

# Chapter Twenty

## A NIGHT BETTER THAN A THOUSAND MONTHS

Five hours till *Lailatul Qadr*, “great” because it was the night when, one thousand three hundred seventy-nine years ago, the Qur’an was first revealed to Prophet Mohammed—“Peace be upon Him!” And thus that Holy Text deems it “better than a thousand months,” verily, 83.33 (ad infinitum) years.

“One can never escape one’s religion,” Remy pondered, as he trod by the Gendarmerie in the same way he had sixteen days ago, with a rapt louring at the second-story office of Foucin: “The Great Man,” for in that fashion all Algiers spoke of him.

At that moment, he was probably mulling over what guile lurked behind the French ambassador’s request to President Bendjedid for a four o’clock parley of “*moi, toi, et Monsieur Le Grand*” at “our violated embassy,” the site changed, he was sure at the commissioner’s insistence, to El Mouradia, the Presidential Palace.

*Lailatul Qadr*. Another, the “Great Deceiver,” who “counterfeited a lesser (yet his better)” in a room not dissimilar to the one toward which Remy was bound. He had cast “the net” that sought to “enmesh them all” and would be his rendezvous at the same time as the Mouradia conference.

And consider further, there was the “Boy of Great Beauty,” captured since his birth in his sister’s lullaby, who each Monday had prostituted himself in order to buy silk shirts and drinking buddies and now would sell body and soul to hear her strains again.

Finally, himself, the “Great Traitor,” for thus *Algérie Presse Service* stories blazoned him, who craved nothing more than to revert to the prosaic days of Le Puy: Better to him “than a thousand months.”

In “M. Paul’s *burnoose*,” unbathed for eleven days, and with Rachid’s toolbox clenched, he turned off Taleb Mohammed Avenue and soon was ambling through the side streets since Devereaux had set their *lieu de réunion* “a mere four blocks from Toumi.”

With No. 21 Rue Brazza located, Remy mounted the stairs to the second-floor apartment “B,” tapping at the appointed 2:45.

“M. Bulles?” the whisper from within.

“To see M. Xérès,” he rejoined.

When the door was swung open, Remy, intent on avoiding eye contact, peeked around Devereaux at his two companions, the expected Jacques and an Algerian, all three in various hues of Arab garb.

Devereaux phewed, “To the toilet for a shower and shave! You can’t accost His Excellency looking and smelling like a . . . sewer rat. ‘[His] clothes shall abhor [thee].’” Job’s complaint was directed at the Moroccan-attired Jacques. “And, poor minion of

France, 'tis thou who must don this garbage heap.”

In the dresser's rectangle glass, Remy contemplated the stoutish fellow appeared in a maroon felt fez and tyrian-blue cotton *gandoura*, topped by a cognac-brown blazer.

Taking from its chest pocket a lizard skin billfold, he examined his new identity, Abdulkharem Maghza. “Oh, I suppose a Casablancon entrepreneur would so bedeck himself, part homespun, part Savile Row,” he muttered.

His right index jabbed at the bridge of the oversized purple-tinted sunglasses Jacques had surrendered. Next all eight fingers labored to smooth down the bushy salt-and-pepper mustache.

“What's this?” Devereaux, till then silent, held up the diminutive rectangular box.

“A gift for my wife. *Pardon*, but French *loukoums* (‘Turkish Delights’) are bland. Only the legerdemain of an Arab confectioner can infuse the appurtenant tang. I will be reunited with her tonight.” His tone assumed a seriousness. “That is true?”

“From the German embassy you'll be helicoptered to Sardinia,” answered Devereaux, while Remy was slipping the sweets into an inside pocket, “refuel, and thereupon to Marseille. Two a.m. (an approximation): the connubial bliss of Châteauroux.”

A wary Jacques blanched when Remy exclaimed, “One minute!” and thrust a hand past his left ear. From the lining of the hood of the *burnoose*, it resurfaced with a wad of dinars. “Twenty-eight hundred: Kindly tender them to Mme. Ballard.”

Gingerly easing the money into a slit pocket of his incommodiously alien robe, Devereaux addressed his query to the mirrored image of Remy, “Returning them?”

“It's illegal to take dinars from Algeria. Besides, they don't spend in France.”

Devereaux's face reddened, and his voice grew heated. “And she buried this Ballard the day before yesterday!”

“What?”

Minimally he listened to the explanation: While Medlin's apartment was being searched, Foucin had broached to Leroy the idea of relinquishing the corpse. By Saturday the Ambassador had personally indemnified the niece to rescind her petition.

Instead Remy was marveling to himself, “Not a hint: That obsession *de la première fois que je l'ai vue*, with its plea, ‘Give me my husband's body!’ had been suppressed last night, my plight for the moment more remediable and accordingly more imperative.”

“Everyone's your fool!” Devereaux's vociferation wakened him. “You've manipulated all of us. Is she inveigled into being your umbra to the Casbah?”

Remy mouth broadened into a smirk. “Now you . . . you quite looked the ‘fool,’ tightly clamping your lips around the valve and blowing up my guts.”

He patted the inflated rubber tubing—“my comic camouflage”—strapped about his stomach. “And, monsieur, how dare you intimate I'd fancy any *bella donna* beholding me so porcinely plumped up!”

Draping his hands over Remy's shoulders, Devereaux, apparently unfazed by the mockery, traced his fingers across the outline of the adhesive strip until lighting on the palm-sized *magnétophone*, tucked between the scapulae.

Prior to a secure pat, he jiggled it. “Its clarity's much superior to the one you ditched. The best we French can make; *ergo*, the best there is. It will tape for six hours—”

“Surely, I won’t be that long,” interposed Remy.

“—and a bullet won’t stop it, nor always a bomb.”

“None of those, if you please.” He feigned a shudder, certain his links of jest were being interpreted as nervousness.

Devereaux stepped back. “The pair of BMWs will be a flight of stairs away. After revealing your evidentiary constat, don’t dally. Aware it’s not with you he’ll have to dicker, Leroy won’t. Hustle up to Abderazak Hadad. I’ve stationed four agents thereabouts in the small-chanced event you’re intercepted.

“You needn’t worry. Foucin will be in Bendjedid’s office. Ambassador Audibert has prepared his clear-the-air compromise: If their embassy-girding helicopters are grounded, they may enter and sabotage our two.

“He’ll keep up the pettifoggery pending *Botschafter* Hofmann’s call to an aide, who’ll steal in to whisper to His Excellency, ‘*Mission accomplie!*’ Teutonic cooperation isn’t coming politically cheap. No doubt we’ll even get a bill for the *Hubschrauber*.”

With a glance Devereaux dismissed the restless, scruffily barbated Jacques, who, clutching the toolbox, exited the room.

“Again your *double*,” he spoke to Remy. “Ali here will taxi you to the Galeries Algériennes near the Al-Nigma. ‘Pray why,’ you wonder, ‘can’t I tarry here and thirty minutes on stroll across to Taleb, up Abderazak, and step down to Café de Flore?’ Paris, however, deems it wisest for you to be a moving target.”

As he anticipated, Devereaux, leaning in, flaccidly embraced him, bestowing a peck on each cheek. “Monsieur, farewell.” Remy executed a mannered stride backward to the door, politely held open by Ali, where he declared, “I know: France salutes me!”

## 2

From Ketchaoua Mosque, the chanting had begun at sunrise, an all-day summons for the people to espouse the solemnity of the impending Night. There Remy turned left and soon reached the cobblestone staircase, Rue Rabah Smala, which after four-hundred meters would bring him to the Café de Flore.

In this thronged ascent, hands, arms, shoulders, hips, thighs, knees, and feet shoved, jostled, slammed, nudged, clunked, banged, and clipped him.

*I’m lashed by the Casbah’s wind of people*, he mused.

“*Zalamiit!*” a wandering vendor of boxes of wooden “matches” bellowed. “*Baeed!*” brayed the *droit de passage* not of the grain-sack-laden donkey, “as pitiable as Rachid’s,” but of its impatient master. “*Hina! Hina!*” insisted the burly exhortations of merchants hawking the “Here! Here!” of their cubicular stalls and aspiring, lioness-like, to take down just one from the fidgety, fluent herd.

Ten minutes on, Remy was transversing the Middle Street, beyond which the narrowing lanes magnified the actually thinning pedestrian traffic.

Here the cramp of three-story structures became principally residential, though most of the Casbah’s once-glorious, but at present time-harried, mansions, built around courtyards ringed by loggie, had been split into eight or so one-to-two-room apartments, each housing a family of five to nine.

Most façades, while rifted and peeling, nonetheless defiantly retained their heavy

brightly colored cedar doors, nail-studded with bronze or brass knockers. On many were imprinted the five fingers of Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, and some, as well, were splashed with hen's blood, a double dose to ward off the "evil eye."

The expression propelled Remy, still being buffeted by a "wind of people," to cast a backward glimpse upon the tiers of humanity he had negotiated.

Ahead was the final leg, the lengthy flight of stairs from Rue Soualah Mohammed to Rue Mohammed Azouzi. This exhaustive climb left the rubber tubing squeegeeing his undershirt. The Café de Flore, he knew, would be closed, but not its garden terrace.

"*As-salaamu 'alaikum!*" hailed a dignified old man posted at its threshold. "Behind these thirty-three coral-beaded strands resides a pearl of coolness and peace. Before you resume your ambling, verify its loveliness and further savor this tantalizing thought, for I digest you are a Moroccan sheikh: The specialty of our iftar dessert tray is your *bourtaka muhallabieh* ['caramel-smothered orange custard']."

Seizing Remy's arm, the doorman, traditionally liveried, dragged him in.

The grapevine-trellised canopy of the terrace shielded fifteen circular white-framed tables with petite interlaced chairs. Potted lemon and kumquat trees lined the glass panels leading into the restaurant. Seaward was a turreted parapet, over which was bent the solitary occupant of the garden, a tall, broad-shouldered man in a gray pinstriped silk suit. Quickly Remy retreated, hauling along the *portier*.

"My friend is here," he announced and, wriggling free from the grip, smoothed his *gandoura* and adjusted his fez. Withdrawing a handkerchief, he patted his brow and wedged it under the glasses to dab his eyelids. In reinserting it, his knuckles touched "Marie's box," inside which he stuck an index finger, probing.

At Remy's about-face, the greeter bowed toward the entrance. "Beyond welcome, both you and your '*mon ami*'!"

### 3

"Your Excellency."

Through Remy's first three paces, the one heralded, having spun round, fixed him with a quizzical expression. With the fourth, however, a blurted-out "You!" confirmed that recognition had dawned.

"M. Devereaux sends his apologies," Remy clarified in English.

Walking to a centric table, Leroy transformed his pursed mouth into a reluctant smile. "You'll join me." Uncomfortably, Remy slouched into the seat opposite, the rubber padding squeaking a strident whirr.

"You make me a richer man, M. La— Montpel— Naaman. There's a reward of 500,000 dinars."

"Alive. Only 200,000 dead." Remy's wry upturn of his lips reflected the visage confronting him.

Having situated his elbows on the tabletop, Leroy poised his chin atop his clasped hands. "But why?"

"The French have a problem sneaking me out." With his right annular, Remy was doodling on the translucent acrylic surface. "I suggested to M. Devereaux you might not."

"Yes, they, you do," Leroy bantered with a harsh laugh. "Still, why should we

Americans charge to the rescue?”

“Because I know you to be the murderer of M. Ballard.” A dilating sting of disbelief evinced itself on a countenance initially frozen. “Nevertheless, I breathed not a morpheme of that to M. Devereaux. I said we’d become ‘chums’ during my assignment.”

“And so we had . . . have.” An awkward delay elapsed before Leroy rose. Not toward the exit, but to a turret, he traipsed. There, after halting to skim its conical roof, he hunched down and shambled inside.

Pulling back from the sill of the exterior slit, through which he had poked his head and trunk, he called, “Of course, you’ve been in one of these.”

“Not since a child. I swept its patio and *tourelles*, but the tinted-glass section postdates me. Given its view of the bay, this terrace was singled out by French *colons*.”

Leroy’s response was circumstantially hollowed. “Despite the hovering mass of slate-gray clouds, ‘so various, so beautiful, so new’ is the sea this afternoon. Come!”

He beckoned Remy, who whickered to himself while approaching, *To so garble the context of a child’s-play quote, a sign of how “woundily” I’ve discombobulated him!*

Likewise having to stoop, with a nimble skip, he stuffed himself into the watchtower.

“If you slew *à gauche*”—Leroy twisted his neck—“you can descry the steep cliff that hides Zaracova Beach.”

He mured against the side, an invitation for Remy, who squeezed to the window. The tight quarters forced his left shoulder to brush Leroy’s slanted forehead.

With a feeble bounce of his distended girth, Remy’s torso flopped onto the base of the window; and following a glance at the two-story drop, he angled his sklent northward.

“Yes, Zaracova appears to be no more than a stone’s overthrow from here.”

Leroy’s hands shot forward but merely swiped Remy’s sleeve, for on sensing their movement, not the subsequent warning, “Do not tip over!” he had instinctively retracted his body from the ledge.

The consequence of their shifting was to bring the two face-to-face.

“So now you need my help,” a disported Leroy spoke, “as once, in finding the killer of my friend, I sought yours.”

“He’s found, I boorishly iterate.” Remy flexed his fingers, the tips of which grazed Leroy’s mauve tie at the breastbone, and shoehorned past him.

Reseated, he was spinning Marie’s sweets, beside which he had placed his sunglasses, when, a minute later, Leroy advanced, positioning his chair toward the bay.

“M. Ballard was a Jew. Circumcised.” Remy had to raise his voice since from a nearby mosque the shrilled Asr summons had begun. “The man who bedded down with M. Belmazoir for eight months and his unfortunate sister for one repelling night was not, even though he, mirroring M. Ballard, had pockmarks stippling the backs of his thighs.”

Remy studied Leroy’s profile. “But I ‘preach to the “queer.”” Could a fistful of those twenty-two unidentified *empreintes digitales* lifted from the Toumi flat be yours? You *were* there, yet not in the Mirabout’s enclosed dining room at the time of the murder, for so its Christian busboy avouches.

After a half swivel, his head also stared seaward. “Surely, the impeccable Mme. Leroy apprised you of M. Samir’s second trip. Adjured, would she spontaneously reply

that you had ‘gone to get . . . your *bon ami*,’ in her innocence not injecting a caesura as I did?”

At the mention of his wife, Leroy’s right cheek had visibly tightened, a presage of future references to her. “Wasn’t it she who noted in passing that the Fiat rental seemed to be parked in a different spot?” and “Would Mme. Leroy be abashed by this sleight-of-penis, bait-and-switch, lick-him maneuver of the Toumi?”

“Such humiliation before a consort who so dotes on you! And I can sympathize, myself an embarrassment to the French, who simply hanker for me and my ‘[too] substantial pageant’ to fade from the headlines, leaving ‘not a rack behind.’ For that reason, to repeat, I shamelessly beseech your comrade-in-arms assistance!”

*Per contra*, the comments solely about Medlin—“whom you also dispatched”—were ho-hummed by Leroy through a trio of undisguised yawns: “. . . the tasteless, odorless ratsbane, not opting to exploit your DCM’s anosmia, in a fare-thee-well, complimentary thermos of percolated coffee. By the by, his was drip-brewed.”

Remy screwed up his eyes as if he had just bumbled on the correlations. “Juxtapose your planting that acetate snippet on M. Ballard’s corpse or, I speculate, the thousand-dinar drop for M. Tinfingers. I ‘absorbed a beating’ there,” he snorted. “No ‘*ana aasif*, ‘I’m-sorry’ apology?”

Leroy’s stern sidling glare snubbed the question. “Such parenthetical conjectures spurned, this sequitur *is* indisputable: An outback death for M. Medlin being more convenient, ’twas you who seeded his mind with the Saharan excursion.”

At Remy’s segue into the Regata’s two keys, Leroy suspended his tapping on the tabletop, a melody from Schumann’s *Carnaval*. “Your ‘death-marked’ deputy chief of mission couldn’t have driven to Zaracova, my intimation during the interview in your office, framing myself, as much as him, as your scapegoat. He had no means.

“‘But I slipped the key to him,’ you asseverate. “‘At the Mirabout *porte d’entrée* I whispered, “‘Put Gertie’s Qur’an with the others in the trunk.” And he used it.’

“I wrestled with that truth until a call to a Fiat dealer: This Regata has a key for the ignition/door and another for the boot. Supplying the latter to M. Medlin, you retained the first. “‘Back in the lot, the ‘deed done’—*Pas de chance!*—you failed to regain ‘your’ parking place. . . . ‘Bad luck!’” Remy shooed out the last two words.

Leroy’s scowl he wished could have been captured on the tape. Respecting the Toumi apartment, Remy, his eyewitness not cited, concentrated on “flaws in the ‘stage picture’”: Why abscond with Ballard holding an implausible hand prop, the supernumerary pair of FLIRs? “You should have had the presence to spirit away one.”

*Deuxièmement*, when the lights came on, how could Ballard be “chalked” five paces from the door switch? “You should have tugged him back as you retreated! Not even orangutan arms could make that stretch!”

Finally, since Ballard had arranged the contretemps, was it logical that his immediate countenance be “‘horror-struck’? A quick farewell rib-goosing would have set him giggling, much more in character.”

Remy tilted forward, the cynosure of his absorption ostensibly Leroy’s pendent elbow. “You, departing, decreed, ‘Let there be incandescence!’ Ogling the sexual antic gratified you, but total Pre-Raphaelite surfeit necessitated exposing brother and sister to the farce. M. Ballard would have been ‘too full o’ the’ et cetera for such. Yes, the sudden

illumination astonished him as well, no?”

The Schumann melody, reprised by Leroy as a virtually inaudible hum, Remy gleaned during the courtesy pause.

“What perfectionist—that species which never with fortuity trucks—would not be discomfited at how the accumulating missteps and misfortune vie with each other? The cock-a-duo, twice-a-cock, cockatrice (take your . . . ‘prick’); the oxymoron of a conscientious or conniving Arab busboy, M. Samir; the undoing Fiat with its miscarried keys; the ‘bungeeing’ FLIRs; the exceeding-one’s-grasp light switch; and on and on.”

He again tarried an allaying moment. “Yet in your defense, at each stage you were hurried. I hope that in scrubbing the Regata’s matting, you didn’t compound your blunders: neglect a speck of your *sadeek*’s blood.”

He halted to scratch his moustache. “To dethrone that worry, I’m sure M. Devereaux would humor a request to carjack it; pronto his forensic team could scour its insides. Frankly such an inquest less interests me than ‘Why?’ After all, he did save your life.”

The face that shot round brandished a self-gruntled smile. “And from whom did you hear that?” With a deep inhalation, Leroy squared his shoulders of their marginal stoop and recommenced with a drawling melancholy spite.

“Poor weak Paul would have left me and, of negative importance, himself there at death’s door . . . ‘à l’article de la mort.’ It was I who ‘took by th’ throat the circumcised’ Jew—the trimming unknown till (shall we say?) ten minutes ago—and crawled, towing him, my legs afire with shrapnel and splinters and sand, out of harm’s way.”

Succeeding a brief hiatus, in which he appeared to be “rerunning the polysyndetic gauntlet,” Leroy added, “A person who saves another’s life becomes entwined with, and ironically indebted to, the one he saved. The engraved scars testified to our bond.”

Remy saw. “A bond you ruffled to warrant his tagging along. But your umbra he must continue. Nothing could sanction M. Ballard’s snipping of the tracking cord. He alone must be privy to that subtle ‘devotion’ of yours . . . Tchaikovsky’s Sonata in ‘Z.’”

“Sa, sa, sa, sa,” with tremolo, Leroy’s scrowed lips taunted, a piddling diversion for Remy, who via falsetto was poised to “hit my High C” of contempt.

“Your friendship spanned nearly twenty-eight years. Wasn’t there one integral pang crying out, not “‘Let this cup pass from [him],” but why endanger myself when I can hire some Palestinians to enforce my *fatwa*?’ Why this compulsion to launch the ‘Turkish clip’ point blade into his carotid?” sleeked Remy, before averting his glower toward the horizon.

#### 4

“And miss getting ‘the beauty of it hot’!” Remy was jarred by a confession he at once surmised had spilled out too rashly.

“I’d absented myself from the fifth act at the Toumi, although, a day granted for Paul to decompress his nerves—he summarily accepted the pretext that my shoulder had accidentally bumped on the switch—I pumped him for each nicety: how the girl, equally ‘horror-struck’ as himself, yanked the blood-freckled muslin sheet over her head and the groggy boy, striving to rouse himself erect, retopped onto the floor.”

Leroy, chuckling, slid his chair around. “Positive I could bring it off *de première*

*main*, why should I experience the traitor's elimination secondhand? Still and all, I needn't tutoye 'thee' about the scorn treason inspires, something 'thou hast' braved . . . firsthand."

Remy ignored the teasing lull, mentally nagged by a droning alarm, "Why so much, as if he couldn't bear being unmasked by other than himself?"

When Leroy resumed, his voice was isotonic, almost nonchalant. "Is there ever anything touching on sex which doesn't eventually tire? At our inceptive posting in Brasília I steered Paul into concocting 'the game.' A *good*—that he'd attend to the soliciting—led to a *better*—the aphotic chamber, where the impostor became the real. (I've found that there's seldom a lasting *best*.) In short, the amusement worked on four continents, except for a minor flub in the Philippines."

*It has to be that*, Remy concluded during Leroy's penultimate sentence. *To neutralize my intolerable list of his partial failures—a knavish perturbation—he must intrude to pitch the brilliance of his total design: the maniac's fetish.*

His resolution to the quandary overlapped Leroy's three-sputtered clucking. "If *rien* disconnects, then *tout* connects. Hamlet's fine-tuning 'divinity,' eh? Had you been present, you'd have scented it in Elbert's grateful sparrow eyes, sparkling while I hobnobbed (I omitted this from my pristine account of his 'bolting': *Ana aasif!*): 'Here's an auxiliary thermos of coffee, might save you some driving time.'

"And did not 'heaven ordinant' impair his sensorium—no 'nose' to smell 'a rat' 'behind the arras'—for my profit? Your 'tasteless, odorless' arsenic, contrary to prevailing superstition, in fact, imparts a mildly bitter tang to coffee, whether dripped or—so cheap, conservative Medlin finally tossed his percolator. But I digress.

"By the ninth sip a metallic sapor weighs down the tongue and anon the garlicky breath: Clues enough for one duller than Medlin to bemoan, Laertes-like, or scribble a hasty chit for the court, 'poisoned . . . The King, the King's to blame.'" Pointing a jittery forefinger at Remy, he rasped the line.

"And was it rough-hewn that Paul—a dead man the instant he inferentially acknowledged he held a 'Greater Allegiance' to another—four days after that confession and still giddy in his excitement over my lack of anger at his staying in Algiers, bumbled that he was benefacting the sister of this Belmazoir, this *M. Belmazoir*?

"Always the generous Paul! My commiserative friend, a limning, *s'il vous plaît*, provided it won't embarrass.' A recital of his meetings with the char ensued.

"A plan took shape, to kill him through this kindness, with the murder blamed on one or both of the Belmazoirs. The next night, after giving him the \$15,000 bank draft as my wedding present, I let slip, 'A fitting way to terminate the "merry sport."'

"What? No visual or vocal glimmer of suspicion. On the heels of my elaboration—tricking the sister and brother into sleeping unawares with each other—he 'protest[ed]' like a 'Player Queen.'

"But I believe she's fallen in love with you,' I finessed, the 'honeydew' romantics lust to be 'fed'? I glanced down at the 'earnest.' 'And a crowning service to me.'

"Despite his wavering, I scrupled he'd succumb. After all, over the years he'd set trysts even more bizarre. 'The room's cimmerician. They'll never know.'"

His fingers executed a rapid drumroll against the clear acrylic. "Yes, 'twas I, on my way out, who flicked the light, just as I had previously empowered the fail-safe

*interrupteur principal* in the lavatory breaker box, a *sine-qua-non* flip capacitating the wall switch next to the door for its dominoing destiny. Every current, if truth be not a liar, must con—”

A burnished grin aborted the ultima. “You appreciate, to be sure, why he had to be nullified. Twenty-eight years ago, on the Dakota to Marseille, you hoped (for what else did you have?) the French had extirpated your collusive roots. *Sans doute*, they hadn’t. Such would have freed you, saved you, and did they ever aspire after your salvation?

“Could I endure having one about, no longer in my liege, who in a moment of *faiblesse* might flaunt mine, say at the precipice of the Presidency? A guilt-ridden Paul answered that question himself.

“Five days after the subterfuge, over our Monday a.m. coffee, he sought permission for a *mea-culpa*, huddling cuddle with this Belmazoire. ‘You won’t be mentioned, Claude. I could never be disloyal to you, even in my thoughts, yet they should know.’

“‘Of course they must,’ concurred I, aware of the opportunity at hand, ‘but let’s mull over how best to do it.’ During the rest of the day, I ‘engendered’ Gertie’s shopping spree ‘knavery.’ Late that afternoon and the next, in disguise I scouted the Casbah for a restaurant I could slip away from during sunset prayers. How it closed up fixed me on the Mirabout. I even made a drive to Zaracova and trod across its grove to the disco.

“Wednesday I was well-armed to steer Paul toward a 7:15 rendezvous there and on the next day involved Medlin as a necessary tool . . . and back-up *bouc émissaire*.”

Remy finally spoke. “The plank against the face? A Deity-ordained ‘whirlwind’ confrontation.”

“Struck in such a way to leave an eyeball clear . . . clear not simply to catch the glint of the encroaching *douk-douk*, but also its wielder’s smugness. Justice obliged me to exact nothing less. *Fiat justitia ruat caelum*. (‘Let justice be done, though the heavens fall.’)” He paused to shake his head. “How chicly comic to be undone by never lavishing an alms-for-the-bugger *pensée* that in his history lurked *une circoncision!*”

To ensure no fresh disclosure was planned, Remy did not speed his rejoinder. “Monsieur, if as you make out Almighty God was your accomplice, He’s quite a Bungler, it seems. A pity I petitioned the help of one so ill-served.”

His intention, curtly to rise and excuse himself, was contravened by Leroy’s riposte: “Well declaimed by a devil, the Great Devil! Still I persist ‘there’s a divinity’ . . .” And as if to vivify his refrain, his arms began to outstretch.

What he asudden stared upon through the limb-formed coulisses caused a wince, which further delayed his speech. “. . . and perceiving that it even now approaches—thaws not my *mene, mene, tekél, upharsin?*—I answer what you required, ‘In extracting yourself from this city of your birth, with it, not me, you must seek collaboration.’”

Ever widening into an exaggerated gawk, Leroy’s stare jaunted beyond the shoulders of Remy, who disdained to turn, for his qualms had not forecast this reversal. In preference, he struggled to thwart the resignation of his heart from sprangling to his face.

“Monsieur, how?” Leroy’s tone sustained its cordiality while the distance was narrowed. “You dispatched apologies; nonetheless, I’m enchanted your schedule’s enabled you.” The ambassador rose and remained standing until Devereaux, who nodded to him first, but more extravagantly bowed to Remy, seated himself.

His regard promptly was refocused on Leroy. “Your Excellency, we have you—

what's that American expression?—'rights to dead.'" The accused constricted his cheek muscles and raised his eyebrows.

"Monsieur," Devereaux addressed Remy, "extricate the cassette recorder."

"Recorder?" Flinging back his arms triggered Leroy's chair to slide with a screech.

"Dis-like, you're glaciated, my friend. Permit me." Bouncing up and leaning over, Devereaux thrust a hand under the embroidered collar of the *gandoura*. At the shoulder blades, with a snatch he broke the adhesive, the tug exhausting the air from Remy's lungs. "*Presto facto!*" he paraded the machine. "Everything uttered is imprisoned here."

"No larger than a limp, uncircumcised penis!" exclaimed Leroy, his laughter weakly contained. "'[*He (Hamlet) takes a recorder.*] . . . Will you play upon this pipe?'"

Devereaux pressed the Eject button. Wormy coils avalanched from the slot, flopping onto the translucid surface. "What's this?" With patent disbelief, he distraughtly mouthed to Remy, "Ah me, a million *hélasses!* France produces the best recorders, but—Oh, those vitiating budget cutbacks!—from Taiwan our tape must be procured."

Both men's reedy sniggers, trained on him, swelled to burly fleers. "Paris has . . . opted," Devereaux spattered before normalizing his open junctures, "to look forward . . . not to the past. . . . Toward American potentiality, not Le Puy's dormant volcanoes. Your beaky contact, not content when he scratched up that verdict, had to have his 'coitus interrupted,' though I didn't lie: He and his 'blonde' penetrated as far as Rome."

"*Mon tour! Mon tour!*" importuned Leroy. "This was my 'merry' *contrapasso* 'game,' luring you to this floral Eden. Paris advocated that we not let you quit Rue Brazza alive. '*Mais non!*' I objected. 'I can't "piss off" to Washington without bidding my *sadeek* a festive "toad-spotted," traitor-future-to-traitor-passé *Mahasalaama!*'"

He beamed at his bon mot. "The French flatter me, reckon I can be of service to them in DC—some military blueprints *ça*, White House plutonomy *là*, general red alerts *partout*. 'Friendly spying,' it's christened—and 'humored my request.' I, your obverse, who similarly heeded Dr. Swift's advice, was 'a little cautious not to sell [my] country and conscience for nothing.'"

Pushing away from the table and to his feet, Remy took a step backward, halted, and extending a hand, retrieved the box, but not the sunglasses. "A gift for my wife," he clarified for Leroy, previous to embarking on the six mechanical paces to the entryway.

"M. Montpellier," Devereaux called out, "*Botschafter* Hofmann communicates his regrets. Both 525i's atypically had *ein mechanisches Problem*."

At the threshold, Remy, volte-facing, confronted the two, who were resettling into their chairs. "I am . . ." He stopped, uncertain how to complete the sentence.

## 5

The husband of his most-beloved, Marie; the father of Françoise Bismuth and Claudia Sitruk; the son of Ibrahim Naaman ben Ismail and the God-veiled Aziza; the unworthy brother of the Paradise-havened Noura; the grandfather of Juliette Bismuth and Odile and Dominique Sitruk; the beneficiary of Mme. Leila Ballard; the sometime confidant of the Great One M. Foucin; the one who braced the neck of the dying Mlle. Belmazoir and assayed to screen the knuckles of her grief-consumed brother; the scanner of the body of M. Paul Ballard, rendering it a jaundiced compassion ill-deserved by any

fellow traveler, not having attained the level of Mme. Remidi's love; the boon acquaintance of the *honest* Mohisen and that indomitable street sweeper Rachid; HIV-2 only because he had fraternized with the faithful original; the trying "old artificer" crafted by Saul; the master (or "servant") of Snooks; the director of Le Puy's public library, who delivered a Holy Book in Braille; and *Al Djazair's* last-surviving traitor.

Scrabbling for an identity through others, Remy ticked off this list between the Café de Flore landing and the first downward cobblestone step. Most immediately, "I'm the purveyor of the multitude," one block—"a continent"—below in Rue Soualah Mohammed.

At the third step, two men, barricading a rung halfway up the lower rise of stairs, surged to their feet. Their black-and-white checkered headscarves branded them.

With four clumsy leaps, Remy gained the landing dividing the two flights. As he was steadying himself, from the shadows of the alleyway pounced a cloaking frame. An arm whizzed across his right shoulder to circle his neck, its coldness at his throat. He clutched at the throttling prosthesis while twisting his torso to sling off the superincumbent weight.

Peripherally his left eye caught the pocketknife being swung around. Its arc was lost, still Remy heard the *boom!* and felt the skin of his right side being pierced. Startled by the report, Khalaf slackened his jugular grip. As *sssss* wheezed from beneath the *gandoura*, with a heave Remy flipped the body onto the landing's edge.

Tweaking the collapsed robe at his knees, he aimed an unhampered foot at the chest of Tinfingers, just attempting to stand. A toe nudge sent him trundling down the stairs.

Stupefied by this tumbling figure, one of the ascending Palestinians jerked his head back, a flinch which divided his *kaffiyah* and revealed the dazed frown of Ahmed Chabane. His rearward hop, too feebly implemented, tangled his feet. Leila's brother slumped and began to slide, dropping the item he clasped, a *talkie-walkie*.

His comrade ventured to hurtle the cascading Tinfingers, but snagged an ankle on the flailing prosthesis. He toppled onto his face and, to the clack of his chin ricocheting off each step, was towed along.

Attracted by a rumbling cachinnation from above, Remy distinguished the shaded contours of Devereaux and Leroy. Two others stormed forward, yet were intercepted by a sharp backstroke of the ambassador's right hand. Having linked its index and medius, he studiously guided the fingers to his perspiring brow in a salute to Remy.

As his hand descended, it clapped the shoulder of one of the henchmen. Both sprang at the buffet, their *kaffiyaat* fluttering with each bound.

Scrambling into the four-meter-wide alley, Remy streaked by the houses, delaying a stab at a knob until the third one on his right. "Locked!" as was the next. "*Inshallah!* 'God willing!'" Remy invoked, shooting a glimpse at the two pursuers, who had reached the landing and would not be retarded by fiddling with handles.

*A blessing in Divine Thunder!* (*working through an absent-minded toddler*), for the fifth was ajar. Squeezing inside, he latched the mortise lock and rammed shut the crossbar.

From a back room issued an Arabic inquiry, "Dear husband, are you astir?" By the time fists commenced a salvo against the cedar door, he had raced to the caracole.

A veiless woman, bemusedly flourishing a ladle, elbowed through a swinging door.

“Mounir.” Her anxious squint targeted the thuds, observed Remy, midway up the spiral. “Allah! . . . Bandits . . . at our door!” in spewing pants she shrieked. “Mounir!”

The third floor reached, with his glances flitting toward her screams, “Robbers in Ramadan! Dear husband! I’m being raped!” and the battering now of shoulders, Remy almost trampled over four stair-step children, all tickled by the dart-and-din hurly-burly.

As he was scaling the iron ladder to the roof, a chamber door opened and out wobbled a belly-clawing pilgarlic in a green nightgown. With the trespasser espied, not deigning a peep at (or for) his brood, he ducked back into the bedroom.

Shoving aside the trapdoor and boosting himself onto the flat roof, Remy dashed to the waist-high divider separating his terrace from the one adjoining, cognizant of what to expect: three-storied, stuccoed, sandstone, or baked-clay buildings nearly abutting each other and following the Sahel gradient.

As a boy, his friends and he had chivied across them in a game of *pierres de gué* (“stepping-stones”); and during the Revolution, with their cantilevered overhangs jutting out and often spanning alleys, the roofs had been translated into an airborne escape route.

With the chain of hills at his back, Remy scanned the rust-colored oblong rectangles, scouting for a pathway. His left leg brought over, he situated its calx on the rim and hoisted his frame, which with a thrust was vailed onto the contiguous roof.

From there he still did not elude the wife’s stridor, whose alliterative effusion now came from the landing: “Unbolt, my Mounir! *Allahu Akbar!* Affirm, my four pretty ones, I’m being raped!” Her pounding on the turquoise oak replaced, Remy marked with unease, the bombardment downstairs, abruptly grown silent.

## 6

The faded olive-drab, tan-striped *djellaba* and white *chèche* snatched from a clothesline two structures back were both damp. He was seven deep in the large block beneath the Café de Flore and three rows over from the one-family abode he had invaded.

Before straddling each wall, he had checked whether any PLOs were tailing aloft: still none. And no residents had he stumbled on, taking in wash or aligning a TV aerial. “Leroy and Devereaux are persuaded,” he reasoned under the gloom of the water tank where he was changing, “they have me trapped. Why risk ‘scrawming’ to the roofs?”

The block would be encased with picketed guards: at the alley he had ducked into, as a precaution against “my doubling back”; on the east and west cobblestone stairs, to monitor anyone exiting the dwellings; and along Rue Soualah Mohammed, the street toward which Tinfingers and his cohorts had last been seen skidding—“and where my roofs run out.”

With a strip torn from the Moroccan *gandoura*, the bleeding of the nick had been staunched. As he softly massaged his chafed upper lip, tingling since he had ripped off the mustache, he gazed into the neat pile of that discarded robe, the jacket, the deflated inner tube, and the fez. Atop was the box of sweets.

“Marie,” he whispered as he nestled it into the right side pocket of the *djellaba*. He imagined them in bed in their Montreal apartment, her plump fingers stroking his

cheeks.

(Which embassy he would entreat for help in his escape had been resolved during a pause on the third roof: Independent of, nonetheless tied to, both the Americans and the French, the Canadians, overall, were a decent, honorable people, each trait undoubtedly conditioned by the country's antergic cold.)

She had just kissed his left collarbone. "Only a month till your second haj. In your Mecca letter, insert my card to her. Pray God, Commissioner Foucin hasn't discovered the ritual. I know you won't forget, yet I treasure reminding you. She saved your life."

Her hush was more meditative than reflective. "I never tire of loving her." A sigh would harbinger a period of sobbing, "best not to be encroached upon" till on its own it subsided.

"As do I, in appreciation of her passion to reunite me," the truth unvarnished he murmured into Marie's right ear, "with the one I never tire of professing, 'I love you.'"

The overcast day had deepened the adumbration of the wall under which he hunkered. The congested lanes must be descended to, he recognized, since in two and a half hours, the cannonade heralding the onset of *Lailatul Qadr* would empty them, except for the Palestinians.

And Foucin could not be detained forever: When Ghouraf breached the colloquy with news about a hubbub in the Casbah, prior to bulleting over, the Great One would order it sealed off. Erecting himself, Remy began to heft his body onto the top of the wall. "I must get out before he's involved."

"Perhaps I'm already spotted," he scoffed, "and they are simply waiting for me to transport myself to them."

For several minutes, he had listened at the horizontal roof door, hearing nothing. An apiarian commotion gushed from Rue Soualah, its buildings totally commercial, but no one was crossing the threshold of this shop. "Closed early for Ramadan?"

Using a one-meter iron rod that he had accroached two dwellings above, he notched a chink in the cement opposite the hinges of the door. With this wedged in, he started to crank, each howd further embedding it.

"Let the pivot hinges be Casbah-antiquated!" he implored during a break. A fourth time, with both hands clamped on the *tige*, he hurled his full weight against the lever. As the *trappe* gave way, the release tumbled him back onto the scattered gravel of the roof.

A ladder, rung-gapped, declined into a dust-whirling cockloft choked with boxes of books, magazines, pamphlets, brochures, and even comics. He fumbled through them to a stone-canopied door which opened onto a wooden stairway.

Grasping its top newel for balance, Remy peered into the two-level *librarie*. The walls of each were lined with books mounting to its ceiling. However, on the ground floor there were tables of overweening stacks so crammed together that aisles for browsing were ill-defined "and, in all likelihood, 'shifting.'"

As he descended, he noticed that the broad vitrines on each side of the shop's front door had been shuttered. "Yes, an incisive businessman who discerned that at five on a fasting day nobody would be ruminating on the consumption of theological texts (all that Casbah bookstores vend) and—a religious realist—had 'closed his books' early."

At the door, Remy checked the latch. Three turns having opened it, he re-eased it to. Deciding not to don the Western garb and gray headscarf swiped from a different clothesline, he began to flick the dust from his olive *djellaba* and shake the *chèche*.

“One ultimate accessory I lack.” In the dimness of the left show window, he spied the book, and on inspection found it to be a well-thumbed edition.

“Has my religion come to this?” he scolded with a woebegone grin. “To ornament my sham, stealing a copy of the Holy Qur’an: ‘Robbers in Ramadan!’”

Outside, he mimicked locking up and, with the book in his right and the sack of clothes in his left, joined the thick scuffing press. Having schemed his way to the center, he navigated into an eastward countercurrent, aware that in a third of a kilometer Rue Soualah would intersect with the north-south Middle Street that he sought.

Suddenly he like those around him was drawn to a flurry arear. With caroms off those he overhauled, the ends of his zebra-colored *kaffiyah* flapping, swashed a Plo.

“How so swiftly unmasked?” Remy demanded. While wiggling through the crush toward the nearest cutoff, he identified another ten paces to the fore, propelling himself through the crowd.

An over-the-shoulder *coup d’œil* revealed that his danger was halved: The closer Palestinian, whose arrogant rampage had obviously incited scores to jib and vent some casual curses, was enmeshed in the resultant gridlock. “But not the other one.”

At the *ruelle*, in a seam below the hooked elbows of two men in front of him, he snatched the gleam of this Plo’s *douk-douk*, poised hip-level. As he lunged, Remy smacked into one of the arm-in-arms, tripping him up and bowling over both.

Unable to dodge their flumping bodies, the Palestinian struck out wildly, one jab piercing Remy’s right flank.

Although humped over in pain, with the sandaled foot of his injured leg he kicked at the procumbent assailant’s face. “A Philistine thief!” he clamored, waving the Qur’an and exhuming the Casbah dialect, till eight days ago buried for twenty-eight years. “Help me! Allah! Help me!”

The two embroiled companions launched into a punching, slapping assault on the Palestinian. “Dragging his stronger foot and limping along,” Remy hurried down the alley, yet a backward squint betrayed an elating scene: Six or seven reinforcements had cordoned off the Plo and were soundly thrashing him.

“My brother Casbahians spring to my rescue.”

## 7

In a cramped walkway three minutes from the knifing, behind chest-high cardboard boxes of garbage, Remy had afresh lit on a niche to squat and change.

“Old clothes for a new wound,” he told himself, tying the olive-drab swath around the foin in his thigh, deeper than Tinfingers’ stab, “plausibly because it was less confidently struck. The desperate knife—for all his jactation of being in control, Leroy had become what he had wielded—does the greatest damage.”

His reflection encapsulated, out loud “New clothes for an old traitor,” Remy emended, while buttoning the flowery Sri Lankan shirt and surveying the too large bluejeans, labeled “Mad in Amrica,” the worldly bundle carried from the bookshop.

He wrapped the last half meter of the gray headdress about his sinciput and lower face, leaving a slit for his eyes.

With a stretch, he scooped up the Holy Qur'an, which in his collapse onto the trash had slid from his hand. He gently wiped and tucked it between the folds of the *chèche*, vigilant not to let the bloodstain touch it.

The recurring "How?" he asked. "They'd ignored many my height outfitted in tan-striped robes. Had one Plo seen me emerge from the shop and postponed swooping till he'd transmitted my position to the other? Probably, since both were speeding straight for me."

Striving not to let dwindle the conviction he would escape, Remy wearily struggled to his feet. With a pinch by the rubbish heap, he crept toward the lane which would usher him to the Middle Street, "Rue Arbadji Abderahmane, *née* Rue Marengo: its aliases a pittance compared to mine," still asking, "How had they known?"

During the snaking trek there, at any moment he had anticipated being intercepted, in his mind the harrowing discs of a new *ratissage*, "raking over," marshaled from all sides. When nothing had occurred, he evoked the consoling, topsy-turvied haystack adage belabored during the conference in Leroy's office.

Its retrieval, however, terminated with a reprimand: "Unlike that perspicacious 'villain,' I have no *plan de secours*." Almost immediately one came, and with such an impact he summarily halted his tack and half tack toward the busses of Martyrs Square and veered southwesterly, bound for the garment market and the "tunnel . . . built so well Time cannot destroy it!" the Ozymandiasian boast of "Engineer" Brahim Laffiz.

"From that souk I can espy who's lurking at its Place de la Lyre exit: French agents, their PLO allies, or Foucin's police, a vexing sign that he's involved. If none of these, in this square I'll hop on a south bus which will drop me near the Riboux Lane *dukkaan*, my original scheme.

However," his hedging stipulation ballooned, "should any be posted there, I'll have at hand a back-up route, my martyred comrades' crosscutting shaft."

Jockeying out of the central file, Remy steered toward the inner lining of the paved street leading to the *marché*, there able to slip into the alley ahead should a threat appear. Midway across this blind, a man in a navy-blue *djellaba* whipped directly behind him.

"No, monsieur," was crisply articulated into Remy's left ear. "You divine what you're up against, a .38." Too late having "scented" Jacques, he lurched instinctively, but the pocketed snub nose, jammed further in, prescribed their course.

At the fourth stride, Remy cast a glance rearward. "But how?"

"You tread on your own destruction," the Frenchman smirked. "A tracking mote in the Moroccan sandals. M. Devereaux's standby plan in case our PLO allies fucked up—an 'inbred gift' of theirs—and let you be swallowed up in the swelter of the Casbah."

Through a sidling peek, Remy detected Jacques's left hand rising. "He's leashed. You're acquainted with our route. Send him up." The transmitter was repocketed.

In a lilting vein, de Larosière continued. "Can I keep naught from 'myself'? You my doppelgänger—yet I, not yours—yearn to be apprised of the 'him.' First off, the Plos were retained as picadors, to lance, not to kill, you. And incontestably it wouldn't do for a 'colonial' Gaul, such as me or my superior, to bring to justice Algeria's fag-end devil.

Suffice to say, the one soon here, with jubilation, will be patronized by all Algiers.”

He snickered, “Send a traitor to catch a traitor.”

That which had enticed the gay tourist—not subordinate to his masculine beauty, his commanding stature—allowed Remy to make him out, *une tête au-dessus de la foule*. Converging upon them, his gait measured, he was appareled in a niveous-white *gandoura*, the gold stitching at its neck radiating in spurts.

Uncovered was his head, thus revealing the girded dedication of his countenance, its left cheek now without bandage.

From a distance Mohammed’s scowl had riveted on Remy and as he bored in had never deviated. Stamping past him, he assumed a position next to Jacques. “Monsieur.”

The Frenchman did not deign to respond. With the .38 tensed, he bent forward to gurgle to Remy, “My captivated chum, is not this cynically cyclical? The grandson of a traitor snares the last. You ‘popped in’ to liberate the grandfather’s heir and in accomplishing that feat transform him into Algeria’s Greatest (momentary) Hero.”

Not heeding the irony, instead Remy was contemplating, *Five minutes from the clothing souk, a meager interval to prepare my body for the bullet it must take to reap an escape, at best, “small-chanced.”*

“Pass the gun to me!” Mohammed sharply whispered to de Larosière. “Does it matter where? He hounded my sister to an unhallowed death!”

“Impossible!” Jacques grunted. “Outside the Casbah: M. Dev— My mandate. Curb your felici—”

The glob of spit, arresting and glossing the counsel, slapped against Remy’s right ear and clung. “Black tapeworm, wholly vile!” So nigh were Mohammed’s teeth that they seemed zeal-driven to champ the splattered lobe.

The ensuing tirade—at maledictive exclamation points exclusively in French; otherwise in Arabic—had hissed, bristled, slavered, drooled, and cackled. The import of one tongue, Remy had marveled, diametrically opposed the other.

“*Heigh-ho, maggot-mouth!* My sister sang another boyhood lullaby. Of a bond seven forged, but when my grandfather summoned, only one, the youngest, came.—*Toilet-fly!*—‘Into his lap, you tumbled, / A troth not unplighted.’

“Your identity exposed, I elicited the pattern: the garden comfort to my dying mother—*You’ll lick my soles, the barrel at your brain!*—the self-negating dash to foil my sister, and your dogged resistance to withdrawing till I, the least worthy, was—”

Remy burst in, yapping at Jacques in French, “Muzzle this shitmonger!” before confessing in Arabic, “No! More complicated!”

“You—*Sowfucker!*—shielded my hands that day, a blood-bond. Other Jacques ascend. It must be now, or forever held.—*Your eyelashes will wipe my ass!*—Perhaps you have a better drafted plan. If not, curse me: At that cue I’ll slam against him. God help us both!”

“*Maricón!*” At Remy’s “Faggot!” an intervening trunk smothered his back, the lateral sweep automating the *shrrhp* of a discharged bullet.

Remy toppled onto the blue-enveloped woman ahead of him, who at the spang, as did everyone else, dived to the pavement. Disregarding the caustic myalgia beneath his right scapula, he clambered over and around those cleaving to the asphalt.

Eight rows away, with his eyes skimming over the cringed bodies, a hunkered-down

Remy zeroed in on the expanding, murrey-red splotch on Mohammed's *gandoura*. On his knees, he was grappling with Jacques, endeavoring to wrestle him to the ground.

The latter, finally kicking free, without hesitation, rushed unimpeded into an alleyway, clenching openly the *talkie-walkie*, not the .38.

As a smattering scrambled to their feet and gravitated toward Mohammed, a tentative circle soon eclipsed him from Remy's view. "Anew our blood commingles. Allah—Most Merciful—let him—"

His petitioning prayer was suspended by a whoop from the ring: "He gasps that the man who shot him is the Seventh! Let's go! A half million's slithering away! The navy-blue *djellaba*! After him!" Ten charged toward the passageway Jacques had fled into.

A half block on, the traffic had "quite leisurely" resumed its hectic clip. "A firecracker!" some gamins "skat[ed]" by with the dispatch. "A *Lailatul* squib!" several graybeards, "scratch[ing]" with one finger a pate or an asshole, snorted.

All inconsequential to the barefoot Remy, as intent on his prayer as on his direction.

## 8

A minute later, he paused to lean against the wall of the store adjacent to the main entrance to the clothing market. Maneuvering his left arm under his shirt, he pressed the site radiating flame. A jagged halo of blood returned on the knuckle of his medius.

Glancing from it to survey the street, he suddenly spurred himself, "Time shortens!" The throng notwithstanding, he had readily tagged them: their eared walkie-talkies and leather bomber jackets.

As he raced across the threshold, a backward perusal disclosed the two marginal reconnoiterers frantically stabbing their index fingers at the double-wide doorway, gesticulations designed to alert the middle patroller.

With a nod at the attendant, Remy hustled through the turnstile onto the familiar and capacious floor room. Except for the brightness of the fluorescent-irradiated cashier counters, the secondhand store was plunging into dusk, the overcast sky having rendered it considerably darker than it was eighteen days ago during Remy's initial visit.

Also, as then, clustered in the front and engaged in the same pastimes were the requisite male chaperons for the women shoppers: the fifteen or so "gambling" teenagers, squatted over cards, a spinning Coke bottle, or dicelike stippled pebbles, and the six-to-eight "'old fathers,' bickering, probably about me: into how I should be quartered."

Fixing his bearings, memorialized at that first excursion—Laffiz's tunnel was under the fifteenth table down the seventh aisle to the left—Remy plotted his way from the twilight to the murky center, certain he had outstripped the number of *haik*-clad rummagers. With each pace his curious bending had mutated into a bundled crouch.

At the stentorian voice from near the cash registers, Remy ducked into a rack of full-length dresses, sinking to their hems a handbreadth off the floor: "All must exit posthaste! A criminal's in our midst! For your own safety—shoplifting's an especial sin in Ramadan!—file out!"

Few hearkening, in non-native Arabic a different announcer roared, "Behold my Beretta! We're deputized by the police to apprehend this felon. My gun begs your

cooperation.”

*Krmph!* “That,” Remy spoofed, “no one could mistake for a firecracker!”

Yelps of “*Allahu Akbar!* God preserve me!” punctuated the rout toward the front. With apparent surprise, Remy sensed the arms and hips of sundry women bustling from the midnight-pervading rear section swish against the rack in which he was buried.

Only two tables from his destination, he exploited the wailing pother to veil his movement: On hands and knees, scooting to the intermediate station, he threaded through its rimming boxes and, with a lunge over the scant aisle, gained the shelter of the second.

As the ululation reverberated, a scooped-down Remy by jiggering loosened the burlap strip from the far legs and eased it toward him. With a space no larger than a crib cleared, his hand darted forward, clawing for proof that this was his wooden table.

Bridling his joy, he palpated the edge of the iron cover, but without halting groped for its pick hole. Despite his burning shoulder, he strained to dislodge the disk.

It began to rise like a gouty sun, the stir inciting a ravenous, centimeter-by-centimeter craning inward, as if no tenebrosity would dare “bar from my eyeshot the tunnel of my ‘heaven’s gate.’”

Only after the fingertips of his free hand had brailled the shaft—enlightened forthwith by the coarse gravel of “sullen earth”—and a few seconds more of gently lowering the metallic plate, during which he murmured, “Brahim, Khaleel, Djouher,” did Remy collapse onto his buttocks.

The haven of the counters having been secured by the panicked value-hunters, the skittish jabber about their flight was succeeded by an intoxicated whirr: “Who is it?” “Does he have a pistol?” “I recollect I saw him: a Berber!” “And I too, as uglified as a camel!”

Remy propped his back against the table leg. “Of course, filled in, sealed off, no longer relevant—‘*Au revoir, Révolution!*’ Chancing on it, the owner, had trembled that some robbers—‘*Au revoir, Ramadan!*’—would mole through, his valuable apparel to purloin.”

Scarcely aware that he was fondling the sleeve of a dangling suede coat, he wondered, *What now, M. Pauvre Diable?*

“Smell out the rat!” the voice in French proclaimed, the root of the yet hated word *ratonnade* (“rat-sweep”) quelling the Arabic chatter. A table on the right was upended.

“Monsieur, please,” the obtestation came. “I’m liable! The owner will be angry.” From the opposite side erupted the clunk of a garment hamper tipped over. The plea continued, “I’ll . . . I’ll summon the police.”

In French-tinted Arabic was slung the taunting rejoinder, “Good luck in mobilizing even one! We’re your gendarmes today. Herd these people out. I order!”

No treading ensued, rather gloating chirps by several: “But I would observe him being plugged with bullets!” (*une femme de cinquante ans*) “We’ll be mice-silent should you let us watch the Berber slaughtered!” (*un vieillard*) “*Wallahee!* My best Ramadan present away you snat—” The racket of a table being upset interrupted *la lamentation d’un adolescent*.

“A gift for Ramadan,” Remy mulled. “The diminished light and the exalting Black-Madonna obscurity purblind them, and there are over two hundred tables, boxes, bins,

and racks to inventory.” At the noise of one of these being overthrown—“though far to my right”—he slunk from his spot and burrowed under two racks.

“I will employ the darkness . . . and my treason, all that I have.”

The instant the dazzling peccavi had been halloosed in Arabic, “I’m the Seventh Traitor!” he scurried along the floor toward “an indeterminate polyester lair.”

The pell-mell thumping of thick-soled boots and the curses of their wearers when they tripped over boxes or snagged their expensive bomber jackets on miscreant coat hangers, he availed himself of, zigzagging farther into the heart of the warehouse.

“*Putain de merde!* It’s as ‘niggered’ as a turd back here!” a grouse drifting from the left railed. “Hey, Roland, in the name of the Fifth Republic, levy some flashlights!”

“A cock-sucking black hole!” his partner, roughly antipodal, concurred. “I’ve splintered a kneecap. Can’t Marcel and I simply kindle a fire and smoke him out?”

Satisfied they were not vicinal, Remy squealed two imperatives, “Capture me! Your fortune’s made!” and, weaving in and out, crawled two aisles over.

The crash of several inverted pieces was supplemented by some stale French expletives. However, “from the front a counterpoint is welling up, Arabic mumbles,” unintelligible from his range.

The one denominated Roland pursued his first colleague’s suggestion. “Ten dinars for . . . *une lampe de poche,*” he had faltered before utilizing the French. A quarter of a minute elapsed. “All right, twenty . . . fifty, my last offer . . . one hundred . . . Go screw your mother!” the *flèche du Parthe* (“parting shot”) *en français*.

“Subliminally bottled up in their ‘charcoal matter’ is a larger figure,” Remy calculated. How derelict of me not to jumpstart their memory!” Having slinked *à sa droite*, he yelled, from a hunched position between two tables, “Five hundred thousand for the Great Traitor!”

A pair of tromping feet bumbled toward him, knocking over any racks with which they collided, and lumbered on by, missing his hiding place by at least three rows.

The indistinct buzzing beyond the cash registers was spreading when Roland’s WT emitted a five-tone burst. A half-minute later he fumed, albeit wearily, “Chief informs me that Jacques’s been waylaid, pummeled unconscious, and is being lugged as that traitor Naaman up the hill to the Gendarmerie. The Plos are pulling out, so no flashlights. We’re to finish off this shitass and hightail it ourselves.”

“Not even a pair of FLIRs!” was the sarcastic riposte of the one designated Marcel, his hollow guffaws augmented by merely one other’s.

“Now Jacques’s my *double!*” Remy self-chortled. “They’re in disarray. Some at the counter will hit on that! And no menacing Palestinians. *Good’s* converting into *better.*”

In skittering too quickly, Remy jostled a wobbly rack. A gunshot tanged, trailed by a petulant quiet. “Care-care-careful, you bas-bastard! I’m ov-over here!” Marcel squalled.

At the overturning of a rear table, a woman shrieked, “Help me, Allah!” Remy traced the mad scuffling of her sandals across the cement. “I was frozen as Satan, afr—”

“Your half million French-pilfered!” bellowed Remy, cutting her off.

The clump of footfalls spooring hers ceased. “Huh? What? Not him, aping a bitch’s pitch!” A table, “in disgust,” was kicked over.

“. . . afraid as Satan to budge. Allah! Al—” Her complaint this time was checked by a prostrate rack stumbled over. A moment later flared her plea, “Come . . . take my

hand! I'm . . . bathed in neon! Your eyes witness . . . I'm no devil (he- or she-)!"

Again relying on such ado to drown out his own, Remy likewise scampered vanward, burrowing under a table, draped with tie-dyed shirts through which seeped bodkins of fluorescent light. Solicitous not to joggle the garments, Remy carved a peephole to assess how far he would have to dash.

With the forepart attained, the woman, still shrilling, had been joined by a dozen, their reciprocal blubbering intent on calming hers. A guttural innuendo from behind was barracked, silencing them, "What do these colonials need with our bounty?"

Sloping back his head, Remy clucked, "A testy mob and a maximum of ten strides. Let my Casbah 'brothers' net me! If Foucin doesn't arrive, I can somehow elu—"

The capsized table dumped its clothes upon him, and through the gaps he could distinguish the at-arm's-length Beretta, "for it gives off its own glint."

*Marie! Marie!* thought Remy, and the two of them were hiking among the red-and-black lava of Le Puy. He had prodded her, "Where's M. Foucin and his 'Why M. Lazar,' now when I most require him?" and was awaiting her answer.

The single ratching click and the teeth of a listing smile on the dim visage were distractions, for streaking through Remy's mind were a thousand other faces, too fleeting for even the angels Munkar and Nakir to call to account.

They concluded with his own personage and a testimony even he acknowledged was unctuous in its anthropocentricity: "In such déclassé, Third-World jeans and—"

A crunching thud was followed by the bark of a pistol. The Frenchman slumped forward onto Remy, who the second the head landed on his left pectoral girdle felt his neck jabbed by a shard of glass.

The stampede of sandals was crested by one exultant and forlorn cry, "I hurled the Coke bottle! This Devil's mine!"

**Notes and Commentary: Chapter 20: “A Night Better Than a Thousand Months”****MAY 2, 1989 (26 Ramadan 1409) (Tuesday)**

p. 332: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE OF CHAPTER 20: This “night” chapter, a reference to the most spiritual night in Islam, balances chap. 2, “A Night at Trimalchio’s,” where the emphasis is on what Muslims regard as Western sexual decadence.

This contrast of soul vs. body or Western sensuality vs. Muslim spirituality, however, is deceptive since two of the central characters of chap. 2 are HIV and Saul, whom Remy eulogizes even after Devereaux told him that they were the ones who had betrayed him for \$50,000 (19.329).

In chap. 20, the contrast also appears unsatisfactory. It is true that its two major Western characters lack any sense of morality: Leroy is a murderer, and Devereaux, on orders from DGSE, is scheming how France can use this discovery by Remy to further its national interests (19.330).

However, the Muslims of chap. 20 seem to be driven even in this Holy Month by materialism, particularly money, an aspect of the last which Remy will exploit. Thus any contrast between chapters 2 and 20 necessarily must incorporate the ambiguous treatment of materialism and spirituality.

The title of chap. 20 is taken from the description of *Lailatul Qadr* in Sura 97.3 where it is called that night that “is better than a thousand months,” that is, any good deeds or prayers performed on this night will be equal to those which a Muslim does in a thousand months, the equivalence of over 83 years.

As the 19.330 note, N19:66, mentions, *Lailatul Qadr* is called the Night of Greatness or Power or Majesty because it was the night when the Qur’an was first revealed to Prophet Mohammed. Its importance will be stressed on 20.332 in the first three footnotes to section one of this chapter, N20:2-3.

Consideration of the night of greatness leads Remy into an analysis of the types of greatness in men (no women are specified): Foucin, the great man; Leroy, the great deceiver; Mohammed, the young man of great beauty; and himself, the great traitor (332).

“Great” occurs seven other times in the chapter: Leroy speaks of Ballard forming a “Greater Allegiance” (339) and refers to Remy as the “Great Devil” (340); Remy twice refers to Foucin as the “Great One” (341 and 344); he also says the desperate knife does the “greatest damage” (345); another character will be called “Algeria’s Greatest (momentary) Hero” (347); and a desperate Remy cries out, “Five hundred thousand for the Great Traitor!” (350).

Of the other words in the title, “better” is the only one which appears symbolically significant, although a “thousand other faces” will at one point pass through Remy’s mind (351).

On p. 332, Remy acknowledges that Ballard was “better” than Leroy, and on the same page he speaks of his days in Le Puy as “better to him ‘than a thousand months.’”

Leroy says that in devising the sexual charade a “*good* . . . led to a *better*” (339).

On p. 347 Remy is told to accept a plan unless he has something “better drafted.” And echoing Leroy, Remy notes, “*Good’s* converting into *better*” (350).

pp. 332-51: CHRONOLOGY OF CHAPTER 20: The action begins at 2:35 p.m., May 2, with Remy walking toward his rendezvous with Devereaux, an apartment near Rue Toumi.

There he is to don his disguise for the meeting with Leroy. To prepare the reader: Over the next three and one-half hours, there will be more physical action than in all of the previous nineteen chapters.

This melodrama, ill becoming an intellectual murder mystery, ends at 6 p.m. with a Beretta .38 thrust an arm’s length from Remy’s face and its bark rapidly ensuing.

AT THE END OF THE NOTES TO THIS CHAPTER, N20:80-82, THERE IS A SHORT ESSAY COMPARING REMY’S WOUNDS TO THOSE OF CHRIST.

pp. 332-34: SECTION 1

p. 332: “Five hours till *Lailatul Qadr*”: This chapter opens at 2:35 p.m. with Remy, still disguised as a carpenter, walking past Foucin’s Gendarmerie Nationale office on the way to his meeting with Devereaux.

During Ramadan the new day (here the 27<sup>th</sup>) starts with the fast-breaking Maghrib prayer, which will begin at 7:36 p.m., the official time when Ramadan 26 ends. Thus it is five hours till the twenty-seventh, called *Lailatul Qadr*.

Again see the 19.330 note, N19:66, mentioned above in discussing the title, which clarifies that while *lailatul* translates as “night,” *qadr* is better rendered as “of revelation,” but more popular translations are “night of greatness,” “night of power,” or “night of majesty,” the first of which Remy uses. This term leads to a listing of some “great” people in the novel.

p. 332: “one thousand three hundred seventy-nine years ago”: The date of this chapter of the novel is 26 Ramadan 1409 AH (or May 2, 1989 CE).

As the N19:66 note indicates, the first revelation of the Qur’an came while Prophet Mohammed was living in Mecca in 610 CE, thirteen years before the Muslim Hegira calendar began.

Thus the “age” of the Qur’an in 1989 can be calculated by subtracting this Gregorian year from 610: 1379.

p. 332: “‘better than a thousand months,’ verily, 83.33 (ad infinitum) years”: Sura 97:1-5 of the Qur’an states, “We have indeed revealed this (Message [the Qur’an]) in the Night of Power: / And what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is? / The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. / Therein come down the angels and the Spirit [the Angel Jibril or Gabriel] by Allah’s permission, on every errand: / Peace! . . . This until the rise of dawn [the beginning of the next day’s fast]!”

There are twelve months in the Islamic year; thus 1,000 months divided by 12 equals 83.33 (the threes extending forever) years.

p. 332: “sixteen days ago”: See 13.201.

On the night of Apr. 16, tracing Houda’s (and Ghazi’s) route to the Toumi apartment, Remy walked by the Gendarmerie Nationale. Foucin’s office is on its second floor.

p. 332: *lour*: A variant spelling of the noun “lower,” meaning “sullen look” or “frown.”

p. 332: “The Great Man, for in that fashion all Algiers spoke of him”: “The Great One” (twelve times) or “M. Le Grand” (eight) and “Monsieur the Grand” (once) occur a total of twenty-one times in the novel, used by fourteen different characters. See the 6.91 note, N6:29-30, for a complete list.

p. 332: “*moi, toi, et Monsieur Le Grand*”: French for “me, you, and M. Foucin.”

p. 332: “our violated embassy”: See Devereaux’s description of the siege of the French Embassy (19.324).

p. 332: El Mouradia: The official residence of the president of Algeria, similar to the White House or the Kremlin. In French, “Présidence [presidential residence] de la République Algérienne.”

A rather modest Moorish-style villa built before independence in 1962, it is located in El Mouradia (hence its name), a suburb of Algiers approximately three and a half kilometers (c. 2.2 miles) south of the Casbah.

The building is around 200 meters from Bois de Boulogne.

In it is the Office of the President, the room where a new president is sworn in.

p. 332: “Great Deceiver”: In Islam the epithet of *Shaitan* (Satan).

Here it refers to Leroy.

For *Shaitan*, see the 11.175 note, N11:14.

p. 332: “counterfeited a lesser (yet his better)”: In the darkness of the Toumi flat, Leroy became his subordinate Ballard, who, Remy says, was morally better than his superior, a judgment which he will restate on 21.361.

- p. 332: “cast ‘the net’ that sought to ‘enmesh them all’”: In Remy’s mind, Leroy is paralleled with Iago who says in *Othello* 2.3.354-56: “So will I turn her virtue into pitch, / And out of her own goodness make the net / That shall enmesh them all.”
- p. 332: “at the same time as the Mouradia conference”: Remy’s meeting with Leroy at the Café de Flore is at 4 p.m., at which time Foucin, the Algerian president Bendjedid, and the French Ambassador are to meet.
- p. 332: “captured since his birth in his sister’s lullaby”: See 15.314 for the lullaby and 18.299 where Houda admits that in her selfishness she had kept Mohammed captive to and dependent upon her strength.
- p. 332: “each Monday had prostituted himself to buy silk shirts and drinking buddies”: Monday was the day when Mohammed rendezvoused with Ballard (and unknowingly had sex with Leroy). Bourceli commented that the youth spent “all the money his face and physique could earn on silk shirts” and Italian shoes (11.175) and that he “buys his friends” (176). The latter charge was confirmed by Belghiche who said that Mohammed had drinking buddies “provided [he] was ‘footing’” (13.213).
- p. 332: strains: In this plural form, “a passage of music” or “a lyric poem,” although other meanings underlie its use as applied to Houda: “great effort, exertion, or tension”; “an excessive demand on one’s emotions, resources, etc.”; and the obsolete meanings of “offspring” and “lineage or descent.”
- p. 332: *Algérie Presse Service*: The APS is the official source of news in Algeria. The agency daily provides state-sanctioned news releases (articles and photographs) on the events and activities in the country. However, Algerian newspapers are privately owned and have the choice of using APS releases or not.
- p. 332: *burnoose*: a hooded wraparound cloak worn by Algerian men usually over a *djellaba* or robe. The lining of its hood is sometimes used to store small items or pieces of paper, such as the money on p. 333. Remy is still wearing Ballard’s ecru linen *burnoose* “sold” to him by Leila on 19.319.
- p. 332: “unbathed for eleven days”: From Apr. 22 to May 2, 1989.
- p. 332: Taleb Mohammed Avenue: See 10.153, where Remy refers to this street as the short western boundary of the Casbah; he uses Taleb to enter it on April 14. On 13.201-02, Taleb is the avenue which Houda, with Ghazi tailing her, veered

from in getting to the Toumi apartment on Feb. 15, as did Remy in retracing her path on Apr. 16.

p. 332: *lieu de réunion*: French for “meeting place.”

p. 332: Rue Brazza: There were three streets named Brazza at the time of my novel, all of which have subsequently undergone a name change.

In colonial Algeria the streets honored the 19<sup>th</sup>-century French explorer of central Africa, Pierre de Brazza (1852-1905). Although he never lived in Algeria, Brazza was buried there for one hundred years (1906 – 2006).

He was originally interred in Paris, but his widow was dissatisfied with the criticism made of her husband’s African explorations immediately after his death.

Thus when she moved to Algiers with their children, she had the body exhumed and reinterred in the Algerian capital.

In 2006, however, with the approval of Brazza’s descendents, his body was moved to Brazzaville, the eponymous capital of the Republic of the Congo and the first French settlement that Brazza established in what became known as French Congo.

Most likely to curry favor with France, its president built an elaborate mausoleum where for a third time Brazza was interred.

To end this lengthy digression, I chose Rue Brazza as the name of the street where Remy meets with Devereaux and receives his Moroccan disguise to symbolize not only colonialism but also continued French and Western interference in Algeria.

p. 332: “M. Bulles . . . M. Xérès”: See 5.76, where the comically coded names are first used, and its note, N5:23, which explains that *bulles* is French for “bubbles” (of “champagne”) and *xérès*, for “sherry.”

p. 332: “the expected Jacques”: Jacques de Larosière (full name given on 17.289-90) is the aide of Devereaux with whom Remy exchanged clothes (17.279-80 and 282).

p. 332: phewed: A neologism since I use the interjection “Phew!” as an intransitive verb, meaning “to express disgust.”

p. 332: “sewer rat”: The rat imagery appears frequently in the novel. On 1.3, in his dramatic interior monologue, Ballard says that he “descried huge mire-spattered rats dancing along the rim of a corroded sewer pipe.”

On 3.37, Omar speaks of a *ratonnade*, French for “rat-sweep,” and quotes an FLN directive forbidding “rodent -skittering.”

This *ratonnade* term, in response to the exclamation, “Smell out the rat!” will be used later in this chapter (20.350).

On 8.120, a quote from *Hamlet* is for the first of three times used: “Behind the arras . . . ‘A rat, a rat!’” Gertrude quotes her son as exclaiming (4.1.9-10).

On 8.132, Remy again thinks of the quote. And later in this chapter (20.339), Leroy will rearrange the quote, “smell ‘a rat’ ‘behind the arras.’”

Also on 8.132, Medlin says he used the FLIRs “to catch a rat” in his apartment, speaking of it as “an intelligent rodent.”

On 10.158, Omar saw “oversized nesting rats in the culvert,” a French draining pipe which became part of the tunnel from the Casbah built by Laffiz, Khaleel, Djouher, and him.

In an Algerian newspaper headline Remy is described as the “Slimy Rat of Seine” (19.330).

Later on 21.360, the “Seine-scented rat” will be used in a chorus to describe Remy, and finally, the French term for “the rat” (*le rat*) will be used in the same chant on 21.360 and 362.

p. 332: “[His] clothes shall abhor [thee]”: From Job 9:30-31: “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; / Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.”

p. 332: “Abhor me: “make me to be abhorred.”

- p. 333: “must don this garbage heap”: The garbage imagery was used on 19.321 and examined in its note, N19:31-32.
- p. 333: “In the dresser’s rectangle glass . . . stoutish fellow”: From 2:46 to 3:10, Remy showered, shaved, and donned Jacques’ Moroccan garb. The rubber tubing that Jacques had worn under his Moroccan *gandoura* was wrapped about Remy’s waist, thus giving him a “stoutish” appearance. De Larosière similarly had dressed himself in Remy’s clothes and taken the carpenter’s toolbox.
- p. 333: fez: A red brimless felt hat shaped like a truncated cone. It is the traditional headwear of Moroccan men since it became fashionable among Arabs in Fez, Morocco, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, from which it spread to many Islamic countries. Mohammed V, the ruler or Sultan of Morocco from 1927 until his death in 1961, save for a brief exile, almost always wore a fez in public appearances.
- p. 333: tyrian-blue: “of the color Tyrian purple” (*Webster’s Third*). In writing of the color, “tyrian” is often capitalized as in the *Webster* definition. Also “tyrian-blue” may be unhyphenated.
- p. 333: *gandoura*: The traditional male dress in Morocco, as in Algeria, is a robe-like outer garment. Both countries have two types, the *djellaba* and the *gandoura*. As in Algeria, the Moroccan *gandoura* is a sleeveless or quarter-sleeved *djellaba*. See the 1.14 and 3.39 notes for more complete descriptions of the two garments.
- p. 333: “lizard skin”: Variant spellings are “lizard-skin” and “lizardskin.”
- p. 333: “his new identity”: The last alias that Remy will assume in the novel. For a discussion of his nine identities in the novel, see the 2.28 note, “the real,” N2:44-45.
- p. 333: Abdulkharem Maghza: A personal note: The name of a friend of mine in Rabat, Morocco. On the night the real-life Mohammed Belmazoïr died in a motorcycle accident (see Dedication to my novel, xii), Abdulkharem was the first to reach his body.
- p. 333: Casablancon: The adjective of “Casablanca” (used in articles on the internet, but not found in standard dictionaries).
- p. 333: Savile Row: An exclusive men’s clothing street in central London, famous for its traditional bespoke tailoring.
- p. 333: *loukoums*: French for “Turkish Delights,” as indicated in the text.

- p. 333: appurtenant: “appropriate” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 333: “From the German embassy”: The plan for Remy’s escape is more fully explained.
- p. 333: Châteauroux: The city in central France where Marie’s sister Caroline lived. Marie went to stay with her while Remy was supposedly in Canada (4.53 and its note, N4.6).  
More details about the city are given in the 2.16 note, N2.6.
- p. 333: “It’s illegal to take dinars from Algeria”’: At the airports of most Middle East and North African countries, tourists are checked before they enter their waiting room’s gate to ensure that they are not taking the local currency out of the country.  
Remy is being facetious in order to irritate Devereaux: Algeria’s most wanted criminal lectures about obeying a minor currency law.
- p. 333: “Twenty-eight hundred”: Leila had placed three-thousand dinars in the bag, and Remy had four hundred on him (19.320).  
He had placed three hundred in a soup tin, hoping Rachid would find it (19.323).  
Since he is giving Devereaux 2,800 dinars here to be returned to Leila, Remy spent three hundred dinars from Apr. 22 to May 2 on such items as planks (19.324), the chemical from agricultural stores (19.329), the Turkish Delight for Marie (19.330), food, and incidentals, such as coins for the phone calls.  
The 2,800 is unnecessarily symbolic of his years of exile.
- p. 333: “And she buried this Ballard the day before yesterday!”: On Sunday, Apr. 30, through Foucin intervention with Leroy on Wednesday, Apr. 26, Leila had been given the body of her husband.  
She had buried it the same day, but in her conversation with Remy on Monday, May 1, she had not mentioned it.
- p. 333: “the Ambassador personally indemnified the niece to rescind her petition”: Devereaux is referring to Ballard’s “foster-niece” (5.69).  
Leroy’s motive is driven by his own interest. On 13.217 in his plea to Remy to stop his investigation, he said, “I fear, concerning [Medlin], what else you will unearth.” His “fear” is that Remy is near to unmasking his role in the murder of Ballard.  
It is Leroy who revealed Remy’s identity as the seventh traitor to Foucin (19.327), and later in this chapter (20.337) Remy will speculate that he was the mysterious caller who hired Tinfingers to kidnap him (16.271).  
His response to this abduction, in which he hypocritically offered his concern and desire to help (16.267), parallels his ready decision to assist Leila by removing the last obstacle keeping her from receiving Ballard’s corpse.  
This action also ingratiates him to Foucin, whom he wants to convince that Medlin was the murderer of Ballard.

In essence, Leroy's goal is to stop any farther investigation of the concerns which Remy had raised about the murderer of Ballard.

That Remy is still a fugitive and thus able to hurt him seemingly prompts Leroy to meet with Devereaux at the Café de Flore. He hopes to find out what the French know (19.329).

p. 333: "*de la première fois que je l'ai vue*": French for "from the first time that I saw her."

p. 333: "Give me my husband's body!": See 8.133.

p. 333: *umbra*: "one that tags along with another," seemingly as close as a shadow (*Webster's Third*).

Devereaux suggests that Remy has convinced Leila to follow him to the Casbah meeting with Leroy.

p. 333: *bella donna*: Italian for "fine or beautiful lady."

p. 333: *porcinely*: "swinishly" (*Webster's Third*).

p. 333: *magnétophone*: French for "tape recorder."

p. 333: "the one you ditched": The microcassette recorder in the shape of a "faux Dupont lighter" which Remy had lied to Devereaux by saying he had hidden it in a courtyard urn of a mosque in the shantytown section of Algiers (19.329).

p. 333: *ergo*: Latin for the adverb "therefore," but frequently used in English as a conjunctive adverb.

- p. 334: “pair of BMWs”: Devereaux mentioned these as the German automobiles parked near the Café de Flore, one of which will whisk Remy away after his meeting with Leroy (19.330).
- p. 334: constat: “a legal certificate showing what appears upon record touching a matter in question” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Here it is used metaphorically to indicate, “after revealing the record of your proof that Leroy is the murderer.”
- p. 334: Abderazak Hadad: The boulevard which forms the northern border of the Casbah (10.153).  
The Gendarmerie Nationale, where Foucin has his office, is located on this boulevard (4.55).
- p. 334: Ambassador Audibert: Jean Audibert was the French Ambassador to Algiers in 1989.  
See 17.279 and its note, N17:16.
- p. 334: “embassy-girding helicopters”: See 19.324.
- p. 334: *Botschafter*: German for “Ambassador”
- p. 334: “Hofmann”: Murad Hofmann was the West Germany ambassador to Algeria from 1987 to 1990.  
Born a Catholic, he converted or reverted to Islam in 1980. His portrayal in this novel is in no way meant to represent or be representative of the real Murad Hofmann.
- p. 334: “*Mission accomplie!*”: French for “mission completed.”  
This French expression during a French dialogue translated into English indicates that the exclamation is spoken in English.
- p. 334: *Hubschrauber*: German for “helicopter.”
- p. 334: barbate: bearded.
- p. 334: “Again your *double*”: The English definition of “double”: “a person looking very much like another; a duplicate; a counterpart.”  
On 17.280, Devereaux had looked at Remy and Jacques side by side and called them the “*doubles*.”
- p. 334: Galeries Algériennes: In 1989, Galeries Algériennes and Bon Marché were the two major department stores in central Algiers, both on Rue Larbi Ben M’hidi.  
The coastal street on which my fictitious Al-Nigma Hotel is located is the long Boulevard Zirout Youcef (5.77, 6.88, and particularly 7.110).

Rue Larbi is the second inland street near the hotel, its first being Rue Abane Ramdane (5.76).

This is the first mention in the novel of the Galeries, but the initial rendezvous place of Ballard and Mohammed was outside Bon Marché (4.63).

p. 334: Café de Flore: See the 19.330 note for this fictional café.

It is located on the real Rue Mohammed Azouzi (the colonial Rue des Maugrebins), a narrow street just ten meters (c. ten yards) below the major northern boundary of the Casbah, the broad Boulevard Abderazak Hadad, mentioned ten notes above, N20:10.

p. 334: “France salutes me!”: Remy plays upon the expression, “France salutes you!”

This is a traditional French tribute to honored visitors.

Some date it to the address which Victor Hugo gave in 1878 to the International Literary Congress, “Poets, novelists, philosophers, men of science, France salutes you!” (My citation comes from Matilda Betham-Edwards, *Anglo-French Reminiscences*, published in 1899.)

This section ends at 3:18.

pp. 334-35: SECTION 2

p. 334: “From Ketchaoua Mosque”: The action switches ahead to 3:40 p.m.

After Remy had been dropped off by the chauffeur Ali near the Galeries (3:28), he walked northward on Rue Ben M’hidi Larbi to the Casbah’s Rue Ahmed Bouzrina, at the end of which is Ketchaoua (3:40).

The side street of this mosque is Rue Abdelkader Aoua, where Remy turned left, walked the length of the mosque, and at its rear began his climb of the flight of stairs, Rue Rabah Smala.

p. 334: Ketchaoua Mosque: This 17<sup>th</sup>-century mosque is located at the foot of the Casbah about two hundred meters south of Martyrs Square.

Under French colonial rule it was converted into a cathedral, but at Algerian independence in 1962, it became a mosque again.

First mentioned on 10.163, it is briefly described on 19.315.

p. 334: Rue Rabah Smala: The colonial Rue du Regard, Smala is a long north-south flight of stairs running from the rear of Ketchaoua Mosque across the Middle Street up to Rue Soualah Mohammed. (In my novel for simplicity I have it continue to Rue Mohammed Azouzi.)

It is around four hundred meters from Ketchaoua to Azouzi; at the intersection of it and “my” Rabah Smala, the Café de Flore is located.

p. 334: “*Casbah’s wind of people*”: “Wind” is used throughout the novel to characterize a person or people.

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Like Shelley's "west wind," symbolically it can be both "Destroyer and preserver" (14).

The second sentence of my novel speaks of the "wind" carrying the call to prayers (1.1); however, it is also a "breeze" that exposes to Ballard his murderer (1.14). Omar sways in the wind while in the nest of the palm tree (4.60).

Mohisen throws the tip Ballard had left him into the wind (6.91). Remy's father says he cannot throw the gift of the Braille Qur'an into the wind (17.290), and later, on 21.364 another youth speaks of throwing money to the wind.

Leila and her beauty are associated with the wind on 9.148 (implied) and 17.288. On 13.218, the stiffening wind characterizes the end of Remy's and Leroy's conference.

In a "varying wind" (18.302), Remy burns Houda's suicide note.

The variant "whirlwind" is three times used, 2.19, 18.294, and 20.340, the same number of times that there is a reference to a "windfall" (6.84, 15.254, and 21.352).

p. 334: "*Zalamiit!*": In Arabic, "matches," as the text indicates.

p. 334: "*Baeead!*": Algerian Arabic for "Get out of my way!" or "Make way!"

p. 334: *droit de passage*: French for "right of way."

p. 334: "donkey, 'as pitiable as 'Rachid's'": See 19.322 for old Rachid's feeding dates to the hungry donkey.

p. 334: "*Hina!*": As translated in the text, Arabic for "Here!"

p. 334: cubicular: "of or relating to a cubicle" (*Webster's Third*).

p. 334: "Ten minutes on": From 3:40 to 3:49 p.m., Remy walks from the rear of Ketchaoua Mosque to the Middle Street, a commercial area.

p. 334: transverse: As a transitive verb, it means to "pass across" or to "cross" something (*Webster's Third*).

Remy enters an area of the Casbah which is basically residential.

p. 334: loggie: An alternate plural of "loggia," a roofed gallery projecting from the side of a building, especially one overlooking a courtyard.

p. 334: "eight or so one-to-two-room apartments, each housing a family of five to nine": A 2007 *Smithsonian Magazine* article, "Save the Casbah," reports that twelve family members were jammed into two rooms of a dilapidated Casbah residence and that as many as ten families were packed into one dwelling.

The Casbah mansion which will be described on pp. 342-43 is an exception.

A lack of decent housing is not limited just to the Casbah. Even in Bab el-Oued, a three-story house formerly inhabited by one *pied-noir* family, Remy observed, had been divided so that twelve families lived there, four on each level (5.80).

p. 334: rifted: manifesting splits, cracks, or breaks.

- p. 335: “brightly colored cedar doors”: See 5.80, which notes the “inordinate pride” of Algerians on the front entrance to the building in which they lived.
- p. 335: “the five fingers of Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, and some, as well, were splashed with hen’s blood”: A five-finger amulet, called by Muslims the *hamsa* (from the Arabic word for “five”), is popular throughout the Middle East and North Africa.  
In the middle of the palm is an eye. If the fingers are closed, the amulet is supposed to bring its wearer good luck, or if they are opened, the charm will ward off the “evil eye.”  
The *hamsa*, which Muslims call the Hand of Fatimah, to commemorate the only daughter of the Prophet, Fatimah Zahra, appears in jewelry and silverwork. Additionally, it is frequently painted in red on the front door or inside wall of a house for protection or defense, sometimes using the blood of a sacrificed animal, or drawn on the surface and then splashed with this blood.  
The Hand of Fatimah amulet is one of the national symbols of Algeria and appears in its emblem or national seal.
- p. 335: “evil eye”: A malicious stare from an enemy which some Muslims believe can cause illness, death, or bad luck.  
It appears two other times in the novel: 14.232, where Algerian President Boumediène believes that Foucin has cast an “evil eye” on him, and 18.300, where Bourceli focuses an “evil eye” on the dying Houda.  
The 14.232 note, N14:45, examines the Islamic approval of the concept, even by the Prophet himself.
- p. 335: Rue Soualah Mohammed: The large street, principally commercial, which is forty meters below Rue Mohammed Azouzi, where the Café du Flore is located.
- p. 335: “*As-salaamu ‘alaikum!*”: “Peace be upon you!” This is the typical greeting by one Muslim to another.  
At 3:57, Remy reached the Café de Flore, where he is greeted by its doorman.
- p. 335: “these thirty-three coral-beaded strands”: For the numerical symbolism of “thirty-three” in Islam, see the 6.92 note, N6:32-33.
- p. 335: “Moroccan sheikh”: A compliment paid by the doorman in addressing Remy, who is garbed like a Moroccan, as a “sheikh.”
- p. 335: iftar: The fast-breaking meal at sunset.
- p. 335: *bourtaka muhallabieh*: The dessert is described in the text.  
It is a type of Lebanese custard which Moroccans enjoy.  
The most popular Moroccan sweet in Ramadan, however, is *kaab el ghzal*, inaccurately translated in English as “gazelle horns,” instead of “gazelle ankles.”  
It is a cookie with almond paste and dusted with sugar.

Its commonness would disincline the concierge from advertising it as a lure.

p. 335: turreted parapet: A turret is a small tower projecting from a building, usually at a corner and often merely ornamental.

The next page establishes that the turrets of the Café du Flore have conical roofs.

A parapet is a wall-like barrier at the edge of a roof, terrace, balcony, or other structures.

p. 335: “gray silk suit”: Is it coincidental that Leroy is wearing a “gray silk suit”? He had one on when Remy first caught sight of him on the day he was escorting his wife from the embassy (5.71).

p. 335: *portier*: French for “doorman.”

p. 335: “your ‘*mon ami*’”: In French “my friend.”

See the 14.230 note, 14:32, for the seemingly ungrammatical use of the double pronominal adjective before “friend.”

Section 2 ends at 3:59 p.m., about thirty seconds before the time for the meeting with Leroy.

pp. 335-38: SECTION 3

p. 335: “Your Excellency”: The formal address to an ambassador by a person not of his embassy staff.

At exactly 4 p.m. Remy hails Leroy, who after a moment recognizes him.

p. 335: “M. La— Montpel— Naaman”: Leroy uses the three names of Remy, or parts of them, moving backward in time: Lazar (the DGSE alias given to him before he returned to Algiers in 1989); Montpellier (the French alias imposed on him in 1961), and Naaman (his Algerian birth name).

p. 335: “‘500,000 dinars.’ ‘Alive. Only 200,000 dead’”: See the 19.322 note, N19:33, for a summary of the references to the rewards placed on Remy.

p. 335: annulary: “ring finger” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 335: tralucet: “translucent”; “transparent” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 335: “Yes, they, you do”: “Yes, both the French and you have a problem in getting you out of Algeria.”

- p. 336: morpheme: Remy avoids the cliché “breathed not a syllable” by substituting a word defined as “the smallest meaningful unit in a language.”
- p. 336: “chums”: The word is in quotation marks because in Remy’s mind he is quoting the wording of HIV in telling him of the close friendship between Leroy and Ballard: “The dead M. Ballard was a way-back chum of their ambassador” (2.30).
- p. 336: *tourelles*: French for “turrets.”
- p. 336: *colons*: French for “colonials” of “settlers,” that is, the Europeans who settled in Algeria in the nineteenth century.  
This is the first use of the word *colons* in the text although it appears in the 2.21 and 22 notes, N2.27 and 30, and the 3.40 note, N3.16.
- p. 336: ““so various, so beautiful, so new” is the sea’ . . . whickered . . . *To so garble the context of a child’s-play quote*”: Remy snickers to himself that Leroy must be added to so botch the “context” of such “a child’s-play quote.”  
The line from Arnold’s poem “Dover Beach” does not refer to the sea, but to the world: “Ah, love, let us be true / To one another! For the world, which seems / To lie before us like a land of dreams, / So various, so beautiful, so new” (29-32).
- p. 336: whicker: to utter a partly stifled laugh; snicker.
- p. 336: “*woundily*”: An archaic word (thus the single quotations) meaning “excessively; extremely” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 336: slew: An alternate spelling of “slue,” meaning “to turn or swing around,” a quite daring pun by Leroy, who has just been accused of murder, on the past tense of “slay.”
- p. 336: *à gauche*: French for “to the left.”
- p. 336: mure: A transitive verb meaning “thrust or squeeze,” as in “mure against a wall.” In this example from *Webster’s Third* the direct object seems to be understood.  
The expression “mure against” is used one other time in the novel. On 7.148, “those mured against the wall” employs the understood passive, “those who were mured against the wall,” which transforms into “they had mured themselves against the wall.”  
A search of Google produced no specimens of this use of “mure” meaning “thrust or squeeze,” not even the one cited in *Webster’s Third*.  
In such circumstances in the novel, I usually substituted a synonym. I did not here because “mure” is derived from the Latin word for “wall,” and in the two uses of “mure” in the novel, characters have their “backs against the wall.”

- p. 336: distended girth: caused by the inflated tubing around his stomach.
- p. 336: “the two-story drop”: It is not established if the two stories below the Flore are used for restaurant storage or as a residence, the third story of which had been turned into a café a long time ago.  
There is a drop of about 10 meters (33 feet) from the terrace to the narrow alleyway below the café.
- p. 336: sklent: a “sideways glance.”  
Chiefly used in Scotland and northern England.  
*Webster’s Third* lists it only as a verb, but *Dictionary.com* provides three definitions of it used as a noun.
- p. 336: “a stone’s overthrow”: Remy plays upon the expression “a stone’s throw,” but it serves to insinuate that he has the power to “overthrow” Leroy (“the king” in French).
- p. 336: “Leroy’s hand shot forward”: The suspense here is mechanical: Seizing on the situation, has Leroy lured Remy into the dangling position in the turret where he plans to shove him through the opening to a potentially fatal 33-foot fall?  
Or is he merely going through the motions to suggest to Remy how easily he could kill him or have him killed?  
Is the hand shooting forward to propel Remy over the ledge or to pull him back from danger?
- p. 336: disported: self-amused.
- p. 336: “as once, in finding the killer of my friend”: See 8.128: “I beseech you, M. Lazar, ‘Find this murderer, whose extreme vengeance was misdirected. . . . Your remuneration from M. Vellacott I’ll triply augment. ’”
- p. 336: “a minute later”: The time is 4:11. Over the next eleven minutes Remy presents his evidence and supposition which point to Leroy as the murderer of Ballard (and of Medlin): the uncircumcised penis, the fingerprints at the Toumi flat, the Mirabout busboy Samir’s second visit to the closed-off dining room, Mrs. Leroy’s observation that the car was moved, the poison in the second thermos, Leroy as the one who planted the negative in Ballard’s wallet and hired the PLO to kidnap Remy, the two keys to the Fiat rental, and the mistakes Leroy made in the Toumi apartment.  
These arguments, with which the reader is familiar from chap. 19, are sometimes summarized and textually are not given in the chronological order of Remy’s presentation.  
For instance, Leroy’s wife is brought up at various stages of his argument, although her importance is basically summarized in one paragraph (337).
- p. 336: Asr summons: The call to afternoon prayers.

On this day, the convocation began at 4:12.

p. 336: “for eight months”: In late May 1988 (May 24 in my chronology), Ballard spoke to Mohammed at Palais des Nations Beach. They met later that night and drove to the Toumi apartment (4.62-64 and 1.5, where Ballard indicates that Mohammed was “snared quickly” or soon after his and Leroy’s posting in Algiers on May 15, 1988).

They had no sex the first night (May 24). However, Ballard set a second meeting two weeks later (June 7), where again they had no sex. At the third meeting, June 24, they did as Mohammed described on 4.64.

Eight months later, the relationship ended with the Feb. 27 murder of Ballard although it would have been on Feb. 6, the night Leroy had unsuccessfully tried to sodomize Mohammed, when Leroy last had sex with the youth (6.85).

p. 336: “for one repelling night”: Feb. 8 was the Wednesday that Houda fondled Leroy, thinking he was Ballard, in the Toumi apartment.

Remy describes it as “repelling” to indicate to Leroy that he knows that this experiment with heterosexuality had repulsed him since he “reeled his frame from the bed’ and stamped to the [bathroom]” (15.251).

p. 336: “preach to the “queer””: Remy puns on the expression “preach to the choir” or “to make one’s case primarily to those who already know and accept one’s position.”

By using “queer,” at the time of the novel a slang term for a homosexual which implied contempt or derision, Remy is seeking to roil Leroy.

“Preach to the choir” will be used in the next chapter (21.359).

p. 336: *empreintes digitales*: French for “fingerprints.” The “twenty-two anonymous fingerprints from Ballard’s Toumi Street room” was mentioned by Devereaux on 19.328.

- p. 337: “gone to get . . . your *bon ami*”: That is, Mme. Leroy would use “get” in a standard sense of “go and bring,” not envisioning in this situation that it carries a slang meaning of “kill.”
- p. 337: *bon ami*: “good friend” in French.
- p. 337: caesura: While “caesura” principally indicates “a break or pause in a line of verse,” a more general meaning is any “stop, break, or interruption” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 337: “Fiat rental seemed to be parked in a different spot”: On 11.180, Medlin reported that Mme. Leroy had said, “the Fiat . . . doesn’t appear to be where we left it.”  
Medlin added that while he had had problems finding the car, Leroy had “luckily descried” it (180).
- p. 337: “sleight-of-penis, bait-and-switch, lick-him maneuver”: Remy’s playful puns, dripping with contempt, are intended to so irritate Leroy that he will blurt out something incriminating.  
“Sleight-of-penis” quibbles on “sleight of hand.”  
A “bait-and-switch” sales technique lures someone in with a bargain price and then tries to sell the person a more expensive item. Remy uses the term to stress the “switch” in sexual partners that took place in the Toumi apartment.  
A “lick-him maneuver” is a morphemic inverted pun on the “Heimlich maneuver” and “lick” invokes Leroy’s use of “the tongue of tongues” (8.122).
- p. 337: “my [too] substantial pageant’ to fade from the headlines, leaving ‘not a rack behind””: Based on *The Tempest*: “And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, / Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff as dreams are made on” (4.1.155-57).  
In Remy’s speech, “rack” as in “newspaper rack” flows from “headlines.”  
In Shakespeare’s line “rack” means a “wisp of cloud.”
- p. 337: “comrade-in-arms assistance”: “comrade in arms” refers to “a fellow soldier.”
- p. 337: *per contra*: Latin for “on the contrary.”
- p. 337: ho-hum: “Ho-hum” is listed as an adjective meaning “dull” or as an interjection indicating “one is bored.”  
I did not find “ho-hum” as a verb in any standard dictionary, but a Google search revealed several instances from reputable publications where it appears as a past-tense or progressive verb, “ho-hummed” and “ho-humming,” meaning “to be or act bored by something.”
- p. 337: ratsbane: rat poison, especially trioxide of arsenic.

- p. 337: anosmia: Partial or total loss of the sense of smell.  
See 8.133 for the earlier mentioning of Medlin's condition.
- p. 337: "of percolated coffee . . . his was drip-brewed": Remy makes two points: Illogically Medlin used different types of coffeemakers for the two thermoses. Also only the percolated coffee was spiked with arsenic.  
See 19.327-28 for the types of coffeemakers.
- p. 337: "thousand-dinar drop": See 16.271: "One thousand he was told" and after collecting this "retainer . . . ripened into a thousand-dinar richer gent."
- p. 337: "absorbed a beating": A sports term meaning "to lose by a large score." It is related to "take a beating," a financial idiom meaning "to lose a significant amount on an investment."  
The "quip" sarcastically puns on "absorbed" since Tinfingers struck him with his prosthesis which was wrapped in a wet or water-absorbed towel (16.263).
- p. 337: snirt: A chiefly Scottish intransitive verb meaning to "snort, especially with laughter" (*Webster's Third*).
- p. 337: *ana aasif*: As translated in the text, it is Arabic for "I'm sorry."
- p. 337: sequitur: "an inference that follows from a premise" (*Webster's Third*).
- p. 337: segue: transition.
- p. 337: Regata: The Fiat rental for the excursion to the Casbah on Feb. 27.  
In full, "a 1988 silver Fiat Regata 85S" (11.181).
- p. 337: Schumann's *Carnaval*: For Schumann's opus, see 5.69 and its note, N5:4.
- p. 337: "death-marked": From the opening prologue of *Romeo*: "The fearful passage of their death-marked love" (9).
- p. 337: "my intimation during the interview in your office": See Medlin's "'No! . . . No!' his voice cresting" (11.184).  
Later at the Al-Nigma, Remy thinks back to these exclamations: "After one had blurted out the double negative, none had voiced what all three were contemplating": The absent Medlin would have had time to drive to Zaracova and kill Ballard (11.182-83).
- p. 337: "But I slipped the key to him": On 11.179, Medlin said that Leroy told him, "Here's the key. Deposit Gertie's Qur'an with the [other items] in the trunk" of the Regata.  
Medlin did so as he stated on 11.181: "With the bags and mat stowed in the trunk," an indication that he had the key to it.

- p. 337: *porte d'entrée*: French for the “front door” of a building.
- p. 337: “a Fiat dealer”: Remy is fabricating the call to a Fiat dealer.  
On 19.328 Remy deduced that two keys must have been received by the embassy guard since Devereaux’s investigators had found out that two were picked up by agents from the car rental.  
From this information, Remy realized that the key given to Medlin was to the trunk, while Leroy retained the door/ignition key.
- p. 337: “the ‘deed done’”: Based on *Macbeth*: “I have done the deed,” the murder of Duncan (2.2.15).  
Remy employed five images from *Macbeth* in imagining Medlin’s killing of Ballard and the aftermath to the assassination (11.183 and its notes, N11:35-36).
- p. 337: “*Pas de chance!*”: “Bad (or hard) luck!”
- p. 337: “his eyewitness not cited”: Given their argumentative weakness, why does Remy even bother to bring up the errors Leroy made in the Toumi? The ambassador would know that there were only two eyewitnesses, Mohammed and Houda.  
The latter was dead, and her brother had, as far as he knew, never discussed the incident since it would involve his having to admit that he had been tricked into sleeping with his sister.  
Thus not for any legal relevance does Remy incorporate them into his presentation. Rather for their psychological impact because they demonstrate to Leroy how many factors, exposed with mocking ridicule, the Ambassador had overlooked in his “perfect” scheme.
- p. 337: “stage picture”: The physical appearance of the stage for a play in regard to props, actors, shapes, and colors.  
Another theatrical image used in the novel.
- p. 337: supernumerary: extra; superfluous; beyond the number needed.
- p. 337: *deuxièmement*: “secondly” in French.
- p. 337: “chalked”: The theatrical metaphor continues with Remy arguing that Leroy as stage director had poorly placed the chalk mark where Ballard was to stand. Before the use of colored tape, chalk marks were made on the floor of a stage signifying the position of performers or major props in a scene.  
Additionally in police work, a chalk outline is often drawn around a body. Thus the term allows Remy to continue to emphasize Leroy as the murderer of Ballard.
- p. 337: *contretemps*: An embarrassing occurrence, here of brother and sister in bed together.

- p. 337: “horror-struck”: The term was employed by Houda on 15.253.  
On 19.317 Remy plays the segment from the tape of her use of the term.
- p. 337: cynosure: Any person or thing that is a center of attention.
- p. 337: “Let there be incandescence!”: A play on Gen. 1:3: “And God said, let there be light: and there was light.”
- p. 337: Pre-Raphaelite: A society of Victorian artists who advocated painting and poetry which was accurate down to the most minute detail, a fidelity that they considered characteristic of Italian art before Raphael.  
Such attention gave to their work a sensuous quality.  
Remy indicates these two aspects in the noun which follows “Pre-Raphaelite”: “surfeit.”
- p. 337: “too full o’ the’ et cetera”: From *Macbeth*: “Yet do I fear thy nature; / It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness” (1.5.16-17).

- p. 338: courtesy pause: A polite pause in a conversation to allow a person to respond.
- p. 338: truck: to deal; “to establish a familiar basis; have intercourse” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 338: “cock-a-duo, twice-a-cock, cockatrice (take your . . . ‘prick’): Outrageous phrasing by Remy in his summation!  
 “Cock-a-duo” implies the two penises, one uncircumcised and the second circumcised, and it plays upon “cock-a-doodle-doo” and “cockatoo.”  
 “Twice-a-cock” again suggests the two male members.  
 “Cockatrice” is a mythical serpent hatched from a cock’s egg and having the power to kill by a look; a biblical deadly serpent (Isa. 11:8 and 59:5 and Jer. 8:17).  
 A penis is often compared with a serpent. The suffix of the word “-trice” is similar to “thrice,” thus adding Mohammed’s penis to the mix.  
 “Take your . . . ‘prick’” puns on the expression “take your pick” by using a vulgar term for penis.
- p. 338: “the oxymoron of a conscientious or conniving busboy, M. Samir”: Leroy had stereotyped the busboy Samir.  
 Thus he had never considered that, either out of dutiful concern or a desire to gain or augment a pourboire, he would return to the closed-off booth to see if the three American customers needed some extra water (19.318).
- p. 338: “the undoing Fiat with its miscarried keys”: Fiat means “let it be done,” but as Remy points out the car leads to the “undoing” of Leroy’s scheme.  
 “Miscarried” indicates that the key which Medlin carried was not the one which he seemed to be carrying. “Miscarried” further reinforces that Leroy’s plan “failed” or “went wrong,” partially because of the “keys.”
- p. 338: the ‘bungeeing’ FLIRs”: See the 1.3 note, N1:9, where “bungee” as a verb means “to bounce up and down like a bungee jumper at the end of his or her fall.”  
 Since it is a neologism, it is placed in single quotes.  
 In an example of affinity, here Remy uses a form of “bungee” to describe the FLIRs just as Ballard had done in chap. 1.  
 The term which Houda used in her narration about the goggles is not “bungeeing,” but “dangling” (15.253), so Remy did not get the present participle from her.
- p. 338: “exceeding-one’s-grasp light switch”: This is the third and last use of lines 97-98 from Browning’s “Andrea del Sarto”: “Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp, / Or what’s a heaven for?”  
 The others appeared on 5.71 and 8.124.
- p. 338: *sadeek*: “friend” in Arabic.

- p. 338: “The face that shot round”: At 4:23 Leroy finally comments on Remy’s account by pointing out an error in it.
- p. 338: “self-gruntled”: self-satisfied.  
“Gruntle” is a back-formation from “disgruntle” and means “satisfy, soothe, or placate” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 338: ““And from whom did you hear that?””: On 8.123, Remy mentions to Leroy that he knew Ballard had saved his life.  
Belsches had referred to the incident, “And subsequently Vietnam: Paul saved his life” (5.73), but this detail would have been in the DGSE 2269 file, although this is not specified in the text.  
Remy’s comment on p. 123 immediately leads to Leroy’s description of Ballard’s heroism (123-24), an account basically in line with the one given by the American on 1.10 since Leroy had convinced his friend that the incident had occurred that way.  
On 13.217, Leroy twice uses the declaration that Ballard had “saved my life.”
- p. 338: ““à l’article de la mort””: Leroy gives the English “at death’s door” and then translated it into French.
- p. 338: “took by th’ throat the circumcised Jew”: From *Othello*: “I took by th’ throat the circumcised dog / And smote him, thus. [*He stabs himself.*]” (5.2.365-66).  
Remy cited this line on 16.271.  
Shakespeare’s “by th’ throat the circumcised” was an early title of my book.
- p. 338: “the trimming unknown till . . . ten minutes ago”: “Twelve minutes ago” would be more exact.  
At 4:11 Remy pointed out to Leroy that Ballard’s penis was circumcised.  
Here at 4:23 Leroy admits that this is the first time he heard that Ballard was a circumcised Jew.  
As far back as 1961, Ballard had told Leroy that he had been born a Jew, but he doubted that his egocentric friend had “even heeded” what he had said (1.2).
- p. 338: polysyndetic: A rhetorical term which is defined as “characterized by polysyndeton” or “repetition of conjunctions in close succession” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Leroy’s “with shrapnel and splinters and sand” is an example of polysyndeton since normally one would say, “shrapnel, splinters, and sand.”
- p. 338: “engraved scars testified to our bond”: Another instance of a bond, this one in fleshy scars.  
For the bond theme throughout the novel, see the 15.253 note, N15:49-50.
- p. 338: “A bond you ruffled”: The sense of this clause is that Leroy had advertised Ballard’s heroism in order to justify his accompanying him to each diplomatic

post while the real reason Leroy wanted him along was to round up homosexual “tricks.”

“Ruffle” is a musical metaphor, meaning “to beat a ruffle [or “a low vibrating drumbeat less loud than a roll”] on a drum” (*Webster’s Third*).

A “ruffle” with a drum and a “flourish” with a bugle make up the “ruffle and flourish” that is the fanfare played in honor of a high official at a ceremonial reception” (again *WT*), particularly familiar on diplomatic occasions.

*WT* lists “ruffle” in this sense as an intransitive verb. Other dictionaries, such as the earlier *Webster’s International* (1913), *Amer. Her.*, and *Collins* list it only as transitive.

*Webster’s New World* labels it as either transitive or intransitive.

In Remy’s metaphorical sentence, “ruffle” is transitive, that is, “Leroy ruffled or beat the drum about Ballard’s heroism.”

p. 338: umbra: “one that tags along with another” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 338: “snipping of the tracking cord”: A farfetched wordplay on “cutting the umbilical cord.”

“Tracking” is employed to indicate that Leroy must never “lose track” of Ballard since the latter knows his darkest secret.

p. 338: “that subtle ‘devotion’ of yours . . . Tchaikovsky’s Sonata in ‘Z’”: My notes from 1991 simply indicate that in an unidentified book or essay I came across Tchaikovsky used the code “Sensation Z” to describe his “devotion” to men.

In 2009 when I began to verify the accuracy of my notes, I discovered some online articles which examined the code more deeply.

According to these, a diary that Tchaikovsky kept in spring 1884 contains encrypted references to two “sensations,” one labeled *x* and the other *z*.

Since Tchaikovsky was visiting his sister at that time, some critics contend that he used the letters to disguise his homosexuality in case she came across the diary.

Some cite that the *z* in his following notation, “There was a lot of *z*. Ah, what a monstrous person I am!”

The *x* sensation, most of these same critics hold, specifically refers to his passion for his nephew Bob Davydov and the resulting guilt. This familial affair undoubtedly would have scandalized Tchaikovsky’s sister.

Still other scholars argue that the codes have no sexual orientation. Instead they refer to Tchaikovsky’s card-playing mania.

See N. Slonimsky’s “Did Tchaikovsky Commit Suicide?” and the online source on which I principally relied, Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music*, pp. 97-98.

p. 338: “Sa, sa, sa, sa”: The hunting cry used by the mad Lear in 4.6.203 as he bolts from the stage.

p. 338: tremolo: “the rapid repetition of a musical tone or of alternating tones of a chord so as to produce a tremulous effect” (*Webster’s Third*).

- p. 338: scrowed: A variant of “screw,” here meaning “to twist into a strained or contorted configuration” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 338: “via falsetto”: By means of an artificial way of singing or speaking in which the voice is placed in a register much higher than that of the natural voice.  
The falsetto register is occasionally used by male countertenors to sing in the soprano range.
- p. 338: “‘hit my High C’ of contempt”: In music, High C is the C two octaves above Middle C. It is considered the defining note of a soprano.  
“Hit” is sometimes used to designate that a musical note has been successfully produced or reached.  
The ‘High C’ is a psychological, not a vocal, goal of Remy’s; that is, he does not screech the speech in a falsetto register.
- p. 338: “Your friendship spanned nearly twenty-eight years”: Leroy and Ballard, both 18, met as freshmen at the University of Michigan in September 1961 (1.2 and partially substantiated by Belsches on 5.73).  
Remy would have known of their friendship from the DGSE reports, and even HIV mentioned that the “dead Ballard was a way-back chum” of Leroy’s (2.30). Thus on Feb. 27, 1989, the night of Ballard’s death, they had been friends for twenty-seven years and six months.
- p. 338: “Let this cup pass from [him]”: In Matt. 26:39, Christ prayed, “O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”
- p. 338: “‘hire some Palestinians’”: Remy had alluded to Leroy having hired Tinfingers to kidnap him (337).
- p. 338: *fatwa*: In Islam, “a death sentence imposed through a religious and legal decree or edict issued by a council of religious leaders.”
- p. 338: “the ‘Turkish clip’ point blade”: The distinctive shape of the blade of a *douk-douk*, the pocketknife that killed Ballard.  
It is called a “Turkish clip” because the point of the blade resembles a scimitar. See 4.57 and its note, N4:17-18, for a more complete explanation.
- p. 338: carotid: A carotid artery, one of the two major arteries, one on each side of the neck, which convey blood from the aorta to the head.
- p. 338: sleek: An intransitive verb meaning “slick or glide smoothly.”  
Metaphorically it indicates that Remy “smoothly or cleverly” (the adverb meanings of “sleek”) glided to the end of his speech which began with a rhetorical “contempt.”  
This section ends at 4:25 p.m.

## pp. 338-41: SECTION 4

- p. 338: “the beauty of it hot”: From *The Waste Land*, “II. A Game of Chess,”: “And they asked me in to dinner, to get the beauty of it [a ham] hot” (167).  
This is another incidence of verbal paralleling since on the beach Ballard had referred to the waiter’s bringing the beer at the right time so that he could “get the beauty of it [cold]” (1.4).  
With this speech, given at 4:25, Leroy confesses. His boastful admission will continue for the next eight minutes.
- p. 338: “decompress his nerves”: to calm down or free himself from the pressure of what had happened at the Toumi on Feb. 15.  
By chance Leroy uses a deep-sea diving image. A similar one came to Ballard’s mind as he was dying: “He remembered . . . his first scuba dive” (1.14).  
Leroy also drew the wording from a medical procedure, “nerve compression surgery.” It is used on any part of the body, but particularly the spinal column, to relieve pressure on any pinched nerve.
- p. 338: “equally ‘horror-struck’ as himself”: Leroy accepts the description which Remy had used to describe Ballard’s expression when the lights came on. Since he was going out the door of the flat at the time he turned on the lights, he could not have seen Ballard’s face.  
Knowing that his friend was not privy to the dénouement of the ruse, however, Leroy was certain that he would have been horrified at how it ended.  
See the p. 337 note, N20:22, which cites the place where Houda used “horror-struck” (15.253) and where Remy realized its importance (19.317).
- p. 338: “the blood-freckled muslin sheet over her head and the groggy boy . . . retopped”: Ballard had provided Leroy with some details from the Toumi not given in Ballard’s Zaracova memory of the event, where he did not note the “blood-freckled muslin sheet” or Mohammed’s falling as he attempted to stand.  
For Ballard’s abridged account, see 1.2-3: Houda “had by then shrouded herself with the bedsheet” and Mohammed’s eyes were “half-closed by the whiskey and hashish.”  
In Houda’s account on 15.253, few descriptive details are provided, but on 15.256 Remy imagines Houda’s hymen being broken. Its blood would have been sprinkled on the sheet, accounting for the image which Ballard used in describing the incident to Leroy.
- p. 338: groggy: In both its archaic sense of “intoxicated” and its current meanings of “weak, sleepy, exhausted . . . torpid mentally . . . dazed” (*Webster’s Third*), here not just from the drink and drugs Mohammed had imbibed but also from his ejaculation.
- p. 338: “retopple”: Not listed in standard dictionaries, but it occurs in several places in reputable online articles.

The word conveys that a startled Mohammed toppled from the bed onto the floor when the lights came on and again toppled over in his attempt to rise and confront Ballard.

p. 338: “rouse himself erect”: An adolescent penile pun.

pp. 338-39: *de première main*: French for “at first hand.”

- p. 339: “the traitor’s elimination”: How Leroy’s “best friend” became a “traitor” was intimated by Remy on the previous page when he said that Ballard planned to cut the cords of their friendship by staying in Algiers with Leila instead of going to Washington with Leroy.
- p. 339: “tutoyer ‘thee’ . . . ‘thou hast’”: “Tutoyer” means to “speak to familiarly, as, in French, by using the singular forms (*tu* and *toi*) of ‘you’ rather than the more formal plural form (*vous*)” (*Webster’s New*). Hence Leroy’s use of “thee” and “thou.”
- p. 339: “being unmasked”: See the 5.68 note on the use of masks in the novel, N5:1.
- p. 339: isotonic: The physical exercise term, meaning “taking place in the absence of significant resistance” (*Webster’s Third*), is metaphorically applied to Leroy’s voice, which displayed no tension.
- p. 339: “anything touching on sex which doesn’t eventually tire”: In this matter, Leroy and Mohammed agree. See Belmazoir’s “sex stales” (6.83).
- p. 339: “At our inceptive posting in Brasília”: In 1967, Leroy and Ballard received their first diplomatic assignment. Their positions there are not revealed. The previous year, both had received training at the U.S. State Department’s Foreign Service Institute located in Arlington, Virginia, across from Washington, D.C. Beginning diplomatic service employees take courses in foreign languages, aspects of consular work, such as passports and visas, economic/commercial affairs, human rights, negotiations, area studies, and international relations. This study lasts for one-to-two years.
- p. 339: “A *good* . . . led to a *better* . . . a lasting *best*”: Leroy appropriates wording similar to that earlier stated by Remy: “For . . . no Palestinian ever concedes a ‘good’ without a following ‘better’” (16.259), an idea which he repeated later in that chapter (16:262, 263, and 274). On 20.352, Remy will likewise return to the image which Leroy uses here.
- p. 339: “the aphotic chamber, where the impostor became the real”: My immediate sources for the sexual substitution, which is an ancient theme in literature, are several Shakespearean comedies, principally *All’s Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*, and Yeats’s poem, “The Three Bushes,” particularly the lines where the lady tells her chambermaid that she must enter the totally dark room of her lover: “So you must lie beside him [her lover] / And let him think me there” (22-23).
- p. 339: “it worked on four continents”: South America; Europe; Asia; and Africa.

See the 1.7 note, “posting,” N1:20, which lists discusses Leroy’s principal assignments. According to my working notes, only a part of which had to make its way into the novel, Leroy and Ballard had the following diplomatic resumé:

1967: Brazil (as noted above, their positions are not identified).

1970: Greece (not mentioned in the novel).

1972: India (again their positions in New Delhi are not identified).

1975: Sri Lanka (not mentioned, but Leroy’s position is DCM).

1977: Leroy marries Gertie. He is 34.

1978: Chile (mentioned in the novel on 5.72; Leroy is the ambassador there from 1978 to 1981, the period during which General Pinochet installed his dictatorship with U.S. approval).

1982: Philippines (the coffee ritual, 1.6; the Sin City incident, 1.7-8; 5.75; 13.217, and 20.339; Leroy is the U.S. ambassador there when Ferdinand Marcos was at the height of his power; Leroy and his wife go on a covert shopping spree in Manila, 11.177).

1984: Pakistan (Leroy is its ambassador when the U.S. began supplying money and arms to Afghan groups fighting the Soviets and its Kabul puppet government. Leroy gives the Patek Philippe watch to Ballard, 1.7).

1988 Algeria (Leroy is an ambassador and Ballard an economic officer).

p. 339: “a minor flub in the Philippines”: As noted above, see Ballard’s account of this on 1.7-8.

A DGSE memo refers to it on 5.75, and Leroy himself twice notes it, on 13.217 and here.

p. 339: “If *rien* disconnects, then *tout* connects”: “If nothing disconnects, then everything connects.”

p. 339: “Hamlet’s fine-tuning ‘divinity,’ eh?”: From 5.2.10-11, where Hamlet says, “There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will.”

p. 339: “you would have scented it”: A play upon Medlin’s anosmia.

p. 339: “Elbert’s grateful sparrow eyes”: Another reference to *Hamlet*: In 5.2.217-18, Hamlet professes, “There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow.” Shakespeare’s source is Luke 12:6 (Geneva Bible): “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?” and to Matt. 10:29 (Geneva), “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.”

Leroy is being ironic because Hamlet and the Biblical passages maintain that God remembers and loves all creatures, even the lowly sparrow, while Leroy will play on the weaknesses of his “sparrow” Medlin.

p. 339: “pristine account of his ‘bolting’”: See 13.214-16 for Leroy’s partially fabricated account of what caused Medlin suddenly to leave—or “bolt” from—Algiers on his Saharan excursion.

- p. 339: “*Ana aasif!*”: On p. 337, Remy had asked Leroy for an apology (the Arabic “*Ana aasif!*”) for arranging his kidnapping and beating by Tinfingers. Here he finally receives it, but Leroy’s “I’m sorry!” is for withholding from Remy that he had given Medlin a second thermos of coffee.
- p. 339: “‘heaven ordinant’”: From *Hamlet* 5.2.48: “Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.” Hamlet tells Horatio that even in the guile he used in counterfeiting the letter which would bring Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’s deaths, Divinity was “directing” (the meaning of “ordinant”). That some minor inoffensive characters should die a short time before the final confrontation between the protagonist and the antagonist (as R & G do in *Hamlet*) influenced my having HIV and Saul be killed. This aspect of some Shakespeare’s tragedies is seen in the slaying of Paris in *Romeo*; Titinius and young Cato in *Julius Caesar*; Roderigo in *Othello*; and young Siward in *Macbeth*. These deaths, I find, are more jolting than, for instance, the thematically necessary hanging of Cordelia or the murder of Emilia by her husband Iago. Significantly Hamlet has to defend his signing of the death warrants of R & G to Horatio, who seems bothered by Hamlet so casually dooming them (5.2.56-62).
- p. 339: sensorium: the whole sensory apparatus of the body.
- p. 339: “no ‘nose’ to smell ‘a rat’ behind the arras”: Leroy combines two accounts in *Hamlet* about the death of Polonius: His call from behind the arras for someone to “help” the Queen startles Hamlet who thinks that it is Claudius hiding behind the tapestry. Polonius’s cry is greeted by Hamlet’s “How now? A rat? Dead for a ducat, dead!” [*He thrusts his rapier through the arras*] (3.4.24-25) In 4.3.36-37, Hamlet tells Claudius that if he does not find Polonius’s body “within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby” where Hamlet had hidden the corpse. Leroy’s use of the “behind the arras” passage brings the image full circle since at their first meeting the ambassador had used it (8.118 and 120) and later in that chapter (132) Remy had thought of it after Medlin had described killing a rat.
- p. 339: “Your ‘tasteless, odorless’ arsenic, contrary to prevailing superstition, in fact, imparts a mildly bitter tang to coffee . . . metallic sapor . . . garlicky odor”: Remy had used the two adjectives “tasteless” and “odorless” to describe arsenic (337). Leroy says that technically neither is factual since two of its immediate symptoms are a bitter metallic taste and a garlic odor on the breath. Research bears the ambassador out. The worst mass arsenic poisoning through spiked coffee in the history of the U.S. occurred at a church council meeting in New Sweden, Maine, in 2003. Of the twenty-seven who drank the brewed coffee, one died and fifteen more were hospitalized.

The survivors said that the “coffee tasted bitter,” but not so much so as to cause all of them to stop drinking it. (Source: An article in the *New York Times*, May 2, 2003).

Other immediate or almost-immediate signs that someone has drunk or eaten something with arsenic in it are a garlic odor on the breath and a metallic taste in the mouth.

Headaches, confusion, a tingling in the palms, and drowsiness are subsequent symptoms. Vomiting and diarrhea begin after about two hours as mentioned on 19.327 and in its note, N19:49.

p. 339: “whether dripped or—so cheap, conservative Medlin finally tossed his percolator”: On p. 337 Remy informed Leroy that he had uncovered that the first thermos of coffee, prepared by Medlin, was electric drip-brewed, while the second, poisoned one, given to the DCM by Leroy, was percolated. Here, the ambassador’s defends his mistake by attacking Medlin’s character. He had seen a percolator at Medlin’s apartment or the DCM had spoken about one. Leroy inferred that Medlin was too “cheap” and “conservative” to change to an electric drip coffeemaker.

p. 339: sapor: That quality in a substance which produces taste or flavor.

p. 339: “Laertes-like . . . ‘poisoned . . . The King, the King’s to blame””: In 5.2.322-23, the dying Laertes tells Hamlet, “Thy mother’s poisoned. / I can no more. The King, the King’s to blame.”

Here Leroy puns on his own name, *le roi* (“the king”) in French.

The ambassador’s point is that contrary to what Remy had stated on p. 337 he had “exploit[ed his] DCM’s anosmia.”

Medlin died never knowing that he had been poisoned by Leroy.

p. 339: “rough-hewn that Paul”: Leroy borrows “rough-hewn” from Hamlet’s divinity speech: “There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will” (5.2.10-11),

“Rough-hew” means “to shape roughly; to hew timber coarsely without smoothing or finishing.”

Leroy’s question and answer indicate that his actions were not rough-hewn as Remy had contended.

p. 339: “a dead man the instant he inferentially acknowledged he held a ‘Greater Allegiance’ to another . . . staying in Algiers”: On Monday, Jan. 23, Ballard told Leroy about the marriage contract he and Leila had signed on Jan. 7, with additional stipulations on Jan. 8.

He also informed him that he would be staying in Algiers. Both of these doom Ballard for they show that his loyalty to Leila was greater than his allegiance to Leroy.

However, the ambassador’s overt reaction was to say that he had heard from Medlin that Ballard had set Leila up in a suite (1.6). However, on 1.13, Ballard

states that later during this meeting Leroy forgave him for not going to Washington.

His generous “wedding check” had allowed Ballard to satisfy the last financial demands of the marriage contract (1.11).

p. 339: “four days after that confession . . . The next night”: During the interval between this Monday, Jan. 23, meeting and their Friday a.m. coffee, Leroy plotted how he would kill Ballard or have him killed.

His actions, however, indicate that Ballard’s decision had not angered him.

On that Monday night Leroy had his usual secret sexual encounter with Mohammed. (Incidentally, this was the assignation at Zaracova referred to by Ballard as “five weeks back” on 1.10.)

On Tuesday, Jan. 24, he asked Ballard if he needed any financial help. He was told about the final marriage contract installment for Leila’s father and the money they needed for the flower shop (1.11).

Two days later, Leroy presumably showed Ballard the bank draft, which is dated Jan. 26 (8.124), the \$15,000 wedding present for the couple, to be pre-paid given their financial circumstances (1.11).

On Friday, Jan. 27, again over coffee, a giddy Ballard told Leroy about how he had met Houda without her brother knowing and was passing on money to her for medicine for their sick mother, an episode which Houda recounted to Leila (15.248-49).

On the “next night,” Saturday, Jan. 28, the Leroy’s entertained Ballard and Leila, and the \$15,000 check was turned over. Taking Ballard aside, Leroy proposed the idea of having the brother and sister unknowingly sleep with each other in the Toumi apartment. Reluctantly a weak Ballard agreed.

p. 339: benefact: A transitive verb meaning “to act as a benefactor of” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 339: “this Belmazoir—this *M. Belmazoir*”: In his first reference to Mohammed, Leroy spoke of “this boy Belmazoir,” which Remy immediately corrected to “*M. Belmazoir*” (8.119).

On 8.124, Leroy makes the emendation himself, saying “only one person, this Belmazoir—*M. Belmazoir!*”

p. 339: *s’il vous plaît*: “if you please” in French.

p. 339: char: a char woman, one who does general cleaning.

p. 339: “the \$15,000 bank draft as my wedding present”: See 8.124 where Leroy presents the check as a sign of Leroy’s appreciation of Ballard’s companionship, “less than eight hundred a year for our time together.”

This present would also serve to dispel any later suspicion that Leroy was involved in the murder.

This monetary gift, Leroy himself notes, was designed as a sort of quid-pro-quo “earnest money,” nudging Ballard toward accepting the trick to be played on Mohammed and Houda.

Finally the money was a subtle bribe to buy Ballard’s silence until Leroy could work out the method to kill or have him killed: The \$15,000 is given on Jan. 28; the murder of Ballard will not occur until Feb. 27.

As a bribe it parallels the strategy of the equally distrustful old Belmazoir, who gave his son Ahmed an unspecified amount of money when he took his family back to Algiers in 1972.

On 14.236 Foucin said that they were “living off some money brought from France, probably a moderate paternal bribe to bond his son to silence.”

p. 339: “the ‘merry sport’”: From *Merchant* 1.3.142-147, where Shylock proposes that Antonio seal a “single bond” with him; “and, in a merry sport, / If you repay me not on such a day,” Antonio has to “forfeit . . . an equal pound / Of your fair flesh.”

A variant of this phrase was previously used by Leroy on 1.2, “‘merry-sport[ful]’ Washington.”

p. 339: “‘protest[ed]’ like a ‘Player Queen’”: See Gertrude’s speech to Hamlet, “The lady [the Player Queen in *The Mousetrap*] doth protest too much, methinks” (3.2.228).

p. 339: “‘honeydew’ romantics lust to be ‘fed’”: From the closing lines of Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan”: “For he on honey-dew has fed, / And drunk the milk of Paradise” (53-54).

p. 339: “earnest”: In full, “earnest money.” It is “something of value given by a buyer or seller to bind a bargain” (*Webster’s Third*).

By glancing down at the check directly after proposing that Ballard help him trick the Belmazoirs, Leroy expresses how he truly considered the money, as an “earnest” which implicitly would bind Ballard’s allegiance.

p. 339: cimmerian: As an adjective, it means “extremely dark.”

As a noun it refers to a mythical people whom Homer described as living in a land of mists and darkness.

Unlike the noun form, the adjective is typically not capitalized.

Shakespeare uses the word only once: In *Titus Andronicus*, the capitalized “Cimmerian” indicates that Aaron has a black complexion (2.3.72).

pp. 339-40: “the fail-safe *interrupteur principal* in the lavatory breaker box”: French for the “main switch” in the breaker box.

It controlled electrical power to the bedroom of the Toumi apartment, but not to the bathroom.

Leroy calls it “fail-safe” because it prevented the wall switch from being accidentally turned on, thus exposing that he was taking Ballard’s place.

- p. 340: *sine-qua-non*: As an adjectival phrase, “essential; indispensable; prerequisite.”
- p. 340: dominoing: The domino effect is a chain reaction as in a falling row of dominoes.  
 Leroy means that by flipping on the principal switch in the breaker box, he will be able to turn on the wall switch in the bedroom.  
 The word “dominoing” as referring to public sex in a parking place at a pizza establishment, such as Domino’s, or in a car in its drive-through line postdates my novel.  
 Thus it would be frightfully anachronistic to interpret Leroy’s use of the word to suggest that he was making public the private sex act by turning on the switches.
- p. 340: “Every current, if truth be not a liar, must con—”: “Current” carries two meanings here: The obvious contextual one is “electric current” or “the movement of positive or negative electric particles.”  
 This is manipulated by a switch which controls the flow of the particles, thus allowing them to connect or disconnect.  
 A non-electrical meaning of “current” is “course of events” or “flux of forces.” Examples from *Webster’s Third* include “strong currents of public opinion” and “an adventure that changed the whole current of his life.”  
 Leroy views the events (Ballard’s “betrayal,” his own scheme to embroil the Belmazoires in the planned murder, and the murder itself) as being divinely connected, “if truth [God] be not a liar [Satan],” or so Leroy considers these supernatural forces.
- p. 340: ultima: The last syllable of a word.  
 Here *-nect* in “connect.”
- p. 340: “the Dakota to Marseille”: The type of French transport airplane which flew the Seven Traitors from Algiers to Marseille on Apr. 13, 1961: They “boarded the Dakota transport . . . at Maison-Blanche Airport outside Algiers, destined for Marseille” (2.27 and its note, N2:42-43).  
 In 1949, France procured around one hundred ex-USAAF Douglas-made Dakota C-47 transport airplanes, which they used first in the French Indochina War and later in the French-Algerian War.  
 Leroy is exhibiting that CIA agents have seemingly supplied him with complete DGSE files on Remy during that period when he was in transition from ceasing to be Omar to becoming Remy.
- p. 340: “you hoped (for what else did you have?)”: Leroy echoes the wording which Remy’s second contact had used about old Belmazoire in 1972 when his son Ahmed was planning to return to Algeria: He “hopes—what else has he got?—one of you can ‘beat some sense’ into Ahmed and convince him not to go (2.32).  
 Here Leroy manifests knowledge of Remy’s activities in France.

- p. 340: “the French had extirpated your collusive roots”: The last part of the sentence attests to Leroy’s awareness of an activity of Omar in Algeria, thus completing the during-after-before pattern.  
In 1960, Omar’s French case officer in Algiers told Remy that if he were flown to France, he would “shred” all files on Omar so no one would know he was a traitor. However, one year after Omar (now Remy) was in France, his identity as one of the great traitors was revealed. “So much for the word of a Frenchman!” Remy had concluded (16.262).
- p. 340: *sans doute*: “no doubt” in French.
- p. 340: *faiblesse*: In French “weakness.”
- p. 340: “at the precipice of the Presidency”: Leroy reveals his ultimate political goal.
- p. 340: “Five days after the subterfuge”: That is, five days after the Feb. 15 ruse at the Toumi flat.  
On Monday morning, Feb. 20, Ballard asked Leroy’s permission to meet with Mohammed and afterward Houda to apologize for the deceit perpetrated against them.
- p. 340: *mea-culpa*: The unhyphenated Latin phrase means “(by) my fault; I am to blame.”
- p. 340: “You won’t be mentioned, Claude. I could never be disloyal to you, even in my thoughts”: This is an echo of Leroy’s speech to Ballard on 1.11: “Not even in your thoughts could you betray me.”  
Ballard’s loyalty to Leroy cannot be doubted. For this reason, in his reminiscences in chap. 1, he skirts any mention of Leroy’s involvement in the Toumi apartment ruse.  
That Leroy senses Ballard wished to meet with Mohammed immediately to apologize for the trick inflicted on him and his sister, he agrees with Ballard’s proposal but asks him to postpone it until they have mulled over the best way to confront the two siblings.
- p. 340: “During the rest of the day”: Monday, Feb. 20. In another plot line, it is on this night that Leila greeted Ballard by telling him they had received the deed to the flower shop (1.11).
- p. 340: “I ‘engendered’ Gertie’s shopping spree ‘knavery’”: In Iago’s soliloquy which closes act 1 of *Othello*, he vows “to get [Casio’s] place and to plume up my will / In double knavery” and proclaims, “I have ’t. It is engendered” (1.3.394-95 and 403).
- P. 340: “Late that afternoon and the next, in disguise I scouted the Casbah for a restaurant I could slip away from during sunset prayers:” Having learned that

Ballard desires to meet with Mohammed and apologize, Leroy sees this proposed rendezvous as the perfect opportunity to kill him since the youth would naturally be blamed for the crime.

Before he visits the Casbah that afternoon of Feb. 20, he had already selected the place and time toward which he would guide Ballard to select for the meeting with Mohammed: the Zaracova grove at 7:15 p.m.

In the Casbah, at the call to Monday's sunset prayers, he observed the restaurants near the Martyrs Square bus stop parking lot, eliminating those where the manager locked the front door from the outside with a key.

It was on his Tuesday, Feb. 21, reconnoitering visit that he noticed the staff (he speculated) of the Mirabout exited from a rear gate for prayers.

He did not risk going inside the restaurant. That task he decided would be left for Medlin since Leroy also saw the advantage of involving his DCM.

However, on Tuesday he did make a timed trial run: walking from the Mirabout to his rental car in the parking lot, driving to Zaracova, waking to the disco and back to his car, making the return drive to the lot, and strolling back to the Mirabout.

Other events occurring on Tuesday, Feb. 21: The argument which Medlin initiated with Ballard in the embassy coffee room. According to Leroy, it was this Tuesday that his wife proposed the shopping trip to the Casbah (11.177).

Since Remy has been reconsidering everything that Leroy had told him, he has realized that it was most likely the ambassador who had proposed the tourist spree to her.

p. 340: "Wednesday I was well armed to steer Paul toward a 7:15 rendezvous there": Wednesday, Feb. 22. Other events: Believing that his friendship with his "M. John" (Ballard) was finished, a dejected Mohammed left for his weekly Wednesday trip to the Palestinian camp.

See 1.10 where Ballard recalls that on certain occasions Belmazoir had suggested Zaracova for their rendezvous. However, he had inserted, "this evening, no," an indication that Ballard himself had suggested that their Feb. 27 meeting be at Zaracova.

Here Leroy reveals that he had nominated the place and the time.

How he steered Ballard to these choices is not given in the text, but likely Leroy stressed the familiarity and privacy of the Zaracova palm grove. Around sunset prayers was the typical time Ballard and Mohammed met before going to the Toumi apartment.

This time would be perfect for Leroy, who would also know that Ballard typically arrived twenty minutes early for any meeting (9.150) and that Mohammed came fifteen minutes late (6.86).

Thus Leroy would have some leeway regarding time, and most notably there would be a thirty-five-minute stretch in which Ballard would be in the grove alone.

p. 340: "on the next day [I] involved Medlin as a necessary tool": On Thursday, Feb. 23, Leroy decided to follow up on his Tuesday thought about involving Medlin.

He was aware of his jealousy of Ballard and doubtless had heard of their confrontation on Tuesday, Feb. 21.

From Leroy's and Medlin's account on 11.177-78, the ambassador told Medlin that he wanted him to join Mrs. Leroy and him on an incognito shopping trip to the Casbah set for Monday, Feb. 27.

Medlin's help, Leroy continued, was necessary since the ambassador planned to buy a special present for his wife without her knowledge.

At the end of the shopping spree, they were to dine at the Casbah's Mirabout Restaurant. Before they were served, Medlin was to excuse himself and hurry back to a shop to buy the present.

Since timing was essential in bringing off the deception, Leroy told Medlin that he was going to do a dry run of the Monday-night scheme, well aware that the DCM would volunteer to do it for him.

Medlin is doubly conscientious for he makes a scouting mission of the area about the Mirabout later that afternoon preparatory to the planned Friday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> "dry run" inside the restaurant.

There Medlin crucially notices that the maitre d' simply latched the front door of the restaurant during sunset, making it easy for Medlin to exit the restaurant, and also for Leroy to do so.

Not mentioned in the text: Even if Medlin had reported that the door was locked from within by a key, Leroy would have had a back-up plan: Give a nice tip to the maitre d' to leave it open since Medlin after he rested a moment wanted to take the packages which they had to their car.

Other events occurring on Thursday, Feb. 23: In the morning Ballard calls Bendari's and leaves a message for Mohammed to meet him at the abandoned disco in the palm grove at Zaracova Beach. In the afternoon Mohammed gets the message and tells Fouad to tell the caller that he will be there.

Another event occurring on Friday, Feb. 24: At 1:30 p.m. Ballard calls Fouad at Bendari's and receives word that Mohammed will meet him at Zaracova.

p. 340: *bouc émissaire*: French for "scapegoat."

Leroy decided that he must have a "back-up" suspect of Ballard's murder other than Mohammed. Thus he arranged for Medlin to be absent from the restaurant at the time Ballard was killed.

p. 340: "Remy finally spoke": The time is 4:33.

p. 340: "'whirlwind' confrontation": In Job 31:35, Job said, "May the Almighty answer me!" The reply begins on 38:1: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind."

Remy means that the plank wielded by Leroy struck Remy's face with the force of a whirlwind.

However, implied is that Leroy has turned himself into God whose vengeance strikes down Ballard just as the voice from the whirlwind battered Job into submission.

- p. 340: *douk-douk*: The pocketknife which was used to kill Ballard.  
It is described above on p. 338 and in its note, “the “Turkish clip,” N20:26.
- p. 340: *Fiat justitia ruat caelum*: The Latin legal clause is translated by Leroy.  
The maxim signifies that justice must be meted regardless of the consequences.  
By using it, Leroy is insisting that his murder of Ballard is just.
- p. 340: “an alms-for-the-bugger *pensée*”: The phrase “alms for the beggar” is delightfully perverted here.  
On 3.51, Omar spoke of “an alms-for-the-beggar thought” for the girl who had been tortured in Noura’s place.
- p. 340: *pensée*: French for “thought.”
- p. 340: *une circoncision*: French for “a circumcision.”  
Leroy’s statement confirms Ballard’s suspicion from 1961 when he doubted that the self-centered Leroy had “heeded when I let it slip . . . that ‘I was [born] a Jew’” (1.2).
- p. 340: “Well declaimed by a devil, the Great Devil!”: Ironically, at the beginning of this chapter Remy had quoted the Algerian press as terming him as the “Great Traitor” (20.332), an expression often assigned to Satan, as is the one Remy applied to Leroy on the same page, the “Great Deceiver.”
- p. 340: “there’s a divinity”: For Leroy’s first use of the quotation from *Hamlet*, see p. 339 and its note, N20:30.
- p. 340: *coulisses*: the side flaps of a theater stage.
- p. 340: “perceiving that it . . . with it, not me, you must”: The antecedent of each “it” is “divinity.”
- p. 340: “thaws not my *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*”: As on 1.8, Leroy quotes from Dan. 5:25. As explained in its note, N1:22, the Babylonian king Belshazzar saw these words written on a wall.  
Daniel correctly interpreted them as meaning that God had noted (*mene*, “numbered”) the sins of both Belshazzar and of Babylon, had “weighed” (*tekel*) and found them wanting, and consequently would destroy (*upharsin*, “divided”) both Belshazzar and his kingdom.  
As in chap. 1, here Leroy again believes that he will escape any consequences: Remy, not he, will be numbered, weighed, and destroyed.
- p. 340: *collaboration*: “cooperation [a form of connection] with an enemy invader.”  
Since Remy had collaborated with France, the word signifies to him that a French agent is approaching.

- p. 340: jaunt: An intransitive verb meaning “to make a short pleasurable journey.”
- p. 340: “his qualms had not forecast this reversal”: Nonplussed by Devereaux’s account of the betrayal of HIV and Saul and their being murdered by DGSE agents (19.329), Remy immediately becomes distrustful of the French, who had tricked him as Omar over thirty years ago when they used Noura to turn him into a traitor.  
He had suspected that they might be luring him out to kill him as they had HIV and Saul; however, once no move was made against him at the Rue Brazza apartment (332), he relaxed.  
Here Remy admits to himself that he had never foreseen that Leroy would be the agent used by the French for his destruction.
- p. 340: sprangle: An intransitive verb basically used in botany to mean “ramify,” that is, “send forth branches, outgrowths, shoots, or extensions resembling them” (*Webster’s Third*).  
It is 4:35 when Devereaux appears.
- p. 340: “you dispatched apologies”: See p. 335: “M. Devereaux sends his apologies.”

- p. 341: “rights to dead”: Devereaux deliberately jumbles the informal expression, “dead to rights,” which means “in an undeniably incriminating situation; red-handed.”
- p. 341: extricate: to “pull out; extract” (*Webster’s Third*, which adds that “extricate,” given its derivation, is most exactly used when referring to “gaining release from an entanglement”).
- p. 341: “Dis-like, you’re glaciated”: The image is from Dante’s *Inferno*, where Dis is used to refer to the city of hell next to the lake in the ninth circle or to Satan himself.  
The latter, less common, definition is seen in 34.19, where Virgil tells Dante as they approach Satan half-frozen in the ice of the lake, “Behold Dis!”  
“Dis” was used earlier in this novel (4.67) to describe an expression on Mohammed’s face.
- p. 341: “glaciate”: to “cover with or as if with ice or snow; freeze; become frozen” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 341: *gandoura*: The tyrian-blue cotton robe-like outer garment which Remy, disguised as a Moroccan, is wearing.  
See the earlier p. 333 note, N20:7.
- p. 341: “*Presto facto!*”: Devereaux combines “Presto!” the magician’s command which signals a sudden, amazing change, and the Latin phrase, *ipso facto*, meaning “by that very fact” or “by the very nature of the case.”  
His verbal jubilation is in retaliation for Remy having deceived him and DGSE about his reason for returning to Algiers (17.278).
- p. 341: “no larger than a limp, uncircumcised penis”: This is the sixth of the seven uses of the “limp penis” image (2.15, 2.25, 9.151, 11.175, 16.259, and later 21.365).  
Leroy adds “uncircumcised” as if to torment himself as well as Remy, who had thought his discovery that Ballard was circumcised had been the principal clue in establishing Leroy as the murderer: “M. Ballard was a Jew. Circumcised” (336).  
Furthermore, Leroy has just admitted that he was “undone by never lavishing an alms-for-the-bugger *pensée* that in [Ballard’s] history lurked *une circoncision!*” (340)
- p. 341: “[He (*Hamlet*) takes a recorder.] . . . Will you play upon this pipe?”: The stage direction and Hamlet’s speech to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in 3.2.344, 349-50.  
A “recorder” or “pipe” was an Elizabethan wind instrument similar to a flute.  
Leroy associates the tape recorder with this musical-instrument recorder.
- p. 341: “Ah me, a million *hélas!*”: French for the plural of “Alas!”

Earlier it was twice uttered by the French lieutenant at *Les Tombeaux*: “Ah me, a million *hélasses*” and “Ah me, a million *hélasses* to support a thousand pardons” (3.46 and 48).

This is another instance of the DGSE having a complete transcript of what transpired during the torture at *Les Tombeaux*.

- p. 341: spatter: “to emit or spurt out in drops or small blobs, as fat in frying.”
- p. 341: open juncture: A linguistic term meaning the transition from one speech sound to another, marking the boundary between words. It has less assimilation than the pause between syllables of a word (termed “close juncture”) and less hiatus than words divided by punctuation marks (called “terminal juncture”) (paraphrased from several dictionaries, principally *Webster’s Third*).
- p. 341: “Paris has . . . opted [. . .] to look forward . . . not to the past. . . . Toward American potentiality, not Le Puy’s dormant volcanoes”: This passage will be repeated on 21.365.
- p. 341: “potentiality”: This word was used on 7.117 when Foucin, quoting Aquinas, stated that Remy was “only in potentiality toward understanding” his relationship with the Belmazoires. Its note, N7:43, indicates that the single-quote passage is from *The Summa Theologica*, Question 79, Article 2: “[A]t first we are only in potentiality toward understanding.” Such verbal echoes are designed to tie together strands of the novel, here the Belmazoire/Foucin treason story with the Leroy/French treason subplot.
- p. 341: “your beaky contact . . . scratched up”: The “hen” metaphor applied to HIV on 17.275-77 by both Devereaux and Remy is revived by the former.
- p. 341: “coitus interrupted”: A weak play upon the Latin *coitus interruptus*, “the withdrawal of the penis in sexual intercourse before ejaculation.” As the next sentence indicates, it is used metaphorically to indicate that the killing of HIV and Saul interrupted their trip to Algiers to warn Remy: They “penetrated as far as Rome.” Additionally, Devereaux’s earlier account states that the two were *not* gunned down while they were having sex. Instead, HIV was “perched, fully dressed” on “the edge of the bed” while Saul was “naked under the counterpane” (19.329).
- p. 341: “blonde”: The feminine form, as on 19.329, is intended because that is how Devereaux viewed the homosexual Saul.
- p. 341: “*Mon tour! Mon tour!*”: French for “My turn! My turn!”

- p. 341: “my ‘merry’ *contrapasso* ‘game’”: For “‘merry,’” see the p. 339 note above, N20:34. The word is taken from Shylock’s “merry sport” in *Merchant* 1.3.144-45: “and, in a merry sport, / If you repay me not.”  
*Contrapasso* refers to the just punishment of sinners in Dante’s *Inferno* by means of a process either resembling or contrasting with the sin itself. It is often translated from Italian as “counterpoise,” a force that balances or neutralizes another force.  
 The term is not original with Dante, the idea going back to Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica*. Dante uses the word *contrapasso* only once in *The Divine Comedy: Inferno* 28.142.  
 Leroy’s “*contrapasso*” indicates that the tables are turned on Remy: He came to the Café de Flore to trap Leroy, but it is Leroy who snares him.
- p. 341: “this floral Eden”: A labored parallel with the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden.  
 In French Café de Flore means the “Café of Flora,” the Roman goddess of flowers and spring.  
 See the 19.330 note, N19:64.
- p. 341: “*Mais non!*”: French for “But no!”
- p. 341: “piss off”: A slang term meaning “to get away from or out of; leave.”
- p. 341: *sadeek*: “friend” in Arabic.
- p. 341: “‘toad-spotted’”: From *Lear* 5.3.141, where Edgar describes Edmund as “a most toad-spotted traitor.”  
 “Toad-spotted” in all likelihood refers to the venomous skin of toads.
- p. 341: “‘traitor-future-to-traitor-passé’ . . . beamed at his bon mot”: Leroy seems proud of this pun on the expected paralleling “past.”  
 “Passé” is appropriate since Remy is an “out-of-date” traitor.
- p. 341: *Mahasalaama!*: The “Go in Peace!” farewell in Arabic.  
 See the 19.323 note, N19:36.
- p. 341: “*ça . . . là . . . partout*”: The components of the French phrase meaning “here, there, and everywhere,” that is, “in every possible place.”  
 Leroy purposively employs this expression since Remy had tauntingly used it on 8.127 in discussing with him and Medlin the innumerable sources of the negative.  
 The phrase is used two other times in the novel, 3.43 and 10.158.
- p. 341: plutonomy: “the science dealing with the interrelationship of political and economic processes” (*Webster’s Third*).

- p. 341: red alert: a state or condition where a warning of imminent danger is in effect.
- p. 341: “friendly spying”: Often called industrial or economic spying on an ally or friendly country.  
Since the 1980s France’s DGSE has assigned numerous agents in its attempts to obtain U. S. aviation, satellite, and computer technology.  
In 1987 the FBI accused it of trying to steal commercial secrets from IBM and Texas Instruments, intending to pass them on to Groupe Bull, the French computer company.  
In 1989 French DGSE agents also covertly sought Motorola’s European marketing strategy for cellular phones and the negotiating tactics of the U.S. Trade Representative.  
Today much espionage is directed toward economic, scientific, technological, and financial matters.
- p. 341: “humored my request”: Leroy mocks Remy’s earlier use of this phrase: “I’m sure M. Devereaux would humor my request to carjack it” (338).
- p. 341: obverse: Used in two senses: In numismatics, it is “the side of a coin bearing the main design and the date; opposed to ‘reverse’” (*Webster’s New World*).  
Leroy contends that since he and Remy are both traitors, they are “two sides of the same coin”; that is, they are slightly different (nationality, profession, period of treason, etc.), but are closely related by one aspect (treason)  
Secondly, in logic, the “obverse” is “the negative counterpart of an affirmative proposition, or the affirmative counterpart of a negative” (*Webster’s New World*).  
For instance, to use assertions in this novel, “nothing disconnects” is the obverse of “everything connects” and “everything disconnects” is the obverse of “nothing connects.”
- p. 341: “‘heeded Dr. Swift’s advice’ [by being] ‘a little cautious not to sell [my] country and conscience for nothing’”: In “A Modest Proposal,” Swift wrote, “Being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing.”
- p. 341: “M. Montpellier”: Devereaux uses Remy’s Le Puy surname.
- p. 341: *Botschafter*: German for “Ambassador.”  
As indicated in the p. 334 note, Murad Hofmann was the West German ambassador to Algeria in 1989.
- p. 341: “Both 525i’s”: A 2.5 L four-door sedan model of the BMW E28 series, manufactured from 1982 to 1988.  
Devereaux earlier referred to the two BMW escape cars on 19.330 and on 20.334.
- p. 341: *ein mechanisches Problem*: “a mechanical problem” in German.

p. 341: “I am . . .” : Called “M. Montpellier,” Remy turns to correct this denomination, but finds himself unable to complete the sentence with an appropriate emendation.

The misnomer fortuitously forces Remy, who had assumed so many aliases and identities in his life (see the 2.28 note, N2:45-46, for his nine major ones in the novel) to confront the idea not only of who he is but how one’s identity is established.

This section ends with him exiting the café at 4:42.

pp. 341-43: SECTION 5

p. 341: “The husband of his most-beloved Marie”: In the time it takes for Remy to step from the landing outside the café to the first cobblestone step of the downward stairway, Remy begins to make the first list of those people who define his identity, Marie being foremost (4:42).

This is the first point of *anagnorisis*, Aristotle’s term for the “self-discovery” or “recognition” which the Greek critic felt a complex tragedy (or, I might add, a complex comedy) should come to near its end: The main character realizes some important aspects of her or his life or the world about him or her.

p. 341: “Françoise Bismuth and Claudia Sitruk”: The last names of the husbands of Remy’s two daughters indicate that they had married into Jewish families.

On 10.156, Remy thinks that “without conspiracy” his two daughters had “married Jews,” but their married names are not given.

Aspects of Judaism, the third religion of the novel, appear frequently:

- Ballard was born a Jew (1.2; 9.141 and 144; 17.294; 19.317 and 326; and 20.336 and 338).
- Leroy’s stereotypical attack on Jews in the U.S. State Department (1.2).
- Marie also was born a Jew (2.16 and 17.292). Just as her family out of convenience converted to Catholicism, Ballard was reared in a non-Jewish family after the death of his natural parents.
- HIV is twice associated with Judaism: He disguises himself as a Hasidic rabbi (2.18) and mentions their “Jewish postman” as having sex with his wife (2.34).
- Saul is a Jew (2.20).
- Ahmed Chabane says that he would become a Christian, a Jew, or an animist to get a regal meal at the Aladdin (9.138); he tells his father that the dowry can be raised again simply because Ballard was born a Jew (9.141); and he calls Ballard “a besotted Jew” (12.192).
- Leila: As a testimony of her last of religious prejudice, she says that she loves Ballard not negatively (despite his being a Jew), but positively (because he is a Jew) (12.192). She loves the person not the religion.

- Muslim engrained desire to obliterate Jews: The historical sacking and burning of Algiers' Grand Synagogue in 1960 and the subsequent FLN government's hostility which coerced the few remaining Algerian Jews of its pre-revolutionary population of 150,000 to seek exile (10.156 and its note, "Casbah's," N10.10).
- Palestinian hatred of Jews is first seen in Tinfingers assertion that "Israeli pigs" mangled his right hand (16.261) and next in his wish that Remy were a Jew since it would make more satisfying his torturing of him (16.263). It is further exemplified in the two narratives of the torturing of the crazed Jewish French lieutenant by the three Saharan Palestinians (16.258-59 and 274).
- Humanity's general delight in persecuting Jews is revealed in the statement on 16.258, where the words "He's a Jew" seemingly has always awakened this primeval compulsion toward anti-Semitism.
- Remy calls himself a Jew while he is being tortured by Tinfingers, taunting the Palestinian to "strike . . . as if he were a Jew" (16.263), but later he shies away from this affiliation (16.273).
- Foucin jokes about Remy having said that he was a Jew. The commissioner's reference to him as "M. Whateverstein" exhibits stereotypical nominal anti-Semitism (16.272).
- Old Naaman displays no Muslim prejudice toward Jews in his only reference to them. On hearing that his imposter-son's wife Marie is a Jewess, he says approvingly that she is "of the Book," Christianity and Islam both having their basis in the Torah.

p. 341: "Ibrahim Naaman ben Ismail": For the previous two instances of the full name of Omar/Remy's father, see 2.27 and 13.215.

p. 341: Aziza: Remy's mother.  
See 2.27.

p. 341: "Juliette Bismuth and Odile and Dominique Sitruk": The first time the grandchildren of Remy and Marie are mentioned by name, although on 13.204 and 19.322 he prayed for "his granddaughters" before he slept. Furthermore, as "Jacques" he mentioned his "granddaughters" (17.290), and from this account his father concluded that his imposter-son was without a male descendant—"no son or grandson" (17.292).

p. 341: "the sometime confidant of the Great One M. Foucin": A "confidant" is "a close, trusted friend, to whom one confides intimate matters or secrets."  
Even with the qualifier "sometime," still it is a noticeable confession by Remy of how he views Foucin.  
On 21.363, "confidant" will be used in an even more surprising admission.

p. 341: "braced the neck of the dying Mlle. Belmazoir": See 18.300: Remy "braced Houda's neck and shoulder."

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- p. 341: “assayed to screen the knuckles of her . . . brother”: “Throwing himself forward, Remy clasped . . . Mohammed’s bleeding hands” (18.312).
- p. 341: “jaundiced”: The past participle of the verb meaning to “make bitter or prejudiced through jealousy, envy, etc.”  
Remy balances and combines his early feelings toward Ballard, caused by jealousy,” with the “compassion” which Leila gradually convinced him was a truer estimate.

- p. 342: fellow traveler: The political meaning, “a person who espouses, or is a sympathizer of, the cause of a party without being a member,” is given a humanistic implication, that all human beings are fellow travelers on this planet.
- p. 342: “the level of Mme. Remidi’s love”: The neighbor who looked after his father, largely from a distance, after his paralyzing stroke: 10.155-59 and 17.280.
- p. 342: “the *honest* Mohisen”: See 6.94-96 and 7.108 and 110.
- p. 342: “street sweeper Rachid”: See 19.320-23.
- p. 342: “the faithful original”: HIV.
- p. 342: “old artificer”: From the last sentence of Joyce’s *Portrait of an Artist*: “Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead.”  
Saul called Remy “Poppa 2” (2.19) and “*mon père*” (2:20).
- p. 342: “the master (or ‘servant’) of Snooks”: His and Marie’s cat, first mentioned on 4.53.  
The notion that a person is the servant of her or his cat (while, I must add, a person is always referred to as the master of one’s dog) is derived from Montaigne’s *In Defense of Raymond Sebond*, chap. 2, sect. 3: “When I play with my cat, who knows whether she is not making me her pastime more than I make her mine?”
- p. 342: *Al Djazair*: “Algeria” in Arabic.
- p. 342: scabble: to “scratch, scrape, or paw as though looking for something; to struggle.”
- p. 342: “an identity through others”: The truth Remy comes to at this moment: Through connection with others, one gains one’s identity.
- p. 342: “*a continent*”: On 6.95, Remy used the expression, “*discovered (i.e. invented) a continent*” to describe what he unearthed at Zaracova Beach.  
Remy employs a hyperbole to stress the difficulty which is ahead of him in the one block.
- p. 342: Rue Soualah Mohammed: For a more detailed location of this street, see the p. 335 note above, N20:14.
- p. 342: “black-and-white checkered headscarves”: A *kaffiyah* with this pattern is the distinctive headdress worn by Palestinians.  
Its plural is *kaffiyaat*.  
See the 13.206 note.

- p. 342: “four clumsy steps”: The rubber tubing wrapped around Remy’s waist makes his downward movement difficult.
- p. 342: prosthesis: An artificial hand.
- p. 342: superincumbent: lying or resting on something else.
- p. 342: “the skin of his right side being pierced”: This is the first of Remy’s four wounds this day.  
See the short essay at the end of the notes on this chapter, N20:80-82, for a discussion of the symbolism of the wounds and their comparison with Jesus’s wounds.
- p. 342: *gandoura*: The native outer robe worn by many North African men.
- p. 342: tweak: “to pinch and pull with a sudden jerk and twist” (*Webster’s Third*). Without the inner tube padding, Remy’s robe hung loose about his frame (see *Macbeth* 5.2.21-22, the inspiration for the image) and thus covered his sandals.  
To kick Tinfingers, Remy first must pinch and pull up the robe so that his feet are no longer hampered by its overhanging hem.
- p. 342: trundle: roll.
- p. 342: *kaffiyah*: Palestinian headdress. See the note eight above, “black-and-white checkered headscarves,” N20:48.
- p. 342: *talkie-walkie*: The French form of “walkie-talkie.”
- p. 342: index and medius: “index” is short for “index finger”; “medius” is “the middle finger” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Leroy’s salute to Remy occurs at 4:45.
- p. 342: four-meter wide: Thirteen feet.
- p. 342: *Inshallah!*: As translated in the text, “God Willing!”
- p. 342: “*Divine Thunder*”: Thunder was regarded by the ancient Greeks as the voice of God; for instance, Zeus thundered from gleaming Olympus in the *Odyssey* 20.97-104.  
In the Old and New Testament, God’s voice is often associated with thunder (Exod. 9:28; 2 Sam. 22:14; Job 37:4-5 and 40.9; Ps. 18:13; John 12:28-29; and Rev. 4:5).  
In Islam, God does not speak through thunder. On 13:13 of the sura (chapter) The Thunder, thunder “glorified Him with His Praise.” In his commentary on this passage the thirteenth-century C.E. scholar Abdullah Baidawi reports that a

companion of Mohammed asked him about the thunder and was told that it is an angel who drives the clouds.

p. 342: mortise lock: A door lock inserted in a mortise or a hole or recess cut into a door frame in order to receive a lock.

p. 342: caracole: “a staircase in a spiral form” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 342: veilles: “not veiled” (*Webster’s Third*).

- p. 343: "I'm being raped!": The woman either views the assault on the house as an attack upon herself or uses the present progressive tense to alert her husband to the fate that impinges.  
This reoccurrence of the rape image, turned into a burlesque scene, contrasts with the horrific rape of "Noura" on 3.43-51, the casual acceptance of it by the women of Tizi Aimoula (9.136 and 151), the oral sex which the teenage sister of Ferhat was forced to perform on French paratroopers and her own father (14.234), and the rape of Houda by an unknowing Mohammed, as imagined by Remy (15.255-56).
- p. 343: pilgarlic: A baldheaded man.
- p. 343: "a peep at (or for) his brood": "peep at" means to "take a hasty, furtive look"; "peep for" means to "speak in a small, weak voice."  
Hence, the cowardly father does not look at or call to his children.
- p. 343: trapdoor: "a hinged or sliding door in a roof, ceiling, or floor" (*Webster's New World*).
- p. 343: terrace: A flat roof, especially of a house of Spanish or Middle Eastern architecture.
- p. 343: "the Sahel gradient": The Casbah is built on the slope of the Sahel Hills.  
See 4.52 and its note, N4:3.  
The hills are also mentioned in the text on 10.153 and 17.277.
- p. 343: gradient: slope.
- p. 343: chivy: As an intransitive verb, one meaning is "scurry" (*Amer. Heritage*).  
The examples turned up in a Google search show that it is often followed by "across," particularly in military books describing the movement of troops.
- p. 343: *pierres de gué*: The French idiom for "stepping-stones," as defined in the text.
- p. 343: cantilever: As a verb, it is defined as "to support a balcony or cornice by means of large brackets or blocks which project from a wall" (based on *Webster's New World*).
- p. 343: "oblong rectangles": The geometrical shapes of the roof.
- p. 343: calx: The heel of the foot.
- p. 343: vail: to "lower" something.
- p. 343: stridor: A strident or shrill sound.

p. 343: “*Allahu Akbar!*”: “God is Great!”

The exclamation is often used in times of danger or stress, the person believing that the words will bring God’s intercession.

See the 1.1 note, N1:2.

p. 343: “my four pretty ones”: From *Macbeth*, where Macduff refers to his children, whom Macbeth has ordered slain, as “All my pretty ones” (4.3.217)

p. 343: “the bombardment, abruptly grown silent”: The Palestinians had inexplicably ceased pounding their shoulders against the front door of the house which they knew Remy had entered.

This section ends at 4:48, a minute after the end of Asr prayers.

pp. 343-45: SECTION 6

p. 343: “The faded olive-drab”: This section opens at 4:53, five minutes after the end of the previous section.

Moving quickly, Remy has penetrated seven deep into the residential block below the Café de Flore.

He stops and rests behind a water tank, realizing that Leroy and Devereaux have ordered the Palestinians not to call attention to their prey by initiating an across-the-rooftop pursuit.

p. 343: *djellaba*: The outer robe worn by some Algerian men.

See the 1.14 note, N1:37, where it is differentiated from the *gandoura*.

p. 343: *chèche*: The traditional male headdress in Algeria.

For a description of its functions as a turban, scarf, and veil, see 10.156 and its note, N10:11-12.

p. 343: PLOs: The abbreviation for members of the Palestine Liberation Organization; each capitalized letter is pronounced.

p. 343: “TV aerial”: According to records, only 690 of the 50,000 Casbah residents had TVs in 1989, so there was little chance of Remy encountering a resident aligning an aerial.

p. 343: gloom: “deep shadowiness or shadiness” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 343: “scrawming”: A dialectical intransitive verb (hence its enclosure by double quotes) meaning “scramble; clamber” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 343: “picketed guards”: Palestinians who were lined up like the stakes of a picket fence.

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- p. 343: “where my roofs run out”: The block between the Café de Flore’s Rue Mohammed Azouzi and Remy’s goal Rue Soualah Mohammed has abutting or near-contiguous roofs. Soualah, however, is a wide street (for the Casbah); it is not possible for Remy to cross it “airborne.”
- p. 343: Montreal: That Remy imagines his reunion with Marie in a Canadian city is ironic since it was a telegram requesting him to travel to Whitehorse, Canada, which provided the cover for his trip to Algeria (4.52 and its note, N4:3).

- p. 344: “a decent, honorable people”: This encomium of Canada was a byproduct of the courage and Samaritanism of the Canadian Embassy officials in Teheran, Iran. They gave covert sanctuary to six U.S. Embassy employees who had evaded capture during the seizure of the U.S. Embassy there on Nov. 4, 1979. The six were hidden at the residences of the Canadian ambassador and a Canadian immigration official for seventy-nine days, from Nov. 10 to Jan. 27, 1980. On that date, using forged Canadian papers, they were flown from Tehran’s airport to Zurich, Switzerland, and freedom. In addition, I met a goodly number of Canadians while working in the Middle East, not a disagreeable one among the lot, something I cannot say about any other nationality.
- p. 344: antergic: “antagonistic,” principally used in discussing muscles; its antonym is “synergic,” which refers to “muscles which work together” (*Webster’s Third*). In *The Dictionary of Psychology*, R. J. Corsini (2002), defines it more completely: “Exerting forces in opposition, applied chiefly of muscles or muscle-groups which oppose each other in flexing or extending a joint” (54). Remy employs it to suggest that since their cold environment forced Canadians to learn that human being must “connect” or “work together” for the species to survive, it made them “decent” and “honorable” in their treatment of each other, other people, and even other species.
- p. 344: “left collarbone”: Remy remembers their last night together, Friday, Apr. 7, 1989, where Marie “kissed him once on his left collarbone” (4.53).
- p. 344: “‘till your second haj’”: At Trimalchio’s, Remy had imagined that if he made the dangerous trip to Algiers to see his father, the latter “would impose a haj on me, a second, a third, a fourth” (2.20). Its note, N2:24, explains that Islam allows a Muslim to make a haj (pilgrimage to Mecca) for a dead or infirm member of one’s family, after he has made a haj for himself (not herself since a female may not make a haj for another). The second haj which Remy thinks his father will require of him is for Noura; the third, Remy’s mother; and the fourth, his father. However, on 17.292, his father advises him only to make the haj for himself and does not speak of the other three hajjes. In the Montreal dream, Remy has completed the haj for himself and is about to embark on the haj for Noura, so in Remy’s mind the time of this would be 1992 or 1993: That is, the Canadian embassy in Algiers sneaked him out in late 1989. Remy reunited with Marie in, say, 1991 and in the same year performs his first haj. In 1992 or 1993, he would be ready to do his second haj, this one for Noura.
- p. 344: “her passion to reunite me with” Marie: In his first telephone call to Leila on Apr. 24, Leila commits herself to helping him “until you’re out of danger and reunited with your family” (19.325).

And in her farewell conversation with him on May 1, she asks if he might be able to write her “a brief note . . . that you and your family are well” (19.331).

p. 344: “The overcast day”: Three minutes have passed since Remy left the water tank.

p. 344: adumbration: Obscuring shadow (from *Webster’s Third*).

p. 344: “two and a half hours”: At this point the time is 4:56. The cannon signaling the sunset end of the fast and the beginning of the Great Night will occur at 7:36. Thus, more exactly, the interval would be two hours and forty minutes.

p. 344: “the colloquy”: The meeting between the Algerian President, the French Ambassador, and Foucin, which began at 4 p.m.

p. 344: bullet: As an intransitive verb, it means “to move fast” (*Webster’s Third*), literally “to speed like a bullet.”

p. 344: “Perhaps I’m already spotted”: At 4:59 Remy reaches the line of shops abutting the commercial street, Rue Soualah Mohammed.

p. 344: apiarian: bee-like.

p. 344: accroach: “appropriate,” with the meanings of “pilfer” and “purloin” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 344: howd: “a lurching, rocking movement” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 344: pivot hinge: A door hinge which has a short shaft or pin whose pointed end forms the fulcrum and center on which something turns about. This type of hinge pivots in openings of a floor (in my novel a roof); it is often used in dry stone buildings.

p. 344: *tige*: In French, a “medal rod.”

p. 344: *trappe*: French for “trapdoor,” which was defined in the p. 343 note above, N20:51, as “a hinged or sliding door in a roof, ceiling, or floor.”

p. 344: cockloft: A small loft or attic. Remy enters it at 5:03. From its contents Remy knows it is the attic storeroom of a bookshop.

p. 344: newel: The post at the top or bottom of a flight of stairs, supporting the handrail.

p. 344: *librarie*: In French a “bookstore.”

- p. 344: “shifting”: Remy employs the word which Medlin used to describe the lot where Leroy parked the Regata: “the layout undergoing a desert-sand shifting” (11.181).  
It was repeated in Remy’s thoughts on 19.319.
- p. 344: vitrine: A glass showcase for display of items.  
Here, by extension it is used to refer to the two display windows of the shop.
- p. 344: “a religious realist”: Religious realism is a branch of philosophy developed by Reinhold Niebuhr in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and particularly examined in his book *Christian Realism and Political Problems*.  
Niebuhr argues that self-interest is at the center of each individual. Out of this selfishness arises evil; thus by nature each person is sinful and evil.  
Human perfectibility is an illusion as is the ideal of God’s kingdom being established on earth, both of which are unrealistic views.  
Christian concepts of morality and justice, however, must be emphasized in order to control this individual selfishness and its resulting evil, which run amok could led to the human species destroying itself.  
Nations likewise are grounded in patriotic egotism, which leads to immoral and unjust acts. The ameliorative tenets of Christianity, Niebuhr argues, are consequently needed in international relationships.  
According to Remy’s interpretation, the religious bookstore proprietor idealistically should hold that, as the Great Night approaches, religious texts would be foremost in a Muslim’s mind, but realistically he knows that all Muslims, including himself, must surely be thinking about the fast-breaking meal, not the consumption of theological texts.  
Thus a realistic assessment, not an idealistic hope, guided the shopkeeper to close his business early.
- p. 344: “closed his books”: Several plays upon the American idiom, “close one’s books”: shut up the bookstore; closed his bookkeeping records for that day; declared that he’s finished with his customers or his expectancy of them.

- p. 345: *djellaba*: Robe worn by Algerian men.
- p. 345: *chèche*: Male headdress.
- p. 345: “Robbers in Ramadan”: Remy parrots the cry of the wife on p. 343.
- p. 345: *scuff*: to walk without lifting the feet; to shuffle.  
Remy exits the bookstore at 5:06.
- p. 345: “in a third of a kilometer Rue Soualah would intersect with the north-south Middle Street that he sought”: A third of a kilometer is about 360 yards.  
Rue Soualah runs east to west.  
Remy wants to get to the Casbah’s most crowded street Rue Arbadji Abderahmane (the Middle Street), the formal title previously mentioned in the text on 5.78, 10.153, and 13.201.  
His plan is to move south on it until it intersects with the stairway Rue Rabah Smala which since it bears east will lead him to the bus stop near Martyrs Square.  
If neither French nor Palestinian agents are watching it, he plans to board a bus to take him south to the shop of Leila’s aunt.
- p. 345: *kaffiyah*: The black-and-white Palestinian headdress.
- p. 345: *swash*: As an intransitive verb, to “make violent noisy movements” or “move or wander violently or erratically” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 345: “Plo”: A Palestinian.  
Here it is pronounced as a one-syllable word rhyming with “grow.”  
Contrast this with the expression “PLOs” used by Remy on p. 343, in which each letter is pronounced, making it a three-syllable abbreviation.  
See the 1.12 note, N1:33-34, which examines the distinction between the two in greater detail.
- p. 345: *coup d’œil*: Rapid glance.
- p. 345: *jib*: to stop and refuse to go forward.
- p. 345: *ruelle*: French for “alley” or “lane.”
- p. 345: *douk-douk*: Pocketknife.  
See the p. 340 note above, N20:39.
- p. 345: “arm-in-arms”: A neologism since the adverbial expression “arm in arm,” meaning “with arms interlocked, as two persons walking together,” is transformed into a hyphenated noun designating “two people walking with arms interlocked.”

- p. 345: flump: to “fall suddenly and heavily” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 345: “one jab piercing Remy’s right flank”: The second wound of the four which Remy will receive this day.  
The significance of the wounds is discussed in an essay at this end of the notes of this chapter, N20:80-82.
- p. 345: “till eight days ago buried”: On Apr. 24, during his first telephone conversation with Leila, the *dardja* (“vernacular”) Algerian which Remy used was in the Casbah dialect (19.326).
- p. 345: “Dragging his stronger foot and limping along”: Based on line 30 of canto 1 of the *Inferno*: “I dragged my stronger foot and limped along.”  
I used the Musa translation, but discovered later that it is not exact. A literal translation of Dante’s line would be “so that the firm foot was always lower.” “Firm” has no reference to either the right or left foot (Remy’s right leg was wounded).  
The lower foot, Dante reasoned, is always firmer and thus it represents the love of God, while the upper, less stable foot represents the love of the world.  
To Dante human beings are drawn to the upper, less firm foot, so the lower, firmer foot (God’s prodding) must push them away from love of the world.  
Limping results in the pulling in two directions of the feet.
- p. 345: Casbahians: Residents of the Casbah.  
This was the term my North African English-speaking friends used in referring to those who lived in the Casbah.  
An alternate form which I found through a Google search is “Casbahites.”  
See 6.89 and 10.157 and their notes, N6:23 and N10:14.
- p. 345: “come to my rescue”: Remy sees the irony of the Casbahians unknowingly coming to the aid of the Seventh Devil.  
This section ends at 5:10.
- pp. 345-48: SECTION 7
- p. 345: “In a cramped walkway three minutes from the knifing”: This section opens at 5:13.
- p. 345: “‘Old clothes for a new wound’ . . . tying the olive-drab swath”: Remy ties a strip of the olive *djellaba* (“old clothes”) about his second wound.
- p. 345: foin: “a wound made by a thrust” (*Webster’s Third*).

- p. 345: jactation: “boastful declaration or display” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Remy refers to Leroy’s lengthy defense of his plan for murdering Ballard (338-40), not to the trap into which he boasted he lured Remy (341).
- p. 345: “the desperate knife . . . Leroy had become what he had wielded”: Leroy was in control in his slaying of Ballard.  
However, he revealed his desperation that night of his conference with Remy at his residence: “Desist, I beseech you. I’ll quintuple the fee of M. Vellacott” (13.217).  
The poisoning of Medlin, hiring the Palestinians to kidnap Remy, paying off Ballard’s foster-niece, and quickly acquisitioning to the French are all actions which attest that he has become “the desperate knife.”
- p. 345: “New clothes for an old traitor”: A balancing phrase to Remy’s first thought in this section: “Old clothes for a new wound.”
- p. 345: “Mad in Amrica”: The spelling of the label on the bluejeans contradicts its signification.  
The comic misspelling harks back to that on the Filipino’s cutoffs on 1.7: “Mor then youl ever no.”  
Replacing designer labels with faux ones (2.28) is part of the artificiality that Remy has had to assume since he left Algeria.
- p. 345: “the worldly bundle”: Remy’s new clothes are the flowery shirt and oversized bluejeans from “the sack” in his left hand when he exited the bookshop: His back-up “Western garb . . . swiped from a different clothesline” (345).

p. 346: *sinciput*: the forehead.

p. 346: “he scooped up the Holy Qur’an [from] the trash [and] gently rapped and tucked it between the folds of the [headdress]”: Another instance of Remy’s ambivalence toward his Islamic past.

His care for the Holy Book here contrasts with his mocking reference to it as an “accessory” to his ensemble (345).

p. 346: *chèche*: Male headdress.

Remy refers to the “white *chèche*” that he had worn with the olive, “tan-stripped *djellaba* (343), not “the gray headscarf” (345) to be donned with his new clothes, the flowery shirt and the bluejeans.

p. 346: Rue Arbadji Abderahmane: The post-independence name of the Middle Street of the Casbah, its main artery.

See 10.195 which summarizes the names of Arbadji.

p. 346: *née*: “originally or formerly called or named.”

It is sometimes used to indicate a previous name of a “place,” as in “Kernville, *née* Whisky Flat” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 346: Rue Marengo: The colonial name of the Middle Street.

p. 346: “the aliases a pittance compared to mine”: As noted two times earlier in the notes of this chapter, for a list of Remy’s nine major identities see the 2.28 note, “the real,” N2:45-46.

p. 346: “harrowing discs”: A “disc harrow” or “disk harrow” is “a harrow that breaks up plowed or rough land by means of discs arranged at an angle with the line of draft” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 346: *ratissage*: As indicated textually, in French, a “raking over” or “search” of an area.

During the Algerian War for Independence, the term was a synonym for “*ratonnade*” (“rat-sweep”), a wanton rounding-up of Muslim Algerians by French authorities.

p. 346: “topsy-turvied”: As a transitive verb, “topsy-turvy” means “to turn or make topsy-turvy” (*Webster’s Third*), that is, in reversed order or position.

p. 346: “haystack adage belabored during the conference in Leroy’s office”: On 8.127, Remy, supposedly quoting Vellacott, said, “We’re not looking for ‘a needle in a haystack,’ rather ‘a piece of hay in a rick of needles.’”

The image is “belabored” since Remy asks whether “any [workers] from the haycock prick” and Leroy quotes the inverted adage, speculating that Remy had devised it (128).

The phrasing occurs in two other places in the novel: On 13.211, Remy employs it in his conversation with Karami, and on 17.277 Devereaux speaks of a “piece of hay in a stack of needles.”

- p. 346: “Its retrieval”: Remembering Leroy makes Remy apprehend that he has no backup plan.  
His original design may be inferred from the next paragraph: Having transverse the Middle Street, he intends to continue southeasterly to the bus stop near Martyrs Square.  
He hopes that his new disguise will fool the Palestinian or French agents who he is certain will be inconspicuously stationed about.  
There he plans to take a southbound bus to the University. Near it is the Riboux Lane shop of Leila’s aunt.
- p. 346: “perspicacious ‘villain’”: The astute “villain” is Leroy who like Claudius in *Hamlet*, as Foucin argued on 19.315, “has both plan and backup plan.”  
In 4.7.130-63, Claudius and Laertes discuss this “back or second” which their “project / Should have” (153-54).  
Seven times Hamlet refers to Claudius as a “villain” (1.5.107-109; 3.3.76-77; and 3.4.99).
- p. 346: *plan de secours*: French for “backup plan.”  
The term will reappear on 21.354 and 365.
- p. 346: “tack and half tack”: A nautical term referring to a series of zigzag movements in which “a long tack is followed by a short one.”  
The word “tack” by itself also refers to “a zigzag movement on land” (*Webster’s Third*), such as Remy executes here.
- p. 346: “busses of Martyrs Square”: The bus stop near Martyrs Square is about 250 meters (c. 273 yards) from the Middle Street.
- p. 346: “the ‘tunnel . . . built so well Time cannot destroy it!’”: See 10.157-58: “‘A tunnel which generations of Casbahians can use to frustrate their inevitable overlords,’ the not-shy Laffiz had boasted. ‘It’s build so well Time cannot destroy it!’”
- p. 346: Ozymandiasian: The adjective form of Ozymandias, the Greek name for Ramses II of Egypt.  
In his sonnet “Ozymandias,” Shelley portrays him as a symbol of an egomaniacal tyrant.  
It is his Ozymandias who boasts that no one would ever surpass his achievements.  
The last line of this poem is minimally referred to on 6.94, as mentioned in its note N6:37.

- p. 346: “‘Engineer’ Brahim Laffiz: The University of Algiers engineering student who with the help of Omar, his best friend Khaleel, and another student Djouher constructed a tunnel leading from the Casbah to a culvert outside it from March to November 1960 (10.157-58).  
Laffiz, Khaleel, and Djouher were killed during a street protest in Dec. 1960, leaving only Omar with knowledge of the tunnel (158).  
As a memorial to them, on his visit to the Casbah on Apr. 14, 1989, Remy located the spot in the clothing warehouse where the tunnel began, even touching the iron disk which covered it (158).  
At that time, he had not contemplated that he might have to make use of it.
- p. 346: souk: marketplace.  
Here it is the garment market which Remy visited in chap. 10.
- p. 346: Place de la Lyre exit: The southern-most square (“*place*” in French) of the Casbah, which is the intersection of three of its major streets: Rue Amar Ali, itself the southern leg of the Middle Street; the east-west Blvd. Ourida Meddad; and the north-south Rue Ahmed Bouzrina, which partially parallels the Middle Street and Rue Amar Ali.  
As Remy notes, southbound busses stop in the square. Thus, if there are no French or Palestinians about, he can board one there.
- p. 346: Riboux Lane *dukkaan*: The lane on which the “shop” of Leila’s aunt is located.
- p. 346: martyred comrades: As mentioned four notes above, Laffiz, Khaleel, and Djouher were killed and thus martyred in a street protest in December 1960.
- p. 346: crosscut: to cut through something transversely, as a path cutting across countryside.  
Given the use of “martyred,” there is the typical pun on “cross.”
- p. 346: “Jockeying out of the central file . . . of the paved street”: The text does not detail the six-minute walk (5:21 – 5:27) which brings Remy to this paved street which will lead him to the garment souk.  
At 5:21, remembering the tunnel, Remy had veered southwesterly from just below the Middle Street. This direction brought him onto Rue Amar Ali (named for Ali la Pointe), a continuation of the north-south Middle Street.  
He continued around 200 meters south until its intersection with the east-west Rue Porte Neuve (now Rue Rabah Rajah).  
There he turned west and walked about 250 meters until he is a block from Boulevard Ourida Meddad, the southern boundary of the Casbah. Remy turns south off of Porte Neuve onto this inner lane of Ourida’s.  
Around 150 meters down this pedestrian-only branch, technically an inner lining of Ourida, is the clothing souk.  
It is “paved” in places and in others has cobblestones.

- p. 346: *marché*: Market.  
Here it designates the clothing souk.
- p. 346: blind: Blind alley; dead end.
- p. 346: *djellaba*: Robe worn by Algerian men.
- p. 346: “scented”: On 17.284, Remy said to himself that he was eager to get out of the clothes of Devereaux’s aide which he had donned as his disguise in the visit to his father since they were “reeking of Jacques.”  
Here he faults himself for not having picked up the scent of de Larosière.
- p. 346: snub nose: The short barrel of a handgun.  
An alternate spelling of the noun phrase is “snubbed nose” (*Webster’s Third*).  
French agents typically used the American-made .38 Smith & Wesson revolver (Model 36) which has a two-inch snub-nosed barrel.
- p. 346: “a tracking mote”: A microchip transmitter employing passive radio frequency identification technology.  
This “bug” is about the size of a grain of rice.
- p. 346: “the Moroccan sandals”: Ironically the only part of the Moroccan disguise given Remy in the Rue Brazza flat which he had not discarded.
- p. 346: “PLO allies fucked up—an ‘inbred gift’ of theirs”: The wording is similar to what Remy said to Tinfingers on 16.261: “I’m afraid you’ve fucked up again, an inbred gift of you Plos.”  
In hiring the Palestinians to help in apprehending Remy in the Casbah, the French had obviously gotten this comment from the babbling Tinfingers.
- p. 346: swelter: Oppressive heat; turmoil; welter.
- p. 346: repocket: “to return to one’s pocket” (*Wiktionary*).
- p. 346: “keep naught from ‘myself’”: After Remy and Jacques had exchanged clothes, it was Devereaux who introduced the idea that each had become the double of the other: “The ‘doubles!’” (17.280) and “‘Mine eyes dazzle,’ confused as to which one they gaze upon” (17.282).
- p. 346: doppelgänger: The supposed ghostly double or wraith of a living person.  
Jacques’s denial that he is Remy’s double is ambiguous. He may be contending that unlike Remy who consented to become him, he never willingly assumed Remy’s character.  
It may also be a statement of his Francophile jingoism: An Algerian (Remy) would want to become a Frenchman, but a Frenchman such as Jacques would

necessarily feel that he has demeaned himself by assuming the role of an Algerian.

p. 346: “were retained as picadors, to lance, not to kill, you”: The bullfighting image balances the one used on 3.44.

One meaning of “lance” as a transitive verb is “to pierce with a lance.”

p. 346: Gaul: A Frenchman.

p. 346: “fag-end devil”: On 4.58, Foucin referred to Omar (Remy) as “the fag end of the traitors.”

Its note, N4:21, defines “fag end” as “the last and worst part of anything.”

Another character calls Remy a “devil.” See the 9.148 note, N9:34, which lists the characters who call him a devil.

- p. 347: “patronized”: The derivation of this word, the Latin *pater* (“father”), hints at the person being sent up, presumably to execute Remy.
- p. 347: “Send a traitor to catch a traitor”: A play upon the expression, “Send a thief to catch a thief.”  
According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*, its earliest English version dates from a 1665 play, “Set a thief to catch a thief.”  
See 4.54, where Remy discusses how he is like Ballard: “Dispatch a traitor to catch a fellow traitor.”  
The time is 5:29.
- p. 347: “That which had enticed the gay tourist”: Two minutes of silence pass; then Remy sees Mohammed walking up the hill toward him and Jacques.
- p. 347: “*une tête au-dessus de la foule*”: French for “a head above the crowd.”  
The description is based on the English adverbial idiom, “head and shoulders above the crowd.”
- p. 347: niveous-white: snowy-white.
- p. 347: *gandoura*: One of the traditional robes worn by Algerian men.
- p. 347: “gold stitching”: According to certain Hadiths, it is forbidden for Muslim men to wear gold jewelry.  
A few scholars add that by extension a male may not wear clothing that has been stitched with gold threads.  
I found this admonition not to be enforced in any Muslim country that I visited in the Middle East and North Africa. There gold-stitched garments are very popular.  
Even in ultraconservative Saudi Arabia, gold embroidery is used in its *thobe* (an outer-garment robe worn by Saudi men).
- p. 347: “cynically cyclical? The grandson of a traitor snares the last”: “Cyclical” recalls “the ragged circle” which the Seven Great Traitors made in the Marseille airport hangar on Apr. 13, 1961, and the bond they forged (2.32-33).  
That the grandson of old Belmazoir will bring the bond full circle, thus breaking its spell, Jacques asserts, is an affirmation of cynicism, a philosophical outlook which holds that people are motivated not by human bonds but by individual selfishness.
- p. 347: “popped in”: Again the pun on “father” is imposed by Remy’s subliminal translation.  
In French, which Jacques is speaking, “You ‘popped in,’” would be rendered, “*Vous avez fait une petite visite.*”

- p. 347: “to liberate the grandfather’s heir . . . transform him into Algeria’s Greatest (momentary) Hero”: Ostensibly Remy came to Algiers as an investigator to gain Mohammed’s freedom, but not only has he accomplished that, he will also turn the youth into a national hero, the slayer of the Seventh Traitor. However, de Larosière adds, in contrary Algeria all heroism is fleeting.
- p. 347: “*Five minutes from the clothing souk*”: The time is 5:32. At the pace they are walking the three will arrive at the garment souk in five minutes.
- p. 347: “*an escape, at best, ‘small-chanced’*”: On p. 334, in the Rue Brazza apartment Devereaux had used this wording to reassure Remy: “I’ve stationed four agents thereabouts in the small-chanced event you’re intercepted.”
- p. 347: ““M. Dev—””: Jacques catches himself before he speaks Devereaux’s full name to Mohammed.
- p. 347: ““Curb your felici—””: The image is from Hamlet’s dying speech: “Absent thee from felicity awhile” (5.2.349). The word is broken off by Mohammed’s spitting at and cursing Remy.
- p. 347: ““wholly vile””: As Remy translates Mohammed’s Arabic in his own mind, he initially misses the puns on “holy” and “vial,” the first hints that Mohammed’s insulting words carry an opposite meaning.
- p. 347: “at maledictive exclamation points exclusively in French”: “Maledictive” means “marked by cursing; invoking evil” (*Webster’s Third*). The French segments of Mohammed’s speech are placed in italics, and each ends with an exclamation point. These curses and threats Jacques can understand. However, in the other parts spoken in Arabic, which de Larosière believes are vituperations in that language, Mohammed explains how he came to realize that Remy had come to Algiers to fulfill a promise made twenty-eight years ago to his grandfather and the other five great traitors. Although the text does not report this development, it is to be assumed that when the French approached Tinfingers to seek his help in capturing Remy, Mohammed came forward to encourage the PLO leader to tell the French that it would be most appropriate for the grandson of a traitor to be involved in the capture of the last traitor. It would have been Leroy, by that time allied with the French, who would find it particularly mordant that Mohammed would be the executioner of Remy.
- p. 347: “*Heigh-ho*”: The interjection which can be used to express various emotions is here used in another of its meaning, “a way of greeting someone.”

- p. 347: “another boyhood lullaby”: The first one is “A garden beauty’s in his face” (15.241).
- p. 347: “a bond seven forged”: See 2.33.
- p. 347: “only one, the youngest, came”: See 2.31-32. Either Houda did not know or she omitted the detail that in 1972, the year Remy came to meet old Belmazoïr and his son Ahmed, there were only three of the seven traitors, excluding her grandfather, still alive.
- p. 347: “Into his lap, you tumbled, / A troth not unplighted”: A line from the song which Houda sang to Mohammed.  
He probably remembered something about the incident when he, a two year-old, had jumped into the lap of a masked stranger who had slipped into the back seat of his grandfather’s Audi (2.32).  
The song indicates that Houda had found out from her father who the stranger was and how he was the only one who had fulfilled his pledge by answering old Belmazoïr’s plea for help.
- p. 347: troth: one’s pledged word; promise.
- p. 347: unplighted: “Plight” means “to pledge or promise.”  
The expression, “plight one’s troth,” signifying either “to pledge one’s truth or one’s word” or “to make a promise of marriage,” is played upon here.  
Befitting a poem, “unplighted” is a neologism, meaning “unkept or unfulfilled.”
- p. 347: “Your identity exposed”: Ironically, only when Remy is revealed as a traitor does he become a hero to Mohammed, who now believes that he had tried to comfort his mother, save his sister, and after her death had stayed in Algiers to continue his efforts to free him.
- p. 347: “*You’ll lick my soles, the barrel at your brain!*”: The typical pun on “souls.”  
The image is reminiscent of Foucin’s account of how old Belmazoïr died: “I rounded the chair and fired one bullet above the occipital bone” (14.220).  
As he grew up, Mohammed would have been told how his grandfather died.
- p. 347: shitmonger: “one who mongs [deals] in shit, who is surrounded by shit, and possibly [is] shit too,” according to the online *Dictionary of Slang*.  
The online *Urban Dictionary* defines “shit monger” (two words) as “someone who enjoys ‘mongering’ shit. They enjoy hoarding it and/or eating this shit.”  
A “monger” is “one engaged in the sale of a commodity,” such as an ironmonger, or a person engaged in petty or discreditable dealings,” for instance, a scandalmonger (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 347: “No! More complicated!”: Remy tries to tell Mohammed that his explanation of what drove Remy’s actions in regard to the Belmazoïr family is too simplified.

- p. 347: “*Sowfucker!*”: Not listed in print or online dictionaries although a Google search turns up several references to “sowfucker.”  
The online *Urban Dictionary* lists “pigfucker” as “one who fucks pigs.”
- p. 347: “blood-bond”: On 4.52, in the DGSE telegram there was a fictitious reference that Remy had sealed a “blood-bond” with an orphanage friend.  
The merging of blood which Mohammed alludes to here is described on 18.312.  
For a summary of the bond theme in the novel, see the 15.253 note, N15:49-50.
- p. 347: “It must be now, or forever held”: See the passage from the “The Solemnization of Matrimony” from the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*: “Therefore if any man can shew any just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak or else hereafter forever hold his peace.”
- p. 347: “If not, curse me”: The curse Remy knows is designed to throw de Larosière’s off guard for a split second.
- p. 347: “*Maricón!*”: The pejorative Spanish word for “a homosexual or an effeminate man; queer; or faggot,” the last the translation used in the text.  
The Spanish term was used twice in chap. 9 (139 and 144).
- p. 347: spang: “a sharp loud often whining sound” as in “the spang of a ricocheting bullet” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Mohammed is to the right of Remy and Jacques. Hence, when he spits, the glob lands on the lobe of Remy’s right ear.  
He thrusts his body leftward, wedging his left side between the gun and Remy’s back.  
The word *spang* indicates that the bullet went through Mohammed’s left side into a falling Remy’s right shoulder blade, and then ricocheted off the pavement.
- p. 347: “the caustic myalgia beneath his right scapula”: This is Remy’s third wound.  
The importance of these four wounds is discussed in the essay at the end of the notes on this chapter, N20:80-82.
- p. 347: myalgia: A pain in a muscle or muscles.

- p. 348: murrey-red: A dark red. The color, which signals the lack of oxygen being transported, suggests that there is venous bleeding.  
The blood loss from such a wound, while slower and less copious than an arterial wound, still is substantial and can occur rapidly.
- p. 348: *talkie-walkie*: French for “walkie-talkie,” a portable radio transmitter and receiver.  
De Larosière is calling Devereaux to get instructions for this unforeseen betrayal by Belmazoir.
- p. 348: “a tentative circle”: Four times in the novel a group of people form an imperfect circle: 2.33 (the “ragged circle” of the traitors in the airport hangar); 9.151 (the “frayed circle” of the abashed women of Tizi Aimoula); here where the Casbah men converge on and beetle over the wounded Mohammed; and 21.353 (the “two-tiered ragged circle” formed by seven youths).  
See the 2.33 note on the concomitant image, “ragged circle,” N2:62-63.
- p. 348: “Anew our blood commingles”: Like Belmazoir on the previous page, Remy recalls the scene on 18.312 where his hands had clasped Mohammed’s as the guard struck them with the truncheon.  
On 18.309, Remy apostrophizes Mohammed, “*And has his [Foucain’s] blood mixed with yours?*”
- p. 348: “petitioning prayer”: Called *du’a* in Arabic. It is a prayer of supplication, which may be given at any time, in which a Muslim asks God for forgiveness or petitions Him for favors.
- p. 348: “He gasps that the man who shot him is the Seventh!”: In a last act of magnanimity, in order to protect Remy, Mohammed sends the Casbah men off in pursuit of Jacques by telling them that he is the seventh traitor.
- p. 348: “‘quite ‘leisurely’ . . . ‘skat[ed]’ . . . scratch[ing]”: Few poems excel Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” in examining suffering.  
The words in quotation marks are taken from his poem: “how everything turns away / Quite leisurely from the disaster” (14-15); “Children . . . skating on a pond” (7-8); and “the torturer’s horse / Scratches its innocent behind on a tree” (12-13).  
A minute past and a block away from the shooting, gossip has turned Mohammed’s heroic sacrifice and his life-and-death struggle into the exploding of a “firecracker.”
- p. 348: gamins: Street urchins.
- p. 348: squib: A firecracker that burns with a hissing, spurting noise before exploding.  
In many Muslim countries, children set off firecrackers in the hours leading up to and after the beginning of *Lailatul Qadr*.

Elaborate fireworks are often arranged by a neighborhood or the city. Both the individual and the communal fireworks are delightfully exhibited in the “*Lailatul Qadr*” episode of the Malaysian *Upin and Ipin* cartoon series.

p. 348: “Remy, as intent on his prayer [for Mohammed] as on his direction [the garment souk]”: This section ends at 5:37.

pp. 348-51: SECTION 8

p. 348: “A minute later”: This section opens at 5:38.

p. 348: “jagged halo of blood”: Two previous times a halo or circle of blood is mentioned, once involving his sister and the second his father: “a ragged circle in the blood” flowing from Noura’s pubes area (3.48) and “the ragged red circle” on the military coat made by a speck of blood shaken from his father’s mouth as he threw up (17.282).

p. 348: medius: “middle finger” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 348: “Time shortens!”: 1 Cor. 7:29 (KJV): “The time is short.”  
The time is still 5:38 when Remy enters the garment warehouse.

p. 348: tag: “label, identify, brand” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 348: “eighteen days ago during Remy’s initial visit”: On Apr. 14, Remy visited this clothing warehouse (10.156-59).

p. 348: “chaperons for the women shoppers”: For the first description of them, see 10.157.

p. 348: “dicelike”: Not listed in *Webster’s Third*. *Amer. Her. Dictionary* spells it thus; other sources hyphenate it, “dice-like.”

p. 348: “old fathers”: From the first line of Yeats’s “Pardon, Old Fathers.”

p. 348: quarter: “to defile (the body of a person put to death) by dismembering it or cutting it into quarters.”  
This method of execution was used in Europe and China, but the only Muslims who employed it, my research revealed, were the Moorish rulers of the Iberian Peninsula from 711 to 1492 C. E.

p. 348: “memorialized at that first excursion”: In his first visit to the warehouse, Remy “took a memorial bearing (seventh aisle from left, fifteenth table down, dubbing

the iron ring ungrammatically '*La Pointe de Laffiz*' to incorporate a salute to both Revolutionary heroes, Ali la Pointe and Engineer Brahim [Laffiz]" (10.159). See its note, N10:18, for the grammatical error.

p. 348: outstrip: "to leave behind; to go ahead of" (*Webster's Third*).

p. 348: *haik*: An outer robe worn by Algerian women.

p. 348: "At the stentorian voice": Forced by the three French agents, the manager of the garment warehouse bellows the command for the shoppers to leave.

p. 348: Beretta: This is the PAMAS-G1 pistol referred to on 19.329 and in its note, "silenced," N19:61. In 1987, it became the standard issue pistol of both the French military and police force.

- p. 349: “*Allahu Akbar!*”: “God is Great!”  
See the p. 343 note above, N20:52.
- p. 349: “With apparent surprise”: Remy is surprised because three paragraphs above (348) he was “certain” that the darkness was so thick in this area of the store that “he had outstripped” any other shoppers.  
This is the second and final use of a positive variation of the opening line/title of Dickinson’s poem, “Apparently with no surprise.”  
It was first employed on 16.272, N16:46.
- p. 349: pothor: “an uproar, commotion, fuss.”
- p. 349: ululation: “howling” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 349: jigger: “give a series of tugs on” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 349: palpate: “to examine by touching, as for medical diagnosis.”  
The word is meant to connect Remy’s search for an escape route with the method which Dr. Dahmani used in discovering Houda’s pregnancy: “I ‘labored’ simply by palpation” (18.303).
- p. 349: pick hole: A small opening on a manhole cover into which a finger or hook can be inserted to lift it.
- p. 349: “Rise like a gouty sun”: The word “rise” is taken from Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 29,” the first of three images from that poem: “Like to the lark at break of day arising” (11).  
The phrase “gouty sun” was derived from a mingling of words from the early lines of two of Donne’s poems: “Busy old fool, unruly sun,” (“The Sun Rising,” 1) and “Or chide my palsy, or my gout” (“The Canonization,” 2).
- p. 349: tenebrosity: “darkness” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 349: eyeshot: “the range of the eye; the distance that the eye can see; sight” (*Webster’s Third*).  
Given the darkness, Remy knows that he cannot see the tunnel. He can know it only by touch.
- p. 349: “heaven’s gate”: From “Sonnet 29”: “From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven’s gate” (12).  
The tunnel will be Remy’s means of escape (figuratively his gate to earthly salvation).
- p. 349: braille: Usually lowercased as a verb, it means “to print or transcribe using the Braille system.”

The word ties back to the Braille Qur'an which Remy gave to his father (17.278, 290, and 292; 19.317; and 20.342).

Here, it is figuratively used to indicate that Remy's fingers transliterated the points of the gravel alphabet into the realization that the tunnel had been sealed.

- p. 349: "sullen earth": See two notes above, l. 12 of "Sonnet 29."
- p. 349: "Brahim, Khaleel, Djouher": His three University of Algiers' friends who had worked on the tunnel and had been killed the month after its completion in a demonstration.  
See the p. 346 note above on Laffiz, N20:62.
- p. 349: "a Berber!": On the prejudice of most Arab Algerians toward Berbers, see the 19.321 note, N19:31.
- p. 349: uglify: to make ugly; disfigure.
- p. 349: "*Au revoir, Révolution! . . . Au revoir, Ramadan!*": To a dismayed and now desperate Remy, the sealing up of the tunnel meant the end (or a "goodbye to") the Algerian Revolution and what it stood for.  
The clause "that some robbers—*Au revoir, Ramadan!*—would mole through" recalls the wife's cry "Robbers in Ramadan!" (343) and Remy's echo of it (345).  
It also seemingly contradicts Leila's assertion that "*Lailatul Qadr*," the 27<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, being "our 'Night of Greatness'" would be a "favorable time" for Remy's escape from Algiers (19.330).  
The time is 5:42 so only four minutes have passed since Remy entered the clothing warehouse.
- p. 349: "*M. Pauvre Diable*": "Mr. Poor Devil." The French expression, *les pauvres diables* was used On 2.22 by the "TV interviewer," supposedly quoting de Gaulle's description of the fate of the 100,000 Muslim Algerians who had supported the French. Most of them were killed by the FLN victors.  
As the 2.22 note, N2:30-31, clarifies, the phrase was actually used by de Gaulle as early as 1959 in referring to the French settlers in Algeria.  
Remy realizes that his life has come full circle. On 2.22, the interviewer (a persona of Remy himself) states that he had been "spared the fate of the one hundred thousand minor *collaborateurs*." Now he realizes that he has not.
- p. 349: *ratonnade*: As defined in the text, "a rat-sweep," in which French settlers or soldiers would randomly target for attack Muslim residents in Algiers.  
The French word for "rat" is *rat*.  
*Ratonnade* was first used on 3.37.
- p. 349: obtestation: humble request.

- p. 349: “plugged with bullets”: Redundant since a slang meaning of “plug” is “to shoot a bullet into.”
- p. 349: *une femme de cinquante ans*: “a woman of about fifty.”  
Playfully, each of the Arab speakers will be denominated in French, although Remy would only be guessing.
- p. 349: *un vieillard*: An old man.
- p. 349: “*Wallahee!*”: “By God!” or “I swear by God!”
- p. 349: “away you snat—”: “snatch.” The speaker argues that his best present for Ramadan would be to eyewitness the Berber being gunned down.
- p. 349: *la lamentation d’un adolescent*: “the complaint of a teenager.”
- p. 349: Black-Madonna: For the reference to the Black Madonna of Le Puy, see 2.23 and its note, N2:34, and to the one in Algiers, see 6.82 and its note, N6:2-3.

- p. 350: peccavi: A confession of sin or guilt.
- p. 350: halloo: to shout or call out in order to attract the attention of (a person).
- p. 350: “I’m the Seventh Traitor!”: The time is 5:45.
- p. 350: pell-mell: headlong.
- p. 350: “*Putain de merde!*”: French for “Whore of shit!”
- p. 350: “‘niggered’”: A neologism for “black.”  
 The vulgarism “nigger” has been used as a verb, perhaps most prominently by George Wallace, the future governor of Alabama, who in 1959 said, “I was out-niggered, and I will never be out-niggered again,” in characterizing how his opponent had won an election by accusing Wallace of being a Negrophile. The online *Urban Dictionary* lists the meaning of the verb “nigger” as to “cheat” someone.  
 Neither captures the meaning employed here by Marcel, which uses the etymology of the word, the Latin adjective *niger* (black).  
 The vulgarism “nigra” was previously used on 2.21 and 3.46. See the note on the latter, N3:29.
- p. 350: “the Fifth Republic”: The fifth and current republican constitution of France which was established at de Gaulle’s insistence in an election on Oct. 4, 1958. It strengthened the president at the expense of France’s parliament.
- p. 350: “black hole”: See the 3.42 note, “wormhole,” N3:22, where this astronomical term is discussed in reference to a wormhole.  
 “Black hole” is used by Mohammed on 6.82 (twice) and 84 (twice) and by Remy on 6.85 and 91. See the 6.82 note, “*trou noir*,” N6:3.  
 On 11.180, the expression is used by Medlin to describe his being lost in the Casbah.  
 On 14.225, as examined in its note, N14:24, “black hole” is employed by Remy to delineate his discovery that Mohammed and Houda had been tricked into sleeping with each other.  
 And on 15.243, Mohammed says that he went to smoke his weed in “our black-hole toilet” at the prison.
- p. 350: antipodal: “diametrically opposite” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 350: “Ten dinars . . . twenty . . . fifty . . . one hundred”: Approximately US\$1, \$2, \$5, and \$10.
- p. 350: “*lampe de poche*”: French for “flashlight.”  
 The Arabic that Roland was searching for is *battariyya* or *mish‘al kahraba’i*.

- p. 350: “*flèche du Parthe . . . en français*”: As translated in the text, French for a “parting shot.”  
Literally, a “Parthian shot” or “any hostile gesture or remark made in leaving: Parthian cavalymen usually shot at the enemy while retreating or pretending to retreat.”  
However, “parting shot” appears in English prior to “Parthian shot”; therefore some scholars hold that they have different derivations while others contend that the earlier usages were simply a confusion of “Parthian” and “parting.”
- p. 350: “charcoal matter”: Remy paraphrases Ghazi’s reference to the “black matter” of one’s brain, his confusion with “gray matter” (12.198 and 199).  
Tinfingers (or Foucin in mocking the PLO chief) also mixes up the two on 16.271.
- p. 350: *à sa droite*: French for “to his right.”
- p. 350: WT: The military and governmental abbreviation for “walkie-talkie.”  
My research produced no French abbreviation for *talkie-walkie*.
- p. 350: “a five-tone burst”: The sound given off by a walkie-talkie indicating that a user has an incoming message, comparable to the ring of a telephone.  
The call comes at 5:50.
- p. 350: “Chief”: Devereaux.
- p. 350: Plos: The plural of the derogatory one-syllable word referring to Palestinians.  
It rhymes with “grows.”  
See the 1.12 note, N1:33-34.
- p. 350: “a pair of FLIRs”: Night-vision goggles. Although the goggles are first mentioned on 1.3, the military term FLIRs is not used until 8.132.  
It is on the next page that Medlin explains the meaning of the acronym, “Forward Looking Infrareds.”  
The time is 5:53; Remy has been in the warehouse for about fifteen minutes.
- p. 350: “guffaws augmented by merely one other’s”: Marcel’s unnamed partner in the search for Remy.
- p. 350: “Jacques’s my *double*”: Jacques had said to Remy, “You’re my doppelgänger—yet I, not yours” (346).  
Remy notes that ironically Jacques has now become his double, the Seventh Traitor.  
See the 20.346 note above on “doppelgänger,” N20:63-64.
- p. 350: “And no menacing Palestinians. *Good’s* converting into *better*”: A characteristic of Palestinians is always to add something better to an

acknowledged good proposal or action, according to Remy (16.259, 262, 263 and 274) and Leroy (20.339).

See the 16.259 note, N16:8, which indicates that the observation is based on my personal experiences from teaching in the Middle East and offers a justification for this Palestinian attitude.

p. 350: skitter: “scurry” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 350: tanged: as an intransitive verb, “to make a harsh ringing sound” (*Webster’s Third*).

p. 350: scuffling: The act or sound of feet shuffling.

p. 350: “I was frozen as Satan, afr— . . . afraid as Satan to budge”: During Ramadan, “the rebellious devils are chained” and “the gates of Hell are closed,” according to the Hadiths of Al-Tirmidhi 1962 and Al-Bukhari 1077.

*Shaitan* (Satan) and his followers are not able to move about to lead to sin some Muslims who might be weakened by daytime fasting.

The Algerian woman here is metaphorically referring to Satan as “frozen,” unable to roam about and do evil.

Dante’s Satan, however, is buried waist-high in the frozen lake of Dis in the ninth circle of hell (canto 34 of the *Inferno*).

The woman’s crying out occurs at 5:55.

p. 350: spoor: As a transitive verb, “to trace or track an animal by the trail or spoor it leaves.”

Here metaphorically the trail is the aural sound of the woman’s footsteps.

p. 350: “aping a bitch’s pitch”: The French agent thought that Remy had altered his voice to sound like a woman’s.

- p. 351: “I’m . . . bathed in neon! . . . I’m no devil (he- or she-)!”: A wordplay on Remy as the last devil.
- p. 351: vanward: toward the front.
- p. 351: bodkin: The narrow beams of light coming through the garments are compared ominously to the blade of a dagger or stiletto.
- p. 351: peephole: See the 3.42 note, N3:21-22, which lists the ten times in seven chapters in which the “peephole” image appears: 3.42, 46, 48, and 50; 4.62; 6.87; 12.197; 15.256; 16.260; and here 20.351.
- p. 351: forepart: The forward or anterior part of something.
- p. 351: guttural: harsh, rasping.
- p. 351: barrack: As an intransitive verb, “jeer; shout derisively” (principally an Australian football term).
- p. 351: “Casbah ‘brothers’ net me!”: More immediately, this is drawn from p. 345 where Remy said, “My brother Casbahians spring to my rescue.” However, see 5.75, where Remy notes that in Algeria, “‘Brother,’ as oft as not carries the implication, ‘Brother enemy.’”
- p. 351: “‘net’ me””: The image was used on the first page of this chapter: “He [Leroy] has cast ‘the net’ that sought to ‘enmesh them all’” (332). Its note, N20.4, indicates that the words in quotes are taken from *Othello* 2.3.355-56.
- p. 351: “I can somehow elu—“: Remy’s word “elude” is cut short as is his idea that he can outwit and therefore escape from the Casbahians.
- p. 351: “Beretta, ‘for it gives off its own glint’”: Just like the *douk-douk* that killed Ballard: “he caught, since it gives off its own light, the glint of the dagger” (1.14). The phrasing is also used by Mohammed on 15.243.
- p. 351: “red-and-black lava of Le Puy”: Remy at once conjures up the image of Marie and him hiking among the red and black lava of the high broad plateau dotted by its four puyes or volcanic outcrops.  
This igneous rock formed from the hardened lava is polychromatic granite, but red and black are stressed here, representing generally life and death and specifically Stendhal’s colors for religion (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in my novel) and the military (the French-Algerian War).  
See 2.23 and its note, N2.34, for a description of the puyes.

- p. 351: “Where’s M. Foucin and his ‘Why M. Lazar,’ now when I most require him”: Ironically Remy, who earlier in the chapter (344, 346, and two paragraphs above this paragraph where he thinks, “If Foucin doesn’t arrive”) had dreaded Foucin’s involvement, now wishes that he would magically appear, saying, “Why M. Lazar,” as he did on 7.108, 12.194, 13.203, and 16.264. Its final use will occur on 21.359.
- p. 351: ratching click: The verb “ratch” means to “turn (as a tool) by or as if by a ratchet and pawl.”  
When a shooter clicks the trigger to fire a gun, the pawl attached to the trigger pushes on a ratchet to rotate the cylinder.  
This action produces the sound of the ratchet clicking.
- p. 351: “the teeth of a listing smile”: A contorted smile, that is, a grin tilting to one side.
- p. 351: “too fleetingly even for the angels Munkar and Nakir to call to account”: This is the fourth and last reference to Munkar and Nakir, the angels who interrogate the recently deceased, usually in his/her grave, to determine how the person will spend the buried interval between death and Judgment Day: 3.41 (and its note, N3:18); 17.289 and 291; and here, 20.351.  
At this point Remy is not concerned with the questioning of the angels since many of the “thousand other faces” are those of acquaintances still alive.  
The reference is meant to emphasize how quickly the images are passing through his mind—their progress so quick that even the accounting angels Munkar and Nakir could not “count” them.  
The *count/account* figure of speech is present for the sake of the same pun that Whitman uses in the contrasting “figures” (2) and “unaccountable” (5) of “When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer.”
- p. 351: anthropocentricity: “a theory that considers man to be the central or most significant fact of the universe” (*Webster’s Third*), and by extension, each individual the measure of all things.  
The concept is discussed by Remy on 5.74-75.
- p. 351: “déclassé, Third-World jeans”: At numerous points in the novel, Remy stresses his obsession with his dress, “a French appropriation” which had become a part of “his Algerian heritage” (2.28).  
See 4.66; 5.74-75; 6.87 and 95-97; 7.104; 8.118; 10.153-54; 12.187 and 197; 13.214; 15.247; 16.264; 17.283; 19.319 and 324; and 20.333.
- p. 351: “bark of a pistol”: a “sharp loud explosive sound” such as “a cough or a pistol shot” (*Webster’s Third*).  
The bottle struck Roland in the head with a “crunching thud,” causing the bullet to miss Remy.

- p. 351: “felt his neck jabbed by a shard of glass”: This is the third and last use of the shard image, previously employed on 3.48 and 8.124. Their notes, N3:33 and N8:19, point out that the word was taken from *Hamlet* where the Priest tells Laertes that because his sister had committed suicide, “shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her” (5.1.231). Remy’s fourth wound parallels the fatal knife wound made in Ballard’s carotid artery on 1.14. The significance of the four wounds and their parallel with those of Christ will be discussed in an essay following the next three notes, N20:80-82.
- p. 351: crest: As a transitive verb, it means “crown” in its sense of “surmount.”
- p. 351: “the Coke bottle”: The “spinning Coke bottle” being used by the teenage chaperons in their “roulette” game mentioned on p. 348. This chapter ends at 6 p.m.

### **REMY’S WOUNDS COMPARED WITH CHRIST’S**

Except for the trial-run self- or friend-assisted wounding described on 3.40, Remy (as Omar) experienced no physical wounds early in his life. At *Les Tombeaux* (41), the torture he expected to be inflicted upon himself was shifted to his “sister,” his torture there and thereafter being mental, not physical.

In Le Puy, the physical wounds described are those of Snooks, their cat (15.239) or Marie’s (for instance, the pricking of her thumb on 8.128). Throughout their marriage she seemed to have labored to shield Remy from pain: On 16.263, Remy speaks of her “even in the years of neglect” “shelter[ing]” him from physical “violence,” this negligence mentioned earlier on 2.17.

His father’s physical suffering (paralysis, blindness, and tuberculosis) during his later years is far greater emphasized than Remy’s pain.

However, starting with Chap. 16 and continuing until the end of the novel, the physical wounding of Remy will be stressed. The two blows against his back (16.363-64) were designed to imitate the flogging of Christ on his way to the cross. Significantly during the scene at the Palestinian camp, Remy identifies himself as a Jew: “Strike . . . as if I were a Jew!” (263)

In Chapter 18, the blow against his right hand (he used this bandaged hand to open the door of the car on p. 309) or both hands (since he had put them in danger, his right over Mohammed’s left and his left over Mohammed’s right on p. 312) again has a Christian significance, the nailing of Christ’s hands to the cross.

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At this point Remy connects Mohammed's (or any person's) suffering with that of his family: Noura's, his father's, and his mother's: "The blades of the cornstalks were slashing Noura's face, and the vile claws of Foucin were jellying his father's blind eyes. Through the georgette gauze eternally pleaded his mother, 'Forgive! Forgive!'" (18.312).

In Chapter 20, during his attempt to escape from the French and Palestinians, Remy receives four wounds. In the early drafts of the novel, he had three, to parallel vaguely the three areas where Christ was wounded: the side, the lower body, and the upper body. (Of course, the true reference is to Christ's five wounds since the two feet and two hands are counted separately, with the spear wound being the fifth.)

However, at the end of Chapter 20 (351), I could not resist having a shard of glass from the broken Coke bottle nick Remy's neck near his left carotid artery as a correspondence to the blade of the knife which pierced Ballard's carotid on 1.14. Therefore in chapter 21, twice Remy refers to his four wounds: "I'm four times wounded" (353) and "the four-times wounded" (367).

In chapter 20, Remy's first wound comes from Tinfingers' *douk-douk* penknife which was jabbed into Remy's right side (342). Remy describes this wound as being "a nick" (344).

The second wound comes from a similar penknife wielded by one of the Palestinians, which pierced "Remy's right flank" (345). The third wound is inflicted by Jacques's .38, the bullet entering just beneath Remy's "right scapula" (348).

Additionally, in one late revision (after the fourth wound was added), I incorporated words to attempt to parallel Remy's four wounds with "the four wounds inflicted on the whole of human nature as a result of our first parents' sins," Aquinas's summary of Bede's list in *Summa Theologica*, Question 85 ("The Effects of Sin"), Art. 3.

According to Aquinas, Bede (whose text has not come down) had listed the four wounds as (1) the wound of ignorance, (2) the wound of malice, (3) the wound of weakness, and (4) the wound of desire or concupiscence.

In my novel, as I ridiculously worked it out, Remy's fourth wound is struck ignorantly since the thrower of the Coke bottle had no intention to hurt Remy, his target being the Frenchman Roland. Tinfingers, however, struck with malice aforethought, although his intent was simply to immobilize not kill Remy (the first wound).

The second wound was the result of a desperate and hence weak penknife thrust by one of the Palestinian pursuers.

The third wound (the bullet from Jacques's .38) was the result of the Frenchman's intense desire to hurt Remy. His steel-like sarcasm toward and hatred of Remy are manifestations of Camus's idea that "only guns have souls" from "The Renegade" in *Exile and the Kingdom* (1976 ed.), p. 51.

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Fortunately, I realized the artificiality of the scheme. Thus *most* verbal representatives of it are removed. After all, Aquinas fairly well demolished Bede's scheme by showing that it confuses cause and effect; that is, ignorance, malice, weakness, and concupiscence are causes of sin not their effects (wounds).

The lesson which I learned: A writer should not be ashamed of confessing to blind ends and to the numerous hours she or he trudged to get to them.