

12/23 Once upon a time, the large, beige brick-fronted building facing 23rd Street between Eighth and Ninth was surrounded by lower structures that were torn down to make way for Penn South. You've never learned why The Cornish Arms – this emblazoned across the marquee – survived the clearance. Yet for some reason it did – the only non-church building in the six square block renewal zone left standing. With its neighbors gone, the lower back floors were left exposed and the expedient path lay in finishing this swath of unfinished brick with a thin coat of cement. Which, on a rainy day like today, absorbs water unevenly, lending the surface the look of a great screen of Desert Storm camo with a grid of windows punched in. Very strange.

And then you remember how, twelve years or so ago, when the hotel was converted to a condo, all the old folks living there got chucked out. Not a pretty scene.

Murder charge, though the killing was borderline self-defense. Nonetheless, in Suffolk County, LI, a jury convicts a black man named White so they can all get home in time to unwrap their presents.

Olive, the other reindeer...

Yesterday, snowblind again across wide reaches of Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa. In Oklahoma the wind came whistling down the plain at sustained speeds of thirty five miles per hour, and gusts of much greater velocity. An enormous game of off-fairground bumpercar played out on the

public highways. Hundreds of GPS systems telling drivers exactly which road they blew off.

As of this typing, on the banks of the Erie, the Giants and Bills are spinning footballs inside a Lake Effect wind tunnel set for a consistent thirty MPH.

*I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all –*

*O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?*

Shock und Awe. Sturm 'n' Drang. Embrace, as R.L. Stevenson did, the suck.

What did the previous inhabitant of your mother's womb inscribe on its walls? Four verticals with a diagonal slash through, for however long she or he recorded, to count the days? A message of defiance? *Up the workers! ¡Fuera Yanqui! Freiheit!* Or would you find paintings there – of horses, bison, wolves, mammoths? Charcoal line. Relief-carved. Or polychromed. Perhaps an image on the limestone, as in Font de Gaume: two reindeer, confronted, one licking the head

of the other.

Whatever your miscarried brother or sister – the one who came before, yet was not present, outside in the daylight to receive you – whatever records she or he might have left upon your common habitation, where are those traces now? And did Bea's grief and hope also live within that space? What currents informed the waters of your primal swim? And if you yourself left evidence behind, who would ever know? You were the last to leave that ship.

12/24 At minimum twenty dead, including at least one in a fifty car pile-up on Route 40 in Texas. Scores and scores injured. Hundreds of thousands without power, and the *Messenger*, busy celebrating a \$6 billion Singaporean "capital injection" into the withered gluteus of Merrill Lynch and the fact that anarchist pranksters are "shop-dropping" teeshirts imprinted with the wise men visages of Marx, Bakunin and El Ché into Target stores, cannot mobilize itself to cover a vast trauma that's seizing up the heartland. They deep-clix the story under "News from AP & Reuters" in near microscopic type. Yet it's front page news on the BBC website. Hmmm. And, go figure, the Grand Rapids, MI airport – named for better or worse after Gerald Ford – loses electrical power for fourteen hours.

'S a real StorMedusa – not only the lone star state, but Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa and Oklahoma, Michigan, Wyoming, Indiana, Minnesota – where three people die in three hundred plus road accidents – not to mention Idaho and Montana – in short the whole fucking promised land embraced by a multi-headed vertical, spiroform suck – a Tesla-dacious romp of cellular fury and amazing proportions. And then, there's Canada.

Manichean depression. Manic oppressive. Improvised implosive devices.
And the new geometry: How many triads can you fit inside a pentagon? And a
pentagon, if you look at it right, has seventeen sides.

Tenéis un secreto: Engage everything. Have nothing. Hold less.

Blockade-running at the level of qi.

Respire. Conspire. Spiritus sancti.

If it's many-headed, call Perseus. Which is the celestial barrio wherein
Holmes is hanging now.



At the egg's lower left shines Mirfak, aka Alpha Persei aka Alganib – tip of the wing of the Flying Horse.

Grand slam. Holmes run. Ava-tar, baby. A millenniumsworth of tales to tell. Start anywhere.

Me gusta la cometa,

Me gustas tú.

Me gusta el espacio,

Me gustas tú.

Me gusta la tierra,

Me gustas tú.

¿Que voy a hacer?

Je ne sais pas.

¿Que voy a hacer?

Je ne sais plus.

¿Que voy a hacer?

Je suis perdu.

¿Que horas son, mi corazon?

Il est deux heures à Tokyo,

Il est cinq heures au Mali,

Mediodia en Darktown, EEUU.

Quelle heure est-il au paradis?

Me gusta la historia

Me gustas tú.

Me gustan las palabras

Me gustas tú.

Me gusta el misterio

Me gustas tú...

Con muchas gracias a Manu Chao. Me gusta el viento tambien.

Here comes the remix.

Hay que bailar de nuevo. Venga, venga a bailar.

12/25 From the East they came, those Magi. Who were naturally wise enough to expect something in return for their gifts. Thus did the finances of the subsidiary known as the United States – once renowned for its automobiles and skyscrapers, but now more for its moving images and deadly yet vulnerable helicopters – become an evermore Dubai-ous proposition. Do buy us. Pleeeeze. Por favor. We'll sing(apore) for our supper. And pity for the widows and orphans.

OK, so what's your X-mas strategy?

Black water,

Let stand

Becomes clear.

Any word or sign can be a shibboleth.

Gilled by association.

Gilt by dissociation.

Gulled by missociation.

Grilled to a turn.

Think globally, act loca

And the sun, the sun seems a blank. Not a spot to be seen.

12/26 A navy blue van drives past as you bike along 25th. The driver's looking for a parking space, hence the van slowly oscillates from one side of the street to the other, as he imagines a possible accommodation in every hopeful-looking gap. Yellow letters on the side: NEW DRAGON TOY CO.

Exofuckin' real.

In the context of nothing.

Extrudel.

Marx tells Bakunin?

Hawk glides low outside bedroom window.

12/27 And now a word from our technical difficulties.

Weird and roiling days: the stomach and your clouds.

Forty acres or a mule.

Names have been changed to protect the

Dates have been changed to

Places have

Assassins!

In Rawalpindi.

Thieves in the temple.

Mules in the airports.

Ivanka! A rallying cry of the parvenu class that roughly translates: *Forward!* Or

Onward to Bloomie's! Though it's not known whether this refers to Bloomberg's palace, or the flowering dale.

And what are the dogs whispering (about those who let them in and out)?

Keep to your book, counsels Franz K.

What would Frantz F. advise?

Est-ce que ce monde est sérieux?

Si, si hombre.

Me gusta la muerte,

Me gustas tú.

Me gusta la lluvia,

Me gustas tú.

Me gusta el sol,

Me gustas tú.

La corrida.

It's an outside chance that in just over a month, on January 30, a Tunguska-class asteroid about fifty meters wide will strike Mars. The day before, an asteroid with

eight times this diameter will fly-by earthgasm. At closest approach this body, officially called 2007 TU24, will pass us at 1.4 lunar distances, or, mas o menos 540,000 kilometers. Using even a modest telescope, and looking from an area not entirely saturated with ambient light, this puppy should glow like a tenth magnitude star as it whips through Cassiopeia.

O Ethiopian queen, your name means “she whose words excel.” Why then did you not attempt use them, but rather offered your daughter as a sacrifice? No, we don’t mean that old canard about Poseidon’s jealousy of your beauty and the flood and the sea monster – we want the real story. Come, and no mincing of those excellent words. We want them fresh and raw. Alive alive-O.

And what part did Cepheus play in this? Why is his name so like Cetus?

But a question that you probably can’t answer is this: what really signifies? That which we’ve told ourselves signifies, or that which actually bears weight and form and mass? And can we tell the difference between one and the other, or will this coming world be one of rare surprises? Tiger or paper tiger? If tiger, than teeth? Talon’d or declawed? The only way to know is to look inside its mouth. And shake hands.

Put a dragon in your tank.

Fuck levers. Give me a bomb big enough and I can move the world. Starting with Pakistan, and ending where?



John Moore/Getty Images

Old is the new now.

The *Messenger* offers its New Year's resolutions, Among them: "Simplify Your Beauty." Right. Cut off that nose. Despite, or because of its face.

Nothing to sphere, but sphere itself.

Another woman done gone.

Another woman done gone.

They sick the dogs on her

They sick the dogs on her

They sick the dogs on her

Torn limb from limb

Another woman done gone.

Though not literally limb from limb. By many accounts, a remarkably unmarked body, considering the carnage all around her.

An intense enough event on earth, on the order of Chicxulub, for example, and even the quartz would be shocked.

But what event would trigger that criticality? Still, the *Messenger* turns its face to the wall and murmurs:

“The gloomy news overshadowed a small uptick in consumer confidence. Anxiety over the attack in Pakistan that killed Ms. Bhutto and at least a dozen others may have led investors into more conservative corners of the market...

“‘We’ve always understood how volatile and dangerous that place is,’ said Larry Goldstein, a director at the Energy Policy Research Foundation. ‘This confirms what we already know.’

“‘...There’s no direct relationship between crude oil and what happens in Pakistan,’ said Tom Bentz, senior energy analyst at BNP Paribas. ‘But any political unrest, and the fact that they do own nuclear weapons, certainly raises tensions a little bit.’

“‘The markets have become kind of jaded,’ said Brian Gendreau, an investment strategist at ING Investment Management.

“‘How many traders know where she fits into the political spectrum in Pakistan, and how many would be able to digest what the risk would be for that area of

the world?' he said. 'I don't think very many.'

"The major European markets appeared to shrug off the news, with a benchmark London index ending the day in positive territory. French and German markets also retained their gains."

And the carnival moves on.