

12/28 Al-Qaeda: Investment banking carried on by other means.

Between explosions, you ride and walkabout. Ad over the subway entrance: "All new competition series!" on BRAVO. A dozen or so gorgeously "diverse" catwalk strutters fronted by a blonde goddess:

*Make Me a Supermodel.*

And the tagline: *Everybody poses a threat.*

Ad poster on the side of a curbside Verizon phone kiosk. The image, a cityscape, waterside skyline, part Buck Rogers, tall shiny buildings overawed by a fantastical needle-spined tower, at the foot of which spreads a horizontal structure, maybe an old dockside warehouse, esthetically restored. Grainy, weirdly unbalanced colors like a past and future movie still blown up past sustainability of focus.

*Welcome to Shanghai China.*

*Better City. Better Life.*

*May-Oct. 2010. EXPO.*

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Pause at 31st Street and Seventh and lean on your bike seat to watch the illuminated Fidelity Investments ticker roll by. Exxon and ATT up. AIG down. Boeing's off too. Citigroup's downward arrow colored the same shade red as its umbrella. Caterpillar's in the green, tho. GM and Home Depot, what to say? Take away the chart and hang the sign at the foot of the patient's bed as in hospital days of old: *No more to be done.*

JP Morgan Chase, 3M ↓. Merck's lost its perk. Mickey D., arrow up.

"It's ten to twelve," a middle aged woman in a knit hat yells at her presumably deaf and diminutive mom, who wears a bright red coat, very stylish, and grayish beige support hose. They stand waiting at the corner as the traffic pours by. On their way to a service at St. Anthony's down the block. But first, "You wanna eat something, ma?"

The old lady nods. Light changes. Gently but with intention, "C'mon!" Takes mom's arm. With a kind of tally-ho gesture, the ancient one raises her cane and there they go, forward, folded into the eight million.

There it is, just like Floyd said it would be, just south of the spanking new, not so *piano*, Renzo Piano *Times* building at 40th and Eighth. Global poshification has missed this whole block – it's chockfull of marginal shops: jewelry, a deli, men's wear. The widest canopy says: *2 Suits for \$125*. But what you came to see isn't the signage, it's the building's sole remaining visible cast iron column, fluted at the bottom supported by a stone base. It peeks out at you, this relic of overdubbed New York as from behind a curtain. Somehow it didn't get façaded over in the multiple ground-floor makeovers of the shabby, dignified brick structure it helps hold up. Lower your gaze to where a passing dog might pee and you'll see, cast into the metal in small, elegantly-spaced sans-serif caps:

BLAKE & DUFFY

IRON WORKS

517 WEST 25 ST. N.Y.

And lo, perfect timing, for even as you ink the dot after the final Y, somewhere

above, secreted in the pressed metal cornice of this venerable building, a rock dove lets loose and *Sper-lat!* there falls upon your bike's lock and chain guard a vernacular Pollack brushload that somehow misses the twin targets of your open book and bike seat. Whew. Check your shoulders. Double whew. No napkins in your pocket to wipe it off with so you bike home a bit bow-legged, right foot half off the pedal. Coast down Ninth from 34th. No stress, gravity all the way.

That's it, that's the year end baptism. Now on, on to the krazie '08s!

Note to self while cleaning off bike. Tomorrow a.m., or some time soon, cruise by 517 West 25th where Blake & Duffy wuz, and see what's being forged there now.

*Enlil blew an evil storm; silence lay upon the city...*

*Ningirsu wasted Sumer like milk poured to the dogs.*

Nippur on Tigris and Euphrates. A hundred and some miles south of Baghdad. Dead center in what we now call Iraq.

Sez Enlil: *I knew you when you were just a little Nippur. So do what I say Ur else?*

Sez U: *Yeah, Ur else, what?!*

Just how viable are your ancestors?

12/29 Note to self: Write your history of the energies and convergences, of the powers and principalities, of the Devil's Tail, of Indigo Gate, where in certain uncertain

seasons it is possible only to go in circles. Which, seen from even one millimeter to the side reveal themselves as spirals.

*Confusion of the heart starts with the eyes.*

So begins Ba Gua Zhang method number 28.

Growing Holmes. Growing Holmes. I am growing Holmes.

Flashfires across the veldt and outback. Heat like there's no tomorrow.

Marshmallow time in Australia and South Africa. S'mores.

Truth or falsehood who can say? But some aver that her body had no shrapnel tears, nor entry nor exit bullet wounds. Still, if you could have, you'd have said, "Benazir, where three roads come together, watch out. It may not be a plaza yo, but it's a bum Dealy for sure."

Autopsy-turvy. "The Kennedys of Pakistan": an even truer sobriquet than previously thought.

Some folks may have been Mos' sad. But not surprised to hear the news.

Assemble my away team!

*Don't boast about strong conquering weak.*

*That weak can conquer strong is the skillful way.*

Says method 27.

Surprise surprise, there is, today, no 517 West 25th Street. Numbers 521-531 comprise a converted industrial building, housing more galleries than you can shake a laundered greenback at. Except for some mismatched patches of brick, it seems elegantly repurposed, with arch-linteled bays, and a double-barrel vaulted entranceway. Atop, brick faux-machicolations serve for a cornice. Number 511, just to the east is less descript. Early 20th century by the look of it, white-gray painted brickwork with utterly generic detailing. Lots of spikes on the window sills to discourage perching rock doves. It too is a decent-sized ghetto of galleries unto itself. This building abuts the High Line, though, so its value is loftier no doubt than the topless towers of Ilium. But whatever the numbers above the doorway say, these lots once numbered 509 to 519. So just over here, to the left of the present entrance is where 517 stood.

How dig to deep? With New York you can excavate all you like, but there's no Ur thar. On the round, goggle-like caps of the redpainted standpipe valves by the doorway of 521, some wag has magic marked in black: YO YO.

Very little street traffic for a Saturday. If anyone's talking as they pass by, it ain't English. Lotsa posh clothes: glossy bronze "hiking" boots, silk bag with gold dragons swimming in red, very swingy hair that moves as if it's an integral organism. Basta.

Funny how, for all the mornings you've ridden west, the sun at your back down 25th, you never noticed the abundance of nests in the trees lining the street. Perhaps a dozen in all, always one per tree, never more, and usually cantilevered over the asphalt rather than the sidewalk. K. pointed these out to you, as she did the oak close to your corner, with its full complement of brown coppery leaves still attached, whereas all the trees around stand bare. Does this mean it's dead? Pull at a leaf you can reach. Curled. Dry. A bit of resistance before it snaps off the twig. Not much surface to catch wind or rain, so there they remain, except for the one you plucked.

What built and lives or lived in those nests? They appear to be ad-hoc affairs, patched together from leaves and held together with what? Have to watch for goings and comings. The nests appear abandoned, but that could be the point.

There's a squirrel. And a hole in a tree. Whether the squirrel lives in there or not, at least something on this awful day makes sense.

Twenty-five feet across the slapping waters from the posh new pier at 26th Street, the Frying Pan's barge is moored, and upon it, the Erie Lackawanna caboose. Hawsered to the barge, the fireboat itself. Apart from some modifications to the roofdeck, the whole complex looks "the same," as though suspended in a cryogenic slumber.

The fence at the head of the trestle that's supposed to serve as an entrance looks permanent. Still it's no big deal. One vault and you're over. No longer on solid ground, not even landfill.

A black chopper with gold racing stripes takes off from the heliport too close to the north. Here's a red one coming in. If you had only one ground-to-air missile, which one would you take out? Or might it be possible, with enough skill, and a good angle, to shoot one and use it to bring down the other?

Up much higher to the south, arcs of cirrus, spray textured like multiple fireboat jets. *Long Time*, the Paul Ramírez Jonas water wheel at the end of northward pier turns slowly. River's flowing upstream. Do nothing. Let Tao sort it out. Or not. Off the Frying Pan. Back into the fire.

At the café p.m. you unlayer to find you've left home without your belt.

The family is a mechanism for generating heartbreak.

Fortunately, though they're not wide for your height, your hips and a certain amount of static resistance hold your pants up. Friction and fog.

Last of the 36 tactics: *Run*.

What's that smell? Roast goose of self.

A push toward Hillary from a hidden hand. A boom in one place, in another, bust. One woman down, another up. Pour sentiment into another mold. Lost wax. Across the universe, on every rag and screen, a gazillion pics of Benazir's pale and "striking" face, (as the *Messenger* termed it) dark hair covered with white cloth. And twinning this death-in-lifemask, right alongside, in the next column or cutaway, shot after shot of wailing, weeping, shrieking, often bloodied brown men. Helpless. Clothes

in tatters. They are all Obama. This hit constitutes, among so many other things, an attempt at assassination in the mass mind. He is weak. She was strong. We must resurrect the Mother. Oh don't ask why. For if we do not, I tell you, I tell you, I tell you we must die. Oh moon of Alabama...

*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?*

*The body of the dragon concentrates energy in its sinuous curves, and coils and uncoils to move along more quickly. It is a symbol with all the potential with which form can be charged, a potential that never ceases to be actualized. The dragon now lurks in watery depths, now streaks aloft to the highest heavens, and its very gait is a continuous undulation. It presents an image of energy constantly recharged through oscillation from one pole to the other.*

Says François Julien.

Burning within so many souls, a searchlight of aggrievement. It sweeps



the breadth of the waters, to the farthest distance its intensity can sustain. Should the beam reflect off of an object, it will fix upon it, try to scorch the thing, cause it to burst into flame.

The beacon's power emanates from a well of unbearable heat, a cauldron of white, molten rage which only cools momentarily when the searchlight finds a target and discharges some of its energy. When the object of the projecting beam explodes and is extinguished, the rage-filled soul feels, for an instant, some approximation of what we call peace. But almost immediately, the furnace flares anew. Again the searchlight swings. Object upon object falls before its implacable gaze, until the rage that fuels the searing ray burns itself out, as all things must. Even the sun and every other star.

Where did it come from, this rage? What hand or will ignited its annihilating heat? How long it will endure? Who's to say? Perhaps turned on itself, the searchlight would discover its true nature, its origins, its primal core. But that might be dangerous, no? The heat might prove too great and consume the self. Leaving darkness to witness the miracle of its infinite no.

12/30 Dragon breath. White, scaly sky. Not white really. Fractured, sick grays in hues neither rosy nor blue. A glacier run out of breath.

The front page of the *Messenger's* "News of the Week in Review" section shows Benazir, back in '89, extreme close up, cheeks flawless, creamy as a milkmaid's, jet hair exploding from beneath her white scarf, lips parted, pearlescent teeth, ineffably gapped. Behind her, just slightly smaller in scale and

infinitesimally less sharp in focus, the visage of George H.W. Bush. Supreme desiccation. The mummy, unwrapped and come not so much as back to life as animate in death.

There she stands, slim overtones of Ms. America, but more boldly Aphrodite, Athena and Artemis, merged into one and manifesting in her political aspect. What is it you see through those big, wide, eye-magnifying glasses, Benazir? And what, what is going on in this picture? What is whispering, shouting, shrieking to get into the frame? Or claw its way out of it? Or abolish it?

George H.W. Bush = Death.

George W. Bush = Son of Death.

Simple algebra. No accounting.

Death from above. Death from above. The scorchers of the earth. The strafers, the layers on of flaming, profitable jelly. No Daedalus these. No masters of flight for the sake of sweet divinity. I knew Daedalus and you're not him. Who needs murderous Aliens when you've created your own assassins, nurtured them at your own breast? Enemies of the sea. Depth chargers. Sonic reducers. Whale confusers. Cod is dead!

And all because the earth possesses a womb, that hateful thing you'll kill and kill to avoid going back into.

So much liquid, lost in the great blotter of the desert will nonetheless rain down.

Look into the Georges' eyes and you'll see the same spark of nothing. The burning bush, a pyromaniac. Sons that cannot hold a candle. They wax. Live long enough, you'll see them Wayne. Set badly in the west. *Her situation should have secured your compassion. It was badly done indeed!* No worse. Like their wars: bad things, poorly done.



Greg Gibson/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

*Informers inform. Burglars Burgle. Killers Kill. Lovers love. Says Michel in À bout de souffle.*

Vipers.

The mind is a minkey. But do you have a leesence for it?

Here's gem in your i.

O would that this smothering blanket would lift and one could gaze up into the true nacreous clouds!

*...If you're looking for love*

*In a looking glass world*

*It's pretty hard to find*

*Oh mother of pearl*

*I wouldn't trade you*

*For another girl*

*Divine intervention*

*Always my intention*

*So I take my time*

*I've been looking for something*

*I've always wanted*

*But was never mine*

*But now I've seen that something*

*Just out of reach, glowing*

*Very holy grail*

*Oh mother of pearl*

*Lustrous lady*

*Of a sacred world*

*Thus: even Zarathustra*

*Another-time-loser*

*Could believe in you*

*With every goddess a let-down*

*Every idol a bring-down  
It gets you down  
But the search for perfection  
Your own predilection  
Goes on and on and on and on*

*Oh mother of pearl  
So so semi-precious  
In your detached world  
Oh mother of pearl  
I wouldn't trade you  
For another girl...*

Sang Roxy Music *kan ya makan*.

Here come the 8's like a bat out of hell. Two of 'em with an oh-oh in between.

Twice infinity, separated by eyeholes. Whose sum is 10 and reduces to 1.

First year of what?

*Tote dat barge, wind that gyre.* Krazie Yeats.

Unless the 1 slips into the 0 and changes into something more or less

comfortable.

*If you're looking for love*

*In a looking glass world*

*It's pretty hard to find*

Still, there's something on the other side...

*What, said the Caterpillar to Alice, did the zero say to the eight?*

*I'm sorry, but I've no idea at all, replied Alice, as respectfully as possible.*

The caterpillar looked very pleased with himself and took another long draught on his hookah. Alice, who had begun to get a bit impatient now felt quite unaccountably lightheaded. At length, the Caterpillar exhaled.

*Nice belt.*

*Oh, said Alice, and immediately they both began to cough.*

Count your fingers and your toes. Keep going when you run out of numbers.  
Keep going when you run out of digits. Keep going when you run out of ciphers.

Taxonomy

Will be the death of ye

Just grab the frame and give it a good shake. If that doesn't work, step through.

Neither life nor liability, fixed term or variable, fire, flood or casualty. No insurance. Still, you've got your own two hands. In all states.

When the going gets tough, the tough make soup.

Bullshit. Cowshit. Horseshit. What else would you use to fertilize the crops?