

Chapter Two

A NIGHT AT TRIMALCHIO'S

*Five-foot Thai—
What a guy!—
An extra foot
Against his thigh.
Has anybody seen my Thai?*

*My private stock,
Kept under lock,
He put the cock
Back in ole Bangkok.
Has anybody seen my Thai?*

*Koochee-koo, koochee-kee
His cock hangs clear to his knee!
Has anybody seen my Thai?*

Remy Montpellier had cast his eyes downward almost as soon as the stage lights came up at Trimalchio's Feast. Still he had caught a glimpse of a nude teenage Oriental, twirling his limp penis while he danced around a middle-aged Western man. Seated in a wicker chair and dressed in an open maroon terry cloth bathrobe, he was doing the singing or more correctly, Remy quickly realized, the lip-syncing.

"Just like HIV," he added, fixing his stare on the program:

Trimalchio's offers the following Savory Feast:

- I. A Bangkok-alota*
- II. An Old Queen's Lament*
- III. An Orgy with Georgie*
- IV. A Modest Proposal to Relieve the Abominable
Plight of Third-World Urchins*

*The programme will be reprised on the hour.
No gratuities, please.*

HIV, who had become his case officer (“*contact*”) in 1981, “delighted” in scheduling their rendezvous in places that would embarrass him: Last year’s was in a bathhouse in Amsterdam’s De Wallen district. Since HIV had hustled in late, “as he will tonight,” he had endured an hour and a half of fending off eucalyptus-oiled petitioners.

Brought in a brown paper bag, the 123,000 franc notes, Remy’s *pourboire* (“tip”), got thoroughly sodden, for HIV delayed handing over the money until he had circumnavigated the room—“*nota bene*-ing,” he denominated this readjusting of his towel before the stewing clientele.

On surrendering the money, he leaned his florid face close and, with a shake of his head, which sprinkled some beads of perspiration from his chin onto Remy’s, whispered, “If in this steam we ‘poof,’ two others we kill—your wife and mine—of shame. I hope France appreciates our sacrificial service.”

“Marie.” Remy, with his gaze on the program’s word *Lament*, remembered how two days ago she, turning from him, had protested, “And I’m to be here alone!” Had he informed her four years earlier, the twenty-third of their marriage, that he must attend a bookfair in London, she would have shrugged. However, after the wedding of Claudia, who, like her older sister, had postmatrimonially moved from Le Puy, Marie rediscovered Remy.

Her *livre de cuisine* stowed away in a kitchen drawer was month by month augmented until twenty-nine decorated a beetling over-the-countertop shelf. Now when Remy left for work, she, who had as often as not neglected to bid him adieu, tucked a rosebud in his lapel’s *boutonnière* and, hooking her arm through his, walked him the eight blocks to the library.

“Perhaps your sister from Châteauroux can visit,” Remy had tried to allay her.

“You’d compound my misery. I’m to spend four days at Caroline’s beck and call. No.” He decided against suggesting a sojourn to Claudia’s or Françoise’s, for the proposal would merely reinforce her certainty that he would leave on this trip and not return: a fear of being abandoned—the inescapable *brader*.

She’s admitting that she desires to minister only to me. And he accepted the guilt for having incited this privileged divulgence. Taking and patting her hand, he slipped his palm into hers and squeezed.

Before their marriage, when he was a clerk and she a book-pocket typist at the Le Puy library, they never spoke of “love.” Belaboring her background, she had expected him to do the same. Her Jewishness was confessed, “although preceding the Nazi Occupation my shrewd parents put aside that minority, ‘Weber’ converted to ‘Dufoix.’ Should God favor us with children, they’ll be reared Catholic, the religion which saw us through the war.”

He recited the *arrière-garde* the French *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage* had bestowed on him.

From his hand to hers he endeavored to pass the tenderness he felt, not simply to assuage her at that moment but to convey as well his gratitude for her ample sustenance over the course of twenty-three years of neglect and three of attention. After Algeria, he had yearned for quiet companionship, and that she had provided.

“You will come back,” she spoke timidly, afraid of her words, “in four days?”

Remy, who had “‘abandon[ed] all,’ (save my life)” twenty-eight years ago, had

assured her, "Yes, and before if possible. You know I never am in comfort apart from you."

2

*Ain't nobody loves my body,
I wonder why.
Won't somebody want my body,
Before I die?
I'm creeping up on eighty,
And still ain't snagged a matey.
Won't somebody want my body,
Before I die?*

"And what will you have, sir? It's designated a complimentary, albeit given our thirty-pound-sterling *couvert*, do you esteem you've been complimented?"

A medium-height man in his mid-twenties, attired in a silk cherry-red vest and emerald-green denim cutoffs, looked down at Remy. As he inclined his blond head and muscular frame, for balance he placed his right palm on the table of the semicircular diamond-tufted booth.

Not allowing Remy the opportunity to respond, he continued familiarly, "I see you find Trimalchio's tablecloth more amusing than our 'Feast.' We used to mount voluptuous parodies of Donne's songs and Spenser's madrigals, with delicate, languid boys, who as slow-paced as a Roman imperial procession maundered into commercial nudity, but now all's reduced to hurly-burly travesty. Trimalchio's has degenerated."

Drawing away from Remy, he glared at the stage eight tiers below. There, Remy, once more not fleet enough, discerned a very old man, every part shriveled and sunken, executing a fan dance while seven nude striplings in the backdrop jeered, "Won't somebody want his body / Before he dies?"

Sonless and stuffed in a loft in Algiers' stifling Casbah, my father, my father, Remy inwardly moaned, averting his eyes from the spectacle, *what have I brought you to?*

"And this crisscross I have to bear every night!" Remy glanced up, sensing the waiter had reinterposed his trunk. "You're meeting someone."

"Someone," Remy started to agree, but substituted, "A friend."

"I thought as much. Not many ascend to my rear-wall ninth circle unless their basket already contains the promise of 'joy o' the worm.' Most drool to be abutting the stage. At any rate, too copiously I 'chat you up.' Your quaff, kind sir? You're French."

"Not at all. Satan's Whiskers," Remy paused, "curled," and subjoined, "*Merci*," which prompted a self-congratulatory smile from the departing waiter.

Maybe HIV would bring news that another had "expired." (The deaths of three—by decapitation, flaying, and dismemberment—TV and print had blazoned.) If so, it would mean the final increase in the *pourboire*.

Nothing in his contact's face—yet under the wide-brimmed black hat and behind the false beard scant of it could be detected—had intimated that the sixth of the "devils," as Ben Bella (Algeria's first president) had dubbed the seven traitors, had encountered a

“timely or untimely succumbence.”

Still HIV did come early: Last Monday his secretary entered to announce “a complaint from a—” Before she could finish, a man in the habit of a Hasidic rabbi shoved past her.

“*C’est pornographie!*” He slung the library’s copy of Petronius’s *Satyricon* onto Remy’s desk, whirled, and stormed out. After Martine’s exit, Remy, who had assumed the directorship of Le Puy’s library in ’83, leafed through the book until he located the memo typed on an orange Post-it: “London, 6 April, 10 p.m., Trimalchio’s Feast.”

There had been seven, Remy’s contemplation reverted to the number, flown out of Algiers six months previous to *the* General’s dictate that an accord at Évian, Switzerland, must be thrashed out “to rid me of this adulterous two-bit war (*‘affaire de quatre sous’*).” If Remy had calculated the burgeoning of his *pourboire* correctly, one beside himself remained.

At the last increment four years ago, HIV had scoffed at his suspicion. “No! No! Why such a linkage would have had you plotting one another’s assassination long ago. Or betraying each other to the Algerians, and let them do the killing for you.”

Remy credited de Gaulle himself with instituting the bond. In his early years at Le Puy, he imagined the scene: *The* General intoned, wagging his finger at the chief of counterespionage, “They have served France,” perhaps half-pivoting to cast his shadow on a Delacroixian portrait of some Napoleonic general, forgotten by all but not by him.

“Never again let me—and pray my legatees feel as I do—hear utilized that malediction *traître*. A prodigal 22,753 French soldiers died in that *sans-foi, sans-loi, sans-espoir* war. Without these seven, multiply that by at least two. France and many a French family owe a kingly ransom to these so cavalierly misnomered *traîtres*.”

“It’s begun afresh, the past as ‘the specious present,’ as the *‘nunc-stans* [“eternal now”],’ or that which ‘as always, stretch[s] before us,’” with self-disdain Remy murmured, the disconnecting ritual which every year when he embarked on his hajlike journey to collect his *pourboire* he vowed he would not reenact, knowing that the maze would lead to Noura, a confrontation of brother and sister.

But HIV came so early this year. Unawares I was taken, he whined to himself, attempting to excuse, yet not hinder, the ruminations which would drown out the prerecorded music and lip-synced words of Trimalchio’s Feast.

3

*Ain’t no petah
That is sweetah
Than Big Black Georgie Brown’s.
And that ain’t all,
Two big black balls
Just bouncin’ aroun’.*

*Georgie blew into Ms. San Fran;
All the guys cooed, “That’s a man, man!”
When he unzipped,*

*They mint-juleped,
"Big Black Georgie Brown!"*

*His cock, it just don't stop.
Its bottom can't spy its top.
Min. fourteen inches,
Guess that clinches
It. He's big Black Georgie Brown.*

"The 'Ethiop' isn't really humping him, not in Maw Thatcher's 'green & pleasant Land.'" The waiter placed the cocktail glass in front of Remy, who had rested his head against the alternating dark cherry and viridian rhombuses of the booth's neck roll. "We have to ass-sync, just as we lip-sync. In the next serving, some pubescent teens romp about." He whickered. "The youngest is a ripe twenty-three!"

Reaching for his wallet, Remy intended to tip a five-pound note. "No *pourboire*, *s'il vous plaît*. As strictly forbidden at Trimalchio's as at Gilbert and Sullivan's Savoy." To himself, Remy quipped, "*Pourboire* for the traitor, but not for the waiter."

The server paused, transmitting the impression that what was to be imparted was rehearsed. "You're quite handsome. I suspect you didn't willingly venture here." With his eyes deflected, he scanned the miniature amphitheater, nodding as if counting each table: the ten crammed together nearest the stage, then the twelve, fourteen, seventeen, twenty, twenty-three, twenty-seven, thirty-one of tiers two through eight.

In the fifteen-booth ninth, to Remy's extreme left were hunched down two bloom-faded *petits-mâtres* ("dandies"), who were tiding their faces toward, merely to suck back from, the mouth of an older distinguished pilgarlic.

"They pilgrimage to Trimalchio's 'burning sands' in quest of what cannot be found, yet that they know, and still they trek . . . in search of the son, Perfect Son, or the father, 'Our Father which art,' *le père*, *Le Père Parfait*, Poppa 2. Look! On the stage! The swarthy one's bugging Papa now! Not really: ass-syncing. Yes, really! A transubstantiating fuck! *Regardez! Regardez!*"

The blond waiter, his ecstasy abruptly vanished, was staring wide-eyed not at the stage, but at Remy. "I am the messenger. A *garçon* in the second tier buttoned my hole while I was fetching your drink and chirred, 'Here's a whirlwind message from a *donna angelicata* in my circle to the Ugolino in yours: "Sweetmeat," he grouched, "you bedeck the stage with 'pretty dimpled boys,' but retrally situate the handsome man.'" So 'tis not I who christen you *très beau*."

"HIV" was Remy's celeritous thought. "My friend enjoys his joke. Which table?" He was already skimming the arc of the second row.

"Notwithstanding, you are. *La troisième à gauche*. The one twisting his head our way. A jejune British earl, full of 'more pounds / Than the Queen can shit.' That's not your friend, I think, Poppa 2, Poppa 2."

"No." Stone-heavy the word emerged. It would be a protracted stay, *for the devil appoints his own time. Not 'world enough' to get to Noura*, Remy foretold. *Still there are others in the maze.*

“My name is Saul. Let not the flaxen hair—beloved by even the dark-bearded Jewish father since it catches the rose-tipped light of dawn—fool you. Beforehand I inform you, in case your ‘mate’ doesn’t show: My penis is *circoncis*. Some don’t fancy the ‘snipped-in-the-bud.’ And I would not deceive you . . . *mon père*.”

But Remy’s eyes were tightened, and he was heedless to the blond dawn being touted, the foreskinless penis being confessed, and the waiter’s familiarity. “No! No!” he shouted a remonstrance only he heard—although it overwhelmed the din of Trimalchio’s. “If I made that trip, without stipulating he would impose a haj on me, a second, a third, a fourth.”

His piece said, Remy snapped open his eyes. Saul had disappeared.

4

*Ain't no honky's,
Ain't no donkey's,
 'S big as Big Black Georgie Brown's.
His damn ding-dong
Out-apes King Kong's,
 Big Black Georgie Brown's.*

*Georgie winged to Holey Roma,
Turned the Pope into a homo.
Poppa was ecstatic
When he sat with
 Big Black Georgie Brown.
Poppa humphed, “Fuck the rock!
I'll build my Kingdom on this cock!
It's much neatah
With a new See of Petah:
 Big Black Georgie Brown's.”*

*Not just Cath'lics, each Protestant
Proclaimed his cock as Heaven-sent.
Preacher Graham
Boomed, “God damn!
 Boy, that boy is hung!”
Rev'rend Roberts d'livered the moral,
“Though I like anal, not oral,
A night with Georgie
'S better than an orgy:
 He's got me speakin' in tongue.”
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,
Georgie came to earth to please us.
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,
 He's got us speakin' in tongues.*

"So the last time you saw your father, you don't wish to begin with."

Emphatically Remy wagged his head.

"You recognize it has an obvious, tie-in with the song. The Pope. Poppa. 'Boy, that boy is hung,' though few of our TV viewers will catch it, undeniably refers to the Son's crucifixion: 'Comedown from the cross.' We have some capital footage of the nigra assyncing the Methuselah (another father figure)—ha-ha, the one whose body nobody wanted—miter-adorned in this number.

"Some—admittedly here I may be free-basing—might connect it with how you fucked over your family. We're a visual medium, y'know: 'S what we do best."

"No."

The man—who, of course, was not there, for Remy was again gazing at Trimalchio's red green-bordered tablecloth, resigned to waiting for HIV—to indicate his disgruntlement pushed his right medius against the nose arch of his dark-brown horn-rimmed glasses, previous to running the fingers of that hand through his wavy brunet hair. ("Did he select the frames to match the hair, or dye it to coordinate with them?")

He flipped through some index cards on which Remy could espy neat, double-spaced typed lines. "The flight from Algiers?"

"Fine."

"In a journal interview last year you divulged that a dearth of camaraderie prevailed."

"The only passengers on the military transport, we could have sat apart, yet aligned ourselves, birds on the same branch before migration, side-by-side."

"Your name was Omar then. A law student at the University of Algiers—despite the insurrection, ten percent of its enrollment was still reserved for Muslims—and . . ."

"All the six I'd encountered at various clandestine meetings over the past three years . . ."

". . . the protégé of Si Azzedine, the FLN—'*Front de Libération nationale*'—military commander of *Wilaya* ('Province') IV, circling Algiers, until his capture near the end of 1958. Have anything to do with that?"

He smirked at Remy prior to glancing at the elevated control room, flanked by two spotlights. "Round up a shot of him," he called. "He may be filed under his non-nom de guerre, Rabah Zerrari."

As if his concentration had never forsaken Remy, he proceeded, "Despite your youth, he had 'an absolute trust' in you. Not a good reader of men's faces, eh?"

". . . arguing for this or that plan of action. In my egoism, I'd conceived I was alone. The revelation of being merely one among seven collaborationists both diminished and exaggerated the guilt I felt. It was a comfort to be linked with confederates equally liable. However, with my evil no longer 'walking invisible' but unveiled, a shame as awful as the guilt set in. One chain broken, another snakelike formed."

"New skin for old," his inquisitor grinned. "You were commenting on 'this or that' stratagem."

"I—and I infer each of them—had a French *surveillant* ('handler') to whom was passed . . ." Remy flicked his right hand at the lavender cusp of the candle flame illuminating Trimalchio's program. "Mine always contrived to protect me although it had sometimes entailed a family of French Algerian settlers had to be consigned to massacre."

"You're far too self-effacing. *Mon Dieu*, my man, under four months after you, so close to the top cadre of the FLN, launched your 'double cross'—how Christ never leaves us!— in a single day in March we eliminated the leaders of two *wilayaat*"—he mimicked Remy's dismissing stroke—"Kabylie's III and the Sahara's VI. With such help is it any wonder that by the middle of '59, we'd contained the *dérangement algérien*?"

"*Hélas!* the tide turned in '61. Still you and your six compatriots well deserved to be flown to safety, spared the fate of the one hundred thousand minor *collaborateurs*, whom under the Évian accords the victorious FLN was committed to protect."

He shuffled through the notes. "How did you designate them three years ago? '*Les pauvres diables.*' No, 'poor devils' was de Gaulle's compassionate branding. Ah, here 'tis. '*Le pain perdu*': 'French toast.' Let them eat cake, eh?"

"This isn't working" glided a judgment from above, the accent on *king*.

"*Je sais! Je sais!*" He lowered his head until his lips were level with Remy's. "Do you fathom the mess you've dumped me in? Nobody cares about this thirty-year-old war because it's history, and no one cares about history anymore since no one knows what history is. Now when they hurled your father down the cramped stairs—"

"But they did not!" Remy vociferated.

". . . while he was attempting to protect his son (not cognizant of your 'cahoots' with his tumblers), that's not history. That's television. As the term intimates, the Vision Thing: 'S what we do best. Think of it. No, don't! See it.

"We sneak you into Algiers. You're captured mounting the rungs of the ladder to your father's cramped garret. He's stone-blind, yet he senses this is his son, come home after twenty-eight years of treasonous exile.

"Not a word need be whimpered. A close-up of tears streaming from amaurotic eyes. The instant he tries to gibber, the voice waxes deaf and dumb. If you're reluctant to travel, we could film it in a Paris studio, employing a stand-in for your *père*."

He snuffled loudly, exasperated. "It is not working." And he identically stressed the ultima. "Not even the rape of Noura would . . ."

("All rapes—one hundred thousand—lead to Noura," Remy acknowledged to himself. She, "who had no voice with which to keen," was scurrying about in the haze of the tiny field of corn, its cultrate blades, rough-edged, slashing the skin of her face and limbs.

"And God lets His angel be raped?" weakly he demurred. And spotting his own *un nul*, he accused, "And where was her brother?")

". . . the way you'd 'pitch' it: all talk, talk as dull as black print on a white page. Now that you microscopically comprehend, you'll be reasonable and do it our way."

Remy's head quivered, aggressively.

5

*No hungry children,
None who sleep cold,
Why can't we get that far?
None whose arms have*

*No one to hold,
Why can't we get that far?*

*No children crying
Themselves to sleep,
Why can't we get that far?*

*No five-year-olds
Claw'ng at a garbage heap,
Why can't we get that far?
How did we get this far?
Why—can't—we—get—that—far?*

At its first performance, the anomaly of the words and the tenor's plaintive voice had triggered Remy to look up. On the stage, a middle-aged man, wrapped in a grossly oversized robin's-egg blue terry robe, was sitting toward the front of its modest apron in—and suddenly Remy had remembered him—the wicker chair from the first number.

During the stanzas, twice sung, live cameos were mutely illuminated in various sections of the *toile de fond*. One revealed a juvenile dressed in a soiled white dhoti, split at the crotch, and suppliantly panning an empty rice bowl, the movement joggling his penis and testicles. In the second, two shivered while counterfeiting sleep, their huddled bodies partially masking each other's nakedness.

The third was four in tattered boxers or jockeys, pantomiming a “battle royal” near a garbage can. Underwear was snapped, ripped, or twined, yet never torn off. Hence merely in glimpses were exposed spanked-pink behinds and clawed genitals.

At the 11:45 performance, enlightened of the Swiftian irony to come, Remy concentrated on the chiaroscuro: how the dim outback of the stage so bathed the performers in an early-evening lambency that they did resemble adolescents—even though “the youngest is a ripe twenty-three!”

In just such a twilight, I observed the long neck of a wine bottle thrust into a vagina, darted through Remy's brain. But reserve that for later. Instead, at Marie's bidding—“to stimulate your supper appetite and whet mine”—they had strolled a kilometer or so from their chalet to the base of the most hallowed of Le Puy's four outcrops, *puy*s—from which the town got its name—the granite core plugs of hundreds-of-thousands-of-years-ago volcanoes whose cones had eroded away.

Halting at the first of the steep flight of sixty steps, husband and wife peered upward at the culmination of the *puy*, the gloomy Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy, its Moorish façade coursed with black volcanic breccia and white sandstone. Inside it was the city's treasure, a Black Madonna, venerated and paraded through its streets on the Feast of the Assumption, although the meter-high sumptuously garbed cedarwood statuette, with the faces of both Virgin and Child stained black, was merely a copy.

Its original, a benefice from Saint Louis on his return from the Holy Land in 1254, had been publicly burned during the atheistic fervor of the French Revolution, but when religion regained its accustomed respect, the statuette was born anew, its artificers relying on five-hundred-and-forty years of thorough descriptions and sketches.

“While Marie’s eyes fixed on the central gable, with a sidewise squint I tracked a final ray of the sun as it struck a sharp-cornered bit of breccia in the keystone of the left arch—at once transformed into the contorted, wizened visage of the French private, whose shins I, under the approving scrutiny of my FLN sponsors, was drumming with a lead pipe.

“By and by, when he had regained consciousness, for inflicting pain requires such exertion, it should not be squandered on the unfeeling, Commander Si Azzedine assured me, ‘There’s no hurry, Brother Omar. Let our guest savor our mountain knife.’

“Dancing with it, I approached the conscript, my hand swaying the ‘*boussaadi*’ as effortlessly as a breeze wabbles the fronds of a date palm. *O let them be intent on the terror in his gray eyes, I craved, distracting them from mine!*”

“‘Now!’ At this order, I forthwith administered the ‘Kabyle smile,’ a ‘happy face’ curved in the throat—that centuries-old trademark of those wild Algerian Berbers, the region’s original inhabitants, many light complexioned and sandy haired until Islam ramped with hordes of dark homeland Arabians, Egyptians, Libyans, Phoenicians, and Turks, ultimately driving the Berbers into the barren Kabylie Mountains east of Algiers, which even the most wretched land-seeking intruders disdained.

“As was expected, the blood spritzing from the conscript’s throat onto the steel I wiped across my brow, then along both cheeks. I was careless: The blade nicked my right temple, a scratch I did not detect till the next day when with a rush I apprehended that his blood and mine had flowed together.

“In the afterglow of the murder, my beaming arose from his having died so quickly. Nevertheless, I hoped my patrons would interpret it as the chilled satisfaction of a seventeen-year-old who had completed the ritual slaughter the FLN levied on each initiate.”

At his back booth in lush Trimalchio’s, a scrunched-down Remy mused, “With what fecundity God has provided this world to blind it to its morbidity.”

Never again did he walk Marie to the afternoon steps leading to the Black Madonna.

6

*'Twas just last night,
We had a fight.
Last saw him with a
British “so[m]domite.”
Has anybody seen my Thai?*

*That fairy Brit
Was fingering his slit,
Promising more pounds
Than the Queen can shit.
Has anybody seen my Thai?*

*Now if I spy
That baggy fag
 (For wear the worse),
I'll grab my Thai.
Slap the Brit high
 With my Versace purse.
Koochee-koo, koochee-ky,
Ain't it sad to see an old queen cry,
 "Has anybody seen my Thai?"*

The midnight show, which repeated the ten and eleven o'clock and would be reprised at the one, two, and three, had begun at Trimalchio's.

"Should he prance in now, I'll snarl, 'You're early!'"

At their inceptive meeting in a Vichy café, HIV, although he would not assume that sobriquet for six years, had said puckishly, "I have something for you." Remy had already eyed the burnt-umber attaché case plumped down on the white wrought-iron chair to his left. "No, more than your *cadeau*, a *pourboire* for your *cadeau*."

And thereafter what Remy's three previous contacts had styled his "gift" from a grateful French government became his "tip."

"You're a librarian. Here!" HIV shoved a book over the tempered-glass tabletop. "Not Proust's weighty tome," he chuckled. "The bookmark."

Remy opened onto an erect phallus terminating in two pimply testicles. The *signet* wearied Remy into a sighful reality: *The French have relegated me to a puerile punster.*

Two years later, HIV had fitted a metal object into Remy's palm. "It's DGSE's—our new name, Directorate-General for External Security, 'counterespionage' nominally being deleted—state of the art. A 20 × 35 × 12 mm. microcassette recorder. For you. It records forever. I have them all over my domicile.

"Its cassette's no larger than a limp penis, still what potential! Slip this inside the jacket of a book, casually position it on a reading table, and through its magnetic tape you can eavesdrop on what those girls in training bras are giggling about.

"Much fun! It comes accessorized with all manner of unbulky disguises: cigarette lighters, key chains, currency converters, et cetera. I've found out everyone my wife screws while I'm away. With what 'opprobrious contempt' she tautologically appraises my sex. She'll make me queer: It's woman, never satisfied, who drives man queer."

HIV paused, a vivid flush suffusing his countenance. "I'm to the point that I prefer listening to the cassettes of her fornicating with the proverbial milkman than jabbing her myself. Secrete this in a dresser drawer, under a mattress, anywhere. It records through wood, metal, Formica. She revels doing it on the kitchen counter, so I know."

Four years later, in Athens, with a dolent expression, he lobbed Remy a copy of *Moby Dick*. "Call me HIV," he had muttered before erupting into triumphant cachinnation.

7

*No Yankee Doodle
 Can "starch" your noodle
 Like Big Black Georgie Brown.
 No pile driver
 Can drill inside ya
 Like Big Black Georgie Brown.
 Georgie sailed to la-la London.
 We had to build a bigger condom.
 Even the Queen said,
 "I've never seen 'head'
 Like Big Black Georgie Brown's."*

*Big Ben tolled from his ridge,
 "It could pass for London Bridge."
 Princess Diana
 Hallelujahed and hosannaed
 At Big Black Georgie Brown's.*

"The French have lost!" was his instinctive reaction to the 4:50 banging at the cypress door of their grocery shop. Rifle butts shattered through its panels.

In anticipation of the summons to dawn prayers, he was awake, yet hung back, listening to the supplication from his parents' bedchamber, "Allah! Protect my family!" Clumsy boot steps then were mounting the narrow stairway to their quarters.

He fretted that French adoration of *cinéma vérité* would compel them to strike his father, whose audible presence dominated the landing. After the thud of a body being slammed against the wall, he issued the mandate, "Return my Noura!" The jussive convinced him that his father had been pinned but was unhurt.

Adhering to the script of his *surveillant*, his "boss," he retreated into the mahogany wardrobe, burying himself in the soiled clothes. Though not locked, his door was unhinged by two thick-heeled blows. After the first, from his parents' bedroom emanated a wail, a resonating companion to the commencement of the Fajr azan.

His bed upended, he waited while the handle of the armoire was yanked with such force that it tumbled over, carrying him forward with its plunge. Two French "paras" (counter-insurgency paratroopers) smashed through its frail plywood back. Dragged forth, he played his part, struggling and writhing, conscious that all was over. "The FLN has won."

As he was slapped, his mother's plaintive groan amplified into a rabid shriek, broken only by his name, "Omar!" When he was pushed onto the landing, she lunged toward him.

A soldier intervened, yet not before her hand grazed his side and the lips behind her black "forever-mourning" *niquaab* (the veil worn since Noura's abduction), fervent to kiss, skirted his right cheek. She was flung toward his father, still clamped by paras.

He strove to relax, aware he would be hustled down the stairway and kicked if his progress should halt. "My son, be true to God and Algeria!" his father shouted, and he, with his arms draped about his face and head, began his fall, veiled as his mother.

Arrant incompetence that his "blind mouth" had not been hushed by then. However, they must have underestimated his "passionate strength"—had not he accosted those ascending the stairs with the demand they give back, even though certain they had come to confiscate again?—for anew he wrested his mouth free to cry, "God will comfort the tortured! *Allahu Akbar!*"

The sincere wistfulness of that adjuring—"the last words I heard my father speak," Remy of the Trimalchio's murmured into the program—constrained him to glance upward. He discerned neither his father nor his mother, only the smothering bulk of now three soldiers before he was lugged across the shivered remnants of the doorframe.

Four hours later, the collaborators from Constantine and Oran having finally arrived, he and the other six, with concealment and courtesy, boarded the Dakota transport parked on an isolated runway at Maison-Blanche Airport outside Algiers, destined for Marseille.

"I've ceased to be Omar, the son of Ibrahim Naaman ben Ismail, the grocer of Ruelle Bensedid in northwest Casbah, and of his wife Aziza, from whose loins and womb I came forth, and the brother of Noura, safely tucked away, unbeknownst to them, in an immured nunnery a mere thirty-minute excursion from our family's store, where among the mulberry trees' scarlet berries, which when they burst spew droppings of mock blood, birds sing melodies her ears cannot hear but she can."

At one point in the two-hour flight, from his jaded slouch glimpsing Zbiri, he craved to ask, "Did your wife call to you, 'God will comfort the tortured'?"

Yet he did not. Actually ("*vide supra*"), none of the airborne conversed. All, "myself excepted," were plotting how to persuade the French to get their families out, to rescue them from the torture these seven were bound for, or so their loved ones grieved.

8

*Ain't nothing greater
For filling your crater
Than Big Black Georgie Brown's.
Nary a casserole
Can stuff your gassy hole
Like Big Black Georgie Brown's.*

*Smoother than nylon,
Longer than a python,
Feels so good wrapped
Around my tongue.
In double digits,
Taller than some midgets,
Big Black Georgie Brown's.*

*Wherever Georgie went,
 He cured the impotent.
 But when he waved, "Ta-ta,"
 Guys they went gaga,
 Big Black Georgie Brown.
 —Come on back, Black!—
 Big Black Georgie Brown.*

Despite the admonition, Remy sneaked a ten-pound note under the coaster, green based with a red purple, slightly pushed out the table, and slid himself across the arc-shaped booth.

It was 12:44, and the third number of Trimalchio's "feast" had surged from a "crescendoing Brown" to a blackout. "The stipend's superfluous: Marie and the girls are more than amply provided for." He rose, and as if from air, Saul materialized.

"Your friend 'no-showed.' And you've been undone, not by 'Georgie,' but by the preceding third douse of the septuagenarian fantastico, whose figure has dried up, but his lust subsists untarnished. A happy ending, I will enlighten you, who spurned to gawk: He ass-syns and is ass-synced by the seven taunting princoxes. I was one once."

He paused to grin. "Perhaps, all symbolism aside, they do—I did—in fact, fuck one another. I prefer to think that since the real only tries to pass itself off as the artificial, *ipso facto*, the artificial can become the real."

Conceivably Saul intended this obiter dictum to be directed toward himself, not the number. Nevertheless, it induced Remy to ponder his own originally dubbed "*cadeau*."

"You must spend it discreetly," he had been advised at the assimilation center, "not to attract notice." When the first was handed over—and he was surprised by the largess—he taxied to a boutique on the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, where he bought Marie Dufoix, the library typist he was dating, a Hermès scarf costing his food allotment for that month. This he dropped off at a Left Bank seamstress with the instruction to remove the designer label and sew in a new one, Made in Hong Kong.

Thenceforth, her every present—and he never returned from a trip without a Scavia strand of pearls, a Lalique emerald brooch, or a specimen from Montana, Balmain, Leiber, or Moschino—and the gifts (in time) for Claudia and Françoise, he prefaced with "Would that these trinkets were genuine! Then we could put a price on love."

The *etiquettes* of his own attire, for that part of his Algerian heritage, a French appropriation, he was not able to relinquish, were similarly altered. The Gianfranco Ferré he wore to London had been retagged, "with disgust," as an Azzaro Original, "a bargain I snatched off the rack for three hundred francs," he had told Marie.

The words, ". . . the artificial can become the real," had no sooner fallen from Saul's lips than, reaching across, he retrieved the ten-pound note from under the coaster, leaned forward till his lips brushed Remy's ear, and buoyantly susurrated, while tucking the bill into the welt breast pocket of the off-brown jacket, "*Pourboire, de moi à toi.*"

Poof, he vanished, not having heard, Remy was positive, "my 'Merci!'"

Buffeted and jostled for the last two levels—since many of Trimalchio's patrons, even during the numbers, abandoned their tables and shuffled, in “dreary, Dante-confirming perpetual motion,” along the narrow landings and aisles—he eventually gained the exit.

He was already pressing the thumb piece of the brass door handle when there rang out in English, “My NutraSweet! Do not d’camp just yet!”

Twisting, he beheld in the red, green, and white flashes of the strobe lights, fumbling through the second row and onto the landing, where with both hands he threw pinch-fingered kisses to the bodies he caromed off, HIV. Three paces away, faking a stumble that propelled him against Remy, his case officer planted a loud kiss on his right cheek.

“Don’t Honeycomb look mellifluent?” He tiptoed back to twirl, delighted—“or pretending to be,” Remy corrected himself—by his low-cut, plum-colored stretch jeans, Jamaican shirt, brown suede fringed jacket, and rhinestone clutch purse, “Versace, no doubt.” Dangling from his left earlobe was a ruby earring, and on his head, a conical, multihued tinsel party hat was being pulled up and down as he spun himself.

“My camouflage’s *très chic*, is it not, *mon chéri*?” HIV continued, having escorted Remy back to the booth. “You prosaic peacock, how tackily you’re dressed! I’m astounded Trimalchio’s let you in. A double-breasted tweed sportcoat, and is that shade hard bistre? Spare me a ‘gander’ at your trousers.”

He slurred a palm onto Remy’s knee. “The fabric’s smooth. You gauge how plainly I love you: Our rendezvous expressly set in London so you could stockpile some Tory duds.”

“He did come.” It was Saul.

“Been here from the beginning.” HIV bent his neck to survey the waiter’s buttocks. “Pleasant traveling there, I wager,” he turned, speaking to Remy. “How is it, eh?” He had squirmed back around to confront Saul.

“Not so ‘deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door; but ’tis enough, ’twill serve.’”

“And ’twill receive, I warrant,” HIV snickered.

“I am the server. What would you have me serve?” And Saul too had fixed his eyes on Remy. “Or do I serve most advantageously by quitting the court?” Still facing them, he stepped backward until swallowed by the darkness.

“I’ll ace you later,” HIV bantered, his leer on Remy, who had glowered at the tablecloth throughout the skittish exchange—“verbal towel readjustment.” The *flèche du Parthe* (“parting shot”) was succeeded by a transitional half minute of silence.

“Not looking for your *pourboire*? (As true a patriot as I, neither ‘greedy of [the] filthy [“lilty”] lucre.’ The bond is all, eh, for you, for me.) Oh, it would not fit into this minikin.”

He tossed the purse onto the table. “Yes, it’s up again. You’ve won the skin game. I shouldn’t tattle, and I won’t, that you are . . . the last standing.”

He snapped open the clutch and fiddled. “Here ’tis.” He pitched a key across. “Orly. 2269. I chose the number myself. In that airport locker, your *pourboire* has a companion. Some papers. Twenty-eight years down the road, the Chief has decided you must earn your *‘pain perdu.*’ I’ll tell you all.”

A U.S. embassy official, thirty-nine days ago, had been murdered in a beach palm grove near Algiers. His homosexual “servicer” had been arrested, but DGSE’s curiosity was piqued by a scissored strip of a negative discovered in the currency compartment of the American’s wallet.

“Obviously he’d been slipping something other than just his cock to his Arab camel boy,” HIV tittered. Nothing had leaked to the newspapers about the negative. “The Algerians don’t pine to pursue it. They have only one decent *gardien de la paix*, M. Tawfek Foucin. Dashing as the dickens, I’m apprised, if you’re captivated by forty-two-year-old tarbooshes.

“The Americans are comparably reticent. The dead M. Ballard was a way-back chum of their ambassador, who’s stone chiseled in for some top-notch Washington slot. So everyone’s content to let this delectable springald of eighteen—whose third leg, the circumcised one, in all likelihood o’ershadows his femoral two—take the music of the rap. Not *Sécurité*.”

Even though the negative “borders on the innocuous,” DGSE was worried about what had been passed on before. “I can’t divulge specifics, but the next time President Mitterrand busses PLO Chairman Arafat, he desires solely a scraped cheek, not a hissed, ‘So you French shitasses had a radar malfunction the night the fucking Israeli F-15 Eagles hit our Tunis base.’

“Sadly a 1985 truth, a tit-for-tat trade-off, for the *Juifs* contracted to eliminate two of those nasty subway bombers whom they had ferreted out—and our DST (domestic intelligence) had not.

“Our negotiations with Mossad were coordinated through a U.S. agent in (you presumably have guessed) Tunis’s next-door neighbor Algiers. Since a coded report of the affair is vaulted in our embassy there, for sure an American version’s stored away in theirs. *Sécurité* posits this Ballard might have via aceta—”

Barging in, an impatient Remy challenged, “What has this to do with me? ‘I can connect / Nothing with nothing.’”

“Oh, we have buttered up this pliant man-eating Mohammed. Dispatched a team, headed by the renowned M. Maurice Vellacott, from *Solliciteurs pour la justice sans frontières*—and few are privy to our tie-in with that distinguished organization, probably only the Americans—to represent him.

“The papers with your *pourboire* at Orly 2269 will manifest what they unearthed, still I’ll forewarn: M. Mohammed, born and bred to lie, was as uncooperative as a mountain.

“You’ll be the delegation’s follow-up investigator. Directeur’s convinced that, one Algerian to another, you can intuit how to prize open his lips.”

Preposterous! Remy told himself, then blurted it out derisively. “Return to Algiers? In the Constitution, Ben Bella placed a bounty on each of us Seven: Twenty-five thousand Algerian francs dead, and double that alive, to be augmented at the direction of their Parliament. God knows what the rewards are now! No! I don’t need any more of your *pourboires*.” With a flick, the key shirred over the red to HIV.

As Remy pushed to his feet, his contact’s left hand whizzed forward and clenched his right. All the mannerisms had deserted his chubby face, and even his ensemble assumed different, subtler hues. “Perhaps I should reveal the camel boy’s name.”

The suctioning pressure of his grip increased. "I squeeze with such intensity doubtless never before employed in Trimalchio's—on a hand. . . . Mohammed Ahmed Belmazoïr."

"With 'cursèd spite,'" for so Remy inwardly animadverted, sinking onto the dark cherry naugahyde seat.

The fist slackened. "Darling Sugar-Free Peppermint, I must break off. The second section of 'A Modest Proposal' is impending. I wouldn't miss this for all the teetee in China. I'll dispense the 'wormwood,' in as much as you will not watch."

9

THE SONG

*Come, hungry children
I'll give you a treat,
Breakfast in bed,
With an extra slab of meat.
Here's hoping I get you that far.*

*Come, naked children,
I'll garb you in my robe,
And as you giggle,
I'll do a Daddy probe.
God! I didn't fathom getting that far.*

*A modest proposal
'S what I present.
To save les pauvres enfants
And succor our 'bent'
How did we get this far?
Why—can't—we—get—that—far?*

But Remy was not listening.

"I would be amenable to telling you what happened during the Marseille layover."

The interviewer raised his smartly bespectacled nut-brown eyes, sparkling with intrigue. "Something post-touchdown, after the Evil had landed?"

Research would "find naught" about the 1961 compact although there would be a report on the 1972 meeting. Being the youngest, Remy was the final one approached.

"His son, his lone offspring, yearns to go back to Algeria, taking his wife and children," his second contact was explaining. "It's working: The FLN has spread the word throughout France: The ninety-one thousand Muslim Algerians who exiled themselves in '62 and/or their descendants are welcome to return home and reclaim or be

HIV'S COMMENTARY

Bringing himself to an upright position, he extends his tentlike robe, under which those pathetic ragamuffins gleefully scamper.

The garment swings open, revealing seven mouths rooting about his privy parts. It closes, although one—the cutie, don't you agree?—emerges at lap level. The man thrusts. Ouch! . . . Oh! . . . Ahhh!

And an *Extase* known only to saints and us guys bursts forth on both his and the boy's face. Bravo! Bravissimo!

compensated for all properties forfeited through tergiversation.

"I'm sure Belmazoir cares not a whit about losing his son. Rather he's afraid that once there, this renegade scion will let slip a clue leading straight to him. Like your two other comrades, you analogously will decline. He thinks, he hopes—what else has he got?—one of you can 'beat some sense' into the would-be reverter."

Notwithstanding, Remy did go, meeting *le père*, *le fils*, and even *le petit-fils* in a silver Audi parked on a dirt road, where the moon intermittently perforated the foliage of the grove. The blindfold worn for the preceding seven hours was replaced by a ski mask.

Before he got out, Contact Deux reinforced two points. "Not more than twenty minutes. And no hint of your French life: He will address you by your long-buried Algerian name, Naaman, and you by his, your sole link."

What he had evinced in support of the father was unimportant, and it was not till this night he learned with certainty, through HIV, that his arguments had had no effect. For Remy had solaced himself fifteen months later: A "mere coincidence" it could have been, the "execution" of old Belmazoir.

His widow, unharmed by the Algerian infiltrators, had rushed to the press to catalog the tortured mayhem of her husband's corpus delicti—the blurred "*La Heure*" carved into his chest, according to some accounts—and campaign for the continuance of his "pension."

So the son, family in tow, had bolted in November '72. At any rate, that "collied night," in the midst of Remy's phlegmatic consecution, a child of about two peeped over his father's shoulders and began to climb toward the *siège arrière*, unheeded by both parent and grandparent, who were engaged in schematizing proofs and rebuttals.

Perched atop the headrest, with a bound the *enfant* thumped into Remy's lap, his diminutive fingers grasping at the parti-colored wool over his visage.

"Moham—" The front-seat scolding by the younger Belmazoir was checked by his father's enraged intrusion, "Pierre! His name's Pierre!"

"*Mohammed, ana* ['I am'] *Mohammed Ahmed!*" the toddler bawled out in Arabic. "*Mah fee* ['I am not'] *Pierre de Vil*—" The shouts of *père et fils* squashed the cognomen the boy was attempting to complete. Frustrated, he pinched Remy's knuckles to garner his attention before both, their faces likewise obscured, lunged to retrieve him.

"You see, this will happen in Algeria!" the father rebuked the son, who was nestling the child and with a tender firmness whispering into its tiny right ear, "No. No."

From above: "The plane landed at Aéroport de Marignane, northwest of Marseille, and fifteen minutes later, each of the seven was ushered to a car, on his way to a new life. That's all we have."

The interviewer, flaunting nonchalance, peeked over his horn-rimmed frames. "So what transpired in that quarter hour?"

"'You must wait here,' the French official apologized. 'We must telephone the seven points.' Pivoting sharply, he exited. It was difficult to stand apart, for we'd been shepherded into the hangar's custodial room, small and already occupied with a desk, three chairs—although none of us sat—and two metallic gray filing cabinets.

"In spite of the contiguity, previous to Mahmoudany's clearing his throat, the silence had lasted five minutes. 'I am senior. I profess I'm not ashamed not to die in Algeria. I have served France well, and France will honor my claim on her. Has not she spirited us to a joyous asylum this very day? She will reunite us with our families, and in such a way that we'll be protected, I am confident.'

"He halted, and in his eyes, he intended for the six of us to detect the creeping suspicion. 'We've been comrades unwittingly, unknown servants of the same master. Over the past several years of the insurrection, irregularly I consorted with all of you. I peered into your countenance, and you into mine, over mint tea and talk, but never until today was acquainted with how we were welded.'

"His right fist started to pound his left palm. 'To rend this nexus so briefly perceived would be, I aver, like ripping the still-umbilicated son, momentarily tumbled from a wifely womb, and hurling it as a meal to the dogs.'

"'We're the despicable,' a nervous Belmazoir whined, employing the connotative synonym, '*l'immonde*,' yet no one regarded his critique.

"'Time or place cannot change this covenant. Let it be sealed!'

"'Detail the bond,' Ghozali demanded.

"'A simple one, as plain as the French forged with us: Should ever one of us need, the others will come.'

"'The eldest gets off easy while the youngest will bear the most,' Khedda, the second youngest, remonstrated, but all, including him, squinted at me.

"'Let it be inherited, binding us through our progeny long after we are gone.'

"'Algeria will no sooner forget our branch and seed than it will us. Not even one tenth-removed cousin will be spared! If you were they and they you, would you?' mumbled Belmazoir, seeking to dispel the notion that traitor to traitor can be true.

"However, his words had the opposite effect. Mahmoudany stepped forward and enfolded Ghozali's left hand. Ghozali without hesitation advanced his right to Zbiri. Zbiri bypassed the nearer Khedda and clasped that of Morcel. Morcel beckoned to Belmazoir, who shrugged yet lumbered over, snatching the extended right. Belmazoir joined his with Khedda's, who in midstride was offering his to me.

"Catching it, I deemed I was not 'forever fallen' and hoped these, my cohorts, so held. Mahmoudany's empty left seized my right, the oldest with the youngest.

"A ragged circle had been formed, albeit as expeditiously as it was fabricated, the chain was severed, and each of us retired to his isolated mark, buttressed by a faith—at least the presentiment was mine—that 'all [was] not lost.'"

"It plugs a breach: 'S what we do best, fill in gaps." He scanned for authorization.

"Have him sign a letter of release," the fiat gravitated.

Release, Remy agonized.

"I have the hardest of hard-ons," tee-heed HIV, who picked up the key and dropped it in the listless palm. Too overwhelmed to sigh, Remy struggled to his feet.

"Have a telegram sent to me. It must arrive before I do." She would read it, and possibly the second goodbye would be less daunting. "And a newer model of the microrecorder you gave me in '83, disguised to resemble a lighter or some such."

HIV counterfeited a smirk. "So you enshrine as little trust in your wife as I in mine!"

Ignoring this distraction, Remy accepted that there was a voice he must record, one for Marie, Claudia, Françoise, and his grandchildren. He would return, "but selfishly."

"You're '*au-revoir*'-ing,' and your boyfriend just surfaced." Saul had reappeared.

"I must go," Remy answered, speaking, or so he adjudged, with an absent mind.

"I'd like to suppose we'll cross paths again," the blond waiter faintly smiled. "An egoist, I paraphrase myself: If the artificial applies itself, it can become the real."

"O you of golden hair and balls, *I* am here." HIV's hand darted across and enveloped Saul's.

"Perhaps you'll prepare a way to another," he replied, his eyes not focused on the one addressed. "I am circumcised. Some find ill-favored the sheared penis."

Though Remy had already quit the booth, resigned to make his way among the wanderers, still he apprehended HIV's reply. "'As long as it's sliced sideways, not lengthwise,' to plagiarize my wife (no philomicron), wagging her finger at our Jewish postman—granted, of course, the tape couldn't record the brandishing, yet, doubt me not, the gesture's quite in character."

Notes and Commentary: Chapter 2: "A Night at Trimalchio's"

April 6 (Thursday) and April 7 (Friday), 1989

p. 15: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE OF CHAPTER 2: The novel switches from a beach in Algiers to a gay nightclub in London. It is now April 6, 1989, so five-and-one-half weeks have elapsed since Ballard's murder (Feb. 27).

Trimalchio's Feast, the name of the gay London club, is taken from Petronius's *Satyricon*. In this first century C.E. Roman novel, the nouveau riche Roman merchant and money-lender Trimalchio gives a luxurious banquet in which he pontificates on sundry matters while his guests feast on its delicacies (chaps. 5-10, in the translation attributed to Oscar Wilde).

However, it is Trimalchio's public kissing and petting of a pretty slave boy which cause his wife Fortunata to assail him for his inability to restrain his "filthy passions." Friends at the feast reconcile the couple. Numerous passages in chap. 2 appropriate images, both verbally and thematically, from Petronius's episode.

This "night[club]" chapter, with its emphasis on what Muslims regard as Western sexual decadence, contrasts with the next to the last chapter of the novel, "A Night Better Than a Thousand Months," a reference to the most spiritual night in Islam, "*Lailatul Qadr* [The Night of Greatness]," previously mentioned in the 1.1 note, "Leila," N1:4.

This contrast of body vs. soul or Western sensuality vs. Muslim spirituality, however, is tempered since chap. 2 contains some selfless characters (for instance, the waiter Saul whose name is a play upon "soul"), while in chap. 20, several materialistic Muslims will figure prominently. Thus, the novel suggests, such artificial contrasting "connections" are simplistic.

Besides Trimalchio's feast, there are three other symbolic meals described in the book, each of which correlates with the nothing connects (NC), nothing disconnects (ND), everything disconnects (ED), everything connects (EC) paradigm central to the novel, discussed in the 1.1 "Significance of the Title" note, N1:1.

(To be sure, there are other feasts in the novel, such as the wedding feast envisioned by Ballard on 1.13 and the later repast at the American embassy on 8:125, but I attached minimal symbolic importance to these.)

(1) NC: In this chapter, Remy, the protagonist of the novel, quotes T. S. Eliot's "I can connect nothing / With nothing" (30), an indication that the incidents at Trimalchio's Feast represent an apparent absence of connection.

(2) ED: On 9.128, in order to partake of a sumptuous meal, Ahmed Chabane will state that he will disown or disconnect himself from his religion. This is the same

character who on 1.13 expressed his desire to escape from "God-drenched" Algeria.

(3) ND: On the insistence of a seemingly higher authority (14.221-22), Remy will be invited to and will partake in a Ramadan feast on 14.229, for him a reconnection with his abandoned religion.

(4) EC: A simpler Ramadan meal, which Remy will help to prepare under the guidance of a father figure, will be eaten on 19.321-23.

To sum up, feasts have a symbolic importance at crucial points in the novel.

pp. 15-34: CHRONOLOGY OF CHAPTER 2: From a little before 10 p.m. on April 6, 1989, when Remy Montpellier, a French librarian, arrives at the gay London nightclub Trimalchio's Feast, to 1 a.m., April 7, when he leaves the club.

pp. 15-16: SECTION 1: Time span: From a little before 10 to 10:20 p.m.

p. 15: "Five-foot Thai" parodies the 1925 American song, "Five Foot Two," sometimes titled, "Has Anybody Seen My Gal?"

Two of the four songs in Trimalchio's revue fixate on oversized penises. This idea ties in with the same obsession mentioned on 1.6, where Mohammed Belmazoir "like most Arabs attached some pre-Islamic import to [the] length and girth" of a penis. See the 1.6 note, N1:17, for a discussion of this fixation in ancient and transitional Arabic literature.

Since Trimalchio's is a gay nightclub, it is not surprising that their numbers would stress this fascination. Just as some heterosexuals go to strip clubs to see large-bosomed women, studies show that most gay men, not just thus termed size queens, prefer a large penis over a regular-sized or undersized one.

Other studies suggest that even among modern heterosexual men, there is the perception that a large penis is linked to higher self-esteem.

The paintings and artifacts of many cultures subtly stress penile size. Two of the ancient Greek gods, Pan and Priapus, were always painted or sculpted with exaggerated phalluses.

Ancient Romans believed that the size and girth of a penis were signs of masculinity. Even in a passage from the Bible, a whore lusted after lovers whose penises were like those of donkeys (Ez. 23:18-20).

Oversized penises are also common in ancient Indian artwork, particularly among its deities. In Africa, sculptures of males often present them with enormous penises, as will be discussed in a later note on p. 30, N2:52.

In ancient Egypt, the erect penis was a symbol of fertility. Finally, in pre-Columbia America, large phalluses are often portrayed in artwork.

Christianity and in its footsteps Islam attempted to suppress this emphasis on male and female sexuality. The former hacked off penises of Greek and Roman statues, and the latter forbade any representation of the human form.

In Christian societies, the impulse never died as underground sexual artwork stressing

voluminous bosoms and gigantic male members, some of it coming from monasteries, attest.

In Islamic countries bordering the Mediterranean many young Muslim males will assume that single female tourists are “fair game” for sexual advances, just as they will accept that all unmarried male tourists are gay (12.189).

Quite a few male tourists to these Islamic countries report that one of the earliest comments a young Muslim male will whisper is “*Ana kabeer zib*” (“I (have) big penis”).

In my novel, Mohammed Belmazoir takes pride in the fact that he is dingus-laden (6.84), the truth of which has been picked up by two other characters.

One will call Mohammed “bull-hung” (5.77) and the other speaks of it in order to ridicule her own son for his thimble clitoris-like penis (11.175).

- p. 15: Remy Montpellier: The novel's protagonist Remy Montpellier, 49, is a French librarian, who as an Algerian youth, Omar Naaman, was forced to become a collaborator for the French during the Algerian War. His history will be revealed in this chapter.

(The symbolism of Remy and Montpellier, the names which the French gave him, will be explained in the 3.35 note, N3:2.)

There are many parallels beyond their age between Ballard, 46, and Remy, 49. For instance, in chap. 1, Ballard goes to a strange venue for a nighttime “life-changing” meeting where his past catches up with him. Chap. 2 follows Remy through the same procession.

Just as Ballard was certain that Mohammed would be “tardy” (1.3), so Remy assumes that the person he is to rendezvous with will also bustle “in late” (2.16).

Ballard is withholding information from his wife Leila (1.6) while Remy lies to his wife Marie about attending “a bookfair in London” (2.16).

In 1.3 and 11, Ballard, ostensibly a Protestant, quotes from Milton's *PL* and “*Il Penseroso*” (N1:9, 10, and 28). Remy, however, nominally a Catholic, will make several references to Dante's *DC* in chap. 2, although toward the end of the chapter, several times he compares himself to the Satan of *PL*.

Just as Ballard, born a Jew, was reared in a presumably Protestant family after the deaths of his parents (1.2 and 10), so Remy abandoned his natal religion.

He will admit that he took on a Catholic identity as part of his disguise (2.16) as did his wife's Jewish family, who became Catholic to save themselves from the Nazis (2.16).

There are other similarities between Ballard and Remy, which will be examined as they occur.

- p. 15: “twirling his limp penis while he danced”: The image of a “limp penis” will be used six other times in the novel (2.25; 9.151; 11.175; 16.259; 20.341; and 21.365). The penis is “limp” here because governmental regulations in England in 1989, the time of the novel, prevented the display of an erect penis in a stage performance.

Just as Mohammed “with a bravura twirl” displayed his “stiffening penis” to Ballard on 1.6, Remy catches a glimpse of the Oriental dancer doing the same in front of another stage performer.

This dance where a penis is displayed foreshadows an incident from 2.24 where Remy, then named Omar, will perform a knife dance about a captured French soldier.

p. 15: “Lip-syncing”: As part of the artificial-real contrast of the novel, “lip-sync” or variants of it will appear four other times in this chapter, 2.18, 19, 21, and 28. It will further appear on 13.202.

p. 15: “HIV”: The alias taken by Remy’s DGSE “case officer.” On p. 25, HIV explains why he has assumed that strange code name.

p. 15: “A Modest Proposal”: Swift’s essay argued that since society permits so many children to die of hunger, it should consider putting them out of their prospective misery by slaughtering them while they are very young in order to satisfy the appetite of others.

On p. 23, this “Swiftian irony” is referred to since through this stage number Trimalchio’s presents another “modest proposal” to remedy the mistreatment of children: Give them to a group that truly wants and needs them.

Two other references to Swift will appear in the novel. On 16.272, a similarity is pointed out between Swift’s term “Yahoo” in *GT* and the Arabic word for “Jews,” *Yahoodee*.

The final one occurs on 20.341, where Swift’s famous admonition “not to sell our country and conscience for nothing,” also from “A Modest Proposal,” is cited.

- p. 16: *contact*: The French word has the same meaning as the English word “contact.” In the jargon of spydom, a “contact” or “case officer is an operative who also serves as an official staffer of an intelligence service” (online *Free Dictionary*). This person frequently serves as a “liaison” between a supervision of an intelligence service and his/her agent, that is, the person who is assigned to handle the “case” of a particular agent.
- p. 16: “a bathhouse in Amsterdam’s De Wallen district”: De Wallen is the red-light district of Amsterdam. Many gay establishments, principally bars, are located on or near the street Warmoesstraat in that district. Again as an instance of my authorial obsession of balancing something early in the novel with something late, this chapter’s bathhouse scene is mirrored in two others: a steam room on 17.276 and an Algerian *hammam* (Arab public bath and steam room) on 19.315-16.
- p. 16: “123,000 franc . . . *pourboire*”: In 1988, US\$1 equaled approximately 6 French francs (FRF). Thus Remy’s yearly stipend from DGSE, called a *pourboire* (French for “gratuity or tip”) here, *cadeau* (“gift”) on p. 25, and “pension” (32), was around \$20,500 in 1988.
- p. 16: *Nota bene*-ing: “Note well”; it is used (most ungrammatically) by HIV as a verb.
- p. 16: “the stewing clientele”: “to stew” here means “to swelter, especially from confinement in a hot or stuffy atmosphere.” However, there is a pun upon the noun form of “stew,” which has the meanings of “a heated room where hot baths are furnished” and “a brothel” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 16: “poof” . . . “two others we kill”: The three meanings of “poof” (“disdain,” “disappear suddenly,” and “an effeminate homosexual”) are suggested by HIV. The word is used four other times in the novel: 2.28, 7.114, 17.276, and 19.329. The “two others we kill—your wife and mine—” ironically foreshadow events in the last two chapters of the novel.
- p. 16: “alone!”: This last word of Marie’s first speech prepares for this fear which suffuses the novel: loneliness. Along with hate, this is the principal force driving the E/D and N/C theme. As one character will say on 13.203, “Loneliness is frightening!” Loneliness is the result of a breaking of the human bond, a major theme of the novel which will be discussed in the 15.253 note, N15:49-50.
- p. 16: “four years earlier, the twenty-third of their marriage”: In 1989 Marie and Remy have been married twenty-seven years. According to my chronology, they married in March 1962.
- p. 16: “Claudia”: Marie and Remy’s younger daughter was born in September 1963. She married in 1985.

- p. 16: “Le Puy”: A small city in south-central France, its full name is Le Puy-en-Velay. It will be described in more detail on 2.23 and 3.35-36. In 1989, it had a population of around 23,000.
I chose Le Puy as Remy's residence for the same reasons that the French intelligence service gave to him when it relocated him there on June 25, 1961: Both its landscape and its storied religious history will militate against any urge by him to escape from the past (3.35-36)
- p. 16: *livre de cuisine*: In French, “cookbook.”
- p. 16: beetle: As an intransitive verb, “project or jut; overhang.”
- p. 16: “tucked a rosebud in his lapel's *boutonnière*”: Marie's rosebud will parallel the rose used on 8.119, 121, 122, 123, and 125.
Early on I considered using as the title of my murder mystery a rosebud reference by the fourteenth-century Persian poet Hafiz: *A Mystery in Each Fold*.
The words are from his “Taking a Riddle into the Tavern,” ll. 15-16: “The heart . . . practicing the rosebud's art / Conceals a mystery in each fold.”
- p. 16: *boutonnière*: French for “buttonhole.” The English word “boutonniere” refers to “the flower or flowers worn in a buttonhole, as of a lapel.”
- p. 16: Châteauroux: A city in the center of France, approximately 170 miles northwest of Le Puy. Its population at the time of the novel (as now, 2013) is around 50,000.
- p. 16: Caroline: Marie's sister.
- p. 16: Françoise: The older of Marie's and Remy's two daughters. She was born in November 1962 and married in 1984.
Both daughters moved from Le Puy after their marriage.
- p. 16: “a fear of being abandoned—the inescapable *brader*”: The theme of abandonment is applied to Marie and a variant of it is used in the penultimate sentence of this section to apply to Remy, who had “‘abandon[ed] all’(save my life)” twenty-eight years ago” (28).
The single quote is from the *Inferno*, Canto 3: “Abandon all hope, ye who enter here” (9), although the direct object is altered.
- p. 16: *brader*: Personal abandonment is felt by both wife and husband, but the word *brader* gives it a political significance. In French *brader* idiomatically means “to sell off” or “to sell for next to nothing.”
However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s those who opposed France's leaving (“abandoning”) Algeria, used it bitterly to mean “to sell out” or “abandon” the minority European settlers to the majority Arab Algerians.

- p. 16: "Her Jewishness was confessed": Quite purposively, I followed personal and political abandonment with that of religion, for Marie's parents, when the Nazis seized France, put aside their Jewish faith for Catholicism, which "got them through the war."
- p. 16: "'Weber' converted to 'Dufoix'": Marie's parents dropped the Jewish surname "Weber" and adopted a Catholic one. Dufoix translates as "of the faith." Similarly, as previously noted, Ballard was born a Jew (1.2), but on being "orphaned at three" (1.10) was reared by a Protestant family since not even his best friend Leroy knows of his Jewish heritage (1.2).
Only a Christian in name, Ballard was in the process of becoming a Muslim, that is, he was abandoning even the façade of being a Christian, since a prerequisite to marrying a Muslim woman is that the groom convert to Islam.
[On 12.191, Leila will confirm that Ballard was engaged in "Islamic studies" that would prepare him for conversion ("reversion") to Islam.]
Implicit in chap. 2 is that Remy, in order to "save his life," was advised by French intelligence to adopt Catholicism as his religion, thus abandoning Islam.
This apostasy is designed to reinforce the Jerusalem (Judaism)-Rome (Christianity)-Mecca (Islam) disconnection.
- p. 16: "After Algeria . . . twenty-eight years ago": However, religion was just part of the "all" which Remy had abandoned. He had also abandoned his country.
Here is his first mention of Algeria.
Piece by piece, in sections 2, 4, 5, 7, and 9, there will be presented events in his Algerian past which caused him to leave it twenty-eight years ago (1961), just as the Algerian War of Independence against France (1954-1962) was winding down.
In Remy's "abandon[ing]" all, beyond his religion and his country, he also deserted his birth family. His remorse over this disgrace figures in every succeeding section of chap. 2 and all of chap. 3.
Familial abandonment is experienced by another major character (6.99 and 7.115-16) and a final act of imagining someone deserting his family occurs near the end of the novel (21.365).
This theme of abandonment of or disconnection with family, religion, and country is further manifested in some of the minor characters of the novel. These will be examined as they occur.
- p. 16: *arrière-garde*: The rear guard of an army, but here it contains the implication of how a grateful French government guarded or protected Remy's past.
- p. 16: "the French *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage*": Its abbreviation is SDECE.
France's intelligence agency from 1944 –1982, it was replaced by the *Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure* (DGSE, the French equivalent of America's CIA).
The mention of this agency confirms that in Algeria Remy was involved in some type

of espionage work for the French, which presumably caused him to have to seek exile once it was clear that the Algerian Muslims were winning the war.

p. 16: “gratitude . . . quiet companionship”: These words reveal Remy’s relationship with Marie (as he understood it then).

As noted, the marriage allowed Remy a disguise from any agents whom Algeria might send to hunt him down for his actions of helping the French during the war.

p. 16: “she spoke timidly, afraid of her words”: The wording here was appropriated from the English translation of Chekov’s “The Bishop” (penultimate sentence of the story): “She spoke timidly, afraid of being disbelieved.”

p. 17: "Yes, and before if possible": His answer will be repeated on 19.331, in a not altogether dissimilar situation.

pp. 17-18: SECTION 2: Time span: This scene begins at about 10:20 since a second stanza of "An Old Queen's Lament" is being mockingly sung and ends at 10:30.

p. 17: "Ain't nobody loves my body": Bodily love in this line (1) contrasts with the spiritual love of St. Paul, as cited by Ballard on 1.13.

p. 17: "Won't somebody want my body": An inane wordplay on "won't" and "want."

p. 17: "Before I die . . . creeping up on eighty": The old man of the number will cause Remy to think about his own father as the fifth paragraph after the song reveals. Line 4 fits in with Remy's desire to see his father before his father dies. His father, however, is seventy, not the near "eighty," the age of the old man in the number.

pp. 15, 17, 18-19, 20, 22-23, 24-25, 25-26, 27, and 31: The SONGS of Trimalchio's revue: Two of them (the first and third of the programme) are parodies and two (the second and fourth) are originals. The songs reinforce the ND/ED/NC/EC paradigm:

NC: "A Bangkok-alota" (17 and 24-25): Distrust and deception dominate the parody, "Five-foot," which ends without a connection. The love affair between this older man, perhaps a father figure, and a reckless youth imprisons the participants. The "fairy Brit" is a satanic figure stealing mankind from God.

EC: "The Old Queen's Lament" (17; Saul's commentary on the number on p. 28): In "Ain't Nobody," the septuagenarian is similarly a father figure since on seeing him Remy begins to think about his own father (17). The number itself ends with the dancing youth and the old man connecting on a bodily level: "A happy dénouement . . . He ass-syns and is ass-synced by the seven taunting princoxes" (28).

ND: "An Orgy" (18-19, 20, 25-26; 27): Georgie is designated as a Christ figure (p. 20, ll. 7-30). Like Christ, "George came to earth to please us. / Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, / He's got us speakin' in tongues" (28-30), that is, he has conveyed the meaning and essence of God/happiness/redemption. Having fulfilled his mission, he departs (p. 27, ll. 16-20).

ED: "Modest Proposal": Everything has become disconnected when there is no distinction between amorality and immortality. The singer views himself as a philanthropist doing a great and good service for the world, which since the beginning of humanity has allowed children to be horribly exploited (pp. 22-23, ll. 6-14). The "bent" (p. 31, l. 14) are succored and rule the day.

- p. 17: "And what will you have, sir?": The waiter's first speech, as many of his other comments, has a second meaning. The question suggests that he perceives resignation in Remy's face and that he is in need of connecting with something to make his life complete.
On p. 19, he notes that Remy "did not venture here [to Trimalchio's] willingly."
- p. 17: *couvert*: French for a nightclub's "cover charge," but also there is Saul's intuition that Remy is keeping something hidden or covered.
- p. 17: "cherry-red vest and emerald-green denim cutoffs": The red/green colors which dominate the waiter's clothing and the décor of Trimalchio's are taken from the Algerian flag, which has a red star and red crescent against a background of green (left half) and white (right half).
His blond hair suggests this third color (white). This color scheme occurs frequently in the novel.
Also the use of these colors was confirmed by two other sources: (1) the livery of one of Trimalchio's staff in Petronius' *Satyricon*, chap. 5, p. 76 (Wilde-ascribed translation): "Just within the vestibule [of Trimalchio's villa] stood the doorkeeper, dressed in green with a cherry-coloured sash."
(2) the color symbolism of the Three Sacred Virtues: Faith (white), Hope (green), and Charity (red). In *Purgatorio* 8.19-39, Dante sees three angels who are dressed in green and have green wings. Their features, however, are blonde, and each of them carries a sword that is aflame (red).
Some scholars view *DC* as being structured by these three color-coded virtues: *Inferno* (the absence of caritas; red); *Purgatorio* (hope; green), and *Paradiso* (faith; white).
- p. 17: "blond head and muscular frame": These physical attributes of the waiter are drawn from Melville's youth Billy Budd, chap. 2.
On p. 19, other imagery from *Billy Budd* is used in reference to him: "flaxen hair," "rose-tipped light of dawn," and "snipped- in-the-bud," a pun on Budd.
- p. 17: "Donne's songs and Spencer's madrigals": John Donne's most famous song is "Go and Catch a Falling Star."
Edmund Spencer, another of Shakespeare's contemporaries, wrote several madrigals.
- p. 17: "Roman imperial procession" is the first of numerous references to Rome, which becomes a symbol of Christianity in the novel: 4.66; 8.122; 17.277, 283, and 284; 19.329; and 20. 341.
A separate reference to Rome on p. 329 alters the famous maxim about the city by noting, "All roads digress to Rome."
The only book which Remy reads during the novel is Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. References to him or that book occur on 4.66; 11.181; 13.215; and 15.255.

- p. 17: "fan dance": A fan or similar implement is also used as part of minor plot lines in 10.197 (a fly whisk) and 13.263 and 270 (a woman's fan).
- p. 17: "seven nude striplings": Septets occur throughout the novel. In the p. 23 note below, N2:33, I will summarize those which appear in the first two chapters. Other occurrences of seven as a symbol will be noted as they occur. A summary of heptads in the novel will be reserved for the last chapter, the 21.352 note, N21:2-3. That seven is a symbolic number in Islam will be discussed in the 11.178 note, N11:23-24.
- p. 17: "*Sonless and stuffed in a loft in Algiers' stifling Casbah, my father, my father . . . what have I brought you to?*": As mentioned in the p. 17 note above, a discussion of the songs, N2:9, Remy's interior monologue suggests that the old man performing the fan dance is a symbol of his own father. It will be revealed later that his father has faced his Casbah neighbors' rejection and scorn, just as the youths taunt the revue's septuagenarian, because of what his son did in helping the French during Algeria's war for independence. "My father, my father . . . what have I brought you to?" will be a question that torments Remy throughout the novel, but finds expression on 10.159 and 17.281 and 291.
- p. 17: *Sonless*: A pun on "sunless."
- p. 17: "And this crisscross I have to bear": This wordplay introduces the Christ symbolism.
- p. 17: "my rear-wall ninth circle": The waiter makes the first reference to Trimalchio's as being Dante's Inferno. However, he inverts the configuration of Dante's hell when he notes, "Not many ascend to my ninth circle." Dante descends, not ascends, into hell. Additionally, the ninth circle of Dante's hell is at the central bottom pit of Dante's world, while the ninth circle of Trimalchio's is at the outer bound, the periphery.
- p. 17: "'joy o' the worm'": The literate waiter borrows this image from Shakespeare's *Antony* 5.2.259 and 279. It is twice used by Shakespeare's Clown after he gave the asp to Cleopatra, using the same phallic suggestion as the waiter does here. Variants of the phrase will be employed a total of seven times in the novel. It is partially resurrected on 3.37 as "joy o' my daughter." In chap. 6, three times another variant, "joy o' your joy" (90-91), is used, and in chap. 7, "joy o' your joy" is recounted before Remy quotes the Shakespearian original (117).
- p. 17: "Satan's Whiskers . . . curled": To convey to Saul that he understand his *Inferno* allusion, Remy orders this cocktail. FYI: The "curled" version is made with gin, sweet vermouth, dry vermouth, orange

juice, curaçao, and orange bitters.

- p. 17: “Your quaff”: The waiter’s affected way of asking, “What would you have to drink?” Thus “quaff” is not used in its denotative sense: “a drink imbibed copiously and freely.”
- p. 17: “*Merci*”: The word is designed to answer the waiter’s supposition, “You’re French.”
- p. 17: “‘expired.’ (The deaths of three—by decapitation, flaying, and dismemberment—TV and print had blazoned)”: After the badinage with the waiter, Remy’s thoughts become serious. He wonders whether another one has “expired” (died) and speaks of three great traitors who had met horrible forms of death.
- The press had published accounts of the gruesome deaths; thus Remy knows about their methods of execution.
- Decapitation: The first one killed was Noredine Ghozali. His mistress was bribed to decapitate him in 1968. In the description of his murder (14.302), it will not be mentioned that the incident was publicized in the newspapers, but it must have been since Remy states here that he knew this detail about it.
- Flaying: In late 1968, the third traitor, Abdullah Morcel, was tortured all night by the brother of an Algerian family whom Morcel had caused to be abused brutally and sexually during the war. In press accounts, it was indicated that part of his torture involving flaying (14.302-04).
- Dismemberment: In 1974, old Mohammed Belmazoir, the fourth traitor killed, was piece by piece dismembered, Remy read in the newspapers (4.61). Will be on 2.31, it is revealed that in November 1972, Remy had met with Belmazoir, who had sent a plea to the three remaining traitors for some assistance.
- From an early increase in his stipend, Remy knew that another one had died in 1968. The death was indirectly confirmed by his contact before Remy met with Belmazoir in 1972 (2.31).
- Later he will learn that the second “apprehended” was Jamal Zbiri, who had died of a medical condition in 1967, but in 1968 his family in France sent his dug-up corpse to the Algerians to prove that Zbiri was dead (14.233).
- Again a 1985 raise in his annual *pourboire* increment—HIV is now his case officer—indicated that the fifth great traitor was brought to justice. On 14.235, he will be told that this one was Bachir Khedda, whose death was made to look like an accident. It was not publicized. His executioner dressed as a charwoman during the tracking down of Bachir (7.103).
- In mid-February 1989, the sixth Yahia Mahmoudany was choked to death in a drawn-out lynching. The French President François Mitterrand persuaded the press not to mention it.
- Remy will learn about this recent death because on 2.29 in Trimalchio’s HIV tells Remy that he is the sole survivor of the seven great traitors.
- On p.17, he speculates that this early meeting with HIV in London was to inform him

about the death of the sixth. Because of the risqué setting, Remy seemingly does not consider that it is to tell him that his Algerian father is dead.

- p. 17: “the final increase in the *pourboire*”: As indicated in the previous note, Remy suggests that there was a fixed yearly sum which the French had allocated for the seven great traitors. Thus when one died, his “pension” was divided among the others.

Since Remy received FRF123,000 last year (2.16 and its note, N2:5), he must have been receiving that amount since 1985 when unknown to him Khedda was murdered.

With the announcement of the death of the sixth, his stipend would be double that or around US\$45,000.

- p. 17: “the ‘devils,’ as Ben Bella (Algeria’s first president) had dubbed the seven traitors”: Ahmed Ben Bella was the first elected president of an independent Algeria. (Two other FLN leaders of the Revolution briefly bore the title before the staged election in 1963.)

Ben Bella was deposed by his defense minister Houari Boumediène in 1965. Imprisoned and then exiled, he was allowed to return at Algiers in 1990, where he was placed under house arrest until his death in April 2012.

- p. 17: “the seven traitors”: The major heptad in the novel. Algeria was committed to tracking down the seven traitors who had most damaged the revolution against the French.

Words and variants of “treason” constitute a key cluster of the novel. Ballard introduced the idea in the word “traitor,” twice used in chap. 1 (10 and 12).

In chapter two, Ben Bella so branded the seven for having betrayed their nation, but on the next page Charles de Gaulle, president of France during part of the Algerian war, will view the seven not as *traîtres* but from the French perspective as patriots (18).

On 2.29, HIV will say that Remy is “as true a patriot as I” (a phrase which will be recalled much later in the novel, 19.329).

On 2.19, Remy sees himself as a traitor, thinking “*Pourboire* for the traitor but not for the waiter” (again recited on 19.329). He forces himself to confront the truth that he has been living the last twenty-eight years in a “treasonous exile” (2.22).

And on 2.33, one of the seven traitors seems to question whether “traitor to traitor can be true.”

My novel, I hope, will challenge readers to debate the concepts of treason and patriotism. In fact, one of the last spoken words of the novel will be the word “treason” (21.368), which is substituted for the word “patriotism” in a mangling of a famous quotation by Samuel Johnson.

- p. 18: succumbence: “the act or process of succumbing,” that is, dying (*Webster's Third*).
- p. 18: “Last Monday”: On April 3, a disguised HIV had come to Le Puy's library to pass a note informing Remy, its director since 1983 (18), that they must meet in London on April 6.
His visit was “early” (18, 19), twice Remy tells himself.
According to my chronology, HIV came four months prior to their scheduled annual meeting. Since Remy received his first *pourboire* in August, that would be the month of his subsequent stipends.
- p. 18: “in the habit of a Hasidic rabbi”: Hasidic Judaism is a branch of orthodox Judaism that promotes the mystical aspects of the faith as a reaction against overly legalistic Judaism.
HIV assumes this disguise as a sarcastic protest to what will be revealed late on p. 34, that his wife is having a sexual affair with their “Jewish postman.”
- p. 18: “*C'est pornographie!*”: “This is pornographic!” in French.
- p. 18: Petronius's *Satyricon*: The title of this chapter is drawn from this novel which the “rabbi” whom HIV is impersonating labels pornographic.
See the pp.15-16 note above the significance of the title of this chapter, N2.1 for additional information about Petronius's work.
- p. 18: “Le Puy's library”: The city maintains only one *Bibliothèque municipale* (municipal library), an imposing classical structure located at 5, Place de la Halle in the center of Le Puy.
- p. 18: “There had been seven . . . flown out of Algiers six months before”: The seven great traitors (see the p. 17 note above, “expired,” N2:12), who had served near the top level of the FLN as agents for the French, on April 13, 1961, according to my chronology, were flown from Algiers to a new life in France about the time de Gaulle had decided that the war was hopeless and an accord to end it must be reached.
He had been elected as president of France in 1959 on a platform that Algeria would remain part of France, but once in office he reversed his position.
- p. 18: “*the General*”: This italicized designation of De Gaulle is twice used on this page. This same print or type will be used in referring to him on 17.276 and 21.366.
- p. 18: “an accord at Évian”: The French and the FLN held their first meetings to end the Algerian war at the Swiss hamlet of Les Rousses, twenty-two miles from Geneva, from December 1961 to February 1962. A basic agreement guaranteeing Algerian's independence was reached.
The second negotiations began on March 7, 1962, at the nearby Évian-les-Bains, just inside France, with the final agreement signed on 18 March. This specified that a ceasefire was to take effect on March 19, 1962.

Rapidly both France (April 8, 1962) and Algeria (July 1, 1962) held referendums, each gaining over 90 per cent approval of the provisions of the Évian accords. (European Algerians boycotted the second election.)

On July 3, 1962, de Gaulle recognized Algeria's independence.

- p. 18: “*affaire de quatre sous*”: This French phrase literally translates as “a matter of four sous” (a French coin) or something of no more worth to a person than four pennies. De Gaulle did not actually use this phrase to describe the Algerian war, although it was the sentiment of many in his government and in the press that the war cheapened the image of France.
- p. 18: “At the last increment four years ago”: 1985, when Khedda, the fifth great traitor, was killed.
- p. 18: “Remy credited de Gaulle himself with instituting the bond”: Remy believed that de Gaulle committed France to protecting the seven great traitors, their families, and their descendents because of the service of the seven to France during the war. This is the first use of the word “bond” in the novel, and ironically it is this political bond which will be the last one broken on 20.341. The concept of making and breaking bonds is a central theme of the novel. Although the word is not used, at the end of section 1, p. 16, Remy committed himself to a binding agreement to return to his wife. Similarly section 2 will end with Remy attempting to draw back or “excuse” himself from any thoughts of his bond to his Algerian family, particularly to his sister “Noura” (18), the subject of much of chap. 3. Later in this chapter, on p. 29, HIV will speak of a “bond” between him and Remy, one not forged by the *pourboire* money. His intimate confessions to Remy in sections 6, 8, and 9 of chap. 2 (all most embarrassing to Remy) suggest that HIV sees their relationship as more than the responsibility of a case officer to his assigned client. The bond he seems to seek with Remy is friendship, the goal not only of him but also of the waiter Saul, despite the sexual innuendos each parades. Every chapter deals with this concept of bonding, which is often worked into the title of a chapter, such as “The Calculus of Relations” (chap. 3) and “Binding with Briars” (chap. 13), as well as the obvious “connect-disconnect” chapter titles. In chap. 4, Remy learns that the principal antagonist of the novel has also made a bond, a vow to God, to bring the seven great traitors to justice, not realizing that he is speaking to the seventh. As mentioned earlier, this theme of “bonds” will be discussed as it appears in each chapter, and a summary of its instances in the novel will be provided in the 15.253 note, N15:49-50.
- p. 18: Delacroixian: The adjective of the last name of Eugène Delacroix, an eighteenth-century French painter, some of whose most stunning paintings are of French military figures or engagements.

- p. 18: legatee: one to whom a legacy is bequeathed.
- p. 18: *traître*: The French word for “traitor.”
- p. 18: “22,753”: This count of dead French troops, it must be remembered, is Remy's 1989 account of what he imagined in 1963 or 1964 (his early years in Le Puy) de Gaulle had been informed was the death count in 1961 or 1962. Why did Remy not use the figure given in Alistair Horne's 1977 book *A Savage War of Peace*? This definitive study of the Algerian conflict, we will learn on 6.89, he had read several times over. Horne lists French army losses as 17,456, not including approximately 1,000 missing. The rationale I used was that the figure which Remy gave to de Gaulle was based on a widely publicized Jan. 25, 1982, report by Charles Hernu, France's Minister of Defense, and published in the ministry's *Journal Officiel*. There Hernu reports that there were 21,753 French troops killed and 1,000 missing. Remy's figure, which he has de Gaulle anachronistically maintain, is a combination of the two from Hernu, thus 22,753. Incidentally, later reports give the figure as approximately 25,000 (Cohen 2003), over 30,000 (Forrest 2009), and nearly 28,600, six thousand of which were from non-combat causes (*Wikipedia* 2012).
- p. 18: “that *sans-foi, sans-loi, sans-espoir* war”: I put these words into de Gaulle's mouth. The first two, meaning “faithless” and “lawless,” are from Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, Book 1, Cantos 2 and 3. Sansfoi and Sansloy are two of the three Saracen (Muslim) brothers (the other is Sansjoy or “joyless”) who fight Redcrosse, the Christian champion. This Spenserian episode fits in with the “disconnection” between Islam and Christianity, as portrayed in my novel. When I wrote its first draft in 1990, I was conscious that around a thousand years separated the Crusades which pitted Christians against Muslims (and both against the Jews) from the late-twentieth century conflict of the three religions in the Middle East. William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet who was the subject of my Ph.D. dissertation, attached a great significance to 1,000-year intervals. *Sans-espoir* (“hopeless”) I decided to add in preference to *Sans-joie*, since I could not see the warrior de Gaulle, who sees his own reflection in a painting of some minor Napoleonic general by Delacroix, ever referring to warfare as “joyless.”
- p. 18: “a kingly ransom”: A rewording of the idiomatic cliché “king's ransom.” I have found that one of the easiest ways to avoid a cliché is simply to change the parts of speech of the original.
- p. 18: The three quotations about the relationship of the past, present, future, and eternity are from the following:

(1) “the past as ‘the specious present’”: From William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890, p. 609). The present is specious because it is gone or become a part swallowed up by the past in the instant of becoming.

A passage from James, as noted, provided the title for my novel.

(2) “[the past] as “the *nunc-stans*”: Translated in the text as the “eternal now,” it is used as an expression of derision by Hobbes in *The Leviathan*, chap. 46: “Eternity is the standing still of the present time, a *nunc-stans*.”

The idea of the “still point” by T. S. Eliot better presents Remy's view of time than does the Hobbes passage. In “Burnt Norton” Eliot wrote, “At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless” (62).

(3) “[the past as] that which “as always, stretche[s] before us” is from Louise Glück's poem “The Fear of Love”: “And the past, as always stretched before us, / still, complex, impenetrable” (11-12).

Throughout this chapter and in many of the other chapters Remy is compelled to look backward in order to understand the present. An obsession with understanding the past is constantly bedeviling him. For Remy, time becomes a more pressing antagonist than any of his human foes.

p. 18: “hajlike”: Haj, a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is performed to demonstrate a Muslim's “submission to God” (the meaning of the Arabic word *Islām*) and to assert the universal kinship of all Muslims.

To show how far from Islam Remy has strayed, he compares his journey to collect his yearly stipend to this religious pilgrimage.

p. 18: “Noura, a confrontation of brother and sister”: The name of the Algerian sister of Omar Naaman, the person who was given the name Remy Montpellier after he was flown out of Algiers in 1961.

As mentioned before, “Noura” is the Arabic word for “light,” just as “Leila” is the Arabic word for “night” and Houda, for “good.”

Thus far, Remy has mentioned only two members of his Algerian family, his father and his sister.

While chap. 1 presents two physical sibling confrontations (Mohammed vs. Houda Belmazoir and Leila vs. Ahmed Chabane), in chap. 2, Remy speaks of a dreaded mental confrontation between himself and his sister Noura.

pp. 18-20: SECTION 3: Time span: From 10:30 to 10:35 p.m.

pp. 18-19: “Ain't no . . . Georgie Brown”: This is the first section of “An Orgy with Georgie,” a loose parody of the 1925 swing classic, “Sweet Georgia Brown” by Ben Bernie and Maceo Pinkard (music) and Kenneth Casey (lyrics).

This first section is from the 10:30 performance.

“Georgie” and “Modest Proposal” are the two numbers from the revue given in their entirety. The other two presumably had extra sections or stanzas.

“Georgie” is by far the longest of the four numbers. Its second stanza (20) is from the 11:30 show, and the third (25-26) and fourth (27) are from the 12:30 performance.

Each of the numbers lasted from twelve to fifteen minutes since the complete four-song program was “reprised on the hour” (15).

Much of each number consisted of a resinging of the lyrics, separated by provocative choreography.

p. 18: “petah”: This word (l. 1) is misspelled, purposively. In the songs “guys” (l. 8) is used in all places where one would expect “gays.”

- p. 19: mint-juleped: No dictionary that I consulted listed “mint-julep” as a verb. However, a search of Google revealed several examples of it used as such (“mint-juleped by the three of them”).
I used it in my first manuscript version of this novel in 1990, at which time I suspect it was a neologism.
The meaning is both that the sight of Georgie gave the viewers the refreshing “kick” of a mint julep drink and that they gasped their exclamation over or into the mint julep brought to their lips.
- p. 19: “Min.” in “Min. fourteen inches” (l. 14) is the abbreviation for “minimum,” although there is a pun on “men” as in “Men [the audience, he’s got] fourteen inches.”
- p. 19: “Ethiop”: Archaic for “Ethiopian” or “black man or woman.” Shakespeare uses it, often with the variant spelling “Ethiope” nine times in seven works: *Ado* 4.3.36 and 5.4.37; *LLL* 4.3.114 and 264; *MND* 3.2.257; *Passionate Pilgrim* (l. 228); *Pericles* 2.2.20; *Two Gentlemen* 2.6.26; and *Romeo* 1.5.47.
- p. 19: “Maw Thatcher’s” refers to the United Kingdom’s strait-laced prime minister (1979-1990) during Remy’s visit to London in 1989.
- p. 19: “‘green & pleasant Land’”: Blake’s “Jerusalem [‘And did those feet’]”: “I will not cease from Mental Fight, / Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand, / Till we have built Jerusalem / In England’s green & pleasant Land” (13-16).
This quotation is balanced by the use of lines 13-14 in the last chapter, 21.362.
- p. 19: viridian: greenish-blue.
- p. 19: “ass-sync”: A neologism meaning “to fake anal intercourse,” based on, as the waiter points out, “lip-sync” or “to synchronize lip movements with recorded speaking or singing.”
- p. 19: “In our next serving”: A reference to the next number on the “programme” (15), “A Modest Proposal.”
- p. 19: “No *pourboire, s’il vous plaît*”: On the program given to Remy, it was specified, “No gratuities, please” (15).
- p. 19: “at Gilbert and Sullivan’s Savoy”: At the Savoy Theatre, where Gilbert and Sullivan’s comic operas were presented, the programme specified that ushers were not to be tipped.
- p. 19: “miniature amphitheater”: Trimalchio’s has an “amphitheater” design with an apron stage which allowed customers to sit on both sides as well as in front of it.
Unlike Dante’s inferno, the circles are not complete.

The stage and its abutting food-and-drink servicing areas rendered the audience area with its nine rising rows of tables as having a three-fourths circular design.

- p. 19: “each table: the ten . . . twelve, fourteen, seventeen, twenty, twenty-three, thirty-one [and] the fifteenth-booth ninth [tier]”: In case you do not wish to do the arithmetic, the total number of tables is 169, I hope, or my gay numerical symbolism is also awry.
In homosexual jargon “169” is code for “one [who likes] 69.” Its more typical code “2469” means “two [or I am seeking a partner] for 69.”
A third variant, “2269,” will be given on p. 30.
- p. 19: “two bloom-faded *petits-mâtres* (“dandies”), who were tiding their faces . . . pilgarlic”: The description of the other inhabitants of Trimalchio's ninth tier is a distorted imitation of the final major image of Dante's *Inferno* (Canto 33): Satan chewing on the three greatest sinners, Brutus, Cassius, and Judas.
The “older distinguished pilgarlic,” I imagined, as Satan. I originally had three “dandies” being lured in by him; the lateral tide-like movement is a mimicking of Satan's up-and-down chewing on the three sinners.
However, I changed it to two, when I realized that the observing Remy was the third.
The literal French translation of “*petits-mâtres*” is “little masters,” but the compound came into English (according to *Webster's Third*) in 1711 with the meaning of “fop” or “dandy.”
- p. 19: “pilgrimage to Trimalchio's ‘burning sands.’” A reference to Dante's *Inferno*, the Seventh Circle, third round. The plain of the burning sands houses those who, Christian tradition held, committed violence against God and nature.
The first two rounds were concerned with those who treated others violently or did violence against themselves (the suicides).
The inhabitants of the third round are the blasphemers, who lie supine in the sands; the sodomites, who run in endless circles; and the usurers, who huddle on the sand.
Dante describes the plain in Canto 14, lines 8-14, noting that the “ground was dry, thick sand” (13), but the phrase “burning sand” is not used until Virgil tells Dante not to step on the “burning sand” (14:71). (The plural *sands* is typically used by critics in discussing the locale.)
The quotation by the waiter is not meant to apply only to Trimalchio's gay clientele, but also to Remy, whose face tells the perceptive server that he is also in need of pilgrimage.
- p. 19: “in search of the son, Perfect Son, or the father, ‘Our Father which art,’ *le père, Le Père Parfait, Poppa 2*”: The image of the father figure and the theme of a son in search of his father are presented.
The waiter presents a stereotypical homosexual partnering (that a gay youth seeks a father figure, and the older gay is searching for a son) based on all four numbers

performed in Trimalchio's revue. He has caught the momentary expression of suffering and repulsion on Remy's face during the "old man[s] fan dance" (29) and believes that those are manifestations of a painful mature-man, young-lover relationship.

Three paragraphs down he is dismissive of the "jejune British earl" (19), commenting before Remy himself can confirm, "That's not your friend, I think," and addressing Remy as "Poppa 2" (a substitute father for him). Another two paragraphs down, he adds, "I would not deceive you . . . *mon père* (19).

To Remy, almost every word that Saul utters carries a separate meaning since he is a son in search of his father, whom he knows that he deceived when he deserted his Algerian family.

To sum up, obviously smitten, Saul desires to set up a son-father relationship with Remy while his overture simply reinforces Remy's desire to reunite with his father, whom he is aware (and we will find out later) is dying.

- p. 19: "'Our Father which art'": The opening of the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6.9 and Luke 11.2 (KJV).
- p. 19: "*Le Père Parfait*": French for "The Perfect Father."
- p. 19: "The swarthy one's bugging Papa now!": The song "An Orgy with Georgie" is continuing as the waiter speaks, so it would have reached the second section (given on p. 20), where Georgie, "the swarthy one," is described as having sex with the Pope, called by Italian Catholics "Poppa," (12, but the whole stanza, 7-16, is relevant to the image).
- p. 19: "a transubstantiating fuck": A crude mockery of the Eucharist, the central Christian rite. Here the bread put into the mouth as the body of Christ becomes the black penis, and the wine drunk as the blood of Christ becomes the semen ejaculated into the anus.
Additionally, it is a "false fuck" (since Maw Thatcher forbade the real sexual act), just as some believe no symbolic or real change occurs in the bread and wine.
- p. 19: *Regardez!*: "Look!" in French.
- p. 19: "I am the messenger": The meaning of Remy's waiter is that he is delivering a message from a server in the second row.
The wording, however, relates him to John the Baptist, whom the author of Mark identifies with the person mentioned in the Old Testament in Malachi 3.1: "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way for me," a precursor who will ready the people for the Messiah.
- p. 19: "buttoned my hole": A meaning of the transitive verb "buttonhole" is "to get someone's attention by grasping that person's coat by a buttonhole."

The rewording provides a sodomitical meaning characteristic of Trimalchio's, where "hole" becomes "asshole."

- p. 19: "Here's a whirlwind message": In the second circle of the *Inferno*, canto 5:30-32 the souls of impulsive lovers are carried in a whirlwind: "A wind that never rests whirls the damned spirits round and round."
Thus a "whirlwind message" in this context would be one from an impulsive lover to another. The most famous lovers from this canto are Francesca and Paolo.
The waiter may also be mocking God's message to Job, which was delivered from a whirlwind (Job, chap. 38-41).
- p. 19: "from a Donna Angelicata in my circle": In Italian, the "angelic lady." Several Italian poets who preceded Dante developed the concept of a lady so pure and beautiful as to seem an angel.
In the writings of Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Dante, the *donna angelicata* was the path to the knowledge of God through one of His creatures. Dante uses Beatrice as such in *Via Nuova* and the *Divine Comedy*.
Either Remy's waiter or the one in the second tier inverts this situation by having the one designated as the *donna angelicata*, identified two paragraphs down as a "jejune British earl" (19), seek the path to his happiness through a human being, Remy, "the handsome man" (19).
- p. 19: "Ugolino": This chapter contains the first reference to Ugolino from Dante's *Inferno*, cantos 32-33. There he is seen gnawing on the skull of his enemy, Archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini.
Both men, like Remy, were guilty of treason, and the one to whom Remy is compared was also responsible for the great suffering of his family.
As Dante narrates the story, Ruggieri had Ugolino, his two sons, and his two grandsons imprisoned in a tower whose door was nailed up. There all died of starvation although the last survivor Ugolino engaged in cannibalizing his own family members.
There is also a pun on the similar sounding "Ugolino" and "ugly one" since Remy is referred to as a contrast, the "handsome man."
The Ugolino allusion will be revived (as expected) in the last chapter of the novel, 21.359."
- p. 19: "sweetmeat": "any sweet food made with sugar or honey"; here it is used in the sense of "sweetheart" or "sweetie," although its second syllabic gives it a homosexual connotation.
- p. 19: "pretty dimpled boys": From *Antony* 2.2.211-12, where Enobarbus says, "On each side [of Cleopatra] / Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids."
- p. 19: retrally: "at, near, or toward the back."

- p. 19: *très beau*: “very handsome”; three paragraphs above, the waiter had said to Remy, “You’re quite handsome.” Remy had assumed that the compliment was from his waiter, but now he is told that his waiter is (supposedly) relaying a message from a patron in the second tier: “So it was not I who christen you *très beau*.”
- p. 19: “Notwithstanding, you are”: Having dismissed that he so characterized Remy, the waiter concurs that Remy is very handsome.
- p. 19: *La troisième à gauche*: French for “The third [table] from the left.”
- p. 19: “full of ‘more pounds / Than the Queen can shit.’”: The quoted part is taken from the second part of the song “Bangkok-alota.” Remy had heard it in section one—again, all musical numbers are given in full over each hour’s span—but it is not revealed to the reader until p. 24.
- p. 19: “*for the devil appoints his own time*”: Remy is greatly disappointed that the person pointed out is not HIV. His thought is influenced by Rev. 12:12: The Devil’s “appointed time is short.”
This malediction “devil,” previously used by Ben Bella on 2.17 in referring to the seven traitors, characterizes HIV here.
“Devil,” “Satan,” or “demon” will principally be used in referring to Remy.
In the 9.148 note, N9:34, there will be a list of the thirty-three instances in the novel in which Remy is spoken of demonically by a broad spectrum of the characters, eleven individuals and several groups.
- p. 19: “world enough”: From the opening line of Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress.”
Remy, characteristically, does not give the complete phrase, “world enough and time,” because of his discomfiture with the temporal.

- p. 20: "My name is Saul": Finally, the waiter's name is given. It has a Biblical connection since it was the name Paul had before his experience on the road to Damascus and his subsequent conversion to Christianity (Acts 13.9).
A Jewish name, it also is an approximate homonym for "soul." In Hebrew his name means "asked for; prayed for."
Although Saul is absent from the novel for a long spell, he will eventually reappear.
- p. 20: "the rose-tipped light of dawn": As mentioned on the p. 17 note, N2:10, "blond hair," the color of Saul's cheeks, and his built are borrowed from *Billy Budd*, chap. 2. This image is drawn from chap. 25: "Ascending [the hanged Billy] took the full rose of the dawn."
- p. 20: *circoncis*: "circumcised" in French. The word "circumcise" or a variant appears at least one time in each chapter of the novel as does the word "throat."
This curious repetition will be explained later.
- p. 20: "snipped-in-the-bud": This playful description puns upon "nipped in the bud" (an idiom for a life destroyed early).
There is a mechanical pun on *bud/Budd*, as I mentioned in the p. 17 note above, N.2:9.
- p. 20: "foreskinless": See Leroy's use of this term on 1.2, which is discussed in its note, N1:6. Its online *Wiktionary* definition is "without a foreskin; circumcised."
- p. 20: "If I made that trip [to Algiers], without stipulating he [his father in the Casbah] would impose a haj on me, a second, a third, a fourth": The bracketed words clarify what is unspecified in the text.
Thus in his mind Remy is already contemplating a return to Algiers to see his father before HIV on p. 30 will present the desire of the French intelligence agency for him to travel there.
Four hajjes are mentioned by Remy: Islam allows a male Muslim (but not a female) to make a haj for a dead or infirm family member.
However, first the person must make the haj for himself. See the Hadiths (or collections of authenticated sayings or deeds of the Prophet Mohammed) of Al-Bukhari 7315 and Muslim 1149.
The first haj which will be imposed, Remy says, is on himself, "a haj on me" (20). The other three would be for other members of his Algerian family, either living or dead.
- pp. 20-22: SECTION 4: Time span: From c. 11:33 since it opens with the second stanza from "Orgy," to an undesignated, but probable, 11:45. Thus Remy has been waiting about an hour and a half for HIV.
- p. 20: honky: a slang expression for a white person.

- p. 20: “ding-dong”: A synonym for “dong,” a large penis, according to the *Urban Dictionary*.
- p. 20: “holey Roma”: The denotative definition is “having a hole or holes.” However, the connotations merge the religious “holy” with the sexual “asshole.”
- p. 20: “Poppa humphed, ‘Fuck . . . See of Petah””: A pope is regarded as the successor of Peter, the first Roman Catholic pope. This stanza puns upon rock and kingdom images about St. Peter from Matt. 16:18-19, where the name “is itself a biblical play on its Greek derivation *petros* (“rock”): “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.”
In the song “church” is changed to “kingdom” because Jesus next said, “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”
Another meaning of “cock” is also affiliated with Peter. In Matt. 26:34, Jesus told Peter, “Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.”
“See of Petah””: A wordplay on the see of Peter, the papacy of Rome, which is the central government of the Roman Catholic Church.
- p. 20: “Preacher Graham” (l. 19) and “Rev’rend Roberts” (22) are based on the names (not the actions) of the American evangelists, Billy Graham and Oral Roberts. The latter’s first name occasions a sexual pun: “Though I like anal, not oral” (23).
- p. 20: “Boy, that boy is hung”: Puns upon “hung” meaning “having large genitals” and “hung” meaning crucified.” This line from the song is quoted on p. 21.
- p. 20: “speakin’ in tongues”: “Glossolalia” or “speaking in tongues” means “ecstatic or apparently ecstatic utterance of usually unintelligible speechlike sounds, as in a religious assembly.”
Here it is given a sexual connotation of fellatio.
This phrase becomes the title of chap. 16. That chapter will end (16.274) with Remy recalling the last two lines of this song: “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, / He’s got us speakin’ in tongues.”

pp. 21-22: "So the last time . . . quivered, aggressively": This is the second use of the literary device which I termed an "interior dramatic duologue" in the 1.3 note "protested," N1:10, where the literary device is analyzed.

In brief, an interior dramatic duologue is used by Remy when he must examine situations so painful to him that he needs an intermediary or an antagonist to help him confront these situations.

Thus, an aspect of Remy's own mind serves the role of "Job's comforters."

Future instances of the interior dramatic duologue occur on 3.47-51; 15.255-56; and 17.388-92.

In chap. two, through the persona of a TV newsman, Remy forces himself to confront the horrendous consequences of his treason. Although he does so, the duologue opens (21) and closes (22) with him shaking his head to assert that he will not confront all of these familial repercussions of this treason.

In between, partly by him but mostly by the TV newsman, his past is revealed.

Born Omar, in late 1957 when he was seventeen, he secretly joined the FLN which was fighting for Algeria's independence. Despite his youth, he became a trusted member of its hierarchy (21).

Not specified is what caused him to become an agent for the French authorities in Algiers, although he speaks about the "rape" (22) of his sister Noura.

He served as a valuable clandestine collaborator for two years and three months (from Dec. 1958 to April 1961). However, when the tide began to turn in favor of the FLN, he and six other Muslim agents for the French were flown to safety in France (22).

A new detail about his father is give. He is still alive, but has gone blind (22). The section closes with Remy picturing Noura, here revealed as deaf and mute, running through a field, presumably being pursued by men intent of raping her (22).

p. 21: "So the last time you saw your father": The interviewer wants to talk about Remy and his Algerian father, but Remy indicates he will not speak about that.

p. 21: "Boy, that boy is hung . . . 'Comedown from the cross'": The TV interviewer says that the line 21 of "An Orgy with Georgie" refers to the crucifixion of Christ, which he notes is a "Comedown from the cross."

"Comedown," meaning "a fall to a low or lower status or position," puns on Mark 15.29-30: Those who passed by the crucified Jesus railed and mocked him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Save thyself, and come down from the cross."

Matt. 27:40 and 42 use similar wording: "If thou are the Son of God, come down from the cross" and "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him."

p. 21: "the nigra ass-syncing the Methuselah": A reference to a choreographed section of "An Old Queen's Lament" not previously mentioned. The "old queen," the interviewer says, also portrays the Pope from "An Orgy with Georgie"

- p. 21: “free-basing”: Denotatively, “to prepare or use a concentrated form of cocaine.” It is employed metaphorically here to indicate that the interviewer is facetiously admitting he is drawing a dangerous, unsubstantiated conclusion about Remy’s treatment of his Algerian family.
- p. 21: “how you fucked over your family”: Remy’s anti-self, the newsman, brings up Remy’s family again, commenting how he had maliciously harmed them, a slang meaning of “fuck over.”
- p. 21: “‘S what we do best”: The first of three times that the interviewer defines the mission of television. Here it’s “a visual medium.”
- p. 21: “The man [interviewer] . . . was not there, for Remy was . . . gazing at Trimalchio’s . . . tablecloth”: Remy is aware of the struggle between himself (his id) and his anti-self (superego).
- p. 21: “A law student at the University of Algiers”: Still (2013) the major university in Algeria, it was founded in 1909. Until Algerian independence, almost all of its student body consisted of sons of European settlers in Algeria (called *colons*). In 1957, the time about which the interviewer is speaking, students started their university education at seventeen. Also as the interviewer points out, despite the insurrection, now in its third year, the French authorities continued to reserve ten percent of the enrollment at the University of Algiers for Muslims.
Note: Omar (Remy) was a law student there from Jan. 1957 to April 1961.
- p. 21: “All the six”: The other great traitors whom Remy said he had met at various “clandestine meetings over the past three years” (from late 1957 to April 1961, when they were flown to France). None of the seven, who held trusted positions in the FLN, knew that each was a French collaborator.
- p. 21: “the protégé of Si Azzedine . . . Rabah Zerrari”: This real-life FLN leader was still alive when I last checked the internet and though in his eighties was still waging his fight for democracy in Algeria. In an article dated March 4, 2012, Zerrari is listed as the co-writer of a proposed film about a hero of the revolution, Belkacem Krim. Si Azzedine was Zerrari’s “non de guerre.” On pp. 23-24, my fictional representation of Si Azzedine presides over Omar’s (Remy’s) FLN initiation ritual in October 1957.
- p. 21: Si: In the Arabic dialects of Algerian and Tunisia, *Si* (as is *Sayyid*) is an often used masculine title of respect, comparable to “Mr.” in English or *Sidi* in other Muslim dialects.
- p. 21: “the FLN—‘*Front de Libération nationale*’”: The French translation of the FLN, the National Liberation Front, which produced its abbreviation.

- p. 21: *Wilaya*: The Arabic word for “province,” as the text states. The FLN divided Algeria into seven *wilayaat* (plural).
Wilaya IV, which surrounded the capital Algiers, but did not include it, was principally based in Blida, a city about twenty-seven miles (forty-five km.) south of Algiers.
- p. 21: “his capture near the end of 1958. Have anything to do with that?”: The interviewer suggests that information from Remy allowed the French to capture his mentor Azzedine.
 The real-life Azzedine was captured by the French in a battle near Palestro, a town in northern Algeria in Nov. 1958.
 Thus as the interviewer (Remy's anti-self) well knew that Omar could not have had anything to do with this seizure since he did not become a French collaborator until Dec. 8, 1958.
 Paralleling the character in my novel, the real Azzedine was released from prison in July 1962 and rushed to Algiers to take command of the FLN forces in the Casbah. Not siding with the eventual Algerian victors in the brief civil war following independence, he was pushed into political insignificance.
- p. 21: “elevated control room”: Remy's imagination has constructed a setting in which he and his interviewer are on a stage in a theater.
 At the front of it is an elevated control room, with a TV crew and a producer who will not speak until p. 33, where the interviewing duologue is revived.
- p. 21: “he had ‘an absolute trust’ in you. Not a good reader of men's faces”: Cf. *Macbeth* 1.4.11-14: “There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face. / He was a gentleman on whom I built / An absolute trust.”
- p. 21: “I'd conceived I was alone . . . ‘walking invisible’”: The single quoted passage is adapted from Milton's *PL* 3.682-84: For neither man nor angel can discern / Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks / Invisible, except to God alone.”
 The loneliness theme was mentioned in the p. 16 note above, N2:5. It will be examined further in the 15.253 note on the breaking of bonds motif, N15:49-50.
- p. 21: “‘One chain broken, another snakelike formed’”: The disconnection theme is stressed by the breaking of one chain; the connection theme, by the forming of another, albeit it is one with traitors.
- p. 21: “‘New skin for old’”: Remy's reference to “snakelike” provides his anti-self with the rebuttal about a molting snake which sheds its old skin prior to replacing it with a new growth.
 The passage symbolizes Remy's casting off his Algerian identity and assuming a French one.
- p. 21: “*surveillant*”: The French is typically translated as “supervisor,” but in espionage, the

term is sometimes applied to a case officer.

I used the term only to refer to the case officers whom Omar had in Algiers from 1958–1961.

- p. 22: *Mon Dieu*: “My God!” in French.
- p. 22: “under four months after you . . . launched your ‘double cross’”: The historical information about the French military successes against the FLN’s ALN (National Liberation Army) is accurate.
By the middle of 1959, French officers were openly and dismissively declaring that the “*dérangement algérien* (“the Algerian trouble”) was over.
My principal source for the Algerian war is Horne’s *Savage War*. As mentioned in the p. 18 note, “22,753,” N2.16, Remy is said to have read the book.
Horne is first cited in the 1.11 note, N1.28.
- p. 22: “in a single day in March we eliminated the leaders of . . . Kabylie’s III and the Sahara’s VI”: Si Haouès, the leader of *Wilaya* 6 (the Sahara), and Col. Amirouche Aït, the leader of Kabylie’s *Wilaya* 3 (the province east of Algiers), were both killed on March 29, 1959. (Some sources list March 28. Horne writes “late March.”)
- p. 22: ““double cross—how Christ never leaves us!”: Another connection of the political with the religious.
- p. 22: *Hélas!*: French for “Alas!”
- p. 22: “the tide turned in ’61”: International and French-mainland opposition to the war began to increase, particularly as accounts of the brutal torture used by the French military came to light.
Fearing that de Gaulle was going to abandon them, European colonists and the French military in Algeria four times plotted his assassination during his trip to Algeria in Dec. 1960.
For the referendums in France and Algerian and the resultant Évian accord, see the p. 18 note above, N2:14-15.
- p. 22: “the one hundred thousand minor *collaborateurs* . . . the Évian accords”: The victorious FLN turned its vengeance on the 250,000 Algerian Muslims who had worked with or supported the French.
Horne estimates that between 30,000 and 150,000 passive collaborators and their families were killed following independence, often after outrageous forms of torture.
The interviewer exaggerates when he suggests that the accords of Évian stated that these were to be protected. There seemed to have been only some sort of gentlemen’s agreement to do so.
- p. 22: “How did you designate them three years ago?”: Remy’s anti-self even concocts a fictitious past for Remy, pretending that he had made a statement about the collaborators three years ago.
- p. 22: “*les pauvres diables* . . . ‘poor devils’”: Again a mistake by the interviewer. This phrase was used by de Gaulle in 1959, but to refer to the French settlers (*colons*) in Algeria, not to the Algerians who had colluded with the French.

The phrase will reappear late in the novel, 20.349.

- p. 22: “*Le pain perdu*”: French for “French toast,” as the text translates. However, *perdu*, meaning “lost” in French, is played upon to indicate how Remy felt that he himself was lost. The French *pain* is a homograph for the English word “pain,” that is, it has the same spelling, but a different meaning and pronunciation.
- p. 22: “Let them eat cake, eh?”: This is the English translation of the French expression, “*Qu’is mangent de la brioche* [a fancy pastry].” Supposedly French Queen Marie Antoinette made this facetious response on being told that the peasants had no bread. If she did utter it—and few historians think she did—she would have borrowed it from Rousseau’s *Confessions* (1782), where it is used in chap. 6 to describe a similar situation. The sentiment was not attributed to Antoinette until 1843, fifty years after her death.
- p. 22: “*Je sais!*”: “I know!” in French.
- p. 22: “Now when they hurled your father down the cramped stairs”: The interviewer (Remy’s anti-self) returns to the topic he began with on p. 20, Remy’s father. However, he has his information wrong, as Remy tells him. On p. 26, as part of the ruse to make it appear that Omar (Remy) is being seized, the French soldiers throw Omar down the stairs.
- p. 22: “S what we do best”: The second definition of television given by the interviewer stresses not its visual importance, but that it is “Vision” medium.
- p. 22: “We sneak you into Algiers”: The interviewer then proposes that Remy be smuggled back to Algiers for a reunion with his father, a reinforcement of the indication that Remy desires to make that trip (20).
- p. 22: “He’s stone-blind”: Remy’s father is blind.
- p. 22: amaurotic: being partially or completely blind. However, the “deaf and dumb” afflictions are brought on by his father’s emotions. To torment Remy, his anti-self brings up Noura’s natal infirmities, one of which is given two paragraphs down: “She ‘who had no voice with which to keen.’”
- p. 22: “stand-in”: Here applied to the father, it is used purposively by Remy’s anti-self since it prepares for a crucial event in chap. 3. “Foreshadows” cannot be used here because the event is from 1958 while this supposed conversation with the interviewer is taking place in 1989 in Trimalchio’s. In that sense, the word “stand-in” foreshadows something for the reader, but is a flashback for the characters, Remy and his anti-self.

- p. 22: “the rape of Noura”: The rape of his sister is mentioned, but Remy, initially not wanting to confront it, connects it with the 100,000 collaborators killed by the vengeful FLN.
He then gives a vivid description of Noura’s helplessness as she rushes about a corn field, presumably the site of her rape.
- p. 22: cultrate: sharp-edged and pointed.
- p. 22: ““And God lets his angel be raped?””: Remy seeks to blame God first.
- p. 22: *un nul*: literally in French, “a nonentity”; figuratively, cowardice or weakness of character.
Remy’s anti-self blames Remy himself, “And where was her brother?”
- p. 22: “‘pitch’”: A double meaning: “pitch” as “to try to sell using persuasive talk or advertising” and as “to cover or smear with or as with pitch.”
- p. 22: “Remy’s head quivered, aggressively”: Section 4 ends with Remy, who had begun it by agreeing to speak of his own treason, refusing to talk further about either his father or Noura.
- pp. 22-24: SECTION 5: Time span: From 11:45, as specified on p. 23, to c. 11:55, although the text does not specify the time the section ends.
- pp. 22-23: “No hungry children . . . that—far?”: The first section of the song “A Modest Proposal” appears to be a protest against child abuse and hunger. (Its second section will be given on pp. 30-31.)
The human species, this first section seems to maintain, has not gotten very far, if these inhuman conditions still exist.
However, the description of the three living cameos of one, two, and four performers has a tantalizing sexual undertone.

- p. 23: "At the first performance": Around 10:45.
- p. 23: "the wicker chair from the first number": "Five-foot Thai," p. 15.
- p. 23: *toile de fond*: backdrop of a stage.
- p. 23: "one . . . two . . . four": The total of the youths in the three cameos is seven.
As mentioned in the footnote to p. 17, N2:11, the number seven or a variant of it appears frequently in the novel.
In the first chapter, Ballard says that when he is "seventy," Leila will be forty-eight, a number which she corrects to "forty-seven" (4). Ballard's meeting with Mohammed is at "7:15" (11). The dowry is \$7,000 (12).
In the second chapter, Remy has been married to Marie twenty-seven years (note to p. 16, N2:5). His father is seventy (note to p. 17, "Before," N2:9). The taunting youths in "An Old Queen's Lament" number seven (17).
The number of the great traitors is seven (17). That number designating them is used seven times in chap. 2 (17, twice on 18, 21, 27, 30, and 32).
Omar (Remy) is seventeen when he joins the FLN (21). The number of Algeria's provinces is seven (21).
The heptads will multiply as the novel continues.
- p. 23: dhoti: a loincloth worn by Hindu males.
- p. 23: "battle royal": a free-for-all.
This term will appear on 21.353 to describe another melee among teenagers, another example of the early-late parallelism in the novel.
- p. 23: "enlightened of the Swiftian irony to come": That is, from the 10:45 performance Remy knows the ironic ending of the performance of "A Modest Proposal."
He would not have looked at it, but would have heard the lyrics of its second section.
- p. 23: "chiaroscuro": the light and shade in a painting, applied here to the theatrical lighting of the stage.
Since there is no blatant nudity in the first section of "Modest," Remy says that the chiaroscuro masked the ages of the performers.
- p. 23: "a ripe twenty-three": Remy quotes Saul's revelation about the ages of the p. 19 performers.
- p. 23: "*the long neck of a wine bottle thrust into a vagina*": The violence of the imagery, invoked by the twilight of the stage, darts into and out of Remy's mind. Its quick exit indicates that he is not yet willing to confront the incident.
- p. 23: "to stimulate your supper appetite and whet mine": Marie's witticism japes at her overweight.

- p. 23: “Le Puy’s four outcrops, *puys*—from which the town got its name—the granite core plugs . . . volcanoes whose cones had eroded away”: The highland scenery of Le Puy, which was built around the eroded cones (*puys*) of volcanoes.
- p. 23: “Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy . . . Black Madonna”: Factual are the description of the cathedral, the history of its Black Madonna, and the parading of it through the streets of Le Puy on August 16 (in the Roman Catholic Church the date the Virgin Mary was taken into Heaven after her death).
Le Puy is principally known for its two statutory Madonnas. The first is the small wooden statuette Black Virgin in the upstairs cloister area of its Cathédrale de Notre-Dame du Puy, a replica since its medieval original was destroyed by atheistic revolutionaries in 1793.
The second is the colossal bronze Notre Dame de France (“Pink Madonna”) statue, which is located at the top of the highest volcanic plug (*puys*). It was dedicated in 1860, ten years after its construction began.
Sixteen meters high, it was molded from the melted frames of two-hundred Russians cannons seized at the battle of Sevastopol.
Deemed garish by some critics, it towers over the city from its pinnacle and in the afternoon casts an enormous shadow over the lower-level Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy, which houses the Black Madonna.
A second Black Madonna will appear in my novel on 6.82, the Black Madonna inside the cathedral of Notre Dame d’Afrique, just north of Algiers (and in my novel near Zaracova Beach). Given the minimal number of Catholics remaining in Algiers, it mainly serves as a religious attraction for European tourists.
- p. 23: “merely a copy . . . born anew . . . its artificers ”: Artificers are skilled craftsman or inventors. However, as a play upon “artificial, the “copy” of the religious statue reinforces the real vs. artificial theme of the novel.
“Born anew” continues the religious motif.
- p. 23: “Saint Louis”: Louis IX, king of France from 1226-70. He was canonized as Saint Louis in 1297.

- p. 24: breccia: “rock consisting of sharp-cornered bits of fragmented rock, cemented together by sand, clay, or lime.”
Breccia is used as part of the surface of Le Puy's cathedral.
- p. 24: “visage of the French private, whose shins I . . . was drumming with a lead pipe”: What Remy conjures up is the night of his initiation into the FLN. (The date Oct. 15, 1957, is not mentioned here. That Omar, Remy's Algerian name, is seventeen is given later on this page).
The initiation took place in Blida, a city around twenty-seven miles (forty-five km.) south of Algiers. It is mentioned in the note to p. 21, N2:28, “*Wilaya*,” and on 3.38 Omar will attend a meeting there.
Omar could not join the FLN in Algiers because the French, as 6.88-90 will explain, eradicated its network in the capital in late 1957. Not until 1960 was a cautious rebuilding of the FLN presence in Algiers begun.
- p. 24: “inflicting pain requires such exertion, it should not be squandered on the unfeeling”: Remy of the Trimalchio's realizes the callousness of that statement, which disregards the suffering of the tortured person and stresses how tiring such torture is for its administrator.
- p. 24: Commander Si Azzedine: See the two notes on him on p. 21, N2:27 and N2:28.
- p. 24: *boussaadi*: An Arabic word for a “mountain knife,” as the text suggests. *Webster's Online* defines it as a “dagger,” but my Muslim friends in North Africa used “*boussaadi*” in referring to a “hunting knife.”
- p. 24: “Kabyle smile”: The Kabyles, whose homeland is the Atlas Mountains east of Algiers, is Algeria's largest Berber group. Their province, called Kabylie, was mentioned on p. 22 and in its note on N2:30.
Throughout the history of Algeria, they were known for dealing with an enemy by cutting his or her throat. The “Kabylie smile” is the resultant fatal wound. Describing the wound as being in the shape of the mouth of a “happy or smiley face” was my grotesque creation.
A knife to the throat was also used on 1.14 in the killing of Ballard. The same instrument with slight modifications will be employed in balancing later chapters: 15.240 and 243 and 20.342.
- p. 24: “the region's original inhabitants . . . intruders disdained”: The history of the invaders of Algeria and the fate of the original inhabitants, the Berbers, is largely factual: I may have left out a few invaders.
On 19.321 and 323-24, I will portray the prejudice of many Arabian-descended residents of Algiers toward Kabyles in 1989, the time of the novel.
- p. 24: “nicked . . . a scratch”: These words will be used with a symbolic undertone in later chapters, typically indicating what appears to be a superficial wound actually has a

larger implication.

“Nick,” as such, appears on 3.48; 4.57; 5.77; 9.136; and 15.244.

“Scratch”: 3.41 and 7.103.

- p. 24: “his blood and mine had flowed together”: As part of the connection theme (here of the murderer and his victim), the purposeful or accidental commixing of blood will also appear on 4.52, 18.312 (twice), and 20.348.
- p. 24: “the ritual slaughter the FLN levied on each initiate”: As an initiation rite, a candidate for membership in the FLN had to kill a *harki* (one of the 210,000 Algerian Muslims who served with the French army or as auxiliaries during the war; this figure, based on more recent studies, exceeds the 150,000 given by Horne), a French settler or official, or a French soldier.
- p. 24: “seventeen-year-old”: In his thoughts, Remy of Trimalchio's remembers how young he was when he made his first kill.
- p. 24: “Fecundity . . . morbidity”: The fruitfulness of this world masks from people the counterbalancing presence of how much life is wantonly destroyed.
- pp. 24-25: SECTION 6: Time span: It begins at around 12:12 a.m. since the last section (the second given in the text) of “Bangkok-alota,” is just finishing. The first number on the program, it would have begun at “midnight” (25). The end of the section is not stated, but is 12:18.
- p. 24: “Last seen him with a / British ‘so[m]domite’”: In the song, lines 3-4 mock the most famous misspelling in gay literary lore. The Marquis of Queensberry, angry at Oscar Wilde's friendship with his son Lord Alfred Douglas, scribbled on his calling card at Wilde's club, the Albemarle, on Feb. 18, 1895: “For Oscar Wilde, posing somdomite [sic].”
- p. 24: “fingering his slit”: The “slit” of l. 7 or “long narrow opening or crack” referred to here is the gluteal cleft or “crack” which separates the buttocks and inside which the anus is situated. See 1.6 and its note, N1:16, where Ballard under the shower of the changing room washes his gluteal cleft. The “fairy Brit” (6) is indicating which part of the Thai's anatomy interests him.
- p. 24: “more pounds / Than the Queen”: This was quoted by Saul on p. 19 to describe the British earl. Remy had heard the song twice before this 12:00 performance, so he, but not the reader until now, was aware where Saul took the quote. The rich are sometimes said “to defecate money,” a Google search reveals, although I wrote this line long before I even knew there was such a search tool as Google.

- p. 25: “baggy fag” (12): “Fag” is a derogatory term for a male homosexual. “Baggy” indicates both the “bags” under the person’s eyes and the Versace bag or “purse” (15).
- p. 25: “(For wear the worse)”: An inversion of the idiom, “the worse for wear,” meaning “damaged or worn through use.”
- p. 25: “Slap the Brit high”: The blow is aimed at the Britisher’s head.
- p. 25: “Versace purse” (15): Gianni Versace (1946 – 1997), Italian fashion designer.
- p. 25: “At their inceptive meeting . . . HIV”: This section concentrates mainly on HIV. He was assigned as Remy’s *contact* (his fourth) in 1981 (15). At this first meeting in Vichy, his new case officer displayed his obsession with pornography. He also called the annual “gift” or stipend Remy’s *pourboire* or “gratuity” (25). This meeting and subsequent ones typically occur in August. See the p. 28 note below “At their,” N2.46, for the selection of that month. Their 1982 meeting will be reported on 3.38. Its place is unspecified, and it probably occurred earlier than expected since Remy is given some sad news about his Algerian family. At their third meeting in 1983 HIV gave Remy a microcassette recorder. The place is not specified (25). The 1984 meeting is not mentioned. At the 1985 meeting Remy received an increase in his increments (18) since the traitor Khedda had been killed earlier that year. The 1986 meeting also occurred earlier than expected, as will be revealed on 10.155. It is at a Paris Metro stop. Again Remy gets some disturbing information about his Algerian family. Their 1987 meeting was in Athens, where Remy was told not to address him as “Contact,” but as “HIV” (25). AIDS was first clinically observed in 1981, but the virus which causes it was first called HIV in 1986. In 1988, they met in an Amsterdam public sauna (16). In the 10.159 note, N10:17, the time of this meeting will be listed as Aug. 17.
- p. 25: “a Vichy café”: HIV undoubtedly chose this city purposively, given Remy’s treason. After France was conquered by Germany (1940), the Nazis allowed a French government (free only in name) to be set up in Vichy, a city in central France. Most people of France regarded this government as pandering, cowardly, and traitorously collaborative.
- p. 25: “your *cadeau*, a *pourboire*”: As previously explained in the note to p. 16, N2:5, *cadeau* means “gift; present” in French, while *pourboire* means “tip; gratuity.”
- p. 25: “his three previous contacts”: According to my chronology, Remy got his first

contact in 1961; his second, in 1966; and his third, in 1974.

p. 25: "Proust's weighty tome": *Remembrance of Things Past*.

p. 25: *signet*: French for "bookmark."

p. 25: "Directorate-General for External Security": The French name of this agency, whose acronym is DGSE, is given in the p. 16 note on its predecessor "*Service de Documentation*" or SDECE (N2:7-8).

However, my novel sometimes uses the French word for "security" (*Sécurité*) in designating France's new intelligence organization.

HIV gives the reason for its change: France wanted to remove the word "counterespionage" and its implication of "spying," although as HIV comments, the concept was only "nominally" deleted (25).

p. 25: "limp penis": The cassette of the micro-recorder, HIV says, is "no larger than a limp penis."

This image was used earlier on p. 15 in describing the dance of the actor portraying the Thai in "A Bangkok-alota."

It will be employed five other times in the novel: 9.151; 11.175; 16.259; 20.341; and 21.365, for a total of seven.

p. 25: "everyone my wife screws while I'm away": HIV's confession about his philandering wife prepares for the closing sentence of this chapter (34). His wife had been mentioned earlier (16).

p. 25: "'opprobrious contempt' she tautologically appraises my sex": "Opprobrium" and "contempt" have basically the same meaning so they are tautological.

HIV's noun phrase "my sex" refers to his penis.

p. 25: "It's woman, never satisfied [that is, she always seeks the larger penis], who drives man queer": HIV states that his wife, not contented with the size of his penis, is always seeking a larger one through her philandering.

This contention naturally leads to his rationale: (1) his wife has made him queer by emasculating him through criticism of his penis; (2) unmanned, he is like a homosexual; (3) most "queer[s]" have AIDS, HIV's reasoning continues—and by the way a prejudice of most heterosexuals in the 1980s); therefore, HIV insists at their next meeting in Athens, "Call me HIV," a mimicking of the first sentence of *Moby Dick*, "Call me Ishmael."

- pp. 26-27: SECTION 7: Time span: It begins around 12:34 with the first rendition of the third section of "Georgie." Since the "Queen's Lament" number, which would have run from around 12:15 to 12:30, is not mentioned, presumably throughout that number Remy was convincing himself to confront the painful memory of this section. Remy's musings in section 7 will last through the ending of the first rendition of "Georgie" and its repetition up to the beginning of the fourth stanza, 12:42. Section 7 focuses on April 13, 1961, the day French paratroopers raided the shop/house of Omar's father.
- p. 26: "'starch' your noodle": make your penis stiff or erect.
- p. 26: "la-la London": "La-la Land" was a slang expression introduced c. 1980 to refer to Los Angeles (L.A. or simply LA). It quickly became an adjective to refer to any city renowned for frivolous or outrageous behavior and even to describe the state of a "spaced-out" person: "He's snorted himself into la-la land."
- p. 26: "head": slang expression for the glans penis, the tip or head of the penis.
- p. 26: "Diana": My apologies to Princess "Diana-fanatics," but this parody was written in 1991, a year before the scandalous book about the infidelities of this perfect royal couple. I was teaching in Saudi Arabia during Charles and Diana's 1986 visit to the kingdom.
- p. 26: "Hallelujahed and hosannaed": *Webster's Third* lists "hosanna" as having a verb form, but the only dictionaries which label "hallelujah" as a verb are the online *Wiktionary* and *Wordnik*. The latter gives three examples from articles of its use as a past tense verb.
- p. 26: "The French have lost!": Omar had been told by his French "handler" that if the occasion arose for him to be flown from Algiers, this early morning raid on his family's shop/home would be implemented. Three paragraphs down, he is said to be "adhering to the script of his *surveillant*" (case officer) and in the next paragraph indicates that he is "play[ing] his part." The plan for his flight to France will be clarified on 5.79 where his Algiers' "boss" assured Omar that if the French had to retreat from Algeria he would "not be left dangling." According to my chronology, Omar was twenty-one and in his fourth year as a law student at the University of Algiers when he was flown to France. More specifically, he was born on April 2, 1940, and was hustled out of Algiers by the French on April 13, 1961.
- p. 26: "the cypress door of their grocery shop": Just as Ballard passes by flowers associated with death on 1.11, so the wood of the door Omar is dragged across—an action signaling that he "ceased to be Omar . . . Naaman" (27)—is also connected with

death.

The cypress is the prevalent cemetery tree in the Muslim world. In classical Greek and Roman society it was the tree of mourning; the custom of these ancients was to plant it beside a grave, and mourners in Roman funerals carried branches of it. (See *Aeneid*, bk. 3).

p. 26: “grocery shop”: The first identification of Omar's father's occupation.

p. 26: “dawn prayers”: In Arabic *salaat il-fajr* or simply Fajr.

“Dawn” is not the same as “sunrise,” although I've heard Muslims speaking in English refer to Fajr as “sunrise prayers.” Dawn is the light which appears before the sun becomes visible (sunrise).

Muslim scholars agree that the beginning of dawn, and thus of its prayers, is the point where a white thread of light appears on the horizon.

There is disagreement among them, however, whether dawn begins when the sun is eighteen degrees below the horizon (as held by proponents of Astronomical Twilight) or when it is no more than twelve degrees below the horizon (as maintained by adherents of Nautical Twilight).

A large majority accepts the former, which is used to establish the time of dawn prayers.

p. 26: “mounting the narrow stairs to their quarters”: In the Naaman residence, the first floor was used for the grocery; the second, for their living quarters. While most houses in the Casbah are three-stories, the gradient and foundation of certain areas will not support a third story.

p. 26: *cinéma vérité*: a realistic, documentary-like type of movie-making.

p. 26: “Return my Noura!”: The reader's first indication that Noura had been abducted by the French army.

Though 3.38-39 will reveal that her abduction happened over three years ago (on Wednesday, Dec. 5, 1958), her mother and father had obviously never given up hope that she was alive and would be returned.

On p. 27, Omar will surprisingly reveal that he knows where Noura is.

p. 26: *surveillant*: French for “supervisor,” although it is sometimes translated as “handler” or “boss.” See the p. 21 note, N2:28-29.

p. 26: “emanated a wail . . . his mother's plaintive groan”: The first time Omar's mother is mentioned.

p. 26: “paras”: Defined in the text as “counter-insurgency paratroopers.” In 1955, the 10th French Paratrooper division was assigned to Algiers to suppress the FLN insurrection, the regular army and police having had little success.

On 6.88, the 10th division and its commander Gen. Jacques Massu will be discussed in

more detail.

The “paras” were used principally as land-based counter-insurgency units, although some of their daring operations involved helicopters landing on the rooftops of the Casbah. The “paras” who seized Omar came by truck.

At the time of Omar's staged abduction (April 13, 1961), Massu was no longer the commander of the paras since in Jan. 1960 he criticized de Gaulle's Algerian policy and was promptly removed of his duties and reassigned to France.

p. 26: “The FLN has won”: This contrasts with the opening “The French have lost!” the exclamation point conveying Omar's astoundment.

The absence of one here indicates Remy's resignation.

p. 26: “black forever-mourning *niqaab*”: Although termed as a type of veil, this garment drapes over a woman, hiding her body from head to foot.

Omar's mother, Remy conveys, has worn this since Noura was abducted. This incident will be described on 3.38-39, as mentioned five notes above.

- p. 27: "began his fall": This clause suggests not just his fall down the stairs, but the falling away of his identity, his "ceas[ing] to be Omar" (27), and the "not 'fallen forever'" of p. 33.
With his arms covering his face, he ironically notes that he was "veiled as his mother."
- p. 27: "blind mouth": Remy in Trimalchio's in 1989 uses "blind" to torment himself in narrating this account of his "abduction" in 1961. His father will not lose his eyesight until his stroke in 1986, we will learn later in the novel (10.155).
This is an example of how an event in the near past (1986) influences an interpretation of something in the far past (1961), which is being given by a narrator in the present time (1989).
This narrative technique merges foreshadowing with flashback with present-time stream of consciousness.
The "blind mouth" image is from Milton's "Lycidas" where St. Peter employs synaesthesia in calling the corrupt clergy "Blind mouths!" (119) They are blind to the sacred duties of ministry and care only about stuffing food into their mouths. Line 125 brings the two senses together, "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed."
Here Remy uses "blind mouth" to refer to the words coming from his father's mouth: Even if they torture you, "Be true to God and Algeria!" (26). His father is blind to the fact that for over three years Omar has been an ingrained traitor for the French.
Thus the words "torment" him more so than the physical fall; in fact, Remy of the Trimalchio, like the student in Poe's "The Raven," chooses words which will intensify his torment.
- p. 27: "passionate strength": From Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, 1889 ed., vol. 3, chap. 2, "Of the Pathetic Fallacy," p. 177: "Ellen's character is throughout consistent in this clear though passionate strength."
Ellen is a character in Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, bk. 6. Ruskin is referring to a speech of Ellen given in ll. 869-87.
- p. 27: "the demand they give back . . . come to confiscate again": "Return my Noura!" was the demand that his father made to the paras, although he realized that they were coming to arrest Omar, his only son.
- p. 27: "'God will comfort the tortured!' . . . 'the last words I heard my father speak'": An indication that Remy desires to speak with his father again. In France he has lived a "comfortable" life (16), but he is still haunted by those last words of his father.
- p. 27: "Four hours later, the collaborators from Constantine and Oran": The drive from either Constantine (in eastern Algeria) to Algiers or Oran (in western Algeria) to the capital takes from three and one-half to four hours.
- p. 27: Dakota transport: In 1949, the French Air Force received approximately one hundred ex-U.S. Air Force Dakota C-47 transport planes.

It used them in the Indochina and Algerian wars for transporting troops and dropping supplies and leaflets.

- p. 27: Maison-Blanche Airport: The name of Algiers' airport during French colonial rule. It was so named because it was located in the suburb Dar el Beida, which was popularly called Maison Blanche because most of its "houses" were "white."
The airport was renamed Houari Boumediène Airport shortly after the death of Algeria's second president in 1978. It is 16.9 km. east southeast of the center of Algiers.
- p. 27: Marseille: France's major Mediterranean seaport.
- p. 27: Naaman: Omar's family name is Naaman. A real Algerian name, I selected it because in English it sounds like "no man," as opposed to "everyman," since Omar gave up his identity when he became Remy.
The name will be punned on by Remy's anti-self on 17.289: "Let no man enter."
Omar's father's given name is Ibrahim, a variant of the Hebrew Abraham, meaning "father of many."
Omar's mother's name is Aziza, which means in Arabic "powerful; beloved; precious."
- p. 27: Ruelle Bensdid: The name, but not the place or its location, is based on Ruelle Laid Bensdid, a real alleyway in the Casbah.
In French *ruelle* means "a lane or alley."
- p. 27: "safely tucked away . . . in an immured nunnery": A surprising disclosure because it had been assumed that Noura had been raped and perhaps killed.
As Omar is flying to safety in France, he thinks of her, who, he hopes, is safe in a nunnery outside Algiers, although her parents do not know she is there.
- p. 27: mulberry tree: The image of the juice of its berries as "mock blood" is from Pierre Leulliette's 1961 book, *St. Michael and the Dragon: A Paratrooper in the Algerian War*.
- p. 27: "melodies her ears cannot hear but she can": The paradox is appropriated from Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn": "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard / Are sweeter" (11-12).
The wording here flashes forward to the source of the image, 3.43, where the paradox is partially resolved.
- p. 27: Zbiri: One of the seven great traitors. See the p. 17 note, N2:12, which lists the names of the great traitors.
Their names will also be given on p. 33.
- p. 27: *vide supra*: Latin for "see above." Remy tells himself he had earlier informed the interviewer that the seven traitors did not speak during the flight. The interviewer

had commented that there was “a dearth of camaraderie” (21).

p. 27: “All, ‘myself excepted’”: Remy says that of the seven he was the only one not plotting a reunion with his family. He would rather have his father think him dead than to find out that he had betrayed “God and Algeria” (26).

pp. 27-30: SECTION 8: The second repetition of third section of “Georgie” finish around 12:42 with its last stanza immediately beginning and lasting until “12:44,” the time given by Remy (27).

During the stage blackout separating the end of “Georgie” and the first stanza of “Modest,” Remy gets up to leave (12:44).

As he reaches the exit to the club, HIV suddenly appears and leads him back to his table, where he speaks to Remy and Saul until 12:53, breaking off because he wants to listen to the second section of “Modest,” which is just beginning.

p. 27: “crater” (l. 2) and “gassy hole” (5): Crude references to the rectum and the anus.

- p. 28: “the admonition”: Despite the “no gratuities, please” of Trimalchio’s program (15), Remy leaves a ten-pound tip for Saul.
- p. 28: “‘crescendoing Brown’ to a blackout”: The farewell of Georgie Brown, whose name is contrasted with “blackout,” the theatrical term for the extinguishing of stage lights to end a number, but with a pun on “black out” (the black man Brown exits).
- p. 28: “Marie and the girls”: His wife and his two daughters.
- p. 28: “‘no-showed’”: Almost all dictionaries list “no-show” as either a noun or adjective referring to the failure of someone to appear for some planned activity, such as work or an entertainment event. Only the online *Urban Dictionary* denotes its use as a verb, and just a few instances where writers employ it as a verb were turned up through a Google search. I put single quotes around it to indicate its neologistic status.
- p. 28: “the third douse”: As a noun, “douse” means “drenching; downpour” (*Webster’s Third*). Since “An Old Queen’s Lament” was the second number on the program, Remy would have sat through it at 10:15 and 11:15 p.m. and at 12:15 a.m. “Douse” refers to the downpour of jeers from “the seven taunting princoxes” and also has an ejaculative sexual meaning since Saul immediately says the performance has a “happy ending” (another pun) since the septuagenarian receives and gives simulated buggery. Saul discusses this number because he had intuitively grasped Remy’s severe reaction to it on p. 17.
- p. 28: fantastico: “a pretentiously fantastic person” (*Webster’s Third*).
- p. 28: “whose figure has dried up, but his lust subsists untarnished”: The idea is topsyturvily based on *Antony and Cleopatra* 2.2.245-48: “Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale / Her infinite variety. Other women cloy / The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry / Where most she satisfied.”
- p. 28: princox: In its archaic sense, “a pert youth” (*Webster’s Third*), not the modern definition of “a coxcomb or fop.” It was used on 1.8 and will appear twice more, 4.64 and 21.367.
- p. 28: “the real tries to pass itself off as the artificial”: Ballard touched on the artificial-real theme so important in my novel by stressing how his life was a sham since he was keeping so many people in his life from others there (1.6). However, it is Saul who overtly introduces this theme. This artificiality is partly conveyed by the aliases major characters must use. While Ballard has two names (Paul and John), Remy assumes nine in the novel (listed chronologically): Omar, Remy, Christian, M. Champagne, Michael (an American),

M. Quel Que Soit (French for “M. Whatever”), Jacques, Aït (a Berber), and Abdulkharem (a Moroccan). And this enumeration does not include the other unnamed identities he assumes.

Furthermore, throughout the novel, characters will repeatedly challenge who Remy really is. This inquiry reaches its climax when Remy himself begins to question his own identity in chaps. 20 and 21.

His culminating answer comes on 21.364 when he says a person's true identity can only be defined by those he loved. These, he concludes, are the “realit[ies] I cannot doubt” (the quotation drawn from the American philosopher William James, whose writings also provided the title for my novel).

p. 28: *ipso facto*: Latin for “by that very fact.”

p. 28: *obiter dictum*: an incidental remark.

p. 28: *cadeau*: His stipend or “gift” from the French for his work as a collaborator.

p. 28: “assimilation center”: After the flight from Algiers to Marseille, each of the seven traitors was sent to a military camp for indoctrination and assimilation. According to my chronology, Omar remained in his camp for just over ten weeks, from April 13, the date of his flight from Algiers, to June 25, 1961, when he is given his new identity, Remy Montpellier, and whisked to Le Puy.

p. 28: “he was surprised by the largess”: This first meeting with his initial *contact* occurred during August, 1961, although this is not specified in the text. Since all the traitors were alive at that time, Remy would have received one-seventh of the 140,000-france pool.

A sum of FFR20,000 for each, using the exchange rate of 1961 of approximately 5 francs for 1US\$, would mean Remy's “largess” was \$4,000.

p. 28: Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré: The center of haute couture in Paris and perhaps the world.

All of the high-fashion jewelers or designers cited are historically accurate: Hermès is a French high fashion house which specializes in luxury scarves and leather accessories.

Scavia has been an Italian fine jewelry company since 1923. René Lalique (1860-1945) was France's foremost designer of art nouveau jewelry. After his death, his firm continued to produce works based on his designs.

Claude Montana, a French fashion designer, was the darling of 1980s high fashion.

Pierre Balmain (1914-1982), a French fashion designer, whose firm, named after him, still produce stylish garments.

The Hungarian-born Judith Leiber has been a designer of luxury handbags since the 1960s.

Franco Moschino, an Italian fashion designer, founded his fashion house in 1983.

- p. 28: “remove the designer label and sew in at new one, Made in Hong Kong”: This relabeling the real as the fake was what Saul's comment on the real and the artificial occasioned Remy to consider.
The clothes for his family and himself become a symbol of his life in which born an Algerian he had to “relabel” himself as a Frenchman.
A prudent practicality, to be sure, goaded his decision about the clothes since he had been told at the assimilation center to “spend [the *cadeau*] discreetly . . . not to attract notice.”
It is as if the French knew very early that the Algerians would eventually try to hunt down the seven great traitors.
- p. 28: “these trinkets were genuine”: The real or genuine is being passed off as the artificial.
- p. 28: “a price on love”: Just like King Lear, by the end of the novel Remy will see the folly of connecting these two nouns.
- p. 28: *etiquettes*: clothing labels.
- p. 28: “a French appropriation, he was not able to relinquish”: Remy has an obsession with wearing garments by the best designers of men's clothes.
The mania will become a source of comedy on 5.74, where he imagines himself ripping a coat off a stylish man in order to expose the label of its designer, and on 6.85 and 6.96, where as a disguise he will don clothes which he feels humiliate him.
As the novel progresses, the clothes imagery will assume a symbolic seriousness, for I tried to imitate its use by Shakespeare in *Lear*, where the old king casts off his royal garbs and becomes more human, and in *Macbeth*, where kingly garments illegally donned doom its protagonist.
- p. 28: “Gianfranco Ferré . . . Azzaro Original.” Gianfranco Ferré was a classic Italian fashion designer who launched his first men's collection in 1982.
Loris Azzaro was a successful French fashion designer from the 1960s until his death in 2003. His men's clothing line never achieved the popularity of his women's collection.
His *prêt-à-porter* on-sale men's wool suits had a price of about what Remy said he paid for one, FFR300 or, using the exchange rate in 1988 of one dollar for 6.4 francs, around US\$50.
- p. 28: “*Pourboire, de moi à toi*”: “A gratuity, from me to you.” Saul uses the tutoyering form of “you.”
This refusal to accept a *pourboire* parallels the one by the beach attendant Mohisen on 1.8-9 except, unlike then, here the refusal is never reversed.

p. 28: "Poof, he vanished": "very suddenly," but with a pun on "poof" meaning "an effeminate homosexual." See the p. 16 note above, N2:5.

- p. 29: “shuffled, in ‘dreary, Dante-confirming perpetual motion’”: The double quote is not from another source, but it is used to indicate the exact phrasing in Remy’s mind. The reference is to Dante’s *Inferno*, Circle 7, round 3, cantos 14-16 (the Brunetto Latini episode dominates the description of this round), where sodomites must keep moving: “Others were stirred continually to roam” (14:24) because the penalty for halting is to lie a hundred years upon the burning sand (15:37-39).
On p. 34, Remy is no longer cynical about this camaraderie for he realizes like them that he must “make his way among the wanderers.”
Remy’s acceptance of the “perpetual motion” of his life, and of everyone else’s, not just homosexuals’, will be seen much later in his dream on 18.310, where “he was spun (the circuit, he vertiginously surmised, was helical) and spun and spun.”
Incidentally, *Purgatorio*, Canto 26, which deals with the redeemable lustful, shows that for Dante committing a homosexual act did not exclude a person from being assigned to Purgatory, thereby making the person eligible to be promoted to Paradise. The experimenting Christian heterosexual who dabbled in homosexuality, as did the pagan Julius Caesar (26:76-78), may be redeemed.
Their purging punishment is to run through a wall of flame calling out their lust (“Sodom and Gomorrah”), their breath aiding and intensifying the fire and thus their purgatorial process.
How like a Southern Baptist is Dante sometimes!
- pp. 29 and 31: “NutraSweet” (29), “Honeycomb” (29), and “Darling Sugar-Free Peppermint” (31): All three are pet names, but embellishing the artificial/real theme, HIV twice addresses Remy as an artificial sweetener, while he uses the real storage place of honey (a natural sugar) to refer to himself.
- p. 29: “d’camp”: A slurring of “decamp,” meaning “to go away suddenly and secretly,” but with the homosexual pun on “camp” as “to exhibit exaggerated, affected effeminate mannerisms.”
- p. 29: “the red-and-green-and-white flashes of the strobe lights”: The parti-colored lighting (for the symbolic red, green, and white, see the p.17 note, N2:9) refers to the scalding drops of fire raining down on the blasphemers, the sodomites, and the usurers tormented in the plain of burning sands, in Dante’s *Inferno*, seventh Circle, third round, canto 14: “Slowing raining over [the tormented were] flakes of fire” (14.30-31).
- p. 29: “Honeycomb look mellifluent”: Redundant since “mellifluent” means “honeyed.”
- p. 29: “pretending to be”: Remy obviously has long suspected that HIV’s homosexuality is a façade, or to use the word HIV employs in the next paragraph, a “camouflage,” allowing him to better perform his case officer’s duty to his client Remy.

- p. 29: “dangling from his left earlobe”: In the 1980s, wearing an earring on the left earlobe, not the right, indicated that a homosexual preferred to be sodomized, not to be the sodomizer. In the 6.83 note, N6:8, there will be a longer commentary on earrings.
- p. 29: “Versace no doubt”: A reference to the Versace purse in l. 15 of the second given section of “Bangkok-alota” on p. 24. See its note, N2:37.
Remy disparages Versace in the same way he berates Azzaro, both of whom initially showed great genius as fashion designers until they allowed their names to be commercialized through tawdry, but profitable, mass-oriented items.
- p. 29: “*très chic . . . mon chéri*”: “very chic” and “darling” (masculine) in French.
- p. 29: “hard bistre”: dark brown.
- p. 29: “so deep as a well”: Asked about his buttocks by HIV, Saul quotes Mercutio's assessment of his sword wound in *Romeo* 3.1.95-96: “No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve.”
- p. 29: “‘And 'twill receive.’ . . . ‘I am the server.’ . . . ‘serve’”: The bugging ripostes by HIV and Saul play upon homosexual jargon where the “server” is the active partner while the “receiver” is passive.
Saul's “server” next indicates that he is a Trimalchio “waiter,” and he closes by referring to the “server” in a tennis game.
- p. 29: “‘by quitting the court?’ . . . ‘I'll ace you later’”: Confronted with a plethora of puns here (tennis court, royal conference, flattering attention, and courtship), HIV seizes on the first, “I'll ace you later,” with the term for a tennis serve containing the double entendre, “ace/ass.”
- p. 29: “verbal towel readjustment”: Remy's view of this badinage harks back to the bathhouse scene on p. 16.
- p. 29: *flèche du Parthe*: The French expression, defined in the text, will reappear on 20.350, the offset of this chapter.
- p. 29: “As true a patriot as I, neither ‘greedy of [the] filthy [“lilty”] lucre’”: The single quoted passage is from 1 Tim. 3:3, where Paul in listing the qualities of a bishop notes that this clergyman should not be “greedy of filthy lucre.”
Also see Dante's description of the beast Geryon, in Circle 7, canto 17, l. 7, where the monster is said to have “that filthy image of Fraud.”
The word “lilty” is coined from the adjective *lilting*, which would not have given HIV the slant rhyme he sought.
He wishes gracefully and cheerfully to proclaim what he feels is his and Remy's disdain of money, unaware of Remy's connection of “price” and “love” (28).
- p. 29: “‘The bond is all, eh, for you, for me.’”: “Bond” emphasizes the connection theme.

Once again, in the 15.253 note, N15:49-50, there will be a listing of the instances of the bond theme, a central one of the novel.

The phrasing "The bond is all" mimics the grammatical structure of Hamlet's "The readiness is all" (5.2.220) and Edgar's counsel in *Lear*, "Ripeness is all" (5.2.11).

In this passage, HIV implies that his and Remy's eight years of working together have gone beyond the typical professional case officer-client bond, defined by the yearly *pourboire* that he, on his government's instruction (the political bond), delivers to Remy.

Instead what has developed between them is a human "bond" (of trust, of friendship, of camaraderie, etc.). This bond is the essence of "patriot[ism]."

Remy scoffs at this idea, but HIV's words will spring up in Remy's mind in 19.329, as will those which Saul said on pp. 19 and 28 about not deceiving Remy and about the real and the artificial, and those he will say later on p. 34 about his belief that they will meet (19.329).

- p. 29: minikin: something "small and delicate," such as the clutch purse here.
- p. 29: "skin game . . . the last standing": For his pun HIV merges this slang expression meaning "a swindling trick" with the slang expression "saving one's skin," that is "escaping death."
He declares that of the seven traitors Remy is "the last standing," that is, the last one not lying underground.
- p. 29: Orly: Paris-Orly Airport.
- p. 29: 2269: This number juggles the typical homosexual numerical invitation: 2469 (Two—2—to engage in—for, or 4—oral sex—69, the graphic position of two people having oral sex).
I first used a form of this emendation, "69:22," in a previous book, *The Saint of Sodomy* (1999), p. 53, where "69" again represents the position of two men giving and receiving oral sex; the "22" portrays the position of two kneeling men, with one buggering the other.
- p. 29: "Twenty-eight years down the road, the [DGSE] chief": Remy was flown out of Algiers with the other six traitors on April 13, 1961. The meeting at Trimalchio's occurs on April 6, 1989, so it is short by seven days being twenty-eight years.
- p. 29: *pain perdu*: Again translated in the text, "French toast." See p. 22 and its note, N2:31.

- p. 30: "A U.S. embassy official, thirty-nine days ago, had been murdered": Finally, the tie-in to the first chapter is established (1.14). Ballard was murdered on Feb 27; the meeting at Trimalchio's, as just mentioned, is on April 6.
- p. 30: "his homosexual 'servicer'": Mohammed Belmazoir from chap. 1.
 "Servicer" is not defined in any standard or online dictionary that I consulted as meaning "a prostitute," that is, "one who provides sexual service," although a few dictionaries define it as finance jargon for administering a loan (the online *Wiktionary*).
 Googling produces a few entries referring to a prostitute as a "sexual servicer," including one use of "male servicer/servicing" in a scholarly study of William Blake. Because of its absence from dictionaries, I treat it as a neologism and put it in quotes.
- p. 30: "a scissored strip of a negative . . . in the American's wallet": There had been no mention of this negative or strip of photographic film in chap. 1, but then there Ballard had been reluctant to reveal or confront major issues in his life.
 DGSE interprets the negative strip to indicate that Ballard was involved in espionage for profit and was using Belmazoir as his go-between in trafficking classified documents.
- p. 30: "one decent *gardien de la paix*, M. Tawfek Foucin": "guardian of the peace" or policeman.
 Tawfek Foucin, mentioned here, will first appear in chap. 4 of the novel. He is described by HIV as being decent, handsome, and forty-two years old.
 "Decent" means "professionally competent," but the word foreshadows other aspects of Foucin, who will become the principal antagonist of the novel. Similarly he will be shown to be a "guardian of the peace" in more than just a policing sense.
- p. 30: tarboosh: A brimless felt or cloth cap worn by Muslim men, sometimes as the inner part of a turban.
 Here the word is used synecdochically to indicate the person.
- p. 30: "The dead M. Ballard was a way-back chum of their ambassador . . . top-notch Washington slot": The first mention in this chapter of the man who dominated chap. 1. Leroy has been nominated as the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (1.1-2), the third ranking position in the U.S. State Department.
- p. 30: "springald . . . eighteen": "a young man; stripling" (*Webster's Third*). An alternate spelling is "springal."
 Mohammed's age, 18, is given.
- p. 30: "whose third leg, the circumcised one, in all likelihood o'ershadows his femoral two": Medieval Mali wooden statues typically show males with elongated penises, delineated by one source as a "third leg."

I appropriated the metaphor from my 1996 novella "Portrait of a Statue as a [Very] Young Man" (76) in *Saint*. Unfortunately my notes to it did not specify the source.) For a general discussion of cultures, such as those in Africa, which stress the oversized penis in their artwork, see the p. 16 note above, N2:2-3, and the 1.6 note, N1.17, which focuses on this emphasis in pre-Islamic societies.

p. 30: "take the music of the rap": A tiresome pun incorporating "facing the music," "rap" music (which was on the European and North African scene in 1989), and the slang "take the rap" meaning "receiving the blame or punishment."

p. 30: *Sécurité*: Short for DGSE. See the pp. 16 and 25 notes above, N2:7-8 and 38.

p. 30: Mitterrand . . . Arafat . . . Israeli F-15 Eagles hit our Tunis base . . . a 1985 truth . . . Mossad . . . American version . . . Ballard": The basic historical details here are accurate. In 1989, Mitterrand was president of France, and Arafat was chairman of the PLO. The two sometimes met officially.

The incident involving the 1985 aerial bombing by Israel (Mossad is its intelligence agency) of the PLO headquarters in Tunisia did occur. After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the PLO leadership and many of its eight thousand remaining fighters were evacuated from Beirut to Tunis.

In Hammam al-Shatt, twelve miles from this capital, a new PLO headquarters was constructed where Yasser Arafat had his offices.

On Oct. 1, Israeli F-15 Eagles conducted a six-minute attack on the facility, which was completely destroyed. Arafat was absent and hence survived. Subsequently a new compound was rebuilt there.

(This Tunis headquarters determined PLO policy from 1982 – 1993, when as a result of the Oslo Accords, the PLO was allowed to set up a Palestinian Authority in Gaza City, Palestine. Arafat moved his entourage there in 1994.)

Now the events become speculation. That Paris was rocked by subway bombers in the 1980s is factual, but it is only a supposition that Mossad killed them, thereby earning French cooperation for the Tunis bombing. Only a few heterodox commentators suggest that there was French complicity in the attack.

That the negotiations surrounding the attack between the French and the Israeli took place in the American embassy in Algiers is totally my invention, as is its resultant addendum that DGSE feared that someone, who was the source for my novel's Ballard, had sold some documents dealing with these negotiations.

p. 30: *Juifs*: "Jews" in French.

p. 30: DST (domestic intelligence): The acronym for *Direction de la surveillance du territoire*. Until 2008, DST was the French domestic intelligence agency.

p. 30: "What has this to do with me? 'I can connect / Nothing with nothing'": The internal quotation is from "Section III: The Fire Sermon," lines 301-02 of Eliot's

The Waste Land: "I can connect / Nothing with nothing."

This will be one of the seminal quotations about the theme of connection used in my novel and is one of the four epigraphs for my novel.

- p. 30: *Solliciteurs pour la justice sans frontières*: A literal translation is "Appellants for Justice without Borders."

The name of this fictional organization is based on *Médecins sans frontières* ("Doctors without Borders").

A more parallel denomination for a legal organization would have incorporated *avocats*, the French word for "lawyers," but an *Avocats sans frontières* ("Lawyers without Borders") was not formed until 1992, three years after the events of my novel.

Furthermore, I did not wish to slander this noble, real-life group, by associating it with my fictional organization, which, in essence, is presented as a hypocritical screen for clandestine French interference in its former colonies.

In French *solliciteurs* is a secondary meaning for someone who appeals to a court or requests a trial for someone.

- p. 30: "M. Mohammed . . . was as uncooperative as a mountain": HIV quibbles with the adage, "If the mountain will not come to Mohammed, then Mohammed must go to the mountain."

It was first recorded in English by Francis Bacon in his *Essays*, published in 1625.

In his account, the Prophet Mohammed asked a mountain to come to him, but was refused. The Prophet's response was not to rail at the "uncooperative" mountain, but to come up with an alternate solution.

- p. 30: "one Algerian to another, you can intuit how to prize open [Belmazoir's] lips": The stated justification for sending Remy, who has no experience as a private investigator.

- p. 30: "*Preposterous!*": From Latin, "preposterous" means "getting things back to front."

Such inversion is an important narrative technique of my novel.

A chapter or a section of a chapter or a segment of a section will open by revealing an episode's climax. Then it will flashback to the events which led up to the climax, whose relevance will become apparent.

Narrative inversion was a favorite technique of Henry James since it approximates the workings of the mind, where insight is often missed during an occurrence.

An abecedarian use of this technique can be seen in section 9: It begins in 1989 in Trimalchio, switches to 1972 in a parked car containing three men and a child, travels to a farther distant past, 1961, where a group of men are gathered in a hangar, returns briefly to 1972, and then back to 1989.

These flashbacks (the past) prepare Remy to make his present-day (1989) decision, which closes section 9 and chap. 2.

Frequently Remy is compelled to look backward in order to understand the present;

hence, his three quotations on p. 18 that attempt to relate the past to the present, the future, and the timeless or eternity.

An obsession with understanding this relationship is constantly bedeviling him. For Remy time becomes a more pressing antagonist than any of his human foes.

“Preposterous” will be used two other times in the novel: 17.277 and 18.300. In the latter, the sentence opens with “preposterous” and closes with the contrastive temporal word “foregone.”

- p. 30: ““Ben Bella placed a bounty on each of us Seven””: Remy lists the bounty placed on the heads of the seven by the 1963 Constitution: 25,000 (dead) and 50,000 (alive) Algerian francs. It would not be until 1964 that Algeria went to the dinar currency system.

In 1960, a new Algerian franc replaced the old Algerian franc, whose value had fallen considerably during the revolution: 100 old francs were equal to one new franc in the 1960 conversion.

The new Algerian franc was officially made equivalent to the French franc (FFR)—that is, 5 FFR equal \$1 in 1960—but realistically by 1963 the value of the Algerian franc had been halved.

Thus the bounty on each of the seven in U.S. dollars would be the equivalent of \$2,500 to \$5,000, still a princely sum at that time.

- p. 31: "I squeeze . . . on a hand": A fellatio comparison.
- p. 31: "'cursèd spite'": The mentioning of the name Mohammed Ahmed Belmazoïr immediately causes Remy to abandon his determination to leave.
The quotation is from *Hamlet* 1.5.197-98: "The time is out of joint. O cursèd spite / That ever I was born to set it right!"
- p. 31: "for all the teetee in China": "Teetee" is a Southern (U.S.) euphemism for "urine," "urination" or "to urinate," as defined in the online *Urban Dictionary*. Also spelled as two words, *tee tee*. Variants are *pee* or *pee pee*.
HIV, whose obsession with all things penile is wide-ranging, uses "teetee" to pun on the figurative idiom, "not for all the tea in China." This expression means "not even if you rewarded me with all the tea in China; not for anything at all." It originated in Australia in the late 19th or early 20th century.
Here HIV means that "nothing at all would make him miss the second section of 'A Modest Proposal.'"
- p. 31: "wormwood": HIV uses it not to suggest that the second section of "Modest" will be full of bitterness. Instead he wishes to play on "worm" and "wood," both slang terms for "penis."
Furthermore, he undoubtedly remembers the wording used by another commentator on a stage performance: Hamlet on *The Mousetrap* utters, "Wormwood, wormwood" (3.2.179), to indicate "how bitter" is the Player Queen's hypocrisy in telling the Player King that she will always remain faithful to him, even after his death.
- pp. 31-34: SECTION 9: The time span of this section is 12:53 p.m. (the beginning of the second section of "Modest") to 1 a.m., at which time Remy leaves Trimalchio's.
- p. 31: "Come, hungry . . . far?": The second section of "Modest" presents what most would agree is the second most horrible evil in society, the sexual abuse of children by pedophiles.
What is the premier evil? The failure of society itself, which for 50,000 years has not universally provided for the basic needs of children: food, clothing, shelter, and education.
Surely in that time span humanity should have come up with a solution to the hunger and homelessness of "five-year-olds / Claw'ng at a garbage heap" (ll. 10-11) limned in section 1 of the song, pp. 22-23.
At least, one group in society, the second section points out, selfishly wants to "save" (l. 13) them and even provides them with food and a place to sleep (albeit temporarily, until they tire of them).
If it means adopting an obtrusive government, abolishing obstructive religious beliefs, or turning upside down social conventions, the simple goal that no child go to

bed hungry should be met.

Until such time, legislators should pass no (digressive) laws, religious leaders should preach no (irrelevant) sermons, and moralists should rail against no other (minor) evils.

- p. 31: Golden Calf: A trite pun on the calf of a leg and the golden-calf idol which the Israelites worshipped while Moses was at Mt. Sinai (Exod. 32:4), but it reinforces the sensuous-spiritual dichotomy of the novel.
- p. 31: “*les pauvres enfants*”: “poor children”; it complements the de Gaulle reference on p. 22, “*les pauvres diables*” (“poor devils”).
- p. 31: *Extase*: French for “ecstasy.”
- p. 31: “bent”: A slang term for homosexuals who in no way want to be considered “straight.” The “bent” in this song is that small group of homosexuals who are pedophiles.
They would be among the clientele of Trimalchio's since the character Trimalchio from *Satyricon* during the feast that he is giving fondles a “pretty boy” (Wilde's translation, chap.10).
Studies show that instances of heterosexual pedophilia (usually adult male-girl) far outstrip in percentages those of homosexual pedophilia (exclusively adult male-boy).
- p. 31: “what happened during the Marseille layover”: The interior dramatic duologue of section 4 (20-22), in which Remy's anti-self or superego is represented by the television interview, is revived, as if taking up where the earlier scene broke off.
Remy says that he will reveal something which he has previously not made public: what happened in the airport hangar during the fifteen-minute layover in Marseille, after the plane from Algiers had landed.
- p. 31: “Something post-touchdown, after the Evil had landed”: A corruption of what the astronaut Neil Armstrong radioed just after the lunar module “Eagle” touched down on the moon on July 20, 1961: “The Eagle has landed.”
- p. 31: “the 1961 bond . . . the 1972 meeting”: Yet, Remy still seems to be unable to confront the 1961 incident because he first recalls in his id's mind—all of this, he fantasizes, is kept from his anti-self, the interviewer—what happened eleven years later.
In 1972, he held a secretive meeting with one of his fellow traitors, old Mohammed Belmazoir. This account explains why at the end of section 8 the mention of Mohammed Ahmed Belmazoir, his grandson, caused Remy to abort his plan to leave Trimalchio's.

p. 31: "The ninety-one thousand Muslim Algerians who exiled themselves in '62": The number is from the *Wikipedia* article on "*Harkis*."

Horne's book presents a sharply lower figure of less than fifteen thousand.

The term *Harkis* originally was used to designate Muslim Algerians who served in the French army during the war. However, it has been broadened to include all Muslim Algerians who aided France during the war.

When it was obvious that France was abandoning Algeria, the roughly 250,000 *harkis*, cognizant of the revenge that awaited them from the victorious FLN, were frantic to escape Algeria. (For this figure, see the p. 22 and 24 notes above, N2:30 and N2:36.)

Not officially provided for in the Évian accords, the French government employed severe tactics to prevent the *harkis* from seeking sanctuary in France, which was already being inundated by almost 900,000 European Algerians (85% Catholic and 15% Jewish) who fled to France in 1961 and 1962.

Gradually over the next fifteen years, the remaining 100,000 European Algerians sought exile in Europe until now (2013) there are almost no Jews or Christian Europeans in Algeria.

The horrible fate that the two-thirds of the *harkis* who were unable to emigrate faced is given in the p. 22 note above, N2:30: Of the c. 160,000 who remained, the FLN hunted down and killed around 100,000, usually after horrible torture. (The number can only be estimated with Horne placing it between 30,000 and 150,000.)

The *harki* community in France has thrived in numbers if not economically. The 91,000 *harkis* who fled to France in 1962 have blossomed to around a half-million counting their descendants today (2013); they live mainly along France's Mediterranean coast.

- p. 32: tergiversation: desertion; apostasy.
I concocted the 1972 Algerian law repealing the consequences of tergiversation. However, historically, post-independent Algeria's relationship with France hit its lowest ebb in 1971, when its president Boumediène nationalized French-owned oil and natural gas companies, offering only paltry compensation.
- p. 32: “like your two other comrades”: Old Belmazoïr had sent word that he needed the other three remaining traitors to convince his son not to return to Algeria. Remy alone came, the other two (Khedda and Mahmoudany, but Remy does not know their identities) obviously believing that such a rendezvous would put them at risk.
For a list of the seven traitors, see the p. 17 note above, “expired,” N2:12.
- p. 32: “he hopes—what else has he got?”: In the mode of the early-late repetition, this query will reappear on 20.340: “you hoped (for what else did you have?).”
- p. 32: “*le père, le fils, and even le petit-fils*”: the father, the son, and even the grandson.
- p. 32: “the moon intermittently perforated the foliage of the grove”: The meeting in near-total darkness between Remy and the Belmazoïrs on the tree-enshrouded dirt road parallels the one planned between Ballard and Mohammed Belmazoïr in the darkened Zaracova Beach palm grove in chap. 1.
- p. 32: Contact Deux: Remy's second contact or case officer. He supervised Remy from 1966 to 1974.
For a list of Remy's four case officers, see the p. 25 note, N2:37-38.
- p. 32: “a child of about two”: Why did old Belmazoïr's son bring along his two-year-old son to this bizarre meeting? The novel provides no answer (for a novel would never end if a novelist sought to answer every possible question of every incident in it). However, the likely reason is that he planned to use the child as part of his argument that his family must return to Algeria.
The boy must grow up in an Algerian environment in order to appreciate his Arabic and Islamic heritage. Seven paragraphs down reveals that the father had already (and perhaps secretly) been teaching his son Arabic since the child proclaims his Arabic name and disowns his French identity.
- p. 32: “fifteen months later . . . the ‘execution’ of old Belmazoïr”: The meeting between Remy and “old Belmazoïr” and his son occurred on Nov. 1, 1972. (I chose this date because the Algerian independence war began on Nov. 1, 1954.)
The son of Belmazoïr with his family left their father's house on Nov. 3, 1972, but visa problems prevented them from flying to Algiers until Nov. 8.
Old Belmazoïr, after torture, will be killed by FLN agents sent to France on February 5, 1974, just over fifteen months after the meeting.
- p. 32: *La Heure*: French for “the hour,” presumably “of reckoning” for the fourth traitor,

the French press reported.

Not until 6:99 and 14.219 will Remy find out the several ways in which the newspaper account of the word and of the deed were inaccurate.

p. 32: "his 'pension'": Another term for the stipend France allocated to the great traitors.

p. 32: "collied night": From Shakespeare's *MND* 1.1.145: "Brief as the lightning in the collied night."

"Collied" means "blackened (as with coal dust); darkened."

p. 32: consecution: chain of reasoning.

The word refers to Remy's attempt to convince the son of the traitor Belmazoir that his decision to return to Algeria could endanger his father and the other three great traitors, himself included.

p. 32: *siège arrière*: French for "back seat" of an automobile.

p. 32: "with a bound the *enfant* thumped into Remy's lap": *Enfant*: French for "child." This image of a child climbing into a stranger's lap will become a means of structuring chap. 14, which begins, "So he climbed from my lap into yours" (219), and ends, "So he climbed down into my lap, and up into yours" (238).

p. 32: "'Mohammed . . . Pierre de Vil—' . . . squashed the cognomen the boy was attempting": Like Ballard, Remy, old Belmazoir, and his son (whose French praenomen is never given in the novel), even the tiny grandson has an alias. Not until 14.219 will it be revealed that old Belmazoir's adopted cognomen, the first two syllable of which the child forms here, was de Villiers.

p. 32: "*ana . . . mah fee*": The first, as the text indicates can mean "I am," though literally it means just "I". Arabic has no "be" verb forms. The expression *mah fee*, which the text renders as "I am not," is more exactly translated as "There isn't."

As mentioned nine notes above, this passage shows that old Belmazoir's son was teaching his son some basic Arabic and stressing his Algerian heritage.

These indicate that his decision to return to Algeria was not made on the spur of the moment.

p. 32: *père et fils*: "father and son."

p. 32: "their faces likewise obscured": Like Remy, each was wearing a "ski mask" (31).

p. 32: Aeroport de Marignane: In 1961, the name of the airport servicing Marseille, so called because it was located in its suburb Marignane, twenty-seven kilometers northwest of Marseille.

The airport is now called the Marseille Provence Airport.

Marignane had a population of around ten thousand in 1961.

- p. 32: "So what transpired in that quarter hour?": This is the interviewer's follow-up question to his first, asked on p. 31, "Something post-touchdown . . . landed?" That one was as much delivered to the television producer and his staff in "the elevated control room" (21) as to Remy. In the interval while Remy has the flashback to his meeting with the Belmazoires, this crew had been going through their files to determine if they had a record of something happening during the fifteen minutes in the hangar. When the producer calls out that nothing had been found, the interviewer asks the second question.
- p. 32: "seven points": Each of the traitors is being sent to a different military base for assimilation training.
- p. 32: "we'd been shepherded": While in the first flashback about the Belmazoires third-person narration is used to indicate that Remy was thinking to himself, for the second incident in the hangar, first-person narration is employed in speaking to the interviewer. Remy principally refers to "we," meaning himself and the other six traitors.

- p. 33: "Mahmoudany's clearing his throat . . . 'I am senior'": The oldest of the seven traitors, ironically he was the sixth to die.
See the p.17 note listing the six traitors excluding Omar (Remy), N2:12.
- p. 33: "the creeping suspicion": Distrust in the word of the French leads to the back-up plan: The seven traitors forge a bond to help each other.
- p. 33: nexus: a connection, tie, or link between individuals of a group.
- p. 33: *l'immonde*: In French, "foul" or "vile."
It will be used two other times, on 4.61 (during which Remy again recalls its first use) and 21.357 (once more by Remy, but hypocritically speaking of himself).
- p. 33: "Detail the bond": This is the third and final use of "bond" in the chapter, here a bond tying the traitors to each other.
On p. 18, Remy said that de Gaulle had instituted a political "bond," this time between France and the "misnomered" traitors. And on p. 29, HIV had spoken of a personal "bond" between himself and Remy, one transcending the political bond.
- p. 33: "Should ever one of us need, the others will come": The basic contract, which Remy had honored in answering Belmazoir's call in November 1972, but which the two remaining traitors had not (31-32).
- p. 33: "Let it be inherited, binding us through our progeny long after we are gone": If Remy would honor the bond a second time, he would have to agree to go to Algiers to help old Belmazoir's grandson, "Mohammed Ahmed Belmazoir," all three names enunciated by HIV on p. 30.
- p. 33: "one tenth-removed cousin": The phrase will be repeated on 6.99.
- p. 33: "dispel the notion that traitor to traitor can be true": One of the paradoxes with which my novel wrestles.
See the p. 17 note above, "seven traitors," N2:13, which briefly discusses the theme of treason in the novel.
- p. 33: "Mahmoudany . . . Ghozali . . . Zbiri . . . Morcel . . . Belmazoir . . . Khedda": The surnames of the six traitors are given, from the oldest to the youngest. Since Remy is narrating, he indicates himself (Omar Naaman) by using "me."
Again, see the p. 17 note, N2:12, which lists the full names of the traitors.
The listing of these seven will parallel the calling out of their names by seven different Algerians in the last chapter, 21.357.
- p. 33: "I deemed myself not 'forever fallen'": See Milton's *PL* 1.330: Satan exhorts the fallen angels, "Awake, arise, or be forever fallen!"
- p. 33: "A ragged circle had been formed": This image will be used three other times in

the novel: (1) on 3.48, there will be “a ragged circle [made] in the blood” of a family member; (2) on 17.282, a “ragged red circle” of blood, again from a family member, will appear as a stain on the sleeve of a uniform Remy is wearing; and (3) on 21.353, a heptad of young men will form a “two-tiered ragged circle” about Remy.

The seven traitors of chap. 2 balance the politically redeeming septuplet of chap. 21. Chaps. 3 and 17, on the other hand, involve familial circles of blood.

Each “ragged circle” also represents the four levels of connection in the novel. In chap. 2, “everything disconnects” (E/D) for Omar/Remy when he enters the traitors’ circle.

In chap. 3, “nothing connects” (N/C) since the French sever all of Remy’s bonds to God, family, and country by using his sister to break his spirit.

In chap. 17, “nothing disconnects” (N/D), for Remy renews an unspoken bond. And in chap. 21, “everything connects” (E/C), as the title of the last chapter states, since Remy comes to a final realization of the relationships which had made his life meaningful.

Other circular groups appear in the novel, but none use the modifier “ragged.”

- p. 33: “all [was] not lost”: After the circle was broken and the seven returned to their marks, Omar (Remy) remembers another passage from *PL* 1.105-106: “What though the field be lost? / All is not lost.”
- p. 33: “what we do best, fill in gaps”: This final definition of television’s role stresses not its visual or vision importance, but its function as a medium that simply “plugs a breach” or fills in gaps in history.
- p. 33: “release”: A transition word with multiple meanings. In television and other media, a signed “letter of release” or “release form” states that the performer will not later object to the material being used for whatever purpose the releasee wishes. In its broader senses, “release” means “a setting free or being set free” or “relief from pain or cares.” Legally, a letter of release is a notice filed with the court that a state attorney’s office is not going to prosecute a case. Remy realizes that he can obtain “release” by “signing” an agreement with DGSE to return to Algeria, by taking on the painful but necessary mission which can set him free from his guilt about how he deserted his Algerian family, and thereby releasing himself from his twenty-eight years of self-prosecution.
- p. 33: “tee-heed HIV”: HIV mockingly rhymes his earlier use of “teetee” (30).
- p. 33: “possibly the second goodbye would be less daunting”: His first goodbye to Marie was described on p. 16.
- p. 33: “a new model of the microrecorder you gave me in ’83, disguised to resemble a lighter or some such”: The microcassette recorder which HIV described on p. 25.

- p. 34: “a voice he must record”: Remy suggests he has another more important reason for going to Algiers; thus he “would return, ‘but selfishly.’”
- p. 34: “‘*au-revoir*’-ing: an awkward neologism. In all dictionaries which I consulted *au revoir* can be used only as a noun or an interjection.
- p. 34: “I’d like to suppose we’ll cross paths again”: This sentence will reappear on 19.329.
- p. 34: “If the artificial applies itself, it can become the real”: Saul paraphrases himself from p. 28: “since the real only tries to pass itself off as the artificial, *ipso facto*, the artificial can become the real.”
- p. 34: “Perhaps you’ll prepare a way to another”: Saul seems to be implying that he will use HIV as a means to reconnect somehow with Remy. Since his wording is based on biblical passages where John the Baptist is portrayed as sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus (Matt.11:10 and Mark 1:1-3), Saul seems to be viewing HIV as John and Remy as his Savior.
- p. 34: “resigned to make his way among the wanderers”: Remy pushed into the crowd of perpetually moving homosexuals (28). Ironically, Remy now identifies himself with the homosexuals whom he had disdained throughout this chapter.
- p. 34: philomicron: *Philomicron* is formed from the Greek words meaning “love” and “small.”
I came across it in Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, bk. 2, chap. 17, where the editor’s footnote defined it as “lover of small things.”
In the Eliot passage, Mr. Farebrother speaks of a magazine article which dealt with “small things about a variety of *Aphis Brassicæ*, with the well-known signature of Philomicron.”
I did not find “philomicron” listed in any dictionary. A Google search turned up the Eliot passage, but no other scholarly sources.
The word is used by HIV to stress that his wife does not prefer small penises.
- p. 34: “Jewish postman”: See the p. 18 note above, N2:14, where it is suggested that the sexual affair which HIV’s wife is having with a Jewish postman possibly influenced the Hasidic disguise he wore when visiting Remy at the Le Puy library.