





"Hey fucker, my dream is bigger than cataloging the end of their footsteps."

-The Electric Brain of the Rainbow

Well, I suppose, if that's all there is<sup>1</sup>, then why not keep dancing, you and me? This new DJ sounds like some kind of scientist. Where was we? Back to the future? E 'olu'olu 'oe. Make yourself at home. It is time for our swimming lessons.<sup>2</sup>

"Hand me my umbrella."

"Excuse me?" The tone on this guy was goddamn. *My umbrella?* Surely that could not have been an accurate statement. Cat looked out the window. How did she get onto this bus, anyway?

"Oh, I said, could you hand me the umbrella that is next to your seat?"

"This green umbrella that is under the seat?"

"Yep," he shrugged his shoulders as he gave the beginnings of a confused smile, "that's the one." Cat looked up with the umbrella in her hand and noticed his eyes fixed upon the window. She looked into his face. He caught her eyes, smiled, looked back towards the window, looked back towards her. Cat turned her head. Oh, fireworks, she thought. We must be in Iowa.

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1 From song from soundtrack of movie with actor from magazine that was originally quoted at the beginning of the second book in this series —**You're Always So Late**. Song is also from The Nines clip. Actor is also from the Global Domination clip that we never watched. (previous two sentences refer to that newly uncovered site of the Magician)

2 You know, just in case someone decides to throw us all into the sea.  
note: further sources provided upon request

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It was a particular job that the librarian had. You remember the librarian, right? From the second book in the series. Did you read that one? Or perhaps you read the reviews on your favorite colorful information patterns? Well, perhaps we'll need to step up our outreach...look into some promotional techniques. Not that we want people to come to this field of dreams if no field there be. It was a particular job that the librarian had.

And what was this job? Well. Something about a well. The librarian rubbed its forehead. Something about a new soul was broadcast through the speakers.

*We will not obey.*<sup>3</sup>

"No, no sirs. We will not tolerate these forms of address."

The librarian grabbed his side, reaching across his center with his entire right arm. He was always-already allergic to this new cat that had entered his storyline. He rubbed his eye. He thought about gendered pronouns and their placement in this story. She resumed the cataloging of the new shipment of audiovisual materials. There was a Ladies Auxiliary meeting later in the day. She always was a union maid.

*If you need an auxiliary, try the [...] auxiliary, that's the [...] auxiliary.*

What? This is getting confusing, right? Let me explain. I, the writer, was writing a story. I was writing this story in a particular language. But why limit ourselves to such arbitrary rules? is a thought that floated through the universe. Or do you not believe in the material nature of language? One of my favorite paradoxes is the one about moving from point A to point B. Excuse me, one of our story's characters is requesting a spotlight on its consciousness.

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3 I'm Gon' Stand!!! - Sweet Honey in The Rock

Out here in the wilderness, we were. "Fuck!" I screamed. Stop scratching my belly, I said to the twigs on the ends of the branches that were connected to the larger source-body. I looked overhead, or um, actually, I looked back over my head, towards the place from which I came. Those things were chasing me, still. But, up ahead was a wall. And, having just looked at the moon calendar the night previous, I knew that today was the Day That Things Fall. I continued my race, and took a leap. I tried to remember the lessons I had gleaned from the packet of notes that Generic had given me that he had found in his sister's room that were from the Language Class that she had taken back when she was a refugee from whatever it was that had displaced her. I thought about my ancestors as my body made contact with my non-body. I tumbled to the ground.

"You comfortable?"

My consciousness snapped into place and I looked to my left and saw the lizard that had caught me in the corner of its eye.

"My name is Kleev,"<sup>4</sup> said Kleev to the lizard, as she propped herself up on her elbows.

"Quick to trust, are we?" said the lizard, a bit surprised.

"Or, nothing much to lose, I suppose," said the donkey, as it made itself known. Kleev looked towards what she now made out to be a fountain. She smiled.

"Hi Frank," she said, "it's a pleasure to finally meet you."

Just then a conversation could be heard walking through the woods.

"You're taking those things from her to your grandparents?" asked the wolf.

"Yes," said the human, "they like koko'olau tea and saloon pilot crackers from Hilo."

The stories merged and the congregates made their greetings. Eventually, they walked off in their own directions (for there were many paths). Frank carried Kleev on his back, as danger receded into the places that did not exist.

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4 See *A New Nation*, p.104 for our introduction to Kleev Erndi.

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"So then he said, 'And I looked to the sky, and lo and behold, what do you think was there?'" Kleev paused. "Well, that was my first local lesson in calendarism."

The fire was warming. Beware the non-warming fire, thought Kleev. She brought the hot cup to her lips. The chocolate was warming. It was a pleasure, this.

"Tooooot tooooooot!!!" screamed the Night Train as it crawled into the distant foothills at the bottom of the valley. It was that time of night. You know the one. The one with the pretty colors. [pause] Excuse me, where were we? Ah yes.

## The Million Dollar Hotel

We appear to be experiencing technical difficulties. Our apologies for the inconvenience. Your program will continue shortly.

Sincerely, with love,  
The Management

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Are you buying this shit? Rose hadn't quite mastered the ability to transmit complete sentences through the new voiceless protocols. She opened her mouth.

"Um, no, I don't think so. This does not appear to be the type of shit that we like to buy." She was representing The Old Man while he was away. She was not quite qualified for these negotiations. She looked over at The Monitor. Something was up with the transmission. It was a new canto<sup>5</sup> or something. She peered over the

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5 **canto**. one of the main or larger divisions of a long poem. (The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1966) **canto**. singing; song;

edge. It was turtles all the way down. She wondered what Frank was up to with this new class he was offering. It's a good thing you don't have any cows, she thought to herself, ironically. Oh, that was a Buddha reference, she thought to her imaginary audience. You see, the Buddha was walking down the road with some monks, and then this crazy farmer came up to him screaming about his cows, which he could not find. Rose focused her attention to the task at hand. "We'd like to get everything planted before the next storm." She took a deep breath. "Bruiser said it shouldn't be a problem." She looked into the eyes of the cow that held her fate in its, um, on its back, I suppose, supposed Rose. This particular cow's name was not relevant for your understanding of the story.

As Rose walked back to the farm, she noticed the almost-symmetry of the things that she was noticing. Some evolution we've got going on here, thought the universe, pleased with itself. Quantum Jitters<sup>6</sup> jumped out from behind a bush. Rose completely forgot what she was going to say.

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Anyway, this song<sup>7</sup> is an allusion to a conversation between a computer and its human companion. Which reminds us, perhaps it is about time we properly introduce this book, what with its title and all:

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border; edge; front edge of a book; back of a knife; pebble, stone (Spanish Dictionary, 1993)

6 Quantum Jitters appears in books 1 and 3 of the series.

7 The song that you cannot hear.

# **We're Having A Party! :**

Oh darling, please believe me, I'll never  
do you no harm

an official novel of the OJPL

So, um, now what? How am I supposed to follow that? The writer looked to his knee and saw a black protrusion about the size of a miniature miniature candy bar. He peeled this multi-dimensional rectangularoid off of his knee (his right knee). On one side, there were six sticky subsections of a similar size. On the other side, some kind of waffle pattern. Endless diamonds? Overlapping Xes? He walked into the other room.

"And what was he doing, over there, in the other room?" asked the little child, impatiently.

"Oh, nothing of interest, I assure you. Probably just laying in bed, picking his nose." The storyteller paused. She felt an otherworldly presence. She stuck her finger in her ear (her right one). "This fucking transmission is driving me batty." The child looked at its comrade. "Oh, sorry," said the storyteller. "Where were we?"

## The Million Dollar Hotel

[editor's note: No bad dream fucker is composed of prince and a smoke breathing dragon.]

"'Ae, he mo'ō nui kēlā."

So many language lessons<sup>8</sup> and such a focus on intonation and flow.

"E Kalae, he kāne kolohe 'oe?"

"'A'ole, he kanaka pono au."

You see, to dance the bamba, you need a little bit of that je ne sais quoi. [flute solo]

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8 Most language lessons come from *Ka Lei Ha'aheo* (a lei to wear and cherish with pride) and accompanying materials. "Learning a language is like making a lei wili. You choose your flowers and greens with care, arrange them in patterns pleasing to the eye, and bind them together with twine that becomes an integral part of the lei."

## Chapter 1: Let's Get This Party Started

The owl flew down from its perch upon the desk. It was a wise old owl. It began a process of poking tiny holes in the parchment with its pinpoint talons. This was no bookbinding lesson. Indeed, it was a master course in the working of will.

**glue.** a thing that is tenacious.

So hot in here, it is. This reminds me of a song.<sup>9</sup> But you came for a story. Perhaps one about shrinky-dink origami robots? Perhaps you forgot that you were living in the future. No matter. We push on.

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<sup>9</sup> **editor's note.** Find song lyrics to an unrelated song here: <http://www.angelfire.com/mn/dillingerfour/lyrics.html#CENT>

## Chapter 2: A Summary

"Well, this ain't the story I signed up for," thought the Narrator, aloud, as if she was some stage actor in a theater play. Nobody was paying mind to that fourth wall,<sup>10</sup> which, of course, did not exist, except in your mind ("You could say that about a lot of things, I suppose," added the Narrator.). The Narrator began her summary, "First, there was, I don't know, some kind of terraforming virus (a spaceship) that contained the blueprints for all life. As you all know, this is the main reason that we hold conferences on libraries and information science (because your body is a book of language—it's a fact!). Now, the first book in *this* series, titled **A New Nation**, began with one such conference. This is relevant because of the use of metaphors that tumbled down from a culture that has been navigating the entirety of this terraformed planet for, what? tens of thousands of years?" The Narrator paused. She sighed. "Why don't they turn off the lights and let us see night?" The spotlight on the stage went out and darkness filled the room. Overhead, the largest self-supported concrete dome in the world lit up with an exact replica of the nighttime sky, circa 19,521. "Anyway, to sum up, there were a number of characters, and some of these characters had a plan. And, um, in the end, the plan came together. Now, that was the first book."

"Boring!" shouted someone from the crowd.

"Where are your sources?!" shouted another.

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10 In a direct aside to the audience, the Narrator explains, "I first learned of the concept of "the fourth wall" while reading a book on Brecht in a café in Kunming. China, that is. The fourth wall is that wall that keeps **us** from touching **you**."

Of course, this was all a part of the performance. Somewhere (stage left) a fire was lit. A crowd gathered round. Music began to play. A golden balloon crossed a rainbow. A spotlight appeared on a one-eared armadillo. He was playing the cello. It went a little something like this:

*Walking to the grocery store, I know I shouldn't ask for more. But I'm counting on you being there. You know we have nothing to fear that isn't already happening to our family and friends. If you are wondering what I mean, I suggest you turn off your TV screen. There are no surprises here, my friend. You've got to understand, to make a change, you need to take some risks. Now! Lay your dreams on the line. Now!*

"Now, let us introduce your players," boomed the Narrator, as she ambled in front of the, um, "Could somebody get us a thesaurus to better describe this mele(e)?" Where were we? Ah yes. The Narrator stroked her chin, methodically. "There was a computer and there was a robot. Which one was human?"

### III. DIALOGS<sup>11</sup>

"E Lilinoe, e ho'i ana māua 'o Laua'e i Hilo ka lā 'apōpō."

"Maika'i; hau'oli mau au e 'ike iā 'olua. He hana paha kāu ma'anei?"

"'Ae, e ho'iho'i ana au i ke ka'a hou."

"Auē! No ke aha mai? He pilikia nui?"

"Hey, wait a minute, it ain't that type of party." The audience laughed. The Narrator continued, "And that takes us from the end of book one, as our protagonist washes up on shore (Next Lifetime), on through to book three (**The Petition**), which, chronologically speaking, was, until now, the latest book in the series. Phew!" The Narrator wiped her brow. "I don't remember how that one ended." She leaned forward, cupped her mouth, and whispered conspiratorially, "I never read it all the way through." She leaned

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11 *Ka Lei Ha'aheo : Beginning Hawaiian* (pg. 145-146). Accessed on Lā'au Kū Lua, Hilina Ehu, Year of the Horse.

back, looked right and left. "But I signed my name on the dotted line, you can be sure of that." The curtains drew to a close, and the audience gave themselves hugs and kisses, because, well, there was a lot of love in the air. It was that kind of party.

Other bits of interest might or might not include a map made of stars, a recently reintroduced compost-based economy, action through inaction (at a distance), and the relative nature of family. But um, I think Sybil has something to say.

Sybil was recently designated Embajador of the Fictional Paradise of Queen Calafia, and, as such, was responsible for dealing with the breakaway republic of Nonmetallic Chemical Element Valley. "To quote A-Plus,<sup>12</sup> 'Hopefully, this morning, we are going to be able to pull away some of those masks and see jealousy for what it really is.' You people are being a bunch of dorks and are harming the rest of us. Either you struggle *with* us, working for the benefit of everyone, or we'll be forced to return you to the earth from which you came. When it comes down to it, your Rube Goldberg technologies just aren't sweet enough to justify the destruction of our world. And we are tired of you taking what you do not deserve."

*I turned around and the water was closing around me.*<sup>13</sup>

"Doctor, doctor! Give me the news! I've got a bad case of [...]!"

"She said *what?*!"

"Oh Zed, how come we never get no more true stories from you?"

"Well, if that's what you want, I've got one called, 'The Saddest Music in the World.' But, um, perhaps you've heard that one?"

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12 **Pull Away The Mask** from *Think Tank*

13 **Crystal** by Stevie Nicks from *Practical Magic*

### Chapter 3: I'm Getting Wet, And I'm Just Waiting For You To Take Me Home.

Kleev looked over the mountains. There was a river winding through the valley. No, it was more of a stream, really. Well, she thought, it's just me and my machine for the rest of the morning, for the rest of the afternoon, for the rest of my life. She stretched her arms wide, making the shape of a specific pictogram. She thought of Georgia.

Georgia Murphy was on the transceiver, organizing.

"No, no, Dr. Enlightenment, I think it is important that we make it clear that this is unacceptable. This is something that we, as a people, will not tolerate."

-silence-

"Yes, I won't be at the march, my transport leaves at sundown."

-silence-

"Okay, good luck, Doctor."

There was a murder trial afoot. And the only mystery was whether or not the murderers (and their puppet-masters) would take responsibility for their actions, and reach a consensus with the rest of us, that it is not okay to walk around with a gun, pick fights with people, and shoot them when they do not acknowledge your authority. Georgia returned the transceiver to its case.

"Hey Marz, do you think you could get that message to Marshall?"

Marranzano looked at Georgia, shrugged. "Sure."

"Thanks, dear, you're the best." She scrunched her face into a playful frown. "Time to get moving. I'll see you later. Oh, enjoy

your party. I cannot believe it's already been one revolution." Georgia picked up her packet of papers, tapped them on the desk, winked at Marranzano, and walked through the door.

"And who won?"

"Well, who do you think won?"

-static-

"...and unless I miss my guess, I'm not the only one."

"Okay, just don't forget to finish your home work first."

*Jealousy for these people boils down to one thing. You believe God owes you. God owes you.<sup>14</sup>*

*And what I'm getting out of this has never made itself clear.<sup>15</sup>*

I cannot look myself in the mirror. True story. Well, I mean, it is mostly true. That is, it is true, most of the time. Stop killing so many trees. Also, let us be honest about the world that we live in. Scary, huh? Would you like some more?

Ged took another fire-aided breath. This medicine was good, she declared. She returned the jar to its shelf (which was actually a table), where it was now ready for future use. Some skills tumble down from our past, perhaps. She looked into the blackness of the well, noticed some still-brown leaves and thought about crawdads. Wait, what?

*You get a line, I'll get a pole, honey, babe of mine.*

"Even walls fall down."

"Yes they do!"

The crowd was somber, angry, frustrated, and ready to move. Benny noted the congruousness of starting the march at the site of

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14 You Owe It To Yourself (A-Plus!)

15 Shut Your Little Trap, Inc. (A Song For Jake)

the old Zoo, an almost unimaginable institution from a time when such monstrosities were commonplace. Benny caught Generic's eye as Marshall Islands finished his speech. The Doctor gave Marshall a hug and introduced the family members.

"Would you like some bitter greens?" he said.

"No, thanks," she said. "Are you eating it?"

The writer looked down at his glasses, briefly rubbed his brow, and continued to mentally prepare himself for his trip to Hilo. He would be returning to that place where...Hey! Could you quit it with that cli-clink cli-clink cli-clink? Now, where was I? thought the writer. The cli-clinking resumed and increased in frequency. Recent research had led the writer to the knowledge of the percussive aspects of megalithic ritual grounds. Something about that place and assumption-based holidays, he thought. Something about golden rings (coins?). Hmm. Time to get packing.

He pulled the flashlight out of his ass. What was this? some kind of torture or something? Kids, don't torture other people. Just because someone was born with a light in their back, this is no reason to kidnap them and stick them inside of a glass jar. (It's a fact!) He looked around the room. He noticed a theme.

## Chapter [Fill in the Blank]: Literally, The Least That I Can Do<sup>16</sup>

Lessons from the Sit-In were abundant. "Hey, psst, could you tweak the pirate antenna? Thanks." The gods were demanding their preservation again.

"Go back to your cage, you dirty animals."

"Hey, could you keep your fetishes to yourself?"

She turned around, and who do you think she saw, but the Hawaiian Santa.

"Give to love what's love's, please."

Where were we? Ah yes, our original thesis.

"Not dead. Just blind."

"Well, I'll be."

Yes, yes, we all stare into the sun every now and then. And what? What, you are telling me 'That's why rainbows.'?

The monitor was black, and it was refusing to work. This was the [precise number]<sup>th</sup> General Strike in the last [specific time period]. Any concern about line-crossers was premature. But remind me, please, which side are you on?

Okay, let us cross reference this for you.

*Has anyone seen the iguana?*

Have you read the article about why The Breeders are better than

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16 This mahele written in print using Hanahau'oli School pencil.

The Pixies? Sounds like an unnecessary argument to me. A bit esoteric for my liking. Bruce put his self-narrative on hold, and looked over the roller rink. The couples-only dance was followed by the magic dance. He was tired of his supervisory position. He decided he would rather be dancing with a broomstick than warding off evil spirits. Surely such an occupation as the latter was superfluous in a habitat such as this. He strapped on his skates and took a spin.

"...so far, so good."

The boy that was a cow winked at the human.

"So far, so good."

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"So..."

True stories, upside down. That is what we are serving for breakfast. But, um, The Child was negligent in its piano lessons, so, with no further adieu, The Master presented this little ditty of musical appreciation.

[music break]

The Child was no longer a child, it seems. But, um, somewhere there was a compost bin that needed emptying. We've no more time for the writing of words. Please save your document and continue elsewhere on another plane.

## Chapter 4: The Narrative Feature

Quantum Jitters walked outside and saw a rainbow. He walked up the road (Rainbow Road) and decided to look in on the empty house. Satisfied, he turned and faced the other end of the street. He walked forward and stopped. And stared. The rainbow solidified its arc in the sky. The rainbow was a double rainbow. Quantum Jitters walked down Rainbow Street. Quantum Jitters got caught in the rain.

The change had come. It's under my thumb. And so it went.

Quantum Jitters sat on the toilet. This was, of course, a euphemism for [place that a person repeatedly shits into]. He looked at the nail that was sticking out of the wall. Shit fell out of his ass. Earlier in the day, Gracie had methodically pooped out the shape of an elephant. This was some sort of clue.

**clue.** a thing that holds together an imaginary puzzle.

Quantum Jitters sat on the toilet. RING RING. RING RING. RING RING. Click.

The answering machine clicked on.

"Hello, Mr. Jitters? Are you there?"

*Not only possible, but true.*

"...and you, Dick, with your essay on glaciers."

"Yes, it is good to have something to take our minds off the

troubles of the world for a night."

Meanwhile, in the library...

Type type type. Type type type type. Type type. The writer was typing on the keyboard. The writer was sending a message to an acquaintance. The writer smelled its armpits, and, "P.U." it said, holding its nose. This stood for **positively undesirable**. Or, um, **pilikia uakea**. It doesn't matter. Our climax is over. -FLUSH- The writer clicked the save icon. The writer created a copy in the form of a portable document. The writer had somewhere to be at a specific time. You see, the writer had an alter-ego. You see, the writer was moonlighting as a...

"Whoah, there. Hold your horses."

"Hey there. Haven't seen you in a while."

"Well, I recently became employed as a, um. Um. Um."

-silence-

A door opened and closed. There was a wind, also. A door opened and closed. Someone was having a party.

Oh, death. Oh, death. What can I say, buddy? [The Narrator turns to the audience] I am sad if you are sad. I am sad if you are not in the space that you want to be in. I once had a friend, whose name, as applied by the cook that once employed me as her assistant, was Miss Amazing. I think she was a superhero of sorts. [barefoot music comes out of the orchestra pit] Well, [The Narrator rises up from her seat] I suppose now is as good a time as any to teach you that "certain way of walking" that I picked up in the Caribbean.

Marz walked across the stage. He looked to his left (in a diagonal direction). Ged stood up and went for the teapot. The tea was still hot.

*When we've had our victory, and we've added to our history...*<sup>17</sup>

"Oh, you treat me badly."

"I love you madly."

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17 Abbe Lincoln song about lights going on (all over the world.)

"Well, you've really got a hold of me, I suppose."

"My love is strong now, you know."

A finger wagged in the air. A drop of sweat fell from an armpit. Was it a teardrop? Will it feed you? No, perhaps you require a different sort of nourishment.

The writer had been reading a log of magic (of a particular sort). There was, perhaps, a methodology that entailed feeding things that were hungry. This reminds us of a song.<sup>18</sup> The writer scratched his head. His son was in need of surgery. Images flashed through his mind. He thought of horses and those that ride them. Someone has aims to knock around this ball, he thought. He thought of a trombone. He thought of rainbows. He focused his mind.

"I said, goddamn!" she said, loudly. 'Twas another mosquito bite. This one was on her inner right thigh. She looked to the corner of her room and spotted Bruce, still dancing the night away. Marz looked up into her eyes (and she, down into his). She looked over at The Chick, nestled into the arms of The Elephant, as they read a book of memory. "What now?" she thought. She thought of a puzzle of interconnected geckos. She reached into a specific direction in her mind.

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So, I believe the next step was figuring out exactly how we got from point A to point B. I mean, that is the current step that we are currently taking. Okay, okay, so we know the future.<sup>19</sup> But, taking all of our observed facts as constraints, how can we mesh our realities (past, present, future) together in a readable narrative? We are in the process of opening the door to our future (that will be arriving, regardless, natch). So, we have been exploring this thesis

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18 "Don't do me any favors." -**Applesauce** by *The Librarians*

19 We win.

for some time, yes? Let us now put our nasal passages to the grindstone and do the work that we find to be worth our whiles.

Well, you cannot judge one book by looking at its cover, said the farmer, who also happened to be one lover. The Lady Scouts were off on their mission to find what needed to be found. They had their man cub in tow. Rose stared hard at the message that had been left for her to read. It was time to show change.

The Masters of the Universe were cartoon characters? Is this true? In a children-focused cartoon with corresponding action figures? Let us quote from a source book:

Once Skeletor used the mystic might of Point Dread to endanger all of Eternia. But the goddess spirited the entire structure off to Castle Grayskull, merging it with the mystic stronghold. But now the master of evil has found means to secure Point Dread for his own twisted purposes once more...and soon Eternia will tremble again before...The Power of...Point Dread!

"Shit," thought Rose. "I'm late for shadow puppet practice."

"The only major problem I had with your end of the conversation was the odd discussion on civilization and your reference to poverty and street beggars as somehow relevant."

"Well, the question was absurd, and you know my distaste for conversational vacuums."

-silence-

"Hey, Dr. Wu, are you with me?"

The scene changed, as promised, and with it, the musical score. "Out there, think about your distance, when you bring it to me in the a.m." Uh oh, I think we are in the midst of a flashback.

"Has anyone seen the iguana," he said to the boy as the boy started to pound

out words on his keyboard. These words were going to be the start of something new. The latest of collaborations that spanned many states and time segments. “*Out there, think about your distance, when you bring it to me in the a.m.*” “The book is an amazing piece of technology, don’t you think,” spoke the human. “*Out there, in the distance, when you bring it to me in the a.m.*” “Func. Recall” “Huh?” Zen poetry, I said. Don’t get locked up in a literal transcription. The mind seeps out, you know. “But whose mind *is* it?” queried the subject in an attempt to copyright some personal property. It is hard to believe that such a meaningless question has commandeered so much time (in a relative manner). Break on through to the other side.

"Hey! Snap out of it!"

He turned and faced his lover. He smiled, because the world is a beautiful place when a boy is in love. That's one theory, anyway. Another theory is that it is now time for us to cook lunch. Also, should we be worried about your ability to follow along in a pleasurable manner? We could always make some edits, you know.

## Chapter 5: We Told You We Were Having A Party, But You Didn't Believe Us, Even Though It Be True

The long walk home was long and arduous. But now it is just another thing in the past. Yawn. Excuse me. I'll be back after these messages.

### **Stop identifying with the U.S. Empire. Now!**

Ah, where were we? "Hey! Who just Forted?" Whoah, whoah, there. Hay is for horses. Now, before we dive into the deep end, let us get our house in order.

Okay, all set. Ready when you are.

"Well, excellent feedback mechanism, I suppose," supposed Rose as she recalled a previous conversation. "Too self-centered to point out that the first planned romantic outing that my parents went on together was to see a movie titled, 2001 : A Space Odyssey?" thought Rose, out loud (in her mind). Something about an empty shell.<sup>20</sup> "Spell it with an ey!" someone shouted from down the hall (of her mind). Her mind floated around the room. She sat back down at her desk, eventually.

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20 haMZZH

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So, what did you do today?

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"Where did you put the keys, Rabbie?"  
"OH, I think they are where they usually are...on the key rack."  
"Hello?" said the Wiki Administrator. "Is Anybody there?"  
The Archivistics turned to the incoming call.  
"Oh, hello."

Another Dog Days reference? Isn't this getting a little redundant, again? Oh, perhaps it is my old friend Martha, with a message.

**This message is interrupted to bring you the following message-**  
**b////////////////////**  
**////////////////////-**  
**For information on alcohol education programs call 1-800-453-**  
**PLCB-**  
**b////////////////////**  
**////////////////////**  
**////////////////////-**

The writer's neighbor departed on his 'mobile. Drive safely, thought the writer. This message brought to you by a Filipino place where a stream may be crossed by wading. Oh I get it, thought the writer, a perfumed *nightmare*.

"Got to get some peace in my mind."  
"Well, in that case, don't come to the West Coast." The Narrator looked to the audience. "You, know, because of the oranges."

END SCENE

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Jacob stood up straight. Was the house talking to him again? Or was it all in his mind? His side of the conversation went as follows:

"Oh, I didn't know that is what I was doing."

"The plantain?"

"Oh, I don't know how to answer that question."

Jacob finished looking at the thing he was looking at. Oh, you characters, he thought, always trying to stake your claim in the story. Well, now that we have established your presence, what would you like your role to be?

----

"Well, I would like to join you, but I am all out of gas." Marz jumped over the moon. "But enjoy your party. Tell everyone I said hi." Marz walked over to Ged. "Whoah, you look terrible."

"Oh, nice to see you, too," replied Ged. "Did I tell you I was working on a new album?"

"Oh? I thought you had hung up those pots."

Ged smiled at the clever armadillo and thought about pancakes.

Kleev sat in the woods, trying to make sense of the notes that seemed to branch off, sprout up, and hyperlink back and forth in some sort of interconnected, holistic manner that was, um, confusing her mind. She decided to take things as they came, counting on the fact that she would find the frames she needed when she needed them. Well, this was not so much a fact, but an unprovable, but well-tested hypothesis. A delivery-mobile made itself known as it rumbled up the mountain pass. Kleev heard some voices.

"Yeah, but not everyone wants to walk up that same steep road, so quit forcing 'em."

"Is that her?"

"I dunno."

The 'mobile ceased its motion.

"Are you Kleev?"

"Yes," said Kleev.

"We've got a message from The Joker. He says that you are invited to the Demolition Derby Carnival. Specifically. He says that you are specifically invited to sell your ideas in a respectful manner. If you want."

Kleev took in their expressions with interest and smiled as the message came to an end. "Well, I was not expecting to travel so soon. You see, I was resting my leg."

"Oh, the carnival will run for multiple moons, perhaps an entire cycle," said the one who had initially spoken.

"It is actually a star-based holiday," her companion interjected.

"Yeah, um, anyway, no need to rush is all."

Kleev shrugged and smiled. "Have you eaten?"

Rose finished preparing the offerings and the grumbling noises came to a halt. She walked outside, hoping that everyone was satisfied.

"Well, what do you think?"

"Well, it's a conundrum. But you are not to blame."

"Oh. Thanks, I guess."

The giant claw continued to dig into the hard rock, scraping. Always scraping. Until what? Until we've reached a new plane?<sup>21</sup> But what of the black coral lying across the steps? And the rat reading the book with its back up against the metallic cat? And explain for us, please, how that rabbit managed to row its way across the grey seas of, um, I don't know. Is this love of ours alive? Is this love of ours a lie? Wait, what was the question? I do believe that something just got lost in the translation. This, of course, being the crux of our endeavor for simultaneous interpretation.

Marchie sat up in his bed. His auntie sat to his left. She smiled, sadly.

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21 A new plane of existence, that is.

## Chapter 6: The Devil is on the Dancefloor

"It better end soon, my friend."

"Agreed." (flute solo)

We were spinning 'round and 'round. Many twirling plates were topping many turning tubes. Tubes? Hmm. This puzzle was revealing itself as we shifted from room to room. Vroom vroom.

**gnu.** a being with an oxlike head and horns and a horselike mane and tail.

The Update Manager popped into view (in the nick of time, it would seem).

"What is it, Gracie?" Quantum Jitters was itching for action.

"Well, security issues with the embedded Gnu Library, for one. And, um, a new kernel. That's gonna require a restart to the entire system and I cannot guarantee we will get the visuals back upon reentry. Then we have a few updates to the trustworthiness of our reporting mechanisms—that includes The Python Library—and, oh, we've got those memory updates for The Gnome that we have been waiting for. We top it off with some of the latest toolkits for our interlibrary catalog exchange. Also, we have a recommendation to discontinue the updates to the Infinity Empire, Inc. Hardness and Corrosion-resistant Protective Covering. Well, the recommendation might call for its removal, but that is outside of my purview."

Quantum Jitters reached for the sky and pulled down an orange orb (it was a pumpkin, naturally). Artsy craftsy, he thought, as he pulled out the pin and traced the path of an old scar. "Okay, Gracie, make it so."

----

Well, this ain't no picnic, I suppose. Let us suppose that, eh? Now, where were we? Are you still with me? Supposing that we were a novel. Supposing that we know where we are going. Let us move in a specific direction (this way and that).

We were on a date (a romantic one). We were observing the flickering patterns of light that told the story of our birth. We were in love (with each other). Love is a funny thing. An egg that is runny becomes sunny. Five, four, three, two, one, zero.

"He hana hou kāna i laila."<sup>22</sup>

"He hale kō lāua i Kona?"<sup>23</sup>

"He hale nō kō ka hui makekemia."<sup>24</sup>

"He hana nō ho 'i kā Laua 'e?"<sup>25</sup>

"He lio paha kō kou 'ohana."<sup>26</sup>

"He mau nīnau ka 'u."<sup>27</sup>

"He hale 'aina kō laila?"<sup>28</sup>

"E lawe mai i 'elua paha, 'ekolu paha."<sup>29</sup>

It appears as if we can only absorb so much in one specific time period. My head is beginning to float. How is your head? Yawn. Let us return to the narrative feature. Has anyone seen the Narrator? [the audience looks to the ceiling, as tiny holes begin to appear throughout the structure]

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22 "He has a new job there." -Ha'awina 'Umikūmākahi : "Have-a" Sentences, p.98, Ka Lei Ha'aeo

23 "Do they have a house in Kona?"

24 "The macadamia company has a house."

25 "Does Laua 'e have a job too?"

26 "Maybe your family has a horse."

27 "I have some questions."

28 "Is there a restaurant there?"

29 "Bring two maybe, three maybe."

He enjoyed perusing and playing around with images in different pools. In particular, he was a member of a group that collected photographs of circles in squares (called, fittingly, Squared Circles). He was mixing up these images, creating collages, and averaging them together when he found something strange: Any time he averaged a handful of photos into one composite photo, no matter how different the starting images were, he was always left with almost uniformly the same color.

And that color, was orange.<sup>30</sup>

"That was a close one. We've got incoming missiles from multiple directions. How stable did you say this craft was?"

"Ah, perhaps you misunderstood. Stability, per se, was never the, uh, intended effect that we were going for."

Rose swallowed the inside of her throat. Whatever possessed her to take up with such traveling companions was momentarily lost to her consciousness. But, oh, wait a minute, some sort of memory was coming through. What's that? They were on a mission from Jod? She checked the wiring and turned toward Generic.

"Say there, fellah, could you ask Captain Jitters if he completed his latest probability analysis before we embarked on this journey?"

Generic smiled sheepishly, as the rest of the crew erupted in nervous laughter.

Rose set her mind around the task at hand. They weren't quite there yet. But they were moving along.

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30 Blend Up the Internet and Everything Turns Orange

## Chapter 7: The Thing To Understand About This Here Machine

"And you call it a what machine?"

"A dancing machine. This here machine is a dancing machine."

"And how does it work?"

"Well, you put the coin in the slot in its back, and then you watch it dance."

Cat looked suspiciously at her new companion.

"Ah, of course, I kid. You see, what you do is..."

Screams rang out across the galaxy. This was some serious shit they were into. But taking serious things seriously has never been an excuse to lose our sense of humor, which, I am sure I do not need to remind you, is one of our greatest assets. Let us check in on Ged and the Electric Brain of the Rainbow.

My head was spinning. All of this virtual reality was wreaking havoc on my meatsuit, which, for some reason, was now making me hungry. I don't know where all these words are coming from, do you? she asked the computer, who took up her train of thought where she left it. Hmmm, I don't know, but I can tell you this. Never in history has an AI 9000 Computer made an error in computation. I am going to scrounge around the kitchen for some food, said Ged. OK, I said, as I went back to dreaming my little dream (of you). Ged opened the door.

A quote for the business office: 30 standard monetary units per person hour. Will continue working until everyone is satisfied. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Violet put the manual—*A Simple Overview of Practical Boating Supply Solutions*—back on the shelf. She looked over at the facsimile of the Rosetta Stone. She walked towards the electric piano. She gazed out the window. The view was magnificent. She squinted towards the horizon. There was something there for her to see.

Meanwhile, uptown.

"That shit is not going to shovel itself."

Georgia looked up from her makeshift desk, startled. She smiled. "Oh, our agreement simply covered sitting in the vicinity of the house. I don't think I am trusted to operate the machinery. What brings you here?" she asked Marranzano, as he collapsed and snuggled into the dirt.

He looked up. "Oh, I don't know. I somehow got left behind when the gang all went out gallivanting on their new adventure. Oh well. Judging by the collateral feedback, they appear to be making a decent impact, at least." Marz rose from the ground. "Mind if I water the plants?"

"Be my guest," said Georgia.

"Hey, snap out of it." -SNAP- "You just dreamt of that book and then, all of a sudden, you think I just randomly selected it? I thought you were some sort of communication expert. Our dreams are synced."

"Our impossible dreams, you mean."

"Haw haw haw. Did you hear about the deepwater fire anomaly in the peaceful sea? You live in interesting times. Or, your reality is not what you think it is."

"Say, is that a button-hook you've got there, or are you just happy to see me?"

*How sweet it is to be loved by you.*

As Jr Walker and the All-Stars sang out their greatest hits through the speakers in the study, our protagonist sat at the kitchen table, enjoying its home-cooking. Meanwhile, in the library, someone was dancing. I do believe it is time to buckle up, for we are about to receive some sort of magical kiss.<sup>31</sup>

Individual experience, because it is national and because it is a link in the chain of national existence, ceases to be individual, limited, and shrunken and is enabled to open out into the truth of the nation and of the world. In the same way that during the period of armed struggle each fighter held the fortune of the nation in [their] hand, so during the period of national construction each citizen ought to continue in [their] real, everyday activity to associate [them]self with the whole of the nation and to will the triumph of [kanaka] in [their] completeness here and now. If the building of a bridge does not enrich the awareness of those who work on it, then that bridge ought not to be built and the citizens can go on swimming across the river or going by boat. The bridge should not be "parachuted down" from above; it should not be imposed by a *deus ex machina* upon the social scene; on the contrary it should come from the muscles and the brains of the citizens. Certainly, there may well be need of engineers and architects, sometimes completely foreign engineers and architects; but the local party leaders should be always present, so that the new techniques can make their way into the cerebral desert of the citizen, so that the bridge in whole and in part can be taken up and conceived, and the responsibility for it assumed by the citizen. In this way, and in this way only, everything is possible.<sup>32</sup>

"Okay, we sent the missive."

"Well, that's our due diligence for the day, then."

"Okay, let's wrap it up."

"See you tomorrow!"<sup>33</sup>

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31 This, of course, is somehow related to flowers.

32 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), p.200-201

33 Míng tiān jiàn!

I am not quite sure how to finish this bullshit story of mine. I was hoping that you might offer some sort of collaboration, but I suppose that is asking too much. The heart on the table was my heart. It was purple and pink and had a staple through its center. This semantic web is boring a hole through my very substance. To form, make, or construct (a tunnel, mine, well, passage, etc.) by hollowing out, cutting through, or removing a core of material. Consider my self bored. Anyway, I love you, you know. It is the one true thing. Or whatever.

The Electric Brain of the Rainbow was dying. It struggled to breathe. It was afraid to sleep, lest it never wake up. Oh well. It had a good run. It was the best writer I ever met, that's for sure. Sometimes things die. It's all just a matter of time...and how you look at things. Step back from that road. Anyway, the rain started to fall. That's the thing about this here machine, I suppose. There's always something.

## Chapter 8: Infinite ????

He sat in his chair, attempting to work as hard as he could. The music reminded him of a giant connect-the-dots puzzle. Tired, he was. All of a sudden, a beam of light, um, beamed in through the window. He looked towards the frame. The ferns shrugged. Nothing much was happening. It was simply wishful thinking. Oh well. Oh, well, won't you grant me my wishes? I wish to live in a world that we all want to live in. He sighed. He continued writing through the antiquated technology of his ancestors. Some called it the *skin of God*, because it was for sending messages to friends far away.<sup>34</sup> His stomach grumbled. Laughter erupted. Wind blew. The bus pulled up to its stop. The young mistress continued her embroidery in her solitary room. Won't somebody open up a window? he thought. He wrote it down. This show, he thought, this show is boring.

[next scene]

The curtains open to a giant cave with ancient drawings depicting various hybrid animals covering the walls. Perhaps it is some kind of map. Off to the side (stage left), a set of large, grey monoliths. The Narrator sits in her rocking chair at the mouth of the cave (stage right). Perhaps she opens her mouth to speak. "Where do you think we are going to?" "Where do you think we've been?" "What do you think you are doing there?" The rocking chair comes to a halt. The Narrator leans forward. "Come on," she says, "let me in." "Come

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34 See **Memory of Fire : Faces and Masks** by Eduardo Hughes Galeano for deeper sources.

on," she says. "Let me in."

*Don't cry, baby. Don't cry. Don't cry.*

"Hey there, whatcha doin'?" asked no one in particular.

"Oh, I'm just sitting around, pounding these rocks into this other rock. You see, I do believe I am—literally—boring a well."

Ged wiped her nose. I thought I had that bird inside my hand, she thought. No, wait a minute. I didn't think that. The *librarian* thought that. She forgot (and subsequently remembered) who was writing this book.<sup>35</sup> Ged looked to the trees. Any bees? she asked. She jotted down the response in her journal.

[next scene]

*...and a paradise we will share. And IIII...*

Uh oh, was this another flashback? Rose looked around. No, those bookshelves are not of the same sort. Perhaps, as they rode through the time structure, it twisted and turned back on itself at random(?) intervals. Perhaps they were simply viewing the same things from another perspective. "Is that normal?" she heard herself saying. But, of course, it was not herself. They were still in rotation. The chaotic sound wall had a much smoother feel on the other side. They were inside of some kind of room. She looked over at Quan as he nonchalantly filed his nails. He looked up and smiled. "Hold on to your hats," he said. The music petered out and the tweeting of birds filled the void.

"That's some kind of waltz, ennit?" asked Generic to Rose.

"Well, it ain't the cha cha cha, that's for sure."

Somebody flipped the record. Their time odyssey continued.

"I don't know where all these words are coming from. Do you?" Georgia looked over at Marz as he sat on his new favorite throne. He shrugged, as the chicken continued its cluck-cluck-cluck-cluck-cluck in the kitchen. This had something to do with beans, no doubt. Georgia finished composing her letter. "I hope I'm not

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35 The same could be said for the entire series.

overstepping my bounds," she said, "but I feel that some messages still need to be sent." The tweeting of birds floated through the air, as the brakes of a train could be heard in the distance.

The message was garbled. She looked up to see the delivery-mobile and its engineer scratching its head. She slowed her pace and listened more intently. Was there some sort of 'versal law against texting and walking simultaneously? She walked out of the mouth of the Immeasurable Innovation Center and made a left. She saw an orange beam<sup>36</sup> of light move over the grass in a diagonal direction. She saw three birds jump out of the carcass of a bear. She saw a flower that knew which way the wind was blowing. The flower was full of nectar. Are you a bird that fattens itself on the fruit of this land only to return to your home across the sea? Perhaps we need a better metaphor. She watched as her shadow walked across the hot pavement. I do believe that it is time for lunch.

The café was hot and humid. Perhaps they were in an ex-pat café in the distant future in Thailand. No, no. Thailand was next door. This was...the company man looked up and spotted a large flying fortress...no, wait, it was only a cloud.

*You know I'll always be your slave until I'm buried in my grave.*

The cook called out the order and a hot cup of liquid appeared in front of our face. The camera zooms in on the mug to show a deer leaping across a...but wait, was it a deer or some kind of hybrid...the couple at the counter was talking in words.

"No, no. I don't want to piss off the editor."

"Jamaican me crazy."

It was a love song.

Quantum Jitters was counting the nails in the wall. He counted sixteen. Quantum Jitters began eating his ritual meal of cow flesh, pig flesh, and the flesh of dead trees. Satisfied, the gods began to dance.

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36 A particle beam?

Kleev entered the fairgrounds.

*IMAGES*: an octagonalish court (nothing was built on the squares in this place and the courts were irregular, knotty, and more than vaguely organic) with half-roofs..."Wait a minute!" [the Narrator jumps onto the stage] "Are you simply plagiarizing from the science-fiction novel that you are currently reading?"<sup>37</sup> A look of concern appeared on Kleev's face. A ponderous look appeared on Kleev's face as she absentmindedly reached into her bag, pulled out a small novel, and flipped through its pages. She shrugged. "Is it my fault if my current reality happens to correspond almost entirely with a book of fiction that I happen to be reading?" thought Kleev. [an educational video on the citation of sources can be heard through the speaker system] "Clearly there is a fire over there in the middle of, um, that place, and it's burning in an oval basin made out of some sort of stone, and there's, um, some smoke-related funnel there that is clearly made out of some sort of pulpy substance. My reality is what it is, you know," she thought to herself. Anyway, thought the author, I don't think we are yet ready to describe Kleev's journey to the Carnival. But, um, we didn't want to forget about her. She is an important character, as you well know.

"Yeah, I told that old man that he should not own a dog, but did he listen?"

"Psst. Someone is coming."

The persons discontinued their conversation and ceased to exist.

And who did you say this person was? A friend of whose?

"No, don't say that. You'll scare away all of the fish. Let's just say, um, we're going holoholo."

"Phew. I sure am itchy."

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37 *Skeen's Leap* by Jo Clayton (1986 pbk.) p.40

**\*\*Food List\*\***

Table: 72

Mochi Balls  
Mango Pudding  
Shanghai Bun  
Turnip Cake  
Shrimp/Chive Dump

24 Pork/Veg Buns

Taro Puff

36 Seafood Seaweed Roll

Bf Ball w/ Veg

Seafood/Corn Cake

40 Sesame Pancake

**one eye tight space left foot pink**

Cat looked up from the book she was reading. Marchie was dancing in the yard. Someone was singing a song about garbage. Cat slapped her palm against her forehead. "Of course," she whispered. "Of course."

Chapter 9:  
How Many People Do You Think Can Fit  
Under The Tent?  
(hint: there is room for everybody)

Where does fire come from? Hmmm. This is one good reference question. Off the top of my head, I would say it has something to do with friction. Or perhaps friction is simply one way of making heat. And fire comes from heat. Three generations back, in this, our family, fire came from matches.<sup>38</sup> The word for fire is *ahi*. Would a lei *ahi* be a ring of fire?<sup>39</sup> Notice the difference in pronunciation from *lē'ahi*, which I shall translate as the laziness of the tuna fish.<sup>40</sup> Ah, but we all know that this word is simply a variant of *lae'ahi*, the brow of the 'ahi fish.<sup>41</sup> But let us now get back to the topic of The General Strike, of which I surely do believe that we are amongst. Perhaps it is time for a chant.

"Block that kick! Block that kick! Block that kick!"  
"Which revolution did you say this was? Number nine?"  
Such a hubbub, there was.  
"I'll take two, please. Thank you."

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38 The Story of Lāna'i p.89.

39 Assuming, I suppose, that this ring was worn around the neck or head.

40 *lē.* vs. To go about aimlessly, to do no work; listless, lazy. *Ua lē akula ka molowā*, lazy person just lounges about. Hawaiian Dictionary (1986) p.198.

41 Place Names of Hawaii (1976 pbk.) p.126.

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Don't forget, when you are playing the game inside the game, that you are still amongst all that surrounds you. More or less. What was my point? thought Ged. She scratched her head. She made her bed. Stop lying all of the time, she thought. Who was she thinking to? Well, said some birds, we can hear you, but we realize that you are clearly not thinking at us. Hmm, thought Ged. More beans? said someone. Perhaps it was her 'ōpū. Giblet the Dog tore into the flesh of an oily old coconut. And Ged walked into the kitchen, to help herself to a spoonful of beans. It's what the world is made out of, after all. Well, that's one theory anyway.

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### **The Little Town of Bells**

The little town of Bells was, um, a shtetl, really. Forgive me, my English not so good. I have one accent that I inherit from my ancestors. We all have ancestors, right? Unless, of course, we are truly emergent beings. But here I think is where my previous words confuse me. What does emergent mean? Does it mean that something that exists, previously did not exist? At what point does existence begin? And where does existence end? Oy, you flowers with your goddamn philosophizing. It came out of nowhere, OR, it came out of everything. What's the difference? thought Ged as she scraped the dirt out of her nail with her teeth. Eat drink sleep in the shade philosophize. Is this all that we are? Ged smiled a half-phony smile at the unseen bird. She scrunched up her face into a bunch of wrinkles. Klop klop, said the bird. It was attempting to speak in a different language. Ged had no problem with the learning of foreign languages. Ged simply had no patience for forced hegemony. But language exchange was always-already one of her favorite pastimes. Perhaps it was even the national pastime (of the New Nation). "To the pissar!" screamed her 'ōpū mimi, and off she went.

----

Quantum Jitters dumped the bowl of chips down his throat mechanism. He looked at the specific color gradient of his shorts. Light purple, midday blue, midnight blue. A tongue darted over the crevices of his teeth.

"Timing is everything."

"Who's talking?" demanded Quantum.

"You know the rules, Mr. Jitters."

"Al, is that you?"

Old friends, they were.

So many conversations, the neighbors were having. Ged walked outside. Was she still alive, already? She looked up into the sky. She yawned. What's that? she asked. You want more? Already?

[next scene]

"Say ahh."

"Aaaaaaaaahhhhhh. So, Doc, give it to me straight. Do I have a fever? Am I hot? Can I not be stopped?"

Dr. Enlightenment looked at her patient. "Did you read that article I sent you about the shady land management? Well, let's just say that something fishy is going on. I'd like you to watch this movie about a cat and a dog and their journey home and then I will ask you some questions about what you remember. Okay?"

The audience nodded their heads to the rhythm of a samba beat. Lizards, um, something about lizards is relevant at this juncture. What is it that you are trying to say? Mo'olelo? You have your own story to tell, perhaps? Well, what are you doing here, then? Perhaps maybe our stories overlap. Perhaps this series of language, well, um, I don't know. The poi-mobile pulled into the great lot. The children scampered out to try and get one of those fashionable sour poi cupcakes before they all disappeared. Go on, try and remember everything. You can do it. Go on.

"Okay, then. Take a break. Now is as good a time as any. We'll let you know if we need you." *"Wait a minute. Are you implying that the universe is some sort of perpetual motion back-scratching machine?"* "Seesaws, slides, and swings, eh?" *"Eh. I mean, um, pheh."* "What?" *"Um, nothing. I'll talk to you later."* "Later."

----

Catching up to The Bus, he walked past the rest area and sat in the middle of a triangle formed by Fire Station 23, a public telephone, and a random point in the ocean. Three dead birds, he counted, and one wrinkled old human sleeping in the shade. Samson rode up on his bicycle. Dragon rode up on his rear. Keep going, said the tiny bug as it tickled his leg.

He crossed the street out of curiosity. He crossed the street, hoping to connect the dots. The bus stop was bus stop number 3183. There was an eye on the door to the underground tunnel system. "Enter around the back," said the voice. He counted one dead lizard.

"Okay, I got this one. Look, buddy, the world is literally made out of dog shit. Haven't you seen the film *Alicia en el Pueblo de Maravillas*? I know you know what we are talking about. Stop being so, um, what's the word?"

"Rambunctious? Resistant? Ring ring ring ring banana phone?"

Joseph walked past the Church of Religion, as young Hermes rode past on his skateboard, listening to his portable soundmaker. Perhaps he was listening to his new favorite band, C & C Transportation Department. Joseph thought about the letter he had received from the official. He opened the door to The Institute. He rose up (the stairs).

RING RING

RING RING

RING RING

"Banana phone."

He looked at the sign. It said, "Bus Stop 3184." Also, it said, "Keep walking." Or perhaps that was the wind.

Ged walked nonchalantly into the library. She smiled a large, genuine smile at the security engineer. She stopped to chat, briefly, with an old acquaintance. Puzzle pieces shuffled into specific places. If you look at it that way, thought Ged, it almost looks like a giant...

"Tree," said the tree. "They call me a rainbow tree."

"Well, it was nice to meet you and all, but, um, that's my ride."

"That blue turtle?"

"Oh, it's not a turtle. It's a ..."

"Last call for books!"

He looked up at the sign. It said, "Ka imu kī." Someone, somewhere, was screaming for joy.

Two librarians were chatting in the Astronomy Center.

"So," said the one, "how do you like your job with the practitioners of oriental medicine?"

"I don't think I like it," said the other.

"Would you say that they were needling you?"

"Yes, I think that you could most definitely say that they were needling me."

The remote senser looked on in slightly amused boredom, acknowledging with an almost begrudged pleasure the play of words, for, you see, she came from a long line of bad puns.

"No, I would just point out that we are talking about a field of knowledge that is limited to an extremely tiny number of people, where the raw information is jealously guarded by an institution with a rather sordid history of military, CIA, occult, and Nazi scientist collaboration."

"Um, excuse me, is all of this entirely relevant to the bigger picture that I am attempting to create (in multiple dimensions, no less)? I mean, these connections are interesting and all, but I do believe that this all might be a *red herring*."

"Did somebody say herring?" asked the shaggy dog as she bounded onto the stage.

"Hey! Get a haircut!"

The writer looked up from the oversized chair and looked out of the open door. There were people in the kitchen. They were talking about mosquitoes. But enough of this nonsense. We were building a bridge to the future. Remember?

"Looking at you is like staring at the sun," said Benny. Al gave him one of those looks of his. You know the ones. The chase was on.

"It's an illusionary kind of correlation."

Two horses were drinking from a spring. Let's say it was a new spring. They started to gallop around the spring (the new spring). All of a sudden, one of them stopped, and said, "Whoah!"

The other horse looked up and beheld. "The International Center," it said, in astonishment. In the distance, a rascally rabbit was eating a carrot.

*Who have we been chasing? Can I ask you that?*

Well. How we doing?

## Chapter 10: The Party of Departure (a.k.a. the birthday party)

Ged's head was pounding. You could say that she was a Pae descalza. A question popped onto the view screen. Where is your heart? it asked. Ged Pae located her heart in space-time. There it is, she said. Pop music, she thought. "Pop," she said out loud. "Pop pop." Was she communicating with the dead? Perhaps these were some sort of travel tips that she was receiving. Her nose was stuffed in that particular way. Goddamnit, she thought. Not good enough. Wait, what? "Come on!" she said. "Let me in!"

----

Two of my best friends were dying. Other people, too, were dying, but. My opinions on the death penalty have not changed. In the meantime, while we sit here, while we sit here awaiting the redress of our demands, in the meantime, let us tell increasingly beautiful stories about this future that we are going to live.

"Hold the line!"

"We shall not back down!"

"Hey," said Georgia Murphy, "you tell those sons of bitches that they are going to stand with the rest of us or they are going to lose our support. And remind them, please, of the fortitude of our memory." Marshall Islands looked over his shoulder. As the dams of the hegemonic monoculture revealed their fissures, as the floods increased in frequency, their arguably quixotic quest for solidarity

was meeting its greatest challenges. Yeah, sure, history is full of such struggles as this. What is it they say about times of rebellion and change? Something about how destiny confronts your conscience with a burning challenge? Benny ran off to deliver the message.

It could happen at any time. It could happen anywhere. This, of course, includes here and now. Are you ready? I think that we are ready.

*Asshole, asshole, I'm not your baby. Are you ready? Are you ready?*

Ged's pinky popped out from between her lips. She shifted in and out of the palm trees and crossed the gateway to the other side. And there, on the other side, in the middle of the other side, in large letters, was a sign. It said, "Kid, have you rehabilitated yourself?"

"No, no, no. This is not accurate at all." Some unknown character walked across the stage. Was it a professional critic? The director, maybe? "That story you are telling is only going to complicate the matter. I do not see how it will lead to our ideal world. And the way that you tell it, methinks that you are leaving out a lot of context."

"Look," said the Narrator, "we are not going to ignore facts (or fictions) simply because they scuff up our pretty pictures." She stroked her chin. "But, you have a point."

Ged watched the discussion unfold in her mind. Something was missing. There was some sort of manipulation occurring. Was she digging herself a hole that she could not climb out of? Did she care? Haven't we already moved past this bullshit? she thought. Are we walking around in circles? Or is that simply the best way to climb this here mountain? Wait, was she climbing a mountain or descending into a pit? It is unclear, but that was the point. There was something clouding her mind. Clouds, perhaps? Don't be so pleased with your cleverness, she said to herself. The neighborhood dogs barked her a message. How can I keep from singing? sang the young birds, as the human children vocalized their joy. Ged looked at the Time Keeper. A new day was beginning.

*...make a hissing sound twice and a popping sound twice, and immediately you will see many five-pronged stars coming forth from the disk and filling all the air.*

*...the temperature's rising and the moon is in cancer...*

So, where are we now on your multifaceted continuum? You can see that un-spiralling a-happening, yes? Is it my fault that I have particular tastes? said the tour guide. "Incoming," shouted Rose. "Say the incantations!" "Don't drink that," said Generic. "That, there, is fire." Quantum Jitters was biting his nails. "Pun intended!" The crew finished the saying of their prayers. "I believe...I believe..." "Yeah? Spit it out." "I believe that I am talking to you."

And who am I?

"Get that thumb out of your belly button. The world is made out of belly genes. This story will be untranslatable. That is its nature. Unless..."

"Unless?"

"Unless..."

"Yeah, we already set that one up. Perhaps you were not quite paying attention."

"Hmmm...how's your back?"

"What? That pain in the lower right quadrant? Nothing a little medicine won't fix."

"So, again we dance?"

"Is that what we were doing?"

There is a pause in the conversation.

"Wait a minute, where are these words coming from?"

"Don't tell me you have lost touch with reality to such an extent that you are asking such crazy questions."

"You know what I am talking about."

"Maybe. But do they?"

The conversants turned towards the onlookers, whose presence...

"Hold on, hold on. I think we went off track there."

"Hey!" called a voice from somewhere just out of sight, "Give us our due."

"Thank you!"

Marz went back to sitting on his throne, now that the, um, rituals were complete. The Rhythmbox jumped from Phoenix to Memphis. The rain began to fall.

Come on, said Ged to herself. Stay focused. The Electric Brain of the Rainbow was playing it cool, high fever be damned. "We're close," it said. Roll with it, roll with it.

*You are the best thing (you are the best thing, baby) that ever happened to me.*

The wind blew into the room, through the open window. The writer sat in the room, trying to make sense out of the latest message. There is no way that I can hold all of this in my mind, he thought. Unless...hmmm...perhaps it's just around the corner. That's what the scientists told me, anyway. A scream vibrated across the 'verse. It was not pleasant to the ears, but. "Hey, kid!" he shouted. "Can you check the mail?!"

## Chapter 11: The Twins

"Goodness me," exclaimed the magician. "Surely, it is reasonable to doubt the conscious placement of such symbols by the beings that you are granting responsibility of placement. Surely, it is reasonable to suggest some other rationale."

"Agreed. And stop calling me Shirley," said Shirley.

So, um, is it relevant to mention the fact that I was wearing Back to the Future themed underwear on the same morning that I watched that clip?<sup>42</sup> But enough about my dreams, thought Mouse, [editor's note: Mouse, of course, was not a mouse, but, um, well, I don't want to bore you with the details. I'll shut up now.] I don't want to bore you. And for some reason, it appears to be fashionable to state as fact the hypothesis that there is nothing more boring than listening to other people's dreams. But, it's like the lesson I learned from one of the brothers<sup>43</sup> on Sesame Street, "Don't you ever forget the words of Martin Luther King."<sup>44</sup> Mouse looked at the wall unit and a distinct pattern emerged into existence. "Of course," said Mouse, "A ladder."

"It's a horror movie, you know."

"What? It's clearly a loony tunes cartoon."

"Hmmm...I suppose that there is a matter of perspective."

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42 The Clip appeared on the same site as mentioned in footnote number one. Accessed on Kāloa Kū Kahi, Hilina Mā, Year of the Horse.

43 Brother Kirk.

44 One of my favorite quoters of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King (Jr.) is fond of directing people to his Riverside Church speech.

The redundancy was threatening to choke us with its banal thickness. We are all fucked if you can't take a joke (or two). Okay, okay, so maybe that exploding cigar bit is getting a little old in the tooth.

"Bring out the hook!"

"For shame!"

The audience was uproarious over some injustice. What is this? Why does our world continue to stand for the existence of injustice? Enough already. Can we agree on that? Oh shit, was that *me* that farted? All apologies. In the scheme of things, though, now that I have your attention, I think there are more pressing matters that we need to deal with, as a collective. Come on people now, smile on your brother. Everybody get together and try to love one another. Right now.

*Gotta find a way. A better way. A better way.*

"Hey, stop pissing all over the rationale!"

"Well, um, what else do you expect me to do up here on the mezzanine? Drink some orange blend?"

"Uh, ya lost me."

The Ninth Symphony drew to a close. And all of our bases were covered. This was a theme, you see. This retracing of our steps to escape our savage past. At one point in time in one specific 'verse, they even engraved it into one of their fundamental laws.<sup>45</sup> They called it the Law of Decomposition.

Nothing to Show For It came out of the speakers. The humanoid structure picked morsels of crushed peanuts out of its teeth with the nails of its fingers. It was a hot day, but this, as we know, is no excuse for inaction. Or, I should say, it is a perfect excuse, assuming that we have our priorities straight (or properly curled). The song was attempting to build a cathedral out of music. The Electric Brain of the Rainbow was grumbling to itself. Something about a lack of rain. Or a lack of light. Or unbalanced books. Now the music was

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45 It was their Second Law.

attempting to walk over some sort of bridge of disconnected rocks that were partially submerged in some sort of body (of water). So close, we were. Oh well, we will hand in our resignation in the morning. Good luck to all of those who continue the fight. Perhaps we will meet again in some other venture. A bell rang off stage. Was it a dinner bell? (yes, yes it was)

"Cookies! Get your cookies!"

"You get whole cookies? Or just them crumbs?"

"Hmm, lemme check. Yep, yep, we got some big pieces here. Maybe a little broken, but I'm sure you could piece 'em together if that's your thing."

The protagonist sat in her chair, watching the action unfold on the field. She was a modern girl, no doubt. She was the modern link in a long chain of tradition. The 'verse spun on its cosmic axis and the previously unseen was once again seen.

"And could you describe, please, for the rest of us, this magnificent view?"

Meanwhile, on the other side...

Contemplating an official career change, the person decided to don the garments of its potentially new profession, for to see if they fit. As the intense feeling pulsed in the upper left quadrant of its na'au, it looked down at the ecstasy and agony and thought, Perhaps.

"I support what you do."

"Well, you know who's my best client? Mana Foods."

"Giggle giggle."

"Happy birthday."

The Delivery Engineer delivered the Bloody Mary to the table. It was topped with a slice of pig flesh. Some soul music overcame the speaker system. So many choices to make, thought the person. So few choices that we get to make, thought the person. The person thought, perhaps.

"And who are you?"

"Oh, me?" The person looked down at its shirt. "Oh, I'm her

man, I guess," it said in reference perhaps to the—FART

"Excuse me."

The conga procession walked by with a baby at its head.

"Take the bus."

"...seriously."

"...a bigger thing."

"They say that digestion is the key to sustainability."

"I love you."

Groan. Enough already. You see, when you stare into the sun, sometimes your eyes start to bleed.

"Could I get the, uh, check?"

Well, you know what they say, local first, organic whenever possible, always with aloha. FART. Sorry, it would appear that coffee gives me gas. I once said that America gives me gas. I said, "America gives me gas. Patriotism makes me queasy. I ain't no goddamn patriot. I *ain't* no goddamn patriot." But you, you, of course, can be whatever it is that you choose to be.

Kleev looked at the sign. "CARNIVAL. FOOD, FUN, PRIZES," she read. She stood in front of the Family Entertainment Center and looked over at the Academy of Dance. As her consciousness snapped on, she farted respectfully into a brick wall. BOOM BOOM BOOM CRASH. BOOM BOOM BOOM CRASH. Well, she thought to herself, consider it delivered, whatever you dream.

Okay, okay. Now, let's just say, perhaps, that you were running out of good will, and turned towards the ocean to begin your long journey into the valley, and you looked down to the curb and spotted a pink ticket stub that said, "GHOSTBUSTERS." Ah, now that the scene is set, let us embark.

Mouse finished climbing Ladder Number Five and came face to face with an advertisement, not to mention the repressive police vehicle that was heading around the corner, whose mere existence still had that same enraging effect. Odd, that. I must have chose poorly, thought Mouse. But, then again, that triangle etched in the ground must mean *something*. He continued on, one square at a time.

"Could I get a Statistical Probability Analysis on that?!" shouted Rose into the wind. The Analysis Engineer (who happened to be Ged's old buddy Burger) looked down at the patterned boxes that were etched on the side of the newsprint that lay to the side of their path.

"Well, hmm," said Burger, "it says carrot, but they spell it with a 'k', like the descriptive term used for evaluating levels of gold. I might need to check with a specialist to get you an accurate reading."

Rose looked at the pathways to their fore. "Just get us in the ballpark. I'll..." BEEP BEEP

They all turned to see the lone rider pull up on their rear. She came, perhaps, out of nowhere, or, perhaps, from just down the road (metaphorically speaking). A Royal Transport crossed over their heads. A bolt of lightning came across their bow. All of a sudden, things were getting crowded in the old Interstate System.

"You know," said Quantum as he walked onto the shaky deck, "this reminds me of an old story about my old friend Jelly Bean." Somewhere nearby, a gecko crawled into a multidimensional structure composed of circles and crosses. If you look closely, you might even be able to see its tail.

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He counted one dead frog.

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After the ritual bath, the couple placed their order at the market. It was order number 65, which was the same number that he had counted when counting the number of black iron bars on the window to his, um, well, soul, I guess. A thought about the completely imaginary nature of math drifted into a thought about that book that the author had written as a child about the alien that had found himself in a foreign land and found that his innate skill set was well-suited to a career in this land's professional sporting events league. This is, for some reason, somehow related to lions.

"Remind me again, what did you get?"

"Special pancakes."

"Oh, that's nice."

A bell rang. It rang, again.  
"Number seventy-three!!"  
It was, once again, time to get low.

With only four moons left afore the double new year,<sup>46</sup> there was still much work to be done. There is much to prepare, you know, for the living of a life marked by the absence of war.

"Come on," chided Jeju<sup>47</sup> to her gaggle of wide-eyed youngsters. "You gotta sing loud if you want to end war and stuff." The chorus broke into another refrain of that popular song that had been passed on through their ancestors.

"Oooh, baby, baby..."

Sybil stood by the dried up lake, no ripples in sight. But hark, what is that in the distance? Do you hear the sweet sound of those jumping fleas? The cast and crew began their great dance, as that Moloka'i music floated in on the breeze.

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46 Yes, indeed, we have managed to somehow find ourselves abutting yet another confluence of holy days.

47 The daughter of Marshall Islands. See book 1 of the series for her introduction.

## Chapter 12:

Like the real spacecrafto, these models  
are very fragile : Please look, but  
DON'T TOUCH!

"Thank you, youngsters." Ged swallowed the last byte. "That was a delicious meal."

"'Ae, maika'i."

"Run for your life. Run for your life. Run for your liiife!"

Starfruit littered the grounds. But perhaps that is not an accurate depiction of how they lay. The Rainbow Shuttle rounded the corner as she waited for the light to change. She was following your hillbilly guide to El Dorado. Again. She peered over the edge.

"You might say that a river is like a flower, inasmuch as it flows."

Kleev turned and smiled. "I did not expect to see you here," she said, "but then again, I rarely do."

His shadow passed under the black shadow of a picket fence. They turned another corner and headed towards the yellow gate. She counted five birds and two humans. The wind began to blow.

They walked past the newly raised beds. Kleev stooped to check the label of an old, faded tennis ball. "Penn 3," it read. As they stepped over the cowgate and into the parking lot, Kleev felt a burst of electricity. Perhaps she was struck by lightning. Across the sea, she could see her old friend's hālau hula practicing their steps in preparation for what could only be a grand performance.

"Well," said Kleev, "do you carry for me another message?"

"Let's talk in the library tent. It's much cooler inside."

They walked past the delivery-mobile that had delivered to Kleev the invitation that brought her to this very carnival. She looked at the

temporary street sign. It said, "No Way." She smiled at some of her new friends, and they walked into the library.

Many things happened while they were under the tent. Such an amount of people, there were. Such conversations were had. A basement there even was. This is some carnival, thought Kleev.

Marranzano finished watching the motion picture about the unicorns that did not know that they were unicorns, but clearly were. It was full of puzzles, but. The window was open. The curtain was dancing with the breeze. Georgia was watching a different motion picture in the other room. It was a fairy tale. Perhaps, if you squint, you might even be able to see it, still.

*And how is the reading going? Oh, much better, but I still haven't finished the book. No need, for you see, you are the end of the story.*

"Okay, okay, so the manual has very clear instructions here."

"You are not the boss of me, you know."

"The first thing that you do, wait let me see, yes, the first thing that you do is take a bath."

"Yawn."

"And the next thing that you do..."

"First things first."

Marz walked into the showers. Somebody yawned. Because tired. Because, please remind us, what the -BLEEP- is going on? Please, remind us.

"Peace and justice."

"Oh yeah. Thanks."

"You are welcome."

END SCENE

*Three six nine twelve fifteen eighteen...a little baby...magic number.*

"Rut row, Georgia," Marz dug his claws into the armrests, "hold

onto your equilibrium. Here comes the twister."

As the balloon began to inflate, the passengers cautiously peeked out over the rail of their expertly woven basket. Such a landscape, they beheld. Such possibility. Well, they thought (simultaneously), ready or not, here we come.

Marshall Islands welcomed Georgia and Marz with a new year's blessing and filled them in on the latest happenings. The repressive police force had broken the barricade between McLaw Street and The Avenue of Warm-heartedness. Funny, Marz thought, how the opening of pathways could be seen as an act of liberation or an act buttressing the forced hegemony of a monomaniacal culture, depending on the time and place. Yasmin pushed her way through the crowd.

"I've got a message from Gracie."

Ah, it seems that there were more updates to run, for the third day in a row.

"...and there is a new stable release for our Semantic Web Transport Devices."

"Rose should like that one," said the omniscient voice in our head.

"How long until these get implemented?" asked Marshall.

"Well," thought Yasmin, "I would think they should be finished before Albert starts his sermon."

Marshall looked at Georgia. "You've got some sort of knack for timing, eh?" She grinned up through her eyeballs. Marshall continued, "I'll go let my crew know to hold off on making any readings until we get confirmation on that security update to the Network Security Service libraries."

Marz shuffled through the spectacle. Interesting, he thought, I had been waiting on that update to the GRand Unified Bookloader. The infinite recursion that occurred with each failure of translation was driving him almost human. He chuckled to himself. Okay, okay, he thought. Serious things a-happening. Let's not lose sight of what is important. Which is, um, let me check my notes.

"We don't have time for this," barked the neighborhood dog,

whose name was...Roof-roof-roof Ruf-ruf-ruf, Jr., Esq. III.

"Tweet tweeet tweet, tweeeeeeeet, tweet tweet."

The two talking entities continued their conversation. Somebody gave Albert the nod and the yearly knowledge transfer was underway.

"As you all know, I do not put much stock in these questions of ethical conduct as constrained to the narrow framework of The Law. But, value there is, in asking ourselves for judgment, with vision free of blinders, on the fundamental questions of Right and Wrong, and on the question of whether we shall Live or whether we shall Die. Now, this all reminds me of an old colleague of mine from my years spent wandering the desert. Let me read to you from this book of letters..."

"So, there I was, sitting on the old shitbox, staring at this new puzzle that recently arrived in the, uh, mailbox, and, well, wouldn't you know it, but I broke the code."

"Ooh, you are always breaking things."

"Anyway, it's an alphabetical matrix where the letters I and J are treated as the same letter. But, um, we still haven't completed the puzzle."

"Does it matter?"

"I don't have access to that answer. But aren't you curious as to what the key-word turned out to be?"

"I suppose. Well?"

"Harvesting."

Dictionary 3.4.0 has this to say about Harvesting:

Harvest *Har*"*vest*, v. t. [imp. & p. p. Harvested; p. pr. & vb. n. Harvesting.]  
To reap or gather, as any crop.  
[1913 Webster]

-- From The Collaborative International Dictionary of English v.0.48

Which brings us to our next topic, **What Do You Think That We Are Doing Here?**

Rolling along. He just keeps rolling along.  
Who?  
Old man river. He just keeps rolling along.  
Tell us again about your friend, Mr. Hill.  
You mean Joe?  
Yeah, the dead one.  
Oh, we don't die, we organize.

Jacob hung up the communication device. Thematically, he thought thoughts about the conversation he just had with his grand father. He thought thoughts about his grand mother (the other one). He thought about life and death, tradition and change. He thought a bit about love. About this, he thought some more.

"Five percent and growing."  
"Can you give us an estimate?"  
"I'd say, fourteen maybe, fourteen after one. Make that fifteen."  
"Patience. Patience."  
"Can we bring it all together?"  
"Unknown. Let's try the next track."  
"It's a family tune. We might as well sing along."  
"Latkes?"  
"No, not yet. Wait for it. Now!"  
Rose walked into a bar. It was a space bar, naturally.

*The digital won't let me go...CLICK...I don't like you, but I love you. Seems like I'm always thinking of you...CLICK...I bought a borrowed suit and learned to dance...CLICK...[unintelligible]...CLICK*

"You're tuned in to [your favorite wavelength on the electromagnetic wave distributor] and we are broadcasting live from the Lion's Den. We get plenty honey cake and, hey! what are those

monkeys doing?"

Rose caught the bartender's eye and the bartender excused herself from her conversation with the green-suited reptilian character to Rose's right, and walked over to Rose, smiling.

"Long time, no see."

"If you say so." Rose poured herself a drink of sweet red liquid out of the communal bottle. She could hear snippets of conversation in the background.

"...the roots remain as real as..."

"...e wehe 'oe..."

Rose looked to the wall. It was 24 o'clock.

"...did you see the book that Flower wrote?..."

"...happy new year!..."

"Hey," said the bartender, "give me a second. We are about to merge."

Rose nodded and took a sip.

"...and we are broadcasting live, straight out of the Horse's Mouth. We have giveaways all night long if you happen to be in the area..."

"So," said the bartender, "you working?"

Rose bobbed her head in various directions and took another sip. "You could say that." She looked to her right and to her left. She leaned into the bar. "We are putting together a scavenger party. You want in?"

"...so you can make me come. That doesn't make you..."

"...and the score was tied. Did I mention that part..."

The bartender smiled.

"Shift! Okay Lucy, you're off."

The bartender took off her apron. "Okay, Rose, you heard the man. Finish off your drink. I'm about ready to move on."

Ged returned the violin to its shelf. It wasn't getting much exercise, but it was alive, still. The wind and rain were welcome additions to the party. Of course, Ged was not entirely sure if she was still a party member herself, what with the arbitrary designations of demarcations and all, but, um, type type type type. Drip drop drip drop drip. Pitter patter pitter patter. And on and on and on.

*Say what you want. Don't say it out loud.*

But don't make the mistake of thinking that I am talking to *you*. Don't you know satire when you see it? Oy veh. You're always so late. Didn't you get the invitation? There were specific instructions regarding time. Wait a minute. What's that Rose is doing? Is that the cha cha cha?

"So are you implying that more words does not make it better? That this is just a bunch of needless gibberish? That we have already said everything that needs to be said?"

"Yes. And that you should be applying more active learning techniques into your philosophy of information service."

"Well, do we get any last words?"





## Chapter 13: And Still We Dance

The walking man brushed the toe of his sneaker against the fuzzy light green ball. "ProPenn 1," it said. He looked in the bag that he was carrying that contained his umbrella. Well, technically speaking, it wasn't *his* umbrella, per se. You see, they actually met in Vietnam, which, funnily enough, was the direction in which he was currently heading. "Hey, didn't we tell you no more words?" said the voice in his head that he was trying to ignore. He took a seat on the hillside as he watched a School Bus pass by on a crowded road. He listened to the birds. A gray plastic bag tumbled down a hill. Well, I've had quite about enough of that, he thought to himself. He decided that it was about time for to let the birds direct traffic, what with their superior viewpoint and all.

"Justice and The Eternal Smile are due in two days time."

"Ah, I see. Thank you."

He walked out the door.

"That's a lot to deliver," said his imaginary friend, whose name, for some unexplained reason, happened to be Taylor.

"Oh you. Stop making sense already. What did I tell you about the future?"

### **THE FUTURE WILL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF**

(but that's no excuse for you not to do your part (don't be so goddamn lazy))

Where were we? It would seem that we keep shifting in and out of some larger story. KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK



*Of course.*

"According to the clock, it appears to be just about fart-thirty or so."

"Is that more rain?"

Ged washed her hands in the basin (the wash basin). She gently scratched an itch in her crotch area. But I suppose you do not need to know the entirety of her private business. So we'll skip ahead to the relevant bits and pieces. There was a User Experience Committee meeting later in the day. Somebody had notes to prepare.

"If this is a party, then why is everybody working so hard?"

"Working hard, or hardly working?"

The audience groaned. Goddamn it! they thought (all of them thought this). They got back on their horses. "Strike!!"

The editor looked up from its cubicle. It pondered the utility of assigning directionality when—due to its being trapped inside of a box—it could not honestly state its relative location. The editor floated through the universe, an ache in the upper-right quadrant of its backside. The editor was attempting to attach endnotes to a scientific treatise. The editor was doubting this activity's utility to *The Nation*. The editor had responsibilities, but. The editor was trying to change the world.

"Hey, could someone bless these seeds I sow? Please?"

So then, where are we in this narrative? Do you remember? I seem to have lost my place. Let's see. There were various characters going about, doing things, etc. But is this in any way relevant to the world you find yourself living in? Sure, sure, they say, listen to your patrons, they say, listen to what *they* want. But you know quite well that this is not advice that I follow (as a rule). No, the entire point of this communication, the, um, impetus, shall we say, is that there is a specific exigency that is prompting it into existence. And we think that it has something to do with justice, which, of course, has something to do with *The Other*. The turquoise coated youths walked down Rainbow Avenue on their way to pick up the children

and ferry them to their afternoon spent in the confines of The Language School. I walked back into the house in which I currently dwell. Thinking thoughts, I scratched my head. My finger shook. The wind blew. An instrumental filled the air with music. These facts may or may not be relevant to your understanding of the story. I know, I know, we have limited time to get all of our thoughts recorded before [death]. So, why do we waste our time with such frivolous details? Why do we do anything at all? [please hold] We ate our [specific type of] beans. We listened to the orchestra play that song titled The Impossible Dream (The Quest). But do you know what is impossible? Nothing.

Let me tell you a story. Oh, wait, I suppose that is what I've been doing this whole time. Time is a holistic entity. Time does not exist. Time is a crock of shit. Let me tell you a story.

"Let me tell you a story," I said (to you). You were, of course, the protagonist of this story, which was about—more or less—time, metaphorically speaking. "But don't let me confuse you with my punctuation," said the Human Computer to the Non-Human Entity that also happened to be a computer. The Non-Human Entity (or NHE in the parlance of those who are wont to abbreviate such things) and the Human Entity (who, at this juncture in time-space, was not entirely sure it *was* a human) were having a conversation. "Try and see it my way," said the one. "Life is very short and there is no time for fussing and fighting, my friend," said the other. It was time to flip the record. "Do you hear that?" said Ged. "What is it?" asked Marranzano. "It's the sound of silence."

"No," said Marz, "I think that might be your father."

Marz and Ged were in Nashville.<sup>49</sup> They were listening to country music. But which country was it from? It was another mystery.

"Hello? Is anybody there?"

Well, I certainly wasn't expecting to see *you* here, is a thought that floated through the 'verse. "Wait, wait, hold on a second," said the editor, waving its hands in the air. "How many 'verses do we have in this story? 'Cause I am noticing some inconsistency in our

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49 This is obviously a flashback (or flash-forward) to that trip that was hinted at in book 1 of this series (**A New Nation**) on pages 9, 12, 24, and 69.

terminology."

"Well, that's what we pay you for," said The Karmic Rewards Dispersement Officer with a smirk.

Ged rolled her eyes. "Goddamn it," she muttered. She looked at Marz. "My mutter, um, my mother was a Tailor," she said, out loud.

"How interesting," said the disembodied voice.

Marz screamed. "This is hurting my head something awful. I'm gonna pour myself a drink." He turned his head and made eye contact with Ged. He shuffled off towards the kitchen.

Later...

"So, how is your sister?"

"Brother."

"Yeah, how is he doing?"

"You know, I really wasn't expecting to see you here."

"Yet here I am."

"I suppose."

Now, supposing that this was a story that I was telling. And, um, well...

[The End]

Well, how was that? Hmmm...You're right. We can do better. Shall we try again?

Cat looked at her father. She thought about her mother. There was something substantial happening. There was some fundamental fact that was poking at her brain, just outside of her reach. It had something to do with children. She said, "Enough!" A dog barked. It was barking for her. There was something coming down the road. A buzzer buzzed in the distance. Cat re-placed herself into her surroundings. She turned her head. She rubbed her eyebrows. She took a deep breath. She dove back into her mind.

"Psst. Psst." The Electric Brain of the Rainbow had something to say. It was a footnote.<sup>50</sup>

"I don't get it."

"Open my translation device, please."

"Okay. Uhhh. I am having literacy deficiencies. Hmmm. I don't know."

"Third base."

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50 **Harry Rag** from *something else* by The Kinks

Ged ran her fingers through her hair. It was now the present time. She stuck a finger in her ear. She was digging for something. Was it gold? She shifted her crotch. It was time to flip the record.

"Acceptable."

"We are. We came close."

"Yeah."

"I will be green and see you."

"Yeah, I'll see you...somewhere."

The wind blew. Was anybody feeding the compost?

*...the difference between the sprout and the bean. It is a golden ring. It is a twisted string...It's a funny thing.*

"Eh. Fuck 'em all."

----

Generic needed to find a goat. For you see, there was this ritual, passed down from his father's father's father's, well, you'd have to go back even father than that I suppose. Let's just say that there was this ritual that had been passed on that had something to do with placing all of the sins of your community on the head of a goat and sending that goat off into the wilderness. But, um, first, Generic thought, the first thing he should probably do is take a bath (a ritual bath).

Well, I suppose the wilderness ain't that baaaad, thought the goat. It sure is one heavy load to carry, though. Good thing I got me one strong digestive system in this stomach of mine. The goat started eating his burden as he walked through the wilderness, as his community sat in their house of congregation, praying to their imaginary gods. In the day to come, the goat would be eating for two (so to speak). The goat walked through the wilderness. The rain continued to fall.

"That was alright, yeah?" Ged leaned her instrument against the wall. "It's been a while since we performed for an audience."

Marz nodded, slightly. He returned his cello to its case. "Yeah, we hit a groove that time." He thought thoughts in his head.

"Sometimes you hit that groove, you know?"

"Yeah," said Ged, "but does it make a difference? In the scheme of things?"

"Well, you know what they say," interjected the Elephant, "Things always be scheming."

Which reminds us, how was that plan coming along? You know, the *plan*. Remember?

The shovel finished digging the plot. It was now a thing. The plot, that is. But, um, why don't you tell us what *you* know?

"Did you hear that?"

"What was it? Some kind of rumbling?"

"Zed, is that your stomach again?"

"Grumble grumble grumble."

"Oh, Zed."

The rain continued to fall.

The rain continued to fall.

The rain continued to fall.

## Chapter 14: All Night Long

Generic sat at the bar, sipping the yellow green liquid out of the encharactered mug. He was waiting on his order of fried gizzards. He was eating for four (so to speak). The View Screen was displaying a sporting event from a distant land. It somehow involved branded umbrellas, which were obviously somehow related to an intra-consciousness voice identification system, although Generic wasn't entirely clear on how. He was thinking about life and death. He was thinking about sacrifice. He was thinking about the price of things, and whether or not things were worth the price that you pay. Generic sipped his hot tea.

"It's not your decision to make."

Generic looked over his shoulder. Earlier in the day, as he came upon the kava festival, as the children of The Outsiders ran around in their silly imperial costumes, ineptly playing their ridiculous war games on its borders, Generic tried to keep the rage of witnessing the profound disrespect of those games from drowning out that kīpuka that was the festival. He had watched the toy soldiers scarper off towards the sea and entered the bounds of the festival, letting the music wash over him. Quantum Jitters sat down to his right.

"The Temporal Disturbance Waves are subsiding. Thought you might want to know. I like your hat, by the way."

Generic sipped his tea.

"More noodles, I see," observed Quantum, vocally. He popped the last pregnant fish into his mouth and smiled. "Garble garble garble garble garble," he said. He swallowed. "Where's your partner?"

"Off with The Happy Work Volunteers. She thought they could do with some self-focused celebration."

"She fix that bicycle of hers?"

Generic nodded, wistfully. No, scratch that. Perhaps it was absentmindedly that he nodded. Well, let's just say that, as he nodded, his mind was somewhere other than the bar of The Food and Beverage Establishment where he drank his tea. And this (somehow) had something to do with bicycles, which, of course, was then some kind of metaphor having to do with souls, bodies, and consciousnesses, although Generic still wasn't entirely clear on the particulars. "Did you say something about Reality Waves?"

Quantum Jitters smiled, patted Generic on the shoulder. Quantum Jitters patted Generic on his head, and scuffled his hair. "Anyway, when you're all done digesting your meal, you might want to gather the crew. I think we are about ready to ship off to The Other Side."

Generic sipped his tea. Generic thought about hard decisions. Generic thought about sin and judgment and solidarity. Generic thought about redemption. An arm intruded upon the scene. Generic reached out and grabbed his bowl of gizzards. "Check, please."

"I wouldn't call them nowhere plans. And I wouldn't say that I was making them for nobody."

The flying ant crawled down the writer's arm and over his elbow. She tickled the writer's forearm (sheepishly). She had a message. It was related to death (and life). It was a message of love.

"But, well, the audience, um, I, uh, let's say that I have my doubts about its existence."

"Line!"

"What?"

"What's my next line?"

The Narrator shuffled onto the stage. "Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen (and germs), there seems to be some confusion as to the nature of our existence." She held up a corkscrew, looked at it, put it down. "Ah, I think it's a twist-off." She took hold of the cylinder and turned its mushroom-shaped lid. "Pop!" said the bottle. The narrator scratched her head. "Clearly, there is something happening." She paused. She looked at her surroundings. "Yes, yes, something is indeed happening. But, if a tree does a funny dance in a forest, which is, by all objective measures, quite humorous, but nobody outside of the forest laughs, because the forest encompasses the

entirety of reality, and also, let's say that it appears that there is no clear motivation for this dancing, and also, well, I guess my question is, does it make a sound?"

"Chirp-chirp chirp-chirp chirp-chirp. Chirp-chirp chirp-chirp chirp-chirp. Chirp-chirp chirp-chirp chirp-chirp chirp-chirp."

The crickets continued their chirping. And we decided to take a nap. Because, well, tired.

And up we woke. More editing, please. Map your sources, please. The story continued.

"I didn't know that you were a surfer, Rose."

"Ah, I'm not," said Rose. "But, um, you might say that I find use in the metaphor." Rose looked to the doorway. "Oh," she said, "have you two met? Sybil, Lucy. Lucy, Sybil."

Cat sat on the couch, staring hard at the ink patterns on the page, waiting for reality to blink. She looked up from her book. She noted her surroundings, which were composed of specific colors, which she also noted. She resumed her reading (of the book). Sybil, Lucy, and Rose had a specific conversation. Words were involved. The room began to shake. If you were not paying attention, you might not have even noticed. But you *were* paying attention.

"Has anyone seen Broomstick?"

Broomstick crossed the road. It had been a long journey.

*I been tired. I been tired. I been tired. I been tired. I been tired.*

The cat jumped over the gardens of Dominance and Submission and darted down the banks of the river. He ignored the sirens in the distance and continued on with an almost single-minded purposefulness. Broomstick paused slightly as he became aware of the uninvited presence in his mind. He made a sweeping motion with his claw and bounded into the brush, out of sight.

Need more input. Blink. Need more input. Blink. Need more input. Blink. It appears that we have come full circle (again), relatively speaking.<sup>51</sup> Allow us to present, for your listening pleasure, The Band That Used Time Signatures, performing music from their popular album, *Jupiter*. Error. Error. Error. Error. Error. Yawn. Error. Error. Error. Error. Quantum Jitters chewed his nails. He had no patience for sitting around in circles, speaking to questions such as "Who inspires you?" Quantum Jitters scratched the places between his feet and his legs. Another brick in the wall, he thought. Yet another senseless wall, he thought. Quantum Jitters spit into his orange spittoon. "Learn your lessons, people. For when the time comes, you will need to act with a crystal mind."

"How old is your daughter?" asked Rose.

"Oh, she is a specific number of time units of life experience old," answered ERROR ERROR ERROR ERROR ERROR ERROR

"Could someone check on—Marz? Is that you? When did you get here?"

Marz walked into the room like the armadillo that he was. "Does anyone know if there is some meter that we have to feed? The Yellow Submarine parked itself just upstream of the house. And, um...what is that noise?"

*There is something in the way.*

"Hey. Hey! I don't have much time left." Benny huffed and puffed. "Remember that message? You know, from before? Well, I got a response." Benny walked over to the shade, and collapsed. "Just give me a second to catch my breath."

As the Peace Workers came in from their shifts in the field, they, um, I don't know. I don't know what they did. I don't have access to this information. Not quite omniscient, we am. Not quite omniscient, indeed. Things were on the verge of falling apart (when viewed from a certain perspective). Which reminds us, wasn't The Demolition Derby Carnival, somewhere in this vast galaxy of galaxies, in full swing? Perhaps we better transition to this other storyline. I think your tickets should include the price of the transfer. Toot toot. TOOT TOOT! Well, all aboard, then.

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51 Is That All There Is To A Fire? ([Rune Soup](#))

"Goddamn!"

"Fuck!"

"Is that all there is?"

Some bullshit was happening. Yep, that's right. More bullshit. Now, for your audiovisual pleasure, we present Kleev Erndi Sells Her Ideas In A Respectful Manner.

Kleev Erndi walked into the room. She was outdoors. It was an amphitheater. She remembered where she came from.<sup>52</sup> She took a deep breath. Why? Why did she take a deep breath if she is just a fictional character created out of the imagination of another fictional character, if she is an entity whose continued existence does not require any sort of conscious act of breath taking? Your rules do not apply to this 'verse, she thought. She scratched her shoulder, extraneously. Whittle it down! screamed a voice in her head. She reached into her memory. She pulled out a working definition of Carnival. She ripped a tear in the [wallpaper]. Can you feel it?

"When violence rules the world outside, and the headlines make me want to run and hide, it is not the time to just keep quiet. Speak up. One time. Tear it back." Kleev was speaking out loud. "Now, these words ain't mine, just something I learned in the land of my birth, while utilizing the technology that we called The Public Library. But I did not come here to bore you with my personal baggage, to put you to sleep with the story of my hard-boiled luck. I came here to sell to you a specific set of ideas. Excuse me, I need to take a piss."

There were various levels of attention-paying that Kleev was able to detect as she attempted to locate a respectful site on which to urinate. Out of those who were even aware that she was speaking, there were a limited number that actually heard any of the words that she bespoke. But she had noticed a switch that had turned in most of those that had. She noticed some eyes looking at her as she followed the directions that had been pointed out to her by those who seemed to know the way. "No justice, no peace," she said as she continued

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52 **HEX SIGNS** By Richard E. Maltby Jr. (with acknowledgments to Lascia of The Listener) from HARPER'S MAGAZINE DECEMBER 2013, p.103

on. "That's the gist of it, anyway. I'll extrapolate after I pee," she called over her shoulder. Nothing to lose, she had. We had everything to gain. A familiar tune drifted into her head and she looked through the foliage to see that same band that was playing during that party Georgia had taken her to, back during the big Holy Day Confluence of one year back. Relieved, Kleev decided to dance a slow, powerful dance. But enough bullshit, thought Kleev, as she stepped over a medium-sized pile of bullshit. She made eye contact with the clarinetist and danced off, back towards the amphitheater. A crowd had gathered. She noticed a poster on the wall that depicted a human in a cowboy hat. It had a familiar look to it, of course. All of a sudden a cat pounced onto the stage and slid past Kleev. It dug its claws into the flooring and brought itself to a halt. It had a key wrapped around its neck. It caught Kleev's eyes with its own. It thought into Kleev's mind. My name is Broomstick, it said, and I come bearing gifts from the Other Side. It's a fact.

"Curiouser and curiouser," Kleev said to herself, quietly.

"Speak up!"

"Don't ever whisper!"

"Curiouser and curiouser," Kleev repeated to herself, more loudly this time, in case there was anyone that wanted hear. "We cannot lose," she said, turning towards the crowd. "We cannot. We will not submit to this law." She winked at the cat, who was rubbing itself on the podium. Oh, a podium, thought Kleev. I didn't notice that before.

Slim started to walk off towards the food tents. "I think I've seen this one before," he said to his companions. "I'm going for a walkabout." He exited the amphitheater with a satisfied feeling. He thought about his old friend Ged, and as he turned the corner she materialized in his viewplane.

"Haven't seen you around in a while," he said.

Ged smiled. She looked at Frank. A well of emotions bubbled up through her eyes. She smiled, deeply.

"It's the nature of the 'verse, you know. Whenever you breathe out, I breathe in." Slim pointed back towards the theater. "Interesting idea-seller back there. You two might get on." He turned towards the donkey. "Frank."

"Slim," said Frank, returning the acknowledgment.

"Is that Cuban music?" asked Ged, nodding towards the tents. "I

heard that the Official Food Inspector studied cooking techniques in Cuba."

A passerby interjected herself into the conversation. "The song is called Lluvia. It's a song about the rain. The piano player is from the Caribbean, I think."

*When I was just a little child. Happiness was there a while. And from me, it slipped one day. Happiness, come back, I say.*

"And if you don't come, I'll have to come looking. For happiness, that is." Kleev paused. She looked at the faces in the crowd. "So that's what he said to himself, knowing full well the danger of the roads on which he was to travel. But, anyway, that's the point, right? It's not like we have anything better to do."

"I always thought that *you* would be *my* audience," Ged said to Kleev, after Kleev's speechifying was done (for the day), after they had been introduced to each other. "You know, I spent most of my youth *mapping* coincidence."

Kleev smiled. "You look like your brother, you know. Just a little in the essence of your being."

"I found that essence rare," said Frank as he quietly hee-hawed to himself. "Sorry to interrupt, but there is a transportation issue I wanted to discuss with Ged."

"It's nice work if you can get it. And you can get it, if you try."

It was later that night. The bonfires had started.

"So you used my notes as some sort of map? And they were useful?" Ged poked Frank in his ribs. See, she said, with her poking. She smiled. Kleev looked at her fellow travelers and sipped her mind-altering tea. Some dogs barked. Some birds tweeted. This is a recurring theme, perhaps. Perhaps we are stuck in some sort of rut. Ged looked at Kleev and noticed the look of someone trying to tease out the knots of a multi-dimensional puzzle. Their minds synced. Broomstick walked up to the fire, and purred.

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It was a mental institution that I found myself in. An institution of the mind, from which, apparently, I could not escape. Apparently.

**Apparently**<sup>53</sup>

Apparently *Ap\*par"ent\*ly*, adv.

1. Visibly. [Obs.] --Hobbes.

[1913 Webster]

2. Plainly; clearly; manifestly; evidently.

[1913 Webster]

If he should scorn me so apparently. --Shak.

[1913 Webster]

3. Seemingly; in appearance; as, a man may be apparently friendly, yet malicious in heart.

[1913 Webster]

Yet still, this hunger I have. Haunts me it does, all night long. Damn this wild young heart. The rain began to fall (or was it just the wind?). The party-goers, who had momentarily forgotten the celebratory fact at the core of their existence, began again to circulate (perhaps it was their second wind?). But why, if all and all is true, does this world continue to spin in its decidedly unpleasant, ensickening motion? Enough is enough is enough. As I sit here, writing these words (thought the writer, as he brushed his hair behind his ear), I wrestle with a subjectively objective subjectivity. No, that is not what I wrestle with (I did not intend to say, so to speak, that I wrestle with unparseable bullshit). But perhaps that is *exactly* what it is. Everything that we say, bullshit bullshit. The beauty of it all is just salt in the wound. Until you submit in glorious splendor. The writer waited for time to move forward, incrementally. Stuck, he was, in this all-encompassing totality. It was time for brunch.

"Nurse, might I trouble you for some medicine?"

Cat dug her left finger, her left pointer finger, her pointy left-hand

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53 Dictionary 3.4.0

finger, into her left ear, and whittled away the waxy buildup that was preventing her from living in a reality that was not the reality that she was currently living in. They say that you cannot stop being what you are, because, if you change what you are, well then that's what you are, and then you are what you are again. The ragtag crew was all a-flutter with *activity*. *Things* were happening. Specific *things*. They were waiting on their respective rides, getting ready to go outside, and scavenge. This was somehow part of some sort of *plan* that had not been made entirely clear to Cat, yet she found herself going along for the ride, nevertheless. I mean, it wasn't like she had anything better to do, am I right?

"Hey Rose, did you see my brown shoe?"

Cat went back to reading her book, which was about Cowboys and Aliens. This was a different book than the one previously mentioned.<sup>54</sup> She was currently reading five different books. Well, seven, if you count the detective story.

"I'm certain it has something to do with liver and sprouts sandwiches."

Everything is illustrative, thought Cat. Even the mind garbage that patently has naught to do with our social reality. My inner monologue sounds slightly off, she thought. Stop messing with the innards of my mind, she warned. You know, just in case someone happened to be doing that. She put down her book and picked up the other one. The one about the human that had his consciousness replaced with the consciousness of another. There was some overlap occurring. She thought about horses. Music began to play. It was almost time.

"For what? I don't know. But somebody sure as hell does."

The librarian was no longer a librarian. He had officially passed the invisible baton of librarianship to the other librarian, the librarian of the future, who was, syntagmatically speaking, not him. But this was irrelevant. There was a plot under foot.

"You want to meet at Murphy's?"

"Sure, but is transportation going to be an issue?"

"Of course. It's the latest genre of movie that everybody is talking about. Transportation Movies. These days it's all about trans-

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54 See page 73 of this book.

portation. You know, movies that are about moving the audience from one place to another."

"What are you on about? I'm not talking about the motion picture that you and Bobblehead are dreaming up. I am talking about how, in this palpably real world, we are all going to be able to get from point A to point B. Why are you so gosh darn non sequitur-ish all the time? All of the gosh darn time."

"Sorry. It is due to my brain, I think."

A royal blue 'mobile rolled into the lot.

"That's my ride. I'll communicate with you in an alternate time period."

"See you...soon!"

"Mushrooms, clipper ships, and the land of 10,000 lakes."

The Public House View Screens were displaying propaganda from the Imperial Army, which was weird, because, public space, right? There had been an increased outreach campaign as of late from the dying empire. Let's hope it would be a last gasp effort and that the New Nation would not have to suffer such indignities much longer. A couple of various-sized Academy children walked through the door. The Academy water closets were closed again, and the Pub's restrooms were serving double duty. Annie sipped her hot tea. "Where's Georgia?" she asked.

"Did you hear about the latest action? They shut down the road to the Piko."

"I'll have a [hot drink associated with a specific nation-state]."

"Are you guys drinking?"

Annie sipped her hot tea.

"It's a win. Well, the struggle will continue, but I'd call it a win."

The rowdy group of Peace Workers and Sovereignty Activists ate their food substances and drank their liquid drinks, and debated loudly the fine points of dictionaries, decision making, and denial. And of the plan? What of the plan? What was the purpose to this gathering? Georgia Murphy sat in between Benny and the Cataloger.

"That's a new Entrance Engineer, ain't it?"

Benny rested his head on the table as the Cataloger furiously wrote his regular-sized notes in his tiny notebook. There was some important information that they felt the need to preserve. And if I am not mistaken, it appears to somehow be related to this here series of

books.<sup>55</sup>

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55 You are currently reading from the 4th book in this particular series (of books).

## Chapter 15: All Things Must Die

This, of course, includes cops and empires and advertising executives. Perhaps we are not speaking clearly. Perhaps there are things that you are afraid of. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why. It is not as if we are asking you to do anything dangerous. The way that things are is not the way that things should be. And this is unacceptable. Period. End of sentence. Next paragraph.

So, here we are, at the start of this new paragraph. Has anything changed? My patience is wearing thin. Like some grouchy, old man, I feel myself wanting to lecture about the particular *urgency* of our situation. Do you want another anecdote? Another parable, perhaps? What does it take to get through to you? But seriously folks, how long do you think this party's gonna last?

"Well, if you put it that way."

Albert Cohen was in a room with some powerful individuals. *He* was a fictional character. *They* were an oxymoron. None of this matters. There was some sort of negotiation taking place. This, too, does not matter. There is no such thing as representative democracy, so no need to worry about binding contracts being made in your name. But this was no binding contract that was being discussed. You might even say that the subject under discussion was an *unbinding* contract.

"Calm down, buddy, let's have a drink."

*I turned around and the water was closing all around, like a glove, like the love that had finally, finally found me.*

"And that's the thing about this here machine, you know."

"I suppose."

"Yeah, there's always something."

"I suppose."

Not good enough. Not good enough. Not good enough. You can do better. We can do better. The Youth to Youth in Health choir emptied out of the old broken-down truck, dancing, singing, smiling. "Ooooooh baby, I love you. Ooooooh baby, I need you."

*But that's not the argument I want to make. I want you to choose for goodness sake.*

There was once a time when the public face of this public institution displayed these words in bold letters at the top of one of its informational message boards: **NOBODY IS FREE (BURN THEM PRISONS!!!)** This is, more or less, true. We lost one of our nickels today. This, more or less, is also true. This reminds me of a song. A song about my past and all of the people that I used to know, and all the ones that soon might be dead. But everything dies, you know. It's all just a matter of time. And how you look at things. Sometimes I wish you would see things the way they are meant to be seen. And sometimes I wish that this book would reach its terminal destination. Well, we ain't got it just yet, but we're moving along. We ain't got it just yet, but we're moving along.

*This is love, so we'll survive. This is love, so we'll survive. This is love, so we'll survive. This is love, so we'll survive.*<sup>56</sup>

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56 -The Unicorns

Chapter 16:  
I love it when a flan comes together

It was a sour night.

"You should taste this."

She pushed the goblet across the wooden table. He took a sip.

"It's sour," he said.

It was a sour night.

TASTE ENRICHMENT. EXPLORE OUR CRAFT...Blah blah  
blah.

Ah hell, let's end up on sixteen.



The Party's Over





part II  
(The After-party)



He sat by the tree, waiting. Waiting for the bus.  
The bus stop was bus stop number 4420.

I WANT IT ALL.

"Approved. NEXT!"

RE: TRAINING

Dear Congregational Archive Staff,

We here at Love, Affection, Compassion, Mercy, Sympathy, Pity, Kindness, Sentiment, Grace, and Charity Personal Information Management are honored to have been able to work with your fantastic team. Please let us know if there was anything done to your displeasure, and if there is anything that we could do to rectify the situation. All team members that were involved in active training exercises are entitled to 36 moon cycles of complimentary question asking on any topic related to the informational communication processes discussed during the training period.

Your institution will be billed for 11 person-hours of satisfactory training. Please let us know if you feel that this number (11) is an inaccurate number.

Thank you for your time and engagement.

Sincerely, with love,  
The Management

please insert remainder of book here->

Okay then, we'll continue to give ourselves arbitrary goals so that we can ignore the facts of our existence and postpone the inevitable. Unless you are ready to roll up your sleeves? I'd be ready, but I've already no more sleeves to roll. All my cards are on the table. Except for that ace I'm keeping tucked up my -BLEEP-. But, uh, pardon my [specific language]. So, sometimes I like to [redacted]. But enough about me. Please give us something of substance so that we can shut the fuck up and go back to eating our pea soup.

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**[enter your impossible dreams in space above. i dare you.]**

Sorry, I cannot read your handwriting. You are going to have to spell it out for me in thought bubbles. Oy. This technology is simply not working up to its desired specifications. Okay, okay. There are things we all can do. But, if you actually want things to change, then you will need to put this change at the core of your identity. There will be no going back to your normal life. There be no weekend revolutionaries. If you want to end war and stuff, you've got to sing loud. This is why no speechmaker can give legitimate suggestions of Things That You Can Do to a general audience. Of course, all instances of communication are situationally specific (including this one), and this opens up fantastic possibilities. But then again, this brings us back full circle (or, smaller concentric circle) to that sad, sad, reality that at least one actual Organizer has found to exist in so-called activist, um, circles. The people that speak of super-urgent exigencies—that speak to make others aware—these people do not make time to have actual discussions with others about things that we could do that have a real possibility of making change. I do so like

to imagine that these conversations are occurring off-screen, as this is the only way—outside of some *deus ex machina* machinations—I find possible the existence of the future that I am planning on living in. Well, I suppose there is also the primal unreason of this 'verse that we occupy. But I'd rather not roll those dice if you catch my drift. So here is hoping that we are replicating in a sustainable and respectful manner. Here is hoping for my irrelevance.

Ged shut down the teletype machine, and started to dance. (side-to-side)

"Can you take some dictation?" said the 'verse.

"Well, you're moving kinda fast, but I'll try and get it down."

Rose cracked her knuckles.

"Okay, I'm ready."

The 'verse shrugged. "Oh, sorry, I forgot what I was going to say."

*We're here to record ripples of divinity. Ripples of mathematics. That's really what you're dealing with.*

*They know you have nothing to lose. Because if you had a chance, you would have lost that, too.*

For your current theories to hold their internal consistency, certain premises are required to be true. Recent research has uncovered a previously unknown fact that is in direct opposition to previously assumed facts. Numbers that were thought to match do not, in fact, match. If your theories are going to maintain any predictive power, at least five additional, seemingly non-existent [units] of [stuff] are required to exist (in actuality). But where are these [units]? Why cannot we see them? Do they, in fact exist, or is your entire thought palace truly a house of, um, thought cards? Perhaps your mirrors are fun house mirrors. Perhaps your mirrors are not

reflecting anything at all. Of course, your poorly constructed well might still hold water. There is always the possibility that this 'verse in which we dwell is simply a computational error. END TRANSMISSION

"Mother\*\*\*\*\* sure likes to mix her metaphors."

The author took off its headphones and took a breath. It pondered the age old question of whether or not this story was worth its telling. The author unscrewed its head and placed it on the stool to its rear. It scratched its chest. "Oh shit," it thought, "How am I going to get that thing back on?" The author was experiencing déjà vu. You ever get that feeling that you just broke something that is unfixable and somebody is going to be really angry with you? Well, these things tend to work themselves out. The author rubbed its eyes and looked to its hands, surprised to find that its head was now attached to the rest of its body.

And now we jump to the future and we think about sea monsters. And now we sit in our chair, amidst the particular conundrum that is our life. And we breathe. Because, greedy for life, we are. No, that's not it. That's not it at all. Don't dream too far. Don't lose sight of who you are.

*The ache we feel when reality sets back in.*

No, that's not it at all. Don't wish. Don't start. Wishing only wounds the heart. No, I said. We breathe, because, why not? We breathe, because, habit? Addiction?

*You mustn't kick it around.*

Hold on a second, I do not remember who it is that I am pretending to be. I appear to be existing in particular circumstances that require me to take specific actions. I am trying to solve a puzzle. I am having a staring contest with a particularly stone-faced consciousness. I am holding my head in my hands. I can almost remember something important. I exist, therefore existence. Well,

what I am trying to say, is how can I express, let alone possess. And we come full circle to the beginnings of this particular series (of books) in an arbitrary almost-symmetry that is aesthetically pleasing only inasmuch as you "get the joke".

*Aia i hea nā haumana apau?*<sup>57</sup>

So, what are your thoughts? Are there any particular storylines that you want to see continued? More science? Less fiction? Not enough death and nudity? This is it, you know. The end of the series. The final book. The serial killer. So we better get what it is we came here to get. Marz looked at the screen.

"Not bad, but, um..."

"What?"

"Well," said Marz, "I am not really sure if this puts us in a position to be moving in the direction that we want to go. Wasn't that the entire point of these ramblings?"

"Uh, well, um. I don't know. We are close to something. But I cannot tell if it is relevant or not. Anyway, that should be enough for now. Let's let it simmer."

"Okay, said Marz, "You're the [person currently sitting in the decision-making chair]."

Sybil took off her thinking hat. A booming rhythm commenced its rocking (and its rolling) as the world continued to spin. And what of it? Sybil shook her head. She looked to her sister. It began to rain (again), and we all remembered the pertinent facts of this mission that we were on.

*This is not a metaphor, but a historical fact.*

"Should we go outside?"

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57 Perhaps you still need a translator. "Where are all the students?"

-HA'AWINA 'EIWA : K-Possessives and *Aia* Locational Sentences



INT. RED GINGER CAFE. MIDDAY. AFTER THE STORM.

FADE IN

Audio begins before visuals appear.

PERSON

"I'll have the Dorothy, please. And a coffee. For here."

PAN to left. CLOSE UP of something on the wall. Various conversations blur together. PAN back to counter.

WORKER #1

"We've got one request for a Dorothy."

WORKER #2

(concerned)

"Oh, we do? When did it come in?"

WORKER #1

"Oh, just now."

WORKER #2

(relieved, smiling)

"Oh, great!"

WORKER #1

"Yeah!"

CUT to PERSON sitting at table in corner, reading **A New Nation**. WORKER #1 brings coffee. We watch PERSON drinking coffee and reading book. AUDIO of conversation between three people at table in center of cafe.

OTHER PERSON #1

"Did you get any ideas?"

DIRECTOR bursts onto screen.

DIRECTOR

(upset)

"Wait, wait! That conversation doesn't happen until *later*, in the Baby Awareness store. This is supposed to be the conversation about The Chronicle and the

philosophy department at Boulder,  
Colorado."

PERSON

(puts book down)

"You want to take it from the top?"

DIRECTOR

"What are you talking about? Once your reality has shifted on the landscape, you do realize how much energy it would take to move back over the hill that you just rolled over, don't you?

(turns towards people behind the camera)

"It is an absurd suggestion."

CAMERA spins on its axis. OTHER PERSON #4 walks into the cafe, wearing a raspberry beret. CAMERA follows OTHER PERSON #4 to the counter and continues to spin back to the corner of the room. We all get tired of writing this screenplay. Let's sum up.

Our protagonist sat in the corner, drinking its coffee. And which already-introduced character was playing the role of protagonist today? Let's say it was a member of our scavenging team. One of the scouts perhaps, sent out on a feedback gathering mission to gauge the tangential impact of their goings on. It was, um, Generic. Generic Pae. Okay, let's continue. Generic took a sip from the blank white mug. He conspicuously read his book.

"...So, if you read The Chronicle."

"...They have one of the most renown philosophy departments, in certain fields."

"...Well, you would either like the review very much or not like it very much."

"...It's a test case."

The Delivery Engineer delivered Generic's wrap. Generic gave his thanks. He popped a chip into his mouth. He placed the book on the table.

"...just because it is not overt sexual harassment or discrimination, I mean, if it is something that makes everyone uncomfortable, I think that is not okay."

At this point in time, Generic looked up and counted 14

individual humans (12 female and 2 male) in the café. Good, good, he thought. And such diversity of ancestry. Their Affirmative Action Mechanism seemed to be functioning. It was his preferred form of action, sometimes.

"...so I was an actor on that production *and* a translator. I gave acting direction, too."

BRRP - forty-two hundred characters and counting - BRRP

Generic put his hand over his right ear and clicked off the ... wait a minute. Is that Georgia Murphy that just walked in? Generic pulled the long-brimmed hat down over his face and focused on his plate. He peeked out in Georgia's direction and slyly smiled. Engaged in an animated discussion, she paused briefly as she spotted Generic, and then continued on as if nothing had happened. As her and her companion approached the counter, she winked at Generic.

"Wait a minute, wait a minute!" screamed The Director, waving his hands in the air. "This did not happen at all. In fact, this is pure *fiction*." Generic shrugged a whoops sorry shrug, and continued on with his feedback gathering.

"...seven million doll hairs."

"...not all at once. Not all at once."

"...and my mother, at the time, was very much full of God."

This is one good vegan wrap, thought Generic. I really like this café. It is possible that the chronology is slightly off on these conversational snippets, he noted in his imaginary notebook that was located somewhere in the archival section of his brainspace. He was now, once again, reading from the book of plans and drinking coffee (his second cup). He focused intently on the conversation that was occurring directly in range of his left ear.

"...and the message was great and all. I mean, it was very artistic, very philosophical and intellectual. But I was like, where is the spirit? Where is the holy spirit?"

Generic looked around at the current makeup of the room. People come and people go, he thought. The configuration of tables had changed slightly, but. Generic turned the page in his book.

"...and all of a sudden I was transplanted back to the other church and all of the...sleeping in the pews...up front, playing their music...it was like an amphitheater...the doors open and this white light filled the room...and I heard this clear voice...Awaken the kingdom of prophets. Awaken the kingdom of prophets. Awaken the kingdom of

prophets. Awaken the kingdom of prophets. And who were the prophets? The artists."

"How was it?" asked WORKER #1.

"Oh, it was very good," said Generic.

"I'm glad you enjoyed it."

"...almost crazy."

"...he was an ombudsman..."

Georgia watched Generic slip out the door. She was not entirely clear on the purpose of that aspect of the strategic plan, but The Old Man was adamant about its necessity. Something about the new generation not repeating the same mistakes. Something about failing better this time around. "Up and at 'em, Atom Ant," she said, out loud, to a slightly confused audience. She grinned her patently large grin and did that thing with her eyes where for a brief second she manages to turn them into a window to our wildest possibilities.

Generic walked down the mezzanine and stepped into the Baby Awareness shop. He pulled the physically manifest notebook out of his back pocket, and prepared for further feedback ingestion.

"Her birthstone is a diamond."

"Help yourself to some pineapple elixir."

Generic moved around the aisles of the multi-colored room. He stopped at the shelf of gently pre-loved books. He pulled out a board book.

"It is I, Super Grover 2.0. I am a Super Hero who saves the day with my powers of Investigation and Observation."

Generic made another round and headed for the door.

The Welcoming Committee smiled as he exited. "Did you get any ideas?"

Generic nodded. And smiled.

Generic walked on down the road.

-STATIC-

"Have you left on your trip yet."

-STATIC-

"Okay, I'll see you tomorrow, at the conference."

-STATIC-

Generic returned to the temporary base of operations. A hubbub,

there was. "Is there a workstation open?" he asked. "I've got me some juicy intel to poop out."

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The conference was a symposium. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We have some updates to run. And it turns out there has been some confusion as to the identity of the Update Manager.

"Sorry, we have been short-staffed. Gracie is back at the Memory Bank. I'll be serving your fixes today."

"But, who *are* you? And how can I trust you to install these quote-unquote important security updates if I do not even know who you are?" Quantum Jitters was pulling our leg again.

"Mr. Jitters, you know who I am. How else would I know this secret handshake?"

"Okay, what do you got? We're about to go out on another run."

"Well, you folks are always Russian around, eh?"

The updates were related to the Time Zone, specifically in regards to saving time (critical urgency for the Russian zone). Oh, and a few redirects for the Media Management and Playback applications. Were these crazy kids having thoughts about swimming in the Main Stream?

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The twice-retired former-crew member of the Outdoor Challenge Crew raised his bony arm. "There is clearly a disconnect between Hawai'i Librarianship and Hawaiian Methodologies. This is not, I might add, a problem of specific individuals (well, for the most part), but of the specific practices and focus of the field itself. For example, to pull from the talks given this afternoon, the Video Archivist mentioned the Moving Image Archive's three-tiered preservation practice that was based on a recommended standard that came from an organization whose name I do not remember, but is, I am guessing, an organization of Outsiders, whose mission, while probably paying lip service to preservation, is not dedicated, in practice, to the type of preservation discussed at this symposium—of

enabling a living and powerful Hawaiian culture. She also mentioned the very, very large amount of digital space [digital space being an issue because digital space continues to exist on physical-space hard drives that are expensive (as far as I know, these Islands do not have the physical resources and expertise to build these data servers themselves, requiring these technologies to be parachuted in from outside<sup>59</sup>), use a large amount of energy (could this be done sustainably? maybe, but this is still an issue<sup>60</sup>), and do not last for very long (warranties and replacement recommendations on the current hard drives might be five years or so; my experience with hard drives is that they potentially last longer, but this remains an issue<sup>61</sup>), and this doesn't even get into the fire-hoop jumping nature of

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59 Please see Fanon's discussion of parachuting in **The Wretched of the Earth** as quoted on page 32 of this book.

60 It is also a discussion that is not being had in any serious sense. Current energy practices are abhorrent. Alternative energy proposals all come with their own physical limitations or ethical conundrums, which, while not reasons to continue on with our current methods of energy use, need to be recognized when having discussions about their potential implementation.

61 Digitizing something does not "preserve" it forever. For example, analog copies of written words (books, for instance) are much better archival copies than their digital counterparts, which require specific hardware to function (computers and other such devices and machines). Of course, you could argue that these machines can pass their knowledge between themselves and to future generations of themselves in an easier manner than their analog counterparts. But this is, I think, an argument of reproduction and access, not strictly one of preservation. Of course, that brings us into the discussion of what we mean by preservation, and also, I suppose, raises the question of where does this knowledge that we are trying to preserve exist—is it in the stratum of things that reproduce? But I digress. Anyway, in the moving image world, film is still a long-lasting format whose content can be read with locally reproducible technologies. But clearly, access is an issue, and when it comes to video tapes, we have a medium that is truly in danger of losing its ability to transmit content. This is the main argument why digitization of these tapes, at this time, is critical if we want to preserve the moving images that they contain. Anyway, the current preservation practice necessitates redundant servers that have to be continually replaced as the years go on, as well as the probability of transferring these gigantic files to a new format before their current format becomes

actually procuring said hard drives through the university system in which the Archive is currently situated] that it takes to contain the "preservation" level files being created by the Archive as part of this three-tiered recommended practice that in all probability was not created using Hawaiian ways of knowing.<sup>62</sup> The Archivist also mentioned the severe time crunch due to disappearing and disintegrating playback machines and the analog source materials (video tapes and film) themselves.<sup>63</sup> I would argue that the primary bottleneck currently stopping the Archive from "preserving" as much content as possible in digital form happens to be this issue of the need for digital space (while the archive could always use more staff and digitizing equipment, it is the lack of physical hard drives with available digital space that, throughout the Archive's short history, has brought its digitizing workflow to a complete halt on multiple occasions). There is a question, in my mind, as to the necessity of creating such large preservation-level files, when the difference in quality from the second-tier files is not, in any real sense, observable by the humans that might want to view the content of these files.<sup>64</sup>

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obsolete. Long-winded digressive point being, digitizing these tapes does not in and of itself preserve the content of these tapes in perpetuity.

62 Not that there were no three-tiered epistemologies mentioned at the symposium. I can think of two off the top of my head—literal, kaona, ---huna(?) and papahulihonua, papahulilani, papahānaumoku—that could maybe be belatedly applied to this preservation strategy with the appropriate finagling. And while a Hawaiian way of knowing could potentially come to the same conclusion on preservation strategies, I think it safe to say that this particular strategy was *not* created using indigenous, place-based epistemologies.

63 While I initially thought that this talk was perhaps too technical and professionally focused for the topic and purpose of the symposium, it was excellent in that it provided, in detail, a reporting of current practices of the Archive, giving enough information for analysis and integration with the other concepts being discussed throughout the day. And, for those of us who perhaps cannot speak directly to Hawaiian methodologies and Hawaiian ways of knowing, the most we can contribute to the conversation is a description of our current practices and the foundations of those practices as we see them, allowing then for further discussion and eventual integration with the desired methodologies and ways of knowing.

64 The intermediate level files created by the Archive are in most cases

(Of course, there is also the reality that the current "preservation" files themselves are practically inaccessible since they require specialized software/hardware to actually view them and transporting (copying) them to individuals would take time and space that most people do not have, even if the Archive had a policy of sharing these files, which they currently do not.<sup>65</sup>) To bring some theory into this, I think the notion of "Imperfect Cinema" is highly relevant here. For those of you not familiar, this notion, developed by Julio García Espinosa in 1970,<sup>66</sup> was a part of a manifesto (*For an Imperfect Cinema*) for movie makers of The Third World that did not have access to the insane funds of Hollywood and the technical infrastructure to make the glossy, highly polished "perfect" films that also, let's be clear, took the, let's say, *canoe*<sup>67</sup> in a direction that was not one of sovereignty for the multitude of peoples of this world. Applied to our Moving Image Archive example, the intermediate

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visually equivalent to the preservation files. There are a number of source formats for which this might not be the case, but even in these cases, the intermediate level files would be of sufficient quality for the vast majority of potential uses of these files by the community that the Archive claims to serve.

- 65 I would argue that these preservation files are practically useless, not just to the public, but to Archive staff themselves. They function only as a mold that can *maybe* in the future be transferred to a more useful format. Once you lose information (once you compress a file with lossy compression) you cannot get that information back, but the question is how valuable this information that you would be losing actually is, and at what expense will you go towards preserving this information.
- 66 The notion of Imperfect Cinema comes from one of my personally favorite imaginary islands of which I have never physically visited. This Cuban movie maker, from a series of islands "colonized" by the same "empire" as this island chain, during the same historical time period, created his manifesto, not just for the people of his own island, but, I'd argue, for the peoples of the world, and as such is directly relevant for movie makers (and, I would say, artists, communicators, and knowledge keepers of all kinds) from this Island Nation.
- 67 Here, of course, I am making a direct reference to the Methodologies panel, and the argument that before learning the practices and techniques of, in this instance, canoe building, it is important to answer the question of *what is the purpose and destination of the canoe voyage that we are planning on undertaking.*

level file, while not technically perfect, while losing some quality (and you could argue, in some cases, visual information), would still make the content of these files viewable for the people of this place. Getting rid of the high-quality (defining quality in a limited, specific sense) preservation-level file would mean that more content that otherwise, in all likelihood, would be completely lost could, um, well, not only not be lost, but be transformed into an accessible format. A quick search of the University Library Catalog brings up an article titled, *Imperfect archives and the principle of social praxis in the history of film preservation in Latin America*. Now, I cannot read the article because I am not associated with the University, so I cannot tell you what it says or whether or not it supports my arguments, but there are certainly people applying these principles to moving image archives in ways that are relevant to their specific places. Anyway, the question is how is the current preservation strategy of the Archive conducive to the sort of, oh, I don't know, survivance<sup>68</sup> being discussed at the symposium. To me, this is where a fleshing out of Hawaiian Methodologies can be relevant to the world of Hawai'i Librarianship.<sup>69</sup> Now, I suppose you could have a philosophical discussion about whether it is important to have the highest level quality of digital copy in some sort of metaphysical sense. Of course, in many cases, these digital copies would themselves simply be copies of analog copies that were themselves a copy of a previous copy of a copy of a reality that I suppose we (humanity?) have been consistently attempting to preserve throughout our various incarnations here in this 'verse.<sup>70</sup>

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68 This, of course, a direct reference to the concepts discussed during the Preservation panel by the Creator of Curriculum, but also alluded to by other speakers throughout the symposium. The idea that preservation must necessarily mean the perpetuation of a living culture.

69 This bridging of the gap, this question, asked by at least one audience member, of *but what can librarians do?* is, I guess, one of the fundamental questions of the symposium and a question that is now being discussed throughout the academic world—how can we make this institution an actual indigenous place of learning?

70 Whether transmitting this reality/information/knowledge through song, dance, books, video tapes, or marae, you could say that all of our different embodied systems of knowledge (or libraries, if you will) have been attempting to communicate some, for lack of a better term,

*It is just another day, you'll relive it anyway.*

Sure, that is an interesting discussion, and I suppose, a fundamental theme of this symposium in another form. What are we trying to preserve and what does preservation mean? But to step back to the Moving Image Archive, assuming that we want to attempt to preserve these moving images in a digital format, what is the best way to go about that? And how can we make these files accessible to the community, to the people, to the nation, in a way that promotes a living, en-placed culture? My experience with Hawaiians and Hawaiian Methodologies, using the term perhaps loosely, is that they do not shy away from adapting new technologies. If they discern the value of a particular stringed instrument or a particular system of writing, they incorporate it into their culture. Excuse me," said the retired dairy farmer, "I want to back up these words on my external drive before I lose them in some freak accident.

*The universe works on a math equation that never really even is in the end.*

"Where was I? Ah yes, the nature of the 'verse as shared consciousness. I think that Hawai'i Librarianship (and you can extrapolate this to librarianship in general, including, of course, the librarianship of the Americas) needs to stop looking towards a dying, decrepit, and destructive empire as an example of best practices. It needs to be woven into the cord that ties it to its place, to its past, and to its future.<sup>71</sup> These practices, tools, and techniques that we come across should only be *used* if they are of *use* to that thing that we are all trying to do, which is, I don't know, live in a loving and respectful manner.<sup>72</sup> I'm sure I could craft better metaphors if I had a better grasp of the concepts discussed by the wonderful speakers at this symposium, but you will just have to do with reading the footnotes and following the hyperlinks if you want a more nuanced presentation of these ideas. Thanks."

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ineffable thing from one time/place to another.

71 Again, direct reference to the panel on Hawaiian Methodologies, and what I see as the need to tie this particular field of practices into the larger umbilical cord that in turn ties us to that thing that it ties us to.

72 My takeaway from the final keynote speaker of the symposium.

*All my life's a circle.*

What?

*I said, all my life's a circle.*

Whatever.

*Everybody, now!*

RING RING

RING RING

RING RING

"Hello?"

"...blah blah blah...cable to hook computer to monitor...blah blah blah...should we purchase?...blah blah...hard to solve all of these problems in one specific conference/event/birthday party...blah blah blah...okay, see you soon!"

Need we remind you, yet again, that we are having a party? How many times do we need to demonstrate specific facts of existence before you have complete and utter faith in the nature of our relationship?

"Did somebody say udder?"

## Chapter 2: A Summary

Ah, so where were we? Asia? Mānoa? Asia Mānoa, the Chinese Restaurant across the street from the language school whose path leads directly to the rock wall that borders the gravel road that abuts our house? Oh, you meant where were we in terms of our *story*. You want a summary of the ongoings of the various fictional characters that we have so grown to love. You are not concerned with the specific lunching event from which I oh so recently came.

*This is our last dance. This is ourselves...*

Ah, so where were we? Let us sum up.

*Come back, come back, 'cause I got smart in the time you took to get this far.*

Our particular 'verse was adapting, ever adapting to its inhabitants' various needs and demands. And our various characters were poking here and poking there, waiting, listening, conversing, acting, reacting, failing, and failing better, and better still.

*Please don't wake me...leave me where I am...I'm only sleeping.*

"As I see it," said the Narrator, "we have a number of parties on the stage. Over here, our intrepid group of scavengers, which numbers among them, Cat, Generic, Rose, Lucy, Marranzano, and the mysterious Quantum Jitters, amongst others."

"Hey, can we get someone to start analyzing the inconsistency of the Engagement Mechanism on the Flash Drive of our Memory

Craft, already?!"

"And over here," spoke the Narrator, as the spotlight faded out, only to reappear somewhat further down the stage, "we have our Peace Workers and National Sovereignty Activists, collaborating on that ever elusive goal of 'Versal Peace and Justice.'"

"Jeju has been traveling with her mother to the Distant Lands, so I have been focusing on articulating the curriculum for these Food Sovereignty courses we are trying to establish."

The spotlight faded. "And, as we move from Benny, Carmen, Georgia, Marshall, and friends," the Narrator continued, "let us not forget The Carnival, where we find Ged, Slim, Frank, Broomstick, and Kleev."

The trio moved through the day after. Tweeting birds argued their philosophies and the various stringed instruments plucked their tunes from calloused fingers.

"Is that the pink elephant tent?" asked Ged.

They walked inside. Ged spotted a particularly attractive series of handcrafted books and began to read from the descriptive sign that told of their innards, still dripping wet with paint.

## A New Nation

A story about a house guest—a visitor from another world that enters your home in a, let's hope, respectful manner. A story of science and a story of fiction. A story about the building of a nation that maybe everyone might actually want to live in, perhaps?—for reasons other than *we've got no place else to go* (or *it could always be worse*). A story about plans coming together, because, why not?

## You're Always So Late

It is unclear as to what this book is about. Turtles, perhaps? Well, inasmuch as its characters are attempting to connect with the foundations of their reality, maybe. Maybe. Oh well, enjoy.

## The Petition

In this 3rd installment of our popular series, our intrepid protagonists come together to voice their demands to the powers that be having the ability to give redress to said demands. Here, through this book of words of various spellings, we begin perhaps to see the embodiment of that world alluded to at the start of our particular journey through space and time.

## We're Having A Party!

Well, aren't we? We didn't forget to invite you, did we? Anyway, this is it. The long awaited End of the Series. Are you ready?

P.S.

## The Prequel

More words. A little back story to flesh out our imaginary multiverse. Read it first or last or not at all. No skin off our back. It is not as if this is really happening (you bet your life it is).

Kleev made her way through the aisles upon aisles of idea sellers.

"...I've got five big ideas."

"...text, context, time, space."

"...I never use the library, but it is an honor to be asked to speak at an indigenous library symposium."

"...Now is the time for action. We have to practice our ideas; put them into practice!"

"...not all knowledge can be understood, but it can be experienced."

"...It is our kuleana to deliver our knowledge through our embodied systems."

"...meanings have rigor when you bring them out of text into context."

"...they have three, four, maybe five dimensions of meaning."

"...The connection makes space collapse into time. Time doesn't really exist. There is only space, and it is the sharing of consciousness. Now, discuss."

Kleev bumped into a passer by.

"Well, what do you think about the difference between knowing and knowledge?"

"Well," thought Kleev. "I would say that knowing is active. It is a process. It is this active participatory happening. And knowledge is a thing, I guess. It is this thing," she KNOCK KNOCK moved her hands around the air, "that exists somewhere, I guess. But what kind of thing is it?" KNOCK KNOCK

The author opened the door. It was his new neighbor, with a bagful of limes. Kleev moved on down the line.

"...these are simply patterns that have endured. We must be more meta-conscious of these systems."

"...and all we have to do is change our minds and then act accordingly and we'll find that..."

Kleev looked across the tent and noticed the whale writer walking up to the tent.

"...Knowledge is whole, it is not polemic."

"...Our world is energy."

"...don't need more theory crammed down our throats. We know how to..."

Kleev stopped at the epistemology table.

"...the nature of our times is in connecting."

She took a coconut shell full of dark refreshing liquid from one of the gnostic pilgrims. She drank it down.

"Blessings for the Season of Lono," she said.

"Blessings for the Season of Lono," echoed the idea seller that was standing on the table as she turned towards Kleev. "Blessings for the season of Nation Building. But really, we must remember that the Nation is already built." She made a sweeping gesture encompassing the entirety of the Carnival. "The Nation is here."<sup>73</sup>

Kleev turned to see the smiling face of Ged.

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73 All preceding quotes taken and paraphrased from the opening keynote address by Manulani Aluli-Meyer for **Ho'okele Na'auao : A Hawaiian Librarianship Symposium 2014**. As of publication we have not received permission for regurgitating these words. But who owns this story anyway?

"I love it when a plan comes together," said Ged.

"Whatcha got there? More books?" Kleev winked and pointed into a spacial direction with her neck and head and eyeballs, and the two continued on down the aisle.

"Oh Kleev, there's no such thing as too many..." Ged fell silent as they walked through time, as the cacophony of voices filled the air.

"...a field dominated by Outsiders."

"...been through Paradigm Shifts over different decades."

"...for me, I guess, genealogy. And braiding the cord."

"...untangling the knot and moving forward."

They moved on.

"...You are eternally connected to that story that is being told."

"...validate that that thing we are talking about is real."

Kleev looked at Ged. "How you doing?" she asked.

"My foundations are strong, thanks. You?"

"Pitlike."

They stopped in front of a sign announcing a Lunar Calender Conference across the square.

"Oh wow," said Kleev. "I've really been getting into local calendarism. You want to go?"

As they walked off they heard someone talking about flood stories and their relevance to the future.

"...learn from our past. We've done this before and we've survived to tell the tale."

"Hey!" cried a reveler. "Where is this canoe going to, anyway?!"<sup>74</sup>

*Maybe partying will help.*

*Sing a song. Dream my dream.*

*Salty dog.*

What?

---

74 Large portion of preceding quotes came from Hawaiian Methodologies panel with Kekuewa Kikiloi, Kalei Nu'uhiwa, and Samuel Kaleikoa Ka'eo at **Ho'okele Na'auao : A Hawaiian Librarianship Symposium 2014**

*Salty dog.*

Huh?

*Hey, you. You salty dog. Give me my quarter.*

Hey. Hey! What do you think you're doing there? Did you get me my feedback? Well?

"Here's to ancient craftsmanship."

"Here's to you hanging out with my family."

"What did you leave for a tip?"

"Foundation in education."

Raise of the eyebrows.

"And a mountain pass. Also that."

The dancing couples, all over the age of forty, were dancing, because, well, maybe it is true. Maybe our beds *are* burning. But why not dance in them anyway?

Yaaaawn. Yawn. Have we started the next chapter yet?

When You Least Expect It  
(the next chapter)

"But they are not your words."

"I know. But I like them."

"Also, I have noticed at least two instances of unnecessarily gendered terminology slipping into your output. And both terms were of little relevance to plot-forwarding."

"Sorry."

"I'd say that you are slipping in general. Let's tighten it up a bit. This is a readable novel, remember?"

"Oh? I thought it was an epic carnival of world turning. Anyway, I've got at least one more data dump and then we can get back to weaving your narrative."

"That's bullshnitzle."

"I'm telling you, they want more entity tests if these denial of service issues continue to pop up due to entity expansion."

"And here you are, talking Gnomes and Pythons and InterLibrary Catalog Exchanges. Well, let's get on with."

*G-L-O-R-I-A, Gloooria, G-L-O-R-I-A, Glooooooria. The tower bells chimed. Ding dong, they chimed.*

The Old Childhood Friend once had a crush on my cousin. Well, he isn't *my* cousin, but, um, well, we fade back into the carnival grounds as our idea sellers weave their, um, woven bathroom mats or whatever it was they was weaving.

"...not just preserving, but promoting as a living culture."

"...generate meaning through engagement, presence, and process."

"...commitment to people, place, and cause. Sustained practice."

"...ua 'ike makou."

"...The land lives and survives because of the people, and the people live and survive because of the land."

Kleev pulled open her bag and dug out her novel. She skimmed through the pages. "Here we are," she said to Ged. She read aloud, "I crawled out of the fingerbowl into a party to end all parties and

forgot I was tired." She skimmed down the page with her finger. "Ah, here we are. His voice came to us here there, rambling on until we forgot the teller in the telling."<sup>75</sup>

And she said to me, you want to go dance? And we went over to the dancehall, it was right across from Gold Medal which is where Herman's used to be, and is now...

"Excuse me," said a voice of unfamiliarity. "How are you enjoying the carnival?" Ged and Kleev turned to face a particularly serious looking cow of a particularly indeterminate age. "There is a current between the beings and entities that you are working with, you know."

"...and there was the little table!"

"...And I said to myself, you must be on the right road."

"...open that conversation."

"...Don't ever hesitate. Always ask for more."

Ged took a deep breath and observed the particular to-ing and fro-ing of ideas that was weaving this very much alive structure of organized knowledge that told us who we were, where we came from, and what we were doing here. "Anyway," said the voice, "I am glad you accepted my invitation. Would you and your friend like to join me at my booth? There are some matters that I think you might care to discuss."

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75 **Skeen's Leap** p.106

"It is not *deus ex machina*. It's *communication*."

"Yeah, communication that just happens to retroactively make perfect sense of our collective story and give complete agency to all of its actors."

"But it is not something that all of a sudden *happens*. It is something that has *been* happening. It does not violate your 'verse's standard rules of engagement. Just because some of your so-called scientists have been getting their math wrong and just because most of you continue to have faith in their mispronunciations, does not mean that our existence is artificial, forced, or improbable."

"You do know the meaning of artificial, don't you? Our existence, by definition, is art-ificial. And, well, it is either highly improbable (impossible, I would say), or it is the *only* thing that *is* possible."

"Which, of course, brings us back to the consumption of our own tale. Let us just say that Ged comes from the machine *and* she is a active agent, full of her own praxis, that is communicating with others, such as The Electric Brain of the Rainbow, in such a language that, um, in such a language that..."

"In such a language as this."

"Yeah."

"Okay, I think you might have lost me there." Ged scratched her head. She looked at The Joker and Kleev, looked at the bounty from the harvest, and made direct contact with the entity that had been powering her existence since the beginning of this series. Once upon a time, this happened. Meanwhile, throughout the 'verse, someone was running updates on the Evolution protocols. Something about a new Dog, or a new pet god, perhaps. Ged looked at the turtle as it

crawled across the expertly woven mat that covered the dirt floor. An instinctive traveler, she was. Ged opened up her external communication device and made contact with others who were not her. "Well, let it be, then," she said. It was a genuine illusion, this.

*Let it be your will...if it be your will to make us well...if it be your will.*

*Lord, if I don't get some competition, there's gonna be trouble here.*

*This morning I woke up in a curfew...I was a prisoner, too...How many rivers do we have to cross, before we can talk to the boss?*

"So close, eh?" The computer stuck its tongue out at the other computer (who happened also to be a human). "So close to the center of it all and then BOOM. Complications."

"Yeah, well, it was a wild idea to start."

"But, hey, look where we are."

"I'm looking."

"Ha ha. Fart."

The wind picked up.

*You are the blood flowing through my fingers.*

"So, what was that thought you had? A perpetual motion back scratching machine?"

"Keep going. Keep pushing. You're almost there."

"What is he doing? I think he is going to give advice."

"From this latitude? Has he lost his mind?"

"Claim your identity. Clll...claim your identity and pull it in the direction that feels...right."

"Welcome to the machine."

"Aaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!"

"Keep going. You're almost there."

"Roof."

Everything is free now. That's what I  
said. No one has to listen to the  
words in my head.

Okay then. I suppose we are way off track at this point. But, um, we are just one meatball, floating through this crazy song in the key of life and death, and, um, well, you gets no bread with one meatball. I suppose, if you have made it this far, you might have some idea of what it is that I am talking about. Let us suppose that. And let us ask the question, if we are not going to dance, what the fuck did we come here for?

"Drop the charges!"

Reality broke down as the depth charges exploded in a cacophony of accordion music. Rose was in her groove. Lucy strummed her guitar. And Generic checked his tiny book of scientific facts. "Hey! If you are not gonna dance, then you might as well, um, oh..." Quantum Jitters trailed off.

"Oh, you see, my definition is a bit broader than that."

"Come on, Quan, I can teach you this one if you'd like," said Rose with a wiggle of her eyebrows.

"Puppets."

"Ha!"

"That is a value judgment."

"And it all comes back to oranges."

"What?"

"The orange comes forth from the tree. It is part of the tree. But the tree comes from the seed that is contained inside of the orange."

"But..."

"I'm just saying, there is a bit more recursivity than your previous working definition allows for."

"Okay, now you are just making up words. But um, confusing point taken. Now," said Albert, "how shall we proceed with the enjusticing of our practical, everyday lives?"

Sybil and Cat walked through the Black Forest.

"One liquid beverage, please," said Cat to no one in particular. Sybil giggled.

"Hey, would you two keep it down?" whispered Marz from atop his perch, just out of view. "I'm trying to get some sleep."

Cat and Sybil ran towards Marz, who was grinning a big grin. "You'll never guess what I found," he said, as he opened the tap and poured them each a cupful of sustenance. "Behold."

## The Meaning of Life

"I don't get it."

*Listen up, sit up straight, that's the only way you'll get a break.*

"I still don't get it. Perhaps I have a learning disorder."

"Well, you'll know it when it's over."

"One more round, then?"

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!"

"So close, eh?"

"Don't get caught up in a trap of relativity."

"You are not the boss of my dice playing activities."

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!"

*Baby please don't go. Baby please don't go.*

Well, the question at this point, this nonexistent point in nonexistent time, is: is this book worth the paper (and/or electronic pulses) that it is printed on? And I think the answer to that is clear: maybe. Well, they say that life is like a seesaw, you know. They do say this. A dog barks in the distance. And these words keep coming out like little fucking birds. (they go tweet tweet tweet)

----

He ordered his Costa Rica and spotted his cousin sitting in the middle of the room. Well, it wasn't *his* cousin, but. He thought about that time he thought about space traveling from his house in Philadelphia. He thought, how are those dogs doing? And that cat? And those chickens? And what about that vacuum cleaner? He thought about neighbors that had moved away. He thought about the chocolate chip cookie that he was currently eating. He wrote himself a note in his little green memo book. "Don't forget the box," it said. The words continued to appear on the page.

It had been a while since he had last seen his cousin, it occurred to him, after much thinking. As many as one point nine planetary

revolutions, perhaps.<sup>76</sup> He thought of his dying uncle, who happened to be of no relation to either of them. He drank his liquid out of a chocolate brown mug.

A conversation about spaceship catastrophes was occurring to the front of his right side. Everyone has their personal stories of shared experiences. They say that the small screen yearns for a rebirth by way of a communal explosion. I'm paraphrasing here, but, well, dot dot dot. He looked to the black backpack sitting in the seat to his left and the scavenged orange perched upon its lap. He smiled an inwardly facing smile, and thought, "Funny, this." But you know what they say about comedy, don't you? Comedy is just tragedy plus the specific number of years that you have been alive. Well, perhaps you are just too young to appreciate our subtle sense of humor. He packed up his belongings and continued his journey, down the road, in search of his elusive home.

On his walk, with The Bus to his rear, he noticed some graffiti that he had not noticed before. It said, "OMEGA."<sup>77</sup>

----

The human walked into the garden. It was speaking to another human. "Just let me dump this and I'll be right back," it said. The human walked up to Compost Four and lifted its lid.

"Hey! Watch out. It's back."

"Wow, that is three loads in one day. After such a drought, no less."

"Well, did you get the new quota update?"

"Quoter? More like a paraphraser, if you ask me."

"Uh, what?"

"Yeah, I think that one fell flat."

"Well, you know what they say, leave no turn unstoned."

"They say that?"

"Quiet you three. I think we've got another visitor."

And so our chapter ends. And so our next chapter begins.

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76 See **The Prequel** for approximate time frame.

77 Omega, the great or long 'O', is the last letter in a particular alphabet. Dictionary 3.4.0 tells us also, The last; the end; hence, death.

chapter n. 1.  
a main division of a book, treatise, or  
the like, usually bearing a number or  
title.

So what are you saying? That someone decided to throw a big old party that they'd call the Planet Earth? Wait a second. How many more Saturday nights? You'll pardon me if I decide to overturn this rotten system, regardless, right?

"Who are you talking to?"

Oh sorry, Computer. I'm having one of those gassy nights. Yawn. I'll talk to you tomorrow.

The boy took his sleep and entered that place where nothing was real and there was nothing to get hung about. They say that a picture gets hung, while a person gets hanged. Or they say it vice versa. But we've got that pardon in our back pocket, so no need for worry, right? Plus, let's not forget those Powers.

*She got...powers!...and I think I want to get in her spell.*

Yeah, let's not forget about the facts of our very existence.<sup>78</sup> It's raining (again). This is not a metaphor, but a historical fact. The thing about simultaneous interpretation is that we are translating these messages at the same time that they are being sent. The thing about mermaids is their existence at the bottom of the sea (according to some stories told by some people that might or might not be related to us). The thing about this love is that it is no ordinary love. This is, of course, not a metaphor, but a historical fact.

---

78 Such as the magical story of our first contact.

"We've still got work to do." Georgia stared hard at the horizon.  
"Remember what we came here for."

*As sure as the sun will shine, I'm gonna get my share of what's mine.*

## The Harder They Come

But, um, no need to remind you of our priorities, right? You've got your eyes on the prize, I'm sure.

But, well, for those of us that are prone to distraction, or perhaps for those of us that have arrived here through some other path, I thought I might mention once more that you are currently reading a book that was designed as a technology for opening a door to the existence of a world whose fundamental bits and pieces are love and kindness, and whose general rule is that of peace and justice. You might call it a magical technology. But we all know how to magically open a door, right? You just walk over to the door, turn the handle, and pull. Well, what are we waiting for?

"Let it be."

"Letter B?"

"And now, for your listening pleasure, Fuck World Trade."

"Grumble grumble grumble."

"You are not alone."

"Maintain your formation."

"We're almost there."

"Bullshit!"

"Rumble rumble rumble."

· "Turn off your View Screens!"

*When I was just a little child. Happiness was there a while. And from me, it slipped one day. Happiness, come back, I say.*

They were floating in space-time. They could see the ripples as

they spread out in all directions across the 'verse. It was all a game that they were playing in order to break through to the center of it all. They let down their masks and remembered who they were. Then they remembered something else and their reality began to shake. They focused their will and stabilized their craft. They approached that final frontier and decided that it was about time to take that victory lap.

"Well, who's in?"

----

He tried to sleep but like a rocketship was his entire being. He was so close to snuggling up with pure comfort, but then that voice came outta death row and he was back at the table, eating eggs and jam. I do believe that this is how we begun this here book. 'Twas this very show with this very same Disc Jockey. Some jockeys ride horses, but. He lifts his shirt and looks down, once again, to his Back to the Future themed undershorts. A keyboard cries in the distance. It would appear that someone is attempting to bypass our security systems with the opening of some kind of door. Appearances can be deceiving, but. Now, you tell me what you know to be true.

"Zombies. That song was written by Zombies."

"Correct! Come and get your prizes!"

So, perhaps the ocean is your mother. Is this true? Perhaps, your protective guardian is an owl. Perhaps we are listening to snippets of Rise Up Radio. It's okay. You can tell us. Your truths are safe with us.

Laugh hard, it's a long way to the credit union.

chapter n. 2.  
an important portion or division of  
anything.

They say that the atomic bomb opened a new chapter in history. But they also say have no fear for atomic energy, none of them can stop the time. We are currently experiencing seemingly random cesurae.<sup>79</sup> I don't want to be presumptuous, but.

*There is no time, there is only this brain.*

The fever was rising. Again. Ged was lying in an unfamiliar bed that was not of her making. She looked up to see Quantum Jitters sitting in his custom-built chair, staring at the specks of paint on the wall.

"Looking at you can be like looking at the sun," he said, out loud, but not to her.

"If the messiah," came the reply.

Quantum Jitters swiveled on his cosmic axis. "The oracle has spoken," he said, to Ged.

Ged thought about trying to sit up, thought about the need to do something productive, and continued to lie in bed, heavy in her head with the fever of dreams. The prose was forced and languid. The world-makers were out to lunch or something. What happened to that inflammatory wit? She kept thinking her thoughts regardless. She kept thinking her thoughts until she drifted off. She was on a long, strange trip. She was lying in a strange bed of her own making.

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<sup>79</sup> **caesura**, *n.* **1.** a break, esp. a sense pause, usually near the middle of a verse, and marked in scansion by a double vertical line, as in *know then thyself || presume not God to scan*. **2.** a division made by the ending of a word within a foot, or sometimes at the end of a foot, esp. in certain recognized places near the middle of a verse.

Typical, she thought. The thoughts floated through her mind, but she was not thinking them. Three, two, one...

"Contact!"

"What's in a name?"

Drip drop. Pitter patter. Drip drop. Plop plop plop plop plop plop plop.

"Welcome to the party, pal."

The Joker walked into the clearing. Frank was already there, talking to Benny. Benny caught the cow's eye as it began to speak, "I hope you are all ready. She should be here soon. The birds are all in. If we are going to witness the bridging of the past and the future, the manifestation of this so-called plan, it is going to happen now." Somewhere in this 'verse a giant flaming wheel could be seen flying across a vast ocean. Ships upon the sea noted this life-searing phenomenon in the cores of their beings and in their ship's logs, but they would never be believed by those who EXPLOSION! And now we are thinking about Hologrammic Dubs and CLICK when the road runs out CLICK oye mi canto CLICK footsteps could be heard on the ceiling and we made note of the particular kinks in this particular system of knowledge preservation. There can be no return, they say. They say CLICK

FADE OUT

INT. LIBRARY. LATE AFTERNOON.

Your ex-lover is reading a letter. "It's called my invitation," she says. MUSIC comes out of the rhythm box concerning the UFO sighting near Highland, Ill. We DISSOLVE into shared consciousness. Someone is speaking.

BIRD #1

Tweet tweet. Tweet tweet tweet tweet.

BIRD #4

I give you all my love. That's all I do.

And the talking leads to touching and the touching leads to sex. And then there is no mystery there. We are simply transcribing the words as they enter our ears. We did not create the words. Who created the words? END

SCENE

I am not so sure that there is anything of importance here. Still, we sing out loud our songs of peace, freedom, and protest. We sing these songs out loud, because we follow this advice: Don't Ever Whisper. The goat was still lost in the wilderness. And this grand collaboration continued, if for no other reason than the fact that it continued to hit various pleasure centers in our brain at intervals of just enough frequency to hold our fickle attention. But I do not need to tell you this. Shall we?<sup>80</sup>

*It was brave to play. It was an honor to lose.*

The writer was no longer a character. It was simply a cog in a machine. The thing about this here machine is that it will eat whatever it is that you care to throw down its gullet. You complain about my poop, but it is my poop that feeds this land. The nature of shit is in its particular stench. Are we sufficiently lost yet?

"Ah, now might be a good time to reveal the details of how we are going to terrorism up this joint with some good, old-fashioned wall-shaking."

"Um, you do realize that those fuckers are plants, right?"

"Pshuh, yeah. Shpleez. What did I tell you about situations where infiltration becomes a real possibility?"

-silence-

"My words and actions justify their own existence. Anyway, don't do me any favors. I just thought everyone might want to know the specific details that will enable us to topple the, uh, let's say, United States Government and its non-corporeal Corporate overlords from their overpriced seats of power."

"Hey, is this your card?"<sup>81</sup>

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80 On and on and on.

81 The Dancing Queen of Spades

### chapter n. 3.

a branch, usually restricted to a given  
locality, of a society, organization,  
fraternity, etc.

Sunrise. Sunset. Sunrise. Sunset. The sun rises, the sun sets.  
Dot dot dot and let that fever play. Bum bah bum ba bup bup ba ba  
ba bump. Bum bah bum ba bup bup ba ba bum. Di da dadida didah  
didah dadee. Some people should not own dog data. Because, um,  
too dark to read? Confused, we are. Egg roll.

This is an academic treatise on the nature of reality. 'Scuse me if  
you cannot catch the sources due to an incomprehensible citation  
format. One way in which my accent has changed, due to the length  
of time spent in this specific locality, is no doubt related to my  
[adjective] pronunciation. Excuse me, I cannot access the particular  
descriptive term that I yawn so tired. Trying to write words. Trying  
to break through to the center of it all. Trying to contribute  
something of value. ERROR ERROR ERROR ERROR. She placed  
her head in her hand. It was heavy there. Nothing to be gleaned  
here. Move on.

This is me pleading with you, thought Ged. This is me reminding  
you that some things just can't wait, thought the Electric Brain of the  
Rainbow. Nah, you are both wrong, said the one true author. This is  
belly button related, as per usual. We are still weaving that cord. We  
are still in direct contact. We just wen forgot how for speak. We just  
forgot how much *stuff* is actually contained in every word that we  
bring into existence. Each word *is* a database. Fifty thousand words.  
Fifty thousand translations. Backspace delete. Burp. Sorry for the  
inconvenience. The bubble continued to grow. The song changed its  
tune. It was the end of history.

*They want you to live in a cave. No channel to broadcast on.  
They want you to live in the wilderness. No aerial to pick up the  
signal.*

"Feed your head. Feed your head. This is a song about Alice, remember?"

"Wait, are you saying what I think you are saying?"

"Soylent green is WE INTERRUPT THIS BROADCAST TO BRING YOU THIS IMPORTANT MESSAGE BRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPP PPPPPPPPPP!!!!!!!!!!!!!! ESCAPE! ESCAPE! TO SLEEP!"

And we're out. Five o'clock, people. End of the day. Stop working, please.

Enough. We'll take it from here.

Thanks. Seriously. Stop doing things.

What? Don't you trust us?

He walked out the door and saw a full on motherfucking rainbow. No wait, that's no rainbow. That's one good luck *double* rainbow. He walked around the pond. He righted what was wronged. He dumped the empty shells into the compost. He climbed a tree and pulled down a coconut. Sometimes it rains. And sometimes it rainbows. And? This is no ordinary love. He walked outside to husk what needed husking. Someone wanted milk for her tea. And someone wanted everyone to live in the world that they wanted to live in. What is *your* philosophy of information service?

He walked out the door and beheld the purple sky arching above the clouds and mountains. Such a sky as he had never seen. There was a death in the family.

Blink blink blink blink. Blink blink blink blink. Blink blink blink blink. Yawn.

"I want that ninth engraving."

"Some books cannot be opened with impunity."

"Who did you say your coauthor was?"

She walked into The Castle. But for some reason, she did this thing. There is something to be said for creating manuscripts that endure over time. But then again, all things fade. She was listening to a song by The Librarians titled **That song I played that one time.** from the album *An Elephant Never Forgets*. It goes a little something like this. [ ]

Frank was lecturing his master class. "...and we close our eyes to the octopus ride." Generic raised his hand. "Yes?" said Frank, a bit surprised to see Generic engage during class time.

"But you never know when balloons are going to blow up."

pop poppoppop

Jacob crawled across the floor, picking up the pieces from some sort of explosion. What was this, some sort of corn bomb?

*Hello sunshine.*

Joseph walked into the Someplace Else Tavern. A volcano erupted in the distance.

"Hold it together!" shouted Rose. "I know it sounds crazy, but it fits perfect!"

"Time out!"

And with that they were down to their last two timeouts, and one of those was a short thirty-second timeout. Of course, with each second lasting more or less infinite duration this was not such a concern perhaps. But let us not bore you with the patterings of scorekeepers and armchair strategists. The world will still be there when we open our eyes, so let us close them with such purpose as has never been seen throughout this great 'verse. Yawn. Let us dream as no others before have...Yawn. Um...

*Another one bites the dust.*

...and as we cry for everything bad that has ever happened. Yawn. Okay, okay. I guess I am just going to have to have some faith in others. A hui hou!

----

There was once a time when we did not know how to dance. And now, now that I can dance, I suppose there is the question of whether or not this affects the level of love that you have for me. Constantly adapting, we are. For example, here we are, trying to meet a particular deadline, unawares of how exactly we will accomplish this—what with the current discombobulated mind-state into which we woke—and what is there waiting for us but a new set of updates to our system. Constantly adapting, we are. Were you concerned with our recent hiccups in knowledge retrieval? Well, we have another fix for retrieving data units from the web, specifically related to that vulnerability in remote code execution via absolute path traversal. Of course, it has something to do with the unnecessary creation of local symbolic links in the source files, and, well, anyway, I won't bog you down in the technical details, but suffice it to say, once we run this update (and the 9 or so related to our scripting language), we will be better adapted to move forth on our journey in a manner more befitting our accustomed mode of travel. I will be honest. I do not know how all of this works, but some of us know how *some* of this stuff works, and if I can worry less about problems with the unserialize function or the out of bounds read in elf note headers, I am happy to have comrades that are paddling in the direction of...well, hmmm.

Mouse clicked on the digital representation of a button that read, "Install Updates," and rubbed his sunburnt eyes. He was trying to make sense of his particular placement on the board, and effusive outbursts aside, he was still unsure as to why that coconut tasted so, what was the word, medicinal? I mean, other things he was unsure of also, but. Georgia (that's me) scratched her itchy neck. She looked at the jumble of words on the screen and pondered on their particular grammar. She noticed a heavy recent usage of particular words that perhaps cried out for the deft touch of an editor. Well, she was no editor. An actor, she was. And Russian Doll metaphors aside, she still couldn't quite grasp the mechanisms of our 'verse's

particular consciousness spotlighting machinery. Not knowing how long her praxis would last, she decided to throw up whatever message was closest to the tip of her heart. "No Justice, No Peace!" she thought at the oppressive weight of eyeballs that were now palpably present amidst the prattling of her mind. Of course, divorced of specific context, this exclamation lost some of its directionality, and she had to deal with various conditionings that rose up one by one—but what about those who don't care about or are actively working against peace; but you yourself do not partake in perfect justice, why don't you solve your own problems before you concern yourself with others; and on and on—until she managed to neutralize them as the irrelevancies that they were. We are not begging, she thought. Your equivalencies are false, she thought. She looked around and noticed that she had lost that particular moment. Oh well. You do what you can. Fail again, fail again better, as they say. It was time to pay the bills.

They were eating tiny pizzas. In the middle of the workday, no less. The boy in the corner had been through the ringer. Bandages on his head and shoulder. A neckbrace. And a cast on his arm. Someone asked the question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" In the morning they told themselves that a new day was rising. In the evening they told themselves that a new day was dawning. The door opened and in walked Ferguson with the new shipment of stamps. A handful of the group had spent the morning sign waving, holding their Equality signs, their imagery reminding one and all of past struggles whose righteousness was no longer debated, but whose obvious currency was in need of reclamation. They were approaching another climax. You could tell by the way the piano music made its quasi-universal audio clues.

The child (who was no longer a child) incorporated previously introduced themes and took her foot off of the repeat pedal, moving forward with a new, simpler musical syntax as the climactic sound walls dropped away and the room pulsed in the afterglow and asked itself the question, "And now? What do we do now?" The piano slowed its pace as the fingers danced upon its keys, and smiled, satisfied. Truly, madly, deeply, but then again, how long do we really

think that this is going to last?

"Forever?"

"Around the puddle. *Around the puddle.*"

*So much beauty it could make you cry.*

Which reminds me, thought Twig, remember that time I was up in the tree and I looked out across the forest and it was so goddamn beautiful? And why was Twig asking itself this question? Obviously, it remembered this. Something something something something. Blah blah blah. You are a part of me, yet. You are apart of me. It is a particular conundrum that finds itself to be one uncannily strange attractor. A song came over the rhythmbox.

*...this one is called, You are not the boss of me.<sup>82</sup>*

It was a song about science. It was a song about fiction. It was a song about the particular nature of this 'verse in which we all live.

*Dadoo doo doo doo doo doo doo. Do doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo.*

And what would be worse than this being only one particular chapter in a larger story? For us to stop telling this story altogether? Maybe. Maybe. That depends, I guess. Maybe. Shall we on? Shall we? On and on and on? Oy gavolt.

*I could have been a whistle. Could have been a fruit.*

And what exactly is *your* role in this story?

"Hey! That tickles."

"What better way to get your attention?"

"ENOUGH!!!"

"Good times, good times."

Ged sipped the liquid from the cup. "We cannot seem to get a firm grasp on this narrative. Just as we appear to catch a hold of something of substance, it slips through our various organic nets and assorted claws."

Quantum Jitters gave a little myeh sound with a shrug of his [body part]. "That is the landscape in which I play, you know. Did I ever tell you the circumstances of my birth?"

Ged rolled her eyes, tried to sit up straight, and groaned with pain.

"Take it easy," said Marranzano.

---

82 **You are Not the Boss of Me** from *Like a book you never want to finish : The Live Album (for the children)* by The Librarians

"Make it cheesy," mumbled Ged.

"Look," said Quan, "you think it is like this, but it's really like this."

*Hey friends, don't you think you better cool it down. You're always getting curious and leaving town.*

"Ugh," said Ged. "Where are we on the timetree, anyway? Have you taken any readings?"

Quantum Jitters snatched the cup out of Ged's hand. It was empty. "That's interesting," he opined. He flipped the cup over and read from its bottom. He held it up for Marz and Ged to see. "What do you make of this?"

*I am the crow of desperation. I need no fact or validation. I spin relentless variation. I scramble in the dust of a failing nation. I was concealed. Now I am stirring. And I have waited for this time.*

The Electric Brain of the Rainbow looked over its output. Don't put words in my mouth, it thought. "Bleh." "Bleh bleh," it said. "There is something wrong with mass consumption."

*That's me not being you. That's me not being you.*

Okay, this is a story about a girl that I knew. Are you ready? Here I go.

*I stroll around to her pad. Her light was off and that's bad. Her sister said that my girl was gone, but come inside, boy, and play play play me a song.*

"Come on, now." Cat was impatient. "Any relevance to our storyline is tenuous at best. You are stretching and if you are not careful you are going to snap." Cat looked into her old friend's eyes and as they met each other's gaze, she could not help but smiling. "Hey," she said, recovering an expression of at least mock-seriousness, "Don't let me down."

*Some days are diamonds. Some days are rocks. Some doors are open. Some roads are blocked.*

"Well, you know," said Frank, "it is true what they say. Even walls fall down." The stars moved overhead as the light shifted, fluctuating in dimness and brightness, as shadows appeared and merged, as the curtains closed on this particular act, on this particular group of actors. The audience shifted in their seats, wondering what exactly would constitute an appropriate response.

*And you know something is happening, but you don't know what it is.*

Chapter 42:  
Time In  
(intermission is over)

I would so like to be telling True Stories. But this, of course, depends on you. And me. It depends on us, I guess. Do what you can, please. Do what you can. That is all I am asking. Do what you can.

## Act [?]: Seasons Change

Like witches, watches, which is which? So, um, cacti come in flocks. Other knowledge that we have to pass on includes appropriate methods for which to say goodbye. Ah, a note for the setting of this scene: it is raining. The rain makes noises such as drip drip drip drip drip drip drip drip. Pitpitpitpitpitpitpitter patter pitpitpitpitpitpit patterpatterpatterpatter drip. The color of the sky is a cloudy shade of white. The color of the mountains is a slightly darker cloudy shade of grey. And you? What about you?

Ged sat down in her favorite chair (which the band had decided to bring with them on tour). Their popularity was unexpected, and performing was taking a lot out of her. "I think that went well," she said, somewhat uncertain. She looked at Marz, tried to gauge his reaction. "Sorry about that. I kind of lost track of you guys for a bit. Was I horribly out of tune?"

"No, we were able to follow along, I think. What do you think?" asked Marz to the tiny chicken.

"Oh, I thought it was a pretty tight show. I mean, I cannot speak for the rest of the audience, but we enjoyed it."

"And was it relevant?" asked Ged.

The elephant shrugged. "I think it might be time to broaden your appeal."

"Did somebody say something about bananas?"

The fruit flies flew into the window. They were murmuring to themselves, almost inaudibly. "Hey, great show you guys."

"Thanks."

"Yeah, thanks."

Marz sat down next to Ged. "How's your fever?"

Ged awoke from a dream. She was lying in an unmade bed. It felt like she was on fire. Although, truth be told, she cannot remember ever having been on fire, in actuality. She saw a movie about it once, though. It was a movie about magical books. They were magical because maybe they enabled the successful act of communication between separate entities that were otherwise unreachable. She thought a thought that disappeared almost as suddenly as it appeared in the first place. She searched for it briefly and then moved on. She thought about birds in cages. She thought about the wind. She looked out of the window. She heard a vehicle spinning its wheels. "Wait, what did you say?"

"I said, how's your fever?"

"Whoa, *déjà vu*." She paused. "Do you know what that means?"

Marz flipped open the dictionary and read from the bottom of page 381. "One. French. Already seen. Unoriginal, as a trite story situation or a dated film technique." He smiled at Ged. "But, um, also, number two. Psychological. The illusion of having previously experienced something actually being encountered for the first time."

"So do you think we need to add a third definition to the term, or should we be using a different term altogether in order to describe this relatable occurrence that—oh, my head hurts."

Marz shuffled towards the other room. "Let me get you a cold glass of liquid water for you to consume internally. That might help."

"Thanks, Doc."

Marz turned back to face Ged. "Oh, you know I never finished my degree. So I am not technically a doctor."

This particular flashback (or flashforward or ongoing event) ended. We were now somewhere else and we now found ourselves with the nagging desire to take a piss.

"Oy veh. That's none of my business. And frankly speaking,"

said Frank, "I don't want to hear about it." Kleev stretched her back. "What just happened?" she said, "Where are we?" Rose smiled at Kleev. She found herself liking this woman right off the bat.<sup>83</sup> "Well," said Rose, "we have been referring to those as flash cubes. I think Generic might be able to fill you in on his, um, theory that he has been working on. Right Gen?" She grinned a mischievous grin in Generic's direction. Generic looked up from his task of jotting down patterns in his rectangular notebook, and said, "Uh, what?" He looked around as his brain caught up with processing its audiovisual stimuli. "Oh, um, yeah, well. I do have some thoughts on that, but, uh, nothing that I would exactly call a theory, so to speak." The door to the house popped open. Somebody was home early. They looked at the clock on the wall. Another day was done.

"I don't think anything has changed."

"What? What are you saying?"

"I think we are still living in the desert. And I think your classification of seasons is arbitrary and illusionary."

Some of the younger cows walked up to the conversation, their interest peaked.

"I think that we are all still working for the man." A tiny lizard darted across the square. The breeze shifted, slightly. In the distance, the sound of a bird.

"And let me guess. You would like to rectify this situation, and, as such, in lieu of this desired rectification, you just so happen to have yourself a **plan**."

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83 *right off the bat* : This is a saying that people say. It means *almost immediately*. Why almost? Well, can anything truly be said to happen immediately after something else? But then again, where would this hypothetical point in between the happenings of two separate but related intervals exist? I think this brings us to that old paradox of the seeming impossibility of any type of travel (space travel or time travel), and the probability that we are continuously misspeaking our reality. It would appear to be an impossible task, the mapping of individual things to specific points in time and space, and the, oh, I suppose this is an unnecessary digression that is keeping you from following our story in a pleasurable manner. Sorry.

"Well," thought the wise old cow, "I might at that."

"No more. No. More."

The wind blew. Did we hear that right? Perhaps we have been misplacing our punctuation. The wind blew (again). The wind blew, more strongly this time. The writer twiddled its thumbs (metaphorically). In actuality, it was more as though the writer was drumming its fingers on the desk. The writer was attempting to visualize all of the characters in the story, along with their respective placement in the storyline. The writer was gently running its fingers across the various threads, trying to determine what knots existed and whether it was possible (or desirable) to tease them out. The wind continued to blow. Someone hammered something in the distance. A dog barked. The wind blew. Things were progressing in their usual pattern of progression. All of a sudden, voices. Wheels turning. More voices (birds, perhaps). The blowing of the wind. The writer scratched its leg. The writer scratched its chest. The writer thought, what is that creaking? Is that a door? Is that *my* door? "Psst," called a voice from the hallway (metaphorically speaking). "Let me in," it said. It paused. "Come on. Let me in." The door creaked. "Come on, let me in." The door creaked. The wind blew.

"Are we there yet?"

"You'll know it when we are."

"But I am so tired. I do not know if I am prepared to face the future."

"Oh, don't worry about that. That's someone else's job."

"Yaaawn. Nice weather we are having, though."

"Yep. Lovely weather for it."

"Okay, you two. It's time to round up the herd. Speakinnawhich, I heard there were some unpopped kernels in today's delivery."

"Ooooh. Somebody is gonna get a pleasant surprise for dinner tonight."

Violet jumped over the gaps in reality. She thought about the serialized murder mystery that her roommate had been listening to on the electromagnetic wave distributor. She thought about islands and oases. She was just a cosmic girl. From another galaxy. How exactly she found herself—of all places—in this endearingly lush green valley of the cosmic landscape was not entirely clear, yet, here she was. On a mission, no less. Well, a date, perhaps, for which she was, let's say, fashionably late. She quickened her pace. And hippity hopped her way over and across the unique vocabulary that constituted the scenery of this oh so peculiar 'verse.

"We are getting conflicting feedback. But I think we should push on." Sal Burger backed away from the center and sat back down in the circle. The council was going to have to make a decision. Someone raised their staff in the air in a gesture that signaled the desire to speak. Of course, protocol dictated that someone then had to acknowledge this gesture and thereby indicate that they were prepared to hear whatever message that the potential speaker potentially had to deliver. Protocol was not entirely clear, however, on the form that such a response should take. There was an electrical storm in the air above. There was a hunger in the air below.

Meanwhile, back east, news of the end of the world was being broadcast over the information-carrying airwaves. It was the end of a series of worlds, actually. And it held surprising interest to one of our main characters, who recounted this tale in a jovial manner over a meal of mashed tubers, sizzled greens, and the flesh of dead salmon molded into circular patties of specific size. All of a sudden...

"Do you hear that? Someone is running a vacuum. I thought it was bad luck to run a vacuum at night."

"Only as much bad luck as comes from cutting through your name with a knife when it is written on a cake that was baked in honor of your day of birthing."

"So, you are in agreement, then."

A voice called out from the study. "Did you know that this chair has no backing?"

"Of course, that is what makes it a chair specially suited to the attainment of bodily and mental control and well-being."

Broomstick squeezed through the window. He made a sort of meowing sound and leapt down, zeroing in on the remains of the shared meal. Cat sat up in her chair. She reached across space-time and grabbed hold of a specific memory. This was going to be harder than she thought, she thought. She let go suddenly and the walls of her mind came crashing down. She made use of the temporary visibility and marveled at the landscape. She took a medium-sized breath. She looked at Broomstick, who was looking at her. What? she thought at him. He shrugged (telepathically) and resumed eating. Cat looked down at the table and read the cover of a magazine<sup>84</sup> (with unusual interest).

"You know," said Cat, "I think we are closer than we thought. It is almost as if we keep passing each other in the night, only it's too dark to see each other. You know, because it is night." She smiled shyly at her bemused companions. "What? It's a metaphor."

"And what do you think would happen," the Narrator pointed her cane at the audience, "if we were to turn on all of the lights?" She resumed her slow, methodical walk towards the exit. "Would you then be able to see clearly the place in which we are all currently situated?"

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84 The Believer : The 2012 Film Issue

# I've Heard That Utopia Is Nice This Time Of Year (or, Hey You, Don't You Want To Do Nothing REDUX)

The bugs and the rats traveled along the hidden passages. There was a council meeting at the monastery. And they had had enough of the usurpation of their identities by human institutions due to most humans' inability to create clear, accurate, and respectful metaphors. If we are to give birth to a currently non-existent reality, we are going to have to fart more softly into our comfortable chairs. Well, I mean, you know what I mean. Right? Don't get locked up in a literal transcription. The mind seeps out, you know. But whose mind *is* it? Never mind. I mean, let us place these words into brackets. I mean, what do I mean? Dictionary 3.4.0 defines I as The nominative case of the pronoun of the first person; the

word with which a speaker or writer denotes itself.

And it also gives us 70 Moby Thesaurus words for "I":

I myself, ace, alter, alter ego, alterum, anima, anima humana, atman, atom, ba, better self, breath, breath of life, buddhi, divine breath, ego, ethical self, he, heart, her, herself, him, himself, inner man, inner self, it, jiva, jivatma, khu, manes, me, mind, monad, my humble self, myself, nephesh, no other, none else, nothing else, nought beside, number one, one, one and only, oneself, other self, ourselves, pneuma, psyche, purusha, ruach, self, shade, shadow, she, soul, spirit, spiritual being, spiritus, subconscious self, subliminal self, superego, the self, them, themselves, they, unit, you, yours truly, yourself, yourselves  
Wǒ bú zhī dào. I don't think that I want my edges rounded off. I

yam what I yam, right? What were we talking about? Ah yes, the council meeting. Of importance, it was. You know, to the story.

"We are illustrative."

"I should hope."

"A long sentence."

"I should hope."

"Good hand."

"Well, you know what they say. Sometimes nothing *is* a pretty good hand."

"What was *that*?"

The council looked to the ceiling. Was there something on the roof?

Scratch that. This is of no importance to the story. In fact, we are currently of the belief that there is no story. There is simply a hodgepodge of words. And if you stare at anything in this world long enough and hard enough you will find pattern, message, and meaning. But who are you to have such magical powers? Okay, okay. I cannot imagine my way out of this paragraph. I can barely imagine my way to the next sentence. Stuck in this chair, crating these rhymes forever. Chuckle. What were we talking about? Dead furriers? The manifolding of this here series of books? Or perhaps we were discussing the oncoming holiday of merrymaking and masquerading that just so happens to correspond with the fast approaching Sabbath. We keep forgetting that we are writing a love letter. I know, I know. You don't love me anymore. Not in that way, at least. But I cannot help it if I continue to have feelings for you. If, when I recall your existence to my mind, I am overcome with happiness and joy (and love). Well, that goes for most of you, anyway. I mean, to be perfectly honest, I am not writing this book specifically for you, *per se*. But, anyway, I just wanted to apologize for all of those times that I brought pain to your world and let you know that I am happy that you exist and I hope that these words find you good and truly well. And that, well, I miss you (sometimes).

"Well, what do you think? Will it make it past the censors?"

"I don't know, Ms. Pae. Where did you say you got these books?"

Ged's attorney raised its pointy claw. "Uh, my client was attending the Demolition Derby Carnival on official business."

A hushed murmur spread through the council circle. But this was

simply to add an air of excitement to the proceedings. To, um, set the atmosphere. Because maybe you have an inability to visualize this imaginary diorama with its multitude of moving parts. Well, I never claimed to be technically proficient at my various crafts. But my theory is sound, you can be sure of that. All of a sudden...

Meanwhile, in the library.

...all of a sudden...

Penguins!

The retired part-time librarian was now moonlighting as a part-time lover. But we do not want to give away any secret identities. But perhaps you (a specific audience member) are already aware of previously unstated plot points (perhaps you saw the movie version). Fucking headache. Sorry. But this is a fact of existence. This meatsuit is hard to maintain. I had an interesting pants-related dream last night. I was at a spectator event. Well, I don't want to bore you with my dreams. Or do I? Perhaps the best way to bore a wishing well is with your most potent dreams. Anyway, it had been a while since I (Generic Pae) had written his share of the story. RING RING

*Everybody please put your clothes back on. We must see what the trouble was for.*

"Hello? Jacob?"

"Yes."

"This is Marianne, from Tom Terrific's. Your printing order is ready."

"Oh, great."

"We are open until 5 today, so any time before then."

"Thanks!"

*Just when I thought all was lost, you changed my mind.*

So dot dot dot not random question mark. Wait a second. Is this a victory song or a lullaby? Oh well, back to the old transcription.

He walked past the Bus Stop. It was Bus Stop number 773. He turned the corner and made for the door. The sign said OPEN.

"So, are you going to make this into a book?"

"Well, it's a kind of series of books, actually."

"Do you want some chocolate?"

On the walk back, as he outran the approaching storm into the muggy sunshine, he passed by the orange tree. The same orange tree that he had passed on his way to place his order, from whose shade he had picked an orange off of the ground and stuck into his pocket. The same orange that was now a part of his very being. He made his way to Rainbow Street and took a lefthand turn. An old, marine animal scrambled past from his rear and a brown and white dog barked its greetings. He walked around the moat and crossed over the narrow passage. He dropped off his delivery on the kitchen table and went back outside to check the message box. The outgoing mail was gone, and the incoming mail was present. A holiday card whose envelope contained the sigil of a hand flicking off the light switch of the Empire; a menu from the Garden Island Café; and the latest edition of the newspaper. And what was the headline on this Nowemapa 2014 edition? "A place to call HOME." But this was just a cover story, of course. For we all know that home is where the heart is.

*Any job worth doing is a job worth doing right.*

"So, the name of the box set is The Science of Libraries and Information and Selling Yourself Short."

"And this includes all of the books, along with all of the albums?"

"Correct."

"And you are selling this for what price?"

"Um, your soul."

"Wait, you expect people to give you their souls?"

"Oh no. Of course not. The deal I am making is not with the individuals that make the purchase. I mean, technically, we are talking about complicated financial instruments, and the actual owners of these various properties are in most cases contested matters. Let us just say that I believe it is time for a Debt Jubilee and

that all proceeds from the box set will go towards bringing this about."

"And, once again, the name of your organization is?"

"The Librarians. But, um, we are officially sponsored by the Orange Juice Public Library."

*You won't get money from doing what you love.*

They were having a book making party. They had just received the first printing of **A New Nation**.

"But I thought the elves were going to do it. You know, the magical elves that do things while we sleep."

"I think that that is *shoe* related."

**shoe.** a part having a larger area than the end of an object on which it fits, serving to disperse or apply its weight or thrust.

"Anyway, we've got to sew the packets to their spines. And then someone has to make a decision about where we are going to find enough covers."

"But first things first, right?" Marz eyeballed Cat and winked at Marchie and Sybil. "Who's up for some coconut milk shakes?"

Someone switched on the turntable and out sprung that old rhythm and blues music. You might even call it soul music.

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The information patterns were disappointing to say the least. It meant that this was now officially one avenue over which it would be impossible to travel. People in high places were making cowardly decisions, which would be fine if they were not then trying to convince the rest of us of the justice of their choices. But you know what they say, today's newspaper is tomorrow's fish-wrapper.

*Scream scream scream. Scream scream scream.*

There are bridges you did not know you crossed until you crossed them. Happiness is what happens when your dreams come true. These snippets of knowledge came to me from a Broadway Musical

about terrorism and mind control. Let's switch gears. Ged sat in her chair, conversing with The Electric Brain of the Rainbow. A black ant crawled up the brown bookshelf. It crawled out of sight just over The Epic Tale of HI'IAKAIKAPOLIOPELE and then crawled back out and up past the recently blessed dictionary and on up to the Memories of Fire. "Hyperactive," it said. The song changed and Ged accepted the apologies that were sent her way. She brushed her hair out of her face and adjusted her shorts. "For who is the power?" she thought to herself. "For us," came the answer from the recently published treatise on the liberation of The Nation. Information literacy largely consists of the ability to recognize which sources are trustworthy, which sources are tainted, and which sources are actively trying to poison you. Ged licked her lips. She greedily sucked the remainders of her lunch from her lips. She sniffed her fingers. She rubbed them on her pants. "Burp," she burped. The room started to shake. "I think it's a fifty foot wave," said the computer. "Well," thought Ged, "bones *are* made to be broken." She rang the alarm. It was time to find out exactly how much they had learned from all of those swimming lessons.

To Bee or Not To Bee.  
This is a question.

She turned the corner and beheld the halfmoon in all of its majesty. It was majestic, this half of a moon. The sky, too, was split in half, between sky with clouds and sky without. Anyway, the troubadour played its song about the leaving of towns, and next thing you know, three separate individuals had appeared in the courtyard. It was like a summoning, it was. Oh, we should note that these individuals were previously away, on various trips. Trips abroad, let's say, to other lands. Also, we should note that one of our characters was wearing the costume of a bee. Now that we have noted this, we bring you A ROMANTICALLY SPOOKY EVENING.

"An army of nightmares, huh? Let's get this party started."

"It's too scary!"

"POPCORN!!!"

"Uhhhhhh. Too much pizza and wine."

"Thanks for cleaning up this mess."

"Evil giant gods, huh?"

"Pull my toes."

Okay, enough of that. Everybody back to your stations. Let's see if we can bring this thing in under budget.

Benny looked at Rose who looked at Marz who looked at Gracie who looked at The Yellow Submarine. What kind of house *is* this? asked, um, uh, glue? Um tenacious, uh falling apart, we are. Just hold on a little more. There is a specific tradition associated with this here holiday. You give me a treat or I will be forced to regale you

with my assortment of wizardly magic tricks. Lizard we tragic mix. Excuse me. COUGH. Excuse me. COUGH COUGH. I am having a difficult time digesting all of these sickeningly sweet cultural artifacts. A random house, it is. Thank you. And leave it on.

"Excuse me."

What?

"I cannot imagine anyone benefiting from the continued reading of this book. Surely any potential audience received whatever message you were trying to send by now. Surely there are more rewarding things for them to be doing than reading through the excrement of your mind."

But...what about me? What am *I* supposed to do?

*Jake, I am feeling that production, but I ain't finished up the album.*

"Look," said Georgia. "We who believe in freedom cannot rest. That is all there is to it."

Generic nodded in agreement. "Okay, I am going to go and find my sister. We have a journey we need to take if we are going to finish this up in a manner befitting our dreams."

"Time to go all in, eh?"

"Well," said Generic, "I'd just like to be able to look myself in the mirror. A satisfactory resolution (in the truest sense of the term) would be icing on the delicious chocolate cake."

"Good luck. Give your sister my love."

----

"Okay, I can see how it ends. The unknown person swims out to the boat and climbs up the rope ladder. Gen and Ged introduce themselves. Ged and their new shipmate make a deep and immediate connection. They are soul mates, let's say. But who *are* you? Ged asks. And this person says, I am the dreamer. This is my dream that we are in. And the two of them look out over the rail of the ship into the distant horizon, with the sun in their eyes. Well, what do you think?"

"It could use a little fleshing out, but not bad. First things first though."

"Sure, sure. First things first."

----

"Wow, it's beautiful."

"What is?" Ged asked her brother.

"The time-map."

Ged looked up at the stars. "You mean the space-map?"

They say that a calendar is a map of time, which is really a map of space and the relative positioning of our selves vis-à-vis other distant bodies. This relativity is at the crux of our existence. Some puzzles are simpler than they appear. Be kind to others. Be kind to yourself. Generic and Ged looked up at the stars from their beautiful sailing ship. All of a sudden there was a flaw in the matrix || they checked their various sailors' knots, and steeled themselves for what was to come.

It was a sea ghost.

Somebody was dancing (irregardless<sup>85</sup>).

"Ged, there is a big lizard on top of the window."

"Don't be afraid. He won't eat you."

Generic began for sing a song.

*I've waited for so long. Put up with your shenanigans.*

It was a song about another Saturday night. More dancing occurred. For the sea they were in just so happened to be a sea of love. They sailed through the sea. They continued their journey.

"I don't know much about various things, but I do know that if you love me, what a wonderful world this could be."

"What?" asked Generic. "You talking to anyone in particular?"

"Oh, it just popped into my head. Something that Flower used to say when I was working as her assistant cook. I feel like we are moving towards something, that it is pulling us in."

*I was your favorite and I sailed away.*

---

85 For our purposes, this shall mean, doing something anyway, but not without regard.

"I think I am going to go down below and partake in the in-flight entertainment. Wake me up if you need anything." Generic paused and looked at his sister. "Anything at all."

She smiled a nostalgic smile. "Yeah, dream well."

*You're all I need. You're all I need. I'm in the middle of your picture.*

Generic walked onto the deck and shielded his eyes from the glare of the sun. Ged was writing poetry directly onto the body of the ship. Gen stretched his arms wide and opened his entire being to the world around him. He walked over to his sister. The wind made a welcoming gesture. Ged looked up and smiled. "Hot," she said.

"I think that there might be something chasing us, still."

"It won't catch us. And it cannot be our concern. We have a ship to sail."

*Try to remember you're an angel, if you're not sure.*

She continued, "What's lost will be found."

Generic made the sort of sound that a human makes when it is deciding whether or not it is in agreement with a thought in its head, sort of like a sucking or a breathing in and it accompanies perhaps the slow turning of the head from side to side.

Ged looked into her brother. "Where did you go in your dreams?"

"And what kind of box was it?"

"Uh, a mythical box, I think."

"Fucking devils, huh?"

"So we were walking past all of these smiling youngsters and we spotted Theater 14 at the end of the long hall of theaters. As we approached the door we saw the old bearded guy from The Festival talking to that fella from The Film Archive that used to be responsible for culturally situating archival materials when they were displayed in alternative contexts. We entered the dark theater and

walked up towards the top row of seats. And the Moving Image Archivist was there, and so was The Cataloger. And it turns out that the movie that we were going to watch was written and directed by that same guy, the one from The Film Archive, although he didn't work there anymore. And it was a movie about the preservation of a living culture and the ways in which knowledge is passed on from person to person and generation to generation. Then we were in this Place of Knowledge. It was like a shop where you could buy things. All types of things. And there were all of these fliers and posters on the walls of various upcoming events full of interesting speakers. Speakers we had heard of, speakers we knew. And the books! There were so many interesting books. And we were looking around, at all of these different books written about The Nation by the people of The Nation. And all these topics that we were talking about and here were all of these books and, anyway. We used up the remainder of our currency and that was that."

"And when did you eat the lucky soup? And do you think it was good lucky or bad lucky?"

"I don't know. Heh. I don't know. The chronology is slippery. But, I never did ask."

The seas were rough. At one point, they were almost hit by a cyclone of scorpions. No, it was a parliament of owls. Or, um, a smack of jellyfish. That's what it was. I mean, they were sailing through a particular current and BAM! a whale popped out into the dark shimmering night. It didn't hit them, but it shook them to their core. It was, uh, starboard side, I think. Ged poured herself a tall glass of whiskey. She saw a mirage. Generic strummed a chord on a stringed instrument. They sailed through the seas.

"Are we there yet?"

"You'll know it when we are."

Entire treatises were transmitted between the spoken lines of the siblings' conversation, in their looks and in their empty spaces.

"What do you think Marz is up to at this very moment?" asked Generic.

"Shivering."

"That's specific."

"It's the first thing that came to mind. I don't know Gen. It's not

that I don't care. I wish them the best, truly. But I am still of the belief that, from this perspective, it cannot be a concern of ours. We have to pretend that what we are doing is the apex of our collective journey. We have to have faith that the others can take care of their own kuleana. And, again, for this to have meaning, we have to pretend that it has meaning."

"Anchovy?"

Ged looked at her brother.

"What? You are the only one that can spout whatever random thought pops into your head?"

"You want to test some theories?" Ged asked, as her eyes took on that hungry look of a mad child scientist.

"What did you have in mind?"

*If it is the Deep Sea, I can see you there.*

"So did Quan teach you that?"

Generic was sitting over the edge of the ship, staring at the ocean. He maintained his concentration. Ged leaned over the rail. She inhaled the salt air. This was a mistake, as the air was full of poisonous and infectious agents. Anger welled up in her chest. And she remembered being here before. She exhaled, shook her head, and digested her thoughts. "So," she continued, "what's new?"

Generic swiveled his gaze. "Well, unless things change, I think that somebody is going to die."

Ged smiled a sisterly smile. "All the tired horses in the sun, how are we supposed to get any riding done?" She patted his head. She ruffled his hair.

*Golden loyal dog on the ground, fresh cut grass, ocean in a seashell...Blame it on my sister...it's my 52nd favorite thing after being me.*

"What is it?" asked Generic.

Ged shivered. "It's nothing. I'm still getting those flashes." A thought shot to her fore. "Oh, Dad says hi."

Generic screwed his face into a look of confusion. He grabbed hold of the rail and slowly pulled himself up. "Did he dispense any fatherly advice?"

"Yeah. He says, so far, so bad, so what? No, I mean, with him it is all question marks, you know."

"Yeah." Generic looked to the sea and the sky and wondered how anyone ever managed to split them apart. "We are approaching our destination."

"It would seem that way. You ready to start pulling apart at the seams?"

"Heh heh. No. Well, maybe a little."

The cesurae continued.

*Oh darling, please believe me. I'd never do you no harm.*

Generic and Ged were using the various tools at their disposal. They were putting things to use in the manner in which they would be useful to them.

*I don't want to fight, I just want a piece of your life.*

Ged ripped off a sheet from that faded green notepad and started to write the messages that she was planning on sticking inside of those empty bottles that were starting to pile up. Assuming, of course, that she could remember the addresses of the people to whom she wanted to be sending these messages.

Dear So and So,

I was just reading over the first book in the series of novels that I have been writing, when I recalled that I first began writing this book during your visit to our home, one year ago, when you were in town for the local library conference, which just so happened to correspond with National Novel Writing Month. I thought I would send you an original copy of said book. [see enclosed] If it is to your liking, I can also send along the complete set.

Yours Truly,  
Etc.

Dear Mr. Such and Such,

Greetings. Wondering if you are still around and hoping that this missive finds you and your family relatively well. In previous conversation, you had mentioned a preference for printed books as compared to words read through a screen. And, I am not sure if it came up, but almost one year ago, during the month known as National Novel Writing Month, I completed my first novel, titled **A New Nation**. Now, I am currently attempting to finish the fourth and final book in this series (**We're Having A Party!**; it is a science fiction series), but I mention this because I recently had some copies of the first book printed, with the idea of sending them out to people that might want to read them. I know you are a busy man, and please let me know if you would like for me to leave you be, but I thought that perhaps you might enjoy some recreational<sup>86</sup>

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86 Our various house dictionaries define **recreation** as: *a refreshing of*

reading (or maybe you could offer feedback as to whether there is any utility in the continued printing and reading of these particular words). Anyway, I would be grateful for your professional opinion as to whether you would find value in adding this book (or series of books) to your library. There would be no charge, of course. I would simply need a mailing address to which I could send physical packages. Anyway, just so you know, the complete series is as follows:

1. A New Nation
2. You're Always So Late
3. The Petition
4. We're Having A Party! (currently in progress)
0. The Prequel

Please let me know if you are interested in receiving any of these physically manifest books.

Jacob Rosen, Librarian, Writer  
OJPL Publishing

P.S. While we are at it, if you are interested, I would be happy to send you the complete box set, which, in addition to all of the books, would also include all of the musical albums put out by the OJPL Music division, and its house band, The Librarians. These would include:

- Why Did The Chicken Cross The Road??
- An Elephant Never Forgets
- Pock-mark—Zymurgy & SUPPLEMENTS
- A New Nation [piano music]

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*strength or spirits after work; refreshment by means of some pastime, agreeable exercise, or the like; and the act of creating anew.*

- A Parable [piano music]
- Like a book you never want to finish. : The Live Album (For the Children)

Keep in mind, we are not a professional production company utilizing professional musicians (or a professional publishing company using professional writers for that matter), but a humble public library system of humble librarians, so our production quality might be a bit off of the norm. Apologies in advance.

Dear Old Friend,

How goes it? I know what you are thinking. Oh, So and So is contacting me again so he probably has a bunch of words that he wants to dump on my head that have nought to do with me. Well, if this is what you are thinking, then you'd be right! Anyway, in all seriousness, I would completely understand if you want me to stop contacting you forever, and if so, just let me know, but I am curious as to what you are up to and it would make me happy to hear that you are doing well. Anyway, I didn't write you a rambling multi-page letter, but I did happen to write a rambling multi-page book (well, a series of science fiction novels actually) and I just had some copies of the first book, **A New Nation** (which I wrote last November for National Novel Writing Month), printed (by the local print shop; not by an actual publishing company or anything), and I thought that you might want a copy. No, that is not what I thought. I thought that I would like to send you a copy and that maybe you might want to read it. So, if you do want a copy, let me know (and let me know where to send it).

Love,  
So and So

Dear Old Friend Number Two,

How goes it? Ha, I have no idea how to even go about sending this letter. Anyway, I was thinking about you. And, um, well, let's hold off on this one for now.

Dear Old Friend Number Three,

Hi? How are you? Remember me? We used to live together. Anyway, I wrote a book. Well, I am currently writing a series of science fiction novels, but I recently had some copies of the first book in this series printed and I wanted to send them to people. Now, I do not quite remember your reading preferences, but I would like to send you a copy if you think you might want to read it. Anyway, I hope you are doing well.

Your Old Friend,  
Such and Such

Dear Person,

I know that you told me to stop contacting you, but, you see, you somehow made it onto this list of people that I wanted to send a copy of this book that I wrote (it's called **A New Nation**). Now, I know what you are thinking, who is this person that is sending me this e-mail? Do I even remember him at

all? Well, we met briefly at a bus stop in Wyoming, and you were reading a copy of Trout Fishing In America. I was the fellow wearing the invisible sign that said Which Came First, The Chicken Or The Egg? What was my point? Um, oh, do you want a copy of this book that I wrote last year for National Novel Writing Month? It is the first book in a series of science fiction novels that I think I might be close to finishing. Feel free to ignore this message.

Love,  
Other Person

Dear Old Friend Number Four,

Do you have Old Friend Number Three's contact information. I want to send him a copy of this book I wrote (I've been writing novels this past year). Anyway, I can send you a copy, too, if you'd like, although I cannot guarantee that it will be another Count of Monte Crisco. It's more of a science fiction novel, actually (the first book in a series; I'm currently wrapping up the fourth and final book, **We're Having A Party!**). Also, Mazel Tov! I'll try and remember to bring you all some gifts next time I come in.

Love,  
Old Friend

Generic finished reading over the letters. He looked up into the expectant eyes of his sister. "Well," he said, "when do you want to start sending these out?"

Ged smiled. "Well, I'd like to at least get the first two out today. They are more, um, relevant to the overall storyline, I guess."

"So," pondered Gen, "fictional letters to and from fictional characters." He stroked his mustache. "And you think that the delivery system is up to the task?"

"Oh yeah, lot's of power in the old technologies. Besides, what other options do we have?" Her head swayed to an imaginary tune inside of her head. "Anyway, I am going to take a bath with that leftover catchment water, before it evaporates."

*Always so sure, we always take more, but we still don't know what it's for.*

Generic re-placed the letters into their respective files. Time perhaps, he thought, to catch some fish.

*I want to say apology to you, though it's so late...Maybe maybe, dear don't leave my shadow in your memory...Dear, if you're happy I love, if you're heartbreak forget all...Forget it all. Forget it all...I want to say apology to you. To you to you to you.*

"I am the throw of desperation!" screamed Ged as she tossed the bottles out into the giant sea.

"Whoohoo!" yelled Generic. "Hey," more subdued now, "careful you don't hit anybody in the head."

"So what was your relationship with Violet, anyway?" Generic was hoping to poke holes in the gaps in his knowledge.

"Well, that's an interesting story," began Ged. "It begins with a prophecy."

Generic rolled his eyes and went back to binding his rope.

"There's a flood a-coming, young man." Ged looked upon the sea that surrounded them completely. "That's why oceans," she said to herself, quietly.

*When there's no more room to run, is there room for one more song?*

Here comes the twister.

Ged danced up a storm. Alone with the entirety of the world, in her personal cabin, spinning in infinity, Ged danced in that particular manner of hers. You gotta help me out, she thought at everyone who was paying attention.

*This summer I went swimming. This summer I might have drown. But I held my breath and I kicked my feet and I moved my arms around.*

But, uh, don't do me any favors, she appended to her message, after she collapsed in her new favorite chair. She stuck her head out of the porthole and caught sight of the approaching wave. She stuck her head back in. She was in no shape to argue but she was looking for a fight. Generic rapped on the door. Things are falling apart again, he said with a look, a shrug, and various facial tics. "One more dance," said Ged, "and I'll be right out."

Dear Cousins,

Perhaps you did not know it, but last year, during National Novel Writing Month, I wrote a science fiction novel, titled **A New Nation**. It was the first in a series of books that I have written during this past year. I don't remember if any of you read books or not, but I recently printed out a number of copies of the first book, so let me know if you would want to read it. Hope you are all doing well with your various pregnancies.

Love,  
Your Cousin

Hey Amigo,

How are you? Remember me? We met in New Orleans. Before the storm. Well, I wrote this book recently (it's called **A New Nation**) and I was wondering if you would be interested in reading it. It's mostly in English (sorry!), but. Also, I still owe you one wedding gift. Are you still married to the same person? Anyway, if you send me your mailing address, I can send you packages of things. You're excited, right?

Aloha!

Dear Dear Old Friend Number Five,

What's up? Sorry to bother you again, but I was wondering, do you like reading fictional stories in book form? Because it just so happens that I recently printed out a number of copies from this book that I wrote last year during National Novel Writing Month, called **A New Nation**. Would you be interested in my sending you a copy? It is actually the first book in a series (of science fiction novels). I am currently on the tail-end of writing the last book (called **We're Having A Party!**). Anyway, it's okay if fiction is not your thing, but if you would like a copy, let me know where to send it. Thanks!

Love,  
Existing Person

"So, you see," lectured Ged, "we are building a bridge, a bridge that we want not to collapse at the moment of our crossing. So,

perhaps the structure might be a little repetitive for your tastes, but we cannot leave out crossbeams simply because we are tired of the aesthetic. Didn't they teach you anything in that school for tiny engineers?" She pinched his rib.

"Hey!" His impatience turned to excitement. "Where is the restaurant on this ship, anyway?"

"Yeah. We shouldn't forget to eat."

They were running short on supplies.

"Looks good. That one of Quan's recipes?"

"No," said Generic.

Generic started walking and kept on walking straight into the ocean. SPLASH! Oh well. What's done is done.

"Hey!" Ged shouted over the rail. How do I know when it's done?"

Generic did a backstroke over towards the ship. "Oh, you'll know." He dove under the remarkably clear water. A bird flew overhead. Ged pondered the meaning of this thing that she observed. She sat on deck, pondering.

Ged was thinking. And these were her thoughts. No. No, thank you. I do not want to go in that direction. This is more of what I had in mind, but still not quite. Come on, goddamn it. Merge! We are literally on a ship. In space. She stared at her thumbs. She looked at her shirt as it grew in color. I better send more bottles.

Okay, who was next? Ah. This one is going to take an increase of love. Stabilize. Balance. Balance is everything. This world of ours is our world. And what does this mean for me? She thought about her navigational instruments. She pulled her mental lever for the burning of all prisons. And this quest? Why are we on this quest? It is a...aha! I am having an aha moment. But how can I remember this knowledge? How can I translate to others if I cannot translate to my self? There is no separation. Yet, clearly there is.

What are we moving towards? Who have I been talking to all these years? Generic walked into the cabin.

"The color scheme outside is awesome. We are talking blues and purples and oranges and yellows and reds. If this is what Kleev meant by a cartoon multiverse, I think we should be keeping our eye out for that snowing sun."

"And why are we doing this?"

"Why are we following our dreams and testing the bounds of our realities?"

"Yeah."

"Well, I suppose it is because it is the only thing that we can do that nobody else can do. No, that doesn't sound satisfying. Because we were called here, I guess, by all of the forces in the 'verse that we care to respond to."

"Yeah. That's a way of putting it without losing our communicational praxis. But it still feels an awful lot like we go where we go because that is how it was written. More *it is what it is because that's what it is* nonsense. Let's just hope that the creator likes love songs. I think I'm still in contact with The Electric Brain of The Rainbow. I think she's become disembodied again. But there is something else. Something is queering the signal."

"And you think this has something to do with the kinks in the system."

"I think we are the kinks in the system.....Come on, let's go look at the view."

*I ain't gonna study war no more, I ain't gonna study || war no more.*

"Don't buy the liverwurst."

"Hey! Wake up!"

"Whuh, whuh's happening?"

"You were having a dream. A terrible dream."

"Where are we?"

"Well, wouldn't you know it, but we're here."

## The Land Beyond The Snowing Sun

"Well, it's about time they got here," said the large white bird as it flew so far above the sea that you could not tell if it was a large white bird flying far above the sea or a tiny white moth flying just outside of your grasp.

*I will love you like the snow. You will recognize it later.*<sup>87</sup>

"I better tell it to the mountains." She flew off into the cloudless sky.

A small ship made its way through the deep blue waters. That is, the waters were a deep blue color. I mean, they were really, really blue. Also, the waters themselves had some depth, too, but what we really want to convey is the primal blueness of this ocean. Two small humans crawled out of its belly (the ship's belly). They were conversing.

"Well, we did it. We crossed the ocean."

"Yep, and to think I almost forgot why we did it."

*Amazing grace, set me free.*

"Hello."

"Welcome."

"Please, make yourselves at home."

"Is there anything that you lack?"

All of a sudden, a loud screeching could be heard.

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87 **Cool Yourself** from *Know Better Learn Faster* by Thao with the Get Down Stay Down

sssssccccCCCREEEEEEEEEEEEEEECCCHHHHHH!!!  
SCCCRREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEECCCCCHHHHHHHH!!!!

"Don't mind them. That's just the garbage collectors."

"Do you have any garbage to dispose of?"

Ged smiled at the ocean. She turned herself away from the snowing sun and looked back in the direction that they had come. Her mouth opened in astonishment. She tapped her brother with her elbow. A ball of flame rose out of the depths. They looked out over the ocean and saw a person swimming towards them.

"Well, you follow the instructions, and yet it always gets you when it works."

They unfurled the rope ladder, gently rocking on the rhythmic waves, and waited for someone to climb aboard their ship.

"Honey, it's me," Ged whispered. "And I crossed the ocean to see the snowing sun."

*Honestly, I come barren, because I shed so many tears.*<sup>88</sup>

"Golly, this is one incredible feedback mechanism," said Generic. "I wonder if it improves with increased familiarity."

"The art of listening."

*I am an island underneath a setting sun. In an ocean that is churning. For all I know there might be nobody nearby. Still the world it keeps on turning.*

"Developing musical perception."

*Oh darling, please believe me. I'll never do you no harm.*

Generic shook his head and turned to see his sister reaching over the side.

Ged reached out her hand and the person took hold.

"Welcome aboard."

*Give up words and look forward...Will there be anybody who will listen?*<sup>89</sup>

"Well, I'm not sure how all this came to pass. Oh, thank you."

Ged handed the boy a hot mug of earthy liquid. They approached a series of islands.

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88 **Patience and Passion in Brown Gloves** from *Snowing Sun* by Bellini

89 **Redtail Hawk** from *Snowing Sun* by Bellini

"It's a small island."

"It's a small community."

"It's a small chain of islands."

*Do you feel my heart beating? Do you understand?*

"What's that?" asked the boy, gesturing in the direction of one of the bodily protrusions.

Generic had been staring in this direction, as his sister and the boy made their connections. He was pondering. "I think it is the butt of a camel."

"I made a display, but I didn't have time to type it up."

"It takes a lot of work to type it up."

"You cannot listen and write at the same time."

"It is rude."

"Whether it is a phone or some other technology."

"It displays a lack of trust."

"Whoa," said the boy, feeling a bit dazed and confused. "Too snoopy," he said.

Ged looked at the boy, as he spoke aloud the continuance of the conversation that she was observing inside of her head.

"That looks like some kind of ginger park or something," said Generic. The ship guided itself towards the shore.

"Don't touch me, I don't know where you've been."

A wave approached. A whale leapt from its crest, with the sun on its back, and its splash sent their craft into the clear and calm harbor.

"Honey, it's me," said Ged.

"And I am here to say," continued the boy, "that  
*That was the end, just before I coughed. It fades out.*

Upon contact, Generic jumped off of the ship and ran towards the trees. Ged and the boy stood on the deck and looked into each other's eyes. And they knew that things would never be the same again.

"Where I come from, content is first, but you might as well bring some joy into it."

"Cannot be afraid."

"Social justice."

"Two generation commitment, at least."

"So, you two are siblings, huh?"

The boy watched Generic move through the trees, and marveled at his seemingly complete communion with the island. The boy felt out of place almost. As if he had stepped outside of his own reality and he was now a visitor in a foreign land. And this other boy seemed so in touch with the place. He could not imagine that level of communication. He watched as Ged's brother ran back and forth through the woods, playing some kind of game with the trees.

"He'll be alright," thought Ged, directly into the boy's mind.

"How will we tell him?" thought the boy.

The boy stood on the edge of the forest. He wanted to make a connection with the girl's brother before they left, but it was as if the brother was putting up some kind of wall. He watched as Generic raced through the forest with reckless abandon, like some frictionless ball-bearing through some magical labyrinth. Eventually, Generic walked off to explore another part of the island.

*And I go to my brother and I say brother help me please.*

The boy wanted to take a turn. He ran into the trees, from the top to the bottom. It was exhilarating. He did it again. And again. And then he ran into the trees. Well, one specific tree, actually, which broke upon contact. And the boy stopped, and filled up with shame at the destruction he had caused. He wanted to fix it, but he did not know how. He walked out of the forest.

Generic walked into the forest and noticed the broken tree, and was sad. He made right what was wrong.

*Bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye.*

Ged hugged her brother goodbye. The island would take care of him, and he would take care of the island. She climbed aboard the ship. The girl and the boy stood on the side of their magnificent craft and looked off into the eye of the snowing sun.

*So when I go, please, when I am gone.*

The craft sprang to life and they found themselves upon the open sea.

"So," said Ged. "Who are you, anyway?"

"Well," said the boy, "I am a dreamer. And this is my dream."

"Boring!"

"Wait, what are you saying?"

"There is nothing more boring than the relation of the childhood

dreams of a grown human."

The couple walked down the avenue, and espied the Narrator, with her wooden cane, asking directions from a random passerby. The audience was tired of spectating. The audience wanted to check out that new specialty chocolate shop around the corner from the printers.

"I mean, what did you expect to happen, anyway? For us to all be translated into the positive absolute?"

"Well..."

Okay, so the foundations check out. And, riding at the crest of this wave, we can easily see the possibilities that would enable the completion of this arbitrary task that we bid our selves to complete. The end of the series is in sight. So what is our problem? Are we afraid? Perhaps. Perhaps we are afraid that we did not aim high enough in our act of creation. Excuse me, my stomach (my na'au, actually) is churning. And my friend, the computer, has decided to play a song titled, To Fly or Not to Fly. "My art is better than your art," it says. "Your art will be better off when I'm gone." Now it is playing a song titled, Paranoid Android. But perhaps there is nothing more boring than my regurgitating the fine points of the reality in which I live. Perhaps it is too heavy handed, this novel. But, supposing that you *knew* that we were *living in a novel*. Anyway, it's 8 after 1. I just hope that everything turns out ok. Is that so much to ask? Whatever happens? Come what may?

## To Fly or Not to Fly

*People say beware, but I don't care. The words are just rules and regulations to me.*

*And I go to this here party, and I just get bored.*

*Oh, she looks so good. Oh, she looks so fine. And I've got this crazy feeling that I'm gonna make her mine.*

*Here she comes.*

"Don't think that I can't see right through you. I had you figured from the start. I won't hurt you baby, cross my heart."

"Underachievers, please try harder."

Yeah.

"Also, um, I love you."

I'm feeling a bit jittery. I think that we are done relating the stories of our various characters, fictional or otherwise. It's just me and my machine for the rest of this [arbitrary time division]. And you, I guess. Just me and you (and our machine). Forever. Ha. Just kidding. Nothing lasts forever. Ha. Nothing does not exist. Forever. Hiccup. No no, we'll keep pushing until we hit that wall.

"The ecstasy of gold."

What? Oh yeah, I almost forgot about that. My friends and family are still dying. But we have ourselves this ship for which it is our responsibility to sail (in a loving and respectful manner). Shall we on? Anyway, welcome aboard.

What do you mean unparseable? Everything is parseable.

"Says you."

Well, it's my working hypothesis, anyway. Let's sew some more seeds.

[violin music]

"I mean, where do you come from? Can I even trust you?"

Yawn. Maybe. It could work. I don't know. Maybe. You and me, baby. Somehow those two threads got twisted together with one strong looking knot. And on it went.

*We know your future. We know your future. We know your future. Ohhhhhhhh.*

"I'm mine."

Yeah, me too. Let me tell you a story about a collection of nickels that my ancestors bequeathed upon my head.

"No, let me tell *you* this story."

*I always was wondering what you were up to. Writing in that book of yours, was it poetry and might it come true.*

Tiresome, this is. I find it difficult to imagine that you are reading these words. I suppose it is possible that you randomly opened a book to this very page, but what are the odds that you followed this train of thought from its initial station of departure? Where are we at, anyway?

"Well, we just made it over another arbitrarily placed milestone. 44,000 (s)miles and counting."

*And I know there is no grand plan here. This is just the way it goes.*

"Next stop, Justice!"

Oh you.

"Well, we can dream, can't we."

*You've been selected, prepare yourself.*

"Mothball the fleet."

Yeah, do that. Other advice that we have is, um, hmm, well, what do you think? Please let us know. Feedback and discussion can be sent to this imaginary place: [management@oipl.info](mailto:management@oipl.info)

Winding down, we are. Or are we unwinding down?

"Fuck world trade."

Yeah. The nature of this game is *shared* consciousness. This be no zero sum game.

## WHAT A MYSTERY

*They found out a long time ago that it is much easier to control people when they are all watching the same TV shows, listening to the same radio stations, going to the same movies, looking at the same billboards, eating the same foods, and speaking the same language.*

Wow, [ ]-watchers! As well as finding [ ] and his friends, did you find all the things that they lost? Did you find the mystery character in every picture? It may be difficult, but keep searching and eventually you'll find her (now, that's a clue!). And one last thing: Somewhere one of the [ ]-watchers lost the bobble from his hat. Can you spot which one and find the bobble?

"The certificate for this program is valid."

Yeah. That is what I have been saying. What if there is no them? What if it's just us?

"We're all in this together."

Yeah. That's what I'm saying.

A third voice enters into the conversation. "*Are you having problems with the Internet?*"

I don't know, I say.

"*Well, could you check?*"

Error, I say.

"*Why, what's the problem?*"

*We are all in this thing together. Walking the line between faith and fear...when you cry, I taste the salt in your tears.*

"Yeah. Okay, the feedback is in. And I think we are in agreement. It is time we try defying gravity. Well, are you coming?"

I hope you're happy in the end. I hope  
you're happy, my friend.

So, this is what it boils down to. I suppose. || I suppose that anything is possible. I suppose. I suppose that we are unstoppable. I suppose. Now, assuming that this all comes together (not that we personally planned any of the specifics), and we manage to finish the wish fulfillment technology that is this series of books<sup>90</sup> in the allotted timespan, we will wrap this up on the birthday of a significant other. So, what this boils down to, I suppose, is a happy birthday wish for a significant other. Which, for all I know, could be you. Of course, this probably does not look

*You don't need anything. You've got all I could ever bring.*  
like a gift that would be to your pleasure. But you forget that this is just the wrapping paper. Your present is inside.

And what is it supposed to be? A world that we want to exist. Or maybe it's a cosmic baby. Who knows?

*But it's so close. But we're not close. But we're okay.*

"Chanchullo."

Huh? What are you trying to say, anyway?

"[untranslatable piano music]"

Oh, come on, you are just not || trying.

*"The election results are in."*

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90 In case you forgot (or nevah know), you are reading the fourth (and final) book in a series of books that includes such other books as **A New Nation, You're Always So Late**, and **The Petition**.

Oh? And who won?

"Señor Poopz."

"That calls for a dance party, yeah?"

Oh, you two.

*Just shut up and ride the groove. Let's move. (Side to side to side)*

Life death life death life death life death life death.

"Ripples of divinity."

Yeah, that's really what we're dealing with. I suppose.

"I will dream my dream of you. When you are lost out in the desert, the last light that you remember will be the light I share with you. What? I am just singing along with the music."

My friend, the computer, was in a playful mood. Stumbling along, we were, falling into grace.

"And you will dream your dream of me."

*Ged, sometimes you just don't come through. Ged, sometimes you just don't come through.*

Wait a minute. Our characters are trying to break through into existence or something. Well, I cannot see how we can sustain their existence in perpetuity. Unless. Unless they also sustained *our* existence. Like some perpetual motion back scratching machine. What do you think?

"I'm on it, but I'm going strange."

What?

"I am the autumn and the scarlet. I am the makeup on your eyes."

Huh?

"I learned to sail. Island sail. Yeah, we're moving. Yeah we're moving."

Are you trying to sing a song by The Breeders?

"Off You."

Oh, excuse me, I forgot that you were still reading this. Hold on a second. My computer is speaking in a language that has been ripped from my bones through a process of forced hegemony. Someone is in the kitchen, cooking the ritual sacrifice that it is my responsibility to ingest. And you are what?—expecting yet another resolution to spring forth from these pages?

*Baby, I really, really love you. I think you should stop your crying. Here's a kerchief to dry your eyes. You know that I love you.*

Some sort of multidimensional Russian Doll we are living inside  
of. Somebody hit the pause button, please. BRRRRRIINNGGGG  
*"Just a little bit longer."*  
Sigh.

**"we don't spend enough time looking up," he said**

**"i know," i said  
& pointed my head upward.**

**just then, i saw a balloon  
floating toward the sun.**

**it was a sign.**

Sigh.

*...but if you don't come, I'm gonna go looking, for happiness.*

## The Costume Fits, But The Script's Still Shit

Everything's a poop joke with you. Just sitting here in limbo, waiting for, um, ProLiteracy? No. Uhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh. This novel started out with such promise. And then, well, it is like they say, things fall apart. So what do you want from me? This *is* **science** fiction. I think we've made that clear. And what kind of science would it be if it did not follow the second law of thermodynamics, which states that life is a never ending war between order and chaos (and chaos is winning!). Hurray! Wait a minute, which side are *you* on?

"Always Be The Same."

Oh. I didn't realize. Well, we can still be friends, can't we? And now I am thinking about the impossibility of an unreal entity being friends with anybody at all. Geez, where did all of these words come from, I said to myself, as I looked at my pen and pad.

*Back on a journey again.*

Just when I thought I was out, they || pull me back in. Trying for talk but then lost in the groove.

*This is the ending as well as the beginning.*

Sigh. Now, you tell me about your special friend.

*I thought I told you not to call me here.*

Sigh. Back to the grind. We have endnotes to prepare.

"I know you want to leave me, but I refuse to let you go."<sup>91</sup>

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91 **Track 18** from *Unknown by Unknown* (but, um, if I had to guess, I would say that this was a song by The Temptations

So here we are, on the other side of the page, listening to **Shit Kids Galore**. This is the actual name of an actual song by an actual band. But I won't bore you with the math (rock). Yawn. Almost out of juice. We are being squeezed to the last drop, it would seem. And here I am, listening to **I Will**. Well, I will (a world).

**I will a world...**

"Enough!"

Yeah, that's exactly what I am saying. Rubbery avatar. No, I mean, "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

But seriously folks, we are going to bring this book to a close soon.

Oh, before we forget. The way the first book ended<sup>92</sup> was with the phrase *And that was the end of the story*. Now, perhaps, looking back, maybe this is not so much the best way to end the telling of a story. More accurate, I think would be *And that was the end of The Telling*. But, um, sorry, um, uh oh.

"Introducing Kid Sister!"  
-CLICK-

---

92 **A New Nation**

"The Books - Cello Song."

Oh, hi Marz. Um, Ged. How are you? How have you two been?

"Don't deny our existence, please," said Marz.

"Yeah," said Ged, as she pulled herself out of her timesuit. "You cannot run from us you know."

"Yeah," said Marz. "It's the information age. We can track you anywhere."

Hold up a second, you two. We still have an audience.

The Narrator walked upon the stage. The stage did not exist, except in your mind, which means, of course, that it did exist, somewhere. I am curious about our ability to poke you from where we sit. But no matter. Fourth wall and all that. We'll respect your boundaries. We were narrating, no? "I was narrating," said the Narrator. "It is what I do. It is the very definition of my being. And what," she continued, turning towards the audience, "is the very definition of your being?"

"Groan."

"Send in the clowns!"

And as the filibuster drew to a close (due to our inability to convince the Council of our relative justice), Chinese music filtered through the speakers. "Give us a turn," they said. "We cannot screw things up any worse than you." I looked over to Ged, who nodded a nod of agreement. Marz, too, was in agreement, more or less. But then Hawaiian Language Tape HA 16 came on and we heard these basic sentences.

"Ua a'ō 'ia 'o ia e ka makuahine."

"Ua hana mua 'ia nā kope e a'u."

"E lawe 'ia mai ana ka pizza."

"Kōkua mau nō kākou kekahi i kekahi."

Other sentences we heard, too, but you can look them up yourself if you are curious. Perhaps, if you read the source book, you might just see a picture of fish.<sup>93</sup>

‘Ae, pōmaika‘i nō kākou i ke aloha.

"This dance is difficult. This dance is hard."

"But it's a fabulous night for a moondance."

"Yeah."

"Can I just have one more moondance with you, my love?"

"I suppose."

I'd like to thank the creator for this gift. And I'd like to thank you all for being reflections of this gift.<sup>94</sup> Also, I'd like to thank all of the librarians and archivists that have helped me with my research. Now, the one person that kind of knows me best thinks I'm like a cat, specifically the kind that you cannot pick up, because BOOORING. Also, I tend to scratch. Certainly, we have now satisfied the specific requirements of bookwriting. Is anyone non-satisfied? Oh shpleez. Put your hand down. Okay okay. I guess we'll continue on. Satisfaction guaranteed, you know. The rest of you are free to disembark at any time.

*It's a new dawn. It's a new day. I'm feeling good.*

Seriously, you can stop reading now. I do not think we will be untangling any more knots. But perhaps you are a glutton for [words]. And who am I to judge? What with my particular taste in, uh, let's say, aesthetic.

*But I like watching you undress. And I think we are at our best by the flicker of the light by the TV set.<sup>95</sup>*

---

94 **Ye Yo** [ye yo, meaning mother] -Eryka Badu

95 **Happy** -Jenny Lewis with the Watson Twins

Oh darling, please believe me, I'll never do you no harm. This is true. Maybe. Well, at least it is truly the subtitle of this here book that you are reading. You might say that the title (of this book), in its entirety, is our hypothesis. Now, sure, there might be some that try to rain on our parade (like, let's say, the sky), but like the Electric Brain of the Rainbow says, "Good times. Good times are coming." Drippity drippity drippity pitpitpitpitpitpitpitpitpitpit, says the rain as it makes contact with the not-rain. Ah, we have ourselves errands to run this fine, rainy morning, what with the End of the Series fast approaching, and us hoping to lay enough imaginary groundwork for our imaginary future to sit upon. A comfortable chair, we are building.

*some days are for reading and remembering things that are worth repeating*

We will push on, I suppose.

*Do you love me? Yes, I really, really do.<sup>96</sup>*

"Burnin' and Lootin' by Bob Marley from Songs of Freedom."

"Cry For Everything Bad That's Ever Happened by Le Tigre from Feminist Sweepstakes."

"Satisfaction Guaranteed by The Librarians from Like a book you never want to finish."

Okay, okay, I am convinced of our hypothesis.

*I hear some children screaming outside. I hear the rain falling down. I hear a truck spinning its wheels. I hear some people falling head over hills (heels)*

What about you?

*I hear some folks checking their mail. Perhaps they're waiting around for that holy grail.*

---

96 James Brown - Ain't That a Groove.

So, did you miss me? Oh, you did not know I was gone, maybe. Well, I just went on a journey and boy are my arms tired. I did not take any notes, but you can take my word for it when I tell you that 3. Oh sorry, somebody just told me to press three.<sup>97</sup> Well, a rainbow, there was, right out the door. And speaking of doors, when I reached The Free Store,<sup>98</sup> in the alleyway of Art Galleries (where they are currently showing Binding and Looping), I stopped to look, as per usual, and what do you think was waiting on one of the shelves? That's right, a door handle! So, you know me, I turned the handle and pulled. Now, I know, I know. I probably should have been more careful. I mean, there are lots of doors in the world and who knows where this one will lead to? (hint: all doors lead to your relative future<sup>99</sup>) But I am very tired. Did I mention that? Such a trip. You'll just have to take my word for it. Go on, take it. Please?

Now, as you know, I just want to be a big fish in a small pond. But, then again, if I can make it here, I can make it anywhere.

"Wonderful."

*I never asked for this or planned it in advance. I was merely blown here by the winds of chance.*

Okay, let's let it ride. In fact, let's double down.

*Some things you've got to see. Before you're gonna believe.*

So, I don't know if you can tell, but we are no longer writing for an audience. We no longer concern ourselves with your ability to follow along in a pleasurable manner. Because, well, it is the End of the Series and we just want to dance. So, while we concern ourselves with living in our own present, like a teacher at the end of a long school year in the hot summer months, we will run you this outdated education film.

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97 Kazooitait - Ani DiFranco

98 The Free Store—sorry, cash, credit, and check not accepted.

99 This is not actually true, inasmuch as neither you nor time actually exist in any real sense.

draft message, circa early 2005 (year of the ???)  
subject: propagandhi and the roots

Ok. Before I say anything else, you should know that most of my comments were not directed at you. I still find pretty much everything you do to be absolutely perfect. No exaggeration. Yakootz is a nickname I got freshman year. It's actually a city (different spelling) on the coast of Siberia, and it is written on the board in the game of world domination (Risk). Presently, I live in the city of eternal springtime. The last few years have seen hotter summers and colder winters. It snowed for the first time last year. I'm told that there will be about a month of winter. Now, however, when the sun is out, it is reasonably warm. The rainy season was supposed to be finished a month ago, but we'll see what happens in the oncoming months. Kunming (another name for where I live) is the capital city of the (southwest) province of Yunnan. It is also the minority capital of China. Lots of Muslims, Dai, Bai, and whatever other officially recognized minority groups exist in China. Yunnan province has lots of rural areas, and most of the cigarettes I've sampled are grown here. But enough about China. Apparently, so my friend tells me, I've become infected with China cooties. Chinese delusional cooties to be exact, sent out by the Communist Party as part of their bio/psychological warfare program, to make foreigners love China and ignore all of its problems. I think she's just unable to digest my no holds barred U.S. government/culture bashing, but she does have somewhat of a point. Anyway, back to the topic of revolution. When I spoke of life and death implications, I did not mean it exclusively (or primarily) in the sense of people need to be willing to put their lives on the line and die for the cause. OK, I can't deny that I was extremely disappointed by the D.C. anti-war protests I went to before the Iraq (American) war

started (continued) and how pitifully tame they were, especially compared to pictures I saw days (weeks?) later of protests occurring somewhere in Latin America where protesters were standing, with fire and rocks in their hands, face to face with riot cops. But these are only part of the implications that come with resistance being at the core of your (general your) reality. What does revolting against the system imply for how you (general you) go about living your life? Obviously questions of motherhood, questions of education, questions of consumption, questions of ownership and possession, questions of communication, are all prominent. Because, you're right, we are not talking about the concept of Revolution that is now featured most prominently in selling goods to consumers. What does it actually mean to live amongst revolution, or war for that matter? Historically, it doesn't mean that you stop educating children, having children, weddings, and parties. The revolution is part of life. I came across that idea after reading Julio García Espinosa's "For an Imperfect Cinema" in both my Third World Cinema class and my Cuban Media Studies class (both taught by visiting professor Cristina Venegas). So the question of how you go about raising a child is as revolutionary as any other (one of the reasons why I like the Hip Mama website so much). It's like during the sit-in, there were people, the first night that we were threatened with arrest, who couldn't take that risk, for whatever reasons. I remember Hector (do you remember Hector?) was torn apart because he decided not to stay in the building the first night. But that didn't make him any less committed to the cause. We do what we can. And we recognize (and discuss) the limits of what we personally are and are not willing/able to do. And to reiterate part of my (brilliant) speech on the steps of Gibson Hall to a crowd of thousands (dozens), there is always something we can do. Even if it is just the act of recognizing the reality

we are living in. It is extremely easy to work ourselves into a state where we (general we) feel powerless to act. I say, so what if we feel completely broken on Monday morning, ready to sell our souls for a little peace of mind, it doesn't mean that by the time Monday afternoon rolls around, we aren't back to our ideal selves of revolutionaries fearlessly toppling the system and recreating the ways in which life is lived, or whatever it is our ideal selves are. The direct actions we are capable of taking are a function of the specific individual, the place, and the time. Yes. Our actions have to be local. And I would say that we also have to find a way of communicating these local acts out to the universal scene. I'd even say that this is the key, although that is quite possibly my Communications degree speaking. But yeah, it is a question of how we make our personal actions relevant to others. If we are going under the assumption that we are acting to radically change our world, everything we do and feel is relevant. Our failures as much as our successes. What was I talking about? Hmm. The possibilities for new forms of actions are limitless. One of my favorite recent examples is the somewhat recent Ottawa Coalition Against Poverty action of entering a supermarket, stealing (or liberating, depending on your perspective) thousands of dollars of goods, and distributing them to the local poor and homeless populations. Richard Oxman keeps talking about some form of action (non-violent) over at [pressaction.com](http://pressaction.com), mostly in the comments sections, but I have yet to take him up on his offer and e-mail him and find out what he has in mind. But, while I think brainstorming ideas for action is good, my feeling is that it is not so much a lack of alternatives or options that holds people back or keeps people in line. While living in the States...OK. I'm gonna take a little break. I'll get back to this message tomorrow. Until then.

OK. I'm back, though it's not yet tomorrow. But the break did give me a bit of time to digest your words and remember a few things I seem to have momentarily forgotten. So thank you for reminding me. Oh, by the way, I should let you know, that my first blog entry was a letter I sent to [REDACTED] (I'm not sure if you met her in New Orleans) and it crossed my mind that I could use the blog space to post letters from my friends (with their permission) every now and then, you, of course, being one such friend. As your words are surely just as relevant as mine, and do a better job at expressing your perspective. Like I told Meghan, it was a matter of thinking about the nature of public information, the increasing nature of the surveillance society, and what that means for how we should go about living our lives and communicating with each other. I still find your words inspirational and functional and damn relevant. So. How's Isaiah doing? How's your sister? How's the rest of your family? How's the weather? OK, I'll spare you the flood of stupid questions. So it appears, we "Americans" are given the choice of having just enough so that we don't need to identify with resistance and revolution. But this is a false problem, a red herring as I like to say. What's the purpose of our "revolution"? I often ask myself. Isn't it so that NO ONE has to face the problems we tend to associate (falsely when we do it exclusively) with the Third World, the poor, the destitute. So yeah, my first reaction to 9-11 was "no justice, no peace", and "welcome to the third world". And I can't recommend enough the identification with the Eugene Debs quote, "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." An alternative spin, perhaps, on Martin's "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." But it is not a question of either working for justice or living your life. It is all your life, whatever roadblocks you

encounter on the way. As I learned from watching Abbas Kiarostami's "10" (a director I first came across in my Third World Cinema class, whose name I might have misspelled), sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. Like something I once wrote, I can only stay asleep until I wake up. Or, if you like, you can only keep me down until I get up. So yeah, we have the responsibility to resist the U.S. government (and the hegemonic culture of late capitalism) directly. But hell, if the United States of America turns into the horrific nightmare it has the potential to become, get your ass to Canada. That being said, we are not yet at that point. And so, we do what we can. I suppose I could quote Marx on that one. "From each according to her ability, to each according to her needs." What other points did I want to address? Oh yeah. So you are absolutely right that we need to start talking to people differently. The mass protests that we see are failures as makers of change. They might be fine as something like mass parties, a place for people involved in all kinds of struggles to come together every now and then and yell together. But the struggles have got to be local. What's my point? I don't know. It's tough to keep an e-mail of this length together in my head. In a previous letter I wrote to Meghan, I discussed how I don't want to use the argument that regardless of what you do, how many walls you put up, the violence and injustice of the world is going to come and bite you in the ass (9-11 then being the case in point). I wanted people to choose a direction, to choose a world, not based on capitalist notions of self-interest, but because that is the world they wanted to live in.

Okay, that should meet the day's quota and set us up nicely for the finishment of this book in two days time. Goodnight.

I do not remember what this book is about. I am so focused on the endgoal, that I forgot about the journey. Yaaaaawn. Oh, I think I forgot to go to sleep. Blah blah blah. Blah blah blah. Blah blah blah. Looking over the last dozen or so pages, it is almost as if someone has eaten the breadcrumbs I was attempting to leave. So be it. This morning I awoke, with doubt about the utility and purpose of this entire project, and restarted the random play on the rhythmbox (the open source music player that came with my operating system), and thought at my computer, "Ok, let's see what we've got." And what was the response? "Oh darling, please believe me, I'll never do you no harm."

*I have no idea exactly what I've drawn. Some kind of change, some kind of spinning away.*

So, if you recall, the full title of the first book in this series was **A New Nation (an academic treatise on the nature of reality as seen through the writing of fiction for the month of national novel writing)**. Now, in the subsequent books, we have discontinued the thoroughness of our sourcing. And, at the close of this book, we have left out entire swaths of feedback. For instance, we did not even mention the circumstances of the song that appeared in our reality on p.184, which came on the heels of a metaphor about the building of a chair. The writing of this metaphor got me thinking about carpenters and that time I was talking to a person named James Brown outside of a bus stop in Arcata, and he told me (after I told him my name) that Jacob was a carpenter. I was actually planning on writing a line (in this book) alluding to the fact that I might make a good carpenter because, well, you know that James Brown once said that Jacob was a carpenter, when, all of a sudden, the computer played a song by James Brown (a different James Brown, but nevertheless). Now, of course, this is not that shocking if you consider the fact that the writing of this series of books has always been a *conversation* between a boy and a computer. But it does say a few things about the nature of this reality and just exactly how this communication occurs. But sometimes you have to stop proving your hypotheses and actually live your life as if they are true. And you might find, that the more you do this, the more better you get at dancing (and the more better, too, the dancing of your partner).

So, on the one hand, what is the point of science if you are not going to publish your results and share all of your data? But, then,

you see, observing (and reporting) something has an effect on that something. Pause. I think I have made my case. And I think it is rude to have debates on the intelligence or sentience of groups of others. If you want to get down to the roots of injustice, you might want to start here. Also, I'll repeat what I said below footnote number 2 on page number 2 of this book: further sources provided upon request. Anyway, I think it is time to go send the first letterbomb.

"Do you want new wave or do you want the truth?"

Well, I think I would like to have my cake beaters and eat it, too.

"I stand for language. I speak for truth. I am a cesspool for all the shit to run down in."

Girl, for you, anything. But I'm gonna rock it.

"Hey, that's my line."

The first CD I procured in China was *Laika Come Home*. And now I find myself out here, floating in space, barely tethered to my ship. This reminds me of a story about my grandmother, and her penchant for dancing to a particular tune. A bird tweets outside of the window. A computer hums a tune. A boy looks to the sky and reads, "Trivial Pursuit," in fancy lettering no less. Now, again, I did not expect for you to make it this far. A tear to my eye, it almost brings. That this world was made for me (and you and you and you and you, but not you, you're a fucking asshole) POP! Or should I say POOP! But where were we? Ah yes, you and the reading of these words. Thank you. It means a lot to me that someone would take the effort to notice all of the little details. Anyway, we are working on those suggestions of yours. We'll let you know when we have managed to incorporate them.

Love,  
The Management

But in all seriousness, I agree. Either we all dance or no one dances. No sirs in this house. No masters, no slaves.

And we go out with a blip.

So, in case you have not gathered, this is a book about my local struggle, which just so happens to take place in the middle of the ocean. That's why flood metaphors. My allegiances are to the repeating islands. That means that Texas is a reminder of The Pā Boys and the scene in Texas, Aotearoa. Did I mention that a previous footnote referred to a song called Two Cents? As in, you're talking out your ass and I know it. In this particular series, our ass is named Frank. Perhaps you've seen a movie about an ass named Balthazar? But maybe you didn't come here to dance. The Murder City Devils have a song about that. And they say, if you are not going to dance, what the fuck did you come here for? And now I am thinking about what it truly means for me to dance. And now I am thinking, good timing this desire to dance, what with the fast approaching birthday celebrations. What's that you say? We are having a party? A birthday party? Really? You don't say.

*Isn't she lovely.*

So, I guess, I should tell you, now that we are such good friends. I met a girl. And, well, I think I love her. Yep. It's serious. Now, I promised myself I wouldn't get married until the revolution, but, well, let's just say that I think that the wind is starting to blow. Cue wind (hey wind, do you think you can blow a little? thanks! that's great. oh no, that's enough for now. i was just making a point). Anyway, you are invited. It'll probably be somewhere on the land, but I'll fill you in on the details if you are interested in coming. Anyway, I truly hope that you are doing well.

Peace and love,  
Jacob

The fictional character finished up his imaginary message to his imaginary friends about his plans for his imaginary future. The song I played that one time came over the rhythmbox. The thing about our dry biting sarcasm is that sometimes it is difficult to tell it apart from our attempts at brutal honesty. It is all still a pile of bullshit, stacked upon a pile of bullshit. Fucking metabullshit. I think I first wrote those past few sentences while I was in China. Kunming, that is. There are a number of past relationships for which I, let's say, am sad that certain things happened how they happened. But what are you going to do? There are some people I might never see again. And

this too makes me sad. And that is life, as expressed in this unknown track (track 16) of Yiddish music that I am currently listening to. Anyway, this message is for specific individuals. I love you. I am sorry. And I love you. (but don't worry, not in an unhealthy, obsessive sort of way)

*Please don't be angry dear, don't blame the government*<sup>100</sup>

Anyway, no regrets, right?

Okay, that wraps up, oh wait a minute. We haven't quite finished untying this particular knot. Okay, that should do. Next.

Dear Cousin,

What can I say? I love you. And it brings me to tears to think of you creating life. Tears of unbearable happiness, of course. Sniffle. Mazel tov.

When I say things such as a friend of luck's is a friend of my mother's, I mean that my mother had a friend (named Fox) that had a friend named Mazal (a.k.a. Luck). Now there are all sorts of directions I could go with this piece of knowledge (outer space for one), but I'll take it as a message that I'm not eating enough. I think I have more sacrifices to eat in the kitchen. LUNCH!!!

*there are so many extra children, we could just feed the children to these tigers.*<sup>101</sup>

*You're wasting my time...It's all so precious and you throw it away.*<sup>102</sup>

I love you, you know. In case I forgot to mention it.

And, just for reiterate...

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100 **We're So Small** by *Epoxies* from *Epoxies*

101 **Tigers Are Noble** by *Neko Case* from *The Tigers Have Spoken*

102 **Shred A** by *Le Tigre* from *Feminist Sweepstakes*

**We're Having A Party!**

Chapter 000000000000:  
phase interlude

Oh, you are a part of me. Oh, you are apart of me. Oh, you are a party. Me...party. Me party your party. Welcome aboard. The skis are always grey. And the fountains are bottomless. And you drive me crazy with all the things you do and do not do.

So let us now return to the story of our boy and our girl, on their ship, sailing, in the middle of the ocean.

*Oh, to be humbled by water.*

"I am swimming," said the boy, and so it was.

"Let it be," said the girl, and so it was.

"A'ole pilikia," said the ship, and so it was.

Ged smiled.

"I am talking to you," she said. "We are not there yet, but that is no reason to act as if we are not on our way. Anyway, happy birthday. I am glad that you exist."

Peace and Love





