

11/13 Something you've known for fifty-something years, but now you own it: your first name's John. Buried at birth this John. Now, if only in silence, he's the slow yet shorter out-breath: *John*. Before the inhale: *Eric*. Before the exhale: *Darton*.

John. Say it right and you hear the sound a chain makes, falling. Or a pair of deep pitched zils. Got a chime to it.

He had a long chain on

He had a long chain on

He had a long chain on...

This John Eric Darton aka Darktown, was he a friend to the poor? Who traveled with a gun in every hand?

I didn't know his name

I didn't know his name

I didn't know his name

They did him just the same...

Was never known to hurt an honest man?

Whereas in faraway Madrid, on the platform of the Legazpi subway station, a young fascist kills a young leftist with a knife to the heart. The proximal cause, disagreement over immigration policy.

Says Alfredo Parada, the city's official community justice spokesman:

"Madrid is an open and integrated region where there is no room for racist, xenophobic or extremist expressions."

No room, yet somehow, open. That's a trick alright. By which, legerdemain, the elephant descended via the roof. Or coalesced out of the ground.

Contra-diction. And look, crossing the street, a pair of ducks. And trailing behind them: pair of bulls.

One *noia* standing next to another being one to many.

The rhetoric of carnage.

The electronic plunk of a drop in your laptop's email bucket: an invitation to the Friends of the High Line holiday cocktail party. At only \$75, it'll be a real proletarian throwdown. Still, a cheap night out considering it's one thousandth the cost of a low-rent table at a Hillary fundraiser.

Thatswhatshesaid.

Blue-silver Hudson. One of those rare moments when you catch sight of the ferry crossing the bay. A barge moving way down there too. Half a parenthetical moon hangs over Richmond. A cleaner arc you've ever seen.

11/14 “While dictators rage and statesmen talk, all Europe dances – to The Lambeth Walk.” So ran a *Times* headline in October 1938, referring to the dance craze based on the signature tune from the London musical *Me and My Girl*, starring the late, great Lupino Lane who first recited the intro:

*Lambeth – you’ve never seen,
The skies ain’t blue, the grass ain’t green.
It hasn’t got the Mayfair touch,
But that don’t matter very much.
We play the Lambeth way,
Not like you but a bit more gay
And when we have a bit of fun...
Oh, Boy.*

Then sang the tune:

*Any time you’re Lambeth way,
Any evening, any day,
You’ll find us all
Doin’ the Lambeth Walk. Oy!*

*Every little Lambeth gal,
With her little Lambeth pal,
You’ll find ‘em all
Doin’ the Lambeth Walk. Oy!*

*Everything free and easy,
Do as you darn well pleasy,
Why don't you make your way there
Go there, stay there.*

*Once you get down Lambeth way
Ev'ry ev'ning, ev'ry day,
You'll find yourself
Doin' the Lambeth Walk. Oy!*



Photo Bill Brandt

But *pace*, Lupino, *pace* you blokes wot wrote the book and music – *pace* also upon the people of that poor but honest Lunnon burra souf’ o’ th’ Thames. But if any of ‘ems as was livin’ ‘ere in Darktown today, they might change the words a bit, to wit:

New York like you’ve never seen.

The blood ain’t blue,

The money ain’t green.

It ‘asn’t got the Bloomie touch

But that don’t matter very much

We play a different way

With the rich folks gone away...

Oh, boy!

Every squealin’ lit’le pig

Thought that ‘e ‘ad made it big,

You’ll find ‘em all

Doin’ the Dead Cat Bounce

See that former millionaire

Leap out into open air

‘e’s on ‘is own

Doin’ the Dead Cat Bounce...

Everyone acting needy

Once they was posh and greedy

No way to stop them bleedin'

Bulls from stampedin'

If you go down Wall Street way

Any evening, any day

You'll find 'em all

Doin' the Dead Cat

– Ba-da-pa-num-dum –

Doin' the Dead Cat Bounce... Oy!

Whoever designed those labyrinths was just amazing.

Will the cropcircle be unbroken?

In Brooklyn it takes twenty police bullets to bring down Khiel Coppin, eighteen years old, raving and waving a...

"It is hard to justify shooting someone with a comb," said an PD official to the *Times*. "And you find yourself in a position of defending the actions. Unfortunately, policing takes on the demeanor that you have to be right 100 percent of the time – and that is an impossible standard for anyone to meet.

"There will be a lot of controversy over this. It was a tragic accident, a tragic mistake. And, unfortunately, you cannot take back the bullets."

Send CondoleeZZas to the family.

Another man done gone.

The mind is a monkey
On your back.

At the café, Dylan says he saw comet 17P/Holmes through his binoculars last night.

“Damn,” you say, thinking tonight you’ll have a look yourself. “Where was it at?”

“Right over Chelsea Papaya.”

And somewhere in the neighborhood of Perseus.

*The world is so filled with a number of things,
I’m sure we should all be as happy as kings.*

Out of the mists, fragments of a song your father sang you when you were quite young:

Hay Sing come from Hong Kong...

...I likee Ilish girl, she likee me...

...’long come a Melican... steal Ilish girl from a poor Chinee...

One reason these bits stuck so durably was the beautiful sound of the word “Melican” – like pelican – and the weird idea, to a young mind that had no idea what a “poor Chinee” was, of “a porch-high knee.” Clearly there existed some standard height

of porches – to measure the height of knees thereby.

Disorientalism. *C'est ton métier.*

The ship, as if, the fan.

The Welt of Nations by Addum Snit. To whose publication the market reacts Malthusianistically. *Die Welt?* Sure, but who is this *Ann Schauung?*

And then there's *Die Weltseele*, a born performer, alternately barking for fish and spinning a ball on its nose.

Hertzen, meet Schmertzen!

At a summit conference in Chile, Hugo, el Presidente de Venezuela, refers to Spain's former prime minister – who, in 2002, supported the coup against Chávez – as a “fascist.” Whereupon King Juan Carlos barks at Chávez to “shut up” – literally *¿Por que no te callas?*

“The King lost it,” Chávez declares and insists upon an apology. “He should say, ‘I, the king, confess, I was beside myself, I made a mistake.’” And, to put some weight behind his demand Chávez adds: “Whatever has been privatized can be taken back.”

Now what's poor “socialist” Rodríguez Zapatero, the Spanish PM, to do? After “500 years of arrogance” – Chávez's phrase – Spain may have to stop building castles in Venezuela.

For the moment, eu-row and we swim. But in the current-sea, anyone – even divine presences – can drown.



Mr. Thain will take over a post at Merrill Lynch vacated by E. Stanley O'Neal who was ousted a few weeks ago. Photo: Eric Thayer/Reuters

This picture in the *Times*, beneath the headline “NYSE Chief is Chosen to Head Merrill Lynch.” Now tell me, oh best beloveds, is this the visage of an earthling?

Anomie as you're not she and he not we and them be untogether...

It's the direction of Life we're going in. We are livin 2 die which mean we go forward just 2 go backward

So why live going forward if we just go backward...

These were the words on one of the four pieces of paper the police say they found in Kheil Coppin's pockets.

Some folks believe that the kosmik ducks have aligned – in particular Mercury, Venus and Mars – and there may be a planet in formation out of 17P/Holmes, engaged bigtime with Jupiter. Ah, but at what point does *engagé* become *impilqué*? Still, much magnetic action, torsion going on, a powerful lot of it. And should the planets gain a sibling, well, then certain things would make a different kind of sense.

Venus on the halfshell reborn newborn? Whole earth witnessed? Divine comety? Some amity? Cal-amity? ¿Por qué no?

Au Le G. at the next table over sits a jumpy young woman. She's not quite eating what's before her and not quite reading a yellow book called *Models for Mental Disorder*. For an instant you think perhaps the title refers to an advocacy group, but then in this day and age it would have to read *Super Models*. When she gets up to leave you see her toting, schlepping really, an immense, shapeless gold-colored shoulderbag. Plus, she's walking out into 60+° weather wearing the sort of fur hat you associate with Nureyev, or Lara in Dr. Zhivago. *That book*, you barely resist asking, *is it a how-to manual?*

Too overcast to get a glimpse of the vast comet this evening. Patience, Watson. Holmes isn't going away any time soon.

Check the James McCanney website. On certain subjects, he's mad as a hatter, but as with others similarly endowed, there's a germ of sanity in the mix that shouldn't be chucked with the bathwater and one recent sense-impression rings true:

"...Also tonight when i was outside i felt what i have come to call the 'electrical winds.'"

"...The 'electrical winds' are steady and harsh and feel different from the variable winds we are used to... [they're] foreboding and unkind..."

And this just after you read that tropical storm Noel has transitioned into a hurricane is heading up the outer banks.

Big mamajama earthquake, epicenter 37 miles beneath the surface of northern Chile's copper country. 7.7 Richter. Sends ripples beneath the feet in Bolivia and Peru. Land surf's up. Hang ten. Some injuries. Two deaths reported so far.

Another clash of financial tectonics causes HSBC to draw an X through \$3.4 bil whilst Br'er Bear (Stearns) whites out \$1.2 followed by nine round 'uns. But thanks to Mams Naturaleza flexing her muscles down south, copper spikes north – up 2.6% at closing. Dawn of a new metal age?

noagelikuntuthisun

Koom lah rayati yafati, ulehi lah

Arise my beloved, my beauty, come away!

– Song of Songs 2:10

O to live in recipro-city.

11/15 Yet you wake up in Profit Town and scan the paper to find that “It [a building] not only dared, but delighted in, the infringement of every servile principle.” Only the *Times* could blithely invoke Ruskin’s paean to the Gothic impulse in kvelling over another luxury high rise. This one’s seventy-five stories, developed by Hines, and designed by Jean Nouvel to nestle against the broad flank of Tanaguchi’s MoMA.

As though the design – a weird glassed-over web of fractured-looking trusses, rather like Jean Nouvelle channeling Bruno Taut – announced the arrival of the missing great cathedral, the finally-dawning We-Symbol so long denied this self-traumatizing city. And the headline: “Next to MoMA, a Tower Will Reach for the Stars.” Whose rhetoric is that, Sulzberger’s or Disney’s? Finally, it dawns on you: the *Times* is what passes for news when Utopia goes rotten on the shelf.

Time has come today.

There are things to realize.

All bodies electric.

Everyone seems exhilarated by the morning’s downpour.

Another winner from gray lady’s lead-line factory: “U.S. is Looking Past Musharraf in Case He Falls.”

Falls or is pushed.

“And how exactly like an egg he is!” she said aloud, standing with her hands ready to catch him, for she was every moment expecting him to fall.

“It’s *very* provoking,” Humpty Dumpty said after a long silence, looking away from Alice as he spoke, “to be called an egg – *very*!”

“I said you *looked* like an egg, Sir,” Alice gently explained. “And some eggs are very pretty, you know,” she added hoping to turn her remark into some sort of compliment.

“Some people,” said Humpty Dumpty, looking away from her as usual, “have no more sense than a baby!”

Wrote Dodgson.

There are Führers who invariably burrow into bunkers. But eventually, the Führers get de-bunkered.

There was a wicked messenger

From Eli he did come,

With a mind that multiplied

The smallest matter...

Sang Zimmerman.

Your voices go quiet.

*Those who've colluded with an Emperor deluded
Have often found themselves denuded.*

Weltschmerz. On a cloudy day.

*Oh, the leaves began to fallin'
And the seas began to part,
And the people that confronted him were many.
And he was told but these few words,
Which opened up his heart,
"If ye cannot bring good news, then don't bring any."
Sang Zimmerman.*

In 2005, the last year for which figures are available, U.S. veterans killed themselves at a rate twice that of the general population: an average of seventeen per day, for a total of 6,256. When the threshold was narrowed to ex-military aged between twenty and twenty-four, the rate spiked to four times the non-veteran average.

Astronomers at the University of Hawaii measure 17P/Holmes and conclude it is now, at a diameter of 1.4 million kilometers, larger than the sun, and that it's growing at a steady 1,100 mph.

A thousand fishermen missing, three hundred boats sunk as Cyclone Sidr, with windspeeds up to 155 mph, crosses the Bay of Bengal and makes landfall in the Sundarbans mangrove forests of Bangladesh.

11/16 The 4 closures of the apocalypse. No, five closures. No, more. Fourteen and counting – foreclosures that cannot go forward because the presumptive lender, in this case Deutsche Bank, had not provided proof that they actually owned the properties in question. So held Christopher A. Boyko, Judge of the Federal District Court in Cleveland, t’other day.

To the *Times*, O. Max Gardner III, a North Carolina lawyer representing foreclosed-upon borrowers said, “The big issue in all these cases, whether we are dealing with a bankruptcy court, a state court or a federal court, is who really owns the mortgage note, and that is allegedly what they securitized. A collateral question is, has that mortgage note really been transferred and assigned to the securitization trust? If not, then they really don’t have standing. It’s Law School 101.”

The *Times*, er, *Messenger*, goes on to say that “when a loan goes into a securitization, the mortgage note is not sent to the trust. Instead it shows up as a data transfer with the physical note being kept at a separate document repository company. Such practices keep the process fast and cheap.” Fast and cheap. Securitization. Trust. What can one say in the face of these bold words?

Ultimately, and beyond any juridical interpretation, the conundrum lies in untangling the product from the packaging. The difficulty arises when you take a home loan and transform it, via some black alchemy, it into a security and then sell that to diverse other parties as a gas. Hard to return a thing from its once-profitable Chaos to a

prior state where, once upon a time, it was based on something solid. No liquidity possible. Just evaporation.

It's going to get more interesting too, now that loads of folks are defaulting on the mortgages that, in sum, got packaged \$6.5 trillionworth of "securitized" debt. And it's all begun in Ohio: zero on the ends, high in the middle.

Eight for the eight that stood at the gate.

Hey, look out, they're gonna try to Wachovia.

"Of all the buildings in Chelsea," reads the generically printed, gaily colored, techno-realist, yet crudely customized poster hung up in your lobby, "there's one that shines a bit brighter. And you're living there."

Uh, oh. Verizon's fiber co-opt'd us. Too bad. Things were so much friendlier in the dark. And one could see so clearly.

By Jove – it's Holmes!