

# Post-Solar Histories.

Michael S. Judge.

when we know all things, the sun is black

- Meister Eckhart -

we rise into the failed libraries of *civitas*

- Lisa Robertson -

## an introduction to the modernized theory of solar waste

green saline glare through skylight some nonspecific naphtha-fractioned miles above us (paleontology of genetic overdubs cracked free of their petrol storage in hydraulic-fracture star, the osteocyte code worn through scab's telomere till acid patchbay feels again along the latency of small damp cables sprawling, reignition of an insect epoch, cyclical-resonant star's surgery upon the fossil record)

while mathematical parameters of the explosions rip through the trading floor, maybe not triggered yet and maybe triggered several hundred thousand times in a past which can probably not be called "recent," no matter how few hours or days ago it's said to have occurred: very little is recent now, very little bears the rhotic-to-sibilant sting of a history still seething, because there's so much machinery in place to salve that burn by overload, pure neuromodulator excess pumped in alkaline straits and the ruptured housing of lithium batteries across xerographic dry wash of the modem star's throughput,

always more, and not just more, and not just always, always more than more in thinner and thinner slices of time, cross-section of the MRI star in functional transplant to hemodynamic axes, the spike in the blood and the intravenous metallurgy surging

or immobilized at peak of waveform, carted out then to spread-spectrum distribution, and already, there you are – happened a few minutes ago, each of these fractally analyzed down to a functional infinity of subdivisions, and we're already talking about the vast and systematic impact, the means of its transduction and efficient routing, the relay stations and the overall drains on the grid, remember, voiceprint arthropod denatured through the voltage-control star until transformer-phonemes bellow black and moldy through a buried uninhabitable heaven of wires grown very nearly into roots, thick cabling shielded with materials several decades (i.e. several wars and their contingent procurements) out of date, gutta-percha, actual catgut,

no storehouse for that any more, no obvious supply chain, source code of the wetware star's medical devices implanted decimally or less in exposed rhizospheric tissue, wiretaps bacterial and otherwise, even fiber-optic cabling out of date now, what are we working with, we want transmitters through the black air, we want the slump of the Old War

(our "Europe" is underground, mostly because we killed it and paved over the scene of something more and worse than crime, the blinded ritual enactment of a slaughter parallaxic in all temporal dimensions, half-recalled where hot clotted blood gushed in uneven mucosal spasms from the cut throat of a bull and we stood under the grate, in the darker-than-dark, whole place lightless but for highlights off the fires outside occasionally catching tarnished cold and strips of verdigris, all this in a city not yet dead and certainly not yet Civitas Dei, though that of course was to follow, was being patched together in the same moment, theology as tourniquet aspiring to mend the strangers' bones,

each to each, not any one rescue but whatever scraps of spine and femur were available, a general and statistically mean effigy of massacre, penny for your old Guy, better make him old first, better age him through whatever means available, e.g. burial in soil soaked with industrial runoff and the mercury bleeding of the thermometric trees, bandwidth of chemical-weapon star recoverable as half-deleted file from the molecular diagrams still semi-visible where the dirt gives onto no bedrock but septic tanks, tunnels and siding for quarantined underground river, foundations of the buildings we destroyed to lend ourselves an earthed blank for its subsequent reoccupation,

an entire city – so I hear; wouldn't know firsthand, of course – beneath the last chamber under the last floor of the stadium complex in the valley, not just the stadium itself, see, but the whole sprawl of contiguous outbuildings, many of which the object of the real architectural excuse, not just to build a structure with capacity of 10,000-times-*x* as your present funding and ambition will allow at seats say \$100-odd a pop and then the multiplicands for concessions parking memorabilia licensing fees the separate ticket-vendor's overhead and admin money

gallstones dislocated shivering free of urinary tract and climbing up your throat in frame-rate shudder to recolonize your vocal tract a polypary relic of the sea salt still

hived in the microfiche of stem cell listen thermal noise of IP star where frequency envelope hardens into a pictography of briny rain swept in off the ghost

more as morphology than anything tangible something you can hear and see but rarely feel distinctly for all the sharp drypoint distinction of the way the waves bend and burst across the uneven surface of the world tumbleweed nests of concertina wire the way the current stammers against carbon evidence of its own vacated tenancy the way electron buildup may soon fire off its excess in opened panels of old CRTVs likewise piled up there and waiting on something more than their present economy of piecemeal salvage who wants the copper who wants the iron who can do something with the fuel cell here does anybody know if you can sell cadmium at cost to anybody ligand-gate potassium as surgical mesh thrown across and sutured to fluidic-computer star's eroded terminals where electrophoretic gel dries out into an etchwork of aborted lightning

stillbirth as may be or a planned termination, and you know by now which to expect, though you also know by now not to take it for granted that the pregnant ones planned the terminations, not that easily, not just taken in the blank blush of the word's momentum driven half-thawed over the uncomfortable air where people traffic in the physics of speech, less in speech itself than in the barometric forces it inhabits for a moment or two, carrier waves reliably latent in the tangle of spent breath and carbon-cycle reversal backmasked into a contact sheet of monoxide star's respiration –

they say Look look, they say You can date the screws and lumber and specific chemical composition of the paint, the way it does or doesn't pick up traces of certain nerve gases after extensive if none-too-careful testing, the way it verifies or just corroborates or stays basically silent about the idea of an attack we're trying to push, a screen-freeze embryology of bioweapon star in latex solution, titrated where the silicon-thick fog solidifies in crystallographic char, a molar-cracking pregnancy of logic boards borne hot enough to melt the flesh that picks them from the outskirts of a junkyard fire the height of hanging gardens)

(Babylon not only adventitious, about as far east of then as the junkyard burns east of now, i.e. not very far at all in terms of sheer mileage, but you're not going to get there as the crow flies, and the crow has lately been occupied with indistinct shapes on the ground and with the unmistakable if variegated air columns of sweaty rot rising off

them, sarcomere delay chain in cell-respiration star, erase head piled up with the lapsed architectonics of spent muscle, motor proteins unraveling, and the possibility of their conversion into the kind of heat you can carry in hand beak belly

out of Babylon, Bab-y-lon, and back to the regulated territories with all problems of semi-friendly and semi-cooperative governments in tow – but, specifics as they are, which is to say often pretty non-specific, this is *regulated* land, this is earth to which we've deeded ourselves the rights of measurement and surveillance in perpetuity, awarded an autologous no-bid contract for the parceling out to security services public and private and, most importantly, the shadow in between them, basaltic slab of neural process frozen in the lag spike of a modem star,

electrochemical indices fixed if fading in the radiological halo there, the cybernetic star's medical reverb, scraped from walls of centrifuge or rolled back on the tray after exposure to the hammering concussion inside the downed fuselage we've converted to diesel and then to purposes of clinical imaging, who knows where you can get airplane fuel around here other than from the wreck of another airplane, and who knows how the hell stable it would be, acoustic overload of heterocyclic star sending the whole sidechain structure into parasitic resonance, feedback turning its own bones to abruptly carnivorous purpose

out where the jungle briefly burns away to what looks like an airstrip, not, of course, a very finished one, but the kind we're told the narcos use, ahem, as if we were so unfamiliar with them, couldn't ourselves name them on sight, and as if the narcos had to invent them or were classified in such sharp distinction, as against, say, membership in the intelligence agencies, people taking the requisite sabbatical in what we'll be happy to continue calling the private sector exactly as long as it takes the heat off us, you know how that goes or probably should've heard, just like Department of Defense out to Northrup Grumman, Honeywell, Lockheed, whatever, only tending now toward information processing and the conversion of bioinformatic abstraction into tracts of definite and sited land, those places our highest-speed CPUs are still in the process of rendering, factoring virology of attack-vector star in unnaturally smooth massifs of unusually solid and simple color, same brown-yellow for all sand and same gray-blue for all mountain and same chemical sheen of industrial detergents for all alleged seas,

maybe out in the bay where they sculpt the artificial islands to look good in flyover footage, billionaires with actual jetpacks, yessir, future's just the damndest thing, some emir's son who likes to bankroll basejumpers with bodycams teetering on the roofs of hotels his father owns, not even to mention the massive contract awarded by the government to the airline and then by the airline back to relatives of somebody in the government, not improbably the same princelings who already own the airline, etc. etc., the thing is working how it's supposed to work, you see, this is no glitch, this is the optimum conservancy of the system, battery life kept high as we can keep it while relying on the ambient recharge from the cosmetic windfarms built there in a couple weeks and "turned on" only when diplomats visit, plus of course the much more powerful radiation spectra worked into all state-funded architecture, it's a complicated scheme here, something to do with digital dust and an upload sequence sent out 24/7 to all enabled devices, logging them in automatically to a storage facility which is always in the ongoing process of saving all their memory's contents and then erasing the originals, something like that,

I'm not entirely sure I understand but you get the idea, a massive project of transcription and the thrilled, the hapless acquiescence of a client class much wealthier than the system's actual architects but a significant number of inches beneath them in terms of access to continuity, likelihood that they'll keep their fortunes and titles after the next coup, probability of employment in former allied nations gone distinctly cold after the regional hub-country brought physical suit against one of its old satellites, you've heard about this?, claiming some vast coordinated attempt to hack into its diplomatic files and disseminate embarrassing information, as if anything could be much more embarrassing than the world you can sneak into just by opening your goddamn eyes,

and nobody knows if it really happened, and a significant part of the case hinges on a speech supposedly made by, christ, it gets convoluted in here, thickets of parallel narration and no accident at that, the way they try to streamline the casus belli for sympathetic resonance with stories you already know, a morphological assemblage from the agon scrap you're chemically prepared to consider plausible,

karyotype star subject to preprogram of sequencer's REM edits where the aliased DNA furs out at pixel-edge in cenotaphic script of its own deletion, a memorial

monument that follows the firing squad so seamlessly as to convince you that there's actually no difference between the dead and the things transplanted or demolished here in nomine their heavily-trafficked memory, well not *their* memory but our memory of them, well not *our* memory but somebody's, a general kind of hum, the parasympathetic cancers shivering in the air)

(slurry of spent menus, minutes of meetings that may or may not ever have occurred, let alone in the form recorded here or rather in the form of the record to which this third-order and stenographic recording gestures like indices of spinal constriction, respiratory throughput as grit blackening the biochemical galleries of the silicotic star, fuel chits, provisional agreements to provisional agreements for the still more provisional sale of arms,

not of course between the two countries hereinundersigned, no sir, that would be illegal, we are, you see, at war, well not technically at war, no declaration in the one legislature and on the other side nobody's sure exactly who the government-in-force might be, former despot's second son, the "weaker one," the one who spent his youth studying medicine in the European kingdom that used to own his home country, older brother meant to inherit the throne, you see, though they wouldn't have been saying "throne" back then, father was a charter member of a nominally Marxist party, maybe even Marxist-Leninist, which pretty quickly declined – under the pressure of First World foreign policy, American spies, American money for the half dozen factions of Islamist rebels, pardon, freedom fighters, the Democratic Army of whatever, enforced poverty, the world divided 90/10 by sanctions out of all the major landlord nations, not those who produce but those who pre-own the production of others – into a virtual autocracy, though they still at least feigned elections and were notably free of the religious harassment and outright murder that defines every single one of our "allies" in the region, presidential-cum-royal family members of a religious minority themselves, you understand, Alawites, I think, so they weren't about to gear up for pogrom in a Sunni nation, besides which the Christians, the Druze, the Jews, I think there are still some Yazidis there, not impossibly Zoroastrians or Manichees or whatever the contemporary terminology would dictate,



so not a war, but yes a war, but no not legally, not obliging us or anybody else to participate in a blockade or an embargo or whatever, which is good, because you sell over here and I sell over there and we often meet in the middle at a summit between the nonexistent “moderate rebels” whom we so love and the, not to point too fine a point on it, Al Qaeda affiliate we’ve been circumspectly arming to the tune of \$1 billion annually for the last 7 years, time now, I guess, to give up the pretenses, though only viva voce with the voiceprint on the door and the security squads glowering at each other across what must be the last strip of undamaged tarmac left on the entire Levantine shore, with the exception of Israel, of course, always that Israeli exception, and to say “glowering at each other” risks giving the impression that they’re on footing anywhere near equal, which is in no way true: one side’s got something much better than Soviet surplus rifles and Eastern Bloc bombs and plastique of South Africa, weapons caches sold off piecemeal by retreating legacy-case Boers, white nationalist groups still looking to blow up the buildings of any government body whereof the membership is more than, where would you place it, let’s say 10% black, and sure, fine, you want to press the issue, we’re probably giving them money too, and sure, fine, if I say “probably” I mean “we’re definitely giving them money,”

is it your place to criticize, have you calibrated with the requisite finesse every single proper name and not just the nominations but the habits you ought to know them to have, the excess to which a real expert must be aware that they remain prone, fertilizer truck or thermite charge spackled in with a trowel among the laths and caulking of a new congressional outbuilding, paint samples analyzed for the characteristic molecular twist and fractionation of nerve agents, sarin feedback loop, electrochemical star’s weaponized cryptography a sudden geometric rapture among withered protein chains,

but, like I was saying, no mistakes of equal footing here, that would be worse than fatal, i.e. embarrassing, and you can ill afford to be embarrassed, less even than these people can afford to die, as far as we know or care to find out, as far as we’re at all concerned – hazard that out under contrails off the planes that officially aren’t flying here, no-fly zone established in some dickwagging brinksmanship during the presidential primaries 18 months ago or maybe only gestured at, I can’t remember, the talk eventually devours its own object, which is of course the point, phagocytosis of the

bioweapon star cached now in flimsy datamining history of URLs and the preload imagery each drags behind like metal traces lighting up the bloodstream, welding shut the slack valves of a lipid-varnished heart,

so yes, it's happening, but no, "it's not happening," as if anybody expected a no-fly zone to work, or rather to work as it purports to – there's never, did you know this?, never been a no-fly zone that didn't lead to military intervention by the nation or nations who instituted it, the idea that it's going to prevent war is absurd and is meant to be so, this is just how you ramp up to direct involvement, a process clean and regulated as any simple factorial linkage hunting for, sniffing after, the terminal exclamation point that will arrive in the form of night-vision footage simulcast to shithead evening-news anchors spurting out orgasmic reveries, "I am guided by the beauty of our weapons," jesus fucking christ, infrared autopsy of white-phosphorus star reconstructing the aborted landmass

in the image of the half-ass architecture to be parceled out via no-bid deals among corporations which you oughtn't dare hint have maintained any kind of financial relationship with anybody in the West Wing, are you prepared to *prove* that assertion, can you provide any *documentation* substantiating the claim that the man in question didn't in fact and in toto sever his ties to the company in question, have you retained a lawyer, have you ever been sued for slander for libel for perjury for just not knowing your goddamn place

and, to be frank, something a good deal worse, your sin against not only your own misplaced station but against the entire organizing order, a Great Chain of Being just as literal as any plodding Methodist's, adequately summarized by microfiche of foreign mammals – at the bottom – zebra, quagga, rhino, hippo, lion, and at the top their likewise-foreign hunters, gathered here in what you might as well convince yourself is a reenactment of amnesiac religious slaughter, hooked knife to a bullock's throat, machine-gun barrels preening out of helicopter doors)

(homo monstrosus, pourquoi pas, mon capitaine, il y a, au monde et aux cieux, beaucoup plus choses que celles dont ta philosophie à rêvé, Horace, something like that, I'm extemporizing for the dubious benefit of what I take to be a few old ex-colonial subjects, gaunt men the color and texture of tannin-soaked leather, 50 years' tobacco

fumes collecting in net curtains, each with a small, finely trimmed mustache and one of those flat-topped Fidel Castro ballcaps, the name of which I've never known nor have any definite plans to ascertain, these are guys, must be in their 70s by now, whose brutal and mandatory education in killing and dying turned out to have prepared them for decades of selling newspapers and cigarettes and dealing as they found they had to deal with the squalls of local criminality that attended any given regime, because

it turns out, Ami, Yanqui, though you might not've guessed it, that a significant element of Totalitarian Fascism is precisely the opposite, I mean that any given day's reverses and slaughters may come at the hands of some utterly uniform and faceless detachment of federal butchers, sure, it might, but not very often and then mostly in official wartime; it arrives more often in the form of the same shitheel gangsters you knew under the last government, always by face and name but rarely to converse with, and if you did, so much the worse, everyone below them was a potential sacrifice, either to rival gangs or to government prosecutors or to, in the terminal stage, a UN war crimes tribunal, the prosecutors at the International Criminal Court – fat fucking chance, I know, but they were always after dossiers, even for things they knew would never, ever go to trial, and I gather that the primary means of personal advancement in *that* system is the arrogation of such cases unto oneself, videlicet, so much the better if the case is never heard, because then 1} you can't possibly lose and 2} you can "have" 3 or 4 such cases at a time, insisting on their interpenetration, which is true enough, of course, but true for the moment in a way that'll never matter, the judge knows he won't have to listen and you know you won't have to talk and the indicted know that only the lowliest among them will ever be compelled to show up anywhere or do any time at all, especially not à l'ascenseur pour l'échafaud, what we sometimes like to call the chair électrique for the vulgate's sake of anybody who might be half-listening with a half-knowledge of English, probably better than our collectively spotty and phrasebook grasp of French, though likewise probably not better by much –

so you get through as you can and you die as you have no choice but to die and you make your various and serial peace with the same evil little shits as they receive or lose their funding, their permission, their official sanction from sequent fascist regimes, all or none of which may be called "fascist," either by themselves or by the international press or by the Press Secretary of the United States, and so on, and so on, entirely an

economic matter here, we may briefly define “fascist” as “authoritarian in a way that doesn’t make us any money,”

and the skinny old men are smoking short black cigarettes with gold filters and are staring at the “nonpartisan international weapons inspectors,” who are notably not raking dirt or bagging stone and plaster or scraping paint, latex-archived signal chain of biomechanical star bristling through typography of peak-oil formulae, erosion spectra ringing differently on the touchscreen of the frequency analyzer depending on the section of the city from which each has been quarried, here’s the coast, here are the Damascus suburbs, here’s the Settlement zone, variously Judea Samaria Gaza I think or maybe that’s West Bank or Hebron or whatever, the hospital at Golan that flies Israeli colors but regularly seems to discharge what we think are ISIS militants into convoys heading north again, and

that, to be quite clear, doesn’t mean it’s *not* Israeli, ask the Turks if you can find them, wait on the highway median where the buses come down from the Balkans full of week-long medicine headaches, over-the-counter hangovers that seem, at this point, unlikely ever to end, CCTV escarpment-dross of the radiopharmaceutical star in thick bandwidths of cellular alluvium, the echo-scrim, the stippled field of granular reverb, postgain exons of the cybernetic star a process of script-arrogation now, the green-on-black jabber trying to reload the whole peninsula, earlier and relatively primitive code systems unearthed from what we half-expected to be an ammunition dump, outdated medical machinery leaking the blanked fuel-cell blood of bootscreen star’s xenotic litmus glyphs,

and the error of equal footing then, like I was saying, the error not to make: yes, there are two “security forces,” what you might indifferently call troops, each side made partly of beefy men stuffed into expensive suits too small for them and with forefingers permanently pressed to wireless earpieces, muttering thickly sibilant into headset mics, and partly of whatever military escort they could dredge up, uniforms of half a dozen services, several of which have been discontinued since the unrecorded end of the last government, specious continuity assured by the fact that, oh, say 70% of last election’s voters were allowed to pretend to vote again,

but the weapons on one side are much newer, and the argot in the headsets much more patent-brusque, neologistic, scraped in biopsy of field manuals’ glossaries, and,

above all else, one side can kill and get away with it, “provoke an international incident,” perhaps, but not in such a way as to endanger its membership once each member has fucked off out of here, back in the armored van, boys, back to call in the coordinates that will remedy this long-illicit continent by recourse to grids of pale weapons-grade sky)

(to which addend surveillance-system video where voiceprint login detonates adenosine star’s phosphate weapons cache, deep in the periphery of the cell and printed circuit, bits of lithium and copper undervolting the biofeedback, then

unedited live feed + TV broadcast on a 6-second delay + front-of-house audiofeed straight out of XLR jacks on the mixing desk + the playback on the monitors in the lobby, subject to just a little bit of scrubbing and addition of a stylized and copyrighted chyron over shitty automated subtitles +

the real-time stream online, which is very much like the lobby playback but with timecodes flickering across the bottom of the screen and patches of strange aliasing, acoustic weaponry of airframe star resampled into resampled patches of chorus/flange/phase, out of tune or out of synch, acquiring new labial histology for enunciation of unborn vowels, embryonic vocable a question of the enabling tissue, amniocentesis of file-transfer star the envelope filter cutting somite frequencies to throat-map and topology of wrinkled foul silk cordage +

of course the CCTV system in strangely luminous grayscale, everything modeled in a sculpture of lunar tumors, chemotherapeutic star’s lymph-printing application to oncology of moonlight in the marrow and white blood reshot on bales of heated dust, enormous fossil record of the exobiologic star as archived in and uploaded from a milky leukocyte bandwidth of paralytic satellites,

all this on screens next to each other, piled up vertically, not perfectly in time, what did you expect, the expertise can only go so far and even then we don’t necessarily have the money or even the inclination to hire only experts; the problems, ah, the sorrows of a front organization, a holding company, the private and thus paradoxically the public face of an Agency, and you know more or less which one, in recent receipt of a Strongly-Worded Directive from a congressional inquiry designed to provide a reprimand which none of the members of the committee expect or even want to be taken seriously,

you get it, they were preening, they were looking for TV time, some just wanted to be seen with grave faces and hands to temples and heads shaking against the tepid waveform of late-night testimony, working for the People, “some corrupted abstraction of the People,” deeply so, mutilated mast-cell output rising from the rifts in granite gargoyles and birds of prey still riveted to the upper deck of the stadium, part of a single stone once, it’s alleged, but long since torn away by acidic rain and the molecular camber of the halide bulbs, metalloprotein dross caught in the proud-flesh glare of massive lighting rigs that don’t fully turn off for hours after you’ve thrown the killswitch, metabolic pulse-code of methanogen star eating through the decimals at the eastern end of the IP address toward a stranger and more frangible mathematics, algebra returned to the broken spring, who bonesets in the blackness of the zero rising from the desert floor while uninhabitable light screams over here, biocide sunshine over the null-terminator star’s carboniferous stratigraphy,

and some, not content with committee membership and concerned facial expressions in footage which they deeply hope will be cut down to individual frames and used to illustrate this incident in all high-school textbooks and cheaply produced documentaries for decades to come, have written up and tried, though not so very hard, to memorize whole paragraphs of what they regard as scathing rhetoric, with the scathe applied “strategically,” ahem, wouldn’t want to make the wrong people angry, “the wrong people” hear meaning anybody with real power of reprisal, anybody who can go above your head, and when you think of the airspace above a congressman or -woman, well, you better not be thinking of the Senate or the White House or even the Supreme Court, not in this schematic,

and best of all if you wrench yourself free of “above” and “up the ladder,” the hierarchical stigmata there: this is not a question of height as you understand it; height applies, if at all, only as a half-aware reference to the variable effects of gravity-at-distance, the separation from the nodular core, central pattern generator printing swallow reflex on synaptic noise of limestone granite chalk, mineralized throughput of fluidic-computer star simplified via lossy download to a set of volume measurements and sketchy graphs of chemical constituents, x% metal and y% stone and z% compounds we’d taken heretofore as exclusively biological,

which is to say perhaps presence of fossils, of bacteria, of the interstellar viruses among the oil-weeping shale, lo-res printout of biochemical star bleeding dark and heavy water against the insoluble lip where iridescent gasoline bands harden into finalized hard copy,

so you should, I mean to see to say, be looking sideways, rather than anything you took for above: dismiss the diagrams as known, or rather don't dismiss, but take them lightly, as a public-access legend to be held somewhere along the sides of the mind, soft temple flesh aching to the thrum of postsynched temporal lobes slipping out of phase, difference tone of overclocking wetware star not yet so sharp as to detonate the piezo quartz but getting there, a whine of stress matrices roughly interlocking in the void heart of the crystal,

all of which laterality will require alternate axes of reference, and if you want to get off here, I can't blame you, although there are some who would insist on a kind of benign contempt; I mean, you quit, and the people charged, often self-charged, with monitoring all this will only feel confirmed in their suspicions-cum-megalomaniacs, that nobody outside their cénacle wants to know how the Real World works and that they thus are justified in doing pretty much whatever they want, under a kind of stammering and serially ruptured jurisdiction, the bloodwork of a seek-judder star,

in which you overstep and hear nothing and overstep and are chastised but allowed to continue and overstep and have gone past the last retort of any chastisement and maybe just continue overstepping forever, remember the stories about the medevac helicopters brought down with threats of shoulder-mounted RPGs and used instead to ship enormous bricks of heroin to South Pacific islands or, better yet, to ship bodybagged GI corpses whose viscera had been scooped out and replaced with about 40 pounds of black tar per cadaver)

(summoned by a call across the wastes, ragged barking and then pissed-off seething whispers, the full vocal range of the aggrieved white male when under the impression that nobody's listening in,

which is wrong, of course, I could if so inclined provide you with at least 3 alternate versions of the same phone call right now, rip them down off the cell towers most certainly, and nothing necessarily so primitive as a literal wiretap, though why not,

we might do or be thinking of doing or have already done that anyway, to say nothing of the glottographic MRI accessible remotely, bootscreen star's xenotic transcripts as in airport-scanner imaging of the hot fat and gristle in the senator's throat, so

called across those wastes, you'd remember, feeling the ground stiffen from the swamp on which the place is built, a salt-and-alkaloid autopsy of a peptide-computer star, to all the mnemonic pavement and constantly torn-up blacktop, or

at least I *would* be feeling it if I were on foot, excuse me, *he* would've felt it if he were on foot or in any car but this one, which, though it doesn't look especially official or expensive, rides too smoothly to be anything but high-end motor-pool material, chassis probably sawn in half and reinforced and welded back together, whole frame alloyed with something non-civilian, and if they went to that expense and trouble, it's probably specialized elsewhere too, like bulletproof partition between backseat and the driver, that would be smart, like bulletproof windows and one-way glass, and almost certainly bugged, on multiple layers, multiple and parasymphathetic systems all eavesdropping on each other and all recorded to different disks in different buildings belonging to or leased by different interested parties all over town, across the state, across the country, yes it's even possible that they're on several different continents, you know we do a lot of our hard storage in the Caribbean and the South Seas in general now,

something complicated the details of which I don't really know about former colonial holdings and islands officially designated territories, a whole generation of premature opioid addicts nursing war wounds on Guam with not a VA hospital or even administrative building anywhere inside 1,000 miles, funny little bit of legislature that, "all military or ex-military personnel must have access to aforementioned services inside a radius of" etc., but we made a point to exclude the ocean from any tallying of distances, so you get what you get here, which is nothing, which is decorative fruit rotting on the tourist trees and hungry nervous rats in the treetops something shimmying down the trunks for pecks at deliquescent melons, It's a Man's Life in the Army,

and something else about wifi and the Keys to the Internet, a British administrator who's turned himself into the virtual overload of Tonga, I think it's Tonga, you'd have to ask somebody who understands it all better, and you could, almost certainly, with access only to the several systems of surveillance active inside this single



car on this single night, parasitology of the remote-execute star logging into viral runtime from half-secured locations in an insecurable world,

not that we won't try, well, half-try, and not, not certainly that we won't claim to have achieved it all a long, long time ago and now to be just troubleshooting, ces petit évènements, tu comprends?, which is the idea here, part and parcel of the idea moving the other way, a dead tensor, attack-vector weaponization of the petrochemical star,

where the ground shifts from the marsh to all the concrete in the federal city, all the monuments to shit we all know didn't really happen, certainly not as advertised, but

oh, amen, amen, I say to you, what profit it a man to lose these bitter specious innocences? I mean really? I mean what use do you plan to make of knowing certain things aren't true when you can't do anything about them and will only ever be half-believed, even by those who claim and seem to act upon total faith in you, because they know better than you do that there's not much point in prolonging the pains and more-than-symmetrical punishment of incredulity, help me out here, Jeremiah, fuck almighty I hope you're not one of those weirdo quasi-religious cases who believes there's some intrinsic value to the truth as such,

I hope you've learned by now that – let me figure out how to put this in a way you'll understand and, more than understand, *believe*, a way that will bite into your flesh, the sarcomere graft's sweet infection of an acetate star prone under the needle,

OK, let's say this: I hope you've learned that no single version of the truth – and we may add parenthetically here that all systems in which there's one single truth presuppose God, if not as literal being etc., then at least as divine mind etc., the omniscience with the faculty of knowing exactly what did happen and of whose omniscience all partial human knowledge is the inferior copy, lo-res, low-rent, pixilated, scarified with screen burn, toxicology of print-through star a cicatrix mapping points of bacterial breach –

let me start over, I hope you're learned that no single version of the truth is valuable as such or in itself, or at least not very valuable, nowhere near the optimization of its profit potential, which ought to be enormous and which need not restrain itself to manifestation as literal money, pip pip, old chap, don't you ever want to get over *that* hump, don't you want to be one of the men, and we do our part to make certain that they're mostly men, who use no money, who don't need it, who buy with space and time

and only rarely condescend to figure them in financial numerals and who, when they do thus condescend, do it only as sensory gust of force, the sheer giddymaking plunge of enormous numbers dropping through your gut,

no, no, the value is precisely in the management of parallel versions of the truth, in the dissonances provoked between them and in the careful cultivation of alliances and hatreds based on those differences, the value's in the lack of standard tuning, yes, you see, we're strikingly tolerant and pluralist here, we notably cross-multiply the reference tone by any war's or ecocide's mantissa)

(disk controller downclocked to resample toward a grainily aliased whoosh the tracking-error coefficient of the biogenetic star, everything coming in massively thermophilic and hellbent for treble, all phonemes freshly bleeding sibilant, the sound of a quartz clock ruptured by syringes dipped in something translucent and violently astringent,

peroxide scream across the tape-loop generations of accumulated eschar, white decay products of petrochemical star datamined for possible ghost alloy,

anything blank, anything improbably pale, a gauze, a scrim, an overlay, the incredible molecular convolution required to produce the appearance of nothing much, Kraft und Weisse und the third, the triune cipher censored out for reasons best known by certain international corporations operating now under new names and behind such a dead-cell labyrinth of holding companies and titles deeded over to the provisional governments of recently-invaded island nations, nothing you'd want to get yourself involved in, understand, nothing wherein your involvement would probably dig up much more than a few subpoenas never honored or, at very best, capable of troweling up a few strictly local worms, sacrificial meat tendered by the juniormost partner of the 4<sup>th</sup> best retained law firm, finally securing the brief detention and release-on-his-own-recognizance of, what, a smalltime pawnbroker, a Third World ex-cop running guns, a "traveling salesman" of "radio equipment,"

wink until your face splits, neural paralysis along the sagittal plane, extinction-layer printout of the stereotactic-image star vivisected for spread-spectrum distribution by a blown tweeter that coughs up a charred scrap of paper speaker cone each time it stammers out another detached cross-section of the missing hi-end waveform,

electrochemical star torched by the recombinase spot-weld till it should sleep along the routing of the fiberscope, arthropod surgeries retained in the more pliant flesh As Long As Life Endures, that long falling cadence in monosyllables, 5<sup>th</sup> beneath – tonic – major 3<sup>rd</sup> – repeat – 2<sup>nd</sup> – tonic, aren't we all glad to be home, isn't this just the place to be, regret to inform you, actually, that you're going to be detained for just a little brief while here, couple issues of documentation that want sorting out, oh nothing major, don't you worry, you'll soon be on your way, learned my unctuous manners from the secretarial staff of – and this may seem paradoxical – the cheapest kind of GP, dentist, psychiatrist, people who take out ads in the phonebook nobody reads anymore, echo-suppressor autopsy of MRI star zeroed out to cauterize the timestamp,

yes indeed you might've noticed that, I take it you're a denizen of such similarly pseudo-public spaces, take it you've done your time in waiting rooms and lobbies as indeed we all have, not "all" in the general sense but all of us specifically right here right now, some people never have to wait at all and, when threatened with a wait, take it as though you'd proposed to stripsearch them on a jumbotron, I mean good god, can things really have been so easy for you, yes, in fact, they can thus have been, you'll want to follow me to the executive runway, no TSA check here, private plane, after all, chartered though not by you, so if you want to bring it down, bomb it, reroute it along the geometrical imperfections on the edge of a boxcutter's blade, well, you know, that's really kind of your prerogative here, thyroidal blackbox of the airframe star secreting oily slabs of fossil throughput,

but you don't, why would you, everything's on schedule, including the scheduling of the drugs, and one way to measure wealth in this country is to observe Subject's ability, or lack thereof, to do drugs in public, to attract virtually no notice in doing them, or only such as envy may compound itself with, and we're not talking amberoid prescription bottles and so forth, we're not looking at a blue plastic pill planner with MTWThFSSu on each hinged lid, I mean

a plastic baggie, a small pile of powder in an empty phone case, a compact makeup unit with scratches skew-plotting all over the mirror, littoral drift to measure the CCTV videofeed of antibody star, the compromised cells erupting black as in that last solar eclipse, when everything was suddenly very, very, *very* old, when the Earth gave up its age underneath the withered darkness of the sun, "Sumerian time of

sackcloth & ashes,” some remembered, ampersand for the ornate articulations of the ritual death, a profaned thing pushed so far through the metalloprotein traces of its profanation that it becomes site-specifically holy again, weapons-testing range the sacramental continuity of a biomechanical star less to be resurrected than to be dug up and recrucified on timescales so immense that the land beneath the gallows the firing-squad wall the chamber into which we release the gas should thence resemble a random walk along the dirtied vectors of a compromised cleanroom, cross-scripting star’s deleted files of dust slicing the lab technicians’ corneas,

and if you’ve got money, or if you’re in the kind of place to which only the moneyed have access, you can just pop out the phone case the compact the empty shell of a \$10 cigarette lighter and get to swallowing snorting spritzing whatever should attract your moment’s bodily attention, physiological overtone series of the millimeter-wave star mapping out a topographic target of irradiated fats,

the southern borderland of a country with enough money and white-lipped dead time in its clenched gut to have attained total and permanent surveillance – and, in passing, if you really believe it’s total and permanent, you’re just as gullible as they are; yes, they have the most intimate exterior of everything all the time, on film, on tape, on disc, on solid-state drive; you really believe that’s all there is? come to see a kind of awful hope in terrorism, even? basaltic reflex arcs of the remote-execute star firing where motor spindle autografts to botched electron gun? –

except, of course, where money makes it unnecessary, as here, in the executive lounge, what we’d never defame by calling it the waiting room for Gold Star members, Platinum Reserve Club, the captain welcomes you and you exclusively, and if you take a little bump off the edge of a storage-locker key, hell, even crush the pill in plain sight and blow a long shuddering rail off the pleather armrest, rolled-up dollar and corresponding nose bumping over the mottled texture of the pad hard enough to imprint a migraine’s waveguide back on slack cortical surfaces, seek judder of biosynthetic star your new grammar’s imperative,

well, all who watch, or rather all who face the same direction and happen accidentally to see, will assume it’s a medical thing, can’t keep them down otherwise, hard to swallow, hard to digest, straight into the mucous membranes is the most effective manner, or else it’s a question of efficacy, need the hit right now, can’t afford to

wait until we've been in the air for an hour, gets motion-sick, gets travel-panicked, would otherwise be screaming through the whole takeoff, reengineering operating system of bioavailable star, or else it's just none of our business save as we're in that same business and happy to see our efforts appreciated in the field)

(but-there-was-a-point-to-have-been-made, all grammatical frieze now, that retroactive Doppler scree, parataxis of the histocompatible star's signal-clipping phase transition, a kind of phantom pain modeled in a surplus inner ear, effects of shifting barometric pressure elevation temperature distance from gravitational node the mascon in the lunar surface milking spider-poisoned pulp from a satellite mummified in concentric swaddling of dirty gummy gossamer the integrase text-edit of the lignified star migrant like radionuclide through flesh of a tree much older than the world it's growing into,

there was, I remember, and out there near, and trophic to, the freight yard where the squat broadshouldered man bends at his waist – he looks nearly pre-Columbian, dark straight hair, skin that nearly glows copper-red underneath the noise-gated sun, a cancerous burn nearly invisible but intact behind the chemical filtration of the weather here, metastases of a film-chain star in long torturous process of dry transfer – and speaks the rhotic flexile Spanish that you hear near the border, not exactly bitten off, not hard-edged, but a kind of iron sizzle to the rising of the short clipped vowels, every one terminating itself early to hear the black perturbation of the air that outlasts its own ending, deep ferrous systems of metastable heat, the thermal remnants' print-though in the feedback band of cybernetic star,

and he's bent at the waist and speaking that Spanish to somebody we can't see, other side of the boxcar, the shorter end of the rectangle, and then he turns, a little bit surprised, and stares down at the ground where he must've felt or heard something, and his eyes widen, and he seems nearly captivated by his own sudden transition into English, peering with his hands on his knees and saying *Oh no bitch you is a centipede!* in a voice suddenly soft as a child's,

and the point's cotangent here, is contiguous, waiting on extracted biochemical sine of the FM-synthetic star, it hits this place and others on the way between here and there, which was to say: it's actually the, whatever you want to call them, assistants,

receptionists, secretarial staff of the most expensive medical technicians who can afford to be waspish, cold, even outright angry, who can look at the card that certifies your inclusion in a cheap pyramid scheme, bullshit coerced purchase of insurance that covers nothing until you've already paid out a deductible that would wreck your entire life for decades to come, unless, of course, you lie and say you've got enough money to pay for it, at which point they'll stop *telling* you to pay it, because this is America, let that be a capsule lesson if but little else, what did the fella say with his yellow eyeballs rolling up rakish and the pupils gone to amphetamine pinpricks and the yellowy teeth sprawling from his gums, "Free to those who can afford it; very expensive to those who can't," right-o, mate, we were, of course, a British colony at one point,

it's the lower-middle-class establishments in which they feel it necessary to assume that air of false Midwestern friendliness, here a geographical term but an affective one as well, moderate chemical dependency on SSRIs you're deeply ashamed to be taking, no mention of them, ever, except in the kind of publicly-drunk intimacy of older women leaning forward in clouds of loud perfume to which they too are obviously unaccustomed, half-grinning with the embarrassment of the disclosure, not that coastal shit where everybody loves to detail his or her regimen of psychiatric medications as substitute for any other very evident personality and as claimjump to a little ore-seam of trauma easily translatable into social currency, you know, spindle us up around that capstan, cap'n, and see if you can't make something out of all that lost woolgathering, nitrocellulose star's reuptake filmed on kilocycle frequencies and transferred to decaying safety stock,

no, there remains a residual embarrassment here and a false and falsely pious sort of de rigueur sympathy, oh you poor poor thing, I'll say a Saxon rosary for you, all of this is germane, believe me, still on the way to that appointment with the man who screamed across the dead line, reopened now via Executive Order or National Security Directive #whatever it was, I don't offhand know what a "trunk call" is but apparently this is a trunk call, some solid-state continuity powered down after a resurgence of '80s Cold War paranoia, i.e. after a massive amount of time and money were pumped into that adventitious "feeling," and still more time and money afterward, a kind of self-renewing little circle here, you get me, login screen to cyclic-resonant star hard-freeze on the upload bar and, please God, may it never melt again,

the carefully maintained wastes between anywhere you'd be coming from and anywhere you'd plausibly be heading, where, yes, they still do use trains, and people still do have to make sure they're working, though fewer and fewer people, and those who do appear less and less likely to talk to you or even look at you, here on official business and with armbands bearing institutional acronyms, white lettering on black plastic, at least for a little a while, just till that all seems a little gauche and too much an invitation to unwanted scrutiny, given the way they're altering the insides of the boxcars, given the asbestos padding stapled to the corrugated walls, given the 20 pairs of handcuffs bolted roughly at waist height)

(tinnitic sizzle of the treble strata reignited, rutted fossil waveform lighting up with the exhaust-spectrography of biodiesel star, and

"I'll make you deal, like any other Candidate," no doubt you will, no doubt at all, a hitching shuffle, triplicate meter with a crippled leg, Fathered and Sonned to all redundant hell and waiting on the awkward staccato grace-note of the Holy Ghost, demagnetized pickups to archived biofeedback of the cybernetic star as excess magnetic error and forced realignment of the tracking arm, a filter sweep like the cellular rejection of alien vitamin, mutilated GABA star in acetate printout depicting the distance between these outskirts and the "city proper," such as it is, in a sequence of sunken massifs, one semi-continuous drowned archipelago a clipped signal-domain from here to the thing they call the center, though it could hardly be central to less,

save of course as target, and you remember, and you've perhaps forgotten: there were those few weeks after the attack – you know which one; I could only, at the moment, be talking about one; you remember the iconography erupting and, more than any single bonfire of the vanities, the Eikonosphere itself subject to final screaming breach, reuptake of the airframe star metabolized beneath intensive phage therapy and surfacing as trace readings of raw carbon, steel, jet fuel, human flesh alloyed with dripping metals, chrome and iron and melted polyvinyl chloride, cephalopod partitioning of bioglass star codec-beached as shipwreck in the bloodstream,

you remember, you may more or less try not to, you may approximately drug yourself with the various visions since then, the infinitely variegated subspecies and hybrid forms of bullshit reverse-engineered to replace the horror of the moment's eye-

myth, muthopis clear as any could be, moths bursting in a cigarette-burn constellation of scorched dust against the serial surgical interventions of the wet-gate star, optical-printer pharmaceuticals for editing the scratches into their own nervous sideband continuity, the odd etchings and hairline cracks, cymatic glyphs where black-glass substrate hives biomechanical star's operating system as a sequence less of nodes than of the tangent skew that constitutes each of their wounded novae –

there were, I meant to say, you meant to hear, who could do either now over the sound of the flicker-noise wind whipping through the “empty” house, a thin-walled shack on marsh's edge that visibly leans and audibly cracks and moans against the gale, throughput of blood-brain star an antibody detox for the retroviral architecture's implant here, and

it's only “empty” in the sense of the census, in that nobody officially lives here, and you could, and in latter days of ahem ahem official inquiries subpoenas handed out along the lowest possible rungs of what we might euphemistically call parallel power structures you see the problem here you grasp the need for circumlocution I take it and if I take it wrong God help ye who are wrongly taken for the pain of it will not redound to *me*, you understand, a sidechain, a compressor gulping through the punctured diaphragm, a preamp plugged right into the glitching spinal grammar of a sample-voltage star, but as I say

in latter days we will in fact make that exact argument, in district courts whose cases are always threatening to go federal but never do, slick fuckface prosecutors against even slicker defense teams, all DAs themselves once and long since escaped that measly racket for a luxurious private practice with exactly the same clients they were wont to gentle and assuage back in the public sector, I mean, look, if you're not in this to run for governor at the very least, AG first, perhaps, and then Senate or President, there's no goddamn reason to hold on here, none at all, the rewards are better this side and you don't have to throw away your address book, that's the way, softly now, his stomach's weak his hands shake his eyes are thickly shielded with keratin or glaucoma, genetic splice of RF-hacking star the sound of multipath static edited into some soluble plant sugars and mineral salts translocating slowly up the spinal-column cellulose,

ahem, ahem, we would now like to prepare ourselves to have retroactively prepared ourselves to make a possible future statement, you can see how this goes, can't



you, can understand the hesitations and the evasions and the final subdued and secretive holophrase in which we offer a single word to those equipped for its reception, a term that'll sound like nothing much at all, another blank bloc of tepid and bland air, but if you're up on the jargon, you'll understand that this word itself constitutes an act, a threat made manifest, a measly acrid little Incarnation, *que milagro*, were you listening there, coil tap on the aneurysmal angel where a DNA-repair star twitches ataxic against the film gate between riverbanks of obsidian bloodclot hydrology,

it really is that quick and that simple, look for the stammer, look for the thing that can't quite hold its place against the lens nor then against your eye, projector bulb devouring reams of denatured protein math, peptide-computer star an acid text-file broken down to lipid buffer-code as camouflage for viral intervention,

so the guy who used to be the DA says *this* to the guy who's currently the DA who responds by saying *that*, and the "accused" in the right docket is, if upset at all, only irritated with the expenditure of time better put to other uses, twiddling thumbs where hands cross on a belly either swollen with rich food or washboard-flat with the strange, if basically explicable, muscle-fetish pride of men who'll never need to apply physical strength to a single task for the rest of their natural and unnatural lives, which is just as well, given the circumstances, see, a synthol fillup, botulism toxin rippling aftermarket through unusually smooth foreheads, petrochemical star's plugin rewriting penicillin machine-code of the blood software till gristly patch of marrow should let fall the upload-sequence scales and allow a 6" telephone-jack login,

just a little discomfort here, don't you worry, prelude to something wonderful I'm quite happy to assure you, the massively overloading opioid reverb of a cyclic-resonant star,

and the "plaintiff," for obvious scare-quote reasons, nervous as though he's about to be remanded to the death cells and the slaughtering-dock himself, or herself, or simply itself, just a carnal function here, fleshed coefficient place alongside useful map of a new patent drug's ungainly distribution through the bloodstream, catch and drag along FM-synthetic star for waveguide graft we'll want to bitsmooth when we've got it on the in-home screen and monitors incline to us as heliotrope protein stacking up inside the orchid's starving bones)

(white serotyping scripts chatter through bootscreen of a blood-hydraulic star,  
and

perdoname, te lo ruego, te lo imploro, Say-Ee-Ah?, Day-Eh-Ah?, no sé, persona  
no me dice nada, es imposible to figure out exactly what's supposed to be going on here,  
I mean

I know I've got the approximate contours, know where we're headed, hell, have  
known it ever since the spiderhole, Soviet surplus rifles and the weapons we sent here  
during that whole Mujahid thing, all clustered around the mouth of the 6-foot shaft,  
mining his own dead future world there, trying like hell to claw and hack into the  
archives of the aborted biochemical star, a world severally terminated in parallel wombs,  
each of which might well have been left here along with the weapons caches and the  
alleged reservoirs of poison gas, nerve agents, which, if they exist at all, were almost  
certainly *our* little deposits, kept here like medicine against the advent of an inverse  
plague, a state of health so robust as to demand our immediate and deleterious  
intervention, what otherwise would be the point of empire, this I ask you, this I beg, if  
not to decide where the lepers are allowed to go and where they aren't, to manufacture  
the lepers if necessary, and it's nearly always necessary or at least we've decided it is and  
must be, to quarantine the chora of the bioweapon star,

a tetanus parenthesis of riven gangrenous metals bracketing the function's {x},  
cutting off the lymphatic system from the wetware star's antigen battery, calling up just  
enough infection to kickstart its foreign-body response and then flicking the killswitch  
when we're "done,"

and might as well say that with as much distance as voice and gesture can  
manufacture, because of course it's never done, of course there's always leak and excess,  
multipath, resonant circuitry of immunologic-computer star cross-linking the fossilized  
white-blood stratigraphy, um

"steroid metaphrast, 5% memory, hyperbonding of the insect," as you'd  
remember from the bushes, Monsieur Poher, crouching on what I've always imagined as  
a highway median or bit of enforced municipal greenery at the center of a roundabout  
where the fumes rise all day in bruise-blue layers that make everybody lightheaded and  
stomach-sick, shut down several outboard quadrants of the brain, a mild chemotactic  
lobotomy of remote-execute star in gamma vectors coming down like neon surgery from

signage that won't light up anymore because its gases have spread through the whole contaminated city,

but, knowing what city it was, probably went some other way, albeit with much the same epidemiological modeling, nearly identical software patches streaming from hydrocracked mRNA star:

a disgustingly manicured park, so lushly green and absolutely level that it's more than artificial, it's genuinely eerie, that Freemasonic symmetry and stillness that calls for hieratic butchery, a priestly caste of slaughtermen, exactly who you think they'd be, hoods and pruning hooks to bear-bait the glyph eunuch, cuneiform printout of the fluidic-computer star immobilized in the form of architecture and broken down when useful to give off the fatty sooty flame of fouled tallow,

and for your butchers, well, rely on those you know, might quite reasonably be police chief and higher-ranked detectives and the head of the Vigilance Committee and the Royal Physician-in-Ordinary and all those suspected – though suspected at, let's say, the wrong angle, with the right kind of momentum but under the auspices of the wrong target, burnt-in cursor of the gene-silencing star a different chromatin encryption – but

in this particular case it's shitty neoclassical statuary, some still in plaster, some whitewashed years ago to make up for all the pigeon droppings and alcoholic vomit, though this is the kind of place in which the drunks will be ashamed enough to scrub up their own puke if and when they wake in the park and have time to do it, not yet pursued, less and less of these, as you'd imagine, because now the people sleeping in the park are often not even drunk, are Arabs and Romani and non-Arab Muslims who can hardly afford to stay still even while they're sleeping, have to teach themselves a dream thin as the hummingbird's, the Honey-Ant Dreaming wildly dislocated, alien iconography of phage star bioavailable on the surface of that easily-breached sleep

because they need to be able to wake at the passage of any car and especially at the parking of any car, the opening and closing of its doors, at the sound of any taxi's horn, the sound of footsteps approaching and of voices either whispering conspiratorially or so shitfaced shameless drunk-loud that you can hear them from blocks away down the narrow mews, for which I'm sure they have another word here, but nobody's bothered to tell us, and these last are perhaps not the most dangerous, as

you might assume: they're uncoordinated, they're sloppy, they're out more for their repulsive idea of fun than for blood per se, and

most importantly, they're little fucking cowards, which is why they needed to get drunk; the murderers neither need nor want intoxication for this; the real murderers have been planning for a while, have had this idea in the backs of their minds for weeks, months, years, have been nursing their resentments like bees with detached stingers waiting for the blood-level detonator to go off and planning to take a few bystanders with it when it does, hideous and evil men who have learned to blame those even more frustrated and powerless than they are,

men who want, who need, both to attempt to kill a certain world – a world in which we're expected to believe that these, vous savez, these Gypsies and les Arabes and ces peuples de l'Afrique du Nord, that these are vraiment Français, je m'en fout, ça m'emmerde, quel affront – and to fail in the flesh-wreckage and newspaper photography of that event, because failure proves that they themselves were not to blame, that only a blessed army could've routed out these interlopers, and that, therefore, the army itself is in on the conspiracy, the President is in on the conspiracy, the fractured breathing of the Earth itself conspires to choke them out and lay their bigot corpses up for infamy and the wheedling, cautious worship of the fucked children who visit their memorial gazebos)

(optical tracking of the nitrocellulose star in vermicide glyphs scarred into the substrate of the night's volcanic glass,

a black screen archiving cicatrix cache half an inch beneath the glossy trackpad surface where the old directions each begin to disgorge latent jungle, ethology of lag-spike star as through the Xs cut into the eyes of the abandoned gods when we had to leave the city,

and we did *have* to leave the city: who could see the cycles setting, who could watch the green fumes gathering on what was no longer the horizon because no longer capable of changing, a quarantine, rather, a chora, phosgene parenthesis of the chemical-weapon star setting like the mechanized sequel to sundown,

against which we were wont to lay our dead, back then; gotten a good deal more complicated now, questions of land rights and periodical invasions, utter certainty that

this will provoke that will provoke this too and finally Xux Ek stationed on the edge of the last pathway, neurotransmitter caulk simmering down to cough up the carbon grit of its epinephrine message, chemical-transduction zones scorched down through the emulsion to the clear plastic backing on white-noisy anatomic scan of operating-system star,

so the strangelight does come through, if there were any, and there is, and there isn't – depends on vantage, the night's angular momentum, how near we are and how far off the warehouses with a few sodium-vapor lamps still spraying their particulate glare, the crinoid dustfall tracking its own timescale not indifferent to but separate from whatever other light may trespass here, extinction layer of methanogen star in red and black fossil indices

as worn through verso of the chalk cliffs back across a colder ocean, brought here with that blunter northern marking; been suggested that the human being as such, i.e. the animal that walks upright, uses or rather is used by language – modem star's benign and needed parasitology, sarcomere host webbing the protein software toward some viable structure in 3 dimensions, the first ziggurat matrix of the peptide-computer star – and has the approximate cranial capacity of, ahem, well, people, no need to get specific, anyway

been suggested that this animal develops, breaks off from whatever was right before it, Australopithecus, I think, capable of standing up but still wont to walk on four limbs and live partly in the trees to escape predators on the forest floor, semi-furred, camouflage in jungle canopy, possibility of disappearance into the biological stock footage of that same nitrocellulose star,

because the jungle itself then disappears, the forest floor turns to open savannah and desert, everything underneath goes to gravel and breccia, ooliths and geofact hardware of the karyolitic star, cell-death diagrams erupting in frigid slow motion across the stratigraphic plateaus,

sill laccolith lopolith is I think the other one? and magmatic reliquary broken down to the stalled cursors of flow the screen-freeze breathing compression-artifact penicillin on the wetware star's topography of neural contagion

all because there's a mass drainage, for reasons nobody really understands and maybe never will – a big chunk of the salt in all the world's oceans suddenly floods the

Mediterranean, which means the polar waters can finally freeze, which means a worldwide drop in temperature, or rather Earthwide, since who hypothecates which world we might be dealing with here and of whose multiple making, what cyclic resonance of circuit-bending star across the exterminated clades,

so what were adaptable apes of forest and jungle become hunted creatures of desert and plain, have to summon or be summoned by encrypted throughput of the genotypic star toward language, relocation, mapping, “I would be tempted to say, ‘Singing through the wilderness,’” and this is the precisely right sort of temptation,

pity for you, B, rest well wherever you’re resting, hope the virus died when it killed you and if it didn’t, well, we’re still running out here, still hunted,

terror makes the human from the specialized primate, terror and distortion are both what and *that* we are,

so you remember, I would think, even if only one the level of some dim hormonal prompting, tape-code index of electrochemical star disrupting the cellular steadicam and exocrine autocue, those near misses and periodic rushed escapes, even if we could never explain to anybody else what we were running from and how exactly we knew to run, which is to say that we *did* explain, over and over, and that they variously declined to hear, along the whole doubtful scale of their bought graces, from the specious gentleness of “anthropological interest” – *c’est bien à la mode, très chic, vous comprenez?* – all the way back to outright slaughter,

the nervous platelet singing of the dry blood sunburnt black up the walls of the pyramidal buildings, all coated with lime plaster once and all carved with an incredible complexity of glyph, most of that either rotting underneath the artifacts of the conquistadors’ arrival – human blood and blood of apes and huge green birds and pulped insects and blood of wolfhounds and the cautious quadrupeds that sometimes still show up here from the plains and mountains to the south, llama, alpaca, ask for local names, acquire local phonology as through symbiotic upload, seek judder of the sonochemical star’s pictographs solute with protein firewall in a strange dangling rigidity of sidechains and enantiomer excess, the genetic overdose of a heterocyclic star –

or just hacked away by bored and furious men, in idle moments, maybe, piss-drunk at noon and sourly fading while the sun fades alongside them, you know *that*

feeling, less and less shitfaced, more and more headachy, bitter, tired but unable to sleep, stomach rebelling in your premature old age, can hardly throw yourself a decent episode of self-administered anesthesia without getting so gut-sick that you're ready to contemplate suicide a few hours later, anything at all to stop shitting blood and stringy yellow mucus, anything to keep the chalk chisels from their delicate work picking apart the sutures of your skull, beaks of small fossilized birds after the fleshy insect prey that disappears down cranial fossae, may resurface in the postgain surge of spine)

(salt-stung verdigris blindness of the late sun, glint of tarnished copper and of fool's gold rubbing off onto the numbed meat of your thumbs, its uneven zoetrope flicker and twitch, a variable scansion with a variable key, voiceprint logging into the acoustic-weapon star,

and metal fumes enough to lacquer the linings of our lungs up to a high blurry mirror-shine, ultrasonography of silicotic star returning the radio spectra of an intricate mineral language, 3-dimensional and grammatically tuned along all sorts of scales and parameters, height/width/depth, unevenness of surface, chemical composition, age, carbon- or uranium-dating, presence or absence of pitchblende, strontium, heavy water, radioiodine star grading the pathology of wounds it salves to print, the whole eukaryotic architecture waiting in the glial tesserae of the city

in the process of dismantling by these men who came in from the shallows, just appeared there, and though of course we saw the ships later and figured it out, nothing can gainsay the horror of the way they first arrived, seated motionless on pale horses where the shoals clear out and you can see the gray-blue gleam of the escarpment dropping toward the coral, can catch a glare of iridescent red yellow orange green purple off the fish that haven't disappeared into the darker water yet, and

though we now know they were only still and silent with an enormous suppression of rage, the huge and ultimately stupid effort to rescale and retune multiple etiologies of anger toward some central and factitious unity of purpose – their hatred for each other after long terrified months at sea, hatred of confinement, bad food, constant sickness, hangovers that lasted entire weeks, sincere but infrequent bouts of ravaged prayer to gods in whom they'd never really believed, or rather in whom they'd believed the same way that one might believe, at this late date, in magnetism, for example, a fair

certainty that it exists and no real notion of how it works or why it came to be that way and no appeal to its mercy or generosity or conferral of rare grace and if something's supposed to work magnetically and it doesn't you just say "huh I guess it got demagnetized" and if something's not supposed to work magnetically but does you say "well I'll be damned it must've gotten magnetized somehow" and if perchance you should hear one day that magnetism has been reexplained that New Discoveries by Leading Experts in the Field have determined an alternate causal chain for all phenomena once described magnetically and that "magnetism" itself is now relegated to the status of Progress's innumerable fossils and corpses, back there with physiognomy and mesmerism and the brain bending the spoons, you wouldn't be particularly put out, you wouldn't feel disillusioned, you'd understand on some level that "magnetism" was a way to talk about something and that the Overseers –

who rarely stand in the guardtowers themselves but who have an enormous staff paid a pittance to do so, men with mirrored glasses, rifles fitted with telescopic sights, CCTV monitors with infrared and night-vision modes, deleted map of GABA star draining in clear serologic damage somewhere near the bone-and-tissue karst on the floor of the cranial cavity, yes, the payroll's incredibly long and detailed to agree that actively repulses some people's capacity to feel interest, you're not unfamiliar –

have now decided, in their wisdom, which is essentially to say their power to hurt those who would refuse their dictates, that you should use a different word; no problems over here, guv, just getting me tongue around the fresh'un; you'd probably even get houseproud and bitchy about it, probably take all delighted chances to correct the fools who still speak of magnetism in your presence, No, no, no, mate, that's gone off, that just can't be worked with no more,

and thus for the gods of the men in the boats, usable and nameable force back in a half-forgotten place thereafter likely to be enshrined as one of the Eternal Realms, depending on how they felt about it, and these were meant trained for the triplicate and triune, apt to look for triptychs' coronal symmetry, so

some will think of the old Homeland – itself home much as god was once magnetic, "home" in the sense of a usable public fiction, one to which you could subscribe in all the scrutiny of open places where the white light throbs in a huge pulse-code wash, treble-hot but too wide and dense for the pure cell-death scream of the upper



frequencies, ultraviolet biofeedback of the cybernetic star where heatstroke software erupts in what will be mistaken for the overexposed negatives of solar flares, the black chancres on a smudged ambrotype plate of orchid disease –

as Heaven-or-equivalent, lost stillness, enamel and gold and everything they've been coached for, all the grooming, not to euphemize, groomed likely in more ways than one given the ecclesiastical authorities of the Old Country and, soon enough, the New; some will think of it as Hell-or-etc., utter loss of purpose there, directionless terror in the daytime and, at night, a pained tightness in chest gut arms face throat every single suddenly tangible bit of vascular tissue, brachial arteries tensed up for a single and unnaturally high strum during which they'll snap, jesus fucking christ, overclocked to giddy hell, timestamp spluttering where the piezo quartz has already acquired a dense matrix of internal fissures, whole slack backlog of sample voltage plugged into the biomechanical star like metabolic bandwidth forced to decode the soluble geology of entire extinct phyla, "feels like you're gonna die / but you can get used to anything / sooner or later just becomes your life," and who knows about missing wives and children, who knows, with these men in particular, about the murders and rapes they're running from, ones they committed and ones committed against those they bitterly claim to love;

and some, well, to some it will have been a baffled purgatory from which this place is no escape, of which this place is only a recoding, a separate but cognate Geiger-counter topography of clicks, where drowned lightning undervolts the cold fluidic-computer star in midsea above the trenches where enormous white worms suck the sulfur clinging to the skin of a black rainbow)

(but some, well, "some," first, who? this is a litigious fuckin' organizational body with as much of the Justice Department behind it as you could ever hope to dream badly about, so let's not tend to libel here, let's be careful with the specifics of slander, etiology of text-file star immobilized in phospholipid quarantine till all possible impact is just small dent on the cell's periphery, minor scree, a noise-gated shriek of cellular debris erupting near external protein matrices like viral matter hunting for the sun,

antibody bandwidth of the exobiologic star exported from the storage reels as quick EQ parameter, something preset, a dialed-in setting latent in the electromechanics

of the dials and wires themselves, a position toward which they leap as by something very much like instinct, which, why not, we may as well impute to machines as to people, animals, rock tree river sea sky, they too have their harmonic series, their most and least pliable overtone sequences, the coiling of that certain seaborne stone compiled of mass skeletal damage, the nucleotide labyrinth where impossible mineral triage lays out peptide-computer star's chemical grammar,

and anyway, I'm asking who again, I'm saying Can somebody get specific here? a status report? name or approximate name or sheaf of aliases, fanned out in glyph of littoral skew, sarcomere voltage briefly glaring through the fracture map of myographic star, the reconstructive surgery of fissures and elisions,

anything? present location, estimated or known, GPS coordinates tracked from any and all devices registered to any and all of the names he's alleged to have or to have once had or to be considering or to be almost statistically certain to encounter at one point or another, again as unbidden, the grit on the volume pot, the flakes of demagnetized iron falling from the poles of the risen pickups, humbucked once, now single-coil, ready anytime for use as sideways plugin, hungry as the blind white roots to tap whatever rudimentary network of landlines you can still find or at least conjecture, to resurrect spread-spectrum autopsy of neurochemical star cut up into tracking-error syntax of the cellphone towers, a slide a gap a slide a

blue diagnosis at rest where the buses still move through the official city night, not just at its periphery but constructing that periphery in their movement, empty now, apparently even of drivers, not a single passenger that I can see and no destination written on the electric signboard over the windshield and the rearward set of doors although you can see little screen-burn patterns worked into the lapsing liquid crystal there, the old continuities resampled unto sclerosis, a salt tinge,

an enantiomer wreckage of the chemoweapon star embalmed in textual sarcophagi till central pattern generator's habitual light –

and, perhaps as important as the habituation, the black bone-marrow howl of withdrawal therefrom, the new blood bubbling dark and corrupt from the haft of the femur, hydraulic-fracture star entombed in the cold liquid necropolis of cerebrospinal fluid and then breaking hot and diffuse on contact with the brainpan thaw, the input-

jack malfunction of thermal variance in wetware star's perpetual and botched reinstallation –

should outlast the sited necessity of the tissue that once bore it, which is, strictly speaking, true and not true; the siting is the *most* necessary, the tissue perhaps best construed as a modality of place, a flicker-noise coefficient of the stolid calculus waiting to burst open there, derivative-graph pollen of the cybernetic star trespassing brackish blood-brain firewall to make of local bodies a continuous columnar target-lock, to use the notochord as system of cursors and brackets,

acquire a fix on the spindrift, a serologic medium in which to suspend that thing whose signs will be taken for mere “digital dust,” missing, of course, what the dust moves in and upon, the epidemic physics of it, the extinction stratum hiving fluidic-computer star's drained semiosis, an overgrowth of glyph unto condition of total white-blood breach, leukocyte become the binding factor, cellular host only, a transport protein meeting at the ligand gate with ensigns of sleek throughput which, as soon as we've begun to turn away, will sound like the air-sucked silence of huge fires and the slaughter of horses begun sudden as a coup only seems to begin back inside the city gates,

remember that, as long as you're going to say *some* and *who* you might quite well get your records together, correct for endemic error and the way, e.g., pianos have to go successively flatter in the upper registers because our hearing is so kinked as to perceive all nearly-supersonic notes just a little bit sharper than they are, so bring it down by a couple cents here, and then 3, and then 5, maybe it follows the Fibonacci sequence, I'm not sure, you'd have to ask an expert and I'm what they call a man-of-all-work, Jack Blow the coachman more or less, was a place said “Dan Corbeau” and a place where they conferred the title “Doctor” as the honorific it always is but rarely admits to being, which is to say that

it simply refers to a kind of status, an envelope-filter borne along with the body in siphonophore sweep, the way the circulation goes cold around certain people and the way others carry around themselves a zone of irreducible and unitary heat, either there or not there, nothing to soften or to pique it, only probably of windbreak or the awful stagnant sky lowering to some blank gunmetal throb a few feet over our heads, pressing down something awful, phase transition of the fluoroscopic star in multiple bronchial

exposure, so you do what you can and only what you have to in order to reroute the breath through squamous new venturi with which the tissue has had, till now, but glancing latent traffic,

that stammer to the west of the point marked 00:00, 00'00", 00.00000 depending on the degree of specificity you're looking for and able to afford, the depth of your ragged-clawed purchase, keratin ground down to nubs that are always bleeding just a little bit more or less, nearly greenish sting of pus-fouled blood under the sunlight and, beneath the metal laminations of the moon, a slow heavy drool of snail-slime, a deeply saccharine serum, white-phosphorus star reformatted with upload-sugars triggering the framebuffer like old maths of asylum in the temples we've been burning, each as afterthought, or simply interdicting behind caution tape like flat blind worms titrated with bright gall)

(calcined old city gates, smoke going up, perfectly bent molecular-diagram haloes, check the taxogram for metastatic reverb field of lag-spike star in lignifying throughput, the clinamen a xylem derivative now, ash frozen in the heat-thick air and the strange borderland where the cold of the surrounding plain and beach just beyond – marram and small dunes as per the burial of somebody else's preceding gods, adenosine star's tumuli for mineralogical leaching of the long insulin lull to follow – snags against the heat coming off the fire inside the city and you stand inside a foot-wide storm, altered temperatures and pressures in the air coughing up short blasts of tangible friction that would've been lightning and thunderhead on any bigger scale, odd eddies of the windborne cinders, peptide-computer star's processor-erosion reprinting the whole circuitry in jagged runic antigen of grafted roots grown sideways through the mastic-sweating trees,

and the older one leaned forward in a crouch, lower back still against the wall where the heat came through in a trickle of nearly-melted mortar, of alloys invented on the spot by this holocaust, what they used to say and maybe still do say about the burning of Corinth, about the cupric spume where that old goddess the limb-loosener reenacted her birth for us, the lightning hitting the water, the electrified bacteria, weapons-system star in biogenesis of code –

this older one, he was a countryman but wasn't; we knew him dimly to be on our side in a strictly notional way, but likewise to be not quite among us, from a place just a little bit outside the old nomos given its pension as city's grounds now, old tremulant ataxia distilled to the inconstant waveform piping upward through the acropolis, acoustic surgeries ongoing, ultrasound of chemotherapeutic star's benign deletions, or so you'd hope, so explain it to yourself and, unbidden, to those passing, coaxed ungainly toward explanation by the way they look once quickly and then snap their heads forward again, ostentatiously avoiding you, nothing to see here, dum-de-dum, just another day in the streets of the doomed capital, till you're likely to start yelling, This is supposed to be happening, goddamn it, I'm supposed to be bald, my skin should be yellow-white and soft as camphorated wax, you see the fillers along my cheekbones, you smell the metal they've screwed into my mouth, this is all right, this is all to the good, it's a form of aid or so they've assured me, it's the modernized technology of divine intervention, it's exhuming Pluton the rich, 'Ades the unseen, you see what I mean, the sculptured carbon waste under the threshold height of Tartaros, radiomedicine of fluorocarbon star piped in from reactor core of a long-dormant glyph they've slagged with antifreeze and xenon,

look and tell me you understand, goddammit, look at this and say it's something other than affliction, signal your comprehension, I'm not here to be gawked at, well, hold that, check that, I am in fact here to be gawked at but not this way, not with bewilderment, xenophagy of bootscreen star's typographic antigens, I'm here

as a display of techniques and of goading you know already, have maybe never seen in person but understand at least on a vernacular basis, look at me and tell me you know that I'm getting better and that all the horror of my evident body has been processed into fatuous notions of onward-and-upward movement toward a state of health recovered or at least of death prolonged, not one blinding instant, not the burn of the last gradient, night-vision whiteout where the chemical-weapon star breaches all phosphorylate login,

but something less than stepwise, nearly geodesic, a changing of the camber so subtle that you'll mistake it for little more than your own knees getting weaker – and they should, of course they should, brittle bones, mineral deficiency, what is it they say about the painkillers, “smack is a vampire,” sucks the chalk right out of your teeth when you're on opiates for too long, but they assure me I'll be off soon, or rather will be ready

to begin the weeks-long process of detoxification, the slow erosion of dependency, the constant and the freak horrors of withdrawal, and some caution me that it actually lasts months, and some, and I'm one of these, have been through it before, about a year and a half ago, and still haven't returned to normal, which suggests that "normal" has become a meaningless word, no, no it doesn't, suggests rather that "normal" has undergone a permanent and cataclysmic shift, pin-register access to the fossil-record star where shale weeps oil and carbon bears the crinoid script of some profound isomer surgery –

or for your legs getting tired or for your head getting light stomach turning over blood having a harder and harder time making the rounds, and that's convenient because it's all true, too, that's plausible because the pathology is multiple, is nearly infinite, can never be assigned as a strict cause for or effect of any given symptom or structural decay, you're breaking down which feeds the breakdown which nurtures overreliance on organs and systems remaining intact which in turn causes their breakdown on and on can you hear that the huge transient buildup in the line the blackened software of a rhizospheric star booming subsonic and sideways through transformers sunk right into the wet turf –

the older one, right, we understood him thus, some sort of compatriot but not entirely, something like a blood-cousin estranged or an orphan taken in, from a city, say, north up the peninsula, though he might also have been from one of the litter-islands to the west or from some station along the eastern archipelago where they speak our language but look different or look like us but chomp and flick their tongues through dialect we don't know how to hear, much less write down, not quite the famous bar-bar-bar but something similar in terms of its oblique distantiation, chemical-analogue star bent into the sharp instrumentation of a song cast where the Lyre breaks and the Wain dismantles brightly earthed syringes toward a tainted graphite cure)

(Saint Hyacinth reclaimed for desert's refugees, exiled *from*, not *to*, the desert, a city-quarantine for which they're every bit as grateful as you and I would probably be, armature of security against the repeating decimal of the null-terminator star, that brownout zero way beneath the infrared flicker

and creeping in from all photo-periphery, anatomic scanning of the weapons-system star's xerograph marginalia, a blackness between pixels where the resolution

falters and what was sweat salt spit bile uric acid burns down to its ochre-stung components, the encaustics, whatever works for indices and marking, mutagen glyph, mRNA of bootscreen star in redshift ataxia strummed between the patchbay and the output jacks,

fed across the half-healed wastes of synaptic damage, threaded through the tongue as wet-gate star's xenotic text acquiring pliable phonology, a derivative from the calculus of the given tissues, histological exponents worked backwards from what appears to be a set sarcomere function, phosphatase math burning past adenosine star's archives to a white-noisy structure of sugar and slow blue-green light, the sea-hive in the longer bone, the error rate of the cerebrospinal fluid, blood-brain framebuffer decaying on each preset iteration till we come up with a negative-plate map of GABA star's time-lapse depletion like the black ocean receding from the shores of silver sponge and toxic platinum, chrome reefs in which the skeletal fish have been suspended by a massive overdose of receiver-side activity, voltage held in place now, sculptural and whining toward a million potential matrices of fissure, neurochemical star's reuptake functions modeled in a bleached-out rainbow

of strontium analogues seeped into the motherboard of rhizofilter star, out past the half-named limit where you haven't yet been asked for identification but know you will be soon enough, fences appearing at what seem like arbitrary points, sudden awareness of small animals and gaunt carrion crows keeping to flyback points like bomber wings around the edges of the dead USSR, border still programmed into the glial mesh, disk permissions to contagious wetware star

their own cartography, symbiotic with the political grids now, a splicing of mineral content and vitamin sump, a stray sideband of the blood-frequency benignly vampirized off in the dark where it takes however high a refresh rate, however many excess frames, to keep up the semi-convincing appearance of unitary blackness, remember that, screen-burn fossil record in the basaltic stratum's glossary of electrochemical star,

a sarcophagus not only for the dead but likewise for all language that came in contact with it him her, all conceivable tangency of nouns, all connectives, all the earthed and routed voltage, fracture maps of myographic star embedded in the broken edges of glass, ductile metal, sulfur furze, fine copper wire, and finally the disks of

seaward soil cracked into phytoremedial star's RAM, though "random access" is simplistic and shouldn't be so much repeated,

though of course the mass of simplistic repetition compels us to say it again here, to make ourselves approximately understood, to borrow your tongue and slap it against our dry palates and the bulge of exposed root on the back of each of our alveolar ridges, all that you might feel you've comprehended, claro que si, como no, how could it be otherwise, what parallel virus argot keening,

isn't that the approximate goal, weren't we asking after the probable half-life of the chemical-weapon star, circumference of contagion, radiological dispersion devices graphed at maybe 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of the eventual stayaway zone, a tiny mockup of the thing itself and then a tunnel to test boundary-layer effects, pitch yaw drag roll, friction ripped from the striate muscle of what looked like the smooth world until just then, motor-protein histogram in the glycerin sweep of liquefied sky where etiology of airframe star comes up against the oxygen deletions,

lung swollen to burst or collapsed with the impossible throughput of all that processing, how much it has to do and can't, how much it would but doesn't, how much the *meat itself will dream of doing*, don't be mistaken on that score, however much or deeply mistake may take us all on all the others: the flesh itself does sleep and dream, not quite separately from the brain mind nerves however you like, whatever version of undeclined Latin and Greek nouns should come down to you, artificially genderless now, the shorn eunuch substantives where pneuma was once female to make sense of the Sun and Son alleged to be born among Greek-speakers with the Romans on one nominal side and the Aramaic tongues on the nominal other, met never in the middle (not even sure that phrase can mean anything) but in a third and missing geography, an exile nation brought in as combatant, that era's locus for the recent epoch of extinctions, hung back dim then as, say, the antebellum States to anyone now suffering for America, which latter category ought to include just about all living humanity and the great majority of the dead,

yes there's the body dream and its subassignment bus through spinal preamp and the bandwidth of the bioweapon star fanning out into cellular printing, into postgain script that holds the old heat armed and coded in the charred grayscale stratigraphy of modem star's genetic login,



and then there's the edge we were asking after, has somebody measured this yet, well, let me revise that question, I know somebody's measured it, I know in fact that there have been several and dissenting measurements, that each has its own funding and therefore its own agenda and that each is in none-too-subtle competition with another office, sometimes government-departmental but much more often privatized and proudly so, trying to justify its budget and attract the patronage of other feasible host nations and not just to win out on its own terms but to embarrass outright whoever should presume to usurp its function,

even a retroactive usurpation, see, phage star's grammar in the tensed myosin chains, even those bureaux and ministries which lay claim to past-including-present, the most recent quantum slice of cross-sectioned time falling back under the gamma knives where fluoroscopic star cultures an algal battery inside the caches of exposed bone,

to claim that you were here and did what you did and that it was within your rights to do so, to arrogate the past and, insofar as they include the past, the present and the cognizable future unto yourself, no no, this cannot be allowed to stand, we cannot allow this vile trespass on a demesne at very least open to cheery sporting competition in the absolutely vile flush of the daylight on freshly cut and finically mown grass, we would take our state in all possible times, we would excavate the mineralized rainbow for taphonomy of remote-execute star, that beehive virulence where old plagues break down into pigment and metal reek, the amber and the honey sheathing prion star in textwrap DNA)

("the barbecue parties on blood-red sands," nuclear medicine for effigies now, electrochemical star's fuel-cylinder sweat seeping through an incalculable architecture of pipes walls roofs streets wires overpasses gas stations blacktop asphalt cement concrete sheetrock limestone scarce marble sewage systems junkyards dumps canals sluiceways morgues, radioisotope star crawling through compressed granitic matrix,

and this is one way to track the violent if semi-surgical domestication of the hyacinth, with tracking error included, needle-slip and refusal of the vein to bloom, lag-spike solute in the sudden reefing capillary blossom of seek-judder star, its dosage upward from afferent plug to brain or skipping that whole dubious circulatory regimen and just seizing hard through your abdominal wall, peritoneum, all the lesser and the

rarely-named sacs, a herniate bulge, an inflammation of the linings and the membranous matter, phosphorylate star's crypto key a stretch of protein dross deep in the middle of the IP address, digits easiest to forget,

neither the burst of the commencement nor the way the final math, we think, should fall between the teeth like a thin metal plate hard enough to bite down on when the pain would otherwise have you shattering your molars against each other and swallowing your tongue, pharmaceutical math swarming peptide-computer star toward that worked stasis of cracked bones held to knit and deeply imbalanced chemical ratios attaining at least a tumulus beneath the denominator if not exactly calm, sheltering in the cancelled divisions by zero, coefficient stripped, variable matrices gushing sideways through burst bracket as in massive systems-failure of the phytoextraction star,

the grid we meant to keep in keeping Saint Hyacinth to the cities now, "an early martyr of Caesaria in Cappadocia," "a historical region in central Anatolia, largely in the" (sorry, you'll have to do without the proper diacritics here) "Nevsehir, Kayseri, Kirsehir, Aksaray, and Nigde provinces,"

sure, fine, run with that, whatever greases the skids for you, lays map flexile and curved along the creaking oiled wood of the slipway where we still sometimes creep back down to that last scrim of undeveloped land between the port proper and the violently developed sea, the glass-and-sugar hive where parametric-EQ printing of the weapons-system star hangs in a sample-and-hold voltage of saline preservation,

silicosis for the miners' lungs and a simple eardrum rupture or case of decompression sickness for the men in the primitive wetsuits and iron lungs who had to pack dynamite into mudholes before they could lay the foundations for the stanchions of the suspension bridge that would bear us from this specific version of the past – or rather from this generalized fragment of its massive overdosage-specificity, the part of the city we'll take as ensign, use for avatar, line up in emblematic rows alongside the "historic sites," apply like a tourniquet whenever the name's mentioned elsewhere, in the listings of Olympic skiers' times, the top 10 and the bottom 10 for GDP that year, that decade, that half-century, murder rate and raw number of violent crimes, the sickly pride some will attach to these, yes yes, a wound, of course, a signifying wound, how else could it be, but don't worry, it's all well under control, hypertext pathologies applied to the machine-language star's phase transition, we have all necessary schematics of

reference and plans auxiliary to other plans and the moldered bones and rotting meat inside the utterly unrotting flightsuits of the pilots in the crashed plane's fuselage, blackbox still processing the sideband static of the wetware star's bacteriological battery

—

to one superseded version of the future, an airport, fine, that works, a set of what would it be you couldn't really call them "interstates" though they do actually cut back and forth across the state line, uh, superhighways, why not, specific chunks of pale 8-line concrete that cut directly from anywhere to that airport, stone that looks like it should be coughing up immobilized ancient spirochetes and the ornately crinkled script of cephalopod fossils, shale weeping epidural milk of the petrochemical star's breached vertebral firewall,

but no, not on our watch, certainly, and not as we ordered it and believe you me there'd have been hell to pay if it had come in that way because that's *not* how we ordered it and we *do* expect service as described and if there should be any problem with the goods as ordered as procured as shipped as received then yes we *do* expect expert help the necessary aid the technicians' preening service oh of course we'd love to hear their proprietary language hissing down like metal at some vast dissonance of temperature or pressure with the open air the armed and target-locked sky the bakelite floppy-disk fusing sequence of the firmware star's prescript extermination

that of course we would accept, that's a kind of privilege unto itself, but the rest, well, you'll be hearing from us about that, or rather your manager your supervisor the dingiest shittiest pissiest shape taken by human fear in your life will be hearing from us about that, because we're settled people, yes we know where we are and thus creditably who, we know or think we know or trust that somebody here knows and if not here, well, so much the better, the information would be safer somewhere else, don't you agree, isn't it necessary to provide a whole chain of offsite failsafe mechanisms, hadn't we better in fact provide a mechanism for offshoring all resident language here, the mutilated roots of Hyacinth brought in from the desert and stationed at the city's edge, an effigy above the brown-red dirt and, underneath, a long low grave stuffed with tangled vines and stems in a shape vaguely like a horribly tall and thin human body, nitrocellulose star's filmstrip in the spine where aniline cancers augur a sleep-paralytic saint)

(The city – wherever it should rise or rather be exposed by serial myoclonic washes of erosion, optical-printer afterburn resurfacing the GABA star's necropolis – lies always downwind of the testing range,

in the spindrift, along the filter-swept edge of the slipstream, where the EQ can't catch the last fractious harmonic and the signal domain tangibly clips out in systems-failure scansion of a red peak meter's tetchy bypass blare, clicking on and off because never really expected to work and abandoned halfway through its wiring, a device mostly for show, the kind of failsafe mechanism you point out ostentatiously in the course of a civilian tour and especially on some diplomat's scheduled walkabout, advertising your services for whatever country s/he represents, which may very well be the "country" you're in,

not that such abstract unities obtain here or most anywhere else, really, not that the political borders matter as they're declared; forever selling yourself to alternating factions of the state, to the naphtha bleed of their scab-crust ed motherboard mending, the hydrocracked commissure where the wetware star derives its basal voltage from a white sluice of cerebrospinal fluid and mineral turpentine, leukocyte throughput overloaded to preset specifications that we might harvest the scummy rush of its self-administered medicine, the blackbox static of the DNA-repair star logged in aneurysm's terminal

for interchange of vein-code with whatever overclocking hemorrhage appears to access the hard disk, refigure the IP address, cut through the abortive uplink sequence to pause, analyze, format, restart the protein download from peptide-computer star, up just past the tropopause where acronyms from past wars wait, apparently diffident, working out the platelet algebra of belated wound-response tesserae, surgeons to the preclinical ghost of weapons-system star,

called obsolete now, dead as a specific god, one of the many abandoned on our grateful exit from the desert – noted here and elsewhere that monotheism is what becomes of desert religion once its worshippers have disappeared, that it persists in trans- or metabinary, where the settled field is 1 and the desert is both zero and the enormity of feedback scream frozen like scratched glass inside its event horizon, acetate transcripts of the biomechanical star, tracked patina and the nuclide cursor swimming

through accretion disc's condensed macrophage archive, bootscreen star's chemical text around the edge of vermicial algorithm scrawled here in an arterial blockage of movable type,

up in the shadow-mess of stock footage and films recent enough to have remained under copyright but with owners variously dead, disappeared, officially dissolved, much registered to, what would it have been, Lenfilm, Mosfilm, and so legally the property of no one now, though it can only be so long until they either file class-action suit against the State Department and win some meager pissy fraction of what should've been 25 years' royalties or, more likely, get bought out by an American syndicate claiming force majeure, claiming either prior restraint or that prior restraint is unconstitutional, depending on which way you want to spin the law, claiming horribly freighted access to the brainstem honeycomb

where heavy syrup trickles slow and patchy from the punctured mineral bulbs of the cephalopod sepulture, the overground tombs where bacterial surge-protector reaps the algae-filtered fallout from the serocomplex fuel-cell of hacked-into wetware star, call it 7 decades' tampering entirely indistinct now from the structure it effaced, inseparable as the sudden bone-inclusions, the way a given patch of vertebrae or femur will crumble on exposure to the aimed light of the small amateurish operating theater,

well fuck off, then, what did you expect, this isn't the Mayo Clinic, I'm rarely even sure we're in the continental United States, and I have reason to suspect that we legally aren't, that there obtains some statutory code specialized as the bleak "agreements" between the federal government and the Indian tribes, a casino gladhand for 500 years' unrestricted access to your aquifer, chief, permission to sell liquor and cigarettes to whatever-age clients as long as you'll permit us biannual medical trials of our own description and of a length intensity profundity degree (or total lack) of compensation to be determined then, or after, or never, and only by our boards of review and only if we consider these things in need some final or partial or provisional or totally casual and unenforceable determination, you see how things are tending here, you see what we're driving toward,

namely nothing, namely just more driving, mechanoreceptor voltage routed right into the kinked knee where the gas pedal sticks halfway between floor and its maximum springback, uncut nails digging nervous into the thick pleather of the steering wheel,

genetic cartridge of the RF-hacking star in splice-thinned bandwidths where the gamma knives' radiosurgical surveillance still wrings spoked stratum of fossil interference from the green-black purge of the night,

histocompatible star in bated neon flux of difference tones, where the infrared can't quite claw and the night vision just washes everything out into the general sense of either hunting or being hunted, depending on your orders and the amount of money you're getting to carry them out and the extent to which you believe in them, which means, most of the time, the extent to which you can either keep yourself from thinking about them or convince yourself that, if you weren't following them, somebody else would be, so better that it should be you, who at least know what you're doing, right, who at least are decent enough to feel conflicted about the whole thing

in a way that will never really matter except to you and the cohabitants of whatever sort, parents siblings kids marriage material and bunked-in government-assigned roommates, whom you'll eventually estrange with the habits you'll take on in order to exculpate yourself or, if not quite the full confessional sacrament, at least to find yourself assuaged in passive voice

emanating of course from yourself but heard as if from outside, this is the bd magic, isn't it, FM synthesis of artificial marrow in a swarm of nanomechanical blood cells transplanted into open wounds of operating-system star, this is the grim scarifying miracle, that they teach you to throw your ethical voice, to practice a kind of priestly ventriloquism, catching the excuses from outside as pingback shivers white and dusty from the anterior walls of your skull, contagious reverb-field of cybernetic star sprayed down for rigorous chemical quarantine and sterilized as transfer of mineral analogues, strontium and iodine and anything that lodges in the roots of the imported plants, in the thick falsely-gasping leaves of the succulents imported to make this place look like anything but what it is,

can't you hear the friendly interrogator's mild and modulated voice through what's supposed to be talkback mic out in the live room but may only be a set of speakers plugged right into the most compromise and compromissory patch of the gray matter, a splash of dulcet hippocampal milk, graphics card for neoplasm annex to the recordkeeping function of a chemoweapon star)

(and the city exists, in part, *to be* downwind of the testing range, to teeter on the rim of the “controlled” blast radius, to show up on the belly cameras of the recon planes in multiple exposure of profound damage, electrochemical star’s wet-gate prints as factored into vertebral basalt; it serves as field in which our free-radical mathematics may attain their etiological shape, stochastic lag-spike loop up to the mutant hysteresis of genetic-weapon star;

that’s an important element in its array of rationalized functions, part of why the bursars keep shelling out for it even though human survival, in all but the very short term and for all but a few very heavily-insured and -secured capital-S Subjects, has been declared a moneylosing proposition, finally, an eccentricity at best, something undertaken either out of vague vaporous imperative or as a passion project by a few among the ranks of our stranger technicians, paleomechanical star’s sample velocity shivering through the trackpad in dry arcs of myographic voltage,

and the black wattage still trapped in the asbestos hull belowground, phytoextractor star a fossil library of side effects denied and multiple pathologies strenuously unlinked, kept out of symptomatology’s malignant asterism, no we’re positively certain they have nothing to do with each other nor can be imputed to any impetus further up the causal chain, by which we mean we’re positively certain that we’ll continue to deny it and will amass great fortunes to fund that denial and will array great forces against any agency, human or otherwise, that keeps bringing the goddamn thing up in the unlikely editorials or gossip columns or public rumors or ineffectual TV-newsmagazine reports,

intended to be ineffectual, to function as blear totems of Concern, never to *do* anything, simply to demonstrate that someone somewhere allegedly feels bound to mention that a thing binds us to mention it, a kind of subject-verb agreement we don’t really have in English, call it the French *on* or the Spanish *usted*, one says, they say, it-is-said, a passive structure, something for irradiated wind to blow right through, lush cancerous fats spreading out beneath the bulletpoint scrutiny of the airport scanner, fMRI results latent in the sudden slump and giddy discharge of the cellphone towers slicing up the spread spectrum toward some gridlocked apocatastasis, all shall be redeemed as in transmitted, “keep believing it, shit for brains,”

all shall finally fit the protocol, match the login, make sense of the upload parameters and the geosynchronous orbit, broadcast to its specific targets, spraying through the server's dubious firewall, gnawing at the phospholipid gaps in the blood-brain barrier, a bit of stray enzyme, a cellular typography gone haywire with peptide-computer star's protein undervolting, programmed to function only at the "necessary" server speed and processor-velocity, you wouldn't blame us, not if you could see the drains on the grid,

not if you could watch the transients bellowing through the line code like black parasitic bulbs hanging from the roots down here, metastatic pictographs of rhizofilter star a symbiont cymatics for the way the earthed spine hoards what even the analyzed topsoil would disclaim, disallow, strike from the record, I will not allow that calumny to be spoken in this courtroom again, I hereby enjoin the paper to print no more of this libelous material until it consents to name and to produce its alleged witnesses or informants or sources or whatever you're calling them at the moment for the scrutiny of this courtroom and for interviewing by the FBI the CIA the Justice Department the Defense Department the Defense Intelligence Agency the corporate-espionage firms hired by such variably asterisked conglomerates as L\*\*kheed and H••eywell and what used to be Bl•••water but call it what you want now, call it anything at all, they're on a faux-Greek tip themselves, trying to give a Doppler impression of both Platonic rational superiority and membership in some bullshit version of an ancient hashashin cult, can't resist that sort of playacting, can they, Academi or Delphi or Oracle or whatever it is or has been or will be, enantiomer matrices resampled from the signal-to-noise ratio of the radiopharmaceutical star

elapsing in granular and dimmed green flares across the more specialized civilian bandwidths where we log the broadcasts that would only interest us; funny thing about encryption in the last several decades, funny, I mean, how the priorities have changed –

you ever think of that?, of the way, say, a numbers station is different from a PGP key, in that a PGP key is nigh-impossible to figure out but, once figured out, disgorges its contents right away, whereas a numbers station is right there, contents as clear as they could be, but only a few people know what they mean, and those few people have been so protractedly selected for what we might as well just call their manipulable psychopathy as to be virtually immune to suasion otherwise,



which is in part to say that even if they “defect,” they’ll still be working for us, just another of our front companies somewhere else, another division of the same essential enterprise and in all the world’s languages and nations, including several that haven’t actually been formulated, circulated, formalized yet, are still in that demotic stage of pictographs’ agglutinative grammar toward hieroglyph, the cyclic resonance of phagocytic star devouring petrologic strata where black bands may issue diesel-iridescent from the two sides we prop up in a three- or four-sided war, OK, fine, all four, but two especially, two right under the table

where your nervous nails are notching into grooves of scratched graffiti you can only read with tender cartilaginous bone-tip, condyle orthography among the fractured plates where natural-gas fires have been kept burning since the ’70s in countryside illegible but for the hazmat-suited crews behind the firebreak, hushing up the field-clinic approaches to an epiphyte prospectus of the beta-burn star’s xerographic script)

*in the assassins’ house*, the nuclide wind blows more than simply sideways: depending on which coast you want to deal with (and “coast” here may or may not reckon with an ocean, or what you’d think an ocean means; in this case it does, it must, it can’t help but do so; “ocean,” however, is a variable coefficient, and affixes itself elsewhere to the flattened sprawl of marine fossils worked deep into toxic sand, the silicotic filmstrips of the optical-printer star, biopsied lung and deep but frangible keratin time, the memory-storage horned against intrusion but sometimes frail enough to dissolve at the tilting of the screen-freeze sunset, its Failure to Disperse, official citation #whatever it may be, hex-code probably, chromatography of the attack-vector star in varispeeded pathogen resampling),

the nuclide wind soaks through a dense sweat of curdled magnetic paste, between the thin walls and the thinner things concealed in them, unintentional sculpture of pulpy insect dross, overdubbed stop-codon’s graft to tape edits of genotypic star, the bank of logographic char a series of black smears on tainted glass,

ambrotype negatives for feeding up through the octave divider and thence back as either infrared or ultraviolet squall, paleographic throb of gamma-knife star surfacing through deserts’ indices of neon medicine, the early pitchblende surgeries more than simply affine here, worked into the structure, waiting on the hormone sluice or sudden

giddyup panic after the lag spike, abiogenesis of bootscreen star's ataxic scripts derived from the molecular entanglements of graphite

or the way the ocean finally did disappear and now fades back in, a long dry episode of multiple exposure, the dust-furred mirror-shadow sweeping upward through the tracts of causeless shadow on the floor, the basin, the dry wash, the disk permissions flaking off adenosine star toward a textual reinforcement of the mineral login protocol, siphonophore wreckage still suspended from thin topsoil, colonial organisms, har har, what other name could they have and who else thus to name them, suspended from the uppermost stratum of thin rock, ready to split on the syringe-tip of an unpremeditated glance,

anything too sharp and too profoundly without planning, anything outside the massive structures of incitement so carefully brought here in dense bulletpoint quarantine, a plague of glossaries, your locust acronym

borne west in spindrift vortices to censor petrochemical star weeping its voltaic ichors upward through the stung blue of the shale, a dome as over a dead house of wasps, the honeycombs of buried Hittite capitals wherein lies epidemic that our bodies wouldn't even know how to translate, so they might appear unafflicted for years, for decades, centuries, and might even function so, before some final burst of backlog sugar works the distanced transforms, Hekatê on the floor of the dried swamp, surrounded by the hollowed skeletons of owls and by the millirad-dosed frogs who can no longer produce any sound, just bellycrawl slow and arid and with a horrific avocalic kind of rain-drying drag across the salt print of the deleted marsh, alkaline code window to a beta-burn star's interrupted triage

when we had to pull up stakes, and by "had to" I mean "were ordered to," and by "were ordered to" I of course – of course, what did you think you were hearing? – mean "contrived at great length and considerable bureau-wide expense to produce the orders which would force us to," to goad our friendly-enough captors into the establishment of a stayaway zone, a brace of deeply-failed flyback points, the failsafe margin blistering with isotopic decay, blackboxed radioiodine of airframe star's low-contrast MRI dying in flooded tiers of bitcrushed resolution,

a downsampling seizure, back to first granulate axes, back to surveillance tape of macrophage star's blood-software beneath the x line of the coordinate system, where we

carefully evade our own notice, where we take incredible pains not to be seen, and least of all by ourselves; we are, after all, the only ones properly capable of seeing what we've done; let others *look*, that's no particular problem, that can be erased denied subjected to subpoena and intractably opaque court order compelling *your* presence mesdames messieurs at a particular annex to the county courthouse and I say "annex" forgive me you must know what I mean but it's really more than 100 miles away in a little burg which via some peculiarity of zoning law or tax districting is in fact a legal part of the county seat and it's not even in the same goddamn county and

this is America so if you dig deep enough provided you've got the incentive (and it certainly wouldn't have come from us, and it's certainly borderline contraband if you've got it, something you'd do well not to mention in too giddily proud a tone or in too public a place, voice-activated microphones clambering lurid, flagellum-prurient, over file-system star's blanked error-log, erased by passage overhead of magnets which we'll always manage to pretend were just flying this way for no particular reason outside the sheer logistics of convenience, you know, no big deal, can't see conspiracy everywhere, now can you, come to think of it don't bother answering that or even considering the wracked variety of ways you might answer, tamp stray myographic voltage from the IP star's infarcted cardioid typebar,

this is just the most convenient flight corridor and the one we can rely on to be more or less untenanted and the one to which we're told we have exclusive and permanent rights, in perpetuity, to be renewed every, what is it, 50 years by an act of Congress that'll sail through in 15 minutes between the months of debate on whether or not to, say, shut down every medical facility that might be able to catch a birth defect or molar pregnancy or uterine hemorrhage impossible to stanch except with inwardly-focus fiberscope heat, autology of tissue-sinter star among the lapsed script of the sarcomeres,

and all because they allegedly "traffic in abortions," yes that's right, don't just "provide" or "offer" them, insincerely mercantile as those terms hit the tongue, like they've sent out fucking road agents with handbills to tell the town girlies about this wonderful new invention – which, incidentally, people *did* do a hundred-odd years ago, and with the right-wing government's entire if rather muted acquiescence – hey there, mamzelle, let me tell you about a wonderful wonderful thing,

Dr. Polk's Magnetic Fluid will clear up all unsightly female troubles, get you back to business in a heartbeat, well, maybe pick different metaphor on this particular occasion, electrodes pasted to the notches between vertebrae, rubber cups at end of wiretap appliqué leaving bat-mouth sigilia on the rubberized sheeting meant to stand in for window glass until that technology should migrate to this falsely terminal extremity of the Occident, because there does remain, after all, an ocean, after which we're back east again and can restart the whole process, revise it, a fresh edition making good the velleity of our bastard forefathers' wobbling wills, sing it in a sped-up white boy's fake-blues minor even though the chord changes are pure shitkicker rockabilly, "ain't that a sha-hee-hame," methylphenidate star tampering with spinal column's greasy coughing motor)

well, well, well now, the way we broke your heart, and *how*right there Policeman Danny take us to the bridge – they want a down-home chromatic turnaround, something else smuggled up out of the Gulf along with horseflesh and the slave-meat not very often differentiated from horse traffic in those days or, matter of fact, these, though the sourcing's gotten more complicated and the offshore schemes a whole order of magnitude more veiled (selling URLs at pennies a pop while they run the Gram stain and the cyan filters on bacterial samples of the biomechanical star's voltaic cell, all out to the South Pacific, last I heard, where there's some runaround about the jurisdiction and you can do a lot of things at the seaside that you can't do in the town, la-di-da, let's not get so precocious about these sedimentary deposits in our history, but, oh, then let's, it's been a decade, it's been several, it's been 70 goddamn years and we're so very awfully hungry for a revival but from Parts speciously Unknown, we want the Past again but in a way that takes us by contrived surprise, we want the nicely graded and lab-tarnished wreckage of a Future foregone, brought back at museum quality, cleanroom surgical interventions on the circuit printing of a lithospheric star, the way the text attains a mutagen cofactor and shrieks sideways into frozen smoke and third-rail vapors, exhaust plume of enormous tubeworm trophosome, fluidic-computer star's throughput guttering on a rich silt of tuned sulfur and belayed acoustic weaponry),

well, that's what they *want*, that's the leached-after effect, but they're playing it diatonic, mutilating the turnaround to major 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> like the whitest, yessirree,

white keys on the piano, helplessly Anglo-Saxon, so it beaches itself halfway between pick'n'grin bullshit and the national anthem of some recently-partitioned Western nation that can still afford official optimism, hasn't yet required of itself the token nods to the austere or dreadful in its mass-market literature, and that's a way to keep the riot at a manageable level,

which is, after all, entirely the goal – don't ever let them fool you into thinking that they want total peace, don't allow yourself to get lulled into the onetime panic of pure suburbanization; now, do they want an absolute and veto-proof *majority* of suburbs?, yes, of course they do, they want all things preciously o'erflown by geosynchronous satellite archiving 24/7 livestream of invasive telemetric data, they want codestring etiology of fuselage censorship applied to recon array of the exobiologic star,

they want lye-scorched print fake-aged between the edges of the suspiciously incomplete blacktop as a kind of heirloom damage to rationalize the invocations of Biblical toponymy and references to trees that have never grown here and, quel malheur, apparently never will, we brought the fuckin' things in on the back of a pickup truck after carefully arranging that they should fall off the backs of several others, you get the idea, you don't need to get the idea, and at just a phenomenal price, you wouldn't have believed it, we are utterly independent of your belief or incredulity and each of these commodities will be leveled out to a fair price by the inexorable logics of the market (lopped hand after asbestos gloves wore through in the testing chamber, faint Kirlian glow for the cover of a '50s sci-fi paperback, and ask the official observer about the little mezuzah of radiosensitive metal he swallowed before the flight, top up gasoline pharmaceuticals for rebate on the chemical-weapon star),

but we almost want to let you in on this one because we damn well want to be praised for it, not in any way our fault that the scheme didn't come off, and ain't that, like the song says, just a shame shame shame, that you don't even get to hear the magisterial details of the coups that never quite erupted, the hundred years' cumulative planning in the course of a few months spread among however many hundred technicians and bureaucrats and contract workers and on-books/off-books assets would be required to compound a century from, let's say, 8 weeks' combined effort,

the horrible density of lightly secret history,

the things you could find out but probably won't because there's nobody very eager to talk about them on any or, ahem, "either" side, whatever that means, failure on the one hand and paralytic terror on the other, the symptomatology we've spliced right in with what wears the public and official designation "paranoia," call it induced sleep apnea, call it inability to breathe this particular compression and chemical composition of what I think we're still referring to as air, backbone alembic for precipitates of DNA-computer star gone terminally offline,

but they're getting back to the tonic and the verses, more or less, despite the enormity of fuckup on the turnaround, nobody seems to have noticed or to have cared, and those few who did or do may yet recall this as a token moment, luminous detail, a kind of etiological index, but more likely the continuation of their lives will oblige them to get trashed to such a degree as precludes much detailed memory,

and, like I was saying, this is America, so the annex to the county courthouse that's neither an annex nor even in the county, well, what do you expect, plunge a garbage-spike through that soiled turf if truly, yea, if verily you insist, and it'll come up where it always does, in some legal peculiarity of slavery and the "free" states' obligation to return escaped slaves, o states' rights, aren't we listenin', in murdered Indians and the ethnographic resums wherein some Carthaginian explorer refers to "apes" for a thousand lines before describing the "apes" language, homes, economy and you realize what he's been seeing, gripping, canting down to a tympanic sore of postgain bar-bar-bar

## specimen fever cinema

always west of any fixed coordinates, whether or not your hackles raise against the plumed chill of the Atlantic,

as they will, soon enough – maybe you’ve been watching the weather – though not so chill by then, by now, and not so focused as the plume would name it, frost-quill gone to vapor in the incredible thoracic pressure of a humid wash hotter than the substance of your veins, fluidic-computer star denaturing blood-software back to a pre-codec protein scree that threatens to burn through all forecast screens in neon index precedent of whatever you’re asking it to indicate, horizontal hold swimming in the lush downdrift of cancers only wishfully called “post-industrial,”

in the literal sense, I guess, in that they do succeed industry but can hardly have attained the naming separation from it, metastatic script where bootscreen star compiles a wound report of gamma knives and their failed intervention, something gone drastically wrong in the echo suppressants and sidechain algorithms, the sound of your own blear voice in hypertrophic grayscale leaking back through the landline’s earpiece, cell-death reverb of the haywire cybernetic star a germline swollen past the dimming textual confinement, some aberration in the fossil record, alien geologic species, xenophagy of karyotype star

where the black marks rise to and dissipate upon the surface of a sickly warming flood, down in the cement districts, places where they gave up even the outward attempt to build the city in an “environmentally friendly” way

(the real environmental friendless here, if any may obtain, would have been to forbear building the city, but that wasn’t an option, but of course it was, but let’s just say it wasn’t, dysplasia of file-system star

attaining speaker-on-speaker feedback where it crawls between glass slides, a cryosurgical thaw softening the graphite till biogenetic star may match the sample

voltage and veer over into the signal domain of acoustic weaponry, what the cops have lately started using with less and less shame, though of course they've had the technology for several decades now and have been conducting what an optimist – i.e., in this case, an unforgivable comprador – would tend to call “research trials,”

and this all, this all, *this all goes in*:

understand that the War on Drugs isn't just about cocaine from South America and heroin from Southeast Asia and the carceral state and the billion-upon-billion-dollar private prison industry and the maintenance of genocidal ghettos and the excuses to persecute racial minorities, religious minorities, leftists, plus any sort of separate sub-rosa group beyond the normal classificatory schemes, chemotaxis of white-phosphorus star reprinting the fragmented drive of night above the rowhouses in burnout Philadelphia, already scoured down to the last carbon resistance long before this ever started,

or rather in the auspice of which this, right now, call it 1968-present, is just the amplified continuation, everything on standby till it's pumped through vast multiplicative and preset maths, the virion mantissa, breaching quarantine of text-file star's livid contagion, so you can see that whole swath of the most run-down slum turned suddenly to a real-time contact sheet, live-action photography on the same spatial and temporal scales of, and at the same frame rate as, the thing it thinks to depict –

e.g. we need longer take-pictures-of, because we can just *make* the thing, we can turn the thing to be imaged into the image we were going to make,

a preclinical process, say the salesmen from the arms cartels and the sketchy advisors who'll never quite admit to serving any particular government department, e.g. we don't have to make do with pocket-sized simulacra and microfiches held in hollowed molars, though that of course will still be useful, that of course is on the bill and in the docket and maybe sewn to dental pulp or wired up to the dimmed tetanic jaw, the brackish bone of the witnesses kept on ice and in the drunk tank for weeks at a time before they're moved to private cells and without the filing of any particular charges, but it's OK, que pasó, it's fine, we have an understanding, look, buddy, I'm going to get you out of this, but you need to *cooperate*, you hear that word?, you know it?, ¿sabes ya lo que digo?, in fact



we can do better than just “getting you out of it,” we can reward you for your time, how’d you like special protections, how’d you like a budget line, a relocation bonus, a monthly stipend as long as you can slip in among people who – to our eyes, and our eyes are the ones that have to close themselves strategically or stay half-open long enough to feed the check through the machine that forges our preprinted signatures – look basically like you and basically like the last people we had you turn out and

just basically, who basically look, a meet typology, o paraclete’s advent here, o we would intercede for you, abogado presente, por supuesto, epidemiology of chemotherapeutic star repurposed as a weapons installation in the seared red sky over a place that frankly looked like the end of the world before we wrote out the permissions slips and requisition chits that helped that particular world to end,

a matter of dissonant timescales, I guess you’d say, a little delicate retuning among the rust-shuttered sarcomeres, something difficult with muscle tissue and hypertext recall from adenosine star’s microfilmed spring, the savage leukocyte lashing where the urban livestock comes down from the stray fields overhead to cut horns and sharpen teeth against the windows of the few shacks we’ve left scattered around the geographical version of that particular account, see what I’m saying, little outbuildings like railway sheds that are actually miniature surveillance bunkers or weapons caches or whatever you like, negative catacombs all blackly solarized by GABA star’s reprinting

where the land lifts just a little and, if you’ve been around for long enough, you should probably be guessing that the land didn’t always lift that way, whatever “always” means, that this isn’t a *comme-on-dit* “natural topographic feature,” again, “natural,” what is there but nature, what deformity exceeds the bourne of the natural, I truly don’t know, we need a bit of anesthesiology over here, we’re getting overheated and require a wicked little kink to the enantiomer’s traffic, maybe something in the vein of nitrous oxide, and I do specifically mean the vein, do I not, is this not clear, sodium pentothal or any of the useful opium analogues, run me off another version of

the burned-down angiograph spilling radiopharmaceutical star’s fluoroscopy, an autopsy of helpless light, the way the bright vertebrate analogues slip right through epidural dose to vein the spinal fuselage with richly toxic ore, an archaeopteryx recovery, the airframe star in strontium lode shining where the rhizofilters slump)

(overdub the mixdown plate with something thick enough to cover the seek judder of deposit-fuser star, the error log of softened metals and failed sluicing through the roots,

I don't know, man, phase cancellation, bad stereo pairing, reprocessed mono once the market, ahem, "caught up" and everybody had to buy new turntables and speakers, DC offset of the dissonance vintage bitter in the blackened topsoil volts, etiologic histories of the phytoremedial star and the rate at which it nonetheless permits a strange wilting softness to the horns of the animals that still wonder into the city, a set of spongy growths where children's eyes should be, hydatidiform mole, one great purgative rush of what looks like 10 pounds of acid-seared placenta, you know more or less the track record here, right, and

the tracking error where the cartridge slips and we can see, for a moment, identikit photogeology of chemical-weapon star in mutant genotype of polyploid uranium negatives, but

that's all the way it was more or less supposed to happen, and that's what I was saying about the War on Drugs, though it's of much wider and worse application: they didn't *only* want to keep the ghettos dying and the cops plumped up with military budgets, didn't only want to keep the prisons full and the slave-labor pool thus assured for future generations, I'm told there are more black people in jail now than there ever were enslaved at any given time before the Civil War, and though I don't know the statistics myself, I have no reason – and I mean *no* reason – to disbelieve it, alright now, overseer's mirrored sunglasses and pump-action shotgun where he leads the blue-jumpsuited ranks into the cornfield, harvest season, time to turn that ol' moon orange the way you always heard about, and don't you worry, ever'body, don't you feel the least concerned, cos what we're doin' here is we're usin' this particular form of unpaid work to develop Sustainable Fuels, that's right, ever'thing here gon' be farmed out for ethanol or what the hell ever goes into the tank of the car whose pricepoint includes the extra margin of condescending superiority its ownership will afford you, arrogate unto us, o Lord, o angels in thy keeping, the right to feel disdainful of all who, and it's funny how this works, haven't gotten rich enough to grant themselves access to the lifestyle options that provide meaningless ostentatious aid & comfort to the poor, gotta spend people to make money, way it's always been,

fuck out of here, “always,” well “always” as far as we’re concerned, and it’s our concern makes history, as you might well have heard, biodiesel and surgical plastics, designer-virus reflex arcs where basalt hoards the fracture map of an electrochemical star,

yessir, we’re proud to have done enough to hate those we pretend we pity, and we’ve just got nothing but contempt for people who etc., etc., you know how this goes, don’t you, oye, dime Azazel, who waits out in the flat field that’s not at all a natural landform, with caveats for “natural” as aforementioned, of course, but in this case

it’s a pile of medical-incinerator waste, it’s old reactor slag grown over with the seeds drilled into mats of artificial sod, it’s the asbestos partition reformatting the petrochemical star for a medicine of implants alongside bioglass architecture and little polyurethane stents preprogrammed to help your failed lungs close and open, in that order and only in that order, line code to infect the IP star till transfer protocol should buzz up in wet swarm of penicillin,

antigen stimulus to wetware star’s immunocompromised computing, you’ve probably been down there, the dirty room, figure of speech, just differentiating it from the cleanroom, right, don’t have to wear latex gloves or cotton mask or gasmask or those little hazmat shoepacs or whatever, though, brother, shit, you *should*, whole point is looking into the scale and progress of ongoing contaminations, in which latter category you’ll find yourself pretty damn quick if you’re not careful, and

that’s what we meant about the Drug War, too: apart from all its other manifest and incalculable evils, *it’s a laboratory; it’s a theater*; it’s a place in which the local cops, the highway patrol, the FBI, the C- and DIA, the arms contractors, the bureaucratic specialists in pacification, the real-estate developers and corporate lawyers, the whole surpassing apparatus of administered and target-locking death can try out new techniques, test machinery, run pharmaceutical trials otherwise difficult-not-to-say-illegal, hell with the permission slips, you understand, vivisect the pharmacogenomic star from modem down to last receivers crackling

where we tried to move along the missing shoreline, out east again, though “east” hardly seems to cover it and “south” has too many other affectations, you remember, in the lab, the theater, the test site which power and money make of any city or nation, testing, bien sûr, different things in different districts, and I bet you know which ones

they test where you spend most of your time, and I bet you use that idiom without often considering what it means for time to stand as a commodity we *spend*, and I bet

you're wondering about that strange high clicking tone, the sound of ghost-fission, acoustic-weapon star's ectopic angelus in riven ice-tectonics, well

that's a thing the cops have had in their weapons lockup for the better part of a decade now, goes by some manner of intentionally perfunctory acronym, LRAD, I think, maybe MRAD, can't remember, and they won't tell the press exactly what it is and naturally don't have to, and the flood's abraded all the streets off the map, so we navigate by odd highlights on black and tainted water, acetate star's tracked physiology where needle-input ultrasound rewrites the mangy valence of the moon)

old cultists of asylum walls where swine-flu serum ramifies the Francophone graffiti, skimming rancid milk from surface-scum of steroid crystallography, notochordal clade for target-login to the bioweapon star,

all input formalized, phosphorylate denatured codestring toward a fossil slate of vermiform stock footage,

spinal voiceprint hardening at ligand gate to vertebrate guncotton for peptide-computer star, the shudder of subduction zones in the gel terminal, cymatic glyph's emergence and the parallel backmasking in the blackbox,

where legible names soften into barely-sculpted static, where every phoneme's coefficient carries plausible deniability, bears along the mourners' path from gut to voicebox to palate teeth and tongue a separate effigy, another artificial corpse for stationing in the dummy chamber in order to ward off any specimen jackal, human or otherwise, all biopsy-slide reentry to the histocompatible star's necropolis,

burnoff as its own set of disk permissions and the reformatting in progress whenever you should "happen" to look in, always still uploading, sorry, always still in the process of rebuffering, stream only partly resolved, screen gone back to insect ova, ectopic colonies of weapons-system star's parasitology, fattening on blackout voltage swung sideways through the grid's genitive viscera, a shielded cable slicing taproots, any copper wire's autograft with dense clamber of starches in the middle spectra, sample trigger firing off xenonucleic star between the airburst overdubs where pink noise outlines a stratigraphy of brief compromised tissue

and the statistical probability of our ever having to deal with it, which is low enough, of course, or else none of this would be happening at all, not as such, not in present form, we'd have relocated, established a new and, to all appearances, a strange jurisdiction, a free-enterprise zone, a borderland colony in the middle of 10,000 square miles' uninterrupted flatland, archaeology of Anasazi biomechanical star reprinted in the nuclide script of radiotoxic ochre,

the way the middle archives fill up quickest and quick access is thus only a varispeed catechism, wrenching you time-lapse through the first several thousand frames, fine, what exactly did you think you wanted here, to what would you be initiated, druthers given, I should fain exhaust my own self, I should drown in a tall hollow glass column of frankincense and myrrh and cephalopod fossils, I should learn the sleep paralysis of crinoid script repairing DNA-computer star

along with baked-on registry of diesel fumes, the trophosomal voiceprint where the sulfite wreckage makes up plausible accounting for the seafloor thus displaced by necessity of large-scale testing, projects for which we need big-time institutional cover and enough dummy companies, third-world papers of incorporation, a Panama storefront and a Florida office with one phone plugged into the wall but kept in a padded steel briefcase with the cord cinched between the teeth of the popped lock, remember that, fluidic-computer star's gasoline throughput stiffening into wax-cylinder cuneiform on rainbow-tainted air

in the iridescent hypostyle at the end of the peninsula, the way the sky's so obviously made up of segments to be transacted, derivatives to be integrated, a rate-flow primed for metabolic reduction to the single archway of a preset flightpath, understand, bioassay on a peak-oil star's paleontological remainders, the print-through scraps of old stop-codon and artifact summons calling for deleted code, abandoned nucleoside vertebrae, exons of genetic-weapon star in the white acetate prescription

that suddenly overtakes a perfectly black street, "perfectly" in the sense of "perfectly prepared to be so," of course there's always a little light somewhere or other, tant pis, more's the pity, more's the shame, honi soit qu'y pense very much at all, but we did what would could, arranged for the requisition and removal of all gas generators, all batteries white-, gray-, and black-market, the little bootlegged canisters filled with anything that smells like the right acid, and if it is the right acid, hey, why not, satisfied

customer, and if it isn't, I guess you just pray that it cost less than the real thing, was just slightly the wrong size, filled up with sawdust and nail-filings and the silicate sludge bleeding from the courtyard between Babylon slums,

aftermath of white-phosphorus star in real-time contact sheet, remaining city as a 3D negative now, etched onto the bleeding volcanic substrate and pretty much apt to revert whenever, however, carbon cycle swung antiphonal against its own practiced bones, petrochemical star's throughput blue-black hard-save to a spine of phosphate sugars, the way the very, very "ancient past" is so much nearer than the past of call it 50 years ago, although that too will have to be swum through backward, have to be transitively drowned,

suicide nouns acquiring sudden direct objects, titration of the wetware star with heliograph ghost's opiate reverb,

and you're doing what you can, and don't think we don't appreciate it, and you likewise ought not think that our appreciation clings to any but a very separate and site-specific kind of meaning, a, what would you call it, an institutional semiotic: we're grateful that we don't have to spend time thinking about it; we're grateful that we're not allowed to refer all our responses back up to a corporate flowchart on which it's declared for now and all soluble relevant time that *you*, whoever you are, are responsible for that particular field, are damn good your own self, are worthy of such trust as our slack backbones will render up to you, not in tribute to the position's occupant nor to the position itself, as such, but as Caesar taxation for the structure in which all these things are possible and, because possible, necessary and, because necessary, tantamount to the divine,

oh if it fits it fits and if it don't it don't and the fusing sequence and the countdown and the orders to fire are all stamped into firmware patch in bloodwork of a disk-repair star fretting through turntable mat of beige plastics and the intentionally clunky housing of field telephones run right into the wall on one-use landline kept "secure" such as we can really aspire to security,

slab of biogenic graphite where electrochemical star's baseband hum is stored as text of viral amniocentesis, MRI inducing intrauterine fissures, and

we'll basically try, we won't obviously fail to have looked as though we meant once to appear to have tried, cancel out terms above and below the barline, see what's

usable, don't tire the legislators, now, they have their own graft to get back to, so much old fur and pollen broken down in the vast chemical virulence of honey, so many falsely-terminated tracts of somite coding, the prion star's invasive language where we'd otherwise be left to gargle bullet points till Ministries fall and then just gulp the bullets

shit, now, Senator, way I see it, damn near *necessary*, let's remember here, *la chute, la chute*

(oh shit he's doing it again, OK, places, everybody, this has officially become a photo op, the videofeed's sluicing through the macrophage star, lunar carcinogens each a bluestone flaking or a transcript of flints, and by "places" we mean "stay wherever you are," heads down, muttering all at once, as many different specious accidental angles as you can muster, this is a set piece, this is something to confer upon all who might be watching the sense of, I dunno, having seen something exalted and exclusive, and to confer upon you yourselves a not dissimilar sense, like

think it's time to learn y'all some precise responsa-*bil*-ities, like participation in a holy office that will outlast your tenancy and even perhaps its naming, a hierarchical function tamped down backbone-deep whether representative legislature should give way to sindicati, fascist hustings, some kind of etiolate parliamentary nonsense, *they'll* still be there, the scarecrows you impersonate in 4- or 6-year terms, the effigies of power and the rites by which they recognize each other, whatever awkward host-flesh they've been inconvenienced by these last few decades, whatever typebar meat they're now obliged to occupy,

so heads down, megaphone vocables all, shouting it out from the edges of the frame where the boom keeps wavering in over the upper-lefthand corner of the visitors' gallery and it's had to keep up much sense of solemnity when we can see the goddamn gel light being thrown over the pallid old Carolina bastard's froggy jowls, some son of a bitch always seems to be in equal preparation for a losing presidential bid and a successful run at Debutante of the Year for his congressional district, whether himself or his most-recently thawed scraps of dulcet prey, give me a volumetric estimate of this freezer's capacity, if you would, how many pounds its floor can be expected to bear, how many horsetraders and traded horses we can cram into the service elevator,

goddamn, gonna require a touch of enantiomer resampling here, problems with limited-time patents, the industry's relying on us, sir, the industry expects to have its good graces remembered and its better turns returned, we'll haul out the older-model TVs, kind you can plug directly into the wall, we'll set them to a nonspecific channel and wait there while the cathode tremens excavates a weapons cache of radiopharmaceutical star,

alright now, grave as you can look, very serious, gennilmens, very august indeed, "it is time, it is time, it is time for stormy weather," not the real kind like down there on the coasts, not the 6 months without electricity and the 60 years of IMF loansharking, paying back interest on an "aid package" they never fucking wanted before they're allowed to spend a cent on such frivolous luxuries as schools, hospitals, clean water, a fire department, any emergency services of any kind at all, to say nothing of rudimentary civil defense in case Our Northern Cousins should decide to fuck around in the grand national tradition and send a half-imaginary junta riding in on the backs of flatbed fruit trucks, nonsense argot drilling through civilian receivers, ultraviolet band a histologic riot of the RF-hacking star,

now I know you can't have forgotten all that so easily, wouldn't be like you, too rich for your blood to consign such acrid triumphs to the general adipose pall of things proudly forgotten, waving your hands like *oh please don't embarrass me* when the interviewer brings it up; you'll crow over this sit; "didn't he sit on *that* one till it hatched!"; mutagen frieze of fluoroscopic star extracted from the gallery of decayed bone-analogues, radiocarbon and the strontium trace archived in guncotton spate of roots, nitrocellulose cache hiving obsolete chemical-weapon star behind a tapeworm firewall of lapsed hormones' autocue,

exocrine script we don't know how to dig up anymore, spades to the milky bleeding thyroid, sure, but who the hell remembers the right protocol for access and dismissal, how to log out once you've logged in, what exactly is coming toward us now along the step-function machinery of the line code, optical disc wounded to record the IP star's eroded paleotectonics,

well, shit, I guess I can just say "places" and you can take them and we can all assume we've done basically what we can do and not carry the blame any further than that, oh, fine, no point tearing your hair out, boss, hysteresis of FM-synthetic star



outlining kidneys' bromide failure or the pancreatic islets sloughed along a planned "contingency" for brownout archipelago where public wattage baulks at the disinfectant whitewash ladled over choleric statues of conquistadors in empty city squares)

(to wit)

*la chute, la chute, ô quel honteur, hélas, hélas*, sitrep says the asset has lost his drum, has dropped it through the floor which was also the roof of hell in this particular scenario, sitrep says – and we know you love this kind of garbage, love to feel neologism sprouting like benign tumors, blocking out that other and more hemodynamic scale, designer virus saved to modem star's tetanic login –

sitrep says the asset is out there alone and cannot ensure his safety or the safety of the assigned operation for any amount of time at any price, sitrep cautions that we ought to move as quickly as possible but not at the expense of increased visibility, whatever the hell you're supposed to do with a directive like *that*, and then you might, if you were of a certain turn of mind, begin to wonder if sitrep's not covering its own ass in advance, rolling down the shutters, bureaucratic asbestos and the flammable cladding of a paper trail whose immunoassay smoke will drag up analysand ballast about 50 years too late, carboniferous oncology where antigen star sleeps in the distilled document-serum

"the dead are starving, but they can't eat"

or maybe can't find anything they reckon worth the eating – teeth, by that point, modeled on the veins of subtler prey, sun to hematoma star, colonnade of ferroconcrete wreckage now galleried in the dense tamped dirt,

though, in its subtlety, much larger than you'd probably imagine, a mastodontic extent, one vast world just off to the side of any you're likely to recognize, where systems theory folds back on itself to flare up saurian and carnivore again, reports of beta-burn star fading through the radio transmission, static patches of proud flesh inexplicable by any of the logged or scheduled broadcasts,

call it a relay error, call it a form of strictly physical panic, what they'll want to name a question of sheer volumes and metallic interactions, problem with the heterodyning and extraction from the carrier wave, biomechanical star's ligand-gated

frieze where the cofactor blood slips off antigen traffic, grayscale freight borne where we're asking off the line, honing the sideband to a bore narrow enough that you scarcely have the neural armature to feel it slipping between temple's flesh and skull, always more pure meat than you'd counted on, a greater condensation of the circulatory drift, radionuclide star in parametric EQ's contrast surgery with volatility smile flattened out for blind spike in the ultraviolet reaches and a long infrared drone out where we park the fake wrecked cars,

oh real enough, but falsely wrecked, see, lab-graded to look that way, a delicate process and one for which no amount of forensic theory can really prepare you, given problems the textbook would never admit it had to deal with, to say nothing of its capacity for dealing with them were the admission permissible: the sand, the erosion, the windborne dirt, the endless fucking solar flatline, blood software of an acetate star washed out to grainy midrange diapason like the DC offset neutered by a stray amplification, making it louder in order to take the edge off, DI box wherever you can find it, ideally a stray episode of exposed spinal patchbay, fossil record of the tape-code star in flinty vermin library or passage of the slates where oil still shines against a surface return we hunt despite the narrowness of our official duties here, because who'd want to miss it, who would want to be responsible for holding things back that way, not for failure to stop a war, let's say – the war is *going* to happen – but

for failure to convert it into what it might otherwise be, i.e. a pure exercise in virtuosity, i.e. a music detached from the immediate headache of logistical factors, please tell me you've got ears for this, please don't make me wonder if I'm wasting my time,

petrochemical star's ultrasound where green of screen-burn whiteout scalds the monitors toward semiotics' cicatrix and everybody will cluster around for a moment or two, collectively saluting what we'll all be pleased as hell to take for either our good work or our good fortune, each depending on his or her notions of, what, whatever you want, really, the divine and the sub-angelic, yes indeed there are still people here thinking that way, and they're freaks among us, too, it's not an intensely religious crowd per se (lots of Mormons, but if they're here, they likely realize that Mormonism is basically a school of lifestyle theology whose mythos is entirely detachable and doesn't bear much on the job description – go on, *buddih*, keep telling yourself that, what did the old Bronx recluse

say, “keep believing it, shit for brains”; this is what recruiters have to pretend they think, because otherwise, hmm, you know), epizootics of the bootscreen star subjected to old pin-register surgery before even unscheduled screening, pharmaceutical banns’ vigil against patent of decayed chemical formulae and everybody comes out from the back rooms that looked as though they must’ve just been utility closets, ready with an analogue we can sell at half the price because we can manufacture it at 1/10,000<sup>th</sup> the expense,

question of publicity, you see, in that we weren’t ready to admit the existence of the basic ingredient or rather its availability anywhere within the continental United States or any of the satellite nations thereto appurtenant etc., because of course it’s the product of something we can’t talk about, it’s, well, not precisely what you’d call a manmade substance but an excrescence of human activities,

it’s shrieking solar waste,

it’s the gene-targeting introit of modem star as salvaged from the geologic epochs of more obvious technologies, more explicitly mechanical, none of your smooth pale surfaces and fiber-optic wiring here, none of the massive counterfeiting that goes into the production of white chemical gloss, the studied blankness, the deleted bioassay, an immunoviral star’s leukocyte throughput further bleached to hang in pale luminol contrail off the coast of any last manned lunar mission

until it should hit the pitch of Evidence and come up shining, shining, newly significand, the upper stroke and the barline bleeding mantissa’s linkage like mastic and resin through the bark of trees too near the testing range, no longer daubed with any Roman motto, come on now, those aren’t precisely the fantasies we cherish, or at least not most of us – there was that *one*, eventually attained the Vice Presidency and was, for the first term of two, in unitary control of the entire federal government, but then his fake boy-howdy deeply contrived shitkicker of a boss started to get tender roundabout the operative centers of what we must assume was basically his brain, and we got four years of exactly what you’d think, Christian moralism on the Alcoholics Anonymous pattern, Carl Jung’s exhausted joke gone deeply wrong,

plus the Surge, and that’s maybe been knocked out of any cortices frontal enough to gear up memory’s volitional programming, have to rely on the text virus of remote-execute star, recalls unwilling, a whole obsolete lexicon of neologisms that were in public

circulation for exactly 3.5 years and since have been exhumed only as withered sheepish icon of an age we mean to mock with bitter saccharine ichors hived pseudo-canopic, the inquest glyphs of serotyping star mixed down to mono for a dried lymphocyte sluice like map of vanished rutting snails

because – hey there, momento, digame, carnal, this sounded dig-uh-me in some abhorrent gavancho Spanish that makes everything sound like a racial slur, a dialect composed entirely of the bilingual-punning punchlines to Jackie Gleason-vintage ethnic jokes; christ, Diggamy, a no-horse and ex-railroad town in Australia where you can buy discontinued room-temperature soft drinks, but only with the local currency of watered-down gasoline; and understand, you hear that shit clattering like corroded sheet-zinc from the mouth of a man who's had to speak at least a little bit of Spanish on almost every day of his adult life, and it's not just that he's stupid or has a tin ear, though both may quite well be true; it's that nothing has ever forced him to learn, and *he wants you to know it*; he wants to make it very clear that you're the one who adjusts and contorts and gets a goddamn education, and he's the one who sounds however it's most immediately convenient for him to sound, and if you can't understand a word of it, well, amiguh, you'd better learn, cos he ain't much in the reformin' line and you're as expendable as expense accounts get, can be not just written off but entirely written *out*, are here on dubious pretexts anyway and, if you disappeared, would be missed by not a single government agency on the face or in the intestines of the Earth, as you prefer, technetium runtime of the operating-system star a dense ore-seam of what looks like black fishskin, there are no papers de jure and no magnetic strips de facto and we slide a card and sign our approximate names and at no point in the transaction are we asked to explain who you were or how you got here, much less what's happened to you since, if even that passivity is of adequate grammatical application; is there any you for anything to happen to you; are you not perhaps better figured as a brief and basically unmemorable event, a thing that happened once and quickly ceased to happen, a weather pattern forecast and offhandedly prepared for but never actually encountered, they say rain, they've been saying rain, oh look, they've now stopped saying rain, ought to have a clear sky for the neuroviral transit of the attack-vector star through all glial acropolis,

excuse me, ought to have a clear sky for the flight out to the coast, and by “clear” you know what I mean and what I don’t, by “clear” you oughtn’t think for an instant that I intend the breakdown screen-freeze even modulated pause of a single grid or set of coordinate axes, good god, certainly not, on standby maybe but then when aren’t they, infectious maths and weapons-system star an algebra’s contagion foaming over like peroxide in a dirty cut, an old Boeing contract, kind of thing you’re liable to forget about, Who Knows Where the Time Goes?, the 9-minute version with the long spoken intro and the thin acoustic-electric guitar probably plugged right into the soundboard, shit, probably one of those shallow-bellied models was so pop’lar back then, sound like shit now, might as well run something single-coiled through the input of an old cassette player, but it was new technology and everyone was thrilled, wire-recorder medicine to titrate wetware star with backmask index of the obsolete diseases,

none so very obsolete, no, none gone beyond recall, we’re designing viruses and, as we must, take hints from the given templates, genetic-cassette star misfolded deeply as the pharma chain allows, enantiomer waste in the botched symmetry of polarizing light,

don’t know what the difference is, well, hold right there, sample that voltage and recant at least a little, we know that the real and the importance difference is a matter of copyright protections and sweetheart legislation meted out in the congressional session right after the election while nobody was noticing, you let us own these shapes for 80 additional years and we’ll reconsider the plan to relocate our plant from your state and right over the border into Mississauga or whatever, fuck it, Ireland, tax reversion, maybe Panama, maybe Greece, hell of a deal on labor going down in Greece this Mayday weekend, if indeed it does fall on a weekend, and if it don’t, we’ll make it that way for the good of our own souls, you see, a pleasant kind of after-dinner laze, tryptophan booster shot plugged right into the neck, left jugular keening for a software update, nobody move too quick now, peptide-computer star dosed with a metabolic backwash thick enough to keep the sugar crystalizing in its code for years on end, pale gaunt white-crystal vantages of saccharine sarcophagi that hang like roosting bats from lithic flesh –

because, says the man who wants you to know that he doesn’t have to do a goddamn thing if he don’t feel like it, amen, the war is going to happen, better yet, the wars *are* going to happen, and

if the wars should be precluded by an (unlikely) upheaval in Stateside politics or a (very, very, imminently likely) collapse of every sort of ecologic hardware, “system” is inadequate here, well, those too will-have-been the war, those too will only be an alternate genetic expression of the same things built into and leading up to the war, those will find the same profit centers and broken angles, parataxis of the bone-analogue star when dredged from cracked xerograph clay where once there lurked the furtive wreckage of an unintended ocean, inland sea’s depleted GABA star a blind night-vision scald of compression artifacts decaying where refresh rates spike the bloodstream with potassium, adjust reuptake gradient to something the technicians can respect:

these men, these utter sons of bitches (your employers, in the bargain), don’t need any pretext, and would disdain such pretexts as appear, though they may be necessary in, yea, mourn it, the aberrant, the errant light of the world, though they may fulfill a dubious but wonted function before thine unprotected sight, o aegrum vulgus, floaters in your goddamn eye, peninsular god riddled with glaucoma, disk-permission stand-ins for

the X the bioelectric star etched into vitrine humor when the ziggurat encrypted backlog protocol defoliant

cut hard left from the peninsula and into the cold glare, karyotype star’s cassette still bleeding out the dried wispy contrails of recombinase and paint thinner, the fumes we used to engineer the westward deviation, program lapsed horizontal hold to glitch-consistency of myoclonic grammars refined into cellular memory and thus the contact-sheet furtherance of our own futural ghosts, preclinical imaging of wetware star’s vertebrate fuel cylinder

to know which was to know this, right here, point here, fried cursor, mark it down: know that dawn was west of us then, couldn’t have been any other way, and that the sunrise was therefore an enormity of dying, a protocol for glyphing out extinction-layer physics into printout etiology of bootscreen star’s black loop-return,

numbed but present, reporting nothing but, in the nil recurrence, defining a space from which the reports refuse to emanate, a kind of baffled canyon from which you might still be able to extract minor detached figments of waveform orography, biomechanical star’s frieze on fly-in reel played back for shattered decimal seconds only

in a blowby of magnetic shrapnel, each sliver keening to find the wound it ought to have augured, the precise pathology to which it might attach as reversed cause,

initials dropped, the signature more as of heat than in any economy of holograph's retrieval, something like disrupted ultrasound, abortion of the airframe star's real-time frequency profile in dense packing of uranium-rich mud and pitchblende sieve forecasting weaponry still latent in the soil,

hear that, the flyover routes figured in the radon shudder of earth dimmer by far than any surface-return blank it might cough up, some pleural diagram to match asphyxiate humors, the neuromodulator runes of a sleep-paralytic star timestretched to slow molecular formulae each threatening a recurrence, visual if in no other domain, and who's to say no other,

clipped out, harsh digital noise from the edges of the speakers only designed to look like paper cone behind mesh grille, actually nothing there, friend, actually we did you a solid in that bargain and would be happy any time you like to explain the dubious and delicately calibrated machinery of your most recent purchase which, we should point out, probably should've pointed out then but why bring up a prehistoric insult I'd like to ask you, will be immediately void as refers to warranty etc. will be immediately compromised in terms of technical virginity and so forth the tangent contagions of the sample-velocity star in touchscreen recall or the artificial haptic interface as modeled on a patch of not-quite-ready xenotransplant tissue

(working for the moment on valves of pigs' hearts, on skin from wings of incubator bats, on the longer yellow teeth of dogs trained to bark at the approach of well-you-wouldn't-want-me-naming-it-here, question of legality, question of compliance with various sorts of nondiscrimination noncompetition nondisclosure clauses that really we oughtn't to have written in or rather oughtn't to have agreed to let somebody else fly in bloc boilerplate from I don't know any of the basic and mandatory updates, any of the heavy saccharine satellite sweat, the IP star's lymphatic ichor smeared with lampblack and undeveloped carbon wilderness of reharvested negatives,

this is of course a problem, this is something one really should've warned you and us and everybody about but, you know, the time, the day, the hour just wasn't right, other warnings pressed in other places, what's the line, "toils urged other," "unwept, unburied," set up the oar that he swung 'mid fellows and be there set his epitaph, a man

of no fortune and with very specific instructions as to the hours in which this particular road is open to civilian traffic, i.e. none, plus thence the divagations from “civilian” as such, you gotta day pass, mate, magnetic strip in spinal graft would do you good, would frankly help all of us more than a little, notochord clade of weapons-system star never farther away than a syntactic inflection of the early neural tube,

soft as a goat’s hip, like the man said, and anyway you don’t want to be fucking around in there any more than you have to, voided warranty, as I intended to tell you at one point or another and if I never quite got around to saying it well you can blame that on the temper of the age, in the sense of tonal reference alongside any fine Jamesian distinction of social manner as evinced by private indiscretion or the other way around, “contrived to permit human cohabitation without excessive strain upon the nerves” or something to that effect, thereafter “raised itself to the pitch of tragic intensity,” is it still legitimate to go so far, who knows, who dares ask, by which I mean who asks with such daring as to sufferance of the answer, and

you’d need a proprietary screwdriver anyway, question of copyrights again, had to do it this way, damn complicated, I’ll grant you, but for market protections and planned obsolescence you really can’t do any better, not at least until they start letting us work with some of the fantastic shit they’re still keeping, hmm, you wouldn’t quite say “hidden” because it is all listed somewhere, thoroughly invoiced, so many somewheres, in fact, that you could very well expend your little viable lifeblood, if you haven’t sold *that* patent yet –

DNA-computer star offline where shelter-hatch of transplant rushes matted down with heat-resistant epoxy is still stirring wormy and over-rehearsed with circulated breath over the hollow bones of the old dig site, recently revived as subject matter for a parallel archaeology, call it a Mayan codex once, call it the very slow admission of American involvement in, ahem, amazing what kinds of things you’ll find on the local hilltops if you’ve got the time and safety, in the local sense, to look,

failed objects of sky burial, at Aleppo once, naming the lurid softcore adversaries for some manner of deferred access to habitrail insurance, I wouldn’t bother the governor too much right now, he’s having a difficult time, too, this isn’t all about us, you know, and somebody’s got to pay for the caution tape in several languages, and somebody’s got to take the public flak for the days-long water shutdown, the sudden



brownout-throbbing weakness of the exurban electric grid, the star-remission figured in obliquer login sequences than hex-encrypted engine knows to gutter down the steering column gentled target-itchy near the cliffs)

(above the mourning-sintered bloodline of the radon-daughter star

and along the slopes of the hillside drives where the various cops stand telling their obscene slapstick jokes, less bi- than sub-lingual, and as much in terms of physiological location as per adenosine star's cytological bandwidth, I mean

look, you've got to be careful with all the radio stations here, all the callsigns and the official listed frequencies, to say nothing of the variable bootlegged back channels in use by all present and many theoretically absent, of which more momentarily, but for the moment we're looking at a question of pure throughput, or rather listening for the crippled gneiss tensions of that question, piezo fracture-map unfolding like unregistered protein sequence from the exobiologic star, off the index but not totally separate from its radiological field, a mutagen cofactor waiting latent in the glossary's construction, in the conventions it follows and bucks, the odd chemical scansion its genitive splices construe, because

you've got the local cops, whom nobody respects at all and who are therefore just standing around in the pure practiced choreography of necessary lassitude they've had so much time to perfect – it's a minor art unto itself, something like the training of the ideal movie extra, one directors would keep calling back if they ever cared enough to find out his or her name or, really, beyond the specifics of the perfectly plausible meat, would photocopy, would take as basis for a series of pliable 3D-printed objects, some kind of tensile latex, maybe, the material for a bulletproof vest that perfectly fits the contours of your own statistically-determined collarbones, you like that, sir?, I thought you would, question of delicacies,

looking now for the xerography of operating-system star's dim medical remainders where the night sky is so clearly mirror-chained feedback of graphite repetitions, each echo seeking the level of the general overload-hum, tamped down by now to a reasonable drone, not too heavy behind the eardrums nor too great a fluid displacement in the exposed backbone, spinal plugin for biogenetic star's contagious software

and the other ambient machinery susceptible to such benign infection, or

that's what it says on the papers that came with the thing, anyway, and who are we to question the papers, and who, much less, are *they* to question the papers, policía muy local, lo mas local, creo, could hardly be any more so, paper is basically the substance that engineers if not quite actually constitutes their circulatory systems, individual and institutional, paper is what grants them the conditions of habitation and diet they're used to and promises the future probability of the future possibility of the future unlikely but still feasible occurrence of something very much like a promotion although not listed as such and never officially reported and never itself put on paper and not certainly not referred up to the review board because there was that nasty little business a few years ago with the woman who well you remember I don't need to remind you nor do I no certainly not *I* propose to censure you for your actions in that circumstance I'm not here to offer condemnation not at any price though if you were to keep naming prices you might eventually find mine

but the point is that the review board might not quite feel able to recommend you for any official distinction one must report these things to the public you understand give the impression of slow and arduous and ultimately very depressing progress in terms of large-scale ahem "political progress" which is useful not only to keep the reformists off your back and the revolutionaries pessimistically docile but to impart a general sense that yes indeed this is the only way things ever happen or ever could so you'd all better get goddamn good and used to your own life measured by a single-digit annual decrease in the number of police-brutality claims and let's say a double-digit decrease in nomine actual legal suits thereto attendant

because that's what you wanted, right, a more perfect union or what the fuck ever, and if you were to protest that we have no right to take such reduction as a real measure of anything – I mean, mightn't it just refer to the cops' improved techniques for covering up brutality, or to an increased willingness to settle civil suits before they ever actually hit the courtroom, or mightn't it even conceal, though not very well, a simple legal redefinition of what constitutes "brutality" and upon whom the onus for same falls, who's got to prove what, let's say a special addendum to the penal code whereby the burden of proof in such an allegation is not only upon the plaintiff as usual but, in these cases and these only, stringently *requires* one witness verbal or aural to the event, so

that if a policeman beats or rapes you and there's no one else around in time to hear see touch smell whatever any of the carnage, you can no longer sue for brutality per se, oh yes, maybe "emotional damages," the very unlikely assault and battery, Grievous Bodily Harm depending on jurisdiction, there's some interesting extradition law left on the books from the colonial period, I don't know, maybe look there?, I'm not really, I mean to say, this isn't precisely my area of expertise and I am, after all, a local civil employee, I do technically work for the government, which is itself eager, of course, to smooth these matters over before they should ever reach the litigious stage,

bad news for everybody, you most of all, don't believe that, look around a little bit, 56k hookup in the courthouse waiting room where you can browse your own name as respondent in several cases of whose existence you might well have been unaware until this moment, accessory, accessory, and here's a coconspirator, and spot the bougie, watch the thimble shade what evidentiary weapons yet adorn suicide kings)

(green seethe as of resin-heavy nightsweat wind-frosted to a shiver of detachable rime, the deep freeze of the waveguide-sculpted noise en bloc, sunspot-tremens bandwidth of the weapons-system star

installed, what, at least 60 years ago, and the broadcast comes in more or less unregulated from all conceivable quarters, or from several beyond conception and several fewer than the public offices of the registered Milagro would warrant, gonna need to see disk-permissions on that particular quantity, miss, gonna need to look into the karyotype halo of a bioweapon star where uplink shrivels in crude splice of striate muscle to fine ductile copper wire,

that's what I'm saying, old stuff, never replaced nor even much repaired, you're looking at several linear miles' worth of old corroded metals and umbilical grafts plaited together along whatever lines appeared most accessible at any given moment to any given contractor of provenance etc. and of credentials etc. and dubious enough at any price, much less the one we paid, much less the one we were secretly prepared to pay if anybody had really put us to it, mutagen splices of the tape-code star where spent hormonal autocue still runs through its hived backlog in a discharge of electron guns officially offline but still approximately active

in the back of the offloaded CRTVs waiting where the storeroom door's left open all day, not that you'd ever see it or even think of it save by night, fusion gene of bootscreen star as textual wiretap snaking through the germline

where we watched the spent cells annealing under a heat that struck us very much like cold, though nothing much of winter here, none of the kind of constant and inbred frigidity you'd know from northern latitudes: this is more the variable temper of your footage above sea-level elapsing, right, the amount of calculable distance between you and attack vectors of the execute-file star laid out in stratigram of petrologic rainbow on the allegations' shore,

I mean I've heard it's there, certainly, I've been treated to something that seemed a little bit more solid than rumor, surgit fama and all that, of course, a spinal transplant of nitrocellulose star winding itself verminous alongside shutter speed of biogenic graphite, nothing much to surprise you with, the ideogram faces of the gently predatory owls that never seem to *land* here, appear always to have been there already, alert you by some minor stirring in the lower and more mangled branches of the yews, black basalt logging runtime of electrochemical star and retroviral algorithms annexed there by barrel-width of server and the pileup of the requisition orders for ammunition we'll be happy to call "necessary,"

and so it may be, just not as named in public, certainly not as abstractly justified by men who, if we're being honest, don't give anything like a very profound damn and have their jobs to do and are doing them and that's a nice enough alibi isn't it and don't we love to believe in the world to exactly such a prescriptive degree, as if "their jobs" came from nowhere, crawled up from the shore where the kingfishers' nests are still glutinous wreckage of cracked eggs and vomited-up fishbones, "got his color from the setting sun" he did, DNA-computer star in the lye printout of a ziggurat's abortion

where you might still sniff the astringents downwind, if you were so inclined, and if you prove to be, I'll take you there tomorrow, maybe, or the day after, or anyway such day as doesn't require a numeration at this point because it promises to intervene before the distance of numerical extent would really become necessary, you see what I mean, for some people that's about 6 days, for some more, given the possibility of numbering in weeks, and then months and then years and then concretions of theoretical time like

tumors fattening with misdirected voltage, you see, black watts feeding myograph of oncologic star

where the carcinogen mass has acquired its own rudimentary nervous system and you are practically if not yet officially become a host for something whose birth will almost certainly kill you, and

what's new about that, you might ask, and

fair enough, more than sufficiently fair, but we're not used to talking about it in such blank bald terms, thy towers, Ierushalom, or your preferential rusticated spelling, I saw that, nearly blind before the first flush of the proper daylight, when, by some law of optics which I neither claim nor particularly care to understand, you can actually see the light preceding the dawn if you look in the right direction, which I believe to be the west, counterintuitive, I guess, though what could be more strictly rooted in the basic intuitions than the light and how you turn to it

or don't, bypass mechanism to "debug" peptide-computer star against occurrences of protein luminescence in the vein, before we've gone down also, construed such factitious speleology as will get us right in there, ought to be hyphenated, not intensifier-preposition-location but a set piece, a bit of rote comedy, the kind of thing that comes up in the middle of the teleplay and you go with it because it's a way to be gone with, it's a prevailing wind, it's the sidechained compressor track that lies just outside the narrowed signal domain of the weather, see what I mean, hemodynamics of cross-scripting star reprinted as what spatial plausibility might more or less give back an MRI

of the, what are we calling her at this point, "victim's," sure, but there are victims everywhere, I guess the witness's injuries and what might be gleaned as to the nature of their infliction, I don't know, man, are you sure you really want to get so very invested in a single case when there are hundreds, thousands, probably tens of thousands more to come, visceral glyph of fluoroscopic star quarried from the dust-abraded quartz walls of the worm necropolis

but that was to the south, where history's afflicted with a different peristalsis, and they die according to the spasms of the same gut alternately piqued)

(whereas, um, and in the event that, stalling, prefatory language de rigueur blah blah radiopharmaceutical star hits cyclic resonance of benzene ring to scream the whole engine compartment to pieces

and best believe we had to file a bunch of fuckin' paperwork on *that* one, difficult situation, me entiendes, because it was what you might very well call a cross-organizational operation if you were in the mood to be coy, and functionally you are, as in the friction of the bracket around  $x$  where leaky battery casings leach the wetware star's hematopoietic fuel cell

as stem as mast as sirene with wax for your ears against the various seductions of the thing on the other side of the equals sign, and if it's really not quite equal, as it really never is, well, that's a major subset of governmental magic, which is to say voodoo economics, that anything can eventually be made equal to anything else, at least on paper and provided you don't particularly give a shit about the casualties involved, which, trust me, you don't

because if you did, and so on, and were you to take seriously even for a sincere blistered decimal shard of a moment, and so on, and there's a problem in the upper reaches of the broadcast spectrum, there's some kind of difficulty with heterodyned ligand gates infecting the remote-execute star, a malware reef where silver sponge begins to reek with misdirected potassium and the problems of protein folding above a certain altitude, the old installations, you know, the firmware necessary to maintain a bioweapon star through several violent graphics-card reuptake spasms for replacement of the sky and redistricting of its forced gamma-knife cartography

as when you had the halo on and we were running the complimentary tests, I don't know, che, some people enjoy this part, a little bit curious about, well, not themselves, but what kind of institutional metrics they might be capable of generating, you get me?, the Balkan frame or cranial halo, the stereotactic imagery compressed into a cybernetic star's contagious codec-dross, old feedback frozen in place, sampled-and-less-than-held, basically we were looking for a foolproof disposal mechanism, the ideal cleanroom, the medically perfect incinerator, no residues, no aftermath,

not even an autoclave to prove that anything had happened anywhere ever at all, the scratched-out peptide cache of a biogenetic star canceled underneath the pharmacy's denominator and waiting only for updated instructions as to frequency and amount of

dosage, legality of same, credentials necessary to apply for same and credentials necessary to dispense or better to disburse same, they call them crótalos or crótales here as I remember, small cymbals shaking on the unbelievably dry back of a snake that moves like an alternate viscosity of sand, the oily dirt around this place, the tar-soaked grit, the shale weeping upward from the flashpoint bones of a hydraulic-fracture star

which is still essentially the goal, though I hear it from way overhead – or rather I hear that others hear it from their aeries a little bit higher than mine, dribbling down as on the forecast model and its single success in proceeding so, har har, a backwash filter-sweep, rotary speaker angiograph where the somite login hits an obsolete disk-repair star – that the present model has perhaps begun to wear thin, that they’re looking at diplomatic relationships with several of your more obviously inhumane MENA regimes and so forth, wondering what really prevents us from installing somebody superficially liberal in, say, Qatar, Oman, whatever, wondering about what kind of “momentum” the new Saudi crown prince might be able to “generate,” euphemisms flowering like lush cancers in the valley underneath the smokestacks, “beautiful sky of soot and clay,” haven’t we offshored *that* along with all the pittances it takes to pay the new Third World technicians, haven’t we excised cytopathology of bootscreen star from every very obvious clip-assay of the blood

where dropdown menus all go black or rather ungray and it’s time for every conceivable kind of option, as against, if tacitly so, every conceivable decision, not at all the same thing and it’s your fucking neck to confuse the two, but such enjoyable and languorous confusions are, shall we say, a prerogative of Empire,

which reminds me how we started down all this rabbitholing, and you can see the cartilage rings there, isn’t that remarkable in its way, can see contractile sphindid matter is I believe the technical term, watch the molecular manufacture of a short-term chimera, abortifacient passkey to the airlock where decaying wetware star serves as raw source of tissue-code if little else

on the model of machine language, to wit: we fucked that plane right up, and did it in a very unsubtle way, once, at least, we realized we’d been seen coming in; problem of jurisdiction, although not really; problem, although not really, of the “no-fly zone” we were eager to instate so that we ourselves could selectively fail to enforce it; basically

what I'm saying is that we got spotted en route by some fucking amateur radar emplacement or I don't know exactly what, old guerrilla electronics still flashing like tinfoil at the edge of the desert sprawl toward Antarctica, ain't that kind of goddamn miraculous in its own way, technetium indices of MIDI star's breached containment where acoustic weaponry still catalogues the old defoliant formulae for reuse under little greater auspice than what will strike you, if you're within hearing distance, and you probably won't be, as the sound of a chisel splitting a glacier, finding the exact point from which to activate the latent matrices of tension and fracture, one tap like an autopsy on a statue, this is the prevailing myth and this, as mythos, is still usable, if not such as you might come to prefer,

remember that, recordalo, right in the side of the neck, right where the frameshift carotid thumps up varicose, gamma-knife star under varispeed acts of neon medicine designed to provide oblique stimulant cover, so that we were always only moving, and if they saw us flying over from some outpost in the jungle's burnoff margin, we'll pretend to crash the plane, we'll detail artificial fire damage and trash the crumpled fuselage, we'll tear off bits of paneling and scatter them over the tamped mat of the dead and living vines)

(hey mano, hey che, como se llama *una vega* en inglés,  
"it's a beautiful night, García")

(the city is a glossary of possible assassinations, uncompiled as yet, latent in the glint the flash the Rubicon beach where red volcanic cold underlies screen-burn flare off the contaminated oil wells, vivisection of petrochemical star's disease-slide archaeology, a shudder, dim blood-colored fog, metalloprotein Cimmeria though there's alleged land to any and all sides, in-vitro amnion resampling aliases glial-layer satellite of DNA-repair star,

the sutures whereof we'd deny all knowledge on supposedly continuous massif, exobiologic star's ataxic faultline error-log,

some heart-wall arrhythmia where sloughed heterodyne matrix falls like eschar-bound marine snow to redefine disk-region protocol of IP star, striate muscle eventually annealed like young glass, cut horns, the way the winter never exactly comes, lies out in



discrete acts of botched framebuffer surgery underneath the general and superficial swelter of the land, a humid gasoline density any time you're near the city and the sudden shock of liquid cold beneath before the towers have quite faded in the distance, fluidic-computer star's gel RAM cache hardened into sculptural polymerase lightning,

a pathologic archive bound now to the substrate in the shallow bath like old photos developed here when there was still land enough for minor optic interventions, as indeed there still is, but pre- and re-owned now, all under one form of indictment or another, holding companies and fictitious fronts and the businesses that, though they're technically Agency property and as such are meant to function as excuses before all else, are actually turning a tidy profit and might well work in a state of semi-detachment and of deniability so wholly implausible that the District Attorney will know *exactly* what lines she's not prepared to cross, a cursory glance at the papers of incorporation, a virologic bioassay of the text-file star isolating parts per million where subroutines surface to cross-multiply against the ragged molecules of bloody gold,

birds' tongues probing in the basement of the U.S. mint and ancient leukocyte hardware annexed to the antibody star for laggy update, a hard drag against the 0:00:00 mark when playback was supposed to start but didn't, you get me, several seconds' pause, the graphite cyst looking like it ought to mirror comparable orography on ground level, a gleaming gray gouge in the sky, some feedback having to do with the complex volumetric and refractive properties of diesel vapor, I guess, cellular throughput of biochemical star long since semi-refined into rudimentary software of fossil fuels, but

nothing on the ground like that and nothing much above save bleat of remaindered machinery and the xerographic sidechain where a modem star's extinction is still rolling-shutter gawky through a long-term phase transition, gas to metals, metals back to ichorous Earth, the punctured lymph node where the aquifer runs out into a reservoir of garbage that's not supposed to be biodegrading but is, or is supposed to be but isn't, I can never remember, this ain't even sort of my specialty, you ever seen a plastic bag start to rot like the thin flesh stretched over the wings of depilated bats, well, you know, you ever see what it looks like when the passerine birds throw up their stillbirths around here, hideous, really, especially the way the pink featherless sac moves against the toetip of your shoe when you try to nudge it, can feel the organs lurching behind the diaphragmatic lapse, just a diseased blood-pear,

and there seem to be more and more of them, though what would I know, on what statistical basis could I hope to make that claim and with reference to what specified and demarcated geography and with what legal right to roll out the caution tape and to declare this an interdicted zone, much less the question of the access to the tape itself and the ability to mark the map as such, gamma-knife syntax for depleted GABA star

where patches of overload are paradoxically dark, soaked to the color of a violent but shallow bruise, bitemark on the doughiest portion of the inner thigh, and we were asking after a DMZ where we might still construe xenophagy of airframe star's failsafe cell-death mechanism,

the very basic immunologic systems with which the skeleton was retrofit before its failed attempt at mass production, never got the damn thing off the ground, you know, in any sense except the literal – it *did* fly, or I'm told it flew, I've heard rumors for years about a sequence of little test jaunts between here and the Salton Sea, here and the Gulf, here and Baja California, could you really be surprised, you couldn't, I couldn't, amateurishly doctored photographs presenting obviously counterfeit evidence of a million Red Chinese troops massing in what's technically Mexican territory, the islands off the southern knurl of the Pacific Coast and nothing much there to shock you, evident graphics-card epidemiology

repurposed at such angle as will best infect the decommissioned officers' sleep, tamper with the spinal dreaming of the weapons-system star,

fried angiography of parallel notochord sequences dormant in the most fissile layers of schist, where the slate foliates like Dante's rose in paradise or just the sparks gone up off the brand and we still waiting out here in vestige of proud flesh from officially quarantined injury data, nothing to discuss, nothing to tell you even if I were in the mood or the position to tell, which I am most assuredly not and even more than most assuredly cannot be, wouldn't have the work otherwise, wouldn't in that case be allowed to inspect contamination indices for blackbox star's old histiocyte uplink,

the way the slackened sarcomere devours all other possible grammar, the paratactic ghosts of the histocompatible star their own naphtha-flickering city-image alongside, or rather superimposed upon, the one you know in the distance you're

convinced you must've covered by this point, civitas pursued back to the etymon's necropolis, what the word is, radiological sepulture

and this likewise in cities' overexposure, when all that structuration lays itself suddenly bare as the pulp of evidence, blistered dicot mainframe shedding broken pollen from peptide-computer star's spliced peak of derivative-graph noise)

(but that was old, that was borrowed, that was blue, and as far as something young and owned and biondo – eh, che be'a!, flown-in footage stuck there with saccharine paste and the edge of a dulled razor in matte pancake-makeup Technicolor or the stolen-carbon monochrome of black-market Cinecittà cameras already trafficked several times apiece by 1946, charred Prometheus remainder, the rapid-saccade edits of adenosine star's RAM,

well, some young Italian fuckup-in-training, maybe 11 or 12, fingering the wet scales of the day's haul from the trawlers with an abashed sexual tenderness he's unlikely ever to show a human female, or a male, for that matter, depending on any number of incident factors which we might as well enumerate but then might quite as well not, your pick, really, prison sentencing etc., military service and so forth, presence in several of our smaller convocations by accident or as errand boy when we're waiting down near the rowhouses for a meeting which would be unwise if not exactly impossible to conduct by daylight,

oh yes, you remember that, *ou sont les jours d'antan, les jours du glaïeul*, *stesso sentimento* if a different dialect necessary for the moment's precise impact, you get the idea, toxins surfacing from the gritty hardpan of a dried-out vein, solid-state biomachinery to register the RF-hacking star's illicit login, well

they knew his face, is the point I'm making here, they knew what he looked like and weren't about to forget it, not the kid who ran his hands over the fish, and we might pause here to note the self-evident grammatical obscenity of the phrase "other people's fish," but, having made clear that we might, we therefore no longer need to, and the other guy, they'd probably convince themselves they hadn't seen him, tell themselves in retrospect that he was only the dimmed brainstem emblem taken up as mask by something never really localized in any given person or set of circumstances, ancien régime pathologies, you get me, who's to know what *il fascismo* really was and who's to

triangulate its specified coordinates, work backward along the ravaged signal chain toward its entry point, reboot the DNA-computer star toward fractured gene-expression pathways where the wracked cofactor squeezes thyroid sweat from acrid cells

or really any of it, really assign blame, really set the docket, I mean of course there will be show trials and maybe a few personal prosecutions and a “lifetime ban” on political involvement which will, without exception, be lifted within a decade in each case in exchange for, I don’t know, who cares, you do, we should, an American weapons installation, a ring of nuclear missiles aimed at various trackmark entry points on the periphery of the Soviet Union, warhead’s logic board crawling with bacterial differentiation of the wetware star

and maybe an aid package, a photo-op airlift, the erase head’s compound cicatrix, multiple acts of spurious and conspicuous deletion, scar tissue thicker than the end of your unclipped and biggest toenail, some keratin excess to harvest as cable-shielding for immunocompromised star’s impaired stereo balance,

since we need it in two channels and *only ever* in two channels, strict opposition, everything’s easier that way, take what you will from home hi-fi technology just then approaching consumer ubiquity: there is no center speaker; there’s only the fake centrality of what the other two contrive to agree upon; the world as you’re given purchase upon it is the spectral radiation of the compacts they don’t even need to make in secret, because they refer to matters apparently so recondite, and in language apparently so specialized and tedious, as to present no real claim upon your attention; they give you the vulgarized mass-market nightmare and then go about articulating the nightmare’s daylight contours in a way that doesn’t much perturb you and is frankly hard to care about, for most of us, at least; have you spun up the drive to check the topsoil’s millirad count lately; have you presented phytoremedial star to the graft-patchbay of bone analogues and seen which plugin scabs of lab-cultured tissue start to feel toward each other as albino roots exposed to solar ravage,

the ruptured sunspot economy where the magnetic storms still blow across the civilian frequencies we thought would’ve been stabilized by now, but who knows, it’s a fucked country, it’s hardly even a “country” in the sense which we expect the word to carry with it, some old goddamn foundation work on a fallen Roman wall and that’s enough to base elections on, I guess, if you’re really into that sort of thing, molecular

taxonomy of alkaloid star in slow videofeed baseband now transliterate as line code and broadcast where glyphic resonance = carrier-wave frequency,

it's a complicated little schematic and not many people really understand it and even fewer need to; matter of fact, nobody really needs to understand it at all, not even necessarily its inventor; let him have invented it while sleepwalking, that's fine, let him shrug and rearrange the stents where opioid formulae hit cyclic resonance and skin signally fails to repair itself under the black bath of the oxygen-tent star; let the rest of us then rely more or less on random intervention as far as maintenance goes, and let us be surrounded by devices whose purpose we only grasp in near-total dimness and then only on the social level, their function as insignia, the way we use them not only to distinguish among ranks but to invent such heretofore intangible ranking as now seems nearly prehistoric, facies hippocratica, the deathmask at the bottom of the dehydrated ravine, hypoechoic star's null-return ultrasound,

the zeroes in the code where we'd scuff the pith a little bit and occupy ourselves with sucking on a curved platelet cache, a little 90° quadrant of small mammals' exposed marrow, while we waited for the guy we couldn't allow ourselves to be seen meeting in daylight, not really because the meeting itself would give us away but because I think people would've been stunned to realize that this guy was still alive at all, that the at-war Earth included any postwar world wherein he might've been allowed to survive, and we'd listen to the urchin kid running his gluey hands over heaped-up fish in the darkness like a blind man trying to navigate the freshly-risen sea)

(acidic scripts of bootscreen star still waiting for the phosphate access panel, wrongfooted and wrong-octaved, bristled pixilation at the first harmonic depositing onscreen artifacts across the DNA-computer star's damaged display,

old readout dross in splintered shale and calcium tumor, scanned for and, if found, noted, briefly sweated over, then forgotten; that was roughly the deal; you trawl and, having done so, more or less, having at least fulfilled such formal requirements as would provide you with an obsolescent but briefly tenable alibi in the event of later questioning, unlikely as it was and is and will be, you lose what's been trawled for, if such placement as object is even really appropriate, cursor fattening on viral load of modem star;

a question of grammar's predation, of carnivorous syntactic bent and the way the jaws will batten, epizootics of the text-file star an animal plague transferred via Eden biosynthesis to reams upper or lower, as you like, nuclease printout of peptide-computer star in touchscreen slick of finger-whorl and caked-on grease,

basically null, which is to say neither null nor in any manner basic – a slick bland crust, sure, but we're dealing with the acids underneath and how should anyone forget it, alkaloid ring coverup for electrochemical star's login to the black granitic patchbay – but that's the story we're telling and approximately plan to keep telling, most importantly to *keep told*, a general and vague sense of linguistic currency, the fact of what the fact is supposed to be in all such zones as will encounter, generate, parse the supposition, you know what I mean, the old bureaucracy of the superseded acrylics and bakelite casing and the final beige account, firmware fusion-sequence of the cybernetic star saved on old floppy disks because allegedly harder to break into, though much simpler, one would think, just to steal,

and you might be surprised, or might not be surprised at all, at how lax the security's been left for years on end, as the factitious specters of other and more marketable threats overtook this territory, wrung it out, left it less to dry than to erode beneath the weight of its own trapped dynamics, arid wind abrading electrophoretic gel-printout of fluidic-computer star, the old chain-reaction lightning of polymerase glyph left to die off in extinction-layer oracles of alphabet,

preclinical imaging whose waste may not refer to anyone or anything but must itself contrive, compound the simplistic basis of a system we'll pretend to think is adequate for coding mouth noise and thus for the transmission of all necessary etc., reactor slag of MRI star offshored for reuse as battery in a car headlight and then, I'm thinking, and you can let me know if this is plausible at all, maybe we can light the runway with them, too, I realize there are pretty specific parameters, I realize the old nerve agents have been stockpiled just a few feet underground for use as wetware star's immunodeficient fuel cell, but

if not the runway itself, because you have to be able to read all the insignia under such conditions as are elsewhere specified by people I don't care to meet and may well have met already and according to a protocol which frankly doesn't interest me in the abstract but might very well strike me as fascinating if I were privy to any of the details,

and who's to say I'm not – cytopathology of weapons-system star disguised on wall-length bank of monitors as oceanic conditions obtaining near the black sites in 9 other countries

or, to be legally punctilious about it, 6 countries and 3 territories, or protectorates, or unincorporated colonial holdings, or whatever exactly it is, perpetual rumors of a statehood vote coming up and so much prepaid blather from all presented angles, if by no means from all angles possible, that it's hard even to know how to begin to think about it, because we'll get some straight-up hateful bullshit from over here and, from just a few inches west, we'll get superficial piety and paeans to the theoretical but not the logistic value of something they call "tolerance" which apparently involves allowing people whom we don't personally resemble to eat up a few seconds' worth of screentime in a PSA organized and shot by a for-profit advertising firm semi-disguised as an "awareness-building" charity and all to the tune of, last I heard, \$11 million, considerably more than half of which has reliably been embezzled to the edification of many concerned, though certainly not the central-casting leprosy, you know, those afflicted with such antiquated plagues as we'll occasionally call out of storage for the little hit of repulsed nostalgia they'll grant us, you like to feel disgusted in a kind of sepia-toned way, get me, like to feel the ridged and scarred-up rotogravure texture of old hideousness, something scraped from the ambrotype, remaindered bioweapon star in viral-shedding season,

maybe crusted amniotic fluid or just a little bit of the plasma underlying redder cells, central grayscale static anaglyph of the anemic star and all possible software updates, meaning all those allowed us under the commons license, the prepurchased holdings of the Agency across bureaucratic partitions et seq., and the kind of theft we're practiced in committing, the kind we know we can deny for a period of time not to exceed 10 years but never to be less than 3, at which point we'll admit it in a side-of-the-mouth weasly bitchy way and nothing will happen at all, a sour writeup in the same few low-rent rags that already hate us, so, uh, whatever the opposite of cui bono is, who gets hurt, what lit up the nociceptors and why, could I bother you for a brief immunoassay map of the recorded-over GABA star and stratigraphy of dubbing we've mixed down to mask its absence or depletion,

but what I mean to say is that you trundle the exemplars of old disease under the klieg light, and you briefly adore them for horrifying you in a way you haven't been horrified for a while, and then you adore yourself at great and fatuous length for being so very concerned, so damned sensibly charitable, and you take them to the premiere, which, sure, seems like an odd thing to have for what's basically a commercial, since all the money pledged on to all the phone numbers and email addresses listed is paying somebody's salary after it pays somebody else's bonuses, but there's a premiere, of course there is, it's at the halftime show, it's in the meretricious reverence of preproduction in-stadium darkness, they set up folding chairs on the field itself, hell of a thing to do to the grounds crew, I guess, but

this isn't their night, this is your client's night, meaning your specimen's, meaning, finally, yours, and you get to hold the leper's hand through triple-thick disease-resistant gloves, take cleanroom autopsy while misnaming the antibody star as random walk, and point up at the screen, and tell the plaguestricken – no name to follow; adjective a substantive as all the naming necessary – There, my dear, and only there, you are)

(o the drizzle and the hum of it, the sludge dripping over the lightbulb, the overburden and the ballast aneurysm of hydraulic-fracture star,

the ways we thought to bend and then the ways we ceased to think at all of bending, to fracture-map the immunocompromised star for tensile strength and ductility and finally as spot-substitute, should any present itself as necessary, for the material we normally use in bulletproof vests and body armor and protective cladding for various kinds of vehicles deployed in warzones or what you wouldn't technically call "warzones" as such because the war was never declared and never passed through the legislature as any sort of decree but everybody knows what you mean and there's also the question of saving \$5,000 if we're willing to use the flammable kind of sheets on the "empty" buildings which everybody knows aren't really empty, I mean they're listed vacant, I mean they're former public housing projects, if such a thing may be said to exist, if a building can ever cease to be a public housing project, in which nobody is officially housed but in which several "temporary transient residents" have been quartered for a period not to exceed 6 months and which has exceeded 6 or 7 years in



most cases because, let's be honest, this is an easy way to stop thinking about people who have nowhere else to go and we're in no particular rush to think about them any more than is absolutely necessary or at least than appears absolutely necessary and there's the question of neurotransmitters and of what might be done to block or to prick them as the case demands and there's the reuptake of the biogenetic star's codec-riddled karyotype glyph with hashmark indices optical as carbon scarring the dust of a black crushed moth right where the centromere disintegrates and

if not as all that, the armor, then there's the armory, we might be able to use this material as the substrate for, I don't know, plastic explosives of some kind, possibly the layered heart of a warhead, the bleeding wetware quotient of a chemical-weapon star,

although I've got no doubt that words like "thermite" and "plastique" are out of fashion now and that even "substrate" is doubled up and trebled over with a million other proprietary words on all possible levels of command, control, distribution, and consumption, because the arms-dealing racket feeds on that, the frothy hypergamy of patented nouns, the rattling overproduction of new and specious naming; you've probably run into it at one point or another; not only do all possibly relevant preexistent terms have to be redefined for every new product – let's not forget, these are, finally, assholes selling something – but they must likewise be refashioned along every branch and radicle of the command list, from the CEOs and CFOs and CIOs to the people who order the production of the new weapon to the people who rationalize its expense to the actual designers engineers programmers builders to the people who buy it on behalf of whatever military organization to the people who mandate its purchase to the aforementioned purchasers to the people who then hire the people who give the management-level seminars on its uses tactical advantages specific improvements upon prior techniques and devices protocols of deployment legality or illegality under conventions of war we'll be happy to take as unenforceable and finally impotent guidelines because that's exactly what they are and

all the way down to the people who actually fire or set or drop or spin up the device itself, overclock the processors of weapons-system star to engineer a biosynthetic abortion somewhere between the plasma-beady logic board and the servers responsible for its network connectivity and automatic autosurgical maintenance and debugging,

to say nothing then of the victims, both nominal and actual, of the military or paramilitary or state or substatal bodies against which the device is then deployed, and of the people who die and the people who watch them die and the people who have to take care of their dying on whatever level and the people who knew them loved them hated them were distantly related to them knew of them but never actually met them attached a great deal of emotional import to the prospect of their dying or their possible and not necessarily opposed and plausibly even concomitant elevation to positions of national or religious importance and the people who had to dispose of their bodies and the people who had to lie about the disposal and the people who had to carry the empty coffin or to fill the coffin with nonbiodegradable plastic sheeting or wrap the winding sheet around whatever unrecognizable ex-human remainders of martial algebra were available in the street those people mummified beneath the scanner-ray of the white-phosphorus star those people whose outermost layer of flesh was turned to their own blackout sarcophagi the necropolis of the histocompatible star splicing itself with melted sarcomere glyph

and though of course this is all proprietary bullshit and hierarchical obfuscation, in a way or in several of them, and though of course this is designed to serve and does, in fact, serve all the standard rhetorical purposes whereby we seek to prevent anybody from looking very clearly at anything for any length of time, whereby we synthesize ersatz alternatives to attention,

it's hard not to feel, hard for you or for whomever, that there's something older and less willed at work, too, that the manufacturers and marketers and purchasers and users of weaponry understand – if only on the most basal and crudescent level, spinal petrology of exhumed cross-scripting star – the violent birth of the Word, and that the word's birth may be primary here, the weaponry is outward and explicable occasion, that the things they build and buy not only can but inevitably will be used beyond the lifespan of the nation or the faction they're allegedly defending and that the words – not the words *for* these, as if there could ever obtain such rationalistic detachment, but the words *spliced in with these* – will outlive even that, will wait in the invertebrate clade of nitrocellulose star, down where the gray matter's sleeping black as our embalmed fire-hazard film)

(unfathomable wreckage actuated by the eye, exhumed ammoniac negatives of gene-silencing star,

rain-spatter circling phasic prey in and out of the refused grafts and in such access of memory as not even a spurious god could call random, donor-frieze of heterodyne's keycard bent and wilting, xenon surgical indices of fluidic-computer star cache-cleared to make disk-space for recon map of salmonella airstrike

in such topographic fields as will construe the hurricane-rapt island somewhat, though only somewhat, otherwise than loci of brown- and blackout, availability of drinking water, rather obverse of the same, access to drowning where you stand in five feet of brackish flood, polluted throughput, modem star's signal-clipped amniocentesis coming back on ultrasound display like silicotic sculpture torn from fever-moths' ejection by some bronchial complaint, dry, high, and whistling, nothing much to worry about, at least for the time being, don't you have enough problems, why add to them, why annex yourself already to a future plausible if not at all likely death in an arid place at the end of the road where the road, somewhat to your surprise, keeps going, though it's very definitely ended:

cicatrized dust and the anemic hi-pass surge of a remote-execute star, some scurf of cell-death feedback coming over like the fossil ghost of spume,

box-camera echo for days on end, the cooked-on pinhole shadow and the inability to see it after very long as anything but carbon matte, reverb histology of antibody star a runtime concussion shaken loose from the badly-fitted inputs and the dirt on the ridged spindle of the volume pot, some difficulty among rickety jacks and a socket prolapsed several inches from the facing of the control panel, spinal battery of wetware star leaking a thick white pitch we might convert to solarized petroleum,

gotta be something usable in there, you'd have to think, wherever naphtha hardly sleeps beneath the numbed denominator, splay amputated limbs and gristle-mass of half-catalyzed deity still fitful as nightmare's oxygen tent toward the redshift of adenosine star, you know more or less where you're going and nothing at all about how to get there,

the enormity of molecular contrivance just to produce what must look blank, chemical-weapons star a dead radiosurgery for work on spectrograms of still-buried necropolis,

think we found it, “found” is far too decisive and intentional a word, need something laden with less freight of the profoundly tainted will, immunocompromise of the hydraulic-fracture star’s seared diesel leukocyte, well fine, we just stumbled over it, we found it the way we “found America,” according to the official lie, not solely, friend, a matter of trade routes and colonial exploitation, though of course it *was* that and has become that more and more across the intervening horror, but there was also the horror before we convened, fingerprints reorganized by salt scar of the rotting oar after several days floating under the horrible light in what must’ve seemed the middle of the open ocean, shoulders and forehead and back of neck bubbled black with dirty sunburn, blisters bursting and self-annealing where the sunspot interference logs into the archives of an RF-hacking star,

and you’d wait and try, I guess, to catch some metastatic fragment of the radio blowing through there, as we now wait again, albeit availed of many more devices for the waiting than anybody really could’ve wanted or even feared, you know where I’m looking?, you remember?, turnoff ideally positioned for abortifacient volume of several hours’ fugue state in any lost direction at all, since there are only lost directions in that part of the world, and the sunset like a time-lapse error, hours and hours of it and then utter blackout within a few minutes, Atacama germline, biomechanical star’s cytosampling glyph,

the plasm on the end of the patch clamp or just a little browning episode of wiretapped wattage, color of long-dried blood, metalloprotein glint long gone off it, aphasiac now to error-lightning of peptide-computer star, the script shivered down like glass broken in a thousand places but still hanging together of its own complex inertia,

waiting out the recombinase edit, the genetic torch, the way the sawtooth waveform infects and reprograms xenophagy of acetate star, some cellular-breakdown pathway directed now back into the billion miniature hydrostatic skeletons like blueprint for miscarried shark and waiting out there for acoustic contagion of phosphorylate star

as we too would wait, but that comes later, that’s another kind of momentum, in such economy of same as would include practiced stillness, the enormity of contrivance necessary to impute to ourselves and straight-to-yoo-hoo, lover mine, Where I Am Captured, any notion that we’ve just been sitting in one place, wetware star’s bacterial

fuselage slowly scumming over the waterline in the buried cylinders of obsolescent nerve gas,

though it can only ever be so obsolete: not, not, amico mio, amici nostri?, that it doesn't work, not that the black glint of the electrochemical star's phanerite mainframe has so violently evolved since then, well, OK, retract that, yes it has, several hundred million years' violent punctuation jackhammered into the bleak comfort of equilibrium, actually everything is unbelievably different and altered on a scale of violence such as would confound even your ability to begin to consider it, parataxis of a weapons-system star in fossil record where the shale weeps white-blood contact sheet still working out its protocol for disarmed viral storage,

if only nominally disarmed, but I'm saying that

the stuff still does work, has even, by this point, acquired a certain nostalgic cachet, you know what I mean, autopsy of image-bundle star, the last war you can remember in which we even thought we knew what it would mean to have "won" and how we'd know when we'd done so, I mean what the fuck would "victory in Vietnam" even have constituted – here's a hint: the people who know the answer to that question won and won and won and have never ceased to win since then and are winning while you mumble away in somewhat-less-than-precise circles, ellipsoid, pigment spot distilled to tamper-prone angiograph, clade-wide malware compromise of neurochemical star –

but the drift is what you think it is, the puttees have been rolled around the shins already gangrenous and bleeding something quaint toward quainter cures, camphor and sulfa-drugging, scarcely-refined opium where now derivative-graph pollen sprays from integron star's retroactive pharmacy)

(well now it's a son of a whole bitch is what it is, although the names and the locations, "secret" as they are or may still be, would probably not surprise you, not by now:

so sue us, so literally and expensively sue us, bring the kind of class action so enormously foredoomed to settlement out of court if to any kind of settlement at all, no admission of guilt, a \$1 million public-awareness campaign included in the list of damages and somehow, but you know how, turned into a 10-minute musical at the

Super Bowl, karyotype star's glyphosate print-through shepherding the nicotine derivatives to a right-channel hard-pan,

OK, trying to cancel the Soviet flirtation with some Eisenhower quikcrete piety, though I think Truman was still president – this the same Truman who, apart from killing more people on a single day than any other human in recorded and likely in unrecorded history, had threatened maybe just a year or two prior to drop an atomic bomb, or several of them, to keep the Russians from taking control of Iranian oilfields, which is presumably why we're so speciously terrified to let Iran have a nuclear bomb now: somebody there might remember that you *can* actually use them, that they're good for more than threats, old Independence Harry's birdshit statue in the pseudo-rusticated courthouse square where more meth addicts per square mile than any other place on the face of the Earth jitter toward the gas station in oversized Looney Tunes sweatshirts and look, from a distance, like dirty children, because everybody there got stunted at about 5'1" by the bathtub crank, guidance system of a bioweapon star glaring online in less and more than the massed difference tone of our sleep,

yessir, and jesus do airlift me out of here if'n you proceed to get a chance, I've done my time, I logged discoverable hours in that courthouse, kid with a name like Curtis Yawls or some shit wearing a shirt and tie that obviously came together in a plastic bag with a \$19 pricetag and his lawyer steaming flabby through a green wool suit that looked like it'd been used as a camping tent during the rainy season, across the room, of course, from the spit-slick DA with the hair epoxied in place and the unctuous manner and an in-joke for the judge whom he knew from a thousand previous trials and many thousands more to come and that's not even mentioning the backroom for preferred customers at the lawyer-themed restaurant near the courthouse, fuckin' saints preserve us, yes, a theme restaurant for lawyers, ate something nondescript there for the low low price of \$23 dollars and got a constipated stomach ache and had to slip sideways into the local branch of the million-location pharmacy, kitted out, in this case, like some bullshit soda fountain, everybody dressed up like a North Korean propagandist's imagined version of a candystriper, and had to buy a couple different bottles of painkillers to make up for the wide variety of airport-ready afflictions acquired en route, a 5 a.m. start and a drive through one of the worst parts of the country, zero's hunger feedback-streaming off null-terminator star,

which the guy behind the counter in the pharmacy took as suspicious behavior, and why wouldn't he, I guess, given the constant runs on amphetamine ingredients there, anything at all to be cooked up or down for resale at ten thousand times the unit price to secondary seller, this ain't even a black market anymore, grayscale as you could like now, xerograph anatomy of scanner-bed star bleeding out to aliased disk-region damage more or less unplayable but still just intact enough to force toward seek judder from the hidden corner speaker in the otherwise empty room of a photocopy house in a photocopy exurb long fallen from the OPEC-crisis era in which it was supposed to be, how would you say, the equal-and-opposite counterforce to yuppiedom, though "opposite" in geographical terms only, money very much the same if somewhat newer, it's largely the nouveaux riches who want to get out of town these days, old money likes to gnaw back through the stratigraphy of its presumptive urban inheritance,

that's a statue of my grandpaw, I wanna take a bite out of his thigh and show you all what I tore off and slap and growl at you while you try to tear a piece out of my mouth, I wanna wait out where the watchmen in the towers smoke weak pot and have to file a brief report every time the automatic fountains turn on to rinse the bleached-out city esplanade with heavy water and a massive calcium buildup in the water table, anybody remember, serotonin inhibition now a property of the inedible local fish, the prion star affixing ligand gates to all possible motes of solar reuptake, so

we're talking white flight on freshly-resoled courtroom shoes, money gone the other way, at least that was the idea, but what was that is now this, and by *this* we mean the kind of apartment complex with an aborescent name and a profile noticeably slumping toward one side after several decades' operation by utter scumfuck landlords and the unit price nearly constant but the percentage of the tenants' income gone to rent skyrocketing in 6-month intervals, so that most of the people who live here now either spend most of their money on the effort not to be homeless or don't live here at all, at least not on paper, well where do they live on paper, now that's a problem, that's a puzzler, that's a real damnable question, last known address attributable to a grandmother in Greenville or a dead aunt out in Hickman Mills or nobody in particular, offices of a medical-supply firm in receivership, attic of a midtown icehouse converted into a failing evangelical youth ministry, a fucked gut crawling,

so the short answer is that, on paper, they don't live at all, that paper's where they're dead, logged by the multiplicand gerund of their all-possible dying, and the rest of the world is a soundstage for their serial and phase-canceling deaths)

(waterbound echo infecting centrifuge of wetware starwhere syntactical bacteria burn a timestamp stripe through the upper saline strata,

print-through necropolis of weapons-system star's outdated antiviral software, the failing hum of runtime meltdown, standby and test-pattern since force-grafted to a different set of coordinates for the nominal sky, another caloric sting of coefficient

where we had to lug in all the numerical data from, christ, what would it have been, maybe the Gulf, whichever gulf, capitalized in nominal familiarity to signal, I suppose, that these things are to be said only among people who'd already know which approximate square of map you were referring to,

not that they're secret as such, never officially made confidential, that's a question for another day and, before you even get to asking it, you're going to need to come with me for a few hours at least, problems to the, what, the east, the slight northeast, epidemiology of malware star in guidance systems of the preprogrammed artillery pieces, supposed to remove all or most uncertainty, supposed to calibrate themselves against the autonomic curve of a dead day and the manner of its ideal dying, know what I mean, problem if not, attack vectors where cross-scripting star may slip through zero's text-file mitochondrion

and more or less download itself, engineer a smoothness of distribution and chromatographic presence, spun up and spun out, wired behind the wheel and moving "forward," whatever that means to you, at the sort of constant rate available primarily to those who know that anything they might hit or run over is much less important than they are and will have its absence greeted with indifference if with anything at all, should anybody ever even notice, it's not like we can take a census out here or would do so were it possible, it's not as though we're all that keen on being certain who precisely works for us and who's on contract status and who has no technical employer but gleefully manages all the third-party crosshatching and moiré, you see the problem, spinning bioweapon star from all the petrologic wastes



and then the average speed at which the territory must be crossed if we're going to make the ridgeline by sundown, which is, I'm told, the last hour of the day at which you can expect to stare into a backlit screen without the parallel expectation of the backlight calling down an RPG from somewhere in the basin, the valley, was there a river here at one point, was it possibly rationalized away during one of the 7 transfers of national sovereignty which have taken place here in the last 90 years or so, I thought I heard, I mean I don't know but I thought I heard, about an alteration of the water table, about a sea-level rise or something, siliceous ooze corrupted by transplant logic into some horrible legibility, scansion of a chemical-weapon star's cytoskeleton

after dredging from the rotifer dross and perpetual slow snowfall of the bone cells blowing up under the automated magnifying glass, an icon, you get me, a preset transformation where the cursor whinges tangent to the chemosynthetic star,

we're really going to have to hurry up, one way or another, and whether that means you drive faster or that we just disregard to still greater degrees the territory driven over, through, maybe just driven, constituted by the fact of our salaried passage here, giddily unfolding, transcriptase star's beached error log of protein deficit and overclocked sample velocity

and the way the key's touch-sensitive or isn't, comes up bleeding at a soft stroke or hits after a hard perpendicular thumbing like the resonant frequency of your lower jaw matched by a hinging of pig iron, something metallurgically unrefined, remember that, mate, cupric precipitates exhumed from angiography of fluidic-computer star for use in all the wiring we'll have to replace once the "city," if you like, has been pretty thoroughly dismantled, though what I see from here ain't much to call a city:

we hit the road up the ridge after a long yelping burn through land you might as well call flat and featureless, neither of which words is ever anywhere near accurate, but we were moving quickly enough to burn the contours down, nullify recon geology of GABA star by recourse to an algebraic constant with a ligand-proper name,

and it was desert or it wasn't, it was really steppe, I guess, no way, pardner, we're not nearly far north enough to be in the steppe-proper, so what are you saying, so I guess what I'm saying is that this was farmland till recently, pastureland, bad poetry about shepherds as cooked up by postdate apparatchiks in a university just beginning to rediscover the semi-licit pleasures of nationalism, you can hear it, even, out there where

the wind isn't, at least not according to the whip of the cold liquid oxygen alongside the armored car we're driving, hard to tell any two breeds of more or less linear chaos apart, and backlogged rocket fuel with which to titrate DNA-computer star's old printouts,

vestige of same or of other, depends on the angle you're working from or prepared to ignore, incorporated into the Soviets – meaning the governmental bodies, for the moment, at least – or thrown hard from the back of a fuselage that came apart right as it hit redshift to compose a kind of cosmological crucifixion, sample-and-hold airframe star for resurrection once per decade right where waveguide strata bend to some source of future gravity,

a mascon unseen as yet but already growing in your cheek, present if only via elemental traces on the last aniline filmstrips and in the first results of the “new,” i.e. the Western-surplus, CAT scanner, oncology of millimeter-wave star smuggled out of rundown airport in a nation which technically ceased to exist about 25 years ago, though it's got partisans, and they're very particular about what language you deal in when you're trying to buy the scraps of their superannuated dreaming, whether your alphabetic usage tends Cyrillic or to the Latinate, guncotton tourniquet for the invertebrate star's file system

alongside the null-character refineries laid waiting by the site of an announced, but an as-yet-unfinanced, spine)

(oh it's a problem, oh it's definitely a problem and

I'm begging your indulgence, your good humor, your restraint, gentlemen, extremely gentlemen, which is to say extremity in application both to my begging and to your entitlements to the titles you wear, I would – given your permission – I would be your Sherpa to a speciously craggy rhetorical territory just bristling with self-deprecation,

so much of it, in fact, that you can't help but wonder if he's being sarcastic or has just gone insane with the waiting and with the way the end to waiting fails to fulfill any of his visions of what the vigil was supposed to mean, script-pathology of bootscreen star emergent as the tentacular bestiary of a graphite-fattened sea, pictograph radical blurred back to burnout-negative of gene-editing star,

well, sirs, esteemed sirs, you'll have to pardon us, the warehouse is a little bit of a mess, I know we don't know how to box and stack bullets the way *Americans* do, eh wot?, fuck me running, country squire routine he must've acquired from some videotaped set of English-language tutorials put together by the RAF for use in colonial Africa, maybe a Berlin airlift relict, grass widowers for Christ Almighty and the white antiseptic blare of the integrase torch still cauterizing edges of genetic-cartridge star, implanted here fifty or a hundred years ago and still not quite in place, see, you can still make out the welding-lines and the failure of the thin primer to mask the splices, still recall a whole thyroidal edit log of IP star's reuptake glitches,

and, really, I mean really, isn't this a little bit too much, you'll start to wonder, pacing around the showroom floor with your own suit sickly airplane-sweaty, tepid body-salts worn into airbrush-immune creases and the three days' growth of beard you hoped would make you look rugged and field-ready, though it actually lends you the effect of, and please don't take this wrong, I'm figuring out how to word it politely, oh, I don't know, a prematurely wizened drunk sent out to teach the freshly Communist Hungarians how to operate a collective farm on the basis of gray mud, pigshit, and occasional orgies of resurgent gothic Christianity, you know what I mean, the odd biannual rumor of a virgin birth, maybe we occasionally stumble into a knocked-over silo and find a 50-year-old woman breastfeeding a rabbit,

something on that order, it's difficult to expunge the last traces and even more difficult to pretend that these are only the last traces, we're trying, we're running system-wide crosschecks and pretending that nothing in particular came up while they were clicking away in the minimized corner of the terminal, we're getting out the luminescent watchhands to look for illicit material in the paint that wasn't supposed to be dayglo or blacklight-reflective or whatever but certainly looks that way, a Passion Play with a significantly different narrative arc staged in what used to be the airlock that separates the civilian air-traffic-control tower from the place we store the firmware for the bioweapon star,

the spent hard disks, the tape drum reverted to some manner of rebarbative trilobite fossil, odd erratics in the geologic record, you see, inclusions of boulders – some of them even etched with what look like illiterate attempts to copy down the Greek alphabet as a sheer pictorial phenomenon, right, the way you'd freehand it a little bit if

you didn't know it was meant to encode sound, or even the way you *wouldn't*, the anal-retentive fidelity to the shapes as presented, which of course would be somebody else's handwriting and would thus be replete with its own idiosyncrasies and mistakes, and that's presumably how you get the local written language, though I wouldn't claim to know for sure – millions of years out of date on either side, granitic sphinx xenophagy of antibody star in the fallout belt and the accretion disc

come down in cybernetic field of reverb, where you're always hearing the echo-tail of whatever you're about to say as reinjected into your own mouth and thus, one would hope, enabling you to say it, bleedthrough codex where the notochordal fuel cell of a wetware star begins to burn through casings of tangent batteries and frankly fucks the whole thing up, mutual acid neutralization or something much the same, alkaloid orthography cast over the whole audible occurrence of the night sky as a result, I think, of something to do with lapsed patent protections or lack of extradition treaties or rights held in perpetuity and passed down from the colonial period via hereditary legerdemain and royal primogeniture and blah blah blah what the fuck else the point is that You Can Do a Lot of Things at the Seaside That You Can't Do in the Town,

as ever, as ever, e.g. sell an opiate painkiller a hundred times stronger than anything legal back in-country, a homeland discount on a strikingly pure autumn varietal of morphine, and by "strikingly pure" we're probably talking dilution down to something in the 25% range, but we're used to shit even more stepped-on than that, so it seems very much like divine revelation when it erupts in your vein, metalloprotein carcass blown out of the way by sudden aneurysmal monstrosity of the macrophage star's cache spooled up for radiograph readout,

but I'm sure you gentlemen wouldn't be interested in such tawdry matters, except, perhaps, as sociological data, an index to the extent to which we've continued to fail to be you, and justly so, oh very meet and just,

growing suspicion in the audience that he's being supercilious, and so you've got to wonder: does he mean to suggest that, actually, Americans are bad at packing bullets? or could he really cherish such antediluvian propaganda-leaflet airdrop notions of the United States? or is he obliquely hinting that he knows we don't deal in our own armaments, that most of them are packed up in facilities like this one and in countries quite as nameless, condemned to historical limbo by this precise level of participation in

overground history, as feeders, routers, ruptured blastulae of source-code star, and thus disk-impermissible on all zones of the surface, named always and only in dwindling parallel series, significant specimens at best, the kind of place you might mention were you dedicating private time to eccentric personal study of such places, which, in your position as provisional attaché, you meant to, right until you just forgot)

(no assignment, no permissions, no directions, no constraints, but we know vaguely what's attempted and what's only ever rumored, which bits of the breath-seep to deny, bronchial surge officially blacklisted or condemned to winter quarters, somite xerograph of stalled monoxide star in upload linkage

and the data-sweat skirling from the bent connectives, histological and syntactical and dented tin, galvanized zinc bleeding the last layer of its finish, whatever you were looking for, whatever you expected to find, umbilical scansion annexed to the biomechanical star in a sequence of sub-basements and unofficial armories dense and uncommunicating enough to qualify as proto-fossil matter, designed, if not necessarily by their accredited designers, to be rediscovered in a baffled sprawl of condensates uncoiling, illegible protein feedback of peptide-computer star in a gel-negative tray where abortive operations have been raised or lowered to the flint pitch of result,

now that nothing will succeed, and by "nothing" we mean everything possible outside the scope of evident intention, we meant the blackfly swarm fixed in flash-burn triage around hydraulic-fracture star's corrupted bones, digging through the crystallized viscera of waterfowl dead after the oil spill, which doesn't always mean they were killed by it; the cleanup attempts have their own bodycount, though it'll never be acknowledged as such, and though "attempt" is perhaps too dignified a word for what we really mean or, more to the point, don't; a hazmat photo op, a technician feigning shock in a polyurethane boiler suit while he stands at the end of a row of breached containment units dug up where their encryption started to go white and flake away or fuse in myographic panic, checksum fault encroaching, error log of beta-burn star indexed to the semiotic meat,

and these were salvaged though wrecked, and these, though perhaps not destroyed in themselves, were impossible to exhume, cytoskeletal pathology of file-system star a repartition of the metal-heavy earth, millirad spin-up where they ran you

through successive failures to avoid the basic ziggurat histolysis, cauterized pyramid as failsafe housing for offline DNA-computer star, and

you knew, I think, or had at least picked up the mild epidemic of what-was-said, always in such compound osteorrhaphy, each term inextricable because a multiply-spliced articulation of something for which there was no one word, it's sticking to your tongue, it's gall from the bundle of hiss, it's cardiomyopathy of IP star where petrol-strata line code starves the baseband out with artifacts of quarantine,

a whole screen-burn sequester against any of the things you might've heard down near the site itself and, more to the point, in the complex of nondescript buildings where we did what we had to do, ahem, what we were told to do, well, check that, what we were more or less under the impression we were supposed to feel we'd been not quite told to do, if precision's the idea here, an inferential set of bypasses and alternate routings, the phospholipid subroutines of wet-gate star congealing, so

it's out past the American zone proper, though "proper" is of course a bridge too far, in this case no bridge at all, a whole broken stammer of them terminated across gulches and dry ravines that, if we were in America, would almost certainly have been put to some grim industrial use, whatever age of industry you happen to be thinking of, ruined New Deal dam or later hydroelectric units suffering some protracted non-animal form of elephantiasis or spinal-fluid leakage, bootscreen star's xenotic scripts of postgain hydrocephalus,

and then the datamining stammer and the way you learn to stumble, hitch, a little bit of a drag to one foot when you're walking, not quite a limp but clearly a clock-error worked back into the presets, something fucked from the start and, as such, serially restarted until we may at least disclaim all authorship if not its lamed effects here, crippling the winter king, amen, bone-software star's aliased scanner-bed autopsy in such littoral skew of pixilate resampling

that you might eventually be working with almost anything at all, and why not, and why so, and just keep your goddamn head low and keep doing what you're doing, reporting back on the shift in pigmentation among squares labeled A1 through, what would be sufficient, ZZZ1000 maybe, of course we could've automated this by now and have actually done so and of course could've declared you obsolete and so you are and there's probably a declaration coming but, you know, the vile mysterium of corporate

accounting, question maybe of what cheap backbiting fellowship greased the contract down the legislative slips, or

at this point, come to think of it, more likely that they're actually doing some kind of parallel study, checking propensity for human error against the automated output, possibly trying to justify the alleged subtle plasticity of what I guess we might as well call humanity against whatever we're naming otherwise, I mean shit, consider the pork-barrel difficulties, why does a goddamn senator want a goddamn factory in his state if it's going to put people *out* of work, expanded HR departments, of course, and grim technical night school for eventual employment at \$7.75 per hour, and

let's not forget – i.e. let's mention as prelude to a willed and thorough amnesia – the night watchmen, the people in the towers with the rifles they barely know how to use and, in more than a couple cases, medical-marijuana prescriptions, why not, if there were ever a job contrived as an ornate excuse to get high on the clock, this is it, and let's not forget, etc., bone sinter run over the shrapnel-massif of a fugue state, typebar script-virus remaindering the GABA star,

the fact of employment vs. the unchecked boxes of housing such employment might afford, which isn't, to be frank, a question wherein the senator takes much interest, make it reflexive, tune it that way, il n'y s'interesse jamais, ou peut-être pas jamais but very rarely, it's an autofill contusion and it's meant to be, it injects a thermoplastic substance into the blank spreadsheet and very quickly matches the dimensions of all apparently vacant space, what else did you want here, what were you asking from the way the crystallized time does or doesn't bleed from these prone and immobilized objects, cryosurgical pause muting the fluidic-computer star back to a heliotype sepia of cancelled cells' thin echo)

(electrochemical star's malware in corroded scab of tidemark where the interdicted docklands crumple into what I'm sure can't be the sea,

though it might lead into the sea, hard to say, little sense of direction here other than the scansion of the city itself, indices of gamma-knife star in faint pin-register fluoroscopic damage, maybe an artificial river with a breakwater the length of an island nation built off to the side, "a way off, miles off, famine is a tall, tall tower," you would

remember, not the famine but the height, chemosynthetic star's eroded cytoarchitecture buckling toward the echo-key of spent phosphorus login,

and they'll always tell you that the city – an American capital, you understand, though not always an official one – is just about to hit its 10 millionth resident, and hell, maybe we'll have some kind of party, I mean presumably a different party than the ten thousand parties we have every night, kind of place that's still big on parades, I guess maybe a faint sense of ironized nostalgia, the wan attempt to reach such pitch of self-aware public absurdity as would give them the lapsed-Catholic equivalent of the carnivalesque, counterfeit voodoo for people who don't believe in anything and thus can feel fear only on the level of impinged bodily safety, something encroaching where the corner's supposed to turn into the next graph of the world and just doesn't, demyelinate cable-splice, malfunction of the graphics card, abrupt pauses where you'd thought to rely on some manner of alkaline momentum, one long slide, more or less, to the place everybody more or less expects to go, though with different degrees of prophylaxis between oneself and the junkyard, to be sure, a hierarchy of scone and entablature, subscriptions to the architrave renewed on an automatic annual basis to keep you in business as the archetypal peasant or victim of the sealanes, dad's knife in your belly while the huntress clutches her bow and the arrows shiver on her back, blood under her fingernails and blood at the corners of her mouth, her own and others', whom should you disqualify and what condemn, we meant to follow, it was just kind of willed laze, but turn and find a world no longer tangent to the one you turned from, day's asphyxiation of agglutinated context burned horribly clear,

which is fear enough for any given maxim of the sunlight, of course, but hardly the breadth of the spectrum, backlogged retroviral software of cross-scripting star and the potassium reef implanted there to keep reuptake to a minimum,

guardian against the flux of your own grayed fluids, hippocampal antifreeze, the vertebrate extinction layer of a wetware star under post-nuclear quarantine and surrounded with a buffer zone of roads that never interlock nor seem to approach the site no matter how much they turn and feel like they're engineering the constriction of some unnamed central prey,

hey everybody, we're nearly to 10 million, yes we heard, yes we were told that last year and we waited and there was a wan kind of humoresque anticipation, not funny in



itself but almost funny that we were paying attention, World War II headlines, the kind of flashbulb that actually shatters, you know, a tungsten reinforcement for the white stringy pith of the spinal cord and maybe, if you're totally outside all referential schemata we call "luck," well, better not to speak of that, who'd listen, who'd want to, really what air is open to such benign contamination, radiosurgical star's contact sheet a text-wrap to the null-character bone

where they've still got the banners in the typefaces now a decade out of date, embarrassing obsolete visions of the Hi-Tech, Project for a New American Century, o please for fuck's sake plan a Project to Put Us Thoroughly Out of Our Misery, reenactment, at great expense, of that gaunt Vietnamese man with the knobby cheekbones grimacing while the bullet spirals through his brain, blowback extrusion now fuel cylinder for wetware star though it relies on failsafe generator coughing up streaks of petrologic waste,

but if you've looked around at all, and I mean at *all*, you know there have to be more than 10 million people there, particularly if they've all been waiting on the 10 millionth since, what, 8 or 9 years ago at least; the reference is presumably to official legal residents; the reference presumes to elide the office buildings in Chinatown owned by some black-mold consortium which is finally, if not untraceable, so distant from the first adrenal spike of the trace that whoever finds the owner cannot be the same nervous animal who set out to answer that question, presumes not to look into the basements with noise behind the metal doors but nobody answering the census taker's rap, presumes least of all to wonder about the people whose only legal documentation is maybe a birth certificate with several fields left blank and who will tend to disappear not *in* police custody but just *outside* of it, which is the problem, see, they never get booked, they never get accused of anything, nobody ever sets bail, there's no court date and no court, they just get picked up or rather shoved down, have often learned to lie prone without much instruction, which doesn't stop the knee in the small of the back and the cop's foot grinding their faces into the asphalt, and then they're shoved into the cruisers, and then, well, ou sont les neiges, they're gone, good luck asking after them around the precincts, and

if they ever do appear again, and don't take that for granted, it's with strange welts on their wrists and necks and bits of ossified light floating in their eyes, diluted

cache of DNA-repair star narrowed to a null calcium focus, and you can holler their old names if you really want to, if the yelling itself will do you some good, but they've been physically remodeled toward the political condition of namelessness and might not hear you when you call nor know the names you'll yell as theirs)

## Hippocratic euthanasia template

remanded uptown, past the flood-knock where old city walls would likely once have stood, snare-buzz and throughput of the malware star's field-targeting,

not, of course, that we could tell you: keep telling ourselves that we're still on the job, that this is a lull, a period of insufficient funding or suddenly implausible alibis, narrative gaps more necessary than they might appear, wet-gate star's genetic edits ripping filmstock in the early chemical offing, still raw soup of emulsion and incoherent plastics, uncut till suddenly savaged, all along the telecine chain of chemotherapeutic star with vision mixer more or less blacked out and a preset test pattern available on one of the older reels if we absolutely have to have something, admission of defeat, I guess, which in this case simply means an interruption recognized as such, the inability to continue construing the brownout hum as an intentional continuum, indices of peptide-computer star's grammar,

keep saying all that, please, we need and more-than-need it, think what we'd collapse toward otherwise, this is only a planned absence, intermezzo, we're working up the entr'acte in the vein, angiography unswollen, resampling the radioiodine MRI back down to unedited waveform of chemosynthetic star, the first recognizable hertz frieze snapped loose of the carrier wave, pall's roil and then emergent structure, chain lightning, stalled polymerase photocopy, bioweapon star's compromised cytoarchitecture hard-saved to the cache of analogue remainders pending some unlikely and insufficient digital "salvation,"

nicely enumerated now where once just whatever they were, the sudden unmatched crescendo of the voice through a glitchy receiver, solar flares audible, modem star's histologic interference peaking with the clipped signal domain of a magnetic storm, and all tracks' stereo-pairing cradled roughly out of phase, so

you get strange cancellations in the amplitude, sudden areas of choked-out quiet, oxygen starvation as a form of reconnaissance array, identikit photogeology assembling the unwilling autopsy of a GABA star

and all the tissues thence affected, though of course they wouldn't know it, would only overload, asking little or nothing in the way of explanation until it was already much later than just too late, and we find ourselves, if there's any finding to speak of, rushed nervous down city blocks we've walked hundreds of thousands of times already, feeling our own ghosts bristling unconjugated at our backs, the horrible need for a wave-function collapse into chartable coordinates, anything, please, for fuck's sake, just a shape, a photo lineup, a set of mathematical constants or, if you're really into buying the cheap skag, even variables, set me up and I'll knock down whatever you were looking for, coefficient pharmaceutical to DNA-computer star, bacteria cultured toward employment as small cameras,

the negatives erupting on the capillary sheath and the comparable splice of fried old wiring where we can't quite ever seem to get through to the depot for a resupply order, which gives rise, as you'd imagine, to certain uneasy rumors: 1). that the depot has ceased to exist altogether, which sounds bad enough, sounds, at first, like it might be the very worst, but it wouldn't be, because there remains the possibility that 2). the depot has been relocated without anybody telling *us*, worse still, as we'd then have to imagine that we've either been rationalized and laid off without even a courier's grimace to that effect, or that the plan had been changed and nobody had found time or motivation to let us know, a contingency which renders possible a scenario in which we do the thing we were more or less hired to do years ago but, upon its final accomplishment

(or, more likely, its approximate and half-achieved abortion, pharmacogenomic star's extinction-layer lithograph, interrupted and not so wrong as to be haywire nor so right as to be anything but wrong enough and again, a hard wedge of silver sponge separating nodes of fatty neural tissue, wetware star's metalloprotein antiviral program subject now to stray transliteration that will set it to attacking its own cells),

we'll discover that all our cover has been removed, intentionally or via oversight, in all senses of the term, or just fallen far past any level of decision and assigned responsibility, you get what I'm saying, it's not that anybody will have *chosen* to fuck us

over, it's just that we *will* be fucked and no possible world will conspire such ornate ragged coherence as would contrive to unfuck us, meaning

we do hit the basement with the fertilizer truck, we do disappear along the side of the low barracks that faces the sea, we do in fact go down to the hold of the aircraft carrier docked off the coast of what's technically enemy territory, or at least a state with which we do not maintain normalized diplomatic and economic relations™, and cross the wires and reset the weapons-system star's vertebrate patchbay

and defuse the failsafe explosives already set there and repurpose the semtex or plastique for small gummy resinous balls stuck to the insides of the bulletproof vests lined up in rows of 6 from wall to wall and remove the heatproof lining from several pairs of kneehigh boots and load dummy rounds in several of the service pistols and/or real bullets in what were supposed to be flare guns and I'm not sure what that would do but either way you get the idea maybe the flare gun jams or explodes or maybe it shoots the real bullet who cares not our problem as long as we've created some manner of problem for somebody else and plug the outputs back into the inputs and detach the speakers from the preamps and wrench the volume pots past ten but then remove and replace the marked knobs so they all read 3 or 4 and leave tiny tiny tiny little cuts – I'm talking lacerations maybe half a millimeter long and properly thinner than all conceivable designations of width, the simple and world-ending fact of the two surfaces' detachment, the sudden gashed commissure where was once continuous plastic, phaneritic backslash transplant to electrochemical star's black-marble URL –

in the, what, the upper thighs, the backs or sides, the lowest rib-rungs of the hazmat suits, very slight jostling off the artificial-glass eyepiece so it slips just out of camber with its rubber or polyurethane lining, respirator shunted a half-inch off course, hose missing the small vacuum-sealed port in the nape of the blue mylar neck, jogwheel autosurgery of mitochondrial star fattening the black air to a sideband blast of feedback that composes hi-pass desert where the filter sweep stalls out along the bones of air-drowned manta rays where seas have disappeared

all that, and much more than all, what you'd call an irreducible ratio of ontological excess if you had the time to consider it, and who knows but that you might, who pries into the dreams of the, ahem, "state-sponsored terrorist" while he,

oh enough with the pronominal pretenses, while *we*

ran down the corridor that looked like it was meant as an escape route for future saboteurs, hard to imagine anybody actually being down here for any other reason, no cleaning staff, not even the base logistics personnel or the hired hands who don't know what they're carrying and God be praised that they don't, on our behalf and on theirs, why burden them with that kind of epidemic knowledge, codec error riddling the script-virion of exobiologic star, you'd only set their hands to shaking and the porous cement walls rumbling toward status of future forensic icons, the saints' relics as the spores of some ideal infectious mold, bacterial samples sweating from the dry wash of an irradiated vein when it reliquefies once annually on the feast of Giambattista or whatever other Desert Father Gospel Priest and Revelator with the dead sun nearly central in the red thrombotic sky, serotyping star's canopic aneurysm clarifying lymph down to the octave of pure turpentine while we smash clay pots full of fennel against the whitewash-spattered door of a quarantine church,

yessir we were there for that one too, you remember, "cholera outbreak," that was the official story, and it was a cholera outbreak of sorts, though "outbreak" sounds unintentional, the Act of God so prized by authors of insurance policy, not merely divine interventionism but a whole political school of divine interventionism, foreign masters all, bien sûr, a beltway hierophant or two in the bargain and delivering his prepared remarks with just enough faked off-the-cuff humor to convince the glib little shits in the audience that they've been brought into his confidence, that they're now members of his inner circle, oh satellitic members to be sure, nothing near the center, still combing through the static mass of telemetric data, blackbox slag, stratigraphy of disarmed operating-system star, but his familiars now, his similars and colleagues, praying as they might to rise one day unto his level, which is, perhaps above all else, a hymn for increased status of the things they prey upon, from jobs and stateside slums to foreign industries, foreign cities, entire nations, entire continents,

finally the whole continuous manifold of The World as they're hideously apt to manufacture it, a blast of bad tarot, tamper-proof seals dented and reglued across the mouths of medicine bottles "charitably donated" to Liberia after some members of the Church were disturbed by a recent documentary broadcast on one of the few remaining public TV channels at 8 p.m., ideal viewing hours wherein fat complacent people might

administer themselves a homeopathic spike of factitious outrage and concern, a little bit of borrowed adrenaline just the ticket for bowling through those blank suffocating hours between now and the moment you'll allow yourself to feel dignified about sleeping,

question now of a vaccination campaign and vaccine-resistant runtime of the biomechanical star, question of the viruses we've shelled out to design and of the antidotes whose discovery and mass production we've more or less left up to a number of firms that look like isolated private-sector murderers and are, of course they are, but also operate on a very innarestin' contract basis, all of them, with a single holding company whose papers of incorporation you might be able to find but would never be able to decipher, what with the black-barred redactions everywhere and the THIS INFORMATION IS CLASSIFIED AS A STATE SECRET IN THE SENSE OF statute number paragraph number maybe even line number, whatever they might be, whatever seems precise enough to confer unto your privileged bafflement the sense of having encountered real precision, which is the whole idea; people love to feel that they've brushed up against the secret, and the secret itself is most often a disappointment;

well, so, OK, the precise nature of the coded event is not entirely, uh, our concern or ours to disburse, properly to spend, it's a money thing first and last and would cost you more than you can really comprehend to know or even to start scratching in the dark, etched injuries to plates of volcanic glass, the eschar buildup on the spluttering erase-head, scab-mapping the film-gate star with recourse to the optimal wound profile,

but yes, there was cholera, there was an unbelievable amount of cholera, diseased shit running liquid through the gutters and then no longer running, stopping in place, still hot as the day was – and it was so hot in that city, you wouldn't have fucking believed it, people were dying because they spent the nights outside, people were waking up with bleeding brains because they couldn't afford air conditioning, which led to a mass nocturnal invasion of the cemeteries and aboveground tombs and open-plan crypts, and you do what you can not to look at that too hard, fossil-record tape edit of histocompatible star to the necropolis that sleeps like print-through tar against the lining of the city's softened bones –

but unmoving now, warm liquid tessellating in bubbles and white matrices like it was laced with toothpaste, which, as I later found out, it was: they raided all the closed-down and abandoned shops for food and water first, and then for medicine and

toiletries, and then for anything that would burn or give shelter or get them stoned, drunk, anesthetized enough to mistake dying for survival and vice versa, any gratified confusion of themselves for the living and the living for the dead and this for any world you might once more inhabit, if the world itself returned,

they were guzzling lighter fluid and rubbing alcohol, they were eating handfuls of expired antihistamines, they were scratching old wounds open to pour in chemical solutions because somebody told somebody that if you gouge the meat of your thigh and then douse it with, what was it, maybe antifreeze?, you won't feel any pain or hunger for a little while, which I'm almost certain is untrue, but who I am to register and to alter their criteria for truth, what assay-text of antibody star recurrent in disease slides' lapsed mantissa,

and then the rumors got more and more obscure, of stranger origin, seemed like pranks, seemed like test-marketed suicides, ways to kill yourself but to test the killing on somebody else beforehand to make sure it didn't hurt too much or disable without killing, and everybody started eating toothpaste, everybody somehow got the impression that it contained enough protein or sugar or whatever, and the gutter turned into a city-length filmstrip of warm runny shit with toothpaste weather baked onto its surface like corrosion threading biopsies of copper

so north, why not, against the sluggish way the city waters shunt to judder benzene calamus, gasoline bandwidth of fluidic-computer star in the contagious skin-glint of black fluid passing slower now than any uncontaminated drizzle should,

perpetually downhill, though the city's theoretically at sea level and more or less flat, less than more, it would appear, a constant blood-less trickle of particulate garbage and, as such, host for what word can find the flesh of its fixation here, function-bracket buzzing in the undressed wound or through as many eschar-strata as you like, ziggurat's cautery to DNA-computer star,

the real-time autopsy ongoing and, if not what you'd call "permanent," whatever that's supposed to mean, at least bound to a term that must exceed the standing city's, megalith prosthesis coughing bubbled and too warm from 3D printer, metastatic dross of a deposit-fuser star, what will outlast if not endure, draw such distinctions as seem operable to you, in the reverb field, slower than slapback and not a little bit more



vaporous, audibly a precipitate, skimmed from lining of spine's alembic, vertebrate clade of nitrocellulose star's filmstrip hematopoiesis,

tamper-proof seal of whiter cell broken and we're fondling what medicine we can still steal or grab during the confusion over an obsolete discount, matter of exhaustion, of disgust (theirs, with us), of the willingness to take a little loss as price of no longer dealing with these fuckin' weirdoes, gummy one-dollar bills rolled up with resinous bits of whatever's been in pockets long enough to leach some of the fabric dye, glue residue stamped in place by some Taiwanese starveling while we were up walking, or rather pretending to walk (and there is a distinction here, though of course the forward motion obtains in either case, but you can move forward step by step – and, one presumes, can move thus backward – without walking per se, in the pretense of an accidental position and of changes to it no more measured than the bone-span of the footfall, some mute body-scansion, archeology of operating-system star an osteocyte flicker on the grayscale scanner bed),

around the, what would you call it, “citadel” seems like a ridiculous word to apply to any city anywhere on Earth after Americans have occupied it – and there's not a city Americans visit but that they *occupy*; this is perhaps the foremost modern meaning of “American,” anywhere but in the States themselves, and even there, most of the time; an American is an invader anywhere he goes, or scout for same, advance guard needling the forward positions,

shotgun mic and comically large industrial headphones in the crèche of disused signal-tower apparatus atop the empty skyscraper, cell receivers fetid with the overripe dissection of a fluoroscopic star,

waiting out the relay in the meat-kickback, how muscle falls briefly away in the recoil of a sidearm you were issued in the expectation that its presence would be quite enough to obviate its necessity, as if anybody in this place were likely to think you a good target for a mugging, shit, maybe some would, I guess I don't know, maybe if you go to the lower quarters, and you will, what else is it to be American and “on vacation” but to indulge one's own ability to roister through the slums and pay off the whorehouse madams and feel absolutely certain, having done so, that none of this will impinge in any significant way upon your expected, indeed anticipated, presence at the colloquium

tomorrow morning where you'll be delivering the keynote lecture on, clear throat here, Recontextualizing Modern Strategies of Asymmetrical Warfare,

now, gentlemen, the city guerrilla, we've had years, we've had decades, we've had successive wars, we've had seven of them ongoing at once with no more than one in the public mind at any given time, it's Iraq but then it's Afghanistan but then it's briefly Syria and that's a "humanitarian crisis" we We've Got to Do Something and doctor the paint scrapings and the trace scraps of metal underneath the corpses' fingernails to prevail on an international panel of "experts" in your opinion that yes indeed certain gases were deployed please keep us posted please write it was a lovely little getaway and we just know you're bound for great things and we'll be so proud when you achieve them here's my phone number here's the email address I give to people whom I want to feel as though they've earned some minor perfunctory kind of intimacy without actually giving them a way to talk to me which isn't an insult oh no please don't take it wrong why besmirch this separable idyll with the grubby ladderclimbing business of subsequent contact you'll want something I'll want ten more things and you'll supply them in exchange for the one you want and that'll make me feel contemptuous as it could hardly help but do! as it could hardly help but do! and this I take it you would understand if you were in my position which someday God willing and Man collaborating you will be collaboration in the sense of a Nuremberg docket if you're filling black-humored which you might well be in certain circumstances and which in others would constitute more than adequate grounds for your permanent irrevocable dismissal from my mind and company and I guess you'll just be guessing which is which from this point on and

isn't that American, to keep the rest of the world playing three-card monte with your whims, oh sure, sometimes I keep it buttoned-down to flatter my sense of self-importance and tradition, and sometimes I'm just aching for a servile little subordinate to say something a little bit off-color, and sometimes there's nothing you could say without making me violently angry and silence is even worse, silence is the final affront because it indicates to me that you've read my pissy bitchy sour mood and have taken it upon yourself to judge the most prudent course of action, which is *my* prerogative, that's what *I* do, I tell you what's safe and what's not and you act like you've got any reason in the world to believe me,

which you do, of a kind, of a suicidal sort, the way you might come to trust the surgeon who's administering electroshock, conferring with him over meager details and insurance payments and occasionally remembering, in the middle of some ornate little clause in the copay paragraph, that you're paying him to set your brain on fire

gray rain down like old glass trapping even older dirt between the panes, detritivore feast of machine-code star, where we would hide for days at a time, given the choice, dozens of stories above street level, annealed in place and subsisting on lymphatic crystallography, the cached RAM of the phagocyte star bleeding slow white wattage through the fissures

in the day you'd otherwise get down there where the water's sliding off the sleek buffed surface of a bugged limo, passenger aware that it's been bugged, of course, or practiced enough in all this to guess, whatever permission he has or hasn't given or, more to the point, whatever promissory conditions have been signed off on or refused by those above him, which

is really a piece of hierarchical slag, "above," may not apply precisely anymore, is perhaps better to think of sidebands and the trophosomal star's sulfite encryption in a heterodyne frieze, were you waiting, is that what comes next, we're looking at framebuffer amputation and the necessary repeater on the line, we want to harness and to redirect the sunspot feedback of the cybernetic star where at all possible, which means basically anything we want it to mean, this is an interdicted area, you're gonna need special documents before I let you through this checkpoint, sir, oh, sir, I'm sorry, didn't recognize you, knew your name but never actually seen your face, that's probably the point, sir, is what I'd tend to guess if I were guessing, go right ahead, so there's a breach and here's another and they realign however they realign and

there are certainly génocidaire sons of bitches who profit enormously by every new whining matrix of infinitesimal cracks, the recomputed bone-mathematics of hydraulic-fracture star,

but you could say and say accurately, despite their affiliation with home addresses and utterly literal assholes, that power nonetheless remains a separate organism irreducible to any given clutch of murderers and murders in any particular convocation, that power waits where the unmarked dead nonetheless pursue their

recording media in poisoned earth, defoliant-striped soil, the strontium waveband seeping through the failed phytoremedial star, and

this perhaps is one such case, out in but somehow separate from the rain, in one of its small isolated interstices, no rain on the diplomat but rain on the car and rain on the driver and rain on the bodyguards and rain on the few stringers from the kludged-together mess of whatever constitutes “the press” in this particular latitude – the government paper, which is bound to tell you precisely nothing, Cooperation with Americans Continues, subheader, Diplomatic Says He’s “Cautiously Optimistic” and “Looks Forward to What Could Be a Fruitful Collaboration,” thanks a million, we’ll all be looking too, macrophage star’s videofeed in white flare-out on banks of disused surveillance monitors, basement of a black-shellacked building near the coast of a former British protectorate that probably got its independence in a way that will never matter, essentially a floating military base with a decorative splash of as-yet-unmurdered natives,

though don’t worry, the opiates and PTSD and lack of a veterans’ hospital will see to them soon enough, we’ll get any number of colorfully local and specific crimes, “impossible” to sort beneath the causal barline of any larger condition except in the vague fuckface way a soi-distant moderate Republican newspaper columnist gets his, oh, call it \$700,000 annual salary to do, looking at you here, Mr. B, go fuck yourself, and that’s not counting the book deals, the TV appearances, the exclusive contract to lend his expertise (read: his mammoth credulity and almost equally mammoth cynicism) to one particular channel on Election Night and the morning after, though, to be fair, it’s also not counting the cost of the divorce he didn’t legally initiate but got rolling when he started fucking his research assistant and thanking her effusively above the single-line dedication to his now-estranged wife,

tant pis, chérie, these are the rigors of the commentariat,

plus probably a relic Communist or Socialist Workers’ Party newspaper read only by the people who write for it and not even by all of them, the odd bit of correspondence with a similarly doomed Front of some nominal designation or another in a country currently undergoing a very slow CIA coup, started the moment El Hugo took his place, ramped up when he started dying, and we’re expected to believe that “local dissidents” somehow acquired and learned to operate and then in fact *did* operate the rocket

launcher that took out an entire side of the tower in which the president – or soon-to-be-ex-president, or ex-president-in-exile-in-residence, a one-man failed government whereof the failure has not yet actually kicked him out of the palacio, if they’ve got a palacio – was, in essence, trying not to die, trying not to be assassinated, though again, events have reached such pitch as might decline to confer upon his murder the status of an “assassination,” which is meant to be epochal and severe and august and to be memorialized in granite and actual film, not just “film” in the sense of any movie but the real 35mm shit, the telecine abortion weeping down the line code, stem-cell login of a wet-gate star where spinal outlets fuse with the burnt wall,

a bundle of letters postmarked El Salvador or Honduras and delivered thirty years after the dates somebody’s incompetently tried to scrawl over or to steam out of the envelopes, not that it matters now: the point is that they’re reading and fucking with your mail, the point is that you know it and will be, ehi mehércule, a little careful, n’est-ce pas?, as if you weren’t already, hadn’t come to cherish your ad-hoc identity as an Enemy of a State that couldn’t be less threatened by you if you were actually dead; the dead sometimes do loom larger in the bone-and-graphite room behind the lens

wet light shearing off the dim rubber plantation, deep xylem saccharine bled for cytopathologic diagram of weapons-system star, neurodegenerative latencies waiting in the drag of heavy water and encryption-thickened sugars up through capillary tissue, coefficients of lost velocity and the way the metals flatten out or bulge tumorous with cancer-lag in upper air, ozone surgery on airframe star

a boundary-layer constant wracked for use at lower altitude where the numbers spin back into your backmost teeth, molar’s carbon microfiche a failsafe suicide capsule of genetic-engineering star, where cellulose burst reconstructs the broken clade along invertebrate signal chain, fuses some cracks and leaves others open, black deposit sweating underneath the solar flare, magnetic storms like bioindicator hemorrhage on the RF-hacking star’s preclinical map, and

could be Angkor Wat or Teotihuacan, my friend citadel, married to himself, “lemon bloody cola,” sponge me down, doc, we’ve got time and only time with which to overload this single and marginally contested space, although the contest, such as it obtains at all, is really a retrospective alibi, a question of what can be rationalized in the

moment and, most importantly, what-can-have-been-rationalized in future preterite, not now, not whenever you are and wherever you presume to be, but thinking back already to the euthanized syntax, Egyptian spinal cinema of DNA-computer star in pyramid's containment unit,

the dead dreaming's grammar shunted through the preamp for a possibly fucked buildup toward something audible, at least, something that'll fit the waveguide like the wrong kind of ammunition stuffed down an oversized bore, genetic cartridge amputee for the FM-synthetic star, bent sarcomere to alias whatever sympathetic strings ought to be ringing in the characteristic local scale,

by which we, as westerners, almost always mean something pentatonic, the one or the other is the same as either is both, pick your point of emphasis, deescalate your pedal tone while bringing – hey, why not cop a bit of their argot, denature the transcriptase star in retroviral species of machine language – while bringing the Dialectical Tensions Latent in the Overall World Political Situation to such head as you prefer, probably the one marked ERASE on the small control panel, black plastic buttons barely equipped to cope with a finger's width, maybe because manufactured here, where people are generally smaller, and by children, similar guidelines as to human size obtaining as you like or can't really admit to, et sequelae, who was listening, was anybody, early somite reflex arc of sample-trigger star in a polymerase-chain copy-and-paste transfer to the vat of Nike glue and black gel soon enough hardening toward the crystal structures of steroids,

where we were, you remember or don't, along the long thin metal wall, galvanized zinc and corrugated tin depending on how recently each section was built, went on and on for city blocks, we thought at first we must've found the wrong place, that this had to be a fence or something, blacksite perimeter for testing chemical-weapon star in quarantine, but

no, it was actually one building, really a single slum-cum-factory maybe 10 blocks by 12 or something on that order, an entire "neighborhood," less even the meagerest notion of "neighbor," in a structure that was totally walled in but present various perforations and gaps through roof, floor, core, open walkways, firmware linkage of the bioweapon star where flimsy diskettes melt into lapse backbone slotting,

the black surface of the optical track blinking back or rarely blinking, LED as medicine, disk permissions zeroed out for emphasis, weapons cache of a cross-scripting star transliterate in abortion-ready architecture,

the stem-cell lag and eventual failure of catwalks, bridges, “balconies” more like open-air prison cells, the kind of gorilla cage we used to quarter the dubious Italians without passports (as if the Italians on *our* side had their own passports – as if, for that matter, “our” side was a single and a separable entity, but

you’ve got to talk that way, I guess, want to keep in shape for the eventual if implausible and ultimately meaningless grand jury or just a bit of empaneled senatorial showboating, chance for them to stand in front of vague unremarkable men whose names they might’ve heard a time or so and easily mistaken for the names of actors once well-known with quick-twitch irritation by their parents, oh right, he played heavies in the detective movies, she was a grande dame in a dead time, he was always the slick reptile son of a bitch who set the detective off on a case that was secretly meant to kill him, the detective, but usually ended up killing him, the human lizard, instead, and those two were always presidents and those two were always astronauts before we really had a space program per se and these three well these three were just great at a kind of onscreen dying you hardly ever see nowadays, sad thing, isn’t it, a damn lost art, quite as baffling, I’d imagine, to our unlikely archaeologists as any Nazca-lined hummingbird to us, by which I mean

these three fell down walls when they got shot, gutshot almost always, because, well, more than one reason, come to think of it, because first of all a gutshot is a way not to show wound or blood, the guy who got shot always throws one hand or both over his stomach – most Artistical practitioners, you know, they’d always do the one hand straight to the gut and the other very slowly dropping the gun, which was always a revolver, of course, they’d do that thing where the gun-hand goes totally slack but the ring of the trigger-guard around the index finger is still catching for an instant or two, no energy even to throw the damn thing down, so the gun wobbles and half-turns along the rim of the limp digit, and then the gun hits the suspiciously clean and well-raked dirt – never blood in the dirt, not here, another reason to keep these boys gutshot, you can pretend they’re holding all the viscera and fluids in, which is ridiculous, but you didn’t pay your 1-to-15 dollars for the exclusion of the ridiculous –

and the other hand either lurches over to the gut or freezes in place as the guy falls or makes a pointless grab at something missing or is raised above the head, if you're really pushing the theatrical quotient here, and why not, even then there wasn't such clear distinction between acting for the camera and acting for the eye, a distinction which, when more fully formulated, wasn't just a case of actors' and directors' education, also had something to do with the human eye itself, restructured by the sudden slow and horrible discovery of its kinship to the camera, wet-gate star's drowned algebra of DNA repair behind a silver-halide aneurysm glinting like the sigil of the Hunter)

(and now, shit, I dunno, I guess I haven't seen a lot of recent movies recently, but it doesn't seem like people quite die that way in the movies anymore: I'm talking one long shot, uncut, with of course its variables, its lesser and greater mutagen pathways,

beginning arguably with the lone shot of the man twisting as he dies in the middle of empty desert, canyon, dry wash, maybe on the tablet of a mesa, incised there in the cuneiform of a nucleic-acid star, and though you could say all sorts of dreadful '50s-existentialist bullshit about this, Man's Fate ad actual nauseam, it strikes me now, maybe because we're here and doing what we're doing, as the most graceful, or rather the most gracious: he'll be eaten by the desert night, the phagocytic star will swarm, defuse, dismantle him, the jackals will bury solar meat and dig up the rotting fuel cell of the wetware star's necropolis-transistors,

the scorpions will scale him and the small pale mice will crawl across the roses growing from his torn-open throat, print of wild dogs' teeth where the blowflies feed on his decomposing voicebox and the bees feed on the blowflies, honeycomb wreckage filtering down to immunologic stratum of the phytoremedial star, overexposed nearly to blackout on the desert's bandaged negatives and, if ever printed positive, a contact sheet of the annihilating light wrung from him, the carnivorous angel's annunciation,

plus the echo off the canyon walls or desert floor or fragmentary air will enunciate a hollow ozone architecture above him, perforated avian bone held together by harmonic-series tension, transcribe the dry heat-lightning runtime of the peptide-computer star, but



this is only one mode and maybe the least common, I don't know, I haven't performed the full bioassay, strewn the luminol across the used filmstrips, to say nothing of theater prints, bootleg versions in other countries or for the early at-home use of the American rich, the American obsessives, Bob Crane and the guy he killed or, wait, the guy who killed him, I don't know, somebody's dead, and then the videocassettes, laserdiscs, Betamax, DVDs, hard drives with the, what would they be, .mov or .wmv files, virology of a remote-execute star annexed to the immunoblot multitrack that saves the score and Foley FX like a prion remnant dangling from the riven stem of blood,

but anyway, that's my sense of it, presumably yours too if you're listening and hadn't thought about this yet, keep your head down when they're firing, love, it's a marvelous place, they're not allowed to shoot us, not at all, and if we're hit and die or hit and maimed or hit and permanently disfigured or just barely nicked, well, that'll be hors de commerce, that'll be frankly impermissible, we will never have been wounded much less killed, not according to any official record of these profoundly unofficial proceedings, whatever official sanction they nonetheless maintain, and there's a certain kind of bleak immortality in knowing that you died important enough for every level of your country's government to lie about you, mutatis mutandis, "your," "country's," "government," "you," etc., though you almost certainly weren't so important when alive, but

the other shots, apart from the death underneath the drumming tense enormity of sky, well, I think of two: there's the kind against the low wall, where the guy who gets shot slides down with his back against the stucco adobe shellac cheap tarnished metal, knees slowly flexing till he's just sitting against the foot of the wall, and then there's the high wall and the shot guy at the bottom, nearly out of sight, and from that kind of angle, he usually dies along the contours of a blunter choreography – depleted recon cache of GABA star's reuptake goes to program dim closed-circuit subroutines in sleek-walled basements where we'll never need to know the subject's untelevised name –

maybe spun backward by a bullet catching a cheekbone or the outboard edge of an exposed carotid artery, maybe just lurching to the side or falling facefirst or, if you really want to get tasteless about it, dropping to his knees like a stabbed samurai, time

enough for some bullshit significance, muttering “Rosebud” at the firing squad, you get me, and

“firing squad” is, I think, the key term here: shot against a low wall, that’s geographic, that’s death as an extension of place, you become a crow-ornament, wormy effigy elapsing, jump-cut footage fused into a vermin-riddled obelisk, error log of disk-repair star secreting a dense petrochemical totem,

and shot against a high wall, that’s judicial, that’s abstraction brought to bear, you could be anywhere but are here and only ever here but still could be anywhere, you’re plugged this way to demonstrate the theoretico-functionally infinite reach of the Law, a more Judeo-Christian death, to be sure, than the other kind, which flirts with every kind of American god murdered when white men showed up wearing an entire ocean’s subclause of diseases, but only murdered once and resurrected from the killing *as the killed*, you get me, never healed, no old breach made good, no sin forgiven, the spent American gods stalking the land and what lies beneath it not in spite of but because of their offhand nervous extermination by men afraid of everything and thus bound to condemn it, zoonotic text of bootscreen star arcing like black genetic wattage from the underside of tamped earth and browned-blood mineral theft)

(doctor, técnico, give me a key,

overexpose naphthalene bleedthrough of the hacked petroglyph star, catastrophic peak-oil dreaming wrung free of decayed vertebrate safety stock, xenonucleic star secreting the fever-map of stalled aniline uploads, such that you could reprint and reprocess this whole territory as a throb of unfledged cancers, quick-change waveform metastable where the artifacts of heat glitch out, print-through necropolis of RF-hacking star and all the topside radio traffic we’ll be happy to list, cross out, finalize, archive as all that happened here, historians’ grist, the mummified meat for that lesser species of jackal, plus

wetware star’s bacterial line code foaming over at the onset-sting of early sulfa drugs, trafficked here through some tortuous series of interlocks, because there was, you understand, that act of congress or that senate resolution, there was an order given in no uncertain terms to a chain of command very uncertain indeed, there were the blood diseases of the operating-system star each hard-saved to a failing myelin sheath or

frayed vascular protein and sloughing with the leukocyte retrieval, endometriosis of spent information, how you presumed to look and where you thought you were looking, videotape ribosome where macrophage star overdubs the runtime hex of obsolete diseases, but

we had to get it, them, these, couldn't have done without and weren't really expected to do so; question of jurisdictions, of who's allowed to know what and when, of, I guess you'd say, to what degree the world must pretend ignorance of itself just to keep going in more or less the same way; grasp that, here and now; we live under such systematized power as much consistently deny self-awareness, and because the ability thus to deny presumes some knowledge of its own evasions, it needs to structure its own artificial ignorance beforehand, build in escape hatches and failsafes, the automatic override and the manual flux bursting through the flight deck as an autopsy of phase-transition star when the altimeter's glass facing cracks or liquid crystal lines up in the signature of lyotropic shock;

we mean the secret federal highway system, all up and down the coast, entrances that look like locked gates fronting some failed farmland, a tufa plantation, a stonecrop effigy, raw alkaline loss screaming back to the ocean, toxicology of failed seas where the phage star's scansion reenacts denatured evolutionary strata, lag time of peptide-computer star its own abrupt grammar of sheared dystonic clades; you've maybe heard about that, same general quarters as the car that runs on water and the "dirty bombs" for which we put a couple minor gangbangers, ahem, accused minor gangbangers, well let's not get too far ahead of ourselves now, not now that we're already years and miles both in front of and behind where we've claimed to be, because this all happened already and this is all premised on something that was never going to happen anyway, OK, so

a kid from Chicago who may or may not have had some minor ties to one gang or another, and in the poorest parts of any American city, in the intentional socioeconomic quarantine of the ghettos – yes *of course* it's intentional, yes of course things were meant to go on more or less in this vein, arterial blockage brownout for the somite surface-area of biomechanical star back in Anasazi cities of the dead – it's easy as hell, because, again, it's supposed to be, for us to claim that anybody has "ties to a gang," how could they not, gangs are just the people who live there and are often more a matter of birthplace and lineage than any willed affiliation, you come from this block, you know

the GDs or the Crips or whatever, that block is the Bloods or Black Guerrilla Family or Latin Kings or Ñetas, it doesn't, in itself, mean anymore than a system of geographical and genealogical reference, very convenient for the local cops, at one point, and now more likely the FBI, since we managed to convince a helpless cringing busload of absolutely credulous senatorial assholes that gangs lie somehow tangent to international terrorism,

drug traffic, why you know where those drugs *come* from, don't you, senator, why yes I do, from Afghanistan, where we raised the water table and thereby turned the desert into the world's premiere opium plantation, well you know how they *get* here, don't you senator, why yes I've heard, the airfield where Lt. Col. North set up his parallel runways, a landing strip for the planes that could afford to have their provenances stenciled on their sides in letters large enough for the binoculars in the air-traffic control tower to read, and those with multiple subtitles etched out, palimpsest of alphanumerical cicatrix, soon enough a colorless matte brown-gray with continual revision, not the Army, not the Navy, not the Air Force or Marines, and none of our brother and sister militias, and none, certainly, of the paramilitary groups we've been funding this whole time, endocrine output of resampled airframe star from giddy epinephrine flux to slow white sugars where potassium diskette burns green and wounded against sloshing brainpan water,

the fever's byproduct, a bacterial infection scabbing you from wrists to armpits where the lymph nodes swell up to the approximate size and consistency of walnuts, but who'd be listening, who'd ever know, isn't this precisely why we do things the way we do them, in a topography of plausible epidemics, among the recognized and prerecorded scenery of plague, disinfecting wetware star's contagious fuselage for redeployment as aimed virion, designer illness soon enough as much part of the local picturesque as any prized scene of somebody salting down an etiolate ear of butter-slathered corn, ay tamarindo aca, and the kids always in shorts too short to keep the mosquitoes off and shirts too loose not to feel the distinct and asphyxiate spacing off the sweat and hot air trapped between themselves and the yanqui castoffs they wear here,

no, probably not toting machetes and probably not scurrying up the trees for whatever you consider the most representative indigenous fruit, don't you think they know what you're looking for, ven alla, señor, ven alla y vas verlo, a shimmy for the

captain as an entrée to the disclosure of his other and less photogenic tastes, contact sheet of open sores and deep quarter-sized lesions where the silver-blooded flicker noise attests to GABA star's light-wronged erasure)

(multitrack redundancy your goal, if I do say so, if eyes do so say, L63 R63 or 10/10 or the stereo-paired 100 depending on your software, lobotomized by trepan-cursor where the frequency analysis reports the same cross-sections of abraded cranial reefs, the phase-canceling CAT scans reinstalled as automatic override on weapons-system star,

a separate overdub, you'd hope, you'd think, a new, i.e. old but undisclosed, road running alongside the facility at a distance of several miles and with a set of gates and exits where the main highway runs out into mountainside, just stops there, Ironwood Court or some street of similar description seen from overhead in recon photogeology like the place the razor caught against the lapsed grain of the skin, bumped into prior cicatrix, deposit-hypostyle of tracking-error star, the hypogeum embedded in the uppermost flesh, sphinx as meat-encrypted stele to keep the DNA-computer star bone-latent in the reverb field of terminal stress bursting black from dead air trapped in languages we've killed,

that's nothing theoretical, that's sharp and definite as can be, and it started many, many miles north of here, a natural topography to counterpose with this one, not the least hint of green bleedthrough, concrete everywhere and streets named for the species of trees they displaced, fitting, actually, as prelude to Afghanistan and the sudden saline change in the water table, where we spent our time peddling boy-flesh to the local warlords in exchange for their sworn cooperation, never bothering to ask – because of course we didn't bother – what exactly “cooperation” and “sworn” mean to them, like that glib asshole Cabeza de Vaca thinking himself hailed as a savior because the Indians treated him the same way they'd treat any stranger, with a decency that struck a Christian as outlandish, plus potlatch or whatever the local word for it would've been, shame that name had to get wasted on such a delusional son of a bitch, cows' skulls responsible for much less murder than are men's, so that

you'd remember the print-through lightning and the failed laboratory chain reactions, you'd remember the preordered segments of bulk-purchase DNA where an

electrical storm photocopies protein ziggurat of the peptide-computer star, available to commercial and industrial use, all comers, private and public, it's a government contract but you need to remember to invoice it as a corporate one, I don't know, man, dubious interlocks, delicate bullshit, who's fronting for what and just how malleable and flimsy the fronts are meant to be – we, as Americans, sometimes enjoy flaunting the insane dimensions of our power and thus the world-spanning dimensions of our insanity, angiograph of fiberscope star transferring disease-blood to a phylum of freshly epidemic ticks, the bootscreen star's xenotic pictography surfacing through wounded silt and lye-scauld fissure along with scorpions and spiders evolved white and blind, even eyeless and translucent, in a buried Hittite city of the dead,

that's where it started, set your clocks, punch it into the GPS, compression-artifact star as shrapnel to the uplink with a geosynchronous satellite and the fallout belt we keep there just in case anybody needs a periodical reminder, which they do, o Lord they do, deliver us, Thy servants, from the need to demonstrate again and again, not so that we may cease the demonstrations, o Lord, but so that they may become acts of pure excess, gratuity in overload of sense, tip your driver, your bartender, your bootblack and maître d', tip 'em, tip 'em all, chérie, we're coming up with songs we need as each sung need arises, we're following the prosody of the uneven land to beach some whale-carcass hymnal where the last green things burn out around the snowline as the arid mountain range falls to the sea and this is finally Patagonia or some conceivable alternative, Antarctic base or just an observatory to which we have seasonal rights, a bit of funding tossed off from the failed space program,

and by “failed” we mean “privatized,” and by “privatized” we mean “there will be slaves on the moon before this century ends, if indeed its end's recorded by the sorts of organisms who count centuries,”

right, swing down from the barren flats alongside, what is this, Potomac, Merrimac, Concord, I couldn't be bothered to tell you and you couldn't trouble yourself to find out, not why we're here, not what we're for, the point is that there's a shipment waiting and we've got to hustle, some complicated supply chain to get around the latest amendment, which was written to be gotten around, you see, but which knew that it needed to make the evasions and the substitutions sufficiently ornate, such that their preprogramming into H.R. #xxxxx would look very nearly accidental, the kind of thing

somebody figured out in the course of a sweaty sleepless caffeine-jittering night in a shack in the Florida Keys whose deed is in the name of a dead Agency field hand

and not, say, in a sweaty sleepless caffeine-jittering night in one of the wood-paneled rooms of the Senator's secondary estate, where he keeps his eminently tasteful collection of native art and his strictly aesthetic, you'd say, stockpile of weapons from the Civil War, all, notably, the sort the Confederacy would've used, but let's not draw any conclusions where none yet need to be drawn, he's just a collector, he's just concerned with the salvage and refurbishing and maintenance of history which might otherwise, he tells us, be forgotten, ah, right, I'm sure there's no particular segment of the American population which would remember the Civil War and why it happened without trustees and gendarmerie like you to tend the flame, besides which

there's the other dirty little fire, petrochemical star blooming on stress-fractured acetate disk inside the blanched femoral artery, slate-livid till a few days back and now white and cold-cheesy as candlewax, so you'd better get the disinfectants working, because if this guy dies, we won't be able to admit it, will have to contrive an inauspicious cult of his disappearance and survival, and I don't know about you, but I didn't get into this so I could work up an alternative-hemisphere Mahdi, though, come to think of it, just why *did* I get into this, what ever for if not to claw Lazarus backward out of all his second graves)

(always feel of recent rain-lash in the dead circular city, River Tigris now a corridor of screen-burn LEDs, cytopathology transcriptions of the weapons-system star, "little cow and calf has got to die," and

understand, this is where they engineer their arms into the future, guns ever before butter like parenthesis incites the operation, first friction from addenda to the strict numeric stumble here, the null code in cross-scripting star's extracted naphtha fraction, or rather

where they reconstruct the future from the capabilities of their arms, call log your target-lock, triangulating prey by the most recent cellular transmission, where's the birdie, look now quick now follow said the echo off the bottom of the drained pool in a nation where it now seems impossible that anybody should've had the money or the luxury or even just the unendangered time to own a pool, much less to use one, hi-

albedo wreckage, surface-return star in its spread-spectrum autopsy slicing through the wired tiers of piano roll

as backbone splice with xenonucleic star's sugared ovipositor, the sting the same as implantation waiting, green flare from the nightvision array or anything you might coax out of a failed radar, older equipment still in use for the fact of older quarry, like trying to ferret disused statuary out of the fossil library of the nation you *wish* you were invading, necropolis-graft of the histocompatible star,

somewhere down there are the gods or semidioses fit for our manic ravage, an aim we'd know how to construe, viral cursor's ECT on the gel mainframe of fluidic-computer star, hardened into oncologic salts and waiting out what topside summer sprawls through damp black slabs of overburden worn inside your throat, against the epiglottal flap, as alleged screening agent for carcinogens still wafting through the air, that's what I'm told, anyway, some immediate biogenetic quarantine of the chemical-weapon star,

this is the rumor, keeps your lungs clean, keeps the myograph from peaking too white in unwonted signal domains, bronchoscopic feedback loop free of the airframe star's aborted sonochemistry, a series of prenatal scans like waveguide atlas tunneled fiber-optic through consortium of ideal unlikely flesh, what we'd be producing if we'd really figured out how to backmask uterine calculi, among which the white stones, not only numbered, never consonant with their own counting, more and less and once and, in the bargain, some other than both or neither, a ghost off to the side, carrier-wave frieze disclosing exobiologic star's deformed parallel login

to the Earth as it might be or to the much more likely World, which you're busily at, always *at*, locative and accusative and dative in the same case, nettles buried under the skin, a rancid look at the way the water table just keeps rising and you have to, i.e. "have to," viz. actually don't, send out the cropdusters bellyful of defoliant formulae to euthanize the opioid star, enantiomer clang against the tainted mirror-mercury, a rattle of corrupt solar flesh where packed black and oozing in the scavengers' tinfoil, ruptured battery of wetware star a phage server we coaxed immunodeficient

as we hardly could've avoided doing, and by that phrase I mean any number of things other than what that phrase appears to say or to be poised to allow somebody somewhere to have said in a pluperfect tense we're only standing beside as per lapsed



medieval vigil, the kind of much-trafficked hymn in which it's very clear to anybody with ears and eyes that both the music and the mythos are feral and pre-Christian, that this is clearly Jesus slathered over something truly local, back when there was such a thing as local and pre-Christian Europe, as there still is, in one sense, and in another will be again, preguntalo de Catalunya as it goes in broken casing of illiterate multinational Yanqui Spanish,

blacksite protocol for bioweapon star, the facility just a few miles east and actually visible over the border if you knew what you were looking at, though of course the point is that you don't and hardly could, not even after you've been there:

strange, that, vision-mixer clamping rotifer jaws, karyorrhesis of the wet-gate star in bleached or slurried genotype where rigid saline negative should breach from what we thought was bath of saccharine and peak oil,

burn ward for hydraulic-fracture star with cleanroom airlocks conducting us directly to the prenatal division and all factitious third or fourth births thereat deemed more or less necessary, especially by people who decide first on necessity and thereafter where to stamp it, you know where we're going, don't you, a blunt pocketknife or the dumb inch-long blade of some kind of tool innocuous enough to sneak through airport security, and we're digging around what we estimate to be the rough outlines of our hearts, rib-clink to reenact killed bacterial pictography, antigen star's cybernetics flaring

in the green-blue glow of phosphorus or just entry denied to the script-archive of adenosine star forced to clear abrupt chemical cache, and here you are, boys, here you are: stare east, stare a little further east than that, it'll be its own country soon, predictable process in the immediate gangrene of failed nationalism, the richest provinces are going to come up with some semi-resilient argument for ethnic separatism because they want to stop paying into statewide welfare programs, ehi Laomedon or something else cooked up for costive men to pretend to bellow in the reading rooms of the British Museum after an afternoon spent sexually harassing the Elgin Marbles,

and who comes from the other side to tear or talk it down, then, what, are you in *favor* of Castilian police beating the shit out of Catalan firefighters as they try to keep the riot from spreading too far past the polling place, which looks like one of those perpetually-under-construction building entrances near Union Square, storefronts

beneath the black spraypainted wood and secret entrances in fiberboard walls the length of entire blocks

till the city looks like a semiedible billboard, some series of blanked-out commercials each waiting for its signifying disease, whatever scab-fueled semiotic of immunocompromised star will rearrange topsoil histology just sharply enough for the figures of the light-damned to pull focus, and it is what it appears and wants to be)

(now if you're in a mourning line and see a face that looks like mine, say I drowned in a barrel of wine when I got to the border, which jurisdiction specifically, does it matter, multiply-exposed Catholic guilt misery of Ireland and Mexico and this one right here, which is

uh I guess we're coming up right against it now there'll be the sentries but not for us and remember like I've said before or think at least I've said that they mostly get up there and get stoned and watch TV on a flotilla's-worth of obsolete American i.e. Japanese or Taiwanese handheld consoles that work via shitty old radio antennae so all the lapse in horizontal hold flourishing cancers colorburst routes the sync-pulse bacteriology through genome screech of RF-hacking star

yessir remember the kid who used to sell the pot to all the border guards or many of them at least well he's dead now as you might well have predicted got greedy got inordinate ideas of himself and his importance as if you couldn't have paid virtually anybody in the country to do a job as easy and simple as that best fuckin' work going but he decided he was a Local Figure of Note started spending his money conspicuously a bad joke for a dumb time it wasn't even like he had that much probably the equivalent of what you'd once have called a lower-middle-class living the old Eisenhower blue-collar shit when a pipefitter could have a ranch-style prefab death cell with a semidetached garage and a new Ford Fairlane in the driveway at his "convenience" i.e. whatever we wanted him to feel his convenience meant or could mean but

those designations don't exactly apply anymore different value to the money different "goods" available for "purchase" w/prior caveats wholly applying ibid ibid ibidem chanting it like Ho, Ho, Ho-Ho Chi Minh and

there was good reason to suspect him but you know it's an exhausting business to keep your eye on year-round and we've got other things to do and there are increasingly

only two classes the very very rich and those who keep them very very rich whatever other fealties you're working through glib Ivy League dipshits serving out their 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive unpaid internships with daddymoney for the backing to keep them near Bushwick which would've been a hysterical sentence even 15 years ago but it seems to be an axiom that everything-but-everything gets less funny except for the bleating terror of the lightstricken world itself

the contact-sheet prints autopsy of white-phosphorus star as reconstructed from the flesh and granite it destroyed a map of scald and char connective tissue melting off the bone lapsed cytoarchitecture gone to program GABA star through slackened blood-brain filter and

we'd sometimes be down around that border checking the readings collecting what we hoped were usable scraps of strontium from the eloquently and expensively failed buffer zone of phytoremedial star a plan much bruited about as you'd expect in a hundred stupid meetings the purpose of which was only to have met to provide minutes to provide photo ops to schedule the thing like a banned narcotic associate it with necessity of glass-walled rooms and ginned-up Inner Sancta blah blah touch it here and crush it there and speak your name and hold your weather eye open for the retinal scan asbestos and bioglass firewall to encrypt the DNA-computer star in structural-steel Valley of the Unacknowledged Kings

legitimate well who's asking and what does legitimacy mean but that you serve and need you know you're serving for the service to take hold haha what the fuck kind of question is that

well we'd sometimes be down there as I set finding what we could find falsifying the data from the field and if it came back dissonant with the periodic readouts of decayed digital dust that's a question for a committee in ten years and maybe but improbably a massive civil settlement much more likely some half-miscarried class action that'll end up paying out \$1,000 to each mother who gave birth to a pile of uncoordinated and skinless flesh like the innards of red grapes sprawling from her permanently fouled womb

by which point we'll be in other jobs in other offices in other countries even and won't really have to worry except perhaps to confer upon ourselves some grave sense of Dignity via Responsibility august self-reverence as those who have shaped World Events

which almost always means as the man said that “somebody dies, somebody don’t shave,”

radioisotope star’s lag-spike autosurgery erupting where the static begins to dissolve with a hiss of pack ice bleeding out beneath the rabid sunspot wounding

and there we were one on such business jaunt and found the kid who sold weed to the border guards in a club he really shouldn’t have been frequenting spending money that we *knew* he didn’t have because we paid him his base salary his little performance bonuses allowed him to con us and his customers both or really just us since we were ultimately employers and consumers on both ends but it’s a different department differently invoiced and another expense sheet and anyway nobody needs to worry about double-entry bookkeeping there’s a firm on a South Pacific island absorbs the worry on our behalf wonderful thing

watery white blood swilling through tamper-prone rhizofilter star

which meant he was either stealing or applying too high a markup or just being a jackass with the decent well the marginally well the significantly sub-decent money he had making a big show of telling the weary bartender to break out the bottle of old brandy in the red-lit velvet case behind the bar shots for the girls starchy pidgin Spanish everywhere he went and thus the bangup in some human-trafficking case which really could’ve named almost any city county state federal official as defendant respondent material witness but in the event mostly named him and

now he’s dead would you believe it found in an irrigation ditch that runs alongside the delta cut where the border dips to define the risen syncline of a maquiladora zone scansion of gamma-knife star cutting through the tarnished neon breeze and he had enemies and who could be surprised?)

(carnival lights and barbwire, sessile frame-rate skitter of lo-res petrochemical star, flares off the rotten oil still pooling around the stanchions of dead derricks, coal gas and mineral desolation, jackal-meat thawed against the worm-furnace of the Earth, archaeology of bioweapon star semi-exhumed where the ground-penetrating radar lifts a winding sheet as blood-polluted negative,

metalloprotein dross climbing the stepped amino structure of a fouled water supply, peptide-computer star's codon-necropolis aphasiac taxonomy where chitin insect casings sprawl against the viscous sprawl of blackened test-site flesh, and

I dunno about you, wouldn't presume to know your opinion nor do I have any particular plans to ask for it, conditions being what they are, but

I don't like this kind of gig, don't relish any of the bullshit, don't enjoy figuring out the dubious logistics, and even past all that, it's a problem of telos, of purpose, of employment and aim, feels, and again, you're free to disagree, and don't think I don't realize that I sound a little bit ridiculous in saying it, but it feels a little bit beneath our station?, right?, like

surely there's somebody else to handle this particular variegated species of mess, surely we can call up some more continuous ghost-login from the wreck of an extinct disk-repair star, climbing up through half-vertebrate phyla, the abortions and unviable mutations, xenonucleic star's branch clade an asymptotic feedback loop extremer than its own spinal condition

and thus shattering the backbone while the creature still attempts to stand, not broken in half, not severed cleanly along the pelvic knobs like Old Testament altar horns, sizzle of rancid fat and browned blood dripping, ornate brawl of microfilm bone wrestled out of Moses's split forehead, the migraine weather in the bellow of the Book, some old fixative storm recalled from the thick impasto background like a waterbear reliquified with a single droplet of sweat after a thousand years' concentrated biostasis, screaming up along salt software of peptide-computer star,

for the Red Sea's severance or any comparable dilution, as you like, as you require, tending Caspian or Black now in some quarters, where we monitor the virologic progress of the cross-scripting star's malware as it presses pink-rimmed stains of peroxide froth from artillery-piece touchscreens, haptic input a thick penicillin slurry, antibiotics' failing algebra of exobiologic star where waveform bracket hacks just deep enough through the thin skin of a lithium battery to give all the tapwater a mildly uncanny aftertaste, some sharp thousand-year savor, hangs ringing on your palate like something disinterred, which it is, a smell better suited for the opening of dry tombs,

the disinfected crime-scene diligence applied there or just prepared and never actually imposed, caution tape out and sterile plastic sheeting hung from every surface,

draped on ceilings and floors, from dummy chamber down receding green seethe of night-vision staircase to the DNA-computer star's elided hypogeum, ziggurat above as the affine cicatrix login, a breached upload through the fracture map infesting any stele the sea wind frets at,

and that would be more my, more our line, put it in third-person plural, more theirs, since we all aspire to that condition, in one way or another; America is third-person country, and the thing left to discover, for most of us, is the angle of approach, the technology necessary to hunting and capture, the ability to stomach the wormy meat you'll finally fell, cartilage rings gasping independent of the throat they line, body dead but airlock still in rich reflex-arc panic, bacterial fuselage of wetware star a bioluminescent reverb-field of posthumous code,

all the fused machine-platelets and pockmarked nanomedicine we couldn't possibly have brought to bear until this moment, so say we all, amen, ayes have it and the eyes always will, eyes have it and they're watching you still, who serves witness on the rotating schedule and whose job is it to reload the cameras on the traffic lights or just make sure the electricity's getting there, I mean of course there's a certain amount of automation in play here, we can tell more or less where something's gone wrong and sometimes we can even tell a little bit about why, but you've still got to send an employee out to the site if it's any more complicated than flicking the fusebox on and off, throwing the killswitch on the circuit breaker half a dozen times and hoping for mechanical equivalent of epigenome's cartridge unspooling along the same acetate pathways, congealed white wax where the genetic-edit star deposits recombinase printout of a flyblown ass's jawbone,

wasp-sniped mules collapsing forelegs first in the desert where was supposed to be some brief and fictitious episode of water, but at least, at least, a fiction tenable enough to keep ourselves moving "forward," whatever exactly that means, for another day or two, until one of the facilities provided for our interstitial blackouts, motel, likely semi-glorified flophouse, a place to which the Agency still holds the hundred-year deed and there's always a guy asleep on the front porch and always a back door wedged open with a certain significant word, a pseudorandom patter of phrases you'd recognize if you'd been, let's say, in the business of international radio-station licensing,

viral load of bootscreen star reassayed as basaltic rupture surfacing through shoals of cracked black glass where the oil sometimes wrings itself loose in long rivulets from escarpment to the underside of the shallow sea like jellyfish tentacles hanging there, you remember, the newsfilm frieze of contact-sheet detonators to encrypt chemical-weapon star as stock-footage explosion of magnesium flares hanging

like astronauts crucified by gravity where the seventh Pleiad should've been and wasn't, the authenticated bones of the variably spurious space program drawn into histone-radiology of the phagocytic star,

well, you'd come up along the cold side of the river and find your way, for a few hours or days, by nothing more than the dead momenta worked into the way the ring roads, feeder roads, domesticated sections of ex-interstate bend each to fountain's capstan, dry now, naturally, or only water-sluiced in season when it's time for the tourists to celebrate the fact of their still having a government, and as to what that government does, doesn't do, is for, is specifically forbidden to be, details, who can remember, who even wants to be that pedantic, the point is that you can head through a flatlined acropolis of mud and find your government in this or any season,

can bioterrorism contagion of the holophrase agora till it hardens to fine viral-shedding ingots to line each fine ciliate surface of phytoremedial star's root, like banks of tapeworm data line the inside of your cheek)

(contraseña aquí, por favor, almost tender how they ask at the beginning, it won't be that way soon enough/it ain't been that way in some time, onscreen artifacts of tape-code star like cinder-heavy river wind in no sight of the water, none you'd notice, blacksite archives of the weapons-system star in a gray mapping of remission,

the supposedly benign oncology we're waiting for up here, rehashing phrases more than half-forgotten, relying on pure muscular recall to stammer tongue and teeth and roof of mouth through what no theoretically more conscious flesh remembers, ay dolor or something much like it, histocompatible star's print-through inside the burnt-out bulbs of failing halogen prosthesis, trapped there with dust of charred moth-carcass and the flightpaths of crashed flies, what you remember, what do you want to, endocrine blackbox salvaged from the offline airframe star as up through layers of radium-packed mud, it was a test, it was just a trial run, don't you worry, we took all necessary

precautions, well necessary for *what?*, now that's an excellent question, necessary not to get caught, not to be blamed if we were caught, if those terms even apply, most importantly not to let on to anybody what we were about, forestall their runt knowledge of what they'd found even if they found us in the daylight,

as unlikely as that was and is; we don't often work that way and can easily be dismissed as a glitch of the vitreous humor, come on, buddy, you'll be happier and the guilt won't lead to anything but acid spasms building up in all the lesser linkages you've overgrown or allowed to corrode, infected surgical staples and plates in the skull, fine filiated wire in 3D sculpture of the way your knees blew out, where the light failed and how its indices of failure distribute predicate ghost of inadequate cures, error log of DNA-repair star its own optical-disc document

much as you'd needle the verminous strings off the translucent wax slab in the plywood belly of something that was supposed to look like a piano and wasn't, misnamed "random" access to the mainframe etiology of breached file-system star, how they found their way in and what, on entry, they then claimed to find, ten-foot worm fossils embedded in the walls, concrete bulbous over whatever was resting there in the eye of the aurochs where the old molecular bones tend isotopic, radiopaque star's loop-send glaring through hi-contrast angiography till trophosome comes up in broken rainbow of the fine neon-soaked smoke,

stratigraphy of the attack-vector star in densely banded petrol feathering, and that was more and less than we were meant to locate or even look for, outside our remit, nowhere near the job description of even such an ill-described job as ours – you understand; keep it off paper, keep it implicit, learn the whole grisly bullshit regimen of men who've taught each other to respond the same way to the same few subtly different nods and take that minor education for a claim to authorship of the world, a kind of openly murderous version of Old Ivy pomp, all the school-tie, frat-house bullshit on the level of toppled governments, bearing down the tape, gamma-knife star's anticline a delta wave transcribed upon contagious national sleep,

the spinal cinema of the nitrocellulose star in washed-out germline xerography, you were waiting, we were waiting, we'd convinced ourselves that waiting would bring about whatever nominal object we were waiting upon, and this is the kind of mystifying language an Old Hand will use when he wants it to be clear that you, the interviewer,



student, new recruit, helpless civilian, pity the poor forlorn civilian, aye, will only ever know by hint and whisper in a dark that reeks of scalded boiler-room dust, cellular debris of a machine-code star, the way the ancient reverb briefly lights up the architectural properties of the space its resonance defines, overtone series of chemosynthetic star its own acoustic weaponry in the dark where the pictographs grow from wounded cells,

so he'll say that *we could all feel it coming*, he'll lean in as if to confide and tell you that *everybody in the street, everybody in the embassy, they all knew something was about to happen, you'd hear talk about it in the bars, you'd notice the waiters looking at you differently in the restaurants, less or more obsequious, less or more given to the mannered gestures with which you appease your occupiers, or no, that's not exactly right, funny thing about forced servility, often the unction and the bowing and the scraping are more annoying than would be simple blank-faced subservience, but they do all that to let you know that they know, that they understand where they are and what's going on and who's the Subject of this historic period, who decides the predicate, and who's just the direct object, receiver of the action, surface upon which it's all to be imprinted, cytostructural readout of bioweapon star's quickly-condensing bandwidth, so*

*some were extra-subaltern, said things so plainly insincere about how they hoped, sincerely hoped, sir, that you wouldn't have to leave, it had been such an enjoyable part of their working lives to serve you, to get to know your habits, to please you as you might be pleased by the semi-anonymous and wholly condemned – so plainly insincere, you know, that you really had to admire it, not as show of cheek or gall or sarcasm, not like that at all, they knew we would've killed them if they'd mocked us that directly, and they were right, we probably would've, no, they went through all that as a formal recognition of the strangulating graces to which one adheres in an occupied country, the preexistent structures one inherits, noblesse oblige in the form of \$2 trillion in weaponry and manpower + apparently the automatic import of a whole medieval sociology, histogram rising as it rises and cut off where it suddenly takes scatter plot's skew index as the line along which throats wait to be slit*

)(where close parenthesis or act as though the codestring's only over)

(osteocyte severance of ozone where the burnt lands skirt the map, bucked exoskeleton of airframe star a retroactive surgery on lye-scabbed fossil phyla, smuggling broken bones into the slack-tuned cytoplasm, quarantined script-cache of a modem star

in granular xerograph feedback where the night's never first or only empty, the streaking up there in the brownout lurch of fallout belt where anything is audible if you know how to look or just can't keep yourself from looking, and there are whole epochs of night during which nobody can choose to keep his or her eyes closed – no willed possession, or not exclusively, and no particular initiatory rites, working up the blood-fever to fit the god's gallstone calculus, fat carnivore worm coiled in the kidney, hepatic islets blanched and sloughed in reprint of the bioweapon star's blacksite grammar on a shutdown archipelago,

one of the many where we pressed our case against nothing, chosen precisely for this lack of an apparent outer limit, apart, of course, from the sea, where – yes – we'd Do A Lot of Things at the Seaside that You Can't Do in the Town, play us the old songs, Joe, set 'em up again, his name's not Joe, he's not even the colorful native we demanded from central casting, and by "we," I mean somebody in an anonymous-looking block of blonde brick and wall-to-wall carpet made of some reeking acrylic derivative that crunches underfoot like frigid astroturf, remember, the bone orchard of the chemosynthetic star a floorplan wrung from dirty xenophagic output, just the voltage it required to burn them down and code them null, pipefitting tarnished zeroes into the adenosine star's scoliotic spine, definition of lapsed heat's mnemonic curve and what manner of phosphorus sting it might take to relight the thing, send the text-virus pouring out like suppressed echo in the sidebands of your landline, citizen, the thing the mouthpiece and receiver are both built to lie about, metabolic dross where the reactor slag bleeds artificial xenon temperance to mute radiopharmaceutical star but never to delete it, since

the last and first deletion's in the breakdown, which proceeds according to its own wrecked spiral and will only come up such as bent helices do, in tangencies to code you couldn't program, nucleic acid software of peptide-computer star its own linguistic topology and dense enough that we require entire cities cyclically abandoned to encrypt it, 52 years or thereabouts, when the flower's cicatrix is outline by the green wasp

trapped in Venus as an ice-flaw in the glassy humors of your eye, hyalin shutdown and the torched integron star a measure of cauterized tectonics, the nominal central orifice of the sky, central enough for fear and to lend us the direction in which you'll soon enough be running and I'll soon enough be running but

you couldn't really say "we," no collectivity here, no safety in the prosody of number, this happens to each and more than once to each, won't even accept the ersatz checksum of its concentration camp beneath the numerator of a single unitary "subject," no he no me no you no she and certainly no *we*, gneiss fracture crawling up through any fixed ratio, the lung-karst where the fluoroscopic star will engineer a reverb-eaten genome of such junked god as may surface to the reveille of neon signage only,

can return when and if it finds the gaudy shit to do so, the Word Made Flesh, yes always, only, yes, but which flesh in particular, were you trapping argon when the vacuum went out of the disconnected headlights, were you with me, I can't remember, when that was more or less our job, prowling around the hill that always seemed to be covered in orange gritty fog, whatever was happening in the rest of the city, and crouching on the leeward side of any car parked in the same place since the last time we were sent out, usually once per week sometimes more sometimes less and come to think of it I derived most of my sense of what "a week" meant from the fact of our assignment so, you know, don't put too much trust in my calibrated timing here, altimeter sweat bleaching, acetate lymphocyte where neither wax nor vinyl nor shellac could be obtained, kerosene stent for wetware star's ataxic batteries

or just depleted fuel cylinder, hence, in part, the job, the hill, a highway headed theoretically out of town but really through and into and past inlets of the same fucked sprawl that never really let up for more than a mile in any direction till you got to Kansas, which was at least 500 miles away and may well still be, though I wouldn't presume to say, not now, anatomy manual of exobiologic star a treatise now on the acoustics underlying continental drift, cymatic cleavage to the somite mourning of the pictograph in daubed mold and bacterial hallucination, but

we weren't going to Kansas and have only been back once or twice since then, as I recall, "been back" here implying an economy of recognized return which is frankly bullshit and I wouldn't credit if I were you or anybody else, though it will be credited, that's one of the ways history survives – *history*, here, as violently distinct from

*whatever happened*; history is mythos we allow to slough the cauls which would identify it thus; history, at this point in the thing we've learned to call its own anabolic progress, which is just dumb as all hell but what are you gonna do, you specifically, there in the back, with your hand up and your head suspiciously down,

anyway, history hasn't just begun to eat its own tail, which would imply some kind of cyclic massing, repeated more already than anybody wants to know or count, this is not Yeats and we're not offering a Rosy Cross, though the Golden Dawn is very much for sale, ask us sometime about *that* job, a fine and an ongoing vocation in the latitudes where you can still find what used to be the bodies of Nigerians beached atop the mainframe of a bleaching coral reef like a failed reconciliation of one bone to another, system-crash histocompatible star's ossuary probing each dead polyp for the acid gist of song it might've whined)

(ciliate cells scream themselves to death, gamma-knife star retuning the stereotactic readout to such scale as you might carry in the coiled whorl of a breached cartilage airlock, if that's your fancy, and

what claim have you upon its late disclaiming, penny a pop, forty a quarter, buy a plastic baggie for a dollar and fill it brimful as ever you can with the screws bolts washers wingnuts we've accumulated across decades of paying too little attention or only the wrong kind, dehydrated goldfish rasping crinkly atop silicon components and half-useful copper wiring, deleted renal calculi of phagocytic star,

no, can't put that off, what I mean to say – and we have to be very careful with our terms here, because someone's always listening in, whether or not that someone even means to eavesdrop, because the language maintains the capacity of self-surveillance, a metabolic autosurgery alerted to distension and contraction, sarcomere schist weeping unusable fouled oil, the endoplasm wattage of hydraulic-fracture star –

what I mean to say is that somebody somewhere could say that history is over, in a very particular sense, *not*, not at all, the idiot-Hegelian manner of the people who appear really to have thought that the Market would save them – spurlosen Trostmarkt, if I remember right, the only one remaining, what's bursting blood-ripe as a rooftop jumper where the annihilating angel stomps out even his own footprint – and of the even worse mercenary assholes who never believed it for a moment but were paid to say

it anyway after demonstration of their willingness to do, for which biographical marginalia were often enough sufficient, place of birth, family's income bracket, what sort of bullshit you were bottle-fed and what sort of bullshit you employed to counteract it, viral load of bootscreen star's immunocompromise when you were coming up through what you taught yourself to think was history's first ocean,

and it may as well have been, for all the not-much the appellative or honorific means, congratulate yourself, and

let's not forget, before dispensing with the idea as mere stupidity or even a too-simple accusation of bad faith, that a lot of the people who believed it or claimed to believe it are doing just *fine*, thanks, really quite exciting stuff, lovely thing to ride the very front of the waveform, especially when it's a standing wave and was only ever intended for hard save, copy-and-paste, amplification, shoved through the detail multiplier until, however shitty its degraded sourcing, whatever quotient of so-called "generation loss" attends the real output of the genetic-cartridge star – whose generation did you mean, and how did you presume to measure its decay – it's far too loud for anybody to hear much of anything else, which means

that deviation from the thing it's saying is *your* failure, that you're a left-behind of something very much like your own volition, and since the good news for you advance troops out there is that, yes, the most radical notion will be in mass circulation after 50 years or less, and the bad news is that, no, it won't mean a motherfucking thing by the time it gets there,

well, the people with the megaphones have received their dose of Freud, of course, they too, it's in the water now and everybody loves the sunshine and the solar bloodclot migrates down the quaternary map of DNA-computer star,

ahem, no, history's not over in that sense, not at all; there is no Universal City and no long slow fade of Last Men, though you could be forgiven for seeing the latter in the way that advocates of history's easy euthanasia just keep saying the same shit, forgiven for forgetting that they're getting paid to do it, a fact which doesn't often slip *their* minds, pace pace, the Latin kind, revise your ibidem to say the same thing backwards and deeply wronged, but

history may be over in the sense of any linear build toward anything but more death on a scale incomprehensibly greater every time you stop to think of it, "really, no

more often than before,” fadeout ellipsis there, the automated step function of 5 decibels per 3 seconds smoothed out into a perfectly regular heterodyne curve without damaging the peaks and troughs of the first signal, I guess that’s what the postproduction team is gonna want, telecine autopsy of wet-gate star a source-code sludge of silicate remainders and unraveled protein for reuse whenever we need to install an escarpment, alter the grade of a sea or Gulf whose laddered foreshore we’ll be climbing soon, a 3D-printed Christian temple in a city of the artificially drowned, just for the sake of precedent and post-war celebrations,

unlikely as they are, nobody wants to remember the troops coming home, partly because they don’t come home very much or very often anymore, and when they do, it’s rarely an entire soldier, maimed or amputee as may be, yes, the old manner of phantom pain, but under a different gag order now, just as wrecked with PTSD and induced chemical dependency as his uncles were, to be sure, plus which the fact of having done something that nobody will talk about, and I don’t just mean war crimes and cover-ups, though of course those too, those too, how many fucking My Lai revivals have we staged in the last 15 years and how many of us care at all about answering that question,

but also, along with this, the sleep beneath the carrier wave, they were part of a war for, and in, a kind of history that no longer obtains, a war whose pretexts all require something other than the simple scream of the angel with the copper ikon head being dragged backward through a whirlwind of detonating cities – even for the war’s most wicked and murderous purposes, even down to the single and supposedly “private” life of any given bloodbath architect, all still in power, most in more of it than war ever afforded them – a kind of history to which we have no access, though I’m sure we can take up a collection and make a flimsy pact to keep the act together, wouldn’t want to bust it up now, we’re still out on tour and with much of the South and Midwest left to go, I won’t say anything if you won’t say anything, just wait on the turn of the face card and see what sums might still compute)

(rainwater seeping stannic through a rotten molar’s smokehole, plus shadowprint of washed-out ’60s horror movie blowing erosive across skin-disease city, prespinal cinema of DNA-computer star, protein sequences on the non-safety stock that waits for any plausible fire and, long before the actual blackout, should be counted for a loss,

figured in some tracer's margin-integer alongside blinding calculus of white-phosphorus star to fuse the cone and rod, anneal vitreous humor, scrape the brackish water from the flawed bulb of your eye

as scalded moth dust telegraphing karyotype star along the indices of obsolete tungsten damage, now that we're working with fluorescents or rather trying and failing thus to work, a fucked grid-flicker every few minutes, maybe it's the lamp, maybe the outlet, maybe the threaded socket, maybe the whole city, why not, and why start anywhere else, transients blowing down the line, a massive freak spike where the signal domain hives its sample voltage in the phytoremedial star, radiation-damaged roots in dead framebuffer flash of what would be high albedo if there were much to reflect, and

there is, not that you'll see, be given frequent viewings like the kin petitioning the mortician to observe their own dead, problems down at the ministry, you understand, constant state of upheaval here what with the dissonance between the local, state, and federal governments, plus the fact that no "government" services here are actually run or financed by the departments bearing their names or whose names they wear, depending on what level of primacy you accord the nominal conventions, I guess, how often you've been to see imported cacti wilting, reinforced with metal rods and stiff wire, rotting off the flimsy iron trusses, finally kludged back together and sprayed down with some kind of dry-on laminate, carcinogen epoxy, halide-crystal metastases growing where the aniline dye resamples beta-burn star's tape edits

for smoothness, continuity literal and scenographic as you please or rather please yourself not to consider, whether things hold together on a narrative level and whether or not they hold together at all, emulsion coughing through the gate, you get me, hairline flaws in wet-gate star's amniotic germline optically printed toward a feedback loop in which the fissure or stray microfiber starts to glow against the suddenly synthetic light trapped behind it, the way the filmed matter will granulate and this and this and this enlarge, go raw and snarled at the edges, radiotoxic star's autopsy against carbon-target cicatrix with cursor lodged like failsafe in the eye

or not, as the case may be, breaking the glass for the failure of it all and we need everybody out, quick as you can move without trampling each other, fire-retardant foam enough to fill the theater with, up past shoulder level, I should think, take a swim and consider the rich variety of choking you might accomplish in this, or any comparable,

room, come basically to gorge on the reflex ichor milked from countermuscles of your forebrain, exocrine throughput of optical-printer star,

the way the epinephrine jolt runs quickly cold against a fading buzz at each limb's skinned extremity, ceding what afference you might and more than willing the cession, give it up, we need a goddamn bonfire here, we need something for the cave wall's smeared mycology, bacterial glyph's sepulcher peptide-computer star

where the more complex codestrings breakdown or rather anabolize from beads-on-a-string to dense chromatin whorl to waveform en passant, the lightning frisking the stale fish eggs and insect spawning of the tidepool, anywhere you want to look but

you don't always, or really ever, want to look just anywhere, this is not a place to get yourself involved in amateur investigation, oye, guey, me entiendes o no, what looks like the sea is an industrial outflow margin dyed blue in the first step among many latter steps unfollowed at the "water treatment facility," the bulk of operations in which concern, as you might've expected by this point, alternate hard-disk layers of blacksite access to the chemical-weapon star,

the vats underneath Cahuenga, wait, Sepulveda, wait, Hollywood, Highland, Sunset, wait, Whitley, Waring, La Brea, Beverly, no, slow down, Melrose, anybody listening, adenosine star's login required where the phosphorylate stinger evolves to match a pin register's preappointed wound, recalling tissue-trauma codex as a kind of pathologic machine language in advance, not clearly alphanumeric or phono- logographic, who can say, we can pretend to and, in the pretense, make up more or less the ground we would've lost by only feigning to stay silent, since the "silence" of authorities is never only that, can't figure blank space, who are you, what kind of asshole operation did you really think this was, I've got a shipping manifest here says I need to get through the gate and unscrew a couple panels of ablative armor like sun-damaged polystyrene for manual reprogramming of weapons-system star's central computer,

well, not central, manner of speaking, this is the place the code goes, I think, this is where the transistors' basic electrical imperatives do or don't attain the condition of embodied grammar flatline, where they hit the baseband or die out along the upper rungs of line code's failed amino synthesis, you hear that, got a little shortwave blast to shove off to the side like airburst inconvenient on the day of planned invasion, got the



attack-vector memorial resupplied and all automatic overrides already overridden, rearmed for zero's carrier wave to smuggle peptide-computer star as sarcophagic frieze,

the sculpted ash of its own absence, the way Haversian system lends itself to fire and then remembers fire and lending both, if you know how to unpick that much-broken lock, if you particularly care, tumblers stumpy as your canines worn to useless half-moon mouth-cleat, multipath the phage star's scansion waiting on a coupled substrate,

a rich vein of penicillin froth to scrape off wetware star's voltaic cell, the algal terminal where "solved" infection math should wring just enough wattage to get this all broadcast and get the night moving at the basic back-projection speed we require to sync up all or most available devices, SMPTE standard at one point, now I'm not sure, problem of privatized state television and the million subdivisions thence created, blastula hyperventilating when each breath creates the orifice it needs to get extinguished, get expunged, a pall of softened cell-division calculus erupting much too slowly for the compression wave to hit you anywhere near your chest, though you'll pick it up in long bones of the feet and maybe metacarpals, shrug off an edgy pixilated wave of nerve-ambient static while we try to figure out just where to set the horizontal hold, in reference to what plausible horizon)

(well who owns that and when was how, timecode breaking down in patchbay off the bioweapon star, and Everybody Wants Some, particularly when you're in the needing business, Your Preference Our Priority™ and this no slogan you should be too overjoyed about, consider it says, dropdown genome mimesis will submit "infinite scroll," cytometry of modem star's coiled gristle against the browned archways of dead telemetric data, what we cared or managed to rake down from decommissioned satellite full of pulpy spiderweb remainders, malware of cross-scripting star its own immunologic protocol by now, so

we had to, or rather were supposed to but did not, sort through the licenses, figure out who exactly had been allowed to buy a chunk of the old state-owned telecom network, who cut in for shares in the bloc still state-owned but now publicly-traded, whom given high placement in the bureaucracy of the state section and whom allowed to come in the tradesmen's entrance with a different sheaf of papers in his hand and who

just a valued oh a trusted go-between no office himself you understand no political appointment that would only be making things still messier than necessary a teletype machine and what you'd call a "storefront" if its purpose weren't precisely and obviously to refract all attention in a nest of commutative microfractures bone-debridement of radiotoxic star's ossuary bandwidth a wall-length window of black glass in the back reaches of a shopping center empty now except for a bookstore trying to peddle the water-damaged stock of a defunct charter school and on the corner some kind of quack dentist \$50 for a pulled tooth no questions asked at least not asked of you by the dentist or what we may presume his staff of variously brainwashed and sexually-enslaved acolytes something for the cult-affairs boys to inspect if we've still got anything along those lines and probably to cover up if we've still got anything along *those* lines

remember the two men in black suits with black mirrored shades and no ties white shirts with collars open like narcotraficante gunmen like the TV-movie versions of cartel assassins and they were watching a brawl between six ragged horribly malnourished children with lice and scabies and open sores and they all seemed to live in a van parked somewhere near the dismal abandoned playground with the plastic seahorse teetering off the edge of the slack rusty spring it was mounted on and the what do you call it that children's toy like a kind of preset crossword puzzle little rotatable plastic blocks on a grid of metal trusswork and each block has a letter on one side and a number on the other you know what I'm talking about? probably has a proper name but I don't know it and the last adolescent at the park furtively burning through half a pack of mom's stolen menthols and a bottle of blueberry Mad Dog that'll leave an interesting antifreeze-toned vomit stain somewhere corrosive enough to burn through the blacktop I'd imagine well that kid had set the letter-and-number-block-machine to read FUK 69 although I myself like to believe that O the lonely rain and the wind Irish refrain bring it back at the end of every verse until the audience is so sick of it that the tedium may achieve and only rarely some form of near-hymnal meditation the same thing heard so many times that the tiny differences in each reprise hit like a patch of gray matter suddenly gone barbed xenophagy of wetware star under annexed neurochemical interrogation tactics

that the lonely rain and the wind as I say bring it back around boys had blown the blocks to say FUK 69 because why not allow myself that at least in the measure of

another day blown out from measuring the bone-sources of song cytosine scrapings from the tape-code star where osseous tide still beats in and under the dry ruts and a linear squall of unfledged storm that locates rain between your skin and whatever rags you're wearing a closed system of diseased heat histocompatible star's thermal remnants wiring the prosthetic to necropolis grafts latent in the brownout blare of metastable watts but

anyway the well-dressed men and the filthy sickly children and the van parked off to the side of the playground with the mattress in the back and they were all brought in and none of the children came up in the databases not the cops' not Child Protective Services' not any of the school districts' not even birth certificates medical records hospital-intake documents whatever and when they ran the men's names at least the names they gave neither was carrying ID those names came up RECORDS REQUEST DENIED INTERNAL INVESTIGATION # and then some alphanumeric codestring there was clearly no point in remembering because you don't often get that dialogue box and when you do the point is clearly FUCK OFF NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS viral shedding of the bootscreen star in a season when the wormwood dripped intubates all public statuary so

no, we didn't do that, didn't have the time or frankly the enthusiasm; such are the prerogatives, such the pleasures of, what would you say, assetdom or assethood, that there's always something else to do and always a reasonable explanation for having done it first, because, and remember this,

*the hypochondriac State tends to legitimize all possible activity,*

that's one of the limits it's clawing toward, dead-letter office for topdown anarchy, someone's always got or has inferred permission to do any given thing and someone else has already done it knowing that no consequence could possibly result, not to him personally and not to the organization of which he's only haphazardly member, we wait, sometimes in tension, less and less of it, to be called up and forced to give excuses, and the first refrain is speciously decisive, and the second worn in like gross body heat clinging to dirty public-lobby leather, and the third is desultory, and the fourth doesn't come at all, and the fifth is only Echo's bones where mirror-sickness starved her)

(syphilitic kings, face rotted down to fraying bone, worm-meal and pitchblende to lacquer the calcined arch and bole like turpentine sweating from corrupt wood, bleedthrough indices of the cell-respiration star blowing like ochre scraped from bronchoscopic footage on the west side of town, and

any sufficiently wide avenue, over the course of a day's wind, will be coated in an inch-thick layer of brown red yellow dirt, reprocessed as the reliquary valley where we shunt and moor the death-boats for want of a river an inlet a communicating tributary, something with a coast on it, defined loss and the sense at least of world's end before world's beginning elsewhere, print-through necropolis of weapons-system star recorded on the other side, stereo tracks 3 and 4, of all the tape-code backup

which elsewhere shudders linear in dimmed recall of state-university registrar's records, draft cards, immunization documents, statistics on homelessness vs. the number of empty buildings owned by individuals and consortia out of state, out of country, out of continent, water pressure by foot-pound, the aging concrete, the rebar melting in its own spinal momentum, preamp archaeology of xenonucleic star on nitrate stock spooled up as vermin fuse wherever the old archives have been relocated wherefrom whereto, genitive and dative as you like, switched 7 or 8 times and

frankly we don't have the energy or resources to update the lists any more often than we absolutely have to, including the list of where the last list went and whether or not you can still get in with little beyond the attitude that, yes, you're supposed to be here, yes, you have permission, a practiced kind of calm-in-harassment, tired and overworked and past annoyance, so confident you'll be allowed entry that, if anybody tries to stop, you're more surprised than angry, will laugh, certain that it's a mistake, listen, you must be new here, you must not usually work Fridays, no offense, why don't you get on the intercom and call up and see who calls back down, you say my name once and the director or subdirector or shift manager or coordinator of the nightwatch will be scurrying down to the lobby, obsequious and more than a little piqued with you for making him look stupid, no, no, it's no real trouble, I understand, learning the ropes, you'll recognize me next time and we'll have a little laugh over this and when one of us dies the other will be able to recall this slight misunderstanding as a humanizing episode, right, an asterism pinned into the dead symptomatology of public figures'

actual dead skin and rotten body-water, viral load of bootscreen star in fingernail recovery or hard save to the microfibers wriggling between teeth,

the specificity of old wooden light glancing creaky through the trusses that look older than anybody's WPA stele or CCC sigil awkwardly etched into the fresh cement and this is private property and this is a public building sure but the property's still private and we've got a torturous hundred-year lease thing going on with the trustees of whatever uh foundation I guess or Center bearing the sloughed-overburden name of some ornately dead patriarch all three or four of them a great-grandfather's Biblical mouthful and then the surnames of all the moneyed family branches lest somebody feel insulted, that was built into the draft-board protocol too, you might remember, sorted the listings to make sure that those with more than two names would be drafted last because they tended to be rich WASPs with distant relatives well-practiced in the acrid minor art of taking spurious offense, but

now that's back a while, that's obsolete technology, you shouldn't have to worry about it and I'm here to release you from any responsibility to concern as such, we're only crossing out the older causes of cancer, you understand, scraping a sunspot plaque of heart disease from cross-section of deleted IP star, machine code now a reeking trickle of inexplicable black water where the scavengers buried their stolen meat in wads of tinfoil and tried to let the desert cure it overnight, but jackals' orchard, you understand, but those still more practiced in scavenging, glitchy reflex arcs of the genetic-edit star firing up "random" chromatin timestamp and plying small waxy torches along the weld-line of what we didn't think were separate tectonic plates, goes to show you, what exactly does it go to show you, uh, well, it just goes in the general sense to show you that there's something still to be shown and some power capable of showing it, predicate of the disarmed chemical-weapon star in mourning for the grammar's wasteland hived here when a given war's excuse went headline-stale,

not, not, not at all that it can't come back, haven't we seen that recently, aren't we engaged in just such a revival-meeting atmosphere, yes not one of your more optimistic Gospel raveups, I'll grant you that, anybody would, but I think the spirit, howsoever diffracted and mangled, still obtains, shrieks back in high-albedo output from the GABA star's topography as parsed by fallout belt of recon drones,

old scansion of damage repurposed now with camera for cursor and light targeted as any typebar hunts down pharmacogenomics of the wetware star for sulfa reset foaming over the dissolved multinational blocs we used to dial right into wrist-blood, slap against the ulnar artery wherever string-beat worked the whining bone sul ponticello, bit of stray piezo voltage through the tooth-gneiss and misfile the myographic star in time-lapse 2D modeling of color-coded deglaciation, all strictly theoretical, you understand, all set up in this early instance as a kind of thought experiment to justify, yet again, the expansion of the semi-secret budget line for invasion of island territories around the Arctic Circle if it should ever really come to that,

and trust us, we're doing everything we can to make sure that it does, Novaya Zemlya I'll be waiting, Tunguska blowout, radiology of white-phosphorus star where the trees each encode an angiograph clocking the designer-virus progress through constricted saccharine veins, heavy blue sugar turned to fluid and then ice-rapt gel in artery of blanching xylem tension, peptide-computer star where reprint lightning retroacts the copy-and-paste protein sequence run off in what quiet we could find or manufacture for emergency distribution at first and then, in deficit or contrived default of even more contrived emergencies, bulk sale to a former enemy protectorate, smaller print where the "humanitarian airlift" defines a new Republic's blood loss and probable cause)

(inverse ziggurat disguised as the step function of a South American copper mine, employed as biohazard stele to contain the haywire DNA-computer star, and

you would work through stratigraphic metals there, trying to suss out the phase transitions, how much of this is, what would you say, euphemism, not exactly, who should tell what's better and what's worse, how much of what you're asking me is gamesmanship and the attempt to find out exactly what it is I think I know, slow down, dead maps on the walls guttering to bulbous pregnant paper-rasp with "windblown hair in a windowless room," the constant wind-frieze of an improvised explosive device stalled out here on purpose and reengineered as sample voltage of a weapons-system star, more or less available for lossy reload anytime you want it, bearing thence

a whole geography, the outer roads and the unfinished crosscountry highway that was supposedly a project of the last administration, you know the one I mean, general sitting on the headrests of the back seats in an open-topped convertible limousine, just begging for inclusion in the dense tesserae of some fresh assassination pictography, well fine, maybe not quite fresh, and almost certainly denatured down to alphabetic traffic by that point, but it would be a jolt, at least, a useful form of panic, acetate cuttings as to reconstruct the corpse from any given cell's nucleic-acid content if you can find some and please let me know if indeed you can, we could use a little bit of shock, genotypic scan of modem star recovered from the waveform squall

offshore and more than a little out to sea, you know, far enough in fact to suspect that it might be coming from a neighbor island, such as there are any, archipelago of cellular debris risen with the "tactical" abolition of the ocean in between, local as you name it, paleomechanical star's stress-fracture a tracking device established in the faults that clock the alphabetic scission, when we hit the shore with little enough language to spare and needed something violently sleek, something that hit like sharp cool wind and would leave its targets with the impression that they'd had some transverse meaning imparted unto them, oh sure, I got you, buddy, brother, x horses are worth y% of a boat, who doesn't know that, corpses of griffins presented as substantiating evidence for your argument to readjust the international value of gold, of course, of course, RF-hacking star in cellular division on the airframe where we'd ask after yet another fleet of gray-market lymphocytes incurring what immediate geographic wrath they might, this feels like, well, not an invasion, nothing that clear-cut nor so immediately provocative of Total Military Response, whatever the fuck that means, men with guns love their jargon and we may finally come to feel that guns were an excuse for such proprietary language,

no, not yet, not only that, shutdown and restart antibody star when macrophage runtime scatters badly pixelated pollen down the rungs of the burnt screen, a set of lye shards redefined as some approximately indicative Pleiad patterning over the world's single most overcrowded slum, recordame, contact sheet of beta-burn star offloaded to silver halide's minimal recall

in mnemonic prospects of a blowfly hard drive buzzing with the stoked hunger of bees in a rotten throat, where we'd go into winter quarters had we either quarters or winter enough, but this is a new form of imperial expansion, you get me, and it would be

a little bit predictable – even, if you allow critique on this level, a little bit gauche – for us simply to take up whatever Roman ruins are left here, post-post-indefinitely-post-Roman as they may be, however etiolate and reified through later Christian bacillus albeit with the same Sol Invictus coinage much in circulation and the same arguments with caliphs structuring the exact proportions of copper to nickel to iron to tin, they say it costs more than 1¢ apiece to manufacture pennies, draw what conclusions you like, blackened cartilage rind of compression-artifact star compiling dirt toward quaternary structure as to resurrect the malware of dead cells,

cross-scripting star's helical screen-crack where we meant to check the programs reinstalled on all the “automated” field artillery, not that we received so very much of it or that it was so very automated: always comes down to this, right, the newspaper accounts that lovingly list each martial item by its manufacturers' designation like a shipping manifest of pilgrims' provisions fat-daubed onto vellum, as if the AP hack or whoever the fuck else has any idea what the difference between this rifle and that one is,

as if *we* do, for that matter, except to the extent that this one comes from the Soviet Union and is therefore obtainable through a particular supply chain and therefore requires certain delicate evasions and, what's the term for it, help me out here, the thing you do where there's a law against selling arms to a certain country, so you sell them to a third country with reliable smugglers' routes into the actual buyer-nation and the Third Man takes his cut and stands with frankly theatrical poise in the doorway of a building that only exists to rationalize the doorway in which the Third Man may stand with frankly theatrical poise after taking his cut, probably seen that movie once or twice, and if not, well, you might find it all a bit unnecessary by now, might hear it telling you what you know quite well enough already, but

it's still worth it, I think, if only for the dirty serum and the failed vaccinations and the sheer pressure release of giving fictional vent to a rumor that we're all a little bit afraid to bring up, some of us because we fear it might be true and don't really want to know if it is, some because we fear reprisal from any superiors who might hear about it, and some because we just don't want to get made fun of, don't want to torture ourselves wondering if we were mocked because we were right or wrong or just because the others were bored and needed something to make fun of, yes that still goes on no matter what mercenary proximities you lease, buy off, incorporate, whatever radii you buy in



cheapjack quarterly installments from the deader leprous monstrosity of deregulated states)

(cold tremolo to melt against the waxed meat of your cheek, acetate strips baffling epidural schedule of a tracking-error star, the neonicitinoid varnish where the cliffs look down on bone-sheath of debrided river valley in red dark, cellulose brownout, the fossil record of a bioweapon star attaining vertebrate clades' voltage

through epoch of cephalopod smokeshow carbonized, burnt into the rock face seen mostly as a muddy flare of night vision or dingy surface-return sonar, biopsied white-phosphorus star aliasing this with other cities nearer the threat of an ocean, whole delta figured as dysfunction of its power grids and the likely targeting in subset of same, the odds for any given place that we'll be asked, be ordered, have it hinted or implied, just be allowed, does it come down to that, yes it does, yes of course it does, you want to wait hear a moment while I have a little mostly grunt-and-silence talk with the man on the end of the pier who's got his cards and thimble laid out on a folding table and something apparently alive steaming under a soaked horse blanket where the ghost of old river traffic blows against the xylem whining of the masts, xenonucleic star on scanner-bed life support of gelid liquefied sugars,

still too dense to freeze, exactly, or however freezing works, it's been a while, I'm not that studied up, maybe we can ask somebody back at the base or could if we had a base per se and not a succession of rooms retrofit with anonymity for resale, since somebody's always moving in, since, yes, we've been obliged to turn a profit as a means of keeping cover, easier for everybody, understand, just simpler and easier, if the balance sheet can actually come clean then you've got an excellent excuse for having done whatever it is you were doing,

get that, I mean truly do, zeroed out or actual net profit and it's fine, all other alibis are nicety and superfluity, just a means of making conversation, the null-character osteocyte where generation-lossy copies edge through loop send of cross-scripting star, prosthetic firewall trundling backlog scripts against the blotter of slack phosphorus,

bootscreen star in viral shedding hosted where the server overgrows the glial mesh and turns heliotropic or to water's nudge in thin-metal taint and dazzle of the bay to which nobody has official sanctioned access,

though there are, of course, other ways to get in, other means of egress once you're stuck there and freighted with enough possible parallel narrative that somebody at some point is going to come calling with the backing of a larger corps you're not immediately prepared to brush off, I mean after a few steps, sure, just let the startup protocol cringe and splutter its way through the upper echelons of cooked-on gasoline and biodiesel, steroid-crystal sludge and vegetable metabolism keening detuned against the patchy metal of the fuel cylinder's lip, had to use it for, let's say, encrypted storage, had to toss a few tools only tools only implements for the performance of a specific but unspecified task and nothing else and you'd be wise to freight them with as little other pulse-jump and tape edit as you can well sure we had to leave them there because the air traffic control could probably, I don't know, if not see us per se then wring some other hint of our passage from the banks of surveillance cameras the probable radar drift the sonochemistry of airframe star's drowned sepulture where radon mud seeps through the fetal gills

and it was river territory anyway, with or without the river's cancellation in the bargain and always worked out a hundred years before you're liable to have shown up for the first time, much less this one, which is never, ever the first, even if for access to the others you require an empty evening's trawl of déjà vu afflicted with the benzene ring beneath your tongue, the taste of flimsy tarnished metals, alkaloid-script star in cyclic resonance reprogramming the bone cell with aftermarket opioid software,

all that more than once, we'd lurch, we'd wheedle, we'd play all sorts of deliriously cheap havoc with ourselves, setting labile minor goals and failing them, OK, no more than 4 cigarettes in the next hour, OK, no more than twice as many painkillers as the bottle says you can take per day per week per any interval of time at all the measurement descended now from analgesic calculi as literal as you like in the hardened upper knob of a cirrhotic liver jutting against lowest rib on the right if what we heard is true but then why wouldn't it be and then why would it

kind of bullshit penetrabilia often swapped back and forth to nothing but an unfelt later deficit by everybody in the mildly dizzy congress of some night when we all slunk off the bus and showed up shamed for roll call in a bar we'd never bother to remember because it looked so much like so many others and was designed insofar as it was designed at all to provide exactly that sense of lateral continuity just maintaining the

horizontal hold you get me some older machinery here the kind you actually have to adjust with screwdrivers and pliers and wire cutters no slick knobs and faders yet no retrosurgical architectonics of the biointerface star

that was unwonted smoothness still looking for the spark gap between plate and coil still scratching the grease from between the ridges in our fingerprints hour after hour and though you get gray grit beneath the nail of the scratching finger no grease ever actually seems to come off well lay it out and thank whomever you feel disciplined to thank that there's an identifying mark which you didn't personally have to contrive and which you won't have to explain away as failure of conviction or last sad useless attempt to catch somebody's eye beyond the confines of the kind of life you got at

cents per striate muscle cents per smooth the dollarweight of semi-poisoned blood still a strong skeleton despite yourself and teeth which while yellow and more than a little acid-worn are healthy enough to swap out

for something of lesser value where the decimal sting winces through the sample-trigger star and we affect smoothed-out tape speed as just might elide the spool-up of three pensioned violinists in a glacial block of beta-burn star stabilized and hived as ozone coding)

(geosynch scab, good enough and fiat mihi, the cable splice of RF-hacking star where the asbestos shielding ingrows cross-sectioned wall of a vein, and

you'll want to check all the cassettes in those three boxes we found in standing water, fucked walls of a leaky basement, spirit level gone to scoliosis, chemical-weapon star the print-through ossuary of tape backup

where all stored is all dismembered and the operating-system star was basically engineered to log targeting data spatial distribution of population centers incidence per 1,000 or 100,000 of susceptibility to certain naturally-occurring and plausible pathogens viruses common sources of what we won't deign to call "plague" but that's exactly what we mean, as in

who'd know to check for cholera in the water supply, who'd ask about the daubing of runny shit in all the gutters and in the gutterless streets running half-paved from the city center, such as it is, to the outskirts where we get our real work done – the American régime, abroad as at home, is largely an exurban one, deals with the periphery

as form of acid login to the nominal centers, where the remote-execute map immunocompromised peptide-computer star –

left there after one or another time-limited spree, and time is only and ever our time, you understand me, that's the role we've arrogated unto ourselves, we watch the clocks, we decide less what "too far" is than how long is too long and we all just Get a Feeling and we stand up from the tables because we know the meeting's outlasted its own momentum and is just going to devolve into factional bickering and senatorial backslapping if we keep it up much longer, and anyway, the odd light coming through the echeloned glass enclosures around the conference room, I dunno, don't like it, looks like something you'd scrape from the inside of a shattered joint, videofeed arthroscopic scar in a disarmed bacterial cache

so it's back out again, though never into the street, despite the idling of the hired cars and the few early adopters thumbing autofill addresses into the greasy touchscreens of their phones, hip shit, friendo, maybe you can tell your elder statesmen about it either to impress them with its utility or to bewilder them with your apparently intuitive and thoughtless grasp not just of technologies they don't understand but with an entire world in which such technologies require no understanding at all, are strictly acquired, not quite genetic but not far off, call it a gene-expression pathway, call it the potassium torch burning river-spate of dry washes into wetware star's grease-bleeding substrate

or the stone-lymph milked like glands in a snake's mouth where polymerase-chain reflex arc gets transferred to granitic scripts of electrochemical star, we're going to need whatever data you've got re: the throughput and the system's approximate capacity, we're going to ask each other questions whose only purpose is to demonstrate that we're comfortable with certain terminology, not, to be clear, that we understand it or have any desire at all to understand it, what use is that to a man of affairs, only that we don't get nervous when it starts wheeling around, that we're basically comfortable with its detached circulation, its census in polluted air, angiography of IP star where disk permissions stratify according to the weft of trauma-fused cardiac muscle

and that's a real kind of leg up, don't mistake it and don't lowball it and don't you ever talk to me that way again, especially dealing with men older than oneself, men who tend to come from one of two schools, in the present instance: they think of themselves either as competent old machine politicians, backwater or inner-city before white flight,

though of course they're all too young for the latter by now and if they were really backwater without a spraydown in the Ivy League airlocks, well, they wouldn't fucking be here, or as Idea Men, theorists, vaguely but suitably credentialed, papers published – i.e. publication paid for – in a number of journals each sufficiently, allegedly different enough from the others in terms of scope and focus to confer upon these men the specious but effective aura of the polymath, the guy who understands something Essential and Timely beyond across over disciplinary partitions, I don't know what he does, you don't know what he does, “consultant,” “advisor,” but listen, you want him in the room, that I can promise you,

why, will he give us some workable idea?, no, hell no, not at all, but he'll occasionally emit some gnomic phraseling just malleable enough that those present can take it as support of or attack on absolutely anything else they're thinking saying thinking of saying saying and then proceeding to think or not to think about, you can have no idea just how valuable that is if you haven't been in these circumstances before, planning a war, which rhymes with “planning a world,” but only if you've acquired the proper cochlear kink, reformatted the clotting-factor tension of the biomechanical star toward that stop-codon economy of blackout pauses filed between disease slides to make mock of waveform motion,

so, first shot, right, we take him as supporting whatever it is we were going to do anyway – you don't have these fucking meetings to “figure anything out,” you have them only to assemble the necessary armature of factitious language and enumeration around something already decided – and then, when they ask us for retrospectives, late-career interviews, still on the job but shuffled off to some other coil, helical as the latest agents of disease, burst the hazmat seal on DNA-computer star in its abbreviated spiral of luminol cautery,

then we can say he was always the most forward-looking of us, furthest seeing, damn near oracular, he sounded a word of warning which, alas, we couldn't hear, he bade us hesitate but we were in no mood at all for hesitation, fuck off, he shuffled the gray air around until old software told us time had passed)

## on VHS recognizance

so choler wash on gray paved waste where timestamp ichor bleeds against the sync pulse, judder to vision mixer's surgeries on fluoroscopic star, imparting bronchial conniption where the reflex valves hit varispeed and render each saccade as violent tape-edit, microphone hysteria, the caches of surveillance devices hidden in abortive signal towers atop the skyscrapers in an evacuated district, and out, then, to the last grammatical teeth, terminal stress reactor-slagging DNA-computer star with pulp host of exterminated wasps

as you were in the final panic, or the one that just seemed final, residual prints of back teeth stomped into dry sand wet enough at one point, it would seem, to take the cast, so that we might or might not reconstruct this place from the decomposition-glyph left in the border dirt, sense of missing ocean borne into the frayed edge of a city map and tenuous as all hell, false fronts flapping in the wind, a soundstage mockup for a kaffir business district, gamma-knife star's neon printout coughing incandescent exhaust bent for the moment in the shape of truncated stylized Arabic lettering, though always with the internationally legible, i.e. the English, trademark underneath it, our brand sigil for  $x$  square miles of your land and the skyline rights, whatever you call them there, the patent on vertical space, operating-theater addenda to the fossil record, miscarried airframe star in blackbox eavesdrop where magnetic pickups milk the trapped silence for any plausible index, any scratch and wheeze and creak

as might serve to stand witness, make us evidence, substantiate if not quite prove a case, bacterial fuselage of wetware star now spun out toward the differential strains as in forensic calculi Gram-staining panel jury blue against the litmus red that flickers where there ought to be some manner of horizon and is not,

nothing there, mate, this is a closed session and all forms of notetaking are strictly prohibited, which term shall be, is, already has been construed to include any

device conceivably capable of recording in any fashion whatsoever, so we're down to protein structures in your skin, the way the cold might force the collagen in rooms too air-conditioned against the dry throb of the heat outside like chitin tissue crawling over arid glass, karyotype breakdown of a weapons-system star subject to fusion gene and rendered as a readout sheaf of numbing blacksite touchscreens,

nothing doing, nothing answering, pretend to read as you like but it's only a dent a laceration a small asterism resultant – and this is hearsay this is in no way admissible I would advise counsel to consider his position and precise legal quandary before continuing along the present ahem path of inquiry but we're all friends here we're gentlemen I take it so a word to the wise need not be the word expunged in sodden breath-wash and the way you misfile bronchial slides hanging in the oxygen we feign to share cellular resampling of the beta-burn star analyzed at first for pathogenesis and then of course for alternate approaches to the same, meaning

yes, fine, could've been the tests we ran, could've been the groundwater or farmland around the high-security site, topmost ten percent of clearances only, a few patches of strictly photogenic livestock here and there, something for the recon drones to focus on, should any happen to be flying by, and there are *always* some flying by, and they *never* just “happen” to do so, listen now, darkroom vivisection of the GABA star as aliased in digital feed just real-time enough to get your panic buttons sweating in advance of fingers' input,

whatever that should be, whether you actually do any of the commanding here, you're a, what would you say, a spark gap, an electrical arc, just the distance between the tapped handle and whatever part of the telegraph actually starts sending, biomechanical star's radiopaque parataxis clipped into the signal domain of an ochre cliff still sweating out the oncologic glyph of detonations before history,

you're in here, briefly patched into the circuit, that we might have some claim to oversight and human discretion and human judgment and, yes, even human fallibility, never underestimate how badly both the public at large and the credulous twits who ultimately write and vote on our appropriations bills require that sense of precious human failure, know what I mean?, they love to think of that, love to seize on it, love to tell themselves about the single man elected

(and here they imagine years of biometric tests and psych profiling, here perhaps they dredge up the “results” of old interrogation-eavesdrop soundtracks, pry open surgical-stapled wounds of optical-disc star where black blood’s still just crude enough to seep from somite ventilation of dulled wax, rotary-speaker blast of complex mineral histology disclosed only in those brief intervals when the signal from the top bout of the organ’s horn should hit just as the lower half of the chord is sweeping in, kind of like phase-shift, kind of like flanger, really never come up with a perfect simulation of it but I’ve heard some pretty decent ones but they’re of very limited application what works on a voice doesn’t work on a piano and so forth and so forth but you make do with what you’ve got and anyway the idea is to produce a generation or two whose members such as we denominate them have never heard the original, at which point any low-rent lo-res lo-fi version of the damn thing will be better than acceptable, save perhaps the brief fleshy RAM spasm of compression-artifact star singeing glial tesserae, but anyway

they think OK here’s what we’re going to do I’m going to say the number 100 one hundred and then I’m going to ask you to perform several simple mathematical operations in a row alright let’s start 100 minus 7? is 93 minus 7? is 86 minus 7? is 79 minus 7? is 72 minus 7? is 65 minus 7? is 58 OK that’s quite enough and

now I’m going to read you a sequence of 9 numbers and I’m going to ask you to repeat them in reverse order alright very good that’s fine now

who are the last three Presidents of the United States yes including the current one and what’s my name and what county are we in and what city and do you remember the address of the building we’re in right now and do you remember the three objects I asked you to remember at the beginning of this session *square circle triangle* no I’m sorry pardon me the three words beforehand *anchor rake car* yes very good and

Mr. Taylor was very worried because he hadn’t seen his dog Daisy in 6 I’m sorry can’t remember if it was 6 hours or 6 days he put up MISSING posters and asked his friends to call the dog’s name and was very relieved to find her curled up on the couch later that afternoon and

what does it mean to *strike while the iron is hot?* and why is it that *people in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones?* jesus I realize right now that I’ve been misunderstand the idiom my entire life I mean I know the import of it I know what it’s supposed to mean but I’ve misunderstood the literal scenario always thought it referred



to people in glass houses throwing stones at each other i.e. at other people in the same glass house

and so, as it turns out, it does or at least ought to, and

OK very good you're done now I report these results directly to the Determinations Office to more properly speaking the Review Board at the Determinations Office and they don't tell me anything about payments awarded and I don't make any recommendations as to the awarding of payments so if you want to know something anything at all about this process or its results don't ask me do not ask me do not write call email stalk me fine bye-bye!)

(after which, aspirant leper, I don't know, maybe tool around the Midwest for a while until you find a French fur-trapping city called Lourdes and dunk any available extremity into a paint-blue industrial outflow creek, backwash dyes for wrist or ankle, head's probably gonna be hard to eke down through the bulrush and imported swans or just the angry owls confused by the freak extensions of summer, plus which who's to say that the soul or psyche or mind or whatever is meaningfully located in your head, though that does seem to be the seat of the problem, at least, sucking on a layer of asbestos grafted underneath the stratum of the rhizofilter star,

such as it obtains or doesn't, has or hasn't been breached, flammable spectra there and the likelihood of any given light's violent exposure, brownout bones of the hydraulic-fracture star in abraded ambrotype negative against the sunspot flare

which seems, I'll grant you, crazy as you apparently are, nearer and nearer every day, you ever notice that, some sense of missing separation, a shield removed, a quarantine less lifted than breached, the firewalls gaping, radio malware of a bioweapon star seeping through extinctions of code

and then a thumb thrust between your shoulderblades, Gentle but Firm, that's the idea here, we deal with a lot of, uh, clients, applicants, candidates who don't really know where they are or what's going on and may become unruly out of fear more than aggression, so one hand clamping too hard on the meat between your collarbone and neck and the other right alongside the spinal indentation, there you go, remember birdy, birdy wait in waiting room take you home car vroom vroom, remember car, remember

sunlight, amino battery synthesized from xenonucleic star's vertebrate sugar-sting mistaken for or accurately perceived as tape-drum backup of the obsolete ovipositors

the city underneath the green glare of the wasp risen through thick canopy on jungle's edge and everyone abandons the X'd-out eyes of the unstable god

everybody lacerating stelae friezes glyphs where histocompatible star's transplant seals the last offshore necropolis with logrolling escarpment underfoot of shattered cervical vertebrae and bloody rust-colored corn growing from the fresh sibilant mouth of a slit throat

those who hang themselves go directly to heaven, or such was the alleged system then, broken neck in delicate but tensile-strong topology of neural cordage hung from blackened IP star and then

out into the lobby, studied anonymity of cement, glass partitions, exposed pipes on the ceiling, looks like the kind of place where they pretend not to know what they're going to do after a war, open-plan offices enough to host a number of photogenic disagreements as to the precise contours and legal language in re: oil subsidies for the occupying nation and our regional allies and whether or not we're going to keep letting them set the price just because they're willing, in exchange, to keep using the dollar as their reserve currency, of course we will, what did you think the fucking point was, I thought it maybe had something to do with military bases, sure, in a small, limited, horrendously local way, the kind of excavation a stray "investigative journalist" might do in a decade or so, allowed to hunt and peck around the edges of the warzone, keystroke-logged to phospholipid parenthesis and running a finger down the delta-edged grooves where we stripped a gummy cartilaginous reflex arc from the sample-trigger star, and

maybe, maybe, he eventually comes up with the story, o the heartrending and specified narrative, of a particular man who went missing or a particular set of girls well children but mostly girls who went missing in his care or a man listed as imprisoned in a particular facility but when you go to that facility everybody swears he's not there or a man listed as free on his own recognizance but actually still in confinement or a man as-good-as-convicted of masterminding a particular suicide bombing but really and truly free on \$5 million bail put up by a dummy corporation that turned out to be a CIA front

and it's picturesque, it's "gritty," it gives opinion-column noncombatants a sense of local mud between their teeth, it's Brave, it's Harrowing, it's a surefire nominee for

the major prizes and easily parlayed into a book deal, at which point you'll be allowed to join the company of those you once feigned to despise and wallow softly in their sotto voce confidences anywhere the green room can rescan itself like artificial tissue mapped on scaffolding of first-run plastic bone)

(blue flake shatter in the throb of muted sunlight, automated faders set to creep above sore grit of trenchmouth dial-up and viridian dye casting the sleep spindles intravenous, meat-code cluster off peptide-computer star buried in glycerin sprawl of thick delta-wave sepulture, so

scenic on the coast, Wish You Were at all and wherever we presume to be, Come on Down to Sunny installation # howso think to number them and in what minor gneiss-cracked squall of semi-alphabetic jargon built up, it would seem, mostly to give the informatics class a sense of prey's adequate purchase on the jaw, something to dig into, really, sniper practice on the local mules without obvious owners, who knows, some castoff welfare scheme from the days before the invasion, a pen full of livestock per each grouping of 100 citizens or more insofar as we, I mean they, no, fine, we were able to ascertain their grouping and their citizenship status, census by then mostly a question of what you saw or didn't want to see through the weathered dirty plastic where the windows weren't, just translucent tarp between canvas top and doorframe on the trawl through the outlying lands where city names change with the genetic drift of dialect and anybody might refer to any place as any piezo-broken squabble of denominators lisping,

se llama el Obelisco, what, this whole town, no, just this right here, "rough sleepers" an inadequate category, a whole gray field not even a junkyard but the collation of the ash from any garbage still capable of burning, uneven slag and cinder-shift underfoot, the melting diesel halo of hydraulic-fracture star's autoclave dross, and then

you'd stop on something looked like I dunno a bundle of blankets a split box of uniforms for a dismantled army or one never officially decommissioned because never officially commissioned at all and realize you were walking on somebody's ankles or elbows, and the rising then, like a covey of birds' ghosts, hundreds of people appearing not from under but from inside the uneven surface of the ash and thin sterile topsoil,

quarantine rhizome as nerve-net to phytoremedial star in massifs poisoned not with outward war but with the secret research for a war never declared,

the blacksite disk permissions to a weapons-system star in crucifer hex of roads listed on only one map and that held somewhere between the rear and middle brains of the few people with reason to use them and credentials do so without getting shot blown up spike-stripped reduced to fatty globular ornamentation of a burnt-out car's black skeleton

as we saw coming up from Dallas or maybe it was Forth Worth somewhere in that awful complex of loosened sutures and surgical stapling gone off the recon array photogeological star's time-lapse graft-rejection I recall

some dim petty spiteful argument in the front seat something whose origins didn't involve me or at least didn't make my involvement very obvious and that awkward sort of perching on the edge of the last moment to which you feel a right of lexical reclamation the last thing mentioned into whose wording you might feel able to splice yourself disease slides of tape-edit star the spinal suffix waiting on unconjugated etymon of sleep

so they were waspish and sour and pissed off with each other for reasons I couldn't really understand though I guess I could guess well enough how the one goes quiet when he's confused impossible to wring an explanatory word out of them and the other she wants every explanation in her bafflement wants every move narrated line-code log chattering down the green sting of the old stratigraph screen burn lithic codicils to viral load of bootscreen star's deleted archaeology

and neither right and neither wrong and neither habitable at all what was the line soft as a goat's hip hard as something else and you can blame neither and you can't like either of them at all and wishing there were any other way to move but in time that so much of the figured or the vacant air should be consumed in this kind of fraught combustion with nothing afterward but a shaken sense in the chest frameshift glass wearing the ozone dispensation autopsy of beta-burn star cicatrized where failed satellite recall must still figure into anybody's hopelessly scabbed sense of Pleiad math

maybe remembered maybe not a few weeks' war already rewritten into ye grand Historie of the Period and nothing but the dead and those few on this or any side who still recall it as distinct epoch not to be simply elided into somebody's fucking 70-year

summary of “tensions” – there are never anything but “tensions,” and to name ongoing slaughter thus is maybe worse than to refuse it naming – OK so look for the ledge the sill the laccolith bulb blooming oncologic print-through margin of xenonucleic star reformatted for vertebrate metabolism bursting in the spinous process electrical scan of the anterior horn blown up till each bone cell is a condensed magnetic storm

and I did what I can hardly help but do, or couldn't help but do then – it's been so long since I talked at all that I don't know what would happen if I tried again, but back then, anyway, the helpless reflex was to joke, to try to say something absurd, burst into the *Sabado Gigante* accent employed earlier when navigating the edge of the barrio on our way to whatever gentrified bar, datamining the plumbing and the ventilation system on its own, thanks very much, null-character dust of a chemical-weapon star compounded toward its karyotype lesion under text

and then the drop, not even in the back room, no reason to be coy or secretive about it, who cares, who's watching, who'd know what she'd seen even if she saw it, aren't there a thousand small malicious agendas to be prosecuted here only in the failed quotient of air we're going to split between each other's mouths and some say at smaller and smaller distance if we're lucky and some are horrified by the convergence like in pinhole camera's registry of solar eclipse electrochemical star lignified and climbing up the neuroviral tracts of xylem life support

and some are out of all that or would wish to be don't care want not to care want not to want only the fake brown aging of the light the photo-treatment ladled with insupportable expense upon this carefully detailed shithole trying to look old and worn-in succeeding mostly in looking like the cheapest front available in the whole soundstage vocabulary something from a straight-to-TV Western or the 15 minutes' diegetic prologue to a porno and why not isn't that basically the point here assign any given night's value to negotiable meat then rub the bracketing together till each variable gives up its acrid wattage call it syphilis or unwanted pregnancies or sexual assault or just a cold hour in the waiting room of the public clinic where you didn't bring a cellphone and resolve to hide identifying marks)

(nothing so readymade-baroque as a microfilm canister, nor cloaks nor daggers, sahib, ni manteau mi poignard or whatever, tapeworm playback of the nitrocellulose

star inched over the heads till every aural microsecond is the warped and mangled song of a landbound whale's extinction,

seen 'em, actually, in pictures I did, 'struth, and they had four stumpy legs and even a little bit of hair around the gills, no actual gills, you understand me, manner of speaking, and in this part of the world we may take comfort from the certainty that you too will come to see them when a billionaire decides you should, land for a museum bought at such enormous city-subsidized discount that the billionaire in question will actually make back the cumulative purchase price of his art collection, to say nothing of its probable appreciation since then, though appreciation only in that one specific sense, by opening the museum, something like \$77 million given him by your elected aldermen and councilmen and mayor and so forth and you'll be allowed to go in once per month on Public School Fridays and press the button that plays whalesong behind a Plexiglas enclosure makes it sound like the varispeed record of old armaments dropped oxygen biopsy of Blitz London and light-wounds of the optical-track star a Lichtzwang coroner to beg you through the mortuary gates with one reusable token This Is Not Legal Tender Please Do Not Remove from the Museum

no value on the private exchange though wait just wait inevitable collector's market and you might even wind up selling it back to our gracious Founder either when he loses his money or he gets so incalculably rich that he can no longer even feel the sweet sting of acquisitiveness gratified, you know what I mean, after a certain point you have to start asking what the fucking difference is, what does \$40 billion buy you that \$35 billion couldn't, sure, a place on the list, a higher ranking, maybe maybe *maybe* an invitation to the after-after-after-afterparty for which you were adjudged just a little bit uncouth before, but jesus christ all-or-somewhat-less-than-almighty, is that really enough motivation for any living thing?,

well, yeah, cumta fine out, as they'd bract it around here, local chrestomathy of parasitic plants grown through stomata in the cheek, surgical fistulae for tracheotomies, a kind of metal-tangy speech, bent and constricted, so each phrase – not word, but phrase; they speak en bloc and will be baffled, unamused, and frankly hostile if you deviate from such usage – comes out like the last choked flash of tarnished copper interbred with stems of dying plants, something from the arboretum, a rich widow's plantation opened to the public on certain days for certain visiting hours and otherwise

available for hire at what you really should thank your betters are such reasonable rates for wedding receptions nuptial photoshoots corporate parties political fundraisers announcements of candidacy election-night parties though you'd want to be a little careful with the floral imagery, I'd think, want to stave off accusations of ornate Renaissance-princeling airs, the sense that you were heir to whatever and that the public mandate was a coarse formality to which you nonetheless find the public still entitled, the more so because that's absolutely true,

our bonny prince, our fleur-de-lys, our escutcheon dragged out of the woodshop where we paid a couple middle-management types to lend a kind word to the director of the Vocational Skills & Training Rehabilitation Program at the private prison in whose national corporate ownership we own considerable stock, both in the vulgar sense of shares purchased and in the sleeker one whereby we're responsible for the disbursement of public funds, some of which have gone to build that prison and to keep it running and to defend it from the, what was it, 600+ complaints of cruelty, torture, unsanitary and flagrantly illegal living conditions we've received in the past year,

and by "received" I guess I mean it only insofar as you "receive" the snow that you allow to fall on you – picturesque, catch it on your tongue, poise there on tiptoe for a nice brochure tableau – when you're underneath some kind of shelter and don't have to be touched by a damn flake if you don't decide to be: it melts on our sleeves, it melts on our tongues, we sometimes deign to come inside with it still hanging from our hair, a seasonal pleasure, what ought to be an irritation but becomes, because we've chosen to endure it, something anecdotal, scrapbook-ready, sent down quick to the chemical baths for treatment before shipping it off to the sepia plantation,

and anyway, the cash, the word, the nod, gripped shoulder, I trust you with this, words we'd have said to absolutely anyone because we're in the position of expecting our trust to be made good, and they got a couple prisoners to research our lineage and a couple more to work on the coat of arms itself, maybe elide its more disreputable valences if any there should be, traitorous Irish or Black Dutch or any of the abrogated, what would you say, regional races you'd have to recover from Mark Twain or some dim bullshit, though of course those might lend a sense of ancient strangeness and thus a kind of bad-magical preference, marked out with the true blood of the land, this young

man, a real son of the soil, true enough, in the sense of induced chemical dependencies,  
so

leave an awkward runnel or two in there, they'll give us the chance to be witty and self-deprecating about the more equivocal patches in our lineage, all of which nothing but narrative now, set pieces to run out at a length we've timed for ideal digestion, never longer or shorter within a window of about 45 seconds and you'll have to excuse me for a just a moment, I see somebody I should pretend to thank)

(smoke syncope reprints the shutdown-cinema, offline bioweapon star aimed north in script of echographic acids, seeking, it would seem, some gelid fixity of form against the heat of its own construction,

a cold entanglement where malware star slips target-locking neural tube, vermiform markup language hollowing out ribcage centrifuge, core dump peptide-computer star's amino subroutine

for crooked carbon scrawl in middle air below which lies the allegations' city, a consequence of zoning rumor, de jure and whatever fact you're prepared to arrogate, compression-artifact star fused into the blind bodylong sting of semi-metalloid prosthesis and raking opiate formulae down from whatever constellations are still visible here, should any prove so, against the butchered Pleiad reckoning we knew back east

which means "the past" from here of course, how should it be otherwise, viral load of bootscreen star in dense print-through necropolis, the tape so many times recorded and so many half-erased, lipping the edge of its own waning warmth as for some sibilance wrung from the air cracking at whatever liquid nods in the syringe, ozone pathologist for beta-burn star's runtime as a loose-bracketed matrix of confused glyph we would still scrape from the crumbling nests of paper wasps or mud-dauber's tumorous house clinging to whatever metal bones we leave exposed,

stupid as it is, as we should know it to be and don't, breached quarantine resampling chemical-weapon star in aliased autopsies of latex paint and bleached hair of stray dogs,

the street gone pale as solar midnight, some awful inverse of eclipse, too brief, really, to feel more than reflexive horror afterward, the strange sense of your own lapsed



vigilance, that it should've been worse we should've been screaming I could see the hospital orderlies too young too young they all look like children now and a couple of them were smoking cigarettes rolling empty stretchers back into the ER's rear entrance and a couple more were pacing the elderly-to-half-dead through whatever fleshed geometry slack tendon could remember strung up to the falling reference tone acoustic-weapon star strafing harmonic series as carnal arpeggio the login sting Apollo authorized to hunt you as his own arrowshaft where gluey string of heel snaps against the hard gray haft of the daylight a potassium reef paralyzing adenosine star for slow metabolism or just

entry denied you're going to need the full backlog of permissions and I mean the full thing a failed map upon a failed map ligand-gated star to reconcile with neuroviral angiograph climbing glial tissue as on scan of isotopes we slid into the softest part of your scarred-up inner elbow trackmark junction with the spent railway slow frameshift lurch radiocontrast star in progress of the MRI's drowned lightless opacity

the slow albino animals on the abyssal plane and "sight" become a function of polarities on skin of wrecked cells' galvanism the burst between depleted arcs immunocompromised star's failsafe archive rescanned to identify first point of entry not that we can do so much about it now compile compile adduce the scrapped geography jogwheel yips spin it hard as you can against the rubber rollerball in the socket underneath or inch careful as strained tape bellying delivered of his dizzy insect pregnancy across the playback heads this incubator for arachnid cell cultures only maggot fuselage of wetware star transcribing the disk regions in an arthroscopic film

when we were adding re-adding re-re-adding all atop all looking for some difference tone in overlaid transparencies I guess a workable dissonance a point of exploited tension osteocyte map of GABA star when broken heterodyne frieze-collapse should issue the high deaf whine of the carrier wave a frequency too trebly for your hearing though we sometimes pick it up as an itch deep in the inner ear a sense of disorientation like being ripped too quickly from deep water to baffled numbing daylight

pharmacogenomics of tape-bias star a bee-math schedule zeroing out nociceptor clock speed

too high up too far down whatever was recommended on the specs sent with the processor though of course they'd have been overcautious they'd have wanted to protect

themselves from any kind of legal ramification single or class action it's bad fucking news to have your name on the other side of *Maryland v.* for example want to play more than the victim more than that simplistic case of harm imputed no it's got to be a larger right noblesse oblige unspoken the sort of thing that people first articulate to themselves in the breach because it seemed so obvious in fact so impossible to sin against that it never need be said see what I mean? like you don't just kill the president until of course you do but then you don't just do it with the cameras on but then you do but then you don't just shoot the president fail to kill him to go trial spend thirty-odd years locked up in a succession of jail cells tending maximum to minimum security and then the psych wards and then the Long-Term Inpatient Care Facilities capitalize each initial so we can pretend they mean what they say and then

a special well no not even a full special an 8-minute segment during one of the half-hour newsmagazine shitshows ABC NBC CBS station break from a 1975 movie the inevitability of callsigns then had to be one or the other or the other or some sad outerborough public-access washout with the colors gone so violently wrong the whole thing looked mildly hallucinatory your deracinated budget version of a vision quest there's a sweat lodge out there friends and it's whatever you can find on the UHF dial between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. and between say Flushing and Yonkers the exterminated genera of RF-hacking star in neon splice aged out to mild halogen reverb field like coma's aura bleedthrough in the precinct of dead cults' amnesiac angel

still more forgotten though in the forgetting maybe still more active less chained to the life of the thing they subsisted upon capable of detachment call them benign parasites if you're that confident cross-scripting star alive in cytological brownout for a hundred years in the diseased skin of a tarnished copper plate and then the storm blows and you find yourself relying on or simply bellowing at whatever icon seemed to bleed from the burst stone along the cities' edges quarries no one bothered to clean up a gravel slide what looks like a junkyard for diseased statuary hosts for text-file pollen of xenotic star in viral-shedding season)

(water guzzling smoke, the grand-mal tincture of a phase-transition star's intravenous suspension, ganglionic crystallography a map of the city's compromise-points, disease vector from weaponized sky bearing down in melted grid or local

deformity of clathrate cages, glioblastoma wetware star running carcinogen drive outboard of the wrist-vein or maybe -artery where they've been practicing injecting you for however many years, don't know, impossible to say now and

what record of the time should you prefer to the fact of built-up cicatrix the scabs' accumulation the slow dosing of the vascular wall with tiny granules of steel iron tin aluminum, radioisotope star's vertebrate contact sheet cached there against the sluggish frame-rate judder of the blood, hardly able to feel panic anymore for all the indistinct way panic just assumed day's movement, heart no longer able to slow down, and if it did, you'd probably feel like you were going to pass out, penicillin scum on hardware tracking obsolete IP star along the sunspot-blackened edges of the thin civilian bands

or what's remembered on outtake, would that be the word, opposite of intake, I mean, seems fit enough, a set of stills taken onset and we had to wait however many decades it's been to release them into the public domain though not, of course, in the sense of having allowed their copyright to lapse, that's still down in the corner where it's always going to be, but daily rushes, junked excess footage, a few stock frames, the sound effects the studio conglomerate owns, that one high sharp scream and the other longer one with the rhotic edge on it, always seem to use it when a man's been set on fire, though as I remember it came first from a scene where a man has his hand crushed while he's holding a glass bottle, something like that, bloodwork sideband of the wet-gate star's encrypted lab results

and then, if that's what outtake is, and let's just say it is, time now, hurry up please, think you'd be in a rush today of all days meaning tonight of all nights because it's damn enough near midnight if it's still technically Thursday, I'm not sure, depends on what time zone you're asking about, and anyway, aren't you excited, isn't this wonderful, don't you feel cured, might've been in here for a weekend and it might've been 30 years but the point is that the State has done its duty by you and you can therefore feel edified as a taxpayer, can understand exactly where the extra 12¢ go on the bottle of soda you can't afford at the gas station, yessir I'd say if anybody is a "citizen" in the real full sense it would have to be you, you know what society's for and you know how it feels as only one so long and violently estranged from it can ever really know, like does-a-fish-know-it's-in-water, old Greek problems for the gummy pondering of men surrounded by boys who dote on the sound of their voices and are horrified of their slack

rumpled pasty bodies, tenure-track, naturally, cartridge hunting groove in the gray brain fat, genetic-cassette store in offshore peaks of integrase torch cut into the acetate demo and allowed to disintegrate after a couple of promo playbacks and long storage in a waterlogged cardboard box, so

here you go, then, standards changed, boy, shit, I've got to blow the *dust* off this one, pardon my language, records still typewritten back then, name last name first name middle, Social Security number, was he even old enough to have a draft card at the time, now I wonder about that, if you get imprisoned in a mental hospital before you're 18, do you still have to sign up for the draft?, you probably know, don't mean to batter you with questions, not tonight, I'm sure I can find it out from one of the old hands, wound index of a gamma-knife star registered in stereotactic images of specimen tissue, isolated and allowed to rotate in a medium of clear alcohol or slightly strangely orange fuel, what is that, gasoline, for fuck's sake, well I've heard they *did* use gasoline to clean clothes, way way back, this would be the '20s, I think, going to have to start saying 1920s all the time pretty soon, and you're not that old, wink wink, no really you look pretty goddamn good, all things considered, decently fed and clothed and housed for a minute now, so I hope you have no trouble regaining your previous standard of health, physical health, I mean to say, whatever exactly that was,

granuloma infrared a fragile onscreen artifact where thermal noise still haloes exobiologic star,

and here's a brown envelope, the kind with, what the fuck is it, paper-wool-dust for cushioning, here are some clothes that don't fit and would look bizarre on you now anyway, here's the key to a demolished house and the key to a junker Buick that your parents were going to sell for scrap until some local kids tried to steal it, got frustrated that, of all the cars on the block, this one was unlocked with a window down but couldn't fucking run anymore, but one of them pulled the old parking brake and it started to roll and they started laughing and guided it downhill like a bike until they made the concrete observation platform above the river, at which one point one of them decided it would make a gratifying splash when it hit the water, and it probably would've, too, had there not been about twenty feet of disused railroad and matted filthy cattails and drought-beached fish and the occasional body of a junkie or gang hit underneath, so now it's another burnout by the river, and

sure it's full of glass and soot and blood and shit and vomit, but it'll probably be somebody's house tonight and for a few more days, and when he or she dies and some improbable series of accidents conspires to get the cops out there and they send for the EMTs or just the funeral home and make evident their theatrical disgust, don't worry, it'll be somebody else's house a few days later, this is America, the place where you can live anywhere, caveat, the place where you can only ever live anywhere else)

(discharge papers cashiered the serotonin, wetware star's reuptake gauges flickering as in REM sleep to the fitful hippocampal standby-wattage,

grainy brownout hum of amps left halfway on with nothing to overhear but themselves and building, given time, to auscultation of the entire power grid, acoustic-weapon star a playback autopsy where transients trace risen arc against the blackened tomb beneath the city, its own carbonized past, what it had to burn to keep itself lit, warm, functional, at least insofar as it's been any of those, in patches and harmonic partials, overtone series off a circuit-bent star clanging where the gamma knives still lay out neon relic of past surgical disaster,

districts nobody could quite anneal, wouldn't lay flat, wouldn't expunge the last few bubbles, trapped oxygen crawling up the arachnoid sheath, decompression sickness the principle of spatial orientation and thus of any basal drone you'd want to name the fundamental or just moment's tonic taken before the next violent displacement, tectonic uproar in the spinal levels infested with ectopic nitrogen ova, failed guncotton vermicide replacing the stop codon in xenonucleic star, so that

it's copies on copies for copies in copies along the surface of the gel where the rancid city water's supposed to drain into whatever section of the river allegedly flows away from the population centers but this is a populated landmass more or less and whatever leaves here is arriving somewhere else the high bleat of simplified sine slipping backmasked over read/write heads in sibilance of disk-repair star's cytolysis bleeding a cold glassy fluid byproduct like water just on the point of freezing and reinforced with something greasy something that unravels any caught light to fray-edged rainbow spectra benzene analogues to petrochemical star lining up oblique pharmaceutical formulae in any legible section of the sky left to your appeasement and discretion

such as they remain such as you propose to practice them and anyway the switchback in the river stings the same city on the other side of the state line same name anyway though laws are different and much differently enforced up there over there street signs in Spanish and Vietnamese and the police rolling through at 10 mph rapping their nightsticks on the doors of their cruisers at the stoplights which is supposed to be intimidating and must be so for the people it's supposed to intimidate but which also gives the weird unintended impression that their cars are made of flimsy shit plastic and cheap second-run metal lab-cloned aluminum polymerase bath refuse the sideband dross of a peptide-computer star's obsolete software

imagine them bent double around their own axles imagine them burning hot enough in blistered spatter of lacquer-flat paint to keep the street warm across both time and space of a given night here between buildings where nobody but nobody was ever meant to live, blank sandstone matte in hoarding the conditions of the daylight it presumes, you get me, official civic noon in all lit hours, cached adenosine star's files corrupt and leaking a diluted saccharine voltage, but

this is what they wanted, this was the design, a place that always looks like it's ready for a press conference in re: the discovery of a body and the demotions and promotions thereupon attendant, we've looked into the matter and are prepared to convene a grand jury with special prosecutor in order to find ourselves entirely innocent, yes we'll go that far, do you feel cared for now, does it provide you with some fine thin twitch of gratification to know that we'll go to all this trouble, stage the rickety bullshit pageantry you always seem to want, real mid-century nonsense or even earlier, whistle stops and bunting and a multi-sectional platform with the trademark of its designer repeated several hundred times in white lettering, a dated "futuristic" font, call it about 1998, against the flapping background of blue dusty tarp that whips in a wind elsewhere unevidenced, I mean

I can't feel it, can you feel it, I don't feel a damn thing, but it must be blowing somewhere, mustn't it, for the stage to creak and jitter that way, maybe an effect of the height of the buildings against the width of the street against the feverish close-press of the weather here, a malarial rain-heat that crouches on your supine chest like a fucking Goya incubus if Goya ever painted incubi, could be thinking of somebody else, phase-cancelled the cell-respiration star to absent multitrack that sounds like the removal and

sanitary destruction of its own contents, not silence, not pure emptiness, whatever that would mean in a medium composed of sculpted noise, no matter how quiet, but I mean to say you can hear the fact that something was there and now isn't, a kind of iron-lung pumping, multiple exposure of a bronchial contusion on several strata of webbed spongy flesh, piezoelectric sarcomere whine in mourning for erased tape-bias star

where we lie low as we can against the street, if we're caught out in it, or otherwise will press against the corners of the buildings such as they offer anywhere to hide, though

it's obvious almost immediately, didn't you spot it, you had to see it even if you don't know what it means, but yes, but yes this whole part of down was designed from the surveillance outward, see what I mean, it was reverse-engineered from the ideal conditions for security cameras mics ambient contact condenser and cardioid the rare though increasing use of recon drones the various pressure sensors in the asphalt the walls the dead heat rising the way galvanic sting off your skin might be reprocessed for use as photogeologic evidence indicting whatever carnal map serves adequately in the place of an actual defendant,

not that they can't dredge somebody up if they really, really have to, but jesus it's a slog, why would you want this to be any more complicated than it already is, we stalled, we issued a number of statements the purpose of each of which was to provide a pretext for the issue of further statements the purpose of each of which was etc., pocketful of ashes, the distended sides of the black zero swimming so clearly skinward from the white bulbs of your facial bone, null terminator cutting in remote-execute star as from another bank of grafted mics another set of monitors unfreezing)

(swing it back to camera 1, no, camera 1, well why aren't they numbered sequentially, what the hell, a blackout somewhere down the grid or just a whole banked installation mumbling underneath reactor slag and plastic that will biodegrade faster than the half-life will elapse, operating-system star offline but radon daughters still in isotopic broadcast from the live booth back the control room where we left the talkback mics to scrape the black air for whatever gust of lithic reverb might be hiding there, the resonance of old stone underneath the superadded plaster bones of the façade and rooms elevated a foot above their own floors on a mattress of egg carbons or composite

foam, but what the hell, but I guess it doesn't matter, I'm just concerned with adequate coverage here,

total adequacy, really, is the aim, and we live not to be found in breach of contract,

and we die, if ever we're allowed to, with less freedom than even the contract's final suicidal breaching, it was written in there too, it was a subclause, maybe not the precise temporal term or spatial location but the basic outlines of the pact you made to cease being inconvenient when such cessation was of ideal moment to the signatories, all of whom are listed by whichever front or shell corporation best conceals from you whatever they most want to conceal, and that's not necessarily their names, home addresses, medical records, results of last prostate exam or dental checkup, income admitted to and actual, yearly salary on paper plus at least that much again from the speaking engagements, endorsement deals, scams they were able to cut themselves in on because of their individual and collective positions but from which they legally haven't received any money yet, though of course they have, fuck are you kidding, and anyway they operate on levels at which money is never to be spent or even lost, at which money just *moves*, acquires its own gravity and volume, has extension in the rotted air and a heavy graphite cylinder shoved down the back of the official time, biogenic in the reams of suppressed text, a decomposing glyph livid with bacterial pollen,

viral load of bootscreen star in hex-code frieze of spinal column's registered color and defunct IP address,

not that we still won't aim to connect every once in a while, still won't try the old alphanumeric login just to make sure that the system rejects it the way it's supposed to, because if it doesn't, all of a sudden, shit, we're looking at a breach, a ghost account, your old messenger spastic with froth around the lips and firing off some United Bank of Africa scam to everybody you fucked over hard enough that you haven't needed to contact them for several years, not, of course, that most or even many would be opposed to contact, since they marginally profited by being thus fucked over, they got their little cut and it seemed like the world to them and they were nouveaux riches in exactly the way you'd expect, the *façon encore plus nouveau*,

investing drabs in tech stocks because somebody whispered the three-letter parasite on a chyron crawl or lipped the colophon like the neck of a glass bottle at the



right party and under the right pretenses, sunk a million bucks a pop into some dipshit VR-headset outfit operating in, what was it, the Cayman Islands, and almost certain to get bogged down in whatever the next major disclosure of financial documents should be, not because it's any bit more fraudulent or savage than, say, the average daily business of the average national government, but because it's simply more accessible and because the people who run it, to the degree that anybody *really* runs it, are exposed, i.e. aren't needed, nothing important depends on them, dial in all useful values for *important* there, a jogwheel spree running up the virtual faders on an acid-green screen several decades out of date by now

but some of us have learned to love the petty nostalgia of any last epoch wherein we could fantasize that we more or less understood the machinery we were using, bullshit, of course, but that's never been much impediment to love, lye-fractured mesh of liquid-crystal glut where old hard glial tesserae ring dusty from the brainpans of the dead, an inland salt sea reconstructed as prosthesis to cover the cheap chrome pin connector mangled bent and sideways into the meat circuitry of biointerface star,

all optioned off, where and when it could be, and none presenting a real threat to the people who get to define what "a real threat" is, but

still I'm uneasy, still I'd like things to be just a little bit more settled, I'm not sure we really have every angle on the meeting of the larger roads at which this press-conference-cum-aborted-parade is supposed to occur, missing some rooftops here and there, missing those mirrors they put up around the corners of the police station so you could see who was waiting just around each cross-street's bend, and

I know it's a little ridiculous, I know that, for whatever reason, we seem to have exited the great age of American assassinations; the question isn't, and has never been, how somebody could shoot a president or fly a plane into a skyscraper; the question is always and only why every president doesn't get shot and every skyscraper detonated from the top down, why Bush can show his face in New Orleans or Clinton his in Haiti or Somalia and back and back and back as far as it goes, the pathogen coordinates we built into a worldwide sky enforced by deed and treaty last but first of all by actual black insects made of plastics first developed for the bones and skin of defunded space stations, how every building of ten stories plus on either coast doesn't cough up its own median halo of atomized people and metal sweat, the bioweapon star through ozone

ligand's gated exile back to karyotype latent in the difference tones of all that flashing glass)

(idle it in cold drift of the freshwater gone salt, shaken descriptive strata among glaucous bones on matted slurry of cold damp kingfisher feathers, patch-clamping the fractured earth for MRI of a file-system star's eroded cytoskeleton, in

overrecorded city of the dead, a late dub looping up gen-lossy mumble of throughput toward the padded basal hum, resonant circuitry of weapons-system star in spinal drone beneath the spectrum you can pick up save with covalent bone-surveillance, just enough access to the outer rings, benzodiazepine math added up to more or less a coefficient of addiction,

episodes of nausea and vomiting, episodes of coughing blood or standing up to see the water webbed with strings of bloody mucosal shit, dizziness so violent that you feel the world is perpetually falling forward, which is true enough, I guess, that every instant is its own missed step, a frame-rate glitch resident in whatever faculty is meant to make time flow more or less smoothly, something wrong in the cochlear whorl, airlock marrow depressurized, nitrogen bubbles hardened into gray pearls interrupting cleanroom blood, amniocentesis ripe with carbon-fixing star's black metabolic photos, and

again, just keep it here, we don't want anything premature, anything too worrisome too early, you're out on 30 years' neurochemical bail and don't want to fuck it up right away, not that you could fully ruin things nor make even the least effort to salvage them, whatever salvage would or could mean, whatever world you've been whelped into, bacterial afterbirth still trailing from the last gate where nobody met you or, worse yet, where you were met by the press and a few estranged family members who wanted publicity for whatever sad hopeless shit they were peddling, a website, a tax-reform plan, a binder full of laminated graphs in re: The Right Way to Fix Our Schools, some stringy old sun-baked refugee from a failed decade toting around his disordered thousand-page prospectus and haranguing everybody who looked like he or she might have more authority than him, which category includes almost all conceivable human beings, including quite a few children, who at least have the stability of their own

local worlds to return to, specious and easily disrupted as it might be, who wake up more or less supercertain that they're going to sleep that night in the same house,

not simple certainty because never much considered, the possibility that things could be otherwise hasn't occurred to them or, if it has, seems like a furlough, a vacation, some episode of causeless excitement nor more or less disorienting than the affectations of the day, that you're taken to another building and left in the care of strangers and picked up after a period of time which, among adults, seems to name by numeration a fairly stable quantity, call it 7 hours, so what's an hour, 60 minutes, isn't this recursive, mirror feedback whining over the quicksilver serum in which afferent nerves freeze and emulsify,

electrochemical star's text-file contagion stored on the basaltic disks that slip between annealed daylight en bloc, whatever seems just to proceed, whatever acts unthought of: you wake or really you sense first cartography of pain before waking the headache that precedes the world on which it's to be blamed circulation dysfunction or some minor survivable deformity of the cranial sutures whose only insignificant side effect will be to keep you vibrantly wounded as all time disgorges all space the actual blood of the actual stone black-glass serology of GABA star scabbed over to dispose mineral assay map

where otherwise you'd only have the clang of dry-wash synaptic spate fused into white mass of mutually embalmed piezo voltage like carboniferous strata of extinct jaws clenching myographic readout of a sample-trigger star

and then the sound thus aimed and fired, whatever it might be, probably some evenly squared-off quantum of reverb behind anything that jumps a certain decibel threshold, that we might more or less reanimate the same artificial room from a reservoir of shared backdate dreaming, an attempt made somewhere by somebody with a name and a salary and an executive-management level above him to whose decisions he has no real access except as they're decided, yes, yes, right there, you hear that, this is a hit, or no, no, it doesn't move me, I feel unmoved, we can't do anything with that or I'm not sure but I don't love it and I just think it could use a little extra *something* or hey great you're almost there just a few more touches just one what would you say signature element a hook kid a barb snare wired through accidental flesh whatever plants itself in

meat and doesn't tear it just detains a compulsory interval of attention you understand the sarcophagus architecture of the chemical-weapon star's blacksite database

in terms of damage to the cells sarcomere slackened or entirely eaten away the mordants buzzing on a membrane gone to dirty peroxide froth and poisoned blood the single throb of one discolored angiograph frieze, magnetic moments in the disk's erasure loop-returning camera feed of fluoroscopic star,

the scanner over the cold gel with which they slathered your belly or rubbed out whatever other indices disfigured your forehead against this particular decipherment, now this should only take a minute and you should hardly feel anything at all, although I'm told – maybe I shouldn't bring this up, but you seem like the kind of person who'd enjoy knowing the details, kind of person who wants as much raw color and sound and shape as possible in order to contextualize what's going on, to site and root the taxonomy of his own malfunction, sonochemistry of airframe star the boundary-layer shriek where cyclic resonance builds up inside the alkaloid sideband like turbid wattage hived too long in porous earth

well what I'm telling you, because I think you'd enjoy knowing, and let me be clear, you can stop me at any moment if I'm wrong, but here it is: some patients swear they can feel the radiation or whatever it is, swear there's a kind of buzzing in their molars or a swelling at the root of their tongues, pixel trauma of radiocontrast isotope reformatting the source-code star, maybe their hair stands up, maybe their palms start to sweat, maybe it's just that they're suddenly and strangely winded, never having moved, not like the wind was knocked out of them so much as they were estranged from *it*, displaced, waking up genome-tattooed with the same GPS coordinates in a world sleep has shifted several inches to the left)

(standing wave on voltmeter where skew matrix of sleep spindles debrides the DNA-computer star, amino dross to build up on a carrier wave ferrying encrypted signal lower than it's meant to be, so the relays still relay it, cellphone tower still machines derivative calculus of MRI star, but

the rest wheels out hard and groundbound into the city, a granular tide, undertow of the compression-artifact star's fossil record a separate gravity implicit in the back-and-forward sway of it, uneven, both in strength and in duration, too sharp

toward the land and then too weak and brief out to the sea, you remember that, mascon tumors redirect the moon's oncology, germline of seek-judder star where tracking error recorrects for aberrant cellular readouts, and

keep low, keep quiet, no too low is conspicuous and too quiet strikes the assembled crowd as something to hide, is there a crowd, I dunno, man, this place looks pretty empty, matter of fact I don't see a single person up and down the length of a boulevard that's much too wide and goes on much too long for what looks like it was meant to be a nondescript suburban district, why the hell would they, oh right, built from security specs outward, phagocyte star's videofeed as dubbed down to the CCTV tape deck where we have to erase all the records every month or so to make more space, which means that every new month is more thickly gessoed with the incompletely-canceled ghosts of the last, whichever have appeared the most times in the same place and thus deposited the densest silt of temporal shadow,

plus the odd artifacts of the recording itself, singe around the edges of the frame and a color warp up the middle where everything goes blue in a diagonal slash of irresolvable static, print-through archaeology of bioweapon star the tape's nuclear medicine, a history less parallel than consciously buried, reengineered as premature relic, euphemized posthumous against all risk of early retrieval, that someone should slide sideways through the hint of a few non-sequential serial numbers or the work orders detailing personnel from what are supposed to be private corporations to facilities at which it's been mandated that nothing but government work should take place and with full financial disclosure of the funds apportioned to etc. and with a periodical statement of intent and progress thereunto etc. and with a biannual bipartisan review of all projects undertaken and methodology therein employed because we wouldn't want anything getting out of hand here, of course not, wouldn't want the industry of certain semi-secret wars' provision to acquire its own momentum and just go acting like a separate animal, a symbiont detached or bloodborne parasite now coextensive with the blood, the same size as veins capillaries arteries it used to feed on, bleedthrough of the serotyping star's canopic disks

where we'd distill bacterial runtime down to principle of greatest harm, supposedly to figure out how to contain it, but you were there, I was there, and we both

knew roughly what tract of breached and censored memory this was supposed to apply to, what subroutine to call on the immunocompromised star:

valley of recent wreckage between edges of a bifurcated city, everything still hot and much still half-molten or only recently settled into puddles of rubber, runny metal, blood baked to a crisp ferric sheen, metalloprotein tesserae that glint like marine predators' teeth floating up through limestone, peptide-computer star resolving karst of viral scripts into the epinephrine thump against your ribcage and the tainted wash of hippocampal milk,

translate quick and give me a decent rendering, I don't need all the subtleties, I don't need to understand the idioms, boys, just a sense of the general drift, OK, fine, going to make me be explicit about it: yes, we want to know if it's religious, was Allah mentioned, was Muhammad or Mohammed or whatever, is there anything specifically Sunni or Shi'a about it, what kind of Shia, Twelver, Alawite, is that right, and what kind of Sunni, does anything say Saudi or Iraqi or winning half of the Yemeni or what, just mix it down and give me a rough master for the pocket-sized demo, acetate transfer of the somite samples, a machine-language star in bitcrushed dub I'm capable of storing in the body fats and chill cache of archived sugar,

sarin login to adenosine star grafted among the molecular stresses of latex paint, if we were serious, if we really meant to figure out what happened here rather than to decide what we find plausible, meaning useful, and thence to argue backward toward motive, opportunity, and means, of course this is A Region of Contrasts, ah yes, A Troubled Land, and no story is too farfetched and nothing is particularly unrealistic when we're in charge of deciding the criteria for realism, applying the gray-market REM grammar to the tape-code star in crude hormonal edits,

so if there's a little bit of excess endocrine sloth, as there may well be, if we're looking at the thermal remnants' bleedthrough on a final printout of the gene-computing star, don't worry too much, that can all be scrubbed away in postproduction, another name for the remainder of history, all of which may already be in the past, but we won't know for a while yet, never hear the one that gets you, right, rockets quicker than the sound they make dissecting London in what must track from overhead as squalid city silence

and you come to wonder, after all, if that's not part of our military omnipresence in the Third World, I mean narrative malleability: of course it's about raw resources and cheap labor, it's about who's enslaved by whom and for exactly what buyout parceled among the compradors, about the lost ubiquity of copper zinc molybdenum ingredients for diesel cocaine-processing requisites the cybernetics of the peak-oil star in detonating vanished species latent behind the sleek petrochemical scrim,

but it may also be about the fact that nothing is quite unbelievable outside certain geographical confines, that any story might as well be *the* story when its editors live elsewhere and have never particularly cared, save as the printed version pisses off their bosses or appeases them, so I really think this claim goes too far, and I really think that one is overmodest, and I really think you might draw explicitly those conclusions which the reader is bound to reach anyway, save him some time, finalize the disc, run the smooth sinter up the bones not yet deposited but waiting to be entered as a bank draft among numbers going hungry no matter how well they've been fed)

(dreaming of the bodies of the dead – and of those still living who you, in daily and unfeigned agony, hope will outlive you, cutting wrist shoulder chest belly neck and thigh to make good what cannot be called a prayer because it trusts in nothing it might petition to be merciful, nor even in the possibility of mercy's understanding, an abiding mind human enough to know what was meant by relenting and what the injuries could signify, only in the directionless need to believe that some harm latent in the wound-profile that is the world could be defused, disarmed, redirected in advance by taking it upon yourself willingly for all the harm done before, some unknown, misunderstood, let this hold for future ruin, let this acquire the weight and thermal signature of the violences waiting on the air, fuck, can't it remember prematurely, can't it bury in the slit skin whatever hasn't yet been born, or at least hasn't come to recognition of its birth, no shape in the broken dilation of the gases and the smoke, no liquid-crystal hex or lye sting meeting digital-artifact star as registry of gamma knives' transcription,

build sepulcher here in my own useless flesh for injuries which now, if and when they come, will already have been posthumous, entombed beneath skew granuloma symbiont, wearing the glyph of their own shape denatured, blood donor to chemosynthetic star beneath a surgery of pyramid, all architecture as the shape of

medical instrumentation arriving either epochs too early or too late, baffled and livid at the edges, a failure to knit, to mend, to take a final form against the bleedthrough, as in babies' fontanelles unclosed, as in gummy fetal bone refusing to harden and the bewilderment of the veins that can't address themselves or ferry lymph to their own rupture, disabled cell, a thymic stall to graph immunocompromised star's print-through, body compounded finally of breaches overlapping and, in the dissension of the atoms, finding some minimal and half-functional set of tensions balanced at least long enough to let us see them as sterile lightning, the eruption of the pent dry heat on a horizon which would seem to threaten rain if you were new to this place, and it may well be that you are, however long inhabited, however wretchedly repeated all the courses possible to you, because

the horror of it, though always more ancient than you could even really want to grasp, is for all that never old, is hourly cut open and flung clear, reexposed, faders up, trim knob thrown hard and far as sundown will allow, though on the opposite coast now, a feedback shriek from the peptide-computer star in programmed cytological eclipse,

the way the leukocyte whines in the crinkled metal of mirrors' backing and we'd sometimes find ourselves less and more than waiting in the red room with the other chambers of an inoperable heart open in front of and behind it, not far enough to enter and, if entered, in no condition to be saved, but present to the eye, extinction layer of the DNA-repair star embalmed in cicatrix of failed optical-code transcripts now illegible to light,

likewise tasting the frail metal on our tongues and in the nervous pricked accretion of our spit, blood-protein riling to erode vertebral patchbay of obsolete IP star, a recognition sequence black and graphite-loose on the air, not so much wide of its target as in reference to a target long gone missing, the stray stations you'd try to dial in from a locus of memory clearly more the lower body's than the brain's, whatever exactly that means, a felt topography of GABA star's depletion,

it's in the elbow's kink, it's in the rot of the wormy cartilage that was supposed to insulate my kneepans or the ball of white dead tendons like a parasite-claimed root bole between patellar bulb and, what would it be, tibia or fibula, a pin-register amputee for reconstructing dead tape-edit star,



here was the gauge, here was the heated continuity of the substrate, you could move forward if only by recognizing some heredity of trapped warmth, nothing linear and nothing in the ordered crosstree of descent, that's not the point at all though often thus mistaken and to catastrophic result, it's nowhere near so simple and authors its own sign if even recognizable as such, more likely taken for

disaster area blast radius stayaway zone quarantine perimeter of  
genotypic star's radiological dispersion or the shattered ghosts of calor circulating as they may toward a magnetism hidden in the mass of their own atrophied swarming as infestation ova chiming metastable flashbulb in chemical-weapon star's resurrected arming sequence and coordinate-system site

the city it would excavate from the city people meant to build, the mammoth protist sleeping in the uncreated wreckage, maxillary profile of rotifer star taken in grayscale microfilm and reprinted onto less and less stabilized media until we're dealing with the sound of lax analogue code seeping like stale borrowed sleep over the videocassette, cheap guitar direct into the board without a DI box or preamp and overloading shitty little boombox speakers, transcriptase star's resonant circuitry where fragile crumbling cylinders of old extruded vascular geology should still hang from the side of dirty logic board, the scraps of shit animal and human, spilled beer and leaky pipes, several dozen distinct breeds of ash, curdled sweat, sticky boozy blood gone so long and so deeply corrupt that the reek of it is mostly mineral now, the smell of metals in extremis, Gethsemane for tin and nickel, funerary urns where serocomplex star freezes to fish-scale slurry against cupric sting of voltage stored against the red light's failsafe,

the reactivation waiting for a signal that couldn't possibly have outlasted the need for that same signal, see what I mean, you lay these systems in place because you fear such circumstance as will destroy all notion of what the systems were for, what they did, how they were accessed, did they work at all, was this ever more than crackpot shit, a bad idea badly funded but still to the tune of more money than the addled author ever thought to see and thus pursued with a momentum of manic hypertrophy, a shabby-ornate architecture of redirected panic, as vaccination harnessing the cell's alleged defenses, neon operating theater routing multipath distortion through the antibody star)

(oh can't we spare some space otherwise useless to us, isn't there discretionary funding for exactly this sort of aimless shit, what sense in trying to be moderate and cautious at the evident end of empire, do you think to cancel the losses and waste of the last 500 years by disappointing one more shut-in loser who would actually grovel, who would kiss your feed outside of the cliché, sound of the furnace typecasting, molten metal slugs you might quite as well refashion into obsolete ammunition for all you're going to do with them, ploughshares and swords, right, still at it, typesetters' lines into deformed bullets quite as likely to turn the guns that try to fire them into IEDs, old piece-of-shit pawnshop revolver exploding and taking most of your right hand with it, not that you were really using it for much, respectfully, this is the point,

so far as there's a point, I know, an acid gnaw of things gone much too wrong for this particular failure to make sense on its own terms or any, lease him out a poisoned tract and wait to blame the poisoning on him when we need an alibi and wait still longer for the case to be thrown out the land "detoxified" to no particular effect the old epidemics return under more specific names birth defects and molar pregnancies and radioactive metal traces hiding in the milk of goats and mothers phytoremedial star's system failure broadcast bandwidth-wide by the antiphonal failure of the broadcast to go out at all

monitors dim matte-gray or dusty satin black or just blind glass depending on the period style the availability of materials raw and processed i.e. the state of colonial war at the moment and in the moments anticipated don't you ever worry about it the bigger corporations have their own departments for conducting this sort of analysis or rather they're capable of subcontracting the same risk-assessment firms and nebulous "geopolitical strategy initiatives" employed by the governments whom you feel you should take more seriously than the higher-salaried tiers of an electronic hardware manufacturer though really you ought to know better by now

and you'd think wouldn't you maybe you wouldn't but you might think that the employment of the same few hundred vicious opportunists by governments and allegedly non-governmental entities alike would mean a general assonance of forecasting would mean that the men who own the factories with the suicide-prevention netting in China would more or less agree on China's future with the men who own the

men who daily redirect the missiles we might really decide to launch at some point just a few fractions of a degree south so we can claim we weren't aiming for the population centers get it? so we can talk about disruption of supply chains and attempts to impede the production of materiel and tell everyone we know that of course we couldn't mean to kill several hundred thousand people in the attack proper and then several million with the fallout and the radiotoxicity and so forth and so forth because that's just not What We Do or Who We Are we're focused on humanitarian warfare charitable violence the master's sadly condign beatings handed out only the better to educate and lead subordinates let it be known let it be seen that we hurt only in order to lead you away from the worse ways you might've hurt yourself without this preliminary beating

well right that's the markup language ferried around in the meetings beforehand as waterbug outrider the translucent infant scorpions and spiders embedded in the glass partitions of the cleanroom crawling through asbestos we allegedly removed and replaced the nuclease disarmament transliterating exobiologic star for use as guidance system in a warhead still entirely theoretical wink-wink and

we could feel a little slowdown in the insulin processing in the clock speed hard drives wearing to a kind of crippled stumble where the edge of the optical disk itself keeps nicking the plastic housing painted to look like metal or maybe it actually is metal or maybe and most likely of all some metal/polymer compound assembled at virtually no cost to its patentholders and to the detriment of several hundred lungs and brains at least not necessarily twice as many of the former as of the latter working on one kidney or half a liver enormous tumor removed along with 90% of the pancreas but there should be some synthetic material capable of performing most of the same transmembrane functions filtering and sorting and so forth and the good news is that you'll have to go into hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt but only to the same people whose credit over us you were already working off I mean to say it's on sale at the company store and ever shall be so long as "ever" should apply i.e. in all contiguous worlds all versions of the ruined Earth whose linear procession from this one we'd be able to recognize beneath xerographic granuloma of the scanner-bed star building suppressed carcinogen echo or

just the more routine and more explicable dysfunction of the minor organs as you should expect with age and wear and work I hope you don't plan to retire this is perhaps

what you might call the secularization of a certain kind of religious-political language the Gospel overlay across the WPA hymns we would disabuse you now of the false knowledge that you're working toward any final reward we would in our wisdom and our mercy keep you from living with the mistaken idea that you'll ever be allowed to rest or are headed anywhere in particular only security cameras at the Big Rock Candy Mountain friends only guard dogs outside heaven and behind them tiered security such as not even the guard dogs would know how to trespass upon much less to circumvent)

(slow corpse-shadow soaking through the screens, into the floorboards, darkening the wind porch a bleary photo printed on cold gel, downclocked glycerin storm effacing hardwired scripts from disk surface of weapons-system star gone dark offline, and

the supposed assassins – those, at least, who caught the charges, ate the blame, maybe not in court, ideally not, in fact, should've been dead before it went to trial, and trials were always unlikely, a nitpicking exigency to be gotten around with as much suavity and elegance as was allowed, though never putting elegance above the fact of their elision, not now, not like this, you do it how you can and how you want to but you *get it done*, this isn't the goddamn time to sacrifice some thick tract of the future to the poise and symmetry of your schematics, that's for the higher levels, you understand, men who describe their purview as "geopolitics,"

engineering the simplistic plan-view by which the world will devour yet further the underlying Earth, such as it still obtains, if it does at all, the petrochemical star's autopsy exposed on reefs of coral swaddled with tendrils of molten plastic and semi-organic rot, benzene rings and baroque polymer sequences, chemosynthetic star in cyclic resonance till the pure architectural mileage of the aromatic chain or alkaloid substructure should distill itself from hangover of milling vermin-reverb,

photomachined, cybernetic haloes off the solar flare and spent radio frequency, fossil crystallography where glacier melt defragments gelid hard drives, core dumping file-system star with ozone scab or carbon time's reversal as a vast purgative fever of exhausted fleshy plants, the semi-willed affliction of a saint, the picturebook kind, the sort that arranges his own hagiography in advance, nothing particularly good or merciful about his sanctity, only the proper and prescribed relationship of relics to

emblems to conspicuous acts of public charity, that there were lepers shucked of their leprosy, that Lazarus was dragged out to shed and shiver differently against the cold light of a sun gone the wrong color while he was underground

or more likely in the mountainside, rough mastaba for a people without time or space in which to build a single-purpose tomb, DNA-computer star encoding ziggurat genetics loosely as a zoonotic text of transliterated glyph between the carbon-fixing semiotic of the slipping lithic layers,

pollen derivatives from hydrocracking calculi, viral load of bootscreen star in scales torn from the quarantine flesh by force of that translated light,

the way it burns now, the chill distance of it, strangest damn thing and no explanation among any of the living, well among any of the continuously-living, this is an interesting question to pose to their philosophers, I mean the invaders', the occupiers', I mean really those they've arrogated unto themselves by way of a "tradition" no less imaginary than geographic,

that's what "tradition" is, the annexation of a dead and present dream left in the earth, targeting URL stratigraphy of exobiologic star,

the momenta left in gristly neon indices around a remnant spine, how it flinched, how it recovered or only seemed to recover from the flinching, how it maintained, how it counterfeited stillness from the enormity of tension it would bring to bear against an unstill world,

how it synchronized its fitful bucking sleep to the way the whole night shuddered, looked for the colorburst and signifying pulse, the PAL code coming over the shutdown phone lines, the bandwidth 50 years gone and still present in the open granulation of black air, the grayscale pixels suffering grid-slough, what inevitably happens to the sky when it's pinned down to a coordinate system, however malleable and flexible and subject to change, atmosphere gone stippled and loose as cellulite, medical history of RF-hacking star now text for pharmacogenomics' psalm and every body-schedule for the drugs they think, or just say, will acquit you,

all of that still up there, all that ineradicable though multiply and variously eradicated, hanging on, the way we denatured the radiation to what we presumed were our own purposes and may have been the world's, the Earth's, or something else's,

reprogramming the topologic fold splice knot and severance of peptide-computer star's wide throughput spectra, runtime hissing colder than the cytoplasm that surrounds it,

threatening to burst, to buckle the container like liquid expanding as it freezes, shreds of aluminum sticking out of the punctured lining of a broken freezer

when we still have time and something much like but unequal to energy and we drag ourselves down to one or more of the illegal dumps, arrayed like diadem of the pariah dogs' carious teeth around the city, no matter how many times the, what, the mayor, the governor of the state, the provincial overseer, the MP or congressperson for this district, the colonial lieutenant, the pretender-king and whoever stands behind him, the Emperor and Empress declared in some enormous pathologic dream-fit of a France fantasizing resurrection of Napoleon waste and hardly propped up by anything more than the given word of a kingdom, or more properly an imperial seat, far away enough and allegedly strong enough that it wouldn't go declaring such things unless it had the force to back them, would it, can you imagine just spluttering that sort of judicial sentence in your sleep, Max and Charlie, la reina y Cristo el rey such as he may serve in the carcass of this likely phthisic confused manchild, a limp undersized body and a face scarcely capable of growing more than patchy hair you couldn't even call stubble, it's not kinked and taut and barbed, know what I mean, it's just like forearm hair, long and straight and thin, which

gives him a look of faint embarrassed idiocy, and I mean that in the old medical sense, Mississippi country doctor declaring ruefully that your newborn is what we in the bonesetter's profession call an idiot, from the Latin, as you might well know, backwoods and shitkicking though you be, for the little bit of Greco-Roman edification that still sometimes trickles alongside Biblethumping, even this late after the official declarations of Imperium,

yes ma'am, "idiot," same root – pronounced like *foot* with an R at the front – as "idiom," a feller who only speaketh his own tongue, whose flesh cannot abide pretensions to the language of the King)

(nor yet the tongue of Gospel carolers nor proud 'vangelists' Pentecostal barbecue, the fire you carry with you in the mouth, keeps you warm all day and fills your belly just like good red meat and helps you sleep like liquor would and in the morning

rouses you like coffee and a smoke, pep in your step all day, remember that, a low low price, I'm practically giving it away and I'm not even complaining, folks, nor am I asking for your pity, nosir no ma'am I want to give it away because my mission is to spread health wealth and happiness among the peoples of this god-blessed country beneath the light of God's own sun moon stars and rockets, yes indeed, bowel trouble?, it re-knots your guts for you, a migraine?, washed away, cleanest white, your linens reprinted, your former virgins spotless once again, made as new, as freshest dawn, Delilah, Samson's got a new luster and sheen to that wonderful head of hair and Delilah's scissors is sharper than they've ever been before but we're teaching her to put 'em to a different better purpose, cutting cloth to patterns, cutting veins open when doctors say to bleed 'em, this is where the medicine goes in and that right there on the table behind me beside the Good Book is the medicine itself, hosanna amen,

it's what you're singing at the end of a psalm, it's what the preacher preaches and it's the music that follows him home, it ain't just the words but the Word, now, understand me, people, it suffers the little children to come unto it but it sure as shootin' sure as shit don't let the little children depart sufferin',

no *ma'am*, no *sir*, pardon me, old soldier there, you look like you was maybe in one of the Great Wars we keep having, as I recall it 3 or 4 or 50 to the century dependin' on the way you like to count and then more likely on those in whom you place the trust that they'll keep trustworthy tallies, now may I ask which?, and now may as inquire as to which side?, har-har, just a little joke for you there, thought you might be a Mau-Mau or one of them Viet Cong, heard tell there was a Korean brainwasher somewhere around here with a little Fu Manchu moustache and a silver colander screwed through with electrodes, wants to clap it on your skull and read your brainwaves, what I heard, wants to see if he can't turn you into a soldier for the Dark, but

no, he can't, he won't, he never shall, he's dreamin', he's lost, he's benighted and forgotten, and rumor places him in these parts but you need never fear a rumor, surgit fama said the Latins meanin' rumors flies around, but tempus fugit said the Latins meanin' time flies right off with it, and

sic transit gloria mundi said the Latins meanin' nothin' lasts too long except the abiding peace of the Cure, the Gospel Cure, not in that particular chunk of Latin but

Lord knows it would've been if Rome were Christianized back then in them old days when they were such scholars and scientists of rumors and of time,

lo, you can see it now, look right on out, look around you at the town you think you know and look upon it as it were a Roman outpost, yessir, not quite as hard as you'd think nor quite so strange, is it?, no, you can see American as right on Roman outskirts and it don't even require so very much conjuration in the bargain, the seat of Empire's way back home, both Empires in our case, meanin' the one in London we done wrest ourself away from and the one in Jerusalem we won't never cease to need, the deep succor, the mother's breast, they call it, and the father's stern strong hand, his kind reproof, the way he glance at you awrong to let you know there's something fishy and then glance at you aright to let you know that you are his sons and daughters in whom he is well pleased, amen, now don't that just put a shine on your nickels and dimes, folks,

don't that make your belly feel calm and your eyes blink bright and your hair part right and your suits fit better and your socks sew up their own holes overnight, don't your shoes suddenly feel softer and more supple on your feet, focus on that, folks, gonna lead you in a little exercise I learnt from the East, now some might say it's unchristian but those folks is plum misguided and I feel for 'em and hope they come around to seein' the Word and the Truth and the Life, amen, which is that it ain't nothin' unchristian to look to the whole world for what gives peace and comfort and goodwill among mankind, no ma'am no sir no not at all, I reckon we need all the help we can get, amen, and what would God and Jesus put all those heathens out there for if not to be a white man's helpmeet much as Adam had his Eve,

see what I mean?, so they taught me to concentrate on the feel of the feet on the mud of the turning earth, just focus on that, brothers and sisters, fix your mind and feel how the world bears you up and how you sink down just a little soft and kind into it, because the earth was made for you and me, to carry us through times when we slump down and to be our softest bed in times when we can't hardly find a place to rest, it's grit and gravel for the long road and it's silt and sand for the night's bivouac and lo if it ain't the green fields for the pleasure of your eye,

and we'd be Romans here in the outposts, only 'stead of spreadin' the Empire, we're here spreadin' the Good News, amen, selah, I send you off to do your duty, even



this poor idiot boy here, God rest his simple muddy mind, he's got his Gospel too and it's a Gospel for the idiots, meanin' they who can speak only their own tongues, but Gospel nonetheless, don't doubt that, even the littlest, even the last, now lean down right by my ear and tell me what's John a-writin', John the Revelator)

(cold curved moan of metal bowed in washout glare off back-projection sun, the positive assertion of no-color, as of neurons firing in a comatose brain, not quite dead but with no evidence of life save the downclocking to a basal function, the massive drone of it recalled to stratified mastodon sleep, acoustic transients in vertebral storage of the breached file-system star,

the way it sounds when the transformers die in rainstorm or simple boding of dry lightning, though nothing falls, there's no storm, nothing per se is happening per se is legible in the patterned loss of the place, you'd wait out under the unconfirmed occurrences and try to track, correct for the seek judder and the bleedthrough on the old slack media, ferrous oxide and obsolete plastics, early polymer wreckage synthesized by offline peptide-computer star, the interferon buffer up from midbrain past what firewalls we'd erect

in form of forecast or taxonomy of airburst, confusing finally the guns with the weather until we might come to recognize erosion of the distances between them, that this was earth turned to an instrument of violence and all such instrumentation upraised powers of the earth, as mastaba broken from the bones of the small dry hills where you could sometimes still find evidence of old eroded burial, ziggurat, then, from the simple blunt machining of mastaba, and on, however it should move, out of the delta to the sea and west to blindness, final blindness

of the transatlantic and the nothing-to-be-retained thereafter, an active and intentional abortion of the memory, who would you blame, what else ask, necropolis of weapons-system star in the black sterile soil of inland airlock cauterizing all the bones' parenthesis of salt sea

such as was even recalled, the microfiche in the infestation of the cells, the multiplicand damage of the disk-repair star copying what could still be copied from small translucent structures of key and lock and piston and cylinder and myosin and actin and the lacquer worn off neural gap or baseband login spilling out of axon-

terminal star where we'd insert ruined machinery into all obvious input jacks, whatever seemed to be waiting, to have had this vigil programmed long ago into its physical structure,

the matter all like oil congealed, and because much of it was, no clearer and no sharper, spectrograph of petrochemical star strung out to detuned sarcomere rainbow

and the edges of each colorband to set up histologic dissonance such as might distill the few fibers of striate muscle or reflex enough to engineer the jolt through a restive wing ready as not to panic itself across the cold reach of the middle day lit bright as it seems noon should be but with no affect in the chill and vacant light, no sense of any biofeedback operant between the sun and Earth,

at which point it's no longer the sun – the *sun* is something definite, has stood in certain places which we'll later come to number or to name; the *sun* accrues such litany of function and no meanness in thus nominating it, nothing but keystone to the arch in the jaw or the old synapsid severance in archives of pale calcium where gamma-knife star transplants syncline grammar to the mud of bypassed clades –

but only self-surveillance, eavesdrop autosurgery of exobiologic star,

and we too, if we were anything moving, if we meant to do anything at all, would have to reconstruct a baffled almanac of medical techniques, infer the purposes of instrumentation from the way it looked and the certain cast of blood left on its hooks and valves and gauges, what filmy overlay what bleaching undertone of lymph what glare from anthracite or scarcely-annealed laminating granite and the spent basaltic program-cache where electrochemical star deposits untracked lurches and firings of the back brain,

much as once before, as infinitely many times before, well not infinitely, well close to it as you dare augur, it's always going further back, there will always be more evidence of this and this and this, and this is the Earth understood as a crime scene, and “ourselves,” a cheap worn name for what ought never to be subsumed under such a vacuously predatory nome, as the forensic leavings, graveside dross deposited in thought of Dead Lands token or Styx penny or just the emblem of the need to do though all done must be useless, to take the marrow-buzz of mourning back past sites thereto consecrated, that it shouldn't just be lost, shouldn't fade over the fading of the day,

long since automated now, you check your protocols and see where they've built in the headroom the volume floor the little notches in the EQ profile to expunge excessive midrange as will tend to jab the speaker cones too boxy plus such high sibilance from tweeter up around 10 or 15 kHz that it comes as the harmonic-series vivisection of a wetware star, phoneme-damage violently debriding, and

we'd like not to have too much of that if it's at all possible, we'd understand if it were impossible but we think we hope it isn't it can be done it's within our reach and

this is how, I guess, history now moves, though I suspect that the name "history" is wrong as any name could be, in that it artificially scarfs the joints of this with what preceded it, will allow us to pretend that we're talking about a hopeless project uninterrupted since Herodotus, maybe Thucydides if you're finical, and that's not at all true and hasn't been for hundreds of years but

particularly not for the last what would you say 70 or so a little more a little less in any of the directions as you elect them and not simply forward and back no there's dimension to it now rueful extent you can hear the worms boring through gneiss and the piezo quartz come to an ornate fracture-map of unfledged dental shatter viral load of bootscreen star a glyph-text sintered from the missing heat's deep artifacts where each stains the underside of a permanently fouled touchscreen like either cancer's offing or the unborn dead in the womb of a dead mother and thus always to be something still much stranger than "unborn")

(hard pile of fused ferrotype scabs or oncologic star's aniline filmstrip as a microdot autopsy when we're straggling through the disused storage media in a basement that smells like the dust of an embalmed epoch, machine heat and scorched dirt treated with chemicals and stained with paints no longer in use, lead sweating from the walls and a mild natural-gas high dizzying the waver of the stratified air like vertical hold lost across the grid and sync pulse fading to the dulled spinal insistence at root of decommissioned operating-system star,

the granulate night and the old magnetic footage still to be wrung from it in the improbable instance that you've got the right sort of receiver and even know what it is you mean to look for or would have the strange unwonted wit to know that you'd found it whether you were looking or not, see, hard-fade grayscale remainders of the

macrophage star's CCTV backup, cellular security-cam wrung out for the pedal tone that more or less persists through 40, 50, 60 years' focus on the same few spots the same few angles the sweep of the dirt toward the annex even older than this one and doors unopened less for fear of what's behind them than for fear of what the mind might do confronted with that much more *world*, the fact of overload still unappeasable, multipath distortion seeping through the failed surgical indices where optical-printer star needed to splice intractable mascon filmstock, graft rejected, safety celluloid gone up with spark at end of transplant guncotton's long fuse, like

everything filmed on the old nitrocellulose composes the million-mile wick coiling like the umbilical cord of a dead mother rat embalmed and ammonia-soaked with her unborn children still inside her, all trailing back to the whole time and space therein more than contained, because nor film nor tape nor script nor any other kind of writing just *records*, simply reproduces contents already to have been found in the day or in the day's tearing away; they mutate; they transform; there is a vast and unintended alchemy, and there's the trapped air attaining a sort of stilled exit velocity against the fact of its world's obsolescence, hanging in the artifacts of redshift, codec error's print-through star in the accretion disc around the hookworm fistulae

or skull-frequency disturbance on the air when tape-code star plays back to no receiver capable of deciphering its transmission, so

you just set your teeth on edge your sinuses contracting or expanded sore and tender when the atmosphere opens up after a wrenching shift of barometric pressure like last night it threatened rain all through the dark starless but nowhere near Bible black rather starless for the blank-cinema sweat upon the air a layer of asbestos interposed and now today nothing but blue height aching asthma scoured the wound profile we sometimes thought to what end will transcribe from the harmed ozone and a contact sheet of beta-burn star transferrable mostly to the backbone's eyed account

where it does develop does milk the blind proofs from the black negatives the surface burned away to be returned as the annihilating light, bones of whole cities present in the glare though only as the atom's present in the screaming outward speed of its own fission, what held together given back with the heat it had to harness for that seeming stability, remember, white-phosphorus star's loop-return in shriek of Gaza architects' erasure

meaning nobody, or very few, with drafting boards and accredited degrees, the fuck did you think you are, implicit who or inferential where, the most overcrowded place on the face of the Earth, so think about footage you've seen of Nigeria or India and then think someplace still more vastly populous than that, however many millions at the absolute last surface-tension blooming of the transmembrane domain enforced by American artillery and an international compact of surveillance technology, how long till drone strikes now, or rather how long till somebody admits to them, yes we thought there were Philistines on the top floor of the building we eradicated but it turned out only to have been the nervous fidgeting children of the Philistines and the juries both civil and religious are still out on the exact degree to which these children can be held legally and morally responsible for their parents' Philistinism, as you may well know, perhaps you have your own extremely-highly-developed opinions on this subject, perhaps this is the kind of argument that gets your whole family screaming, and maybe not at each other, maybe in accord, the rich settled hum of righteous indignation shared by those you suddenly come to admire on the order of the instant for the way they're just as mad as you at things neither of you fucking understand,

donate a golf cart to the IDF and be done with it, for God's sake or more properly for the sake of those whom God clearly either can't help or won't help or doesn't even know how to save,

just the endless sinking squalid compression of cardboard structures fouled in place so they slowly congeal over hot reeking months that likewise find a certain gelatinous density in the center of your chest, always trying to cough up somebody else's phlegm, a bronchial complaint inherited from the place itself, the way the sun comes through so unprotected here, full-spectrum radiation strong enough that you often dimly feel you can stare not just at but right through the bones of the millions rarely passing, mostly keeping to their quarters for what they know about reprisal and the physics of its counterfeiting, the offended sensibilities of that Meister no longer auf Deutschland, signal-clip the frame rate of cell-respiration star till you can seem to breathe through brown technologized smoke long enough at least that you won't know you're dead until you see meek shaky handheld footage on a specialty satellite station broadcast only from midnight to 6 a.m. and only on the nights they have the cash or time or dread to feed the generator diesel)

(stereo-paired cells' terminal flare reloads the bootscreen star in eye-fused lines  
of viral-shedding script wrung from acoustic-glitch transduction of the light

as in gray median whine coming through the limbic gate with donor metals  
shearing off the molecule's edge or autophagous login to the serocomplex star a  
sequence of potassium firmware torn from the belly of the reef and bearing signature of  
bone not simply dead but long extinct

the wrench the twist the mourning of it still imprinted deep as any text may sleep  
in undertow of spent chemical trauma and its indices were any to be read any seen any  
heard on frequencies apart from those of dream-infection the virologic tide creeping up  
the preamp when nobody's monitoring because everything's been set up automated not  
quite algorithmic yet an earlier year and a later season in that year we weren't so  
dependent then on proprietary mathematics leased on terms we couldn't possibly have  
understand nor will see with anything resembling clarity when finally the loan's called in  
and everyone turns out to have a significant stake in the unpaid interest

you may hope and how should I presume to stop you that at least the severance  
the punishment the myoclonic spasm or disk-controller dystonia of a remote-execute  
star will render some legible verdict make clear the nature of infraction as of crimes'  
names tattooed inkless in your own blood on your back you know that story but

it won't come so easily nor so quickly nor very probably at all

we'll all go down having known nothing understood nothing incapable of milking  
any further ounce of comprehension no matter how often we reread the terms of the  
initial agreement which is to be considered void under the follow specific conditions  
which conditions are likewise to be considered void if any one of several of the following  
circumstances obtain which circumstances failing to obtain will then legally constitute  
the vacation of certain foregoing clauses which clauses if ever specified such that you  
could really agree to them or withhold your agreement will have been so boilerplate and  
Latin-anonymous that their passage overhead will hardly disturb the falsely even tenor  
of the air nor incite the air-raid siren past its monthly testing first Wednesday around  
noon remember remember and the pattern gone out on all stations just to make sure  
your set still functions as envisioned by its programmers at least in part this is just the  
early-warning grid put through its paces now that we're recalling the late war this is only

tape-backup necropolis of weapons-system star exhumed

that newer plagues not overtake their predecessors too quickly that you not be so easily exempted from the dreamsickness of those who still wander around less dazed than they ought to be but more than they'll ever admit feeling hamfisted and a little bit beset by vertigo with credit cards fragile and easily chipped with each pocket disgorging like intestines to embalmers' hook a roll of flimsy stained cash-register paper on which have been written for the perusal of anybody who looks through enough trash every single PIN number SSN DOB driver's license phosphorylate pin register to radiation-footage bleeding from the router star

date of last prostate exam phone to the GP if you're so lucky as to have one phone to the dentist phone to the therapist phone to the shrink a comprehensive pharmacological history well not *that* comprehensive you understand there are certain necessary retentions it doesn't do to let yourself be made too malleable play it all a little cagey because if you're still unable to do anything but live in cages you might as well reproduce the cage inwardly and on your own terms borrow its image on unstable storage media cheap "hologram" card came with the packaging a promotional USB drive given away with the novelty liquor they're bringing around on trays 5 times nightly i.e. every two hours between 6 p.m. and 2 a.m. though we shut down at 2 so you'd better make it more like 1:30

optical-printer star in reconstructive surgery or reverse engineering the ideal medical subject which is not exclusively to say "victim" though I'll be damned if you in the event that it's you and it always is will know the difference

wind that seems specious as unjustified by any prevailing weather day that seems to have arrived too soon after a night that never actually came only a temporal synonym with a period of blankness you thought you wanted thought you asked for propitiated with a series of drugs over-the-counter and prescribed alike these were rites of ingratiation this was osseous algebra of ziggurat's cliff logging into pharmacogenomic star

or so it seemed at the time so we wanted it to be and in our wanting convinced ourselves it had to be and isn't that too a definition of "civilization" or "society" if you like: the wants weaponized into need by mass hallucination of sufficient human terror

sure that'll do you but

then it came too quick all of a sudden eyes closed for 15 solid minutes half-dreaming before you realized you were neither quite asleep nor quite awake and language from somewhere else motile in you but in no way yours the benign contagion blood-brain availability of exobiologic star the blackout chemosynthesis of text

and then some sudden shake or flinch in the back muscles or the way I for one will tend to frighten myself awake with a series of spasms that seem normal in the moment but are inexplicable in retrospect I'm lying there or more often half-lying propped up legs out flat back elevated maybe I don't know 40 degrees and head near 90 and then there's some kind of misdirected electrical torsion through a moment's-advent plexus in my stomach back and hipbones and my legs fly up off the floor the couch the park bench the resinous what is it rubber-plastic coating on the metal grille of the seats in front of the canceled public school where I was sleeping or pretending that I might be able to sleep in hope enough that the world too would get delirious with my pretense and convince itself of same until sleep came back as a pattern of unscheduled missile launches or still worse as launches scheduled without any real suspicion that they'd ever occur)

(hardwired to the timestamp and/or gristle flecked with black fresh blood pushing its way up through the cracked glass facings of the gauges damp with body-steam

voltage spike resetting wetware star to wrecked parameters of analogue flux metered out by battery acid gnawing constellations of polypary mouths through cheap tin casing and

the schedule was ascertained at the most enormous expense and by the most enormously qualified the schedule should be venerated as an artifact of our greatest expertise the schedule will somebody be understood in the tradition of the pyramids at Giza and the Hanging Gardens and the Rhodos Kolossos it would've been said remember the time just getting our first English versions of Homer that didn't try to Roman up the Greek names

the schedule is our testament the schedule possesses no manifests no is the incarnation of a transcendent historic value



see this hear this oyez oyez the schedule ought be praised and damn near worshipped even if it conclusively fails *perhaps especially if it conclusively fails* the schedule is too pure for this world the schedule is the talisman of a perfection to which humans must ever aspire and in which aspiring they must ever be disappointed

the schedule is what we are insofar as we have been anything and what we ought to be insofar as we may even lift our eyes to something greater – by whom denominated greater I mean greater by what criteria or are you just talking and letting the momenta of hot meat-jarred air propel you as I suspect the reddish-gray crude effluent of the canopic jars serotyping the hydraulic-fracture star for the phage therapy of extinct mutations' ghosts –

than the ruck the mud the fact of being fed the Army surplus tents in olive drab or dun across the semi-clearing in the jungle wasn't there yesterday and very well may be gone by tomorrow all the edges are exactly as burned as you'd imagine carbon reek of vegetation not yet conclusively murdered and the molecular formulae live on the air in recompense for missing seventh Pleiad see the graphs of the enantiomer structure up where undeveloped negative of white-phosphorus star distributes radiation spectra in a probability scatter-plot of the city become weapons-contagious

but for now at least and for all such *then* as now may seem persuasive enough to determine there is this clearing and the wooden boxes painted basically the same colors as the tents and the hot metal and cold medicine inside them and the syringes not yet individually wrapped and the useless gasmasks left over from at least two wars ago and that's only counting the wars we admitted to I mean what else between now and then Italy how many of you know we fought a war in Italy from 1946 to ???

then Guatemala beginnings of Chile beginnings of Argentina Brazil certainly probably beginnings of El Salvador um does this read too much like a list which will eventually name every nation in Central and South America and why precisely do you think that might be true coffee and bananas before your morning walk sahib or just a reliable source of copper and a mine where the overseers aren't afraid to practice such tough love as American labor policy after the Pinkertons must frown upon officially

though get outside the office and the frown takes on a different set of implications looks dare I say a little bit wistful kind of I dunno stop me if you've heard this one kind of German? just a little bit? like frustrated-romantic like plans too big for this world like

lying on your back on the morbid autumn hillside during Wandervogel and masturbating meaningfully to whatever you've convinced yourself is the Authentic Greek Rhythm of Hölderlin attributing it of course to racial characteristics

yes the ancient continuity of the German with the Greek although only of course the healthy German and as for Rome we're not going to fuck around and get ourselves blamed for Catullus or Seneca although certain of the upper echelon may be discovered rather to enjoy Seneca in their private time a bloodlust prefigured for what should be conditions of maximum significance and if that's not political pragmatism I don't know what is I mean is politics much else than the question of how to stage a slaughter for the greatest effect

but these are men whose minds we shouldn't think to understand much less to undercut have some piety and humility about you these are men who can afford to enjoy things that might vitiate or poison or even debilitate us precisely because they *are* so healthy they have a license at all times and in all places to take pleasure in the most florid and evidently decadent manifestations of sickness think of it like a physician who in the name of sanitation feels a certain delight in identifying a new cancerous etiology or perhaps a new fungal infection in the anal fissures of certain subjects many of them still living subject to a law of disease we don't yet understand or at least feign not to get

oh yes the doctor does enjoy himself and wouldn't you? hadn't Treves his right to Merrick Joseph or James or John as you like it? isn't that a kind of thrill to know yourself right on the point of making a discovery that will finally and for all time distinguish this disease from that one probably with your name attached in perpetuity probably to list yourself with Galen and Hippocrates or pop stars' Christian names force-grafted onto recently-identified exoplanets and

if the cure should never come and the structural or functional or etiological distinction happen to have been rather overemphasized and constructed on questionable taxonomical grounds or thrown away entirely with the misunderstood mechanism of one sickness now classed as the subset of another well don't worry we'll be back this program is contractually obligated to run in all 4 seasons)

("in *The Spring and Autumn*, there are no just wars," but

wire cutters to the lag-spike star where gray videofeed heat seeps from the stayaway zone, exclusion protocol in onscreen display and ratcheted back to blackness at an uncertain refresh rate still more awkward on the monitors displaying other monitors, the cameras feeding into cameras in the empty rooms with sandbagged walls and a substitute for asbestos insulation which will no doubt be found, given time, to cause another and a more rarefied cancer, closer to the losses of the ozone dispensation, loop-send of the oncologic star

in sidechain atlas where you'd mark down close as possible the geography of what lies out until it snaps all the way on, silent but for the added coefficient of basal hum, a gritty buzz as from dirty volume pots, knob rolled off halfway and trim control in audible dissection of the trapped air, piece by piece by hertz by pixel by

compression-artifact star rendering touchscreen fibrous with deposits of calcium and storage-fat, the lipid content of the untranslated languages, whatever still waits in the deeper incursions of sugar and dehydrated salt, rotifer populace compacted into edge of vicious moonlight, exobiologic star's software-contagion crawling slow as lithic strata each condensed to one layer of old diskette unreadable on all the new machinery

and so we'd pack it out we'd box it up we'd remand it as under some justly harshly but puzzling sentence to one of the offsite facilities where men and women likewise obsolete in keeping with their quarry will have to slough and mumble through a life of seeing to what no longer needs seeing to of walking the dead tending the wounds that survive them changing bandages on mummies grafting little trackpad polygons of artificial skin back onto leper-flesh gone stale enough to creep away from the exhibition-bier

which we've set up in the corner as it just as is right as is traditional never more than you'd know nor ever less than you'd know it and it's a question of spatial orientation at first with a definite object in play as lancing geosynchronous satellite with photomultiplied tip of a syringe back before they were packaged individually in vacuum-sealed plastic and you were basically taking someone or other's word for it that they hadn't been used or if they had that they'd at least been cleaned whatever "cleaning" meant at the time half an hour's soak in a flask of rubbing alcohol the rancid sperm looping lightward in formaldehyde suspension as may well have been titrating chemical-weapon star with histologic acids in the autoclave's inert preservative summer

as detoxified burnt off flung clear scared clean with excess output from peptide-computer star's overloaded protein sequencers the numb stammer like tape-code with nothing to hear nothing to see not even a change in the light but

nonetheless some small and definitely noticeable alteration of the air a kind of gap a small concussion the sound of a 40-year-old drum machine like maybe you'd have wrenched it off the side of a cheap home organ a Lowry or whatever the other kind was you know saw them all over the American South must've been a big run at one point little old women who took piano lessons at the church when they were children if ever you can consider a white Southerner a "child" per se if childhood as a species may descend upon those so ghost-poisoned long before they understand the least drop of their sharp liquid inheritance and doing everything they can once they're adults to keep on uncomprehending since it's not as though all that play-acted anguish of obligation to the dead can make up the least fucking bit for you know not having been slaves

or for having owned them

or for having abetted their ownership in everything you do quite without regard to any houseproud outward-and-manifest Christian charity declaring that you find it simply awful you do that anybody should be a slaveowner in this our American republic shining city on the hill though that was Winthrop if I do recall correctly and he a Yankee and therefore to be distrusted for his leanings toward exactly the some kind of conspicuous public moralizing in which you now engage to your vast felt personal profit like a rich reinforcement of the body's starches and unused hydrocarbon architecture the attack-vector sacred geometry weaponized for access to adenosine star's sepulcher of code

now now not in those words those were as spoken by the North and who should be so guileless as to take in all good faith their intentions behind ostensible goodness and cleanliness and godliness and which is next to which runs hard clear against here the first the primary which of course is what we are

protagonists as ever and in the sense if the unspoken and unfelt sense of "those who precipitate the agony" proto + agon as in useless fleshed demand for the electron-gun star's preclinical medicine the backscatter of the future's latent autopsy

already in the trees you know to stay away from in the muddy dispensation of the places that do grow and cover up in the springtime a kind of paradoxical modesty which

our own young debutantes would do well to emulate you see you attract attention by seeming to deter it you make yourself ornately inaccessible and thus compel the audience's mind to consider questions of access and all this not because it's good for you or good at all for anyone in any sense of "good" that can't be translated directly into bank drafts and the question of interest as accrued over a period not to exceed let's say 250 years plus estate tax inheritance tax and the senators with whom we'll need to have a word and more to the point the "strategists" the vacuous and vaguely-defined functionaries the men essentially who sit around bullshitting over brandy and cigars and expensive food in hotel restaurants and then expensive food like slum drive-thrus after a night getting kicked out of the most expensive what would you call them houses of prostitution bordellos that all seems too picturesque and down-homey don't it though the Southerner among them brought in for the utter disregard which he directs toward Ivy League lexical shibboleths

though he of course has a fucking Ivy League degree too none of them would be there if he didn't

but the Southerner you know he don't take to the politically-correct neologisms that just plain don't damn interest him at all and

it's felt it's presumed it's hoped that his entirely theatrical insouciance may give us access to a portion of the electorate heretofore denied us so we keep him around to say rootsy tangy bullshit like Hell, boss, that just ain't gonna play like Damn thing stinks like a polecat like Damn shame, too, 'cause I liked the way that boy could sit a horse and

he says "cathouses" insists that all his confreres say the same even while rifling through their wallets for the credit cards that won't put a government name to the charges when they slip through the magnetic reader on the "madam's" sham-ebony desk)

(in scare-quotes too you see – or you don't see – because she's an actress also maybe paid a little bit more than the other actresses or maybe a bit less depending on exactly the sort of "free-market forces" in the defense of which her nightly clientele have you mightily striven lay yourself down ser knight thou hast fought the good battle thou hast done the doughty deed deservest now thy rest and recompense deservest earthly

foretaste of the rewards which all Crusaders reap beyond Empyrean a little bit too Latinate I guess for the occasion and

more likely what should've been the long vigil by the hump of bloody linen in the corner the fouled tourniquets wound partly around the bier behind the curtain along the long wall of a windowless room made from ashlar scarcely cut or dressed raw blocks of stone sticking out into the air at minutely different angles with the change in the air pressure and the way the weather warps the mortar and the grout all the connective tissue of a miniaturized city swollen to bursting or contracted down to a bone-substitute as stormlight will re-engineer as ossuary modem-star indexed the graft-rejections and

the bed should be the centerpiece I guess if we were strictly following old protocol but it now looks like a pile of dirty furs and napped patchy velvet with an old spindly man neither asleep nor awake nightmares with his eyes open and rheumy milk-thick tears without even the force behind them to send them running off his eyeball a dead orbit and the vitreous humor back of it living up to that name blind cankered glass shoved in the socket till we can find a more adequate prosthesis the in-vitro bioassay of the DNA-repair star's mass abortion

or just euthanized for offprint as decayed extinction layer several generations' loss to the bad and displaying if it's ever called from microfilm machine or jeweler's loupe up to the big screen the one the size of the wall that isn't there as a semi-readable field of strictly visual events nothing meant nothing signified hard even to distill a statistical distribution from this mess though of course that won't stop the statisticians who've been bent on it since long before they were ever given a particular assignment and aren't going to let you down now even when confronted with what looks like the standard deviation the minimum expected glitch the recon mapping of a GABA star depleted down to fluoroscopic shrapnel and old MRI exposures ripped from accidental routing through the nearest cellphone tower

but there he is still nonetheless old man bleeding gouts of pus and lymph from the huge bulbous sores on his inner thighs blood that comes out streaked green and yellow and past him in the corner a kind of miniature necropolis a single-occupancy crypt meaning the corpse of what he takes to be his god now shriveled black kept away from the rodents and the insects and the worms for as long as he could stay there watching and some may well have settled in his own sores like the legend of the stylite

saint though who at this point could believe it right away wouldn't want to see the mangled boulder on the pediment of his fallen column check what viral load announces bootscreen star's acidic reset-angelus

the interbreeding strains the vermin-splice the protist translucent on the slide and major populations of prokaryote and unicellular animals setting up their helpless unprotected cities in your own cuts scrapes helpless gouges debridement of file-system star by extinct bacteria in phylum-length rescanning but

that's all implicit stagecraft here all direction we wouldn't actually want to say out loud and anyway the whole point of the place is to anticipate such men's gross and predictable desires to make them feel catered to in advance of the carnal need thus met see what I mean as though they were so very hard to clock as though they didn't make it all pretty fucking clear in advance

it has been theorized that "society" is now and for the last 6,000 years or so has been a conspiracy to buy and sell women; that the incest taboo is therefore not a question of abstract sin or of the production of unviable children – were that the case, we'd probably have been a little bit more careful with nuclear weapons tests, enormities of waste that will outlive all animals cognizant enough to lend the waste a name from the linguistic heat which fear first engineers, the thermal remnants piled up in a print-through root of breached phytoremedial star – but a question of *resource hoarding*, that it's unfair to fuck your own female children because you're keeping them from being fucked by somebody else and are therefore endangering the Fabric of Society, which, again, exists only to buy and sell women, and by dint of such purchase and sale, and so

the madam gets a little extra to wear an eyepatch or exhibit an interesting scar or smoke a clove cigarette wrapped in black perfumed paper and screwed into the end of a 6" jade cigarette holder even though she hates the fucking things give her a headache make her feel a little nauseous but that's hey that's what the bonus is for and she has to learn a whole ensemble of vague accents never specific enough to give her clients flashbacks you know what I mean just Central European OK Eastern European OK South American but definitely more Spanish than native OK Central American and lean hard into the native shit they're in a Cold War mood again conquistador retrenchment withers black against the moon)

## in regnum lazari

(congealed air sliding greasy down the slope of a concrete pyramid in the last Cold War capital, because the capital of the country that allegedly won the Cold War, and thus

a balance of theorized temperatures borrowing what you will from remnants still poised sometimes to shake loose the hoarded frequency, dull roar at the base of spine too young yet for the ears' reception, felt only in first lineate plexus, text-file zoonotics of the bootscreen star in pollen hydrocracked from viral calculus,

the graph burst the arms resuscitated the grand and specious resurrection of whole worldwide states of alert less than mothballed consigned not to a deeper but to a flimsier annex of what you'd call "memory" only faute de mieux in the name of a recollection nowhere present

no crawl through the marsh no paper bulbs nodding with groundwater infestation of the opiate formulae as when we raised the water table during one or another self-proclaimed Reconstruction epoch were you waiting then and are you waiting now the way you watch the enantiomer limbs of peptide-computer star's contagious print-through slipping just beneath the surface-tension skin of motile water

as, later though not much later, neon half-borne by the billow of the fog, gamma-knife star's syncline geosurgery converted to extinction-layer negative, cyanotype abortions in the rasp of the loosed gases from which any and all of us would declare the maximum possible distance it's not and couldn't be my fault what orders should I have given or refused how could I possibly know enough or little enough to be responsible in this instance wasn't I just hanging back like the rest waiting for the tactile creak of the halogen upload the dehydrated code-transfer of a MIDI star in reams of teleprinter sugars



still potential phosphate autocue abandoned or condemned to offsite storage of adenosine star likewise gone to white fern-tendrill fracture map at every seam and edge of the stacked spine or

automated sugar upload to xenonucleic star's vertebrate sequence when there's still a chance a hopeless chance to be sure but a chance nonetheless for deep-mud rearrangement of the cellular potentials of the cytoskeletal retrieval and the plasma not yet wrung for 50 bucks a pop though no more than once a month though

there are half a dozen "plasma donation centers" in town here and don't you ever forget it, each of which will make you sign the form whereby you swear that you have no infectious or bloodborne diseases, that you're ha-ha normative like who the fuck do they think their clientele is, exactly, who would be "normative" and come in to collect two twenties and a ten for the privilege of opening his scab-worn inner elbow to the needles they may or may not have used already, individually-wrapped now, like I was saying, but there are shortages, there are problems with the wholesalers, there's some ornate and historied bitchery with the medical-supply firm with whom we used to run our contracts and a whole new set of fuckups between us and the cut-rate outfit we'd been patronizing for, what, I guess 6 months or so, probably more like 8, what month is, jesus christ, is it really almost November, OK, so let's put it closer to 11 months, better to get this story straight before the class-action comes calling, though

if you're waiting on the action of a class like this, you'll probably be waiting for a while, more likely a DOJ or HHS sweep or maybe it'll come under Housing and Urban Development or maybe, and this is the hope, under a government narrowly and meaninglessly saved from "outright fascism" only by its incompetence in acting outright fascist, nobody will come calling at all, no knocks on the door, that's antiquated anyway, no subpoenas, no unknown numbers coming through the small screen on the casing of the flip phone, yes, we still use those, and yes, we like to pretend it's a departmental or corporation-wide policy, and no, it isn't, although it could be, no, we're just either too poor or too cheap to use anything else, ask us individually sometime as to which is which, but yes, poverty and skinflint shit alike, they *are* harder to trace now, and

this is a serious advantage to obsolescence, that the countertech, all the machinery designed to undo these machines, is likewise obsolete, so mount disease slide of the weapons-system star offline and try to reckon some re-armed mantissa's payload

from the cytopathologic prints emergent where the contact sheet coughs runny from a  
blear spray of dot matrix, or

biopsy the radio-ambient bones of a dead operating-system star as they  
recolonize more vacuous software, climb the glial tissue, wait inside the bulbs of strictly  
functional flesh, no purpose but to buffer, no term of use but buffering's and thus that of  
the body to be saved a few rudimentary shocks, or, more accurately, of its faculty of such  
desires, that it should want to be saved for so long and no longer, that it should  
periodically expose itself in specious orgiastic raptures, decide it's missing something  
and decide to tour the warzone like a senator does, meaning

and only meaning

of course a ferried sightseeing jaunt around the best-secured edges of the green  
zone, fuck did you think we were really going to risk here, see it from overhead as in the  
depth-surveillance of the recon drones, looking first for surface return and then for the  
archaeologies of the ground-penetrating radar, bioweapon star's installed sarcophagi

and then the variously baffled encryption of their serial reinstallation, as dug up  
every so often in bewilderment or terror or the bureaucratic additives to caution, this  
keeps the flavor from fading, this keeps the color bright as you could expect any color to  
be kept across, what is it now, at least 14 years of freeze-drying – and that's only the 14  
admitted, the 14 we've actually been telling the newspapers that there are troops on the  
ground; they've been engineering this war since fuckin' 1979, and if its objects weren't  
precisely known, its techniques were detailed to the last atom – and this keeps the  
texture from slackening, well, from slackening too much, from just crumbling or  
liquefied, granting half a sibyl's wish to watch the acid glow of the green jelly slide past  
wetware star's last voltage gate to sing in brief alarm of blackened watts)

(what's that, sir?, oh sir, no, sir, not a joke, sir, not, not certainly, a joke at your  
expense, sir, we just worried a little bit about a small misunderstanding and then started  
to laugh at the improbability of that same misunderstanding and thus called attention to  
a thing that never happened in the first place, at which point, sir, we adjudged it most  
prudent not to explain our laughter at all, but that, sir, appears to have been the wrong  
strategy, sir, as it incited your question, and a reasonable question it was, sir, but sir, no,  
sir, we were not laughing at you, just a

congressman or senator or attaché in some respect or departmental head or uppermost undersecretary for Affairs in the Region and if we're not mistaken and more to the point if you're not mistaken it's California isn't it sir it's Marin? Orange County? What, San Clemente? Malibu shit good times in Malibu and

this was in the dossier by which we mean to say nothing officially military no document on the kind of carbon flimsy you'd probably fetishize after enough years spent half-watching World War II movies at 4 a.m. on one of the channels created both to recreate and then to serve the half-need for a half-nostalgia in men of roughly your age and temperament, knowing that you don't pine for the 1940s or the War but for their later recreation and specifically for the still-later *exhumation* of the recreate, see what I'm saying, that if it were the 1940s and you were seeing these things for the first time you'd have no interest in them at all because that would just be the mediatized texture of the moment the way the film tends to wash out go grainy wane sepia the germline teratology of wet-gate star's still-viable miscarriages

as in strontium census out in the valley between the real hills on the one side and the fake ones on the other where we piled up inconspicuous earth to conceal the things it buries or rather keeps in fledged abeyance no intent that they'll remain buried forever it's a kind of warehouse sir it's a sort of salon des refusés if that doesn't strike you as unnecessarily finicky and erudite what we're talking about is the catacombs of the bypassed chemical-weapon star abstracted and dissected and laid out each segment from each at such distance as has been carefully planned to defuse all possibility of an accidental reaction between any two or more of the given segments though

accident being what it is well we could hardly know to plan for it and will no doubt discover means of interaction between these components and will no doubt make discoveries of genuine scientific merit and at the cost of nothing more than several hundred or thousand lives which probably if we're being honest weren't going to benefit us much anyway and that's I suppose a harsh thing to say about civilians in a warzone and even harsher when the civilians are supposedly U.S. citizens and they live in the zone of an undeclared and perpetual war but what are we really trying to delude ourselves with here you see what I'm saying homme d'affaires you understand the grave sort of decisions to be made so

some white trash meth candidates some snake-handling late-Christian cultists  
some Mormon offshoots who got religion all over again when Latter-Day Sanctity  
suddenly declared itself above the evils of polygamy and some Indians some old and  
already doomed some young and riddled with pinworms and some neither old nor  
young but long annealed beneath the hard tannin texture of habits to which they were  
forced and which will eventually provide a more-than-plausible cause of death i.e. we'll  
get to say "cirrhosis" or "pneumonia" or "heart disease" or "stroke" or "hemorrhage" or  
"aneurism" or "diabetes" and this is known as symptomatology however many layers  
you convince yourself you've hunted the symptoms through disk-permission denied  
please wait for a remote technician to assist you please do not press any key do not shut  
your device down do not close the screen if closeable screen it has do not do anything at  
all one of our boffin boys will be along shortly and in the meantime here's a 56k version  
of a soprano saxophone bleating "I Love You Just the Way You Are" all the way from I'd  
guess urban India though really from the satellite between there and here wherever  
there or here should presume itself to be granulocyte surveillance of the modem star's  
defunctive immunology

and having thus arraigned the symptoms disguised as diseases well we're never  
really going to ask how so many people ended up diabetic or cirrhotic or mentally  
handicapped or born with flippers for arms and legs I used to know a guy around these  
parts, sir, if you'll pardon the reminiscence, and I think, sir, that you will, because most  
of the reason you plan this kind of bullshit factfinding mission is to arrogate unto  
yourself enough local color that you'll feel, come the next meeting with the other etiolate  
compradors of your own caste, that you Know What It's Like to have Boots On the  
Ground, you've seen the goddamn place, you know how the dirt tastes in your mouth  
and how the sky is always falling but never quite falls, how it teeters on the edge of a vast  
atmospheric fracture but somehow maintains the capacity to get worse, no matter how  
bad right now, no matter anything at all, the dry-lightning script across the old  
polymerase bath, the test tubes spilled and left where they stopped rolling, amino  
subroutine of dead peptide-computer star still foaming its discolored damp results from  
output jack we should've wrenched out of the wall

but anyway I used to know a guy round these parts who was always in and out of  
the bars and almost everything about him was normal maybe 5'6" on the short side but

not freakishly so blond guy wore glasses and normal clothes and everything and seemed to take care of himself but the thing was he didn't have any arms and I don't mean he lost the arms at some point I mean he'd never had them like right socket was just blank no meat after the shoulder and left socket was about I dunno a third of a bicep and on the end of that hunk of aborted arm he had a thumb just one thumb and he used it to pick things up and hold them and I always wondered how in the hell his nerves had been rewired from spine to brain to antethumb small blessing of his partial deletion I suppose and these the kind of results you're looking for the scratch-prone ambrotypes you'll carry back to fit nostalgia's rickety zoetrope when this war shall serve prototype for the diplomats of post-nuclear springtime)

(old third-rail scream earthed on the Hopi reservation, necropolis transplant of the bioweapon star's breached hazmat ziggurat run facedown on used tape so many times that print-through remnants cluster blackly of their own compromised gravity,

a flux of haywire voltage acquiring its own resonant cycles and harmonic series, transients blown out around the edges, heat oddly contoured into such seasons as the outside world will know only in periphery, as carrier wave, maybe, or the secret signal heterodyned beneath the frieze of ostensible noise,

immunodeficient tape-bias star overdubbed onto the evident blood and moving on a disk layer you'd be careful, at this point, not to call "history,"

careful as custodians of that dubious quantity must ever be, who sets them up who knocks them down who keeps them more or less in order who decides the nodes who disarranges the connectives who either standardizes and begins to mass-produce or cancels aborts debrides denies all knowledge of nucleic syntax babbling from DNA-computer star,

the dead islets and the non-history occurrent on the outbound archipelago, gamma-knife star paratactic each to each in surgical alterations of originals we never saw nor much wanted to see and therefore can take as no basis for comparison, so you get what you get and you learn, if not to like it – who'd bother to like it? – then at least to take it as what is and, soon enough, to absorb it less and more than passively, hold it in gelid suspension, less likely oil and water than oil and another kind of oil, bioassay

petrochemistry exposing the hydraulic-fracture star's contagious skeleton against the rainbow stratigraph of epidemic light,

where you could catch what's catching and, more than the contraction itself, remain as unaware as the old motile plague entails, bound out'n of Egypt he were with nothin' but his sons and daughters carryin' the packs, and oh yes, brethren and sestren and mothers and fathers and children of all vulnerable ages, wheresoe'er ye be, why I've seen 'em come in gaunt and trembling to 7 a.m. mass when the priest was too boozy even to practice pedophilia, not, you know, that he was necessarily a child molester, never heard a particular rumor in that direction, though he did once cock his thumb up like the hammer of a pistol above fore- and ring fingers extended for the barrel and shove it against the side of a 7-year-old's head and ask the kid if he would die for Christ,

this is an event recorded, this is a thing seen, let there be no doubt that it happened and let those who lie about its passing condemn themselves to such tangled hells of dissembling as we can only fantasize, because, in all likelihood, they don't even remember lying, much less what they were lying about, and if they make do with some horrified new visceral topology, as rococo a late-Renaissance oilpainting of heretics' torture as any Spaniard ever thought he might commission when he'd finally burned and slashed through his queue of infidels and of those late come to the Cross in questionable faith –

remember, cautions the inquisitor, a Jew is always a Jew, and a Mohammedan a Moslem or a Musulman until the day he dies; his Christianity is only ever skinborne, a light and benign pestilence, the null-terminator zeroes in a halo of carnivorous dark reverb as emitted by attack-vector star and visible mostly upon the contagion's disappearance; he can put it on and take it off and has and does and will; he may come to true faith only by the imposition of deep terror, a fear profounder than fear merely for the flesh, a true reckoning with the fact of his eternal and irrevocable damnation; in which case, the subtlest among you might set to arguing, isn't that just bargaining, too, ain't the heathen cuttin' deals, is this a horsetrader's convention or did I come to the wrong pulpit; and yes, my dear little friends and brothers in Christ, and no, for how ever shall a man be motivated save in fear of forfeiting his own skin, and yet how much profounder the fear when one wrongfooted backpedaling gesture would lose him not just skin but whatever skin's been rumored to contain,

if that's the word, if it's to be pictured as some manner of volumetric bourne, this is a bag that holds a certain amount of water and can deal with a certain circulation of waterborne caloric heat before it either bursts or withers or goes slack and porous and just bleeds the thing we tend to picture as light, and for what reason, who can say, there are no doubt theologians equipped to tackle *that* one, too, and some patch of rotten source code a hundred million years before theology in the visible carbon ghosts of the birds going up when they're smoked out of their branches and fall into the wildfire, small passerine songbirds, see, all monochrome and grayscale in the dark, no flash of color nor the fine netting of the gold on a starling's wing, keratin circuitry as semagraphic index to the epizootic transfer of the bootscreen star's hived scripts –

right, their torture is never the torture you'd hope for or even, in your deepest delusion of justice and symmetry, find adequate, they're always torn apart by something private and, to you, trivial, so

let it be recorded, then, at fear of no great punishment if lost, of no loss but the truth's and all the worlds contiguous with it, such tangent Earth as still obtains, the skew line scraping the derivative-graph pollen from a ream of hardened calculi you'd now find in the kidneys or the liver if at all, the constellations in the gall, the Pleiad asterism punctuating renal autopsy paragraphs with inferential afterburn of chemical-weapon star,

that we weren't afraid of the priest on those mornings, "we" meaning whoever's here right now and knows or feigns to know what we feign to remember, because even if the priest had been a pedophile – and, like I say, I don't believe he was, though we later found out that the church in question had been one of the great child-molestation factories of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and that the rectory where we rearranged dank furniture in the reek of dust matted with vomit-laced and saccharine booze, \$5 wine left over from the big-batch consecrations, was the last innocent place in several hundred children's lives – he was too goddamn drunk to do anything about it, and

he'd mostly call us into the vestry for some minor business which he'd immediately forget, then take the occasion of his fucked short-term memory as either an excuse to bark at us for failing to execute the orders he never gave

or an occasion for the kind of glassy-eyed reminiscence queasily common among men who drink a great deal and have finally, for whatever boozy reason, decided that

today is the today on which they'll grant themselves permission for a full public display of, what, not mourning, exactly, and not only self-pity, though self-pity's certainly in the compound, just a kind of baffled directionless bitter sorrow which will shuffle through a slot-machine array of plausible targets and fix on each in the ergot lurch of the aerated blood, rage briefly, then dismiss the object as inadequate and move on to the next supreme inadequacy, lost by rancorous stages, never knowing itself lost entire)

(well "a cold coming they had of it, just the very worst time of year for a journey," and what Jesuitical exercise for a cold Anglican fish, despite the old New England bitching in the second line, *avant la lettre*, new and old thus counterposed past all conscious intent,

composición del lugar or scriptor loci depending on what ethnocentric fantasy he felt like genuflecting toward that week, I mean you wanna be a Spaniard with a knife under your cassock or you wanna starve yourself and in the malnutrition hope to transmute all the jolly rubicund Aquino intellect of that fat bastard who died falling off a donkey into such sting of bodily necessity as, some say, makes the mystic, but

yes it's false, yes it's contrived, and yes that's precisely the point, they want this worked-up speciousness, pasteboard soundstage economy, exchanging banknotes Magic Marker-scrawled on torn-out chunks of corrugated boxes, "the splendid and reeking falsification," what's the season for if not just such occasions as this one, when we can act and know ourselves acting and hope that the fact of the pretension's threadbare flimsiness should be the exact manner and means of, say it with him, transubstantiation, if you can use that kind of language without embarrassment sharp enough to make you feel you're having a mild stroke, ischemic dripfeed down the left side of the body only, heart carrying a few inches in front of your chest and about a foot above its normal location, a hemorrhage of curdled old machine code, obsolete tape-backup star as triggered by magnetic summons latent in the passage of the slow unscheduled trains

or just the unending construction, all the crystallized viscera they're pulling out of the city underneath the city, a realer testament than any we'll contrive to leave on purpose, should've known that since at least the 19<sup>th</sup> century and I suspect we're beginning to learn it now, this here's your Ozymandias, ol' pardner, steady rider, stop breakin' down, pipes so shit-encrusted for so many years that their mineral coatings are no longer even repulsive, just add up to a deliriously detailed and very nearly illegible



codex, disk permissions all flipped to the off side of the two-way pole so hard that you're going to need a crane or at least a mule team to drag them back, and who has time, who could even replace all the burnt-out fuses, not sure they make this model anymore, plus heat from the furnace getting us chafed and drowsy and the smell and the stratified air after it burns off another prolapsed summer's dust, the way the vertical hold wavers and the horizontal gives up splice of unintended color, a blooded sepia, the pulse as seen through the walls of its own vessels worn untenably thin, subroutine of a stop codon overridden where xenotic star should quietly emend cellular script

till each is compilation of its own surpassed defenses, a codicil of failure in pathology's terse cuneiform, not yet autopsy because not yet testament strictly of the dead, but we're getting there, we're always getting and only there, what is a city but that it should eventually be a catacomb unearthed, ground-penetrating radar wrenching GABA star's necropolis from remnants of the ossifying brainpan and the epinephrine water table stalling in long streaks of salt and lye,

another ocean exhumed and another clerical meddling around the sides of the dig site because the mayor, or what- or whoever, is still religious, or because the religious component is built into the city charter, the bylaws of the state legislature, hell, the federal constitution, who's to tell you no, I mean undo a little bit of deist trapping right above the photocopy signature of the Treasury Secretary and we'll talk, polymerase xerograph as uppermost in bandwidth of peptide-computer star where shortwave radio's been colonized by minor arms of military research,

there's analogy, and for the other kind of parallel run, check femurs of the elderly and soft skulls of the still- or barely-born, plug outer valence shells between the brackets, hunting hazchem {x} where bone-analogue star reformats spinal diskettes hissing each against the new compression of old calcium and gneiss, and

that's what they want, that's why they're here, 7-on-the-dot-in-the-morning 5 days a week every week for 30 years plus 4:30 on Saturday and 11:30 Sunday, long past approval of the Mysteries' prescription except as rarely failed, priest present so that they can censure him if he fucks up, no homily to speak of, sermonizing at a minimum and with what you can't quite call a hangover since the priest's already started drinking again and is right on the sour edge between withdrawal and another wobbly traipse through the fake-rusticated pathways of his campus, hand to a briar rose because he

feels that's the sort of pose a priest should strike, and may I tell you, o my little brothers and sisters, it was cold, it was dark, it was bright from the height of the sky only, and Egypt at their backs and then again before their faces)

(contrecoup delayed while we replace defective lightbulbs in the wall, concussed the fracture map of wetware star so brainpan's dry wash takes inaccurate slow graft,

pseudo-anonymous donor tissue worming misdirected through all cracks all flaws all fissures as the glacial propagation of dispersed species through the xenochronic ice, an epoch-surgery redundant for the anagram we'd make of the biopsied Arctic anyway, reload protocol for DNA-computer star gone haywire in the snowmelt where the line crawls higher and higher up thawed latitudes toward that carnivore zero which we redeploy as polestar in defunct stop-loss cartography,

you know, the big lit map of the missing archipelago, rest of the drywall paneling installed with a dozen switches that look as if they ought to control the startup sequences for ornate instruments of torture in different rooms, and hey, here's the thing, they do,

actually do, better pick up your speed here, overclock the remnant machine language where it still spills through the weft of harmed flesh subject to amateur cures often worse than the first injury, a backlog of cloudy sulfa drugs in ampoules stained with dust made from the unrecognizable dead, the dirt of a world long gone, and not adventitiously so, not by anyone's estimation of accident, but as conscious output bandwidth of the weapons-system star,

exactly what it was supposed to commit to the videocassette, the scratched-out discs, the microfilm for which we can't find any adequate reader, neither in technical terms nor in those of maladjusted eyes, your presbyopia and fucked-up optical accommodation as a side effect of pills which we, over the last, what would it be, at least 6 months, have finally harassed you into taking, periphery likewise to include startling weight-gain or -loss, insomnia, hives, itching, inexplicable rash, trembling hands, unwilling saccades like air puff at the optometrist's office, optical code mangled by tape-bias star's long-term acoustic surgery into reams of mutagen glyph,

plus a neat little phenomena they've taught us to call akathisia and which is defined as "a movement disorder characterized by a feeling of inner restlessness," but

that don't half do fuckin' justice to the actual experience of it, which is something more than either restless or inner, which is rather the vast compulsion not just to do but to have been already doing something which your body feels like it can just remember but of which your mind has no image at all, see what I mean, that the body is living in the last decayed surge of an erosive memory and the mind is several seconds' latency behind, cybernetics of the lag-spike star between the playback ordered and the actual beginning of the noise we thought to commit or only committed in the conscious lack of thinking, in the deep breaths for the steadiness of your fingers or the stretches you'd been doing, smile here frown here smile here, to remind yourself to set your lips a certain way while you were elocuting, try to keep from too much sibilance, lispy, remember that one R is a flip and two are a roll, remember that a solo D is an eth, a soft th-, when it's after a vowel and a harder though still linguodental *duh* when it follows a consonant,

you ready?, now this'll be for both the English-speaking soldiers in the region and those Hispanophones, if that's the word, accustomed to Yanqui Spanish, not necessarily able to understand it word-for-word but better and more than aware of what it means,

not what you're saying or think to say, but what should be inferred from the fact of your being here to speak at all, or rather from the fact of the recordings they're now blaring in short sheer-edged bursts from the radio tower where the shoals come in stained with a glassy bioluminescence, so it's claimed, from a certain breed of jellyfish that beaches here at ebb tide and will either reproduce or die en masse, depending on whom you ask, extinction-layer software for the biointerface star,

though some of us have heard – and who knows who started the rumor, and if it's a rumor, and if one of us perhaps started it, and if he or she would remember having done so, and if, for all that, it's any less a rumor and in currency, because we do say we do hear we do circulate it's the kind of thing you throw in to make time from the awkward stasis of a social occasion to inject the temporal pathogen into an otherwise sculptural affray see what I mean? as viral load of bootscreen star distilled where the derivatives wring friction from lapsed calculi each caught at what remains its resonant frequency

like say I don't know it depends on your pay grade and what precisely you hope to be doing here or more to the point were ordered not to fail to do or even more to the

point were ordered in compound and multiplex tense not to have failed to have done at a certain future point as yet undetermined but don't you fuck it up or don't you allow yourself to have been proven to have fucked it up when we should return listen for the way the circuitry begins to overhear itself the voltage coupled with its flimsy plastic substrate multipathed and seething through the teeth of the transistors now listen for chemical-weapon star's transplanted biofeedback as a new carrier wave against the whine of dying cells

like say like say like

maybe you were lucky enough to be a nob bastard to be one of the young kingly and elect the kind of man who encourages all rumors about himself to exactly the extent that each is picaresque and borderline monstrous On the Rise you know On the Come-Up and the way you swept the papers off the desk and the way you shattered the glasses at the bar where no one was supposed to know even your assumed name much less your real one and the way you piped up in the closed-door meeting with the Undersecretary for Equatorial Affairs and told him Sir with all due respect – and the assholes retelling this story will take such gross fatty glee in emphasizing that particular locution *with all due respect* i.e. if you don't hear *any* respect then it's because no respect is due you –

Sir with all due respect your thinking is a relic of old entrapments of old quandaries into which old men work themselves corkscrewed and sweating when they need some outward and explicit excuse for their own insomnia and night terrors and implacable if diffident and vague guilt you still talk like it's Balkanosis and ethnolinguistics asking us to carve 20 new nations out of what was defiled Macedon or just the place the lesser Greeks go about fucking their sheep

Sir it's to the point that I can see you in a low field in an expensive bungalow detailed at great cost and annoyance to look like it's a hundred years old and might've just cohered that way from the rocks moss iron stonecrop merds in the mud in the dirt and I can see you asking yourself for justification in long sentences that never so much end as just reveal another clause modifying what seemed like the last phrase's dying fall and I can see you speaking that way rather at than to a man of about my age who'd be impressed to death with all of this

But I Sir am no impressed no more no longer and what I hear alongside all this seeing is the sound of the beasts eating in the fields above the sound of the goats and

cattle figuring out how to shake the bells off their necks the sound of the silence not itself sudden but suddenly and after too long noticed when the wild dogs you were too preoccupied too monitor have carried off the pale white meat still dented with the bell-chain it once bore)

(all this followed by the phantom-limb prickle of the silence of mild and mildly astonished acclaim and his fellow whiz-kid bootlickers will think Oh golly we can *talk* like that?

and the middle echelon will think as one because that's their basic function to share the compartmentalized mechanics of what you wouldn't precisely call a mind and in such unity will sourly muse OK so this is clearly somebody either to crush or to draw into the sphere of my opportunistic affiliations even to draw under my wing whatever that means and it's always easier to do the latter though the former is more satisfying yet the former so much more apt to go wrong and men like these will always always do whatever's more likely to "progress smoothly" whether or not it accomplishes anything at all whether or not the very thinking should make mock of anybody still deluded enough to use a word like "progress"

and the men above those stably positioned will think By god this might be exactly the sort of tenacity the sort of fighting lifeblood we'll need to wrench us out of this godalmighty fucked quagmire we've gotten ourselves into and thank the old Secretary for *that* particular piece of language the stupid son of a bitch 30 years of professional ratfucking from Nixon all the way through Team B and the Reagan Evangelists so how could he *not* know that if you dig up a word like "quagmire" you're going to hear it all over the news until you're politically dead and then will be able to cross-index it oh I don't know about 50 fuckin' times in every single unauthorized biography I could slap the son of a bitch for being so absolutely naïve why I remember the day he said it or maybe it was the next day the day I first heard it anyway and would you believe listen to this would you believe that I heard it over a meal in a restaurant that doesn't even fuckin' *exist* anymore? that's how goddamn long ago it was and we're not talking some chi-chi bullshit where they come and go every 6 months this was an old dump in the slums the ones we carefully curated to retain authentic slum appeal so if *that* place is gone we're talking different worlds we're talking geologic epochs passed and grafted and

annexed we're talking the arrogation of entire ossified species to the timestamp by which you'd claw back to the moment of his lapsed idiot diction

decomposing cytoskeleton of xenonucleic star's fossil record printed on stale sugars and scarcely enough phosphorus to keep the edge of midnight water glowing and

the Undersecretary himself the man addressed will think Oh you've *fucked* yourself with this I'm never going to see your face again prerogatives of power my boy the privileges of the position I've attained and all the ass I had to kiss to get here but next Monday the Undersecretary will be called into a series of falsely offhand meetings just in the neighborhood just happened to have 15 free minutes' office time and in each of these meetings his own superiors will inform him that the young man who spoke out of turn and yes it *was* out of turn but it was also necessary of the moment caught the real tenor and feeling of the times well that young man has been given an expanded portfolio in certain areas once within the Undersecretary's jurisdiction which really he himself should consider cause for relief you know he'll have more time to dedicate to the first few and largest headlines on his own list meaning You'll be out of here by this time next year asshole hope you packed up all the things you'd planned to steal from the building hope you kept the notes upon which your memoir will base its petty and useless attempts at character assassination

and the last the old generals the half-retired military dementia-cases to whose baffled and diaper-wearing dotage we've assigned no more responsibility than the prosecution of America's wars i.e. the world's wars now that the World is only America and those places which persistently fail to be America despite no doubt a certain good-faith striving

well some of those men will think Oh dear I just don't understand I thought I believed in the Chain of Command I thought I knew how I got here and now I'm just not sure and what can there be to do about it but continue to feel baffled and to hope my bafflement acquires a certain coefficient of grace

and some will think This Shall Not Pass I'll offer my resignation though very few of them will and those who do will be so forgotten as less than to have lived because if we're being honest there'd be quite a bit more vegetation in Korea and Vietnam if they were never born so it's less as if their lives had been erased than as though a partial

erasure had abolished all biography but transferred its consequences to the account of plague's least tractable transcription)

(bioweapon star's mitosis printing acid login asterism cell-deep on the night's broken coordinates

and we should've known we should've guessed o how could we have been so blind your specious retrospection and fucked crocodile tears squeezebottled on the witness stand in some municipal courtroom nowhere near picturesque enough to satisfy the set designer's notion of a grand condign reckoning the ill reward you so ill and richly deserve no

this is like I dunno Fresno or San Luis Obispo or Century City or something this is like the place they litigate traffic tickets in Los Feliz couldn't book the old courthouse and weren't about to be called into D.C. for the occasion nothing so serious as all *that* plus it's not like the men who wrote the writs and signed the warrants really wanted to have their names tied to all this too-late accounting sero sero nothing we built etc. but that's the problem you see you did build something and will settle now for some flimsy assay at impossible emendations acting like you couldn't have seen it coming more than willing to declare your guilt in the matter of a lesser charge like perjury or contempt of court and accept the concomitant six months' suspended sentence plus 100 hours of court-ordered pro bono work or possibly every other weekend 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. in a lockdown facility with an ankle monitor among the other white-collar criminals none quite of your caste naturally you're an exceptional personage even here and they'll be furtive at first scared to gather around you in mild awe of your accomplishments even those who think they hate you even those who have told themselves before that given the chance they'd wring your pompous supercilious little neck dewlapped and wattled like a 70-year-old man though you're what 50 at the outside all that useless gristle spilling over a starched military collar and yet

here you are approximately and there they are most definitely and nothing's going to happen a choreography of cheap hologram violence the dead image-bundle output overlapping decanted ray-for-ray where the crosshatched indices meet and you get a mild cartilaginous weather system of optical distortion watch genetic cartridges

reprogrammed by the gamma-knife star downloading glioma from the lab-grown neural tissue

undifferentiated cellular matter is the way they sell it just a what you call a culture just something to keep in the centrifuge while we spend our more focused hours on a more specific project because who knows who can say to what use all may someday be assigned I mean even now we're rewriting the subroutines combing through the linecode for improvable patches even while you're listening yes you customer prospective or unknown and if you're here at all to listen and to watch then buddy you're a buyer whether or not you know for whom you presume to buy

you're a sales agent fully invested with purchasing powers representative of the King with the solar sigil sewn above your heart ideally right into the flesh where isotope decay of IP star rejects the artificial xenograft some malleable plastic arrayed on a scaffold or possibly the metadata drained from pork and plugged right into the reset cells a hard wipe a core dump all the soft saves erased while we run shutdown protocol like hazmat rites at a contaminated crime scene redistribute disk permissions to the bootscreen star's text-file immunocompromise

OK everybody out this is now state property or at least under a very particular department's jurisdiction and if you've got a claim to make you can submit it in writing for us to forget or you can email it to the address provided in which case you should expect an automated response within 6-12 hours and thereafter nothing much except the odd personalized message from some harassed sub-minor functionary who'll sign his or her name to let you know that *yes* this is a fucking inconvenience and *no* you don't get to jump your place in the queue just because you keep interrupting me when I'm trying to take my afternoon break it's the only goddamn thing that keeps me sane the fuck you think this is a talk show? like you can annoy the judge enough to get your 15 minutes' screentime

and the appearance itself much more important than the fact that you're getting dressed down by some corrupt retired old hack trading his threadbare toupee first for a set of implants that look like ink-spray from a burst ballpoint pen and then for a horrible-sounding form of cosmetic surgery in which and I swear this is real they cut open your scalp and cut off the part that can't grow hair anymore and pull the part that used to cover the back of your skull all the way up to meet your browline because its



follicles still work or still haven't contracted enough to choke out the growth I think that's the way follicles operate or rather don't and so you end up with a bizarre stippling of stringy thin soft hair in the middle of your head and have to comb it both backward and forward which just looks even faker than a wig but who's asking who wanted your permission who you think you are

trying to trade insults with a professional insult comic however otherwise entitled to self-reference as juris doctor and god help the prior clientele you think you get a gig like this without 30 solid years of screaming at poor people beforehand you think Detroit or Baltimore or Kansas City has any use for a local judge unless he or she takes time out to deliver moralizing flimsy aspartame versions of Old Testament rhetoric just vomiting a cut-rate jeremiad at a man who couldn't pay the usurious interest on the flatbed truck he was forced to lease in order to get a job as a truck driver

remember that or likely don't say the rig costs half a million dollars and if you want the work you're expected to buy the truck from the company you'll be working for assume the debt in monthly installments at a markup not to exceed 700% of the base purchase price because they've managed to reclassify this as a payday loan with not much noticeable irony in the fact that it obviates the whole notion of payday though you do get a certain pain in the side every other Friday I'd guess the little sort of acrid wincing stab that makes you wonder if you know where liver spleen pancreas kidneys are exactly

of course you know in general of course you kind of think you used to know at one point had to get through high school after all or had to get a GED or had at least to live long enough and in enough poverty to experience some minor form of premonitory organ failure but I can't quite remember

the hardened horn of hepatic cells accruing as to kill you via sepulture in which you'll then be buried

haywire phagocytic star's hacked autofocus ossuary moon-gray on the zoom-in and too detailed for a wide shot quite to capture)

(dingy coordinate system on the semi-crumpled touchscreen where chyron no longer pops up to the prompting of a callused thumbprint, cell-division scum of malware star in slow climb through the breached targeting algorithm, a slow offwhite

peroxide froth that freezes in long contrails like the salt foam on the side of a horse's neck,

told us the solid state drive would be more secure than the optical kind, told us better to have it all onsite plus backed up wherever satellites could reach us, server farm once located in the desert and recently moved to someplace in mid-northern Canada where the land's still cheap and you can still maintain pretenses of a seed vault or ignition mechanism to the whole crashed internet if you're in that kind of glib mood, bionterface star's system-failure lymphocytes foaming over the pin-connector inputs in a drift of waterlogged angiosperm and fusing dicot stillbirth,

all back and away, all down the slope and in the dark near the smell of water somehow more eerily sterile than it should be, brine reek anesthetized as in chemical-weapon star pulled offline but still near enough the blacksite that we'll be digging up odd hard drives of bone-analogue material from the skeletons of local fish for a thousand years in the improbable event that a thousand years are left us,

plus the half-life afterward, or more probably half-lives, given our comparable if not exactly parallel decay, the flawed and forced symmetry, tracking glial biomarker where injected radiocontrast star impacts with the vaccine-resistant software to reprint an unstable node of angiograph light,

transcriptase star decoding the prone silicon necropolis in blue-black maps of hematoma scarp,

and oh the sons of bitches, oh the every mother's sons of them motherfuckers in requisitions and development and research and ordering and appropriations bills and lobbying and every payrolled dinner and every expense account and every salaried outing to scenic rustic rural Oregon to learn about the new way we've decided to sever and suture the sky, all the overridden bone-sinter script in the weather, all surpassed text-file virology of weapons-system star's designed-in obsolescence, see,

we're doing it with different coefficients now, we've found, we've "found," and named and numbered and patented a more accurate constant, call it, uh, *b*, for our founder or our owner or at the very least our namesake, and that's what we're going with and that's what you're buying and I think you'll find that the brochures are very clear about all this albeit in the smallest possible typeface and after so many \* i § ¶ • <sup>a</sup> that

you'll be goddamned if you're going to torture yourself over that breed of legalese on what's technically vacation, I mean

it's technically not, you're working, you're getting paid, you're actually going to end up *making* money on this whole thing, a very generous travel stipend which you yourself were instrumental in determining because you knew you'd be among the first to get it, like Gentlemen, we don't do things on the cheap here, we don't half-ass and half-step and we never take half-measures, this is showtime, these are the big leagues, this is and these are whatever sport or military metaphor best fits what you've dimly seized upon as the Mood of the Moment, call it the episteme if you're into that sort of language, if perhaps you're going to pretend to have read a particular book which actually you saw footnoted in the weekly column of a both-sidesing asshole who makes \$700,000 annually in on-books salary alone and who didn't read it himself, who'd never heard of it himself, who rather heard its name dropped in postcoital conversation with his research assistant, before the whole divorce and annulment and before he made the girl change her name as he had with his first wife, too, and I don't mean her *last* name, I mean he made her change her given name the better to suit his particular and vastly publicized delusions, well

she'd read a little bit of it after hearing its name several times among the lower paygrades, the people so misfortunate as still to think that they need to know something about something before they start talking about it, never get ahead with that kind of frankly self-sabotaging attitude, so there it went and there she goes and here he is with the column in hand and wondering what kind of speaking fee the columnist would demand if we wanted him to lead the seminar the next time we disguise the sales pitch for a missile-defense system as some kind of weeklong bullshit academic colloquy, but

the point to be taken here, the derivative the best to remembered from this leprous bit of calculus, is that we're big spenders and big buyers and we never need to second-guess the specious largesse on display, because this all for Our Boys in the Field, and

oh you absolute motherfuckers, you intolerable sons of the sons of bitches, this new artillery piece is Next-Generation they said, it's the Latest they said, it's Lightyears Ahead they said, can you believe it, would you believe it, I oughta kick their whole ass, I oughta bash their fuckin' teeth in, and

it's funny – or really not very funny – how human beings in their utmost and probably final extremity, given just enough time before grisly and unnecessary death to curse the people who brought them to it, don't suddenly speak truth, go neither bright nor blank around the eyes and neither open mouths to let out the repressed mantic blare nor quietly say what everybody's known this whole time but could never be brought to enounce; rather they revert to the most inculcated clichés, cough up daytime-TV dialogue from 50 years ago, operate in colorless inert blocs of copy-and-paste language they'd be ashamed to use in daily conversation, die embarrassed to be dying so routinely,

and are you here to presume that this reveals some deep stratum of stasis boredom hopeless repetition, are you here to declare that what's said last is said deepest, are you taking graveside testimony for a chrestomathy of the very best words before dying, and if so, do you recapitulate the numb decay you think you're here to chronicle, or is this just a job and are you just a jobber, trying to get out before the roof really falls in, watching the colorless ridgeline where it seems to advance along the uneven saccades of its own glaciatic fever)

(two American investments, then, futures in the market's sense, meaning toxic geoglyph distilled from the annihilating angel's footfall, reliquary host embedded jaw-deep where the rotifers swarm breached immunologic firewall, archived systems-failure artifacts of biointerface star in viral bleedthrough,

each to each rehabilitated as a principle of weaponry, the environment from which we might reverse-engineer not its ideal inhabitant but its perfect victim,

“see, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament,” this, to some, was no announcement of dread revelation or the last true vision making good all the horror it succeeded, this was no deathbed admission, holy seizure, the aneurysm's black clot navigating blood-brain architecture toward last voltage spike of shutdown wetware star,

no, it can also mean a *target*, an *aim*, the place to which the place itself will be directed, how we narrow down and pull focus like extras who can't stop overacting in the background, how we fix the vicious cursor, fluidic-computer star constricted to asphyxiate burst of pronoun or the stenotic rasp still screeching off the scanner bed,

dry lightning, grayscale zeroes for the better and fuller refinement of the vectors whereby zero should be reached, a null-terminator codon annexed to peptide-computer star's overdubbed output

carried if at all on bulky cassettes we're looking for any pretext any opportunity at all to dispose of would you mind holding this at the front desk I've got an appointment on the higher levels I have to take the elevator with the metal detector in front of it and I'm not sure that there's any metal in this goddamn thing mind that hear exactly what I say now I'm not *sure* there may be and there mayn't and so I wonder if you wouldn't mind just watching this in the coatcheck though by watching I of course do not mean *watching* macrophage star's videofeed blowback scanning rewind through the dim haunt of the prerecorded blood

"I'd stop and talk to the girls who work this street but I got business further down" doesn't that sound good doesn't that strike you just right, worn in, creased with use and, after and before use, the kind of knowledge impossible to encapsulate or summarize save in itself, the sheer soaked-in absorption of the time, the way an object cognates, and don't mistake that, objects think, world thinks, Earth thinks underneath all or performs surgical operations of DNA-computer star prior to "thinking," but

we're stuck with that word for the moment, start to sound vague and abstract when we get to mentioning "cognition" or even "sentience," so just say "thinks" for now and be, if not done with it, at least tenterhooked for the moment, waiting out in the gray cold with the sky streaming past in cold gray gels, stuck in the stall before they blow the horn or fire the starter pistol or ring the bell or buzzer and we don't even know nor can we guess whether there's anything or anyone to any side of us in the next stall over, whether there *is* a next stall over, just the assumption from such pattern as we're given to observe, gamma-knife star rearranging thawed wet bloc of neuromodulator code,

what slips into the scansion of your dreaming and your less-than-dream, what colors the acidophilic spindrift of your sleep, xenonucleic star attaining taxogram's stray gravity at very least,

if not the blooded thump of glyph, if not yet the arterial characters from which we'll no doubt milk some blanched and easily exchangeable derivative, was that somebody upstairs, did you hear that, are we still alone here, you and I, alone despite the other and each the more alone for the other's alleged presence, or are the walls and

floors just creaking in the sudden dry heat of the winter come too early and the furnace not yet ready to be turned on, reactor slag and argon lamps' ruptured trickle in one of the junkyards nobody's allowed even to look at without a perfunctory gasmask and pair of sunglasses that supposedly block the most harmful emissions,

are you buying that, why would you, beta-burn star index to the pictograph bacteriology that underlies the oceanwide island of plastic which, if it finds no natural predators, will stoke such evolution as will supply the unborn carnivore,

though not in time for us, you'd want to say, you'd want to hear it, not while we're around, and that'll lend

a certain rich rubicund sense of seeing things in all necessary perspective, of smiling fatalism, of the "older" meaning you accord to the word "stoic," not German Lutheran farmers with half-paralyzed faces staring out onto the vacant land but, uh, I guess sitting underneath the apple tree and waiting for the apples to fall and, if you should starve to death before it's windfall season, well then that's just how the world works and who could complain, well, strike that, we could all complain and will at great and tinny length, tweeters overloaded to the exact frequency of cellular death, biofeedback a white bolt of sample voltage misapplied in later copy-and-paste template, acoustic-weapon star's cytopathology a minor controlled census among victims never to be classed as such,

and not simply through denial, though denial will of course play its starring role: ma'am, sir, I don't believe we've ever heard of any of the research trials to which you allude, if we grant the powers of allusion to what I frankly consider a figment of paranoia and fever and possibly groundwater's infiltration by something we're *not* responsible for, now I understand it's a hard life you have out here and I understand that you had a plan to buy livestock again and try to cobble together the half-erased and flaking ambrotype image of the gentleman farmer's lifestyle if only on a late-run Mormon model, frontier already discovered and so forth, all possible Earths despoiled and you reaping only the last ancillary benefits of their despoliation –

check, by the way, for the bone-analogue compounds in phytoremedial star's throughput, check for molecules of unforeseen complexity and array all to search for pedal tone, the medical disaster of which they compose the preclinical image in fragmentary mosaic if at all, stripped tesserae singing for want of the glial baffle, RF-

hacking star's lost bandwidth in the static flare you might quite well mistake for Northern Lights –)

( – all of which is understandable and blowby and basically chawing and bullshitting through the several necessary and incident and prefatory paragraphs which will allow us to make clear to you by which of course I mean much less than clear that

no we're not really going to do anything but

yes we will keep you in the kind of suspense which will forestall any direct and active reprisals against us because you're always going to be afraid that you might lose your last chance to get some help and

there's always a last chance there's always something more to be taken away this is a nation of incomplete punishments what are the last say 70 years of our history if not the history of things you took for granted or for "rights" being revealed as our discretionary kindness the spending we might quite well choose not to renew if we're feeling pettish or unappreciated or just bored tired drunk hungover or hey what the hell maybe we're feeling great and in the mood to do a favor for a friend who's not a friend but set us up to feel this way and so well shit folks I don't know what to tell you but there were feasibility studies there were private what were they called Problem Identification and Awareness Groups PIAGs that's right made me think of a hog with makeup on singing "Ne me quitte pas" or really I guess "La vie en rose" and

it came to light it was unearthed it done been mightily exhumed that we as a People can no longer afford to let ourselves as a People oversee the medical services in your particular what would it be congressional district I suppose and that they meaning the medical services and you'll notice how we choose to couch it as a "service" like we're talking about the fucking waitstaff well

that they would be faster more efficient less expensive more effective overall if privatized to a firm in which yes admittedly certain elected officials do have a direct monetary interest but isn't that the nature of the thing? and what's more *shouldn't* that be the nature of the thing? don't you *want* your senator sinking some personal cash in whatever corporation best merits his confidence? isn't it important that your rights as a consumer should be as it were pre-enacted in bulk and on a larger stage than any to which you'll ever have even the least nominal dream-poisoned access

the delta-folding anticline under which radiotoxic star reprograms access protocol for the abortifacient sync pulse

and that's well you might call it our national theater our civilizational epic the artform the antique dramaturgy for which we'll be remembered: not just movies though of course movies are the most famous and largest-scale example

well wait really I suppose it would be advertising more than movies per se making use of the same basic techniques and material technology and even more worldwide and world-devouring though "devour" sounds entirely too active this is a more enzymatic process a slow and ineluctable digestion nothing for anybody to do because nothing even for anybody to notice just the froth at the periphery

the way the spume dries out in formae which might well augur or occasion something if you had time to look at them which you most definitely do not salt baseband afflicted with the silicate carrier wave where core-dump ossuary of peptide-computer star can't yet commit itself to bones as such and rather maintains possible cytoskeleton the undead architecture of the cell still left unborn

but you were on your way already, had less places to be than places in which you definitely should not be found, which finding would always and already be a catching, the instant's helpless manufacture of a culprit, and the conditions of such finding so pre-criminalized as to obviate all question of what exactly you were doing and why it mattered, why it was wrong,

reinstalled tape-edit triage under optical-printer star where the last few neon signs in Arabic are creaking off the badly-bolted stanchions on the roofs of the last few buildings old enough to have been raised 6 or 7 stories,

before it was completely clear what such architecture meant or would come to mean, before everybody knew that you were only doing a favor to the IDF, rendering the surer and the less complex every operation in a targeting algorithm which has never been particularly accurate but wasn't particularly designed for accuracy and so, you know, whatever works or doesn't work or aspires to the condition of very nearly not yet having failed,

negative plates of the white-phosphorus star's germline cached beneath every pre-ruled square and plat of land from here to the western sea, which really means the edge of the blockade, the helpless sufferance of the impacted maps upon which this last



cleanroom cartography still bleats like poisoned lymph trapped in a bulge that will not burst, recon microfracture of the GABA star impossible to mend no matter how much homeopathy of injury we feign to keep applying,

a just punishment, right, a necessary evil, keeping ourselves safe by keeping our imaginary enemies apprised of what exactly we deem sufficient precondition to our safety, you heard or didn't hear the middle-aged man laughing and laughing and spluttering himself nearly to asphyxia shouting Aravim klavim! every time he could decide between another gulp of air or food or liquor, wondered or didn't wonder whether he was laughing at the slogan itself or laughing at his own joy in the ability to shout it or just laughing, pure hilarity borne of nothing much beyond the impulse not to stop a world shaken hilarious and notice what contours it might attain when it quit shaking, and

you saw or didn't see the abashed camcorder interviews with the kids who come down for the party scene on weekends, don't even live here, and who smiled and covered their mouths with mittens like they'd been asked whether or not they were virgins and if so exactly what they thought "virginity" meant and if not then to what degree of loss, the one in the background grinning and the one in the foreground pulling faces of fake shock when her friend goaded her to say well yes, I mean, it's not, I mean I'm not proud to say it but I do think they're dangerous and I do think they'd be happier elsewhere and we'd be happier if they were gone so who would we be hurting?)

(disk-controller cicatrix condenses flimsy optical aluminum to registry of machine-language wounds, dry plasma etching fossil record of the wet-gate star's extinction,

sprawling abortifacient germline semiotic transliterate now as thick cluster of barbed signs marks indicia, hooks and eyes and the implication that the whole writing system is a disarmed structure of nucleic acids and dormant sugars, the technical specs of a bioweapon star,

waiting for some violent genetic update for the calyx to find sepals' lift toward the upper-petaled air in which we'll finally be able to play back the detonation we've been waiting on so long, adenosine star's airframe reconstructed from blackbox audio wreckage,

and you'd hold there in the stilled heat of it, unfelt as heat, not yet the swelter of the place the language comes from, though we'll get there, don't you worry, but as yet heat thickened into structure, the frozen howl of the energy it takes to hold the molecule together and which, if the thing should break, will radiate outward at the speed of its own hunger, carnivore serocomplex star its own print-through necropolis on worn tape of the blood,

wormy and ichor-thin or hardened into iron pigment scarcely liquid enough to drift as necessary now, pus-streaked or heavy with the sluggish lymph, the way the edge of the desert teaches you to become a humorist again, recover some botched theory of the four or five or seven or nine essential elements and how precisely it is that they come together in the rapture of accident to compound this mewling animal you are or soon will be, no offense, we're all mewling out here, some of us just more subtly than other, audio drivers of fluidic-computer star in semipermanent shutdown for a maintenance crew nobody could still believe will ever show,

I mean why would you, what kind of late Pollyanna nonsense is this, como dice el Cubano, "what baroque mockery is this, shitass, or what blasphemy?," have to ask the lady how she got *shitass* from Cubano Spanish if you ever happen to meet her, a dialect quite as interlayered and phenomenally complex as you could wring from any of the world's most contested wastes

as in the waste at present, reactor-slugging the biomolecular remainders of the chemical-weapon star,

trying to comb through our own leavings for what we claim not to have left, thus to defuse it thus to defame it thus to counterfeit its presence in the weapons of our enemies or in the guts we often enough claim they simply don't have, you see, you see the charity there, no worry for what they should be eating because they don't need to eat, no worry about the water supply because they don't drunk water, they live on the awful blood of the sun, you've probably seen them doing it, living that way, and

the force of propaganda does accrue here, because of course you haven't seen it, but you've heard it mentioned enough times and, in the mentioning, pictured it to yourself with sufficient frequency as to suspect that yes you more or less do know what it would look like, you've dosed the pharmacogenomics of tape-bias star's extraction

and come spuriously to believe that you understand what you've never even thought about, Old India Hand would be the model here, lemme tell you, son, times ain't what it used to was, the rancorous bitter bigoted old assholes sitting around where the corrugated tin and zinc awnings cast some shadow to the side of the Confederate memorial, yessir, still there,

*well, Kernel, they kilt us but they ain't whupped us yet, air they?,*

and they want to tell you about diesel vs. gasoline engines or the old abandoned protocol for dealing with shipping containers at the Baltimore ports or what kind of speed you can mix with which kinds of alcohol and blah blah blah admiralty law and the Theory of Sovereign Citizenship like Man come to me sayin' I ain't pay no taxes lo these several years and I says to him You're goddamn right I ain't and I been waitin' for this day and he says Well now I just bet you have and I says No sir not the way *you're* thinkin' of it and he says Now just how do you think I'm thinkin' of it and how do you think you know how I'm thinkin' of it and I says Well I bet you ten to one that you think I been hidin' in the corner and shiverin' and shakin' and jus' prayin' to the Lord nobody would ever come a-lookin' for me because I know I done wrong and I know I'll get caught come time come time whenever time should be all in the fullness of the Lord's design and the might and majesty of the Federal Government of the United States of America the finest nation God Himself seen fit to raise upon the face of this His Earth and fella says Well I wouldn't'a put it in them terms exactly but I figure you got the outline of it more or less aright and I says Well now that's just where you're wrong Johnny Law that's where you done fucked yourself because I *ain't* no American citizen and he says Oh so should I call in the Immigration boys? because we got a fine batch of la migra likes to wait down on the soft shoulder near the 25-pump gas station where the migrant workers show up every morning 5 a.m. hopin' to get construction work or what you like and them ICE boys well they know the Mexicans or Guatemalans or Hondurans or whatever they is will be back there around 8 p.m. with cash in hand so pull 'em over threaten 'em say we gon' take you to a place you ain't never can come back from I hope some of y'all is Cubans 'cause this right here is a one-way vacation to sunny Guantanamo Bay where señorita no sabee fucky-fucky and they hand over the money and the ICE boys sure do treat a feller good with it never known 'em not to stand a round never known 'em to jump out on a debt hell you can meet 'em tonight down the

Texas 8-Ball if you ain't been 86'd from that joint too and play a couple rounds of pool before they cuff you to the fender and I says That's all as it might be but they ain't got no authority over me neither 'cause you see this document right here? and I pull it out and I smooth it out and I lay it on the hood of his cruiser and he let me because there ain't a goddamn thing he can do about it nosir and I say This here document says that I'm a sovereign citizen and I don't pay you no taxes and I don't acknowledge your authority and he says You don't acknowledge my authority and I say That's what I'm tellin' you and would you believe I almost spend the night in the goddamn drunk tank because he's tellin' me Boy I knowed you was stoned out of your goddamn mind 'fore we even started talkin' and me tryin' to explain Bullshit son and don't you never call your elders boy it's just this goddamn medication that the goddamn judge ordered on me and I got to take it now because they gave it to me long enough for me to get addicted and so now I get sick if I don't take it get the shivers get the shits get the cramps can't hardly walk for dizziness only I ain't got my medicine today because I's locked out of the house last night 'cause of some goddamn fool thing the other feller did with the key after some business with a homeless girl I ain't never heard the beginnin' of but you trust me soon enough I ain't never gonna hear the goddamn end of it and we go and we come back and they say I owe \$25,000 in back taxes and they're gonna garnish my wages and put a goddamn lien on me and I say Feller if you think I got wages to garnish you got another thing comin' we'll just see about that debt and I reckon I'll be proud to die outstandin' on your slates)

(irrupt the false monologue symmetry the tainted bivalve anatomic plates of bionterface star's broken login-chemistry

and blind yellow light as static in the backstreets off the square where the City Father was buried headless for his failure to dispose of absolutely every last Indian in the territory, a hired killer before and after all other things, to be arraigned that way if ever there were to be arraignment at all, though there's not much point in holding out that hope, and you'll only wind up disappointed if you rely on the notion of some final justice beyond the fact of his having been decapitated by at least a few of the local Keechi Kitchai Kitsai, whichever is the paleface spelling to which we studious earnest palefaces

attribute the greatest weight, and whatever exactly it is that we presume to mean by such attribution,

here's the problem with the alphabetic transfer, here's the question of the inflections which would change the meaning of words written identically or at least occupying roughly the same zones of phonetic value in the Latin alphabet, and it's not enough to use accents or emphases or what you like because there were and probably still are 8 10 15 different modes of inflection each with its own minor variations and if the point of a written system is to make accessible to anyone who reads a given alphabet the words in another language, well, what exactly are you trying to achieve by making people learn 15 signs they never see otherwise and 15 sorts of vocalese phenomena which they may well have learned intuitively on some other ground but will probably not have thought of in a formalized way until now, that's the damned thing about linguistics, that so much of it deals with the abstraction and taxonomy of things you already know how to do and hear but have never *realized* you know how to do and hear, it's a kind of reverse divination, it's the reconstruction from a missing original, it's the evacuee necropolis of file-system star where the green wasplight has begun to breach the edges of the lime plaster flaking off the porous local stone

and everyone supposedly gone by then, at least as the astronomy would tell it, a numerical system based on 60 or whatever and the theoretical contact with, hell, I guess pre-Babylonian peoples of what's now the permanent warzone at the end of the world,

Sumerians or Akkadians or I don't know I get the order and geography of the civilizations confused and that's not my specialty I'm not wholly certain that I have a specialty though I do remember the fact of the City Father's incomplete grave, not incompletely dug, see, but rather dug twice in two different locations and with the fraction's barline gutting it about 5/6<sup>ths</sup> of the way up or down depending on the point from which you begin to measure because his old murderer's skull is somewhere else, the head he used to look out of while he was busy about the act of murdering for money and for acclaim and for, no doubt, his own enjoyment or at least sense of sanctity and righteousness,

sort of American Christian far more American than Christian in any sense the word could've activated until then, bioavailable star's radiotoxin over the ruts and gouges of the land where there aren't yet the relay towers bracketed stenosis-parenthetic

in the one direction the night seems to understand but soon enough will be, freak spike to overload the wetware star's clipped signal domain with sample voltage ripping through the trackpad winding sheet)

(silver air gravid with denatured cinema, belly-laden with the freight of the undeveloped image, tainted tinge of white blooded meat exposed before its time to lunar cancers or disease encrypting garbled carnal message, fire-gutted prion glyphs of bootscreen star transcribed in a synoptic body-restart,

and swollen, pregnant things gone dead-eyed but still technically breathing, as come through some ravage impossible to recall and, no matter how articulate, still beyond reconstruction, cleared RNA cache of the modem star in core dump such as trials will be convened to misremember,

naming details as they construe it, and them, possible, but both the point and the result will be an errant attribution of wronged limbs, flesh forced onto missing bones without regard for their supposed original fit or the long and awful process of their mending, deposit-fuser star inking the sarcomere cartography in bundles of degraded fiber-optic wire and piezo voltage held between cadavers' missing teeth

or the teeth and those only, skull gone, body inferred from protein microfiche in dental pulp or records kept on the state of the metals and the enamel, xenonucleic star in crooked sugar spine heat-sintered back to artificial substitute for bone

and good enough, at least in the periods you're likely to reckon, with the fog refusing to burn off the middle reaches of what's still probably a mountainside if figured from overhead but, on the ground, seems like more rising country risen toward nothing, a continual half-steep upward grade that will never hit any kind of summit and just flinches on in all directions, infinite scroll with myoclonic jerk as trackpad scansion for the mapped-out GABA star

if such you should navigate alongside, in the periphery that's supposed to decode all of this or rather to recode it, thus to tender unto us the pleasure of its secondary and maybe unnecessary decryption, which will obscure the first and incomplete, make us feel that we understand by setting us a puzzle which we ourselves have engineered as though it were there waiting for us and then handing us the solution to that puzzle like it's the hydrocarbon key that will slit the lock in the land's belly, biogenic tumuli in

graphite's hazmat firewall around the obsolete file-system star, the graves we'd never notice as graves unless given some prior warning and the million prior warnings we discarded as possessed of insufficient interest at the time, histocompatible star's print-through an oblique necropolis pollen and syntactic drift thrown black to show deep half-red iron-gray against the underside of the overrecorded film,

the clipped signal domain of the tape-bias star in weaponized acts of acoustic telesurgery, like

thanks but no we don't have time for everybody who wanders in here with a bizarre half-story to tell like the old man who wasn't actually old we demanded his ID and he looked at us in utter incomprehension and with something more than simple lack of understanding like he actively disdained us for having asked and for having spoken the language that he speaks more or less like he expected the bitter compensatory pleasure of hating the occupiers for not knowing how to talk to him and of their crippled phrasebook version of his dialect Spanish Indian Pashto Urdu Arabic however it should be he'd *wanted* that to stand there and be able to shrug feigning embarrassment and apologetic interest and actually thinking and quite rightly You miserable sons of bitches who would come here and demand that I speak English or mutter my way through loanwords from whatever colonizer's tongue still leaves its viscous slug-print stamped onto the land French likely Spanish not much less likely Dutch or German still not much less likely than that the tooth-formation whine of the FM-synthetic star and cell death transmitted on the nearby frequencies a curdle of corrupt and unfinished protein the rotten architecture of peptide-computer star in grayed-out bandwidths which no cursor will select nor simple target lock unsimple teeth upon

the keyed phospholipid login to the serocomplex star in white wattage-crackling negative of the canopic jars

and the fact of its prior breach the knowledge that it had been broken into a dozen or a hundred times before this that there were no tombs left undefiled no pyramids unentered though the pits beneath the labyrinths of the dead the genetic-cassette viscera of DNA-computer star

these haven't yet been fully mapped much less fully explored these are feared to bear disease and god here's hoping that they do ancient pathogen for which the invaders

have lost the immunity after a millennium's lack of exposure genetic-weapon star a viral load where otherwise might proceed acid tape-code eating through the emulsion on the surface toward the ferrous-oxide gravesites stamped onto or gnawed down among the thickness of the final plastic backing

which looks thin enough from here would appear to be figured in centimeters at most thinner by far than your fingernail if a little bit less likely to snap at the unexpected drag of a table's corner or the handle on a drawer or the loop beneath your thigh or foot where you were sitting or the way our lax veins overload and slacken with the impossible access-request for throughput the decayed authentication signature of the old weapons-system star

nobody to refuse nor to accept now nobody to identify the protocol wronged or correctly carried out as in some specious rite of reconstructed holy choreography the ritual enactments before a sacrament whose steps we can no longer guess at to say nothing of its vanished meaning though of course inability to guess will never prevent us from guessing and the meaning were it ever here must still hold in some trace right in the codon's bleedthrough shadow in remote-execute star overgrowing the porous spongy bones of the airplane crashed here and half-dissolved by gastric peristalsis of the jungle

suspended in a column of black gelatin congealed runtime of fluidic-computer star and all the photochemical ghosts of its hardware as lens flare or flaws in the film spots in the glass or water of your eye the wet-gate star's aborted germline and a gamma-knife cross-section through a million years of cells where neon medicine afflicts whom it shall cure)

(or of feigned medicine set semi-congruent to unfeigned, misnamed affliction, patch-clamped across the equals sign and muting grand-mal voltage spike in wetware star's power supply,

the disease-taxon we'd all love to seen burning backwards through the liquid-crystal screen because we know how to pretend we're going to treat it, are well aware of its film-gate lesions and the errors in its transfer, cataloguing, restoration, botched surgical artifacts optical-printer star where hair slipped into the cold fluid or violent light wreaked hairline fracture whining up the tonic haft of bone,



the tone it meant to give off, the tolling when in ideal conditions for the propagating wave or just something close enough, room raised a foot off its own floor on a layer of egg cartons and packing foam and with wooden inserts all over the walls and a dozen different snare drums each of which buzzes to a different ambient frequency and the resonant-circuit feedback of the airframe star's deleted sonochemistry, the ultrasounds of airstrikes and flyover recon cancelled when we decided that we'd never been officially at war nor were ever even in the position, officially, to make that official decision, because it'd never been brought up it'd never been discussed not seriously not with a view to genuine policymaking just the idles whiles and speculation of men with so much on their minds you understand a little namedrop here or there of course but if you worked on this level and grasped the world to this degree, meaning that in its cognitive sense but with more than a brief overtone of metal plunging into pliant flesh, of cognate opposite flesh stamped and cabled with metal apparatus and sinking prosthetic claws deep into the meat not yet thus technically reinforced, the patchbay of the wrist-vein, ulnar artery disgorging decomposed machine-code star as in the heat of dirt burnt off the furnace in first winter pall or just the autumn rehearsal for the same,

the shielded cables and the carcinogen insulation and the splay of the white fibers where the wires began to scar through their own rubber sheaths and the drained fuel cell of the chemical-weapon star

where yet again we would pretend that it had never been weaponized I mean not completely never been fully operational this was what you call a research project or more properly R&D and you'd better believe we have a hundred or thousand such projects on the move at any given time I'd tell you more but I can't but I can but I won't because I've learned in my professional capacity to make use of even such brief and acrid leverages as this one, because I know you want to know and thus that I until I tell you will be the one who knows what you wish you could know and so it's important for me to hold onto even that minor kind of differential, an electrical potential in the line, a grid-transient star erupting in stop-motion through the tainted mycorrhizae,

wiretapped roots coughing out their own hived sample voltages and biomechanical star's software never loading right no matter how many times we reset first the individual program and then the whole operating system and then the

particular machine it runs on and then the whole class of machines and finally down to the whole power grid and then the wattage-sweating Earth beneath

or only the voltaic spit of the world we've grafted onto such an Earth, the power still to be wrung from the fact of the incomplete and the imperfect transplant, a friction-differential, a glaciological archive still storing at least the text-file reference to abolished protein structures and the sorts of unsustainable organism they coded for, maybe not the code itself, the karyotype matrices or extinction-glyph of biointerface star raining down in dead acidic coils to build necropolis

but the vacant Babylon of their old indexical housing, see what I mean, the city of their having been and having left and having, in the interim, been classified for access, lookup, permissions, layering, I'm sorry, you don't have the credentials to see that right now and more than likely will always be denied them, for which I'm sorry again, and I apologize but this set of files has been deleted, and it would appear, and I know this is going to sound funny, that we don't actually have any record of that arrest, sir, that actually – and let me emphasize, *it would appear* – that no arrest was ever made and that the suspect and the officer in question just disappeared for a while and that one of them came up a few days later in a different part of town than either the part where he worked or the part where he lived and the other one never came up at all, although there are of course the anonymous admissions to the hospitals and morgues and the insane asylum and the orphanage and so forth, and

not to put too fine a point on it, sir, but it's easy to lose a poor black person in America, we shunt so many of them through the same few places, or through the million photocopies of the same few places, that if one should go missing, well, it's no real interruption to the flow, you understand?, it's just a minor aberration, something inconvenient but maybe interesting insofar as it provides us with the pretext or occasion for a reversible diagnosis of something wrong with the whole pattern,

a wrinkle to be smoothed, a little gummy grit on the volume pot and the attendant hum and crackle when you try to turn the volume of the whole world down or up, codec errors to the operating-system star's transliteration stuck in phosphorylate sugar or the drift of one or two among the file nucleotide bases and the records of the monthly turnover on the south side of the city, when

we “had to” shut down half the mental health clinics, i.e. weren’t making enough money to keep somebody happy and elected to decide – because it was an election, in the sense both of a choice and of the no-choice we’re still making at the polls – that shuttering the clinics could make more of it, and there were 6 of them on the north side and 6 in the south, and we shut down the 6 in the south and left the north untouched because, hey, wouldn’t you know, the prisons are mostly in the south too, and they can cope with all the overflow)

(paused roil of loadbar fog in unfilmed country, though we have islets off the variable coast, seaward Florida or the Gulf, to make up for canceled location work, xenotic capsid-glyph of bootscreen star in dried out reams semi-recoverable from the stone exposed at low tide

and then, if even then, only as a drift, a tendency, the pattern of the quaternary structure half-undone and the encoded velocity at which its decay attains some formal momentum of mutagen heat, the spike and trough of it, the detuned genotype star against the artificial reference tones we quarried there or rather claimed long years since others’ quarrying

as city less risen than cut down to, xenonucleic star beneath fixed acid template

and the mordant screech along the edges of the white fissile rock, though it doesn’t come apart in leaves and plates like slate, is denser and more malleable than that, a kind of muscular tenuousness, sarcomere text blurring with the pliancy of absorbed torque back to something before the fine alphabet stenosis, spinal column narrowed down to emit only the single sign at any given time and the false sense, then, of a separation granted, a continuum bisected on each issue, we have only to deal with the one sound and the one sound it makes among the many allophones, we take core samples from the worn acetate star and try as we might to reprint them on shellac vinyl lacquer rubber wax, we ran the whole photogeologic feedback of the massed recon missions through a lossy primitive codec to establish GABA star as a fixed locative prey,

tense and declension known, case apparent, numbers obvious as any numbers ought to be, the dried out brain and the reefs of silver sponge or hardened potassium rising like sculpture discovered underneath the stratum that was supposed to mark the

earth-shrugging formation of this massif, biomechanical star's onscreen tectonics with a statuary lineage suspended in your throat, as

we were waiting for the calcium to dwindle go gray and damp thin out to etiolate atrophied limbs grown too long for the body to control them too heavy to hold up head slumping back on shoulders or forward in attitude of copperplate idiocy borrowed from the old narrow range of Bedlam diagnosis Officially a Moron signed here by the École Normale Supérieure and let all who would question such judgment produce their credentials for the perusal of the committee which even if it had such credentials to inspect couldn't possibly do so just now because it's been called away to deal with a very serious issue a very pressing problem involving the use of the letter K in the written script of its colonies and the slow phase-shift against the proper letter Q as for example in "ki" for "qui" or simply "k" for "que" and clearly we can't allow that sort of thing to go on imagine the foment it might produce imagine the risk it obviously indicates imagine radioisotope star climbing up the angiograph's bandwidth rungs of strung-out code wrung silent and secreting some minor acrid variation upon honey serotyping star's text-editor function milked clot by clot from the pale suspended contents of the cold canopic jars

as weaponized as turned against whatever purpose we divine from the initial fact of structure save that structure is never merely "fact" is a side-effect of the eyes you use to look with and of the way you keep forgetting that you look through them is

compression-artifact star hung among the oolitic matrices the stressed phanerite tesseræ eventually declined as to emit the broken chordal skew plot of the reference tone each fixation was meant to hold

containment breached on sample voltage arcing wide and haywire across wetware star's slowed-down immunocompromise

the safety precautions the airlocks and the weirs the sluicgate fallen to keep us all out of the city so far as we could be kept, though there wasn't much to it, you probably remember, and wasn't so much anybody could tell us, not back then, before we understood, meaning before we convinced ourselves that we could possibly understand, let alone that we did, and are now or were thence older and wiser men describing the technical specs of the scenario to anyone who doesn't understand, hasn't had firsthand experience, yes a damn sad thing but nothing really to be done and who would interdict

our wisdom even were such interdiction plausible, genetic cassette spliced from ruined architecture of the tape-code star or just

exhumed from the thin layer of diseased ash underneath the city as rebuilt, “rebuilt,” what continuance there, what furthering of an ineradicable design, except maybe in the infection of the place, genius loci read for epidemiology, antigen star’s print-through and the white blood called up like the civilian fire brigades fooled by the fires started in the empty shells and abandoned houses up in the uninhabitable zone around the mountains, on the canyons’ edges, where the rich people used to live and where a few still do, insisting either that nothing’s wrong or that they’d rather be wrong this way than right anywhere else, which is perhaps the single most real prerogative of wealth, and usually works out fine for the wealthy,

though I’m not sure about this case: no running water up there, heat punishing in a way it isn’t or at least usually isn’t down in the bleaker streets, the long curve of the boulevard that turns into a highway where the city’s still so young that they haven’t yet segregated the tourist traps and postcard institutions from the places homeless people sleep, right,

we came around that bend in the middle of the night desperate for something to drink, thirsty as all hell and the water in the apartment undrinkable, at least that’s what they said, some old pesticide or defoliant still richly printed in hard metalloprotein arabesques there, enantiomer formulae of molecules referred to both by name and by chemical contents in the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, taxonomic artifacts of weapons-system star the worn-in lithic supposition of your belly and raw-patched esophagus with quarter-sized sores weeping thin gray fluid every time we try to sleep)

(so we came around the corner at something nearing a run – I could hear the knots of balled-up tendons whining in my knees, time-lapse histolysis of tape-bias star under enough varispeed anesthesia to rend audibly –

out of the narrow “residential” street under the sterile facing of half-occupied hotels repurposed as condos for the fading class of the middle-rich, those with enough money to spend thousands of dollars on rent every month but not so much money that they’d leave the city altogether and live in one of the airbrushed suburbs, occasional graphics-card malfunction and all, the snake coiled in the teacup, the long gray worms

moving over the dead cropped scrub of the garden after rainfall by oozing nominal heads toward one place and then wrenching the remainders of their bodies after that first panicked surge, you know the zone, you know basically the places we're thinking of here, codec error rampant where obsolete machine-code star ebbs from the access panels of the old refrigerators and the uplink to a clade of half-extinct satellites,

got to log in somehow, right, got to key the firing sequence to adenosine star's chemical weaponry,

and if the firmware's all decades out of date and if all the mainframes are down and if the servers haven't yet been offshored quite as thoroughly as they might be well that's just the nature of the situation I guess and you'll have to make do with whatever you've got and you'll have to find a way to breathe through the dust of the spent protocols scorched motile in the air by the rigor of this sudden restart the RF-hacking star's transcript of reentry burn as blackened bandwidth stenosis

the way the shorthand glyph condensed into ozone autopsy and microfilm contact sheet of beta-burn star in what might be multiple and very slightly different angles of the same cancerous lesion or might be hundreds of very similar-looking injuries or any combination of the two or some fourth option possibly recombinant of the preceding three in a way I don't understand yet that's to you I guess that's for your figuring the cut-out genetic tract of the integrase star fading where the acid clipboard can't recall its contents program to program window to window the exhausted ROM cache of the wetware star in pseudorandom access pulled up malleable and dented through a depth chart of kitschy software emulators

the old skins the imitation of technology we'd now call "outdated" and precisely for the quality of having been usurped though to say "outdated" presumes doesn't it some eventual telos of computation that we're going somewhere and will know it when we've gotten there and thus must know what we've discarded along the way a belief than which very little could be less true if you don't mind getting syntactically torturous about it radiosurgical grammar cutting thick petit-mal slices from the DNA-computer star's coiled coding for a minor epileptic flash or just the coma-summons in the density of dead information when you huffed natural gas from a crack in the floor of the cave a graphite cylinder a biogenetic star's fuel cell ruptured around the faintly glowing central

chamber to bleed first the pink medicinal hush of lambent light as filtered through some richly veined acrylic and then

the all-out blast the bioweapon star's login telegraphed as transient oncology of alternating current

the which remembered the which recalled the which wanted so very badly so that we come to prize nostalgically the images of the machines we've "surpassed" meaning simply ceased to use and there are a lot of reasons for it a lot to which you might attribute the effect but this certainly must be among that lot: you see the way things used to look see how much more "intuitive" the newer technology is meaning how much more accustomed you are to allowing the newer technology to reprogram you and then retroactively believing that it was better all along the transcription error where the biointerface star garbles a hardened glial mesh of fused stop codons

where null terminator builds up to the strained petrochemical rainbow the airframe overgrown with black bacterial scum of remote-execute star and detached hard drives in the earth nearby either where they fell or rather were embedded by the force and height of their fall or were buried by whom by the people who came with them I guess wouldn't those people have died in the plane crash well maybe not all wouldn't those people have had nearer objectives to hand than the burial of the information they came with I mean even if they survived wouldn't they have been nursing broken bones and burnt flesh wouldn't they probably have been on fire and running around the jungle trying to roll themselves on any bedding of grass or leaves that looked thick enough to put the fire out and probably just setting considerable portions of the jungle on fire in the process actuating buried diagrams of neonicitinoid script the sarcophagic text of atrazine star buried in necropolis of anxiolytic rings

yes some of them no doubt and more dead and still more nowhere at all though they were always and only there where the plane crashed or wherever they were flung when it hit or wherever they jump trying to time their ejections so they'd fall clear of the wreckage without losing their bearings entirely which was maybe a stupid idea or rather an ill-advised one but had a certain kind of merit you'd have to admit a certain kind of dedication remembering the blacksite MRI star and the slides of it exposed in flashes brief enough to imprint behind their eyes without the conscious mind remembering much at all

know what I mean the kind of thing you recall not from your “memory” but just via the encoded countermotions of your eye the retinol flush and sudden depletion the vitrine tissue samples of the DNA-repair star and such interdict saccade as would restart the engine we had to kill for noise and rewrite its preset flightpath toward a target which only our eyes know we’re attacking)

(busy day in a suicide vest, nettled-bored and leaning in the street next to the radio-cab dispatcher’s moveable kiosk, the edge of which won’t stop flapping in the wind – I mean the kiosk, not the suicide vest, the velcro’s holding pretty well on that – underneath autopsy spectrograph of RF-hacking star in distillate sarcomere bandwidths

which the lossy codec renders as disk regions of intensely aliased noise, that flanged airstream bypass, audible pixilation, bitrate shot to hell and serotyping modem star a dim transcriptase layer in which RNA and blood-text all spill over into the same few unclear thermograph plates, ultrasound slag and the dross of disused sonochemistry, ground-penetrating radar to exhume the wetware star in annexed phage-grammar of viruses injected each as cursor to the baffled vein,

target-lock to read bacterial shift backward as index to fluidic-computer star, the red light around the edge of the invasion, the glare of its scream away from wherever we are and then the blue glow when it begins to move back toward us, ozone pathologist or film gate’s transfer of the beta-burn star overlying any copied footage in ornate ambergris scab or eschar not yet fully formed,

vaccine-resistant scripts translating bioweapon star in stream of blear .mp3 codon,

not particularly detailed not particularly resilient only the base sense the question of where the treble screams across the speaker cone or abandons us to the shudder in the walls and the doors the way the whole frame of the car shakes paneling unscrewing itself by millionths of an inch from the unfinished threaded bolts and stereo equipment restored every few seconds to factory settings with an audible skip and jump to whatever’s coming over the speakers microphotographs of jogwheel surgery as anatomical reconstruction of the seek-judder star

mumbling as it may or in smoothed-out vectors of what should be a fairly detailed noise and just comes across artificially smooth as synth wash the endocrinology



of sample-trigger star dosed up with epinephrine overload or brief dopamine spill before the arterial howl from the lymph node nearest your wound an ankle broken so badly that the foot is virtually detached from the leg and all tendons hang loose a boar's tusk sticking out of the middle of your thigh or of its top the junction with the pelvic crest and

iliac transducers picking up cyclic combustion the engine overhearing itself the disabling biofeedback of a weapons-system star in blacksite lockdown of acoustic cancellation such that we'll have to reverse-engineer the cause of death from the machine's own telemetrys have to mock up backlog blood work from the lab results we've falsified to cover our researches on the bioweapon star

for which of course there's always an alibi always some plausible second stream of scientific inquiry and questions as to say tolerable levels of intravenous seepage toxicology as inferred from the mass of blood donations we were able to extort from the richer civilians after whatever it was a hurricane a bombing a "terrorist incident" which is to say a bombing without explicit governmental sanction or even just administrative quiet afterwards blast radii as heterodyned between immunoblot multitrack and the crime-scene overdub of GABA star which it's now carrying

borne on the bottom of the wave in the belly of the frieze where the visceral cassette of ziggurat encrypts the DNA-computer star for its survival through the end of this regime and all extinction-layer architecture thence cicatrized upon the whole peninsula from Gulf in the north to beginnings of the Patagonian cold underneath us

though there's still jungle to travel through and still more than enough stock footage on the territories in between for any concerned citizen to get himself frightened take it like a diuretic a laxative take it like self-administered pain which claims to serve some higher principle if only of digestive economy and which is thus superior to the aimless pain from nowhere the kind of misdirected neural agon it succeeds because at least this means something and was nominally our choice right so roll back the odometer show me the busted loadscreen of the axon-terminal star

where we stamped in our pin connectors and offshored what USB contents we could those not yet password-protected malware's ribosomal login to adenosine star shining black-on-black as petrol highlight in the protein studding underfoot when

we were coming down from the gray hills the dulled-metal sheen of the whole place as you must remember it was always either about to rain or just about to stop

raining very rarely the kind of rolling gale you'd have recognized from the Midwest or the southern coasts very rarely the black sheets of water crashing and some lightning still dry atop all that soaked darkness still the arid plasma etching for peptide-computer star's transistor desert

the protein noise gate welded shut or crowbarred open and the compression algorithm coughing up such intermittent bursts of desperate asphyxiate gasping as would code for a whole seethe and gulp of polypary hosts of mainframe coughing on the middle darkness of the sea and core-dump petrochemistry to redesign the biointerface star's rotten cytoarchitecture

and we took what we could take of course from anybody who was giving it or simply couldn't prevent the taking we had our routes and our reliable sources we knew who was afraid of us and would give up a small but consistent sum every time we came around like pissant local Mafiosi

you imagine small men with unusually pale skin and short neat moustaches trimmed severely at the sides exactly at the corners of the lips so that they look if not quite Hitleresque than like the BBC's imagined version of a French police inspector or more accurately like they should be selling bootleg cigarettes on maybe Staten Island or one of the piers near Transistor Park in the bathrooms of the Port Authority waiting for the winches and the abandoned concrete docks along a section of river that doesn't carry any licit traffic anymore

though you can still occasionally pick up the rust-edged whine of the radios in the cabins that nobody's supposed to be manning – and there's a chance nobody is – the dead telegraph operators in the drowned waterproof cells where oxide serration of tape-bias star afflicts the dimmed enantiomer river)

(so your country's up-to-date enough for rheostats well well salud na zdorovie na Pravda a vôtre santé little men milling around underneath gray hats barely large enough to fit on their heads all talking vaguely in soft voices and with disproportionately broad gestures about whatever's "coming down the river" and in all probability it's bullshit and they're just playacting both for the invaders' eyes and for their own because this is who and what they want to be wish they were the artificial versions of their grandfathers they grew up hearing about after they meaning here equally the grandfathers and

prematurely or perhaps proto-posthumously the grandsons were killed fighting the Fascists

no sorry check that fighting *for* the Fascists or wait

the lines weren't so very clear back then not everybody knew what everybody knew or didn't know if that makes sense if you understand me mi capisci? ju kuptoni mua? da li me razumete? razumijes li me? or razbirash li me? or just a simple ty poniyamesh' menya? anyway it was a question of nationalism of ethnonationalism of ethnic allegiances constituting a nation I guess that's what I heard that's what I was told the script in the instruction manuals to the black-market RPGs in this case meaning rocket-propelled grenades though it may well refer to video games in a later iteration semi-pictograph Cyrillic as proprietary software code to biomechanical star's missile-guidance system

yes we fought against the Nazis because they wanted to establish Nazism here and we wanted to establish *our* version of Nazism you see it wasn't that they hated the Jews or hated the Catholics or hated the gypsies or hated what for them were the ex-colonial blacks the Africans brought in from Herero country or wherever the Namib the Kalahari the Atlas what's now I guess Zimbabwe or South Africa or what's the other one they made another country out of that was it Namibia? and for us were the entirely theoretical blacks I mean you'd occasionally see them a Nazi unit redirected out of North Africa because they were losing in the Balkans or wherever a parachute mention sent in to kill some Elenikós Laikós Apeleftherotikós Stratós a oui mais oui la mystère laïc comment de le comprendre autrefois without this without that without the bored pompous pseudo-understanding of Frenchmen with gloved hands discussing all this over imported cigarettes in some exile bar in a country where nothing happened and by "discussing" we of course mean slinging phrasebook nonsense at each other each vying for placement in the chrestomathy or Who's Who in American High Schools the chosen quote the yearbook bullshit très profond for a 19-year-old I suppose is the desired reaction and we'll get there don't you worry one of you gentlemen is going to win the Nobel Prize for Literature and another one for Peace and another one for War and still another for Medicine or however they're denominating it these days the infratoxonomy of the increasingly dissected scientific field as must be as should be as can hardly help but be you know the way they like to slice up terms you know the gamma-knife star's

neon index still coiled for pyloric quitclaim in a junkyard full of broken cod-classical statuary in a nation invaded at some point by the Romans or the Greeks and who *hasn't* been invaded at some point by the Romans or the Greeks even if just their cosplaying fanatics the men used to rhetorical dress-up quoting Cicero and Pliny and Thucydides at each other while lazily beating their slaves and smoking the year's excess from a bumper crop of good Virginia tobacco

the junkyard just there in the middle of the block and behind the same fake-Mediterranean stucco walls as the houses of the wealthy with the terracotta shingles atop or sometimes bits of colored broken glass in glittery substitute for barbwire made the thing look like an upper-class neighborhood in one of the Mexican narco capitals to which you might well ask Which large Mexican city *isn't* a narco capital and to which you wouldn't get much answer neither from the rich who are actively involved in trafficking drugs in both directions north and south the two that matter nor from the rich who claim they just want to stay out of it by which they mean reap what they might before any consequences redound to them personally or the rich who declare all this a Biblical scourge and who are setting up tax-shelter missions for civic pride and religious renewal in the capitals of Chihuahua and Sonora and Baja California nor of course from the narcos themselves

all of which more complicated because you say "the narcos" and you probably imagine people who hang out on corners and do slow drive-bys in black SUVs or makes of cars you haven't heard of in North America nor in the secondhand and export markets the people who buy Yanqui coups in bulk sorry Yankee *coupes* in bulk back of the freighter now put them all on the ferry and let's not worry about the small detail of what you might well call a silent *e* though it isn't

Chevy Corsa or yes Chevrolet Chevy that was a real one Opel Corsa Volkswagen Sedán Chevy Pop Chevy Monza Nissan Tsuru Bora Jetta Clásico do they pronounce it "Volkeswagón Héta" dunno never heard in person this too perhaps may be filed under the heading of a certain kind of ethnic nationalism and of its third-layer exploitation by people happy to let the Nazis operate as long as they're not operating at a loss

as with this place, Gospodin, Gospodine, Domnule, Zotëri, because, as I say, it wasn't that they hated the Jews, leftists, Catholics, gypsies, blacks, gays; we hated the Jews, leftists, Catholics, gypsies, blacks, gays, though, as I also say, we'd most of us

never seen a black in our lives and, as I haven't said yet but as you might well have been able to infer, we had no "gays," not that we didn't have men who buggered men and perhaps even some women who licked women, but they would not have been "gays," you see, because that implies at least some recognition of identity, some prolongation of the act beyond the moment of enactment into personhood, that one *is* rather than simply *has done*

{-temporal statuary, yes, the glycerin timestamp melting in streaks down the erased tape-backup star}

no sir no Gospody no, it was simply that they were Germans, you see, and that we were are our own people, and still are, and wanted and want to be left to hate the gypsies and the Jews on our own terms, and don't want to call our emperor the Kaiser nor our dictator the Führer, want to bring back the old names here rather than kneeling twice a year in the direction of Barbarossa's tomb, want to subject you to a lecture on a few very interesting etymons in a language which we hold to be the oldest in the world despite the researches of degenerate and Hebraized people in which case sir you possibly would be intrigued to know that we've recently discovered ah I see too bad another time perhaps?)

(cold chrome still spilling over the surveillance camera's lens, denatured metalloprotein clade, necropolis tape-edits splicing xenonucleic star into the banked genetic code,

and we'd come down through the valley in the north where the constant rain-fog on the air occasionally hit some resonant frequency and fixed itself into an actual and recognizable form of weather, something that either falls, goddammit, or will dissipate, not this constant drift and thud in the sinuses, always about to storm and never quite storming, a downpour to clear the sky as gastric purgative or the sample voltage wrung out of the visceral cassette beneath the DNA-computer star's pyramidal containment unit,

please, god's sake, even snow, we'd take the snowline, we'd go north if that were necessary, into territories less contested for the moment because more at the beck of American cash, calling and calling and your call has been placed aright no worry about that but there's no one here to take it at the moment the first doctor has gone home and

the second doctor is in the middle of a divorce and an infatuation with various forms of prescription amphetamines particularly methylphenidate and has turned his office and the adjoining room into a kind of protracted den in which he's busy fomenting his cheap version of a Manson cult fucking female graduate students and wandering around the corporate park with no shoes on playing the banjo and prominently displaying handwritten copies of Bob Dylan lyrics with the auctioneer's pricetag still hanging in the lower righthand corner of each framed glass pane he wants to set himself up as the Buddha of Suburbia and instead gives off the unmistakable if not yet fully coherent reek of a current criminal to be later arraigned the kind of guy upon whom people will look back and say Well yeah obviously I knew there was something up something quite clearly amiss but you don't just go barging in and demanding an exact account of what he's doing and why especially in that godawful strange place with the cold metal sun always behind accreted vapor-rust of gasoline and diesel exhaust from the interstate just outside the buzzer-activated gate another of a million numbered highways alongside which nothing good will ever happen to anybody and you come to wonder if that on a certain level isn't their purpose the mass formalization of ills which would otherwise attack from angles unforeseen and in forms without the convenient padding of ritual between the recognition and the impact

this is why we do much of what we do after all this is the aim to provide some ceremonial identification of the virus before it really and truly hits burst-capsid pictograph of execute-file star in epidemic petrol spectra as through rainbow of refracted surface tensions between each distillate stripe of colored light as in wetware star's concatenated bandwidth the titrations with plausible radio noise

with tides and sunspots with the way you could reconstruct a glossary of solar flares from the cerebral flaws in a given generation at a given time the predictable malfunction of meat aged roughly the same fatty storage media corrupted past the antiviral software of the DNA-repair star the translation lipids deliquescent bleeding a salt reek of what looks like lymph and smells like raw pus gone old and clotted underneath unbroken skin

could run the cortical tissue off as contact sheet of white-phosphorus star like on the other coast not so very far from here at all

if you're only figuring by mapped distance and only using the one map which I assure you is a damned inefficient and ineffective way to go about it look at the electrical grid clustering up the delta toward the northern shore of the continent watch the way radioisotope star's transients still sometimes peak to clipped signal domain under the hundred-thousand-year sleep of the papyrus marsh with the spent molecular bones delicately incandescent only in the infrared or ultraviolet registers

the muted throughput scream of supervisible radiation which you're tempted to call light but if can it be light if you can't see it what print-through ratio of fluoroscopic star to eyes' immunocompromise when loading up the cartridges with which we'll realign dot-matrix protocol to get this country going

yes it's a country now no longer a "historical region" or just a chunk of land it has a descriptive nationality and a government and an economy and an army actually it has several armies that's been a bit of a problem as you might imagine GABA star's breached fuel cell shutting down huge sections of the power supply in whine of misdirected DC voltage out of the wall out of the wires and pipes and back through the asbestos cladding and the flammable option at about if I recall correctly £8,000 savings to You the Consumer though it might well have been \$8,000 or €8,000 demme but I'm not entirely sure aye Brummie you'll want to go down Exchange for that you'll want to go out back of gashouse check meters read monitors as monitors there is the cracked gauge over sample-printer star peaked out to hard-right red gone black as blackshirts

and no coincidence in that aye check news as well check street for them silver tailorings as the old Laird had his people brought in wi' can't remember the name on't now I want to say 'twas Cable Street but tha' could well be wrong and you remember this kind of news because it's so distinctly un-American recalls the kind of "politics" we've very rarely had and in their rare resurgences could faintly dismiss under the larger heading of let's say the Civil War or the Constitutional Crisis depending on the zip code in which you went to high school

I for one was taught and taught by Jesuits at what would've been great expense if I weren't poor enough to qualify for scholarship that the Civil War was not about slavery that it was the abstracted issue of states' rights and my professors might well have gone on to query how a "states' rights" coalition could've supported the Fugitive Slave Law

which apart from its status as one of the great moral atrocities in legal history is also the single most anti-states'-rights piece of legislation on the books in the Americas but

aye that's another question you'll want to go out in't streets now boy and just see for yourself them as has silver shirts and them as has no color nor no uniform at all and what they're fighting over if you want to call it fighting no battle lines half battle dress only and the barricades made of immigrants' knocked-over fruit stalls and immigrants all hiding as they have to while we pick up reminiscent Commune cobblestones and likely fantasize in one or both directions about Paris '71 or the wormy skeleton of Phantom Rome refleshed)

(aye, well, we nominate the boss Tis 'Im – that's *it his him* for you as is versed in Yank crime – and that's boss's name from the day he becomes boss, Tis 'Im, every boss, same as your nob family will have a servant named Arthur and then insist that every servant be called Arthur from then on, and

yes you probably wanted to hear about the Famous Northern Rot, want to talk coal seams and the estuary fan where the alluvium bleaches out and sifts into its mineral and animal contents, cytologic ossuary of a bioweapon star, the spinous glyph of old fish bone and language thence derived, which is real and will stay real, but

the set dressing and the world built first beneath it as a principle of energy and form and then out from it, the world for which we built the thing and ended up accidentally reconstructing in the image of the thing we built to fit it, well

that's old now, well past due, it's not so many factories up here anymore and the injuries are a good deal less picturesque, the boys don't come home maimed by lathes and gears and belt drives quite so often anymore, though no mistake, they come home maimed often enough, but it's nothing you could put down to the kind of misdirected Pride in Craftsmanship that's mostly felt by people who have never crafted a damn thing on behalf of those who'd rather be at home or, more likely, anywhere other than home and the job, any place on Earth, lord help and save us, even in a town as looks exactly like this one and with the same ten damnable people and each of their ten thousand damnable copies milling around with different names, that would be difference enough, just a new set of words to hear every day, please god, just a different nomination of the skyline even if it's cut up in exactly the same way, same somite divisions flaring off the



black passage of the rotary speaker, transcriptase star the base codon for backup  
sonochemistry deleted when we had to, or just wanted to, erase the fifty years of old air  
trapped on tape and film and pretend to make do with the pretense to a world of which  
we all were thus absolved,

not on your fucking life, jack, but

that's the sort of thing as they wants us to pretend to, now and again, and don't  
think we get away without that Pride of Craftsmanship rap too, they want to see it, kind  
of attitude you put on for the tourists, not so very different than the Caribbean boys who  
have to caper and juggle and sell pot and ask the fat pale men on vacation if they care 10  
dollars' worth about seeing what's *really* going on here on the island, yessir, can show  
you something you won't see back home, a camcorder twenty years out of date for the  
nation in which its principal distributor is headquartered for tax reasons – not, of  
course, the country where it's made, or even necessarily the one where it's most bought,  
but Celtic Lion, you know, corporate inversion, offshoring the money like your pinup  
Canadian prime minister posing shirtless in the waist-down uniform of a summer-camp  
counselor, the twit –

and the timestamp in the corner telling what may quite as well be dates back in  
the 1990s for the quality of image, fuzzy-edged and washed out, color thin as gruel save  
for the dark, the way it cuts right through, the aliased and resampled regions in quick  
hard enamel-edged brunt of optical distortion, plus time-lapse anesthesiology of a tape-  
bias star brought down to the range of audible cell death emitting a frequency like fossils  
swimming through the rich foul syrup of their own decay, serovariant star climbing glial  
angiograph rungs through unending honey of corruption

as they say of the tombs as they say of the relics as they say of the peptide-  
computer star's terminal log suspended in white aspic of canopic jar and still ready to  
eat the moment you first break the seal of the stele on the tomb's door and inherit  
respiratory diseases and bacterial infections otherwise extinct 5,000 years, you're very  
welcome, but

the boys do come home maimed, as I say, as I been telling, only it's nothing  
goddamn picturesque, and you could find your parallels belike on the cassette in the  
Jamaican camcorder, too small for your video player, need the original camera or a  
similar model to play it back, genetic-cartridge star transposed to template of mass

saurian deletion, of great cold-blooded animals' bones stuffed beneath the furry skin come later to baffle us as work backward through the mud trying to assemble some operable model of the way the archipelago half-drowned or was snapped off the mainland like a bone spur from the filed-down edge of shin,

aye, same Jamaicans as has to come over here for the chaos we sewn over there or for the Americans come down with a "charitable initiative" that somehow ends up in a concentration camp for AIDS patients, go look, find out, it's nothing conspiratorial and it's not even a rumor, since rumor requires some speech, the fama which in this case fails to surgit, blackout complex-wide and haywire weapons-system star beneath the cytotoxic housing of the world denominated Third for its assigned, foredoomed safekeeping)

## foreign; domestic; secret; undeclared

(maimed by pharmacogenomics now, radiomedical star's intubation schedule stippled in dot matrix of proud flesh,

down out of the north wherein the wind's still never strong enough to tear away the soundstage city, modem star's bloodborne necropolis of backdate cellular login ferrying a drift of blackened white noise to the ferrous-oxide stanchions of the vein,

tape-backup star unspooled for use as venographic printout, circulatory system-failure the principle of any motion, "forward" as may be, if you still demand such nomination, with radiocontrast cranked up as far as the dial will go and minor acts of jogwheel surgery still fretting the granulocyte stall-out at the waveform's peak, overloaded signal domain screaming to a congealed halo of reverb, cybernetic star's blood-relics in the clot of solar flare where glial tissue either breaches to allow the clot its labyrinthine passage or hardens into beehive catacomb, albino insects crawling over the lye aftermath of wetware star botched sample-and-hold voltage, thick wings burring chitinous and semi-sibilant as unknown consonant held carefully between cheekmeat and the backmost aching molar for fear of what it might contain,

the pictograph bacteriology of bootscreen star recalled from millennial deactivation on first contact with the serum

and strained upward through the white cold hanging artifacts of the canopic jar, onscreen remainders broken with the breaking of the display they used to cicatrize, matte satin finish or just the overheated curve of too-thick glass and tetanic contraction of electron-gun star cigarette-burn backscatter where film chain coughs the etiolate result into whatever we've got rolling for an autocue, the programmed scan from left to right, the odd stammer and pickup of the horizontal hold, petit-mal spike off anterior horn of wetware star in spinal storage

where the disc rot has long since commenced and silver sores like syphilitic coefficient of lunar caustic ring up and down compacted bone-sheath, integrase tape edit where xenonucleic star devours bleedthrough foundations of the photocopied genome, tape worn slack with too much playback on too many obsolete machines though born coeval with what they're inching for vermin sound,

visceral cassette the cracked stele's penitralia to DNA-computer star in limestone gleam enough to baffle the ground-penetrating radar and reprogram recon drones to swerve as in drunken terror between the pane-wide unitary flashbang glare,

a single print, a total alphabetic blowout, haywire xenotic scripts of operating-system star corrupted in the transfer such that their effect cannot properly be classified as disease or even virus, given no bacterial origin no nature as dysfunction of the preexistent organ, of hepatic islets burning out or pancreatic archipelago scabbed over by the brown bitter seafret of a bilious ocean,

that would be too simple, too replete, would stop the thing too early and serve purpose only as constricted sign of cheap regret, o that we might have done differently, we who never intended to do a damn thing other than *this* nor ever would've given the chance nor ever did when actually given those million chances every day forever as long as there shall be day and we its masters we contractually provided with the rights to final cut and supervision of all the backlog music produced only for this purpose to be shared among the major studios via worldwide licensing agreement library records and the same few worn Mellotron tapes or beatbox wheeze and plosive in the rhythm panel of home-use electric organ with the lights beneath the buttons long since blown out and the melted fuses of a bioweapon star culled from nuclear clinker for reuse beneath the city's power grid,

as you were, gents, as you were, we're only looking for the rubble now, through it but also for it, and no sky at all, no matter how "outside" you are, only the dense and disordered collation of the fumes we produce, nuclear-weapon star's exhaust and chemosynthesis within as to foment and orthograph old protein chain long since extinct but archived in the radiotoxic stone,

lithic code restarted where polymerase-chain lightning boots up peptide-computer star,

aye, for all tha', moving still where it's only ever varying shades of blue-gray overhead and damn cold on the ground especially with the wind blowing but damn hot at any elevation at all, you've probably grasped that paradox by now, we live beneath convection sheet of metal steam crawling across the inverse rasters of what you always took for ground though naming it upward and angiograph seat of radiopaque star,

the magnetic pole the neuroviral climbing and the readout scan of prion star a script of alphabetic characters denatured back to origins in glyph,

this was the backbone and ribs of a fish, you see, this was the vertebrate bandwidth of chemical-weapon star condensed from all the runtime bussed to alternate anatomies,

all the loop-send and -return and hemorrhagic dross of DNA-repair star stanching to aneurysm's sideband while the base still carries line code through the telephone-pole bleating in your skull, and yes it hurts like hell, and no you can't get used to it but rarely, sometimes periods of self-administered anesthesia and rarely, gratefully, with such gratitude, in fact, that you're sick at yourself for being so goddamn servile and obsequious, self-loathing for your inability to keep up the pretense that you deserve more in a world of men who will never, ever give you what you try to remember to think you deserve,

well, rarely, as I say, the actual papers come through, the scrips for stepwise backdate chemotherapy, gray-market radiopharmaceutical star with brand name scratched out and reentered a half dozen times for its half dozen transits between and across the porous phospholipid membranes between officially separate markets, tho'

it's all the one, isn't that their fucking dream, the Single Market, and doesn't the "single" market predicate itself on internal scissions, I mean if it were single the same thing would cost the same fucking amount everywhere which it absolutely doesn't and which constitutive friction is the only thing that keeps the profit flowing, that I can somewhere sell this garbage for more than it's worth here, that I can keep the price of bananas and coffee down with nothing more inconvenient than a secret war waged briefly via radio station and confused men in the backs of trucks on undeveloped old monochrome plates)

(came inland from the shore with the sough-thick roar of the shingle still loud behind us, bones somehow overexposed beneath the skin, flesh turned to graphite butter in the fixed stillness under the plastic slips on the disease-slide star

blown up to wall-length photo array and run down the corridors of the sanitarium later on, though we're not supposed to know that were never meant to see were certainly some of us taken in for later processing and extra training and what you might generically call "classes" there but the connection wasn't supposed to be made you're not to remember that's not your prerogative and it's not part of your assignment and it's way way above your paygrade to know what goes where and in what order and why in any way at all the blackbox drift of histologic code recovered from the decomposing airframe star suspended in a column of black gelatin where we dug the pit beneath the jungle or rather beneath the secret airstrip which was itself beneath the ripped-up foliage and the torn limbs of the trees which were beneath the jungle

which is always underneath itself in serial pileup stratigraphic print-through of histocompatible star fusing the cellular voltage potentials where the patch clamp force-mends noisy coefficients between hemispheres

the muted lobotomy overdub dosing wetware star with massive analgesic weight of DC bias so the current overloads the current and you're strung out and down in a shift of blackout wattage through slow flesh the hydrocodone side effect of sweating thick black honey

and that's as far as memory goes or is even meant to that's all you need to know and really more than you *need* per se as long as flesh should remember what the mind doesn't get me some basic meatbound footage I want only the amino-sequence of spinal-cinema star

transferrable not so much "vertebrate" as just a non-collated lump sum of available and malleable bone capable of multiple configurations and of multipath distortion where the current couples to the substrate and the transistors each leak thick dark fluid on their open sides a natural exocrine painkiller call it dopamine adrenaline endorphins as you like call it fluidic-computer star run through the loop-gain buzz of hippocampal translations and the drugging proper to each so that we don't overhear too much the sound of the translative work itself hear only the blank nondescript phrasebook English of the eventual result How is it going? what has happened? what

more properly has passed? are you sir familiar with the latest events, no word in English that precisely gets conocer connaitter conoscere, to know as in to have known already to keep with the sphere of what you more or less presume to know rather than simply to be aware of us in a factual sense but

these difficulties are to be expected and speaking of expectations I'd have expected you to plan ahead for them and if you haven't that's a real problem and

don't come to me complaining about the amputation of your memory you ought to have learned to do without this by now we don't care about the mind knowing we care only about the body's ability to synchronize with feedback rhythm of the biomechanical star to fit into the given wave to break its neuromodulator patterns for the airborne acquisition of others the viral FM synthesis of router star in gray exhaust and blood

as gray as faces in that country where they've only printed a few proofs from the negatives and kept those mostly to the contact sheet never designed to be seen never showcased never of course dear god blown up to the size at which you could actually see whom they depict and doing what are you out of your fucking mind of course we haven't of course we won't look you're waiting on genetic-edit star in cairn of open-source scripts waiting for its technologies distilled from a fluid suspension for the energy reborn as nothing more than "information" and thence bioinformatics the telemetry from the washed-out malarial blood of the satellite the serocomplex mutagen of modem star in dubious translation with dry-plasma glyph that underlies the arid fire of your pulse

a hot reek panting and no sense of laden air around it or even the movement of the warm bellowing wind nothing like that just the simple desert fact of heat building the more-than-fact since "fact" would be the abstracted body of this the drained pseudo-anatomy and we're still on the level of the actual and desiccated ruins which themselves are principle preceding a kind of rebirth which will not at all be resurrection which will have little or nothing to do with the thing that died save on the purely material level but will nonetheless constitute a sort of rising from the grave the leprous ray fixed on the middle of the street in the hour of red heat neither daylight nor nighttime in the red-tending-green glare of the sky the bioluminescent wasps pinpricked and screaming where the DNA-computer star has overloaded spinal chamber of the pyramids

much as we were back then with the low furnace-banked roaring of the scarp and beachwrack behind and with the etiology of RF-hacking star still uncoiling down the amputee rows and matrices of bootscreen code, a sculpture garden of severed limbs and of marble flesh grafts that failed to take, now automatically updated – “automatically,” sure, why not, say it as you’ve been told to say it, say it as you’re trained – with still further transplant failure and the sort of provisional success we’ve long since trained ourselves to wring rhetorically and economically from the fact of what’s never just pure and simple death, though you’d been doing them a mercy if it were, which is precisely why it isn’t: nobody only dies nobody only goes down underneath the quiet gunfire from nowhere it’s all put to vile posthumous purpose when we heard and made the soft surprisingly gentle noise of it the way the mild air cracked apart around the gray muzzle flash and the jungle hardly even needed to move scarcely bore any post-partum scorchmark since delivery of ultrasound reprinted on its clipped and transferred womb)

(osseous star in CCTV dial-up with the bitrate slowed to granulocyte crawl, feedback from taped-over cells partitioned into buffer-heavy overdub bandwidths of the router star,

waiting and waiting and no real thought of what you’re waiting for, no criteria by which to recognize its unlikely arrival, timestamp a formality by now, no real set of coordinates fixed or held anywhere in the mind, loop-return radar of the GABA star draining and refilling by odd whiles while we slump through another rank of cassette backup, rack it, bring it up to tune, varispeed dampness and the harsh acoustic transients of tape-bias star under massive opioid dosage

with the dark honey crusting on stretchmarked skin where it slips from the dilated pores and the sense of time shot to all hell a slow viscous lurch occasional punctuation of a heavy intravenous equilibrium

the fossil record of the lag-spike star in sweet thick serum overloaded as antifreeze and

still waiting but all thought of target-lock entirely deleted now waiting only for itself and the way the time will suddenly run out beach you back on the hardened baked sand the coast of the ungainly hour with several already passed and no sense of their



passage bloodborne viral load of bootscreen star violently titrated from old serocomplex storage

hardly encrypted password protections gone to dribble of characters meant to look alphanumeric from a distance but actually unrecognizable the way a lazy commercial artist might scribble genetic damage of denatured letter and digit into the empty searchbar or the text field of transcriptase star downloading on an automated interval from the heavy-water blood of a pulped satellite

the karyotype star's sudden wrench out of liquid suspension with the heavier petrochemical elements spiking to the top now and fouled rain underneath or the seawater gone to impossible million-year rot after the oil spill and you'd be raking up the blackened feathers of starved or asphyxiate birds for as long as you could possibly imagine humor-dyed dross of fluidic-computer star recalling to black bile and melancholia the classification of obsolete disease and the doubly obsolete intervention of such medicine as you would only practice on yourself and only in the lapsed straits of a desperation come so late and after so much useless agony that you can almost set out to commit a kind of etiolate laughing suicide like this won't work but neither will it make anything worse like this might kill me and if it doesn't there's an infinitesimal chance that it'll help and either murder – not just death, but a definite form of negligent homicide, albeit you the victim and the killer both – or minor ministration would be better than what's happening right now the amateur autosurgery of modem star uploaded to a sketchy gray-market server and available in diagrammatic form for all who'd follow though without any record of the results

not that they'd probably want 'em or would have much idea what to do with them if they could be obtained and possibly they can cross-reference screen name as you were as you were now run a basic free easy search of the database for which you'd later have to pay \$15.99 monthly and worth every penny they assure us and see if the legal name pops up in any crime stories or the kind of genteel pained soft-shoeing obituary that's very careful not to mention cause of death but likewise careful not to make its evasion too obvious *passed away after a long and painful illness -> after a sudden medical emergency -> departed this world as the result of congenital disease of which we were all unaware until it tragically claimed his life* and no mention there of trepanning the file-system star with

anxiolytics to steady the hands lorazepam variant or enantiomer of the drugs they used to keep in military snipers' rations so the crosshair axis didn't clash too badly with the corneal-scratch atlas with the negative-plate skew matrix of DNA-repair star erupting in ancient suspicion of vitreous humors

the canopic storage of the optical-track star as glass or water as undeveloped carbon damage and the tendency toward certain kinds of readout when you've left the results alone for long enough presumably because there was something in them you feared or rather expected to fear so when it comes if it comes at all like bracketed parhelion around seek-judder star like the parenthesis of corrupt light throbbing off the uncentered placement of the solar aneurysm a blood clot visible in back-projection shadow against the sun a twist of viscous tissue writhing and dilating like an earthworm after rain siliceous ooze sloughed on the escarpment the backdate solar medicine the surgery of wetware star with sample voltage rewriting the protocol for fuel cell till spent lithium and hippocampal correction fluid should smear the preprogrammed translation

as in Hello how is it you fare or Greetings do things go well or Well met my fellow citizen and are the events of the day to your satisfaction the milky fouled precipitate of the translation's ergon metastable swarms of biomechanical star's peaked lexical variants

the signal domain stilled at cusp of strained twitch as strung out between the film editor's clamps and scrutinized with jeweler's loupe and brought by reference tone to tensions that it can't materially sustain the clipped-out waveform of the chemotherapeutic star eliding into cauterized amputee glyph

and we'd disappear quickly as possible into the bathrooms off the commons in the last hallway of the tenement the highest the one right beneath the roof where nobody lives for some obscure clause of municipal zoning code ignored in every other instance so god knows why anybody was paying attention this time presumably popped for it on a prior occasion presumably threatened to send the inspectors around like Mister now I'd love to cut you a deal don't think I wouldn't you think I make the kind of money makes me *want* to be a stickler for this shit? hell I'd prefer if I had my way I'd prefer to go home and turn the radio on and see if the Cuban lady from across the bridge showed up to do her weekly show though it's hardly weekly with the kind of weird schedule she keeps but I like that old boogaloo I like the music I can remember the little

kids playing they'd get empty paint cans empty coffee cans and fill some of them with gravel to use as maracas and hit others on the bottom with drumsticks and they'd crouch or sit up there in the girders of one of those construction sites been underway for a goddamn decade and not a single sign of progress whatever "progress" would mean at least some drywall or some floors and they all knew how to play the clave you know what the clave is? they call it the Bo Diddley beat these days like boom-boom-*boom*, BAP-BAP and interrupt it with the ballgame with the scores with the two out blah blah melodrama so don't talk to me about being a hardass it's a hardass is *my* boss it's a hardass is my boss's boss so why don't we see what kind of petty cash you might carry around)

(hallways, utility tunnels, access hatches, vertical passages through the acoustic-tiled ceiling unused by anybody and unlikely to be discovered by more than a very few, the scar-encrypted architecture of the dummy-chamber pyramid over DNA-computer star's enteric cartridge

and the discovery, though not his, that the scene so fondly recalled by the city loanshark was, of course, entirely staged, set up for some semi-documentary movie promoting a record label in Harlem or the Bronx, though, staged or not, there was real enough magic in it, and the records were incidentally great, guys calling themselves el Maestro and el Professor and el Cantante and la Voz, and

backscatter drainage of epinephrine dopamine endorphins through the blood-brain barrier biochemical star's electron-gun remainder still firing with the static building up on one side of remembered glass the splay limbs lost in the marsh and the swamp the terminal stress of the airframe star crashed in some contretemps about a country in which we've never been officially at war of course what do you think you're dealing with amateurs here is that all you know how to recall the declarations and the U.N. resolutions and a bunch of other shit that absolutely does not matter except as formality to be entombed in the annals of mass credulity and

then the prison afterward giving the soi-disant prophet the chance to preach from his gang cell to a whole black of prisoners who weren't political or religious in any programmatic way until you locked them up and if one were to judge the purpose of the carceral state strictly by its effects one would be compelled to conclude that it existed for a few basic purposes namely {1} an incredible amount of money made by the worst

people on Earth several of whom you've almost certainly voted for however you think you were voting they like to say around the Beltway that there's no real way to vote against Israel not in the United States and how much more so for the prison system {2} an incredible amount of slave labor, see item 1, and {3} the psychic and physical ruination of people adjudged otherwise worthless to the economy save as the process of their decay or violent dismantling should provide employment to others slightly less worthless and if it's a graded double negative well that's exactly what it should be but

{4} don't forget this one the religio-political volatilization of people who've probably never lent much thought to either and often correct enough I mean you can impeach the Nation of Islam on any number of grounds but you can't pretend it's anything but basically correct in the assumption that America is a machine for the dismembering and scrap sale of black people and

not exactly thus here but not entirely unkin either with the choleric shit smeared on the floor of the cell in great alluvial fans near its bars and edges hoping that you might at least get a guard sick or something I don't know man small hopes small ambitions because you're ripe for prisoner exchange or political bargaining as you are right now locked up with 50 "co-conspirators" many of whom you've never seen before and several of whom you know to look at but not to name because

they're probably not going to kill you, right, if that were going to happen it would've happened already, you've been here for weeks and the editorial-column demand for vengeance has already aged itself stale and this is a country where they're not so shy about public executions, hell, even put 'em on the state-run TV channel every so often or broadcast a radio play-by-play like it's the fucking American League Championship Series, so probably not that, probably not RF-hacked nerve splice beneath remote-execute star but

clearly you've been held here to some purpose, otherwise you would've been solicited for bribes by now or just extorted, they know you don't have any goddamn money but money isn't the only thing a prison guard wants out of a prisoner or a prison, eh, slave labor to a private purpose on the low end, like sew my socks like patch my pants like can't you get the sweat out of the band and brim of this hat, all the way up through coercive sex or use as a trade chip with someone else who plans to rape the prisoner to the offices of the drug mule, listen, I've got a thing coming in next week and I

need a place to keep it and your belly's empty anyway, doesn't look like you've been eating not that I blame you with the kind of shit we give you people though it's all that you deserve it's more it's more, so I'm gonna lease the space between your mouth and your asshole for a while, and maybe if you do it right this time and I'm sure I can trust you, well just maybe there's a small chance that I might cut you in next time

as the signal cuts in through the mended glial framebuffer of radiosurgical star with cheap transistors units blaring in crosscurrent between cell blocks where the man who calls himself a mujahid is going to corner you in time and either shout you down or wait until you're sick of your own carcass and then intubate remaindered meat with oily rhetoric enough to turn it to some aftermarket purpose)

(rush and hissing strain of mica-glinting knife-edge harmonics bowed col legno through a shrieking blue jay's throat and

pickup coil of phagocytic star editing signal into phosphate exoskeleton, the lithic cysts and faults transcoded to a brownout bloc of hardened-sugar light, each ashlar the adenosine star's fossil-record autopsy

as "by the side wall of the cease-to-do-evil," the high tense carotid drumming of purpose restored to your daylight, though it be only toward suicide or incomplete self-mutilation, as though it were only the self mutilating only the self, only such narrow phantom restriction of carnage, goddamn ridiculous, rotten cybernetic haloes melting around retroviral text of bootscreen star

and the direction back in the nervous walk, wetware star's hippocampal guidance system in script-field of thickened glandular translation, the washout of the epinephrine milk, stretching or tensing or anyway milling the infrared sarcomere, electrical-grid transient spike and reuptake of file-system star a postsynaptic wash of serotonin autocensorship

as under the deposit fuser as over the sinter as in the heated mending of the artificial bone or the bone real enough with only artificial restorations active,

banked reactor but still stammering forward on cartography of GABA star's canceled surface-return as we came around the corner into that other city, likewise literally coastal but feeling different than any near rise or fall of the sea over the downs over the hills over the slagged earth and the xenon technics leaching into the ashen

ground, phytoremedial software milking blacksite pictography of weapons-system star we've called disarmed

though its rearmament, we likewise know and are bound never to admit, will be – or more properly will have been, because always-already future-past, more calibrated than subjunctive, a pluperfection waiting only on the triggers in the eye, target lock of gamma-knife star hunting down the autosurgical indices – a question of seeing, a vision less restored than mangled back to certain recognitions, necropolis of DNA-repair star actuated by magnetic interference blowing off the solar flares

in hard black bloodclot or aneurysmal constriction through the glial map, the narrows of the brackish river hardening till final venographic printout as little more than crusted stream of bile or something comparably bitter, the fouled-sloe body liquor you were waiting on when southern archipelago coiled backward as sacral stinger to transplanted continental spine, a vertebrate massif reorganized around the chemical-weapon star

and all osseous code to retroact therefrom, machine language roughly grafted to xenonucleic star's bandwidth as torn wall of a pig's heart or arterial valves torn from massacred cows might well revive the pulse of our half-dead captain and head of subnominal state, he who doesn't say so much in public nor would be recognized, I'd guess, in half the major cities in half the countries in the world, who moves behind, who sits back, who occupies a second layer of violent crabbed awareness in the dark rooms where they project the maps on the walls or just call them up in targeted graphics-card malfunction, the optical-track errors precision-maimed to suit their purpose, like

this is the region this is the countryside this is the autonomous zone claimed for nation by an ethnic minority which we ourselves have done everything we could to murder and dispossess but then the local strongman – not to put to fine a point on it: our local strongman; you remember and will be taught to forget; '79-'88 or whatever it was and a necessary pivot after the Islamic Revolution elsewhere and of course we couldn't hold him accountable then sure fine tell yourself that miserable bullshit oh yes we would've gone in guns a-blazing

by which of course we mean *we* wouldn't have gone in at all would have sent for men who'd send for men who'd send for men on a thousand Doppler layers with the automated fade-in the difference tone of phase-transition star titrated down to some

colloidal suspension that wouldn't quite kill you though it's apt to turn your damn skin blue if you drink too much though of course it's not for you and anyway you never actually suggested in so many words that anybody drink it not as such not per se not certainly in a manner subject to prosecution or the standards of ethical proof whatever those might pass for in the moment and whatever in the obverse unequally passes for them

set across the lying sign for reuse as call-up friction of the function's brackets chafing against variable sickness designer viruses of coefficient's bioweapon star

and sample voltage on the long odds with all oscillation ultra-high-frequency now much oh much too high for anyone to hear though of course we'll wrench it awkwardly and bluntly down into the audible spectra later take radiography of RF-hacking star's whining rib-fissure and the hairline spinal cracks growing like overtones grow prominent in striate image-bundle of coiled feedback

and the sound around the unknown-recorded see what I mean what you weren't aware you were registering fobbing off just picking up as blowby and blowback and the nothing attendant thereupon the simpler-than-"condition" because wholly unremarked upon even by historians puffing themselves up with "novelty of perspective" or however you should like pharmaceutical scheduling of tape-bias star as the movement of the photomachined air soughs down into a falling drone of spin-out and the overclocked breath likewise hits a gradient of downshift somewhere very distant from the lungs along connective tissue in your neck and among the rustle of the loosened rearmost molars as in biomechanical star's cartilaginous airlock stuttering to reprint the black density of gases

and the blackness unseen because we chose to unsee it, not just not-to-see but to erase and then to wreck the goddamn medium, and not just the individual device but the whole method of storage, the server farms euthanizing epizootic text of lag-spike star

though nothing more native and no foreign instruments can really work the bad magic of its spurious extraction, still, well, we've learned to pretend and to let the pretense serve for daylight accord long enough that everybody just forgets to be angry and then to be disappointed or depressed and then to notice very much at all, cauterized meat-cinema of sample-printer star and the rush imparted back to panics somewhat

below official amplitude of war, so many decibels distributed among so many hertz and acoustic injury the flat stock-footage pretext for the fact of ferroconcrete split and blast barriers blackened)

(“above the drizzle-drone of wingtips beating,” massive targeted overdose of chemotherapeutic star across the blood-brain barrier

and deep as the grain of the latex paint the granulation of cement the macrophage star’s CCTV edits where the aniline film ran out and we had to rearticulate cancers from likely patterns in the tainting of the rain

as by the marsh up on the northern coast not so very far from here as a matter of fact and something beyond fact besides as not at all back west where the sea is the presence down toward which the city sinks nor further east when same again but after Babylon prattle of genocide slums on the roll of the land to the Levantine shore if that’s the word you want doesn’t cart in too many implications of the factitiously Rich and Strange apart from what you’re actually seeing like

spinal neurons of white-phosphorus star contagious when loosed from the negative plates as a ream of capsid pollen of the ideograph burst from the denatured protein shell and bioavailable spindrift of transcriptase star across cortical membrane down through blackout sites where white flesh never answers to the televised call nor finds itself arraigned at end of telecine chin

not that we weren’t trying you understand not for lack of any effort the desiccated flesh-remainders of the wet-gate star’s abortifacient germline and the pesticides and herbicides and vermicides and every kind of minor body-murder building toward the larger though always in such terms as we were free to deny like It’s only supposed to go so far it was never meant to eradicate the plant life in an entire region much less to cause the extinction of any species animal vegetable or mineral were the latter possible were it even conceivable

which of course it is despite your thinking or not thinking so of course how could it be any other way what hasn’t been alive which is likewise to ask what isn’t now dead and waiting for the strangeness of its faceless resurrection and so often brought to the black light of anonymous rebirth as script-contingency of bioweapon star



the hardware the software the forced updates and the automatic link with an obsolete satellite or so at least we're happy to say to allege it's just up there not doing anything yes of course it's been acquired and sold and reacquired a dozen times since the official date of obsolescence but that's just what you'd call a rainy-day fund an insurance policy or a speculative investment only a question of corporate interlocks and their various and dizzying intercontamination the way the same disease-print takes on typebar characteristics of the local torture implements the weaponry developed for the war in this particular biome and climate and elevation above sea level the text-file waveband of the wetware star's immunocompromise and breached containment-architecture and

if there are medical side effects well I'm sure we regret the hassle ma'am do fervently regret to trouble you or to have troubled you or the fact that we'll inevitably need to be troubling you further and by "need" I mean "want" and by "want" I mean nothing more or less complicated than "find profitable" contriving further researches upon botched specimen of serocomplex star

the bacterial typing the text-entry field of phage star among hacked genetic logins and

you can see them still sometimes in what isn't a long file winding up and down the coast, another different shore here, east is seaward and no doubt a half-dozen names for the bays and inlets, half-dozen per English, French, and Vietnamese apiece, or whatever troika of languages fits the delta-wave convulsion of old invader/new invader/locals, sleep spindle come to standing wave in gamma-knife star's IP signup waiting

for the clinic to open, which means, in this case, for the last clinic to close, because you'd better believe the occupying army isn't about to operate two clinics gratis at once, and you'd better believe "gratis" means anything but what it says, that this is contractor money, as ever, and would absolutely not be disbursed to the tune of a single red fuckin' cent unless they expected to make back a hundred times their investment, at least, and if the investment's public money and all the profit's private, if we're "collecting data" out here for the National Institutes of Health or Centers for Disease Control and happen to route it back to a pill manufacturer or hospital cartel before the

databases of our alleged employer, the disk-architecture of a radiopharmaceutical star waiting where the blackbox drowns in a squalid column of darkened spinal gelatin, well

that's just the nature of the thing and I frankly don't know how you ever expected to do differently or to do much of anything at all without at least some enantiomer symmetry breaking down the light, carcinogen medicine and the unnecessary countdown film-chained right into the printouts of the nuclear-weapon star,

and the small crowd, mostly women and their deformed or disabled children, waiting near the leprous flaking plaster statuary of the previous invader's public places, lisping for the *z* in *plaza* or just long *a* like a Bostonized *bath* for Gallic *place*, the voltaic pile where brine soaks through the porous backbone's sheath, anterior-horn autopsy-star built up to an MRI of symptoms we'll be very delicately certain to pretend we don't understand and causes we'll act as though we even have to guess, then as though we can't manage to guess them,

as if the same few weren't basically aware and "sharing intel" across the fake partitioning of agencies thus named simply not to give appearance of exactly what they are, a parallel government responsible to nobody at all and in no way restricted to the operations of a single nation or even to the political concept of the nation-state itself, a malleable and mutagenic structure than can and must outgrow any failed capsule of continent flesh)

(ziggurat for biointerface star printing out the haywire DNA

and its enantiomers elsewhere, mother city no more distant from necropolis than the phase-swap on a nasal and one plosive's relocation from the clenched teeth to a choking glottal stop, dentate specificity against the less particular but maybe more impactful fact of drowning, that *this*, of all possible methodologies and all dubious means to results likewise so dubious they can hardly be called "ends," is the place and the manner, the how of your dying, "the Suicide Bridge," topography always the angiograph hunting after that specific locus, GABA star's coordinates target-locked into the white flash across all nerves and along the broader veins femoral delta ulnar pinhole the alluvial fan of the splay artery, a final overexposure, anterior horn aliased rebooting nerve-terminal star with ranks of xenon script denatured

and the overload that breaches genome cage of voltage-filter star toward a different shape in the mouth, that physical and no less adopted by the exact place at the exact time, a weight on the tongue a cache of smooth broken pebbles in the pouch of cheekmeat between gums and worn teeth the extruded vertebrate fuel cylinder of wetware star now hiving the drowned archives all the subroutine contagion and botched throughput bandwidth scheduled for destruction on last core dump, as though it could ever be so goddamn easy to dispose of anything, much less what will be immunized against disposal by the sheer fact of our trying to be done with it, hackles raised and phage star's serotyping blackout-wild with carbon text of antibody panic

on the telecine chain running off the incomplete and imperfect victim, nuclear-weapon star on tape backup and impossible to delete much past a few outdated signs replaced with their software-update stammer of genetic matter filling in stomata, tracheotomy script blossoming the dark carcinogen stenography, a narrowed spinal column and the antigen star's multitrack immunoassay clipping out the signal domain slicked down with haphazard strew of luminol

or what was only meant, and fails, to look haphazard, offhand, do this like you don't mean it and maybe the results will finally come, attach no importance to the act and maybe the world will relent, weaponized as it has and must've been against your evident if unclear need for an answer, the dirty, sooty light of it, the lymph-pearled tainted glare of wet-gate star's immunocompromise,

and weren't you willing still to weigh up what dross-gold could be harvested from the brackish blood, weren't you interested in scraping through the dead lands for the mudstone where they might've turned cystitic with precious metals on each screen-refresh, compression-artifact star mutagen through late layers of petrol-weeping shale until we come up with some auric tincture ready as hell for resale to people who mistakenly think it'll cure their psoriasis, rheumatism, arthritis, diabetes, varicose and spider veins, yessir right up to cancer of the brain and bone, to HIV and AIDS, to lapsed oncology's white slowdown recrudescence, baffling the dead audio to playback motor-speed so low that the exterminated clade of the tape-bias star can splice itself in with the genetic feedback-shriek of dying cells

and with the fossil record of bypassed file-system star in slippery vector of water  
needling porous up through oils with which we couldn't power much of anything, save  
possibly the ongoing world, save maybe ossuary radio of modem star

in the blackness over the blackness and the thin excuse of a lit world between,  
you know, one dark frame to another, one undeveloped negative and either all charred  
to deep nigredo or still throbbing out the unitary planar pane of the milk-blind albedo-  
light as you prefer, surface return a hungry luminous green zero against ground-  
penetrating radar's chatter of null-character result in failed attempts to exhume the  
DNA-computer star

from territory such as you and I should really know better than this by now, or so  
they're more than willing to insist, overdub chemosynthesis of router star live but  
grayscale on the granulocyte air and much more than just gray market, or much less,  
depending on the scale whereby you name value's gradation

meaning it can be sold at a real profit, you bet your life, old son, listen, we're not  
just dealing with any old army camp and field hospital and invasion rites and hospice for  
the locals maimed in such a way as to allow them the useless hope that they'll recover  
which of course they won't it means nothing at all recover to what? to any world in  
which recovery still serves alleged purpose? you see what I mean you remember the old  
feller's definition that the "mind" is not to be mistaken as coeval or coterminous with  
either the brain or the individual psyche that the "mind" is rather a compound of  
organism and environment change either and you change both "mind" the radiography  
of biointerface star's nerve-software translation-agents climbing up and down the codon  
like mildly predatory insects with wings that seem too dry for the wet lazy heat of the air  
like swarm of albino bees where dry honeycombs still grow unauthored in black halved  
trunks of dead trees around the permanent-night blacksite of the chemical-weapon star

which is to say that without its environment the mind will cease not only to be  
but ever to have been irrecoverable even to itself 404 error dialogue boxes piling up like  
plaque on your teeth vitreous humor a failing quarantine chora of the DNA-repair star's  
leprous code

the disk reformatted and the vines now sterile where they grow through long-  
prone flesh or find the corpses supine with their uniforms rotted off in the whip and  
blanch of the coastal weather the sores on the skin and then the accumulations of salt

that just look like sores and none of it very cold nor very hot though a mile toward either lateral horizon would be enough to freeze you dead or to overheat you panting in a nightmare of the body alone but which the mind still must observe entirely powerless to act or intervene the ataxia of sleep-paralytic star while carbon sculpture of your own genetic wreckage rises spindly and too tall at the end of the dead jungle of your dying bed a pile of soft dark earth lumped over scarred-out airstrip or just crumbling limestone ledge where choral reefs attempt and fail to earth massed polypary shriek)

(ought to know, mate, ought-to ought not to see but to have known, it was right there, know I got to make up, know I got to make up my dying bed, Jesus make up my dying, my dying bed, and feedback contrails coiling on the scanner bed of chemotherapeutic star's critical overdose

as how long till genetic-weapon star in radiotoxic bandwidths introduced and live on the air and how long live or what air for them to move in another metaphor then necessary for the ON AIR signs in the broadcaster's booth as we'll primarily be moving through various reams of exhaust then through exhumed and incinerated strata of medical remainders and fossil records and the neon-pinprick matrices of gamma-knife star's weapons-system telesurgery but

there's still room to move till then and will be room for some to move even then though you don't you dare go mistaking yourself about how Africans who rarely come into the cities or the fabled Amazonian tribe entirely out of contact with technologized Western civilization is going to have a better time once shit truly starts to collapse

17 named storms in a single summer-to-fall hurricane season

the ticks are suddenly airborne now and the common diseases have begun to turn vaccine-resistant there's a whole evolutionary momentum a kind of epigenetic gravity at work in the antigen scripts of the bootscreen star

but some will still insist batting aside the earth-scales the fallen spots of lunar caustic the whole viral load of operating-system star that no still things haven't gone *truly* south, a violent misnomer again, they're getting souther and souther all the time, for what dyou think "global south" has come to replace "third world" in so much conferencegoing parlance, "the end of the Cold War," fuck out of here, absolutely all the rest of our international politics and a good chunk of the domestic ones are dedicated to

the maintenance of Cold War conditions whether or not there's an actual Cold War on which to blame them, serology of modern star rewired by the malarial resin hardening inside the dead geosynchronous satellite,

we adore the Cold War and would do anything and have done quite a bit to have it back, we tried blanket "terrorism" at first and got Afghanistan and Iraq and were, to be quite frank, inexcusably ungrateful to the Mujahidin and Ba'athists we were so happy to install in each of those former and unlisted territories of ours the unnamed crown, Masonic pyramid's eye, why not, who the hell's telling the difference, dummy chamber over histocompatible star's hypogeum where we keep the canceled genetic records of the children unborn because conceived to slavery or born and sold immediately and the green seep of the radiation blaring through the walls the roof the entablature the ten-foot-high sconces along the rectangle's longer sides each presumably for the upright standing crypt of somebody with no carcass to bury and no name with which to seal the stele no containment-unit login to adenosine star's archive of genetic cryosurgery

the text only addressable when so cold it can be relied upon not to move and when the burning scream of the chill of your instrumentation will at least refrain from breaking the glass facing of the gauges in the cockpit where

we test out boundary-layer coefficients on the biomechanical airframe star before suspending it in an enormous block of brownout spinal gelatin behind the blood-brain barrier and several miles beneath the southern border of the southernmost state with which we have either a treaty of official cooperation or an open declaration of war or even just "friendly" diplomatic relations how you like that resampling cytopathology of nuclear-weapon star on waveforms titrated beneath the rigid sunrise radiation and sample trigger target-locking all their outmost rings' stiff playback valence

as in the gapped electron scansion and the teeth smashed out of the mouths that sometimes still have the temerity to smile at each other or at us down here and you do start to wonder if you're given to reflection – and I don't recommend that you acquire the habit if you weren't born to it – that Jesus Christ maybe we've run into some real helpless sadomasochists here maybe they *enjoy* having their teeth kicked in it's a strange little economy of means and of actions you know you have to stomp the first couple times but then the combination of old injury and malnutrition builds up and soon you can knock their teeth out with a really gentle gesture just barely flicking the toe

of your boot hell even wrench them with a bad grip on the squeaky incisors or canines and just flex the wrist and there they come sometimes not even bloody it's got something to do with vitamin deficiencies and mineral shortage in the bloodstream something to do with the arachnoid matter's embargo on the calcified star except for weaponized use as neurotransmitter

except for sea-lapped sculpture of some exterminated civilization out where ligand-gated star still bleeds potassium diskette and data-rot coterminous with the mainframes in the unlikely marble the limestone more probably and shellacked with plaster dredged up from the floor of the swamp that was also lending all the moisture to their staple crops so that they literally built themselves out of a home so that the city is the ongoing and perfectly scrupulous record of a people forced into starvation every building its own quadrature and coordinates of a particular famine each structure the surgical implement of a peninsula begun to consume itself via peristaltic triggers with no food to answer them nothing in the belly but more raw material for architecture nothing but phosphorylate star's empty login cache to an irradiated ossuary sweating out radio-broadcast virus

and sure that's what we'd like to tell ourselves and since we're the occupying power that's what we're *going* to tell ourselves and to tell you and god help anyone who contradicts it: that the locals' teeth come out so easily because they've lived so long in a zone of perilous radiation, and that they still occasionally smile because they like so much to be mastered, enjoy telescoping the trackless horror of a day around at least some central target, the sore red-edged fistula from which all other lesions' exegesis may be reverse-engineered)

(application denied, grounds of impairment real but insufficient, i'faith begorrah do you tell me so, spluttering Hiberno-Saxon dialect lame halt and thirdhand in the judges' chambers where you're expected not just to tolerate the judgment of your betters but to thank them for the time they spent deliberating the precise bureaucratic language and administrative contours of the way you're going to die,

because you *are* going to die, they've seen to that, matter of, say, a few months vs. a few years but nothing more much uncertain than that, grammatical surgeries of phage star signal-clipped out of ground-penetrating radar's bounceback seeping dummy

hypogeum in acid green glare from the still unsettled earth, amino sequence piled up to voltaic spine of wetware star in topography of old protein misfolding,

the mutagen error finalized so many times it fits right into more or less indistinguishable texts, codicil of glaucous humor and glial rot like sleet lacquered cold upon disk-image star's long data rot in server farms relocated from desert to approximate soundstage tundra, whatever struck us as available in the moment of fawning after availability, whatever falsely promised the likewise false resistance of the seed vault already flooded and the mess in the corner of the eye, an onscreen artifact where thermal remnants engineer the modem star as reboot-sequence bleedthrough,

film's verso and the old cassettes recorded on both sides over and over till each is a necropolis of semi-cancelled image, what could neither die nor do anything but be killed, what met death as something other than eradication, violent integrase edits still incapable of wholly erasing tape-backup star's pharmacogenomics

and the broken branch the sign more like yew's ideograph than anything so alphabet now and sound probably encoded somewhere but this no phonography for the telling of it radionuclide star embedded in genetic damage of the acetate demo

and the field around a sunken flat between what you wouldn't quite call mountains and what you could only unwisely call the sea

not that there are so many terminologies left over nor that the lack of remainder is very accidental at all no thanks no sir no citizen you're given the words you're meant to use and god help you if you should feel it necessary to subsist upon some other unofficial language something found on the print-through the dried germline resampling of the wet-gate star in cellular cross-section strung by voltage clamp or just extrusion rod plunged through shared center of a million lined-up nuclei each so shallow that the stacking of them hardly escapes microscopic scale not that they and we and all aren't trying not that we haven't done what struck us in the moment at least as semi-necessary to collate some parataxis of disease-slide star

to retune and set a reference tone for chemosynthetic grammar after gamma-knife star's telesurgical reauthoring of body-scripts unsettled

and the hollow syringe later milked for the mess of its byproduct though in the moment we promised that it was strictly a question of spatial orientations and making sure it all fit beneath the lens around the edges of the cornea to be rewritten cut up and



sometimes mended burnt back together as in sintering along white stress-shriek lines or just the old proud flesh outstanding from the fact of a wound that cannot fade less cicatrix than neoplasm a fresh cancerous organism rising from your worn-out meat the spinal cinema the cyclical resonance titrated for a wetware star's fuel cylinder and

yes there were contracts and there is therefore breach of contract but not such that you'd worry because not such that you'd be able to do anything about it even if you knew it was happening even if you could claim to think to feel to suspect how you'd been done wrong in the vaguest terms the most dissolute and unfocused sense of grievance and of loss like your skin suddenly bereft of the first touch it didn't cringe from after 19 months of willed sterile quarantine because of the horror waiting permanently at each of quarantine's edges like

horrendous retrospection and the recurrent optical flaws of the image-bundle star a spliced sarcomere cable-snake with proteinaceous coating like fingernail or thin translucent horn the way the look goes wrong and all it should think to look upon is thus wronged in that hopeless transaction stay with me now don't fall too far afield don't take your eye off the bouncing ball which sites a suicide technology in the wretched lyric flesh like here's a razor here's a penknife here's one of the small blades on the end of a paintbrush's shaft as used to cut through paperboard and stiffer forms of bonded paper and here's a bottle the contents of which might kill you but might also just leave you asphyxiated for long enough that come the charcoal milkshake and the days of rancid bloody vomiting you'll turn out to be braindead and get backlogged in some remaindered state facility the terms of which are even grimmer than those of the shittiest private institution because this is the place where they keep the terminal cases

i.e. the people worth no money

and you're looking at yes everything you'd think you'd be looking at we're talking stolen prescriptions and well it seems preposterous to call them "orderlies" but orderlies showing up stoned or drunk or strung out for lack of their own opioids or just meth-sick on the come-up or the come-down and swapping out the drugs on purpose or via something less than "accident" because "accident" at least implies the screen-ghost of effort remember the fiberscope flashlight shining through remember the chemical-weather printout of the arthroscopic star

and we'll be quiet if we're asked to be at this point anyway and we'll look around the room with that kind of forced and cheap eyes-wide-open graveness as in I'm not saying it but you *know* what I'm not saying the same way there are and have for many years been TV commercials which make a joke of prison rape yessir very normal country you've got there be a shame if something happened to upset its psyche 300 million-odd people each of whom knows he or she lives so fully beneath the predatory caprices of a carceral imperative that anybody might just get wrung up for no good reason and locked in a room for a few years and raped because the guards don't care or maybe even with the guards egging the rapist on maybe taking bets maybe picking sides like at a cockfight

but most likely using the interlude of chaos to transact a little business of their own I've got a fella I'm supposed to meet at the back door and you've got a very nice young lady waiting for you in the hallway in front of the warden's empty office and the three or four of us depending on the exigencies will all be upstairs soon enough amen and don't you worry it's a plastic pellet it's a sandwich baggy wrapped and wrapped to the size of an earplug and slathered with canola oil it's a lubricated and flavored condom re-detailed thus to smuggle in an alternate disease)

(engineered the anti-star and all wronged Earth thence backward in supposed sealanes of the rumored submarine intrusion and of course cell-toxin grid of the coordinate-system sky

cytopathology of weapons-system star our lone remaining topographic principle save occasional drainage and panicked reprogramming of GABA star depleted on the heat-sensitive filmstock or the readout after thermograph debugging where we still replace the hulks of the burned-out cars along the entrances to tunnels of whose existence we pretend to be aware some out of and some into the interdicted country or the penitentiary grounds and yes there are different tunnels for each direction and you wouldn't want to walk the wrong way down the right passage or vice versa for positioning of cameras and so forth for CCTV of the macrophage star's compromised immunologic software and

you got the shit yeah man I got the shit calm down or no but the guy's meeting us up top pleased for the moment by the privilege of using bad pulp jargon you've picked up crustaceating across the seafloor of shopworn dialect stereotactic imagery of the

chemotherapeutic star's white hardware and the white blare of overload-albedo in the cells restored to such scream of zero-hungry health as the corrupt bones may not yet endure as blow the fuses in spinal computation of xenonucleic star

but yeah anyway and one way or the other and all ways combined or separately and parallel yeah we've got the shit we're supposed to have so head up top to the control room if that's still what you want to call it the Command Center blah blah a surveillance aerie of false chrome surfaces scuffed to show the dun matte plastic underneath the bakelite and cheap substitutes even for zinc or tin syncope's reboot on nerve-terminal star rolling back the blurred strata of rolling-shutter script like a sawdust odometer

and you know basically what the deal what the idea is and everybody else does too or at least everybody who takes a proper concern with the order of this instant mind a *proper* concern as in "belonging to" the old sense root of property propriety and for the moment proprioception if you care to go that far pain sensors screaming axon varnished in dead throughput of fluidic-computer star the hardened slabs of backbone gelatin in what was supposed to be polymerase cusp of screen burn like thirsty screech of lye ghost on the margins of the missing inland sea or just index of oxidized tape-wounds for use as atlas to erased ROM of peptide-computer star

the marks on the actual material substratum the white stains and bits of cracked black ferric surface maybe ferrous I can't remember which is which it's a question I believe of the amount of iron atoms to the amount of oxygen I want to say that ferrous would be  $\text{FeO}_2$  and ferric  $\text{FeO}_3$  and suchlike babble to fill time to take the edge off nerves we all want to pretend we don't have up here because

we're all Professionals you see the sort of people who will loudly proclaim ourselves to be Some Bad Motherfuckers if it should come to that or just Old Hands Old Soldiers Veterans of Wars Foreign Domestic Secret and Undeclared

you must remember that the shop-talk bullshit and the aftermarket tattoos picked up for a song against regimental marginalia and a cheap Geocities page detailing the insignia of all the units conscripted for a particular uh call it a police action and all the awards handed out for that campaign or for any other campaign in which those units' members are very likely to have served depending on age status of enrollment officer training school or just right to basic and enantiomer capsid glyph off retroviral bandwidth of the router star where cellular text-archive tends to pictograph detuned

like stop-loss policy and then the very complicated – though really as to purpose as to evident appeal not all that complicated – policy on whether you’re officially military or officially an unofficial observer or just working for a private contractor and yourself no doubt an independent contractor too with the work itself insured but not much insurance on your own personal carcass or rather on the corpse which would overload and blow out all weak categories of “personality” of selfhood the unredeemed and very plausibly unredeemable chemotactic bones of airframe star crawling through the broken horizontal hold of the security-cam hangar where everything shows up in bulbous milky glare called finely differentiated strains of lunar cancer

the bacterial testing the Gram stain the cyanotype prints taken from the serotyping star’s undeveloped negatives hung in heavy dark fluid ossifying to white calcium crystallography in the canopic jar save when we draw it off as syrup first and drink it against the unlimited term of our grave-occupancy how long how long how even to know if they tell you count the limits of a time defined by how it’s used and count the use then only by the speed at which it wears out bodies become useless namely ours namely

meat-core fuel rod still able to light up the sample-trigger star where we wait in the booth a-level with the tops of the guard towers at the corners of the exercise yard and watch the men with rifles smoking joints while we erase all the timestamps from absolutely every bit of video and run back through the archives on the angles at the front and back doors to counterfeit in retrospect some plausible malfunction had to happen after we left last night but before we got here this morning had to call down the infection rate of the remote-execute star as dense black froth like bitter basalt sweat swept over the cheap circuitry in dark hard tide to cast lithic saliva’s frozen print on flayed transistors)

(idiolect tetanus for sample-trigger star in motor proteins, lash of sugar-soluble code binding the myosin raster,

afflict specifically and, from specificity of the affliction, acquire categorical dropsy, a spread a pooling a disseminate dark blue as where antifreeze leaks from loose access panel of biomechanical star and old proprietary code bleeds in a lymph-thick set of incommunicable droplets, bracketed by surface-tension skin of rotten pus or simple

inaccessibility of visual notation, wetware star's hippocampal translator in writing system left along with corpses on the coast

when we had to run or perhaps less had to than simply chose to, knowing more or less what it would mean to stay, knowing rather the fear of that uncertain knowledge and the imperative not to find out more about it than fear would augur, because

we were a leaving people, we were a commercial tribe given its boundaries and parameters by little more or less than the fact of scheduled disappearance, massive legislated overdose of chemotherapeutic star from sky in which the asbestos layers and ablative armor that counterpose cancer into a series of thick diagnostic slices hadn't quite yet been installed, immunocompromise of modem star across the blood-brain barrier,

so move out quick, you wouldn't want to be caught alone here, and to be caught is always to be caught alone, however further followed by the members of what would've been your tribe until the precise moment of your discovery, whereafter there's only the scramble and the likelihood of interrogation surveillance supervised custody ankle monitors bail jesus the bail cash bail is the medieval punishment of a failed state and any nation making use of it has put off all claim to be anything more than a protection racket on the grand scale a dispersed nuclear medicine promising and lying in the promise to save you from such download radiographies as router star will cast for in the bandwidth of a gamma-knife amputation

as black bloodclot or the browned knot of the hysterically reproducing cells mitotic whine where karyotype star separates along the frequency-profile edge of the tape bias and we all recur as phantoms saved to the eye archival optic dross the aqueous or vitrine necropolis of DNA-repair star hived in glial mesh as honeycomb bereft

deprival of all but useless bitter eye-sap serocomplex login to peptide-computer star and the blood-proteins thence derived vein-metal's yaw or pitch to complicated molecule we'll later patent toward a psychotropic distribution

the sculpted interference of the radiopharmaceutical star as attack vector nullified and turned outward in the specious image of the security we promise and neither can nor will deliver but

that's all a bit post-hoc by now don't you think I mean that's retrospection you weren't considering it in the moment neither promise's instant nor the million billion

serial and contiguous and superdivisible instantations of the way the promise failed was meant to fail was never anything but the predictive-text ghost of its own automated failure as botched firmware to disarmament of nuclear-weapon star still bioactive in the silos

as was meant to be

as could hardly have been otherwise that was the plan as far as there was any plan at all the broken eye-biome of security and the keening fact of its loss debridement via telesurgical star's acoustic weapons or

just proud flesh tamped down again around the body spot-flayed to bring the general meat-water table up to the level of the risen skin so nobody could tell bruise-edema or eschar from the tissues we pretend to have left untouched although who of course could believe that who remains so trusting well

astonishing to say of course but some do some will whether through true simple ignorance or the vast and unstinting complication of the desire to remain credulous and I don't know I couldn't tell you which is which we're not quite in enemy territory here since we officially have no enemies and are officially in no territory but our own yet still I can tell you this: it's a work it's a job it's a definite elision of all the definite topographies by which the riven world tore itself open for sluice of GABA star's depleted scanner-bed archaeology or

the blue fluid underneath the wiped-out recon field when we zero out all the drones' telemetry for a rescan of the monitored Earth for biointerface star's molecular outputs resampled and aliased into place as areas of usable noise as simple static to which no one need pay any attention despite its sensory prominence in a dark room with only a few small bulbs shining near waist-level across thousands of square feet and the monitors high as the walls and often riveted to them but somehow casting very little light beyond whatever patch of grid-flesh they depict extracted spinal cinema of xenonucleic star's hydrocarbon titration

annexing the old bone-formulae to unfamiliar genetics in the hope of rendering them soluble and nothing more than we'd already seen no more complex than the fact of manipulation already bygone or still upcoming but at any rate thoroughly understood at any rate little more than artifacts of rate code the firing off and the quieting down the nerve-terminal star's readout with grand-mal spike or standing wave in backbrain's

blackout-permanent convulsion or just the grouping of sleep spindles so discreet but so closely clustered that they look less like individual events than cross-sections of a phenomenon ongoing but perceived only as the stammer of occurrence and of interruption, a hard tremolo of restart commands broken up by the same hardware they're half-trying to resuscitate, mutter for it, cut your tongue out of your own mouth and check the temporal fixation of the teeth each one incarnate cyst of some chronic measurement some fact of space bled out for eventual decay or just the short fuse with the timestamp dialed into the simple LCD display,

chemical-weapon star along polymerase arch filling in for the departed eye-echo of lightning the ornately fissured class of the pure structural tissue and nothing there but to scrape its underside for spark again to hope for some friction or static electricity built up on the edge of our lone remaining coin and don't you dare lose the thing small-denomination as it may be you need it for ignition and she needs it for scraping the strings which otherwise come off so limply bell-like so much like a slackened adipose carillon and I need it for breaking into intervals of pennies for that extra cent our monitored survival always seems to demand atop the base price like the baseband lurching mudstone-coded while the karyolite whine down the telephone line collects swept noise-suppressor slag in hi-shelf filter as in calcium remainders of the sea)

(and what it means is what it means is what you'd guess if you were guessing and heav'n forbend wot we should delay your guesswork for a moment prevent you thinking whatever you were already liable to think, disk-image star in the screen-dark of the rickety microfiche roulette,

film-chain biopsied transcriptase star writing in vowel-stripped asphyxiate reverse the abjad names of abdominal cancers

in the ward of the old facility left there to disguise both existence and purpose of the new one as you might well be imagining, dummy chamber, a suspended graphite cell or cylinder of radioactive metals and meteorite debris hung from catgut hawsers in the inaccessible center of the pyramid, ground-penetrating radar soaked hypogeum to encrypt blastomere cassette of DNA-computer star as

a geography or rather architecture much like this one, where we'd hide if we were hiding, and to some degree we are, and to some degree we'll never be, ain't like you

would know what to look for even if we were in plain sight, which, again, to some degree we are, everybody with the knowledge requisite to an identification, the petty bitter knowledge, sure, it hurts even to think you know or to find yourself communicant to such an acrid knowing, static's centromere the bracket-friction algebra in weapons-system star's cytopathology,

well like I tell you everybody who'd know what he or she was seeing would know it only from the inside and see it likewise thus, because everybody who could look at us and know what we're doing is also one of us, or has been, or will be, and who can take that kind of testimony at face value, who wouldn't start looking into the favors and bribes and gifts and cons long- short- middle-term like a syllogism, it's damn funny, or it would be if it weren't so fucking depressing, how the most credulous people in the world will suddenly turn investigative when presented with exactly the right – viz., the wrong – kind of information, how they'll rightly enough accuse all power of incurable corruption and you want to tell them Yes, keep going, all correct so far, now *learn* something about it, but then the next war's up on the front pages and the next one after that prepared in small blind items hardly large enough to merit the eye's interest let alone the nominal mind's interaction, organism and environment, wot,

so call it merely “psyche,” which is to say the collection of flaws and horrors without which the body would be animated unidentifiably, the immunoblot assay of the antigen star come up in viral multitrack for late-term overdubbing to unconjugate abortions and the strange synthetic grammar of the ultrasound as yet unfixed, the image bundle pried loose of the airframe star's black-gelatin decomposition,

bones of a wrecked helicopter slowly melting in a bloc of cold dark half-liquid congealed under the heated jungle rain and no doubt the chemicals used in its manufacture and in the helicopter's and, for the matter, in the jungle's, since there's no “natural” place on Earth, since the Earth itself came long before “nature” and the world is only its process of becoming-unnatural, such as those simplistic flimsy canons supervene, and sometimes they still do, no use asking your interlocutor right now why a honeycomb or anthill is particularly different from a skyscraper, mate, you'd only get the sound of tuned-mass dampers soaking up acoustic transients from the buildings' tape-wavery skeletons like windfall pray accruing to the center of the spiderweb



once wrapped up injected with toxins and reduced to mummified pulp like the white blood of the satellites rerouted through the modem star's dark granulocyte codec,

like the process of the old prey dragged from web's periphery to bullseye target-lock as in adenosine star's login coiled along the signal chain of its own piled-up feedback to cement a sacral stinger, the aborted logarithmic spiral of the lumbar vertebrae in protein misfolding or seek judder of a frameshift star's blind cartridge scuttering against the raised transcription-wounds of wax

the cicatrix glyph nominal in screen burn or refresh rate botched till acetate demos shear from the frozen skin of what bulbous petrochemistry hydraulic-fracture star leaks from the sunspot of its ruptured bones

and solar flare its own kind of complication back in the facility that you'd only know how to name if you worked in it – and if you worked in it, you wouldn't name it, blah blah, less and more than double bind, the shape of self-inflicted pathology with output jack running right back into its own input, the nuclear-weapon star's suicide patchbay –

because it blots out big sections of the screens makes everything obscure will lend the matte surface that kind of acid-breaching lava lamp oncology you know what I mean? probably real enough as lyotropic liquid crystal reaching some fixation of pre-registered sting as DNA cinematography of wet-gate star approaching login wounds that filmstock knows to suffer in material advance

so we get frustrated sometimes, of course we do, and dawdle outside the main rooms where the drones are still supposed to be online and reporting but have all settled down in whatever nearby spot looked safest, they're programmed for that, they were injected with much the same algorithmic parameters for predation and for security as animate the vultures out here, a neat bit of sophistry, somebody had the idea to base their artificial endocrinology on the mind and glands of whatever animal is most likely to survive the desert's quick-enough spread to the rest of a burned map, xenograft avian matter to the wetware star in grayscale of transliterate fats leeching backdate circuitry for heat)

(bone-voltage star set in dry socket of wavelengths against blackout radio traffic, as tape-delay reversed so that the condensate ghosts precede their own flesh, genitive

sarcomere distilled from hived spectrography, predictive antibody glyphs of bootscreen star after a long axonal shutdown,

neurotransmitter as may be or just alternating current run straight into the dry wash of a wetware star's meat-grafted circuit board, the old watts wrung from the arid dark and the poultice of printed tissue underneath if such should still obtain, and it almost always does

in some degree, such as we'd learn to look after long bewildered wandering or only the extruded archaeology in columns such as might well be reengineered to mount dummy hypogeum and save DNA-computer star from penetration of the radar-soaked earth,

green acid login to adenosine star's RAM though access never does come randomly nor would we really know to tell the random from the logics simply other than our own, who dares say what's indeterminate, who could be so arrogant, well

we could and are and will probably continue to be, which doesn't make it true, but then we've never been so worried about truth on any terms but those of publicity, so get it working, a long jaunt down to the server farm where the pseudorandom numbers gestate in the basement, unmatching batteries circuit-bent into the nerve-terminal star so dry-cell shiver of fuel cylinder would wring whatever mathematic slag still floats atop the black tide of the reactor's gelatinous output,

time enough in that hardened water to extract the bones of men who were officially never what or where they really were and human skeletons that may not be attributed to "people" as such, since a "person" remains our category to denominate and to decide, and these are only, what would you say, casualties, eventualities, only fleshed consequence and never really on the voting rolls or in the tax base, not likely members of tribes outside all contact with even the nominal local government – though that's not impossible, if nonetheless unlikely: you hear stories about the people by the river who don't farm don't build don't "work" in our sense who look after all children collectively and don't give a damn as to biological parentage who have a language which must be sung to impart its relatively few phonemes and morphological variations with exactly the right pitch and EQ-profile of meaning who laugh a remarkable amount whose traditional "goodnight" translates literally to *don't sleep, there are spiders* if you believe the ethnolinguist who came down here as a Jesuit or at least a Christian and was weaned

off his Christianity when these people asked if he knew Christ and then if his father knew Christ and then if his father's father knew Christ and, when they heard all replies in the negative, wondered why or how a man or woman could possibly care about somebody born and dead before his or her grandfather's memory, wondered what kind of trust it may be that trusts in something already overtold a million times by the time of the first telling in earshot of anybody the living descendent might plausibly have met,

and there's a kind of obverse argument for a kind of decentered Christianity in this, or really less Christianity per se than a religion as anthology of all preceding cults, looking for the common tone, the matched peak in the waveform, signal domain of a bioelectric star clipped out in articulation of the same print-through anatomy,

in which things would become meaningful precisely *because* they've been told an incalculable million million times and because they've been tarnished broken awkwardly mended corroded twisted denatured in the text-file pollen of transcriptase star or call it viral load borne in along the momentum of the RNA call it the benign epizootics "the Divine Invasion" GABA star's xenosis when depleted and the blood-brain barrier emits a massed choral scream through cortical pores normally soaked mute,

but the missionary was in no position to make that argument and probably not even to imagine it, had been taught the faith literal and rationalist, soldier in the lord's army, of course, and fit "resistance" in there as you find it appropriate, and so his faith broke in a way that probably didn't hurt him much at all, but

it's also been muttered that he's just an opportunist quack who made the whole thing up in order to cock a snook at some other famous academic's theory of pronominal recursion as a necessary component of all human language blah blah blah and that for all we know he was never a goddamn Christian missionary and thus could never have been divested of that dubious faith, call it shifting, not, not certainly exchanging, your crown of thorns for thorns as they just grow, and might well have attained the form of the crown whether you pruned or pleached them that way or had never seen the territory till just then, semi-fascist administration raising the radio-relay towers in blackened-green vantage of light-trapping night-fog in the wetland glare of the chemoreceptor star,

been out there, no, well I wouldn't recommend it but then I guess maybe I would, worth knowing if you can stand to know, worth seeing if your eyes won't buck up and

rebel against their sockets, vitreous germline archive of the DNA-repair star come to wash of spinal retinol and skins of citrus fruits lamely guarding against cancer in the throat and lungs and tongue,

to say nothing of the rarer pest no doubt swarming where the surface of the world, and sometimes even of the Earth, is neither liquid nor solid but a bleary lateral slide underfoot which you couldn't quite call mud, the seeming cell-death hyalin of the world's programmed decay, xenonucleic star in spinal sequence reset by the snapping of the neck when and where suicides ascend directly to heaven,

but it wasn't "heaven," only the White Road, Xibalba, call it, only the backbone of the milky way and vertebrate architecture annexed to peptide-computer star's dry chemical lightning, and some have argued that the case for sainted suicide was only misconstruction of a detail in the codices, was an imaginary goddess built from images we taught ourselves to misread, to which assertion one might very well ask what other kind of goddess there could be or has ever been)

(so implausible, maybe, but not infeasible, and the sodium lamps and rare magnesium flares hard-save to the hot mist cooling as it falls, sugar-spine matrices preserving camera roll of deployed white-phosphorus star, a bioluminescence, nearly, sense of subsisting at the bottom of a buried and then excavated sea, exhumed blastocoel cassette of fluoroscopic star

while we were trying to avoid detention and questioning for all the reasons you'd expect: we weren't there we were never officially anywhere our cover was dubious and multiply so the substrate-coupled current the sample voltage leaking from a circuit-bent star right where hard drive's spent hold-function began to lose all pin-connector grip on xenotransplant motherboard like mesh made from the walls of pigs' hearts the tape-bias whine of the FM-synthetic star annexing epinephrine overdose to whatever calmer chemistry we might've expected to slow if not to soothe the inflamed vertebral airlock transfer protocol of wetware star in hippocampal translator's rendition

the early bone-glyphs and the later alphabetic mangling and

we had no legal jurisdiction but were recognizable by our faces, not, you understand, by our specific faces, but simply the fact of them, white, middle-aged, and furtive in that country where the roads sometimes self-detonate halfway up the

interminable roll of the mountains and foothills and you'll be walking along cobblestones old as goddamn rotten conquistador's corpses and then take an unwatched step and sink your fuckin' shinbone two feet deep into the mud and quicklime outline as of crime scene everywhere immunoblot star's overdub exceeds stereo pairing of the simplified anaglyph image of histologies resampled till some aliased noise overrides necropolis of halide glare and chemotherapeutic star's medicinal deletions

the hair falling the skin slack and pale the veins overexposed beneath what thin parchment wrap still holds in the vast swell of sickened dropsy couldn't touch a thing thanks not at all in any mood to eat and even water seems like rich food at the moment and even richness the thing well to be frank the thing for which we're doing all of this at least in theory if you're not an ideologue who genuinely believes in the idiot supremacies we promote yes even richness seems a bit de trop for the first time in our lives under the grayscale coordinate system where the scanner bed reproduces anatomic feedback of the nuclear-weapon star

and all technologies thereto appended including the imaginary because understand the State since about 1945 – and not just this State though of course we've killed and killed to render it prototypical of States tout court “peerless among the peers” superior of equals not that we believed for a moment in the equaling nor were very apt to dismiss bracketed specificity the algebraic wattage to be wrung from prion star's bloodborne containment – the postwar State

and you tell us a lot, and we tell you a lot, by simple willingness to use that word, or even the ability to conceive of conditions in which that word would be meaningful: when the fuck has it ever been “postwar”? but

the postwar state is essentially an apparatus reverse-engineered from the fact of certain kinds of weaponry and to the benefit of those very few who either make the weapons, control the use of the weapons, deploy the weapons, maintain and modify the weapons, are responsible for the weapons' arrangement and supposed internal logic, and everything else not only can but will be forced at gunpoint to go fuck itself,

which basic economy of means was then transferred to let's say the prison system the remnants of the “welfare” programs the wholly vaporous and referential notion of a “social safety net” if you can conceive of such a thing by now it's like fata morgana tell me a tale of Aisha Gedisheh or Qandisha or Qaddesha or however you should find it

fallen on the tongue and in the gated air between the language-meat and back teeth in esophageal compressor's asphyxiate pumping where the noise-reduction software overwhelms nerve-terminal star toward a final gritty hiss with all oblique signal suppressed

the granulocyte background noise or DC offset crackling where the macrophage star's videofeed is daily erased and subject to rites of specious repristination

not good enough just to hit "cancel" or "delete" no sir we want we more than want we damn near need to soak the whole thing in various quasimedical fluids like we're treating it to a Lourdes cure erase the hairline fissure via sublimated drowning and the microfracture surgery on wet-gate star's abortive genome reeling

as we too were reeling, still reel now, with the access to certain pills suddenly cut off, and a damn cruel thing to beach us here, of all places, starting to fiend for antidepressants we'd taken every day in 150 mg doses for, what, 13 or 14 years, hardly know my own blood without out, well, hold there, never "knew" my own blood but can hardly keep up the workable pretense to such unlikely, wronged, and wronging knowledge, piezoelectricity wrung in gneiss-crunching volts from the ossified venographic star

and we still had to climb the crooked streets that tended to end in a bare patch of mud on a mountaintop, always just behind the city square, the plaza which called itself older than Mesoamerican conquest and may well have been, the unctuous tour guides who speak your English and look like you and want to tell you lurid shit about Aztec human sacrifice as though Americans were any less prone to ornamental slaughter than were Aztecs, but

get past that and there's always the blank field, the bare black earth between low walls, and from that earth there always rise like lopped amphibians' limbs shocked on a stainless-steel plate the bones we're willing to attribute to any war at all, as long as it doesn't implicate us directly, the skeleton-cache of bygone fronts and allies in a local form of Spanish we'll be careful to pretend we've learned to imitate until the exact moment that we wake midflight with lights on the ends of the planes' wings looking like an endlessly looped blackbox detonation)

(gravity-knife anatomies resampling exobiologic star, the contour coefficients of the land and of the radiologies that lie above and through it,

sideband multitrack of GABA in sluice through arid VHS cassette and crumpled tape, dry histologic transfer of the wetware star to circuit board of ossified siliceous ooze,

and if you had the radio you were issued – and don't tell me you've already lost it, and don't tell me you lent it out, always somebody onshore and always another shore with another host of possible latent somebodies waiting for the ill effects of this your cheapest charitable currency, how to show you love 'em, love 'em all, bueno sabe bien won't you always be back amen mi amor, silly bullshit learned from movies that were already outdated by the time you came to understand the significance of gestures which, at first, appeared to you as though dictated by some obscure behavioral code whose internal consistency you very nearly grasped despite your utter lack of any notion of what it was meant to achieve, but this is what a fellow does and this is how a lady ought respond and this is what it means in the background when the guy with the accordion or more likely bandoneón comes walking up to the table cantoring about la luz de la luna and so forth and endlessly so on because he wants primarily to sing in Spanish that the gabanchos can be expected to understand the kind of language they might borrow to name the semi-pornographic sub-heroines of books with only heroes and heroes' appurtenances get me in movie scripts with mestiza women who are supposed to be thrilled that the gringo vigilante got them both singularly and collectively pregnant before riding off to get *himself* enceinte with a bullet or two if he were anything like the agent he pretends to be

any time-lapse target-locking malware of radionuclide star clambering up acid-rung architecture of the unraveling glial tissue and of the translucent vowel-rich code from which it rose, to which it falls,

the missing redox content of the abjad's sleep paralysis, when the language – not the words, but the whole language – stands at the end of your bed 7 feet tall and anorectically thin and slowly wavering against the back videotape focus of the background the low resolution and the overheated compression-artifact throb of a nerve-terminal star's fossil record

hardened potassium or cytoskeletons reinforced with butyric acid and the bled lymph of pierced batteries the ruptured casing of the calamus scriptorium an extruded rod of typebar flesh and text-file protocol likewise erupting from the wetware star's quarantined hive of sample voltages and

it wavers there, too tall, too thin, it doesn't shake but waves as if accustomed to the pressure of the seabed and suddenly too loose against the background of the unimpeded air, though this is anything but unimpeded by any measure but the sea's, ohm-script to cicatrize wax cylinder's stored RAM of DNA-computer star,

scarred over with electrical resistance to cache the old lost throughput in the form of indices and terse lipless abbreviations if nothing else, the skin pulled back from the teeth either by decomposition or by torture, maybe embalmed that way, maybe the long brown papery rot of flesh over a skull rotting itself but for the protein microfilm fixed in the molar, mummified machine code engineering gamma-knife star's surgical coordinates, so

you know how to speak, more or less, or how to borrow the dead dim protocol of speech, and you can feel it against your back in the right and the wrong moments: this is where the palm trees should've been, at this point I should really be doing some kind of horseback trick though I'll admit I don't know how to do any and the guidance of a submarine, even one of the small daredevil models looks like something that should've been exhumed from a creekbed after a failed Confederate offensive, well, it's just not as romantic, or rather

its romanticism is on the wrong scale, the wrong terms, it's not *singular* and therefore not heroic in the same way: the Fascists – and I mean those who actually called themselves “the Fascists,” not the other and much more numerous kind – wrung their quantum of romance out of submarine demonstrations, but it was on that whole Germano-Roman model like fuckin' synchronized swimming, a thousand people doing the same thing at the same time to ten identical machines or reverse those proportions as you like it's not my brief not my portfolio to maintain the toxin census of denominator's hive to watch histocompatible star grafting a honeycomb necropolis to lower halves of fractions like abandoned cities overrun with the cells and craters of the paper-wasp geography like



stelae wind- or rain-wrenched off their hinges if hinges they have more likely lime plaster in the grouting between tiles of the tesserae and clinking with remarkably pure tempered tone when they hit the ground and crack through rarely shatter just split up the middle or lose a corner I mean it's a remarkable kind of noise you see it's router star's cerebral telesurgery the way the music of their decay fits so precisely into the Western scale or something very near it

since, and this is important, this will remain important, it doesn't have to *be* ours to *become* ours; you've probably learned that; say you work at A=440 or the perverse European A=444, I think, for whatever goddamn reason, and say the sound of the broken city comes in at 438 Hz or 449 or really anything within about 20 twitches-per-second in either direction, cyclic resonance shrieking apart peptide-computer star's vertebrate patchbay into feedback system of bone's corrupt entanglement and spray of the cerebrospinal fluid printing through all tape banks up and down the spine of the wrecked continent,

well, within that range, we can simply say it's ours but wrong, its ours but produced incorrectly, it's ours but in need of our kind stern tutelage, and that's how you take over the world, more or less, that's the protocol here, to render all possible worlds and the dead-and-resurrected-and-remurdered Earth beneath just errant imperfect versions of the world as you instate it, as you've guns and money and litigation to rebuild it from the ruins that weren't ruins until your vast insipid powers of material suasion adjudged this world to be still incomplete)

(fused firmware ossuary of nuclear-weapon star, the ankylosis of the old command chain saved to floppy disk, optical readout gone stenotic with the narrowing of parasitic zero, the voltage-carnivore potentials in remote-execute star's fanned petrol rainbow,

and sure, why stint to admit it, we'd go out sometimes to take the air and maybe leave the silo doors open or maybe lock ourselves out of doors whose keys we very badly needed but were never quite allowed to have, despite the hex-code on the alphanumeric pad by the doorway and the voiceprint and the biopsies and the retinal scan and the crystal set of vitreous-humor radio replaying print-through DNA-repair star on the underside of histologic tape loops, and

whenever you hear somebody complaining about the way new media have induced us to become fractious swine, you ought to ask yourself whether we *became* anything new at all, or whether those “new” media simply made it harder to deny our share of porcine DNA; this is a country founded by thieving swine upon the corpses and the earth they stole, and founded via the imperative to declare all piggies Gadarene who happened to get in our way, to arrogate unto ourselves the power to declare which hogs were host for parasites and demons and to drive them across the continent for about 300 goddamn years until we finally pushed them off the edge of California – or, less picturesquely but perhaps more to the point, of Oregon, a state founded for the express purpose of excluding non-white citizens –

and looked back at the landmass we presumed to have cleansed and found it riddled with our own pestilent kine, hookworm ringworm pinworm tapeworm all the body-parasites and all the body-heat transmission of meat-radio they sweated in red vapor on the infrared videofeed in the macrophage star, all night-vision flash and thermographic plates downloading bootscreen star’s xenotic scripts after an epinephrine restart sequence logged its way through flimsy spinal baffling and the bleached arachnoid matter, the etiolate cortex like white pale sheaths of gristle torn back from the bones of slaughtered fowl,

which is to say that nothing and nobody *made* us this way, other than we ourselves and, perhaps, if you like, if this still means something to you, God; to say we’ve been rebuilt by our own machinery, though not entirely untrue, is to miss that we built the machines in the first place, encoded their synthetic genes with such lag-spike star as would peak clip melt and disseminate through the circulatory system as soon as the bitrate ticked up high enough, 56kbps parasitology of modem star in sidechains with which blood-brain barrier may titrate its closed ports and lazarettos, so

yeah, sure, we were sometimes derelict in duty and less than apt to perform up to the specifications given us when we were “hired,” not to say pressganged, forced into this for lack of anything else to be forced into: I used to watch the newspaper-delivery vans circle lazy through the neighborhoods at 3 and 4 am when everything was black with the evaporated rainfall and rarely shining in scuffed passages of stalled sodium vapor, the halogen breach, the thalidomide germline of xenonucleic star’s rough halide

annexation, artificial light built into the coiled vertebrate sugar-stinger of the hosts for experimental genes, and think

man that don't seem like such bad work just drive around all night with somebody else in the passenger's seat tossing papers into the dark and never much punishment if you missed because hell who could really blame it on you who could know I mean it might be a neighbor right might be a dog might only be o the lonely rain and the wind listen to 'em jangling listen to the way the wind blows always triplicate in a turn of 3 beats per bar no matter how uneven the numbering of the measures so that you can always stay on time by counting one-two-three like triune god of rhythm like

the triunity of the Catholic god supersedes any one of its members like stop codon or the integron cassettes transferrable up and down ROM printout of the offline DNA-computer star

as in I mean to say that the triple nature of the deity is more important than any given aspect that you could say Father Son and Holy Ghost Radio the most important of all in my small baffled mournful sort of revelation the E on the oldest stone de E apud Delphos or Delphi or Delphis if it was in the genitive see what I mean the three protein pylons emerging where the hypostyle encrypts containment unit over necropolis of the genetic-engineering star

it mattered more to move in threes and you could always find your way back to the tonic simply by counting that way right-left-right a kind of hustled uncertain limping the way you might take flights of stairs if you were half-lame in one leg and I thought

sure you'd probably get sick of the person next to you every so often or maybe drunk or passed out in the seat still bolt upright behind the dashboard but it wouldn't be that bad certainly not worse than any of the other miserable situations by which you earn the paper right to continue befouling the Earth with your mere presence let alone the unfathomable tonnage of your plastic effluvia the bloodborne matrices of the bioavailable code-star's ambivalent virology

but then they got rid of the second paperboy or -man or -woman in each car and it was just the single person trying to drive while tossing the papers with one arm up and over the roof of the car so that you'd head down the road with one hand hanging from the driver's-side door and that your left and probably your weaker hand kind of skyhooking the newspapers like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar if he'd never heard of basketball

and probably therefore remained Alcinder and son of a Manhattan traffic cop too tall to fit in much of anywhere and so

might well, as with the decline of all the other jobs we might've done around the margins at night with nobody breathing very directly down our necks, have followed us into the vagueness of fucked "national service," meaning exactly what and where and when you think it meant and means, after which overtime with the contractors, standing outside the silo door blind drunk or, for the last few weeks, more likely just drunk-seeming on a fierce cocktail of opioid painkillers, benzodiazepine anxiolytics, and withdrawal from an SNRI antidepressant, jabbing our thumbs into the keypad and hoping some pure protein memory would take over from the slurry of drowned numbers under our tongues)

(position you occupy, ingenuous loci, and the function you perform – and innocence of such function would be innocence greater and more anthrax-bleached than the flesh was contrived to bear, out in the

telegraph misfire clipping out the nerve-terminal star, send-key still frantically tapping under the splint-locked finger of a semi-animate corpse, and don't you dare presume this technology to be more than a few years off, if indeed it isn't being used already or at least subject to long-term and extensively funded and purposely vague laboratory trials in a corner of DARPA never asked, much less told, to justify its operating budget before any House or Senate committee, god help you if you still believe in oversight along *those* lines, I mean

dry topographic-transfer strips of wetware star scanner-bed white and grafted to the lining of the medical cadaver's spine,

though spine by no means dead itself, satellites' white blood for sugar vertebrae of xenonucleic star, the leukocytes hived in the amnion of spent broadcast,

phagocytosis of the modem star's condensed antigen archive down from .rar or .zip or any comparable format of compression, password-protected but not such as you'd have a very hard time guessing, probably just the name of the domain from which you downloaded all those overdubbed immunoblot multitracks, the spliced and variable stunning of the tape-knot come to meet with sequent flesh, histocompatible star's sync pulse weakly separated into bloodcount monitor of CCTV screenings

and the antibody massif of the “cured” diseases waiting to be reengineered incurable, designer-virus star against vaccine-resistant multipaths, the distortion where the current couples with the material substrate, as if electricity weren’t quite “material” enough, and you watch the circuit become cannibal, transistors self-devouring as in armed macrophage hunting its own traces, autophagy of biointerface star preying on the nuclide index to its own hived operations

where we’d wait out in the huts between the shoreline and the edge of the swamp, much as in transit of the sacral voltage up to the damp peat-bog of the brain, the old DC offset waiting in bone-hypostyle of corpses, obelisk gone aneurysmal with tape-bias star in wincing cell-death overdub,

huts built, I guess you’d say, in dim appropriation of what we imagined to be “the local style” before we ever came here, and we were not, of course, very likely to alter what we’d pictured for the simple – or rather the not-at-all-simple – fact of having seen that we were wrong, that would be what they call weakness of will, your upper lip unstiffening, the limp erections in the colonies, you know, cock half-plump with pooling blood but impossible to work up to the parameters of a usable instrument, which is going, in turn, to generate some *very* useful coefficient of embarrassed rage, the better to sublimate the outright sexual violence of colonial occupation into ornate distanced rites of sadomasochism and voyeur piety, the men with their ridiculously overelaborate uniforms half-unbuttoned and piled up around the edges of the doorway to the room in which a woman with no name we care to learn is being whipped, maybe with an actual whip at first, you know, Americans all, slavemaster repertory strong as ever and the paraphernalia to suit it, but soon enough tending European with a quirt whip or the bundled fasces of a riding crop, no doubt keeping the etymology of *fasces* far as you can from any conscious approximation, or

just coathangers twisted out of shape into straight lines, less leaving scars than depositing the pearly scar-flesh like silt, as though a quantity preexistent and just seeking its host, parasitology of erase-head star in hunt for disk-partition’s cicatrix,

holding to the seek judder of the sampled and held flesh in SMPTE code or whatever broadcast matrix struck us, and probably incorrectly, as proper to the scene, the geography, the sort of ritual we meant both to invoke and to instantiate, radiology

ward of router star's bandwidth cancers thirsty for the transfer-protocol that ported local meat knows to accept, and

understand this, if not first nor foremost, then somewhere on the back end, sequentially and in the literal geography of flesh, gray-matter sluice of GABA star's drowned login cache receding from the rearmost lobe where all the choral scream of dark and daylight finds itself brutally pre-selected for importance to your forebrain, all the editors' diseases minting asterism syndrome from deployed chemical weaponry of antibody star:

you don't *just* go to the colonies for resources, for slave labor, for "empty" land and the pleasure of emptying it actual as rhetoric would have it in advance, committing first linguistic genocide and then the sort that actually requires cyanide and shower heads or kraals and smashed gourds full of goats' milk and concentric roads abraded off the map, focusing now on no cattle-pen at all, the former aperture of the entire city, spinal telecine chain to wet-gate star where vision mixer edits broken DNA into some usable approximation of acids left intact,

as not to retroact but to debride the fact of their elision, not to lie about the past but to recut all the slaughter as another continuity discovered, what persists on the underside of history, the verso of the canvas and the obverse of the film, the side of the VHS cassette they always keep blank up in the control room at the private prison for purposes that none of them necessarily understand, immunoassay tape-code star its own latent histology where voltage-control filters spin out haywire in the loading bays and silos –

everything, in short, the occupiers want to kill, and they'll kill all of it, but there may persist beyond the murder some manner of grammatical cartilage which can integrate that killing into blastocoel cassette of DNA-computer star's stayaway-zone quarantine,

rewire and circuit-bend the parataxis of the radiation poisoning through which we all drowse and swoon when we can, illustrative that way when there's enough caloric sump left in the groundwater and the chewable skin flaking off our own hands arms thighs faces to keep us upright for a little while, weaponized overdose of chemotherapeutic star a scansion sounding undeveloped cancers from the ultrasound

that only wants for tumor's exact outline, nuclear-weapon star's ongoing/erased amniocentesis)

(and this is what the occupiers want to kill and what, in killing, they nudge toward resurrection – but make no mistake: it will come as a translation and rebirth masked and anonymous as any death could, and those firstborn-in-resuscitation, never alive like this until murdered and transliterate by murder, are death's own grieving children, terrified and mournful for the loss of a mother they remember only dimly as a gentler form of night, or

wetware star's pink-green larvae overgrowing airframe condemned to file-erasure, along with all records of its circumstance/ownership/authorship/financing, purpose/pilot/blackbox logs/ostensible success or failure, in a dark bloc of black blood clots hardening first to viscous tentacles and coils and then to mounds of ridged and lumpen eschar, the tumuli of DNA-repair star scheduled for a motor-silent core dump,

such that motor silence can ever really be achieved, which it can't, of course, you always pick up at least a little bit of the devices themselves working, cyclic resonance of biomechanical star looped up for quaternary protein feedback, but

you hold it in the mind or in the bones as an impossible goal and you contrive however uselessly to butt up against the asymptote you've set, "hold to the zero burn, imagine," find the phosphorylate sear of the gradient logging into the deleted adenosine star,

thus more colonial murder, the falsification of more records which would've been false no matter how scrupulously they were compiled, because they would've been the *occupiers' records*, you see, only victors' history, and the list of the dead which names those dead as their murderers named them is triumphal by definition, a gaudy archway pretending to status of memorial but transparently a boast,

like how efficient, how profound, how frankly sweeping, is the heart not moved to pity, dear citizen, yea, to pity and to pleasantly grave languor at the thought of the sight of the vision of the feeling of the less-than-a-thought of all those dead and of the purposes to which their deaths have been put or – if you cherish a Metaphysickall turn of mind – of the purpose which their deaths served from time immemorial and before all time, in the black vacancy of God, before space, without extension, beyond

chronology, as prior to the horrible atomic cleavage of the Khronos born for coupling of the Earth and sky, that's time's actual lineage, you see, at least as handed down to us, time the child of the sky's insane shearing against the insane Earth, miswired subroutines of the peptide-computer star in burst amino cassette bleeding up through black mud tainted flash-red with intravenous albedo on receipt of the recon drones and the ground-penetrating radar,

ah, citizen, hold dear these spectacles, know that here you see and prize the purpose and the progress of your civilization, such as it is, and don't you worry a hair on your dubious and frankly functional little head, whatever the hair's worth: we're going to have a Truth and Reconciliation Committee, the survivors will be allowed to tell their stories so long as they refer to themselves only as survivors and consent to speak either exactly as we do or in subtitled in an entirely foreign language, you see, none of that beastly Creole, frankly no dialect for an ennobled people, and you must admit that, despite what one might term our excesses of vigilance, we *did* ennoble those savages, teach them the grand benefice of the West, I seem to recall a three-part pedagogy, ah yes, "Benny Goodman, / trial by jury, / a phonebox full of books," love's old sweet song in Catholic triplicate,

and there'll be a benefit concert featuring the members of ex-chart-topping bands just fallen enough in public stature to be affordable, and there'll be at least two bona fide pop stars whom we unctuously coerce into performing for free, or at least reading prepared statements – not, of course, prepared by *them*, don't be daft – and Samantha Power, "foreign policy expert" and ambassador to the United Nations when our former president, her former boss, began helping the Saudis with a genocidal war which has included, thus far, a triple-tap airstrike –

first a building full of people who, if we hadn't murdered them, would probably have turned out not to be terrorists, but murdered, they have ineradicably attained that status, what's the line, "a thing of beauty is a joy forever"; then a second airstrike on the people coming to sort through the rubble from the first, look for living bodies or dead pieces of the living and the dead, something with which to notify the families, at least to bury, *jesus goddamn*, an amputated leg like a cow's shank swaddled in a blood-burgundy burial cloth and dug into the northwest corner of the garden where the prophet's body is made of rotting millet, barley, wheat which we've hoped would leave



some seeds in its decay; and then, third and most decisively, an airstrike on the public funeral held for the victims of the first two airstrikes, a point really driven home here, cruelty pursued so far beyond the bounds of sanity or even *usefulness* that one comes to wonder about that old hypothesis, somebody or other's, that the United States occasionally wants to look deranged, and then one comes to wonder, though not long, unable perhaps to consider in any depth what it would mean, how the fuck man or god presumes to tell the difference between a deranged empire and an empire that simply chooses to look deranged, but may only make such choice via the acts of sheer derangement, and so fuses with the posture it once thought to adopt "strategically," like dressing yourself in others' rotting skin until the rot pervades your own and you swap diseases with the dead, chemical-weapon star exchanging decomposed blocs of bacteria-rich code –

and let's not forget the cholera epidemic which will almost certainly claim, oh, a hundred, perhaps even a thousand times as many corpses as the actual bombs and guns and planes and landmines and drones and formalized IEDs, you see, one learns certain new techniques in explosives manufacture from the "rebels" thus created by your own designation, and one adopts them for mass production and distribution; a cholera epidemic, a blockade, a flamethrower destruction of an entire subcontinent's grain supply, that's not *war*, is it, just événements très tristes, a consummation devoutly to be unwished, but never, ever treated in terms stronger than mere wishing)

(microdot recording of bacterial-colony star, replayable as often as projector's reel or read/write head can stand it, and delayed update to silicon nanowire for biointerface star's aliased crucifixion if we're still in country

which we might be and might not I hardly dare say with the way the malaria's catching not just on ground level but white milky blood leached from the orbital detritus old mechanical wreckage of the CCTV star less obsolete itself than intended for the obsolescence of the eye a bulbous white bead of gel on a stalk hanging from the head of a crushed albino ant the in-vitro disease slides of the DNA-repair star cyan-stained and blown up to the height and length of the translucent plastic walls

in whole region's later textual rescinding when we clear out by which we of course mean pretend to clear out and pretend to reinstate the prior alphabet or more likely the

pictographic or ideographic system or more likely still the Latin letters and numbers but with diacritic marks and tone-scale superscript for telling you where in the mouth to site the name of the stolen epidemic a benign parasitism which we don't deserve to host yet nor quite ever will overriding stereo-paired geography with etiologic scans of lag-spike star and

the map dried out and soaked again and again allowed to dry in a country which ostensibly has nothing to do with this one, I mean what could the rapport be, what insane set of paranoid delusions are you about to subject us to, qui sait quien sabe non lo so but it doesn't ramp up, does take on another rigor of falsely smoothed-out highway torque, the resampled sections of the interference buzzing lightly around edges of your eye less in a constant whine of tape-bias star titrated to the black canopic liquors of the ear than in an intermittent polypary breathing as of carnivorous plants' gasp suspended in thick cold water, nearly gelatin, exobiologic star in graft to spinal patchbay

and the donor tissue half-refused but incompletely sloughed, so that you work, if you can still work, with one replay in periphery and another running down the third-rail center of the skull, fontanel wrenching back open and unclosed cranial sutures their own GABA-star topography of epinephrine sluiceway held and rate code's diskettes furiously rewritten by the sudden lack or excess of activity,

you know, the blood-brain barrier a static bootscreen login for the nerve-terminal star

against which we'd compile an atlas of the sicknesses we brought in with us, so long dormant in our own hardened veins, buffered in the slow upload of arteries' cholesterol reinforcement, that we'd hardly even know to suffer it, would only affect a mild sluggishness and the failed distillation of tape-code syndromes nominally present but unfelt, waiting there, you remember, you must know it now, film-chain backup for designer-virus star the long strip run out in the aniline enantiomers seeping between dye and cancer of the viscera, some less-trafficked candidate, not the lungs or liver, lights or gall, maybe kidneys or something curably pancreatic undertaken by a billionaire asshole who will contrive to die of it through his insistence that it can be treated with a juice cleanse and a diet rich in antioxidants, why not, let fall his fantasies where they may, he has the money to bankroll them and that's our first and last criterion for the viability of whatever stupid notion you'd see writ less than large but deeper than

most inscription, not quite billboard blowup yet but lurking in the currency of moneyed conversation, the subscientific blather of rich people trying to impress each other less with any personal awareness or specific knowledge than with their mutual practice in the same sixmonth idiolect,

ready for that, why not, scabflesh built to override xenon's injektilo, the cautery glare of detached headlines trying and failing to cancel out the modem star's zoonosis,

up the coast in country we'll eventually dress up as other land invaded and retreated from, though calling the retreat, of course, a victory of sorts, nothing unilateral, to be sure, and not perhaps what we'd have wanted when we set out nor what we promised in the first few lies meant to serve public notice on a war which must remain scrupulously undeclared, but then that's war, innit, guv, what else can you expect but a kind of stately and ordered unraveling, stepwise if not quite sequential, phase-transition viral load of plasma-etching star on all the circuits of bone-calcium:

listen, the one's been recalled and the other's been reinstated, a prince is going to be the king and an alleged bastard princeling will never even get to be prime minister, we were detailed to the airport and assigned less than assignments, expected not just to pick up on but actively to appreciate the subtle signs and indices of men obscurely ranked but very clearly ranked above us, that's what you want, that's what you know, flicking wrists or suddenly appearing with habitual twenty-year beards shorn down to airbrush stubble or the kind of moustache you might still associate with pseudomilitary figures during the pan-Arabist period, the nationalist period,

whatever backdate language best fits the scheme of your present elisions, the automated airframe reconstructed from a wetware star's remainder hung in metalloprotein deposits on a vapor-susceptible wafer of excerpted fossil record,

well it means something that he cut it and it means something that the other didn't and it means, all in all, that we're going to be stationed at the airport, told to wear civvies but with just enough paraphernalia showing that it's clear who we are and clear that we're not to be fucked with, not just then, disk-partitioning peptide-computer star in dead reformat where the metal-thread insignia sewn chest- or shoulder-high look like the decorations of a long-withdrawn old empire,

which they literally are, borrowed from, say, the British or the French, and which they'll continue to be, in the sense of fealty, in that frequency profile where the traffic

scrapes against the geological erratics collecting in between the rigidly denominated but badly-monitored bandwidths, moraine scree of DNA-computer star where borrowed radio afflicts the blood-transistor with a monologue in quaint accented British and a list of newfound contraband beneath aged cropduster plague)

(holding at 40, falling sometimes to the low 30s, spiking rarely as high as 70 when the wetware star's voltage-control filter fails, but basically holding at 40, and

the dry matte shining billow of it on the air's botched horizontal hold, remember, the viral shedding of the bootscreen star's vaccine-resistant scripts

to subroutine meat and choreography thus imported, St. Vitus Dance, name of a muse pressed to your shivering limb and nothing you can do to stop it, so we'd just watch from the middle distance on a low rise where the helipads had been broken up with picks and dented shovels after the last semi-coup, though officially you'd see the nation's government unbroken since, whatever, 1935 or how you like, and nothing in there about the seizure and the French paratroopers or commandos or whatever they were called in to retake the mosque and mass-converted to Islam at the entrance because no Jew or Christian or unbeliever could cross the threshold, which is funny enough in reference to a stone slab underfoot and even funnier, albeit in a nervous and borderline-hysterical way, when you're talking

noise-reduction software patch-clamped to the nerve-terminal star's intracellular recordings, the white pipette decanting dye derived from serocomplex math and

chemical-weapon star likewise dyscalculiac derivative from bracket function fixed in the latex paint on the sides of the houses in the country we've legally never attacked,

for whatever the law's worth; you begin to wonder if we've ever technically been at war, and if, in all that technical peacetime, there's been even a single hour in the last 70 years during which we haven't murdered somebody somewhere in the world, ourselves or proxies, always proxies, cell-death host of IP star readdressed to its own translucent hydrostatic skeleton

like the bones of some half-vegetative undersea animal contracting and expanding with the enormity of the dark cold water pressure overhead, though nothing seems much "over" or "under" in that clime and biomass star decompressed through broken .rar to mid-fi audio file's bleedthrough

on the subcutane of the blood-derived tape media, where we, again, weren't killing anybody in terms such as would stand up in the International Criminal Court, not, of course, that we'd ever have been called to the International Criminal Court in the first place, an institution whose purpose, so far as it may be intuited or inferred from its history, is to let Western nations fling shit at African ex-dictators and -presidents who were either installed by the same Western nations now become their persecutors or just spun out into the power vacuum created by some other vast Western fuckup, withdrawing after 300 years' semirandom cruelty or sending the troops back in, though always in a peacekeeping function, remember, impartial U.N. observers all, experts and advisers just here to grill the members of the Free Allied Army or whatever the fuck on their knowledge of what we'll be very careful not to call American interrogation techniques, all three of those words illegitimate illicit to be struck from the record and never use that phrase again in my hearing,

we want "extreme rendition" or "extended questioning" and I frankly don't see what nationality has to do with it apart from the fact that only one nation employing such tactics has ever been allowed by its similars to survive, well, no, that's not true, is it, only one nation employing such tactics has ever had so significant a share of the world's gross product, grosser by the day, and so much to say about the other fractions jangling like broken glass in a loud pocket of thin fabric over bulbous noisy bone,

acoustic-weapon star's germline transients run through the cellular history on a strand of memory metal that recalls the shape of its own alternating current, the forced surgical rearmament of a skeleton never more or less than the shutdown architecture of a weapons-system star,

again, illegitimate, illicit, please direct your criticisms to somebody who can hear them and offer anything like a sincere response, please don't bother me with this kind of minor caviling anymore, I'm not here to match voltages with whatever your estranged idea of righteousness and settled scores might be, we deal in hard specifics and in the abstractions thence derived, so unless you can show me an actual piece of paper with all these "techniques" and "processes" enumerated as official departmental or national or military procedure or produce for me a witness who will swear to that effect and whose character can withstand at least the first basic round of assassination attempts Are you now or have you ever been a homosexual in thought in desire in practice Are you now or

have you at any time been bisexual transgendered as you like whatever terminology you'd choose to self apply Are you telling me you've never had a single homosexual thought of any kind at all never even an inkling never even the simple blank unimportant sense that well yes if one were attracted to men than the man before you is the sort of man to which one might be attracted even if one were to stop short of let us say oral or anal penetration or even of the desire to penetrate orally or anally

ah yes well you see that's very normal it would in fact be rather abnormal if you hadn't as the good doctor once said while demoralizing Freeland so

having admitted to such episodes of personal indiscretion if only in fantasy can you then fully deny that your perverse desires have in turn perverted the patriotism and high duty which you owed to your position and your people and can you then fully deny that all this "whistleblowing" activity is anything more than a rejected queer's resentment at the country he hoped to deceive and are you ready to have every man you ever glanced at for more than a few seconds appear in the newspapers and confess that yes indeed he had wondered about you on more than one occasion and of course there are those little how does one say homosocial interludes in all military life and

if you can't swear to all that, and if we couldn't believe your swearing were you yet able to swear, and of course we couldn't, then don't fucking come back here till you've got a printed paper or at least a cracked microcassette with somebody singing low and idle over the sound of the high-voltage current crackling)

## error code, the anticline

(blinding newsprint light en bloc in the East the East the East where the news happens, freshly-minted 16-track stereo mixing board with faders thrown up and open to all bandwidth of nuclear-weapon star,

assembled painfully and piece by piece through half a hundred minute smuggling operations the details of which wouldn't precisely bore you so much as they'd refer to things of which you can probably have only a textbook conception and would therefore find a little baffling, not, perhaps, for their names or for the matter with which the name fuses ungainly, that photo-damaged alchemy where the DI box solders phase-swapped charcoal wattage to exposed spinal patchbay of a wetware star, but

for the intensity attached to them for the fact of the way they came and of the interference thus acquired, harsh postgain in the loop-return of DNA computer star for

sound of the goats making whatever sound you're said to say a goat makes, "lowing" if they were or had been cattle and they very distinctly aren't and weren't, this is goat country, with all that means dragged up the ragged backbone of the day in the blue-gray light that seemed less to fall upon than to be wrung pained from the earth, a slow pixel-fried distillation, glaciology of aliased genome transliterate as radiopharmaceutical star, the medicine the atom bomb where sickness was only a historical dissension, a means and a manner of dissonance as in bowstring pulled too taut against the catgut and, if not ready to snap quite yet, then

milking the high freak harmonics as in smoke-shriek of the rotten silk from which we manufactured your crumpled vocal chords, transient overtone like cumulative error in the throughput, remember that, remember this:

acoustic feedback looped back into the depleted mineral skeleton of a peptide-computer star, the protein sculpture garden subject to disease testing, all amino statuary under brackish scanner-bed scrutiny of designer-virus star's updated software,

the download link already grayed out and replaced with something so new it referred to a nonexistent entity, the satellite's malarial lymph, the markup-language syndrome of the bloodborne malware star's remote-code execution firing like a tetanic contraction still alight along the backbone of a corpse,

reflex arcs of medical cadavers searing bootsplash text scar-deep onto the matted monitor of the nerve-terminal star, and

you'd move that way for want, really, of any other way to move or even the dim knowledge of how movement might be detached and abstracted from the notions of the destinations they gave you, "all about strikes now, so here's what's striking me," the so-called surgical program where metal-fatigued hardware of the sample-trigger star picks up the sound of its own piezoelectric wincing, cheap tin plated with whatever buttery fake-silver veneer stands in for chrome, an anthology of what they used to call "social diseases," and well-named now at that, though not in the sense they recommended, a circulatory question in the angiograph's total sum-lost throb,

read-error fluoroscopic star in phosphor stinger where the touchscreen display piles up histologic artifacts like compound dust rearticulating its history of shed skin, the eschar slough and cell death pumped through the damp codec to produce such blackened biologic slurry as might print contusion-field for router star,

figure out exactly what it was meant to be dividing and directing, submix reassigned to the dead cochlea and kept in homeostatic abeyance on the far side of that membrane, adenosine star's core dump where the donor tissue piles up in cold storage underneath the junkyard we're still using for its cover story,

might as well be anything, right, might as well be nothing much at all, the simple fact of all this garbage in a place aimed at and serving only garbage's production – this is, after all, what it means to be part of the West: you take the rest of the world, use it for a little while, skim cream, render pulp, subduct misdirected umbilical nectar from the modem star's angiograph radix and then

call it trash, first pre-owned and gently used, finally irredeemable, ranked from the first factory-floor rollout for its biodegradation because you'll soon be wanting to insist, if you don't already want to insist, on its propensity to age well, videlicet, age away, and rather slough age than acquire it, to cease to be as side effect of mass temporal buildup, fossil-record lithic stele of biointerface star's germline stacked for



deep image to swim through like the codon for disease through tangled nucleotide swarm,

design specs for genetic-weapon star premised as may be on the fact of radiation or the way certain chemicals, no matter how much cleanup work we pretend to do and to care about doing, will stick around, affixed to other chemicals, know what I mean, does this sound like a hint to you, have you heard it calling before, listen, we could come down from what I presume was the north based on the relative position of the sun and what the clock told me was the lateness of the day though of course it seems unsafe to presume that sunrise and -set should occupy their nominally normal positions in this particular quadrant of the world I mean who's to keep them there who's to notice that the Set as final morpheme of the way the sun dies must refer to Osiris's murderous brother in among coordinate-system dialup of the bioweapon star

at bitrates slow enough to embarrass you into never having tried like maybe 128 for the stuff to be played over the public PA system because of course you need *some* kind of cover suspicious as all hell to try to arrange *this* kind of activity on *that* scale of public outdoor silence because

they'd get the impression as well they might that you were being falsely nonchalant that you were faking modesty and unconcern because you knew you were doing something which might not quite be awful itself but which referred to or rather was the referent of some ultimate awe run backward the last spasm now in embryo reverse-engineering nerve-terminal star from such overdose of epinephrine as sent axons back to toxic protein froth and wore the cortical sheath thin as scaly isinglass we scrape from the swim bladders of the oil-drowned local fish)

(piscine ideogram archived to hydraulic-fracture star, earthed-current ichthyolite screaming, necrotic disk region or

honeycomb damage patched into fluidic-computer star on scummy surface of the gel bath where old stale polymerase lightning still outlines lapsed polypeptide archways of decayed file-system star, obsolete but not quite thoroughly deleted because somehow engineered into the architecture of the medium itself – “does this remind you of something?,” he would ask, before asserting that “the pain must feel like snow, [and] I’m sorry, so, so sorry” – so ineradicable, more or less, not that we were trying very hard,

would occasionally turn on the industrial vacuum or try to move quickly from one corner of the room to the other avoiding as best we could the soaked wall-to-wall carpet and watching the ground-penetrating radar as it exhumed another GABA-star hypogeum from print-through earth we thought to disinherit

not of course that all or even any local inheritance was ours save as we claimed it and we claimed and claimed and were you watching the disk image fall from the missing sixth or seventh Pleiad or many many more depending on which prophet's idiom you follow I'm told Mohammed or Muhammad or however you prefer it claimed he could see dozens of extra stars and gave them the collective Arabic name for "chandelier" and that seems basically believable given the terrifying openness of his eyes the phased-in dialed-up permeation of the cornea a dusty sheath of splintered keratin where DNA-repair star floats embalmed in the in vitro frieze as serovariant waiting out the white canopic storage which by disc rot may attain the terms of lymph or honey

or may only come out as corrupt black blood the metal-reeking kind you scrape from cheeks and chin and nostrils after you've slept through a nosebleed as many of us do here almost every night and don't you worry it's nothing to be especially concerned about it's normal given the terrain the way the clathrates cage and hive the methane the way the electron guns in all the vacuum-burst old CRTVs hard-save chemical-weapon star to software ghost still circulating gray and gently distended from the cracks and fistulae of broken machinery

yes we all do it yes I do it all the time matter of fact I'd had trouble sleeping for the last I don't know I guess it must be 6 years of insomnia often counteracted by overdose the failed dopamine quills the vertebrate parataxis of reuptake star in scansion of ersatz serotonin or whatever used endorphins they could traffic down the line and get to me in some half-recognizable enantiomer packaging like a brand name intentionally misspelled and a symbol legal part of the misspelled name that's meant to look like a registered-trademark sign but actually doesn't say or mean anything all just to fool you like blacksite supply chain of the weapons-system star

as when we bought those batteries in Nigeria as whatever size we thought we were buying the kind you'd use in the back of an old boombox I guess maybe AA certainly not 9-volt and jammed them in the compartment and found that they were actually smaller batteries covered in sawdust and polish and rewrapped in the printed

plastic coating of actual AA models and wondered to ourselves at how much more work that whole scam required than just I don't know finding and selling some AA batteries which in turn gave cause for marveling at the grand and awful mysteries of the market oyez friends at its puzzling machinations all the more wonderfully obscure because all as we know for our benefit the benign oncology there brothers and sisters the fact of all those hundreds of millions of tumors not just harmless but beneficent apiece carcinogen telecine chain from wet-gate star's hyperactive cell-production

and the fuel we were carrying and the joint-ache of carrying it and the other kind of fuel that might've been mined from the ache if not so very effective at all and so expensive vis-à-vis the extraction that it hardly would've been worth mining but then the oil out of Saudi Arabia the oil out of Iran you know they don't pay their own way matter of fact they cost more to pump and to distribute than they make back and are actually that way more often than not takes an oil price of something like \$70 per barrel for the Kingdom to make a profit so the thing's not so much about "oil money" per se as about the nature of money entire and the fact of the agreement nowhere officially recorded to continue using the American dollar as the reserve currency for the entire petrol economy as long as American foreign policy continued in turn to favor the several thousand princelings of the world's second-most corrupt nation the most corrupt of course being by definition its patron

or perhaps the overswollen minor duchy to which it gave such careful patronage if you prefer the old models of power the old alignments and hierarchies whereby a state with a king could never really be *smaller* than a state which finds it convenient for its own reasons and god blast them whatever they are to pretend to "representative democracy" or something along those lines parliamentary congressional coalition or just simple ruling-party system which means in effect just a more distributed and confusing network of kingmakers,

means, and understand this, not *no royalty* but *multiple royalties contending*, means a fairly vast and populous sideband of credentialed pretenders, any of whom might accede at any moment via simple cumulate wealth, the forms of weather trapped in their deep pockets,

the way the storm-quadrant rolls over the country we mean to disappear from without ever having occupied officially, perfect cover, just enough to burn off the most

pernicious UV radiation, retrieve us under xenograft meat pilfered from the valves of a pig's heart, file-system star's porous architecture hyperventilating under a map of spotlessly bland skin)

(drugged up with dross-silver bypass channel of bad alchemy with copper wiring patched into phase-transition spine of the chemical-weapon star

and clotted drizzle of tainted gold still falling in the higher rooms where the charred ghosts of old torture hardly disturb the newer tenants, designed to be implacable, human or semi-metallic or the difference split to the extent that the difference can still passive-voice be told; don't pretend *you'd* be the one to tell it; don't pretend you could do other than transcribe the findings of devices whose operation you can scarcely explain even to yourself in the most childish terms and then repeat those findings with whatever specious authority you've found yourself able to allot to your own blathering; them's the rules; no shame necessary, at least no specific shame, though the shame of the whole social edifice ought to've been more than enough to drag us all to hell, not, of course, that it ever will;

transliterate the output-glyph of peptide-computer star immured where generation-lossy layers of insulation have narrowed the tower's inner aperture to scarcely the space a column of bone would occupy, reactor slag repurposed for the vertebrate architecture of the xenonucleic star, a backbone/ribcage matrix for the arrangement of acids otherwise injected with sugar or phosphorus or pernicious nanomachinery whining in high throughput, as of course you must've guessed by now, and who could guess otherwise, and who, thus conjectural, would ever grab your ear;

motor noise from adenosine star's cache dragged off the extinction massif of the lakebed where the bones have so long fused with their chemical surroundings that you'd be hard-pressed, were you ever in the position to make an attempt at all, to tell what's fossil record and what's the structure of the library containing it, see what I mean, exterminated clade of biointerface star's haptic inputs dented in the shape of mass migration or the way the world starved itself to eliminate the adipose matter of a certain species of bird, the cell death of the uncatalogued cranes whining right at 20 kilohertz, just on the upper edge of human audibility, when karyotype wreckage burns off the dead operating-system star,

though, dead as it may be, it still controls the basic revolutions of the comparably dead satellites, the thick and sickly-sweet milk hived there after such intravenous disease as we can hardly reconstruct and hardly want to, bloodborne surveillance of designer-virus star logged to the macrophage and loop-return as the denatured pictograph, the machine code for entire generations of disused refrigerators and key targeting components in a missile “defense” system that effectively spans the entire operable breadth and height of the sky,

immunocompromised star’s pitch-amplifier hitting the precise login frequency that keys up the old firing sequence still stored somewhere on collapsing banks of glial firmware and half-melted floppy disks exposed to desert heat for twenty years before we learned the basic pathologies of data rot, nuclear-weapon star’s frail hardware in endoskeletal as terse mineral sculpture floating core-dumped in the cytoplasm,

transcriptase log of bootscreen star in serocomplex airlock or

just metal teething through cartilage as you like it, connective tissue crossbred with aluminum and heat-refusing plastics in a catalogue of military procurements that goes back to the effective beginning of history, which is not at all to say the beginning of the history we pretend to know, just back to the moment through which all foregone events are forced to travel now, the noise gate the compressor the errant codec the seek judder the way the disk controller fucks up over and over every time we try to cough up a hard copy, sends the flimsy metalloprotein coating back in a dizzy frieze of faintly bioluminescent scratches, cicatrix line code for erase-head star suppressed along with any noise the baseband couldn’t countenance in traffic through the relay towers and the last iteration of the fat shielded cables so long out of production that you’re going to be invading “backward” nations pretty soon just to trawl for some mechanical components that aren’t made in the United States anymore

or, to be much more accurate and specific about it, aren’t made in the Third World at the cattle-prod behest of firms owned by Americans but nonetheless headquartered in, let’s say, Ireland, tax inversion for the boys down at the pharmacy and medical archive of the RF-hacking star still apparent in the abandoned chunks of obsolete machines up in the fallout belt, still visible with the right kind of telescope, night-vision green or maybe infrared glare of thermal accumulation, modem star’s telesurgical transcripts set up soon enough for the electron-scanning microscope

because direct-injected from the troposphere to the fluid contents of your own cells, were you waiting for that, an unnecessary question, of course you were, a more necessary question: *while* you were waiting for that, what did you *think* you were waiting for, tape loop recalled from osteocyte storage to transfer histocompatible star's print-through necropolis to the cellular debris that collects around the tip and haft of the hypodermic needle

and every forced vaccination campaign actually a way to harvest that information, actually the slow and furtive reverse-engineering of a genetic-weapon star, built backwards from the genotypic contours of the animals it's meant to kill,

not to get, ahem, conspiratorial, maybe somebody has access to the congressional records but I certainly don't, maybe somebody wants to jump in to spell me here before I use the kind of noun that might bar me from further debate on the storied floor of this very august body, nerve-terminal star reprinted immunodeficient for ease of newfound porous readout where you simply touch the screen and leave a Pleiad lesion stippled with sarcoma in the shape of your blunt finger,

and, to be clear, I'm not suggesting that any of you gentlemen are personally responsible, in the legal sense, for the AIDS epidemic – there are, of course, senses extralegal and what you would probably deem “impersonal” – nor am I asserting that AIDS isn't a naturally occurring disease, I'm simply saying that the way AIDS worked out has just been real fuckin' convenient for those already in power when it first hit these sainted shores, amen, when it first traveled to the isle of saints to reconcile with holocaust all the worn-down pancreatic islets, all the cell-printing star's botched software, nearly as convenient as, say, crack cocaine or lost Afghan grenades)

(“grows evenly neither in space nor in time,” depleted map of GABA star subject to violent epinephrine retrieval, trying and failing to archive the contents of the disks where overdose attempts to wring dead memory from wetware star in hazmat server farm,

not, of course, that *I'd* know anything about it, humble me as humble as I can be, and heaven forfend – there-but-for-the-grace-of-any-substrate-coupled-god etc. go we, circuit-bent star multipath'd to buckle the black plastic wafer underneath with even its attenuated spinal current –

the suggestion of any wrongdoing, much less the direct imputation, no sir no, I accept entirely the explanation of the disease's natural genesis and as for the course of its treatment or lack thereof, as for responses public and private, as for the government programs that never existed or ceased quickly to exist and as for the corporations charging usurious blood-interest on the medicines that maintain living cadavers without any hope of the most minor recovery while others, the rich and famously aggrieved, somehow manage to survive for decades with no major side effects apart from their sudden collective presence in PSAs and their sudden collective seats on the Boards of Directors of scam charities running out ribbons during the Super Bowl halftime show and funding a mass display of synchronized dancing that would put your Nuremberg choreography to shame, titles in Fraktur, black charred wood, gothic fonts all for the baptism in graphite or crude ink, hematopoeia of the peak-oil star in backlight glare of blackened bones dirtily erupting against the projector-bulb of the solar flare

oh all the blood-clot radio focused down into the sunspots and the chemotherapeutic star repairing your DNA toward the genetic template of a different species thence rebuilt to occupy the dimensions of your own condemned meat well

I guess I shouldn't say too much more, should likely never have said anything at all, he turns around, he's no longer in the dock or on the docket, whatever he says from this point onward is to be classified under the general rubric of "interruptions" and ignored by the stenographer who's still here but is now employed to spot-check the automated transcription of the voice-recognition software in the tablet computer she's bent over with an attitude of studious tedium meant more or less to disguise the fact that she's just bored out of her skull, bored enough in fact to exceed the compiled dimensions of the 50 collective skulls in the courtroom, and not paying very much to attention to the text on the screen, which doesn't really matter, sorry, because they'll have to check the damn thing again, realign it against the voice recordings from the shotgun mics reduced to the size of sunflower buttons and drilled into the corners of the ceiling with the fake-glass shields around them like bite-collars for dogs who try to tear out their own stitches, acoustic-surgical star sonicating broken cell till reprint ultrasound should supervene upon the eye-flesh it was once meant to depict,

the waveform blackly rippling from the blackbox to the bacterial-airframe star, all breathborne workarounds to public vaccination, and

she'll have to read *that* transcript against her own and then simply to decide which versions of which doubtful words will stand in the public record, which you'd think would be, I dunno, maybe the province of a panel with any civilian oversight at all, naturally not, stitching together the erase-head variorum from refused skin in the garbage can where the phagocyte star's software likewise metes out fleshy subroutine like wash of penicillin over oily machine viscera and then the flare-up of peroxide froth on contact with infected flesh, the ornate ichor-lacquered peaks and crags of your own unsloughed eschar and the way the wound outlasts even the imaged body's knowledge of its cause,

though "cause and effect" is a cheap way to think about it, and don't you doubt that such images are printed directly to the cell and come to foment glyph, each as freed pictographic radical, genetic cartridge the labyrinthine necropolis under the DNA-computer star's prosthetic hypogeum, where we bury excess corpses under names of those whose graves we've predicted will be robbed,

and if predictive text as algorithm really worked the changes for that augury, whatever, we'll claim credit, this is what we do, we take it from the meanest and most recognizable kind of con man that all you have to do is set up his machine and give it a good kick and it'll tell you how the world works and what's more dictate the future of that same world from semina motuum present in the present but invisible to your weak mammal eye, amen, and ain't that always just the way, what were you waiting on if not the serial outflow of alphanumeric sequences so impressive in their aspect of public meaninglessness, so imposing because they don't say anything to anybody as far as you can tell or claim to know and therefore must encrypt grave secrets for those very few among whom they claim the status of live currency,

or even, and this is nearer a certain kind of truth, only for machinery itself to exchange, only plasma-etch pathology run back and forth at massive generation loss between the bioavailable code-star and the printout of white phosphorus across the seaward reaches of a town that calls itself one thing but pants beneath the sleep-apneal weight of maps that only ever call it something else,

did you see it rising from the deeper protein structure, watch the gaunt and too-tall figure appearing at your feet while you woke but couldn't shift upward through sleep's benign paralysis, very thin and very tall and very apt to waver in the windblown



hair of the windowless room where the IEDs impart a weather system to fluidic-gate star's rapt ataxic mouthing)

(spindle-limbed beneath gaunt recco maps of chiaroscuro facial scarring, yes, but belly-thick with the caloric heft of some bullshit curative extract, titrated serotonin tape-bank of a wetware star's loop-send and stored hard copies,

the million printouts designated never to be read except at such expense to lector and most recently accusable typesetter alike as cannot easily be figured at the moment, in the dry calculi, the kidney stones unpassed, the white abacus screeching against spinal input-jack of xenonucleic star,

all flimsy diskette stacked up in vertebrate approximation, doctoring the ages of the clades in fossil record reverse-engineered from failsafe parameters of nuclear-weapon star,

and they tell us it's a painkiller they tell us it's a soporific they tell us it's an aid to appetite and thus to better health when everything else clicks hard against the scabbed-over bottom of the stomach as in birdstrike disturbance of eschar not yet completely dried of blood just fresh enough to liquefy again at point of contact with the numb grid of the fingerprint or only fluid volume coughing through transistor the razor cuneiform of corrupt metalloprotein throughput in peptide-computer star beneath the serovar albedo of the central column's broken bloodborne complex

white road as you might remember or the blast of inverse radio silence the fMRI waveband of the router star recurrent when you try to sniff and drag the signals off the cellphone tower built up in oblique medical imaging of some corpus undiagnosed even by its outline morphologically anonymous and thus prepared to strike with nothing more than slow decay the cell-death scripts of bootscreen star no retroviral program necessary nor yet invasive software save the tinny throb in temple-meat and blistered penetralia the visceral cassette of the hypogaeum's uppermost diorama where autopsied choreography should disguise with osseous stelae DNA-computer star still operational beneath

or at least that was the idea I don't know about how well it was or wasn't carried out and I have been informed of anything for years and years officially or otherwise I

have to take my hints where they wait to be scraped from the sideways language in the newspaper the filler text alongside the null-character predation of an execute-file star

like adding up whichever word seems the worst chosen in each headline and subheader and then each first sentence of each first paragraph until you come up with a sentence for every page of the newspaper see what I mean and if that's not quite enough then you get into acrostics and gematria the substitution cipher of each letter figured 1 through 26 in the Latin alphabet and the understanding that a given word may encrypt its live bacterial star in any number of ways

like say *abc* would be the sequence 1-2-3 which could mean another word made of the same three letters rearranged but could likewise mean any word whose total numerical value is 6 and could likewise mean any word in which the largest numerical value is 3 and the total is no more than 6 and could likewise mean any word of which the final numerical value is 123 and then all preceding operations repeated with 123 instead of 6 as final result you see how the problems multiply I take it see how you could occupy yourself with this forever the design flaws of the operating-system star and some intentional and others not and still others and by far the most beyond all simple opposition of intent to accident

as who could know and who could broadcast and who claim to tell what's meant based on the scant evidence of the ghost-stained world

nothing paranormal about it and certainly nothing Victorian-gothickal long thin curtains and candles in cold stairwells fuck out of here with that thanks no a ghost is just the replay of a given mind by which we do *not* mean a given "brain" or "personality" or "psyche" but mind as the encounter between organism and environment mind the thing that sleeps beneath and baffles the equals sign where tourist trail deadends into Anasazi camera or the lithotrophic star that sleeps beneath denominator's evacuated honeycomb

or sometimes census of the homeless paper wasps invading beehive for the loss of their own colony the nerve-terminal star's pale golden hippocampal flush for guidance system setting up the histologic matrices of alternate glyphs the brownout current to be wrung from the transcriptase star's text-download and

it's automated or it's accidental or it's just the ghost again something recorded and so often inched across the playback heads that it's come to reprogram a portion of its own environment come to denature the earth-protein toward a recurrent if not

precisely a fixed quaternary structure the frameshift of xenonucleic star a sugar login or just phosphorus horn stinging where tape backup still but dimly etches sound of backdate shofar remodeled in dark WWII plastic upon the fake-rustic capitals and towers of the faked city itself so much repeated that it turns more or less real

meaning “real enough”

as in “oh, they’re real enough” a sentence that can mean four different and distinct things depending on the placement of its single emphasis in one of four possible stations but

this is no Dover to be dreaming over fa-la-la the wiry tannoy blare the treble content of the RF-hacking star a telesurgery for image bundle’s half-benign contagion as it threads between the sarcomeres or resolders the axon against glial matter rotted back to hard scurf of black-lacquer scum like insects asphyxiated in the darkened varnish on a counterfeit Old Master)

(to counterfeit which is exactly such Old Mastery as we would seek here, needle rotating around the tape drum, syringe to gauge to taut memory-surface of designer-virus star,

the tracking error where we wait for the erase head to reload and X out everything still inconveniently surviving, all the regional remainders and all the applied technology of pervasive disc rot we’ve learned how not just to harness but to *aim*, blunt haptic module for the sample-trigger star rewired as cheap targeting software and the few clipped mics left over for reuse wherever you should like, on the pillars, perhaps, that hold up your shaky pre-war house, on the hollow spinal column of your spouses or your spouse, a single backbone shared in fealty to contracts it’ll cost blood and money to break, whatever “personal commitment” you thought the act was recording, compression-artifact star swimming up through lyotropic tissues till the cortex hardens in salt-stained tesserae of acid tolerance exceeded,

padishah, padishah, rubble and rum,

the men with the magnets are coming, have come,

the men with the magnets are taking you home,

counterfeit city in the perpetual affect of the sampled-and-held morning with the wattage inconsistent but enough blinders and buffers to keep us all approximately in

place, cerebrospinal fluid for the voltage-control star periodically evaporating onto edges of meningeal alembic but, again, it's nothing critical, nothing we can't make up for if "make up for" is the word if it's not rather a matter of concealment too dim to mask the dim thing it conceals and so unnoticed because so slack of effort and of execution that it doesn't even look like a lie holds together just as badly as reality itself

as in let's say the fixed coordinates let's say the malware overgrowing blacksite ossuary of a weapons-system star

put them wherever you want across the entire eastern Mediterranean I mean you're playing at Levantine partition and that's to statesmen as wargames to generals it's what they do when they get the chance to do it see it's not that they care per se not some deep matter of fellow-feeling though of course it would be rash to exclude the possibility of specious idiot brotherhood coming out of a midday screening of *Exodus* and already drunk on whatever you were able to flask-smuggle into the theater sweet reek of grenadine or sherry over the row of seats to the back so you'd be at risk of getting thrown out if you were anybody but exactly who the fuck you are and that's the prerogative and privilege of real political power, see:

in a system predicated on both the forced identification categorization display of all individual things anywhere on earth, whether nominally alive or not, and the malleability of such identity and category when money and influence are brought to bear or rather, and more often, thereto bring themselves, well, real power is to say *don't you know who the fuck I am* and to be absolutely certain that the other does, not because *who I am* is a fixed quantity, never that, never truly, it's not actually possible, but because *who I am* will in that moment take the shadow of whatever key will tumble terror's locks, will mold itself to the shape of the instant's fear and engineer from such morphology a weapon, the gneiss-scream of the mechanoreceptor star, the fluidic terminals clotted in afterimage lightning of polymerase gate holding hard as fallen arch outside the artificial heirloom city,

targeted application of chemotherapeutic star in violent overdose reprogramming the hyperactive cells as their own exterminating angels, so massive and so categorical that it almost seems to arrive in peace if not in gentleness, a kind of overwhelmed silence as in your ears right after an explosion and before the whine of tinnitus has begun, swapped and grafted domains of the motor-protein star in scummy froth up wall

of oil-byproduct coronary valve or silicate ooze stamped into a voltage-coupled substrate, ventricles of IP star still processing the satellite's white blood and all disease-script have therein,

immunocyte far as it goes and the collapse of macrophage star's bleedthrough archive tinging iron-stung underside of the videotape we reuse and reuse and reuse for the "24-hour" broadcast that's actually only up and running for a few hours in the morning, afternoon, and middle of the night,

only important that it be checked then on the regular rounds, hell, tell me when you've scheduled the maintenance and I'll tell you when you'll find anything to be maintained, get what I'm saying here, you make it all too easy, but

that's what they want that's what they said their orders were as clear as orders can be so we got it up and running for the 7-9 a.m. bloc with another from 11 to 1 in the afternoon and then brief shots around 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. again, the same ersatz battlements for, what, near 70 years now, the same faked Cinecittà corridor, Potemkin village rearranged for local custom shining up the archaeologist's coins for placement neither on the eyes nor on the casket nor around the bier but in a hidden corner, as the last desperate rainy-day cache for a permanently hunted people, behind the pipe, under the uneven floorboard, where the stud behind the particleboard wall begins to sag,

but with the caveat that no such persons will be admitted *here*, paradox of final nationhood, you see, that the reason for having a nation must then be excluded from that nation when established, so instead, and I don't think I'm speaking out of turn here, instead of another elegy to the slain or another Declaration of the Rights of Man or sudden fit of pique at being taxed without a minister in parliament, I've got an idea, and I think it's a decent one:

well, you remember that military hardware we got at a massive discount from our friends to the west, the silent partner in our Special Relationship – silent on *this* score, at least, because pretending there's nothing else to be said – nuclear blueprints from a fistfuck penpal, yes?,

well you'll remember that, though it be out of date to them and us, it's still many decades advanced upon whatever they've got to the east, in the backscatter spindrift of newborn and doomed countries after the collapse of the Soyuz Sovetskikh, and those nations no doubt have a few of our rightful future citizens among a herd they'd be happy

to thin, anyway, what with the oil price per barrel still cratering, what with the tanking market for raw potassium now that it's a copper and plastic and silicon world, what with the soon-to-be-catastrophic lack of potable water in the soon-to-evade-extra-catastrophe placement of the landlocked country, caught between a slow and bureaucratically-grimed death by thirst and by the undrinkable wave rising from the green sea-slums of the southwest where the corpses of drowned migrants are suspended in the rolling tidal blare like flaws inside a contagious emerald)

(spinal-dielectric star the high road to cinema city, past the false fronts and the soundstage cardboard which the derelicts, even so long windowed of themselves, have since abandoned,

furled blizzard of spliced matter in the tube for tape backup of nerve-terminal star's serotonin overdose in morpheme semi-scrutable if not legible per se, and whether or not you can tell what it is, just clip it paste it sew it in, telesurgery of modem star the sinter in the routed signal clipping out the last failsafe domain

where interference blackens glial matter hard and compacted as a dimmed agate, we're looking at the charcoal rind around the bone, we're looking at the sidebands of the benzene-ring star farmed out for weaponized pharmacogenomics, a broadcast quick as the fact of the text of you auguring susceptibilities like visceral footage spooled out slowly across the downed moon's projector bulb, organ-failure cartridge of a DNA-computer star

exhumed across the river, across how many, across all over them, and don't forget across the southern sea from which the traders came before we were the traders and had stolen only what we then pretended to steal, you see the difference, both arrogating the old merchant ghosts' power unto ourselves and presenting it in forms they wouldn't have recognized, fraud and theft both, our own inventions trafficked as the things we'd taken by skill or cleverness or force, so that

you'd end up with failsafe protocol of bioweapon star loop-sent through parametric EQ like a sequence of granulated surgical closeups, histologic asterism much too close to the lens for anybody to tell what it was apart from a topography of variously damaged shape and pigment, pathology of GABA star the lesion map for surface return

much too broad for pingback, hitting us each over the frontmost protuberance of whatever mangled cranial architecture like a pane of whiteout sugar-glass shattering,

the forced updates to the rolling-shutter star's organogenesis or just the glyph and stutter of the synclines clipping in sleep-spindle printout of the gamma-knife star's medicine,

dubious as may be and as is but we've got too little or too much time for that and the goal the directive the keep-yourself-alive right now is this and very simple which is not to say it's easy: up the coast run run and not so fast not fast enough to make it seem like you're running away from or toward something which of course will attract the damned kinetic attention of everybody you pass it's a fucked kind of old instinct see man run you gotta run where man run maybe man know 'bout tidal wave maybe woman know the house is burning and she either run away from burning house or back into the fire to save the child or to articulate the hagiographic tokens of the child's abandonment and then incineration as you like as you can conceive the tetanic contractions firing where obsolete electron-gun star throws charged image-decimal at back of CRTV glass still thick enough to kill somebody with as it did or didn't kill any number of more or less willing operands back in the old world the mantissa of the radiosurgical star against a floating-point spinal column peaked out with oily meniscus at the top and

questions of petrochemistry distilled along the length of the knurled bone and hollow hypostyle the triumphal arches overneath the inverted substrate coupling of the slaughter-pit for which peptide computer star then comes to seem the stelae or rehearsal

sounding the drowned archive for whatever backlight carbonized anatomy of hydraulic-fracture star you might still be able to scrape off either the projector itself or the screen too often used too deeply impregnated with simple atomic clusters it can't shed now

mechanoreceptor drift of meat-earthed voltage keening and the sluiceway to the serocomplex star its own burnt login with no voiceprint and no print of finger capable of gnawing down through all that scalded tissue the mess of blood and flesh no longer very separable so it all settles like a baked-on syrup like something sugary and amber-tainted heat-freezing back to glass as certain sections of the recon atlas underneath scanner-bed protocol of the nuclear-weapon star

but those are aftereffects and thus not your concern the MRI's run out and the direct-injection box has already sucked everything it might from exposed patches of nerve bundle between anterior horn and spinous process the vertebrae each tabbed for quick snap-in-and-out removal and replacement the ink cartridges for wetware star when sample voltage suddenly coughs up a close-set spatter of grand-mal spike or just REM-twitch and decorticate saccade

the delta waves beneath the beach along which each of us presumed to run as running might've meant something or might rather have abstracted – not to say reprieved – us from the conditions of meaning, like hey where's he going, like *donde vas*, like *ahi voyez-vous le gendarme qui a pris du peur du peur!*, il y a donc quelque désastre dont il faut avoir la même peur, mais nous, savez?, nous montrons la qualité de notre éducation et bon ton haut ton savoir-vivre en ceci, quis nous ne couriez jamais, pas pour rien, pas pour le monde soi-même tout seul ou avec toutes les choses dont on peut dire qu'elles sont de la monde et pas exactement de la terre,

the hard sand still cold and wet but stiffened as platelet to blood-swarm of contagion star up the shoreline turning monochrome in brown-gray of littoral drift's underlying fixation, skew matrix minting the alembic from which wattage may result if you've got tools for distillation and for husbandry and for the various and difficult acts of discriminating hand and eye and blathering numb tongue to follow, right, radiochemistry of router star's long loop-return in 70 years' nostos come with stinger prized and logging into taut cochlear labyrinth

or just the faulty bloc text of adenosine star finally hydrocracked after how many years of trying to reveal nothing much more obvious nothing clearer than tiny carvings done on what look like the teeth of dogs or maybe sections of baleen broken from the mouths of slightly atrophied whales' beaching and then broken again and again and again until every child within 5 miles of the coast had his or her small bit of sea-tooth and could record not what he or she remembered loved prized wanted to say but simply the serovariant glyph of the day and what turns hard and quickly just outside the day's glitch-heavy bourne)

(as prone to error prone to recede or just



run backwards up the millrace of the fluidic-computer star where the peat bog archives lignin bones of what were never “nations” gone before what precede and maybe supersede but certainly must slide beneath that broken designation brownout hum of file-system star’s cytoskeleton a key trigger refiring after aimless spasms picked up by no transfer protocol or chain of command or

further southwest where the land hooks back away from the sea that presses to the north like an insistent vesicular pressure or telencephalon a little feverish prenatal the swollen and the overfilled the straining against membrane hardly formed from surface-tension fixatives in the fluid a mess of loose half-liquid tesserae around peptide-computer star’s resetting subroutines the constant satellite update in the vein

and down there in that hook of land the paper marsh where the simplified alphabetic elements of the invaders’ future writing system grow as radioisotope star climbing up the angiograph for terrified translation across blood-brain barrier from hematic lurch to neural gates and some for noise and some for water and some for wetware star’s brackish transistor overgrown with failed attempts of flesh to heal itself

the crusty edges of the eschar patch or cancerous neoplasm budding like spores of poppies all over your liver and metastable states of oncologic star’s print-through tape file backing up and up and up until it’s impossible to say what you’re replaying and what creating by the act of its false recall a transcription longer than the whole Earth it transcribes at least on axes linear and temporal and what exactly did you presume to do if not to tell it back by time in time useless and misdirected and ersatz as that goal was trying to guarantee regular acoustic response on the final master reel by surgical annexation of tape-bias star’s mitotic overtones

alongside the minutely detailed kick-drum thump dressed up for tonal resonance with a bass synth that stands in for an 808 the frieze of cheapened glandular inducements

which is not to say that they won’t, or don’t, work: they flock to the zona rosa of a place with a name like some kind of bored space-filling moue in a language that’s not quite Spanish, maybe some form of Provençal or Langue d’Oc, maybe, given the geography here, Basque, but it sure don’t look Basque, not that anything does, some kind of Maltese Greek car wreck for the hypogea at Tarxien and the upright graves of the dead giants not yet gods because subject as yet to no theological constraint, the third-

rail horror earthed in monolith we mainline since the tumuli are set up vertically and do, yes, audibly creak and lean in the wind, annexed to radiochemical star's scansion and surfacing in future acts of dubious nuclear medicine

like the way the people still do move despite the regular periods of blackout and the fact that blackout is sometimes not their decision to make well would *you* leave it to these benighted colonials to know exactly how much or many precaution or precautions they should be taking against an air raid? no I thought not and would *you* even with the former question answered in the negative as indeed it must have been would *you* allow them to take charge of the application of those precautions up and down the list from decisions about topmost general protocol to no-bid contracts handed out for the production of blackout curtains and rigorously nonreflective plastics to be draped over the roofs of their slumping sodden houses and tacked to whatever part of each wall seems most stable not that *any* is so very stable to the procurement of materials for same indeed to the invention of materials in many cases the experimental resampling of the enantiomer star for a question of light polarized oddly in your gut

and then distribution the freight and carriage whatever the precise difference between freight and carriage is and then the dummy accounts and front corporations set up to guarantee a significant profit somewhere because you were never going to motivate the firms concerned to do the whole damn thing unless you offered them the opportunity to get as one expert had it "their shitty paws deep in a slush fund" as indeed they've gotten up to the elbow in cold liquefied shit like discolored sleet so old and so long trafficked-in that it hardly even smells anymore or at least hardly smells under and in the circumstances of this reeking country where the people have been forced to slough all shame about say skin disease or pinworm hookworm tapeworm ringworm parasitology of optical-printer star editing their flesh into the third vermiculate reel

we have thought too often in terms not just orderly and linear but progressive; we have presumed that anything which follows must improve upon whatever it succeeds; that was a lie and never anything but a lie; the age of humanity will be succeeded by the age of worms; we were no sequel save as sequelae may yet belie the order of events; the age of worms will be succeeded by the age of the xerophyte star printing scanner-bed rotifers on the undredged silicate matrix of the desert

and all this to be remembered when you're handing out the State Department funds and recognizing the same man from the Agency office and the boardroom at USAID and asking whether it wouldn't in the long run be more profitable in every sense of "profit" just to let the natives keep burning sheets of rubber for want of firewood or candles I mean we're used to it they're used to it why fuck up a good thing or at least a thing that runs steadily and we recognize no difference between "practicable" and "good" and we have the home addresses of the upper-tier management at any number of firms capable of producing rubber that'll burn hotter and give off sweeter smells)

(postgain loess accruent to the spinal-cinema star

along the northern highway out of town, noise-gated against synaptic noise to override the nerve-terminal star, a bootscreen virus reproductive of itself in serial deformities along the tangent pharmaceutical path of the image melting through colloid celluloid ambrotype raw glass the wadding of a Civil War rifle stuffed with rancid bandages ripped from its prior owner and

if you're asking which Civil War well that's a reasonable question but the wrong one for the territory and you're going to be disappointed with whatever answer could or will be given the tapeworm backup of the nitrocellulose star's failed transfer to safety stock from fallible pink meat such that the backing ichor leaks the bleedthrough bleeds and the whole stockroom's liable to go up in one great lung-pressing *whoop* the kind of compact between heat and sound that extracts every last atom of air from broken bronchial loop-send when codec's algorithm ruptures to the serocomplex star

and we deal suddenly with the unfiltered blast of the fouled white ichor, pus ferrying off cellular debris and the cell-respiration star a set of blackened pictographs gone serially illegible in feedback between patch clamp and the wiretapped membrane or hollow glass syringe titrating wetware star's exocrine translator with heavy dirty water and the marsh-sweat of the salt inlets where we keep what we keep,

not that you need to know, not that it's yours to ask; think of it like a movie set;

better still, think of all the last century's major events as basically cinematic, the firmware loading sequence of a nuclear-weapon star its own telecine chain for lossy reproduction from the wide screen in the theater to the small one in your house to finally just the billows and asbestos-wiry drifts of interference over your civilian-issue

walkie-talkie with the batteries dying down, nerve-clicking Geiger spectra of the radiochemical star a biomechanics' glossolalia like the Holy Spirit come down on reactor-slagging canyons full of obsolete machines,

alchemical dross of exobiologic star reworked into the markup language for failed appliances' attempts to connect with the Ethernet the LAN whatever's spitting on the air which coefficient too-hot particulate rain feeling like it could lacerate the skin on your face in its passage chemotherapy of router star in loop-return mantissa with the sideband hanging on for something dear but stranger than life,

a kind of survival-past-death with not very much religion about it, a bleak tenacity entirely material and proof of nothing good about your God nor nothing Godly at all, pulling out forensic scintigraphs on optical-printer star

to measure the sweating atom the clipped sequence the domain burnt out in overtone-series affinities of radioisotope star with chordal flesh, the massed difference tones plaiting the sarcomere to such braid as might match in macrostructure the bizarre sequence of acid tampering underneath, xenonucleic star's containment unit terminally breached out by the airport in the dead land deeded to and then back from the Indians

who themselves are dead and not dead, hyphenate that all if you like, a compound descriptor, have not ceased to be technically alive but are pretty far from what you'd call living, and wasn't that exactly the idea?, I mean, imagine if Nazi Germany had just said *OK, the Endlosung is over, OK, fine, no more Holocaust, we keep what we've got and you get back what you can cheat us out of*, not that it ever would've gone that way, of course, but prescribed rather by the canons of fatalist romanticism than by political possibility; Hitler could probably have kept everything from France to, what, the edge of Turkey if he'd just stopped, but to stop would be, in his massively but not at all uniquely poisoned mind, an abrogation of the whole purpose and cause, so blah blah blah, Leningrad will fall, Leningrad is falling, don't be fooled, be not mistaken, brothers and sons, Leningrad in fact has fallen already, the sporadic pockets of resistance around Leningrad are but phantoms, they are the, as it were, metallurgical impurities of the as-yet-imperfect national will, and when that will shall be perfected, the resistance will not just dissipate or decrease, it will entirely disappear,

understand, fathers and sons, Our Only Enemies Are Ghosts,

understand that who resists us make himself in the act of a resistance a relic, a bad dream, a persistent pushy revenant like the outmoded blood outside the limits of its reservation, a gaunt weak hunter returned from the grave to stand at the ends of our beds underneath the black screaming radii of the sleep-paralytic star –

{oh god, oh help, oh this is what the dream can't save you from because this too is part of the dream, oh lay a seal a biohazard stele a hazmat sigil upon it and dig it up no more, the radioactive skeletons of astronauts buried in the temple walls of the DNA-computer star} –

but even that, you know, you see, we'll learn to use that, and I promise, I guarantee, fuck, to hell with guarantees and promises, I *manifest*, I *make* it so because I *say* it so,

doesn't that credo look almost pitiful in print, and don't you then marvel in vein-clipping horror at the suasion of the voice, that such textual pathogen could concentrate itself with a particular colony of vermiculate acoustic flesh and come out as it did to the effects it engineered, contagion star's xenotic scripts the agent of benign mutation right until they thaw antifreeze voiceprint up to vapor deposit or plasma-etched orthography through megaphone's black extra mouth and sync-sound finally possible when we film the hundred-thousand-man rally, at which it's said that

*we cannot be killed by ghosts*, to be murdered by a ghost is only to find oneself alive again at the end of the tale, Liebchen, mein Kind, there is no murder in a fairytale so profound as to destroy those who have heard it – though the teller, he does not parenthetically add, may well be killed in the telling, contract some stray tape-backup edge of bacterial-colony star and quickly dwindle to white waxen flesh around an inoperative medical sculpture of penicillin-spluttering bone)

(so call it 1942 or even '43, and think of the Nazis just leaving the Jews where they were, Bergen-Belsen Terezin Oswiecim Dachau Buchenwald, which doesn't quite mean "forest of books" but really, really should for all the volumes you can quite well see them burning, some for heat and some for fuel and some just for the burning of them, the way the flame defines not just a space but a volume of usable air, the exposed viscera of a redox star, or

think of the Nazis providing the Jews with places to go, think of the Nazis – with extensive American assistance, no doubt – retrofitting the death camps to serve as Jewish reservations, and think of the smug self-assurance of those Humanitarians who'd know that they were right, too right, good man, not to worry about the Jews to whom those beastly Huns were giving such a hard time, because they were, after all, only white-trash Jews, the Ashkenazim of the bleakest Eastern Europe, men and women and children who live in huts and shtetls and are still trading coins left over from the most recent Roman occupation, women and children and men who practice forms of “Judaism” scarcely recognizable to our urbane Semitic brethren in the cities of the west, I mean these people believe in golems and resurrection, believe in the breath of god hissed up the clay nostrils and the few glyphs on the forehead made of mud, believe that souls may yet be stolen if the bodies of the dead be left unguarded, believe in Lilith, that she orbits the dead, that she floats in a taut spiral around the corpse and will creep in save you be vigilant enough to keep her off, burning incense or hanging garlic or whatever, I'm not familiar with the customs, telesurgery of modem star in dense bandwidths of dried brown blood that smells like one-cent coins dissolved in wine,

whatever your penny ha'penny centime denarius should call itself, whatever currency those beastly poor Eastern dogs are still circulating, Barbarossa coinage or numismatists of Marco Polo vintage copied on a wax stamp-press and just coated with a very thin veneer of copper or tin, and

let's not pretend, friends, neighbors, that such smug self-satisfaction would've settled solely among Gentiles, not pretend that there weren't Jews nearer the sundown side of Europe who fantasized that they'd be spared – you ought to know by now that not even genocide overlooks distinctions of class – and were quite alright with their unkissing cousins to the East getting rounded up and

shot and buried at first in long deep trenches but then the ground got too hard and we were too cold so we start making them dig their own graves and it was actually amazing you know the degree of effort they gave the enthusiasm with which they smacked the spades into the frigid dirt you'd have thought or at least *I'd* have thought that if a man with a gun tells you *dig your own grave* well I'd say *no* because what's he going to do shoot me? isn't he going to shoot me no matter what? and in fact we suspected the Jews of timewasting at first you know thought they were just

pantomiming it all and pretending the earth was too cold or stony to dig up so we went over and said *let me show you how a white man does it* but we couldn't goddamn do it at all! in fact we realized that the Jews starving and sickly and worm-ridden as they were had brought quite incredible force to bear upon that unyielding land and if we'd had time to be puzzled well I don't want to speak on your behalf but I certainly would've puzzled over it long and hard as I have in the years since my retirement from *that* profession at least in the comfort of the domestic tranquility which yes I do like to think I've earned

so anyway they dug and dug and dug and even they could only get a few feet deep and the methane would build up till the corpses burst and the dirt went flying in dark reeking clods like it had been hit by some small wretched-smelling bomb which don't get me wrong was pretty funny at first and we'd run across the mass graves on a dare you go no you go no *I'm* not getting Jew all over my uniform and they'd say Why not? like maybe it would be enough for a commendation a promotion a rise in rank or salary and as I think of it now maybe it actually *would've* been but not just then not that part of the war

and the war got old the same way we did you know the bureaucracy and logistics just wear you down and that's what happened with the killing because soon the Jews were too weak to dig any graves at all and we were hungry and angry and sick too and more than a little repulsed by their weakness but knew we'd discover that we were just as weak if we put our shoulders into it so we didn't do *that* so we just started shooting them and leaving them where they lay but *that* of course got serious censure from the upper echelons who were still at interested even at so late a date in concealing the evidence of what they'd done and

let me emphasize: what *they'd* done we were only the instrumentation I once heard a theologian describe this very nicely I said Father help me live with what I've done and he said Son you've done nothing you were only the Efficient Cause you see only the proximate engine of the act whereas the First Cause lies as far behind your actual slaughtering as God does behind the creation of such nation-states as might provoke a war and he smiled at *provoke* and I said Father thank you what a gift! I'll tell my sons and daughters and I'll send them this way too and you strange Catholics do

seem just a little alien to me but I suppose I'm learning tolerance as once I learned to kill and he said Only learned to be a killer's tool, remember, son)

(wiretaps even in the gashouse where nothing much can happen, notwithstanding floppy-disk vertebrate sequence of the nuclear-weapon star

keyed up in beige plastic and on half-coded old data tapes to which we've lost most if not at all of the encryption presets, which is fine, which doesn't matter, protocol's protocol and you execute it as best you can and you worry later about the enzyme login to the spinal edit-bay of xenonucleic star never actually disarmed and still in receipt of however many billion dollars every year in federal money that just slips in under the line veto with some suitably bland name and abstract nouns congealing everywhere into the sort of en-bloc unit that it's almost impossible to *read*, strictly speaking,

because it just passes though, acts as a flavorless concentrate still spiked with enough acid that it stings beneath too much focus, fibrotic processors of the fluidic-computer star from which we might chip glaciological transistor or just the old microfiche DNA yet hived in missing molars and the victims of unregulated wars,

the only kind we can't abide, you see, though "war" as term might very well pass on, is passing, has passed, an unnecessary designation for an era of individual strikes and surgical targeting,

ahem, were you, did you, had you a wait here, experimental trials of bioweapon star in the facilities we invaded after claiming their prior use for same, made up from Butler buildings and mobile campers like the shit you'd find in the alleys between Hollywood film lots, those few big old half-cylinder buildings you can still find in the right or rather the wrong neighborhoods, curved that way, I guess, for ease of lighting, or for the realistic appearance of the backdrops and throw-curtain sky, or for the flies to hold the right amount of mobile audiovisual equipment, or, by this point, simply out of habit, telecine chain mounting oncology of wet-gate star in a filmstrip account of undelivered uterine cancers,

the somite scan over the rotary speaker in thick slices of condensed grand-mal time, chemical-weapon star a blastomere map editing the land as undelivered from your guns into the land your guns would rewrite reapportion and then finally rename,



talking civilian government, talking a multiethnic and multireligious ruling council under a sort of mixed star chamber/parliamentary system in which you allow the populace its prized delusion of voting and so forth but never really leave anything up to more than seven men at a time, and yes, they'll all be men, we haven't moved so far beyond the outward-and-apparent colonial impulses, have we, though you needn't worry, PR crow-bait, we'll make sure to drain an absolutely infinitesimal percentage of the oil profits off to establish a fund for 100 local girls to study, what, computer coding every year or so, the better to drive down the price of such labor and thus keep the system smoothly functioning,

to which you might well ask *a system for what* and mightn't quite receive an answer, who the fuck do you think you are, anyway, mineralized cytoskeleton of hydraulic-fracture star in backlight blackout where the solar-flare albedo magnetizes twists and coils of taut cerebral flesh in wetware star's RAM backup toward the obsolescent hemorrhage

or just an aneurysmal obelisk still stinging despite long residency and the drainage of a dozen failed stents, the haywire DNA-repair star ripping itself to frantic shreds of cyclic resonance as glutted with its own cybernetics of inadequate medical reverb

and the men in the cafeteria of the green zone, what would you call it, "mall," I guess, though that's got implications and resonances which don't precisely fit here, but it's good enough, it's fine, it works, why are you always complicating things, we've got a Sunni got a Shi'ite got a Kurd got even hell maybe a Druze or a Yazidi or whatever the hell an Avestan is and there are probably some Zoroastrians left around and if you were to ask me whether or not Avestan is an antiquated term for same like say Parsee fire-worshipper I'm not entirely sure that I could tell you, "Manes, Manes was tanned and stuffed,"

the larvae overgrowing the airframe where blackbox MIDI command still promises etiolate beehive access to peptide-computer star's subroutine wreckage,

the name for the ghost is the name for the prophet is the name finally of the loss the horror the great alluvial fan torn out of the pack ice where exobiologic star's deleted fossil record piles up in friable mudstone clades as to disclose burst archaeopteryx like a magnetic storm blowing over touchy radio, and

that's where you'd want to pull your focus, mate, telesurgery of modem star for variable's losing nomination,

by which I mean or rather we mean or rather and in the general in the passive in the Germanically oblique it-is-meant es gibt est hat der Bedeutung or something that the important name is the name of the loss and that it'll take up its predictable formations and then it'll likewise surpass prediction and you're apt to wind up in a Gordon-on-the-Khartoum-steps sort of scenario, which, to be quite fair, is more ennobled an end that you were probably under the impression this office could afford you, I mean it's got production value, it's got lights and camera if not action, it's got the hard-saved waveforms of the optical-track star spliced up to sarcomere's slack tension and then throttled for the reference tone to come across brittle and almost unplayed like Aeolian-harp flesh, like the exocrine overdosage of the meat-cinema star in gluey milk,

as when machine code should drain from hippocampal translator and you've got a DI box through which to route all that thick cold turgid excess, good enough, slag the reactors, bank the furnaces, we want to keep a reasonable operating temperature here and we want not to exceed the budget or the thermal directives given us, print-through star's necropolis a fuel cell of combustible bone waiting in pent cytoplasm painfully retuned to the fiction of the local cold and to the fact of the somewhat-more-than-local heat out on the highway where a million pounds of automotive wreckage from the last war still wait on an internationally mandated storytime capable of setting them in order)

(now ain't that remarkable, in the literal sense worthy of remark, radiochemical bandwidths of router star to articulate such bone-fruit orchard as would reconstruct leviathan on the oilslick shores of the Gulf

where we come with box- and pinhole-camera frames ready to take down what there is to be taken down i.e. exactly what we want to see i.e. what we may then blame on the technical limitations of our equipment which equipment was of course chosen precisely *for* these limitations that it exercise a retroactive and futural pardon in the same instance that it make up in the future's past for exactly what the present doesn't want to see and that my son my blue-eyed son is called History: what living people say in the knowledge of what they'll later need a reason to deny, how the not-yet-dead foist alibis upon the corpses they've created, the way a murder is just "a death," flatly and

thus without attribution, until 50 or 100 years have passed and we come back to call it a killing again, no more dalliance with the passive voice, you see, stiff upper lips now, time to call in the Truth & Reconciliation Committees and to name the names

on *both* sides, to be sure, let's not pretend you wily local rascals didn't do your fair share of hellraising, provoked as may have been, aha, going to play that card, alright, well, fine, the point remains that, invaded and occupied or however you like to phrase it, you too were responsible for violence, and I think it would be best for everyone if we could leave this conference as official allies, wary ones, to be sure, in fact deeply distrustful, in fact in the profoundest insincerity both imaginable and practicable, because from our side we'll condescend and patronize and, if we pretend to forgive, will forgive as you'd forgive a dog for shitting on the floor, for pissing up the rug during a storm, it couldn't have known any better, it was and remains a dumb animal and there's no point treating it as though its actions manifest any human motive, it's just, in the oldest and least judgmental sense, you understand, a Brute, yes we do tend to fall back upon Biblical language in such circumstances as these, you were the beasts of the field and we were given dominion over you and allowed to set you to combat with the beasts of the air, the recon drone assassinating GABA star's grayscale map of ravaged cortical tissue,

and we'll happily admit – now – that our dominion was imperfect, that we were sometimes too harsh and very often neglectful, and we'd be quite obliged, thanks, if you'd pardon us on that basis, because of course we have to pretend to *earn* your pardon, pretend we can't just exact it anytime we want for any reason, imagine! living under some sort of venal Dark Ages dictatorship in which the head of state can simply revoke anybody's prison sentence for any reason and, beyond even that, can retroactively declare such persons to have been not only innocent but fraudulently charged, yes we enjoy these fine distinctions, it's not just that you've served your time for war profiteering and may now return to authorship of a fulsome social profile, no sir, it's that you were *never* a war profiteer and that those who reined suit against you should be ashamed and frankly punished, had we the wherewithal to find them and arraign them as fits the dimensions of their crimes, which we do, but we're going to pretend we don't, because

that would mount some awkward postures in the dock, let me tell you, I mean old, old shit that's in nobody's interest to bring up anymore, like say

we came down through the cut in the hills to the north and had our rats on every side of a war which, as far as we could tell or cared, was essentially a war between humans and the inhospitable Earth – don't you just love the way that exempts you from any culpability – and so the humans, unable either to murder the Earth or to commit mass suicide to a man woman child, divided into factions and commenced to slaughter each other – yet again, that false wide-angle shot, ignoring absolutely everything inconvenient, simply speaking as though events occurred in some objective middle distance with no causes and no effects and no help from anybody, especially not from *us*, why, what interest could we have in the internecine blood-feuds of some rainy Balkan shithole, or rather of, what would it be, Christ, at least 4 rainy Balkan shitholes subdividing like metastatic tissue, talking first the Former Yugoslav Republic which was communist but not Soviet and therefore not properly “eastern bloc,” talking then

Croatia Serbia Republika Srpska Bosnia and whatever the difference between “Bosnia” and “Bosnia-Herzegovina” is and then the international città dolente polis Kosovo and then fuck wasn't the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia in there too somehow aren't we responsible for the Macedons as far as anybody is for the mastodons extracted from the riverbank tape archive of the file-system star's phosphor-backed sugars rotting in daylong bluegreen luminescence for the sample-velocity sting of the adenosine star's login on a touchscreen laceration or just monitor-scabs flaking off to the kind of indoor midafternoon grayness we'll always be able to sell off to somebody with similar plans

and let's say all our rats came to us, rats even against rats of the same subgenus, whole vast phyla of rats spliced and mingled, let's say parataxis of the radiosurgical star coming over in blasts of interrupted pharmaceutical grammar like artificially pure white noise peaking above a decibel gate set somewhere very near zero gain and loud as hell when it spiked, and let's say

they all told us about a marketplace and they all threatened mass reprisal and they each accused the others in advance of unspeakable barbarity and so we decided to do what we do best, to erase the whole thing before it started and to claim foreknowledge of inevitable evil, preventative violence, that's the gig, doping out tape-

bias star for massive predeletion, and let's say you can still find bits of human tooth and bone driven deep into the walls of the few buildings still standing near that marketplace, that every time a wall must be knocked down or some old carcinogenic insulation replaced you pick up little slivers of yellow-gray grit and try not to think about the sockets from which they tore)

(pane of dustlight where the windows aren't but should be, phosphor voiceprint bleeding through the overground necropolis of file-system star

left exposed in unincorporated territory where the thunder never beats but the sky always threatens thunder, leaden gray as the end of the world, a perpetual-elsewhere storm, the blue dropsical heaviness of cloud where arid lightning prints used polymerase pattern on the cross-sectioned mountain's autopsy, software of peptide-computer star rotting to thermal-remnant flicker on the porous stone where blacksite film's dim substrate scrapes all but the most common names from all the but the most wrecked graves, such that none of this is anyone's responsibility, you see, no more than the fact of an earthquake or a drought

both of which we might actually be responsible for, sure, if you were pursuing it far enough, if you were that kind of frankly inoperable and odious cofactor, enzyme sear and the sulfa drugs necessary to burn you out, water table risen with the bolt-on xenotransplant infrastructure we decided to drag over and apply as stele of cautery for dummy chamber to the tomb of the hydraulic-fracture star

in a country of very little monumental architecture, not as ziggurat to west or further south and east where stupa sets up albino bone-gleam of the surface return pinging back into the recon drone, loop-send of modem star's abortive telesurgery

like heat-sintered trepanations and the cranial suture reworded according to some blare of megaphone parataxis, the blackout wattage of the chemotherapeutic star dialed up for slow retargeting as metastasis wrung from hardware's cells

or just the dry pigments of the place, occasionally brought in for local color when we need to impress upon our audience the difficulty of our position here, and don't ever delude yourself: war is, in fact, produced for an audience, is the finest and most expensive marshaling of all our technical forces and for much the same purpose as any blowout prestige-TV special or bloated Hollywood wreck after a dozen rewrites and

reshoots and focus groups and test screenings and a further dozen reshoots with different actors and bad post-sync dialogue and the separator circuits blown to seek-judder speech defect in spinal-edit frieze of xenonucleic star

where we inserted sugar for the acid gone to waste and brought up thick starch from a dropdown menu rattling inside its fatty insulation, hippocampal scripts transliterate in wetware star's low-bitrate history,

the resolution gone no finer than the screen and subject matter and then audience demand, because it's not as though they really want to see this in so very much detail, not like we're dealing with a crowd of sticklers for accuracy who demand the self-lacerating account that might come closest to the truth of what we're doing and where we're doing it; please; you've been in the business for longer than that; you've watched the telecine chain set up histologic alternatives to radiopharmacy of router star's thick bandwidths and the thinned-out sarcomere stratigraphy spot-welded as a placeholder, or such is the pretense, until we come up with a better sample voltage, a more useful electrical protocol,

the enormity of immunoassay salvage in exobiologic star's bone-sculpture where you wouldn't know to tell the tomb from the land nor the land from its condensed voltaic pile of fused extinction layers, earth as the archiving of archival dead already recompressed,

generation-lossy dirt-cache ROM of bioweapon star once ordered linear through a clearly tracklit pathway of sequential circuits, thus to lead us to the false agon we needed for war's pretext, but

it goes in all directions now, it picks up metastable flurries and spirals and then disappears, it subtracts the biological coefficient of tape-bias star from flown-in overdub reels already doped onto the master track a hundred thousand times and listen, man, they'd better be ready for a hundred thousand more, are you feeling awake, can you stand to keep doing this, I've got some No-Doz in the back, I've got something stronger than that in a plastic baggy slipped into the lining of a bulletproof vest that I very rarely bother to wear anyway because, frankly, what's the point, if we're going to get killed it's not going to be by something so comparatively small and petty as a *bullet*, you know, gunfire we could hear and adjust to, gunfire would ping off and dent the flimsy metal shielding of the armored car, we're more worried about IEDs underfoot and the fact of

their rhetorical ubiquity and the way the shrapnel goes unmentioned, the way wars import neologisms so quickly into the argot of the men who started them and the hundreds of millions more who keep them going by not caring so very much about whether they're still going on and, if so, then in what direction, along what switchback of reactor slag, where the nerve-terminal star suffers a third-rail xenon login

down among the lights of the subterranean train system forecast for this place by a billionaire developer whose actual job, had it ever come to pass – and sure, leave it that way, “come to pass,” another Biblical blank, like we're talking about the fucking swallows coming back to Capistrano, though actually even less culpable than that, because, as we now have reason to know, it's also our fault if Capistrano goes birdless, and you can listen for the blue shriek between the teeth of clathrate seething where methanogen star edits the acidophilic text –

was just to hire another developer who actually knew something about transport systems in general, because developer #1, and just tell me how this phrase sounds to you, had firsthand experience in the manufacture of exactly two things: weaponry and voting machines,

I shit you not nor really would ever need to, there's enough shit without my willed participation and exactly the same amount once they've cozened or threatened or just abandoned me into speaking on something much like their behalf, stay close behind, you wouldn't really want to be alone up here and I wouldn't really want to leave you that way because I really wouldn't want to be forced to take a podium whose scale is so inappropriate to the dry yawning horror of the land here, too small to speak from but much too large for any of the rubble that surrounds it)

(at, what, fuck, I'm always forgetting my conversion tables, the exchange rate on their variable heresies of noon, the world – as opposed to the Earth – is a 24-part fugal argument on the precise nature of what it means or doesn't that the sun is overhead, lobed somite GABA map of exobiologic star forcibly translated to a medical prosthesis,

OK, fine, flatter them with the locality of their hour's purchasing power, the local time in the NOVA arms-dealer suburbs, named better than they know, tant pis, whiteout forecourts of the weapons-system star where all bone armature appears in gritty pale

overexposure as the errors on a scanner bed, the scratches on the glass, flaws in the paper, insect ova of ectopic text still surfacing in bootscreen star's contagion, so

at approximately 12:31 Eastern Standard Time, wait, is daylight savings time the one where you're forward or you're back, gentlemen, pardon the confusion here, we're still working out the protocol, a very difficult business requiring a great deal of discretion, as I'm sure you understand – and here the press pool collectively nods, feeling damn near giddy to have been afforded such a meaningless glimpse into the minds of their so very fascinating subjects, because everything's just fascinating in a war, and aren't you, frankly, kinda glad to be covering something *real*, don't you just feel the continuity with your predecessors who also swarmed all over the American-backed carcasses of the world to plant their eggs in every recess of fallen flesh and empty dental sockets, aren't we lucky, pollen-drift where larvae swarm the image bundle that runs right down the fuselage of the crashed plane, stripped now to airframe where the glial firewall cedes antigen software's daylong dripfeed to a wetware star jailbroken of all rigid technical specs –

as I'm sure, I'm very sure you understand, proxy for an IP star in cardiac flesh borrowed from one of the pig farms we keep upstate or, frankly, why not the rancid goat meat out under the sun that's unbearably fucking hot in the daytime but doesn't seem to leave a scrap of heat for the nights, which are cold as any sudden burnt-out-bulb nightfall over the desert here, and

you'd be amazed, ladies and gentlemen, at the symmetry, how much the geography of an American war resembles the false-front geography of that American periphery where we carry on the *real* business for which the rest of this is a kind of decent front operation, a holding company designed to obscure the purpose and finances of the corporation in whose stead it'll turn up in court, not that we're very likely to reach such an unpretty pass:

acetate demos to reboot nuclear-weapon star's firmware amino sequence, because there was an oil shortage just then, there was a crisis of wax and lacquer and shellac and polyvinyl and acrylic and latex paint in the tubes we couldn't use for the oil-related economics of the metals that comprised them, so there's your notion of purpose

and for purpose's deferral, one of those Arizona suburbs where there are low fake-Spanish walls separating nothing from nothing, where the houses are construction-



site trailers with fake terracotta shingles on the roofs, where the vegetation has all clearly been photocopied from some cheap inertial version of a Mediterranean idyll in the backlog of the studios' stock footage, not so very far from here, you can get there in a day of driving and I recommend you do as long as I'm making recommendations, overridden cephalopod clade still coded into the null-character emissions of the obsolete operating-system star swaddled in orbit with the leukocytes hydrocracked from some decommissioned satellite, the accidental immunology of our weaponry gone wrong,

as if a satellite could ever be for anything but weaponry, telemetrics and television included, bring up the film chain on that electron-gun star if you would and make sure the fallout all pings back in static scatter against glass thick enough to host a bursting vacuum just beneath it, the old cathode tubes erupting in the unaccustomed heat, well

we were out there between the brief human settlements, having destroyed at great length and with great relish the world of the only human beings who knew how to live here as anything but fucked strangers – not that they weren't strangers too, of their kind, inheriting the baffled relics of a precursor civilization they named the Elders or Unknown and you'd know as the kind of word that riddles geometrically-patterned blankets in a gift shop, hey, why not take something home for the estranged family, why not presume the wife has some interest in Native American art and, if she doesn't, tell her very soulfully that she's so very soulful that you thought there'd be a kinship there, you thought to help her discover her own reserves of credulous grasping fatuity at a frequency nearly equal to your own, though what, you might well ask, can ever really equal the credulity of the military man,

not much, not anything, god help us, god won't, not *that* god, he ain't been much in evidence and his older stranger siblings were the subjects of a genocide which admittedly got off to a rocky start but has certainly made progress both technological and animal since then, has become both more efficient and more humane, press the button on the placard if you'd like to hear an authentic example of native drumming or the name of the constellation in a language we must now reconstruct because we absolutely slaughtered it, printout of biomechanical star doped in rotary-speaker autopsy slices into the cliffside with the Anasazi city still in sharp xenolith prominence

though alien not to the local stone but to our uses for it, among which uses may be numbered the sheetrock beneath and to all four sides of the podium on which I'm going to tell you that, at approximately 12:31 p.m. eastern standard time, an operation was assayed, passive again, you see, to make it seem as though the operation was just *there* waiting to happen, which yielded critical military intelligence – i.e. a terrified old man with a henna-stiff beard told us that he hadn't seen his son in months and didn't even know how to get in contact – and occasioned only small loss of life on all sides, as if there were many sides after dying, as though the war weren't a question of mineral survey rights to cadavers, weren't basically the petrochemistry of how quickly we exhume and burn the dead, and to what notion of what end)

(sharp cold outside the blind glare of the tracking shot's periphery, a frigid gel of grand-mal tincture in the wetware star's fuel cylinder, leaking through the gas lines where ectopic light lies incubated under vast and only semi-effective sedation, the long-term anesthesiology of nuclear-weapon star's firmware undeployed

officially speaking, though of course its deployment was a matter of vast expense and what we might as well call technical expertise in the decades intervening between this one and the last ten years you feel comfortable slotting into the fake-orderly procession of mere history, genetic cassette's lo-res overdub on the exposed visceral cartridge of necropolis beneath earthed DNA-computer star

now neither in nor out of history but setting the term to history's rupture, the wound it can't sustain but has no choice but to navigate for all our etiolate faculties in dealing with this any other way, I mean you want the story, I mean I want what buzzes around the edge of the story, I want the sideline of the wreckage, I want the sample-trigger subroutines of the phagocytic star built up in dielectric drone of cyclic resonance where the white extended cortex goes slack around the long taut image-bundle fasciae of tissue, the spinal access hatch to xenonucleic star's massed graft-rejection

and what failed immunologic ichors may be wept yet for the way the transplant couldn't carry off its newfound consonance with prior flesh, we fucked up, why try to cast it any other way, we fucked up, wait there, meaning here, I'll come back, hopefully, with something to show you, as in

sleep-spindle pictography issuing from gamma-knife star's postoperative indices in gouts of tangled protoglyph, not yet the written sign nor very likely, under the circumstances, to attain such unfixed intensity of pitch, not a definite frequency but a sarcomere stratum of possible tunings, see, bandwidth of the modem star in histologic download

or whatever else you planned to use for framebuffer alongside the night's quotient of forced packet-sniffing updates, all the shit we've got to make do with, all the metastatic software of the bioweapon star

implanted so slowly and with such a tongue-numbing array of options and of disk-permission menus that you really quite forget what you're doing and to whom you're doing it, not least of all yourself, though damn near least: we need you to enter a password we need you to set and then answer and then re-answer two security questions from a list of twenty preapproved topics none of which as it turns out apply to you very precisely but then you've led an unusual career which is a kind way of saying that you're a fuckup shut-in with a lot of blank years in the CV already thoroughly debriefed as to ostensibly sane causes of their blankness don't you think wouldn't you say you did as good a job as could be expected in rationalizing what we were never going to accept so that of course is a small plus you might say a minor tally in the column of those few quiddities which add up in your favor redound to the eventual effect and specifics of your employment

because understand you were *always* going to get *some* kind of job everybody who comes in here goes on the payroll it's just that some are never told and some would never *be* told despite the tenacity or depth of inquiry and some leave the office owing *us* money in the nature of a dignified and thoroughly bureaucratic protection racket,

get me, it's never just thanks for coming by and we value your application and we're proud that you wanted to work for such a well-established company yes we're just damn plum chuffed with the fact that you thought of us but unfortunately we can make no reasonable use of your dubious talents at this time and we beg you in the sincerest terms which the pure structural insincerity of the day allow us to let us know anytime you get an itch to apply again because we are of course humanitarians first and foremost and you, to all appearances, still technically qualify for the status of "human,"

how much do you really expect them to mean anything between the gelid smudge of the liquefying air against the glass walls and the open-plan office in which bored overworked people decide the exact monetary terms of your subsidized starvation, imagine that, like this guy right here is about, oh, \$6,000-per-year crippled, this woman's maimed something real impressive but, unfortunately for her, very much deemphasized under the new administration after it was adjudged, algorithmically and with a great deal of crosschecking, of course, that we'd spent too much money on exactly that sort of maiming over the last, what would it be, 8 years, so sorry, ma'am, but the best we can do for you is \$300 per month and permission to request an appeal hearing within 60 days,

meaning the request has to come within 60 days – shit, the appeal hearing could be years from now, and please do bear in mind that, if you make such a request, your \$300 monthly payment will be suspended until such time as the request has been approved, which could, as I say, take years, and then the appeal's been heard, months more at the very least, and then the appeal's been officially decided upon, months more, and then several weeks at minimum for you to get, oh, 3 or 4 utterly unnecessary and duplicative typewritten letters all dated last year in which you're serially informed of your disbarment from the official condition of prize freak, why Janey can't sleep at the zoo no more, why we done locked her cage and sent her home with a brown paper bag full of rotten flour left in the charity slot on the side of the disused Lutheran church like ergot-infested mail, the maggot's office of dead letters)

(and the maggot sprawl across the penicillin shriek of unconfirmed imago where an airframe also rots despite mitotic installation of the wetware star it wore as guidance system, maybe, allegedly, if you believe everything you hear or only some of it, but

I'll let you in on a neat secret if you promise not to tell, the pitter-patter blather of too-cut Merseyside 8<sup>th</sup> notes all in tune: that ain't no fuckin' guidance system, bweh, that's there for targeting is what it is and targeting *what* I couldn't tell you and targeting *how* I couldn't tell you neither, only know about the white blood of satellite plus epinephrine spike's loop-send through nerve-terminal star for massive postgain,

so the signal, the original, if you're the sort who believes in the technical or even let's say the metaphysical possibility of an original signal, as though it all weren't the

broken and mutated copies of the mutant broken copies blowing through something analogous to but different from the wind – the bloodborne ossuary of peptide-computer star’s synaptic print-through –

always comes over loud as hell and so distorted that its leading edge is like the sudden discover of a bug under your index finger when you thought you were just relocating specks of dust and scraps of broken wood and little chits and scrips of ash, radiopharmaceutical star in the horrible pliancy of the yielding insect flesh and then the chitin sting of wing along the outboard lining of the waveform

which we’d then route through whatever system of baffles and formalized distances seemed, and only seemed, capable of containing it, a rippling gray weather system of millions of dead gnats floating in the electrophoretic gel bath of the fluidic-computer star,

well, that’s as may be, screw the jogwheel up and around and set the parametric EQ for small acts of entomological surgery and send the fossil-record dialup through the router star at bitrates low enough that we can pretend to tell the incidental interference from the thing we meant to broadcast,

as though broadcast, again, weren’t only interference sculpted, static granted purpose and always right on the edge of exceeding whatever formal limits purpose meant to impart, the semiosis of the radiochemical star’s overload-glyph a coil of aneurysmal flesh still blood- and signal-pent on the surface of a pile of dead gray matter or of cerebral tissue, let’s say, kept conditionally alive, not-dead to the extent that it can still be used as a system of electrical conduits, a logic board, a railway shunt-to-siding of biomechanical star’s meat-transistors,

coming wave, I guess, no, I more than guess, I’ll just say it like it’s a fact and then if I was right-in-retrospect you’ll count me for a prophet, so: Coming wave, and I’ve already seen the legal boilerplate laid out, seen the presaved and prefled document template they’ve got written into the new software, am more or less familiar with the kind of terminology they’ll find necessary to employ or really will just use because they want to, because they like to, because it makes them feel a certain kind of way they like to feel – it’s very, very important to remember that the powers of this world do much of what they do for sheer indulgence, even if it’s indulgence masquerading as high duty or high dudgeon or just rote formulaic completion of scheduled “necessary” tasks; things

are this way because somebody wanted them to be and because somebody else, often the same person or a member of that person's class, likes the way things are so very, very much; *it's always the right world for somebody*, however wrong you are in it, and though I'd caution anybody not too get to Jansenist or Zwinglite about the whole goddamn mess, it does take a certain amount of teeth-gritting meat-ergon not to admit for the first and last time that you've just been transplanted into the wrong meat-machinery and that you might quite well kill yourself either right away or over the many many years of a slow ritualized suicide that would, to anybody watching, look like something sadder, perhaps, but less predetermined, like alcoholism or opioid addiction or 6 months of benzodiazepine fugue terminating in the massive spasm of a call to the emergency room to ask what they could do, and then a cigarette outside between the calling and the getting in the car to get yourself dumped off in front of the ER doors like a slunk calf fallen from its mother onto undressed concrete, and then, in the time-concentrated-back-into-space of one cigarette smoked, you only disappeared, you only ceased to show up where we looked, and

we figured it out later, how you must've headed north, right along the main street that changes its name a half dozen times between here and the river, spinal darts as always, the white ineffectual dopamine arrowhead and the systems-failure of reuptake star in constant serotonin drainage nagging at the edges of the last brain-matter massif legible on any topographic map at all, GABA star's loop-send depletion an FX return with all the post-synch dialogue ripped several seconds out of correspondence with any of the actors' mouths and incidental sound like gunshots and broken windows succeeding its paired imagery as to make violence seem the simple deliverance of a tragedy already undergone and more than simply impossible to revoke,

the old disaster and its soundtrack catching up to you when disaster reaches blood level after months or years of slow introductory titration, you see, optical-printer star's dyslexia of mangled spinal edits

and the way you held to that main road despite the fact that it doesn't actually go straight, for all its straightness in the abstracts of the map, Just Head North, well there are switchbacks and dead ends and odd places where it runs out into the façade of some 1910 building in High Slaughterhouse Gothic and continues on the other side of the horizontal arterial or maybe intravenous, as you will, and the way north then must've

been a vertebrate magnetization, the uncoiled pickups and the patter of iron dust fallen from the used tape, the macrophage star's videocassette inviting final override of all the geographic syndrome latent in the shape of sited lives and death-at-site)

(exobiologic star grease-welded in a hydrocarbon frieze of molten fats and thick adulterated blood to the exposed skeleton of a car which you can't properly buy anywhere

because bolted stapled screwed and nailed together from the bones of a half-dozen makes and models of compact truck available only in southern Eurasia and very rarely from licensed reputable dealers, not that you were asking or, frankly, have any right to ask, don't worry about it, this isn't your beat if beat you have and we're not doing anything very much more illegal than the boys to either side of us or the civilian dealers in the green zone with the price-gouged numerals already flaking off their own plastic backing and down to yet more metals which might be salvaged or just stolen, fused with anything at anytime and graft-rejected again and torn away and sold per weight per purity per density as metalloprotein bandwidth of reuptake star encroaching,

as bracket to the millimeter-wave deposit on the body, the modem star's necropolis of airport-scanner autopsies,

all of them still the orange-white of lunar fats and in the sky's dim tincture where suspended particulate between whatever clotting agents mouth a biofilm out of all the dead aerosol, the spent dispersals, the riot police muttering in a language which none of the locals understand but which they don't really need to because, obviously, you know, plastic shield and nightstick and flash grenades and smoke bombs and tear-gas canisters and megaphones and the PA system atop the armored car whose armor, by the way, was another one of our cut-and-paste jobs, subcontracted to a subcontractor as the case may be and was, question only of procurements and relative pricing and the fact of a covalent war elsewhere notching its last valence shell between the pseudorandom tetanic spasms of electron-gun star's clocked ataxia in the back of a busted cathode-ray TV,

obviously weapons and what you might call the clade of the soft weaponry, fossil record of the wetware star's glucose battery

among rubber bullets and gases that'll scar your lungs, bring richly textured frescoes of destroyed bronchial flesh up with your body-wrecking cough, but won't

technically kill you, i.e. not in any legal sense, nothing to be prosecuted, just fuel for another century's wholly justified resentments and thus a kind of reverse crypto-key to the architecture of the West, which is set up in retrospect as the formalized machinery of its own disassembly, firmware firing sequence of nuclear-weapon star on diskettes stacked and riveted and fused in the black petrochemical heat

of the remote-execute star's line-edit darkness among peak-oil text or just the viral shedding of the bootscreen star's xenotic script in detail of small avian bone, extinct passerine species and the larger predators who fed on them despite nominal inclusion underneath the same few headings, so it was technically cannibalism, so it was nothing more or less than the predatory refurbishing of such a used world as is ours, and you'd cough up the clinking cervical vertebrae or whatever mangled twist of gristle put the switchback in the elongated muscular tail, unusual birds, I'll admit, ossuary of hydraulic-fracture star erupting in the focused sunspot radio

and the flare of aneurysm pent to engineer a broadcast hemorrhage when DNA-repair star ruptures in its vitrine casing and we all come back and back and back

through the melted sand and the cold beside it, unbelievably goddamn frigid at night for the sick blaze of the day, vertical hold lost to the damp swelter in rippling downdrift as to surgery of rolling-shutter star

or just the accidents of scanner beds along the blast barriers and the fact of exactly how much heat concrete does and doesn't contain, abortifacient germline of the wet-gate star as interspecies glyph lodged in cement wall from some mass evolutionary detonation,

the IED cobbled together from the output of genetic-weapon star's partial machinery, failed overdubs, the safety reel that never quite took and the RAM cache we could never fully empty,

so the city is an archive of its own least eradicable memories, but less of the memories themselves than of the failed attempts at their eradication, the indices of cicatrix and lesion and deep blooming hematoma, the venography of GABA star now ripened subcutaneous to lunar bruise such as forecasts the last sarcoma and

file-system star's immunocompromise for cells wrongly sorted coming over the lower end of the waveband like audible scurf, the froth and scree of the downhill sea as you sometimes do find it, the trench in front of the beachhead proper so that the ocean



beats overhead and you feel it like a pressure on your neck and skull and eardrums, the spinal hard-save of xenonucleic star to sugars hived in the anterior horn, waiting in arachnoid sheath, white rigid tissues snapped under the lubed camera's stalk-eye like spiderweb proteins heard ripping,

not that we spent any more time than was absolutely necessary in such places nor considered them any better than idiot work for the many of us, or really just the many, strike "of us" because stricken by its own nomination thus, who didn't know any goddamn better, who still understood and understand war as a series of orders to be carried out in the pursuit of a general and obvious and final goal, one univocal directive with occasional descant heavy on the tremulant or dubbed-in rotary-speaker slabs of somite scan where blastomere map tries to reconstruct the IP star from damaged cellular debris that might, in time, have grown a heart, though probably not,

you're looking for the countermelody and you're asking for the highest line to fall chromatically through a series of chord- and key-change realignments justified in retroaction by the fact of that falling note, yessir it didn't make no sense first time I heard it but then the reference tone collapsed and I could watch the multipath distortion through embalmed lipid transistors of a circuit-bending star, the current coupling with the silicon beneath and buckling straightened pin connectors likewise purchased from a dealer in goods more valuable the more thoroughly secondhand they get)

(because therefore less traceable, you get me, here's what I'll do for you, I'll give you a card, and it'll be the good card with the right number on it, and that number is the number of a storage locker, don't you call no phones or go around handing this out, ought to be able to remember it because you can't have so very many cards that just show one black number on a white background and good heavy cardstock too, understand, that's memorable, that's something,

and the next time you're in town, come on around and see your uncle, minor-mode city-in-the-city, fucking necropolis of storage lockers overground and that says nothing of what might be underneath 'em, OK, heel of hand to ram the blastocoel cassette into labyrinth of slaughter under DNA-computer star,

you know the dead lands we exhumed on purpose and those we merely brought up with the weaponry designed to erase even the dead, scrape that culture off the

samples, tape backup of bacterial-colony star soaked in astringents and waiting on the smell of raw rubbing alcohol till everybody feels a bit lightheaded and stomachsick and you go out into the day again where you won't find anything to cure *that* feeling,

benzene ring in the realigned asterism of the radius and ulna as you like it or methylphenidate downloaded from radiopharmaceutical star's aberrant satellite uplink, never exactly sure when it's going to come through at all and, even then, quite far from certain that it'll be comprehensible, you know how this shit works or maybe you don't, nuclear medicine of router star in 8-track mixdown of the aliased and clipped-out MRIs,

some of which refer, no doubt, to enemy flesh, though it's a little bit hard to imagine that we'd be in possession of a wholly intact enemy body, at least according to the official regulations here: you're allowed to shoot to hack to maim to mow down to rip apart at waistline with machine-gun fire I mean you're allowed to tear somebody in half with a bump stock or something mounted on a tripod and that's not even mentioning the target algorithm where the malware star overgrows touchscreen directives on artillery piece bought thirdhand from yet another civil war we'll be pretending not to have instigated pretty soon here, understand,

Banderist sympathies and mercenaries speaking in flimsy easily-cracked code over the handsets in radio taxis, chemical-weapon star decrypting a new map of the bone-architecture underneath the public square where, in as blank and nonjudgmental a phrasing as you can manage, "the protestors have gathered,"

some of whom really are protestors, I'm sure, and some of whom believe entirely in what they're doing and see nothing sinister at all in the imperative to representative democracy and membership in the EU and a free-trade agreement that'll soften up the borders on all sides but only for a certain kind of traffic, because this is a country people flee, right, so you want the membrane porous but selectively permeable only, want "your" people to get back in and maybe a certain amount of cheap immigrant labor once we've doped out our own Celtic Lion scenario and *definite* porosity as regards the Song of Investment Capital Overseas, "out of town, I do my work out of town," a tax inversion for a pharma firm and the kerchief'd wives lining up to line up again in the cafeteria as servers or the served, sure, call them that,

some of them, some of them, not all, nowhere near all, oh but some believe, they bring out acoustic guitars like it's the fall of the Berlin Wall again and we're filming an

intimate group shot of 6 or 7 young half-ideologue self-styled rebels each of whom has fucked the others corresponding to his or her choice or choices of gender, malleable enough after years of desperation and selective famine, favors for favors, “that graft at the Ministry of Supply,” chocolate bars and American cigarettes dumped off in a tinfoil brick every few weeks so the tinfoil brick of hash occasionally substitute for it won’t look too suspicious, which isn’t to say we *don’t* want the chocolate and the cigarettes, of course we do, for our own use or to sell, and

it’s time for Freedom Radio, yeh-yeh boys, hump out “Light My Fire” in Polish or some shit, come on, people now, smile on your class-brother as geography may dictate, headbands and old bellbottoms smeared with paint and thick leather bracelets and probably a goddamn tourist-trinket version of an Apache headdress, and all of this with no embarrassment at all, not even a little bit, pre-ironic, these guys, haven’t had the parallel and multiple luxuries of simultaneous consumer rebellions yet, have had to buy or more likely to bootleg and to steal the last American image of revolution they could smuggle over pirate radio and through the docks with the help of sympathetic sailors and captains who didn’t give a shit, whatever the difference might be, if there obtains any further distinction between real sympathy and convenient mercantile apathy,

and soon enough, they’ll have all those images at once, and whatever genuine tinge of *decision* their acts and language might’ve maintained will reduce itself to *choice*, simply the selection from an array of preset options so large that you hardly feel deprived for having been hemmed in, much the same way you wouldn’t start to get claustrophobic if somebody told you that you’d die when you’d counted to infinity and had to start counting right now, I mean, we can scroll all the way to the bottom of the list, we can see that the list has a bottom, but it’s just so very, very long and each of the listed items unfurls its own menu of secondary tertiary quaternary options each likewise prepared with presets enough to make the cross-multiplication seem nearly endless as misfolded protein under operating-system star’s gray frameshift obsolescence where the xerograph sky rocks against its own corroded hinges)

(a sold voice in numb recitative on what’s supposed to be the military-police band, so exhausted with its own rote sales pitch that it’s started to find the entire thing

obscurely but physically hilarious, file-system star's cytopathology in clipped signal domains,

the near-hysteria as it chews on each phoneme's metastasis in teeth tongue throat palate vocal cords, asbestos glyph breaching anesthesiology of nerve-terminal star toward endoscopic footage replayed on the pale dirty white backing of the body, tissue mangled by production of the fixed sound it encodes and of that sound slowly denatured out of fixity, the frameshift mutation of a genetic-weapon star

run through a walkie-talkie borrowed from the cab of the MP's cruiser, such as it is, meaning really an armored car, meaning "armored" in a sense more outward and maintained for display than effective, because I've been told the bombs can still get right under all that flimsy cladding, rip the plastic off the metal, massage the flesh till it slips right from greasy bone, reengineer a wetware star by welding language-fats to recyclable chassis, the gray matter slipping down the spinal column in a spatter of bloodstreaked grease and the blood-brain barrier a dim onscreen artifact for xenonucleic star's aliased vertebrate codons,

the stop command or reset to the viral load of bootscreen star as surfacing in melted synaptic tesserae like maps of ongoing and catastrophic deglaciation, the polar sidechain broadcast to the baseband meat-specifics of chemical-weapon star and casualty reports referring exclusively to individual organs for want of any "person" as such to suffer the violence inflicted,

because that violence, see, was "personhood" revoked, repealing the pretense to the overtone of necessary flesh in contact, acoustic-transient star's spinal epidemiology in local parlance probably a lost metaphor of the breath or the water, spiritus or Seele as you like, pulled out of the lake or half-rescued from the hard bronchial tremolo, a somite scan erupting Doppler-mangled in the hard reset of the modem star's radiochemical bandwidth,

and the street's basically deserted, or at least as empty as it ever gets, which is to say it's not so very empty at all, but everybody has our explicit permission, in fact our directive, to be here and to be about the obvious and illustrative tasks they feign to undertake, a cartoon world, utile meat exhibiting each purpose as in uniforms splayed across the pictures in a children's book, like here come fireman here come police here come baker milkman tinker Wandering Judas outside the lazaret he's never quite

allowed to enter and under the hyperventilation of the router star in waveband sleep-paralysis,

watching the ghost in the protein rise too tall and thin from the foot of his improvised bed every night, as token maybe of some contact with inhuman species long since extinct, but only maybe, fossil record of genetic-cassette star in etiolate clades drawn out as to timestretch without altering the pitch, so every waveform breaks down to granulocyte friction, macrophage star's videofeed resampled until you can actually see the syncope intervening as brief blackout between single frames, petit-mal spike in the current that reengineers molecular architecture of the wetware star's glucose battery,

the broken white spindrift in the vacuum tube's muted eruption or just hard necropolis honey out of serocomplex star's edited skeleton,

medical patents as they may or may not apply and a term for each not to exceed the existence of the nation wherein patenting takes place as such as must as will be under the present name and with exactly this self-description as to form of government and no other, see what I'm saying, so if we change from Kingdom to Republic to Democratic People's Republic to Union of States, that's got to be a new patent a new trademark another set of copyright protections in each one,

enantiomer germline of the radiopharmaceutical star drawn out to oblique sarcomere prosthesis for encryption among dystonic muscle and shivering airlock cartilage such as will disguise the splice and solder, overwrite erase-head damage with a system of lost glyph designed mostly to provide glue for the eye, neuroglial binding agent to entomb DNA-repair star in hypogeum of damp structural cells,

edit-cache of optical-printer star's ongoing and crude surgery entirely lost to the undo function and stammering blank to the way you still insist on prodding the dead significance of certain combinations of alphanumerical keys, well,

I mean, shit, keep it up if you feel that keeps you safe, I'm not the one to tell you otherwise, dried scanner-bed parataxis of the wet-gate star in geofact histology,

the mutagen sculpture of the Earth and whatever you were planning to stripmine from the hollows where its bones aren't, or simply the continued solidity of statuary flesh, the fact of nothing less or more than the raw stone matrix when you've burrowed

down to what you wrongly thought the center the principle the seedbed from which all such radiology of xenolith star must rise,

remember that, remember looking, remember enumerating stains of lye and photo-cyanide and iron and nectar-stained glass among the core-dump index of peptide-computer star,

all the text expected from the dented ringing metal of the statues you tore down, not even “fascist,” let’s save that word for the nations to whom it truly applies, eh?, for the moribund center-right market liberalism in such deep refusal of its own bucking and thrashing immune system that you might well think it’s invited its own terminal disease, and who’d be there to tell you you’re wrong, whom could you trust in the ambivalent event of such a telling, doesn’t it seem to want to die and, if it didn’t, wouldn’t it have fucking listened to the ways either it or its doomed cellular constituents were trying to save it, designer-virus star to call up antibody cluster before the pathology in the most basic line code should emerge with a violence of such surpassing size and scale and unsummable form, a geometry impossible to describe from any given angle, not yet susceptible to vision all at once, scarfed and medically-stapled together from a dozen bad contact sheets in which the only shared pivot-tone is, let’s say,

the weaponry the cops employ, the fact of the border guards burying nameless migrants in graves they don’t even bother to fill and waiting for the satellite photography to routinize those corpses and their nonexistent funeral rites as vague victims of the drug trade, which of course *you* wouldn’t know anything about, white-phosphorus star’s overdose in tinder city waiting for the chroma key to venographic light)

(tape scan for skipped biotrace on bacteriophage star, the indices of penicillin and rotifer dross, ruptured animalculae, unicellular deletions seek-juddering down the black mainline in silver microphotograph like disk control impaired in DNA-computer star’s failed restart operations stammering,

over and over and over and over until the speech defect should attain condition of its own idiolect and become the local language, nobody speaking otherwise nor anatomically capable of any speech older or newer, cross-sections of the biomass star ripped up from the sea for installation one by one in rows of the server facility where the

air always forms a milky surface-tension skin at the temperature gradient, 65°F or whatever inside the building and rarely less than 120° when you've passed through the triple set of doors, call them serial vestibules, better to call them sluiceways, failed remedies for decompression sickness, caisson disease setting off the nitrogen-fixing star in the spinal column of a diver underpaid to dynamite the rockier scansion of the river bed

because we're going to build a bridge, isn't that exactly the kind of bullshit we ought to be doing here, not invaders, not conquerors, just occupying friends, taking over your sublease, as it were, hadn't you ought to let us get this dam in place and raise the water table and watch the poppies blooming fat and sickly sweet from your slit wrist, the thick bulbs forcing themselves painfully through a glut of sliced connective tissue and burst vascular connectives, grammatical medicine of gamma-knife star editing the CAT scan of the ocean floor again

as to reap salt for growth of altered drugs, your pain a different question before the possibility of a different and narrowed range of answers, look inland, look to the home of your deliverer and savior, if you would, observe the place he came from and try your damndest to escape the cutesy renaissance sense of divine symmetry achieved: he brought heroin to your country, and his hometown is now ravaged by synthetic opioids, the demand for which was created in large part by the ubiquity of the plant that hardly grew in your homeland until he fucked it up,

although it was a meth down before it was the storage-locker necropolis of opiates, it was always high as hell before a nasty comedown, and

I waited around the corner of the empty glass shopping center, near the steps down to the underground restaurant where the lawyers eat during recesses, one room where the DAs and serious litigators are served with fabric napkins and the kind of wine bottle you act nearly ashamed to display because it's just such a damn marvelous thing that even spending the eye's virginity on it seems too little a repayment for its splendor, and then another room for the public defenders who all seem to have barged in out of recent rain, whether or not it's actually raining, and who are sweating through suits that look like they were made of condemned pool tables, green-gray-blue and felt and baize and billiard cloth and a phosphorescence wrongly calibrated to match the vision-mixer

sheen of the iridule shining from the sharkskin suits in which their opposite numbers move with such cuff-shot assurance,

how we doing, Your Honor, and how's my worthy opponent, condescending as all hell, but those in receipt of condescension, despite their constant and eminently justifiable rage, can't help but feel a little honored that the DA would pay them even faux-personal attention, so what are you going to do, you going to act like you didn't notice, didn't appreciate, film-chain surgery to sequence fluoroscopic star in sheaves of deleted umbilical meat,

and in that other room, they give you paper placemats and they direct your attention to a bottle of midprice cognac or something in a velvet display case with a red light in its roof like it's advertising a miniature whorehouse, someplace where American cops purchase Mexican strippers for hourly chop-shop conversion, and by "purchase," we're often talking intimidation and outright violence more than money, a brief jaunt over the border for a springtime you're reclaiming from the schedule of your fact, hermano, o no no no, the cops still in the States wouldn't know *anything* about that, we're not a goddamn Third World hellhole, are we, I mean we mace and gas and club and shoot and even bomb protestors or those whose lives we have adjudged to constitute an intolerable form of protest, ask those vaguely Rastafari Pan-Africanists back in Philadelphia, ask the single scalded child who allegedly survived the mayor's firebombs if you can find him, either the mayor or the child,

and we tap their phones and bug their computers and turn mics and cameras on and off in their pockets via remote satellite uplink or the half-shattered negative plates of the MRI star keening windblown through the limbs of the cellphone tower, but no, of course not, American police would *never* bully a sex worker into blowing or fucking them in exchange for their overlooking her trade, and of *course* they'd never go further than simply bullying, would never just assault her or, for that matter, him, let's be realistic, says the DA, smiling under a stiff peak of gelled hair, let's not get conspiratorial or paranoid, I know you've got reasons to be suspicious and, believe me, I do too, I've seen the cops in their free time, I know the secret bars that don't close until 7 a.m., but *assault?*, really?, are you prepared to prove that?, can you submit evidence?, will that evidence meet the standards for same as established for the benefit of the people you're



trying to accuse?, by which I mean, can you tell me *the cops did it* in the idiom and tone of the last mythical good cop?)

## acropolis prosthetics

(botched the sync sound, ran the telecine mixer up a slack-tuned myofibril toward the core dump of a crashed nerve-terminal star,

inquired after the authorship of such permissions as would probably prove necessary to negotiate reformatted disk, adenosine star's login sugars smeared into a blar patch of crystallizing metadata, the holograph substrate of multiply-encrypted ID cards melted down into some molecular mangle that will outlive by several million years the mistaken society that intentionally produced it, or the opposite, as you like, technetium wiretap on the serocomplex star

and no real hope, in all that inquiry, of getting any real authorization or hearing anything back at all, just not now, not at your level, not such as you'd need to know, listen, we're all very busy doing things we barely understand at all and don't have time to realign the bones that present themselves with the black foliage of your echo chamber, only blackbox organogenesis now, histocompatible star's print-through hypostyle

as to encode the earth beneath with something in the manner of a hazmat stele, xenonucleic star's vertebrate patchbay waiting on the correct restart sting of salt and phosphorus or

just plastic substrate for the virus delicacy plasma-etched in cleanroom manners, waiting on the photomachine grid to clamp down over phage star's occupant scansion,

the empty cell and the disease model thereto imported like a bit of useful architecture with an entire catalogue full of options for its outward and ostensible purpose, the kind of walls you put up the kind and number of shutters you draw down the sort of signage you display or pointedly omit you want the thing to be fireproof you want it bulletproof you want it to eat sound or to strew sound like luminol around the forensic reconstructions archaeology of immunoblot star's multitrack cassette jammed

raw with hand's heel into empty tape deck of the first available corpse radiochemistry of  
modem star broadcast tinny and static-seething on middlemost cadaver bandwidths

as you'd expect, as you'd been given to understand, as you'd probably have  
guessed from the packing foam and egg cartons stapled to the inner walls, but don't let  
me predetermine anything for you, that's not my job here and I'm very careful not to do  
anything that isn't my job, partly, of course, out of laziness, partly because I'm not  
getting paid any extra for supererogation, including perhaps the Latinate word rippling  
up like mild gastric panic through loose sheaves of fouled silk, bronchoscopy manual  
settled into surface-tension glyphs on darker bile, legible only to the right hysterically  
sensitive hand in the right kind of blackout, transmission-protocol star autopsied in  
fluoroscope's worn cartridge

or the videocassette cache of an erased macrophage star and antibodies likewise  
thus deleted, so we'd head back to the falsest kind of pseudolocal zero, name ourselves  
first of all by the descent from the nothing we allow to have preceded us, like none of  
this were here until we arrived to fuck it up, like null-terminator stress matrix to  
repartition DNA-computer star

derived not even from the recon footage but simply from the flightpaths of the  
drones, an old convention concretized for lack of any effort to warn ourselves against it,  
not that there'd have been so very much warning even with some unaccustomed jolt of  
sudden and accurate terror: execute-file star's somite drift judders across xerographic  
scanner bed and

whatever you do is whatever you've been doing is whatever will attract the least  
attention from the people whose attention is significant, namely *not* the people you  
might happen to "encounter" in the street, not quite shooting on sight but very near it,  
who's out here at this goddamn hour save he or she's in uniform and who wants to hard-  
copy the whole software pathology to file-system star's eroded cytoskeleton,

well, they sometimes cringe and limp in the dark exactly like you'd have thought,  
the extras from a Greek tragedy as performed in a warzone and with its casualties for  
less and more than extras, choral members, sure, acropolis prosthetics bolted onto the  
fact of whatever's holding focus at center stage, whichever hippocampal voltage spike  
transliterates the wetware star's code-pollen output sleek enough to slip through the  
layered stalks of the local opium poppies,

they mutter they scuffle they stay out of easy range they know approximately what weapons you've got not by name or serial number or anything so technical but in terms of how far they can shoot and how likely you are to shoot them on a given night and for a given reason at the sign of a given disturbance or just as likely at the withheld sign of a disturbance merely implied the hypertrophic semiosis of the bioweapon star

and you know they know or should by know and they know you know they know etc. in recursive loop-gain you'd call infinite save for the fact that it very definitely isn't because they're going to die at some point and there's an excellent chance that when they do it'll have happened because you killed them either directly with the specific ammunition inside that specific gun or with the shock of the flashbang or with the regularly-scheduled airstrike just a test run nothing serious didn't mean to scare you there the planes strafing so low overhead that the flanged Doppler scream set up between their bellies and the Earth should reprogram neuromodulator star teethe deep into the central pattern generators set the term and amplitude to your heartbeat resample the somatic cells of the IP star toward a mathematics no healthy flesh could bear and certainly unbearable to this the hived remainder of disease

the fact the epidemic deigned to spare or just forgot about, in the missing signage for the rainwater sump and the statistics about choleric spread that frankly don't interest us as much as weapons-system of designer-virus star, those few of us who know anything and those even fewer who'd be comfortable saying it if asked, or just desperate to talk, feeling the decompression sickness swell the linings of our skulls, file-corrupt lithotroph star detonating in our spines)

(eyes unfocused, hands still shaking with the reminiscent DTs 5 years out of date, drinking what's supposed to be, but doesn't taste much like, weak tea made with the same hot water whose steam we used to peel the paper labels off the orange pill bottles, radiopharmaceutical star's microfiche vector coming over the cellphone tower in a narrowed and sharp-edged waveband, stereotactic image carved up into spindrift glare of black ice and the epinephrine light on loop-return through router star's crashed frequency

and this all only prelude for the way we'll need to go or I'll go by myself at least and you can watch or follow as you like or find it necessary feasible even imaginable

'cause look there's the base proper and then there are the streets outside of it though still within its remit where the strangers move bent over swaddled in rags a bit ostentatiously impoverished like they want us to know that they're no threat at all which paradoxically makes them seem costumed and therefore threatening like any one of them might have the bomb strapped to his belly or his back though that's a bit obsolete right talking more about small packs of thermite or semtex talking about things that look like cellphone batteries in the pockets of a dozen-pocket vest the wetware star's glycogen fuel cell in a dripfeed rearranged to meet the crumpled spinal parameters

and you do whatever you're going to do none of my business to tell you not to I'm just an employee like you are and if you fuck up it's no proverbial skin off my nose though the results of the fuck up may in fact result in the literal removal of skin from any number of my facial surfaces but

anyway you do what you're going to do and I work in the pluperfect tense or perhaps better to say the future preterite as in I professionally will have seen nothing that's the gig a multiple grammatology of blindness the scansion of the gamma-knife star cutting into such prone flesh as may yet be able to hypothecate a neon city at whose edges all this murder makes some sense but not yet not yet not in fact for a thousand years and we hope to be excavated by somebody more or less sympathetic or we hope for no excavation at all we hope only along the signal chain and step function where the archaeology of nuclear-weapon star's firmware stays deeply grafted to the softer stone we found there underground in bulb of rhizosphere and final cave-in of the semi-synthetic desert's roof

so while you're about that business I'm going to scrabble through the drawers and find what I can in terms of stimulants sedatives selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors antipsychotics atypical and whatever the other kind is the typical I guess plus the ton-weight of failed bipolar medication for diseases I just barely failed to have hoping to take enough to develop that famous gangrenous rash and get myself effectively paroled to a hospital in another country where I'll pretend not to know what I did or how I did it and they'll have to make some inquiry into the constituents of the polluted air and the chemical structure of everything inside the armored cars and the fact of the gasmask and the facemask and the goggles and the synthetic fibers used in the uniforms the

acrylic surgery of microfracture star where glass pipette looms at the lens's edge like instrument of planetary intubation

geologic stents to drain the blood we can hardly spare and the dropsical fluid we could turn for a tidy profit if in fact we could find a buyer because god knows we've got enough of it you're swollen I'm swollen must be something in the food or maybe fucked nuclear medicine must be acoustic transients of chemotherapeutic star softly ringing in the flimsy metal walls

so you do that and I'm going to pick up on whatever meager scarp-edge of momentum sleep has left me the encrusted spinal salts of misdirected dreaming and just start walking and hope there's some kind of accurate direction left in their mineral deposits or serology of modern star where satellites' white blood comes down swarming with half-fossilized antigen a necropolis of strangers' pollen breathing

through the control-room door and down the hallway and past the turnoff I normally take to the what would you call it lobby and the barracks beyond and the places we cook and sell meth or brew illegal liquor more as a matter of institutional mythology than of necessity because of course we can buy liquor anytime we want of course we constitute in fact the subjects of a new booming legal-booze trade in a country wherein alcohol was allegedly banned until just a few years ago but you know the fucking deal the rules are for those frightened enough to follow them and everyone was quite aware that the right countersign to the right man behind the right counter would produce a bottle and some of them Americans and the American-affiliated were pretty shameless about it and would sip rich sickly-sweet things on the sidewalk right out of the bottle although with those little nozzles still affixed you know the ones bartenders use to stop themselves from pouring out too much at once there was a weird fidelity to that rigmarole here even before we arrived in force and I wonder sometimes why and I sometimes think the local bootleggers enjoyed imagining themselves as real American exchequers of cirrhosis and delirium the postures and the etiquette they'd no doubt learned from TV-movie rights sold a decade or two late to whichever multinational cabal has figured out how to get itself broadcast in this country without offending either

the explicit legalized religious sensibilities which may or may not correspond to *anybody's* actual convictions or then

the subtler sort of faith you more discover in yourself by accident than ever know you hold the secret belief if not quite trust in a god Who has to be excavated from your soft tissues discovered by the millimeter-wave star hibernating in your marrow and your fats)

(posthumous arthroscopic star with inward sample-and-hold windstorm of its glitch-riven playback over the prefab storage units lined up row after pseudoidentical row in the middle of a city otherwise collapsing from the periphery inward, white stone en bloc as cut into the mountainside like fossil-record ashlar of biomechanical star's mass extinction

or the ongoing and partially impossible erasure of the wetware star's failed glycerol RAM, holding onto what few bits of shrapnel it can cache while the whole thing undergoes one final rehearsal for what's supposed to be its silence thereafter,

only that you're never really silent, never even all that close to zeroed out, the sound of the current itself will overtake whatever machine muteness you've contrived that you might aspire to it, depleted GABA star the archive of accretion-disc synthetics when the same wind or a similar held voltage should edit thermal remnants into the newly-printed memory of very old heat, xenonucleic star's tape splice of spinal sugars or the login screen dented with the physiology once required to complete its doubtful operation, compression-artifact star's bleedthrough scream on miles of tapeworm film worn spindly with dry transfer

or ceding loose genetic cartridge to the wet-gate star's bloodborne text-virus, benign as may be as you'd hope as probably isn't but who presumes to name so much malignity beyond the specific and obvious ways we're being malicious right here and right now, as in You stay the fuck back, this is loaded, the safety's off, I've got permission to shoot anybody I consider threatening and at the moment I consider absolutely all forms of life threatening from the fact of such multiple assignments as spot-weld the flightpath over the perimeter I'm supposed to be sealing off, phage star's airframe scripts and blackbox babble run alphanumeric as disguise for glyphic bacteria,

the histiocyte star in the fluidic computer's turgid gel bath hardening toward forms of canceled convergent evolution, low shriek of acid wattage with the blackout tape-reversed to vast albedo inside melting platelets of permafrost, glacial housing for

the DNA-computer star we're presently eroding with the local forms of trapped heat and the chemistry that traps it

the aerosols the propellants the fumes from the fuel burnt and unburnt the peptide-computer star's brine-powered battery the sunspot radio occurrent just between my skull and the outmost arachnoid layer or swarm of dura mater whichever it should be, a question yet again of what seeps through the recording surface, what couples with the substrate, what reprint necropolis of hydraulic-fracture star's black skeleton erupting as dirty flaws to backlight

should be hived in the white blood should remember the idiolect scrutiny of the phagocytic star, local denaturing of falsely abstract number back to pictograph encoded

deep as anything could want to be and thus beyond much recall save the core dump you know you're waiting for, the nuclear-weapon star's combined vertebrate hardware in a restart sequence thick enough of bandwidth to block out the whole massed signal of such worlds as might have grown in its own fissures, epiphyte cosmology, brittle windfall pollen, the shoots and mangled taproots crawling through the hairline cracks in the backbone, viral load of bootscreen star its own ragweed collusion of the air with the xenotic script entailed

or just imprinted, right there in the architecture of the circuit, contagion star the logic board's distended protein blueprint

as you might or might not see had you a different angle on the scene here where it's never exactly nighttime but is certainly not day, which latter quality requires, I don't know, some sense of motion, if not forward then at least a little bit cyclical, the rising and the dimming, the rheostat malfunction and the tracking-error star a stylus skipping over bone grooved in shallow wax-cylinder codex or just the erase head's eschar compact with ferrous oxide and the fact of the sting waiting for adenosine star's login,

that would be something confusable for daytime, at least, a workable surrogate blankness, ersatz field of light if light itself still wholly missing, the dense chewy *memory* of it sufficiently invoked by the conditions of its storage, see what I mean, operating-system star's extinction logged to macrophage and still loop-gain recurrent in the grayed-out white blood of the immediate relic thermosphere,

the build on each reversion and the protein sequence unraveling back to raw blips of surveillance footage and tape-bias star's orthodontic whine, compacting minerals for



dental enamel and raw blood-neural clump for pulp within, the axon soldered to a cable snake, the thin rickety walls of the place each a false front for the wires and conduits running underneath them end to end of a whole building large enough that we've never actually seen the places it gives out onto the city per se,

though we've *been* to them, you get me, we've been out in the city, we just haven't *seen* the places we were going, missed the airlocks, were jump-cut right through the nitrogen fixation and the pale fact of the flashbulbs doubling us over in brain-wringing abdominal spasms, the spinal-column cross-section of lithotroph star's hard disk,

and you'd remember that, I'm guessing, you'd be pretty unable to expunge that from even the outermost and purely sensate sting of the nerve-edge, nothing "factual," nothing thought, only ghost replay in the nociceptor's throughput, chemical-weapon star an electroneural subroutine

and all biology by then the stacked and fused and slowly sifting massif of what the body knows and the mind may or may not, at which point we'd begin, of course, to construct an entirely detached and etiolate theory of memory, working as if analogy were only the mind's, as if the body didn't work its own fraction of correspondences, coefficient of the antibody star breaching library of disarmed somatic cells,

so we'd remain happy to tell ourselves that study, boy, is all it takes, and you can just wait here inside the door in the cool dark where nothing happens and nothing is going to and I can just peer out into what might or might not be the hard white faulted block of light you'd never call the day's and tell you what is or isn't happening, pretend to ask after the disappearance of the birds of song and prey)

(stale angel's Babylon, the obvious architecture to be destroyed, sacramental morpheme in the coppery undergleam of the bioweapon star's exposed motherboard,

as if that were all you wanted, all though either to confirm or to deny, waiting behind the corrugated walls that do so badly keeping the light either in or out, an Armageddon glaring between the floor and missing wainscot, the way the world's no long coped together and you can see the plasma-etching grammar of a phage star's cellular occupation crawling through those unscarfed gaps,

rough dovetail joint or only the monitor-bound test pattern of nuclear-weapon star in one last preparatory playback because

this is always the next-to-last the penultimate the pre-terminal this is always what we're waiting for that we might wait one final time and keep in that vigil some bleak transcendent awareness of what it is we pretend to understand all such terminology in the profoundest kind of scare-quote bracketing "transcendent" as in "vaguely given pause" as in "the flesh ringing a little pale with the null object of foreknowledge with attack vector in petrochemical rainbow of the execute-file star"

knowing nothing foreseeing nothing responsible neither to nor for anything the same dumb fucking animals we always were but convinced in the moment that we're obliged to adopt a certain posture of grave prescience of erect posture alongside the foreordained knowing-what-we-must-know and if that quantity remain the exact zero it appears to be right now well fine that's good enough that's nothing much to worry about radioisotope star climbing the saline-acid rungs of the fuel cell while we hold such poses pull such focus as seems appropriate to a pensive painting of the hour before the final onslaught of the obsolescent attitudes you might strike in a hundred years' war only just recognized as such I mean 19-fucking-14 was more than a century ago I think I'm pretty sure I don't know I haven't been counting the years very well lately in fact I don't think I've counted one right for more than half a decade but wherever we are it ought to be right around the what the diamond anniversary if silver's 25 and gold is 50 how about 100 consecrated with bone how about the extracted cytoskeleton of the file-system star's cellular pathology

tintype and glass negative pulling back the soldiers in uniform like tainted tourniquet rewrapped with fouled side inward for use now as treads and puttees and whatever else spiked helmets or furry caps or just the little peaked berets of men who are so obviously bound for massive death before a weapon one generation younger than they are riding horses into a wave of machine-gun fire and copyright *that* get your hooks and fixes into *that* no truer disk-image resultant from the horrific century afterward set up the polymerase sidechain's photocopies to reproduce peptide-computer star in cyanotype weaponry of that picture as cell-death feedback whine and names of falsely ambivalent chemicals taking on their particular ring

the acoustic transients of the resonant-circuit star whenever you or I should mention what might be just a gas just a liquid in a carbon-dated phial nothing more or less than a small blue crystal on a desktop something to play with while we wear

asbestos gloves and pretend not to understand how much meat goes into the marshaling of all these abstract forces exactly how much living spinal cinema we need for real-time playback of the coiled nitrocellulose star

and having understood that we'll be here a hundred years and then a hundred years more you can give it some title probably either a classical allusion or the emphatic flatness of the name and date like *Liège 1915* like *Ypres Salient* or whatever and then just wait wait wait for the light to turn to ambergris for the dead phagocyte clotting of the sun for DNA-repair star's in-vitro hardware to surface cold and multiply exposed behind the last light of the last day before a thousand years with neither day nor night

gone to brass corrosion as you like or the jut of black iron bone from the ferroconcrete blocks the immunocompromise of weapon-system star's blacksite ossuary leaking and

listen, it's not all like that, I mean it is but, you know, it doesn't all seem that way in the moment in the definite necessity of the false and felt need of the moment and who's to say what's false and who's really to tell me that I don't *need* another opioid that I only *want* another benzo that my hands will stop shaking if I wait for them to stop shaking that the horrible unconjugated shiver pent up in my chest and shoulders will either settle down or wring itself out through my raw wracked bones if I can just keep up the vigil for a few more hours days decades oh they say this kind of thing gets a lot better in your late 30s don't they and they say that by your 40s you've entirely made peace with it and would hardly bother to spend another minute thinking about it for all the useless thought expended which sounds to me like something both less effective and more cowardly than the simple admission of malfunction and bad mechanics which strikes me as a kind of pastel timestretched suicide for those of us who want the same amount of sound extended into clipping germline samples over twice as many years and

granulocyte bitrate of the modem star's output radiochemistry to render icy slurry of isinglass from the linings of your more penetrable organs, and again, we'll say that you really don't need to worry, or more accurately that there's no point, I mean they'll officially discover the syndrome ten years after you're demobbed and way too late to make much of a fuss about it, they might even name it after you, name you respondent in the suit for certain internal cancers' annulled divorce from the State)

(wiretap the bacterium's rich bandwidth, frameshift proteins' king-list as surgical records of the optical-printer star, what green lightning brought the oxidized and verdigris tinge out of tainted blood, what specious central principle we utilized to calibrate ill aim,

codec error standardized as pin-connector sugars, tape-bank edits of xenonucleic star where spinal sequence starts to coil back autotrophic in a feedback spiral milking lumbar stinger for abrupt cervical vertebrae's reentry, the afterscream of atmospheric wounding, the archived shriek of beta-burn star's loop-return

when gain should overload that blanked mantissa and its floating point disperse in a squall of large-scale military affiliates, none of them officially so, of course, only developers, technicians, logistics people, risk assessors, organelles of weapons-system star in blacksite histology ringing only the way brownout voices might on flight recorder

when we tear it up from the bloc-column of the dead gel in places we've never technically occupied, though you and I are familiar, aren't we, and could exchange by a few basic nods of the head or plosive consonants rendered, let's say, alveolar rather than interdental exactly what we pretend to have seen, exactly what we were there to see and missed, ain't that always the way, ain't it a shame, by the by, wasn't your heart broken for the missing seminarians and the bags of bones they've still got back at the provincial police station, ossuary of fluidic-computer star metabolizing spindrift calcium into skeletons that surface from the aquarium terminal,

right, a few hard turns off a road that barely even looks like a road, standardized more as a matter of rhetoric than of anything done in concert with or even flatly *to* the country itself, worn-out seek-judder spate of GABA star in disk controller's serial malfunction

where the tone arm jumps and the dead skin and hair build up on the needle for playback of designer-virus star's acoustic autopsy

as in resistance to vaccine or just piezo quartz beginning to erupt along stress matrices of the ancient explosion encoded back when it was still part of some larger stone and, even before that, in the drift of the uncooled magma or the sediment compounding, phanerite or aphanite as may be, igneous or transition, I don't know, I've never known much about quartz, I guess you could say that's one of my flaws, spinal

geology of xenolith star breaking down the stock protein resistance of the hard drive scarcely loaded there and swarming with metastable field of thermal software,

the hive-loosed swarm of operating-system star in radio decay's false obsolescence,

and then the way the detonators ready themselves almost beyond any sense of your intention or awareness, the stelae of hydraulic-fracture star ready to milk crude oil from hippocampal backlog of translations

where immunocyte switched over to the broken-down blood to the carried weight the vast throughput of antigen star washing up like signs do along the shore where we have to move very quickly indeed and so record what we record, if anything at all, as a terse stenography of sonic principles only, you look at this and you make that sound and people pretend to know what you mean and the pretense is good enough and maybe you can put little super- or subscript numbers by the signs to indicate the approximate relative pitch or the tone of voice the breathing smooth or striate like muscle tissue the nerve-terminal star's demyelinate hardware loosing squalls of dry genetic lightning as in extended stingers still alive on outboard edge of long-dead coral reef

and maybe you can begin to formalize the breathing pattern as a sequence of letters or punctuations unto itself see what I mean like maybe comma means a pause and semicolon means a kind of peering-over a false stasis the syncope with the long tumble afterward well-prepared the way the sleep spindles will cluster in a wetware star's delta-ravaged subroutine of sleep where standing wave accrues all looser unaffiliated voltage and the affine map's downloaded as a massively compressed file of the gamma-knife star's indices for atmospheric reentry and subsequent amputation

coring the outward layer of the heat before removing whatever was to be removed and whatever actually meets the flesh of the flesh's momentary opposite the neon ringing here the noble gases in the harbor where some classical statuary still stands amid much faux-classical matter and nobody cares enough to tell the two apart because both are relics of the same pretension, get me, both tell of the moment in which the harbor city could conceive of itself as part of the same continuity sweeping from wherever to wherever, as you like it,

start it conventionally in Greece or one of the archipelagoes to its east, start it on the island where Homer was allegedly born or the coast of what's now Turkey, bring it

around to Charlemagne and the Norman Conquest and the young Protestant hysterics setting out to expand monarchy by pretending not to acknowledge its terrestrial claims, enough of that, enough of this, never enough, tobacco growing from the opened ulnar artery of an Indian so thoroughly dead that he was killed before white men even bothered to mock up a Latin-alphabet “equivalent” for the name of his vanished tribe, if you’ll permit the further Romance mangling, los desaparecidos very far avant la lettre, suicide-by-force in the femoral gouts erupting from the place where the old tools hit an Earth even older and turned it, now and then, to a substrate for the Biblical multiplication of armaments,

nuclear-weapon star’s mathematic biology

the real subject and subtext of the continent as far as we can tell or would ever be given to know, and if you’re not sure, watch for radioisotope star’s generation loss in the test patterns, pick up the phone and let me know you’re home, baby, let me know you got there safe, let everybody hear that you can still breathe in what few manners still matter and which few matters still mind it, a recording not to exceed 30 seconds unless some piece of actionable intelligence should pass through the baseband and jump up into the line code during that given period, and of course anything is actionable when everything’s intelligence so we keep the machines operative and we keep the little red recording light set to ON, uplink to the histiocyte star a wash of pale milk or blood thickened to the white ohmic resistance of the satellites’ crude spit)

(at pace now, right, because some fronts you can keep up for just so long and not a moment longer, and Lycabettus or Lukabettos or however they’re spelling it now to the east or to the west and to the south or possibly to the north Ida or the name of any mountain where the hermaphrodites sleep their long thin sleep just beneath the surface of the wellwater in cool trays and the white teeth of dogs are embedded up the mountainside in strains like genetic printing the autoimmune weaponry of the DNA-computer star

as further south or east or another one of the several available directions you might get exposed blastomere cartridge underneath peptide-computer star when excavation comes up with the labyrinth where the dead were either buried in the artificial postures of starved bafflement or were actually baffled and starved to death set

there that their deaths might further engineer further realign the death of the thing that died inside the pyramid or was only entombed in the ziggurat after dying because

they told us about rush mats on the roof plaited and tied to poles to make a little sort of canopy where the organs were removed from the abdomen and the brain hooked through passages of nasal bone and the antibody login to serocomplex star abraded down in hapax glyph that will resurface if ever only as a set of stingers belonging less to wasps or bees than to the thought of them the idea that they must recently have swarmed by for you to be so minutely and multiply punctured the viral load of bootscreen star in print-through of the playback-damaged blood-tape

hard reset of the modem star in radiochemical scans and then the canopy building the one made of the rope and matted rushes was translated into stone though often not atop the ziggurat or larger lower funerary complex often carted off to some other place entirely as a kind of ancillary site of worship I guess an auxiliary death-temple proxy to IP star's necropolis and

then the corpse just dropped through the roof and layer after layer of plasma-etched Babel linguistics on the wafer in the boule till finally it erupted into the precise architecture of its own sarcophagus law of falling bodies per second per second and the blood-burst with the horns knobs carved devices the death-boat which its own grave also constitutes you get up close to one of those things you see the staves and breastwork underneath the painted exterior and the gold all long since stolen or falsified by graverobbers posing as archaeologists or vice versa and then you compare it to specimens from a continent of which these people had probably never heard although there are strange evidences to suggest that actually they had there's an inexplicable map of the Arctic coastline before deglaciation or maybe it was glaciation that would've taken place about 5,000 years ago and there are 5 cities in contemporary what was it Armenia? with names almost identical to five cities in contemporary Guatemala or Honduras or southern Mexico and we're talking about pre-Columbian native names so it can't have been a case of the invaders imitation

I dunno details escape me and not just me the blowback the fiberscope wiring of the biomechanical star where the wound becomes a site for engineering a locus of medical technologies untested upon those whose death or living actually matters to the State i.e. to the State's money

so it was adjudged too risky to attempt them there but they were kept of course on the backburner in the ragged notes underneath the lists nobody would ever bother to encrypt because who cares who cares for the daydreams of the surgeon well really we all fucking well ought to but maybe as some would argue it's too late to begin caring about anything so large if you've treated it with disinterest thus far radiosurgery of router star and anaglyphs of alien flesh wedged into your failed stereoscopic vision the fucked-up channel-coupling of your eyes

the ways the wires don't cross or do to electrify DNA-repair star inside vitrine battery with current rerouted from the million logged failures of the white blood

and maybe the corpses were posed this way like I was saying or maybe they were thrown into the labyrinth alive and told to find the central chamber of the building connected with it at a distance of miles sometimes like hunting the red edge of the sundown like screaming for access to the blood-computer star across an Earth of photomachined disease-text

but they're there anyway same as we're here save of course that "here" is a pretty malleable concept because you know I mean what right have we really to assume the whole concentric rot of "local history" couldn't any place supply more than enough to overload even the most dropsy-swollen annals yes of course and yes it does and yes we'll no doubt have more to contend with on *that* score but

right now we're all waiting for the secret feast day when the dead pre-Christian saint floats in on his or her death-barque like I was saying about sarcophagi and the boats in which the Plains Indians or Mississippians entombed their own dead and I'd give you a more definite possessive pronoun but nobody knows the sex of the saint nor can be sure whether it falls among any of the preexistent categories fits the fixed scansion expanded though it lately be I mean we only see the rare white flash of the cadaver strangely well-preserved above the gunnels made of something like deeply polished black stone like something very nearly synthetic a bone-substitute a circuit-bending substrate for the lithotrophic star)

(classical gunfire just one district over and therefore on coordinate systems which simply don't concern us, as blood clot importing codec error to the fluidic-computer star:



not mine not ours not here not now, so what would you like us to do, the bare white architecture flaking leprous in the sky and the bacterial crawl of the blackbox larvae over exposed airframe star with umbilical tissue run through an airlock flooded with motor oil and sawdust, running back the mileage as may be or just subject to a raw panic that we can only earth in such contrivances, however unrelated they may appear, fear given cytoskeleton as biomechanical star under the frieze where the slaughter still goes on

and in terms not so very foreign to us, though perhaps less displaced, with weaker and more primitive technologies of distance between the horn thrust and the gut skewered, the taped carillon and the visceral cassette spilling wet and bright as day's catch of silver-flashing red-backed fish onto the brine-reek pier from mutilated DNA-computer star:

say you navigate the carvings and the sculpture set alone and say you set off all the sacred geometry and understand it at least on a guidebook level and in mumbling phrasebook languages still half-spoken by people who half-identify with the blear hollow notion of the civilization you're here to exhume and to respread, the viral load of bootscreen star an anatomic statuary-graft prepared for transplant to such voltage-opened flesh as leaves the loop-return undetermined though buzzing with black honeybee cautery of null terminators

and say you've gotten the exchange rates basically right and know what's an insulting tip and know exactly the degree to which you mean to modulate your insults by feigning not to understand the difference between the new and older coinage, hey kid, isn't American money always worth more than it says there on the milling or the printed corners, don't you pay a kind of pre-tax premium for currency that can be used anywhere among any people to buy the dirtiest kind of shit imaginable and to dress it up in the white boxes on the dock the storage containers none of which looks any more notably sinister than any other oh the pale freight of the gray goods with the blacksite ornithology of weapons-system star locked in sub-voiceprint encryptions of birdsong

with the vertebral prosthesis of the nuclear-weapon star's firmware still the base genetic sequence from which we'd mangle slice melt edit any less explicit codon

like the one that says to stop but will stop nothing, like the one that says to keep going and really needn't have been programmed save us benison to our momentum, the

way we lie and, more than any specific evil fiction or bad magic, the way we were always and already going to keep lying, because that's in the speed of it the fact of the blunt ugly touch the surgery of the sample-velocity star in weighted keyboard or blank atlas of trackpad cicatrix the scar tissue line-editing the GABA star's topography

as florilegium of recon photos barely plaited with the dull wire through their upper lefthand corners and timestamp chrestomathy on long pictograph array where the monitors all chronicle ongoing anesthesiology of nerve-terminal star as a coefficient of inevitable mechanical failure like

we're at 95% we're down in the lower 80s now we're at 75% which still frankly sounds pretty good at least as good as you could expect it to and if that number should fall to let's say 61% or even scrape the 40s well you'll get used to it the same way you vaguely need to keep \$1,500 in your pocket when you've got \$1,650 total and then will need lesser and lesser amounts as you keep burning cash until finally you're telling yourself that hey \$400 is still a considerable amount of money especially here and especially in such small denominations when part of the point is the thickness of the packet you can smack onto the table is the chemotaxis of the router star crustaceating through the vertical hypogeum of metastatic code

basic software grown cancerous as it was intended to grow because self-replicating at a level we could neither predict nor-and-thus specifically engineer oh fucking spare me rather emend nucleotide text of cell-editing star as it feeds back in reams of room-sized printer-script triplicate or pyramidal re-based to slide a dozen combinations of strange tonics underneath the upper chord

so that we might finally claim to have understood and then snared all the operant derangements of the key as it appears to us ignoring for the moment the dystonia of hydraulic-fracture star all the cows' or pigs' muscles xenografted to the oily burning bone a fire that would last oh what would say 1500 years at the very least nightlong daylong and of course it's got to be disgusted flesh laboratory-goaded and much too developed for the skeletons of factory-farmed animals that look as one notable commentator said as though they've been incarcerated in a facility to punish mammal thoughtcrime not of course that any thought is really crime enough for them to worry about nor any action really self-sufficient cause for punishment since how could you

hurt them what could you really do to impede the functioning of either their machinery or the minds that pretend to operate it even for a day

as obsolescent granulocyte capture of the operating-system star's gene-knockdown still suspended in a brownout tincture of radio decay

and slide it under slide it back and give us the basic petrochemistry of the situation, like we're going to reach peak oil by 2030 at the very latest, like we're going to have some complications in Beirut, as when don't we, like we're going to watch the rainbow go CCTV grainy with attack vectors of remote-execute star embedded either in the macrophage or in the antigens it processes, and good luck telling them apart, I mean truly best wishes and a salute to you wherever you happen to be hopelessly going, immunoassay of the antibody star conducted among fake torches with the gas mains underneath cranked down to narrow fumes' defile and LEDs precariously day-balanced against the helipad we're not supposed to see)

(supposedly some rare aromatic oil set on the upper plate of the torch like block of resin on a hookah pipe or host to patens, fossil record's cyclic combustion subassigned to a pitch-amplifier star and shrieking its backlit bone-fragments to pieces,

as when purge of sunspot radio should harden the squared column of extruded brain matter against DNA-repair star's archives of in-vitro surgery and toward aneurysmal obelisk, but

really it's a mass-produced substitute, as of course you would've guessed, minor typo between benzoin and benzene ring and photocopied just like anything else in the steroid-crystal vats or the polymerase-chain bath, throughput of peptide-computer star severed en bloc for industrial uses, mostly, and the occasional bit of palace-brightening as here

in what you wouldn't technically call a palace, though I'll be fucked if I know what the effective difference is: still renting rooms still holding prisoners and still you'd better believe in possession of a fully-functioning dungeon where the "confessions" are "extracted" as though we're performing some delicate act involving test tubes and flasks set on lit rings a simple question of electrical affinities and *a condition of the outer shells* chemotherapeutic star the ghost-tree of gray-matter bulbs elapsing

as would fit the ginned-up pretexts of religious war, some of which may be more or less effectively true, but don't let yourself get bought off so easily, it's not like the average citizen of any of these countries – or the average subject of the kingdoms, *mutatis mutandis* – walks around every day thinking about how much he, a Sunni, hates the Shi'a, or vice versa, or vice anything at all, though of course they can work up a general lynch-mob enthusiasm when somebodies mentions the Druze or the Yazidis or however and whomever, semi-heretics and all the more rankling for the half-infraction of it, that's part of what translates discomfort into the outright desire to kill, see, because they come across as viral outriders to the host body, as patches of imperfect and denatured DNA at risk of compromising structurally the whole delicate vessel, contagion star in the genetic text

and thus the roundup never to be called such and conducted along lines significantly less organized than the phrase would probably suggest: we're not talking any Bataan Death March or even Sherman headed to the sea, though Trail of Tears ain't so far off or wouldn't be if any of these victims hadn't cried themselves dry years and years ago and learned as they were forced to learn to imitate the desert by showing nothing saying nothing apparently feeling nothing but getting very warm in one hour and very cold in another and what else could you want and what else ask from the eye the mouth the rare exposed tooth in a mouth nearly bereft of them and the young soldiers of the occupying power mostly children of the fabulously in fact the pornographically rich classes who are doing "military service" the same way the French nobility once sent its scions to the Congo to learn to be adults by slaughtering some Africans and maybe even the odd Belgian if a point of honor should arise

and, having a risen, require some putting down, radiopharmaceutical waveband of the modem star an interference-medicine over what are now the crowded capitals where the small cars nudge and browse against each other quite as softly and as often as herd animals sometimes still driven through the streets, obscurely and, to a westerner, frighteningly sensual, you don't want your car *touching* another car, do you, that's grounds for a lawsuit, that's occasion to get out onto the soft shoulder on one of the many many sky-spiraling loops of the turnpike named for one of the many many war criminals in whose living honor we hereby dedicate this stretch of Interstate 35 and chamber a round in the accessory pistol you keep in your glove compartment less to use

than to substantiate the sort of threat you make almost exclusively to yourself with the radio on and the windows up and the A/C absolutely fucking blaring like

goddamn sonofabitch thinks he can just treat me anyway he pleases thinks I'm nothing thinks I come in out of the dark and the brightness like a goddamn drowned rat all scraggly around the neck just like he does well I bet the motherfucker wouldn't like to see *me* in private now would he bet he wouldn't come to none of the places where I spend *my* time down the street under the green light of the sodium lamps glaring against the blue bar neon and there are what a half dozen places to get legally and violently drunk within a few hundred feet of each other and we sometimes get the basketball and the footbaw players down here I mean up here when they want to throw a wild drunk without getting themselves pictured in the tabloids though of course everybody's got a goddamn cellphone now so everybody's putting their pictures up on the internet and that's – hear the gearshift clanking through the nearly ossified fats inside his skull –

that's the *problem* with this *goddamn country* these days the country I loved so much and wanna love again is nobody has any goddamn respect for *privacy* like right now this motherfucker bumping up against me 'cause we're trying to get in the exit lane at the same time even though he shoulda *seen* I was there first and if I wasn't *hell* I'm in the bigger *ve*-hicle and that shoulda been enough to let the sumbitch know there'd be a problem if he tried to cut in line even if I cut first and

my point is that he don't respect my motherfuckin' privacy and I'm gon' teach him to be private again because a gun's a form of privacy if it's anything else on God's offwhite Earth a gun takes what was public and turns it private in a thin black panting airlock between weapon and its target and publicities will supervene like point of purchase money used credit card numbers criminal record but right now for the moment buddy I'm gon' make the whole day private I'm gon' turn all the ugly sandstone yellow out there to newsprint black-and-white)

(reboot gamma knife star to dissect a paired stereotactic map:

neon cursive rolls in on the multipath distortion of the rancid city fog, corrupt meat-hardware of the nerve-terminal star in strains of crude oil and the unburnt excess from the natural-gas wells, not least of which the pit burning however many miles to the

north and east and however many years back, coughing up the fossil-record strata of contagion star as dirty heat

such as might form metastable structure in the air for long enough to acquire a name, election to the local demonology of winds, bleedthrough operating-system star now many updates obsolete but still alive in the brownout granulocyte and the failed cell-death programming

likewise reset every so often for the vast latency of the city behind it, the fact that zero is never and only just zero, is either contaminated with some ineradicable decimal or is zero + its own hunger and therefore less than simple absence, carnivorous null-terminator star beneath the disk imagery of executable files,

the way the darkness doesn't just lie there but builds increeps attains histocompatible star's print-through in necropolis readouts from the terminals of electrophoretic gel or the simple question of exhaust routed through a hub with three different outflow pipes and the hard bronchial venturi you might thus model in the aftermath, right, macrophage star's loop-send an archive of diseases half-disarmed and waiting for the keycard to slip back between the ornate molecular interstices, carcinogen buildup, serocomplex star in heavy suspension of alabaster syrup and the richest whitest blood of birds with long necks ceremonially broken over heavy urns with lids carved in the images of apes and men and jackals,

adenosine star's login to stored sugar-heat now system-architecture's cold because held together with exactly as much voltage as the whole thing would loose in a wild compression wave if it were to erupt, the optical-track scansion of the nuclear-weapon star's exported syncope,

technologies of coma and the spinal MRI afterward to pick up traces of radioisotope star climbing through failed drainage of the rhizofilter framebuffer

like cellphone tower hiving what few startup screens you'd hope would at least baffle at least mute at least attenuate the roar of bootscreen star's archaeological viral load renascent after some enormous sprawling transient bowls tentacular through the whole electric grid and we're

out in and under the streets for days upon days of shutdown, with the storefronts merged into one long spectacle of partial decay and dereliction just intact enough to hold itself up and awake, no real sense of function or tenancy or ownership or anything

that abstract, just sheet metal held up on rickety poles and chain-link grates pulled down in front and men at card tables doing whatever passes for cheap magic around here as once at home

roll me the bougie watch the cold hard pea disappearing under a rigged thimble on the end of the pier where there should for the sake of picaresque habillement be sailors coming off just rigid or liquescent with disease bound for the lazaretto where the antigen star crustaceates through body-text where code in the somatic cell performs slow autosurgical graft to cytopathologic structure of file-system star waiting deep in the riverbanks' mudstone paleomachinery

the way the slates foliate and the corpses of extinct beasts take on their suspiciously self-evident gradations the exobiologic star's clade-grammar

all detachable in frangible red rock that crumbles under little more than the force of the probing eye in the vitrine cold of the DNA-repair star wriggling out of solar flare's coned ultrasound interference

if you're so luck if you've got so much room to work and so many tools with which to do whatever you're doing but the rest of us not so not so and it's not even heirloom damage or the gratified chaos of a dead place briefly resurrected for the sake of local color and tourist appeal the animatronic corpses in homespun woolens lined up where they've leaned a bunch of sections of ill-fitting linoleum like a ramp against the side of the risen steamship sounded for in river bottom's surface-return blindness sonochemical albedo of file-system star in rhizosequester stents of alchemy

and the tincture thus derived and the dirt and glass and few scraggly flowers and weeds thus benignly poisoned where the rabbits nibble furtive and more nervous that you'd think your presence would warrant but only because the rabbits have been here long enough to understand the danger that's built into place itself what you'd call genius loci had you either Latin or the proper substitute for "genius" the morpheme-drift of the chemoreceptor star's vast pathogen bandwidth

and mechanical stress falling in volts of piezo gneiss through half-rotten teeth buried in rows by the river's edge and stained nearly the color of the dark rich earth but still intact, still legible, preprogrammed codons for easy insertion into the machine language of genetic-weapon star,

a cassette you can thunk in with the heel of your hand and let's not worry about the proper spellings of onomatopoeia individually or as a group and let's not worry about precisely which sausage-greasy finger you use to jab at the fast-forward or the rewind button going about 60 whatever speed the highway suggests whatever blurred-out telesurgery of modem star obtains under surveillance of the highway-patrol drones

same models deployed in a place you used to call just "overseas" generically distant and now implied in the actual sickened structure of the slowly rolling landscape you'd call yours if there were anything but ownership as far as you can not only see but think in every direction, if this weren't all agribusiness land or parcels put aside for the new pork-barrel airport or plots granted with a massive tax break to the biotech sector because they've promised to make this, hey, wouldn't you know, wouldn't you guess, an international hub for technical development, meaning the place furthest from the missile installations of our most immediately liking assailants, which of course include ourselves, meaning the factory for hydrogen-bomb parts a few miles to the southwest at the very most and

the long silos that may once actually have held grain but have long since been retrofit for the fall of another seed, the way Xibalba's black spine rotates to the vertical to implant blood-computing Earth with loop gain skimmed like platelet crust from the nuclear-weapon star)

(stop codon throttled in the deep gnarls of the phospholipid membrane, clathrate cages fattening against methanogen star's restricted bandwidth, idiot's version of eland-leaping down the stairs two at a time and in the dark, half-hoping along the acid burn of some parallel timestamp to at least have *seen*, if nothing else, the vision of a broken neck or the dark tepid cloth impact of a suicide's legs slapping against your face and shoulders in the halflight, and

TARDIVE DYSKINESIA and EXTRAPYRAMIDAL SYMPTOMS indicated as side effect on the geology of file-system star

as consonant, more or less, with the land we're traveling over with the cassette in the tapedeck and the auto-rewind function freaking out every 15 minutes or so and beaching us back in the bleached-out bridge of some song that's really gone on much too long and can't save itself with a half-assed key change halfway through, like say the



thing was in C and then you get a drop to Ab major and up to Eb and then your vaguely gospel turnaround on a G7 to land us all where the God of Dead Things has decided we should be, “ontology,” as it is, “always a question of who is buried where,” the ossuary of the bioweapon star a misfiled cephalopod extinction layer

coming up NOT FOUND or simply inaccessible such as the monitors would tell it and who are you, really, to fuck around with questioning the monitors, don’t they tell you what to do, aren’t they both what you know and how you know it, are you a technician, because if so well I’ve been having this problem with these funny iridescent banding effects coming up like rainbow of defective lyotropic liquid crystal like codec error in decompression of the fluoroscopic star’s surgical scans, I wonder if you might just pop out the surgical staples that hold my face to nasal bone and lower jaw and zygomatic arch or I mean the screws the proprietary pneumatic or hydraulic bolts the blastocoel-locked processing of fluidic-computer star and have a look for bugs and for debugging, as in literal moths fried and, in their frying, blackly fused to the machinery of the mainframe, as in fat brown cockroaches crucified on the transistors, and

if you’re not then get the fuck out of the way and out of my office and no you’re right fine this isn’t *my* office it’s an open-plan sort of affair and I wouldn’t even rate a nameplate but the point of the rhetorical gesture stands i.e. that we need you *out out out* we need you to darken no longer the available light beneath the asbestos cladding of the walls of the rock we’ve dynamited hollow in which god knows there was already little light enough and I can’t fucking stand it myself I feel really like I’m going to die I feel a profound glitch deep in the flesh the haywire spinal edits of the wetware star in malfunctioning sarcomere ROM

I feel every day like I’m about to pull myself to pieces just pick any available excess meat or overhang of cartilaginous tissue and start pulling you know what I mean? like hook a finger inside my right nostril and rip the nose right off my face, like twist and twist my own ear until it finally tears away from the mess of bloody body-plastic underneath it, like jam screwdriver’s head or edge of credit card into the terminals of the xenonucleic star’s vertebrate sequence until my backbone splits in a rich flood of alien sugars and of the milk derived like weather-system precipitate from hippocampal translation,

you know that, you must know, it's been too long since somebody knew and I elect you for the privilege, wanna tear off my fingernails with a pair of nail clippers, you know, just grab them top and center and peel back, wanna pull out my teeth with a pair of needle-nosed pliers, they need not be insulated, no rubber on the grip because no current other than the body's and you're already overfull of that, massive mnemonic backup of tape-bias star slowed down through cellular varispeed through a sound like whalesong among pods of slaughtered calves

or the mass mewling of the goats around the test site where the strontium-analogue star grows through their backbones, hooves, and horns, where the firewall of the phytoremedial star has singularly failed to collect or to repel its own isotopic similars, because

and you can call this a guess if you want to or maybe just a personal derangement writ large but because

it's impossible to hear about these things happening to flesh, human or otherwise, for whatever reason, torture or weapons testing or "data extraction" or "medical trials," and not to see them thereafter as possibilities laid open to your own malleable corpse, the dead-thing-which-you-are, the motile autopsy of lag-spike star

with just enough hematocerebral current to keep it lurching around, sample voltage of the blood-brain star just barely self-sufficient not to mention its insufficiency toward the worlds outward and inward apart from that small tart battery test, stinging your finger to reap the sweat cold clotted surface of the wetware star's glucose fuel cylinder, and so

a Republic of Torture inflicts the same operations on those imaginary citizens it's pretending to care about keeping safe, because get this, if you haven't gotten this already: *torture doesn't work*, torture never fucking worked, torture just gets the tortured to say anything you've told them to say, and if the tortured know it doesn't work and the *torturers themselves* know it doesn't work, as they do, as they have and as they've had to, then it must serve some other and undisclosed purpose, something very nearly religious, a brutalized Mayan continuity, let's say, a tainted version of 200,000 slaughtered carcasses under DNA-computer star's pyramid housing in the overturned bonepits of Uaxactun)

(cytoplasmic interference ribbing histiocyte blackbox with exhumed architectonics  
of the weapons-system star

in gray gloaming-balanced cleanrooms where the outside light is subject to mild  
prophylaxis against contagion star, treated with brief technical puzzlement before the  
framebuffers snap down pin-connector teeth and we're in easily recognizable software-  
skins again, a long and repetitive graft of external tissues to a body whose abdominal  
contents frankly don't interest us all that much

because, you know, if they did, well, you get the idea, whose to say, spinal  
biointerface star's bleedthrough axons past explicit printing on the tape backup in  
archives we consult rarely if ever and, on those rare occasions, primarily as a form of  
structural hubris, to blague and brag over How Far We've Come, I mean look at the  
playback heads look at the molting plastic casing look at the firmware floppy disks  
arranged in vertebrate sequence for nuclear-weapon star

and so subject to that heliotrope turning, the fiending hunger after nearest light  
or even just light's promise in the heat we could explain but will not deign to, backbone  
livid with infestation of lithotrophic star's honeycomb stratigraphy

and all this to be canceled or at the very least denied, your earliest convenience,  
sir, the unlikely event of a public spectacle and a podium erected somewhere impossibly  
miserable and rainy though, naturally, not on a rainy day, we wouldn't do it then, we  
don't control the weather but we do control roughly the extent to which we allow it to  
precipitate large newsfilm events, "large" being, of course, a very local kind of  
designation here, like

nothing we could do between this latitude and that one is really very significant  
nor has any great aspirations to significance nor would be anything but bitter  
disappointment if it cherished such delusions and

you've probably already run into more than a few cases of disillusioned old  
liaison men pouring wretched-smelling liqueurs into their coffee shit you yourself would  
never even touch things in dusty beveled bottles and the cut glass so pre-war that it  
nearly glows with lead content the plumbic glare of it against the dirt-light the ripe  
carcinogen wellbeing of a drunk you just can't buy for love nor money anymore o tell us  
something of the old days colonel do let us know just a little bit about the engineered  
immunocompromise of chemical-weapon star

and he'll lay back, he'll ruffle the metals and the chevrons where their stitching has started to wrestle loose of his woolen breast, the studs rattling on the epaulets and one of his many regulation-issue headpieces exchanged against another because tonight, you see, he felt more like a fellow who really ought to be wearing a beret as opposed to a helmet as opposed to a peaked cap with some recondite insignia of a fire brigade or early-warning system when the router star's test-pattern immunology should blare brief and tremens-shaky in the vertical hold across ceiling-mounted TVs only funded for that reason,

that we might know in advance exactly how the world as we conceived it was about to end, not that we could do a fucking thing nor even mount much pretense to such vacuous action, a decayed disk-image star and probably some manic pawing at each other's flesh for pure idiot comfort that would attain to dimensions of molestation if anybody were very likely to file suit afterwards, which of course nobody is, these were *war years*, understand, and every year since has also been a *war year*, undeclared as may be, waiting and waiting and waiting and the vigil its eventual own coefficient of vaccine resistance, the parametric-EQ sliders on designer-virus star

peaked so high in the tinniest superaudible treble range that, though you can't hear anything per se, you walk around with some needling tintinnabuli among the inmost whorls of your ear, histogenesis of the tape-bias star extracted from whatever ferrous oxide it was meant to sensitize

like the bitumen of Judaea plastered thick along the linings of your lungs and the long microfiche accounts built up there, cyanotype or stannic plates or just the dry old copperpoint among the failing meat transistors of the biohardware star in motherboard a thousand times unsuccessfully digested and distributing its hard precipitates in such old asterism as might well be mistaken for incipient renal calculus or the worms in your belly and your asshole the delicate roadside surgery of men with filthy fingers promising gut cures if you'll just drink this cup of steaming awful something-or-other and

it's true, it does in fact get rid of your intestinal parasites, but it also gets rid of a fair chunk of your intestines, coughing them up or shitting them down and everybody ready for a glance at that spongy flesh against the colorless rain-lash of the muddy pilgrimage trails along which we've erected such new Stations of the Cross as may well

prove real goddamn useful when another crucifixion rears what you couldn't quite call its head

as in the ochre-tone, the sepia photography of the edges of the miniature city square, a walled-off park piazza with iron spikes atop the fenceposts and a former public library we've requisitioned as logistical HQ because, well, how to say it without too fine a point put on the sibilants and plosives, let's just make it out like

we've got a number of special and delicate and difficult relationships with every "rebel" group in the territory, given that our interest is the usurpation of the government-as-is, because, well, who cares about because, because the wind is high it blows my mind and because the sky is blue it makes me cry and because I'm presently stuffed to fullest capacity of vascular tissue with a very expensive and pure morphine solution well my backing vocals are exquisitely in tune, they're not going to have to retrack *this* take, though they will, of course, for smoothness of impact, for better consonance with the other two voices in the triadic movement not quite so perfectly attuned as mine is, not so easily umbilical where minor viruses route antigen star through the pitch-amplifier)

(to which you might well ask, Well, *why?*, I mean right is right is right, nicht wahr?, and nein, actually, das ist nicht also wahr, the correctives have to pile atop the corrections and everything get smoother the more you repeat it, like the little flaws of intonation or diction or precise rhythmic acuity, they'd be very, very obvious if the three of us were only singing all this at once on one single occasion, but you overdub it one more time, six voices total singing three notes at any given moment, and the flaws start to fade, and then you do it at least one more time, three notes three times each among nine voices, and you're really getting it lacquered down, and if you want the full effect, another tracking, please, or maybe just copy-and-paste the nine you've already got for a full stereophonic 18 voices, though of course, in that instance, you'd need to *fake* the spontaneity of the copies, which means offsetting them just a little bit by time or by tuning, apply a mild flange or a barely noticeable chorus or a little bit of phase cancellation, shift the waveform just a fraction of a millionth of a second right or left, intubate the arthroscopic star to append an extra breathing to the image itself apart

from the breathing of what it depicts, preclinical gasp for the cell-respiration star in blackened sugars,

and there is, wie sagen sie, wie heißt es, an instructive parallel here, ja?, in terms of what you'd love to call "the public discourse," quite as parallel as the derivative-graph pollen strewing bone-analogue star to creep through your calcium hollows, the attack-vector rainbow where the petrochemistry of the execute-file star downloads to any available skeletal interstice

or just the crime scene and the subsequent forensics of immunoblot star's multitrack so thoroughly overdubbed upon whatever we thought we were finding or even thought to find:

that's how it all works, that's what I mean to tell you, that one voice is nothing and three is scarcely more than nothing and six is just the very decimal fractional beginning of something but, shit, get me up to 9 or 12 or 18 and we're really dealing with The World As It Is Today and the Song of Investment Capital Overseas, we've established a standard, we know now how people have to talk in order to get paid for talking, and

you can watch and listen to it slopping it, bypassing failed containment units of phytoremedial star,

where the general staff take their leisure under an arbor lately deserted of its mourning doves for the way the freak weather has scared all the birds away, migratory or emplaced like artillery, watching the penicillin overload of malware star scum up the haptic targeting console, you can hear and see and even fuckin' *smell* it, the way Wisdom becomes Conventional and we're all happy to strike a little bit of farcical facial anguish over our brandy and cigars or whatever's more in tune with the moment's idiocy, micellar water and cannabidiol in a vape pen, you get me, the plasma etching and the photomachined logic board, the genetic errors of the circuit-printing star in long transcriptase anagram,

wrenching back the RNA till everybody knows not just what to say but how to prevent anything further from being said, which is the real purpose of so much public speech:

well, old man, I think we've had just about enough of *that*, aren't going to get anywhere bickering, are we, and after all, you and I are both just old soldiers with the

same essential goals in mind, yes?, and the very mildest and most easily smoothed-over differences as to what strategy will best conduce toward those goals, and we're nothing if we forget our manners, what, after all, distinguishes a nationbuilder from a mere colonial upstart if not his social graces and his understanding of how precisely one is permitted to hypothecate a genocide in public places without making the bloody thing too all-powerful obvious –

there's the blockade, there's the starvation, there's the epidemic cholera, there are photos upon photos day after day of children who look like withered corpses, whose skin is already gray and elderly-loose around the ribbing that looks much too sharp to underlie tenable human flesh, looks like the fucking underside of a crustacean, arthropod fossil record recovered from the core dump of exhumed file-system star;

there are more of these than you could really even look at, much less be *moved* by, after the endless reduplication, and note, if you would, the analogy to public speech there: after, say, a thousand individual toddlers starved and diseased down to wrinkled colorless parchment over bone so honed and thin that it looks like it's trying to wrestle itself free of a useless dermal envelope, as indeed it may well be, can you *see* any of them anymore?, can you really look and really prevent the self-defenses of your eyes from censoring what's right the fuck in front of them?, or does it become simply another blaring solar-flare bit of blackout, another browned blood clot of interference to disable DNA-repair star's in-vitro computer where the cells keep reproducing in the same haywire manner your own cancer-prone genetics have dictated since births long before your own?,

that's the idea, that was always and ever and must remain the idea, overproduction, see, quite like World Wars allegedly fought for access to overseas markets, quite like polishing more steal or casting more bullets than you're allowed to use back in the Homeland, so you don't just murder strangers, and not just defenseless strangers of a notably offwhite and non-Christian caste, no sir, you murder them in such a manner as to necessitate precisely your own goods among the few survivors, whether they be goods material, rhetorical, or just "geopolitical," a word that seems to mean "whatever we were going to do anyway," but expressed in terms of the catechism, a question and an answer toward the nebular howl of kingly purposes so long and so immovably enthroned)

(open shots remap the GABA star in mangled demotic glyph of the halftone assassinations,

raw helpless fear vein-sintered and deposit-fused for its long loop gain in the extrasolar surgery of the optical-printer star, reassembled in such terms as place and timestamped year may dictate, the way the footage does or doesn't come together in a tense compounded of *not yet*, both foregone and upcoming, the oracular spasm already in place the sleep spindles violently clustering on the monitor readout of a nerve-terminal star

the grand mal spike a nearly constant aberration of the voltage and so less error than design flaw where wetware star attempts to draw off hived serology of hippocampal milk's assumed stenography, all shorthand and transliterate and bleedthrough

for necropolis the city's secretly become and for the gradual erosion of that secrecy, the cell-editing star's exhumed hypogeum in biomass histocompatibility

dredged less from any literal geologic layer, though of course there are those layers and they do obtain and disgorge the chalk remnant of another city remaindered, compression-artifact star in the form of dislocated cytoskeleton and bypassed clade and damped immunologic wattage waiting on standby, canceled macrophage star's videofeed, the missing fossil record of the herons and the cranes where mudstone gives out in deleted archaeology of file-system star,

than from the fact of what the killings are and aren't, how they do and don't proceed, from the rooftops in the alleys in the middle of the street in the square which only old European pretense would refer to as a "plaza" but all we've *got* is that old European pretense lest we force ourselves to learn a language which our very presence here has helped to render so bloodily obsolete, no go no good this place of last fuck for Johnny, meester, señor sabby or no, already another invader's argot and the cephalopod structure of the tape-code star decaying in long thick tracts of radio silence

or the modem star's telesurgical bandwidth kept on the 1/2" master reel and flown in when we need to patch up some self-evidently threadbare part of the day or, more likely, of the night, radiochemistry of router star in mass articulation of such bone-salvage as might still appear in the sidebands where the X'd-out interference still occurs



as alongside solar flare in the rattle of the cortical tinfoil we wrapped around the DNA-repair star's liquid battery,

if that could be maintained protected anything but utterly immunocompromised as in the comparably X-marked eyes of the gods whose glyph-severe faces coded genetic template for bionterface star up and down a city of lime plaster that glared blind white in the dawn and simmered blood red in the sundown,

as was the point, of course, the city of full albedo in the surface return of your annihilating morning, the sun as your null-terminator star on all attack-vectored rainbows' cancellation, and then

the city of the open veins reworking their own scansion, grammar of operating-system star's file-hacked venography

to climb up the fissile material whether nuclear or just made from the scum and thick slop scraped out of the bottoms of the swamps and marshes, with whose excavation, incidentally, we starved ourselves, we committed a city-scale suicide, wouldn't you know it hadn't you guessed isn't this exactly the way to die and, more to the point, *has any society ever died of anything else*, does "social collapse" mean anything at all – or *can* it even mean anything at all – aside from exactly this kind of distanced and formalized self-slaughter, a ritual bloodletting eventually so intense that the let blood exceeds the volume still to spill, the bandwidth-bleedthrough of the DNA-computer star exceeding architecture of the pyramids peaked or ziggurat-flattened

as to meet the servers on their own helpless frequency, keep up with the heating and cooling of the one relatively temperature-constant place in a country that's mostly either drowning in hot rain or suffering the oblique slashes of sudden cold down from mountains that we can hardly ever see, hardly even know to think about for all the obvious eye-lack, retinal sequence of the xenolith star abstracted from entire glial stratigraphy

that no eye-quarried math might tell exactly how we contrived to kill ourselves and to disavow the suicide in one apparently uninterrupted gesture, an extension of the arm such as might fit your most secondhand, meaning, I guess,  $(n+1)$ -handed visions of the Orient, which was and is and only can be anywhere you haven't yet subdued entirely, subjected to your medicines and to the diseases they conversely render epidemic,

xenotic scripts of bootscreen star's new viral load a print-through writing system stamped right on the underside of all prescription drugs

such as you'd trundle in across the same drained marshland where the salt shriek of the tide change underneath the saline hay overcodes lag-spike star toward its eventual detonation in the walls of a city neither sunrise white nor red of the sun slaughtered,

in the soft boat, you remember, with the walls of it like leather, with the gunwales crumpled under our hands and the exposed ribs in the bottom like old skin japanned like an acetate demo rendering the cellular-debris star nearly playable under accruent dust and shed scales of the lapsed genetic cartridge, remember, all histological wreckage reengineered into designer-virus star for germline rewind or fast-forwarding so violent that the asterism blurs out into one long clathrate cage above the desert in the south

where you can very nearly see what's going to rumble smoking from the bed of the cold sea so very soon, I mean truly, you can almost hear the system-failure overload of the methanogen star while the carbon cycle reverses and the trees begin to cough up the blue smoke, the ultraviolet autopsy of beta-burn star's contact sheet

alongside lesser photos taken maybe as an accident of war reportage or bullshit speculation on the stock market in countries we'll refer to, for the moment, in terms of "productive capacity" and "availability of labor," and we only meant to get a clean shot of the damage, uh huh, nothing culpable about *that*, certainly not, we only wanted the gnarled skeletons of bombed-out cars or whatever it may have been, were looking for the biomechanical star's software embedded benignly viral where human fat has soldered the tendril-map of useless oxidizing human blood to cheap aluminum,

and we got that, and we won a very prestigious prize for it, and we accepted in the honorarium in the collective name of the victims without whom we wouldn't be nearly this famous, and we pledged to keep up the same good work for all the fucking good it did the dead whose bodies we were very gentle with, you know, dissection rather than pure ravage, exquisite table manners at the morgue)

(but got – and this by sheer moronic luck, and not for nothing do we speak of holy fools, too stupid to tell anything but a thick-tongued, sidelong-dragging version of the truth –

a very decent peripheral autopsy of the monoxide star's surface area expanding without any attendant loss of gaseous density, which isn't supposed to be possible, unless of course it's being continuously fed by a source we can't see or simply choose to ignore, like maybe the source code of the fluidic-computer star where the natural-gas pit is still on fire in, what, Turkmenistan, one of the Balkanized little nations we made out of the former Soviet Union to the increase of both artificial statistics of capital exports etc. and to wars per year along ethnic or sectarian lines which nobody but a specialist could be expected even to give a fuck about, let alone to understand,

and that's all to the good: we find it salutary, we find it very damn healthy indeed, for the world to be full of wars that don't concern us; we find it cultivates a sanitary kind of scorn for other living things, you know, to be aware at all times that somebody's being slaughtered for reasons we just can't summon the enthusiasm to investigate, and if you and I should say something to each other like Tutsi and Hutu and Rwanda or Bosnian and Croat and Serb or even just the Dessalines barracks and the anniversary of Toussaint l'Ouverture chopping his horse to bits for meat, if in fact that really happened,

well, that implies no *obligation*, I'm not invested, you're not a shareholder, we're not concerned in any sense other than the occasional felt need to grasp a few headlines as they fly by, a kind of magnetism for the sheer oral texture of your moment, that you can say *Port au Prince* or *Republika Srpska* and have the impression that your mouth knows what it's doing whether or not your brain functions at all along the same coordinate systems, spinal patchbay of xenonucleic star a sugar substitute procured on the ersatz market where the starved farmers are dumping GMO grain into the sea

at such a rate and with such anger that the cloud the dumping kicks up nearly, though not quite, rivals the cloud from their own dirt-farms also eroding into the bay there, the way the goats slip knobbly-kneed down stonepaths much too tortuous and narrow even for their navigation, let alone the farmers', so they just stay up on the hilltops and hope they don't lose too big a percentage of their livestock every year, which of course they do, how could they not, how could they knot the world back together at the pace of such a furious unraveling

and some even hold shepherds' crooks like papacies divested of their sees, like bishops shorn of bishoprics, which we frankly find picturesque as all hell and are just *dying* to get photos of, and sometimes they allow us to take their pictures and

sometimes even smile or put on the sort of stoic resignation, facing just to the left of the lenses' dead centers, that we associate with Great Depression photoessays and praising famous men and everything you know already,

and the news, for most of you, is the serial and recolorized production of what you know already, in very slightly different terms, with an extra 10kHz notch for sibilance in the vision mixer, with the film chain spiking along a stray line of delta-wave tincture that the wet-gate star might print some other decayed strobe of spinal dreaming,

and those are the best, goddamn, we love those boys, mostly boys, we love those young men, and of course they know Western movies, nobody's so bereft in this our modern and smoothed-out world as to be ignorant of Hollywood's best-distributed products, so we can say, Hey, John Wayne, John Wayne, to which we get Eh ouais, Jean Wéné, le monsieur Jean Wéné, and maybe even lend a cowboy hat and a six-shooter if you've got either laying around, which you probably do, because press photographers are notably among the most unbearably godawful pompous pieces of shit on the face of the Earth and very often under and above it, neglecting, during all international and intercontinental flights, to mark the action of the moment's real photography, the recon drones photomachining Earth for reverse-engineering of a weapons-system star,

describing the world backward from its capacity to host and to enable mass technologies of violence,

you know Westerns?, you like Westerns?, this is going to be your own personal Western know, comprenez?, fucking hell, you don't expect me to speak Creole or Kréol or however they spell it around here, I mean all the goddamn *signs* are in proper Academie French and that's what I've been studying and that's the tongue of the interpreter I brought either because I want to fuck him or her or because she or he has a boyfriend or girlfriend whom I want to fuck and I'm relying on chaos and up-close if still mostly prophylactic violence to provide the two of us with a sense of loosened social restrictions, somebody tell this fucked goatfarmer what I want, hey, you, hey, kid, you speak any English, tell him cowboy, tell him no-home-on-the-range)

(pin connector's fontanel syringe compiles designer-virus star from mass of cellular debris, semi-autogenic and self-engineered for ease of access and obliquity of angle, enough biotic scum in the loop-send to overload nerve-terminal star's readout

in the rain lash down on the uneven roofs in a city you might quite well call Fourth World for all the dubious survivals from tripartite scheme of the Third, hardwired firmware vertebrae of nuclear-weapon star

now redistributed along the lines of a non-alignment non-aggression pact which absolutely nobody is prepared to follow and which none of the signees took, even in the moment of their signing, as anything more than the sort of formality that survives as prelude to further and still more profitable war, which may, in this particular instance, have something to do with the American abhorrence of the uncontrolled image, the love for disaster-choreography we inherit as in gel negatives from Nuremberg rectitude, thousands and thousands of people and each with their role and each the false-pure product of the high-albedo processing that scrapes the surface return down from modem star's radiochemical postgain,

all too white, frankly, and I mean literally white, not yet talking ethnicities, because of course our version's going to be overwhelmingly Caucasian too, not that we won't include a few token scraps of the color wheel, and it's a damn corporeal work of mercy that the detailed and deleted old boys at the Office of War Information compiled their pamphlets on the Mexican Migrant Worker's Contribution to the American Dream before we kicked them all out, fuck it, take a secretarial desk at the National Labor Relations Board or, better yet, just disappear forever

far as disappearance concerns us, some rooting through shards in the Yucatan and the phosphorescent pictograph of a fish's skeleton central to adenosine-star login, the glare of it from all the fine-boned wreckage you would sift in days and days propelled by their own inhabited and inherited sense of purpose, like the shape of the work was latent in the air and the earth there and was only waiting for its proper host body, the benign parasitology of lag-spike star decrypted,

which of course is absolutely true, which of course is more than evident in the 52-year abandonment of the cities where the gods' eyes were X'd out on every temple frieze to cauterize the DNA-computer star's biolith input jacks

lest Green Wasp return there in her orbit like the petals of a small purplish flower  
I can no longer name around the smokehole at the center of the sky, Xibalba in the  
spinal protocol of xenonucleic star attaching genetic acids to whatever sugar was left in  
the exhausted marshes and at the bottoms of the wells lacquered over with a poultice  
made from the feathers of thousands of murdered kingfishers

brighter blue and brighter yellow than your subsequent sense would really credit,  
numbed out and dumbed down as it must be, your maxillary architecture a  
containment-unit housing for the xylocaine star's forced transplant,

the way the cartouche eats the city glyph, lignifies the output of the exobiologic  
star till all of us may come up from the floor beneath the desert floor absolutely  
daylight-baffled with the profusion of silver in a land that valued gold so deeply, that set  
all its resources to placing gold where god or gods might best observe it, in the tinting of  
the stone, in the pyramid's sloped vertebrae of lithotrophic star

and in the bone-grafted ornaments meant to survive even the blackened  
desiccation of the dead flesh gone newly ripe with its half-rotting, which was the point,  
you see, the overlooked point, the thing we don't understand for all our clamant  
understanding: you didn't mummify the dead to keep them "intact," which is a  
meaningless idea, first of all, and blasphemous if you believe in any force capable of  
sustaining blasphemy's insult; you mummify the dead for exactly the opposite reason, so  
that they'll turn black and fertile like the delta soil again, so that they'll fuse along the  
linework of the geologic bone-sinter to missing fossil record of the ibises and cranes  
where deleted file-system star's cytopathology waits deeper than sleeping in the  
mudstone,

spindles grouped to violent voltage spike undoing the spot-welded tape edits of  
the wetware star's REM, a freak saccade taken as principle of further contiguity and  
metonym maybe only the rolling of your eye, the strict meat-scansion of the DNA-repair  
star as recalled from its in-vitro mainframe

melting if left too long aboveground but look look up at the corner of the garden  
the one we'd call northeast although directions were reversed in those days and "upper"  
and "lower" were figured by distance from the source of the river so that "up" is south et  
cetera so who knows exactly which corner of which garden we're talking about but

you move over the small humped tumuli in drypoint yellow and the copperplate ochre-dusting of the wrecked angel's recent theft, both what the angel stole and of the angel himself stolen, blown backwards with his wings inwardly erupted like a moth's after too many impacts with the lightbulb, fiberscope threading the sarcomeres for blastocoel-saved cartridge of peptide-computer star's recompilation from the incredible wreck seen in one long line, long though not anywhere near straight, from one end of the Earth to the other and then on all diagonals and botched longitudes between and then again and again in minutely differentiated skew matrices and scatter plots as though the world were held together by the fact of its own fissuring, by the multiple gradients of tension pushing against each other just intensely or delicately enough to keep any one somite section from falling completely out of the rotary-speaker star's anatomic blare, which is of course exactly true,

which is the surgical makeup of the microfracture star when oil begins to weep through rotten cartilage and the arthropod menisci we were hoping to wound until they healed again, isn't that always the point and the purpose, didn't we goad each other with long straight rust-gnawed needles and the acid pitting of the empty hypodermic shaft and then with the great hooks that pull the brain out of the nasal passages in some hope that accrued damage would coax immunologic process into delayed and drowsy action, jolted out of sleep paralysis

and watching the deep genome-ghost of the thing too tall and too thin that stands at the end of the bed or the foot of the grave, waving gently against the air as though in broken horizontal hold or suddenly suspended in a medium whose density and speed of movement are entirely foreign to it, a seaweed quaver on the tracking-error star in decompression sickness retrofit as principle of next vertebrate clade)

(which is fine, I guess, I mean it couldn't be much worse than what preceded it, and don't we arrogate unto ourselves a principle of wormy kingfisher paternity thereby, looking for the scions of the groin that gives no issue and would set all its resources to corrupt parthenogenesis, like be me but don't be me, like continue me but in all rote sterility and only as I've laid it out but only ever as better than the templates you've been given with

genetic-weapon star to reformat all paleomechanical diskettes of the continental alignment and the rest consigned to something much less exile after the last Party conference, call it anywhere you like, with the rigging in the catwalks and the scaffolds of the theater such obvious recall of circus bullshit that we're never, ever going to leave behind, we're a nation of circuses and, just importantly, of the long gaunt run after midnight when you're skipping out on whatever bills you incurred during your weeklong residency on the edge of some shithole where the groundwater's dirtier than the rain collecting in the stained barrels and you've got just a little bit of credit at the company store and the miners and their wives regard you with an utterly justified suspicion which still can't help but crack in places like the hard coatings of coaldust and pancake makeup on their faces because they hate you, sort of, I mean they really do hate you but only partially and only some of the time, and the rest of the time and in the remaindered fractions they wish their lives were anything but what they are and therefore fixate upon you as the only very visible alternative outside the kind of fuck who comes around with silver dollars gleaming sewn into the tongues of his leather shoes and flipping pennies at any child whose poverty strikes him as sufficiently picturesque,

why I was like you once, a son of the soil!, a son of the toil!, nothing but hard work and black lung and early death before me and the homemaking of a woman who would grow more pinched and bitter with every passing hour in which I failed to be anything at all but more deeply myself in the worst possible way, hardening into drug habits and prejudice and not improbably the fanatical protection of my daughters' virginity as the first and last and only form of *property* I'd ever really have, because the house isn't my house, I mean I put it up and did a shitty job of it but it's on a rented plot, and the tools aren't my tools, and the job will be meaningless as soon as we've bled the land dry and the bleedthrough of the xenolithic star shows like embedded teeth of extinct wolves where the tape's run thin with all that accumulated impact of picks made of water and of metal,

so, yes, my daughter's virginity, that's *property*, that is in fact the *basis* of property in the Western sense, you could argue – and it has been argued, and it ought to be argued more – than “civilization” as we conceive of it is nothing more or less than the monopoly traffic in women, and that the most successful citizens are those who manage to eke some racketeering angle on the trade of female flesh,



not necessarily for the purposes of prostitution, though of course you'll never go broke as a pimp, but subtler and more slowly corrosive means and purposes, you understand, that women are employed to splice either the riches or the poverty of the men who vend the women to each other, that women serve as repository for both the excess and the lack in all our awful lives, that they're responsible for everything we have too little of and they have to drain off all the overload in whatever direction, that's what society is, my boy, stare down omphalos all the way back to any doubtful epsilon on any Delphi stone, essayistic and de E apud Delphis or something much like that in the Latin, and I'll guarantee you that it somehow has to do with prostitution literal or simply economic, that what you're talking about is the buying and selling of women for men's purposes, and all children are to be considered women up to a certain point, until we've taught them their prescribed habits of differentiation, and then

a girl right on the point of being forcefully inducted into femininity, why, there's no good more precious and no traffic more hotly contested and we're going to sell and sell and sell until the buyers overwhelm the sellers and then we're going to have something like a party to which the women will be invited in an ornamental capacity if at all, you know, a West Virginia geisha trussed up in all the whalebone bullshit and quasi-medical equipment we can find both as an emblem of her mandated protections and encryptions, i.e. she's somebody's *property*, and as a tease to those who might still inquire after her purchase price, even on the secondhand market, i.e. wouldn't you like to be the *owner* who has the keys to all these locks, I'm hearing ten dollars, I'm hearing ten dollars and a mule, I'm hearing a sizeable if modest portfolio of real estate in New York and New Jersey, I'm hearing the entire landmass of California including all the potable water underneath)

(bleeding from knuckles bleeding from gums bleeding from skinbed of the quick beneath both thumbnails as the hematoma surfaces or blood-bruise wriggles its way toward the surface along tapeworm galleries of xenonucleic star's vertebrate sequence gone vermiculate with replay as the old sarcophagus files recalled and resampled where the tumuli clump together and lower in one long ochre patch of disc-rot erosion

with all the bleeding plus the autosurgery of modem star in bleedthrough neurmodulator tesseræ as high brass percussion's bandwidth brought in to clash above

whatever central throb or pedal bass slips from the larger ganglia where the melting clusters of sleep spindles leak from wetware star's glycogen battery the walls of which are eaten nearly hollow with their own acid refusal

at speed now at speed and in sobrieties entirely unaccustomed and unwelcome since we're used to having anything and I mean anything at all to wrench us through the middle of the godawful day when every day and any day is nothing but its own middle replayed in time-lapse pulse across the sky the single lens-wide burst so strong you feel it in your backmost and profounder nerves the knot at the bottom of the spine and the fading surfaces of thigh and calf and upper arm where light would tinge you last and photographic mordants make their last attempt to eat away at the substrate now voltage-coupled in long arid lightning-arcs of multipath distortion where peptide-computer star's hard reset cracks the dried silicate ossuary

the salt flats down the escarpment each a burial ledge each the hinged door to a tomb you'd enter facefirst and with absolute bewilderment at facial bone's keen alien login to the stele of biointerface star's hazmat protocol unwinding

as in spools of film too narrow for the gauge of the projector's sprocket we mean long pinworm footage better threaded through the body than any external machinery you're likely to be able to procure at *this* time in *this* place officially a warzone no less so mount up light's parasitology through venographic star

or just open one of your more accessible arteries to the overtone parhelion that dins in metalloprotein sundogs of harmonic series off the radioisotope star an audible parenthesis of hardened interference like deep mollusk valving at the outer edge of undersea recovery like archaeology of modem star in read-only whorls of vicious trilobite encryption

clenched so hard you can feel your own molars cracking with the useless effort to match the tension though who's to say what's useless when you're used to everything and could hardly even be stirred from your low rooftop by the explosions in the middle distance where another chunk of city goes up in a vertical howl of discolored fire so straight and so brief that it seems almost predestined something written into the land and simply allowed to precipitate now or wrenched out of solution like the fMRI melting lag-spike star in real-time videofeed

or antibody cache milked from the macrophage star's CCTV archive quite as blankly as the resource-lookup addresses unmoored like leprous flakes from scum of tongue covered in white hardened froth like the spume at the edge of the contaminated sea what tessellated mouthwash bubbles reinforced with the preservative components of used toothpaste or the particulate metals seeping from the "destroyed" i.e. the obsolete and decommissioned chemical-weapon star

core-dumped in open ocean and in the hope that contents of its mainframe might contaminate nothing more immediately necessary than a coral reef or the whole populace of the hadean zone down where light's much too tenuously ribboned to survive the incredible density and pressure of the dark the biomass-erasure of file-system star erupting in such slow-motion microfracture that you might easily mistake it for nothing more than the passage of time

as if "the passage of time" were a thing in itself as if it could ever be anything but a way to name phenomena without actually naming them because

naming is a form of magic and the refusal to name likewise a magic-fraught act dangerous as anything could be recoding an enormity of possible thermal violence the histocompatible star's sarcophagus parataxis in print-through hypogeum of etymons eliding and still breathing though they're dead

as in black carbon interchange of the cell-respiration star and grafts refused and transplants stamped in place despite all tissue-rites of their refusal the hardened peroxide fizz of infected meat along each emulsion-fused faultline of the optical-printer star's tectonic surgery

so to name as to refuse to name is to invoke the metastable heat still waiting there the remnant temperature of compression-artifact star hanging in deep screen-burn constellations

where even haptic interface could hardly dent the surface of *that* image deeper in fact than the liquid crystal that deforms to fit the formalizing influence of grubby fingers prodding to call up a dropdown menu and thereafter to select from an enormous compilation of pre-sorted pre-approved options but

only *select* you see only choice never decision since we've been given our vetted alternatives each of which is therefore latent in the "unaffected" track as if any first recording could be otherwise than – among other things – an artifact of the material

possibilities dormant in the thing it was recorded upon or into call it the demodulated sleep of the circuit-bending star

call it denatured protein structure where the sky acquires geometries more crooked than any simple scatter plot for epidemic passage of say cholera among the local bowels can rationalize less rectilinear than the skew matrices' obtainment from the wormy colon nobody's investigating because everybody knows the cause and knows there's very little to be done about it

by which we mean of course that we don't care to do what could be done and that actually we know the cause the cure every intervening step and could with a fairly simple and comparatively tiny reallocation of resources fix the problem beginning to end and wipe out every case of the backdate disease that's presently making the skeletal children of a nation whose name you've only lately remembered shit themselves to death with blood flowing mucous-crudescent from their assholes like something coughed up from a cancerous lung like petrochemistry of the hydraulic-fracture star's half-metabolized bones)

(but – comes the eminently, the horrifically reasonable rejoinder, *bâtarde de Voltaire*, *comme vous voulez*, comes the response less than automated but somehow slightly more than algorithmic, or at least appearing so, and isn't it remarkable, or not quite remarkable, how the jackboot aspirants love to blather about “the possibility of artificial intelligence,” as if most people's “intelligence” weren't wholly artificial –

but if we *know* the cure and the etiology and the process of production and distribution and administration and triage in the meantime and subsequent checkups to make sure the bacillus is really dead and thorough testing of the water table and significant expenditure to rebuild infrastructure destroyed by rockets which our own firms manufactured which in fact came rolling off the idealized 1950s conveyor belts of some of the same corporations which would almost certainly be responsible for the material reconstruction, if we're already aware of all that and would have little left to learn, then

isn't it more edifying and more instructive to leave all this as it is and let it play out and see what might blossom in the whorls and pollen-swirl of the disease, like

consider it the screen-freeze polygonal matrices of a designer-virus star we never quite meant to engineer but nonetheless did model and print and spread, like

consider it the password from which we have to backmask and reconstruct both the thing to be entered and the nominal world outside of it, consider thermal encryption and the pin-connector registries of cold to shell adenosine star's login atlas with whole chains of printed samples and bypassed cell-editing star on one of the subassigned loop-sends we can turn on or off with the press of a button, allegedly,

though in practice the buttons are actually kind of sticky and require a pretty firm thump of the thumb just to move up or down and you always have to check the acid-green little LED display to make sure the machine's registered the button-push and you have to sieve and separate and harmonically analyze the radiochemical bandwidth of the router star to check for such symptomatology as should attend mechanical diseases meant to spread

the epidemics of device and the devices meant to cure them and the further devices for the ratiocination of that cure as cause or effect or just another giddy node on the signal chain for our further ponderous reproduction, like farm it out, like mint the formula and patent the fucking thing before somebody tries to establish a commons license, like crack open the canopic jar and copyright the serocomplex star along with all its molecular variants, we have a factory to run here, and by "we" I mean "people answering approximately to our titles via a chain of deferred corporate personhood and concordant 'personal responsibility' which I couldn't really elucidate for you even if I wanted to, and I very definitely do not want to," and by "a factory" I mean

an actual factory but

by "here" I mean, you know, one of the territories, do we need to be so blunt as to give it a proper name, the kind of thing you can look up on a map and thereby miss all the nuance involved, since maps still treat the world as if it were a puzzle of political borders and not the corpse of a dead animal called the Earth over which capital flows like quickly-drying magma in a kind of volcanic momentum that's either going to dry up or overload itself very fucking soon here, just a minute, seconds to go, check your wristwatch if you have one and manually inch the hands toward midnight and be careful of the tiny tiny amount of depleted uranium we might've used to make the hands glow in the dark and go get yourself tested if that's the kind of thing you find comforting, edit a

few green integers into the timestamp, hell, edit the whole immunocompromised monitor readout of the hacked nerve-terminal star

for something like, I dunno, an extra half-hour in which to pursue your final petty agenda, because this, friends, is what the end of the world looks like, how the end of the world feels:

you'd expected Annunciation, you'd thought to revive Hebraic apocalypse or Patmos revelator, you wanted at least the skyline-wide crash of Babylon machinery, the aneurysmal obelisks erupting, cracked stop-codon loosing DNA-repair star in benign glare of angelic extermination, the medicine that kills, the print-through entomology of the nuclear-weapon star as backmasked remedy borne hence by the faint glow of the radiotoxic albino bees, but

what it really looks and sounds and feels like is More of the Same, Only Faster, the rich hoarding even more of what they hoarded already, the panic index gone so sharply through the roof that, without roof to mark its gradations, without any millimetric numbers inked onto the side of the cylinder, the risen mercury doesn't mean a goddamn thing and we have to convene a panel of the remaining experts in, say, Switzerland to argue over what exactly it means if it means anything at all, if there can be, in mathematical terms, absolute value to fear,

or if fear's always a named variable a mantissa a coefficient set alongside the detonator variable of a nucleosome star, crossmatched and slipping under alien denominators, the multiplicand tripwire algebra of the weapons-system star

and all the grafted failsafe protocol which itself has long since failed, ceded place to the automatic firing line and the way a single thrown switch now throws all the others via some mechanism so outdated that it's almost kind of precious, reminds us very nearly of children's toys and messianic innocence, a rheostat wired up the plaster-stripped wall of a sleazy 1971 condo to leave the baroquely out-of-date targeting software exactly where and what it is and everybody sitting back in what you wouldn't mistake for peace but might very well confuse for over-medicated calm, for the opioid lull of amor fati in enantiomer formulae unpatented as yet)

(north wind cut the dead patrol with aneurysm's obelisk lodged blackening in your eye, recompressed file archive of the DNA-computer star

immunotampered bloodcount codec coughing up glassy rinds ribboned with unaffiliated glial tissue in some kind of rotten saline solution streaky with the organelles it might've been the lost adumbrations of some sight though where in valve of airlock or biomechanical star's late-term arthroscopy aborting the covalent architecture hacked into the cliffs before we came along to separate them from the body of the range

in the interest sure why not call it that of mineral resources of fossil records used for heat and the material past a restart-ossuary of hydraulic-fracture star as petrochemical cache dwindling

though in fade to lend the twilight the oily spectra of its glare, something embedded in the screen, know what I'm saying, like viscous matter trapped between the matte plastic surface and the tesserae of lyotropic crystal, reboot tremens of a modem star encountering its own decayed disk image on each stammering attempt to run the software scan again and mint the antiviral photomachine coinage

where it slips off back of hand or between liar's knuckles to gig the gears to run the machine to send the pier sagging with another repetition of the same ambrotype-browned music still more slack on each dragged playback with the autosurgery of the optical-printer star in crude sutures of soundtrack and medically stapling the waveforms across crust of gangrenous blood or just the eschar that refused to harden into useful neoplasm the trackmark codex to a cellular-debris star crucified among the oxidizing branches of the signal tower

with MRIs performed and never really read back for lack of anybody to read them to, anybody who can afford to be termed relevant, at least, who could pay for the treatment which the preclinical imaging will indicate, who could sit still and take seriously the half-explanations of the drugs we plan to administer and the procedures we plan to schedule, both of which actually of course to be done by a further geologic stratum of bureaucrats none of whom are personally known to us nor need any of them really be so known and anyway it's just a landline it's all the vowels suddenly turned striate with rough dialect breathing in the cell-respiration star's audible blackboxed refraction over a colorless bakelite mouthpiece where the noise-reduction rackmount and the echo suppressor have both failed

and systems-failure now the scansion of a router star in deep bronchial implant where the switchboard hardly knows to monitor one judder of spread spectrum from another

so you get the wreckage of an entire, let's say, half-hour's telephone traffic in shards of bent vowel mewling and in consonantal dross referable to lookup code or error-message dialogue box sprouting from the grammar of the lithotrophic star in strips of opened spinal patchbay

in the access hatches carved into the meat soft as rotten vegetation and the whole back-catalogue jungle pried back for another look by which we mean the first look by which we mean no kind of goddamn look at all because

the point is not to see anything or to have seen anything or even to know what you were looking for, right, the point is no result, the point is nothing you might actually *find*, the point in fact is to build up such mass resistance to any and all findings beyond your own prediction that you can report back to whoever happens to occupy the post just above yours and say Right, right, it wasn't necessary, it'll never be necessary again, we found nothing saw nothing heard nothing just malaria and mosquitoes the size of wrens just food that made us shit water and water that *also* made us shit water just the confusion of a dozen regimes' canceled currencies in your pocket a wad of dictators' faces molting through scurf of inky clumped paper where sweat wrings the dyes from the cheap cotton and cordwood backscatter the amputee statuary ringing with horizontal hold lost where electron-gun star yet maintains a library of interrupted cathode surgery though nobody's been here to look in years nor if arrived to look or even just by accident would know what he or she or they was or were looking at in all possible tenses and declensions in the etymon glossary of an uninflected language and the cephalopod text cropping up in spiky retroviral scripts in wetware star's sea-threaded glycol battery

though it's a funny thing, you know, trying not to offend anybody's sensibility's with the image of the wrong caudillo, hoping people won't notice, wondering how Christian the nation now considers itself or, perhaps more to the point, whether or not the local Christians consider themselves a nation, more likely a tribe besieged, the pose that Christians everywhere love to strike, I mean for fuck's sake they've run the United States government since there was any government to run and any United States to



govern and they *still* love to style themselves a persecuted minority, a purist sect hounded out of public places by the aggression of pornography and foul language bursting in white panes across the piazza, something like that, right, skitter and wrench of small wheels wrestling particulate grime from the dirty blacktop in long pained polyurethane adhesion and the surface return shattering a nerve-terminal star's glial-cell readout with albedo such as flesh cannot sustain

so ask the church ask the bishopric ask the Mission that still holds the deed in perpetuity to all usable farmland from *this* line to *that* line and woe betide the government domestic or foreign which should attempt to infringe upon their patented geography, yes, my boy, sons adoptive and coerced, it's come to be something of a Scottish-play phenomenon, a bit of repertory fable, like you don't have to respect the Mystical Body or whatever other hoodoo bullshit you imagine to cling extra ecclesiam where nulla salus famously est, catechistic paragraphs like fucking ice floes, denaturing peptide-computer star's multitrack throughput where the ultraviolet leakage names the melting glacier backwards through the highest-numbered channels still accessible on dim fatback TVs)

("voice yanks my neck on the chain," was it, badly rendered karaoke-style in autocue autotranslated Spanish without any of the accent marks, bouncing-ball or lit up yellow-from-white as you prefer, though to register that preference you'd probably have to negotiate several menus and submenus in some system of Asian ideogram and with a remote nobody can find which, even if found, would've build up so much gummy grit between the thick rubber buttons and the contacts underneath that who's to say what would work if anything would work and who's to know what working is when the mechanical satisfaction should decline unto the level of pure cause and effect, seeing anything happen at all, I hit the damn thing and the damn thing did what it did and that's something, at least, that's more than obviously nothing, we're not going to get into sophistic bullshit about the nature of vacuity and the void hiding behind whatever whatever,

listen, don't you fucking *wish* that were true, that the world could cancel out above and below all its violent thoracic divisors to pure nullity, but

listen again, zero's *hungry*, the zero accretion disc of the bootscreen star's viral load has its own omnivore text burning daylong like phosphorus at temperature of any room you can conceive and at no temperature at all, since that's a human stylization of the inhuman fact of heat, a formality among the thermal remnants of the histocompatible star's writing-system print-through in necropolis of paratactic survivals, and

you'd be waiting on the white flush of the chemotherapeutic star to purge the metal-poisoned Earth like antiviral milk and

you'd be waiting for a long goddamn time, too, consider the scale of likelihood and the epochs of the names applied here while you were holding that lamed vigil, first everything's European but very quickly everything European is upset in its spindly castrato equilibrium with all gilt and silver gelding and the high descant over the false poise because everybody around here still calls the cities by their pre-European names, so yes, we must make, must we not, some concessions to the beastly Babel argot of the people we subdue and render some of these toponyms as they would appear – were they, Heaven forbid the possibility until now, to appear at all – in a more dignified form of speech and of what we'll conceive as merely speech's registry, as though things don't mutate in recording, as though there weren't the blacker alchemy of compression-artifact star sleeping under the touchscreen's preset commands

and the twilight sleep the vacuum-tube anesthesiology of held voltages pricking sample-velocity star across a map of trackpad scarring but

that's recognized later, if ever, if at all, and so for now you're going to want to apply the Latin alphabet and its coordinate vowel systems to sounds that Europeans don't really know how to make, you're going to want to substitute the simple C or K for a kind of choking glottal stop that turns the skin flap to a backfiring engine, cyclic resonance of circuit-bending star a broken logic board exhuming its own ghosts of electricity

wherever you can see the bronchial tissue and the vocal folds, which requires a degree either of surgical skill or of mechanical "advancement" presently inaccessible to us, so here's what's going to happen, by which I mean what's already happening: I'm going to wear a zinc funnel upside down on my head and move through the cracked lacquer and browned gesso of what I'll generically term "the countryside" administering

quack cures to people with parasitic plants growing from the sutures of their skulls, and you're going to stand off to the side stork-legged with a fat belly trussed up in some stripey silk bullshit like maybe ice-cream pink-and-white, whatever will make you look most laughably out of place but is intended, in the moment, to confer upon you the status of Continental nobility, to suggest and often enough to say outright that

if you look like a dumb bastard here, trying to preserve the bleached albedo of your linens in a country where lime-plaster dust rots from the side of the hacked ziggurat, where deep hardware malfunction of the DNA-computer star sweats sundown blood through venographic architecture risen so near the molecule-thin underlayer of the skin that it can practically evaporate right into the open or more likely the closed air, well

that's the fault of the place, that's the indignity of the specifics of the way you live, o prince exilic, o king in waiting for a reign adequate to your biometrics, since the regent, like the Church, is both master and principle of his subjects' physical bodies, and this is what it meant, once upon a time, meaning tomorrow, to employ the Royal We: you said, We are displeased, because your personal displeasure would be translated to shed bile weeping from the perforated viscera of your, ahem, citizens; you said, We go to war, because *we* would, *you* wouldn't; you said, We accept the terms as they have been tendered and We thank in all good grace those dignitaries those emissaries those conferents assembled to formulate and to present the offer as offered as here recorded and hereinunder undersigned and underwritten, and what that meant was *we* were gonna eat it and be told to thank the people who force-fed it to us

or, more likely, be instilled with an abstract if sometimes shamefully direct gratitude to the machinery that routed its effects directly to us, umbilical meat like the segmentary body of an enormous worm pumping through the DI box, immunoblot star's polluted genetic cassette hardly the forensic memory of the crime scene it no longer reconstructs,

and, with all that machinery intervening, *we* would forget that there'd ever been a decision, *we* would consider ourselves lucky not to be any more deeply fucked than we already are in a world which can of course only proceed as it proceeds, which would've been different if it could've been different, which is nobody's fault and therefore nobody's responsibility, and occasionally *we* will be struck by some eye-pricking access

of sentimental overflow and even get a little teary while rehearsing hymns of measured  
stately praise)

## a practical field manual to the biomedical applications of quick-drying cement

(catch racked in the throat like strand of migrant geese bewildered tape-decay of pinworm sun, thermal remnants enough to derange the bioweapon star's targeting software

ill-acquired as may be from a download proxy somewhere in the former Eastern Bloc and bleedthrough ziggurat of DNA-computer star rewriting tesserae of former glial flesh now vitiate to heme-stained glass

as slack-jawed laze after some combination of pills and wronged sleep which we'd find impossible to reconstruct were we to try its reconstruction, which, luckily, we won't, who needs that kind of aggravation when the day's its own enervate formula and transfer of patched tissue as at the moment from our faces and outermost cortical membranes to what's supposed to be a bulletproof windowpane and may, in fact, be bulletproof,

wouldn't know, could ask, I guess, which contractor was responsible for filling the order and then abstract a probability from the "success" of its other assignments, like whether or not the armored flaked off the sides of the armored cars like fishscales drying out under the dry throb of meridian sunlight, like whether or not the floor gave way to download GABA star's topography of improvised explosives, somite sections of the map alight in long exposure of the stilled rotary speaker,

so one twisted horn just blares out anatomic scan of tape-bias star as vermiform index to the acetate or vinyl underneath, or more likely now to PVC to rayon dacron nylon to kevlar or some other proprietary material wrench as multiplicand sarcomere from petrochemical star's histologic framebuffer the mess of protein strand preprogrammed for the background to your home screen your saved file your login

sequence what comes up when you first turn on your cellphone if indeed you ever turn it off,

adenosine star's interference crackling over cold blue authentication sequence of artificial sugars arranged as clathrate matrix to sample and hold methanogen star's voltage in the glacial disease slides and biopsied gaseous ice or just

spinal geography of xenonucleic star likewise dubbed down in heavily compressed multitrack demo to aspartame and ersatz epinephrine

to the sting of fake gray-market adrenaline available as you like it, genetic cassette extracted from immunoblot star's mixing desk or film chain running from the chalk outline and the caution tape back to a mobile production truck where we're all pretty much ready to get this goddamn night through with, been out here, fuck, I can hardly remember, gotta be close to 8 hours already, only 4-odd, you're shitting me, I feel like I've grown old waiting for the coverage on these shots, feel like multiple camera angles have already spliced and cross-multiplied to track recombinase germline of wet-gate star, the cellular potential in each wrenched gene and the cut-off protein babble ending solidly blank as self-auscultating throb of the null terminator, histolytic froth skimmed off the DC-bias star, what we left burning in the tape deck after discovery that all of these cars were still equipped with state-of-the-art 1987 playback technology and that we'd have to learn to edit together the evidence on equipment older than we are, heterodyne sibilance where carrier wave's fMRI frieze detaches violently from biomechanical star's cache of lithic files,

and you were waiting I was waiting everybody was paradoxically cold under the sandstone pinkish glare of the flat sun with no feeling of heat no gradient of warmth between the full glare and the shadow or radioisotope star climbing the ultraviolet bandwidths toward transmission-frequency so thoroughly supersonic that you'd feel it, if at all, as kind of perturbation in the dental pulp, fine cracks spidering your backmost right molar, river system of the venographic star transferred from spinal sheathing to the plastic sheets that stand in for the blown-out window glass

where we were lulled to something less than sleep by the inordinate and irregular motion of the car in dead territory nothing to notice nothing to see the same photocopy exurb sprawl in all directions and all of it equally thin and tenuous, audibly wrinkling against the ropes that hold down the tarps that keep the map of the faked daylight more

or less in place, enough that you won't notice, sir, enough that all the dialed-in coordinates will still claim their approximate victims and at roughly the same rate per attempt per day per year per war if any war endure for such term as may be measured in years at all, which is to say, if any war should ever *end* again,

not terribly likely, I should think, and dial-up frequency through firmware of the nuclear-weapon star at 56k bitrate

its own orthodontia soundtrack in the deeper geological strata of the place, right before you hit the peak-oil disc rot and begin to pick up shards of wayward spread-spectrum broadcast immured between the fossil contents of the various partitioned or mixed fuels, reformatting hydraulic-fracture star's file-system skeleton to match eventual use made of the crude, diesel and gasoline, polyvinyl and mass-production plastics or

your more specialized projects, sir, the kinds of things we'll keep out of the trades if we know what's good for us, and after all this, we ought to know what's good for *us* if nothing else, one of the two things of which we feel relatively sure, the other being, well, I couldn't tell you unless I had your assurance that we were entirely off the record, that this were for your private edification only and would never be reproduced or rebroadcast in any form whatsoever without the express written consent of Major League Baseball, understand me, not even blown out of a speaker mounted on your rearview mirror with the screen left blank at the drive-in movies, not even the open-air theater in a district now gone to utter desolation under enantiomer reprints of the opioid star's molecular anatomy, save a massive flea market improvised from what used to be a hundred-store megamall sinking into the timescale of its own incomplete wreck

as you can sometimes hear the reconstructed roar of a deleted species in the way the mosses and the dirt are tainted with its protein-strung decay, the wreckage of peptide-computer star's subfolder vertebrae each executing its remaindered subroutine till submix metadata might still filter down the spinal mono mix)

(microcassette recorders at the edge of the encampment, tape-code hardware commands of the genetic-weapon star smuggled out of the country on eighth-inch reels unplayable on any device manufactured after a date that coincides suspiciously well with the start of the "operation"

such that you'd find yourself rearticulating the bones of the war, if you find them or yourself at all, as latent in a pile of junkyard capstans, threaded reels, playback spindles, disk-controller arms each the overexposed hypogeum for a lag-spike star, the machinery catching up with its own potential to reveal and mechanically censored long before such potential should appear as sudden grand-mal waver on the intracellular recordings where the voltage clamp transcribes a wetware star's clustered sleep spindles,

and again, suspicious coincidence, the things meant to tell us what the fuck is going on are rendered obsolete exactly as the terms of "what the fuck" and "going on" expand to thoroughly ungovernable proportions, and you might begin to wonder whether all rational analysis of nations' motives shouldn't be bracketed in the most acid-sarcastic kind of scare-quotes, even wonder, sometimes, if there can be a derangement that lies beneath the very most cynical awareness of a few powerful people working for their own enrichment and such incidental gain among their fellows as may flake off the edge of the self-renewing cycle, 'self-renewing,' the same brackets, the same brine spike or voltaic pile sweating sea-fouled water in loop gain of wetware star to gain's own distorted increase every summary winter

as though nobody had to *do* anything and it just happened this way, as though nobody *could've* done anything and this exact shape was always manifest in the shapeless prearrangement of the unfulfilled event, the not-yet-occurrent, myosin torque of mechanoreceptor star humming in long neuromodulator pulses down the length of the whole radio-relay system years before anybody knew what we'd be calling the thing that stood in for "invasion," the screen-ghost wreckage of the operating-system star design-flawed to such critical extent that, in the instant of its birth, it begins to shriek its own bones northward through a pile of gelatinous unconfirmed flesh,

that the world is nothing more or less than the scream that will excavate its own live skeleton, bioavailable marrow of the DNA-computer star unearthed on an artillery map of weapons caches in the eastern Yucatán,

not that we ever need name it so specifically, never need to be so indiscreet, there are livelihoods hanging on this and you wouldn't want to be responsible for anybody's individual and named downfall, would you, I mean I've got *stories* if stories are what you want, I can put you behind the trigger and I can line up enough post-hoc pathos that



it'll more or less fabricate the gun for you not so much to fire as to-have-fired-always-already and the jury of your peers or mine who will confirm that judgment exactly because they have no other function and were never designed to, like

say it now and you can get a shack let's say no that's not quite believable no one in North America really lives in a "shack" anymore save those precious holier-than-thou-on-other-axes-of-holiness types, back-to-the-land bullshit on behalf of people who would scream after 3 hours without hand sanitizer, so let's say

a small house on company land in a company town where the one concern owns everything and you're probably thinking of coalmines in West Virginia or the natural gasworks on the offshore platforms along the rim of the Gulf and that's fine that would work I mean it's not implausible you could even expand it as you like to suburbs around the capital blank stretches of weapons-dealer land and the optical-track storage of the nuclear-weapon star's command-tree branching from outdated discs that play back only when you shine the right kind of light through their perforated wounds,

Optigan whine of strings recorded in another room half a continent a way and not too perfectly in tune even on the day of their withheld renaissance to say nothing of the way the tuning wilts across, what would it be, at least 50 years now, maybe more, maybe more than a little more, that fits, that sticks, that's useful, you can actually hear the dying cells, can pickup the feedback looped around the reverse engineering of a designer-virus star as it extracts carcinogen principle or rites of apoptosis from the glow of the deferred phosphate recognizance across the lipid wall, signal transduction pathways, biochemical flaws in cytoskeleton of file-system star,

this is all, as I say, well within the mainstream of available narrative, if detailed in such manner as that mainstream is unlikely to approach save by accidental oxbowing, the spate or summer freshet erosively detached from the arterial trunk, is this a station-to-station call, I'm going to need special permission to put that message through, sir, I'm going to need the PIN for your most frequently accessed checking or credit account and then the PINs for any subsequent account and then a confirmation of birthdate Social Security number color of eyes color of hair a series of questions whose answers you will have provided in advance unless of course you registered before we started demanding security questions in which case we'll just set those questions and their corresponding answers up right now except how can I because I need the questions and answers to

know that you're really you so couldn't you I mean not-you be setting up a fake account in advance and locking you-you out I'm going to need a supervisor's approval on this I'm going to need to see the day's mean and median bandwidth for the throughput of haywire chemotherapeutic star

and while you're waiting for my manager's approval, you can answer the underwriter's questions, which are different from the security questions, though I warn you that, of course, if you prove not to be you, none of those underwritten answers are going to matter, so if you're the sort of person who gets disproportionately frustrated at wasted effort, we might as well stop now, before I ask you if you've ever contemplated suicide and, if so, whether that contemplation included a prayer for its own feedback-loop effect on your confessed insurance premiums)

(archival rockets for your standard, payload null or wetware star's bacteriological guidance circuitry hardwired in reference to a map that no longer exist,

warhead's trawl of oxide-wedded thermal remnants as in bootscreen star's xenotic cache, close enough, fused by the rust of their long-term obsolescence and waiting on such world as will have forgotten their successors years ago, which comes soon enough and more than simply so soon, is in fact the nature of the newsprint:

sepia weather out of grayscale squall and it's sharp edges softening all the way until we know what we presume to know as a manner of sheer reflex, the error-message flak a set of fishhook glyphs to interrupt nerve-terminal star's readout,

ichthyolite wreckage in the geological cross-section with a scanner-bed ossuary of hydraulic-fracture star for immediate fuel and, after that, you use what you can use, you find whatever finding designates, the method of the search decides result so far as you or I or anybody is willing to look into it and that's good enough that's fine we're not out here for what you might call specific news or sharply delineated evidence we just want the general kind of overview the harvested tape-hum of the chemotherapeutic star's corrupted gene cassette

and if it's soft and long and dim and if it comes like afferent rain I mean a real gentle smoothed-out tube-amp distortion the most dulcet pumping of the last compressor like the substitution of bone-analogue star filling horns of goats with

crumpled strontium and roots of parasitic grasses with dioxin, if it's the unitary sibilance of photocopied surface return from the tape bank of the phytoremedial star,

then that's better than good, that's everything we could ask for, another overtone to add to the preexistent mass and another mass said more or less in confirmation of the prior patterns established down the long and half-lit street of a fake city where real-enough people live, scarcely stapled down to scrubland between desert on the one side and hurricane-wrecked swamp on the other, sodium glare of voltaic brine and the spinal hypostyle of xenonucleic star a precolumbian necropolis pulled down in advance of the advance scouts

whom we sent out, not to put too fine a point on it, in order to "clear the land," meaning basically to find Indians and subdue them by whatever means our road agents deemed necessary, not the least of which is murder, but you needn't be so literal-minded about it, buddy, there are always degrees of separation and enforced calm and fake détente, there's always another attaché to send and another envoy to the stacked terms of another conference and another deck to shuffle in the image of your own departed royalty and to the bafflement of everybody else observing, mnemonic as they may be of their own violently effaced king-lists or earlier documentation, the text-file download of a modem star's virology in spikes of brownout dialup

where we send our delegations and we wait less for news than for the fact of the news coming: who cares what it is, what they say, whether they say anything at all, whether, in fact, the conference even convened that day, who cares who's conferring as long as they come from basically the right nations or, in the more deferred and triply-vested form of modern politicking, have been hired on a non-exclusive third-party basis by the right nations, offshore integer cache ruptured in petrochemical star's bleedthrough

and who cares what the results are, to the extent that there are any results, and who's telling us about them, and, really, whether or not we're told at all, whether we could muster the least affective + or – upon hearing the day's blather of data repeated for what will already be the third time at the very least, somber tones for this instance, boys, modulate your goddamn voice to fit the architecture, honeycolored light some Latin poet's chrysolithos smaragdus as I recall dripping down the old brick and the

sandstone and more accurately the veneers photomachined and artificially aged to look like sandstone and old brick, because

this building, you might be interested to know, is actually a replica, is a recreation of a certain basilica which itself was a recreation, allegedly, of a certain pre-Roman pagan temple, that's the legend, anyway, and the Romans killed the pagans and we took about two thousand years to kill the Romans out of imperial jealousy or simply in the pretense that we were anything but their successors, which we *are*, actually, I mean something other than *only* the successors to the Romans, but you can hardly expect a Roman to see it that way, understand the nuance, grasp how very much profounder the violations of our tekhnē than anything his simple ships-and-aqueducts mind could've conceived, we're talking about ownership of the *sky*, we're talking about coordinate-system phage star to rewrite the less than grid-straight cytoskeleton,

we're talking about first-day immunoassay of the antibody star and cut-rate biomass imported from wherever it should spend itself most prodigally to overpower the present contents of the place like dumping thick polluted water into an aquarium however full or empty it should be and watching the crystalline shit slosh over the tops of the walls, does that make sense, is that a metaphor you understand, you who so love the dynamics of water as an image of power and of power's displacement by itself, never the means to anything more than more of itself, that's the legend, though I suspect that there's a postgain beyond even power, a kind of bone-shredded ekstasis one might naively call "transcendent" if one were still in the market for that kind of sloppy language,

you want the dregs, you want the last apples of summer gently corroding in your blood cells and the bloodwork of the router star's radiochemical bandwidths neatly sectioned off into a multitrack recording for the mixing desk to fade up down pan left right falsely center

which is only, and take this as a political lesson, which is only the following illusion: what you hear as "center" is no center; there's no center speaker, and you have no center ear; what you hear as "center" is only equal volume from the left and right, a conspiracy of difference tones electing a dim Rhodos for colossus amputations in the interference pattern)

(“scarcity mindset,” come the well-bred accusations from such voices as know scarcity exclusively under the heading of leverage, of resource, something to be made from something not yet apparent or specifically unappearing because it doesn’t goddamn exist, “poverty’s reflexes sustained beyond poverty’s own circumstance,”

and I guess that’s fair enough, or would be if it were coming from any other accuser, but affichez-là, right there, over the graffiti about how the king never died and is secretly in hiding and right next to the other graffiti about how the king’s death or survival don’t matter and never could’ve because Iesus Rex Mundi Est, whatever, fine for you, if it helps the night pass more quickly and the smell of the rubber burnt for want of candlewax filter somewhat less nauseously through your nostrils, stele of black compacted grit to code cell-respiration star a long string of null terminators each its own accretion-disc scream of withheld feedback,

the bypass line and the standby switch and the transients shrieking up the third rail where we waited underground while they were pasting up posters to inform the residents of their new government and thus of their new nation and the Latin tag an artifact of passage through this place by people you’d now want to call, let’s say, Lithuanians?, though that’s anachronistic, that’s a term derived from later political alignments, so if we’re being realistic we’d probably have referred to them back then by ethnic group, as indeed they might’ve referred to themselves, and if that’s racist, well, so were we, and so were they, with the tacit admission between the two of us that only *our* racism is embedded in the structures of available reality, but

keep that quiet and keep them moving through the tunnels where the trains don’t run anymore now that we’ve all gotten a little bit suspicious of trains, have all begun to wonder if every railway mustn’t terminate in such ashen finalities as the last years have disclosed or, at the very least, cyanotype fermata, the mass poisoning not yet official policy but *certainly* on the table, radio assay of antigen star’s available stockpiles under the streets of cities not yet built or only just named yesterday and spreading over the boulevards named for the Spaniards who killed the people who were here before the Spaniards and then the subsequent boulevards named for the WASPs who killed the Spaniards and then one street, sure, named for a Chicano farmworker who tried to free the slaves, and no, not those slaves, not the ones already “free” by the official dispensation,

who himself would've been killed by WASPs and Spaniards alike, of course, if not such as you'd see it in the headlines, no rooftop sniper, no car bomb, no mafia hit with finical attention paid to fine lengths of French cuff alongside the jettisoned bullet casings, getting really pissy about gun grease on your white collar or the way the escape very nearly fucked up the crown of your hat in a manner that no amount of boxing and punching would've fixed, this was almost worse than a dent, man, this was almost a goddamn tear, and then I would've needed a new hat, and then the hat I was wearing would've become a hagiographic item, don't you see that, would've been added to the reliquary of the saint with whose martyrdom we so effectively assisted, radiology of chemotherapeutic star a contrast venograph climbing the gold-leaf arterials in the unofficial portrait of a saint no church will ever canonize,

something made from tinfoil and shards of broken mirrors and craft paste and dead flowers and seashells and concrete on the side of a highway or at the end of a small public park in the shape of a kidney between two housing developments whose exteriors are so unremarkable for the area, a lot of fake-Spanish tile and stucco, that any knowledge of the local life expectancy and murder rate will render such benign facades just eerie as all shit, like you want to watch your back especially when you feel you have no back to watch, like you're most vulnerable when the city spreads so widescreen out before you that you're likely to forget you came from anywhere and could retreat in any direction at all, could choose to move save forward on the mainline physics of the dolly shot,

cold morphine drizzle of the rhizofilter star suddenly thawed and vertically liquefied with a violence that'll hit your mind like the eruption of many many gentle golden darts,

euthanasia census of the nerve-terminal star replayed in overdubbed additions to the central pattern generator right across the blood-brain hull,

like Here We Are, like This Was the Idea, OK, wide avenues and people moving on them but only as what you might call illustrations, tableaux, scenes the better with which to frame the central scene and the real protagonist, each of which were always You, Baby, and Whatever You're Doing, because there's all kinds of money behind this project and we're very interested in what might be termed a soft reconquest of the inner cities, yes?, like why should the doomed rats get to have all the fun of urban

infrastructure, to say nothing of the contracts for its maintenance and, after 50 years of pointless piecemeal updates to a thing constructed so shittily that it was always going to crumple, the contracts for its demolition, and then the contracts for the hauling away and destruction of its dead parts, because *this* shit, hoo boy, carcinogen payload like you wouldn't believe, lead poisoning and the right numerical red dye to climb whichever of your carotid horns is more perfectly exposed, nuclear-weapon star the anatomic scans of white blank flesh detailed for allegoric satellites around the central subject of a mural as yet untenanted and waiting for bouquets of checks to clear)

(terabyte malware of exobiologic star buried gestating in the cool cool heather where the heat rises like pollen stirred by old and formal slaughter

along lines we'll adumbrate in committee or by fiat in the shadow of the church where the floodlamps impersonate fire and the fire is officially nonexistent, outlines maps in the distance which we're unobliged to see and therefore commit to no monument's coded memory, though very possibly it seeps by accident into the geometric limit, the sense of form, the fact that now a pile of wreckage looks like organism grown on the spot alongside sugar casing of xenonucleic star's spinal cartridge,

a reach down into the wet dirt where the needle wrings waveform from taut patterns of grooved wound and we're waiting on the land to dry because, when dry, it's so much easier to divide, so much less apt to overflow its own boundaries, the purpose of which is the purpose of Earth is the purpose of us as far as we're concerned: to know who owns what and therefore to know what constitutes a breach sufficient to stand as casus belli, why I'm allowed to kill you and under what terrene circumstances, geology of GABA star's surface return exported via loop gain you can easily lop off in one of the sidechains where it'll soon enough fall in with all the other half-heard static and the imperfectly white noise on the stations nobody officially owns,

sonicating autosurgery of modem star in massive cell-death bandwidth,

the scree and mumbled hiss of it as through an inch of swollen cheek-meat and doctore, doctore, ti pregho if we're praying, I need something for the way the day keeps coming in all these small towns each oppressively right-angled already and even more so in the way we cleared them out for the treatymaking conference, in the grid we seem to

think must presuppose the terms of Armistice, and who the hell's to say but that it does, so put your mind at ease, doctore, among the way the paths are all the same path in one of two transpositions and the chemical signaling quickly erodes file-system star's exhumed cytoskeleton

with mordants that don't look like much apart from daylight, with acids pale as the bleached anthrax sun of this latitude, a peptide spike in wetware star's dormant lobe where the sampled and held voltages wear out their own anatomy

because shape can be held only for so long and for so long only and that's perhaps the secret of morphology, doctore, is the gneiss-grit in piezo spike of mechanoreceptor star out where the relay towers each repeat the failed and lossy copies of a first injection largely fabled, some lost primary hypodermic reach we all "remember" because we've all been told to remember it and for absolutely no other reason than that, I mean there's second there's third there's incalculable trillionth so there must've been a first, right, and it's in the decayed disk-image of the first that we recompose these solemn rites though getting a damn sight less solemn on each bone-sore reiteration, I can tell you, I'm tired as hell and can only imagine how *you* must feel, doctore, tending to the way the bone presses upward against and outward from the skin like a litany of withheld horn, the ossuary forest of the lag-spike star in antlered download from the hearts of black trees still too cold and inwardly laminate with frost to know they're dead,

backlogged broadcast of bone-analogue star waiting in the rhizofilter buffer like the screen that comes up when you turn on your machinery, the first eye-soft-enough skin before the readout, prologue canceling virology of bootscreen star with antidotes devised only to bewilder the symptom toward estrangement from its cause, like

I was going down the place where Broadway – and not the Broadway you're thinking of – widens out into the first slum desolation it allows near the shopping district built to look like some land-baron asshole's vision of Seville, I think it was, or maybe Firenze or whatever, guy who invented racial housing covenants, as I recall, and thus the secret author of so much American geography, the man behind the exurb, a bitter little contraction or file classification glinting from behind the decimal point where we do or don't line up the contents of the place for what you might call an aggressive schematic of reordering, attack vectors of the execute-file star in petrol rainbow where the iridule strains out like a contagion isolated to specific realms of cells,



disease-slide star in back projection so enormous that you'd miss the corresponding lack of sky if you got here any later than, say, 115 years ago, which you statistically did,

and even if you didn't, boss, you'll be deep into the Cumaean fugue by then and so consumed with the leathery and melting desire to die that it's not like you'll be volunteering too many memories to too many takers, nor that anybody really wants to hear, nor that "history," in the main, has ever been anything but the settling of scores according to the people in whose favor those scores settled, rehashing the same shit over and over again to prove you really won whether you won or not, and we'll occasionally allow a dissenting voice in the name of "fairness" and really because we don't want to make censorship too obvious and thereby risk reprisal,

though between you and me, doctore, I think it's really too late to worry about all that, and we're caught up in the reflexive paranoiae of another era, still dosing ourselves with massive scheduled download from obsolete chemotherapeutic star:

nobody's going to fight; nobody's going to get angrier than anybody already is; you come right out and say *this can no longer be printed* or *this can no longer be publicly spoken* and the people who'll get mad are already mad, and some of them are right to be, and the people who don't care will start caring only in the vaguest and most vacuous public way, shifting the outward air around between mouths really predisposed to eat it slowly, what's the Topic of Discussion, does the News show us a less protected flank, a million small rotifer jaws sucking at the rich blanket of translation-fats where all deleted glyph goes to discomfit such blood's passage as we'll never notice stalling)

(or not, at least, until it's much too late for anyone to care, at which point we'll fire up the industry designed to traffic idiot euphemisms like "malaise" and "stagnation" and talk about the national deficit, delete bioavailable code-star in frieze of hardened arterial cholesterol,

and you know all about that, doc, have no doubt been treating it for years, I can't be the first to come here under these terms where the light turns to a species of shale and I'm allowed to turn my ruined tissue to a kind of plate-reverb unit for reprocessing enantiomer structures of the radiopharmaceutical star, opiate transmission coming up in the black terminal like script softened by long occupancy of a slowly thawing snowbank,

the tape drive in the vein and the tape-edit star no backup along blood-brain barrier save in the architecture of the barrier itself, which is wearing, which is worn, which is plum busted in a whole bunch of places and probably compromised too thoroughly for any mass retrieval of the information it “stored,”

itself a euphemism: nothing’s ever just “stored”; there is an active process, a recirculation, a constant making-new and the most ancient the most newly made because the foundation of memory’s grammar, bleedthrough scansion of the DNA-computer star behind detached containment-unit ziggurat where we

went in first with hazmat suits as if we’d be able to tell the nature of the harm from what color it turned our tongues and teeth and lungs, which may be true enough, on a certain level, but an insufficient one, and the work proceeded for days in a kind of spooked quiet, as you probably remember, doc, not all – but much – of which was pure racism, because the people crawling over the old tumuli in bright yellow plastic wrapping like the return of the murdered kingfishers to this country of bird-sacrifice were, well, afraid, I guess, thought that something might come down out of the trees or up from the floor of the jungle if they moved too suddenly or made too much noise, unraveled stems of marsh papyrus angiographed with radioisotope star and reprinted so many times that sheer generation loss its own tidechart and florilegium of half-trackmarked coastal currents,

the patch of wrecked meat on the Levantine edge where you could reconstruct a decent pictograph of some helpless addiction, not, not surely, that we’ll ever be allowed or even ought to be allowed to speak in such reductive and frankly vulgar terms of the high purposes and means of National Destiny, doctore, which, as we know, pursue their own ends by paths which we may sometimes find distasteful but which are always to the greater good in this, the best of all possible worlds, except for the next world which the present world is currently about the business of excreting, some ripe hideous penicillin foam through all the pores open and blocked, bacterial-colony star in spread-spectrum autopsy whose dissections each end up hung from the most-used limb of any given cellphone tower,

weight of throughput its dyes and volume of the call deepening each compression-artifact star in violent aniline turn, the kind of color that we’ll soon find cause for cancer if we choose to look, which we may very profitably not, o it’s important,

doctore, it's a damp, sorry, a damn important thing to know what you're looking for and even more important one to know where you ought not look for all the lack of good the looking will do you, "we'll only wind up dead this way," yes, sure, reel in and spool up and replay a despairing Inland Empire gnostic for the purposes of foreign policy, what else have we ever done, the cities after cities after cities none of which really qualifies as such, feels sufficiently alive on its own terms to be anything but the inert and wholly dependent district of something else,

but look just once for the edge, look for the bounding volume, the limit which will or should explain of what exactly this right here is a constituent zone, and you'll find yourself like we found ourselves, too high on the elevated interstate where the overpasses all seem to end in scrapheaps piled up between remainders of some dead development hack's fake-Spanish Baroque fantasia, black-orange hardened scum of gasoline fumes obscuring readout of the nerve-terminal star

in light granular with what you only hope is something relatively innocent as dust, the least innocent substance in the world except for most of the others, tape-code hypogeum for bones of the hydraulic-fracture star in backlit rapture of explosion paused for still frames each injectable as a form of local medicine when cooled down to a temperature your arteries can bear,

though Some Like It Hot, doctore, as I'm sure you've heard in what must be your damned interesting line of work, yessir, learn a lot about one's fellow man that way, including, perhaps, some fine degrees of distinction in the word "fellow" and in its application, to say nothing of "one's" and "man," to say nothing much at all, really, so

back out to the places always the color of sickly prolonged summer with the scorched grass and the trucked-in foliage too burnt to rot, slowly flaking in long fricative rub against the vinyl siding of prefab houses, sound like slowed-down tape loop of cats fucking, that awful aspirate stridulation somewhere in back of the organs a human being carries around in its throat, not least of them the heart whose rate, we're told, is dangerously elevated, would you perhaps like to inquire as to treatment options, would you like to peruse the details of various credit and installment plans, would you consent to membership in an experimental trial if that meant you'd pay a tenth as much and maybe even pocket a profit on the gas money we'll give you if you lie well enough about the place you live?)

(cold off the north shore of the assassins' quarters, a coast no one would frequent but for some rotten fucking business, and cold wind hooking in from the dark where the tarps flap in tape-code retranscription of a nuclear-weapon star's forgotten dose-rate contour,

about how many millirads or Roentgens in the same area per given time defined by either concentrated population or political boundary almost certainly lapsed and reconstituted and lapsed again as we wait out the failed white blood of succeeding kings, phagocytic star's immunodeficient videofeed bleeding thin and red-stained from the malarial steel wool inside the satellite's veins, deleted operating-system star an angiograph ghost enough to bother existent wiring with the specter of some overtone unexcised, a hum we couldn't quite work out of the machinery,

though god knows we tried for days and days and almost went out of our goddamn minds I don't know if you remember that but I do and I'll never forget it the way we had to take apart the soundboard and the vision mixer looking for stray artifact of tape-bias star's onscreen anatomy or subtler scanner-bed histology less in the image given than in the flaws of the glass or the plastic or the whole pale substructure of the chemical-weapon star now overdubbed to sample cytoskeleton exported via disease-slide photocopy or just the probabilist equations governing dispersal of any given aerosol over any given landmass under any given set of weather conditions

the which we could predict to some degree and to another were powerless to name much less to alter so we'd get right down in the dirt where the main electrical supply plugged into a pre-war grid with the prior war's carbolic and quicklime still flaking off the gutta-percha shielding and the breathturn of the lithotrophic star a thick penicillin squall or biotic massif peeling with the high harmonic latent in the way the bubbles tessellate or don't the way the million small mouths open each for exactly long enough to denature its own reference tone scream insectile from the fallen bones of the pitch-amplifier star still plugged in via DI box to missile-defense protocol we occasionally log onto if only to make sure that it's still not firing itself of its own nervousness, whatever twitch the system picked up from a phenomenally twitchy epoch, anxiety no doubt coded into the adenosine star's hardware

no matter what we meant to store and how careful the provisions we took against disc rot and the inevitable failure of the inevitable tape that seemed to be everywhere for 40 goddamn years and

if you had a certain turn of mind you might then draw some conclusions from the fact that audiotape was invented for the Nazis by the Nazis to convince people that they were hearing Hitler live when they were hearing prerecorded broadcasts, ever heard that one before, quality of radio being what it was in 1941 or '40 or even '39, let's say, well you could tell the added coefficient of hiss from a shellac disc or some shitty immediate acetate transfer with hypodermic map of GABA star gone dark under null terminators' carnivore mathematics but

you couldn't really tell the hiss of audiotape from the hiss of all the radio broadcasts in the world some better than others and some worst and not least because if you were told you were hearing a man speaking to a crowd on some shithole Prussian esplanade with the cold an algebraic constant in the air a gelid mass of vein-glass heaving slowly with the heaving of the sea and breakdown hyalin secreted from the bones of the cell-respiration star well

you were probably going to believe it because why not, why would they lie, what, for all the other fictions ongoing, would be the point of this one, such small ambition and meager means, only that  $x$  is now when  $x$  was really 3 weeks ago and in Bremen or wherever you happened not to be when you heard what you weren't hearing with the DC offset clamoring somewhere in the low decibel ranges though high enough in soft treble perturbation to prick the finer cilia inside your ear stereotactic image downloaded from the radiosurgical star in failed graft to the cartridge-seeking grooves of the cochlear whorl

not that we'd let them go for failure's sake alone nor stop doing much of anything just because it didn't doesn't can't and never will work, that wouldn't be us, or rather we wouldn't be us were we to act that way, a people who simply accept that things have run down so terribly fucking badly as to make it a nearly nonchalant statistic that – and guess which country this refers to – of all the people murdered by somebody he or she doesn't know, which is to say basically apart from "crimes of passion," 1 in 3 is murdered by a police officer, a number you'd have a hard time wringing from the gaunt juiceless flesh of any withered nation officially designated a "police state"

with that other wind, a little lighter, the color and texture of flush-rosy shale, also whipping in but from the gaps in newsprint as the gaps in the city's Aeolian-harp architecture, peptide-computer star's freestanding sarcophagi out in the Valley of the Kings where we lay corpses of attendants and doctors and slaves for future exhumation, because

any given regime prepares the tomb for its successor, readies the relics and the piles of amputee flesh both organic and statuary, fills the ground with weapons-cache remainders, articulates in reverse the archaeology of offline DNA-computer star

for later and supremely error-prone reconstruction, I'm sorry, we were unable to find any file with that name, and we were further unable to find any file whose name contained any of the words in the name you gave us, and we were still further unable to find any file which contained either the name you gave us as-is as-was or even the three words in the name you gave us in any order at all separated by any number of other words, no not even in the metadata, no not even in the authorship and the permissions where the timestamp on Last Opened or Last Updated might tell you something about the predecease of now-insoluble ghosts or might only be the evidence of your previous failed search)

(less than no traffic coming through, an active and felt absence which, if you were in the business of understanding your own unexamined assumptions, and by definition you are not, you could further perjure by constructing any number of matrices of webbed integers and timetables of averages per hour while the helipad creaks and half-crumples under the added weight of the boys from Chicago, each of whom, however well-maintained by Chicago standards, is an unusually large human being for this climate and will probably suffer considerably with the altitude and the salient the salità the way the whole city's uphill and you gain only on the crooked rickety ghost of one or another syphilitic conquistador crouched in his aerie whether named that way or not, all places to shoot from, all brutality masquerading as defense, a technique we've learned about as well as anyone learns anything, which is to say that we've given ourselves to it entirely, whatever else we've understood or haven't, and now

articulate the low wall where we say it would've been on the mountaintop where the dust is the color of a dead lion covered in dust and conceals about as much,

something you'll have been impressed to find in immediate and stunned retrospect and then will come to wonder about when it's much too late to do anything, and now mix down the immunoblot star's multitrack to a stereo-paired transfer we can play on any compatible machinery, ideally the tapedeck in the car or jeep on the way back, ideally the Dictaphone or miniature reel-to-reel machine in the back of the van where the seats have been taken out and where there are pairs of handcuffs bolted to the flimsy aluminum frame each in its own Doppler reconstruction of the stereo mix simplified from let's say a couple hundred individual channels before, plus all the channels which composed them, all the teeth and small perdurable bones of hands and faces, it's amazing how long the hands last, you know, how long after the slaughter's over you're still finding joints of fingers and knuckles with all the cartilage rotted off or more likely eaten by the gaunt exhausted-looking birds who circle here with bones seeming too hollow and too malleable to live at this altitude, really, wonder sometimes about decompression sickness, wonder sometimes about codec rites for bioweapon star as reverse-engineered from cached remains of desaparecidos

because that would fit, would have to, would occupy roughly the same space as the shape as the absence, if with infected tissue, the rare graft of the necrotic back onto the living if not healthy, haha, jaja, "rare," the rarefaction of the black grit blowing off the modem star's mitochondrial bandwidth where sugar hardens into nodes of brownout static flaring rhotic or thickly aspirated over the unoccupied sockets for the halogen tubes

and we conduct whatever work we've been hired out on a contract basis to pursue, each of us maybe brushing down a few of those small bones or tracking the serial numbers on cheap jewelry manufactured way up at the Mexican border in American-owned maquiladoras for American-owned corporations and given those serial numbers in the United States, maybe, and then resold back to the Central and South American market for a markup of something in the neighborhood of say 5,000%, good gift while you've got it, senator, and much to be admired in the smoothness of its function, the way the signal gains and gains on every loop, financialized decimals piling up like misfolded protein, polymerase-chain lightning of peptide-computer star canceled in the fluid terminal long flash-frozen to panes of shatterable rime

or just the spun sugar we'll use for the stunt sequence later when it comes time to rehash all this in a Hollywood movie via which we'll forgive ourselves for having had anything to do with it, impetus, maybe, for a Truth and Reconciliation Committee before which the torturers will have the chance to recount through honest-enough – not honest, but honest-enough – tears how badly it hurt them to be torturers and their tortured will stand awkwardly with arms pressed to their own sides and painfully flexed inward at the elbows while the torturers embrace them in a violent photo-op hug which would be more trouble, and a bigger PR problem, to evade than to allow, so fine, one more orgy of specious public repentance, fine, I came here to make a couple of things very clear and will allow myself to be batted around through all this bullshit as long as I'm likewise allowed to do that, to impart a few specific names and, I hope, maybe to put a birth name to a nickname to an alias, so you can reghost the ghosted rumors and the assembled-in-conference memoirs of other people tortured half to death and all the way to incurable derangement and say

Ah, OK, I think I'm getting something, remember how they all called that guy Shades, or he said his name was Fat Tony because he was skinny and the other one was Toni el Flaco because he was fat, well, bear with me, what if neither of these guys was named Antonio, or rather what if they both were but the names they gave on their induction to the Special Domestic Police weren't Antonio, whatever somebody helped them falsify their records at point of entry to the police force or didn't check them against any other records or knew but just didn't give a shit, I mean would you have cared if people were volunteering?, would it have mattered to you by what names they'd be called when they were anything but torturers, if anything but torturers they'd ever really been?)

(temperate freak in faulted block of frigid light, a vesper wasp tuned to and tombed in the matte ashlar glare, reconstructing overexposures of disease-slide archaeology of lithotrophic star from fissured respiratory bandwidth in the stone we keep from noticing

with all the mnemonic technology available to us, much of which is coded in the structure of the city, that's a help, that's a metabolic burden lifted, I can find albino ants crawling up and down the webbed hot sheathing of my bones and you've reported in



your sleep that you can feel the spinal membrane of the xenonucleic star pulled apart by pale beetles navigating with the moon's crooked glance on the southern plains

where it's cold as hell though looks like rancid heat in all directions where the sand cooks and the time-lapse anatomy needles through the roof of the observatory in scanner-bed relics of tape-backup star, the bleedthrough of the thermal remnants keening with microscopic rotifer teeth at the enameled underside of the old footage, histocompatible star's xenograft necropolis a dead technique of the cells harvested from petri dishes vats incubators iron lungs only the decimal-cracked integer of IP star to code them flesh at all and may quite as well be recoded afterward for architecture if we should see our way clear to finishing, i.e. to starting, the long-rumored extension of the highways from the desert near the zero at the bottom of the world back up to the cities on the coast,

a fascist project, right, aren't they all, terracing the cliffs for something like the American interstate system or sending out road crews to recite Gymnasium poetry to each other by firelight and drink an incredible quantity of beer before they're officially drafted or just unofficially pressganged by the western advance of the eastern front or however it should go, are you custodian of maps, we've been looking for him, we were looking when we crawled across the cement floor of the sound archive while the bombs were more than falling, seemed to erupt from underground, weakly shielded as we were from any evidence of their descent or fire and so receive them as synoptic autosurgery of modem star, a sequence of subterranean concussions exhumed, the REM-glitch of the wetware star recovered from some half-cracked paleontological mission to unearth the holy grail and finding mostly tags and biopsy fragments of old voltage, melted fuses, the transformer blown by tape-splice with late tendrils of dead rhizofilter star

hoarding the radio dross from the weapons experiments whose cost nobody's ever going to ask us to justify now, which is a minor plus, one of the small blessings of ahem regime change, be thankful enough and no more and no less, the concrete archway where we tried to focus sonicating wave on the corrupt cell-editing star and came back mostly with a sequence of half-ruined bunkers like ossified seasnakes on whichever is the more myth-prone British coast, Bran's head staring out from Dover, is it, or the spiral mound on the other side, reached, and this is not to be overlooked or at least not too often, by driving over an enormous field under which the upper geological

layer of chalk has been used as a giant containment-unit buffer beneath which to bury plague victims, late and early, influenza or something less easily immobilized by naming, taxonomical curare for the breath the plague has of itself, chemotactic star in cross-referenced leprosarium for indices committed as the raw fiberglass shards of colorburst to a secondary film you play alongside the first

for its sync sound and its uplink to the public satellite and its monitoring by the private devices and the sonochemistry of router star collapsing in a bank of cytoskeletal deletions each depositing the wattage-ghost of structure in a carbonized black howl on motile plasm underneath,

not that you'd worry, not that you'd try to keep yourself from worrying, nor go out hunting for the strontium in bone-analogue star as might still come up silvery and porous from the masses of the medical incinerator kept several miles from the hospital just in case anybody gets suspicious, I mean there's such thing as, what would you say, a structural suspicion, a geographical unease, and hospitals look the way they look to keep you from thinking of the way they do the things they do, all that white tile and plastic easy to clean and, more importantly, easy to tell when it's been fouled, so you can send in the cleanup crews paid cents an hour after the deduction from what would be a starvation wage even if they received it, working for the prison "rehab" program which is to say a chain gang wherein chains have been replaced by zip tie shock collar not impossibly a dermal implant or a smear of ineradicable locator fluid although frankly that all seems a little too predictable, too much like a libertarian's version of the overweening state, and if you can trust libertarians for anything – a debatable proposition – you can trust them to be wrong about the future, so

maybe sure the pin-connector flesh the graphics card wedged in a slice of disabled gray matter not impossibly the slow monitored overdose of chemotherapeutic star from nanomechanical implant keeping everyone just strong and not-quite-cancerous enough to do the simple work but much too weak and starved even to think of departing from routine, and I mean even toward laziness or total work stoppage, let alone anything more volatile, this won't turn Spartacus, are you out of your fucking mind, we hand out half a Vicodin to anybody who asks at any time though legally no more than one half of one pill per what is it 4 hours? 8 hours? and the fact that I don't know should answer any questions you might have about the degree of seriousness we

confer upon our orders when the order-word goes out like Get this done But you know, really, what we mean, don't fuck it up in any obvious way, don't allow for the appearance of a flaw whose authorship will be too evident, too snarling with wrongly-sized text in a different typeface from the rest of the metadata's formicary sprawl)

(white noise enough to gutter in shards along the banks of the Tiber the Dnieper the Drina the Don, cum Munich cum Frankfurt cum Bayer cum Agfa cum Ufa cum Thyssen cum Imperial Chemicals cum Deutsche Rundfunk not impossibly and the big boom mics swung enough to match phase cancellation juddering the waveform where a tracking-error star fills the syringe on live tape readout though of course it can't be perfectly live and of course "real time" is an exaggeration, one employed largely to impress those whom it may impress, we're going to need to do a second take of all this, I'm pretty sure, a second take at least, because the news of the necessity will probably depress everyone, which will mean a bad second take, which will in turn mean a grim teeth-gritted workmanlike third take with which nobody will be happy, and at that point you can go on to takes 4-110 if you really want to but you're probably going to come back to take 3 as the one with which people are, if not really happy, still the least *unhappy*, and we can punch in if we want to, do the vocal in several different takes and tack together the best bits, this isn't, unless I'm mistaken, this isn't music for broadcast?, this is not, by some definitions, music at all, though have no doubt but that people can and will hear it that way, enough alternating current to send a spasm through the concrete eagles on the stadium cornices or what you like, a bioglass star covered in siliceous ooze and quicklime and spattered bird shit and the overburden turned up by the way we renamed the land, remember that, remember the alphabetic transfer and the tendency of all the simple phonemes to revert to their suppressed pictographic contents under such circumstances, the biohazard stele cracked on the DNA-computer star till ziggurat indices should emerge stepped and chemical from the function meant to predict the way the sound wave would behave,

which it didn't, you might say, but of course it did: it predicted, it was just wrong in its prediction, and we were more apt to trust that wrongness than the evidence of what you might well call our own senses if there weren't so much machinery intervening between us and them, I mean a Fourier transform or spectrum analysis, is that really

“the evidence of your own senses,” how much mediation are you willing to cross out like a matched variable above and below the barline that amputates denominators from hydraulic-fracture star in scalded-dust smell of a furnace turning on for the first time since last spring when the bone sinter crawls along that dormant petrol skeleton and you can hear the high crinkling overtone of the broken series can look for the amino-sequence flash from the nuclear-weapon star’s obsolete firmware and the obsolescence planned for all its sequels in a bunker to which we sometimes leave the door noticeably ajar

like come on in because, even if you’re in here, there’s not much to see, to steal, to tamper with, bloodwork of an optical-track star half-glowing when it catches the halogen bulbs at the right angle and, other than that, nothing you’d probably be familiar with, keep it this way to prevent exactly such incursions,

to which you might well ask, Then why not keep everything important the same way?, and that’s a question for which I’ve devised all kinds of answers, none of which I’m really more sure of than I am of any of the others, triply genitive and stumbling over its own syntax and this no accident, like they enjoy saying, not a bug, a feature, though you can actually hear the dry striated sizzle of the bugs trapped between mainframe and its housing and frying there as the current sears the meat of their wings away, found as a pile of charred black pulp on next inspection of the wetware star’s motherboard smeared with ancient rotting sugar as to make up for the missing genes in the code we haven’t quite managed to steal from either the blood or the dreaming of the people we mean to kill, of the people who, we say, want to kill us, and why not believe it, why not revert to that kind of dumb rhetorical inertia when nobody’s going to listen anyway and the speeches exist – in vast baffling empty profusion, the lukewarm air fading from thermal gradients of atomized saliva against pop screen for a rhetorician with a notable tendency to blow blithely through his plosives, plus the de-esser on the backline because he’s extremely sensitive about his hint of a lisp, plus we’re going to need EQs both graphic and parametric, the one just for a general cleanup, you know, notches around 500 and 1,000 and 10,000 and spikes at let’s say 40 50 60 5,000 and maybe 15 or 20k if you really want to keep the glass and metals in the public square awake, want to test the material resistance of the genetic-engineering star’s long download to worn reams of buyback tape

picked up in what some would call, and no doubt have called, a minor material coup along with the guns now required for our new sets of friends, you heard about that?, you probably didn't, you fault of your'n, buddy, we weren't exactly buying headlines about it, in fact we were paying to have them, well,

"suppressed" is far too emphatic and doctrinaire a word, you know what I mean, because it's not like the people who might otherwise have written the headlines were *really* just dead-set on writing them, really cared at all about their contents, they needed x amount of letters in a typeface and a size predetermined a decade ago and then redetermined in 6-month intervals ever since by unctuous little scabs flown in to milk one or another strain of imaginary money from a failing proposition or bit of lost connective grammar, so we gave them different text to fill the entry bar, appeased them via dialogue-box triage)

(lessons learned from Haitian radio, the dust filter thrown on the shriek-heat of meridian gel, sorting through the iridescent real-time skin wreckage resampled by the cell-editing star

because we want a kind of motile bone calculus, the flesh stripped from the calcium sculpture or the skeleton quicklimed onto the limbs of the living, squall of biogenic graphite, glowing oncologic indices to chemotherapeutic star's benign parasitology

and how we might superimpose other and canceling glyph atop that fluoroscope pictography, a lesson there, a lesson everywhere, a few years and miles to the north where you know what's going on and are loath to tell it simply for the complications it would introduce into your own telling, where the city's meant to serve as a kind of harmonic differentiator for the frequency spectra of the bones living and dead, a resonant cavity that will sort out some of the tones and emphasize some others and produce whatever roiling howl of sarcomere cluster-chord best holds against the grand-mal sample voltage filter-swept through wetware star in cone of tainted ultrasound light,

umbilical tinctures wrung from the cord and brownout early-warning system for the nuclear-weapon star in vertebrate stacks of optical diskettes if you go even further north, by years and by mileage again, to the control, the station where – we have to assume, and when I say *have to*, I mean *have to* – they really are monitoring all this,

they really know what's going on, they not only possess the latest machinery but are skilled in its use to a degree that will strike us as entirely inhuman, they seem to move in grotesque streamlined symbiosis with devices which seem, when we attempt even to power them up or to shut them down, clanky and multijointed as overgrown arthroscopy of circuit-bending star, the flexile stalk-camera wedged in the crooked joint,

but they, they're in their element, their masters of such worlds as may be welded together by this exact machinery, the seek judder and the cursor-loss of operating-system star's hard reset, they know what it means to cut the power source right out of the wall and to replace it with a battery or lines run to a generator, they understand the protocol for blackouts up the coast when we need to pretend that we're not doing much of anything, tweedly-dee, just bureaucrats and technophiles here, senator, inspector, doctor, you wouldn't by any chance be from the UN, ah you would, then if you would please allow me to demonstrate for you on a two-color cathode-tube monitor how the OS we're currently running – or, I should say, the OS we're currently testing for bugs, sending through its beta stages, as in contact sheet of beta-burn star delivered from the darkroom of livid atmospheric wounds –

might be used to distribute, whaddayou want, aid packages on the other side of the Berlin Wall, not your style, OK, how about leaflets warning against the specious seductions of pan-Arab nationalism over Egypt and Afghanistan, how about dehydrated rice pressed into wafers whichever African desert strikes you as most redolent of impossible poverty and thus of our excusable failure in dispelling that poverty, a place, senator, inspector, where nobody's ever going to get fed, where thirst will always be the leading cause of death, as if we'd just accept that about any other continent except, you know, maybe Asia, some parts of South America, depending on the friendliness of the local government, which is to say how recently we installed that government or had to start rifling through the plans for a reinstallation, damn convoluted thing and nobody's favorite kind of work, that's not true, there are men who live for it, enormous software update to the bioweapon star

takes all goddamn day and you have to circle the facility like a spooked carrion bird wearing a hazmat suit and a gasmask within a certain perimeter which we've so pathetically underestimated, pathetically and intentionally, that you might as well go home and get in bed and go to sleep without removing the, what is it, mylar?, the dirty

crumpled off-white mylar over whatever shirt-and-tie you wore to the facility that day, return to a model house in a tract developed for the short-term quartering of the defense industry's necessary mammals and, as long as we're at it, for certain intelligence elements within politically subversive communities – i.e. snitches – and for certain elements of *our* intelligence service who do work that won't appear on any congressional budget line, at least not under its own name – i.e. murderers – like possibly

Logistical Support to the Democratic Rebels Outside Kandahar or something of the sort, the Cuban Freedom Caucus, Libertad Nicaragua, the Committee for Free Markets in Chile, you know how it goes by now, or ought to, these men pass through and look like nothing much, beefy and reddish and always wearing short sleeves against the northeastern winter because they're used to operating in warmer climates, maybe, or some are exactly the sort of multi-fuckup losers you'd expect, been drummed out of every organized body they've ever made an attempt to join and are now just barely hanging on to unlisted innominal membership in this one, never going to be saved in court by a District Attorney suddenly approaching the bench like

*Uh your honor we've received information in regard to the defendant's work on several uh government projects which makes it you would say inopportune to pursue charges against him at this time and are therefore recommending your honor that the State drop all charges and turn him loose as quickly as we can because if we keep bail at the posted amount we're going to get some very angry phonecalls from the people who had to pay it in the middle of the night, I mean both the paying and the calls, as to the timing, and I'd just as soon avoid all that in advance, it seems intelligent to me, it seems like we'd rather not waste your time your honor with a prosecution which can only go so far before the State itself must plead the Fifth against its own questioning and I have here for your perusal should you so demand a list of bank deposits and credit card transactions and receipts for rent paid on apartments and rental cars know what I mean?)*

(well I'm going to have to put it all allusively and quickly and with a lot of blank space in between the few names and dates and toponyms I can recall right here and right now, I mean you're really putting me on the spot, this isn't how *you're* used to conducting your business, hell, your honor, this isn't how *I'm* used to conducting my

business either, don't think you're the only one inconvenienced here, though I have to say

that it's getting more and more common, used to be you picked somebody up for running guns or trafficking drugs and one of two things would happen, either you'd just run the motherfucker in for whatever plea deal his shyster lawyer could convince him to take – and yes, sure, of course, that happened more often when he was black or Latino or anyway not white and especially some kind of semi-foreigner who only spoke a little bit of English, why wouldn't it happen that way, are you going to bust my ass about details all day long or do you want to hear this story? – or the arresting officer would take one look at him and say Aw don't worry about this fella here he's a good old boy or Now you know whose son that is and we're not tryna make no more trouble than is absolutely necessary or Hell boy you just let us have this one this man he done us a good turn or two and I feel we're just about in position to owe him a favor back now ain't that right?, and the would've-been-defendant either so grateful he's groveling, thank you, Sheriff Lynchmob, or absolutely contemptuous and still this whole time, smirking like the guy behind the table over there right now between the lawyer that no I don't know *how* the hell he could afford that kind of representation and the two other guys in suits that answer my question right away, oh, right, somebody else footing the bill for that one, guy's not what he looks like, or he *is* what he looks like, but he's paid to look that way, you understand,

interesting existential or metaphysical question if you're into that kind of bullshit, namely how long somebody's got to play a role for a money, and with what kind of tenacity and what assumption of personal tics and habits and preferences and loves and hates and mechanical competences and so forth, before that person just becomes the thing he thought he was playing – *I* don't know, don't start asking *me*, it's what you call a rhetorical question, it's something to fill out the middle reaches of the eventual biography of somebody else, 'cause that guy right there, the one we're about to drop the charges against, your honor, he's never going to have a book written about him,

maybe dedicated to him, maybe coauthored in some late-career spasm of vanity or just the sudden pressing need for \$100,000 once his handlers turn him loose and he realizes the only skills he's ever acquired in 50 odd post-teenage years involve the commission of felonies, not uncommon at all, they get out there on the street and they're



like prisoners that way, don't know how to do a goddamn thing except what kept them off the street till now, 'cept for them, of course, well they'll be going to streets named after citrus groves and trees alien to the local geography and possibly dead presidents or possibly just the men who either made them presidents or made them dead, is there still a Dulles airport or have they renamed that one?, did Reagan take over Dulles, or was that Idlewild?, and, for that matter, which Dulles was it, the famous one or the one who mattered more, and are we meant to understand the nominal tribute as a kind of specious shadow-doubling, like here's a drink lifted to John Foster and here's the mutual unspoken understanding that the mordant ring it leaves gnawing through the varnish on the laminated tabletop is Allen's zero, the null terminator to the chain, stop codon paralyzing bandwidth of peptide-computer star until we're ready to thaw out the Poles with the exhaust from obsolete systemic weaponry still prosecuting the canceled war they were built not just to follow and to finish but to reverse-engineer from the actual circumstances of the material Earth if that war should ever actually end,

oh fuck, oh help, oh Jesus, who wants a war to *end*, not *us*, your honor, goddamn it that makes everything so much more complicated and we've really only got the room for so many profitable complications, there's the kind of complicating factor that means expense accounts and donations to reelection committees and two-year tenures at plush resorts in Switzerland as long as you're willing to refer to Ed Gein as a Reformer with Results every few weeks on the *Washington Post* op-ed page, but then

there's the bad kind of complication and, like I said, I've gotta be delicate now, how's it, periphrastic, I've got to circumlocute which, as a higher-paid employee of the state, is luckily my one certifiable skill, so here's a receipt for two nights in a motel in some dank sinking Louisiana shithole with the possums staring infrared out of the lynching trees, and here's the receipt for a rental car, and here's a photo of that car in the parking lot of a motel near the Florida keys, and here's that car returned to Louisiana and an identical car rented and driven west and here's another party of men who look almost exactly like the first three, see that?, renting the *same* model Ford and driving west along the same highway, and is any of this ringing any bells, and if it is, are they your bells in your proprietary skull or are they tolling underground among the power lines and molar cache, take care, do not disturb?)

(autopsy's dialup hemorrhage of modem star disclosing the black air where the voice moves

over the blood-spike in the salt flats, wetware star's sleep-edit in the spinal archive ringing in a long yowl of third-rail voltage slowed down to the frequency of feral cats trapped inside poured-concrete walls

and radioisotope star in peat-bog cyst of autoclave remainders up in the sundog periphery of the official station, you know the one I mean, government radio plus all the supposedly private and free numbers likewise owned by holding companies that trace back to the intelligence services and the secret police and our friends a few miles north banked on the southern shore of Modern History, where we're allowed to be, how would you say, oh can you see, just a little bit frivolous with ourselves, try out schemes that maybe we should've known couldn't and wouldn't work, like line the Premier's or President's wetsuit with some sort of skin-dissolving poison and this despite the fact that the ambassador gave him a wetsuit as a present on his *last* visit, like build me, uh, an explosive rock?, or maybe wire up a little bit of coral with a depth charge?, and then he'll go scuba diving, as we're assured he loves to do, and the security guards will loll up and down the beach hitting on the few local women who haven't been scared or actively cleared away when el presidente or whatever his official title is decided to take a dip, ay donde vas, ay queso pasó, and then a wet thump and the bloodstain spreading thickened with iridescent bandwidth of diesel fuel or clumps of plastique like his exploded fats crudescing to a surface-tension skin, the dead cellular matter flayed from the skeleton of the hydraulic-fracture star with butterfly knives probing for the incident text of flesh

but that was, I don't know, extracurricular, sort of what you do when you know you're doing nothing, an odd compact of fanaticism and utter boredom, like we can't just do *nothing* but we also can't specifically do *anything* so why not try to pay some scabby little coastal import-export firm to send in a whole shipment's worth of pre-war Edsels and Studebakers, every single one with a bomb wired to the ignition, and just hope el presidente happens to drive one of them off the lot or get into one of them or whatever, and if that means a couple dozen deaths of Cuban nationals, or a couple dozen individual *incidents* with, let's say, four to five deaths per incident, well, uh,

easy enough to say that they were politically subversive elements in this or the other sense and that their president wanted them dead and that his godless ideology

obviously permits of such open-air violence such airshaft shock of the heat rising in a great stomach-torn whoosh from the square of the charred casino-floor cement underfoot and cache of thermal remnants screeching when their print-through necropolis hits the tip of the cartridge in acetate grafts to histocompatible star or just the vinyl plating on a boundary-layer model built to test certain resistances, let's say, to demonstrate its minor and focused reaction to certain atmospheric forces

the cause and necessity of which we frankly don't feel is any of your business, though if you get us in the right mood, we might just tell you anyway, roll of microfilm with blackout negatives of beta-burn star flushed with leukocyte albedo of immune systems they disabled

a significant weight in the pocket, not totally unlike carrying around an unnecessary and unlicensed handgun, same sense of, what would you say, a personal form of eminent domain, like I'm going where I'm going and everybody just stand back, like you wouldn't believe me if I told you, shitty little extension of the interstate off some landbridge to the Keys and we'd come up onto the mainland already half-drunk in that midafternoon laze of a daylong booze rolling unevenly since breakfast and landing sour between lunch and whatever comes afterward so that you pass out in some deep brown miswired fugue with the fuses spattering in your back brain, a thick slice of badly-aligned time sour as hell at the edges, spinal geology of xenonucleic star's failed bonding to a translation-structure of artificial sugars shocked covalent,

we thought that would work, that the transfer would take, that you could just lay one across the other and flip the mains and, you know, wait there, goggles of course, labcoats if you're feeling a little bit flashy and baroque about it, a little queeny, who doesn't like to bitch from irony's gilt tarnished throne every now and again, wasn't it a Cuban who said that Catholic priesthood would be the most beautiful job in the world if not for all the Catholicism, oh good lord, that high tranvestiture of rite whose referents nobody quite believes, but they believe in the rite itself, the fact of its performance and the violent censure courted if you break off that performance or carry it out in bad faith, not "what it means" but just what happens when you set the incense burning and maybe some local variants on the theme like a shotglass of rum on the small shelf where you keep the even smaller TV a few inches below the ceiling

and wait for the signal disturbance, the great grayscale washes of sharp-edged interference like asbestos snowdrift broken up into wedges as recovered from the abdomen of an epidemic's thoroughly nameless and unexceptional victim, of nuclear-weapon star's login and transfer protocol and slow hardwired upshift through stages of structural warning with nobody left to warn, only the keys to turn at the same time and the meaningless phrases followed by the meaningless sequences of integers as determined by a pseudorandom computer algorithm somewhere in the basement of a research university in Nevada or the warren of defense-industry towns in the California desert

which, if you were getting a little giddy about it, you might well take as a surgery on meaning itself, a semiotic intervention, that the last phrase spoken before the fusing sequence will have meant only go go go and not in so many words nor necessarily in any, that the command sequence comes down along a hierarchy of multiply-vetted gibberish like current bucking the topography of circuit boards to couple with the substrate underneath and melt it all back to blackened plastic inertia, reversion to siliceous ooze or byproducts skimmed from crude oil, antigen spectra of the RF-hacking star noise-canceled normally but pouring through your small tinny receiver when the day goes dimmer than the weather warrants but not so dark as night)

(awright now, sheesh-fuck, you're a leper but who's counting, you're a freak but Barnum couldn't find you a market, a little consideration would be nice now and again, I mean

it's your operation, colonel, so you just tell us what to do and where to do it and how to get there and we'll do that there in the hour ordained, but bear in mind, add to your no doubt various and complex considerations, that we have to come up every morning through the bleary multitrack strata of the sleeping pills without which we'd be useless come morning and the champagne with which we have to wash them down because that's the only alcohol they sell at gas stations in this county and the pills just don't work as well without a little booze to ease them down your throat and the paper and plastic cups crinkling underfoot and occasionally fetching you a nice mean cut because what the hell's the point of buying dishes for an apartment or a motel room you might leave at any time unless you expect us to carry an entire set of dishes with us in

which I case I'd think you'd think of forensic evidence, probably of us leaving some significant blood or spit somewhere, know what I mean, half the reason to stay in motels and furnished rooms, they toss the place every couple days, or at least they're supposed to,

and it's funny, you'd think the mounting piles of disposable shit would mean *more* evidence, that we would've laid a pretty phenomenally wide paper trail across whole swaths of the United States, but it *was* in the United States, where accumulation is a form of anonymity and may eventually, though improbably, be pursued unto a form of celebrity, where it's most dangerous to do anything quietly and once, to fix yourself to any set of searchable specifics, but if you do the thing a million times and a million times again and throw away the whole set of implements on each recurrence, you've just guaranteed that nobody will ever find you, because everybody else sat in on all those million reenactments of the same basically sordid scene and everybody else also junked the scenery after it was over and nobody can really tell, or at least nobody really wants that badly to tell, my hair or spit from yours when it's all in the motel dumpster and we're mostly just trying to get out of here without a scene at the front desk, without a credit card turned down or somebody angrily tapping a smoke-bellied piece of paper taped to the back of the kiosk's glass wall on which we're advised that they don't take personal checks and never have, though I swear to god that wasn't there yesterday or whenever we checked in, colonel, and I'm beginning to suspect that we have a kind of reputation,

not, not of course, us specifically, but that the region is becoming known as one in which people with no names borrow such nominations as will make their payment falsely feasible and then piss off to another town just far away to repeat the magic trick, kind of a frontier-revival scene, know what I mean?, back when you could lie about who you were and what you did in 5-mile increments from St. Louis to the end of the world, and of course you still can, but the lie takes on agglutinative dimensions now, you want to build and sustain it rather than disposing of it with that kind of interstate-jaunt frequency, you want to build up a vast and imbalanced resumé of bullshit until the bullshit takes on a kind of internal momentum, doesn't so much dispel doubt as renders doubt irrelevant, like Sure, we might be getting conned, but then so were the Brookings Institution and the University of Chicago and the Department of Defense and a dozen

think tanks weapons dealers military contractors Institutes for the Study of and so forth, we're not alone in prize rube status, and that's the only distinction that matters:

come on, townie, get yourself gulled, here's a rap on the wrist and the ink it deposits and here's the garish gnarled sundown of the place just after weather, when all possible chromatic states of skyline and of biopsied lung surrender themselves as artifacts of bioweapon star's ineradicable software, the kind that outlasts any certain system and will burrow, will slip through the phospholipid membrane, implant the cytoplasm with reproducible information and with subroutines for edited mitosis,

spores of lithotrophic star cached in the hollow spinal column and waiting for the tide sweep to distribute them to all the inlets up and down the eastern coast, the one that faces away from the Gulf and toward the other Gulf, State of the Union's January 30, anticipate, how would you say, some cartographic doubling by that point, the labial Doppler sibilance of the GABA star's scanner-bed relics piled atop themselves into an inch-thick wafer of silicate dross we'll test soon enough for conductivity, resistance, use as filler in pills that don't have quite the right heft in your hand, use as dye in foods that are looking a little wan this season, a little blanched,

people desperately *don't* want to know what they're eating or breathing or drinking, and don't listen when somebody tells you that they do, people want the image of a world from which such things have been *detached*, an ecological holism of which they were vital constituents until juuuuust now, and then the ripe crack of the stalks so like the wetted dryness of a dislocated ankle under stadium lights' probing)

(gunpoint karaoke where the halides cede to scraps of backlog neon, spinal printout of the nerve-terminal star in all blizzards of sharp-edged fiberglass interference

coming through a PA bolted to some unseen wall recess and bass-numbed by the curtains and the structure of the stage, a sound less heard than picked up by transceivers in your belly and your gums, something to fill your mouth with between bursts of meaningless talk metabolically compelled by a flinch in the the light a panic in the uneasy resonance of the floorboards where a certain tremulant breed of tweeter shrilling makes the seams of the uneven planks grate and shiver and the old cracked glue between them feel like black ice thinned down to friable rime

with some cluster of trapped noble gases over driftwood exotica or, more likely, the bare concrete of a room that'll be something else in six months, fallen to disfavor with the coup or lasting out another short-term government to greet one that'll censure all of its activities up to the exact point at which it pays out a bribe quite beyond its resources for the moment and for any moment, thank you, we can't do that, I mean of course we could but then we wouldn't be making any money, we'd run this fucking place at a loss and that was never the point, so unless you want to strike a deal to send your officers through here every night or get us involved in shipping cigarettes before they pick up tax stamps or running liquor under the counter or better yet running guns to a nation always in need of them, sir, vigilant as hell regarding self-defense

and particularly from ourselves as manifest in other factions of what you're otherwise careful to emphasize is a unified populace, o strong-willed and unified, determined, fixed in its resolve and drawing mightily upon characteristic reserves of courage and daring which you'll be careful never to call "racial," because that sort of language no longer floats in the good graces of the North American corporations upon whose funding and materiel we rely a good deal more directly than on any human factor or any human being, but will often hint are so, however you can get it across, local idiom, right, a phrase you wouldn't care to translate were somebody standing over your shoulder, as somebody almost always is,

documentary crews and advisors from the mainland University calculating economic policy as an instrument of finely-measured retribution, remote-execute star's targeting software in bacterial payload of nosecones buried just beneath the frigid lunar desert where the observatory cranes over on metal supports gone contractile with the cold and audibly whining against the night's exclusion zone, nobody back here, nobody anywhere near it, we regard any and all presence within the defined perimeter as prima facie evidence of conspiracy to break and enter and that as prima facie evidence of conspiracy to steal and to sell or otherwise transmit information officially designated Secret under whatever act in the sense of whatever bullet-pointed paragraph heading

and this as you may or may not know is not actually part of the country, not in terms of jurisdiction, is international land co-administered by a special division of the national government and a board of directors on which sit whichever remaindered and superfluous vice presidents our corporate partners could spare for the project, kind of

like being appointed an ambassador, I'd imagine, go down to the sunny South and drink yourself frivolous for a year or two while conveying the junta's meek complaints back to the people with the money and the guns and, more importantly, the people behind them who regulate the flow of both,

whose business has to do with the porosity of membranes and the tendency of cytoplasm either to devour or to eliminate certain forms of cellular debris or information-storage sugars, vertebrate bootscreen of xenonucleic star logged on in sequence of inscrutable bone-fragment glyph for later oily clarification into pictographs that might as well be the Latin alphabet for all they resemble it

and can thus be made to acquire, to host, to transmit the same chemical resonance, a bit of antifreeze or banned metal, a question of certain artificial compounds swapped in slowly, bit-for-bit, across the autopsy of modem star's cell-respiration bandwidth, tracking error either reduced to ersatz zero or brought up high as it can go, till we're clipping out the signal domains and the entire transcribed night is the single shriek of the needle running across grooves it can't catch, in which case you can rewrite the whole catastrophe as xylem, as the codified process of lignification, as the exchange of a molecule-thin layer between human skin and the surrounding peat to cure bog-corpses toward their resurrection as evidence, archaeology of lithotrophic star in mainframe osteocyte bleeding through the verso glint of tape

all of which we're going to erase and reuse, so don't worry a damn bit about, you know, leaving whatever you leave, doing whatever you have to do, we're very sympathetic to your peculiar position and we understand that you're not accustomed to working under such odd constraints nor with such nearly obsolete equipment, genetic cassette downloaded from operating-system star between the bands of the old chemoreceptor radio still half-blaring from dead machinery in orbit now as fallout, the real wreckage of an imagined nuclear holocaust, wringing us to summer though we thought of winter bleaching and the glaucous anthrax granulation of the light as seen through scrim of fish-skin, chemical-weapon star the biomass equivalent of mammal proteins long ago translated into manipulable form

for use wherever, you know, they proved useful, for installation wherever they could be installed, security clearance for genetic-engineering star a question of tenure and seniority only and then a question mostly of who was sending you and why, to check



the loop gain and make sure we were still abstractly +1 each time, plus what, what's "one," who cares, who could know, I'm not a technician and I leave that kind of talk to either boffins or seditionists,

it's frankly a little bit suspicious that you're so unnaturally interested in understanding the workings of a system with which none of your professionally responsibilities are in any way concerned, and I say this as, well, not a friend, let's not get *that* insincere, but somebody concerned with the generally smoothing running of things, somebody who'd rather not see you get picked up by the plainclothes cops in unmarked cars because that would create a statistical lack in the vague area you used to occupy, an empty slot in the data tables, and we'd have to fill it, and we might also have to explain just how it came to require filling)

(not that we probably would, you know, the unexampled horror despite a thousand near-identical repetitions and the self-maintenance of the city-silence afterward, a low hum of DC offset, machinery overhearing its own operation, mainline enantiomer dross of the tape-bias star for regular response and fix the horizontal hold with bromide therapy and caulk,

a bit of quick-dry foam to keep the thing in place and some rubber cement for that unity of surface which we've learned to prize, I don't remember how or why, I don't even remember being taught or where we learned it but for god's sake we *all* know it and there's no point pretending not to so I'm going to need whatever chemicals are most easily obtained in this particular part of town in this particular cross-section of the night and we'll erase what can be erased and we'll leave the rest to settle underneath a layering of varnish thick enough that the scavengers will have a hard time digging through it with just fingernails, and anybody out here right now, other than us, of course, is going to want for tools, money to buy them with, and a friendly salesperson,

resampling subroutines of offline nuclear-weapon star to give us the gray scanner-bed corruptions of the cement soundstage city where the transient harmonics are clearly questions of congealed flesh and everything was designed with hosing-down in mind, an easy sequence of half-deletions, probably hair and dead skin enough in some of the crevices to make up an inconclusive file for the next regime's self-pardoning attempts at backward-ass scrutiny

but nothing that'll come to find us now, no real worries, who'd investigate?, who has the money and the time and the equipment and permission *and* wants to know?, we talk about being "a nation of laws" as if any law existed independently of the will to enforce it, what utter useful horseshit, and thereby excuse ourselves the effort of knowing who sits on the executive committees of any given, say, government department or state's attorney's office and how he or she got there and what he or she wants to do with the position, except for the obvious goal, to use it as leverage toward something better-paying and possibly more prestigious, though some have had done with the prestige already, the smarter and the more diligently wicked, and would rather work where only flat beige daylight can expose the odd noncommittal headline way back in the high-numbered pages with a small limp flock of acronyms trailing behind like the overfed gulls at the poisoned beach

where we left greasy paper quietly rattling in the tidechart wreckage of the GABA star's depletion or thick petrochemical strata banded into a grainy fixative rainbow at the line where the water used to meet the land, now regularly superseded, floodwalls thick with virulent microorganisms or just water-damaged paint and not a legible height-marker for a hundred miles in any direction, which is fine, which is only as consequential as the people who might complain about it, and the only people still here are those without enough money to leave, so we're cool, Q.E.D.,

clapboard tract housing for employees of the gas stations and rest stops whose employees' lives you'd really, really rather not have to consider: imagine them in uniform forever, imagine them put to sleep beneath the floor in a bomb shelter actually built before the floor was, a whole small island just off the Gulf coast dedicated to the maintenance of General Staff and oil millionaires during some particularly thorny interlude with Korea or Vietnam, one of the Joint Chiefs advocating day and night for us to nuke Berlin and the thought that, well, though cooler heads will of course prevail, the coolest available head may still insist on at least one thermonuclear device employed across a state line or two, so I'm just saying that it wouldn't be the *worst* thing in the world to have a tunnel system ready, a complex of thoroughly insulated galleries and sleeping quarters, building the hypogeum in advance of contents the better to metastasize them from the cancer of the land, oncology of DNA-computer star's necropolis in haywire cellular reproduction

where we'd been thankful till just now to reap the tumors as oil as goal as good haul of only mildly toxic fish netted by the thousand from the bay outside and I've got a friend, well, an acquaintance who has a real friend, I mean really, at the FDA who's currently funding some really top-notch research in re: the amount of mercury or pesticide it's safe for any given human to consume over a given period in a given latitude with the propensity for given genetic failures and viral epidemics per 100,000 persons as derived from various means and modes the techniques for finding which you really don't want to get into, it's boring, it's jargon-heavy, it's been plated and printed to keep you drowsy, but

wouldn't you goddamn know, mercury's fine, we've all been a little over-cautious, forgivably so, of course, have to think of the next generation and have to keep ourselves from thinking of their probable deformed spawn, have to conduct specious immunoassay of bone-analogue star leaking overexposed cache of X-ray strontium from the skeletons of cattle whom nobody seems to own, just out there limp-legged and attempting to graze on nothing much at all, collapsing in a heap and unable to get up and ripe, I'd say, for repackaging and mass-market reuse)

(helicopter tape-code thumping through the porous concrete walls, dry replay of the ferrous-oxide venography or spinal nitrocellulose in bleedthrough from the optical-track star, a pulse to checksum all dyscalculiac thrumming across elbows kneepans temples wrists carotid arteries, bodywide fucked for colorburst and vision mixer unable to pick up the raceme image bundle from blear germline of a wet-gate star

in all this arid map-loss, At the Border, Guy, if we knew where the border was, but no trustworthy cartography, no single useful sense of central government to ratify the systems of edges that tear apart in slow paleotectonic shrieking, brought down to a motor speed sufficient to reduce them to the sound of fossil clades' wrecked parturition, ossuary of the operating-system star's serial and tiered extinction,

a roar first perceived in your own bones' tinny radio, one black flicker like a hair in the gate and just stray-wild of the pictographs we're meant to be picking up here, see what I mean, osteocyte transceiver flooded with the core dump of crashed chemotherapeutic star's old hard drives cached for long-term if flimsy containment and, not impossibly, reuse in a field not very far to the north of this place, a few hours' flight

at most on the kind of plane you'd be taking if you were allowed to see the place at all, the cylinders half-buried on a plot of land we had rezoned to keep the public out, call it whatever you want, power station, military security, a probable terrorist target on a list of same which includes such estimable institutions as the water tower in Blackwell, Oklahoma and every Civic Center in every shithole exurb from one end of the landmass to the other, bitcrushed immunoassay of the antigen star printing through immunoblots' dim multitrack in slowdown crime-scene calculus the better for a sterile cleanroom reconstruction

along the lines of gematria, sacred letters swapped for sacred numbers coded in the same glyph, long airlock dormancy of the chemical-weapon star coded into that amputation-mass of stray flesh welded together by the oxides of the eye, the wrenching overtone of blood clots' sunspot radio denaturing the DNA-repair star toward some usable accumulation of algorithmic acids

in our frontal lobes and on the whiter and more worn patches of whatever cortices we're barreling across the northbound night with, you in the driver's seat because I never got my license renewed, because I never actually had a license, because I was, last time I checked, officially regarded as a missing person and hadn't yet disabused the bureaucratic organs of that particular misapprehension nor am altogether sure that I really want to; surely you understand; there are advantages to being nobody at all, and, advantageous or not, that's who I most accurately am anyway, so why risk the

long descent through the concrete and steel overpasses through a section of the city that always looks partially and unsuccessfully exhumed, pre-war cement architecture of the DNA-computer star's necropolis now sloughing tainted dirt toward some cheap and overquick assay of biomass entombed there in fake pebbledash and sea-trawl of abyssal plains' remaindered skeletons, the cell-decay shriek of the file-system star's tape-echoed cytoskeleton a sampled-and-held voltage over the top of the dry night, soon reclassified by blood's doubtful taxonomy from an Event to a Condition, just the kind of thing you have to bear with if you're going to bear much of anything at all, the long broken drone from the airfield where nobody ever seems to arrive and from which nobody's seen departing but

you know they've got to keep the wired-up firmware sequence of the nuclear-weapon star's obsolete anatomy in frail containment there, behind the massive vaults we

often forget to close or leave, let's say, strategically open, attempt to provoke some kind of incursion that would give us the pretext for a desk-thumping appearance before a senate appropriations committee and a shock report in one of the more credulous national magazines as to the shameful, sir, the *shameful* state of our emergency response systems, still run on the old power grid, still burning coal to power test-pattern readout of the nerve-terminal star, soot baked onto membranous wrappings of the spinal column and a backbrain hive swollen with signal-clipping carbon, peat-bog library for leprosarium of radioisotope star's faintly glowing mathematics in a compressed wilderness of black metals,

the which, you know, has positive propaganda value and will recall us all to one of our lapsed senses of the threat, one of the many avenues whereby we might be harmed but which we tend to forget because there are just so many – you remember the couple weeks right after the Towers went down, and everybody was telling you to stay away from whatever podunk Cotton Bowl or stockyard bleachers, was warning you that the decrepit semi-stadium where they hold the yearly review of prize beef was under eminent danger of attack by groups loosely defined as uh maybe the PLO maybe the remnants of the Afghan mujahidin and of course the phantom of Iraqi missiles thumping into dark oily water off a coast to which we'd staked our claim at least twice in living memory already, though none of it quite stuck, still attack-vector star fossilized into the biomass ore-lode of a signal-clipped petrol rainbow, still the hardened iridescent scum in strata groping toward the seawall that demarcates the beach at the end of the world, cracking open xenolith inclusions in the diesel-bleeding scree to find print-through hypogeum of the hydraulic-fracture star

and the strontium leach bubbling through a rhizofilter framebuffer whenever you turn on your dingy flip phone, scuffs all around the primitively moving parts, battery case always seems like it's about to fall right off the back of the fucking thing, I don't know about you but I'd think they could provide us with something better than *this*, and of course they can, and of course the fact that they haven't is a measure of their disdain for what you'd call our operational necessity, viral load of bootscreen star in leaky lithium-ion cell or just briny voltaic spine half-rescued from the mudstone archive heaving under ghosts of river traffic)

(all of which available if you're into "civic memory" and violently remaindered if you're resolutely not, radiosurgical star's step function coded in the bleached-out backlog text of reverse-transcriptase instructions

up in the octave of satellites in withdrawal, syringe drawing malarial blood from decommissioned machinery, pharmaceutical censorship of beta-burn star's body-strobe photography in anatomic raster you might scrape off the top layer of the scanner bed's filthy surface like a scalpel underneath a millimeter-thick skin of isinglass

much like the webbing interposed between your senses and yourself and haywire neural input sidechained for a subroutine in modem star's dim triage where the granulocyte layer of the atmosphere traps all the chemical imperatives that add up, if indeed they ever add up at all, to a gray paralytic kind of spinal-archived fear, too much too much, nothing really to panic about, only the sudden cold draining of your blood to all lower extremities and focus on the burned-out solar plexus, the dead nerve-terminal star now an accretion disc for hard-drive archaeology,

so that, though it surprises us to hear now and to think, we pretty much just stay in place, though some of course will remember the industrial films and public-service announcements and the mandatory screening in a classroom in a flimsy prefab building wobbling in the windborne sand, erosive multiplicand of the bone-analogue star's atom-for-atom restricting of your half-deleted skeleton, and roll beneath their desks, or hide in closets, or head to the basement, or maybe even go up to the rooftops, the better to greet the image of what might as well be standing in for a savior, since it occupies approximately the same function if toward very different ends, the Final, the Katharsis, the Four or Fewer Last Things

with whatever purpose you can still remember to assign them and whatever subassigned hormonal mixdown is busy sluicing toward the neuromodulator star responsible for sense of pain and danger, nociceptor drowned in glue-thick wash of withheld endorphins, sudden blackout-wide erasure of the GABA star's topography toward blank maps of the delta lately so lit up with a power grid installed there by one or another contingent of invaders across 70-odd specific invaded years during, what, call it about 40 centuries of serial invasion,

the north coast where the river cuts into the continent and then the brown grit coughing through the halogen tubes when everybody freezes and looks up, aged 30 years

in the moment, overexposed down to the nests of broken veins that ring their eyes, the burst capillaries in the alcoholics' noses, the caries in the teeth of open mouths with no more need to close since nobody's too worried anymore about hoarding what oxygen might remain, blackbox bandwidth of cell-respiration star a sudden squall of interference-shards broadcast down the whole fuselage like all the afferent traffic offset by an opiate sluice suddenly rescued from the ROM cache of the offline wetware star

and blaring hard as pure melted-fuse burnout down whatever systems we'd use to keep ourselves from immediate contact with the day we were busy constructing or only feigning to construct, electrochemical star rigorously phase-canceled wherever it should arise for reuse as a natural fund of mute passages and signal-domain clipping when the audio track overloads and nobody's in the mood to hear another few seconds' worth of incomprehensible distorted speech rising toward some register of frenzy hideously constrained by on-air elocution, postgain on pitch-amplifier star down graphite vane of the half-models we'd use to test for boundary-layer damage and the contact sheet of radiation sickness thence derived

if we were still running those tests, though, and I don't know about you, I haven't heard anything of the sort in quite a while, I hear a lot more at this point about datamining and increasingly impalpable forms of surveillance, first the camera lifted off the ground and then the camera wired up to the bellybound payload of the armed drone and then the camera built right into the intracellular recordings where the patch clamp sucks the legible voltage from any transduction-pathway jump across the membrane, dry archival lightning of peptide-computer star saved to polymerase baths drying out with institutional disuse

as long as we've got institutions to insist that we employ or don't employ any given fixture in the ceilings walls floors alcoves closed-off corridors the caution tape we don't remember anybody putting up there and the unfamiliar people who look up from the water fountains and the OUT OF ORDER bathrooms at the edges where the walls meet against the unnaturally thin aperture of those hallways

and the way they look up is well you know I don't want to say it isn't friendly because I don't know them of course I don't want to presume anything about their attitudes it's very important to remain nonjudgmental it's very important to assume until proven otherwise that everybody is trying to do his or her best by you in this best of

all possible worlds which assertion may be tautologically proven by the fact that if this world were any but the best why then somebody other than us would be in charge of its destruction so you know you like to take those little comforts where you find them and anyway I'm not a philosopher or statesman and don't think I know all that much and don't want to get involved in arguments above my pay grade and quite outside my capacity to reckon I just walk around looking for things that need to be fixed and when I understand how to fix them I volunteer to fix them and that's how the day goes and it's a useful day a day put toward a *purpose* right? which is all anybody can really ask and

the salary's not great but it's not awful either and the benefits are acceptable and the name recognition is likewise acceptably limited because the right people know to make the right kind of pure mammal noise when they hear my surname mentioned and the wrong ones scribble it down next to a self-proliferating nest of toxic arrows like the tiny fissures whining in a kneecap about to shatter like the failed bone sinter sliding ineffectual over the cracked graph of a microfracture star then wrap the whole thing up with tinfoil and burst batteries and leave it in the freezer for their nonexistent heirs to throw away)

(no time now for the Angel of Extinction, boss, who requires some manner of defined periphery, a temenos, a target locked for the remote-execute star's antigen software bleeding up through touchscreen backing of lit diodes and small pressure-sensitive pads, bandwidth of sample-velocity star kicked up into the nearly inaudible shriek of the norepinephrine frequencies, so high you perceive them as a faltering of the light, sun's circulatory system gone violently clotted or dissolving its own vascular tissue with the speed of the venograph twitch, remember that, ossuary of peptide-computer star erupting in the bone cells each once codon for some lost vestigial organ, and

we haven't felt undrugged calm in a fucking decade, boss, if even that, that's just a guess, we're only approximating so you'll have something to write down if you're keeping notes on this exchange, as you no doubt are, or rather as you no doubt aren't but have subcontracted to a hireling whose name you'll never need to know in a cross section of a blank country where the only work is work comparably farmed out to P.O. boxes with no names attached, xenotransplant cellular debris of IP star sloughed off necrotic satellite's last immunologic spasm of defense,



no, we weren't calm and couldn't fix you any coordinates, nothing to set the distance to nor any height toward which to calibrate the ideal arc given raw footage between here and there and the abortions of the wet-gate star slipping up through film chain like deleted amnion along the way, plus the concern of the payload and the guidance system, what bacteriological algorithm you might've learned to load into the maggot-swarmling logic board of the bioweapon star's more etiolate hardware, all gone white against the fact of its own usage, high albedo blinding all the blueprints until you're left with the optical *impression* of significance, know what I mean or what I can't be meaning, the shape of semiotic transfer

as across semipermeable membrane with the patch clamp set to monitor all flicker-noise exchange of the cell-editing star nonetheless come in beneath the lowest blackout wattage so

we'd sit there in the dark of long low buildings somehow now less separated from the outside than they were before, and prophylaxis reduced by nothing more than the fact of the lights going out, and we'd realize, first singly then as a group, exactly how unfamiliar we really were with the way we'd need to move in the surroundings we navigated thoughtlessly every day for however many years, call it most of a decade if it were a good assignment and we were Really Making a Difference, stay-behind shit, expense accounts right there on the ledger and written into the appropriations bill with no reflexive shame or need for subterfuge, not yet, because it was still just the first minute or second hour after official wartime and people understood, people were more than sympathetic,

people, in fact, demanded our obscurest offices and would line up at any opportunity to receive their blessings, however these should manifest in the beige and pre-aged blare of public sunlight, the ambrotype already falsely dated, radioisotope star buried in necropolis of closed-mouth carbon or just iodine astringents seething to delete whatever the vein had picked up,

a demagnetized wall of striate muscle and the hum it still transmits, no matter how hard we've been trying to scrub it down to neither, eradicate all memory of exchange, even the slight change in polarity of arterial proteins or the tinge left over in the hardened cholesterol frieze, and difficult enough, as you'd expect, and worse than difficult, damn near impossible, but that was the job or rather part of it, and

we were living, as I say, on corrupt umbilical-pulp downloads from the radiopharmaceutical star, trying to keep our hands locally steady if globally given to such violent withdrawal twitch as would redraw the atlases' notation for continental drift along a savagely canted skew line, a littoral wound bent to reclassify anything east of the moment's meridian as fair game and open territory for expansion of certain patented molecular formulae, see what I'm saying, enantiomer echo of tape-bias star expanded toward neonicotinoid orthography or just the simpler thud of a few interdental plosives come down voiced and then voiceless, and the stilling of the vocal cords between two Ds and a T that white mimesis of the way the orient winter would whiten around the coded betrayal of that name

in genetic cartridge of contagion star recoded for immunoblots' dim scrutiny on those rare days and nights when we had a specific event to inspect, something definite and delimited in the middle of a fucking war if not quite a War, legally, as per U.N. declaration or the unpassed acts of House and Senate and the bill that never actually devolved full war powers upon the sitting president, whomever precisely that should be, depends on the camera angles in the plaza down by the overpass on the southern edge of the city, depends on where we can nest the shotgun mics and how likely the radio-relay towers are to pick up preclinical-image shrapnel from the fixed decay of MRI star junked in the incinerators' core dump of biomechanical drives,

whatever was saved to the bone and the blood and the tissue mediating in between them, spinal cache of bioweapon star's early technologies of code-exchange and the voltage-gate unwired there for mass passage of stained calcium like a snake's jaw snapped off the last hinges and hanging limp while it gorges itself to death on the oily black outflow of the massive valves that lean out of a wall of artificially packed mud

down where there ought to be a river and there isn't, you remember that?, down where all the maps hypothecate a river system branching to a general and wider South that wouldn't be in our interest at all to examine, the kind of place where every crime is hyper-local and every death is the product of some incestuous 200-year blood feud that's really not the object of federal scrutiny until it involves a certain amount of stockpiled guns or Army-issue Benzedrine cooked down for adulteration and mass resale, in which case, well, we might just know a little more about it than we're willing to let on)

(like how you *ever* gonna find the guns, boss, if you *never* knew where the guns were, pure problem of logic, you see how the questions and subquestions and their tangents and points of intersection would multiply, how they'd work up to a full addendum calculus of extrapolated occasions hanging off like strings of kidney stones unrolled from belly of the worm coiled up in the same kidney, calcium-analogue star leaching through the test-site earth and up into the horns of the wobbly-kneed goats and the teeth of the spindly sheep with the fur molting off for no evident reason in silver patches that shine wrong against the daylight like remainders of a metal glint seen across a certain wide expanse of night under the yellow glare of sodium bulbs not yet swapped out for the day-balanced LEDs that are meant to keep the long-haul truckers awake by simulating bursts of daylight and do, actually, but at the expense of driving them utterly insane, circadian rhythm all inoperably fucked, as you probably could've predicted were you in the business of making predictions that would tend to impede the progress of a multibillion-dollar nationwide project and whose job is *that*, I ask you, who would want to get in the way, circuit-bent the neuromodulator's optical-code sidescrawl for the modem star to archive in masses of synaptic misfire, so

we set it up all perfectly legal at first, the way you have to, or the way you're supposed to have to if you don't want to attract unnecessary press attention, though that's pretty much an obsolete concern these days: you know who owns the biggest local paper, right, and you know who owns all the subsidiary papers in false competition with it, all running ratfuck stories on the indiscretions of each other's reporters and editors and all in the name of greater public transparency, sure, boss, keep that racket going for as long as it generates its own current and then maybe hook it up to diesel-generator life support for a few years afterward, petrochemical star's ossuary hacked into for the black crude wattage lying coiled there like extinction-clade of enormous snakes from the years when this part of the country was underwater,

though they hardly would've been "years" yet, would they, because untabulated as such, nobody's interest to propose such an artificial scission, so call it instead the extinction-layer mitosis of file-system star in telophase erupting, and

we did it at one of the exurb hotels just like you'd advise, I mean exactly as we'd heard it was done before, the Ramada Inn Reno Welcomes the Committee for American

Vigilance or whatever you like, paranoid Vietnam vets and those who'd styled themselves on paranoid Vietnam vets without the minor inconvenience of military service, a couple self-designated "reporters" from right-wing fringe websites to whom, of course, we'd given the highest level of press clearance, and there was only one level of press clearance, and it was a laminated badge that said PRESS, but we applied a gold stripe to some and a silver stripe to others and, just to see how it would be taken, black chevrons to a third meaningless variety, and we were going to take notes on how those people were treated and how they treated each other, what they made of the unclear tripartite hierarchy, but, as things transpired – an easy way to relieve anybody of the least responsibility, like we're talking about a fucking tree breathing, cell-respiration star in carbon-cycle mathematic brownout underneath the dead friable whine of lignifying cells – we didn't really have the time or resources for that, so

another study another time, I guess, and probably better for our friends at a different agency, more their line, better proportioned to their budgetary restrictions, namely none, since they actually *make* money, run a whole sub rosa galaxy of front companies and dummy corporations which are profitable concerns in themselves, selling weapons, let's say, to the same mythical "moderate rebels" whom it's their official assignment to "support," wink-wink, like maybe they were supposed to send Get Well Soon cards to the field hospitals in the Golan Heights whose addresses they weren't supposed to know, maybe preface them with bureaucratic explanations in Turkish and modern Hebrew, not, of course, that *I* would know or have any personal stake in the matter,

and the thing at the motel went fine, small conference room rented out for the weekend and a whole lot of contraband moved under legal auspices that were primarily a matter of emphatic self-assertion: it comforts some of us, I guess, to think of a society of laws and of humanity just illustrating the smoothly-oiled hydraulic function of the legal code, but get down to the level at which the local highway patrol either does or doesn't haul you in for some awkward questioning – because they know, even if they don't know exactly *who* you are, that you have to be *somebody* to try something so obvious right out in the relative open, even if "somebody" just means "crazy as all hell" – and you're talking about a few wise words around the corner of the motel's northwest edge,

an odd jut to the otherwise rectilinear building, an extended wing with a diagonal wall slanting back to the rear like it was built to serve as a windbreak, which it might well have been, for all the vicious pitting wind here, all the sand scraping the primer off the rows of thirdhand cars mostly bought at some utterly desolate knocking shop a few dozen miles up the highway in either direction and mostly to be abandoned as soon as we're done with this, whatever *this* is, however you'll write it up when it comes time to file reports: 20 cars the first day, 23 the second, then 5 the third and then just 1, along with a black horse that came out of nowhere, unsaddled and without a brand, spitting up blood and tapeworms into the garbage can with oddly studied politesse)

## set equal to the gravity of metals

(solve for

swarm of albino ants over red arid earth assembled in cross section from the archives of reconnaissance drones, compression-artifact star hoarded in the short-term glial cache before an automated erasure comes to wipe all but magnetic ghost of memory, less memory itself than the charge of once having remembered, deleted ROM of wetware star a field of voltmeter disturbance hanging over the junkyard and occasionally infesting the mass-market machinery we might still scavenge piece by piece from dead hulks of things ruled inoperable because one part of them is broken,

for which you might find all the analogies you like, get started, get moving, vast hollow resonance of motile landmass under the lowering ochre sky, failed tectonic graft of circuit-bending star in the tissue incinerator behind the banks of anonymous buildings thrown up flimsy as soundstage flats and waiting only for a wind sufficiently sharp to shake them from the loosened bolts and screws that hold them to an inch-thick sheet of plastic matting

which itself is just annealed to the friable dust by habit and little else and would blow away if anybody concentrated on it long enough to gauge its fragility, which set of circumstances isn't very likely nor was designed to be, wait here, somebody will see you eventually, you know, in time, that is to say before time is entirely over, though we can't make such definite claims vis-à-vis the suicide of history –

all history moves toward suicide; its telos is self-slaughter and was always only thus; razorblade X on the eye of the god photomachined into cytoplasm frieze on biointerface star glaring violently green under the five-decade descent of what you and I might call Venus but is around here named the Wasp, and the green wind that comes with her, the increep of the gaseous substrate under the peninsula with which DNA-computer star's long spine-saved sample voltages will couple,

chemical marriage if you have the time to name it, solve et coagula in Latinate contortion of the people who wait too long aboveground because they haven't been around here for one of these upheavals yet and will outlast *maybe* one, survive only to acquire the sense of mast-cell-shredding dread that will attend the second and final catastrophe, and this, in part, is what it means to remember anything at all, to go toward your own utter devastation with the sense of nightmare written on the cells, a sugar-spike of blackened wattage rising from adenosine star's login, phosphorylate matter creeping from the print-through necropolis of the xenonucleic star's vertebrate cassette,

long replay over the dimmed nerves so that you catch less sound than sound's shape overhead like passing shadow of great predatory birds so distended by the timescale of extinction that what ought, or "ought," to be a single piquing shriek is a roar of rending metals and breastwork moaning against the precise limit of carbon's tensile strength or strontium shaved from the bonepit where we gathered the condemned sheep and goats before setting them on fire, you wouldn't have fucking believed it, man, I was there and I still hardly believe it, sound like you've never heard before, and we had to do it more than once, so we tried gasoline, we tried diesel, we tried napalm brought home from Vietnam in enough canisters to pave the street beneath the street from here to Edgewood Arsenal or Andrews AFB or wherever they should be resting, hypogeum of bioweapon star's unused script-virus,

and then we tried flamethrowers and firebombs and the bleedthrough tape-delay of the white-phosphorus star shrieking in silent virid loops next to the eye-ghost of the thread-sun, onscreen artifact the tapeworm name of the disease, hapax contagion star slipping into glial matter of the glyph to which we hadn't yet assigned a phonic analogue,

nor would we, very likely, at the speed with which we had to leave the shore; remember hitting the ground and the alphabet underfoot simplified from termitary mass of local ideographs sprawling wet and larval, imago cell to overgrow the airframe star in bitrate sonochemistry when neoplastic masks should slough recategorized as a subsidiary cancer, the taxonomic apparatus lowering to reprint chemotherapeutic star as timetables and histograms of oncologic risk between here and the coast,

per region, per gender or sex, whichever is the more contemporary word, per previous occurrence of genetic malformations, per codec error in the cell-recording star,

per utter wreckage of the decompression algorithm choking on a foreign lump of line code or just baseband static pumping like a suddenly liquefied blood clot over the phone lines which I, for one, assumed we'd torn down already or were at least getting ready to tear down, granulocyte hemorrhage of modem star offline and saved if anywhere to ruptured scansion of immunologic firewall

where nothing lowered nothing availed nothing came to stanch or press or cauterize or even just to regulate, monitor the flow, chemoreceptor star diagrammed in night-vision green by a schematic of its permeable protein domains each for the hypodermic insertion of a radio relay out where we moved through a dark that was never quite dark enough to seem like the real night, for all the oily dross still hanging in the air, know what I mean, all the iridescent skin of shattered molecules adhering to the inner concave wall of enzymatic substrate's breath, the active site of the reprogrammed fossil-fuel star exhumed for some postmortem use as contents of a huge obsolete battery

or just the blackout principle behind the waspish lashing of the entire local power grid, what would turn on when everything else turned off, and it's almost time for the weekly test, no longer weekly but we kept the name, you know, easier than rewriting all the circulars and notices and protocol, though that would be a job, too, that will no doubt see us through some crisis of employment statistics and new metrics re: amount of useful work done

per dollar spent per moment set equal to the spending of a dollar

per bronchial complaints among the stenographic pool or server error in the hydrocracked download from router star's amino loop-send coming up through porous sidebands like the skeletons of long-fossilized fish)

(you'd want to call it "lunar," for all that doesn't and can't mean anymore, now that either of us could call up a reasonable-enough facsimile of any given quadrant of any given lunar surface as seen by any given coefficient of sunlight plus the lumens given off by the apparent degradation of the file-system star's cytoskeleton as it's farmed out for use in the fuses and the fusing sequences of weaponry to which we allegedly have no access and of which we allegedly have no knowledge, but

come on, those lines are a little bit less formal than they seem, everybody's got the handbook and a few of us have even read it, not just bored but, what would you say,



given to *ennui* in the real and full sense of the word, a feeling that seems to arise like a virus along with the advent of glass-and-steel architecture, the disease-slide star in text-file epidemiology decrypted with the way that you could build anything anywhere on any ground and given to a range of shapes which must, at the time, have seemed almost limitless, though of course we'd come up hard against the limits both implicit in the materials and explicitly zoned and bylawed when we felt like it, nothing more than that, understand the frivolity and simple bitter ending there, *when we felt like it*, bilious overdose compacted with norepinephrine flooding to wash out the short-term RAM of an exposed nerve-terminal star,

ennui not just boredom but fatigue-with-what-is very nearly to the point of insanity, a kind of suppressed full-body scream that might quite well send you to the top of the clocktower with a rifle you don't really know how to aim and a scope that doesn't fit the barrel or the brackets so you have to hold the fucking thing in place with duct tape or wood glue, or maybe, and I do mean maybe, you know exactly what you're doing and have studied, have gone to the shooting range, have stayed up at night conducting the BDSM-tinged rites of commercial masculinity on display in commercials that try to convince you to join the Marines via a computer-animated dragon and a cost to the taxpayers of no more than, oh, you really don't want or need to know and to be honest we don't trust you to put these sorts of numbers in the proper context, why, if I were to tell you the amount of money that's bent spent on a certain fighter jet which, to date, does not in fact exist, at least not in any operational form, you'd probably feel a tinge of vertigo creeping right up one of your carotid arteries – studies, at least to the extent that I'm familiar with them, indicate that it would probably be your left carotid artery, the one nearest the heart, though we can say with a certain amount of confidence that biological quiddity is always ready to surprise us and that you might even be the kind of freak more likely to feel it in, say, your wrists, either or both, or in the thump of the blood draining along your femurs, or in the lymph nodes under your arms and near the junction of your thighs with your, uh, what would the polite and correct scientific term be, I guess "pudendum," though that sounds like the kind of word a greasy old Oxbridge Latin translator would use to dirty up his euphemisms, Catullus or Propertius, right, trying to evade the ridiculous pre-war censorship laws by utilizing whatever term he finds most frequently employed in anatomic textbooks and the xerograph dross of the

scanner-bed star primitively fed back via loop-return to botched satellite uplink, since this would all predate, you see, the modern system of the sky's division into flexile grids, quite like the hypostatic skeletons of certain undersea organisms, the cartilaginous system of airlocks that allows a shark to bend the way it bends and possibly to sleep the way it does or doesn't sleep, I'm not quite sure of that, I for one have wondered if a shark really has to keep swimming in order to survive, and let me say here and now that, though I don't have adequate data thereanent and therefore am unwilling to hazard any public guess with the full weight of my considerable credentials behind it, the idea does *make sense* to me, the idea seems correct, the idea fits such criteria of syllogistic logic as presage the modern era of empirico-rationalism as such, so I'm going to scour the sterilized fields near the research complex for seeds that look like your eyes in order to install a forced software update to the DNA-repair star where the dry transfer of film to film occurs in a vitreous medium which cannot be replaced once it's been used up, though don't worry, kid, we're working there too, we'll soon have an adequate substitute ready, something petrochemical or possibly derived from natural glycogens, I don't know, you'd have to ask the chemists, and they're always at work and don't really like to answer questions anyway, dust in the cleanroom of flat rhetoric, sabe sabe, a kind of jargon-wild accumulation piled up into hazmat ziggurat like protein structure intentionally misfolded or the frameshift errors that compile the abortive germline of a peptide-computer star –

and all that's as may be, and all that's perfectly understandable in a merely human context, because you're not used to dealing with numbers over a certain size, let's say, I dunno, 500,000, the amount of debt you're likely to incur given a college education and at least one prison stay, and you can only deal with integers *as* debt, as black marks to be expunged or suffered, so I don't blame you when you say, or rather indicate by a widening of the eyes and a nearly audible uptick in the velocity of your pulse,

as brittle digital modulation for the blood-analogue star in filter-sweep through phytoremedial buffers' failure,

that 1.7 trillion sounds like a very large number indeed, but trust me, there are men out there who know how to manipulate it, where its soft spots are, how to prod it just right like the built-in synth pad just beneath the breastbone of a corpse that makes

the corpse bend upward at the waste, sorry, the waist with arms crossed like a pharaoh's mummy in a blank hospital bed)

(landline dioxin foaming granular up through the chemical-weapon star's calcium-gated bandwidth,

a dry spate of brain tissue leading back to grand-mal sample voltage hard-saved to auxiliary vertebrate fuel cell of the wetware star and branched over topography whose main and arid purpose seems to be the photographic supply of suicide coefficients,

all that dry and empty land for the sway of accident to find its footing, or rather yours, or rather yours becoming its in the divestment of whatever intent might've landed you anywhere else and otherwise than broken-necked at the bottom of an empty tributary whose features harden over the corpse in stratigraphic density, layers of cytoskeletal encryption to keep the offline DNA-computer star approximately safe and with its memory more or less intact

while the small dark shapes of strange men swarm over the tumulus in middle distance visible from any of the cities on the hill, unshining, small dim places built, it would seem, to eat the sunlight and reduce it to a certain white thickness of chemical rejections in the sewage that scums the outline of the shore with some kind of hard rubbery runoff, polyurethane tidechart condensed to the integers that will find their way singly and wholly into your bloodwork

when we come to resample jogwheel pregain from the fMRI star in what you might as well call "real time," since it takes real time to do, whatever the other kind of time might be: video surveillance archives wiped once per month if not more often, and we don't expect to see much, have begun to go a little bit crazy with the repetition of the same few silhouettes in the gray dark of the neuromodulator weather systems sweeping blankly over, genetic cassette overdubbed to GABA star's lossy acetate transfer

and falling under the beaks of the slaughtered kingfishers still to be found in fossil stratum at the bottom of the sealed plague-well if you or somebody with more money and influence were determined to excavate it, as might be the case, as is not improbably happening already, I don't know, corporal, their reasons are not our reasons and we speculate at the risk of our own coherence, always looking for fuel sources and the possibility of a weapons cache or the chance to fabricate one as post-hoc justification

for having come in here with American rifles blathering against the imaginary pall of the Soviet guns supposedly stored up in a small locked shed out by the railway terminus where the last of the deportees are hustled off the train if indeed any have lasted that long,

which I'm told is unusual: lost in transit, most of the time, jumped off the roof or the sides, were ransomed off to family members or coyotes, both kinds, the sort that drive 18-wheeler trucks and semi-defunct schoolbuses with handcuffs welded to the walls and the sort that pick bones after jogging through the sodium-lit street at midnight, if you can find much difference between them at this particular latitude, the way the corrupt orange-yellow glare of it lays flat against the dwindling immunoassay of a fossil-fuel star's bloodcount in old blacktop or the newer asphalt manufactured when we overturned the beach to look for bombs we might've planted there under the last and half-ongoing dispensation,

have to find a hiding place for all of it, you know, have to deal with equipment that can be folded up and locked down with a minimum of hassle, collapsible antennae and prefab sheds that crumple into flimsy graphics-card malfunction at the prompting of a brief historical period come to its unannounced extinction or the phonetic overload of the announcement basal-humming latent in the sky, signal-clipped star's opioid domain in a femoral thrum and glossolalia reduced to the possible morphologies of choking,

an asphyxiate emendation to the diacritic marks with which we infected an alien alphabet to render it more or less compatible with the local manner of rupturing the breath, and I say "more or less," and I say "compatible" rather than "identical," and I say partial generation loss on anatomic scans of xenonucleic star coding for graft-refusal bone,

the kind you can't spot-weld in the dark where the other inhumed species beat like temple-bound fever in the friable sides of the mineshaft, a kind of dormant pulse-code waiting to be keyed up via adenosine star's winter-blinded login, high albedo on the surface return printed black when negatives roll over to the contact sheet of city under gag order, like

turn yourself as dark as possible so the only lights will be the lights of targets, like calm down for a minute so all remnant frenzy will stick on the screen as hollowed zero

hungry for the ordnance we'll deposit, a null-terminator codon babbling to metabolize white-phosphorus star

or just to vanish in the subsequent reports, should there be any, and I'm not entirely convinced that there will be, nor should you assume that any incident of these proportions *has* to generate what we'll be calling "news"; it certainly seems so; if this were your first exposure, I wouldn't blame you for the thought, but come on, you're not a rookie anymore, if not much better trained than that one, and you ought to know by now that we were crashlanding rockets in eyeless Gaza last week to no goddamn fanfare at all, that the target screech of guidance system overgrown with biotic snarl of malware star was rewriting in violent rectilinear white quadrants a geography more given to the curve and ebb of catastrophic overcrowding, the way the slum tenements seethe against the border nowhere actually declared,

at least not quite yet, despite the fences in the east or in the west or in the south or in the north and at all subdivisions of the compass rose between, bitter inedible foliage nonetheless brewed up for some ghost of medicinal purpose, I don't know, they started a rumor that if you steeped the bulbs or petals long enough you'd get a kind of a painkiller, lethal often as not and thus indisputably effective)

(well listen, man, if you *do* just want to kill the pain, if that's the first and basic imperative – amino sequence spiraling misfolded toward the frameshift logic typed into a nerve-terminal star – then

you could do worse than a permanent and general reprieve, especially given the extended tinderbox hovel in which all this seems to be occurring, as far as we can tell from footage both onsite from fixed angles fed through CCTV cameras which it's a felony to disrupt much less to steal or to destroy entirely, they might be able to get you the death penalty for that, I mean not through anything like due process or a trial but on-the-spot summary execution which, according to the dubious and flexible rigors of something like an improvised court martial, will probably be found legal, which is to say, in compound and fractious tense, will be found to have always been and to remain in perpetuity legal, since of course we trust to the transtemporal quality of our laws, that what they recognize perdures in time and space despite their recognition thereof and whether or not they themselves can garner much recognition from the extremely

spatiotemporal authorities concerned with their legitimacy and their enforcement, see what I mean?, it's not hard to get into metaphysics here, and to be honest I'm not trying very hard to veer away from them, I know the local quality of mind, the bent that aimless conversation takes on when you're trying to come up with absolutely anything at all to distract you from the rotting-gut binomial of hunger and of hunger's bruit cause spliced, incomplete lobotomy of tape edits half-processed in the surgery of the optical-printer star, in the forecourts of the exterminating sun

because hunger is bad enough, hunger will drive almost anyone to do almost anything, but even worse – to some minds, or rather to some bones for which the minds will later find themselves obliged to make excuses – is the fact of hunger's meaningless enforcement, that you were born 20 feet to the left of the right line and with the wrong kind of surname and thus are going to remain hungry unless chosen for condescending patronage by the families of the men who occupy the ridgeline in khaki drab not quite the color of the land they're not *really* trying to blend in with,

want to stand out just a little bit, want to make the blue-black of the gunmetal pop eye-loud against the reddish dark of the local water, want the names to move liquid and unctuous across the cleanroom geometry of their unimpeded day, no ear's ohm to contend with and the dying whine of the cell-recording star a DC bias easily offset by noise gate annexed in the form of a trillion-dollar missile-defense system

which probably doesn't work, you know the deal, probably was never going to work; these grim little fistfuck deals have their metaphysics, too, and you could call it a pure rip-off, an undiluted species of mass lying, and you'd be absolutely right, but

consider the men who consider themselves something like prophets, whose actual paid work is not to say what can be done, much less to do it, but to bat around vacuous Concepts in air-conditioned rooms dedicated to that purpose, glass and exposed metal everywhere for the spurious sense of industry, you know, the lie that they're somehow closer to the workings of the world than would be all the blue polyethylene sheeting hung up around the construction sites which must follow from their babble if anything follows at all, a monitor back in the control room and a set of two-story guard towers heat-sealed between the turret and the doorway onto a small stairwell or firehouse ladder and the minimum-wage "guards" up top smoking ditch weed with the safeties off their rifles and lazily bragging about the provenance of other drugs, we had these pills

the other night at the bar, no not at the bar, you out of your mind, they'd never let us in there, they do a full body search at the door every time, not *every* time, man, I know the guy who works the door and he knows me and we've done a few little deals together so he leaves me the fuck alone when I go in but, as it happens, you're right, though right by reasoning from the wrong principles, but anyway right enough,

it wasn't the bar, it was the VIP room above the other bar where you're allowed to come in via the back staircase, you remember, rickety wooden fire escape probably built in a sneer of insincere compliance with some 1920 city ordinance after one or another Great Fire and creakily bolted to the rotting brick ever since, well

we came up that fire escape where the young tired women were getting cajoled into poses by men who consider themselves, ahem, not amateur photographers but professional photographers obliged for the moment to work somewhere else to pay the rent on apartments large and empty enough that they can withstand plausible reference as "studios," since "let's shoot this at my studio" sounds better than "come over to my apartment," doesn't it, and anyway

the guy at the back door was about, oh, 9 feet tall and didn't want to let us in at all, much less to let us skip the patdown, but then the millionaire trust-fund hippie who runs the place saw us and said, Guys, come in, come on, the show started already!, so there we were, in a firetrap of a room like a fucking elementary school cafeteria somewhere inside the hollow outer cells of a collapsing skyscraper and we had these pills, I don't remember the name of the pills, I don't remember exactly where we got them or exactly what they did, but fuck, I think we had a great time, I seem to recall that we had a better time than we're having now up in a tower idly fondling the barrels of guns we hardly know how to use and have been cautioned not to shoot unless "it's absolutely necessary," but the instructor seemed, how would you say, abstracted, less than emphatic, and I think he winked on the word "absolutely")

(solve for

contagion star asymptomatic on the positive prints,

no traffic yet in baseline trawl for yowl of fossil record moving, the slowdown axis congealed to frequency of fissile bone-analogue star as overgrown in white hard froth

across the wiring of the guidance system, through the apertures through which the warhead breathes

and filmstrip biomass of lithotrophic star canceled out for later use if any use at all, ruptured in the denominator, waiting for some blackout freak of sunspot reactivation and the aneurysm's obelisk crudescent in cerebral petrochemistry, naphtha fraction leaking down unoccupied spinal column and anterior horn biopsied for hydrocracked remainders in the file cache of the cell-recording star, one voltage potential less or more, one shock across the membrane lost and found

in the single-lobe spike off a dead battery or the sleep spindles clustering in wetware star's encephalogram, a diagnostic update we're supposed to be maintaining every week or so but, you know, who's to count, who's really to hold that up against the rumor of the opal scrim of daylight where the dirt collects under the threat of unfallen snow and the sky livid with the weather it retains as some cruel matrix of bone-memory, a reminiscent tension in the gneiss spark of the sarcomere strained, demyelinate text babbling through nerve-terminal star's corrupted readout

till we have to call for general shutdown and reload of the whole system, not that you're going to learn much you didn't know already: piezo wattage held back to blare just beneath the level of your skin, a shocked sense of immobility in the face or less-than-face of all that massive trackless emptiness, so you adopt a trackmark methodology, self-harm as cartographic principle, the viral load of bootscreen star script-transferred to skew matrices of cicatrix

and scatter-plot pollen only looking spindrift wind-cast for all the half-alert care given the in the drowse of the reuptake star slathered with clotted endorphins and the sudden upswing of adrenaline past circuit-breakers imported with the two-tone pills we swallowed dry at nominal "bedtime," though of course we couldn't sleep, hacked monitor of blood-brain star a dented touchscreen graveyard of burst algorithms,

imported there and overlaid on tesserae of glial flesh colluding, a bad transfer but what are you going to do, right, a failed xenograft but we're obligated to report success for all that it doesn't matter to anybody but our overseers and they quite as distracted as you are in adding up imagined results to their imagined satisfaction which is less a feeling or even a gravity of attention in itself than the lack of something aberrant, the no-need to recalibrate for tracking error dragging genome's cartridge across miscue log



of GABA star gone xenoglot with characters not included in the typefaces that came with the software,

operating-system star infested with the isotopic-daughter roots of pictograph across its long disuse, obsolescence now a kind of fallout gestation, ectopic pregnancy in the belt where artificial sterilizing winter was once thought to be collecting or to lay itself in photonegative preparation to collect, all that gray mass of reverse-filtered light come down only so far toward the surface of the Earth that generated it, command-tree ossuary of nuclear-weapon star's dead hardware printed granular and monochrome as artifacts of scanner bed in the walls of the dead light's catacombs,

which plague we have, if not quite dismissed, then learned to take as secondary, an unlikely outcome, a probable denial and a plausible way to do so: I don't know about you, but that's never what *I'm* told to worry about, rarely on my docket, dirty bombs and radiological dispersion devices and the fact of the temperature node rising like an exponential fever out of a certain patch of land in a certain part of the world whose name, as regards official political boundaries and belonging to a nation-state, I wouldn't tell you even if I could but, as of the moment, can't even determine, the fuck is it, "Eurasia" would be the right kind of designation – and mind, I'm not saying it's *in* Eurasia, and I'm not saying it's not; I'm just saying that's the right kind of word, specific to a certain degree without telling you a goddamn thing, vaguely geopolitical, the kind of term employed by men with *plans* and either with the means to execute them or with a convoluted amphetamine sales pitch for those possessed of the means' custody, the loop-gain shrilling of the execute-file star wired up to its own tapeworm metabolism in a less-than-careful onscreen hive of sky –

and even if that were true and exact, and let's say it is, then exactly what?, a hundred million square miles of whatever, the steppe and the long gradient of it felt less as any sense of rising land than the increased torque in your joints, cartilage airlock slowly dying of oxygen deprivation, mass braindeath of cyanotype star papering the lung with blue-stained sepia as failed litmus recurrent,

the way the display begins to eat its own output, overhear the gastric swap-out mechanism of its own operation, skimmed oil for entrail as you like, the benzene penetralia exactly mapped enough to predict the way each would diffract any given pharmaceutical quotient of rainbow, blastocoel cassette of labyrinth beneath the DNA-

computer star's huge biohazard perimeter and the steps we take to secure the steps we take to secure the access to the idea of the area, like

not today, sir, ma'am, I'm sorry, well really I'm not that sorry at all but noblesse oblige and so forth, I wouldn't offend you unnecessarily, by which axiom you should infer the opposite – not really inferable, not by strictly logical means, but I'm telling you to believe it – that *if* I offend you, it's because I had to, it's the artifact of no-choice and I was never in a choosing role myself, never elevated that high nor had that kind of aspiration, just wanted to fulfill a minor necessary function and render myself marginally preferable to exchange for another person who'd do basically the same thing in the same place over and over until either he or his function wore out,

the long graphitic phoneme yaw of tape too often played, distended slack against magnetic heads in glossary of morphologic drag available to the extinct, file-system star eroded down to spare hint of stray calcium infecting sheets of petrol-weeping shale)

(so maybe you begin – in failed solution, or titration to achieve a falsely neutral pH on the cursory readout, at least, resetting the molecular machinery to recognize as antigen the cell-editing star – with the outside:

well, what's outside, what could you sever so cleanly and hold up hardly even bleeding, just far enough from the ground that you can feel if not quite hear the spatter of the black metallic blood against a surface shared with spasms so enormous and horizon-wide that, pretty soon, your bones accustom themselves, your sense of balance is gratefully deranged, maybe some cochlear uncoiling and stop codons edited out of the xenonucleic star's illegible logography, a needle fix of morphine frieze imported to swell everything with neoplastic blanks,

cut cut cut, colorless matter filling the cracks, epoxied in place like the wreckage of a self-censoring Pompeii, and

*this*, friends, teachers, is a cultural goal, the manufacture of catastrophe which will erase all its own indices, will tell nothing of how it got that way or what it might've been before, much less, god help us, what it *means*, according to whom, in what conjunction with what, see what I'm saying or rather keep yourself from seeing what I'm not saying, all of which in progress, we're working on it, the server error reconstructs the bioweapon star as a black linear grid of probabilities lit up square by square according to

the presence of certain molecular decay complex in latex paint and the teeth of the remaining victims,

in the morgue where they disassemble the serocomplex star as far as they're able to and reprogram its sense of immune response for critical-mass autophagy, accretion diskettes devouring their own contents, spinal negatives of a white-phosphorus star in sketchy rapid printout for their easier deletion and the way the failed exposures tend to ramify in death, latency building in cached garbage, the sway and minor biome of the landfill, germline of a lag-spike star bioavailable on contact with live blood

or cut entirely from the fMRI's readout, recombinase torch spitting colorless fluid over RNA star dubbed in lossy mixdown to the acetate disc screeching mildly underneath dull needles, were you there for that, can you remember, if you were, exactly how much we determined to emanate from the recording itself and how much we presumed to be the noise of the worn stylus, the cell debris colluding in half-intentioned manufacture of designer-virus star, the unborn epidemiology in hairline squall of tape bias or just the bitrate audibly lowering in the more complex overtone statuary,

you know, human voices, to a certain degree, the harmonic decay of metals, the way the pitch-amplifier star separates into individual overloaded frequencies after it's been allowed to ring for long enough, and what the ringing means or doesn't mean, and how the clipped-out signal domain tends to recognize itself, after a while, either as error in need of immediate technological redress or as a new and stylized tissue, histologic algebra dividing, the leukocyte mathematics of the autoimmune star become carnivorous or preying on its own backlog of sleep,

all of which underground or nearly, on levels of the building close and airless and artificially soundproofed enough that you forget very easily whether you've been outside at all that day and how far you are from the surface of the Earth and just *which* surface of the Earth you might or might not be referring to, because

the whole structure of the underlying tectonic plates is honeycombed around here with loading docks and poured-concrete corridors and decompression chambers and airlocks and emergency warning systems and the autocue updates to coalmine canaries and the storage, *jesus christ*, the storage of actual gasmasks and hazmat suits and chemical showers and everything you'd expect on that literal order, right, and then the data storage, which, despite its claims to impalpability, the thrilled sense you steal from

any decaying notion of the Future in the Air Around You, radioisotope star's daughter cells climbing up the breached defenses of the blood,

does in fact require massive physical concentration, and it's nothing smooth and scaled and vectored and grateful in cheap-CGI lack of detail, the way all the walls are featureless and the sky is only a blue-screen mockup sheet of polythene flapping around the dig site before enough time has built up in the arteries of the cashiered ambition to accrue dust and white thin dirt and an oily pebbly kind of substance that, I don't know, man, I don't know if it blows in on the wind here or if we're digging it up or if maybe that's the jellied particulate texture of the local earth once it's been mixed with the sweat on our faces or the blood from the predictable number of accidents, which integer or integer-and-fraction, as long as it doesn't exceed the predicted ratio of days-without to days-with, is totally acceptable, I've been assured, is taken care of or rather was taken care of years and years ago in a boilerplate insurance policy written for a completely different project though with similar goals in mind so, you know, don't worry too much, don't concern yourself with the imponderable machinery of averages and means,

and if your own meat and bone should come to illustrate the savage reckoning of the average, if you should lend flesh to statistics, well, that's a kind of communal prayer, that's the tribal tithe we pay to a world which so often and so richly rewards our reliance on the simple process of scrubbing the noise out of the numbers until nobody can hear anything for all the hourly practice at ignoring the low-voltage whine of dying cells, a predictable and, in fact, a predicted error for which we'll correct in the final results, for which we're already correcting, pay no mind, degauss the tape before you use it and don't forget to erase it on the first of every month)

(no morning sun on either count to run run run run run from: wrench playback head reversed to speak in loosely-bound bundle of throttling amputated tongues the outermost harmonics of the fossil-fuel star distended toward the audible spectra

out with frayed shells of the dialup stop codon from the modem star, sundog damage with no central cipher nor even the null terminator screaming at autotroph edge of zero fixing carbons or scraps of nitrogen along the breached edge of the spinal column where sugar-backed login to xenonucleic star describes containment units of the blood-brain barrier elapsing against timescale of contagion,

the same year in a different agglomeration of cellular debris, the same stamp alternately referent to anatomic scans of a designer-virus star,

all of which blind and hot and unlit-glowing as phosphorus behind the blackout curtains while we're moving underground because tomorrow is an entity exactly as impalpable and speculative as the odorless colorless gas that's currently probably killing us, lung colonized by viral load of bootscreen star's benzene-ring script, squamous cells multiplying with the way the pixels shut off after however many preset seconds of inactivity and you're reprogramming the threshold higher or lower for a lesser or a great expected period of darkness in the raw breath-scrape at bottom of capacity for movement after which you're still required to move because

tomorrow's coming, not that you'd know when it got here, not that we mightn't already have missed its advent, how can anyone be sure of that, how can the bloodless wasps crawling from the cracked bioninterface star not take up constellated resonance in frozen geometry of the bloodstream, one for one for one to hit the precise kilocycle pitch at which machinery begins to feedback, circuitry to listen to itself, the quaternary folding of the wetware star to take on fractal aspect of its own deleted bandwidth

from such epochs of technology as you and I were never meant to remember because never meant to notice in the first place because excluded by all possible rudiments of station and of birth how much money we did or didn't have and where we did or didn't have it, yes there are exclusions at the top end, too, the "blessed kind," I'm told, the nearly omnipotent ignorance of the exterminating angel

who might act otherwise than he does if he had any idea what he was doing, and then might not, and then might at every moment be in full possession of all possible faculties, harvesting the agony that meets each of his movements, sucking the lymph from the parted blood and the dislocated code-chatter of IP star from wall of dysfunctional heart gone to the texture and, soon enough, molecular composition of flesh left to cure itself in a peat bog for a thousand years, might be scraping frameshift leukocyte from cell-editing star with hollow teeth designed precisely for such delicate acts of noise-gate exclusion

where the white blood hardens to gelatinous froth around the circuit-bending star and we have to cut out the old implants for their long failure to graft, 45, 50, 70 years' failure written off at first as some mere difficulty of transmission or translation,

the somatic-cell star's text hived infectious in the way the fat discolours with the coloration of the splay blood underneath it, burst capillaries and arterial density lending a sickly orange cast to the blanket of failed redshift between skin and bone,

the serocomplex star transliterate to useless vein-machinery bloodborne only toward eventual hanging gray-out when the figure-modeling software just lets go, as indeed it's not only wont but programmed to do, and decides that we've tried hard enough, that nobody but nobody will blame us for the partially visible effects of our failure, conduct vicious immunoassay of the compression-artifact star and hold the whole optical content up as specimen of sickness or even lack of human effort, not until nostalgia can take over and everybody will have learned to enjoy the rank liquescent softness and the way it rots while you watch, maybe even because you're watching, the high tamped feedback squeal of the inoperable DNA-repair star clambering useless over oxidized amino rungs and toward final interment in some harmless inaccessible layer of the spinal sheath

like meninx cracking to the lobster-clawed coroner's scissors, apply equally to scissors and to coroner as you prefer, underneath filmstrip of disease-slide star replayed at speed sufficient to make the whole loop seem an archive of gestation, blastulae cohering and hollowing themselves out for the differentiation of simple tissues, blackbox star's histology embedded tersely decimal in some lost corner of the drowned airframe

where we too have been sent out on runs coterminous with shame if not ashamed themselves, and it's funny – and it's not funny at all – how you eventually learn to infer the means and the motive from what you're told to do and how you're told to do it, you see what I'm saying, the way any sense of guilt or even fear becomes a set of commands and litigiously detailed subparagraphs in the contracts you absolutely couldn't have afforded to read before you signed them because, buddy, this is contract work and if you *read* the goddamn contract you'd probably figure out why they weren't hiring you to do it full time,

so terror or disgust or the full loathing equally compacted of both transfers much of its lost heat and metabolic weight to nuclear-weapon star's software growing more grayly obsolete by the instant, as was its intention and design: it exists only *to be too old*,

its purpose is to have been exceeded from the moment it was well enough defined to permit of excess,

the metastasis of cell-echo from the dead operating-system star a sideband we can easily mask out with a bit of applied white noise or just the natural tendency of the tape deck to hum and hum and occasionally hit the pitch of a small lubricious whinny as out of tracheae of mammals choking on oil better spent elsewhere)

(as indeed most oil would be were we in charge of the expenditure and the expensing, reconstructing the gullets of diesel-drowned seafowl like the funerary architecture of a murdered civilization to look for biomarker flash of the hydraulic-fracture star's disrupted bones shaken through the layers of sand and schist, DNA-computer star's tape-cassette necropolis or labyrinth of modeled viscera leading up to the actual monumental structure, pyramid ziggurat mastaba in variable order of complexity and lineage or just

the gored side of a mountain where we hid the body waiting for the rays through slits in broken rock to develop its anti-image on the walls, a visual fission like extinction-layer firmware of nuclear-weapon star receding into rasters and fossil strata of disused code, inexplicable pictography and the one eye along the one autopsy of lacerated optical-track star capable – maybe, and only maybe – of deciphering what it was supposed to mean

or, well, not what it was supposed to mean, I don't want to give you any false hopes or to sell myself with false impressions, I pride myself on exactly as much honesty in business as is expedient, and this would be, in terms of future earnings and future opportunities for earnings, you see, inexpedient to lie about flat-out, so *not* "what it was supposed to mean" but maybe some sense of the computer language it once dealt with, an idea of the sorts of commands it was written to encode and to offer and to receive, backbrain honeycomb of sample-and-hold star rattling out decayed in a sequence of sleep spindles too closely grouped for anything but the raw and ugly synthesis of medically-administered coma, encephalogram of radiochemical star's loop-send repeated till it takes on a system-wide murmur and you can safely write the whole thing off as an experiment in failed machine code,

which is what I'd guess this would've been, another of the overfunded and underconsidered projects for which we're so unjustly not-quite-famous; yes you get certain people in certain corridors figurative and literal who know exactly what I'm talking about, but I don't know, I guess I think we're not quite adequately appreciated for what we do best, which is to launch out on this kind of shit at the enormous expense of our peripheral subjects, the edgework of the empire much too large to know that any of its edges have begun to decay – you've doubtless heard analogy with the nervous systems of certain massive extinct reptiles, that they could injure a, what would it be, "hoof" and "claw" both seem wrong, let's say that they could injure an extremity of whatever description and not know about it for how long?, for minutes, hours, days, or long enough for the fallout belt to suture wounds together as the prelude to explanatory bone, the sinter of the nuclear cold screening bionterface star's calcium-gate channels for what artifacts they might permit to pass –

but I've never been up there, at the level where expenses are determined and decided, because of course they're making the price up as they pay it, "they" and "they" are the same people, the sentence is always reflexive though it does its damndest to dress itself up in direct objects, a pleroma of false targets for the launch we never actually need to perform, but stage it, get all the plausible technology together and gather a crowd and look for parenthetical signs of the execute-file star's contagious semiotic in the way the scanners' focus keeps getting pulled from the gantry where the fuel's supposed to be burning,

if it's fuel, and if that's really what we're seeing, real combustion or combustion to the purpose for which we're all ostensibly here: it took a long ride moving too fast across the wind-whipped flatness of a land where the storms rarely settle for more than an hour or two, where the rain lashes down violently in black glassy sheets and then disappears, cloud cover racing by overhead at a speed that would make you dizzy, so that if you drive fast enough and in the right direction – and you'll probably have to do away with all reference to paved roads and traffic laws, but if you live here or are even just passing through, that shouldn't be much of a problem – you can actually keep the same weather system alongside you for hours at a time, which, and I realize this might sound a little crazy but just listen, which comes to seem like its own sufficient purpose after a while, like you're *doing something*, like it matters or rather waits at the Three-



Stone Place in the cicatrix of the genetic-engineering star from which matter's meaning can still, we hope, emerge,

so we got cranked up to start with on whatever was around, crushing caffeine pills and prescription speed and taking bumps off the dirty edge of a stranger's credit card in a weird yellow womb-lit room above a yard where more strangers were acting as if they knew each other in the dark, all terrified, and justly so, to admit that they didn't know where they were nor whom they were brushing up against, and somebody came in with a bag of gray flakes that he claimed were cocaine and we were all kind of afraid of that guy already, walked around with a backpack full of what sounded like empty bottles and might've been something worse, so we doubted that it was really coke but we snorted it anyway to keep from offending him with our enacted disbelief, and then

got out there in a jeep with a canvas roof that kept peeling back from the windshield and wringing itself loose of the footholds on each side where the bottoms of the doors would be if there were any doors, stopping every once in a while at one of the overlit gas stations in what you'd call the "middle" of the directionless exurban metastasis if there were any shape to be the middle of, if each conceivable node weren't just the further excuse for signal-domain clipping from the cell-editing star's critical overload, until somebody raced in from the pumps to the white room where they sold everything worth buying and would yell *get the hell out here, man, it's moving, it's moving again*)

(fossil ghosts of crowflight printed on the roof of the corridor that leads to the coal elevator, lithic-cycle transfer of the file-system star's skeletal overtones,

where we would all run in a backache crouch with the blast of the dark heat behind and to both sides, meaningless timestamp algebra erupting in the rending of the blackout, obscure defiled machinery in some critical collapse, accretion disc around the dead reactor core of nucleosome star devouring its own null-terminator syntax,

our subsolar transit across the blank eyes of the dead, buffeted by enough solar wind to reprogram the macrophage star's antigen coordinates, and

radio of chemotherapeutic star the last transmission in the clatter of the thermal remnants falling, print-through necropolis of tape-code star in metastable blossom eaten by the stem as in an evolutionary rejection of some midbrain airlock secreted by

the prior and predatory lobes, EEG spike off the wetware star in denied histocompatibility and the reflex arc lighting up the strip of carnivorous cells

where you too would've been running if you'd known yourself present at all; you were there; we all remember you, or somebody who looked and acted a lot like you, or someone visually dissimilar but apt to play the same basic role, slotted in, no upset to the table of contents, radioisotope star's indices essentially the same where they cut amino-acid notches into the film chain, telecine runout miming tape delay for embryology of wet-gate star's sloughed parentheses,

there are, you'd have to admit, quite a few people who could be mistaken for you in broad-ass daylight and even more who might stand alongside you in the dark and more or less exchange the weight of the significand, bleed the semiotic charge through semipermeable membranes, telemetry or signal-transduction pathway, the dialup granulocyte downclocking the modem star toward grayscale tessellation of inert structural tissue

and no contractile nor distensive impulse left anywhere along the whole voltage channel, no calcium-gate star reprinted as script of lunar erosion on the back side of your eyelid or the walls of the buried complex, so

keep moving, keep running, if there's no room to run and no direction to move well then I guess you'd better start digging in any direction through the walls down through the floor hell why not through the bellying fall of the ceiling where it presses tighter and tighter like some uterine protocol pre-screening for agglomeration of unsafely large material fissionable serocomplex star archived in the alabaster-bleached honey of the canopic jars or just umbilical download from IP star proceeding in a clotted bandwidth of acidic pulp

and stinging our palms our soles the rectos and the versos of our tongues the receding flesh around the back teeth where they keep the small TV transmitters, which of course nobody will ever admit, no sir oh no, you'd need all kinds of paperwork on that even to begin to make your accusations and by the time you did they'd have moved the office and gone on vacation and voided their department oversight and been sold off to a third-party contractor which itself would've leased the thing out to parties fourth through  $x$ th or  $(n+1)$  so

impossible basically to get a sworn affidavit or even a hint from a friendly bureaucratic defector, who, let's say – just to make things more plausible for ourselves, to lend us the sense that this might not be entirely ridiculous as hope, as preset fixture of images, as filmstrip dross not even left on the cutting-room floor but swept back into the furnace to recycle its raw emulsion and whatever halide-crystal content will survive the optical-track star's sterilization, right,

reset cell-editing star in overload's autoclave where the clipped signal domains terminate in sheer cliffs as after noise-gate surgery,

which is precisely what they're following, exactly how they come to look this way, a caloric blast of abraded brownout wattage and then nothing save the contrails of the plate or spring reverb that lent them space enough to fill, a dental resonance like protein pulp ringing in the confines of the molar, enamel for methanogen star's clathrate cage near bursting or the old inch-thick glass with the vacuum tubes behind where leprosarium of decayed electron-gun star should hoard image-potential like the volts not yet expended in the maintenance and operation of wavery handset TVs

where the vertical hold is an object of prayer and weather more than any fix technology's inconstant crosshairs might've lent you, grasp and scramble and render up thy intentions to whichever unlikely god you imagine is looking out for you or has already decided on punishment and only needed the right metal-and-plastic platform, the semiconductor angiograph of the biomechanical star, to print out condign measures taken against the simple fact of the space you interrupt,

the sound you soak and distort, *the light you block*,

how could any deity be expected to understand and, without such understanding, how could we expect anything but disproportionately vicious reprisal, central pattern generator deleting the contagion star with neuromodulator's pulse-code weaponry

or just the fact of passing time and the way we'll all tend to corrode and flake away against that daylight, *if* it's daylight, if you're overground enough to lend the glare of it that sanction, censure to complete black-bar typography the immunocompromised star's viral load of blown-fuse text and

if you are, that probably bespeaks some manner of official standing or permission to do so and to have done so and to continue doing so from “on high,” a worthless

designation now that everything's at half-tangent diagonals, razorblade tape-edit operation on the chemotactic star's syncopic grammar,

and it will avail us none to climb, son, watch out now, there's going to be a loud buzz at your back and then there's going to be the impression – the *impression*, I say, because nobody's figured out yet whether or not it's more than that, because, for reasons you're about to understand, nobody's had the time or much of the well – of a bright red concentrated light at your back, near and sharp enough not to pick up those sundog brackets you might recognize from sodium lamps seen through the iridescent scrim of the half-rain, a petrochemical slurry latent in the circulatory throughput of the lag-spike star decoding)

(scheduled for output exactly *where*, come on come on, what temenos what target what test site, what baffling algebraic quarantine of stop codon to cache the nuclear-weapon star's bioavailable software,

understand that entire civilizations have arisen for no better reason than to find a place to put their own garbage, that the containment of the excess, the means and manners of cordoning off waste, are excuse enough for both the constructing and the utter devastation of what you'd come to call a culture,

like the tendon stretching from metacarpal base of middle finger all the way to your elbow, you know, the one you sawed through while trying to get at the artery that thumps in your wrist

or metacarpal tuning fork briefly brought into oscillatory symmetry with the fake glass in the windowpane that faces what we think must be the weapons range, for all the artificial weather we hear drumming through the ground in that direction, and it would probably be easier to say for sure – this I'm told by some of the older and crazier locals, who it's safe to assume are only more insane than us by a factor of long-term exposure, weren't really predisposed that way or, if they were, no more thus predisposed than any other assemblage of the same number of people elsewhere, and can't you hear the slow half-fluid increeping of the bone-analogue star through cells and frames of worn-out calcium –

if the window were made of actual glass, but that's been adjudged unsafe for us, improper to keep anywhere near our vicinity, why just think of the things they might do

with it, ram their heads right through – and I did actually do that once, lower my head like a bull and use it to shatter a window, so I guess I can't castigate them fully for this precise point of precaution, though I didn't really mean to do it and, strange to say, have no actual memory of the impact; I remember lowering my head and running, thinking I'd know when to lift it or would just bounce benignly off the glass; I had no idea it was fragile enough to break with my skull, or that, conversely, my skull was that strong; so I was running, and then there's a soft kind of blank with cold light crawling at the edges, "winter and elastic light," as of a cap not squarely screwed onto the lens, some unguardable periphery that always, always gets exposed no matter what care you think you're taking, phytoremedial star's negative plates in lucent upward bleedthrough turning veins of pollen-shivering stamens to loud glass –

and, having broken the windows, might then use the shards to cut their wrists or throats or to harm the attendants or as tokens of primitive barter in an intramural economy whose dictates we couldn't predict and therefore cannot trust, though we'll be happy to give the, uh, is "residents" the euphemism du jour, oh no, sorry, "clients," we'll be happy to distribute fake dollar bills among the clientele and encourage their exchange for, let's say, cigarettes or extra portions of dessert, and if we know beforehand that they'll end up paying for blowjobs, or tranquilizers, or opiate painkillers, or sleeping pills, or traded visits to the hydrotherapy room, which is to say exemption from the firehoses, or even just for facetime with the paid "relatives" kept on retainer by some of the richer clients or their families, social workers and college professors and graduate students compiling the data for their dissertations and even, yes, scanning for another euphemism now, are you still allowed to say "prostitutes"?, I just don't know, these lexical canons pass me by and I sit here just trying to keep the indoor wind from blowing all my papers away, a glary gust that kicks up out of nowhere and can't be explained by any pressure differential between the corridors when their enormous padded locking doors are opened or closed, the hardwired weather system of a bioweapon star's slow detonation over decades of spurious disarmament and safety,

well, then that's the lesson! See what I'm saying, see the magical circular logic of the market always making itself more and more available?, if you distribute Monopoly money to wards of the state and it pierces the antipsychotic fog just enough for them to start buying coercive sexual favors or portions of each other's daily medication, then

that's the thing you were supposed to learn, that's the nature of your edifying inferences piled up to some moment at which you look the market itself in the fake central node, the local spiderweb hub at which there'd be an eye if the market required eyes to see us, and say

This was the idea, right?, and the market, of course, goes on functioning, with a little help, to be sure, from those of us predisposed to its service, yes I'm not afraid to say those of us given over to a vocation, quite as strong as any Franciscan's calling to recite novenas to the songbirds or whatever, Hail Mary, full of grace, the plucked corpses of diseased infant wrens have fallen to the pavement and the smaller groundbound predators are scratching at their gummy and surprisingly thick outer skins in nervous curiosity and you can actually hear, or can at least actually think you hear, the sloshing of the small internal organs in corrupted humors and the amplifying coefficient of the hollow aerostatic bone collapse or swollen permanently open as the case may be,

like the market is, were anything there permanent except its dross, the territories redefined as bulk-storage facilities for the market's condemned and disqualified, depleted stereotactic scan of GABA star drained nightly for reuse in some more rewarding corner of the market where we see a definite and measurable response to our inputs, where, in short, we feel our contributions noticed and esteemed)

(some added caul of oily slithering disturbance between the day and the day, between the lens-bleed of the brutal bleached-out morning light that rewrites the cell-editing star carnivorous and the stiffened spinal meninges,

between the dead birds trapped in the arachnoid matter and the bursts of radio static off the blood-brain star's loop-send,

an aviary squall bitcrushed to solid blocs furred at the edges with gritty pixilate distortion, coming over like the sound of mic'd-up ice, a DI box jacked straight into the side of a melting glacier for recording to the filmstrip tissues of your dirtied cyanotype throat, brownout standby flicker of DNA-computer star offline and running failed immunologic subroutines on first direct exposure to what we'll all pretend to think is the daylight,

though that name's too old or newer than it should be, depending on the locus of your reckoning, the way you orient a surgery of decimals among the  $x+1$  coordinates given each as dialogue-box fever in the targeting software of the bioweapon star, some numerical infestation wrung from the latent and abstracted value of local systems of glyph driven extinct, pictograph's radical a quarantine for algebra still swarming with contagion star and eventual delousing by the rigid vector and raster of a monitor set up for horizontal and vertical display only,

no diagonals save slant line faked by moving the lit pixel over a column on each reiteration and not, not certainly, any curves, though we'll occasionally set up a geodesic simulation, straight surfaces altered by some tiny angle over and over until they look enough like a circle for you to stop thinking about the absence of the baseband sine in wetware star's REM edits,

the offset voltage from the cracked glycogen battery now running down veins in backs of arms and legs where the anthrax sun can't yet establish neuromodulator primacy, though trust me, it's working, it'll get there, it has its methods of infiltration and its comprador technologies like any good State must, a military and an economy predicated on permanent and omnidirectional expansion, a massive slate of weaponry that may not even work and a still more massive slate of funding for the next set of dubiously operable weapons

when we came down among the gray slips where the wind was like a sequence of fissures asleep in the glassy air, a matrix of gestating fractures born in chain-reaction series long enough to crack the whole lateral surface of world as you peered into it with the water whipped out of your eyes and freezing on the folds beneath and beside them, skin-orography the function mapped by dry polymerase lightning hard-saved to peptide-computer star's unstable RAM,

looking for whatever was still liquid, anything that could move or be moved with violent rending, any throughput of fluidic-computer star not yet severed and dissected for gel-component resale, each unit a plugin to the aberrations of the spine in lag-spike star's slow dissolution or just rackmount hardware bleating for a fix it can't explain and still can't indicate to any other device, caution lights on, OVERLOAD meter shrieking a permanent red meniscus, clipped signal domain of the file-system star an abortive surgery before the download's even finished and we have manipulable architecture

underneath the glass and dented plastic that lies underneath our fingers where we've left precedent stains of salt and grease,

venography of cell-debris star's incomplete coherence and the drive for it fragmented and gathering the broken bones from any stand of stiff marsh reeds or wire-draped tumulus of poppies and etiolate barley at the corner of the burial plot, radioisotope star the map to the necropolis as world's river systems shift around it or as it travels up in arterial counterflow, against the outward keening or the inward shrapnel-mending of the heart, reprogrammed IP star in graft of undifferentiated cellular matter spawning to lye honeycomb of screen burn

like the tree-maps of the acids left on the bottom of the dry wash and all the defused alkaloid-chain star present as slick corruptible ghost then, ready for incorporation into mass-produced molecules, waiting on the opened airlock in the enantiomer's reflection, the breath-glitch of the world between the world and its own image,

immunocompromised cell-respiration star an error-message overgrowth of carbon damage climbing the blank film and of the tape code all reduced to mainline hum in zero's false nullity, the sound of the machine overhearing the machine, macrophage star's feedback slowly haywire and attacking the white blood as though invaded by its own evolutionary ghost,

the hard target lock on the benzene-ring star where we moved as close to the walls as we could to avoid that bitter cutting wind, the kind that seemed to hit once and, in the hitting, to redefine the possible topographies of vulnerable meat, then to soak right through the bone, denature stem cell toward some unviable sequence of wet-gate star's abortifacient blastocoel, a seam smoothed over with a silken colorless chemical it would've killed you to drink and, after many years' exposure, did in fact kill the technicians to have touched and breathed so often,

so what you're seeing, when you watch all this restored footage, isn't and was never only the supposed content of the film, whatever we aimed the cameras at, whatever pulled their focus while we meant to aim them at something else, compression-artifact star blooming like the autotroph bacteria in technical errata of the transfer from celluloid to tape and then from tape to 1s and 0s, though that's all in there too, and if you had the right kind of botched lexicon, the proper glossary of tampering



and phagocyte star's brittle overdosed failure, you could reconstruct all that, along with supply lines and the diplomatic relationships they necessitate, wars per year and their probable distribution over certain specified landmasses which we needn't name for the moment because, number one, we're polite, and anyway, number two, there are only so many contiguous tumors of the Earth large enough to be referred to as "landmasses," so number three, we'll get to all of them eventually, we will not stint in our attention, we'll hold the valve of the dead heart open and pump in any late-model and lightly tested substitute for blood,)

("discovered" – we will be, in this one instance and because international liabilities may intrude, not to say "invented" – as minor bioindustrial grace of researches into the chemical-weapon star,

the evidence of which we're now scraping from certain breeds of synthetic paint wherever they still stick to the sides of the few remaining buildings in a valley of broken stone slabs, fallen roof-slates, unwritten tombstones befitting the mass anonymity of deaths whose exact sufferers will probably never be named, because there's a goddamn war on, after all, or rather there's a goddamn international policing action and an official stance struck with all possible theatrical overemphasis by any number of technically non-governmental bodies, each after a protracted vote complete with grandstanding speeches 90% on the nominal same side, which technically have no power to enforce any of the things they do and so are technically not *doing* anything, are not even making decisions, are just browsing among preselected options on a dropdown menu whose contents might quite as well have been inferred from biometric data handed in before you're allowed even to witness the speeches, much less the vote, much less to participate in either, looks like you've got something going on in or at a certain chromosomal pair which I won't mention and all I'm saying is be careful, consult a specialist if you ever decide to reproduce and, if reproduction finds you unaware before you've decided anything at all, I mean *really* consult a specialist, hightail it the fuck down to the grim version of a doctor you can afford in a building that looks like it's also used to process people not technically found guilty of any crime but already held in prison for months at their pretrial bail hearings, because it is also used for that, that's the, I think, the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, you'd have to check at the front desk to be sure although I wouldn't actually

recommend showing up there behind the Passion Play crowd of medieval syphilitics and amputees and old men crying foul because they secretly invented television in 1931 or because they lost fingers and toes in wars that never legally occurred, and if the efficient cause of the loss, to get Aristotelian about it, was actually frostbite, for which the efficient cause in turn was homelessness, for which the efficient cause was mental illness undiagnosed and probably undiagnosable in that a phrase like “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder” is primarily employed to make its utterers feel powerful, is very nearly what you call a holophrastic entity, like yelling *Car!* to mean *There’s a car running a red light and you’re trying to cross the street*, it’s intended to accomplish a certain nonspecific something, to manifest and to make good upon a certain set of principles which we can’t articulate and wouldn’t if we could for all the spooked unsympathetic magic of our refusal to say them, because

“PTSD” is a description of symptoms, is a cluster of things happening regrouped under another name that feints at an approximation of their cause, but in the strictest medical terms, it doesn’t actually *mean* anything, like “new daily persistent headache” or even “depression,” for which the bad magic of cheap serotonin physics has been the reigning sugar pill so long that we’ve forgotten its descriptive medical value, to wit, nil, that it works sometimes and doesn’t work other times and in fact quite often has an effect exactly opposite to the one intended and some people get better and some people get worse and some people just stay where they were in whatever shelter the animal fact of their not-quite-dead bodies was able to cadge out of the soft side of the world where half its ribcage has gone missing and some maybe the most maybe the biggest group feel briefly better and then decline back unto a status which it would be pure mean-spirited sarcasm to call “steady” or “baseline” so of course that’s exactly what medicine calls it

because medicine, no mistake, resents you for needing it, carries with it a certain lordly and condescending hauteur, only deigns to act when it acts at all, is a series of contemptuous gestures which only put right the wronged body as a means of both explaining and demonstrating its contempt,

you *would* need your ragged bones popped back into place, peasant, you *would* need some extra wash to mute the adrenergic function on the nerve-terminal star’s multitrack printout with the faders ossified in place and the reuptake coefficient of the calcium-gate star hypertrophied into a sign neither number nor alphabetic script but

some radiological half-life glyph that can be wrung for mathematical value and place upon or underneath the tongue for its phonetic proteins and reincorporated back into the amputee set of signs from which it so obviously comes, the mass of histologic-software star whose purpose is so baffling after a thousand generations of forced ignorance and professional disdain

among the class of priests and doctors, who have only subdivided into different classes very, very recently, let that not be forgotten, who were perhaps specialized versions of the same ideal practitioner until a hundred goddamn years ago when you and I came jolting into the dead town between the dry hills where it was always ambrotype sundown, a negative-plate stain impossible to burn off the disabled reuptake star, and the springs between the wheels and body of the half-wrecked buggy made the only sound that anything was making anywhere save for the interrupted attentions of the groundbound birds, mostly crows and corvids, as far as we could tell at that distance, at least, too glossy and too iridescent, fed on some scrap-meat flushed with crude oil before it just expired in the middle of a street whose other occupants, if anybody occupied it at all, were much too rushed along failed stratagems for escape to stop and cover the faceless corpse or even roll it into the shadows and the sewage underneath the elevated wooden sidewalk whining as it took a hundred years to wring itself free of its bolts and screws and nails)