

11/5 Out of the corner of your eye, you see it whiz past, silently, on the other side of the café window: a truck with Divine Moving Co. emblazoned on its side – the words augmented graphically by the nearly touching hands of Adam and the Almighty borrowed from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Which gets you to laugh, whence pops up a line you read recently regarding the credit debacle, out of the mouth of some investment banker, to wit: *We're in the moving business, not storage.*

Some folks imagine they must fix the universe. Gød grant that urge lets go of you too.

The *Times* photo shows a young, business-suited woman, identified as Heekynug Kim. She leans against the esplanade railing in front of the Avery, a Trump City building where she recently bought a two-bedroom condo for \$1.5 million. You learn from the story that Ms. Kim is an investment banker recently moved to New York. Mom and dad helped her financially, motivated in part by “views that rival their views of the Han river from their apartment in Seoul.”

The headline, really a punchline: “Foreign Buyers Take Manhattan.”

Author's copies of *Chimurenga* arrive in the mail. Issue 11: “Conversations with Poets Who Refuse to Speak.” Your fable is sandwiched between a piece on Guantánamo by a Capetown-based scholar, Neelika Jayawardane, and a collection of letters from Jack Henry Abbott to Norman Mailer, wherein you find that Abbott frequently wrote in second person.

*As life in the hole, in the pure terrain of time, continues, your passions are aroused less*

*and less with the help of memories and more and more by your ideals. Love, Hate, Equality, Justice, Freedom, War, Peace, Beauty, Truth – they all become Idols, pure and empty abstract gods that demand your fealty, your undying obedience. Little Hitlers come from every precious feeling, every innocent notion you ever entertained, every thought about yourself, your people, the world – all become so many idols, oblivious to each other that stridently dictate to you in the prison hole. You cannot fill them up with your days, your years, for they are empty too. But you try – god how you try.*

*The wasteland that is your memory now comes under the absolute dictatorship of idols too terrible to envision.*

–

*Don't go near yourself.*

Afternoon revolving doors. Mobs in the lobbies, restaurants and bars, and elevator banks of the midtown Hilton. All upside their awareness.

*You're breaking up.... Or words to that effect.*

*Solitary confinement, says Abbott, can alter the ontological makeup of a stone.*

11/6 Imagine your world to be a spacious, commodious place.

Ralph Ellison said it:

*Despite the bland assertions of sociologists, high visibility actually rendered one UN-VISIBLE. Despite the fact the last word is written caps, you first read it as IN-*

*VIOLABLE*. Wish-fulfillment. Springs up everywhere in the garden, like weeds.

The 11/2 *Jerusalem Post* reports an *Al-Jazeera* account of two US jets, supported by Israeli fighters, delivering a single tactical nuke to a supposed Syrian atomic facility early last September. You search for the story on *Al-Jazeera's* English-language website, but can't find it.

Whatever the nationality of the pilots, someone apparently dropped something on the site, whatever it was or wasn't, prompting the Israeli prime minister, "A-hood" Olmert to mouth a Byzantine non-apology in the direction of the Turk, for violating – or perhaps not – his airspace.

Meanwhile, out there cruising through Perseus in late October, the comet known as 17P/Holmes increases its magnitude some half-millionfold in a couple of hours, becoming the third-brightest "star" in the constellation. At the same time, it extends its coma of icy, dusty "hair" to seven times the diameter of Jupiter, roughly seventy percent of our sun's diameter. This sudden hirsuteness caused, supposedly, by the sun's heat causing the comet to sublimate: turn part of its material directly from solid to gas without passing through liquid. Exuberant, high one could even say, Holmes loop-de-loops once before continuing its course away from the sun, to which it came closest on May 4. See what kind of weather this brings...

*Don't tase me, bro!*

When the Emperor stands naked, one can easily observed the shrunken state of

his equipment.

Something like the dollar.

And Lady Mondegreen.

*...Yet, if you enter the woods  
Of a summer evening late,  
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools  
Where the otter whistles his mate.  
(They fear not men in the woods,  
Because they see so few)  
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,  
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,  
Steadily cantering through  
The misty solitudes,  
As though they perfectly knew  
The old lost road through the woods...  
But there is no road through the woods.*

You say Sikorsky and I say Sarkosy – let's call the whole thing...

Last Friday, the 11th, you began sending bite-sized installments of this narrative out via email. Many a good words comes flying back. Among the most sustaining, those of a beauteous Canadian who makes her wish for “more dépêches,

please," imperative via a pair of exclamation marks.

Technically, legally, a surf board is a form of water board, pero no es lo mismo. And Mickey Mukasey, long-time court Jew, Giuliani intimate and all-round serviceable villain, is set to ride the pipeline all the way through Congress to become the first Orthodox fascist US AG. Hang ten is just a precedent. But then, no bumper is endless.

The Theremin that played itself, without benefit of Nero. While light sweet crude traded \$3 shy of an even hundred.

*No eyebrows raised*

*No looks amazed*

*No backward glance of sorrow*

*But a nervous sigh,*

*and the stifled cry*

*Of a just-foreclosed tomorrow.*

Over the subway station loudspeakers, the primal mantra booms:

*This is a message from the New York City Police Department: Please keep your longings with you at all times...*

The patient stirs. Anesthesia wearing off? Some nascent will to consciousness?

Who's that standing next to Citi and Merrill as they watch the fast-moving

current sweep their CDO's over the edge of Victoria falls? Why Morgan Stanley, I presume.

And there goes the dollar too, into the surging mists. Cleavage of the Goddess. Don't look down.

11/7 Extraordinary. The Georgian riot police are deployed wearing masks that make them look like grotesque personifications of a blank-eyed Mickey Mouse if he folded his round ears beneath the dome of a black, visored helmet.



David Mdzinarishvili/Reuters [11/7 NYT online]

Above your neck hovers the metaphor: a virtual sword of Dramocles.

Straight to hell! Dispense with all possible handbags.

Lost you'd be, without your old factory sense.

*Is there for honest sovereignty*

*That lifts her head, an' a that?*

*The Dow's off near fair hundred points –*

*We dare be rich for a' that!*

It's a jungle out there, G.M.

“Remarks by Cheng Siwei, vice chairman of the National People’s Congress in China – a colossal dollar investor by virtue of its \$1.43 trillion in currency reserves, most of which are presumed to be denominated in dollars – helped drive the dollar lower.

“‘In terms of the structure of our foreign exchange reserves, we should take advantage of the appreciation of strong currencies to offset the depreciation of weak currencies,’ Mr. Cheng said....

“It is probably an exaggeration, many analysts think, to say that the dollar is losing its status as the world’s leading currency, or that central banks like the one in China will actively dump dollars.”

This sage-sounding, virtuosic ass-covering language from the *Times*, reporting on the new \$1.47 euro and its English cousin, the \$2.10 pound.

“I’m not yet ready to say that the sky is falling,” said Win Thin, senior currency strategist at Brown Brothers Harriman in New York.

The sky, no, not likely. But can a currency topple off its pedestal like a statue in La Place Vendôme, or Baghdad’s Firdos Square?

And to celebrate his assumption of the Citigroup throne, Rob Rubin will throw his garter to Hillary to fix upon her lance for the joust. But which one of the two can be said to rule over the other, and who is vassal in such a tangled chain of obligations?

Political life takes on the sensation of a fairy tale gone wrong. The narrative has a disembodied quality, as if the objects before the mirror, captured by reflection, have lost primary existence and in doing so, turned twice-real. The world soul labors under an enchantment, perhaps of its own devise.

Dreadful, creepy and nauseating beyond belief: the suspicion that Giuliani was dubbed President-apparent on September 11, 2001 when WTC 7 came down. A made man. Which would render all subsequent posturings regarding Bush's succession mere stagecraft, nothing more. Unless, that is, the Bushies have really exceeded their reach. Which would be hard to gauge since for a number of years their actions seemed at once delusory and omnipotent, instruments of a genuinely malevolent god. But destructive as they still are, horrifyingly so, their trajectory seems blunted somehow. It's clear they planned and deeply desired to work their dark magic on Iran, yet so far, no go. If so, it's possible that, regardless of any promises made to Rudy, he could come down like a house of cards.

By closing bell, Dow's traveled three hundred and sixty points: full circle in degrees of separation.

11/8 Two things you trust, and they're both senses: your smell and your nausea. The latter possessed you from below last night when you read of Pat Robertson's



endorsement of Giuliani, which coincided – though separated by a two columns of *Times* copy – with a report on Bernard B. Kerik’s impending Federal indictment. Clear the path before the strike. The yin-yang, true and false of it: a hideous form of Ba Gua.

And it was at the hour of WTC7’s fall, close to 5:20 on the 11th was it not? that Pat declared the carnage an act of God which no earthly power could have deflected, nor deterred.

By closing bell, Dow’s traveled three hundred and sixty points: full circle in degrees of separation.

11/8 Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division. All just basic arithmetic.

Which human Animals, endowed to with the capacities for smell and nausea, innately understand:

*He blesses the boys as they stand in line*

*The smell of gun grease and the bayonets they shine*

*He’s there to help them all that he can*

*To make them feel wanted he’s a good holy man*

*Sky pilot...*

*How high can you fly?*

*You’ll never*

*Never*

*Never*

*Reach the sky...*

Nor will Hillary achieve figureheadedness, though iconographically, her torso could well suit the prow of a sailing ship. But the Presidency is, oddly, too sacred in its profaned way. For, au fond, the Senator remains a woman, and therefore, in the eyes of the kingmakers, trayf. But then, perhaps, her installment might prove a necessary evil. No system so corrupt, nor compromised, that it won't expend its last ounce of energy on survival, and – shudder! – adapt if it must, to eke life out an instant longer.

Page one: Sarko slavering over Mme. Laura's hand – quelle spectacle! – as W looks on in, what? – discomfiture? Sarko-Jockamo, like Danny Kaye in demonic form: a pretender, the court jester assuming the role of king in a deadly earnest play.

*Chimurenga*, a Shona word for “struggle,” wherein whose pages your fable:

***Late***

*I was late and by the time I got to the market square everyone had been herded off to the trains and the trains were leaving – I could tell by the fading whistles and the ochre sky. I felt a pang of something – I'm not sure what – and unburdened myself to the guard. He looked down from under his great helmet and took my jaw in his rough hand. The oddest feeling, wanting to turn and run and also to stay with his holding touch forever.*

*“Little one,” he said, “it's not such a bad thing to be late. I am here because I missed my call-up many years ago. No one from my regiment was heard from again. Besides, there is always another call-up. Some day you will be right on time.”*

*I could say nothing until his hand released me, I could do nothing but feel my tongue fill my mouth, feel how deep in my skull it was planted. What would I say when it came time to speak?*

Investigating the circumstances of an unspeakable crime, one of the characters in Tom's novel *Dark City*, a homicide detective named Brooks, asks Maurice, an ex-Panther turned urban sage: "So who jacked her, man?"

"It was done," says Maurice, "not done by, you understand."

Epigraph of an epoch. Epitaph too. You understand?

Beneath his deli's brand new awning, Kyung has installed a huge electronic sign, its strobing red and green display so visually overwhelming that it can't be read close up, but is most legible – when not obscured by traffic – from across the Eighth Avenue.

Kyung himself speaks five languages, but the sign's sweeping, hopping, rippling letters advertise a special "Korian" wrap, as one of their lunch offerings. Take out the "i" and you get, well... let's call the whole thing off.

Gee seven. G-hate.

"I came in late – 8:30 am. I'm on the basement – the basement has six levels of basement; B1 to B6. On the B1 level were all of the support companies that dealt with the World Trade Center – mine was ABM (American Building Maintenance). That company had the structural, painting, and mechanical contracts.

I was talking to a supervisor at 8:46 am and all of a sudden we hear a very loud “BOOM!”

An explosion so hard that it pushed us upwards! Upwards. And it came from the basement between the B2 level, and the B3 level. At that moment I thought it was the mechanical room where they have all the pumps and the generators for the building – that I thought maybe a generator had just blown up on the basement. Now 20 years in the building – you know the difference between something that comes from the bottom and something that comes from the top.

At that moment everyone started screaming – the explosion was so hard that the walls cracked – the ceiling fell on top of us. The sprinkler system got activated. When I was about to say out loud “*it was the generator*” we hear “BOOM” – the impact of the plane on the top of the building.”

Later, after rescuing scores of people, many of them gravely injured, William Rodríguez, master janitor of the WTC, and holder of the passepartout for many a recondite lock, fled the towers.

“I turned around and looked back. I saw the bodies of the people that jumped out of the building. I saw, like they melted on the floor because of the impact.”

“We’re an empire now,” said Karl Rove *kan ya makan*, “and when we act, we create our own reality.”

Still, \$9 trillion is a lot of money, even for an empire to owe.

Or not so much relative to Citigroup’s \$35 trillion investment in derivatives like

credit cards and corporate loans. Which in turn is modest compared to JP Morgan Chase's \$80 trillion exposure. But not to worry, Chase holds \$1.46 trillion in the kitty.

Soften the eyes. Anything can happen.