

# Chapter Seven

## STATUS ACROSS THE STATUS QUO

In the sitting room of his Al-Nigma suite, for despite the lateness, neither seemed inclined to leave the other, Remy began with the obvious—that it must be assumed everything connects—having eventually gotten around to addressing Foucin’s contention that his having conferred identity on the fingerprints unyoked them from the murder.

However, in his avidity to concede its insignificance, while politely avouching its significance, the subordinate clause came out in the negative, “nothing disconnects.”

Foucin’s response, an allusion to Greek tragedy, less surprised than worried Remy. It was further confirmation of a mental legerity which he knew put him in danger.

*I must escape this country, he vowed again, before I’m defanged.* The first tocsin had been sounded earlier in the office when Foucin had rapidly embraced the implication of Mohisen’s *empreintes digitales*.

“*Khalaas!*” he had exclaimed, an Arabic indication of concord. Foucin raised his right hand to his throat where his joined index and medius stroked the track of his jugular. “But you will please excuse me, and be so kind as to await my return?” Pushing his chair from the desk, he rose and walked past Remy to the door.

Within two minutes it was evident that he had not gone to his prayers without pause: His sergeant (Ghouraf, the cognomen of his Arabic *plaque*) brought in a tea service and exited without acknowledgment.

On the silver tray was also a small plate with crescent-shaped *chacab*, an almond pastry, and—“what dazzling efficiency!”—a zip-lock plastic bag with Remy’s belt, Swatch, and clutch purse. Remy poured himself a cup, careful not to spill a discourteous drop.

“A Muslim’s prayers.” It had been twenty-eight years since he had performed them. At seven, he had confessed to his father that the sundry, hectic movements distracted him from concentrating on God.

His parent’s countenance stiffened, yet gradually the muscles relaxed. “We’re not all so blessed as Noura, endowed at birth with reciprocity. God understands.” Nestling Omar to his chest, he whispered, “Seek release in the ritual.”

He had tried, and Remy, as he placed the *théière* down, conjured up a reenactment: In it, the phantasm of him as the father-instructed youngster melted into that of Foucin, who, his ablution completed, was “now aligning himself” with some colleagues in the prayer room of the Gendarmerie.

In an erect position, his face toward the Kaaba in Mecca, with both hands lifted to his ears, the supplicant uttered *Takbeer*: “*Allahu Akbar!* [‘God is Great!].”

Immediately launching into his *Qiyam*, Foucin situated his right hand upon the forearm of his left and chanted, “Glory to Thee, O God, Thine is the praise and blessed is Thy Name and exalted is Thy Majesty, and there is none to be served beside Thee. I betake me for refuge in God against the accursed Satan.”

As Remy stared at the cup, he heard the *Fatiha* (the opening chapter of the Qur’an) and the four-verse Sura *Al-Ikhlās*, affirming God’s uniqueness. Still the identity of the intoning worshiper was beyond his ken, no image being reflected in the silver teapot.

At the point the boy, inaugurating *Ruku* (the bowing position), began to chant a solitary nightingale cry, “*Allahu Akbar!*” his head lowered so that the palms of his hands reached his knees.

“Glory to my Lord, the Great!” Foucin thrice jubilated, and as the lad, whose bent frame had righted itself, implored God to “accept him who gives praise to You. O our Lord, Thine is the praise,” Remy added a sugar cube to the *shai*.

Together, the two, freed from *Ruku*, fell. Toes, knees, hands, knitted brows touched the carpet, into which two unisonous voices murmured the first chant from *Sujud* (the procumbent position), “Glory to my Lord, the most High,” again three times repeated.

Undistinguishable even in their shadows, they reared their procumbent bodies and tilted backward into an upright sitting posture (*Jalsah*), during this brief interim praying for God’s forgiveness. The second prostration ensued, and after still another trinity of laudation, in concert they rose. [“Here endeth the first *Raka’ah* (‘prayer cycle’).”]

And here Remy took a sip of the tea.

At the end of the second *Raka’ah*, a variation from the first occurs: In lieu of standing, the worshiper slumps to his haunches.

“All prayers and worship rendered through words, actions, and wealth are due to God,” muttered Remy, constrained to appropriate temporarily the role of professor, since the exercise of sweetening the tea with an extra cube, while not having dispelled the chant, had succeeded in confusing him over who the intoner was, the lad or Foucin.

Again he raised the cup to his lips, and now clearly it was the commissioner whom he saw completing the incantation, where extolment of God descends into acclamation of the Prophet, “Peace be upon You, O Prophet, and the Mercy of God and His Blessings.”

The boy with his lower legs steady, yet his hips, buttocks, and upper body swaying, interposed and over-chanted Foucin, “Peace be on us and the virtuous servants of God. I bear witness that none is worthy to be worshiped save God and I bear witness that Mohammed is His Servant and His Apostle.”

Remy had downed the cup and was on his second before they concluded the third *Raka’ah*, not obligatory, though both had proceeded to it without any hint of conspiracy. At its close, after which one is finally permitted to solicit divine sanction for one’s family, the youth’s voice anew became presumptuously dominant: “Peace be upon my father, my mother, and my sister, the favored Noura, and the Mercy of God and His Blessings be upon them.”

Thereafter the two arose. “Peace be upon you and the Mercy of God,” the child, quarter-wheeling, said to the *commissaire divisionnaire* and pivoted to invoke the same on his forty-eight-year-old self to his left.

Foucin communicated the inalterable *Salām* (“peaceful greeting”) to an unknown someone on his right, and to the boy, “Peace be upon you and the Mercy of God,” notwithstanding Remy was conscious that it had been his lips moving in all instances.

## 2

The “insubstantial pageant” dissolved, *les derniers mots* having been spoken into the dregs at the bottom of the cup, themselves soon smothered. No, Remy was persuaded, during this fifteen minutes reserved for God, Foucin’s mind would not have wasted a moment on the “irreverent irrelevance” of a post-factum negative.

However, on his return, having ensconced himself in his leather chair, the commissioner did hone in on what had influenced Remy to phrase his pre-prayer query as a possibility, “Could it be . . . that M. Ballard . . . ?”

Backtracking to the point gained before his withdrawal, Foucin started with a causative concession, “‘Since M. Mohisen’s fingerprints are on everything else, they should have been on the negative’ is your inference, is it not?”

He ticked off the corpse’s smudged “possessions”: “The Patek Philippe, the Lladro belt and wallet, the calfskin of the burgundy Kingsley slip-ons, the buttons on the wine-plaid Arrow shirt, the two keys to his Renault (his others left in the glove compartment), and the dinar notes recovered from the Belmazoirs’ shack.

“Yet not on the negative, which had it been where it was found would have been the one item, by its novelty, most intriguing to the attendant M. Mohisen Abdelghani.”

Foucin targeted his gaze at Remy. “You’ve contemplated that M. Ballard, averse to leaving it in the changing-room basket, might have taken it to his spot on the beach.”

“Perhaps he did. Perhaps you’ve named the one who can tell us.”

“Still you’ve considered it, the pristine condition of the negative: not scratched by a single grain of gray sand, not crusted by a wanton crumb of sea spray, its by-and-large blackness unsullied by ‘nary’ a penetrating sunbeam. It’s as if it was protected by a revolutionary all-purpose sand-, seamist-, sun-screen.” A wan smile, mirrored by Remy’s, lingered on his face. “No fingerprints. No beach prints.”

As Foucin pushed to his feet, Remy perceived that despite the impudence he had grown to enjoy reasoning with this man, in his unerringly pressed tan uniform, to the left welt pocket of which was miserly pinned a slitlike white ribbon with red and green borders, three fewer decorations than the regalia of his sergeant’s coat.

This observation provoked Remy to bemoan the ocean-clashing mayhem, Pacific and Atlantic, of his own trappings.

Rounding the desk, Foucin drew near. “A sip of water having compliantly satisfied my thirst, I will not feast until ‘the one who can tell us,’ ‘perhaps,’ has been questioned.

“I’d be honored if you’d accompany me to his house, after—for I empathize with your disarray, having once in Nice, in corralling the fifth devil, bedecked myself in a charwoman’s rags, and paradoxically felt ennobled—after you’ve been afforded the opportunity to repair to the Al-Nigma.”

Foucin halted for a meditative pause. “Please forgive the contumely of my salutatory

laughter and any other slights, with which you may not have been acquainted, thus entailing that each acquires the status of a social sin.”

From a coatrack, he threw a stone-hued *burnoose* (a hooded cloak, more cape-like than a *cachabía*) over his habiliments, eschewing, however, his visored cap.

Remy had risen with Foucin, thereby emancipating from the shadow of his fig-tree lap an orange boy and a green girl. Initially he dismissed any need for apology before conveying, “I—we—rendezvous with him at 9:30.”

### 3

In Foucin’s Peugeot Ghouraf drove them the two kilometers from the Gendarmerie to the Al-Nigma. Alone in the backseat, Remy observed the thick stretch of clouds which menaced the city and wondered whether “the good shirt, the good *bantaloón*” would get drenched in the trek to the Andaloos.

At the hotel’s underground parking lot, Foucin assured him, “No rush. It’s 8:10, and you know how vicinal the restaurant is.” While Remy changed, he added, Ghouraf and he would perform *salaat il-isha* (‘midevening prayers’) at a proximate mosque.

In his room, however, with alacrity the HIV-2 apparel was flung off. More leisurely he showered and then donned “some civility”: a pearl-white dress shirt, black pants, a charcoal tie with swirls of cobalt, and a gray herringbone jacket, respectively by CK, Mandelli, CM, and Boss, of course, without their labels. At the plated gold collar of its whangee handle, Remy clasped his Brigg.

Downstairs, the opening of the elevator revealed Foucin and Ghouraf chatting by the white car. The commissioner was quick to halloo him with the lilting gibe, “So antipodal your garb, fear you not M. Mohisen will reckon you a damning *djinni*?”

Not five minutes into the ride to the Andaloos, Ghouraf was signaled to stop. They had reached Boulevard Mohammed Khemisti, the threshold of Alger-Centre, the modern haute couture section of Algiers, with its foreign-chartered boutiques, airline offices, *monuments commerciaux au luxe*, and *palais de cuisine voyante*.

“Shall we stroll the last five blocks, talk a little?” This consent gained, Foucin mumbled something to Ghouraf.

The narratives of Remy’s Aladdin’s cave adventure in Mons and Foucin’s Aurès Mountains’ familial tragedy occupied the first three blocks, and as repercussion of these they padded the next in silence. With Rue Docteur Saâdane traversed, they entered Rue Mokhtar Abdellatif, at the end of which was the Andaloos.

Here Foucin reopened the conversation. “It’s only when an Arab—or a Berber—lacks time to lie that he’ll blurt out the truth,” Foucin had submitted as an exordium to his proposal of how Mohisen should be manipulated.

“We must play with his pulsebeat. Up and down, a further up, a further down, culminating in an upper crest, as down, my shadow heralding, I swoop on him,” the metaphor “almost eerie” to Remy. “The truth, akin to a diver in cramps, gasping for and gagging on the essential air, in uncontrived, hallucinatory bursts will be hauled from the tenebrous, mid-marked ocean to its sunlit surface.

“What did Tolstoy write, ‘It is very difficult to tell the truth, and young people are rarely capable of it’?”

By their arrival at the green-and-white canvas awning, which like the red carpet extended from the Andaloos’s entrance to the curb, Foucin had elaborately limned his strategy, ceasing with the semi-rhetorical query, “Is this somewhat congruent with your plan had we not merged forces?”

Remy was struggling with the phrasing of his concurrence when his attention was diverted by the aberrant reception of the doorman, clad in a signatory red full-length coat and green puffy trousers. Instead of parading forth to greet the two prospective customers, he had bolted through the *porte d’entrée*.

“In essence, but absent of your texture. I hadn’t incorporated the adjacent park. I suppose, during our meal, I would have strip by strip removed my homophile bandage, a delicate postoperative procedure often more painful to the observer than to the patient.

“Feasibly this prelude would have so alarmed him that my (now our) desideratum—a validation of the items M. Ballard bore from the changing room—would have stayed floor-lodged, never to ascend as claimable flotsam.”

Remy shifted his gaze from the former spot of the vanished ostiary to his questioner. The compliment must have been too self-consciously entertained, for Foucin, possibly to terminate his companion’s self-denigrating excess, pushed his left arm under Remy’s right and, elbow locked in elbow, guided him up the carpet.

They passed the knee-high hedged border of the Andaloos’s external section, its tables already filled with diners, who, Remy noticed in passing, had riveted a communal and disconcerting gloat on them.

As they neared, the richly carved blackened oak door opened. A stout man in an ivory tuxedo, jade ruffled shirt, and vermilion bow tie bustled out, dogged by the hovering concierge. His face ablaze with a startled delight, he made a cramped bow to Foucin. “Monsieur, you honor us,” and a welcoming forearm glided toward the entrance.

Inside, Remy had no time to survey the main room, for on the mezzanine a brouhaha was in progress.

“*Scandaleux!*” a voice protested to a waiter who squeezed the pleated trim of the bay-leaf satin-damask portière. Drawn back, it had exposed the private dining room.

The quivering server, whose complexion was as stark in its pallor as the other’s was in its rubescence, glanced from the remonstrant, in formal Western attire, to the vestibule. Suddenly a smile of relief sprang forth. He turned to the affronted patron, confidently met his glower, and half twisting, with emphasis, nodded in the direction of Foucin.

Even from that distance, Remy comprehended the alteration which immediately suffused both the figure and visage of the insulted: a rasping intake of breath that swelled his chest, a mouth gone slack, and a widening of his eyes.

With a similar briskness he composed himself. “Madam,” he summoned. Stepping to the railing, he unfurled his right arm, and his open palm, partially masking the countenance of a woman who had advanced, indicated the room. “M. Commi—Monsieur, please.”

Two strides forward divorced Foucin from his group. “M. le Ministre, the blessings of Ramadan to you and your wife.” His hand, thenar inward, was brought to his heart and on to

his lips. The homage accorded, in its glissading past his waist, he waggled an index finger.

An additional severe inhalation by the dignitary was followed by a sharp percipient head bow. He took a military pace backward, bumping into his wife.

Remy joined the concierge, falling in behind the tuxedoed *maître d'hôtel*, who differentially trailed Foucin. "Monsieur," he began, "I merely wanted the best for you . . . and your guest," finally conferring a peep on Remy.

"I am honored, M. Kasdi, and apologize for my delinquency in wishing, 'The blessings of Ramadan to you and your family.'" He conveyed the same to the doorman, whose carriage stiffened at this agnition.

After their customary responses, Foucin couched his appeal: "If an empty table's available, the refreshing air of the left balcony is to my taste. Another my friend expects. May he be seated, as he desires, alfresco, on the right next to the sidewalk, where he's guaranteed of being espied by his companion."

Before they were ushered to their separate destinations, Remy leaned in to sussurate, "Monsieur, monsieur, that first day in your office did I in truth 'bombast [your] worth'? Beyond your pretense of being peripheral, you seem to have achieved a certain status."

Foucin delayed his reaction until he had gained the first rung of the stairway leading to the balcony.

There with his dark eyes he fastened Remy, who imaginatively conceived that they subsumed those nearest him—the *portier* and the headwaiter, the latter of whom would presently escort him outside—the governmental minister and his wife, who had not moved from the railing, the other patrons, all of whom were "rapturously" gaping at the "Great One," the restaurant's lush interior of high ceiling, gilded woodwork, and intricate chandeliers, and its canopied exterior, dissected by the red carpet, the blocks they had negotiated to the Andaloos, Algiers itself, and all of Algeria, the Arab lineage of the name undoubtedly goading the Berber.

The rejoinder, however, as if adjudged inadequate to its preceding stare, was spoken too softly for Remy to catch. "I'll have to feed him that line again," he vowed, once seated at his hedged-in nook.

#### 4

"In Greek tragedies, peripheries were disallowed, to employ the negative prefix, 'nothing disconnects,' which you seized on." As well as the clause, Foucin had cogently employed a form of the adjective that Remy had used two hours earlier at the Andaloos.

"Nothing must distract Oedipus from 'closing up truth to truth,' as he found it. But surely you wouldn't accord this matter a Sophoclean status." He looked at his host, settled in the left bergère, to determine whether the allusions should be shelved or expanded on.

Remy's answer, not his nod, reversed the options, negating the first alternative and discharging the second. "I prefer to view Oedipus as an evader of truth, like most of us. Strange pursuer! He passes the bulk of the drama running from it, unwillingly suspending his disbelief till reality is rammed down his throat. The truth of that tragedy is our natural proclivity to marginalize the truth."



Briefly he deliberated, yet to evince he would continue, held his mouth ajar. “M. Foucin, through M. Vellacott’s reports I know *your* history,” the accentuation designed to impart that he was not referring to his country’s.

Foucin’s rejoinder was an unsubtle attestation of his disinterest in excursing into personalia. “The Rothmans. I caught the abrupt twist of your neck when Mohisen said, ‘M. John never took a towel, merely a lighter and his pack of Rothmans, to his spot. Worrisome at the time, the package a safe place to hide the negative.’”

Through a fine jet of cigarette smoke, Remy’s head gestured his assent.

“But promptly resolved.” Standing up, Foucin ambled from the French Empire sofa to the casement window, his darting eyes exploiting the occasion to inventory (or so it struck Remy) the sitting room: the rosette-patterned ceiling of white, broken only by a small chandelier of cut and frosted glass; the teakwood trim and wainscoting; the velvet-embossed wallpaper in hues of red; and the circles, stars, and triangles of the tiled floor.

Numerated were the seven scattered Kashmir rugs. Some were under the tiny brown-cherry pedestal wall tables, decorated with burnished terracotta vases or glass box lanterns. Others, unencumbered, lay either in front of a pair of soft-green-striped ottomans at one end of the room or, toward the chamber entrance of the suite, where the tile yielded to shag carpeting, before two Louis XV chairs, beside one of which was a pecan-finished cane table, on which perched a squat black telephone.

At the window, Foucin kept his back to Remy. “That M. Ballard sauntered into the grove without the negative doesn’t absolve M. Belmazoir, the solitary one proven to be at the scene. Perhaps somehow he chanced upon the negative and realized its extortionary value. We’re diplomatically forbidden to question him about it, as you’re aware.”

When Remy volunteered nothing, he proceeded. “Ah well, I suspect he’s veiling more than just a name. Inspector Hussein Karami, quite proficient, conducted his interrogation, utilizing (I blush to admit) only physical inducement. Having survived that intact, the accused is convinced he can tergiversate forever. Not all confess as freely as those archcriminals, Adam and Cain. You witnessed how an *anima simplicetta* was handled.”

It had been so. After the meal, Remy had steered Mohisen along the curving block from the Andaloos to the *jardin public*, choosing a bench ill-lit by the soft yellow light of its sodium-vapor lamp.

“Still the ‘simple heart’ outwitted me at one point,” Foucin continued, “not having to be coaxed to bring up Ballard. While edging onto my caliginous mark, I heard him exult, ‘I lucky the boy all Algiers, two restaurant and I the young’—his English as imperfect as my own.” The quotation attested to how expeditiously the tailing, wool-cloaked Foucin had been able to sneak up on them.

“‘Two?’ You’d draped your left arm across the back of the bench, embracing the op—”

Foucin was interrupted by a faint rap on the door. “Permit me.” Hurrying past the seated Remy, with his hand on the knob, he called over his shoulder, “. . . the opportunity to settle a pulse. Felt comfortable with you.”

The waiter, who acknowledged in kind Foucin’s Ramadan devoirs, placed the tray of coffee on the marble-topped table and, not asking whether he was to serve, exited.

Foucin reseated himself on the central French Empire sofa. “‘Friend, I before (*“gabl”*),’”

he answered. ‘Restaurant Sindibad,’ May I pour?’

Returning the coffeepot to the tray, he motioned to the creamer, the bowl of cubed sugar with its fleur-de-lis-clawed tongs, and the syrup pitcher. “One, please. I take it black.” Watching Foucin cut off the viscous stream sluggishly flowing into his own cup, Remy decided to confront him with what the sterling set proclaimed.

“Everyone in Algiers seems to aspire to collude with you. Six times room service has brought me coffee, and on every occasion there would be a bowl of sugar cubes. Tonight’s no different, yet someone apparently is informed that you prefer syrup.”

Easing back into the couch, Foucin laughed. “The Andaloos, not the Al-Nigma, haunts your mind. What noun did you use, ‘status’? As much a hindrance as a help in my work.”

*Ample for the moment*, Remy counseled himself prior to continuing aloud. “Yes, he adverted to M. Ballard even before the inquiry per se. My sequent questions were clumsy.”

Foucin shook his head. “Not to the stander-by. ‘Same you Mr. Mike, American gentleman,’ he denominated him and you, the highest tribute, as you may know from your sojourn in Egypt, an Arab can bestow on a foreigner.

“To your resultant query his voice assumed a sadness. ‘My friend go.’ Asudden the ebullition: ‘I no the good boy, no the *honest*, Mr. Mi-keel! I the cheat!’ I pounced on that as a meet cue for my intrusion, covetous of not letting his pulse elude the low tide actuated by the meal, but not before you switched to French to counter, ‘Dear Mohisen, I . . .’”

. . . *am the deceiver*, Remy mentally completed the sentence.

“‘. . . no the good,’ were you about to echo?”

Remy leaned back, the cup in hand. For a minute or so the two sipped at their coffee.

“He blames himself,” Remy broke the silence, having positioned his left elbow on the arm of his bergère opposite the sofa where Foucin sat. “Indicts himself for not having put aside his selfish possessiveness of his ‘*Amrekaanee sadeek*’ and secured him a ‘good boy’ at Zaracova, thus obviating M. Ballard’s fatal visit to the grove.”

“Deception is the disguise that the *honest* man, his ‘heart upon [his] sleeve,’ most rackingly wears.” Foucin soughed. “The lad suffers.”

*Over a queer who having nothing better “on his menu” treated him to the fancy Sindibad Restaurant*, Remy scoffed to himself.

## 5

Even he who was privy to what was imminent had been astonished, and not just by Foucin’s spectral emergence from the gloom into the hazy glow encysting the bench where they sat but also by the mock-bewildered words matter-of-factly droned, “Why M. Lazar, and with a young friend! Can the two of you ever forgive my intrusion?”

In spite of the dimness, recognition was instantaneous. Mohisen lurched backward, causing the entire bench to shiver, and away, a heaving which—in his instinctive efforts to escape from the shadow cast by Foucin—jammed his right shoulder into Remy’s left.

“You are Mohisen Ben Salah Abdelghani,” Foucin accused in French. Having stepped in front of the *jeune homme*, he tilted his body and thrust his face in close. “The tender of a public changing room at Zaracova Beach, one frequented by a M. Paul Ballard—do you



persist in dubbing him your M. John?—forty-five days ago.”

He placed a hand under Mohisen’s gnathion to upraise his sagging head. “Who after he quitted your establishment was murdered in the contiguous grove. You are?” Maneuvering the chin, up and down Foucin jiggled the head of the youth, *more than figuratively* mort de peur, *‘frightened to death,’* observed Remy to himself.

“Excellent! You’re wise not to embark mendaciously,” and as he withdrew his fingers, he gave Mohisen’s left cheek a light pat.

“M. Lazar, mark how he began not with a lie. You must relinquish your grasp, M. Lazar.” The repetition of his name was necessary, Remy accepted, to topsy-turvy the already agitated thoughts of Mohisen, who was slowly perceiving that his confession, “I the cheat” had been delivered to a person who had all along been deceiving him.

Horror-stricken, he endeavored to extricate his hand, but Foucin’s streaked forward to bond the three, one left and two right. With force he kneaded them prior to disengaging Mohisen’s and tugging it so near that the base of its palm abutted his own chin.

“For I would see it,” he announced. With his left index, Foucin pressed the tips of the clutched fingers and thumb, wedging each apart as he snaked to the next.

Having studied the whorls of his own for a moment, he sportively drawled, the verbal air wafting through the gaps of Mohisen’s still outspread digits, “None of your prints remain on my forefinger, albeit belts and keys, buttons and buckles, dinar notes and leather billfolds, all take our touch.”

He loosed his grip on the hand which did not fall. “As does the hilt of a *douk-douk*. Boy, would you recognize your own fingerprints lifted from one?”

His left fist opened to reveal a black slide with a white cardboard border. “You’re ‘landed in particulars,’ lad,” and Foucin slapped his right dorsum against the yet pendant hand, knocking it onto Mohisen’s leg. “With that, would not you concur, M. Lazar?”

Before the adolescent’s head sank onto his knees, he glanced up from the snippet to the visage of Foucin and back down *encore une fois*. “Mr. John, Mr. John,” he sobbed. The cephalic shaking had as an undercurrent a body weaving.

“Hearkened to by more than one pair of ears, enounce so that your words travel heavenward.” His harsh voice notwithstanding, Foucin slipped beside Mohisen and dropped his free hand on the young man’s shoulder. He lowered his head until their temples met. “If it would please you, whisper only to one.”

“M. John . . . knew . . . what . . . I did” came out, splintered by gasps. “Once he bantered with me in disjointed French, ‘You’ve smudged my time, the crystal of my watch.’ And he had laughed as he cleaned it with a towel. He knew. He didn’t care, a good man, a ‘gentleman.’”

At that appellation, Mohisen did not glimpse toward Remy. Nor did he in the pursuant tormented paroxysm, beginning, “No! How could my fingerprints be on a . . .” a shrewd rebuttal which foreshadowed a lashing out at the one who had lured him into the trap, itself succeeded by a vented prayer that “both demonized and trenchantly reduced me to *un nul*.”

Although neither thenceforth paid any heed to him, through the next twenty minutes, Remy, a spectator of the crouched huddle, was satisfied that “Foucin’s out to prove me right.”

The interrogation had skipped about, adhering to no chronology. “What time . . . ? His brand of cigarettes was . . . ? So you hosed the changing stall while Mr. John swam? Green, did you say, was the color of his . . . ? Which server purveyed the Tango to him?”

This middle query had been resummoned five minutes afterward: “From the beads, he’d scooted back to tip—Was he aware you would have scrubbed every centimeter of the cubicle, then quarantined it, during his absence?”

That a cavity of it could have functioned as a cache had not occurred to Remy. Foucin had dug for the verification: Alert to Mohisen’s scouring routine, the American never would have considered hiding the sensitive negative there.

The youth’s no to Foucin’s “His lycra swimsuit had a pocket, a tiny one?” was followed by “Did you—no evil calculated—uproot the dinars from the wallet to gain a nicer feel for them?”

The volunteered response to one question—its first appearance had prompted Remy to twist his head round—was revisited time and again: ““No girl! And you call yourself an American!”” Foucin giggled, eager for Mohisen to notice his appreciation of the joshing. “That day your cigarette, the one Mahdi passed over, was it still in the old pack?”

Subsequently, “So he failed to heave a resigned sigh, lobbed no barb at your having fondled his watch? Did either waiter ever cheat, not give you one of the two smokes left in the pack? . . . Touched you, probed you ?”

And there ensued a cataloguing of the other items in the basket, each answer greeted by a prodding “How so? In what way?” A few minutes later, as a finale, ushering in the badinage with deep-throated cachinnation, Foucin reprised, ““No girl! And you call yourself an American! You lie! No! No!””

Thereupon, employing Mohisen’s left shoulder for a boost, he straightened himself. “M. Abdelghani, my Peugeot’s nearby, a demoded heap. All the same, should you so desire, ’twill dispatch you to your Bab el Oued home.”

The instant the beach attendant rose, Foucin hooked their arms, and side by side they proceeded toward the street. In their wake was Remy, whose mind would not let go of Mohisen’s earlier, reverberating invocation.

Ghouraf had pulled the car around to a slot in front of the park. “At least on my part,” Remy grouched to himself, the torrent conditioned the quiescence of the seven-minute ride to the Al-Nigma. Foucin and he were in the backseat, Mohisen having been directed to the front by the door which the *commissaire divisionnaire* had held open for him.

In the hotel’s driveway, the two in the rear climbed out synchronously. As Remy tarried, Foucin angled his head through the window and, projecting his voice beyond the sergeant’s frame, addressed Mohisen in Arabic.

“My thanks to you. An honest man, you’re not predisposed to trouble. Should it come, for often through none of our efforts it does, seek me out, if you deem I can be of service. I would be of service to you. The blessings of Ramadan to you and your family.”

He then mumbled into Ghouraf’s ear, his message ungrasped by Remy and, he suspected, even by Mohisen.

Having tracked the Peugeot from the driveway onto Boulevard Zirout Youcef, Foucin skelped over. “You’re too fatigued, I’m sure, for coffee in the Aladdin.”

“Better for me my room, if you would so honor me. It’s you who must be exhausted. You hunched for a third of an hour . . . to prove me right.”

In the elevator, the “haro” of Mohisen, exclaimed to Foucin, yet “after its inceptive protest targeted at me,” violently recrudesced: “No! No! How could my fingerprints be on a *douk-douk* I have never touched? I am deceived by a demon! Great God, ‘betake me’ in ‘refuge against the accursed Satan’!”

## 6

“Still you lessened his anguish,” Remy responded to Foucin’s observation about the guilt-ridden Mohisen. “As you foretold, the truth was brought to the surface.”

“Or ‘rammed down [our] throat[s],’ as you said.”

Remy knotted his brow, embarrassed by the citation. “The slide with M. Ballard’s—or a—print, did you retrieve it on the walk back from your prayers? You were a tittle tardy.”

Foucin’s thick chortle imparted “an irritation that truth and a snippet of acetate” could be familiarly linked. “Now that is peripheral!” In concord with the syllables, his loosely cupped right hand seven times teasingly chopped the air.

“Quite unmerited his valedictory condemnation of you as a “demon,” you who had been so solicitous at the Andaloos. From my balcony I conjectured that on discerning his struggle with the cutlery, you requested, ‘Mohisen, teach me the native manner of eating.’

“That notion I gleaned from the gesticulations, the genial smile, and the aftermath, your dispensing with the utensils and, in mimic of your guest, plunging the correct hand into the steaming platter of couscous. So well executed, you could have passed for an Arab.”

“As Arab as you.” The benign tweak kindled in Foucin a chuckling spurt that overrode Remy’s next several words.

In the course of the succeeding forty minutes, the two men—“Arab to Arab,” Foucin joked—reviewed the probable chronology of Ballard’s day at the beach prior to his entering the grove.

Two events prolonged the time span: a call in which Foucin was apprised by Ghouraf that both Zaracova waiters had confirmed the “Rothmans-and-Tango ritual” and the knock of *service dans les chambres* with another tray of coffee, not rung for. On it were two packs of cigarettes, Foucin’s Algiers-manufactured Ryms and Remy’s French Gauloises.

It was the former who essayed the summary and pointed to an illation: “Not left in the basket. Not concealed in the changing stall. Not smuggled to the beach in the pack of Rothmans or the pocketless Speedo. Not fetched from the red sedan.

“If the murderer, not the murdered, bore the negative to the grove, there’s premeditation. I’m confident our prosecutor will more fervently rejoice in that deduction than your client.”

“Dare he brandish it at the trial? Revelation of the negative opens political doors. Were you not, a man whose status far transcends the case, assigned to keep this homicide personal, not let the political encroach?”

The skin about Foucin’s eyes and mouth tautened. “I am with this matter committed to ‘closing up truth to truth,’ as I stalk it.” Erecting himself, with both hands clenching the saucer, he ambled over to the curtains.

Not seeking permission, he drew open the full-length cabernet velvet drapes and stared into the midnight blackness. “You’re cognizant of what M. Belmazoir’s sister asserted on the morning the police bundled him from their shack? ‘It is not his fault.’ Not ‘he is innocent,’ but ‘it is not his fault.’”

Remy amplified his voice to display his vexation that Foucin showed a disinclination to consider the political. “So the sister’s like you, believes—believed at least at that moment—her brother killed M. Ballard. Your nation, Monsieur, has Palestinian guests—”

“To the camp of whom ‘the client of your client’ journeyed every week,” Foucin interjected, not pivoting.

“—some of whom would glory in sabotaging the promotion of Ambassador Leroy, thereby hoping to scuttle the November rapprochement between the Americans and their organization’s leaders.”

Rising, turning, and staring into Foucin’s back, Remy fabricated his sarcasm to allow the rhetoric to slobber from his lips: “‘Brother enemy!’ How loyal to your citizenry! Is Algeria in such fear of the PLO that it would sacrifice one of its own, M. Belmazoir, a ‘personal’ casualty preferable to a ‘political’ cause célèbre? And you, Monsieur, its minion, ‘virtuous servant’ of a country which has bartered its soul!”

Remy sustained the remnants of a labial tremble while Foucin about-faced, still clasping the saucer and cup midriff-high.

In a stilted tone, he apologized “for my discourteous interruption. I’m a guest in your room”—the sentence was left unfinished till he had stiffly marched from the window to the couch, where he bent and placed both items on the tray—“as you are in my country.”

He proceeded with a dispassionate conviction. “Monsieur, you’ve uncovered much in a short time. I’ve commended you, and again do so . . . on your beachcombing espials.”

A sidling tread freed him from the confines of the sofa and the *table basse*. “I was about to betray to you, in appreciation of what you’ve bestowed on me, a recital of something not beach-bound, which would conceivably justify my faith that the murder was ‘personal,’ not ‘political.’

“Yet I’m constrained to speak to the latter. Have you, monsieur, individually questioned the camp’s leader M. Khalaf and the ninety-two other Palestinians there—an inquisition not of a twenty-minute squatting, but extended over two sixteen-hour days?”

“Gradually extracted was the following: On the last Wednesday in January, a ‘high’ M. Belmazoir bragged he had a wealthy American friend, M. John, whom he met every Monday night.

“M. Khalaf—his nickname’s Tinfingers—designated three of his men to shadow their peddler’s next rendezvous. Through the license plate of the red Renault Quatreille that picked him up, they discovered his tryster to be Paul Ballard, most surprisingly, an economic officer at the American embassy.

“M. Khalaf notified the PLO head office in Algiers about his preliminary findings. It sanctioned additional probing which disclosed the American’s relationship with Mlle. Leila Chabane. Through her brother Ahmed, they were pursuing still more information about M. Ballard when, on 13 Rajab, your 19 February, Algiers’ PLO chief M. Atef Al-Wazar commanded them to desist.

“Their legation has diplomatic privileges tantamount to an embassy, so no one there may be examined. Unofficially, it sent word down that ‘such snooping could have endangered our accord with the Americans’ and the warrant, ‘No agent of Palestine was in any way involved in the unfortunate homicide of M. Ballard.’”

During Foucin’s six paces to the door, he kept his eyes fixed on Remy. “Islam forbids Muslims from sacrificing the individual—God’s creation—on the altar of some man-made expedience, yet it as well enjoins us not to shrink from our duty to punish those who transgress God’s laws. ‘It is not his fault,’ a sister’s nonpolitical confession of a brother’s personal guilt.”

With deliberate strides, Remy traversed the same distance. “As ‘personal’ as your investigation?”

## 7

Remy’s elaboration began at the door. However, at its *terminus ad quem*, Foucin and he would be stationed by the window, the gaze of both attracted not to the Ramadan-flurried street that bordered the rear ingress of the Al-Nigma, but to the wispy clouds, scarcely veiling the sky’s layered darkness.

Initially, Remy confronted him with a specimen scavenged from Abukadir, one which connoted Foucin’s involvement in the investigation before he was assigned to the case.

“‘Involved,’ ‘assigned,’” he replied. “Like every other policeman (for what more am I?), I’m ‘involved’ ex officio in each incident which disturbs our nation’s peace. As you announced on Monday, it wasn’t till the third post-homicidal day I was ‘assigned’ as the officer in charge. In truth, on the night of the murder, I should have reached Zaracova sooner, only a twenty-minute drive from my Kouba apartment.”

There ensued what was intended by Foucin to be a weak imitation of a single-syllable laugh. “This discrepancy, most decidedly, isn’t the catalyst generating your arraignment that my investigation is tainted by ‘personal’ interest.”

Ostensibly to stress his trust in his own accusation, he retreated to the sofa, situated himself, poured out Remy’s half cup of lukewarm coffee, refilled it, and then his own.

“‘Like every other policeman’ in Algiers, still with one difference.” Remy had reassumed his position in the bergère before he answered. “Some of their names appear in print or on the airwaves. Yours, never—or so a researcher for M. Vellacott unearthed.”

“This media scrutiny bears out what I have professed: In the scheme of things, I am of meager importance.” Lowering his chin, Foucin stifled a yawn. “What is your point?”

“Nevertheless,” and with a pause, Remy sought to indicate that he would be quoting himself from the Andaloos, “‘beyond your pretense of being peripheral’—just another policemen—‘you have achieved a certain status.’”

“‘Across the status quo’”—Foucin inserted a now unmuffled gape—“I resay.” He raised his eyes, but they, so it seemed to his listener, took in solely the face opposite his.

Remy let the wording, not expected, sink in. “All the better for you. A status that has allowed you to pursue clinically your vendetta not just against the seven, but also any auxiliary lit upon. Monsieur, I reiterate, ‘I know *your* history,’ why only M. Belmazoir can



be ‘your’ murderer,” affirmed Remy, quite aware that he was now *playing with a pulsebeat*.

“Earlier when everything betokened that the killer was the negative’s transporter, how you hurried the speculation that M. Belmazoir had blundered on and pocketed the strip, perchance visualizing the theft occurring in his ‘friend’s’ car or in their rendezvous room.

“I misspoke when I termed your investigation ‘personal.’ It’s familial. *Lex talionis*: ‘the law of retaliation.’ You carry a hatred for the Belmazoirs.”

Twenty-five minutes later, when they were again at the entrance, Foucin himself broached the subject: Ambassador Leroy had to be apprised of what had been discovered about the negative. “By you!” he emphasized, and on observing the pinched countenance signaling how, at once appended, “I’ll arrange it.”

It was Remy who moved to open the door. “Thank you. *Bonsoir!*” No sooner had they stepped into the hall than they noticed halfway down the corridor the bearer of the previous two trays emerging from the elevator with a third balanced on his right palm.

Sharp glances exchanged, host and guest simultaneously erupted into laughter.

“Monsieur?” Foucin inquired.

“Not I.”

“M. Badjadja,” the waiter, who had stopped in his tracks on sighting the two, was hailed, “the eternal blessings of Ramadan! We’re in agreement: no more for us. If not inconvenient, I’ll accompany you down.”

Swinging round, Foucin offered his hand—and a nettling farewell which would linger with Remy, shadowing him into his sleep.

## 8

“It was in December 1955, the second year of the Revolution, so one of M. Vellacott’s background reports states,” Remy had begun with a lie. “The Insurrection had been more successful than its pioneers, in time venerated as ‘the historic nine,’ had envisioned.

“A network comprising six provinces had been established, yet the major task was to cement the bond so that Algiers was not fighting for its administrative preeminence, Oran for its factories and fisheries, or the Aurès for its Berber heritage.

“A rallying, policy-oriented caucus was needed, but the ‘chiefs,’ ever cautious, decided a rehearsal for this would be beneficial, one to be attended not by them (for should the French get wind of their presence, strike, and annihilate, the Revolution would go ‘poof’), but by a trusted deputy or two appointed by each.

“Where better for this preliminary session, which would set the agenda for a future summit of the leaders (if all went well), than the Aurès, the birthing ground of the Movement and the sector where the French had the least military control? Selected for the parley was the villa of one of the district’s patriarchs, but that you know.

“All had arrived safely by the evening of the twenty-sixth of December, the final three the distinguished emissaries from Algiers and Blida-Médéa, who had traveled in peasant camouflage, occasionally buried under hay in donkey carts.

“Do you tire of my monologue? Perhaps you would like to speak?”

Foucin's reaction had been motional, to retrace his steps to the open drapes.

"No? . . . The due diligence which Revolutionary strategy warrants commenced the next morning, and they kept at it till seven. With a sumptuous meal spread Arab-style on the carpet, they had just plunged in when the defiant cry hallooed."

"The French! The French! Bastards come!" Foucin, his voice weary and his eyes focused on comprehending the *obscurité*, seamlessly intruded, as if only he should "raise from the dead" the alarm.

"Old Matoub's exhortation: My 'Yorick,' who when I was a child of three, four, and five had delighted in parading me about on his shoulders. 'My throat is cut with the others!' He was at a window, baying through the jalousie slats. 'Tis not so deep as to foil my devotion: 'Master, esca—'" Splotches of red 'fleabit' the shutters' green.

"More enfilading, now from the pomegranate trees that scented our villa's entrance, and hammering of rifle butts against its two back doors. The women—five servants, my three sisters, and my mother—had fled from the kitchen to the dining room.

"Some of our ten guests were clambering across the food, befouling their clothes with the banquet, some toward, and some away from, the window which grave Matoub had selected for his martyrdom.

"My father, jumping over those crawlers, scurried to the rear wall, skirting one of the light-footed delegates from Algiers, who had positioned himself behind an overturned thick-oak gateleg table, being maneuvered toward a stairwell in the posterior alcove. The anteroom on the left was the destination of one from Tébéssa, sidling in a semicrouch.

"My mother was not one who so condescended, although about her whirred relentless bullets, by nature lethal, but in piercing the shutters scattered distraught slivers and on ricocheting against the pale-white walls unleashed enraged pellets, innocent wood and limestone equally as pernicious as the metal.

"I saw the head of the Saharan delegate spring up and then slump. He pulled himself half-a-body's length before his left hand released the red mosaic pattern of the knotted-pile carpet it had gripped.

"My father, by that time, had dislodged the wooden case, toppling it and his beloved books onto the floor. Pelted by the volumes, some blubbered, while others clung to them as shelter or strove to climb under the collapsed piece of furniture itself.

"Father, already bolstered by my mother and my eldest brother, my beloved Boualem, shattered the plywood back of the case, exposing the horde of rifles and small arms. Six hands cast them in three directions, yet anon only four.

"Boualem, my Boualem, fell, a hole the diameter of a pearl in his spine, his torso pitching forward onto my mother. She expended a reverent howl on her firstborn before she grabbed him at his axillae and, esteeming him no more than a mass of dough being flipped, tossed him aside, completing her grasp for two carbines, forthwith winged to those mured against the wall.

"Ever-broadening holes had multiplied in all the shutters, allowing me to catch darting splashes of jungle-green uniforms and their accoutrements. The muzzle of a *rashshash ayli* was poked through one. Yellow sparks and a xylophone sound issued from it, and flecks of blood dotted the white *gandoura* my father wore.

“His chest the burst serrated, but not because she was that much shorter—my mother was a woman tall in stature, have I noted?—rather because she had dipped further downward to seize a rifle, the rounds tore into her face, across the eyes and teeth.

“I wrenched free from the clutches of my brother, my beloved Zitouni, who at the onset had dragged me to a front ‘pier,’ his body sheltering mine, while he fired a pistol through the splintered slats.

“Tripping over a book, with a stumble I landed athwart my father’s left shoulder. Elevating his head, with his eyes he embraced his wife and murmured a brief prayer.

“Past her, he glimpsed my brother Salah, my beloved Salah, seven years my senior . . . fifteen . . . who, dropping his rifle and hurling his frame toward mine, was cut down by the sequent barrage from the machine gun. A witness, Zitouni, twisting, roared, most assuredly not from the leaden hail of slugs that had peppered his ribs.

“In imitation of my father, I surveyed the room, questing for Wafah, Zouina, Yamina, my beloved sisters. His susurrated entreaty, ‘Let them be dead!’ was accompanied by his right hand which, shooting to my nape, drew my face close to his.

“At the fringe of the alcove, he’d spied him too. Into my hair my father rasped, ‘The *bab al-sirr* . . . our “secret door” . . . midway the stairs . . . its tunnel . . . our guest from Algiers, M. Bel—’ (and censure not his violation of the code—his tongue’s letting slip that nominal syllable—for he was dying) ‘guide him . . . yourself to safety, God willing. . . A *nathr!*’”

“I obeyed, led him to the tunnel’s end, a cornfield, and with the dusk our shield onward to one of our mountain camps and ‘safety.’” Foucin buried his sigh in the wrinkle of a smile. “‘But that you know.’”

Throughout he had spoken with a voice immutably soft, *transformed into another*, one who had careered into the obsidian prospectus at which he stared, and become the night itself, *mine in London, a darkness that I fancied I’d put behind me pending next year*.

With the fall of the oldest brother, Remy had embarked upon his “pilgrimage” to the window and progressed until he stood beside Foucin. “Nour—,” sotto voce he moaned, tilting his head *à gauche*, in partial confession that he likewise had broken the code. The “circumcising” vocable prodded the other to turn his cheek to the right, and in that veering, their slightly graying temporal hairs grazed.

“*Pardon!*” Foucin whispered, retreating.

At the coffee table, even though the one he addressed was still fronting the double-paned glass, his pitch-range leveled out: “Monsieur, I had cause to bear ‘a lodged hate’ against the grandfather, old Belmazoir . . . but not the son . . . not the grandson.

“Islam forbids it: ‘Beware, no one committing a crime is responsible for it but he himself. Neither the son is responsible for the crime of his father, nor the father responsible for the crime of his son,’ our Prophet—Peace be upon Him—adjured.

“You stipulated “‘your’ murderer,’ as if I had the prerogative—and would aspire to claim any except the seven. Through God’s Grace, six. Through God’s Will, the seventh.”

A half-minute later, Remy having rejoined him, they settled into their familiar places, one on the French Empire sofa, the other in the bergère, the marble-top between—“we are ‘landed in particulars,’” joked Remy—and talked some more.

Foucin described how, during his protracted interrogation at the Palestinian camp,

Tinfingers' artificial hand had quivered against the surface of the metal table, "Morse code tapping that I couldn't decrypt."

Evoking the image of the crafty ancient Abukadir, who had "repeatedly and appropriately sung out to me, merrily clad in my bounding-main frippery, 'joy o' your joy,'" Remy idly paralleled the locution with the Clown's in *Antony and Cleopatra*: "I wish you joy o' the worm," rendered in English.

Foucin's visage manifested bewilderment before he chuckled, "So you thought it playacting, my intimation of how haltingly I followed your English conversation with Mohisen."

After the explanation, Remy apprehended, yet did not advertise the discernment, that in languages the two men divaricated: While he—his hatred for all things French welling up after Noura's death—chose always to read the French classics in English translation, Foucin read the English classics, "and all others," in French: "My obsession solely on France, I never studied—and thus am an abecedarian in—that universal tongue."

An hour later, with his bed covers already folded down, Remy was gazing into the "long deep-running night," which his apperception convinced him simply appeared to change, toward a loft in the Casbah.

Darkly he contemplated "the *status quo ante*" hinted in Foucin's parting—and its impact on his mission: "M. Lazar, you 'are only in potentiality toward understanding.' But little do you know of the Belmazoires and me."

**Notes and Commentary: Chapter 7: “Status Across the Status Quo”****April 12 and 13, 1989 (Wednesday evening and early Thursday)**

- p. 101: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE OF CHAPTER 7: The key word of the title “status” will be used nine times during the chapter, five times by Remy (106, 111, 113 twice, and 117) and four by Foucin (104, 106, 108, and 113). Both men, as others in their forties, have achieved a certain status or “high rank,” but neither is satisfied with his “state or condition.” Remy accepts his position in the status quo of Le Puy, except for the one day in the year he goes to collect his *pourboire*, a trip that brings up anguished memories of his past (2.18). Foucin accepts his position as police commissioner in Algiers because this office allows him the means to fulfill part of his destiny, to bring to justice the seven great traitors. This status quo is temporary for him, who yearns for the day he can return to his home province to complete his final mission, to recover the bones of his family and give them their proper burial. Concerning the status quo, Remy and Foucin, therefore, differ. The former is content with his established status in his status quo and would not have abandoned it (except in his dreams) if the French, exploiting an ancient bond, had not forced him to. Foucin never views his status in Algeria’s status quo as more than a means to an end.
- pp. 101-17: CHRONOLOGY OF CHAPTER 7: The evening of Apr. 12 and the early morning of Apr. 13, 1989. From 11:07 p.m. to 12:42 a.m. in Remy’s hotel room Foucin and he discuss the central event of the chapter involving Mohisen (9:00 – 11:09). Also revealed is what happened before this meeting (7:22 – 9:00).
- pp. 101-03: SECTION 1: Time span: Section 1 opens with Foucin and Remy in the latter’s hotel room. The time is much later, 11:07, a sign that a significant part of this chapter will be told as flashbacks. The first begins at the point where chapter six finished, 7:22 p.m., with Foucin leaving to perform his prayers. Left alone in Foucin’s office, Remy thinks back to an incident when he was seven and he discussed with his father his difficulty in performing prayers (7:28). Subsequently Remy goes through the ritualistic steps of a Muslim’s prayers, a reconnection with his Islamic past (7:44).



- p. 101: “everything connects . . . nothing disconnects”: On 6.98, in his office Foucin had suggested that identifying the fingerprints removed a mystery from the case which could have been used by Vellacott in arguing that the person who left these prints is the murderer, not Belmazoir. In essence, Remy had divorced them from the case. It is not until this 11:07 speech in the hotel room that Remy addresses this contention.  
He had planned to say that “everything connects” in a murder case, but instead rendered his thought as negative, “nothing disconnects.”  
These two expressions are used as structuring principles in the novel. The second is the title of chap. 1, and the first will be the title of chap. 9. The two other possibilities will become the titles of chaps. 17 and 21.  
See the discussion of the significance of the titles of these four chapters in the note, N1:1.
- p. 101: “Greek tragedy”: Foucin’s surprising allusion to Greek tragedy will not be given until the opening of section 4, p. 106.
- p. 101: “*I must escape this country*”: This chapter will reveal to Remy what a worthy antagonist Foucin is. Such “mental legerity,” Remy realizes puts him in danger and causes him to think that he must speed up the meeting with his father and exit Algiers quickly before the perceptive Foucin discovers who he really is.  
The two testaments of Foucin’s perspicacity were the Greek allusion here and his use of “*Khalaas!*” earlier in his office, to which Remy’s mind flashes back (7:22).
- p. 101: “*before I’m defanged*”: Here Remy compares himself to a snake; his meaning is that if Foucin finds out who he really is, he will be as helpless as a defanged serpent.  
In the Judeo-Christian tradition, Satan took the shape of a serpent in the Garden of Eden.  
In Islam, Satan (*Shaitan*) was a rebellious *djinni* (another creation of God, made from fire, not earth as human beings were).  
The mission of him and his followers (*djinn* is the plural of *djinni*) was to tempt and torment human beings. In the Hadiths of Al-Tahhaawi and Abu Dawood, it is stated that *Shaitan* and other *djinn* exist in the shape of a snake or dog or they can assume that shape.
- p. 101: tocsin: an alarm or a sound of warning. Here it is a homophonic pun on a snake’s toxin.
- p. 101: *empreintes digitales*: “fingerprints” in French.
- p. 101: “*Khalaas!*”: As soon as Remy asks whether it could be possible that Ballard did not bring the negative to the beach (6.100), Foucin says, “*Khalaas!*”  
This Arabic expression is literally translated as “That’s finished!” Here it indicates that Foucin understands what Remy was suggesting—the murderer put the negative in Ballard’s wallet.

- p. 101: *medius*: “the middle finger” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 101: “not gone to his prayers without pause”: Foucin leaves, but he obviously stopped to tell Sgt. Ghouraf to bring a tray with tea, a dessert, and Remy’s belt, Swatch, and clutch purse.  
After speaking to Ghouraf, Foucin broke his fast with only a sip of water (103). He proceeds to his prayers, which begin at 7:29, the same time as Remy mentally conjures up the praying ceremony.
- p. 101: *plaque*: in French, “nameplate.”
- p. 101: “twenty-eight years”: The early morning when Omar was seized by the French for his escape to France he had awakened early to perform “dawn prayers” (2.26). Thus presumably his last prayers would have been Isha’ (the midevening prayers around 9 p.m.) on the night before, April 12, 1961.
- p. 101: “A Muslim’s prayers”: On 4.54, Remy observed that “a native country [quickly] begins its work on a ‘reinstated son.’”  
On 6:88-90, through his catalogue of the martyrs, Remy had begun to reconnect with his political/historical past.  
In this chapter, he starts to bond again with his religious heritage.
- p. 101: reciprocity: the desire to repay or make a return for something done or given.
- p. 101: “Seek release in the ritual”: The theme of release: The word “release” is used symbolically at certain points in the novel: On 2.33—see its note, N2:63—Remy is told by the imaginary television producer to sign a “letter of release,” a word which tolls him back to the reality of Trimalchio’s. There he repeats it with a new meaning, his release from the guilt of his treason.  
This letter of release will contrast with a document marked REL (in diplomacy, an abbreviation for “release”) on 8.126.  
On 9.140, words similar to the ones in chap. 7 are used, for a ceremony will be termed “a ritualistic release.”  
The resolution of the theme of release will occur over chaps. 17-19. On 17.282, one character will seek “release” from the grasp of another, but the hold is more than physical.  
On 18.294, the same situation from chap. 2 will be repeated: A character uses the word “release,” which is echoed in a new sense by another character. On the next page, Remy speaks of an action of another which “saves *me*, releases *me*.”  
On 18.309, Remy tells another to gain “release.” On 19.322, during a prayer, Remy will say that “the unsought release descended” on him, a thematic climax of the novel, although there will be a last significance occurrence on 19.330, where another speaks of Remy gaining “release from that demon,” his guilt over his treason.
- p. 101: *théière*: French for “teapot.”

- p. 101: “ablution”: In Arabic *wudu*, ablution is the procedure of washing parts of the body preparatory for formal prayers.  
*Wudu* is generally translated in English as “ablution” or sometimes as “partial ablution,” to distinguish it from *ghusl* or “full ablution,” a washing of the entire body.
- p. 101: Kaaba: The sacred Islamic shrine in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, toward which Muslims turn when praying.  
It is cuboid-shaped, has a granite structure and a marble, and is kept covered by a black silk and gold curtain.
- pp. 101-02: “*Takbeer . . . Qiyam . . . Fitiha*”: These terms and others relating to the cycles of a Muslim’s prayers are defined in the text. The wording of the prayers was taken from a standard English translation.  
In Remy’s mental depiction of the prayers, he imagines himself as both a young man and as Foucin. The latter is not meant as some sort of father figure. He is a participant in Remy’s mental prayer because Remy began this sequence by imaging what Foucin was doing in the Gendarmerie prayer room.  
The time of Remy’s mental performance of the prayers is 7:29 – 7:44, which is, by his design, identical to Foucin’s physical performance of the prayers.  
Remy’s first *Raka’ah* (prayer cycle) ends at 7:33.  
The second *Raka’ah* ends at 7:37 and its “variation from the first” at 7:40.  
The third non-obligatory *Raka’ah* lasts until 7:43, and it is followed by the brief *Salām* exchanges.  
Thus Remy finishes his mental prayer at 7:44.

p. 102: *shai*: Arabic for “tea.”

p. 102: unisonous: producing sound in unison.

p. 102: “trinity of laudation”: Remy chose the word because of its Christian connotations.

p. 102: “sweetening the tea . . . succeeded in confusing him over who the intoner was, the lad or Foucin”: Remy is concentrating on worldly matters (the sweetening of the tea) and temporarily forgets who is who in the prayers, an example of his long ago complaint to his father that the prayers’ “hectic movements” kept him from concentrating on God (101).

p. 102: *commissaire divisionnaire*: “divisional commissioner” in French; Foucin’s title.

p. 103: “his lips . . . had moved in all instances”: Although Remy realizes that he had performed none of the movements, he is aware that he had spoken all the lines of the prayers.

However, that is only partially true: On p. 101, just as the person praying bows at the start of *Ruku* so Remy would have leaned forward and “placed [the teapot] down.”

On p. 102, “Again he raised the cup” stylistically balances “Thereafter the two arose,” and “Remy had downed the cup” appears at a prostrate segment of the prayer cycle.

The motions of his arm in raising and lowering the cup, for he drinks one and a half during the prayers, would mimic the rising and lowering movements of those praying.

At the point he asks God to accept him,” he adds “a sugar cube” to his cup of tea (102). At the end of the first prayer cycle, he pauses to take “a sip of tea,” and at the end of the second prayer cycle, he adds “an extra cube” and “again raised the cup to his lips” (102).

During the third prayer cycle he finishes the first cup, pours his second cup, and begins to drink it before the end of this cycle. However, there is no mention of drinking tea while he performs the next section of the prayer where one can pray for his family.

Finally, in the *Salām*, there is no mention of the tea as Remy’s head moves to greet those on his right and left (102-03).

pp. 103-04: SECTION 2: Time span: Foucin’s return from his prayers at 7:49. He begins by listing the items with Mohisen’s fingerprints, but none were on the negative, an indication it was not left in Mohisen’s basket.

He explains why he believes Ballard did not take the negative to his spot on the beach (7:53).

Foucin invites Remy to accompany him to Mohisen’s house to interrogate him about his memory of what objects of Ballard were in the basket. Remy says that he is (now they are) dining with Mohisen at 9:30 at the Andaloos (7:56).

p. 103: The prayer’s “insubstantial pageant”: From *Tempest* 4.1.154-156: “Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, / And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, / Leave not a rack behind.”

The “pageant” image, previously used on 3.37, will appear two more times: 20.337 and 21.367.

p. 103: “*les derniers mots*”: French for “the last words.”

p. 103: “the dregs . . . soon smothered”: Having finished the second cup, Remy pours himself a third, thereby covering the dregs of the second.



- p. 103: “fifteen minutes reserved for God”: The time it usually takes to perform one of the five daily prayers required of Muslims.
- p. 103: “‘irreverent irrelevance’ of the post-factum negative”: Remy’s supposition that Foucin, intent on his prayers, had put from his mind the negative turns out not to be true.  
On p. 111, Remy speculates that on his way back from the prayer hall Foucin stopped in the evidence room to pick up the (or a) slide-mounted negative.
- p. 103: “post-factum”: an adjective meaning “occurring after the fact, ex post facto, or retrospective” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 103: “backtracking to the point gained before his withdrawal”: His exclamation “*Khalaas!*” indicated his agreement with what Remy had not yet fully expressed: Mohisen’s fingerprints would have been on the negative if it were in the wallet; their absence raises the possibility which Remy had ventured to present at the end of chap. 6: Ballard had entered the grove without the negative.
- p. 103: “‘Could it be . . . that Ballard . . . ?’”: The closing sentence of chap. 6: “‘Could it be that . . . that M. Ballard entered the palm grove without the negative?’” (100)
- p. 103: “M. Mohisen’s fingerprints . . . should have been on the negative”: On 4.57, it was revealed that there no fingerprints on the negative.
- p. 103: “‘possessions’”: This word is not used by Foucin. It is in quotes because Remy recalled how he himself referred to the items on Ballard’s body as “the corpse’s possessions” (4.67).
- p. 103: Patek Philippe: The expensive watch which Leroy gave to Ballard (1.7 and its note).
- p. 103: Lladro: A company which produces moderately priced leather goods for women and men.
- p. 103: Kingsley slip-ons: Kingsley is an American company which makes inexpensive footwear for men and women.
- p. 103: Arrow shirt: Again indicative of Ballard’s budget, an Arrow is a middle-priced shirt available at American retail outlet such as Penny’s. It has been continuously manufactured since 1885.
- p. 103: “the two keys to his Renault (his others left in the glove compartment)”: Ballard took only the keys to his Renault to the beach. His other keys, such as those for his apartments or his embassy office. were left in his car.
- p. 103: impudence: a threat from near at hand or in the immediate future, such as Remy had agreed Foucin was to him (101).

- p. 103: welt: “an applied edge along . . . the top of a pocket” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 103: “a white slitlike ribbon with red and green borders”: The National Order of Merit instituted in 1984 for outstanding service to Algeria.
- p. 103: “the ocean-clashing mayhem, Pacific and Atlantic”: Remy is garbed in a Hawaiian beach shirt (hence Pacific) and Bermuda shorts (Atlantic) (6.85).
- p. 103: “in Nice, in corralling the fifth devil”: The fifth traitor was Bachir Khedda, born in 1935 and thus the second youngest of the seven.  
On 14.235, Foucin will tell Remy that Khedda was living in Nice, France, had become a drunkard, and his death was made to appear to be an accident, although DGSE knew it was not.

- p. 104: “the status of a social sin”: Without specifying, Foucin apologizes to Remy for laughing at his dress and the joke which he made about him (6.96).  
This is the first use in this chapter of the key word of the title.  
Here it means “rank” or “standing.”
- p. 104: *burnoose*: The first use of this Arabian male garment, it is defined in the text.  
See the 4.59 note, N4.24-25, for its contrast with the *cachabia*.
- p. 104: “his fig-tree lap a green boy and an orange girl”: The front design of his bermudas (6.85).  
A fig tree, not a part of the scene portrayed on the garment, is used metaphorically to describe Remy’s lap.
- pp. 104-06: SECTION 3: Time span: Foucin and Remy leave the Gendarmerie at around eight and are driven by Sgt. Ghouraf to the Al-Nigma, where Remy showers and changes while the two Muslims perform Isha’ prayers.  
At nine they drive toward downtown Algiers, the location of the Andaloos Restaurant. Suddenly Foucin stops the car and asks Remy if he would walk the last six blocks (9:05).  
In their stroll Foucin repeats his question from the office about how Remy had known that Mohisen would fondle Ballard’s items in the basket. Remy fabricates his story about being an orphan.  
Foucin then tells how he was one from the age of six since his birth family was massacred in the Aurès. (These details were given as a flash forward on 6.98-100.) (9:13).  
Foucin then proposes the strategy they should use to ensure that Mohisen does not lie (9:13 – 9:17). At the Andaloos from the deferential reception accorded Foucin, Remy realizes in what high regard Foucin is held (9:17 – 9:22).  
The commissioner tells the maitre d’ that he wishes to sit at a table on the outside balcony, but Remy, who is expecting a dinner guest, desires one on the ground-floor terrace. At his table (9:25), Remy awaits Mohisen’s 9:30 arrival.
- p. 104: Peugeot: The first mention of Foucin’s car. At the time of the novel, Peugeot was a medium-price French car brand, the most popular in Algeria.  
Foucin’s is not a late-model Peugeot since he himself calls it “a demodé heap” (120).  
That he, a divisional commissioner, is not driving a more expensive car is another sign of his simplicity.
- p. 104: “the good shirt, the good *bantaloos*”: From Mohisen’s excited speech on 6.97 in which he described what he would wear to their Andaloos Restaurant dinner.
- p. 104: *salaat il-isha’*: On this night, Wednesday, April 12, Isha’ prayers were from 8:45 – 9:00, with the call for prayers coming at 8:25.

- p. 104: “some civility”: attire indicating civilized or cultured conduct (as opposed to the vulgarity and bedlam of his HIV-2 garments).
- p. 104: “CK, Mandelli, CM, and Boss”: Remy is quite international in his ensemble: the American designer Calvin Klein, the Italian Enrico Mandelli (not Mariuccia Mandelli), the French Claude Montana, and the German house Hugo Boss.
- p. 104: “plated gold color”: An encircling ornamental band around the lower part of the handle of an umbrella; it is sometimes called the tip cup.  
On a Brigg’s umbrella (see 5.70 and its note, N5:8), the collar is engraved with the coat-of-arms of the Prince of Wales.
- p. 104: whangee: bamboo.
- p. 104: antipodal: “diametrically opposite” or “widely different” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 104: “a damning *djinni*”: The Arabic word for “a ghostly spirit.”  
See the 1.9 note, N1:24-25.  
Foucin’s comment in some ways unknowingly foreshadows Mohisen’s later comment on p. 111.
- p. 104: “Boulevard Mohammed Khemisti . . . Alger-Centre . . . Rue Docteur Saâdane . . . Rue Mokhtar Adellatif”: Three important streets of Alger-Centre or downtown Algiers.
- p. 104: haute couture: Designer fashion or high fashion. There is a minor pun here for the modern section of Algiers is located on the lowland section of the city.
- p. 104: *monuments commerciaux au luxe*: French for “commercial monuments to luxury.”
- p. 104: *palais de cuisine voyante*: French for “palaces of gaudy cuisine,” that is, restaurants where how the food looks is as important as how it tastes.
- p. 104: “The narratives of Remy’s Aladdin’s cave adventure in Mons and Foucin’s Aurès Mountains’ familial tragedy”: See 6.98-110.
- p. 104: padded: walked.
- p. 104: “at the end of which was the Andaloos”: As mentioned in the 6.97 note, the Andaloos is a fictional restaurant.
- p. 104: “The truth, akin to a diver in cramps”: Truth being pulled forcefully and painfully to the surface, like a scuba diver, contrasts with the memory which comes to the dying Ballard’s mind of his “first experience at scuba diving” (1.14).  
However, there Ballard saw himself falling from light into darkness. Here Foucin sees truth rising from the darkness.

The light-darkness imagery connects with the Biblical passage John 1:5 which Remy cites on 4.54: “The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

p. 104: “gasping for and gagging on the essential air”: Cf. Omar tumbling from the locker on 3:41: “Prostrate on the cement, he gasped the delicious taste of unpinioned air.”

- p. 105: “What did Tolstoy write, ‘It is very difficult to tell the truth, and young people are rarely capable of it?’”: The quote is from *War and Peace*, bk. 2, chap. 7, the paragraph beginning “But Boris noticed.”
- p. 105: *porte d'entrée*: front door of the restaurant.
- p. 105: “the adjacent park”: In Foucin’s plan, as will be revealed, after the meal Remy was to invite Mohisen to walk to a public park a block or so from the Andaloos (107).
- p. 105: “I would have strip by strip removed my gay bandage, a delicate postoperative procedure often more painful to the observer than to the patient”: A circumlocutory description of the opposite of “coming out of the closet.”
- p. 105: “floor-lodged”: Remy takes up Foucin’s sea metaphor: Truth is “lagan,” cargo from a distressed ship that is found lying (lodged) on the bottom (sea floor), sometimes marked by a buoy. It can be reclaimed.  
Foucin’s method, Remy tells him, would allow this cargo (or truth) to float to the surface as “claimable flotsam.”
- p. 105: ostiary: Doorkeeper or “one that tends the door of an establishment and admits only those qualified to enter” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 105: “an ivory tuxedo, jade ruffled shirt, and vermilion bow tie”: The white, green, and red colors of the Algerian flag.  
On further symbolism of these three colors, see the 2.7 note.
- p. 105: “*Scandaleux!*”: “Outrageous!” in French.
- p. 105: “portière ”: Definition of the word as used in English: A curtain usually heavy, hanging in a doorway. When used as such, it is not italicized.  
However, the French word *portière*, meaning the “door of an automobile or a train,” is italicized in the novel.
- p. 105: “M. le Ministre”: The address to a governmental minister.
- p. 105: thenar: the palm of the hand.
- pp. 105-06: “brought to his heart and on to his lips”: A courtesy movement among Arabs which precedes addressing a person whom the speaker respects.



- p. 106: *maitre d'hôtel*: The formal term for a “headwaiter”; the shorter form “maitre d” (not italicized) is considered informal.
- p. 106: agnition: recognition; acknowledgment (listed as “obsolete” in *Webster’s Third*).
- p. 106: “did I in truth ‘bombast [your] worth?’”: On 4.58, during their first meeting in Foucin’s office (April 10), Remy called him “‘the cream of the cream’ of Sûreté Nationale.”  
Foucin answered that “you [Remy] bombast my worth,” that is, exaggerate Foucin’s importance.
- p. 106: “your pretense of being peripheral”: Remy says that Foucin had asserted that his worth was of minor importance or relevance, a claim which the treatment of him at the Andaloos does not support.
- p. 106: “a certain status”: The third use of the key word from the title of the chapter, here meaning “high position” or “prestige.”
- p. 106: *portier*: “doorman” in French.
- p. 106: “with his dark eyes he fastened Remy”: As a transitive verb, “fasten” may mean “to focus or direct attention or interest markedly upon” as in “fastened him with his clear blue eyes” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 106: “subsumed those nearest him . . . goading the Berber”: The widening symbolic panorama, here of Algeria’s history, will be used again on 18.299, there symbolic of the movement from earth to heaven.
- p. 106: “Algiers itself, and all of Algeria, the Arab lineage of the name undoubtedly goading the Berber”: Algiers derives from the Arabic words *Al Djazair*, meaning “the islands.”  
For a longer explanation, see 4.52 and its note.
- p. 106: “The rejoinder . . . spoken too softly . . . ‘I’ll feed him that line again’”: Foucin’s response was just above a whisper, not loud enough for Remy to catch it.  
Remy will “feed him” the conclusion that Foucin has achieved “a certain status” on p. 113 and immediately receive the answer Foucin spoke, but Remy did not catch, at the Andaloos.
- pp. 106-08: SECTION 4: Time span: Section 4 returns to the hotel room, the conversation taking up where it had left off at 11:07 with Foucin making an allusion to Greek tragedy.  
In the next twelve minutes, the two men largely discuss the opening part of the

conversation between Remy and Mohisen in a nearby park.

After the meal, Remy had led him there where they sat on a bench and talked until Foucin, who had followed them, showed himself (the earlier 10:15 – 10:25).

In the conversation in Remy’s room, snatches about Belmazoir (11:11) and Foucin’s personal history (11:10) and his “status” (11:17) are interposed, and their discussion is interrupted by a waiter bringing a room service tray, complements of the Al-Nigma (11:15).

The section ends with the two men empathizing with Mohisen and in some ways ruining the ordeal they had put him through (the subject of the next section) (11:19).

- p. 106: “In Greek tragedies, peripheries were disallowed”: The noun “periphery” means “the outward bounds of something as distinguished from its internal regions or center” (*Webster’s Third*).

Applying the word to tragedy, Foucin believes that a tragic situation concentrates on a central event, not the many peripheral events surround it.

This concept of unity of action is principally associated with Aristotle’s *Poetics*: Digressions or marginal issues must be omitted from the plot of a tragedy.

Introduced by Remy in this chapter, “periphery” and its variants become a favorite during their discussion here: On p. 106 Remy spoke of Foucin’s “pretense of being peripheral”; here Foucin applies the term to tragedy.

On p. 111, the commissioner insists that the time he picked up the slide of a negative shown to Mohisen is “peripheral” or irrelevant. And on p. 113, Remy repeats what he had said on p. 106, that Foucin merely pretends to be peripheral in Algerian society.

In later chapters, the word will be bandied about by Remy and Leroy (11.177 and twice on 185).

On 12.196, Foucin will call “periphery” a “byword” of Remy, and on 13.203 will note that Remy had digressed “into the periphery, my background.”

On 16.268, the commissioner wonders how “women keep stage center the peripheral.” On 18.302, Remy has a peripheral afterthought.

The term is used by or about other characters. On 19:313, after a momentous speech a woman will be described as slipping into the “periphery,” while later in this chapter (19.324), a character will tell Remy that the identity of the murderer of Ballard is “peripheral,” and on 21.359, Remy will describe Foucin as waiting “in the periphery.”

- p. 106: “the negative prefix you seized on”: On p. 131, Remy had intended to say “everything connects,” but used the negative of it, “nothing disconnects.”

The “negative prefix” which both men used is *dis-* in Remy’s “disconnects” and Foucin’s “disallowed.”

- p. 106: “nothing can distract Oedipus”: In Sophocles’s *Oedipus the King*, some critics hold, Oedipus is an obstinate searcher for the truth of who murdered the previous king Laius, that is, Foucin suggests, he did not deviate into the periphery.

- p. 106: “closing up truth to truth”: In *Aeropagettica* (par. 26), Milton wrote that man is “still searching what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it.”
- p. 106: “A Sophoclean status”: The third use of the key word in the title of the chapter; here it means “high rank; standing.”
- p. 106: bergère: An upholstered armchair, usually in an early 18<sup>th</sup>-century French style. There are two bergères in Remy’s sitting room, separated by a coffee table from the French Empire sofa.
- p. 106: “whether the allusions should be shelved”: On pp. 57 and 58 (see their notes, N4:18 and N4:20), Remy had not reacted to Foucin’s literary quotations from J. S. Mill and John Webster. Likewise, there had been no comment on Foucin’s quotation from Tolstoy on the previous page (105).  
On 5.68, Belsches had likewise studied Remy’s expression to determine “what [of his Greek- and Latin-based vocabulary] Remy comprehended.”
- p. 106: “Oedipus as an evader of truth”: Remy answers that he views Oedipus as a person running from truth. He says the natural tendency of people is to evade facing the truth.  
This passage is paraphrased from my essay, “A ‘Feeling of Reconciliation’ and the Tragic Calm,” *The Comparatist* (1995), 19:46-59: “Oedipus . . . at times seeks to avoid a confrontation with the gods. . . . [U]pon hearing from the Delphic oracle . . . he intuitively decides to flee. This type of evasion is also seen when Oedipus seeks to deflect attention from the accusation which he had wrung from Tiresias—who Oedipus admits has always spoken the truth—by accusing Tiresias of accepting bribes and afterwards by charging his brother-in-law Creon of colluding with Tiresias. Next Oedipus quickly and easily seizes on Jocasta’s argument that the prophecies of the gods are worthless, another testimony that Oedipus can be / seen as an evader of truth, not a pursuer of it” (47-48).
- p. 106: “unwillingly suspending his disbelief”: A play on Coleridge’s “willing suspension of disbelief” from *Biographia Literaria*, chap. 14.

- p. 107: “M. Foucin, through M. Vellacott’s reports I know *your* history”: After lecturing on “truth,” Remy employs a lie: He had discovered Foucin’s personal “history” through Foucin’s own description of the massacre of his Aurès family (6.99). He tentatively attempts to have Foucin discuss how this event, for which old Belmazoïr was responsible, could be perceived as influencing his conviction that his grandson is guilty of Ballard’s murder.
- p. 107: “excuse”: to digress or ramble (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 107: “Rothmans”: Ballard’s brand of cigarettes. A British cigarette, first mentioned on p. 3 and discussed in its note.
- p. 107: “But promptly resolved”: On pp. 110-11, during the cross-examination of Mohisen, Foucin (and Remy) will learn that it was impossible for the negative to be hidden in the pack of Rothmans, something which the reader knows from 1.3.
- p. 107: French Empire sofa: a neoclassical style sofa prevalent in the first part of 19<sup>th</sup>-century France.
- p. 107: “diplomatically forbidden to question [Belmazoïr] about [the negative], as you’re aware”: On 4.56-57, Foucin told Remy that Ambassador Leroy had “diplomatically immunized” any discussion of the negative, and accommodating him, his country had not publicized it. He had added that he believed its existence had been kept from even Vellacott, Remy’s employer. On 2.30, HIV said that the Algerians had kept the news of the negative from the press and do not plan to pursue an investigation of it. Here Foucin reveals that in the interrogation of Belmazoïr, no mention had been made of the negative. He pauses hoping Remy will reveal any discussion which he has had with Belmazoïr about it, but Remy volunteers nothing.
- p. 107: “he’s veiling more than just a name”: On 4.62, Belmazoïr told Remy that during his interrogation he was tortured in order to gain a confession that he knew “M. John” was “M. Ballard,” an American embassy official. Here Foucin states that he believes Belmazoïr is hiding more than just his knowledge about the real name of the man who used the alias “M. John.”
- p. 107: “Inspector Hussein Karami”: The first mention of Deputy Inspector Hussein Karami, who for the first three days officially headed the investigation of Ballard’s murder and thus carried out the interrogation and torture of Belmazoïr. In more than just name, Karami will appear in the novel in chaps. 13 and 21.
- p. 107: tergiversate: to use evasions; to equivocate.
- p. 107: “archcriminals, Adam and Cain”: The prefix “arch” has the meaning of “first in time,” as in “archfather,” listed in *Webster’s Third*. The Qur’an follows the Biblical account by portraying Adam (*Adem* in Arabic)

and Cain (*Qabil*) as the first lawbreakers.

- p. 107: “You witnessed how an *anima semplicetta* was handled”: In speaking of his subtler, more psychological, method of questioning another teenager earlier that night, Foucin uses the Italian phrase, which two paragraphs down he translates as a “simple heart.”  
On 6.95, Remy had instinctually used this same phrase from Dante in characterizing Mohisen’s innocence.  
In its note, N6:40, the two lines 16:88-89 from *Purgatorio* are cited in their entirety. There Remy translates the Italian phrase as “simple soul,” its usual translation.
- p. 107: *jardin public*: French for “public park.” The site was chosen by Foucin, as Remy’s comment on p. 105 suggests: He had planned to question Mohisen at the Andaloos: “I hadn’t incorporated the adjacent park.”  
In 1989, there was a public park located near the city’s football stadium, several blocks from which I placed the Andaloos.  
Since 1994, part of this green zone is now the site of the National Library of Algeria (*Bibliothèque Nationale*).
- p. 107: “sodium-vapor lamp”: Low-pressure sodium-vapor lamps are widely used for outdoor lighting, especially for street lights.
- p. 107: “outwitted me at one point”: In Foucin’s plan, he had believed that Remy would have to ask some questions which would lead Mohisen to bring up his friendship with Ballard. Instead, the youth had done it on his own.
- p. 107: mark: A theatrical term. Chalk marks on the stage floor were originally used to signify the placement of an actor.  
Today chalk has been replaced by colored tape.  
“Hitting one’s mark” is an expression which means that an actor moved to and stopped on his mark with precision.  
Foucin had followed the two to the park and positioned himself so that he could overhear their conversation, thus able to adjudge the right time to show himself.
- p. 107: “his English as imperfect as my own”: Why the intelligent and well-read Foucin has never mastered English will be explained on p.117.
- p. 107: “the opportunity to settle a pulse”: On p. 104 Foucin had told Remy that they “must play with [Mohisen’s] pulsebeat,” that is, slow his pulse rate so that it will speed up rapidly when Foucin suddenly appears.
- p. 107: *devoirs*: acts or expressions of due respect or courtesy, as in greetings.

- p. 108: Restaurant Sindibad: Unlike the invented Andaloos, Le Sindibad (Arabic of Sinbad) was in 1989 (the time of the novel) and still is one of the most popular seafood restaurants in old Algiers, particularly with tourists. It is located opposite the main Casbah mosque, Ketchaoua, and thus near Martyrs Square. The sense of Mohisen’s pidgin is that at some unspecified time in the past a friend took him to the Sindibad Restaurant. Mohisen stated that that this person was similar to Remy (“Mr. Mike”), an American gentleman. When asked what had happened to this friend, Mohisen replied simply that he had left,” a tone of sadness in his voice.
- p. 108: “The Andaloos, not the Al-Nigma haunts your mind. . . . did you use, ‘status’”: A reference to the comment Remy had made at the Andaloos that Foucin had “achieved a certain status” (106). The commissioner’s response then had been so low that Remy had not caught it. Here Foucin’s answer that status is “as much a hindrance as a help in my work,” Remy is certain, was not the response at the Andaloos, but he believes he has succeeded in pointing out to Foucin that he is still interested in the earlier reply.
- p. 108: ebullition: a sudden outburst, as of some emotion.
- p. 108: “I no the good boy!”: Mohisen applies to himself an expression similar to the one used in describing the two hustlers and the prostitute in the beach café: “Two boy, girl no the good” (6.97).
- p. 108: “I the cheat!”: Mohisen is not given the chance to elaborate, but presumably he feels that he has cheated Remy in two ways: He maneuvered the invitation by berating the two café boys and through accepting it he implicitly committed himself to some sexual act in which he knows he cannot engage.
- p. 108: “you switched to French to counter”: Remy is obviously moved by Mohisen’s confession since it has been he who was deceiving Mohisen. That he goes out of character by speaking French indicated that he wished to reveal to Mohisen his deceit, in the same way Mohisen was so excited by the invitation to dine with Remy that he “slip[ed] up in tongues” at the beach (6.97).
- p. 108: “*Amrekaanee sadeek*”: In Arabic, “American friend.”
- p. 108: “Deception is the disguise that the *honest* man, his ‘heart upon [his] sleeve,’ most rackingly wears”: Foucin’s aphorism specifically addressed the suffering which Mohisen is going through because he felt he deceived Ballard. However, it equally applies to Remy and Foucin, who used maneuvered deception against Mohisen in the same way that they believed Ballard had. That Remy realizes the applicability of the maxim to himself is seen in the lewd manner (“queer”) in which he mentally lashes out against Ballard. Foucin sounds the *h* in “honest” because five paragraphs above he had heard



Mohisen say, “I . . . no the *honest*.”

Remy had heard the attendant use the adjective in describing himself on 6.94 and had employed it in referring to Mohisen on 6.95 and 96.

- p. 108: “heart upOn [his] sleeve”: The internal quote is by that masterful deceiver Iago. In *Othello* 1.1.66-67, he scoffs at “wear[ing] my heart upon my sleeve / For the daws to peck at.”
- p. 108: rackingly: in a tortured or anguished manner “so as to shake or strain” like someone stretched on a rack (*Webster’s Third*).  
In its meaning of a framework or stand for displaying garments, it continues the clothing metaphor of “disguise,” “sleeve,” and “wears.”
- p. 108: queer: A slang term for a homosexual, viewed as a term of contempt and derision when used by a heterosexual, although less so when used by one homosexual speaking about or to another.  
A wrought Remy slips into the vulgar use here.
- pp. 108-11: SECTION 5: Time line: This section recounts Foucin’s interrogation of Mohisen on the park bench with Remy basically a silent witness (10:25 – 10:50). After it, the three walk to Foucin’s car which Sgt. Ghouraf had pulled around to the park.  
They drive to the Al-Nigma where Remy and Foucin get out (11:00). The latter thanks Mohisen for his help and requests Ghouraf to drive him home.  
Foucin and Remy decide to retire to his Al-Nigma room to discuss the significance of what they had learned from Mohisen. In the elevator ride, one comment of Mohisen’s lingers in Remy’s mind (11:07).
- p. 108: “Why M. Lazar . . .”: This interjection will be used as a catchphrase in five other chapters in the novel: 12:194; 13:203; 16:264; 20:351; and 21.359, although the last two slightly vary from the pattern
- p. 108: Mohisen Al-Ghamdi ben Salah: The full name of the changing room attendant.
- p. 108: *jeune homme*: young man.

- p. 109: “forty-five days ago”: Feb. 27, 1989, the date of Ballard’s murder. The date of this chapter is April 12.
- p. 109: gnathion: “the midpoint of the lower border of the human mandible” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 109: “*more than figuratively morte de peur, ‘frightened to death’*”: French dictionaries list the French phrase as “figurative.” It literally translates as “death from fear.”
- p. 109: “The repetition of his name was necessary divulgence”: In Foucin’s first speech (108) he had identified that the man sitting with Mohisen was not “Mr. Mike” by calling him “M. Lazar.”  
He twice repeats this cognomen here for the reason Remy gives.
- p. 109: “to bond the three”: On Foucin’s sudden appearance, Mohisen instinctively grasped Remy’s hand as he “jammed his right shoulder into Remy’s left” (108).  
When Foucin moved his hand forward, apparently to break this hold, he decided to knead the three hands for a moment.  
This image of the three hands joined and the use of the word “bond” reinforces the connection/disconnection theme.  
This theme has appeared frequently in the notes of the first seven chapters: N1:1-2; N2:7, 9, 16, 28, 32, 36, 50, 53-54, and 62-63; N3:6; N5: 5 and 34; N6:40; and N7.1-2 and 3.  
A full listing of its occurrences in the novel will be given in the 15.253 note, N15:49-50.
- p. 109: “belts and keys, buttons and buckles . . . billfold”: Items of Ballard’s which were left in the basket.
- p. 109: *douk-douk*: The knife used to kill Ballard. See 4.57-58 and its note, N4:17-18.
- p. 109: “a black slide with a white cardboard border”: Foucin hopes by showing this negative he will prod Mohisen to discuss whether he had found such a negative in Ballard’s billfold.
- p. 109: “You’re ‘landed in particulars,’ lad”: The citation is from Plato’s *Meno* where Socrates is discussing his and the young Meno’s attempt to establish “one common notion of virtue”: “Ever and anon we are landed in particulars, but this is not what I want” (about one-sixth of the way through *Meno*).  
Remy will employ the phrase later in this chapter (116) and use it in an embarrassing request on 19.326.
- p. 109: *dorsum*: the back part of a hand.
- p. 109: *encore une fois*: “once again” in French.

- p. 109: cephalic: of the head.
- p. 109: "a body weaving": Mohisen's body was moving from side to side.
- p. 109: "so that your words travel heavenward": Foucin selectively paraphrases Claudius's post-prayer couplet in *Hamlet* 3.3.97-98: "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. / Words without thoughts never to heaven go."
- p. 109: "a good man, a 'gentleman'": The terms were used by Mohisen to describe "M. John," his first American friend, and "Mr. Mike," his second (108).
- p. 109: paroxysm: a sudden outburst, here of tormented feelings.
- p. 109: "How could my fingerprints be on a . . . ": The completion of this question will be given on p. 111, which will reveal how it is "a shrewd rebuttal."  
There the question will be followed by a prayer which singles out Remy.
- p. 109: "*un nul*": a nonentity. The French term was used earlier on 2.22 in its figurative sense of weakness of character; see its note N2:32.  
On 12.192, Leila will say that Ballard had used the term to describe a weakness in his character.  
Here the sense of Remy's nonentity is conveyed by the next sentence: "neither [Mohisen nor Foucin] thenceforth paid any heed to him [Remy]."
- p. 109: "Foucin is out to prove me right": That is, Ballard did not take the negative to the grove as well as its corollary, the negative was planted on Ballard by his murderer.  
Remy will again refer to this aim of Foucin on p. 111.

- p. 110: “The interrogation had skipped about”: With Mohisen psychologically readied, for the next twenty minutes Foucin questions him. His topics skip about, follow no chronology, and are often repeated. He finds out three crucial points:  
 (1) Questioned about each object which he touched, Mohisen made no mention of the negative.  
 (2) Mohisen scrubbed clean the stall once Ballard left so it would be fresh when he returned from his swim. The American would be aware of this procedure, so he would not have hidden the negative in the stall.  
 (3) It could not have been slipped by Ballard into the pack of Rothman cigarettes that he took to his spot on the beach because near the end of his swim the ritual was for a new pack to be brought to this spot along with a beer. The old pack with two cigarettes purposefully left in it—one for Mohisen and the other for the waiter—was taken away by the latter.
- p. 110: “His brand of cigarettes”: Ballard smoked the popular British brand Rothmans (1.3, 4, and 11).
- p. 110: “Green . . . the color”: On 1.4, Ballard’s Speedo swimsuit was described as “hunter-green” and made of “lycra.”
- p. 110: Tango: the brand of beer brought by one of the café’s waiters to Ballard’s spot on the beach (1.3).
- p. 110: “to tip”: Foucin does not pursue the amount of the tip nor does Mohisen volunteer this information. If either had, Remy would have reported on this since he had speculated about the tip on 6.95.
- p. 110: “feel for them”: a knack, facility, or skill often derived from an innate ability—used with *for*; “an awareness of the spirit or temper of something or of its distinguishing or special qualities—often used with *for*” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 110: “The volunteered response . . . ‘No girl! And you call yourself an American! You lie! No! No!’”: Although not stated, the reason Mohisen proffered this exclamatory passage is that he wanted to convey the familiar nature of his friendship with the American. Ballard commented that he called it out to show others in the changing room that he had an American friend whom “I can joke with” (1.5). This conclusion is similar to Belmazoir’s definition of a friend: “A friend’s someone you can laugh with” (4.65). Mohisen’s bantering with Ballard is reported on 1.5 and 1.9 (twice).
- p. 110: Mahdi: The waiter who brought the beer and the fresh pack of cigarettes to Ballard’s spot on the beach and took away the old pack with two cigarettes purposively left in it, one for him and the other for Mohisen. The waiter’s name is not given in the scene on 1.12 since Ballard would not know

which of the two café waiters would bring the items.

p. 110: cachinnation: loud and/or excessive laughter.

p. 110: “demoded heap”: “demoded” is an English translation of the French adjective *démodé*, which indicates that something is no longer fashionable or is obsolete (*Webster’s Third*).

“Heap” is slang for an “old beat-up automobile” (*Webster’s Third*).

Foucin is trying to elevate the status of Mohisen by suggesting that he might be embarrassed to be seen in such an old car.

Later actions and words show Foucin’s attempt to exalt the character of the beach attendant whom he had initially humbled.

p. 110: “earlier, reverberating invocation . . . the torrent”: References to Mohisen’s speech, the first sentence of which was given on p. 109.

As noted there, this section will end with Remy’s recalling of the entirety of the speech.

p. 110: *commissaire divisionnaire*: Foucin’s title, “divisional commissioner.”

p. 110: skelp: hustle.

p. 110: Boulevard Zirout Youcef: The coastal highway which runs in front of the Al-Nigma.

p. 110: Aladdin: the Al-Nigma’s restaurant which would still be open given that it is Ramadan.

- p. 111: “haro”: A variant spelling of the interjection “harrow,” which is “used to express alarm or distress” (*Webster’s Third*).  
It is placed in quotes here to indicate that the interjection is being used as a noun.
- p. 111: “Great God, ‘betake me’ in ‘refuge against the accursed Satan!’”: The quoted words are taken from the first part of the prayer given on p. 102: “I betake me for refuge I n God against the accursed Satan.”  
Remy, one of the seven devils (the great traitors), is here called Satan by Mohisen, not the last character who will so demonize him.  
In the 9.148 note, N9:34, there will be a list of the eleven specific characters as well as some groups of characters who speak of Remy as a devil.  
Ironically, on 6.95, because of his belief that Ballard had corrupted Mohisen, Remy had referred to the American as “one of the lesser devils which strives to imitate, in anticipation of overthrowing, the Great One [Satan].”  
Here, the person he was championing there accuses him of being a demonic deceiver.
- pp. 111-113: SECTION 6: Time span: Section six begins with a continuation of Remy’s and Foucin’s conversation in the hotel room (11:19). It takes up where it had broken off at the end of section four with Foucin sighing, “The lad suffers” (108). There is a flashback to Remy’s dinner with Mohisen at the Andalooos (c. 9:45). For the next forty minutes (11:20 – midnight) they review the details which Mohisen had disclosed.  
In the next six minutes, the cooperation between Remy and Foucin crumbles. The latter insists that the murder of Ballard was personal, an act of passion or of some unknown motivation by Belmazoir (12:02).  
Remy, however, contends that a political motivation cannot be ruled out: Some Palestinians in Algeria, disenchanted with the recent agreement brokered by Ambassador Leroy, would have delighted in attempting to scuttle it by embarrassing Leroy (12:03). He heatedly questions Foucin why he has not pursued that possibility.  
Upset by Remy’s charge, Foucin says that he was about to give him proof that the murder was personal, but realizes that he is called upon to speak to the Palestinian issue.  
He gives an account of his questioning of the 93 Palestinians at the PLO camp south of Algiers (March 3 – 4, not specified in the text) and how he found out nothing that incriminated them (12:05).  
Foucin walks to the door intent on leaving the hotel room. Before he can exit, Remy charges that Foucin’s investigation of the murder has always been personal (12:06).
- p. 111: “‘Still you lessened his anguish,’ Remy responded to Foucin’s observation about the guilt-ridden Mohisen”: The action returns to the second paragraph from the end



of section 4, p. 108, where Foucin sighed, “The lad [Mohisen] suffers.”

- p. 111: “the truth was brought to the surface”: Foucin’s speech on p. 104, “Truth . . . will be hauled . . . to the sunlit surface.”
- p. 111: “‘or rammed down [our] throat[s]’”: Foucin quotes from Remy’s speech on Oedipus: “till reality is rammed down his throat” (106).
- p. 111: “The slide with M. Ballard’s—or a—print, did you retrieve it . . . prayers . . . tardy”: The slide shown to Mohisen on p. 109.  
Remy notes that Foucin was “a tittle tardy” returning from his performance of his sunset prayers: They finished at 7:44, but it was not until 7:49 that Foucin reentered his office where Remy was waiting.
- p. 111: “Now that is peripheral’ . . . “seven times ‘teasingly’ chopped the air”: The French of the sentence—“Now that is peripheral!”—likewise has seven syllables.  
“Peripheral” here means both “unimportant” and “on the edge,” that is, if truth is the center of a circle, the negative is on the outer edge.
- p. 111: “the correct hand”: Muslims always eat with their right hand.  
It is reported in the Hadiths of Bukhari (5376), Muslim (2021-22), and Abu Dawood (33) that Prophet Mohammed stressed that a Muslim should use the right hand in eating, drinking, shaking hands, or handing an object to someone.  
Muslim (2020) states that the Prophet said *Shaitan* (Satan) eats with his left hand.
- p. 111: “Arab to Arab”: Foucin adds that Remy was soon eating like an Arab. Remy responds, “As Arab as you,” a reference to Foucin’s Berber heritage (6.100).  
Foucin’s joke has an ironic truth to it, unperceived by him but not by Remy, who was born an Arab but to ward off any Algerian agents sent to kill him became a Christian.  
Foucin, a Berber, however, has retained his Arab status in order to allow him to track down the seven great traitors.
- p. 111: “a call . . . by Ghouraf that both Zaracova waiters confirmed”: After dropping Mohisen off, Sgt. Ghouraf visited the houses of the two café waiters who confirmed what Ballard took to his place on the beach and what each on Mohisen’s instructions took to him that day of his murder and the other days.  
Not mentioned in the text, my notes indicate that this call came at 11:40, that is, forty minutes after Ghouraf pulled out of the Al-Nigma driveway, taking Mohisen home.
- p. 111: “Rothmans-and-Tango ritual”: As mentioned in the 7:110 notes, the first is the brand of cigarettes which Ballard smoked and the second is the kind of beer that he drank at the beach.  
The ritual was that a little while before the spying Mohisen adjudged Ballard was near the end of his swim, the American would be brought a new pack of Rothmans

and a cold Tango beer

The waiter who brought the two items would pick up the original Rothman packet, in which Ballard had courteously left two cigarettes, one for Mohisen and the other for the waiter, and leave the fresh pack under Ballard’s lighter.

- p. 111: *service dans les chambres*: “room service” in French. Again the time is not specified, but in my notes I placed it at 11:45. The first tray had arrived thirty minutes before.
- p. 111: “Foucin’s Algiers-manufactured Ryms”: The locally produced Ryms is the most popular brand of cigarettes in Algeria. Almost half of the country’s smokers choose it, largely because of its low price.  
Around forty per cent of Algerian men and ten per cent of its women smoke.
- p. 111: “Remy’s French Gauloises”: See the 6.98 note for information about this French-produced cigarette, Remy’s brand.
- p. 111: “Not fetched from the red sedan”: Not portrayed in the novel, but during their discussion Remy must have explained to Foucin how he was certain that if Ballard had returned to the car, Abukadir, Zaracova’s parking attendant, would have seen him.
- p. 111: “If the murderer . . . bore the negative to the grove, there’s premeditation”: Foucin first held that Belmazoïr, high on drugs, killed Ballard in a “[h]ashish-prompted robber[y]” (4.57).  
On p. 107, he changes and suggests that Belmazoïr had found the negative and brought it to extort a larger sum of money than his weekly pay from Ballard.  
Here he contends that if the negative, not hashish, prompted the murder, there would be premeditation.
- p. 111: “Dare [the Algerian prosecutor of the case against Belmazoïr] brandish [the negative] at the trial?”: Remy argues that the Algerians have kept the negative a secret because if it is revealed there would be questions about how Belmazoïr had obtained it, which would naturally lead to his employer, the Algerian PLO.  
The case could become embarrassingly “political.”
- p. 111: “a man whose status far transcends the case . . . to keep this homicide personal”:  
“Status” here means “high position.”  
Through all of Remy’s arguments here, it must be remembered that his overriding purpose is to create a diversion which will allow him to visit his father. He had come to Algiers believing this goal might be easily achievable: “I’ll do . . . what *I* have come to do, and promptly speed home to Marie” (4.52).  
However, after meeting Foucin and learning that his obsession is to bring to justice the last of the seven great traitors, Remy realizes that the commissioner would have set up a system to screen any visitors to the building where his father lives.  
Remy’s best hope of bringing off the visit is to divert Foucin, preferably by getting

him out of Algiers where he would not be able to respond quickly when a report comes in that someone has visited old Naaman, Remy’s father.

After his success with the negative, Remy’s strategy is to intimate to Foucin that the Palestinians in Algeria are involved in the murder of Ballard, thus making it politically motivated.

Through DGSE reports, Remy is aware that Foucin spent two days at the PLO camp south of Algiers, as Foucin will confirm on pp. 112-13. He hopes that by turning Foucin’s attention to them, the commissioner will revisit their camp for a daylong interview. While he is away, by using a disguise Remy plans to sneak into his father’s attic dwelling.

Thus, as part of this strategy, Remy resurrects the anomaly broached twice earlier—on 4.58 and in this chapter, p. 106—that the assignment of Foucin to this “matter-of-fact murder” case (4.57) indicates that Algeria does not wish a thorough examination of it.

On 4.58, Remy contended that Foucin was less interested in the case than in the interest shown in it by Vellacott or the group or country that sponsored him. At that time, Remy had not received the information, gained from Foucin himself, which allowed him to connect the commissioner with the massacre of the Lakhtour family.

This discovery now convinces him that Foucin has a personal stake in taking revenge against the Belmazoir family.

To sum up, Foucin’s position is unwavering: The weight of evidence convinces him that Belmazoir is the murderer. The slaying was personal, but some outside forces, such as Vellacott’s organization, after the fact want to make it political. He hopes to use this outside interest to steer him to the last surviving great traitor, Omar Naaman.

Remy’s position reverses this argument: The murder was possibly political, but Foucin’s involvement has made it personal. Foucin desires Belmazoir’s conviction in order to punish the family that was principally responsible for destroying his.

Thus there is a touch of irony when Remy charges that Foucin was “assigned to keep this homicide personal.”

- p. 111: “‘closing up truth to truth,’ as I stalk it”: On p. 106, Foucin cited from Milton *Aeropagettica* (N7:14-15), in contending that Oedipus was committed to “‘closing up truth to truth,’ as he found it.” Significantly here he changes “found” to “stalk.” The latter means “to pursue persistently, even obsessively.”

- p. 112: cabernet: purplish red, from the color of the red wine.
- p. 112: “It is not his fault”: As Foucin states, Remy would have been acquainted by Vellacott of the immediate response that Houda made about her brother’s involvement in the murder of Ballard.  
Afterwards, she refused all questions about the matter, often by saying, as she had stated to Remy on 5.81, “My brother forbids me.”  
The assertion, “It is not his fault,” will be used ten times in the novel: 7.112 (twice) and 113; 9.149; 11.173 (variant); 12.194; 13.207; and 15.245, 248, and 251, although in that last one Houda does not refer to her brother.  
In addition, the wording is echoed by others seeking to take responsibility on 11.177, 179, and 185; 12.190; 13.216; and 15.249.
- p. 112: “to the camp”: The PLO camp is located about 110 kilometers south of Algiers. See the 4.58 note.
- p. 112: “the client of your client”: The first “client” refers to Belmazoir, and “your client,” to Vellacott, as used on 4.56 and 57.
- p. 112: “the November rapprochement”: The November 1988 declaration by the PLO in which it recognized Israel. See 1.1 and its note, N1:5.
- p. 112: “Brother enemy!”: See 5.75 and its note, which explains that while most Muslims greet fellow Muslims as brother, still implicit in the salutation is the notion from their Arabic heritage that anyone beyond one’s family must be regarded as a potential enemy.
- p. 112: “a ‘political’ cause célèbre”: It would be a political scandal if it were revealed that a Palestinian had killed, i.e., assassinated, Ballard in order to sabotage the November declaration.
- p. 112: minion: a fawning, servile follower (“of the status quo” is implied).
- p. 112: “virtuous servant”: Tauntingly, Remy employs wording from the section of the Muslim prayer in which the Prophet is extolled: “Peace be on us and the virtuous servants of God” (102).  
Remy had quoted the same phrase on 4.67.
- p. 112: “beach-combing espials”: Remy’s discoveries made while walking the beach.
- p. 112: *table basse*: coffee table.
- p. 112: “a recital of something not beach-bound . . . justify my faith that the murder was ‘personal’”: Remy had made his discoveries at the beach.  
What Foucin was about to reveal about Belmazoir’s motive will not be given until 13.203.

- p. 112: “the camp’s leader M. Khalaf and the ninety-two other Palestinians there”: Khalaf is first mentioned on 1.12 by Ahmed Chabane who uses his sobriquet “Tinfingers.” On 4.62, Remy recalls the DGSE report which spoke of the leader of the Palestinian camp south of Algiers as Salam Khalaf, aka Tinfingers. See the two notes on him, N4:31.
- pp. 112-13: “On the last Wednesday in January . . . the homicide of M. Ballard’: Foucin summarizes what he discovered about the Palestinian involvement in the Ballard case:
- (1) The PLO had heard from a drunken Belmazoïr that he had an American friend John Ridgemont (Jan. 25; in the text no dates are specified).
  - (2) By tailing Belmazoïr during his next Monday meeting with Ballard (Jan. 30), they discover that Ridgemont was an alias. Unknown to Belmazoïr, his real name was Paul Ballard, an American Embassy officer (Jan. 31).
  - (3) To get some additional information on Ballard, one of the PLO had befriended the brother of Leïla Chabane, an Algerian who had once worked at the American Embassy and was engaged to marry Ballard (Feb. 2, 7, 9, 14, and 17).
  - (4) On Feb. 19, ten days before the murder, Algiers’ PLO chief halted all investigation of Ballard.
  - (5) On Mar. 6 (again not specified), a week after the murder, this chief assured Foucin that none of their members were involved in the murder of Ballard
- p. 112: “twenty-minute squatting”: The time of Foucin’s questioning of Mohisen.
- p. 112: “high”: under the influence of drugs (Slang).  
Cf. 1.12-13, Chabane’s account to Ballard of what Belmazoïr had said at the PLO camp.
- p. 112: tryster: one of the participants in a meeting at a specific time and place, especially one made secretly by lovers.
- p. 112: Atef Al-Wazar: A concocted name to designate the head of the PLO mission in Algiers.  
This character is mentioned again on 13.206 and his wife on 16.271.

p. 113: “warrant”: assurance.

p. 113: “man-made expediency”: Foucin is answering Remy’s contention that Algeria’s actions in this matter show it accepts that “a ‘personal’ casualty [is] preferable to a ‘political’ [embarrassment]” (112).

Foucin answers that Islam “forbids” the “sacrificing” of “the individual” in order to achieve some temporary societal gain.

He is contrasting human ends with God’s Will and man-made law with His eternal commandments.

One of the latter, he continues, is that those people who “transgress God’s laws” must be punished. A person must be held accountable for his crimes, God dictates.

p. 113: “As ‘personal’ as your investigation?”: At this point, Remy turns the tables by saying he accepts Foucin’s argument about responsibility (metaphorically conveyed by his “transvers[ing] the same distance” as Foucin.

He avers that just as the criminal must be held liable so an investigator of a crime must bear a personal accountability for his actions.

pp. 113-14: SECTION 7: Time span: At the end of sect. 6, Remy’s accusation of personal bias had stopped Foucin from leaving the room (12:06). In sect. 7, he elaborates on his proof of the charge: First Remy says that Foucin’s misrepresented when he became personally, not officially, involved with the murder investigation. Foucin sloughs off this discrepancy as minor (12:08).

Remy next contends that Foucin’s personal popularity—what Foucin himself dismissively calls his “status across the status quo”—has allowed him to do as he wishes in his pursuit of the seven great traitors.

Out of his hate for one of these, old Belmazoir, he has decided that his grandson must be the murderer of Ballard.

Remy now makes his most serious charge against Foucin’s investigation, saying that it goes beyond the ‘personal.’ It is familial since Foucin carries a hatred for the Belmazoir family (12:12).

Bypassing the next twenty-five minutes, the action shifts to 12:37, and the two men, no longer at each other’s throat, are at the door of Remy’s room, saying their goodbyes.

Foucin says that he will arrange a conference between Remy and Ambassador Leroy where he can explain his discovery about the negative. In Foucin’s final sentence of farewell, he says something which piques Remy (12:42).

p. 113: *terminus ad quem*: Latin for “end toward which”; its English meanings here: “conclusion” or “end.”

The two men move from the door to the coffee table (section 7), to the window (section 8), to the coffee table again (section 8), and finally to the door (sections 7 and 8).

- p. 113: “a specimen scavenged from Abukadir”: The parking attendant Abukadir mentioned that Foucin was at Zaracova Beach at around 10:35 and took charge of the search for Ballard.  
See 6.91 and its note N6:29-30.
- p. 113: “Like every other policeman (for what more am I?)”: Even to a greater extent than before (4.58 and 7.106 and 108), Foucin denigrates his importance.
- p. 113: “you announced on Monday”: At their first meeting on Monday, April 10, Remy informed Foucin he had learned that it was three days after the murder that Foucin was assigned to the investigation (4.58-59).
- p. 113: Kouba: A suburb of Algiers six kilometers south of the Al-Nigma.  
At the time of the novel (1989), it was the site of a five-story apartment building, the Garidi Estates, which housed police officers and their families. This building is the model for the one where Foucin’s family lives in my novel.  
It will be described in more detail in chap. 14.  
According to Foucin’s statement here, on the night of Ballard’s murder, he made the trip from his Kouba building in twenty minutes, arriving at around 10:35. Ballard’s body was found sixteen minutes later.
- p. 113: “beyond your pretense of being peripheral”: The single quotes indicate that Remy is using the exact words of his speech to Foucin from p. 106.
- p. 113: “unmuffled gape”: To show his boredom with Remy’s insinuations, Foucin does not cover (“unmuffled”) this second yawn (“gape”).
- p. 113: “‘a certain status’ . . . ‘Across the status quo’”: The combined speeches provide the title for this chapter. See the discussion of it on N7:1-2.
- p. 113: “his dark eyes . . . took in solely the face”: Remy contrasts how Foucin’s eyes looked on saying “Across the status quo” on p. 106, in which his stare seemed to embrace the entire history of Algeria, with his eyes here, which concentrated simply on Remy’s face.
- p. 113: “Monsieur, I reiterate, ‘I know *your* history’”: See p. 107: “M. Foucin, through M. Vellacott’s reports I know *your* history.”



- p. 114: “*playing with a pulsebeat*”: Remy feels that just as Foucin had stressed that they must “play with [Mohisen’s] pulsebeat” (104) to gain the truth from him, so here he is conscious that he is playing with Foucin’s own pulsebeat.
- p. 114: “Earlier . . . how you hurried the speculation that M. Belmazoir had blundered on and pocketed the strip”: See p. 107 where Foucin said, “Perhaps somehow [Belmazoir] chanced upon the negative and realized its extortionary value.”
- p. 114: *Lex talionis*: Its translation from Latin is given in the text. It is an ancient concept, being mentioned in the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi and is embedded in the three religions contrasted in my novel.  
 In Judaism, it is “the eye for an eye” retribution of Exod. 21:22-25, Lev. 24:19-21, and Deut. 19:21, part of the Old Testament books which most Christians accept, although in the New Testament the concept of justice (life for life, tit for tat, measure for measure) is tempered by mercy.  
 A further amelioration occurs in Islam where the rigidity of the concept has a less moral loophole through “blood money,” by means of which a Muslim can buy his way out of a strict implementation of *lex talionis*.  
 In the Qur’an, *lex talionis* is the *qisas* (“retribution”) mentioned in Sura 2:178.  
 In my novel, “tit for tat” and the frequently used “measure for measure” reinforce this retribution, with the male characters much more obsessed by it than females.
- p. 114: “Twenty-five minutes later”: That is, at 12:37 a.m. As frequently used in the novel, a suspenseful gap interposes itself. It will be filled in the next section.
- p. 114: “Ambassador Leroy had to be apprised”: The American must be told that Ballard, his employee and friend, had not brought the negative of a page from an embassy document to the beach in order to sell it.
- p. 114: “*Bonsoir!*”: “Good night!” in French
- p. 114: “our benefactor”: The hotel manager.
- p. 114: “nettling farewell”: The suspended statement is used once again to create suspense. On p. 109, Mohisen’s verbal attack on Remy is referred to, but it will not be quoted in full until p. 111.  
 Secondly there is the gap just mentioned four notes above, which will be detailed in sect. 8.  
 Here Foucin’s “nettling farewell” will not be revealed until the last sentence of this chapter (117).
- pp. 114-17: SECTION 8: Time span: Section 8 flashes back to what Remy had said after accusing Foucin of hating the Belmazoirs (12:12). He begins his account of a

1955 meeting in the Aurès bringing together representatives of the FLN. At the point where Remy is about to describe the French assault on the villa, with a weary voice, Foucin takes up the narrative (12:15).

He describes how his mother, brothers, sisters, and others in the villa were killed (12:15 – 12:25). Next he reveals the dying wish of his father, who had espied the only FLN representatives still alive: The eight-year-old Foucin should lead “M. Bel—” to safety through a secret passageway.

The name his father had begun to say is Belmazoir, the grandfather of the imprisoned Mohammed Belmazoir. By 1955 old Belmazoir had become an unknown collaborator, who had informed the French of the meeting.

Conscious of the tie that binds them—both had been victims of the French—Remy feels sympathy for Foucin and even moves to stand beside him during the painful last part of his narrative (12:23 – 12:27).

Foucin tells Remy that he had cause to hate old Belmazoir, but Islam forbids him from transferring the sin of a grandfather to his grandson (12:29).

Their passion purged, in jovial camaraderie they speak of some lighter matters (12:29 – 12:41).

The action switches to 1:30. About to go to bed, Remy mulls over the last thing Foucin had said to him at 12:42 and how it might complicate his completing of his real “mission” for returning to Algiers.

Foucin had confided that even given what Remy had learned this night, he still knew only a small part of his relationship with the Belmazoirs (12:42).

- p. 114: “Remy had begun with a lie”: The “lie” is that he had read about the 1955 massacre in one of Vellacott’s reports. Along with most of Algeria, Omar, fifteen, would have heard of the devastating French ambush at the Lakhtour villa in the Aurès. The wording contrasts with Foucin’s observation about Mohisen: “M. Lazar, mark how he began not with a lie” (109).
- p. 114: “the historic nine”: In French, “*neuf historiques*,” the early leaders of the Algerian revolution. They are known as the country’s “founding fathers.” See the 6.88 note, N6:17-18, for a list of them and of their fate.
- p. 114: “six provinces”: The FLN set up six provinces or *wilayaat*. Its singular is *wilaya*. The *-at* suffix is one method used in Arabic to make a noun plural. The six were as follows:  
*Wilaya I* (the Aurès, excluding Constantine);  
*Wilaya II* (the area around Constantine, the major city in northeastern Algeria);  
*Wilaya III* (Kabylie, the coastline region of northeastern Algeria);  
*Wilaya IV* (the area surrounding the capital Algiers; its major center was the Blida-Médéa area);  
*Wilaya V* (Oran, the major city of western Algeria, and the area surrounding it; and  
*Wilaya VI* (the Sahara territories, the sparsely populated southern two-thirds of Algeria).  
 In order to stress its importance to the revolution, the capital Algiers was not

considered a *wilaya*, but an autonomous zone, called ZAA (in French, *Zone Autonome d’Alger*).

- p. 114: “chiefs”: The “historic nine” were also called the *chefs historiques*, translated here as “chiefs.”  
Cf. 6.90 and its note, N6.27.
- p. 114: “a rehearsal for this [meeting]”: The word has special significance to Remy because on 3.69 he French lieutenant told Omar after the torture of the girl he thought was his sister, “Every play has its rehearsal.”  
For a discussion of the use of the rehearsal-understudy image in the novel, see the 3.69 note.
- p. 114: “poof”: An interjection used to express suddenness of disappearance, but of its five uses in the novel only twice does it appear as such (2.28 and 19.329).  
In the other three places it appears, quite ungrammatically, as an adjective, as on this page, or as a verb (2.16 and 17.276).  
Its use here is a sign of the egotism of Algeria’s founding fathers, who felt that the revolutionary fervor would disappear if they should be captured or killed.
- p. 114: “future summit of the *wilayaat* leaders”: My confab in the Aurès is fictional. However, in history, a unifying summit of revolutionary leaders from each province was held from Aug. 20 to Sept. 10, 1956, at a simple forester’s cottage in Soummam Valley in Kabylie, the mountainous district in northeastern Algeria. Because of the elaborate secrecy and security measures taken, for the entire twenty days the French army in Kabylie were unaware a summit was taking place. See 6.88 and its note for more on the Soummam Valley summit.  
For Kabylie, see the earlier 2.22 and 24 and 6.88 notes.  
For more information on the Aurès, see its 6.88, 6.90, and 6.99 notes.
- p. 114: the birthing ground of the Movement”: The Aurès is the mountainous district south of coastal Kabylie in the northeastern part of Algeria.  
It is called the “birthing ground” of the insurrection because on the morning of Nov. 1, 1954 (All Saints’ Day) it was the principal site of the first guerrilla operations against the French. Two French sentries were killed, and communication facilities were destroyed.  
Later that day similar attacks were launched in the Kabylie and the northwestern city of Oran, but the impact of the Aurès uprising garnered the most attention from the French press.
- p. 114: Blida-Médéa: As mentioned six notes above, during the revolution, these two cities were part of Wilaya 4 which surrounded Algiers.  
Blida is around twenty-five miles and Médéa c. 45 miles south of Algiers.  
For earlier textual references or notes on Blida and/or Médéa, see 2.22 and 24 and 6.88 and their notes.

- p. 115: **motional**: “of, relating to, or characterized by motion” (*Webster’s Third*).  
The word expected is “emotional,” but “motional” suggests that by moving toward the window Foucin’s mind is traveling back in time (the male’s association with the past) to an event so crucial in his life.
- p. 115: **“due diligence”**: Careful investigation of a business or person before a contract is signed. The term is typically used in business transactions, not revolutionary strategy.  
However, the backbiting and jockeying for position exhibited by the leaders of the Soummam summit, Horne suggests in *Savage War*, pp. 143-46, revealed how minutely each “brother enemy” had investigated one other.
- p. 115: **“comprehending the *obscurité*”**: In French, *obscurité* means “the darkness of the night.”  
Foucin is forced to look into the darkest episode of his life, the massacre of his family, when he was only eight.  
This is yet another reference in the novel to John 1:5 (KJV), which was quoted in its entirety on 4.54: “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”  
The image of a person staring into the darkness is used frequently in the novel: On 1.11, Ballard stares into the “tenebrosity” of the disco which he does not know holds his killer.  
On 3.49 Remy “gaze[s] into the darkness” of the night sky from his London hotel room, and on 3.43, as Omar, he peers through the peephole into the dim room where his “sister” is about to be raped.  
On 4.81 he looks beyond Houda into the “more distant darkness” of the Belmazoires’ shack where their mother lies close to death.  
The image of someone peering into something dark will reappear in later chapters, especially 13, 15, 17, and 18.
- p. 115: **“raise from the dead”**: Foucin does here what Remy did in chap. 6 through his “list of the dead” (82), that is, his “honor roll of martyrs” (89-90).  
Muslims accept the concept that Jesus was empowered by God physically to raise the dead, although the Qur’an makes no specific references to the three instances of Jesus doing so: Luke 7:11-17; Mark 5:21-43, which is repeated in Matt. 9:18-26 and Luke 8:40-56; and John 11:1-44).  
The Qur’an states that Jesus was neither killed nor crucified; rather his body ascended to Heaven through God’s decree.  
Islam accepts the doctrine of his second coming, but states that Jesus will rule a united humankind for around forty years, then die, and be buried in a tomb next to the Prophet Mohammed’s in Medina, Saudi Arabia.
- p.115: **“Yorick”**: Foucin calls the old family retainer who warned them of the imminent French assault “my ‘Yorick,’ who when I was a child . . . had delighted in parading me about on his shoulders.”  
The Yorick reference is to old Hamlet’s court jester who young Hamlet said “hath

bore me on his back a thousand times” (5.1.185-86).

- p. 115: “my throat is cut”: Another wound to the neck.
- p. 115: “window, baying”: Foucin’s pun on “bay window” may be considered by some as inappropriate.  
It serves to help him to control his feelings by distancing himself from the horrible events, the same purpose as the quote and other pun in this and the next paragraph.
- p. 115: “‘Tis not so deep as’”: From Mercutio in *Romeo* 3.1.95: “No, ’tis not so deep as a well.”  
A longer version of Mercutio’s speech was used by Saul on 2.29.
- p. 115: “fleabit”: In quotes because as a neologism I employ the noun “fleabite” as a verb.  
“Fleabite” is defined as “the red spot on the skin caused by the bite of a flea.”  
Foucin uses it metaphorically to describe the red splotches of Matoub’s flesh.
- p. 115: enfilading: directing gunfire along the length of a column or line of troops.
- p. 115: pomegranate trees: Many rural houses in Algeria plant these around and near their houses because their sweet aroma will waft through the rooms.
- p. 115: “grave Matoub”: The pun on “grave” as a “tomb” and something “serious or important or dignified and solemn” is from Mercutio’s dying speech, “Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man” (3.2.96-97).
- p. 115: “one of the light-footed delegates from Algiers”: The scurrying of Belmazoir indicates that the French had betrayed him, for they had left him in the line of fire to fend for himself.
- p. 115: thick-oak gateleg table: The astute Belmazoir had selected a gateleg table. Its drop leaves would give him protection from three sides.  
He was maneuvering toward the back wall under the stair to protect his flank.
- p. 115: Tébessa: A city in the Aurès Mountains in northeastern Algeria.  
It is now the capital of the province of Tébessa, but at the time of this episode of the novel it was part of *Wilaya I* (the Aurès).
- p. 115: “bullets, by nature lethal, but . . . distraught slivers and . . . enraged pellets, innocent wood and limestone”: The lead bullets are by definition meant to be deadly, but splinters of wood and flakes of limestone are not.  
This image sums up my (and I hope Foucin’s) view of warfare: Soldiers as “killing machines” or Falstaff’s “food for powder [cannon fodder]” (*1 Henry IV*, 4.2.65) should expect to kill and be killed, but not innocent civilians, without fail the major casualties of modern warfare.

- p. 115: “my beloved Boualem”: “Foucin’s” oldest brother.  
Intent on her service to her family and the Revolution, his mother tosses the body of her first-born aside and continues to throw the guns.  
When his first child, a son, is born in 1979, Foucin will name him Boualem. This child, now ten years old, will appear in the novel on 14.222-23 and 228-29.
- p. 115: anon: A largely archaic word meaning “soon” or “shortly.”
- p. 115: axillae: armpits.
- p. 115: mure: “squeeze” as in “mure against a wall” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 115: “jungle-green uniforms”: The battle uniform of French paratroopers. The French 10<sup>th</sup> division, under General Massu, had been sent to Algeria’s Aurès and Kabylie provinces in 1955 to combat the rebels (the 6.88 note, N6.19).
- p. 115: accoutrements: “a soldier’s outfit (as a rifle belt, pack, and other accessories, usually not including clothes and weapons)” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 115: *rashshash ayli*: In Arabic, “machinegun.”
- p. 115: *gandoura*: the traditional short-sleeved or sleeveless robe-like outer garment worn by males.  
See the 3.39 note, N3:13, and the earlier 1.14 note, “*djellaba*,” N1:37.

- p. 116: “my beloved Zitouni . . . my beloved Salah”: Zitouni is the second oldest brother of “Foucin.” When the fighting began, he grabbed the eight-year-old “Foucin” to protect him. He is killed directly after Salah, fifteen and the second youngest, who also tried to shield “Foucin.”  
In his account Foucin does not evade his responsibility: His bolting action exposed both his second and third brother to the gunfire that killed them.  
Foucin will name his second son, born in 1983, Zitouni, in honor of his second oldest brother. He appears on 14.223, 228, and 229.
- p. 116: “A front ‘pier’”: “Pier” is an architectural term—hence the single quotes—meaning “the part of a wall between windows or other openings.”
- p. 116: “Wafah, Zouina, Yamina, my beloved sisters”: These will be mentioned again in 18.306.  
On 14.222, the three-year-old daughter of the Foucins will appear, Yamina, the only one of their three daughters given a name in the text, although their ages are given.  
The oldest girl, one can speculate, born in 1980, was named Wafah, and the middle one, whose age is given as seven, was named Zouina.
- p. 116: “*bab al-sirr*”: An Arabic phrase, literally defined in the text as “the secret” (*al-sirr*) “door” (*bab*).  
Emergency exits were often designed into Arabic houses either during their construction or added afterward as a situation warranted.  
As mentioned On 6.89-90, Saadi Yacef had ordered house-to-house passageways constructed throughout the Casbah, and Ali la Pointe, Hassiba, and Petit Omar retreated through a secret panel to a mew, where they were killed by a bomb blast.
- p. 116: “to the cornfield”: The secret door midway up the stairway leads to a tunnel which exits in a field of corn.  
Remy makes the connection of the Lakhtours’ tragedy with his family’s: Just as nearly six years later, in June 1961, Noura will be running through the cornfield below the nunnery presumably pursued by the French OAS, so in December 1955, the eight-year-old Lakhtour (Foucin), imagining the French trailing him, would have been rushing through blades of corn, leading the unknown traitor Belmazoir to safety.
- p. 116: “M. Bel—”: The dying Lakhtour reveals the first syllable of the name “Belmazoir,” a violation of the code and vow of silence and secrecy among FLN members.
- p. 116: “A *nathr*!”: A pledge to God. Again the protagonist and antagonist are connected: When Omar (Remy) was seven, at his father’s intimation, he made “a *nathr*” binding him to protect his sister always (3.37).  
Here Lakhtour, close to death, speaks to his eight-year-old about “a *nathr*” binding him to lead to safety the representative from Algiers



- p. 116: “led him to the tunnel’s end, a cornfield . . . onward to one of our mountain camps and ‘safety’”: Nowhere does Foucin indicate what happened in the immediate interval after he led Belmazoir to safety.  
I intended the “mountain camp” to be one of those which Mustapha Ben Boulaid, the leader of the Aurès (*Wilaya I*) at the time of the attack on the Lakhtour villa (Dec. 26, 1955), used as a base.  
Although in his jurisdiction, Ben Boulaid would not have been present at the villa during the attack since, as stated on p. 114, none of the “chiefs” attended this preparatory conference. (Incidentally, Ben Boulaid’s death was imminent; he was killed in March 1956, as is mentioned in the 6.88 and 90 notes.)  
Old Belmazoir would have had no reason to overpower and kill his eight-year-old guide or attempt a rendezvous with the French, whose attack on the villa indicated that he was dispensable.  
Never suspecting Belmazoir to be an agent of the French, Boulaid would have whisked him back to Algiers, where he continued his double-dealing. And fearing the French would begin a search for the sole surviving Lakhtour, Boulaid likewise must have bundled the child to Algiers, where he was quickly “adopted” by the Foucin family.  
As any fictional writer knows, details such as this must be worked out even though she or he realizes they are too peripheral to be incorporated into the text.
- p. 116: “to the tunnel’s end, a cornfield”: Three times Remy has visualized his sister Noura running through a cornfield during the attack on the nunnery in which she was staying (2.2; 3.40; and 5.70).
- p. 116: “buried his sigh in the wrinkle of a smile”: Adapted from 1.1.40 of *Troilus and Cressida*, where Troilus says that he “Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile.”
- p. 116: “‘But that you know’”: In his opening narration of the episode, Remy said to Foucin, “but that you know” (114); therefore Foucin is quoting Remy here.  
This expression will occur three other times: 8.129; 15.256, and 18.293.  
A variant of the clause (“that ye know”) occurred on 3.39—see its note N3:12—and will appear again on 16.258.  
Thus the linguistic pattern “that you [or ye] know” occurs a symbolic seven times.
- p. 116: “*transformed into another . . . the obsidian prospectus . . . mine in London*”: Remy transforms Foucin, who had told his tragedy while staring from the Al-Nigma room into the “*obscurité*” (115) of the Algerian night, into himself seven days ago who, looking from a London hotel room into the darkness of London just before its dawn broke, recalled the tragedy of his family’s loss (3.35, 40, and 51).
- p. 116: obsidian: As an adjective, it is a poetic synonym for “black” (*Wiktionary*).  
All other dictionaries which I consulted listed “obsidian” only as a noun meaning “a volcanic glass that is generally black, banded, or spherulitic” (*Webster’s Third*).

- p. 116: “With the fall of the eldest brother”: Boualem (115).
- p. 116: “pilgrimage”: On 2.18, Remy told himself that every year when he went on his “hajlike journey” (“haj” designating a pilgrimage) to collect his *pourboire*, he secretly knew the past would overtake him and “would lead to Noura, a confrontation of brother and sister.”  
Here in commiseration with Foucin’s pain, he makes a “pilgrimage” to stand beside his fellow sufferer.  
Though Remy realizes how great a danger Foucin represents, he is cognizant of the bond between them since the Algerian families of both were destroyed physically or spiritually by the French-Algerian conflict.
- p. 116: “Nour—”: At the mention of the cornfield, Remy unconsciously lets slip the first syllable of his dead sister’s name, just as old Lakhtour had uttered the initial syllable of Belmazoir’s.  
If Foucin heard the “sotto voce” moan, he would think it was a trembling form of *noir*, the “blackness” of the moment and of the night, or a clipped form of *noirceur* (a literary form of “blackness” or a figurative term for “wickedness in French).
- p. 116: *à gauche*: French for “to the left.”
- p. 116: “broken the code”: The vow of silence and secrecy, mentioned above, N7:38.
- p. 116: “‘circumcising’ vocable”: A “vocable” is a word principally regarded as a unit of sounds or letters rather than a unit of meaning.  
Its use conveys Remy’s hope that Foucin has not comprehended the name that he began to utter since he might recall that Noura was the name of the sister of the last great traitor.  
The vocable is “circumcising” because at this moment it serves cathartically to “purify” by “cutting off or away” (both meanings given in *Webster’s Third*) that which separates the two men. Their momentary bonding is seen in the grazing of the hairs of their temples.  
The union here is similar to that which Remy portrayed the two having during the imaginary prayer in the first section of this chapter (101-03).
- p. 116: “*Pardon!*”: Foucin’s “Excuse me!” may be interrupted as addressed to Remy; he apologizes for brushing his head against Remy’s.  
Or it may be an apostrophe to his dead family for not attending to their business, the search for their bones, mentioned on 6.99.
- p. 116: “pitch-range”: “The pitch-range property specifies the range over which [such] variations” as vocal animation inflections may occur. “Thus, a highly animated voice, or one that is heavily inflected, displays a high pitch-range” (the internet site [xhtml.com](http://xhtml.com)).

- p. 116: “lodged hate”: In *Measure for Measure*, 4.1.60-61, Shylock says he bears Antonio “a lodged hate and a certain loathing.”  
 “Lodged” means “steadfast” or “settled.”  
 Foucin acknowledges he had reason to bear old Belmazoir “a lodged hate,” but not the son or the grandson.
- p. 116: “Beware, no one committing . . . the father responsible for the crime of his son”: Foucin states that Islam forbids the idea that the sins of the father can pass to his children, quoting from the Prophet Mohammed’s Final Sermon: “Beware, no one committing a crime is responsible for it but he himself. Neither the son is responsible for the crime of his father, nor the father responsible for the crime of his son,’ our Prophet—Peace be upon Him—adjures.”  
 Versions of the “Prophet’s Last [or Farewell] Sermon” are given in most Hadiths. Foucin’s is from Ahmad ibn Hanbal’s Hadith *Musnad*, which contains the most complete Sunni version of the sermon.  
 The Qur’an itself does not use the father-son analogy in forbidding inherited sin, as does the Old Testament in Deut. 24:16: “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor shall the children be put to death for the fathers.”  
 However, there are numerous passages in the Bible which advocate the doctrine of inherited sin, and many Christian writers find it to be inherent in the fall of Adam and Eve, which corrupted all of their descendants until the coming of Christ. But the concept of inherited sins is forbidden in Islam, as stated in the following passages from the Qur’an: 4:111-12; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7; and 53:38.  
 The verse 35:18 is typical (according to the scholars I consulted): “And no bearer of burdens shall bear another’s burdens.”  
 Remy will call up and paraphrase Foucin’s words about inherited sin on 14.231 and invert the concept on 17.289.
- p. 116: “You stipulated ‘your’ murderer”: Remy had referred to Belmazoir as being Foucin’s chosen murderer of Ballard on pp. 113-14.
- p. 116: “landed in particulars”: Referring to their familiar positions, Foucin on the French Empire sofa and Remy in the bergère, with the coffee table between them, Remy echoes the quotation from Socrates (in *Meno*) used by Foucin on p. 109; see its note, N7.20.

- p. 117: “Tinfingers’ artificial hand”: This will be the first reference in the text to the prosthesis of the Palestinian leader.  
However, the 4.62 note did reveal that his nickname was based upon the fact that he had an artificial right hand.  
See the p. 112 note above, N7:29, which lists other earlier references to him in the novel.
- p. 117: “bounding-main frippery”: The “bounding main” is a poetic reference to the “high, or open, sea” or the “oceans.”  
Remy jokes about his HIV-2 clothes, with its Hawaiian beach shirt and its Bermuda shorts.  
See the p. 103 note above, N7.8.
- p. 117: “joy o’ your joy”: See 6.90 and its note, N6.28.  
In relating how Abukadir used this expression, Remy switched to English to quote how coincidentally it paralleled the phrase ‘joy o’ the worm’ by the Clown in Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* (5.2.259 and 279).
- p. 117: “how haltingly I followed your English conversation with Mohisen”: See p. 107 where Foucin tells Remy that Mohisen’s “English [was] as imperfect as my own.”
- p. 117: “My obsession solely on France”: The puzzled expression on Foucin’s visage led to a quick confession, earlier hinted: He knows English only rudimentarily, never taking the time to veer from his obsession with all things French since France it was which held the seven traitors.
- p. 117: abecedarian: elementary.
- p. 117: “that universal tongue”: English. This wording and the idea will be important in the next chapter, “The Tongue of Tongues.”
- p. 117: “the long deep-running night”: I have kept this phrase in quotation to indicate that it is Remy’s exact wording. However, my notes indicate that it was actually drawn from John Milton.  
I have been unable to find it in any of his English works, although it could have come from a book of translations of his Latin poems, which I no longer have.  
Using Google, I was unable to locate the phrase in other writers.
- p. 117: apperception: the assimilation and interpretation of new ideas, impressions, etc. by the help of past experience.
- p. 117: *status quo ante*: The state of affairs existing prior to a given event.  
Foucin reveals that as much as Remy had learned about his relationship with the Belmazoires in the hotel room this night (the “given event”), it is but little in comparison to some unspecified prior events involving him and the family (“the state of affairs existing prior”).

This is the last use of “status” in this chapter.

- p. 117: “are only in potentiality toward understanding”: From Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, Q. 79, Art. 2, entitled “Whether the Intellect is a Passive Power”: “At first we are only in potentiality toward understanding, and afterwards we are made to understand actually.”