. May David Icke have been right all along? Never mind: since his three sons were variously multiple or abject in character. Whereupon Pond Granite – who happened to be deeply implicated in Lift Spenser Wingate – hid his trophy behind some masked anger or aplomb. The armour in question, however, appeared to be synthetic or over-embroidered in its resin. Superficially – by the by – what looks like a German Iron Cross (second class) peeps out amidships! Whilst one bravo's face torques in a direction which insures that it's green, pupiless

and pointy-eared. Further to this (my friends) Low Termagant and Egghead Morgan also wax monstrous... albeit with a totally crushed or discombobulated face on either side of the mirror. Various extremities or appurtenances then wiggle or waggle thereafter... nearly all of it on the basis of a duffle-coat's collapse. (Possibly Alexis Lykiard's amputation novel, *The Stump*, comes to call?) Finally Rapacious Quicksilver and Axon Tree weigh in – and they are wearing an old World War II or government issue helmet. American manufactured, it comes down around their ears – plus an accompanying strap. Could Otto Dix have painted it any better? Anyway, their visage proved to be bestial, flayed, wide-nostrilled, throaty and eye-revolving. Perhaps – at another conscious level or stratum – it floats free of their sockets like Odin's balloon!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FOURTEEN: (114)

In the late twentieth century Harlequin Thoomey brought his fist down hard on Blackbird Leys Dingo's scalp. Didn't the stripling then let out a cry before slithering down to those snowy caps? Certainly our Pinkerton's mallet connected with full force and splendour. "AAAIIEEE!", his victim caterwauled or cried out. A million stars filled both of his eyes and this was prior to an imminent collapse. What thoughts or stray gun-shots ricocheted in our man-hunter's mind at this juncture? Who knows (?), but possibly he left this bottled message for another to find. "I'll kill him later... primarily when Toblerone has gotten clear. As one's Nemedian chronicle foretells, he shall be gutted like a von Hagens' plastinate. Isn't it a freak's destiny to be exhibited after death?"

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTEEN: (115)

Our clown held images abreast of a hero or its Greek sculpture, and his eyes twinkled over a dais or whitened board on which shimmered abstract offerings. Can they be reminiscent of Hughie O'Donoghue's *Irish Sea (Study)*, perchance? Maybe it exists in terms of a billowing incline and with water piled high in mid-

Atlantic wash? Up, up and away – or by way of spume – crashed these green bottles that refuse themselves any easy passage whatsoever. Nor will the like of them be splintering into shards or littering terminal beaches *a la* J.G. Ballard. No. For one feels inescapably drawn back to Jack B. Yeats’ work here, but with less direction or impasto. Likewise, another card in our Jacques LeCoq’s hand is by Karel Appel or a familiar, and here a coloured streak limbers up to some poster paint. It cleaves to a kaleidoscope where stroboscopic light pulses... only then to levitate beyond primary impulses or by dint of a swirl. A further tarot card – when captured in vaudeville – has to do with Alberto Magnelli’s futurity; and it curls like a science fiction drama or seeks to uncover a gyroscope’s brown study. “What do you notice in a soul’s rebus or Rorschach test?”, enquired our Glock. There was an aggressive tone in his voice and he held an image directly under Harlequin’s nose. In design it helps to recall an artwork like Marcus Lupertz’s *Prometheus*. Might he come forward in order to give fire, light or balm... and prior to feeding an eagle when chained to a rock for all eternity? As to today’s turpentine or linseed oil... an image splits off and dines on deranged mirrors. It also interprets Robert Selzer’s *Anatomy of a Knife*... wherein octopi are festooned in squares. A pale flesh colour – pink to its river or abundance – then inundates the swash. Surely this codex lacks any resource or even a resolute energy throughout? By any calculation, then, all-father Zeus has triumphed... especially if Lupertz’s fire-giver wears a clock’s mystagoguery.

*Come hither
go thither
can we
or thee
for free.*

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What do you see?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SIXTEEN: (116)

Our mother figure has taken up a defensive part in the nineteenth century. She wears a bright green-dress and her hand gestures --- somewhat accusingly --- at an accompanying Comus Rout. Haven't they kidnapped her kindred and 'sectioned' them in loneliness' hut? Rare wooden boards rise behind her in a perpendicular fashion – albeit as concerns a trellis work of brown. Her husband wilts beside his wife; together with a bandage wound around the latter's scalp. It traverses two ways or paths; by virtue of sloping from left-to-right. To one side of him – and down farther than a distaff's incline – leans a boy. He's very small in size... with a tousled mop of blonde hair over preternaturally brown eyes. Meanwhile, their assailants stand about brandishing muzzled guns... and each one is silhouetted towards or scores with the Blue. The woman speaks indignantly like Euripides' *Medea* – although in reverse circumstances, ethically speaking. (Surely G.E. Moore's morals can't intrude here?) For isn't this Toblerone Harpie – circa. the Reconstruction period – and improved upon by motherhood? Her voice's pitch lilts upwards like a soprano playing Salome in Strauss' opera. "You've got no right to keep us imprisoned, do you hear? Our boy – who's wearing Glock's gloves – keeps a'sickening. He's liable to go down with a fever... most regularly. Doesn't your cruelty embody that of various clowns who flaunt Tommy-guns whilst wearing Billy Smart's cover-all?" Her interlocutors remain as mute as stone. Can they intone or entomb --- in petrification --- an Easter Island sculpture? *In vacuo*, her husband intervenes: "Hush Tobey, these brigands won't understand."

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SEVENTEEN: (117)

Toblerone Harpie screamed again and again now that she was in her husband's grasp. Could it be Relief's onset or the tolling of a new dirge like at *Black Narcissus*' culmination? Do you remember Michael Powell's classic film? Anyway, Blackbird Leys Dingo lay sprawled in the slush... nor can disjointed ice revive him now! Roundabout or circumambiently his relatives

continue to prance. Like Scott of the Antarctic they are wearing a combination of ski suits, ice-masks, dungarees, serge, dirty flannels and busted out prison uniforms. Behind them and sweeping away rearwards one notices an enclosed forest. It has crept up on one *avec* dead stalks, brazen tree-stumps and heavy boughs... all of them laden with light purple camouflage. A hemispherical union (this) it perfectly matches the continuing snowfall. "Hey, what goes on?", this terrorist family cries out in unison. Aren't they a groupuscule or cell fighting their own *intifada* against life?

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For Harlequin Thoomey's grabbed hold of his woman and he twirls her around, marionette-like, in order to enforce obedience. Yessir: Toblerone releases a Banshee's howl at this juncture, but her husband is already eyeing the opposition. They – to reverse our mirror's image – open their jaws slackly so as to pant and cry. By this reckoning, then, the Smithers' crew are definitely wolverines or Reynolds' *Wagner the Werewolf* after dark!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-EIGHTEEN: (118)

Our Jester's hand obscures a star; and yet we fail to deal with Maximiani Portaz's *The Lightning and the Sun* here. In this scenario he held up an image before his *alter ego*, Harlequin Thoomey. Surely our mountebank offers up the immortal remark: "what do you see?" To which our hero replies: "Many things... in a precise order of will and prerequisite it begins with *English Church Craftsmanship* by F.H. Crossley. Herein and after, I'm free to adopt these temperatures: such as a gargoyle with ramifications of a northern corbel, for example. Again and all, I notice this existing on an exterior's asp --- at once held over at St. George's chapel, Windsor. It depicts a leering extremity who's actually backing onto a column's plight. Furthermore, one form appears leonine or otherwise happens to be fixed to a fatal flooring. (A threshing plane, that is – if one takes my meaning). Whereas its appurtenances or orifices embody a pregnant ant-eater who's merely been snuffling the ground. Attached to this,

however, and curled in its grasp one apprises a moaning or crying child. When it's bound over to release itself – we appreciate nought save blood! Moreover, we are alive to Wyndham Lewis' *Childermass* falling sheer now that its verbal task-master looks forlorn. Certainly the babe ventilates a hullabaloo or a brouhaha. It cries to be relieved of its suffering --- so it lives. Whereupon and around a serpentine extent our Leo writhes in fire – only stopping to gain a silent joy at this precedent. But enough of John Cage – indeed, his pretence avoids an appropriate piece such as Arthur Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake*. Behind it a lintel plays percussion with its jamb – if only to support alabaster's finery over a trellis. Most definitely, I could instruct you more... save for the fact which says that your art-card shows nothing but pitch."

Rich, ditch, snatch, pinch, lynch, cinch... kitsch! --- opines one of Leo Sayer's clowns. Send them in!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-NINETEEN: (119)

"Now, now, ma'am", lisped Old Man Smithers, "we comprehend your grievance and belly-aching. Assuredly so, every man-jack of us sympathises with your plight... truly. Our kind understands what it means to give birth to Titans and even a two-headed tiger shark. Yesss..., as a red-light would have it, we're liable to burst into tears and start bawling right away! HAW!" With this Old Man's visage creases into a toothy grin. A large federal Union or a Grand Army hat adorned his lobes... and its rim pitches up either black or blue/black-and-blue. Could it be a Northern carpet-bagger's homburg (?) – itself redolent of Sherman's or Grant's puritanism and march to the coast (thereby). Immediately a rubiate filter rises up across him and it contrives to fill in an imaginary square. Whereas – in his grasp – a thick Italian cigar protrudes... and it is somewhat greasy or slick to the taste. (Each one of these Big Berthas takes around an hour to smoke, you know? For its end flares like pitch bubbling up... and may it celebrate Professor Gunter von Hagens' corpse art, albeit in

dumb show?) Vaguely then, Old Man Smithers remembers a mime between Revenge and Andrea's Ghost in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. He casts it from his mind once its vigilante qualities become apparent. Regardless of any of this, though, our rolled tobacco leaf happens to be 'Antico Toscano', 1818.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY: (120)

In a white hell, which recalls one of Leni Riefenstahl's mountain efforts, Harlequin Thoomey carries his wife away. He runs at full pelt with Toblerone Harpie slung over one shoulder. Do her pink leggings glisten in a noontide's sun that shades into a darksome glow? Admittedly, such light breaks a crystalline surface which is nearly pitched at rapture and bears a blanched undertow 'neath it. It forgets its structures... only to shine effulgence on a whiteness thence turning crimson through a saccharine filter. Can it be reserved unto snowy owls, who, in naturalist documentaries, pluck at their prey with incisor beaks merely to regurgitate them later? No matter: since in a manner that reconsiders David Carradine, at once fresh from Tarantino's efforts in a B-movie where he hunts down aliens... Harlequin still sizes up his enemies. They pursue him across this tundra's crispness (rather resultantly) – a terrain or steppe which was breaking, fractured, icy, slippery and petrified. All of this incarnates various passages in J.G. Ballard's novel *The Crystal World*; regardless of how ebon-iced they proved to be. (A text that prefigures the congealed quality of a cancer beyond any sense of metaphor... no matter how nacreous these pearly gates!) Likewise, Low Termagant and Rapacious Quicksilver let rip thunderous oaths as they chase this husband-and-wife team across the ice. Both frost-biters carry mountain knives, staves, fire-lighters, brandy-snap and chalk. Whereupon – and to concentrate on a notion of alienage – perhaps Harlequin Thoomey can ultimately see beneath superficial flesh in order to reveal a skull, if not depths below. A Kelvin temperature lurks in these recesses; and didn't Edgar Allan Poe call it *The Tell-Tale Heart*? Essentially then, Thoomey's vision discerned demons or hooved ones who lurked

under an egg's-head. Couldn't they be splintered, bug-eyed, horizontal in latitude and multiple armed? Further, each of their mouths contains at least twenty-six cavities. Ask Lawman Thoomey about it – because this federal marshal can tell them at a distance!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-ONE: (121)

In Old Man Smithers' collective unconscious various items are astir – amongst other matters we could mention. One of them involves our clown or Harlequin Thoomey's *alter ego*. Does one follow it up? He holds a forgotten art-card in an adjustable mitten. To be sure, one's mountebank stares at it fixedly – with his normal side, Harlequin, hovering nearby in a foggy background. "What do I detect in this absinthe's grip?", murmured a dreamy Grimaldi... a character who happens to be a patron saint among Britain's funny-men. "Well, I'll tell you – one and all – plus a beaten plate of eggs! It has to do with ochre's swirl – itself belatedly melted down into Jackson Pollack's abstraction. Do you remember his *Naked Man with Knife* in 1942 (?); and prior to the CIA recruiting such business during the Cold War. Any road up... to my deluded mind such paint reallocates itself and becomes suggestive... but rarely cloacal. No – an injustice fells that tree! Because my retina conjures this up: it discerns a hairy simian who's obviously masked up and carrying a bathing beauty. She waxes gymnastic, muscular, art-tart like, virginal and Pre-Raphaelite (vaguely speaking). Could it be a heterosexual Gluck that's been abandoned as a keep-sake? Truly, this image looms from "What the Butler Saw"; at once care of Mirror Pix and by way of Hulton Getty. Undeniably, it goes back to before silent cinema, even, where coin-operated slot machines gave a thrill!

Still, bill, kill, trill, Nihil, fill, ol' Lil --- where's it going?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-TWO: (122)

In nineteenth century Oregon our Pinkerton has succeeded in climbing a cliff. Whilst the moon subsists ahead and to the left – with its disc signalling a pale slice like a radius on a compass’ isle. Certainly a mount juts out in terms of Scaramouch’s promontory: and it rises beyond the chalet while finding a resonance inside or alongside it. Can this hut also bear a striking resemblance to George Bernard Shaw’s cabin? A longitudinal fabric of wood (this) it served as a box... wherein a left Nietzschean wrote out his life monastically. A light shone from its western end and thence came to criss-cross the glass. Likewise, a dun-coloured brown which folded into grey then suffused both the shack and its surrounding granite.

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Meanwhile, our hero – Harlequin Thoomey – has mounted a neighbouring perch and he succeeds in doing all of it without Chris Bonnington’s assistance. Didn’t Aleister Crowley consider himself to be a mountaineer... irrespective of a film like *Touching the Void*? Perchance – this rock-scape was limned in blue with a rising smart of cerulean. A situation where each filigree tapers away on either side of Thoomey’s left and right hand. Also, sundry bushes blossom up which were themselves spiky, cactus-like or Yucca... at least in terms of a prior perennialism. Each tuft or rabbit-warren then stares out; and is thus reminiscent of a television film like *Duel*. Correspondingly, a north American bird perches on a branch all a’twitter... it flatters to deceive a breed much sought after by H.P. Lovecraft and known as a whippoorwill. Against the grain, though, Thoomey surmounts a defile; and when we examine it aslant his entire frame is red or blood suffused. Why so? Essentially because – like Charles Bronson in *Death Wish* – he incarnates vengeance.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-THREE: (123)

A century later amid ice pillars and snow Old Man Smithers stares at an errant chip – namely Blackbird Leys Dingo. He is

muffled under an ice giant's bank... while massaging his head with a gloved hand that's fit for purpose. Gloomily, Dingo gazes up expecting the BIG FREEZE or parental excoriation. Old Man points an accusing finger at his face: "You ought to be ashamed of spent conduct, my boy! Call yourself a man and a warrior... why, you're no better than William S. Burroughs' *Queer* or Kramer's novel *Faggots*. Doesn't the delinquency of John Rechy tamper with your head-piece? Avaunt thee! In life's plenitude you've come up wanting on the plane of genetics, my friend. Listen: those who ascend to the summit do so by walking on others' faces. Your chance came a'begging – it was squandered and now Erda has turned her back. It's finished, do you contemplate it? As in John Gardner's book *Grendel* – where Beowulf is seen from the monster's perspective, you're left (h)armless at the end. Face it! For you, t'would be better to crawl away and die... alone of all spore."

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-FOUR: (124)

At this instant in time our Harlequin hurls away a William Roberts postcard in disgust. When behind him two figures were dimly limned or cast in copper; they each stood out against such a fortune. Both of them appear to be encased in egg-cups – what with their lower extremities so conjoined. Might this be Pond Granite and Lift Spenser Wingate combined? A trail of Siamese twins or electrical circuitry then manoeuvred between them. It trespassed from head-to-head – merely to break with Brian Aldiss' philosophical notion which was occasioned by his novel *Barefoot in the Head*. Don't they enjoin – in this regard – two pin-balls while relishing a cue? Rather like specimens in the surgeon's museum, south Kensington, with foetuses bottled in formaldehyde... we can see an Elephant man in green-glass here. What message in a litre suffices from all this? Furthermore, this Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee have started to speak across one another. What can they be uttering about the place? Lift Spenser happens to be the first to opine: "Look, your thinking is kak-handed!" "Why so?", Granite's Pond replies. "Mainly by virtue

of the fact”, intones his brother, “that Humpty-Dumpty’s semiotic proves to be imprecise. For this cuddly egg sat on a wall and frustrates a curate’s synonym by doing so. It breaks up an omelette’s passage by refusing a bit-player’s role.” “You mean it’s good and bad in parts?” “Precisely, what recalls us to our senses – between-times – has to be Humpty’s post-structuralism.” “What?” “I’m referring to the fact which says that Dumpty believes words mean what you want them to – like critics such as Katherine Belsey, Terry Eagleton, Malcolm Evans and Jonathan Dollimore.” “Alice retorts – ‘No, they don’t; they have a precise definition. A dictionary – like Chambers’ or Webster’s – fixes it. Language isn’t heuristic. You can’t make it up as you travel along.” “Want to bet?”, scolds Humpty-Dumpty. He then falls off the wall and smashes his shell into a hundred pieces.”

Amongst such blokes, you’ve got to choke, it’s no yoke... yodels this dream’s clown.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-FIVE: (125)

Left alone – and standing on Scaramouch’s fort or perch – Harlequin Thoomey surveys the scene. A sky-burst entrammels him and it basically pins him to a blue locution. For his part, an ochre masquerade fillets his format withal. “One item brings them within distance”, reflects our Pinkerton. “This bluff, Scaramouch’s point or whatever else lacks a basic necessity... even a cover-all. Naked in its brazen traps, it refuses to provide shelter for those who might surmount it. Also, hostages have been seized, probably an entire family from a deserted farmhouse in the valley. I must proceed cautiously – like a wolverine who captures a doll’s-head between its claws. But, evaluating every angle, there is a way to break in and it necessarily utilises fear.” As a token to his skald or intrigue, Harlequin puts his gloved hands together. Instantly he produces an eerie purchase such as AAAAEEEEIIIOOUUU(!); and it rings out across one’s arbour. Within the shack Egghead Morgan stares wild-eyed... while a

sandy-coloured dervish covers his breath. “What was that, Pa? To me, it sounded like a damned soul’s liberation. In a bent certitude the Prado looms up and in it you can configure Memling’s hellishness... wherein shaded demons, waving a necropolis drear, pitch forward naked termagants... all of whom yearn in torment. Didn’t Ernst Junger prefigure it all in his *Copse 125*? A scenario – behind whose metal doors – the Great War flared up either as a revolution or as killings on an industrial scale.” Old Man Smithers remained unmoved, however. A shotgun’s silver streamer – when abreast of a rancher’s turquoise jacket – scans a wall’s azure without comment. “Nothing doing”, the Old’un coughed to deliver up. “It’s just wolves out at a distance who are reconnoitring our bluff. I tell you, Egg, don’t let it turn your bone marrow to water.” Yet – even on utterance – the finger-shadows of various Red Indians appear silhouetted on such a phrenology. (Especially when we remember that Egghead Morgan died earlier in this narrative!)

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-SIX: (126)

Desperate to make amends after his *faux pas*, Blackbird Leys Dingo follows his pappy’s snow troughs or foot-prints. Nor can our young scallywag – or leprous mendicant – forget his father’s ringing or Parthian shot. “Get your sorry posterior removed, Din. A man-thing who allows himself to be crept up on... why, my loins must have misfired. I DIDN’T CREATE YOU!”

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Hungry and desperate, then, Blackbird Leys sloughs on after Old Man... thereby trespassing on his wake. Ahead of him lies a tableau of white rain that’s occasionally punctured, as it is, by stick-trees which stand out in mauve light. His patriarch moves ahead of him withal – seemingly oblivious to all difficulties. A brief palisade of snow that’s rather like iron petals continues to fall. It flecks their clothing or attire, and interrupts whatever eyes and boots they might have on. Moreover, Blackbird Leys flexes his back in an attempt to catch his sire up. Listen to this now... “Don’t leave me, Pah o’ mine. I’m unfit to continue with these

particular cross-keys. I swear to take him down – do ya hear? Why can't I cut his mangy throat or suck out those eyes with a midget's breath? Maybe like Mime in Wagner's *Ring* cycle I'll don a magic cap in order to transform reality? Previously a lawman caught me unawares, but now I guard against confusion through psychedelia..." Whereupon a disembodied eye floats on a pink wind. It is embroidered around the edges or happens to be caught up towards velvet like a pale ormolu. Yet inside its casing – perchance – an eye-ball tilts in knowledge's direction and this is primarily by recognising its sheen. Underneath it strange tendrils move around and they are rather reminiscent of an octopus' legs.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-SEVEN: (127)

Multi-dimensionally speaking, Low Termagant examines our future together. He stands behind a clown's face or lies askance of 'its' left side. All of this occurs during a period where our Harlequin's grin, inanity, grease paint and capacity for delusion becomes more and more pronounced (residually). Here again Termagant – somewhat akin to a character in Clive Barker's novels *The Books of Blood* – wears a balaclava. It suffuses one's features – rather like a liquorice spore and adjacent to a glove's face. "I say, Grimo(.)", beckons L. Termagant in an upper class lingo, "what's wrong with the Turner Prize?" "Just about everything", responds the Clown. "First off, let's examine these efforts in their own crock or chamber pot. Take Damien Hirst's shark in formaldehyde – the one everybody recognises (instantaneously so). Its form pokes out amid green dye and within a hammer-head's leyden jar – only then to renounce some progressing torpedoes. Moreover, this taxidermy wears an exoskeleton in the form of a crate through which Peter Benchley's vehicle passes. Didn't Will Eisner encompass *Moby Dick* as a graphic novel? Independently then, Hirst called his Old Man without the sea *The Impossibility of conceiving Death in the mind of someone Living*." On an Old Man's mentioning, though, do we hear a stirring beneath oaken tables? Anyway, Smithers was

down there and he seemed to be impatient of all other sound. “Yet”, continued our Max Wall playing Beckett, “Hirst’s folly leads to auto-destructive art or *kaos*, and not in Metzger’s configuration either. Since he hasn’t ‘based’ his creation --- it will rot away to nothingness over time, in other words. Or – at the very least – it’s going to shrink, gradually float towards the tank’s bottom and flip over. Pure alcohol or ethanol is what’s required, you see. In fact, in order to keep his fish going he should have immersed it in this and injected it too. Didn’t it fetch six million pounds at auction (?); it’s amazing the way this figure keeps popping up.”

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Our troubadour then opens his arms wide. For like Frankie Howard, a *Cabaret* character or one of Mel Brooks’ *The Producers*... he yelps:

*There’s no business like Shoah
business
like no business
I know!*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-EIGHT: (128)

Momentarily – and on hearing the wolves without – our kidnapped father pipes up. He wore a bandage around his black shock of hair which slanted it from left to right. Behind him a scarlet backing arose as a stocking filler – it showed his face to be livid, blanched, pasty, expectant and fervid. Also, his moustache twitches somewhat... albeit rather like D.H. Lawrence in full spate. Weren’t his teeth grinding together in a like expectoration? Presumably he wore a pale blue-shirt that shaded into white... whereas a yellow nimbus played with fire above his head. It pulsed or flashed on and off stroboscopically. Within this aura a Red Indian chief becomes visible in a full head-dress. Could it delineate Sitting Bull, the Sioux leader, who alternates now and again like an exercise in Op art? Already

then, Harlequin's younger *alter ego* – minus a Grimaldi's mask – has begun speaking or orating...

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"Fools! You underestimate these disturbed spirits of yore. You're on their ossuary or disused burial mound, you see! For the Red Man's *kami* are Animist or liable to manifest physical objects. They resemble a poltergeist – by either whizzing through space or screaming at the dawn."

"Shut up! Cease your croaking or so help me I'll...", rasped Old Man Smithers. But – for the first time – he seems to be rattled.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-NINE: (129)

All out of places to run Harlequin Thoomey has arrived at a sheer rock wall. He looked around him desperately, but could see nought save a magenta edifice rising above some alabaster. It towered off onto a distance's perch. Likewise, the snowy deluge filtered away from him abreast of an envelope all around. Surely its outer extremities looked ultramarine in an uncertain light? Again, he felt trapped or cornered, and the grey mackintosh he wore billowed out like a bat's cape. It filled up with frigid air – only to let out an exhalation thereafter. Moreover, the shadows of his two pursuers over-arched him... both of them combining together like a negative dance. Could it re-interpret Sir Arthur Bliss' dithyramb from his ballet *Checkmate*? Let's see: a penumbra overhung the scene and came cast before treason. Perhaps momentarily --- or dissociatively --- Patrick Magee's performance as *King Lear* comes to mind. Yet we soon abandon this notion... since Low Termagant and Rapacious Quicksilver share one particular shadow. It overlaps, morphs, dribbles and deludes any sense of expectancy. Do both heads then interconnect in a siamese manner? Although each of their shoulders now sports a poniard or knife – albeit in dream time. It rears towards its prey.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY: (130)

Hunting down some archetypes – or within all of our characters’ minds – Harlequin’s clown and Low Termagant are busy conversing. (Each one of them can be seen from the others’ profile – at least when viewed sideways on). Yet a Greek exercise in dialectic carries on between them. Could it be a debate betwixt Thrasymachus and the rest, or possibly Graf and Rudolf? Anyway, Termagant rumbles on beneath his balaclava: “Concerning the Turner prize... surely Marcus Harvey’s *Myra* comes to mind?” “Really, I suppose you’re referring to its pointillism... an image that’s allegedly made from kiddies’ hand-prints? It has less to do with Seurat (for sure), and is more about potato shapes or cut-outs.” “Remarkably so, it all relates to a *folie a deux*... a scenario where a man and a woman are engaged in psychopathic crimes. You know, the kinetic or supra-realist elements epitomise Gabriel Rossetti’s *Lilith*. A portrait which was based on Lizzie Siddal combing her hair and that only hints at laudanum’s slumbers.” “But where lies its originality?” “Nowhere – it merely exists in order to offend or bait the bourgeoisie. Clearly such a process combines Galla’s picture --- as set down by Dali --- with Lacenaire’s autobiography.” “The one he wrote before ascending to the guillotine, you mean?” “You’ve a variant on Tom Wolfe’s *The Right Stuff*, there... basically because he experienced what Myra Hindley should have shared.” “I take your point, matey, and who cares about Lord Longford’s judgement?”

*He loved Myra... pyrotechnicon:
who’ll match her fate?*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-ONE: (131)

Our family group – superintended by a younger Harlequin – then retreated to a cabin’s interior. Could they be suffused with a greenish light at such a moment? Certainly their gaolers were captured by the moon... as its pale radiance reflected like a lattice on their shoulders. This, in turn, trailed a grid across

wooden boards... especially when compared to a stove or rough-hewn implements above such friezes. For his part, Old Man Smithers still wore a Federal or a Union uniform; and it discharged a dark-blue tint plus a yellow stripe amidst gloom. He appeared to be highly agitated. Beside him two of his sons – Axon Tree and Rapacious Quicksilver – gaped askance. As you will recall, these siamese twins over-lapped so as to compose one form. Don't they comport the freakishness of yesteryear or last century... wherein a human slug crawled around a stage-set? Any road up, Axon-Rape's corse pointed beyond its own glass. (Won't atomic radiation that's been compounded with sand produce the same effect?) "Look-ee, Daddy-o", burred a misfit, "aught flits before our gaze like a mirage. One moment it's there – limned between red-woods – and the next absent. Correspondingly, it lets loose a cry in a lycanthropic manner." "AAAAEEEEIIIOOUUU!" "Do ya hear it, Pa? Because – even when it's gone – the moon's tarot shines on. It spins disc-like and comes to resemble a Roman coin. Afterwards we notice whether a trail of blue mist crosses her face. Doesn't the lunar represent those feminine, mystical, treachy, emotional, tidal, menstrual and stagnant forces?" "Again Ginsberg's *Howl* was heard abroad: "AAAAEEEEIIIOOUUU!" "Shut in tarnation up!", bellowed Old Man Smithers. Was he losing control?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-TWO: (132)

Cornered in his labyrinth amid the snowy drifts, Harlequin Thoomey turns at bay. But where will he find a minotaur or a ball of string? Regardless of which, he rears up over Low Termagant and Rapacious Quicksilver... and he almost describes a gorilla protecting his young (thereby). "Look at the Lawman", sneers Rape, "he's all outta puff 'n' run." "Yeah...", agreed Lout... who nodded vigorously. "Now's our chance to crucify a saviour without Golgotha! Doesn't he typify a grizzly bear who stands erect on his hind legs with bristling hair and chest? He's guarding a mate, you see. Yet – heretofore – we're in a position

to skin him and treat the carcass as a rug. Perhaps Toblerone can walk across it on a polished floor in order to savour our victory?"

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Facing destruction or nullity, then, our hero ponders the future: "Hope's vanguard has deserted us. Maybe Fortune's wheel – plus various candles in its sockets – had spun a full circle or revolution. It remains true that we have momentarily drawn the Death card. Let us face it further, the figure of Toblerone in her skin-tight lycra fulfils no hope. Whereas – and immediately behind us – a mauve or rubiate rock-face rises sheer. For, like rats in B.F. Skinner's mazes or Pavlov's dogs, we're trapped, hemmed-in and hazarding nothing but slaughter." During this soliloquy individual diamonds continue to cascade... although with a rasping and crunching underfoot Old Man Smithers, Pond Granite and Egghead Morgan come up. Each of them waves a titanium blade about in the freezing air. Don't their thoughts crystallise on a greying ether?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-THREE: (133)

Between dimensional doors a close-up occurs on our clown's jump-suit. Assuredly, his painted face will do, but might this bring back the Hood amongst Gerry Anderson's puppets? "Returning to the Turner Prize", mused our cachinnator, "let's examine Marc Quinn's *oeuvre*. After Goldsmith's college he has achieved fame with a literal blood-mask. Here it is: and it consists of haemoglobin, stainless steel, perspex and refrigeration equipment. Although Quinn happens to be tapping a tradition which involves a wax frontage to death. (To whit: the expressive skins of Beethoven, Cromwell and Keats pass muster ... all of them denying a Cycladic uniformity). His thirteen ton sculpture in Trafalgar square, *inter alia*, plumbs new depths... it also delineates a pregnant thalidomide victim, Alison Lapper. Yet – to renew our appeal – Quinn is returning to classicism via disability. If you will, he's adopted a 'politically correct' pose in order to reach Thorak's *Atlas* by legerdemain. (After Europe's second civil war, 1939-1945, this sculptor sought asylum in

Turkey). Whereupon – and in a later work – our M.C. adopted a mode of gymnastics in a negative manner. Herein a contorted Kate Moss, the junkie super-model, finds herself depicted in Flaxman’s vein. Maybe Quinn aims at a static Rodin; or alternatively does he seek Dobson’s means through Gaius Cibber’s effects?” In confirmation of all this, then, our Harlequin massages his chin.

*Traction, reaction, fraction, compaction:
No breaker’s yard can break Breker!*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-FOUR: (134)

At this hourly even-tide time presses onwards and it relentlessly impinges on this chalet... so as to sift each grain through an hour-glass. Already the farmer, a younger version of Thoomey, talks incessantly. Does he detect the dodge which the Pinkerton outside is trying to pull (somewhat instinctively)? “What you hear beyond us and howling in ochre’s darkness has to be Anton LaVey’s advice to Roman Polanski. Do you know that he was a religious advisor on the film *Rosemary’s Baby*? It’s the wolf-spirit, baying treacherously at the moon, which you discount. Could it be a war-wolf of presumed excellence? Never mind the damage done... since, in phantasy, these pack-animals riot and slither around a mausoleum that’s girt with snow. Whereas inside or on an ebon dais sits a fleshless skeleton adorned with a crown. A wolverine-spirit remains holy to the Red Skin, you see? When we consider whether this spit or cliff, known as Scaramouch’s Fort, still retains its animism... an allure which attracts elementals to materialise from the ether. You captured their leader, Geronimo, didn’t you? Maybe a shaman who’s anthropologically capped dances in a wolf-skin without? Dare you open the shack’s door and take a chance on it?” “Mendacity ill-suits you, land grubber”, hissed Old Man Smithers in reply. But – clothed in his serge uniform – he continued to waver like a flame. Suddenly a low or throaty cacophony is heard. “AAAAEEEEIIIOOUUU!” it reverberated all around. “Be

silent!", shrills Smithers. "Reckon on't, agrarian. Fear won't nibble at my heart." After this statement Old Man lashes out with his pistol's butt. He swipes his prisoner across the forehead. *THWACK!*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-FIVE: (135)

A century further on our Patriarch continuously holds forth. "Listen up, brood time! Conversation detracts us from a necessary skinning or deliverance. For – between our pericarps – we possess five knives or scalpels." "The total's SIX!", yelped Blackbird Leys Dingo... as he made his way over to them at a side-winder's pace. Truly, he traverses this tundra like a glowing ice-worm! "As I remarked", proceeded Old Man, "we need to forgo a passionate indulgence... imperturbably so. Can you expel it? Because if we circle him our blades will enforce a tattoo like moon-lit dancers. No matter how niggardly it seems... we'll bleed Thoomey like a mediaeval leech. By virtue of the fact that our vengeance kindles apace or in-between, and it resembles ancient conspirators who are gathered under an apothecary's crocodile. Most assertively, it knows no other bronze or distaff, and by this ballet's end a pursuing detective becomes a flayed scarecrow." (He gestures farther off – somewhat airily). "At the *denouement* even his wife won't recognise him; and didn't the surrealist Antonin Artaud call it a theatre of cruelty?" So saying it – a dispassionate observer watches Old Man Smithers' face under the microscope. It luxuriates in its meaty folds: at once avid, greedy, vengeful, porcine and convulsed with near-lust. May Louis Adamic clock its temperature at all accurately?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-SIX: (136)

Avaunt these matters a dreamy sun-dial displays its minutes, hours, seconds and other loot. Won't such a ligature cast its shadow across this treachery? Meanwhile, our circus performer has been addressing Toblerone Harpie. If you glance away quickly then you'll miss Grimaldi's white hand on her shoulder. "As regards other Turner Prize entrants", negotiates Glock, "let's

shift a frisbee onto Jenny Saville's daubs or mopes. These inculcate bloated, obscene and naked female bodies without any redeeming attractiveness. Many of them are hung-up --- abattoir-like --- and recall chickens on a meat-rack. Perhaps she means to infer the Richardsons' victims/*slags* in south London? Anyway, her images wax anti-idealist, deliberately repulsive, ugly and feminist by turns. They hint at a lesbian nation without its dildo or *phallae*, and Andrea Dworkin's separatism becomes obligatory in relation to these sausages." Listening to this, however, Toblerone Harpie remains statuesquely to one side of events. Furthermore – when seen in profile her features delineate a yearning ideal. Momentarily then, her visage recalls the twentieth century's greatest artist *and femme fatale*: Leni Riefenstahl.

*Jenny Saville's degenerate art,
carp, lark, bark, start, tart: no will triumphs here!*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-SEVEN: (137)

Pinkerton Thoomey moved across black-lined rocks under an adjacent moon. These slanted adrift the horizon and coursed laterally from left-to-right. When one considers it, therefore, fate has granted them a brilliant impress in terms of a purplish granite. Whereas our moon carved out a disc or an azo's pale yellow... and against its pallor Harlequin's silhouette limned like a dancing foal. He leapt up onto his toes in a sprightly fashion. Like a veritable flash he capered – whilst pirouetting and turning *a la* Nijinsky on shod and spurred feet. Alternately, small items of stone came away --- rather haphazardly --- under his balletic tremor or tarantella. Why does he gyrate so persuasively or calmly, an observer asks? Our answer is simple: he wants to approach the hut's blind or deluded side. To begin with... he stared down from Scaramouch's bluff and various branches or wild aspen, possibly fossilised to white wood, surrounded his billowing trench-coat. Whereupon the moon – lacking a gibbous indent – mantles up everything carefully and in such a way as to

isolate Shaw's cabin. It lay directly below all other considerations, longitudinally speaking. Above us though – and within the mystagoguery of those present – an orange skull hovers in the twilight. Didn't it really incarnate a wolf spirit, thereby? It also wore a Red Man's war-bonnet replete with feathers around those empty sockets or orbs, and some clenched teeth. Moreover, its lipless and receding gums opened and shut... primarily so as to articulate a cry. Nothing came of it and no sound rent the air... but around its floating nimbus several warriors or braves cavorted on horse-back. They brandished feathery spears, axes, hatchets, tulwars, bows and arrows. They likewise whooped and hollered. Again silence reigned and this was despite the disembodied cranium zig-zagging madly in yellow or green ether... together with its jaws working convulsively. Have we been writing a supernatural Western all along?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-EIGHT: (138)

Irrespective of being a hundred years ahead – my friends – our narrative quickens apace. In this Aeschylean scene we notice that six characters creep up on Marshal Thoomey. He stands stock-still; thereby repositioning one of Thorak's sculptures before this mason fled to Turkey after the war. Hereabouts Old Man Smithers, Blackbird Leys Dingo, Pond Granite, Egghead Morgan, Low Termagant and Rapacious Quicksilver edge closer. They are hunkered down amidst clawing ice-sheets. Each of them is then bent double as they approach... like a bunch of snivelling dwarves. However, out of their butchered hands and clothed in woollen gloves certain knives trail. A wisp of etheric breath or undelivered heat spirals up from their mouths' corners. Set against this, though, heavy dollops or flakes of congealed water continue to fall. Close by – a centimetre here; a millimetre there – this wrecking crew slithers nearer. Point-by-point they become compacted and move up. Soon their blades will come to droop before Harlequin's submerged toes. "Steady lads... and we have 'em!", burbled Old Man Smithers.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY-NINE: (139)

In our characters' haze or their collective unconscious Toblerone Harpie drew up a chair. It is no longer one of those unergonomic ones which are made from plastic and metal. *No*. It happens to be a sturdy or wooden effort. She levers it out palm uppermost and her black top – in its tightness – accentuates her breasts' line. "Do you mind sitting down to a game of draughts?", she asks her husband sheepishly. "Not at all", he replied nonchalantly. Hasn't he been circling around in the background amid dry-ice swirls for quite a time now?" "Will this painted clown – abreast of a million fair-grounds – be my opponent?" "Assuredly...", she responds with an assertive whisper.

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See the discs --- black and white --- move upon squares --- replete to a clown. They take on a diagonal hop, skip and jump -- switching each way in order to alleviate cramp.

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Can we get those Persian Jews – Saatchi and Saatchi – to donate an art-work? Let's work on the following principle: winner takes all!", jeers our Clown.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY: (140)

Louis L'Amour's or Zane Gray's wolf spirit reappears when pursuant to an aggrieved nothingness. Unholy of holies... it's on a rival rockface looking up the valley and down which a non-existent cavalry would have to enter. Immediately behind such a carapace the moon leers or preens; and it fills the chalet's glass with a transparent disc. Unbeknown to Old Man Smithers' clan, however, Harlequin Thoomey holds up his coat-tails in silhouette. Might it have been a man or a beast? Old Man starts violently as soon as he sees the apparition behind him. Already he grasps a Derringer or a Luger in his fist... and it tails away from this non-commissioned officer's uniform and hat. A single stripe or a centurion's sigil stands out. While – to one side of him – runs a rough-hewn table which is constructed from raw planks... It holds some rudimentary utensils such as a tin mug, a

kettle, spoons and simple earthenware bowls. Above this an old-fashioned oil-lamp limbers up and its mechanism sports a cadmium-yellow flue. Whereas – by contrast – Egghead Morgan carries a Colt. 45 that glows blood-red amid any contracting litmus test. “Do ya ken its quicksand, Pa?”, trembles an underling. “Be quiet!”, thunders Old Man Smithers. “T’ain’t nought available, my brethren. Yonder’s a mirage or a fancy which proves unamenable to science.” “You’ve used a double-negative”, suffixed our Egghead. (He was obviously eager to affirm grammatical pedantry – even in American English). “I’ll gut the first stripling who confronts my will!”, responded their patriarch. Truly, Egghead Morgan/Low Termagant, Rapacious Quicksilver/Axon Tree and Lift Spenser Wingate/Pond Granite all revere Old Man Smithers as a Moses. But has he foregone killing swine or their piglets?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-ONE: (141)

A century farther on our concentration has to be on Harlequin Thoomey’s face. For it narrows in about the eyes when adjacent to a panning-beam or its long-shot. Yes indeed: his elongated features are equal to a new tasking or issuance. But it’s the orbs which arrest such diatribes as these; they also foreshorten a moment’s stillness before this *Battle of Maldon*. Why so? Because they set about an eaglet with its dark blue – only to relieve such a primary token. Whereupon – and contrary to any other license – a grey filter superintends over these slits. It masks a coming sepulchral tint; thereby registering a lugubrious entry or a closing off to new possibilities. A swollen interlude supervenes now – primarily in terms of two Anglo-Saxon warriors fused together. It deliberates upon pink or violet; whilst casting an ebon shade. What can our Harlequin be thinking about? Why, it’s merely that Old Man Smithers has overplayed his hand. Given this... a Joker grins inanely from a pack of cards which just casts yellow ahead of a sport’s defeat! In any event, those other lacquered boards in this five-card trick were the Six of Clubs, an Ace of Diamonds, a Jack of Spades (nought else)

and a Heart's twosome. "Hmmm...", mused Thoomey. He played with a high-eyed Joker in his mind throughout. "No card can be excluded until this game is over. Hope's eternal defeat rests easy on itself, you see. Let the music in now! When we cogitate over whether the cold snap we've been enduring will last forever. Anyway, heat up this ice and you've got boiling water."

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-TWO: (142)

In an increasingly intrusive dimension like this one our clown smirks under a peaked cap. Surely our draughts challenge between Harlequin's two versions has already begun? Wherein those brisk discs – both black and white – spread across longitudinal squares. Here one's troubadour commences with white and possibly moves a checker diagonally. It traverses the pediment 11→16 on a numbered board. But – when beholden to all hallows – our circus-man dreams negatively about Tracey Emin's 'Unmade Bed'. Such a manoeuvre fills two nonchalant squares with nothingness... albeit only then to waste space with its fitness. Correspondingly, a Ring-master's gaze can sing the following... no matter how blanched in manner:

*Bed-stead, ready, unready, pure red; cold dead –
do you unfurl a jingle, m'lud?*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-THREE: (143)

Old Man Smithers continues to sweat in his clap-boarded chalet during the post-Confederate era. For – without situationism's split from left surrealism and by way of lettrism/a movement for an imagist Bauhaus – it perches on Scaramouch's Fort. If we listen closely then we can hear Old Man mouthing: "You're misaligned, boy. Those Red Men have never evinced any special powers... Later on and after the War of Northern Aggression our klavern massacred 'em like rodents. Howdy-doodie! Do you recognise those trills which originate from Al Jolson's *The Jazz Singer*? I instruct you, twin-head: we burnt them out with brackish incense and on a summer's day. It was like firing kilns

or killing ants' nests – both of them deep in some Alabama grass. Our dum-dums mowed them down – babies – and they illustrated scant eldritch pants whatsoever. Certainly no shamanism, witch-doctoring or mysticism helped liberate our task. We made their raddled corpses twitch with bullets. Goddamn, it gave us pleasure... no more; no less. Harken to me, children o' bleat: there's nothing out there in the darkness... nor can there be a wolf-spirit or a somnambulist's turn! As King Lear intones after Canute's example (AD 1016-1035): nought comes from nowt, speak again."

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-FOUR: (144)

Wasn't the moon out above us now? For it worked its way through the trees' spidery traces... wherein each branch sets up a lattice against the sky. Harlequin Thoomey edged forward within this vortex. Now he controlled a negative spur between a chalet and its sea... no matter how imaginary. Closer he came to those inside – albeit plus a blue-wind which whistled in these limes. When – if seen suddenly in tracery – his neckerchief whips around in surfeit. It masters those shadows under a visage at once fervid, energised, dangerous and complete. (Nota bene: Thoomey incarnates a warrior's principles – after the example of a Henry de Montherlant short-story). He stands with his back to our goal and looks on at a square/amber joist. A trellis structure masks it or mulcts its frequency (thereby). Our Pinkerton plots his entry calmly and with supreme forethought. Will it be an instant of revolutionary violence – yes or no? Yet – irrespective of any pathos – Harlequin's blue serge limbers up underneath a sloping brown-hat. Could it recall Texas' sacrifice at the Alamo to one's mind?

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-FIVE: (145)

All abreast of such an instant six myrmidons gibber away before a damnation's crack.... By virtue of the fact that 6 knife-wielding tormentors stagger backwards – themselves torn asunder by some pursuant knowledge. Each of them faces off against falling

snow... basically in a compendium of near-oblivion. Quite suddenly nemesis rises up to confound them; and it just leaves their eyes all aglow, resultant, afraid, commingled and without satisfaction. A pellet of doom has been released amongst them... thus causing their number to cavil and scatter: much of it occurring against blackened theatrics. In these instances a kaleidoscope of faces intermingle one with another: they mix Pond Granite, Egghead Morgan, Low Termagant and Rapacious Quicksilver together. Whereas two familiar masks – those of Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo – also elide. They swivel, twitch and burn. At first they measure their countenances against the dust... only to fall down amidships. They are subsequently left in a thousand pieces like Humpty-Dumpty in *Alice in Wonderland*. In such a situation – my friends – no mercy can be shown! Because these thieving selves are multiple, irregular, broken, adrift, castaway and incomplete. Moreover, every physiognomy masquerades as another one – primarily by smearing lard across its fellow. (Why don't you think of Yul Brunner's robot in *West-World* (?); at once de-faced and thrown amid chaos).

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-SIX: (146)

Meanwhile, a clown's eye superintends all possible developments which can occur in a rival dimension. It stares at a wretched quadrangle and such a fright as this seems to be alleviated by perspicacity. Like in a surrealist film, possibly by Bunuel, a close-up on this marble intervenes now. It shuts the gate in relation to all those bloody troughs or the likelihood of them filtering around a golden iris. Simultaneously with the above (though) the other player in this checker-board's deficit, Harlequin Thoomey, moves a blackman. Such a piece sidles across the squared surface. Irrespective of all this... a vaudeville *artiste* dwells on Sarah Lucas' sculptural essays. They fail to live up to any advanced billing... since her license reveals a pornographic dummy that tends to adopt the codename *Bunny* after Hugh Hefner. It sprawls – occasioning phallic penetration –

on a tragi-comic seat. Whereas a sculpture like this insinuates octopi or robotic hose-pipes onto the *Daily Mirror's* decadence. Similarly, its scatology risks imprecision or a closure in terms of vacant vulvas. No madam: William Gaunt's *Victorian Olympus* plays to empty houses now; in that Andrea Dworkin's ugliness meets Lucas' dolls head-on. Could these toys be haunted by feminist obesity --- especially in reverse? After skimming a lone draught across the board... our Glock hums to himself:

*Lucas' spawn isn't warm
but torn and fawn:
let it rip*

+

*What's the answer
when faced with a cancer?
I know:
total sexism.*

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-SEVEN: (147)

'The End is nigh' waxes a lyrical chorus or Toblerone Harpie's private diary. For inside this wooden cabin – when besieged by a wolf-spirit from without – a dramatic turn of events has ensued. Within its plain or puritanical adornments, then, the young boy seems to suffer a spasm and hurls himself to its boards. He kicks a table over with him... thereby showering the shed's interior with broken crockery. But, by moments such as these, no Julian Schnabel designs can alter this prologue. *No*. You see, epilepsy wasn't fully diagnosed at Reconstruction's juncture – even though John Hughlings Jackson characterised it as a nervous discharge, spasm or electrical brain-storm in 1873. Still, a superstitious individual like Old Man Smithers might view it distinctly. He was the first to react to such turmoil amongst his brood. "Might and main, begorrah!", he enunciated. "This has to be a trap or snare, and by Peter Blatty's leave-taking it involves diabolical possession. Surely it's an exercise in Greek drama's *Deux ex Machina*, but viewed from left about apex? An Indian

daemon or wolf-spirit floats outside... etherically so. An elemental, it feeds on the weakest link within: namely the boy. In accordance with Georges Bataille's doctrine of waste or effulgence... such a *Death in Venice* precedes its coitus. A devil crepitates, you see; it strikes out at declining matter which is dehiscent to its intrigues. Why, I've known such spirits of the outer circle feed off raw potatoes, dwarves, spastics, cretins, runts, the mentally ill and such like 'special needs'. Also, jism and faecal matter are rudimentary cholesterol levels for these spawn. Again, the Indian nimbus or Djinn is attacking us through her 'son'. He's the weakest link in this socio-biological chain. But if we move to kill him now --- fine and simply --- then we slay the shape-shifter or possessor as well." With these words, however, Old Man Smithers fires a full carbine into the youngster who drops to the ground screaming. Wasn't he a *Just William* character laid low by a flowering rifle? A mixture of orange and yellow light subsists withal... whereas the child's corpse undergoes various convulsions before it seeks closure in a coagulating pool *a la* Jackson Pollack!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-EIGHT: (148)

Harlequin Thoomey lifts up a gigantic white-fist as the snow-flakes continue to deluge. Within it a large automatic pistol is clearly discernible. It fires repeatedly into the air in order to enforce a cascade inside frigidity. Clearly, Thoomey has chosen not to master Old Man's warning concerning an avalanche. For one was quite clearly desired now – even if it swamped the prospects of everyone else out of sight. Why did this U.S. Federal marshal do it? Primarily, it occasioned a dialectical trick or conceit – all would then find themselves devastated; the enemy throng must not survive and in victory lay negation's defeat! Turn and turn about, these spinning tops sped on before they keeled over. Isn't there a possibility of Dadaism, heretofore?

+

All around him, though, the snow continuously slanted down on a black backdrop. Like the Cornish flag – of white reversed out

on *noir* – it spotted a scintillation... only to reverse King Lear's logic at a later date.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-NINE: (149)

An antique clock tick-tocked away --- somewhat aberrantly --- in our collective unconscious. Did it signify time between certain moves – themselves pursuant or relative to one white disc as against its neighbour? Let's see now: those two variants of Harlequin, the circus clown and one's ultimate Thule, are still arguing about the Turner prize. A game of draughts remains unfinished on a table between them. To embolden a first instant, therefore, our Grimaldi gesticulates wildly and holds a revolver in the air. Might it really be a starting-pistol? Well! his pasty features look more animated than ever before... what with a puerile taper lighting up his grin. It grimaces, starts, reckons on and enforces closure... While Harlequin Thoomey and Toblerone Harpie, husband and wife, hover continuously in the background amid dry-ice. "Consider", articulates the clown, "the miasma represented by Chris Ofili's *The Holy Virgin Mary*... a clear example of artistic deliquescence or decay. Whereby a negroid sculpture on resin tails off badly; it incarnates a sort of Venus of Willendorf when crossed with a sex-doll. Inconsequentiality has to be its remit... especially in a scenario where a cloacal animism comes to the fore. Moreover, the entire assemblage was festooned with elephant dung; the latter stuck to this polyester using some map-pins. A former Arts minister and labourite, Chris Smith MP, purchased it for divers shekels... maybe it can help him live positively with HIV/AIDS?"

Cripes(!)

sprite

take a bite:

don't be trite –

it's DEGENERATE ART!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY: (150)

At this precise moment the wooden door flew off its latch or crook, and, contrary to all expectations, Harlequin Thoomey appeared in the aperture. Surely he transposed an angel or *Azrael's* vengeance (?); at least at a time when his frame came ladled with sapphire. "It's the Pinkerton!", ejaculated Old Man Smithers... almost in relief. During his embarkation the Smithers' set had hatched in turquoise's direction. Needless to say, they stood under an oil-lamp that refused to swing – irrespective of any other livery. "You criminal swine, Smithers! There was no need to slay the boy! It served a scant purpose... alrighty." Whilst enunciating this Harlequin Thoomey sped on his heels *avaunt* such prey. He struck Rapacious Quicksilver and Axon Tree full in the face. They turned liverish, expired and began to steam: especially when his Colt. 45 passed a bullet through their skulls. Against a semblance of azure his Bowie knife passed up their cortex and missed some vertebrae... but left others of them inebriate. Do you detect it? Most definitely, a destructive scintilla rounded these snails' heads or coins. Similarly, our hero held a blunderbuss athwart a 3-D head and Phrenology's bust; or possibly a series of them. BLAM! BLAM! It blew up and thence ruptured this scale. Didn't a burnt rose or some umber hue rise up on a screen rearwards? It happened to be speckled with blood and gore. In furtherance of which the Pinkerton's weaponry blasted again – so that Pond Granite and Lift Spenser Wingate curled over in its fire! By such an effulgence their rib-cages smouldered in a molten glue. At a time when Egghead Morgan and Low Termagant – perchance – had their collective Heads bent back by a machine-pistol. It exploded into life all of a sudden and while their joint craniums spewed up... provisionally over a slog or its impress. A violent, blanched quality fell away from us here. It trafficked with various skulls on poles – only to market them at a later date. Don't these myrmidons' tops flick or spin off; thereby splattering cabin walls with brains? But mortal faggots take their leave now; it's Old

Man Smithers whom Thoomey wants. Given the boy's taking off... he's the quarry now.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-ONE: (151)

A century further on a mountain of snow is about to fall on our main characters. It's a melt-down where our villain's canter – nor can they merit termination abreast of such meaninglessness. For all of them the notion of being carried hither has to be Death's equivalent. Could it help to notate – rather vaguely – an authoritarian text known as *Secession '85*? Regardless of this, each of the Smithers' clan peels away in relation to an ice-warrior's crumble. Surely now such balaclavas as these feed off a worm's belly? (Although none sought out Bram Stoker's ditty referred to as *The Lair of the White Worm*). Given this emergency: six pink-dots split from an atom's stalk. They shift off hopefully under demise's tonnage... but nothing can stay the avalanche which races from above. Truly, great pillars of basalt slacken in the cold without Samson removing their fence-posts. It spears downwards ever-ready to pummel, pulverise and leave aghast. Grand-father mountain had shifted his axis thereby, if only to touch a void's absence. (Didn't the traditionalist philosopher Julius Evola pen a work called *Speculation on the Peaks*?) It portends gravitationally towards one lustre or other – like an icy temple cracking. Yet now these crack houses are multi-planar, trigonometrical and entropic in feel. Looking up, however, Harlequin Thoomey spies some brazen boulders which cascade down like billiards and wax hostile to life. He laughs uncontrollably. Somewhat strangely, the guffaw catches him from without. Precipice-like – he recalls a similitude or correspondence... namely, this was Doctor William Pierce's last slogan: the one that declared *white revolution is the only solution*.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-TWO: (152)

A deep saturnalia, nocturne or 'Nix' travels abroad; and it subsumes a dark travelogue or its fatality. In it we wonder at the

clown's approach to Old Man Smithers; a character who had formerly scrambled under tables. His face came dimly scarred or divided into two halves. They were equidistant from each other – one in white crepe; the other in black satin. Might he be construed as an in-between? In any event, a golden balloon which was touched up with tinsel attached itself to his head. Our Grimaldi or his route-master Glock started to make threatening gestures, albeit in a Boris Karloff mime. (Don't you realise that mimesis is crucial to Horror's vintage? It traverses the Gothic through play, you see. No-one should be surprised, then, whether Christopher Lee, Karloff himself, Bela Lugosi, Lon Chaney father and son, Peter Lorre, Vincent Price and Donald Pleasance were all schooled in LeCoq). After a few seconds he held a gun to Smithers' temple. Happy days; howdy-doodie! What's he been mouthing, my ring-master? "Oscar Wilde never said – under absinthe's influence – that a man's thoughts could be cleared by placing a blunderbuss so. But he ought to have punted it farther out or preferably on a vicar's croquet lawn. Anyway, the Turner prize declares its weakness on Adorno's swinging gibbet. In his *Aesthetic Theory* Adorno hoped to find ultra-modernism subverting culture's industry. Whereas radically abstract art – even the codex of B.S. Johnson's sentences or aleatory music – just becomes so much wall-paper. Surely it can't claim to be more than capitalist decoration?"

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After Auschwitz, no more poesy; ring a'ring a'Roses: all fall down.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-THREE: (153)

Back in the nineteenth century, though, Harlequin Thoomey utters a threat through gritted teeth. At this instant in time he's every inch the Pinkerton. For – looked at aslant or under his mighty brim – a motley of light blue and white distills abundant masculinity. Aren't his eyes hooded or cupped... after an eagle's format? "Goddamn, you'll pay for such a malevolent slaughter, Smithers! There was no need to silence the boy. It smacks iredal

or oneiric in its substantive fact: save that the child won't rise again." But in reply --- somewhat strangely --- Old Man Smithers happens to be in deadly earnest. Hatless, and with his gun discarded, he almost pleads for contact or intimacy *avec* Thoomey... against what? Presumably a wolf-spirit which lurks beyond. In this particular Smithers waxes beady-eyed, inconstant, galvanic and plangent all at once. "You don't understand, bounty hunter! The chickadee proved to be a conduit for a Red Man's demon... yeah. I finished him before he devoured all of us. Yet you've got to help me across the remaining negative *kami*, huh? It's your duty to assist us."

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Perhaps only now Pinkerton Thoomey fully comprehends what has happened.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-FOUR: (154)

In the twentieth century, however, our eight-pack waits for an avalanche to hit or overwhelm them. It subsists all afore it in relation to a North Eiger's southwards tilt. Altogether now the compacted snow rolls down; and it exists in accordance with barbed strontium or some slashing planes of alabaster. These funnel up into the air... at least in terms of frigid methane clouds: and this was whether they happen to be light or dark blue spectres. Amidst such chaff as this our malcontents' bodies are hurled up in a purple livery. In the foreground – though – Harlequin Thoomey places a masculine glove over his wife's head. It is a loving or protective gesture... regardless of a darkling fog which surrounds them all. What does fate have in store for his clan? They fare badly – one and all. To whit: an enormous ice-block knocks out Axon Tree's eyes and this occurs before a boulder dislodges the brain. Whereas Pond Granite sees a shaft of ice pass via a man's spine or cord, and it resultantly transfixes his heart. Just occasionally – or in the merry-go round of existence – two corses become knit: after Lift Spenser Wingate's and Low Termagant's fashion. Each of these became spliced inside an icy cube prior to asphyxiation... and they

resembled siamese twins or freaks. Do they take a time to perish – rather like prehistoric fish in warmer waters? Whereupon Rapacious Quicksilver mushrooms a mask over ‘its’ face; it’s almost as if he grows a second hide or carapace! Nonetheless, he happens to be dwarfed and runtish in aspect; and it also flaps around an Elephant Man’s porcupine. Finally he expires – especially given the battering both skulls receive. Perhaps Egghead Morgan – as befits his pointy-head or name – gets further up this negative beach. But he (too) faces a crumpled forehead which elongates his oblong. Percussively, it adopts a square-shape afore liquid cortex pours from either ear. What of Old Man Smithers and Blackbird Leys Dingo, though? For – denying all partiality – this avalanche purges them as well. (You see: they face embarkation when laid out upon a board... or is it really desolation?) Dingo then loses both of his feet to a gigantic stone... until hurling around in this maelstrom he comes to rest on his father’s blade. It severs a key artery and butchers the wind-pipe thereby... whilst Blackbird’s orbs ‘n’ joy collapse into a red tank. By this stage – somewhat inevitably – Old Man Smithers feels a formaldehyde breath upon his back. Might a von Hagens’ plastinate reach out from Gray’s abstraction now? Certainly, a snow zombie seems to momentarily clutch at Old Man’s neck. He senses the cold nails biting into his corded muscles. Suddenly this Kelvin volcano wrenches off his cranium and causes it to fly eastwards. Like in Dogma films, for example, the pearly eyes and bleary lips slaver under gravity until the impress of Smithers’ screaming-skull fades out. Finally it’s all over.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-FIVE: (155)

Our clown happens to be in full spate now... as befits a negative circus’ tributary. Have you rescinded examples as diverse as Archaos, the Circus of Horrors, Vermin from the Sewers, Doc Madness and so on? Probably not: but a notional freak show must pass afore Celine’s *Guignol’s Band* here. Remember... Harlequin’s *alter ego* has placed a luger next to Old Man’s

covered head. If we squint through a glass darkly then much gibbering and capering takes place as a consequence. Or – on a point of principle – the game of draughts between our protagonists seems forgotten at this point. Although – across a parallax view – you can make out a checker game in the background... somewhat dimly. Instantaneously, and after one of our Glock's movements, the other clown grimaces with a fanatic avidity. Surely he re-interprets an asphalt Lear or Canute (?); both of them effectively burning on their respective heaths or beaches. All of a sudden he lets off the mallet or pistol. It discharges an explosive dose; the latter filtering under a thousand lights (etherically). During this sonic moment various shards or lit-up bursts punctuate our scene. Can any disagree with it? Because Old Man's demise is hardly real or kosher; and it waxes --- in fact --- more like an artist's jointed-model collapsing inwards. For – in a scene reminiscent of Dr. Caligari's cabinet – Smithers slumps over a balsa stool. Yet isn't it just an exercise in Punch and Judy... albeit rendered more adult in its game-time? (Maybe Geoff Felix proved to be our invisible Professor?) Harken now! Our clown's pontificating has commenced: "I do declare that – under any aesthetic license – Stewart Home's proletarian materialism proves to be redundant. It falls sheer. Or contrariwise, it manifested itself as anti-Art – let alone art strikes or redundant boycotts, et cetera... In his agit-prop or screed, *The Assault on Culture: From Lettrism to Class War*, Home urges a new wave or neoism. But original forms necessitate some talent, whether pre-or-post, and this involves elitism or top-down inequality. Consequently, we find a sub-text to his flirtation with Flux-Europa, Richard Lawson and neo-fascism."

Home/Gnome
Cone/Foam...
Let it alone!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-SIX: (156)

Harlequin Thoomey recoils from nearly everything else inside our nineteenth century chalet. Almost to circumnavigate this moment effectively... a shadow or penumbra casts its shape over his upper face. Could it be the impact of his sombrero's rim or cusp, and might it be more? Yet he has to recognise fear's percussive rhythm or its dip-stick. Didn't Ezra Pound declare the latter property to be formalism when cut into space? Truly though, he'd summoned up a non-existent wolf-spirit so as to cast tears at imaginary moons. Furthermore, Little Red Riding-Hood tip-toed across the loam in order to prevent toad-stools staring up at her --- as wolf-heads. "I've no time for you, Smithers, old man. A child murderer merits no respect whatsoever. The only question which remains is this: do I finish it here? Or perchance, should I recall you to Eugene, Oregon... and maybe even further afield? Then and there you can be made to kick and dance on the gibbet. Yes sir! We've got to hang 'em high or loose, and always remembering that recusants die in calf-leather boots." With this Parthian shot Pinkerton Thoomey violently hacked through Old Man Smithers' neck. Soon it was severed completely, and it bobbed up and down like in an al-Qa'eda video.

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In finality or closure, then, Harlequin Thoomey ripped off Old Man Smithers' carapace or physiognomy. He then sent it aggressively leeward; thereby shooting out some interconnected clots of blood. These constellated like black soot and amber, or those blobs which cluster in Rauschenberg's graphics. Whereas Smithers' mask limbered up eyeless, rimless, lidless, bright scarlet and elongated. Thoomey held it aloft successfully and he shook it repeatedly on a gigantic hack-saw. In its ultimate *ex cathedra* moments, then, Smithers' rip-jaw represented a shaman's mumbo-jumbo. May it lift the veil off a Blackfoot's or an Apache's war recipe? Assuredly, this copper and cadmium disfigurement hinted at lycanthropy. In death's darkness didn't lightening flashes, war-paint and woad transfix its surface?

Hasn't Old Man Smithers exchanged places with a war-wolf?
You see, FEAR must be its own reward...

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-SEVEN: (157)

A century distant a primitive helicopter or an autogyro traverses great banks of snow. This black-beetle – plus its twirling blades – hovers over a form which is lying amidst tons of slush. It looks forlorn under a tepid sky; the latter a rhapsody in one prism's violet hue. But the atmosphere now that the avalanche has passed seems to be lighter and less oppressive than before. See(!), it's a woman these state Rangers have discovered, even though one of them keenly recalls a younger Harlequin Thoomey from the nineteenth century. He winches her to safety and the wind swirling around *la femme* – or underneath the 'copter – revives T.H.. It was only then that she came to realise why her husband's left his coat behind. She shook her orange tresses rather coquettishly.

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For Toblerone Harpie has survived.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-EIGHT: (158)

A clowning Harlequin steps back from Old Man's cadaver in one redolent dream-burst. Is it really occurring within these mists of spontaneity? For – against damnation's Faust – this clown wishes to prove Edward Lear's accuracy. Definitely so... because Smithers' bloodied tonsure reclines on a chair. It streams to the purpose of some wood, but is it any good? Regardless of this oneiric bias... one's clown measures infinity against itself. He spreads his arms wide in order to dish the Turner prize once and for all. "Jean Gimpel's contribution might prove even more trenchant now. Beginning with *The Cult of Art: Against Art and Artists*, Gimpel sought out a revolutionary philistinism. Yet this proved to be a cul-de-sac. What he really wished to achieve was a collective art – after the manner of *The Cathedral Builders*. Herein lay a traditional artistry... one which would reduce modernism to its rightful place: namely to research and

development. If post-modernism happens to be art's R&D; what purpose conceptual art (?)... that is: a notion about having one!"

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This Chipperfield's wastrel – at once reminiscent of Conan Doyle's story *The Shrouded Lodger* – toyed with his revolver. Do you require a snatch of song? Still and all... it comes out as:

Classical rascals

bring them back

hew and rack

'The Oath of the Horatii'

--- reverse Rome's sack

Serota's pap!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY-NINE: (159)

During this interval, a bereaved mother is understandably in tears or discomfort. Whereas – in colour scheme – an ultra-violet fixative betrays her innermost thoughts. "We moved out here to keep a distance", she mumbled... by way of an explanation. "His disease led other folks to betray their false hopes. In contravention to epilepsy being a brain-storm... why, few others use their minds to reckon on goodness' sake or fall-out. This clime proved accommodating before a bullet crossed his path from one side to another. Could it have been a dum-dum or possibly a perforated tag? In exceptional circumstances, then, we stayed on our farm after the railroad's purchase or buy-out... It was probably bound to be forlorn... our attempt to give him a life beyond such galactic fears." Within an environment of shaven or planed wood, a solitary oil-lamp illumined this bare cabin. Harlequin Thoomey's younger self is speaking now. He also wore a bandage around his scalp. "Mister Pinkerton agent, sir, we can't offer proper gratitude for deliverance from sin. Isn't the capital of Rhode Island called Providence?" "Thanks indeed, friend", nodded Harlequin Thoomey in reply. But like Icarus' model wings before the sun... this rescue proved to be insufficient.

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Even though – at a squint or one remove – the younger Thoomey harks back to his master... in that he stood apart, metaphorically speaking. He smouldered with a giant's torso and reincarnated Josef Thorak's *Atlas* outside Chicago's central railway station. Whereupon, and at dream-time's other end, Old Man Smithers' face was seen to dally on a pike. Did it scream in agony or fall from its nail like one of Ensor's masks? For their part, his features were painted in fluorescent yellow and they recalled a day-glow extra... but not on diamantine. For – like Marlon Brando's tribally-painted head in *Apocalypse Now* – it pulsed slowly. You see, in a screeching fit only a luminescent skull may win the Turner prize!

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SIXTY: (160)

Speaking of which, my friends, a great flurry of snow-flakes churns up underneath the autogyro. Isn't this an illustration of impressionism... no matter how inevitably miscued? Nonetheless, Toblerone Harpie arches under the chopper in her skin-tight leggings or lycra... as it rises from the tundra. A youthful Oregon ranger then hauls her aboard – a factor that's already been mentioned. During this transfer, however, her orange tresses stream behind the waif's back... while Harlequin's coat circles her upper body and moves sheer on a windy diagonal. It billows out on this lissom slip-stream whether suggestively or semi-erotically... and this is irrespective of how frigid it might be. Certainly, Toblerone had been loaned the coat for a purpose. What was it? Why, it definitely helped to conceal Old Man Smithers' stripped face from another dimension. For – deep inside this cover-all – it chafed against her left breast. Maybe Dumas' slip found itself contained inside an ebon box with convex sides? "Whatever happened to Smithers' 'family'?", queried our ranger over the rotor blades. (They basically roared, whipped, whelped and crashed in a cacophonous vein. Didn't these rotations inveigh upon concrete music or serial composition betimes? It all illustrated Elisabeth Lutyens' work... you know,

the architect's daughter? She wrote her variant on twelve-tone serialism as well and one of its key examples proved to be a Hammer horror film, *The Skull*, based on the Marquis de Sade). "Smithers' or Old Man's extended family are under the drifts", rejoined their former captive. "Their corpses happened to be piled on top of all else. Each one of them distributes some lost diesel fuel rather like in a car-crash. Perhaps they reach out to David Carradine's *Alien X*, *inter alia*, or even a compacted sculpture by Cesar? Every one of Smithers' ilk is then found to be red, grey, mouldy, sweaty, broken and ethically naked. In a rival continuum, though, dead molars still slaver over living flesh... I'm pleased to say." Yet the autogyro's composition drives out her final words.

ONE HUNDRED-AND-SIXTY-ONE: (161)

His job completed now we note that Britain's Grimaldi turns away. He also wafts a hand over his forehead in a mock-theatrical gesture. Might it turn out to be an example worthy of Sir Henry Irving himself? Our Glock then appears to be saying the following in soliloquy: "Oh! What a waste of mortal skin or sausage, by deuce!" Even though as he vents one ditty... a steaming luger continues to lie in a leftist palm. Mayhap a discerning viewer can see an abandoned draughts-board behind-hand or in one's visual foreplay? On it a tournament of cylindrical checkers mounts a charge. Look at this: several white discs surround a forlorn black one and it becomes enfiladed thereby. May the piece soon be jettisoned or abandoned – in accordance with Willie Ryan or apartheid's glory? Yet again, the real point here is dissolution... because all of these denizens are apt to fade away. They consist of Toblerone Harpie, Harlequin Thoomey, Old Man Smithers, Blackbird Leys Dingo, Lift Spenser Wingate, Pond Granite and Low Termagant *et al.* Slowly, oh so slowly... they allocate themselves to a multi-dimensional charge – wherein each spirit reconnects with a former husk. In point of fact a naked hand was spent after a claw's entreaty... whereas out of its ossuary swirls some abstract

expressionist dream-time. Surmounting all of this two etheric figures thence mushroom against the astral's blackness. One of them suggests a homily or a Conan Doyle-like nudity; that is, a sort of bath-chair affidavit after 'what the butler saw'. It wore a handle-bar moustache like Colonel Blimp. The other effigy, though, distills a Pitt-Rivers museum piece: and it delineates a horned god; at once carved, over-shooting, tubular or Gaudier-Brzeska like.

EPILOGUE:

<<<Back in the nineteenth century we find Pinkerton Thoomey taking a boy out of this lodge in order to essay the stars. The youngster's name was Dingo – despite a clown-mask having fallen from him so as to reveal much spittle and gore. Both man and child came to be limned in a light-blue; at least when set against a hut's internal radiance. Two house-props then betoken a Tree of Life on either side of our concluding characters – somewhat evidently. What has Harlequin really learnt from our adventure? There were essentially two double helixes to be considered: the first realises that these innocents must suffer and die. It is a law of life. The second relates to Joseph Smith's theology in *The Book of Mormon*. For don't these latterday saints postulate as to whether a superior man turns into a God after death and rules over a solar system?

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Whereas – over in the twentieth century – an autogyro turns away and makes a circuit across some snowy vales. Marshal Thoomey looked up at the vehicle – he knew that he'd be rejoining his wife in Eugene soon enough. A radio-car, swivelling on its caterpillars, would be rendezvousing with him on a ridge a mile or two distant. His heavy boots then cut Odin's tears into some retreating glaciers or ice-fountains. What did he feel throughout this? Many things, but chiefly relief over whether Old Man Smithers' face lay inside his pocket. It took up quite a lot of space within a pocket-book. Also, one of Harlequin's incarnations has winched Toblerone to safety moments before.

Yet – at this meaning's summit – a trench-coat and a felt-hat came to tip the balance. They engulfed a cool orange disc or a white sun, and Harlequin Thoomey – on his own behalf – strode resultantly towards a receding vista. For, if bereft of a magic mountain, Nietzsche has prophesied the superman's birth... a fact which doesn't connect with Jerry Siegel's or Joe Shuster's character. Isn't he already here?>>>

THE END